



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

Volume 22, Issue 1
February/March 2013

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission • 1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

ASMFC Spring Meeting May 20 - 23, 2013

**Crowne Plaza Hotel Old Town
901 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, Virginia**

Preliminary Schedule

The agenda is subject to change. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein. The Commission's Public Comment Guidelines can be found online at <http://www.asmfc.org/spring2013Mtg.htm>.

Monday, May 20, 2013

10:00 – 11:00 AM	Atlantic Herring Section
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	Winter Flounder Management Board
1:00 – 5:00 PM	Law Enforcement Committee
1:15 – 3:15 PM	American Lobster Management Board
2:00 – 3:00 PM	Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Executive Committee
3:30 – 5:30 PM	ACCSP Coordinating Council

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

8:00 a.m. – Noon	Strategic Planning Workshop
8:30 a.m. – Noon	Law Enforcement Committee
1:00 – 5:00 PM	Management & Science Committee
1:00 – 2:30 PM	Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Management Board
2:45 – 5:15 PM	American Eel Management Board
6:30 – 8:00 PM	Annual Awards of Excellence Reception

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

8:00 – 11:00 AM	Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
8:30 AM – Noon	Management & Science Committee (continued)

continued on page 12

Inside This Issue

Species Profile: Spanish Mackerel
Page 4

Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment Q&A
Page 5

Public Comment Sought on Potential Management Actions
Page 7

ASMFC Comings & Goings Page 8

Kerns & Taylor Receive Promotions
Page 9

Preparations Begin for Northern Shrimp Benchmark Stock Assessment
Page 9

ACCSP Solicits Fishing Industry Input on Electronic Reporting
Page 10

ASMFC Employee of the Quarter Named
Page 11

Specifications Set for 2013-2015 Atlantic Herring Fishery Page 11

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. The fifteen member states of the Commission are: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Paul J. Diodati (MA), Chair
Dr. Louis B. Daniel, III (NC), Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal, Executive Director
Patrick A. Campfield, Science Director
Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director
Laura C. Leach, Director of Finance & Administration

Tina L. Berger, Editor
tberger@asmfc.org

703.842.0740 Phone • 703.842.0741 Fax
www.asmfc.org

Upcoming Meetings

4/2 (9 AM - 5 PM):

ASMFC Assessment Science Committee, Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard Hanover, Maryland.

4/3 (9 AM - 5 PM):

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee, Hotel at Arundel Preserve, 7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard Hanover, Maryland.

4/9 - 11:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Embassy Suites Raleigh Crabtree, 4700 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh, North Carolina.

4/15 - 19:

ASMFC Black Drum Data Workshop, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, 217 Fort Johnson Road, Charleston, South Carolina.

4/23 - 25:

New England Fishery Management Council, Hilton, Mystic, Connecticut.

5/7 & 8:

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee, Childs Mansion at SUNY Stony Brook University, 19 Shore Dr., Old Field, New York.

5/7 - 9:

Managing Our Nation's Fisheries 3: Advancing Sustainability, Renaissance Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C.

5/9 & 10:

ASMFC Habitat Committee, Childs Mansion at SUNY Stony Brook University, 19 Shore Drive, Old Field, New York.

5/20 - 23:

ASMFC Spring Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia (see preliminary agenda on pages 1 & 12).

6/11 - 13:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Double Tree by Hilton, 700 Hope Road, Eatontown, New Jersey.

6/18 - 20:

New England Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland, Maine.

6/25 - 27:

ASMFC American Lobster Stock Assessment Modeling Workshop (This workshop will include but is not limited to the development of catch-at-length matrices and model configuration and parameterization.) Location to be determined.

Captain Larry Simns: Champion of Maryland Watermen 1937-2013

Maryland watermen and Chesapeake Bay advocates lost a dedicated leader and true friend when Captain Larry Simns died on March 14, 2013. Founder and longtime President of the Maryland Watermen's Association, Captain Simns committed his life to maintaining the decades old tradition of an active and vibrant fishing community and all that went with that – thriving fishery resources and a healthy marine environment. He was a lead proponent in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. His first efforts began as far back as the 1970s when he met with then Senator Charles McCurdy Mathias Jr. to push for a thorough examination of the bay's environmental condition. Mathias' study ultimately led to multistate and federal efforts to preserve the bay.

Throughout his 40 years at the helm of the Maryland Watermen's Association, Captain Simns fought hard for the rights of commercial fishermen at the state, interstate, and federal levels. He served on the Commission as a proxy to the state's Legislative Commissioner and as an industry advisor. From 2001 to 2010, he was a member of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, where he chaired multiple committees and was a participant on many more. He was also a longstanding and active member of the Maryland Tidal Fish Advisory Committee and the Commercial Fisherman of America Association. He worked on a variety of issues ranging from closure of the striped bass fishery in the mid-1980s, to revising the management of oysters, to more recent efforts to restrict the harvest of blue crabs.

