



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 31, 2017

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703.842.0740

This press release revises the release distributed August 17<sup>th</sup> with the addition of Maryland's public hearing information. All other information remains the same.

### States Schedule Hearings on Atlantic Menhaden Draft Amendment 3

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic coastal states of Maine through Florida have scheduled their hearings to gather public comment on Draft Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. The details of those hearings follow.

#### **Maine Dept. of Marine Resources**

*October 5, 2017; 6 PM*

Yarmouth Town Hall

200 Main Street

Yarmouth, ME

Contact: [Pat Keliher](#) at 207.624.6553

*October 5, 2017; 6 PM*

Bourne Community Center, Room 2

239 Main Street

Buzzards Bay, MA

Contact: [Nichola Meserve](#) at 617.626.1531

#### **New Hampshire Fish and Game Department**

*October 3, 2017; 7 PM*

Urban Forestry Center

45 Elwyn Road

Portsmouth, NH

Contact: [Cheri Patterson](#) at 603.868.1095

#### **Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*October 4, 2017; 6 PM*

University of Rhode Island Bay Campus

Corless Auditorium, South Ferry Road

Narragansett, RI

Contact: [Robert Ballou](#) at 401.222.4700 ext: 4420

#### **Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries**

*October 2, 2017; 6 PM*

Thayer Public Library, Logan Auditorium

798 Washington Street

Braintree, MA

Contact: [Nichola Meserve](#) at 617.626.1531

#### **Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection**

*September 11, 2017; 7 PM*

CT DEEP Boating Education Center

333 Ferry Road

Old Lyme, CT

Contact: [Mark Alexander](#) at 860.447.4322

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.

**New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation**

*September 12, 2017; 6 PM*

NYSDEC Division of Marine Resources  
205 N. Belle Mead Road  
East Setauket, NY  
Contact: [Jim Gilmore](#) at 631.444.0430

**New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*September 13, 2017; 6 PM*

Manahawkin (Stafford Township) Courtroom  
260 East Bay Avenue  
Manahawkin, NJ  
Contact: [Russ Allen](#) at 609.748.2020

**Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*September 14, 2017; 6 PM*

DNREC Auditorium  
89 Kings Highway  
Dover, DE  
Contact: [John Clark](#) at 302.739.9914

**Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources**

*September 18, 2017; 6 PM*

Anne Arundel Community College  
Cade Center for the Fine Arts – Room 219  
101 College Parkway  
Arnold, MD  
Contact: [Lynn Fegley](#) at 410.260.8285

**Potomac River Fisheries Commission**

*September 19, 2017; 6 PM*

Carpenter Building  
222 Taylor Street  
Colonial Beach, VA  
Contact: [Martin Gary](#) at 804.456.6935

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**

*September 20, 2017; 6 PM*

Northumberland High School  
201 Academic Lane  
Heathsville, VA  
Contact: [Rob O'Reilly](#) at 757.247.2247

*September 21, 2017; 6 PM*

2600 Washington Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Newport News, VA  
Contact: [Rob O'Reilly](#) at 757.247.2247

**North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries**

*September 27, 2017; 6 PM*

Central District Office  
5285 US Highway 70 West  
Morehead City, NC  
Contact: [Michelle Duval](#) at 252.808.8013

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

*September 26, 2017; 6 PM*

Town of Melbourne Beach Community Center  
507 Ocean Avenue  
Melbourne Beach, FL  
Contact: [Jim Estes](#) at 850.617.9622

Draft Amendment 3 seeks to manage the menhaden resource in a way that balances menhaden's ecological role as a prey species with the needs of all user groups. To this end, the Draft Amendment considers the use of ecosystem reference points (ERPs) to manage the resource and changes to the allocation method. In addition, it presents a suite of management options for quota transfers, quota rollovers, incidental catch, the episodic events set aside program, and the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap.

The 2015 Benchmark Stock Assessment Report identified the development of ERPs as a high priority for Atlantic menhaden management. Menhaden serve an important role in the marine ecosystem as prey for a variety of species including larger fish (e.g. weakfish, striped bass), birds (e.g. bald eagles, osprey), and marine mammals (e.g. humpback whales, bottlenose dolphins). As a result, changes in the abundance of menhaden may impact the abundance and diversity of predator populations, particularly if the availability of other prey is limited. ERPs provide a method to assess the status of menhaden within the broad ecosystem context. Draft Amendment 3 provides a variety of reference point options, including the continued development of menhaden-specific ERPs as well as the application of precautionary guidelines for forage fish species.

Draft Amendment 3 also considers changes to the allocation method given concerns that the current approach may not strike an appropriate balance between gear types and jurisdictions. Specifically, under the current allocation method, increases in the total allowable catch (TAC) result in limited benefits to small-scale fisheries, and to several states. Furthermore, the current method may not provide a balance between the present needs of the fishery and future growth opportunities. Draft Amendment 3 considers a range of allocation alternatives, including a dispositional quota (bait vs. reduction), fleet-capacity quota (quota divided by gear type), jurisdictional quota, including a fixed minimum quota for each state, and an allocation method based on the TAC. In addition, the document considers five allocation timeframes including 2009-2011, 2012-2016, 1985-2016, 1985-1995, and a weighted approach which considers both historic and recent landings.

The Draft Amendment is available at [http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AtlanticMenhadenDraftAmendment3\\_PublicComment.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AtlanticMenhadenDraftAmendment3_PublicComment.pdf) or on the Commission website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), under Public Input. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Amendment either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM (EST) on October 20, 2017** and should be forwarded to Megan Ware, FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at [comments@asmfc.org](mailto:comments@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Draft Amd. 3). If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to Draft Amendment 3, please contact Megan Ware at 703.842.0740, so she can work with you to develop a unique subject line to enable us to better organize and summarize incoming comments for Board review.

Final action on the Amendment, as well as specification of the 2018 TAC, is scheduled to occur on November 13 & 14 at the BWI Airport Marriott, 1743 West Nursery Road, Linthicum, MD. For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mware@asmfc.org](mailto:mware@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

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