

HERRING BUFFER ZONES (from page 1)

Steve Medeiros, President and Executive Director of RISAA testified at the hearing and said, “We support a healthy population of Atlantic herring as it is important for the local economy, supporting commercial and recreational fishing for cod and striped bass and for ecotourism businesses like whale watching. We firmly believe that catch limits for herring that account for its role in the ecosystem are vitally important. Therefore we support Alternative 2.”



school of Atlantic herring

“In regard to localized depletion and buffer zones, we support a buffer zone that extends 25 miles offshore,” said Medeiros.

Richard Hittinger, RISAA’s 1st Vice President said, “For Rhode Island a 25 mile buffer is important to help prevent localized depletion and user conflicts considering the major role herring plays around Block Island and Cox Ledge as forage fish for striped bass, cod, tuna, whales and other species.”

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The New England Fishery Management Council scheduled a series of public hearings on Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. The purpose of the hearings is to solicit comments on the amendment’s two major components, which include alternatives to establish a long-term acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rule that account for herring’s role in the ecosystem and alternatives to address potential localized depletion and user conflicts.



Pair trawlers can drag a net the size of a football field

Two Massachusetts hearings were planned, one in Gloucester on Wednesday, May 30, 6:00 p.m. at the Beauport Hotel, 55 Commercial Street; and a second hearing in Chatham, MA, Tuesday, June 19, 6:00 p.m. at the Chatham Community Center, 702 Main Street.

There is also a Webinar Hearing scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, starting at 2 p.m. Registration is required to participate. In addition, a call-in option is available to join the webinar. For details see press release at <https://www.nefmc.org/library/amendment-8-2>.

SEND WRITTEN COMMENTS

Anglers are encouraged to send the New England Council comments via email, fax or mail advocating for the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) formula outlined in alternative 2 along with a 25 mile buffer zone for mid water trawlers that would protect coastal, Block Island and Cox Ledge fishing grounds.

The deadline for submitting written comments is Monday, June 25 at 5:00 p.m., although earlier submissions are highly encouraged.

Label correspondence as “DEIS for Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring FMP” and sent to Tom Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

The New England Council plans to address herring Amendment 8 at their September 25-27, 2018 meeting in Plymouth, MA. Anglers are encouraged to attend the meeting, more details on this as they become available.

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