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# FWC approves stone crab regulation changes; effective Oct. 1

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At its July meeting, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) approved changes to recreational and commercial stone crab regulations.

Florida's stone crab fishery has experienced a long-term decline in harvest and is likely undergoing overfishing. FWC staff worked with stakeholders on these changes that are intended to increase the stone crab population and build resiliency in the fishery.

Approved changes go into effect Oct. 1, 2020, and include:

- Moving the season end date from May 15 to May 1, closed on May 2.
- Requiring a 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-inch escape ring in all plastic and wood stone crab traps before the start of the 2023/2024 season.

- Increasing the minimum claw size limit by <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches from 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches to 2 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>
- Limiting possession of whole stone crabs on the water to two checker boxes, each up to 3 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet **OR** a total volume of 24 cubic feet. Checker boxes are used to hold crabs onboard a vessel before they are measured and legal-sized claws are removed.

Learn more about [stone crab regulations](#) at MyFWC.com/Marine.

For the full [July 22-23 agenda](#), including links to background reports, go to [MyFWC.com/About](#) and click on "The Commission" and "Commission Meetings."

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Pursuant to section 120.74, Florida Statutes, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has published its **2019 Agency Regulatory Plan**.

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