

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

January 24, 2024

1:45 – 4:45 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*M. Ware*) 1:45 p.m.
2. Board Consent 1:45 p.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment 1:50 p.m.
4. Consider Draft Addendum II for Final Approval **Final Action** 2:00 p.m.
 - Review Options and Public Comment Summary (*E. Franke*)
 - Advisory Panel Report (*E. Franke*)
 - Law Enforcement Committee Report (*J. Mercer*)
 - Consider Final Approval of Addendum II
5. New Jersey Alternative Management Proposal **Final Action** 4:20 p.m.
 - Review of New Jersey Proposal (*J. Cimino*)
 - Plan Review Team Report (*E. Franke*)
 - Consider Approval of New Jersey's Conservation Equivalency Proposal
6. Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action** 4:40 p.m.
7. Other Business/Adjourn 4:45 p.m.

The meeting will be held at The Westin Crystal City (1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA; 703.486.1111) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details.

MEETING OVERVIEW

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

January 24, 2024

1:45 – 4:45 p.m.

Hybrid

Chair: Megan Ware (ME) Assumed Chairmanship: 01/24	Technical Committee Chair: Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI)	Law Enforcement Committee Rep: Sgt. Jeff Mercer (RI)
Vice Chair: Vacant	Advisory Panel Chair: Louis Bassano (NJ)	Previous Board Meeting: October 18, 2023
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NMFS, USFWS (16 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from October 2023

3. Public Comment – At the beginning of the meeting, public comment will be taken on items not on the agenda. Individuals that wish to speak at this time must sign-in at the beginning of the meeting. For agenda items that have already gone out for public hearing and/or have had a public comment period that has closed, the Board Chair may determine that additional public comment will not provide additional information. In this circumstance, the Chair will not allow additional public comment on an issue. For agenda items that the public has not had a chance to provide input, the Board Chair may allow limited opportunity for comment. The Board Chair has the discretion to limit the number of speakers and/or the length of each comment.

4. Draft Addendum II (2:00-4:20 p.m.) Final Action

Background

- Draft Addendum II proposes options for recreational and commercial measures to reduce fishing mortality to the target. The draft addendum also proposes options for minimum requirements for recreational filleting, and proposes options for how the Board could respond to future stock assessments during the rebuilding period. **(Briefing Materials)**
- Public comment was gathered in November and December through public hearings **(Briefing Materials)** and written comments **(Supplemental Materials)**.
- The Advisory Panel reviewed the draft addendum on January 11 **(Supplemental Materials)**.
- The Law Enforcement Committee reviewed the draft addendum on January 3 **(Supplemental Materials)**.

Presentations

- Overview of options and public comment summary by E. Franke.
- Advisory Panel report by E. Franke; Law Enforcement Committee report by J. Mercer.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Select management options and implementation dates.
- Approve final document.

5. New Jersey Alternative Management Proposal (4:20-4:40 p.m.) Final Action

Background

- New Jersey submitted a conservation equivalency proposal for the New Jersey Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) for Draft Addendum II (**Briefing Materials**).
- New Jersey submitted the proposal before final approval of Draft Addendum II in order to allow sufficient time for Board review, and to allow sufficient time for implementation before the SBBP spring start date.
- The Plan Review Team reviewed the proposal in December and early January (**Supplemental Materials**).

Presentations

- Review of New Jersey proposal by J. Cimino.
- Plan Review Team Report by E. Franke.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Consider approval of New Jersey's Conservation Equivalency Proposal

6. Advisory Panel Committee Membership (4:40-4:45 p.m.) Action

Background

- Capt. Julie Evans from NY and Toby Lapinski from CT have been nominated to the Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel (**Briefing Materials**).

Presentations

- Nominations by T. Berger.

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Approve Advisory Panel nominations.

7. Other Business/Adjourn (4:45 p.m.)

Atlantic Striped Bass

Activity level: High

Committee Overlap Score: Medium (TC/SAS/TSC overlaps with BERP, Atlantic menhaden, American eel, horseshoe crab, shad/river herring)

Committee Task List

- TC – June 15th: Annual compliance reports due
- TC-SAS – Conduct 2024 stock assessment update

TC Members: Michael Brown (ME), Kevin Sullivan (NH), Gary Nelson (MA), Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI), Kurt Gottschall (CT), Caitlin Craig (NY), Brendan Harrison (NJ), Tyler Grabowski (PA), Margaret Conroy (DE), Alexei Sharov (MD), Luke Lyon (DC), Ingrid Braun (PRFC), Joshua McGilly (VA), Charlton Godwin (NC), Jeremy McCargo (NC), Peter Schuhmann (UNCW), Tony Wood (NMFS), Steve Minkinen (USFWS), John Ellis (USFWS), Katie Drew (ASMFC)

SAS Members: Michael Celestino (NJ, Chair), Gary Nelson (MA), Alexei Sharov (MD), Brooke Lowman (VMRC), John Sweka (USFWS), Margaret Conroy (DE), Katie Drew (ASMFC)

Tagging Subcommittee (TSC) Members: Angela Giuliano (MD), Beth Versak (MD), Brendan Harrison (NJ), Chris Bonzek (VIMS), Gary Nelson (MA), Ian Park (DE), Jessica Best (NY), Josh Newhard (USFWS), Julien Martin (USGS), Katie Drew (ASMFC)

**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Beaufort Hotel
Beaufort, North Carolina
Hybrid Meeting**

October 18, 2023

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board.
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

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INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings from August 1, 2023** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Main Motion**
Move to remove from section 3.1.2 (Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options) of Draft Addendum II, Alternative Set B (B1 - B4), Alternative Set C (C1-C4), and E4 (Page 15). Motion by Michael Luisi; second by Pat Geer. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend
Motion to amend to add E3 for removal (Page 16). Motion by Doug Grout; second by Mike Armstrong. Motion passes (10 in favor, 6 opposed) (Page 17).

Main Motion as Amended
Move to remove from section 3.1.2 (Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options) of Draft Addendum II, Alternative Set B (B1 - B4), Alternative Set C (C1-C4), E4, and E3. Motion passes unanimously (Page 17).
4. **Motion to add the following options to section 3.1.1. Ocean Recreational Fishery:**
 - **Option D. 1 fish at 30" to 33" with 2022 seasons (all modes) (12.8% overall reduction, 45% harvest reduction and 2% increase in release mortality)**
 - **Option E. 1 fish at 30" to 33" with 2022 seasons for private vessel/shore anglers; 1 fish at 28"-33" with 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode**(Page 18). Motion made by Justin Davis; second by Joe Cimino. Motion passes (Roll Call: In Favor – NH, ME, DE, MD, PRFC, DC, VA, PA, US FWS, NJ, NY, CT, MA, RI, NOAA; Opposed – NC; Abstentions – None; Null – None) (Page 19).
5. **Main Motion**
Move to specify that any for-hire mode specific limit optioned in Section 3.1, Recreational Fishery Management, applies only to patrons during a for-hire trip; captain and crew during a for-hire trip are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits (Page 20). Motion by Mike Armstrong; second by John Clark. Motion amended.

Motion to Amend
Motion to amend to replace "specify" with "add an option" (Page 22). Motion by Doug Grout; second by Emerson Hasbrouck. Motion passes (13 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions) (Page 22).

Main Motion as Amended
Move to add an option that any for-hire mode specific limit optioned in Section 3.1, Recreational Fishery Management, applies only to patrons during a for-hire trip; captain and crew during a for-hire trip are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits (Page 22). Motion passes (Roll Call: In Favor – NH, DE, MD, PRFC, DC, VA, NC, PA, NJ, NY, CT, MA; Opposed – RI, ME; Abstentions – US FWS, NOAA; Null – None) (Page 23).
6. **Motion to remove section 3.2.2 Commercial Maximum Size Limit options and 3.2.3 Gill Net Exemption options from Draft Addendum II** (Page 23). Motion by Justin Davis; second by John Clark. Motion passes by unanimous consent (Page 24).

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7. **Motion to approve Draft Addendum II for public comment as modified today** (Page 27). Motion by Emerson Hasbrouck; second by Jason McNamee. Motion passes by unanimous consent (Page 27).
8. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 30).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Megan Ware, ME, proxy for P. Keliher (AA)	Jeff Kaelin, NJ (GA)
Steve Train, ME (GA)	Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Sen. Gopal (LA)
Rep. Allison Hepler, ME (LA)	Kris Kuhn, PA, proxy for T. Schaeffer (AA)
Cheri Patterson, NH (AA)	Loren Lustig, PA (GA)
Doug Grout, NH (GA)	John Clark, DE (AA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Sen. Watters (LA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Mike Armstrong, MA, proxy for D. McKiernan (AA)	Craig Pugh, DE, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)
Raymond Kane, MA (GA)	Michael Luisi, MD, proxy for L. Fegley (AA Acting)
Sarah Ferrara, MA, proxy for Rep. Peake (LA)	Robert T. Brown, MD, proxy for R. Dize (GA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)	David Sikorski, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Pat Geer, VA, proxy for J. Green (AA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Bryan Plumlee, VA (GA)
Justin Davis, CT (AA)	Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for K. Rawls (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)	Chad Thomas, NC, proxy for Rep. Wray (LA)
Craig Miner, proxy for Rep. Gresko (LA)	Ingrid Braun, PRFC
Marty Gary, NY (AA)	Dan Ryan, DC, proxy for R. Cloyd
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Max Appelman, NOAA
Joe Cimino, NJ (AA)	Rick Jacobson, US FWS

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Ex-Officio Members

Nicole Lengyel Costa, Technical Committee Chair	Mike Celestino, Stk. Assmnt. Subcommittee Chair
Jeffrey Mercer, Law Enforcement Representative	

Staff

Bob Beal	James Boyle	Jainita Patel
Toni Kerns	Caitlin Starks	Kristen Anstead
Tina Berger	Emily Franke	Jeff Kipp
Katie Drew	Tracey Bauer	Pat Campfield
Chelsea Tuohy	Madeline Musante	Kurt Blanchard

Guests

Cole Baldwin	Jessica Best, NYS DEC	Scot Calitri
Richard Balouskus, RI DEM	Alan Bianchi, NC DMF	Craig Cantelmo, Van Staal
Megan Barrow, NYS DEC	Carl Bois, Topspin Fishing	Benson Chiles
Rick Bellavance, RIPCA	Christopher Borgatti,	Haley Clinton, NC DEQ
John Bello, VA Saltwater	Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	Brian Cloutier
Sportfishing Assn.	Jason Boucher, NOAA	Phil Coates
Bill Benton	Simon Brown, MD DNR	Richard Cody, NOAA
Sue Bertoline	Jeffrey Brust, NJ DEP	Brian Collins

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Guests (continued)

Patrick Comerford	William Hoffman, MA DMF	Robert Moss
Margaret Conroy, DE DNREC	Jeffrey Horne, MD DNR	Brandon Muffley, MAFMC
Caitlin Craig, NYS DEC	Harry Hornick, MD DNR	Timothy Mughnerini
Greg Cudnik, Fishermans Headquarters	Jesse Hornstein, NYS DEC	Allison Murphy, NOAA
Scott Curatolo-Wagemann, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County	Derrek Hughes, NYS DEC	Robert Newberry, Delmarva Fisheries Association Inc
Brad Curtin	Taylor Ingraham, ASGA & Tightlined	Thomas Newman
Sarah Cvach, MD DNR	Richard Jacobson, FWS	Tyler O'Neill
Bob Danielson	Matthew Jacobus	Tammy O'Connell, MD DNR
Maureen Davidson, NYS DEC	Jacob Jaskiel	Conor O'Donnell, NH FGD
Dustin Delano, NEFSA	Robert Jeter	George O'Donnell, MD DNR
Mike Delzingo	James Jewkes	Zane Oliver
Patrick Denno	Paul Kameen	Danielle Palmer, NOAA
Jason Didden, MAFMC	Denise Kaminski, NYS DEC	Patrick Paquette, MA Striped Bass Assn
Greg DiDomenico	TJ Karbowski, Rock And Roll Charters	Robert Pellegrino, Plum Island Surfcasters
Will DiMento	Pat Keliher, ME (AA)	Chris Piatek
Evan Dintaman	Carrie Kennedy, MD DNR	Michael Pierdinock
Nick DiSarro	Gregg Kenney, NYS DEC	Michael Piper
Kurt Doherty, PISC	Geoffrey Klane	Michael Pirri
Chris Dollar	Thomas Kosinski, Sandy Hook Outfitters	Craig Poosikian
Eric Durell, MD DNR	Toby Lapinski	Michael Quinan, Thompson McMullan Law Firm
Wes Eakin, NYS DEC	Alyssa Lefebvre, NYS DEC	Jill Ramsey, VMRC
Daniel Ebling	Thomas Lilly	Kathy Rawls, NC (AA)
Julie Evans, Evans Communications	Brooke Lowman, VMRC	Fred Reynolds
Lynn Fegley, MD (AA)	Chip Lynch, NOAA	Harry Rickabaugh, MD DNR
James Ferguson	John Maniscalco, NYS DEC	Steven Robichaud
Seth Fiola	Todd Mathes, NC DEQ	Katherine Rodrigue, RI DEM
Robin Frede, NEFMC	Genine McClair, MD DNR	James Ronayne, CCA MD
Tony Friedrich, ASGA	Alex McCrickard, VDWR	Cody Rubner, ASGA
Tom Fuda	Joshua McGilly, VMRC	Mike Ruccio, NOAA
Mia Furtado	Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)	Patrick Rudman, Old Maine Outfitters
Jerry Gaff, SMRFO	Kevin McMenamin, Annapolis Anglers Club	Rob Savino, C.J. Victoria Charters
Ben Gahagan, MA DMF	Nichola Meserve, MA DMF	Kyle Schaefer, Soul Fly Outfitters
Paul Genovese, MD DNR	Steve Meyers	Erin Schnettler, NOAA
Charles Green, MD Charter Boat Association	Lauren Miller, WBOC News	Zachary Schuller, NYS DEC
Joseph Grist, VMRC	Steve Minkinen, US FWS	Christopher Scott, NYS DEC
Paul Haertel, Jersey Coast Anglers Assn.	Pete Mohlin	McLean Seward, NC DEQ
John Hardy	Jason Moore, Island Fly	Alexei Sharov, MD DNR
Brendan Harrison, NJ DEP	Chris Moore, Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Ethan Simpson, VMRC
Daniel Herrick, MD DNR	Patrick Moran, MA	Andrew Sinchuk
Jaclyn Higgins, TRCP	Environmental Police	
	Trevor Moss	

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Guests (continued)

Amanda Small, MD DNR	Jim Uphoff, MD DNR	Hunters & Anglers
Melissa Smith, MA DMF	Chris Uraneck, ME DMR	Chris Wright, NOAA
Julia Socrates, NYS DEC	Taylor Vavra, Stripers Forever	Phil Zalesak
Ron Soto	Beth Versak, MD DNR	Steven Zalesak, Numerical
Mike Spinney, Stripers Forever	Ralph Vigmostad, NY Coalition	Consultants Incorporated
Ross Squire, NYCRF	for Recreational Fishing	Daniel Zapf, NC DEQ
Kristen St Louis	Chad Vin	Jordan Zimmerman, DE DFW
Renee St. Amand, CT DEEP	Craig Weedon, MD DNR	Erik Zlokovitz, MD DNR
Joel Stoehr	Ben Whalley	Renee Zobel, NH FGD
Kathryn Strauch, Plum Island	Peter Whelan	Chris Moore, CBF
Surfcasters	Kyle White	Tom Roller
Kevin Sullivan, NH FGD	Ritchie White	Russel Dize, MD (GA)
John Sweka, US FWS	Shelby White, NC DMF	Heather Corbett, NJ DEP
Helen Takade-Heumacher,	Adam Wiles, Rosell	Delayne Brown, NH FGD
NOAA	Kate Wilke, The Nature	Jason Walker, NC Marine Patrol
Mike Tambone	Conservancy	Ronald Owens, PRFC
Mark Taylor	Alvin Williams	Monty Deihl, Ocean Harvesters
Kristen Thiebault, MA DMF	Brian Williams, Badfish Fishing	George Salson, NC DEQ
David Tolbert	Charters	Brendan Runde, TNC
Michael Toole, Plum Island	Patrick Williamson, RI DEM	Owen Mulvey-McFerron, NC
Surfcasters	Brandon Wingate, Salt Tale	DMF
Aaron Townsley, BHA	Charters	David Sneed, CCA NC
Troy Tuckey, VIMS	Michael Woods, Backcountry	

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Rachel Carson Ballroom via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Wednesday, October 18, 2023, and was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chair Martin Gary.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MARTIN GARY: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to ASMFC's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board meeting. My name is Marty Gary, I'm with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, and I am your Board Chair. Our Vice-Chair is Megan Ware from the state of Maine.

