



ASMFC

Fisheries *focus*

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ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves Addendum 1 to the American Lobster FMP

On August 3, 1999, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission American Lobster Management Board approved Addendum I to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. Addendum I continues implementation of the area management program instituted in Amendment 3 through the establishment of area-specific effort control measures. The Addendum also clarifies provisions of Amendment 3 through adaptive management and creates a coastwide trap tag system to implement and enforce trap limits.

Addendum I represents a unique approach in the development of fishery management measures for the Commission in that it was almost entirely developed by regional groups of lobster fishermen. Amendment 3 established a framework for area management, which includes industry participation through seven Lobster Conservation Management Teams (LCMT). The LCMTs worked intensively over the last year to develop effective and meaningful approaches to controlling effort in the lobster fishery.

Ernest Beckwith, Chair of the American Lobster Board, expressed his pleasure with the process by stating that, "With the adoption of Addendum I, we have completed another important step in the coastwide management of American lobster. This step could not have been taken without the significant contributions of the Lobster Conservation Management Teams. They had an enormous and difficult task to undertake – namely, the development of area-specific effort control measures – and they accomplished this task in less than a year's time. On behalf of the Board, I commend them for their dedication and hard work, and look forward to their continued participation in lobster management."

The industry-derived effort control measures included a flat trap cap for Area 2 (inshore southern New England) and the Outer Cape, beginning with 1200 traps and reducing to 800 traps over a three year period; trap limits for Areas 3 (offshore waters), 4 (inshore and mid-Atlantic), 5 (inshore southern mid-Atlantic), and 6 (Connecticut and New York state waters) based on historical participation. Participation in Areas 3, 4, 5 & 6

will be limited to the maximum number of traps fished during the specified reference period, which varies by area. Initial trap allocations for Area 3 participants will be further reduced by 20 percent over five years.

Another key element of Addendum I is the coastwide trap tag system. From the Board's perspective, this is essential to the effective implementation of the effort control system established by the LCMTs. The main purpose of the trap tag system is to ensure the consistent enforcement of trap limits throughout the range of the resource by requiring all lobster traps to be tagged.

Addendum I also establishes monitoring and reporting standards for the lobster fishery, circular escape vent specifications, and procedures for determining *de minimis* status. A *de minimis* state is one that has a minimal lobster fishery and, therefore, may be exempted from implementing the full suite of management and monitoring requirements of the plan.

Additionally, the Addendum includes recommendations to the Secretary of Commerce on actions in federal waters. The Commission is committed to working with the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that compatible measures are adopted in federal waters.

Now that Addendum I has been adopted, the next steps to be taken by the affected states and jurisdictions are: (1) implementation of Addendum I; (2) formal evaluation of the stock assessment by an external peer review panel; and (3) development of measures to meet egg production goals through Addendum II.

Addendum I will be available to the public by the end of September. Copies of Addendum I can be obtained by either contacting Jeanette Braxton, Administrative Assistant, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 333, or via the Commission's web page at www.asmfc.org. For more information, please contact Amy Schick, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 317.

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 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, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

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Upcoming Meetings

9/8 (10 AM - 5 PM):

ASMFC Striped Bass Technical Committee, Comfort Inn Airport, 1940 Post Road, Warwick, Rhode Island; (401)732-0470.

9/9 & 10:

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Technical Committee, Baltimore, Maryland.

9/14 (9:30 AM - 3 PM):

ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board, Providence Biltmore, Providence, Rhode Island; (401)421-0700.

9/14 (3 PM - 5PM)

ASMFC American Lobster Management Board, Providence Biltmore, Providence, Rhode Island; (401)421-0700.

9/15:

ASMFC Tautog Technical Committee, Providence, Rhode Island.

9/15 & 16:

ASMFC Management and Science Committee Aquaculture Subcommittee, Ramada Philadelphia Airport, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

9/16 (9 AM - 6 PM):

ASMFC Lobster Technical Committee, Connecticut Department Environmental Protection, Marine Headquarters, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

9/16 -21:

IAFWA Annual Meeting, Killington Grand Resort, Killington, Vermont; (888)64GRAND.

9/20 - 24:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Town and Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina.

9/21 - 23:

Recreational Fisheries Information Network (FIN), FIN, ComFIN, Tampa, Florida. For more information, contact Dave Donaldson at (228)875-5912.

9/21 - 23:

New England Fishery Management Council, Seaport Inn, Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

9/27 & 28:

ASMFC Shad & River Herring Technical Committee, Comfort Inn BWI, 6921 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland; (410)789-9100.

10/12 - 14:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Ramada Inn and Conference Center, Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina; (252)441-2151.

The last summer of the millennium has been eventful for the Dunnigans. One son graduated from college, married and moved to the West Coast. Another graduated from law school and is heading for practice in the Big Apple. Our daughter is now a college sophomore. (Mom and Dad are home alone without adult supervision!) It has been, among other things, a summer of reflection, looking back on two decades-plus of family life and guiding the growth of strong, independent individuals. Any parents could probably boil down their basic guidance for their children into a few simple proverbs. Perhaps the most universal, and one that we surely tried to emphasize, was: "Life is not fair." How many times have we tried to help our children understand this essential equation! How important a lesson for life! And slowly but surely, as they grow, the realization sinks in.

But wait a minute!! Aren't told that we are *supposed* to be fair? If not in life, well then, at least in fisheries management! Does not the law require it? We cannot discriminate, we have to be fair! C'mon, get with it, Jack!

Well, folks, as it goes with life, it goes with fisheries management – it just ain't that simple. Let us start with the fact that the basic rules of fisheries management, under the Commission's Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Charter or even the Magnuson-Stevens Act, *do not* forbid discrimination, nor do they require that fisheries management be fair. That's a fact, ma'am, plain and straightforward. (I presume that federal judges read these basic rules – the law – before they issue their orders, although that is not always readily apparent.) Congress has worked hard to write the law, and the National Marine Fisheries Service has worked hard to interpret it. The states have worked just as hard to establish the ISFMP. We all ought to very carefully read what has been laid down before casting forth allegations concerning discrimination and fairness.

Nevertheless, it is useful to consider what we might believe is fair. We have heard recreational fishermen, for example, claim that their fisheries have the most users, and that the only fair thing to do is recognize this and give them preference. The best for the most numbers; that's what is fair. But we have also heard commercial fishermen argue that they are the only access that non-fishing consumers have to the benefits of our fishery resources, so they really represent the most Americans. Both sides playing "one-ups-manship" in

hopes of being fair. We have also heard some fishermen argue that they were here first, and so they should have a recognized preference. Allow people to continue what they are doing; that's what is fair. But there are also concerns that fisheries management should not foreclose the opportunity for new entrants and young blood because it would be unfair.

