



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

73rd Annual Meeting Summary

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

73rd Annual Meeting
Mystic, Connecticut
October 27-30, 2014

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Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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ATLANTIC HERRING SECTION (OCTOBER 27, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Herring Section to receive an update on the development of Draft Amendment 3 to the Atlantic Herring FMP, set specifications for the 2015 fishing season (seasonal splitting), and approve a new Advisory Panel member. The Section granted the Plan Development Team additional time to complete analysis for Draft Amendment 3's issues and management options. The Advisory Panel and Law Enforcement Committee will meet to conduct additional reviews of the draft amendment.

The Section received an update on the pursuit of research and funding opportunities for an offshore Atlantic herring spawning study. Commission staff and members of the Atlantic Herring Technical Committee had conversations with staff from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC). There may be spawning data collected from the NEFSC acoustic survey, and possible opportunities to collect data and spawning samples. However, the timing of the survey and spawning events may not align. Commission staff will work with NEFSC staff to exchange sample collection protocols and continue seeking funding for an offshore study.

For the 2015 fishing season, the Section maintained status quo seasonal specifications for Area 1A. The fishing year will be seasonally split with 0% of the sub-quota allocated for January 1 through May 31, 72.8% from June 1 through September 30, and 27.2% from October 1 through December 31.

The Section discussed inconsistencies of closure announcements and the need to better coordinate closure decisions between NOAA Fisheries, state agencies, and the Commission. The Atlantic herring fishery is subject to quota-based closures, spawning area closures, and landing prohibitions ("days out"). Furthermore, a state may have regulations specifying different times in which landings days are in effect. The Board recommended to the ISFMP Policy Board that the Commission send a letter to NOAA Fisheries to coordinate communications on closure regulations and ensure fishermen and law enforcement are clearly informed of any prohibitions.

The Section moved to have ISFMP Policy Board support the ACCSP funding for Atlantic herring portside, Atlantic mackerel, and menhaden monitoring programs. These programs provide significant data on fisheries and bycatch.

The Section approved Shawn Joyce (NH) as a member of the Advisory Panel. For more information, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to allocate the 2015 Area 1a TAC seasonally with 72.8% available from June through September and 27.2% allocated from October through December. The fishery will close when 92% of the seasonal period's quota has been harvested and underages from June through September may be rolled into the October through December period.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to nominate Shawn Joyce (NH) as a member of the Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel.

Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Train. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to recommend to the ISFMP Policy Board to send a letter to NOAA Fisheries recommending a modification in herring closure notices to reflect ASMFC no-landing days and timing of state notifications to Directors.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.

Move that the Atlantic Herring Section recommend the Commission requests the ACCSP Coordinating Council fund port-side commercial catch sampling for the Atlantic Herring, Atlantic Mackerel, and Atlantic Menhaden fisheries.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Dr. Pierce. Motion carries (5 in favor, 2 opposed).

ATLANTIC COASTAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP STEERING COMMITTEE (OCTOBER 27, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) Steering Committee had a productive meeting, covering a variety of topics including science and data, outreach, and on-the-ground restoration projects. The Steering Committee reviewed the applications received for fish habitat restoration project funding and decided to recommend two highly ranked projects to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Steering Committee also discussed the status of the 2012 – 2016 Conservation Strategic Plan and the associated Implementation Plan, with updates on particular action items that are currently underway or completed. In particular, ACFHP is in the process of developing multiple surveys to acquire feedback from restoration practitioners on habitat restoration priorities. The ACFHP partner NOAA-funded conservation mooring project in Jamestown, RI is currently underway, and is set for completion in the spring of 2015. This project will retrofit block-chain moorings in eelgrass beds with Halas mooring systems resulting in the recovery of chain scoured eelgrass beds in Narragansett Bay.

The Steering Committee had the opportunity to hear from invited speakers Donna Bilkovich (Virginia Institute of Marine Science) and Stephen Gephard (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection), as well from Kent Smith (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission & ACFHP Chair) about climate change and the potential impacts on fish habitat in their respective subregions. Erik Martin (The Nature Conservancy) provided a presentation on a new diadromous fish habitat assessment tool TNC is working on that will help guide ACFHP decisions in prioritizing restoration projects in the near future. The Committee also received an update on the River Herring Restoration Strategies project, funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and jointly led by ACFHP and The Nature Conservancy. There was an update on the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative-funded habitat assessment project, which is being conducted by Downstream Strategies, LLC. ACFHP is leading the coastal component of the project, with a model focused on winter flounder distribution near completion and a model for river herring soon to be developed.

The Committee also discussed our current collaborative efforts and future possible directions with the National Fish Habitat Partnership, Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, and the Whitewater to Bluewater collaboration (between ACFHP and the two other eastern Fish Habitat Partnerships: Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership). Operational activities and the next steps in the organizational assessment were also examined, and ACFHP had the pleasure of welcoming the International Federation of Fly Fishers into the Partnership. Last, members of the Steering Committee had the opportunity to visit five fish passage access sites at prior in-stream barriers along coastal Connecticut on Wednesday.

For more information, please contact Lisa Havel, ACFHP Coordinator, at lhavel@asmfc.org or 703.842.0743.

MANAGEMENT & SCIENCE COMMITTEE (OCTOBER 27, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Management and Science Committee (MSC) met to discuss a number of issues and receive presentations on various topics. The MSC heard updates from ASMFC staff regarding progress on stock assessments currently underway. MSC received presentations from the Science Center for Marine Fisheries regarding collaborative industry-agency-academic research and on the NMFS climate change stock vulnerability analysis. The Committee also received a FishSmart Program presentation, including the latest in barotrauma reduction tools. MSC also heard presentations on the Research Set-Aside Program and plans to improve the Mid-Atlantic RSA in the future.

The MSC held in-depth discussions concerning changes to the Technical Committee Guidelines and prepared recommendations for the ISFMP Policy Board. The Committee heard updates on the ASMFC/MAFMC Observer Program and deliberated over future plans for the program. Additionally, MSC revisited the role of the Committee in stock assessment peer review planning. Finally, the MSC was updated on the current status of the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise, SEAMAP, NEAMAP and coastwide ageing activities. For more information, please contact Shanna Madsen, Fisheries Science Coordinator, at smadsen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

WINTER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 27, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Winter Flounder Management Board met to receive reports on the recent stock assessment for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) winter flounder stock, spawning stock biomass trends of the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) stock, and fisheries status by the Advisory Panel.

