

THE NORFOLK ANGLERS CLUB

WIRELINE

JANUARY 2021

What's Inside

Guest Speaker: Wreck Fishing with Capt Bradley Gray, *Wreck Dawg Sport Fishing*

Fishing Tips; NOAA Bathymetric Data Viewer; Locating your Fishing Spots

Fishing Reports;

- Lynnhaven: Speckled Trout
- James River: Rockfish
- Elizabeth River: Speckled Trout, Striped Bass
- Inshore/Bay Wrecks: Black Sea Bass, Tautog

Angler Interest:

- Atlantic States Fisheries Management Commission (ASFMC) Menhaden Board
- ASFMC Fisheries Management 101

Leadership Notes...

Fellow Norfolk Anglers,

Welcome! to our new members for 2021, William Ragulsky, Jeffery Duffer, Corey Ferguson, Richard Keatley, Kelly Hoggard and Jere Humphrey. We're glad you're with us and look forward to fishing with you!

We've recently created a PayPal account to collect membership dues. You can find a link to our PayPal account on our NAC Webpage along the top header line. There's an additional \$1.00 added for the PayPal fee. You can also send a check and membership form to the address below on the lower right corner. We're working to include PayPal options for Hats, Fishing Tips Books, Decals, etc., at a later date.

Last meeting, we had some questions about the status of Menhaden fishery and also about how fishery management decisions and regulations are set. The Anglers Interest section has some information on both subjects.

Happy New Year! We hope you remain healthy and safe during the coming year. Please take precautions on and off the water.

- Will

Meeting

Our next Club meeting is scheduled for January 11th will be a video networked meeting on Zoom.

Guest Speaker: Wreck Fishing with Captain Bradley Gray, *Wreck Dawg Sport Fishing*. With the February Sea Bass season approaching this is speaker you don't want to miss!



Important:
January NAC Meeting will be
on Zoom *January 11th*

Publishers NOTES

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NORFOLK ANGLERS



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We would like to Thank everyone who contributed to our Marine Toys for Tots Foundation fundraiser this year! With the help of all we succeeded our goal by 36%. Our goal was set for \$5,000.00 and we collected \$6783.42. Great Job! Due to your generosity, you certainly put a smile on a Child's face in the Hampton Roads area on Christmas morning. Hope you have a safe and Happy New Year and hopefully in 2021, we will be stuffing the boat full of toys again.

Ed & Karen Schrader, Sea Tow Hampton Roads

Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish Entries
January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Freshwater	
Species	Name (#Entries)
Blue Catfish	Mary Troutner (1)
	James Eisenhower (1)
Largemouth Bass	James Eisenhower (1)
	Russel Willoughby (1)
Crappie	James Eisenhower (3)

Saltwater	
Species	Name (#Entries)
Shark	Greg Rogers (1)
Blueline Tilefish	James Eisenhower (2)
Flounder	Louis Glaser (2)
	Alex Perez, Jr. (1)
Cobia	Alex Perez, Sr (1)
Speckled Trout	Bert Sainz (1)
	James Eisenhower (4)
	Ned Smith (1)
Black Drum	Ned Smith (1)
Spanish Mackerel	Alex Perez, Sr. (1)
Grey Triggerfish	Jere Humphrey (1)
Tautog	Alex Perez, Jr (3)

****Virginia Saltwater Tournament (Saltwater) or Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Freshwater) Citation paperwork or the Norfolk Anglers Club Prize Fish entry form may be submitted to James "Ike" Eisenhower at the regular meetings or send via email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com.

Club Members Tournament for 2021

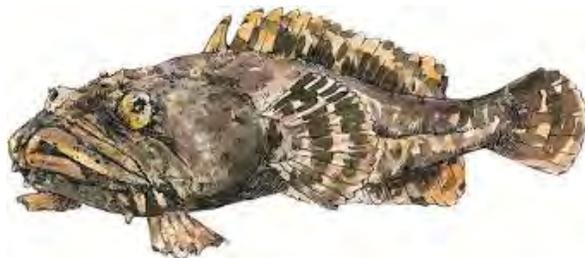
For this year we're continuing our Redfish "Spots" Tournament and adding an Oyster Toadfish Tournament. Both are running from January 1st through the end of the year. They're open to Norfolk Anglers Club members.



Redfish "Spots" Tournament

Rules

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- Must have the Norfolk Anglers Club decal in the photo with the fish on a measuring device* showing the total length of the fish. See NAC Prize Fish Contest Rules for measuring info. *Entries received with decal and no measurement can only be judged by number of spots.
- Red Drum/Redfish up to 26 inches in length only and caught in Virginia and North Carolina waters
- Awards determined by 1st: number of Spots, 2nd: Largest Fish up to 26 inches, 3rd: Date of Catch
- Entries submitted on the Club Prize Fish Entry Form with photo (can be sent electronically to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com)
- No entry fee except the cost of the decal (\$1)
- \$50.00 Gift Card to the 1st Place Angler, \$25.00 Gift Card for the 2nd Place Angler.



Oyster Toadfish Tournament

- Must be a Norfolk Anglers Club Member
- Tournament for fish caught between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021
- Awards determined by Total Weight and then by date of catch
- Additional Award for Best Oyster Toad Photo
- Entries submitted by email to NorfolkAnglersClub@gmail.com in the form of a Fishing Report; who was fishing, stating total weight, with photo
- Weighing need not be on a certified scale and may be done by the angler, just try an avoid weighing fish on a pitching boat
- No entry fee (we would never charge a fee for catching Toads)
- 1st Place, 2nd Place, and Best Photo Winners get a Non-Tipping Oyster Toad Can Cooler from Oyster Toad Outfitters
- Winners will be determined by our Tournament Director

"AJ" Perez, the Oyster Toadfish Tournament Director (OTTD)



The Basics of Cold Water Safety



When planning a fishing trip we think about all the things to make the trip successful. There's all the rods & reels, fishing tackle, bait, fuel for the boat, food & drink, and the list goes on. And, while we'll give a thought to the outside temperature and dress for it, seldom do we consider how cold the water is and what it means IF you find yourself in it.



1 - 10 - 1 is the US Coast Guard's Cold Water Survival Rule and it helps to understand the phases of cold water immersion. Simply put, it's 1 (first minute and Cold Water Shock), 10 (Ten minutes and Cold Water Incapacitation), and 1 (One hour to succumb to Hypothermia).

