



ASMFC

# FISHERIES *focus*

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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*

## Stakeholders Pledge Over \$117,000 to Continue Horseshoe Crab Trawl Survey

Members of the biomedical and commercial fishing industries have contributed more than \$117,000 to support the Horseshoe Crab Trawl Survey for 2011. Biomedical companies Lonza Walkersville, Inc., Associates of Cape Cod, Inc., and Charles River Laboratory pledged over \$100,000, while whelk and horseshoe crab processors and dealers, and eel exporters from the Chesapeake Bay Packing, LLC, Bernie's Conchs, LLC, LaMonica Fine Foods, Southern Connection Seafood, Inc., Sea King Corp., Spot's Fish Company, and Delaware Valley Fish pledged \$17,500.



Photo courtesy of Gregory Breese, US Fish and Wildlife Service

"These contributions will go a long way to ensure that this essential survey is conducted at least in part in 2011," stated Thomas O'Connell, ASMFC Horseshoe Crab Board Chair and Maryland DNR Fisheries Service Director. "An additional \$85,000 will enable the survey to be fully conducted in 2011 and may allow for the continuance of the survey through 2012 if we can get matching funds. I sincerely thank and commend both the biomedical and fishing industries for coming together to support horseshoe crab management. Given these contributions, I am hopeful that other interested groups will come forward to help support this important survey."

The survey, which has been administered by Virginia Tech since 2002, is the only survey designed to sample the horseshoe crab population in coastal waters. Its data are a critical component of the coastwide stock assessment and the new Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) framework, both of which were endorsed through an independent peer review in 2009. The ARM framework includes modeling that links management of horseshoe crab harvest to multispecies objectives, particularly red knot shorebird recovery. It was developed jointly by the Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey in recognition of the importance of horseshoe crab eggs to shorebirds in the Delaware Bay Region.

Generally supported by congressionally-directed funds in the past, the survey would have been shut down without the generosity of the companies from the biomedical and fishing industries, who depend upon a healthy population of horseshoe crabs. To garner support for the survey, the Commission had reached out to various stakeholders groups that have an expressed interest in shorebird conservation and horseshoe crab management. Support is still being sought to fund the remainder of the 2011 survey, as well as the long-term continuance of the survey.

Horseshoe crabs play an important role on many levels – their blood is used to produce *Limulus* Amoebocyte Lysate, an important tool for detecting contaminated medical devices and drugs; their eggs are consumed by hundreds of thousands of migratory shorebirds as they complete their northward migration to the Arctic; and the crabs themselves are harvested by fishermen to be used as bait for whelk and eel fisheries. They are managed through the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Horseshoe Crabs (adopted in 1998) and subsequent addenda.

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**T**he 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*

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## Upcoming Meetings

**3/15 - 17:**

FishSmart Barotrauma Workshop, Crowne Plaza Atlanta Perimeter NW, 6345 Powers Ferry Road, Atlanta, Georgia; (770) 955-1700.

**3/15 (4 PM):**

ASMFC Public Hearing on the Emergency Closure of the 2010/2011 Northern Shrimp Fishery, Maine Department of Marine Resources, Natural Resources Service Center, Room 106, 6 Beech Street, Hallowell, Maine.

**3/16 (6 PM):**

ASMFC Public Hearing on the Emergency Closure of the 2010/2011 Northern Shrimp Fishery, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Annisquam River Station, 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

**3/20 - 22:**

Boston Seafood Show, Boston Convention Center, Boston, Massachusetts.

**3/21 - 24:**

ASMFC Winter-Spring Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia; (703) 683-6000 (see final agenda on pages 9 & 10).

**3/30 & 31:**

Eel Passage Technology Workshop, NMFS Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

**4/12 & 13:**

National Fish Habitat Board, Washington, DC.

**4/12 - 14:**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Historic Inn of Annapolis, 58 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland.

**4/26 - 28:**

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

**5/23 - 26:**

ASMFC American Eel Assessment Workshop, Baltimore, Maryland area.

**6/13 - 17:**

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel, 3841 N. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West, Florida.

**6/14 - 16:**

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Danfords Hotel & Marina, 25 East Broadway, Port Jefferson, New York.

## Atlantic Striped Bass: Protecting Our Gains

The video of dead striped bass discarded by a North Carolina commercial trawler last month has been widely circulated on the internet and has generated a visceral reaction from fishermen from Maine to North Carolina. Although it has generated misinformation and finger pointing, it should also raise our collective awareness of the need for us all to be good stewards of a resource everyone has worked so hard to restore.

First, let's review some facts. While the Commission determines the total commercial quota and allocates to the states their share based on their historical catches, it is up to the individual states to decide on harvest methods and regulate quotas. They must close their fisheries when quotas are reached; overages must be paid back in the following year.