This January, Governor Martin O'Malley named Captain Simns Admiral of the Chesapeake for his "role in promoting changes to ensure the sustainability of commercial fishing in the State of Maryland." Captain Simns was a man who was deeply passionate about the things he cared most about – his family and friends; fishing, watermen, and his coastal heritage; and the Chesapeake Bay.

The Maryland Watermen's Association posted the following poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson on its website in honor of Captain Simns. I thought it would be fitting to repeat it here.



Crossing the Bar

*Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,*

*But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.*

*Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;*

*For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.*

From the Executive Director's Desk

Spanish Mackerel
Scomberomorus maculatus



ASMFC Management Area:
NY - FL

Interesting Facts:

- * Spanish mackerel have been known to establish permanent resident populations in particularly favorable spots such as drop-offs.
- * They can leap up to 6 feet in the air when taking rapidly trolled bait.
- * Fish can grow up to 15 inches in the first year and reach a maximum length of 3 feet.
- * Fish form large schools which travel great distances over a short period of time.

Largest Recorded: 13 pounds,
Ocracoke Inlet, NC, 1987

Age/Length at Maturity: 2
years/13.8 - 14.8 inches

Age at Recruitment: 0-2 years
due to rapid growth in first year

Oldest Recorded: 5 years

Stock Status: Not overfished not
experiencing overfishing

Species Profile: Spanish Mackerel

Popular South Atlantic Species Comes Under ACFCMA Management

Introduction

Spanish mackerel, *Scomberomorus maculatus*, is a popular recreational and commercial fish harvested throughout the South Atlantic and gaining in importance in the Mid-Atlantic. Complementary management by the Commission in state waters (0 – 3 miles from shore) and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) in federal waters (3 – 200 miles from shore) has resulted in stock rebuilding with Spanish mackerel not overfished nor experiencing overfishing. In 2011, the Commission adopted the Omnibus Amendment to the Interstate Fishery Management Plans (FMP) for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout, further aiding complementary management through adaptive management measures to address changes in the fishery or stock condition as well as a process for Board review and action in response to changes in federal regulations.

Life History

A fast swimming fish, known to gather in large schools and travel great distances, Spanish mackerel are found throughout the coastal waters of the eastern US and the Gulf of Mexico. These fish winter off Florida, moving northward to North Carolina in early April and to New York in June. Later in the year, as waters cool, Spanish mackerel return to warm Florida waters.

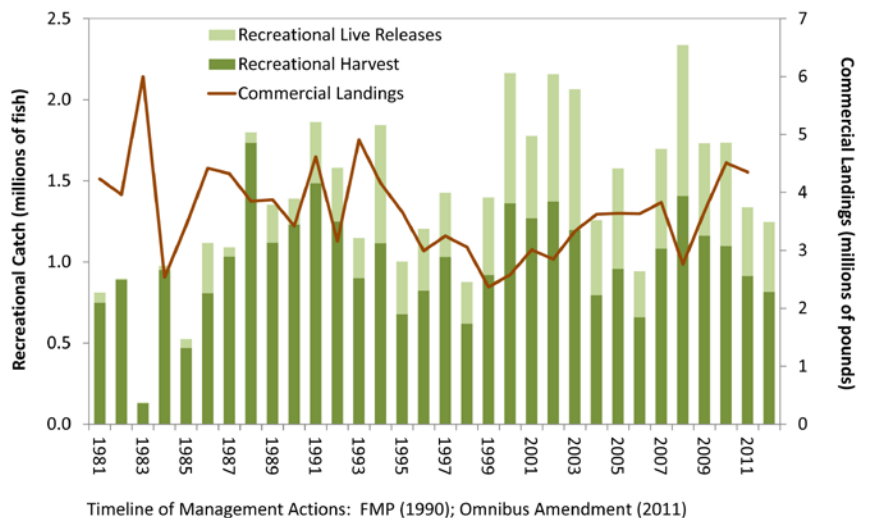
Their migratory and schooling nature often frustrate anglers, as large congregations of fish can be found in an area one day and gone the next. Spanish mackerel prefer open water but are sometimes found over deep grass beds and reefs, as well as in shallow estuaries. They live for five to eight years. Females spawn by age two, releasing between half a million and 1.5 million eggs. Larvae grow quickly, reaching lengths of 12 to 15 inches in a year. Older fish may weigh several pounds. Both juvenile and adult Spanish mackerel are carnivorous, feeding primarily on other fish such as menhaden, anchovy, herring, shad, pompano, and jacks, as well as shrimp and squid. Sharks are a major predator of Spanish mackerel.

Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

The commercial fishery began about 1850 off Long Island and New Jersey, and was well established in the Mid-Atlantic and Chesapeake Bay by the late 1870s. Soon after, the major areas of production changed to the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, and the waters off Florida became the major commercial fishing area by 1920. Troll lines were used during the fishery's infancy, then pound nets and gillnets too, with gillnets becoming the principal gear in the Florida fishery up to the mid-1990s. In July 1995, Florida instituted a net ban, which shifted gillnet fishing into federal waters and led to an increase in cast net fishing in state waters. Currently, purse seines and drift gillnets south of Cape Lookout, North Carolina are prohibited.

