



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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States Schedule Public Hearings on American Lobster Draft Addendum XXVII

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic coastal states of Maine through New York have scheduled hearings to gather public input on Draft Addendum XXVII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster, which considers measures to increase protection of the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) spawning stock. Some hearings will be conducted in-person, and some hearings will be conducted via webinar. Additional details on participating in the webinars can be found later in this release.

The public hearing details are as follows:

Hearing Date	State/Agency and Hearing Location	Contact
Tuesday, March 7 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources Freeport High School (in the Café space) 30 Holbrook Street, Freeport, ME 04032	Megan Ware , 207.446.0932
Wednesday, March 8 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources <i>Webinar Hearing</i>	Megan Ware , 207.446.0932
Wednesday, March 8 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Hampshire Fish and Game Dept. Urban Forestry Center 45 Elwyn Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801	Cheri Patterson , 603.868.1095
Thursday, March 9 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources Ellsworth High School Cafeteria 24 Lejok Street, Ellsworth, ME 04605	Megan Ware , 207.446.0932
Tuesday, March 14 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation <i>Webinar Hearing</i>	John Maniscalco , 631.444.0437
Wednesday, March 15 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries <i>Webinar Hearing</i>	Dan McKiernan , 617.626.1536
Thursday, March 16 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management <i>Webinar Hearing</i>	Jason McNamee , 401.222.4700

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.

The American Lobster Management Board initiated Addendum XXVII in 2017 as a proactive measure to improve the resiliency of the GOM/GBK stock, responding to signs of reduced juvenile settlement and the combining of the GOM and GBK stocks following the 2015 Stock Assessment. Work on this addendum was paused due to the prioritization of work on take reduction efforts for North Atlantic right whales and the 2020 stock assessment. The Board reinitiated work on Draft Addendum XXVII in February 2021, and has since revised its goal to consider a trigger mechanism such that measures would be automatically implemented to increase the overall protection of the GOM/GBK spawning stock when a defined trigger level is reached. Draft Addendum XXVII also considers the standardization of management measures across Lobster Conservation Management Areas with the goal of providing a consistent conservation strategy and simplifying enforcement across management areas and interstate commerce.

Webinar Instructions

For all virtual hearings, please note that in order to comment during webinar hearings 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 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 213-929-4212 and enter access code 210-711-884.

For all virtual 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 (VoIP)** so you can ask questions and provide input at the hearing.

Hearing Presentation Recording

For those who cannot attend any in-person or virtual hearings, the Commission will also post a recording of the hearing presentation on the Commission's [Public Input page](#) so that stakeholders may watch the presentation and submit comment at any time during the comment process. This recording will be available in early March.

Submitting Comments

The Draft Addendum is available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmLobsterDraftAddendumXXVII_PublicComment.pdf or via the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>. All those interested in the management of American lobster are encouraged to provide input either by participating in public hearings, which may be conducted via webinar, or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EST) on March 31, 2023** and should be sent to Caitlin Starks, Senior FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Lobster Draft Addendum XXVII).

If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to the Draft Amendment, please contact Caitlin Starks at cstarks@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740, so she can work with you to develop a unique subject line to enable us to better organize and summarize comments for Board review.