



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 9, 2005

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
(202) 289-6400

Atlantic Coastal States Schedule Public Hearings on Draft Addendum I to the Weakfish Plan: *Public Comment Accepted until October 21, 2005*

Washington, DC – The Commission’s Weakfish Management Board has approved sending forward Draft Addendum I to Amendment 4 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Weakfish for public review and comment. The Draft Addendum was developed in response to concern over declines in both weakfish abundance and commercial and recreational catches, and proposes reductions in recreational bag limits, commercial and recreational seasons, and bycatch allowances.

Atlantic coastal states from Rhode Island through Florida have scheduled the dates and times of their public hearings; their details follow.

Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management

Tuesday, October 11, 2005; 6:00 PM
University of Rhode Island
Narragansett Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium
South Ferry Road
Narragansett, Rhode Island
Contact: Brian Murphy at (401) 423-1941

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection

Tuesday, September 27, 2005; 7:00 PM
Marine Headquarters, Boating Education Center
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: David Simpson at (860) 434-6043

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation (Tentative location)

Wednesday, October 12, 2005; 7:00 – 10:00 PM
Brookhaven Town Hall Auditorium
1 Independence Hill
Farmingville, New York
Contact: Byron Young (631) 444-0436

New Jersey Division Fish and Wildlife

Wednesday, October 12, 2005; 7:30 – 9:30 PM
Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension
355 Court House-South Dennis Road
Route 657
Cape May Court House, New Jersey
Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 633-2408

Thursday, October 13, 2005; 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Ocean County Administration Building
Room 119
101 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, New Jersey
Contact: Bruce Freeman at (609) 633-2408

Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Tuesday, October 18, 2005; 7:00 PM
Auditorium
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware
Contact: Roy Miller at (302) 739-9914

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.

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources

Thursday, September 29, 2005; 6:00 PM

Tawes State Office Building
C-1 Conference Room
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland
Contact: Howard King (410) 260-8282

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Monday, September 26, 2005; 6:00 PM

2600 Washington Avenue, Fourth Floor
Newport News, Virginia
Contact: Jack Travelstead at (757) 247-2247

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

Tuesday, September 27, 2005; 6:00 PM

Duke Marine Laboratory Auditorium
135 Duke Marine Lab Road
Beaufort, North Carolina
Contact: Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

Wednesday, September 28, 2005; 6:00 PM

Roanoke Island Festival Park
1 Festival Park
Manteo, North Carolina
Contact: Louis Daniel at (252) 726-7021

The Draft Addendum also addresses a major challenge in assessing the weakfish population, namely significant gaps in biological data such as age and length. It proposes new required levels of biological sampling intensity and considers the implications of state noncompliance. The Board will meet in early November to review public comment on the Draft Addendum and consider its final approval.

Copies of the Draft Addendum can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmf.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on Draft Amendment 1 either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM on October 21, 2005** and should be forwarded to Braddock Spear, Weakfish Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1444 'Eye' Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202)289-6051 (fax) or comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Weakfish). For more information, please contact Braddock Spear at (202)289-6400 or bspear@asmfc.org.

**South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources
& Georgia Coastal Resources**

Wednesday, October 5, 2005; 6:00 PM

SC Marine Resources Center
Law Enforcement Conference Room
217 Ft. Johnson Road
Charleston, South Carolina
Contacts: Mel Bell at (843) 953-9007 and Spud
Woodward (912) 264-7218

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission**

Friday, October 14, 2005; 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Atlantic Beach City Hall
Commission Chambers
800 Seminole Road
Atlantic Beach, Florida
Contact: Roy Williams at (850) 487-0554

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