



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 24, 2018

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ASMFC Presents Roy W. Miller Prestigious Captain David H. Hart Award

New York, NY – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented Roy W. Miller, Delaware’s Governor Appointee to the Commission and former Director of Delaware’s Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Captain David H. Hart Award, its highest annual award, at the Commission’s 77th Annual Meeting in New York City. Mr. Miller has admirably served the State of Delaware and the Commission since 1978 when he first started with the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife as a Program Manager.

Right from the start, Mr. Miller became a member of the Striped Bass Technical Committee, then known as the Striped Bass Science and Statistical Committee. The Committee had a lot on its plate given the precipitous decline of the striped bass population. As part of those discussions, Mr. Miller was instrumental in getting Delaware to join Maryland in a moratorium on the Delaware striped bass fishery. To this day, he considers the recovery of the striped bass population and the return of the Delaware Bay as a productive and important spawning area as two of his proudest Commission moments. Mr. Miller served on the committee through passage of the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act in 1984.



From left: ASMFC Executive Chair Bob Beal, Hart Award Recipient Roy Miller, and ASMFC Chair Jim Gilmore

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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.

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Beginning in 2003, as Section Administrator for the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Mr. Miller became the state's Administrative Commissioner Proxy. In that position, he served on and chaired numerous management boards, including Shad and River Herring, Weakfish, and, most memorably for Mr. Miller, the Horseshoe Crab Board. His chairmanship of the Horseshoe Crab Board was during the highly contentious development and implementation of the FMP, which sought to balance the needs of watermen, who wanted to continue to harvest crabs to use as bait, with the desires of environmentalists, who wanted to preserve the crabs so their eggs could feed migrating shorebirds. Mr. Miller skillfully guided the Board through some intense Board meetings, which included extensive and impassioned public comment on both sides of the issue. In addition to a management program that accommodated the needs of all the stakeholders and the resource, those meetings also resulted in revised comment protocols for public speaking at ASMFC meetings.

Immediately after his retirement in 2009, Mr. Miller was chosen by Governor Jack Markell (D-DE) to serve as his Appointee to the Commission. Notably, Mr. Miller didn't miss a meeting between his retirement and the Governor's appointment, continuing to serve to this day. As Governor Appointee, Mr. Miller continues to chair management boards and has been a regular visitor to Capitol Hill, keeping staffers apprised of important developments in Delaware and at the Commission. At one such meeting with former Congressman Carney's staff, Mr. Miller expressed his concern about funding shortfalls that resulted in the discontinuance of the Mid-Atlantic Horseshoe Crab Trawl Survey. That meeting and others that followed ultimately led to the restoration of the survey's funding in 2016. It is now supported by Senators and Representatives throughout the Mid-Atlantic, and the survey's third consecutive year was completed just this month.

Throughout his 40 years of service, Mr. Miller has distinguished himself by his dedication to the Commission's management process. He is always prepared for board meetings, asks insightful questions and is always a respectful debater. One of the most collegial Commissioners, Mr. Miller consistently reaches out to other Commissioners and seeks compromise instead of contention. These traits, combined with his long and meritorious record of accomplishments and dedication to sustainable fisheries management, make him a most worthy award recipient.

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.

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