Let's face it folks, fairness, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. In the instance of specific allocations of fishing privileges (the one place under the Magnuson-Stevens Act where fairness truly is relevant), it is implicit that assigning a fishing privilege to one necessarily means that it cannot be assigned to another. When it comes time to stand up to the microphone and tell the Commission or Council what I think about that, my perception of the fairness of the matter will depend on whether or not I received the allocation. Even the national standards guidelines cannot tell us what is fair, only that allocations "should be rationally connected to the achievement of OY (optimum yield) or with the furtherance of a legitimate FMP (fishery management plan) objective." Not that something has to be the right way, or the best way, or the only way of getting to where you want to go, but that it is one of the rational ways of getting there.

In the end, you cannot separate the concept of fairness from the basic ends that the fishery managers are trying to accomplish. Managers must meaningfully, concisely, and plainly state what they want to do with a fishery. (We seldom do that in our objectives for fisheries management; but that is grist for another mill.) There are lots of things in any fishery that could be characterized as fair. Access by fishery sectors, maintenance of traditional fisheries, preserving opportunities for future entrants – none of these is an inherently fair criterion, but any of them could be in the context of a particular fishery. And the only people who can decide this are those who vote on the FMP. Once they do, they have a lot of discretion. If I am going to argue that something is not fair, then I had better be ready to point out why it is inconsistent with the objectives in the FMP. That is a challenge not only to those who want to argue fairness, but also to the managers who should set the limits of the fairness debates ahead of time.

American Eel Board Approves Draft Eel FMP: *Final Approval Slated for November*

On August 3, 1999, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission American Eel Management Board approved the Draft Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for American Eel for final adoption by the Board and the Commission at its Annual Meeting in late October/early November. The plan is the culmination of four years of intense work and scrutiny by the American Eel Management Board, Technical Committee, Advisory Panel, and the public. Its specific goals include: protecting and enhancing the abundance of American eel in inland and territorial waters of the Atlantic states and jurisdictions (Maine through Florida, the District of Columbia, and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission); contributing to the viability of the American eel spawning population; and providing for sustainable commercial, subsistence and recreational fisheries by preventing overharvest of any eel life stage.

A Draft Public Hearing Document of the FMP had been approved by the Board in February 1999. This resulted in 18 public hearings along the coast in locations identified by the states and jurisdictions. Recommendations received during the public hearings and written comments were reviewed and addressed by the Board which resulted in some changes to the latest draft.

The impetus to begin the fisheries management planning process for American eel arose in part out of concern regarding a potential decline in American eel populations in recent years and in part out of concern regarding the interconnectedness of fisheries for American eel and horseshoe crab. Several factors have contributed to the concern that unlimited harvest may only aggravate current declines in eel population status. These factors include: (1) a long maturation period (7-30 years); (2) glass eels aggregate seasonally to migrate; (3) yellow eel harvest is a cumulative stress, over multiple years, on the same yearclasses; (4) all eel mortality is pre-spawning mortality; and (5) changes in yearclass abundance are not readily recognizable because harvest data include fish of similar sizes but are from a number of yearclasses.

The draft plan will require mandatory implementation of a coastwide monitoring and assessment program for the young-of-the-year eels. It will also require the states and jurisdictions to collect commercial harvest data in order to quantify the harvest and to evaluate the existing data collection efforts.

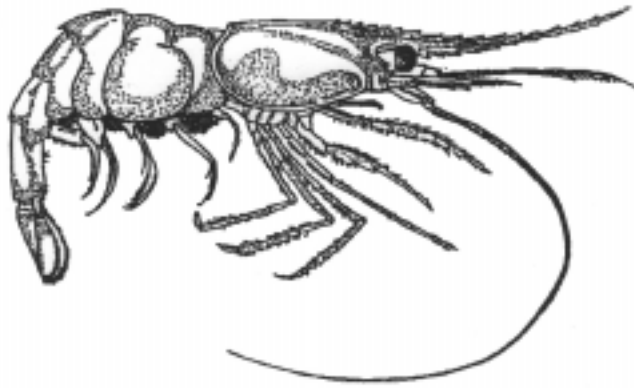
The primary regulatory tools of the plan focus on establishing harvest limits on recreational and commercial fisheries. Specifically, the draft plan calls

for establishment of a six-inch minimum size and, 50 eel/person possession limit for recreational fisheries in all of the participating states/jurisdictions, unless otherwise approved by the Board. Additionally, the Board approved a provision which prohibits the sale of eels by recreational fishermen. Commercial management measures will maintain existing or more conservative American eel commercial fishery regulations, including gear specifications, for all life stages. States with minimum size limits for commercial eel fisheries shall retain those minimum size limits, unless otherwise approved by the American Eel Management Board.

In addition, the Board has approved an initial recommendation to the Secretary of Commerce calling for a ban on harvest of American eel at any life stage in federal waters (three to 200 miles offshore), but will permit a possession limit of 50 eel/person for use as bait. A recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior was also approved calling for the listing of American glass eels and elvers under Appendix III of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). The CITES listing will in no way prohibit the harvest of American eel at any life stage, but rather will improve record-keeping of exports and should reduce any illegal harvest of eel. Of all the comments received through the extensive public hearing process on the draft plan, the Appendix III listing gained the most widespread support.

The final draft of the plan is slated for Board and Commission approval at the Commission's Annual Meeting in early November. For information, please contact Heather Stirratt, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 301, or via email at hstirratt@asmfc.org.





Double Nordmore Grate and Cod End Strengtheners Join the List of Gears Fishermen Can Use to Reduce Finfish Bycatch and Northern Shrimp Losses

As a result of recent actions by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Northern Shrimp Section, northern shrimp fishermen stand to gain increased conservation benefits and additional tools to make their fishing practices more efficient. Specifically, the Section approved the use of two new gears – the double Nordmore grate and cod end strengthener – during the 1999-2000 fishing season as established by the Section in the fall. This will be the first time that northern shrimp fishermen will be able to use these gears without an experimental fishery permit.

The Section's action was in response to industry requests for the allowance of these gear types. In fact, northern shrimp fishermen were instrumental in the development and evaluation of these gears. Through cooperative efforts with the fishing industry, the Northern Shrimp Technical Committee was able to evaluate the impact of these gear types on finfish release and retention of northern shrimp catches. The studies showed that the gears provided a conservation benefit to the fishery, although the Technical Committee did not believe that the benefits warrant mandating the new gear types at this time. The Commission is currently working on specifications for double Nordmore grate and the cod end strengthener, which will be released in early fall.

