



Maine Glass Eel Quota



American Eel Management Board

October 21, 2021

Background



Addendum V (2018)

- Set Maine's Glass Eel Quota at 9,688 pounds
- Established for 3 years (2019-2021)
 - revisit before year 4 (2022)
- Board can extend Status Quo Quota for 3 more years
- Setting the Quota at higher level requires an addendum

Board Action for Consideration



Extend Maine's Glass Eel Quota at 9,688 pounds, up to three years (2022-2024)



Questions?



American Eel FMP Review for 2020 Fishing Year



American Eel Management Board
October 21, 2021

Outline



- Status of the FMP
- Stock Status
- Status of the Fishery
 - Commercial
 - Recreational
- State Compliance with FMP
- PRT Recommendations

Status of the FMP



- Addendum V was approved in 2018; Coastwide Cap policy approved in 2019
- Two Aquaculture proposals submitted & approved for the 2020 season
 - ME: 0 lbs harvested, impacted by COVID-19
 - NC: 2019-2020 season, 0 lbs harvest
- Any state that harvests over 750 lbs of glass eel a year must implement a fishery-independent life cycle survey
 - Maine implemented survey in 2016. The survey location moved from Cobboseecontee Stream to West Harbor Pond in 2019.

Stock Status



- 2017 Update: American eel stock status remains depleted.
- Benchmark stock assessment to be completed next year (2022)

Status of the Fishery



Commercial

- State-reported landings of yellow/silver eels were approx. 259,862 lbs in 2020
 - 51.8% decrease from 2019 to 2020
 - Maryland, PRFC, Virginia account for 78% of harvest
- Maine Glass Eels: 9,652 lbs in 2020 (Maine only)
 - SC landings are confidential

Recreational

- As of 2009, recreational data are no longer provided for American eel in CRs

Fishery Management Plan



Glass Eel Fishery Regulations

- All states must implement YOY survey (2000)
- All states must maintain regulations (2000)
- Max of 25 pigmented eels per one pound of glass eels. Use 1/8" mesh to grade eels (2014)
- Maine glass eel quota of 9,688 lbs with payback (2015)
- Maine implements swipe card monitoring program for daily reporting (2014/2015):
 - Harvester to dealer
 - Dealer to dealer
 - Export from state
- Maine is required to implement life cycle survey (2015)
- No change in regulations

Fishery Management Plan



Glass Eel Fishery Regulations

PRT Review:

- No noted issues on glass eel regulations from state compliance reports

Fishery Management Plan



Yellow Eel Fishery Regulations (both Com and Rec)

- Increase in minimum size to 9" (2014)
- ½" x ½" min mesh size for yellow eel pots
- Allowance of 4x4" escape panel of ½" x ½" mesh
- Recreational 25 fish bag limit per day per angler
- Crew and captain allowed 50 fish bag limit per day
- Coastwide harvest cap of 916,473 lbs (implemented in Jan 2019)
- 2 Year Management Trigger of 10% Overage (2019)
- No change in regulations

Fishery Management Plan



Yellow Eel Fishery Regulations (both Com and Rec)

PRT Review:

- No noted issues on yellow eel regulations from state compliance reports

Fishery Management Plan



Silver Eel Fishery Regulations

- Seasonal closure from Sept 1 – Dec 31, no take except from baited pots/traps and spears (2015)
- One year exemption for weir fishery in Delaware River and its tributaries in NY (2014)
- NY weir fishery exemption continued, but restricted to 9 permits that may be transferred (2015)
- No change in regulations

Fishery Management Plan



Silver Eel Fishery Regulations

PRT Review:

- No noted issues on silver eel regulations from state compliance reports

Fishery Management Plan



Other Management Measures

- Trip level reporting by both harvesters and dealers at least monthly
- Sustainable fishery management plans:
 - Fishing Mortality Plan
 - Transfer Plan quota from yellow to glass
 - Aquaculture Plan: 200 pounds of glass eels if can demonstrate watershed contributes minimally to spawning stock (requested information changed in 2019)
- All plans must scientifically demonstrate that they will not increase overall fishing mortality
- No change in regulations

Fishery Management Plan



Other Management Measures

Aquaculture Plans:

- ME: submitted a continuation of Aquaculture Plan for 2021
 - Approved by the Board in August 2020
 - 138.23 lbs were harvested as of June 7th

De minimis



- Standard: for each life stage, for preceding 2 years, average commercial landings constitute less than 1% of the coastwide commercial landings for that life stage.
- New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, D.C., Georgia, and Florida requested *de minimis* status for their yellow eel fisheries.
 - All states that applied for *de minimis* status for yellow eels met the 1% landings criteria.

PRT Recommendations



- The Board consider state compliance notes
- Note the drop in recent years yellow eel harvest; likely to continue due to decreased market demand
- Reevaluate requirement that states provide estimates of the % harvest going to food vs bait
- States continue work w/law enforcement agencies to include information on illegal harvest
- PRT request NY work to separate yellow and silver eel landings
- States quantify upstream and downstream passage, and provide information to the TC for evaluation

Board Action for Consideration



Approve the American Eel FMP Review for the 2020 Fishing year, state compliance reports, and *de minimis* requests from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, Georgia, and Florida for their yellow eel fisheries.



Questions?