Our Technical Committee Chair is Nicole Lengyel Costa from Rhode Island. Our AP Chair is Lou Bassano from New Jersey, and our Law Enforcement representative joining us at the table is Jeff Mercer from Rhode Island. I am also joined at the front table to my right by Toni Kerns, and Dr. Katie Drew.

We have one new member of the Board I would like to acknowledge, Ingrid Braun, with the Potomac River Fisheries Commission. Welcome, Ingrid! We'll go to our first order of business, which is approval of the agenda from the summer meeting. Hopefully, everybody has had a chance to look at the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR GARY: Are there any additions, modifications, any changes to that agenda? Seeing none; the agenda is approved by consent, I'm sorry the agenda for today.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR GARY: The proceedings from the August, 2023 meeting, are there any change to those proceedings from the August, 2023 meeting of the Striped Bass Board? Seeing none; that is approved by consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR GARY: We'll now go to Public Comment for items that are not on the agenda. The way that I

would like to do this, we have a ten-minute allocation for the public comment. I would like to see a show of hands, both in the room that would like to make public comment on items that are not on the agenda, and also a show of hands online.

What we're going to do is we're going to calculate how many people want to make comment, and then we're going to divide up and allocate, so we have a fair allocation of time. Raise your hand in the room and online if you would like to make a public comment for items not on the agenda. I'm not seeing anybody in the room.

MS. TONI KERNS: I currently have three people, Michael Pirri, Phil and Tom Lilly. If there is anybody else that intended to do public comment, you have ten seconds to get your hand up. All right, just three.

CHAIR GARY: Okay, so we have three folks online who would like to offer public comment, so allocate three minutes per person, and our first one is Tom Lilly that we have, Toni? Okay, Mr. Lilly, if you can unmute yourself, you have three minutes. Thank you.

MR. THOMAS LILLY: Good afternoon, members of the Striped Bass Management Board. Thank you for the opportunity. I'm going to start with a request. I am going to ask you that the striped bass, that you refer the question of the failure of the young of year in Chesapeake Bay to, I guess it would be your Striped Bass and the Menhaden Technical Committees, to determine the cause of the five-year long now young of the year failure in Chesapeake Bay.

I guess you have looked at the reports for this year. Based on the decline in the last three years, it wouldn't surprise me to see us approaching zero next year. In other words, it wouldn't surprise me to see the possible coming of the extinction of striped bass in Chesapeake Bay. You people from New York and New Jersey, at least we go by the reports that since menhaden factory and purse seine fishing was put out into the ocean there, out in the U.S. Atlantic Zone, there has been an amazing change in your charter and recreational fishing, just unbelievable.

I think the people up there are all saying it's due to the fact you have so many menhaden juveniles and adults there for the large and small striped bass to feed on. When you consider this request, consider that the Chesapeake striped bass fishing alone affects about 400,000 to 500,000 anglers, about 800 charter boat captains, and hundreds of those are going out of business.

It affects about 500 fishermen, about 300,000 fishing power boat owners, and one forgotten group, about two million wildlife watchers in the two states, 400 marinas, and about 30,000 jobs. From the statistics we have in Virginia, there were about 600,000 fewer striped bass trips taken a year the last time that was accounted, and about 150 million dollars a year less spent just by striped bass fishermen in local Virginia small businesses.

This is my request that you refer this incredibly serious matter to however it should be referred to whatever committee it should be referred to. But I ask this, that you've been studying the relationship of these two species for at least 19 years now. There have been thousands of reports and studies made. Let's do this. Please recommend this based on the available science, and please move ahead with getting a decision made on the cause of this catastrophic failure in striped bass. Thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Mr. Lilly for your comment. Next, we'll go to Phil Zalesak. Go ahead, Phil, you have three minutes.

MR. PHIL ZALESAK: Chairman Gary, consider the following. Over 60 percent of the coastal stock of striped bass begin a spawn in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The mortality rate of striped bass is directly tied to the mortality rate of Atlantic menhaden. The higher the mortality rate of Atlantic menhaden, the higher the mortality rate of striped bass will be. The Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery allocation in Virginia is for at least 67 percent of the total allowable catch for the entire Atlantic coast. That is over 158,000 metric tons, over three-quarters of a billion fish being removed from Virginia waters this year. Intense reduction fishing is currently during the same time when there is little

migration of Atlantic menhaden in Virginia waters. That is called localized depletion.

Currently the reduction fishery has had the great difficulty finding menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay and at its entrance. The latest NOAA data indicates that the recreational harvest of striped bass in Maryland waters has declined 72 percent since 2016, and the Maryland Chesapeake juvenile index for the striped bass is at an all-time low.

The decline of striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay is due to the lack of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay. It is not due to overharvesting by recreational fishermen. Further evidence of localized depletion of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay was provided by Dr. Brian Watts of the College of William and Mary during his sworn testimony before the Virginia Marine Resources Commission on August 22nd.

He stated the following; If you look at the relationship between reproductive rates of osprey over the last 40 years, and Atlantic menhaden relative abundance index, they are directly related. To sustain the osprey population in the main stem of the lower Chesapeake Bay, the reproductive rate of osprey needs to be 1.15.

The current rate is 0.1. That is a 91 percent decline in reproductive rate, and thousands of osprey chicks have died in their nest this summer in the lower Chesapeake Bay. In 2016, the Maryland GDP associated with the striped bass industry was 800 million dollars and supported over 10,000 jobs. That is no longer true, after a 72 percent decline in recreational harvest.

By comparison, the reduction harvest industry in Virginia is supported by less than a thousand jobs, with profits going to Canada. In 2020, Atlantic Menhaden Management Board reaffirmed the commitment to manage the fishery in a way that accounts for species role as forage fish. That Board has failed in that commitment.

Further, I sent to the Ecological Reference Point Working Group meetings two weeks ago, and heard

no discussion of striped bass mortality rate and its relationship to Atlantic menhaden, none. In the interest of conservation and sound fishery management, it's time to limit the Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery to federal waters. I request to advise that the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board take action as soon as possible to end this ecological disaster. I thank you for your time.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Mr. Zalesak, appreciate that. Our next commenter is Michael Pirri. Michael, you have three minutes, unmute your microphone.

MR. MICHAEL PIRRI: Hi, I'm not nearly as prepared as the two former speakers. I absolutely do agree with them. In my area of Connecticut, I am seeing very few bunkers to support striped bass and their needs. We're right now in the middle of fall run. I operate a 36-foot charterboat. I am not a guide service, I am a charterboat. I carry six passengers who like to harvest and eat striped bass. My passengers, I do consider to be under represented. They are not aware of the means to voice their opinions on striped bass. Currently today, we have beautiful conditions, slight winds, no rain, finally, and my boat is sitting to the dock, because I do not have trips. There are seven other charter boats in my harbor. They do not have trips, and one-party boat as well.

We have an abundance of striped bass, just right two miles outside our harbor we have sea bass fishing. We have tautog fishing, we have everything right now, right in the middle of the fall run, and we cannot get our boats off the dock. This emergency action has really strong implications on our business, I say most will say 40 to 60 percent.

It's impacting us greatly, us as operators and owners, our mates in marinas, their mechanics, their fuel docks, local businesses, motels and delis. We all are aware that MRIP has now confessed to a 40 percent overestimate of angler effort, which might have really forced the hands of the emergency action.

Today, I see all the documentation. I'm aware of the former meetings. I am asking everybody to keep us

in mind when it comes for a sector allowance for striped bass, 28 to 33 will get us closer to being on track to where we can be, and hopefully support our trips, bring our customers back, and support us getting off the dock. That is one microcosm of Connecticut, but this is happening.

CHAIR GARY: Michael.

MR. PIRRI: Yes.

CHAIR GARY: Some of the comments you are referring to are part of the agenda, and you will have an opportunity if there is a motion. You are talking about some options that may be on the table for discussion today. This is a comment period for just those items that are not on the agenda. You have just about 30 seconds, if you could wrap up your comments, thank you.

MR. PIRRI: I just ask everybody consider this going forward today, and I will re-comment. Thank you very much.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Michael. We had one other person raise their hand, it was T.J. Krabowski, and TJ, there was one minute left. You came in a little bit late. But if you could keep your comment to one to two minutes that would be great. You can unmute, thank you.

MR. T.J. KRABOWSKI: I'm going to save my comments similar to Mike's, but right now specifically, I just want to speak about bunker menhaden. This year I'm wrapping up my 20th season doing this professionally. I've been fishing my entire life, but for a living this is my 20th season doing this.

I can tell you unequivocally that the amount of large striped bass, and when I mean large, I'm talking like 25, 30 pounds and up, is 100 percent related to the amount of bunker that are in the area. In other words, you are not going to find a lot of 40-pound fish hanging around, unless there is bunker for them to eat. It's no small coincidence that you guys or the Menhaden Committee or whatever, raised the quota this year, and I have not seen a pot of bunker in

months now, months. The school size stripers, we'll call them whatever, 35 inches and smaller, they don't mind eating all the small bait that is around, because there are plenty of bay anchovies and silversides, and peanut bunker and all that stuff. They don't mind eating that.

But whatever happened this year, and I'm not saying it's 100 percent Omega Protein, but it's an awfully big coincidence that you guys raised their quota that now we don't have any bunker around, months. I just want to put that on the record. Thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, T. J., I appreciate your comment. Before we go to the next item in the agenda, which is Consider Approval of Draft Addendum II for Public Comment. Given the speakers that have weighed in, I just feel compelled to say, so many of you listening in from the public, and certainly the Board members have seen juvenile abundance indices for Maryland and Virginia that were released late last week.

Both states 2023 index values were below the long time series average, Maryland's even lower than Virginia's. The fishery management plan's management trigger for the juvenile index had previously been tripped, and the low recruitment regime is in use and will be used in the 2024 update to the assessment coming next summer.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DRAFT ADDENDUM II FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

For today's purposes the Board is considering measures to reduce after the target for 2024. In the upcoming presentations you'll hear a little bit more from Toni and Katie. They will talk and clarify how we're using the juvenile abundance indices. There are opportunities for Board members to obviously ask questions.

But we are trying to utilize the juvenile abundance indices to the best of our ability for those indices that we have.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

CHAIR GARY: We'll go to our next item, which is going to be presented by our Technical Committee representative, Nicole, who is participating via the webinar, and she will give a presentation on the Technical Committee report. Nicole and Katie will take questions after the presentation. I'll turn it over to you, Nicole.

MS. NICOLE LENGYEL COSTA: Today I'll be presenting on the spawning potential ratio adjustment for commercial maximum size options. I would first like to start by recognizing the Technical Committee for their work in completing this task, Dr. Gary Nelson for developing the template used by the TC, and Toni, Katie and Emilie for all of their support with this task.

I'll start today by providing a little background on the Technical Committee task, provide an overview of the methods for the SPR analysis decided on by the Technical Committee at their August, 2023 meeting, review the results of the analysis, and then wrap up with some comments provided by the TC.

By way of background, the Board passed a motion at its August, '23 meeting, tasking the PDT with conducting a spawning potential analysis to determine quota reductions using 2022 as the starting point associated with each option in Options sets D for ocean commercial maximum size limit, and E, Chesapeake Bay commercial maximum size limit in Draft Addendum II. Given the technical nature of the analysis, and the need for state-specific analyses, the TC took on the charge of completing the analysis, and discussed the analysis in detail, and the methodology at their August, 2023 meeting. The analysis was run using the same methodology as the Fishmethods package in R, but with the additional optimization for the F increment to increase precision.

Additionally, the template was a bit easier to use for the TC, and eliminated the need for TC members to use R in our studio directly. Several of the inputs for the analysis were taken directly from the most recent stock assessment, including spawning stock biomass weight at age, catch weight at age, the F

target value of 0.167, having an age 15 plus group, a proportion mature at age, and age-specific mortality.

The analysis also required selectivity curves for each base option, as well as each max size limit option. These curves were developed from state-specific age/length keys, where states pooled 2021 and 2022 data. If there were less than 10 lengths per age, states were allowed to borrow data from another year or a neighboring state, to ensure a large enough sample size in order to estimate what proportion of each age class is weekly harvestable under each option.

The results show that maximum size limits decrease the quotas for most states with active commercial fisheries. Both New York and New Jersey had quotas that increase from 5 to 49 percent, and this is due to the current quotas being based on a maximum size limit that is lower than the proposed options in the Draft Addendum. All other states had quotas that decreased from 5 to 26.9 percent.

The TC had several comments they wanted to raise for the Board, including that without a quota adjustment implementation of a maximum size will increase removals in numbers of fish. This is due to the fact that the average size fish is likely to decrease with the implementation of the maximum size. Additionally, the SPR quota adjustments attempt to maintain the same spawning potential under the new maximum size limits.

The management options remain conservationally equivalent to the status quo. However, there are multiple sources of uncertainty with this analysis, including characterizing the change in selectivity that may be due to factors such as availability of fish and gear effects, commercial fishery behavior from the market and gear used or gear restrictions, and increased discards of oversized fish.

The Technical Committee understands the Board's intent with this option is to protect larger fish, but the TCs earlier analysis on minimum size limits versus slot limits, showed no benefit of protecting older fish, in terms of the rebuilding timeline to the 2029 SSB. The overall effect of maximum size limit options

is increased uncertainty around the rebuilding probabilities, without positively impacting stock productivity or stock rebuilding.

With that, Katie and I are happy to take any questions, and I would also just point out that the PDT memo, which we will be discussing later, does have some of the probabilities of rebuilding in there, and Katie will go over that in just a little bit.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Nicole, for your report, and thanks to the Technical Committee for all its hard work. We'll go to questions for Nicole and Katie. Thank you, John, it couldn't be that easy, right? John Clark.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Thank you for the presentation, Nicole. The whole SPR thing says the basic idea is we're taking a quota that was developed in pounds and turning it into numbers of fish, correct? Then converting back to pounds to reduce the quota. I just want to make sure I'm understanding the last point there was that the TC is not recommending that we use this method, it's really not going to gain us anything, correct?

MS. COSTA: Yes, so the TC is basically saying that the uncertainty it adds to the rebuilding probabilities may not be worth actually implementing the maximum size limit. When you're doing the SPR analysis you are saying, given my current size limit and the new size limit, what quota adjustment do I have to make in order to maintain the same spawning potential.

That is why we're saying they are essentially conservationally equivalent. You are just maintaining the same spawning potential; you are not getting any credit for any quota reductions that might occur. There is just a lot of added uncertainty by implementing the max size limit, especially when you consider the potential increase in dead discards, which we point out in the memo in a little bit more detail. Those are not accounted for in this analysis.

CHAIR GARY: Go ahead, John, a follow.

MR. CLARK: Yes, I would just like to say, I would glad to see that maximum size limit go from the commercial options.

CHAIR GARY: Any other questions on the TC report?

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II FOR BOARD REVIEW

CHAIR GARY: Next up, Toni will give an overview of changes to the Draft Addendum II, a document including a review of proposed management options. Toni will include PDT and LEC comments as part of the presentation. At the end of her presentation, Katie will go over the projections in the PDT memo, and Katie and Toni will then take questions on the Draft and the projections. I'll turn it to you, Toni.

MS. KERNS: Just quickly, just to throw us for a small loop. I just wanted to put up on the screen the Wave 1 through 4 harvest estimates for 2021, 2022, and 2023, so folks can see where we are so far in some estimates. I realize these are still preliminary. If you look at the very last line, this is a percent change from 2022. For the coastwide removals, which is your very far column on the right, we are about 25 percent down from 2022.

Our estimates, when we were thinking about the emergency actions, and thinking about how much we potentially could be reduced from there, the low end was about a 13.3 percent, the high end was a 31 percent. This is within that range. We recognize that this is just Wave 1 through 4, things can change in the future. It is within the range of what the TC had projected. Mr. Armstrong looks like he has a question, is that all right, Marty?

CHAIR GARY: Go ahead, Mike.

DR. MICHAEL ARMSTRONG: Just a question. The first two waves most of the states had no new rules in, so the reduction that we're seeing in Wave 4 was probably greater than that number. Is that right?

