

Scup/Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel
Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2006
Division of Fish and Wildlife, Fort Wetherill
Jamestown, RI
(as amended 11/17/06)

There were 12 people present: (*primary advisory panel member; ^ alternate member)

Ken Ketcham, Chairman

Tom Hoxie^A – Floating Traps

Frank Blount^A – Party & Charter

Jim Low* -- Commercial Hook and Line

Ed Baker^A – Commercial Pots

Brian Murphy, RIDFW

Nancy Scarduzia, RIDFW

Review of 2006 scup and black sea bass commercial fishery performance

The panel reviewed the data on commercial scup landings in 2006. It was also brought to the attention of the panel that the commercial quota for 2007 would be smaller by about 1 ½ %. K. Ketcham informed the panel that Chris Brown submitted a recommendation from the RI Commercial Fishermen's Association for status quo in 2007 for commercial scup regulations, other gear types. The current regulations specify a possession limit of 1,000 pounds starting on May 1. There was some discussion on why a lower limit has not been implemented. The panel voted all in favor of recommending status quo to the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council.

Jim Low reviewed a proposal that he submitted on behalf of the RI Commercial Rod and Reel Anglers Association. The proposal would change allocation of the commercial scup quota between floating fish traps and other gear types to 40% and 60%, respectively. There was much discussion on the current allocation of 60% for fish traps and 40% for other gear types and exactly how the Department decided on the split. B. Murphy stated that the split was based on historical landings of scup in RI and that there is no record of which years were used as a baseline. The panel voted two in favor and two opposed to the proposal.

The panel was informed that the commercial quota for black sea bass would be smaller by approximately 19%. The proposal submitted by RICFA recommended status quo for 2007. The panel voted all in favor of recommending status quo to the Council.

In regards to regulations pertaining to floating fish traps, T. Hoxsie suggested increasing the set aside for the month of June. Currently 10% of the quota is set aside for the month of June. T. Hoxie suggested increasing the percentage so that an additional 30,000 pounds is available during that month, which equals approximately 12% of the quota adopted by the Commission/Council for 2007. Two were in favor and two were opposed to the recommendation.

