



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission • 1444 Eye Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015.

ASMFC 2005 Winter Meeting

February 7 - 10, 2005
Radisson Hotel Old Town Alexandria
901 North Fairfax
Alexandria, Virginia

Preliminary Agenda

Monday, February 7, 2005

Noon – 2:00 PM Atlantic Herring Section

2:15 PM – 5:15 PM Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

Tuesday, February 8, 2005

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

10:15 AM – 12:15 PM South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM American Eel Management Board

3:45 PM – 5:45 PM American Lobster Management Board

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

8:30 AM – 11:30 AM Atlantic Menhaden Management Board with Technical Committee

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Weakfish Management Board

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM Shad & River Herring Management Board

Thursday, February 10, 2005

8:00 AM – 9:30 AM Horseshoe Crab Management Board

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM Atlantic Sturgeon Management Board

11:00 AM – 2:00 PM ISFMP Policy Board

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM Business Session

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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. The fifteen member states of the Commission are: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Preston P. Pate, Jr. (NC), Chair
George D. Lapointe (ME), Vice-Chair

John V. O'Shea, Executive Director
Robert E. Beal, Director, Interstate Fisheries
Management Program
Laura C. Leach, Director of Finance & Administration

Tina L. Berger, Editor
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Upcoming Meetings

1/18 - 20:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Radisson Hotel, 700 Settlers Landing Road, Hampton, Virginia.

2/1 - 3:

New England Fishery Management Council, Courtyard by Marriott, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

2/7 - 10:

ASMFC Meeting Week, Radisson Hotel Old Town Alexandria, 901 North Fairfax, Alexandria, Virginia.

3/3 - 5:

Maine's Fishermen's Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport, Maine.

3/15 - 17:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Ramada Inn/Outer Banks Resort & Conference Center, 1701 S. Virginia Dare Trail, Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina.

3/28 - 4/1:

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, location to be determined.

3/29 - 31:

New England Fishery Management Council, Hotel Viking, Newport, Rhode Island.

5/3- 5:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel & Conference Center, 9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Maryland.

5/9 - 12:

ASMFC Meeting Week, Radisson Hotel Old Town Alexandria, 901 North Fairfax, Alexandria, Virginia.

6/14 - 16:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Wyndham Wilmington Hotel, 700 King Street, Wilmington, Delaware.

6/21 - 23:

New England Fishery Management Council, Radisson Eastland Hotel, Portland, Maine.

6/27 - 7/1:

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, location to be determined.

8/8-10:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Society Hill Hotel, One Dock Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The last days of December gently suggest the opportunity to reflect on the year's efforts and take stock of accomplishments. From the Commission perspective, stakeholders again have enjoyed the benefits of healthy stocks such as striped bass, Atlantic croaker, and Spanish mackerel. Rebuilding continues for stocks like summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup, as evidenced by increased quotas and larger fish. From a governance perspective, we improved our processes by clearly outlining how decisions are made, rescinded or appealed, and have committed to adopting measures to ensure states are consistent in their application of conservation rules. Internally, our staff continues to grow and excel.

These are just a few examples of what our Commissioners have enabled all of us to accomplish through their leadership and hard work. I continue to be impressed with their talents, wisdom and commitment. Commissioners seem to instinctively know what it takes to be effective. Here are some of the things I have learned by watching them.

Commissioners provide direction to the organization and staff. Commissioners not only have the important duty of setting organizational objectives, but they also have a keen sense of where the organization needs to go. They have the ability to maintain a long-term view, and balance immediate issues while focusing on the future. Our Strategic Plan exemplifies the important visionary traits held by Commissioners. With the Strategic Plan in place, the Commissioners recognize the need to monitor progress and actively participate in the construction and review of the Commission's Action Plan. Commissioners know that if they do not give direction, no one else will.

Commissioners obtain results. Commissioners recognize their unique ability to drive results through their votes. They study the issues and come prepared to meetings. While they are exposed to a wide range of advice from technical committees, plan development teams, advisory panels, and the public, Commissioners ultimately make the final decision. All too often, the right decisions are unpopular, especially when it means short-term restrictions on harvests. A good example of this occurred in the '80s when Commissioners imposed the harvesting moratorium on Atlantic striped bass. More recently, they have resisted pressures to deviate from their commitment to rebuild summer flounder. Today, we en-

joy terrific benefits from these "unpopular" decisions.

