

Good Afternoon All,

I was just going over some numbers on summer flounder and there are a few interesting facts to consider.

The MA landings were down 22,000 fish last year or about 28% and RI landings were down 72,000 fish or approximately 44%. That means RI and Mass were down by 94,000 fish.

CT was up 134% with an increase of 126,000 fish, NY was up 238,000 fish or 48% and NJ was up 294,000 fish or 61%. That is an increase of 658,000 fish over the past year.

There just doesn't seem to be any logic in MA and RI going along with option 5 at all. MA seems to be willing to go up and inch but not lowering their bag limit. Early reports are NJ is also going to do something different.

What that means is at a period of time when two states caught 94,000 FEWER fish three states caught 658,000 MORE. The move to cut the bag limit is not based on any science. The other states say they are disadvantage because we have a higher bag limit. If that is the case why have their landings gone up and ours gone down? They also state there is chaos on the border between the states. MA and RI have a 2 inch size difference and a different bag limit. The argument does not hold water.

I urge the State of RI to do EVERYTHING that it can to keep the theft of the summer flounder and the mistreatment of RI fisherman from happening. If MA, NJ and RI all stand firm we have a chance. I don't believe any judge, if it gets that far, would find RI or MA out of compliance with the plan if we take a larger percent reduction then the three states that went over by 658,000 fish. **RI should go up one inch and if needed shorten our season by 18 days in May. We should not cut our bag limit just because other states think the optics of it look on fair.**

NY doesn't think it is on fair when in the fall they have a 10 fish bag limit on Sea Bass. Ct didn't seem to have a problem with an 8 fish bag limit on the for hire sector all year when RI had a 3 fish limit for half of the season and then a 7 fish limit in the fall. The other two states agreed to have a regional approach with RI last year, they didn't not in fact do so in reality. Ct went over in Sea bass by 151,000 fish. If the coast needs and 8 % reduction for 2017 Ct is a good place to look for it.

AMSMC and the MAFMC went with the regional approach a couple of years back. What it has done is just reallocate the fish. The other states have been supplementing NY for a couple of years. What did NY do in return? NY increased its bag limit and will not cut its season! If NY can keep the same length of its season does anyone think that they will not go over again?

Frank Blount

Hi Pete,

Here is what I recall saying on the record at the Public Hearing.

Fluke: May 19<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 19 Inches and 6 fish per person. I am adamantly opposed to the ASMFC Option.

Tautog: Option 2 Opening on October 15<sup>th</sup> as opposed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in October.

Black Sea Bass: June 14<sup>th</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> 3 fish per person; and October 15<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 7 fish per person.

My intent on the Black Sea Bass is to limit the fall closure to 2 weeks. Then take whatever conservation we have left after the 8% reduction and open as many days as possible in June. I think Jason will need to figure out the exact day, I picked June 14<sup>th</sup>. I would like to try to get the Black Sea Bass opening and the Tautog opening to correspond so we can sell those trips.

Thanks,  
Rick

*Capt. Rick Bellavance*, President  
RI Party and Charter Boat Association  
401-741-5648  
[www.rifishing.com](http://www.rifishing.com)

Hi Jason,

Just getting back to you regarding the workshop for Bluefish. After speaking with Nicole, it seems like option 2 is best. Then making adjustments like last year as the season progresses. It is very important to be PRO active as we were for the most part last year. I do appreciate being able to continue to work together.

Thanks  
Dean Pasante

Hi Jason, Couldn't make the public hearing this past Monday. I'm assuming option 2 or 3 was most popular for Bluefish. If we could come to a compromise on the minimum size, 15 inches, maybe that would satisfy the traps. I'm friends with those guys and understand their concern, but I think its best to let ALL fish reproduce before harvesting them. Let me know what you think.

Thanks,  
Dean Pesante

Hello,

My name is Kenneth T Murgo and I am a commercial fisherman from Bristol, RI (Multipurpose License # 001365). I wanted to comment on the public hearing item 1C Commercial Tautog. I support the status quo option on commercial Tautog management. The even distribution of quota between the three sub periods allows me to harvest tautog regularly in the Spring and Summer sub periods, which is an important part of my income. As tautog are one of the first fish to arrive in RI waters in the spring, the spring sub period is very important to my livelihood as it is one of the first things I can fish for after a long winter with little income. Reducing the quota in the spring sub period when there are no other fish available would be a hardship to my, and other fisherman's businesses. There is no advantage to allocating more quota to the fall sub period as proposed in option 2. During the fall there are numerous other species of fish, shellfish, and crustacean available for harvest, so more tautog quota is not needed during this time. Therefore, I feel that the status quo regarding Commercial Tautog management is in the best interest of RI fisherman.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kenneth T Murgo

# Rhode Island Fishermen's Alliance

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P.O. Box 337  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

February 1, 2017

RI Marine Fisheries Public Hearing for proposed amendments for the 2017 **Commercial Tautog** fisheries management plan.

