

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Shad and River Herring Management Board

November 10, 2026

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*R. Owens*) 1:30 p.m.
2. Board Consent 1:30 p.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from August 2025
3. Public Comment 1:35 p.m.
4. Technical Committee Report (*M. Jargowsky*) **Action** 1:45 p.m.
 - Consider Shad and River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plan (SFMP), Alternative Management Plan (AMP), and Habitat Plan Updates for the Delaware River Cooperative (Habitat Plan), Maine (American Shad SFMP), South Carolina (River Herring AMP), and Florida (American Shad SFMP)
 - Review Sustainability Metrics for New York (River Herring) and South Carolina (American Shad)
5. Update from New England Fishery Management Council (*J. Cournane*) 2:10 p.m.
 - Shad and River Herring Bycatch Avoidance in the Atlantic Herring Fishery
6. Consider Timing of Next Shad and River Herring Stock Assessments (*K. Drew*) 2:20 p.m.
7. Other Business/Adjourn 2:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held at Hotel Viking (One Bellevue Avenue, Newport, RI; 855.860.4254) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details.

MEETING OVERVIEW

Shad and River Herring Management Board Meeting

November 10, 2026

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Chair: Ron Owens (PRFC) Assumed Chairmanship: 11/26	Technical Committee Chair: Matthew Jargowsky (MD)	Law Enforcement Committee Representative: Lt. Col. Doug Daniels
Vice Chair: Vacant	Advisory Panel Chair: Vacant	Previous Board Meeting: August 6, 2025
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS (19 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from August 2025

3. Public Comment – At the beginning of the meeting public comment will be taken on items not on the agenda. Individuals that wish to speak at this time must sign-in at the beginning of the meeting. For agenda items that have already gone out for public hearing and/or have had a public comment period that has closed, the Board Chair may determine that additional public comment will not provide additional information. In this circumstance the Chair will not allow additional public comment on an issue. For agenda items that the public has not had a chance to provide input, the Board Chair may allow limited opportunity for comment. The Board Chair has the discretion to limit the number of speakers and/or the length of each comment.

4. Technical Committee Report (1:45-2:10 p.m.) Action

Background

- Amendments 2 and 3 to the Shad and River Herring FMP require all states and jurisdictions that have a commercial fishery to submit an SFMP for river herring and American shad, respectively. Plans are updated and reviewed by the Technical Committee (TC) every five years.
- Maine (American shad) submitted an updated SFMP, South Carolina (river herring) submitted an updated Alternative Management Plan (AMP), and the Delaware River Cooperative submitted an updated Habitat Plan for American shad. Florida informed the TC that they will be transitioning to catch and release in the St. John's river; therefore, they are withdrawing their American shad SFMP. The plans were recommended for approval by the TC (**Supplemental Materials**).
- Additionally, the TC reviewed updates from New York and South Carolina on their sustainability metrics.

Presentations

- TC Report by M. Jargowsky

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Consider approval of updated SFMPs, AMPs, and Habitat Plans

5. Update from New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) (2:10-2:20 p.m.)

Background

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In September 2026, the NEFMC took final action to set Atlantic herring specifications for fishing years 2027–2031, including status quo river herring and shad catch caps. Additionally, the Council discussed a separate action that would modify river herring and shad management through an amendment as part of a multi-year priority. |
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Presentations

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NEFMC report by J. Cournane |
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6. Consider Timing of Next Shad and River Herring Stock Assessments (2:20-2:30 p.m.)

Background

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In October 2026, the TC discussed the timing of the next river herring and American shad stock assessments and made recommendations to modify the timeline to avoid overlapping the two assessments. |
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Presentations

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of assessment timeline by K. Drew |
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7. Other Business/Adjourn

DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
SHAD AND RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
Hybrid Meeting

August 6, 2025

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Shad and River Herring Management Board.
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Call to Order	1
Approval of Agenda	1
Approval of Proceedings from October 23, 2024.....	1
Public Comment	1
Advisory Panel Report	1
2024 River Herring Benchmark Assessment	1
Consider Shad and River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plan (SFMP) and Alternative Management Plan (AMP) Updates	4
Massachusetts SFMP (River Herring)	5
Georgia SFMP (American Shad) and AMP (River Herring)	6
Florida AMP (Shad & River Herring).....	7
Elect Vice-Chair.....	8
Adjournment	8

INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings of October 23, 2024** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve the updated River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plan from Massachusetts, Shad Sustainable Fishery Management Plan and River Herring Alternative Management Plan from Georgia, and the Shad and River Herring Alternative Management Plan from Florida, as presented today** (Page 8). Motion by Dan McKiernan; second by David Borden. Motion passes by consent (Page 8).
4. **Move to elect Ron Owens as Vice-Chair** (Page 8). Motion by John Maniscalco; second by Joe Grist. Motion passes by consent (Page 8).
5. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 8).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Megan Ware, ME, proxy for C. Wilson (AA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Renee Zobel, NH (AA)	Lynn Fegley, MD (AA)
Doug Grout, NH (GA)	Russel Dize, MD (GA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Sen. Watters (LA)	Allison Colden, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)	Jamie Green, VA (AA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for K. Rawls (AA)
Matthew Gates, CT, proxy for J. Davis (AA)	Ross Self, SC, proxy for Blaik Keppler (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)	Malcolm Rhodes, SC (GA)
Rep. Joesph Gresko, CT (LA)	Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
John Maniscalco, NY, proxy for M. Gary (AA)	Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Heather Corbett, NJ, proxy for J. Cimino (AA)	Gary Jennings, FL (GA)
Jeff Kaelin, NJ (GA)	Daniel Ryan, DC
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Sen. Gopal (AA)	Ron Owens, PRFC
Kristopher Kuhn, PA, proxy for T. Schaeffer (AA)	Max Appelman, NMFS
Loren Lustig, PA (GA)	Rick Jacobson USFWS
Edna Stetzar, DE, proxy for J. Clark (AA)	

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Ex-Officio Members

Matt Jargowsky Technical Committee Chair	Thomas Gadomski, Law Enforcement Committee
Pam Lyons Gromen, Advisory Panel Chair	Rep.

Staff

Bob Beal	Madeline Musante	Tracy Bauer
Toni Kerns	Caitlin Starks	James Boyle
Tina Berger	Jeff Kipp	Chelsea Tuohy
Katie Drew	Samarah Nehemiah	Jeff Kipp

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The Shad and River Herring Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Westin Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia, via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Wednesday, August 6, 2025, and was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Phillip Edwards.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR PHILLIP EDWARDS: Good morning, everybody. I would like to call to order the Shad and River Herring Management Board Meeting. With me today is James Boyle and Katie Drew from the Commission, and Matthew Jargowski, the TC Chair from Maryland.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR EDWARDS: I would like to start with the approval of the agenda. Are there any proposed modifications to today's agenda? Seeing none; approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR EDWARDS: Moving on to approval of proceedings from October 2024. The proceedings were in your materials. Are there any corrections or edits? Seeing none; approved by consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR EDWARDS: The next topic on the agenda is public comment. Is there any public comment at this time on anything that is not on the agenda? Seeing no public comment, we'll move on to Agenda Item Number 4. The Advisory Panel Report from AP Chair Pam Lyons Groman to provide an update on the 2024 River Herring Benchmark Assessment.

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

MS. PAM LYONS GROMAN: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of the Management Board, just checking my sound to make sure you can hear me okay. Wonderful. It is my pleasure to be here, connected with you this morning to

represent the Shad and River Herring Advisory Panel.

Our comments today are going to be focused on the 2024 River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment. At the August 2024 meeting, just about a year ago now, the Management Board accepted the 2024 River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use.

Following this meeting the AP convened via webinar on October 7, to review the assessment findings and provide recommendations. It was a pretty rich discussion, as you recall, that was a very thorough assessment. The AP members felt strongly that we just needed some more time for some thoughtful discussion, and to develop consensus recommendations.