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NC DMF) documented two incidents of commercial discarding. The first event occurred on January 15, with one trawler discarding an estimated 3,000 – 4,000 fish. In response, NC DMF quickly changed the possession limit from 50 fish to 2,000 pounds (to discourage high grading) and authorized

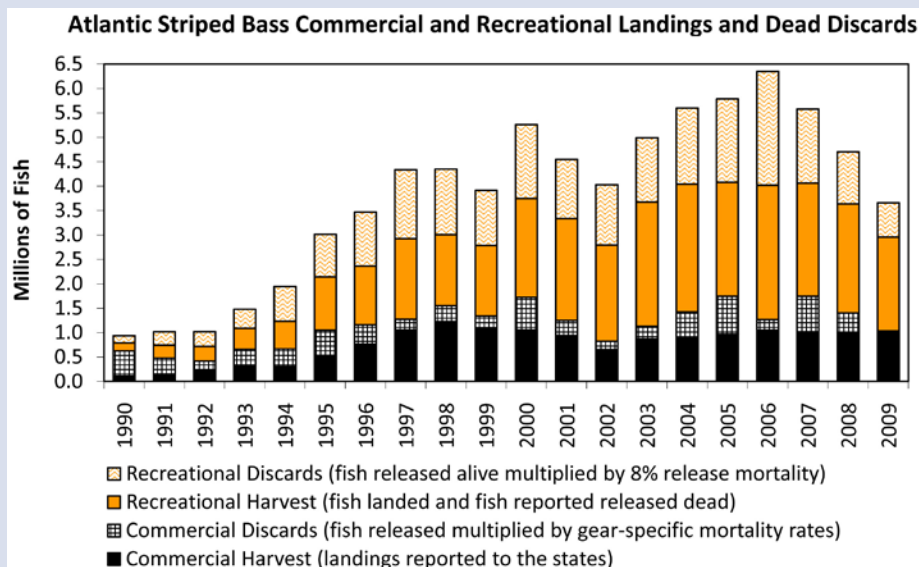
at-sea transfers to enable excess fish to be landed by other permit holders. The second incident occurred on February 3. Marine Patrol officers counted a total of 501 dead fish from both events. This number does not include fish that might have sunk or those that recreational fishermen in the area recovered to fill their bag limits.

Regardless of the actual number of fish involved in these incidents, dead discards by commercial or recreational fishermen at anytime is a concern. They are a waste of the resource and, in the case of large striped bass, which are all females,

Until that happens, the fish would benefit if everyone adopted responsible practices. For commercial fishermen this means short tow and soak times and, when their quota is closed, avoiding areas known to have high concentrations of fish. Recreational anglers could make greater use of circle hooks, avoid using live bait (increases the chances of fatal gut hooks), and stop fishing when they have caught their bag limit. Barbless hooks are a good choice for those who catch and release fish.

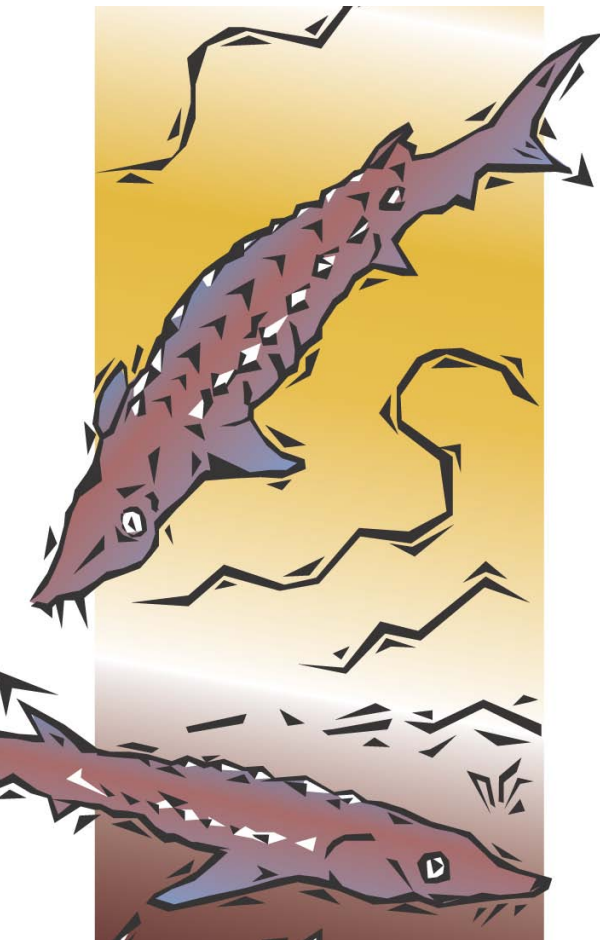
These practices can be done now without regulations. The wide-

spread selective targeting of large fish (it takes 20 years to grow a 40 pound fish), consecutive low young-of-the-year indices, and sharply declining recreational catches should be issues of concern to all.



an immediate reduction in spawning capacity. The fact is commercial and recreational fisheries contribute to mortality. Minimizing discard mortality is a component of sound stewardship and should be a goal for all fishermen. Hopefully, these recent events and reports from fishermen of declining abundance will prompt a meaningful discussion and call for management measures to reduce striped bass mortality.

We should not ignore the thousands of fish that were discarded in North Carolina. Instead, we need to be mindful of the millions of fish discarded throughout the fishery. It took many years to rebuild this stock; hopefully, protecting it for our children is something we can all agree to do.



