



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

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November 2004

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.

Dr. William Hogarth Receives Prestigious David H. Hart Award

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented Dr. William Hogarth, NOAA's Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, its highest annual award, the Captain David H. Hart Award, at the Commission's 63rd Annual Meeting in New Castle, New Hampshire.

Dr. Hogarth has been in the forefront of interstate fisheries management on the Atlantic coast for nearly two decades. He served as State Director for the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries for eight years, bringing innovative approaches for developing, managing and monitoring the state's fisheries resources while ensuring their protection for future generations. In particular, he promoted state legislation enhancing management of coastal fisheries through

revisions to the licensing system, improved fisheries data collection, and the establishment of a restructured governing board and new species advisory committees.

As ASMFC Chair, Dr. Hogarth led the Commission through the establishment of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, and the creation of the Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter. Under his leadership, the Commission moved forward with important measures to protect and conserve weakfish.

As Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, he has emphasized teambuilding and partnerships. He has worked tirelessly to improve relations between stakeholders and managers by fostering open communications between fishing constituents and his agency, and promoting cooperative state/federal management efforts. He has a keen ability to resolve fisheries issues, willingly involving managers, stakeholders and the public when making critical decisions. He is an avid supporter of the states, vigorously promoting state/federal partnerships. A steadfast advocate for sustainable fisheries management, Dr. Hogarth has earned the respect of all those involved in living marine resource management.

The Commission instituted the "Captain David H. Hart Award" in 1991 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the betterment of marine fisheries on the Atlantic coast. The award is named for the Commission's oldest and longest serving member, a Governor's Appointee from New Jersey who was dedicated to the advancement and protection of marine fishery resources.



From left: ASMFC Executive Director John V. O'Shea, Dr. William Hogarth, and ASMFC Chair John I. Nelson Jr.

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

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Preston P. Pate, Jr. (NC), Chair
George D. Lapointe (ME), Vice-Chair

John V. O'Shea, Executive Director
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Upcoming Meetings

11/22 (10 AM - 5 PM) & 23 (9 AM - 4 PM):

Atlantic Sturgeon Workshop: Working Toward Recovery, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, 12100 Beech Forest Road, Laurel, Maryland.

12/6 - 10:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Atlantic Beach, 217 West Fort Macon Road, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina; (252)240-1155.

12/7 - 9:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn Select, Claymont, Delaware.

12/9 (10:30 AM - 5:30 PM) & 10 (8:30 AM - 3:00 PM):

ASMFC American Lobster Technical Committee, Stock Assessment Subcommittee and Model Development Subcommittee, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

2005

1/18 - 20:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Radisson Hotel, 700 Settlers Landing Road, Hampton, Virginia.

2/1 - 3:

New England Fishery Management Council, Courtyard by Marriott, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

2/7 - 10:

ASMFC Meeting Week, Radisson Hotel Old Town Alexandria, 901 North Fairfax, Alexandria, Virginia.

3/3 - 5:

Maine's Fishermen's Forum, Samoset Resort, Rockport, Maine.

3/15 - 17:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Ramada Inn/Outer Banks Resort & Conference Center, 1701 S. Virginia Dare Trail, Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina.

3/29 - 31:

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

3/3- 5:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel & Conference Center, 9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Maryland.

Our 63rd Annual Meeting in New Castle, New Hampshire, may have been our best ever. Besides a busy week of important board and committee meetings, annual meetings provide an opportunity for us all to enjoy the hospitality of our host state, and learn more about the fisheries and heritage of the region. Commissioners John Nelson (and his staff), Ritchie White, Representative MaryAnn Blanchard and proxy Dennis Abbott out did themselves in selecting a location and planning activities that we will long remember. Our annual meetings also provide the opportunity to recognize and thank those who have gone above and beyond to contribute to fisheries management.

The Commission formally recognized New Hampshire resident Captain Herb Drake, and Maine resident Artie Odlin, both well-respected industry leaders and conservationists. Each received Commission Awards of Excellence for their steadfast efforts in support of ASMFC programs. Captain Drake was recognized for his work in fisheries management, serving over the years as an ASMFC Commissioner, a member of the New England Fishery Management Council, and a state legislator, consistently advocating conservative fisheries management. Now in retirement, Captain Drake continues to help the Commission, interacting with key members of the Senate and House to secure long-term funding for Atlantic coast fishery management and conservation activities.

