

States Schedule Public Hearings on Draft Addendum XXVII
Addendum Seeks Input on Regional Management Options for 2016 Summer
Flounder and Black Sea Recreational Fisheries

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Draft Addendum XXVII for public comment at the Joint Commission/Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting in Annapolis, Maryland earlier this month. Draft Addendum XXVII proposes regional management approaches for the 2016 summer flounder and black sea bass recreational fisheries. The Atlantic coast states of Massachusetts through Virginia have scheduled public hearings to gather public comment. The details of those hearings follow:

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

January 12, 2016 at 6 PM

2600 Washington Avenue

4th Floor Conference Room

Newport News, Virginia

Contact: [Rob O’Reilly](#) at 757.247.2248

Draft Addendum XXVII was initiated to consider extending use of regional management approaches for the 2016 recreational summer flounder fishery, including an option that would allow for a Delaware Bay specific region. The Draft Addendum also includes options for extending use of ad-hoc regional management approaches for black sea bass recreational fisheries in 2016 and 2017. In the event the options in Draft Addendum XXVII are not approved for management, the Board extended the current summer flounder regional management approach for use in 2016.

In 2014, the Board approved Addendum XXV to shift away from traditional use of state-by-state harvest targets under conservation equivalency to use of an alternative regional strategy for managing summer flounder recreational fisheries. Based on its success in keeping recreational harvest within the RHL and providing greater regulatory consistency among neighboring states, this strategy was extended for use in 2015. State-by-state harvest targets previously utilized under conservation equivalency created difficulties for some states as overages occurred due largely to state shares and limits not reflecting local summer flounder abundance and its availability to recreational fishermen. In 2014 and 2015 management regions were the following: 1) Massachusetts; 2) Rhode Island; 3) Connecticut-New Jersey; 4) Delaware-Virginia; and 5) North Carolina.

The Draft Addendum also proposes two options for the 2016 black sea bass recreational fishery (1) coastwide measures or (2) the continued use of management measures by northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern regions (Delaware – North Carolina). The regional management approach has been used since 2011 and offers advantages over coastwide regulations by addressing geographic differences in the stock (size, abundance and seasonality) while maintaining the consistent application of management measures by neighboring states.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXVII either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum is available at

http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/DraftAddendumXXVII_PublicComment_Dec2015.pdf and can also be accessed on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under Public Input. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on **January 21, 2016** and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Addendum XXVII). For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.