Commissioners exercise wise use of Commission resources. Commissioners recognize fiscal and human resources available for fisheries management are limited and need to be used wisely. Commissioners understand the importance of providing clear guidance to their technical advisors, and in turn listening carefully to their advice. They are mindful of the workload they impose on staff, constantly deploying staff's analytical skills on the most critical problems with an end goal of taking meaningful management action. Commissioners also share the unique responsibility of ensuring adequate fiscal resources to support Commission activities. They recognize the importance of long term planning to link emerging management issues with budget procurement strategy. They leverage their unique political and persuasive skills to obtain needed fiscal resources.

Commissioners support the Commission governance structure. Commissioners are keenly aware of their collective strength. Our membership of 15 states is inherently diverse, so differences in individual interests and priorities are to be expected. The Commission process provides for a complete presentation of available information, and allows the opportunity for stakeholders (at public hearings) and Commissioners (during board meetings) to be heard. Issues are carefully deliberated and, at times, vigorously debated. If compromise is not possible, tough decisions are made by vote. Regardless of individual viewpoints, Commissioners recognize their collective obligation to respect majority decisions. Thus, they demonstrate the ability to maintain a macro-level perspective on any decision by focusing on the benefits that accrue to their states through healthier fisheries resources.

It is easy to take these qualities for granted because they appear to come naturally to our Commissioners. Make no mistake, it takes hard work to be an effective leader, and courage to make the right decisions. It has been said that we select leaders in order to have someone to blame. Our Commissioners have volunteered for that role, and we are all better off because of that. So next time you see them make a tough call, consider thanking them for looking out for our long-term interests. Hopefully that is something we could all agree with. On behalf of the Commission staff, best wishes for a Happy Holiday and a healthy and prosperous New Year!



Atlantic Croaker
Micropogonias undulatus

Common Names: hard-head, King Billy, grumbler

Family: Sciaenidae (along with weakfish, spot and red drum)

Interesting Fact: Characteristic “croaking” sound produced by the vibrating of the swim bladder and special muscles

Largest Recorded: 7 pounds, 1 ounce (caught in a VA commercial pound net)

Oldest Recorded: 13 years

Age & Length at Maturity: 1 - 2 years; 9.8 - 10.2”

Stock Status: Mid-Atlantic component is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring; status unknown for South Atlantic component.

Species Profile: Atlantic Croaker

New Amendment to Set Course for Future Management of Popular South Atlantic Fish

Introduction

Atlantic croaker, *Micropogonias undulatus*, occur in coastal waters from the Gulf of Maine to Argentina. Although not common north of New Jersey, this species is one of the most abundant inshore bottom dwelling fish along the US Atlantic coast. As such, croaker are sought by recreational anglers and commercial fishermen alike from New York to North Carolina. While highly valuable, there is still much fisheries managers do not know about this resource. Annual recruitment appears to be highly variable and dependent on natural environmental conditions. A new amendment, currently under development, will focus on addressing these data needs and fine-tuning the management approach to ensure long-term conservation of this important fishery resource.