Former Council member and Commission Advisory Panel member, Artie Odlin was recognized for his contributions in the area of scientific, technical, and advisory matters. Mr. Odlin played a key role in promoting the introduction of the Nordmore Grate, a proven gear technology to prevent the wasteful bycatch of finfish in the New England shrimp fishery. As a result of his efforts and the widespread use of the grate, the northern shrimp fishery is accepted as one of the cleanest fisheries in New England.

The Commission also honored Dr. William Hogarth, NOAA's Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, with its highest annual recognition, the Captain David H. Hart Award. Dr. Hogarth has a long and distinguished career in fisheries management. While State Director for the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, he introduced innovative approaches to resource management and conservation. During his tenure as ASMFC Chair, he led the Commission through the establishment of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Man-

agement Act, and the creation of our Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter. As Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, he has provided clear national leadership fostering open communication and strong partnerships with stakeholders. A longtime friend and believer in the Commission, Dr. Hogarth has inspired us all to work in a cooperative spirit to solve problems and move towards our common vision.

The Commission also recognized the end of John Nelson's term as Chair with the election of Preston P. Pate as its new Chair, and George D. Lapointe as its new Vice-Chair. John Nelson has provided steady and consistent leadership to Commissioners and staff during his tenure. He led the development of our new Five-Year Strategic Plan, as well as the successful implementation of various initiatives to provide consistency and fairness to Commission processes. From a staff perspective, John was unfailing in making himself available to us, and always provided sound advice and clear direction -- characteristics of a true leader and professional in my book.

We are excited about our new Chair, Preston Pate. He has worked closely as Vice-Chair and is clearly capable and committed to giving the Commission the leadership and vision needed for growth and success. Since 1997, he has overseen North Carolina's \$1 billion saltwater fishing industry, consisting of 5,000 full time commercial harvesters and some 1.7 million recreational anglers. Prior to becoming Director of Marine Fisheries, Pres distinguished himself in North Carolina's coastal management program as a tireless advocate for protecting important coastal habitat.

Our new Vice Chair, George Lapointe, is Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources, our only Commissioner serving in a cabinet-level position within a state. George worked at the Commission as ISFMP Director from 1994 to 1998 and brings to the Commission years of experience, enthusiasm, knowledge, and dedication to sustainable fisheries management. He will be a great addition to our strong leadership team.

I encourage you all to take pride in our many accomplishments in fisheries management this past year. I hope you will join me in looking forward with energy and enthusiasm to support our new leadership. With your help, I am convinced we can continue our progress towards restoring healthy stocks. That should be a goal we can all agree on.



Tautog *Tautoga onitis*

Common Names: black-fish, tog, white chinner, black pogy

Interesting Facts: Tautog are exclusively daytime feeders, with feeding peaks at dawn and dusk. They also tend to stay within localized home ranges while feeding and resting. While on summering grounds, tautog establish a “home site,” a protected spot where they rest every night. Juveniles stay close to their home site during the day, while adults range more widely when feeding.

Maximum Age/Size: 30 years/3.1 feet

Age & Length at Maturity: 3 - 4 years/7 - 12”

Age & Length at Recruitment: 6 years/14”

Stock Status: Overfished and overfishing is occurring.

Species Profile: Tautog States Strive to Recover Species through Management Measures & Increased Monitoring

Introduction

Tautog rank among the top recreational species caught throughout New England and the Mid-Atlantic, and has grown in popularity over the last few years as a commercially-harvested species, particularly in the live fish market. A slow growing, long-lived species, which is commonly associated with structured habitat, tautog are particularly vulnerable to overfishing. The latest stock assessment update (2001) found tautog to be overfished and overfishing is occurring. Beginning in April 2003, as part of Addendum III to the Tautog Fishery Management Plan, states imposed strict recreational fishing measures to reduce fishing mortality and aid in the species recovery. Additionally, Addendum III required all states to collect fisheries dependent and independent data to support a coastwide stock assessment.

Life History

Tautog are distributed along the northeast Atlantic coast, from Nova Scotia to Georgia, with the greatest abundances occurring in the U.S. between Cape Cod, Massachusetts and the Chesapeake Bay. North of Cape Cod, tautog are generally found close to shore, in water less than 60 feet deep. South of Cape Cod, they can be found up to 40 miles offshore and at depths up to 120 feet. During spring, as water temperatures approach 48° F, tautog migrate inshore to spawn in estuaries and nearshore marine waters. They may remain inshore throughout the summer, then move to deeper (80-150 feet) wintering areas offshore as fall approaches and water temperatures drop below 52° F. Toward the southern end of their range, some adults may remain offshore throughout the year.

