



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
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MEMORANDUM

January 19, 2016

To: Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
From: Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee
RE: TC Review of Maryland and PRFC's Conservation Equivalent Management Proposals

The Technical Committee (TC) met via conference call to review an alternative management proposal submitted by the State of Maryland and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) regarding the 6,000 pound bycatch allowance. In brief, the proposals are requesting to allow two permitted/licensed pound net fishermen aboard the same vessel to each land 6,000 pounds of menhaden as bycatch (i.e., 12,000 pounds total from one vessel). Currently, two permitted/licensed individuals can land 6,000 pound each of menhaden bycatch on separate vessels, but not 12,000 pounds if they are fishing from the same vessel. This proposed management alternative only applies to pound net fishermen who must possess a menhaden bycatch permit or menhaden license. Both Maryland, and PRFC have a limited entry pound net fishery for menhaden, thus limiting the opportunity for expansion of the bycatch fishery. Maryland and PRFC conclude that this proposal will not result in an increase in the number of menhaden harvested, and it will allow harvesting in a more efficient manner.

TC Recommendation

The TC agreed by consensus that Maryland and PRFC's alternative management proposals will not adversely impact the biological status of Atlantic menhaden. The TC acknowledges that the proposed alternative would most likely not significantly change the amount of harvest occurring in Maryland or PRFC. Furthermore, the established limited entry program for the pound net fisheries is expected to limit the expansion of landings under these proposed management alternatives.

Given the current stock status of Atlantic menhaden (not overfished or experiencing overfishing), and the limited amount of landings occurring under the bycatch allowance (approximately 1% coastwide), the TC does not have biological concern with the proposed conservation equivalent proposals. The TC recommends continued monitoring of bycatch landings coastwide to ensure an expansion of harvest can be addressed if it occurs.

The TC also recommends the Board consider further evaluation of the bycatch landings on a coastal scale as it develops draft Amendment 3 to the FMP for Atlantic menhaden. The TC discussed that the bycatch portion of the harvest is currently able to expand. Assessing the upper bound of this expansion and its potential impacts to the fishery should be undertaken during the development of Amendment 3 as the Board considers the bycatch allowance provision.

M16-02



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MEMORANDUM

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To: Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
From: The Committee on Economics and Social Sciences
RE: Socioeconomic Study of Menhaden Fisheries - Request for Proposals Update

As discussed at the November 2015 meeting of the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (Board), the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS) has developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) to conduct a study on the socioeconomics of Atlantic menhaden commercial fisheries. The research will be funded through a cooperative agreement with NOAA Fisheries.

Following the recommendations from the November 2015 meeting, the Board allocation working group met with the CESS RFP subcommittee to provide feedback on project objectives and deliverables to ensure that the information requested is the most beneficial to the management objectives of the Board. The RFP was advertised on November 30th and a total of five proposals were received by ASMFC by the deadline of January 4th.

A panel of CESS and Board working group members were randomly assigned to review each individual proposal. Reviews and original proposals will be distributed to the CESS Selection Committee in time for a January 27th conference call to review proposals and make a final selection. The CESS RFP subcommittee anticipates working with the contracted Principle Investigators to create a project timeline that includes progress updates for the Board. The expected work period will be February 15, 2016 to February 15, 2017, and ASMFC anticipates announcing the selected proposal once a contract has been signed.

M16-05