



# *Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission*

## NEWS RELEASE

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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves Addendum XIX and Releases Draft Addenda XX for Public Comment**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s American Lobster Board approved Addendum XIX to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Addendum modifies the transfer tax for Lobster Conservation Management Area 3 (LCMA 3 - offshore waters) to a single conservation tax of 10% for full business or partial trap sales within the area. This measure will be considered by NOAA Fisheries as part of its upcoming federal rule-making process.

The Addendum is the second in a series of addenda that respond to the depleted condition of the Southern New England (SNE) lobster resource by scaling the capacity of the SNE fishery to the size the SNE resource. Since the scope of the SNE resource encompasses all or part of six of the seven LCMAs established by Amendment 3, additional addenda will be developed to address effort reductions in the remaining LCMAs (4, 5, and 6). The Board will continue to work on draft Addendum XXI to refine and develop a definition of ownership for the purposes of measures contained in the addendum.

The Board also approved Draft Addendum XX for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes to formalize measures outlined in an agreement between the offshore lobster fishery and groundfish sector trawl fishermen for bottom sharing in Closed Area II of Georges Bank in order to prevent gear conflicts and to protect large concentrations of egg bearing females. The agreement specifies certain times of year when lobster trap gear and sector trawl fishermen may fish in (or not fish in) in certain portions of Closed Area II. The fishing industry developed this agreement in anticipation of the final approval of the New England Fishery Management Council’s (NEFMC) Groundfish Framework 48 which contains measures to help mitigate the economic impact of the dramatic reductions in groundfish annual catch limits for the 2013 fishing year which begins May 1, 2013. If approved, groundfish sectors may request, through their operations plans, access to areas currently closed solely to reduce fishing mortality. In addition, the NEFMC explicitly considered potential gear conflicts and included language in the Framework that states “when considering sector requests for access to closed areas, NMFS Regional Office should include, inter alia, consideration of the potential for gear conflicts, shifts in fishing effort out of the closed areas and impacts on protected species and lobsters.”

Addendum XIX will be available on the Commission website ([www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)) under *Breaking News* or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. A subsequent press release will be issued when Draft Addendum XX is available for public comment; no public hearings will be conducted on the Draft Addendum. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@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.