1 Minute - First Minute and Cold Water Shock

Rapid immersion in cold water causes the body to gasp and hyperventilate. The risk of breathing in water during this initial and uncontrolled phase is high and accounts for roughly 20 percent of deaths from drowning.



10 Minutes- Cold Water Incapacitation

The next ten minutes is critical for a person in the water to self-rescue. As the body decreases blood flow to the arms and legs to preserve body heat to vital organs you lose meaningful arm & legs movements. Your ability to self-rescue diminishes and if you're not wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) that will float you head up, you drown.



1 Hour - Hypothermia

Hypothermia is the cooling of the body core temperature. It happens more slowly than you might imagine and varies among individuals depending on a number of factors such as, physical conditioning, body fat, etc. Hypothermia symptoms can range from confusion to unconsciousness and develops in the hour after immersion.

So, how cold does the water have to be? Well, our fishing grounds are already very cold with 45.5 degrees (CBBT water temperature on 30 Dec). Though generally, water colder than 60 degrees is considered cold.

There's another Coast Guard Rule to think about...the 50/50/50 Rule; In 50 degree water for 50 minutes you have a 50 percent *better* chance of surviving wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD).

It's important to remember if you've gotten dunked you must get dry and warm as soon as possible. Toughing it out because the fishing's good can spell disaster. Hypothermia can quickly become a medical emergency. Calling the Coast Guard on VHF Channel 16 is one of your best options for getting assistance quickly.



Locating & Navigating the Wrecks we fish, Captain Will Bransom

Finding fishable structure was once having a fishing partner who "had some numbers," a commercial "Hang Log," or an established artificial reef. With sidescan technology readily available and affordable many anglers can locate fishing spots without too much difficulty with their own vessel. In the past decade commercial sidescan data has become available online through the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) making finding great fishing locations much easier. Using the NOAA Bathymetric Data Viewer can be frustrating until you figure out the layers you want or don't want to see. I take a simple approach and only select two; BAG Color and DEM Color Shaded Relief. I also use the Options drop down menu in the upper right corner to select the NOAA Raster Navigational Charts. This will overlay the NOAA Navigation Chart over the areas you're viewing.

The screenshot displays the NOAA Bathymetric Data Viewer interface. The browser address bar shows the URL: maps.ngdc.noaa.gov/viewers/bathymetry/. The NOAA logo and "NATIONAL CENTERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION" are visible at the top left. The breadcrumb trail reads: NOAA > NESDIS > NCEI > Maps > Bathymetry.

Layers Panel:

- Bathymetric Surveys**
 - Multibeam Survey Tracklines
 - Multibeam Survey Footprints
 - Multibeam Bathymetry Mosaic
 - NOAA NOS Hydrographic Data:
 - All Surveys with Digital Data
 - Surveys with Bathymetric Attributed Grids (BAGs)
 - Surveys without Digital Data
 - BAG Footprints
 - BAG Color Shaded Relief
 - Single-Beam Surveys
 - Single-Beam Sounding Density
- Digital Elevation Models**
 - DEM Footprints
 - DEM Color Shaded Relief
 - All DEMs
 - Newer Tiled DEMs
- Coastal Lidar**
 - Topo-Bathy/Bathy Lidar Datasets

Main Map Area:

- A bathymetric map showing a deep, narrow channel with a blue 'X' marking the wreck site.
- An inset image shows a black and white photograph of the SS Tiger, a large steamship, at sea.
- Text overlay on the map reads: **Inshore Wreck: SS Tiger Sunk: April 1, 1942**
- A vertical scale bar is visible on the left side of the map.

Bottom Left Panel:

- More Information**
- Help**

Bottom Right Panel:

- Position: -75.773°, 36.765°
- Elevation: -18.7039 meters
- 20m
- 100ft

Use the zoom function (it's very sensitive) and move the cursor over an area of interest and record the Decimal-Degrees position in the lower left corner. You can also click to place a blue "X" on a position to help relocate it when you're zooming in/out. Just remember the position location aligns to the cursor NOT the blue "X."

The Decimal-Degrees navigational format is the format you'll most often see on a cell phone or map application. You'll often see another format, Degrees, Minutes, Seconds, used on navigational fixes or positions. Neither one of these formats are frequently used in Marine Chart-plotters. What you're looking for is a conversion to a Global Positioning System (GPS) format.

Fortunately at you can find a coordinate conversion program at www.Boulter.com. Enter in any navigational format being careful to use a decimal point where it matters and the minus sign when appropriate. Select "Convert and Map" and you'll be provided with all the navigation formats and a map position depicted. If you find the map depiction is way off check the coordinates entered.

Lastly, a note about GPS positions you'll find on the internet. Many well-meaning people have posted "their numbers" and before you strike out on the perfect day to fish a new spot be warned that in my experience "their numbers" have average .75-1.50 nm off from the actual position. That's A LOT of error! Some of this can be attributed to some kind of conversion error from one chart-plotter to another, an error converting a LORAN position to GPS (I've NEVER found a program that's any good), or someone's error transcribing the data. For common artificial reef locations check the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) website for artificial reef locations or talk with other anglers and compare notes.



GPS Coordinate Converter, Maps and Info

Enter coordinates

(like 37 23.516 -122 02.625, but it's flexible)

Decimal Degrees (WGS84)

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
36.765	-75.773

Degrees, Minutes & Seconds

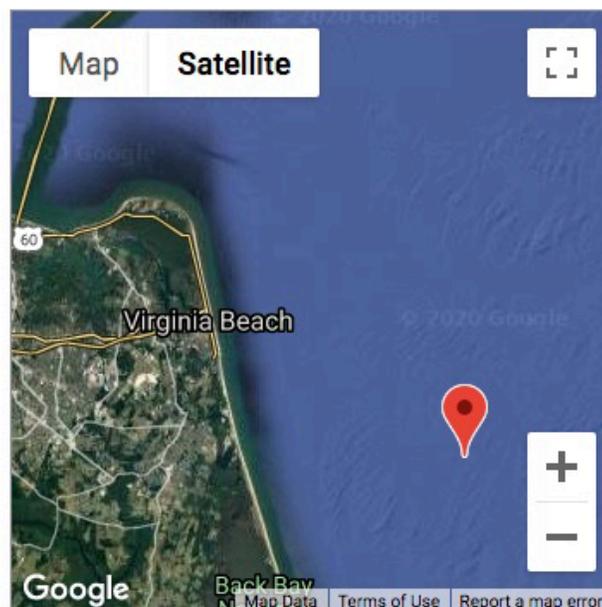
<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
N36 45 54	W75 46 22

GPS

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
N 36 45.900	W 75 46.380

UTM

	<u>X</u>	<u>Y</u>
18N	431010	4069082



Fishing Reports...