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center completed an operational stock assessment update for the GOM stock in August 2014. It found the stock to not be experiencing overfishing, but the stock status remains unknown. The update was based on three trawl surveys that cover a majority of the GOM stock's range.

The Technical Committee produced spawning stock biomass and abundance indices for each state in the SNE/MA range based on state's fishery independent surveys (trawls). In all surveys, the trends are declining and the indices in 2013 are often the lowest on record. Recruitment is slow, if happening at all. NEFSC will conduct an operational SNE/MA stock assessment update in 2015.

The Advisory Panel provided a report on the status of winter flounder fisheries. In most states, there are so few winter flounder in recent years that some fishermen are no longer targeting this species. An AP member was involved in a Stony Brook University study of winter flounder spawning grounds, which found that contrary to common belief, winter flounder are spawning in nearshore, hard sand bottoms rather than estuaries. Although no consensus was reached because of low participation, the AP generally supports tightening regulations according to quota reductions, and even a moratorium of the SNE/MA fishery.

The Board did not set the 2015 specifications at this time. It will address the issue during the Commission's Winter Meeting, after the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) has had a chance to set its specifications for the 2015 fishing year. The Board discussed the management of winter flounder between NEFMC, NOAA Fisheries, and the Commission. The state-water sub-component is based on recent catch and is not an allocation of the annual catch limit. The Board is interested in a complementary management plan for more equitable allocation of the winter flounder resource. The Board is concerned about the depleted SNE/MA stock and moved that the ISFMP Policy Board send a letter to NEFMC and NOAA Fisheries in support of reducing SNE/MA winter flounder possession limits to bycatch limits.

The Board approved David Goethel (NH) as a member of the Advisory Panel.

The Board approved changing the deadline for state compliance reports from November 1 to December 1. For more information, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

The Board recommends to the ISFMP Policy Board to send a letter to the New England Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries urging a reduction in the SNE/MA Winter Flounder possession limit to bycatch

limits only for federal vessels based on sea sampling data for trips targeting other species.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion carries (6 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention).

Move to nominate David Goethel to the Winter Flounder Advisory Panel.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion carries unanimously.

AMERICAN EEL MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 27, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC American Eel Board Approves Addendum IV

Mystic, CT – The Commission’s American Eel Management Board approved Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan. The Addendum establishes a 907,671 pound coastwide quota for yellow eel fisheries, reduces Maine’s glass eel quota to 9,688 pounds (2014 landings), and allows for the continuation of New York’s silver eel weir fishery in the Delaware River.



Photo © Brian Gratwicke

For yellow eel fisheries, the coastwide quota will be implemented for the 2015 fishing year but will not initially include state-specific allocations. Instead, the Addendum establishes two management triggers: (1) exceeding coastwide quota by more than 10% in a given year, or (2) exceeding the coastwide quota for two consecutive years regardless of the percent overage. If either one of the triggers are met then states would implement state-specific allocation based on average landings from 2011-2013.

Maine will continue to maintain daily trip level reporting and require a pound-for-pound payback in the event of quota overages in its glass eel fishery. Additionally, the state will implement a fishery-independent life cycle survey covering glass, yellow and silver eels within at least one river system. The Addendum specifies that these requirements would also be required for any jurisdiction with a commercial glass eel fishery harvesting more than 750 pounds.

Addendum IV provides states/jurisdictions the ability to request limited participation in the glass eel fishery based on conservation programs enacted after January 1, 2011, and given there is an overall benefit to American eel populations. Examples of conservation programs include, but are not limited to, habitat restoration projects, fish passage improvements, or fish passage construction. The Addendum also provides opportunities for a limited glass eel harvest for domestic aquaculture purposes and allows the continuation of New York’s Delaware River silver eel weir fishery under a transferable license cap, limited to nine permits annually.

The Board’s actions respond to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock has declined in recent decades and the prevalence of significant downward trends in multiple surveys across the coast is cause for concern. Causes of decline are likely due to a combination of factors including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease. Addendum IV is the second phase of management action in response to the stock assessment.

The Board’s actions respond to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock has declined in recent decades and the prevalence of significant downward trends in multiple surveys across the coast is cause for concern. Causes of decline are likely due to a combination of factors including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease. Addendum IV is the second phase of management action in response to the stock assessment.

The Addendum will be posted to the Commission's website by mid-November under *Breaking News*. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-38

Motions

Move to approve North Carolina's proposal for one year.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion carries (14 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Main Motion

Move to adopt the working group's recommendations for yellow and glass eels, and for the sustainable fishery management plans.

Motion made by Rep. Kumiega and seconded by Mr. White. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to use soft cap of 978,004 pounds and trigger #2 (from working group recommendations) if cap is exceeded in two years then allocation would be as specified as option 2a from Draft Addendum IV.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and second by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion fails (3 in favor, 15 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – CT, NY, NJ; Opposed – ME, NH, MA, RI, PA, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend by striking Option 8 from the main motion for glass eels.

Motion made by Mr. Ballou and seconded by Mr. McKiernan. Motion carries.

Main Motion as Amended

Move to adopt the working group's recommendations for yellow and glass eels, and for the sustainable fishery management plans, excluding Option 8 for glass eels. Motion carries (15 in favor, 3 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NJ, PA, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL; Opposed – NJ, NMFS, USFWS.

Move to approve Addendum IV as modified today and in August 2014.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion carries (17 in favor, 1 null). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NJ, PA, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS; Null – NY.

AMERICAN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves Development of Jonah Crab FMP & Initiates Draft Addendum XXIV to Address State/Federal Consistency in Lobster Management

Mystic, CT – The Commission's American Lobster Management Board approved the development of an Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Jonah Crab and initiated the development of Draft Addendum XXIV to Amendment 3 to the Interstate FMP for American Lobster.

