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11/26/12 Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder Commercial Trip Limits Increased

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The Division of Marine Fisheries (MarineFisheries) has enacted emergency regulations affecting winter flounder taken in the Gulf of Maine Groundfish Management Area. Effective immediately, the commercial winter flounder trip limit for this area has been increased from 250 pounds to 500 pounds per trip or per 24-hour period, whichever is longer. In addition, the September 1 – October 31 recreational winter flounder closure for this area has been eliminated. This action is being taken in accordance with Addendum II to the Interstate Management Plan for Winter Flounder, recently approved by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Gulf of Maine Groundfish Management Area is defined as all state waters north of 42°00' including waters of Cape Cod Bay and the Cape Cod Canal that is bounded to the west by a line drawn from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy to the Bell's Neck Rd. Tidal Flats Recreational Area and all estuaries and salt ponds that empty into these waters.

In the winter of 2013, MarineFisheries will hold a public hearing on these emergency regulations so that they may be permanently codify at 322 CMR 6.03(11). In the coming weeks a public hearing and comment schedule will be announced.

Full text of this regulation can be found at 322 CMR 6.03. For more information please visit our website (www.mass.gov/marinefisheries) or contact Jared Silva (617-626-1534; jared.silva@state.ma.us).



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