

## **MARINE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**April 7, 2022**

**Held Virtually via Zoom**

### **In attendance:**

*Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission:* Raymond Kane, Chairman; Michael Pierdinock, Vice-Chairman; Bill Doyle, Clerk; Kalil Boghdan; Shelley Edmundson; Arthur “Sooky” Sawyer; Bill Amaru; Lou Williams; and Tim Brady (Tim was experiencing technical difficulties and abstained from voting on action items).

*Division of Marine Fisheries:* Daniel McKiernan, Director; Kevin Creighton, CFO; Story Reed; Jared Silva; Nichola Meserve; Bob Glenn; Jeff Kennedy; Melanie Griffin; Kelly Whitmore; Stephanie Cunningham; Tracy Pugh; Derek Perry; Brad Schondelmeier; Wendy Mainardi; Nick Buchan; Scott Schaffer and Anna Webb

*Department of Fish and Game:* Ron Amidon, Commissioner; Mark Reil, Director of Legislative Affairs

*Massachusetts Environmental Police:* Capt. Kevin Clayton; and Lt. Matt Bass

*Members of the Public:* Heather Haggerty; Lizzie Roche; Philip Coates; Emerson Hasbrouck; Brian Curry; and Rob Savino

## **INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Ray Kane called the April 7, 2022 Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC) business meeting to order.

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2022 DRAFT BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

Shelley Edmundson requested a couple typographical errors be amended. Jared stated he will make the changes.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve April 7, 2022 MFAC business meeting minutes as amended by Shelley Edmundson. Sooky Sawyer made the motion to approve the amended April 7, 2022 business meeting minutes as amended. Shelley Edmundson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously 6-0 with Chairman Kane, Tim Brady, and Bill Amaru abstaining.**

### **CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS**

Chairman Kane did not provide any comments.

## **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Commissioner Amidon was unavailable at the outset of the meeting and joined later as his schedule permitted. No comments were provided.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMENTS**

Lt. Matthew Bass handled the comments for the Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP). Lt. Bass stated the joint MEP-DMF trap gear retrieval project had wrapped up and MEP was transitioning into vessel speed enforcement in Cape Cod Bay. In May, their attention will turn to recreational fisheries enforcement with the arrival of various migratory species.

Mike Pierdinock asked if MEP had observed river herring of north of Cape Cod. Lt. Bass could not speak to this. Mike P. then asked about activity in the recreational haddock fishery. Lt. Bass did not think the boats were landing many fish this spring.

Ray Kane asked for further details regarding the abandoned gear project. Bob Glenn stated the project began the first week of February and ended around mid-March. Glenn stated the season does not close until February 1<sup>st</sup>, which means DMF does not conduct aerial surveys until early February when all gear set in the closure is non-conforming. Prior to the closure going into effect, it is too difficult to ascertain what is abandoned gear and what is gear being actively fished.

## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Director Dan McKiernan started his comments by announcing a June 16<sup>th</sup> MFAC meeting at DMF's New Bedford office where the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MFAC will be celebrated. Dan looked forward to the event and bringing together commission members past and present to celebrate the important work of this public body.

Ray Kane asked Dan to clarify whether this was a business meeting or an event. Director McKiernan and Jared Silva explained it would begin with a short in-person business meeting and then an event would follow the adjournment of the meeting.

Dan discussed the annual Seafood Expo North America in Boston. Thirteen Massachusetts-based seafood businesses attended and he commended DMF's Seafood Marketing Program for their contributions.

Dan had spent considerable time on right whale issues this winter. The Legislature allocated funding for research into on-demand gear, and the purchasing of gear to comply with the gear modification and marking regulations. Dan added that Noah Oppenheim released his report on 'Assessing the Feasibility of On-Demand Gear in New England Lobster Fisheries.' The report addresses on-demand fishing systems and the describes the various challenges to implementation and areas where additional research and work needs to be focused. Dan also informed the MFAC that he issued a

letter to Pioneers for Thoughtful Coexistence denying their request to fish on-demand systems within the seasonal trap gear closure in Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay. This denial letter will be discussed later in the meeting.

