Atlantic Chub Mackerel Amendment

Scoping Hearing
May 2017
Scoping

- Early opportunity for public input
- Alternatives have not yet been developed or analyzed
- Establishes the overall focus and direction of the amendment
Develop management measures for Atlantic chub mackerel fisheries

- Prevent overfishing
- Achieve optimum yield
- Ensure long-term sustainability
Biology/Life History

- Small, schooling, pelagic species
- Opportunistic predators
- Frequent prey for tunas and billfish in Mid-Atlantic
- Also likely prey for spiny dogfish, monkfish, summer flounder, marine mammals, and sharks
Biology/Life History

- Widely distributed
- Evidence of spawning in NC-FL, larvae in straits of FL
- Large fluctuations in abundance & availability around the world – likely driven by environment
Mid-Atlantic & New England Landings

- Mid-Atlantic & New England Landings

Landings (millions of lb)

- 1994-1996: 0
- 1997: 0
- 1998: 0
- 1999: 0
- 2000: 0
- 2001: 0
- 2002: 0
- 2003: 0.61
- 2004: 0
- 2005: 0
- 2006: 0
- 2007-2009: 0
- 2010-2011: 0
- 2012: 0
- 2013: 5.25
- 2014: 2.11
- 2015: 1.23
- 2016: 0.61
Fishery

- >95% landings June-October
- 90% from bottom trawls
- ≤29 vessels/year, ≤8 dealers/year
- Most landings from south of Hudson Canyon in stat areas in or near shelf break
- Some recreational landings throughout east coast and in Gulf of Mexico
Amendment Rationale

- Existing targeted fishery
- Temporary measures through forage amendment
  - 2.86 million lb/year, then 40K lb possession limit
- Goal of this amendment: longer-term mgmt.
- EAFM Guidance Document
Council policy “to support the maintenance of an adequate forage base in the Mid-Atlantic to ensure ecosystem productivity, structure and function and to support sustainable fishing communities”

May consider using more restrictive management measures for forage species than otherwise required
Stock in the Fishery

Required management measures under the Magnuson-Stevens Act

- Acceptable biological catch (ABC)
- Annual catch limits (ACLs)
- Accountability measures (AMs)
- Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
- Management unit
Discretionary Measures

- Permit requirements
- Limited access provisions
- Annual catch targets
- Landings limits (e.g. quotas)
- Possession limits
- Minimum fish size restrictions
- Gear restrictions
- Reporting requirements
- Seasonal closures
How should the Council take ecosystem considerations into account when setting catch limits?

What ecological & socioeconomic tradeoffs should the Council consider when developing management measures?
Should management measures apply beyond the mid-Atlantic?

What types of accountability measures are most appropriate?

– Closures?
– Gear restrictions?
– Deductions from catch limit or quota in following year?
– Possession limit adjustments?
- Is limited access necessary?
- Are possession limits necessary?
- Are recreational management measures necessary?
  - Recreational harvest limit
  - Possession limit
  - Open/closed seasons seasons
  - Minimum fish sizes
Amendment Development Process

1. **Initiate Action**
2. **Scoping**
3. **Develop draft alternatives**
5. **Public Comment on Draft Action**
6. **Review Public Comments**
7. **Select Preferred Management Measures**
8. **Submit Preferred Measures to Secretary of Commerce**
9. **Publish Proposed Rule**
10. **Public Comment on Proposed Rule**
11. **Publish Final Rule**
12. **Implement Final Rule**

- **Council action**
- **NMFS action**
Questions/Comments

For the record, please state:

▪ Your name
▪ If applicable, the name of any organization or agency for which you are acting as a spokesperson