



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

2014 Spring Meeting Summary

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

2014 Spring Meeting
Alexandria, VA
May 12-15, 2014

For more information,
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Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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ATLANTIC HERRING SECTION (MAY 12, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Herring Section Approves Draft Amendment 3 PID for Public Comment

Alexandria, VA ó The Commission's Atlantic Herring Section approved the Public Information Document (PID) for Draft Amendment 3 to the Interstate Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for public comment. Draft Amendment 3 was initiated to strengthen spawning sea herring protections in Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) and address concerns raised by the commercial Atlantic herring industry. The PID presents four issues the Commission is seeking public input on to better inform the development of management measures for the Atlantic herring fishery. The issues focus on (1) spawning area boundaries and closures in Area 1A, (2) a fixed gear set-aside rollover provision, (3) declaration of fishing gear prior to the beginning of a quota period in order to provide fishery managers a more accurate estimate of effort for decisions relative to harvest control measures and (4) requirement for a vessel's fish hold to be emptied before leaving on a fishing trip in order to allow for full accounting of catch and to discourage dumping of unsold fish.

The 2012 stock assessment estimated the Atlantic herring spawning stock biomass (SSB) at 517,930 mt (1.1 billion pounds) in 2011. Atlantic herring is considered rebuilt; it is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Commercial landings have increased since 1983 to a high of 101,859 mt (224.6 million pounds) in 2009. Annual catch has averaged 82,407 mt (181.7 million pounds) since implementation of the FMP in 1993.

The PID is the first step in the Commission's amendment process. It is intended to gather information concerning the Atlantic herring fishery and provide an opportunity for the public to identify and comment on major issues relative to the management of these species. Following the initial phase of information-gathering and public comment, the Commission will evaluate potential management alternatives and develop Draft Amendment 3 for public review. After the public comment period, the Commission will specify the management measures to be included in Amendment 3. A tentative schedule for the completion of Amendment 3 is included in PID.

Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts will be conducting public hearings on the PID. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the four issues in the PID, as well as comment on other management measures that should be considered, either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. A subsequent press release will announce the PID's availability as well as the details of the scheduled hearings. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-11

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Herring Section received an overview of the New England Fishery Management Council's approved alternatives for Draft Framework Adjustment 4, which focuses on dealer reporting/weighing and net slippage. The Council selected the empty fish hold provision as a dealer reporting/weighing option,

with the ability to issue a waiver after inspection by an appropriate law enforcement agent for unforeseen circumstances. This measure is also proposed in the ASMFC Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 3 (see press release).

Staff updated the Section on the Nantucket Shoals/Georges Bank (NSGB) spawning study. ASMFC sent a letter including the Technical Committee reports to the New England Fisheries Management Council requesting support and collaboration from the Council, Northeast Fishery Science Center, and Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office. The issue was discussed at the Northeast Regional Coordinating Committee (NRCC) meeting in April. The NRCC will review current sampling programs to identify opportunities for additional spawning sampling and analysis in NSGB prior to the August Commission meeting. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve the PID with the changes made today.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries without objection

AMERICAN EEL MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 12, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC American Eel Board Approves Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s American Eel Management Board approved Draft Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Eel for public comment. Draft Addendum IV proposes a suite of options to address the commercial glass, yellow, and silver eel fisheries along the Atlantic coast. Management options under consideration include glass and yellow eel quotas, a catch cap for the yellow eel fishery, a moratorium on the glass eel fishery, and a seasonal closure and license cap for the silver eel fishery in the Delaware River (NY). The Draft Addendum also includes glass eel harvest allowances for aquaculture purposes and a conservation-based allocation program in which the states may earn a glass eel quota via stock enhancement programs that increase glass eel passage. The Draft Addendum intends to build upon the management measures established under Addendum III in order to reduce overall mortality and increase conservation of American eel stocks.

The Board’s actions respond to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock has declined in recent decades and the prevalence of significant downward trends in multiple surveys across the coast is cause for concern. Causes of decline are likely due to a combination of factors including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease.

Commercial regulations vary by state. Glass eel fisheries currently occur in Maine and South Carolina. Significant yellow eel fisheries occur in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, the Potomac River, Virginia, and North Carolina. Although commercial fishery landings and effort in recent times have declined in most regions, current levels of fishing effort may still be too high given the depleted nature of the stock. The recreational fishery is managed under a 25 recreational fish per day creel limit (with an exception for party/charter boats) and 9 inch minimum size.