Throughout their life, tautog can be found associated with structured habitats. Shallow, vegetated habitats of estuaries and inshore areas serve as juvenile nurseries. Larger juveniles join adults offshore in deeper waters. North of Long Island, New York, tautog are generally found around rocks and boulders. Toward the south, tautog often inhabit wrecks, jetties, natural and artificial reefs, and shellfish beds. They are also often found near the mouths of estuaries and other inlets. Adults stay close to their preferred home site and, although they may move away during the day to feed, they return to the same general location at night where they become dormant and may actually sleep.

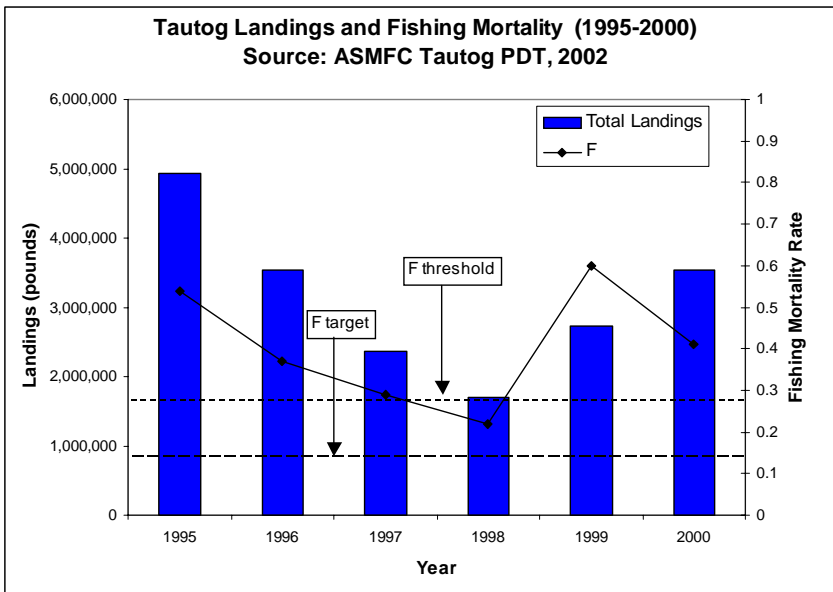
Commercial & Recreational Fisheries

The tautog fishery is primarily recreational, extending from Maine to Virginia with the majority of landings occurring in state waters between Cape Cod and the Chesapeake Bay. The fishery occurs primarily in the spring and fall, although many Mid-Atlantic fishermen pursue tautog year-round, and there is an active fishery off the Virginia coast in the winter.

Since 1980, total landings have averaged about six million pounds, with recreational catches accounting for 95 percent of the total. The commercial fishery generally occurs between Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Historically, otter trawls have been the predominate fishing gear, although floating fish traps and gillnets have also landed significant numbers of tautog. In recent



Photo courtesy of Geoffrey White



Addendum III to the FMP revises the biomass target to $F_{40\%SSB}$. Life history parameters for this species suggest that F values approaching this level continue to be appropriate for stock recovery. In 2001, the recalculated biomass targets were $SSB_{40\%}=0.29$ and $F_{0.1}=0.21$. The upcoming stock assessment is to be completed and peer-reviewed in 2005.

Atlantic Coastal Management Considerations

In March 1996, the Commission approved the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Tautog. Because of tautog's vulnerability to overfishing and increasing demands on the resource by both recreational and commercial fishermen, the plan primarily focuses on reducing fishing mortality through interim and final fishing mortality targets. Since plan approval, states from Massachusetts through Virginia have implemented recreational and commercial management measures in

order to reduce fishing pressure on tautog stocks. These measures include minimum size and possession limits, gear restrictions and closed seasons.

The FMP also identified a number of research and monitoring needs that are essential to ensuring better management of the tautog resource. These include (1) a better understanding of the relationship between stock size and recruitment (the number of young fish entering the fishery each year), (2) more extensive size and age composition data, as well as catch-at-age data at the state level, and (3) surveys dedicated to determining discard mortality rates. There is also a need for genetic stock identification studies to determine the nature of tautog stocks and spawning groups along the coast. Finally, the plan calls for continued and increased sampling of both recreational and commercial catches.

