

# VMRC FISHERIES NEWSLETTER

*This newsletter provides only a summary of management measures adopted by the Commission and has no legal force or effect. The purpose of this newsletter is to explore events and issues of interest to commercial fishermen, VMRC managers, Law Enforcement, researchers, and the Commission.*

Volume 23, Issue 1  
Spring 2015

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*We serve as stewards of the Commonwealth's marine and aquatic resources, and protectors of its tidal waters and homelands, for present and future generations.*

## INSIDE THE SPRING 2015 ISSUE:

This issue contains updates on recent regulatory decisions by the Commission, including amendments to striped bass, American eel, speckled trout, and shellfish.

In 2014, the Commission made amendments to the commercial blue crab fishery to reduce the female blue crab harvest by 10 percent. Additional information for the 2015 blue crab fishery, including changes to bushel limits, is provided.

Instructions and examples for mandatory reporting for all commercial harvesters are included, along with important updates and changes.

You will also find information regarding Harmful Algal Blooms from the Virginia Department of Health, and an article on Atlantic sturgeon and rockfish from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

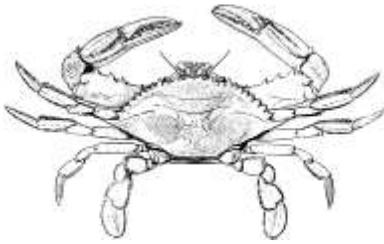
We would like to thank all of the Virginia commercial harvesters that actively participate in programs and committee meetings sponsored by the Commission. Have a great spring and summer!

## VMRC ONLINE RESOURCES

- **Online Mandatory Reporting** – please go to the website: <https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/harvest/> Select “Request an Account”  
\*Your password must conform to the state government’s criteria and must be changed every 120 days. See page 9 of this newsletter for more details.
- **License Sales:** If you are looking to BUY or to SELL a license, please visit: [http://www.mrc.virginia.gov/quota&licenses\\_for\\_sale.shtm](http://www.mrc.virginia.gov/quota&licenses_for_sale.shtm) and click on the appropriate link. Further instruction is on each page.
- **Regulations:** All VMRC regulations can be found by species/category <http://mrc.virginia.gov/Regulations/regindex.shtm>
- **Find us on Facebook!** “Like” our page for regular updates!

**Please note: This newsletter is moving to an online-only format in 2016. Please call VMRC staff at 757-247-8102 if you would like to continue receiving your newsletter by mail.**

## 2015 BLUE CRAB RESOURCE CONSERVATION MEASURES



At the June 2014 Commission meeting, the Commission amended Chapter 4 VAC 20-270-10 et seq., "Pertaining to Blue Crabs", with the goal of reducing the female blue crab harvest by 10 percent from the 2013 total harvest. These new management measures were taken as a result of the 2013/2014 Annual Winter Dredge Survey which indicated female blue crabs dropped below the safe level of 70 million and are in a depleted state. The harvest reductions were aimed at bolstering the number of spawning-age females and to conserve more of the juveniles from harvest when they

reached market size in the fall of 2014 and spring of 2015, so they may spawn a larger generation of crabs in 2015. The Commission also voted to close commercial crab harvest from any lawful commercial gear used to harvest crabs, except any hard crab pot, from September 16, 2014 through April 30, 2015. The winter crab dredge season also remained closed for the seventh year in a row.

At the February 2015 Commission meeting, the number of commercial blue crab agents for 2015 was set at 125 agents. This amendment was recommended by the Crab Management Advisory Committee (CMAC) with hopes of having the blue crab agent process closer to its original intent. The Commissioner can still approve requests for agent use for non-economic hardships.

### 2015 Blue Crab Bushel & Barrel Limits

From March 17, 2015 through March 31, 2015, any harvester legally licensed for a crab pot license is limited to the following harvest and possession limits shown below:

- 1) 8 bushels, or 2 barrels and 2 bushels, of crabs, if licensed for up to 85 crab pots.
- 2) 10 bushels, or 3 barrels and 1 bushel, of crabs, if licensed for up to 127 crab pots.
- 3) 13 bushels, or 4 barrels and 1 bushel, of crabs, if licensed for up to 170 crab pots.
- 4) 21 bushels, or 7 barrels of crabs, if licensed for up to 255 crab pots.
- 5) 27 bushels, or 9 barrels of crabs, if licensed for up to 425 crab pots.

From April 1, 2015 through July 4, 2015, any harvester legally licensed for a crab pot license is limited to the following harvest and possession limits shown below:

- 1) 10 bushels, or 3 barrels and 1 bushel, of crabs, if licensed for up to 85 crab pots.
- 2) 14 bushels, or 4 barrels and 2 bushels, of crabs, if licensed for up to 127 crab pots.
- 3) 18 bushels, or 6 barrels, of crabs, if licensed for up to 170 crab pots.
- 4) 29 bushels, or 9 barrels and 2 bushels, of crabs, if licensed for up to 255 crab pots.
- 5) 47 bushels, or 15 barrels and 2 bushels, of crabs, if licensed for up to 425 crab pots.

Because some harvesters use barrels rather than bushels, the Commission defined a barrel to be equivalent in volume to no more than 3 bushels of crabs.