Sooky Sawyer asked if Dan was knowledgeable about the status of NOAA Fisheries 2022 List of Fisheries (LOF) determination. Dan stated NOAA Fisheries had not yet published its final 2022 LOF. DMF anxiously awaited its publication and was optimistic Massachusetts commercial trap fisheries would be listed separate from the regional lobster/crab trap and fish pot fisheries and the state fishery would receive a Category 2 designation. By way of background, NOAA Fisheries annually lists and categorizes fisheries based on their anticipated interactions with marine mammals. Historically, Massachusetts' lobster trap fisheries was included within the Northeast Lobster Trap Fishery and given a Category 1 designation. Based on DMF's ongoing right whale conservation efforts, DMF sought to have its state trap fisheries listed separately from the broader listed trap fisheries and given a Category 2 designation.

Sooky also asked about the May 1 closure in Maine and if it would apply for Massachusetts permit holders fishing in federal waters. Bob Glenn stated NOAA Fisheries had not indicated an intention to delay implementation. The closure would apply to all trap gear set in the area, regardless of where the vessel is permitted.

Dan concluded his comments by stating the trap tag deadline may be extended due to delays in issuance related to work force and supply chain issues.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### Commercial Limits for Quota Managed Species

#### *Summer Flounder Limits*

Dan McKiernan discussed the final recommendation for commercial summer flounder. He highlighted feedback received from an industry meeting, as well as at public hearing. The detailed recommendations are described below.

#### *Period I (January 1–April 22)*

1. Increase the trip limit from 1,000 pounds to 3,000 pounds.
2. Change the 100-lb trip limit trigger from 25% quota use to 30% quota use.
3. Codify the pilot program allowing the possession of multiple states landing limits when offloading in Massachusetts. Vessels may partake in this allowance subject to an annual authorization by the Director.

#### *Period II (April 23–December 31)*

1. Move the opening of the directed inshore summer flounder fishery from June 10 to April 23.
2. For April 23–September 30:
  - a. Eliminate the closed fishing days on Fridays and Saturdays allowing commercial fishermen to fish for, retain, and land summer flounder seven-days per week. Concurrent with this change, DMF will eliminate the

corresponding closed fishing days for black sea bass and horseshoe crabs affecting trawlers.

- b. Increase the commercial trip limit for hook fishermen from 250 pounds to 300 pounds (20% increase).
  - c. Increase the commercial trip limit for net fishermen from 400 pounds to 500 pounds (25% increase).
  - d. For trawlers, establish a 100-pound trip limit for vessels in possession of more than 250 pounds of squid or fishing with small mesh.
  - e. Establish an automatic trip limit increase to 800 pounds for all gear types on September 1, provided at least 20% of the quota is projected to remain available to harvest.
3. For October 1–December 31:
- a. Establish a 3,000-pound trip limit on October 1, provided at least 5% of the quota is projected to remain available to harvest. If less than 5% of the quota is available then the trip limit will remain at 800 pounds.
  - b. Allow the pilot program authorizing the possession of multiple states landing limits when offloading in Massachusetts to also occur during this season.

Dan McKiernan stated this recommendation addressed most of the concerns raised by the inshore trawl fleet during the public process. With this in mind, he highlighted that he was not recommending changing the allocation split between Period I (30%) and Period II (70%).

The Director recommended the MFAC move to adopt this recommendation in its entirety, rather than voting on each specific element. If there were strong objections to any single aspect, he would consider providing a revised recommendation.

Bill Amaru commended DMF for their work crafting the recommendation. Bill asked that the fishery participants be alerted of the quota availability as soon as possible near the trigger date. Bill was not concerned about the fishery being open seven days of week due to weather days.

Based on dealer reporting schedules, Story and Dan believed DMF could provide about a week's notice on quota trigger decisions.

Mike Pierdinock generally supported the Director's recommendation. However, he discussed his desire to balance commercial and recreational fishing interests and ameliorate negative impacts on recreational fishing that increased commercial fishing effort may cause. Accordingly, he asked the Director to speak more to anticipated changes in fishing activity and effort in the summertime inshore fishery.

Dan McKiernan reminded the MFAC that participation in the summertime inshore fishery is at an all-time low. Therefore, any anticipated increase in effort will likely only bring the number of trips back up to recent levels of activity. Dan also underscored the importance of promoting fisherman safety by better allowing fishermen to pick their

fishing days. Jared Silva added the overall effort in the fishery is down 50% compared to effort during the early 2010s. Even if the fishery participation increases 5-10% this year as a result of these recommended changes, overall effort will still be substantially lower than where it was ten years ago.

