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## **Division of Marine Fisheries**

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June 8, 2016

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

### **SMALL-MESH TRAWL FISHERY FOR LONGFIN SQUID EXTENDED THROUGH JUNE 16, 2016**

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Trawlers fishing for squid in the Commonwealth's southern waters will have an addition seven days to participate in the fishery. Per 322 CMR 8.07 (1)(b), the Director is extending the small-mesh trawl fishery for longfin squid through Thursday, June 16, 2016.

Late-warming waters delayed the springtime run of longfin squid into the waters south of Cape Cod. Analysis of recent sea sampling data in the area provided by the National Observer Program demonstrates sizeable catches of marketable squid with low bycatch of other managed species.

The small-mesh trawl season was scheduled to close on Friday, June 10. The extension of this commercial fishing season will provide some mobile gear fishermen with continued access to the federal longfin squid quota while squid are available in state waters. DMF expects a portion of the fleet to capitalize on this extension but most vessels are likely to switch over to using large-mesh nets to direct on fluke.

Vessels fishing with a small-mesh trawl (less than 6 ½-inch opening in the cod end and 6 inches throughout the rest of the net) will continue to be allowed to fish 7 days per week during the extended season. However, vessels fishing with small mesh in state waters or landing longfin squid caught with small mesh in Massachusetts ports are still subject to all state trip limits. Specifically, vessels may not possess or land: (1) any black sea bass; (2) more than 800 pounds of scup without a Letter of Authorization to participate in Massachusetts' Scup Weekly Aggregate Experimental Fishery Program; (3) more than 50 pounds of winter flounder taken from the waters south and east of the Cape; or (4) more than 100 pounds combined of any flounder species, including fluke. Additionally, it is unlawful to conduct trawl fishing from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise, and all existing mobile gear closures apply.

Unless otherwise notified, effective Friday, June 17, 2016 the state waters small-mesh fishery for longfin squid will be closed. At that time, all vessels fishing with trawl gear in state waters will be required to use nets with a minimum mesh size of 6 ½ inch through the cod-end and 6 inches throughout the remainder of the net.

For more information regarding the management of longfin squid in Massachusetts, please visit our website: [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).