NOAA FISHERIES

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 18-21
ICES Annual Science Conference, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

September 23
Working Waterfront Festival, New Bedford, MA

September 26-28
New England Fishery Management Council Meeting, Gloucester, MA

October 10-12
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting, Riverhead, NY

October 12
Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM) Annual Science Meeting, Portland, ME

November 5-9
Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation 24th Biennial Conference, Providence, RI

January 8-10, 2018
Milford Aquaculture Seminar, Shelton, CT

January 17-18, 2018
9th Atlantic Salmon Ecosystem Forum, UMaine, Orono

Top Story

Sweep Efficiency Study Targets Summer Flounder

Left: F/V *Karen Elizabeth* crew members Joe Alverness and Denny St. Amand secure the nets during haul back. The rockhopper sweep is visible on the net at left. Right: Calvin Alexander (left) and Jeff Pessutti of the NEFSC measure samples using the Fisheries Scientific Computing System (FSCS) aboard the *Karen Elizabeth*. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/Giovanni Gianesin, NEFSC.

Testing the efficiency of different sweep types on fishing nets was the focus of twin trawling operations August 18-28 aboard the F/V *Karen Elizabeth* from Point Judith, RI. The target species: summer flounder, also known as fluke, with red hake and winter flounder a secondary priority.

This sweep efficiency experiment, like those conducted in 2015 on yellowtail flounder and in 2016 on winter flounder and American plaice, was recommended by the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel, a joint advisory panel for the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils that is composed of fishermen, scientists, and managers.

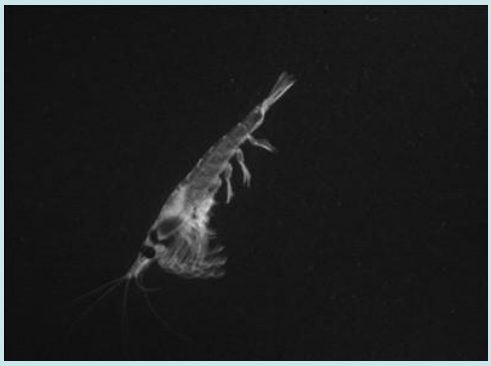
The results of this experiment will be used to refine the research survey-based estimate of summer flounder population abundance, which will then be available for use in the 2018 summer flounder benchmark stock assessment. The data for other species captured in the study will also be available to help improve other NEFSC assessments.

The team included Chris Roebuck and his four-person crew aboard the 78-foot western-rigged stern trawler *Karen Elizabeth* and five staffers from the NEFSC's Northeast Cooperative Research and Fisheries Ecology and Oceans and Climate branches. The study targeted summer flounder in Southern New England from Montauk, Long Island to Nantucket and red hake in the western Gulf of Maine off Cape Ann, making 103 good tows and collecting more than 73,000 fish of the targeted species.

More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/news/nr1711/

Brian Linton discusses the *Bigelow's* random stratified sampling design at stations from Cape Hatteras through the Gulf of Maine at the August 18 groundfish stock assessment port outreach meeting in Gloucester, MA. Photo credit: Ariele Baker, NEFSC.

NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow.* Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/NEFSC.



Euphausiids, or krill, are small shrimp-like crustaceans that are consumed by many baleen whales. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/ Elisabeth Broughton, NEFSC.

Northeast Groundfish Operational Assessments Update

Eight meetings were held between August 15 and September 7 in groundfish ports from Montauk, Long Island to Portland, Maine to talk with fishermen about the upcoming groundfish operational assessments as well as the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel and Cooperative Research Program plans to better connect industry-based research with upcoming assessments. Discussions were lively and productive. Local GARFO port agents and NEFSC Cooperative Research Branch staff participated, along with Population Dynamics Branch stock assessment scientists and staff. The peer review meeting was held in Woods Hole, MA September 11-15. More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/groundfish/operational-assessments-2017/

NOAA Ship Henry Bigelow Update

NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow* is in dry dock in Norfolk, Va., undergoing motor repairs. The vessel is expected back in service in early November. Several Northeast Fisheries Science Center research cruises have been affected. The summer ecosystem monitoring cruise was canceled. A beaked whale survey was moved to the R/V *Hugh Sharp*, operated by the University of Delaware. The center is working with other NOAA line offices on options for the fall bottom-trawl survey. At press time, the NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter* was being rescheduled to handle cruises originally planned on the NOAA Ship *Pisces*, including the fall ecosystem monitoring cruise, which usually occurs between September and late November. This allows the NOAA Ship *Pisces* to prepare for use in the NEFSC Fall Bottom Trawl Survey, originally scheduled for the *Bigelow*. More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/news/nr1709/

Science Shorts

Lessons in Communication from a Stakeholder Driven MSE for Atlantic Herring

NEFSC scientists and others helped organize and facilitate a 2017 American Fisheries Society symposium on stakeholder involvement in the management strategy evaluation (MSE) process. In 2016, the New England Fisheries Management Council approved development of two MSE workshops, held in May and December 2016, to give Atlantic herring stakeholders the opportunity to provide input about their concerns regarding fishery objectives and control rule trade-offs. The workshops, the first ever in the region, revealed some crucial takeaways: words and phrases mean different things to different people with different life experiences. More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/features/stakeholder-mse-herring/

Digital Media as a Research Tool

A camera just isn't a camera anymore. Cameras still document our exciting times in interesting places with friends and family, but the digital landscape has definitely changed. Today, cameras and smart phones have high resolution video and their ease of use, storage capacity, and distribution pathways make them a valuable research tool for scientists.

Visitors learned about fisheries surveys, sampling at sea, ship operations, and careers aboard the R/V *Gloria Michelle* during an outreach event in August on Boston Harbor. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/Shelley Dawicki, NEFSC.

NEFSC staff member Holly McBride extracts a fish earbone from a red hake during the Boston outreach event. An Acadian redfish is on the measuring board at left, a witch flounder at bottom. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/Shelley Dawicki, NEFSC.

GoPro video helps scientists at the NEFSC' s Milford Laboratory understand how fish like this tautog might use an aquaculture farm's oyster cage as habitat. Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries/Paul Clark,NEFSC.

NEFSC scientists use cameras in a variety of ways, from identifying plankton and measuring a fish egg to tracking fish behavior, estimating fecundity in summer flounder, and tracking growth in larval surfclams. More here: https:// www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/features/digital-media-research-tools/

Research Vessel Visits Boston, Offers Public Tours

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center's 72-foot research vessel *Gloria Michelle* visited Boston on August 10 and 11, giving the public an opportunity to tour the ship and learn more about its work. The vessel conducts groundfish surveys in state waters each spring and fall for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and a summer northern shrimp survey in the Gulf of Maine, as well as projects for NOAA and other scientific research organizations in the Northeast. Several hundred people, along with summer campers and student groups from the New England Aquarium and Congressional staff members, toured the vessel. They learned how a fisheries survey is conducted, saw some of the species found in the Northeast, and met the crew and scientists who work aboard the vessel. The ship was docked adjacent to the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse on Northern Avenue, along the Harborwalk on Boston Harbor. Visits to other ports are being considered.
More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/news/nr1710/

Atlantic Wolffish and Halibut Sampling in the Gulf of Maine

Sampling started slowly, but picked up after a revised experimental fishing permit was issued to the University of New Hampshire, allowing access to Jeffrey's Ledge, which yielded 20 fish, including 11 females. Halibut samples from the study fleet and a cooperating partner were used to train researchers (The Nature Conservancy, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth) and fishermen (Cape Cod Fishermen's Alliance) to take life history samples and to test methods for attaching satellite tags to mature fish. The work is funded by a Saltonstall-Kennedy grant.

GoPro Camera Oyster Cage Monitoring Near Charles Island Reef

NEFSC staff have being experimenting with *GoPro* cameras to collect video of fish activity around oyster cages. The project is comparing how cage density may affect diversity and abundance of fish associated with oyster cage farms. Water samples were also collected for eDNA.

Studies Look at Effects of Ocean Acidification on Early Life Stages of Fish

Summer experiments at the NEFSC's J.J. Howard Lab focused on how elevated carbon dioxide affects the health and viability of fish in early life stages. The first series of proof-of-concept experiments used the Atlantic silverside as a model species. Summer flounder will be used in an analogous series of studies in the fall.

