



ASMFC

# FISHERIES *focus*

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

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## **ASMFC Presents Annual Awards of Excellence**

"Every year a great many people contribute to the success of fisheries management along the Atlantic coast. The Commission's Annual Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding efforts by professionals who have made a difference in the way we manage and conserve our fisheries," said ASMFC Chair, Paul J. Diodati of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission had the honor of presenting awards to several notable individuals at its Summer Meeting and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's June meeting. Below is an overview of the award recipients' accomplishments.

### **Management and Policy Contributions**

#### **William J. Goldsborough, Chesapeake Bay Foundation**

For 30 years, Mr. Goldsborough has been on the front lines of fisheries management, advocating for science-based decision-making and the integration of ecological services into the Commission's species management programs. As senior scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Mr. Goldsborough has been a steadfast voice supporting the conservation of Chesapeake Bay fisheries, effectively opposing legislation and other actions that might harm the Bay's resources. He played a central role in striped bass recovery beginning with the implementation of Maryland's moratorium in 1985 and through to the development of a conservation-based approach to reopening the fishery in 1990.

Passionate about the significance of healthy habitat on healthy fisheries, he advanced the importance of habitat as a critical common concern among fishermen. At the regional level, he brought together a diverse group of commercial and recreational fishermen, representing 16 fishing organizations, to adopt codes for protecting the Chesapeake Bay. Coastwide, he has left an indelible mark on the Commission's Habitat Program as one of the earliest members of the Habitat Committee and its longest serving chair, having served in that position for 10 years. Under his leadership and participation, the Committee has developed habitat sections for many of the Commission's fishery management plans and released numerous publications – all of which have elevated our understanding of habitat and its critical link to supporting abundant fisheries.

He has been a tireless and articulate advocate for the need to address Atlantic menhaden's ecological role in the Commission's management process. He was instrumental in the development and adoption of Amendment 1 in 2001, which formally recognized menhaden as an important forage species. He helped plan and conduct a 2004 menhaden workshop, which highlighted the various ecological services menhaden provide and the need for ecological reference points in managing the resource. He was instrumental in developing the Chesapeake Bay reduction cap, beginning in 2006, and prompting a five-year Chesapeake Bay population research program. Over the past few years, Mr. Goldsborough vigorously campaigned for the development of ecological reference points. The recent adoption

*continued, see AWARDS, page 4*

## Upcoming Meetings

*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 the 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

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Tina L. Berger, Editor  
*Director of Communications*  
tberger@asmfc.org

703.842.0740 Phone  
703.842.0741 Fax  
www.asmfc.org  
info@asmfc.org

#### **July 21-22**

ASMFC Black Sea Bass Ageing Workshop, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA.

#### **July 31-August 1**

Climate Change and New England Fisheries - Observations, Impacts and Adaptation Strategies, The Portland Company Complex, 58 Fore Street, Portland, ME.

#### **August 6-8**

ASMFC Summer Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA (see page 11 for preliminary agenda and public comment guidelines).

#### **August 13-15**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Double Tree by Hilton Wilmington, 4727 Concord Pike, Wilmington, DE.

#### **August 19 (begins at 1 p.m.) - 22 (ends at 3 p.m.)**

ASMFC Atlantic Sturgeon Data Workshop, Renaissance Providence Downtown, 5 Avenue of the Arts, Providence, RI.

#### **August 20-23**

ASMFC Northern Shrimp Assessment Workshop, Hilton Garden Inn Portland Airport, 145 Jetport Boulevard, Portland, ME.

#### **September 16-20**

ASMFC Technical Committee Meeting Week, location to be determined.

#### **September 16-20**

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, The Charleston Marriott Hotel, 170 Lockwood Boulevard, Charleston, SC.

#### **September 24-26**

New England Fishery Management Council, Cape Codder Resort, Hyannis, MA.

#### **October 8-10**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Courtyard Philadelphia Downtown, 21 North Juniper Street, Philadelphia, PA.

#### **October 9-11**

ASMFC American Lobster Stock Assessment Modeling Workshop, New Hampshire Fish and Game Region 3 Office and Marine Fisheries Division, 225 Maine Street, Durham, NH.

#### **October 27-31**

ASMFC 72nd Annual Meeting, The King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort, 201 Arnold Street, St. Simons Island, GA.

#### **November 19-21**

New England Fishery Management Council, Newport Marriott, Newport, RI.

#### **December 2-6**

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Hilton Wilmington Riverside, 301 North Water Street, Wilmington, NC.

#### **December 10-12**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, The Westin Annapolis, 100 Westgate Circle, Annapolis, MD.



### Partnership is the Key to Successful Law Enforcement

What makes the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission successful in achieving its goals? At the heart of it lie three elements: sound science, collaborative management, and effective enforcement strategies that garner public support and compliance. The Commission has strongly woven law enforcement into this successful management model. This was especially evident recently when the Commission strengthened protection of Atlantic striped bass. Actions the Commission took were the direct result of recommendations from our own Law Enforcement Committee (LEC).

The LEC reviewed the results of a lengthy investigation of illegal striped bass harvest and sale in the Chesapeake Bay area that occurred from 2003-2009. An Interstate

Watershed Task Force made up of state and federal enforcement agencies spearheaded the investigation. After the successful prosecution of the cases, the LEC facilitated a presentation of the findings to the Commission in November 2011. Among other things, the LEC report cited the illegal sale of untagged fish and the widespread abuse of existing tagging requirements to exceed commercial harvest quotas. How significant was the problem? The Task Force estimated from the case files that over one million pounds of illegal striped bass were taken during the investigation. Nineteen individuals and three corporations were convicted.

active law enforcement participation in our programs to yield just these kinds of results. Our Charter establishes the LEC as a standing Commission committee. Under this Charter the LEC,

*"...provides information on law enforcement issues, brings resolutions addressing enforcement concerns before the Commission, coordinates enforcement efforts among states, exchanges data, identifies potential enforcement problems, and monitors enforcement of measures incorporated into the various interstate fishery management plans."*

That's a tall order but the LEC does all this and more. It is made up of law enforcement representatives from each member state, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Coast Guard. While it only meets as a group during the Commission's Spring and Annual Meetings, the LEC regularly convenes conference calls and exchanges information by email to keep up with the demand for advice and information. Many LEC members have been a part of the Commission family for years and, as a group, the LEC offers a wealth of experience, expertise, and insight.