DR. KATIE DREW: The reduction calculations did account for the fact that the regulations did not go

into place until Wave 3 or Wave 4, so this is the correct comparison.

DR. ARMSTRONG: Okay, good, thanks for the clarification.

CHAIR GARY: We'll go back to Toni.

MS. KERNS: We will move into the presentation of the Draft Addendum. I'm going to start today's presentation with a brief background on the changes that we made to the background section, go through the timeline, and then present the new options. The first thing, here we are in October looking at this Draft Document to approve it for potential public comment in November and December of this year.

Then the Board would consider the document for final action in January of 2024. In August, the Board removed consideration of recreational harvest season closures. We added Options for commercial quota reductions, recreational for-hire measures, and minimum requirements for states allowing filleting in the recreational fishery.

The Board also provided direction on a range of other commercial and recreational management options that were requested. Due to the additional time needed for the development of the Draft Addendum, we anticipate that final action will occur in 2024, and the implementation schedule may span both 2024 and 2025, so take that into account. When we talk about the reductions in the document, those are assuming that all of the measures get implemented in 2024.

I'll note that in the overview section we did add information on the MRIP Fishing Effort Survey, to give context back to the public. I will not repeat what MRIP went over the other day, but I just will note that even if we were to assume that the striped bass recreational catch was overestimated by 30 to 40 percent over the timeframe since MRIP has started, it would only change the scale of the biomass, but not the overall downward trend in the population that we've seen since 2010.

While we may not have been harvesting as many fish in 2022, the scale would still be there, and whatever the number was, we would have likely doubled the harvest still. Addressing that extremely large jump in harvest would still have been necessary. Just as a reminder, the Board initiated the Draft Addendum to address stock rebuilding beyond 2023.

The measures in the document are designed to achieve F target from the 2022 assessment, and it also includes the ability for the Board to respond via Board action to the stock assessment update in 2024. The striped bass stock is subject to a rebuilding plan that requires the stock to be rebuilt to its spawning stock biomass by 2029. The most recent projections indicate that a low probability of meeting that deadline is the fishing mortality rate associated with the level of catch in 2022 continued. There was concern that the recreational and commercial management measures of Amendment 7, in combination with the availability of that strong 2015-year class to the fisheries would lead to similarly high levels of catch in 2024. This Addendum considers measures to reduce the removals to the 2022 level, to achieve the target fishing mortality rate in '24, and support stock rebuilding.

We'll move into the management options. Just as a reminder, there are projections that you would use to develop these management options. You use the same forward projecting methodology as is done in the assessment, to estimate the removals needed to achieve the F target in '24, with a 50 percent probability. The projections were made using 2022 removals data, and estimated a '23 removals accounting for the emergency action.

A new selectivity curve was developed for the '23 emergency action, to account for the lower selectivity of ages 7 through 9 in 2023, due to that narrower slot limit. Because the calculation of F target accounts for selectivity, the F target value was recalculated to incorporate this new 2023 selectivity, and the projection results indicate that we need a 14.5 percent reduction from 2022 removals to achieve the F target in 2024, for the carryover from last time.

But if there are only recreational measures done in this document, then that reduction would need to be 16.1. For the recreational options that are in the document, the Board will choose one option for each region, the ocean and the Bay. Options for the recreational fishery are designed to reduce harvest to achieve the target F.

While these options are not designed to protect a specific year class, they may offer some protection for one or more stronger classes. All the ocean options propose a change, except for status quo, obviously, propose a change to the slot limits maximum size, a revision to the 28 minimum size for the lower bound was not considered, given this longstanding nature of this measure, and in consideration of some of the environmental justice issues that have been brought up previously to the Board.

The range of options considered for wider slot limit for the for-hire mode to address concerns heard from for-hire operators about potential for increased discards with narrower slots and a general desire for anglers on for-hire trips to harvest a fish. The impacts of the wider slot on the reduction to be achieved is very limited, due to the small contribution of the for-hire fishery in the ocean sector, or in the ocean fleet.

A wider slot would provide less protection to the 2015-year class, which will be Age 9 in 2024. I will note that in the PDT memo the Law Enforcement Committee commented on, the simpler the regulations are the more consistent the regulations are, the easier they are to enforce. Having a separate for-hire measure makes it more complex, and makes enforcement a little bit more difficult for them.

Here are the three ocean options; status quo, the all mode 28 to 31, and the separate measures for the for-hire fleet, which is at a 28 to 33 inch, and the associated reductions with those. Let's sit on that for a sec. For the Bay recreational options. All the Bay options except for status quo, propose a maximum size limit. Some options also change the minimum size limit or a bag in addition, to have some more uniformity within the Bay. Maximum size limits

range anywhere from 23 inches to 26. Higher maximum sizes were not considered, to provide some protection to the above average 2018-year class, which is coming into the Bay in 2024. The range of options considered are just a higher bag limit to the for-hire fleet instead of a wider slot, as you saw in the ocean fleet. In the Bay for higher removals are about a fifth of the Bay's total removals, so the impact of the higher bag limit on the reduction is somewhat larger than what we saw in the ocean fishery.

Option B of the B set options apply a standard maximum size. The C set options apply as a standard 20 inch minimum, and then all of the maximum sizes. The D set options apply a 19-inch minimum size, and a 1-fish bag limit to all of the maximum size limits. Then the Option E is what allows for the separate for-hire 2-fish bag for the for-hire fleet, and a 1-fish bag for the private and shore anglers, and it is a 19-inch minimum size.

I'll note that the reductions range anywhere from about 5 percent up to about a 24 percent reduction. The PDT is recommending for equity between the ocean and the Bay measures to remove any options that are less than of a 10 percent reduction or greater than a 20 percent reduction. I just noted in red on each of these tables, which of those options they are.

I recognize these tables might be tricky to read. You can follow along in the document. These tables start on Page 15, if you are looking at the document right now. Again, these are the consistent maximum size ranging from 23 to 25 inches. Next are the standard 20-inch minimum size with the range of maximum size limits.

Here we have the 19-inch with the maximum size limits and the 1-fish bag, and next we have the separate for-hire bag with the minimum of 19 inches. In addition, we added the recreational filleting, not necessarily at sea, filleting at sea or at shore. There are states out there that allow for filleting to occur.

We have an option here in the document that states that do authorize this, to make sure that your

measures have certain standards and minimums in order to best enforce this action. There would be minimum requirements that states that have this, that racks must be retained, skin would be intact, and possession limit of no more than two fillets per legal fish.

Then the states should consider including language about when and where racks may be disposed of, specifically for each mode of fishing. We did not make specific recommendations here, because some states their townships have specific laws to how these can be disposed of. But we just want to make sure that there is language that tells the fishermen when it should be or where it should be disposed, that the racks must be kept with the fillets once they are hacked off.

This provides for much better enforcement. Moving on to the commercial measures. The proposed options in the document for both the ocean and the Bay for the commercial fishery, use both commercial quotas and commercial size limit. They use the 2022 measures as the starting point. All commercial quotas are in pounds, and all size limits are in total length.

There are two types of options, quota reduction and maximum size. They are designed to achieve different goals towards rebuilding. A quota reduction reduces harvest towards achieving the Target F, but does not aim to protect any specific year class. Commercial quota management provide for increased certainty with regard to achieving a harvest reduction, in contrast to the recreational fishing options. However, a reduction quota does not always translate to the same reduction in harvest. We'll get into that more in a minute. A maximum size limit protects larger and older fish, but aims to maintain the same overall spawning potential through the quota adjustments.

Accordingly, changes to the commercial quota results from a maximum size limit are not credited towards the goal of achieving the F, as Nicole went over in her presentation. Additionally, there are areas of uncertainty associated with the spawning

potential equivalency of this approach as Nicole went over earlier in the TC's report.

All options in the commercial quota reductions, except for status quo, propose implementing a reduction for striped bass commercial fisheries in both the ocean and the Bay. The quota reduction would contribute to the goal of reducing removals to achieve the target. Option A is status quo, maintain the current measures that we have, and Option B is the quota reduction.

That quota reduction can be reduced up to 14.5 percent from the 2022 quotas with their 2022 size limits intact. We note that reducing commercial quotas by a certain percentage is unlikely to achieve that percentage, due to annual quota underages that tend to occur for reasons such as state regulations, market conditions, distribution shifts, and other factors that can affect fishing.

In the past this difference between the commercial quota and the harvest was much more pronounced, but in the table, you will see in 2022 the majority of the states with commercial fisheries fully utilized their quota. Therefore, the PDT anticipates that quota reductions will have the potential to impact those dates a lot more than previous years when the quota was underutilized.

We actually may have realized real quota reduction in states with active fisheries. We will always continue to have underages if there are states that choose not to have an active commercial fishery, but they are allocated commercial quota. Then reducing quotas from the realized harvest levels is not considered, as it would amount to a quota reallocation, which is outside the scope of this document.

This table is on Page 19. I recognize this is quite small, but you can see those fisheries that achieved their 2022 quotas, and the middle column is what the maximum quota reduction would be under F-14, 5 percent. Moving on to the commercial maximum size limits. All options besides status quo propose implementing a maximum size limit for both the ocean and the Bay. The intention of this option is not

to contribute to the goal of reducing removals to the F target, but preserving a larger fish that would contribute to the spawning stock biomass.

As part of implementing a change in the size limit, the commercial quotas were adjusted to account for maintaining the same spawning stock spawning potential as under its current size limits and quotas. Most state quotas would decrease, to account for a lost spawning potential. However, some would increase. The percent change by state varies given the range of commercial size limits and fisheries selectivity by state. These changes in quota will not be credited towards the Addendum's objective of achieving the F. The proposed quotas were developed using the spawning potential ratio, as Nicole went over. I'll just restate the TCs concern with the maximum size limit option that the maximum size limit would likely increase dead discards of larger fish, produce levels of harvest that are not equivalent to the current quotas and size limits, and is likely not to increase the probability of rebuilding in 2029

The maximum size limit option has a potential for increases in quota that would exist in states that have current maximum size limits that are lower than the proposed max size limits. It should be noted that the SPR calculations for those state allow the quota be increased to account for the harvest of larger fish, which would result in fewer total fish harvested, relative to the lower maximum size limit.

However, the fishery may not actually achieve the harvest of larger fish due to market demands, availability of larger fish, gear restrictions or other limitations. The bottom line here is that it has the potential to result in higher overall removals under a higher quota. We have the options for the commercial maximum size limit.

Option A, status quo, none. Option B has a range of different size limits, 38, 40, and 42 for the ocean, and Option C are the Bay. C-1 is 36 inches from June 1 to December 31, and 28 inches from January 1 to May 31. Then Option C-2 is 36 inches for all the Bay fisheries. This first table, which is on Page 21 of the

document shows the quota changes for each of those maximum size limits of the ocean fishery.

This second table is the changes for the Bay. I will note that I didn't realize these options are labeled incorrectly. E-1 is really C-2, and E-2 is really C-1. If this option stays in the document, we will fix that. It got out before we noticed. Next, almost done, we have the gillnet exemption. For states that allow commercial striped bass harvest from gillnet, there was a request to have an exemption from the maximum size limit, and instead put in place a maximum mesh size for the gillnet fisheries, because of the increased discarding that we potentially may see.

I think it's 45 percent dead discards in the gillnet fisheries, and so we wanted to try to make sure to not have those percent dead discards, and provide options for this exemption. The first exemption is just a coastwide measure that would allow for gillnet exemption, and a single maximum mesh size would be established.

We would have to figure out what that coastwide mesh size would need to be. We did not have enough time to do that prior to this document being released. If we did this, the states that utilize the gillnet exemption would need to be able to discern between the fish caught in an exempted fishery, versus the regular fishery.

They would do that through implementation plans. That could be having specific tags for these fisheries and other types of measures. The PDT is actually recommending that the Board would move this option from the document, and it is because they are concerned that a coastwide maximum mesh size may not fit every state's needs. Fish availability and net selectivity within a state has the potential to be different in their quick look, we saw that. The PDT is actually recommending that the gillnet exemption be done through the conservation equivalency process, so that each state can make sure that the maximum mesh size fits the need or fits the requirements of their state gillnet fishery. It is not to suggest that we wouldn't allow the exemption, it's

just so that we can make sure that the mesh size fits that state's fishery properly.

The Option 3 is the gillnet exemption through CE. The state would submit a proposal requesting the exemption. It would utilize the TC to help them if needed, to figure out what that maximum mesh size would be, and within that proposal they would also state how they would discern between the fish caught in the exempted fishery versus fish caught in a regular maximum size limit fishery.

The last option in the document is the assessment response. This is to allow the Board to take action if the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029, with a probability of greater than or equal to 50 percent. Option A is that the Board would just utilize the addendum or amendment process to make changes to the management program.

As a reminder, addendums and amendments have a public comment process that the timing that measures would be implemented would likely be close to two years following the assessment, by the time the document was developed and went out for public comment, and then the states implemented the measures within the document.

Option B is the Board can respond via Board action following the assessment. This is a much faster process. It allows public comment during the Board meeting, as well as public comment in writing prior to the meeting. It is much more expedited. We anticipate that if the Board did action at a meeting, then it would be able to implement measures within six months, and likely for that 2025 season following the '24 assessment.

Just as a reminder, what we're trying to do today is release this document for public comment. Emilie is listening to us today. I think she would be very disappointed in me if I didn't put my best effort forward here. She will be back next week. Next, Katie will go over the projections that were in the PDT memo. I just want to thank again all of the PDT members that the state has graciously given me to work on this document, without them I would be lost.

STRIPED BASS PROJECTIONS FOR ADDENDUM II

DR. DREW: I'm going to discuss the striped bass projections that we did for Addendum II. I think before we get into them, I just want to stress, right up front, these are not formal rebuilding projections. There is still a lot of uncertainty, in terms of what effort or removals or regulations, or F rates will actually be from 2024 to 2029, including things like the effect of the new measures on selectivity. These projections also do not include uncertainty around sort of the estimates of those expected reductions for each option.

We're really only presenting these to help the Board compare across options that are currently under consideration. When we do the assessment update next year, we will have more formal rebuilding projections, and that assessment update will help us get a better handle on things like what is the effect of the emergency action are this year, as well as what kind of the selectivity we expect going forward. Again, this is just to help compare across these options under consideration, and are not true rebuilding projections. What I'm going to go over today are the projection methods, and then show you a quick overview of the results for the set of projections that looked at the probability of being at or below the F target in 2024 under different combinations of options, and then the probability of being at or above the SSB target in 2029 under those same combinations of different options.

As a reminder, the terminal year of the assessment is 2021. For the projections, the data that we need are the removals are the F rates that we are projecting over. We need information on recruitment, and we need information on population parameters like selectivity, weight at age, natural mortality, et cetera.

Those parameters were taken from the 2021 assessment, with the exception of selectivity, which was modified to reflect the emergency action selectivity, that was again predicted outside of the assessment model, so another source of uncertainty. For the projections, so we know what the 2022 removals were.

We have an estimate of the 2023 removals, based on the calculations that we did under the emergency action regulation. Then for 2024, we have estimated the removals based on different combinations of options, based on that estimated percent reduction. If you recall, we have the option of either a 0 percent reduction quota up to a 14.5 percent reduction in quota.

That could be combined with a set of options for the Bay, each of one of which has a different percent reduction, which could be combined with two different options for the ocean, which have different percent reduction. Combining all of those different regulations will get you a different set of reductions to go into these projections.

Then for the SSB projections, which go out beyond 2024, we use the predicted 2024 F for 2025 to 2029. What was our F in 2024 based on the first set of projections, and use that going forward. For recruitment, we used the observed values from the Maryland JAI in 2021 and 2022, to predict Age 1 recruitment in 2022 and 2023, so it flagged forward one year.

This graph is showing the Maryland JAI on the X axis, and the Age 1 recruitment from the model on the Y axis. You can see there is a very strong correlation between the Maryland Index and the model's predicted recruitment. We use that relationship to be able to predict the recruitment for 2022 and 2023, based on those observed values.

Those low values of recruitment are in the projections, as far as we have that data for. In addition, for 2024 to 2029, we are drawing from that low recruitment regime. If you recall, we did trigger the recruitment trigger last year, I think, at least for the most recent assessment update, with the Maryland JAI. The FMP requires that when we trigger one of these recruitments we would go from, instead of drawing recruitment from that average, the solid dark bar, which is the average of basically the recovered stock full time series.

