



# ***Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission***

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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*Cooperative and Sustainable Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Daniel McKiernan Elected ASMFC Chair**

Dewey Beach, DE – Today, member states of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) thanked Joseph Cimino of New Jersey for a successful two-year term as Chair and elected Daniel McKiernan of Massachusetts to succeed him.

"I'm honored to be chosen by my fellow Commissioners to lead our efforts for the next two years. One of my priorities will be to work with my colleagues in the states and federal agencies to seek resources to fund fundamental fisheries data collection and science activities to support our management programs. Other key topics over the next two years will be our ability to adapt to changes in species distribution and availability and how best to respond to the recalibration of recreational fishing effort and harvest data from the Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort Survey," said Mr. McKiernan.

Mr. McKiernan continued, "I want to thank outgoing Chair, Joe Cimino for his leadership in tackling some challenging management issues for species such as American lobster, American eel, Atlantic striped bass, Atlantic menhaden, horseshoe crab, and red drum. He helped support the advancement of fisheries science through the completion of an impressive number of benchmark stock assessments and assessment updates for river herring, red drum, American lobster, horseshoe crab, tautog, Atlantic sturgeon, and Atlantic menhaden (single species assessment update and ecological reference points benchmark assessment). Further, under his leadership, the Commission also strengthened stakeholder engagement in horseshoe crab management by bringing together diverse stakeholders for a Delaware Bay management objectives workshop to provide recommendations for possible revisions to the management process, and by increasing nontraditional stakeholder representation on the Horseshoe Crab Advisory Panel to more equitably balance user group perspectives. Lastly, Mr. Cimino initiated the process to consider possible changes to voting practices and declared interests on species management boards."

Additionally, advances in habitat conservation were made by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) through its funding of five on-the-ground projects, which will open over seven river miles and restore over 110 acres of habitat. These include dam removal projects in New Jersey and Massachusetts, as well as



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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 diadromous species.

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saltmarsh and oyster restoration projects in Maryland and Florida. ACFHP will also be hosting a Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Workshop in 2026 focused on developing a Seed Transfer Best Management Practices Guidance Document.

From a data collection and management perspective, the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) also made progress under Mr. Cimino's leadership. ACCSP supported 20 partner agency data collection projects and expanded the scope and security of the ACCSP Data Warehouse. ACCSP held a data accountability workshop and extended data validation tools within electronic reporting systems; extended implementation of harvester One Stop Reporting; and made progress on a methodology to more fully use for-hire logbooks in Marine Recreational Information Program's catch statistics.

Mr. McKiernan has directed the Massachusetts Division of Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) since late 2019, where he develops agency policies, represents the Commonwealth in interstate and federal fishery management forums and administers nearly all aspects of the DMF's in-state management and regulations for fisheries management. He began his professional career as a field biologist for DMF in 1985 and worked closely with the lobster fishery as a sea sampler and an assistant marine biologist. He brought his field experience to DMF's headquarters and has worked on fisheries management and policy for almost four decades. He has worked diligently to achieve co-existence between endangered right whales and the maritime and fishing industries in Massachusetts. In 2023, Massachusetts was recognized with the NOAA Fisheries "Partner in the Spotlight" award for exceptional efforts to the conservation and recovery of Northern Right Whales.

Mr. McKiernan is practiced in the arenas of federal and interstate fisheries management. As a long-standing representative to the Commission, he has chaired numerous species management boards and was recognized for his management efforts with the Commission's Award of Excellence in 2018. He is a strong promoter of conservation and accountable fisheries management for commercial fisheries, recreational fisheries, and the seafood industry at large. Mr. McKiernan is a graduate of UMASS-Dartmouth and earned an MS in Fisheries Biology from Auburn University. He received the Massachusetts Pride in Performance Award, as well as the Massachusetts Lobsterman's Association "Ralph W. Maling" Award of Excellence for dedicated service on behalf of the Commonwealth's lobster industry.

The Commission also elected Doug Haymans, Director of the Georgia Coastal Resources Division as its new Vice-Chair.

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