



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Spring Meeting

May 4-7, 2015

The Westin Alexandria
400 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, VA
703.253.8600

Preliminary Agenda

Please note: The agenda is subject to change. Bulleted items represent the anticipated major issues to be discussed or acted upon at the meeting. The final agenda will include additional items and may revise the bulleted items provided below. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.

MONDAY, MAY 4

12:45 – 2:15 PM **Atlantic Herring Section**

- Review and Consider Approval of Draft Amendment 3 for Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of the 2014 FMP Review and State Compliance Report

2:30 – 5 PM **American Lobster Management Board**

- Review and Consider Approval of Draft Addendum XXIV for Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of the Draft Jonah Crab Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of Nominations to the Jonah Crab Advisory Panel

TUESDAY, MAY 5

8 – 11 AM **Atlantic Menhaden Management Board**

- Review Technical Committee Report on Biological Reference Points and Stock Projections
- Consider Approval of 2015 Fishery Specifications
- Discuss Next Steps for Management Based on Results of the Benchmark Assessment/ERP Term of Reference and the Technical Committee Report

11:15 AM - Noon **South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board**

- Review NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office Draft Strategic Plan for 2016-2020

continued, see SPRING MEETING AGENDA on page 6

Upcoming Meetings

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 the deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous 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

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Chair

Douglas E. Grout (NH)
Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal
Executive Director

Patrick A. Campfield
Science Director

Toni Kerns
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April 10 (9:30 AM - Noon)

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Advisory Panel Conference Call.

April 14 - 16

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Ocean Place Resort, 1 Ocean Boulevard, Long Branch, NJ.

April 20 & 21

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee, Hyatt Regency, Pier 66, 2301 SE 17th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

April 21 - 23

New England Fishery Management Council, Hilton Hotel, Mystic, CT.

April 22 & 23

ASMFC Habitat Committee, Hyatt Regency, Pier 66, 2301 SE 17th Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

May 4 - 7

ASMFC Spring Meeting, The Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria, VA.

June 2

Bluefish Stock Assessment Review Workshop, NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA.

June 8 - 12

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Doubletree Grand Key Resort, 3990 S. Roosevelt Boulevard, Key West, FL.

June 9 - 11

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Doubletree by Hilton, Raleigh Brownstone University, 1707 Hillsborough Street, Raleigh, NC.

June 9 - 12

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, committees and location to be determined.

June 16 - 18

New England Fishery Management Council, Hotel Viking, Newport, RI.

August 4 - 6

ASMFC Summer Meeting, The Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria, VA.

August 11 - 13

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn Midtown, 440 West 57th Street, New York City, NY.

September 14 - 18

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, The Beach House Resort, 1 South Forest Beach Drive, Hilton Head Island, SC.

September 14 - 18

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, committees and location to be determined.

September 29 - October 1

New England Fishery Management Council, Radisson Hotel, Plymouth Harbor, Plymouth, MA.

October 6 - 8

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Doubletree Philadelphia Center City 237 S Broad St Philadelphia, PA.

November 2 - 5

ASMFC 74th Annual Meeting & Joint Meeting with the GSMFC, St. Augustine, FL.



ASMFC and ACCSP Join Forces with NOAA Fisheries to Bolster Recreational Fishing Catch and Effort Data

Producing a reliable estimate of recreational anglers' catch and effort has proven to be one of the most difficult tasks facing fishery managers in modern times. Unlike commercial fisheries, with trip level reporting, dealer reporting, and onboard observers, recreational catch and effort is as complicated and varied as the millions of anglers who fish our marine waters every year.

Recognizing the need for better recreational effort data, NOAA Fisheries commissioned an independent review of its recreational fishing survey in 2006 through the National Research Council (NRC). One year later, Congress required NOAA to implement the study's recommendations, including

the creation of a national saltwater angler registry. While the resulting Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) was a vast improvement over previous estimates, there is still work to do to further improve the program and the data it provides. Two recent developments have the potential to significantly improve the accuracy of, and stakeholder confidence in, recreational fishing effort and landings estimates. The first development involves the Atlantic states taking over conduct of the catch estimate portion of MRIP known as the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS).

APAIS is one of the most crucial components of estimating recreational catch and discards. It requires person to person interaction on docks and other fishing sites to identify catch and effort of recreational anglers. The Atlantic coast remains the only area in

the continental U.S. where the APAIS angler interviews are still conducted by MRIP's contractors. Shifting APAIS to the states in the Gulf of Mexico has resulted in substantial improvements in data quality, a better sense of involvement by the participating states, and more confidence in the results by the interviewed anglers.

Beginning in 2016, all coastal states from Maine through Georgia will transition to conducting APAIS to collect information on marine recreational fishing catch and effort data in their own waters. Over the past decade several states (e.g., Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia) have successfully improved data quality, and stakeholder confidence in that data, through greater state involvement with APAIS contractors.

Based on these successes, the states, through the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) and the Commission, approved a plan to transition to state conduct of APAIS in 2016. The plan details the transition from the current NOAA Fisheries contractor to ASMFC/ACCSP and state conduct of the APAIS. Under this plan, NOAA Fisheries will retain primary accountability for APAIS and will be responsible for survey design, catch and effort estimation, and public dissemination. The Commission and ACCSP will act as the central coordinators of the state-conducted APAIS and will be responsible for data entry, compilation, quality control/quality assurance, as well as formatting and delivering intercept data to NOAA Fisheries. States will oversee and manage field collection, which will be conducted by state or Commission employees in accordance with APAIS standard data collection protocols.

NOAA Fisheries is also transitioning parts of the effort survey it administers from a landline phone survey to mail survey. In the past, MRIP has estimated effort through the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS), which randomly targets households with landlines in coastal counties. As you can imagine, this methodology has a number of shortcomings, including declining response rates to household telephone surveys generally and the increasing proportion of households that only use cell phones. Recently completed pilot studies indicate mail surveys are a much better tool for capturing recreational fishing effort by increasing response rates, reaching a broader population of anglers, and improving response accuracy. The pilot studies also found the new survey resulted in considerably higher estimates of fishing effort, which in turn will result in correspondingly higher estimates of catch. What this means is that once the new survey is ready for implementation, which will take two to three years in order to align the new estimates with the historical data series, there could be significant stock assessment and management implications. In order to develop the most appropriate way to transition from historical to improved survey designs, NOAA Fisheries has formed a Transition Team, composed of representatives from the Regional Councils, Interstate Commissions, and state partners, to design an implementation plan for the new mail survey.

In order to assess MRIP's progress in addressing the NRC's 2006 recommendations, the MRIP Executive Steering, of which the Executive Directors of the three Interstate Commissions are members, is recommending a new NRC review be undertaken soon. It is my hope the review will find MRIP's accomplishments, including changes to APAIS conduct and the effort survey, are vast improvements from its predecessor, the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey. While these improvements have been a long time in coming, they represent time well spent in ensuring recreational fishing and effort estimates are accurate and best meet the needs of fisheries scientists, managers, and the angling public.

Beginning in 2016, all coastal states from Maine through Georgia will transition to conducting APAIS to collect information on marine recreational fishing catch and effort data in their own waters.

