



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director *TMK*

DATE: July 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Atlantic Herring Area 1A Start Date Remains July 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Atlantic Herring Management Board members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts met via webinar on July 17 to discuss the start date for the 2026 Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) fishery. The Board members previously set the start date for July 19 at 6:00 p.m. as part of days out measures discussed in April 2026 ([press release here](#)). The additional meeting was scheduled after some industry members reported a significant increase in bait from the menhaden fishery and imported bait from the Canadian weir fishery on the market. As a result, there are some concerns about the possibility of a surplus of bait at the dock, lack of storage capacity for herring, a crash of the bait market, and general waste if the fishery were to open on July 19. However, not all members of industry expressed those concerns and noted that there are markets for bait. In addition, those industry members expressed that changing the start date at the last minute would cause hardships because crews were already lined up and vessels are prepared to begin fishing on July 19.

Given the lack of consensus among industry and only two days until the original start date, the Board maintained the July 19 start date with landing days starting at 6:00 p.m. this Sunday, July 19.

The effort control measures set in April 2026 are unchanged.

Days Out of the Fishery

- Landing days will be set at zero (0) from June 1 until the start of the fishery on Sunday, July 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.
- Landing days begin on Sunday of each week at 6:00 p.m. starting Sunday, July 19.
- Vessels with an Atlantic herring Limited Access Category A permit that have declared into the Area 1A fishery may land herring five consecutive days a week. The week shall begin at 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and conclude at 6:00 p.m. on Fridays. One landing per 24-hour period. Vessels are prohibited from landing or possessing herring caught from Area 1A during a day out of the fishery.
- Small mesh bottom trawl vessels with an Atlantic herring Limited Access Category C or Open Access D permit that have declared into the fishery may land herring six

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consecutive days a week. The week shall begin at 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and conclude at 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Weekly Landing Limit

- Vessels with an Atlantic herring Category A permit may harvest up to 240,000 lbs. (6 trucks) per harvester vessel, per week starting Sunday, July 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

At-Sea Transfer and Carrier Restrictions

The following applies to harvester vessels with an Atlantic herring Category A permit and carrier vessels landing herring caught in Area 1A to a Maine, New Hampshire, or Massachusetts port.

- A harvester vessel may transfer herring at-sea to another harvester vessel.
- A harvester vessel may not make any at-sea transfers to a carrier vessel.
- Carrier vessels may not receive at-sea transfers from a harvester vessel.

Harvesters are prohibited from landing more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip from Area 1A until July 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. Landings will be closely monitored and the fishery will be adjusted to zero landing days when the Season 1 quota of 1,748 metric tons is projected to be reached.

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