Bushel limits after July 4, 2015 will be established by the Commission during the spring of 2015. This spring time-table will allow the most up-to-date results of the 2014/2015 Bay-wide Winter Dredge Survey to be available to develop sustainable bushel limits.

## AMERICAN EEL REGULATIONS

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) approved a benchmark stock assessment for American eels in May 2012. The assessment concluded that the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted, which means a species or stock is below its optimum sustainable population. The American eel stock is at or near historically low levels because of a combination of historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is also considering listing American eel under the Endangered Species Act. The outcome of those deliberations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not be known until September, 2015.

In response to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment and in recognition of the potential listing of this species, the ASMFC American Eel Management Board directed the Technical Committee to develop Addendum III and Addendum IV to the 2000 ASMFC Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for American eel. The goal of Addendum III and Addendum IV is to reduce mortality and increase the conservation of American eel stocks across all life stages.

The ASMFC American Eel Management Board (Board) approved conservation measures presented in Addendum III to the American eel FMP at its August 2013 board meeting. All states were required to implement the Addendum's measures by January 1, 2014, and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission adopted all requirements at the December 2013 Commission meeting. The Board approved conservation measures presented in Addendum IV at its October 2014 board meeting. At this time, Addendum IV does not require Virginia to take any management actions.

To increase reporting accuracy, Addendum III also required all states to implement buyer reporting for eels by January 1, 2015. At its December 9, 2014 public hearing, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission adopted amendments to Chapter 4VAC20-500-10 et seq., "Pertaining to the Catching of Eels". These amendments established an Eel Buyer Permit for any legally licensed seafood buyer that purchases or receives any quantity of eel landed in Virginia, by any legally licensed harvester, and reporting requirements for Eel Buyer Permittees. It shall be unlawful for any Eel Buyer Permittee to purchase or receive eel landed in Virginia to fail to provide written reports to the Commission of daily purchases and harvest information on forms provided by the Marine Resources Commission. Each Eel Buyer Permittee will provide the Commission the date of purchase, the harvester's Commercial Fisherman Registration License number, weight of eel purchased, and gear type. These reports shall be completed in full and submitted monthly to the Marine Resources Commission no later than the fifth day of the following month.

The Commission also established an Eel Self-Market Permit for any legally-licensed individual who self-markets any eels to any person or business, and reporting requirements for Eel Self-Market Permittees. It shall be unlawful for any Eel Self-Market Permittee to fail to report daily landing records of eels to the Commission. These reports shall be completed in full and submitted monthly to the Marine Resources Commission no later than the fifth day of the following month.



Photo courtesy of Cornell University

## STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS

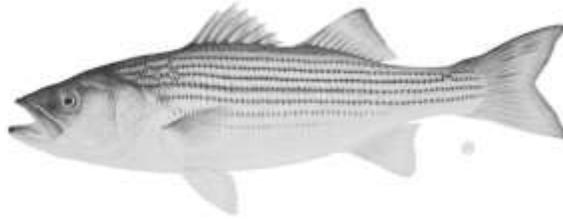


Photo courtesy of Cornell University

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's At its December 9th, 2014 public hearing, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission adopted new Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Interstate amendments to Chapter 4VAC20-252-10 et seq. Fishery Management plan for Atlantic Striped Bass "Pertaining to the Taking of Striped Bass" to establish the annual commercial coastal quota as 138,640 pounds; establish the annual commercial Chesapeake Bay quota as 1,064,997 pounds; and amend reference points. This was in response to a stock assessment projection model that predicted the bass spring trophy fisheries. In 2015, any person participating in a striped bass recreational trophy fishery shall obtain a permit from the Commission and report, regardless of harvest.

Addendum IV mandated coastwide reductions in commercial and recreational striped bass harvest. This addendum required Virginia to 1) reduce the annual Virginia commercial coastal quota by 25% of the Amendment 6 quota of 184,853 pounds, 2) reduce the annual Virginia commercial Chesapeake Bay quota by 20.5% of the 2012 harvest of 1,339,619 pounds, and 3) reduce the possession limit for the coastal recreational fishery from 2 fish to 1 fish. As stated by Addendum IV, all states/jurisdictions must have promulgated their regulations prior to the start of their 2015 seasons. Virginia has the ability to select alternate options for the recreational coastal and bay fisheries after an implementation plan has been reviewed by the ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee, so these alternate options will be decided by the Commission in March 2015.

The commercial striped bass season opened on January 16, 2015.

Staff would also like to remind any buyer permitted to purchase striped bass harvested from Virginia tidal waters that they shall provide written reports to the Commission of daily purchases and harvest information each month.

To schedule a striped bass quota transfer, please contact Melanie Ramirez at (757) 247-2238 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, or Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. No walk-in (non-appointment) striped bass quota transfers, or additional tag allocations, will be allowed. If you do not have a confirmed appointment with staff, you will be required to schedule an appointment for a later date and time.

## SPECKLED TROUT BUYER REPORTING

In response to the cold-stun mortality experienced during winter 2013, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission adopted new amendments to Chapter 4VAC20-280-10 et seq. "Pertaining to Speckled Trout and Red Drum" at its March 25, 2014 public hearing. These amendments included establishing a bycatch limit of no greater than 100 pounds when 80% of the commercial quota has been reached, and to require buyers to report any amount of speckled trout purchased any week during August through December.