The Jonah Crab FMP was initiated in response to concern about increasing targeted fishing pressure for Jonah crab, which has long been considered a bycatch in the lobster fishery. However, growing market demand has doubled landings in the past seven years. Given the absence of state and federal management programs and a

stock assessment for Jonah crab, there is concern current harvest may compromise the sustainability of the resource. The Draft Jonah Crab FMP will consider management objectives, proposed regulations to the commercial and recreational fishery, monitoring requirements, and recommendations for federal waters fisheries. It is anticipated an initial Draft Jonah Crab FMP will be presented to the Board at the Commission's Winter Meeting in Alexandria, VA.

As part of the development of the FMP, the Commission will be forming a Jonah Crab Advisory Panel. Commission Advisory Panels are typically comprised of commercial and recreational fishermen, processors/dealers and other stakeholders who are concerned about fisheries conservation and management and have expertise in the Jonah crab fishery. The Advisory Panel provides the Board with advice concerning fishery practices and species' management activities. Those interested in becoming a member should contact their state Commissioners.

Draft Addendum XXIV will address inconsistencies between state and federal American Lobster trap transfer regulations. Options will be drafted to propose alignment between state and federal measures for full business conservation tax, trap transfer increments, and dual permits transferability rules. Draft Addendum XXIV will be presented to the Board for its consideration and approval for public comment at the Commission's Winter Meeting in Alexandria, VA.

For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

PR14-41

Motions

Move to develop an FMP for Jonah crab.

Motion made by Mr. Train and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to establish a PDT, TC and AP for the Jonah Crab FMP.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Stockwell. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to accept the working group recommendations and develop an addendum based on those recommendations.

Motion made by Mr. Train and seconded by Mr. Gibson. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to create an ad-hoc subcommittee to address the inconsistent fixed gear marking requirements in the 3-12 mile area beyond state waters. The subcommittee should consist of Board, LCMT, mobile gear fishery reps and LEC members. The goals of the subcommittee will be:

- **Review the state and federal gear marking schemes among states and NMFS that are currently legally required in the nearshore zone (3-12 miles).**
- **Make a recommendation whether a more uniform gear marking scheme in this area would have value to alleviate gear conflicts among and within sectors, and improve enforcement.**

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion

Move to approve a closed season from April 30th to May 31st for Lobster Conservation Management Area 4 and 5 to achieve the required 10% reduction in Addendum XVII. Allow a 2 week grace period for the removal of lobster traps and allow the setting of unbaited lobster traps 1 week prior to the season reopening.

Motion made by Mr. Baum and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend motion to remove LCMA 5.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. O'Connell. Motion fails (4 in favor, 6 opposed).

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute a 10% reduction in trap allocation for LCMA 4 and 5.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion fails (3 in favor, 7 opposed).

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to strike “two week grace period for the removal of lobster traps.”

Motion made by Rep. Miner and seconded by Mr. White. Motion carries (7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 null).

Main Motion as Amended

Move to approve a closed season from April 30th to May 31st for Lobster Conservation Management Area 4 and 5 to achieve the required 10% reduction in Addendum XVII, and allow the setting of unbaited lobster traps 1 week prior to the season reopening.

Motion carries (6 in favor, 4 opposed).

Main Motion

Move to accept 2014 FMP Review and *de minimis* requests for Virginia and Delaware.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to include Maryland as *de minimis*.

Motion made by Mr. O’Connell and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes (9 in favor, 1 abstention).

Main Motion as Amended

Move to accept 2014 FMP Review and *de minimis* requests for Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to take no action on recently approved LCMA 4 and 5 until after the completion of the stock assessment.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. O’Connell. Motion fails (3 in favor, 6 opposed, 1 null).

HABITAT COMMITTEE (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Habitat Committee held its second in-person meeting of the year at the Commission’s 73rd Annual Meeting. The Committee received an update on the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership program from the new coordinator, Lisa Havel. The Committee then discussed experiences working with local municipalities and segued into series of presentations: fisheries and land-use discourse, blue carbon, and habitats and ecosystem-based management.

Troy Hartley, Research Associate Professor of Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, presented his research on fisheries and land-use discourse analysis. In his two-part study, he and his research assistants analyzed the communications network of land-use planners and compared the language in a fishery management plan (shad and river herring) and local city and county comprehensive land use plans (Virginia and Maryland). For the discourse analysis, he found that the two disciplines are not using similar languages, with approximately 80% of the language being different. Fisheries plans tend to focus on the biotic factors, while land-use plans describe abiotic factors (i.e. water flow). Fisheries managers can facilitate their work by understanding the layers of professional networks at the local level, identifying the individuals who serve as information hubs, and maintaining frequent communications to develop mutual understanding, trust, interests, and concerns.

Phil Colarusso of the Environment Protection Agency provided an overview of blue carbon, which is the carbon sequestered by salt marshes, sea grass meadows, and mangrove swamps. Blue carbon ecosystems are more effective than tropical forests at absorbing carbon dioxide. Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) has formed a working group consisting of NOAA, EPA, USGS, NASA, and Canadian and Mexican government officials. The working group has funding to estimate blue carbon in North America. The blue carbon policy implications include the development of carbon trading markets, which can create incentive and potentially provide funding for large scale restoration of these habitats. Naturally, this would provide for economic evaluation of sea grass, salt marsh, and mangrove systems. Blue carbon may be a potential bridge between the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts.

Peter Auster of University of Connecticut shared his research on the linkages between habitats selection and ecosystem-based fisheries management. Local-scale studies have shown that survivorship of fishes are related to habitat attributes. Studies mostly focus on sensitivity and vulnerability to habitat disturbance, but recovery and resiliency widely vary and tend to focus on the least resilient and longest recovery times. Ecosystem-based management should include habitat-mediated processes to more realistically parameterize single and multi-species models.

The Maryland representative provided an overview of Maryland's Ocean Acidification Task Force. Federal agencies have developed programs to address ocean acidification impacts. So far, Maine and Maryland have created task forces to study the effects and potential risks of ocean acidification in their state waters.

