

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
BLUEFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Crowne Plaza Hotel Old Town
Alexandria, Virginia
February 8, 2012**

Approved April 30, 2018

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2. **Approval of proceedings of February, 2010 by consent** (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve Addendum 1 which includes Option 2 with an effective date of March 1, 2012** (Page 2). Motion by Pat Augustine; second by Dr. David Pierce. Motion carries (Page 2).
4. **Adjourn by consent** (Page 2).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Sen. Brian Langley, ME (LA)	(AA)
Steve Train, ME (GA)	Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Albano (LA)
Terry Stockwell, ME, proxy for P. Keliher (AA)	Bernie Pankowski, DE, proxy for Sen. Venables (LA)
Doug Grout, NH (AA)	John Clark, DE, proxy for D. Saveikis (AA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Rep. Watters (LA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
G. Ritchie White, NH (GA)	Tom O'Connell, MD DNR (AA)
William Adler, MA (GA)	Bill Goldsborough, MD (GA)
Jocelyn Carey, MA, proxy for Rep. Peake (LA)	Russell Dize, MD, proxy for Sen. Colburn (LA)
Mark Gibson, RI, proxy for B. Ballou (AA)	Jack Travelstead, VA, proxy for S. Bowman (AA)
Rick Bellavance, RI, proxy for Rep. Martin (LA)	Louis Daniel, NC (AA)
Bill McElroy, RI (GA)	Mike Johnson, NC, proxy for Rep. Wainwright (LA)
David Simpson, CT (AA)	Robert Boyles, SC (LA)
Rep. Craig Miner, CT (LA)	John Frampton, SC (AA)
James Gilmore, NY (AA)	John Duren, GA (GA)
Brian Culhane, NY, proxy for Sen. Johnson (LA)	Pat Geer, GA, proxy for S. Woodward (LA)
Pat Augustine, NY (GA)	Aaron Podey, FL (AA)
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Jaime Geiger, USFWS
Peter Himchak, NJ, proxy for David Chanda	A.C. Carpenter, PRFC
	Steve Meyers, NMFS

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Staff

Vince O'Shea	Chris Vonderweidt
Robert Beal	Mark Robson
Mike Waine	

Guests

David Pierce, MA DMF

The Bluefish Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Presidential Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia, February 8, 2012, and was called to order at 8:30 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Jack Travelstead.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN JACK TRAVELSTEAD: Good morning, everyone. This is the Bluefish Management Board. We have a relatively short agenda today. Are there any additions or changes to the agenda from the board members? Seeing none, the agenda stands.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: You have seen the proceedings from the February 2010 board meeting. Are there any changes to those minutes? Seeing none, they're approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: Is there any member of the public that wishes to make comment at this time on any item that is not on today's agenda? Okay, moving right along, Draft Amendment 1 for final approval. Mike, you're going to take us through the document?

REVIEW OF DRAFT AMENDMENT 1 FOR FINAL APPROVAL

MR. MICHAEL WAINE: Staff first brought this draft addendum to the joint board meeting at the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting in August of 2011. The board approved the document for public comment at that time. I will review the document right now. The SARC approved an age-structured assessment program in 2005, and in 2009 the bluefish stock was declared rebuilt.

However, the peer review stated that results should be used with caution because of assessment uncertainties. More specifically, there was aging difficulty in the assessment. Scales were used for the early part of the time series and otoliths for the latter part. SARC was concerned about discrepancies between scale

and otolith ages and the general difficulties of aging bluefish.

The assessment was further hampered by gaps in age-length keys resulting from a lack of samples from certain age and size classes. These gaps were filled by pooling samples across years, which increased uncertainty. Also, age samples were graphically limited coming from only Virginia and North Carolina.

This figure shows the length frequency of the fishery in the dashed line and the age samples collected in the solid line for 2004. You can see that there are gaps in the age samples from several length classes, particularly for larger fish. In response to the SARC recommendations for the bluefish assessment, the 2011 Action Plan included a task to work with states on developing a cooperative program to collect otoliths to improve the age data for assessments for several species, including bluefish.