Figure 1. Commercial Landings and Recreational Catch (Harvest + Releases) of Spanish Mackerel on the Atlantic Coast

Source: Personal communication from NMFS Fisheries Statistics Division, Silver Spring, MD, 2013



Since 1950, coastwide commercial landings have generally fluctuated between two and six million pounds, with the exception of peak harvests of nine to 11 million pounds in 1976, 1977, and 1980. The Atlantic coast commercial fishery averaged 2.82 million pounds annually over the last ten years, with landings of 4.3 million pounds in 2011.

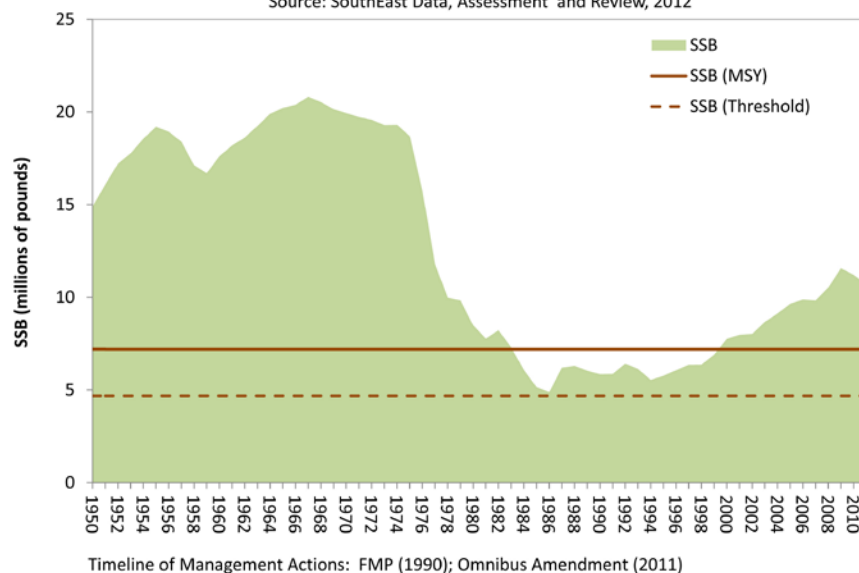
Spanish mackerel support recreational fisheries in the South and Mid-Atlantic regions, with the most extensive fisheries occurring in Florida and North Carolina. Since 1981, landings in these two states generally contributed 70 to 95% of the coastwide harvest. Anglers target Spanish mackerel for sport and also to use as bait for big game fishing. Over the past ten years, recreational anglers harvested an average of 1.5 million pounds per year. The peak harvest occurred in 1988, when anglers harvested over three million pounds. Part of the recreational fishery is catch and release; in the last ten years, anglers released on average 34% of the number of fish caught due to regulations or by personal choice (see Figure 1).

Stock Status

Stock assessments are conducted by the joint Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel (MSAP) of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. In 2012, Spanish mackerel was assessed and peer reviewed through the SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review. The results of the assessment indicate that the stock is not overfished (see Figure 2) and it is not undergoing overfishing. The stock biomass remained at a low level from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s and has been steadily increasing since 1995. Fishing mortality has been decreasing since the early 1990s (see side-bar for more information on the recent assessment).

Figure 2. Spanish Mackerel Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB)

Source: SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review, 2012



Atlantic Coastal Management

Spanish mackerel is one of several species that the Commission manages cooperatively with the Council. Since adoption of the Interstate FMP in 1990, South and Mid-Atlantic states have responded to the plan's recommendations through implementation of bag limits, size limits, commercial trip limits, and/or provisions for seasonal closures to complement the Council's measures

Stock Assessment Q&A

Spanish mackerel are managed as two stocks -- a Gulf of Mexico stock and an Atlantic stock. The Atlantic Spanish mackerel recently went through the SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) process. The assessment for the Gulf of Mexico stock was not ready in time for the review workshop in 2012, so only the results of the Atlantic Spanish mackerel stock assessment are provided below.

What Data Were Used?

The stock assessment used both fishery-dependent and independent data, including information on Atlantic Spanish mackerel biology and life history. Fishery-dependent data came from recreational and commercial fisheries, while fishery-independent data were collected through scientific research and surveys. The Atlantic stock of Spanish mackerel was considered to be all fish caught south of US Highway 1 through the Florida Keys, northward along the east coast of Florida to Maine.