“Members of the Northern Shrimp Section are very pleased that we can be responsive to industry needs, particularly in a time when industry may begin to see reductions in northern shrimp landings due to population decreases. These gear types will not only help to reduce finfish bycatch, but will also reduce the capture of immature northern shrimp, allowing these animals to reenter the fishery and achieve their reproductive potential,” stated Jill Goldthwait, Chair of the Northern Shrimp Section.

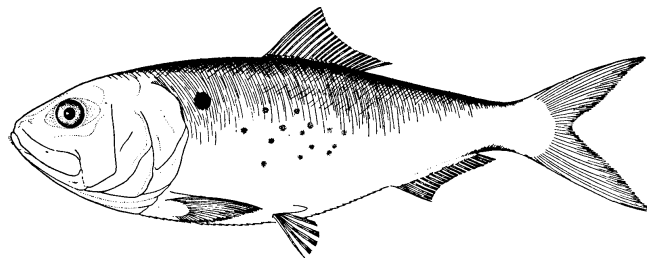
In addition to discussing allowable gear types, the Section reviewed the recent action of the New England Fishery Management Council related to northern shrimp. Specifically, the Council requested that the Commission develop an amendment to the northern shrimp plan within the next year, if northern shrimp is listed as an overfished stock. In the spirit of state-federal cooperation, the Section agreed to review the need for an amendment if northern shrimp is included in the list of overfished species by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

For more information, please contact Amy Schick, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 317.

Correction

In last issue's lead article, which was written by Dusty Rhodes, Dusty was incorrectly represented as the Chair of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Dusty is actually Vice-Chair of the Council; Jim Gilford is the current Council Chair. Both gentlemen were re-elected to these positions this August. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Atlantic Coastal States Schedule Atlantic Menhaden Public Hearings



Last month the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission announced the release of the Public Information Document (PID) for Atlantic Menhaden for public review and comment. Nearly all the jurisdictions involved in the management of Atlantic menhaden have scheduled public hearings. Following are the details (dates, times and locations) of these hearings.

August 30, 1999, 7:00 PM

Virginia Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Newport News, Virginia
Contact: Jack Travelstead, (757)247-2247

September 1, 1999, 7:00 PM

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
Manteo Festival Park
Manteo, North Carolina
Contact: Mike Street, (252)726-7021

September 13, 1999, 7:00 PM

Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Tawes State Office Building Cafeteria
Annapolis, Maryland
Contact: Howard King, (410)260-8264

September 22, 1999, 7:00 PM

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection
Marine Headquarters
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: Eric Smith, (860)434-6043

September 27, 1999, 7:00 PM

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
Dept. of Natural Resources Regional Office
127 Cardinal Drive (extended)
Wilmington, North Carolina
Contact: Mike Street, (252)726-7021

September 29, 1999, 7:00 PM

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Cedarville Fire Station
2209 State Road (Route 3A)
Plymouth, Massachusetts
Contact: Phil Coates, (617)727-3193

August 31, 1999, 7:00 PM

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries
Duke Marine Laboratory
Beaufort, North Carolina
Contact: Mike Street, (252)726-7021

September 9, 1999, 7:00 PM

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Atlantic Beach City Hall
800 Seminole Road
Atlantic Beach, Florida
Contact: Roy Williams, (850)487-0554

September 21, 1999, 6:30 PM

New Jersey Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife
A-Wing Lecture Hall
Stockton College
Ponoma, New Jersey
Contact: Bruce Freeman, (609)292-2083

September 23, 1999, 7:00 PM

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Bureau of Marine Resources
205 N. Belle Meade Road
East Setauket, New York
Contact: Byron Young, (516)444-0436

September 28, 1999, 7:00 PM

Maine Department of Natural Resources
Sheraton South Portland
South Portland, Maine
Contact: Lew Flagg, (207)624-6341

September 30, 1999, 5:00 PM

Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management
Radisson Airport Hotel Providence
Warwick, Rhode Island
Contact: Dick Sisson, (401)789-3094

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ASMFC Sport Fish Restoration Committee Update

The Commission's Sport Fish Restoration Committee met in Alexandria, Virginia on August 3, 1999. The Committee took up a number of issues including transmittal of a letter to the Clean Water Coalition in regard to draft legislation entitled "Fishable Waters Act." The letter was prepared at the direction of the Habitat and Legislative Committees following meetings this past April. Committee recommendations were included in the final draft.

The Committee also discussed establishing a dialogue, through the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for guidance on levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) present in derelict vessels which may be used to construct artificial reefs. The Committee stated a desire to proceed with the process to prepare the letter stating concerns to the EPA Administrator and requested that the draft be referred to the Commission's Management and Science and Habitat Committees for further review. An issue paper will be prepared rela-

tive to PCBs and fish habitat enhancement using "secondary use" materials. The paper will be available prior to the Commission's Annual Meeting in late October/early November. In addition, the committee considered a proposal by staff to develop a Strategic Plan for Artificial Reefs. The purpose of the plan is to achieve better coordination between the Commission's Artificial Reef and the Habitat Committees and Interstate Fisheries Management Program.

Another item discussed by the committee was development of a resolution supporting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Fish Hatcheries System. The Committee requested that the issue be referred to the Management and Science Committee for further development. The Committee also reviewed the annual implementation plan for Sport Fish Restoration Program. The implementation plan includes 16 specific action items to be performed during the one-year period. For more information, please contact Richard Christian, Sport Fish Restoration Coordinator, at (202)289-6400, ext. 307.

International Artificial Reef Conference Planned for October 1999

The Seventh International Conference on Artificial Reefs and related Aquatic Habitat (CARAH) will be held in Sanremo, Liguria, Italy, October 7-11, 1999. Technical features of the Conference include over 100 oral reports and a poster session. Presentations will include the latest scientific information from colleagues in Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and North America. Topics include function and ecology, mariculture, design of habitats, evaluating performance, artisan fishing, mitigation and restoration, and planning (includes worldwide panel).

