

NEW JERSEY MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL
Galloway Library
Galloway Township, NJ
May 12, 2016

Council Attendees:

Richard Herb (Acting Chairman)
James Alexis
Scott Bailey
Erling Berg
Eleanor Bochenek
John Maxwell
Sergio Radossi
Joseph Rizzo
Robert Rush
Joseph Zaborowski

Council Absentees:

Frances Puskas

Division of Fish and Wildlife Attendees:

David Chanda, Director, Division of Fish and Wildlife
Brandon Muffley, Administrator, Marine Fisheries Administration (MFA)
Russ Allen, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Marine Fisheries (BMF)
Jeff Normant, Principal Biologist, Bureau of Shellfisheries (BSF)
Deputy Chief Cianciulli, Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE)
Captain Jason Snellbaker, Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE)
Jeff Brust, Research Scientist 1, MFA
Tom Baum, Supervising Biologist, BMF
Lindy Barry, Senior Biologist, MFA
Sherry Bennett, Council Secretary

Ms. Bennett read the compliance with the Sunshine Law. Notice of the Marine Fisheries Council (Council) meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on April 13, 2016. Council meeting minutes for March 3, 2016 were approved. Mr. Herb began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Audience Conduct

Mr. Herb reminded the audience to take conversations outside or wait until the end of the meeting and to turn off all cell phones. Individuals wishing to make a public comment will need to sign up.

Law Enforcement Report

CO Captain Snellbaker presented the Council with an update of the Law Enforcement Report for May 2106, Handout #1. Highlights include:

- A written warning was issued to a commercial lobster pot fisherman, for setting fixed gear on state reefs, the Axel Carlson Jr reef off Mantoloking, Ocean County. The lobster fisherman stated he had not received any written notice that the regulations pertaining to fishing fixed gear on state reefs had taken effect. The gear was moved off the reef.
- In March, CO's revisited the Axel Carlson Jr. reef. Where another commercial lobster owner was found to deploy gear in the full access zone, yet failed to renew their Lobster, Fish, Conch pot license for the past two years, and failed to provide proper notice to the Marine Law Enforcement Unit. A summons was issued for these violations and later pled guilty and paid a penalty of \$466.
- During the month of February, District 8 CO's used newly issued electronic equipment and proven piloting techniques to apprehend six commercial oyster tong fishermen harvesting from condemned waters of Maurice River Cove in Delaware Bay. In early March, the fishermen plead guilty in Commercial Twp. Court to the charges of harvest and possession of oysters from the condemned waters of Maurice River Cove. The fisherman were fined maximum monetary penalties for DP and PDP offenses and the court ordered the suspension of their commercial shellfish licenses for a period of three years for the first offenders and five years for the second offenders. In addition, the court directed the forfeiture of their oyster tongs, worth several thousand dollars, that were seized by the CO's.
- On Sunday, March 6, 2016, CO's apprehended a Sea Isle City based recreational charter fishing vessel with possession of seventy-seven closed season marine finfish. When CO's boarded the vessel they found one hundred and fifty four black sea bass, tautog and scup fillets hidden in a compartment of the vessel. The owner/operator of the vessel was charged with possession of seventy seven closed season marine finfish and was also charged with the mutilation of seventy seven marine finfish.
- The general category scallop fleet was allotted a total of 600 day trips in the Mid-Atlantic rotational sea scallop access area under the latest framework adjustment to the Federal scallop fishery management plan. Since the area opened on April 1st, a derby fishery has commenced with many local and out of state vessels making back to back scallop landings in the southern NJ area. CO's have been conducting routine inspections of these possession/trip limit of 600 pounds. The cases have been referred to NMFS for Federal prosecution.

Legislative/Regulatory Report

Mr. Muffley presented Council with the Legislative and Regulatory Report, (Handouts #2-#4).

- Presented Council with the approved Notice of Administrative Change (Notice) from Council's January meeting which appeared in the April 18, 2016, NJ Register (Handout #2). The Notice modified Crab and Lobster Management Rules for Jonah Crab and Commercial shark seasons.