We have employed a number of strategies to ensure active involvement and participation of the LEC in Commission business. During the regularly scheduled LEC meetings, the full-day agenda typically includes interactions with Commissioners and staff to discuss ongoing and emerging management issues. LEC members are appointed to the various species management boards and sit in on those board meetings to offer advice and perspective. LEC input is sought in the development and revision of Commission planning documents and species management plans. The LEC has prepared a detailed guidance document for managers entitled, *Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures*. We maintain an area on the Commission website where LEC information and recommendations are available for review and reference. And finally, we have provided part-time staff support to the LEC to ensure that its efforts are well integrated into the Commission process.

Marine fisheries, by their very nature, require a collaborative, multi-jurisdictional approach to management and protection. We as a Commission operate in this kind of arena as a matter of course. The integration of law enforcement advice and expertise is a priority in our cooperative endeavors, and that helps us to be a model for effective resource management.

**Many LEC members have been part of the Commission family for years and, as a group, the LEC offers a wealth of experience, expertise, and insight.**

As a result of the information brought before the Commission, we have now implemented Addendum III to the Atlantic Striped Bass Plan. The management changes implemented in August 2012 will help to standardize the use of commercial harvest tags and ensure better accountability for tags being used. The LEC contributed significantly to the development of this Addendum. More importantly, the LEC facilitated communication between the Commission and the members of the Interstate Task Force who had direct knowledge of the problems at hand.

When the Commission's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter was developed, it foresaw the potential of

# Annual Awards of Excellence

AWARDS, continued from page 1

of interim reference points and a new management program for Atlantic menhaden are, in part, due to his efforts.

## **Thomas W. McCloy, New Jersey Marine Fisheries Administration**

Mr. McCloy has spent his entire career, now extending into its 40th year, working for the betterment of New Jersey's marine resources and the fisheries they support. He began his career in the early 1970s as a biologist, conducting some of the first comprehensive population and habitat assessments for the state's various shellfish resources. He was promoted to Bureau Chief for New Jersey Marine Fisheries in 1990 and Administrator for the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Administration in 2001.

In the 1990s, Mr. McCloy became engaged in broader coastal resource issues, serving as his state's administrative proxy to both the Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. At the Commission, he played a key role in developing many of the initial FMPs in response to the requirements of the newly enacted Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act. These documents serve as the foundation for much of the Commission's management policies today.

For the past 12 years as Marine Fisheries Administrator, Mr. McCloy has been a key link between upper management within the state's resource agency and its diverse fisheries constituency. His expertise and experience has guided these groups in ensuring that appropriate and prudent actions are taken to the benefit of the resource first and the fisheries that rely on them second.

However, Mr. McCloy's greatest and most enduring success has been the mentorship of his staff. He demands the best of them, expecting excellence, professionalism, and a commitment to safeguard fisheries resources for their sustainable use. In turn, he invests significant time in training staff on how



From left: ASMFC Awards Chair Jack Travelstead, Thomas McCloy, Wayne Hettenbach, Robert Ross, Malcolm Rhodes, Captain Dorothy Thumm, Patrick Duggan, ASMFC Chair Paul Diodati, and William Goldsborough.

to fairly evaluate the issues before them, listen carefully to all affected parties, understand the full scope of the problem, and use the best scientific information to make an informed decision. Due to this mentorship, a good number of his staff has served in important leadership roles, from chairing the majority of the Commission management boards to serving as vital contributors on species technical and stock assessment committees as well as the Management and Science Committee.

## **Dr. Malcolm Rhodes, South Carolina Governor Appointee**

A passionate steward of Atlantic coast fisheries and their habitats, Dr. Rhodes has served as South Carolina's Governor Appointee to the Commission for eight years. From the outset, he has brought his leadership and expertise to bear, chairing both the Shad and River Herring Management Board and the Governors' Appointees. He has also been a long-standing and active participant on the Administrative Oversight Committee and Executive Committee – two primary committees which set Commission administrative policies and provide guidance to the Executive Director on personnel, fiscal, and organizational matters.

As Chair of the Shad and River Herring Management Board, Dr. Rhodes led the states through the complex process of developing American shad sustainable fisheries plans for specific river systems. In doing so, he ushered in a new model and standard of fisheries conservation by turning the traditional, "Fish until you see there is a problem," management approach to a more precautionary and enlightened "Don't fish unless you can prove there won't be a problem" mindset.

A true conservationist, Dr. Rhodes' calm and kind demeanor have enabled him to provide sound leadership to the Commission as it works to sustain and rebuild Atlantic coast fish stocks.

## **Robert J. Ross, Jr., NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region**

Mr. Ross began his career in fisheries management 40 years ago as a student working in a NOAA Fisheries lab testing fish samples for heavy metals and contaminants. From there, he became a well-known port agent collecting important fisheries landings and biological data throughout New England. His outstanding work ethic and affable manner led to steady promotions within NOAA Fisheries including a stint with the State/Federal and Constituent Office and later working in the Northeast Regional Office.



Mr. Ross has been an active and engaged participant in the Commission's fisheries management process for the last 15 years. His leadership and collaborative efforts have been critical to the continued success of several cooperatively managed species, including spiny dogfish, summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and winter flounder. But, by far, his greatest contributions have been in the management of American lobster. As a member of the American Lobster Plan Development Team and Management Board, Mr. Ross has played a vital role in ensuring the sustainable management of this valuable species coastwide. He worked closely with the lobster industry, scientists, and state partners to craft a unique and cutting-edge approach to sustainable lobster management which involves the implementation of area-based eligibility and trap transferability. His analytical abilities yielded important analyses of federal actions in support of Commission management goals and he drafted and published countless federal actions to complement state management measures for the American lobster fishery. Despite this program's increasing complexity, he has remained committed to its success and health and vibrancy of the resource and industry it supports.

## Law Enforcement Contributions

### **Captain Dorothy Thumm (retired), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation**

Captain Thumm has dedicated her 40-year career to the protection and sustainable management of Atlantic coast fishery resources. A trailblazer in her field, she was the fourth woman to be hired as an environmental conservation officer by New York in 1980 and the first woman to be promoted to Lieutenant and then later Captain after completing her FBI Academy training. She served as Commanding Officer of New York's Marine Enforcement Unit from 2005 to 2013. An outstanding officer with an impeccable record, she worked collaboratively with the Bureau

of Marine Resources to target priority fishery enforcement needs, networking with a myriad of local, state, and federal agencies to ensure that fishery laws and regulations were properly enforced.

