



Conservation Equivalency Guidance Document

ISFMP Policy Board

August 2023

CE Review Process



- The application of conservation equivalency (CE) is described in the Conservation Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance Document
- The Executive Committee and a subset of MSC Committee members provided information that informed staff revisions to the CE Guidance Document

Proposed Changes



- Removal of CE in the development of FMPs references
 - The entire 3rd paragraph should have been deleted on pg 3, not just the last sentence and the first paragraph under the review process on pg 6
- Requires state to include single more restrictive measures in compliance reports
- Multi measure more restrictive changes must be approved by a Board

Proposed Changes



- CE programs are required to be described and evaluated in the annual compliance review, unless alternative time has been set
- CE programs will have a length of time it is in place
- PRTs review proposals, not approve

Proposed Changes



DECISION POINT for the Policy Board

- When should CE not be allowed?

Option 1: if the stock is overfished

Option 2: if overfishing is occurring

Option 3: if overfishing is occurring and the stock is overfished

Option 4: Board Discretion

Proposed Changes



- Measures that cannot be quantified are not permitted in CE if their sole purpose is credit for a reduction
 - State would show a measurable reduction
 - Measures could be used as a buffer
 - TC determines if something is non-quantifiable
 - E.g. circle hooks, non-targeting zones/period, no gaffing, outreach promoting best practices for release, and other measures expected to reduce release mortality or overall discards.

Proposed Changes



- If there is a target coastwide reduction needed it cannot be achieved through a combination of some states implementing the coastwide measure and some states implementing the coastwide percent reduction at the state level.
- Options will be kept to a reasonable level
 - Boards can cap the number
- Proposals have requirements for what is included

Proposed Changes



- Provides recommendation for minimum data standards
- Requires availability to be considered with closed seasons
- Proposals will include timeframe, an annual review
- Extensions of the timeframe can be granted under specific conditions but not beyond the next benchmark

Proposed Changes



- Steps in the review process would be required
- Changes in the review timeline

Question to the PB: for submission is three months reasonable?

- Proposals can not be submitted less than 3 weeks before the board meets

Consideration Today



Consider approval of the Conservation
Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance
Document as modified today



Red Drum Risk & Uncertainty Decision Tool

Report to the ISFMP Policy Board
ASMFC Summer Meeting 2023

Refresher



- The draft Risk and Uncertainty Policy & Decision Tool provides a method for arriving at the appropriate **risk tolerance** level for a stock, given management priorities and characteristics of the species and fishery
 - This risk tolerance level can then be used to select a harvest level based on projections
 - It is **not** a tool for assessing the varying risk levels of different management approaches, this could be done using other tools such as an MSE

Refresher



- Technical Committee assesses key R&U factors
 - Stock status
 - Model uncertainty
 - Management uncertainty
 - Environmental uncertainty
 - Ecosystem importance
 - Socioeconomic considerations
- Board weights the importance of each factor
- R&U Tool provides the recommended probability of achieving F or SSB reference points for setting specifications
 - E.g., set the quota to have a 55% chance of achieving F target

Tautog Pilot Case



- Policy Board recommended using tautog as a pilot case in Aug. 2021
- Preliminary Risk and Uncertainty Decision Tools were developed for each of the four tautog management regions using input from the Tautog Management Board, Tautog TC, and the CESS
- Board reviewed the decision tool and the Preliminary Tautog Risk and Uncertainty Report
- Tautog Board did not initiate a management action, the final steps were not completed
- Staff developed hypothetical scenarios to illustrate how the tool would have worked to complete the process

Updates



- Red Drum is selected as the next test case for the policy:
 - Data-rich
 - Stock assessment scheduled for August 2024
 - Chance of management action needed in the near-future
 - Management framework aligns with tool output
 - No quota, but if a reduction in removals is necessary, the tool can provide the probability of achieving the SPR reference points that the reduction should achieve

Updates



- Next steps:
 - R&U WG meets to begin this process
 - Jainita reaches out to Red Drum TC & CESS to provide technical inputs
 - The Red Drum Board provide input on weightings

Any questions?





**Report to the Atlantic States Marine
Fisheries Commission
ISFMP Policy Board
August 3rd, 2023**

Steering Committee Meeting



Met July 26-27, 2023 in Philadelphia, PA

- Strategic Planning: 2022-2026 Strategic Plan
- Action Planning: 2023-2024 Action Plan
- 2023 Melissa Laser Habitat Conservation Award
- Discussions on
 - BIL/IRA Funding Opportunities
 - No match requirements
 - FY25 ACFHP RFP (Sep./Oct. 2023)
 - National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP, *Alex Atkinson, NOAA*)
 - Beyond the Pond
 - Congressional Designation

Steering Committee Meeting



Fish Habitat Partnership (FHP) Congressional Designation Process

- ACE Act requirement (Sec 204(g))



- ACFHP submits draft application to the NFHP Board
- (Dec. 31, 2023)

- Votes on final list of FHPs to recommend
- (June 2024)

- Funding continues through USFWS
- (2025)

FY24 NFHP-Funded Projects



Two on-the-ground projects + operational support

- New Jersey: Engineering, Design, and Permitting for the Removal of the Upper E.R. Collins Dam (NJ Dam #24-29) on the Pequest River
- Maryland: Maryland Coastal Bays Salt Marsh Restoration Project (Phase 1)
- ACFHP remains in top funding tier
- Estimated \$300,000 in NFHP funding for FY24.