- Presented Council with a summary of the Department's proposed amendments of the rules concerning the management of oyster harvesting in the Delaware Bay, which appeared in the April 4, 2016 NJ Register (Handout #3). A 60-day comment period is in effect; submit comments by June 3, 2016, electronically at www.nj.gov/dep/reules/comments.
- S1157; Changes law regulating size limits of lobsters. (Handout #4)
- A2949 has been approved and S1625 once approved these bills will go to Governor for signature making the terrapin turtle a non-game species and preventing them from being harvested.
- The Department is working on rules to close the commercial terrapin fishery at the request of the Council. A draft proposal will be in the NJ Register May 16, followed by a 60-day comment period. A public meeting will be held on June 13 at 6 pm in Stafford in regards to proposed terrapin regulation.
- The 2008 Multispecies Rule is scheduled to be published in the NJ Register and will be going into effect on the publication date of June 6, 2016. A 60-day comment period will be held for the modifications made to commercial gill nets that were in the original Multispecies Rule. The change was made to correct language regarding gill nets smaller than 4" and allows the use of two nets instead of one.

Director Chanda brought Council's attention to a Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources to fund conservation that bridges the funding gap between game and nongame species and secures a future for diverse fish and wildlife and the economy. Congress is currently working on a bill to implement wildlife action plans.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Report

Mr. Allen, Mr. Muffley and Captain Snellbaker presented Council with ASMFC Spring Meeting Summary, held in Alexandria, VA May 2-5, 2016, (Handout #5).

Mr. Allen

- **Shad & River Herring Management Board**

The Board met to review the timetable for the next river herring and American shad stock assessments, receive reports on the Data Collection Standardization Workshop and Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG) activities in 2015, and approve the 2015 FMP Review.

- **American Eel Management Board**

The Board met to receive an update on the timing of the 2017 stock assessment and to consider changes to the Addendum IV commercial yellow eel allocations.

- **Weakfish Management Board**

The 2016 Weakfish Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report indicate weakfish is depleted and has been for the past 13 years. Under the new reference points, the stock is considered depleted when the stock is below a spawning stock biomass (SSB) threshold of 30% (15.17 million pounds).

The Board took no management action at this time but directed the TC to prepare for an assessment update in two years, at which time the Board will review the results and consider possible management action.

- **South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board**

The Board met to review the results of the 2016 Red Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report. Preliminary results of these models suggest that overfishing is occurring in both the northern (NJ-NC) and southern (SC-FL) regions. The Board charged the TC with several tasks to ensure the results of the model are accurate. The TC will provide a report to the Board in October.

- **Atlantic Menhaden Management Board**

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board initiated the development of the Draft Addendum I to Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes allowing two individuals who are each authorized by their management jurisdiction to harvest 6,000 pounds of menhaden bycatch to harvest up to 12,000 pounds of menhaden bycatch when working from the same vessel fishing stationary, multi-species gear –limited to one vessel trip per day. The intent of Draft Addendum I is to add flexibility to one element of the bycatch allowance provision while the Board prepares to address menhaden management more comprehensively through the development of Draft Amendment 3 to the FMP over the next two years. The Board will consider all public comment (including a July 7 public hearing in NJ) and consider taking final action on the draft Addendum at its August meeting.

Mr. Muffley

- **American Lobster Management Board**

The Board approved Addendum I to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Jonah Crab. The Addendum establishes a bycatch limit of 1,000 pounds of crab/trip for non-trap gear, and non-lobster trap gear effective January 1, 2017. The 1,000 crab limit provides a cap to potential increase in effort and trap proliferation. In addition, the Board initiated a draft addendum to create a coastwide claw standard in the Jonah crab fishery with options for a strictly whole crab fishery, a whole crab fishery with the allowance for a specific volume of detached claws per trip, and the unlimited landing of claws that meet a 2.5” minimum length. The draft addendum will be presented to the Board in August.

The Board met to discuss potential management actions to address American lobster stock declines in the Southern New England (SNE) stock. The Board agreed not to pursue a moratorium in the SNE fishery. As a first step in the addendum process, the Board tasked the Technical Committee (TC) to review management measures which could achieve a 20-60% increase in egg production. The analysis will be presented to the Board in August.

- **Horseshoe Crab Management Board**

The Board met to receive an update on the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework review, discuss biomedical data confidentiality and the next stock assessment, and review the alternative bait cost comparison.

