



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC to Notify the Commonwealth of Virginia of Potential Noncompliance Action

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Atlantic Menhaden Management Board initiated a noncompliance finding in response to the Commonwealth of Virginia’s failure to fully implement the mandatory provisions of Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan. Specifically, the Commonwealth has not established the Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap of 51,000 mt. Rather than forwarding that finding to the Commission’s Interstate Fisheries Management Program, the Board postponed action on the noncompliance finding until the Commission’s Summer Meeting in August 2018. In the interim, the Board has requested the Commission send a letter to the Commonwealth of Virginia stating its intent to consider the noncompliance finding in August if the Commonwealth has not implemented Amendment 3’s Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap. Staff will monitor the fishery and inform the Board if harvest is approaching 51,000 mt in the Bay.

There are several reasons why the Board postponed action. The Commonwealth’s General Assembly, which oversees Atlantic menhaden management in Virginia, is still in session and has an opportunity to implement the 51,000 mt Bay cap. The reduction fishery is just beginning for the year and is highly unlikely to exceed the Bay cap prior to August given the performance of the fishery for the past five years (i.e., reduction fishery in the Chesapeake Bay has been significantly below 51,000 mt over that time period).

Upon notification by the Commission of a noncompliance finding, the Secretary of Commerce has 30 days to review the recommendation and determine appropriate action, which may include a federal moratorium on fishing for Atlantic menhaden in Virginia’s state waters.

For more information, please contact Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mappelman@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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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.

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