



Marine Resources Advisory Council  
January 23, 2018

Sean Barrett

Robert Danielson

John Davi, Jr.

Melissa Dearborn

Vincent Finalborgo

Thomas Jordan

Hank Lackner

Joseph Paradiso

Christopher Squeri

Charles Witek

Steve Witthuhn

Dean Yaxa

Michael Frisk  
Chairman

Kim Knoll  
Staff Assistant

The meeting began with introductions by the Councilors present and DEC staff – James Gilmore, Director, and John Maniscalco, Bureau Chief Marine Fisheries.

Chairman Frisk went over the day's agenda followed by an announcement by Mr. Gilmore. Mr. Gilmore stated that although Commissioner Basil Seggos was supposed to attend today's meeting because of a conflict on his calendar, he was unable to come to Long Island. In his place was Kathy Moser, Deputy Commissioner of the NYSDEC.

He reminded everyone that the meetings are now being webcast. If you are unable to attend a meeting you can go on the DEC's website and link into the meeting. You won't be able to actively participate but you will be able to hear what is being said and discussed.

The "at large seat" currently held by Tony DeLearnia on the Mid-Atlantic Council is coming up for re-appointment. The process is such that The Governor must submit 3 names to The Secretary of Commerce for consideration. If anyone is interested, please send Mr. Gilmore a letter of interest along with your CV and why your background makes you a good candidate for this position. He believes Mr. DeLearnia will be reapplying. People in the audience thought Mr. John German would be a good person to hold this position. Mr. Gilmore said the decision will be made by the end of March.

#### Approval of Minutes - November 8, 2017

Motion by Councilor Danielson to accept the Minutes from November 8, 2017's meeting as written, seconded by Councilor Paradiso. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

#### Public Comments for Non- agenda Items

John German, a Commercial fisher questioned what was being done to fill the vacant commercial seat on the Council. Mr. Gilmore said both he and Ms. Moser had a discussion with the Commissioner the week prior and they are moving forward with the search for a delegate.

Mr. Ralph Vigmostad representing the New York Coalition for recreational fishers, stated on January 5<sup>th</sup> the Trump administration announced they were going to roll back a ban on new offshore oil drilling off the coasts of Florida and California and is considering more than 40 sites for leasing of natural gas and oil production. The very next day, Governors from states on the east coast as well as the west coast expressed their dismay. Prior to that though, on December 28, 2017 the Government stated it was going to roll back the safety regulations that were put in place in 2010. The oil industry contends that they have suffered a financial hardship because of those regulations, however, last year alone BP showed a profit of

\$1.8 billion. He believes we need to stand together and come out against the drilling; this is much more detrimental to our environment than wind farms.

Mr. Ron Turbin repeated his long time request – to have at least 1 or 2 of the Council meetings further west to accommodate the folks from Brooklyn and beyond. To many, having the meeting in East Setauket is fair and centrally located since many of the attendees come from points far out East. Councilor Davi suggested that perhaps one meeting could be set more westerly and one meeting could be held out East to try and accommodate everyone. Many in the audience didn't agree with this because they felt we would actually lose most of the audience participants. Chairman Frisk thought this could be brought up for further discussion when we set the year's calendar of meetings later on.

Mr. James Schneider said his last on-board survey was right before hurricane sandy. He hasn't been asked to bring a survey person on-board since 2012, but he would welcome it. He has been cooperative in the past and will be in the future. The seabass numbers that have been thrown out have created hysteria and they are not accurate. For example, in the month of November alone (30 days minus 3 for bad weather) they released over 17,000 blackfish. As everyone knows, if we're not catching fish, no one comes to the boat. He carried over 900 people on his vessel. Mr. Gilmore asked if Mr. Schneider's data is broken down by date and asked if the DEC could cross reference it against their own data and Mr. Schneider agreed to share his VTRs.

#### NY Commercial Quota Distribution

Chairman Frisk explained that the information that will be shown now was only given to the council for review yesterday. There have been two public meetings (November 28 & December 19, 2017), however, a decision could not be reached. It was requested that the Councilors weigh in on this topic, unfortunately we are missing two of our commercial councilors at today's meeting and he would be hesitant to vote on this without those Councilor's thoughts and perspective. He would like to begin a discussion today but will not vote until the March meeting.

Attached please see letters from Sean Barrett and Hank Lackner for their view point.