- **Coastal Sharks Management Board**

The Board approved Draft Addendum IV to the Interstate FMP for Coastal Sharks for public comment. The purpose of the Draft Addendum is to maintain consistency between federal and state FMP's, and incorporate into state regulations the intent to the limited fins-attached exception for smooth dogfish in the Shark Conservation Act of 2010. A press release on public hearings schedule and Draft Addendum availability will be distributed once state hearings have been scheduled.

- **Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board**

Council was presented with an overview of the current status of the cobia fishery to provide background on the Council's request to have the Commission either jointly or complementarily manage cobia with the Council. The Board tasked the South Atlantic Board to develop alternatives for developing an FMP.

Captain Snellbaker

- **Law Enforcement Committee (LEC)**

The LEC met over two days during the 2016 Spring Meeting of the ASMFC.

- Captain Snellbaker briefed the Council on the recent work of the Tautog Enforcement Subcommittee. The subcommittee will be reviewing possible tag designs that may be useable for live tautog, and that would meet enforcement requirements for durability and tamper-resistance.
- Captain Snellbaker also discussed the recent growth of safe-harbor requests and proposals to allow dual-state landings in NJ. Other LEC members reported similar increase in safe harbor requests. A number of management and potential enforcement issues were discussed.
- The LEC reviewed recent work of the lobster enforcement subcommittee. The LEC was briefed by the Lobster Management Board to ensure success of trap reduction and stock recovery efforts, and need for successful enforcement.
- The LEC was briefed on recent action to implement bycatch limits for non-trap and non-lobster trap gear, and consideration of claw harvest to be added to new addendum.
- The LEC reviewed the establishment of an Aerial Enforcement Subcommittee to begin working on review and update of enforceability rankings for aerial enforcement.
- The LEC has been asked to provide a list of recommended enforcement safeguards in conjunction with American eel aquaculture operations in NC.

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)

Mr. Baum presented Council with the MAFMC Meeting Summary, held in Montauk, NY (Handout #6).

• Blueline Tilefish Amendment

The Council approved measures to establish management of blueline tilefish in federal waters off the Mid-Atlantic and New England coasts. The emergency measures in the Mid-Atlantic of a commercial trip limit of 275 pounds (gutted) and a recreational bag limit of 7 fish per person will expire on June 3, 2016.

- SSC recommended ABC of 87,031 pounds for 2017
- Allocate 73% of total allowable landings to the recreational fishery and 27% to the commercial sector (based on the median of annual commercial-recreational catch ratios from 2009-2013)
- Commercial trip limit of 300 pounds gutted weight (head and fins must be attached)
- Open season from May 1 to October 31; possession limits per trip of 7 fish per person for inspected for-hire vessels, 5 fish per person for uninspected for-hire vessels, and 3 fish for person for private vessels. The Council recommended mandatory permitting and reporting of golden and blueline tilefish for both for-hire and private recreational fishing in order to develop better information on recreational tilefish landings in the Mid-Atlantic.

The public will have an opportunity to comment on the measures recommended by the Council during the comment period associated with the NMFS proposed rule. Publication of the proposed rule is expected this summer.

• Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment

The Council reviewed a range of alternatives for inclusion in the Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment, modified several alternatives and voted to move forward with public hearings. A public hearing will be held on Wednesday May 18, 2016, 6:30 pm, at Stockton College.

- Council modified the list of taxa under consideration.
- Council approved management alternatives to designate these taxa (excluding chub mackerel) as Ecosystem Components (ECs) in the Council's existing FMPs and either prohibit their harvest or allow an incidental possession limit.
- Council approved incidental possession limit alternatives of either 1,500 pounds of any of these species per trip or 1,700 pounds for all of these species combined per trip.

• Scup Gear Restricted Areas

The Council approved a framework action to modify the boundary of one of the region's two Scup Gear Restricted Areas (GRAs). This modification is expected to increase the amount of longfin squid available in the Southern Scup GRA boundary, to small-mesh fisheries during January 1 – March 15 by 51% compared to the current GRA. It is expected to reduce the amount of scup found within the Southern GRA by 21%.

- **Golden Tilefish Framework 2**

The Council selected preferred alternative for Framework 2, to the Tilefish FMP. The framework proposes to:

- have discards deducted from the specific component of the commercial sector generating them;
- eliminate IVR reporting requirements;
- prohibit vessels from fishing more than one golden tilefish IFQ allocation at a time;
- require golden tilefish to be landed with the head attached;
- restrict the golden tilefish recreational fishery to rod and reel only, with a five hook limit per rod

- **Spiny Dogfish Trip Limits**

Council voted to increase the federal dogfish trip limit to 6,000 lbs., up from the current 5,000 lb. trip limit.

