

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

January 28, 2010

To: Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

From: Robert Beal, ISFMP Director

RE: 2010 Summer Flounder Recreational Fishery Proposals

List of Participants

Paul Caruso (MA)

Jason McNamee (RI)

Greg Wojcik (CT) via
phone

Alice Weber (NY)

Tom Baum (NJ)

Jeff Brust (NJ)

Rich Wong (DE)

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Summer Flounder Recreational Proposals

The Board and Council met in December of 2009 to establish the 2010 recreational management program. At this meeting, the Board and Council agreed that the states would implement conservational equivalent measures rather than implement a coastwide management program.

In addition to the existing process to set state conservation equivalency measures, the Board tasked the technical committee (TC) to develop evaluations of their states' past management history (size, season, and possession limits), fishery performance, relative to those measures, and an evaluation of the impacts of those measures on landings for that state or region. To address these concerns state proposals included information on general fishery performance, since conservation equivalency began (2002), with a more detailed analysis for the most recent two years. States that liberalized their regulations developed a detailed analysis of the methods last used to liberalize their summer flounder fishery.

The TC met on January 27, 2010 to review the state management proposals for 2010. Below are the details of each option and the Technical Committee recommendations to the Board.

Additional Notes:

Each proposal assumes that effort and availability in 2010 will be similar to prior years.

At the time of the review of the proposals, the wave 5 and 6 data were not available, but wave 5 and 6 data from 2008 were used to estimate 2009 annual harvest, for states with open seasons in

those waves. The TC recommends that states use these projections and proposals for their 2010 fishery.

Massachusetts

2009 Harvest Target: 114,000 fish
 2009 Landings: 57,000 fish
 2010 Harvest Target: 140,000 fish
 Alteration for 2010: 145 % liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 18.5”
 Possession Limit: 5 fish
 Open Season: July 1-August 13

Proposed 2010 Measures

Option #	Min Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
1	18”	5 fish	June 20 - August 17
2	18”	5 fish	July 1-August 28
3	18.5”	5 fish	June 1-September 16
4	18.5”	5 fish	May 16-August 31
5	18.5”	5 fish	May 22- September 6

Technical Committee Recommendations:

Approve options

Rhode Island

2009 Harvest Target: 117,000 fish
 2009 Landings: 49,000 fish
 2010 Harvest Target: 144,000 fish
 Alteration for 2010: 194% liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 21”
 Possession Limit: 6 fish
 Open Season: June 16-December 31

Proposed 2010 Measures

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Season
1	18”	6	July 2-December 31
2	19”	6	May 1-December 31
3	19.5”	6	May 1-December 31
4	20”	6	May 1-December 31
5	20.5”	6	May 1-December 31

Technical Committee Recommendation:

The technical committee notes that minimum sizes as low as 19 inches in the past decade have often resulted in harvest levels as high as 200,000 fish (e.g. 2007: 232,495 fish and 2008: 206,501 fish). Approve options.

Connecticut

2009Harvest Target: 77,000 fish

Healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

2009 Landings: 62,000 fish
 2010 Harvest Target: 95,000 fish
 Alteration for 2010: 53% liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 19.5”
 Possession Limit: 3 fish
 Open Season: June 15-August 19

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Season
1	19.5”	3	June 13-September 6
2	19.5”	3	May 29-August 28
3	19.5”	3	June 15-September 11
4	19.5”	3	May 1 – August 21
5	19.5”	3	May 1-July 10 and July 24-October 31
6	19.5”	4	May 29-August 25
7	19.5”	4	June 24-Septemer 6
8	19.5”	2	May 29-August 30
9	19.5”	2	June 6-September 6

Technical Committee Recommendation:

Approve options

New York

2009 Harvest Target: 365,000 fish
 2009 Landings: 252,000 fish
 2010 Harvest Target: 449,000fish
 Alteration for 2010: 78% liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 21”
 Possession Limit: 2 fish
 Open Season: May 15 – June 15 and July 3 – August 17

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Season
1	21”	2	May 15 - August 17
2	21”	2	May 1 - August 17
3	21”	2	May 15 - September 6
4	21”	2	May 1 - August 30
5	21”	2	May 29-September 6
6	20”	2	May 2- June 15 and July 3-August 17
7	20”	2	May 15- June 15 and July 3-August 17

Technical Committee Recommendation:

If New York drops the minimum size, the technical committee recommends a closure during the peak season (waves 3/4). The technical committee does not recommend the state adopt option 4 or 6 due to greater risk of exceeding the harvest limit. Approve options.