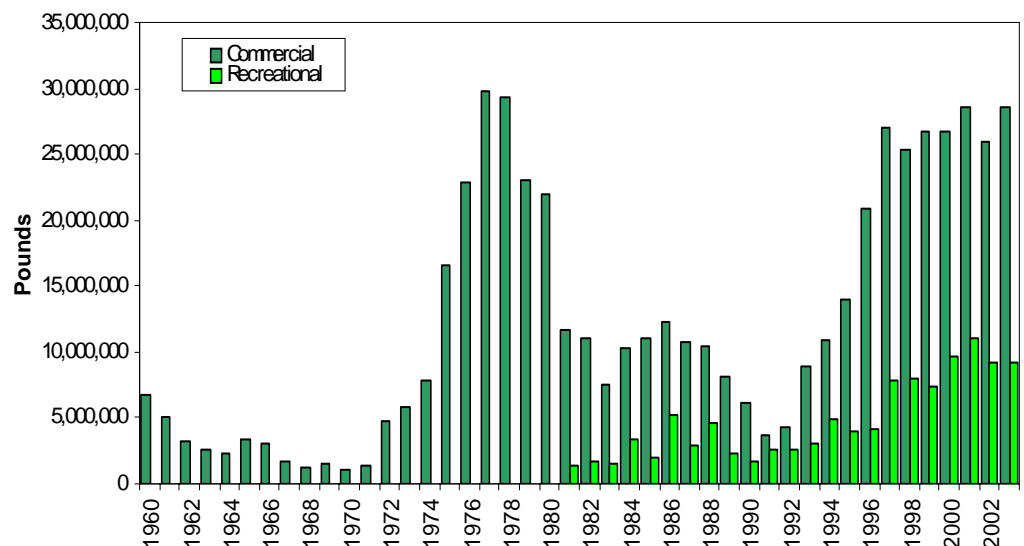
Life History

Atlantic croaker occur in US coastal waters from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Florida. Seasonal migrations of croaker have not been well defined, but they appear to move northward and inshore during the warmer months, and southward into the ocean during the winter. They spawn in the ocean during fall and winter. The post-larvae move into estuaries and develop into juveniles in low salinity waters before moving into higher salinity waters in the summer and fall. Croaker mature between the ages of one and two, at lengths of seven to 10 inches for males and six to 10 inches for females. Size at any given age varies throughout the range. Very young croaker eat small planktonic organisms, while juveniles and adults feed on bottom organisms such as marine worms, mollusks, crustaceans, and occasionally fish. In turn, they are eaten by many species, including striped bass, flounder, weakfish, and spotted seatrout.

Commercial & Recreational Fisheries

Atlantic croaker support important commercial and recreational fisheries along the Atlantic coast, particularly from Maryland to North Carolina, although significant catches have been made in some years as far north as New York. The commercial landings of croaker are cyclical. Some years the catch is almost 30 million pounds, while in other years it is less than two million pounds. Since 1996, the croaker fishery has been at the high end of a

Figure 1. Atlantic Croaker Recreational and Commercial Landings
Source: NOAA Fisheries, MRFSS and Fisheries Statistics Division, December 2004



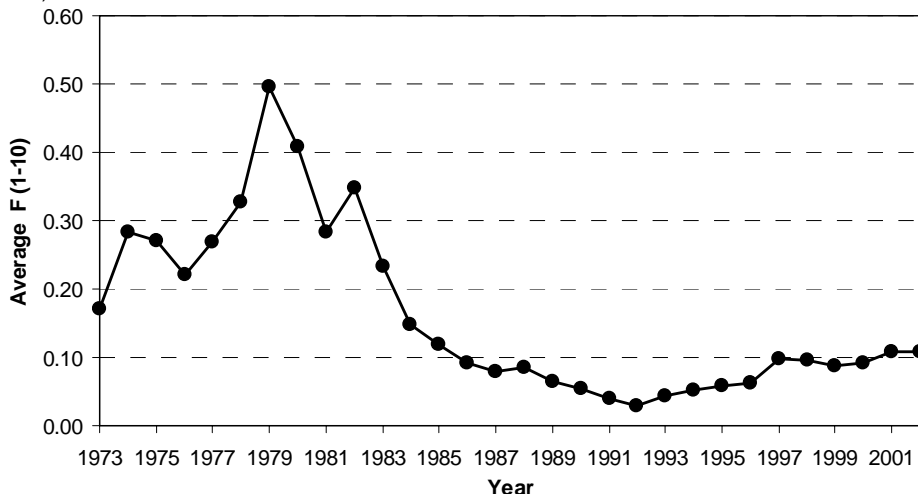
cycle, with commercial landings in 2003 at 28.5 million pounds (Figure 1). Croaker are harvested by a variety of commercial gear including haul seines, pound nets, gillnets, flynets, and trawls.

Over the past 20 years, croaker recreational catch from New Jersey through Florida has risen from about two million pounds to a high of more than 13 million pounds in 2001 (Figure 1). Atlantic croaker are found in shallow to deep water (>45 feet) over all bottom types. They are caught by bottom fishing or jigging from anchored or drifting boats, ocean beaches and the banks of bays and rivers, as well as from structures such as piers, bridges, jetties, and causeways. They are also taken in nearshore and estuarine waters from party, charter, and private boats.

Stock Status

The latest peer-reviewed stock assessment, completed in 2004, found the stock status for the Mid-Atlantic region (North Carolina and north) not overfished and overfishing not occurring. The stock status for the South Atlantic region (South Carolina through the east coast of Florida) is unknown, due to lack of data. The stock assessment shows both spawning stock biomass (SSB) and fishing mortality for the Mid-Atlantic region as exhibiting a pronounced cyclical trend over the time series. Between 1999 and 2002, SSB ranged between 80,000 – 91,000 metric tons (Figure 2). Fishing mortality remained relatively stable from 1997 to 2002 at approximately 0.11 (Figure 3). Although the stock assessment indicates that the croaker stock is healthy, estimates of fish-