The National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Intergovernmental and Recreational Fisheries will cohost the planning session and provide for participation of a U.S. delegation to include state artificial reef program representatives of the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific states. Panel discussions will include an overview of the National Artificial Reef Plan of 1985 and amendments proposed by the states through a joint interstate commission effort. Since 1985, the coastal states have acted through their respective interstate marine fisheries commissions (Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Atlantic) to exchange information and coordinate policy development and planning relative to marine artificial reef programs nationwide. The Gulf and Atlantic Commissions established committees to assist member states in coordination of such activities. Following a request by Com-

mittee members in 1995, the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions established a protocol with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and the National Marine Fisheries Service to revise and update the guidelines provided in the Secretary's Plan of 1985. The process undertaken has assisted state and federal agencies to consolidate a national planning effort to reevaluate the direction and responsibilities for artificial reef development in the U.S. The panel debate will provide deliberative forum to share experiences of this process, and exchange ideas with reef developers in other countries.

Attendees at the conference will include fishery scientists, resource managers, artisan, commercial, and recreational fishing interests, educators and media, habitat manufacturer, and consultants.

There is still time to make plans to attend. **Deadline is September 1, 1999** to indicate an interest. For assistance with travel arrangements, please contact Barbara Thoney at Continental Capers Travel Center, (800)446-0705 or (352)378-1406, email: barbara@flycapers.com. The full program is available at the website: <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/SUDO/DEPT/7CARAH/7carah.html>

Shad and River Herring Recovery Reaches a New Level of Excitement



With the adoption of Amendment 1, the states and jurisdictions involved in shad and river herring management are now required to submit fishing/recovery plans to the Management Board for approval by January 1, 2000. Recovery plans must include descriptions of in-river management areas, stock restoration targets, stock target mortality rates, timelines for restoration, and descriptions of the management measures intended to achieve restoration goals. As of July 1, 1999, the states and jurisdictions ranging from Maine to Florida submitted these documents and many have exciting plans for shad and river herring recovery!

Concern over access to historical spawning grounds in New England has resulted in habitat-based restoration programs. Maine reports that "beginning in 2001, dams with licensed prescriptions for the installation of passage will sequentially begin construction of fishways within or below the portion(s) of drainages targeted for restoration." Rhode Island and Connecticut are also "making improvements in the function and efficiency of existing fishways." Massachusetts has established an annual goal of providing passage for 35,000 adult American shad via the Essex fish-lift on the Merrimack River.

Hatchery programs dominate mid-Atlantic recovery initiatives. New Jersey will initiate a coastal tagging program for American shad, whereby a minimum of 500 American shad will be marked

for a mixed stock evaluation in 2000. Maryland estimates over five million American shad larvae will be produced each year with the implementation of State restoration programs. Similarly, Virginia continues to stock the James and Pamunkey Rivers. In 1998 alone, over 14 million fry were used to stock the James and Pamunkey Rivers.

Recently, North Carolina implemented the Roanoke River American Shad Mitigation Project. Whereby, the North Carolina Department of Transportation was authorized to construct temporary causeways in the Roanoke River to improve fish passage upstream. This project will include concentrated stocking programs to monitor hatchery-released fish returns to upstream spawning grounds over the next six to seven years. Mark and recapture techniques are also being utilized by other Southern states as a mechanism to determine stock migration, upstream passage, and obstruction related mortality.

For additional information on these or any other Shad and River Herring related issues, please contact Heather Stirratt, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 ext. 301, or by email at hstirratt@asmfc.org.

Implementation Status of the Horseshoe Crab Management Plan

Almost a year has past since the adoption of the Horseshoe Crab Fishery Management Plan (Plan) in October 1998, so it seems appropriate to report on the implementation status of the Plan. The implementation schedule required all states to meet the Plan's compliance requirements by March 15, 1999. This date was necessary to ensure that each state would have implemented the Plan's mandatory reporting requirements prior to start of the 1999 horseshoe crab fishing season. This information was requested to provide an accurate accounting of the 1999 harvest and for the Board to use in conjunction with the reference period landings to establish a coastwide landings cap for implementation in the year 2000.

Unfortunately, the majority of states have had a difficult time in obtaining authority and/or implementing mandatory reporting requirements, particularly for the hand-harvest and per-

sonal use sector of the fishery. Only five of the seventeen state management proposals (New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina) were approved by the Board in March 1999. As a result, the Board extended the compliance deadline to September 1, 1999. The Board approved five more state management proposals (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Georgia) at its spring meeting in May 1999. The remaining six state management proposals were reviewed by the Board on August 4, 1999. The Board approved state and jurisdiction management proposals for the District of Columbia and Potomac River Fisheries Commission and approved the proposals for the remaining states (Maine, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Florida) contingent upon the states addressing the issues identified by the Technical Committee by November 1, 1999.

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State Legislators Meet

The Commission's Legislators convened on August 2, 1999. Although the Legislators have historically convened only during the Commission's Spring and Annual Meetings, three years ago, the Legislators agreed to begin meeting in August, as it seems to be the month in which the fewest Atlantic state legislatures are in session.

The agenda for the meeting included a discussion of certain administrative procedures employed in the States of New York, Connecticut, and North Carolina. At a previous meeting, some legislators expressed concern with the manner and length of time that is required to enact some fisheries management laws and regulations. The 15 Atlantic states often use varying procedures for managing fisheries; some states require the legislature to pass laws endorsing each new fisheries management regulation, while other states provide varying degrees of authority to the state marine fisheries department to regulate fisheries. Summaries of the procedures of three states were discussed at this meeting.

Legislators were briefed on how the New York State Assembly grants most authority over developing and enacting fisheries management regulations to the Department of Environmental Conservation, although the Assembly writes detailed laws for certain species and subjects all fisheries management laws to sunset provisions requiring periodic legislative reauthorization. In the case of Connecticut, the State's Legislative Regulatory Review Committee, a bipartisan, bicameral group reviews proposed state regulations for legal sufficiency and general soundness and purpose. North Carolina, on the other hand, operates through the North Carolina's Fisheries Reform Act, which establishes or revises fisheries regulations in six major policy areas including licensing requirements, management practices, habitat conservation, enforcement and marine studies. The Act also establishes a Marine Fisheries Commission that has broad authorization for determining fisheries objectives and for adopting fisheries regulations.

The legislators then discussed what resources were available to assist legislators in their responsibilities with the Commission. Audio tapes of Commission public hearings in their states are available to legislators upon request. Additionally, the legislators asked that the Commission staff provide summaries of sections of the Spring and Annual Meeting briefing books. Legislators reminded staff that this is the second request for such summaries, since the Legislators and Governor's Appointees made a similar request at the 57th Annual Meeting.

The legislators then discussed the attendance of Commission advisors at species advisory panel and the Advisory Committee meetings. Legislators noted that advisory panels are a very important part of the Commission management structure, though, unfortunately, attendance on some of the panels may be lackluster. Legislators were informed that advisory panel attendance records are also available upon request. Legislators noted that

the issue of attendance on advisory panels should be explored further.

