

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Horseshoe Crab Management Board

*May 3, 2012
10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
Alexandria, Virginia*

DRAFT Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Welcome/Call to Order (<i>D. Simpson</i>) | 10:45 a.m. |
| 2. Board Consent | 10:45 a.m. |
| • Approval of Agenda | |
| • Approval of Proceedings from February 9, 2012 | |
| 3. Public Comment | 10:50 a.m. |
| 4. Elect Vice Chair Action | 11:00 a.m. |
| 5. Transfer request from North Carolina to Georgia (<i>D. Chesky</i>) Action | 11:05 a.m. |
| 6. Consider FMP Review and State Compliance (<i>D. Chesky</i>) Action | 11:15 a.m. |
| 7. Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Report on Tagging Program (<i>D. Chesky</i>) Possible Action | 11:25 a.m. |
| 8. Update on ARM Framework Implementation Schedule (<i>D. Chesky</i>) | 11:40 a.m. |
| 9. Other Business/Adjourn | 11:45 a.m. |

The meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-683-6000

Healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

MEETING OVERVIEW

Horseshoe Crab Management Board Meeting
Thursday, May 3, 2012
10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
Alexandria, VA

Chair: David Simpson (CT) Assumed Chairmanship: 5/12	Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Chair: Penny Howell (CT)	Law Enforcement Committee Representative: Vacant
Vice Chair: Vacant	Horseshoe Crab Advisory Panel Chair: Dr. Jim Cooper (SC)	Previous Board Meeting: February 9, 2012
Shorebird Advisory Panel Chair: Dr. Sarah Karpanty (VA)	Delaware Bay Ecosystem Technical Committee Chair: Jeff Brust (NJ)	
Voting Members: NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS (17 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from February 9, 2012

3. Public Comment – At the beginning of the meeting public comment will be taken on items not on the agenda. Individuals that wish to speak at this time must sign-in at the beginning of the meeting. For agenda items that have already gone out for public hearing and/or have had a public comment period that has closed, the Board Chair may determine that additional public comment will not provide additional information. In this circumstance the Chair will not allow additional public comment on an issue. For agenda items that the public has not had a chance to provide input, the Board Chair may allow limited opportunity for comment. The Board Chair has the discretion to limit the number of speakers and/or the length of each comment.

4. Elect Vice Chair (11:00-11:05 a.m.) Action
Background
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Board Chair, Tom O’Connell (MD), term expired February 2012 • Former Vice Chair, now Chair, is David Simpson (CT).
Presentations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
Board actions for consideration at this meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect Vice Chair.

5. Transfer Request from North Carolina to Georgia (11:05-11:15 a.m.) Action
Background
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the 2011 fishing season, North Carolina surpassed its state quota by approximately 3,040 crabs. As a result, North Carolina requested a transfer of 3,500 crabs from Georgia to cover the overage (Briefing CD). • Per Addendum II, transfer requests are allowed and must be reviewed by the Advisory Panels and the Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee. Comments were reviewed and summarized for the Board by the Plan Review Team (Supplemental Materials).
Presentations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of transfer request and Plan Review Team summary of comments by D. Chesky.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Consider approval of transfer request.

6. Fishery Management Plan Review (11:15-11:25 a.m.) Action**Background**

- State compliance reports were due March 1, 2012 (**Briefing CD**).
- The Plan Review Team reviewed the state compliance reports and compiled the Annual Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Report Summary (**Supplemental materials**).

Presentations

- Overview of the Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Report Summary by D. Chesky.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Approve 2012 Fishery Management Plan Review, State Compliance Report Summary, and requests for *de minimis*.

7. Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Report (11:25-11:40 a.m.) Action**Background**

- The Horseshoe Crab Tagging Program, coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has grown beyond the budget and staff resources able to support it, especially with a decreasing budget.
- The Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee met on April 3, 2012 in Baltimore, Maryland to formalize a protocol for the tagging program cooperators (**Supplemental materials**).
- The Technical Committee also discussed concerns with implementation of the ARM Framework and the impacts on fisheries and populations outside of Delaware Bay.

Presentations

- Technical Committee report and recommendations by D. Chesky.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Task the Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee with completing a quick status update of indicators from along the coast.

8. Update on ARM Framework Implementation Schedule (11:40-11:45 a.m.) Action**Background**

- The Horseshoe Crab Management Board approved implementation of the ARM Framework for management in Delaware Bay at its February 2012 meeting as part of Addendum VII.
- The proposed schedule within the Addendum suggested review of data and bringing recommendations to the Board for the Summer meeting; however, this schedule will not accommodate incorporation of the necessary shorebird data and quality assurance and control procedures.
- The Delaware Bay Ecosystem Technical Committee discussed the schedule and concluded that presentation of recommendations to the Board at the annual meeting would allow sufficient time for states to implement the Board's decision.