Figure 3. Average fishing mortality rates (ages 1 –10) for Atlantic croaker in the Mid-Atlantic (Source: ASMFC Atlantic Croaker Stock Assessment Report for Peer Review, 2004)



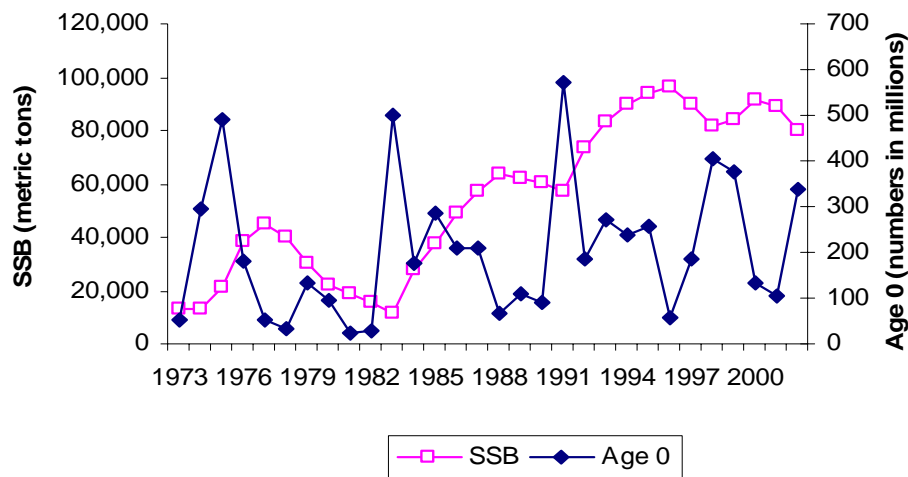
ing mortality and SSB do not include bycatch from the shrimp fishery, a potentially significant source of mortality.

Atlantic Coastal Management Considerations

In August 2004, the Commission's South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board approved the development of Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Croaker. The Amendment will incorporate information from the latest stock assessment and peer review, including new biological reference points as recommended by the Technical Committee. The Amendment will also be revised to comply with the mandates of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act.

In November 2004, the Board approved the Public Information Document for public comment. The PID seeks input on plan objectives, biological reference points, commercial and recreational management measures, bycatch, habitat, regional management approaches, and conservation equivalency. The states will be conducting public hearings in January, with the public comment period running until February 2, 2005. The Management Board will meet in February to review public comment and Advisory Panel input, and identify the initial elements to be included in the first draft of the Amendment. Once approved, the Draft Amendment will be released for public review and comment. Final Amendment approval is slated for fall 2005.

Figure 2. Spawning stock biomass (metric tons) and age 0 recruits (millions of fish) estimates in the Mid-Atlantic (Source: ASMFC Atlantic Croaker Stock Assessment Report for Peer Review, 2004)



For more information, please contact Nancy Wallace, Atlantic Croaker FMP Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <nwallace@asmfc.org>.

ASMFC & MAFMC Take Action on Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass

In November, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XV to the Management Plan. Addendum XV establishes an allocation program for increases of approximately 1.3 million pounds and 1.6 million pounds in the 2005 and 2006 commercial summer flounder fisheries, respectively. The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board approved the increase in total allowable landings in August based on stock improvements and increases in available biomass.

Approximately 980,000 pounds of the 2005 quota increase will be distributed according to historic state shares. The remaining 320,000 pounds will be distributed to the following states: 75,000 pounds each to MA, CT, NY, and MD; 15,000 pounds to DE; and 5,000 pounds to ME.

Approximately 1,280,000 pounds of the 2006 quota increase will be distributed according to the historic state share. The remaining 320,000 pounds will be distributed as such: MA, CT, NY, and MD will each receive 75,000 lbs; DE will receive 15,000 lbs; ME will receive 5,000 lbs; and NH will receive 90 lbs.

Table 1. Historic and approximate state shares under the management program described in the addendum for 2005 and 2006 (shares are in pounds).

