



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

## Atlantic Herring Technical Committee Meeting Summary Conference Call February 18, 2016

*Technical Committee Members:* Renee Zobel (Chair), Matt Cieri (ME)

*Public:* Aaron Kornbluth (Pew)

*ASMFC Staff:* Ashton Harp

The TC reviewed the options selected by the Atlantic Herring Section at the February 2016 meeting (Appendix 1). Each state is reviewing the changes to management and will begin writing new regulations in March. States will work together as much as possible when drafting the spawning area closure regulations to ensure consistency.

In preparation for implementation of the new spawning closure monitoring system the TC will develop an agreed upon protocol. Specific topics to address in the protocol and at the next meeting include:

- **Designated person to run the model weekly; options include:**
  - One person running the model for all three spawning areas
  - Maine running the model for EM and WM; Massachusetts running the model for MA/NH
- **Central, secure location to upload and store (dependent and independently collected) sampling data so that it is accessible to state agencies and staff**
  - **PRIORITY ACTION:** Staff to identify an appropriate data warehouse, will reach out to ACCSP
- **Identify when sampling will begin for each spawning area, most likely it will be:**
  - EM and WM: at least by August 1
  - MA/NH: at least by September 1
- **Identify the state agency person to contact during spawning timeframe, and designee if out of town**
- **Identify chain of command when initiating a spawning area closure**

At the February 2016 Section meeting there was a request for a list of criteria to evaluate the 'effectiveness' of the new spawning area closure monitoring system that utilizes samples to forecast the onset of spawning. The TC discussed this topic, but noted that clear guidance was not provided by the Section. An objective analysis may prove difficult, this topic will be discussed again at the next TC meeting. It was noted that finalized sampling and landings data from the 2016 fishing season will not be available until spring 2017. A timeline will be developed to illustrate the when analysis from sampling and landing data can take place and when it can be shared.

**Appendix 1: Atlantic Herring Amendment 3 to the FMP  
TC Briefing Document  
February 2016**

The Board approved Amendment 3 to the Atlantic Herring FMP, Board select options below. The planned implementation is June 1, 2016.

<b>Spawning Area Closure Monitoring System</b>	
<b>Selected Option</b>	The Board adopted <i>Option C. GSI<sub>30</sub>-based forecast system</i> for the Spawning Area Closure Monitoring System. This system would be implemented for one year and will then be reviewed by the Technical Committee and Section for effectiveness. If the GSI-based system is effective it can be continued either indefinitely or for a time-certain by a majority vote of the Herring Section. If GSI-based system is not effective, then the spawning area closure monitoring system will automatically revert to Option B.
<b>Full text for the chosen management option, as written in A3</b>	<p><b>GSI<sub>30</sub>-Based Forecast System</b></p> <p>The closure date for a spawning area will be projected based on a minimum of three (3) fishery dependent or independent samples, each containing at least 25 female herring in ICNAF gonadal stages III-V. Because larger herring spawn first, female GSI values will be standardized to that of a 30 cm fish, (95th percentile of observed female herring lengths) using the following formula:</p> $GSI_{30} = GSI_{obs} + 1.84 * (30 - TL_{cm})$ <p>When a significant positive relationship is detected between GSI<sub>30</sub> and date, the slope of this line will be used to forecast a closure date. The forecasted closure date will be the day where GSI<sub>30</sub> is projected to exceed the selected trigger value. As additional samples are collected, the forecast will be updated and fine-tuned. Once the forecasted date is within 5 days, the spawning closure will be announced. If no significant increase in GSI<sub>30</sub> is detected prior to the default closure date, the default closure date would apply (see <i>Section 4.2.6.2</i> for default dates).</p> <p><b>GSI<sub>30</sub> Trigger Value:</b> Spawning occurs at the completion of maturity stage V. Therefore, a point near the high end of observed GSI values for stage V fish should be used as the trigger. A higher value closes the fishery later and just prior to spawning, whereas a lower value provides additional protection for maturing fish. In other words, higher GSI values indicate increased maturation and spawning readiness.</p>

Default Closure Dates							
<b>Selected Option</b>	Option C: Default Dates Associated with GSI <sub>30</sub> Trigger Values; Sub-Option C2: 80 <sup>th</sup> Percentile (GSI <sub>30</sub> Trigger = 25)						
<b>Full text for the chosen management option, as written in A3</b>	<p><b>Option C: Default Dates Associated with GSI<sub>30</sub> Trigger Values</b> If sufficient samples are not available, closures will begin on the following dates associated with the respective GSI<sub>30</sub> trigger value.</p> <p><b>Sub-Option C2: 80<sup>th</sup> Percentile (GSI<sub>30</sub> Trigger = 25)</b> Closes the fishery in the later stages of maturity, but before spawning.</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eastern Maine Spawning Area:</td> <td>August 28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Western Maine Spawning Area:</td> <td>October 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Area:</td> <td>October 4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Eastern Maine Spawning Area:	August 28	Western Maine Spawning Area:	October 4	Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Area:	October 4
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Spawning Area Boundaries	
<b>Selected Option</b>	Status quo, 3 spawning areas

Spawning Closure Period	
<b>Selected Option</b>	Status quo, 4 weeks

Spawning Re-Closure Protocol	
<b>Selected Option</b>	Option B: Defined Protocol
<b>Full text for the chosen management option, as written in A3</b>	<p><b>Option B: Defined Protocol</b></p> <p>Sampling will resume in the final week of the initial closure period or at the end of the initial closure period. If one (1) sample taken from within a spawning closure area, by Maine, New Hampshire or Massachusetts, indicates significant numbers of spawn herring then closures will resume for an additional two (2) weeks. Significant numbers of spawn herring is defined as 25% or more mature herring, by number in a</p>

	sample, have yet to spawn. Mature or “spawn” herring are defined as Atlantic herring in ICNAF gonadal stages V and VI. Sample is defined as a minimum of 100 randomly selected adult sized fish from a fishery dependent or independent source.
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Fixed Gear Set-Aside	
<b>Selected Option</b>	Option B: Remove the rollover provision
<b>Full text for the chosen management option, as written in A3</b>	<b>Option B: Remove the rollover provision</b> The fixed gear set-aside will be available to fixed gear fishermen west of Cutler through December 31. When 92% of the Area 1A TAC has been reached, all directed Atlantic herring fisheries in Area 1A will closed. Unused portions of the fixed gear set-aside will not be rolled from one year to the next.

Empty Fish Hold Provision	
<b>Selected Option</b>	Option C1: Federal/State Empty Fish Hold Provision for Select Vessels <i>This option is similar to Option B1, with the additional underlined text, and is contingent on federal adoption. Meaning if NMFS adopts Framework Adjustment 4 then the states will implement this option instead.</i>
<b>Full text for the chosen management option, as written in A3</b>	This option would require that fish holds on Category A/B Atlantic herring vessels <u>with ability to pump fish</u> are empty of fish before leaving the dock on any trip when declared into the Atlantic herring fishery. A waiver may be issued for instances when there are <u>a pumpable quantity of fish</u> in the hold as determined by an appropriate law enforcement officer (the intent is for waivers to be issued for refrigeration failure and non-marketable fish that have been reported by the vessel). Only vessels departing on a fishing trip (i.e. declared into the fishery) are required to have holds empty of fish. As such,

	waivers would not be required for vessels transporting fish from dock to dock.
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