Below is a Power Point presentation given by John Maniscalco

6

## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues

2018 quota distribution meetings for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish held on 11/28 and 12/19.

A number of issues were divisive at both meetings, particularly for the more quota limited species:

- Black sea bass
- Summer flounder

ATTENDEES BY GEAR TYPE		
GEAR	11/28	12/19
HOOK AND LINE	12	13
TRAWL	13	23
POT/TRAP	9	3
GILLNET	2	1

Representation by gear type, geography, vessel size, state vs. federal permits, and full time vs. part time status was uneven and problematic for equitable quota distribution.



## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.

Black Sea Bass Issues (15% decrease in quota)

- Period 2 (spring) opening day May 1 vs. May 7 vs. May 15
  - Opening in 2017 was May 15, this option was supported for the 2018 fishing year.
  - Open earlier, close earlier.
- Manage quota allocated to Periods 2 (May-June) and 3 (July-Aug) as a single period or 2 separate periods.
  - 2017 management intended separate periods.
  - Meeting attendees majority vote favored management as a single quota period.



## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.

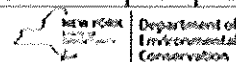
ECL 13-0105. *Marine fisheries conservation and management*

1. (b) (5) *in the event that fishery conservation and management require actions that result in resource allocation impacts, the state shall endeavor to assure such allocation impacts are distributed equitably among user groups, giving priority to existing fisheries within the state;*

- Hook and line commercial fishers say this will result in unequal impacts, and have generated a large number of letters to the Division on the matter.

2015-2017 COMMERCIAL BSB FISHERY	
GEAR	3 YEAR AVG NO. PARTICIPANTS
HOOK AND LINE	160
TRAWLS	80
POTS AND TRAPS	78
FIXED NETS	32
GILL NETS	19
OTHER	2

ATTENDEES BY GEAR TYPE		
GEAR	11/28	12/19
HOOK AND LINE	12	13
TRAWL	13	23
POT/TRAP	9	3
GILLNET	2	1



Councilor Jordan questioned what was the motivation behind the Department's offering options to change the periods, this has never been on the table at quota management meetings before, they have only allowed tweaking of the periods in the past, not to change them. Mr. Maniscalco said most of the comments at the meetings were along the lines of "let it ride", they do not want to see a closure so these options are trying to take that into account. Mr. Jordan said he does not want to come across as argumentative but he was very surprised when after allotments and timing of the periods were discussed it was Mr. Maniscalco who brought to the table, "Let me ask the audience a question – who would like

to open in May and run it out and who would like to retain the two periods.” He believes the option came from Mr. Maniscalco and not an audience member. That was Mr. Davi’s recollection too. Mr. Gilmore said to remember that the DEC receives a lot of email and mail with suggestions from interested parties that might not attend the meetings and Mr. Maniscalco tries to bring **everyone’s** ideas to the table.

Mr. Davi stated that because we will have less quota this year, we will most likely close sometime in June to which Mr. Maniscalco agreed.

Mr. Danielson noticed that there was a breakdown by gear type and he wonders if one user gear type will benefit more in one period over another? The answer was yes, absolutely.

Mr. Jordan said his following comments are coming from his personal perspective. He believes quota management meetings began when the state presented to them the period distribution of black sea bass that was based on historical landing patterns. We have tried to retain those patterns and protect traditional fisheries in the state and the historic fishery. At any meeting since, we have maybe *on occasion* tweaked a period perhaps a percent or two because of a reason or complaint. We have never made a major change to the seasons of the fishery across the periods. During these meetings, even though everyone has a responsibility as a license holder to show up or participate, the trend has been on all sides and gear types to let certain individuals represent them. He is one of those individuals. Most people are just happy to have someone give their point of view but something changed this year. He believes that in years past at Quota Management meetings, the State listened to different industry input and balanced that information to make a decision to achieve the continuance of the historical fishery. Things changed substantially at the last meeting. If we were going to talk about an item as important as eliminating a period, there should have been much more notice. He felt that at the last meeting, decisions were made by how loud folks were and how many spoke and we went to “mob rule.” With more notice, Mr. Jordan would have brought along more Commercial fishers especially if they knew there was a possibility of eliminating period 3. He could have filled the room. Why not send out ballots to every license holder and make it a true vote, it shouldn’t be decided by who showed up and how loud their voices were. We had 36 fishers in the first meeting and 40 in the second – there are approximately 900 who hold a license. The meeting was not a true voice for the commercial fishers.