## Species Profile: Atlantic Sturgeon **NMFS Proposes to Add Atlantic Sturgeon to the Endangered Species List**

### Introduction

Atlantic sturgeon were once highly sought after by commercial fishermen in every major coastal river along the East Coast. Now, it's scientists that go in search of them. The overexploitation from major fisheries, centered in Delaware and Chesapeake Bay during the late 1800s and early 1900s, resulted in stock collapse and recruitment failure. As a result, in 1999 the Commission implemented a 40+ year coastwide moratorium on the harvest and possession of wild Atlantic sturgeon stocks. Today, scientists from Maine to Florida work to study the migration patterns, reproduction, and life history of Atlantic sturgeon to help restore wild populations.

### Life History

Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) are ancient fish, dating back at least 150 million years, and can be found along the entire Atlantic coast from Labrador, Canada to St. Johns River, Florida. They have been recorded to live up to 60 years, grow to lengths of 14 feet and weights of 800 pounds. Atlantic sturgeon are also known to undergo extensive coastal migrations, which take them from the ocean into coastal estuaries and rivers in the spring to spawn once every two to five years.

Typically sturgeon in the southern part of the species range mature faster and grow larger than those in the northern part of the range. Females reach sexual maturity between the ages of seven and 30, and males between the ages of five and 24. The number of eggs that a female produces increases with age and size, which means that older and larger females are more valuable to the population because they produce more eggs (up to eight million eggs per spawning event) than younger, smaller females (estimated 400,000 eggs per spawning event).

Most juveniles remain in their natal river from one to six years before migrating back out to the ocean. Little is known about the movements of Atlantic sturgeon when they are at sea. As juveniles, Atlantic sturgeon feed on flies, worms, shrimps, and small mollusks and crustaceans. As adults, they are opportunistic feeders and prey mainly on mollusks, snails, worms, shrimps and benthic fish. Very little is known about their natural predators.

### Commercial Fisheries

Since colonial times, Atlantic sturgeon have supported commercial fisheries of varying magnitude. The fishery was once considered second in value only to lobster. There are reports from Maine and Massachusetts from as early as the 1600s that cite sturgeon as an important fishery in those states. While sturgeon were mainly being harvested for their flesh and eggs, other parts had commercial value



### Atlantic Sturgeon *Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*

#### Interesting Facts:

- \* Sturgeon fossils date back >150 million years, making them among the oldest living vertebrates.
- \* There are 24 different species of sturgeon; all occur in the Northern Hemisphere.
- \* Sturgeon lack teeth and scales but are covered with bony plates called scutes.
- \* Sturgeon have been tagged off the NC coast as part of the Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise for the past 23 years; a total of 265 have been caught. Sturgeon tagged with acoustic transmitters have turned up in NY's Hudson River.
- \* NEAMAP has caught 70 sturgeon since 2007.

**Age/length at Maturity:** For the Northeast population, 50% are mature by 20-25 years/6.53'

**Stock Status:** Not overfished and overfishing is not occurring

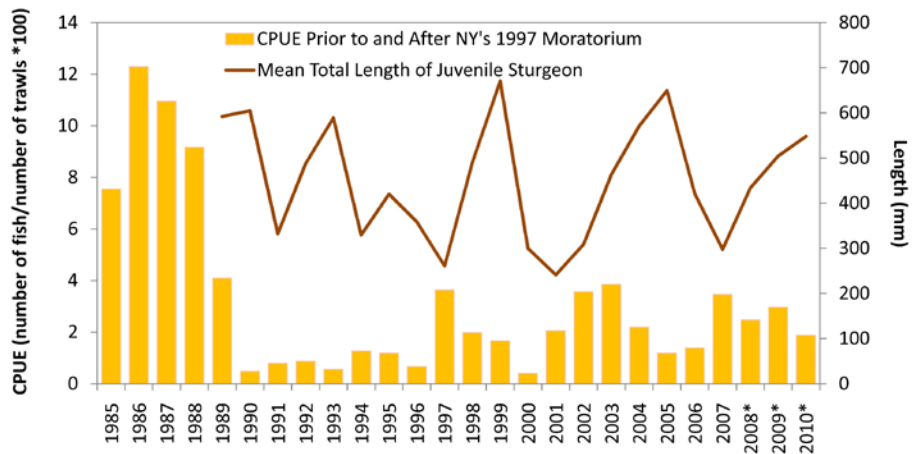
as well. Sturgeon skin was made into leather for clothes and bookbinding. The swim bladder was used to make a gelatin that served as a clarifying agent in jellies, wine, beer, or glue. Swim bladders were also fashioned into windows for carriages.

In 1888, the U.S. Fish Commission reported that there was 7.3 million pounds of sturgeon caught on the East Coast. From 1950 through the mid-1990s, landings had declined to between 100,000 and 250,000 pounds annually. By 1998, a coastwide moratorium on the harvest of wild Atlantic sturgeon stocks was implemented by the Commission, although many states had already closed their fisheries. Currently, cultured Atlantic sturgeon continue to be highly valued. Commercially, the flesh brings a consistently higher price per pound than most fish and the eggs (roe) are worth more than \$50 per pound to fishermen and are sold as caviar for more than \$250 per pound.

