



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

July 31, 2019

Mr. Thomas T. Alspach
295 Bay Street, Suite 1
P.O. Box 1358
Easton, MD 21601

Dear Mr. Alspach:

Thank you for your email dated July 24, 2019 and your request that industry members be included in the recently formed Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT). This FMAT will provide recommendations on how potential actions identified through the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog (SCOQ) Catch Share Program Review should be addressed by the Council.

FMATs are formed to provide the Council with specific technical expertise in support of an action, and to develop options for consideration that are consistent with any statutory or regulatory requirements. The FMAT will meet in early September (tentatively scheduled for September 4, 2019) to discuss technical aspects of the potential actions presented to the Council in June 2018. This will include discussion of the statutory and regulatory tools that might be available to the Council to address potential actions (e.g., under MSA and NEPA process), social and economic data analysis and collection systems, and NOAA Fisheries and Council staffing that might be required to complete such actions.

Industry input on this topic will be provided through the Advisory Panel (AP) process. The use of the FMAT and the input from the AP is consistent with the way the Council conducts amendment development for the other species the Council manages.

The Council has scheduled a SCOQ AP meeting (followed by a SCOQ Committee meeting) on September 17, 2019 to review and provide comments on the FMAT's technical recommendations. The input from the AP and Committee, along with the FMAT recommendations, will be presented to the Council's Executive Committee at the October 2019 Council meeting, when the Council discusses its 2020 Implementation Plan.

It is important to note that the FMAT and AP meetings are public. In addition, we schedule FMAT meetings in locations that are convenient for FMAT members for FMAT meetings, and likewise select AP meeting locations that are convenient to those members for those meetings.

Let me know if you have any questions about the process.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Luisi
Chairman