

From: Jim Dawson <jimdawson1@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, June 7, 2021 12:17 PM
To: Moore, Christopher <cmoore@mafmc.org>
Cc: Beal, Robert <rbeal@asmfc.org>
Subject: Black Sea Bass FULL EXPANSION
Importance: High

Hello Chris:

A fisherman's work is never finished, so I will make this brief:

Ellen has left so understand that what I am informing you all is backed up by our state landings, SAFIS and every harvest report as well as fishing receipts:

The relative size of the stock in and off Virginia and Maryland is by no comparison what it has been in the past. Landing's data verifies this and Jill could also verify this. Again, marketability becomes the biggest problem when every market that is still open has plenty and causes fishermen to not fish because no market wants them...conclusion, the "stock" has simply expanded EVERYWHERE and has NOT just moved north. In fact, this year, due to the colder than normal weather pattern, I would bet MOST black sea bass will stay south this season, hence why Mark Hodges, Wes Townsend and myself are catching at two to three times the typical amount for the year?

My overall concern for reduction in the south is for the way Virginia divides the quota's will amount to a VERY serious reduction. Not too noticeable some would think, but at a point in time when we were given such a small quota by you all, NO LIE, my "personal" IFQ would have been caught this year in just one week! What then? The stock size is increasing so fast, it is my FIRM belief that those who sit in offices each day CANNOT possibly use one method to obtain ENOUGH information for what is actually occurring with respect to black sea bass. There are MANY factors going on all at the same time, waters actually are starting to cool at an unusual rate with water temperatures as low as 60.7 degrees for the 1st of June of our coast? Let's not jump too quick and state that the black sea bass stock moved north because the water is getting too warm? I HAVE the temperature data for the past 20+ years and can verify each year, we should use EVERY data point to assess fisheries and not just a few? VTR records, now "observer data" can be utilized, why was this forced on the fishermen if the data cannot be used? Perhaps we can start using a "combined" data set of sources to asses EVERYTHING well before we just "vote" without ALL points of data? The ENTIRE dynamics has changed! EVERY recreational boat catches their full limits within 15 minutes, then there are those who just keep fishing because there is little to no law enforcement. I am witnessing such abuse on a day-to-day basis, there should be something done! Recreational has caught so many more because there are so many more! No way to track what they catch? MUST CHANGE! Commercial is tracked and stopped yet recreational to date nothing? We CAN and MUST come up with something BEFORE changes can be even thought about! What we do is start discussing with those who ARE actually fishing "full-time". Use as many information sources that we have and PLEASE do NOT change things without understanding the "impacts" on ALL of us! The negative impacts we can explain if we just had ANYONE who would actually listen. "Virtual" just does NOT cut it, so why not table everything until the time you all feel it is safe to meet in person again? My e-mails tend to be to the point, but when speaking and "in person", those who have known me "understand" I mean NO disrespect and just want fairness! Covid has put a real hurting on the fishing industry, we need help! We MUST be given a chance to explain! My point of

“impact” is law that MUST be followed by NOAA. Those leaders understand the repercussions if they move forward without undergoing a full economic impact via Magnuson. Let us think.

The over-all stock must be down south now according to catch results, so how about we give some time to assess before making moves without following the scientific and numbers based facts. Landings are being made by those doing the same thing they always have with no changes made to the way they fish. Landings are what by those individuals? Just look!

Can we agree to at least look...I have had the respect and have given respect, but “we” NEED those in the executive positions to stand up and say: Perhaps we should just look a little further before we make possible mistakes?

All we are asking for is a chance to make our personal points backed by specifics and 100% factual landings data.

Thanks for your time,

James E. Dawson.