State	Historic Percent Allocation	Approximate State Share for 2005	Approximate State Share for 2006
Maine	0.00047560	13,393	14,265
New Hampshire	0.00000460	81	90
Massachusetts	0.06820460	1,278,651	1,403,626
Rhode Island	0.15682980	2,767,677	3,055,045
Connecticut	0.02257080	473,322	514,679
New York	0.07646990	1,424,514	1,564,634
New Jersey	0.16724990	2,951,568	3,258,028
Delaware	0.00017790	18,140	18,465
Maryland	0.02039100	434,853	472,217
Virginia	0.21316760	3,761,907	4,152,505
North Carolina	0.27445840	4,843,546	5,346,450
<i>Total</i>	1.00000010	17,967,652	19,800,002

Please note that research set aside quota has not been taken out of state shares in 2006. Up to three percent of the total coastwide quota can be taken for research set aside. Table 1 presents approximate state shares for 2005 and 2006.

Addendum XVI

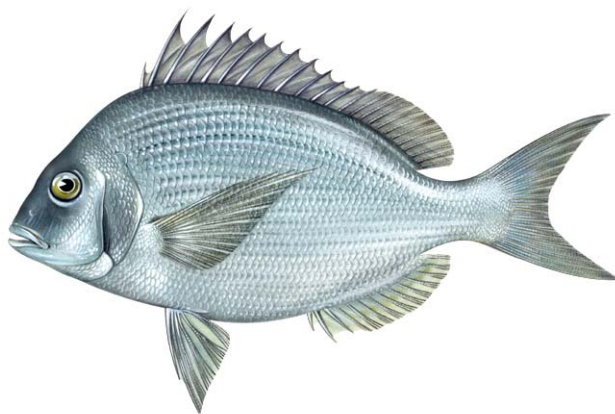
After discussion and review of public comment on Addendum XVI, the Board decided to delay final approval until the Addendum's options could be further clarified. The Draft Addendum XVI intends to address the impacts of delayed implementation of fishery management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. The Draft Addendum introduces a suite of management options, including commercial and recreational measures, and notification periods for the Commission and the states. These options aim to discourage delayed state implementation by requiring a penalty determined by the benefits that a state gained as a result of late compliance with an inter-state fishery management plan. The Board will review the Draft Addendum for approval in February 2005.

The Board will review the Draft Addendum for approval in February 2005.

Scup Winter I Trip Limits

The Board selected January 2, 2005 as the start date for Winter I commercial scup trip limits. The trip limit, approved at the August joint Board and Council meeting, are as follows: federal possession limit in

Winter I to 30,000 pounds for scup, with states implementing a two week landing limit of 30,000 pounds. When 80% of the total allowable catch is reached, the possession limit will drop to 1000 pounds per day.



2005 Recreational Specifications

In December 2004, the Board and Council set the 2005 recreational specifications for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. Both bodies adopted conservation equivalency for the 2005 summer flounder fishery, which requires the states to develop state-specific management measures (i.e., possession limits, size limits, and seasons) to achieve state-specific harvest limits. The states will develop management proposals and submit them to the Board for approval by early spring. As a non-preferred coastwide alternative, the Council and Board adopted a 17-inch total length (TL) minimum fish size, a four fish possession limit, and an open season all year. They also adopted a precautionary default measure of an 18-inch TL minimum fish size, one fish possession limit and an open season all year. This measure would be imposed on any state that did not develop and implement conservation equivalent management measures.

The 2005 scup recreational fishery will

continued on page 8

ASMFC Releases Atlantic Croaker PID for Public Comment States Schedule Public Meetings for January 2005

The Commission's South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board has approved the Public Information Document (PID) for Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Croaker for public review and comment. The Board initiated development of the Amendment to incorporate information from the latest stock assessment and peer review, as well as revise the plan to comply with the mandates of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act.

The States of New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia have scheduled the dates and times of their public meetings. The meeting details follow.

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife

January 6, 2005; 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Atlantic County Library

Galloway Township

East Jimmie Leeds Road (Rte. 561)

Absecon, New Jersey

Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 633-2408

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

January 12, 2005; 7:00 – 9:00PM

North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island

374 Airport Road

Manteo, North Carolina

Contact: Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

And

January 13, 2005; 7:00 – 9:00PM

Crystal Coast Civic Center

3505 Arendell Street

Morehead City, North Carolina

Contact: Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources

January 10, 2005; 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Tawes State Office Building

580 Taylor Street

Annapolis, Maryland

Contact: Howard King at (410) 260-8281

Georgia Division of Coastal Resources

January 19, 2005; 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Mighty 8th Air Force Museum