3 DEC: Went out with Russell on his Carolina Skiff to the Elizabeth River after getting a good report from Jerry Hughes that he caught a limit of trout trolling on the Elizabeth River. It was a beautiful day with water temperatures in the upper 40's to lower 50's. Launched out of the Elizabeth River Park off Poindexter St. Great ramp. We trolled lead head with Gulps, 4 inch white with firetails. It took a while and several hits but the fish got off the hook, but I caught the first one, 20 inch. After exploring the Bryan's Cove, we hit the Deep Creek where we ended up with a 17 inch and 16.5 trout on 52MRs. Slow catching, but a really nice day on the ER.

- Dr. James W. Ike Eisenhower



6 DEC: Went out with John Kudzik and his friend Brian to the Elizabeth River again in his 24 foot Tidewater. We launched out of the ER Park. Very crowded, but it was Sunday, so no surprise. Fished the St. Julian's flat off of the Bomb Dump, it was slow but we saw enough fish caught to keep us anticipating a knockdown. We hooked up 4 fish total right there. Tried further down the ER but no luck. Bumped into Will Bransom and Louis Glaser on Will's Carolina Skiff and he took the above picture of us. That's John in the stern of the boat. All fish were 17-18 inches, but fat. There was still some bait in the water. Water temperature was still in the upper 40's to lower 50's. All fish were caught on Berkley Gulp chartreuse curly tails on lead heads. I caught one and Brian caught the rest.



23 DEC: Striper fishing had seemed to slow down a bit lately and Mary had not been able to go. On a Wednesday, Mary was available, she and I fished with John Curry. Trolling Stretches and Bandits in about 1 1/2 hours, we hooked 7 fish. As usual, Mary caught the most landing 4 and losing 1. Our 3 man limit consisted of a 21, 22 and 24. Mary's Red/White Stretch caught most of the fish but I landed the biggest on a chartreuse striped Bandit.



Water temperature was 45 degrees.
Merry Christmas to all and tight lines in 2021!

- Henry Troutner:

23 DEC: Good day Fishing, not a limit but okay! - Jerry Hughes

From Facebook

Chris Schneider: Where did you get the striper?

Jerry Hughes: Elizabeth River, they are in the same area as Speckled trout, 4th one I've caught there.



27 DEC:
 Great day fishing!

- Jerry Hughes



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 757-687-9093





29 DEC: On a Sunday, AJ and I fished the Tiger wreck using quartered Blue Crabs on a dropper loop rig. Black Sea Bass up to 13.5 inches kept us busy as we tagged and released 28 of them for the Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program (VGFTP).

In between the Black Sea Bass, AJ did find five Tautog ranging from 12 to 21 inches. All tog were tagged and released as well.
- Alex Perez



21 inch Tautog and her Black Sea Bass neighbor.



Only one of these two pictured doesn't mind the cold.



10 -11 DEC: I fished with Shelton Arey in the Lynnhaven River. We fished 6 hours each day mostly on outgoing tides.

The water temperature ranged between 44 and 48 degrees and the bite was very slow. We finished the first day with 5 speckled trouts, the biggest were 16 inches and 17 inches.

The second day we caught 4 speckled trouts, the biggest were 19 inches and 20 inches.

- Ned Smith



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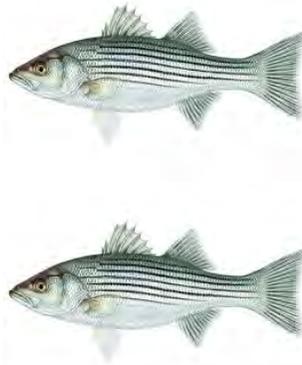
4 DEC: John Curry and I hit the Chuckatuck for a quick limit of striper. We got our 2 fish, 22 inch and 25 1/2 inch, both caught trolling Bandits.

Seems the crazier the color, the more the fish like them. We have also started removing the middle of the 3 treble hooks and it does not seem to effect the results. Makes it a little safer when unhooking a thrashing fish and easier to get out of the net.

- Henry Troutner



3 DEC: Went out for a couple of hours in Little Creek and no bites. Decided to try Pretty Lake and had 2 taps and the below speckled trout which was a little over 24 inches. Water temperature was 54 degrees and depth 3 1/2 feet. Fish are getting scarce, next move is the Elizabeth River. - Louis Glaser



30 DEC: Happy New Years Everyone!
The last time out for stripers in 2020. Worked hard for the 2 keepers and 2 shorts we got.
- Mary & Henry Troutner



3 DEC: Slow bite on this today, but I got dinner.
- James Robinson

29 Nov: Got lucky, couple of nice ones were caught on this day.
- James Robinson

Angler Interests

Mid-Atlantic Council Announces New Mobile App for Recreational Tilefish Reporting



Mid-Atlantic Council Announces New Mobile App for Recreational Tilefish Reporting eFin Logbook Provides Anglers a Simple and Convenient Reporting Tool NOAA Fisheries recently implemented new permitting and reporting requirements for recreational tilefish fishermen.



All recreational vessel operators (including for-hire operators using their vessels on recreational trips) targeting or retaining golden or blueline tilefish from Virginia to Maine are now required to obtain a free permit from NOAA Fisheries and submit electronic vessel trip reports (eVTRs) within 24 hours of returning to port.

A new app has been released to make the reporting process easy and convenient. Harbor Light Software's eFin Logbook has received certification from NOAA Fisheries as an approved application through which anglers can report their trips. Funded by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, eFin Logbook is a user-friendly application designed specifically for recreational tilefish anglers. The app is available for use on all Apple and Android mobile devices (iPhone, iPad, Android phone, and Android tablet).

"During our initial outreach efforts, many anglers told us that the existing NOAA-approved reporting systems were too complicated for recreational reporting," said Mid-Atlantic Council Executive Director Chris Moore. "Recreational stakeholders are generally supportive of the need for improved data collection on tilefish but have stressed the need for a simpler, more user-friendly interface. In response to this feedback, we collaborated with Harbor Light Software on the development of eFin Logbook, the first NOAA-approved electronic reporting system designed specifically for recreational fishermen."

