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: November 6, 2026

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

I have received and reviewed your memo to me, dated October 29, 2026, regarding the regulatory matters that were subject of a public hearing held on September 8, 2026 and RI Marine Fisheries Council meeting held on October 6, 2026. The final decision regarding each regulatory matter is as follows:

1. **Multipurpose Vessel License (Part 2 – Commercial Marine Fishing Licenses, Landing Permits, and Party and Charter Licenses):**

   Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Council and supported by the Division, which provides for the issuance of the Multipurpose Vessel License for an additional five years to 2031; reduces the activity standard requirement from five years to two years consistent with the current activity standard for the issuance of commercial fishing, with this activity no longer required to have occurred on the vessel obtaining the Multipurpose Vessel License; and reduces the timeframe from five years to two years that the business or corporation must be in good standing with the state of Rhode Island.

2. **Shellfish harvest schedule for Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area:**

   Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Council and supported by the Divisions of Marine Fisheries and Law Enforcement, which provides for a revised schedule for the "other than shoredigging" (i.e., boat harvest) schedule for Greenwich Bay Sub Areas 1 & 2 for December 2026 to replace the default schedule currently in

rule as follows: Open 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. on December 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30. The default schedule for the months January through April remains unchanged, open 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

3. **Shellfish harvest schedule for Bissell Cove/Fox Island Shellfish Management Area:**

   Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Council and supported by the Divisions of Marine Fisheries and Law Enforcement, which provides for a revised "other than shoredigging" (i.e., boat harvest) schedule for the Bissel Cove/Fox Island Shellfish Management to replace the default schedule currently in rule, as follows: Open daily beginning on the second (2nd) Wednesday of December through the end of April, excluding December 25 and January 1, and remain closed the rest of the year.

4. **Shellfish harvest schedule for Bristol Harbor Shellfish Management Area:**

   Decision: Amend the rule as recommended by the Council and supported by the Divisions of Marine Fisheries and Law Enforcement, which provides for a revised "other than shoredigging" (i.e., boat harvest) schedule for the Bristol Harbor Shellfish Management to replace the default schedule currently in rule, as follows: Open daily beginning on the second (2nd) Wednesday of December through the end of April, excluding December 25 and January 1, and remain closed the rest of the year.