- **Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management**

The Council reviewed a first draft of its Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Guidance Document. The document is intended to provide an umbrella for coordination of ecosystem considerations across existing FMPs, with the goal of managing fisheries within a broader ecosystem context compared to traditional single species.

- **Collaborative Research Committee**

The committee selected four projects for funding. Drs. Olaf Jenson and Eleanor Bochenek are PI's for the project titled "Estimating and Mitigating the Discard Mortality Rate of Black Sea Bass in Offshore Recreational Rod-And-Reel Fisheries" with Captain Bob Rush as an industry collaborator.

- **River Herring and Shad**

The Council's River-Herring and Shad (RH/S) Committee, RH/S AP, and Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Committee met jointly to reexamine the 2013 RH/S Stock in Fishery White Paper.

- **Special Management Zones**

The Council's timeline for NJ's request for Special Management Zones (SMZ) for the 13 artificial reefs in federal waters was adjusted so that the Monitoring Team's Report will be reviewed at the Council's October meeting in Galloway.

Mr. Bailey asked what the rationale was behind the idea of a 3,5,7 blueline tilefish per person of different sectors. **Mr. Baum** commented that it was not mentioned in the public hearing document, someone added that as an option afterwards. Mr. Baum did comment how difficult from enforcement point of view this will be.

Mr. Nowalsky encouraged Council to send a letter to MAFMC on how difficult it will be for law enforcement to manage blueline tilefish once the proposed rule is approved.

Another area of concern of the proposed rule lies within the possession limits per trip of 7 fish per person for inspected for-hire vessels, 5 fish per person for uninspected for-hire vessels and 3 fish per person for private vessels.

After some discussion among the Council members concerning the definition of inspected vs. not inspected vessels and council not having addressed sector separation before, Dr. Bochenek requested to discuss this further at a Regulatory committee and in the meantime send a letter to the MAFMC.

MOTION to send letter to MAFMC and GARFO regarding the Council's concerns with the MAFMC's recent discussions on blueline tilefish. Motion by Mr. Rush, seconded by Dr. Bochenek. Motion passes.

Public Comment

Mr. Akers commented that if sectors are to be split, than all sectors should be represented.

Marine Fisheries Bureau Report

Mr. Allen presented Council with Bureau report.

- **Commercial Harvest Reporting**

All data from the newly implemented comprehensive reporting program for the entire commercial sector is being entered. The ACCSP staff review all reports as they come in, and is receiving data that has never been seen before. Fyke net, conch and white perch are just a few new types of information coming in.

- **Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS)**

The Division is now conducting the dockside and head boat intercept/interview portion APAIS. It is the interview portion of the survey that helps develop recreational catch and harvest estimates in marine waters throughout the country. Currently the Division is in its 11th week of sampling. Mr. Allen referred to a letter mailed to all party boat captains and owners in April 2016, about this survey and the stress this program has on an already strained Division as well as the importance of collection of biological data. Mr. Allen brings this up to Council and asked Council to help spread the word, because the Administration believes this sampling should be completed without having to pay a fare for the day. However the hourlyies who have been performing these surveys have been using their own money to pay for fares as well as their own transportation and have yet to be reimbursed by the state. Mr. Allen is asking for a little help from these party boat owners for the benefit of better and more accurate recreational fisheries data.

Shellfish Council Reports

- **Delaware Bay – Mr. Bailey**
 - **Direct Market Harvest Oysters, Delaware Bay**

The Delaware Bay Direct Market Harvest started on April 4th. The quota was set at 80,042 bushels. The harvest will take place at Shell Rock, High mortality beds and Medium mortality beds.

- **Intermediate Transplant**

The intermediate transplant program began on April 25th and concluded on May 6th. The transplant was from upper seed beds to Shell Rock and Cohansey. This program would increase the quota by 9,993 bushels which would provide a 290 bushel increase per license.