Chapter 4 VAC 20-280-55 requires any licensed seafood buyer to report, each Monday, from August 1 through November 30, **any purchases** of speckled trout during the previous 7 days. Please call the Commission's Interactive Voice Recording System (800-937-9247, Option 1 then Option 5) and report **any purchases** of speckled trout, in pounds, during the previous 7 days.

Please know that the current commercial speckled trout season is open from September 1, 2014 through August 31, 2015, or until such time as the commercial landings of speckled trout are projected to meet the seasonal commercial landings quota of 51,104 pounds.

It is also a reminder that on November 17, 2014, it was announced that 80% of the commercial landings quota has been harvested for this season. It shall be unlawful for any commercial fisherman registration licensee to take, harvest, land, or possess a daily bycatch limit of greater than 100 pounds of speckled trout, and that daily bycatch landing limit of speckled trout shall consist of at least an equal amount of other fish species.

When it is projected that the commercial landings quota will be met by a certain date within the above period, the VMRC will provide notice of the closing date for commercial harvest and landing of speckled trout during that period; and it shall be unlawful for any person to harvest or land speckled trout for commercial purposes after such closing date for the remainder of that period. The VMRC appreciates your cooperation in continuing the successful management of this important resource.

## ALEWIVES VS. MENHADEN IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING

A moratorium on possession of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) from Virginia tidal waters was established January 1, 2012 to rebuild the Virginia stocks of the species. These species look very similar to the Atlantic menhaden, a legally-harvested species. Descriptions of the two most commonly misreported species, alewives and menhaden, are provided below to ensure commercial harvesters are reporting the correct species:

### ALEWIVES

- More slender body
- Single large black spot
- Heavy, sharp serrations along underside



Photo courtesy of Cornell University

### MENHADEN

- Deep belly
- Multiple spots (single larger black spot behind gill cover, followed by up to 6 lines of smaller spots)
- No serrations along underside

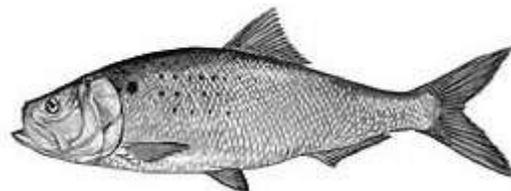


Photo courtesy of Chesapeake Bay Ecological Foundation, Inc.



## SHELLFISH REGULATIONS



In recent years, poor spat recruitment (except 2012) and large increases in effort resulted in the Commission voting under emergency action to suspend the sale of public oyster hand scrape and public oyster dredge licenses at the February 24, 2015 Commission meeting. This emergency management measure was recommended by the Shellfish Management Advisory Committee (SMAC) in order to keep current harvest levels and fishing effort from expanding. The VMRC staff is working to develop management measures that address increased fishing effort within the public oyster dredge and hand scrape fisheries. These management recommendations will be presented to SMAC and may be adopted before the start of the fall 2015 public oyster season.

### MANDATORY SHELLFISH CERTIFICATIONS

The National Shellfish Sanitation Program guidelines now require training and education programs for all shellfish harvesters and certified dealers. This training program is currently being implemented in Virginia and is now required for all 2015 shellfish permits and licenses with Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Division of Shellfish Sanitation (DSS).

The training is free and will be required every two years in Virginia. Completion of the training is a prerequisite for licensing. The intent is to increase the awareness of temperature control and food handling practices for shellfish to minimize growth of *Vibrio* bacteria.

#### HARVESTERS

Training is required prior to purchasing 2015 VMRC shellfish licenses and permits. It can be completed online. Training is free and takes 45 minutes to 1 hour.

<https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/training/register.php>

#### DEALERS

This educational requirement is in addition to HACCP requirements. Shellfish dealers must obtain this training within 90 days of initial licensing in order to be listed on the interstate certified shellfish shippers list (ICSSL). At a minimum, one individual involved in the shellfish operations must obtain the required training.

To access the online training, you will need to go to the website, <https://va.train.org>. You must have a valid email address to complete this online course. On the website home page for TRAIN, you will see on the top of the page a link entitled "How to create a TRAIN account." You will need to follow the instructions once you open the link to create your account which will involve a unique user ID and password. Once you have created your account, you can locate the Shellfish Dealer Course by either searching the course name or entering the unique course ID number:

Course Name: **VDH: Shellfish Dealers Training Program**

Course ID: **1054082**

In following the course flow, everyone will need to listen and view the first section of slides. After the introductory period, you may select what type of shellfish dealer you are based on your certification number (shucker packer – SP, shellstock shipper – SS, Repacker – RP or Reshipper – RS), and complete only that section. For example, if your dealer certification number is VA 000SS, then you would need to select the Shellstock Shipper segment. On the next to the last slide you will see a blank certificate. If you wish to have a paper certificate, you will need to type in your name and print and/or save your certificate from that page while you have the course open and running. Please allow one hour for this training.

