



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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## MEMORANDUM

January 19, 2016

**To: American Eel Management Board**  
**From: American Eel Technical Committee**  
**RE: TC Review of South Carolina's Survey Sampling Proposal and Maine's Conservation Equivalent Management Proposal**

### **South Carolina's Survey Sampling Proposal**

The TC reviewed South Carolina's proposal to amend their fyke net sampling gear in 2016. As required in the FMP, all participating states must conduct surveys for the American eel young of the year (YOY). To meet this requirement, SC has used a staked fyke-net since 2000 at their Goose Creek site, a tributary of the Cooper River. However, the gear has not been consistent from year to year due to extreme tides, drought, vandalism, fallen trees, and erosion. These issues have led to inconsistent data in the time series.

After receiving funding to construct eel collection and passage ramps at the same site, it was confirmed that the fyke nets were not properly capturing young-of-year (YOY). For the last three years, both gears have been sampled at the site and the eel ramp has proven to be a more effective sampling gear. SC requests a change in sampling gear to use the eel ramp in their YOY survey. The TC noted that a change in gear type would mean that the data would need to be collected for 10 years before it could be used in the assessment, but that the three years of paired data may provide an opportunity to apply a correction factor to avoid this issue. The TC did not have any biological concerns with this change and supported the proposal.

### **Maine Conservation Equivalent Management Proposal**

The TC also reviewed a proposal from Maine to eliminate the FMP requirement of two closed days (Saturday and Sunday) for the American eel fishery in that state. This was part of Maine's original regulatory package when the state managed based on input controls (e.g., days out) which managed effort. The state has transitioned to a quota management system to control harvest and is requesting to do away with closed days. The TC was concerned about law enforcement on the previously closed days (Saturday and Sunday) and Maine clarified that enforcement officers are active on the weekends. Considering Maine has transitioned to a quota management program that regulates the harvest of glass eels, the TC is not concerned with the removal of days out and supports their proposal.

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