



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201  
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • [www.asmfmc.org](http://www.asmfmc.org)

---

## Atlantic Menhaden Board Working Group

Conference Call

July 23, 2015

**Board Working Group Members:** Robert Boyles (SC), Lynn Fegley (MD), Bob Ballou (RI), Rob O'Reilly (VA), Jim Gilmore (NY), Russ Allen (NJ)

**ASMFC Staff:** Mike Waine, Toni Kerns, Tina Berger

**Public:** Shaun Gehan (Omega), Jack Travelstead (CCA), Aaron Kornbluth (PEW), Megan Lapp (Sea Freeze), Andre Buchheister (CBL), Dave Sikorski (CCA MD), Bill Goldsborough (MD Commissioner), Ron Lukens (Omega), Jeff Kaelin (Lunds), Robert Crockett (VA Bait), Ida Hall (PRFC), AJ Erskine (Mid Atl. Bait), Eric Reid (RI Commissioner)

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board established a Board Working Group (WG) to revisit quota allocation as required by Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. The WG discussions on allocation are part of the preliminary steps in the Amendment 3 process. Potential allocation options developed by the working group would be reviewed by the full Board prior to inclusion in a Public Information Document which is the scoping phase of Draft Amendment 3. Staff noted that there will be two separate rounds of public comment during the Amendment process, a Public Information Document that will scope the management issues being considered, and then a Draft Amendment which will further develop specific management options.

The WG started by creating a broad characterization of the full range of allocation options that could potentially be considered by the Board for inclusion in Amendment 3. They discussed that some options would be the same as ones previously considered in Amendment 2, and others would be completely new concepts. Generally, the intent of the WG was to start broad with a complete list of allocation options and then focus in on the specifics of each potential option to discuss its applicability and usefulness to Atlantic menhaden management. The WG proposed the following goal statement and list of potential allocation options with factors to be considered.

Draft Goal:

Fair and equitable distribution of coastwide total allowable catch among states/jurisdictions, regions, and fishery interests.

Allocation Options to be Considered:

1. Coastwide quota
2. Regional quotas
3. State-by-state quotas (status quo)
4. Seasonal quotas
5. Separate quotas for bait and reduction fisheries (end uses)
6. Separate quotas for small-/medium-/large-scale fisheries (gear type/harvest capacity)
7. Small capacity set aside (allocation with a small range so that fluctuations in the fisheries can be monitored)
8. Minimum fixed quotas levels

The WG also added a list of potential factors or issues that should be considered when discussing any allocation scenario.

Potential Factors to be Considered:

- A. Historical catch or landings (considering timeframe and data availability)
- B. Commercial capacity/interest (e.g., harvesting and processing)
- C. Availability and distribution of resource
- D. Biological and ecological principles (e.g., size selectivity)
- E. Needs and interests of small-scale fixed gear versus large-scale mobile gear
- F. Bycatch allowance (defining non-directed catch of menhaden in other fisheries)
- G. Transfers
- H. Credit for biological monitoring that guards against local depletion
- I. Credit for data collection programs and improved water quality
- J. Incentive for sound ecological and biological use of the resource
- K. Incentive for reduced discard mortality
- L. Incentive for management and operational efficiencies
- M. Research set aside
- N. Ongoing provision for revisiting allocation

The WG expressed concern over incomplete landings history that may limit the applicability of some allocation options listed above. The WG encouraged states to contact staff if there are known issues with the available landings data provided for the allocation discussion. Pending Board review at the August Board meeting, the WG plans to further develop the list of allocation options for review by the Board at ASMFC's 2015 Annual Meeting.



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## NEWS RELEASE

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 1, 2015

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
703.842.0740

### ASMFC Schedules Atlantic Menhaden Ecosystem Management Objectives Workshop for August 31-September 1

Arlington, VA – Based on the findings of the 2015 Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review, the Commission’s Atlantic Menhaden Management Board initiated Draft Amendment 3 to the Fishery Management Plan. The Draft Amendment will consider changes to the management program including the development of ecological reference points that reflect Atlantic menhaden’s role as a forage species. To aid in the development of these reference points, the Commission has established a multi-disciplinary working group to identify potential ecosystem goals and objectives for Board review and consideration. The working group contains a broad range of representation including, Commissioners, advisors, and technical representatives to provide various perspectives on menhaden management.