We then draw instead from only the most recent low recruitment years. Those lower recruitment values

are being used to project recruitment for 2024 to 2029, and the F target that we are trying to achieve in 2024 is also calculated using that low recruitment regime assumption. With that lower recruitment assumption, it means you need a lower F target in order to get to our SSB target, because the stock is less productive. We are folding in our observed recent low recruitment into these both short term and long-term projections. I'm just going to give a quick overview of the results. The full table is in the memo that you received. Basically, what we see is that the probability of F in 2024 being at or below the F target ranges from about 33 percent to 56 percent. Obviously, the options with the higher percent reduction led to higher probability of being at or below the F target, which is intuitive.

Again, I'm going to talk about the SSB Target. It's repeating the slide, because we do want to emphasize these are not formal rebuilding projections, this is just to help compare across options. But the results are similar to the F target probabilities, which is that the probability of the SSB in 2029 being at or above the target ranges from about 33 percent to 51 percent.

Again, the options at the higher percent reduction led to a higher probability of being at or above the SSB target. We also did one run where F was equal to the F target, and so if you were able to maintain F target from 2024 to 2029, that had a 48 percent chance of being at or above the SSB target in 2029.

I think I have this in here again just to end on this. To be fully clear, just for comparison, but I think part of it is, you know it is hard looking at these different combinations of options with different percent reductions, or none of these options that we are looking at actually achieve, or very few of them actually achieve the percent reduction that we need according to the projection.

That translates into we're not having a 50 percent probability of achieving our F target in 2024, and so we tried to provide context about what that means under these different combinations going forward. With that, I'm going to stop here. We can leave this slide up. But I'm happy to take any questions.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Katie and Toni. Any questions from the Board for Katie and Toni regarding the Draft and the Projection? We'll take those now. Okay, so we have Mike Armstrong and then we'll go to Mike Luisi. Go ahead, Mike.

DR. ARMSTRONG: At the risk of being yelled at here. When I look at the table and I say this certain combination has a 40 percent chance, that is just for comparison purposes. When we do the projection that could turn into 75, it could turn into 20. Is that correct?

DR. DREW: Yes, that is correct. But probably, so if you looked at one option versus another option, one is 40, one is 38, next time when we flip through them, when we do the full projections, okay maybe one is 42 and the other one is 40, or one is 22 and the other one is 18.

To a certain extent they are giving you like probably the relationship between the percentages and what is important, not necessarily what that exact number is. Although there is still uncertainty about whether we will achieve that predicted reduction for each option. But the uncertainty about things like the selectivity in recruitment, and the recent 2023 numbers is going to get folded in across all of those options for the next set of projections.

CHAIR GARY: All right, we'll go to Mike Luisi, and we have Dave Sikorski online in queue.

MR. MICHEAL LUISI: This is to Toni. Toni, you presented the different options, and you pointed out one particular instance where the numbers didn't align, it was either a cut and paste or some type of error that you said you were going to fix. I wanted to point out, and just make sure for the purpose of discussion. In the Chesapeake Bay recreational table options, I wanted to be clear to the Board that in the B, alternative Set B, was it intended to have 25 inches for the maximum size for both B-3 and B-4? That should be 26, right?

MS. KERNS: It is, we didn't touch that one, Mike.

MR. LUISI: On the next page under Alternative Set E, I believe E2 and E3 have a flip flop maximum size limit.

MS. KERNS: Correct.

MR. LUISI: Okay, just wanted to be clear. I've scribbled in the new numbers, I just wanted to point that out for the purpose of discussion. Mr. Chairman, depending on how you plan to step through the document for thoughts and potential modifications, I do have a motion prepared to address the recreational Chesapeake Bay related options. I'll hold off for now, but if you want to take that up at some point, I have a motion.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Mike, appreciate that. We'll go to Dave Sikorski online.

MR. DAVID SIKORSKI: I'm thinking through the portion of the presentation where we talked about the PDTs recommendation as it relates to the difference in quota reductions or landings reductions in the commercial fishery. I think the Board will remember I talked about this and made a motion on the fly at the last meeting, which all relates back to what is in bold on Page 11, which says we need to have the 14.5 percent reduction from total removals to achieve F target in 2024.

I know Katie just said that very few of the options in this document are going to achieve reduction. Thinking about the Chesapeake Bay and the part of the document that says that 80 percent of numbers of fish removed in the commercial fishery come from the Chesapeake Bay. I'm not sure how, given that 14.5 percent reduction in quota is still more fish than what was landed in 2022.

I think we're missing an opportunity here to, one, give the public an opportunity to provide comment, and two, actually for this Board to understand what is the right quota reduction for Chesapeake Bay to achieve the savings of numbers of fish? I think there is my question. What is the quota for reduction in Chesapeake Bay, and is it possible to include that in this document, just to help people understand that. Again, we have to reduce landings, and we just heard

that this document may not do that. Is it possible to add that information in, in some way?

DR. DREW: I think one of the challenges with that is the way we have generally applied a reduction to the quota and seen that trickle down through the total removals, because the key assumption there is that the utilization of that quota will be the same. If we want a reduction, a 14.5 percent reduction from 2022 removals on the commercial side, then by reducing the quota 14.5 percent and assuming that utilization will be roughly the same. Then that translates into a 14.5 percent removal in numbers of fish. It's true that there is the possibility that if we fully utilize the quota, you would not get that 14.5 percent reduction. The Bay has generally come very close to utilizing their quota.

The ocean tends to underutilize the quota, because of number one, the gamefish status for a couple of states, and then number two, the lack of availability in ocean waters off of North Carolina means that North Carolina which holds a fairly large chunk of the ocean quota, has not been able to harvest their quota.

Theoretically, in the ocean, if we reduce the quota by 14.5 percent and that quota was fully utilized, then yes, we would not see that 14.5 percent reduction, and might actually see an increase in removals. However, that reduction is based on the utilization, and what we expect to see in the future. Again, with the Bay, we generally see very high utilization, and so we could look at if the Bay 100 percent utilized their quota, how would that compare to the 2022 landings, where there was a slight underutilization.

Similarly on the ocean side we could look at those numbers. But generally, the utilization has not varied significantly. We do see some increases and decreases from year to year, but it's not a huge change over time, which is why that assumption is generally warranted, compared to trying to reallocate quota to account for those differences in utilization.

CHAIR GARY: Does that answer your question, Dave, or do you have a follow?

MR. SIKORSKI: Yes, it is helpful, thank you, Katie, and there are a lot of thoughts. But I do have a follow up also on the other piece of the puzzle, when it comes to mortality, also thinking about the Chesapeake Bay. I may have missed this. What have we been assuming about natural mortality in the Chesapeake Bay over the recent assessments?

Have we made any adjustments to that in recent projections, because I'm thinking about blue catfish, I'm thinking about predation, how that relates to the unfortunate results five years in a row now with the young of year. I recognize young of year is probably a starting point for our understanding of abundance, and then there is a selectivity and we're applying it, appropriately, I would hope. Could you expand on a little bit of how natural mortality is applied, and then if it's changed in the face of this growing abundance of this invasive species?

DR. DREW: The natural mortality that we use is an age-specific natural mortality, so it is higher on the younger fish and then declines over time, so that the oldest, largest fish have a lower natural mortality. But it does not change over time within the model. Every year we're assuming natural mortality is the same.

We did explore during the last benchmark changing natural mortality for the Bay, based not so much on the predation issues, but on the microbacteriosis issue. As you know, that spatial model did not get approved, and so that kind of was not fully brought into management or assessment use at this time. In terms of the blue catfish issue, I think we have not generally done a lot with that relationship. I think they certainly have the capability of eating juvenile striped bass, but I would say that would go obviously into the juvenile index when they're Age 0, and show up as low Age 0 recruitment, as opposed to natural mortality within the model, where we start modeling them at Age 1. I think the other component of it is, you know the microbacteriosis issue, which seemed to have gone down or receded in recent ed to have gone down or receded in recent years.

It's not as much of an issue as it was previously, possibly related to abundance or density within the

Bay. We could simply look at the overlap of blue catfish with juvenile striped bass. But we think that those striped bass low recruitment values are probably more related to environmental conditions like temperature, flow.

We had a very dry summer and we've had several very dry summers recently, which can reduce the survival of those young of year, as long as the overlap with their points in prey. We know these are all things that affect juvenile recruitment. Blue catfish may be part of it, but there are also known environmental drivers that are currently not favorable for striped bass recruitment. I hope that helped.

MR. SIKORSKI: Extremely helpful as always, thank you, Katie, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR GARY: Additional questions on the Draft or the Projections? Doug Grout.

MR. DOUGLAS E. GROUT: I would like to turn to the Page 19 and the quota options, the quota reductions options, and just get some full understanding of a couple things. What I'm looking at is, under Option A, status quo, Amendment 7 quotas and size limits, and comparing it to Option B, where we would take a 0 percent reduction. I see in the New England states, as I would logically expect there would be no change in the quota, and also the same thing with North Carolina.

But all the other states, looking at New York, Option A quota, for example, is 652,000 and some change. But under a 0 percent reduction under Option B, it's 640,000 pounds. You know Maryland, for example, or the Chesapeake Bay quota under Option A is almost 2.6 million, but under Option B, 0 percent reduction from 2022, it's over 3 million. Could I just get some understanding about why there is some variability and changes there?

MS. KERNS: Doug, I believe it's from the conservation equivalency programs that are not shown, but can continue forward. In the Option, the B options, they would not be there at all, it would be

just straight up from their Amendment 7 quotas. But in the current quotas, CEs are accounted for.

DR. DREW: For example, New York has a maximum size that gives them a little extra quota to account for the fact that they are harvesting smaller numbers of fish, or smaller individual fish. Those calculations are not included in certain places.

CHAIR GARY: Additional questions on the Draft and Projections from the Board? Nobody online, Toni? The next step is to go to Board deliberation. The way I would like to handle this is to go through recreational measures first, so we'll go by sector starting with recreational, and I would like to start in the Chesapeake Bay. To kind of keep things moving, because I know we have a lot of Board members for that discussion, and have some motions teed up. We'll go to Chesapeake Bay, and I know Mike, you had a placeholder for that, so I'll turn to you.

MR. MICHAEL LUISI: I sent a motion to Toni; I'll wait for it to come up before I read it. I guess while they are getting that ready, well, here it is. I'll read it into the record, Mr. Chairman, and then there may need to be some explanation. I'll hold off on comments. If we get a second, then I can explain a little further what my thoughts were in drafting this and putting it together.

I would like to **move to remove from Section 3.1.2 (Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options) of Draft Addendum II, Alternative Set B (B1-B4), Alternative Set C (C1-C4), and E4.** If I get a second, I can speak to the reasons why those were selected for removal.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Mike, is there a second to this motion? Pat Geer. Okay, Mike, back to you.

MR. LUISI: In review of the options for the Chesapeake Bay, the states took a look at the Draft that was put together by the PDT. In the desire through this challenge to try to find some uniformity within the Bay, we felt that achieving a minimum size and a maximum size, having a similar slot limit with all four jurisdictions in the Bay would be an excellent way to move forward.

Right now, we have different minimum sizes. We have three different minimum sizes in four different jurisdictions. Our focus was to establish that uniformity first. By considering that, that essentially removes Alternative Set B, if we didn't want to leave in place what we currently have, which are a number of different minimum size requirements for the jurisdictions in Chesapeake Bay.

Alternative Set B was the first one we decided probably didn't need to continue to stay in a Draft Addendum II. Alternative Set C set the 20-inch minimum size limit throughout the Bay, and some of the issues there would be for the jurisdictions, Maryland and D.C. would need to increase their minimum size limit to 20 inches.

We've been there before, and the number of fish that were released by having a 20-inch minimum size in our portion of the Bay was incredible. We worked really hard to get ourselves back to 19 inches, to try to reduce some of that dead discard mortality that was occurring, which I know is of interest to everybody around this table.

That was the reason for Alternative Set C. Alternative Set D was not mentioned here. I believe Alternative Set D provides a 1-fish bag limit at 19, it's very uniform across the board. Lastly, for E4, E is the alternative that allows for the split modes. Based on the recommendations from the Technical Committee, I felt that since B4 was the lowest amount of reduction that we could achieve at 5.5 percent, something like that.

I felt that was not an acceptable option to take to the public. Now I just mentioned the Technical Committee, and I know the Technical Committee was suggesting that we remove options that are greater than a 20 percent reduction, and less than a 10 percent reduction. However, I feel that in light of what we're faced with, and the challenges ahead, and the juvenile index being what it has been for five years, and a whole list of other things that I won't waste the Board's time on discussing.

I felt that maintaining the options that have higher levels of reduction would be something that I would

like to hear the public's feedback on, which is why I limited the removals to those options that are less than 10 percent, leaving only one in there, which is Option E3, that does not achieve the 10 percent reduction.

However, I would be comfortable when and if this goes out as recommended here through this motion, that when the hearings occur that staff with ASMFC, when they present this information, specifically say that Option E3 did not meet or was not recommended by the Technical Committee in moving forward, just to put it out there.

But I really do want to get the feedback from the public, and I think by supporting this, it provides a broad distribution of maximum size limits with uniformity still. I think we'll get the feedback we need in the Bay to make the decisions we do in final action. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thanks for your rationale, Mike. Pat, as seconder, do you want to add any comments?

MR. PAT GEER: I'll just add that if you look at our regulations in the Bay, we're all over the place. We have different seasons and different size limits. This is a good start to have a consistent slot limit. We met last week and I said, how do we ever get to this point where we were so variable between the states?

It happened because of conservation equivalency over a number of years, but I think this is a good start to try to have some consistency, having that slot limit be the same for all jurisdictions would be very helpful to our anglers, because some of them are fishing right across borders. I'm very supportive of that, and I agree with everything Mr. Luisi said.

CHAIR GARY: We have a motion on the floor, I'll open it up to Board discussion. Any comments on the motion? Okay, Doug, almost going, going, gone, but you got it.

MR. GROUT: I'm sorry, I couldn't let it go, Mr. Chair. I would like to put up a motion to **amend to include to remove Option E3** too. I look at this as a 7 percent

reduction. We've got to be in as close as we can to this, and most of these options, both this and in the coast, at least on paper, don't quite make it. There are some that go over here in the Bay, but I think I would like to see Option E3 also removed if I get a second.

CHAIR GARY: Is there a second to this motion? Mike Armstrong, and back to you, Doug, for your rationale.

MR. GROUT: Yes, as I said, my rationale is we need to get as close as we can to this 14.5 percent reduction. This is half of that. I really appreciate the efforts that Maryland and Virginia have come and put forward, and trying to pare this down. I support it completely, but I am having difficulty supporting having an option for only a 7 percent reduction.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Mike, any additional thoughts?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Not so much, but I don't think we should bring the public hearing anything that we think has such a low probability of succeeding. I think 7 percent is low enough that it just won't fly, so I can support taking that out.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, so we have an amendment to the original motion, it's on the floor and open for Board discussion. I'll go to Pat Geer first.

MR. GEER: When we did Addendum VI in 2019, we brought the sector separation before our Commission, and they didn't want to hear anything about it. I can't guarantee that Virginia will be, we may not do sector separation, we may continue to do 1 fish per person. If that happens there will be additional savings. We have a new commission that is drastically different than our past one, but when we brought that before them and said, we're willing to accept the sector separation to give the charter for-hire fleet 2 fish, they said no. Unanimously they voted against that.

CHAIR GARY: Mike Luisi.

MR. LUISI: I'm not going to try to come up with an example off the top of my head, but I don't necessarily agree with the statement that every document we send out the options that are in those documents are things that we are all willing to support. I think sometimes we put information out there to provide a range of options for consideration.

As I mentioned in my rationale for the motion, not the amended motion, but the original motion. I personally would like, I would like to hear from our stakeholders to determine whether or not they are interested more in just saving themselves for one year, or saving the species into the future.

I think by presenting one of these options that I know for a fact our charter fleet is really interested in, because of the sector split. I really want to see if their focus is all about the largest slot limit or are they going to be thinking in any way about setting themselves up for success for the future? As I mentioned, I would be happy with putting a footnote on that option, to say that it wasn't supported by the TC.