Aerial Cetacean Survey in Gulf of St Lawrence, Canada

After completing seasonal surveys in U.S. waters, the NEFSC's aerial survey team was deployed in the Gulf of St. Lawrence to assist the Canadian government with right whale sighting and identification. The crew subsequently became an integral part of the response effort when a large number of right whale deaths were confirmed in this area. The operations continued through August. More on the Canadian response here: http://dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/environmental-environnement/narightwhale-baleinenoirean/index-eng.html

Latest NEFSC Publications

Rebecca Selden, Ryan Batt, Vincent Saba, Malin Pinsky. 2017. Diversity in thermal affinity among key piscivores buffers impacts of ocean warming on predator-prey interactions. *Global Change Biology*, in press

Brian D. Grieve, Jonathan A. Hare, Vincent S. Saba. Projecting the effects of climate change on Calanus finmarchicus distribution within the U.S. Northeast Continental Shelf. *Scientific Reports 7, 6264.*

Lough RG, Broughton EA, Kristiansen T. 2017. Changes in spatial and temporal variability of prey affect functional connectivity of larval and juvenile cod. *ICES Journal of Marine Science* (2017), 74(6), 1826–1837. doi:10.1093/icesjms/fsx080.

Mercaldo-Allen R, Meseck S, Goldberg R, Clark, P, Kuropat C, Rose J M. 2017. Effects of clam dredging on benthic ecology of two cultivated northern quahog beds with different harvest histories and sediment grain sizes. *Aquaculture International* 25(5):1971-1985.

Georgianna D, Lee MY, Walden J. Contrasting Trends in the Northeast United States Groundfish and Scallop Processing Industries. *Marine Policy*.

Brown SM, Heguy A, Zappile P, Chen H, Goradia A, Wang Y, Hao Y, Roy NK, Vitale K, Chambers RC, Wirgin I. A Dramatic Difference in Global Gene Expression between TCDD-Treated Atlantic Tomcod Larvae from the Resistant Hudson River and a Nearby Sensitive Population. *Genome Biology and Evolution*.

Dave McElroy holds an Atlantic cod at the NEFSC's fish biology and reproduction exhibit at the Woods Hole Science Stroll. Photo Credit: Thomas Kleindinst for NOAA Fisheries/NEFSC.

Study Fleet Vessels Sending Weather Data to National Weather Service

NEFSC Cooperative Research Branch Study Fleet vessels F/V *Lisa Ann III* and F/V *Illusion* are now sending hourly weather reports to the National Weather Service. After a year-long demonstration period, the vessel-based system for gathering meteorological data may now be installed on more boats.

Cruise Maps Deep-Sea Corals in the Gulf of Maine

The NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson* mapped deep sea coral habitats in the Gulf of Maine. The July 29-August 11 cruise, under a NEFSC chief scientist, targeted Lindenkohl Knoll, Georges Bank's north slope, and central Jordan Basin in the middle of the Gulf of Maine as likely areas for deep-sea corals that have not yet been explored. Multibeam backscatter images sent from the ship revealed hills, ridges, mud holes, and possible gas-release pockmarks around Lindenkohl Knoll in the southern Gulf of Maine along the U.S. side of the U.S.-Canadian border. There are areas of heavy trawl tracks, but also areas that appear unscarred by fishing activity. Working up the northern slope of Georges Bank revealed bands of roughly parallel east-to-west tracks (along-slope), but also apparently untrawled bands and rugged terrain on the Bank rim, confirming 2008 observations of a broad, continuous rocky-gravelly band along the Bank rim inside Closed Area II. The final target of the cruise was farther north in central Jordan Basin, around the middle of the Gulf, where rugged, hard-bottom habitat was found on the previously unexplored U.S. side of the border, paralleling known hard-bottom coral habitats on the Canadian side. Collaborating offices and institutions include the NMFS Deep Sea Corals group at NOAA Headquarters, NOAA's National Ocean Service, the University of Connecticut, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Lagrangian Camera Float Study Initiated in Coastal Massachusetts Waters

NEFSC staff and colleagues from the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography and The Nature Conservancy deployed a drift camera near Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries ventless trap sites in Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound. The work is part of a NMFS Habitat Assessment Improvement Plan project to test whether an untethered drift camera system can be used to provide estimates of detectability of species for existing long-term survey indices. Additional sampling will be conducted in conjunction with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries bottom trawl surveys this fall and in the spring of 2018.

Woods Hole Science Stroll Attracts Large Crowd

Things got off to a soggy start, but by the time it was all over attendance was robust with nearly 2,000 visitors at the third annual science stroll, which featured 18 organizations. The NEFSC had 20 exhibits, demonstrations and hands-on displays under tents on the main lab parking lot and a lot nearby. A life-size inflatable humpback whale, a fish biology exhibit featuring more than a dozen species, and U.S. Coast Guard displays were particular favorites. The Woods Hole Science Aquarium had its busiest day of the year so far, with 1,734 visitors signing in. More here: https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/press_release/pr2017/features/science-stroll-2017/

Ken Keene is the new Mid-Atlantic Lead/ Observer Safety Coordinator for the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program. Ken, a research fisheries biologist, is located at the James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory at Sandy Hook, NJ.

Vessel and Field Updates

FSV *Henry B. Bigelow* Cetacean and Turtle Survey

The first leg of the annual cetacean and turtle survey got underway July 6 as part of the Atlantic Marine Assessment Program for Protected Species. Learn more on the NEFSC's Field Freshblog: https://nefsc.wordpress.com/category/turtles/

R/V *Gloria Michelle* Conducts Fall Massachusetts Groundfish Survey

The 72-foot vessel is conducting the annual fall groundfish survey for the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries in state waters. The vessel departed Woods Hole September 5 and will return to Woods Hole September 23. During the survey the ship calls at various ports in the state. *Gloria Michelle* has been conducting the spring and fall Massachusetts groundfish surveys since 1982.

Survey of Amphipods in Sandy Hook Bay, NJ

NEFSC staff surveyed the abundance of the tube-dwelling amphipod *Ampelisca abdita* in Sandy Hook Bay using grab-sampling equipment. This species has become scarce. Only small traces were found in one place (the northeast corner); the remaining areas did not have any specimens. The species once covered the full extent of this bay in a nearly continuous meadow, but it has become much less abundant during the past few years.

Atlantic Salmon Sampling in Greenland

Atlantic salmon caught at Qaqortoq, Greenland were sampled August 28-September 9 by a NEFSC staff member, who also explored live-capture options for tagging studies. Learn more about the experience on the NEFSC blog: https://nefsc.wordpress.com/category/atlantic-salmon/

Turtle Excluder Device Tested on F/V *Karen Elizabeth*

Gear researchers spent eight days in September testing a cable turtle excluder device (TED) for catch comparisons in the summer flounder fishery and in the squid fishery. The project is a collaborative effort between NOAA's Northeast and Southeast Fisheries Science Centers.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

2017 Summer Meeting Summary

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

2017 Summer Meeting
Alexandria, VA
August 1-3, 2017

Toni Kerns, ISFMP, or
Tina Berger, Communications
For more information, please contact
the identified individual at
703.842.0740

Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (AUGUST 1, 2017)

Meeting Summary

The Executive Committee discussed the allocation of the "Regional Councils and Fisheries Commission" line in the NOAA budget. While this budget line has increased significantly since its creation in 2008, allocation to the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA) has not increased proportionally. The Executive Committee reinforced its position that its goal is to ensure ACFCMA is allocated a share equal to the proportion established in 2008.

The Executive Committee also had extensive deliberations on the potential short- and long-term impacts of the Secretary of Commerce's decision to not agree with the Commission's finding of New Jersey's noncompliance with summer flounder recreational measures. The Committee expressed its concern that summer flounder abundance is decreasing and an overharvest of the stock this year will impact the future health of the stock. The Committee also expressed its concern over the uncertainty of how the Secretary may address future non-compliance findings.

For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance and Administration, at lleach@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATE/FEDERAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 1, 2017)

Press Release

ASMFC South Atlantic Board Receives Atlantic Croaker and Spot Benchmark Stock Assessment & Peer Review Reports

Alexandria, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board met in May and August to receive the findings of the 2017 Atlantic Croaker and Spot Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Reports. While neither assessment was endorsed by an independent panel of fisheries scientists (Peer Review Panel) for management use, the Panel agreed with the general results of the assessment that immediate management actions are not necessary. The Panel recommended continued use of the annual traffic light analyses (TLA), established in 2014 to monitor fishery and resource trends, and implement management measures as needed, for Atlantic croaker and spot.

The Panel did acknowledge several improvements since the 2010 Atlantic croaker assessment, notably with regard to the estimation and inclusion of dead discards from the Southeastern US shrimp trawl fishery. Estimates of these discards indicate they account for a large majority of fish removed from the population annually (via directed and non-directed fishing activities) for both Atlantic croaker and spot. The Panel recommended continued monitoring of these discards and potential inclusion or consideration of these discards in the annual TLAs conducted for Atlantic croaker and spot.