Presentations

- Update on schedule for ARM Framework Implementation by D. Chesky.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- None.

9. Other Business/Adjourn



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Division of Marine Fisheries

Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor

Dr. Louis B. Daniel III
Director

Dee Freeman
Secretary

February 6, 2012

Danielle Chesky, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Chesky,

This past summer North Carolina reached its ASMFC directed quota of 24,036 individual horseshoe crabs because rule changes could not occur until April 1, 2011 to reduce the daily trip limit to a more moderate amount. While we were aware that the horseshoe crab quota could be reached within a calendar year we were not greatly concerned because there are no directed fisheries and projected landings based on the majority of the previous years have not exceeded the harvest quota. Rule changes that became effective on April 1, 2011 have broadened the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) Fisheries Director's proclamation authority for horseshoe crabs to include seasons, areas, quantity, means and methods, and size limits that can be implemented within 48 hours. This provides more flexibility to stay in compliance with the ASMFC Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Horseshoe Crab.

The North Carolina Trip Ticket Program captures all seafood harvested and sold within North Carolina but there is a two-month time lag for the verification process to capture this information. On August 7, 2011 I closed all commercial harvest of horseshoe crabs through proclamation because the preliminary trip landings estimates indicated that the quota was close to being exceeded. The quota overage for 2011 is estimated at 3,040 horseshoe crabs. All landings estimates in 2011 are preliminary at this time.

Addendum II of the ASMFC FMP indicates that voluntary quota transfers are allowed between states so long as each transfer is biologically sound. Voluntary quota transfers require Technical Committee review and Management Board approval. To be biologically responsible the quota transfer should occur within a population and must be predicated on stock delineation and estimates of stock size. Population data from North Carolina is limited and the closest state for a transfer would be Georgia. Georgia has recorded no commercial horseshoe crab landings since 1999. The required transfer is low and commercial harvest in both states is either minimal or non-existent in recent years compared to the overall coast-wide harvest allowance.

The NCDMF contacted the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to determine if they would be willing to assist us in addressing our overage through a quota transfer. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has agreed to our proposal. It is requested that North Carolina's horseshoe crab 2011 quota be increased to 27,536 individuals through a transfer of 3,500 horseshoe crabs from Georgia. This transfer will cover the 2011 overage in North Carolina. One previous quota transfer occurred between Georgia and North Carolina in 2010.

Horseshoe crab landings in North Carolina have remained well below the harvest quota, eight of twelve years since its inception in 2000 (Figure 1). An overage of 336 individuals occurred in 2003, 2,155 individuals in 2008 and 8,989 individuals in 2009 (Figure 1). Landings estimates from 2011 are considered preliminary and subject to change. The overages in 2003 and 2008 were exceeded in December due to large landings in the blue crab trawl fishery. The overage in 2009 occurred in May and the majority of the landings (63%) again came from the blue crab trawl fishery (Table 1). The main harvest season for horseshoe crabs in blue crab trawls occurs from November through April, which overlaps two separate quota periods. Seventy-three percent (73%) of the blue crab trawl trips in 2011 landed 150 horseshoe crabs or less, which showed the blue crab trawl fishery was not targeting horseshoe crabs and is considered a bycatch-only fishery for horseshoe crabs.