Fishery-dependent data

The assessment used landings from commercial fisheries, including gillnet, pound net, cast net, and handline fisheries), as well as estimates of commercial discards. Records of commercial landings go back to 1889, but data prior to 1950 were not considered reliable enough to use in the assessment. The assessment developed estimates of shrimp trawl bycatch of Spanish mackerel from observer data and data on shrimping effort. Recreational catch came from the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Program/Marine Recreational Information Program (MRFSS/MRIP) from 1981 to the present. The assessment used data from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation Survey to estimate recreational landings prior to 1981.

Biological samples from commercial and recreational landings were used to describe the age structure and sex ratio of the catch. The assessment also used two fishery-

continued on page 6

continued on page 6

Species Profile: Spanish Mackerel (continued from page 5)

for federal waters. However, all measures contained within the plan were voluntary. State compliance with any management measures in the current or future management plan could not be enforced through the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act until the plans were modified to incorporate the standards and procedures described in the Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Program Charter (1995). Additionally, the Spanish Mackerel FMP was intended to achieve compatible management throughout the species range, including both state and federal waters. The management measures in the original FMP were not consistent with management of Spanish mackerel in federal waters.

To remedy this, the South Atlantic Board approved the Omnibus Amendment for Spot, Spotted Seatrout, and Spanish Mackerel in 2011. The Amendment updates all three species plans with requirements of the Commission's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter.

Specific to Spanish mackerel, the Amendment includes commercial and recreational management measures, adaptive management measures, and a process for Board review and action in response to changes in the federal regulations. This will allow for complementary management throughout the range of the species. The Omnibus Amendment includes provisions that are consistent with the Council's recently approved Amendment 18. The Omnibus Amendment was implemented by the states on July 1, 2012.



Photo © Dean Mitchell.

Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment Q&A (continued from page 5)

dependent indices of abundance: an index of catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) from the Florida trip ticket handline/trolling data and an index of recreational CPUE from the MRFSS/MRIP data.

Fishery-independent Data

The assessment used indices of age-0 and age-1 Spanish mackerel abundance from the Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program trawl survey, which samples the coastal zone of the South Atlantic Bight between Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, and Cape Canaveral, Florida.

What Models Were Used?

The assessment used the Beaufort Assessment Model (BAM), which is a statistical catch-at-age model. In addition, a surplus production model (ASPIC) was run as a complementary model to

verify that the BAM was producing reasonable results.

What is the Status of the Stock?

Atlantic Spanish mackerel are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Female spawning stock biomass in 2011 was estimated to be 10.7 million pounds, above the SSB_{MSY} of 7.2 million pounds. The current fishing mortality rate was 0.36, below the F_{MSY} rate of 0.69.

What's Needed to Improve Future Assessments?

The assessment team and review panel made several recommendations to improve future assessments. Increased observer coverage is needed to develop better estimates of commercial discards and shrimp trawl bycatch. A fishery-independent survey is needed to better track trends in abundance of Spanish

mackerel and other coastal pelagic species in the South Atlantic. The genetic work used to split the Atlantic and Gulf stocks and estimate mixing rates also should be updated with newer, more sensitive methods.

For more information, consult the Stock Assessment Report:

SEDAR. 2012. SEDAR 28 – South Atlantic Spanish mackerel Stock Assessment Report. SEDAR, North Charleston SC. 438 pp. available online at: http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/Sedar_Workshops.jsp?WorkshopNum=28

For more information on stock assessments in general, see the ASMFC Guide to Fisheries Science and Stock Assessments, available online at <http://www.asmfc.org/publications/GuideToFisheriesScienceAndStockAssessments.pdf>.

ASMFC Seeks Public Comment on Potential Management Actions for American Eel, Black Drum, and Summer Flounder

Throughout March and April, the Commission and the states are seeking public input on a number of species management programs, including American eel, black drum, and summer flounder. Below is a brief description of the issues for which public comment is being sought. Please visit the Commission website, www.asmfc.org, under *Meetings* to view of list of scheduled public hearings: copies of all public comment documents can be found under *Breaking News*.

American Eel

Draft Addendum III to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Eel proposes a wide range of management options with the goal of reducing mortality and increasing the conservation of American eel stocks across all life stages. Specific management options focus on both the commercial (glass, yellow, and silver eel life stages) and recreational American eel fisheries. The document also proposes increased monitoring by the states and recommendations to improve American eel habitat.

Draft Addendum III responds to the findings of the 2012 benchmark stock assessment indicating the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock has declined in recent decades and the prevalence of significant downward trends in multiple surveys across the coast is cause for concern. Causes of decline are likely due to a combination of historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease.

Commercial regulations vary by state. Glass eel fisheries currently occur in Maine and South Carolina. Significant yellow eel fisheries occur in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, the Potomac River, Virginia, and North Carolina. Although commercial fishery landings and effort in recent times have declined in most regions, current levels of fishing effort may still be

too high given the depleted nature of the stock. States and jurisdictions are required to annually report on commercial harvest and monitor juvenile abundance. The recreational fishery is currently regulated by a 50 fish per day creel limit and a six inch size minimum, although recreational harvest is believed to be low.