## ATLANTIC STURGEON BYCATCH

### RAISED FOOTROPE IN STRIPED BASS ANCHORED GILLNET FISHERY FISHES WELL AND REDUCES BYCATCH OF ATLANTIC STURGEON

by Tom Murray, VIMS Marine Advisory Services

Anchored gillnets used for striped bass can be modified to reduce bycatch of Atlantic sturgeon and catch the same amount of rockfish, according to a cooperative research program of the Marine Advisory Service (MAS) at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS).

And this is good news – because ever since the Atlantic sturgeon was federally listed in 2012 as “endangered,” stronger protections for the species require minimizing bycatch.

George Trice, of Poquoson, Virginia, has participated in the cooperative program over the last ten years. “We’re trying to show that we can still fish for stripers, and interact with sturgeon that might be on the bottom,” Trice said.

In February and March 2014, Trice set four 300-foot sections of standard 8-inch stretch mesh net, 25 meshes deep (hung 2:1) for an approximate 14.5-foot depth of net, set in 10 to 15 feet of water. Sections of “traditional gear,” with the net hung on the bottom, were alternated with other sections configured with the raised footrope.

Preliminary research shows that striper catch is not impacted using gillnets modified with a 3-foot gap between the leaded anchor line along the bottom and the footrope at the bottom of the mesh net.

While one sturgeon was caught in the traditional net, the experimental gear trapped none. But importantly, the experimental net fished just as well as the traditional net.

And the gear seems to fish better, too, says Trice. “Especially in the spring, when you have a net on the bottom, it will get grassy really quick, but if the net is up three feet, it catches better because it is cleaner.” And, says Trice, he spends less time cleaning grass from the nets.

Compared to his traditional net, Trice says that sometimes running the gear out from the reel can be

a little trickier – as can hauling and setting by hand. “You’ve just got to make sure the lines don’t get twisted,” he said. The first year in the project the raised footrope gear seemed to drag a bit more, but that was corrected with slightly heavier anchors.

The research program is designed to work the bugs out of new gear. “This is why it’s important to have fishermen doing this research,” says Tom Murray, MAS Associate Director and Sea Grant Marine Extension leader at VIMS. He’s been administering the grant fund since it was set up by General Assembly in 1999.

Matt Balazik, PhD, a sturgeon researcher from Virginia Commonwealth University, says working with watermen like Trice who have been on the water their whole lives is essential for discovering ways to reduce bycatch. Scientists need to show effectiveness in controlled experiments, and Trice helps by providing “the manpower and the problem solving.”

Virginia and federal regulations make it unlawful for any person to “take, catch or possess any sturgeon,” and require that “any sturgeon caught by any person shall be immediately returned to the water.” Even stopping to take pictures of sturgeon is prohibited. Further, Virginia regulations on interactions between fishing gear and Atlantic sturgeon are on the horizon, possibly by late 2015.

Proposals for the Fisheries Resource Grant program are solicited once a year, usually in January, primarily to cover expenses of research for exploring new methods that will improve a fishery, fishing habitat, aquaculture or seafood processing.

For more information about the program, see <http://www.vims.edu/research/units/centerspartners/map/frg/> or contact Tom Murray, Associate Director Advisory Services, VIMS, P.O. Box 1346, Gloucester Point, VA 23062. Phone 804-684-7190 or e-mail: [tjm@vims.edu](mailto:tjm@vims.edu).

## RELATED NEWS:

### HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (HABs)

Algae are naturally-occurring microscopic organisms that are found in fresh and salt waters of Virginia and around the world. Many are beneficial because they are major producers of oxygen and food for many of the animals that live in these waters. Algae species in fresh and salt water may multiply rapidly when environmental conditions are favorable for their development, resulting in a bloom. This often (but not always) results in a color change in the water. Algal blooms can be any color, but are commonly red or brown and are known as either “red” or “brown” tides. They most commonly occur in summer.

Most algal blooms in Virginia’s waters are not harmful to people, wildlife, or the environment. However, some types of algae can be harmful and affect fish, shellfish, and human health. These are known as Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). Although rare, some HABs can reduce oxygen levels in water or produce toxins that may result in fish kills, impact shellfish growth, or result in toxin accumulation in fish and shellfish that can cause human illness if consumed. To assess environmental impacts and potential for human health risks, Virginia’s waters are routinely monitored in cooperation with the VDH, VDEQ, ODU, VIMS and VMRC.

The reporting and monitoring of algal blooms often depends on local observations from those on the water. If you should see any discolored water and/or notice dying or dead fish, then please report it immediately.

#### How do I report an Algal Bloom or Fish Kill?

VA Department of Health HABs Hotline:

1-888-238-6154, or

VA Department of Environmental Quality:

757-518-2000

#### How do I report a suspected illness associated with harmful algal blooms?

VA Department of Health HABs Hotline:

1-888-238-6154



**Be a Bayfriend**

The Chesapeake Bay is one of Virginia’s greatest natural resources and one of the most challenged bodies of water in the state. Virginia ranks third in the nation for seafood production. Chesapeake Bay oysters and blue crabs are some of the tastiest in the world. But we need help from citizens like you to keep the bay clean. **Consider a bay license plate.**

Money from the sale of these plates helps citizens keep the bay healthy. More than 100 grants were provided last year to restore wetlands, plant buffers around waterways, promote shad restoration, decrease pollution and provide educational programs.

