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New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

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Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director

November 3, 2025

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

Requested Action

Authorize the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFG) to **Retroactively** pay the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) (VC#164395), Washington, DC 20005, the amount of \$28,913 for Fiscal Year 2026 annual assessment as per RSA 213:1 Article XI effective the date of Governor and Council approval **Retroactive** for the period July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Funding 100% Fish and Game Funds.

Funding is available in account, Marine Fisheries Management, as follows:

	<u>FY26</u>
03 75 75 753020-22880000-026-500251 Organizational Dues	\$28,913

Explanation

This request is **Retroactive** because the department could not submit this request until a fiscal year 2026 budget was passed, and appropriations were made available.

ASMFC is a compact of fifteen east coast states formed sixty years ago to assist in managing and conserving their shared coastal fishery resources. With the recognition that fish do not adhere to political boundaries, the states formed an Interstate Compact, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, which was approved by the U.S. Congress in 1942. The states have found that their mutual interest in sustaining healthy coastal fishery resources is best promoted by working cooperatively, in collaboration with the federal government. With this approach, the states uphold their collective fisheries management responsibilities in a cost-effective, timely, transparent, and responsive fashion.

The Commission's cooperative state management program results in billions of dollars of economic benefits through increased commercial and recreational fishing opportunities along the Atlantic coast.

Direct Benefits to New Hampshire from the FY25 appropriation of \$28,760:

- New Hampshire receives \$240,327 from the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA) to conduct surveys and collect data on state water fisheries.
- New Hampshire receives \$31,725 from the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IJF) to support state level science and management activities.
- New Hampshire receives travel reimbursement for the three NH Commissioners to attend the ASMFC's quarterly meetings. Travel reimbursement is provided for multiple NH F&G staff to attend meetings of ASMFC Technical Committees, Stock Assessment Committees, etc. Travel reimbursement is also provided for NH recreational and commercial fishery participants to participate in species Advisory Panel Meetings.
- Participation in ASMFC allows NH to cooperate on equal footing with states that have larger fisheries and longer coastlines.

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According to the Commission's Compact, each member state is assessed an annual appropriation in support of the Commission.

ARTICLE XI

The states party hereto agree to make annual appropriations to the support of the Commission in proportion to the primary market value of the products of their fisheries, exclusive of cod and haddock, as recorded in the most recent published reports of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States Department of the Interior, provided no state shall contribute less than two hundred dollars per annum and the annual contribution of each state above the minimum shall be figured to the nearest one hundred dollars.

While the appropriations have increased from 1942, the workload has also increased, and the following formula was adopted at the Executive Committee meeting on October 2, 1984, and by the full Commission at its regular Business Meeting, October 4, 1984. This formula for appropriations of member states is based on an appropriation of \$733,444 with a 50% minimum contribution of \$24,448, 25% based on the average percentage value of five-year commercial catch statistics (2019-2023) exclusive of cod and haddock, supplied by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and 25% recreational value based on the average percentage of total number of fishing trips per state (2019-2023).

The base funding of the Commission, appropriations from its member states, supports a portion of the general and administrative activities of the Commission; to include a small staff, an office and the expenses of having an office, and an annual audit of the Commission's financial activities.

The compact parties agreed to make annual appropriations to the support of the Commission in proportion to the primary market value of the products of their fisheries.

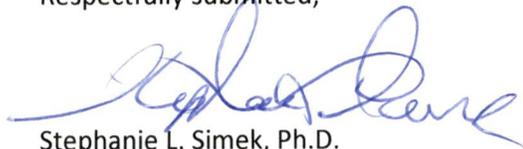
Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Council organization dues and membership approval submissions:

1. How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?
Since 1941, 84 years.
2. Is there any other organization which provides the same or similar benefits which your agency belongs to?
No
3. How many other state's belonging to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?
All 15 Atlantic coast states from Maine through Florida, inclusive of Pennsylvania, belong to this organization. Fish and Game is the only State of NH agency which is a member.
4. How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc)
The base funding comes from the member states' appropriations, which are determined by the value of commercial fishing landings and saltwater recreational trips within each state according to a formula adopted by the Commission in 1984. The formula states that 50% of the targeted state contribution level set by the Commission is equally allocated to the 15 member states; 25% is based on the five-year moving average value of commercial landings, exclusive of cod and haddock; and 25% is based on the five-year moving average of total number of recreational fishing trips per state.

