MID-ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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Mid-Atlantic Council Announces Funded Collaborative Research Projects

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council announces that four research projects have been selected to receive a total of approximately $610,000 in funding as part of the Council's 2016-2017 Collaborative Fisheries Research Program. The four projects each address research priorities identified by the Mid-Atlantic Council in a Request for Proposals distributed in December 2015.

"Accurate information is the foundation of effective fisheries management," said Council Chairman Rick Robins. "These research projects will help fill critical gaps in our understanding of Mid-Atlantic fisheries and ensure their continued sustainability."

Details on the selected projects are provided below.

1. Changes in Availability of Mid-Atlantic Fish Stocks To Fisheries-Independent Surveys

Principal Investigators: Janet Nye, Michael Frisk, and Skyler Sagarese.
This project will investigate how habitat modifies the availability of summer flounder, black sea bass, and spiny dogfish to the NEFSC trawl survey. The focus of this research is on the relationship between the NEFSC trawl survey index and actual abundance of these species.

2. Collaborative Development Of A Winter Habitat Model For Atlantic Mackerel, "Version 2.0", For The Identification Of "Cryptic" Habitats And Estimation Of Population Availability To Assessment Surveys And The Fishery

Principal Investigator: Gregory DiDomenico; Co-Principal Investigators: William Bright; Peter Moore, Josh Kohut, Mitchell Roffer, and John Manderson.
This project will synthesize existing information to develop and evaluate a quantitative model describing dynamic winter habitat distributions for Atlantic Mackerel. The goal of this study is to develop a model that can be used to accurately estimate the availability of the population to fishery independent surveys.

3. Estimating and Mitigating the Discard Mortality Rate of Black Sea Bass in Offshore Recreational Rod-And-Reel Fisheries

Principal Investigator: Olaf Jensen; Co-Principal Investigators: Eleanor Bochenek and Jeffrey Kneebone.
This objective of this project is to estimate the discard mortality rate of black sea bass captured by recreational anglers using rod-and-reel fishing gear in the deepwater offshore fishery during fall/winter in the Mid-Atlantic. In addition, this research will generate "best practice" capture and handling recommendations.

4. Determining Selectivity and Optimum Mesh Size to Harvest Three Commercially Important Mid-Atlantic Species

Principal Investigator: Emerson Hasbrouck; Co-Principal Investigator: Jonathan Knight.
This project will analyze the selectivity of multiple codend mesh sizes relative to summer flounder, black sea bass and scup retention in the commercial bottom trawl fishery in the Mid-Atlantic region.