



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 21, 2024

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
703.842.0749

American Lobster Board Releases Draft Addendum XXX for Public Comment *Draft Addendum Considers Addendum XXVII Impacts on Foreign Imports*

Arlington, VA – Two public hearings have been scheduled to gather input on Draft Addendum XXX to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Draft Addendum considers how the measures of Addendum XXVII, approved in May 2023, will apply to foreign imports of American lobster. One hearing will be conducted in a hybrid format, and one general hearing will be conducted via webinar. ***Regardless of where the hybrid hearing is being conducted, all are welcome to participate in either the virtual or hybrid hearing.*** The public hearing details follow:

Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency	Contact
Tuesday, April 9 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	General Public Hearing Webinar <i>The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.</i>	Caitlin Starks 703.842.0740
Monday, May 6 Hybrid Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Hampshire Fish and Game Dept. <i>In-person Hearing Location:</i> Urban Forestry Center 45 Elwyn Road Portsmouth, NH 03801 <i>The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.</i>	Cheri Patterson 603.868.1095

The Magnuson-Stevens Act prohibits imports of whole live lobster smaller than the minimum possession size in effect at the time under the Commission’s American lobster management program. This provision, referred to as the Mitchell Provision, was passed to prevent imports of lobster smaller than what the US industry can harvest. The current minimum gauge size for Lobster Conservation Management Area (LCMA) 1 of 3 ¼” is the smallest minimum size in effect for the US lobster fishery.

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.

Under Addendum XXVII, changes to the current gauge and escape vent sizes in LCMA 1 (inshore Gulf of Maine) were triggered as of October 2023. Therefore, a series of gradual changes to gauge and vent size will begin January 1, 2025, starting with an increase to the minimum gauge size in LCMA 1 from 3 ¼" to 3 5/16". The 3 5/16" gauge size will be the smallest minimum gauge size in effect for US harvesters in the Commission's FMP. Draft Addendum XXX considers whether the Addendum XXVII minimum size increases should apply to imports, meaning the smallest minimum size for foreign imports would match the smallest minimum size in effect for the US industry.

Unlike most draft addenda, Draft Addendum XXX does not present a range of management alternatives. Rather, it is an administrative document that would consider whether the Addendum XXVII minimum size increases should apply to imports.

Webinar Instructions

Please note that in order to comment during the hybrid or virtual webinar hearing you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your phone. Those joining by phone only will be limited to listening to the presentation and will not be able to provide input. In those cases, you can send your comments to staff via [email](#) or U.S. mail at any time during the public comment period. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 562.247.8422 and enter access code 796-096-508.

Regardless of where the hybrid hearing is being conducted, all are welcome to participate in either the virtual or hybrid hearing.

For the virtual or hybrid hearings, please click [HERE](#) and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu to register for a public hearing webinar. Hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, and you can join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone. If you are new to GoToWebinar, you can download the software by ([clicking here](#)) or via the App store under GoToWebinar. We recommend you register for the hearing well in advance of the hearing since GoToWebinar will provide you with a link to test your device's compatibility with the webinar. If you find your device is not compatible, please contact the Commission at info@asmfc.org (subject line: GoToWebinar help) and we will try to get you connected. We also strongly encourage participants to **use the computer voice over internet protocol (VoIP)** so you can ask questions and provide input at the hearing.

Submitting Comments

The public is encouraged to submit comments at any time during the addendum process. The Draft Addendum is available at https://asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmLobsterDraftAddendumXXX_PublicComment.pdf or via the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>. Public comment will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EST) on June 3, 2024** and should be sent to Caitlin Starks, Senior FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; or to comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Lobster Draft Addendum XXX).

Board Motion

Move to approve Draft Addendum XXX for public comment as modified today.

Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Dr. McNamee. Motion passes by unanimous consent.