Secondly, this I think is a good a time as any to bring to the attention of the Board that in light of the emergency action, the failed recruitment or low recruitment in Chesapeake Bay for the last five years, we are working internally as of when that information became available. We are going to be considering actions in addition to the actions of ASMFC. One of those actions is the elimination of our spring trophy season altogether. We also are contemplating moving forward with additional time periods in the summer, when we have our no targeting restrictions. We're considering extending that. We're beginning that discussion with leadership. But I do believe that we'll be taking additional steps to protect and conserve what we have left in the Bay. I'm not going to support, for those reasons I won't support the motion, but again I ask that you support the original motion.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Mike, for that context. Additional discussion from the Board regarding the amended motion? Mike Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: It sounds like to me that I guess this comes down to you want the 25 inch as the top of the slot, where the coast option is 5 inches maximum slot, that is all that's proposed for for-hire fleet, and that would be 24 inches in the Bay if we flagged the 19 inches. I continue to support that 7 percent is too low, and it gets you a pretty decent slot still for 5 inches, if we go with E2.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Mike, additional discussion. We'll be ready to call the question. Can we have a one-minute caucus appropriate for everyone? I'll give you one minute. All right, let's call the question. We'll just go ahead and go for it. All those in favor, sorry, go ahead, Justin, do you have a question?

DR. JUSTIN DAVIS: Could we possibly get like 30 more seconds to caucus? We weren't quite done over here.

CHAIR GARY: Yes. Let's go ahead and call the question. On the motion to amend, all those in favor, please raise your hand and please hold them up. Toni will count. All right, thank you, lower your hands. All those opposed to the motion, please raise your hand. All right, thank you, abstentions, null votes.

The amended motion passes 10, 6, 0, 0. We'll have the adjusted motion up in a moment. Is there a need to caucus on this, or can we go ahead and call? Does anybody have a burning need to caucus on this? All right, we're going to go ahead and call the question on the motion on the floor. **All those in favor, please raise your hand. Keep them raised as Toni counts them. Just to be sure, abstentions lower your hands, no null votes. All right, it's unanimous, the motion passes.** All right, John is keeping a stray up here. Justin, question?

DR. DAVIS: Not a question, but as we dispensed with this motion, I was prepared to offer another one, if you're ready for another motion.

CHAIR GARY: You beat me to it, Justin. This is with the recreational measures, Chesapeake Bay. I was going to finish in the Bay first if we could. I'll go to

you first when we pivot to the ocean. Are there additional measures on Chesapeake Bay recreational options, either removing from the document or adding to the document? This is the last call for Chesapeake Bay recreational measures. Okay, all right, Justin, it was easy enough. Back to you, we'll go to the ocean recreational measures. You have a motion to offer.

DR. DAVIS: I think I sent this motion to staff, so we can put it up on the board. Okay, **move to add the following options to Section 3.1.1, Ocean Recreational Fishery. Option D, 1-fish at 30 to 33 inches, with 2022 seasons (all modes) (12.8 percent overall reduction, 45% harvest reduction and 2% increase in release mortality). Option E, 1-fish at 30 to 33 inches with 2022 seasons for private vessel/shore anglers; 1-fish at 28 inches – 33 inches with 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode.**

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Justin, is there a second to this motion? Joe Cimino. All right, Dr. Davis, back to you for your rationale.

DR. DAVIS: My motivation here, at the last meeting we considered a draft addendum document that had a lot of options in it for the ocean recreational fishery. At that meeting we voted to essentially take almost everything out. All that is left there at this time is the 28-to-31-inch slot limit, and the status quo FMP standard 28 to 35.

I think the reasons we did that at the last meeting were good. I won't rehash that whole discussion. But I walked away from the meeting feeling somewhat unsatisfied, the reason being, this last year when I talked to the members of my public who are upset about the emergency action that we took last year.

They were upset about the unilateral nature of the action, that there was no public input. What I told them was I stood by that decision. I think this Board did the right thing, given the information we had at hand. But that I understood the criticism about the nature of that action. I think that is valid.

My message back to the public was, for 2024 we will do our normal process, our normal deliberative process. We'll have public input; we'll present options to the public to achieve our objectives. Currently the way the Addendum stands, you know from my standpoint. There are not really options in there for the public to choose from for the ocean recreational fishery.

What I'm trying to do here is just add some options back into the document. The 30-to-33-inch slot, Option D, achieved a 12.8 percent overall reduction on paper compared to the 14.1 percent reduction for the 28–31-inch slot limit. From my standpoint, given all the uncertainties in the projections, that is a distinction without a difference. They are roughly equivalent. That slot limit will expose some more of the 2015-year class to harvest. Based on Table 4 in Page 34 of the Addendum, those 2015 fish will be on average about 34 inches long this coming year.

This will still protect some significant portion of the 2015-year class, but it will also provide some protection to the 2017- and 2018-year class, which should be on average 29 inches and 26 inches respectively next year. Then in Option E what I'm doing is just adding essentially an analog to Option C in the document, providing an option for a for-hire mode split to go along with this 30-to-33-inch slot limit. I don't have the percent overall reduction associated with this option. I did not do my homework.

I was supposed to do that before this meeting, and did not do that. But I think, you know if you look at the comparison between Option B and Option C in the document, which is the 28 to 31 or the 28 to 31 with the mode split. It's a 14.1 versus a 14.0 percent reduction. I think it's safe to assume the difference in the overall reduction between these two options is going to essentially be negligible. But we can calculate that and put it in the document after the fact. Again, the motivation here is just to add some options back in for the public to consider for the ocean recreational fishery. What I'm hoping we can avoid here is getting into a debate about the relative validity, or which of these options would be most appropriate for 2024? We have plenty of time to do

that at final action time if we vote these into the document. I think at this point I'm just hoping the Board will acquiesce to adding these options into the Addendum.

CHAIR GARY: Joe, any additional thoughts as seconder?

MR. JOE CIMINO: Yes, I agree with everything Justin said. I am kind of worried taking this out to the public without what we promised them, you know a chance to look at something other than what we put in as an emergency. I've had a chance to look at this size range, with the same tools that the Technical Committee uses, and I agree that I do believe it provides protection to the two most important year classes that we're trying to protect. I think it's something of value to see what public opinion is on something other than the current option.

CHAIR GARY: We have a motion is on the floor, and I'll open it up to Board discussion. Any of the Board members like to comment on the motion on the floor? Dr. Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: I don't love the thought of a 30-33, though we did a 28-31 to get off a 2015, and now we're following it. That doesn't make all that much sense. I would like to hear what the public has to say. But I guess if I could go through the Chair and ask the motioner what does D achieve that C doesn't?

DR. DAVIS: I think in one sense D doesn't achieve anything different than C, it's just the way the document is constructed. It sort of has distinct options for the 28-31 slot versus a 28-31 slot with a for-hire mode split. I think the options could be reconfigured in such a way as to provide, you know Option A status quo, Option B, 28-31, Option C 30 - 33, and then sort of like, I don't know what you would call it, an Option B to provide a 28-33-inch mode split to go along with either C or B. I think I go that right. It's really just semantics and how the options are structured in the document.

CHAIR GARY: Does that answer your question, Mike?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Yes.

CHAIR GARY: Additional discussion on the motion. Emerson Hasbrouck.

MR. EMERSON C. HASBROUCK: Yes, I support this motion. I came away from the August meeting just thinking that what are we offering the public in this Addendum for the ocean recreational fishery? Essentially the way it's structured now, what we're offering them is what we put into place during emergency action. I think having a couple of additional options is a good idea to get public input on that.

CHAIR GARY: Additional discussion. All right, no hands online, no hands in the room, let's go ahead and, just to be clear for all those listening in from the public. There will be public option to comment on this. We're just adding it to the document to get the public additional options per the rationale that was provided. We're going to go ahead and call the question. I'll give you a two-minute caucus. All right, if everyone is ready, let's go ahead and call the question for the motion on the floor. All those in favor, please raise your hands, and again, please hold them so Toni can count. All right, let's do it this way. Is there any objection to this motion? Oh yes. Chris did. All right, let's try again. **All those in favor of the motion, please raise your hands**, hold them.

MS. KERNS: Just so everybody knows to be clear. For the main motions I'm going to say the names of the states. Amendments, I am not going to unless the Board asks for a roll call. **New Hampshire, Maine, Delaware, Maryland, PRFC, D.C, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Fish and Wildlife Service, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and NOAA Fisheries.**

CHAIR GARY: **All those opposed.**

MS. KERNS: **North Carolina.**

CHAIR GARY: **Abstentions, null votes. Motion passes 15, 1, 0, 0.** All right, we'll continue on the pathway of ocean recreational options, either to remove or to add. Do we have any additional motions from members of the Board? Dr. Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: I have a motion that would apply to both the Bay and the coast if that is okay. It is. This addresses because we have mode splits, and I would like to put this in for clarification. I'll stop at that and then speak a little bit more.

CHAIR GARY: Looking to pull this up.

DR. ARMSTRONG: I'll read it in, yes. **Move to specify that any for-hire mode specific limit optioned in Section 3.1, Recreational Fishery Management, applies only to patrons during a for-hire trip; captain and crew during a for-hire trip are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.**

CHAIR GARY: Is there a second to this motion? John Clark. Mike, back to you.

DR. ARMSTRONG: This was brought up at the PDT and there was discussion. I now Law Enforcement didn't love it, because it's in the weeds. The effect will be small. But what we're doing here is splitting modes, which is really a huge move if we do it, is we're doing it for the for-hire fleet to attract clients. That's what I've heard, and it's not fair that the Captain and Crew could also take advantage of that, because that is not the purpose of why are we splitting the mode. It's as simple as that.

CHAIR GARY: John, any additional thoughts?

MR. CLARK: No, I think Dr. Armstrong explained it all eloquently and succinctly.

CHAIR GARY: All right, the motion is on the floor, Board discussion on the motion.

MS. KERNS: I didn't go over this section of the PDT memo, just because we had pulled the patron aspect out. Mike did say that it is discussed, they just want to make sure the point to the Law Enforcement Committee is spot on. I'll take it to the bottom line if Jeff wants me to go further.

But for them the patron standard would require Law Enforcement to additionally prove that the angler was a paying customer and not a part of the crew. I think that was their biggest concern. A significant

portion of the other aspects of the Law Enforcement Committee's discussion of this was about just consistent straightforward language. You could apply that to this, or you could apply that to mode splits in general. I'll leave it at that.

CHAIR GARY: Jeff, any other thoughts?

MR. JEFF MERCER: Yes, just this is essentially a mode split within a mode split. Like you said, we really get into the weeds here. It wouldn't be a problem in a boat with a captain and customers, captain and one crew, paying customers. But when you get from the party boats with multiple crew. It becomes difficult to identify who is crew, who is paying, and it just adds another step in having to prove employment status. Proving that would be very difficult if someone denies being crew.

CHAIR GARY: First Board member who would like to weigh in. We have Dave Sikorski online. Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SIKORSKI: While I appreciate how this provides some clarity, I think hearing what Law Enforcement has said, it means you know that I don't think this is necessary, and I won't speak against the motion, largely because I think sector separation as we've discussed and deliberated beyond this Board, thinking about it Commission wide.

We still don't have answers, and the fact that we're looking at stock that is collapsing, and considering carve outs regardless of the reason is a mistake. Any further sector separation is a mistake. I do recognize the need for public comment on this issue, it's not one of these things I'm going to try and get in a fight over here, especially virtually.

But I think it's sending the wrong signal. We're in a time of conservation. I already spoke and asked some questions of staff to help understand how we can achieve that, because we know this package so far does not include everything we need. I think this is also a bit of a fool's errand, regardless of how much certain portions of the public need it.

Because I do respect that, and I am concerned for everyone that is connected to this fishery. But what do we stop with the carve outs? It's as simple as going back to the numbers of fish, where we are and how we're regulating in my Chesapeake Bay, or the Chesapeake Bay that I am part of representing, and where I live. Unfortunately for the last three years, sector separation has allowed a portion of a recreational fishery to take twice as many fish as the general public. We see the FES numbers. We've been on a roller coaster ride with recreational data over the last couple years. We don't have clarity on this fishery to try and chop this up as if it's a precise tool. I think we need to stop kidding ourselves at some point. How quickly do we want to race to the bottom is how I'm looking at this sector separation piece across the board. Frankly, I don't even think sector separation belongs in the Chesapeake Bay options, but I do want public comment. This is a decision point for once public comment is complete.

But I definitely want to take this opportunity to say that it's a mistake if we move this forward. I do recognize the political pressure here, and ask the public and ask all my fellow Board members. Do we want to get there twice as fast, because that is what two versus one fish does. Our data is not accurate enough to do this. We shouldn't do it as we continue to have recruitment failure. We're racing to the bottom.

CHAIR GARY: Go back to the Board for additional discussion. I'll go to Roy Miller and then John Clark.

MR. ROY W. MILLER: I think I support this particular motion regarding what David just talked about, mode splits. This isn't a specific action that approves or disapproves of mode splits, this just tells us that if mode splits are selected from the Draft, then this would apply to those mode splits. For that reason, I would support this. We're not voting on mode splits by approving this particular motion.

CHAIR GARY: We'll go to John Clark and then we have Megan Ware and Doug Grout.

MR. CLARK: I certainly understand the Law Enforcement concerns about this, and I don't like

getting into regulations that can't be enforced. But at the same time, I think this does have deterrent value, and that it would at least make clear for anybody that is a for-hire captain that they are not to take extra fish out there. I think it's good just to have it out there, even if it would be difficult to enforce.

CHAIR GARY: Megan.

MS. MEGAN WARE: Yes, I'm going to speak against this motion. I think for anything that is not enforceable, we're kind of losing the conservation value of what we're trying to achieve here. For states who do have stakeholders who are interested in a for-hire split, this makes that option less palatable for me with this language included.

CHAIR GARY: Doug.

MR. GROUT: I just would like some clarification on this motion, because I too have a little bit of heartburn, considering the concern that Law Enforcement had put forward about the enforceability. I don't have a problem with this being added as an option. But if we do select a mode split, could we have an option where this isn't automatically part of it, part of a mode split that we can choose as a Board to either have it in or have it out, or could we come to final determination, decide on a mode split and ask to remove this part?

MS. KERNS: Doug, if that is what you're looking for then we would have to make a motion to amend to make it like an option to add, instead of replace. If you want to do that, I can work with you to write an amendment.

CHAIR GARY: Doug, let me come back, because it sounds like you might want to go that route. But I will go to Justin first.

DR. DAVIS: A couple things. I'll just mention that Connecticut currently has regulations on the books like this for scup and black sea bass during our for-hire bonus seasons for those species. Paying passengers only are allowed to take the higher bag limit. That is what it says right in the regulations.

I haven't heard from our enforcement that that is a problem. Just pointing out that Connecticut has rules like this currently on the books. I also just wanted to point out that, you know I don't see, this motion isn't about whether or not we're going to have for-hire mode splits, it's about if we have for-hire mode splits, might we also want to adopt some additional language that enhances conservation.

I think to me the conversation is getting a little jumbled around the benefit or not of having for-hire mode splits. Maybe that is not what this motion is about. I will also just say that I think Doug makes a good point, that the way this is currently worded says that if this gets voted up and we have a for-hire mode split this has to happen. But I think it should be set up to be sort of a secondary set of some options to go along with the mode splits.

CHAIR GARY: Doug, I'll go back to you if you intend to look to amend.

MR. GROUT: Yes, my **motion to amend is to remove the words "to specify" and replace it with "add an option", in for-hire modes.** Is that clear?

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Doug, we have an amended motion, do we have a second? We have a second by Emerson Hasbrouck. Doug, I'll go back to you if you want to expand on your motion.

MR. GROUT: Yes, I heard what the Law Enforcement report is, and their concern with this. I have a little bit of hesitance. I would like to have this as an option that we can select or not select in the final document, rather than have it just specify that it's going to happen.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, Doug, and Emerson as seconder would you like to comment on this amended motion?

MR. HASBROUCK: Yes, I would rather see this as an option to be considered rather than a specific condition if we go with a mode split. I agree with Doug on that. Also, if it's been working in Connecticut on black sea bass, is that what it was, black sea bass and scup without any serious

problems, then it seems like that might work as well with striped bass.

CHAIR GARY: We have an amended motion, discussion on the amended motion, Mike Luisi.

MR. LUISI: I support the motion to amend, given the discussion around the table I don't want to see this concept coupled with the for-hire options for the recreational fishery when we come to final action. I think it's set to stop nicely, we can make our decisions first and then decide if we want to apply this, if any for-hire mode split options are considered as final action at our next meeting. I support this.

CHAIR GARY: Additional discussion, Mike Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: I have absolutely no problem with this Amendment, and if there is an easier way to do that, I think we learned that there are no such thing as friendly amendments. Vote two yesses.