Additionally, under this task the Bluefish Aging Workshop was conducted in May of 2011 to assess the need for bluefish monitoring and ensure the optimal and consistent sampling methods be established coastwide. The recommendations from the SARC and the Bluefish Aging Workshop are the premise for the development of the addendum to review the sampling protocols.

Out of that aging workshop the technical committee, with the help of the Quantitative Ecology Lab at Old Dominion University, established a protocol to age bluefish using otoliths and also established that Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Florida, NEAMAP and SEAMAP all have aging capability currently set up.

A final result of that workshop was a recommendation for a coast-wide sampling program to determine the optimal sample size for a coast-wide age-length key and test the feasibility of state-level sampling. The addendum has two options. The first is status quo, sampling is not part of state compliance.

The second option is that sampling is part of state compliance, and that states that account

for 5 percent of the coast-wide bluefish landings from '98 to 2008 would be required to collect a hundred bluefish ages. That would be fifty from the first half of the year and fifty from the second half. The states are Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina and Virginia that currently does all the sampling for bluefish itself.

The idea here is to cover the full range of bluefish sizes and that states may help each other with the aging as this would be new for some states and would be getting stuff set up and off and running. After the first year, the TC will review the sampling design to assess and make any changes at that point; and then ten was for an implement date of this season in 2012. I'll move into the public comment summary, which is pretty lengthy. We received on public comments on this document. That concludes my presentation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: That set some kind of record, I guess. I don't know what you did; you scared them off. Comments on the addendum; questions of Mike? David.

DR. DAVID PIERCE: Regarding the sampling design, the technical committee will review the sampling design after we collect the samples in 2012, so is there any guidance beforehand regarding what the sampling design should be?

MR. WAINE: Yes, it's actually detailed in the addendum that the states will collect 50 ages from the first half of the year and fifty ages from the second half of the year. The intent is to collect ages from the widest lengths of bluefish possible so that we can fill in gaps in the age-length key.

DR. PIERCE: Okay, I didn't realize that was called the sampling design. The TC will review the sampling design; that means that the TC will see if the states collected fifty in one part of the year and fifty in another part of the year; it's just simple as that, right? Okay, I get it.

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: Other questions or comments? Okay, I guess we're ready for a motion. Pat.

MR. PATRICK AUGUSTINE: **Mr. Chairman, I move that we approve sending this Draft Addendum 1 to Amendment 2 to the Bluefish Plan out to the public.**

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: We're beyond that.

MR. AUGUSTINE: I'm sorry, that we approve the document as presented.

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: Let me suggest something. **We're looking for a motion to approve the addendum and I would suggest that you approve Option 2 in the addendum on Page 5 and that you include an effective date of March 1, 2012**, so that we can start collecting these samples as soon as possible.

MR. AUGUSTINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Joe, did you get all that?

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: Is there a second to that motion; David, thank you. Comments on the motion? Do we need to caucus before we vote? The motion is move to approve Option 2 with an effective date of March 1, 2012. I would just suggest a slight change to that to say move to approve the addendum with Option 2 just so it's clear we're approving the entire document. Any objection to that? Seeing none, is there any objection to the motion? **The motion carries and the addendum is approved.**

We're moving to Item 5, elect a vice-chair. I'm informed we already have a vice-chair, A.C. Carpenter. This is my last meeting as Chair so, A.C., you'll be taking over as Chair at the next meeting and we'll put that back on the agenda for the next meeting to find a new vice-chair. Is there any other business? Pete.

MR. PETER HIMCHAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not committing to anything, but perhaps New York and New Jersey can work out some kind of a sharing arrangement whereby we may be able to process and age bluefish samples should they be able to take over the monitoring of our research set-aside quota.

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: All right, good luck.

MR. JAMES GILMORE: We would be very interested in pursuing that; and, Pete, if we

don't get enough fish, it was my master's thesis
and I still have some otoliths in the basement.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN TRAVELSTEAD: Is there a motion to
adjourn? We're adjourned; thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at
8:41 o'clock a.m., February 8, 2012.)