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December 27, 2016

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder Recreational Management: January 11, 2017

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. The document presents a suite of management approaches, including regional options, for the 2017 summer flounder (fluke) recreational fishery. The Atlantic coastal states of Massachusetts through North Carolina have scheduled public hearings. The details of the Massachusetts hearing are below; the full schedule of hearings is available [here](#).

January 11, 2017 at 6 PM
Bourne Community Center, Room # 1
239 Main Street
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

Draft Addendum XXVIII was initiated to consider alternative management approaches for the 2017 recreational summer flounder fisheries, while also seeking to address needed reductions due to a decrease in the coastwide recreational harvest limit (RHL) in 2017. In August, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council approved a 30% reduction in the 2017 coastwide RHL relative to 2016. This action was taken in response to the 2016 Stock Assessment Update which found fishing mortality was higher in recent years and population estimates were lower than previously projected.

Changes in summer flounder distribution, abundance, and availability have created problems under the static state-by-state allocations, with overages often occurring. In response, states would implement regulations to reduce harvest, resulting in differing regulations between neighboring states. In 2014, the Board shifted away from traditional state-by-state allocations to a regional approach for managing summer flounder recreational fisheries. A benefit of the regional approach is it provides the states the flexibility to share allocations. The intent is to set regulations that account for shifting distribution, abundance, and availability while providing stability and greater regulatory consistency among neighboring states, and enabling the states to meet but not exceed the coastwide RHL.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXVIII either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained [here](#) or via the Commission's website, www.asmf.org, under *Public Input*. Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on January 19, 2017** and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703-842-0741 (FAX); or at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org (Subject line: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII).

The Board will review the public comment and consider final action at the Commission's Winter Meeting in February 2017. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703-842-0740; or Nichola Meserve at nichola.meserve@state.ma.us or 617-626-1531.