As part of the Board’s deliberations, it received a report on ongoing law enforcement activities to address American eel poaching. The Board commended the states and federal government in devoting significant

resources to curtail the illegal harvest of glass eels. The implementation of Maine's swipe card system, which allows for real time quota monitoring and harvester verification, has also been effective in inhibiting illegal harvest.

It is anticipated that the majority of states will be conducting public hearings on the Draft Addendum throughout the summer. A subsequent press release will announce the Draft Addendum's availability as well as the details of the scheduled hearings. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-12

Motions

Glass Eel Options

Move to add a new option: glass eel quota based on enhanced passage initiated after January 1, 2013. Under this option states may earn glass eel quota via stock enhancement programs that increase glass eel passage. The amount of quota earned shall not exceed an amount equal to: Sub-option 1) 5%, 2) 10%, 3) 25% of the enhanced glass eel passage.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries.

Move to add under Option 4 (glass eel quota based on landings) a Sub-option that sets a minimum glass eel quota of 100 pounds per state.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion fails (6 in favor, 9 opposed, 3 abstentions).

Move to remove Option 7 (Glass eel aquaculture) from Section 3.1.1.

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion fails (2 in favor, 15 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to insert in Section 3.1.1, Option 5 Sub-Option B: "a tolerance of up to 5% overage would be allowed if the current stock status is not depleted or overfished."

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion fails.

Move to remove Option 5B (Quota Overage Tolerance) and 6 under Section 3.1.1 (Quota Underages).

Motion made by Mr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to request the Technical Committee review a watershed-based allocation scheme for glass eel quota and postpone options to Addendum V and proceed with yellow and silver eel options in Addendum IV.

Motion made by Mr. McKiernan and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion fails.

Yellow Eel Options

Move to include the Working Group allocation recommendation from their August memo to the Board as an option to include the three highest landing years from 2002-2012 for Options 2 and 3.

Motion made by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries.

Move to modify Option 5 in Section 3.1.2 (Quota Transfers) to allow states with a 2,000 lb quota to participate in quota transfers.

Motion made by Mr. McKiernan and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion carries.

Silver Eel Options

Move to modify Option 4 in Section 3.1.3 to remove the third sentence “Once issued, licenses are not eligible for transferability” and modify the last sentence to read, “This would result in a reduction of licenses.”

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion carries.

Move to add item #4 in Section 3.1.4: States would be allowed to harvest a maximum of 200 lbs of glass eel annually for the use in domestic aquaculture facilities (to grow out to the minimum legal size) if they can show that they can be harvested from a watershed that minimally contributes to the spawning stock of American eel.

Motion made by Mr. Keliher and seconded by Mr. White. Motion carries.

Move to approve Draft Addendum IV for public comment as modified today.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously.

SPINY DOGFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 12, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board Initiates Draft Addendum V to the Spiny Dogfish Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Alexandria, VA ó The Commission’s Spiny Dogfish Board initiated Draft Addendum V to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Spiny Dogfish. The Draft Addendum seeks to ensure consistency with the Shark Conservation Act of 2010. The Act was signed into law to close loopholes in the U.S. shark finning regulations. Specifically, the Act prohibits the removal of any fins of the shark (including the tail) while at sea (with an exemption for smooth dogfish). Fins must remain naturally attached to the corresponding carcass through landing of the fish (including while aboard a fishing vessel or transferred at sea from one vessel to another)

Currently, the Interstate FMP allows removal of the fins of spiny dogfish at-sea as long as the corresponding carcass is retained. The wet weight of fins on-board may not exceed 5% of the dressed weight of carcasses on-board (a 5-to-95 fin-to-carcass ratio). Maine, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida already require fins to remain naturally attached to the fish through landing. The Board will review and consider approval of the Draft Addendum for public comment at the Commission’s Summer Meeting in August 2014.

The Board also considered changing the state waters’ commercial possession limit for the 2014/2015 spiny dogfish fishing season, currently set at 4,000 pounds, in response to the proposed action by NOAA Fisheries to move to an unlimited possession limit in federal waters. The Board maintained the 4,000 pound limit with individual states providing input to NOAA Fisheries on its proposed rule.

For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org.

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PR14-13

Meeting Summary

The Spiny Dogfish Management Board considered changing the state waters commercial possession limit for the 2014/2015 spiny dogfish fishing season, currently set at 4,000 pounds, in response to the proposed action by NOAA Fisheries to move to an unlimited possession limit in federal waters. The Board maintained the 4,000 pound limit with individual states providing input to NOAA Fisheries on its proposed rule.

