



## MA Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission

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### May 21, 2020 Meeting Summary

This document serves as a brief summary of the May 21, 2020 Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC) business meeting. This MFAC meeting was held virtually. All meeting materials are available on the [MFAC's past meeting website](#).

#### **Action Items**

MFAC Officer Elections. Ray Kane, Mike Pierdinock, and Bill Doyle were reappointed Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk, respectively, by a unanimous vote.

Appointment of the DMF Director. Commissioner Ron Amidon recommended that Acting Director Dan McKiernan be appointed Director of DMF. The recommendation was approved unanimously by the MFAC.

#### **Discussion Items**

DMF reviewed recent meetings of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC). The discussion focused on Atlantic sea herring, menhaden, tautog, striped bass, bluefish, black sea bass, scup and summer flounder.

- The ASMFC's Sea Herring Board tabled final rule making on Addendum III. This was in response to the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) not having yet published a final rule on Amendment 8 to the federal FMP and interest in further discussing certain authorities to manage the fishery in Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) with the NEFMC. Additionally, the ASMFC approved 2020 effort control measures for the directed sea herring fishery in Area 1A.
- The ASMFC's Menhaden Board reviewed a sensitivity analysis from the Ecological Reference Point Working Group related to assumptions made about ecosystem conditions. The Working Group recommended and the Board supported the conducting of further sensitivity analyses to be reviewed at the August ASMFC meeting.
- The ASMFC's Tautog Board considered a conservation equivalency proposal from RI to increase their fall recreational bag limit for for-hire anglers by one fish. The proposal was voted down. MA and RI are in the same management region and this adjustment would have brought RI rules out of phase with MA rules during the fall.
- The ASMFC's Striped Bass Board reviewed a projected 2020 fishery performance analysis based on final Addendum VI measures and new stock assessment projects. The Board also established a working group to review accountability measures specific to Addendum VI; initiate an amendment to consider a suite of management options; and to revisit the conservation equivalency provision.

- Recent joint meetings of the ASMFC and MAFMC were held to review comment received during the initial public scoping of FMP amendments that may revisit commercial and recreational allocations for bluefish, black sea bass, scup and summer flounder.

DMF reviewed a memorandum on the local management of shellfish aquaculture. The document outlines the various legal authorities that create the dual state-local management system for shellfish aquaculture. This expanded upon prior discussion at the April 1 business meeting and the issue will be revisited at upcoming meetings.

There was discussion regarding how COVID-19 is impacting the fishing and seafood industry. DMF briefed the MFAC on the CARES Act disaster relief program, ongoing seafood marketing initiatives and the issuance of retail boat permits for direct to public sales by commercial fishermen. The MFAC provided DMF feedback on these items and described how the impact is affecting their businesses and the industries they represent.

### **Presentation**

DMF provided a preliminary overview of the findings of its report of the longfin squid trawl fishery south of Cape Cod. The agency was in the process of completing a final report and submitting it to the legislature. The report was mandated and funded through a line item in the FY19 state budget.

### **Executive Session**

The MFAC went into executive session to discuss with legal counsel a May 15, 2020 Notice of Intent to bring suit against the MFAC for alleged violations of the Endangered Species Act. It was determined that having such a discussion in an open session would have a demonstrably likely detrimental impact on the MFAC's position in any resulting litigation. The May 2020 MFAC meeting adjourned from executive session.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

The next MFAC business meeting is scheduled for June 18. This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. Prior to the June meeting, a schedule will be set for the second half of 2020.

If you would like to obtain any materials regarding past or upcoming MFAC business meetings, please contact Jared Silva at DMF (617-626-1534 or [jared.silva@state.ma.us](mailto:jared.silva@state.ma.us)).