



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
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July 27, 2026
MarineFisheries Advisory

**Commercial Menhaden Fishery to Transition to Episodic Event Set Aside Fishery
*Effective July 28***

Massachusetts' commercial menhaden fishery is projected to have harvested 100% of the state's 8,667,681-pound quota for 2026 on Monday, July 27. Accordingly, the Commonwealth's Quota Managed Menhaden Fishery will close effective 12:01am on Tuesday, July 28, 2026 ([Closure Notice](#)). However, Massachusetts has also been granted approval by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to declare into the Episodic Event Set Aside Fishery effective 12:01am on Tuesday, July 28, 2026 ([Declaration Notice](#)). The Episodic Event Set Aside for 2026 is 4,119,117 pounds.

The following rules apply during the Episodic Event Set Aside Fishery. Limited entry fishery participants (those that hold a valid regulated fishery permit endorsement for menhaden) are restricted to a 25,000-pound trip limit ([Statement of Permit Conditions](#)). All other harvesters are restricted to a 6,000-pound trip limit and are reminded that the rules regarding maximum purse seine size, catch storage, and volumetric equivalency continue to apply during the EESA fishery. All vessels are restricted to harvesting menhaden from only within the waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and are required to land in Massachusetts ports. Additionally, daily catch reporting is required.

The Episodic Event Set Aside is a provision of the interstate fishery management plan that sets aside 1% of the annual coastwide commercial quota for the northeast states' shared use should they utilize their available state-specific quota and high abundances of menhaden remain available in state waters prior to September 1. Access to the set aside requires prior approval from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Multiple states may harvest from the set aside at the same time. Based on state reports of EESA use, the Commission will determine when the set aside has been exhausted and the Division will close the EESA Fishery accordingly.

For more information about the management of menhaden in Massachusetts,
visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.