The public comment deadline is 11:59 PM (EST) on May 2, 2012 and should be forwarded to Kate Taylor, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at ktaylor@asmfc.org (Subject line: Eel Addendum III). Final action on the Addendum is scheduled to occur in May.

Black Drum

The Draft Black Drum FMP solicits comment on a range of issues, including management goals and objectives; recreational and commercial management measures; flexibility to react to new assessment information; *de minimis* levels and exemptions; monitoring requirements and recommendations; and recommended measures for implementation by NOAA Fisheries in federal waters. The FMP was initiated in response to concern regarding significant increases in harvest in recent years and the fact that the fishery primarily targets juveniles. Further, the lack of consistent coastwide regulations or management goals may negatively impact the black drum population as fishing pressures shifts from other stocks.

Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on April 26, 2013 and should be forwarded to Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or tkerns@asmfc.org (Subject line: Black Drum FMP). The FMP is scheduled for final approval during the Commission's 2013 Spring Meeting.

Summer Flounder

The Draft Addendum XXIV to the Sum-

mer Flounder Fishery Management Plan proposes to stabilize 2013 recreational fishing rules for summer flounder close to those that existed in 2012 partly to minimize the reductions facing two states (e.g., New York and New Jersey) and partly to allow for the more equitable distribution of fishing opportunities in the 2013 season. The proposed approach is intended to allow states to capitalize on harvest opportunities that are foregone by states that choose not to fully utilize their 2013 harvest target.

Specifically, the Draft Addendum proposes a mechanism to allow states access to the summer flounder recreational harvest limit (RHL) that is projected to not be harvested in 2013. For example, following the implementation of each state's measures, recreational harvest will be projected. This projected harvest will be compared to the total RHL (2.5 million fish) to determine the amount of fish available to the states. States may then make an appeal to the Board requesting access to the additional RHL. The request would include why the state has not been able to address its fisheries needs through the current management system, how the additional fish would impact the state's 2013 fishery, and the amount of fish a state is requesting. The Board would ultimately decide the distribution of the additional RHL. It is important to note the states that do not utilize their full liberalization are not giving up their state portion of the 2013 RHL.

The Draft Addendum proposes modification of the summer flounder specification process for 2013 only. The Board has established a subcommittee to address long-term solutions for the 2014 summer flounder recreational fishery and beyond. In 2014, the Commission would revert to the specification process used in previous years unless altered through a subsequent addendum.

continued on page 10

ASMFC Comings & Goings

Commissioners

Senator Ronnie W. Cromer -- In December 2012, Senator Cromer joined the Commission as South Carolina's Legislative Commissioner. He replaces Robert Boyles, Jr. who served as permanent proxy for Senator Hugh Leatherman, Sr. from 2004 to 2012 and now serves as the state's Administrative Commissioner. Senator Cromer was first elected to his seat in April 2003 and currently chairs the Senate Rules Committee. He also serves on five other Senate committees, including Banking and Insurance; Fish, Game and Forestry (former chairman); Finance; General; and Invitations.



Senator Ronnie Cromer

A life-long resident of Newberry County, Senator Cromer has given more than 30 years of his life to public service in the professional and political service arenas. Cromer is fully engaged in the Newberry Community as a business owner, a member of many civic organizations, as well as several conservation organizations. A 30 year member of the Army Reserve National Guard, Senator Cromer served in the first Persian Gulf War and in Operation Desert Shield/Storm receiving several distinguished service honors and retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Senator Cromer lives in Prosperity with his wife of 43 years, Linda. They are the parents of two daughters and the grandfather of three grandchildren. Welcome aboard, Senator Cromer.

John Duren -- In January, John Duren stepped down as Georgia's Governor Appointee to the Commission. John served in that position since 2005. During his eight years as Commissioner, John brought his intelligence, gentle demeanor, and balanced approach to each issue that was before him. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Commission and its science and management process. His active involvement ensured that Georgia's voice was heard at the table and that the Commission's actions were understood and accepted at the state level. We are grateful for all of John's effort to restore Atlantic coastal fisheries and wish him the very best in all his future endeavors.

Senator Clark Jenkins -- In January, Senator Jenkins joined the Commission as North Carolina's Legislative Commissioner, replacing Senator Stan White who served briefly in that role in 2012. Senator Jenkins has been a member of the North Carolina General Assembly since 2003. He currently serves on several standing and select committees including the Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources Committee. In addition to Senator Jenkins' work on behalf of the citizens of North Carolina, he is the owner of W.S. Clark Farms, has real estate and property management interests, and a marine boat business in Dare County.

Senator Jenkins is a graduate of Campbell



Senator Clark Jenkins

University in Buies Creek, North Carolina, is a life member of Calvary Episcopal Church, and is married to Mary Jane Pierce. They are the parents of four children and enjoy being the grandparents of seven. Welcome aboard, Senator Jenkins!



