



**ASMFC**

# **FISHERIES** *focus*

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August 2007

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission • 1444 Eye Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C.

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

## **ASMFC Summer Meeting**

**August 13 - 16, 2007**

**Crowne Plaza**

**901 N. Fairfax Street**

**Alexandria, Virginia**

**Final Agenda**

The final agenda is subject to change. 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. **Please note that this agenda has been modified from the preliminary agenda.** Specifically, an Atlantic Herring Section meeting has been scheduled for Monday, August 13 from 5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m. On Wednesday, August 15, a Business Session Meeting has been added from 4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. and the times of the ISFMP Policy Board and Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board have shifted slightly. If you intend to bring any meeting materials for use by a board or committee not included in the Commission's Summer Meeting Briefing Materials CD-ROM, please bring 50 copies to the meeting.

### Monday, August 13

**2:00 PM - 6:00 PM**      **Habitat Committee**

- Welcome/Introductions, *K. Chytalo*
- New Habitat Committee Member Updates
- Program Updates, *J. Thomas*
  - Coastal Sharks Fishery Management Plan, *C. Vonderweidt*
  - Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership
  - Diadromous Source Document
  - Energy Subcommittee
  - Habitat Committee Member Description Document
- Vice-Chair Nomination
- Operational Procedures Manual
  - FMP Recommendations (and Temporal Dredging Windows Update)
  - Project Review Policy and Effectiveness Review
- Working Waterfronts Discussion
- Commissioner Involvement/Secondary Information List

**2:00 PM - 5:00 PM**      **American Lobster Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *J. Nelson*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of Transferability Committee Recommendation – ACTION, *T. Kerns*
- Review and Consider Approval of Connecticut Conservation Equivalency Proposal – ACTION, *T. Kerns*

*continued on page 7*

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**T**he 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 a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous 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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## Upcoming Meetings

**9/2 - 6:**

American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California. For more information, please contact Chair David Manning at (707) 547-1988.

**9/17 - 21:**

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Avista Resort, 300 North Ocean Boulevard, North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; 800-968-8986.

**9/17 - 21:**

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, location to be determined.

**9/18 - 20:**

New England Fishery Management Council, Radisson Hotel, Plymouth, Massachusetts.

**9/24 - 25:**

ASMFC Coastal Shark Technical Committee, DoubleTree Hotel Annapolis, 210 Holiday Court, Annapolis, Maryland.

**10/16 - 18:**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, New Bern Convention Center, 203 S. Front Street, New Bern, North Carolina; 252-638-1551.

**10/28 - 11/1:**

ASMFC 66th Annual Meeting, Loews Annapolis Hotel, 126 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland; (410) 263-7777.

**11/5 - 9:**

ASMFC Basic Stock Assessment Training Workshop, Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel Virginia Beach, 36th & Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**11/6 - 8:**

New England Fishery Management Council, Hotel Viking, Newport, Rhode Island.

**12/3 - 7:**

ASMFC Basic Stock Assessment Training Workshop, Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel Virginia Beach, 36th & Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**12/3 - 7:**

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, North Carolina (location to be determined).

**12/11 - 13:**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn Harmon Meadows, 300 Plaza Drive, Secaucus, New Jersey; 201-348-2000.

In mid-July, in Norfolk, Virginia, NOAA took an exciting and important step into the future with the commissioning of its newest fisheries research vessel, the Henry B. Bigelow. The second of four ships being built, the 205 foot vessel is a world-class package of technology designed to support NOAA scientists' efforts to assess and monitor fish stocks, marine mammals, and ocean conditions from the Mid-Atlantic to Canada. The Bigelow will be home ported in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and in time will replace the R/Vs Albatross IV and Delaware II.

The ship is named after Henry Bryant Bigelow (1879-1967), the founding director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and a pioneering ocean researcher whose work has been recognized as the foundation of modern oceanography. His expeditions in the Gulf of Maine to collect water samples and data on plankton, fish, and ocean currents made this region one of the most thoroughly studied bodies of water for its size in the world.

In a 1930 report to the National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Bigelow was one of the first to identify the need to not only consider the physics, chemistry, and biology of sea water, but to also understand the interrelationship of the three disciplines in explaining ocean processes. One of Bigelow's enduring legacies was the compilation with William C. Schroeder of Fishes of the Western North Atlantic, a multi-volume text of some 1,100 pages. It can be found on the desk or shelf of nearly every Atlantic fishery scientist.

