



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Tautog Technical Committee/Stock Assessment Subcommittee Meeting Summary March 29-30, 2017

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The Tautog Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Sub-Committee met in Arlington, Virginia to review the preliminary options for alternative management measures that will be included in Draft Amendment 1. The TC analyses are in response to the Tautog Management Board's request for the TC to evaluate consistent management measures across each region: Delaware-Maryland-Virginia (DelMarVa); New Jersey-New York Bight (NJ-NYB); Long Island Sound (LIS); Massachusetts-Rhode Island (MA-RI). A summary of the options that have been (or will be) prepared are below.

Each region has developed a range of options that provide an example of how regional management could be implemented, ranging from consistent measures across the states, state by state measures or combination. All of the regional management options will be included in Draft Amendment 1 for Board consideration in May 2017.

DelMarVa

DelMarVa does not have to take a harvest reduction, however managers want to investigate what consistent recreational management measures might look like. A. Sharov is in the process of developing recreational alternatives to achieve this task.

Recreational Management Options

- Option 1. Status Quo (current measures because a reduction is not required)
- Option 2.
 - Consistent bag (4 fish) and seasonal closure (May/June)
 - Status quo minimum size (DE at 15" and MD/VA at 16")
 - *Estimated combined effect of season and bag changes for the region is 8.5% increase in the harvest.*
- Option 3.
 - Consistent minimum size (16") and seasonal closures (May/June)

- Status quo bag limit
- *Estimated combined effect of season and bag changes for the region is 11.9% reduction in the harvest.*
- Option 4.
 - Consistent regulations for all states (16"; 4 fish; May/June seasonal closures)
 - *Estimated combined effect of season and bag changes for the region is 11.6% reduction in the harvest.*

Long Island Sound

The LIS is overfished and overfishing is occurring. The Board has selected MSY reference points to calculate the harvest reductions relative to a 50% (47.2% reduction) chance of achieving F target and a 70% chance (52.6% reduction). J.Kasper has calculated state specific harvest reductions, but will need to work with CT/NY to develop the parameters for regional management measures.

The TC agreed to the following:

- Method for slot reduction is the mean harvest value for each year (2013-2015)
- The ALK will be pooled
- Re-scale to a max of 1 for the selectivity of overlapping slots in target reduction
- Re-run without the weights and pick options that meet the reductions based on *numbers*; show the associated % reduction.
- Provide a couple sentences describing pros/cons of using a slot limit.

Recreational Management Options

- Option 1. Status Quo, state by state reduction
- Option 2. Regional Management Measures (**TBD**)
 - Consistent minimum size (16") and bag limit (1 fish)
 - Different seasonal closures (including spawning + additional months)
 - *Include regional % (47.2% or 52.6%)*
- Option 3. Regional Management Measures (**TBD**)
 - Consistent minimum size (that is a value >16") and bag limit (X fish)
 - Different seasonal closures (including spawning + additional months)
 - *Include regional % (47.2% or 52.6%)*
- Option 4. Regional Management Measures (**TBD**)
 - Consistent minimum size, bag limit and seasonal closures (including spawning + additional months)
 - *Include regional % (47.2% or 52.6%)*

- Option 5: Slot Limit (**TBD**) for recreational and commercial
 - Size range (14" – X"); status quo bag and seasonal closures (including spawning + additional months)
 - *Include regional % (47.2% or 52.6%)*
- Option 6: Slot Limit (**TBD**) for recreational and commercial
 - Size range (16" – X"); status quo bag and seasonal closures (including spawning + additional months)
 - *Include regional % (47.2% or 52.6%)*

Commercial Management Options

- Option 1. Status Quo
 - CT
 - NY
- Option 2. Regional Reduction Option
 - Consistent minimum size (16")
- Option 3. Regional quota (lbs) based on a 3 year avg (2013-2015)
 - Using 2013-2015 because the commercial sector has to take the same reduction as the recreational sector
 - 47.2% quota
 - 52.6% quota

