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Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearings on Atlantic Menhaden: December 12 & 20

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on the Public Information Document (PID) for Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. The Division of Marine Fisheries will host two public hearings in Massachusetts:

December 12, 2016; 5:30 PM

Bourne Community Center, Room 1

239 Main Street

Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

** This hearing will follow a Jonah Crab Draft*

Addendum II public hearing

December 20, 2016; 6:00PM

Thayer Public Library, Logan Auditorium

798 Washington Street

Braintree, Massachusetts

** Please park on the street or in the Town Hall*

parking lot across Washington Street

As the first step in the amendment process, the PID seeks input from stakeholders and those interested in Atlantic menhaden about changes observed in the fishery/resource and potential management measures. Draft Amendment 3 was initiated following Board review and acceptance of the 2015 Stock Assessment and Peer Review report, which found the menhaden resource in good condition—neither overfished nor experiencing overfishing. Population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, was estimated to be roughly double the threshold value (86.8 trillion eggs). Additionally, fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.22, below both the fishing mortality threshold (1.26) and target (0.38).

The PID outlines a number of issues in the fishery and solicits feedback on how the resource should be managed. Specifically, the PID presents a suite of tools to manage the menhaden resource using ecological reference points (rather than single-species reference points) and provides options to allocate the resource among the states, regions, and user groups. In addition to the specific issues identified in the PID, comments are welcome on all aspects of the fishery and resource, including recommendations for future management. The Management Board will meet at the ASMFC 2017 Winter Meeting to review submitted public comment and provide direction to staff for items to be included in Draft Amendment 3.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on the PID either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The PID can be accessed [here](#) or via the ASMFC website (www.asmfc.org) under *Public Input*.

Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on January 4, 2017** and should be forwarded to Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Menhaden PID).

For more information, please contact Megan Ware at mware@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740; or Nichola Meserve at nichola.meserve@state.ma.us or 617.626.1531. Additionally, if your organization is planning to release an action alert related to the Amendment 3 PID, please contact Megan prior to its release.