

COMMERCIAL REPORTING – Snakehead and Catfish Licenses

What is being considered?

The Department would like to modify its reporting regulations to require individuals who have the Northern Snakehead License and the Blue and Flathead Catfish Finfish Trotline License to submit monthly reports, similar to the rest of the commercial licensees who harvest finfish from Maryland's tidal waters. These are relatively new licenses created by the General Assembly that were not included when the reporting regulations were first written because these licenses did not exist at that time.

Why is this change necessary?

The Department generally requires commercial licensees to submit monthly harvest reports to account for any activity taken under the authorization of that license. Currently, all finfish harvesters with the exception of Northern Snakehead License and Blue and Flathead Catfish Finfish Trotline License holders are required to submit the Commercial Finfish Log on a monthly basis. By adding these two license types to the Department's reporting regulation, all commercial finfish harvesters will be required to submit the same type of information. Commercial harvest reports are an important source of abundance data. Both the harvest information and the effort information (amount of work it took to land the harvest) are important indicators and assist in the Department's management of the State's fish resources.

Who will this affect?

Commercial licensees who are licensed under Natural Resources Article, §§4-701.1 and 4-701.2, Annotated Code of Maryland (Northern Snakehead License and Blue and Flathead Catfish Finfish Trotline License, respectively).

When would this be effective?

The Department projects that this change could be effective in the winter of 2023-2024. However, the exact date cannot be determined. The Department will follow our normal proposal procedures if this concept moves forward.

Has this change been discussed with stakeholders?

No.