



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2005

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ASMFC Winter Flounder Board Approves State Implementation Plans *Plans Pave Way for Rebuilding of SNE/MA Stock*

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Winter Flounder Board approved state proposals (ME through DE) for the implementation of Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The approved winter flounder proposals were determined to meet the stock-wide conservation standards established in Amendment 1. These measures, in combination with those of Amendment 13 to Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish, are intended to initiate stock rebuilding for the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic stock, which is overfished and overfishing is occurring. Amendment 1 also seeks to maintain a healthy and sustainable Gulf of Maine stock.

Amendment 1 stock-wide conservation standards are provided in the table below. States have the option of imposing more conservative regulations. For example, both Rhode Island and Massachusetts (SNE/MA stock) have implemented a four fish bag limit; size limit and season closure regulations remain consistent with the standard. Although the Board deferred action on New Jersey’s recreational fishery, it approved New Jersey’s proposed commercial management measures.

	Commercial	Recreational
Gulf of Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12” minimum size limit - 6.5” minimum square or diamond mesh size in codend (consistent with EEZ regulations) - Maintenance of existing seasonal closures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12” minimum size limit - 8 fish/day bag limit - No required closed seasons
Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12” minimum size limit - 6.5” minimum square or diamond mesh in cod-end (including 100 lb. Trip limit if smaller mesh is used) - Maintenance of existing seasonal closures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12” minimum size limit - 10 fish/day bag limit - 60 day open season split into no more than 2 blocks (20 days must be closed during March and April)

State plans must be implemented by July 31, 2005. Annual compliance reports will be due on November 1 of each year, beginning in 2006. For more information, please contact Ruth Christiansen, FMP Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 or rchristiansen@asmfc.org.

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PR05-09

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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