



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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ASMFC Approves Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Black Drum

Alexandria, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has approved the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Black Drum. The FMP requires all states to maintain current regulations for black drum and implement a maximum possession limit and minimum size limit (of no less than 12 inches) by January 1, 2014. States will be required to further increase the minimum size limit (to no less than 14 inches) by January 1, 2016. Further, the FMP establishes a management framework to address future concerns or changes in the fishery or population. This will be particularly important as the Commission works towards the finalization of the first coastwide benchmark stock assessment for black drum in 2014.

The FMP was initiated to address a number of concerns. There has been a significant increase in harvest by both recreational and commercial fishermen in recent years, with the fishery targeting very young fish in some areas and more heavily targeting the established breeding stock in other areas; both of which could undermine the stock's ability to sustain itself. Further, the lack of consistent coastwide regulations or management goals may negatively impact the black drum population as fishing pressures shifts from other stocks.

The FMP will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under *Breaking News* or can be obtained by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@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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