If we open on May 15<sup>th</sup> and make it to the third week in June, we will be very, very, *very* lucky. The last part of June, all of July and all of August are guaranteed to be closed. We are taking 60% of the quota and catching it in 7 weeks; how is that equitable under your responsibility in the ECL to spread the hurt of reductions across as wide an audience as you possibly can? There is no part of this that makes any kind of sense. It is the responsibility of the DEC, ECL and ours here at MRAC to ensure things like this don’t happen. I can bring folks in to weigh things in his favor. Mr. Maniscalco answered by saying that for the last 3 years we have closed fisheries. Once that happens, people run to the elected officials and complain and the DEC wanted this process out in the open because they get tired of always bearing the brunt. Mr. Jordan understands that, however, it doesn’t change the fact that we need to do the right thing. He is very disappointed that the Commissioner was unable to attend today’s meeting because someone in the Department has to stand up to the pressure of decision making; you are making decisions that affect people’s lives. It’s much easier to say that 15 people in a group said that we should take it all in a 7 week period and when it all blows up to say – that was what they wanted and that was what they got, that’s the easy way out. Mr. Gilmore addressed Mr. Maniscalco’s point, he stated that every year we have a quota management meeting and get consensus but truthfully we don’t have all the stakeholders in the room and the message doesn’t come out that this was really decided by the commercial fishing industry so when the fluke gets closed down in July because of overfishing, it goes to the Commissioner’s office. We definitely need more communication with stakeholders because when we do close the fishery down, they do not want to hear complaints from people saying they didn’t get their way. Mr. Danielson understands that the DEC gets hammered in the press but they’re going to get letters no matter what so the decisions being made should be smart and just not trying to appease a certain group of people.

Mr. Jordan continued by saying that information within the black sea bass fishery and its landings is excellent – they're repeatable and you can count on them. The problem has been controlling period 2 without it affecting period 3. The closest they came to it was 2 years ago when they set the opening date and the closing date for period 2 before the season even started. They know what they are going to land.

Mr. Davi questioned – if we have an opening on May 15<sup>th</sup> – how far will that carry. Mr. Mihale said June 10<sup>th</sup> because June hammers black sea bass and period 2 is very short. Having a hard closure is one option because it puts it on the table. It would open again on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Davi believes this could work.

Mr. Gilmore said there will be more public meetings coming up so there will be more opportunities for folks to speak up and cast their opinions.

9

## **Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.**

Summer Flounder (14% increase in quota, 60,000 pounds)

- 2019 quotas are unknown and depend upon new benchmark assessment

Overage from December fishery (40,000 pounds) must be paid back by end of 2019 fishing year. Options include:

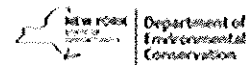
- Wait for 2019
- Split it between 2018 and 2019
- Try to pay it all back in 2018



## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.

When/How to pay it back:

- Winter fisheries only (take quota from December-April)
- Spread it across the year (December often loses quota or is closed due to overages in other periods)
- Mixed model w/ heavier impact on Winter fisheries
- Other suggestions?



## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.

Other summer flounder issues:

- November was lost in 2017. Interest in early Nov 2018 opening at 50 pounds – conservative estimate requires 10,000 for a week w/ unused quota to be rolled over to December.
- Weekly summer trip limit for multi-day trip vessels
  - 150lbs per week/vessel, Sunday thru Saturday, no add'l daily fluke landings allowed after 150lbs.
  - Landings above 50lbs can only occur on trips longer than 72 consecutive hours, as reported on VTRs
  - Opt-in program w/ limited status changes
  - DEC reserves the right to change or terminate the program



## Commercial Quota Distribution Issues – cont.

- Period 5 (Aug-Sep) trial weekend closure
  - May extend time Period 5 is open (2017 closed on Aug 31)
  - Weekend closures are in use in RI
  - Likely to impact commercial fishers with other weekday jobs
  - More loss of fishing days due to weather
  - Fishers that rely upon weekend-only crew will also be impacted.



Mr. Jordan said at the first quota management meeting there was a discussion about what to do if folks went over and it was generally agreed that since it was their gamble to take, it should come out of the winter fishery. Mr. Davi agreed, the summer months are too important but added that we should look more closely at the December opening. He wants to reach out to other fishers to see what they would like to do.