The Alliance proposes the following changes:

## 7.9.2 Commercial:

(A) Minimum size: Sixteen (16) inches.

(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: **The commercial harvest shall be the same seasons and the same bag limit as the recreational fishery.**

~~(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The total allowable harvest of tautog will be established annually, and will be that amount allocated to the State of Rhode Island by the Regional Fishery Management Council and/or the ASMFC. The quota shall only be available during the following seasons:~~

~~(1) Spring sub period (April 15—May 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day. RI Marine Fisheries Regulations Part VII—Finfish Page 15 of 40~~

~~(2) Summer sub period (August 1—September 15): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(3) Fall sub period (October 15—December 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(4) Sub period quotas may be harvested until exhausted. Any quota not harvested during a sub period will be added to the next sub period. If an over harvest has occurred, that over harvest will be deducted equally from all remaining sub periods in the same calendar year. If an over harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub period of the following calendar year.~~

Note:

1. There are around one million residents in the state and around 31,000 salt water licensed residents or approximately three percent (3%) of the resident population.
2. The RI recreational fishery currently harvests over 250,000 lbs of tautog annually while the commercial fishery is limited to less than 50,000 lbs.

3. RI non-fishing residents representing 97% of the population have less than 20% of the available resource accessible to them.
4. Active resident recreational fishermen representing 3% of the population and non-resident fishermen take more than 80% of the resource.
5. More than half of the recreational salt water anglers fishing in RI waters are non-residents.
6. Non-resident recreational fishermen take many more times as much of the Tautog resource as is made available to the non-fishing RI resident.
7. Recreational fishermen have access to the tautog resource for many more days out of the year while non-fishing residents dependent upon commercial fishermen have access for a reduced number of days.

# ITS TIME AGAIN TO FIGHT FOR OUR STRIPED BASS FISHERY!

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO  
SUPPORTED US LAST YEAR

## PROPOSAL FOR 2017:

**SPRING SEASON OPENING MAY 15, (CURRENTLY MAY 29)**  
**80% OF QUOTA (CURRENTLY 70%)**

**FALL SEASON OPENING SEPT. 3, (CURRENTLY SEPT. 8)**  
**20% OF QUOTA (CURRENTLY 30%)**

Please sign below If you wish to support this initiative.

Thank you

Bo Christensen

DICK LEFEBVRE	<i>Richard J. Lefebvre</i>	<del>500</del> 000315
TBD	<i>Whitaker</i>	000057

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18

## PROPOSAL FOR 2017:

3 on Back too!

SPRING SEASON OPENING MAY 15, (CURRENTLY MAY 29)  
80% OF QUOTA (CURRENTLY 70%)

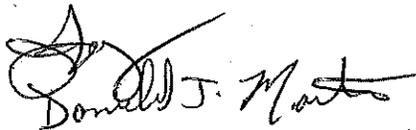
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20% OF QUOTA (CURRENTLY 30%)

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Thank you

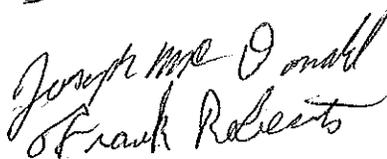
Bo Christensen

Jody King  
DONALD MARTIN



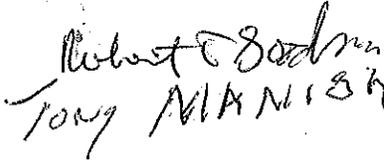
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Joseph McDonald  
FRANK ROBERTS

  
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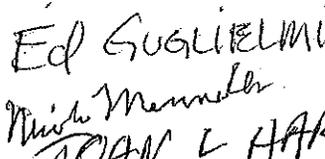
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ROBERT GOODMAN  
ANTHONY MARRAS

