



NEWS RELEASE



Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 10, 2018

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to Hold Public Hearings for Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) are soliciting public input on a draft amendment to address several potential changes to the management of the commercial summer flounder fishery, as well as modifications to the fishery management plan (FMP) goals and objectives for summer flounder. Ten public hearings will be held between September 10 and September 27. Written comments will be accepted through **October 12, 2018**.

The specific issues under consideration in this amendment include:

1. **Requalifying criteria for federal commercial moratorium permits to address latent effort in the fishery:** The amendment includes options to reduce the number of eligible commercial federal moratorium permits by implementing requalifying criteria for existing permits.
2. **Modifying commercial quota allocation:** The amendment proposes several options for revising the current commercial allocation to the states, which has been in place since 1993 and is based on average landings from 1980-1989.
3. **Adding commercial landings flexibility as a framework issue in the Council's FMP:** This action does not consider implementing landings flexibility policies at this time but considers allowing the Council to implement landings flexibility through a future framework action instead of an amendment. The Commission's adaptive management process already allows for landings flexibility.
4. **Revising the FMP objectives for summer flounder:** This amendment proposes revisions to the current FMP objectives for summer flounder management to provide more meaningful and up-to-date guidance to managers.

Learn More

Additional information about the amendment and the management alternatives being considered can be found on the Council's website at www.mafmc.org/actions/summer-flounder-amendment and on the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>. This information includes three documents: (1) the Public Hearing Document, which includes all proposed management changes and was developed to solicit public comment; (2) the Commission's Draft Amendment; and (3) the Council's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Both the Commission's Draft Amendment and the Council's DEIS are required under their respective regulatory processes.

Contacts

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Given summer flounder's presence in, and movement between, state waters (0-3 miles from shore) and federal waters (3-200 miles from shore), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council manage summer flounder cooperatively.

Hearing Schedule

Date and Time	Location
Monday, September 10 7:00 PM	Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Marine Headquarters Boating Education Center (Rear Building) 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371
Wednesday, September 12 6:00 PM	North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, Washington Regional Office 943 Washington Square Mall, US Highway 17, Washington, North Carolina 27889
Thursday, September 13 6:00 PM	Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control DNREC Auditorium, Richardson & Robbins Building, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901
Thursday, September 13 6:00 PM	Virginia Marine Resources Commission 2600 Washington Avenue, 4 th Floor, Newport News, Virginia 23607
Wednesday, September 19 5:30 PM	Bourne Community Center, Room #2 239 Main Street, Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts 02532
Wednesday, September 19 6:00 PM	University of Rhode Island Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium South Ferry Road, Narragansett, Rhode Island 02882
Monday, September 24 6:00 PM	Ocean County Administrative Building 101 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, New Jersey 08753
Tuesday, September 25 6:00 PM	Ocean Pines Library 11107 Cathell Road, Berlin, Maryland 21811
Thursday, September 27 6:30 PM	New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SOMAS), Room 120 Endeavor, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, New York 11794
Thursday, September 27 6:30 PM	Internet Webinar Registration URL: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5467929991483514883 Webinar ID: 658-611-667; Phone: 1-888-585-9008; Room Number: 853-657-937

Written Comments

Given the joint nature of this management effort and to streamline the public comment process, comments should be directed to Council contact information below. In addition to providing comments at any of the scheduled public hearings, you may submit written comments by **11:59 PM, Eastern Time, on Friday, October 12, 2018**. Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

1. **ONLINE:** www.mafmc.org/comments/summer-flounder-amendment
2. **EMAIL:** nmfs.flukeamendment@noaa.gov
3. **MAIL OR FAX to:** Chris Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
FAX: 302.674.5399

Please include "Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment Comments" in the subject line if using email or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments by mail. All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission. **Please do not send separate comments to the Council and Commission.**