

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO REGULATIONS HORSESHOE CRABS

What is being considered?

The department would like to remove the requirement to print the trip limits on horseshoe crab permits.

Why is this change necessary?

Currently, regulation requires the daily catch limit to be printed on the horseshoe crab landing permit. The department has concluded that this requirement is no longer necessary for management or enforcement. This change will allow the department to do in-season changes to manage the quota without reissuing a permit each time. It will also reduce confusion and expenses when managing the fishery to maximize the available quota.

Who will this affect?

Commercial harvesters

Harvesters will still be required to have their permit in possession, but after this change, they will only receive one permit per season. All other rules will remain the same.

When will this be effective?

The department expects this change to be effective in the summer of 2020; however, the exact date cannot be determined. The department will follow our normal scoping and proposal procedures.

This idea is in the scoping process (October 25—November 10). During the scoping process, the Department gathers suggestions and ideas from stakeholders and others about how to solve a fishery problem or address a need. The goal of scoping is to identify issues, potential impacts, and reasonable alternatives associated with the issues so that management actions can be developed. After the public has had an opportunity to comment on possible management actions during the scoping process, the department considers these comments and develops an appropriate management strategy.

If the action is necessary and appropriate, the rules will be promulgated following the Administrative Procedures Act described in Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article Annotated Code of Maryland.

- The General Assembly's Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee reviews the regulatory proposal for fiscal and legal analysis.
- The proposal is printed by the Division of State Documents in the Maryland Register.
- A 30 day public comment period begins on the day of publication.
- After review of the comments, the Department may adopt the changes.
- If the department adopts the changes, they become effective after a notice is published in the Maryland Register that announces approval and the effective date.

Has this change been discussed with advisory commissions?

This idea surfaced from a discussion about managing the quota during a Coastal Commercial Fisheries Forum. The change was scoped at the Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission meeting

on October 22, 2019 and at the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission meeting on October 24, 2019.