Mr. Danielson questioned when the new stock assessment is coming out. Mr. Maniscalco said the first meeting is in February but they will not be doing hard modeling until the summer months and the results will be out the end of 2018 beginning of 2019 and the 2019 season will be based on that assessment.

Mr. Danielson thinks it might be wise to take the cut in 2018 because you will still be gaining 20,000 lbs in net increase and this way you won't have to figure in that 40,000 lbs loss if the stock assessment is harsh towards summer flounder which is almost a certainty. His vote would be to take the 40,000 lbs in 2018, have a 20,000 lbs net increase and let 2019 roll with the dice.

Mr. Davi would rather wait and see, we're already into winter 1 period. Mr. Maniscalco said we have to account for 40,000 lbs no matter what – that's after we increase the quota by 14%, we have to account for 40,000 lbs. Instead of 490,000 lbs. we can only take 450,000 lbs if we want to take the entire amount out of 2018. If winter 1 is 25%, it is worth 15,000 lbs, there is still plenty of time to make those adjustments.

Mr. Jordan continued – if we take off 20,000 lbs immediately from this year, we will be starting off almost at the same point as no loss from last year. You then have to decide how to handle the balance of 20,000 lbs. – if you split that again, now you are splitting the risk between the Spring and the Fall and possibly 2019. He believes that would be a good direction to head in.

Mr. Davi thinks this will hurt the inshore fishery. This is going to chew into the summer period more than reasonable. He believes the fishery will be closed come August if we go with the weekly trip limit. So, now the fishery is closed in September, closed in October, closed in November and he bets it will be closed in August.

Mr. Jordan is very concerned about weekend closures. He worries about the fishers who work seasonally and need every single day out there on the water, how can you possibly take 2 out of 7 days away from them? He spoke with former Councilor, Paul Farnham, who is extremely upset by this, he needs to land his boats every possible day. You are trying to disenfranchise fishers who have small legitimate businesses, folks who haven't over-capitalized their business. The result is not worth the payment.

Mr. Schneider, doesn't believe it makes sense to close on a weekend. This will force people to fish on days that might not be good days, days that might be dangerous to be on the water but they have a mortgage to pay and need to make money. He is 100% against weekend closures.

Ms. Solomon, Director of LI Traditions, concurs completely with Mr. Schneider.

Mr. Mihale thanked Mr. Maniscalco for putting the presentation together. He then referred to Article 13, Title 3 (13-0350) which deals with the Marine Resources Advisory Council (why it was established and what the responsibilities are). In paragraph 4 under Duties of the advisory council, subparagraph € states: "To review proposed regulations pertaining to the conservation and management of marine fisheries, to consult with commercial and recreational users of such fisheries regarding such regulations and to make recommendations and comments to the department regarding the adoption and modification of such regulations consistent with the policy and principles set forth in section 13-0105 of this article." The article specifically says things should be divided equally and he hopes that everyone votes "nay" because neither is fair or equitable. People who fish rod and reel, need to be able to fish everyday.

#### Update – Licensing Issue

Ms. Moser began by expressing the Commissioner's disappointment that he was unable to attend today's meeting, he is meeting with members of the Assembly to go over budget matters. Long Island issues are very important to him, in 2017, he was on Long Island 27 times. She continued by saying Senator LaValle and Assemblyman Theile held a meeting in November to talk about licensing issues with regard to latent permits. Because of the many facets involved, they have proposed to get a consultant that will come back with an impartial listing of issues and possible solutions. This person will meet with all the various stakeholders, from all areas. They hope to have a person in place within the month so this can get moving so there are solutions in 2018. We have a Commissioner and Governor who really want to make a difference.

Mr. Gilmore emphasized the Commissioner understands the diversity of the entire fishing industry. There is so much history that needs to be evaluated and looked at before any changes take place. There is MUCH to consider. The fishery needs to be understood before any change is brought forth and they want the changes to last, they are not looking for quick fixes.

Mr. Davi thinks it's great and takes credit for putting a lot of the issues on paper to which Jim agreed. Mr. Davi just wanted to ensure that the control date that the Council voted on at the November meeting will still stand. Mr. Gilmore said it would unless the Council wants to change it.

Mr. Jordan wanted Ms. Moser to bring his thanks back to the Commissioner – he feels this is the best possible solution.

Ms. Solomon hopes the person that gets hired keeps in mind the fishers busy season and don't bother them in the peak season. Mr. Gilmore assured Ms. Solomon that it will be kept in mind and they will also look at evening meetings. Most of the effort will be directed toward the public, not so much with the Council itself. John German said that the money that is supposed to be directed towards the commercial fishers.

