



# *Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission*

## NEWS RELEASE

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

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### **ASMFC Shad Board Initiates Development of Amendment 3 to the Shad & River Herring Plan *Amendment to Address Major Findings of Benchmark Stock Assessment***

Annapolis, MD – In response to the findings of the 2007 benchmark stock assessment for American shad, indicating that American shad stocks are currently at all-time lows and do not appear to be recovering, the Commission's Shad and River Herring Management Board voted to initiate development of Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Shad and River Herring.

The first step in the amendment process is the creation of a Public Information Document (PID), presenting a broad overview of the issues facing the American shad resource, as well as a range of potential management measures affecting the stock and dependent fisheries. Specific issues to be addressed in the PID are (1) incorporating the biological reference points and stock rebuilding goals identified in the 2007 benchmark stock assessment; (2) restricting fisheries operating on stocks where total mortality is increasing and relative abundance is decreasing; and (3) limiting the expansion of directed American shad fisheries unless a state or jurisdiction with management oversight can demonstrate that an increase in harvest will not jeopardize the rebuilding or sustainability of the stock in question. The Shad Plan Development Team was also given the flexibility to include other options in the PID that it deems necessary (i.e., research needs, habitat restoration and enhancement, data collection) as it proceeds with the development of the PID.

The Draft PID will likely be presented to the Management Board at the Commission's Spring Meeting in May 2008. Upon its approval, it will be made available for public review and comment. It is anticipated that most states will also be conducting public hearings on the PID.

The Management Board also provided feedback on modifying the Draft PID for Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for River Herring. Initiated in response to concern about negative stock indicators and low landings levels for river herring, the document will solicit public comment on potential management actions to protect river herring stocks coastwide. Staff will be finalizing the document over the next several weeks and will release it for public review and comment upon its completion. For more information, please contact Erika Robbins, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at 202/289-6400 or [erobbins@asmfc.org](mailto:erobbins@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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