



ASMFC

FISHERIES *focus*

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission • 1444 Eye Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C.

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

ASMFC Winter Meeting February 4 - 7, 2008

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

Final Agenda

Please note that there have been several time and meeting changes to Thursday's schedule. This final 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.

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Atlantic Herring Section

- Welcome/Call to Order, *T. Stockwell*
- Public Comment
- Preliminary 2007 Catch and Landings, *M. Cieri*
- Technical Committee Review of "Zero Tolerance" Spawning Closures Efficacy, *M. Cieri*
- Discussion of Herring Work Plan Issues
 - Short-term
 - Action Plan Resources, *C. Vonderweidt*
 - Days Out 2008, *T. Stockwell*
 - Long-term
 - NEFMC Amendment IV, *T. Stockwell*
 - Research Set Asides, *C. Vonderweidt*
- Other Business/Adjourn

10:15 AM - 1:15 PM Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *M. Gibson*
- Public Comment
- Vice-Chair Election - ACTION
- 2007 Stock Assessment Review
 - 2007 Stock Assessment, *D. Grout, G. Nelson, B. Versak*
 - Review Peer Review Panel Report, *M. Murphy*
 - Discuss and Consider Approval of Stock Assessment for Management Use - ACTION

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

2/4 - 7:

ASMFC Winter Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia; (800) 333-3333 (see pages 1, 10, 11 and 16 for the final agenda).

2/12 - 14:

New England Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Harborside, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

3/11 (10 AM - 4 PM):

Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP) Operations Committee, Hotel Providence, 311 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

3/12 (10 AM - 4 PM):

NEAMAP Board, Hotel Providence, 311 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island

3/18 - 21:

ASMFC Habitat Committee, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, 6 Herndon Avenue, Annapolis, Maryland.

3/24 - 28:

ASMFC Technical Meeting Week, location to be determined.

4/8 - 10:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Annapolis, 173 Jennifer Road, Annapolis, Maryland; 410-266-3131.

4/15 - 17:

New England Fishery Management Council, Providence Biltmore, Providence, Rhode Island.

5/5 - 8:

ASMFC Spring Meeting, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia; (800) 333-3333.

6/3 - 5:

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

6/10 - 12:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel, Two Miss America Way, Atlantic City, New Jersey; 609-344-3535.

6/23 - 27:

ASMFC Technical Meeting Week, location to be determined.

Going Forward by Looking Back

With the holidays behind us, January offers us the opportunity to reflect on the events of the past year, and to think about our goals for the New Year. A review of a year's worth of our newsletters, press releases, and meeting summaries clearly illustrates both the impressive volume of Commission activities as well as their rich diversity.

Over the past year our management boards dealt with a wide range of issues. They initiated measures to end overfishing of tautog and to rebuild the stock. They received sobering news on American shad, via a comprehensive stock assessment that identified the status and suspected causative factors for the 29 stock units. They acted to reduce the nearshore quota for sea herring and to protect spawning areas.

Our boards also received encouraging news: menhaden fishing mortality remains below the threshold and the fecundity index is above the target, while total biomass continues to increase. Summer flounder age structure continued to expand, a bit of good news, although the spawning stock biomass slipped below the threshold, bringing the species to overfished status.

2007 marked the second year of focused research projects by our states on lobsters, menhaden, red drum, as well as shad and river herring. These projects, made possible by additional funds provided by Congress, are collecting badly needed data to help us better understand these important species. Many of them involve collaboration on the water with fishermen.

It was also the first year of full implementation of the NEAMAP survey, a scientifically designed survey intended to sample the nearshore areas from Cape Hatteras to Cape Cod. It will complement the Northeast Trawl Survey, and shows great promise in being able to provide data needed to successfully manage summer flounder, weakfish, scup, and other species important to our states. Funding was provided by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, New York state, the Mid-Atlantic Council's research set aside program, and the Commission.

In addition to the efforts made to expand the collection of data, the Commission continues to invest in people, sponsoring several stock assessment training initiatives for state scientists as well as for our staff and Commissioners. We have added two stock assessment specialists to our staff, enhancing our ability to provide needed help to the hard working state and federal scientists on our stock assessment and technical committees. The Commission sponsored a leadership-

training course that was well attended by mid-level managers from our staff and member states. In addition, we continue to publish a variety of informational articles on fisheries and science topics to help educate and involve our stakeholders.

The Commission, through our Habitat Committee, has helped promote the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) through the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. The ACFHP, made up of more than 80 stakeholders and partners, has succeeded in securing a sizable competitive grant to underwrite the completion of an assessment of existing information on Atlantic coastal habitats, and a coastwide plan for habitat conservation.

Through our Law Enforcement Committee, we have continued to promote compliance and enhance enforcement activities by providing a forum for state officers and their federal partners to share effective strategies. This has helped set the stage for states to conduct joint operations on a regional basis and to respond to high priority needs.

The Commission has also made a commitment to supporting NOAA Fisheries efforts to improve the collection of marine recreational fisheries catch data, providing staff to both the Steering Committee and Operations Team. The decision by NOAA Fisheries to enlist two of our past chairs, Pres Pate and Gordon Colvin, in Marine Recreational Information Program efforts will help ensure the needs and concerns of our states are carefully considered in the process, resulting in an effective and credible program.