The Board also discussed inconsistencies between the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish (ISFMP) and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 as well as NOAA Fisheries Amendment 3 to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan. The Board initiated an addendum to consider maintaining consistency with the Shark Conservation Act by requiring all sharks, except smooth dogfish, be landed with fins naturally attached. Amendment 3 proposes removing the seasonal allocation of the spiny dogfish quota, allowing management measures to rollover and implementing a research set aside (up to 3%). The Board will be submitting a public comment letter to NOAA Fisheries outlining its support for the measures contained in the Proposed Rule since it improves consistency with the Interstate FMP. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org.

Motions

Move to amend the trip limit to 7,000 lbs for the 2014-2015 spiny dogfish fishing season for the northern region.

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion fails for lack of a 2/3rd majority.

Move to initiate addendum to prohibit processing at sea of spiny dogfish and maintain consistency between Spiny Dogfish FMP and Shark Conservation Act.

Motion by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion carries.

COMMISSIONER WORKSHOP ON THE MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT REAUTHORIZATION (MAY 13, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission held a workshop on the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). Speakers included Jeff Lewis of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; Bob King in the office of Senator Mark Begich (D-AK); and Dave Whaley of the House Committee on Natural Resources. The speakers presented an overview of the House and Senate draft MSA reauthorization bills and fielded a number of questions and recommendations from Commissioners. At the end of the meeting the Commission agreed to formalize their comments in a letter and provide it to the congressional committees in charge of reauthorizing MSA. For more information, please contact Deke Tompkins, Legislative Executive Assistant, at dtompkins@asmfc.org.

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 13, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum Development Continues

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board met to review and consider approval of Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass for public comment. The Draft Addendum will propose new fishing mortality

reference points, as recommended by the 2013 benchmark stock assessment, and associated management measures to achieve the proposed target fishing mortality rate. While the Board did not approve the document for public comment, it approved substantive changes to the document and will reconsider a revised draft for public comment at the Commission's Summer Meeting in August.

The most significant change was the addition of a three-year timeframe to reduce fishing mortality to its target with options to achieve the reduction in harvest incrementally over the three years. This extended timeframe is intended to lessen the impacts of taking the required harvest reductions in one year. As a result, the Draft Addendum will propose measures to achieve the required reduction all in one year or incrementally over three years.

The Board also received a report from the Technical Committee on the development of Chesapeake Bay specific fishing mortality reference points for inclusion in the Draft Addendum. Due to the nature of the fishery, which targets smaller and predominantly male fish, the Technical Committee could not develop Bay-specific reference points at this time. It reported the reference points approved for management use in the 2013 benchmark stock assessment represent the best available scientific advice to manage fishing mortality on the entire striped bass population. The proposed coastwide target fishing mortality rate is designed to maintain the spawning stock biomass at its target level over the long-term. The effects of the Bay's harvest of smaller fish on the total coastwide stock are already incorporated into the coastwide population reference points due to different selectivity patterns for the Bay and coastal fishing fleets.

The Atlantic striped bass stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring under the proposed reference points. While the stock has declined, it remains at levels similar to 1995 when the stock was declared recovered. The revised Draft Addendum will continue to focus on the same management measures that are currently used to regulate the coastal and Chesapeake Bay striped bass fisheries – recreational bag and size limits, and adjustments to the commercial quotas. The Board established a subgroup to work closely with the Plan Development Team to help guide the inclusion of the new options. The revised Draft Addendum will be considered by the Board for approval for public comment in August, with public hearings conducted throughout the fall and final addendum approval slated for October at the Commission's Annual Meeting. If approved, the states would then implement management measures in early 2015. For more information, please contact, Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-15

Motions

Move to include in Draft Addendum IV a modification of Management Trigger 3 under Section 4.1 in Amendment 6 to require the Board to adjust fishing mortality to a level that is at or below the target within three years.

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion carries.

Move to put options in Addendum IV to achieve the necessary reduction over three years with each year achieving a third of that reduction level.

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion carries (9 in favor, 5 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to consider adding Option C in Section 3.2.1. a one fish bag limit with a slot limit (28-40 inches).

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries (14 in favor, 2 opposed).

