



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Horseshoe Crab Board Initiates Development of Addendum V *Addendum Proposes to Extend Restrictions in Delaware Bay Region*

Alexandria, VA – With management measures under Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crabs due to expire by September 30, 2008, the Commission's Horseshoe Crab Management Board has approved the initiation of Draft Addendum V. The Draft Addendum will include all the current provisions of Addendum IV as well as an option for a harvest moratorium in New Jersey and Delaware.

Based on the most recent surveys of horseshoe crabs, it appears that management measures in Addendum IV and previous management plans are resulting in increased horseshoe crab abundance. A horseshoe crab trawl survey administered by Virginia Tech shows increases over the past four to five years in all demographic groups of horseshoe crabs in ocean waters near the Delaware Bay. A survey of spawning crabs on the beaches of Delaware Bay indicate stable female spawning activity and increased male spawning over the past nine years.

However, horseshoe crab management is a multi-species issue. Despite the positive signs in population growth of horseshoe crabs around Delaware Bay, red knots, one of many shorebird species that feed upon horseshoe crab eggs, show no sign of recovery. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Shorebird Technical Committee is expected to take a closer look this spring at the most recent shorebird survey data.

The Draft Addendum will be prepared for Management Board review in May 2008. Upon its approval, it will be released for public review and comment in early summer. The Board will meet in August 2008 to review input from the Horseshoe Crab Advisory Panel and the public, and consider final approval of the addendum. For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, Senior Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator for Policy, at (202) 289-6400 or <bspear@asmfc.org>.

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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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