

NEW JERSEY MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL
Galloway Township Library
Galloway, New Jersey
November 6, 2014

Council Attendees: Acting Chairman Richard Herb
Erling Berg
Walter L. Johnson III
Frances Puskas
Sergio Radossi
Joseph Rizzo
Robert Rush
Joseph Zaborowski
James Alexis

Council Absentees: Eleanor Bochenek
Barney Hollinger

Division of Fish and Wildlife Attendees:

Brandon Muffley, Administrator, Marine Fisheries Administration (MFA)
Russ Allen Bureau Chief, Bureau of Marine Fisheries (BMF)
Russ Babb, Acting Chief, Bureau of Shellfisheries (BSF)
Tom Baum, Supervising Biologist, BMF
Mike Celestino, Research Scientist, MFA
Captain Dominick Fresco, Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE)
Sherry Bennett, Council Secretary, MFA
Brian Neilan, Assistant Biologist, BMF
Chad Power, Fisheries Biologist, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission (ASMFC)
Lloyd Lomolino, Fisheries Biologist, ASMFC

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 October 14, 2014. September 4, 2014 Council meeting minutes were approved. Acting Chairman Herb began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Audience Conduct

Acting Chairman 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

Captain Fresco presented the Council with the Law Enforcement Report for August-October (detailed report provided in Handout #1).

- On 8/24/14 CO was patrolling the Point Pleasant Canal in Point Pleasant Boro, Ocean County when he observed three individuals taking sublegal tautog. Upon inspection, the CO was shown one legal-sized tautog in a small soft cooler. After

a brief interview, the CO was able to locate additional tautog in the spare tire compartment of the vehicle's trunk. Summonses for nine, undersized tautog and six tautog over the daily possession limit were issued.

- On 08/30/14 COs stopped by the Keyport Municipal Boat Ramp and began talking to two men whom had just pulled their boat after a day of fishing. Upon inspection, the COs uncovered several undersized summer flounder under ice in one of the coolers on the vessel's deck, as well as a bag of parts of summer flounder that had been used as bait. COs issued both men two summonses each for undersized summer flounder and possession of parts of mutilated summer flounder.
- On 09/05/14 a CO was contacted to assist with a market inspection at an Asian market in East Brunswick. Upon inspection of the market, CO found multiple packages of dried shark fin for sale, some selling up to \$199 per unit. A summons was issued to the market for failure to keep and produce accurate records.
- On 9/11/14, COs performed a commercial fisheries compliance inspection of a vessel out of Rhode Island. This particular vessel is one of a handful that lands their catch in totes, which makes it more difficult for the COs to inspect for weight. CO's selected two random containers and checked the weight of the fish contained in them. Each tote ultimately weighed approximately 130 pounds, which is approximately 30 pounds heavier than the captain told CO they weighed. Once the total landed catch was weighed, the COs discovered an overage of 515 pounds of summer flounder. The overage was seized, and sold to the highest bidder. Summonses for landing over the limit of 2500 pounds were issued to the captain and the owner of the vessel. The summonses carry a penalty of up to \$3,000 and 6 month suspension of summer flounder landing license.
- Late August and early September has proven to be extremely busy along the Point Pleasant Canal. COs have issued over 30 summonses for various violations from littering to undersized and over limit tautog and other species.
- COs had another busy month with shellfish violations at Sandy Hook National Park. Working with the NPS Rangers, Over 16 summonses and written warnings for clamming without a shellfish license and harvesting clams from the special restricted waters of Sandy Hook Bay.
- On 09/24/14 a CO was patrolling the area around Manasquan Inlet when he noticed a commercial fishing vessel enter the inlet and proceed toward the Point Pleasant Packing Co.'s dock. The CO performed a commercial fisheries compliance inspection of the vessel and found them to be in possession of more than their allowed landing limit of both summer flounder and black sea bass. CO issued the vessel's captain and owner one summons each for landing over the commercial limit of summer flounder and for landing over the by-catch allowance of black sea bass.
- On 09/27/14 CO performed a fisheries compliance inspection on an individual returning to Long Branch Municipal Boat Ramp that had just pulled his crab pot for the season. Upon inspection, CO found a summer flounder measuring 10 inches in the crab pot. In addition, the crab pot was unmarked and the individual did not have a recreational crab pot license. Summonses were issued for

