

## Meeting Minutes for the RIMFC Groundfish & Federally Managed Species Advisory Panel Meeting

Held January 10, 2013 at 6:00 PM  
URI/GSO Narragansett Bay Campus, Coastal Institute Building, Small Conference Room

There were 4 people present; 2 AP members (\*).

- Ken Booth, Chair (RIMFC)
- Jerry Tremblay (RICRRA) \*
- Aaron Gewirtz \*
- Eric Schneider, RI F&W

*Groundfish Members Absent: Douglas Kissick, Paul Westcott, Richard Fuka, Luke Wheeler, Ted Platz, Al Conti, Michael Marchetti, John Troiano III, Frank Blount, Jr., Jim White, John Gadzik, Carl Granquist, Stephen A. Arnold, Stephen Parente, and William Bento.*

Handouts:

- Agenda
- ASMFC New Release, “ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board sets Quota for 2013-15 ”

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There were only two Groundfish AP members in attendance, therefore there was not a quorum, and the meeting was informational only.

K. Booth (Chair) called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 PM. He noted that the purpose of the meeting was to follow up on last year’s meeting regarding possible measures that could extend the duration of the spiny dogfish fishery. He turned the meeting over to E. Schneider (RI F&W).

### **Spiny Dogfish**

E. Schneider went through a power point presentation regarding Agenda Items 1-4 (Spiny Dogfish) that summarized:

- current stock status
- 2012 quota specifications and landings to date
- approved quota and possession limit specifications for the 2013-15 fishing years
- a summary of data and analyses that looked at:
  - spiny dogfish catch in the RI F&W Trawl survey since 1994
  - distribution of landings by month in RI vs. N. Region during the 2012 FY
  - and the predicted effect (with many assumptions) of the 2013 FY possession limit increase to 4,000lbs/day on monthly landings and duration of the fishery
- a review of proposals developed by attendees of the last Groundfish AP meeting (March 2012 – no quorum), and
- 2 new proposals submitted to F&W prior to this meeting:
  - One by Dean Pesante via phone (1/3/13)
    - Goal: keep fishery open for the entire year and provide for harvest in the fall and winter seasons
    - Approach: Establish 2 or 3 seasons where the allocation of quota is based on historical landings.
  - The other by Ted Platz via email (1/3/13)

- Goal: provide for harvest in the fall and winter/spring season, essentially turning discards into landings and potentially help facilitate the return of our historical winter and spring codfish fishery
- Approach: Establish 3 seasons:
  - Season 1: May 1 – Aug 31
  - Season 2: Sep 1 – Dec 31
  - Season 3: Jan 1 – Apr 30
- For the purpose of discussions, a possible starting ratio of quota distribution between seasons could be 50%, 25%, and 25%.

There was discussion of the proposals offered in 2012, during which some potential shortcomings were identified that may decrease the likelihood of regional support (e.g. the need for state and federal permits, reducing the starting possession limit after a NMFS and ASMFC agreed increase in possession limit, etc.).

A. Gewirtz noted that the 2012 proposals came about when the fishery was not extending into the fall and given how this year has progressed (still open in Jan) that it may not be pressing or even necessary to pursue subperiods. Remember that the gillnet fishery is closed in March anyways, so after you get into February you may not actually get much more out of, at least, the gillnet fishery in the final winter/spring period.

A. Gewirtz suggested that F&W should bounce these ideas off surrounding states to see if they have suggestions or wish to pursue any of these options at the regional level. It would be a shame to sit on these ideas and wait until something happens, like the fishery closing in the fall and then initiate such discussions. Similarly, it's important to note that proposals to date have been offered by and reflect the sentiments of the gillnet fishery. It'd be prudent for the trawl industry to provide feedback on these or similar proposals at the regional level, since there has not been feedback at the state level.

Overall, the group discussed the price (landing price) of dogfish at various times of the year and incentives for participation in the fishery. The group thought the State could benefit from a local market that would increase the value of the fishery (landing price). Industrial applications that could deal with a volume fishery (i.e. fertilizer) may be an option to improve the landing price and it'd be great if the Economic Development Council, Rhody Fresh, or DEM could help to bolster an alternative market.

-This concluded the Spiny Dogfish portion of the meeting.

## **Coastal Sharks**

E. Schneider continued with the power point presentation regarding Agenda Items 5-9 (Coastal Sharks) that summarized:

- Review 2012FY commercial fishery
- Update of 2013-15FY management measures
- Division of F&W proposed changes for the 2013FY
  - Adopt ASMFC approved increase in the commercial possession limit of 36 (currently 33) sharks, per vessel per calendar day, regardless of species, from the Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks species group.
- Advisory Panel proposals for 2013FY

- Reminder of Prohibited and Research Shark Species

E. Schneider answered general questions regarding the commercial and recreational shark fisheries as he went through the presentation. Overall, the group saw no reason to object the ASMFC adopted increase in the commercial possession limit of sharks in the Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks species group.

- This concluded the Coastal Shark portion of the meeting.

K. Booth closed the meeting with a discussion regarding of how to increase participation in the Groundfish AP. He noted it's been very challenging to finding people willing to participate, at least on paper, never mind getting members to actually attend meetings. They suggested that the Council may want to revisit options to improve participation.