These are a few of the many activities our Commission has been involved with this past year, and is only the briefest description of the many accomplishments that have resulted. However, they illustrate the breadth of our activities and reflect three values our Commissioners hold:

- Investing in people, giving them the tools they need to collectively solve problems and advance in their careers.
- Pursuing advancements in the collection and use of data to improve our understanding and management of fish stocks.
- Working cooperatively with each other and our federal partners to achieve success even in the face of daunting challenges and scarce fiscal and human resources.

Our collective accomplishments of 2007, as well as the quality of our Commissioners, should be encouragement to us all of the many things that can be done in 2008 to advance the Commission's vision of restoring Atlantic stocks. Hopefully, that is something we should all be able to agree with.



Northern Shrimp
Pandalus borealis

Fish Facts:

- Shrimp begin life as males and metamorphose into females in their 3rd year.
- Most shrimp do not live past 5 years of age.
- Appendages on the tail (abdomen), called pleopods, act like paddles, enabling the shrimp to move with remarkable agility and over considerable distances.

Age/Length at Maturity:
2.5 years for males
3.5 years for females

Amendment I Biological Reference Points:

- F target = F50 = 0.22
- Biomass Threshold = 19.8 million lbs
- Biomass Limit = 13.2 million lbs

Stock Status: Not overfished and overfishing is not occurring

Species Profile: Northern Shrimp

Recent Increase in Biomass Allows Section to Expand Season Length

Introduction

With annual landings valued at an average of six million dollars a year historically, northern shrimp, *Pandalus borealis*, support a small but important fishery in the Gulf of Maine. Throughout the early part of this century, there was concern for the status of the stock and the ability of the resource to sustain high harvest levels. This resulted in severe harvest reductions in the 2001 through 2005 fishing seasons, which, in turn, contracted harvest and processing capacity and closed some markets for northern shrimp. On the positive side, the harvest restrictions have allowed the resource to rebound with biomass at levels not seen since the late 1960s and early 1970s. Markets are now opening back up to take advantage of the high biomass of product available.

Since May 2004, the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts have managed northern shrimp under Amendment 1. The Amendment provides managers and fishermen the opportunity to use additional tools, such as a biomass threshold and limit, to manage this valuable resource in a sustainable way.

Life History

Northern shrimp are located in the cold waters of the Northern Hemisphere. The species is found in Canadian waters and in the northern most waters of the U.S. On the U.S. Atlantic coast, it primarily inhabits waters off of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Northern shrimp are hermaphroditic, maturing first as males at roughly 2 ½ years of age and then transforming to females at about 3 ½ years. Female shrimp may live up to five years old and attain a size of up to three to four inches in length.

Mating takes place in offshore waters during the late summer. Females carry the eggs on their abdomen and hatching takes place during the winter when the shrimp are in inshore waters. Northern shrimp are an important link in marine food chains, preying on both plankton and benthic invertebrates, and, in turn, being consumed by many important fish species, such as cod, redfish, and silver and white hake.

Commercial Fishery

Northern shrimp provide a small but valuable fishery to the New England states. The fishery is seasonal in nature, peaking in late winter when egg-bearing females move into inshore waters and ending in the spring under regulatory closure. The commercial fishery began in earnest in the late 1950s/early 1960s and experienced an incredible expansion in landings, peaking in 1969 at an historic high of 28.3 million pounds. Over the next eight years, landings dropped precipitously to a low of less than 85,000 pounds in 1977. The fishery was closed in 1978 due to a stock collapse and slowly reopened in 1979 at very low levels of harvest. The early 1980s showed a modest increase in landings and over the next ten years landings ranged

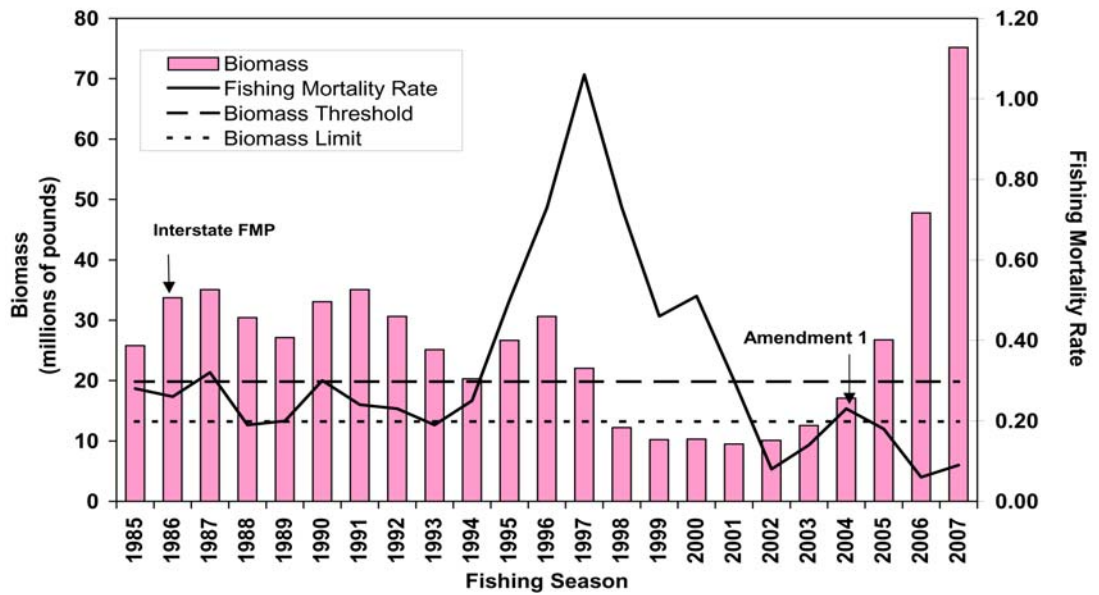


from 4.7 to 11.6 million pounds. From 1995 to 1997, landings approached record highs ranging from 14 to 20 million pounds. Landings have steadily increased from a low of 0.9 million pounds in 2002. The preliminary landings for 2007 are estimated at 7.4 million pounds.

