



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

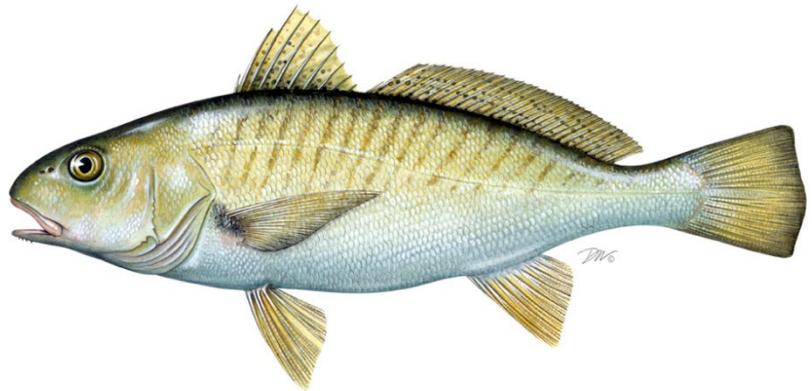
Vision: Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Atlantic Croaker Stock Assessment Workshop Scheduled for March 2-6, 2026 in Arlington, VA

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission will hold the Atlantic Croaker Benchmark Stock Assessment Workshop at the Commission’s office, 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA. The stock assessment will evaluate the health of Atlantic croaker stocks and inform management of this species. The Commission’s stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public, with the exception of discussions of confidential data*, when the public will be asked to leave the room.



The Stock Assessment Workshop will focus on evaluation of models and analyses developed to estimate stock status. The Commission welcomes the submission of models from the public that will improve the stock assessment. The deadline for submission of alternate models is **Friday, February 20, 2026**. For alternate models to be considered, the model description, inputs, and complete source code must be provided to Jeff Kipp, Senior Stock Assessment Scientist, at jkipp@asmfc.org by February 20, 2026. Any models submitted without complete, editable source code and input files will not be considered.

* Each state and federal agency is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of its data and deciding who has access to its confidential data. In the case of our stock assessments and peer reviews, all analysts and, if necessary, reviewers, have been granted permission by the appropriate agency to use and view confidential data. When the assessment team needs to show and discuss these data, observers to our stock assessment process are asked to leave the room to preserve confidentiality.

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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Specifically, the workshop will focus on addressing the following stock assessment terms of reference:

- Develop models used to estimate population parameters (e.g., fishing mortality, biomass, abundance) and biological reference points, and analyze model performance.
- Characterize uncertainty of model estimates and biological or empirical reference points.
- Recommend stock status as related to reference points (if available).
- Compare stock status and management advice from the assessment with the results of the traffic light analysis currently used for management. If outcomes differ, discuss potential causes of observed discrepancies and preferred method.

The final step in the stock assessment process will be the Peer Review Workshop, where an independent panel of fishery scientists will review the assessment for its appropriateness to advise future management of Atlantic croaker. Once the Peer Review has been scheduled, a press release will be issued with the Workshop details.

A workshop agenda will be posted in the coming weeks at <https://asmfc.org/events/atlantic-croaker-stock-assessment-workshop/>. For more information about the assessment or attending the March workshop (space will be limited), please contact Tracey Bauer, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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