



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, Advisory Panel, Technical Committee, Interested Parties

FROM: Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director *TK*

DATE: September 18, 2026

SUBJECT: Atlantic Herring Western Maine and Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Closures in Effect Starting September 23, 2026 through November 3, 2026

The Atlantic herring Area 1A fishery regulations 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, 2026 extending through 11:59 p.m. on November 3, 2026.

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 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.

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

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