Main Motion

Move to add to Section 3.2.2 an option for a two fish bag limit, with one fish at a slot limit between 24-34 inches and one fish above 40 inches, subject to Technical Committee review to adjust the open slot limit to achieve a 31% reduction.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend the slot limit one fish between 28 – 34 inches and one fish over 36 inches.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries (9 in favor, 6 opposed).

Main Motion as Amended

Move to add to Section 3.2.2 an option for a two fish bag limit, with one fish at a slot limit between 28-34 inches and one fish above 36 inches, subject to Technical Committee review to adjust the open slot limit to achieve a 31% reduction.

Motion carries (12 in favor, 3 opposed).

Move to add option D in Section 3.2.2 to have a two fish bag limit at 33 inch minimum size limit for the coastal fishery (ocean) and allow the Bay to have one fish at 18-28 inches and one fish 36 inches or greater, subject to Technical Committee review to adjust the slot limit to achieve a 31% reduction.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Gary. Motion carries (14 in favor, 1 opposed).

Move to remove the second sentence that pertains to the Chesapeake Bay under Section 3.2.2, Option C.

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. Gary. Motion carries (11 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to add an option to reduce the Chesapeake Baywide recreational quota to account for the required reduction.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. O'Connell. Motion carries (12 in favor, 3 opposed).

Motion to Reconsider

Move to put options in Addendum IV to achieve the necessary reduction over three years with each year achieving a third of that reduction level.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. White. Motion fails.

Move to eliminate Option C under Section 3.3.1.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to add to the commercial quota allocation the option of reinstating the final Amendment 5 coastal commercial allocations, as approved in 2001. Because this would result in a 34% reduction from the Amendment 6 allocations the Technical Committee shall adjust the state reductions to achieve a 31% reduction from the Amendment 6 allocations.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Train. Motion fails (2 in favor, 11 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to remove Option D under Section 3.3.1.3 (Chesapeake Bay).

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion carries (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 null).

Move to add William Hall from Virginia and Kyle Douton from Connecticut to the Striped Bass Advisory Panel.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion carries.

Move to add Beth Versak from Maryland to the Plan Development Team.

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries.

Move that the Board approve a revision to the Hudson River Young of the Year sampling program from the six week index to a nine week, 13 site subset index as accepted by the Technical Committee.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion carries without objection.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE (MAY 13 & 14, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Law Enforcement Committee met over two days during the spring meeting of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. This was the first meeting for several new members, including the new addition of a representative from the United States Department of Justice (Wayne Hettenbach). Lt. Doug Messeck now represents Delaware and Lt. Col. Larry Furlong represents Pennsylvania. Special Agent-in-charge Honora Gordon represents the USFWS.

Species Issues

Joe Fessenden gave a presentation to the LEC on the new swipe card system being employed in Maine to address glass eel harvest. Kate Taylor briefed the LEC on management options in Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment and the current law enforcement comments in the document. The LEC will review the management options in the draft and consider whether any changes or updates to previous LEC comments are warranted.

Action Plan Issues

The LEC reviewed the 2009 *Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures*. The LEC determined to initiate a review and update of the guidelines and Mark Robson will prepare a review draft for the fall 2014 meeting.

LEC members reported on activities and participation on Law Enforcement Committees of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and recent meetings of the National and the Northeast Conservation Chiefs Association.

Members reviewed social media sites online and discussed the pros and cons of various sites such as Facebook and Twitter for enforcement purposes. Tina Berger and Ann McElhatton from ASMFC staff participated in the discussion and shared information on conservation use of social media sites. There was general agreement that such tools can be helpful in enforcement but require careful monitoring to minimize misinformation or abuse.

Other Issues

LEC members reviewed their states' participation in wildlife violator compacts and the applicability of those interstate agreements for marine enforcement issues. There was agreement that such compacts enhance enforcement of regulations across state boundaries and will review ways to make use of existing compacts, or to encourage entering into such compacts where needed.

The LEC discussed the recent national coordination meeting for Joint Enforcement Agreements (JEA). These agreements provide funding from NOAA to individual states for their federal marine fisheries enforcement programs. The state-federal makeup of the LEC provided a valuable opportunity to clarify and resolve issues stemming from the national meeting.

For more information, please contact Mark Robson, LEC Coordinator, at markrobson2012@gmail.com.

ANNUAL AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE (MAY 13, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Presents Annual Awards of Excellence

Alexandria, VA - The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented Michael P. Luisi, Paul Caruso, Dr. Robert Latour, Cheri Patterson, and the state and federal members of the joint enforcement team Operation Lookout with its Annual Awards of Excellence for their outstanding contributions to fisheries management, science, and law enforcement along the Atlantic coast.