A key issue causing uncertainty in the results of both assessments was the disagreement between recent trends in harvest and abundance. Trends in stock abundance for Atlantic croaker and spot are estimated through several federal and state fishery-independent surveys. Typically, if these surveys catch a relatively large number of Atlantic croaker or spot, that would indicate a greater number of

Atlantic croaker or spot available to be harvested by their directed fisheries. Thus, scientists and managers would expect a greater abundance of Atlantic croaker or spot would also be reflected through an increase in harvest for that year. Similarly, a decrease in abundance would be expected to be coupled with a decrease in harvest. However, for both Atlantic croaker and spot, recent harvest numbers are declining while estimated abundance is increasing.

A similar trend is evident in the 2016 TLAs for Atlantic croaker and spot. The TLA assigns a color (red, yellow, or green) to categorize relative levels of indicators on the condition of the fish population (abundance metric) or fishery (harvest metric). For example, as harvest increases relative to its long-term mean, the proportion of green in a given year will increase and as harvest decreases, the amount of red in that year will increase. Under the Addendum II to Amendment 1 for Atlantic Croaker and Addendum I to the Omnibus Amendment for Spot, state-specific management action would be initiated when the proportion of red exceeds the specified thresholds (for both harvest and abundance) over three consecutive years for Atlantic croaker and two consecutive years for spot.

Figure 1. Atlantic Croaker TLA Harvest Metric (Recreational and Commercial Landings)

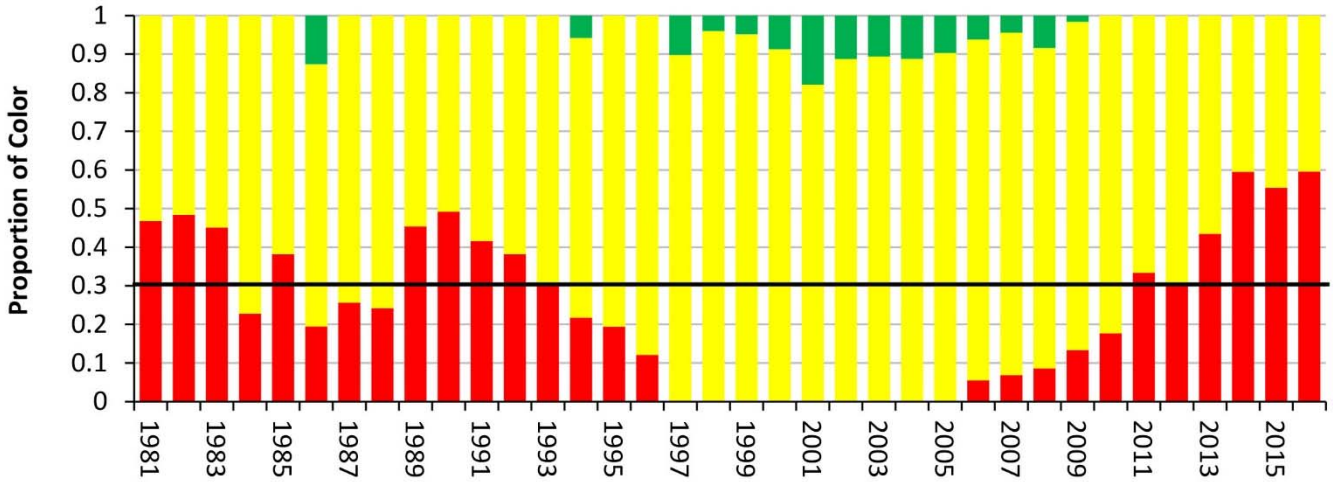
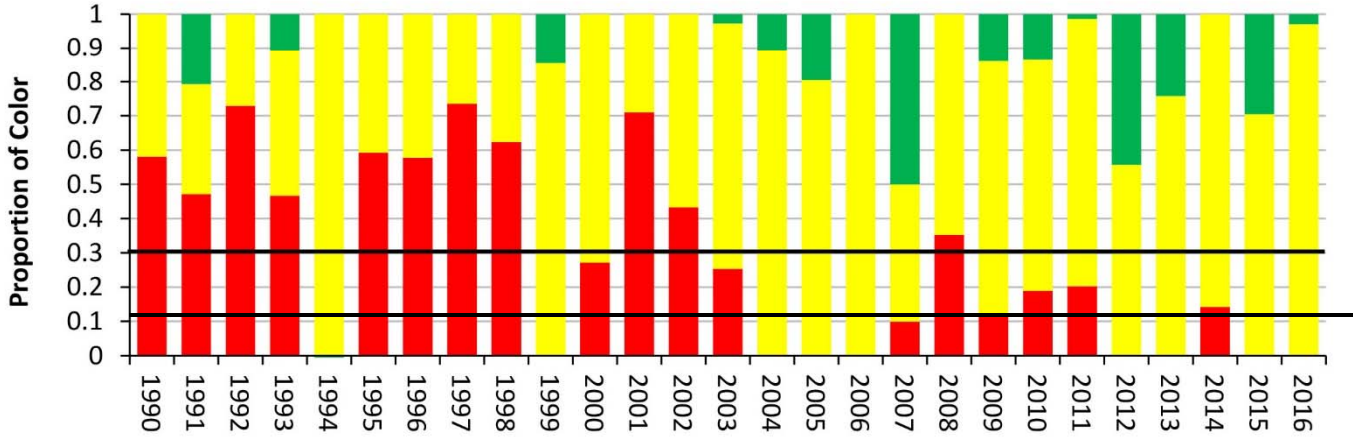


Figure 2. Atlantic Croaker Adult TLA Abundance Metric (NMFS and SEAMAP Surveys)



The 2016 TLA for Atlantic croaker shows red proportions of greater than the 30% threshold for the harvest metric (Figure 1) and 0% for the abundance metric (Figure 2), indicative of relatively low harvest and high abundance in 2016. Since thresholds were not exceeded for both metrics over the last three years, no management response is necessary for Atlantic croaker.

Figure 3. Spot TLA Harvest Metric (Commercial and Recreational Landings)

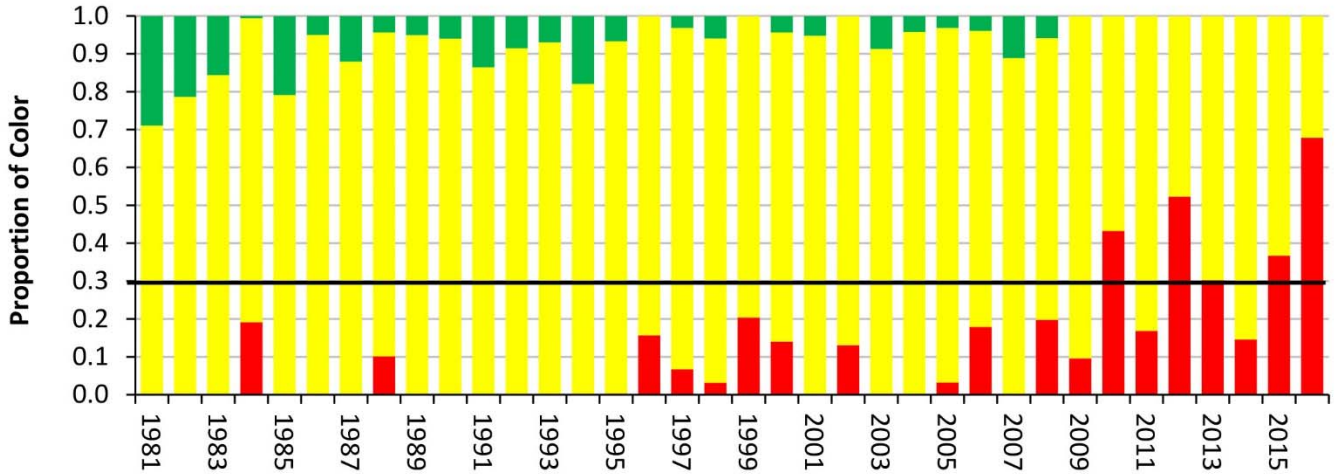
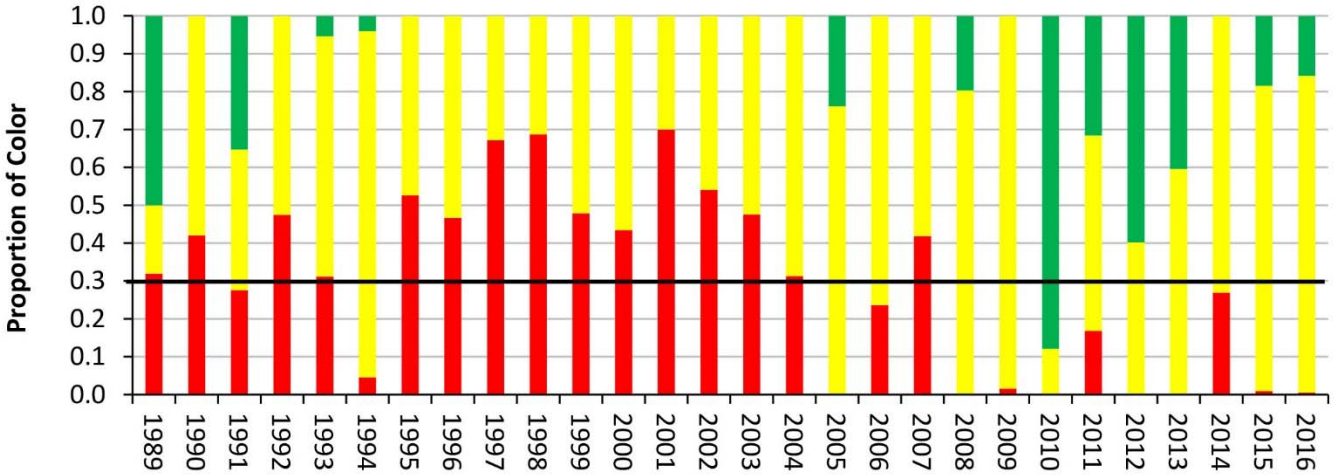


