Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Weakfish Management Board

October 24, 2018
10:15 – 11:00 a.m.
New York, New York

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. O'Reilly)*	10:15 a.m.
2.	Board Consent • Approval of Agenda • Approval of Proceedings from February 2018	10:15 a.m.
3.	Public Comment	10:20 a.m.
4.	Technical Committee Report on Commercial Discards (*K. Drew and M. Schmidtke*)	10:30 a.m.
5.	Consider Approval of 2018 Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports (*M. Schmidtke*) **Action**	10:45 a.m.
6.	Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership *(T. Berger)* **Action**	10:50 a.m.
7.	Elect Vice-Chair **Action**	10:55 a.m.
8.	Other Business/Adjourn	11:00 a.m.

The meeting will be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, 45 East 45th Street & Madison Avenue, New York, NY; 212.661.9600

MEETING OVERVIEW

Weakfish Management Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 24, 2018
10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
New York, New York

Chair: Rob O'Reilly (VA) Assumed Chairmanship: 2/18	Technical Committee Chair: Erin Levesque (SC)	Law Enforcement Committee Representative: Steve Anthony (NC)
Vice Chair: Vacant	Advisory Panel Chair: Billy Farmer (NC)	Previous Board Meeting: February 7, 2018
Voting Members: MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS (15 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from February 7, 2018

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 (TC) Report on Commercial Discards (10:30 – 10:45 a.m.)

Background

- In February 2018, the Board tasked the TC with the following motion:
  "Move to task the Technical Committee to review weakfish discard data from the Northeast Federal Observer Program and from vessel trip reports (VTRs), analyze landings data to see if the occurrences of commercial trips approaching the 100-lb trip limit have increased, and to characterize the fisheries with substantial weakfish discards to see if different trip limits could be implemented to turn discards into landings and/or if fishing modifications could be made to minimize discards."
  Motion by C. Batsavage, second by J. Clark.
- The TC met several times via conference call and submitted a report detailing data and analyses used to form a recommendation on whether the Board should consider further action (**Briefing Materials**).

Presentations

- M. Schmidtke and K. Drew will present TC report and recommendations.

5. Consider 2017 FMP Reviews and State Compliance Reports (10:45 – 10:50 a.m.) Action

Background

- State Compliance Reports are due on September 1. The Plan Review Team (PRT) reviewed each state report and compiled the annual FMP Review. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Florida have applied for *de minimis* (**Supplemental Materials**).

Presentations

- Overview of the FMP Review by M. Schmidtke.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Accept 2017 FMP Review and State Compliance Reports.
- Approve *de minimis* requests for MA, CT, and FL.

6. Review and Populate Advisory Panel (AP) Membership (10:50 – 10:55 a.m.)

Background

- North Carolina submitted a nomination for Dr. Jeffrey Buckel to be appointed to the Weakfish AP as a representative for the recreational fishery (**Briefing Materials**).

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Approve the nomination to appoint Dr. Jeffrey Buckel to the Weakfish AP.

7. Elect Vice Chair (10:55 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.) Action

8. Other Business/Adjourn

Weakfish Board

Activity level: Low

Committee Overlap Score: High (American Eel TC, Atlantic Croaker TC, Cobia TC, Horseshoe Crab SAS & TC, Menhaden TC, Shad and River Herring TC, Striped Bass TC & SAS, Tautog TC)

Committee Task List

- Technical Committee – Fall: Complete analyses of catch and discards to determine whether commercially discarded weakfish numbers have increased – **Completed**
- Technical Committee – Fall/Winter: Review new MRIP estimates and discuss potential assessment update
- Technical Committee – September 1: Compliance Reports Due

TC Members: Erin Levesque (SC, Chair), Katie Drew (ASMFC), Michael Schmidtke (ASMFC), Tiffany Vidal (MA), Christopher Parkins (RI), Paul Nunnenkamp (NY), Linda Barry (NJ), Michael Greco (DE), Harry Rickabaugh (MD), Ellen Cosby (PRFC), Sydney Alhale (VA), Lee Paramore (NC), B.J. Hilton (GA), Dustin Addis (FL), Wilson Laney (USFWS)

SAS Members: Katie Drew (ASMFC), Michael Schmidtke (ASMFC), Linda Barry (NJ), Ed Hale (DE), Angela Giuliano (MD), Yan Jiao (Virginia Tech), Laura Lee (NC), Erin Levesque (SC)

DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

WEAKFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
February 7, 2018

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

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INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Motion to approve agenda** by Consent (Page 1).

2. **Motion to approve proceedings of May 2016** by Consent (Page 1).

3. **Move to accept the 2017 FMP Review and state compliance reports for weakfish, and approve de minimis requests for Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia and Florida** (Page 4). Motion by John Clark; second by Emerson Hasbrouck. Motion carried (Page 4).

4. **Move to task the Technical Committee to review weakfish discard data from the Northeast Federal Observer Program and from vessel trip reports; analyze landings data to see if the occurrences of commercial trips approaching the 100 pound trip limit have increased, and to characterize the fisheries with substantial weakfish discard, to see if different trip limits could be implemented to turn discards into landings and/or if fishing modifications could be made to minimize discards** (Page 9). Motion by Chris Batsavage; second by John Clark. Motion carried (Page 10).

5. **Motion to adjourn by Consent** (Page 10).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

David Pierce, MA (AA)
Sarah Ferrara, MA, proxy for Rep. Peake (LA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)
David Borden, RI (GA)
Mark Alexander, CT (AA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)
Jim Gilmore, NY (AA)
Jeff Brust, NJ, proxy for L. Herrighty (AA)
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Andrzejczak (LA)
Craig Pugh, DE, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)
John Clark, DE, proxy for D. Saveikis (AA)
Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Ed O'Brien, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
Lynn Fegley, MD, proxy for D. Blazer (AA)
Rachel Dean, MD (GA)
Rob O'Reilly, VA, Chair
John Bull, VA (AA)
Cathy Davenport, VA (GA)
Doug Brady, NC (GA)
Steve Murphy, NC (AA)
Chris Batsavage, NC, Administrative proxy
David Bush, NC, proxy for Rep. Steinburg (LA)
Ross Self, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Robert Boyles, SC (LA)
Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
Pat Geer, GA, proxy for Rep. Burns (LA)
Jim Estes, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Martin Gary, PRFC
Sherry White, USFWS

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

Ex-Officio Members

Staff

Bob Beal
Toni Kerns
Katie Drew
Mike Schmidtke
Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Jessica Kuesel

Guests

Joe Cimino, VMRC
Allison Colden, CBF
Jeff Deem, VMRC
Matt Gates, CT DEEP
Zak Greenberg, PEW
Aaron Kornbluth, PEW
Arnold Leo, East Hampton, NY
Chip Lynch, NOAA
Wilson Laney, USFWS
Steve Poland, NC DMF
Gray Rodding, DC
Jack Travelstead, CCA
Ritchie White, NH GA

The Weakfish Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Westin Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia; Wednesday, February 7, 2018, and was called to order at 11:30 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Rob O'Reilly.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN ROB O'REILLY: All right here we go. It is time and this is a fairly short time period for Weakfish. My name is Rob O'Reilly; I'm with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and I'm the Board Chair. Also, Mike Schmidtke is up here with me. Mike is the ASMFC Plan Coordinator for weakfish and Katie Drew is here as well with ASMFC; and I'm just going to label her as a stock assessment extraordinaire person, okay?