We scheduled an additional meeting that was held on December 2nd. We had 7 people attend our first meeting and 10 AP members attend our December 2nd meeting. Our goals at that meeting were to discuss the results of the 2024 River Herring Benchmark Assessment and to receive an update on the progress of the New England Fishery Management Council's Atlantic Herring Amendment 10. In terms of the River Herring Benchmark Assessment and our feedback.

Overall, the AP members were concerned that river herring populations are not recovering, despite the actions taken through Amendment 2, that resulted in the closure of most state fisheries. The AP discussed the contrast in the assessment results between northern New England and Southern New England, particularly considering that the report notes both regions have significant restoration programs.

2024 RIVER HERRING BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT

MS. PAM LYONS GROMAN: Our consensus recommendations, we recommend that Board task the TC to document the numbers of commercial fisheries by state over time, and use those trends to identify and evaluate attributes of effective management programs, including assessing the

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impact of the Atlantic Herring Area 1A Seasonal Closure on the relative success of the Maine river herring runs.

We also recommend that we prioritize genetic sampling of river herring at-sea bycatch, particularly with portside sampling programs, as well as the development of a uniform aging protocol between states, to reduce uncertainty in the assessment results. This was a research recommendation from the Stock Assessment Peer Review.

Other assessment comments, these were not consensus but they were important points made by individual AP members. Increasing the harvest for either species is concerning, given the results of the assessment. One member suggested that the lack of a significant positive trend coastwide, since the moratorium in 2009 represents an emergency. We also discussed that 2009 reference year, and some members felt that it represented a greatly depleted stock and comparisons to 2009 do not fully convey the losses that the stock has had over the full time series.

This should be made clear to the public, the shifting baseline, basically. The assessment cannot evaluate the stocks at small enough scales for suitable management was another comment, and that recent bycatch values are artificially low, due to the lack of observer coverage. Then we moved on to Amendment 10. We received an update on the progress of the New England Council's Amendment 10.

We were given a press release from June of last year, and we had planned to meet this year to review the management alternatives, and to prepare recommendations. We did have a consensus recommendation, and that was that the AP recommends the Commission support the development of management alternatives to consider time/area closures, incidental catch caps, and improvements to incidental catch monitoring, accuracy and precision in Atlantic Herring Amendment 10.

I just want to emphasize that when we say supports in this particular recommendation, it was a form of active support. There was a lot of discussion that we would like for the Commission process to allow time for comments to be developed and submitted as part of this process. Even though our meeting was held a while ago now, and since Amendment 10 has been paused, we still feel potential actions that had been proposed to Amendment 10 remain applicable to the assessment findings. There is always a rich discussion during our AP meetings about bycatch. Most state fisheries are closed, so this is where we spend a good deal of our time. There was general agreement among AP members that there needs to be greater monitoring of offshore fisheries, and that more of the burden of sustainability should be placed on offshore fisheries that have a high incidence of river herring bycatch, rather than the in-river fisheries.

Portside sampling was seen as the most efficient method to acquire the data necessary to evaluate the possibility of disproportionate effects of bycatch on different systems. Support for coastal buffer zones in the Atlantic herring and mackerel fisheries to reduce river herring bycatch was noted by a number of AP members.

They also expressed support for exploring bycatch caps that are more responsive to existing river herring stock conditions, like genetic subregions, as defined by the Reid et al. paper, that paper has gotten a lot of attention in river herring discussions, and also formulating time/area closures based on bycatch probability, such as those investigated by Roberts et al. in the 2023 paper.

We also felt back in December that there should be a rapidly growing focus on funding in-river monitoring efforts, along with any other herring specific surveys, that's river herring, to look at population level responses to reduced Atlantic herring and mackerel effort. At that time, you know before the season really kicked off, we were thinking there could be a good response for less effort at sea, and that that should be something that is monitored.

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Our consensus recommendations, in terms of future management and assessment is we would recommend that the Board identify mechanisms for improving public access and transparency of data between stock assessments, and so we talked about the Manomet study that the Mid-Atlantic Council has funded to create a coastwide river herring data portal, so that the public and others, you know anyone interested, can see trends coastwide in different runs.