The Director then discussed ongoing dockage issues and highlighted survey work being conducted by Rachel Bratton, an intern from UMass Boston. Dan stated the results of the survey will be presented at the Working Waterfront Network Conference this July. Story added that the survey has been distributed electronically and has had a great response from the fleet and phone interviews will start soon.

Ray Kane asked about the pilot programs and if the name will be changed from pilot to a regulation. Jared highlighted moving parts in the programs such as getting trap tags to the fishermen that are eased with an LOA. Dan stated that it is likely the regulations can be satisfied under permit conditions.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Bill Doyle made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Sooky Sawyer seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

#### *Black Sea Bass Limits*

Director McKiernan reviewed DMF's recommendation to amend the commercial fishing limits for black sea bass. The recommendation is described in the bullets below.

1. Move the directed fishery open season start date from July 8 to July 1.
2. Add Mondays and Wednesdays as open fishing days, allowing commercial fishing to occur Sundays–Thursdays.
3. Increase the trip limits from 400 pounds to 500 pounds for pot gear and from 200 pounds to 250 pounds for the other non-trawl gear (e.g., hooks).
4. Effective September 15, eliminate the Friday and Saturday no fishing days to allow fishing seven days per week.
5. Establish an automatic trip limit increase to 600 pounds for pots and 300 pounds for other non-trawl gear on September 15, provided at least 15% of the quota is projected to remain available to harvest.
6. Amend the open days for trawlers to retain and land black sea bass to allow fishing seven-days per week, consistent with approved changes to the summer flounder limits.

Dan added these actions were being recommended to utilize the available quota and considers fishery performance in recent years. Similar to summer flounder, he recommended the MFAC move to adopt this recommendation in its entirety, rather than voting on each specific element. If there were strong objections to any single element being recommended, he would consider amending the element in a revised recommendation.

Mike Pierdinock thanked Dan for the presentation and stated his support for the recommendation.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Lou Williams made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Bill Amaru seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

#### *Menhaden Season*

Director McKiernan recommended a June 1 start date be adopted for the commercial limited entry menhaden fishery. Weir fishermen participating in the limited entry fishery are exempt from this recommendation, as is any fishing activity being conducted under the 6,000-pound open entry fishery limit.

Bill Amaru had heard a lot of concerns from lobstermen regarding the anticipated price of bait and potential bait supply issues. Dan had heard similar comments. These concerns underscored the purpose of his recommendation—to better align local bait harvest with local bait demand.

Mike Pierdinock supported the recommendation, as he understood its stated purpose was to better align quota utilization to local bait demand. However, he expressed concerns about increases in overall menhaden harvest in Massachusetts in recent years.

Nichola Meserve explained this increase in harvest is a product of the state participating in the Episodic Event Set-Aside and acquiring quota transfers from other states to keep the fishery open to provide local bait throughout the summer. Nichola added that the ASMFC is considering an addendum that may provide additional quota allocation to the northern states, but may also make other aspects of the plan (e.g., small-scale and incidental catch allowance) more restrictive and accountable.

Mike Pierdinock brought up the issue of allowing seining in Boston Harbor on Fridays. Dan McKiernan stated he wanted to focus discussion on the June 1 start date recommendation and he intended to address the Boston Harbor issue separately.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Sooky Sawyer made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Lou Williams seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

#### *Discussion on Friday Seining in Boston Harbor*

Director McKiernan stated his intent to keep Boston Harbor open to seining on Fridays, but he would prohibit the use of carriers in the harbor fishery. Dan added that if problems persisted he could limit Friday fishing through adjusting permit conditions, and

if vessels were observed violating permit conditions, particularly fishing in aggregations of recreational boats, he may preclude the vessel from fishing in the harbor. He added that in 2021 he received video evidence of a seiner fishing aggressively among recreational fishing boats and that seiner has since been prohibited from fishing in the harbor.

Sooky Sawyer asked if the prohibition on carrier vessels was only on Fridays or at all times in Boston Harbor. Dan McKiernan stated it was at all times.

