

R.I. Marine Fisheries Statutes and Regulations  
PART VII - MINIMUM SIZES OF FISH/SHELLFISH

**7.6 Minimum sizes, other species -- Except as specifically noted, no person shall possess or take any of the following species which are less than the following minimum size**

**~~AMERICAN PLAICE (DAB): Commercial and Recreational -- 14"~~**

**ATLANTIC STURGEON: Commercial and Recreational - no possession**

**EEL: Commercial and Recreational - 6"**

**~~HADDOCK: Commercial and Recreational -- 19"~~**

**~~POLLOCK: Commercial and Recreational -- 19"~~**

**SCUP: Commercial - 9" and Recreational - 10 1/2". Floating trap fishermen may possess undersize scup provided they are not sold, bartered, traded, and exchanged, but following culling, are taken to sea and released back into the water.**

**WEAKFISH (SQUETEAGUE): Commercial and Recreational - 16"**

**~~WITCH FLOUNDER (GRAY SOLE): Commercial and Recreational -- 14"~~**

**~~YELLOWTAIL FLOUNDER: Commercial and Recreational -- 13"~~**

All minimum sizes for the above listed fish shall be measured as total length (from tip of snout to tip of tail). (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty - Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-1-16)]

**7.8 Winter Flounder (Blackback)**

**7.8.3-2 Commercial Seasons, Possession Limits, and Closed Areas --**

- (a) January 1 – December 31: It shall be unlawful to possess aboard or land from a vessel, in any one calendar day, more than 50 pounds of winter flounder.
- (b) Harvest or possession of winter flounder in Narragansett Bay north of the Colregs line, and in Potter Pond, Point Judith Pond and the Harbor of Refuge, is prohibited.
- (c) It is illegal for a trawl vessel to initiate trawling in Narragansett Bay north of the Colregs line and haul back south of the Colregs line and possess winter flounder.
- (d) Transit Provisions:

(1) Vessels fishing in open portions of state waters or in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) may traverse closed portions of Rhode Island waters for the purpose of landing winter flounder provided they are not fishing and nets are stowed in accordance with Section 10.10 of these regulations.

(2) Vessels ~~fishing south of the Colregs line or in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) federal waters~~ may traverse ~~closed~~ portions of Rhode Island waters while in possession of more than the Rhode Island winter flounder possession limit for the purpose of landing ~~winter flounder~~ provided the vessel possesses a valid federal permit allowing commercial harvest of winter flounder from federal waters for the amount of winter flounder onboard the vessel and they are not fishing and nets are stowed in accordance with Section 10.10 of these regulations.

- (e) Unless otherwise specified in this section, any modifications made by the Division of Fish and Wildlife to the commercial possession limit as set forth above will be promulgated in Part III, section 3.2.1-3.

7.8.3-3 Recreational Transit Provisions - Vessels fishing in Party/Charter mode in federal waters may traverse portions of Rhode Island waters while in possession of more than the Rhode Island winter flounder possession limit to return to port provided the vessel possesses a valid federal permit allowing recreational harvest of winter flounder from federal waters for the amount of winter flounder onboard the vessel and they are not fishing and fishing gear is stowed.

**7.17 American Shad** – The **commercial** harvesting, landing, or possession of American Shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) within the State of Rhode Island and its territorial waters is prohibited. RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]

## **7.21 Monkfish**

### **7.21.1 – Commercial**

**7.21.1-1 Minimum size** – No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any monkfish measuring less than seventeen inches (17”) total length or eleven inches (11”) tail length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

### **7.21.1-2 Possession Limits** –

(a) For any non-federally permitted RI licensed vessel, the possession limit will be 550 pounds tail weight or 1,826 pounds whole weight of monkfish per vessel per calendar day. Whole weight is defined as the weight of monkfish that are gutted (i.e. stomach, liver, and other entrails removed) and have the head and tail attached. In SAFIS landing

monkfish in the “whole” is reported using the grade “gutted, head on, tail on”.

## 7.21.2 – Monkfish - Recreational Harvest

7.21.2-1 Minimum Size -- No person fishing recreationally, shall land or possess any monkfish measuring less than seventeen inches (17”) total length or eleven inches (11”) tail length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.21.2-2 Possession Limits – No person who is fishing recreationally in RI waters, may possess more than 50 pounds tail weight or 166 pounds whole weight of monkfish per vessel per calendar day. Whole weight is defined as the weight of monkfish that are gutted (i.e. stomach, liver, and other entrails removed) and have the head and tail attached.

## 7.22 Cod

### 7.22.1 – Commercial

7.22.1-1 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any cod measuring less than ~~twenty-two~~ nineteen inches (~~22”) (19”)~~ total length whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

#### 7.22.1-2 Possession Limits –

(a) For any ~~non-federally permitted RI licensed~~ vessel fishing in state waters, the possession limit will be 1,000 pounds of cod per vessel per calendar day.