For the past seven years, Captain Thumm has been an active member of the Commission's Law Enforcement Committee (LEC), providing valuable input at both the state and regional level on issues affecting high visibility species such as American lobster, Atlantic sturgeon, striped bass, and tautog. Her strong leadership skills combined with her knowledge and understanding of fisheries and habitat issues were valuable assets to the Committee. A true team player, Captain Thumm represented the LEC on the Atlantic Sturgeon Board where she provided input, comments, and feedback on law enforcement issues. She also assisted in producing the Law Enforcement Committee's document, *Guidelines for Resource Managers on the Enforceability of Fishery Management Measures*.

### **New Jersey/NOAA Fisheries/Dept. of Justice Law Enforcement Team**

Mr. Wayne Hettenbach, Mr. Patrick Duggan, Captain Mark Canale, Lieutenant Karl Yunghans and Special Agents Jeffrey Ray and James Cassin are six members of a joint NOAA Fisheries/New Jersey Law Enforcement Team, who recently capped off a five-year investigation, ending with the conviction of seven defendants on 37 individual counts for trafficking in

illegal oysters. The defendants, all from New Jersey, were overharvesting oysters from the Delaware Bay and then falsely recording their harvest on state and federal records. Further, the Delaware dealer who sold the illegal oysters helped cover up the overharvest by filing false state and federal health documentation. It is estimated that in some years the overharvest exceeded the fishermen's quota by more than 60%. All told, the defendants illegally obtained nearly 15,000 bushels of oysters from the Delaware Bay at a fair market value in excess of \$1.2 million.

New Jersey officers initiated the investigation, with NOAA Fisheries joining soon after. The agencies worked hand-in-hand to covertly record the off-loading and transfer of illegal oysters over state lines to Delaware. This surveillance, combined with information gained from coordinated surprise inspections and simultaneous search warrants, yielded tens of thousands of documents. For well over a year, state and federal agents and prosecutors worked to assemble the necessary evidence, prepare their case, and conduct hearings and testimony. Ultimately, their tireless work, exemplary interagency coordination, and dedication to preserving our natural resources, led to the successful conviction of an extensive criminal ring that had been depleting a vital, keystone species in the Delaware Bay.

*continued, see AWARDS, page 14*



*From left: Bruce Buckson, Director of NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement, Captain Mark Canale, Lieutenant Karl Yunghans, Special Agent Jeffrey Ray, Special Agent James Cassin, and ASMF Executive Director Bob Beal. (Photo by Jason Didden, MAFMC)*

# Species Profile: River Herring

## The States and Federal Government Seek to Reduce Mortality through Sustainable Fishery Management Plans and Bycatch Reduction Measures

### Introduction

The Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Shad and River Herring, approved in 1985, was among the first FMPs to be developed by the Commission. Since that time, the Commission has undertaken three major amendments to the 1985 Plan. Amendment 2, approved in 2009, shepherded in a new management regime for these important prey species; one which required Atlantic coastal states and jurisdictions to document the sustainability of their fisheries or prohibit recreational and commercial fishing for river herring.

A migratory species that traverses both state and federal waters, the Commission has also worked closely with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (MAFMC and NEFMC, respectively) to reduce the bycatch of river herring in small mesh fisheries. The Councils are moving forward with developing and establishing catch caps to reduce incidental harvest of river herring.

### Life History

River herring, which is the collective term for alewife and blueback herring, are an anadromous fish that spend the

majority of their adult lives at sea, but return to freshwater areas to spawn in the spring. Alewife spawn in rivers, lakes, and tributaries from northeastern Newfoundland to South Carolina, but are most abundant in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. Blueback herring prefer to spawn in swift flowing rivers and tributaries from Nova Scotia to northern Florida, but are most numerous in waters from Chesapeake Bay south.

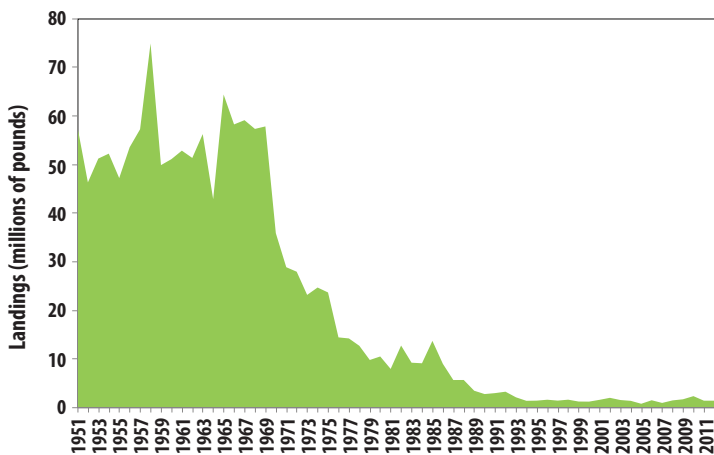
Mature alewife (ages three to eight) and blueback herring (ages three to six) migrate rapidly downstream after spawning. Juveniles remain in tidal freshwater nursery areas in spring and early summer, but may also move upstream with the encroachment of saline water. As water temperatures decline in the fall, juveniles move downstream to more saline waters. Little information is available on the life history of juvenile and adult river herring after they emigrate to the sea and before they mature and return to freshwater to spawn.

### Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

River herring formerly supported significant commercial and recreational fisheries throughout their range. Fisheries were traditionally executed in rivers, estuaries, and coastal waters using weirs, traps, dip nets, and gill nets. Although recreational harvest data are scarce, most harvest is believed to come from the commercial industry.

### Atlantic Coast River Herring Landings

Source: personal communication from NOAA Fisheries Statistics Division, Silver Spring, MD 2013



Timeline of Management Actions: FMP ('85); Amendment 1 ('99); Addendum I ('00); Amendment 2 - River Herring ('09)

### Species Snapshot

#### ALEWIFE

*Alosa pseudoharengus*



#### General Characteristics:

- Adults average 10-11" in length; 8-9 oz. in weight
- Range from Nova Scotia to South Carolina
- Primarily feed on plankton
- Congregate in large schools, numbering in the thousands
- Excellent food fish, marketed both fresh and salted

#### Interesting Facts:

- In the US, alewife are known as sawbelly, grayback, bigeye, and freshwater and spring herring. In Canada they are known as gaspereau or kiack.
- The origin of the name alewife is a reference to the large belly of the fish, which reminded New England fishermen of alehouse wives.
- The Latin name *pseudoharengus* means "false herring."