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: A couple things to do, we have to approve the agenda. Does everyone have the agenda in front of you? Do you have any changes, any comments on the agenda? Seeing none; the agenda is approved.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: We'll next turn to the proceedings from the last time the Weakfish Management Board met, which was May of 2016; that was a little while ago.

Are there any comments or changes on those proceedings? What I would encourage you, if you haven't had the time to read those proceedings all the way through is they are sort of a benchmark approach for where we're going to go forward. You have Jeff Brust, you have him going over the stock assessment; and in addition you've got the peer review that is talked about in here.

Although it's been since May of 2016, this will be part of what we go forward with weakfish. I think you're going to see as we go forward that it's not going to be such a lull in activity for weakfish; as you'll see a little bit later in the agenda. We thank Pat Campfield for going over the peer review in here. I think these are really a good document.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Next we're going to have public comment. I don't have anyone who signed up; I don't think. But if there is anyone who would like to have a public comment at this time, please come forward.

2017 PLAN REVIEW AND STATE COMPLIANCE REPORTS

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Seeing none; I'm going to turn to Mike Schmidtke. He's going to provide information on the 2017 Plan Review and State Compliance Reports**.**

DR. MIKE SCHMIDTKE: Today we'll be going over the 2017 FMP review for weakfish. First we'll start off looking at the landings status. This graph shows recreational harvest in black and commercial harvest in gray. Total coastwide landings in 2016 were 247,000 pounds, which is a 19,000 pound decrease from 2015.

The commercial fishery at 171,000 pounds accounted for about 70 percent of the total 2016 landings; an increase by about 33,000 pounds from 2015. North Carolina at 47 percent and Virginia at 23 percent landed the largest share of the 2016 commercial landings. Here we see recreational harvest in blue and releases in red. As you can see in the mid-1990s, oh and I apologize for that axis, as you can see in the mid-1990s when Amendments 1 through 3 were implemented, releases have typically been about double the number of fish harvested. Although with declining harvest in recent years, releases have outnumbered recreational landings about tenfold or more.

In 2016, recreational landings were 76,000 pounds or 66,000 fish. This represents a 38 percent decline in poundage and 39 percent decline in numbers from 2015. North Carolina had the largest portion of recreational harvest at 51 percent by numbers and 46 percent by weight, followed by Virginia.

An estimated 975,000 weakfish were released by the recreational fishery; which was a 12 percent decrease in number of releases, but a 3 percent increase in percentage of the recreational catch that was released. Addendum I to Amendment 4 requires the collection of otoliths and lengths to characterize the fishery.

The number of samples required is based on the magnitude of each state's fisheries, so that six fish lengths are collected for each metric ton of weakfish landed commercially, and three fish ages are collected for each metric ton of total weakfish landed. All states met the biological sampling requirements in 2016, except for Rhode Island and New York.

Rhode Island specifically mentioned in their compliance report that they had difficulty attaining weakfish samples in 2016. They collected an adequate number of lengths; but collected six ages less than their required nine. New York collected an adequate number of ages, but five lengths less than their required 66.

Issues in sample collection have not been uncommon recently; due at least in some part to the declining landings in this fishery. The Plan Review Team recommends that there is no reason to believe that a good faith effort to fulfill these requirements was not put forth by these states. So given the small margin by which they were short of their requirements, the Plan Review Team would recommend that the Board still find them within compliance of these requirements.

There is some ambiguity in the language of Addendum I, in regards to sample source. The Plan Review Team recommends that the Board provide guidance on whether states should be allowed to supplement current sample collections to fulfill their sample requirements with fishery independent samples. We'll get into that really in the next agenda item. Due to recent difficulties in acquiring these samples, yes we'll just touch on that in the next agenda item.

In 2010 the recreational and commercial management measures in Addendum IV replaced those in Addendum II. However, the Plan Review Team continues to evaluate the former management triggers as they provide some perspective on the landings. The PRT does maintain its recommendation that the Board update these triggers to be reflective of the most recent stock assessment. But looking at the triggers as they stand right now, the commercial management measures are to be reevaluated if coastwide commercial landings exceed 80 percent of the mean landings from 2000 through 2004, or 3 million pounds. This trigger was not met; but commercial and recreational management measures are to be reevaluated if any single state's landings exceed its five year maximum by more than 25 percent in any single year. This did occur for Connecticut and Delaware, and the Board can discuss whether this is cause for a management action. The five year mean includes 2015, which was the second lowest year for Delaware, and the fifth lowest year for Connecticut, in terms of total landings since 1981. There is some of that to be accounted for within this trigger, and how high this high year supposedly is.

Here is a review of kind of all the different stages of management. Right now we're currently under Amendment 4, with associated addenda. The most recent stock assessment was in 2016, and Rob alluded to that in previous comments. The stock is currently depleted, but overfishing is not occurring. Fishing mortality is

stable and modest with a high amount of natural mortality from 2011 to 2014.

There was a low level of total mortality; and this corresponded to a small increase in spawning stock biomass. As of right now the next assessment is in 2019; which is an assessment update. The Plan Review Team found that all states are in compliance with Amendment 4, and the associated addenda. De minimis was requested by Florida, Georgia, Connecticut and Massachusetts. All of these states except for Connecticut qualify for de minimis.

Connecticut's landings are 1.46 percent of the coastwide total; and to qualify for de minimis you would need to be 1 percent or lower. We spoke with a representative from Connecticut, and discussed within the Plan Review Team that because of the small percentage that Connecticut would be over that the PRT doesn't see any issue with allowing Connecticut to maintain de minimis status if they would have difficulty in fulfilling the biological sampling requirements should they be non-de minimis.

In summary, the PRT recommends the Board approve the 2017 weakfish FMP review, state compliance reports and de minimis status for Florida, Georgia, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Additionally, the PRT recommends that the Board clarify the use of fishery independent samples in fulfilling biological sampling requirements of Addendum I to Amendment 4. At this point I can pause and take any questions on the FMP review.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Are there any questions for Mike; yes, Chris Batsavage?

MR. CHRIS BATSAVAGE: Mike, on Page 4 of the FMP Review under the recreational fishery section. It's listed the mean weights of weakfish in the recreational fishery by state. The bottom, it's kind of the next to the last paragraph before going into the next section on that page. It looks like for the state of New York for mean weight it's 0.17. I was wondering if that was a typo; considering that's a pretty small average weight and size fish.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: We're checking.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Can you say the page number again, Chris that you were looking at?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes, it's Page 4 and it's in the recreational fishery section. It is two paragraphs ahead of Section 4, which is status of assessment advice. Just above that Section 4 you'll see, the second to last paragraph.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I would have to double check the data file for that. I can look into that.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Does anyone else have a question? Mark Alexander.

MR. MARK ALEXANDER: Not a question but a comment if that's okay.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Absolutely.

MR. ALEXANDER: I just wanted to thank the PRT for acknowledging that it's appropriate to extend Connecticut the de minimis status; even though our total landings exceeded the threshold for being considered de minimis. I think in this case, I don't know if the PRT looked into this, but I had staff examine our recreational harvest estimate for 2016 to see why it was so large.

In Table 4 on Page 15, if you look at that. Connecticut since 2004 has either had a 0 harvest estimate or no harvest estimate between 2004 and 2015. In 2016 the estimate was 3,120 pounds. I had Greg Wojcik look into that to see what went into that estimate; and it is based on two intercepts, one was aboard a party charterboat, where one fish was caught. That was expanded to 88 fish.