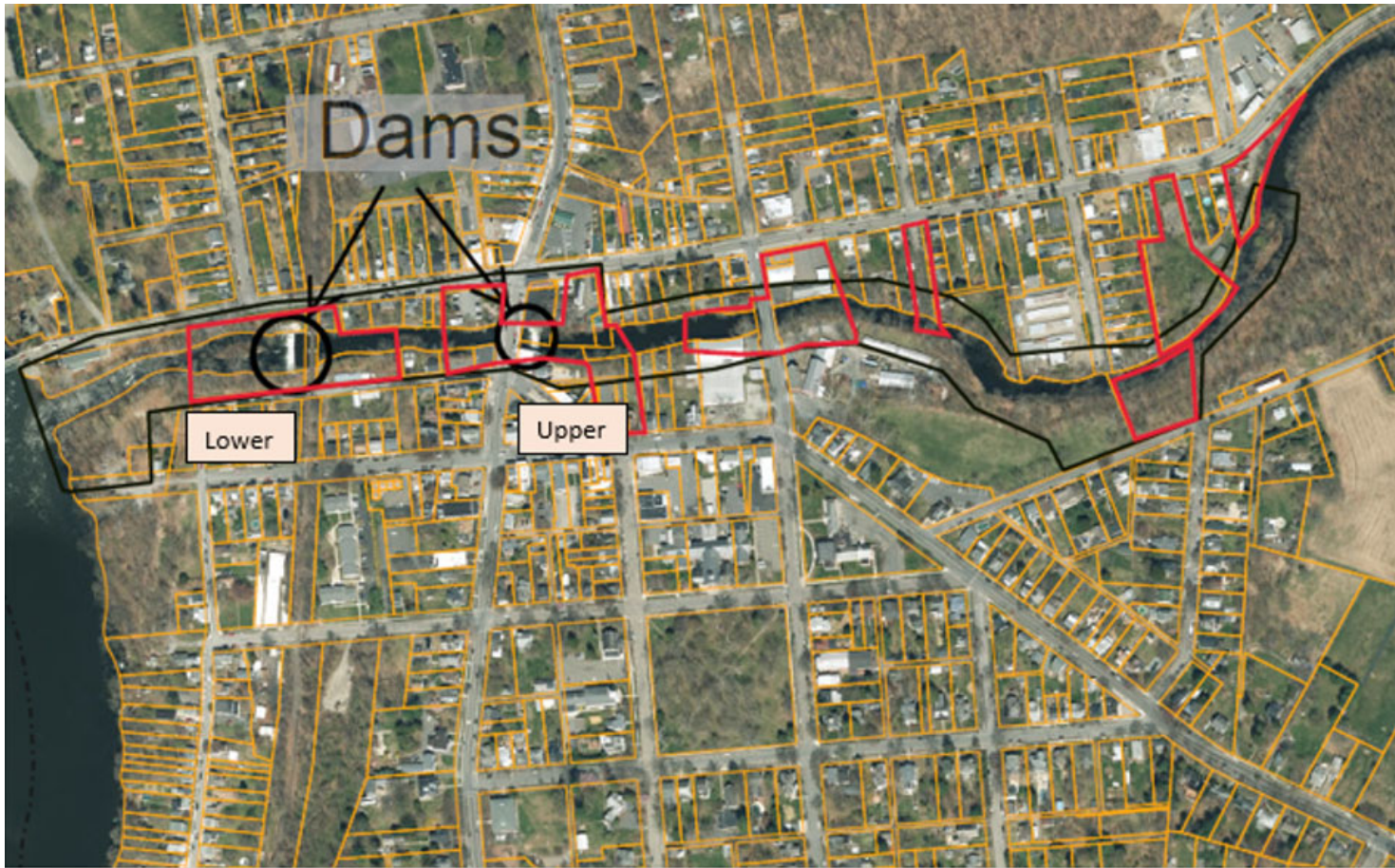
FY24 NFHP-Funded Projects



#1 Removal of the Upper ER Collins Dam (NJ)

- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Restoring 3 miles of Pequest River spawning and foraging habitat
- Tributary to the Delaware River
- Priority species (ranking):
 - American Shad (very high)
 - American Eel (high)
 - Blueback herring (high)
 - Sea Lamprey (high)

FY24 NFHP-Funded Projects



Belvidere, Warren County New Jersey

Credit: TNC-NJ

FY24 NFHP-Funded Projects



#2 Maryland Coastal Bays Salt Marsh Restoration

- Delmarva Resource Conservation and Development Council
- 39 acres of salt marsh restored
- Priority species (high ranking for all):

Atlantic Silverside (very high)

