

NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CMR approves increased size for Spotted Seatrout

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources voted unanimously at its meeting Tuesday, Dec. 13, to approve increasing the minimum size of Spotted Seatrout to 15 inches.

The vote also included allowing no Spotted Seatrout take for charter captains and crew.

The new regulation will go into effect after the Secretary of State's Office approves the paperwork, likely by the middle of January 2017.

Commissioners also voted to open the western portion of the Mississippi Sound for oyster dredging for no more than five days beginning Dec. 15 through Dec. 22, with the exception of Area 1B. This area includes the St. Joe Reef and will be closed to dredging and tonging.

The reefs in the Western Sound also will be open for tonging if the two reefs in the Biloxi Bay are closed. Currently, the Biloxi Bay reefs are closed due to poor water samples. Tonging will end in all areas on Feb. 28, 2017.

In other action, CMR members voted to issue a temporary moratorium on selling commercial crab licenses through April 30, 2017. Commissioners said the move will conserve the blue crab resource because demand and price for the crabs is expected to increase.

The CMR also approved a state record for Inshore Lizardfish, which was established by Aaron Gautier of Pascagoula. Gautier caught the 4.416-ounce fish using conventional tackle.

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**Photo courtesy MS
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Aaron Gautier of Pascagoula established a state record for Inshore Lizardfish with this catch weighing 4.416 ounces.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at dmr.ms.gov.

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