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January 29, 2008  
Marine Fisheries Advisory

**States Schedule Hearings on Draft FMP for Atlantic Coastal Sharks**  
***Public Comment Accepted Until March 28, 2008***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 28,  
2008

**PRESS CONTACT:** Tina Berger, (202) 289-6400

**Washington, DC** - States and jurisdictions from Maine through Florida have scheduled their hearings to gather public comment on the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Atlantic Coastal Sharks. The dates, times, and locations of the scheduled meetings follow:

**Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries**

*February 19, 2008; 6:30 pm*

Plymouth Harbor Radisson

180 Water Street

Plymouth, Massachusetts

Contact: Melanie Griffin (617)626-1528

**Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*February 20 2008; 6:00 pm*

Oliver Stedman Government Center

(Second Floor Conference Room)

4808 Tower Hill Road

Wakefield, Rhode Island

Contact: Nancy Scarduzio (401)423-1927

**New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation**

*March 3, 2008; 6:00 pm*

Bureau of Marine Resources Headquarters  
205 North Belle Mead Road  
East Setauket, New York  
Contact: Steve Heins (630)444-0436

**New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife**

*March 4, 2008; 7:00 pm*

Ocean County Administrative Building  
101 Hooper Avenue, Room 119  
Toms River, New Jersey  
Contact: Peter Himchak (609)748-2020

**Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control**

*March 11, 2008; 6:00 pm*

OC Airport Conference Room  
12724 Airport Road  
Berlin, Maryland  
Contact: Roy Miller (302)739-9914

**Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources**

*March 11, 2008; 6:00 pm*

OC Airport Conference Room  
12724 Airport Road  
Berlin, Maryland  
Contact: Michael Luisi (410)260-8341

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**

*February 11, 2008; 6:00 pm*

2600 Washington Ave, 4th floor  
Newport News, Virginia  
Contact: Jack Travelstead (757)247-2247

**North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries**

*February 26, 2008; 6:00 pm*

Roanoke Island Festival Park  
One Festival Park  
Manteo, North Carolina  
Contact: Fritz Rohde (910)796-7215

**South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources**

*February 27, 2008; 6:00 pm*

Marine Resources Division Auditorium at Ft. Johnson 217 Ft. Johnson Rd.  
Charleston, South Carolina  
Contact: Bryan Frazier (843)953-9843

### **Georgia Coastal Resources Division**

*February 2, 2008; 6:00 pm*

Stellar Conference Center

125 Venture Drive

Brunswick, Georgia

Contact: Doug Haymans (912)265-4600

### **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

*February 25, 2008; 6:00 pm*

Cocoa Agriculture and Extension Office

Lecture Room

3695 Lake Drive

Cocoa, Florida

Contact: Jasmine Cumberbatch (850)487-0554

The Draft FMP addresses the management of 39 shark species. It proposes management measures for state recreational and commercial shark fisheries, including permitted species, regions, seasons, quotas, possession limits, size limits, protection of nursing and pupping grounds, authorized gear, dealer reporting, research, display, finning, and bycatch reduction.

Coordinated state management is a vital step towards establishing healthy self-sustaining populations of Atlantic coastal sharks. Many species have been in a depleted state and are vulnerable to collapse if fishing pressure continues as it has in recent years. Most of these sharks utilize state water coastal estuaries and bays as pupping grounds and nurseries. The Draft FMP proposes to protect depleted shark stocks while they are in these areas during the most vulnerable stages of their life cycles.

Another goal of Draft FMP is to establish complementary state and federal shark management. Currently some states mirror federal regulations for Atlantic sharks while other states have no management (other than spiny dogfish) or have regulations inconsistent with the federal FMP. Coordinating management between state and federal waters will close loopholes between jurisdictions and simplify regulations for law enforcement officials.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft FMP, either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the Draft FMP can be obtained via the Commission's website at [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org) under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. **Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM on March 28, 2008**, and should be forwarded to Chris Vonderweidt, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at [comments@asmfc.org](mailto:comments@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Sharks). For more information, please contact Chris Vonderweidt at (202) 289-6400 or [cvonderweidt@asmfc.org](mailto:cvonderweidt@asmfc.org)

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Tina Berger

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[www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org).

ASMFC Vision: Healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015.