The Committee reviewed its 2014 work plan. The 2014 issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*, with a focus on climate change impacts to fish habitats, is on track for publication at the end of the year, although some articles and state/federal agency updates are still needed. The Committee is currently working on three products under the *Habitat Management Series*. The 2014 issue on nearshore and estuarine aquaculture impacts to fish habitats. The draft is mostly completed, but some sections need additional information and editing. The *Sciaenid Habitats Source Document* is currently in development. The Commission hired a contractor, Steve Midway, to review literature and update the habitat needs by life stages. The Committee began reviewing the *Living Shorelines: Erosion and Control Strategies* document (2010) for a second edition. This will be a useful resources as increasingly more land owners and managers are interested in living shorelines as a natural solution to mitigate erosion and other land loss processes from events such as Hurricane sandy.

For 2015, some of the products from 2014 will carry over. The Committee will also add to the habitat bottlenecks whitepaper by providing case studies on examples of species with physical bottlenecks. The Committee formed a small working group to assess the need and usefulness of a land-use manager's toolbox to help land-use planners familiarize with fisheries habitat and management terms and concerns.

The Committee concluded the meeting with discussions on committee membership. There is high interest in recruiting representatives for Maine and the Army Corps of Engineers. For more information on the activities of the Habitat Committee, please contact Melissa Yuen, Habitat Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) had a busy and productive meeting on the second day of the of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's 73rd Annual Meeting. Throughout the day the LEC welcomed a number of additional enforcement participants from various jurisdictions. It also welcomed two cadets from the USCG Academy who observed the proceedings most of the day.

Species Issues

Sharks

Members discussed current state statutes or laws prohibiting possession of shark fins and discussed whether these new provisions or any statutory exemptions were affecting enforcement. There were no reports of significant problems with incompatible regulations.

Striped Bass

USCG members polled the LEC regarding disposition of illegally-caught striped bass from federal waters. There were a number of different approaches to handling of such fish, and members discussed the process of forfeiture, voluntary abandonment, and transfer of fish to state jurisdictions by the USCG.

Cancer Crab/Jonah Crab

The LEC received an update from staff on potential development of regulations for this fishery, and will weigh in on enforcement considerations in cooperation with plan development staff.

American Lobster

Enforcement staff from Maine gave a presentation to the LEC regarding a potential change they would like to consider that would allow transfer of lobster trap tags in a controlled manner. LEC members discussed possible enforcement issues that might ensue but will review specific language and develop a committee position at a later time, if necessary.

Spiny Dogfish

Members discussed enforcement challenges and needs when considering an aggregate trip limit. The discussion centered on possible increases in the Rhode Island aggregate trip limit. The LEC did not develop a formal position, but agreed that having an advanced reporting system and access to real-time landings information would be critical to enforcement. Three states' enforcement offices do not have access to landings data outside of a subpoena process, a significant problem.

Action Plan Issues

The LEC reviewed the 2009 *Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures*. We are preparing an updated and revised version of these guidelines as part of our 2014 Action Plan commitment. The new guidelines will also incorporate components of a similar set of guidelines published by NOAA/USCG. The LEC provided comments to Mark Robson, who will complete the final draft and submit the revised guidelines to the ASMFC for consideration. LEC members would like to have an opportunity to present the new guidelines to the policy board, discuss the general enforcement precepts in the document, and share examples of regulations that may enhance or hinder enforceability.

The LEC is tasked in the 2014 Action Plan with active participation in law enforcement committees associated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), including the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs (NACLEC). Several members of the LEC are active in these organizations and recently attended the AFWA meeting in St. Louis, MO. Our participating members reported on a new leadership training program that held its first class at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV recently. This training is designed specifically for conservation enforcement officers who are on a leadership track. One LEC member was in the inaugural class, and two of our members served as coaches. AFWA has provided considerable financial support for this program. All reports indicate that this is an excellent training program.

The Committee discussed the current status of VMS data use by enforcement agencies. There is ongoing access to federal VMS data and interagency coordination is working as needed. Some states have reported that they are no longer receiving email notices related to VMS targets and this will be corrected as appropriate.

Toni Kerns briefed the LEC on the 2015 Action Plan and we discussed the addition of an action item to assist the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council in review of their Research Set-Aside program. Selected members of the LEC will be available to provide input and expertise.

Other Issues

David Borden presented an issue to the LEC concerning enforcement problems and concerns in the American lobster offshore (federal) waters fishery. Members discussed the limited capability of enforcement vessels to work these offshore areas, particularly with gear suitable for hauling and checking traps. Equipment and resources are limiting and would take a significant commitment to funding for larger vessels, and/or offshore gear-hauling equipment. In follow-up to our previous review of VMS systems, it was pointed out that enforcement in the American lobster Area 3 fishery would be enhanced if VMS was required.

Special Recognition

The LEC honored outgoing member Joe Fessenden for his long service to the ASMFC. Col. Fessenden will be greatly missed.

For more information, please contact Mark Robson, LEC Coordinator, at markrobson2012@gmail.com.

SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Board Initiates Draft Addendum to Address 2015 Summer Flounder Recreational Fishery

Mystic, CT – The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board initiated the development of Draft Addendum XXVI to the Summer Flounder Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Draft Addendum will propose alternate regional management approaches for the 2015 recreational summer flounder fishery to continue to improve equity in recreational harvest opportunities along the coast. The Draft Addendum will include options to allow for the averaging of harvest estimates, mandatory regions, and the sharing of unused quota.

Draft Addendum XXVI is initiated to continue the use of regional management to harvest the coastwide recreational harvest limit for summer flounder. In 2014, the Board approved Addendum XXV which provided a shift away from state-by-state harvest targets used in previous years. Regional management allowed for the use of the same management measures within regions, as well as more similar management measures between regions. State-by-state harvest targets created difficulties for some states as overages occurred due largely to state shares and limits not reflecting local abundance of summer flounder and its availability to recreational fishermen. State targets were based solely upon the 1998 estimate of harvest from the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey. The 2014 management regions are: Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut-New Jersey; Delaware-Virginia; and North Carolina.

The Board appointed new members to its Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel. At the Commission’s Summer Meeting in August 2014, the Board moved to consolidate the individual advisory panels for each of the three species into one group. This action was prompted by recent declines in participation and engagement of advisory panel members. Commission staff will continue to work closely with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council as it repopulates its Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel with the intent of improving meeting efficiencies and cost, and coordination of the two advisory panels.