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5. What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?
Cooperative interjurisdictional fisheries management and conservation of Atlantic coast fisheries such as striped bass, lobsters, herring, etc.
6. Are training or educational/ research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.
Yes, several trainings and educational materials are included each year and the cost of these is included.
7. Is the membership required to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.
No, although membership does provide the state with access to larger amounts of federal funding from the Atlantic Coastal Act grant.
8. Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel to include the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination if known and purposes of membership supported trips.
Travel is required and paid for by the Commission for at least 4 meetings per year for the 3 NH State Commissioners (Marine Division Chief, Governors appointee, and Legislative appointee) and technical committee staff from NH Fish and Game Marine Division. Meetings take place throughout the 15 Atlantic coast states and involve fisheries management meetings as well as technical/scientific meetings where scientific advice is developed regarding marine resources for the Commissioners to use in managing the fisheries.
9. Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and/or officers of the organization).
The Marine Division Chief is a voting member of the Commission's various species management Boards and Sections and is also a member of the Commission's Executive Committee. Five Marine Division biologists and one Supervisor are members of various species technical committees and plan development teams.
10. Explain in detail any negative impact to the State if the Agency did not belong to this organization.
If the state were not a member, it would not have an input in development of fishery management plans or other management actions that would affect commercial and recreational fisheries that NH residents participate in. In addition, if a state did not comply with measures in an ASMFC fishery management plan, the Secretary of Commerce can place a federal moratorium on harvest of that fish in the State.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephanie L. Simek, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Kathy Ann LaBonte, Chief
Business Division



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Joseph Cimino (NJ), Chair Dan McKiernan (MA), Vice-Chair Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

TO: Ms. Cheri Patterson, Chief
Marine Division
Fish and Game Department
225 Main Street
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

Date: April 3, 2025

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Annual Appropriation calculated under Formula* for FY26, (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026) from the State of New Hampshire:	\$ 28,913
Balance Due	\$ 28,913

APPROVED: _____ Date: _____
Cheri Patterson, Commissioner

ATTEST:  Date: April 3, 2025
Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

*This formula for appropriations of member states is based on an appropriation of \$733,444 with a 50% minimum contribution of \$24,448, 25% based on the average percentage value of five-year commercial catch statistics (2019-2023) exclusive of cod and haddock, supplied by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and 25% recreational value based on the average percentage of total number of fishing trips per state (2019-2023). This formula was adopted at the Executive Committee meeting on October 2, 1984 and by the full Commission at its regular Business Meeting, October 4, 1984 and is in effect for FY26 commencing July 1, 2025. The Commission's Federal I.D. number is 13-6006904.

THIS INVOICE IS DUE NO LATER THAN JUNE 30, 2026, AFTER WHICH TIME IT WILL BE CONSIDERED IN ARREARS

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Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

April 3, 2025

Ms. Cheri Patterson, Chief
Marine Division
Fish and Game Department
225 Main Street
Durham, New Hampshire 03824

Dear Ms. Patterson,

In accordance with Article XI of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Compact and the Rules and Regulations of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission), attached is a statement of the FY26 appropriation for the State of New Hampshire.

The formula for appropriations was adopted by the Executive Committee on October 2, 1984 and by the full Commission at its regular Business Meeting on October 4, 1984. New Hampshire's appropriation for FY26 is \$28,913, derived from a base contribution of \$24,448 and calculated average number of recreational trips (2019-2023) and value of commercial fisheries (2019-2023).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. E. Beal".

Robert E. Beal

Enclosures:
Invoice

L25-022