“This workshop reflects the Commission’s continued commitment to fully evaluating the importance of Atlantic menhaden to the ecosystem and harvesters. This process will benefit from the expertise and input of managers, stakeholders, and scientists that are committed to the sustainable management of this valuable resource,” stated Board Chair Robert Boyles from South Carolina. “The anticipated outcome of the workshop will be potential goals and objectives for ecosystem management that the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board will consider as part of the Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 3.”

#### Ecosystem Management Objectives Workshop Participants

##### Board Subgroup

Bob Ballou (RI, Menhaden Board Vice Chair)  
Jim Gilmore (NY)  
Russ Allen (NJ)  
Lynn Fegley (MD)  
Rob O’Reilly (VA)  
Robert Boyles (SC, Menhaden Board Chair)

##### Advisory Panel Subgroup

David Sikorski (recreational)  
Ken Hinman (ecosystem)  
Ron Lukens (reduction)  
Jeff Kaelin (bait, AP Chair)

##### Technical Representatives

Amy Schueller (NMFS, SAS Chair)  
Jason McNamee (RI, TC Chair)  
Matt Cieri (ME, BERP Chair)

##### Facilitator

Michael Jones (SEDAR 40 Review Panel  
Chair)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

The workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Michael Jones, who chaired the Peer Review Panel for the 2015 Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Stock Assessment. Dr. Jones brings a working knowledge of Atlantic menhaden science and management, as well as expertise of ecosystem management in the Great Lakes region. The workshop will be preceded by a webinar that will review topics to be covered, expectations, and workshop goals, as well as provide participants an opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions on the process. The webinar will also feature an ecosystem management case study from the Great Lakes region to help guide the ecosystem management workshop for Atlantic menhaden.

The public is welcome to attend the webinar and workshop. Since the webinar and workshop will be working meetings, there will be a limited opportunity for the public to provide comments at the end of the meeting if time permits. The webinar will be held on **Friday, August 14 at 9 AM**; please go [here](#) to register, and call 866.244.8528 and enter passcode 629107 to join the conference call. The workshop will be conducted on **August 31 and September 1** from 8:30 AM to 5 PM at the Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard, Hanover, Maryland 21076; 888.624.4011. Space may be limited; please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mwaine@asmfc.org](mailto:mwaine@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740 if you are interested in attending.

Since Draft Amendment 3 will also consider changes to current state-by-state allocation, a working group of the Management Board (see Board Subgroup membership in text box on page 1) has been established to begin discussions on various allocation schemes to help inform the Board as it develops options to be included in the Draft Amendment. The Working Group will meet via webinar on **Wednesday, July 15 at 1 PM**; please go [here](#) to join webinar and call 888.394.8197 and enter passcode: 815277 to join the conference call. As with the ecosystem webinar and workshop, the public is welcome to listen in on the webinar. If time permits, there will be a limited opportunity for the public to provide comments at the end of the meeting.

It is important to note that no management decisions are being formulated or acted upon at the workshop or the webinars. The meetings are a means to initiate discussions on ecosystem objectives and allocation schemes, allowing for the identification of issues and options for Board discussion and consideration. There will be several opportunities throughout the amendment development process for interested stakeholders and the public to submit public comment.

Additional meetings of both working groups may be scheduled. If you are not already on the ASMFC email alerts for Atlantic menhaden, please email [info@asmfc.org](mailto:info@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Menhaden Meetings) to receive email updates on these meetings.

###

## Tina Berger

---

**From:** Comments  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 06, 2015 4:21 PM  
**To:** Amy Hirrlinger  
**Cc:** Mike Waine  
**Subject:** FW: Menhaden

To include in public comment for the next menhaden board meeting.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Joe [mailto:walker9379@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 05, 2015 12:27 PM  
**To:** Comments  
**Subject:** Menhaden

Shame on all of you who voted for an Increase on the Menhaden TAC. Once again it proves big money is more important than the health of our bays and harbors. Smh.

