



New England Fishery Management Council

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Frank Blount, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2006
TO: Herring Committee, ASMFC Herring Section, and Herring Advisory Panel Members
FROM: Lori Steele, NEFMC Staff, Herring PDT Chair
SUBJECT: **Draft Timeline for 2008/2009 Research Set-Asides**

The establishment of TAC set-asides to support herring-related research is a measure proposed in Amendment 1 to the Herring FMP. If approved and implemented, the Council, in consultation with the ASMFC, would have the ability to set-aside up to 3% of any management area(s) TAC(s) to support herring-related research as part of the three-year specification process. The Council intends for the research set-aside (RSA) to be administered through a mechanism similar to the process used by the Mid-Atlantic Council for its Squid, Mackerel, and Butterfish, Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass, Bluefish, and Tilefish FMPs. The details of the RSA process are specified in Section 4.8 of the Amendment 1 document.

For the 2007-2009 specifications, the Herring Committee is proposing to set-aside 3% of each management area TAC to support herring-related research. The timing of the RSA process proposed in Amendment 1, however, precludes the establishment of RSAs for the 2007 fishing year, so these RSAs will be available only for the 2008 and 2009 fishing years if this measure is approved in Amendment 1. In this case, the Council would identify research priorities, NMFS would publish the Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2008 and 2009, and proposals would be reviewed and approved during the 2007 fishing year so that funds could be made available for projects at the start of the 2008 fishing year. NMFS would likely publish a notice in the Federal Register identifying the RSA-funded projects that have been approved for 2008 and 2009, the amount of utilized/unutilized RSA, and any changes to the TACs resulting from returning unutilized RSA.

A **preliminary** timeline for the 2008-2009 RSA process is outlined on the following page for informational purposes. This timeline differs slightly from the one provided in Amendment 1, as the Amendment 1 timeline describes the process for three-year RSAs, which will occur during the development of the 2010-2012 fishery specifications. The specific schedule for the 2008 and 2009 RSAs also may change once the process is implemented and issues regarding State/Federal coordination of RFPs are addressed.

<i>Jan/Feb 2007</i>	Council establishes research priorities for 2008 and 2009 based on advice and comment from its various Committees and ASMFC
<i>Feb/Mar 2007</i>	NMFS publishes RFP for upcoming fishing years (2008 and 2009)
<i>April 2007</i>	Proposal submission deadline
<i>May 2007</i>	NMFS Grants Office completes initial review for completeness and sends proposals out for a technical review, as described in Amendment 1
<i>Jun/Jul 2007</i>	Following completion of the technical evaluation, NMFS will convene a review panel to review and individually critique the scored proposals, and to make final recommendations to enhance NMFS's understanding of the proposals
<i>Sept/Oct 2007</i>	NMFS publishes proposed specifications for 2008 and 2009, including decisions on RSA proposals.
<i>Nov/Dec 2007</i>	NMFS publishes final specifications for 2008-2009, announcing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifications for the fishery and the percentage allocated to research set-aside. • Regulations that may be waived by vessels conducting approved research or compensation trips for research endeavors.
<i>January 2008</i>	NMFS issues Letter of Authorizations (LOA) to research vessels and research begins.

In the event that the approved proposals do not make use of any or all of the RSAs during 2008 and/or 2009, NMFS is authorized in Amendment 1 to release the unutilized portion of the set-aside back to its respective management area(s), prior to the start of the fishing year. If there is unutilized set-aside available, NMFS, at the request of the Council, could publish another RFP for 2009. In this case, NMFS would release the unutilized portion of the set-aside back to its respective management area(s) for 2008 and any other year that yields unutilized set-aside after an additional RFP is published. The Council also may decide not to publish another RFP, in which case NMFS would be authorized to release the unutilized portion of the set-aside back to its respective management area(s) for both 2008 and 2009.