Draft Addendum XXVI will be presented to the Board for its consideration and approval for public comment at its joint December meeting with the Council in Baltimore, Maryland. At this meeting, the Board and Council will also consider management measures for 2015 black sea bass fishery. 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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PR14-39

Motions

Main Motion

Move to initiate an addendum to the summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries management plan to consider and develop alternate approaches for regional management of the recreational summer flounder fishery for 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passes.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to strike the word “regional.”

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion fails.

Move approval of Michael Plaia, Frank Blount, Michael Hall, Aaron Gewirtz, Travis Barao, Kyle Douton, P. Wes Townsend, Clark Evans, Michael Hynson, John Martin, Allen “Buddy” Seigel, Steven Wray, Meade Amory, Ken Neill, Art Smith, Mark King, Arthur Kretschner, Robbie Mercer, and Michael “Jimbo” Ireland as members to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. O’Reilly. Motion carries unanimously.

BUSINESS SESSION (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Business Session reviewed and approved the 2015 Action Plan based on the 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan. The approved plan will be available on the Commission website at www.asmfc.org in early November. Dr. Louis Daniel (NC) and Mr. Douglas Grout (NH) were re-elected by unanimous consent to serve as Commission Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for another year, with their terms ending in November 2015. For more information, please contact Bob Beal, Executive Director, at rbeal@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move that the Commission work together with the MAFMC to put together a joint committee to address concerns on RSA and that committee be comprised of members of both the Commission and the MAFMC; and further that the Commission and the MAFMC work together in an expeditious manner to improve and reinstate the RSA program if possible.

Motion made by Mr. Hasbrouk and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion fails.

On behalf of the Atlantic Herring Section, move the Commission request the ACCSP Coordinating Council fund port-side commercial catch sampling for the Atlantic Herring, Atlantic Mackerel, and Atlantic Menhaden fisheries.

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell. Motion carries.

Move to accept 2015 Action Plan.

Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded by Mr. Feigenbaum. Motion carries unanimously.

ISFMP POLICY BOARD & ACCSP COORDINATING COUNCIL (OCTOBER 28, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The joint Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board and Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council meeting resulted in both groups approving the transition to state conduct of the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) in 2016. This transition plan was drafted by the ACCSP Recreational Technical Committee. During the meeting, the National Marine Fisheries Service expressed their support for the transition to state conduct of APAIS.

Motions

Move to adopt the recommendation of the ACCSP Operations Committee.

Motion made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Gibson. Motion carries unanimously.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (OCTOBER 29, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Executive Committee met to approve the FY2014 audit, receive a report from the Executive Director on his priorities for 2015 and discuss budget priorities with NOAA leadership. For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance and Administration at lleach@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

No motions made.

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 29, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Approves Addendum IV for Implementation in 2015

Mystic, CT – The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. The Addendum establishes new fishing mortality (F) reference points, as recommended by the 2013 benchmark stock assessment. In order to reduce F to a level at or below the new target, coastal states will implement a 25% harvest reduction from 2013 levels. Chesapeake Bay states/jurisdictions will implement a 20.5% harvest reduction from 2012 levels since their fisheries were reduced by 14% in 2013 based on their management program. All states/jurisdictions will promulgate regulations prior to the start of their 2015 fisheries.

“I congratulate members of the Management Board for making tough choices yesterday to ensure the long-term health and viability of our striped bass fishery resources,” stated Board Chair Douglas Grout of New Hampshire. “The Board struck an important balance in taking immediate action to reduce fishing mortality back to the target while also recognizing the unique characteristics of the Chesapeake Bay fisheries. The action will assure a more rapid increase in the abundance of spawning fish which has been declining in recent years.”

The Addendum responds to results of the 2013 Atlantic striped bass benchmark assessment indicating F in 2012 was above the new F target, and female spawning stock biomass (SSB) has been steadily declining below the target level since 2006. This means even though the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and stock projections show SSB will likely fall below the threshold in the coming years. In addition, a similar decline has been observed in total harvest.

The Addendum includes changes to the coastal commercial quota and the coastal recreational fishery to achieve reductions in 2015. Commercial quotas established in Amendment 6 will be reduced by 25% while maintaining current size limits to minimize discard mortality. The Board also maintained no transfer of unused commercial quotas as a conservation benefit to the resource. The coastal recreational fishery harvest will be reduced by implementing a one fish bag limit while keeping a 28" size limit. Under Amendment 6, states may use conservation equivalency to develop state-specific measures that are different than a one fish bag limit and 28" size limit for their coastal fisheries but still achieve a 25% reduction in harvest.



Atlantic striped bass tagged and released as part of the Striped Bass Hook and Line Tagging Survey

The Chesapeake Bay states/jurisdictions will reduce their 2012 Bay commercial harvest level by 20.5% and will submit conservation equivalency proposals to achieve a 20.5% reduction from the Bay recreational fishery. The Technical Committee will continue to work on Chesapeake Bay specific reference points for future management.

The Addendum will be implemented on January 1, 2015. The Technical Committee will review any submitted conservation equivalency proposals by the states and the Board will review and consider approval of those proposals at the Commission's Winter Meeting in Alexandria, VA.

Addendum IV will be made available on the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, under *Breaking News* by mid-November. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-43

Motions

Move to accept Option B under 2.5.1, Option B under 2.5.2, and Option B under 2.5.3.

Motion made by Mr. Keliher and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Motion carries (12 in favor, 4 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS; Opposed – MD, DC, PRFC, VA.

Main Motion

Move to reduce F to target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend the motion by substituting 'three' for the word 'one' and making it 'years' instead of 'year' and add the words 'with either a 17% reduction or a tiered reduction of 7% for three years'.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Clark.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to add (for Section 2.6) Option B, up to a 3-year time frame with the expectation that the Board will be able to select from Section 3.0 Options B, C and D, if necessary.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion fails (6 in favor, 10 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – NJ, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA; Opposed – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, PA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend the motion by substituting ‘three’ for the word ‘one’ and making it ‘years’ instead of ‘year’ and add the words ‘with either a 17% reduction or a tiered reduction of 7% for three years’.

