



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 Weakfish Board Approves Biological Sampling & Reporting Program *Stock Assessment Slated for Peer Review in 2006*

Galloway, NJ – The Commission’s Weakfish Management Board has approved the biological sampling and reporting provisions of Addendum I to Amendment 4 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Weakfish to bolster data collection and improve future stock assessments. It also agreed to send the 2005 weakfish stock assessment forward for peer review. The Commission received extensive public comment in opposition to management measures proposed within the Addendum during public hearings and at the Board’s meeting.

The collection of weakfish age and length data from the recreational and commercial fisheries is critical for use in conducting stock assessments. The biological sampling program under Addendum I makes several improvements over the Amendment 4 program. The new program was crafted to be more responsive to year-to-year changes in landings, which proportionately affect a state’s required level of sampling. Addendum I also establishes criteria for determining non-compliance, consequences of non-compliance, and how states can get back into compliance with the biological sampling requirement. States are required to implement Addendum I for the 2006 season.

Copies of Addendum I will be available by December and can be obtained via the Commission’s website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News 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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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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