



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Division of Marine Fisheries

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INTER-OFFICE MEMO

To: Scott Olszewski,
Chief

From: Terrence Gray, P.E.
Director

Date: April 9, 2025

Subject: Final decisions regarding proposed amendments to the RI Marine Fisheries regulations.

I have received and reviewed your memo to me, dated April 9, 2026 regarding the regulatory matters that were subject of a RI Marine Fisheries Council meeting held on April 6, 2026. The final decision for each regulatory matter is as follows:

1. **Providence River Shellfish Management Area (Area "E") Commercial Shoredigging:**

Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Council and supported by the Division, which closes commercial shoredigging at 4:00 pm rather than sunset as a means to support safe handling requirements.

2. **Providence River Shellfish Management Area (Area "E") Commercial Boat Harvest Schedule from May to December 2026**

Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Shellfish Advisory Panel (SAP) and supported by the Division which establishes a shellfish commercial harvest schedule and possession limit in the Providence River Shellfish Management Area (Area "E") through December 2026. I appreciate the thoughtful deliberation of the Council on the many facets of this schedule and its effect on the harvesters. It is clear that one size does not fit all, and this schedule will remain a work in progress for the foreseeable future.

I understand the importance of having diverse opinions reflected in these advisory opinions. We strive to ensure that there is a variety of opinions in the management of our state's resources, including its fisheries and shellfish management. With the announcement of the new SAP members, I hope that the selected candidates help broaden the scope of opinions on future matters.