The other is a shore based B-1 observation in which the individual identified the fillets in his cooler as being weakfish. He had caught three, which is admittedly over the limit, two over the limit. But that particular observation was expanded to 3,032 fish. I just wanted to put that on the record. Again, I appreciate the PRT's recommendation that Connecticut be considered de minimis.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Can you corroborate how long Connecticut has had de minimis status?

MR. ALEXANDER: No I cannot.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Roy Miller.

MR. ROY W. MILLER: Mike, in looking at the tables like in Table 2. It is obvious that commercial landings have been below 200,000 pounds; which I consider a trivial amount, considering the history of this species for the past three years. Does the Plan Review Team know what those landings come from? Is it directed landings or bycatch landings? Do you have any idea?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I believe most of the commercial landings are bycatch landings at this point; because of the trip limit.

MR. MILLER: If I could just follow that up. If indeed they are bycatch landings, would any of those fisheries give us some inkling what may be happening to these one plus weakfish? The reason I bring this up is every year we seem to get a decent amount of juvenile production in Delaware Bay; and yet year after year after year very little of that comes back as a fishable resource, particularly for the recreational and commercial fisheries.

The big question that the public asks us is, well what happens to these fish? Are there any indications from these bycatch fisheries that they may be having an impact on what comes back as a catchable resource later on in its life cycle?

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Further questions or comments, okay to my left, hello Jay. Jay McNamee.

MR. JASON McNAMEE: First I have a quick question and that is are we on bullet two yet or am I jumping the gun on that?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I think that's the next agenda item.

MR. McNAMEE: I'll wait then, thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Any further questions or comments, John Clark.

MR. JOHN CLARK: I was just going to say Rob, are you ready for a motion to accept the Plan Review?

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Yes.

MR. CLARK: In that case I will move that we, oh now it's off the board. Oh there it is that's the motion I want to make. I will do so. **Move to accept the 2017 FMP Review and state compliance reports for weakfish, and approve de minimis requests for Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia and Florida.**

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY**: Emerson Hasbrouck has a second. Is there any discussion on the motion; any objection to the motion? Seeing none; the motion passes.**

CONSIDER USE OF FISHERY-INDEPENDENT SAMPLES IN FULFILLING BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING REQUIREMENTS OF THE FMP

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY**:** Now we'll go back to Mike and consider the use of fishery independent samples.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Over the past few years there has been some difficulty; and it's not really

specific to any one particular state. There are several states that have had difficulties in fulfilling the biological sampling requirements of Addendum I to Amendment 4. Looking at the actual language that is in Addendum I, there are a couple places where there are questions about interpretation, at least from the PRT's perspective, that we would like some Board clarification on as we evaluate the samples that are submitted each year to fulfill the requirements. The first portion from Addendum I includes the statement: "The weakfish stock assessment requires biological data collected from samples of recreational and commercial catch" as the motivator for these sampling requirements.

After listing out the non de minimis requirements within that section of wording, there is the statement: Samples may come from the commercial and/or recreational fishery; as long as they come from the same general area inshore versus offshore that those fisheries are prosecuted in. There is no statement within the Addendum that says fishery independent samples may not be used; but there is no statement that says overtly that they may be used. We were just looking for some Board clarification on that.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Jay McNamee.

MR. McNAMEE: I guess, and I'm not sure maybe it's a question for Katie. Where are the lengths and ages being used? I mean are these samples supposed to give you the information for the selectivity part of the assessment for the fishery dependent information? I guess if that – you're nodding. I take that as affirmative; and then it gets; I don't know how valuable fishery independent information would be.

Then maybe it's better than nothing, but I guess I'm not sure that is true. Then the other aspect of it is, I'm thinking about in Rhode Island. I think it was Roy who mentioned it before. We get tons of young of the year, so we could fill the requirement in spades; but I don't know how valuable that information would be to get lots of information on zeros and nothing on the rest of the age structure. I guess those are kind of questions/comments. You can grab and take it wherever you want, I guess.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: I do have a couple comments. I talked to Mike before the meeting about this issue. There have been problems with states for various reasons; whether it was budgetary, whether it was being able to have people who would go out and get the samples. But ever since the Addendum went in place, it seemed like every year when Weakfish was meeting more frequently, there were some states that couldn't make the targets.

That is going to happen. That is going to continue to happen. I've always been more interested in a regional approach; knowing very well from the past that you really can't swap out some of the northern samples for the southern samples, and vice versa. I mean there can be four different age groups on a certain size; depending on whether that fish is collected in the southern or northern area.

If you go to independent samples, then what should the criteria be that you have for collection? We have data from the states; even though they are not complete. If they didn't do something in the year where they made the target, at least we know the size ranges that have been collected before.

You would want the independent samples to somewhat match what would have been collected from the dependent samples, and you would want the time of collection to somewhat match the time of the dependent fishery. That may be a starting point. I would like to hear what others have to say about that.

Of course you get into situations where some of the independent samples, there is going to be a voidance for example for some of the larger

weakfish. But we haven't been seeing a whole lot of large weakfish, so that may not be a problem now. That may be something down the road. We need a starting point and it would be good to get a little bit of feedback on this issue now; because it's going to be a problem that persists for various reasons. Katie.

DR. KATIE DREW: I think the TC was not asked officially to weigh in on this; so this isn't an official TC opinion. But I think the other thing to consider, certainly the point about fishery independent samplings having a different length distribution is a concern that the TC would have. I think we would accept ages from the fishery independent samples; as long as they line up with roughly the size range that is covering the fishery as well. But I think we would have concerns about accepting lengths from the fishery independent survey in place of lengths for the commercial or recreational issue.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: I guess what I was thinking more was an augmentation, not a swapping. We wouldn't want to see a state just say well, no more fishery dependent sampling. We can get it this way. I think one of the criteria should be that we know what states have produced in recent years; even under a situation where the stock is not robust. We would want that to continue and get augmentation through fishery independent. Would that be a better suggestion?

DR. DREW: Yes. However we word it, and I'm not saying states are going to take this to slack off immediately on all of their commercial and recreational sampling if we allow this. But I think for sure the emphasis should be on sort of supplementing existing commercial and recreational sampling programs, rather than replacing it purely with fishery independent data. The fishery independent lengths are not really useful to characterize the commercial and recreational size; but the ages could be.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Last question for you if I may; and then we'll have some others too. Is this something that can be talked about in the Technical Committee; come up with some criteria, you know a straw man essentially of this?

DR. DREW: For sure. If you would like sort of formal guidance on what would be an acceptable supplementation, I think the TC could come up with that easily.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Emerson Hasbrouck.

MR. EMERSON C. HASBROUCK: In order to make some comment on samples coming from, or not coming from the fishery. I want to circle back to the issue that Jason raised. I'm going to ask a direct question; because I didn't hear it answered. Is the model that we use for the weakfish assessment the ASAP model? Are these samples being used to determine catch at age?

DR. DREW: Well, yes it is a statistical-catch-at-age model. It's not ASAP. We actually have a very fancy Bayesian model that can estimate natural mortality in addition to fishing mortality. But it does use a catch-at-age framework. The length frequency from the commercial and from the recreational landings is really what we use to determine that catch at age.

We do that by applying an age-length key. The length frequency needs to represent the lengths of what is actually caught. But then to convert that into ages we use a key that often comes from fishery independent as well as fishery dependent age samples; which are why we would say that it's more important to maintain the length information from the commercial and recreational side.

The ages, as long as they sort of cover that same length range and that you're not getting for the age-length key that is entirely young of

year. As long as that age-length key has samples that can cover the length are into the commercial and recreational side, then it doesn't matter where those age samples come from.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Emerson.

