

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON TIDAL FINFISHERIES



MINUTES OF April 18, 2018



DNREC Auditorium, 89 Kings Hwy, Dover, DE 19901
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ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dewayne Fox, Ph.D., Chair
Bernie Pankowski
Brian Hoffecker
James "Jay" Little
Marvin Kahl, Jr.
P. "Wes" Townsend (*Absent*)
Joseph Smith

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

Chief Drew Aydelotte
John Clark
Stewart Michels
David Saveikis, Director

PUBLIC

6 Visitors

Agenda Item 1. Welcome

Chairman Dewayne Fox called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM and welcomed everyone.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of January 17, 2018 Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the January meeting minutes was approved without objection. The Council briefly discussed the Waterway Management Fund and future dredging projects, which were included in the January Minutes as a suggested agenda item for this meeting, but, as there was no new information on this topic, it was not included as an agenda item.

Agenda Item 3. Regulatory Update – Stewart Michels, Fisheries Program Manager, stated that the Secretary signed an emergency regulation on April 13, 2018 that changed the summer flounder limit from 17" to 16.5" (the year-round season and possession limit of 4 remain unchanged). Regulation Start Action Notices were initiated to change the Black Sea Bass and Tautog regulations to comply with Interstate Fishery Management Plans (FMP) requirements.

Agenda Item 4. Mid Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) February and April 2018 Meeting Summary – Stewart Michels, Fisheries Program Manager, stated that the 2018 federal measures recommended by MAFMC for Black Sea Bass are meant to achieve a Recreational Harvest Limit of 3.66 M lbs. Final action was taken on Summer Flounder accountability measures that will trigger when the commercial Allowable Catch Limit (ACL) is exceeded due to discard estimates and will use a single year estimate instead of a three year average. NOAA Fisheries presented a 5 year review on North Atlantic Right Whales, which showed the stock has been declining, with a number of FMPs under review to determine if gear modifications and technology improvements will reduce harmful interactions with fishing gear. The Atlantic Mackerel assessment passed peer review and was accepted, with the assessment indicating that the stock is overfished and that stock distribution has shifted to the north and east.

Agenda Item 5. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Winter 2018 Meeting Summary – John Clark, Fisheries Administrator, stated that draft Addendum V to the American Eel FMP was approved for public comment and that Delaware would host an ASMFC

public hearing on the Addendum on May 17, 2018. Although Addendum XXX to the Black Sea Bass FMP was approved and Delaware has initiated a regulation change to match federal regulations, ASMFC has accepted the appeal by the Northern Region states (NY-MA), which may result in a change to Delaware's proposed 2018 Black Sea Bass regulation. The Summer Flounder Addendum was extended for 2018 and the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia Region was approved to reduce the minimum size to 16.5". ASMFC approved the Cobia FMP with Delaware as a *de minimis* state. Delaware participated in the ASMFC Striped Bass Working Group, convened to recommend reference point criteria for the 2019 benchmark assessment, with Delaware supporting including Amendment 6 reference points in the assessment.

Agenda Item 6. Commercial Fisheries Reporting – David Saveikis, Fish and Wildlife Division Director, stated that there was little improvement in commercial harvest reporting since this topic was addressed by the Council in 2017. To increase reporting timeliness and accuracy, the Division will be mailing a letter to all commercial fishers explaining reporting requirements, followed by reminders via mail, text, etc. He further stated that, for example, Delaware exceeded the Horseshoe Crab quota last year that resulted in a reduced quota the next year because of tardy reports and that the poor reporting rate can affect Delaware's quotas, hurting commercial fishers **as was the case when commercial striped bass quota was allocated by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.**

Agenda Item 7. Director's Update – David Saveikis, Fish and Wildlife Division Director, – SB 158, allowing the landing of quota-managed species in Delaware that were caught in federal waters with gear legal in federal waters quickly passed the General Assembly. Final preparations on the M/V Twin Capes are being done for sinking in May on the DelJerseyLand Reef Site. Amtrak is donating 30+ damaged passenger cars to Delaware and they will be deployed on Reef Site #11 later in 2018. The Army Corps of Engineers main channel deepening of the Delaware River required more rock removal than originally anticipated, yielding a huge amount of

excellent artificial reef material being donated to Delaware that resulted in deployment of 661,500 tons of rock on Reef Site #6 and 355,000 tons of rock on Reef Site #4, with additional rock scheduled for deployment on Reef Site #4.

Suggested Agenda Item for Next Meeting

1. Allowing anchor netting for striped bass north of Liston Point.
2. Boat Ramp maintenance.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by

Rebecca Hoover

Rebecca Hoover

Recording Secretary

DRAFT