Species Profile: Atlantic Menhaden

Benchmark Stock Assessment Sheds New Light on Stock Condition; Board to Consider Long-term Management Goals

Introduction

Atlantic menhaden (*Brevoortia tyrannus*) are a small, oily, schooling fish of historical, economic, and ecological importance. Historically, menhaden supported large-scale commercial reduction fisheries bringing considerable growth to Atlantic coastal communities. Today, the reduction fishery is a fraction of what it once was with one processing plant and several vessels operating on the Atlantic coast. The reduction fishery is so named because menhaden are processed (or reduced) into other products, such as agricultural fertilizer, fishmeal and oil, as well as livestock and aquaculture feeds. Additionally, menhaden are becoming increasingly valuable for use as bait in many important fisheries, including American lobster and blue crab commercial fisheries and striped bass recreational fisheries. Ecologically, the species plays an important role in marine ecosystems as a forage fish (prey) for many fish, sea birds, and marine mammals. As such, the Commission places a high priority on developing ecosystem-based reference points for management use in order to account for the forage needs of menhaden's predator species such as striped bass, weakfish, and bluefish. The 2015 benchmark stock assessment, which was recently approved by the Atlantic Menhaden Board for management use, alters our understanding of the status of the stock. As a result, current management measures may be reassessed to more equitably balance human use and ecological factors.

Life History

Atlantic menhaden occupy estuaries and coastal waters from northern Florida to Nova Scotia and are believed to consist of a single population. Adult and juvenile menhaden form large, near-surface schools, primarily in estuaries and nearshore ocean waters from early spring through early winter. By summer, menhaden schools stratify by size and age along the coast, with older and larger menhaden found farther north. During fall-early winter, menhaden of all sizes and ages migrate south around the North Carolina capes to spawn.

Sexual maturity begins as early as age one to just before age three, with major spawning areas from the Carolinas to New Jersey. The majority of spawning occurs primarily offshore (20-30 miles) during winter. Buoyant eggs hatch at sea, and larvae are carried into estuarine nursery areas by ocean currents. Juveniles spend most of their first year in estuaries, migrating to the ocean in late fall.

Menhaden are very efficient filter feeders. Water is pushed through specialized gill rakers that are formed into a basket that allows them to capture plankton. Menhaden are an important component of the food chain, providing a link between primary production and higher organisms by consuming plankton and providing forage for species such as striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish, to name just a few.

Commercial Fishery

The Atlantic menhaden commercial fishery consists of a reduction fishery and a bait fishery. The reduction fishery, named because it processes the whole fish into fish meal, fish oil, and fish solubles, first began in New England during the early 1800s and spread south after the Civil War. The reduction fishery grew with the advent of purse seine after the Civil War in the mid-

Species Snapshot

Atlantic Menhaden
Brevoortia tyrannus



Common Names:

menhaden, bunker, mossbunker, poggy, fatback, bugmouth, skipjack

Species Range:

Atlantic coast of North America from Nova Scotia to northern Florida

Family:

Clupeidae (includes herring, sardine, and shad species)

Interesting Facts:

- The modern record for the largest menhaden landed occurred in Reedville, VA in 1996, measuring in at 19.4" and weighing 3.4 lbs.
- Pre-colonial Native Americans called menhaden 'munawhatteaug,' which means fertilizer.
- A large crustacean parasite is commonly found in the mouth of Atlantic menhaden; hence its common name "bugmouth."
- Adults can filter 6-7 gallons of water/minute.
- Ethel Hall, with NMFS Beaufort Lab, has been ageing Atlantic menhaden for over 40 years using a 1967 Eberbach projector.
- Adults can filter 6-7 gallons of water/minute.

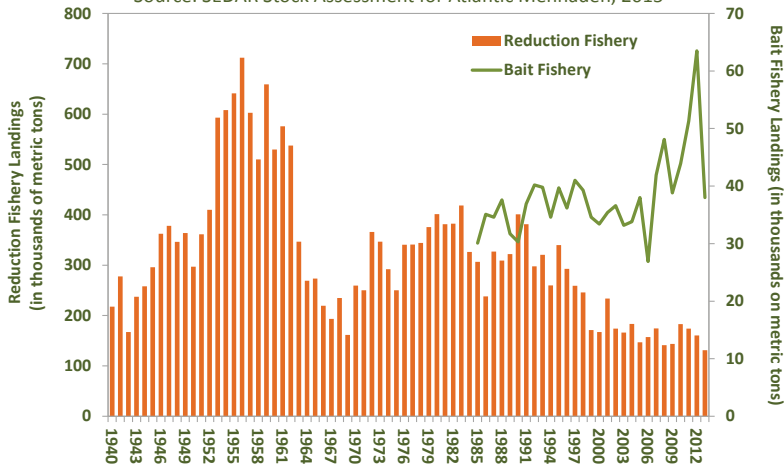
Stock Status: Not overfished and not experiencing overfishing



Photo © John Surrick, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Atlantic Menhaden Landings by Reduction and Bait Fisheries

Source: SEDAR Stock Assessment for Atlantic Menhaden, 2015



Timeline of Management Actions: FMP ('81); FMP Revision ('91); Amendment 1 ('01); Addendum I ('04); Addendum II ('05); Addendum III ('06); Addendum IV (2'09); Addendum V ('11); Amendment 2 ('12); Addendum I ('13)

1800s. Purse seine landings reached a high point in the 1950s with peak landings of 712,100 metric tons (mt) in 1956. At that time, over 20 menhaden reduction factories ranged from northern Florida to

southern Maine. In the 1960s, the Atlantic menhaden stock contracted geographically, and many of the fish factories north of the Chesapeake Bay closed because of a scarcity of fish. Reduction landings dropped to a low of 161,000 mt in 1969. In the 1970s and 1980s, the menhaden population began to expand (primarily due to a series of above average year classes entering the fishery), and reduction landings rose to around 300,000-400,000 mt. Adult menhaden were again abundant in the northern half of their range and, as a result, reduction factories in New England and Canada began processing menhaden again by the mid-1970s. However, by 1989 all shore-side reduction plants in New England had closed, mainly because of odor abatement regulations.

During the 1990s, the Atlantic menhaden stock contracted again (as in the 1960s), largely due to a series of poor to average year classes. Over the next decade, several reduction plants consolidated or closed, resulting in a significant reduction in fleet size and fishing capacity. By 2005, there was only one remaining reduction plant in operation on the Atlantic coast processing menhaden into fishmeal and oil, which is located in Virginia and still operational today.

Beginning in 2013, as required under Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden (Amendment 2) and in response to the results of the 2010 benchmark stock assessment, total harvest levels of menhaden were reduced by at least 20% from the average of 2009-2011 landings. The 2013 reduction fishery harvest was 131,034 mt, an 18% decrease from harvest in 2012 (160,627 mt) and 24% below average landings from 2010-2012 (172,600 mt). Seven purse-seine vessels landed Atlantic menhaden during the 2013 season. Most of the catch occurred in the waters off of Virginia and New Jersey.

The coastwide bait fishery supplies fishermen with bait for popular commercial (e.g., American lobster and blue crab) and sport fish (e.g.,

continued, see ATLANTIC MENHADEN on page 8



Atlantic Menhaden Assessment Q&A

What Data Were Used?

