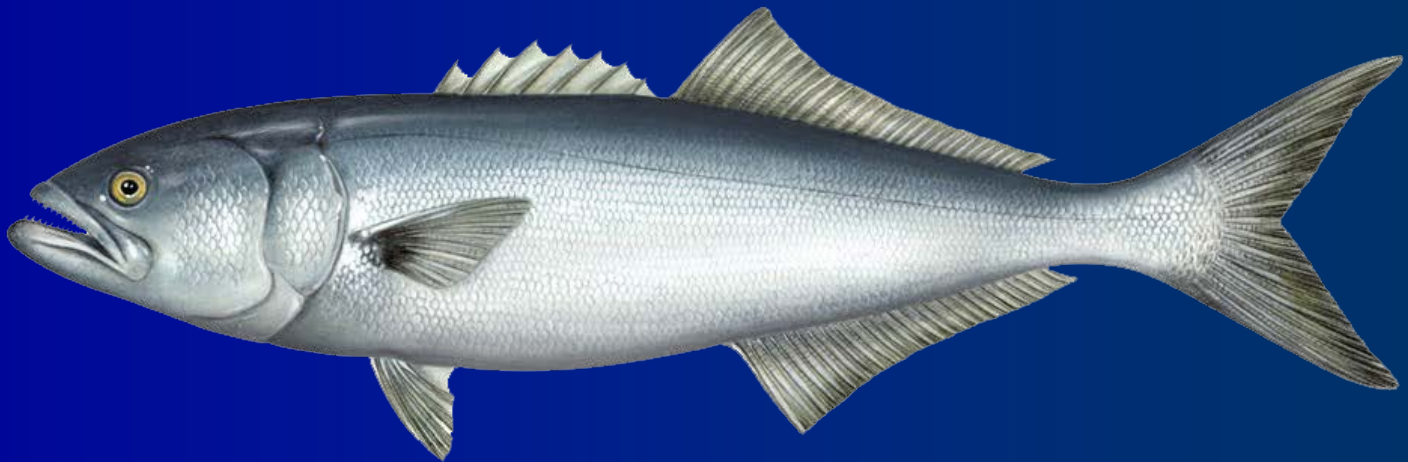




Bluefish Allocation Amendment

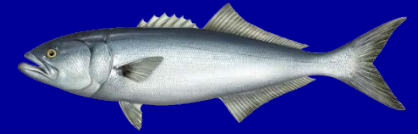
Public Scoping Hearings



Joint Meeting of the MAFMC and ASMFC
Bluefish Management Board

April 30, 2018

Objectives



- Joint Council/Board review of draft scoping document/Public Information Document
- Approval for public scoping hearings

December 2017 Motion

- Move that the Council/Board initiate a bluefish amendment to review and if necessary revise allocations between the commercial and recreational fisheries, the commercial allocations to the states, review the goals and objectives and transfers.
 - Council: Batsavage /Heins (17/2/1)
 - Board: Batsavage/Reid (11/0/0/0) Motion carries

Progress to Date

- Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT) formed
 - Council/Commission Staff, GARFO, NEFSC, TC Chair
 - First meeting – action plan/scoping document
- Draft action plan prepared
- Draft scoping document prepared

Tentative Amendment Timeline



Summer 2018	Scoping hearings & public comment period
Fall 2018	Council/Commission identify priority issues for inclusion in amendment
Winter 2018/2019	Development of options (alternatives)
Winter/Spring 2019	Council and Commission review draft range of options
Spring 2019	Range of options refined and approved
Spring/Summer 2019	Council/Commission select preferred options; public hearings
Fall 2019/ Summer 2020	Council/Commission consider public comments; final action; rulemaking

Scoping Process

- NEPA requirement (for EIS actions)
- Public scoping hearings to inform development of range of alternatives
 - ME to FL; June – July
- Written comment period
 - 30 days
 - Submit to either the Council or Commission

Issue 1: FMP Goals & Objectives

Current FMP Objectives:

- Increase understanding of the stock and of the fishery
- Provide the highest availability of bluefish to U.S. fishermen while maintaining, within limits, traditional uses of bluefish
- Provide for cooperation among management entities along the coast to enhance the management of bluefish throughout its range
- Promote compatible management regulations between State and Federal jurisdictions
- Prevent recruitment overfishing
- Reduce the waste in both the commercial and recreational fisheries

Issue 2: Comm. and Rec. Allocations

- Allocations were set in Amendment 1 (1999) at 83% recreational and 17% commercial of the TAL
 - Developed from 1981-1989 landings data

Issue 3: Comm. Allocations to the States

- Amendment 1 (1999) set the commercial allocations to the states using catch histories from 1981-1989
 - Trends in state harvest have shifted, especially with yearly state-to-state transfers in recent years

Issue 4: Quota Transfers

- Commercial state-to-state quota transfers occur on a yearly basis and become repetitive amongst a few states, especially in recent years
- Transfers from the recreational to commercial sector have occurred in every year since 2001

Issue 5: Other Issues

- This “Issue” is in place to allow the public to identify any other associated issues with the fishery
- Comments do not need to be limited to issues included in the scoping document

Public Comments

- Scoping process will seek comments on:
 - Current measures and strategies that should or should not be modified
 - New measures and strategies that should or should not be considered
 - Fishery trends that managers should consider
 - Any other issues or concerns that should be considered or addressed in the amendment

Next Steps

- Approve the public scoping document
- Public scoping hearings
- Written comments and hearing summaries will be compiled for review by both the Council and Commission
- Joint meeting in August/December 2018 to review comments and identify priority issues for inclusion in the amendment

Questions and Comments

