



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
FROM: Atlantic Menhaden Advisory Panel
DATE: January 23, 2017
SUBJECT: Comments on the Amendment 3 Public Information Document

The Atlantic Menhaden Advisory Panel (AP) met via conference call on January 9, 2017 to review comments made on the Amendment 3 Public Information Document (PID). The purpose of this call was to provide the AP an opportunity to review the comments made during the 14 public hearings conducted on the PID ahead of the February 1st Board meeting. Written comments were not reviewed on this conference call as, due to the volume of letters and emails received, staff was still summarizing these comments. After staff presented a summary of the comments made at the public hearings, each AP member was provided an opportunity to make a statement. The following is a summary of the comments made by the AP members on the call.

AP Members in Attendance:

Jennie Bichrest (ME)	Paul Eidman (NJ)
Donald Swanson (NH)	Leonard Voss (DE)
Patrick Paquette (MA)	David Sikorski (MD)
David Monti (RI)	Jimmy Kellum (VA)
Meghan Lapp (RI)	Peter Himchak (VA)
Melissa Dearborn (NY)	Scott Williams (NC)
Jeff Kaelin (NJ, Chair)	Ken Hinman (GA)

Comments Made by AP Members on ERPs

- 3 members expressed support for *Issue 1, Option D: Existing Guidelines for Forage Fish Species Until ERPs are Developed by the BERP*. They commented that reference points dictate how the fishery is allocated between all stakeholders, including predators, recreational fishermen, and tourism industries and this is why there is broad support for Option D. They also stated that menhaden are the foundation of the ecosystem and it is vital that policy recognize this role.
- One AP member stated that the menhaden fishery is unique and a one-size fits all approach to managing forage fish is not appropriate. As a result, she recommended that current reference points remain in place until menhaden-specific ERPs are finalized and peer-reviewed.
- Another AP member commented that there are very few fisheries that are in as good a condition as menhaden and questioned why there is so much support to change a management strategy that is currently working.
- One AP member noted that the abundance of fish in New England is growing and that the Board should allow fishermen in these regions to benefit from the resurgence of menhaden through the adoption of ERPs. He felt that ERPs would help the resource and the economy.

- One AP member recommended that, because the PID mentions the possibility of combining existing guidelines on ERPs, specifically the 75% unfished biomass target with a 40% unfished biomass threshold, this 40% biomass threshold should be added to Option D.

Comments Made by AP Members on Allocation

- Three AP members highlighted the need for a longer allocation timeframe (*Issue 3, Option C*). One member highlighted that Rhode Island had a large-scale menhaden fishery in the 1980's and that this historic fishery should be recognized when determining new allocation methods. Another stated that the allocation timeframe needs to account for the historic participation of New York and the New England states in the menhaden fishery.
- Two AP members supported *Issue 2, Option H: Allocation Strategy Based on TAC Level*. They stated that the menhaden fishery needs to be made whole again and that, after this is accomplished, additional quota can be allocated to the bait sector. One AP member also noted that the majority of harvest by the reduction fishery does not include age zeros and 1's.
- One AP member stated that Maine has virtually no quota and supported *Issue 2, Option B: State-Specific Quotas with a Fixed Minimum* as well as *Issue 2, Option D: Seasonal Quotas*, as a way to reserve the harvest of menhaden for times when there is high demand. She also recommended that there be an increase to the episodic events set aside program and that a control date be established for the menhaden fishery.
- Another AP member supported re-allocation in the menhaden fishery.

Other Comments on Draft Amendment 3

- One AP member recommended that draft Amendment 3 include two additional tables, one which compares the various reference points on a common currency and another which summarizes catch by state, gear type, and year. He noted that it is hard to compare the various ERP and allocation options without such information.

ATLANTIC MENHADEN ADVISORY PANEL

Bolded names await approval by the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

January 25, 2017

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Megan Ware

From: johngreen3083@gmail.com
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2017 2:01 PM
To: Comments; khinmam@wildoceans.org; Jeff Deem; Megan Ware; killum.martime@gmail.com
Subject: Comments for January 30, 2017 meeting

Please enter the below comments for the January 30, 2017 meeting. My comments are directed to the Atlantic Menhaden Management.

I am just a recreational fisherman. I fish the eastern shore of Virginia bayside for flounder, croaker, striper, and some other fish and seaside for flounder. I am an avid life long fisherman at 59 years old. I have been fishing the Chesapeake bay/eastern shore area for 10 years and I have watched the menhaden fleets in action. On many occasions I have seen miles and miles of dead fish from their actions. I have noticed significant reduction in catches of flounder, croaker, and striper. I have also seen the adult menhaden disappear. Are you all going to take action? This is not rocket science.

Thank you for hearing/reading my comments.

Richie Green
Mechanicsville, Va

Sent from my iPad

Douglas A. Taylor
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Megan Ware
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
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January 24,2017

Subject: Atlantic Menhaden

As it is well known, though the Atlantic Menhaden is not considered to be a game fish, but is a very important species for both the health of the water system (being filter feeders) and as a feed source for fish further up the food chain..

Taking the NOAA reported metric tonnage over the 66 year history for the Atlantic Menhaden and breaking this information down into different categories, trends did develop. It was noted that as the years progressed the Gulf total tonnage was starting to mimic the Total Metric Tonnage Landings (this trend starts approximately in 1966); The Atlantic catch was diminishing and starting to follow the trend and mirror the Chesapeake landings (this trend is most noticeable starting in 1983). (Graph attached, pg. 2; Data from the NOAA Website; http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/pls/webpls/FT_HELP.SPECIES)

Under one of the first studies of the Atlantic Menhaden ("Ecological Role of Atlantic Menhaden in Chesapeake Bay and Implications of Management of the Fishery", 1998; Gottlieb, Sara J. and Mihursky, Joseph A.), a benefit was suggested concerning the harvest by age group and economical-environmental consequences.

The reason for this letter is two fold: 1) There has been an increase of whales feeding off the beaches of New Jersey and 2) the need for the cleaning up of the Chesapeake Bay. Taking in consideration the above data/information and the studies and complaints, please reference the graph that is submitted with this letter when making decisions on the Atlantic Menhaden.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Doug Taylor

Menhaden Tonage (1950 -2016, 66 year History)

