

**Scup/Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 4, 2007**  
**Division of Fish and Wildlife, Fort Wetherill**  
**Jamestown, RI**

There were 4 people present: (\*primary advisory panel member; ^ alternate member)  
Jim Low\* -- Commercial Hook and Line  
Ed Baker<sup>A</sup> – Commercial Pots  
Ken Court<sup>A</sup> – Party & Charter  
Brian Murphy, RIDFW

*Increase in the number of escape vents and size of circular escape vents on pots used to catch black sea bass*

B. Murphy informed the members present that there was an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council requirement for two escape vents in the parlor portion of black sea pots and also to increase the minimum size of circular escape vents from 2 3/8 inches to 2 1/2 inches. This issue was forwarded to the advisory panel for consideration prior to it being presented at the next public hearing. These modifications were recommended to increase escapement of sublegal black sea bass. There was discussion on the area of the recommended dimensions relative to those of existing dimensions for rectangular and square shaped escape vents. It was determined that the larger circular size is smaller in area than the area for rectangular escape vents but larger than the area of square vents. Members did not have any opposition to the modifications and recommended that they be adopted.

*Modification to language concerning commercial possession limit of scup during Winter II period*

B. Murphy informed the members present that since this issue was noticed the Division has been advised by legal counsel that it cannot do as it intended and there will be no modifications to the regulations. During the Winter II period, DEM adopts the possession limit established by the National Marine Fisheries Service. Each year the Division must file a change to match the new limit. The intention of the Division was to adopt language that would establish the most recent possession limit set by NMFS without having to file a regulation adjustment. Since this cannot be done for legal reasons, comment is not needed. There was opportunity however for the advisory panel to comment on the possession limits that are established during the Winter II period and whether the State should adopt those set by NMFS or establish some other lower possession limits. Members commented that they did not have any reason to deviate from NMFS and recommended status quo.

*Further Discussion*

J. Low submitted a proposal to the panel and asked that it be forwarded to the Council. The plan proposes reallocating a portion of the commercial quota for scup. He stated that 60% of the quota should not be allocated to a small group of people. Of the three members present two voted that they were in favor of the proposal and one was opposed.