Mr. Riemer asked who will the person be reporting to. Mr. Gilmore replied mainly himself but Mr. Maniscalco will also be involved.



Mr. Mihale wondered if the person will come to an MRAC meeting to which Mr. Gilmore responded yes. He hopes the person will cover at least 90% of the fishing community and will also work with the sub-committee already formed.

Mr. Davi then read a letter written by Councilor Hank Lackner who could not attend today's meeting

*"Commissioner,*

*I would like to start by saying thank you for staying true to your word and looking into the licensing issues faced by New York's commercial fisherman. Amongst New York's license holders, full time fishermen are the minority and need help.*

*I believe NYS commercial fishermen are in a unique position to GET help addressing a lot of our issues. The answer to some of our problems lies in the hands of Deep Water Wind.*

*I have sat in on multiple wind mill meetings and nowhere do they ever mention the hardships fishermen will encounter once the windmills are installed.*

*Nowhere do they ever mention compensation to the commercial fisherman. They plan to compensate: trustees, townships and even residents.*

*I have a plan. I have emailed Deep Water Wind as well as the Deep Water Wind fishery liaison with this idea. NOW I am asking the NYSDEC as well as our legislators to approach Deep Water Wind with a similar idea.*

*The idea is for Deep Water Wind, with guidance from a commercial fishing subcommittee, overseen by an outside entity (maybe Cornell) to FUND a comprehensive food fish license buy back.*

*The implementation of this BUY BACK will alleviate New York's commercial fishing industry's biggest issue, too many permits and not enough quota. The buy back will make the threat of latent effort disappear, elderly fishermen will have an out and the institution of a permit transfer program will be greatly facilitated.*

*Ultimately this buy back, in conjunction with the transfer program, will transform the makeup of our commercial fisheries. I envision new entrants (both young and old) with higher daily trip limits and ultimately higher prices!!!*

*Wind farms will limit our access to traditional fishing grounds, wind farms long term effects are not known, but a buy back of food fish licenses will go a long way in showing the commercial fisherman of New York that Deep Water Wind "wants" to help the commercial fishing community.*

*Thanks, Hank Lackner"*

#### **Updates Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass**

John Maniscalco continued his presentation with the following slides.

## Recreational Fisheries Update

*Nothing is certain until its adopted into regulation*

Tautog reminder:

- LIS 16" April 1-30 (2 fish), Oct 11-Dec 9 (3 fish)
- NY Bight 16" April 1-30 (2 fish), Oct 15-Dec 22 (4 fish)

Scup (47% liberalization, max)

- 9" minimum size likely (MA-NY, all modes, all waves)

Black sea bass

- Highly uncertain, follow ASMFC on February 8, 2018 for future development of Addendum XXX



## Recreational Fisheries Update – cont.

*Nothing is certain until its adopted into regulation*

*Summer flounder (Fluke)*

- Up to a 17% liberalization. Options submitted to ASMFC for Board approval (Feb 8) include:

OPTION	SIZE	BAG	TOTAL DAYS	SEASON	CHANGE
STATUS QUO	19"	3	128	5/17-9/21	0.0%
1	19"	3	153	5/1-9/30	13.3%
2	19"	4	148	5/1-9/25	17.0%
3	19"	4	151	5/4-9/30	16.5%
4	18.5"	3	106	5/25-9/7	17.0%



Mr. Danielson questioned how does having a 19" size limit impact the discard quota for recreational fishers? The Fishery Management Plan monitors recreational harvest in landed fish, discards from that fishery are taken off at a different portion – when they are cutting up the allowable catch.

Councilor Paradiso referred to Options 1 and 2 and asked if the 45 day rule is now gone? Mr. Maniscalco said the 45-day rule is part of the original regional management and when he asked that question himself, he was told it no longer is.

Arnold Leo brought up the ASMFC board meeting scheduled to begin on February 8<sup>th</sup>. He is unhappy that the very important topic of Black Sea Bass/Scup/Summer Flounder is to be held from 3:00-5:00 p.m. on the last day of a 4-day conference. He wondered if Mr. Gilmore has any say as to how the agenda is made up and if things could be switched around so the important topics go earlier in the day. The current timing will force himself and many others to stay an additional night. Mr. Gilmore said he wasn't sure because they've had to add to the already full agenda.

