

**RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

PUBLIC NOTICE CONCERNING PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGES

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapters 42-17.1 and 20-3 of the General Laws of Rhode Island as amended, and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act Chapter 42-35 of the General Laws, the Director of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) proposes certain amendments to the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Regulations and gives notice of intent to hold a public hearing to afford interested parties the opportunity for public comment.

Public comment will be solicited on the following proposals:

- 1) Commercial Summer flounder quota management plans for 2012;
- 2) Commercial Scup quota management plans for 2012 ;
- 3) Commercial Black Sea Bass quota management plans for 2012;
- 4) Amendments to the Cod Management Plan to allow for a fillet law;
- 5) Amendments to “Part III – RI Marine Fisheries Regulations – Marine Fisheries Council” to address harvest methods and habitat impacts by establishing Gear Restriction Marine Life Management Areas.
- 6) Amendments to “Part X – RI Marine Fisheries Regulations – Equipment Restrictions” to address harvest methods and habitat impacts;
- 7) Amendments to “Part VI – RI Marine Fisheries Regulations – Dredging for Shellfish” to address harvest methods and habitat impacts by clarifying dredging regulations;
- 8) Amendments to “Part IV – RI Marine Fisheries Regulations – Shellfish” to address harvest methods and habitat impacts; and
- 9) Amendments to “Part I – RI Marine Fisheries Regulations – Legislative Findings” to address harvest methods and habitat impacts by including definitions.

The public hearing will commence at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 in the University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography, Corless Auditorium, South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882. The room is accessible to the disabled. Interpreter services for the hearing impaired will be provided if such services are requested at least (3) business days prior to the hearing. Requests for such services may be made in writing or by calling TTY (711) or (401) 222-5300. A recording of the hearing will be made by DEM staff. Written comments concerning the regulations proposed for promulgation by the DEM may be submitted to the Division of Fish and Wildlife, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835 no later than 12:00 PM on November 9, 2011.

The Department has determined that small businesses may be adversely impacted by some of the proposed regulations. The public hearing is being conducted to solicit comment on the proposals and to allow public input from small businesses or any cities or towns, which may be adversely affected. Small businesses which are either currently licensed or in the future may seek permission to harvest, buy, sell, or produce seafood products as well as the small businesses that provide services related to those engaged in such industries and small businesses which buy, sell, or produce products or provide services related to fishing are requested to comment on the proposed regulations on how such proposed action can be changed to minimize the impact on those small businesses affected.

A copy of the proposed regulations will be available for examination from October 7 through November 9, 2011 by mail or at the offices of the Division of Fish and Wildlife located at 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835. Electronic copies of the proposed regulations will also be available on the DEM website at the following web address: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pn110911.htm>.

Janet L. Coit, Director
Department of Environmental Management

Date Posted 10/06/2011