



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Daniel McKiernan (MA), Chair

Doug Haymans (GA), Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

MEMORANDUM

January 21, 2026

TO: Commissioners; Proxies; American Eel Management Board; American Lobster Management Board; Atlantic Menhaden Management Board; Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board; Coastal Pelagics Management Board; Executive Committee; ISFMP Policy Board; Spiny Dogfish Management Board; Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board; and Winter Flounder Management Board

REB

FROM: Robert E. Beal
Executive Director

RE: ASMFC Winter Meeting: February 3 – 5, 2026 (TA 26-009)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Winter Meeting will be February 3 – 5, 2026 at **The Westin Crystal City**. This will be a hybrid meeting (both in-person and remote) to allow for participation by Commissioners and interested stakeholders. The room block is now closed; if you need assistance reserving a room, please contact Lisa Carty at lcarty@asmfc.org.

The final agenda and meeting materials for the Winter Meeting are now available at <https://asmfc.org/events/2026-winter-meeting/>; click on the relevant Board/Committee name to access the documents for that Board/Committee. For ease of access, materials for all boards have been combined into one document – <https://asmfc.org/resources/management-meeting-materials/2026-winter-meeting-materials-february-2026/>. Supplemental materials will be posted to the website on **Wednesday, January 28**.

The following pages contain the final agenda and public comment guidelines. Be advised the agenda's schedule is subject to change; the order in which the agenda items are listed is subject to change, and other agenda items or meetings may be added as necessary.

Webinar Information

Meeting proceedings will be broadcast daily via webinar beginning Tuesday, February 3 at 9 AM and continuing daily until the conclusion of the meeting (expected to be 12:45 PM) on Thursday, February 5. To register for the webinar, please go to: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6602887735395459168> (Webinar ID: 674-030-171). If you are joining the webinar but will not be using VoIP, you may also call in at 914.614.3221, access code 161-484-911. A PIN will be provided to you after joining the webinar. For those who will not be joining the webinar but would like to listen in to the audio portion only, press the # key when asked for a PIN.

Each day, the webinar will begin 15 minutes prior to the start of the first meeting so that people can troubleshoot any connectivity or audio issues they may encounter. If you are having issues with the webinar (connecting to or audio related issues), please contact Chris Jacobs at 703.842.0790.

Meeting Process

Board chairs will ask both in-person and virtual board members if they wish to speak. In-person members can simply raise their hands at the meeting without logging on to the webinar, while virtual members will raise their hands on the webinar. The chair will work with staff to compile the list of speakers, balancing the flow of questions/comments between in-person and virtual attendees. The same process will be used for public comment. Depending upon the number of commenters, the board chair will decide how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

We look forward to seeing you at the Winter Meeting. If the staff or I can provide any further assistance to you, please call us at 703.842.0740.

Winter Meeting

February 3 – 5, 2026

The Westin Crystal City

Arlington, Virginia

Public Comment Guidelines

To provide a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has approved the following guidelines for use at management board meetings:

For issues that are not on the agenda, management boards will continue to provide opportunities to the public to bring matters of concern to the board's attention at the start of each board meeting. Board chairs will ask members of the public to raise their hands to let the chair know they would like to speak. Depending upon the number of commenters, the board chair will decide how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

For topics that are on the agenda, but have not gone out for public comment, board chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. Chairs will have flexibility in deciding how to allocate comment opportunities; this could include hearing one comment in favor and one in opposition until the chair is satisfied further comments will not provide additional insight to the board.

For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment, it is the Policy Board's intent to end the occasional practice of allowing extensive and lengthy public comments. Currently, board chairs have the discretion to decide what public comment to allow in these circumstances.

In addition, the following timeline has been established for the submission of written comments for issues for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period (i.e., in response to proposed management action).

1. Comments received three weeks prior to the start of a meeting week (**January 12**) will be included in the briefing materials.
2. Comments received by **5 PM on Tuesday, January 27** will be included in supplemental materials.
3. Comments received by **10 AM on Friday, January 30** will be distributed electronically to Commissioners/Board members prior to the meeting.

The submitted comments must clearly indicate the commenter's expectation from the ASMFC staff regarding distribution. As with other public comment, it will be accepted via mail and email.