New Jersey

2009 Harvest Target: 809,000 fish
2009 Landings: 1,003,701 fish
2010 Harvest Target: 997,000
Alteration for 2010 unadjusted: 1% reduction

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 18”
Possession Limit: 6 fish
Open Season: May 23-September 4

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
1	18”	6	May 29-September 6
2	18”	4	May 23-September 6
3	18.5”	6	May 13-September 13
4	18.5”	6	May 29-September 26
5	18.5”	6	May 21-September 12
6	18.5”	6	May 29-September 17

Technical Committee Recommendation:

Approve options.

Delaware

2009 Harvest Target: 65,000 fish
2009 Landings: 82,000 fish
2010 Harvest Target: 80,000 fish
Alteration for 2009: 2% reduction

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 18.5”
Possession Limit: 4
Open Season: All Year

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
1	18.5”	4	January 1-October 12
2	18.5”	3	January 1-October 25
3	18.5”	2	All year
4	19”	4	All year

Technical Committee Recommendation:

Approve options

Maryland

2009 Harvest Target: 61,000 fish
2009 Landings: 92,706 fish
2010 Harvest Target: 75,000 fish
Alteration for 2009: 23.6% reduction

2009 Regulations:**Ocean and nearshore waters**

Minimum Size: 18.0"

Possession Limit: 3 fish

Open Season: April 15-September 13

Bay and tributaries

Minimum Size: 16.5"

Possession Limit: 1 fish

Open Season: April 15-September 13

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option		Min Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
1	Ocean	18.5"	3	April 17-September 4
	Bay	16.5"	1	April 17-September 4
2		18.5"	3	April 17 to September 21
3		18.5"	3	April 24 to September 24
4		18.5"	3	June 8 to October 30
5		18.5"	3	May 22 to October 16
6		19"	3	April 17 to Nov 22

Technical Committee Recommendation:

As in 2007, 2008, and 2009, there is no clear method for the TC to evaluate proposals with area splits. The TC does not approve adoption of option 1; the sample sizes and data available are insufficient to evaluate regulations with area/mode splits. Approve options 2-6.

Virginia

2009 Harvest Target: 345,000 fish

2009 Landings: 241,000 fish

2010 Harvest Target: 426,000 fish

Alteration for 2010: 77% liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size: 19"

Possession Limit: 5 fish

Open Season: All year

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Option	Min Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
1	18.5"	5	All year
2	18.5"	4	All Year
3	18"	5	Jan1-June 6 and July 12-Dec 31

Technical Committee Recommendation:

Approve options.

North Carolina

2009 Harvest Target: 116,000 fish

2009 Landings: fish 79,000 fish

2010 Harvest Target: 143,000 fish

Alteration for 2009: 81% liberalization

2009 Regulations:

Minimum Size:

Ocean: 15"

Inland/Estuaries 14"

Healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

Possession Limit: 8 fish

Open Season: All Year

Proposed 2010 Measures:

Status Quo: North Carolina intends to maintain status quo regulations in 2010 with the exception of moving the size limit dividing line in Albemarle Sound.

Technical Committee Recommendation:

As in 2007, 2008, and 2009, there is no clear method for the TC to evaluate proposals with area splits; the sample sizes and data available are insufficient to evaluate regulations with area or mode splits. North Carolina splits the size limit in the estuarine waters to address co-occurrence of southern flounder. North Carolina has not proposed a change in their management measures. Approve status quo.

PRFC will consider both the Maryland and Virginia proposals and pick one for their 2010 measures.

For all state proposals: States may alter the start and end date of the season as long as it follows the methodology used in their proposal to achieve the required alterations listed above.