#### BLUEBACK HERRING

*Alosa aestivalis*

#### General Characteristics:

- Adults average 11" in length; 7 oz. in weight
- Range from Nova Scotia to Northern Florida
- Primarily feed on plankton
- Name derived from dark blue/bluish gray coloring on back

#### Interesting Facts:

- Blueback herring are also known as a summer herring or blackbelly.
- Blueback herring have teeth on the roof of their mouths, while alewife do not. The teeth disappear with age.

#### Stock Status:

- Varies by river system for both species, refer to Table 1.
- Both species are classified as a *Species of Concern* by NOAA Fisheries.
- Both species are currently being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Commercial landings for both species have declined dramatically from historic highs. Landings by domestic and foreign fleets peaked at 140 million pounds in 1969. Since 2000, domestic landings totaled less than two million pounds in any given year, with a historic low of 736,000 pounds occurring in 2005. Landings in 2011 were estimated at 1.5 million pounds, a 27% decrease from 2010 levels. The majority of these landings occurred in Maine.

### Stock Status

In 2012, an independent panel of scientists endorsed the findings of the benchmark stock assessment for river herring, concluding the overall coastwide population of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) stocks on the US Atlantic coast is depleted to near historic lows. The “depleted” determination was used instead of “overfished” and “overfishing” because of the many factors that have contributed to the declining abundance of river herring, which include not just directed and incidental fishing, but also habitat loss, predation, and climate change.

The stock assessment used both fishery-dependent and -independent data as well as information about river herring biology and life history. The assessment included historical landings back to 1887, although the fisheries that target river herring date back to colonial times. The quality of the data has improved as reporting requirements have been implemented. The assessment examined run size indices from five states, young-of-year indices from 10 states, adult net and electrofishing indices from three states, and 19 fishery-independent trawl surveys conducted in coastal waters. The fishery-independent data sets represent a relatively short time series, compared to the long history of the fishery, and all of them were initiated after the peak and sharp decline in landings.

River herring were assessed on a river-by-river basis where the data were available. For the vast majority of rivers, the data were not available to conduct a model-based stock assessment. Instead, trend analysis was used to identify patterns in the available fishery-dependent and -independent data sets. Of the 52 stocks of alewife and blueback herring for which data were available, 23 were depleted relative to historic levels, one stock was increasing, and the status of 28 stocks could not be determined because the time-series of available data was too short.

### Atlantic Coastal Management

In 2009, in response to concerns regarding declining river herring populations, the Commission’s Shad and River Herring Management Board approved Amendment 2 to the Interstate FMP. The Amendment has prohibited state waters commercial

State	River	Status Relative to Historic Levels/Recent Trends
ME	Damariscotta Union	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Stable <sup>A</sup> Increasing <sup>A</sup> , Stable <sup>A</sup>
NH	Cochecho	Unknown <sup>A,B</sup> , Stable <sup>A,B</sup>
	Exeter	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Increasing <sup>A</sup>
	Lamprey	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Unknown <sup>A</sup>
	Oyster	Depleted <sup>B</sup> , Stable <sup>B</sup>
MA	Taylor	Depleted <sup>B</sup> , Decreasing <sup>B</sup>
	Winnicut	Depleted <sup>A,B</sup> , Unknown <sup>A,B</sup>
	Mattapoissett Monument	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Unknown <sup>A</sup>
RI	Parker	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Unknown <sup>A</sup>
	Stony Brook	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Unknown <sup>A</sup>
	Buckeye	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Unknown <sup>A</sup>
CT	Gilbert	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Decreasing <sup>A</sup>
	Nonquit	Depleted <sup>A</sup> , Decreasing <sup>A</sup>
NY	Connecticut	Depleted <sup>B</sup> , Decreasing <sup>B</sup>
MD, DE	Hudson	Depleted <sup>A,B</sup> , Stable <sup>A,B</sup>
VA, MD, DC	Nanticoke	Depleted <sup>A,B</sup> , Decreasing <sup>A,B</sup>
NC	Potomac	Depleted <sup>A,B</sup> , Unknown <sup>A,B</sup>
SC	Chowan	Depleted <sup>A,B</sup> , Stable <sup>A,B</sup>
	Santee-Cooper	Depleted <sup>B</sup> , Increasing <sup>B</sup>

Table 1. Status of select alewife and blueback herring stocks along the Atlantic coast. Status relative to historic levels is pre-1970. Recent trends reflect last ten years of data. A=Alewife only; B=Blueback herring only; A,B=Alewife and blueback herring by species

and recreational fisheries since January 1, 2012, unless a state or jurisdiction had a Board approved sustainable management plan. A sustainable fishery is defined as “a commercial and/or recreational fishery that will not diminish the potential future stock reproduction and recruitment.” The plans must describe sustainability targets that are achieved to prevent closure of the fishery. Plans have currently been approved for Maine, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Amendment 2 also requires states to implement fishery-dependent and independent monitoring programs and contains recommendations to member states and jurisdictions to conserve, restore, and protect critical river herring habitat.

### Federal Action

In support of the sustainable management actions taken by the Commission, both the MAFMC and NEFMC have recently taken actions regarding the incidental catch of river herring and American shad in federal waters fisheries (3-200 miles from shore). In May, MAFMC approved a 236 metric ton (520,380 pound) cap on incidental catch of river herring and shad in the U.S. Atlantic

mackerel fishery for 2014. This catch cap is one of several protective measures being implemented as part of Amendment 14 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP. The Amendment also calls for increased reporting and monitoring requirements for fishermen and dealers. At its June meeting, NEFMC moved forward with the development of river herring and shad catch caps through Draft Framework 3 to Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring FMP. The goal of the proposed catch cap is to provide strong incentives for the industry to continue to avoid and reduce the catch of these species to the extent practicable. If approved, the catch cap would apply to all trips landing more than the open access possession limit of 6,600 pounds of Atlantic herring.

### Endangered Species Petition

In August 2011, the National Resources Defense Council petitioned NOAA Fisheries to list alewife and blueback herring as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. NOAA Fisheries reviewed the petition and found that listing may be warranted. In 2012, NOAA Fisheries conducted a series of workshops to gather more information on the status of and threats to river herring. The workshops focused on stock structure, extinction risk, and the potential impact of climate change. A proposed rule on the potential listing is expected this year.

For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.



# Fishery Management Plan Actions

## First Coastwide Fishery Management Plan for Black Drum Sets Stage for Future Management Action

In May, the Commission approved the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Black Drum. The FMP requires all states to maintain current regulations for black drum and implement a maximum possession limit and minimum size limit (of no less than 12 inches) by January 1, 2014. States will be required to further increase the minimum size limit (to no less than 14 inches) by January 1, 2016. Further, the FMP establishes a management framework to address future concerns or changes in the fishery or population. This will be particularly important as the Commission works towards the finalization of the first coastwide benchmark stock assessment for black drum in 2014.

