



# *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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### **ASMFC Winter Flounder Board Finalizes Addendum II & Approves Draft Addendum III for Public Comment**

Philadelphia, PA – The Commission’s Winter Flounder Management Board has approved Addendum II to Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Addendum modifies the commercial and recreational management requirements for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) stock in response to updated stock status information and recent federal action to increase the GOM winter flounder state waters’ estimated harvest level. Specifically, the commercial trip limit has been increased to 500 pounds per trip and the recreational season has been expanded to year round. These measures apply only to GOM state waters’ fisheries until June 1, 2013.

A peer reviewed stock assessment (SAW/SARC 52) of GOM winter flounder was completed in 2011, which changed the stock’s status to not experiencing overfishing, although the overfished status could not be determined. NOAA Fisheries responded to this finding by more than doubling the ACL for the remainder of 2011 fishing year. The ACL was nearly doubled again for the 2012 fishing year. The state waters estimated harvest limit for 2012 fishing year was increased to 272 mt, a 450% increase from 60 mt in 2010.

The Board also approved Draft Addendum III for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes to establish output controls for GOM state waters for both recreational and commercial fisheries in order to stay within the annually established state waters harvest limit. The proposed controls include trip limits, size limits, area closures, seasons, and possession limits to be determined by the Board on an annual basis. The Draft Addendum also proposes a trigger to reduce commercial trip limits when a percentage of the state water harvest (established by NOAA Fisheries) has been reached.

Addendum II 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.

Draft Addendum III will be released over the next month. It is anticipated that New England states will be conducting public hearings on Draft Addendum III; information on the Draft Addendum’s availability and the details of state hearings will be released once they are finalized.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Acting Director, at 703.842.0740 or [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@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 diadromous species.