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Marine Fisheries Advisory

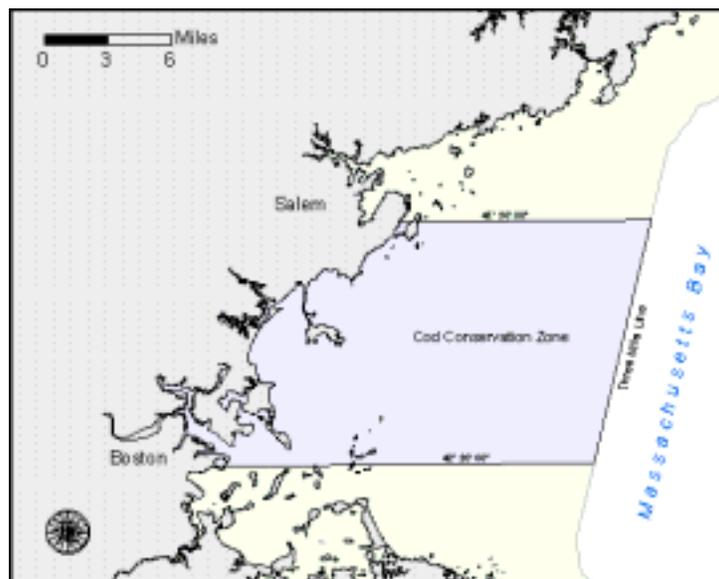
PUBLIC MEETING SEEKS COMMENTS
PRIOR TO TAKING EMERGENCY ACTION IN COD CONSERVATION ZONE –
Meeting to be held at 1PM on Wednesday, December 29th

Marine Fisheries is seeking comments on emergency actions it plans to take to conserve cod stocks in a portion of state waters to be known as the **Cod Conservation Zone** (see map below). Please note that the Cod Conservation Zone includes all waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth north of 42°20' latitude and south of 42°30' latitude. A meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 29th (1PM) at the Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station in Gloucester (30 Emerson Ave.)

The following are the emergency actions *Marine Fisheries* plans to take in the Cod Conservation Zone effective 0001 hours Thursday, December 30, 2004 through Monday, February 28, 2005;

Marine Fisheries is delaying implementation of emergency actions by one day to gather public comment:

- **Gillnet prohibition: no fishing, setting, or abandoning of any gillnet in the Cod Conservation Zone;**
- **Commercial Fishery Limits reduced to no more than 300 lbs. of cod in possession in any 24 hour period within the Cod Conservation Zone; and**
- **Recreational Fishery Limits amended by implementing a 300 lb. cod limit per vessel regardless of the number of persons or anglers onboard.**
- **Vessel possession limit would be enforced for anyone fishing or seen fishing in the Cod Conservation Zone. Vessels only transiting this area would not be subject to the 300 lb. limit.**



Marine Fisheries is taking these actions due to intense fishing (commercial and recreational) on a cod spawning aggregation within state waters, a conservation issue worthy of extraordinary state measures, beyond the current state and federal rules. The gillnet fishery as prosecuted in this area is resulting in excess catches that are either discarded or laid fallow in nets and the area cannot accommodate growth in the commercial and recreational fishery sectors.

For further information please visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.