

"PERTAINING TO SPANISH AND KING MACKEREL"**EMERGENCY CHAPTER 4 VAC 20-540-10 ET SEQ.****PREAMBLE**

This chapter establishes possession limits, minimum size limits, and trip limits, on the harvest of Spanish mackerel and king mackerel. These chapters are established to prevent overfishing and to assist the further recovery of Spanish mackerel and king mackerel along the Atlantic Coast. This emergency chapter is promulgated pursuant to authority contained in §§28.2-201 and 28.2-210 of the Code of Virginia. This emergency chapter amends previous Chapter 4VAC20-540-10 et seq., which was adopted August 28, 2018 and effective September 1, 2018. The effective date of this emergency chapter is August 3, 2020.

4 VAC 20-540-30. Recreational possession limits.

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person fishing with hook-and-line, hand line, rod and reel, spear, gig, or other recreational gear to possess more than 15 Spanish mackerel or more than three king mackerel.
- B. When fishing from a boat or vessel, where the entire catch is held in a common hold or container, the possession limits shall be for the boat or vessel and shall be equal to the number of persons on board legally eligible to fish multiplied by 15 for Spanish mackerel or multiplied by three for king mackerel. The captain or operator of the boat or vessel shall be responsible for any boat or vessel possession limit.

4 VAC 20-540-40. Minimum size limits established.

- A. Minimum size limit for Spanish mackerel is established at 14 inches in total length.
- B. Minimum size limit for king mackerel is established at 27 inches in total length.
- C. It shall be unlawful for any person to take, catch, or possess any Spanish mackerel less than 14 inches in total length.
- D. Except as provided in subsection E of this section it shall be unlawful for any person to take, catch, or possess any king mackerel less than 27 inches in total length.
- E. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the taking, catching, or possession of any king mackerel less than 27 inches in total length, by a licensed pound net.

4 VAC 20-540-50. Commercial trip limit.

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or land in Virginia any amount of Spanish

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mackerel in excess of 3,500 pounds from any vessel in any one day, except as specified in subsection B of this section.

- B. When a commercial closure in federal waters for the Northern Zone Atlantic Migratory Group Spanish Mackerel is announced by the National Marine Fisheries Service, it shall be unlawful for any person to possess or land in Virginia any amount of Spanish mackerel in excess of 500 pounds from any vessel in any one day. This federal closure and state water per trip possession limit will be posted on the Marine Resources Commission website.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the emergency chapter passed by the Marine Resources Commission, pursuant to authority vested in the Commission by §§28.2-201 and 28.2-210 of the Code of Virginia, duly advertised according to statute, and recorded in the Commission's minute book, at meeting held in Hampton, Virginia on July 28, 2020.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

By: [Signature]
Steven G. Bowman
Commissioner

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 31st day of July 2020.

[Signature]
Notary Public