Bigelow received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1906 and served on the faculty for 62 years, a record that still stands. His life reflected a passion and zest for learning, travel, and a love for outdoors activities continuing into his later years. He was an active skier at age 85! His grandson, Fred Bigelow, participated in the commissioning ceremony.

Given the remarkable accomplishments of Dr. Bigelow in collecting information and knowledge about the oceans it is truly fitting that NOAA's newest ship carry his name. One of the Bigelow's missions, especially important to fishery stakeholders, will be to conduct the Northeast Trawl Survey, one of the longest fisheries survey time series in the world.

Dating back to the 1960s NOAA scientists have made

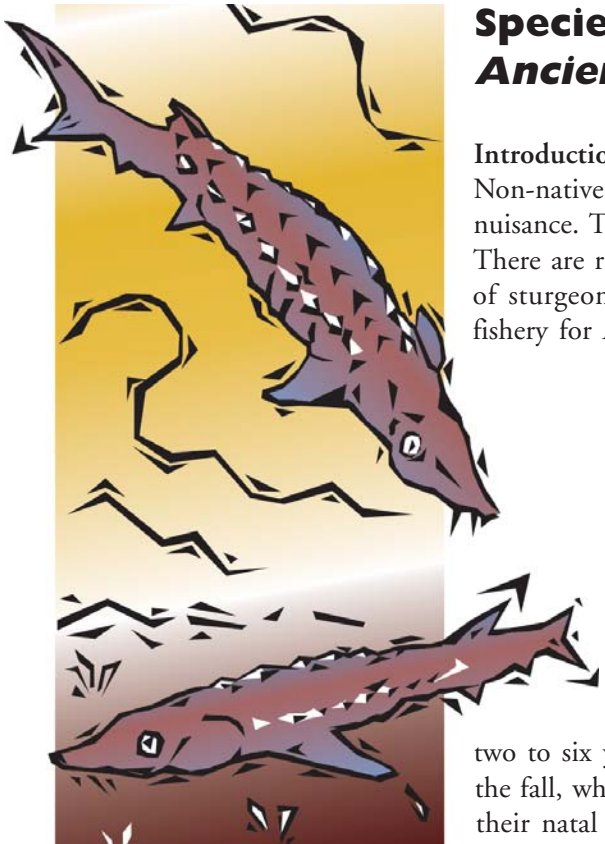
standardized 15-minute tows in the spring and fall with a standard size net at more than 300 locations of various depths, from Cape Hatteras to the Canadian border. Keeping tow times, locations, and net design constant over the years has been critical to ensuring that changes in catch reflect changes in fish populations, and not changes in fishing techniques. Besides counting fish caught, scientists also collect biological samples as well as size and age frequencies. These data are used with other information by state and federal scientists to assess fish populations.

In anticipation of the arrival of the R/V Bigelow, NOAA scientists at the Northeast Science Center in Woods Hole have been working for the past three years with commercial fishermen and net vendors to design a new net system for the R/V Bigelow. Their goal is to deploy a more versatile net and doors, capable of sampling both bottom and near bottom species. It will become the standard net for the next 20 years.

Along with the challenge of designing an improved net, NOAA scientists are vitally concerned with calibrating the difference between the new net on the R/V Bigelow and the existing net on the Albatross IV. Understanding the difference in catch rates between the two systems is critical to maintaining the usefulness of the current survey time series. As a result, Center scientists have prepared a detailed calibration plan for the R/V Bigelow.

Their scientifically based plan was vetted through an independent peer review panel of five scientists from the Center of Independent Experts. The plan has been revised to include the panel's suggestions for improvement. Over the next 18 months the Albatross IV and Bigelow will conduct the fall and spring surveys. In addition, there will be three or more cruises focusing specifically on the differences of the components in the catchability between the nets and vessels. All of these efforts are intended to ensure the scientific integrity and utility of the Northeast Trawl Survey.

The R/V Bigelow is floating testament to our country's commitment to our oceans, and to the NOAA scientists who are so dedicated to learning more about our marine environment. We all wish the Bigelow and her crew, like her namesake, a long and productive life, filled with discovery and achievement.