### Stock Status

Very little is known about the stock status of Atlantic sturgeon. Reliable data is difficult to obtain because many river systems have so few fish, and rivers with more fish are often not easily sampled. In 1998, the Commission completed a peer-reviewed coastwide assessment of the population, examining each river system where Atlantic sturgeon were historically found. The assessment concluded that all systems held significantly less sturgeon than they did in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and

**Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) of Juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon in the Hudson River Estuary**  
Source: New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation Compliance Report, 2010



very few signs of recovery were detected. As a result of the assessment, the Commission established a 40+ year coastwide moratorium through Amendment 1 to the Atlantic Sturgeon Fishery Management Plan. The accompanying graphs depict catch per unit effort for two fishery-independent surveys conducted by New York and North Carolina. Both surveys have experienced significant fluctuations in recent years, with 2009 indices down from time series highs.

### Endangered Species Listing

Undertaken concurrently with the Commission stock assessment in 1998, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) investigated the status of the species with regard to listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). That status review concluded that listing was not warranted at the time. Then in 2005, NMFS initiated

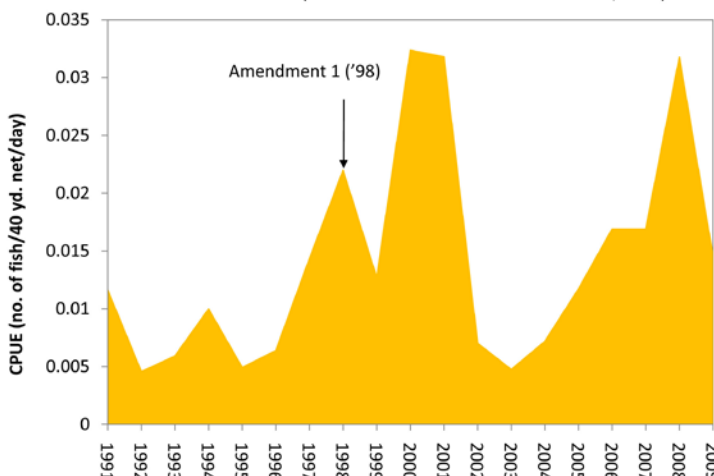
a second status review to re-evaluate whether this species required protection under the ESA. In 2007 the Status Review Team (SRT) determined that Atlantic sturgeon should be broken down into five distinct population segments (DPS): (1) Gulf of Maine, (2) New York

### What is an Endangered or Threatened Listing Based on under ESA?

The ESA designation of threatened or endangered is based on the following factors:

1. Present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of habitat or range
2. Over-utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes
3. Disease or predation
4. Inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
5. Other natural or man-made factors affecting its continued existence

**Fishery-independent Catch Rates of Juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon in Albemarle Sound** (Source: NC Division of Marine Fisheries, 2010)



a second status review to re-evaluate whether this species required protection under the ESA. In 2007 the Status Review Team (SRT) determined that Atlantic sturgeon should be broken down into five distinct population segments (DPS): (1) Gulf of Maine, (2) New York

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## Atlantic Sturgeon (continued from page 5)

moderate risk (<50% chance) of becoming endangered in the next 20 years.

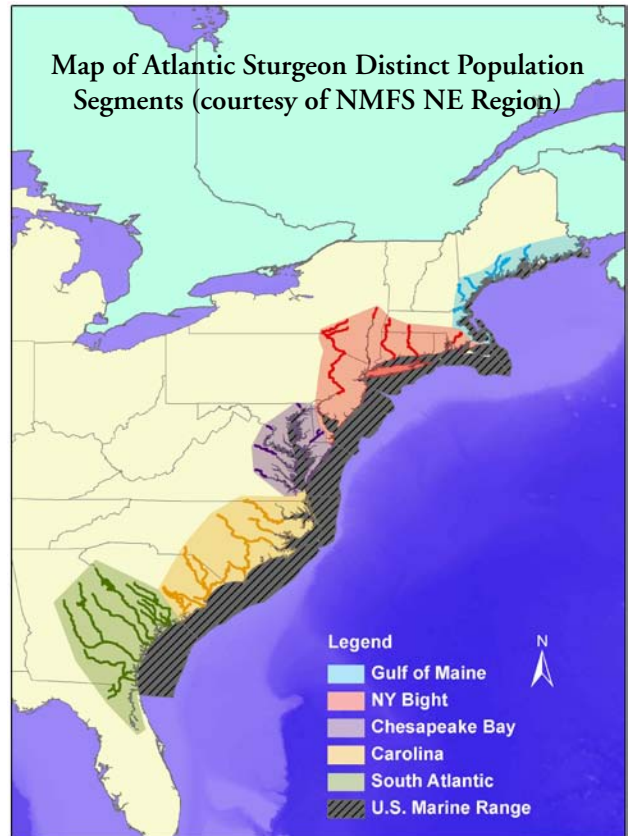
In 2009, the National Resources Defense Council petitioned NMFS to list Atlantic sturgeon on the ESA based on the recommendations from the 2007 Status Review. In January 2010, NMFS reported that the petition may be warranted. After further review NMFS published a proposed rule in October 2010 to list the Gulf of Maine DPS as threatened and the remaining DPSs as endangered. Over 400 public comments were submitted to NMFS on the proposed rule. NMFS is currently reviewing and responding to the submitted public comments is expected to make a final determination in Fall 2011.

For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (703) 842-0741 or ktaylor@asmfc.org.