CHAIR GARY: Any additional discussion before we call the question. A caucus, yes. Let's try one minute. All right, let's bring this Amendment to vote. Actually, let's try this. Is there any opposition to this amended motion? Let's take it to a full vote. All those in favor of the amended motion, please raise your hands. All those opposed.

DR. ARMSTRONG: It was down, it was voting for.

CHAIR GARY: Abstentions, null votes. **The motion passes, 13 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions.** We're back to the modified motion.

Okay, we'll read this into the record. **Move to add an option that any for-hire mode specific limit optioned in Section 3.1, Recreational Fishery Management, applies only to patrons during a for-hire trip; captain and crew during a for-hire trip are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.** I'll try it the easy way. Is there any objection to the motion? Okay, so we're going to go to a full vote. All right, I tried. **All those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand.**

MS. KERNS: New Hampshire, Delaware, Maryland, PRFC, D.C., Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts.

CHAIR GARY: All those opposed, please raise your hand.

MS. KERNS: Rhode Island and Maine.

CHAIR GARY: Abstentions.

MS. KERNS: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries.

CHAIR GARY: Null votes. Motion passes 12 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions. We are back to the Draft, and looking for any sections to add or any deletions on recreational ocean measures. Looking to the Board for any motions related to additions to the document or deletions. Seeing none; let's pivot to commercial measures, and I would look to Dr. Davis for a first motion.

DR. DAVIS: I sent the motion to staff, yes, there we go. I **move to remove Section 3.2.2 Commercial Maximum Size Limit options and 3.2.3 Gill Net Exemption options from Draft Addendum II.**

CHAIR GARY: Sorry, Emerson, John Clark almost jumped over the table, so he's got the second, beat you to it. We have a motion on the floor from Dr. Davis, seconded by John Clark, and Dr. Davis, I'll come back to you to speak to your motion.

DR. DAVIS: I think at this point it's pretty clear this is the best path forward. We have a pretty clear signal from the Technical Committee and the PDT that due to all the uncertainties associated with the analyses that went into creating the maximum size limit options, and sort of some of what I think were maybe unanticipated outcomes, where imposing a maximum size limit might actually increase removals, move us further away from our goal of rebuilding by 2029. I think it's clear at this point we should probably take this out of the document.

I will say that I think there was a lot of value in having this in the document to this point, and having the

technical folks take a really good hard look at it. Since we implemented the slot limit back in 2019 or 2020, I had consistently heard from folks in the recreational sector concerns about equity, that folks on the commercial sector could still take larger fish, while people in the recreational sector couldn't. I think by taking a hard look at this we've been able to show that it's just not that simple imposing a maximum size limit on the commercial fishery.

It just doesn't make sense for a lot of reasons. I would like to advocate for if this motion is voted up, that we retain some text in the Draft Addendum that sort of synthesizes the work that was done, the main conclusions, and sort of like provides that information to the public that they can review in the Draft Addendum so it's in there, sort of memorialized that we took a look at this and here are the reasons why the Board didn't move forward with it, so that work won't be lost and we won't be back here having the same conversation four or five years from now.

CHAIR GARY: John, I'll turn to you for any additional thoughts.

MR. CLARK: I think Justin covered that well. I have to say, philosophically I just haven't liked this whole SPR methodology for taking 1972 to 1979 landings, which were just in pounds, turning it into fish then turning it back into pounds. It seems like alchemy of a type. I'm just glad it's out of the document.

CHAIR GARY: All right, thank you, John, we'll turn to Board discussion on this motion, and we've got Mike Luisi first and then we'll go to Emerson Hasbrouck.

MR. LUISI: I'm going to support the motion, and the reason is because I don't want to see the opposite reaction from John Clark if this were not to pass. That is the reason why I support it, and I suggest calling the question on this rather quick.

CHAIR GARY: Emerson Hasbrouck.

MR. HASBROUCK: Since I was ready to second this motion before you jumped over me and went to John Clark, I obviously support this motion. In terms of satisfying some of the concerns about commercial

sector harvesting larger fish, I'll just reiterate what is in the Technical Committee memo from September 28, relative to this issue.

Implementing a more uncertain management option that is designed to have no effect on overall stock productivity, increases the uncertainty around the rebuilding probability and the impact on the stock, without having a positive impact on overall stock productivity.

CHAIR GARY: Additional discussion on the motion. All right, we'll go ahead and call the question. I'll offer a one-minute caucus. Let's call the question. I'm 0 for on consent, but we'll try one more time. **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none; motion passes.** How about that. Okay, so we're back to commercial measures in the Draft Document. Are there any additional additions, deletions? Any other modifications? Dr. Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: A question for staff, and I think I know the answer. This now renders gillnet exemption moot.

MS. KERNS: That was already in the motion we just passed.

DR. ARMSTRONG: Oh, that was in there, I'm sorry. I'm checking in for a flight we're going so fast.

CHAIR GARY: I guess this is a last call for the Board for modifications to the document, additions, deletions. Are there any others the Board wants to offer? All right, before we, okay, Emerson, go ahead.

MR. HASBROUCK: No, I didn't mean to interrupt you. It seemed like there were no other additions or deletions, so I was just going to ask if you needed a motion to approve this.

CHAIR GARY: We will in a moment, and I'll reserve that for you to make that motion, Emerson, if you could. But before we do that, seeing non other Board action on this. I would like to offer to the public if there is something that has not been added that you would like to see, not something that you

want removed, because we've made those decisions.

But if there is something missing that the Board missed that you would like to comment on for Board consideration, please raise your hand in the room and/or online, and we'll offer some comment for items that have not been added that you would like to see added. All right, we have one person that would like to comment, and again this would be for items that are not in the document you would like to see added. Michael Quinan, would you please unmute? You have two minutes.

MR. MICHAEL QUIINAN: Okay, and it's not going to take me two minutes, and I also maybe didn't understand the limitation. I actually have a question, clarification on the last motion, which removed the commercial size limit options and the commercial gillnet exemption options. Does that also effectively remove the quota reduction option for commercial in the Bay or commercial generally?

MS. KERNS: No, Michael, it does not. There is still an option for commercial quota reductions, they are just straight up reductions, and they can range anywhere from 0 to 14.5 percent.

MR. QUINAN: Okay, and so that is where I'm confused. Maybe I will use a few more seconds here, another minute. Because my understanding was the only reason for the quota reductions was to just for the maximum size limit option, in other words the maximum size limit would result in less taking of larger fish, more taking of smaller fish, in order to equalize, to make there be no change in the effect the quota reduction will be required. If the maximum size limit is removed.

MS. KERNS: Michael, I can explain. The Board at the last meeting added an additional commercial option that looked at straight reductions to the commercial fishery, as well as the maximum size limit option, which also had quota reductions as part of the spawning potential ratio analysis. What the Board did today was remove the maximum size limit option, but held on to the straight up commercial quota reduction.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Michael, I appreciate that. I think now, Emerson, we're ready for that motion. All right, Dave, go ahead, you have the last word before we try to put a blessing on this document. Go ahead, Dave.

MR. SIKORSKI: My question is in regard to, what is the right quota reduction to occur in Chesapeake Bay to actually achieve a 14.5 percent reduction in landings is something I think belongs in this document to inform the public on the difference of landings versus quota. I would gladly make a motion.

But I look to you all to speak to how we could just include that information in that clarity, or if you have any questions for what I am trying to achieve. But I do have a motion prepared. I was not able to provide it to staff. Do you want a motion or is it something staff can add?

MS. KERNS: Dave, I think we can do our best to add something, but we can't predict what the Bay is going to land in any given year. I could say based on last year's landing values to get a 14.5 percent reduction you would actually need this amount. But every year your commercial landings change, so it is difficult for us to predict that value.

MR. SIKORSKI: I would be comfortable with what you just described, including that clarity to folks that there is variability, but based on 2022 landings, what is the number of fish or pounds that should be removed in 2024 or '25, because this document may not impact 2024. I think what you just described provides the clarity I was seeking, and so I don't feel that I need a motion. Thank you.

MS. KERNS: We can just add a column to that table to refine that.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Dave, Emerson, back to you.

MR. HASBROUCK: While staff is.

CHAIR GARY: Okay, bear with us, Emerson, you are going to have your moment, I promise you. All right, so we have Patrick Paquette online. Patrick, we're

not sure when you entered the queue, but we're going to give you the benefit of the doubt. Are you intending to suggest to the Board that we add a component to this Draft?

MR. PATRICK PAQUETTE: I am.

CHAIR GARY: Okay, so go ahead, we'll give you one minute if you could please, Patrick.

MR. PAQUETTE: Absolutely, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Patrick Paquette, Mass Striped Bass Association, and a member of the recreational Striped Bass AP. Just in the answer, and I don't know if it was prevented by a motion leading up to this meeting, which is why I hesitated.

But I would just like to say that what I believe is missing from this document are options and a serious discussion going out to the public about closed seasons. We are going down the road of the extremely controversial lead to a lot of ugly places recreational sub-mode split. I believe that we should be having the closed season discussion before that or at the same time as that. That's all, thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Thanks, Patrick. I think I understand where you are headed with that. Your suggestion is you would like to see a component added to this document that entertains closed seasons. I would turn to the Board if there is any interest and appetite for doing that. Seeing none in the room, but we have two of our Board members that are online that would like to comment to this. I'm going to go to Adam Nowalsky first and then Dave Sikorski second.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: Given the discussion that has already occurred about this around the Board so far, I'm not sure there is going to be much appetite at this time for development of a specific option. Maybe there is somebody else around the table that would like to prove me wrong, but I've certainly spoken my part in support of examining this idea.

What my request would be, is for conversation about the addition of a scoping element to this question, as part of the public comment process. If that needs a specific motion, I would be happy to make that. If

there is support for it around the table, and staff believes we could just add that as a question to the public here to provide input with, I would be acceptable to that path forward as well.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: I guess the question back to Adam, is he actually looking for something to be added into the document, or is it just part of the presentations at public hearing? In other words, we'll go through all the options here, then while we've got you, do you guys have any perspective on closed seasons. It gets a little awkward if you're working through an amendment or an addendum with a series of specific options, and then you're asking kind of questions about future things the Board might do.

It may get really confusing, and some of the public may think since that question is part of the document, then it can actually be included in what the Board does as part of the final approval of that Addendum. The Board won't have that ability to put in seasons now. I think weaving something into the public hearings, we could probably do that. But putting it in the document might get a little messy.

MR. NOWALSKY: I would have no objection to the approach of just weaving it into the presentation as such. That would be fine by me if staff feels that is the most appropriate way forward, and the rest of the Board consents.

MS. KERNS: I'll just add that based on the past couple of striped bass public hearings that we have had, in several states we have utilized the entire time that we have set aside to have those hearings. I would want to make sure we set up some expectations that if we are at the end of the timeframe to create that comment.

Is the state wanting to stick around for additional time to scope or not? It's just that we do get a lot of comments, typically, on striped bass. I want to make sure that we have the right timing set for that. It may be that if you say no, then that scoping would not happen, if we run out of time.

CHAIR GARY: I guess before we clarify what we may or may not do, Dave Sikorski, did you have a comment?

MR. SIKORSKI: No, I appreciate Patrick's comment and the discussion so far. I am supportive, and I feel like I'm in the same place as Adam. Generally speaking, I think this Board needs to figure out what our next steps are to address that issue, because there is no question that seasons are what is left in our recreational tool box.

I think there is actually a seasonality component of commercial fishery constraints as well. I don't know what that path looks like forward, but I don't think it makes sense to add to this document and further complicate our proceedings today, or getting things out to the public. Thanks.

CHAIR GARY: I just turn to staff, if I could. Can we kind of clarify once lastly for the Board. Adam had made a request, working off Patrick Paquette's narrative. What does that mean in terms of the hearings?

MS. KERNS: If it is the pleasure of the Board for us to do some scoping at the end of the hearing, I think we could make that happen. But if the hearing has utilized the entire timeframe that the state has set aside, then it would be the state hearing officer's choice of whether to scope or not. I think it would be the state's choice to do that. This is the pleasure of the Board if the whole Board wants us to scope or not.

CHAIR GARY: Is there any objection from the Board to what Toni is describing? Mike, go ahead.

MR. LUISI: I agree with what has been presented regarding seasons. I'm not going to go get into it at all. But we all know that seasons are next, it is the next thing if we have to make adjustments. We really don't have anything else left. We're down to 1 fish, we have slot limits, you know, no wider than that. It's going to be difficult.

But my concern is that the public goes to a public hearing to listen to Addendum II options, and then

they have a discussion about season closures. Now they think season closures are part of the options for discussion on Addendum II, which we've already had the debate and removed them.

We're going to have time after this is finished in January, I believe, to consider and think about what are the next steps. I personally would rather see them separated from the conversation with the public. As much as I want to hear what the thoughts are, I just think we try to keep it as simple as we can to get the feedback we need at this time, because January will be here before we know it.

CHAIR GARY: It doesn't sound like we have Board consent to move forward with this, unless somebody wants to put a motion forward and try to put something in the form of a motion. Adam, you have your hand raised, go ahead.

MR. NOWALSKY: Yes, if that's what it's going to take, Mr. Chairman, I will go ahead and make a motion to add to the public hearings time for scoping of closed seasons.

CHAIR GARY: We'll wait. I think everybody understood what that meant, but let's wait a second to get it up on the board.

MR. NOWALSKY: I'll just add while that is coming up is that this motion would then include time for that, whether we're going to say if the hearing schedule to end at 8 o'clock, that at 7:45 that is the time we're going to allow. But that is the intent of this motion to explicitly allow time for this topic on the agenda of the public hearings.

MS. KERNS: To clarify, Adam, you would say cut off comment on the document with 15 minutes left to scope.

MS. NOWALSKY: No, I'm saying make enough time for the public hearings to accommodate both. I'm not asking to cut anything off, I'm saying if we're going to plan an hour and a half public hearing, let's make it an hour and 45 public hearing. If it's going to be a two-hour public hearing, let's make it a two hour and 15-minute public hearing.

CHAIR GARY: All right, we have a motion, do we have a second to that motion? Anyone online?

MS. KERNS: Dave Sikorski, are you seconding that motion? David Sikorski, are you listening?

MR. SIKORSKI: I am, but I had to get closer to my mute button. My apologies, I was truly remote away from my computer. I did not know my hand was still up. I am not seconding.

MS. KERNS: Thank you.

CHAIR GARY: All right, so with lack of a second that motion doesn't advance. I think now, Emerson, this is your show. I hope everyone in the public knows we care deeply about how you feel, and I think, at least in my tenure here, I've been very generous in terms of working with them. But it is my discretion.

In the interest of time, we have a couple other agenda items. We've had opportunity for folks to raise their hand to comment on additions to the document. We had one. As Chair, I'm going to go ahead and cut this off. We're going to take it back to Emerson, and Emerson, you've been waiting patiently, so it is your time.

MR. HASBROUCK: I'm hoping that staff has a motion, and while they are getting that motion up, I would just like to say that I know that people from other states have the opinion that New Yorkers are always trying to do things quickly and are always in a rush. Marty, it must have been these past two or three weeks that you've spent in New York that allowed us to get through this contentious document in record time today. **I move to approve Draft Addendum II for public comment as modified today.**

CHAIR GARY: Do we have a second? Jason McNamee. Is there a need to caucus? Seeing none; all in favor. I'm going to go two for two here, **is there any objection to the motion? Seeing none; the motion passes by consent.** Thank you all for your patience. Toni had something she would like to offer to the Board before we move to our next agenda item.

MS. KERNS: Since we did just discuss seasons, sorry Chris to jump the gun. I'll just note that today during the Action Planning Session, I noted that the TC is going to do some additional work to look at the bag and size limit analyses to see if there are ways that we can improve those analyses, to give better advice to the Board.

Katie and I had discussed, maybe there is some additional work that the TC could do for seasons. If that is the will of the Board, we can kind of look into some season concerns. If you want the TC to do so at that time, if not we will stick with the bag and size limit analyses. Does the Board want us to do that or not?

CHAIR GARY: Go ahead, Emerson.

MR. HASBROUCK: I would like to see that occur. Do you need a motion or is just our opinion good enough?

MS. KERNS: Unless anybody has some great objection, we'll have the TC look into some of this, see what we can do. I'm not making grand promises, but.

CHAIR GARY: All right so we have Board consent for that. Thank you, Toni.