At present, eFin Logbook can only be used by tilefish recreational anglers to satisfy reporting requirements. Future modifications may expand its capabilities to other reporting and personal fishing log applications. For-hire operators, many of whom have other reporting requirements, are encouraged to choose different software. To learn more about other electronic reporting options and decide which one is right for you, visit the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Region Electronic Reporting Web Page.

To get started with eFin Logbook: Obtain a [free permit from NOAA Fisheries](#), download the app from the Apple or Google Play store for free (search for "eFin Logbook"), and you will be all set to begin reporting your tilefish trips. For more information and instructions on how to get started with eFin Logbook, visit: <https://www.harborlightsoftware.com/efin-logbook>.

Reminder: Circle Hooks Required for recreational fishing Rockfish with live or chunk bait



As required by 4 VAC 20-252-50 (B), "Pertaining to The Taking of Striped Bass," beginning August 1, 2020, any person fishing striped bass recreationally shall use non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks when fishing with bait, live or chunk.



J Hook Circle Hook Non-Offset Offset



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 20, 2020

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
703.842.0740

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board Approves TAC for 2021-2022

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (Board) approved a total allowable catch (TAC) of 194,400 metric tons (mt) for the 2021 and 2022 fishing seasons, which represents a 10% reduction from the 2018-2020 TAC level. The 2021-2022 TAC was set based on the ecological reference points (ERPs) approved by the Board in August, and reaffirms the Board’s commitment to manage the fishery in a way that accounts for the species role as a forage fish.

“This TAC represents a measured and deliberate way for this Board to move into the realm of ecosystem-based management,” said Board Chair Spud Woodward of Georgia. “The TAC strikes a balance between stakeholder interests to maintain harvest on menhaden at recent levels, while also allowing the ERP models to do what they are intended to do.”

Based on projections, the TAC is estimated to have a 58.5% and 52.5% probability of exceeding the ERP fishing mortality (F) target in the first and second year, respectively. The TAC will be made available to the states based on the state-by-state allocation established by Amendment 3 (see accompanying table for 2021 and 2022 based on a TAC of 194,400 mt). In determining which level to set the TAC, the Board also considered recent updates to the fecundity (FEC) reference points, and current stock condition. According to the latest assessment results, the 2017 estimate of fecundity, a measure of reproductive potential, was above both the ERP FEC target and threshold, indicating the stock was not overfished. A stock assessment update is scheduled for 2022 which will inform the TAC for 2023 and beyond.

For more information, please contact Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, or Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at mappelman@asmfc.org or tkerns@asmfc.org, respectively.

2021-2022 ATLANTIC MENHADEN QUOTAS			
		Metric Tons	Pounds
TAC		194,400	428,578,637
1% Set Aside*		1,944	4,285,786
TAC After Set Aside		192,456	424,292,851
STATE	ALLOCATION	QUOTA (MT)	QUOTA (LBS)
ME	0.52%	995	2,194,080
NH	0.50%	962	2,121,582
MA	1.27%	2,453	5,407,708
RI	0.52%	996	2,196,488
CT	0.52%	993	2,188,342
NY	0.69%	1,330	2,931,091
NJ	10.87%	20,925	46,131,966
PA	0.50%	962	2,121,464
DE	0.51%	986	2,174,821
MD	1.89%	3,634	8,011,402
PRFC	1.07%	2,066	4,554,267
VA	78.66%	151,392	333,761,875
NC	0.96%	1,840	4,056,588
SC	0.50%	962	2,121,464
GA	0.50%	962	2,121,464
FL	0.52%	997	2,198,250
TOTAL	100%	192,456	424,292,851

*1% of the TAC is set aside for episodic events, the remaining TAC is allocated to the states per the provisions of Amendment 3. Quotas may be adjusted pending final 2020 landings and the redistribution of any relinquished quota.

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 diadromous species.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Management 101

Introduction

For over two centuries, coastal and marine fishery resources have been an important component of our nation's heritage, supporting thriving fishing communities and enriching recreational opportunities, as well as providing seafood that is consumed within the U.S. and exported abroad. Recognizing the importance of coastal and marine fisheries to their constituents and the inherent migratory nature of fish species, the 15 Atlantic coastal states came together in the early 1940s to form the Commission. Its purpose is to serve as a deliberative forum for the states to discuss fisheries management issues and challenges, and develop interstate fishery management plans for the conservation of shared fishery resources. Its mission is to promote the better utilization of the fisheries, marine, shell and diadromous, of the Atlantic seaboard through the development of cohesive fishery management plans along the Atlantic coast, rather than disparate state-specific plans for the same species.

Types of Management Tools

The Commission uses two main types of controls to limit catch of the species it manages. Input controls limit the capacity of and effort in the fishery. These controls include fishing seasons, days out, and the number and size of fishing vessels in the fishery. For example, the measures managing the Atlantic herring fishery include days out of the fishery specifications for the inshore Gulf of Maine that allow permitted vessels to land herring four consecutive days a week from June 1 – September 30.

Output controls limit the amount of fish caught by the fishery. This includes measures such as total allowable catch (TAC) and bag limits. For example, the summer flounder commercial fishery is managed by an annual catch limit (ACL). The coastwide ACL is allocated to each state. When the state reaches its quota the fishery is closed in that state, ensuring the coastwide ACL is not exceeded.

More than 75 years have passed since the Commission's creation. Congress has since passed legislation to further support the states' efforts to sustainably manage Atlantic coastal fishery resources. Today, the Commission manages 27 shellfish, diadromous and marine species. Some of these species are managed solely by the Commission and the states, such as striped bass, menhaden, American lobster and eel, while other species, such as Atlantic herring, summer flounder, and coastal sharks, are cooperatively managed by the Commission, NOAA Fisheries and the East Coast Regional Fishery Management Councils.

Management strategies are science-based and tailored to be species-specific; for example, scientists look at a variety of factors when giving advice to managers, including the size of the fish stock, how fast it reproduces, how it interacts with other species, and whether or not it needs to be rebuilt or receive additional protection. Stock assessments are conducted to evaluate the health of the fish stocks and the

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Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

information is used to determine appropriate measures for the fishery. (For more information on the science behind fisheries management, including data sources and stock assessments, see Fisheries Science 101.) To limit harvest to sustainable levels, managers employ a variety of management measures, including controlling the number and size of fish that are caught, the gears that may be used, and the areas and seasons that are open to fishing.