Some legislators took special note of the scheduling of the Commission's upcoming 58th Annual Meeting during Election Day. The legislators noted that such scheduling does not encourage legislators attendance at the meetings, since legislators are often required to be in their districts during Election Day. Additionally, the legislators have registered similar sentiments to the Commission in the past. Finally, the Commissioners made a motion to request that the Commission not to schedule meetings, including its Annual Meetings, during Election Day. The motion will be forwarded to the full Commission when it next convenes in Mystic, Connecticut for the 58th Annual Meeting.

For more information, please contact: Lori Rosa, Special Assistant, at (202)289-6400, ext. 314.

Tautog Management Board Approved Addendum II for Public Hearing

The Tautog Management Board met on August 5, 1999 to review and approve Addendum II to the Fishery Management Plan for Tautog. The Management Board approved the Addendum for public hearing, with the final approval slated to occur during the Commission's Annual Meeting in early November. The Commission will publish a schedule of the tautog public hearings once the meeting dates and locations have been finalized. The hearings will most likely occur in late September and early October.

Addendum II delays the next reduction in fishing mortality for two years. On April 1, 1998, the states were required to implement management measures to reach the interim fishing mortality target of $F=0.24$. Addendum I requires states to meet the next fishing mortality target ($F=0.15$) by April 1, 2000. Addendum II, if approved, will require that states meet the $F=0.15$ target by April 1, 2002. The Management Board agreed to delay the reduction in fishing mortality because the assessment will not be able to fully evaluate the effects of the current management programs due to the short duration of implementation. Many of the states have only had the current regulations in place for about 16 months. The Addendum includes a series of issues that are to be addressed during the two-year delay in fishing mortality reduction. The issues to be addressed are intended to give the states more flexibility in developing management programs, while still achieving the goals and objectives of the management plan.

For more information, please contact Robert Beal, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400, ext. 318.

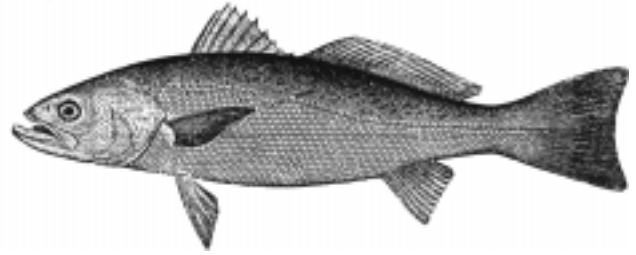
Implementation Status of the Horseshoe Crab Management Plan (continued from page 8)

Delay in the Plan's implementation schedule has resulted in concern that the goals and objectives of this Plan are not being achieved. At the Board's August 4 meeting, several conservation organizations (American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society, World Wildlife Fund, Delaware Audubon Society, Maryland Sierra Club and Maryland Conservation Council) recommended that the Board take immediate action on the following to rectify the situation: (1) request the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to implement an immediate moratorium on the harvest of horseshoe crabs in federal waters until the Commission develops a coastwide quota; (2) establish a mechanism to encourage the development of alternative baits and trap designs to reduce the horseshoe crab bait needs of the eel and conch fisheries; and (3) swiftly adopt a coastwide landing cap on horseshoe crabs significantly below the reference period landings.

At the August 4 meeting, the Technical reported to the Board that despite New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland maintaining their existing state horseshoe crab laws and regulations in 1999 to protect horseshoe crab spawning within and adjacent to the Delaware Bay, substantial harvesting outside the mouth of Delaware Bay in federal waters has negated the conservation of this population of horseshoe crabs. The Technical Committee also reported its concern about developing a coastwide landings cap for the year 2000. In October 1998, the Board rejected the recommendation of a coastwide landing cap because of insufficient landings data; since the majority of states did not implement mandatory reporting, there will only be minor improvements in the quality of landings data. Despite this, however, it was the Board's opinion to maintain the implementation schedule for establishing a coastal cap on horseshoe crab landings along the Atlantic coast in the year 2000. To facilitate this effort, the Board has requested the Technical Committee to provide guidance to the states in determining a reliable estimate of horseshoe crab landings for 1999 in anticipation of establishing a coastal cap in the year 2000. The Board has also requested the Technical Committee to develop alternative management strategies to be implemented in the year 2000 in case a coastal cap is not approved.

The Board will also explore the use of alternative baits and trap designs to reduce the exploitation of the horseshoe crab resource by convening a workshop to be conducted this fall. Some other projects which have been initiated include: (1) a summary of the 1999 horseshoe crab spawner and egg count surveys; (2) the development of guidelines for delineating horseshoe crab spawning and nursery habitat; (3) the design of a horseshoe crab benthic survey; and (4) a summary of the 1998 biomedical questionnaire.

For more information on horseshoe crabs in general, or the alternative bait workshop in particular, please contact Tom O'Connell, Horseshoe Crab Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (410)260-8271 or via email at toconnell@dnr.state.md.us.



Weakfish Update

The Weakfish Management Board met on August 5, 1999. It had a number of pieces of business, including approval of two new Advisory Panel members, review of the recommendations of the Plan Review Team (PRT), and an overview of the most recent stock assessment information.

In its first order of business, the Board approved two new Advisory Panel members: George Scocca, from New York and Felix Heald from Maryland.

Next, Commission staff presented the recommendations of the Plan Review Team (PRT) regarding state compliance reports. Based on recommendations from the PRT, the Board directed the Technical Committee to recommend changes to the criteria, procedures, and requirements for *de minimis* status; and to update the Evaluation Manual to account for changes since the approval of Amendment 3. In addition, the Board changed the due date of state compliance reports from June 1 of each year to September 1 of each year. The Board acknowledged that all states are currently implementing all required measures of Amendment 3.

Technical Committee Chair, Jim Uphoff, also presented the most recent stock assessment information, including recommendations on biological reference points, and bag and size limit progress. The stock assessment indicates a reduction in fishing mortality rates and an increase in spawning stock biomass. The assessment methods incorporate new information and techniques, which improve our ability to assess the status of the stock. This has resulted in a change in our understanding of the magnitude of fishing mortality, which now appears to be lower than historical levels. The Technical Committee recommended new biological reference points based on the new assessment methods. Because of these changes, the stock assessment will be reviewed at the fall Northeast Stock Assessment Review Committee/Workshop to confirm the analysis.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for January 2000. For more information, please contact Amy Schick, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400, ext. 317.

