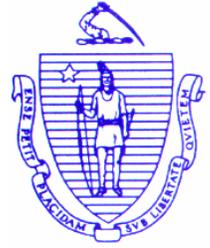




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Marine Fisheries Advisory

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, MARINE FISHERIES IMPLEMENTS MORE
CONSERVATIVE LOBSTER V-NOTCH DEFINITION IN LCMA 2**

Effective, August 17, 2006 the Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*), with support of the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission, has implemented a new v-notch definition in Lobster Conservation Management Area (LCMA) 2. All commercial fishermen fishing or authorized to fish in LCMA 2 are prohibited from possessing “any female lobster that bears a notch or indentation in the base of the flipper that is at least as deep as 1/8 inch, with or without setal hairs” (322 CMR 6.02).

“V-notching” is the practice of carving a v-shaped notch out of a designated flipper of a female egg-bearing lobster. The previous v-notch definition in LCMA 2 (1/4" straight-sided, etc.) only protected a female lobster before it molts. The newly implemented definition will protect female lobsters with healed or molted flipper. Legal sized female lobsters typically mate and extrude eggs after every molt. Protecting these lobsters through one or possibly two additional molts before they are subject to harvest would allow each female to extrude at least one additional clutch of eggs. Immediate action is necessary to protect those female lobsters that have recently hatched their brood of eggs and soon will be molting.

The southern New England lobster stock is the most depressed of the three lobster stocks and must be rebuilt through conservation measures in the future. This change in definition alone will not be sufficient to rebuild this resource, however, it should provide the southern New England stock with a significant increase in egg-production and a slight reduction in fishing mortality on female lobsters; providing the momentum to assist with rebuilding if favorable environmental conditions occur and if commercial exploitation is low to moderate.

For further information please visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.