



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

To: Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
From: Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee
RE: Quarterly Update on 2014 Benchmark Stock Assessment Progress
Date: October 10, 2013

In preparation for the 2014 benchmark stock assessment, the Atlantic menhaden Technical Committee (TC) and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) have held four joint webinars and three in-person meetings to date. This third progress report memorandum contains a summary from one meeting that occurred since the last progress report on July 17, 2013 (M#13-067). Given the amount of preparatory work required for this benchmark, the TC/SAS felt it necessary to begin preliminary data gathering and analyses in 2013. The primary goal of these meetings is to identify and explore the utility of agency-collected data sources in advance of the 2014 Data and Assessment Workshops. These meetings have also included preliminary discussions about potential alternative modeling approaches. The TC/SAS plan to continue meeting regularly via webinar through 2013 to ensure steady progress on data collection tasks. Final vetting of data and decision-making with regard to modeling approaches will be made at the 2014 Data and Assessment Workshops, respectively. Consideration of public data submissions and analyses will occur at the 2014 workshops as well.

Below is a brief summary of topics discussed and progress made at each meeting since July 17, 2013. A tentative timeline for 2014 Atlantic menhaden workshops follows.

Meeting summary:

September 17th-18th, 2013 in-person meeting

- Reviewed all available state and regional datasets (Maine to Florida) that contain age, length and weight data in evaluating menhaden growth and selectivity.
- Analyzed available data to evaluate maturity schedules and fecundity at age.
- Compiled existing fishery landings data for the reduction, bait and recreational fisheries.
- Reviewed multiple methods for estimating natural mortality.
- Continued to discuss potential data analysis pathways for the historical tagging data. Formed a subcommittee to lead this analysis.
- Created a task list in preparation for the January 2014 data workshop.

Tentative timeline for 2014 Atlantic menhaden workshops:

January 13-16, 2014 – Data Workshop

June 2014 – Assessment Workshop

December 2014 – Peer Review Workshop (SEDAR)

M13-091