Figure 4. Spot TLA Adult Abundance Metric (NMFS and SEAMAP Surveys)



The 2016 TLA for spot also shows red proportions of greater than the 30% threshold for the harvest metric (Figure 3) and 0% for the abundance metric (Figure 4), indicative of relatively low harvest and high abundance in 2016. Since thresholds were not exceeded for both metrics over the last two years, no management response is necessary for spot.

The Peer Review Reports will be available on the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, on the respective species page s by mid-August. For more information, please contact Mike Schmidtke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mschmidtke@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR17-31

Meeting Summary

The South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board met to review and discuss a number of issues including the Draft Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia for public comment; the 2017 Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for Spot; and the traffic light analyses for Atlantic croaker and spot.

The Board approved the Draft FMP for AMG Cobia for public comment. The intent of the Draft FMP is to complement federal AMG cobia management actions and distribute catches among member states through a proposed allocation strategy. The Draft FMP was initiated in response to recent overages of the recreational allocation of the federal annual catch limit (ACL) for AMG Cobia. The Draft FMP addresses immediate management and conservation goals in anticipation of a new, benchmark AMG cobia stock assessment scheduled for completion in 2019. Management options include size, bag, and vessel limits and seasons that will restrict harvest to comply with the federal ACL. In addition, the Draft FMP includes proposed *de minimis* options for Mid-Atlantic states (Maryland through New York) whose landings are minimal or episodic.

The most significant change may come in the form of state-specific, recreational allocations. The current ACL for AMG cobia is 670,000 pounds (with 620,000 pounds allocated for recreational harvest and 50,000 pounds for commercial harvest). Managing the recreational ACL on a coastwide basis has resulted in federal closures and significant overages in 2015 and 2016, disrupting fishing opportunities and jeopardizing the health of the stock. The Draft FMP contains a series of proposed options to allocate a coastwide recreational harvest limit equivalent to the recreational ACL to the four primary states (Georgia-Virginia) to allow those states more flexibility in developing seasonal options that best suit their specific state's recreational and for-hire interests.

At this time, the options for the commercial AMG cobia fishery do not include state-specific allocations and generally complement the federal requirements proposed by Framework Amendment 4 to the Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region.

It is expected that the states from Georgia through Virginia will conduct public hearings on the Draft FMP. The details of those hearings, as well as the availability of the Draft FMP for public comment, will be released in a subsequent press release. Final action on the Draft FMP is scheduled to occur in October 2017. For more information, please contact Louis Daniel, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ldaniel@asmfc.org or 252-342-1478.

Motions

Move to add an option for 36" FL (or TL equivalent) minimum size limit for the commercial fishery. Motion made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion fails (3 in fav or, 6 opposed, 1 abstention).

Move to approve the Cobia Fishery Management Plan for public comment as amended. Motion made by Dr. Duval and seconded by Ms. Fegley. Motion passes.

ATLANTIC COASTAL COOPERATIVE STATISTICS PROGRAM (ACCSP) COORDINATING COUNCIL (AUGUST 1, 2017)

Meeting Summary

The ACCSP Coordinating Council met to receive Program and Committee updates and to consider approval of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Atlantic Regional Implementation Plan. The MRIP Atlantic Regional Implementation Plan was compiled by the ACCSP Recreational Technical and approved by the Operations Committee before the plan was presented to the Coordinating Council for final approval.

The plan identifies six recreational data collection priorities, including:

- Improved PSE of MRIP catch estimates
- Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring
- Improved discard/release data
- Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP APAIS
- Improved spatial resolution and technical guidance for post-stratification of MRIP estimates
- Improved timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates

The Coordinating Council approved the MRIP Atlantic Regional Implementation Plan as prepared by the Recreational Technical Committee and recommended by the Operations Committee.

The Coordinating Council was also apprised of recent efforts to improve recreational data collection, including: streamlining APAIS data processing, increasing collaboration with state partners, and working with partners to identify opportunities for reducing duplicate reporting in the for-hire sector. Through adoption of new software and data storage technologies, ACCSP staff have been able to automate a significant portion of data entry, processing, and QA/QC. With less time spent on data entry, staff has been able to increase their focus on supporting and collaborating with the state partners, including providing more interactive training for state field interviewers and increasing outreach.

Partners have identified that there are several examples of overlapping for-hire data collection programs along the coast. ACCSP's Recreational Technical Committee has begun discussions on how to reduce duplicate reporting in the for-hire sector while still ensuring thorough coverage, flexibility in methodologies, standardized storage, and coast-wide access to the data. For more information, please contact Mike Cahall, ACCSP Director, at mike.cahall@accsp.org or 703.842.0780.

Motions

Move to accept the Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan and submit to the MRIP Operations Team.

Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Geer. Motion carries.

AMERICAN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 1, 2017)

Press Release

ASMFC American Lobster Board Initiates Addendum to Increase Resiliency of the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank Stock

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's American Lobster Management Board initiated Draft Addendum XXVII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Draft Addendum seeks to increase the resiliency of the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) stock by considering the standardization of management measures across Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs). This is a proactive management action and is in response to signs of reduced settlement. Initiating an addendum charges the Plan Development Team (PDT) with developing management alternatives for consideration in the Draft Addendum.

The American lobster fishery is one of the largest and most valuable fisheries along the Atlantic coast. In 2016, over 158 million pounds were landed coastwide totaling $666 million in ex-vessel value. The vast majority of harvest occurs within the GOM/GBK stock area, with over 130 million pounds landed in Maine alone. Since 2012, settlement surveys for the GOM/GBK stock have indicated a consistent decreasing trend in young-of-year lobster. This decrease could foreshadow a decline in recruitment and landings. Given the high value of the fishery and the economic importance of the fishery to coastal communities throughout New England, the Board initiated Draft Addendum XXVII as a proactive response to build resiliency in the stock.

The Draft Addendum will consider, to the extent possible, the development of consistent management measures for the GOM/GBK stock, including gauge size and v-notch definitions. Currently, disparate regulations allow lobsters protected in one LCMA to be harvested in another LCMA. A uniform set of regulations would add an additional biological buffer to the stock through the protection of spawning stock biomass across LCMAs. In addition, this action may address enforcement concerns, particularly regarding the sale and transfer of lobsters across state lines which are subject to different minimum gauge sizes. The PDT will provide an update on the development of Draft Addendum XXVII at the Commission's Annual Meeting in October.

Regarding the Southern New England stock, the Board decided to not move forward with Addendum XXV for management use at the current time. After considering the proposals put forth by the Lobster Conservation Management Teams (LCMTs) and Technical Committee input, the Board was divided in its support of the Draft Addendum. Some members felt the proposed measures did not go far enough to protect the stock, while others were concerned the majority of LCMT proposals would not achieve the required 5% increase in egg production. Others believed significant reductions have already occurred in the fishery and no further action was needed. Ultimately, the Board decided to establish a Workgroup to discuss ways to manage SNE lobster.

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PR17-34

Motions

Move to approve the LCMA 5 proposal to increase the minimum gauge size to 88mm to achieve the 5% increase in egg production specified in Addendum XXV.

Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion
Move to approve the LCMT proposals for area 2, 3, 4, and 6 (with option 2).
Motion made by Mr. Reid and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck.

Motion to Postpone
Move to postpone indefinitely action on Addendum XXV.
Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Roll Call Vote: In Favor – CT, NY, NJ, MD; Opposed – ME, NH, MA, RI, DE, VA, NMFS. Motion fails (4 in favor, 7 opposed).