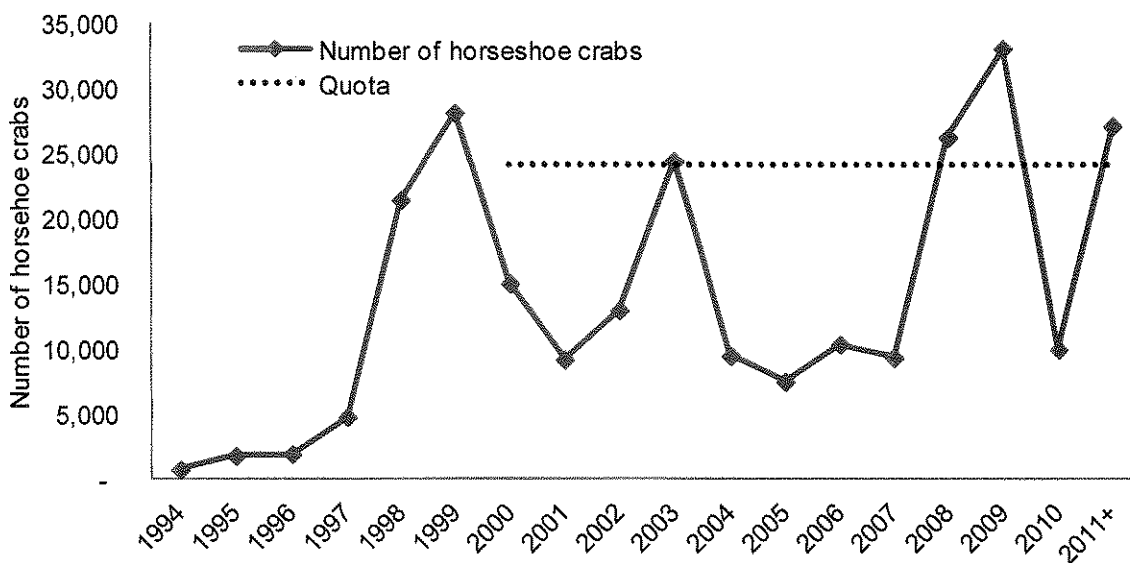


Figure 1. North Carolina annual horseshoe landings (numbers, 1994-2011), including the harvest quota starting in 2000. + Landings for 2011 are preliminary at this time.

Table 1. North Carolina horseshoe landings (Number) and trips, 2011. Landings are preliminary and subject to change. *Some landings and trips are shown as estimates due to confidentiality.

Gear	Number of horseshoe crabs	Number of trips	Percent number	Percent trips
Beach seine	<50*	<25*	<1%	<1%
Crab pot	<225*	<25*	<1%	<2%
Crab trawl	13,961	139	52%	15%
Estuarine gill net	8,401	620	31%	67%
Ocean gill net	<25*	<25*	<1%	<2%
Ocean trawl	<200*	<25*	<1%	<1%
Pound net	4,246	137	16%	15%
Total	27,076	924	100%	100%

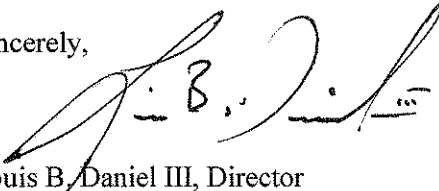
Chesky Letter
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February 6, 2012

Horseshoe crab landings will continue to be monitored through the trip ticket program and if landings reach the quota, I will continue to have proclamation authority to adjust management measures. I plan to continue the bycatch fishery closure until April 1, 2012, after the main harvest season in the crab trawl fishery has ended, and re-open the bycatch fishery with a daily trip limit of 50 horseshoe crabs.

Further concerns include impacts of the quota transfer on shorebird population and the biomedical industry. No biomedical permits have been issued in North Carolina in several years. One biomedical permit was issued in error in 2011 and was voided. Whether Georgia or North Carolina is considered a critical stopover area for migratory shorebirds, including the red knot, is undetermined. Restrictions on harvest of horseshoe crabs from the Delaware Bay region, the epicenter of horseshoe crab production along the coast, has been the prime area of focus in regards to the impacts on egg availability to shorebird migration.

If you need additional information concerning this request, please contact me via e-mail at Louis.Daniel@ncdenr.gov or by phone at 252-808-8013. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. B. Daniel III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "B".

Louis B. Daniel III, Director
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries

cc: Spud Woodward
Don Hesselman
Grace Kemp
Tina Moore

LBD/tm/cb



MARK WILLIAMS
COMMISSIONER

A.G. 'SPUD' WOODWARD
DIRECTOR

February 6, 2012

Dr. Louis B. Daniel III, Director
North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
3441 Arendell Street
P.O. Box 769
Morehead City, North Carolina 28557

Dear ^{Louis} Dr. Daniel,

I received your correspondence dated February 3, 2012 in which you requested that the State of Georgia transfer 3,500 horseshoe crabs from its available quota for calendar year 2011 to the State of North Carolina as allowed in the ASMFC Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crab.

The State of Georgia had no reported harvest of horseshoe crabs during 2011, and, thus, did not use any of its available quota. Therefore, it is my pleasure to respond in the affirmative to your request. Please have ASMFC staff contact me, if they have any questions.

Sincerely,

A.G. "Spud" Woodward
Director

cc: Patrick Geer

2012 HORSESHOE CRAB STATE COMPLIANCE
REPORTS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THIS
DOCUMENT DUE TO FILE SIZE

CONTACT [ASMFC](#) IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO
RECEIVE THE COMPLIANCE REPORTS