



ASMFC

Fisheries *focus*

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States Move Forward to Reduce Shad Ocean Intercept Fisheries by 40% Reductions to Begin December 31, 2002

On August 28, 2002, the Commission's Shad and River Herring Management Board approved state proposals for a 40 percent reduction of effort in the ocean intercept fishery for American shad by December 31, 2002. This effort reduction, which is required by Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Shad and River Herring, is intended to protect depressed stocks of American shad. A second effort reduction, which will completely

eliminate a directed ocean intercept fishery, is scheduled to occur by December 31, 2004.

The seven states with an ocean intercept fishery are Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. All seven states submitted a proposal for reducing the effort in the ocean intercept fishery by 40 percent. Proposals were reviewed by the Technical Committee and then referred to the Management Board for approval. The states were also asked to submit proposals for the 100 percent reduction in effort. Three of the seven states did not submit proposals, but are anticipated to do so over the next few months.

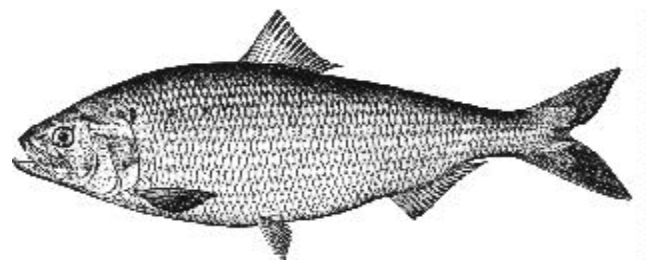
The Management Board gave the states the latitude to develop proposals that take into account regional differences in the American shad ocean intercept fishery. As a result, each of the seven proposals achieves the 40 percent reduction in effort by implementing at least one of the following: commercial landings quota, season and gear restrictions, or limited entry programs.

The Amendment also requires states to implement a bycatch provision to restrict indirect landings of American shad to five percent of the total landings (in pounds) per trip. Bycatch is anticipated to be a

growing problem as the directed ocean fishery is phased out. Several states have already included this requirement in their regulations; the remaining states will do so over the next few months.

Discrete populations of American shad, with varying abundance, migrate to estuaries or river systems to spawn each spring. Prior to their migration, these stocks have been found to mix in coastal waters and are subject to harvest by the ocean intercept fishery. Because of this mixing, the fishery is unable to direct its effort on specific stocks. In order to conserve the more vulnerable runs of American shad, the Amendment requires a phase out of the ocean intercept fishery.

For more information, please contact Megan Gamble, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 extension 317.



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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

9/19:

Joint meeting of the ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee and MAFMC/NEFMC Spiny Dogfish Monitoring Committee, BWI Marriot, Linthicum, Maryland.

9/24 & 25:

ASMFC Winter Flounder Technical Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

10/1 - 3:

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Holiday Inn Select, Claymont, Delaware.

10/2 (1:00 PM - 6:00 PM) & 3 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM):

ASMFC Multispecies Committee, Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia.

10/7 - 10:

ACCSP Advisory and Operations Committees, DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City, 300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, Virginia.

10/8 (9 AM - 4 PM):

ASMFC Tautog Technical Committee and Advisory Panel, Holiday Inn BWI, 890 Elkridge Landing Road, Linthicum, Maryland.

10/16 & 17:

ASMFC Power Plant Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service Fisheries Science Center, Beaufort, North Carolina.

10/22 (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM) & 23 (8:30 AM - 5:00 PM):

ASMFC Workshop on Linking Multispecies Assessments to Single Species Fisheries Management, Baltimore, Maryland.

11/7 (9:30 AM - 5:30 PM):

ASMFC Weakfish Advisory Panel, Holiday Inn BWI, 890 Elkridge Landing Road, Linthicum, Maryland.

11/5 - 7:

New England Fishery Management Council, Gloucester High School Gymnasium, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

11/16- 21:

ASMFC 61st Annual Meeting, Williamsburg Lodge, 310 South England Street, Williamsburg, Virginia; (757) 229-1000.

12/2 - 6:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Sheraton Grand New Bern, 100 Middle Street, New Bern, North Carolina; (800)325-3535.

