



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2010/2011 Northern Shrimp Fishing Season Set at 136 Days

Portsmouth, NH – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section approved a 136-day fishing season for the 2010-2011 northern shrimp fishery. The season was reduced from last year’s season of 180 days to account for a smaller population of northern shrimp. The Section also agreed to assess the pace of the fishery in late February to evaluate where the total landing are relative to the target harvest level of 4,000 mt. If necessary, the Section may adjust the closing date to prevent an overage of the target or extend the season to ensure sufficient opportunity to harvest the target.

“The Section’s decision to decrease the length of the season was consistent with the advice of the Technical Committee and was necessary to ensure the long-term health of the northern shrimp stock.” stated Section Chair Doug Grout from New Hampshire.

The 2006 year-class continues to be very weak and will likely be unavailable in significant numbers as five-year olds for the 2011 season. Therefore, the Technical Committee expects that catches in 2011 will be comprised mostly of four-year old female shrimp, which will be smaller than the five-year olds that have been harvested for the past few seasons. Fortunately, the 2007 - 2009 year-classes exhibited above average strength when compared to past years of the survey.

The 2010 fishing season, which is the same for mobile and trap gear, will be open seven days a week from December 1, 2010, through April 15, 2011.

Under other business, the Section agreed to initiate an amendment to the Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan to clarify the fishing mortality reference points, consider the use of trip limits, and address other issues that arise during the scoping process.

The northern shrimp fishery is jointly regulated by Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine 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 Amendment 1 to the Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan. For more information, please contact Robert Beal, ISFMP Director, at (703) 842-0740 or <rbeal@asmfc.org>.

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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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