We also recommended that the Board investigate the use of external collaborators for data collection. Other comments in this area, there was support for recreational personal use harvest in state sustainable fishery management plans, and again, here we are a year later and I'm providing the AP report, and there is concern that the assessment process really does not involve the AP before the assessment is approved for management use.

When the assessment was approved a year ago, Amendment 10 had been an ongoing action, and the Board decided not to take any action. Perhaps this is a good time to maybe reevaluate, based on these comments, and consider potential actions in response to the stock assessment. That is my last slide, and so I wanted to pause for any questions from the members of the Management Board.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Thank you, Pam, for the update and the presentation. Are there any questions for Pam? Dave Borden.

MR. DAVID V.D. BORDEN: Could we go back two slides, please. Yes, on the top bullet on this one, the AP members state that there is a need for greater monitoring of offshore fisheries. Is a conclusion embedded in that that the inshore fisheries are being monitored correctly in the correct manner?

MS. LYONS GROMEN: Well, the AP also noted that they would like to have more independent data collection systems investigated as

potential to contributing to the stock assessment. I do believe they feel there is room for improvement. But they feel it's disproportionate, that in terms of the burden on sustainability there is just a lot more rigorous record keeping in most river systems versus the effect that offshore fisheries are having on the populations.

MR. BORDEN: I would agree that that is accurate, given the amount of fishing effort in federal waters, but I don't think we should overlook the inshore fisheries, it should be a proportionate amount of independent sampling of the inshore fisheries, to make sure that we're not catching them in nearshore waters.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Jeff.

MR. JEFF KAELEN: There is a lot of river herring taken in the whiting fishery, it's not really regulated. Only the herring fishery has caps, so Dave Borden makes a very good point. Also, back in one of the other slides, I don't know which one it was. There was a comment about bycatch is higher than estimated because of no observers in the herring fishery, or something like that. The herring fishery is monitored by the SBRM Program.

The reason why observer coverage is low is because SBRM days are assigned to fisheries that have high discard rates. The herring fishery doesn't discard. Therefore, the coverage is very, very low. We all know that PEW and Earth Justice and the Council decided that we should take 50% observer coverage when the Agency was saying that somewhere around 20% is probably accurate and precise enough to know what's going on. I have a real issue with that particular bullet point, because it's missing a point, frankly.

MS. LYONS GROMEN: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Kaelin. With the river herring catch, we call it bycatch, but it's incidental catch and so it's retained. It's not really factored in well to the standard bycatch reporting methodology. I believe that comment comes from the Atlantic Herring Amendment 10.

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Some of the work that had been done early on, prior to leading up to Amendment 10 even being initiated, was looking at how the caps were administered in the Atlantic herring fishery, and noticing that some of the cap areas that had been defined had particularly low coverage in certain spaces. I do believe that was founded in some information that came to the AP. But again, that was not a consensus statement that was a statement that was voiced by some members of the AP. But I felt it important to reflect individual voices as well as consensus.

MR. KAE LIN: I won't go any further. We argued that Amendment 10 should be set aside, because there is no herring fishery right now, so very, very low catches. Hopefully, Amendment 10 stays on the shelf until the stock can be rebuilt. That has been the industries position for months on this. We've also asked for some kind of an assessment of the relative impacts on river herring coastwide, inshore fishing, offshore fishing, predation and so forth. It's easy to find the fishermen and say, well gee, if we could just get rid of those offshore fish, all those river herring would be fine. But I don't think that's a very scientific approach to the issue. We'll continue to remain under siege, and continue to report tow by tow and everything else, as we have for years electronically.

We've done everything we have been required to do, and the data just never seems to be enough for the people who would like to see the fishery go away. Maybe I'm overly sensitive, but I'm disappointed that so much of this presentation focuses on bycatch and not some of these other issues, like dams, for example, just to throw out one thing.

MS. LYONS GROMEN: Thank you, and if I could just respond briefly. Our charge as an AP was to respond to the benchmark stock assessment. There was rich discussion within the assessment about bycatch, so that was grounds that we thought was necessary to cover. Thank you.

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CHAIR EDWARDS: Any other questions for Pam? We do have a public comment from Jim Fletcher, go ahead, Jim.