“Every year a great many people contribute to the success of fisheries management along the

Atlantic coast. The Commission’s Annual Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding efforts by professionals who have made a difference in the way we manage and conserve our fisheries,” said ASMFC Chair Louis B. Daniel, III of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries. “This evening, we honor several exceptional individuals for their contributions to the management and conservation of Atlantic coast fisheries.”

From left: ASMFC Executive Director Robert Beal, Cheri Patterson, Dr. Robert Latour, Michael Luisi, Paul Caruso, Sara Block, and ASMFC Chair Louis Daniel

Management & Policy Contributions

Michael Luisi, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Service

Mr. Luisi has made significant contributions to the successful management of summer flounder and black sea bass fisheries throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. Active at the management level at both the Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, he worked closely with staff, technical representatives, industry, and state and federal colleagues to develop and implement regional management approaches for both species. These approaches have allowed the states to maintain recreational black sea bass and summer flounder fisheries when existing policies would have resulted in severely curtailed or non-existent fisheries. For black sea bass, that meant moving away from coastwide management toward a regional approach more suitable to their life history. For summer flounder, it meant moving away from conservation equivalency and the informal sharing of fish that were not otherwise harvested by other states into a more formal regional approach. These approaches have helped minimize the risk of overharvest while still

providing headboats, charter boats, and anglers opportunities to fish. Mr. Luisi's efforts have benefited not only Maryland, but all states with summer flounder and black sea bass fisheries. Through his actions, Mr. Luisi has truly embodied the Commission's Mission "To promote the better utilization of the fisheries of the Atlantic seaboard by the development of a joint program for the promotion and protection of such fisheries."

Scientific, Technical and Advisory Contributions

Paul Caruso, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

Mr. Caruso has devoted nearly three decades to advancing the field of fisheries biology and stock assessments. He has been a tireless contributor to state, regional and coastwide fisheries management activities through his state tagging and fishery-dependent sampling projects, and his participation and chairmanship of numerous Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council technical committees. In Massachusetts, Mr. Caruso has used his encyclopedic knowledge of fisheries to address a multitude of projects and species issues from oversight of the state's Marine Recreational Information Program project, to the conduct of tagging programs for striped bass and summer flounder, to his extensive outreach efforts to the recreational fishing community. Regionally and coastwide, Mr. Caruso's expertise and leadership have guided the development of numerous addenda and amendments for species such as striped bass, tautog, bluefish, black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup. He has helped advance stock assessments and the data upon which they are based through his work on cooperative tag and recapture programs, fish ageing protocols and sampling efforts, and improved biological monitoring requirements.

Throughout his entire career, Mr. Caruso has approached his work with enthusiasm and good humor, quickly embracing and accomplishing tasks. His goal has always been to supply managers with the information they need to properly manage fisheries. Mr. Caruso's accomplishments are many and his efforts have been impactful to the countless fisheries biologists and staff he has mentored by sheer example.

Dr. Robert J. Latour, Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Dr. Latour has made outstanding contributions to the science underpinning the management activities of the Commission. He has contributed to numerous benchmark stock assessments and stock assessment updates, and focused much of his research program and student mentorship on addressing specific research needs of various Mid-Atlantic fisheries. These latter efforts have led to a variety of important peer-reviewed manuscripts focused on improving striped bass tagging models; fish diet composition and community ecology; Atlantic menhaden feeding ecology; and disease epidemiology in Chesapeake Bay striped bass. Collectively, Dr. Latour's work has helped to further the ongoing efforts of various Commission technical committees and the longer term knowledge base used to aid our understanding of fisheries dynamics.

For the last 15 years, Dr. Latour has maintained an active role on Commission technical committees for Atlantic menhaden, striped bass tagging, multispecies assessment, and assessment science. He is co-principle investigator of the Chesapeake Bay Multispecies Monitoring and Assessment Program and the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program. These two relatively new data collection platforms are dedicated to improving the assessments of many Commission managed fisheries, including otherwise data-scarce assessments such as black drum and Atlantic sturgeon. The emergence of these new data sources is a testament to Dr. Latour's hard work and dedication to improving fisheries management along the Atlantic coast. A highly respected scientist, Dr. Latour's expertise is sought as an external peer reviewer and as a member of the Mid-Atlantic Council's Science and Statistical Committee. In all that he does, Dr. Latour provides exemplary scientific expertise and sage advice in an effort to elevate the scientific rigor of our stock assessments and the information upon which fisheries management decisions are based.

