



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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American Lobster Board Approves Addendum XXXII to Repeal Addendum XXVII Gauge and Escape Vent Measures

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s American Lobster Management Board approved Addendum XXXII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Addendum repeals all gauge and escape vent size measures from Addendum XXVII. Measures related to the v-notch possession definition and the issuance of trap tags are maintained.

In October 2023, under Addendum XXVII a series of changes to the current gauge and escape vent sizes in Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs) 1 (Gulf of Maine), 3 (federal waters), and Outer Cape Cod was triggered based on observed declines in recruit abundance indices. The Board postponed the implementation of Addendum XXVII to January 1, 2025 to allow the Gulf of Maine states the opportunity to coordinate with Canada regarding possible trade implications and give the industry and gauge makers additional time to prepare for these changes. In October 2024, the Board further delayed implementation of the gauge and vent size measures, and v-notch possession definition of Addendum XXVII to July 1, 2025.

Addendum XXXII responds to industry concerns about the potential economic impacts of an increase to the minimum gauge size in the Gulf of Maine. By repealing the gauge and vent size measures, the Gulf of Maine states will have the opportunity to engage with the lobster industry, including the Area 1 Lobster Conservation Management Area Team, to identify alternative conservation measures to protect the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stock. Maine and New Hampshire reported to the Board that they have already begun convening stakeholder meetings to discuss the state of the fishery and potential management approaches.

Addendum XXXII will be available on the Commission website, asmfc.org, on the American lobster webpage by next week. For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at cstarks@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 diadromous species.

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