- possession of one undersized summer flounder and failure to possess a recreational crab pot license.
- CO was patrolling Sandy Hook National Park at low tide when he noticed two groups of recreational clambers harvesting hard clams from special restricted waters. National Park Service Rangers assisted with the apprehension. The first individual harvested 45 hard clams while the second group harvested 122 hard clams. Four summonses and four warnings were issued for harvesting shellfish without a shellfish license and harvesting shellfish from the special restricted waters of Sandy Hook Bay.
 - On 09/30/14 CO was patrolling Morgan Inlet when he noticed a group of three fishermen walking back to their vehicle with a seine net and buckets. Initially upon inspecting the individuals there were no violations, however CO walked back to their vehicle with the individuals and noticed a black crate with a white bucket by the backseat of the van. CO asked to see the white bucket where he found 183 snapper bluefish in the bucket. The group was 138 bluefish over their recreational limit. Three summonses were issued for possession of the over the limit bluefish.
 - On 10/04/14 CO was patrolling Barnegat Light when he encountered two men walking off the jetty with large cooler. Inside a cooler, the CO found 40 sublegal blackfish (tautog). The men were issued one summons each for 40 undersized blackfish and 38 blackfish over limit.
 - On 10/06/14 COs worked the Barnegat Light jetty based on complaints of fishermen taking copious amounts of blackfish, both over limit and undersized. Upon inspection, COs found the men 46 blackfish over their daily limit, 38 of which were undersized. Summonses for these violations were issued to all three individuals.
 - On 10/09/14 CO was working the Point Pleasant Beach area when he noticed a commercial fishing vessel preparing to offload their catch. Upon his interviewing of the mates he discovered they were in violation by not calling in to notify the Marine Region Office of their intentions to land summer flounder that day. Additionally, they were in excess of their allowance of black sea bass by-catch. One summons to each the Captain and owner for failing to call in their summer flounder landing and for the black sea bass by-catch overage.
 - On 10/09/14 COs were performing a Marine Mammal Protection Act patrol in the Atlantic Ocean off of Monmouth Beach. COs issued summonses to the captain and owner for leaving three anchored gillnets unattended during the hours of darkness. The nets were seized and summonses issued for failing to stay within 0.5 mile of staked gill nets during the hours of darkness. The nets are also subject to forfeiture.
 - On 10/14/14 CO received a phone call reporting a commercial fishing vessel moored at the Point Pleasant Packing Co.'s dock that was in possession of 2500 pounds of summer flounder during closed season. Both the captain and the owner claimed they didn't know the season had closed. Additionally, CO was able to determine the vessel had failed to call in their landing of black sea bass, which

had already been offloaded earlier that morning. Summonses were issued to the captain and owner for the following violations: Landing summer flounder during closed commercial season, landing over the limit of by-catch of summer flounder, and failure to call in the landing of a commercial black sea bass trip.

- Southern marine officers wrote approximately 75 summonses from Sept. 21 to Oct 20 involving tautog fishing which include littering and interference charges. People are becoming more creative in an attempt to elude apprehension when it comes to tautog violations as COs increase enforcement pressure. October is normally a busy month for tautog violations as the fish become more readily available, fishing pressure increases, other fisheries are closed and striped bass have yet to migrate through our waters. The majority of the tautog are under the legal size limit of 15”.

