



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Herring Management Board, Atlantic Herring Technical Committee,
Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel, Interested Parties

FROM: Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director *TK*

DATE: September 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Closures in Effect
Starting September 23 through November 3, 2025, and Days Out Measures for
Season 2 of the 2025 Atlantic Herring Area 1A Fishery

This memorandum announces closure dates for the Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning areas; and days out measures for the 2025 Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) Atlantic herring fishery for Season 2 (October 1 – December 31).

Spawning Area Closures

The Atlantic herring Area 1A fishery measures include seasonal spawning closures for portions of state and federal waters in Eastern Maine, Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire. The Commission's Atlantic Herring Management Board approved a forecasting method that relies upon at least three samples, each containing at least 25 female herring in gonadal stages III-V, to trigger a spawning closure. However, if sufficient samples are not available then closures will begin on predetermined dates.

There are currently insufficient samples from both the Western Maine and the Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning areas. Therefore, per Addendum II default closure dates, the Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning areas will be closed starting at 12:01 a.m. on September 23 extending through 11:59 p.m. on November 3, 2025.

The Western Maine spawning area includes all waters bounded by the following coordinates:

43° 30' N Maine coast
43° 30' N 68° 54.5' W
43° 48' N 68° 20' W
North to Maine coast at 68° 20' W

The Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning area includes all waters bounded by the Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine coasts, and 43° 30' N and 70° 00' W.

Vessels in the directed Atlantic herring fishery cannot take, land, or possess Atlantic herring caught in either the Western Maine or Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning areas during this time and must have all fishing gear stowed when transiting through the area. The incidental

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bycatch allowance of up to 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip per day applies to vessels in non-directed fisheries that are fishing within the Western Maine or Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning areas.

Days Out Measures for Season 2

The Commission's Atlantic Herring Management Board members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts met September 18 via webinar to set effort control measures for the 2025 Area 1A fishery for Season 2 (October 1 – December 31). The 2025 Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (sub-ACL) is 783 metric tons (mt). This does not take into account the possible reallocation of 1,000 mt to the Area 1A sub-ACL based on catch information from the Canadian New Brunswick weir fishery, nor does it take into account potential revised quotas that may be implemented by NOAA Fisheries.

Landings from Area 1A have exceeded the current sub-ACL and are at an estimated 937 mt as of mid-September and, therefore, the fishery is currently closed. Without a change in the quota from one of the mechanisms listed above, the Area 1A fishery will remain closed with a 2,000-pound possession limit.

The days out measures for Season 2 are as follows:

- Landing days will be set at zero (0) from October 1 through November 4.
- If 1,000 mt is reallocated to Area 1A by October 31, the fishery will move to two (2) consecutive landing days starting at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, November 5 until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. Landing days would be Wednesdays from 12:01 a.m. through Thursdays at 11:59 p.m., weekly.
- If the revised higher quotas have been implemented by October 31 but there has not been a 1,000 mt reallocation, the fishery will move to one (1) landing day starting at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, November 5 until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. The weekly landing day would be Wednesday.
- If the revised higher quotas have not been implemented and there has not been a 1,000 mt reallocation by October 31, landing days will remain at zero (0) from November 5 onward. If there is a subsequent change in available Area 1A quota, then another Days Out call will be scheduled.

While landing days are set at zero (0), harvesters are prohibited from landing more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip from Area 1A during Season 2. If quota becomes available as listed above, fishing for and possession of Atlantic herring may begin prior to landing days during Season 2 as long as fishing is not occurring in spawning areas during a spawning closure.

Please contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at efranke@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740 for more information.

Days Out Meeting Motions (September 18, 2025)

Main Motion

Move to set the following schedule for Area 1A Season 2:

- **Set zero landing days from October 1st through Tuesday, November 4th.**
- **If by October 31 there has been a 1000mt transfer from the Canadian weir fishery, move to 3 consecutive landing days per week starting Wednesday, November 5th at 12:01am until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. Landing days would be Wednesday-Friday.**
- **If by October 31 higher herring quotas have been implemented but there has been no 1000mt transfer from the Canadian weir fishery, move to 1 consecutive landing day per week starting Wednesday, November 5th at 12:01am until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. The landing day would be Wednesday.**
- **If by October 31 higher herring quotas have not been implemented and there is no 1000mt transfer, maintain zero landing days starting November 5th. A future Days Out call would be scheduled to set landing days if there is a subsequent change in available Area 1A quota.**

Motion made by Ms. Ware and second by Ms. Griffin. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Motion to amend to replace ‘three landing days’ with ‘two landing days’ (Wednesday – Thursday) for the second bullet.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Ms. Ware. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Main Motion as Amended

Move to set the following schedule for Area 1A Season 2:

- **Set zero landing days from October 1st through Tuesday, November 4th.**
- **If by October 31 there has been a 1000mt transfer from the Canadian weir fishery, move to 2 consecutive landing days per week starting Wednesday, November 5th at 12:01am until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. Landing days would be Wednesday-Thursday.**
- **If by October 31 higher herring quotas have been implemented but there has been no 1000mt transfer from the Canadian weir fishery, move to 1 consecutive landing day per week starting Wednesday, November 5th at 12:01am until 92% of the Area 1A sub-ACL has been caught. The landing day would be Wednesday.**
- **If by October 31 higher herring quotas have not been implemented and there is no 1000mt transfer, maintain zero landing days starting November 5th. A future Days Out call would be scheduled to set landing days if there is a subsequent change in available Area 1A quota.**

Motion passes by unanimous consent.