

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Executive Committee

February 1, 2023

8 – 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting

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.

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| 1. Welcome/Introductions (<i>S. Woodward</i>) | 8:00 a.m. |
| 2. Committee Consent <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of Agenda• Approval of Meeting Summary from November 9, 2022 | 8:05 a.m. |
| 3. Public Comment | 8:10 a.m. |
| 4. CARES Act Update (<i>R. Beal/L. Leach</i>) | 8:20 a.m. |
| 5. Discussion on Stipends for Legislator and Governors Appointee Commissioners (<i>R. Beal</i>) | 9:00 a.m. |
| 6. Discuss Collection of Sharks for Scientific and Educational Purposes (<i>J. Clark</i>) | 9:10 a.m. |
| 7. Discuss Distribution of Fishery Disaster Funding in FY2023 Omnibus Spending Bill (<i>R. Beal</i>) | 9:20 a.m. |
| 8. Other Business/Adjourn | 9:30 a.m. |

The meeting will be held at The Westin Crystal City (1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA; 703.486.1111) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details

Commissioner Stipend Discussion Paper

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

January 24, 2023

Background

During the 80th Annual Meeting in New Jersey, the Executive Committee and the ISFMP Policy Board discussed the potential to pay a stipend to Legislative and Governors' Appointee Commissioners for their participation in Commission activities beyond the quarterly meetings. To date, the Commission has not provided a stipend to Commissioners for participation. In contrast, the Magnuson-Stevens Act establishes a daily compensation rate (GS 15, Step 7, currently \$540/day) for Federal Fishery Management Council members when engaged in Council activities.

Options for Providing a Stipend to Legislative and Governors' Appointee (LGA) Commissioners

Option 1 – Status Quo

The LGA Commissioners will continue to serve on a volunteer basis and not receive a stipend from the Commission.

Option 2 – A Stipend will be provided only for extraordinary meetings

The LGA Commissioners will receive a stipend for meetings that are outside of the four quarterly Commission meetings and the joint meetings with one of the three Federal Fishery Management Councils. Examples of these meetings include NEFMC Atlantic Herring Committee meetings, Recreational Fisheries Summit, Scenario Planning Summit, etc.

Approximate Financial Impact: 13 Person days X \$540 Stipend = \$ 7,020

Option 3 – A Stipend will be provided for meetings outside of the Commission Quarterly Meetings

The LGA Commissioners will receive a stipend for meetings that are outside of the four quarterly Commission meetings including joint meetings with one of the three Federal Fishery Management Councils and other extraordinary meetings.

Approximate Financial Impact: 82 Person days X \$540 Stipend = \$44,280

Other Considerations

If a stipend is provided to LGA Commissioners, consideration should be given to the following items:

- Stipend for Proxies
- Virtual Participation
- LGA Eligibility to Receive Stipend
- Travel Days
- Partial Days
- Administrative Burden
- Other



January 24, 2023

To: The Executive Committee, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

From: The Southeastern Massachusetts Pine Barrens Alliance

Re: Request for a review of the Horseshoe Crab Management Board

Dear Members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Executive Board:

The Southeastern Massachusetts Pine Barrens Alliance (SEMPBA) is writing to request that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Executive Committee initiate a review of the Horseshoe Crab Management Board.

SEMPBA is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving the globally rare Coastal Pine Barrens Ecoregion, which includes coastal habitats. SEMPBA volunteers have participated in the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries Spawning Horseshoe Crab Survey since 2019 at Long Beach, Plymouth.

SEMPBA believes the Horseshoe Crab Management Board has failed to implement the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crab they themselves created in 1998, and as a result has failed to improve or restore horseshoe crab populations to numbers anywhere near the levels seen in the 1990s.

The goals of the Fishery Management Plan for horseshoe crabs were to:

Conserve and protect the horseshoe crab resource to maintain sustainable levels of spawning stock biomass to ensure its continued role in the ecology of coastal ecosystems, while providing for continued use over time. Specifically, the goal includes management of horseshoe crab populations for their continued use by:

- current and future generations of the fishing and non-fishing public;
- migrating shorebirds; and,
- other dependent wildlife, including federally listed sea turtles.

SEMPBA is of the opinion that the goals set forth in the management plan have been reduced to ensuring that the biomedical industry has an ample supply of horseshoe crab blood. For example, last year the Board adopted Addendum VIII, which granted permission to continue the unsustainable harvest of horseshoe crabs, even though hundreds of scientists and conservationists argued against the Addendum and called instead for full transparency in the biomedical harvest of horseshoe crabs, research into the effects of repeated bleeding on female horseshoe crabs, the implementation of statistically significant surveys coast wide and greater conservation measures.

The Horseshoe Crab Management Board was established to collect information to assist in management decisions and coordinate a comprehensive standardized monitoring plan throughout the Atlantic Coast that includes:

Mandatory monthly reporting, continuing existing benthic sampling programs, establishing pilot programs to survey spawning horseshoe crabs and egg density, evaluating post-release mortality of horseshoe crabs used by the biomedical industry, and identifying potential horseshoe crab habitat in each state.

Furthermore, the Management Plan states:


State fisheries agency(s) must actively intervene to the extent of its authority to ensure that federal, state, and local regulatory agencies are aware of the potential loss in horseshoe crab productivity associated with water quality degradation and habitat loss.

Where are the reports that show progress in habitat management?

The public relies on and expects the ASMFC and the Horseshoe Crab Advisory Board to manage horseshoe crabs responsibly—with conservation as their primary charge. We perceive a board with a bias that benefits the multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry, a board focused more on supplying horseshoe crabs for industry rather than on the coordination of conservation measures.

We urge you to review the Horseshoe Crab Management Board before their next meeting and recommend changes that will turn the Board back toward its original purpose.

Sincerely,



Sharl Heller, President