



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Lt. Governor

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Commissioner

AMERICAN LOBSTER 2015 REGULATION CHANGE

December 19, 2014

Dear New Jersey American Lobster Permit Holder; New Jersey Lobster/Fish/Conch Pot License Holder; Federal Lobster Dealer

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) adopted Addendum XVII to the American Lobster Fisheries Management Plan requiring the Southern New England Lobster Management Stock Area to implement a 10% reduction in landings for fishing year 2013. To this end, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife adopted regulations to comply with the ASMFC Plan which included a mandatory v-notching program of all egg-bearing females coupled with a seasonal closure from February 1-March 31 in both Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMA) 4 and 5. After evaluation of these management strategies, it was determined that a 10% reduction was not met in 2013. Therefore, to meet the required 10% reduction, the ASMFC approved revised management measures as follows;

Effective January 1, 2015, a person fishing with any gear type in LCMA 4 and/or 5 or that has designated LCMA 4 and/or 5 on their Federal Fisheries or State Lobster Pot Permit shall not take or attempt to take, land, have in his or her possession, sell or offer to sell, any American lobster during the **closed season of April 30 through May 31, 2015**. This is the only closed period for LCMA 4 and 5. The previous closed season of February 1 – March 31 is re-opened and it is no longer mandatory to v-notch egg-bearing lobsters. During the closed season, no dealer shall accept, have in their possession, buy, sell or offer to buy or sell American lobsters from LCMA 4 and/or 5.

During the closed season, all lobster traps in LCMA 4 and/or 5 must be removed from the water no later than April 30, 2015. Lobster traps may be set un-baited one week prior to the season reopening. If the license holder is targeting/harvesting other species with lobster trap gear, the lobster trap gear does not need to be removed; however it shall be tended at least once every 30 days.

If you have any questions, please contact the Bureau of Marine Fisheries at 609-748-2020.

Sincerely,

Peter Clarke
Senior Biologist - Fisheries