



# Research Set-Aside Workshop Overview

## **3 Webinars and 1 In-Person Meeting**

July 2021 - February 2022

### **Redevelopment of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program**

#### **Purpose**

The Council is hosting a series of 4 workshops (3 webinars and 1 in-person meeting) to develop recommendations for the possible redevelopment of the RSA program. Each webinar will target a separate topic related to RSA (research, funding, and enforcement). The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Economic Working Group will work collaboratively with the Council's Research Steering Committee (RSC) to provide economic input specific to each webinar topic, as well as develop meeting reports and briefing materials for the in-person workshop in the fall. During the final in-person workshop, participants will review the recommendations from the first three webinars and develop final recommendations for RSA program redevelopment. Workshop participants will include a core group of individuals who will be invited to attend all four workshops. Staff may solicit additional participants with topic-specific expertise to participate in each workshop. All workshops will be open to the public.

Below is an outline of the workshop structure with meeting-specific goals and trigger questions, a proposed participant list, and timeline.

#### **Workshop Dates, Topics, and Objectives**

##### **Workshop Webinar Meeting 1 (July 15<sup>th</sup>): Research**

###### Objectives:

- Identify how research goals will be prioritized, projects will be screened, and results will inform management/be communicated to the Council and stakeholders.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Research

###### Trigger Questions:

- How should research needs (to be fulfilled by RSA) be prioritized?
- What criteria should be met to qualify as a successful applicant?
- What criteria should be developed for how project results will be reviewed and articulated to the Council?

## **Workshop Webinar Meeting 2 (August 31<sup>st</sup>): Funding**

### Objectives:

- Confirm how the program will be administered (federal grant program), discuss funding mechanism, and indicate that projects should be tied to management/assessment needs.
- Discuss how Council, RSC, and SSC input will impact project selection.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Funding

### Trigger Questions:

- How should the auction system or other funding mechanism be revised to improve RSA?
- What would be the benefits (if any) of adopting a posted-price offer per quota lot rather than an auction?
- What are the fishing exemptions that (achieving the same conservation objectives) would maximize revenue for the RSA program?

## **Workshop Webinar Meeting 3 (October 14<sup>th</sup>): Enforcement**

### Objectives:

- Identify potential program modifications that could prevent reoccurrence of previous enforcement issues.
- Identify how the Council will collaborate with the Commission and other agencies to ensure compliance that addresses enforcement objectives.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Enforcement

### Trigger Questions:

- What recommendations should be made to improve enforcement efforts on RSA trips?
- What changes to enforcement have occurred since the suspension of RSA? Were they successful?
- Are there ways the Council can work more effectively with its management and enforcement partners to identify and address RSA enforcement issues in a timely manner?

## **In-Person Workshop (1-day) (February 16<sup>th</sup>): Final Recommendations**

**Location:** the Sheraton Baltimore Washington Airport Hotel – BWI, 1100 Old Elkrigde Landing Road, Linthicum Heights, Maryland 21090

### Objectives:

- Recap meetings 1-3
- Develop detailed recommendations (with timelines) for the Council identifying whether and how RSA should be redeveloped with input from the SSC Economic Working Group

### Trigger Questions:

- Should the Council redevelop the RSA program?
- What changes should be implemented to address previously identified concerns related to the RSA program including research, funding, program administration, and enforcement?

- What timelines should be developed to improve the overall RSA process (e.g., data and research needs, incorporate RSA into specifications cycle, grant applications, fishing “season”, report deadlines, etc.)?

## Participants

- **Primary Participants:**
  - MAFMC Research Steering Committee Members
  - Mid-Atlantic Council Staff
  - New England Council Staff
  - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Staff
  - ASMFC Law Enforcement Committee
  - NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)
  - Northeast Fisheries Science Center
  - Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO)
  - Scientific and Statistical Committee (e.g., Economic Working Group members and SSC Chair)
  - NOAA General Counsel
- **Other Invited Participants:**
  - National Fisheries Institute
  - State representatives (e.g., MAFMC and ASMFC Administrative Commissioners)
  - MAFMC Advisory Panels
  - Previously successful RSA participants
  - Science Center for Marine Fisheries
  - Other individuals

## Timeline

| Date                      | Event/Topic   |
|---------------------------|---|
| April Council Meeting     | RSC Committee Report detailing the RSA Workshop structure   |
| June 2 <sup>nd</sup>      | RSC Meeting – Finalize workshop logistics (e.g., dates, participants, agendas, structure, trigger questions)                        |
| July 15 <sup>th</sup>     | RSA Workshop Meeting 1 (Webinar) - Research   |
| August                    | Council Meeting: Economic WG progress report to Council   |
| August 31 <sup>st</sup>   | RSA Workshop Meeting 2 (Webinar) - Funding  |
| September                 | SSC Meeting: Economic WG progress report to SSC   |
| October 14 <sup>th</sup>  | RSA Workshop Meeting 3 (Webinar) - Enforcement  |
| November 16 <sup>th</sup> | RSC meeting to discuss Workshop 1-3 outcomes and define overall objectives  |
| December                  | Council Meeting: RSC report to Council  |
| February 16 <sup>th</sup> | RSA Workshop Meeting 4 (In-person)  |
| March                     | RSC meeting to discuss Workshop 4 outcomes and overall RSA recommendations  |
| April                     | Council Meeting: SSC Economic WG final report and RSC makes a formal recommendation on the status of RSA for Council consideration. |