



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 302-674-2331 | FAX: 302-674-5399 | www.mafmc.org
Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

April 17, 2017

Ms. Margo Schulze-Haugen
Chief, NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division
1315 East-West Highway
NMFS/SF1
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Margo:

Thank you again for participating in our April 6, 2017 joint HMS-Law Enforcement Committee Meeting. The Council has repeatedly received and discussed concerns regarding compliance with HMS permitting and reporting and your participation helped clarify a number of issues. At the April 2017 Council Meeting, the Council evaluated the committee recommendations and two motions passed by consent:

1. I move that the Council recommend HMS to partition the HMS Party/Charter permit into two permits: Party/Charter No Sale (pure recreational) and Party/Charter Sale (mixed recreational/commercial). Party/Charter Sale would require operators to supply their United States Coast Guard safety inspection decal number to acquire a permit. This would allow recreational fishermen with no intention to sell HMS fish to avoid the United States Coast Guard safety inspection decal and the associated costs in passing inspection, while still more clearly identifying the universe of vessels with commercial transactions.
2. I move that the Council recommend HMS to require logbook or vessel trip report (VTR) reporting for HMS Charter/Headboat and General Category permits so there is a more uniform 2-ticket system (vessel and dealer reports) for tracking HMS sales (do so in a way that avoids duplicate reporting).

Please include this letter in your briefing materials for the upcoming May 2017 HMS Advisory Panel Meeting. We look forward to further discussion regarding HMS permitting/reporting/compliance concerns.

Please call me or Matt Seeley of my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: M. Luisi, W. Elliott, D. Hemilright, J. McMurray, M. Seeley, J. Didden