Mr. Schneider said the traditional fluke fishery has completely changed over the years. Today it's a Jig fishery, where 99% of the fish survive, which changes the discard numbers. That 10% - 20% can be split between the recreational and commercial fisheries. Mr. Maniscalco replied the assessment is a benchmark for the summer and the results will come out in 2019, at that time they will be able to consider different data, different studies and he will suggest they review the discard mortality.

John Schoenig would like to see a longer season and to let the for hire people be able to use the 1<sup>st</sup> of May as their opening day.

## Commercial Tautog

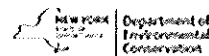
2

### Commercial Tautog

2017 Regulations: 15", 25 fish, 4/8-2/28

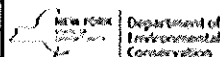
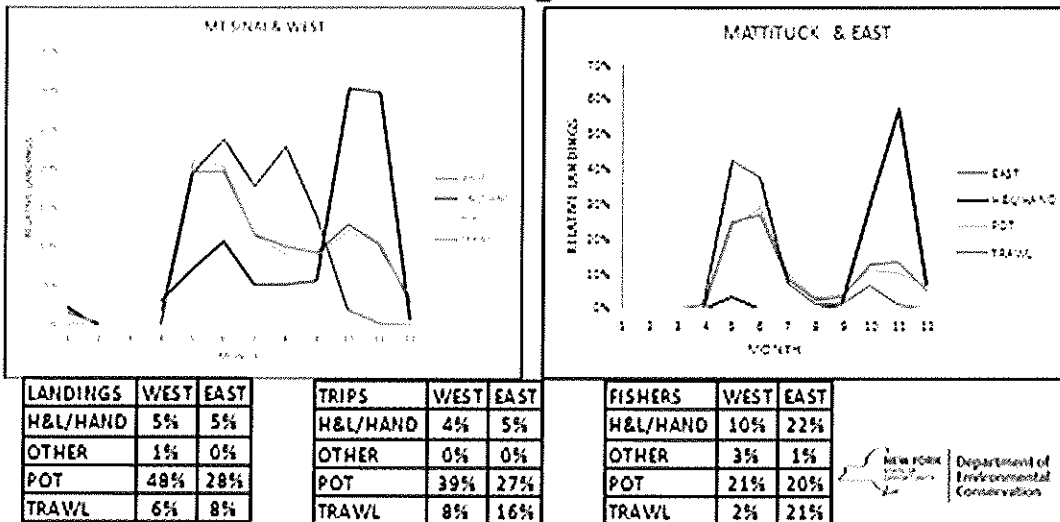
Commercial Reduction Meeting held on 12/5/2017

- NY Bight: 2% reduction by season
  - Favored option = April 16-Jan 25, 285 days
- LIS: 20.3% reduction by season
  - Favored option = May 1-Oct 25, 178 days
  - Some commercial fishers said this season would have a dis-proportionately negative impact on their access



3

### LIS Commercial Tautog - continued



## LIS Commercial Tautog - continued

Analysis of state and federal VTR data from 2013-2015 confirmed dis-proportionate impact of 5/1-10/25 season:

- Eastern Long Island hook and line fishers heavily impacted, trawl fishers much less so.

5/1-10/25, 178 days, Preferred 12/5 Meeting Option			
GEAR	MT SINAI WEST	MATTITUCK EAST	LIS TOTAL
H&L/HAND	-42%	-70%	-55%
POT	-20%	-20%	-20%
TRAWL	-1%	-4%	-3%
TOTAL	-20%	-22%	-20.7%



## LIS Commercial Tautog - continued

1. 5/1-10/25, 178 days, Preferred 12/5 Meeting Option				3. 5/17-11/23			
GEAR	MT SINAI WEST	MATTITUCK EAST	LIS TOTAL	GEAR	MT SINAI WEST	MATTITUCK EAST	LIS TOTAL
H&L/HAND	-42%	-70%	-55%	H&L/HAND	-17%	-22%	-19%
POT	-20%	-20%	-20%	POT	-21%	-22%	-21%
TRAWL	-1%	-4%	-3%	TRAWL	-10%	-24%	-18%
TOTAL	-20%	-22%	-20.7%	TOTAL	-19%	-22%	-20.5%
2. 5/14-11/18, 189 days				4. 5/7-11/23 & AUGUST CLOSURE			
GEAR	MT SINAI WEST	MATTITUCK EAST	LIS TOTAL	GEAR	MT SINAI WEST	MATTITUCK EAST	LIS TOTAL
H&L/HAND	-21%	-31%	-26%	H&L/HAND	-20%	-21%	-20%
POT	-20%	-22%	-21%	POT	-23%	-18%	-21%
TRAWL	-8%	-20%	-15%	TRAWL	-27%	-12%	-18%
TOTAL	-19%	-22%	-20.3%	TOTAL	-23%	-17%	-20.6%



Mr. Maniscalco emphasized the reddish colored hue shows where there is a significant impact of more than 20% whereas the green colored hue is showing an impact of 20% or less.