Now you can join the cause from your car by becoming a **Friend of the Chesapeake Bay.**

For a \$25 annual fee you can have personalized revenue-sharing license plates with \$15 going to the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund.

**So, Bayfriend, what’s on your plate?**  
To purchase a plate, visit [www.dmv.state.va.us/vehicles/#splates/into.asp?idnm=CB](http://www.dmv.state.va.us/vehicles/#splates/into.asp?idnm=CB)

# MANDATORY REPORTING GUIDELINES



## NEW: ADDITIONAL HARVESTER POSTCARDS

A new postcard (blue) will be sent to all harvesters. This postcard allows any licensed or permitted harvester to notify the VMRC that he or she is harvesting with another licensed harvester. The postcard will have a signature line for the primary harvester (the one submitting the report) and any additional harvester that may be included on the report. This postcard does not replace the requirement for the mandatory harvester reports but provides harvesters with additional documentation of when they harvest together. Monthly mandatory harvest reports are still due on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the following month by all commercially licensed and permitted harvesters on forms and folders provided by the Commission.

## 1-800-LINE INFORMATION

The VMRC Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) (1-800-937-9247) is available for harvesters to report no activity, report immediate harvest information for required species (such as black sea bass, horseshoe crabs, spiny dogfish, and American shad bycatch), request forms and folders, and leave messages for license information. When using the IVRS, please remember to speak slowly when providing your name and VMRC ID.

## VISITING THE MAIN OFFICE

It is our recommendation that you call prior to planning any trip to the Fisheries Management Division offices in Newport News, to ensure someone will be available to assist you with your item on that day. Fisheries staff members are working diligently to provide services as quickly as possible; however, staff resources and personnel are limited, and there will be some days that we may not be able to directly assist you with a specific problem until a later time or date. Thank you for your consideration.

## ONLINE REPORTING ACCOUNT REQUESTS

Online harvest reporting is available to all licensed commercial harvesters with appropriate computer equipment and internet access. To register for the program, visit

<https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/harvest/> and select "Request an Account." You will need to provide your VMRC ID, date of birth, vessel ID number, and current email address. Once your request has been submitted, an email will be sent to you from [Stephanie.iverson@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:Stephanie.iverson@mrc.virginia.gov). You will need to click on the link to verify your email. The request should take less than a week to process. If the request is approved you will receive an email notifying you of how to proceed.

There will be three tabs for specific reporting requirements. Review all lookup tables before beginning to enter data. Type full names as instructed and click in drop-down boxes as they appear. You may also report your 'no activity' and get a summary of all records you have submitted through the online reporting system. Also note your online account will have to be reset if you don't use it for 120 days. Please contact Stephanie Iverson through the feedback tab if you have any questions or problems while using the system.

To learn more about online reporting, visit: <http://www.vacrabbers.com/electronic-harvest-reporting/>

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST REPORT BY THE 5TH OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH EVEN IF YOU HAVE NOT HARVESTED (NO ACTIVITY)!**

**ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS –YOUR MRC ID AND FULL NAME SHOULD BE LISTED ON THE PRIMARY HARVESTER'S MANDATORY REPORTING FORM!**

**Please remember the following when filling out monthly mandatory reports:**

### **COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN REGISTRATION LICENSEES**

**Mandatory fields to be filled out by harvester:**

- VMRC ID and full and legal name of the registered commercial fisherman
- VMRC ID and full and legal name of any agent, if used
- VMRC ID and full and legal name of no more than five additional licensed harvesters who were not serving as agents
- Buyer or private sale information (one per ticket)
- Vessel identification (Coast Guard documentation number or VA registration number; one per ticket)
- Vessel name (if applicable), not the make
- Public rock abbreviation (if applicable)
- Lease number for aquaculture (oyster and clams) harvested from private grounds (if applicable)
- City or county where harvest was landed
- Date of harvest (one day per ticket)
- Water body fished (one per ticket; use codes from mandatory reporting folders)
- Number of hours any gear was fished
- Gear type and amount of gear used (one per ticket)
- Number of hours the registered commercial fisherman fished (dock to dock; use whole numbers, and do NOT multiply by crew members)
- Number of crew on board, including captain
- Species harvested, market category
- Live weight or processed weight of species harvested
- Circle unit of measure
- Put a check mark if the product was processed (Filletted, Gutted, Puffer Tails, Fins, etc...)

### **BLUE CRABS**

- Only one gear per ticket (e.g. harvest from crab pots and peeler pots should be written on separate tickets)
- Report peelers and soft crabs in numbers
- Report the peeler crabs harvested FOR a shedding tank, DO NOT report soft crabs FROM a shedding tank

### **FINFISH**

- For anchored gill net (AGN), be sure to include number of nets and total amount in feet
- Specify the number of hooks you used for trot lines
- Be sure to include the number of tags used for harvesting striped bass
- Receipts must be included for striped bass sold as retail when the amount sold is more than 10 pounds
- Report the number of black drum kept

**All licenses are effective for one calendar year. 2015 licenses, permits, and user fees expire Dec 31, 2015.**

## EXAMPLES

### BLUE CRAB (USING AN AGENT)

Only forms with a revision date of 2010 or later will be accepted.

