Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Daniel McKiernan (MD), Chair *Doug Haymans (GA), Vice-Chair* *Robert E. Beal, Executive Director*

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

MEMORANDUM

March 16, 2026

TO: Commissioners; Proxies; American Eel Management Board; American Lobster Management Board; Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council; Atlantic Menhaden Management Board; Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board; Coastal Sharks Management Board; Horseshoe Crab Management Board; Executive Committee; ISFMP Policy Board; Law Enforcement Committee; Sciaenids Management Board; and Tautog Management Board

FROM: Robert E. Beal REB
Executive Director

RE: ASMFC Spring Meeting: May 4 – 6, 2026 (TA 26-016)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Spring Meeting will be **May 4 – 6, 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 details of which will be provided two weeks prior to the meeting. A brief, preliminary agenda and public comment guidelines are included with this memorandum. Materials will be available April 22 on the Commission website at https://asmfc.org/events/2026-spring-meeting/.

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. **At these meetings, action may be taken on any agenda item, including, but not limited to, reports from staff, technical committees, stock assessment committees, peer reviews, Law Enforcement Committee, advisory panels, plan review teams, and plan development teams.**

A block of rooms is being held at The Westin Crystal City, 1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Please **click here** to complete the Attendance and Accommodations Form. This form ensures we have accurate information on meeting attendance. **Lisa Carty will make Commissioner/Proxy reservations. Please notify her of any changes to your travel plans that may impact your hotel reservations, otherwise you will incur no-show penalties**. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

For all other attendees, please reserve your room online via our group link at **Book your group rate for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Spring Meeting** or call Marriott directly at 888.236.2427 as soon as possible and mention the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to obtain

the group room rate of $276 plus tax single/dbl. Please be aware you must guarantee your room reservation with a major credit card or one night's advance payment. **Hotel reservations must be made by Monday, April 6. Room availability will not be guaranteed beyond this date.** If you are being reimbursed by ASMFC for your travel, please make your reservation directly with the hotel. Reservations made through travel websites do not apply toward our minimum number of required reservations with the hotel. **Please note, cancellations at The Westin must be made by 4 PM two days before arrival to avoid penalty and an early departure fee of $276 + tax will apply when checking out before the confirmed date.** If you have any problems regarding accommodations, please contact Lisa Carty at 703.842.0713 or lcarty@asmfc.org.

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

Enclosed: Preliminary Agenda, TA 26-016, and Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

Spring Meeting

May 4 – 6, 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 **(April 13)** will be included in the briefing materials.
2. Comments received by **5 PM on Tuesday, April 28** will be included in supplemental materials.
3. Comments received by **10 AM on Friday, May 1** 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.

Preliminary 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. **At these meetings, action may be taken on any agenda item, including, but not limited to, reports from staff, technical committees, stock assessment committees, peer reviews, Law Enforcement Committee, advisory panels, plan review teams, and plan development teams.**

Monday, May 4

9 – 10:30 AM **Tautog Management Board**

- Review Technical Committee Report on Board Tasks
    - Harvest Projections to Reach Fishing Mortality Target
    - Risk & Uncertainty Decision Tool
    - Delaware-Maryland-Virginia Fishery-independent Data
- Consider Guidance to Plan Development Team for Draft Addendum I

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM **American Lobster Management Board**

- Consider American Lobster Technical Committee Report on Board Tasks
    - Projections of Benefits of Gauge Increase from Addendum XXVII
- Consider Nominations to Management Strategy Evaluation Steering Committee
- Reports from Gulf of Maine States on Industry Surveys and Meetings
- Update on NOAAs Request for Information for Alternative Gear Marking Framework
- Consider Outstanding Management Changes

12:15 – 1:15 PM **Lunch Break**

1:15 – 3:30 PM **Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

- Board Guidance on Reference Points and Spatial Management
- Board Discussion on Work Group Composition and Details/Timelines for Work Group Tasks

3:45 – 5:15 PM **Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council**

- Consider Funding Decision Document and FY2027 Request for Proposals
- Update on Program and Committee Activities

Tuesday, May 5

8:30 – 11:30 AM **Atlantic Menhaden Management Board**

- Consider Approval of Draft Addendum II for Public Comment
- Review Technical Committee Report on Board Task
    - Impacts of Changing Environmental Conditions
- Review Report from Committee on Economics and Social Sciences on Board Task
    - Economic Impacts from Changes in Total Allowable Catch

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM **Luncheon for Legislative and Governor Appointee Commissioners**

11:30 AM – 1 PM **Lunch Break for Commissioners & Proxies**

1:15 – 5 PM **Joint Session of the ASMFC & GSMFC Law Enforcement Committees**

- Welcome and Introduction of Joint Session
- Overview of Commissions' and Their Respective Law Enforcement Committees' (LEC) Responsibilities
- Overview of the Joint Enforcement Agreement Program
- Trending Enforcement Topics for the LEC
- Regional Case Studies
- NOAA Field Forensic Program
- ASMFC Guidelines for Resource Managers
- **Closed Session**
- State Agency Highlights
- Reconvene on May 6th

1 – 2:30 PM **Horseshoe Crab Management Board**

- Consider Report on Stakeholder Engagement Process on Adaptive Resource Management Framework Reward/Utility/Harvest Policy Functions
    - Consider Initiating an Addendum on Proposed Changes

2:45 – 4:15 PM **Coastal Sharks Management Board**

- Updates on Federal Rulemaking
- Updates on Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species Permitting for Smoothhound Dogfish
- Consider Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2024 Fishing Year

5 – 6:30 PM **Annual Awards of Excellence Reception**

Wednesday, May 6

8 AM – 4 PM **Joint Session of the ASMFC & GSMFC Law Enforcement Committees (continued)**

8 – 9 AM **Executive Committee**

- Consider FY2027 Budget
- Legislative Update
- CARES Update
- Future Annual Meetings Update

9:15 – 11:30 AM **Sciaenids Management Board**

- Consider Georgia and South Carolina Red Drum Management Proposals to Implement Addendum II
- Consider North Carolina Spot Conservation Equivalency Proposal
- Progress Update on 2026 Atlantic Croaker Benchmark Assessment

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM **Lunch Break**

12:30 – 1:15 PM **American Eel Management Board**

- Consider Technical Committee Report on Florida Young-of-Year Survey
- Review Preliminary 2025 Yellow Eel Landings

1:30 – 4:30 PM **Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board**

- Update from the Declared Interests and Voting Privileges Work Group
- Reports from the Habitat and Law Enforcement Committees
- Review Noncompliance Findings, if necessary

4:30 – 5 PM **Commission Business Session**

- Consider Noncompliance Recommendations, if necessary