The Atlantic menhaden assessment used two types of data. The first was fishery-dependent data, which includes commercial landings and portside samples taken to obtain weight, length, and age distribution information. The second was fishery-independent data, which includes data collected through scientific research and surveys. To develop a coastwide index of juvenile relative abundance, 16 surveys were used from across the states, including seine surveys, trawl surveys, and an electrofishing survey. Nine new indices of state survey data were used to develop two adult abundance indices, and the selectivity of these indices was estimated with length data.

What Models Were Used?

The Beaufort Assessment Model (BAM) was chosen based on model performance, reliability, flexibility, and assumption requirements. The BAM is a statistical catch-at-age model that estimates population size at age and recruitment in 1955 and then projects the population forward in time to 2013. The model estimates trends in population dynamics, including abundance at age, recruitment, spawning stock biomass, egg production, and fishing mortality rates. The BAM was configured to account for differences in selectivity introduced by each of the fishery fleets, a modeling technique called fleets-as-areas.

What is the Status of the Stock?

The assessment results indicate that the Atlantic menhaden stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, relative to the current

continued, see ASSESSMENT Q&A on page 8

2014 Atlantic Menhaden Quotas		
State	2014 Quota (mt)	2014 Quota (lbs)
ME	66.58	146,787
NH	0.05	112
MA	1417.94	3,126,024
RI	30.29	66,779
CT	29.50	65,034
NY	93.76	206,695
NJ	18924.42	41,721,164
DE	22.33	49,230
MD	2320.98	5,116,874
PRFC	1049.69	2,314,174
VA	144272.84	318,066,790
NC	833.23	1,836,948
SC	-	-
GA	-	-
FL	30.39	66,995
TOTAL	169092	372,783,605

Spring Meeting Agenda (continued)

TUESDAY, MAY 5

- 12:15 – 2 PM **Blank Rome Workshop**
- Budget Status
 - Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization
 - Horseshoe Crab Trawl Survey Funding
 - Committee Membership Updates
- 1 – 5 PM **Law Enforcement Committee (LEC)**
- Review Draft Management Measures for Jonah Crab
 - Review 2015 Action Plan Tasks
 - Update LEC Representatives to Species Boards/Appoint Alternates
 - Reports on Outside Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Activities (AFWA/NACLAC/Councils)
- 2:15 – 3:45 PM **Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**
- Review Technical Committee Report on Progress of the Development of Reference Points for Chesapeake Bay, Hudson River, and Delaware Bay
 - Update on State Implementation of Addendum IV
- 4 – 5:30 PM **NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Update**
- Progress Report on Changes and Improvements to MRIP
- 6 – 8 PM **Annual Awards of Excellence Reception**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

- 8 – 10 AM **Executive Committee**
- Review Suggested Changes to Commission Guidance Documents
 - Update on Staffing
 - Presentation of FY16 Budget
 - Review Revised on Language on Appeal Criteria
 - Update on 2015 Annual Meeting
- 8:30 AM – Noon **Law Enforcement Committee (continued)**
- 10AM – 12:30 PM **Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board**
- Update from Executive Committee
 - Review and Discuss 2014 Commissioner Survey Results
 - Review and Approve Stock Status Definition Revisions
 - Review and Discuss the Northeast Regional Ocean Council Spatial Characterization of Commercial Fisheries
 - Committee on Economics and Social Sciences Report
 - Assessment and Science Committee Report
 - Law Enforcement Committee Report
- 12:45 – 2:15 PM **Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Executive Committee**
- ACCSP Status Report (Program and Committee Updates)
 - Independent Program Review Progress
 - APAIS Update
 - Governance Review Update
- 2:30 – 3:30 PM **Shad and River Herring Management Board**
- Review the River Herring Technical Working Group Conservation Plan

continued, see SPRING MEETING AGENDA on page 9

Public Comment Guidelines

With the intent of developing policies in the Commission's procedures for public participation that result in a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has approved the following guidelines for use at management board meetings:

For issues that are not on the agenda, management boards will continue to provide opportunity to the public to bring matters of concern to the board's attention at the start of each board meeting. Board chairs will use a speaker sign-up list in deciding how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

For topics that are on the agenda, but have not gone out for public comment, board chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. Chairs will have flexibility in deciding how to allocate comment opportunities; this could include hearing one comment in favor and one in opposition until the chair is satisfied further comment will not provide additional insight to the board.

For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment, it is the Policy Board's intent to end the occasional practice of allowing extensive and lengthy public comments. Currently, board chairs have the discretion to decide what public comment to allow in these circumstances.

In addition, the following timeline has been established for the submission of written comment for issues for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period (i.e., in response to proposed management action).

1. Comments received 3 weeks prior to the start of a meeting week will be included with the main meeting materials.
2. Comments received by 5 PM on the Tuesday immediately preceding the scheduled ASMFC Meeting (in this case, the Tuesday deadline will be **April 28, 2015**) will be distributed electronically to Commissioners/Board members prior to the meeting and a limited number of copies will be provided at the meeting.
3. Following the Tuesday, April 28, 2015 5 PM deadline, the commenter will be responsible for distributing the information to the management board prior to the board meeting or providing enough copies for the management board consideration at the meeting (a minimum of 50 copies).

The submitted comments must clearly indicate the commenter's expectation from the ASMFC staff regarding distribution. As with other public comment, it will be accepted via mail, fax, and email.

Summer Flounder Recreational Regional Management Maintained for 2015; State Plans Approved for 2015 Recreational Black Sea Bass & Scup Fisheries

The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXVI to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, continuing adaptive regional management for the 2015 recreational summer flounder fisheries. The approved regions are Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. The Addendum provides the option for the Board to extend the adaptive regional management approach into 2016 through Board action.

Addendum XXVI was initiated to consider a continuation of regional management approved in Addendum XXV. Both addenda address concern that summer flounder management measures under state-by-state conservation equivalency were not providing recreational fishermen along the coast with equitable harvest opportunities to the resource. The adaptive regional management approach is designed to respond to changes in resource availability and effort in the fishery. The Board decided to continue 2014 management measures for the 2015 fishing season.

For black sea bass, the Board approved the methodologies used by the states of Massachusetts through New Jersey to establish their minimum size, bag limits, and season lengths to achieve a 33% reduction in the 2015 recreational harvest levels from the 2014 harvest level. The 33% reduction is required in order to achieve but not exceed that 2015 recreational harvest limit.

For scup, the Board approved the maintenance of 2014 recreational management measures for the 2015 fishing season, with the exception of Connecticut which will increase its size and possession limit to be consistent with the

other states' private and for-hire fisheries. States will finalize their regulations over the next couple of weeks for the recreational summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup fisheries.

Addendum XXVI is available on the Commission website, www.asmf.org, on the Summer Flounder page. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org.

Atlantic Striped Bass State Implementation Plans to Reduce Harvest Approved

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV implementation plans and conservation equivalency proposals for all the states and jurisdictions. The implementation plans, which were reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee, contain state-specific management options that achieve a 25% reduction in harvest from 2013 levels for the coastal fishery and 20.5% reduction in harvest from 2012 levels for the Chesapeake Bay fishery. Given the wide range of options being considered, the Board recommended neighboring states and jurisdictions work together to implement consistent management measures, especially on shared water bodies. This recommendation was also supported by the Commission's Law Enforcement Committee. Additionally, the Board reminded states there is greater certainty in the percent reductions of simple management measures (i.e., changes in bag or size limits) relative to more complex

measures (e.g., slot/trophy fish and mode-specific options).

