



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmf.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Herring Management Board
FROM: Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel
DATE: January 11, 2019
SUBJECT: Specification of Quota Periods in Area 1A

Introduction

On January 3rd, the Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel (AP) met via conference call to discuss the Atlantic Herring Management Board's (Board) proposed Addendum to provide it with greater flexibility when setting the Area 1A quota periods. This discussion was prompted by an October 2018 motion (see below) which was subsequently postponed in order to allow for AP input

Move to initiate an Addendum which considers providing the Atlantic Herring Board greater flexibility to set annual quota period specifications for the Area 1A fishery. This issue can be included in the addendum initiated regarding the Gulf of Maine herring spawning protections, or it can be a separate document. Task the PDT to expand the quota period options to increase flexibility when distributing Area 1A herring quota. During years in which sub-ACLs are lower, it may be prudent to concentrate harvest during the months of July through September. However, in years of higher sub-ACLs, choose options that would allow for an expansion of harvest to meet the needs of the market.

On the call, Commission staff reviewed the existing quota period options in Amendment 3, the postponed motion from the October 2018 Board meeting, and the quota periods which the Board implemented for the 2019 fishing year.

Attendance

The following AP members attended the conference call:

Jeff Kaelin (NJ, Chair)	Shawn Joyce (NH)
Joseph Jurek (MA)	Mary Beth Tooley (ME)
Gerry O'Neill (MA)	Glenn Robbins (ME)
Patrick Paquette (MA)	Stephen Weiner (ME)
Beth Casoni (MA)	

Also in attendance were:

Raymond Kane (MA Commissioner)	Megan Ware (ASMFC)
Deirdre Boelke (NEFMC)	

Advisory Panel Comments on Postponed Motion

- Three AP members did not support the motion to increase the flexibility provided to the Board in setting quota periods. Comments by these individuals were as follows.
 - One AP member commented that the Board already has flexibility in setting the Area 1A quota periods and this flexibility has resulted in decreased access for mid-water

trawl vessels in 2019. This individual felt that the Board was overstepping its reach in the management of a federal species.

- A second AP member did not support the motion, commenting there is already enough flexibility in Amendment 3 and additional regulations are burdensome to industry.
- The third AP member commented that there is not a clear reason why this action is being considered given the fishery can meet its goals under the existing regulations in Amendment 3. This member commented that a new addendum would complicate management of the species, increase the regulatory burden on fishermen, and end up decreasing flexibility in the fishery.
- Three AP members did support additional flexibility when setting the quota periods; however, two of these AP members noted that their support for the motion was weak. Comments by these individuals were as follows.
 - One AP member commented that their support of the postponed motion might be stronger if there was a good explanation as to why it is being considered along with some data available to analyze. Specifically, the member was interested in landings data from multiple bait species to see what is available to the lobster fleet at different times of the year.
 - Another AP member commented that he supported the concept of flexibility but would like to see more data on catches to understand potential impacts on gear types in the fishery.
 - The third AP member supported increased flexibility in Area 1A, stating that flexibility is good because it means the fishery isn't locked into a single management regime, particularly when the fishery is facing low quotas. This member also noted that, given spawning protections already limit access to the fishery, it is important that herring be caught when demand is highest.
- One AP member commented that the Board is trying to put herring quota in the summer months when the lobster fishery needs bait. This AP member wasn't in favor of additional regulations, commenting that there are already enough, but did recommend that the Board establish a quota period where 80% of the Area 1A sub-ACL is allocated June – September and 20% is allocated October – December.
- The AP Chairman abstained from saying whether he supported the Board's motion but did comment that the Atlantic herring fishery is a federal fishery with federal permit holders who could be negatively affected by the postponed motion. The Chairman stated that the decision made by the Board in October to alter the 2019 quota period allocations will negatively impact fishing access to some of those federal permit holders.
- One AP member did not feel the data necessary to make a recommendation on whether the postponed motion should be moved forward was available; however, he did note the importance of spreading herring landings throughout the year.

Advisory Panel Comments on 2019 Quota Periods

- Several AP members expressed concern about the October 2018 decision to use bimonthly quota periods in the 2019 fishery.

- One individual commented that this decision was made without landings data so the impacts of the change were not evaluated. This individual would have liked the opportunity for AP input prior to changing the quota periods.
- Another AP member stated that access to the fishery by mid-water trawlers was negatively impacted by this decision.
- A third AP member commented that the MA lobster fleet relies on bait caught by mid-water trawlers in the fall months so changes to the quota periods have broader impacts on other fisheries.
- Finally, an AP member noted that, under a bimonthly quota period, there is the potential for a closure every other month which could create chaos in the management of the species.