MR. HASBROUCK: Follow up then. If that's the case then I would have to agree that we really don't want to get length frequency samples from fishery independent surveys.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Is that an absolute? I just need to know. I just spent a little bit of time talking about augmentation and sort of just plugging holes that were in the sampling. Given Emerson's comment what would you say?

DR. DREW: I would say yes lengths from fishery independent samples are useful only to characterize the length distribution of that fishery independent sample. Certainly we would not want to completely give up our fishery independent lengths; but they have no utility. Lengths alone have no utility for the commercial or recreational; to characterize the commercial or recreational catch. The ages I think are where you could supplement that information.

If you can only get age samples from your fishery independent survey, which may be the case, because you have to sacrifice the fish or you have to damage the fish and you can't get that from the commercial or the recreational side. Then you can certainly supplement the ages with fishery independent; again as long as they're covering that similar size range. But you would not want to supplement the length frequency of the commercial or recreational catch with fishery independent information.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Okay thank you, it took me three times, but I give. Everyone should know that we may continue to have these sampling gaps a little bit, but the scientific advice is stick to the ages from the independent surveys, not the lengths, and continue to try your best to do some sampling.

There are a lot of demands, we understand that. The other part is, which I'll try and work on in advance of the next meeting on how we might regionalize some of the dependent sampling, you know some nearest neighbor approaches, which has always been something that could have happened. We'll talk about that next time we meet as well, so thank you very much.

DISCUSS RECENT CHANGES IN DISCARDS IN NORTH CAROLINA

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY**:** We're on time; except we did have an added issue, so Chris Batsavage has an issue. What you're going to find after Chris is done is it's not an issue that is just occurring in North Carolina, but Chris is the one who brought this to the attention of ASMFC, and so Chris I would like you to just sort of outline the situation and give some basics. Then we'll have a discussion; and this is something that is going to carry forward until the next meeting, absolutely.

MR. BATSAVAGE: We've received reports of weakfish catches substantially exceeding the 100 pound trip limit in the ocean gillnet fishery targeting Atlantic croaker in 20 to 30 fathoms of water roughly, plus or minus, offshore of Oregon Inlet for the second year in a row. It may have been going on for a little longer than that.

The discard amounts that have been reported to us by fishermen, you know when the fish are there are in the 500 to 1,000 pound range. But these discard events are pretty sporadic. There are times when the fishermen will go out targeting croaker and will hardly see any weakfish at all. Then they'll go out another time and they'll encounter quite a few weakfish while targeting Atlantic croaker. From talking to the fishermen, the weakfish are mixed in

with the croaker, so it's not like simply going one place and finding them all the time.

The weakfish they are encountering are in the 14 to 16 inch range. That size range is really corresponding to the mesh sizes currently used in the croaker fishery off of Oregon Inlet, which right now ranges in the 3.25, the 3.5 inch stretch mesh range. The gillnet fishery for croaker off Oregon Inlet typically ranges from mid to late November to around mid to late March. From kind of looking back at reports we've received from fishermen, it looks like the discards have been occurring in December and January for the most part. But again, it's been pretty sporadic. We haven't heard of any other reports of increased weakfish discards in other fisheries, at least in our state. But it's possible that it is occurring elsewhere along the coast; especially if the population is starting to show an increase in abundance.

I wanted to bring this to the Board's attention; and see if the Board thinks it's appropriate to task the Technical Committee to review any available data on discards, landings trends and gear characteristics of the fisheries that are encountering weakfish beyond the 100 pound trip limit. That is pretty much it in a nutshell. I'll be happy to answer any questions. Whenever you think it's appropriate, Mr. Chairman I have a motion to offer.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: I do have some questions; others may as well. I talked to one of your fishermen a couple years ago when this started. My understanding, you mentioned that it's out 30 fathoms or so. Is that what you indicated? Essentially that was a move out compared to some of the more traditional fishing areas. Was that a change in fishing area at all?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes thanks. It is. The croaker fishery up until recently was typically in much shallower water. Instead of measuring the water depth in fathoms it was more in the 40 to 60 foot range, kind of straddling the three mile boundary. But it has recently moved out into much deeper water. According to the reports from the fishermen, the weakfish have too. When we had a targeted weakfish gillnet fishery, before the bycatch trip limit, that fishery also existed usually in shallower water than what we're currently seeing.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: I probably should have said your fishermen talked to me; because that's absolutely the way it happened. When Chris brought this information forward and we started talking. I checked around and the same situation is occurring in Virginia; but much different in that it is really only out to about a mile offshore, in spring and fall, definitely occurring.

We looked to our data and there is probably off the top of my head a third of the trips are 100 pounds. It tells us that if 100 pounds exactly is being taken, yes we've got discard. We followed up with one of our main fish buyers, and he indicated yes there have been discards. The harvesters hadn't wanted to really make an issue of it. They are not required to report the discards; they're required to report the harvest.

All in all, this is a situation that involves more than North Carolina. I don't know about the other states; but I'm hoping when Chris puts up his motion that we all understand the Technical Committee should look at all the commercial states to see exactly what the performance of this bycatch time. We also do have a directed time period as well; it's not all during the year. But the bycatch is an especially important time period. Any other questions for Chris, okay I think I saw Lynn Fegley first.

MS. LYNN FEGLEY: My question for both Virginia and North Carolina. Is this a gillnet specific issue, or is this also happening in your trawl fishery, if you have trawl fisheries?

MR. BATSAVAGE: We've received specific reports from the gillnet fishery. I've heard some reports of trawlers encountering large amounts of weakfish; but haven't really been able to verify those and where those are occurring. The fishery for croaker off of North Carolina has changed a bit over the years; where it is still both a trawl and gillnet fishery with trawl landings leading the way. But due to various changes in the fishery and shoaling of Oregon Inlet, it's largely a gillnet fishery. Trawls don't play a big a role currently.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: In Virginia, Lynn it's primarily gillnets, but it's also occurring in the pound net. We don't have a trawl fishery in state waters, but it is occurring in the pound net. On the one hand that's a good sign that we're seeing fish. But on the other hand we need to really look at this. John Clark, did you have your hand up?

MR. CLARK: Yes thank you, Mr. Chair. Chris, I just wonder if you could give a few more details. I know you said they were discarding typically 500 to 1,000 pounds a trip. Do you have an idea how many trips that is, and approximately how far offshore are they setting these nets?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Not sure on the number of trips from talking to the fishermen who brought this up. There are fewer boats in the croaker gillnet fishery than there were 10 to 15 years ago. As far as distance from shore, 20 to 30 fathoms, I can't remember off the top of my head. But it's definitely out in federal waters and with water depths in that range. Weakfish typically aren't in real good shape when caught in a gillnet for an hour or so and then brought up from those depths. We're most likely looking at 100 percent discard mortality.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Are there any other questions? Chris, is your motion available?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes. If you're ready, Mr. Chairman, **I would like to move to task the Technical Committee to review weakfish discard data from the Northeast Federal Observer Program and from vessel trip reports; analyze landings data to see if the occurrences of commercial trips approaching the 100 pound trip limit have increased, and to characterize the fisheries with substantial weakfish discard, to see if different trip limits could be implemented to turn discards into landings and/or if fishing modifications could be made to minimize discards.**

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: John Clark second. May I ask the maker of the motion, is the intention to look at when you say analyze landings data, are you including all the states that have the commercial fishery?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes, Mr. Chairman that is my intent, to look at states beyond just Virginia, North Carolina where we've received reports about this.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Discussion on the motion? Jeff Brust.

