A meeting of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council’s Recreational Summer Flounder Advisory Committee was held via webinar on June 28, 2021 to discuss future management approaches for the New Jersey recreational summer flounder fishery.

**Future NJ Summer Flounder Management**

At the May 13, 2021 New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council meeting, Council requested the Marine Fisheries Administration staff continue investigating several alternative recreational summer flounder fisheries management options for 2022 and forward. The intent of this series of meetings is not to decide or recommend summer flounder management for 2022, but rather develop a list of tools to be used for consideration. None of the options represented and presented during these meetings are final in numbers used for calculations and all but the status quo options would need ASMFC Technical Committee approval before being used for NJ fisheries management. All the options are for discussion and planning purposes only. The suite of options approved by Council to move forward for our second of three meetings included 1). A continuous minimum size, season, and bag; 2). A slot size limit of two fish with one trophy fish and a continuous season; and 3). An early season small size limit coupled with a larger minimum size limit later in the year, both with a 3 fish bag limit. Staff presented 8 options representing these three general categories above and as seen in the below table. All options described have a three fish possession limit. These specific option examples presented by staff were;

1. Continuous Minimum Size-Status quo, 18 inch minimum size, season from May 22 to September 19, 121 open days;

2. Continuous Minimum Size-17.5 inch minimum size, season from June 21 to September 26, 98 open days;

3. Continuous Minimum Size-17.5 inch minimum size, season from June 6 to September 5, 92 open days;

4. Slot and Trophy A- 2 fish 17-17.99 inches and 1 fish 18 inches or greater, season from May 16 to October 7, 145 open days;

5. Slot and Trophy B-1 fish 17-17.99 inches and 2 fish 18 inches or greater, season from June 6-Septmeber 19, 106 open days;

6. Slot and Trophy C-1 fish 17.5 -17.99 inches and 2 fish 18 inches or greater, season from May 22 to September 25, 127 open days;

7. Variable Size A-17 inches from May 27-June 30, 18 inches from July 1 to September 9, 106 open days;

8. Variable Size B- 17.5 inches from May 22 to June 30, 18 inches from July 1 to September 12, 114 open days.

The Committee ranked the option concepts in order of preference as 1. Slot and Trophy, 2. Continuous Minimum Size, 3. Variable Size. As such, staff will now carry these option methodologies to the ASMFC Technical Committee for consideration, concept and methodology review, and further vetting for use as management tools as is the process for all annual state summer flounder management proposals. This process will begin in July in front of the scheduled ASMFC Summer Flounder Technical Committee meeting on July 27, 2021. Once the Technical Committee has reviewed the methodology of the three concepts, a third meeting will be held with NJ Advisors in October/November to further refine the NJ summer flounder management path for 2022.