**Atlantic Sturgeon**  
*Acipenser oxyrinchus*

**Interesting Facts:**

- Sturgeon fossils date back more than 120 million years, making them one of the oldest vertebrates.
- A mature female may produce up to 2.4 million eggs, which hatch 1 week after they are fertilized.
- Sturgeon are known for their occasional and inexplicable tendency to jump completely out of water; colonial records report several incidents of giant sturgeon landing on ships' decks.
- An Atlantic sturgeon captured in LI Sound was found to have come from the Altamaha River in GA; this is the 1st evidence of large-scale movement of sturgeon between the North and South Atlantic.

**Largest Recorded:** 15', 811 lbs

**Maximum Age:** 60 years

**Age & Length at Maturity for Northeast Population:** 20 - 25 years/6.53'

**Stock Status:** Overfished & overfishing is not occurring

## Species Profile: Atlantic Sturgeon

### Ancient Species' Slow Road to Recovery

#### Introduction

Non-native Americans once considered Atlantic sturgeon a “junk” fish or navigational nuisance. They used sturgeon for fertilizer for plants or fuel for steam-powered vessels. There are reports of spawning aggregations of sturgeon blocking waterways and reports of sturgeon jumping onboard boats and sometimes injuring those aboard. A major fishery for Atlantic sturgeon did not exist until 1870 when a caviar market was established in response to European demand. Within 100 years of its emergence, the Atlantic sturgeon fishery collapsed. Wild Atlantic sturgeon stocks are now protected for up to 40 years from harvest and possession through a coastwide moratorium.

#### Life History

Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*) are ancient fish, dating back at least 120 million years, and can be found along the entire Atlantic coast from Labrador, Canada to St. Johns River, Florida. They are anadromous, migrating from the ocean into coastal estuaries and rivers to spawn. Spawning occurs during the spring and individual fish only spawn once every two to six years. After spawning, males may remain in the river or lower estuary until the fall, while females typically leave within four to six weeks. Most juveniles remain in their natal river from one to six years before migrating to the ocean. Little is known about the movements of Atlantic sturgeon when they are in the ocean.

Atlantic sturgeon may live to be 60 years old, with females reaching sexual maturity between the ages of seven and 30, and males between the ages of five and 24. Typically, fish in the northern part of the species range mature at a later age than those in the southern part of the range. Atlantic sturgeon are bottom feeders whose prey include mussels, worms, shrimp, and small bottom-dwelling fish.

#### Commercial Fisheries

Since colonial times, Atlantic sturgeon have supported commercial fisheries of varying magnitude. They were the primary “cash crop” of Jamestown, Virginia before tobacco. In the late 1800s, the fishery was second in value only to lobster. Besides being harvested for their flesh and caviar, other sturgeon parts had commercial value. Sturgeon skin was made into leather for clothes and bookbinding. The swim bladder was used to make a gelatin that served as a clarifying agent in jellies, wine, beer or glue. Swim bladders were also fashioned into windows for carriages.

Landings just prior to the turn of the century were estimated at seven million pounds per year. From 1950 through the mid-1990s, landings ranged between 100,000 and 250,000 pounds per year. While a coastwide moratorium on the harvest of wild Atlantic sturgeon stocks was implemented at the close of 1997, cultured Atlantic sturgeon continue to be a valued



Photo courtesy of Kelly Place



commercial fish for both its flesh, which consistently brings a higher price per pound than most fish, and its eggs, or roe, which are worth more than \$50 per pound to fishermen and are sold as caviar for more than \$250 per pound.

### Stock Status

Very little is known about the stock status of Atlantic sturgeon. Reliable data is difficult to obtain because many river systems have so few fish, and rivers with more fish are often not easy to sample. In 1998, the Commission completed a peer-reviewed coastwide assessment of the population. The assessment was conducted for each river system where Atlantic sturgeon were found historically. All assessed systems held significantly less sturgeon than they did in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and very few signs of recovery were detected. Consequently, the assessment report recommended a moratorium for each stock until the spawning population includes at least 20 protected year classes of females. This translates into a minimum of about 38 years of no harvest for each system. Undertaken concurrently with the Commission stock assessment in 1998, the federal government investigated the status of the species with regard to listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). That status review concluded that listing was not warranted at the time.

In 2003, the Commission and the federal government held a workshop to reestablish discussions about the status of the stock. Findings from the workshop ranged from possible signs of recovery beginning in Albemarle Sound (Figure 1) to signs of decreasing abundance in the Delaware River (Figure 2). It is thought that the biggest impediments to Atlantic sturgeon recovery are bycatch and insufficient habitat.