MR. JEFF BRUST: Chris, I'm just wondering, I know North Carolina does have some observer programs, is there any North Carolina specific or perhaps Virginia specific data that could also be used to look at this? I guess if this is for all states, is there any state observer data that could be used for this?

MR. BATSAVAGE: We have observer program data for our estuarine gillnet fisheries. We took a quick look at it just internally. It doesn't look like there is much of a signal there; but that is certainly information we can provide to the Technical Committee, to make sure that no stone goes unturned. Since we don't have an observer program out in the ocean waters of North Carolina, we would have to rely on the Federal Observer program for any information for the croaker fishery, for instance.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Okay I'm looking around. I don't see any other hands. I would ask if there is any objection to the motion, and does everyone understand that what we're trying to do here is there has been a definite lull in activity surrounding weakfish. But we do now have a peer reviewed accepted stock assessment.

We also have a situation where at least it should be our responsibility to make sure that we now start to give weakfish a little more attention, since it seems to be giving the fishermen a little bit more attention. That is my take on what we're going to try and do. Jay McNamee.

MR. McNAMEE: No objection. We're looking for the Technical Committee here to make some comments on potential management programs. Chris has offered different trip limits. I'm wondering if implicit, and that would be something like an aggregate limit, where they could accumulate over a week or something like that. Is it kind of open or is it stick with the traditional approach of just add 50 pounds or something to that effect? That is my question.

MR. BATSAVAGE: I haven't really thought of it; as far as whether a daily trip limit or aggregate trip limit. I think personally I would leave that open for the Technical Committee to look at when they, I guess characterize the fisheries. Some are going to operate a little different than others along the coast. I think it's good to identify what we want the TC to look at. But I don't want to box them in too much. I think that would be fine to explore any options available that could potentially turn discards into landings without increasing targeting, until we see a new assessment.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Robert Boyles.

MR. ROBERT H. BOYLES, JR.: Not to this but just around the table. Our state's efforts to look at the genetic, the stock structure makeup of weakfish, we've been certainly very interested in seeing if there is any stock differentiation, particularly in the South Atlantic. Given that samples are very, very hard to come by, I just encourage our sister states, particularly from the Mid-Atlantic. If you've got some genetic samples we're looking for them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: Robert, do you take fish as such, samples as such, or are you looking for already sampled for genetics?

MR. BOYLES: We would probably take fish as such; but certainly if you've got genetic fin clips, we would be interested in that as well.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: For Jay, go ahead. Then I have a comment for you too.

MR. McNAMEE: Maybe we're thinking the same thing. I'm not inclined to monkey with the motion, and I'm hoping that the discourse that we had provides enough guidance to the Technical Committee. They can see it in the minutes.

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY: I guess the last couple of weeks this has been a priority in Virginia; and we started to pull data from different aspects, whether aggregated or daily fishery season, directed, bycatch. We're starting to look at all that. Definitely once we submit information collectively to the Technical Committee, then we would look for some type of direction that way too. I think Chris has the right idea to start out.

Once again I'll say we have a motion on the board. Are there any objections to that motion; since we've had some discussion and comments? I don't see any objections. The motion is approved.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN O'REILLY**:** And, if there is some other business, please let us know now, any

other business? Seeing none; we are adjourned. Thank you very much.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 12:15 o'clock p.m. on February 7, 2018)

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Weakfish Technical Committee Report on Board Task to Evaluate Commercial Discard Data and Trips Meeting or Exceeding the 100 lb Trip Limit

October 3, 2018

Weakfish Technical Committee: Erin Levesque (SC, Chair), Sydney Alhale (VA), Lee Paramore (NC), Tiffany Vidal (MA), Christopher Parkins (RI), Paul Nunnenkamp (NY), Lindy Barry (NJ), Michael Greco (DE), Harry Rickabaugh (MD), Ellen Cosby (PRFC), Steve Poland (NC), B.J. Hilton (GA), Dustin Addis (FL), and Wilson Laney (USFWS)

ASMFC Staff: Michael Schmidtke and Katie Drew

At the February 2018 meeting, the South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board (Board) tasked the Weakfish Technical Committee (TC) with the following motion:

> *Move to task the Technical Committee to review weakfish discard data from the Northeast Federal Observer Program and from vessel trip reports (VTRs), analyze landings data to see if the occurrences of commercial trips approaching the 100-lb trip limit have increased, and to characterize the fisheries with substantial weakfish discards to see if different trip limits could be implemented to turn discards into landings and/or if fishing modifications could be made to minimize discards.*
>
> *Motion by C. Batsavage, second by J. Clark.*

To accomplish this task, the TC or a subcommittee of the TC met four times via conference call and carried on discussions between calls via email.

During the first call a subcommittee was formed, data sources were identified, and subcommittee members were tasked with making data requests to state and federal agencies. It was determined that although the group would summarize data, some of the data required to complete the task was confidential, so subcommittee members applied for confidential data access through the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP). The second call was used to begin initial review of state data. At this point the group determined that finer-scale detail was required, so a request was made to state natural resource agencies to send revised data in a uniform format. Once all members of the sub-committee had confidential data access, the data were distributed, and two final calls were used to review data for trips that met or exceeded the 100 lb limit. The subcommittee determined how to best summarize data over the course of the time period (2009 – 2017) to identify potential trends.

There were no clear trends evident in either the number of trips meeting or exceeding the trip limit or the amount of weakfish discarded in any of the data sources examined. The subcommittee does note that the states reporting potential increases, which motivated this task, Virginia and North Carolina, did show notable one-year increases in number and percentage of trips at or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit toward the end of the time series. For

Virginia, this increase occurred in 2016, but was followed by a decline to more typical levels in 2017. For North Carolina, the increase occurred in 2017, but there is no way of knowing, with current information, whether this is the beginning of a trend or a single-year phenomenon. Therefore, the Weakfish TC does not recommend any changes to the current management plan. In the future these data can be revisited to include successive years of trip data to determine if a trend develops. Some of the summarized data that the subcommittee investigated are shown below.

Objective: To address the ASMFC Weakfish Management Board tasks to 1) investigate the occurrence of trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit and 2) to examine discard data from the NMFS observer program.

Data sources: Data were from 2009-2017 and came from state agencies, Vessel Trip Reports (NMFS), and the Fishery Observer Program (NMFS).

Task 1

Investigate the occurrence of trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit.

In 2010, a 100 lb trip limit was established as a part of Addendum IV to Amendment 4 (2009) in the Weakfish Management Plan. The Weakfish Technical Committee requested trip level data from state natural resource agencies and NMFS Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs) in order to summarize the number of trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit and quantify the weight of weakfish harvested during those trips. Data provided by individual states did not show any clear trends in either increases or declines in the percentage of trips that were equal to or exceeded the 100 lb limit (Figure 1). Vessel Trip Report data from the NMFS similarly did not indicate any trending in the number of commercial trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb limit (Figure 2). The percentage of pounds reflected in trips ≥ the 100 lb trip limit similarly did not show any patterns in either state (Figure 3) or VTR (Figure 4) data. Peaks and declines were not synchronized among the states and individual states did not reflect an upward trend in catch. A summary of number of trips and weight of weakfish for all states combined in each of the two data sources is shown in Table 1. *De minimis* states (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia, and Florida) were not included in analyses due to minimal impact on the commercial fishery and to avoid portrayal of confidential information from the small number of commercial trips catching weakfish in these states. Additionally, South Carolina was not included due to their lack of commercial weakfish harvest during the time series investigated. Trips and landings reported by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission are included with Virginia or Maryland.