175 Bourne Avenue

Pooler, Georgia

Contact: Spud Woodward at (912) 264-7218

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

January 11, 2005; 7:00 – 9:00 PM

2600 Washington Avenue

Fourth Floor Conference Room

Newport News, Virginia

Contact: Rob O'Reilly at (757) 247-2236

The PID is the first step in the amendment process and presents a general overview of the resource, as well as possible management and research issues to be addressed in the Amendment. It is the public's first opportunity to provide feedback to the Commission and the states about the Atlantic croaker resource and goals for the species' conservation and management. The Atlantic croaker PID seeks input on plan objectives, biological reference points, commercial and recreational management measures, bycatch, habitat, regional management approaches, and conservation equivalency.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the PID, either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the PID are available via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. Public comment will be accepted until 5PM on **February 2, 2005** and should be forwarded to Nancy Wallace, Atlantic Croaker Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org. For more information, please contact Nancy Wallace at (202) 289-6400 or nwallace@asmfc.org.



Photo courtesy of Virginia Marine Resources Commission

ASMFC Seeks Science Director

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission seeks a high-performing technically-oriented individual, with strong leadership and people skills, interested in contributing to sustainable fisheries management as Science Director. The successful candidate will serve as the principal science advisor for the Commission and the Executive Director. The position is based in Washington, D.C. The Commission manages marine fish from Maine to Florida under an interstate compact ratified in 1942.

Duties: The Science Director directs the Commission's marine science program including cooperative research, stock assessment activities, and fisheries-independent data collection programs. The Director coordinates federal, state, and university scientists who provide advice to the Commission. The Director works with a diverse group of Commissioners, agency employees and stakeholders who manage marine fisheries and protect fisheries habitat. The Director supervises

a staff of five fisheries professionals; administers federal grants, including preparation of budgets and work progress reports and represents the Commission before state and federal fisheries management agencies in addition to other duties assigned by the Executive Director. Overnight travel along the Atlantic Coast is required.

Qualifications: Applicants must hold a Masters of Science degree; fisheries, ocean science, or biology preferred. A Ph.D. is preferred; five years of progressive experience at the Masters' level with strong leadership qualities will be considered in lieu of a Ph.D. High interest in fisheries management/ocean issues required. Strong interpersonal and communication abilities required. Proven writing and editing skills, and experience with developing policy or position statements should be demonstrated. Formal training or experience in, or the ability to acquire working knowledge of, fisheries

management principles and fisheries stock assessment methods required. Experience with scientific and research issues required. Personnel and budget management experience preferred. Salary commensurate with educational background and previous relative experience. United States citizenship required. Previous applicants need not apply.

Salary Range: \$75,000 – 100,000

Application Process: Potential applicants are encouraged to review the ASMFC website at www.asmfc.org to learn more about our Mission, Vision, and activities. Please send resume and cover letter to Laura Leach, Director of Finance and Administration, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, 1444 Eye Street, N.W., 6th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005. Applications will be accepted via U.S. Mail (postmarked by closing date), email (lleach@asmfc.org), or fax (202) 289-6051 until the closing date of February 11, 2005.

ASMFC & MAFMC Take Action on Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass (continued from page 6)

be managed under separate regulations for state and federal waters. In federal waters, the Council adopted a coastwide management measure of a 10-inch TL minimum fish size, 50 fish possession limit, and an open season from January 1 - February 28 and September 7 - November 30. The Board approved a conservation equivalency system to manage scup in state waters. That system will be developed in early 2005.

In the black sea bass fishery, the Council and Board approved a 12-inch TL minimum fish size, 25 fish possession limit, and no closed season. These management

measures would apply to the recreational fishery in both state and federal waters.

The Commission and Council jointly manage summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass, meeting annually to establish commercial quotas and recreational harvest limits. The Commission's actions regarding Addendum XV are taken exclusively under the states' management authority. Addendum XV can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the