Councilor Davi said of the options, he favors option 4, having an August closure.

Mr. Marc Hoffman is concerned that **none** of the options protect the spawning season. He believes that if you're trying to protect the stock, start at July 1<sup>st</sup> and continue throughout the rest of the year.

Councilor Davi made a motion to accept Option 4, 5/7 – 11/23 with an August closure. Councilor Jordan seconded.

After polling the audience, which were all happy to go with Option 4, Mr. Frisk took the vote.

All in favor – 9, Opposed – 0, Abstentions (Frisk) – 1. Motion passes 4.

## Bi-Valve Restoration Program

Mr. Davi began by saying that it had been recently announced that Governor Cuomo appropriated approximately \$5 million to Cornell and approximately \$3 million to commercial fishers to jumpstart a program regarding a bi-valve restoration. He was very interested in how this would play out, who is involved and what input would be needed from the commercial fishers. Ms. Debra Barnes clarified that Governor Cuomo did announce the Long Island Shellfish Restoration Project with financial backing of \$10.4 million. His intent is to improve water quality by restoring shellfish to Long Island's local waters. To restore shellfish, New York State is establishing five new sanctuary sites in Suffolk and Nassau counties to transplant seeded clams and oysters and expanding public shellfish hatcheries in the two counties through a dedicated grant program. The restoration project was to have a 5 point strategy:

1. Establish 5 shellfish sanctuaries in strategic areas across Long Island (Hempstead Harbor, Hempstead Bay, Oyster Bay, Bellport Bay and Shinnecock Bay)
2. Increase overall seed production being done by public hatcheries (i.e., Cornell Cooperative Extension)
3. An expansion of existing and new public hatcheries
4. Towns and tribal nations that have a facility that could be converted into a hatchery facility
5. DEC to purchase adult clams from shellfish dealers (not harvesters). They will be soliciting bids

Very specific targets were developed for this project. Mr. Davi questioned if commercial fishers would be able to get involved. Ms. Barnes said this program is in its initial phase and she is not exactly sure how it will unfold but she will keep everyone informed. A project of this magnitude has never been tackled before so they are learning as they go.

Mr. Davi thinks he and others would be very interested in receiving continuing information. This will be placed on a future agenda. Mr. Jordan would like the information to include how this initiative is going to affect local fish prices.

~~~~~

Mr. Danielson brought up the topic that has come up before – Captains in the For-Hire industry saying they shouldn't be held responsible for what customers on their boats catch and keep, specifically, black sea bass. He continued by saying that in Florida you get a cooler with your name and such and that person alone will be responsible for what is in it whether they are being compliant or not. This will be placed on a future agenda.

~~~~~

Regarding the non-compliance issues that we had back in November, people wondered how that will affect future recreational allocation? This too, will be placed on a future agenda.

~~~~~

### 2018 Meeting Schedule

March 6<sup>th</sup> – 2:00 p.m. DEC Offices  
April 17<sup>th</sup> – 2:00 p.m. DEC Offices (Legislative Review)  
May 8<sup>th</sup> – 2:00 p.m. DEC Offices  
July 10<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 p.m. (possibly Stony Brook)  
September 11<sup>th</sup> - 2:00 p.m. DEC Offices  
November 13<sup>th</sup> - 2:00 p.m. DEC Offices

~~~~~

For further information about the Marine Resources Advisory Council, past and present bulletins, as well as any pertinent graphs, charts or data, please check the Council's web page: <http://you.stonybrook.edu/mrac/meetings/>

Should you wish to suggest an agenda topic, contact the Chairman, Michael Frisk, ([Michael.frisk@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Michael.frisk@stonybrook.edu)); phone 631/632-8656; Staff Assistant, Kim Knoll, ([kim.knoll@stonybrook.edu](mailto:kim.knoll@stonybrook.edu))