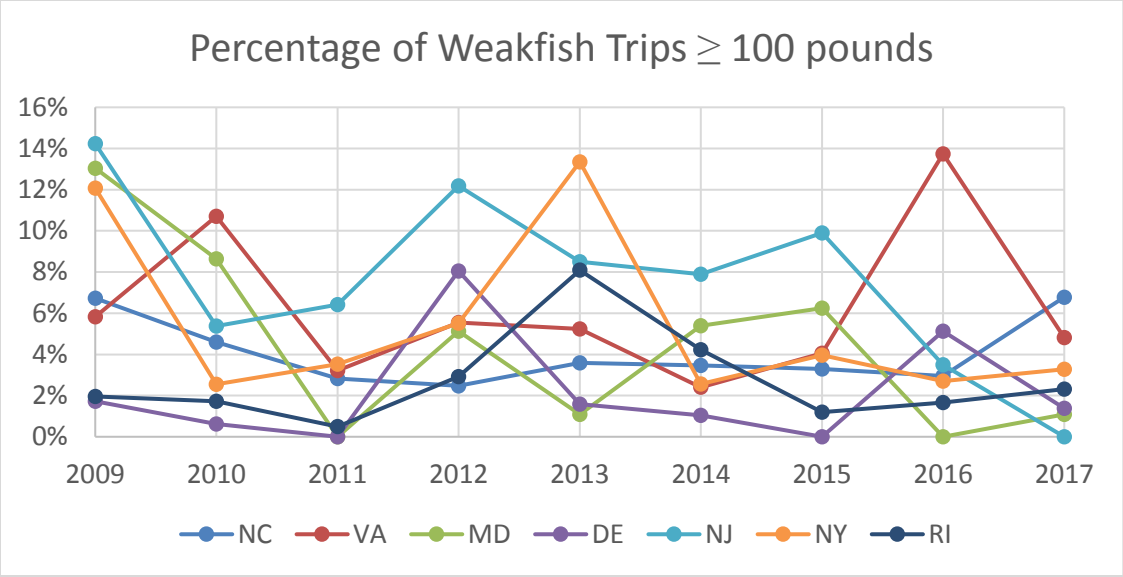

Figure 1. Percentage of commercial trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit as provided by states.

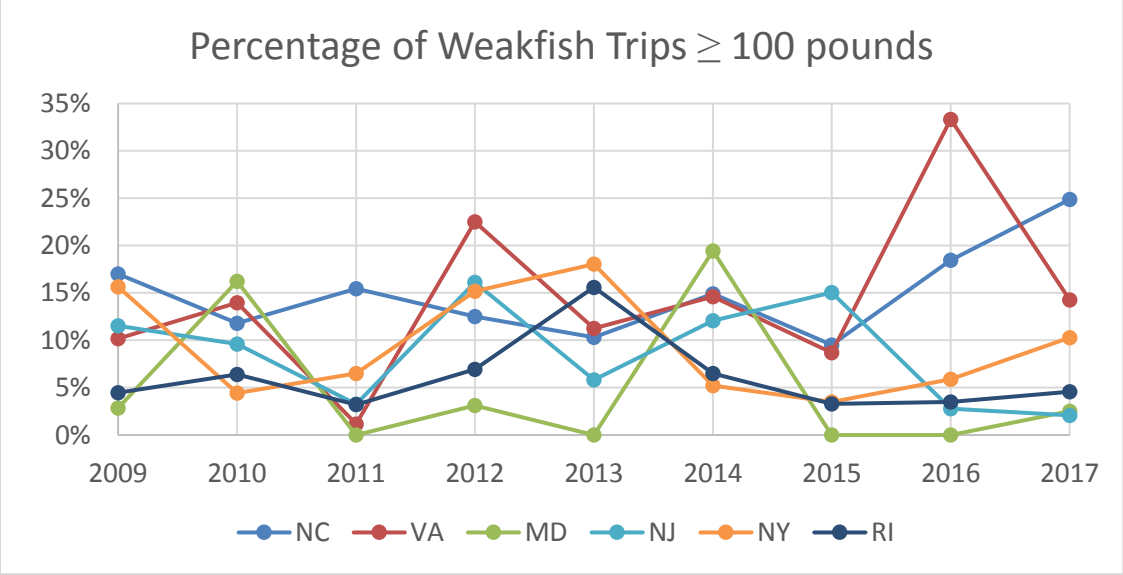

Figure 2. Percentage of commercial trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb trip limit as provided by the NMFS in Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs). Note that Delaware is absent from the VTR data since there were no VTRs from the time period used in this analysis.

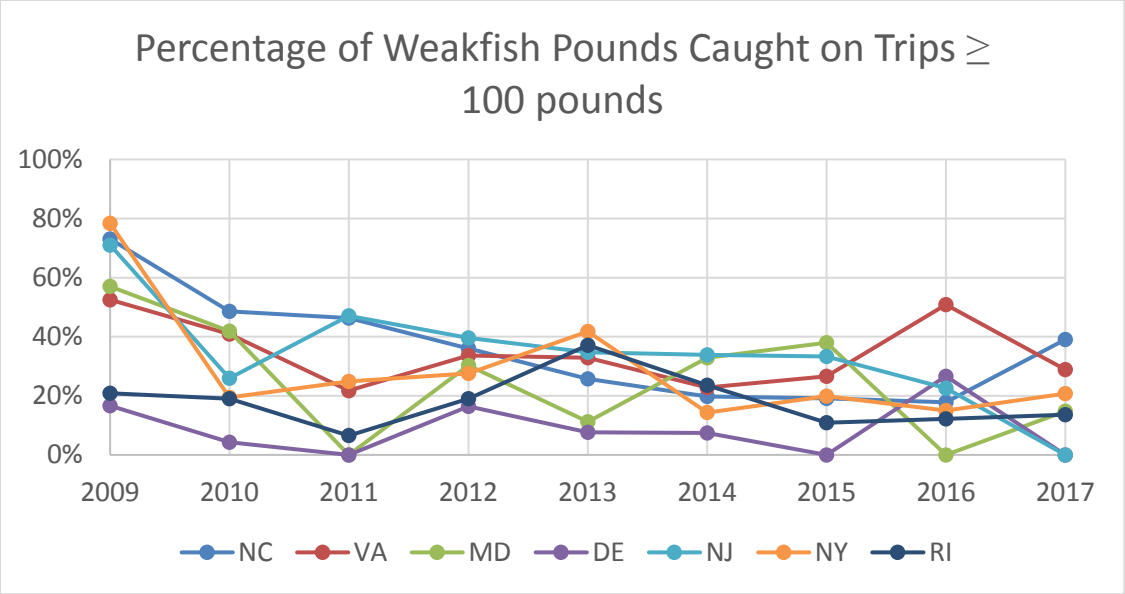

Figure 3. Percentage of weakfish pounds harvested on trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb limit as provided by states.