ALBEMARLE-ROANOKE ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT UPDATE

CHAIR GARY: The next item on our agenda is an update on the Albemarle-Roanoke Atlantic Striped Bass Management, Chris Batsavage.

MR. CHRIS BATSAVAGE: In the briefing material is a memo just kind of highlighting the current status in management changes for the Albemarle Sound striped bass stock. I'll give a quick overview of what is going on with them. Just as a reminder, the Albemarle-Roanoke striped bass stock is managed by North Carolina under the backing of ASMFC.

The stock is jointly managed by North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission and North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission under Amendment 2

to the North Carolina Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. The Marine Fisheries Commission has management authority in Albemarle Sound and its tributaries, while the Wildlife Resources Commission has the management authority in the Roanoke River and its tributaries.

The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries conducts stock assessments for striped bass in this area, and DMF and the Wildlife Resources Commission both monitor the fisheries. The 2020 stock assessment determined that the striped bass stock was overfished and overfishing was occurring. The 2022 stock assessment update showed that stock status was the same, but fishing mortality increased, and spawning stock biomass decreased.

The stock assessment results were consistent with the trends in the fishery independent surveys for both the juvenile and adult striped bass, with juvenile recruitment estimates at very low levels the last several years. The striped bass total allowable landings from 2021 to 2023 were set at roughly 51,000 pounds with 50 percent allocated to the commercial fishery and 50 percent allocated to the recreational fishery, with the recreational allocation evenly split between Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River management areas.

The 2022 stock assessment update determined that a total allowable landings level of 8,249 pounds is needed to end overfishing. The Division of Marine Fisheries is very concerned about the six consecutive years of poor juvenile recruitment, and 2023 appears to be another poor year. About half a million one-to-two-inch juvenile striped bass were stocked in western Albemarle Sound this year, and stocking will continue for at least the next three years to address the low juvenile recruitment.

In addition, roughly 8,300-pound total allowable landings under the allocations in the North Carolina Striped Bass FMP is effectively too low to manage. Therefore, the Division of Marine Fisheries will implement a harvest moratorium in the Albemarle Sound Management Area starting in 2024 under the Adaptive Management Framework in the North Carolina Estuarine Striped Bass FMP.

In addition, the 2023 fall recreational and commercial seasons in the Albemarle Sound Management Area will not open, because there is little quota remaining and because of stock status concerns. It is currently unknown if the Wildlife Resources Commission will implement a harvest moratorium in the Roanoke River Management Area, although the Wildlife Resources Commission is required to implement the moratorium under the FMP.

We believe that a complete moratorium that includes the recreational fishery on the Roanoke River in the spring is necessary for stock rebuilding. I will inform the Board of any future management changes for the stock if there are any. That just concludes just a brief update, as far as what is happening down here with striped bass, Mr. Chair. I'll be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Chris, I appreciate that. Are there any questions for Chris? John Clark.

MR. CLARK: Thank you for that update, Chris. Just curious about the stocking. Is the brood stock coming out of the Albemarle and Roanoke, and how successful has that been? Is this the first time you've done this, or is this something you've had success with?

MR. BATSAVAGE: I don't know the specifics of that, but if it's okay, if I could turn to Chad Thomas. Chad has been, well in his previous career was a striped bass biologist in North Carolina, but is also involved in the current stocking program. We did stock striped bass decades ago, when the stock was under recovery. It's been a long time since then. If it's okay I can turn to Chad and maybe answer the question.

MR. CHAD THOMAS: Thank you, John, great question. The genetics are all from Roanoke River, so the brood stock was collected from the Roanoke. There were two treatments in 2023, the first was a treatment of 1.5 million fry that were genetically distinct from the 650,000 juveniles that were stocked in June.

Those treatments will continue in 2024 and 2025. There are some thoughts of perhaps doing Phase 2 stockings as well, that will also be genetically distinct. Each treatment is being able to be evaluated separately, and again, this multi-year restoration strategy is not intended to do anything except jumpstart the moratory actions.

CHAIR GARY: All right, any other questions for Chris or Chad? On to our final agenda item, Other Business. Is there any other business to bring before the Board? David Borden.

MR. DAVID V. BORDEN: Just a quick point, Mr. Chairman. Over the past couple years, we've been trying to deal with a number of variables, one of them is recreational catch and release mortality. I'm a little bit uneasy where we stand with it. I realize, based on the last couple of years, that it's a difficult issue for the Board to get its head around on what the options are and what these potential impacts are.

My suggestion or request would be for the Chair and Vice-Chair, basically to confer with the staff and any other Board member between now and the next meeting, and try to winnow down a few options, so that the Board could consider how to take that issue up in the future.

CHAIR GARY: I'll turn to staff, look to Toni to see if there is a way to address David's comments.

MS. KERNS: David, if it's just the job of the Chair and the Vice-Chair I would say great, go right on ahead and have those conversations. But if it's the job of staff, between now and that January meeting, and Emilie is just coming back online. I don't want to promise that we'll be able to have a full report to you. I would like to have the option to have that report in May, if I may. If that would be okay, then I think we could do that. But I don't want to commit to Marty and Megan's time to be able to provide a report in January or not. I'm just a little worried about public hearings, additional work that is going on with cobia. Emilie won't be full time when she comes back, she is going to be at reduced hours. I

just want to set some expectations of what can get done.

CHAIR GARY: Yes, go ahead, David.

MR. BORDEN: I think that's fine, and that also might align with the study that Massachusetts is doing currently, where we would have some of the results from that, that might have a bearing on these issues. Thank you very much.

CHAIR GARY: Any other business to bring before the Board? We're having a spectacular end here, Toni. All right, Toni has some process characterization for us for the Draft.

MS. KERNS: We'll make the changes to the document, hopefully have the document out either the end of next week or early into the following week. Emilie will be reaching out to figure out who wants to have public hearings. You will either see myself or Emilie in your state to conduct those public hearings, or have a virtual hearing, we're happy to do those still, if you like them.

We'll try to have at least one virtual hearing out there, so if there is one state that wants to have one, we like to do that, to provide that opportunity to those who can't get to a state hearing, or they are just not available on the evening that your state or jurisdiction is having a hearing. Then we'll bring back comments at the January meeting.

CHAIR GARY: Thanks, Toni, I always seem to miss that at the end of one of these addendum or amendment processes. If there is no other business to come before this Board, this is the last meeting for me. I had the privilege to chair this species board, and I would just like to thank the staff and the leadership of the Commission for the opportunity.

It's a huge privilege to chair any of the boards, but particularly this one, the Flagship. Like a lot of people sitting around the table, I have a long history and a deep connection to this species, and I know everyone else does too. But it was an immense privilege and honor to guide these discussions, and I hope we're guiding them in the right direction.

As the old saying goes, with striped bass at least, there is always going to be pain, uncertainty and constant work, and that will continue. I can't think of a better person to take over than my esteemed colleague, Megan Ware, from the state of Maine. She'll be your Board Chair come this February.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR GARY: I just want to thank everyone, and thank the staff for your incredible work, you're awesome. This meeting is adjourned.

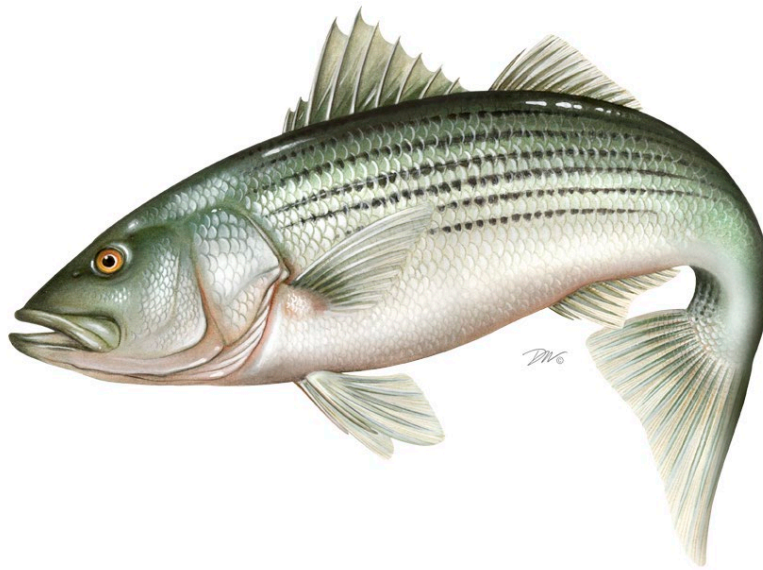
MS. KERNS: Thank you so much, Marty.

Draft Document for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

**DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7
TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS**

Interim Management Measures



October 2023



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Draft Document for Public Comment

Public Comment Process and Proposed Timeline

In May 2023, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board initiated the development of Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass to consider management measures to reduce fishing mortality to the target and support stock rebuilding by 2029. The Draft Addendum also proposes options to allow the Board to respond more quickly to upcoming stock assessment updates. This Draft Addendum presents background on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (Commission) management of Atlantic striped bass; the addendum process and timeline; a statement of the problem; and management options for public consideration and comment.

The public is encouraged to submit comments regarding the proposed management options in this document at any time during the public comment period. The final date comments will be accepted is **Friday, December 22, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. (EST)**. Comments may be submitted at state public hearings or by mail or email. If you have any questions or would like to submit comment, please use the contact information below. Organizations planning to release an action alert in response to this Draft Addendum should contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at efranke@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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(Subject: Striped Bass Draft
Addendum II)

Date	Action
May 2023	Board initiated the Draft Addendum
May – September 2023	Plan Development Team (PDT) develops Draft Addendum document
October 2023	Board reviews and approves Draft Addendum II for public comment
November – December 2023	Public comment period, including public hearings
January 2024	Board reviews public comment, selects management measures, final approval of Addendum II

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Atlantic striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) are managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in state waters (0–3 miles) and through NOAA Fisheries in federal waters (3–200 miles). The management unit includes the coastal migratory stock from Maine through North Carolina. State waters fisheries for Atlantic striped bass are currently managed under Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP), Addendum I to Amendment 7, and a temporary Emergency Action (effective May 2, 2023 through October 28, 2024 unless sooner replaced by this addendum). Harvesting or targeting striped bass in federal waters has been prohibited by NOAA Fisheries since 1990.

In May 2023, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board) initiated Addendum II to Amendment 7 to address stock rebuilding beyond 2023. The Board initiated the draft addendum via the following approved motion:

“Move to initiate an Addendum to implement commercial and recreational measures for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay fisheries in 2024 that in aggregate are projected to achieve F-target from the 2022 stock assessment update ($F = 0.17$). Potential measures for the ocean recreational fishery should include modifications to the Addendum VI standard slot limit of 28-35” with harvest season closures as a secondary non-preferred option. Potential measures for Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries, as well as ocean and Bay commercial fisheries should include maximum size limits. The addendum will include an option for a provision enabling the Board to respond via Board action to the results of the upcoming stock assessment updates (e.g., currently scheduled for 2024, 2026) if the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029 with a probability greater than or equal to 50%.”

In August 2023, the Board removed consideration of recreational harvest season closures; added options for commercial quota reductions, recreational for-hire specific measures, and minimum requirements for states allowing filleting in the recreational fishery; and provided direction on the range of other commercial and recreational management options requested.

In October 2023, the Board added more options for the ocean recreational slot limit; removed some Chesapeake Bay recreational options that would have resulted in vastly different measures across Bay jurisdictions; and removed consideration of commercial maximum size limits. Although commercial maximum size limits were part of the initial scope of this addendum, the Board removed those options from consideration based on recommendations from the Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee (TC)¹. The TC concluded that the overall effect of a commercial maximum size limit option would be increased uncertainty around rebuilding probabilities without positively impacting stock productivity or stock rebuilding. Based on these TC findings, the Board removed consideration of commercial maximum size limits and instead decided to consider a commercial quota reduction to reduce commercial removals.

¹ The TC’s full analysis of commercial maximum size limits is available here:
http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/653fd79fStripedBassTC_Report_Sept2023.pdf

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Due to the additional time needed to develop and refine the draft addendum, final action on the addendum will no longer occur in 2023 and the implementation schedule of selected measures may span 2024–2025. The Board intends to consider the results of the upcoming 2024 stock assessment update to inform subsequent management action.

2.0 OVERVIEW

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Atlantic striped bass were declared overfished in 2019 and are subject to a rebuilding plan that requires the stock to be rebuilt to its spawning stock biomass target by 2029. The most recent rebuilding projections indicate a low probability of meeting that deadline if the fishing mortality rate associated with the level of catch in 2022 continues. There is concern that the recreational and commercial management measures in Amendment 7, in combination with the availability of the strong 2015 year-class to the fisheries, will lead to a similarly high level of catch in 2024. In response, this draft addendum considers measures to reduce removals from the 2022 level to achieve the target fishing mortality rate and support stock rebuilding.

Stock assessments will be completed during the rebuilding period and used to gauge the success of the measures in achieving the target fishing mortality rate and to estimate the probability of rebuilding the stock by 2029. These assessments are typically completed during the second half of the calendar year, so if a management response is needed to reduce fishing mortality, the typical addendum development and implementation schedule results in new measures not being implemented until two years later. There is concern that such delays may impede rebuilding, especially as the deadline to achieve a rebuilt stock nears. Accordingly, this draft addendum also considers a mechanism that would allow the Board to adjust management measures in response to upcoming stock assessments via Board action, which would be faster than a typical addendum process, if deemed necessary to achieve stock rebuilding by 2029.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 Stock Status

Female spawning stock biomass (SSB) and fishing mortality (F) are estimated on a regular basis and compared to target and threshold levels (i.e., biological reference points) to assess the status of the striped bass stock. The 1995 estimate of female SSB is used as the SSB threshold because many stock characteristics, such as an expanded age structure, were reached by this year, and this is also the year the stock was declared recovered. The female SSB target is equal to 125% of the female SSB threshold. The associated F threshold and F target are calculated to achieve the respective SSB reference points in the long term.

The most recent assessment for striped bass was an update completed in 2022 with data through 2021². Prior to this, the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment had determined that striped bass were

² ASMFC. 2022. Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Arlington, VA. 191p.

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overfished and experiencing overfishing in the terminal year (2017)³. Following the implementation of new management measures in 2020, the 2022 Stock Assessment Update found that the stock was no longer experiencing overfishing in 2021 ($F = 0.14$, below the threshold of 0.20 and the target of 0.17) but remained overfished (Female SSB = 143 million pounds, below both the target of 235 million pounds and the threshold of 188 million pounds) (Figures 1 and 2). These reference points were calculated using the “low recruitment assumption” (per Amendment 7’s requirement under a tripped recruitment trigger), which resulted in a lower, more conservative F target and threshold compared to the 2018 benchmark assessment. Although below the threshold and considered overfished, female SSB in 2021 was still estimated to be more than three-times of that during the early 1980s, when the stock was considered collapsed (Figure 1).

The assessment also indicated a period of strong recruitment (numbers of age-1 fish entering the population) from 1994–2004, followed by a period of low recruitment from 2005–2011 (although not as low as the period of stock collapse in the early 1980s) (Figure 1). This period of low recruitment contributed to the decline in SSB that the stock has experienced since 2010. Recruitment of age-1 fish was high in 2012, 2015, 2016, and 2019 (corresponding to strong 2011, 2014, 2015, and 2018 year classes, respectively); however, estimates of age-1 striped bass were below the long-term average in 2018, 2020, and 2021.

The 2022 assessment also included short-term projections to determine the probability of SSB being at or above the SSB target by 2029. These projections also used the low recruitment assumption, which restricts the estimates of age-1 recruitment to those occurring during 2008–2021, rather than the longer time series of 1993–2021. These projections indicated that under the 2021 fishing mortality rate, there was a 97% probability the stock will be rebuilt by 2029 (Figure 3).

However, concerns over high recreational removals in 2022 compared to 2021 (the terminal year of the most recent assessment update) prompted the Board to request updated stock projections using 2022 preliminary removals. These estimates of preliminary 2022 removals and updated stock projections were presented to the Board in May 2023. The data showed that while commercial removals in 2022 were similar to those in 2021, recreational harvest had increased 88% and recreational live releases by 3%, resulting in an overall 38% increase in recreational removals (relative to 2021). These 2022 removals were used to estimate F in 2022. Since striped bass catch and F rates vary from year-to-year (even under the same regulations), the average F from 2019-2022 (excluding 2020 due to uncertainty associated with COVID-19 impacts) was applied to 2023-2029 in the new projections. Under this F rate, the new projections estimate the probability of rebuilding SSB to its target by 2029 drops from 97% to 15% (Figure 3).