Legislative Report

No report.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Report

Mr. Allen and Mr. Baum presented Council with a summary of the ASMFC Management Board (Board) meetings, held in October 2014 (Handout #8):

Mr. Allen

American Eel Management Board

- The ASMFC American Eel Management Board approved Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (IFMP). The Addendum establishes a 907,671 pound coastwide quota for yellow eel fisheries. The coastwide quota will be implemented for the 2015 fishing year but will not initially include state-specific allocations. Instead the management approach establishes two management triggers: 1) exceeding coastwide quota by more than 10% in a given year, or 2) exceeding the coastwide quota for two consecutive years regardless of the percent overage. If either of these triggers are reached, state by state quotas will be enacted in the following year.
- The Addendum also reduces Maine’s glass eel quota to 9,688 pounds for 2015 which is equivalent to the 2014 landings.
- Mr. Allen did suggest Council should convene an Eel Committee Meeting in January 2015 to discuss a plan in case the quota is exceeded and state quotas are established.

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

- The ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the IFMP for Atlantic Striped Bass. The Addendum establishes new fishing mortality (F) reference points, coastal states will implement a 25% harvest reduction from 2013 levels and Chesapeake Bay states/jurisdictions will implement a 20.5% harvest reduction from 2012 levels.
- All states/jurisdictions will promulgate regulations prior to the start of their 2015 fisheries.

Horseshoe Crab Management Board

- The ASMFC Horseshoe Crab Management Board has approved the harvest specifications for horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin. Under the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework, the Board maintained a status quo management program (harvest limit of 500,000 DE Bay male horseshoe crabs and zero females) for the 2015 season.

Mr. Baum

Atlantic Herring Section

- Atlantic Herring Section updated the development of Draft Amendment 3 to the Atlantic Herring FMP. The Section granted the Plan Development Team additional time to complete analysis for Draft Amendment 3's issues and management options.
- The Section discussed inconsistencies of closure announcements and the need to better coordinate closure decisions between NOAA Fisheries, state agencies and ASMFC.

Winter Flounder Management Board

- The Winter Flounder Management Board met to receive reports on the recent stock assessment for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) winter flounder stock, spawning stock biomass trends of the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) stock, and fisheries status by the Advisory Panel.
 - The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) completed an operational stock assessment update which concluded the GOM stock was not experiencing overfishing, but the stock status remains unknown.
 - The NEFSC will conduct an operational SNE/MA stock assessment update in 2015.
 - Based on 3 different trawl survey's thus far, the trends for the SNE/MA stock are declining and the indices in 2013 are the lowest on record. Recruitment is slow, if happening at all.
 - Advisory Panel (AP) reported that in most states, there are so few winter flounder available that fishermen are no longer targeting this species. The AP supports tightening regulations, quota reductions and even a moratorium in the SNE/MA fishery to help rebuild the stock.

American Lobster Management Board

- The ASMFC American Lobster Management Board approved the development of an IFMP for Jonah Crab and initiated the development of Draft Addendum XXIV to Amendment 3 to the ISFMP for American Lobster to address inconsistencies between state and federal lobster trap transfer regulations. The Jonah Crab FMP was initiated in response to concern about increasing fishing pressure for Jonah crab, which has led to a doubling in landings over the past seven years due to a strong market demand.
- A motion was approved to close season from April 30th to May 31st for Lobster Conservation Management Area's (LCMA) 4 and 5 to achieve the 10% reduction

required in Addendum XVII, and allows for the setting of unbaited lobster traps 1 week prior to the season reopening.

- Mr. Baum recommended Council to take action on LCMA's 4 and 5 later in the meeting.

Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board

- The ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board initiated the development of Draft Addendum XXVI to the Summer Flounder Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Draft Addendum will propose alternative regional management approaches for the 2015 recreational fluke fishery to continue to improve equity in recreational harvest opportunities along the coast. The addendum will include options to allow for the averaging of harvest estimates, mandatory regions, and the sharing of unused quota.
- No action necessary for black sea bass at this time.

