



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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ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section Sets Specifications for 2013 Fishery

Portland, ME – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section approved a total allowable catch (TAC) of 625 mt, representing a 72% reduction from last year’s quota. The TAC is further subdivided into a research set aside of 5.44 mt, a trawl fishery TAC of 539.02 mt, and a trap fishery TAC of 80.54 mt. Each fishery will close when 85% of its TAC is projected to be reached and a 4-day advance notice will be issued prior to the closure of each fishery. The trawl fishery will begin on Jan 22, 2013, with two landing days (Monday and Wednesday) and no trip limit. The trap fishery will begin on February 5, 2013, with six landing days (everyday but Sunday) and an 800 lb trip limit.

The Section considered several factors in setting the specifications for the 2013 fishery. These include (1) the northern shrimp stock is overfished and overfishing has been occurring for the last three years; (2) all abundance surveys are exhibiting a downward trend (since 2007 biomass has steadily declined and is currently at its lowest level); and (3) poor recruitment (shrimp entering into the fishery) in 2010 and 2011. Northern shrimp recruitment is related to both spawning biomass and ocean temperatures, with higher spawning biomass and colder temperatures producing stronger recruitment. Ocean temperatures in the western Gulf of Maine shrimp habitat have been increasing in recent years and have reached or approached unprecedented highs in the past three years. This suggests an increasingly inhospitable environment for northern shrimp and indicates the critical need for protecting spawning biomass.

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 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Northern Shrimp. For more information, please contact Michael Waine, FMP Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or <mwaine@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.

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