Stock Status

Exploitable biomass based on the Collie-Sissenwine analysis generally declined from approximately 30 million pounds in 1996 to a time series low of 9.5 million pounds in 2001. Since then the biomass estimate has risen to an estimated time series high 75.2 million pounds in 2007, driven by high summer survey indices for 2005 and 2006. While there is a high degree of uncertainty around terminal year estimates, other indicators corroborate a very high abundance of northern shrimp. Stock status is determined to be not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

Gulf of Maine Northern Shrimp Total Stock Biomass
Source: ASMFC Northern Shrimp Technical Committee, 2007



Year Class Strength of the U.S. Northern Shrimp Stock for the 2008 Season

Year Class	Initial Year Class Strength (based on prior assessments)	Current Year Class Strength (based on 2007 assessment)
2002	<i>Virtually absent</i>	Have passed out of 2008 fishery
2003	<i>Moderate to weak</i>	Moderate Assumed to be 5-year old females
2004	Strong	Strong Assumed to be 4-year old females
2005	<i>Moderate to weak</i>	Moderate to weak Assumed to be 3-year old males and transitionals
2006	<i>Not available</i>	Very weak Juveniles

1970s, management for northern shrimp began in 1973 through an interstate agreement among Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. The northern shrimp fishery boasts the longest running interstate management program on the Atlantic coast of the U.S. The Commission adopted the first Fishery Management Plan for Northern Shrimp in 1986. Under this plan, the fishery was managed through the establishment of fishing seasons, which are set each fall. The plan allowed for the use of gear limitations. This plan was subsequently replaced by Amendment 1 in May 2004.

Amendment 1 establishes formal biological reference points for the first time. These include a fishing mortality target of 0.22, a biomass threshold of 19.8 million pounds, and a biomass limit of 13.2 million pounds. Both points provide benchmarks for Section consideration when establishing annual specifications. The limit is the point below which the management action should be taken to avoid stock collapse. The Amendment also provides a broader suite of management options to allow for greater flexibility in regulating the fishery and conserving the resource.

The current fishing season will run from December 1, 2007, through April 30, 2008. The Section conditionally committed to a 2008-2009 fishing season of the same dates. However, because of concern raised by recent poor recruitment, the fishery may be constrained by number of fishing days per week. For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, FMP Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 or bspear@asmfc.org.

Northern shrimp populations are tracked by year class. The accompanying table provides a comparison of year class strength as determined by prior assessments and the 2007 assessment. Fishing pressure and environmental conditions are the main factors affecting recruitment over time. The moderate 2003 and strong 2004 year classes will contribute most to this season's landings. A moderate to weak 2005 year class and the apparent recruitment failure of the 2006 year class are concerns.

Atlantic Coastal Management Considerations

Following the collapse of the stock in the early

ASMFC Releases Draft Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Coastal Sharks for Public Comment

The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board has approved the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Coastal Sharks for public review and comment. Public hearings will be held between February 7 and March 14, 2008; hearing details will be posted to the Commission website at www.asmfc.org (under Meetings) as they become available.

The Draft FMP addresses the management of 39 shark species. It proposes management measures for state recreational and commercial shark fisheries, including permitted species, regions, seasons, quotas, possession limits, size limits, protection of nursing and pupping grounds, authorized gear, dealer reporting, research, display, finning, and bycatch reduction.

Coordinated state management is a vital step towards establishing healthy self-sustaining populations of Atlantic coastal sharks. Many species have been in a depleted state and are vulnerable

to collapse if fishing pressure continues as it has in recent years. Most of these sharks utilize state water coastal estuaries and bays as pupping grounds and nurseries. The Draft FMP proposes to protect depleted shark stocks while they are in these areas during the most vulnerable stages of their life cycles.

Another goal of Draft FMP is to establish complementary state and federal shark management. Currently some states mirror federal regulations for Atlantic sharks while other states have no management (other than for spiny dogfish) or have regulations inconsistent with the federal FMP. Coordinating management between state and federal waters will close loopholes between jurisdictions and simplify regulations for law enforcement officials.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft FMP, either by attending public hearings or providing written com-



Photo courtesy of Chris Gardner, NOAA Fisheries Panama City Laboratory

ments. Copies of the Draft FMP can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM on March 28, 2008, and should be forwarded to Chris Vonderweidt, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Sharks). For more information, please contact Chris Vonderweidt at (202) 289-6400 or cvonderweidt@asmfc.org.

ASMFC Forms Fishing Gear Technology Workgroup

Last year, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission formed the Fishing Gear Technology Workgroup, a collection of fishing gear experts and representatives from nine of the Atlantic coast states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Workgroup is reviewing new gear innovations and associated research from the U.S. and around the world to evaluate their potential to reduce bycatch, discarding, and habitat alteration associated with Atlantic coast fisheries. The Workgroup hopes to build on the Commission's history of improving fishing gear to minimize impacts on ecosystems. Earlier ef-

forts by Commission committees and workgroups contributed to implementation of the Nordmore grate, turtle exclusion devices (TEDs), and finfish bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) in a variety of fisheries along the Atlantic coast.