Final Agenda

The agenda is subject to change. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.

Tuesday, February 3

9 – 11 a.m.

American Lobster Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia

Other Members: NEFMC, NMFS

Other Participants: Beal, Pugh, Truesdale

Chair: Zobel

Staff: Starks

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*R. Zobel*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Annual Data Updates (*T. Pugh, C. Truesdale*)
 - Jonah Crab Offshore Southern New England Indicators
 - American Lobster Indicators and Recruit Index for Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank (GOM/GBK) Stock
5. Technical Committee Report on Board Tasks (*T. Pugh*) **Possible Action**
 - Guidance on Management Strategy Evaluation for GOM/GBK
 - GOM/GBK Fishery Projections with Original Addendum XXVII Gauge Increases
6. American Lobster Advisory Panel Report (*C. Starks*)
7. Reports from Gulf of Maine States on Industry Surveys and Meetings (*C. Wilson, R. Zobel, R. Glenn*)
8. Update on Request for Information for Alternative Gear Marking Framework (*A. Murphy*)
9. Review and Populate American Lobster Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action**
10. Other Business/Adjourn

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Winter Flounder Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey

Other Members: NMFS

Other Participants: Balouskus, Nitschke, Williams, Wood

Chair: Hyatt

Staff: Bauer

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*W. Hyatt*)

2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from January 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Review 2025 Management Track Assessments for Gulf of Maine and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Stocks of Winter Flounder (*P. Nitschke/T. Wood*)
 - Consider Management Response, If Necessary **Possible Action**
5. Set 2026-2028 Specifications (*T. Bauer*) **Final Action**
 - Review Technical Committee Recommendations (*R. Balouskus*)
 - Review Advisory Panel Report
6. Consider Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance for the 2024 Fishing Year (*T. Bauer*) **Action**
7. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
8. Other Business/Adjourn

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. **Lunch Break**

1:15 – 2:15 p.m. **Spiny Dogfish Management Board**
Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina
Other Members: NMFS
Other Participants: Chapin, Didden
Chair: Cimino
Staff: Boyle

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Cimino*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from May 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Discuss Spiny Dogfish Accountability Measures **Possible Action**
 - Review Actions by New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils on Spiny Dogfish Accountability Measures Framework (*J. Didden*)
 - Consider Complementary Commission Action (*J. Boyle*)
5. Set Specifications for the 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 Fishing Years (*J. Boyle*) **Final Action**
6. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
7. Other Business/Adjourn

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. American Eel Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Other Participants: Beal, Bonvechio

Chair: Hornstein

Staff: Starks

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Hornstein*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Update on Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (*T. Kerns*)
5. Technical Committee Report on Board Tasks (*K. Bonvechio*)
 - Review of Aquaculture Plan Provisions
 - Review of Florida Young of Year Survey
6. Other Business/Adjourn

3:45 – 4:45 p.m. Marine Recreational Information Program Presentation on Fishing Effort Survey

5 – 6 p.m. Recognition of Outgoing Commissioners Reception

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Public Hearing on Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Amendment

- The Council is holding a hearing to solicit public input on a draft amendment to update EFH descriptions and maps for 14 Council-managed species. For more information:
<https://www.mafmc.org/actions/omnibus-efh-amendment>

Wednesday, February 4

8 – 10 a.m. Executive Committee

Breakfast will be available at 7:30 a.m.

(A portion of this meeting may be a closed session for Committee members and Commissioners only)

Members: Abbott, Burgess, Cimino, Clark, Dyar, Gary, Grist, Haymans, Hyatt, Kuhn, Luisi, McKiernan, McNamee, Miller, Rawls, Wilson, Zobel

Chair: McKiernan

Staff: Leach

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*D. McKiernan*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Meeting Summary from October 2025

3. Public Comment
4. Update from the Declared Interests and Voting Privileges Work Group (*R. Beal*)
5. Staff Recommendation on Notifying “Actions” on Meeting Agendas (*R. Beal*)
6. Legislative Update (*A. Law*)
7. CARES Update (*R. Beal*)
8. Future Annual Meetings Update (*L. Leach*)
 - November 8 – 12, 2026 – Newport, Rhode Island
 - 2027 – South Carolina
 - 2028 – Massachusetts
 - 2029 – Pennsylvania
9. Other Business/Adjourn

10:15 – 11:45 a.m.