(b) The possession limit may be modified on the basis of a RI state water cod quota as set by DEM, which shall be equal to 1% of the federal ~~New England (Georges Bank) cod~~ annual catch limit (ACL) for the given fishing year quota. When 90% of the state water quota has been harvested as determined by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, the possession limit will decrease to 75 pounds of cod per vessel per calendar day. ~~When the state water quota has been harvested as determined by the Division, the Director shall close the state water cod fishery for the remainder of the fishing year.~~

~~7.22.1-3 Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of cod may harvest cod in state waters if and only if they are operating during a previously and properly declared day-at-sea; in such instances, such vessels may harvest cod in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations, and thus not be bound by the possession limits set forth in section 7.22.1-2. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of cod may also transit state waters in possession of cod in the amount authorized to be~~

~~possessed pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.~~

7.22.1-3 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of cod may also transit state waters in possession of cod in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

7.24.1-4 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial Cod fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

## 7.22.2 – Cod - Recreational Harvest

7.22.2-1 Minimum Size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any cod measuring less than twenty-two inches (22”) total length, or any cod fillet measuring less than fourteen inches (14”) in total length **in accordance with 7.22.2-1(a)**, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

## 7.26 American Plaice (Dab)

### 7.26.1 – Commercial

7.26.1-1 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial American plaice fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.26.1-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any American plaice measuring less than twelve inches (12”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.26.1-3 Possession Limits – There are no possession limits for American plaice provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of American plaice.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of American plaice in federal waters may harvest American plaice in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.26.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of American plaice may transit state waters in possession of American plaice pursuant to applicable federal

regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

### 7.26.2 – Recreational

7.26.2-1 Recreational Fishing Year – The recreational American plaice fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.26.2-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any American plaice measuring less than fourteen inches (14”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.26.2-3 Possession Limits – There are no recreational possession limits for American plaice provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of American plaice.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of American plaice in federal waters may harvest American plaice in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.26.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of American plaice may transit state waters in possession of American plaice pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

## RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]

### 7.27 Haddock

#### 7.27.1 – Commercial

7.27.1-1 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial haddock fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.27.1-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any haddock measuring less than sixteen inches (16”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.27.1-3 Possession Limits – There are no possession limits for haddock provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal

permit allowing the harvest of haddock.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of haddock in federal waters may harvest haddock in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.27.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of haddock may transit state waters in possession of haddock pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

#### 7.27.2 – Recreational

7.27.2-1 Recreational Fishing Year – The recreational haddock fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.27.2-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any haddock measuring less than eighteen inches (18”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.27.2-3 Possession Limits – There are no recreational possession limits for haddock provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of haddock .

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of haddock in federal waters may harvest haddock in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.27.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of haddock may transit state waters in possession of haddock pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

### RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]

#### 7.28 POLLOCK

##### 7.28.1 – Commercial

7.28.1-1 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial pollock fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.28.1-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any pollock measuring less than nineteen inches (19”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.28.1-3 Possession Limits – There are no possession limits for pollock provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of pollock.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of pollock in federal waters may harvest pollock in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.28.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of pollock may transit state waters in possession of pollock pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

## 7.28.2 – Recreational

7.28.2-1 Recreational Fishing Year – The recreational pollock fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.28.2-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any pollock measuring less than nineteen inches (19”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.28.2-3 Possession Limits – There are no recreational possession limits for pollock provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of pollock .

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of pollock in federal waters may harvest pollock in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.28.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of pollock may transit state waters in possession of pollock pursuant to applicable federal regulations and

land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

## RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]

### 7.29 Witch Flounder (Gray Sole)

#### 7.29.1 – Commercial

7.29.1-1 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial witch flounder fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.29.1-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any witch flounder measuring less than thirteen inches (13”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.29.1-3 Possession Limits – There are no possession limits for witch flounder provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of witch flounder.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of witch flounder in federal waters may harvest witch flounder in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.29.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of witch flounder may transit state waters in possession of witch flounder pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

#### 7.29.2 – Recreational

7.29.2-1 Recreational Fishing Year – The recreational witch flounder fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.29.2-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any witch flounder measuring less than fourteen inches (14”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.29.2-3 Possession Limits – There are no recreational possession limits for witch flounder provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of witch flounder .



A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of witch flounder in federal waters may harvest witch flounder in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.29.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of witch flounder may transit state waters in possession of witch flounder pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

## RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]

### 7.30 Yellowtail Flounder

#### 7.30.1 – Commercial

7.30.1-1 Commercial Fishing Year – The commercial yellowtail flounder fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.30.1-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing commercially shall land or possess any yellowtail flounder measuring less than twelve inches (12”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.30.1-3 Possession Limits – There are no possession limits for yellowtail flounder provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of yellowtail flounder.

A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the harvest of yellowtail flounder in federal waters may harvest yellowtail flounder in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.30.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the commercial harvest of yellowtail flounder may transit state waters in possession of yellowtail flounder pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

#### 7.30.2 – Recreational

7.30.2-1 Recreational Fishing Year – The recreational yellowtail flounder fishery shall operate on a May 1 through April 30 fishing year.

7.30.2-2 Minimum size -- No person fishing recreationally shall land or possess any yellowtail flounder measuring less than thirteen inches (13”) total length whether that fish was caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

7.30.2-3 Possession Limits – There are no recreational possession limits for yellowtail flounder provided the vessel is fishing in state waters and does not have a federal permit allowing the harvest of yellowtail flounder

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A. Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of yellowtail flounder in federal waters may harvest yellowtail flounder in state waters in the amount authorized to be possessed pursuant to federal regulations.

7.30.1-4 Transiting Provision - Vessels in possession of a federal permit allowing the recreational harvest of yellowtail flounder may transit state waters in possession of yellowtail flounder pursuant to applicable federal regulations and land the same if so permitted pursuant to Rhode Island State Law, so long as all of the fish harvesting gear on board the vessel is stowed while in state waters.

RIMF REGULATIONS [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-1-16)]