Mike Pierdinock appreciated DMF's efforts to address user group conflicts within Boston Harbor. Mike opined that when the commercial fishery occurs Monday - Friday, weekend recreational fishing conditions are impacted due to diminished bait availability. Mike stated his support to re-implement the Friday closure and allowing seiners to fish Monday – Thursday instead. Dan stated his intent keep a close eye on conflicts within the fishery and addressing issues if they emerge.

Lou Williams stated prohibiting the use of carriers in Boston Harbor will impact the amount of menhaden harvested the area because it will limit the capacity of the vessels fishing in the area.

#### *Bluefish Minimum Size*

DMF recommended adopting a 16" total length minimum size for the commercial bluefish fishery. This recommendation differs from the public hearing proposal for an 18" minimum size in response to the comment received.

Jared Silva provided some background information on the recommendation and clarified how this regulation will impact the retention of bluefish as bait in the bluefin tuna fishery.

Mike Pierdinock highlighted the need for enforcement.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Bill Doyle made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Shelley Edmundson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

#### *Spiny Dogfish Limits*

Dan McKiernan recommended the commercial spiny dogfish trip limit be increased from 6,000 pounds to 7,500 pounds contingent upon NOAA Fisheries' approval and implementation of the same limit for federal waters. He expected final federal specifications—including the coastwide quota and federal trip limit—to be filed within the next month.

There was no discussion on this recommendation.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Lou Williams made a motion to approve the recommendation from the Director. Bill Amaru seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

#### Regulatory Housekeeping

DMF reviewed two regulatory housekeeping items. These actions were being moved forward as a single recommendation.

Jared Silva discussed DMF's recommendation to rescind unnecessary language regarding the use of officer discretion in enforcing recreational fishing regulations against for-hire operators or permit holders. Jared explained that reference to officer discretion in the regulation creates unnecessary confusion and may ultimately undermine enforcement.

Jared Silva then highlighted a recommendation to require all recreational lobster and crab traps to be rigged in conformity with recreational lobster trap configuration requirements. With blue crab trapping now prohibited, *Cancer* crabs are the only edible crabs that may be taken by trap gear. As *Cancer* crabs are commonly caught as bycatch in lobster traps, and the state manages the commercial fishery as a single management unit, it made sense to prohibit the use of traps other than lobster traps to take edible crabs. In doing so, DMF is also preventing the proliferation of new recreational crab trap gear.

Ray Kane asked about the permitting housekeeping items taken to public hearing. Jared stated these items will be discussed under the next agenda item, as they are permitting regulations promulgated pursuant to G.L. c. 130, §80, they do not require a formal MFAC vote.

Bill asked if *Cancer* covers both Jonah and rock crabs; Jared confirmed this.

**Chairman Kane asked for a motion to approve both housekeeping recommendations from the Director. Sooky Sawyer made a motion to approve the recommendations from the Director. Bill Amaru seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, the motion was passed unanimously 7-0 with Chairman Kane and Tim Brady abstaining.**

### **CONSULTATION ON COMMERCIAL PERMITTING DECISIONS**

#### *Commercial Striped Bass Control Date*

Dan McKiernan asked the MFAC to support a new striped bass control date of June 14, 2022. This would replace the near decade old existing control date and would be inclusive of recent seasons (2019-2021) where there was an observed northward shift in landings.

Bill Amaru agreed with the new control date. However, he reminded the MFAC to recognize that access may be lost as a result of these control dates and certain individuals may be negatively impacted. That said, he commended DMF's work and potential foresight on this issue on this issue.

Ray Kane and Mike Pierdinock raised the issue of certain anglers obtaining a commercial striped bass permit to take striped bass that do not conform to the recreational limits. Story Reed indicated trip level reports show very little commercial striped bass catch is kept for personal consumption. However, he added the caveat that DMF is uncertain to what extent this personal consumption catch is being accurately reported by harvesters.

#### *Owner-Operator Clarification*

Jared Silva discussed the existing owner-operator and described the clarification as setting forth this requirement does not extend past commercial fishing, meaning the permit holder is not required to bring the fish to market for sale.

Lou Williams expressed his support for this clarification.

