



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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States Schedule Hearings on American Lobster Draft Addendum XXV

Arlington, VA – The states of Massachusetts through Delaware have scheduled their hearings to gather public comment on Draft Addendum XXV to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The details of the scheduled hearings follow.

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

March 23, 2017; 6 PM

MA Maritime Academy Admiral's Hall
101 Academy Drive
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts
Contact: [Dan McKiernan](#) at 617.626.1536

Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife

March 22, 2017; 6 PM

University of Rhode Island Bay Campus
Corless Auditorium, South Ferry Road
Narragansett, Rhode Island
Contact: [Scott Olszewski](#) at 401.423.1934

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

March 21, 2017; 7PM

DEEP Marine Headquarters Boating Education Center
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: [Mark Alexander](#) at 860.447.4322

March 27, 2017; 7PM

DEEP Kellogg Environmental Center
500 Hawthorne Avenue
Derby, Connecticut
Contact: [Mark Alexander](#) at 860.447.4322

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

March 20, 2017; 6 PM

NYSDEC Division of Marine Resources
205 N. Belle Mead Road
East Setauket, New York
Contact: [Kim McKown](#) at 631.444.0454

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

March 15, 2017; 6PM

Belmar Municipal Court
601 Main Street
Belmar, New Jersey
Contact: [Tom Baum](#) at 609.748.2020

Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control & Maryland Department of Natural Resources

March 16, 2017; 3 PM

Ocean Pines Library Branch
11107 Cathell Road
Ocean Pines, Maryland
Contact: [Craig Weedon](#) at 410.643.4601

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.

The Draft Addendum seeks to address the depleted condition of the Southern New England (SNE) stock while preserving a functional portion of the SNE lobster fishery. The document presents a suite of management measures to increase egg production and lower fishing mortality through a combination of management tools including gauge size changes, season closures, and trap reductions.

The Draft Addendum responds to the results of the 2015 American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment which found the SNE stock is severely depleted and experiencing recruitment failure. Declines in population abundance were most pronounced in the inshore portion of the stock where environmental conditions have remained unfavorable to lobster since the late 1990s. These stock declines are largely in response to adverse environmental conditions, including increasing water temperatures over the last 15 years, combined with continued fishing mortality.

Draft Addendum XXV focuses on increasing egg production so that, if environmental conditions become favorable, the SNE stock can benefit from a strong recruitment year. The Draft Addendum includes seven issues. The first proposes four targets to increase egg production, ranging from 20% to 60%, with an additional option for status quo. The second issue seeks input on proposed management tools to increase egg production and whether these tools should be used independently or in conjunction with one another. The third issue addresses the effects of proposed measures on the recreational fishery. The fourth issue explores the implementation of season closures and potential impacts to the Jonah crab fishery. The fifth issue examines whether management measures should be uniform across Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMA) in SNE. The sixth issue asks how management measures should be applied to the offshore waters of LCMA 3, which spans both the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank and SNE stock units. The seventh issue asks whether *de minimis* states should be exempt from management action taken in the addendum.

Fishermen and interested stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmLobsterDraftAddendumXXV_PublicComment.pdf or via the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, under *Public Input*. Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on April 7, 2017** and should be forwarded to Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at mware@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Addendum XXV).

The Board will review submitted public comment and consider action on the Addendum at the Commission's Spring Meeting in May 2017. For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mware@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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