Motion made by Mr. O’Reilly and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion fails (1 in favor, 15 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – DE; Opposed – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend by adding after ‘reduction’ “in the coastal fishery and a 20.5% reduction in the Chesapeake Bay beginning in 2015.”

Motion made by Mr. O’Connell and seconded by Mr. Gary. Motion carries (10 in favor, 6 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – MA, RI, CT, NY, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries; Opposed – ME, NH, NJ, PA, DE, USFWS.

Main Motion as Amended (#2)

Move to reduce F to target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction in the coastal fishery and a 20.5% reduction in the Chesapeake Bay beginning in 2015.

Motion tabled.

Motion to Amend (#2a)

Move to amend to remove “one year” and replace it with “less than two years.”

Motion made by Mr. Feigenbaum and seconded by Rep. Kumiega. Motion tabled.

Motion to Amend (#2b)

Move to amend motion to read “reduce F to target within one year in the coastal fishery with a 25% harvest reduction in 2015 and within two years in the Chesapeake Bay with a 20.5% reduction beginning in 2015”.

Motion made by Mr. Young and seconded Dr. Daniel. Motion tabled.

Motion to Table

Move to table Motions 2, 2a and 2b at this time.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion carries unanimously.

Move that prior to the start of the 2015 fishery all jurisdictions implement rules to achieve the new fishing mortality target by implementing a 25% harvest reduction in coastal fisheries and a 20.5% reduction in the Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

Motion made by Mr. O’Connell and seconded by Mr. Abbott. Motion carries (14 in favor, 2 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, PA, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS; Opposed – NJ, DE.

Main Motion

Move to not allow commercial quota transfers.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. Fote.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to allow commercial quota transfers only amongst the states with a coastal commercial quota.

Motion made by Mr. Hasbrouck and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion fails (1 in favor, 15 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – NY; Opposed; ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Main Motion

Move to not allow commercial quota transfers.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion carries (15 in favor, 1 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS; Opposed – NY).

Move to maintain all commercial size limits that were in use in 2013.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. White. Motion carries unanimously.

Main Motion

Move to take a 25% reduction from the commercial coastal Amendment 6 quota (B16).

Motion by Mr. Diodati. Second by Mr. Borden.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend the main motion by excluding from the reduction in commercial quota those states that did not receive a quota increase under Amendment 6.

Motion made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. O’Connell. Motion fails (3 in favor, 11 opposed, 2 abstentions). Roll Call Vote: In favor – MA, PA, DE; Opposed – ME, NH, RI, CT, NY, NJ, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC; Abstentions – NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Main Motion

Move to take a 25% reduction from the commercial coastal Amendment 6 quota (B16).

Motion by Mr. Diodati. Second by Mr. Borden. Motion carries (8 in favor, 6 opposed, 2 abstentions). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, NY, NJ, PA, MD; Opposed – CT, DE, DC, PRFC, VA, NC; Abstentions – NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Main Motion

Move that the states submit for TC review and Board approval conservation equivalency proposals for 2015 that achieve a 25% reduction in the coastal recreational fishery.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. O’Connell. Motion substituted.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to option B3 for the coastal recreational fishery (conservation equivalency is based on a 25% reduction).

Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion fails (3 in favor, 13 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – MA, RI, PA; Opposed – ME, NH, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute option B1 and stipulate that any conservation equivalency proposal meet the calculated reduction at 1 fish at 28”.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion fails (4 in favor, 12 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, CT, PA; Opposed – MA, RI, NY, NJ, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute to approve Option B1 (1 fish at 28”) with all conservation equivalent measures equal to a 25% or greater reduction in harvest.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. Keliher. Motion carries (14 in favor, 2 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, PA, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS; Opposed – NJ, DE.

Main Motion as Substituted

Move to approve Option B1 (1 fish at 28") with all conservation equivalent measures equal to a 25% or greater reduction in harvest.

Motion carries unanimously.

Move that the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions submit for TC review and Board approval for 2015 conservation equivalency proposals that achieve a 20.5% reduction from 2012 harvest in the Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. O'Connell. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion

Move that there will be a 20.5% reduction from the 2012 harvest in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. That reduction will be applied and set before the 2015 season.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. O'Connell.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to replace 2012 harvest with 2013 quota.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. White. Motion fails (2 in favor, 14 opposed). Roll Call Vote: In favor – NJ, PA; Opposed – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS.

Main Motion

Move that there will be a 20.5% reduction from the 2012 harvest in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. That reduction will be applied and set before the 2015 season.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. O'Connell. Motion carries unanimously.

Move for an implementation date of January 1, 2015. And to submit conservation equivalency proposals by December 1, 2014 for Technical Committee review the first week of January 2015 and board review and action at the February meeting in 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion carries.

Move to accept the addendum as modified today.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion carries without objection.

CAPTAIN DAVID H. HART AWARD LUNCHEON (OCTOBER 29, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Presents Patrick Augustine Prestigious Captain David H. Hart Award

Mystic, CT - The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented Mr. Patrick Augustine, long-time ASMFC Commissioner from New York and fisheries advocate, the Captain David H. Hart Award, its highest annual award, at the Commission's 73rd Annual Meeting in Mystic, CT.

For nearly two decades, Mr. Augustine has passionately committed his time and energy to the betterment of Atlantic coast fisheries at all levels of fisheries management – state, interstate, regional, and federal. Over the past 16 years, he served at the pleasure of four consecutive Governors to represent New York's fishing constituents on the Commission. Over that time, he actively participated on 15 of the Commission's 17 species management boards, and provided leadership as Chair on six of those boards. He also played an important role in elevating the status of ASMFC Legislators and Governor Appointees as equal participants on species management

boards, as well as recognizing the outstanding efforts of contributors to our process as a long-standing member of the Awards Committee.

Mr. Augustine served for three consecutive terms as a member of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, participating on over a dozen committees on issues ranging from demersal and coastal migratory species, research set-asides, ecosystem/ocean planning, Magnuson Stevens reauthorization, bycatch and limited access, and highly migratory species. He also represented the Council as an Advisory Committee member to the US Section for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. The Council adopted a formal resolution acknowledging his numerous and outstanding accomplishments upon his retirement from the Council in August 2011.