The FMP was initiated to address a number of concerns. There has been a significant increase in harvest by both recreational and commercial fishermen in recent years, with the fishery targeting very young fish in some areas and more heavily targeting the established breeding stock in other areas; both of which could undermine the stock's ability to sustain itself. Further, the lack of consistent coastwide regulations or management goals may negatively impact the black drum population as fishing pressures shift from other stocks.

The FMP will be available on the Commission website ([www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)) under *Breaking News* or can be obtained by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org).

## American Lobster Addendum XX Formalizes Georges Bank Closed Area II Bottom Shaving Agreement

In May, the Commission's American Lobster Management Board approved Addendum XX to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Addendum formalizes measures outlined in an agreement between the offshore lobster fishery and groundfish sector trawl fishermen for bottom sharing in Closed Area II of Georges Bank in order to prevent gear conflicts and to protect large concentrations of egg bearing females.

The agreement specifies certain times of year when lobster trap gear and sector trawl fishermen may fish in (or not fish in) certain portions of Closed Area II. The fishing industry developed this agreement in anticipation of the final approval of the New England Fishery Management Council's (NEFMC) Groundfish Framework 48 which contains measures to help mitigate the economic impact of the dramatic reductions in groundfish annual catch limits for the 2013 fishing year which began on May 1, 2013. NOAA Fisheries has published an interim rule allowing for groundfish sectors to request, through their operations plans, access to areas currently closed solely to reduce fishing mortality. NEFMC explicitly considered the potential for gear conflicts and included language in the Framework that states "when considering sector requests for access to closed areas, NOAA Fisheries Regional Office should include, inter alia, consideration of the potential for gear conflicts, shifts in fishing effort out of the closed areas and impacts on protected species and lobsters."

Addendum XX can be obtained via the Commission website ([www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org)) under *Breaking News* or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator, at [ktaylor@asmfc.org](mailto:ktaylor@asmfc.org).



Photo by ASMFC

## Smoothhound Shark Addendum II Establishes State Shares & Modifies Fin-to-Carcass Ratio

The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board approved Addendum II to the Atlantic Coastal Sharks Fishery Management Plan. The Addendum allocates state shares of smoothhound sharks (also known as smooth dogfish) and changes the maximum fin-to-carcass ratio for smoothhound shark processing-at-sea.

The Addendum was developed in anticipation of NOAA Fisheries upcoming federal smoothhound shark quota, establishing state shares to prevent one region from harvesting the quota and excluding other regions (see Table 1 on page 9). The shares were established based on historical landings from 1998-2010. The Addendum also addresses changes to the maximum fin-to-carcass ratio for smoothhound sharks which were approved by Congress in the Shark Conservation Act of 2010.

Currently, there are no harvest restrictions for smoothhound sharks. Addendum I allows for the removal of all fins for processing-at-sea from March through June as long as the total wet weight of the fins found on board the vessel does not exceed 5% of the total dressed weight of smoothhound carcasses which are found on board the vessel. Addendum II was developed and approved to ensure consistency between the state and federal smoothhound shark plans.



# Fishery Management Plan Actions

	State-Share Percentages
Maine	0.021%
Massachusetts	0.433%
Rhode Island	1.363%
Connecticut	0.234%
New York	7.953%
New Jersey	18.828%
Delaware	0.339%
Maryland	6.703%
Virginia	34.803%
North Carolina	28.583%
South Carolina	0.742%

TABLE 1: Addendum II State-Share Percentages



Photo by Kevin Sullivan, NH F&G

## Winter Flounder Addendum III Establishes Annual Specification Process

The Atlantic Coastal Shark Plan and its two addenda continue to prohibit the finning of sharks. Finning is defined as the removal of the fins of a shark while discarding the carcass at sea. Fin-to-carcass ratios are used in high volume fisheries to allow fishermen to process the catch at sea, so long as the weight of the fins corresponds to the correct ratio of carcasses on board the vessel. Processing at sea is used to prevent the meat from being contaminated with ammonia and spoiling while still at sea.

Draft Addendum III was also initiated to ensure consistency between the state and federal plans. NOAA Fisheries' Amendment 5a to the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan changes coastal shark species groupings and the recreational size limit for hammerhead sharks. Draft Addendum III proposes changing the species groupings and recreational size limit in state waters accordingly. The Board will review the Draft Addendum and consider its approval for public comment at the Commission's 2013 Summer Meeting.

Addendum II is available on the Commission website ([www.asmf.org](http://www.asmf.org)) under *Breaking News* or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mhawk@asmfc.org](mailto:mhawk@asmfc.org).

The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board has approved Addendum III to Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Addendum establishes an annual specification process to set commercial and recreational management measures for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) fisheries. Each year, with advice from the Winter Flounder Technical Committee, the Board can adjust trip limits, size limits, and seasons for the commercial fishery; and size limits, bag limits, and seasons for the recreational fishery.

The Addendum will enable the Commission to respond more quickly to federal actions and changes in the winter flounder fishery. The Commission manages the two inshore stocks of winter flounder in the GOM and SNE/MA (0-3 miles from shore), while the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) manages winter flounder in offshore waters (3-200 miles from shore). NEFMC establishes specifications for winter flounder stocks, including catch limits (ACL), the allocation of the ACL by sub-component (including state water set-aside), and accountability measures. These specifications are forwarded to NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region for final approval. The state water set-aside is not subject to federal accountability measures.

The Board maintained existing management measures for the 2013 fishing season for the SNE/MA stock due to its continued poor stock status and for the GOM stock because of its unknown stock status. This action is consistent with the Technical Committee's catch advice.

Addendum III is available on the Commission website ([www.asmf.org](http://www.asmf.org)) under *Breaking News* or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [myuen@asmfc.org](mailto:myuen@asmfc.org).



Photo by Dawn McReynolds, NYSEDEC



Photo by Kevin Sullivan, NH F&G

# ACCSP Kicks off FY 2014 Funding Cycle

In May, the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) issued a request for proposals (RFP) to program partners and committees for FY14 funding. To be considered for funding, projects should seek to achieve Program goals or address high priority activities. Program goals, listed by priority, are improvements in:

1. Catch, effort, and landings data (including licensing, permit and vessel registration data)
2. Biological data
3. Releases, discards and protected species data
4. Economic and sociological data

Project activities, according to priority, may include:

- Partner implementation of data collection programs
- Continuation of current Program funded partner programs
- Funding for personnel required to implement Program related projects/proposals
- Data management system upgrades or establishment of Partner data feeds to the Data Warehouse or Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information Systems.