## What is a DPS?

Endangered and threatened listings under the ESA can be applied to (1) species, (2) subspecies (species that are capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring but do not as a result of geographic isolation or other factors) or (3) distinct population segments (DPS). Classification as a DPS is based on two factors. The first is “discreteness,” which occurs when a population of a species is separated from other populations of the species as a result of physical, ecological, or behavioral factors. This can be proven through genetic testing. The second factor is “significance.” A DPS is considered significant if a loss of the DPS would create a significant gap in the total range of the species.

A DPS designation can only be applied to vertebral species. Five Atlantic sturgeon DPSs were determined in the 2007 Status Review based on the fact that (1) since Atlantic sturgeon return to their natal streams this has resulted in ecological separation throughout their range (distinctness) and (2) loss of any of the DPSs would result in a significant loss in the range (significance) of the species (e.g. loss of the Carolina DPS would result in a 475 mile gap between the northern DPS and the South Atlantic DPS).



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## ASMFC Releases Black Sea Bass Draft Addendum XXI for Public Comment

On February 24, 2011, the Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Draft Addendum XXI to the Black Sea Bass FMP for public comment. The states of Massachusetts through North Carolina will be conducting public hearings on the addendum from late February to mid-March (visit [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org) under Meetings to view hearing details).

The Draft Addendum proposes to establish a program wherein the Commission’s Black Sea Bass Management Board could sub-divide the recreational black sea bass coastwide allocations into regional or state-by-state management for 2011 only.

Since 1996, a uniform coastwide size, season, and bag limit has been set by the Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council to constrain the recreational fishery to the annual harvest target. The harvest target was exceeded five times over the last 15 years, most recently in 2009 and 2010 when the harvest target was the lowest in the time series. It is estimated that 2009 and 2010 harvest targets were exceeded by 1.18 and 1.15 million pounds, respectively.

The current management plan only allows for the implementation of measures to be applied coastwide and not on a regional or state-specific basis. In 2010 all states,

with the exception of Massachusetts, adopted coastwide regulations of 25 fish, 12.5 inches TL minimum fish size, and an open season from May 22 to October 11 and November 1 to December 31 in 2010. Massachusetts opted for a more restrictive 20 fish possession limit, and adopted all other coastwide regulations in 2010. The 2010 regulations resulted in a preliminary estimated harvest of 2.98 million pounds, approximately 1.15 million pounds above the 2010 target.

Given that the 2010 regulations were not effective in staying within the target,

*continued on page 12*

## Geoffrey White Awarded ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

The Commission named Geoffrey White its Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2011. Geoff earned this recognition due to his tremendous efforts and results in support of the relocation of the Commission's offices to Arlington, Virginia this past fall. The award is intended to recognize contributions and qualities in the areas of teamwork, initiative, responsibility, quality of work, positive attitude, and results.

The relocation involved overseeing the electrical, IT, and communications infrastructure for more than 40 offices and workstations. It also required careful planning and execution of the transition of key IT services in order to minimize disruptions to thousands of ACCSP external customers and Commission stakeholders, as well as staff. The project exceeded all expectations and was delivered under budget.

In his day job, Geoff plays a vital role in the data operations of Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP). As Data Team Leader, he manages the flow of all data into and out of ACCSP's systems. He also is a System Administrator, coordinating all of the Commission's and ACCSP's network operations and running the computer systems that our entire office uses.

Geoff projects a genuine and unfailing spirit of enthusiasm in tackling problems and glitches. His even-tempered approach towards setbacks and challenges is an inspiration to others. Geoff's efforts and contributions have significantly increased the comfort and efficiency of all of his fellow employees. His hard work in establishing the ACCSP's and Commission's new offices will live on for many years. As an Employee of the Quarter, Geoff received a \$500 cash award, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in his personnel record. In addition, his name is on the Employee of the Quarter Plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, Geoff.



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## ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section Closes Fishery Effective 2359 Hours (EST) February 28, 2011

Effective 2359 hours (EST) on February 28, 2011, the Commission's Northern Shrimp Section and its member states will close the 2010/2011 fishery. The decision to close the fishery prior to the season end of April 15 was based on preliminary landings data that indicate that harvest is already at 4,192 metric tons, 192 metric tons in excess of the Technical Committee recommended landings level. The Technical Committee projected landings could total 7,000 metric tons if harvest continued through April 15.

Section members expressed concern over the lack of a timely and complete reporting system for northern shrimp and the potential for this year's overharvest to negatively impact the stock and next year's fishery. A comprehensive reporting

system would provide managers the necessary information to prevent overharvest of the stock ensuring a healthy population of shrimp for future fisheries. This issue will be addressed in the Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Northern Shrimp, scheduled to be released in March for public comment.

Prior to the start of the 2010/2011 fishery, the Technical Committee cautioned Section members that the abundance of age 5 shrimp in the population is significantly below average. This results in the fishery harvesting primarily age 4 shrimp which should be the foundation of next year's fishery. The age 5 shrimp provide the greatest spawning potential and also receive a higher market price than smaller

younger shrimp. The Northern Shrimp Technical Committee will update the stock assessment this summer to determine if this year's overharvest has had an impact on the 2011/2012 fishery.

