



# Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Services

## How to Get Involved With Fisheries Rulemaking



### What Can You Do to Make a Difference and Be Involved?

- ☑ Attend meetings and hearings discussed in this brochure and speak with Fisheries Service staff
- ☑ Call or email us with your questions or comments
- ☑ Visit Fisheries Service's website to comment on fishing rule ideas or to learn about making a public comment on a proposed fishing rule

### Setting Rules for Maryland Fisheries

Fisheries Service changes fishing rules by creating or amending regulations. The legislature also makes rules through a legislative process. Public input on these changes is important.

In this pamphlet, you can learn:

- Where regulatory ideas come from,
- How to stay informed, and
- Ways to get involved with the regulatory process.

### General Public Interaction

Public suggestions can generate ideas for fishing rules. The Fisheries Service maintains contact with the public through:

- Public meetings and open houses

- Field work and outreach events
- Phone, mail, or email
- Attending meetings of fishing clubs, environmental groups, watermen's organizations and concerned citizens

### Advisory Groups

Fisheries Service citizen advisory groups include:

- Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission,
- Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission;
- Oyster Advisory Commissions;
- Coastal Fisheries Advisory Committee;
- Artificial Reef Committee; and
- Task Force on Fisheries Management.

Advisory groups represent a variety of stakeholders. **All advisory meetings are open to the public. There is public comment time at the meetings.** Fisheries Service or advisory group members present and discuss possible fishing rules.

### Coastal Management

Some fish move between states' waters and into the ocean. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council manage these fish species.

These groups make decisions which affect Maryland's fishing rules. Maryland has members on each board. **These groups' meetings are open to the public.**

## Fisheries Management Plans

Fisheries Service creates fishery management plans (FMP) to help manage fish species. **The public has opportunities to be involved in creating and amending FMPs.**

## Public Scoping

**At least three times a year, Fisheries Service holds scoping meetings to discuss possible fishing rules with the public.** Not all scoped ideas become a proposed regulation.

Fisheries Service posts these ideas on its website. **To provide feedback on ideas before they are proposed, send your comments to Fisheries Service by email, fax, or mail.**

Fisheries Service also has several regional meetings in late spring to present and discuss possible rule changes in non-tidal areas.

Fisheries Service uses comments from the scoping process to create proposed regulations.

## Regulatory Process

All state agencies follow the Maryland Administrative Procedures Act when proposing a regulation. This includes the following:

- A Maryland legislative committee reviews proposed regulations.

- Agencies publish proposed regulations in the Maryland Register.
- Agencies accept public comments for 30 days.
  - **Provide comments by sending Fisheries Service emails, mail, faxes or attending any scheduled hearings. Fisheries Service uses comments to assess public reaction to a proposed regulation.**
- When an agency adopts a proposed regulation it publishes notice in the Maryland Register.
- Adopted regulations are effective 10 days after appearing in the Maryland Register or on a later date.

## Public Notices

Public notices are management actions which occur quickly. Public notices last for only one fishing season. Public notices appear in newspapers. Closing a fishery before it goes over a quota is an example of a public notice action.

## Stay Updated

The Fisheries Service's website is a source for information on:

- Regulatory scoping and advisory group meetings,
- Maryland fishing rules and notices, and
- Links to federal fishing rules.

For current fisheries information visit our website at:

[www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/)

For current Maryland fishing rules visit:

[www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/regulations/regindex.html](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/regulations/regindex.html)

For current information about legislation relating to fishing and how to be involved with that process visit the Maryland General Assembly website:

[www.mlis.state.md.us](http://www.mlis.state.md.us)

Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council

[www.mafmc.org](http://www.mafmc.org)

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

[www.asmfmc.org](http://www.asmfmc.org)

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Fisheries Service

580 Taylor Ave., B-2  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
Phone: 410-260-8260