Figure 1. Fishery-independent Catch Rates of Juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon in Albemarle Sound, North Carolina  
Source: North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, 2007

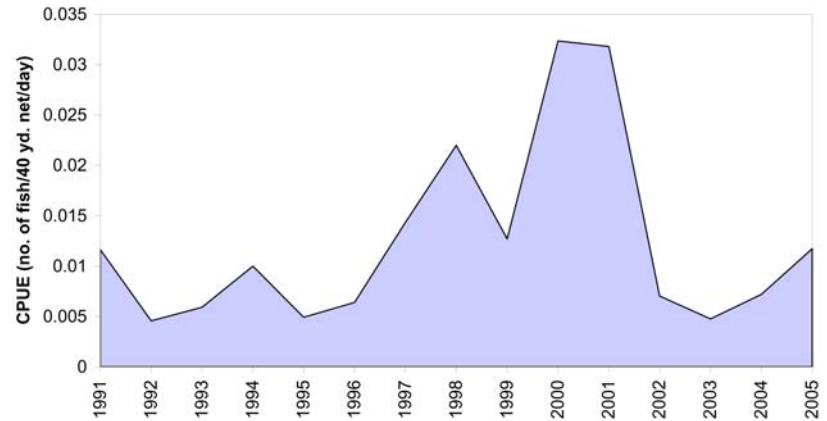
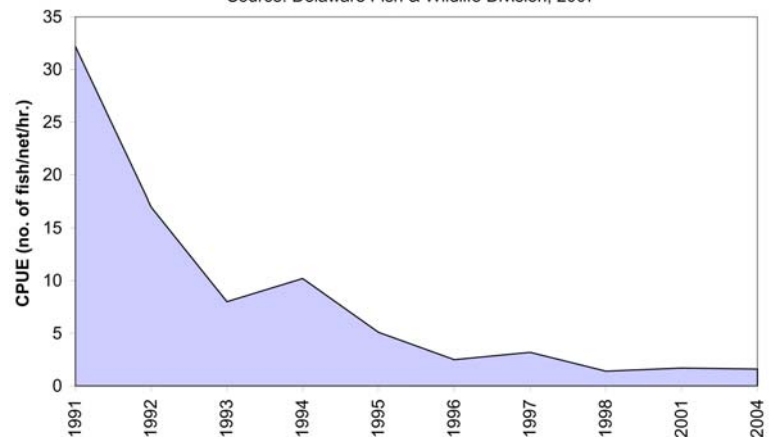


Figure 2. Fishery-independent Catch Rates of SubAdult Atlantic Sturgeon Taken in the Delaware River Tag-Recapture Program  
Source: Delaware Fish & Wildlife Division, 2007



## New Projects Seek to Increase Our Understanding of Atlantic Sturgeon

Over the years, several states and organizations have taken actions to improve our understanding of Atlantic sturgeon and explore ways to aid in its recovery. Following are examples of recent measures taken in the States of Maine, Connecticut, and New York:

- The University of Maine initiated a program to determine the distribution, abundance, and movement of adult and sub-adult Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon in the Penobscot River.
- The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection began a three-year State Wildlife Funded research program on Atlantic sturgeon in state waters in 2006.

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation began a two-year pilot trawl survey to capture juvenile Atlantic sturgeon in ocean waters.



Photo courtesy of Albert Spells, USFWS

## Species Profile: Atlantic Sturgeon (continued from page 5)

In 2005, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) initiated a second status review to reevaluate whether this species required protection under the ESA. The Status Review Team (SRT) determined that Atlantic sturgeon should be broken down into five distinct population segments (DPS): (1) Gulf of Maine, (2) New York Bight, (3) Chesapeake Bay, (4) Carolina, and (5) South Atlantic. The SRT determined that the most significant threats to all of the DPSs are bycatch mortality, poor water quality, lack of adequate state and/or federal regulatory mechanisms, and dredging activities. Additional stressors that are unique to some DPSs include habitat impediments and ship strikes.

The SRT found that the Carolina, Chesapeake Bay, and New York Bight DPSs were likely (>50% chance) to become endangered in the next 20 years. They recommended that these DPSs be listed as threatened under the ESA. The South Atlantic and Gulf of Maine DPSs have a moderate risk (<50% chance) of becoming endangered in the next 20 years, but available sci-

ence was insufficient to allow the SRT to fully assess these populations so they do not provide a listing recommendation. If NMFS proposes to list any DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon, it will publish a Federal Register notice(s), allowing for a public comment period(s). Comments will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate before making any final determinations on whether to list any DPSs.

