



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**  
**DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES**  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835

## **SUMMARY OF HEARING COMMENTS**

A public hearing was held on **November 19, 2018** at 6:00 PM, URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium, Narragansett, RI. Seven (7) persons were in attendance. The public comment period began May 18 and ended June 18.

### **1. Hearing item 1a. – 2019 commercial Black sea bass management:**

- **Option 1:** Status quo.
- **Option 2:** Amend starting possession limit from 50 lbs/day to 25 lbs/day during the July sub-period
  - o *S. Parente:* In support of option 1. Not in support lowering possession limit to 25 lbs/day as is not an economically viable possession limit. In support of closing while Massachusetts is open if lowered to 25 lbs/day as will impact price.
  - o *J. Perkins:* In support of comments made by S. Parente. Not in support of option 2.
  - o *J. Macari:* 25 lb/day possession limit would allow a bycatch when targeting summer flounder.
  - o *D. Blackburn:* In support of option 2 as positive for rod and reel fishermen.
  - o *E. Wright/Town dock:* When season is open rate of discards increases. Gillnet discard mortality rate is over 20%; rod and reel is @ 8%.
  - o *K. Murgio:* In support of option 1. A possession limit of 25 lbs/day is not an economically viable possession limit. Not in support of any closed days.
  - o *Public comment:* In support of option 1. A possession limit of 25 lbs/day is not an economically viable possession limit.

### **2. Hearing item 1b. – 2019 commercial Scup management:**

- **Proposal 1:** Management program.
  - o **Option 1:** Status quo.

- S. Parente: Biomass estimates may be too high; possession limits could result in over-harvest.
- **Proposal 2**: Amend maximum pot limit.
  - o **Option 1**: Remove maximum pot limit.
  - o **Option 2**: Increase maximum pot limit from 50 to 300 pots.
- K. Murgo: In support of option 1.
- E. Wright: The maximum # of pots currently used is 32 pots; changing the rule would therefore have no effect on fishing practices or harvest. Primary method of harvest is trawling.

### 3. **Hearing item 1c. – 2019 commercial Summer flounder management:**

- **Option 1**: Status quo.
- **Option 2**: Re-open on Sundays during the Summer sub-period.
  - o J. Perkins: In support of option 2. The risk of an early closure from adding Sunday is worth the risk. In support of opening on Friday rather than Sunday.
  - o B. Allen: In support of opening an additional day if quota increases by 15% as anticipated. Does not want to see an early closure. Closed day should be based on market, consultation with dealers.
  - o J. Macari: In support of opening an additional day.
  - o E. Wright: Opening on Sunday would be best from a dealer standpoint.
  - o S. Parente: In support of opening an additional day; the day to be based on market.
  - o B. Allen: Quotas don't appear accurate.
  - o D. Blackburn: Opening the additional day should only be implemented if increase in quota realized.

### 4. **Hearing item 1d. – 2019 recreational Tautog management:**

- No comments were made.

### 5. **Hearing item 1e. – 2019 commercial Tautog management:**

- **Proposal 1**: Management program.
  - o **Option 1**: Status quo.

- o **Option 2:** Remove summer sub-period, split allocation 50/50 spring and fall sub-periods.
  - S. Parente: In support of option 2, though concerned about impacts to spear fishermen.
  - K. Murgio: In support of option 1; strongly opposed to option 2. Tautog fishing is an important component of his fishing activity during this sub-period. Removal of this sub-period will not have any appreciable benefit to the other 2 sub-periods.
  - J. Perkins: In support of option 1.
- **Proposal 2:** Proposed adoption of a fish tagging program.
  - o S. Parente: Not in support of an additional tagging program.
  - o E. Wright: Is difficult to tag a live tautog. Does not understand goals of program or logistics of tagging and responsibilities; would appear to have very limited value.
  - o K. Murgio: Not in support of the program; very difficult to tag a live tautog.

For the full video of the hearing please go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiTMKiBRe3w>. Please expand the “SHOW MORE” tab to show individual agenda items and their time of recording.