

Virginia Marine Resources Commission
Finfish Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) Meeting
2600 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA
VMRC Commission Room, Fourth Floor
Wednesday, November 19, 2014, 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Jeff Deem (Chairman)
Skip Feller
Jack Austin
Ernest Bowden
Scott MacDonald
Hon. Ken Neill
Tom Powers
Beth Synowiec
Doug Jenkins proxy for Wayne France

Members Absent

Andy Hall
Robert Weagley
Walter Rogers
Russell Gaskins
Meade Amory

Others Present

Bob Allen
Chris Ludford

VMRC Staff Present

Joe Cimino
Ande Ehlen
Lewis Gillingham
Joe Grist
Rob O'Reilly
Sally Roman
Laurie Williams

A quorum was present with 9 members in attendance. Minutes were recorded by Laurie Williams.

I. FMAC Introductions; Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Jeff Deem

II. Approval of FMAC minutes from October 20, 2014 meetings

The minutes of the previous FMAC meeting were approved unanimously.

III. Discussion: Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan:

Mr. Joe Grist presented the results of the ASMFC Annual Meeting as well as the most recent Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Technical Committee (TC) call for striped bass.

a. Update on commercial fishery quotas

The only approved option for the Coastal Commercial Fishery that meets the required 25% reduction is Option B16 (presented in ASMFC Addendum IV), which gives Virginia a Coastal Commercial Quota of 138,640 pounds of striped

bass. The 2014 allowable harvest (quota) for the Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery, after meeting the 20.5% reduction requirement, is 1,064,997 pounds of striped bass.

b. Coastal recreational management options

Mr. Grist explained that as part of the motion from the ASMFC Annual meeting, Option B1: 1 fish possession limit at 28-inch minimum size, needs to be implemented by the state by January 1, 2015. The TC approved the options listed in the addendum. However, Mr. Rob O'Reilly cautioned that some of the options may still need to be reviewed again to ensure they meet the required reductions. If there is a different option other than reviewed in the addendum, it would need to be presented to the TC for review. Mr. Grist requested that the FMAC provide a recommendation to staff, in order for the state to adhere to the implementation schedule set by the ASMFC. Mr. Grist said that option B1 would have to be chosen at first; however, he noted that the state could then request approval to follow a different option as long as it is on the table of B options. Mr. Grist then asked the FMAC if there were certain B options in the table which the FMAC preferred. Several Committee members stated there were some options they did not feel the Commission should even consider for a public hearing. FMAC selected four options as preferred for managing the Coastal Recreational Fishery: B1, B5 (2 fish at 33 inches minimum); B7 (2 fish [1 fish at 28-34 inches slot, 1 trophy fish at 36 inches minimum]); and, B8 (2 fish [1 28-36 inches slot, 1 trophy fish at 38 inches minimum]). Mr. Tom Powers made a motion to leave Options 1, 5, 7 and 8 for discussion by the Commission as the options recommended by the FMAC. This motion was seconded by Mr. Ernest Bowden. The motion passed with seven in favor, none opposed, and two abstentions. Mr. Rob O'Reilly suggested that the FMAC consider reviewing these options to make a decision on a final recommendation at a future meeting before taking their suggestion to the Commission.

c. Chesapeake Bay recreational management options

Mr. Grist presented the options of the Bay recreational fishery. The only options that meet the required 20.5% reduction are C4 and C8. Mr. Grist clarified that Option C4 only changes the minimum size from 18 to 20 inches minimum. The current seasons and maximum sizes would need to remain in place. Mr. Grist told the FMAC that Option C8 is not really an option because all three jurisdictions would have to pick it and follow it. If one Jurisdiction went over quota, then it would cause all three to pay a penalty. Option C8 was developed by ASMFC staff not by the TC. Mr. Jack Austin motioned to approve Option C4. Ms. Beth Synowiec seconded the motion. The motion passed seven in favor, none opposed, two abstentions. Mr. Grist reminded the FMAC that an implementation plan must be submitted by December 1, 2014.

Dr. Ken Neill expressed concern about putting the plans forward sooner because he felt it was important to get the recreational regulation cards updated as soon as possible. Mr. Grist told him we had to wait until it was officially accepted by the ASMFC. Mr. Powers suggested the regulation cards say "to be determined" instead of incorrect sizes. Staff agreed that something of that nature would be in place until a management measure is approved by ASMFC and the Commission.

IV. New business

Mr. Bowden asked that FMAC once again look at the limited entry criteria for spiny dogfish. He noted the quota has increased considerably and has not been harvested in the most recent seasons and there should be a way for some more people to be able to enter the fishery. Mr. O'Reilly stated there are a lot of factors involved in this situation. He suggested that the FMAC further review and discuss the situation and dilemmas with the spiny dogfish fishery at a future meeting.

V. Adjournment

Mr. Jeff Deem motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bowden. The meeting adjourned at 7:32pm. The next meeting was not scheduled.