This webpage is intended to guide you through the Commission's fisheries management process, including managed species, the key players in the process, FMP and addenda development and implementation, state/federal cooperation, and how the fishing and interested public can become involved in our decision-making process.

Fisheries Management Strives to Balance Objectives

The Atlantic states recognize that their marine fish populations are rich resources, producing high economic yield, supporting recreational fishing opportunities, creating jobs, and providing seafood that is consumed within the U.S. and exported on a global scale. These fish species are also essential to their marine ecosystems, acting as predators and prey, and helping to shape their habitats. The science-driven, interstate management system in place is a way to balance these short- and long-term economic and environmental considerations.

The main objective of fisheries management is to allow enough harvest to sustain and build the fishing and seafood industries while protecting the productivity and sustainability of the marine ecosystems. In order to meet this overarching goal, the Commission strives to meet seven main objectives, contained within the Commission's ASMFC Five-Year Strategic Plan, which is reviewed and updated every five years. Four of those objectives directly pertain to fisheries management and ensuring fisheries sustainability:

Objective 1 – Rebuild, maintain, fairly allocate, and promote Atlantic coastal fisheries.

Objective 2 – Provide the scientific foundation for and conduct stock assessments to support informed management actions.

Objective 3 – Promote compliance with fishery management plans to ensure sustainable use of Atlantic coast fisheries.

Objective 4 – Protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnerships and education.

The bulk of the Commission's fisheries decision-making occurs through the Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP), where species management boards determine management strategies that the states implement through fishing regulations. The ISFMP Policy Board is responsible for the overall administration and management of the Commission's fishery management programs and provides direct oversight to the individual species management boards. The Program promotes the conservation of Atlantic coastal fishery resources, is based on the use of sound science, and provides adequate opportunity for public participation.

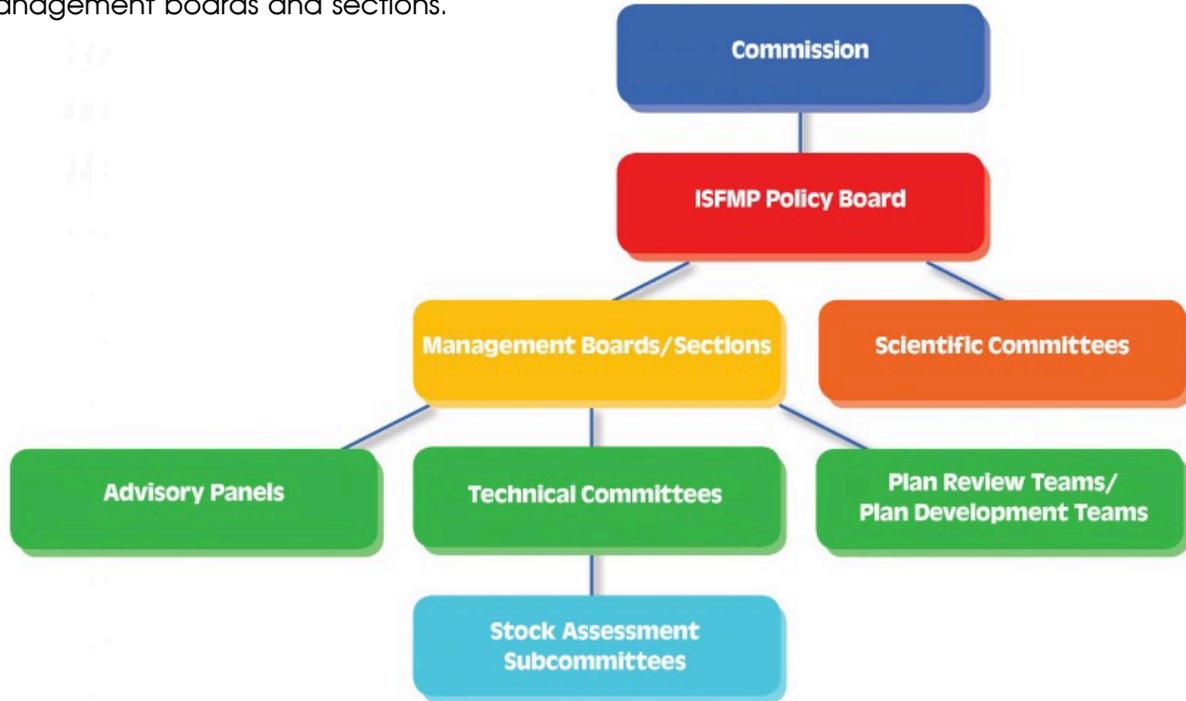


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Management Structure

The accompanying graphic shows the flow of decision-making, with the Commission being the highest level, and advisory panels, technical committees, plan development and review teams providing support to the species management boards and sections.



Boards and Committees

Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board: The ISFMP Policy Board provides primary oversight of the Commission's fisheries management process. It monitors species stock performance, establishes overarching policies to guide decision-making, considers appeals made by the states regarding management actions, and receives reports from various supporting committees. The Board is comprised of the Commissioners from the fifteen member states and representatives from the District of Columbia (DC), the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC), NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Board also includes one non-voting member of the Commission's Law Enforcement Committee.

Species Management Boards and Sections: These species-specific management boards are composed of Commissioners from the states and jurisdictions with a declared interest in the species' management program, as well as representatives from NOAA Fisheries and USFWS, and in some cases the Regional Fishery Management Councils. Each year, the states, jurisdictions and federal partners identify (declare) the species boards that they will serve on as voting members. This declaration is based on a number of factors, including the availability of the species in that state's or jurisdiction's waters, the existence of directed fisheries for the species in question, and an interest in a species' conservation and management. For each state, there are three Commissioners who participate on the species board: 1) the head of the state's marine fisheries department; 2) a member of the state legislature; and 3) a governor's appointee who has knowledge and interest in the fishery. As an example, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board is comprised of 40 Commissioners, which include three representatives each from the states of Maine through North Carolina, and a single representative from the District of Columbia, the PRFC, NOAA Fisheries, and USFWS. There are two species for which there is a management section instead of a board: Atlantic herring and northern shrimp.



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These sections operate in the same way as the management boards, but do not contain representatives from the federal agencies.

Management boards/sections consider and approve the development and implementation of fishery management plans (FMPs), including the integration of scientific information, proposed management measures, enforcement, considerations for habitat conservation and the management of protected species/fishery interactions. They establish and oversee the activities of their respective technical committees, stock assessment subcommittees, advisory panels, plan development teams, and plan review teams.

