



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## NEWS RELEASE

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

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PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
703.842.0740

### ASMFC American Eel Board Approves Addendum IV

Mystic, CT – The Commission’s American Eel Management Board approved Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan. The Addendum establishes a 907,671 pound coastwide quota for yellow eel fisheries, reduces Maine’s glass eel quota to 9,688 pounds (2014 landings), and allows for the continuation of New York’s silver eel weir fishery in the Delaware River.



Photo © Brian Gratwicke

For yellow eel fisheries, the coastwide quota will be implemented for the 2015 fishing year but will not initially include state-specific allocations. Instead, the Addendum establishes two management triggers: (1) exceeding coastwide quota by more than 10% in a given year, or (2) exceeding the coastwide quota for two consecutive years regardless of the percent overage. If either one of the triggers are met then states would implement state-specific allocation based on average landings from 2011-2013.

Maine will continue to maintain daily trip level reporting and require a pound-for-pound payback in the event of quota overages in its glass eel fishery. Additionally, the state will implement a fishery-independent life cycle survey covering glass, yellow and silver eels within at least one river system. The Addendum specifies that these requirements would also be required for any jurisdiction with a commercial glass eel fishery harvesting more than 750 pounds.

Addendum IV provides states/jurisdictions the ability to request limited participation in the glass eel fishery based on conservation programs enacted after January 1, 2011, and given there is an overall benefit to American eel populations. Examples of conservation programs include, but are not limited to, habitat restoration projects, fish passage improvements, or fish passage construction. The Addendum also provides opportunities for a limited glass eel harvest for domestic aquaculture purposes and allows the continuation of New York’s Delaware River silver eel weir fishery under a transferable license cap, limited to nine permits annually.

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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 anadromous species.

1050 N. Highland St. – Suite 200A-N – Arlington, VA 22201  
703.842.0740 (phone) 703.842.0741 (fax) [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)

The Board's actions respond to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock has declined in recent decades and the prevalence of significant downward trends in multiple surveys across the coast is cause for concern. Causes of decline are likely due to a combination of factors including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease. Addendum IV is the second phase of management action in response to the stock assessment.

The Addendum will be posted to the Commission's website by mid-November under *Breaking News*. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, at [ktaylor@asmfc.org](mailto:ktaylor@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

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