§ 13-0360. Special management areas.

1. For purposes of this section:

(a) "artificial reef" shall mean a hard structure, deliberately placed in a marine or coastal water body for the purpose of imitating environmental conditions found on natural underwater rock outcroppings, shellfish reefs or coral reefs; and

(b) "wreck" shall mean an abandoned shipwreck which occurred through an accidental circumstance or deliberate scuttling or sinking that was not part of artificial reef construction activities.

2. For the purposes of protecting reef ecosystems and managing reef fisheries, the department is hereby authorized to adopt regulations which designate as a special management area any area of the marine and coastal district which contains artificial reefs or wrecks simulating artificial reefs together with the surrounding areas where the biota are dependent upon the physical characteristics of the reef.

3. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the department may, until December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-nine, adopt regulations restricting the taking of fish, shellfish and crustacea in any special management area designated pursuant to subdivision two of this section. Such regulations may restrict the manner of taking of fish, shellfish and crustacea in such areas and the landing of fish, shellfish and crustacea which have been taken therefrom. Such regulations shall be consistent with all relevant federal and interstate fisheries management plans and with the marine fisheries conservation and management policy set forth in section 13-0105 of this article.