Addendum III required that states maintain current or more restrictive fishing regulations during the calendar year 2002 and that states implement management measures to meet $F_{40\%SSB}$, which is currently $F=0.29$, no later than April 1, 2003. The years 1998 through 2000 were used as the benchmark period for determining fishing mortality reductions based upon implementation of all states FMP measures beginning in April 1998. States were to implement regulations to reduce fishing mortality in the recreational fishery only to achieve the target. Based on the coastwide average fishing mortality rate of $F=0.41$ at the time of Addendum III implementation, states were required to reduce recreational fishing mortality by 29% to achieve the target. In 2003, states implemented a variety of measures including possession limits and seasons to meet the required reduction in effort.

For more information, please contact Lydia Munger, Tautog Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <lmunger@asmfc.org>.

years, there has also been an increase in landings by potting and hook-and-line, largely the result of a growing market for live fish. Since commercial landings have not risen appreciably since plan implementation and the recreational fishery accounts for approximately 90% of the total harvest, recent increases in recreational landings appear to be the primary driver of increases to the fishing mortality rate.

Stock Status

Most estimates suggest that tautog stocks have declined since the mid-1980s. This decline is evident in both recreational and commercial catch rates (in number of tautog per trip or day). Numerous trawl surveys, and tag and recapture studies have been done in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island since 1959. In 1994, survey results showed the lowest abundance of tautog ever recorded. Slow growth and reproduction, and a tendency to congregate around wrecks and rock piles, make tautog particularly susceptible to overfishing. In 1999, the 30th Northeast Stock Assessment Workshop/Stock Assessment Review Committee (SAW/SARC) concluded that total biomass and recruitment for tautog remain at very low levels. Furthermore, the SAW/SARC reported that fishing mortality rates increased in the 1980s and then decreased in 1998. This decrease in fishing mortality is consistent with regulations implemented throughout the species range in 1996.

An assessment was completed in 2001, using data from 1981 through 2000. A coastwide estimate of fishing mortality rates was derived with a VPA using fisheries dependent and independent data (independent data from Massachusetts through New Jersey only). Results indicate that fishing mortality rates have declined from a high of 0.71 in 1993 to 0.41 in 2000. Since the 2000 F rate exceeds the final plan target of $F=M=0.15$, tautog are considered overfished. Abundance indices through 2000 show a slight increase in biomass and recruitment in recent years.

ASMFC Explores New Course for Atlantic Menhaden Management

On November 9, 2004, the Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board moved forward with exploring a new course for menhaden management, incorporating sound science. It has charged its Technical Committee to address outstanding issues associated with the ecological role of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay and the feasibility of incorporating ecosystem-based management approaches into the menhaden plan.

"The Board has reaffirmed its commitment to comprehensively address the issues surrounding menhaden management both regionally and coastwide," stated Board Chair, Jack Travelstead of Virginia. "The Board wants to ensure that its decisions are scientifically sound and represent the consensus of all interested stakeholders. The Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Workshop this October was an important first step in this process, with its recommendations forming the basis of the Board's actions."

Over the next several months, the Technical Committee will be conducting an analysis of a suite of research and management issues. Topping the list will be a determination as to whether localized depletion of menhaden stocks in Chesapeake Bay is occurring or likely to occur under current management of the coastwide stock of menhaden. Other is-

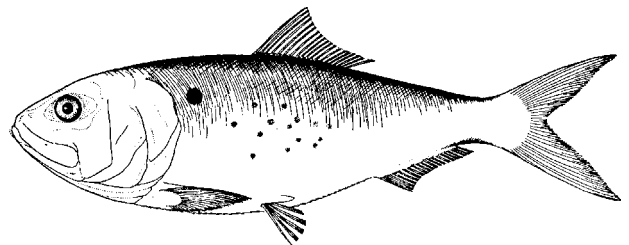
ues include identifying the likely causes of low recruitment of menhaden in Chesapeake Bay; evaluating ecological reference points and recruitment indices for the Bay; and determining whether the effects of time and space openings or closures and harvest caps can be modeled, measured, or monitored well enough to be considered for management tools. A preliminary report will be submitted to the Board by August 2005.

The Board will meet jointly with the Technical Committee at the February 2005 ASMFC Meeting Week to develop revised goals and objectives for menhaden management to incorporate ecologically-based reference points in the stock assessment and management measures for menhaden.

The Board also recommended to the Commission's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board the establishment of a Multispecies Technical Committee for the purpose of continued review and consideration of multispecies management.