ISFMP Policy Board & ACCSP Coordinating Council

- The ISFMP and ACCSP Coordinating Council meeting resulted in both groups approving the transition to state conduct the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) in 2016.

Mr. Rush questioned where is the funding coming from for the APAIS? Mr. Muffley responded that as of now states will have to submit an individual budget to request funds from the NMFS, who has allocated funds for the contractors in the past. How much each state will receive is not known at this time.

Ms. Puskas asked how does the APAIS surveys connect with surveys already being conducted out of Woods Hole? Mr. Muffley responded that they are two separate surveys conducted by NMFS. One survey collects recreational harvest data and one is a trawl survey, respectively.

Mr. Johnson asked if there was going to be any action taken on the winter flounder trip limits? Mr. Baum responded that the Management Board has not yet set the 2015 specifications at this time.

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)

Mr. Baum presented Council with an update on the MAFMC meeting, held in October 2014 (Handout #2).

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee

- The MAFMC voted to take the draft Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Cost Recovery Amendment out for public hearings which will be scheduled for this winter.

Forage Fish White Paper

- The MAFMC received a presentation on the Forage Fish White Paper that was written by MAFMC staff and the SSC members to inform and guide the MAFMC's consideration of forage fish management in its Ecosystem Approaches to Fisheries Management (EAFM) guidance document.

River Herring/Shad Committee Meeting

- The MAFMC decided to work with NMFS to evaluate what would happen to observer coverage levels if river herring and/or shad were added to the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology.

Omnibus Observer Funding Amendment

- The MAFMC expressed frustration at the pace on the development of the Omnibus Observer Funding Amendment, which is being developed jointly by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils to facilitate industry funding of observer coverage.

Vessel Baseline Amendment

- The MAFMC reviewed draft Vessel Baseline Amendment, which considers eliminating certain baseline restrictions. Under Alternative 4, gross and net tonnage would be eliminated from baseline specifications as well as the one-time limit on vessel upgrades.

Shellfish Council Reports

Delaware Bay – No report.

Atlantic Coast – Mr. Johnson gave a report on the Atlantic Coast Shellfish Fishery.

- The Shellfish Council is reconvening its Leasing Committee to discuss general issues related to the State's shellfish leasing program and to assist in the development of recommendations to advise the Bureau ahead of its anticipated updating of the Atlantic Coast shellfish leasing regulations. The Bureau is aiming for a 2015 rulemaking for shellfish leasing regulatory updates. The Council is also interested in working with the Bureau in looking at potential timeframes for potential updates to the Shellfish statutes at N.J.S.A. Title 50.

Council/Bureau Activities- Mr. Babb gave Council an update on Shellfish Council and Bureau Activities.

- **Shellfish Aquaculture Working Group**
Mr. Babb provided an update on the Administration's shellfish aquaculture development efforts. He stated that the Administration convened an informational workshop in June to solicit industry input and then followed up with a full public shellfish aquaculture workshop last month at the Atlantic Cape Community College in Mays Landing. He stated that they had over 100 people attend – from industry, academia, legislative, and non-profits, etc. Overall, the meeting seemed to be well received and he believed that it provided the attendees with a pretty unique opportunity to have all of the agencies together in one place at one time. One main take home theme from the industry's perspective was that

there are probably just too many state and federal agencies involved in the first place.

- **Estuarine Inventory – Raritan and Sandy Hook bays**
Mr. Babb stated that staff were wrapping up our field sampling for the Raritan and Sandy Hook bays shellfish assessment survey. He stated that this was the Administration's first full survey of these bays since 2000 and that it covered over 200 stations. Our new estuarine inventory work-plan calls for each coastal bay to be surveyed every 5-6 years on a rotation (provided funding is available). Staff is also nearing completion of the inventory report for hard clam and SAV data collected in Barnegat Bay before and after Hurricane Sandy. The first maps required for the stock estimate are being finalized. It will be going to internal peer review soon and will then be released to the Atlantic Coast Section of the NJ Shellfisheries Council and the public.