Atlantic Coastal States Schedule Atlantic Menhaden Public Hearings (continued from page 6)

Release of the PID and the holding of public hearings are the first steps in developing Amendment 1 to the Atlantic Menhaden Fishery Management Plan (FMP). In January, the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board passed a motion to initiate development of an amendment to the current FMP. This action was based, in part, on concerns that the Atlantic coastal population is in decline and that the management strategies set forth in the current plan may not adequately address declines in the population. The current FMP relies on six "trigger variables" to monitor changes in stock size and recruitment in the population. Since the majority of these triggers are based on catch data, the Board is concerned that the triggers do not reflect true trends in the population. Further, the trigger variables do not result in any direct management and/or regulatory action. Therefore, the PID and the amendment process will address possibly replacing several of these triggers with true biological reference points which would respond to the management goals and result in regulatory changes in the menhaden management process.

The PID will also address the current management structure and process for Atlantic menhaden. The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board is unlike any other Commission management Board in that it includes industry representation. This structure has both pros and cons and these will be thoroughly debated throughout the amendment process. The PID also reviews the current status of the resource, the various fisheries for menhaden, and the ecological role that menhaden play in the ecosystem.

Copies of the Menhaden PID can be obtained by either contacting Jeanette Braxton, Administrative Assistant, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 333, or via the Commission's webpage under "Public Input" at www.asmfmc.org. **The public comment period for the Menhaden PID extends until October 8, 1999.** Comments should be forwarded to Dr. Joseph Desfosse, Menhaden Fishery Management Coordinator at 1444 Eye Street, N.W., Sixth Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005; (202)289-6051 (fax). For more information, please contact Dr. Joseph Desfosse, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 329.



Board Moves to Reduce Striped Bass Fishing Mortality for Year 2000

The Striped Bass Management Board met on August 5, 1999 to discuss two issues: (1) the striped bass stock assessment, and (2) the Public Information Document for the next amendment or addendum for the striped bass management plan.

A summary of the striped bass stock assessment was presented to the Management Board. The assessment indicated that the 1998 fishing mortality of full recruited striped bass ($F=0.38$) exceeded the target F (0.31) and equaled the overfishing definition ($F_{msy}=0.38$). Fishing mortality on ages five through seven fish exceeded the target F , and the fishing mortality on ages eight and older fish exceeded the overfishing definition. The overall stock size increased slightly in 1998, however, there was a decline in spawning stock biomass from 15 million pounds in 1997 to 14 million pounds in 1998.

Due to the 1998 fishing mortality rate exceeding the target in the Plan, the Striped Bass Management Board agreed that the management program needed to be altered for year 2000 to reduce the fishing mortality to meet the target in the plan. The Striped Bass Technical Committee has been tasked with developing different management scenarios to reduce fishing mortality for year 2000. The Technical Committee has a meeting scheduled on September 8, 1999 to conduct the required analyses.

The Striped Bass Management Board, Technical Committee, and Advisory Panel will hold a series of meetings prior to the Commission's Annual Meeting in November. During the Annual Meeting, the Management Board will meet to give final approval to states proposals to meet the required reduction in fishing mortality.

The Striped Bass Management Board agreed to continue developing the Public Information Document for the next amendment or addendum after the state management programs for the year 2000 have been approved. The Board will be pursuing the next amendment or addendum to the management plan in year 2000.

For more information, please contact Robert Beal, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400, ext. 318.

AOC Meets to Recommend Charter Changes

The Commission's Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) met on August 2, 1999, during the Commission's August meeting week, to address two major issues. These were an evaluation of the concept of "weighted voting" and proposed changes to the Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Charter. The concept of weighted voting was first raised nearly a year ago based on concerns that a state (administration, public officials, industry or public) may feel "powerlessness and disenfranchisement when it is outvoted by states that are not significant players in the fishery." A brief issues paper was prepared and Commissioner views were surveyed. Although the issue was recognized as important, the majority of Commissioners did not support weighted voting, in part because of the difficulties inherent in developing such a system. Commissioners instead opted for identifying other means to address this "fairness" issue. A summary memorandum expressing the majority position will be prepared shortly.

The AOC also reviewed recommended changes to the ISFMP Charter (as revised February 1998). This review was necessary in order to formalize adopted changes in ISFMP Management Board voting procedures. Beginning in October 1999, the Commission instituted a pilot program, which provided equal participation of all three Commissioners from each state at the species management board level; each state, however, still had only one vote. The pilot program was so successful that last spring the ISFMP Policy Board adopted the new participation and voting procedures as standard operating procedures for the ISFMP management boards.

Another proposed change to the Charter includes language that would allow management boards to invite the Executive Director/Chair of the Regional Fishery Management Council to participate as a voting member in the activities of the board when the board determines that this would advance the interjurisdictional management of the specific species. These Charter changes and other "housekeeping" changes will be made to the Charter and provided to the AOC by the end of August. Final recommendations will be made to the ISFMP Policy Board at the Commission's Annual Meeting in late October/early November 1999.

For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance & Administration, at (202)289-6400, ext. 306.

House and Senate Act on Fiscal 2000 Spending Bills

Both houses of Congress have commenced action toward appropriating funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State for fiscal year 2000 (FY 2000). The House Appropriations Committee introduced H.R. 2670, its proposal to fund the Departments, on August 2, 1999, and it was adopted by the full House on August 5, 1999. The Senate took an early start on its version of the legislation, S. 1217, reviewing the Senate Appropriations Committee proposal upon introduction on June 14, 1999. The Senate approved the measure on July 22, 1999.

The Senate bill provides \$1.777 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) operations, research, and facilities for FY 2000. S. 1217 provides \$442.162 million for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for FY 2000, roughly \$22 million over the request. The bill authorizes fees for the implementation of Community and Individual Fishery Quota Programs, but rejects a new fee that would have been collected on an ex-vessel value of commercial fish landings. The Senate bill includes level funding for the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Fisheries Management Act (six million), the marine fisheries commissions (\$1.25 million each), the interjurisdictional fisheries grants (\$2.6 million) and the anadromous fishery grants (\$2.1 million).

The Senate bill urges NMFS to coordinate data collection databases nationally, and directs NMFS to report on these activities with the fiscal 2001 request. The Senate bill provides \$16.408 million for information collection and analyses resource information activities. S. 1217 provides \$1.3 million for Atlantic Recreational Fisheries Information Network (RecFIN) programs, and directs funding to be used in part to continue a South Carolina assessment and tagging program, and study economic recreational fishing data.

