Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 27, 2026

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States Schedule Public Hearings on Atlantic Menhaden Draft Addendum II

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic coastal states of Maine through Virginia have scheduled hearings to gather public input on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. The Draft Addendum considers options to reduce the Chesapeake Bay Reduction Fishery Cap (Bay Cap) by up to 50% and distribute the cap more evenly throughout the fishing season. The options aim to alleviate a concentration of effort that may be affecting other fisheries within the Bay and other potential ecological impacts.

The Board initiated the Draft Addendum in response to concerns regarding declining pound net harvest and catch per unit effort in the Bay in recent years, coinciding with an increase in the concentration of reduction harvest in the summer months, and the possible downstream effects on menhaden predators.

The Draft Addendum also includes options that link the Bay Cap to the coastwide total allowable catch to maintain a more fixed proportion between the two, as well as options to distribute the Bay Cap into three quota periods to prevent a concentration of reduction harvest in the spring and summer of the fishing season.

Some hearings will be conducted in-person, some will be hybrid, and others will be conducted via webinar. ***If you are unable to participate in your state's scheduled hearing, you are welcome to participate in any of the virtual hearings.*** The public hearing details follow. Please note that the hearing location for the MD/PRFC hearing has not been set. The Commission will issue another press release once the hearing details have been confirmed.

Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency	Contact
Tuesday, September 15 ***In-Person Hearing*** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources and Potomac River Fisheries Commission** ***Hearing Location:*** To be determined	Michael Luisi (MD) 443.758.6547 Ingrid Braun-Ricks (PRFC) 804.224.7148

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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Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency	Contact
Wednesday, September 16 ***Hybrid Hearing*** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation and Connecticut Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection** *Note: This is a hybrid meeting (both in-person and virtual). The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.* ***Hearing Location:*** NYSDEC Division of Marine Resources 123 Kings Park Blvd (inside Nissequogue River State Park), Kings Park, NY	Marty Gary (NY) 631.444.0430 Matt Gates (CT) 860.876.4393
Saturday, September 19 ***In-Person Hearing*** 10:00 a.m. - Noon	**Virginia Marine Resources Commission** ***Hearing Location:*** Northumberland High School 201 Academic Lane Heathsville, VA	Joe Grist 757.247.2205
Monday, September 28 ***In-Person Hearing*** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Virginia Marine Resources Commission** ***Hearing Location:*** Virginia Marine Resources Commission 380 Fenwick Rd, Building 96 Fort Monroe, VA	Joe Grist 757.247.2205
Tuesday, September 29 ***Virtual Hearing*** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**Maine Dept. of Natural Resources, New Hampshire Fish and Game, Massachusetts Division of Marine Resources, and Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management** *The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.*	Megan Ware (ME) 207.446.0932 Renee Zobel (NH) 603.868.1095 Nichola Meserve (MA) 978.290.1672 Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI) 401.423.1940
Thursday, October 1 ***Virtual Hearing*** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	**General Public Hearing** *The webinar registration link is available here, and additional webinar instructions are below.*	James Boyle 703.842.0740

Webinar Instructions

For all virtual and hybrid hearings, please click **HERE** and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu to register for a public hearing webinar. Hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, and you can join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone. Please note that in order to comment during virtual webinar hearings you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your phone. If you are new to GoToWebinar, you can download the software by (clicking here) or via the App store under GoToWebinar. We recommend you register for the hearing well in advance of the hearing since GoToWebinar will provide you with a link to test your device's compatibility with the webinar. If you find your device is not compatible, please contact the Commission at info@asmfc.org (subject line: GoToWebinar help) and we will try to get you connected. We also strongly encourage participants to **use the computer voice over internet protocol (VoIP)** so you can ask questions and provide input at the hearing. ***If you are unable to participate in your state's scheduled hearing, you are welcome to participate in any of the virtual or hybrid hearings.***

Hearing Presentation Recording

For those who cannot attend any in-person or virtual hearings, the Commission will also post a recording of the hearing presentation on the Commission's YouTube page so that stakeholders may watch the presentation and submit comment at any time during the comment process. This recording will be available by early September.

Submitting Comments

The public is encouraged to submit comments at any time during the public comment period but no later than **11:59 PM (EST) on October 9, 2026**. You can access the Draft Addendum, public hearing schedule, and ways to comment on the Atlantic Menhaden Draft Addendum II Action Tracker webpage.

We accept public comment in several forms (at public hearings, an online public comment form, an online public comment survey, and via mail or email) and all forms are equally valued. However, we strongly encourage the use of the public comment survey as it allows users to select specific preferred options in the Draft Addendum and provides space for open-ended comments at the end. Options for submitting comments follow:

1. Online via the public comment survey
2. Online via comment box
3. Email: comments@asmfc.org (subject line: Atlantic Menhaden Draft Addendum II)
4. Mail: James Boyle, ASMFC, 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200-N, Arlington, VA 22201
5. Verbal comments provided at any of the scheduled public hearings

If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to the Draft Addendum, please contact James Boyle at jboyle@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740, so he can work with you to develop a unique subject line to enable us to better organize and summarize incoming comments for Board review. For more information, please contact James Boyle, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at jboyle@asmfc.org.

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