**Proposals for biological sampling** typically target priority species in the top quartile, found here: [http://www.accsp.org/documents/RFP2014/AppendixI\\_FY2014BiologicalPriorities.pdf](http://www.accsp.org/documents/RFP2014/AppendixI_FY2014BiologicalPriorities.pdf).

**Proposals for observer coverage** typically align with fisheries affecting the top quartile priority species, found here: [http://www.accsp.org/documents/RFP2014/AppendixII\\_FY2014BycatchPriorities.pdf](http://www.accsp.org/documents/RFP2014/AppendixII_FY2014BycatchPriorities.pdf).

For general guidance and detailed information on how proposals are prepared and the project approval process please see the Funding Decision Document, found here: <http://www.accsp.org/documents/RFP2014/FY14FundingDecisionDocument.pdf>.

If you are interested in updates on proposals submitted for the FY2014 funding cycle or in receiving news on this RFP in future years, please contact Ann McElhatton, Program Manager, at [ann.mcelhatton@accsp.org](mailto:ann.mcelhatton@accsp.org).

In 2013, ACCSP was pleased to award 11 projects that demonstrated a collaborative and innovative approach to Atlantic coast fisheries data collection. Please see the below chart for the program partner and the project awarded.

Program Partner	Project
Maine Department of Marine Resources	Continue management of dealer and harvester reporting in Maine Continue portside commercial catch sampling and comparative bycatch sampling for Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel, and Atlantic menhaden
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries	Continue collecting trip-level reports for all Massachusetts commercial permit holders
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management	Maintain and coordinate fishery-dependent data feeds to ACCSP from the state of Rhode Island
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection	Further develop biological characterization and implementation of the SAFIS for the commercial fisheries in New Jersey
Maryland Department of Natural Resources	Improve timeliness and reporting accuracy in Maryland and to expand online reporting for Maryland commercial fisheries
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources	Continue instituting a collection method for ACCSP commercial modules in South Carolina
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission	Conduct an observer program for the Mid-Atlantic (New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia) and Rhode Island small mesh otter trawl fishery
NOAA-Southeast Fisheries Science Center	Process and age biological samples collected from the U.S. South Atlantic commercial and recreational fisheries in response to ACCSP biotarget samples
ACCSP	Develop and test hand held platforms to enter data using SAFIS
Recreational Technical Committee of the ACCSP	Increase at sea sampling levels for the for-hire survey headboat fishery on the Atlantic coast (New Hampshire through Florida)

**For more information about the request for proposals or any of the projects funded in 2013, please contact Ann McElhatton, Program Manager, at [ann.mcelhatton@accsp.org](mailto:ann.mcelhatton@accsp.org) or 703.842.0780.**



*ACCSP is a cooperative state-federal program to design, implement, and conduct marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and to integrate those data into a single data management system that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. It is composed of representatives from natural resource management agencies coastwide, including ASMFC, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the D.C. Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.*

# Summer Meeting Preliminary Agenda



## ASMFC Summer Meeting August 6-8, 2013 Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria

### Preliminary Agenda

#### Tuesday, August 6

10:00 - 10:45 a.m.	Atlantic Herring Section
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	American Lobster Management Board
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
2:45 - 4:45 p.m.	Business Session (Strategic Planning)
5:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

#### Wednesday, August 7

8:00 a.m. - noon	American Eel Management Board
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board
2:45 - 3:45 p.m.	ISFMP Policy Board
4:00 - 5:15 p.m.	Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board
4:15 - 5:15 p.m.	Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Executive Committee
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.	ACCSP Coordinating Council

#### Thursday, August 8

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Executive Committee
8:30 - noon	Parliamentary Workshop
12:30 - 2:15 p.m.	Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Management Board
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	ISFMP Policy Board (continued)
3:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Business Session (continued)

**Please note: The agenda is subject to change. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of meetings. Interested parties should anticipate meetings starting earlier or later than indicated herein.**

### Public Comment Guidelines

With the intent of developing policies in the Commission's procedures for public participation that result in a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has approved the following guidelines for use at management board meetings:

**For issues that are not on the agenda**, management boards will continue to provide opportunity to the public to bring matters of concern to the board's attention at the start of each board meeting. Board chairs will use a speaker sign-up list in deciding how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

**For topics that are on the agenda, but have not gone out for public comment**, board chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. Chairs will have flexibility in deciding how to allocate comment opportunities; this could include hearing one comment in favor and one in opposition until the chair is satisfied further comment will not provide additional insight to the board.

**For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment**, it is the Policy Board's intent to end the occasional practice of allowing extensive and lengthy public comments. Currently, board chairs have the discretion to decide what public comment to allow in these circumstances.

In addition, **the following timeline has been established for the submission of written comment for issues for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period** (i.e., in response to proposed management action).

- Comments received 3 weeks prior to the start of a meeting week will be included on the briefing CD.
- Comments received by 5:00 PM on the Tuesday immediately preceding the scheduled ASMFC Meeting (in this case, the Tuesday deadline will be **July 30, 2013**) will be distributed electronically to Commissioners/Board members prior to the meeting and a limited number of copies will be provided at the meeting.
- Following the Tuesday, July 30, 2013 5:00 PM deadline, the commenter will be responsible for distributing the information to the management board prior to the board meeting or providing enough copies for the management board consideration at the meeting (a minimum of 50 copies).

The submitted comments must clearly indicate the commenter's expectation from the ASMFC staff regarding distribution. As with other public comment, it will be accepted via mail, fax, and email.



# Proposed Management Actions

Throughout June and July, the Commission sought public comment on a number of proposed management actions through Draft Addenda. For some, the public comment period has passed while the deadline for others is fast approaching. All Draft Addenda can be found on the Commission website ([www.asmf.org](http://www.asmf.org)) under "Breaking News." The respective management boards will review submitted public comment as well as input from its advisory panels, technical committees, and the Law Enforcement Committee and consider final action on the Draft Addenda at the Commission's Summer Meeting in Alexandria, VA. Below is a brief overview of the proposed actions.

## American Lobster Draft Addendum XXI

Draft Addendum XXI to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster proposes changes to the transferability program for Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs) 2 and 3. These changes are designed to allow for flexibility in the movement of traps as the consolidation program for LCMAs 2 and 3 occur to address latent effort (unfished allocation) are implemented. The proposed measures are also intended to provide a mechanism for industry to maintain a profitable fishery as trap reductions occur.



