



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species
or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
(202) 289-6400

Northern Shrimp 2004 Fishing Season Set at 40 Days

Portsmouth, New Hampshire – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section approved a 40-day fishing season for the 2004 northern shrimp fishery, a two-day increase from last year’s season. The fishing season, which is the same for mobile and trap gear, will be from January 19th through March 12th, with Saturdays and Sundays off. The Commission’s Northern Shrimp Advisory Panel advocated a 64-day season, while scientists on the Technical Committee recommended, for the third successive year, that there be no fishing season.

“The Section was reluctant to increase the season by more than a couple days because the most recent stock assessment indicates that stock biomass is still low,” stated Section Chair, Paul Diodati from Massachusetts. “By extending the season to mid-March, the Section addressed industry’s concern that last year’s quality shrimp were not caught because the season ended in late February.”

A large drop in the occurrence of the 2001 year-class and the lack of 1999 and 2002 year-classes in the latest shrimp survey are of concern to Technical Committee and Section members. “The Section is still hopeful that the 2001 year-class will provide enough income and biomass to maintain the fishery and contribute to resource recovery,” continued Mr. Diodati.

The northern shrimp fishery is jointly regulated by the States of Maine and New Hampshire, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section. The cooperative management program has been in place since 1972 and is currently managed under the 1986 Fishery Management Plan.

For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 301.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (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.

1444 Eye Street, N.W. -- Sixth Floor -- Washington, D.C. 20005
(202)289-6400 (phone) (202)289-6051 (fax)
www.asmf.org