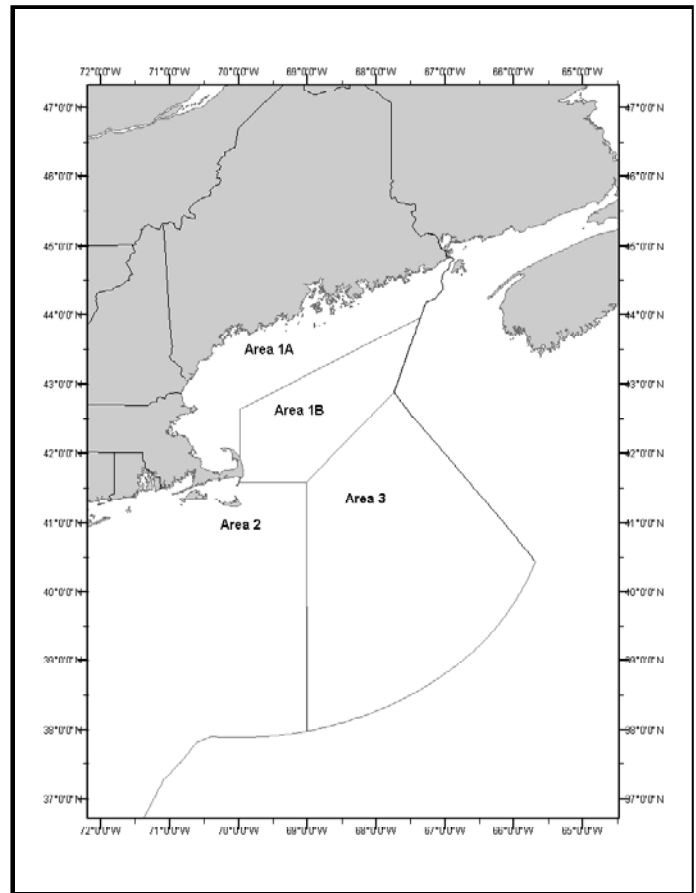
Commission office at (202) 289-6400. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 330 or tkerns@asmfc.org.



Atlantic Herring Management Area 1B Closed to Directed Harvest

On December 3, 2004, the National Marine Fisheries Service projected that 95% of the Atlantic herring Total Allowable Catch (TAC) allocated to Management Area 1B for the 2004 fishing year (January-December) would be harvested by December 8, 2004. NOAA Fisheries has announced that pursuant to 50 CFR 648.202, effective 0001 hours, December 8, 2004, vessels issued federal permits for Atlantic herring may not retain or land more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring from Area 1B per trip or calendar day for the remainder of the 2004 fishery. The federal catch limit restriction will cease at 0001 hours, January 1, 2005.

Under the Commission's Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring, states must prohibit the landing of herring from a closed area and prohibit directed fishing for Atlantic herring in state waters of a closed area once a closure has been announced by the Regional Administrator of NOAA Fisheries. During a closure, vessels participating in other fisheries may retain and land an incidental catch of herring from a closed area that does not exceed 2,000 pounds per trip.



ASMFC Comings & Goings

With mixed emotions, the Commission says good-bye this month to two exceptional employees -- Megan Gamble and Carrie Selberg. Both were enthusiastic and dedicated employees who strived to promote the Commission's vision of "healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration well in progress, by the year 2015." Following is a little bit about their accomplishments and their plans for the future.



Megan Gamble -- Megan came to the Commission over three and a half years ago, quickly becoming a vital part of the interstate fisheries management program. Over that time, she coordinated management programs for shad & river herring and winter flounder, and oversaw the development and implementation of new fishery management



plans for two of the Commission's most controversial species -- Atlantic striped bass (Amendment 6) and spiny dogfish. She has also made significant progress on a new plan amendment for Atlantic herring. In early January, Megan will be joining the National Marine Fisheries Service to work in the Highly Migratory Species Division.

Carrie Selberg -- In her five years at the Commission, Carrie has been an integral part of the Commission's interstate fisheries management program and the backbone of its Habitat Program. She was responsible for the development and implementation of Amendment 4 to the Weakfish FMP, as well as coordination of management programs for horseshoe crab and American lobster. Working with the Commission's Habitat Com-



The ACCSP's Program Design Improves

Better organized Program Design available at www.accsp.org

Data collection standards for the Atlantic coast's commercial, recreational, and for-hire fisheries are easier to find and use since the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) finalized the second edition of its Program Design in November 2004.

The Program Design is the ACCSP's definitive text on data collection and information systems standards for Atlantic coast fisheries. The complete second edition is now available online at www.accsp.org under the Document Archives section.

The second edition includes all standards approved to-date, including those detailed in the first edition in 1998 and those approved since. The policies and standards in the first edition were organized chronologically as the ACCSP Coordinating Council approved them. That format became awkward as the Council adapted standards to include new processes, such as web-based data collection and the new For-Hire Survey.

The second edition keeps all standards specific to each module together, and administrative and policy information is detailed separately. The sections of the Program Design second edition include:

1. **Overview** – Includes mission and vision statements and information

on program structure and operations and law enforcement support.