We all know the obvious: Living within our budget is necessary to stretch our weekly salaries to the next payday, and critical to meeting our longer term goals for financial security. Objectively, we recognize the wisdom of setting aside funds, letting them earn interest and building them for future uses. But credit cards make it easy for us to buy now and pay later...a very tempting proposition. So tempting in fact that the use of credit has become an integral part of our private economic lives. At its best, credit allows us to enjoy the use of something while we are paying for it. At its worse, credit charges consume all of our discretionary funds and some of our essential funds long after we have consumed, used, or worn out what we purchased. Unless you are somehow making money on what you bought, credit purchases are not sustainable. Logically, we all know this but, as a society, Americans have earned a reputation for our affinity for instant gratification. It's tough to say no to that purchase and put the money in the bank instead.

For those of you who saw the fisheries analogy coming in the first sentence, here it is. We know the wisdom of letting fish get bigger before we catch them. We recognize the value in letting fish spawn before we keep them, and we objectively understand the need for leaving enough behind for next year. But that sure doesn't make it easy for us to live within those constraints. We provide all sorts of rationale to justify taking "just a few more fish."

Here are just a few:

I have to meet my annual payment for my boat note.

The balloon mortgage on my tackle shop is due this year.

I'll lose all my charter clients with this bag limit.

Keeping only five fish is not worth my time and gas.

Big fish don't come in my bay, so I need to keep the small ones.

These reductions will cost us our markets.

Under these limits half of my customers will stop sailing with me.

You have probably heard more. Even though they cut across most user groups the comments reflect the com-

mon thread of borrowing against the future. Taking next year's catch today. The trouble is that strategy is not sustainable on healthy stocks and it won't get you to your goal of rebuilding depressed stocks. Our collective will to control our catch today is a major determinant of how many fish will be available tomorrow. I mentioned the difficulty with short-term sacrifice, but that's exactly the choice that was made with striped bass. If you were not around then, a moratorium sounds easy, and logically was the right thing to have done. But to those involved in the fishery back then, it was a painful and courageous investment in the future. All user groups were asked to shoulder the burden, and they collectively stood together to do the right thing. Today, we are all enjoying the wisdom of that decision with a wonderful abundance of striped bass.

Well, we face the same tough choices today as we work to rebuild important species like summer flounder, weakfish, black sea bass and others. But to do that we need to continue to keep constraints on what we are taking. The recent Board action to cut the 2003 summer flounder quota to pay back for previous harvest overages and to keep the rebuilding schedule on track was a tough call for some members to make. The scientific advice was criticized before the meeting, and the Board action to follow that advice has been criticized since. Rather than point fingers, let's remember the lesson from striped bass and follow the wisdom of investing for the future. We have a stewardship trust in managing the people's fish. For resource users, living within our budget and saving for the future is not a punishment it is a responsibility. We owe our children and their children nothing less. I hope that this is something we can all agree with.

States Schedule Public Hearings on Draft Amendment 6 to the Striped Bass FMP Hearings to be Held in September/October

Atlantic coastal states from Maine through North Carolina have scheduled the dates and times of their hearings in order to gather public comment and input on the recently released Draft Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Following are the details of the scheduled meetings. For revisions or additions to the public hearing schedule, please go to the ASMFC website under its EVENTS page.

Maine Department of Marine Resources

September 23, 2002; 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Ellsworth Holiday Inn

Hancock Room

215 High Street

Ellsworth, Maine

Contact: Lew Flagg at (207)624-6548

And

September 25, 2002; 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Sheraton Tara Hotel

Sebago Room

363 Maine Mall Road

South Portland, Maine

Contact: Lew Flagg at (207)624-6548

And

September 26, 2002; 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Wiscasset Middle School Cafeteria

252 Federal Street (Route 218)

Wiscasset, Maine

Contact: Lew Flagg at (207)624-6548

New Hampshire Fish & Game

October 2, 2002; 7:00 PM

Region 3 Office

225 Main Street

Durham, New Hampshire

Contact: John Nelson at (603)868-1096

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

September 24, 2002; 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Boston-Dedham Hotel and Conference Center