MR. JAMES FLETCHER: Is there any way in this we could look at the eggs being affected by the chemicals, mainly surfactants? We're not getting to where the problem is on these herring. When they come out of the rivers and come back to surfactants, and I don't hear any chemicals addressed on how it's affecting it.

We're not going to get to the problem until we get the water quality. But also, the nano and microplastics. But we're not addressing the problem, we're going around and round and asking for more information. Apparently, no one wants to address water quality. Thank you, James Fletcher, United National Fishermen's Association.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Thank you, Jim, for your comment. No other questions, we'll move on to Item Number 5. Consider the Shad and River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plan and the Alternative Management Plan Updates. Matt, the TC Chair will provide us an update.

CONSIDER SHAD AND RIVER HERRING SUSTAINABLE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN (SFMP) AND ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN (AMP) UPDATES

MR. MATTHEW JARGOWSKY: My name is Matthew Jargowsky, and I am the new Shad and River Herring Technical Committee Chair. Today for the Board I am presenting new and updated American Shad and River Herring SFMPs and AMPs. Before I get started, a brief background always required of these plans.

Amendments 2 and 3 of the Shad and River Herring FMP requires states wishing to have a fishery must submit a sustainable fisheries management plan that will demonstrate their stock to support a commercial and/or recreational fishery that will not diminish future stock reproduction and recruitment.

The management board can also approve alternative management programs or alternative management plans if the state or jurisdiction can show to the management board's satisfaction that the alternative proposal will have the same conservation value as the measures contained in the FMP. When the Board tasked the TC of reevaluating and reassessing what should be included in these plans, the TC determined that AMPs may be appropriate for systems with no known harvest. Regardless of the plan type, each are updated and are reviewed every five years to reassess stock status and sustainability.

There are four plans for the Board to review today. The first is a new river herring SFMP for the town of Pembroke, Massachusetts.

The next is an updated American shad SFMP for Georgia, and the final two plans are alternative management plan updates for Georgia and Florida. All four plans were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Technical Committee. I will first start with the new Massachusetts SFMP.

MASSACHUSETTS SFMP (RIVER HERRING)

MR. JARGOWSKY: Again, this is a new river herring SFMP for Herring Brook in the town of Pembroke, Massachusetts. It is important to note that while this is a new SFMP, Massachusetts does already have two approved river herring SFMPs for both the Nemasket and Herring Rivers. However, while these plans have been previously approved, no fishing has occurred under these plans to date.

Some background on Herring Brook. It has a long history of dedicated river herring management by the Pembroke Herring Fisheries Commission and prior town entities, with harvest dating back to 1790. The run is a predominantly alewife run, though there are some blueback herring that show up toward the end of the spawning run.

Since dam failures in the early 2000s, there have been substantial restoration efforts to restore the spawning run to Herring Brook. This includes the construction of new fishways, fishway improvements to existing fishways, and stream restoration in various forms, such as removal of evasive plants and removing dam barriers.

The spawning run is primarily monitored through both digital and electronic run counts. You can see a table to the right that shows these run counts dating back to 2012. The visual counts are the first column after the year, and then it's electronic counts. Then there is a ratio of those electronic to visual counts.

In the final right-hand column, you see the adjusted count column, and this is the column that is used in the sustainability measures. This column is simply the electronic run count in years where the electronic run counts exist, and then years where there is no electronic run count, the visual count is then extrapolated out based on the ratio of electronic count to visual counts, to give us this adjusted run count.

In total we have run count data for this system dating back to 2012. The past three years have been pretty high, and they are the highest three-year average in the history of the time series. However, it is also important to note that in 2021 and 2022 there were relatively low run counts. However, there seems to be no evidence of recruitment failure as to date.