2. **Data Collection and Data Management Standards** – Includes descriptions of each module and the priority of each for implementation, requirements for receiving data loads, confidentiality protocols, data benchmarking, and quality assurance policies.
3. **Catch and Effort Statistics Programs** – Includes standards for commercial, recreational and for-hire fisheries and permit and vessel registration data.
4. **Biological Data** – Includes data collection procedures and measurement standards.
5. **Bycatch, Releases and Protected Species Interactions Data** – Includes standards for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from commercial, recreational, and for-hire fisheries.
6. **Sociological and Economic Data** – Includes standards for surveys for commercial and recreational fisheries data collection.

Technical details and rationale behind the ACCSP's standards are recorded in Technical Source Documents (TSD) Series I through VI. TSDs I and VI are also available on the website under the Document Archives section. The other four TSDs will be posted on the website when they are reformatted.

About the ACCSP

The ACCSP is a cooperative state-federal program to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. It is composed of representatives from natural resource management agencies coastwide, including the Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the DC Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For more information please visit www.accsp.org or call Abbey Compton, Outreach Coordinator, at (202) 216-5690.

“The second edition is a much more user-friendly document,” says Maury Osborn, ACCSP Director. “The partners who look for our standards when implementing new statistics programs will have a much easier time finding and understanding them.”

ACCSP Implementation Plan for 2004-2008

The ACCSP's Implementation Plan 2004-2008 will soon be available in hardcopy and on the website. The staff is having a small number printed. If you would like one, send an email to support@accsp.org. The plan will be available online soon.

Upcoming Meetings

ACCSP Information Systems Committee
January 5 & 6, 2005
Providence, RI

ACCSP Biological Review Panel
January 25 & 26, 2005
Charleston, South Carolina

ACCSP Bycatch Committee
January 27, 2005
Charleston, South Carolina

Tina Berger Awarded ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

Tina Berger has been a part of the Commission staff for over ten years now and her efforts over the years have directly contributed to the Commission's vision of "healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015." In recognition of a number of excellent accomplishments throughout this year, Tina was awarded Employee of the Quarter (October - December 2004). The award is intended to recognize special contributions and qualities in the areas of teamwork, initiative, responsibility, quality of work, positive attitude, and results.

Some of Tina's accomplishments during this past year have been the overhaul of the Commission's webpage, development of the new Commission display, and design and production of the Commission's new five year Strategic Plan. Tina has done an excellent job of

getting the Commission's message out to the public, and to that end has designed a survey seeking feedback on the outreach efforts of the Commission. Throughout the summer, Tina also spent a good deal of time traveling up and down the coast, meeting with state and federal outreach specialists to share information, discuss common challenges and opportunities, and identify areas for future collaboration. She will use the information gathered at these meetings and the outreach survey to develop a comprehensive communications plan for the Commission. Recently, Tina has been involved in the development of new habitat outreach products, including a display and a folder containing species-specific habitat factsheets.

Tina has a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Boston University and a Master of Arts in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island. As an Employee



of the Quarter, she received a cash award, an engraved pewter pencil cup, and a letter of appreciation for her personnel record. In addition, her name will be engraved on the Employee of Quarter Plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Tina!

ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 9)

mittee, Carrie was instrumental in elevating the importance of Atlantic coastal fisheries habitat issues at the state, regional and national levels. Through her efforts, she has increased our knowledge of coastal habitat and its critical role in supporting successful fisheries management activities. In January, Carrie will be working for NOAA's Office of Legislative Affairs.

Congratulations, Meg and Carrie and best wishes.



Candace Nachman -- For the past four months, Intern Candace Nachman has been an indispensable asset to the Commission. Over that brief time period, Candace has worked with the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS) to strengthen their participation in species PDTs and in developing socioeconomic sections for upcoming plan amendments. She coordinated development of an upcoming workshop for Commissioners on economic modeling, scheduled for May 2005, and assisted in writing a policy paper on the cumulative effects

of seasonal closures. She also compiled detailed information on state recreational and commercial fisheries -- landings, participation and economic value -- for inclusion in state-specific factsheets. This January, Candace will be starting one-year ECO internship as a Law of the Sea GIS Associate with NOAA's Office of Coast Survey in Silver Spring. We wish you the best of luck, Candace!

Mark Your Calendars! 2005 Technical Committee Meeting Weeks Scheduled

Week 1: March 28 – April 1, 2005

Week 2: June 27 – July 1, 2005

Week 3: September 26 – 30, 2005

Location to be determined.



***The Staff of the Atlantic
States Marine Fisheries
Commission wishes you
the happiest of holidays
and a healthy &
prosperous New Year!***



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