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April 23, 2026

Notice of Public Hearing and Comment Period:

Recreational Black Sea Bass, Recreational Gulf of Maine Haddock, and Commercial and Recreational Atlantic Mackerel Limits

Under the provisions of G.L. c. 30A, and pursuant to the authorities found at G.L. c. 130, §§ 17A and 21, the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) accepts public comment on recently enacted emergency regulations at 322 CMR 6.00 to set the Commonwealth's recreational fishing limits for black sea bass and Gulf of Maine haddock and commercial and recreational limits for Atlantic mackerel. Full text of the regulations may be found on [DMF's website](#) along with additional background information.

Schedule for Public Comment Period and Hearing

DMF will accept written public comment through 5PM on Friday, May 22, 2026. Please submit written comments by email to marine.fish@mass.gov to the attention of Director Daniel McKiernan. DMF will also host a virtual public hearing on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 6PM. To attend this virtual public hearing, please register [here](#).

Public Hearing Proposals

1. Recreational Gulf of Maine Haddock (322 CMR 6.03). Reduce the minimum size limit from 18" to 17". The existing open season (April 1–February 28) and bag limit (15-fish per angler) are maintained.
2. Recreational Black Sea Bass (322 CMR 6.28). Establish an open fishing season of May 16 through October 14 with a per angler bag limit of 4 fish during May 16–August 31 and 2 fish during September 1–October 14, and a minimum size of 16".
3. Atlantic Mackerel (322 CMR 6.44).
 - a. Increase the recreational per angler bag limit from 20 fish to 50 fish for anglers onboard a for-hire vessel during a for-hire trip and 25 fish for all other anglers.
 - b. Increase the commercial possession limit from 5,000 pounds reduced to 2,500 pounds when 80% of quota is taken to: 20,000 pounds reduced to 5,000 pounds when 1,100 metric tons of the quota remains and 2,500 pounds when 220 metric tons of the quota remains.