Furthermore, Massachusetts believes that these lower run counts are not due to a lack of returning spawning adults, but simply due to downstream blockages. For this SFMP harvest will be capped at 10% of the run count time series mean, which is just over 26,000 fish. The town will offer up to 300 harvest permits, of which the majority of these permits will go to town residents, but there will be some non-town resident permits granted. The fishing season will be five weeks long with three open days per week for fishing. Harvest will only occur in Herring Brook Park, and this harvest will be monitored by Town Herring Wardens. Under this

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plan permit holders can harvest a maximum of 15 fish per week, which results in a maximum harvest under this proposed scenario of just under 17,000 fish, which is well below 10% of the time series count.

As I mentioned before, the sustainability measure for this plan will be the ongoing spawning run counts, and the sustainability target will be the harvest cap of 10% of the time series mean. The primary action threshold for this plan will be a 25th percentile of the run count time series. Management actions on this plan include if the sustainability target is exceeded in a single year this will result in a management review, so that the town can determine how to prevent that from happening moving forward.

If the run count goes below the 25th percentile for two consecutive years, this will result in a sustainability target being reduced to 5% for the following year. If there are three consecutive years of run counts below the 25th percentile this will result in a minimum of a three-year closure for the fishery, and the fishery will not be allowed to reopen until the spawning run counts are above the time series mean, for at least three consecutive years.

For this final slide, this is the spawning run counts that are used for sustainability metrics under the SFMP, and you see the 25th percentile, which is the action threshold is that middle line, and the lower line is the 10% of the time series mean, which is the time series cap. You can see the relatively low count as I mentioned in 2021 and 2022, but overall, there does appear to be an increasing trajectory in this time series, likely due to the restoration efforts that I mentioned previously. With that I will take any questions.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Thank you, Matt, for the detailed presentation. Are there any questions from the Board for Matt? Dennis Abbott.

MR. DENNIS ABBOTT: The question for the permit holders that can harvest 15 fish a day, I think. What is the use of 15 fish per day, bait fish?

MR. JARGOWSKY: Yes, it's 5 fish per day or 15 fish per week, and it's mostly for personal use. Under the plan they are going to encourage consumption of those fish, but some of them will be used for bait.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Any other questions for Matt on the Massachusetts plan? Dan.

MR. DANIEL MCKIERNAN: To Dennis' question. We do know some folks who, I would call them old timers, who do recall pickling river herring and have looked forward to this. I can tell you one anecdote that I had a dear friend who died of cancer, and he just wanted some river herring before he died. I got him some scientific samples and he pickled them. There is a small population of people out there that still would love to pickle river herring, and that's legit.

MR. ABBOTT: I look forward to you bringing us in some pickled herring at some point in the future.

MR. MCKIERNAN: Consider it done.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Any other questions? Okay, Matt.

GEORGIA SFMP (AMERICAN SHAD) AND AMP (RIVER HERRING)

MR. JARGOWSKY: Next, I will present the Georgia SFMP Update. Again, this is an update to Georgia's American shad SFMP, and this plan was previously approved in 2020. Under this plan commercial harvest is allowed in select portions of the Savannah and Altamaha Rivers from January to March, and this is primarily a gillnet fishery.

Commercial landings are reported by the fishermen and these are mandatory requirements. However, it is important to note that landings and effort have declined in recent years, and you can see this in some of the tables towards the end of the plan. There is also recreational harvest allowed, with an 8

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fish daily recreational creel limit throughout Georgia.

In Georgia the shad populations are monitored through a fisheries independent gillnet survey, two fisheries independent electrofishing surveys and a few juvenile seine surveys. In addition, this fishery independent gillnet survey and two electrofishing surveys are used as a management benchmarks and triggers.

There were a couple updates to this new plan, the first being that the sustainability metrics, which include a benchmark which are calculated as the 25th percentile of the time series mean, were updated to include data through 2023. They also request a suspension of the Ogeechee River Creel Survey, due to funding constraints.

This was a creel survey used to monitor recreational harvest on the system. However, the river will still be monitored through a fishery's independent electrofishing survey, as well as a juvenile seine survey. Finally, I'll present the three-sustainability metrics I mentioned previously. This first one is for the Altamaha River, which is the gillnet survey, with data dating back to 1982, with the red line indicating that sustainability benchmark of the 25th percentile.