### Atlantic Coastal Management Considerations

The Commission adopted the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Sturgeon in 1990. All of the 15 member states (Maine to Florida, including Pennsylvania) and two jurisdictions (District of Columbia and Potomac River Fisheries Commission) participate in the FMP. In 1998 the FMP was amended to implement the recommendation of the 1998 peer reviewed stock assessment to prohibit harvest and possession of Atlantic sturgeon and sturgeon parts, including roe, in all participating jurisdictions. In 1999, the federal government complemented state actions by banning the possession and

harvest of Atlantic sturgeon in the exclusive economic zone. Amendment 1 also contains provisions to reduce Atlantic sturgeon bycatch in other fisheries. Subsequent addenda have outlined the protocols and requirements for importing Atlantic sturgeon for aquaculture purposes.

In 2006, the Commission sponsored an Atlantic sturgeon bycatch workshop. One of the principle recommendations of the workshop was a focused assessment of the NMFS database, which principally covers waters between Maine and North Carolina. In the spring of 2007, the Commission hosted a second Atlantic sturgeon bycatch workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to examine the NMFS observer database and develop estimates of bycatch rates and bycatch mortality by fishery and region from 2000-2005. The report from this workshop will be available in August.

For more information, please contact Erika Robbins, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 or [erobbins@asmfc.org](mailto:erobbins@asmfc.org).

## Oyster EIS Team Announces Project Status and Timeline

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Virginia Marine Resources Commission announced in their August 2, 2007 press release a new date of May 2008 for the release of the draft Oyster Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which evaluates alternatives to significantly increase the oyster population throughout the Chesapeake Bay. The additional time is attributed to a delay in completing the native oyster demographic model, but will also allow for a thorough and scientifically defensible peer review process and input from the public and key stakeholder groups. At its July 13, 2007 meeting, the Executive Committee to the Oyster EIS process confirmed a new timeline for the development and release of the Draft EIS. The Committee also heard the results of the Oyster Advisory Panel's preliminary peer review findings of the Native Oyster Demographic Modeling Study. The Panel's final report is due out in August. For the press release and more information on the EIS process and progress, accomplishments to date, available scientific findings, and upcoming meetings go to the EIS website at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/dnrnews/infocus/oysters.asp>.



Photo courtesy of Loren D. Coen, Ph.D., SCDNR, Marine Resources Research Institute

## ASMFC Summer Meeting Final Agenda (continued from page 1)

### 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM American Lobster Management Board (continued)

- Review Connecticut Proposal and Technical Committee Report
- Other Business/Adjourn

### 5:15 PM - 6:15 PM Atlantic Herring Section

- Welcome/Call to Order, *E. Smith*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of Updated 2006 FMP Review – ACTION, *C. Vonderweidt*
- Amendment II Compliance Update – ACTION, *C. Vonderweidt*
- Other Business/Adjourn

### Tuesday, August 14

### 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *J. Travelstead*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of Draft Addendum XIX – ACTION, *T. Kerns*
  - Review Public Comment and Consider Approval of Measures
- Consider Summer Flounder Reference Points – ACTION, *T. Kerns*
- Set 2008 TAL for Summer Flounder – ACTION, *T. Kerns*
- Discuss Summer Flounder 2008 Peer Review, *T. Kerns*
  - Venue and Terms of Reference
- Update of 2007 Black Sea Bass and Scup Quotas, *T. Kerns*
- Other Business/Adjourn

