



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC Atlantic Herring Board Approves Draft Addendum III for Public Comment

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Herring Management Board approved Draft Addendum III to Amendment 3 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes options to better manage the Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) sub-annual catch limit (ACL) under low quota scenarios. This action responds to the challenges encountered in managing the reduced sub-ACL based on the 2018 benchmark stock assessment, which highlighted declining trends in recruitment and spawning stock biomass.

Currently, the Board can allocate the sub-ACL throughout the fishing season using bi-monthly, trimester, or seasonal quota periods to meet the needs of the fishery. For the 2019 fishing season, the Board implemented a bimonthly quota period approach to maximize use of the reduced sub-ACL when demand for bait is high. Due to the low quota, the 2019 fishery experienced frequent closures to avoid an overage. The 2020 sub-ACL (3,344 mt) is lower than in 2019, creating further challenges in distributing the quota throughout the fishing season. The Draft Addendum considers additional tools to provide the Board more flexibility in specifying the allocation under low quota scenarios and meet the needs of the herring fishery moving forward.

Additionally, the Draft Addendum considers expanding landing provisions across different permit categories within the days out program. The Board utilizes days out of the fishery and weekly landing limits to adjust the rate of Area 1A catch. The Draft Addendum includes options that apply weekly landing limits to all vessel categories landing herring in Area 1A throughout the entire fishing season.

Interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under Public Input by February 12, 2020. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM on March 25, 2020 and should be forward to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum III). It is anticipated some states will conduct public hearings on the Draft Addendum; the details of which will be released via a press release once they are finalized.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy 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 diadromous species.