



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC Releases Draft Addenda on Recreational Harvest Control Rule for Public Comment *States to Conduct Webinar Hearings in March & April*

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) approved for public comment the Recreational Harvest Control Rule Draft Addenda to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and Bluefish FMP. The states of Maine through Virginia have scheduled webinar hearings to gather public input on the Draft Addenda between March 16 and April 13, and written comments will be accepted through April 22. Hearing details and comment instructions can be found below.

The Draft Addenda consider changes to the process used by the Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) to set recreational management measures (bag, size, and season limits) for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish. The Council is considering an identical set of options through a framework action. These potential changes are intended to provide greater stability and predictability in recreational management measures from year to year and allow for more explicit consideration of stock status when setting the measures. The Draft Addenda proposes five possible approaches for setting recreational measures. Key differences between the options include the information considered when setting measures and the circumstances under which measures would change. These differences have implications for how often measures would change and the magnitude of those changes. Taking final action on these addenda will not implement any specific bag, size, or season limits but start a new specification process for setting management measures.

The Draft Addenda are available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/HCR_DraftAddenda_PublicComment_March2022.pdf or via the Commission’s [public input webpage](#). A quick reference guide is also available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/HCR_FW_addenda_reference_guide_March2022.pdf to aid stakeholders in understanding the options contained in the Draft Addenda. All those interested in the management of the recreational summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish fisheries are encouraged to provide input by participating in the public hearings or by providing written comment.

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.

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Public Hearing Schedule

Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency	Contact
Wednesday, March 16 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Virginia Marine Resources Commission	Pat Geer , 757.247.2236 Shanna Madsen , 757.247.2247
Monday, March 21 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources & New Hampshire Fish and Game	Megan Ware , 207.446.0932 Cheri Patterson , 603.868.1095
Thursday, March 24 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management	Jason McNamee , 401.222.4700
Monday, March 28 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection & Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife	Joe Cimino , 609.748.2063 John Clark , 302.739.9108
Thursday, March 31 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources & Potomac River Fisheries Commission	Michael Luisi , 443.758.6547 Martin Gary , 804.224.7148
Tuesday, April 5 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Connecticut Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection	Justin Davis , 860.447.4322
Monday, April 11 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation	Maureen Davidson , 631.444.0483
Wednesday, April 13 <i>Webinar Hearing</i> 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries	Nichola Meserve , 617-626-1531

Webinar Instructions

Please note that in order to comment during webinar hearings you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your smart phone. Those joining by phone (audio 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](#), U.S. mail, or fax at any time during the public comment period. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 415.655.0052 and enter access code 964-453-986.

To register for a public hearing webinar please click [HERE](#) and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu. 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 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. If you are joining the webinar but will not be using VoIP, you can may also call in at 415.655.0052, access code 964-453-986. An audio PIN will be provided to you after joining the webinar.

The Commission will also post a recording of the hearing presentation on the Commission's YouTube page so stakeholders may watch the presentation and submit comment at any time during the comment process. A subsequent press release will announce the availability of the recording.

Submitting Written Comments

Written comments will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EDT) on April 22** and should be sent to Dustin Colson Leaning, FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0740 (fax) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Harvest Control Rule).

If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to the Draft Addenda, please contact Dustin Colson Leaning at dleaning@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740, so he can work with you to develop a unique subject line to enable us to better organize and summarize incoming comments for Board review.

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