



**Atlantic States  
Marine Fisheries  
COMMISSION**

# Declared Interest and Voting Privileges Work Group

ISFMP Policy Board

May 2026



# Declared Interest

A state shall be deemed to have an interest in a fishery if it meets either of the following criteria:

- The species is found in the waters under the state's jurisdiction in at least two of the past five years, as documented with state or federal fishery-dependent or independent data or other credible evidence brought forth by the state (such as data from spawning migrations, peer-reviewed publications, eDNA, or other).
- The state's fishery participants are recorded as having taken at least 1% of the total Atlantic coast commercial or recreational landings of the species in at least three of the past five years, as documented by state or federal statistics.



# Review of Declared Interest

- Reviews conducted by PRT as part of FMP reviews
- Occur every 2 years, but always within a year after benchmark assessment
- PRT advises board of any change in state's ability to meet criteria
- The board makes recommendations to the Policy Board regarding state eligibility.
- Policy Board would notify states of changes
- States can petition a Policy Board change at any time



# Voting by a *De Minimis* State

- All states with a declared interest be able to vote on issues at the board regardless of *de minimis* status.
- Consistent with the current board voting practices



# Why Guidelines

- Limiting voting could impinge on guiding documents and responsibilities to be voting members
- Voting restrictions might unduly constrain state's interests and participation in ways undesirable or difficult to predict.
- Determining voting eligibility on a vote-by-vote basis would likely be controversial and contested—creating the need for a parliamentarian/arbiter
- Voting requirements would require detailed set of rules
  - Time consuming to develop, leading to a lack of resolution at this time



# Voting Guidelines

- Guidelines would not apply to ISFMP Policy Board, Commission (Business Session), Executive Committee, federal agencies or fishery management council votes
- Guidelines intent: assist states in navigating voting scenarios while allowing for flexibility based on individual cases
- Not binding rules for voting privileges
- Staff and board chairs would not provide guidance on when to vote based on guidelines



# Voluntary Guidelines

1. Pending action will directly affect the allocation, species abundance, or fishery in your state, be that biological or economic → **Consider Voting**
2. Pending action will indirectly affect your state by impacting the achievement of an FMP goal or objective for a stock that occurs in your state's water → **Consider Voting**



# Voluntary Guidelines

3. Pending action will indirectly affect the allocation or species abundance in your state because you are at the edge of a discrete management unit (i.e., a mixing zone) or the discrete management unit is based more on social or jurisdictional elements rather than ecosystem and natural system consideration → **Consider Voting**
4. Pending action will indirectly affect your state by shifting effort or demand to species of interest within your state → **Consider Voting**
5. Pending action does not directly or indirectly affect your fishery in any discernible way, be biological or economic → **Consider Abstaining**



# Voluntary Guidelines

6. Pending action will have minimal direct or indirect effects on your state, be that biological or economic → **Consider Abstaining**
  
7. Pending action will have: a) minimal direct or indirect effects on your state and b) at least one or more states would be directly affected by a decision have requested discrete decision-making given the impact to them and the limited to no impact to others → **Consider Abstaining**



# Voluntary Guidelines

- ~~6. Pending action will have minimal direct or indirect effects on your state, be that biological or economic → Consider Abstaining~~
- **Some Members of the WG did not agree with this guideline and suggest deleting**
7. Pending action will have: a) minimal direct or indirect effects on your state ~~and~~ **or** b) **have minimal effect on your state and** at least one or more states would be directly affected by a decision have requested discrete decision-making given the impact to them and the limited to no impact to others → **Consider Abstaining**
- **Those that wanted to delete 6 did not want to alter 7**



# Next Steps

- Consider changes to the Rules and Regulations in August for declaring an interest in a fishery
  - Possible changes must be noticed for a minimum of 30 days
- Consider approval of the Voluntary Voting Guidelines

# Habitat Committee Report

Kate Wilke, *Chair; kate.wilke@tnc.org*

Eric Schneider, *Vice Chair; eric.schneider@dem.ri.gov*



# Habitat Committee: 2026 project updates

## **Habitat mapping project – exploratory phase**

- **Building on Fish Habitat of Concern (Jan 2024)**

# Habitat Committee: 2026 project updates

## Commissioner Outreach Project – Help us identify priority topics!



### Preliminary Identification of an Aquaculture Development Area in the Atlantic: Siting-level Benthic Analyses for Offshore Mariculture Activities

Gulfstream Aquaculture, LLC, Florida



### Hatchery Production of the Sea Scallop, *Placopecten magellanicus*

Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center, University of Maine Darling Marine Center, Walpole, ME



### Evaluation of the Survival and Growth of Green Sea Urchin (*Strongylocentrotus droebachiensis*) Juveniles in Two Leased Sites in Maine: LPA/Lease in the Jordan River in Frenchman Bay and in an Oyster Farm in the New Meadows River in...



