

May 30, 2008
Marine Fisheries Advisory

**MARINE FISHERIES TO HOST ASMFC PUBLIC HEARING ON
SHAD PUBLIC INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has announced its public hearing schedule to gather public comment on the Public Information Document (PID) for Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Shad and River Herring. The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) will host a hearing on June 23rd (6:30PM) at the Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station (30 Emerson Ave., Gloucester).

As the first step in the development of an amendment, the PID presents a broad overview of the factors affecting American shad. It provides the public with the opportunity to tell the Commission about changes observed in the fishery; things that should or should not be done in terms of management, regulation, enforcement, research, development, and enhancement; and any other concerns about the resource or the fishery. The PID can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News. It is anticipated that several of coastal states will be conducting public meetings on the PID; information on those meetings will be released once they become finalized.

The PID and subsequent amendment are being developed in response to the findings of the 2007 benchmark stock assessment for American shad, which indicates that American shad stocks are currently at all-time lows and do not appear to be recovering. Specific issues addressed in the PID are (1) incorporating the biological reference points and stock restoration goals identified in the 2007 benchmark stock assessment; (2) not increasing directed fisheries for American shad; and (3) restricting fisheries operating on stocks where total mortality is increasing and relative abundance is decreasing. The PID has been developed to address these issues by seeking public comment on the restoration of American shad fisheries and American shad fisheries management.

Following the initial phase of information-gathering and public comment, the Commission will evaluate potential management alternatives and develop a draft amendment for public review. Following that review and public comment, the Commission will specify the management measures to be included in the final amendment. A tentative schedule for the completion of the Amendment 3 is included in PID.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the PID, either through attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies can be obtained by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400 or via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News. Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM on July 25, 2008** and should be forwarded to Erika Robbins, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, 1444 'Eye' Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: American Shad). For more information, please contact Erika Robbins at (202) 289-6400.

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