The following are earmarked in the Senate budget: \$200,000 to sample lobster populations in New England; \$400,000 to continue research on southeastern shrimp pathogens; \$300,000 to study the status and trends of southeastern sea turtles; \$300,000 for research on the Charleston bump; \$400,000 for Atlantic herring and mackerel research; \$200,000 to study lobster diseases; \$600,000 for bluefin tuna tagging; \$1.5 million for the Chesapeake Bay multispecies management strategy (including blue crab); \$208,000 for a Bycatch Workshop and \$1,000,000 for aquaculture issues. \$300,000 is provided for a New England Safe Seafood Program. Chesapeake Oyster disease research is funded at one million and the Senate directs NMFS to include similar funding in next years request. Addi-

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Atlantic Coastal News Bites



Maine Lobster Trap Limit Violation. On August 1, 1999, five vessels and 18 Maine Marine Patrol officers seized 1,178 lobster traps from a Maine fisherman as violating the current 1,000 trap limit. The limit declined from 1,200 traps to 1,000 traps this year (and will decline to 800 traps next year); this is the first action taken against a violator. The penalty for violating this measure is \$100 per trap. [Associated Press]

Anthropogenic Noise. On July 21, 1999, the Office of Naval Research announced that its Marine Mammal Science Program had released the 140-page Proceedings of the Workshop on the Effects of Anthropogenic Noise in the Marine Environment discussing the potential biological effects of underwater noise [http://www.onr.navy.mil/sci_tech/engineering/proceed.pdf]. On July 30, 1999, the U.S. Navy is scheduled to release an environmental impact statement (EIS) on its low frequency active sonar system, concluding that it will not endanger marine life and human divers exposed to its pulses. A series of five public meetings will be held to obtain comments on the EIS, with the first planned for August 4, 1999, in Washington, DC. [ONR press release, Environmental News Network, Associated Press]

Bycatch Reduction Device Certification. On July 8, 1999, the National Marine Fisheries Service published final regulations for testing and certifying bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) for use in shrimp trawls. No comments were received on a proposed rule published June 3, 1999. [Federal Register]

Shrimp-Sea Turtle Revised Guidelines. On July 8, 1999, the Department of State published revised guidelines for implementing U.S. law relating to importing shrimp so as to protect sea turtles. These revisions were completed to satisfy international trade concerns of the World Trade Organization. The revised guidelines retain provisions allowing shrimp imports from uncertified countries for individual shipments certified as having been caught by shrimpers using turtle excluder devices. The legality of these provisions is being challenged by Earth Island Institute in U.S. federal court. [Federal Register, U.S. Information Service Washington File]

North Carolina Saltwater Recreational Fishing License. On July 6, 1999, the North Carolina House voted 88-23 to pass a bill establishing a saltwater sportfishing licence, after it was amended to allow private boat owners to purchase a license to cover anyone fishing from their boat. [Associated Press, Raleigh News & Observer, Jacksonville Daily News]

Coral Protection. On July 6, 1999, Greenpeace Australia announced completion of a report "Climate Change, Coral Bleaching, and the Future of the World's Coral Reefs" predicting that coral reefs could be eliminated from most areas by 2100 if the current rate of climate change continues. This report is scheduled to be published in the November 1999 issue of the journal Marine and Freshwater Research. On July 20, 1999, six scientists and technicians emerged after completing the second of six planned missions this summer in the artificial habitat Aquarius a depth of 50 feet amid coral reef habitat in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Aquarius is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Undersea Research Center. [NOAA press release, Associated Press, Greenpeace Australia press release, Reuters, Environmental News Network]

The above information was downloaded from HDRFISH@listserv.tamu.edu, a service of the Human Dimensions in Recreational Fisheries Committee of Texas A&M University, Wildlife and Fisheries Department.

House and Senate Act on Fiscal 2000 Spending Bills (continued from page 12)

tionally, \$500,000 is provided for Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery Partnership and NMFS is directed to support oyster disease research via Saltonstall-Kennedy grants. Additionally, one million is provided for Chesapeake Bay Oyster Reef Restoration and \$1.5 million for Chesapeake Bay management.

S. 1217 provides \$200,000 for a Cooperative Marine Education and Research Program between the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Virginia Institute for Marine Science. The Senate directs NMFS to research fishing gear modifications that will benefit right whales (providing \$750,000), and encourages interagency cooperation with the Coast Guard and the Department of the Navy to reduce ship strikes in whale habitat areas. Additional funds are provided for acoustic studies (\$1.150 million); reproductive research (\$450,000); habitat monitoring and population studies (\$600,000); tagging studies (\$650,000); and large whale studies conducted by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (\$250,000).

The South Carolina Marine Resources Monitoring Assessment and Prediction Program (MARMAP) is funded at \$850,000, while Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN) is also funded (\$2.5 million for the Southeast and \$500,000 for the Northeast).

S. 1217 provides \$182.927 million for conservation and management operations. Atlantic salmon recovery efforts are level funded in the budget. Consistent with last year, six

million is provided for implementation of the American Fisheries Act. S. 1217 includes \$66.725 million for protected species recovery, which includes eight million for the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The Senate version does include \$100 million for implementation of the Administration-proposed Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery proposal.

The budget includes eight million for cooperative research, management, and enforcement regarding Gulf of Maine groundfish, of which \$2.82 million would be provided for a Northeast Consortium cooperative research and development program on selective gear technologies and to begin using commercial fishing vessels as research platforms.

Within the National Ocean Service budget, \$6.175 million is provided for *pfisteria* and harmful algae bloom rapid response, as well as one million dollars for the South Carolina Task Group on Toxic Algae for research and response activities. The bill provides one million for implementation of the Oil Pollution Act, with an additional million for spill coastal resource coordination. The Coastal Services Center is funded at \$18 million, while \$2.674 million is provided for estuarine and coastal assessment. Ocean and coastal management is funded at \$91 million. Seven million is provided for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System Program; \$18.5 million for the Marine Sanctuary and one million for section 6217 non-point pollution control grants. Clean Water Act Section 310 grants are unfunded in the budget. Also, \$7.275 million is provided for the Atlantic National Undersea Research Program.

The bill includes \$13.243 million for Fleet maintenance and planning, including one million for upgrading the F/V Rainier, and \$61,567,000 for the Fleet Replacement account for construction of the first of four Fisheries Research Vessels.

H.R. 2670 provides \$1.96 billion for NOAA and \$350.545 million for NMFS. The House level funds the Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions, the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act and Anadromous Fisheries Act grants.