Photo by ASMFC

The Draft Addendum is the second in a series of addenda that respond to the depleted condition of the Southern New England (SNE) lobster resource by scaling the capacity of the SNE fishery to the size the SNE resource. Since the scope of the SNE resource encompasses all or part of six of the seven LCMAs established by Amendment 3, additional addenda will be developed to address effort reductions in the remaining LCMAs (4, 5, and 6).

Massachusetts and Rhode Island conducted a joint public hearing on the Draft Addendum on June 26th. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on July 15, 2013 and should be forwarded to Kate Taylor, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington,



Photo by ME DMIR

VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or via email at [ktaylor@asmfc.org](mailto:ktaylor@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Lobster Draft Addendum XXI).

## Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum VI

Draft Addendum VI to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Herring proposes several changes to the management program, including (1) seasonal splitting of the annual catch limit sub-components (sub-ACLs) for Areas 1B, 2, and 3; (2) up to 10% carryover of a sub-ACL for all management areas; (3) the establishment of triggers to initiate the closing of directed fisheries, (4) a research set-aside of up to 3% of the sub-ACLs, and (5) using the annual specification process to set triggers and research set-aside.

Draft Addendum VI was initiated to establish consistent tools for all four management areas for Atlantic herring and to complement the New England Fishery Management Council's Framework 2, which was submitted to NOAA Fisheries in February 2013.

While the current Interstate Atlantic Herring FMP provides states the flexibility to split quota in Area 1A, it does not include provisions for seasonal splitting in Areas 1B, 2, and 3.

The Draft Addendum proposes to allow for up to 10% of unused sub-ACL for all management areas to carry over from one year to the next. This provision would allow for unused quota to be rolled from one season to the next within the same fishing year. The Draft Addendum also proposes triggers that would close directed fisheries (1) in a management area when 92% of a sub-ACL is projected to be reached and (2) stock-wide when 95% of the ACL is projected to be reached. A 2,000 pound bycatch allowance would continue after directed fisheries are closed. The 10% rollover provision is intended to provide greater flexibility to herring industry, while the triggers are intended to prevent overharvesting in individual management areas and coastwide.



Photo by ASMFC

The states of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts will be conducting public hearings on Draft Addendum VI in early

## Proposed Management Actions

July (check the Commission website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), under Meetings for details on those hearings). Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on July 12, 2013 and should be forwarded to Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or via email at [myuen@asmfc.org](mailto:myuen@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum VI).

### Spanish Mackerel Draft Addendum I

Draft Addendum I to the Omnibus Amendment to the Interstate Fishery Management Plans for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout proposes a pilot program that would allow states to reduce the Spanish mackerel minimum size limit for the commercial pound net fishery to 11 ½ inches for one or more of the summer months of July through September for the 2013 and 2014 fishing years only. The proposed measure is intended to reduce waste of these shorter fish, which are discarded dead in the summer months, by converting them to landed fish.

The Draft Addendum responds to reports about the increased incidence of Spanish mackerel ¼-inch to ½-inch short of the 12

inch fork length minimum size limit in pound nets during the summer months. While the fish are alive in the pound, once the net is bunted and bailing commences, they die before being released. This may be due to a combination of temperature, stress and crowding. Most pound nets are constructed using 1 ½-inch to 1 5/8-inch mesh in the pound and 4-inch to 6-inch mesh for the leads. While individual fishermen have experimented with different wall or panel mesh sizes depending on the target species, there is no consistent use of cull panels. Those who have used cull panels have noted the difficulty and lack of success in being able to release the undersized

fish quickly enough to prevent dead discards during this time of year.

The proposed measure would only apply for the 2013 and 2014 fishing years only. Interested states would be required to notify the Commission of the specific month or months it intends to use the minimum size limit exemption.

Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on July 19, 2013 and should be

forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or via email at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Spanish Mackerel Addendum I).



Photo by Dean Mitchell



## Mark Your Calendars

The Commission's upcoming meetings for the remainder of this year and into 2014

**October 27-31, 2013**  
**ASMFC 72nd Annual Meeting**  
The King and Prince  
Beach and Golf Resort  
201 Arnold Street • St. Simons Island, GA  
800.342.0212

**February 3-6, 2014**  
**ASMFC Winter Meeting**  
Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria  
901 N. Fairfax Street • Alexandria, VA  
703.683.6000

**May 12-15, 2014**  
**ASMFC Spring Meeting**  
Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria  
901 N. Fairfax Street • Alexandria, VA  
703.683.6000

**August 4-6, 2014**  
**ASMFC Summer Meeting**  
Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria  
901 N. Fairfax Street • Alexandria, VA  
703.683.6000

**October 26-30 (Tentative)**  
**ASMFC 73rd Annual Meeting**  
CT, location to be determined





## On The Legislative Front

**This year Congress will have the opportunity to address a number of legislative issues that affect fisheries management along the Atlantic coast and throughout the nation. Below is an overview of some issues likely to be addressed in the coming months.**

### Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The current Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) authorization is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2013. Congress has begun to reauthorize the law through a series of exploratory and oversight hearings. The House Natural Resources Committee held its first hearing of the year on March 13<sup>th</sup> and the Senate Commerce Committee held its first hearing on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Both hearings included a wide array of fisheries stakeholder witnesses who helped identify what is working and what isn't in the current Magnuson-Stevens Act authorization. Additionally, the House Natural Resources Committee held an oversight hearing on fisheries data collection on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Look for more hearings to occur in July and September in both chambers.

Photo by Albert Spells, USFWS



### Fiscal Year 2014 Appropriations

On April 10, 2013, the President submitted his fiscal year (FY) 2014 Budget Request to Congress. The requested amount for Regional Fishery

Management Councils and Commissions was \$31.124 million, a decrease of \$731,000 from FY 2013. Also notable is the inclusion of \$2.5 million for the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IFA), which President Obama and the House of Representatives have previously targeted for elimination. The IFA authorization expired last year and the President recommends reauthorizing the program at a lower level of \$3.09 million per year (previously \$5 million per year). The President also requested a sizable \$15 million increase to Species Recovery Grants (up to \$17.8 million) for states to use in conservation and recovery of marine and anadromous species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Finally, the President requested increases for Fisheries Statistics and Fisheries Information Network funding of \$206,000 and \$20,000, respectively.

In the legislature, the House of Representatives and Senate passed their FY 2014 budgets on March 21<sup>st</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup>, respectively. These budgets represent each party's priorities and vary greatly from House to Senate. Neither chamber has begun to move on the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill, which is where the vast majority of federal fisheries management funding originates.