The Section's action was taken pursuant to the emergency action provision of the Commission's ISFMP Charter, Section 6(c)(10). The provision specifies that the Commission will hold four public hearings within 30 days of the action. The first public hearing was held during the Section's February 18 conference call; the second hearing occurred at the Section's February 28th meeting in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Maine and Massachusetts will conduct the remaining hearings on March 15 and 16, respectively (see page 2 for the details of those hearings).

# ASMFC Winter-Spring Meeting March 21 -24, 2011

**Crowne Plaza Hotel Old Town  
901 North Fairfax Street  
Alexandria, Virginia  
(703) 683-6000**

## Final 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.

### Monday, March 21, 2011

12:30 - 3:30 PM      **American Lobster Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Consider Draft Addendum XVII for Public Comment -- **Action**

3:45 – 5:45 PM      **Atlantic Herring Section**

- Public Comment
- Review 2010 Fishery
- Consider Draft Addendum IV for Final Approval -- **Final Action**
  - Review Options
  - Public Comment Summary
  - Technical Committee, Advisory Panel, and Law Enforcement Reports

### Tuesday, March 22, 2011

8:30 - 9:30 AM      **Shad and River Herring Management Board**

- Public Comment
- River Herring Sustainable Fishery Management Plans -- **Action**
  - Technical Committee Report
  - Discuss and Consider Approval of Sustainable Fishery Management Plans
- River Herring and American Shad Bycatch Update
  - Update on Drafts Amendment 5 (NEFMC) and 14 (MAFMC)
- River Herring Stock Assessment Update
- Discuss Committee Membership and Leadership

9:45 - 10:45 AM      **Weakfish Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Elect Vice-Chair Action
- Technical Committee Report
  - Update on Weakfish Stock Status Indicators
  - Board Input on Next Steps

- Consider Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance -- **Action**

10:00 AM - 5:00 PM      **Law Enforcement Committee**

- Public Comment
- Update on Hiring of Law Enforcement Committee Coordinator
- Discuss Striped Bass Enforcement Issues
- Species Management Updates (Tautog, Atlantic Herring, Spiny Dogfish, Spot, Spotted Seatrout, and Spanish Mackerel)
- Federal Reports (NMFS, USFWS, USCG)
- State Issues (Presented by Each State)

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM      **Atlantic Menhaden Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Elect Vice-Chair -- **Action**
- Consider Acceptance of Revised Benchmark Stock Assessment Report for Management Use -- **Action**
- Technical Committee Report on Alternative Reference Points
- Discuss Next Steps for Possible Management Action

2:15 - 4:45 PM      **Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Draft Addendum III for Final Approval -- **Final Action**
  - Review Options & Public Comment Summary
  - Technical Committee, Advisory Panel Report and Law Enforcement Reports
- Update of Delaware Regulations for Recreational Shore Anglers
- Targeting Prohibited and Research-Only Species
- Future of the Shark Fishery Initiative
- Federal E-Dealer Update and ICCAT Recommendations
- Discuss Variable Commercial Shark Possession Limits
- Update of Shark Finning Conservation Act
- Smooth Dogfish State Shares Discussion



- 6:30 - 8:00 PM      **Annual Awards of Excellence Reception & Office Warming – ASMFC New Offices, Arlington, VA**
- Discuss Blue Catfish Management in Chesapeake Region
  - Law Enforcement Committee Report
  - Report on Black Drum Assessment Data Workshop

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

8:00 - 10:00 AM      **Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

- Consider Connecticut Proposal for Alternative Management -- **Action**
  - Presentation of Proposal
  - Technical Committee and Advisory Panel Reports
- Review of North Carolina Striped Bass Ocean Trawl Discarding
- Review of Maryland Striped Bass Poaching
- Consider Initiating an Addendum to Reduce Coastwide Mortality on Striped Bass -- **Possible Action**
- Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership -- **Action**

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM      **South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Consider Approval of Draft Omnibus Amendment for Public Comment -- **Action**
- Consider Approval of FMP Reviews for Spot, Spotted Seatrout, Spanish Mackerel -- **Action**
- Consider Draft SEAMAP 2011-15 Management Plan for Approval -- **Action**
- Update on FY 2011 SEAMAP Funding

1:30 - 3:00 PM      **Horseshoe Crab Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Update on Funding for Benthic Trawl Survey
- Delaware Bay Ecosystem Technical Committee Report -- **Action**
  - Review Technical Committee Report
  - Discuss Range of Options for Future Management
- FMP Review and Consider Request for *de minimis* Status
- Committee Nominations -- **Action**
  - Shorebird Advisory Panel
  - Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee
  - Stock Assessment Committee

3:15 - 4:15 PM      **Business Session**

- Public Comment
- ASMFC Commissioner Survey Results
  - Summary of Results
  - Discuss Next Steps

4:15 - 6:15 PM      **ISFMP Policy Board**

- Public Comment
- Discuss Policy Board Involvement in Species Management
- Update on Marine Recreational Information Program
- NEAMAP Report
- Discuss ASMFC Role in National Seafood Marketing Coalition

