



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
703.842.0740

ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section Initiates Amendment to Consider Limited Entry in the Northern Shrimp Fishery

Portsmouth, NH – The Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section approved development of Draft Amendment 3 to consider establishing a limited entry program for the northern shrimp fishery. While the fishery is managed through a total allowable catch and defined season, it remains an open access fishery and has experienced significant fluctuations in participation over the last 30 years. This open access, coupled with continued concern about the health of the stock, led the Section to move forward on a limited entry program to further control effort in the fishery. A limited entry program will consider the appropriate number of participants in the fishery given biological, environmental, and economic considerations.

The Section had previously considered limited entry in Amendment 2 (2011) and Addendum I (2012). Based on submitted public comment, the Section established a control date of June 7, 2011 but did not implement a limited entry program. As the first step in the Draft Amendment 3 development process, a Public Information Document (PID) will be developed to gather information concerning the northern shrimp fishery and provide an opportunity for the public to identify and comment on major issues relative to the management of the species with an emphasis on limited entry, state-by-state allocations and multi-year specifications.

Northern shrimp underwent a benchmark stock assessment in 2013. As part of this assessment, all current data inputs were evaluated, new data sources were considered, and new modeling approaches were explored. The final assessment was reviewed by a panel of independent experts in January 2014 through the Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop process.

The Peer Review Panel concluded the results of the assessment models used were not appropriate for management use at this point. The estimates of fishing mortality and overfishing status were sensitive to how the data were weighted within the model. The Panel recommended that Technical Committee continue to develop the presented models, as well as incorporate environmental variables and estimates of fishing effort into the models to increase the stability of the results. However, the Panel agreed that all the survey data and fishery-dependent data examined indicate the northern shrimp stock is at very low levels and there is significant uncertainty about when the stock might recover.

The Northern Shrimp Section will meet in the fall to review the results of the 2014 stock assessment update, consider measures for the 2015 fishery, and consider approval of the PID for public comment. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, FMP Coordinator, at mhawk@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 diadromous species.

1050 N. Highland St. – Suite 200A-N – Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 (phone) 703.842.0741 (fax) www.asmfc.org