55 Ariadne Road

Junction of Route 1A and I-95

Dedham, Massachusetts

Contact: Paul Diodati at (617)626-1528

Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife

October 3, 2002; 6:00 PM

Building C

3 Fort Wetherill Road

Jamestown, Rhode Island

Contact: Brian Murphy at (401)423-1941

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

October 9, 2002; 7:00 PM

Ramada Inn Stratford

222 Lordship Boulevard

Stratford, Connecticut

Contact: Ernie Beckwith at (860)434-6043

And

October 10, 2002; 7:00 PM

333 Ferry Road

Old Lyme, Connecticut

Contact: Ernie Beckwith at (860)434-6043

New York Department of Environmental Conservation

September 18, 2002; 7:30 PM – 10:30 PM

State University of New York at Stony Brook

Student Activities Center Auditorium

Nicholls Road

Stony Brook, New York

Contact: Gordon Colvin at (631)444-0430

And

October 1, 2002; 7:30 PM - 10:30 PM

Meeting location to be determined

Contact: Gordon Colvin at (631)444-0430

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

September 17, 2002; 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Ocean County Administration Building

101 Hooper Avenue

Toms River, New Jersey

Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609)292-2083

And

September 26, 2002; 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Vineland Public Library

Doris Tripp Room

1058 East Landis Avenue

Vineland, New Jersey

Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609)292-2083

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Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife

October 1, 2002; 7:30 PM

Richardson & Robbins Building

89 Kings Highway

Dover, Delaware

Contact: Roy Miller at (302)739-3441

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

October 1, 2002; 7:30 PM

Ramada Inn

Chesapeake Ballroom

300 South Salisbury Boulevard

Business #13

Salisbury, Maryland

Contact: Howard King at (410)260-8264

And

October 10, 2002; 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM

Anne Arundel Community College

Humanities Building, Room 112

101 College Parkway (Main Campus)

Arnold, Maryland

Contact: Howard King at (410)260-8264

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

September 26, 2002; 6:00 PM

222 Taylor Street

Colonial Beach, Virginia

Contact: A.C. Carpenter at (804)224-7148

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

October 7, 2002; 7:00 PM

2600 Washington Avenue

Fourth Floor Conference Room

Newport News, Virginia

Contact: Jack Travelstead at (757)247-2247

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

October 8, 2002; 7:00 PM

North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island

374 Airport Road

Manteo, North Carolina

Contact: Pres Pate: (252)726-7021

And

October 10, 2002; 7:00 PM

Pitt Community College

Leslie Building, Room 143

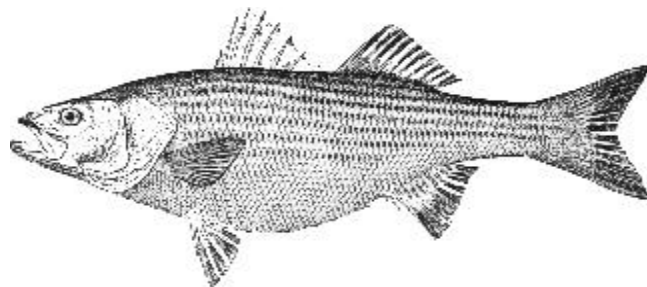
1986 Pitt Tech Road, Highway 11S

Winterville, North Carolina

Contact: Pres Pate: (252)726-7021

The Draft Amendment provides extensive options for the long-range management of Atlantic coastal striped bass populations. The three primary issues addressed in the Draft Amendment include management program goals, objectives and planning horizon, modifications to the biological reference points, and allocation of the resource by user group and area. The document presents information on habitat issues, bycatch and discards of striped bass, monitoring programs, and protected species/fishery interactions.

The Board intends to meet prior to the end of the year to review public comment received at the state hearings and submitted in written form, and select the preferred measures to be included in the final draft of the Amendment. Copies of the Public Hearing Draft can be obtained by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400 or via the Commission's website at www.asmfmc.org. Public comment on the document will be accepted until **October 18, 2002** and should be forwarded to Robert Beal, Director, Interstate Fisheries Management Program, 1444 Eye Street, N.W., Sixth Floor, Washington, DC, 20005; (202) 289-6051 (fax) or <rbeal@asmfc.org>. For more information, please contact Robert Beal at (202)289-6400.