Cheri Patterson, New Hampshire Fish & Game Department

Ms. Patterson has dedicated her 35 year career to not only improving the collection and use of fishery-dependent and independent data along the Atlantic coast, but also to the conservation and protection of diadromous fish habitat. She began her career working for the New Hampshire Fish & Game Department as a member of the scientific crew for the Gulf of Maine Northern Shrimp Survey. Today, this survey represents one of the longest running cooperative state/federal research surveys along the Atlantic coast, and forms the basis for the assessment and management of the northern shrimp resource. She played an integral role in the development of Amendment 2 to the Northern Shrimp Plan and has been a longstanding and engaged member of the Commission's Shad & River Herring Technical Committee and Management & Science Committee. Ms. Patterson has also been a passionate participant in the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program at all levels of the Program since its inception in the mid-1990s and currently serves as Chair of the ACCSP Coordinating Council. She was the driving force in developing and implementing ACCSP-compliant lobster harvester and dealer reporting systems in New Hampshire.

In recent years, Ms. Patterson has become increasingly involved in diadromous fish monitoring and habitat restoration, participating on the Commission's Habitat Committee and Fish Passage Committee, as well as the Steering Committee for the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership. A notable crowning achievement in Ms. Patterson's work on diadromous fish restoration came with her leadership in overseeing the removal of two head of tide dams in rivers of New Hampshire's Great Bay Estuary.

Law Enforcement Contributions

Operation Lookout Members – Captain John Croft and Special Investigator Jimmy Simpson, Virginia Marine Police; Special Agents Sara Block, Tracey Woodruff, and Steven Niemi, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement; and Trial Attorney James Nelson, U.S. Department of Justice

Members of the joint state/federal law enforcement team of Operation Lookout investigated and documented the poaching of striped bass in the exclusive economic zone off the coast of Virginia. In order to obtain the proper evidence and documentation, Operation Lookout conducted high risk undercover operations in an extremely dangerous environment. Their undercover efforts, led to the indictment of five individuals with several charges applied to each individual. Finalization of this operation is still pending given that some of the individuals have confessed to felonies but have not been sentenced while others have not been adjudicated or had a plea agreement entered. As this operation's prosecution comes to a close, it is fitting that the Commission recognize the sacrifice and due diligence of the members of Operation Lookout in protecting migratory striped bass populations for the benefit of all fishermen along the Atlantic coast.

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PR14-14

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATE/FEDERAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 14, 2014)

Press Release

**ASMFC South Atlantic Board Approves Spot and Atlantic Croaker
Draft Addendum for Public Comment**

***Draft Addendum Explores Use of a Traffic Light Approach
to Assess Stock Condition and Initiate Management Response***

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board approved a Draft Addendum to both the Spot and Atlantic Croaker Fishery Management Plans (FMP) for public comment. The Board initiated the development of new management options in response to concerns over trends in the spot and Atlantic croaker fisheries and the extent of bycatch and discards of both species in the shrimp trawl fishery. The Draft Addendum proposes a new method (Traffic Light Approach, TLA) to evaluate the status of the fisheries and potential coastwide or state-specified management actions (e.g. bag limits, size restrictions, time & area closures, and gear restrictions) based on the annual fisheries evaluation.

The TLA has been used as a precautionary framework for fisheries with limited data to allow for a reasonable level of resource management. The name comes from assigning a color (red, yellow, or green) to categorize relative levels of indicators on the condition of the fish population or fishery, which can help clearly illustrate trends in the fishery. The current management of Atlantic croaker and spot compares annual changes in various indices (e.g. recent landings and survey information) to review trends in the fisheries. The most recent review found declines in the commercial and recreational landings for both Atlantic croaker and spot fisheries. However, there is concern that this annual review does not illustrate long-term trends in the stock nor does it include specific management measures to implement in response to declines in the stock or fishery.

The 2010 Atlantic croaker stock assessment indicated that overfishing is not occurring, while the stock status of spot is currently unknown. As both spot and Atlantic croaker are scheduled for benchmark stock assessments in 2016, the management options proposed in the Draft Addendum are intended to provide an interim approach until the benchmark assessments for both species are completed.

It is anticipated that several states will be conducting public hearings on the Draft Addendum throughout the summer. A subsequent press release will announce the availability of Draft Addendum as well as the details of the scheduled hearings. The Board will meet in August to review submitted public input and consider final approval of the Addendum. For more information, please contact, Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator at 703.842.0740 or krootes-murdy@asmfc.org.

