



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board Approves 4 Million Pound Quota for 2005 – 2006 Fishing Year

New Castle, NH – The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board approved specifications for the 2005-2006 fishing year, setting a four million pound annual quota with trip limits of 600 pounds in quota period one (May 1 to October 31) and 300 pounds in quota period two (November 1 to April 30). These actions were taken in response to the results of the latest stock assessment information and recommendations to Commission's Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee.

The coastwide spiny dogfish population is considered overfished, but overfishing is not occurring. The 2004 Northeast Fisheries Science Center's trawl survey data shows the seven years of low pup biomass has led to a truncated size range (i.e., low pup and reproductive female biomass) and shows no progress towards rebuilding the female spawning stock biomass. The 2003 fishing mortality rate (F) is estimated to be 0.044, higher than the rebuilding F (0.03), but lower than the F threshold (0.11) and target (0.08).

The federal specifications for the spiny dogfish fishery are still to be determined. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council recommended a four million pound quota and a 1,500 pound trip limit for the 2005-2006 fishing year. The New England Fishery Management Council will meet next week to discuss its recommendation to the Secretary of Commerce. The Secretary will set the federal specifications prior to the start of the fishing year on May 1, 2005.

The Board approved the development of an addendum to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish if a framework adjustment for the federal management plan is developed in 2005. The addendum and framework adjustment would change the specification progress to occur on a multi-year basis rather than an annual basis. For more information, please contact Megan Gamble, Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <mgamble@asmfc.org>.

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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.

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