



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 2, 2005

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(202) 289-6400

American Eel Draft Addendum I Available for Public Comment *States Schedule Hearings for January*

Washington, DC – The Commission's American Eel Management Board has approved the Draft Addendum I to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Eel for public review and comment. The Draft Addendum proposes the establishment of a mandatory trip-level catch and effort monitoring program for American eel in order to collect much needed data on this species. Specific options include an eel harvester license/permit by state, which may include those who harvest eels for use as bait, and an eel dealer license/permit, including bait dealers.

The Draft Addendum responds to concerns regarding the lack of accurate catch and effort data and the critical need for these data for stock assessment purposes. Current stock status for American eel is poorly understood due in part to limited and inconsistent harvest data. The Commission has prepared an American eel stock assessment for independent peer review in December 2005. The results of the stock assessment and peer review will be presented to the Commission's American Eel Management Board in February 2006.

Atlantic coastal states from Maine through Florida will be holding hearings on the Draft Addendum throughout January. The specific details follow:

Maine Department of Marine Resources

January 4, 2006; 7:00 PM
194 McKown Point Road
West Boothbay Harbor, Maine
Contact: Gail Wippelhauser at 207/624-6548

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

January 5, 2006; 6:00 PM
Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station
30 Emerson Avenue
Gloucester, Massachusetts
Contact: Brad Chase at 978/282-0308 ext. 111

Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife

January 18, 2006; 6:00 PM
URI Narragansett Bay Campus
Corless Auditorium, South Ferry Road

Narragansett, Rhode Island
Contact: Michelle Burnett at 401/423-1946

New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation

January 23, 2006; 7:00 PM
Bureau of Marine Resources Headquarters
205 North Belle Meade Road, Suite #1
East Setauket, New York
Contact: Vic Vecchio at 631/444-0476

New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife

January 25, 2006; 7:00 PM
Richard Stockton College
Townsend Residential Life Center
Multi-purpose Room
Pomona, New Jersey
Contact: Tom McCloy at 609/292-7794

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife

January 17, 2006; 7:00 PM

Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control
Richardson and Robbins Building Auditorium
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware
Contact: Roy Miller at 302/739-3441

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

January 24, 2006; 6:00 PM

Tawes State Office Building-C-1, Conference Room,
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland
Contact: Keith Whiteford 410/643-4601

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

January 11, 2006; 6:00 PM

John T. Parran Hearing Room
222 Taylor Street
Colonial Beach, Virginia
Contact: A.C. Carpenter at 804/224-7148

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

January 10, 2006; 6:00 PM

Fourth Floor Conference Room
2600 Washington Avenue
Newport News, Virginia
Contact: Jack Travelstead at 757/247-2247

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries

January 12, 2006; 6:00 PM

943 Washington Square Mall
Washington, North Carolina
Contact: Mike Potthoff at 252/946-6481

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission**

January 9, 2006; 6:00 PM

St. Johns River Water Management District Office
Governing Board Room
4049 Reid Street
Palatka, Florida
Contact: Kim Bonvechio at 352/742-6438

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the Addendum are available via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. **Public comment will be accepted no later than 5 PM on February 7, 2006**, and should be forwarded to Lydia Munger, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; 202/289-6051 (fax) or comments@asmfc.org (subject line: American Eel). For more information, please contact Lydia Munger at 202/289-6400 or lmunger@asmfc.org.

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