From left: ASMFC Executive Director Bob Beal, Hart Award Recipient Patrick Augustine, and ASMFC Chair Louis B. Daniel, III

In New York, he has led and been a member of a number of his state’s fishing and marine resource organizations, including the New York Sportfishing Federation, Huntington Anglers Club, New York Bight Regional Ocean Science Council, South Shore Estuary Reserve Council, Long Island Sound Estuary Citizens Advisory Committee, Long Island Coastal Advisory Committee, Sea Grant Programs Advisor, and the New York State Boating Advisory Council. And yet, given all these responsibilities he still found time to offer his expertise as a speaker at numerous fishing clubs and special interest groups, and providing valuable input at the Marine Resources Advisory Council.

Throughout it all, Mr. Augustine brought to all his interactions his quick wit and good humor, dedication to fully understanding all the issues brought before him, and commitment to seeking balance among the competing demands of all resource users within fisheries management arena. To the latter point, he was often found talking directly to anglers when forming his position on an issue before the Commission. He is well known for having no reservations about taking those facts up directly at Commission meetings, or going straight to his Governor, Congress, or other elected officials when advocating for a given management action. This approach kept him wholly connected to New York anglers and grounded his positions in real-world facts as few others could. Because of his knowledge and relationships, Mr. Augustine has been at the forefront of resolving countless issues over the years, not only at the Commission, but in his role as a Council member and countless fishing and conservation organizations.

The Commission instituted the Award in 1991 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding efforts to improve Atlantic coast marine fisheries. The award is named for one of the Commission’s longest serving members, who dedicated himself to the advancement and protection of marine fishery resources.

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PR14-40

HORSESHOE CRAB MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 30, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Horseshoe Crab Board Sets 2015 Specifications for Horseshoe Crabs of Delaware Bay Origin

Mystic, Connecticut – The Commission’s Horseshoe Crab Management Board has approved the harvest specifications for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin. Under the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework, the Board maintained a harvest limit of 500,000 Delaware Bay male horseshoe crabs and zero female horseshoe crabs for the 2015 season. Based on the allocation mechanism established in Addendum VII, the following quotas were set for the states of New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, which harvest horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin:

	Delaware Bay Origin Horseshoe Crab Quota (no. of crabs)	Total Quota
State	Male Only	Male Only
Delaware	162,136	162,136
New Jersey	162,136	162,136
Maryland	141,112	255,980
Virginia*	34,615	81,331

*Virginia harvest refers to harvest east of the COLREGS line only

The Board chose a status quo management program due to the lack of compatible data on horseshoe crab abundance. The ARM Framework, established through Addendum VII, incorporates both shorebird and horseshoe crab abundance levels to set optimized harvest levels for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin. The horseshoe crab abundance estimate has been based on data from the Benthic Trawl Survey conducted by Virginia Polytechnic Institute. The Benthic Trawl Survey was not conducted in 2013 or 2014 due to a lack of funding. The Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee reviewed other available data sources, but did not find a suitable option for the ARM Framework. The Technical Committee will continue to investigate other options, while the Commission and states seek long-term funding sources for the Benthic Trawl Survey. The optimized harvest level will be reevaluated annually, allowing for management to adapt to the changes in the population levels of horseshoe crabs and shorebirds as a result of the regulations.

The Board also nominated Dr. Malcolm Rhodes, Governor Appointee from South Carolina as Board Vice-chair. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, FMP Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or mhawk@asmfc.org.

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PR14-42

Motions

Motion to accept the report and the specification of harvest package 3 for the Delaware Bay region for 2015.
Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Michels. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to accept the compliance reports, the FMP Review, and *de minimis* status for the states of NH, PRFC, SC, GA, and FL.
Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to nominate Dr. Malcom Rhodes as Vice-Chair to the Horseshoe Crab Board.

Motion made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Mr. Allen. Approved unanimously.

COMMISSIONER WORKSHOP OF FISHERIES SOCIOECONOMICS (OCTOBER 30, 2014)

Meeting Summary

Commissioners and proxies were presented with an overview on the use of socioeconomics and cost-benefit/economic impact analysis in fisheries management, with the following issues discussed:

Guidance for the use of Social Science in Fisheries Management (M. Hall-Arber)

- *How can social science be utilized by ASMFC?* Social scientists offer their expertise to Technical Committees on issues pertaining to impacts of regulatory changes, as well as participate on Plan Development Teams. Specifically, social science can determine what socio-cultural conditions may be affected by changes in policy.
- *A simple example:* Tradable quota can have social consequences, as the consolidation of the fishing fleet can change relationships in different fishing groups, the fishing fleet characteristics and some demographics.
- *What social factors are typically considered?* We explain some of the social characteristics that are studied when determining the influence of a regulatory change or reallocation.
- *Regulations and beyond:* Social science not only helps to describe management change impacts but is also necessary in considering other fisheries topics of interest such as climate change or ecosystem-based management strategies.
- *What data are available?* We discuss social science indicators and indices available through NMFS and ACCSP, and gaps in these data sets.

Cost-benefit Analysis vs. Economic Impact Analysis in Fisheries (J. Holzer Bilbao)

- *Motivation:* There is a common misunderstanding that cost-benefit and economic impact analyses are synonymous; the results of the 2013 CESS socioeconomic survey of ASMFC Commissioners confirmed the distinction between these concepts is unclear.
- *A simple example:* Starting with the example of an investment decision between two companies (one with high economic impact but low value, one with low economic impact but higher value), we intuitively explain the distinction between the two types of analyses. We will discuss additional examples drawn from fisheries management (race-to-fish versus ITQ fishery, and allocation of quota between sectors).
- *What is cost-benefit analysis?* The objective is to determine economic value (i.e. net benefits), which is a relevant metric when assessing the allocation of limited resources across competing projects/policies (i.e. economic efficiency). Costs are treated as a “negative” here, in the sense that for a given set of benefits, minimizing costs increases the economic value of a project.
- *What is economic impact analysis?* The objective is to assess the effects of a given project/policy on the jobs and income of a region. Costs are treated as “positive” here, in the sense that increasing costs may increase jobs and income impacts in a region.