This is the Savannah River, a fisheries independent creel survey, so again the red mark indicates the benchmark value with data dating back to 2010. Similar on the Ogeechee River there is the fishery's independent electrofishing survey with data also dating back to 2010. With that I can take any questions on Georgia's American Shad SFMP.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Are there any questions for Matt on the Georgia? Okay, Matt, back to you.

MR. JARGOWSKY: Finally, I will present the last two plans, which are Alternative Management Plans, starting with Georgia. In Georgia there is no commercial river herring fishery. However,

recreationally the fishery is unregulated. There are no known river herring fisheries in the state, and the species is thought to be functionally absent. This is seen through the fact that in the two previous electrofishing surveys I mentioned, since 2010 only 10 adult blueback herring have been caught across multiple surveys. Since 2011, less than 400 juvenile blueback herring have been caught in a juvenile seine survey, compared to over 18,000 juvenile American shad. As part of the plan, Georgia states that if any creel survey indicates positive harvest of river herring for three consecutive years, Georgia DNR will take the necessary steps to ensure a sustainability for that river system, either through making the species catch and release only or the creation of a new sustainable fishery's management plan.

FLORIDA AMP (SHAD & RIVER HERRING)

MR. JARGOWSKY: For Florida's Alternative Management Plan, this is an alternative management plan for blueback herring in all Florida waters, as well as American shad outside of the St. John's River Basin, as in the St. John River Basin there is a separate American shad SFMP.

Florida states that Alosa species are functionally absent from most other coastal waters, including the Nassau River, Pellicer Creek, and Tomoka River. Blueback herring are known to occur in the St. John River system, but there is no known directed fishery or no known harvest. Since this is in Florida, there is no commercial fisheries, but there is a 10 fish daily bag limit for Alosa in aggregate.

Similar to Georgia's AMP, if any source detects non-zero blueback herring harvest anywhere in Florida for three consecutive years, or American shad harvest outside of the St. John River Basin, then Florida FWC will initiate the process to demonstrate sustainability for that river system, or prohibit harvest. That is the final plan, and I also can take questions now.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Are there any questions for Matt on the AMPs? John.

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MR. JOHN MANISCALCO: I was just wondering about the state of recreational fisheries monitoring in Florida on those river systems.

MR. JARGOWSKY: I believe there is a creel survey for American shad in the St. John River Basin, but I am not sure about monitoring in other systems outside of MRIP.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Erika.

MS. ERIKA BURGESS: We have a creel survey that is in the St. Johns River, we have not had any occurrence of American shad on any other systems in Florida.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Are there any other questions on the plans? Okay, I am not seeing any, could I have a motion to approve the plans? Dan.

MR. MCKIERNAN: Yes, I have a motion to approve all four plans today, it's on the screen, I'll read it. **Move to approve the updated River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plan from Massachusetts, Shad Sustainable Fishery Management Plan and River Herring Alternative Management Plan from Georgia, and the Shad and River Herring Alternative Management Plan from Florida as presented today.**

CHAIR EDWARDS: Okay, **is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none; the motion is approved by consent.** Thank you, Matt.

ELECT VICE-CHAIR

Our next item is elect a Vice-Chair. Do I have a motion for our next Vice-Chair? John.

MR. MANISCALCO: **I move to elect Ron Owens as Vice-Chair.**

CHAIR EDWARDS: Joe.

MR. JOE GRIST: I was going to second that.

CHAIR EDWARDS: Second. Would anyone like to discuss around the motion? Okay, **is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none; I welcome Ron to the Vice-Chair position.** Is there any other business to come before this Commission? Yes, Bill.

MR. WILLIAM HYATT: Mr. Chair, no new business, I just want to take a moment and make a comment. I would like to compliment the Chair and the members of the AP for the report that was presented at the beginning of this meeting. I think they clearly put in a lot of effort, I think it was well thought out, and I think they provided some valuable recommendations. I think it stands out compared to many of the AP reports that I've heard in my time here, so I just want to pass along a complement. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR EDWARDS: Thank you for those comments. Are there any other comments? Well, could I have a motion to adjourn this meeting? Rhodes and a second, thank you.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 6, 2025)

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