The Board also tasked the Technical Committee with expanding the exploration of stock-specific reference points to include the other producer areas, such as the Delaware Bay and the Hudson River stocks, in addition to the Chesapeake Bay. The Board will review progress on the stock-specific reference points at its Spring Meeting in May.

States and jurisdictions must have final measures for implementing Addendum IV in place by the beginning of their 2015 fishing seasons. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org.

2015 Specifications Set for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder

The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board maintained its winter flounder commercial and recreational management measures for the inshore waters of the Gulf of Maine (GOM) and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) for the 2015 fishing season.

The Board maintains its commitment to work with the New England Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office to collaboratively manage winter flounder stocks throughout their range. For more information, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Minimum Commercial and Recreational Management Measures for Inshore Winter Flounder Stocks

Stock	Sector	Trip Limit/ Possession Limit	Size Limit	Season	Gear
GOM	Commercial	500 lbs/trip/ day	12"	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5" square or diamond mesh in cod-end
	Recreational	8 fish	12"	NA	
SNE/MA	Commercial	50 lbs 38 fish/trip/day	12"	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5" square or diamond mesh in cod-end 100-lb mesh trigger
	Recreational	2 fish	12"	March 1 – December 31	

Species Profile (continued)

striped bass and bluefish), and has grown throughout its history along with the expansion of many fisheries that utilize menhaden as bait. Landings for bait have recently dipped due to the aforementioned reduction; levels for 2013 were 35,043 mt, 34% below the average landings during 2010-2012 (52,900 mt). However in 2012, bait landings peaked at an all-time high of 63,540 mt. The bait fishery has increased in relative importance from New England to North Carolina. This is evident in the increasing percent of total menhaden landings that are attributed to the bait fishery. Between 2001 and 2012, the percent of total landings that were used for bait rose from 13% to a high of 28% in 2012. In 2013, bait harvest composed approximately 22% of the total menhaden harvest. In recent years, the majority of bait landings have been harvested from Virginia and New Jersey waters, followed by Massachusetts and Maryland.

Status of the Stock

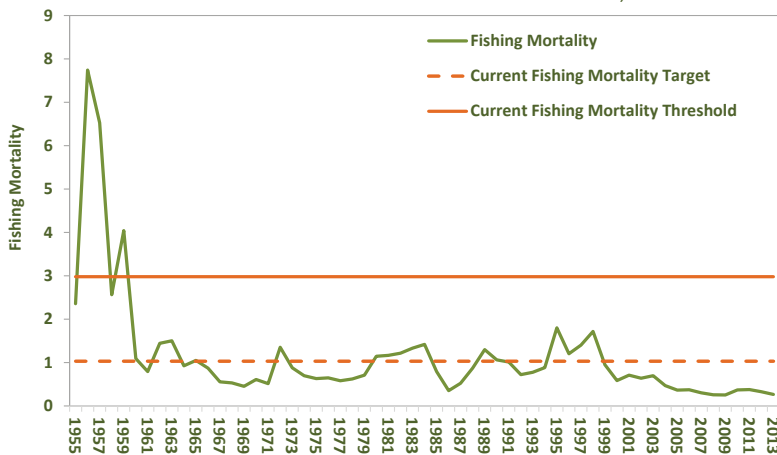
The 2015 benchmark stock assessment indicates that Atlantic menhaden are neither overfished nor experiencing overfishing. Fishing mortality rates have remained below the overfishing threshold (2.98) since the 1960s, and have hovered around the overfishing target (1.03) through the 1990s. In 1999, fishing mortality dropped below the target and was estimated to be 0.27 in 2013 (the latest year in the assessment). In other words, fishing mortality has been decreasing throughout the history of the fishery, and is now 91% below the

threshold and 73% below the target, meaning that overfishing is not occurring.

The biological reference point used to determine the fecundity target is defined as the mature egg production one would expect when the population is being fished at the threshold fishing mortality rate. Population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, was estimated to be well above both the threshold and the target in recent years. In fact, in 2013, fecundity is estimated to have been 71% higher than the target value, which is calculated to be 100

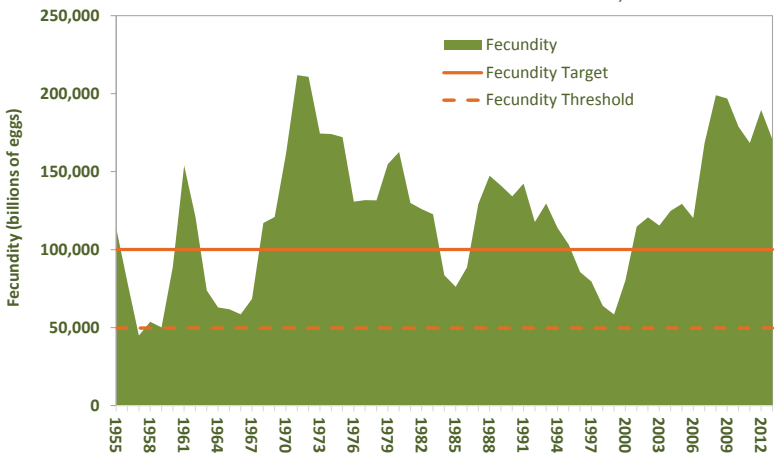
Atlantic Menhaden Fishing Mortality

Source: SEDAR Stock Assessment for Atlantic Menhaden, 2015



Atlantic Menhaden Fecundity

Source: SEDAR Stock Assessment for Atlantic Menhaden, 2015



continued, see ATLANTIC MENHADEN on page 9

ASSESSMENT Q&A continued from page 5

biological reference points based on maximum spawning potential.

Why Are These Findings Different from Those of the 2010 Benchmark Assessment?

Through the consideration of new and existing datasets and the exploration of alternative model configurations, significant changes were made during the 2015 assessment to address the issues identified with the 2010 assessment. These include:

- Maturity at age was corrected with new datasets, which resulted in a higher estimated proportion of mature fish at ages 1-3, meaning the stock has higher reproductive potential than previously estimated.
- The adult indices of relative abundance were expanded with larger and more complete datasets.
- Larger menhaden are not captured as often as smaller menhaden by the fisheries, a fact that was accounted for in the 2015 assessment but not the 2010 assessment.

What Data Are Needed?

The Atlantic menhaden stock assessment would be improved by the development of a coastwide fishery-independent survey to replace or supplement the existing indices. Accurate information on trends in abundance over time is critical for determining stock status and population trajectory in stock assessments. Also, development of a model that treats the stock as multiple regional stocks would be beneficial once sufficient age-specific data on movement rates of menhaden are available. Regional modeling would help to better characterize the movements of both the population and fishery, allowing for better management practices on a regional basis.

ATLANTIC MENHADEN *continued from page 8*

trillion eggs. This means that the spawning stock in 2013 appears to be more than adequate to produce the target number of eggs, and thus the population is not overfished.

Atlantic Coastal Management

Atlantic menhaden are currently managed under Amendment 2, approved in 2012. Amendment 2 established a 170,800 mt total allowable catch (TAC) that began in 2013. The established TAC represents a 20% reduction from the average landings of 2009-2011 and an approximate 25% reduction from 2011 landings, which accounts for the recent decline seen in commercial landings. The TAC was established by Amendment 2 in response to the 2010 benchmark stock assessment, which reported that menhaden were not overfished but were experiencing overfishing.

