Update on the 2020 Atlantic Menhaden Fishing Season

Sustainable Fisheries Branch
NMFS Beaufort Laboratory
Beaufort, NC

GSMFC Spring Meeting
Teleconference
March 2, 2021
2020 Landings for Reduction

- One factory on Atlantic coast at Reedville, VA, since 2005
- Coastwide Total Allowable Catch limit (TAC) raised (216,000 metric tons)
  - 152,392 mt allocated for reduction (prior to set-aside)
- Landings for 2020 reduction fishery:
  - 124,604 mt (or 479 million standard fish)
  - Decreased 17.4% from 2019 (150,825 mt)
  - Decreased 11.2% from previous 5-yr average (140,387 mt)
Vessel Participation for 2020

• 10 Omega Protein vessels unloaded Atlantic menhaden for reduction in 2019 at Reedville

• 1 VA ‘snapper-rig’ boat (bait vessel) also unloaded for reduction at Omega
  • One landed for **bait** only

• ~2 purse-seiners reported catch for **bait** in Atlantic
Coastwide Stock

- Fifth year in a row of large menhaden landings in Northeast
  - “Episodic Event” declared for bait fishing

- Bait fisheries
  - New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine participated in the episodic event this season

- First months of season proceeded below average
  - After June, landings remained close to the 5-year average

- Relatively few direct tropical cyclone strikes, many indirect effects from cyclones
Reduction Landings and Nominal Fishing Effort

Atlantic menhaden landings (1,000 metric tons)
Nominal fishing effort (1,000 vessel-weeks)
2020 Landings by Month

![Graph showing 2020 landings by month. The graph displays the landings in 1,000 metric tons for each month from May to December. The data for 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 is presented with different line styles and colors. The graph peaks in August and shows a general decline throughout the rest of the year.]
Age Compositions in 2020 by Fishing Area
from preliminary catch-at-age matrix

• Critical equipment failure at the beginning of the 2018 fishing season
• Data collection complete for all years
  • Age estimation complete for 2019
• Results of age estimation research are in press
• 2018, 2020 age estimates will be started soon
Coastwide Stock

- 2014 benchmark assessment
  - Stock is not overfished and overfishing not occurring
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- Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
  - 2012 Established an 170,800 mt coastwide Total Allowable Catch
  - 2015 increase in TAC (187,880 mt)
  - 2017 TAC increased to 200,000 mt
  - 2018 TAC increased to 216,000 mt
    - Allocation adjusted from Amendment 2
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- Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan
  - Kept TAC to 216,000 mt
  - Adjusted allocation of landings
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- 2019 benchmark assessment
  - Single-species stock assessment passed peer review
  - Multi-species stock assessment also passed
- Atlantic Menhaden Management Board
  - Reduced TAC 10% for 2021 and 2022 fishing seasons
## 2021 Atlantic Menhaden TAC, by allocation unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Percent of TAC</th>
<th>2019 (1,000 Metric Tons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
<td>1,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>20,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRFC</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA (Reduction)</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
<td>136,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA (Bait)</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>15,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>192,456</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include the 1% episodic set-aside