



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Sciaenids Management Board Approves Red Drum Addendum II

Dewey Beach, DE – The Commission’s Sciaenids Management Board approved Addendum II to Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Red Drum. The Addendum updates red drum management, with the goal of improving efficiency, flexibility, and timeliness in implementation of new regulations and providing assessment advice. In addition, the Addendum modifies the fishing mortality for the southern stock (South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida) to end overfishing and aligns red drum recreational regulations in Virginia, Maryland, and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) given their shared water bodies.

The Addendum establishes a process whereby states can propose management measures in response to new assessment advice, including assessment analyses outside of the Commission’s stock assessment process. It also allows the Board to approve new methods to estimate the impact of different management options on fishing mortality.

In addition, the Addendum modifies the fishing mortality (30% spawning potential ratio or $F_{30\%}$) for the southern stock will aim to meet with implemented management measures. At a minimum, states will reduce fishing effort to $F_{30\%}$ to end overfishing with the unchanged long-term goal of reducing effort to achieve the fishing mortality associated with 40% spawning potential ratio. South Carolina and Georgia will submit proposals by April 1, 2026 with regulatory options that, at minimum, achieve the 14.4% reduction associated with $F_{30\%}$. Florida implemented more restrictive red drum regulations in September 2022; these measures are estimated to have achieved the minimum reduction. The Board will review South Carolina and Georgia’s proposals at its May 2026 meeting.

Northern stock states (New Jersey through North Carolina) are not able to estimate fishing mortality at this time. The states of New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, and North Carolina will maintain their current fishing regulations. For Virginia, Maryland and the PRFC, the Board agreed to the following recreational measures: 3 fish bag limit and 18”-26” inch total length slot. These measures, which are currently in place for Virginia, are meant to simplify management and enforcement in the shared waterbodies of the three jurisdictions. Although these measures will raise Maryland’s current red drum bag limit from 1 fish to 3 fish, the Board noted that these new regulations will lower the 5-fish bag limit for red drum

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.

in the Potomac River to 3 fish, providing some additional protection to red drum within the 18"-26" total length slot.

The implementation date for all new measures is September 1, 2026.

Lastly, the Addendum updates *de minimis* provisions. A state may be granted *de minimis* status if the Board determines that action by the state would contribute insignificantly to the overall management program for a specific species. The Addendum updates the definition so that a state may be considered *de minimis* if the average total landings for the last three years is less than 1% of total landings from its respective stock. In addition, the Addendum implements a process for establishing a set of measures for *de minimis* states which will provide a minimum level of protection and prevent regulatory loopholes.

Addendum II will be available in November on the Commission website at <https://asmfc.org/species/red-drum/> under News and Resources. For more information, please contact Tracey Bauer, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org or 703.842.0723.

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