Board Selects Preferred Management Strategies to the Spiny Dogfish FMP ASMFC to Approve Final Plan in November

2002 Northeast Fisheries Science Center's spring trawl survey.

Public Comment Divided

Public comment was divided among two different groups, the fishing industry and the environmental organizations. In general, the fishing industry supported a small-scale directed fishery with a 7,000-pound trip limit and no set aside for the biomedical industry. Whereas, the environmental organizations vied for complementary regulations in state and federal waters, which eliminates a directed fishery and allows fishermen to land a small amount of bycatch encountered in other fisheries.

Pup Production Remains Low

The spring trawl survey data shows that the steep decline in total biomass appears to have slowed in recent years. The adult (greater than 80 cm) and the intermediate-sized (36-79 cm) female biomass appear to have leveled off in the past few years. The adult male biomass (greater than 80 cm) remains near the time series low. Of greatest concern was the pup biomass (females and males less than 36 cm), which remained extremely low for the sixth consecutive year. This poor pup production is less than what would be expected from the current size composition and abundance of mature females. Because of its poor stock status, the Board will carefully monitor rebuilding and awaits the upcoming stock assessment slated for Spring 2003.

Compatibility with Federal Plan

For the most part, the interstate plan complements the current federal plan, with the exception of the target spawning stock biomass, rebuilding schedule and payback provision for quota overages. Each of these exceptions will be considered in Amendment I to the federal management plan for spiny dogfish. The Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils

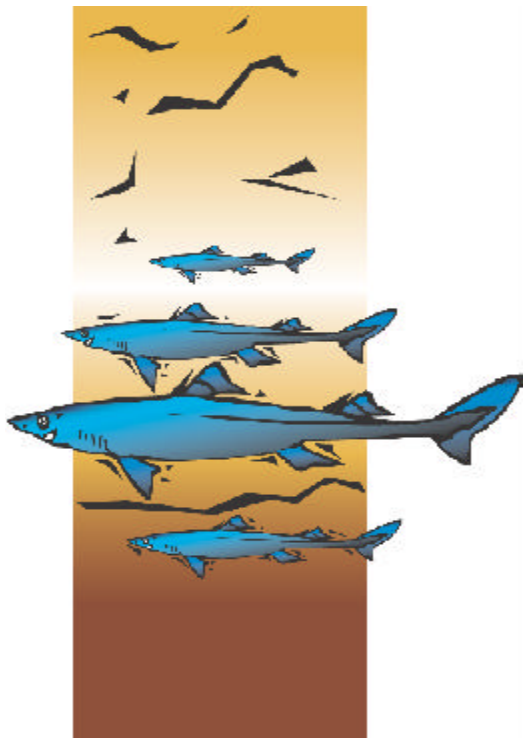
will begin development of the amendment this fall and are expected to take at least a year to complete the document. The Board and Technical Committee anticipate working closely with the Councils as they undertake the amendment process.

Other Issues

Over the next year, the Board will also have to address two other major issues; Canadian spiny dogfish landings and increased discards. Over the past few years, Canadian landings have increased from 939,330 pounds in 1996 to 8.3 million pounds in 2001. 2002 marks the first year that Canada has put a cap on spiny dogfish landings (7.1 million pounds), but the quota is greater than the current federal quota for spiny dogfish (four million pounds for May 2002 - April 2003). The increased Canadian landings and the Board's expressed intent to restore the East Coast population of spiny dogfish calls for greater management cooperation of this transboundary resource. Canadian landings are not the only factor challenging restoration efforts, management changes to fisheries that significantly interact with spiny dogfish (i.e. Northeast Multispecies) will impact the rate of discarding of spiny dogfish. Currently, the interstate FMP for spiny dogfish proposes voluntary monitoring and reporting of spiny dogfish bycatch, but does not implement regulations to control the level of discards.

Plan Approval Slated for November

The Board will review the final management plan during the ASMFC annual meeting in November. During the meeting, the Commission will approve the final document and decide on the implementation date for the interstate regulations. For more information, please contact Megan Gamble, Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400.