Committee Reports

- **Striped Bass Committee** – Mr. Radossi presented Council with the Striped Bass Committee Report (Handout #3a).
The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and develop a position on ASMFC's Draft Addendum IV to the Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. Staff presented an overview of the Draft Addendum and public comments, including options to reduce fishing mortality over the next to one to three years for both the recreational and commercial fisheries coastwide.

The Committee came to a consensus to recommend that the Council develop comments to send the ASMFC:

- Approving the new reference points
- 2 Fish but reduce harvest on larger fish
- A one year timeframe for reducing fishing mortality
- The Committee preferred the conceptual structure of Option C3 but would like ASMFC to explore an option within Option B with no gap within the size ranges. Ex. 1@28-40 and 1 @ 40+
- Enforceable regulations coastwide i.e. no mutilation
- No commercial transfer

Acting Chairman Herb commented that the Council did send these recommendations mentioned above to ASMFC back in September. Plan on having another Committee meeting in December, and select the Council's recommendation at the January Council meeting.

Any striped bass changes need to occur through the legislature, and there were many concerns raised by the public and Council members in that they feared legislators will introduce legislation without first hearing the recommendations made by the Council. The public was reminded that Council can only make recommendations and the public should contact their legislators to make the necessary changes the public wishes to achieve.

A consensus was made to invite legislators to the upcoming Committee meeting and have them work alongside with Council until all questions from the ASMFC have been answered. Mr. Muffley commented that the DEP will have to go through an approval process to invite legislators to a meeting however, the chairman of the Committee can invite the legislators.

Mr. Allen did comment that all nine options within Option B from the Addendum have been approved, if Council wishes to submit more options, this must be done by December 1st. However, the Technical Committee (TC) won't review them until January.

- **Commercial Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass** – Acting Chairman Herb presented Council with the Commercial Summer Flounder & Sea Bass Committee Report (Handout #3b).

The purpose of this meeting was to review the 2015 commercial summer flounder and black sea bass quotas and trip limits.

NJDFW staff provided the 2014 summer flounder landings summary and fishery performance overview. Advisors discussed new possible trip limits and decided on proposing a change to only one of the six summer flounder directed seasons; Season 1: Change from 2,500 pounds two times a week or 5,000 pounds one time a week **to** 2,500 pounds twice over a two week period or 5,000 pounds once over a two week period. A two week period shall begin on Sunday and end on the second Saturday with the first two week period beginning on the first Sunday of the season. For example, the first two week period of 2015 for summer flounder will begin January 4th and end on January 17th. The second two week period shall begin on January 18th and end on January 31st. Landings during any two week period within Season 1 shall not exceed 5,000 pounds. Seasons 2 through 6: No Change.

NJDFW staff then provided the 2014 black sea bass landings summary and fishery performance overview. Advisors discussed new trip limit options and recommended various changes to three of the four directed seasons. Consensus was not reached among the advisors for all seasons, particularly seasons 2 and 4. The following changes are the Committee's preferred options: Season 1: Change 1,000 pounds four times a week or 2,000 pounds twice a week or 4,000 pounds once a week **to** 1,000 pounds four times over a two week period or 2,000 pounds twice over a two week period or 4,000 pounds once over a two week period. The two week period would be similar to those set up for summer flounder. The first two week period for the 2015 black sea bass season shall begin on January 1st and end January 17th. The second two week period will begin January 18th and end on January 31st. Each two week period will run consecutively from Sunday to Saturday thereafter. Season 2: Change 1,000 pounds three times a week or 1,500 pounds twice a week or 3,000 pounds once a week **to** 500 pounds three times a week or 1,500 pounds once a week. There was a non-preferred option for season 2 of 500 pounds four times a week or 1,000 pounds twice a week. Season 3: No change. Season 4: Change 500 pounds five times a week or 1,250 pounds twice a week or 2,500 pounds once a week **to** 1,000 pounds three times a week or 3,000

pounds once a week. There was a non-preferred option for Season 4 of status quo.

