



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves 5% Increase in Egg Production for the Southern New England Lobster Stock

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s American Lobster Management Board approved moving forward with the goal of increasing egg production for the Southern New England (SNE) stock of American lobster by 5%. This increase in egg production can be achieved through a suite of management tools including gauge size changes, trap reductions, and seasonal closures. The recreational fishery is only subject to changes in the gauge size should any be proposed. In making its decision, the Board took into consideration the extensive public comment, which overwhelmingly supported status quo, and the fact that stock declines are largely a result of climatic changes, including increasing water temperatures over the last 15 years.

The next step in the process will be for the Lobster Conservation Management Teams (LCMTs) in Areas 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 to develop area-specific proposals on how to achieve the 5% increase in egg production. As established through Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster, LCMTs are composed of lobster industry members who are charged with recommending area-specific measures for Board consideration and approval. The LCMT proposals will be submitted for Technical Committee review in June and Board consideration in August. Once area-specific measures have been approved, the Board will consider final approval of Addendum XXV.

In its deliberation on the SNE lobster stock, the Board discussed the need to consider changes to the current management goals and reference points, noting changes in the marine environment may limit the ability to rebuild the stock to levels seen in the 1990s. The Board will continue to discuss these issues, particularly as the Commission’s Climate Change Work Group develops recommendations regarding the management of stocks impacted by changing climate conditions.

For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mware@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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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.

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