Main Motion
Move to approve the LCMT proposals for area 2, 3, 4, and 6 (with option 2).
Motion made by Mr. Reid and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Roll Call Vote: In Favor – MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, VA; Opposed – NH, DE, MD, NMFS; Abstention – ME. Motion passes

Move to approve Addendum XXV as modified in May 2017 and today.
Motion made by Mr. McKiernan and seconded by Mr. Gibson. Roll Call Vote: In Favor – MA, RI; Opposed – NH, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, VA, NMFS; Abstention – ME. Motion fails
Main Motion
Move to (1) allow LCMA 4 fishermen the ability to continue fishing fixed lobster gear for other legal species (Jonah crab) during the closed period and (2) exempt closed season from the most restrictive rule.
Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Baum. Motion postponed until 2017 Annual Meeting.

Motion to Postpone
Move to postpone motion until 2017 Annual meeting.
Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to initiate an addendum to consider standardized management measures in the GOM/GBK stock. This addendum is intended to be a proactive management response to increase the resiliency of the stock.
Motion made by Mr. Keliher and seconded by Mr. White. Motion carries unanimously.

SHAD AND RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 2, 2017)

Meeting Summary
The Shad and River Herring Management Board met to receive an update on the timing of the American Shad Stock Assessment Update, review updated sustainable fishery management plans (SFMPs), and approve the 2016 Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Review. The Board was presented the current timetable for the American Shad Stock Assessment Update as well as potential challenges the Assessment Update may present. Scheduled to be completed in 2018, the Assessment Update will update information from the 2007 benchmark stock assessment. Recent feedback from the River Herring Stock Assessment Update indicate that some datasets included in the American shad benchmark assessment may need to be fully revised or removed. Additionally, the Stock Assessment Subcommittee

encountered challenges replicating the framework for assessing stock conditions and trends established in the benchmark assessment. Staff indicated that to better address these challenges, the Technical Committee, Stock Assessment Subcommittee, and Assessment Science Committee will be asked to help provide guidance on how the Assessment Update should proceed; once recommendations are developed, they will be presented to the Board for consideration.

The Board was presented an updated SFMP from South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to commercially and recreational harvest river herring in the Santee-Cooper Rivers complex and commercially from the Pee-Dee River. The plan includes recent data and requests to maintain existing recreational measures from the 2010 SFMP. The Technical Committee supported the plan, though recommended that a secondary sustainability benchmark be incorporated into the SFMP and further detail on what management responses would be if sustainability benchmarks are exceeded. The Board approved the updated SFMP with the Technical Committee recommendation.

The Board was presented an updated SFMP from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to recreationally harvest American shad in the St. Johns River. The plan includes recent data and also requests to maintain current recreational measures from the 2011 SFMP. The plan includes the existing sustainability benchmark of fishery-independent relative spawning stock biomass, was well as the addition of a Juvenile Abundance Index benchmark. While the spawning stock index has been at the 25th percentile (i.e. management triggers) for two consecutive years, the Technical Committee supported the plan and the Board approved the updated SFMP.

Lastly, the Board approved the 2016 FMP Review for Shad and River Herring and *de minimis* status for the following states: for American shad – Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts and Florida; for river herring – New Hampshire and Florida.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Press Release

Stock Assessment Update Indicates River Herring Remain Depleted on a Coastwide Basis Though Improvements Have Occurred in Several River Systems

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Shad and River Herring Management Board reviewed the results of the 2017 River Herring Assessment Update, which indicates river herring remain depleted and at near historic lows on a coastwide basis. The "depleted" determination was used instead of "overfished" and "overfishing" because many factors, not just directed and incidental fishing, are contributing to the low abundance of river herring.

Alewife and blueback herring (collectively referred to as river herring) are anadromous species, spending the majority of their life at sea and returning to their natal streams to spawn. While at sea, mixing is believed to occur among multiple river-specific stocks and the incidental catch of river herring in non-targeted ocean fisheries is known to include both immature and mature fish.

The stock assessment update applied the same approaches used in the previous benchmark stock assessment with the incorporation of additional years of data (2011-2015). Of the 54 river herring stocks for which data were available, 16 experienced increasing abundance trends, 2 experienced decreasing

abundance trends, 8 experienced stable abundance, 10 experienced no discernible trends in abundance due to high variability, and 18 did not have enough data to assess recent abundance trends (see Table 1).

While status on a coastwide basis remains unchanged, there are some positive signs of improvement for some river systems, with increasing abundance trends for a number of rivers in the Mid-Atlantic throughout New England region. While abundance in these river systems are still at low levels, dam removals and improvements to fish passage have had a positive impact on run returns. Since the completion of the 2012 assessment, NOAA Fisheries in partnership with the Commission have worked to provide state and local agencies with restoration project funding, leading to dam removals and fish passage improvement projects.
River herring are managed through Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Shad and River Herring, with the goal of conserving and protecting river herring along the coast. The Amendment prohibited state waters commercial and recreational fisheries beginning January 1, 2012, unless a state or jurisdiction had a Sustainable Fishery Management Plan (SFMP) approved by the Board. SFMPs must clearly demonstrate that the state's or jurisdiction's river herring fisheries meet sustainability targets which must be achieved and maintained. Amendment 2 also required states to implement fisheries-dependent and independent monitoring programs, and contains recommendations to member states and jurisdictions to conserve, restore, and protect critical river herring habitat. As of June 1, 2017, the Shad and River Herring Management Board approved sustainable fishery management plans for Maine, New

State	River	Benchmark Trends (2001-2010)	Updated Recent Trends (2006-2015)
NE U.S. Continental Shelf (NMFS Bottom Trawl)^		NA	Increasing[A,B]
ME	Androscoggin	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A]
	Kennebeck	Unknown[RH]	Increasing[RH]
	Sebasticook	Unknown[A]	Increasing[RH]
	Damariscotta	Stable[A]	Increasing[A]
	Union	Stable[A]	No Trend[A]
NH	Cocheco	Stable[A,B]	Increasing[A,B]
	Exeter	Unknown[A,B]	Stable[RH]
	Lamprey	Increasing[A]	Increasing[RH]
	Oyster	Stable[B]	Decreasing[RH]
	Taylor	Decreasing[B]	No Returns[RH]
	Winnicut	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
MA	Mattapoisett	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A]
	Monument	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A,B]
	Nemasket	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A]
	Parker	Unknown[A]	Stable[A]
	Stony Brook	Unknown[A]	Unknown[A]
RI	Buckeye	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A]
	Gilbert	Decreasing[A]	Stable[A]
	Nonquit	Decreasing[A]	Decrease[A]
CT	Bride Brook	Unknown[A]	Increasing[A]
	Connecticut	Decreasing[B]	Stable[B]
	Farmington	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
	Mianus	Unknown[A,B]	No Trend[A], Increasing[B]
	Mill Brook	Unknown[A]	No Trend[A]
	Naugatuck	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
	Shetucket	Unknown[A,B]	No Trend[A], Stable[B]
NY	Hudson	Stable[A.B]	Increasing[RH]
NJ, DE,PA	Delaware	Unknown[A,B]	No Trend[A,B]
MD, DE	Nanticoke	Decreasing[A,B]	Stable[A], No Trend[B]
VA, MD, DC	Potomac	Unknown[A,B]	Stable[A], Unknown[B]
VA	James	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
	Rappahannock	Unknown[A,B]	No Trend[A], Increasing[B]
	York	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
NC	Alligator	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
	Chowan	Stable[A.B]	No Trend[A], Stable[B]
	Scuppernog	Unknown[A,B]	Unknown[A,B]
SC	Santee-Cooper	Increasing[B]	No Trend[B]
FL	St. Johns River	NA	Unknown[B]

Table 1. Abundance trends of select alewife and blueback herring stocks along the Atlantic coast from the 2012 benchmark assessment and the 2017 assessment update. ^NE shelf trends are from the spring, coastwide survey data which encounters river herring more frequently than the fall survey. A = Alewife only; B= Blueback herring only; A,B = Alewife and blueback herring by species; RH = alewife and blueback herring combined.

Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, and South Carolina. Upon receiving the results of the Stock Assessment Update, the Board did not take any management action at this time.

For a more detailed overview of the River Herring Stock Assessment Update go here – https://tinyurl.com/y93wx7by. The Overview is intended to aid media and interested stakeholders in better understanding the Commission's stock assessment results and process. The River Herring Stock Assessment Update will be available on the Commission website, www.asmfc.org, on the Shad and River Herring webpage under stock assessment reports.
For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions
Move to approve the South Carolina Sustainable Fishery Management Plan (SFMP) for river herring and the Florida SFMP for shad inclusive of the Technical Committee recommendations.
Motion made by Mr. Estes and seconded by Dr. Rhodes. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to approve the 2016 FMP Review of the 2015 fishing year and approve *de minimis* requests for Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Florida for shad; and *de minimis* requests for New Hampshire and Florida for river herring.
Motion made by Dr. Armstrong and seconded by Ms. Patterson. Motion passes unanimously.

