



**Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Division of Marine Fisheries**

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Summary of Comments

Agency: Department of Environmental Management

Division: Marine Fisheries

Regulation: Part 3 – Finfish (250-RICR-90-00-3)

Type of rulemaking: Regular rulemaking

Type of filing: Amendment

Timetable for action on the proposed rule:

- Date of public notice: January 30, 2026
- Date of hearing: February 17, 2026
- End of comment period: March 6, 2026

Proposed rules and comments received:

a. **2026 Recreational Bluefish Management (section 3.17.1(C)):**

➤ **Proposal 1 (Division/Noticed):**

Mode	Season	Poss. limit
Private/Shore	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3 <u>5</u> fish/day
For-hire	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	5 <u>7</u> fish/day

➤ Comments received:

Support for:	Status Quo	Proposal 1	Other
Written	6	0	0
Hearing	11	0	1

b. **2026 Recreational Black Sea Bass Management (section 3.6.1(A)):**

➤ **Proposal 1 (Division):**

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
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Gen. Rec	16.5 16.0"	Jan. 1 – May 21	Closed
		May 22 – Aug. 26	2 fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16.0"	Jan. 1 – June 17 <u>May 21</u>	Closed
		June 18 <u>May 22</u> – Aug. 31	2 fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day

➤ **Proposal 2 (Division):**

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec	16.5"	Jan. 1 – May 21	Closed
		May 22 – Aug. 26	2 <u>3</u> fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16.0"	Jan. 1 – June 17	Closed
		June 18 – Aug. 31	2 <u>3</u> fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day

➤ **Proposal 3 (Division):**

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec	16.5"	Jan. 1 – May 21	Closed
		May 22 – Aug. 26	2 fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16.0 <u>15.5</u> "	Jan. 1 – June 17	Closed
		June 18 – Aug. 31	2 fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day

➤ **Proposal 4 (Division):**

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec	16.5"	Jan. 1 – May 21 <u>May 17</u>	Closed
		May 22 <u>May 18</u> – Aug. 26	2 fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16.0"	Jan. 1 – June 17	Closed
		June 18 – Aug. 31	2 fish/day

		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day
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➤ **Updated proposal presented at the hearing based on conversations with ASMFC:**

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec	16.5 16.0"	Jan. 1 – May 21 <u>May 15</u>	Closed
		May 22 <u>May 16</u> – Aug. 26	2 <u>3</u> fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16.0"	Jan. 1 – June 17 <u>May 15</u>	Closed
		June 18 <u>May 16</u> – Aug. 31	2 <u>4</u> fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day

➤ **Comments received:**

Support for:	Status Quo	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4	Updated ASMFC Proposal	Other
Written	0	1		1	1	6	12
Hearing	0					1	1

c. **Atlantic Bonito & False Albacore regulations (section 3.36):**

➤ **Proposal 1 (Industry):**

3.36.1 Recreational

- A. Minimum size: Sixteen inches (16").
- B. Season: January 1 through December 31.
- C. Possession limit: Three (3) fish per person per day combined.

3.36.2 Commercial

- A. Possession limit: The harvest, landing, and possession of Atlantic Bonito and False Albacore in the marine waters of Rhode Island is prohibited while fishing commercially.

➤ **Proposal 2 (Division):**

3.36.1 Recreational

- A. Minimum size: Sixteen inches (16").
- B. Season: January 1 through December 31.

C. Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per day combined.

3.36.2 Commercial

A. Minimum size: Sixteen inches (16”).

B. Season: January 1 through December 31.

➤ Comments received:

Support for:	Written	Oral
16” Min. Size Rec.	56	16
16” Min. Size Comm.	53	14
3 Fish Poss. Limit Rec.	47	13
5 Fish Poss. Limit Rec.	10	9
Comm. landing Cap/Annual Limit/Quota (unspecified or based on average or maximum landings prior 3-5 yrs)	48	13
Support for new rules/“guardrails” w/o specifics	14	15
Status quo (no new rules now)	15	2
Other	15	10

IMPORTANT! The public hearing was recorded and is publicly available on the Division of Marine Fisheries YouTube channel [here](#). *This document serves only as a summary of public comments received, as provided in written and orally at the public hearing; it does not include supporting details, rationale, or discussion of matters not specific to the proposed rules.*