



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Presents Steven G. Bowman Prestigious Captain David H. Hart Award

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) presented Steven G. Bowman, former Commissioner for the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), with its highest annual honor, the Captain David H. Hart Award, at the Commission’s 2022 Summer Meeting. The Commission instituted the Hart Award in 1991 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding efforts to improve Atlantic coast marine fisheries. The Hart Award is named for one of the Commission’s longest serving members who dedicated himself to the advancement and protection of marine fishery resources, Captain David H. Hart, from the State of New Jersey.



From left: ASMFC Chair Spud Woodward, Hart Award Recipient Steven Bowman, ASMFC Awards Committee Chair Jim Gilmore and ASMFC Executive Director Bob Beal

Mr. Bowman began his marine fisheries career at VMRC in 1992 as Deputy Chief of the Law Enforcement Division, was promoted to Chief of Law Enforcement in 1996, and in 2006 he was appointed Commissioner of Marine Resources by then Governor Timothy Kaine. He served as Commissioner under two subsequent

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.

governors. Throughout his long history with the Commission, Mr. Bowman served as a member of the Law Enforcement Committee (early in his career) and as Virginia's Administrative Commissioner (latter in his career) on the Commission's Executive Committee and Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board, along with several species management boards.

As Virginia's Administrative Commissioner to the Commission, Mr. Bowman gained a reputation for his ability to successfully bring divergent viewpoints of stakeholders to a reasonable and agreeable compromise. When Virginia faced a non-compliance finding under the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act for exceeding the Atlantic menhaden Chesapeake Bay reduction fishery cap in 2019, Mr. Bowman was instrumental in transferring menhaden management authority from the Virginia General Assembly to the VMRC. At that time, Atlantic menhaden was the only marine species managed by the General Assembly. Mr. Bowman worked deftly with political parties, recreational anglers, conservationists, and the reduction industry to navigate a non-compliance finding. Once the management authority was transferred to VMRC, Mr. Bowman ensured that regulations were quickly prepared and approved to avoid a possible moratorium on menhaden fishing in Virginia waters.

This monumental accomplishment is a microcosm of Mr. Bowman's skillset. It demonstrated the trust Mr. Bowman had from all corners of the marine fisheries management world: industry, anglers, conservationists, state and federal politicians, and his fellow Commissioners. Mr. Bowman's efforts ultimately resulted in the protection of the Chesapeake Bay as a critical nursery area for many iconic species such as striped bass, bluefish, and summer flounder which will provide coastwide benefits for years to come.

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