#### *Limited Entry Permit Endorsement Clarification*

Jared then described another permitting clarification to add precise language regarding the non-renewal and retiring of permits applied for after the regulatorily set application deadline.

Ray Kane expressed his support for both these permitting clarifications.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### *Protected Species Update*

DMF then discussed its recent denial letter to the Pioneers for Thoughtful Coexistence regarding their request for a Letter of Authorization to fish on-demand fishing gear during the winter and early spring trap gear closure. Director McKiernan explained the denial focused on the proposals lack of a scientifically robust research plan to answer key questions about ropeless fishing. Additionally, the proposal did not t address a right whale conservation issue or an acute lobster fishery management problem. W Director McKiernan then discussed a Noah Oppenheim's recently released report 'Assessing the Feasibility of On-Demand Gear in New England Lobster Fisheries.' Dan concluded by stating DMF will continue to work with NOAA Fisheries, the fishing industry, and researchers to support ropeless fishing research and development.

Bill Amaru asked why DMF is considering ropeless research if the 90% risk reduction percentage was reached. Dan stated that the 90% risk reduction was for the state waters fishery, but many fishermen in the MA fleet fish in federal and state waters. The federal waters fishery has not been able to meet this level of risk reduction. If further risk reduction is required in the federal waters fishery, ropeless fishing may prove to be a reasonable solution and additional research is necessary to address critical challenges

to implementation. Bill Amaru thanked Dan and Bob and stated that ropeless gear needs to be tested when the mobile gear fishery is open.

Lou Williams stated he was happy to see the denial letter from DMF. Lou opined the research should be conducted in federal waters that are open to buoy lines and other gears and not within a trap gear closure where there is little seasonal overlapping mobile gear fishing.

Sooky Sawyer thanked Dan and Bob for their efforts. He opined that the lobster industry generally did not view ropeless technology as a workable solution to right whale conservation challenges. However, he agreed Lou's comments regarding research needing to occur in areas where trap gear fishing and mobile gear fishing are occurring.

Bob Glenn then provided additional protected species updates. There will be an Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) meeting in Philadelphia on May 9-13. NOAA Fisheries is initiating Phase 2 of conservation framework, which will address gillnet and other commercial trap fisheries not including the Northeast Lobster and Crab trap fishery. Bob then gave an update on the status of DMF's Incidental Take Permit application stating he anticipates submitting a draft application plan to NOAA Fisheries by early-July 2022.

Ray Kane asked who from DMF will be attending the TRT meeting. Bob Glenn indicated he would be.

#### *Updates Concerning the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission*

Nichola covered the ASMFC updates for the commission. With regards to summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup, she stated the MFAC-endorsed recreational management measures for 2022 were approved by ASMFC. Nichola then discussed the lobster/Jonah crab board meeting held on March 31 at which Addendum XXIX was approved which implements an electronic vessel tracking requirement for federal lobster and Jonah crab fisheries. There is multi-year funding expected to support state efforts beginning July 1. The Board requested that NMFS publish a final rule by May 1, 2023, with an implementation date by December 15, 2023. ASMFC will develop an implementation plan during 2022, including a standard operating procedure and the request for quotes from vessel tracking companies. Dan added that NH and ME had successfully lobbied congress for the funding to help offset the cost of the trackers, which was one of the concerns that had initially delayed final action on the addendum. The other concern was over privacy, as the trackers would always be operating, but these data would be treated according to standard confidentiality procedures and were essential to establish the footprint of the fishery.

Nichola moved on to discuss open public comment periods for the striped bass Draft Amendment 7 as well as the Recreational Harvest Control Rule for summer flounder, scup, sea bass, and bluefish, noting that recordings of the public hearings can be found on the ASMFC website. Nichola then provided a spring meeting preview. The spring

meeting will be held in a hybrid format from May 2-5 in Arlington, VA. She highlighted items that will be discussed such as the menhaden Draft Addendum I, consideration of final approval of the striped bass Amendment 7, the tautog tagging program, and the status of considering recreational sector separation by mode. Nichola turned the floor to Mike Armstrong to further address striped bass.