Technical Committees & Stock Assessment Subcommittees: Species technical committees are comprised of representatives from each state, jurisdiction, and federal agency with a declared interest in the fishery, and may also include representatives from Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Commission, academia, or other specialized personnel with an interest in the fishery. Technical committees are responsible for providing the species management boards and sections with the best scientific information available for guidance in the management process. Stock assessment subcommittees are working groups of the technical committees and, as such, are comprised of a subset of the technical committee, along with other fisheries experts – all of whom have stock assessment expertise. The primary role of the stock assessment subcommittee is to conduct benchmark assessments and stock assessment updates.

Advisory Panels: Advisory panel members are citizens who represent a cross-section of commercial and recreational fishing interests, and other stakeholders who are concerned about fisheries conservation and management. The advisory panel provides the management board with advice concerning species management activities.

Plan Development Teams: Plan development teams are comprised of personnel from state and federal agencies with scientific and management ability, knowledge of a species and its habitat, and an interest in the management of species under the jurisdiction of the relevant board. They may also include personnel from Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Commission, academia, and other sectors as appropriate. The species plan development team is responsible for preparing all documentation necessary in the development of an FMP, amendment, or addendum.

Plan Review Teams: Plan review teams are composed of members knowledgeable about the scientific data, stock and fishery condition, and fishery management issues. Once a management program is adopted by a species management board, the plan review team is responsible for providing annual advice concerning implementation of the management program.

ISFMP staff play an important role by helping to coordinate the activities of all the above committees. A list of staff and their respective species responsibilities can be found at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/staff>. Board and committee membership lists can be found <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/boards-committees-panels>.

Meetings

With the exception of some Atlantic Herring or Northern Shrimp Section meetings, species management boards generally meet during one or more of the Commission's quarterly meetings (Winter, Spring, Summer, Annual). Three of the quarterly meetings are held in Northern Virginia, while the Annual Meeting location rotates among the 15 Atlantic states. All of our quarterly meetings are broadcast via live-streaming, and the public is also welcome to attend the meetings in person. For more information on our quarterly meetings, go to <http://www.asmfc.org/home/meeting-archive>.



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Voting Process

When making fishery management decisions, species management boards/sections follow an established voting process, using a modified version of Robert's Rules of Order. In general, decisions are made using a simple majority vote. However, a two-thirds vote of all voting members (entire membership) is required to amend or rescind any final actions. Final actions include setting fishery specifications (including but not limited to quotas, trip limits, possession limits, size limits, season, area closures, gear requirements), allocation, final approval of FMPs/amendments/addenda, emergency actions, conservation equivalency plans, and noncompliance recommendations. Additionally, roll call votes are required for all final actions.

The voting process follows these steps:

1. Ensure a quorum or majority of states with a declared interest in the fishery are present. A state can be represented by one or more of its Commissioners.
2. A Commissioner makes a motion before the board/section for group approval.
3. There is a period of discussion on the motion between the board/section members. Other Commissioners may also offer up amendments to the motion to change the wording or meaning to best match the group's goal.
4. The present states, jurisdictions, and federal agencies vote on the motion. Each state and federal agency gets one vote, regardless of the number of people they have present or their allocation of the resource, and may vote in favor of the motion, against it, abstain from voting, or have a null vote. This means that the three Commissioners representing a state must come to a collective decision on how to vote on an issue.

The voting process remains the same if voting occurs over webinar, conference call, or through email.

Management Process

Management Documents

An *FMP* is the primary management document for a species. It contains background information on the species, including its biology, habitat, and fisheries, and outlines the management program for the species. This includes all measures that must be implemented by the states, as well as monitoring and compliance standards, and research needs.

If significant changes to an FMP are needed, an *Amendment* is developed to replace the FMP as the primary management document for the species. An amendment contains the same level of background information as an FMP and describes an updated management program for the species that is designed to address gaps in management, or changing stock or fishery needs.

Most FMPs specify that certain issues can be altered through adaptive management. If one of these issues needs to be addressed, an Addendum is developed. These documents serve as add-ons to the existing species FMP or amendment, and while most address updates to management measures, they can also be technical or habitat-focused. Addenda are equivalent to the Frameworks developed by the regional management councils and only take 3-6 months to develop, allowing Boards/Sections to quickly respond to changes in the fishery or resource.



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Developing FMPs

The Commission is able to implement fisheries management quickly relative to federal agencies, an important asset when reacting to a changing fishery/resource or adjusting measures and filling gaps in management. It usually takes between eight and 18 months to finalize an FMP or amendment, while it can take less than six months to finalize an addendum.

Still, the Commission's process is involved and thorough, informed by the best available scientific information and incorporating input from the public. It is very important that we are transparent in our process, and we encourage public participation and feedback along the way.

The decision-making process is shown in the accompanying flowchart.

Public Input

Public feedback is valuable to our species management boards, informing their decisions on which of the proposed options to choose as final management measures. The public is encouraged to participate and provide input on potential measures during the development of every FMP, amendment, and addendum. After draft management documents are approved by a Board, a mandatory public comment period begins. All ASMFC documents that are available for public comment can be found at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>, along with information on how to submit written comments by mail, email, or fax. Public hearings are conducted by the states to provide opportunities for people to seek information about the proposed measures, and to speak for or against certain options.

The public comment period for addenda lasts at least 30 days and may include public hearings. FMPs and amendments have longer public comment periods. The document becomes available for comment 30 days prior to the first scheduled public hearing, and remains open for 14 days following the last public hearing.

Under certain circumstances, public comment can also be given verbally at Board meetings. For issues that are not on the agenda, there is an opportunity to bring matters of concern to the Board's attention at the start of each Board meeting. For topics that are on the agenda, but have not gone out for public comment, Board Chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment, the Board Chair has the discretion to decide what public comment to allow.

The public can also reach out to their state Commissioners to discuss issues at any time. (A list of Commissioners by state can be found at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/commissioners>) Anyone who wishes to be more involved can also apply to join a species Advisory Panel through their state delegation. These panels represent the wide group of interests, including commercial and recreational fishermen, environmental groups, and other fields. To find out more about the Advisory Panel process and how to apply, contact us at info@asmfc.org.

