



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel Conference Call

April 10, 2017

10:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Advisory Panel Members: Jeff Kaelin (Chair), Patrick Paquette, Shawn Joyce, Steve Weiner, Marybeth Tooley

ASMFC: Ashton Harp, Ritchie White (Section Chair)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel (AP) met via conference call on April 10, 2017 to discuss the management alternatives in Draft Addendum I. The following summarizes the comments made by AP members on the call. Due to low attendance the comments made are not representative of the entire Advisory Panel, rather they are individual comments. There was a request by the Chair to re-populate the Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel at the May Section meeting.

SECTION 3: MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

Issue 1: State Vessel Landing Reports

The discussion focused more on the applicability of VMS as an avenue for states to monitor the rate of catch, rather than the individual management options (A and B). It was noted that the Commission sent a letter to NOAA Fisheries, Office of Law Enforcement requesting access to VMS pre-trip landing reports for 3 state biologists. If access is granted the AP does not want access to be used for enforcement of any kind (the request was specific to landings information). A member asked if state law enforcement officers have access to VMS and later in the call someone confirmed (at least in NH) that they do have access.

One member noted that they would (reluctantly) comply with the reporting requirements in Option B if implemented.

One member, that is familiar with eTRips, said it is a helpful application that other fisheries along the east coast are already using.

One member commented that boats with federal permits are already reporting to NMFS on a daily basis through vessel trip reports (VTR) and do not want to report the same information twice (via a state report). Therefore, it is preferred that the Commission work with NOAA Fisheries to obtain the data.

Issue 2: Prohibit Landings of Herring Caught in Area 1A During a Day Out of the Fishery

Three members are in favor of *Option A. Status Quo*; there was opposition to restricting the possession of herring on a day out because the majority of fishing takes place in federal waters. Two of the three members believe the days out should be a tool for managers if needed, but if a weekly landing limit is implemented then harvesters should be allowed to land 7 days per week.

Issue 3: Weekly Landing Limit

The AP supports a weekly landing limit, but is opposed to the requirement that harvesters must declare into the Area 1A fishery 45 days prior to the start of the fishing season. The AP would prefer no declaration period. The AP questioned the purpose of the declaration for the following reasons:

- It does not restrict vessels to fishing in Area 1A
- It is relatively easy to know the number of vessels fishing per week because the Area 1A fishery is small
- It is not a good indicator of future effort; all vessels will declare
- The weekly landing limit will fluctuate based on the number of vessels fishing each week

Issue 4: Landing Restriction on Transfers At-Sea

There was support for *Option A. Status Quo* because the other options could lead to discarding. The members on the call think a weekly landing limit is a sufficient effort control and any restrictions on carriers are not necessary.

One person asked if *Option C* would put smaller carriers out of business, others commented that it likely would because the preference would shift to larger carriers.

One member voiced that they did not want harvesters, with the additional capacity of carriers, targeting and taking entire schools of herring. Another member voiced that it is not the goal of the harvester but if there is extra fish then they should be transferred to a carrier(s) instead of being dumped. Any option that has a chance of increasing discards should be avoided.

Issue 5: Small Mesh Bottom (SMBT) Trawl Days Out

The members on the call supported *Option B*, as long as the vessels were required to report their landings. For example, if state vessel landing reports are implemented then they should be required for all vessels.

Issue 6: Clarification of the Days Out Procedure

Two members preferred *Option B2. Consensus* because it required managers to discuss the issue in detail. Some members questioned *Option C2. Zero Days* because it has the potential to

shut down a federal fishery; whereas two members viewed it as an incentive for managers to come to an agreement and force a consensus.

SECTION 4: SCOPING QUESTIONS FOR A TIERED WEEKLY LANDING LIMIT

Two members of the AP are opposed to a tiered weekly landing limit because it is not consistent with the federal FMP. If this effort was to be considered then it should be initiated by NEFMC.