On August 29, 2002, the Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board met to review public comment received on the draft Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish and identify the preferred management strategies for inclusion in the final plan. These management strategies include:

- rebuilding the female spawning stock biomass to a level that will maximize recruitment (SSB_{max}),
- a rebuilding schedule consistent with maintaining a constant fishing mortality strategy until the stock rebuilds to SSB_{max} ,
- a May 1 – April 30 fishing year,
- a constant fishing mortality strategy,
- a semiannual allocation of the annual quota, and
- a payback provision for quota overages.

In making its decisions for the final plan, the Board not only took into account the extensive public comment received during seven state hearings and written comment, but also the findings of the Technical Committee regarding the most recent spiny dogfish data from the

ASMFC Releases Draft Weakfish Amendment 4 for Public Comment: States Schedule Hearings for October

The majority of Atlantic coastal states from Connecticut through Florida, as well as the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, have scheduled the dates and times of their hearings in order to gather public comment and input on the recently released Draft Amendment 4 to the Weakfish Fishery Management Plan. Following are the details of the scheduled meetings. Additional hearings may be scheduled; information on these hearings will be posted on the ASMFC website at <www.asafc.org>.

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection

October 15, 2002; 7:00 PM

333 Ferry Road

Old Lyme, Connecticut

Contact: Eric Smith at (860) 434-6043

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation

October 15, 2002; 7:00 PM

Bureau of Marine Resources, Conference Room

205 North Belle Meade Road

East Setauket, New York

Contact: Gordon Colvin at (631) 444-0433

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife

October 7, 2002; 6:00 PM

Vineland Public Library

Doris Tripp Room

1058 E. Landis Avenue

Vineland, New Jersey

Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 292-2083

And

October 16, 2002; 7:00 PM

Ocean County Administration Building

101 Hooper Avenue

Toms River, New Jersey

Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 292-2083

Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife

October 8, 2002; 7:30 PM

Richardson and Robbins Building

89 Kings Highway

Dover, Delaware

Contact: Roy Miller at (302) 739-3441

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

October 8, 2002; 7:00 PM

Tawes State Office Building Cafeteria

580 Taylor Avenue

Annapolis, Maryland

Contact: Howard King at (410) 260-8264

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

October 10, 2002; 6:30 PM

222 Taylor Street

Colonial Beach, Virginia

Contact: A.C. Carpenter at (804) 224-7148

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

October 15, 2002; 7:00 PM

2600 Washington Avenue

Fourth Floor

Newport News, Virginia

Contact: Jack Travelstead at (757) 247-2247

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

October 15, 2002; 6:00 PM

DENR Office Building

127 Cardinal Drive

Wilmington, North Carolina

Contact: Dr. Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

And

October 16, 2002; 6:00 PM

North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island

374 Airport Road

Manteo, North Carolina

Contact: Dr. Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

And

October 17, 2002; 6:00 PM

CMAST Building, Room 205

303 College Circle

Morehead City, North Carolina

Contact: Dr. Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

October 17, 2002; 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Atlantic Beach City Hall

Commission Chambers

800 Seminole Road

Atlantic Beach, Florida

Andy Strelcheck at (850)487-0554, ext. 214.

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ASMFC & MAFMC Establish 2003 TALs for Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass & Bluefish

In early August 2002, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) met to review the latest stock assessment information on summer flounder, scup, black sea bass and bluefish, and establish the total allowable landings (TAL) limits for the 2003 fishing season for these species. Following is a summary of their actions.

Summer Flounder

The Commission and Council approved the establishment of a 23.3 million pound TAL for the 2003 summer flounder fishery. This TAL, which represents a four percent reduction from last year, meets the fishing mortality target mandated by the Fishery Management Plan, complies with a 1999 court order, and is consistent with the recommendations of the 35th Northeast Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) and the Council's Technical Monitoring Committee.

In taking this action, the Management Board and Council carefully considered scientific advice indicating that while the summer flounder population continues to rebuild, significant landings overages over the last several years have resulted in fishing mortality having consistently exceeded the target required by the Plan. Due to uncertainties in discard mortality and landings data, the model used to conduct the stock assessment overestimates biomass and underestimates fishing mortality, particularly in the most recent year. For example, last year's 2001 biomass estimate was 117 million pounds, while this year's 2001 biomass estimate was 95 million pounds. This has resulted in the estimated biomass being lower than was forecast, and a subsequent need to lower the TAL in order to reach the target.

