

American Eel

Activity level: Low

Committee Overlap Score: Medium (SAS overlaps with BERP, Atlantic herring, horseshoe crab)

Committee Task List

- TC –July 2018: review of Maine’s aquaculture proposal
- TC –July 2018: review of Draft Addendum V
- TC – September 1st: Annual compliance reports due

TC Members: Jordan Zimmerman (DE, TC Chair), Ellen Cosby (PRFC, Vice Chair), Lindsey Aubart (GA), Kimberly Bonvechio (FL), Bradford Chase (MA), Chris Adriance (DC), Robert Eckert (NH), Sheila Eyler (USFWS), Alex Haro (USGS), Carol Hoffman (NY), Michael Kaufmann (PA), Wilson Laney (USFWS), Todd Mathes (NC), Patrick McGee (RI), Jennifer Pyle (NJ), Troy Tuckey (VIMS), Danielle Carty (SC), Keith Whiteford (MD), Gail Wippelhauser (ME), Tim Wildman (CT), Kristen Anstead (ASMFC), Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

SAS Members: Greg Hinks (NJ), Bradford Chase (MA), Matt Cieri (ME), Sheila Eyler (USFWS), Laura Lee (NC), John Sweka (USFWS), Troy Tuckey (VIMS), Keith Whiteford (MD), Kristen Anstead (ASMFC), Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark Belton, Secretary
Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary

Mr. Martin Gary
Chair, ASMFC American Eel Management Board
1050 N. Highland Street Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Gary,

July 31, 2018

This letter is to update the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission American Eel Management Board (the Board) on the status of Maryland's 2017 eel harvest given the voluntary reductions put in place for that year. In 2017, Maryland's commercial eel industry requested that the state prohibit the harvest of eels on Saturdays and Sundays from September 1 through November 30, 2017, and close the eel fishery for the entire month of December 2017. Maryland's eel industry made this request in an effort to reduce Maryland's harvest by a sufficient amount to avoid surpassing the coast wide cap in 2017, and thereby avoid firing the management trigger under Addendum IV. With these voluntary measures in place, Maryland's eel harvest declined by an estimated 6.9% (40,308lbs) from 2016 and preliminary estimates of the 2017 coast wide harvest indicate that the cap will not be exceeded for the second year and the trigger under Addendum IV will not be fired.

Although it is likely that the decrease in Maryland eel harvest in 2017 is not due solely to the voluntary fall reductions, this success indicates that it is feasible to manage to a coast wide cap without state specific quotas and also that Maryland's industry stands ready to do its part when and if action is necessary to avoid firing a trigger or to reduce harvest to a cap.

It is our hope that the Board finds this update useful and informative as it deliberates final action on Addendum V.

Sincerely,

Lynn Fegley
Fishing and Boating Services, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Maryland Administrative Commissioner (Proxy for David Blazer)