Red Drum

Summer Flounder

Winter Flounder

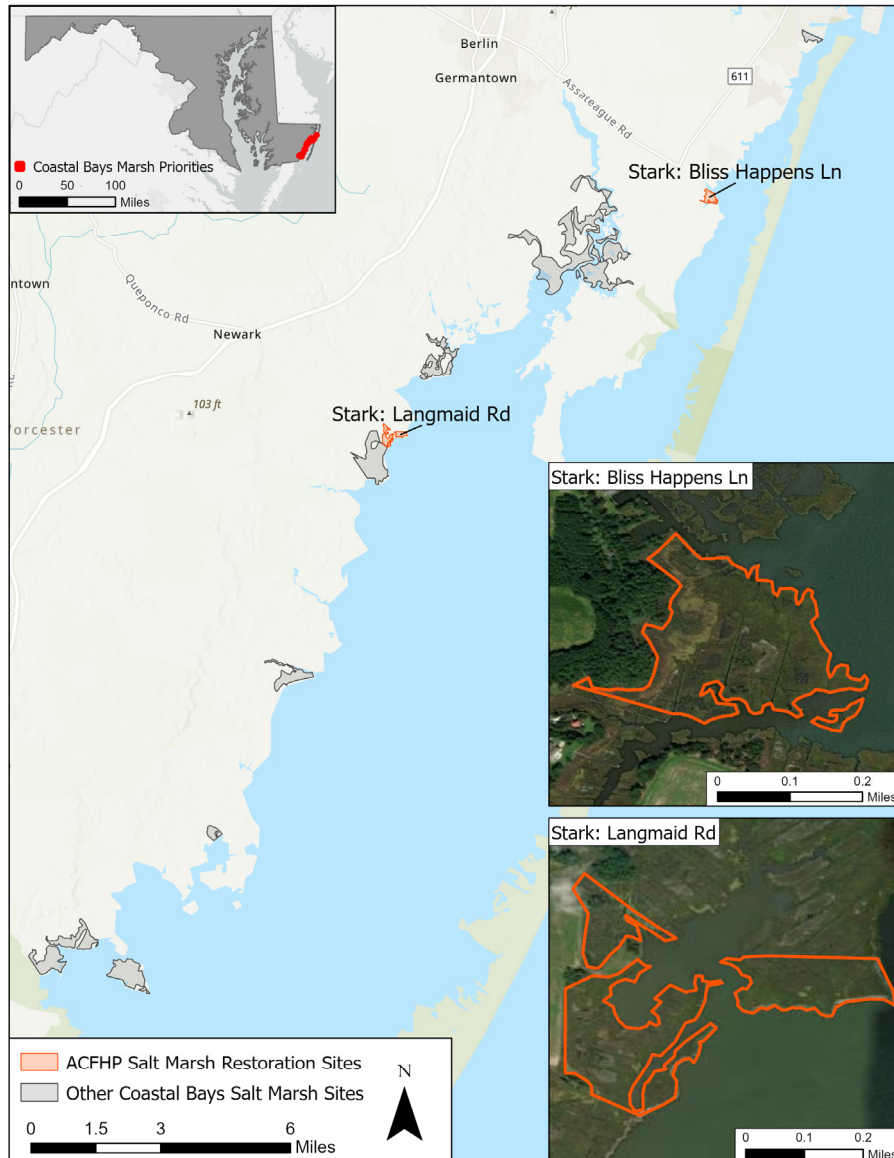
Blue Crab

Spot

Atlantic Croaker

Atlantic Needlefish

FY24 NFHP-Funded Projects



Credit: Douglas Janiec



Revised Timeline of the Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment to the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish FMPs

August 3, 2023

Revised Timeline



Summer/Fall 2023	Form FMAT/PDT
Early 2024	FMAT/PDT develops issues for consideration and draft scoping document
Spring 2024	Council and Policy Board approve a scoping and public information document for public comment
Spring/Summer 2024	Scoping hearings and comment period
Summer 2024	APs and FMAT/PDT review scoping comments and provide input to Council and Policy Board on scope of amendment and possible approaches
August 2024	Council and Policy Board review scoping comments and FMAT and AP recommendations; define scope of action
Fall 2024	FMAT/PDT begins to develop draft alternatives
December 2024	Council and Policy Board review preliminary alternatives
Winter/Spring 2025	Continued FMAT/PDT development and analysis of alternatives; AP input on draft alternatives

Revised Timeline



Spring/Summer 2025	Council and Policy Board approve final range of alternatives for a public hearing document
Fall 2025	FMAT/PDT develops public hearing document/Commission draft amendment document
December 2025	Council and Policy Board approve public hearing document; Policy Board approves draft amendment document for public comment
Winter 2026	Public hearings and comment period
Winter/Spring 2026	AP meeting to provide input on preferred alternatives; FMAT/PDT meeting to provide recommendations to Council/Board
Spring 2026	Final action
Summer 2026	Staff develop and submit draft EA
Fall 2026	NMFS and other agencies review EA; final edits completed; Rulemaking and comment periods
TBD	Target effective date