

Somerset County line meets a line running from point at or near the shore immediately adjacent to the Thomas Tigner house near Haines Point to the southwesterly most point of land on Clay Island defined by Lat. 38° 12.339' N, Long. 75° 57.552' W then running approximately 164° True to a point at or near the shore immediately adjacent to the Thomas Tignor house near Haines Point defined by Lat. 38° 10.771' N, Long. 75° 56.979' W.

(6)—(8) (text unchanged)

I.—K. (text unchanged)

JOSH KURTZ
Secretary of Natural Resources

Subtitle 02 FISHERIES SERVICE

08.02.10 Horseshoe Crabs

Authority: Natural Resources Article, §4-215, Annotated Code of Maryland

Notice of Proposed Action

[24-196-P]

The Secretary of Natural Resources proposes to amend Regulation **.01** under **COMAR 08.02.10 Horseshoe Crabs**.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this action is to allow individuals to catch and land horseshoe crabs on Sundays. Currently, a person may not catch or land horseshoe crabs on Saturday or Sunday. This requirement was put in place many years ago to prevent user conflicts on the weekends. The Department no longer anticipates conflicts on Sundays because horseshoe crabs are generally harvested in the late afternoon or evening.

The annual total allowable landings of male horseshoe crabs for the commercial fishery as determined by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is set annually. There is no female harvest permitted. Allowing harvest on Sundays will not increase the allowable landings. There is a strict cap on harvest and any overages must be subtracted from the total allotment for the following year.

The proposed action removes the prohibition of catching and landing horseshoe crabs on Sundays. This change gives commercial harvesters the flexibility to operate their business for maximum efficiency by allowing them to harvest horseshoe crabs when the weather and market conditions are optimal.

Estimate of Economic Impact

I. Summary of Economic Impact. The proposed action may have a positive economic impact for commercial harvesters and seafood dealers.

II. Types of Economic Impact.

Impacted Entity	Revenue (R+/R-) Expenditure (E+/E-)	Magnitude
A. On issuing agency:	NONE	
B. On other State agencies:	NONE	
C. On local governments:	NONE	

Benefit (+)
Cost (-) Magnitude

D. On regulated industries or trade groups:

Commercial Harvesters and Dealers (+) Indeterminable

E. On other industries or trade groups: NONE

F. Direct and indirect effects on public: NONE

III. Assumptions. (Identified by Impact Letter and Number from Section II.)

D. While the annual total allowable landings of male horseshoe crabs is not increasing, allowing harvest on Sundays gives commercial harvesters the flexibility to operate their businesses for maximum efficiency by allowing them to harvest horseshoe crabs when the weather and market conditions are optimal. If horseshoe crabs are harvested when market conditions are optimal, seafood dealers could benefit from the sale of bait crabs when the demand is high. The actual amount that this action could economically benefit harvesters and dealers is indeterminable.

Economic Impact on Small Businesses

The proposed action has a meaningful economic impact on small businesses. An analysis of this economic impact follows:

While the annual total allowable landings of male horseshoe crabs is not increasing, allowing harvest on Sundays gives commercial harvesters the flexibility to operate their businesses for maximum efficiency by allowing them to harvest horseshoe crabs when the weather and market conditions are optimal. If horseshoe crabs are harvested when market conditions are optimal, seafood dealers could benefit from the sale of horseshoe crabs when the demand is high. The actual amount that this action could economically benefit harvesters and dealers is indeterminable.

Impact on Individuals with Disabilities

The proposed action has no impact on individuals with disabilities.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Comments may be sent to Horseshoe Crabs - Harvest on Sundays, Regulatory Staff, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 580 Taylor Avenue, E-4, Annapolis, MD 21401, or call 410-260-8300, or email to submit comment to <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx#horseshoe>. Comments will be accepted through February 10, 2025. A public hearing has not been scheduled.

.01 Horseshoe Crabs.

A.—B. (text unchanged)

C. Time Restrictions. A person may not catch or land horseshoe crabs on Saturday [or Sunday].

D.—G. (text unchanged)

JOSH KURTZ
Secretary of Natural Resources