

Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 Public Hearing Comments – Summary

November 2015

Formal public hearings for Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 (Reg 1) were held on November 12, 2015 with comment stations in St. Augustine, Florida and Manteo, North Carolina. The public was able to participate through an online webinar. Additionally, public comments were accepted in writing through November 16, 2015.

Four comments were received at the public hearing webinar/comment stations and two written comments were received. Of the four comments that expressed an opinion specifically related to the action considered in Reg 1, all supported selection of **Alternative 4, Sub-alternative 4d**, which would implement a 4,000 lb ww commercial trip limit once 75% of the commercial ACL was taken. No commenters expressed support for any of the other alternatives/sub-alternatives.

Other comments received in regards to dolphin management included:

- Increase the commercial ACL to 2,000,000 lbs ww
- Allow rollover of unused ACL from one year to the next
- If it looks as if the commercial sector may close due to reaching its sector ACL in June/July, some of the recreational ACL should be transferred to the commercial sector
- Allow for a temporary transfer between sectors
- Set a possession limit of 100 lbs ww per 100,000 lbs ww of remaining ACL
- Start the dolphin season in April so the commercial fishery won't close until after the longline fishery run is over
- Do not create a catch shares type program for dolphin
- Consider stocking dolphin through offshore hatcheries

Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 webinar/comment station summary

1. Jeff Oden – rec ACL of 14 MLB not caught; the Council reduced the commercial ACL and now proposed to increase it but now closed since increase not in place and they have to throw dolphin back; support 4,000 lb trip limit after 75% com ACL taken; would like to see the com ACL increased to 2 MLB
2. Dewey Hemilright – doesn't think HMS or water temp is reason for increase in landings; Boyle's Law reduced the com allocation to 7.5%; if the new amount from the amendment was in place there would not be a closure; 1.5 MLB which is 10%; he would like to see a process to borrow some from red ACL in high com years; Alt 4, 4(d) would be least pain if need one; the document should show % com by year, should look at discards in com logbook; we should be able to rollover unused quota to next year.
3. Danny _____ - commercial/charter; if by June/July need some, take from rec since they have not filled the rec ACL for past 15 years.
4. Teri Beidman – nice to see moving forward; discouraging to see that the amendment is still in review since it would have prevented a closure; this has cost lots of money; the price has increased to \$6/lb and benefitted foreign countries through imports; a trigger at 75% with 4,000 lb seems reasonable; need to have a temporary transfer provision in another amendment

Written public comments as of 11/17/2015

Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 Public Comments

The fairest way to manage most large commercial quotas for everyone involved including consumers is to use the final 25% of quotas as a By-catch Allowance. A good rule of thumb for By-catch Allowances is to set the possession limit at 100 pounds per 100,000 pounds of remaining quota. We wouldn't need to implement By-catch Possession Limits if there's less than a month left in the season after 75% has been landed. This concept should apply to most commercial quotas so almost everything remains legal most of the time. This would allow us to target fish with higher limits while still keeping most of what we catch with lower limits. This simple solution would limit waste while giving consumers a more consistent supply of local seafood and providing better data for stock assessments.

Another solution is to start our commercial mahi season on April 1 so the By-catch Allowance is not likely to be triggered until the spring run is over.

The council should NOT create ANY endorsements or shares for the dolphin fishery.

Dolphin stocking should be considered as a mitigation option for any offshore energy production. Hatcheries and research facilities could be built into some of the platforms.

Sincerely,

Chris McCaffity
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DIRECTED SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES, INC. (dsf)
A SALT WATER FISHERIES CONSULTING COMPANY

16 November 2015

Mr. Bob Mahood
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC)
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite # 201
North Charleston, South Carolina 29405

Re: Dolphin Wahoo (DW) Regulatory Amendment 1 (RA-1) Action to establish a Commercial Dolphin Trip Limit Step Down

Mr. Mahood,

Clients of Directed Sustainable Fisheries (DSF) have requested this written comment to be submitted with regard to the DW RA-1 action to establish a commercial dolphin trip limit step down in order to prevent another premature closure as occurred on 30 June 2015 for the first time ever. With the soon to be implemented increase of the commercial dolphin annual catch limit (ACL) from 1,157,001 pounds whole weight (ww) to 1,534,485 pounds ww, the trip limit should allow for the continued harvest of the dolphin ACL through the end of the fishing year.

As a result many commercial dolphin fishermen would like to support the following alternative for this action;

DSF Preferred Alternative 4. A commercial trip limit for dolphin will be established once 75% of the commercial ACL is met.

DSF Preferred Sub-Alternative 4d: 4,000 lbs ww [~3,333 lbs gutted weight; Note: 1.2 conversion rate provided by the NMFS SEFSC to SAFMC on November 16, 2015] trip limit

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Seafood Coalition (SFC) member
American Elasmobranch Society (AES) member 2004-2015
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Coastal Shark (CS) Florida (FL)
Advisory Panel
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Coastal Shark (CS) Florida (FL)
Advisory Panel (AP) commercial & for-hire recreational member [former Chair of CS AP]
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Highly Migratory Species (HMS) AP commercial
member 2013-2015
NMFS HMS SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) AP Pool member 2013-2015
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) SEDAR AP Pool member
SAFMC Marine Protected Area (MPA) Expert Work Group (EWG) participant 2012-2013
SAFMC Snapper-Grouper (SG) AP commercial member 2015-2017
Former SAFMC MPA AP FL commercial member
Former NMFS Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team FL participant (ALWTRT)
Former NMFS Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Team FL participant (BDTRT)
Participant, observer and/or contributor to US coastal shark stock assessments during 1992, 1996,
1998, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015
Participant, observer and/or contributor SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 11
(Large Coastal Sharks), 13 (Small Coastal Sharks), 16 (King Mackerel), 19 (Red Grouper/Black
Grouper), 21 (Large Coastal Sharks/Small Coastal Shark), 24 (Red Snapper), 25 (Black Sea
Bass/Golden Tilefish), 28 (Spanish Mackerel/Cobia), 29 (Gulf Blacktip Shark), 32 (Gray
Triggerfish/Blueline Tilefish), 34 (Atlantic Sharpnose Shark/Bonnethead Shark), 36 (Snowy
Grouper), 38 (King Mackerel), 39 (Smoothhound Sharks) and SEDAR 41 (Red Snapper/Gray
Triggerfish)