AMERICAN EEL MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 2, 2017)

Meeting Summary
The American Eel Management Board met to consider North Carolina's revised Glass Eel Aquaculture Plan for 2017 and consider implications of the 2016 yellow eel landings overage of the coastwide cap. Last year, the Board approved North Carolina's American Eel Farm (AEF) aquaculture plans for 2016 and 2017 to harvest up to 200 pounds of glass eels for domestic aquaculture purposes. This year, AEF submitted a new aquaculture plan for 2018 and beyond that included a number of proposed changes to monitoring, reporting, and location of harvest portions of the plan. The Technical Committee reviewed the new plan in in July 2017 and provided recommendations to modify the plan. Based on Technical Committee recommendations, the new plan was further revised, retaining the calculation of monthly catch per unit effort (CPUE) and reducing the proposed timeframe of the plan from 3 years to 2 years. The revised plan, the 2017 season results, as well as the Law Enforcement Committee's review were presented to the Board. In 2017, AEF harvesters captured 775 glass eels, approximately 0.25 pounds. The Law Enforcement Committee, while expressing concern over how the revised plan loosened monitoring requirements and expanded fishing opportunities, accepted the plan in light of North Carolina's law enforcement capabilities and ability to monitor the aquaculture facility and harvesters. The Board considered these reports and information, and approved the revise aquaculture plan for 2018-2019, with the understanding the Board would again be presented the results of the 2018 season later next year.

The Board was presented preliminary 2016 yellow eel landings information. Based on preliminary data, coastwide landings in 2016 were 928,358 pounds, exceeding the coastwide cap (907,671 pounds). Per the provisions of Addendum IV, if the coastwide cap is exceeded again in 2017, regardless of the amount, state-by-state quotas would be implemented. The Board discussed the implications of when

preliminary data would be available for the 2017 season (Spring 2018) and the potential impacts of triggering state-by-state quotas mid-season. The Board decided to form a Working Group that would further explore approaches to address this, as well as provide the Board with some guidance on setting Maine's glass eel quota for 2018. The Working Group will develop recommendations on these two issues and will report back to Board at the ASMFC Annual Meeting (October 2017).

Lastly, the Board approved the 2016 Fishery Management Plan Review of the 2015 fishing season and approved *de minimis* status for the following states for yellow eel: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, South Carolina, and Georgia.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve the revised North Carolina Aquaculture Plan as submitted on July 25, 2017.
Motion made by Dr. Duval and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion passes unanimously.

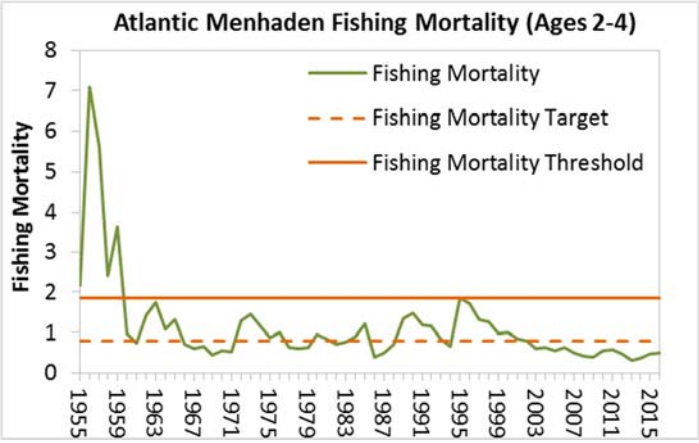
Move to approve the 2016 FMP Review of the 2015 fishing year and approve *de minimis* requests for New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, South Carolina, and Georgia for yellow eel.
Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion passes unanimously.

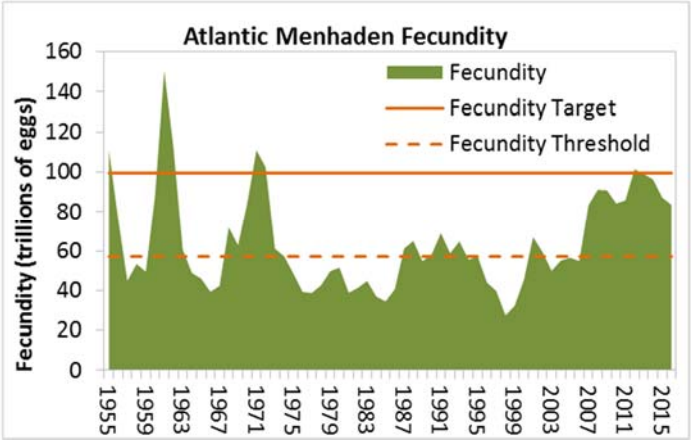
ATLANTIC MENHADEN MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 2, 2017)

Press Releases

Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Update Finds Resource Not Overfished and Overfishing Not Occurring

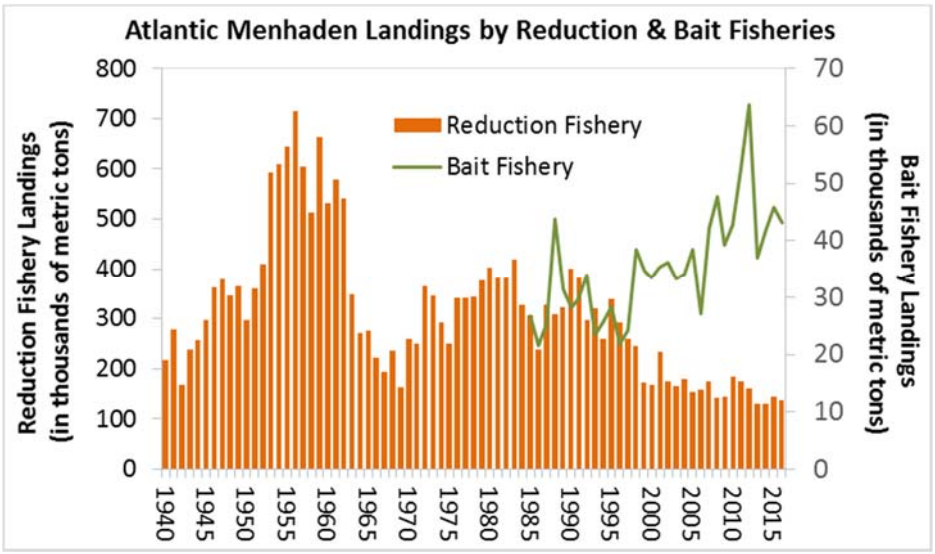
Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board reviewed the results of the 2017 Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Update, which indicates the resource remains healthy; it is not overfished nor experiencing overfishing relative to the current biological reference points. In 2016, population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, is estimated to be 83,486 billion eggs which is well above the threshold (57,295 billion eggs) but below the target (99,467 billion eggs). Additionally, total fishing mortality is estimated to be 0.51, below both the fishing mortality threshold (1.85) and target (0.80). The stock assessment update uses the same modeling approach as the 2015 Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Stock Assessment but added additional years of data from 2014-2016.





While the stock status was assessed in the same way as the 2015 benchmark report, the reference point values have changed. Adding additional years of data to the model resulted in generally higher fishing mortality values throughout the times series which changed the scale of the reference points. While the scale is different and the trend differs in some years, the stock status for both fishing mortality rate and fecundity has been similar over the past decade.

Atlantic menhaden is harvested by both commercial reduction and bait fisheries. In 2013, Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plan implemented a total allowable catch (TAC) of 170,800 metric tons (mt). The coastwide TAC was increased by 10% to 187,880 mt for the 2015-2016 fishing years and by another 6.45% to 200,000 mt for the 2017 fishing year. In 2016, reduction landings were 137,400 mt and accounted for approximately 76% of coastwide landings and bait landings were 43,100 mt and comprised 24% of coastwide landings.



For a more detailed description of the stock assessment results, go here – http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/59822ab4MenhadenAssessmentOverview_Aug2017.pdf. To obtain the Stock Assessment Update go here – http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/59832ee0MenhadenStockAssessmentUpdate_Aug2017.pdf. For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or mware@asmfc.org.

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PR17-33

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board Approves Draft Amendment 3 for Public Comment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board approved Draft Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Menhaden for public comment. The Draft Amendment seeks to manage the menhaden resource in a way that balances menhaden's ecological role as a prey species with the needs of all user groups. To this end, the Draft Amendment considers the use of ecosystem reference points (ERPs) to manage the resource and changes to the allocation method. In addition, it presents a suite of management options for quota transfers, quota rollovers, incidental catch, the episodic events set aside program, and the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap.