PRIMARY HARVESTER VMRC ID & NAME		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF AGENT USED	↓AGENT VMRC ID	WATER FISHED	HRS GEAR FISHED	GEAR	GEAR AMOUNT	MAN HOURS	NO. OF CREW	
↓ VMRC ID <b>009999</b>		↓ NAME <b>Joseph Fisherman</b>		↓AGENT NAME <b>Thomas Fisherman</b>	<b>JRL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>POT</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
				↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY	↓AMOUNT	↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE):				* Check if processed
		↓BUYER <b>Joe Crab Buyer</b>		<b>NO1</b>	<b>3</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓VESSEL ID NO. <b>VA0000AA</b>		<b>BCS</b>	<b>2</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS VMRC ID & NAME(S) LIST ONLY HELPERS WITH VMRC ID		↓VESSEL NAME <b>Miss Virginia</b>		<b>BCP</b>	<b>2</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME		↓PUBLIC ROCK ABBR (OYSTERS ONLY)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓AREA (OYSTER ONLY)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED <b>Fisherman County</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET) <b>April 12, 2015</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>

### FINFISH

PRIMARY HARVESTER VMRC ID & NAME		<input type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF AGENT USED	↓AGENT VMRC ID	WATER FISHED	HRS GEAR FISHED	GEAR	GEAR AMOUNT	MAN HOURS	NO. OF CREW	
↓ VMRC ID <b>009999</b>		↓ NAME <b>Joseph Fisherman</b>		↓AGENT NAME <b>Joe Fish Buyer</b>	<b>CBLE</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>AGN</b>	<b>3@3600ft</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
				↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY	↓AMOUNT	↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE):				* Check if processed
		↓BUYER <b>Joe Fish Buyer</b>		<b>SPOT</b>	<b>200</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓VESSEL ID NO. <b>VA0000AA</b>		<b>CRL</b>	<b>96</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS VMRC ID & NAME(S) LIST ONLY HELPERS WITH VMRC ID		↓VESSEL NAME <b>Miss Virginia</b>		<b>TRM</b>	<b>24</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME		↓PUBLIC ROCK ABBR (OYSTERS ONLY)	<b>TRL</b>	<b>30</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>009876</b>	<b>Mary Fisherman</b>		↓AREA (OYSTER ONLY)	<b>SPT</b>	<b>10</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>009874</b>	<b>William Fisherman</b>		↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED <b>Fisherman County</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET) <b>April 12, 2015</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>

### FINFISH (WITH STRIPED BASS)

PRIMARY HARVESTER VMRC ID & NAME		<input type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF AGENT USED	↓AGENT VMRC ID	WATER FISHED	HRS GEAR FISHED	GEAR	GEAR AMOUNT	MAN HOURS	NO. OF CREW	
↓ VMRC ID <b>009999</b>		↓ NAME <b>Joseph Fisherman</b>		↓AGENT NAME <b>Joe Fish Buyer</b>	<b>OVB</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>AGN</b>	<b>2@2400ft</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>
				↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY	↓AMOUNT	↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE):				* Check if processed
		↓BUYER <b>Joe Fish Buyer</b>		<b>SPMAC</b>	<b>50</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓VESSEL ID NO. <b>VA0000AA</b>		<b>CRM</b>	<b>10</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS VMRC ID & NAME(S) LIST ONLY HELPERS WITH VMRC ID		↓VESSEL NAME <b>Miss Virginia</b>		<b>TRO</b>	<b>91</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME		↓PUBLIC ROCK ABBR (OYSTERS ONLY)	<b>PUFT</b>	<b>40</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>009876</b>	<b>Mary Fisherman</b>		↓AREA (OYSTER ONLY)	<b>STB(4TAGS)</b>	<b>55</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED <b>Fisherman County</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET) <b>April 12, 2015</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY				<input type="checkbox"/>

Please remember the following when filling out monthly mandatory reports:

### OYSTER HARVEST FROM PUBLIC GROUNDS

- Oyster harvest from private grounds (aquaculture) must be reported on a different form. See page 13.
- Include the rock abbreviation and area obtained from the provided list of oyster rocks (e.g., DAYP, OT)
- Contact the VMRC if you need a list of oyster rocks and areas
- Report all oysters in bushels

### EXAMPLE

#### OYSTER HARVEST (PUBLIC GROUNDS)

Only forms with a revision date of 2010 or later will be accepted.