Mike Armstrong discussed the next steps for striped bass management after Amendment 7 is approved. He briefly discussed the expected timeline, with a stock assessment update with data through 2021 being finalized September/October. Projections will use the recruitment assumption selected in Amendment 7. In October, the Board will consider accepting the stock assessment for management purposes. Mike stated that if necessary, the board will craft regulations to address fishing mortality either by an Addendum or, if approved in Amendment 7, "specification." Under specification, implementation of measures is possible for at least part of 2023.

Nichola then moved on to discuss spiny dogfish and the MSC certification. The MSC's proposed revisions to its Fisheries Standard (i.e., the criteria it uses to certify fisheries) may jeopardize the current certification. This related to how the proposed change would automatically designate a species as endangered, threatened, or protected if on certain international conservation lists, with no option to modify this for sharks based on life history, stock status, or management status (as afforded other animals). Nichola stated that a comment letter had been submitted and a meeting with MSC requested. Nichola welcomed questions from the commission.

Mike Pierdinock asked about the discussions surrounding recreational sector separation and if that related to just different regulations by mode or also separate quotas by mode. Nichola replied that both were the focus on discussion and the need to evaluate the benefits and detriments of different management strategies. Mike stated how it would be imperative to have better recreational data first before a consideration of separate allocations based on catch data.

Bill Amaru asked who will be meeting with the MSC. Nichola stated it's still being set up, but Dan requested the meeting with MSC with John Whiteside, who represents the client group that holds the spiny dogfish certification. Bill Amaru stated that a commercial fishermen involved within the fishery should be invited as well. He asked about buyers who do and do not require the MSC standard. Dan McKiernan clarified that it is the secondary buyers that do not require the MSC standard.

#### *Updates Concerning Federal Fisheries Management*

Melanie Griffin discussed updates regarding federal fisheries management, specifically the New England Fishery Management Council. Melanie began by reviewing the April NEFMC agenda, which included the initiation of FMP frameworks for monkfish and multi-species groundfish; a final action on Southern New England Habitat Area of Particular Concern; approval of scallop limited scoping document; and potential changes to multi-species groundfish priorities.

Melanie moved on to discuss the MAFMC's mackerel rebuilding plan. A public hearing document was approved containing rebuilding alternatives and management measures. Melanie then highlighted upcoming public hearings scheduled on April 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in New Bedford and April 26<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in Plymouth. There will also be a webinar held at 6PM on May 2<sup>nd</sup> for those who cannot attend in person.

Bill Amaru asked Melanie for clarification about changes regarding the summertime mackerel fishery. Melanie stated a final actual action would not be implemented until January 2023.

Mike Pierdinock asked if the mackerel bag limit would apply to state or federal waters. Melanie interpreted the proposed regulation as applying in both jurisdictions. Mike noted that the New England states previously provided a single comment on various mackerel related issues and asked if it was DMF's intent to continue to do so. Melanie noted the state's continue to be in contact on the issue, but was uncertain as to the final product.

Ray Kane and Mike Pierdinock then discussed the complexities of the federal permitting and reporting system.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Dan McKiernan stated he would like to cancel the May MFAC meeting and have the MFAC meet on Thursday, June 16, 2022 for a business meeting and celebration of the MFAC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This meeting will be held in person at DMF's New Bedford office. The commission had no issues with this change.

#### *Commission Member Comments*

Lou Williams is looking for rationale for the April mobile gear closure off Gloucester and Rockport. Jared Silva indicated he would research the subject and get back to Lou.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Phil Coates expressed concern regarding the management of the commercial striped bass fishery and his longstanding request and petition to limit entry into this fishery.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Ray Kane requested a motion to adjourn the April MFAC business meeting. **Sooky Sawyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Shelley Edmundson. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.**

## **MEETING DOCUMENTS**

- April 7, 2022 Business Meeting Agenda
- March 10, 2022 Draft Meeting Minutes
- Recommendation Cover Memo
- Commercial Summer Flounder Limits Recommendation
- Commercial Black Seas Bass Limits
- Commercial Bluefish Minimum Size Recommendation
- Menhaden Season and Inshore Net Conditions
- Spiny Dogfish
- Commercial Striped Bass Control Date
- Housekeeping Recommendations and Permitting
- DMF Letter on Spiny Dogfish and MSC Certification
- Joint State Letter to MAFMC on Atlantic Mackerel

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**June 16, 2022  
SMAST East  
New Bedford, MA**