The Workgroup held their inaugural meeting in September 2007 and established a plan to develop a report of their findings. Dr. Joseph DeAlteris (University of Rhode Island) and Dr. Chris Hager (Virginia Sea Grant) were elected to serve as Chair and Vice-chair of the Workgroup. The Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Program



Photo courtesy of W.B. Folsom, NOAA/ Dept. of Commerce

Policy Board charged the Workgroup with accomplishing the following tasks:

- Identify and evaluate studies of fishing gear selectivity, bycatch reduction, gear effects on habitat,

continued on next page

On the Legislative Front: President Signs Fiscal Year 2008 Budget

On December 26, 2007, President George W. Bush signed the \$555 million FY2008 Omnibus Budget Bill. The bill includes funding levels of line items that directly affect the Commission and National Marine Fisheries Service. The table below compares across a few key line items the actual funding in FY2006 with the expected funding in FY2008.



With the exception of the Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP), funding across the two years has nearly level for many line items. The bill signed by the President did not include a detailed breakdown within the 'Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions' and 'Fisheries Statistics' line items. As such, funding levels for the Interstate Fisheries Commissions, Regional Fishery Management Councils, and the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) are unclear at this point.

For more information, please contact Braddock Spear, Senior Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator for Policy, at (202) 289-6400 or bspear@asmfc.org.

Line Item in NOAA Fisheries Budget	FY2006 Actual (in millions of dollars)	FY2008 Expected (in millions of dollars)
Regional Councils and Interstate Fisheries Commissions	25.051	25.701
Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants	2.554	2.506
Fisheries Statistics	12.596	12.868
Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program	1.365	4.392

ASMFC Forms Fishing Gear Technology Workgroup (continued from page 6)

and impacts of a single gear used in multispecies fisheries (ecosystem planning);

- Develop a comprehensive report of gear work along the coast, evaluate the work to see if it is ready to be implemented in the management process and identify research recommendations; and
- Determine the transferability of such studies to other species and geographical areas. This includes identifying relevant studies from outside the Atlantic coast and evaluating them for their applicability to Commission species.

To develop a list of recommendations for the Policy Board, the Workgroup is building a prioritized list of Atlantic coast fisheries and gears known to have the greatest effects on coastal ecosystems. It will then gather and review studies of recent gear innovations that could potentially be applied to Atlantic coast fisheries to reduce ecosystem impacts.



Photo courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Dept. of Commerce

A final report is expected from the Workgroup in the fall of 2008. The report will summarize their evaluations of recent gear developments, and include recommendations for management implementation and future gear research. For more information, please contact Patrick Campfield, Stock Assessment Specialist, at (202) 289-6400 or pcampfield@asmfc.org.

Science Highlight: Southern States Conduct Red Drum Surveys to Better Assess Stock Status

Red Drum Tagging Programs

Why should I report a tag found in a red drum?

Information helps scientists and managers gain insight into changes in population size across years, growth rates, migration patterns, longevity, time at large, and tag retention for red drum. Anglers providing information on recaptured and released tagged fish from South Carolina waters will receive a detailed report on when and where the fish was tagged, its size when first tagged, and how many times it has been recaptured.

What do red drum tags look like?

Virginia: Orange plastic T-bar tag with a unique identifier number and reward call-in number

North Carolina: Steel dart tags with a yellow plastic streamer containing the contact information. Tag can be found on the dorsal side of the fish.

South Carolina: Orange coated plastic dart tag with instructions for reporting.



SC DNR Red Drum Tags

Georgia: Yellow plastic dart tag about 15 cm long, inserted on the shoulder region approximately 1/2 to 3/4 inch below the dorsal fin rays, between the 3rd & 4th ray.

What information should I collect?

Date caught, tag number, length, gear used, specific location of capture, fish kept or thrown back without tag, and any other red drum caught and its length

continued on next page

The red drum fishery is one of the most important coastal fisheries in the Southeastern U.S. Considerable state and federal resources are devoted to its management, yet it is unclear if the population is overfished. Part of this uncertainty is attributable to the regulations in place to manage the fishery. About ninety percent of all red drum landings are from the recreational fishery, which is a nearshore fishery, primarily targeting small “puppy drum.” As a result, most of the red drum landings are subadults (ages one to four). While there are some catches of older fish, they must be released alive due to maximum size restrictions. Due to the nature of the fishery, there is very little information to estimate the stock size of adult red drum.

The last stock assessment for red drum was conducted in 2000 and suggested that overfishing is not occurring, although it is not clear if the stock is overfished. The 2000 stock assessment relied upon data from the recreational and commercial fisheries, as well as fishery-independent surveys directed at the juvenile and subadult components of the estuarine populations. As a result, the primary benchmarks used to determine the status of the red drum have included the spawning potential ratio (the number of eggs that could be produced by an average recruit in a fished stock divided by the number of eggs that could be produced by an average recruit in an unfished stock) and survivability to age-4. There was no information available to assess the status of the adult stock. With a new assessment planned for 2009, the states needed to conduct some additional research on the adult portion of the populations to fully understand the status of the red drum population.

Red Drum Bottom Longline Survey

In 2005, Congress provided additional funds to the Atlantic States

Marine Fisheries Commission to address a number of research priorities. One of these priorities was to determine the stock status of red drum. With these additional funds, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia developed state-specific sampling protocols to provide a fisheries-independent index of abundance for adult red drum. This adult index of abundance will be used in the 2009 red drum assessment, and will aid managers in determining biological reference points.

