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October 11, 2011

Marine Fisheries Advisory

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS:
HOOK AND LINE GEAR RESTRICTIONS IN THE STRIPED BASS FISHERY
MANDATING CIRCLE HOOKS AND PROHIBITING "YO-YO" RIGS**

Under the provisions of M.G.L. Ch 30A and pursuant to the authority found in M.G.L. Ch. 130 ss. 17A & 80, the Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFC) have scheduled two public hearings to accept comments on proposed changes to 322 CMR 6.07. To promote the conservation of the striped bass resource by reducing the discard mortality associated with certain hook and line gears, the Division of Marine Fisheries is proposing the following actions:

1. **Mandate the use of circle hooks.** Traditional "J" hooks are often swallowed by striped bass causing internal damage and increasing discard mortality. Circle hooks have demonstrated the ability to hook the fish in the mouth and thereby decrease discard mortality rates. Consequently, *Marine Fisheries* is proposing to require both recreational and commercial fishermen fishing for or in possession of striped bass to use circle hooks when fishing with whole or cut natural bait.
2. **Prohibit the use yo-yo rigs.** "Yo-Yo" rigs and other similar gear that use natural baits rigged with embedded weights not attached to the terminal tackle increase discard mortality when striped bass swallow the bait and the associated weight. *Marine Fisheries* is proposing to prohibit the use of this gear by both recreational and commercial fishermen.

**Two public hearings have been scheduled:
November 29, 2011 at 6 PM at the CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort, 50 Ferncroft Road,
Danvers, MA 01923.**

**November 30, 2011 at 6 PM at the Radisson Hotel Plymouth Harbor, 180 Water Street,
Plymouth, MA 02360.**

Public comments will be accepted until 5PM on December 2, 2011. Please e-mail all public comments to marine.fisheries@state.ma.us or jared.silva@state.ma.us or send to 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114.

For further information please contact Jared Silva by phone (617-626-1534) or through e-mail (jared.silva@state.ma.us), or visit our website (www.mass.gov/marinefisheries). You may obtain a copy of the draft regulations here.