### 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee

- Welcome/Introductions
- Update on Progress Since May Workshop
  - Workshop Conclusions, *G. Schuler*
  - Grant Applications, *M. Caldwell*
  - Science Activities and Leadership, *J. Thomas and G. Schuler*
  - National Board Information, *J. Thomas*
    - Partnership Application & Process
    - Representatives to National Committees (Science/Data, Communications)
    - Eligibility for 2008 FWS NFHAP Funds
    - Presentation at October NFHAP Board Meeting
- Discussion Items:
  - Selection of an Interim Steering Committee Leader
  - Role of the Steering Committee (Interim & Permanent)
  - Who Should Participate on the Steering Committee based on Roles Needed Today and Projected Under a Permanent Structure?
- Discussion Item: Who is Missing From the ACFHP, Why Should They be Involved and How Do We Involve Them?
  - Southern Organizations and Agencies, Freshwater Fisheries Agencies, Other Fish Habitat Partnerships, Other Groups
- Creating an Action Plan
  - Review and Discussion of Partnership Application, *J. Thomas*
  - Creation of a Timeline for Action using Work Plan and Grant Application
  - Creating a Plan for Accomplishment of Activities
  - Multi-State Grant Triage Plan
- Plan for NOAA Funds, *T. Bigford*
  - Review of NOAA Contract Content
  - Update on Status of Contract
  - Discussion of Immediate Needs for NOAA Fund Distribution based on Timeline
- Discussion on Species – Habitat Matrix Plan of Action Outline for Matrix Completion, *J. Kritzer*
  - Missing Categories and Overall Impression

*continued on page 8*

## **ASMFC Summer Meeting Final Agenda (continued from page 7)**

**9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee (continued)**

- October Meeting
- Other Business/Adjourn

**11:15 AM - 12:15 PM American Eel Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *A.C. Carpenter*
- Public Comment
- Update on Development of Draft Addendum II, *E. Robbins*
- American Eel Stock Assessment Subcommittee Proposal for Evaluating the Potential Impact of Potential Management Measures Outlined in Draft Addendum II, *L. Lee*
- Update on the Development of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, *E. Robbins*
- Other Business/Adjourn

**1:30 PM - 2:30 PM Sturgeon Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *E. Smith*
- Public Comment
- Presentation of Atlantic Sturgeon Bycatch Workshop Report 2007– ACTION, *D. Secor*
- Technical Committee Update, *D. Secor*
- Other Business/Adjourn

**2:45 PM - 5:15 PM Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *E. Smith*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of Spiny Dogfish FMP Review – ACTION
- ASMFC Letter to Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Dr. J. Musick*
- Updated Management Options for Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks, *C. Vonderweidt*
- Other Business/Adjourn

**5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Presentation by NOAA Fisheries Service, Office of Highly Migratory Species on Amendment #2 to the Federal Shark Plan**

### Wednesday, August 15

**8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Tautog Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *D. Pierce*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of 2006 Tautog FMP Review – ACTION
- Live Market Update
  - LEC Response to V-notching or Live Well Prohibition, *M. Howard*
  - Potential Magnitude of Illegal Harvest, *J. McNamee*
- Review and Consider Final Approval of Draft Addendum V – ACTION, *C. Vonderweidt*
  - Review Public Comment, and Technical Committee and Advisory Panel Recommendations
  - Review State Proposals to Achieve  $F = 0.20$  – ACTION, *J. McNamee*
- Other Business/Adjourn

**10:15 AM - 12:15 PM Stock Assessment Workshop for Commissioners**

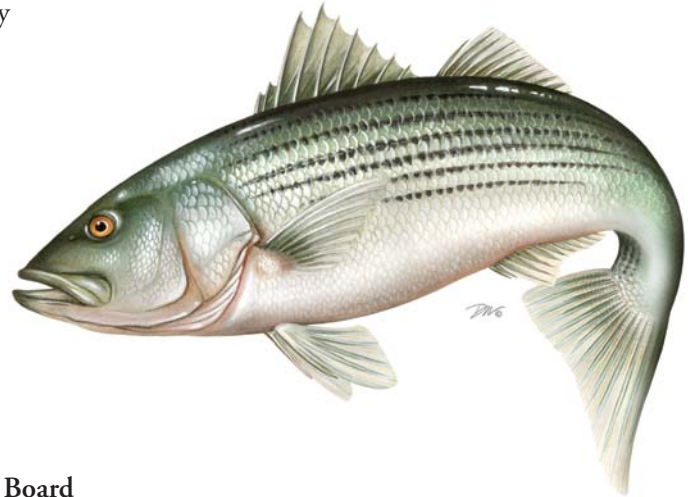
- Welcome/Overview
- When to Use Forward/Backward Projecting Models – Data Requirements
- How Do They Work? What Can They Tell You? How Do Backward/Forward Models Differ?
- Retrospective Bias and Other Common Problems
- Review and Discuss Exercise – Examples from Actual Forward/Backward Assessments

