Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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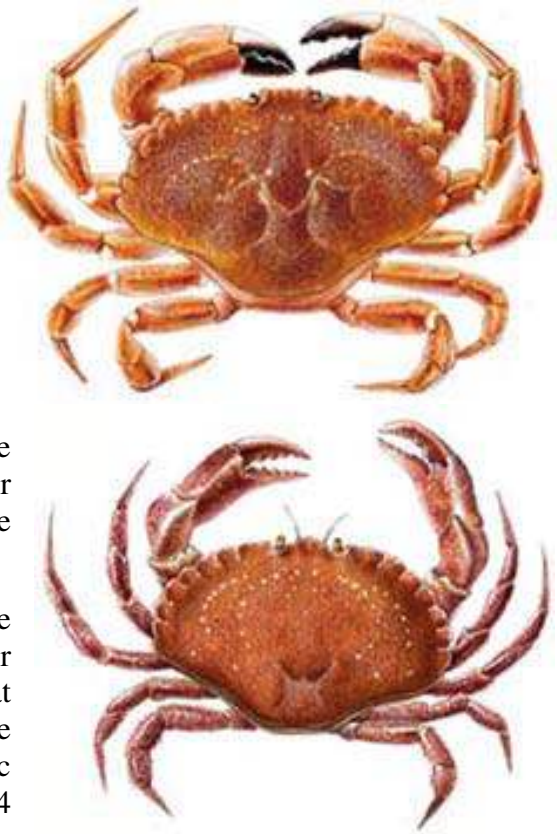
ASMFC Releases Cancer Crab PID for Public Comment

Arlington, VA – The Commission's American Lobster Management Board is seeking public comment on the Public Information Document (PID) for the Draft Fishery Management Plan for Cancer Crab. As the first step in the development of a FMP, the PID seeks public input on information concerning Cancer crab fisheries, including the identification of major issues and options relative to the management of these species. It is anticipated some states will be conducting public hearings on the PID; a subsequent press release will announce the details of those hearings once they become finalized.

The PID was initiated in response to concern about increasing targeted fishing pressure for Jonah crab and rock crab (collectively referred to as Cancer crab). Both species have long been considered a bycatch in the lobster fishery, however, growing market demand has doubled landings in the past seven years. Landings of both species in 2012 was over 12 million pounds and estimated to be worth over $9 million. Given the absence of state and federal management programs and stock assessments for Cancer crab, there is concern the current harvest may compromise the sustainability of the resource.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the PID either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The PID is available at http://tinyurl.com/nuxe25x and can also be accessed on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under Public Input. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on October 3, 2014 and should be forwarded to Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at ktaylor@asmfc.org (Subject line: Cancer Crabs). For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.



Jonah crab (*Cancer borealis*), top, and Rock crab (*Cancer irroratus*), bottom, are collectively referred to as Cancer crab given their similar appearance. Image © MA DMF.

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.