**RED DRUM**  
*Sciaenops ocellatus*

**Life History and Habitat Needs**

**Geographic Range**  
Red drum are found along the Atlantic coast from the Chesapeake Bay to Key West, Florida, and throughout the Gulf of Mexico to southern Mexico.

**Movement/Migration**  
In general, red drum are a seasonally-migratory species that do not exhibit large-scale migrations. Juvenile and sub-adult fish remain in their natal estuaries until approximately age 1, at which point they will be solitary or form of loosely associated fish runs between estuary and nearshore waters during spawning season (November).

**Spawning**  
Spawning occurs primarily in nearshore areas close to inlets and passes during a peak in late September/October. Male fish produce characteristic drumming or rattling to spawning activity.

**Habitat Use**  
The red drum begins to live in a variety of high-salinity coastal habitats, including and healthy bays. After spawning occurs in early fall, juveniles carry the eggs as well as post-larvae, shallow tidal creeks, bays, tidal flats of varying salinities and seagrass beds. As they grow into juveniles, red drum utilize estuary estuarine habitats, including tidal freshwater habitats, unvegetated vegetated wetlands (brackish marsh and tidal creeks), estuarine wetlands (long-term fringe), submerged seagrass and shell banks, and open-ocean habitats (both submersed). In these habitats juveniles prey on grass shrimp, small crabs, and fish. Tidal adults are found throughout channels of southeastern estuaries, in brackish areas behind barrier islands, and during certain times of the year. Larger red drum (approximately 4 – 5 years old) reside in nearshore waters during the fall, and have been observed on hard/low bottom at

**Threats to Habitat**

- Coastal development including beach re-nourishment and energy development
- Navigation and related activities, e.g., dredging and hazardous material spills
- Alterance and modification of coastal sites, e.g., port construction
- Loss of wetland and marine habitats
- Invasion by exotic species that displace or minimize native animals and plants dynamics
- Marine anchoring
- Watercraft operation activities, e.g., pollutant discharges from boats
- Hydrologic modifications, e.g., flood and mosquito control, aquaculture
- Alterations of freshwater flows into estuarine areas
- Certain fishing gears, such as trawls and beach dredges, which adversely affect wetlands needed for spawning

**HABITAT HOTLINE Atlantic**  
2024 Issue

**HEALTHY FISHERIES NEED HEALTHY HABITAT**

**A Sneak Peek at State Shell Recycling Programs**

As the outgoing Chair of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Habitat Committee, it is my pleasure to present the 2024 issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*. I would also like to welcome Kate Wilke (The Nature Conservancy) and Eric Schneider (Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management) as the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee, respectively. This year's issue covers several recently completed projects and offers a preview of our plans for 2025.

The Habitat Committee had a very productive year in 2024. Among its key accomplishments was the development of a document designating "Fish Habitat of

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
Habitat Management Series #17  
Fall 2024

**Anthropogenic Noise Impacts on Atlantic Fish and Fisheries: Implications for Managers and Long-Term Productivity**

*Enhancing, preserving, and protecting Atlantic diadromous, estuarine, and coastal fish habitats*



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# **Law Enforcement Committee Report to ISFMP Policy Board**

May 6, 2026

## Tautog Management Discussion

- The LEC discussed the Tautog Management Board's intent to advance Addendum 1 to Amendment 1 of the Tautog FMP. Staff provided background on current management discussions.
- Board tasking of the LEC to consider the State of New Yorks request to include an option for states to offer a secondary tag as an alternative for a state commercial tagging programs?
- The LEC supports the commercial tagging program outlined in the FMP and is open to endorsing an alternative tag, provided it meets the established requirements of the program.
- The committee requests the opportunity to review the proposed option in the draft addendum before the Board grants final approval.

- NOAA OLE - JEA Update
- *Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures (July 2024).*
- NOAA Field Forensic Program
- Maine Marine Patrol - Court Authorized Surveillance Techniques
- TPWD – Enforcement of Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Activity in the State of Texas.

➤ Mississippi – Department of Marine Resources

*Operation Scaled Deception*- The fraudulent use of trip ticket!

➤ Florida - Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

*Operation Atlantis* - The false tagging of seafood products!



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*Thank you!*



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# Proposed Revisions to Monterey Bay Aquarium's Standards for Fisheries

ISFMP Policy Board

May 2026



# CHANGES WITH SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON RATINGS

- Stricter “Best Choice” (Green) threshold for stock status
- Tightened stock rebuilding thresholds
- Discards and bait use can no drive a red color rating
- Revised reference point guidance
- Data-poor fisheries face harsher scoring



# CHANGES WITH LITTLE IMPACT ON RATINGS

- Streamlined fishing mortality table for bycatch species
- Revised language on alternative reference points
- Consolidation of criteria structure (potential merging of Habitat and Wildlife criteria)
- More explicit guidance for illegal activities and unknown impacts
- New metrics reporting



## Options to comment to the Monterey Bay Aquarium

- Do not sent comments
- Send comments individually by state
- Send comments as the Commission
  
- If yes, staff request specific guidance on the comments