The 2015 Benchmark Stock Assessment Report identified the development of ERPs as a high priority for Atlantic menhaden management. Menhaden serve an important role in the marine ecosystem as prey for a variety of species including larger fish (e.g. weakfish, striped bass), birds (e.g. bald eagles, osprey), and marine mammals (e.g. humpback whales, bottlenose dolphins). As a result, changes in the abundance of menhaden may impact the abundance and diversity of predator populations, particularly if the availability of other prey is limited. ERPs provide a method to assess the status of menhaden within the broad ecosystem context. Draft Amendment 3 provides a variety of reference point options, including the continued development of menhaden-specific ERPs as well as the application of precautionary guidelines for forage fish species.

Draft Amendment 3 also considers changes to the allocation method given concerns that the current approach may not strike an appropriate balance between gear types and jurisdictions. Specifically, under the current allocation method, increases in the total allowable catch (TAC) result in limited benefits to small-scale fisheries, and to several states. Furthermore, the current method may not provide a balance between the present needs of the fishery and future growth opportunities. Draft Amendment 3 considers a range of allocation alternatives, including a dispositional quota (bait vs. reduction), fleet-capacity quota (quota divided by gear type), jurisdictional quota, including a fixed minimum quota for each state, and an allocation method based on the TAC. In addition, the document considers five allocation timeframes including 2009-2011, 2012-2016, 1985-2016, 1985-1995, and a weighted approached which considers both historic and recent landings.

It is anticipated the majority of states from Maine through Florida will be conducting public hearings on the Draft Amendment. The details of those hearings will be released in a subsequent press release. The Draft Amendment will be available on the Commission website, www.asmfc.org (under Public Input) by August 11th. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Amendment either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM (EST) on October 20, 2017** and should be forwarded to Megan Ware, FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Amendment 3). Organizations planning to release an action alert in response to Draft Amendment 3 should contact Megan Ware at (703)-842-0740.

Final action on the Amendment, as well as specification of the 2018 TAC, is scheduled to occur on November 14th at the BWI Airport Marriott, 1743 West Nursery Road, Linthicum, MD. For more

information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mware@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR17-32

Motions

Main Motion

Move to maintain all options for reference points.

Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. McMurray.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute to remove options C and D from the reference point options.

Motion made by Mr. Bush and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion fails for lack of a majority (9 in favor, 9 opposed).

Main Motion

Move to maintain all options for reference points.

Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. McMurray. Motion passes (12 in favor, 6 opposed).

Move to eliminate the 2% fixed minimum from the draft Amendment.

Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Ms. Dean. Motion fails (8 in favor, 8 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to replace the opt out with an opt in clause for all the fixed minimum options.

Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion fails (6 in favor, 9 opposed, 2 abstentions, 1 null).

Move to remove the 3 fleet option.

Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to remove the regional allocation option as a stand-alone option.

Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to remove the Virginia reduction landing only options.

Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion fails (5 in favor, 11 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to remove the historic (1985-2005) reduction landings from states which no longer have a reduction fishery.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion passes (11 in favor, 4 opposed, 3 abstentions).

Move to include New York's proposal to recalibrate the landings in Amendment 3 per the recommendations of the PDT.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Rep. Miner. Motion passes (14 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to simplify the dispositional allocation to have two options (bait/reduction): a 30%/70% and a 25%/75% split.
Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to remove fleet capacity only options.
Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Mr. White. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion
Move to eliminate options B and C from the indecision clause.
Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Ms. Meserve. Motion substituted.

Motion to Substitute
Move to substitute "to eliminate options A, B, and C from the indecision clause."
Motion made by Ms. Dean and seconded by Mr. Boyles. Motion passes (17 in favor, 1 null).

Motion to Amend
Move to amend to add an option to set the TAC at zero.
Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Mr. White. Motion fails (3 in favor, 15 opposed).

Motion to Substitute
Move to substitute "to remove the indecision clause."
Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion passes (15 in favor, 3 opposed).

Main Motion as Substituted
Move to remove the indecision clause.
Motion passes (16 in favor, 2 opposed).

Move to include a statement that describes the TAC setting process with a provision that if the Board fails to reach a decision by the end of the calendar year, then the TAC will be set at the previous year's TAC.
Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Schick. Motion passes (14 in favor, 4 opposed).

Move to delete Option D under Quota Transfer Section.
Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Dr. Duval. Motion passes without objection.

Move to remove Option B under Quota Rollovers Section.
Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded Mr. Miller. Motion passes (13 in favor, 5 opposed).

Move to remove Option C from Episodic Events Set Aside Program section.
Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion fails (4 in favor, 13 opposed, 1 abstentions).

Move to approve Menhaden Draft Amendment 3 for public comment as modified.
Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Motion carries unanimously.

Main Motion
Move to postpone specification setting for the 2018 season until November 14.
Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Estes.

Motion to Substitute
Move to substitute "to postpone specification setting for the 2018 season until the February meeting." Motion made by Mr. Reid and seconded by Mr. Shiels. Motion fails (5 in favor, 13 opposed).

Main Motion
Move to postpone specification setting for the 2018 season until November 14.
Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Estes. Motion passes (17 in favor, 1 opposed).

INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 3, 2017)

Meeting Summary
Chairman Grout updated the ISFMP Policy Board on the actions of the Executive Committee (see Executive Committee meeting summary) and the State Directors Meeting.

New Jersey Noncompliance
The Policy Board discussed at length the Secretary of Commerce's decision to not agree with the Commission's finding of New Jersey's noncompliance with summer flounder recreational measures. The Commission received feedback from NOAA Fisheries that the Commission needed to provide a stronger justification for Criteria #2 (that a state's failure to implement and enforce measures are necessary for conservation of the fishery in question). The Secretary found, despite considerable uncertainty about the effectiveness of New Jersey's measures, they are likely to be equivalent in total conservation. NOAA Fisheries indicated future non-compliance findings will be evaluated on their own merits. Members of the Policy Board expressed their concern that the Secretary did not provide any evidence or supporting documentation to his decision. They also expressed their disagreement with the Secretary's interpretation of the Commission's Summer Flounder Technical Committee memo on the issue. In addition to their concern regarding the impact on summer flounder stocks, the members expressed grave concern about the impact to the Commission process. As a result, Commission leadership has requested a face-to-face meeting with the Secretary with a goal of "protecting the process." At this meeting, Commission leadership will seek to further clarify the process by which the Secretary makes a decision regarding a Commission noncompliance finding through a Memorandum of Agreement, including the opportunity for the Commission have a meeting with the Secretary prior to a final compliance decision.

Annual Performance of the Stocks
As a part of the Commission's 2017 Action Plan, the Policy Board conducted a review of stock rebuilding performance to determine if rebuilding for each species is consistent with the Commission Vision and Goals. The Board reviewed the rebuilding progress for each of the species under Commission management. This review was intended to determine if the progress toward each species rebuilding goals was occurring at an appropriate rate. The Board focused on the species in the categories of "concern," "depleted," and "unknown" in their discussions, as well as the species boards' response to scientific advice.

New England Council Request
The Policy Board discussed a request from the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) for a voting seat on the Atlantic Herring Section. The Council is interested in participating due to the impact Section decisions can have on federal herring permit holders. Commission guiding documents would need to be changed or the Section would need to become a management board in order to allow NEFMC to have a voting seat. Since the Atlantic Herring Section did not have the opportunity to review the request prior to the Policy Board meeting, the Policy Board tasked the Atlantic Herring Section with providing a recommendation to the Policy Board for consideration.

Standard Meetings Practices
The Board approved a Standard Meetings Practices document, which identifies procedures to make Commission meetings more effective and efficient. The Board was also updated by staff that the 2017 Sturgeon Benchmark Stock Assessment will be peer reviewed in September and presented to the Sturgeon Board in October.

Assessment Schedule
The Assessment Science Committee (ASC) provided an update to the Board regarding the stock assessment schedule. The Board reviewed and approved the following changes to the stock assessment schedule. Following the request of the Horseshoe Crab Management Board, a benchmark assessment was added in 2018. SAW-SARC reviews were added for Atlantic herring and summer flounder in 2018. The benchmark assessment for Northern shrimp was moved back to spring 2018 to accommodate a calibration study for the Summer Survey. Lastly, a cobia SEDAR review was added in 2019. The ASC recommended not changing the assessment schedule due to the MRIP survey transition until calibrated numbers are released. Most ASMFC species that could be greatly impacted by the re-estimation are already on the stock assessment schedule for a benchmark trigger in the near future. The ASC will meet in-person this September and will update the Board on any relevant recommendations that come out of the meeting.

