



**RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767
Rhode Island Relay 711

Final Decision Memo

TO: Mark Gibson, Deputy Chief Marine Fisheries

FROM: Janet Coit, Director DEM

DATE: November 4, 2011

SUBJECT: Final Decisions Pertaining to October 3, 2011 Marine Fisheries Council Action Items:
2011-2012 Winter Shellfish Winter Harvest Schedule.

I have received and reviewed your November 3, 2011 briefing memo on the above-referenced item. I have also received and reviewed the supporting documentation submitted along with the memo, including the September 7, 2011 minutes of the RI Marine Fisheries Council's Shellfish Advisory Panel meetings, the minutes from the October 3, 2011 RIMFC meeting, and the supplemental quahog stock status information provided by the Division.

I note that the above-referenced item was subjected to expedited review process, as authorized for designated shellfish management areas in RIGL 20-3-4, via consultation with the RI Marine Fisheries Council (RIMFC) and attending public. I find the RIMFC's recommendations and Division information on the issues, to be a solid basis for my review and consideration.

Having fully considered all of the recommendations and supporting documentation, I hereby set forth the following final regulatory decisions:

Winter Harvest Schedule:

To be enacted: The schedule specified in the Division's part IV proposed revisions.

Consistency with RIMFC: The measures are consistent with the Council's recommendation.

Concluding Comment: Every effort should be made to re-activate the Division's shellfish dredge survey in Narragansett Bay in 2012. I note that the survey, in concert with SAFIS landings data, is essential information for assessing the quahog resource on smaller spatial scales.