



Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

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RIMFC: Molly Moran-Ogren, *Chair*; Coral Aiello; David Bethoney, Ph.D.; Andy Dangelo; Katie Eagan; Melva Treviño Peña, Ph.D.; Mike Roderick; Russell Sylvestre; Greg Vespe

MEETING SUMMARY

December 1, 2025

Chairperson: Molly Ogren

Council members: Ms. Aiello, Mr. Roderick. Dr. Treviño Peña absent

Division of Marine Fisheries: S. Olszewski, J. Livermore, C. Truesdale, J. Lake, N. Costa, N. Ares, E. Schneider, C. Parkins, A. Gerber-Williams, K. Rodrigue, P. Duhamel

DEM Legal: Joe LoBianco

Division of Law Enforcement: Officers J. Mercer and J. Beuth

This document represents a meeting summary of the motions and votes made by the Council, and any future actions that will be addressed at subsequent meetings as directed by the Council. For full meeting details including summary slides of regulatory proposals and the discussions on each matter, please refer to the [video recording of the meeting on the Division of Marine Fisheries YouTube channel](#).

1. Approval of the agenda: Chair Ogren inquired to any objections to approving the agenda; hearing no objections or requests for modifications from the Council members, the agenda was approved by consent.
2. Approval of minutes from last meeting on November 5, 2025: Chair Ogren inquired to any objections to approving the minutes or if there were any requests for modifications. Hearing none, the minutes were approved by consent.
3. Public comments regarding any other matters not on agenda: No comments were made.
4. Review/approval of minutes from last Shellfish Advisory Panel (SAP) meeting held on November 12, 2025: Ms. Gerber-Williams provided an overview of the meetings. Upon conclusion of the meeting summaries, Chair Ogren inquired to any objections to approving the minutes or if there were any requests for modifications. Hearing no objections or requests for modifications, the minutes were approved by consent.
5. Providence River Shellfish Management Area (Area "E") January – April 2026 commercial harvest schedule: Motion made by Ms. Eagan; 2nd by Mr. Vespe, to recommend adoption of the SAP recommended schedule:

- February 2026: Open one (1) weekday Monday through Thursday, excluding Friday, from 9:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. on the first available weekday that is not closed due to water quality.
- March – April 2026: Open one (1) weekday Monday through Thursday, excluding Friday, from 8:00 A.M. until 10:00 A.M. on the first available weekday that is not closed due to water quality impairment.

The motion passed 5-0.

6. Proposed regulations publicly noticed:

- Issuance of tickets for marine fisheries violations through the RI Traffic Tribunal (RITT): The motion to recommend adoption of the proposed rule (proposal #1) passed by consent.
- Dealer fixed place of business documentation: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre; 2nd by Ms. Eagan, to recommend maintaining status quo. The motion passed 3-1-1 (Mr. Vespe opposed; Mr. Dangelo abstained)
- Statutory reference pertaining to marking of traps: Motion to recommend adoption of the proposed rule (proposal #1) passed by consent.
- Escape vent requirements for pots and traps other than lobster, black sea bass, and scup pots: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre; 2nd by Ms. Eagan, to recommend maintaining status quo and revisit the matter for further development next regulatory cycle. The motion passed 5-0.
- 2026 commercial menhaden management: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend adoption of proposal #1. The motion passed 3-2 (Mr. Vespe and Mr. Dangelo opposed).
- 2026 commercial general category striped bass management: Motion made by Mr. Vespe; 2nd by Mr. Dangelo, to recommend adoption of proposal #2. The motion passed 3-1-1 (Mr. Sylvestre opposed; Ms. Eagan abstained).
- 2026 commercial striped bass management – gill net: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend adoption of proposal #5 with the following additions/changes: harvest restricted to November 1 through December 31; and total weight of striped bass possessed (measured in pounds) must be equal to or less than the total combined weight of all other fish possessed. The motion passed 3-2 (Mr. Vespe and Mr. Dangelo opposed)
- 2026 commercial striped bass management – floating fish trap allocation: Motion made by Mr. Vespe; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend maintaining status quo. The motion passed 4-1 (Ms. Eagan opposed).
- 2026 commercial black sea bass management:
 - Motion made by Mr. Dangelo; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend adoption of proposal #1 regarding proposed changes to subperiod allocations, and the proposed starting possession limits increase from July 1 – September 15 from proposal #2. The motion passed 5-0.
 - Motion made by Mr. Dangelo; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre to recommend maintaining status quo regarding the black sea bass January 1 – April 30 possession limit. The motion passed 5-0.

- 2026 commercial summer flounder management: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Vespe, to recommend adoption of proposal #1. The motion passed 3-0-2 (Ms. Eagan and Mr. Dangelo abstained).
 - Commercial summer flounder landing restriction: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre; 2nd by Ms. Eagan, to recommend adoption of proposals #1 and #3. The motion failed 2-2-1 (Mr. Vespe and Dr. Bethoney opposed; Mr. Dangelo abstained). No other motions were made.
 - 2026 Aggregate Program:
 - Proposal # 1: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend adoption of proposal #1 to amend the black sea bass possession limit from 6x to 7x the daily limit from October 16 through December 31 (7x the daily limit for the entire season). The motion passed 5-0.
 - Proposal # 2: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre; 2nd by Mr. Dangelo, to recommend maintaining status quo for the naming of the aggregate program. The motion passed 5-0.
 - Proposal # 3: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend maintaining status quo for the permit condition for aggregate program reporting requirements. The motion passed 5-0.
 - Proposal # 4: Motion made by Dr. Bethoney; 2nd by Mr. Sylvestre, to recommend maintaining status quo for the permit condition for aggregate program reporting requirements. The motion passed 5-0.
 - Proposal # 5: Motion made by Mr. Sylvestre; 2nd by Dr. Bethoney to recommend adoption of proposal #5 regarding the aggregate program with status quo for black sea bass management (i.e., no change to 7x the daily with an 80% trigger). The motion passed 5-0.
 - Proposal # 6: 3-2 in support of recommending adoption but with a possession limit of 5X the daily limit.
 - 2026 commercial tautog management:
 - Motion made by Mr. Vespe; 2nd by Mr. Dangelo to recommend maintaining status quo for 2026 commercial tautog management (both the proposed subperiod allocation changes, and adding tautog to the Aggregate Program). The motion failed 2-3 (Dr. Bethoney, Ms. Eagan, and Mr. Sylvestre opposed).
 - Motion made by Ms. Eagan; 2nd by Mr., Sylvestre, to recommend adoption of Aggregate Proposal # 6 with 5x the daily possession limit for tautog, and adoption of proposal # 1 for the sub-period allocation changes for 2026 commercial tautog management. The motion passed 3-2 (Mr. Dangelo and Mr. Vespe opposed).
7. Administrative Policies and Procedures of the RIMFC – update/revisions: Chair Ogren provided a summary of the contents of the proposed policy, which dictates the operational management of the Council. Ensuing discussion focused on Council communication with the public, the need for additional advisory panels, the current workshop structure and regulatory proposals submitted by industry and the public, aquaculture review, advisory panel attendance requirements, advisory panel chair and

vice-chair, and advisory panel term limits. The Council directed the Division to revise the policy to reflect the discussion and provide an updated policy for review and/or approval for the next meeting scheduled on December 1, 2025.

8. FYI: Letters sent to CRMC regarding SAP review of aquaculture applications were briefly discussed.
9. Any Other Matters: No other matters were brought forward for discussion.
10. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 8:45pm.

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