



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

September 27, 2016

To: Atlantic Herring Section, Technical Committee, Advisory Panel and Interested Parties,
From: Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director *TMK*
Subject: Atlantic Herring Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Closure in Effect Starting October 2, 2016 through October 29, 2016; Review of Spawning Closure Possession and Landing Restrictions

Under Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring, Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) fishery regulations include seasonal spawning closures for portions of state and federal waters in Eastern Maine, Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire. In 2016, the Commission's Atlantic Herring Section approved a one-year pilot of a new forecasting method that relies upon at least three samples, each containing at least 25 female herring in gonadal stages III-V, to trigger a spawning closure.

Sampling in the Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning area (Figure 1) began on August 8, 2016; nine samples totaling 654 female herring were collected to evaluate spawning condition. Based on the analysis of the samples, the **Massachusetts/New Hampshire (MA/NH) spawning area will be closed starting 12:01 a.m. on October 2, 2016 extending through 11:59 p.m. on October 29, 2016.**

Vessels in the directed Atlantic herring fishery cannot take, land or possess Atlantic herring caught within the MA/NH spawning area during this time and must have all fishing gear stowed when transiting the area. **Due to landing day restrictions in Trimester 3 (October 1-December 31) vessels will not be allowed to land prior to the onset of the MA/NH spawning closure. Therefore, if a vessel harvests herring from the MA/NH spawning area on October 1, it will be in violation of the Atlantic Herring FMP starting on October 2 at 12:01 a.m. (when the MA/NH spawning closure takes effect).** The Eastern Maine spawning area will be open to the directed Atlantic herring fishery at the start of Trimester 3. For more information on landing day restrictions in Trimester 3, see the ASFMC memo released on September 21, 2016.

An incidental bycatch allowance of up to 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip per calendar day applies to vessels in non-directed fisheries that are fishing within the Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning area.

For more information, please contact Ashton Harp, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or aharp@asmfc.org.

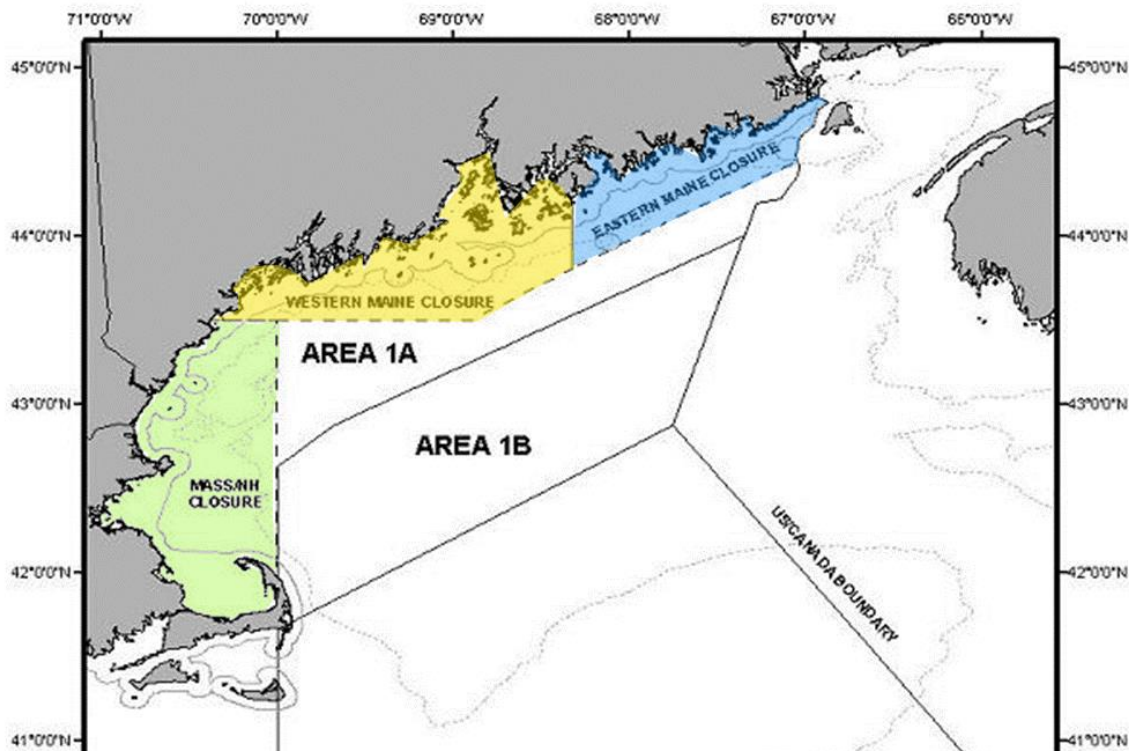


Figure 1. Area 1A Atlantic Herring Spawning Area Boundaries

The Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning area includes all waters bounded by the Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine coasts, and 43° 30' N and 70° 00' W.