



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

# Division of Law Enforcement



## Massachusetts fisherman poaching tautog in Rhode Island waters

On October 22, while on board a National Marine Fisheries Service patrol boat, Environmental Police Officers from RI DEM's Division of Law Enforcement boarded what they thought was a recreational fishing vessel.

During the boarding officers discovered that the operator and only occupant of the vessel possessed a Massachusetts commercial fishing license. The operator was also in possession of 27 tautog, 22 of which were found to be undersized.

All 27 fish were seized and donated to the Amos House in Providence.

The poacher was charged with exceeding the daily limit of tautog and possession of undersized tautog.

Help us protect what is yours. Report violations to our 24 hour dispatch center at (401) 222-3070



## Hitting: No Fluke (from page 18)

### Back to the fluke problem – what can be done?

Well, this trend is certainly being seen not only for fluke, but also for scup and black sea bass. The issue is so important that the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) have started a process to consider a "Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment."

Visit <https://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment> for an update on the status.

Details regarding the alternatives are found in the document located at: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/5f2975a10379c105f6b9ba9d/1596552610877/2-Draft+Range+of+Alts+and+FMAT+Draft+Summary+July+2020\\_final.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/5f2975a10379c105f6b9ba9d/1596552610877/2-Draft+Range+of+Alts+and+FMAT+Draft+Summary+July+2020_final.pdf)

It is very important that the allocation between recreational and commercial fisheries be rebalanced to now account for this revised MRIP because the existing allocation is based on the old MRIP.

You, as a recreational fisherman, need to comment and attend the Public Hearings (which likely will be via Zoom due to the pandemic) on this issue.

Commercial fishermen have already been showing up in big numbers saying that they should not give up any of their recent "bonus" quota by having it diluted with recreational catch numbers because recreational fishers have long been exceeding their allowable catch limits while commercial fishers are held to those fish that they land pound for pound and therefore have not gone over their allowable catch limits.

### I believe that this entire process is faulty.

Fisheries managers have been setting allowable catch limits for the last twenty years based, at least in part, on the reported catches (including the recreational catch estimates from MRIP and MRFS) and the fish populations observed through field surveys.

To go back and say that commercial catch limits can be dramatically increased based on a mathematical change to data over the last 20 years does not take into account all of these observations.

The first step is to reallocate between commercial catch and recreational catch estimates, but this should be followed by some basic changes to allowable catch such that everyone will see a greater abundance of many of the important recreational and commercial fish in our local waters.

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## NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Articles and submissions for the RISAA newsletter must be received by the 15th for the next month's publication.

Items received after this date will be held until the following month.