The Committee recommends the commercial trip limit changes for summer flounder and black sea bass as provided in the report.

The Committee report stands as a motion; no further questions were made by Council.

Public Comment

Mr. Lovegren - would like to see changes to season 1 for black sea bass. He expressed the need to keep seasons open as long as possible, maybe split season 1 in half – make it a 1a and 1b with a quota assigned to each.

Mr. Guttman – Agreed with Mr. Lovegren in keeping sea bass seasons open as long as possible. Suggested smaller trip limits were better. Favored alternate option for 2015 for season 1.

Mr. Rush commented that there is a need for a better mechanism put in place to make sure the quota is being used to its fullest. Mr. Muffley commented that in the proposed Multispecies Rule there is language that if 50 percent of the seasonal quota remains half way through black sea bass and summer flounder season then the DEP can modify trip limits without requiring a Notice of Administrative Change.

- **Move to amend the Committee Motion to adopt the alternative option for commercial black sea bass season 1. Season 1 trip limits would be 1,000 pounds (3 times per 2 weeks); 1,500 pounds (2 times per 2 weeks); or 3,000 pounds (one time per 2 weeks). Motion by Mr. Berg, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **Move to accept Committee recommendation as amended.**
- **Motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Reichle suggested in the future to have trip limits up to a specified trip limit amount and not how many times per week, in hopes to eliminate confusion.

- **Recreational Summer Flounder Committee**- Acting Chairman Herb presented Council with the Recreational Summer Flounder Committee Report (Handout #3c).

A meeting of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council's Recreational Summer Flounder Committee was held at Nacote Creek on October 21, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to continue to develop and discuss management strategy options for New Jersey's 2015 recreational summer flounder fishery.

These discussions were prompted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Summer Flounder Management Board's decision to implement adaptive regional management measures for the 2014 recreational summer flounder fishery which placed New Jersey in a Mid-Atlantic region with Connecticut and New York. While this approach helped address perceived issues between the shared waters of New York and New Jersey, it created a significant disparity in measures for the shared waters of New Jersey and Delaware.

Bureau staff presented results of an analysis tasked by the Committee and advisors during their July Committee meeting. The goal was to evaluate the State of

NJ on different geographic scales due to the perceived variation in available summer flounder resource throughout New Jersey, specifically size differences and seasonality between the northern and southern region of the state. The analysis evaluated the recreational harvest at size and the harvest success by county and region including ocean fisheries versus inland and bay fisheries and fishing mode (shore, private boat and for-hire). The analysis did not show or indicate a significant difference in size between north and south ocean based fisheries, and only a slight difference between ocean and inland fisheries including bays. Based on these findings and the current disparity between the 16 inch, 365 day season that Delaware has implemented compared to the 18 inch, 130 day season implemented in NJ for 2014, the Committee has tasked staff to evaluate the Delaware Bay fishery and explore alternate regional approaches to the 2015 summer flounder fishery. Most notably, the Committee feels that combining the State of Delaware with the northern region of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut will eliminate the inequities created in Delaware Bay between anglers from New Jersey and Delaware.

No further comments from Council

Mr. Nowalsky provided Council with feedback from DE, regarding potential modifications to the current regions. He indicated that DE is not in favor to be in a region with NJ. However, DE was in favor of a 16" fish with a season to be opened all year, and in favor of a modification made to the regions to include all DE Bay in a southern region, with no suggestions on how NJ law enforcement would enforce this.

Regulatory Actions

Mr. Muffley presented Council with regulatory actions.