  
Tony MARRAS

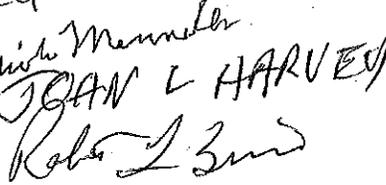
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Ed Guglielmi  
Michele Mennella

  
Ed GUGLIELMI  
Michele Mennella

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00100

Robert L. Simmons

  
JOAN L HARVEY  
Rob L Simmons

00047

EDWARD L VENTURA

  
Edward L Ventura

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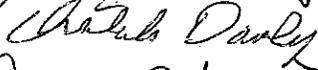
Richard B Andrews  
JOSEPH GAIUCCI

  
Richard B Andrews  
Joseph Scully

971

MP243

EMILY DORRIS DOWNS

  
Emily Dorris Downs

MP 168

Curt Cokely

  
Curt Cokely

MP 466

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Bo Christensen

Bo Christensen	Bo Christensen	MP 429
Martin McGiverney	Mat McGiverney	MP 205
Matthew McGiverney	Mat McGiverney	304
Slawomir Hermanowski	Slawomir Hermanowski	238
RAY RATHILL	Ray Rathill	46
John Pampush	John Pampush	406
John Bonner	John Bonner	1610
Adam McGiverney	Adam McGiverney	1609
Richard Muer	Richard Muer	MP 130
Krzysztof Hermanowski	Krzysztof Hermanowski	MP 275
Philip Spadola	Philip Spadola	MP 106
Mike McGiverney	Mike McGiverney	MP 401
Michael Ventruan	Michael Ventruan	825

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~~Bo Christensen Bo Christensen MP 429~~  
NORM ZWOLINSKI Norman Zwolinski MP 193  
John Stevens III John Stevens III PEL 1527  
JONATHAN WILSON Jonathan Wilson M.P. 125  
MURRAY CIANCIOLO Robert Brierty MP 303  
Bill Bennett Bill Bennett MP 344  
Norm Myers Norman Myers  
KEITH ZWOLINSKI Keith Zwolinski #629  
Greg Bassett #1647  
Dwayne Casper Dwayne Casper #544  
John Mayor 0034  
Joe AMATO - MP 44  
Richard A. Cavaco (A. 1583)

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Bo Christensen

Andrew Bless	Andrew Bless	MP 1224
* Bo Christensen	<del>Bo Christensen</del>	<del>MP 429</del>
Geary Schey	Geary Schey	MP 334
George Viau	George Viau	PE 357
Michael Monteforte	Michael Monteforte	MP 293
Craig Abrahamson	Craig Abrahamson	MP 245
FRANK FIELD	Frank Field	MP 495
Jay E. Camacho	Jay E. Camacho	MP 0006
Joe Bennett	Joe Bennett	1076
Robert J. M... ..	Robert J. M... ..	699
WILLIAM D. SIEZKIEWICZ	William D. Siezkiewicz	M.P. 124
RAMON ESTRADA	Ramon Estrada	02907

9  
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~~\*Bo Christensen Bo Christensen 429~~  
Frank Beardsley 120  
ROBERT C HOGAN JR MPURP 208  
Joe Mc Cue Joseph N. N. 365  
OWEN KELLY MP 0029  
Jenny Myers  
Kathy J. W. E  
Eggs  
Mike Bradshaw 0423  
B. W. 1370  
605 SF 65  
61  
01134

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RONALD FORREST *Ronald Forrest*  
William Silva *W S*  
Nicholas McCarty  
Zach St. Curs  
DAN LOMBARDO  
Joe Medeiros  
Col Rene  
Richard Burton  
Bryce Felt  
Bryan W

MULT 00139  
MULT-0526  
MULT: 1386  
M  
multi 1357  
RIMP 998  
MP 477  
MORP 903  
RD 001501  
CPL 906  
CPL 1268

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Bo Christensen

Mike McEvoy      Richard J. Ely  
Christopher LeVasseur      C. H. L.

MP 0082  
MP 4345

Pete,

I believe that I first requested that RIDEM consider reverting back to the format that worked for a number of years opening on the first Sunday in June with 70% of the quota; and then the fall season after Labor Day with 30% of the quota. If not that option, then the second which calls for opening on May 28th with 60% of the quota and, if my memory is correct, I modified the opening the fall season from the posted date of 8/15 to 8/25 with 40% of the quota..

*Ken Booth*

(Commercial Striped Bass)

To whom it may concern,

I would like to officially comment, on record for the purposed/annotated changes to the Rhode Island commercial striped bass fishery.