Scup

For the 2003 scup fishery, the Commis-

sion and Council approved the establishment of a 16.5 million pound TAL for the 2003 scup fishery. This TAL represents a 53 percent increase relative to the 2002 TAL.

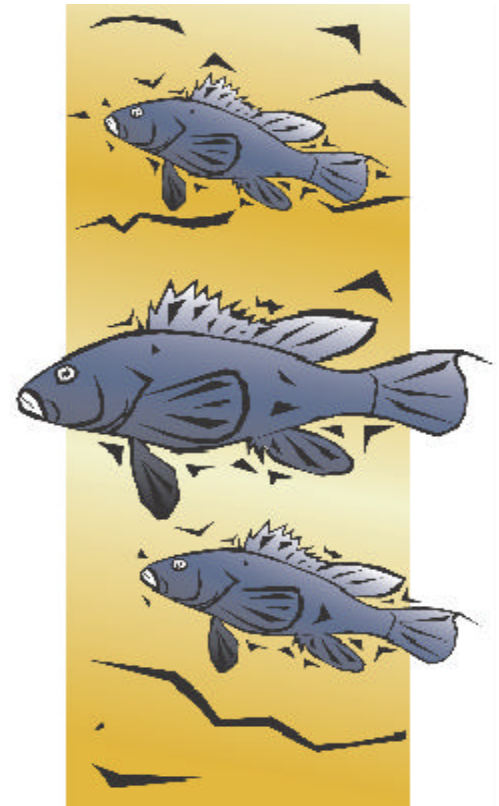
In June, the SARC determined that the scup resource is experiencing strong recruitment and is at a relatively high level of biomass, as indicated by 2002 spring trawl survey. Specifically, the 2002 three-year average of the spring survey indicates that spawning stock biomass has increased 12-fold relative to the 2001 average. These factors, combined with a decline in the relative exploitation rate for the species, have resulted in the determination that scup is no longer considered overfished. Even with these positive findings, both the SARC and the Council's Monitoring Committee recommended a more modest increase to the TAL than was approved by the Board and Council.

"I think that we can all agree that these findings offer very promising news for the scup resource and fishery," stated Board Chair, Pres Pate Jr., of North Carolina. "The question that remains is to what extent is the resource recovered. Our challenge as managers is to implement management measures that will rebuild stocks, while providing fishermen the opportunity to harvest more fish as the resource improves."

The Board and Council also took action to establish a 15,000-pound/week landing limit for the Winter I quota period for the commercial fishery. The Winter I period extends from January 1 through April 30. Taken at the recommendation of industry representatives, this action is intended to prevent an early closure of the fishery, thereby allowing the opportunity for scup landings throughout the entire quota period.

Black Sea Bass & Bluefish

The Commission and Council also



approved the establishment of TAL for the 2003 black sea bass and bluefish fisheries at 6.8 million pounds and 37.3 million pounds, respectively. The TAL for black sea bass remains unchanged from that of 2002, while the TAL for bluefish represents a 39 percent increase relative to 2002.

"These TALs indicate improvements in the stock status of both species and the same, if not increased, fishing opportunities," stated Robert E. Beal, Director, Interstate Fisheries Management Program. "Under the Black Sea Bass Plan the Board was required to reduce fishing exploitation by 32 percent for 2003. However, positive trends in the survey index have allowed us to maintain the 2002 quota level, while ensuring continued rebuilding of the stock."

This past May, the Commission and Council, through the adoption of Amendment 13 to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, established a state-by-state allocation of the

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ASMFC Releases Weakfish Draft Amendment 4 for Public Comment (continued from page 7)

The Draft Amendment proposes a number of changes to the current weakfish management program under Amendment 3. These include a revised overfishing definition; new triggers, targets and schedules for stock rebuilding; a revised recreational reference period; options for data monitoring requirements; and qualifications for *de minimis* status. The Commission and the states are particularly interested in obtaining public comment on management measures pertaining to the recreational fishery and bycatch provisions for the commercial fishery.

