



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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703.842.0740

States Schedule Public Hearings on the Public Information Document for Atlantic Cobia Draft Amendment 1

Arlington, VA – Atlantic coastal states and jurisdictions from New Jersey through Georgia have scheduled their hearings to gather public input on the Public Information Document (PID) for Draft Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia (Atlantic cobia). The details of those hearings follow.

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

**September 6, 2018; 7 PM*

Atlantic County Library/Galloway Township
306 East Jimmie Leeds Road
Galloway, NJ
Contact: [Joe Cimino](mailto:Joe.Cimino@NJDEP.gov) at 609.748.2020

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

September 18, 2018; 6 PM

Dare County Commissioners Office
954 Marshall Collins Drive, Room 168
Manteo, NC
Contact: [Chris Batsavage](mailto:Chris.Batsavage@ncdwr.gov) at 252.808.8009

Potomac River Fisheries Commission and Maryland Department of Natural Resources

September 20, 2018; 6 PM

Potomac River Fisheries Commission
222 Taylor Street
Colonial Beach, VA
Contacts: [Ellen Cosby](mailto:Ellen.Cosby@PRFC.org) (PRFC) at 804.224.7148 and
[Lynn Fegley](mailto:Lynn.Fegley@DNR.MD.gov) (MD DNR) at 410.260.8285

September 10, 2018; 6 PM

Central District Office
5285 US Highway 70 West
Morehead City, NC
Contact: [Chris Batsavage](mailto:Chris.Batsavage@ncdwr.gov) at 252.808.8009

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

September 19, 2018; 6 PM

2600 Washington Avenue
4th Floor Conference Room
Newport News, VA
Contact: [Pat Geer](mailto:Pat.Geer@VMRC.com) at 757.247.2002

Georgia Department of Natural Resources and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

September 12, 2018; 6 PM

National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force
175 Bourne Avenue
Pooler, GA
Contacts: [Doug Haymans](mailto:Doug.Haymans@GADNR.com) (GA DNR) at 912.264.7218
and [Mel Bell](mailto:Mel.Bell@SCDNR.com) (SC DNR) at 843.953.9007

**This will be a state hearing conducted by New Jersey due to the timing of the hearing (the state requested a hearing date that is earlier than the Commission amendment process allows). Comments made at this hearing will be submitted to the Commission and included in the public comment summary for Board consideration.*

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 diadromous species.

Draft Amendment 1 was initiated in anticipation of removal of Atlantic cobia from the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils' Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources (CMP FMP). Both Councils approved removal of Atlantic cobia from the CMP FMP earlier this year, and this action is now pending review by the Secretary of Commerce. If approved by the Secretary of Commerce, there would no longer be a federal management plan for Atlantic cobia, and the Commission would become the sole management body for this stock. This would necessitate amending several portions of the current interstate FMP that are dependent on the CMP FMP and also provide the opportunity for the Board to construct a long-term strategy for managing in the absence of a federal FMP.

The PID is the first step of the Commission's amendment process, and the intent of the PID is to elicit input from stakeholders and those interested in Atlantic cobia about changes observed in the fishery/resource and potential management measures that should be considered for inclusion in Draft Amendment 1. Additionally, the PID seeks input on three main issues: recommended management for federal waters, a harvest specification process, and biological monitoring requirements.

The PID is available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/CobiaDraftAmd1PID_PublicComment.pdf or via the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, under *Public Input*. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the PID either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on October 4, 2018** and should be forwarded to Dr. Michael Schmidtke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Cobia PID).

If your organization is planning to release an action alert related to the PID, please contact Michael Schmidtke at mschmidtke@asmfc.org prior to its release. The Management Board will meet at the Commission's 2018 Annual Meeting in October to review and consider public comment and provide direction to staff for items to be included in Draft Amendment 1.

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