To evaluate the abundance of adult red drum in the population, each state established a bottom longline survey. Many of the red drum encountered in the survey are tagged to collect information on migratory behavior and stock identification. Only male red drum are known to produce drumming sounds; therefore, the



Photo courtesy of Captain Walter Batemen, www.carolinaguide.com



Photo courtesy of SC DNR Red Drum Bottom Longline Survey

presence of “drumming” is noted when fish are measured and tagged to provide information on the sex ratio within the samples. A small sample of the fin is taken as a genetic sample. This is also known as a fin clip. The fin clip provides scientists with information for stock identification studies and to determine the presence of hatchery-origin fish in the offshore adult population.

While most of the fish encountered during the bottom longline survey are tagged and released, the states will sacrifice some red drum to collect additional information on sex ratios, maturity, and age structure of the population. From these sacrificed red drum, otoliths (or ear bone with rings to determine the age of the fish) will be collected to provide a means to evaluate the age structure of the adult population. The ages will be invaluable in determining the year classes present in the spawning (or mature) population. This information compared to subadult catches of red drum may reveal interesting population trends.

Virginia Red Drum Catch and Release Survey

Since July 2007, over 1,100 anglers have joined the Virginia Saltwater Fisherman’s Journal, a voluntary online reporting system conducted by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC). Through their participation in the Journal, anglers are able to record their catch, develop a history of their fishing trips to aid in planning future trips, share their catch data with other members, if they so choose, as well as aid the VMRC in gathering anecdotal data of species prevalence in the Chesapeake Bay.

Throughout 2008, VMRC is asking participating anglers to aid them in gathering information on the size and number of red drum caught and released -- both those that fall within the state slot limit of 18 and 26 inches and those that fall outside the slot limit, either below 18 inches or above 26 inches. This information will allow assessment scientists to obtain a better representation of the number and sizes of fish anglers are actually catching and releasing versus that presented by the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey catch and release estimates.

Over the next year, VMRC will also be working with the other states to collect genetic samples from the adult red drum (greater than 26 inches in length), to determine if the populations are coastal migratory, or state-specific.

Combined, state tagging programs and catch and release surveys will go a long way towards providing information critical to determining the status of the red drum population and developing a successful management program for the red drum fisheries. For information on the Red Drum Bottom Longline Survey, please contact Patrick Marchman, ASMFC Science Director, at pmarchman@asmfc.org; for information on the Virginia Saltwater Journal, visit <https://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com/> or contact Joseph Grist at joc.grist@mrc.virginia.gov.

Red Drum Tagging Programs (continued)

Whom do I contact if I recover a red drum tag?

Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament, Virginia Gamefish Tagging Program

Lewis Gillingham
968 S. Oriole Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
(757) 491 - 5160
(757) 491-5172 (fax)
vswft@mrc.virginia.gov

North Carolina Adult or Juvenile Red Drum Tagging Program

Lee Paramore
P.O. Box 769
Morehead City, NC 28557
1-800-682-2632

South Carolina DNR Adult Red Drum Tagging Program

Bryan Frazier
PO Box 12559
Charleston, SC 29422-2559
1-888-TAGS-4-SC

Georgia Cooperative Angler Tagging Program

Donna McDowell
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, Georgia 31520
912-264-7218

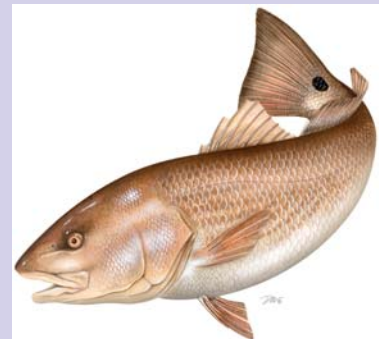
Is there a reward?

Virginia: Reward varies, either a t-shirt, hat, fish pin, or plastic utility box

North Carolina: \$5 or a hat

South Carolina: Hat

Georgia: Reward varies, but usually a t-shirt or hat



ASMFC Winter Meeting Final Agenda (continued from page 1)

10:15 AM - 1:15 PM Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (continued)

- Discuss Potential Changes to Management Program
- Technical Committee Recommendation Regarding the Hudson River Juvenile Abundance Index, *D. Grout*
- Review Fact Sheet on Management, Stock Status and Fishery Trends, *N. Meserve*
- Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise Update, *W. Laney*
- Other Business/Adjourn

2:15 PM - 6:00 PM Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

- Welcome/Call to Order, *J. Gilford*
- Question and Answer Session with Technical Committee Representatives Regarding the 2007 Stock Assessment
- Develop Management Advice in Response to the 2007 Assessment Results
- Other Business
- Election of Chair and Vice-chair
- Prepare Statement of Advice to the Management Board
- Adjourn

2:30 PM - 5:30 PM American Lobster Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *B. Culhane*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Draft Addendum XII for Public Comment - ACTION, *T. Kerns*
 - Lobster History-Based Trap Allocation Transfer Programs
- Review and Consider Draft Addendum XIII for Public Comment - ACTION, *T. Kerns*
 - Formalize LCMA OCC Effort Control Plan Promulgated by Massachusetts
 - Consider Trap Cap and Transfer Tax for LCMA 3
- Technical Committee Report on Relative Stock Trends, *P. Howell*
- Review and Consider State-Specific Conservation Equivalency Proposals for Addendum X - ACTION
 - Massachusetts and Maine Proposals, *D. McKiernan and G. Lapointe*
 - Technical Committee Report, *P. Howell*
- Consider Massachusetts Conservation Equivalency Proposal for Review, *D. McKiernan*
 - Massachusetts Proposal for V-Notching in State Waters of LCMA 1 for Technical Committee Review
- Election of Vice-Chair - ACTION
- Other Business/Adjourn

