



# *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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PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
(703) 842-0740

### **ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section Closes Fishery Effective 2359 Hours (EST) February 28, 2011**

Arlington, VA – Effective 2359 hours (EST) on February 28, 2011, the Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section and its member states will close the 2010/2011 fishery. The decision to close the fishery prior to the season end of April 15 was based on preliminary landings data that indicate that harvest is already at 4,192 metric tons, 192 metric tons in excess of the Technical Committee recommended landings level. The Technical Committee projected landings could total 7,000 metric tons if harvest continued through April 15.

Section members expressed concern over the lack of a timely and complete reporting system for northern shrimp and the potential for this year’s overharvest to negatively impact the stock and next year’s fishery. A comprehensive reporting system would provide managers the necessary information to prevent overharvest of the stock ensuring a healthy population of shrimp for future fisheries. This issue will be addressed in the Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Northern Shrimp, scheduled to be released in March for public comment.

Prior to the start of the 2010/2011 fishery, the Technical Committee cautioned Section members that the abundance of age 5 shrimp in the population is significantly below average. This results in the fishery harvesting primarily age 4 shrimp which should be the foundation of next year’s fishery. The age 5 shrimp provide the greatest spawning potential and also receive a higher market price than smaller younger shrimp. The Northern Shrimp Technical Committee will update the stock assessment this summer to determine if this year’s overharvest has had an impact on the 2011/2012 fishery.

The Section’s action was taken pursuant to the emergency action provision of the Commission’s ISFMP Charter, Section 6(c)(10). The provision specifies that the Commission will hold four public hearings within 30 days of the action. The first public hearing was held during the Section’s February 18 conference call. The second hearing will occur at the Section’s February 28 meeting at the Urban Forestry Center, 45 Elwyn Road, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The details of the remaining hearings will be posted to the Commission website ([www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)) on its Meeting page.

For more information, please contact Robert Beal, ISFMP Director, at [rbeal@asmfc.org](mailto:rbeal@asmfc.org) and (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.

1050 N. Highland St. – Suite 200A-N – Arlington, V.A. 22201  
(703) 842-0740 (phone) (703) 842-0741 (fax) [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)