



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Atlantic Herring Section Initiates Plan Amendment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Herring Section initiated a new amendment with the primary purpose of more fully protecting spawning herring in Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine). The draft amendment will review and consider changes to the Area 1A spawning area regulations as well as consider (1) removing the fixed-gear set-aside rollover provision, (2) requiring the declaration of intended fishing gear types prior to the quota periods, and (3) requiring vessel fish holds to be emptied of fish before leaving the dock on a fishing trip.

The draft amendment is initiated to correct inconsistencies in the application of current spawning area regulations. In preparation for the amendment, the Section has tasked the Technical Committee to review the current default closure dates, area delineations, and time periods. The draft amendment will also propose removing the rollover provision for the fixed gear set-aside in order to allow for increased opportunities for small scale fixed gear fishermen when Atlantic herring are present after the overall Area 1A quota has been harvested by the limited access fishery.

Further, the draft amendment will propose that vessel owners declare in advance their intended fishing gear type for each quota period in order to provide managers with an estimate of effort for each quota period and better inform the Section’s decisions regarding harvest control measures (e.g., days out). Additionally, in order to address concerns about the discards and full reporting, the draft amendment will propose vessel holds be emptied of fish before leaving the dock on a fishing trip.

A Public Information Document (PID) will be developed in consultation with the New England Fishery Management Council to ensure consistent regulations with the federal fishery management plan. The PID will be available for Section consideration in the Commission’s Spring Meeting. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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