Coastal Pelagics Management Board

Member States: Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: NMFS, PRFC, SAFMC

Other Participants: Giuliano, Pearce, Wiegand

Chair: Woodward (R. Beal will chair the meeting)

Staff: Franke

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*R. Beal*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2024
3. Public Comment
4. Review and Consider Approval of 2027 Atlantic Cobia Stock Assessment Terms of Reference (*A. Giuliano*) **Action**
5. Review Next Steps and Timeline for Cobia Management
 - Presentation of Specification Setting Process, Recreational Management Measures, and Confidence Interval Approach (*E. Franke*)
 - Provide Guidance to Cobia Technical Committee on Upcoming Tasks If Needed
6. Consider Approval of Atlantic Cobia Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance for the 2024 Fishing Year (*E. Franke*) **Action**
7. Consider Approval of Spanish Mackerel Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance for the 2023 and 2024 Fishing Years (*E. Franke*) **Action**
8. Update from South Atlantic Fishery Management Council on Spanish Mackerel Council Activity (*C. Wiegand*)
9. Review and Populate Spanish Mackerel Plan Review Team Membership (*E. Franke*) **Action**
10. Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action**
11. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
12. Other Business/Adjourn

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Luncheon for Legislative and Governor Appointee Commissioners

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Lunch Provided for Commissioners and Proxies

1:15 – 3:30 p.m. Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Other Participants: Bailey, Craig, Lapp

Chair: Clark

Staff: Boyle

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Clark*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Progress Update on Development of Draft Addendum II for Public Comment (*J. Boyle*)
5. Advisory Panel Report on 2025 Single-Species and Ecological Reference Points Stock Assessments (*M. Lapp*)
6. Progress Update on Technical Committee Tasking on Changing Environmental Conditions (*C. Craig*)
7. Other Business/Adjourn

3:45 – 5:30 p.m. Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

Member States: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina

Other Members: NMFS, PRFC

Other Participants: Scott, Sysak

Chair: Maniscalco

Staff: Bauer

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Maniscalco*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from February 2024
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Regional Distribution of Black Sea Bass Liberalization for 2026-2027 Recreational Management Measures **Action**
 - Consider Technical Committee Report (*R. Sysak*)
5. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
6. Other Business/Adjourn

Thursday, February 5

8:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Other Participants: Blacklock, Grabowski, Mercer

Chair: Batsavage

Staff: Franke

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*C. Batsavage*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Review and Consider Approval of Addendum III State Implementation Plans (*E. Franke*) **Action**
5. Discuss Work Group on Future Striped Bass Management (*E. Franke*)
 - Provide Guidance on Work Group Composition, Task Details, and Timeline
6. Discuss 2027 Benchmark Stock Assessment (*K. Drew*)
 - Provide Guidance to Stock Assessment Subcommittee on Biological Reference Points and Spatial Management
7. NOAA Fisheries Report on Considerations for Aquaculture of Atlantic Striped Bass (*D. Blacklock*)
8. Other Business/Adjourn

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Chair: McKiernan

Staff: Kerns

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*D. McKiernan*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2024
3. Public Comment
4. Executive Committee Report (*D. McKiernan*)
5. Review and Discuss 2025 Commissioner Survey Results (*A. Law*)
6. Update from the Declared Interests and Voting Privileges Work Group (*R. Beal*)
7. NOAA HMS Update on Recent Coastal Shark Actions (*K. Brewster-Geisz*)
8. Consider Habitat Management Series Report on Atlantic States Shell Recycling (*S. Kaalstad*) **Final Action**
9. Review Noncompliance Findings (If Necessary) **Action**
9. Other Business/Adjourn

12:30 – 12:45 p.m.

Commission Business Session

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Chair: McKiernan

Staff: Beal

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*D. McKiernan*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2025
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Noncompliance Recommendations, if necessary **Final Action**
5. Other Business/Adjourn