Sent from my iPhone

## Tina Berger

---

**From:** Capt. Paul Eidman <paulfish@reeltherapy.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 06, 2015 1:45 PM  
**To:** Mike Waine  
**Subject:** Comments not read yesterday  
**Attachments:** paul Public Comments on Behalf of Menhaden Defenders 5 5 15 eidman.docx

Hi Mike-

I know this is water under the bridge, but just for the record, we along with many others were all set to read comments yesterday but due to time constraints were not able to. I attach them for your review and submittal. Please let me know you got them and if this is acceptable.

Thanks,  
Paul

Capt. Paul Eidman



><(((°>`..\_..\_..\_`-`-`-`..\_..\_..\_><(((°>  
..\_..\_..\_><(((°>`..\_..\_..\_><(((°>  
><(((°>`..\_..\_..\_`-`-`-`..\_..\_..\_><(((°>

[www.reeltherapy.com](http://www.reeltherapy.com)

[www.anglersconservationnetwork.org](http://www.anglersconservationnetwork.org)

[www.menhadendefenders.org](http://www.menhadendefenders.org)

Public Comments on Behalf of Menhaden Defenders 5 5 15

Addressing the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)

Thank you Mr Chairman for giving us the opportunity to make comments on this important issue.

Back in 2012 you moved forward and the majority of you progressively voted to limit harvest on this vital forage species and we thank you for that.

We sit together again just a few years later, to consider how to manage menhaden in light of a positive benchmark stock assessment. The biomass increase found in the study is a good thing and we are excited to see that given just a little bit of moderation in harvest, the Menhaden can rebound.

As expected at the first positive signs of population increase, the profitable industry that surrounds this free public resource is calling for an increase in total allowable catch. We feel that this would be a premature step backwards and find that it would be hypocritical of the ASMFC to vote to catch more after the decision made after many hours of deliberation over how important abundance of Menhaden is.

Increasing harvest levels at a time when our ecosystem and many gamefish are hanging on by a thread makes ZERO sense. It is very clear to those on the water especially to the North and South of the Mid Atlantic region that more work must be done. Yes, the stock assessment showed that there was a positive increase in the spawning stock biomass, but it also states very clearly that the overall stock is still lacking abundance in its range.

We ask, if these fish have recovered and are so abundant, then why does the fishery still hire pilots and planes to find them?

Where I live in New Jersey, trucks are still being loaded each night and driving 450 miles northward to supply New England lobstermen with trap bait. This is a clear sign that Menhaden are STILL not abundant in the entire historic range. There are still NO BUNKER up North. We have always questioned interstate transport and feel that baitfish should be abundant enough so that Baymen can collect their own trap bait locally without having to pay for it.

We have also always questioned why Omega Protein Inc, with its 196 foot long ships insists upon fishing the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, the largest fish nursery on the east coast. This is not acting sustainably nor as "a friend to the sea" as they claim. In our view, this is an incredibly selfish act and on this industrialized scale, Omega is preventing these fish from fulfilling their role in the ecosystem. As if this wasn't bad enough, these same fish are ground up into fish meal and shipped to China's fish farms. It is pathetic to see the backbone of our ecosystem being sold for pennies on the pound as fishing for Striped Bass, Tuna, etc deteriorates.

Omega continues to use job loss as rationale for increasing catch limits when in fact hundreds more fishing related jobs, both commercial and recreational are lost COASTWIDE because of lack of abundant predator fish. We recognize the proud people from Reedville in the room and respect the fact that you all need to make a living too, but we ask that your employer, Omega Protein keep the health of the entire coast in mind.

In closing, we implore commissioners to hold your course by supporting NO CATCH INCREASE in 2015. We also ask that the Board quickly move toward catch limits based on ecological reference points, ones that take the needs of predators into account. Finally, we ask that the Board reallocate the total allowable catch fairly so that family owned small businesses, (local Baymen) who need more quota can have a longer and more profitable season.

Thank you,

Capt. Paul Eidman

Founder of Menhaden Defenders

Owner of Reel Therapy Fishing Charters NJ