As a Rhode Island multipurpose dealer and a commercial rod and reel fisherman, Narragansett Bay Lobsters, Inc. is in **support of option 2**. As a proud member of the RHODE ISLAND SEAFOOD MARKETING COLABRATIVE and a supporter keeping our seafood products local, I feel that the fishery has a greater value to all involved if we can keep the fishery open closer to the peak of our tourist season. By doing this, it will allow our area markets and restaurants to provide the local and visiting public with a highly sought after and valuable local seafood item. By opening the season in mid-May most of the quota is caught before our real season even starts. Prices to the fisherman will be higher because the demand locally is stronger. If not option 2 we would be in support of option 1 status quo. If you should have any questions I can be contacted anytime at the number below.

**Tom LaFazia**  
**Sales/Purchasing Manager**  
**401-782-9000 ext.1**  
[islandlure@yahoo.com](mailto:islandlure@yahoo.com)





Rhode Island  
Department of Environmental Management  
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

401 423-1923  
FAX 401 423-1925

### SUMMARY OF ORAL COMMENTS

A public hearing was held on **February 13, 2017** at 6:00 PM, URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Coastal Institute Building, Narragansett, RI. Approximately 60 persons from the public were present.

Hearing Officer: J. McNamee

DEM Staff: B. Ballou, L. Mouradjian, G. Powers, J. McNamee, S. Olszewski, D. Costa, P. Duhamel.

RIMFC: D. Monti, T. Barao, B. Macintosh, A. Manca, J. Grant

Public comments were solicited on the following items:

• **Hearing Item 1a. - Recreational Summer Flounder:**

- R. Hittinger: *Would normally not be in support of an increase in minimum size, however due to effects on bag limit/season without such increase, in support of ASMFC option #1.*
- S. Medeiros - RISAA: *In support of ASMFC option #1.*
- F. Blount: *In support of 19" min. size and shortening season by 18 days.*
- G. Allen: *In support of ASMFC option #1.*
- R. Bellavance - RIPCBA: *In support of: minimum size 19"; Season May 19 – Dec. 31; 6 fish bag limit.*
- R. Tellier: *In support of ASMFC option #1.*

• **Hearing Item 1b. - Recreational Tautog:**

- S. Medeiros -RISAA: *In support of status quo.*
- G. Allen: *In support of status quo.*
- R. Bellavance - RIPCBA: *In support of option 2.*

• **Hearing Item 1c. - Commercial Tautog:**

- K. Booth - RICRRA: *In support of option 2 as a means to provide for more harvest in the fall season.*
- J. Walker: *Proposed allocations of 40/20/40 respectively for the 3 sub-periods.*
- Public comment: *In support of option 2.*
- A. Cahill: *In support of option 2.*
- R. Enright: *In support of option 2.*
- J. Macari: *In support of option 2.*
- Public comment: *In support of option 2.*
- J. Martini: *In support of option 2.*
- Public comment (comm. Rod and reel fisherman): *In support of option 2.*
- Public comment (comm. Rod and reel fisherman): *In support of option 2.*

- Public comment (comm. Rod and reel fisherman): In support of option 2.
  - D. Pascale: In support of option 2; 2<sup>nd</sup> preference of 40/20/40.
  - F. Pascale: In support of option 2.
  - M. Sherer: In support of option 2.
- **Hearing Item 1d. – Commercial Bluefish:**
    - A. Eagles: In support of option 3.
    - D. Pascale: In support of option 2 or 3.
- **Hearing Item 1e. - Recreational Scup:**
    - S. Medeiros -RISAA: In support of status quo.
    - F. Blount: In support of status quo.
- **Hearing Item 1f. - Recreational Black Sea Bass:**
    - S. Medeiros - RISAA: In support of status quo; 2<sup>nd</sup> preference support for option 4.
    - R. Bellavance - RIPCBA: In support of the following: June 14 – Sept. 30, 3 fish bag limit; Oct. 15 – Dec. 31, 7 fish bag limit. Also in support of an exemption to allow for transiting through federal waters between Block Island and the mainland during closed federal season. Without such exemption vessels docked mainland and wishing to fish in state waters around Block Island cannot do so as are not allowed to possess or transit in federal waters, which is a significant hardship.
    - F. Blount: In support of option 1 if reduction is required; or either option 4 or 5. Strongly in support of season being open in June.
    - A. Cahill: In support of option 1 if reduction is required; or either option 4 or 5.
    - Public comment – recreational fisherman: In support of option 4 and earlier opening.
    - R. Tellier: In support of option 1; or option 4.
- **Hearing Item 2a. - Recreational Striped Bass:**
    - S. Medeiros - RISAA: In support of status quo.
    - G. Allen: In support of status quo.
- **Hearing Item 2b. - Commercial Striped Bass general category:**
    - K. Booth: In support of amending 1<sup>st</sup> sub-period season to open 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in June, and 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-period opening of the day after Labor Day; or industry option 2.
    - G. Allen: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth.
    - J. Macari: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth; or status quo.
    - B. Christensen: In support of option 3.
    - M. McGivney/RISA: In support of option 3.
    - Public comment: In support of option 3.
    - T. Walker: In support of option 3.
    - Public comment: In support of option 3.
    - J. Martini: In support of splitting sub-period allocation 50/50; or option 1.
    - A. Cahill: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth; or option 2.
    - Public comment: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth; strongly opposed to option 3.