These actions are a result of the Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Workshop held on October 12 – 14,

2004. The workshop brought together state, federal, and university scientists to discuss the ecological role of Atlantic menhaden, the effects of concentrated harvest in the Chesapeake Bay, and possible management measures. Representatives from the environmental, com-



mercial, and recreational stakeholder groups helped plan and participated in the workshop. The scientific workshop participants developed a list of consensus statements and recommendations for Board consideration.

The Workshop Report will be finalized over the next few weeks and will be available on the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org. A complete list of Technical Committee charges also can be found on the ASMFC website under the Press Release page, 63rd Annual Meeting Week Summary. For more information, please contact Nancy Wallace, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or nwallace@asmfc.org.



ASMFC Comings & Goings

In October, Lena Kofas joined the Commission as Assistant to the Executive Director. Ms. Kofas has interdisciplinary professional experience as an environmental scientist and research assistant with environmental, health and safety consulting companies. Prior to joining the Commission, she provided administrative and program development support for international environmental programs (environmental institutional strengthening, training and education; sustainable tourism; and coral reef conservation) at a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit international development organization. She holds a M.A. in International Environmental Policy from American University, a M.P.A. in Environmental Management from Indiana University, and a B.S. in Biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin. Welcome aboard, Lena!



Northern Shrimp 2005 Fishing Season Set at 70 Days

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Northern Shrimp Section approved a 70-day fishing season for the 2004-2005 northern shrimp fishery, a 30-day increase from last year's season. The approved season was based upon a

joint recommendation of the Northern Shrimp Technical Committee and Advisory Panel. The approved season will be from December 19 – 23, Sunday through Thursday; December 26 - 30, Sunday through Thursday; and January 3 through March 25, Monday through Friday.

While the reappearance of a moderately strong 2001 year-class and a weak to moderate 2003 year-class is encouraging, the Technical Committee continued to urge caution in management because of the lack of 2000 and 2002 year-classes in the past couple years of the summer shrimp survey. "The Section is confident that the expanded season will provide industry greater economic return while allowing the stock to continue to rebuild," continued Mr. Lapointe.

The northern shrimp fishery is jointly regulated by the States of Maine and New Hampshire, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Northern Shrimp Section. The cooperative management program has been in place since 1972 and is currently managed under Amendment 1 to the Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan. For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, Northern Shrimp Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400, ext. 301.

joint recommendation of the Northern Shrimp Technical Committee and Advisory Panel.

"The Section applauds the efforts of the Advisory Panel and Technical Committee in jointly developing recommendations for Section approval," stated Section Chair George Lapointe, from Maine. "We are also pleased about the findings of the recent stock assessment which have shown improvement to the northern shrimp resource. An increase in harvestable biomass to levels seen in the mid-1990s allowed the Section to open up a December fishery for the holiday market and extend the season later in March."

The fishing season, which is the same for mobile and trap gear, will

ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board Approves 4 Million Pound Quota for 2005 – 2006 Fishing Year

The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board approved specifications for the 2005-2006 fishing year, setting a four million pound annual quota with trip limits of 600 pounds in quota period one (May 1 to October 31) and 300 pounds in quota period two (November 1 to April 30). These actions were taken in response to the results of the latest stock assessment information and recommendations to Commission's Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee.

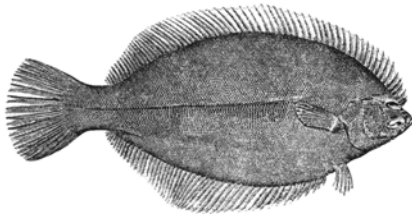
The coastwide spiny dogfish population is considered overfished, but overfishing is not occurring. The 2004 Northeast Fisheries Science Center's trawl survey data shows the seven years of low

pup biomass has led to a truncated size range (i.e., low pup and reproductive female biomass) and shows no progress towards rebuilding the female spawning stock biomass. The 2003 fishing mortality rate (F) is estimated to be 0.044, higher than the rebuilding F (0.03), but lower than the F threshold (0.11) and target (0.08).

The federal specifications for the spiny dogfish fishery are still to be determined. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council recommended a four million pound quota and a 1,500 pound trip limit for the 2005-2006 fishing year. The New England Fishery Management Council will meet next week to discuss its recommendation to the Secretary of

Commerce. The Secretary will set the federal specifications prior to the start of the fishing year on May 1, 2005.

The Board approved the development of an addendum to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish if a framework adjustment for the federal management plan is developed in 2005. The addendum and framework adjustment would change the specification progress to occur on a multi-year basis rather than an annual basis. For more information, please contact Megan Gamble, Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <mgamble@asmfc.org>.