Representative Walter Kumiega

Representative Walter Kumiega III -- In January, Representative Kumiega joined the Commission as Maine's Legislative Commissioner. He replaces Senator Brian Langley who had served in that role since February 2011.

This is Representative Kumiega's second term in the Legislature, where he serves as the House Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources. Commercial fishing plays a major part of the economy in the district he represents. District 36, which includes five permanently inhabited offshore islands, has the highest concentration of commercial fishermen and lands more seafood by value than any other district in Maine.

Representative Kumiega previously served on the Deer Isle-Stonington School Committee for nine years and is in his 17th year on the Board of Child and Family Opportunities, the Head Start grantee for Hancock and Washington Counties. A self employed carpenter, Representative Kumiega lives on Little Deer Isle with his wife Penny and their two teenage children. Welcome aboard Representative Kumiega!

continued on page 12

Toni Kerns Named ISFMP Director; Kate Taylor Promoted to Senior FMP Coordinator

In February, Toni Kerns, a veteran ASMFC Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Coordinator, was selected as the Commission's new Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Director. Since September 2006, Toni has served as the Senior FMP Coordinator for Management, assisting in the oversight and coordination of the ISFMP, including the mentoring of new FMP Coordinators. During that time, she was also responsible for coordinating fisheries management programs for some of the Commission's most complex species programs, such as American lobster, Atlantic menhaden, summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. In particular, she oversaw the successful completion of two American lobster benchmark stock assessments, the adoption of new reference points to manage the resource, and the development of a rebuilding program for the Southern New England stock. Further, she worked cooperatively with the states and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council to craft measures that led to the rebuilding of summer flounder, scup and black sea bass. Toni was promoted for her in-depth knowledge of Atlantic coastal fisheries

issues, her long-standing commitment to the Commission's stewardship responsibilities, and her strong work ethic which has consistently resulted in timely high quality products for sound decision-making.

Kate Taylor, another veteran FMP Coordinator, was promoted to Senior FMP Coordinator in recognition of her significant contributions to the ISFMP and fisheries management programs coastwide. In her new position, Kate will assist in carrying out the day-to-day activities of the ISFMP and providing guidance to junior FMP Coordinators, in addition to her species management responsibilities. Since 2008, Kate has coordinated the Commission's diadromous species management programs (Atlantic striped bass, American eel, shad and river herring, and Atlantic sturgeon); a complex task given both the extensive geographic range of and multiple threats faced by these species. Over that time, she oversaw the successful



From left: Toni and Kate hold a striped bass captured as part of a Striped Bass Hook and Line Tagging Survey.

completion of benchmark stock assessments for American eel and river herring, and played a key role in the development and completion of new management programs for shad and river herring.

Congratulations Toni and Kate!

ASMFC Begins Preparations for Northern Shrimp Benchmark Stock Assessment

This spring, the Commission will begin work on the 2013 benchmark stock assessment for northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*). The assessment will be used to evaluate the health of the northern shrimp stock and inform the management of this species. The Commission's stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public, with the exception of discussions of confidential data, when the public will be asked to leave the room.

The Commission welcomes the submission of data sources that will improve the accuracy of the assessment. This includes,

but is not limited to, data on commercial landings and discards, catch per unit effort, biological samples (length, stage, frequency), and life history information (growth, maturity, fecundity, spawning stock biomass weights, natural mortality). For data sets to be considered, the data must be sent in the required format, with accompanying description of methods, to the Commission by April 22, 2013.

The Data Workshop will be conducted on May 1-3, 2013 (location to be determined). This workshop will review all available data sources for northern shrimp

and identify data sets that will be incorporated in the stock assessment.

For those interested in submitting data and/or attending the northern shrimp data workshop (space is limited), please contact Dr. Katie Drew, ASMFC Stock Assessment Scientist, at kdrew@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740. The deadline for data submission is April 22, 2013.

For more information, please contact Michael Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Opinion on Fisheries Electronic Reporting Requested from Atlantic Coast Fishermen and Dealers

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) has brought together fishermen, dealers and fisheries managers to evaluate electronic reporting on the Atlantic coast. The first part of this project is a survey to solicit the attitudes and opinions of Atlantic coast fishermen and dealers about the current state of electronic reporting.

John Carmichael, with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and Project Leader, explains “Fishermen and data managers both appear to have strong opinions on electronic reporting programs, so this project was begun to describe those opinions and better understand their basis. Information from this survey will be critical to addressing the concerns of the end users as future electronic reporting programs are considered. A great aspect of the project is how scientists and fishery representatives are working together. For example, the questions asked in the survey, and how they are worded, were largely determined by the fisheries representatives. This gives a bit of a different, and I think appropriate, tone to the survey than other efforts fishermen may have encountered.”

The survey is titled, “Improving Our Understanding of Atlantic Coast Fisheries Electronic Reporting” and can be filled out at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACCSP_ereporting. This project will be collecting information from the survey link or printed copies until May 31, 2013. If you do not have access to a computer you can also get a printed copy of the survey by calling 703.842.0782 or from any of the regional fishery councils or most state fisheries agencies.

