



Public Informational Meetings: February 27th & 28th

2023 Marine Recreational Fishing Regulations

The CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Program (MFP) is holding two Public Informational Meetings to provide information on the status of important recreational fisheries and planned recreational regulations for the 2023 fishing season, as well as to gather public input on 2023 regulation options for black sea bass. The same information will be presented at both meetings. MFP is holding both an in-person and a virtual meeting with identical content in the interest of maximizing opportunities for public participation.

The first meeting will be held in person on Monday, February 27th from 6:00-8:00 PM at:

UCONN Avery Point Campus
Lowell P. Weicker Building, Seminar Room 103
1084 Shennecossett Rd, Groton CT 06340

Parking is available in Lot D (Employee Parking). The Lowell P. Weicker Building (formerly the Marine Sciences Building) is located on the south end of the campus. A campus map showing the location of Lot D and the Weicker Building can be found at this link:

<https://marinesciences.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/459/2019/09/Avery-Point-Campus-Map-v5-FY2020.pdf>

The second meeting will be held virtually via Zoom webinar on Tuesday, February 28th from 6:00-8:00 PM. To register for the meeting, please use the link below. After registering, you will receive an e-mail with information on how to connect to the meeting:

Registration link for the webinar:

https://ctdeep.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9YW02zEcQ1OtjVyE74LVGQ

Additional Information

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) jointly manage several fish species on the Atlantic coast, including **scup and black sea bass**. ASMFC and MAFMC have recently voted to implement coastwide changes in recreational regulations for these two species in 2023.

Scup (Porgy)

ASMFC and MAFMC have voted to implement a coastwide **10% reduction** in scup recreational harvest for 2023 based on a finding that recreational harvest under “status quo” (i.e., same as 2022) regulations would exceed the 2023 Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) for scup. The Commission and Council opted to reduce the federal waters (>3 miles from shore) possession limit from 50 to 40 scup and shorten the scup fishing season from year-round to May 1 – December 31, but because these federal waters regulation changes will not achieve the full required harvest reduction, states are required to modify their state waters (0-3 miles from shore) scup regulations to achieve the full reduction. The overwhelming majority of scup recreational harvest (>90%) occurs in the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York, and the states within this “northern region” have an informal agreement to implement uniform scup recreational regulations for the sake of interstate consistency. DEEP has worked with corresponding agencies in the northern region to develop the following uniform scup regulations for 2023:

2023 Scup Recreational Regulations

	Boat	Shore	For-Hire
Minimum Length	10.5 inches ^a	9.5 inches ^b	10.5 inches ^a
Bag Limit	30 fish	30 fish	30 fish ^c
Season	May 1 – Dec. 31 ^d	May 1 – Dec. 31 ^d	May 1 – Dec. 31 ^d

^aincrease from 10 inches in 2022; ^bdecrease from 10 inches in 2022; ^cwith exception of “bonus season” bag limit of 40 fish from Sept. 1 – Oct. 31 (decrease from 50 fish in 2022); ^ddecrease from year-round season in 2022.

Black Sea Bass

ASMFC and MAFMC have voted to implement a coastwide **10% reduction** in black sea bass recreational harvest for 2023 based on a finding that recreational harvest under status quo regulations would exceed the 2023 Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) for black sea bass. As in recent years, the Commission and Council opted to allow states to develop state-specific black sea bass regulations to meet the 10% harvest reduction rather than implement uniform coastwide regulations. DEEP MFP staff have developed recreational regulation options to meet Connecticut’s required harvest reduction. These options, in addition to the 2022 regulations for purposes of comparison, are detailed below:

2022 Sea Bass Recreational Regulations (for comparison to 2023 options)

	Boat	Shore	For-Hire
Minimum Length	16 inches	16 inches	16 inches
Bag Limit	5 fish	5 fish	5 fish ^a
Season	May 19 – Dec. 1	May 19 – Dec. 1	May 19 – Dec. 31

^awith exception of “bonus season” bag limit of 7 fish from Sept. 1 – Dec. 31, daily logbook reporting of black sea bass harvest required for for-hire vessel operators

2023 Sea Bass Recreational Regulation Options

Option 1 – Minimum Length Increase: Increase minimum length to 16.5” for boat, shore, and for-hire. No other changes.

Option 2a – Bag Limit Decrease: Decrease bag limit to 2 fish for boat, shore, and for-hire (eliminate for-hire fall bonus season). No other changes.

Option 2b: same as Option 2a but for-hire bag limit remains status quo (including for-hire fall bonus season).

Option 3a – Summer Season Closure: season closure from June 24 – July 7 for boat, shore, and for-hire. No other changes.

Option 3b: same as Option 3a but for-hire season remains status quo.

Option 4a – Fall Season Closure + Fall Bag Limit Decrease: last day of season moves to October 23 and bag limit decreases to 2 fish on October 1 for boat, shore, and for-hire. No other changes.

Option 4b: Same as Option 4a but for-hire season/bag limit remains status quo.

At this time, DEEP anticipates no changes to recreational size limits, bag limits, or seasons for any species other than black sea bass and scup (porgy) in 2023. However, at this meeting, MFP will provide information on the status of striped bass, summer flounder (fluke), bluefish, and tautog (blackfish).

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request all accommodations as soon as possible following notice of any agency hearing, meeting, program or event.