NJ-NYB

- To do: redistribute NJ commercial fish, similar to NY calculation

Recreational Management Options

- Option 1. Status Quo, 50% and 70% reduction via season reductions
 - New York
 - 33 day reduction (11%)
 - 10 day reduction (2%)
 - New Jersey
 - 11 day reduction (11%)
 - 4 day reduction (2%)
- Option 2. **11%** at consistent minimum size (15")
 - 4 (NJ) and 3 (NY) fish bag limit
 - Open season
 - NJ (October 7 – December 29)
 - NY (October 9 – December 13)
 - Spawning closures (June/July)
- Option 3. **2%** at consistent minimum size (15")

- 5 (NJ) and 4 (NY) fish bag limit
- Open season
 - NJ (Sept 30 – Dec 31)
 - NY (October 10-Dec 12)
- Spawning closures (June/July)
- Option 4. **11%** at consistent minimum size (16”) – will include from excel
 - Bag limit:
 - Open season
- Option 5. **2%** at consistent minimum size (16”) – will include from excel
 - Bag limit:
 - Open season
- Option 6. **11%** at slot Limit
 - Size range (15” – 18”); 4 fish bag limit and spawning closures
- Option 7: **2%** at slot Limit – will include from excel
 - Size range
 - Bag limit and closures

Commercial Options

- Option 1.
 - New York: Close June/July (30% savings) and open March/April (13% liberalization) = net 17% reduction
 - New Jersey: Close June/July (X% savings) and open Sept/October (X% liberalization) = net X% reduction
- Option 2. Regional quota (lbs) based on a 3 year avg (2013-2015)
 - Using 2013-2015 because the commercial sector has to take the same reduction as the recreational sector
 - 2% quota
 - 11% quota

MA-RI

MA-RI does not have to take a harvest reduction, however managers want to investigate what consistent recreational management measures might look like. J. McNamee is in the process of developing recreational alternatives to achieve this task.

Recreational Management Options

- Option 1. Status Quo (current measures because a reduction is not required)
- Option 2: Consistent minimum size (16”) and seasons (includes Jan/Feb closure + June/July spawning closure); 3 and 4 fish bag limit = 9% reduction in harvest
 - Jay will adjust days associated with bag limit

- Option 3: Consistent minimum size (16”) and seasons (includes Jan/Feb closure + June/July spawning closures); 3 fish bag limit = 19% reduction in harvest

Peak Spawning Research

All regions should use the Estuarine Living Marine Resources Database (<https://products.coastalscience.noaa.gov/elmr/>) to justify the peak spawning time periods; project time period is 1985-2000. Additional scientific articles can be referenced. Although the database includes older data, it is unlikely that tautog has been hugely affected by climate change because of protracted spawning events. Spawning closures to be included in Draft Amendment 1:

- MA-RI: June/July
- LIS: May, June and July; Jacob is reviewing the Millstone data as a cumulative sum & will discuss with CT; Sandra’s paper
- NJ-NYB: June/July
- DelMarVA: May/June

General Comments

- Request for future seasonal closures to align with waves entirely or at least allocate a full month within a partial wave.
- In Draft A1, note that there is a higher probability (based on past performance) of achieving harvest reductions with minimum size and bag limits. A lower bag limit can be more beneficial due to site specific preferences and limited migration. Reductions in fishing seasons are not as effective because it generally shifts effort to the open season without truly reducing fishing pressure.
- In Draft A1, note that there is a higher probability of achieving the FMP goals and objectives with regional management.
- The recreational management options are effort based metrics, not quotas.
- Regional %s should be presented, not state specific %s.
- While historically states have achieved reductions through various tools (bag, size, season), the TC/PDT recommendation is a more unified regional approach because the MRIP has not been designed to use strata specific data (i.e. drilling down to use wave specific, day specific estimates to extrapolate catch; less slicing/dicing of regulations). It is easier to understand and enforce. Draft Amendment I is an opportunity to get away from the step-wise approach, piece meal regulations.
- New Jersey – numbers are contingent on the 2014 year class being as high as it really is
 - TC concern that the data point is not as good as it looks, uncertainty because we have not seen this fish propagate yet. Use this reasoning to justify an option which includes consistent measures across the region.