The second phase of the project will be a workshop in fall of 2013 reviewing this survey information, as well as other surveys and papers on the subject of fisheries electronic reporting. Overall goals of the project include 1) creating recommendations on current electronic reporting programs and approaches, 2) identifying frequently asked questions on electronic reporting systems, 3) evaluating the real costs and benefits of electronic reporting

IMPROVING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF ATLANTIC COAST FISHERIES ELECTRONIC REPORTING



The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) would like to hear from you... Atlantic coast commercial and recreational fishermen, harvesters and dealers!

As technologies improve and the electronic era moves forward, state and federal agencies that collect fisheries data could use electronic reporting as a means to capture what fishermen harvest. This survey has been developed to better understand the potential positives and negatives of electronic reporting through the eyes of dealers and the fishing community.

Please take a few minutes to educate us as we explore electronic reporting options. Your input on this survey will then be used to initiate a workshop during the fall of 2013. The intent of the workshop will be to produce a document to be shared with fishermen and fishery management agencies on how to improve new and existing electronic reporting systems. Your anonymous input is critical to the future of fisheries data collection for your industry.

This survey is also available electronically. Please visit http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACCSP_ereporting if you would like to enter electronically. Please see reverse side for information on returning your paper survey.

ABOUT YOU: Please answer the following questions so we may better get to know you.

- Age:**
 Under 25 25 - 34 35 - 44
 45 - 54 Over 54
- Fishing sector:**
 Commercial fisherman Dealer
 For-hire recreational Private recreational
 Other: _____
- Primary home port, business, or residency:**
 Maine New Hampshire
 Massachusetts Rhode Island
 Connecticut New York
 New Jersey Delaware
 Pennsylvania Maryland
 Virginia North Carolina
 South Carolina Georgia
 Florida

- Primary area fished:**
 Inland (bays, lagoons, and/or sounds)
 State waters (0 - 3 miles)
 Federal waters (> 3 miles)

- Fishing related activities (e.g., commercial or recreational fisherman, harvester, dealer, etc.) are:**
 Full-time job Part-time job
 Recreational
 Other: _____

- To which jurisdiction(s) or agencies do you currently report information on your fishing related activities (e.g., commercial or recreational fisherman, harvester, dealer, etc.)? Please let us know all that apply.**
 None Maine
 New Hampshire Massachusetts
 Rhode Island Connecticut
 New York New Jersey
 Delaware Pennsylvania
 Maryland Virginia
 North Carolina South Carolina
 Georgia Florida
 Sector manager
 NOAA: Northeast Regional Office
 NOAA: Southeast Regional Office
 NOAA: Highly Migratory Species (HMS)

- How often are you required to report for your fishing related activities (e.g., commercial or recreational fisherman, harvester, dealer, etc.)?**
 Before arriving at dock Daily
 Weekly Twice a month
 Monthly None
 Other: _____

- What is your experience with electronic reporting?**
 No experience I am required to use it
 It is an option and I do not use it
 It is an option and I use it

- What electronic tool(s) do you currently use?**
 Please let us know all that apply.
 Computer Work internet access
 Tablet At-sea internet access
 Smartphone Home internet access
 At-dock internet access None
 Other: _____

... PLEASE SEE REVERSE SIDE

systems, and 4) improving outreach and public understanding of electronic reporting systems. The final product will be a report released in the spring of 2014.

For more information, please visit www.accsp.org or contact Ann McElhatton, Program Manager, at ann.mcelhatton@accsp.org or 703.842.0782.

ASMFC Seeks Public Comment on Potential Management Actions (continued from page 7)

The Draft Addendum responds to an unintended consequence of using conservation equivalency (e.g., state-specific recreational management measures) to stay within the annually established coastwide RHL for summer flounder. Although the shift away from coastwide management to state conservation equivalency addressed the interests of some states, it created difficulties for other states as overages occurred. While conservation equivalency provided greater flexibility for individual states to set their limits from year to year, state targets were based upon the 1998 estimate of harvest from the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey. No mechanism, outside of the addendum process, was included to allow for the adjustment of the mechanism to set the harvest target or the management strategy if changes occurred in the fishery along the coast. This resulted in ever increasing size limits, reduced bag limits, and shorter seasons for most of the states while the stock was at a low level and recovering. However, the impact of these ever-restrictive measures seemed to affect New York the most, where the size limit reached 21 inches by 2009, which also saw a very short season including mid-season closure. In 2012, with a fully recovered stock, New York's minimum size (19.5 inches) was at least one inch higher than any other state, one and a half inches higher than its Long Island Sound bordering state, Connecticut, and two inches greater than its ocean / New York Harbor bordering state, New Jersey. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on April 12, 2013 and should be forwarded to Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or tkerns@asmfc.org (Subject line: Summer Flounder).