Photo by ASMFC

### 2012 Fishery Disaster Declarations

In late 2012, the Department of Commerce assigned disaster designations for fisheries in a number of New England and Mid-Atlantic states due to reduced catch limits and damage from Superstorm Sandy. The designation paves the way for federal assistance for loss compensation, fishing equipment and infrastructure repair, habitat restoration, workforce education, low-interest loans, and research to improve stock assessments.

While a disaster designation allows fishermen in the affected regions to qualify for federal aid, Congress must still appropriate the funds. A number of Members and Senators attempted to attach \$150 million in fisheries disaster assistance funding to the Superstorm Sandy Relief Bill. However, only \$5 million in fisheries aid was included in the final package, and was exclusively available for damage related to Superstorm Sandy in New York and New Jersey. Efforts to secure additional federal aid are ongoing in both the House and Senate.

For more information, please contact Deke Tompkins, Legislative Executive Assistant, at [dtompkins@asmfc.org](mailto:dtompkins@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740

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*AWARDS, continued from page 5*

With this investigation and further conviction, the Team sent a clear message that state and federal law enforcement officers stand ready to uphold our collective stewardship responsibilities and ensure that all harvest is carried out in accordance to the laws protecting those resources.

The remaining members of the New Jersey/NOAA Fisheries/ Dept. of Justice Law Enforcement Team, namely Conservation Officers Craig James and Jeremy Trembley will be presented their awards later this year.



## Carolyn Dorf: *Notes from an Intern*

Standing on a dark beach in Delaware was not where I pictured myself when I started my internship at the Commission. I was there accompanying one of the Fishery Management Plan Coordinators to observe horseshoe crab spawning during high tide when the crabs come ashore to mate and lay their eggs. Once on the shore, the females dug holes in the sand to lay thousands of tiny eggs. The scientists conducting the survey used quadrates, meter-by-meter squares, to count the crabs as they made their way up onto the beach. It was an amazing sight to see the crabs climb out of the waves to spawn; it was something I had never experienced before. Horseshoe crabs are pretty docile creatures so we were even able to pick them up to pose for some pictures. While it was late when we headed back to DC, getting to experience a horseshoe crab spawning event was one of the highlights of my internship.

The survey helped put things into perspective for me. As a political science major entering my final year of college, I have studied environmental policy but not fisheries issues specifically. The Commission manages a number of species with a focus on sustainable management. Communication and emphasis on conservation is key. I had been working on various projects such as updating the fish tagging database, tracking legislation, and conducting research on the potential impacts of climate change on fish stocks. However, getting an opportunity to interact with a managed species and assist in the collection of data gave me a personal connection. A link was made between what is being done at the Commission and how important it is to the people that work with these species.

I was drawn to the Commission because of my interest in environmental policy. I had never spent a lot of time learning about one specific topic. I didn't even know how I could apply my political science degree to fisheries management. I was worried that lacking a science background would hold me back from working productively, but I've discovered the complete



Photo by ASMFC



## Tina Berger: Director of Communications

In recognition of her exemplary performance as the Commission's Public Affairs Specialist, Tina Berger

has been promoted to Director of Communications. In this new role, she will be working directly with the Executive Director to develop strategies to highlight the Commission's successes and promote the value of investing in interstate management to federal legislators. Tina will also be exploring the use of additional outreach tools, such as social media, to help inform stakeholders of Commission activities. In addition to her new responsibilities, Tina will also continue to develop press releases, serve as the primary media contact, and maintain the Commission's website.

Thank you, Tina, for nearly two decades of service to the Commission and congratulations on your new position.

Tina can be contacted at:  
tberger@asmfc.org; 703.842.0749

opposite. Every day I was learning more about a topic I had little previous knowledge about and that was exciting. Interning here made me realize there are multiple ways in which my political science degree can be used -- ways that I hadn't even considered. This internship challenged me because I was asked to take part in projects where I had to understand the science behind the policies and regulations. I think this internship provided a very holistic approach to fisheries management issues. Since I was involved in projects that were concerned with legislation, research, and data interpretation, I got a little taste of everything. Interning at the Commission was a great experience because it gave me insight on the different career paths I can take after college.

*Editor's Note: The above article was written by Carolyn Dorf, who interned with the Commission this summer, assisting on a number of projects ranging from fish tagging to legislation to research on climate change. While the Commission has worked with interns from established programs in the past, Carolyn was the first intern to approach the Commission independently. Her brother Randy Dorf, now an environmental attorney at Edwards Wildman Palmer LLP in Boston, interned with the Commission several years ago. Carolyn is pursuing a political science major at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania; she'll be entering her senior year this fall. Carolyn's intelligence, enthusiasm, and inquisitiveness were a welcome addition to the Commission staff. We wish Carolyn the very best in all her future endeavors.*

**Atlantic States Marine  
Fisheries Commission**

1050 North Highland St.  
Suite 200 A-N  
Arlington, VA 22201

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## *Science Highlight*

### **ASMFC Releases Report on Research Priorities and Recommendations to Support Atlantic Coast Fisheries Management**

The Commission announces the release of its report, *Research Priorities & Recommendations to Support Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management*. The report highlights research priorities and data critical to the continued success and improvement of the Commission's 25 species management programs. The report can be used by state and federal marine fishery agencies, and university research programs to develop projects to answer outstanding research questions.

The report identifies research priorities and recommendations by individual species and species groups, as in the case of diadromous species (American eel, shad, river herring, Atlantic sturgeon, striped bass), as well as socioeconomic data needs for all species. Research needs were identified from a variety of sources, including Commission fishery management plans and amendments, annual plan reviews, and peer-reviewed stock assessments. Research focal areas were prioritized by the

Commission's species stock assessment subcommittees and technical committees, with additional input from management boards and advisory panels, the Habitat Committee, the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences, and the Management and Science Committee.

State, federal, and non-profit organizations are encouraged to use the report to identify research projects and design studies for future funding programs. To ensure its usefulness and relevancy, the report will be updated periodically as research priorities are met and new research needs are identified. The full report can be obtained on the Commission's website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), under *Breaking News*, with species-specific sections available on the individual species pages. For more information, please contact Jeff Kipp, Stock Assessment Scientist, at [jkipp@asmfc.org](mailto:jkipp@asmfc.org), or Patrick Campfield, Director of Fisheries Science, at [pcampfield@asmfc.org](mailto:pcampfield@asmfc.org).