ASMFC Seeks Public Comment on Winter Flounder Recreational & Commercial Management Measures

The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board has identified its preferred recreational and commercial management measures for inclusion in Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Commission and the states seek public input on these measures prior to final approval of the plan, scheduled for early 2005. It is anticipated that most of the states from Maine through Delaware will be conducting hearings in late November and early December 2004.

Following are the details of currently scheduled hearings. Information on the remaining states' hearings will be posted to www.asmfc.org (Meetings page) as they become available.

Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife

November 30, 2004; 6:00 PM
URI Narragansett Bay Campus
Corless Auditorium
South Ferry Road
Narragansett, Rhode Island.
Contact: Najih Lazar at 401/423-1926

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

December 2, 2004; 7:00 PM
DEP Marine Fisheries Office Education Center
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: Eric Smith at (860)434-6043

In August 2004, the Board selected biological reference points for the Gulf of Maine and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic stocks of winter flounder and directed the Technical Committee to develop a suite of recreational and commercial management measures on a stockwide basis to meet these benchmarks. The current draft of the Amendment includes several options for management of commercial and recreational fisheries for both stocks, with preferred options identified by the Winter Flounder Management Board.

Throughout July and August of 2004, the Commission and the states received extensive public comment on all other sections of the plan. Sections included in the July/August comment period were the goals and objectives of the Amendment, definition of management units, stock rebuilding targets and schedules,

and *de minimis* guidelines. The Winter Flounder Management Board reviewed the earlier comments and finalized these sections at its meeting in August 2004.

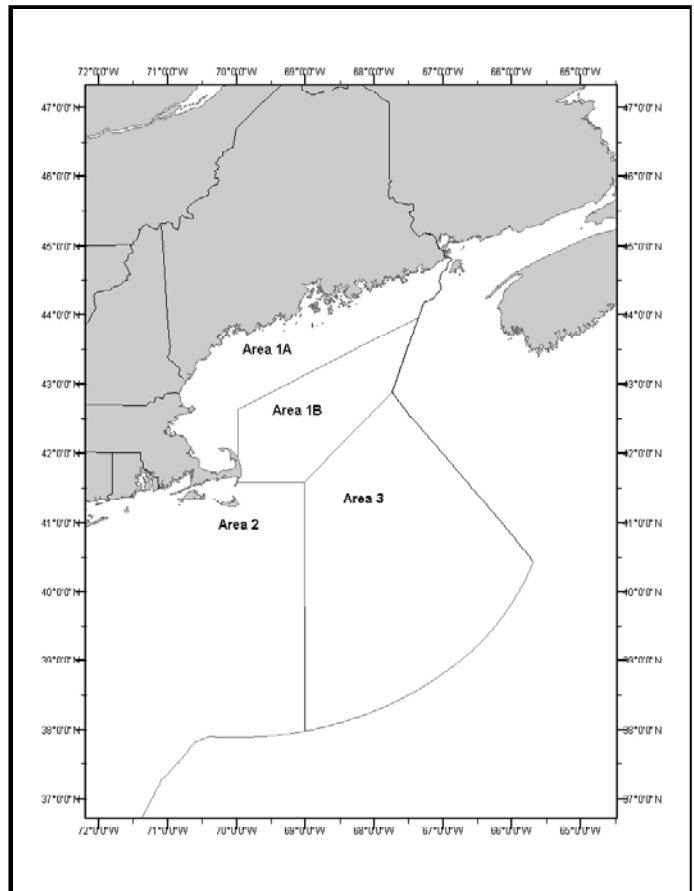
Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on ONLY the recreational and commercial management measures contained in the Draft Amendment (Sections 4.1 and 4.2), either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the Draft Amendment are available via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. Public comment will be accepted until mid-December 2004, and should be forwarded to Lydia Munger, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org. For more information, please contact Lydia Munger at (202) 289-6400 or lmunger@asmfc.org.



Atlantic Herring Management Area 1A Closed to Directed Harvest

On November 9, 2004, the National Marine Fisheries Service projected that 95% of the Atlantic herring total allowable catch (TAC) allocated to Management Area 1A for the 2004 fishing year (January-December) would be harvested by November 19, 2004. NOAA Fisheries has announced that pursuant to 50 CFR 648.202, effective 0001 hours, November 19, 2004, vessels issued federal permits for Atlantic herring may not retain or land more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring from Area 1A per trip or calendar day for the remainder of the 2004 fishery. The federal catch limit restriction will cease at 0001 hours, January 1, 2005.