- **Atlantic Coast – Mr. Maxwell**

- **Atlantic Coast Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing Policy**

At the March 21, 2016 Atlantic Coast Section of the New Jersey Shellfisheries Council meeting, the Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing Policy for the Atlantic Coast of NJ was approved. This policy document was developed through the Council's Leasing Committee, which consists of industry, academia and Bureau representatives. The policy will provide a predictable general planning and guidance tool for the Council, industry and the State of NJ for leasing bottom within the tidal waters along Atlantic coastal areas. This document will be considered "living" document and will be revised as often as necessary to reflect the changing needs of the shellfish aquaculture industry and staffing capacity of the Bureau. In addition, the current policy will not authorize the establishment of new lease areas until proposed revisions to the Leasing Regulations at NJAC 7:25-24 are amended and adopted.

- **Shellfish Aquaculture Leasing Regulations**

The Atlantic Coast Leasing Committee's Regulatory Subcommittee met on March 30th to review the proposed changes to the Leasing Regulations on the Atlantic Coast. It is anticipated that the rule change process for adoption of the proposed revisions to the regulations will commence sometime in August. The new regulations will also include Delaware Bay leasing.

- **Marine Fisheries Administration Budget Deficit**

The Shellfisheries Council sent a letter to the Governor, Commissioner and coastal legislators to address the current budget deficits within the Marine Fisheries Administration and the diversion of Bureau of Shellfisheries' dedicated accounts to cover anticipated salary deficit with the MFS and Marine Enforcement, estimated at \$1.1 million.

Committee Reports

- **Legislative Committee**

Mr. Herb presented Council with Legislative Committee Meeting Report (Handout #7 and #12).

The Marine Fisheries Council's (Council) Legislative Committee (Committee) met to discuss the Marine Fisheries Administration's budget issues and the feasibility of moving the Division of Fish and Wildlife (Division) to the Department of Agriculture.

The Committee raised significant concerns regarding the current and future budgets for the Marine Fisheries Administration (MFA). Sufficient funding to support the Administration has always been, and continues to be, a serious problem. In fact, the annual state appropriation provided to the MFS by the legislature has essentially remained unchanged for the last 30 years. Failure to adequately fund the MFA and address this issue in the not too distant future will have serious negative consequences for the States \$2.5 billion commercial and recreational fishing industries and the nearly 23,000 NJ jobs that rely on these fisheries resources. Other states with equally important commercial and recreational fisheries have budgets that are 4 – 7 times higher than NJ and have staffing levels that are more than 10 times that of NJ's MFA.

The Committee tasked the MFA staff to draft a letter, already approved by the Council at their March 3, 2016 meeting, to the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees outlining the Council's concerns regarding the MFA's budget issues. This letter will also be distributed to the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, all coastal legislative representatives, both Shellfish Councils and the DEP Commissioner. This letter is a first step to engage our legislative representatives on this issue and develop a longer term strategy to increase funding to these important fisheries programs.

The Committee did not see moving the Division out of the DEP and into the Department of Agriculture as feasible or beneficial at this time.

Handout #12 pertains to the Letter mentioned in Committee report.

- **Lobster Committee Report**

Mr. Berg presented Council with the Lobster Committee Report. (Handout #8).

On April 26, 2016, a meeting of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council's American Lobster Committee was held at the Nacote Creek Enforcement Office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues and potential solutions to the possession, import and sale of legal lobster from other Lobster Management Areas that are smaller than the minimum size limit allowed in NJ. Staff also provided an update on the ASMFC management process to address the current and continued poor condition of the Southern New England lobster stock.

Currently, regulations in NJ prohibit the import, export, possession, buying or selling of lobsters less than the NJ minimum size limit of 3 3/8 inches as established by the

ASMFC for Lobster Management Areas (LMA) 4 and 5 (NJ fisherman also harvest lobster from LMA 3 but that Area has a larger minimum size). The minimum size limit of lobster from the Gulf of Maine (includes the state of MA and ME) have a lower minimum size of 3 1/4 inches. NJ dealers obtain lobsters from NJ fishermen but in order to meet demand in NJ and other states, also import lobsters from the Gulf of Maine where there is a significant amount of product available. Due to the smaller possession limit of Gulf of Maine Lobsters, some small portion (estimated between 2-10%) of the imported lobsters are less than the NJ minimum size limit which technically is a violation of NJ regulations. In an effort to address the strict possession regulation and provide an outlet for the undersized lobster, a proposal was evaluated that would allow for a dealer (not a harvester) to legally possess an undersized lobster legally harvested from another Lobster Management Area provided sufficient documentation and record keeping was kept on the undersized lobsters and that no undersized lobster could be sold in NJ and the smaller lobsters must be exported out of NJ for sale elsewhere. This general framework is consistent with regulations developed in other states (CT and RI for example) that have the same minimum size limit as NJ but also rely on imported lobsters to address demand.

