



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Horseshoe Crab Board Releases Draft Addendum IX for Public Comment *Draft Addendum Considers Allowing for Multi-year Specifications for Male-only Harvest in the Delaware Bay Region*

Arlington, VA – Four public hearings have been scheduled to gather input on Draft Addendum IX to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crab. The Draft Addendum considers allowing the Board to set specifications for male-only harvest for multiple years. It also considers options for managing male-only harvest limits, seasonal harvest restrictions, and harvest caps for Maryland and Virginia. Public hearings are open to all, regardless of state residency. The public hearing details follow:

Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency and Location	Contact
Tuesday, March 18 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection Public Hearing Webinar <i>The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.</i>	Joe Cimino 410.260.8295
Thursday, March 20 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Virginia Marine Resources Commission Public Hearing Webinar <i>The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.</i>	Patrick Geer 757.247.2236
Wednesday, March 26 In-person Hearing 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources Berlin Library 13 Harrison Avenue Berlin, Maryland 21811	Carrie Kennedy 410.260.8295
Thursday, March 27 Hybrid Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife Little Creek Hunter Education Training Center 3018 Bayside Dr. Dover, Delaware 19901 <i>The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.</i>	John Clark 302.739.9108

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 diadromous species.

Draft Addendum IX responds to recommendations from the July 2024 Horseshoe Crab Management Objectives Workshop, which convened a small group of stakeholders to explore management objectives for the Delaware Bay-origin horseshoe crab fishery. The workshop participants recommended the Board establish an interim solution to maintain male-only harvest while changes to the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework are explored to better align the model with stakeholder values. Additionally, the Draft Addendum proposes a method for setting maximum male harvest limits in years when the ARM Framework is not used to recommend harvest limits based on Delaware Bay region spawning survey data.

Regarding harvest season closures for the Delaware Bay region states, Draft Addendum IX includes two options: to maintain the current season closure requirement from May 1 through June 7 or reestablish a longer closure from January 1 through June 7. This longer season was implemented under Addenda IV through VI but was inadvertently omitted from later Addenda. Additionally, the Draft Addendum includes options to provide a standard for the application of the harvest caps for Maryland and Virginia established by Addenda VII and VIII.

Webinar Instructions

Please note that in order to comment during a virtual webinar hearing you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your phone. Those who join by phone only will be limited to listening to the presentation and will not be able to provide input. In those cases, you can send your comments to staff via [email](#) or U.S. mail at any time during the public comment period. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 213.929.4212 and enter access code 878-390-871. ***All are welcome to participate in virtual hearings.***

For virtual hearings, please click [HERE](#) and register for the specific date you wish to attend. The hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, and you can join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone. If you are new to GoToWebinar, you can download the software by ([clicking here](#)) or via the App store under GoToWebinar. We recommend you register for the hearing well in advance of the hearing since GoToWebinar will provide you with a link to test your device's compatibility with the webinar. If you find your device is not compatible, please contact the Commission at info@asmfc.org (subject line: GoToWebinar help) and we will try to get you connected. We also strongly encourage participants to **use the computer voice over internet protocol (VoIP)** so you can ask questions and provide input at the hearing.

Submitting Comments

The public is encouraged to submit comments at any time during the addendum process. The Draft Addendum is available at <https://asmfc.org/resources/management/management-actions/draft-addendum-ix-to-the-horseshoe-crab-fishery-management-plan-for-public-comment/> or via the Commission's website at [Horseshoe Crab Draft Addendum IX Action Tracker](#). Public comment will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EST) on March 31, 2025** and should be sent to Caitlin Starks, Senior FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; or to comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Horseshoe Crab Draft Addendum IX); or via the [Horseshoe Crab Draft Addendum IX Action Tracker](#) webpage.

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