Under the Commission's Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring, states must prohibit the landing of herring from a closed area and prohibit directed fishing for Atlantic herring in state waters of a closed area once a closure has been announced by the Regional Administrator of NOAA Fisheries. During a closure, vessels participating in other fisheries may retain and land an incidental catch of herring from a closed area that does not exceed 2,000 pounds per trip. For more information, please contact Megan Gamble, Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400.



Industry to Hold Herring Fishery Gear Selectivity Seminar

The seminar is scheduled for December 13, 2004 from 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM at the Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Driving the seminar is the recognition by both New England fishery managers and fishermen that successful rebuilding of groundfish stocks brings with it the challenge of minimizing increasing interactions with other fisheries. The most notable and talked about example has been in the directed herring fishery, but interaction at varying levels has been documented in several other fisheries using a variety of gear types — lobster, whiting, scallops and groundfish itself.

In addition to modifying fishing pat-

terns, the herring industry has sought to better understand the spatial and temporal phenomenon of fisheries interactions through a request for increased observer coverage and dialogue with the various government management and enforcement agencies charged with oversight of this issue.

The seminar seeks to further information on fisheries interactions and develop practicable solutions to minimizing bycatch and discards. For more information, please contact Peter Moore, American Pelagic Association, 207/233-4353, <petejmoore@aol.com> or Maggie Raymond, Associated Fisheries of Maine, 207/384-4854, <maggieraymond@comcast.net>.

This December, the New England fishing industry will convene a gear selectivity seminar with the goal of bringing together groundfish and herring fishermen, advisors and gear design experts to work collaboratively towards increasing the selectivity of the herring gear, to the extent practicable.



ACCSP Launches New Website

Partners pleased with better graphics and navigation tools at www.accsp.org

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) launched its new website during the summer after much work with partners, data warehouse users, and developers.

The ACCSP staff and committees recognized that the former website layout was difficult to navigate and did not properly reflect the dynamic program the partners were building. With guidance from the Outreach Committee, the staff selected Igor Communications, a DC communications marketing company to create a user-friendly and organized website that allows for easy access to hundreds of documents, multiple databases, and information on upcoming committee meetings.

The website is arranged around a navigation bar with seven headings. The

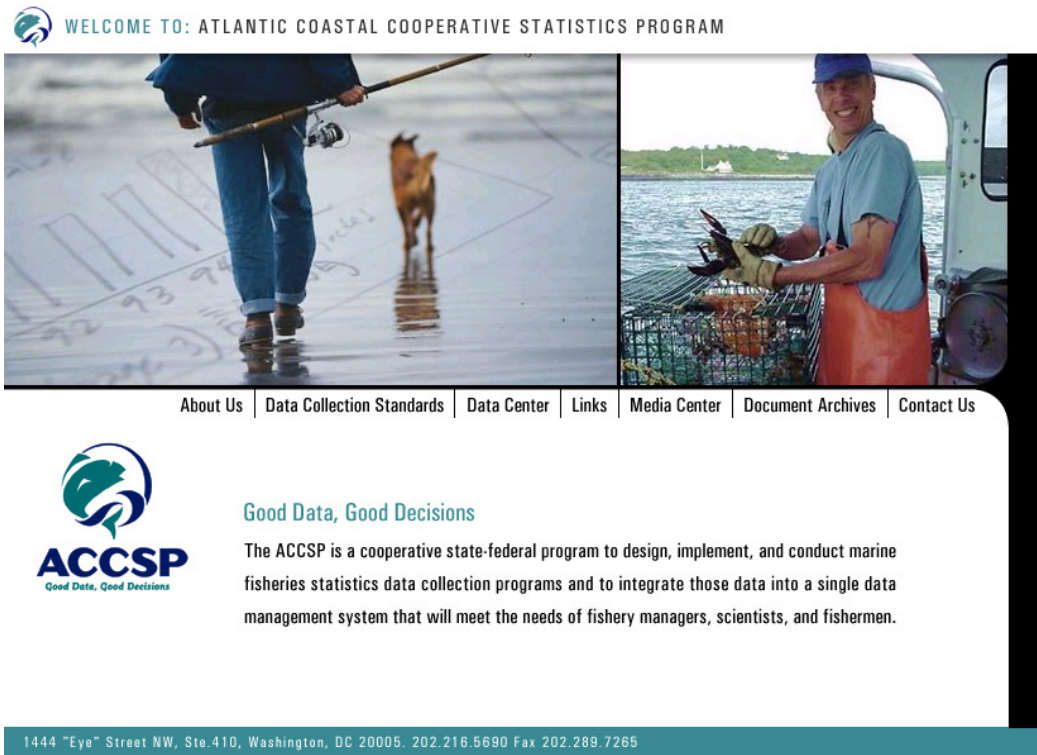
navigation bar is available on all internal webpages, so a user does not have to click the browser's Back button. Users can scroll over the headings to reveal up to five subheadings for each and find information on the first click. The headings and subheading on the navigation bar include:

- About Us – Philosophy; Partners; Committees; and Staff
- Data Collection Standards – Commercial Fisheries; For-hire Fisheries; and Recreational Fisheries
- Data Center – Log-in; Demo Systems; Access Requests; Status of ACCSP Data Systems; and Documentation
- Links – Program Partners; Other Coastal Fisheries Statistics Programs; and Freshwater, GIS, and Other Data Programs

- Media Center – Press Releases; Image Gallery; and Articles
- Document Archives – Funding; Program Documents; and Technical Documents
- Contact Us

Most of the ACCSP's funded proposals and associated reports are available already in the Document Archives. The information systems staff is working to improve the document search function, so the rest can be posted in coming weeks. The staff is also posting relevant information on the internal pages with the handy "More Information" sections.

Please visit the website at www.accsp.org and let us know what you think. If you have trouble finding anything, we want to know. You can email questions and comments to support@accsp.org or call (202) 216-5690 during business hours.



The new look of www.accsp.org. Images reflect the importance of both commercial and recreational fisheries data. The Commission's own Pat White is shown on the homepage pulling lobster traps (right).

Upcoming Meetings

ACCSP Information Systems Committee
January 5 & 6, 2005
Providence, RI

ASMFC Celebrates Outstanding Contributions to Atlantic Fisheries Conservation & Management

At its 63rd Annual Meeting in New Castle, New Hampshire, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission had the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of several individuals to the conservation and management Atlantic coastal resources. Commission Chair John I. Nelson, Jr. and Awards Committee Chair David Cupka had the honor of presenting awards to Dr. William Hogarth, David H. Hart Award recipient, and Captain Herb Drake and Mr. Artie Odlin, Annual Awards of Excellence recipients. In his Executive Director's Column, John V. O'Shea provides the details of the awards and the award recipients. Here are the pictures.



Top left (left to right): ASMFC Awards Committee Chair David Cupka (SC), ASMFC Vice-Chair Preston P. Pate, Jr., Hart Award Recipient and NOAA's Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Dr. William Hogarth, ASMFC Chair John I. Nelson, Jr., and ASMFC Executive Director John V. O'Shea.

Top right: Past and Current Hart Award Recipients -- Jack Travelstead, David Cupka, William Hogarth and Gordon Colvin

Middle left: ASMFC Executive Director John V. O'Shea, AAE Recipients, Artie Odlin of Maine and Herb Drake of New Hampshire, ASMFC Awards Committee Chair David Cupka, and ASMFC Chair John I. Nelson, Jr.

Bottom left: ASMFC Executive Director John V. O'Shea, Artie Odlin, New Hampshire Commissioner G. Ritchie White, Executive Councilor Ruth Griffin of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, ASMFC Chair John I. Nelson, Jr., Herb Drake, and New Hampshire Commissioner proxy, Dennis Abbott.



ASMFC Commissioners & Proxies



Bottom row from left to right: New Chair Preston P. Pate, Jr., Pat Augustine, Dennis Abbott, Damon Tatem, Tom Fote, Lance Stewart, Paul Diodati, Vito Calomo, Fred Frillici, Bruno Vasta
Second row: Gordon Colvin, Jack Travelstead, Robert Boyles, Timothy Targett, Roy Miller, New Vice-Chair George Lapointe, Eric Smith, Russel Dize
Third row: Herb Dick, John Frampton, David Cupka, Everett Petronio Jr., Gene Kray, Dennis Damon, Past Chair John I. Nelson, Jr., Dick Synder
Fourth Row: ASMFC Executive Director, John V. O'Shea, Ritchie White, Spud Woodward, John Duren, Bruce Freeman, Bill Adler, Brian Culhane, Pat White and Ira Palmer (District of Columbia).

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