



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board Approves Regional Management for 2014 Recreational Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fisheries

Alexandria, VA –The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXV to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, establishing regional recreational management for both species for the 2014 fishing year. For summer flounder, the Addendum creates management measures by region with the intent of providing more equity in recreational harvest opportunities along the coast, especially between New York and New Jersey. The approved summer flounder regions are Massachusetts and Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. For black sea bass, the Board also approved the continuation of management measures by northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern regions (Delaware – North Carolina).

Addendum XXV was initiated to address a growing concern that current summer flounder management measures are not providing recreational fishermen along the coast with equitable harvest opportunities to the resource. Its adaptive regional management approach is designed to allow the management program to adjust to past, current, and future changes to the resource and the fishery. Under this approach, all states within a region will be required to have the same possession limit, size limit, and season length. The Technical Committee will work with the states to develop, for Board consideration and approval, measures for each region that will collectively achieve, but not exceed, the recreational harvest limit. The adaptive regional management approach has been approved for the 2014 fishing year only.

For black sea bass, the Board approved the continuation of ad hoc regional management measures by northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern regions (Delaware – North Carolina). This approach has been used since 2011 and offers some advantages over coastwide regulations, which can disproportionately impact states within the management unit. Specifically, regional measures address geographic differences in the stock (size, abundance and seasonality) while maintaining the consistent application of management measures by neighboring states. States in the northern region will reduce their catch based on the region’s performance in 2013. The Technical Committee will work with the states to develop regional management measures for Board consideration and approval. States in the southern

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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region will implement measures consistent with federal regulations (current recommended federal measures are a 12.5 inch TL minimum fish size, 15 fish possession limit, and open season from May 19 – September 18 and October 18 – December 31). The regulations of the two regions combined will achieve the required coastwide harvest reduction in order to not exceed the 2014 recreational harvest limit. The Board approved the ad hoc regional measures approach for the 2014 fishing year, with the option of extending it through 2015 by Board action.

Addendum XXV will be available on the Commission website by the end of February. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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