PRIMARY HARVESTER VMRC ID & NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF AGENT USED	↓AGENT VMRC ID	WATER FISHED	HRS GEAR FISHED	GEAR	GEAR AMOUNT	MAN HOURS	NO. OF CREW
009999		Joseph Fisherman	JRM	7	OT	1	8	2
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME	↓AGENT NAME	↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY	↓AMOUNT	↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE):			* Check if processed
	Joseph Fisherman	↓BUYER	OYSPRNG	10	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS VMRC ID & NAME(S) LIST ONLY HELPERS WITH VMRC ID		↓VESSEL ID NO.			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		VA0000AA			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME	↓VESSEL NAME			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
009876	Mary Fisherman	Miss Virginia			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓PUBLIC ROCK ABBR (OYSTERS ONLY)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		DAYP			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓AREA (OYSTER ONLY)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		OT			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fisherman County			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
		April 11, 2015			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>

### ATTENTION:

### NEW AQUACULTURE-ONLY REPORTING FORMS

On Friday, April 17, 2015 the VMRC mailed out new mandatory reporting forms and instructions for aquaculture harvest, along with a letter describing the change:

“The Mandatory Reporting Program (MRP) has revised the form that will be used by all aquaculture product owners (clam and oysters) to report their monthly summary harvest. These forms have been simplified for your usage; they only include information required for aquaculture harvest reporting. This form is for reporting aquaculture only; no other harvest can be submitted on the form enclosed. If you participate in any other fishery that harvest must be reported separately, on the original forms. We strongly encourage you to transition to the new reporting forms, however staff will continue to accept aquaculture reports on the original forms through the end of 2015.”

Important information about how to complete these new forms is available on page 13.

**All licenses are effective for one calendar year. 2015 licenses, permits, and user fees expire Dec 31, 2015.**

*This newsletter provides only a summary of management measures adopted by the Commission and has no legal force or effect. Please refer to the actual regulation for legal documentation.*

## AQUACULTURE PRODUCT OWNERS (PRIVATE)

### Mandatory fields to be filled out by aquaculture product owners:

- VMRC ID and full and legal name of the aquaculture product owner
- VMRC ID and the full and legal name of no more five additional licensed harvesters
- Number of crew (the number of individuals harvesting)
- Buyer or private sale information (one per summary report)
- Assigned VMRC lease number (one per summary report). If you harvest on the seaside or have riparian rights and do not have a lease number please use 00001 as your lease number (for aquaculture harvest only)
- City or county of landing (one per summary report; use code from the Mandatory Reporting folder)
- Use date of last day of the month (summary report only required)
- Water body fished (recommended but not required)
- Gear type (one per summary report; use code from the Mandatory Reporting folder)
- Species harvested, market category (use code from the Mandatory Reporting folder)
- Report the live weight and the unit (bu - oysters; nu - clams)

### Important Notes:

- The appropriate aquaculture user fees and permits must be acquired before working on leased grounds. Public ground oyster user fees and permits DO NOT apply to aquaculture activity.
- A no-cost vessel permit is available for oyster or clam aquaculture product owner permittees to transport harvesters without their own individual harvesters permit to harvest oyster or clams from the product owner's leased, subleased, or fee simple ground.

## EXAMPLE

### AQUACULTURE PRODUCT OWNERS (OYSTERS FROM PRIVATE GROUNDS)

AQUACULTURE HARVEST ONLY MANDATORY HARVEST REPORTING FORM					
PRIMARY LICENSED HARVESTER VMRC ID AND NAME		*Note* Report clams in units of 'NU' and oysters in units of 'BU'			↓NO. OF CREW <b>3</b>
↓VMRC ID <b>N012345</b>	↓NAME <b>Joseph Fisherman</b>	↓WATER FISHED (ONE PER TICKET) <b>YRL</b>		↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY	↓AMOUNT
ADDITIONAL LICENSED HARVESTER(S) VMRC ID AND NAME(S) LIST UP TO FIVE (5) HARVESTERS BELOW		↓BUYER <b>Joe Oyster Buyer</b>		<b>OYSPRIV</b>	<b>150</b>
↓VMRC ID <b>009876</b>	↓NAME <b>Mary Fisherman</b>	↓GEAR <b>BC</b>		↓GEAR AMOUNT	
<b>N099999</b>	<b>Charles Fisherman</b>	↓LEASE NUMBER (ONE PER TICKET) <b>98766</b>		↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE): <input checked="" type="radio"/> BU <input type="radio"/> NU	
		↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED <b>Fisherman County</b>		BU NU	
		↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET) <b>April 30, 2015</b>		BU NU	

This newsletter provides only a summary of management measures adopted by the Commission and has no legal force or effect. Please refer to the actual regulation for legal documentation.

## SEAFOOD LANDING LICENSEES

### Mandatory fields to be filled out by Seafood Landing Licensees:

- Seafood landing license number and full and legal name of seafood landing licensee
- Buyer or private sale information (one per ticket)
- Vessel identification (Coast Guard documentation number or VA registration number)
- Name of vessel (if applicable) (one per ticket)
- City or county of landing (one per ticket; use list from Mandatory Reporting folders)
- Date of harvest (one per ticket)
- Water body fished (one per ticket; use codes from Mandatory Reporting folders)
- Number of hours gear fished
- Gear type and amount used (one per ticket; use codes from Mandatory Reporting folders)
- Number of hours the seafood landing licensee fished
- Number of crew on board, including captain
- Species harvested, market category (NON-FEDERALLY PERMITTED SPECIES ONLY) (use codes from Mandatory Reporting folders)
- Live weight or processed weight of species harvested
- Please ensure that separate mandatory reporting forms are used when submitting reports for species caught offshore.

All licenses are effective for one calendar year. 2015 licenses, permits, and user fees expire Dec 31, 2015.

