



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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## MEMORANDUM

January 29, 2018

**To: Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board**

**From: Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel**

**RE: AP Review of Draft Addendum XXX Options**

### List of Participants

Art Smith  
Bill Shillingford  
Bob Busby  
Buddy Seigel\*

Frank Blount  
Joe Huckmeyer  
Kyle Douton  
Marc Hoffman

Michael Plaia  
Mike Fedosh  
Wes Townsend\*

\*Present on webinar but did not participate on conference call

### Staff

Caitlin Starks (ASMFC), Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

### Public

Rick Bellevance

**The following memo contains the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel's review of the Draft Addendum XXX Options for the 2018 black sea bass recreational fishery.**

The AP met via conference call on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to review the Draft Addendum XXX options. After a presentation of the Addendum options, AP members asked questions and provided comments on the options. Comments and recommendations are summarized below, broken out by individual decision point as presented in the document.

### Management Program:

#### **Option 3.1.1: Default (Coastwide Measures)**

Art Smith supported one set of coastwide measures for recreational black sea bass, commenting that this is the easiest way to manage the resource from a compliance and planning perspective, and fairest because it would be unaffected by fluctuations in stock and size distributions along the coast. He also preferred one size limit (12 inches, the same as the commercial size) because higher size limits result in higher discards, and minimizing discards should be everyone's goal.

#### **Option 3.1.2: Regional Allocation of the RHL**

Eight other advisors and one member of the public supported regional allocation of the RHL. Reasons included the diverse fish sizes and stock distribution along the coast, differences in the

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fisheries and size limits, and the difficulty of getting coastwide regulations to meet the needs of all of the states.

### Provisions under Option 3.1.2: Regional Allocation of the RHL:

#### **3.1.2.1 Basis for Allocation**

Eight advisors and one member of the public preferred Option A, using historical harvest information to determine regional allocations. Frank Blount commented that this is the more feasible option. Art Smith did not comment on any provisions under regional allocation, as he only supported coastwide measures.

#### **3.1.2.2 Regional Alignment**

Four advisors and one member of the public preferred Option A, two regions. Kyle Douton and Rick Bellevance opposed Option C; Kyle offered that breaking the north into smaller regions is difficult considering they share Block Island. Marc Hoffman preferred Option B, three regions, because the resource is shared between Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York. Bill Shillingford and Mike Fedosh preferred option C.

#### **3.1.2.3 Timeframe for specifying allocation**

Eight advisors and one member of the public all supported Option B, the 5 year timeframe. Comments included that the most recent data is better, the fishery was much different over five years ago and is changing fast, and that the 10 year timeframe is too long.

#### **3.1.2.4 Management measures within a region**

Seven advisors and one member of the public preferred Option B, a regulatory standard with conservation equivalency allowed. Bill Shillingford commented that the fishery differs from region to region and state to state. Three advisors commented that while they prefer this option, they think it is too prescriptive and should have more flexibility.

#### **3.1.3 Evaluation and specification of measures**

Eight advisors and one member of the public preferred Option B, adjusting measures to the ACL. Comments included that status quo has not been getting it right so maybe a new approach would, and that this approach provides some flexibility.

#### **3.2 Timeframe for Addendum provisions**

Five advisors preferred Option A, Addendum provisions for up to two years. Frank Blount commented that the effects of the Addendum will not be clear by the time a new addendum would need to be initiated. Two advisors preferred Option B, up to three years; one commented that a longer timeframe is better. Michael Plaia had no preference, stating that it is up to the Board to decide. Rick Bellevance refrained from stating a preference because he is hoping for a new addendum sooner than either of these timeframe options.

#### **Additional Comments:**

- Joe H: 30 days of difference between states is not enough because of the different timing of seasons.

- Frank B: The goal of the Addendum was to make regions responsible for their catch, but it is not clear in the document who is responsible. It is still a problem that states could exceed their allocation but the whole region would have to reduce their measures. The states also need more flexibility in measures because size limits or number of days are more or less important in different states.
- 2015 wave 4 data was not accurate because very few charter trips were sampled, so it is concerning that this data is included in the allocation timeframes.
- In general, the more recent the data, the more relevant it is to the current fishery.
- Regarding the option using the ACL for adjusting measures, Kyle Douton expressed concern about the uncertainty surrounding the discard rate and the impact on the catch estimate, and how that would end up comparing to the ACL. He commented that there should be some flexibility in the document to account for errors and unexpected issues with using this option.
- John Conway could not attend the conference call but sent comments on the Addendum via email (see attached).

## Caitlin Starks

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**From:** John Conway <ctjackc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2018 11:13 PM  
**To:** Caitlin Starks  
**Subject:** Comments on BSB Recreational Management Plan

Greetings from CT. Unfortunately I can't make the call tomorrow afternoon. I wanted to send you some fast comments.

BSB have become incredibly important to the recreational fishing community in CT. They are the new "go to" fish for general angling public that fishes the waters of Long Island Sound. They have replaced striped bass in terms of importance. In the not that distant past, the CT waters of Long Island Sound (LIS) provided a noteworthy striped bass fishery that supported both the private boat based angler and the for hire fleet. The strong striped bass fishery in the open waters of LIS has basically disappeared. There is still a fishery but its a shadow of what it used to be. BSB have replaced striped bass as the most common target species in LIS for large portions of the fishing season.

LIS is somewhat unique in that BSB fishing is a spring fishery in Western and Central LIS and is more of a fall fishery in Eastern LIS.

Based on this fact its critically important for CT anglers (both recreational and the for hire fleet) to have the longest season possible. Appendix 1 Table A2 (Time Series B) is the preferred option for CT. It provides for the longest open season a modest bag limit and a reasonable size limit.

Thanks - Jack Conway

Apologies on missing the meeting.