COASTAL SHARKS MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 30, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Coastal Sharks Management Board approved a July 1, 2015 opening date for the large coastal sharks species group. All other species groups will open in conjunction with federal waters’ fisheries (Table 1). Additionally, based on the recommendation of its Coastal Sharks Technical Committee, the Board approved a 36 fish possession limit for sharks in the large coastal sharks species group (silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead sharks) for 2015.

Table 1: Opening dates for commercial coastal sharks species groups, 2015 fishing season.

Species Group	Opening Date 2015
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks	July 1, 2015
Hammerhead sharks	June 1, 2015
Pelagic Sharks	January 1, 2015
Non-blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	
Blacknose sharks	
Blue sharks	
Porbeagle sharks	

The Board also received updates from NOAA Fisheries on Amendments 6 and 9, which deal with smoothhound shark management and changes in management of other commercial shark fisheries. Dr. Louis Daniel was elected as vice chair of the Coastal Sharks Board. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to open the large coastal sharks fishery on July 1, 2015.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel, second by Mr. O’Reilly. Motion carries (11 in favor, 3 abstentions).

Move to open other coastal shark groups (small coastal sharks, hammerhead, pelagic, blacknose) consistent with NOAA Fisheries for the 2015 season.

Motion by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Dr. Rhodes. Motion carries without objection.

Move to elect Dr. Daniel as the Vice Chair.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Boyles. Motion carries.

SPINY DOGFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD (OCTOBER 30, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board Approves Addendum V to Ensure Consistency with the Shark Conservation Act

Mystic, CT – The Commission’s Spiny Dogfish Management Board approved Addendum V to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish. The Addendum ensures consistency in spiny dogfish management with the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 by prohibiting processing at-sea, including the removal of fins. Prior to approval, states could process spiny dogfish at-sea, so long as the ratio of fins aboard the vessel did not exceed 5% of the ratio of carcasses aboard the vessel. The Board set an implementation date of May 1, 2015 for states to promulgate this measure.

In related business, the Coastal Sharks Management Board approved a July 1, 2015 opening date for the large coastal sharks species group. All other species groups will open in conjunction with federal waters’ fisheries (Table

1). Additionally, based on the recommendation of its Coastal Sharks Technical Committee, the Board approved a 36 fish possession limit for sharks in the large coastal sharks species group (silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead sharks) for 2015.

Table 1: Opening dates for commercial coastal sharks species groups, 2015 fishing season.

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Hammerhead sharks	June 1, 2015
Pelagic Sharks	January 1, 2015
Non-blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	
Blacknose sharks	
Blue sharks	
Porbeagle sharks	

For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-44

Motions

Motion to accept the Compliance Report and FMP review and *de minimus* status for DE.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. O’Reilly. Motion carries.

Move to approve Option B with the following change: concur with the LEC recommendation to eliminate “and processing.”

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Stockwell. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to set the implementation date to May 1, 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to approve the addendum as modified today.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to increase daily trip limit to 7,000 lbs for the 2015-2016 season.

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion fails.

ISFMP POLICY BOARD (OCTOBER 30, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) reviewed reports from the Habitat, Law Enforcement, and Management and Science Committees as well as the Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership (see individual committee summaries in this document for more details). The Atlantic Menhaden Stock

Assessment Committee reported it will be reviewing and finalizing the benchmark stock assessment the first week in November for peer review in December 2014.

The Fish Passage Working Group (FPWG) provided an update on progress towards achieving Policy Board tasks. The FPWG developed a protocol for state members to prioritize potential fish passage projects within their state with standardized, data-based methods. The protocol calls for use of regional aquatic connectivity tools developed by a partnership led by the Nature Conservancy. The FPWG was updated at its February meeting on progress on the final regional connectivity tool in the Southeast states. Following completion of this project in December 2014, members will integrate state-specific priority lists into a coast wide priority inventory. The inventory will allow comparison of passage projects across states and serve as support for regional or coastwide funding opportunities. The FPWG also continues development of a comprehensive fish passage database that will complement barrier databases for tracking diadromous fish habitat connectivity progress and improving fish passage decision making. Working group members discussed a task to recommend passage targets and agreed habitat-based, state-specific targets were most appropriate given variations in state fish passage resources. Each state representative was tasked to recommend achievable targets and time frames within their states for consideration at the next FPWG meeting. A Policy Board task to develop guidance for navigating the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) dam licensing process is being addressed by developing a guidance document for state staff. The document is being developed by state and federal representatives that have played key roles in past licensing projects.

The Policy Board also reviewed draft language changes to the ASMFC Committee Guidance and Assessment Process Document in response to the Board's action in August. The Guidance Document continues the use of consensus-based decisions, but when a committee has exhausted all possible consensus recommendations and cannot agree, the committee should vote on the recommendation. The Policy Board did not approve the language change but will continue discussion on the document at the Commission's Winter Meeting.

The Policy Board will send two letters to NOAA Fisheries. The first is to address the Atlantic Herring Section's concerns regarding the process for announcing a directed Atlantic herring fishery closure. Improved communication between the NOAA Fisheries staff, state directors, and Commission staff to set closure dates and for notices to mention any "days out" regulations will ensure agreement between Atlantic herring management agencies and eliminate confusion for fishermen as they plan their final fishing trips for the period. The second letter is to address the Winter Flounder Management Board's concern for the depleted status of the SNE/MA stock. The Board is interested in more collaboration and communication between NOAA Fisheries, the New England Fishery Management Council and the Commission for more equitable use of the winter flounder resource. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

On behalf of the Winter Flounder Board, move the Commission send a letter to the New England Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries urging a reduction in the SNE/MA Winter Flounder possession limit to bycatch limits only for federal vessels based on sea sampling data for trips targeting other species.

Motion made by Mr. Gibson. Motion carries unanimously.

On behalf of the Atlantic Herring Section, move to recommend the Commission send a letter to NOAA Fisheries recommending a modification in herring closure notices to reflect ASMFC no-landing days and timing of state notifications to Directors.

Motion made by Mr. Grout. Motion carries.