Thursday, March 24, 2011

8:00 - 9:00 AM      **Executive Committee**

- Public Comment
- Report of the Administrative Oversight Committee
  - Presentation of the FY12 Budget -- **Action**
  - Motion Authorizing Line of Credit -- **Action**
  - Motion Authorizing Temporary Draw on Short-Term Reserves -- **Action**
  - Proposed Revision to the Reserve Fund Policy -- **Action**
- Future Annual Meetings Update
  - 2011 - Boston, Massachusetts, November 7-10, The Langham Hotel; 2012 - Pennsylvania; 2013 - Georgia; 2014 - Connecticut; and 2015 - Florida

9:30 - Noon      **Tautog Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Election of Chair and Vice-Chair -- **Action**
- 2011 Tautog Stock Assessment -- **Action**
  - Assessment Overview and Results
  - Technical Committee Report
- Consider Draft Addendum VI for Final Approval -- **Final Action**
  - Review Options & Public Comment Summary
  - Technical Committee, Advisory Panel and Law Enforcement Reports

12:30 - 2:00 PM      **Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board**

- Public Comment
- Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
- Draft Addendum XXI for Final Approval -- **Final Action**
  - Review Options & Public Comment Summary
  - Advisory Panel Report
  - Consider Final Approval of Addendum XXI
- Discuss MAFMC Action to Initiate an Amendment to the Black Sea Bass FMP at the 2010 December Council Meeting -- **Possible Action**
- Update on MAFMC Request for Proposals for Scup Analysis
- Review and Populate Black Sea Bass Plan Review Team Membership -- **Action**

2:00 - 2:30 PM      **ISFMP Policy Board (continued)**

- Public Comment
- Review Noncompliance Findings (if necessary)

2:30 - 3:00 PM      **Business Session (continued)**

- Public Comment
- Review Noncompliance Findings (if necessary)
- Executive Committee Report

## Be Impressed with our Custom Data Requests

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is proud to announce it recently completed a data request for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC). To satisfy requirements of the Snapper Grouper Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment, the SAFMC needed landings and revenue data for a variety of commercial species found in the South Atlantic from North Carolina down the east coast of Florida. ACCSP provided data for annual landings and ex-vessel revenue for 2005 to 2009 for the total South Atlantic snapper grouper species complex, as well as a variety of smaller complexes such as shallow water groupers and the porgies, grunts and hinds complex. In addition to the species groups, individual species landings and ex-vessel revenues were also provided. A few of these species included Atlantic spadefish (*Chaetodipterus faber*), black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*), mahi mahi (*Coryphaena hippurus*), wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*) and cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*).

By requesting a custom data request, many organizations have come to rely on the ACCSP Data Team as a trusted collaborator and a knowledgeable resource for timely fisheries dependent data. A custom data request may be generated by a unique question or seeking clarification on an intricate search of the data in the Data Warehouse.

The following is a list of organizations that have worked with the Data Team to gain information through a custom data request:

- Environmental Defense Fund
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
- New England Fishery Management Council
- Marine Resource Research Institute
- Getner Group, Inc.

ACCSP is dedicated to meeting the needs of fishery managers, scientists and fisher-

men; please feel free to contact our staff with any of your data needs or requests and we will help any way we can. You can e-mail [support@accsp.org](mailto:support@accsp.org) to request a custom data request.

### About ACCSP

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. For more information about the Program please contact Ann McElhatton, Outreach Coordinator, at [info@accsp.org](mailto:info@accsp.org).



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## ASMFC Comings & Goings

### Commissioners

**Dennis S. Damon** – This winter, with his retirement from the Maine legislature, Mr. Dennis Damon stepped down as the state's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. Mr. Damon served on the Commission since 2003, actively participating in the species management boards for which Maine has a declared interest. He brought to the table a strong commitment to fisheries conservation, having come from a family of fishermen. While Senator, he had the distinction of being the only senator to have chaired two standing committees -- Marine Resources Committee and the Transportation Committee. He also championed and sponsored Maine's first in the nation law to preserve working waterfronts. We wish Mr. Damon a healthy and happy retirement!

**Bob Lane** – Having chosen not to run for re-election as a member of Georgia's General Assembly, Bob Lane stepped down as ASMFC Legislative Commissioner after 14 years of service to the Commission. He has served the State of Georgia, District 158, since 1980. As ASMFC Commissioner and Georgia Legislator, Mr. Lane focused to improve South Atlantic fisheries and Georgia's fishing industries. We wish Mr. Lane a wonderful retirement!

**Senator Brian Langley** -- Following his election by the people of District 28 to represent them in the Maine Senate, Senator Langley was appointed Maine's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. District 28 includes the Hancock County communities of Bar Harbor, Blue Hill, Brooklin, Brooksville, Central Hancock, Cranberry Isles, Deer Isle, Ellsworth, Frenchboro, Gouldsboro, Hancock, Lamoine, Mount Desert, Sedgwick, Sorrento, Southwest Harbor, Stonington, Sullivan, Surry, Swans Island, Tremont, Trenton, and Winter Harbor. The district also includes Knox County's Isle au Haut.



Senator Langley currently chairs the Legislature's Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. He also is a member of the Marine Resources Committee.

Senator Langley is an active board member of the First Congregational Church of Ellsworth and is treasurer of the American Culinary Federation's Downeast chapter. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Maine and Syracuse University. Senator Langley and his wife, Jane Bromley, have two children. Welcome aboard, Senator Langley!