February 5, 2008

8:00 AM - Noon Strategic Planning Workshop

1:15 PM - 2:15 PM Tautog Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *D. Pierce*
- Public Comment
- State Implementation of Addenda IV and V, *C. Vonderweidt*
- Other Business/Adjourn

2:30 PM - 4:30 PM Shad & River Herring Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *P. Diodati*
- Public Comment
- Technical Committee Report, *R. Sadzinski*
- Advisory Panel Report, *P. Jackson*
- Review of Amendment 2
 - Public Comment Summary on PID for Amendment 2, *E. Robbins*
 - Provide Direction to PDT for Development of Draft Amendment 2 - ACTION
- Review and Approval of Advisory Panel Membership - ACTION
- Review and Approval of Stock Assessment Subcommittee Membership - ACTION
- Other Business/Adjourn

4:45 PM - 6:15 PM Weakfish Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *P. Augustine*
- Public Comment
- Weakfish Management Plan Review and State Compliance, *N. Meserve*
 - Discuss and Consider Approval of de minimis Requests - ACTION
 - Discuss and Consider Approval of the 2007 FMP Review - ACTION
- Update from the Stock Assessment Subcommittee, *J. Brust*
 - Review and Consider Approval of the Stock Assessment Terms of Reference - ACTION
- Other Business/Adjourn

February 6, 2008

8:00 AM - Noon Strategic Planning Workshop

1:15 PM - 2:15 PM Communication with Congress Workshop

2:30 PM - 6:00 PM ISFMP Policy Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Update on Non-Native Oyster Activities
- Discussion on ASMFC Involvement in State Recreational Registry
 - Update on Federal Recreational Registry
 - Update on Survey Design for Marine Recreational Information Program
 - Option Paper for ASMFC Involvement in State Registry
- Discussion on Alignment of State/Federal Management Programs
- Update on Fish Passage Workshop
- Other Business/Adjourn

February 7, 2008

8:00 AM - 10:30 AM Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *J. Travelstead*
- Public Comment
- Review and Consider Approval of State Summer Flounder Recreational Conservation Equivalency Proposals - ACTION, *T. Kerns*
 - Technical Committee Recommendation
 - Consider Approval of Proposals
- Review and Consider Approval of Scup Recreational Proposal- ACTION, *T. Kerns*
- Discussion of 2008 Commercial Scup Summer Period Quota, *T. Kerns*
- Discussion on Development of Amendment 15
- Other Business/Adjourn

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM ISFMP Policy Board

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Review of Non-Compliance Findings
- Other Business/Adjourn

11:15 AM - 11:45 AM Business Session

- Welcome/Call to Order, *G. Lapointe*
- Public Comment
- Review of Non-Compliance Findings
- Other Business/Adjourn

Noon Buffet Lunch for Commissioners & Proxies



Photo courtesy of Captain Walter Bateman, www.carolinaguide.com

NGO Representative Sought for Participation on ASMFC Habitat Committee

The Commission's Habitat Committee is seeking nominations from non-governmental organizations along the Atlantic coast to fill one seat on the committee. Examples of such non-governmental organizations include, but are not limited to, environmental organizations, academic organizations, industry, and groups with an interest in habitat conservation.

The intent of this action is to broaden the scope of input to the Habitat Committee as it develops creative approaches to the challenges of effectively integrating habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement into fisheries management programs and plans. The Commission believes that input from non-governmental organizations will strengthen its efforts in successfully conserving Atlantic coastal fish habitat. Individuals interested in serving as Habitat Commit-

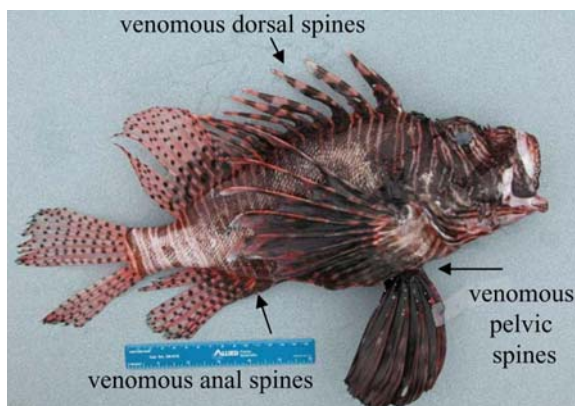
tee members can obtain a nomination form by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400 or downloading the nomination form via the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/breakingNews.htm> (under Announcements). A completed nomination form must be submitted to the Commission by **5:00 PM on Friday, February 8, 2008**.

The Commission recognizes that habitat protection and conservation is an important component to successful fisheries management. As a result, the Commission's Habitat Committee was established to review, research, and develop appropriate responses to concerns of inadequate, damaged, or insufficient habitat for Atlantic coastal species of concern. Nominees should be able to demonstrate a strong knowledge of general fish habitat, a familiarity with cur-

rent Atlantic habitat issues, and be an effective advocate for fish habitat. Nominees also must be willing to dedicate a reasonable amount of time to the activities of the program, including meetings, conference calls, workshops, document review, and working groups. Please note that non-federal members are reimbursed for travel and lodging expenses associated with committee activities. Demonstration of the ability to increase the credibility and expertise of the Habitat Program so that it will become a recognized authority on Atlantic coastal habitat issues will be a key element of the evaluation of nominations.