- An action is needed from Council to modify the seasonal closure of the American lobster fishery. NJ did not meet the 10% reduction in harvest during the 2013-2014 fishing season. To stay in compliance the ASMFC recommended a new season closure of April 30 to May 31 in areas 4 and 5, and remove the mandatory v-notching.

Move to eliminate the "v-notching" requirement for each egg-bearing female prior to discarding; approve a closed season from April 30th to May 31st for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 4 and 5; and allow the setting of unbaited lobster traps one week prior to the season reopening, and remove the two-week grace period from when the season closes to remove all lobster traps. Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Zaborowski. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Muffley brought Council's attention to Draft Notice of Administrative Change (NOAC), (Handout #4), which will be updated to reflect the black sea bass season 1 change made tonight.

Move to move forward with NOAC for summer flounder, black sea bass and lobster. Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Berg. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Mr. Muffley presented Council with:

- Handout #5 is a letter from Council to the ASMFC in which they submitted public comments in regards to ASMFC Draft Addendum IV to the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Plan.
- Handout #5b is a letter from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers responding to Council's letter sent in July 2014 regarding the offshore dredging of sand lumps and shoals that are used for NJ coastal storm risk management projects (i.e. beach replenishment projects).
- Update on the Island Beach State Park Summer Flounder Program:
 - Collected biological data (lengths and weights) on summer flounder that were less than 16" and up to 18" in size, at the check in stations.
 - Conducted 271 Intercept Interviews, gathering info on 337 different fish, most were released fish and 155 of 337 were summer flounder. Also collected additional biological data on 48 other fish.
 - When comparing this to the MRIP survey over the same time period, MRIP conducted 400 shore mode coast wide interviews in NJ, while this program conducted 271 surveys at only IBSP.
- Handout #6 is a letter from the NJ DEP announcing the availability of Fisheries Disaster Direct Assistance Grants for individuals and businesses in NJ's fishing industries that have documented uninsured losses as a result of Superstorm Sandy. Have received 402 applications expressing interest in assistance.

New Business

- Mr. Muffley brought Council's attention to (Handout #7) which are letters from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) that provides the background regarding a significant harvest of terrapins in NJ and sold to an aquaculture facility in MD. This USFWS review was conducted because terrapins are a listed species under the CITES agreement which reviews and oversees all exporting of species on this list, including diamondback terrapins. He recommends a regulatory committee meeting to meet in regards to diamondback terrapins.

Mr. Rizzo recommends a crab pot meeting and to invite John Wnek from the MATES in Manahawkin who has done a lot of work on terrapins in Barnegat Bay.

Mr. Johnson was unclear on what the State can do, as it appears these terrapins were harvested on federal land.

- Mr. Muffley announced to Council that Mr. Allen has been appointed the new Bureau Chief for Marine Fisheries.
- Mr. Muffley reminded Council the Ethics Training is due November 10, 2014.

Public Comment

Mr. Robinson - expressed concern about the blue crab populations. The Council should consider pushing dredging season later, with a start date of January 1, as the dredging in the DE Bay area is affecting/damaging crab and conch species. The DE Bay is like a

nursery for our fisheries and it is being destroyed. Mr. Rizzo recommended Mr. Robinson to mail recommendations to Mr. Muffley.

Mr. Parker– commented that in the law enforcement reports we always hear all these tautog violations, these repeat violators need to be handled better and prevent live fish possession by recreational fisherman.

Mr. Hartel – agreed with striped bass recommendations, would like to see 2 fish, modify the slot fish options so there is no 2” gap and develop an option with a 25% reduction.

Mr. Shillingford – recommends striped bass options to limit the harvest of larger striped bass fish. He also suggested adding a fee to the striped bass bonus tag to help educate the public.

Mr. Rush congratulated Captain Dominick Fresco on his retirement and thanked him for his service. Mr. Rush also recommended an Enforcement Committee meeting with the new Marine Captain to discuss issues and the Council process.

Meeting adjourned. Next Meeting January 8, 2015, Galloway Township Library