### EXAMPLE: SEAFOOD LANDING LICENSEES (OFFSHORE) - FINFISH

PRIMARY HARVESTER VMRC ID & NAME		<input type="checkbox"/> CHECK IF AGENT USED	↓AGENT VMRC ID	WATER FISHED	HRS GEAR FISHED	GEAR HL	GEAR AMOUNT	MAN HOURS	NO. OF CREW
↓VMRC ID <b>G999</b>	↓NAME <b>Joseph Fisherman</b>		↓AGENT NAME	<b>OSVBA</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>HL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>
			↓BUYER <b>Joe Buyer</b>	↓SPECIES & MARKET CATEGORY <b>TTG</b>	↓AMOUNT <b>20</b>	↓UNITS (CIRCLE ONE): BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			* Check if processed <input type="checkbox"/>
ADDITIONAL HARVESTERS VMRC ID & NAME(S) LIST ONLY HELPERS WITH VMRC ID			↓VESSEL ID NO. <b>VA0000AA</b>	<b>CRO</b>	<b>80</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
↓VMRC ID	↓NAME		↓VESSEL NAME <b>Miss Virginia</b>	<b>BFL</b>	<b>50</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>009876</b>	<b>Mary Fisherman</b>		↓PUBLIC ROCK ABBR (OYSTERS ONLY)	<b>TILE</b>	<b>25</b>	BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓AREA (OYSTER ONLY)			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓CITY/COUNTY LANDED <b>Fisherman County</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>
			↓DATE (ONE PER TICKET) <b>April 12, 2015</b>			BU LBS NU BBL BOX DOZ GAL TRAY			<input type="checkbox"/>

Please ensure that all fields are correctly filled out prior to submitting your mandatory reports. For questions about how to fill out mandatory reports please call 757-247-8102.

## NON-COMPLIANCE

The automated compliance notification process has been in place since 2010. Based on a harvester's reporting history, this notification process automatically generates postcards which will serve as reminders for submitting mandatory reports.

Details for the notification process are outlined below:

- If a mandatory report is not submitted by the 5th of the following month, then a **1st notification** 4"x6" postcard will be generated and mailed to the harvester.
- If a mandatory report is not submitted 2 weeks (14 days) after the 1st notification, then a **2nd notification** 4"x6" postcard will be generated and mailed out to the harvester.
- If a mandatory report is not submitted 2 weeks (14 days) after the 2nd notification postcard, then a 8½"x11" **'certified' letter** will be generated and mailed out to the harvester
- If a mandatory report is not submitted 5 days after the issue date on the certified letter, then the harvester who has not responded may receive a **'service letter'** delivered by a Marine Police Officer (MPO) to appear before the Commission for a non-compliance hearing.

**PLEASE REMEMBER YOU MUST REPORT BY THE 5TH OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH EVEN IF YOU HAVE NOT HARVESTED (NO ACTIVITY)!**



### EXAMPLE: FIRST NOTIFICATION POSTCARD

TOM FISHERMAN

February 12, 2015

PO BOX 1234

AQUAVILLE, VA 22222

MRC ID: ####

Dear Tom Fisherman,

This letter serves as your **FIRST** notification by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) that your monthly mandatory harvest reports, required by Regulation 4 VAC 20-610-10 et seq., are currently incomplete. As of February 12, 2015, our records indicate that you have not submitted a report for November 2014. If you need to report 'no activity' for November 2014, please call 1-800-937-9247 and leave a message on our automated voice mail system. If you did harvest seafood and have not submitted your reports, please do so by February 26, 2015. If your monthly reporting records are in error, please contact Mandatory Reporting at 757-247-2241, as soon as possible, between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and between the hours of 8:30 am and 2:00 pm Friday.

# MEETINGS

VMRC – Virginia Marine Resources Commission – Meetings are set for the 4th Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 9:30am, (fisheries items begin at 12:00 noon), and are held at the Commission’s main office in Newport News.

ASMFC – Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – Please visit <http://www.asmfc.org> or call (703) 842-0740 to find out meeting dates, locations, and times.

MAFMC – Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council – Please visit <http://mafmc.org> or call (302) 674-2331 for meeting dates, locations and times.

CMAC – Crab Management Advisory Committee – Meeting dates vary. Please refer to VMRC website calendar for meeting updates.

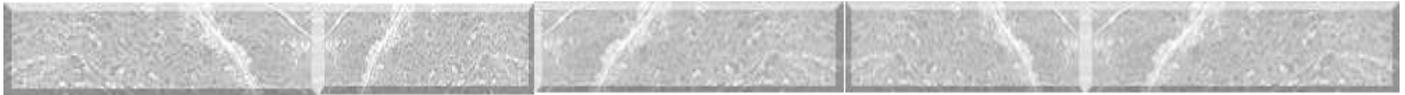
<http://mrc.virginia.gov/calendar.shtm>

FMAC – Finfish Management Advisory Committee – Meeting dates vary. Please refer to VMRC website calendar for meeting updates.

<http://mrc.virginia.gov/calendar.shtm>

CFAB – Commercial Fishery Advisory Board – Contact Alicia Nelson (757) 247-8155 for information.

**As a reminder, VMRC office hours are 8AM-5PM Monday-Thursday, and 8AM-2:30PM Friday.**



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