For more information, please contact Jessie Thomas (Habitat Coordinator; jthomas@asmfc.org), or Tina Berger (Public Affairs Specialist; tberger@asmfc.org) at (202) 289-6400.

Lionfish Invasion Along Southeast Coast



Native to the tropical Indo-Pacific region, lionfish are often kept in both public and private aquariums. Since 2000, however, lionfish have been observed, primarily by SCUBA divers in coral, rocky and artificial reefs along the southeast coast of the U.S., from North Carolina to

Florida and also throughout the Bahamas, Bermuda and Cuba. In more recent years lionfish have also been caught by bottom fishing anglers. Scientists expect lionfish to continue to disperse throughout the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Keys. There is also increasing concern among fishery scientists that lionfish, having no natural enemies, may adversely impact natural fish populations. In addition, this fish has venomous spines and may pose a danger to divers and anglers alike. NOAA would like to encourage fishermen to be extremely cautious and avoid contact with the venomous spines of the lionfish and to help us spread the word

to other anglers by posting and distributing the informational flyers (located on this website)

If an angler does get 'stung' by the venomous spines, (all the spines are venomous, see accompanying figure) they are advised to immerse wound in hot water for 30 – 90 minutes and seek medical attention as soon as possible. Hook and line or fishing related lionfish catches can be reported to NOAA by emailing to reportlionfish@noaa.gov or calling (252)728-8714. For additional information go to: <http://coastalscience.noaa.gov/education/lionfish.html>, <http://lionfish.eisf.org> or google "lionfish outreach"

ASMFC Comings & Goings

Commissioners

Senator John Chichester – Last year, Virginia State Senator John Chichester stepped down from his position in the state legislature and as Commissioner of the ASMFC. He had spent twenty-nine years as a Senator, the last sixteen of those as Chairman of the powerful Finance Committee. Among other successes in his lengthy career, Senator Chichester cosponsored a \$1.2 billion higher education bond package, which Virginia voters passed overwhelmingly. He resides in Stafford County with his wife, Karen. We wish Senator Chichester the very best in the future!

William Goldsborough

– As of November, Mr. Bill Goldsborough rejoins the Commission as Maryland's Governor's Appointee, a position he held from 1995 to 2004. He has been Chair of the Commission's Habitat Committee since 1997 and has participated on many species management boards. Mr. Goldsborough has been a scientist with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation since 1984, specializing in fisheries management and conservation, estuarine ecology, aquatic habitat, and environmental advocacy. He currently serves as the Foundation's Fisheries Program Director, and serves on a wide range of scientific and advisory committees for Maryland, Virginia, and NOAA Fisheries. His extensive experience in fisheries management and habitat conservation make Mr. Goldsborough a valuable addition to the Commission. Welcome back aboard, Mr. Goldsborough!



Howard King -- In December, Mr. Howard King retired after 38 years with the Maryland Department of Natural

Resources; the last five of which he served as Director of Fisheries. A Maryland native, Mr. King began his career as part of a team to first survey all of the tidal streams and rivers for anadromous fish, including shad, river herring, and striped bass. He later assumed responsibilities of administrative officer, federal aid coordinator, and recreational and commercial fisheries manager. Among other achievements, Mr. King developed the first sportfishing license for bay anglers in the mid-1980s, and he oversaw how all the money collected in license fees was spent. His leadership earned him the respect and admiration of diverse groups of stakeholders. He has been an ASMFC Commissioner since 2005, and an active participant in the Commission's process for many years prior. We wish Mr. King the very best!



Delegate Lynwood Lewis, Jr. – As of January, the Honorable Lynwood W. Lewis, Jr. joins the Commission as Virginia's Legislative Commissioner. A state delegate since 2003, Delegate Lewis represents the Counties of Accomack and Northampton, including part of the cities of Hampton and Norfolk. He sits on the Finance Committee, the Agriculture, Chesapeake, and Natural Resources Committee, and the Militia, Police, and Public Safety Committee. Delegate Lewis is



an attorney by trade, having received his B.A. from Hampden-Sydney College and his J.D. from the University of Richmond. He is a native Virginian, and currently resides with his family in Accomac. Welcome aboard, Delegate Lewis!

Bruno Vasta -- In November, Captain Bruno Vasta stepped down as Maryland's Governor's Appointee to the Commission. During his three years as Commissioner, Mr. Vasta brought his scientific background and experience as



Bruno with his lovely wife, Dotty

a professional charter boat captain to bear upon the natural resource stewardship duties of the Commission. He has broad experience in fisheries management, from serving on a series of special task forces addressing blue crab issues to directly aiding Maryland oyster restoration by raising oysters on his own pier. He is an active member of both the Maryland and Solomon's Island Charterboat Captain's Associations and is past-president of the Maryland Saltwater Sportsman's Association. Mr. Vasta future plans include staying involved in the Commission's management process, running his charterboat business, and traveling overseas with his wife and daughters. We wish Captain Bruno the very best in those endeavors!

Staff

Megan Caldwell -- In December, Megan Caldwell stepped down as ASMFC Science Director to pursue a

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***Our People:* Toby Mohrman, ACCSP Industry Advisor**



After retiring from a career as an engineer for the United States Navy submarine force, Toby Mohrman now spends his days as a Waterfront Operations Officer for Cabin Bluff, an outdoor resort of southeastern Georgia. Mr. Mohrman, who says, “fishing is not just a hobby, it’s a love” is literally living his dream of being a charter fishing guide at Cabin Bluff. In addition to acting as a guide on the nature river cruises, Mr. Mohrman oversees the many water activities hosted by the resort, and acts as the lodging manager and group coordinator.