The most recent stock assessment update indicates that the management

measures put in place in Amendment 3 have resulted in positive trends for the weakfish population, with models indicating fishing mortality has significantly declined from levels that existed when Amendment 3 was adopted. The absolute magnitude of impact should be viewed with caution given the uncertainty of the fishing mortality and spawning stock biomass estimates for the most recent year of the assessment, which is often the case with these final year estimates. Amendment 4 intends to build upon the stock recovery benefits of Amendment 3.

The Draft Amendment can be obtained by contacting the Commission office at

(202) 289-6400 or via the Commission's website at <www.asmfc.org>. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Amendment, either through attending public hearings or providing written comments. Written comment will be accepted until **October 31**, and should be submitted to Carrie Selberg, Weakfish FMP Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20005; (202) 289-6051 (fax) or <cselberg@asmfc.org>. For more information, please contact Carrie Selberg at (202) 289-6400.

ASMFC & MAFMC Establish 2003 TALs for Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass & Bluefish (continued from page 8)

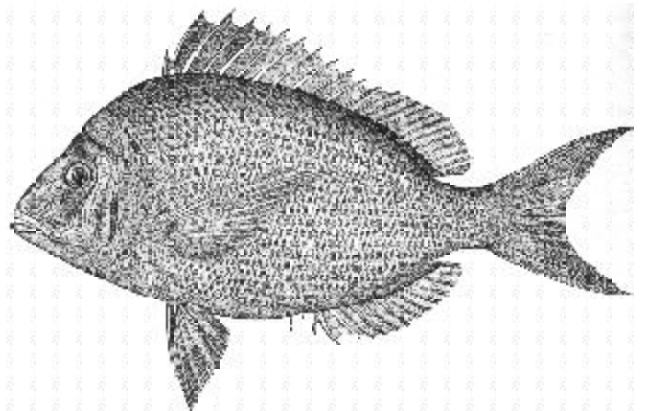
commercial black sea bass quota for the 2003 and 2004 fishing years. Both the Commission and the Council believe that a management program, which allows for state-specific regulations offers the most regulatory flexibility for each gear type used throughout the range of the species. The approved state allocations of the commercial quota are: Maine and New Hampshire - 0.5% each, Connecticut - 1%, Delaware - 5%, New York - 7%, Rhode Island, North Carolina and Maryland - 11% each, Massachusetts - 13%, and New Jersey and Virginia - 20% each. Overall, the commercial fishery receives 49 percent of the TAL. The Commission and Council will meet in December to establish the 2003 recreational management measures.

Bluefish are currently managed through a commercial state-by-state quota system and a recreational possession

limit, which are set annually. The Board and Council established a coastwide TAL of 37,293,397 pounds and a recreational possession limit of 15 fish for 2003. The approved TAL represents a 39 percent increase, while the possession limit remains the same relative to 2002.

All four species -- summer flounder, scup, black sea bass and bluefish -- are managed jointly by the Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Council. Each year, the Commission and Council meet to establish commercial and recreational fisheries management regulations for the

upcoming fishing season. For more information, please contact Michael Lewis, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400.





Fall Brings a New Website and 2003 Budget Planning to the ACCSP

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) has improved the functionality of its website to include much more information on the Program's development and ongoing projects.

"The ACCSP staff have spent much of the summer collaborating on the web redesign," says Maury Osborn, ACCSP Director. "The greatest challenge was finding ways to deliver information very simply to a wide variety of user groups."

The new www.accsp.org is arranged to guide users with varying degrees of program familiarity to information appropriate for their needs. The homepage looks much the same as it has since the launch of the data management system in February 2002. However, subsequent pages are much more concise than the old page layout.

- The **About Us** section features news links and general information on partners and staff.
- The **Data Access** section acts as a portal to the online data management system, provides updates on data management issues and an online access request for new non-confidential users.
- The **Program Info** section describes ACCSP committees, staff, and data collection standards. It also hosts a document search function that provides quick access to ACCSP documents, including the Program Design, operations plans, and project proposals.

2003 ACCSP Proposals

The ACCSP turns its attention to new projects for the 2003 fiscal year, as the request for proposal period ended on August 30. ACCSP partners and committees submitted 20 proposals for the upcoming year, totaling \$4.4 million, excluding administrative costs. Following evaluation by relevant ACCSP staff, the Advisory Committee, and the Opera-

tions Committee, recommendations for 2003 funding will be presented to the Coordinating Council for final approval.

