



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
May 10, 2006

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Horseshoe Crab Board Approves Addendum IV ***Addendum Calls for Additional Restrictions in Delaware Bay Region***

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Horseshoe Crab Management Board approved Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crab. The Addendum requires a suite of management measures to reduce harvest of horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin.

The Addendum intends to address the needs of the migratory shorebirds, particularly the red knot, while allowing a limited commercial bait fishery. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Shorebird Technical Committee has indicated that the red knot, one of many shorebird species that feed upon horseshoe crab eggs, is at low population levels. Red knots have shown no sign of recovery, despite a four-fold reduction in horseshoe crab landings since 1998.

The Addendum allows a delayed, male-only harvest in New Jersey and Delaware for two years. Specifically, it prohibits the harvest and landing of male and female horseshoe crabs from January 1 through June 7 in the Delaware Bay, and restricts the annual harvest to 100,000 males per state from June 8 through December 31. It also establishes a delayed harvest in Maryland, prohibiting horseshoe crab harvest and landings from January 1 through June 7 for two years. The Addendum further prohibits landing of horseshoe crabs in Virginia from federal waters from January 1 through June 7 for two years. No more than forty percent of Virginia’s quota may be landed from ocean waters and those landings must be comprised of a minimum male to female ratio of 2:1.

Affected states are required to implement the provisions of Addendum IV by October 1, 2006. Copies of the final Addendum will be available by mid-June via the Commission’s website at www.asmfc.org or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 or <bspear@asmfc.org>.

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PR06-16

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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