



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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February 23, 2021

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

## **MAFMC and ASMFC to Hold Public Hearings for Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment**

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) are seeking public comment on management options under consideration in the Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment. This amendment contains alternatives to:

- Revise the fishery management plan (FMP) goals and objectives;
- Modify the bluefish allocations between the commercial and recreational sectors;
- Modify the commercial allocations to the states;
- Initiate a rebuilding plan;
- Revise the quota transfer processes;
- Revise how the FMP accounts for management uncertainty; and
- Revise the *de minimis* provisions in the Commission's FMP.

Comments may be provided at any of 5 virtual public hearings to be held between **March 24** and **April 8, 2021** or via written comment until **April 23, 2021**.

We encourage you to visit the Council's [Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment](#) web page or the Commission's [Public Input](#) web page, where you can read the Public Hearing Document, the Draft Amendment, and watch the public hearing presentation (to be posted by March 12, 2021).

The Council's [Public Hearing Document](#) is an abbreviated version of the amendment which summarizes proposed management options and impacts. The Commission's [Draft Amendment](#) is a more comprehensive management document that will resemble the Commission's final amendment once approved. Both documents contain identical options for public input, but each have been developed according to each management body's differing requirements. Commenters need only to submit comment on one of the documents. We have also developed a [Quick Reference Guide](#) which provides an overview of the alternatives under consideration in the amendment.

### **Virtual Hearing Schedule**

Interested members of the public are encouraged to provide oral comments at any of the following public hearings. While we encourage you to attend the hearing that is targeted toward your state or regional grouping, anyone is welcome to participate in any hearing. See the [hearing announcement](#) for a list of hearing contacts.

- **Wednesday, March 24, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.:** North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida

- **Thursday, March 25, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.:** Delaware, Maryland, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, and Virginia
- **Tuesday, March 30, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.:** Connecticut and New York
- **Thursday, April 1, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.:** Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island
- **Thursday, April 8, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.:** New Jersey

### **Webinar Connection Instructions**

To register for a public hearing please click here: [Public Hearing Registration](#) and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu. Hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, which can be accessed using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. When connecting to audio, we strongly encourage participants to use computer voice over internet (VoIP) so you can ask questions and provide input. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 1-866-901-6455 and enter access code 140-544-592. Those joining by phone only will be limited to listening to the presentation and will not be able to provide input. For technical assistance setting up and logging into GoToWebinar, contact Dustin Colson Leaning at 703-842-0714.

*Please note that if you are connected only by phone in listen only mode, you will not show up as a webinar attendee. In the event that there are no webinar attendees, the public hearing will be cancelled unless state staff request that the hearing content is presented.*

### **Written Comments**

Written comments may be submitted through April 23, 2021 by any of the following methods:

1. **ONLINE:** <https://www.mafmc.org/comments/bluefish-allocation-rebuilding-amendment>
2. **EMAIL:** [mseeley@mafmc.org](mailto:mseeley@mafmc.org)
3. **MAIL:** Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director  
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
800 North State Street, Suite 201  
Dover, DE 19901
4. **FAX:** 302-674-5399

*Please include "Bluefish Amendment" in the subject line if using email or fax, or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments.*

### **Tips for Providing Public Comment**

We value your input. To be most effective, we request that your comment include specific details as to why you support or oppose a particular alternative. Specifically, please address the following:

- Which proposed alternative(s) do you support, and which do you oppose?
- Why do you support or oppose the alternative(s)?
- Is there any additional information you think should be considered?

### **Contacts**

If you have any questions, please contact:

- **Matthew Seeley**, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, [mseeley@mafmc.org](mailto:mseeley@mafmc.org), 302-526-5262

- **Dustin Colson Leaning**, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, [dleaning@asmfc.org](mailto:dleaning@asmfc.org),  
703-842-0714

MAFMC PRESS CONTACT: [Mary Sabo](#), 302.518.1143

ASMFC PRESS CONTACT: [Tina Berger](#), 703.842.0749