



RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE / MARINE FISHERIES
Three Fort Wetherill Road
Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835



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 amendments to the **Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Regulations (RIMFR)** and gives notice of intent to hold a workshop and public hearing to afford interested parties the opportunity for public comment.

The following regulatory items will be presented for public comment:

1. Proposed amendments to **RIMFR Part XVI - Menhaden** regarding:
 - a. General editing for improved clarity and readability;
 - b. Commercial Menhaden;
 - c. Recreational Menhaden.
2. Proposed amendments to **RIMFR Part 5 - Lobsters, Crabs, and Other Crustaceans** regarding:
 - a. Management of the Horseshoe crab fishery.
 - b. Management of the Cancer Crab fishery;
3. Proposed amendments regarding **commercial gillnet** regulations (Note: regulations currently contained in RIMFR *Part XIII – Gill Net Regulations* which are to be re-located to newly adopted regulation RIMFR *Part 6 – General Equipment Provisions* in accordance with hearing item #4);
4. Proposed **ADOPTION** of **RIMFR Part 6 – General Equipment Provisions** (in conjunction with hearing items # 5, 6, 7, and 8). Proposal involves re-locating and editing language from RIMFR Part X - *Equipment Restrictions*, RIMFR Part XI – *Commercial Fisheries*, RIMFR *Part XIII – Gill Net Regulations*, and RIMFR *Part XIV – Fish Traps* (in conjunction with hearing items # 5, 6, 7 and 8).
5. Proposed **REPEAL** of **RIMFR Part X - Equipment Restrictions** (in conjunction with hearing items # 4, 6, 7, and 8).
6. Proposed **REPEAL** of **RIMFR Part XI – Commercial Fisheries** (in conjunction with hearing items # 4, 5, 7, and 8).

7. Proposed **REPEAL** of **RIMFR Part XIII – Gill Net Regulations** (in conjunction with hearing items # 4, 5, 6, and 8).
8. Proposed **REPEAL** of **RIMFR Part XIV – Fish Traps** (in conjunction with hearing items # 4, 5, 6, and 7).

The **WORKSHOP** will be held at **6:00PM** on **Monday, March 14th**. The **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held at **6:00PM** on **Wednesday, March 23rd**. Both workshop and hearing to be held at the University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography, Coastal Institute Building, **Hazard Room**, South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882.

The Department has determined that small businesses may be adversely impacted by the proposed regulations. Small businesses which are either currently licensed, or in the future may seek a license to harvest, buy, sell, or produce seafood products, as well as the small businesses that provide services related to those engaged in such industries, 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.

Affected parties are strongly encouraged to provide comments or alternative proposals regarding each of the hearing items. Proposals should be submitted prior to the workshop in order to properly discuss at the workshop. Division staff are available to discuss as needed.

Written comments concerning the proposed regulations may be submitted to Peter Duhamel, Division of Fish and Wildlife – Marine Fisheries office, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835 **no later than 12:00 Noon on March 14, 2016**. A copy of the proposed regulations will be available for review through March 14, 2016 at the Marine Fisheries offices, or by mail. Proposed regulation(s) and notice has been filed with the Office of the Secretary of State's website at <http://sos.ri.gov/ProposedRules/>, and are also available Marine Fisheries webpage at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pn032316.htm>.

Jason McNamee,
Chief