The Amendment allocates the TAC on a state-by-state basis based on landings history of the fishery from 2009-2011. States are required to close their fisheries when the state-specific portion of the TAC has been reached; any overages must be paid back the following year. Under the Amendment, 1% of the overall TAC is set aside for episodic events. If the episodic event set aside quota is unused as of October 31, it is redistributed to all the states on November 1 based on the Amendment 2 allocation percentages.

Amendment 2 also adopted new biological reference points for biomass which are based on maximum spawning potential, with the goal of increasing abundance, spawning stock biomass, and menhaden availability as a forage species.

Next Steps

Following the acceptance of the 2015 benchmark stock assessment for management use, the Board tasked the Technical Committee with conducting a thorough review of the peer review findings. The Board also tasked the Technical Committee to run projections that explore how various TAC levels will impact stock status. The Board will review the projection analyses at the Commission's Spring Meeting and further deliberate on management objectives and a TAC that will address the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries as well as the ecological services menhaden provides.

The Board also continues to place a high priority on developing ecosystem-based reference points (ERP) for management use. The ERPs are designed to account for the forage needs of menhaden's predator species such as striped bass, weakfish, and bluefish. The Board is working to develop specific objectives to provide direction to the working group at the Commission's spring meeting in May.

Under Amendment 2, the allocation of the TAC among states is to be reviewed three years after implementation. Allocation will be reevaluated based on updated landings history in 2016.

For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org.



SPRING MEETING AGENDA *continued from page 6*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

- 2:30 – 3:30 PM **Shad and River Herring Management Board (continued)**
- Update on Shad and River Herring Related Activities of the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils (If Necessary)
- 3:45 – 5:15 PM **ACCSP Coordinating Council**
- ACCSP Status Report (Program and Committee Updates)
 - Independent Program Review Progress
 - Review and Consider Approval of 2015 Request for Proposals and Funding Decision Document **ACTION**

THURSDAY, MAY 7

- 8:30 – 10:30 AM **Tautog Management Board**
- Review Technical Committee Report on Reference Point and Regional Stock Definitions
 - Consider Initiation of an Addendum to Respond to the 2015 Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review
- 10:45 – 11 AM **ISFMP Policy Board (If Necessary)**
- 11 – 11:15 AM **Business Session (If Necessary)**



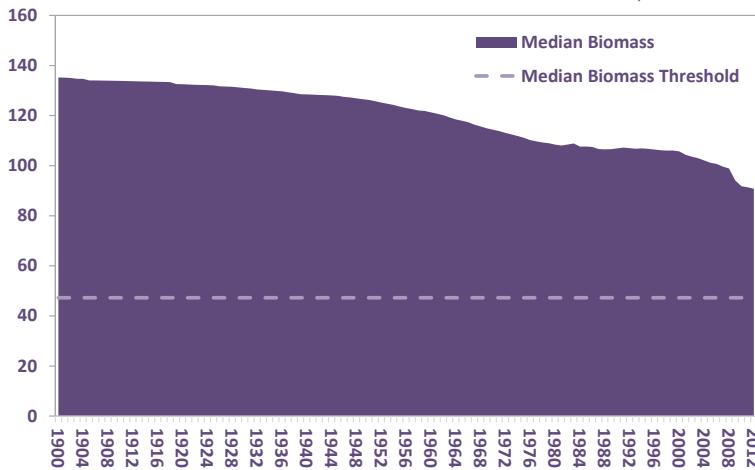
Black Drum & Tautog Benchmark Assessments Released

Black Drum Benchmark Assessment Finds Resource Not Overfished Nor Experiencing Overfishing

The South Atlantic State/Federal Management Board approved the 2015 Black Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use. Based on the assessment results, black drum is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. Median biomass was estimated to have declined slowly and steadily from 135.2 million pounds in 1900 to 90.78 million pounds in 2012, though the median biomass estimate in 2012 is still well above the median biomass that produces maximum sustainable yield (B_{MSY} ; 47.26 million pounds). The median maximum sustainable yield (MSY) estimate is 2.12 million pounds and provides an annual catch target that can be used to sustainably manage the fishery. The median overfishing limit (OFL), which provides a catch threshold, indicating when overfishing is occurring, is estimated to be 4.12 million pounds.

Black Drum Biomass

Source: ASMFC Black Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment, 2015



Black drum are a data-poor species. Their rarity and migratory patterns lead to highly variable levels of encounter in state surveys and fisheries. Further, limited size composition data has been collected, making the use of age-structured models unreliable. For these reasons, data-poor, catch-based modeling methods were used for the assessment. These models estimate reference points based on historical catch data and life history information.

The Black Drum Stock Assessment Subcommittee noted the black drum stock assessment would be improved by applying a more complex, data-rich assessment method such as a statistical catch-at-age model. Data limitations that need to be addressed to successfully make this transition are biological sampling (length and

age) of recreational and commercial fisheries and a fishery-independent survey tracking abundance and the age structure of the mature stock. Additionally, information about fish discarded in commercial fisheries and movement of fish would improve the assessment. A more detailed description of the stock assessment results is available at http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d3a0462015BlackDrumAssessmentOverview_Feb2015.pdf.

Under the Black Drum Fishery Management Plan (FMP), which was approved in 2013, states were required to implement a maximum possession limit and minimum size limit (of at least 12 inches) by January 1, 2014, with an additional increase of the minimum size limit to at least 14 inches required by January 1, 2016. The FMP also includes a management framework to adaptively respond to future concerns or changes in the fishery or population. Given the assessment findings, the Board choose to not make any additional changes to the management program at this time. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, krootes-murdy@asmfc.org.

Tautog Benchmark Assessment Explores Regional Stock Units

The Tautog Management Board approved the 2015 Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use. Unlike previous assessments, which assessed the stock on a coastwide basis, the 2015 assessment evaluated stock status regionally to reflect differences in life history characteristics and harvest patterns. The assessment is the most comprehensive evaluation of stocks to date and provides multiple alternatives for how tautog can be managed regionally.

Based on analysis of all available data, including life history information, the assessment presents a preferred stock structure as three regional stocks: a Southern New England region (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut), a New York-New Jersey region, and a DelMarVa region (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina). Due to overlapping harvest patterns along tautog's range and considerations for consistent management, the assessment also provided an alternative three-region definition where Connecticut is part of the NY-NJ region, and a two-region definition with a Northern stock (Massachusetts through New York) and a Southern stock (New Jersey through North Carolina). The assessment includes stock status and reference points for these alternative stock units as a comprehensive set of options for management use.

Tautog Stock Status and Proposed Biological Reference Points by Stock Regions

Stock Region	Stock Status	SSB Target	SSB Threshold	F Target	F Threshold
Southern New England	Overfished	3,883	2,912	0.15	0.20
	Experiencing Overfishing				
New York – New Jersey	Overfished	3,570	2,640	0.17	0.26
	Not Experiencing Overfishing				
DelMarVa	Overfished	2,090	1,580	0.16	0.24
	Not Experiencing Overfishing				



Under the regional stock structure, the Southern New England stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) for this region is estimated to be 20% below the proposed SSB threshold of 2,300 metric tons (mt) and 40% below the proposed SSB target of 3,000 mt. The three-year average of fishing mortality (0.45) is above both the proposed fishing mortality target (0.26) and the threshold (0.44).

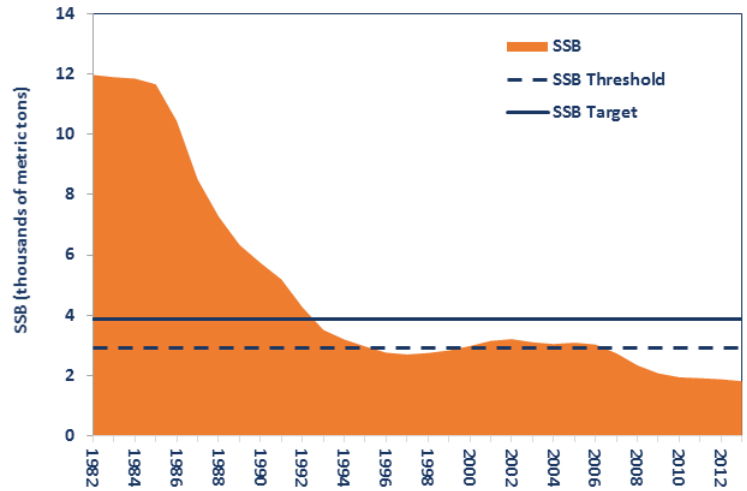
The New York-New Jersey stock is overfished but not experiencing overfishing. SSB is estimated to be 21% below the proposed SSB threshold of 2,600 mt and 42% below the proposed SSB target of 3,500 mt. Current fishing mortality (0.25) was found to be between the proposed target (0.17) and threshold (0.26), meaning overfishing is not occurring.

Conditions of the DelMarVa stock mirror those of the New York-New Jersey stock, with the stock being considered overfished but not experiencing overfishing. SSB is estimated to be 8% below the proposed SSB threshold of 1,600 mt and 30% below the proposed SSB target of 2,000 mt. Current fishing mortality (0.17) is between the proposed fishing mortality target (0.16) and threshold values (0.24).

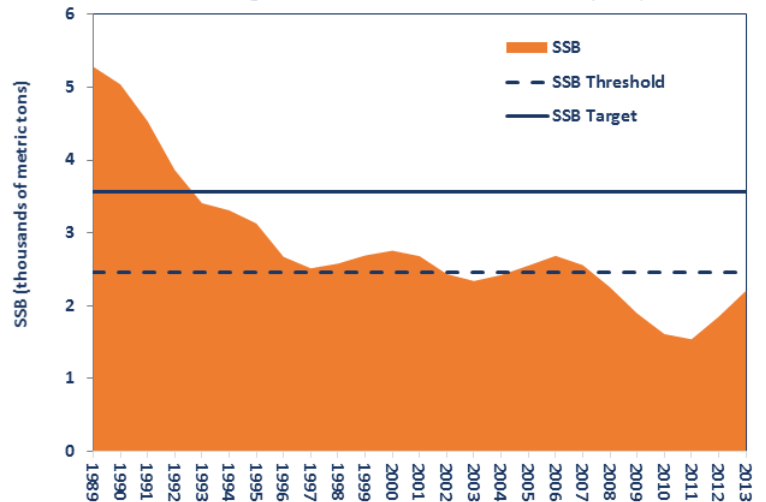
After reviewing the results of the stock assessment and peer review report, the Tautog Management Board accepted the 2015 benchmark stock assessment for management use. However, it expressed concern with the preferred stock structure that would split Long Island Sound harvest between two regions. In the absence of conclusive biological evidence to define the regional boundaries, the Board will consider the management and assessment implications of regionalization and choose its preferred regions for future management. In addition, the Board tasked the Tautog Technical Committee to develop reference points that provide consistent metrics to determine stock status across regions, the results of which will be presented to the Board at the Commission's Spring Meeting in May.

A more detailed description of the stock assessment results is available at http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file//55131e862015TautogAssessmentOverview_Feb2015.pdf. The final assessment and peer review reports are available at http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file//54eccd8cTautogStockAssessment_PeerReviewReport_Feb2015.pdf. For more information on the stock assessment, please contact Katie Drew, Senior Stock Assessment Scientist, at kdrew@asmfc.org; and for more information on tautog management, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org.

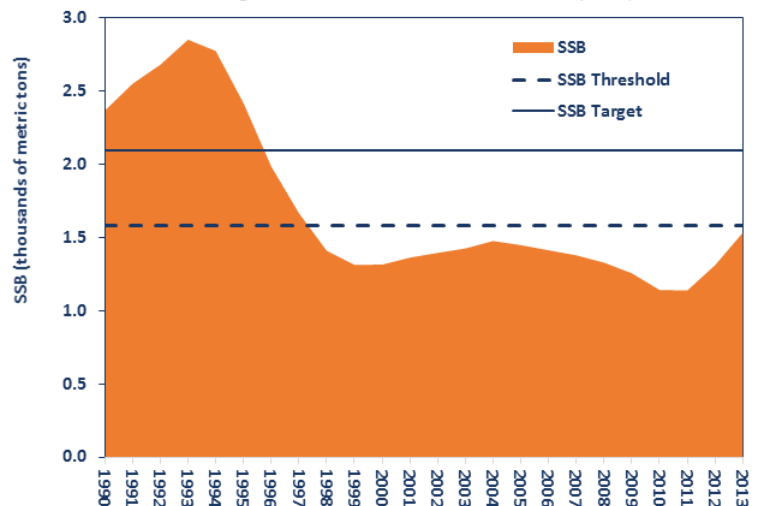
Southern New England Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB)
ASMFC Tautog Stock Assessment & Peer Review Reports, 2015



New York-New Jersey SSB
ASMFC Tautog Stock Assessment & Peer Review Reports, 2015



DelMarVa SSB
ASMFC Tautog Stock Assessment & Peer Review Reports, 2015



ASMFC Comings & Goings

COMMISSIONERS



Representative William J. Carson, Jr.

Representative William Carson has been appointed to serve as Delaware's Legislative Commissioner,

replacing Senator Robert Venables, Sr., who served in that capacity for 12 years. Senator Carson is a member of the Delaware House of Representatives for the 28th District, which includes portions of Smyrna, Leipsic, Little Creek and Dover. He is a lifelong resident of Smyrna and has represented the 28th District since 2007. He is Chair of the Transportation, Land Use & Infrastructure Committee and Vice-Chair of the Manufactured Housing Committee. He also is a member of the Agriculture, Corrections, Judiciary, Natural Resources, Public Safety & Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs Committees.

Representative Carson works for the Town of Middletown and is retired from the Department of Transportation. He is also a veteran of the Delaware Air National Guard and an Honorary Commander of the Dover Air Force Base. Welcome aboard, Senator Carson!



Senator Richard Colburn

Earlier this year, Senator Richard Colburn stepped down as Maryland's

Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. He had served as Maryland State Senator for the past 19 years and as ASMFC Legislative Commissioner for the past 13 years. While his commitments as State Legislator limited his personal involvement with the Commission, he was ably represented at Commission meetings by his ongoing proxy **Russell Dize**. Russell diligently represented the interests of Maryland stakeholders on numerous species management boards and was an active participant of the Commission's Legislators and Governors' Appointees (LGAs). We are grateful for Senator Colburn's support of the Commission and for Russell's longstanding and dedicated participation. We wish them both the very best.



Senator Clark Jenkins

From 2003-2014, Senator Clark Jenkins served as a member of the North Carolina General Assembly representing the third Senate District (Dare

County) and as the state's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC for the past two years. Over his two-year term, **Mike Johnson** faithfully served as his ongoing proxy representing the interests of North Carolina stakeholders on numerous species management boards. Mike also served as Representative Wainwright's ongoing proxy from 2005-2012. While we are sorry to see them both leave the Commission, we are grateful for their support and wish them both the very best.



Representative Walter Kumiega

For the past two years in his capacity as Maine House Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, Representative Walter Kumiega served as the state's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. Over that time, Representative Kumiega actively participated on the boards and sections that Maine has an interest in. He was also Vice Chair of the LGAs, providing guidance to the LGAs as they worked with their Administrative Commissioners to adopt the Commission's Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Policy. We are grateful his contributions and wish him the very best.



Senator Brian D. Langley

No stranger to the Commission having served as Maine's Legislative Commissioner from 2011-

2013, Senator Brian Langley rejoins the Commission as the state's new Legislative Commissioner. Since 2010, Senator Langley has represented the people of District 28, which includes Hancock and Knox Counties. He currently Chairs the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, and is a member of the Marine Resources Committee.

Senator Langley is a graduate of the University of Southern Maine and Syracuse University. He is an entrepreneur, chef, and educator, having spent the more than 27 years teaching culinary arts at Hancock County Technical Center. Senator Langley also owns the Union River Lobster Pot restaurant in Ellsworth. He is involved with Boy Scout Troop 86; a board member of the First Congregational Church of Ellsworth and treasurer of the American Culinary Federation's Down East chapter. Welcome back, Senator Langley!



Delegate Dana Stein

In February, Delegate Dana Stein was appointed as Maryland's new Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. A Baltimore native, Delegate

Stein has been a respected leader in his community and Democratic activities for many years. He has chaired the Baltimore County Democratic Central Committee. And, in 2002, he was appointed to the House of Delegates to fill a vacancy in District 11. He has served as President of the Liberty Road Community Council and GrassRoots Recycling, Chair of the Social Action Committee of Temple Oheb Shalom, and Vice President of Sudbrook Park, Inc.

While practicing law at Squire, Sanders & Dempsey in Washington, D.C., Delegate Stein founded Civic Works, a nationally recognized "Urban Peace Corps" that transforms the lives of young adults through community service. Participants work to rehab homes, build parks and gardens, tutor and mentor students, and teach disaster preparedness. Delegate Stein serves as President and Executive Director of Civic Works.

Delegate Stein has a B.A. in government from Harvard College, a law degree from Columbia Law School, and a Masters in Public Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University. Welcome aboard, Delegate Stein!



Senator Robert L. Venables, Sr.

With this recent departure from office after serving 26 years on the Delaware State Senate, Senator Robert Venables stepped

continued, see COMINGS & GOINGS on page 13

ACCSP Honors Robert Mahood

On March 6, Mr. Robert Mahood, Executive Director of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), was presented with a gift recognizing his almost twenty years serving on the Coordinating Council of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP). The gift was presented at the SAFMC meeting on St. Simons Island, Georgia.

Since 1995, the achievements of the ACCSP have been made possible in large part due to the hard work and dedication of the many individuals who participate in it. As a founding member of the ACCSP Coordinating Council, Mr. Mahood has been a steady leader right from the very beginning. His contributions to the ACCSP have had a lasting impact on the Program's ability to move forward with its mission.

Cheri Patterson, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department's Supervisor of Marine Program and Chair of the ACCSP Coordinating Council, had this to say about working with Mr. Mahood, "It is an honor to work with professionals of your caliber and vision. It is this level of commitment that allows us to produce the products that the entire Atlantic coast has needed for many years. Thank you for your hard work, selflessness, dedication, and leadership. We hope you always look upon this gift as a symbol of our appreciation, and that it will serve as a continual reminder of your achievements. Thank you for your contributions to the ACCSP. You are, and always will be, a valuable member of the Program."

The successes of the Program are the direct result of participants like Mr. Mahood. His dedication serves as a vital link in the chain that drives this effort. Thanks to Mr. Mahood, ACCSP is much



From left: ACCSP Coordinating Council Vice-chair Robert H. Boyles, Jr., honoree Robert Mahood, and ACCSP Coordinating Council former Chair Spud Woodward.

closer to succeeding in our mission to "Produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries that are collected, processed, and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all program partners."

On behalf of all those involved in the Program the gift to Mr. Mahood was presented by Robert H. Boyles, Jr., Deputy Director for Marine Resources with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Vice-chair of the ACCSP Coordinating Council.



ACCSP is a cooperative state-federal program focused on the design, implementation, and conduct of marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and the integration of 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 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For further information please visit www.accsp.org.

COMINGS & GOINGS, continued from page 12



down as the state's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. Senator Venables served on the Commission for 12 years with **Bernie Pankowski** serving as his ongoing proxy for his full tenure. Over that time, Bernie diligently represented the interests of Delaware stakeholders on all species management boards for which Delaware has a seat on and was an important contributor to the development of two Commission Strategic Plans. As an active participant of the Commission's LGAs, Bernie played a key role in developing the Commission's legislative and congressional agendas, as well as facilitating strong working relationships between the Commission and key Delaware federal legislators on a number of important issues, such as long-term funding for the Horseshoe Crab Trawl Survey. Personally, Bernie was an avid supporter of the Laura Leach Fishing Tournament, donating hundreds of dollars over the years to support state youth angler and education programs. While we are sorry to see Senator Venables and Bernie leave the

Commission, we are confident their longstanding commitment to marine fisheries conservation will benefit many future generations.



Max Appelman

In early April, Max Appelman will join the Commission staff as its new Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, for sturgeon and Atlantic striped bass. Max has a Master's Degree from Nova Southeastern University where his Master's work was on catch-per-unit-effort metrics for the North Atlantic pelagic longline fishery. Max was a pelagic fisheries observer in the Gulf of Mexico for two years. We are excited to have someone with Max's experience in and passion for marine fisheries joining the staff. Welcome aboard, Max!

Marin Hawk

In February, motivated by her passion for promoting sustainable seafood, Marin Hawk accepted a position with the Marine Stewardship Council as Fisheries Manager for U.S. Atlantic and Gulf

continued, see COMINGS & GOINGS on page 15

Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization

2014 was an active year for the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act on Capitol Hill. Both chambers of Congress produced reauthorization legislation for the primary federal law governing marine fisheries management in the U.S. exclusive economic zone. However, neither of the two bills advanced to the President's desk before the clock ran out on the 113th Congress at the end of December.

On March 4, Representative Don Young (R-AK) introduced H.R. 1335, "To amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to provide flexibility for fishery managers and stability for fishermen, and for other purposes." The text of the legislation mirrors that of the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization bill approved by the House Natural Resources Committee in 2014. The Committee hopes to hold a markup of H.R. 1335 this spring or summer.



NOAA Fisheries Research and Management, the President requested an increase in funding for Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions of 2.24% (\$33.470 million), and an increase for Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act Grants of 2% (\$5 thousand). NOAA's 2016 blue book contains a detailed

summary of the budget request and can be viewed online at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~nbo/fy16_bluebook/FY2016BudgetSummary-web.pdf.

U.S. Congress Committee Changes

There are a number of new members in the House and Senate along the Atlantic coast. The committees with jurisdiction over Commission policy and funding have also undergone some significant changes. The most apparent are in the Senate where the majority

has flipped from Democrats to Republicans. In the House, the new Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT) has changed the subcommittee overseeing fisheries. All marine fisheries issues will now be heard in the Water, Power, and Oceans Subcommittee.

For more information, please contact Deke Tompkins, Legislative Executive Assistant, at dtompkins@asmfc.org.

The Administration's 2016 Budget Request

President Obama's 2016 Budget Request to Congress contains a total of \$889.036 million for NOAA Fisheries' Operations, Research, and Facilities. The request represents an increase of 8.14% over the amount Congress appropriated in 2015. Within

President Obama's 2016 Budget Request: Fisheries Research and Management (in \$ thousands)

	2015 Enacted	2016 Obama Request	\$ change from 2015	% change from 2015
National Catch Share Program	\$25,000	\$27,505	\$2,505	10.02%
Expand Annual Stock Assessments - Improve Data Collection	\$70,000	\$73,749	\$3,749	5.36%
Economics and Social Sciences Research	\$7,300	\$7,446	\$146	2.00%
Salmon Management Activities	\$30,200	\$27,462	-\$2,738	-9.07%
Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions	\$32,738	\$33,470	\$732	2.24%
Fisheries Statistics	\$22,000	\$22,432	\$432	1.96%
Fish Information Networks	\$22,000	\$22,080	\$80	0.36%
Survey and Monitoring Projects	\$24,000	\$24,503	\$503	2.10%
Fisheries Oceanography	\$2,100	\$2,133	\$33	1.57%
American Fisheries Act	\$3,700	\$3,812	\$112	3.03%
Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants	\$2,500	\$2,505	\$5	0.20%
National Standard 8	\$1,000	\$1,024	\$24	2.40%
Reducing Bycatch	\$3,500	\$3,519	\$19	0.54%
Product Quality and Safety	\$6,700	\$6,870	\$170	2.54%
Total, Fisheries Research and Management	\$252,738	\$258,510	\$5,772	2.28%



Mike Waine Named Employee of the Quarter

In the four years since Mike Waine joined the staff he has significantly contributed to the Commission's fisheries management program, advancing the Commission's Vision of Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries. In recognition of his accomplishments, Mike was named Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2015.

A vast majority of Mike's workload over the past two years has focused on the successful completion of benchmark stock assessments for Atlantic striped bass and Atlantic menhaden, both of which were approved by an independent panel of fisheries scientists and accepted for management use by the respective species management boards. In response to the findings of the Atlantic striped bass assessment, Mike worked closely with the management board, technical committee and advisory panel on the development of Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. This process included multiple revisions to the draft addendum, 19 public hearings, and the review and compilation of thousands of submitted comment. Throughout it all, Mike brought his



Employee of the Quarter Mike Waine with ASMFC Executive Director Bob Beal

dedication, critical thinking, and commitment to developing a detailed and thorough management document for the board to base its decisions on.

Mike has also worked closely with our Science staff and members of the Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Subcommittee to finalize and successfully vet, through a peer review process, the Atlantic menhaden benchmark stock assessment. The new assessment reflects a significant investment of time and effort by Mike and the Stock Assessment Subcommittee to seek

and incorporate new datasets and methodologies, ultimately redefining our understanding of Atlantic menhaden's stock status. At the same time, Mike has played a lead role in working with Science staff and the Biological Ecological Reference Points Workgroup to begin to develop alternative ecologically-based reference points to manage Atlantic menhaden. Responding to the findings of the assessment and peer review will require additional work by the technical committee and further deliberation by the management board on what harvest levels will best meet the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries while also addressing menhaden's ecological services. Based on his

continued, see MIKE WAINE on page 16

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STAFF



of Mexico fisheries and will be the primary outreach representative for fisheries in these areas. For two and a half years, Marin was the Commission's Fishery Management Plan Coordinator for coastal sharks, horseshoe crab, northern shrimp, shad & river herring, and spiny dogfish. While at the Commission,

Marin also helped to promote the Commission's science and management activities through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Marin's enthusiasm, can do attitude, and commitment to teamwork will be missed but will serve her well in her new job. We wish Marin the very best in all her future endeavors.

Megan Ware



On April 27, Megan Ware will be joining the Commission as a Fishery Management Plan Coordinator for American lobster, Jonah crab, weakfish and the South Atlantic species (Atlantic croaker, black drum, red drum, Spanish mackerel, spot, and spotted seatrout). Megan has a Master's in Environmental Management from Duke University, where she researched fish consumption advisories. She has been a Marine

Policy Fellow for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, where she modeled the economics of beach nourishment decision and she has worked in a lobster hatchery in Maine. Welcome aboard, Megan!

This table provides new species assignments for ASMFC FMP Coordinators, with primary and secondary contacts identified. To ease transition, the secondary contacts will initially shadow the primary contacts with the intent of assuming primary coordination responsibilities over a 3-6 month period.

Species	Primary Coordinator	Secondary Coordinator
American Eel	Mike Waine	
American Lobster & Jonah Crab	Toni Kerns	Megan Ware
Atlantic Herring	Melissa Yuen	
Atlantic Menhaden	Mike Waine	
Atlantic Striped Bass	Mike Waine	Max Appelman
Bluefish	Kirby Rootes-Murdy	
Coastal Sharks	Melissa Yuen	
Horseshoe Crab	Kirby Rootes-Murdy	
Northern Shrimp	Max Appelman	
Shad & River Herring	Kirby Rootes-Murdy	
South Atlantic Species	Kirby Rootes-Murdy	Megan Ware
Spiny Dogfish	Melissa Yuen	
Sturgeon	Max Appelman	
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	Kirby Rootes-Murdy	
Tautog	Melissa Yuen	
Weakfish	Melissa Yuen	Megan Ware
Winter Flounder	Melissa Yuen	

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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2014 Annual Report Now Available

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has released its 2014 Annual Report, which provides an overview of significant management actions and associated science activities the Commission and its member states

took in 2014 to maintain and restore the abundance of Commission-managed species.

The Report reflects ASMFC Commissioners' commitment to accountability and transparency in all they do to manage and rebuild stocks under their care. The report is available on the Commission website at www.asmfc.org under Quick Links or directly at http://www.asmfc.org/files/pub/2014AnnualReport_web.pdf.

MIKE WAINÉ continued from page 15

past accomplishments Mike is on point to assist the management board as it deliberates the future of menhaden management.

Mike's commitment to effective teamwork, excellence in performing his tasks, and his passion for fish and sustainable fisheries make Mike a valued coworker and contributor to the Commission's fisheries management program. As a result, Mike was not only named Employee of the Quarter but also promoted to Senior FMP Coordinator, where he will play an important role in mentoring new FMP Coordinators. Given his successful track record, no one is better suited. Mike has a Master's in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences from North Carolina State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. As an Employee of the Quarter, he received a cash award, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in his personnel record. In addition, his name is on the Employee of the Quarter plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Mike!