ASMFC Fisheries Decision-Making Process





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What to Expect at a Public Hearing

When a species management document, such as a draft FMP or Amendment, goes out for public comment, public hearings are conducted in the states/jurisdictions that request them. These meetings serve as a way for fishermen, environmental groups, and others with an interest in the fishery to learn more about the proposed changes and offer their input on what the best options are to solve the issues. The Commission and the state fishery agencies will notify the public of where and when the hearings will be held.

If the management document being discussed is either an FMP or an Amendment, there will be two series of public hearings. The first round of public hearings is on the Public Information Document, which provides an opportunity for the public to identify major issues and alternatives related to the management of the species. The second round of public hearings is on the Draft FMP or Amendment, and asks the public for specific feedback on proposed management alternatives. If an Addendum is being developed, there will only be one set of public hearings to gather input on the specific options contained within the draft document.

At a public hearing, a brief presentation is given on issues being addressed in the management document, the various new management options and how each option will impact the state in which the hearing is being held. After the presentation, attendees can provide written or oral comments on the proposed options. All the comments, both written and spoken, will be summarized by the Coordinator and presented to the Commissioners at the next Board meeting to help them decide what measures to choose.

Attendance is taken at each hearing and the hearings are recorded so that Commission staff can review the recording for additional information, if needed at a later date.

Conservation Equivalency

Conservation equivalency gives states/jurisdictions the flexibility to develop alternate regulations that address specific state or regional differences while still achieving the conservation objectives of required management measures. It is most commonly used as alternative management programs to those required in an addendum or Amendment.

If a state wishes to use conservation equivalency, it must develop a plan for review by the plan review team. The plan review team seeks feedback on the plan from the appropriate species committee (e.g. law enforcement, technical committee, advisory panel). The plan review team then determines whether the alternate measures will have at least the same effect as the original measures at limiting catch and protecting the population from overfishing. Based on this information, the plan review team will make a recommendation to the species management board on how to move forward with the plan. The Commission's Conservation Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance Document can be found [here](#).

Appeals Process

If one or more states or jurisdictions feels a species board decision is in conflict with Commission standards, it may appeal the decision to the ISFMP Policy Board. The appeal must assert that the management decision adopted violates one or more of the Commission's five standards:

1. Decision not consistent with FMP
2. Failure to follow process



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3. Insufficient/inaccurate/incorrect application of technical information
4. Historical landings period not adequately addressed
5. Management actions resulting in unforeseen circumstances/impacts

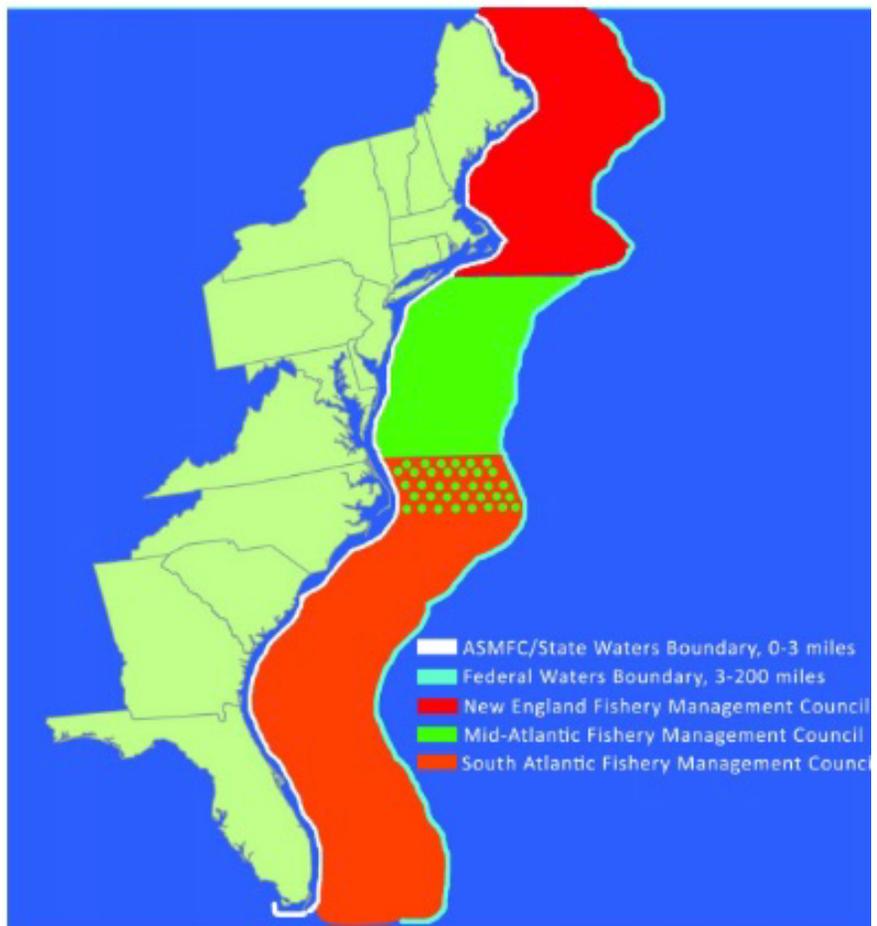
The appeal is first evaluated by Commission leadership (Chair, Vice-Chair and past Chair) to consider whether there is sufficient evidence that the management decision violates one or more of the standards. If they decide there is enough evidence, then the appeal is passed on to the ISFMP Policy Board for a final decision on whether the policy should remain in place. If the Board decides that the policy does not violate Commission standards, then the policy will remain as the species board originally decided it. If the Policy Board determines that the existing management program should be modified, it will issue a finding to that effect, as well as any guidance regarding corrective action to the appropriate species management board. The Commission's Appeals Process can be found <http://www.asafc.org/files/pub/ASAFCAppealsProcess.pdf>

State/Federal Cooperation

Waters zero to three miles from shore are under state authority, while waters three to 200 miles from shore encompass the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which is managed under the federal authority of NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (see map of jurisdictions).

Federal management, which occurs in the EEZ along the Atlantic coast, is split among three regional fishery management councils: the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. Each council develops fisheries policy for its region. NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office (GARFO) has authority for final approval of all recommended management actions by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils, while the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) has final approval authority for management measures recommended by the South Atlantic Council. GARFO and SERO approve the actions, publish them as federal regulations, and enforce them in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard.