**1:15 PM - 4:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Habitat Committee Report



- Update on Non-Native Oyster Activities
- Update on President's Ocean Action Plan
  - Presentation on Joint Ocean Commission Initiative
  - Presentation by the Center for Environmental Quality
  - Questions and Discussion
- Discuss the Use of FAX Ballots for Board Decisions
- Review Noncompliance Recommendations
- Discuss *de minimis* Provisions
- Discuss Updating the ASMFC Strategic Plan
- Other Business/Adjourn



**4:30 PM - 5:00 PM Business Session**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Review Noncompliance Recommendations
- Other Business/Adjourn

**5:15 PM - 6:45 PM Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *P. Diodati*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of 2007 FMP Review – ACTION, *N. Meserve*
- Technical Committee Update, *D. Grout*
  - Overview of Assessment Workshops
  - Review and Consider Approval of Stock Assessment Terms of Reference – ACTION
  - Review and Consider Approval of Request to Prioritize Expansion of MRFSS Sampling into Wave 1 – ACTION
- Review and Consider Approval of Rhode Island Proposal for the Commercial Trap Fishery – ACTION
  - Technical Committee and Advisory Panel Comments, *D. Grout and J. Gilford*, respectively
- Review and Consider Approval of Maryland Proposal for the Susquehanna Flats – ACTION
  - Previous Technical Committee and Advisory Panel Comments, *N. Meserve*
- Review and Consider Approval of Advisory Panel Nominations – ACTION
- Other Business/Adjourn

**Thursday, August 16**

**8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Shad & River Herring Management Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *E. Kray*
- Public Comment
- Presentation of the American Shad Stock Assessment, *A. Kahnle*
- Presentation of the Peer Review Report for the American Shad Stock Assessment – ACTION, *K. Limburg*
- Discussion of American Shad Management
- Discussion of River Herring Stock Assessment
- Review and Discussion of Creel Survey Requirement, *E. Robbins*
- North Carolina Proposal for Moratorium on River Herring Harvest, *L. Daniel*
- Other Business/Adjourn

**11:15 AM - 12:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Review Noncompliance Findings
- Other Business/Adjourn

**12:30 PM - 1:00 PM Business Session**

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Review of Noncompliance Recommendations
- Review and Consider Approval of FMPs or Amendments
- Other Business/Adjourn



## New ACCSP Director is Named

### A Steady Flow of Custom Data Requests Illustrates a Broad Utility of ACCSP's Data Warehouse

#### Michael S. Cahall Named New ACCSP Director

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council named Michael S. Cahall as its new Director on Wednesday, July 25, 2007. Mr. Cahall, who came to ACCSP as the Information Systems Manager in 1999, has been filling the role as Acting Director since March 1, 2007.



ACCSP Coordinating Council Chair, Robert Mahood, and Coordinating Council Vice-chair, Eric Smith, traveled to Washington, D.C. to make the official announcement to staff. Mr. Mahood said, "Mike brings to the position a thorough knowledge of the technical aspects of the program and productive working relationships with the program partners. He is firmly committed to strengthening program partnerships, which will be essential as the program moves forward."

Mr. Cahall's appointment is timely, as a program peer review was conducted less than one year ago. Results from this peer review offer guidance and recommendations for major program improvements and priorities to focus on in the future.

Mr. Cahall has expressed excitement about the opportunity to work with ACCSP's state and federal partners in this new capacity. He looks forward to continued development of the program as staff and partners strive to provide timely and accurate data that meets the needs of ACCSP constituents and stakeholders coastwide.

While Mr. Cahall served as Information Systems Manager, he contributed to the coordination of data collection programs, the continued evolution of standards, and the creation and operation of the ACCSP Data Warehouse. His in-depth knowledge and experience with the development and implementation of program objectives make him well-suited to provide program direction to ACCSP.

#### ACCSP Provides Data to Numerous Users

##### *Stock Assessment Data Workshop*

ACCSP conducted directed trip analysis on Marine Recre-

ational Fisheries Statistics Survey Data (MRFSS) from 1980 – 2006 using the tools built into the ACCSP data warehouse. This data was provided to stock assessment scientists at the July Southeast Data Assessment Review (SEDAR) Data Workshop for greater amberjack and South Atlantic red snapper. This was the first stock assessment data workshop ACCSP has contributed to.

In order to better support stock assessment scientists in the future, ACCSP has updated its data warehouse query interface to present information by region which helps to split Florida data by South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. ACCSP will also update the data warehouse to provide summary data back as far as available in Accumulated Landing System, housed at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Southeast Fisheries Science Center.