Habitat Committee
The Habitat Committee met in May to check in on 2017 Work Plan progress, receive a presentation from Dr. Bob Orth, and discuss other fish habitat issues. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Commission's Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Policy, and the Habitat Committee is working on an update to the policy, which includes new references and emerging issues. They developed a questionnaire to identify how the policy has been implemented over the past 20 years, basing questions on the recommendations found in the original policy. Results were presented to the Policy Board. The Committee developed a new letter to the Department of Interior reiterating the Commission's concerns on seismic testing, which was sent last week. The comment period is currently open for 2019 – 2024 outer continental shelf leasing. The Habitat Committee wrote a draft letter on this leasing, and the Policy Board approved the draft unanimously. The Policy Board also unanimously agreed to task the Habitat Committee with developing a new term for 'Habitat Areas of Particular Concern' in order to reduce confusion with the federal use of the term, which carries regulatory authority. The Habitat Committee was tasked with developing a reference document which compiles current Habitat Areas of Particular Concern from species Fishery Management Plans. This will be included in the 2018 Action Plan. The Habitat Committee has a new chair, January Murray (Georgia), and new vice chair, Marek Topolski (Maryland).

Artificial Reefs Subcommittee
The Commission's Artificial Reefs Subcommittee met jointly with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission's Artificial Reefs Subcommittee in February. The Subcommittee discussed the success of the National Saltwater Artificial Reef Workshop; Habitat Areas of Particular concern, permitting, and reef deployment complications; and historical resource survey requirements. There were guest presentations about Fish Aggregating Devices in Japan and northeast Florida's offshore reef fisheries-independent monitoring program. Each state also provided updates. Dr. Havel is currently representing the Commission on the artificial reef symposium steering committee at the American Fisheries Society Meeting in Tampa, Florida, and is leading the development of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Artificial Reef Essential Fish Habitat Policy.

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership
The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) Steering Committee met in May. A full day of the meeting was dedicated to action planning, and the committee also received updates on science and data initiatives, the 2017 Melissa Laser Award recipient, and collaboration with the National Fish Habitat Partnership and other Fish Habitat Partnerships. ACFHP released its new five-year Conservation Strategic Plan and two-year Action Plan on July 21, 2017, and their Business Plan is on track to be finalized by the end of the year. ACFHP is working on a project, funded by NOAA, to spatially prioritize fish habitat protection and restoration sites using GIS mapping and analysis. ACFHP also received FY2017 National Fish Habitat Action Plan funding that will be used for operations, improving the website, and on the ground restoration in the Sheepscot River (Maine) and Bogue Sound (North Carolina).

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions
Postponed Motion from Spring Meeting
Move to postpone the New Jersey Appeal of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Addendum XXVIII until the Summer/August ISFMP Policy Board Meeting.
Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Keliher.

Move to postpone the New Jersey Appeal of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Addendum XXVIII indefinitely.
Motion made by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Motion carries unanimously.

SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 3, 2017)

Meeting Summary
The Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board met to receive updates and recommendations from Recreational Working Groups on 2018 management of summer flounder and black sea bass, as well reconsider 2017 recreational black sea bass measures for Wave 6 (November-December). The Board was presented a draft prospectus from the Summer Flounder Recreational Working Group on 2018 summer flounder recreational management. The Working Group recommended maintaining the state regional groupings from Addendum XXVIII and the methodology employed by the Technical Committee in recent years for developing subsequent year's measures. For example, the Technical Committee will compare preliminary 2017 harvest data to the 2018 coastwide Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) and adjust 2017 regional measures for 2018 to achieve the RHL. While both the Working Group and Technical Committee have expressed interest in developing alternative approaches

for setting recreational measures annually, neither group has done so due to time constraints. With no recommendations on a different approach, but interest in continuing regional management under the provisions of Addendum XXVIII (2017) for an additional year, the Board took no action at this time. The Board and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet jointly in December 2017 to determine 2018 recreational summer flounder management.

The Board reviewed and reconsidered 2017 recreational black sea bass Wave 6 measures. In May 2017, the Board set the possession limit for Wave 6 at five fish in state waters from Rhode Island through New Jersey, and maintained all other state measures from 2016. The Board took action at that time based on the performance of the 2016 fishery, which indicated a reduction was needed to stay within the 2017 RHL. Taking into consideration the results of the 2016 benchmark stock assessment, which found the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, the Board rescinded its previous action establishing a five fish possession limit. As a result, states will maintain their 2016 wave 6 measures for 2017. NOAA Fisheries established federal waters recreational black sea bass measures earlier this year based on the Board and Council joint actions in February 2017, but may adjust measures in light of the Board's action.

Last, the Board was presented options for consideration in developing Draft Addendum XXX. At the May 2017 Joint Board/Council Meeting the Board initiated an addendum for 2018 recreational black sea bass management, specifically requesting options for regional allocations in the recreational fishery as well as uniform regulations within regions. Regional options were developed based on recent regional groupings for summer flounder recreational measures as well as based on the results of the 2016 benchmark stock assessment. The Black Sea Bass Recreational Working Group presented advantages and challenges for current options included in the draft document. The Board provided feedback on the draft document and staff will work with the Working Group to finalize the document for Board review at the ASMFC Annual Meeting (October 2017). If the document is approved for public comment at the Annual Meeting, the Board may consider final action on the draft addendum at the Joint Board/Council Meeting in December 2017.

For more information about summer flounder, scup, or black sea bass please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to rescind the possession limit of 5 fish in wave 6 for the 2017 black sea bass recreational fishery made at the May 2017 meeting. States would maintain their 2016 wave 6 measures unless otherwise approved by the Board.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Baum. Roll call Vote: In favor – NH, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC; Opposed – MA, RI, USFWS, NOAA Fisheries. Motion passes (9 in favor, 4 opposed).

TAUTOG MANAGEMENT BOARD (AUGUST 3, 2017)

Meeting Summary

The Tautog Management Board met to consider final action on Amendment 1 to the FMP. The Board did not take final action at this meeting. Instead, it identified the majority of issues to be included in the Amendment, deferring action on the measures within the regions until its next meeting in October. The delay allows states within the regions to consider additional management programs that were suggested

at public hearings. The states within the Long Island Sound (LIS) region needed additional time to explore other management strategies that would moderate the severe social and economic impacts and provide flexibility in achieving such a large reduction in fishing mortality. The two states will also be exploring a more modest harvest reduction, 20-30%. Connecticut and New York will work with the Technical Committee/Stock Assessment Subcommittee to determine what impacts such a lessened reduction would have on the probability achieving the fishing mortality target in a reasonable amount of time.

The Board selected the management regions, consistent with those in the assessment: Massachusetts and Rhode Island (MARI); LIS; New York/New Jersey Bight; and Delaware through Virginia (DeMarVa). The Board also approved including a tagging program for the commercial fishery in the Draft Amendment. The Board will meet in October to consider action on the remaining issues and finalize the document. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve option B: Revised Goal Statement in section 2.2.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Luisi. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to approve option H: accept options B through G into section 2.3 Objectives.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Reid. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Move to approve option B in section 2.5 Biological Reference points.
Motion made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion approved by unanimous consent.

Main Motion
Move to approve option B Managing to the Regional Target F, with Sub-Option B2 Board Action within One Year, in section 2.7.1 Fishing Mortality Target.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion tabled until discussion on section 4.1.

Motion to Table
Motion to table action on this specific issue until the Board decides on regional management, section 4.1.
Motion made by Mr. Hasbrouck and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Main Motion
Move to approve option B in section 2.7.4 Stock Rebuilding Schedule.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. McKiernan. Motion tabled until discussion on section 4.1.

Motion to Table
Motion to table action on this specific issue until the Board decides on regional management, section 4.1.
Motion made by Mr. Hasbrouck and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion passes by unanimous consent.

Move to approve option B Regional Management in section 4.1 Regional Boundaries.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Cimino. Motion carries (7 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to approve option B Managing to the Regional Target F, with Sub-Option B2 Board Action within One Year, in section 2.7.1 Fishing Mortality Target.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and second by Mr. Ballou. Motion carries by unanimous consent.

Move to approve option B in section 2.7.4 Stock Rebuilding Schedule.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and second by Mr. McKiernan. Motion carries by unanimous consent.

Move to approve option B Commercial Quota Procedures in section 4.3 Commercial Quota.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion carries by unanimous consent.

Move to approve option B in section 4.4 Commercial Harvest Tagging Program.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries (9 in favor, 1 opposed).

Move to approve option A in section 4.4.3 Tag Application.
Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Kane. Motion carries (9 in favor, 1 opposed).

Motion to approve Dan McKiernan as vice chair of the Tautog Management Board.
Motion made by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion carries unanimously.