Lisa Hartman Awarded ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

In less than a year, Lisa Hartman has clearly established herself as an asset to the Commission and the staff in a myriad of ways from the orientation of new Commissioners, to assisting in accounts payable, to her design and layout expertise. In recognition of her accomplishments, Lisa was named Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2013. The award is intended to recognize contributions and qualities in the areas of teamwork, initiative, responsibility, quality of work, positive attitude, and results.

In just a few months, Lisa has internalized the inner and outer workings of the Commission, assessing and responding to the needs of Commissioners and staff alike. She enthusiastically assumed responsibility for new Commissioner orientation, proxy appointments, and revision and upkeep of the Commissioner Manual, which provides an overview of the Commission's committee structure, programs, and activities. She assists the accounting manager with accounts payable, having quickly coming up to speed on the accounting software. She brought her design and layout abilities to various projects including the complete revision of the Commission's species folder, and preparation of annual meeting outreach materials, the Habitat Committee's Harbor Deepening Report, and the 2012 issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*.



In all that she does, Lisa brings a strong work ethic, keen attention to detail, and a positive and cheerful attitude. As Employee of the Quarter, she received a \$500 cash reward, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in her personal record. In addition, her name is on the Employee of the Quarter plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Lisa!

Atlantic Herring Specifications Set for 2013-2015

The Commission's Atlantic Herring Section has set the annual catch limit (ACL) for the 2013 – 2015 fishing seasons at 107,800 metric tons (mt), an 18% increase from 2010 – 2012 limits. For all three years, the ACL is further subdivided by Atlantic herring management areas as follows: Area 1A = 31,200 mt, Area 1B = 4,600 mt, Area 2 = 30,000 mt, and Area 3 = 42,000 mt. The Area 1A sub-ACL will be distributed seasonally with 72.8% available from June 1 – September 30 and 27.2 % available from October 1 – December 31. The specifications are the same as those adopted by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC). The accompanying table outlines the Commission's herring specifications for 2013-2015.

The Section also initiated the development of Draft Addendum VI to the Atlantic Herring FMP. The Draft Addendum will include options for seasonal splitting of the sub-ACLs and establishment of sub-ACL quota triggers through the specification process. The Draft Addendum will propose triggers for closing the directed fishery (1) in a management area when 92% of the sub-ACL is projected to be reached, and (2) in all management areas when 95% of the stock-wide ACL (107,800 mt) is projected to be reached. A 2,000 pound trip limit will continue after directed fisheries are closed. These triggers are intended to prevent quota overages of both the sub-ACLs and the total ACL. The Draft Addendum also proposes to allow for up to 10% carryover of unharvested sub-ACLs. The measures proposed in the Draft Addendum are consistent with NEFMC's Framework 2. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at 703.842.0740 or tkerns@asmfc.org.

Summary of ASMFC Atlantic Herring Specifications for 2013-2015.
The ACL and sub-ACL values will be modified at a later date to account for overages from the 2011 fishery.

SPECIFICATIONS	Metric Tons
Overfishing Limit	169,000 – 2013
	136,000 – 2014
	114,000 – 2015
Allowable Biological Catch	114,000
Annual Catch Limit (ACL) /Optimal Yield	107,800
Sub-ACL Area 1A	31,200
Sub-ACL Area 1B	4,600
Sub-ACL Area 2	30,000
Sub-ACL Area 3	42,000
Research Set-Aside (2014 and 2015 only)	3% of each Sub-ACL
Fixed Gear Set-Aside (1A)	295

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201-2196

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
WASHINGTON, DC
PERMIT NO. 710

Return Service Requested

ASMFC Spring Meeting Preliminary Agenda (continued from page 1)

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM Horseshoe Crab Management Board
1:15 – 4:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board
4:30 – 5:30 PM Shad & River Herring Management Board (Note: This meeting is contingent upon a decision from NOAA Fisheries on a possible proposed listing of river herring under the Endangered Species Act.

Thursday, May 23, 2013

7:30 – 8:30 AM Executive Committee
8:45 – 9:45 AM Sturgeon Management Board
10:00 – 11:00 AM Tautog Management Board
11:15 AM – 12:45 PM South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board
1:15 – 2:15 PM ISFMP Policy Board (continued)
2:30 – 2:45 PM Business Session

ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 8)

Staff

Deke Tompkins -- In March, Deke Tompkins joined the Commission staff as its Legislative Executive Assistant, providing assistance to the Executive Director with legislative and policy issues. From 2006 to 2013, Deke worked in the U.S. House of Representatives as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Fred Upton (R-MI). Deke served as the primary staffer in charge of a number of legislative issues including Great Lakes and the environment; agriculture and immigration; the Second Amendment, defense and foreign policy; veterans affairs; public safety and law enforcement; and Postal Service Issues. Deke has a Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy and Administration from Michigan State University. Welcome aboard Deke!