- R. Masciarelli: In support of option 1.
  - Public comment: In support of option 1.
  - Public comment: In support of option 1.
  - M. Sherer: In support of option 1 and opening earlier in the fall.
  - Public comment: In support of option 3.
  - Public comment: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth; or status quo. Strongly opposed to option 3.
  - P. Chappell: In support of option 1.
  - D. Pascale: In support of option 2; strongly opposed to option 3.
  - F. Pascale: In support of proposal offered by K. Booth; or option 2 as the most fair.
  - Public comment: Strongly opposed to 50/50 allocation.
  - R. Miner: In support of option 3; or option 1.
  - J. Stevens: In support of option 3.
- **Hearing Item 2c. - Commercial Striped Bass floating fish trap:**
    - J. Walker: In support of status quo.
    - A. Eagles: In support of option 2.
    - J. Grant: In support of option 2.
- **Hearing Item 3. – Commercial Menhaden:**
    - **Proposal 1 - Amend bycatch limit as defined in ASMFC Addendum I to Amendment 2:**
      - T. Walker: In support as proposed.
    - **Proposal 2 - Modify location of Fall opening for purse seining:**
      - S. Medeiros - RISWAA: Strongly opposed as proposed.
      - R. Sousa: Strongly in support of proposal as a means to provide lobster bait to local lobstermen; believes that amount of fish is significant in area currently prohibited and needs to be harvested.
      - J. Walker: In support of proposal. Believes very important that this industry maintains viability so as to provide lobster bait.
      - Public comment: In support of proposal.
      - Public comment: In support of proposal.
      - J. Macari: In support of proposal.
      - A. Eagles: In support of proposal.
      - G. Allen: Opposed.
      - Public comment: Opposed.
      - R. Hittinger: Opposed. Believes area currently open is adequate.
      - Public comment (rec. fisherman): Opposed.
- **Hearing Item 4a. - Proposed Shellfish Management Areas:**
    - **Providence and Seekonk Rivers Shellfish Management Area:**
      - M. McGivney: Support as proposed.

- Public comment: Support as proposed.
- Public comment (comm. shellfisherman):
- **Warren River Shellfish Management Area:**
  - Jarrold Goulart: Opposed to option 1.
  - J. Desmond: Opposed to option 1.
  - Public comment: Opposed to option 1.
  - Public comment: Opposed to option 1.
  - John Goulart: Opposed to option 1.
  - L. McElroy: Opposed to option 1; support for option 2.
  - Public comment: Support for option 2.
  - M. McGivney: Support for option 2.
  - Public comment: Support for option 2.
  - J. Harvey: Support for option 2.
- **Town Pond Shellfish Management Area:**
  - Some discussion but no comments provided.
- **Narrow River Shellfish Management Area:**
  - Some discussion but no comments provided.
- **Green Hill Shellfish Management Area:**
  - No comments provided.
- **Little Narragansett Bay/Pawcatuck River Shellfish Management Area:**
  - Public comment: Inquired if allowed to transit through SMA from non-SMA waters while in possession of quantities greater than SMA possession limit.
- **Hearing Item 4b. – Proposed amendment to the Bristol Harbor Shellfish Management Area boundary:**
  - Public comment: Boundaries should be based on GPS coordinates rather than landmarks.

Prepared by P. Duhamel