

June 14, 2018

Janet Coit, Director
RI DEM
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Director Coit,

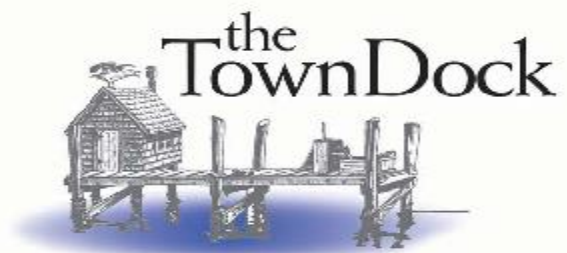
I am writing to comment on RI DEM's proposal of a pilot project to expand the aggregate for summer flounder and black sea bass.

At this point in time we are against an aggregate expansion for both summer flounder and black sea bass. With the possibility of increased pressure on both species as a result of increased participation while the quota for both species is so low we don't think that this is the time to run an experimental program. We need to protect the market and keep a steady flow of fish coming across the docks. It is very hard to recoup a market that is lost.

There are two major summer flounder decisions coming up soon. The MAFMC is in the process of a comprehensive summer flounder amendment with reallocation being one of the issues being discussed and the NEFSC will be conducting a summer flounder benchmark starting this fall. We believe that it would be best to put this project off until both the amendment and the benchmark have been completed. This way we can see exactly what we have to work quota-wise and decide from there.

Thank you for taking the time to hear our concerns.

Sincerely,
Katie Almeida
Fishery Policy Analyst



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