With all these various agencies involved in marine fisheries management, what determines who has primary management authority for a fish or shellfish species? In most cases, that determination is made based on the predominance of the fishery in state versus federal waters. For example, more than 80% of American lobster is harvested in state waters; therefore, the Commission is the management lead. As a result, the Commission develops the FMP for lobster and recommends that NOAA Fisheries implement complementary measures in federal waters. Conversely, most of the coastal shark landings occur in federal waters, with NOAA





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Fisheries acting as the lead in their management. Fisheries that occur largely in both state and federal waters, such as black sea bass, bluefish, summer flounder and winter flounder, are managed through either *joint or complementary FMPs* with the Regional Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries.

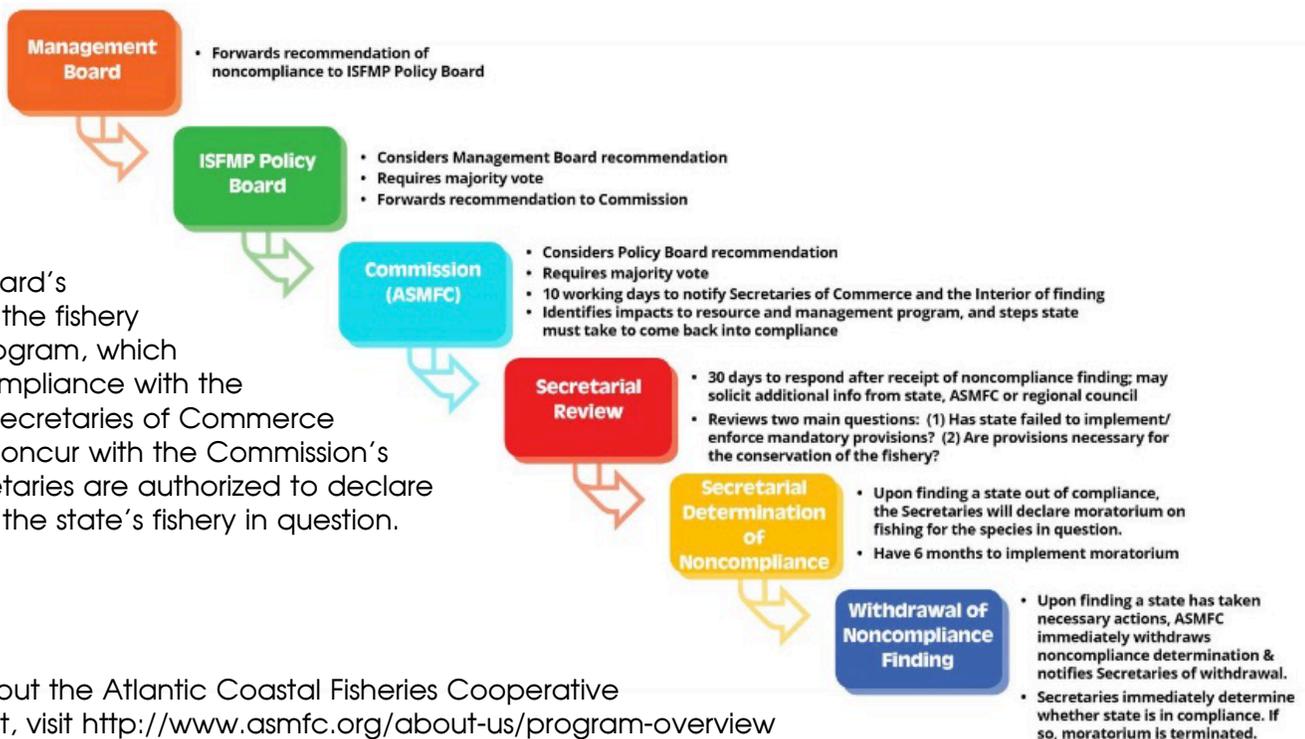
Joint FMPs are developed together between the relevant Council(s) and the Commission; the two bodies must approve the same actions to implement new management measures. This ensures close coordination between the groups and consistent measures between state and federal waters. Summer flounder, black sea bass, and bluefish are all managed through joint FMPs with the Mid-Atlantic Council.

Complementary FMPs are developed in coordination with the relevant Council(s), but do not require like actions for approval of management measures. These plans are meant to keep management measures consistent between state and federal waters, similar to joint FMPs. However, the Council and Commission plans are not necessarily developed, or amended, at the same time as one another, which creates more flexibility, and can speed up the process by reducing the amount of interaction needed between the two groups. Coastal sharks are managed through a complementary FMP with NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species, spiny dogfish is managed through a complementary plan with the New England and Mid Atlantic Councils, and Atlantic herring and winter flounder are managed through complementary plans with the New England Council.

Compliance

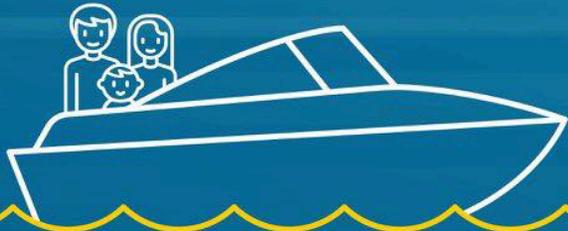
The Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA), the authorizing statute that guides the Commission’s fisheries management process, specifies all states included in an FMP must implement the required provisions of the plan in order to ensure the conservation of the species, as well as sharing in the resource’s management responsibilities. In the event a state fails to implement the required provisions, the Act establishes a process whereby the Commission has the ability to forward its finding of noncompliance to the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior for action. In making its finding, the Commission must identify how failing to implement and enforce the required provision jeopardizes the conservation of the resource, and specify the steps a state must take to come back into compliance.

The compliance finding generally stems from a management board’s annual review of the fishery management program, which includes state compliance with the program. If the Secretaries of Commerce and the Interior concur with the Commission’s finding, the Secretaries are authorized to declare a moratorium for the state’s fishery in question.

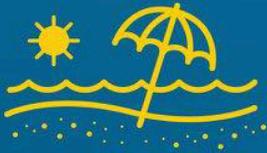


To read more about the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, visit <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/program-overview>

Social Distancing When Boating



Only boat with those in your immediate household.



No beaching your boat right next to someone else.



Maintain your distance at the fuel dock – and remember to wash your hands.



No rafting up – keep your distance on the water.

No guests on your boat!

This includes family members not in your immediate household or your closest boating buddies.

Go right from your house to the boat and back –

no unnecessary contact with anyone.

Enjoy your boat, the water and the fresh air; but enjoy it while boating responsibly.