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PR14-16

Meeting Summary

The South Atlantic Board met to review and consider action regarding current information on the sheepshead and southern kingfish fisheries; consider state representation and participation in the South Atlantic Advisory Panel and Red Drum Stock Assessment Subcommittee. Staff presented to the Board current life history, biology, landings, and management information on sheepshead and southern kingfish along the Atlantic coast. Staff noted that there is little evidence that these species are migratory along the coast. While sheepshead is currently managed on a state-by-state basis with commercial and recreational measures, there are no management measures in place for southern kingfish. Staff also presented the Board with an update of some research priorities that were outlined when the Board last considered

southern kingfish for interstate fisheries management in 2008. Given the information provided and current state level work on both species, the Board decided to note take any action at this time.

The Board was briefed by staff on the attendance of Advisory Panel members in recent years. Given poor attendance on recent conference calls, the Board was asked to consider their state representation and participation. The Board also considered state representation for the upcoming Red Drum Stock Assessment in 2015. The following individuals were appointed to the Red Drum Stock Assessment Subcommittee: Harry Rickabaugh (MD), Sally Roman (VA), Lee Paramore (NC), Steve Arnott (SC), Carolyn Belcher (GA), and Mike Murphy (FL). For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to release the addendum for public comment with the changes made today.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Grist. Motion carries.

INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (ISFMP) POLICY BOARD (MAY 14, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Interstate Fisheries Management program (ISFMP) Policy board met to review and discuss a number of issues. The Management and Science Committee (MSC) reported on the task to investigate climate-induced shifts in stock distributions and recommend options on possible re-allocation of state quotas. The MSC focused its investigation on summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. Explaining distribution shifts is complicated, as shifts can be the result climate change, stock rebuilding, and/or fishing pressure impacts on abundance and distribution. An analysis conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center found evidence of a North Pole-ward shift in black sea bass, scup, and summer flounder. Shifts in black sea bass and scup are primarily temperature driven, whereas the shift in summer flounder is largely driven by recovery of the stock and expansion of larger flounder to more northern waters. Based on a survey of Commissioners, the MSC made several recommendations on how to approach re-allocation. The Policy Board tasked the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board with exploring the preferred reallocation scenario based on the MSC recommendations. The preferred -historical/currentøreallocation scenario would use a combination of a percentage of the allocation retaining the historical allocation framework for a given species, and the remaining percentage would be allocated to states who have experienced increases due to stock distribution shifts.

The Board initiated a Cancer Crab Fishery Management Plan (FMP) based on recommendations from the Jonah Crab Fishery Improvement Project (FIP). The FIP for Jonah crab was initiated by Delhaize America (a grocery retailer) when the company found Jonah crab did not meet its criteria for sustainable harvest in order to continue the sale of Jonah crab in its stores. The FIP is concerned with the increased targeted fishing pressure, likely due to a fast growing market demand, the long term health of the fishery could become compromised. The FIP made several recommendations to the Commission including a minimum size, prohibiting female crab harvest, and reporting requirements. The Board tasked the American Lobster Board with the development of the FMP. The Lobster Board will review the FIP recommendations and develop a public information document for release in the fall of 2014.

The Board tasked the Committee on Economics and Social Science (CESS) to complete a comprehensive case-study on Atlantic menhaden. CESS will report back to the Board in August regarding a timeline and the type of information that can be provided in the case study.

The Board agreed to send comments to NOAA Fisheries on the Draft Stock Assessment Prioritization Protocol. The Board also agreed to changes in the Commission's stock assessment schedule. Changes in timing were made for American lobster (spring 2015 review), black sea bass (spring 2016 review), northern shrimp (2017 review), and the multispecies VPA (date TBD after the 2014 menhaden review). The horseshoe crab benchmark assessment will be delayed until confidential data issues can be resolved. A spot assessment will be conducted concurrently with Atlantic croaker (2016 review).

The Artificial Reef Committee will be working on an update to the Guidelines to Marine Artificial Reef Materials. The Committee will also investigate data available to conduct an economic analysis on the benefits of artificial reefs. The Habitat Committee will be updating the Living Shorelines Guidance Document and drafting a Sciaenid Habitat Source Document. The next Habitat Management Series will be on Nearshore and Estuarine Aquaculture. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org.