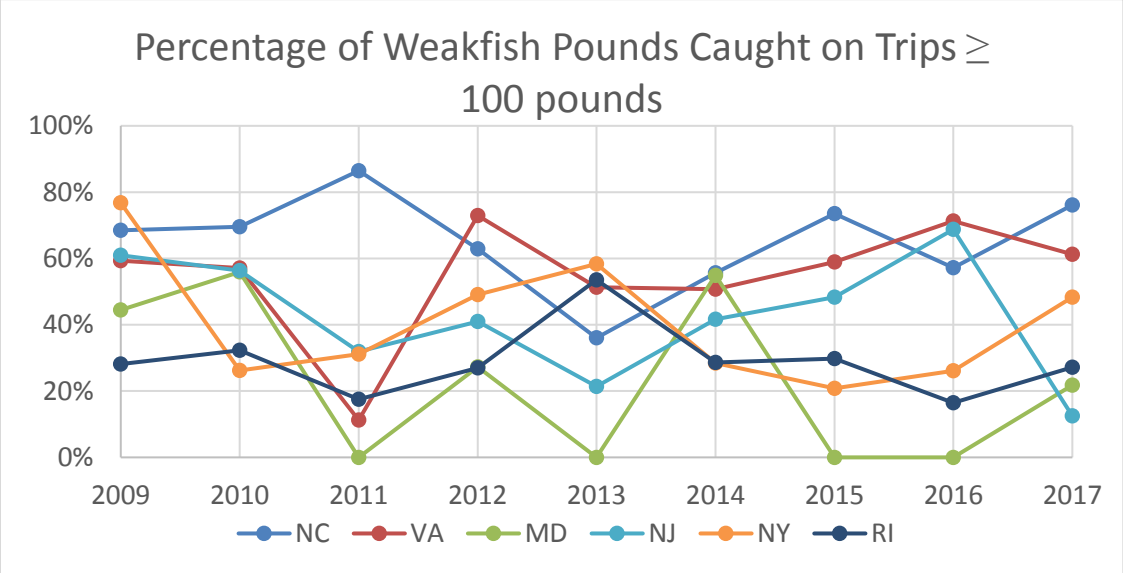

Figure 4. Percentage of weakfish pounds harvested on trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb limit as provided by the NMFS in Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs). Note that Delaware is absent from the VTR data since there were no VTRs from the time period used in this analysis.

Table 1. A summary of trips and weight for all states combined by data source.

State Data

Year	Total Trips	Trips >= 100 lbs	% Trips >=100 lbs	Total Pounds	Pounds from Trips >=100 lbs	% Pounds from Trips >=100 lbs
2009	9,128	635	6.96%	304,568	206,349	67.75%
2010	8,529	487	5.71%	195,691	82,243	42.03%
2011	7,615	224	2.94%	123,196	45,609	37.02%
2012	12,157	529	4.35%	245,557	75,449	30.73%
2013	15,119	928	6.14%	317,826	102,672	32.30%
2014	10,649	356	3.34%	184,086	36,860	20.02%
2015	7,555	270	3.57%	135,642	28,104	20.72%
2016	9,030	403	4.46%	170,378	41,830	24.55%
2017	8,919	463	5.19%	160,481	49,344	30.75%

Vessel Trip Reports (NMFS)

Year	Total Trips	Trips >= 100 lbs	% Trips >=100 lbs	Total Pounds	Pounds from Trips >=100 lbs	% Pounds from Trips >=100 lbs
2009	1,167	145	12.43%	61,479	41,478	67.47%
2010	1,079	94	8.71%	40,321	21,775	54.00%
2011	1,131	64	5.66%	31,699	14,584	46.01%
2012	1,754	233	13.28%	60,911	28,304	46.47%
2013	2,059	275	13.36%	68,075	34,153	50.17%
2014	1,355	132	9.74%	36,294	15,052	41.47%
2015	902	59	6.54%	26,822	13,070	48.73%
2016	1,301	133	10.22%	40,825	18,723	45.86%
2017	1,251	127	10.15%	33,754	16,232	48.09%

Task 2

Examine discard data from the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program.

As with the number of commercial trips meeting or exceeding the 100 lb limit, the percentage of discarded pounds of weakfish does not show a clear temporal trend (Figure 5). Years that demonstrate extreme high or low values are not reflected among states.

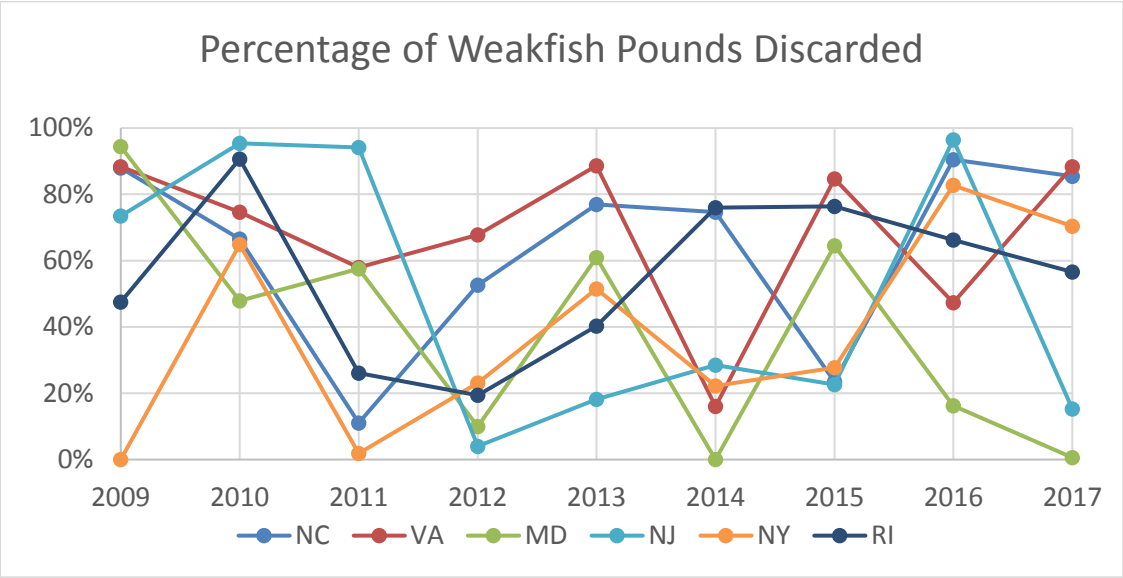

Figure 5. Percentage of weakfish discarded as observed on commercial trips by the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program.

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MEMORANDUM

September 17, 2018

To: **Weakfish Management Board**

From: **Tina Berger, Director of Communications**

RE: **Advisory Panel Nominations**

Please find attached a new nomination to the Weakfish Advisory Panel – Jeffrey Buckel, a recreational angler and fishery scientist from North Carolina. Please review these nominations for action at the next Board meeting.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (703) 842-0749 or tberger@asmfc.org.

