

RHODE ISLAND MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL
TAUTOG ADVISORY PANEL
Minutes of Meeting
February 12, 2007
Stedman Government Center
2nd Floor Board Room
4808 Tower Hill Rd
Wakefield, RI

Tautog AP Members: J. Warnock^{alt}, B. Oakley^{alt}, F. Blount^{alt}, E. Cook^{alt}, M. Lanni^{primary}, T. Hoxsie^{primary}, A. Glidden^{alt}

Chairperson: G. Allen

RIDEM F&W Staff: J. McNamee

G. Allen called the meeting to order. J. McNamee went over a slide show (see attached) that covered the first four agenda items. The first topic was the 2006 commercial fishery. J. McNamee reported that the commercial fishery ended the year at approximately 4,000 pounds under the allocated quota.

The next topic was a review of Addendum 4 to the fishery management plan for tautog. J. McNamee reported that the F target had been changed to 0.2 (from 0.29) and a biomass target had been implemented. Tautog had not until this point had a biomass target. The final point J. McNamee gave was that the concerns about black market tautog being landed. The Board had heard many comments regarding this during the public hearing process and has brought this to the attention of the enforcement agencies of the impacted states.

The next item was a report on a state specific stock assessment. J. McNamee stated that the results of the RI specific VPA were preliminary at this point. He reported that the RI VPA was indicating that the RI specific F was at 0.2, which was the new target for the fishery management plan. If this were to be accepted by the ASMFC tautog technical committee, there would be no reduction required by RI in 2008. He went on to state that P. Caruso of MADMF had performed a combined RI/MA VPA and that has a slightly worse F of 0.25, however this would still be less than the coastwide reduction. The reason for bringing this up was that the accuracy of the data, namely the recreational data, was better with the states combined rather than a single state by itself. This in the end may be more palatable to the technical committee, the group that has to approve any state specific assessments. He concluded by stating that the reductions, no matter what they end up being, will not have the newly enacted June closure accounted for, therefore RI will be able to take credit for this reduction when the time comes.

The fourth topic was any proposed changes the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) may have for the 2007 fishery. J. McNamee stated that the DFW does not propose any changes to the 2007 commercial fishery. The quota under status quo will be

approximately 51,000 pounds.

G. Allen asked the panel if there were any proposals from the group that needed to go forward to the RI Marine Fisheries Council. **The consensus of the group was that they supported remaining at status quo for the commercial fishery in 2007.**

G. Allen adjourned the meeting.

Jason E. McNamee
Recording Secretary