Mr. Mohrman is also one of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Programs (ACCSP) invaluable advisors, whose insights provide important feedback to the fisheries managers and scientists that populate the program’s numerous committees.

Joining ACCSP

Mr. Mohrman was approached by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, asking if he would be willing to serve on the Advisory Committee for the ACCSP. Believing that many people in the outdoor/environmental industry often “let things go”, Mr. Mohrman felt this program’s goal of standardizing data collection efforts and capabilities on the Atlantic coast was worthwhile. He agreed to join the committee in the spring of 2006.

His Stake

In particular, Mr. Mohrman would like to see improvement in the data collection of for-hire fish stocks, so that better management decisions can be made.

Looking Forward

ACCSP is currently focusing much of its efforts towards implementing commercial data collection among the Atlantic coast states. Mr. Mohrman hopes that as this effort continues to grow, there will be more emphasis on other sectors that need it, like the for-hire and recreational fishing industries.

About the ACCSP

The 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 the Commission, the three Atlantic fishery management councils, the 15 Atlantic states, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, the DC Fisheries and Wildlife Division, NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. For more information, please visit www.accsp.org or call (202) 216-5690.



ACCSP Upcoming Meetings

1/30 -31:

ACCSP Bycatch Prioritization Committee, Holiday Inn - Inner Harbor, 301 W. Lombard St., Baltimore, Maryland.

2/25 & 26:

ACCSP Standard Codes Committee, DoubleTree Hotel Annapolis, 210 Holiday Court, Annapolis, Maryland.

2/27 & 28:

ACCSP Outreach Committee, Hilton Garden Inn, 815 14th Street, N.W., Washington DC.

William Most Awarded ASMFC Employee of the Quarter

As the key link between the Commission staff and the Executive Director, William Most has become a critical component of the ASMFC staff and an important contributor to the Commission's vision of "healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015." In recognition of his accomplishments, William was named Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2008. The award is intended to recognize contributions and qualities in the areas of teamwork, initiative, responsibility, quality of work, positive attitude, and results.

In less than a year and a half, William has earned the respect of the Commission leadership and staff for his intelligence, dependability, strong work ethic, and his positive, even tempered manner. He maintains a high level of situational awareness and a keen sense of priorities, enabling him to assist the Executive Director by properly routing issues and addressing problems. A consummate team player, William is always willing to pitch in and assist on any project and consistently delivers high quality work products in turn. This combined with his pleasant demeanor has resulted in positive outcomes in even the most difficult situations. Above all, he has provided a valuable link between the Executive Director, Commissioners, Capitol Hill staff, and other key stakeholders and partners, significantly improving coordination and communication, and enhancing staff efficiency.

William has a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Harvard University. As an Employee of the Quarter, he received a \$500 cash award, a small gift, and a letter of appreciation to be placed in his personnel record. In addition, his name will be engraved on the Employee of Quarter Plaque displayed in the Commission's lobby. Congratulations, William!



ASMFC Comings & Goings (continued from page 13)

new life with her husband Mike and baby girl Emily Sarah in Simsbury, Connecticut. Since September 2006, Megan has done a terrific job of energizing, focusing, and leading the Commission's Science Department. The Commission's loss is offset a bit by



knowing about the new adventures that are ahead for Megan, Mike, and their new daughter, Emily. We wish Megan and the entire Caldwell family the very best!

Patrick Marchman -- In December, Patrick Marchman joined the Commission staff as its new Science Director. Patrick earned an undergraduate degree in Decision Sciences from Georgia State University in 1995, and a master's degree in Marine Affairs, with a graduate-level certificate in Environmental Management, from the University of Washington in 2005. In his last position, he was an Environmental Program Manager and Senior Planner for the U.S. Army Reserve's 70th Regional Readiness Command (RRC) with responsibility for Reserve operations in Washington State, Oregon, and Idaho. As pro-

gram lead for NEPA and natural and cultural resources programs for the 70th RRC, Patrick worked on a wide range of environmental and cultural resource issues. As Science Director, Patrick will be responsible for overseeing the Commission's marine science program, including stock assessment activities, fisheries data collection programs, and scientific support to the states. Welcome aboard, Patrick!



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1444 Eye Street, N.W., 6th Floor
Washington D.C. 20005

Return Service Requested

ASMFC Winter Meeting Final Agenda (continued from page 11)

February 7, 2008 (continued)

12:15 PM - 1:15 PM American Eel Management Board

- Welcome / Call to Order, *A.C. Carpenter*
- Public Comment
- Review of Annual Reports, *E. Robbins*
 - 2007 Plan Review Team Report
 - 2007 Fishery Management Plan Review
- Review and Approval of de minimis Requests - **ACTION**
- Update on the MOU between ASMFC and FLFC, *E. Robbins*
- Update on Addendum II
- Other Business/Adjourn

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

- Welcome/Call to Order, *R. Boyles*
- Public Comment
- Expiration of Addendum IV Management Measures, *B. Spear*
- Economic Impacts of a Moratorium on Horseshoe Crab Harvest Study, *N. Etre*
- Status of the Red Knot, *L. Niles*
- USFWS Shorebird Technical Committee Update, *G. Breese*
- Adaptive Resource Management Work Group, *D. Smith*
- Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Report, *L. DeLancey*
- Possible Initiation of an Addendum - **POSSIBLE ACTION**
- Other Business/Adjourn