

PRESS RELEASE

Potomac River Fisheries Commission • P.O. Box 9 • Colonial Beach, VA 22443
Phone: (804) 224-7148 • Fax: (804) 224-2712

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Kirby A. Carpenter

Potomac River Fisheries Commission Meeting

Colonial Beach, VA —

Chairman William L. Rice, Sr. announced today the Potomac River Fisheries Commission would hold its next regular meeting, including an advertised public hearing, on Thursday, March 29, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Charles County Government Center, 200 Baltimore Street, La Plata, Maryland. Mr. Rice expressed his desire to invite all interested persons to attend this open public meeting.

A public hearing will be held on several proposed regulation changes regarding the upcoming crab season. Items being considered include: a) requiring four 1½" cull rings in peeler pots with 1" mesh beginning this year, and to require peeler pots be constructed of 1½" mesh wire by the 2005 season; b) require peeler trap retention boxes to have 1½" mesh wire by the 2005 season; c) require hard crab pot cull rings be open at all times; d) delay the beginning of crabbing season until May 1st, and/or to end the season on Oct. 15th each year; e) establish a season for the possession of hard crabs; f) establish a season for the possession of peeler crabs of June 1st through August 31st; g) establish a seven (7) hour work day for commercial crabbing starting 1 hour before sunrise; h) prohibit commercial crabbing on a particular day of the week; i) prohibit crabbing in certain area(s) including areas defined by water depths; j) reduce the maximum number of crab pots from 300/400/500 per boat to 150/200/250 and/or a single maximum for all boats; k) establish daily bushel limits for commercial crabbing; l) increase the legal size limits on soft, peeler and hard crabs by up to 1 inch; m) lower the daily recreational crabbing possession limits; n) establish a seven (7) hour daily time limit for recreational crabbing; o) require fish trot line buoys display the letters "FL" in addition to the decal number; and p) require fish pot, eel pot, and bait pot buoys display the letters "FP", "EP", and "BP" in addition to the decal number.

Other items on the agenda include but are not limited to, an oyster harvest report, a report of the oyster/clam advisory committee, approval of the 2001 oyster repletion program, a finfish harvest report and the advisory committee appointments.

PRFC does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities; therefore, if you are in need of reasonable accommodations due to a disability, please call (804) 224-7148 no later than three work days prior to the meeting date and identify your needs.