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Director

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

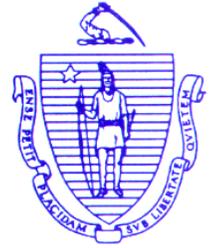
## Division of Marine Fisheries

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November 9, 2016

Marine Fisheries Advisory

### ASMFC Public Hearing on Jonah Crab: December 12

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum II to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Jonah Crab. The Division of Marine Fisheries will host one public hearing in Massachusetts:

**December 12, 2016; 5 PM**  
Bourne Community Center, Room 1  
239 Main Street  
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

The Draft Addendum considers establishing a coastwide standard for claw harvest to address concerns regarding the equity of the current claw provision. Specific options include establishing a whole crab only fishery or allowing for the harvest of claws coastwide. The Draft Addendum also considers establishing a definition of bycatch, based on a percent composition of catch, in order to minimize the expansion of a small-scale fishery under the bycatch allowance.

The Fishery Management Plan (FMP) established a whole crab fishery with the exception of fishermen from NJ, DE, MD, and VA who have a history of claw landings prior to June 2, 2015. Following approval of the FMP, claw fishermen from NY and ME were identified. As a result, jurisdictions have expressed concern regarding the equity of this provision as some fishermen with a history of claw landings are allowed to continue this practice while others must land whole crabs.

Addendum I established a bycatch allowance of 1,000 crabs per trip for non-trap gears and trap gears other than lobster (i.e., fish/crab/whelk pots). Fishermen using these gears are not required to have other species on Board when harvesting Jonah crab, and as a result, may directly target Jonah crab under the bycatch limit. This does not reflect the intention of the bycatch allowance which is to account for Jonah crab caught while targeting another species.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum II either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained [here](#) or via the ASMFC website ([www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)) under *Public Input*.

Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on January 6, 2017** and should be forwarded to Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at [mware@asmfc.org](mailto:mware@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Jonah Crab Draft Addendum II).

The Management Board will review submitted public comment and consider final action on the Draft Addendum at the ASMFC 2017 Winter Meeting. For more information, please contact Megan Ware at [mware@asmfc.org](mailto:mware@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740; or Dan McKiernan at [dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us](mailto:dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us) or 617.626.1536.