#### *Custom Queries*

- ACCSP provided access to Atlantic coast data from Maine to Florida to help the NOAA create a national summary of marine fisheries statistics within the Fisheries Information System (FIS). NOAA, which must compile this data under a provision of Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, is able to collect data from ACCSP and its regional counterparts, GULFIN and PACFIN, instead of approaching all coastal states separately.
- ACCSP provided the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with blue crab catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) data in response to a custom query from the U.S. EPA Gulf Ecology Division. The EPA will use this data in a population assessment for blue crabs.
- ACCSP sent the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council an annual tally of commercial fishing trips by state for Florida to North Carolina from 1980 -2006 in response to a specific request to measure the percentage of trips that biological samples are taken from. ACCSP also identified and communicated when those states implemented mandatory trip level reporting because it affects the quality of the data available.

For more information, please visit [www.accsp.org](http://www.accsp.org) or call (202) 216-5690.

## Erika Robbins Awarded ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

While she has been with the Commission for a relatively short time, Erika Robbins' efforts have already established her as an outstanding employee and an important contributor to the Commission's vision of "healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015." In recognition of her accomplishments, Erika was named Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2007. The award is intended to recognize contributions and qualities in the areas of teamwork, initiative, responsibility, quality of work, positive attitude, and results.

Over the last ten months, Erika has worked long hours with the members of the Shad and River Herring Stock Assessment Subcommittee to complete the benchmark stock assessment for American shad for peer review. The assessment contains an extensive compilation of data from many sources and examines status at the river-stock level for some 30 different stocks. It is one of the most comprehensive collections of fisheries related data ever assembled for this species. Erika's keen attention to detail and unwavering commitment to delivering a high quality assessment in a timely manner was largely responsible for the assessment being completed for the peer review this July. Hopefully, the end result will yield ample new information for managers to use in conserving and managing this important species.

In addition to her work on the shad assessment, Erika kept the coordination of her other species on track. Her work with the American Eel Technical Committee and Plan Development Team has led to a draft addendum that includes a comprehensive list of management measures for consideration by the Board and public. Also, she has coordinated an annual update of the bluefish stock assessment and an initial review of sturgeon bycatch data.

Erika has a Master in Environmental Management from Duke University and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Pepperdine University. As an Employee of the Quarter, she received a \$500 cash award, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in her personnel record. In addition, her name will be engraved on the Employee of Quarter Plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Erika!



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## ASMFC Comings & Goings

**Jennifer Lamb and Nick Monier** -- This August, the Commission said good-bye to two fantastic summer interns, Jennifer Lamb and Nick Monier. Both came to us through the Fund for American Studies and have spent the last two months working on a wide range of fisheries projects. These included cataloging recreational saltwater fishing licenses along the Atlantic coast; surveying fish tagging programs to update and repopulate the Cooperative Fish Tagging Website and Registry, which has been largely inactive over the last several years; and assisting in the development of a youth outreach program for the Commission. Work on the youth outreach program included surveying state and Sea Grant marine educators along the eastern seaboard for information on existing youth outreach programs and where the Commission can play a role. Based upon the results of this survey, Jennifer designed a coloring activity book with information on the different fish under ASMFC management (K through 4th grade) as well information on fisheries policy development and implementation (junior high and high school).

Jennifer will be a junior in the Honors Program at Virginia Tech, studying agricultural economics, political science, and history. In the fall, Jennifer



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## **ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 11)**

will be interning for the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture and will continue her education at Virginia Tech through independent studies on the subjects of Agricultural Law and Communications Law.

Nick is an International Politics and Economics major at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, graduating as a member of the class of 2008. Nick studied abroad in the fall of 2006 as an exchange student at Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is taking the LSAT in December, but wants to work for at least a year before continuing his education, hopefully, in the field of environmental policy and law.

Both interns recieved an ASMFC travel bag in appreciation of their efforts. Their enthusiasm, professionalism, and helpfulness will be greatly missed by the entire staff. We wish them the very best in all their endeavors!

## **Mark Your Calendars! ASMFC 2008 Meeting Schedule**

**Winter Meeting**  
February 4 - 7, 2008

**Spring Meeting**  
May 5 - 8, 2008

**Summer Meeting**  
August 18 - 21, 2008

All of the above meetings will be held at the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

**67th Annual Meeting**  
October 19 - 23, 2008  
Rehoboth, Delaware

*Return Service Requested*

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
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