Enc.

cc: Mike Schmidtke

Weakfish Advisory Panel

Bolded names await Board review and approval

Massachusetts
Whit Griswold (rec/conserv)
R.F.D. 409
295 Lambert's Cove Road
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
Phone: 508.693.6100
awgriswold@yahoo.com
Appt. Confirmed 2/10/00
Appt Reconfirmed 2/04; 2/08; 8/18

Connecticut
2 vacancies

New York
Brad Loewen (comm)
7 Tenth Street
East Hampton, NY 11937
(631)324-7221
Email: cloewen@aol.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/30/96
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/00
Appt. Reconfirmed 1/23/06
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10 & 4/14

George Scocca (rec)
5 Pinecone Lane
Commack, NY 11725
Phone (day): (631)863-0170
Phone (eve): (631)543-7412
FAX: (631)543-1492
Email: george@worcast.com
Appt. Confirmed 8/5/99
Appt. Reconfirmed 1/23/06
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10
Confirmed participation 4/2014

New Jersey
Robert Christensen (charterboat)
PO Box 333
Marmora, NJ 08223-0333
Phone: (609)408-3474
Email: robsea@eti.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/21/02
Appt. Confirmed 2/9/06
No answering machine – no message left

Chuck R. Law (comm/gillnet)
100 East Dawes Avenue
Somers Point, NJ 08244
Phone: (609)927-1441
Appt. Confirmed 5/21/02
Appt. Confirmed 2/9/06 & 4/14

Delaware
Daniel T. Dugan (rec)
20 South Woodward Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19805
Phone: (302)636-9300
Email: dugan@delanet.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/25/04
Appt Reconfirmed 5/08 & 4/14

Vacancy - commercial

Maryland
J. David Martin (processor/comm)
10134 Waterview Drive
Ocean City, MD 21842
Phone: (443)497-3062
Email: occaptaindave@gmail.com
Appt. Confirmed 4/24/95
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/99
Appt Reconfirmed 9/03
Appt Reconfirmed 9/07

Vacancy - recreational

Virginia
Robert H. Pride, III (rec)
11 Rivercrest Drive
Poquoson, VA 23662
Phone (mobile): 757-675-5010
Prider74@alum.daren.edu
Appt. Confirmed 4/24/95
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/99
Appt Reconfirmed 9/03
Appt Reconfirmed 9/07 & 4/14

Ernest L. Bowden (comm/gillnet)
4219 School St.
Chincoteague, VA 23336
Phone (day): (804)336-5792
Phone (eve): (804)336-5792
Email:dusky@intercom.net

Weakfish Advisory Panel

Bolded names await Board review and approval

Appt. Confirmed 4/24/95
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/99
Appt Reconfirmed 9/03
Appt Reconfirmed 9/07
Incorrect telephone number

Ronald. Burrough (comm/poundnet)
PO Box 39 New Point
Mathur, VA 23125
Phone: (804)725-3554
Appt. Confirmed 4/24/95
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/99
Appt Reconfirmed 9/03
Appt Reconfirmed 9/07
Incorrect telephone number

North Carolina
William Mandulak (rec)
1712 Pony Run Road
Raleigh, NC 27615
Phone: (919)876-2983
Email: wreelfun@bellsouth.net
Appt. Confirmed 2/9/05
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10; 4/14; 8/18

Jeffrey A. Buckel (rec)
CMAST-NCSU
303 College Circle
Morehead City, NC 28557
Phone (ay): 252.222.6341
Phone (eve): 252.422.1969
jabuckel@ncsu.edu

Vacancy – commercial otter trawl or gillnet

South Carolina
Fred Kinard (rec)
472 Hugger Street
Charleston, SC 29403
Phone: (843)723-1135 or (843)588-2859
FAX: (843)851-4602
Email: fredkinard@hotmail.com
Appt. Confirmed 2/20/02
Appt Reconfirmed 2/06
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10 & 4/14

Georgia
Gene Neville (rec)
301 Wendwood Drive
Statesboro, GA 30458-5076
Phone: (912)681-4230
FAX: (912)724-4258
Appt. Confirmed 10/15/01
Appt Reconfirmed 10/05
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

Potomac River Fisheries Comm.
Thomas L. Lewis
1685 Green Field Road
Reedville, VA 22539
Phone (day): (804)453-3373
Phone (eve): (804)453-4328
FAX: (804)453-6208
Email: kakky1960@yahoo.com
Appt. Confirmed 8/17/06
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10
Confirmed participation 5/1/14

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Advisory Panel Nomination Form

This form is designed to help nominate Advisors to the Commission's Species Advisory Panels. The information on the returned form will be provided to the Commission's relevant species management board or section. Please answer the questions in the categories (All Nominees, Commercial Fisherman, Charter/Headboat Captain, Recreational Fisherman, Dealer/Processor, or Other Interested Parties) that pertain to the nominee's experience. If the nominee fits into more than one category, answer the questions for all categories that fit the situation. **Also, please fill in the sections which pertain to All Nominees (pages 1 and 2). In addition, nominee signatures are required to verify the provided information (page 4), and Commissioner signatures are requested to verify Commissioner consensus (page 4). Please print and use a black pen.**

Form submitted by _____Chris Batsavage_____ State: ___NC__
(your name)

Name of Nominee: _____Jeffrey A Buckel_____

Address: __CMAST-NCSU, 303 College Circle_____

City, State, Zip:_____Morehead City, NC 28557_____

Please provide the appropriate numbers where the nominee can be reached:

Phone (day): __252-222-6341_____ Phone (evening): __252-422-1969_____
FAX: ___252-222-6311_____ Email: _jabuckel@ncsu.edu_____

FOR ALL NOMINEES:

1. Please list, in order of preference, the Advisory Panel for which you are nominating the above person.
   1. __Weakfish_____
   2. _____
   3. _____
   4. _____
2. Has the nominee been found in violation of criminal or civil federal fishery law or regulation or convicted of any felony or crime over the last three years?

   ☐yes ☒no
3. Is the nominee a member of any fishermen's organizations or clubs?

   ☐yes ☒no

If "yes," please list them below by name.

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

4. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for during the past year?

__black sea bass_____ ___cobia_____

__weakfish_____ ___dolphinfish_____

__gray triggerfish_____ _ snowy grouper_____

5. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for in the past?

__red drum_____ __summer flounder_____

__spanish mackerel_____ __striped bass_____

___southern flounder_____ __bluefish_____

FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN:

1. How many years has the nominee been the commercial fishing business?

2. Is the nominee employed only in commercial fishing? ☐yes ☐no

3. What is the predominant gear type used by the nominee? _____

FOR CHARTER/HEADBOAT CAPTAINS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the charter/headboat business? _____

2. Is the nominee employed only in the charter/headboat industry? ☐yes ☐no

   If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/occupation(s): _____

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? _____ years

   If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

   _____

FOR RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN:

1. How long has the nominee engaged in recreational fishing? ___40__ years

2. Is the nominee working, or has the nominee ever worked in any area related to the fishing industry? ☒yes ☐no

   If "yes," please explain. *Fisheries scientist*

FOR SEAFOOD PROCESSORS & DEALERS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the business of seafood processing/dealing? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in the business of seafood processing/dealing?

   ☐yes ☐no
   If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

---

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? _____ years

   If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

FOR OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

1. How long has the nominee been interested in fishing and/or fisheries management? __40__ years

2. Is the nominee employed in the fishing business or the field of fisheries management?
   ☐yes ☒no

   If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

   _____Fisheries scientist_____

FOR ALL NOMINEES:

In the space provided below, please provide the Commission with any additional information which you feel would assist us in making choosing new Advisors. You may use as many pages as needed.

Additional information for Jeff Buckel:

Buckel is a fishery scientist with NC State University and fishes for weakfish as a recreational angler. A current project in his lab uses tagging and predator-prey modeling to determine sources of weakfish mortality (fishing and natural). Buckel served on the peer review committee for the 2016 weakfish stock assessment.

Additionally, Buckel targeted weakfish as a recreational angler in Delaware Bay during the late 70s and 80s and continues to target them in North Carolina.

Nominee Signature: Jeffrey A. Buckel Click here to enter text. Date: 7/20/2018

Name: Jeffrey A. Buckel
(please print)

COMMISSIONERS SIGN-OFF (not required for non-traditional stakeholders)

State Director – Ongoing Proxy

State Legislator

Governor's Appointee