**George D. Lapointe** -- It is with admiration and respect that the Commission says a fond farewell to George Lapointe. Mr. Lapointe was the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources since 1998. Throughout his 12-year tenure as ASMFC Commissioner, Mr. Lapointe's actions epitomized the Commission's guiding principle of seeking solutions that were good for all versus best for one. He consistently distinguished himself through his unfailing willingness to competently serve in challenging leadership positions.

During his chairmanship of the Commission from 2006 to 2009, Mr. Lapointe effortlessly oversaw a critical period of transition period as a generation of long-standing Commissioners retired. He led the charge on the creation of a 2009-2013 Strategic Plan, which recommitted the 15 Atlantic coast states to their shared vision of stock rebuilding and sustainable resource management. The Plan formalized, for the first time, Commissioner values in pursuit of the Commission's vision and mission. Mr. Lapointe also oversaw the states' efforts to conserve and rebuild diadromous species through the completion of the long-awaited benchmark American shad stock assessment and the development and adoption of a new amendment for river herring.

His remarkable achievements can be attributed, in part, to his past history as the Director of the Interstate Fisheries Management Program with the Commission from 1994 to 1998. Prior to this, he served as the Council Liaison for the Commission from 1987-1989.

Mr. Lapointe directed a critical marine resource agency at one of its most difficult times with a conscience for all those involved. The Commission thanks Mr. Lapointe for his class and dignity through all of his efforts and wishes him and his family the best of luck in the future!

**Commissioner Norman Olsen** -- In January, Maine Governor Paul LePage appointed Mr. Norman Olsen Commissioner of Department of Marine Resources (DMR). Commissioner Olsen brings a breadth of knowledge of marine fisheries issues to Maine DMR and the Commission. As the fourth of five generations of commercial fishermen, he began lobstering at age 12. Following his 1973 graduation from Colby College with a degree in Economics, he eventually ran 550 traps from his 32-foot

Jonesport-style lobster boat, and fished as well for herring, mackerel, groundfish, shrimp, scallops and swordfish. He expanded his understanding of the industry as a reporter for the *Portland Press Herald* with a fisheries and waterfront news beat in the 1970s. He has also served as the first Executive Director of the Maine Fishermen's Cooperative Association, was an original member of the Portland Fish Pier Task Force, and a member of the New England Fishery Management Council.



Throughout his 26-year career with the US State Department, Commissioner Olsen served in Jamaica, Norway, Washington, the Marshall Islands, Israel and the Gaza Strip, Geneva, Kosovo, and Moldova. He was promoted to the Senior Foreign Service with rank equivalent to Brigadier General in 2003. In his final State Department assignment he served as Associate Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the State Department in Washington DC. Since 2008, he has undertaken various assignments, both domestic and foreign, and has conducted training for US special operations forces. Welcome aboard, Commissioner Olsen!

**Senator Richard Stuart** -- In January, Senator Stuart was appointed Virginia's Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC. He has represented Virginia's District 28 since 2008. His other legislative activities include involvement in the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resource Committee, Courts of Justice, and Rehabilitation and Social Services.



Senator Stuart is a member of the American Bar Association and the Northern Neck Bar Association. He has been Chair of the 6th District Disciplinary Committee for the Virginia State Board, represented Westmoreland County School Board since 2006, and is a Trustee for the Westmoreland County Volunteer Fire Department. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve from 1984 to 1992. Senator Stuart received his Bachelor of Science from Virginia Wesleyan College and his J.D. from T.C. Williams School of Law. He and his wife, Lisa, have three children. Welcome aboard, Senator Stuart!

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
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Arlington, VA 22201-2196

*Return Service Requested*

## **Black Sea Bass Draft Addendum XXI (continued from page 6)**

harvest will need to be reduced by 40% to achieve, but not exceed, the 2011 target of 1.78 million pounds. In order to meet the required reduction using coastwide measures, the Board has proposed increasing the minimum size limit to 13 inches and contracting the season to July 1 to October 1 and November 1 to December 31. However, analyses have shown that these proposed changes will impact states differently. The Board initiated the Draft Addendum to provide the necessary management flexibility to mitigate potential disproportionate impact on states that can result from coastwide measures.

The Draft Addendum can be obtained via the Commission's website at [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org) under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (703) 842-0740. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on March 18, 2011 and should be forwarded to Toni Kerns, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; (703) 842-0741 (FAX) or at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Black Sea Bass). For more information, please contact Toni Kerns at (703) 842-0740.

## **ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 11)**

### Staff

**Michael Waine** -- In early March, Michael Waine joined the Commission staff as its newest FMP Coordinator. Mike will be coordinating species management programs for bluefish, northern shrimp, weakfish and eventually Atlantic menhaden. Mike has a Master of Science in Fisheries and Wildlife Management from North Carolina State University. His master's thesis concentrated on hydroacoustic techniques to estimate spawning run size of anadromous fishes in the Roanoke River, NC. He also



has a Bachelor of Science in Marine Science from University of North Carolina (UNC) in Wilmington. Before coming to the Commission, Michael worked for the UNC Institute of Marine Science on a biological risk assessment of proposed offshore wind energy location along the Outer Banks. Welcome aboard, Mike!