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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Notice of Administrative Change  
Marine Fisheries  
Modification of Black Sea Bass Commercial Trip Limits  
N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.12

**Take Notice** that, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.12(o) the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, with the approval of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (Council) at its September 5, 2013 meeting, has modified the commercial trip limits for black sea bass. These actions have been taken to comply with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) management plan for black sea bass and for the optimal utilization of available quotas while at the same time constraining landings to prevent harvest that exceeds available quotas.

To date, only 54 percent of the New Jersey commercial black sea bass quota has been harvested. Therefore, a significant amount of unused quota will likely be rolled over into the final October 1 to December 31 season. In an effort to increase black sea bass landings and optimize available quotas that have not, or will not be harvested in previous seasons, the Council approved modifying the black sea bass trip limit for the October 1 to December 31 season. The commercial black sea bass trip limits from October 1 through December 31 are changed as follows: instead of a 500 pound trip limit four times per week, 1,000 pound trip limit two times per week, or a 2,000 pound trip limit one time per week, vessels may land 1,000 pounds six times per week, 2,000 pounds three times per week, or 6,000 pounds one time per week. This

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change will be for 2013 only; the trip limits for 2014 will be adjusted by a future notice of administrative change to take into account data available at that time.

These changes are reflected in the Division of Fish and Wildlife rules at N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.12(h) as indicated below. As required in N.J.A.C. 18.12(o), changes to N.J.A.C 18.12(h) are being published in the New Jersey Register.

**Full text** of the changed rule follows (additions indicated in boldface **thus**, deletions indicated in brackets [thus]):

7:25-18.12 Commercial fishing seasons, quotas, and trip limits

(a) – (g) (No change.)

(h) The following provisions are applicable to the commercial harvest of black sea bass:

1. – 7. (No change.)

8. Annual and seasonal black sea bass quotas and daily trip limits shall be determined by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service or determined by the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission.

i. – ii. (No change.)

iii. The balance of the New Jersey annual quota for the black sea bass fishery remaining after deducting the by-catch allowance specified in (h)8ii above shall be divided into seasons, percentage of the annual quota apportioned into each season, daily trip limits and number of allowable landing days in each week (Sunday through Saturday) as follows:

(1) – (3) (No change.)

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(4) October 1 – December 31: 27.1 percent, [2,000] **6,000** pound trip limit and a maximum of one day per week that a vessel may land black sea bass, [1,000] **2,000** pound trip limit and a maximum of [two] **three** days per week that a vessel may land black sea bass, or [500] **1,000** pound trip limit and a maximum of [four] **six** days per week that a vessel may land black sea bass;

(5) – (6) (No change.)

iv. – x. (No change.)

9. – 13. (No change.)

(i) – (t) (No change.)