



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 5, 2016

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
703.842.0740

ASMFC Horseshoe Crab Management Board Initiates Draft Addendum to Modify Adaptive Resource Management Framework for the Delaware Bay Region

Alexandria, VA –The Commission’s Horseshoe Crab Board approved development of Draft Addendum VIII to the Horseshoe Crab Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Draft Addendum will propose changes to the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework, which is used annually to set harvest specifications for the Delaware Bay states, taking into consideration horseshoe crab abundance and red knot forage needs.

This action is in response to a recent technical review, which suggested changes to the ARM Framework, including the incorporation of mortality associated with biomedical bleeding activities into the Framework, and the exploration of options that allow for the harvest of female horseshoe crab in the Delaware Bay Region. In its review, the ARM Subcommittee suggested mortality associated with biomedical activities due to capture, handling, or post-bleeding stress and could be considered to be a form of harvest and recommended its inclusion in the Framework. This source of mortality had not been included in the ARM Framework as initially established in 2012.

The ARM Framework currently presents five harvest packages to ensure the sustainable annual harvest of horseshoe crab in the Delaware Bay Region. While the Framework can produce harvest packages that include female crab harvest, the threshold for horseshoe crab abundance precludes allowing for female harvest at this time. However, the Board expressed interest in exploring alternatives that allow for female harvest without compromising the integrity of the ARM Framework. As a result, the Draft Addendum will present alternative harvest packages which allow for female harvest. Further, the Draft Addendum will propose incorporating mortality associated with biomedical bleeding activities into the ARM Framework. The Draft Addendum will be presented to the Board for its consideration and possible approval for public comment at the Commission’s Annual Meeting in October 2016.

The ARM Framework was developed by the Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey in recognition of the relationship between horseshoe crab eggs and shorebirds in the

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.

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 (phone) 703.842.0741 (fax) www.asmfcc.org

Delaware Bay Region. The ARM predicts the optimal strategy for horseshoe crab bait harvest in the Delaware Bay Region while accounting for the need for successful red knot stopover feeding during migrations through the region.

Additionally, the Board tasked the Technical Committee with developing a proposal to test the use of alternative bait in the whelk and eel fisheries. The Board will review the proposal in October 2016. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

###