MENHADEN EPISODIC FISHERY OPENS MONDAY, JULY 15

The menhaden fishery will resume under the episodic event set aside (EESA) program. The quota for the EESA is 1% of the 216,000 mt coastwide TAC, which equates to approximately 4.7 million pounds. DMR has implemented emergency regulation to open the Episodic fishery on Monday, July 15, 2019.

Participation in the EESA REQUIRES DAILY REPORTING of your fishing activity to menhaden.dmr@maine.gov. It is critical that Maine is able to accurately monitor and report our landings in the EESA. Failure to report as required is a violation of regulation and jeopardizes Maine’s future access to this resource. DMR will be issuing summonses for failure to report, and suspending licenses as necessary. This could impact your ability to participate in this fishery next season.

To begin fishing and for details on reporting click here:

Maine’s allocated quota share for 2019 of 2,438,677 pounds was reached by the final week of June. During the State Allocated fishery, 87 harvesters declared into the fishery and 56 of those harvesters were active with daily reporting. The estimated 234 trips completed during the state fishery were predominantly trips landing less than 6,000 lbs (107 trips) or trips landing more than 6,000 lbs but less than 30,000 lbs (90 trips). Trips that had landings between 30,000 and 60,000 lbs or were greater than 60,000 lbs were 10.2 % and 5.6% of the fishery, respectively. Preliminary estimates for landings indicate that the state quota was exceeded by 1.5 million pounds and landing reports are still being received. The bulk of landings occurred during the final four days of June.

Currently, there are over 528 active Commercial Pelagic and Anadromous license permits issued, with over 159 of those individuals declared into the fishery for the onset of the EESA. With the understanding that the harvest capacity of this fleet is above 2 million lbs weekly, it was imperative to reduce the weekly harvest limit by one truck to avoid the depletion of the menhaden supply at a time when it may not be readily used. Menhaden have now been observed in state waters from Kittery through to the Penobscot Bay.

The notice of emergency rulemaking will be posted to DMR’s website and also included below:

NOTICE OF AGENCY EMERGENCY RULE-MAKING
AGENCY: Department of Marine Resources
CHAPTER NUMBER AND TITLE: Chapter 41.30 Menhaden Fishery Management Program
CONCISE SUMMARY:
The fishery for Atlantic menhaden is managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). Maine’s allocated quota share for FY2019 was 2,438,677 pounds, which was fully consumed on June 30, 2019. Department of Marine Resources (DMR) requested, and was granted, approval to participate in the Episodic Event Set Aside program to access an available 4.7 million lbs of menhaden quota. Beginning July 15, 2019, harvest may occur between 12:01 a.m. on Monday and 11:59 p.m. Thursday each week; daily landing limit is 120,000 lbs and this regulation reduces the weekly limit to 120,000 lbs as well. Harvesting and landings are restricted to Maine territorial waters; only one landing may occur per calendar day. All landings must be reported daily via email to menhaden.dmr@maine.gov. The Commissioner has determined that it is necessary to take emergency action to implement the reduction of the weekly limit to prevent the depletion of the supply of Atlantic menhaden. The Commissioner hereby adopts this emergency regulation as authorized by 12 M.R.S. §6171(3)(B).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 14, 2019

SMALL SCALE FISHERY

There has been many questions and requests pertaining to the small scale (17 barrel) fishery and why it wasn’t open during the quota fishery shut-down. The Fishery Management Plan states that the small scale/incidental fishery may occur once all avenues for a quota monitored fishery are exhausted. For the 2019 fishing year, we have yet to partake in the episodic quota and the Commissioner also has potential quota transfers of up to 3.5 million pounds arranged for further harvesting if needed. When all quota has been used, the small scale fishery will be opened for the remainder of the season.

Questions about menhaden management: Melissa.Smith@maine.gov or 624-6558
Questions about reporting: Rob.Watts@maine.gov or 633-9412
Questions about menhaden rules may also be directed to your local patrol officer. For patrol's contact information, please click here.

Division I Head: Lieutenant Daniel White - 633-9596, 592-1260 (cell)
Division II Head: Lieutenant Troy Dow - 664-2393

• MAPA Emergency Ch 41 Menhaden EESA Open 7.14.19 WEB.pdf