The House noted the crux of fisheries management is accurate assessments. The House provides \$98.1 million for base Resource Information. The Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Development Foundation studies for red snapper and shrimp fisheries are funded at one million dollars. Further, the MARMAP program is level funded. The House requested NMFS study bluefin tuna management and assessment practices; and request



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House and Senate Act on Fiscal 2000 Spending Bills (continued from page 14)

NMFS study economic impact in the migratory shark fishery. The bill provides \$350,000 for sea turtle (including Kemp's Ridley) protections, and provides \$350,000 for right whale research.

H.R.2670 provides \$29.77 million for implementation and development of fisheries management programs, \$500,000 of which is designated for intertidal studies of blue back herring, striped bass, and other species. On the issue of species interactions, the House provides one million to continue studies of Atlantic bluefish stocks and striped bass populations. For New England fisheries, \$1.88 million is made available for activities relating to the Northeast Multispecies Fisheries Management Plan.

The House bill directs NOAA to fund Saltonstall-Kennedy grants with a priority on research and education of raw molluscan shellfish bacteria, such as *Vibrio vulnificus*, which can affect some immune-deficient consumers. The House bill does not include \$160 million for the Administration-proposed Pacific Salmon Recovery Fund.

H.R. 2670, under the National Ocean Service, provides \$12.6 million for the base Ocean Assessment Program; five million for the Coastal Services Center; \$3.925 million for *pfisteria* harmful algal bloom research and monitoring; two million dollars for the JASON project's coastal and ocean outreach and education. \$5.41 million is provided for Oceanic and Coastal Research for the Southeast Fisheries Laboratory. \$18.2 million is provided for the Coastal Ocean Program, which includes \$5.2 million for hypoxia, *pfisteria* and other harmful algal bloom research. H.R. 2670 includes \$57.7 million for Clean Water Act Sections 306, 306A, 309, and 6217 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA). Under another CZMA Section 310, \$28 million is provided for environmentally concerned development in coastal communities. National Estuarine Research Reserve System is provided \$5.650 million, while the National Marine Sanctuary Program is provided \$16 million.

The House provides seven million dollars routine maintenance of the existing NOAA fleet. Funds are not provided for construction or modernization of the fleet, and the House requests NOAA to report on plans to contract for data acquisition.

For more information, please contact: Lori Rosa, Special Assistant, at (202)289-6400, ext. 314.

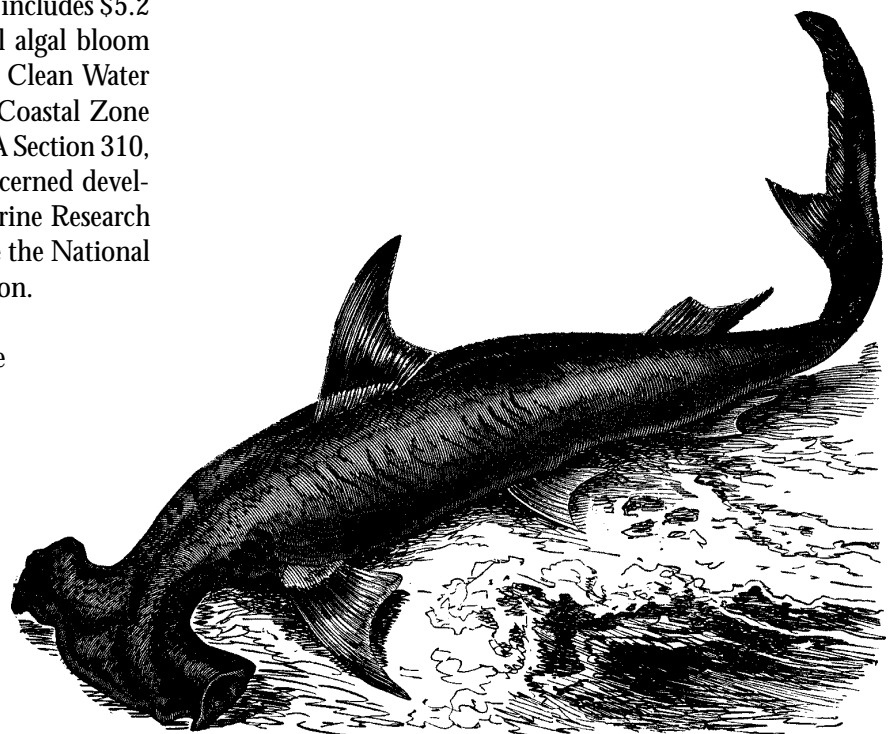
ASMFC Shark Management Board Prioritizes Actions

The Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board met on August 4, 1999 to address organizational issues (elections, committee appointments) and discuss priorities for the initial fishery management plan (FMP). Pat Augustine (New York Governor's Appointee) was elected Board Chair and Dr. David Pierce (Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries) was elected Vice-chair.

A Technical Committee has been appointed (pending further appointments by Rhode Island, New York, and Maryland), and a Plan Development Team (PDT) is being put together with appointments to be made by Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, North Carolina, and possibly New Jersey.

Spiny dogfish will be the priority species for the initial FMP. Outside organizations will be contacted to discuss their willingness and ability to provide funding support for initial PDT activities due to the lack of Commission funds for shark management efforts at this time. The PDT was tasked with reviewing the list of issues identified at the Commission's shark workshop as well as reviewing the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's FMP for spiny dogfish. Commission staff will canvas all the states/jurisdictions to determine what regulations have been implemented pertaining to both spiny dogfish and coastal sharks.

For more information, please contact: Dr. Joseph Desfosse, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400, ext. 329.



ASMFC Comings & Goings

Edwin Conklin -- The Commission would like to bid a fond farewell to Administrative Commissioner Edwin Conklin, who has represented Florida since September 1994. Mr. Conklin's appointment ushered in a period of Florida's active involvement in Commission programs, which continues to this day. His departure reflects a shift in Florida's Commission membership from the Department of Environmental Protection to the newly formed Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The Commission would like to thank Mr. Conklin for his valuable service over the past five years and wishes him success in his future endeavors.

Dr. Russell Nelson -- The Commission would like to welcome Dr. Russell Nelson, who replaces Mr. Conklin as the Administrative Commissioner from Florida. Dr. Nelson was appointed by Dr. Allan Egbert, Executive Director of

the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, in July of 1999. He received his B.A. from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in English and Philosophy and his Ph.D. in Marine Fisheries Ecology from North Carolina State University. As the Executive Director of the Florida Marine Fisheries Commission and a member of the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils, he will bring a breadth of experience and insight to the Commission. Welcome aboard, Russ!

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