Motions

Move to approve the Stock Assessment Schedule as presented.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries without opposition.

Move to initiate a Cancer Crab FMP, with a focus on Jonah Crab and task the American Lobster Board with the development of the FMP.

Motion made by Mr. Train and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion carries without objection.

LEGISLATORS & GOVERNORS' APPOINTEES LUNCHEON (MAY 14, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Commission's Legislators and Governors' Appointees met to provide recommendations on the Commission's Policy on Commissioner Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest. Major points of discussion included possible conditions that constitute a conflict of interest and options for recusal if such conditions are met. Commissioner Roy Miller of Delaware was elected to serve as Governor's Appointee Vice-Chair. For more information, please contact Deke Tompkins, Legislative Executive Assistant, at dtompkins@asmfc.org.

COMMISSIONER WORKSHOP ON THE MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM (MAY 14, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Commission and the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) held a joint workshop on state implementation of the dockside survey of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). The workshop provided Commissioners with information on proposed transitioning of the dockside survey from a federal contractor to state agencies. The survey is used in part to develop recreational catch and effort estimates. Transitioning to state conduct of the dockside survey was originally requested by several states and has been supported by MRIP, with ASMFC/ACCSP to serve the role as central survey coordinator for the Atlantic coast. A series of presentations was given on state implementation transition options, an overview of costs, and the experiences of states who are already conducting the recreational dockside survey (select Atlantic and Gulf states, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission). The Atlantic states, ASMFC/ACCSP, and NMFS MRIP will continue planning over the next several months toward possible state implementation of the survey starting in January, 2016. For more information, please contact Geoff White, ACCSP Data Team, at gwhite@accsp.org.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (MAY 15, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Executive Committee approved the FY 2015 budget and discussed the Policy on Commissioner Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest. The Committee directed staff to develop a white paper to provide consistency in advisory panel involvement in the preparation of fishery management plans, amendments and addenda. For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance & Administration, at lleach@asmfc.org.

ATLANTIC MENHADEN MANAGEMENT BOARD (MAY 15, 2014)

Press Release

First Year of Atlantic Menhaden Amendment 2 Implementation Yields Positive Results

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Menhaden Management Board accepted the 2014 Fishery Management Plan Review detailing the results of the 2013 fishing year and implementation of Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. Total 2013 harvest excluding bycatch was 166,077 metric tons (mt), 2.8% below the coastwide total allowable catch (TAC) of 170,800 mt established through Amendment 2. In 2013, the reduction fishery harvested 131,034 mt while the bait fishery harvested approximately 35,043 mt. A total of 1,942 metric tons were harvested under the 6,000 pound bycatch allowance with approximately 91% of bycatch coming from pound nets. Bycatch accounted for 1.2% of the total coastwide harvest, but does not count towards the TAC. Amendment 2 does not provide for the rollover of unused quota from one year to the next because the stock is currently experiencing overfishing.

“Through the cooperative efforts of the Atlantic states in implementing Amendment 2, we have taken measurable steps towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Atlantic menhaden resource for both its ecosystem services and the fisheries that depend on it,” stated Commission Chair Louis Daniel of North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.

Amendment 2 implementation has also improved reporting as well as expanded biological monitoring for the bait fishery. The

accompanying table details state quotas for the 2014 fishing year after setting aside 1% for episodic events. Any overages in the 2013 quotas because of late reports will come out of the 2014 quotas. Progress on the upcoming benchmark stock assessment continues with an assessment workshop scheduled for June 2 -5, 2014 at the NOAA Beaufort Lab and the peer review scheduled for December 2014. It is anticipated that the Board will consider the results of the peer review at the Commission’s

2014 Atlantic Menhaden Quotas		
State	2014 Quota (MT)	2014 Quota (LBS)
ME	66.58	146,787
NH	0.05	112
MA	1417.94	3,126,024
RI	30.29	66,779
CT	29.50	65,034
NY	93.76	206,695
NJ	18924.42	41,721,164
DE	22.33	49,230
MD	2320.98	5,116,874
PRFC	1049.69	2,314,174
VA	144272.84	318,066,790
NC	833.23	1,836,948
SC	-	-
GA	-	-
FL	30.39	66,995
TOTAL	169092.00	372,783,605

Winter Meeting in February 2015. For more information, please contact, Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-15

Motions

Move to approve the 2014 Fishery Management Plan review for Atlantic Menhaden and approve *de minimis* requests for New Hampshire, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Motion made by Mr. Fote and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously.