



ASMFC

FISHERIES focus

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Spring Meeting

May 2-5, 2016

The Westin Alexandria
400 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, VA
703.253.8600

Preliminary Agenda

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 2

9 AM - 3:30 PM

American Lobster Management Board

- Discuss Future Management of Southern New England American Lobster Stock
- Address Tabled Motion to Initiate an Addendum to Address the Declining Stock Conditions
- Reports from the Technical Committee and Plan Development Team
- Discuss Future Management for Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank American Lobster Stock
- Consider Final Action on Draft Addendum I to the Jonah Crab FMP
- Discuss Possible Action to Create a Coastwide Standard for Claw Landings in the Jonah Crab Fishery
- Update on Effort Control Measures for Jonah Crab Only Trap Fishermen in Rhode Island
- Update on the New England Fishery Management Council Deep Sea Coral Habitat Amendment and ASMFC Survey to Area 3 Fishermen
- American Lobster Law Enforcement Subcommittee Update on Offshore Enforcement and Trap Reduction Enforcement

2:30 - 3:30 PM

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Executive Committee

- Program Update
- Update on the MRIP APAIS Transition
- Review and Approve Standard Operating Procedures Written in Response to the Independent Program Review
- Develop a Program Governance Recommendation
- Review Request for Proposals for the Upcoming Funding Cycle

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

Douglas E. Grout (NH)
Chair

James J. Gilmore, Jr. (NY)
Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal
Executive Director

Patrick A. Campfield
Science Director

Toni Kerns
ISFMP Director

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March 29 (10 AM - 12:30 PM)

Horseshoe Crab Adaptive Resource Management Subcommittee Conference Call; go to <http://www.asmfc.org/calendar/> for more details.

March 30 (1 - 3 PM)

Horseshoe Crab Alternative Bait Analysis Work Group Conference Call; go to <http://www.asmfc.org/calendar/> for more details.

April 5 (1 - 3:30 PM)

Shad and River Herring Technical Committee and River Herring Stock Assessment Subcommittee Conference Call; go to <http://www.asmfc.org/calendar/> for more details.

April 5 (3 - 4 PM)

Jonah Crab Advisory Panel Conference Call; go to <http://www.asmfc.org/calendar/> for more details.

April 6 (1 - 4 PM)

Horseshoe Crab Advisory Panel Conference Call; go to <http://www.asmfc.org/calendar/> for more details.

April 11 & 12

ASMFC Management & Science Committee and Assessment Science Committee, Hotel Monaco Alexandria, 480 King Street Alexandria, VA.

April 12 - 14

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Montauk Yacht Club, Montauk, NY.

April 19 - 21

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

May 2 - 5

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

May 9 & 10

ACFHP Science and Data Working Group, The Grand Hotel, 1045 Beach Avenue, Cape May, NJ.

May 10 & 11

ACFHP Steering Committee, The Grand Hotel, 1045 Beach Avenue Cape May, NJ.

May 12 & 13

ASMFC Habitat Committee, The Grand Hotel, 1045 Beach Avenue Cape May, NJ.

June 13 - 17

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront, 1550 N. Atlantic Avenue, Cocoa Beach, FL.

June 14 - 16

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Courtyard Marriott, Newark, DE.

June 20 - 24

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

June 21 - 23

New England Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland, ME.

August 2 - 4

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

August 8 - 11

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Hilton, Virginia Beach, VA.

August 20 - 24

American Fisheries Society 145th Annual Meeting, Kansas City, KS.



A New Initiative: ASMFC Kicks-off Socioeconomic Study on Atlantic Menhaden Commercial Fisheries

If you have attended or webcasted any Commission meetings since December 2012, you know Atlantic menhaden has garnered its share of interest from commercial, recreational, and conservation sectors alike. From the first coastwide quotas in 2013 to the encouraging findings of the benchmark stock assessment in 2015, the small but ecologically important fish has pushed Commissioners to think outside traditional management regimes.

The most recent example is a first-of-its-kind socioeconomic study that will describe the economic importance of the coastwide commercial fisheries for Atlantic menhaden (both bait and reduction). In 2014, approximately 170,000 metric tons of menhaden were landed on the Atlantic coast with an estimated value of over \$33 million. However, the true impact to fishing communities and other species that depend upon menhaden as a food source remains the missing chapter of Atlantic menhaden's story. The primary objective of this study is to provide socioeconomic information to assist the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board as it considers alternative menhaden allocations in Draft Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

The study's research deliverables were identified by the Commission's Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS) using the general framework from a previous menhaden socioeconomic study on the reduction fishery conducted in the Chesapeake Bay region in 2011. CESS also worked closely with the Atlantic Menhaden Board Allocation Workgroup to address research needs. The project will gather information from stakeholders and state agencies on the fisheries (e.g., landings, value, participation, capacity utilization, fixed costs) and market (e.g., retailers/wholesalers, clients/purchasers, number/types of employees) to more thoroughly evaluate the socioeconomic value of Atlantic menhaden. The research team is headed by Dr. John Whitehead of Appalachian State University and Dr. Jane Harrison from North Carolina Sea Grant, both of whom have conducted extensive socioeconomic research in fisheries.

The commercial menhaden fishery is comprised of two sectors – reduction and bait. In the reduction fishery, menhaden are 'reduced' to produce fish oil and fish meal which are used in wide array of human and animal nutritional

products. The bait fishery supplies menhaden to important commercial trap fisheries such as American lobster, while the small oily fish is also a favorite bait among recreational finfish anglers.

One of the primary challenges for this study will be characterizing the bait fishery. Information on landings and the economic importance of the bait fishery has not been as robust as that from the reduction fishery. However, existing data indicate the bait fishery accounts for a growing share of coastwide landings.



We live in exciting times for fisheries management and this study is just one example. The Commission is also exploring how menhaden management decisions may affect other species higher up in the food web. Socioeconomic and ecological studies are very valuable, but also very expensive. The Commission is grateful to NOAA Fisheries for identifying funding within its agency to enable the Commission to take a deeper look into the socioeconomic importance of Atlantic menhaden. In the future, the Commission hopes to secure additional resources to complete studies on the economic and ecological importance of other fisheries.

To view the proposal, please visit: http://www.asmfc.org/files/Science/MenhadenSocioeconomicAnalysisProposal_Addendum_March2016.pdf

Species Profile: Northern Shrimp

Resource Struggles to Rebuild in the Face of Unfavorable Environmental Conditions

Introduction

Historically, northern shrimp, *Pandalus borealis*, have supported a small but important fishery in the Gulf of Maine (GOM), with average annual landings valued at six million dollars per year since 1980. In recent years, the fishery has been closed early when landings approached the total allowable catch (TAC). Currently, the northern shrimp stock is considered collapsed, and has led managers to close the fishery for the third straight season.

As one of the last open access fisheries in the region, the northern shrimp fishery has provided opportunities for fishermen to target an alternative species when other fishing is unavailable or not economically viable. Participation generally increases as the season length or price increases. Additionally, the number of participants in the fishery has increased because of limited entry programs in other Northeast fisheries. Unfortunately, shrimp biomass has remained at all-time lows in recent years, thus raising concern over the influx of effort into the fishery. This concern led to the suggestion that access to the shrimp fishery should be restricted. Limited entry has been used in a number of fisheries to control effort, as well as stabilize landings so that harvesters and processors are better able to make informed business decisions from year to year. To address these concerns, Amendment 3 was initiated in 2014 to consider management options for limiting effort in the fishery.

Life History

Northern shrimp are found in boreal waters of the North Atlantic, North Pacific and Arctic Oceans. On the U.S. Atlantic coast, the Gulf of Maine (GOM) is considered the southernmost extent of their range, and concentrations generally occur in the western part of the Gulf where temperatures are the coldest.

Northern shrimp are hermaphroditic, maturing first as males at roughly 2 ½ years of age and then transforming to females at about 3 ½ years. In the GOM, northern shrimp populations are part of a single stock. Spawning takes place in offshore waters during the late summer. Females extrude their eggs onto the abdomen and move into inshore waters in late fall and winter, where the eggs hatch. Larvae metamorphose to a juvenile state and remain in inshore waters for over a year before migrating to deeper waters where they mature as males and later transition to females. Females that survive their first egg hatch will repeat the process, living up to five years old and attaining a size of up to four inches in length. Northern shrimp are also an important link in the marine food web preying on both plankton and benthic invertebrates. In turn, northern shrimp are consumed by many commercially important fish species including cod, redfish, red and white hake, and pollock.

Northern shrimp abundance in the GOM appears to be closely correlated with ocean temperatures. Colder temperatures and higher spawning biomass tends to produce more recruits. Differences in size at age from year to year (and size at sex transition to some extent) have also been attributed to temperature effects, with more rapid growth rates at higher temperatures. Additionally, ocean temperatures appear to affect timing of the egg hatch, with the start of egg hatch occurring earlier in warmer years. This is of particular interest to managers because a better understanding of this relationship could allow them to set the start of the fishing season after majority of eggs have hatched, thus aiding rebuilding of the resource.

Commercial Fishery

For nearly four decades, the GOM northern shrimp have provided a small but valuable fishery to the New England states. In 2011, a year in which the TAC was exceeded, average price per pound was \$0.75, with total landings valued at an estimated \$10.6 million. The fishery has been characterized by drastic fluctuations in landings throughout its history and is seasonal in nature, peaking in late winter when egg-bearing females migrate inshore and ending in the spring under regulatory closure.

Species Snapshot



Northern Shrimp
Pandalus borealis

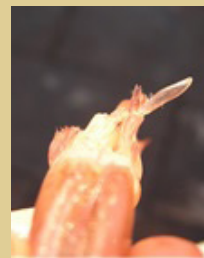
Stock Status: Collapsed and overfishing not occurring

Shrimp Facts:

- Northern shrimp first mature as males and metamorphose into females in their 3rd year.
- Most shrimp do not live more than 5 years.
- A spine located on the 3rd tail segment distinguishes northern shrimp from other pandalid species.
- The sex of a shrimp is easily determined by examining the first pleopod. A male has a characteristic spit with a serrated or two point top edge while a female has a single candle flame point.

Male: 2 points

Female: 1 point



The commercial fishery began in earnest in the late 1950s. By 1969, landings increased to a peak of 28.3 million pounds, of which 24.2 million pounds were landed by Maine vessels. New Hampshire vessels entered the fishery in 1966, but landings from New Hampshire were minor until the mid-80s. Landings by Massachusetts vessels were also insignificant in the 1960s, but the fishery developed rapidly in the early 1970s and by 1975 landings from Massachusetts vessels accounted for over 40% of the GOM total. Through the 1970s, total landings dropped precipitously to a low of 840,000 pounds in 1977. The fishery closed in 1978 due to stock collapse, and slowly reopened in 1979 at very low levels of harvest.

Landings fluctuated considerably throughout the next two decades, from a low of 734,000 pounds in 1980 to a high of 21 million pounds in 1996, then steadily declining again through 2002. In keeping with historic trends, the majority of the catch in those years had been taken by Maine vessels (76%), with Massachusetts vessels accounting for most of the remainder (17%). From 2003 to 2006 landings were steady, averaging 4.6 million pounds. In 2007 and 2008, landings jumped to 10.8 and 10.9 million pounds, respectively, despite declining stock abundance since 2006. The 2010 to 2012 fishing seasons were closed early due to industry exceeding the TAC, and in 2013 landings were a mere 761,689 pounds. A complete moratorium was implemented in 2014, and again in 2015. This past December, the moratorium was extended through 2016.

The northern shrimp fleet is comprised of lobster vessels in the 30-45 foot range that re-rig for shrimping, as well as other trawlers well into the 55-80 foot range. The shrimp trap fishery has grown in recent years, accounting for over 45% of Maine's active vessels from 2006 to 2010. However, the otter trawl remains the primary gear deployed, and is typically chain or roller rigged depending on the type of bottom fished. There has been a recent trend towards the use of heavier and larger roller, or "rockhopper" gear. In

addition to the introduction of electronic equipment (e.g., GPS, radars, and near real time data acquisition of sea surface temperatures and ocean bathymetry, among others), these innovations have substantially increased fishermen's ability to find and catch shrimp.

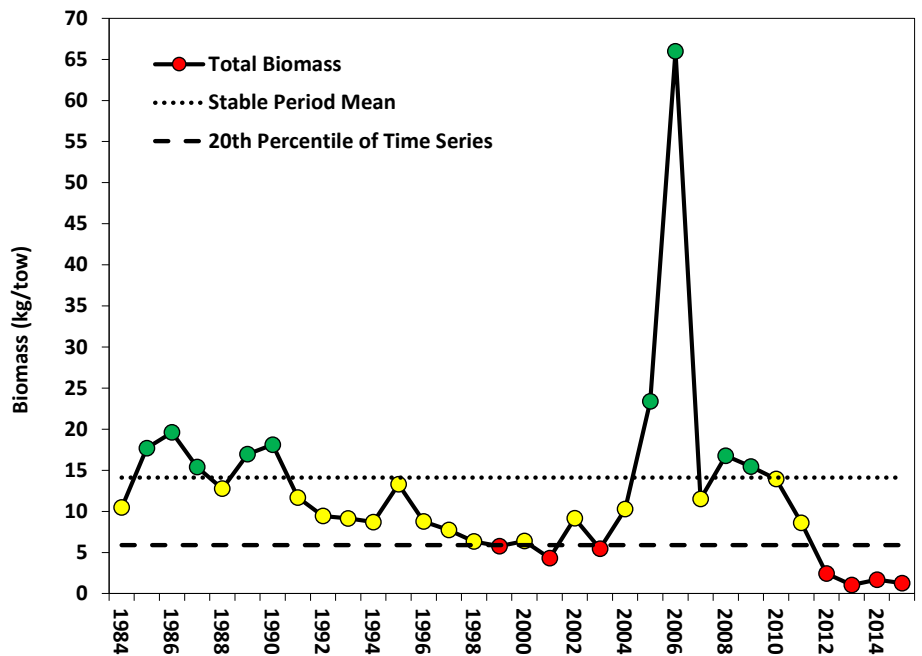
Status of the Stock

Historically, results of the catch-survey analysis (CSA) from the annual stock assessment for northern shrimp have guided management decisions for the fishery. In 2014, a benchmark assessment explored new analytic methods, including a new model and modifications to the existing CSA model. Due to extreme fluctuations in recent years, the models had difficulty fitting the data and thus were not approved for management use by the peer review panel. Therefore, all subsequent stock status reports do not present modeling results and instead use an index-based approach to evaluate stock status.

According to the 2015 stock status report, GOM northern shrimp populations continue to meet the criteria defining a collapsed stock. Abundance and biomass indices since 2012 are the lowest on record. The stock has also experienced failed recruitment for five consecutive years. As a result, the indices of fishable biomass from 2012 to 2015 are also the lowest on record. Recruitment of northern shrimp is related to both spawning biomass and ocean temperatures, with higher spawning biomass and colder temperatures producing stronger recruitment. Ocean temperatures in western GOM shrimp habitat have increased over the past decade and reached unprecedented highs in the past several years. While 2014 and 2015 temperatures were cooler, temperatures are predicted to continue rising as a result of climate change. This suggests an increasingly inhospitable environment for

continued, see NORTHERN SHRIMP on page 10

Total Biomass of Northern Shrimp from the Gulf of Maine Summer Shrimp Survey
Stock Status Report for Gulf of Maine Northern Shrimp, 2015



The graph represents the annual biomass index relative to the reference period (dotted line) and to the 20th percentile of the time series (dashed line). The reference period (1985-1994) is the time period during which the fishery experienced stable landings and value. Green dots are values that are equal to or above the stable period mean (SPM); red dots are values that are equal to or below the 20th percentile of the time series; yellow dots are values between the SPM and the 20th percentile.

Timeline of Management Actions: FMP ('86); Amendment 1 ('04); Amendment 2 ('11); Addendum I ('12)

Spring Meeting Preliminary Agenda (cont'd)

MONDAY, MAY 2

- 3:45 - 4:45 PM** **ACCSP Coordinating Council**
- Program Update
 - Update on the MRIP APAIS Transition
 - Consider Approval of Standard Operating Procedures
 - Review and Consider Approval of Governance Recommendations
 - Review and Consider Approval of Request for Proposals for the Upcoming Funding Cycle

TUESDAY, MAY 3

- 8 - 10 AM** **Executive Committee**
- Report of the Administrative Oversight Committee
 - Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget
 - Discussion of ACCSP Governance
 - Discussion of Plan Development Team Membership
 - Future Annual Meetings Update
- 10:15 - 11:15 AM** **Horseshoe Crab Management Board**
- Discuss Biomedical Data Confidentiality and Stock Assessment Planning
 - Review of Alternative Bait Costs
 - Update on Adaptive Resource Management Framework Review
- 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM** **Shad and River Herring Management Board**
- Report from Data Standardization Workshop
 - Update on Activities of the River Herring Technical Expert Work Group
 - Stock Assessment Planning and Timetable for American Shad and River Herring Benchmark Assessments
- Noon - 5 PM** **Law Enforcement Committee**
- Update on Maine Lobster Trap Tag Transferability Program
 - Discuss Lobster Offshore Enforcement Issues
 - Review Tautog Tagging Program Options & Subcommittee Efforts
 - Discuss Aerial Enforcement Issues and Subcommittee Efforts
 - Review 2016 Action Plan Tasks for LEC
 - Discuss Ongoing Enforcement Activities (Closed Session)
 - Federal Agency Report Highlights
 - State Agency Report Highlights
 - Review and Discuss Additional ISFMP Species Issues (as needed)
- 1:15 - 3:45 PM** **Climate Change Workshop**
- 4 - 5 PM** **American Eel Management Board**
- Discuss Potential Options for Revisiting Yellow Eel Commercial Quota
- 6 - 8 PM** **Annual Awards of Excellence Reception**

Public Comment Guidelines

In order to ensure a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has established 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 in the briefing materials.
2. Comments received by **5 PM on Tuesday, April 26, 2016** 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 April 26th 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.

- 8 - 10 AM** **Atlantic Menhaden Management Board**
- Consider Draft Addendum I for Public Comment
 - Provide Guidance to the Technical Committee Regarding Stock Projections
 - Consider 2015 FMP Review and State Compliance
- 8:30 AM - Noon** **Law Enforcement Committee (continued)**
- 10:15 - 11:45 AM** **Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board**
- Executive Committee Report
 - Management & Science Committee Report
 - Assessment Science Committee Report and Approval of the Stock Assessment Schedule
 - Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Report
 - Law Enforcement Committee Report
 - Consider Next Steps Relative to Climate Change and ASMFC Management
 - Report on Commissioner Survey Follow-up
 - Atlantic Sturgeon Benchmark Assessment Update
 - Overview of the Sturgeon Research and Recovery Workshop Scheduled for May 16-19, 2016 (Coordinated by NOAA Fisheries)
- 1 - 5 PM** **Commissioner Parliamentary Workshop**

- 8 - 10 AM** **Weakfish Management Board**
- Review and Consider Approval of the 2016 Weakfish Benchmark Stock Assessment for Management Use
 - Discuss Next Steps for Management in Response to Assessment Results
- 10:15 - 11 AM** **Coastal Sharks Management Board**
- Review and Consider Approval of Draft Addendum IV (Smoothhound Dogfish) for Public Comment
- 10:15 - 11:45 AM** **South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board**
- Review and Consider Approval of the 2016 Red Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment for Management Use
 - Discuss Next Steps for Red Drum Management in Response to the Assessment Results
 - Progress Update on Spot and Atlantic Croaker Benchmark Stock Assessments
 - Review North Carolina Report on Spanish Mackerel Pound Net Landings as Required by Addendum I to the Omnibus Amendment for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout
 - Elect Vice-Chair
- 2 - 2:30 PM** **Business Session**
- Review Noncompliance Findings (if necessary)



Larval Fish and Climate Change Research in National Estuarine Research Reserves

A team led by New Jersey's Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) conducted a project to engage researchers and fisheries managers in a collaborative effort to share data about the impact of climate variations on fisheries and coastal ecosystems along the Atlantic coast.

In partnership with Rutgers University and NERR sites in NY, NJ, SC, NC, and ME, the project created an online portal for scientists and fisheries managers to share long-term data sets on larval fish recruitment and related environmental variables. The goal was to increase access to data that allows fisheries managers to evaluate climate change impacts when making management decisions.

Changes in environmental conditions can impact the spawning, growth, migration, behavior, and ultimately, survival of coastal fish. Some conditions, such as storm activity and salinity, may also be associated with a changing climate. Fisheries managers at the state, regional, and national levels need access to accurate long-term data sets to assess the impacts of climate variation on the sustainability of fish stocks. However, managers may be unaware of, or lack access to, the data they need. Conversely, fisheries scientists and oceanographers collecting these data may not know how best to provide the information to the decision makers who need it. For example, long-term environmental data on water quality, water chemistry, and atmospheric data are available through the NERR System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP), but in the past there has not been a portal for fisheries managers to link SWMP to larval fish recruitment data.

This project addressed the data access gap by expanding an existing web-based data retrieval system provided by the Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) to include larval fish data sets that previously were inaccessible to fisheries managers from the state agencies, ASMFC, and NOAA Fisheries. The project team used a collaborative process to ensure the online portal provides access to long-term regional trends in larval fish data, coupled with environmental changes.

The project sought to enhance fisheries management decisions by integrating long-term data sets on larval fish recruitment and related environmental variables, such as those provided by the NERR SWMP. These efforts are intended to increase our understanding of how environmental variation and climate change impact estuarine habitat and the early-life history of important fish stocks.

While the NERR project focuses on important recreational and commercial species, the team also evaluated the effectiveness of the portal approach for integrating data to support future ecosystem-scale fisheries management decisions. The team used a collaborative framework to facilitate information exchange between stock assessment scientists, fisheries managers, and data providers who work with NERRs. This framework included focus groups, online needs assessment surveys, and small group discussion.

Through the collaborative process, project partners established a better understanding of the data needs and output preferences for fisheries management. The project team also collected input on how to continue monitoring fish larva at four field sites in ME, NJ, NC, and SC, where they are recording environmental variables available from SWMP data. The team integrated the data on the SEAMAP website, overseen by SC DNR, into an online information system that facilitates sharing of fishery-independent data and other information. A beta version of the enhanced website was developed

and tested by the team to evaluate the appeal and effectiveness of the online portal's design and usefulness of larval fish and environmental data content.

In collaboration with fisheries scientists at NJ DEP, NC DMF, SC DNR, NOAA Fisheries, and ASMFC, data from the long-term larval fish monitoring studies are being provided for potential use in stock assessments and ecosystem modeling applications. For more information on the project, please contact Patrick Campfield, Fisheries Science Director, at pcampfield@asmfc.org.



Image of a larval left-eyed flounder. Photo (c) NOAA Fisheries.



Image of a juvenile summer flounder. Photo (c) Jacques Cousteau NERR

GARFO Authorizes eTrips/Mobile for Use in Electronic Trip Reporting

NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) announced that the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program's (ACCSP) eTrips/Mobile (eTrips/M), a mobile electronic vessel trip reporting (eVTR) application, has now been authorized for the purpose of eVTR submission in the Greater Atlantic Region (Maine through North Carolina).

Trip reports provide catch and effort data to state and federal agencies for use in fisheries management and stock assessments. eVTR allows fishermen to fulfill these reporting requirements electronically, expediting the reporting process, improving reporting accuracy, and producing near real-time landings and catch data that can be accessed by multiple state and federal agencies immediately.

ACCSP's eTrips/M takes eVTR a step further, enabling harvesters to work on and complete trip reports on a portable device that is capable of operating independently of a full-time internet connection, meaning fishermen can complete and submit reports while still at sea. Rick Bellavance, Captain of Priority Too and President of the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association, describes the advantages of a mobile eVTR application, "Designed by fishermen and utilizing the latest technology, eTrips/M dramatically reduces our reporting burden while providing more accurate and timely industry data to the states, the ACCSP, and now GARFO. The eTrips/M application will increase data accuracy and make data available immediately to fisheries managers, improving their ability to respond to changes in the fishery in a more timely way."

eTrips/M is designed to work in both commercial and charter/headboat fisheries, and is free for anyone who wishes to use it in jurisdictions that have adopted electronic trip reporting through the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS). The app can be downloaded from the Apple, Android, and Microsoft app stores. eTrips/M training videos are available on the ACCSP website at www.accsp.org.

ACCSP Seeks Your Feedback on Ways to Improve SAFIS

The ACCSP is committed to delivering the best user experience for its SAFIS applications. In recent months, ACCSP has focused on enhancing user interface elements to make SAFIS easier to use on mobile devices. While these enhancements have been made to allow increased productivity, ACCSP still believes there is more room for improvement. Please help us enhance the application to improve the user experience by filling out the survey below for the SAFIS application you use; be sure to include any ideas for improvement or problems you have encountered have so ACCSP can provide its users with a better SAFIS experience.

eTRIPS: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SAFISeTRIPS>

eDR: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SAFISeDR>

e-1 Ticket: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SAFISe-1Ticket>

SAFIS Managers: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SAFISManagers>

If you are interested in testing the new interface after an initial prototype has been designed, please send an email to info@accsp.org or contact your partner agency.

ACCSP Happenings



Ali Schwaab

In March, the ACCSP welcomed Ali Schwaab as its new Outreach Coordinator. Ali will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of ACCSP's Outreach Strategic Plan, which

includes producing the Program's annual reports and *Fisheries Files* quarterly newsletter, providing outreach to support partner applications, managing website content, and implementing the ACCSP social media strategy. Ali earned her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park and her Master's degree in Coastal and Marine Resource Management at the University of Portsmouth in the United Kingdom. Ali is excited to begin her new role as ACCSP Outreach Coordinator, through which she hopes to communicate the value of ACCSP to stakeholders and strengthen relationships with ACCSP partners. Welcome to the Program, Ali!



Elizabeth Wyatt

In January, with the recent completion of her Master's in Marine Science from the University of New England and her proven track record as Program Assistant, Elizabeth Wyatt was

promoted to ACCSP Program Coordinator. As Coordinator, Elizabeth provides staff support to ACCSP committees, including the Operations Committee and Coordinating Council, as well as help coordinate ACCSP's funding cycles from request for proposals, to proposal evaluation and ranking, to final proposal awards. Elizabeth is enthusiastic about her expanded role at the ACCSP and is committed to helping advance ACCSP's effort to be the principal source for fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast. Congratulations, Elizabeth!



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.

NORTHERN SHRIMP continued from page 5

northern shrimp and the need for strong conservation efforts to help restore the stock.

Fortunately, the recruitment index increased slightly in the 2014 survey (2013 year class). Since landings are typically dominated by four and five year old shrimp, the 2013 year class could provide favorable conditions for a fishing season in the near future. Furthermore, the 2013 year class is comprised of uncharacteristically small females that are expected to spawn for the next three seasons, making them the primary contributors for rebuilding the stock in the long-term. Accordingly, a primary goal of the 2016 moratorium is to protect the 2013 year class and the future sustainability of the resource.

Atlantic Coastal Management

The GOM northern shrimp fishery has been managed by the Commission's Northern Shrimp Section (Section) since 1973, making it the longest running interstate management program on the U.S. Atlantic coast. The Section is comprised of the States of Maine, New Hampshire, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The first Fishery Management Plan (FMP) was implemented in 1986. The FMP established strict guidelines for a defined fishing season to be set annually by the Section and allowed for the use of gear limitations. Amendment 1, implemented in 2004, established biological reference points for the first time and expanded the tools available to manage the fishery. Amendment 1 resulted in a rebuilt stock and increased fishing opportunities. However, in the 2010 and 2011 fishing seasons, landings rates were far greater than expected, resulting in early seasonal closures and an overharvest of the recommended TAC.

Implemented in 2011, Amendment 2 responded to these issues and completely replaced the FMP. The Amendment provides management options to slow catch rates throughout the season, including trip limits, trap limits, and days out of the fishery. Additionally, Amendment 2 modifies the fishing mortality reference points to include a



Northern shrimp being sampled on the Gulf of Maine Summer Shrimp Survey. Photo (c) Elaine Brewer, MA DMF

threshold level, includes a more timely and comprehensive reporting system, and allows for the initiation of a limited entry program to be pursued through the adaptive management process. Addendum 1 to Amendment 2, approved in 2012, further clarifies the annual specifications process, allocates the TAC with 87% for the trawl fishery and 13% for the trap fishery based on historical landings, and introduces a research set aside (RSA) provision which allows the section to "set aside" a percentage of the TAC to help support research on the northern shrimp stock and fishery.

A Cooperative Winter Sampling Program (program) was initiated during the 2014 moratorium. The intent of the program is to collect, in years of a moratorium, biological samples similar to those that might have been collected from commercial shrimp catches. These samples are used to estimate the winter size and sex-stage composition of the shrimp, and have informed annual stock assessments and subsequent management decisions for over thirty years. A handful of trawlers and trappers are selected at random and contracted to fish in the program. For the first time, the 2016 program, which is currently underway, permits the sale of shrimp as additional compensation. The Section approved the program with a 22 metric ton (~50,000 pounds) RSA quota, a 1,800 pound trip limit for trawlers, and a weekly trap limit of 40 traps and 600 pound limit per week for trappers.

The GOM northern shrimp population has experienced significant changes in recent years. Additionally, changes in other Northeast fisheries have resulted in increased effort in the northern shrimp fishery. This increased fishing pressure, paired with failed recruitment, the lowest abundance indices on record, and unfavorable environmental conditions, has resulted in uncertainties in the future of the resource. In 2014, to address these uncertainties, the Section initiated development of Amendment 3, which considers management measures to control effort and stabilize the fishery. Additionally, Amendment 3 seeks to improve the annual specifications process since current estimates of fishing mortality are not usable for establishing the TAC.

The Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 3 sought public comment throughout the winter and early spring of 2015. The Section reviewed public comment and the Advisory Panel's recommendations in June 2015, and further directed the Plan Development Team to develop limited entry and state-by-state allocation options for Draft Amendment 3. However, given the collapsed status of the stock and the fact that the fishery is currently under a moratorium, the Section decided to postpone further action on Amendment 3 so that additional management options can be explored. For more information, please contact Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mappelman@asmfc.org.

President Obama's Fiscal Year 2017 NOAA Fisheries Budget Request

On February 9th, the President submitted his Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request to Congress. It recommends slight increases for the "Regional Councils and Fishery Commissions" and "Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act." Fisheries Information Networks, Fisheries Statistics, and SEAMAP are funded through the "Fisheries Data Collections, Surveys and Assessments" line. Congress is currently negotiating a budget for Fiscal Year 2017 and will then move on to individual appropriations bills.

H.R. 3070 – The EEZ Clarification Act, Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY)

On March 16th, the House Natural Resources Committee held a markup for H.R. 3070. An amendment in the nature of a substitute was accepted that would "authorize the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Commission, to allow and regulate recreational striped bass fishing in an area of the EEZ known as the Block Island Transit Zone." Possession of striped bass has been allowed, for the purposes of transit only, in the Block Island Transit Zone since 1996 but targeting stripers remains illegal.

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

NOAA Fisheries Operations, Research, and Facilities (in \$ thousands)		
	2017 Request	2016 Enacted
Protected Resources Science and Management		
Marine Mammals, Sea Turtles & Other Species	125,107	110,246
Species Recovery Grants	22,020	6,000
Atlantic Salmon	6,224	6,163
Pacific Salmon	63,420	60,000
Total, Protected Resources Science and Management	216,771	182,409
Fisheries Science and Management		
Fisheries and Ecosystem Science Programs and Services	150,169	139,489
Fisheries Data Collections, Surveys and Assessments	164,749	163,271
Observers and Training	45,153	43,655
Fisheries Management Programs and Services	121,895	115,995
Aquaculture	7,906	6,300
Salmon Management Activities	31,585	31,500
Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions	34,254	33,470
Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants	3,004	3,000
Total, Fisheries Science and Management	558,715	536,680
Enforcement	70,858	69,000
Habitat Conservation and Restoration	58,390	61,408
Total, National Marine Fisheries Service - ORF	904,734	849,497



Annual Report 2015

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

2015 Annual Report Now Available

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has released its 2015 Annual Report, which provides an overview of significant management actions and associated science activities the Commission and its member states took in 2015 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/2015AnnualReport_web.pdf

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ASMFC Comings & Goings



Colonel James Kelley

In late February, Colonel James Kelley was named Acting Director of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, becoming the state's new Administrative Commissioner to the ASMFC. Colonel Kelley replaces Dr. Louis Daniel who served as Administrative Commissioner since 2007. Over his nine years as Commissioner, Dr. Daniel served as Commission Chair and Vice Chair, and as the chair of numerous species management boards including Weakfish, Atlantic Menhaden, Coastal Sharks, Horseshoe Crab and the South Atlantic Board. His passion and dedication to the Commission and marine fisheries management will be missed.

Colonel Kelley began his career with Marine Patrol in 1989 as a field officer patrolling the Belhaven area. He was promoted through the ranks to Sergeant, then Lieutenant, moving to Dare County, then the Wilmington Area. In 2008, Kelley was promoted to Captain of the Wilmington Marine Patrol District, and then to Marine Patrol Major in 2013. Colonel Kelley holds the distinction of being the only Marine Patrol Colonel in recent years to have held every Marine Patrol rank, rising from an Enforcement Officer 1 to Colonel. Welcome aboard, Colonel Kelley!



Leroy Young

This March, with his retirement from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PA FBC), Leroy Young stepped down as administrative proxy for PA FBC Executive Director John Arway. Mr. Young served as administrative proxy since 2004 and was an active member of all our diadromous species management boards. Mr. Young worked for PA FBC in various roles since 1981 and has served as Director of the Bureau of Fisheries since 2007. His work has included cold water, warm water, and diadromous fisheries management; and environmental protection related to hydropower development and water withdrawals. Besides serving on the ASMFC, Mr. Young represented the PA FBC on a number of interstate committees including the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Ohio River Fisheries Management Team, the Delaware River Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative Policy Committee, and the Council of Great Lakes Fishery Agencies. We thank Mr. Young for his years of service to the Commission and wish him a healthy and happy retirement, filled with countless fishing opportunities.