



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

ASMFC & MAFMFC Joint Meeting Webinar

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

American Lobster Management Board
December 6, 2021

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Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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AMERICAN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT BOARD (DECEMBER 6, 2021)

Meeting Summary

The American Lobster Management Board met to consider Draft Addendum XXIX to the American Lobster FMP and Draft Addendum IV to the Jonah crab FMP on electronic tracking requirements in the federal American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries for public comment. With full support across the states, the Board approved the Draft Addendum for public comment and expects to hold public hearings in early 2022.

Draft Addendum XXIX was initiated in August 2021 to consider electronic tracking requirements for federal permit holders in the American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries. This proposed action aims to address a critical need for high-resolution spatial and temporal data to characterize effort in these fisheries. In particular, these data are essential to address several challenges facing the fisheries, including Atlantic right whale risk reduction efforts, marine spatial planning discussions, and offshore enforcement. The Draft Addendum includes two options for proposed management programs. The first is status quo, and the second is to implement electronic tracking requirements for federally-permitted lobster and Jonah crab vessels with commercial trap gear area permits for Lobster Conservation and Management Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and Outer Cape Cod. Under this option, the specified permit holders would be required to install an approved electronic vessel tracking device to their vessels prior to beginning a fishing trip to collect and transmit spatial data.

The Board requested several modifications to the Draft Addendum before its approval, including adding language to prohibit tampering with tracking devices, adding the Area 5 Waiver permit to the applicable permit categories, specifying the frequency of data transmission, and adding a sub-option to allow state or federal waivers to be issued for permitted vessels to opt out of participating in the trap fishery and therefore be exempt from the electronic tracking requirements. The Board is expected to meet to consider Draft Addendum XXIX for final approval following the public comment period in early 2022. A press release will follow to notify the public of the Draft Addendum's availability and details regarding the schedule of hearings.

For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at cstarks@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve Draft Addendum XXIX for public comment with the following modifications:

- **Add language to prohibit tampering with devices**
- **Add A5W permit to applicable permit table**
- **Clarification of section 2.2.5 on enforcement background**
- **Provide a general range of costs of trackers/data**
- **Questions about applicability of tracking requirements**
- **Add language to specify how frequently vendors must PUSH data**
- **Add option to allow for a state or federal waiver for permitted vessels to opt out of participating in the trap fishery**

Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded by Ms. Ware. Motion is approved by unanimous consent.