After a lengthy discussion by the group on potential pro's and con's on moving forward with this approach, a consensus was not met amongst the advisors and the potential impact to the fishermen was not clear. Therefore, the Committee's recommendation is to remain at status quo at this time with the State wide lobster possession limit of 3 3/8 inches for NJ dealers and fishermen.

- Dr. Bochenek asked if the advisors were in favor of allowing undersized lobsters in New Jersey. Mr. Muffley commented primary lobster fishermen were not in support and non-lobstermen (i.e. dealers, restaurant owners) supported the proposal. Mr. Herb and Mr. Rush felt that it was a mixture and a split among those present at the meeting.
- Captain Snellbaker commented that he is willing to entertain RI and CT current lobster regulations. Captain Snellbaker expressed his concern and fear this could create the opportunity for undersized lobsters to be landed and laundered in NJ.

Public Comment

Mr. John Godwin, a lobster wholesale dealer, has spoken with MA dealers on black market sales of lobsters. With the heavy fines imposed, the black market has deteriorated and MA has 3 different minimum sizes in their lobster fisheries and possessed by their dealers. He would like to continue selling to PA, but it's really hard to re-measure thousands of lobsters every day, but this motion would help my business. For example, in 2009, on a 12,000 lb. order, about 10% of the lobsters measured smaller than required when inspected. Also the constant handling and re-measuring of the lobsters also increases mortality rates.

Mr. Mackey – commented to allow for out of state sales. The lobsters are coming in on trucks from regulated states, and this helps NJ dealers to have a legal way to off load smaller lobsters.

Motion passes unanimously.

- **Commercial Black Sea Bass Committee Report**

Mr. Herb presented Council with Commercial Black Sea Bass Committee Report. (Handout #9).

On April 26, 2016, a meeting of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council's Commercial Black Sea Bass Committee was held at the Nacote Creek Enforcement Office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential future management approaches to the commercial black sea bass quota allocation harvested by NJ fisherman.

Staff provided an historical overview on the development of sea bass regulations and the current seasonal quota allocation. Staff also provided a summary regarding how specific gear types have been utilizing the annual allocation over the past thirty years. Advisors discussed possible regulatory changes that may provide benefit to both the otter trawl fishermen and fish pot fishermen, the two primary gear types utilizing the commercial black sea bass resource. All advisors agree to evaluate a potential redistribution of quota into different seasonal time periods and gear specific quotas in an effort to benefit the fishery. Related to, or as part of, a potential quota redistribution should be an evaluation of historical and current black sea bass landing permit participation by gear type. Council advised staff to investigate further the number of permits and landings by gear type fishing during each month from 2000 to 2015. A future meeting, recommended for the summer, will take place to review this information and develop potential quota management options.

Regulatory Actions

- **Mr. Allen** presented Council with Handout #10 (Notice of Administrative Change) which modifies commercial coastal shark possession limits and modification of smooth dogfish annual quota.

Motion to approve the Notice of Administrative Change on modifications of Commercial Coastal Shark Possession Limits and Modification of Smooth Dogfish Annual Quota for Commissioner's signature. Motion by Rush, second by Bochenek. Motion carries unanimous, no abstentions.

Old Business

- **Mr. Muffley** presented Council with Handout #11, the letter from Council to Commissioner Martin, regarding travel denial made by the Department for MFA staff person to attend the ASMFC Winter meeting in VA.
- Request to hold an Executive Committee Meeting to review the Draft 5-year Strategic Plan.

New Business

- Mr. Muffley brought Council's attention to end of fiscal year, travel reimbursements are due.

Committee Meetings- The following is a list of committee meetings that are in the queue to be held:

- Executive committee – first week in June regarding Strategic Plan and advisor applications.
- Regulatory Committees regarding landing license, bow fishing, landing flexibility
- Commercial Black Sea Bass to continue quota reallocation discussions

Meeting adjourned. Next Meeting July 7, 2016, Galloway Township.