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 contact Abbey Compton, ACCSP Outreach Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <abbey.compton@accsp.org>.

The ACCSP Welcomes New Staff

Shannon Bettridge joined the ACCSP staff on August 12 as Program Coordinator. In this position she will work closely with the Director to formulate an implementation plan, based on the new ACCSP Strategic Plan. Ms. Bettridge will also be responsible for staffing at least six ACCSP committees.

Ms. Bettridge is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Rhode Island, researching a dissertation entitled "The role of planning in marine resources management: the effect of different legislative mandates on the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan." Ms. Bettridge has taught at the primary, secondary and collegiate levels, and has been co-owner and manager of a Maine lobster business since 1995.



Mark Your Calendars!

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

61st Annual Meeting
November 17 - 21, 2002

Williamsburg Lodge
310 South England Street
Williamsburg, Virginia
(757)229-1000

Preliminary Agenda*

*Dates and times are subject to change up to the times meetings are held

Sunday, November 17, 2002

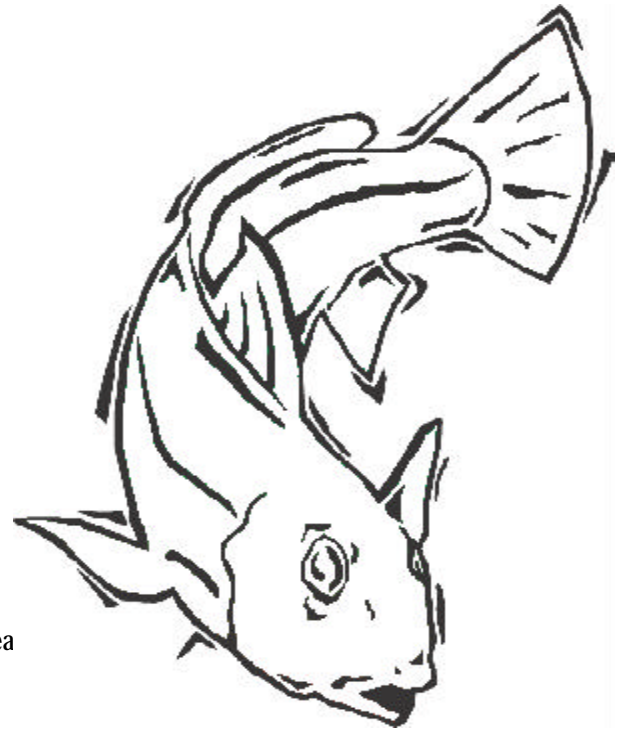
3:00 PM - 7:00 PM Registration
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Advisory Panel Oversight Committee

Monday, November 18, 2002

7:30 AM - 4:00 PM Registration
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Tautog Management Board
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM Welcome Tea for Spouses & Guests
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM American Eel Management Board
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Spiny Dogfish Management Board
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Law Enforcement Committee
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Aquaculture Subcommittee
3:30 PM - 7:00 PM Welcome Reception at Jamestown

Tuesday, November 19, 2002

7:30 AM - 4:00 PM Registration
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea
Bass Management Board
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Habitat Committee
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM Law Enforcement Committee
10:00 AM - Noon South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board
11:00 AM - Noon Habitat Committee and Management & Science Committee
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Management & Science Committee



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ASMFC 61st Annual Meeting Preliminary Agenda (continued from page 11)

Tuesday, November 19, 2002 (continued)

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Striped Bass Management Board

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM Colonial Dinner

Wednesday, November 20, 2002

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM American Lobster Management Board

8:00 AM - Noon Management & Science Committee

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM Commissioner Workshop "Draft 2003 Action Plan Review"

1:15 PM - 2:15 PM Captain David H. Hart Award Luncheon

2:30 PM - 6:30 PM Weakfish Management Board

Thursday, November 21, 2002

8:00 AM - 11:30 PM ISFMP Policy Board

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM Executive Committee

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM Business Meeting

2:00 PM - 6:00 PM ACCSP Coordinating Council

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

Return Service Requested