It should be noted that these projections are not the same as a full stock assessment update where the model would be re-run to include the 2022 catch-at-age and index data. Accordingly, the status of the stock remains overfished but is not experiencing overfishing as per the 2022 stock assessment update.

³ NEFSC. 2019. Summary Report of the 66th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC 66), Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Woods Hole, MA. 40p.

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The next stock assessments for striped bass are currently scheduled for 2024 (an update with data through 2023), 2026 (an update with data through 2025), and 2027 (a benchmark—in which the inputs and methods are fully re-evaluated—likely with data through 2026).

2.2.2 Management Status

Striped bass are currently managed under Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP), Addendum I to Amendment 7, and a temporary Emergency Action (effective May 2, 2023 through October 28, 2024 unless sooner replaced by this addendum).

Amendment 7: Amendment 7 consolidated and replaced Amendment 6 and its addenda in 2022; in so doing, several aspects of the management program, including the management triggers, stock rebuilding plan, recreational gear requirements, and conservation equivalency (CE) restrictions, were updated to better align with current fishery needs and priorities. Importantly, Amendment 7 maintained the Addendum VI to Amendment 6 recreational and commercial fishery measures (the implications of which are described in more detail below). Separate management measures are in place for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay fisheries due to distinct size availabilities of fish between the areas.

Amendment 7's FMP standard for managing the recreational fisheries is a one-fish bag limit with a 28 to less than 35" slot limit for the ocean area, a one-fish bag limit with an 18" minimum size limit for the Chesapeake Bay area, and for both areas the seasons which were in place in 2017. Amendment 7's FMP standard for managing both the ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries is a state and/or area specific commercial quota (reduced 18% from 2017), and the size limit(s) in place in 2017. This suite of measures was first implemented under Addendum VI to Amendment 6 in 2020 to achieve an overall 18% reduction in removals relative to 2017 (shared in equivalent commercial and recreational reduction), in response to the 2018 benchmark stock assessment determining the stock as overfished and experiencing overfishing.⁴ However, when implementing Addendum VI, numerous states adopted alternative recreational size limits, recreational bag limits, recreational seasons, commercial size limits, and/or commercial quotas through CE.⁵ Because Amendment 7 did not revise the FMP standard commercial and recreational fishery measures from those of Addendum VI, the CE programs implemented under Addendum VI were also allowed to be carried forward by states in 2022 under the framework of Amendment 7. See Tables 1–2 for the recreational and commercial measures in place in 2022 and Table 3 for a description of the CE programs implemented. Amendment 7's revision to when and how CE may be employed by states is reviewed below.

Part of the rationale for not changing any commercial and recreational management measures under Amendment 7 was that final action on the amendment preceded the completion of the 2022 stock

⁴ Addendum VI also established the mandatory use of circle hooks when recreationally fishing for striped bass with bait (except as part of an artificial lure); however, this measure was not credited towards the needed 18% reduction in removals to end overfishing. Amendment 7 added two additional gear requirements when recreationally fishing for striped bass: a prohibition on gaffing and the immediate release of striped bass caught on any unapproved method of take.

⁵ Conservation equivalency (CE) refers to actions taken by a state which differ from the specific requirements of the FMP, but which achieve the same quantified level of conservation for the resource under management. It is the responsibility of the state to demonstrate the proposed management program is equivalent to the FMP standards and consistent with the restrictions and requirements for CE determined by the Board. Board approval of a CE proposal is required prior to state implementation.

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assessment by several months. The 2022 stock assessment was expected to provide management advice as to whether the existing measures implemented under Addendum VI had successfully reduced fishing mortality to the target level and put the stock on track to rebuild by 2029. In other words, when Amendment 7 was adopted, it was unknown whether additional conservation measures were needed. Because of this timing issue, Amendment 7 instead included a provision allowing the Board to respond quickly to the results of the 2022 stock assessment update with additional management measures if needed for rebuilding success. Specifically, rather than responding via an addendum (which typically requires three Board meetings from addendum initiation to adoption), the Board could specify state measures by a Board vote at a single meeting. Ultimately, the 2022 stock assessment indicated that *F* in 2021 was below the target, providing a very high probability of achieving a rebuilt stock by 2029; consequently, this provision of Amendment 7, which was specific to responding to the results of the 2022 stock assessment, was not utilized.

The use of CE is subject to additional restrictions and requirements under Amendment 7 *when the FMP standard for a fishery is revised*. First and foremost, CE programs will not be approved for non-quota managed fisheries (with the exception of the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Delaware Bay recreational fisheries) when the stock is at or below the biomass threshold (i.e., overfished), though quota managed CE programs would still be allowed. In the context of this draft addendum and current stock status, this means that if the FMP standard for the ocean or Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries (as described above) is changed, the existing Addendum VI CE programs affecting those fisheries are invalidated and a state cannot request a new CE program for non-quota managed fisheries (with the exception of the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Delaware Bay recreational fisheries) until the stock is no longer considered overfished by a future stock assessment. For states that combined Addendum VI CE programs across fishery sectors (e.g., took a less than 18% commercial reduction based on achieving more than an 18% recreational reduction), this has implications beyond the recreational fishery.

Additionally, if future CE is requested, CE proposals will be subject to new recreational catch estimate precision standards, uncertainty buffer requirements, and an established definition of “equivalency”. Specifically, CE proposals will not be allowed to use Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimates associated with a percent standard error (PSE) exceeding 40%. PSE is a measure of precision, and higher PSEs indicate the data are less precise. Proposed CE programs for non-quota managed fisheries will be required to include an uncertainty buffer of 10%; this is intended to increase the proposed CE program’s probability of achieving equivalency with the FMP standard. However, if a CE proposal uses MRIP estimates with a PSE exceeding 30%, but less than or equal to 40%, then a larger 25% uncertainty buffer is required. Lastly, CE programs for non-quota managed fisheries are required to demonstrate equivalency to the percent reduction/liberalization projected for the FMP standard at the state-specific level (rather than the coastwide level).

Addendum I to Amendment 7: Addendum I was approved and implemented in May 2023 to allow for voluntary ocean commercial quota transfers contingent on stock status. When the stock is overfished, no quota transfers will be allowed. When the stock is not overfished, the Board can decide every one to two years whether it will allow voluntary transfers of unused ocean commercial quota. The Board can also set criteria for allowable transfers, including a limit on how much and when quota can be

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transferred in a given year, and the eligibility of a state to request a transfer based on its landings. Given the overfished stock status for striped bass, quota transfers will not be authorized in 2024.

2023 Emergency Action: At its May 2023 meeting, the Board was presented with updated stock rebuilding projections that included preliminary removal estimates for 2022. Prior projections with data through 2021 had indicated a very high chance (97%) of rebuilding the overfished striped bass resource to its SSB target by the 2029 rebuilding deadline. Due to a near doubling of recreational harvest in 2022, the new projections estimated that the probability of rebuilding to the SSB target by 2029 drops to 15% if the higher fishing mortality rate (calculated as the average of 2019-2022 fishing mortality rates, excluding 2020) continues for 2023-2029.

In addition to initiating this draft addendum to consider coastwide changes to the commercial and recreational regulations to bring *F* back to the target level of 0.17, the Board approved an Emergency Action to more immediately address the source of the increase in fishing mortality. Specifically, the Board's May 2, 2023 emergency action required all states to implement a 31-inch maximum size limit for their striped bass recreational fisheries⁶ as soon as possible and no later than July 2, 2023, while maintaining all other measures. In effect, the emergency action reduced the ocean recreational slot from 28 to <35" to 28 – 31", and layered a 31" maximum size to the Chesapeake Bay's recreational measures. Emergency actions are effective for 180 days from the time of their declaration, putting the expiration date of the 31" recreational maximum size limit at October 28, 2023, unless sooner rescinded or extended by the Board. At its August 2023 meeting, the Board extended the emergency action for one year (through October 28, 2024) or until the implementation of this addendum (if sooner). If it deems necessary, the Board may extend the emergency action for one additional period of up to a year at a future Board meeting.

The emergency action's 31" recreational maximum size limit is intended to reduce recreational harvest from the level seen in 2022 by providing additional protection to the abundant 2015 year class. The strong 2015 year-class is a primary reason for the increase in harvest in 2022, as many of the fish born that year had begun to exceed 28" in length, the lower bound of the ocean slot limit (Figure 4). In 2023, as 8 year olds, these fish are expected to average 31 ½" in length (Table 4). By implementing the 31" maximum size limit, over 50% of the 2015 year class should be protected from recreational harvest. Without this change, a high majority of the 2015 year-class would have been within the 28" to <35" ocean slot and susceptible to recreational harvest, raising concern that fishing mortality in 2023 would be even greater than 2022 and further erode the probability for rebuilding by 2029. As of July 2, 2023, all states implemented the emergency action's 31" maximum size limit (Table 5).

2.2.2.1 Social and Economic Impacts

For more detailed discussion of recent research into striped bass anglers' preferences and behavior and how it could be applied, see Amendment 7 to the Striped Bass FMP Section 1.5.2.

⁶ The emergency action excluded the Chesapeake Bay spring trophy fishery from the 31" maximum size limit in 2023 because this fishery occurs for two weeks in May prior to the emergency action's implementation deadline and the fishery's current 35" minimum size limit provides a high level of protection to the 2015 year-class in the short-term.

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For the recreational sector, changes in bag and size limits (as well as other management measures not considered herein) affect important attributes of a recreational fishing trip, such as the number of fish of each species that anglers catch and are allowed to keep. In turn, these changes in trip attributes will modify the utility (i.e., level of satisfaction) an angler expects to obtain from the fishing trip (McConnell et al. 1995, Haab and McConnell 2003)⁷. As a result, the angler may shift target species, modify trip duration or location, or decide not to take the trip and do something else instead. These behavioral responses lead to changes in directed fishing effort, resulting in changes in harvest, fishing mortality, and angler welfare. This is, however, only a short-term response and stock dynamics will dictate any longer-term effects on the resource, which may subsequently feedback and affect future management decisions and angling behavior.

Narrow slot limits, like the 2023 emergency action and the options being considered in this document for beyond 2023, will lead to fish in the larger size range being released in the short-term. For example, a 28" to 31" recreational slot limit in the ocean will lead to fish in the 31" to 35" size range being released in the short-term. Recent research into striped bass anglers' preferences and behavior found the typical striped bass angler prefers to keep larger fish (Carr-Harris and Steinback 2020)⁸. Applying this to a 28 to 31" slot limit, anglers would likely prefer to keep a fish on the size range 31"-35" rather than having to release it, which means that in the short-term, a narrow slot limit like 28 to 31" may reduce effort (i.e., reduce trips) from those anglers seeking to bring fish home in the cooler. Thus, the overall anticipated effect on the number of releases in the short-term is unclear; larger fish are required to be released, but any reduction in effort may reduce the overall number of releases. Conversely, the higher slot limit option considered herein (i.e., 30-33") may make it more difficult for shore anglers to catch a legal sized fish, given the smaller size of fish generally available inshore, which may also reduce effort and raise environmental justice issues. A reduction in effort could translate into a short-term negative impact on the regional economy and businesses associated with the fishing industry for this species. Importantly, this is likely only a short-term response, and stock dynamics will dictate any longer-term effects on the resource and the angling community. Assuming the options considered for this action will support the rebuilding of the striped bass population, it will likely ensure the quality of the recreational fishing experience for the sector in the long-term.

For the commercial sector, changes in quota could also have economic impacts due to a change in total poundage. A reduction in quota would likely reduce profits and may increase the consumer price of striped bass.

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery

In 2022, total Atlantic striped bass removals (including commercial and recreational harvest, commercial dead discards and recreational release mortality) were estimated at 6.8 million fish, which is a 32% increase from 2021 total removals. This 2022 increase was driven by an increase in

⁷ McConnell, K.E. and Strand, I.E. and Blake-Hedges, L. 1995. Random Utility Models of Recreational Fishing: Catching Fish Using a Poisson Process. *Marine Resource Economics* 10, p.247-261.

Haab, T.C. and McConnell, K.E. 2003. *Valuating Environmental and Natural Resources: The Econometrics of Non-Market Valuation*, Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁸ Carr-Harris, A. and S. Steinback. 2020. Expected economic and biological impacts of recreational Atlantic striped bass fishing policy. *Front. Mar. Sci.* 6: 814, p.1-20.

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recreational removals, as commercial removals slightly decreased. In 2022, the commercial sector accounted for about 10% of total removals in numbers of fish (9% harvest and 1% dead discards), and the recreational sector accounted for 90% of removals in numbers of fish (51% harvest and 39% release mortality) (Figure 5). Removals for each sector by year are listed in Table 6.

Recreational Fishery

The recreational fishery is managed by bag limits, minimum size or slot size limits, and closed seasons (in some states) to restrict harvest (Table 2). Gear restrictions are also in place to increase the chance of survival after a striped bass is released alive in the recreational fishery. Total recreational catch (harvest and live releases) coastwide was estimated at 33.1 million fish in 2022, which is a 38% increase from 2021. This overall coastwide increase was a combination of a large increase in harvest and a marginal increase in live releases.

From 2004 to 2014, recreational harvest averaged 4.6 million fish per year. From 2015-2019, annual harvest decreased to an estimated 2.8 million fish due to the implementation of more restrictive regulations via Addendum IV, changes in effort and changes in size and distribution of the population through time. Total recreational harvest decreased to 1.71 million fish in 2020 and 1.82 million fish in 2021, likely due to a combination of factors including more restrictive regulations via Addendum VI, fish availability, and impacts of COVID-19. It is important to recognize that impacts from COVID-19 were likely not uniform across states, sectors, or modes.

Under the same management measures as 2020-2021, total recreational harvest in 2022 increased to 3.4 million fish (35.8 million pounds), which is an 88% increase by number relative to 2021 (127% increase by weight). This increase was likely due to the increased availability of the strong 2015 year class in the ocean slot in 2022. New Jersey landed the largest proportion of recreational harvest in number of fish⁹ (33%), followed by New York (26%), Maryland (19%), and Massachusetts (14%). The proportion of coastwide recreational harvest in numbers from Chesapeake Bay was estimated at 20% in 2022, compared to 35% in 2021. By weight, the proportion of recreational harvest from the Chesapeake Bay was estimated at 9% in 2022, compared to 20% in 2021.

The vast majority of recreational striped bass catch (over 90%) is released alive either due to angler preference or regulation (i.e., closed season, undersized, or already caught the bag limit). The stock assessment assumes, based on previous studies, that 9% of fish that are released alive die as a result of being caught. In 2022, recreational anglers caught and released an estimated 29.6 million fish, of which 2.7 million are assumed to have died. This represents a 3% increase in live releases coastwide from 2021.

In 2022, combined private vessel/shore modes of the recreational striped bass fishery accounted for 95% of recreational removals, and the for-hire components (charter and head boats) accounted for 5%. Coastwide in 2022, private vessel/shore mode recreational removals increased by 42% relative to 2021, while for-hire recreational removals decreased by 7%. However, this trend differs by region and

⁹ By weight, New Jersey had the largest proportion of recreational harvest (38%), followed by New York (30%), Massachusetts (15%), and Maryland (9%).

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by mode. In the ocean, private vessel/shore mode removals increased by 52% and for-hire removals increased by 22% in 2022. In the Chesapeake Bay, private vessel/shore mode removals increased by only 3%, and for-hire removals decreased by 27%.

The ocean and Chesapeake Bay regions experienced different changes in recreational catch in 2022 relative to 2021. The ocean region saw an increase in both recreational harvest (132% increase in numbers of fish) and live releases (7% increase) relative to 2021. On the other hand, the Chesapeake Bay saw a much smaller increase in recreational harvest (7% increase) and a decrease in live releases (18% decrease) relative to 2021. Again, the large increase in ocean recreational harvest is likely due to the availability of the strong 2015 year class in the ocean slot in 2022, when many of those age-8 fish were above the legal minimum size of 28 inches.

The number of trips directed at striped bass (primary and secondary target) also shows a differing trend between the ocean and the Chesapeake Bay. In 2022, the number of ocean directed trips increased by 31% relative to 2021, while the number of Chesapeake Bay directed trips decreased slightly by about 2%.

Recent MRIP News Regarding Fishing Effort Survey

In August 2023, NOAA Fisheries released findings of a pilot study it conducted to evaluate potential sources of bias in the recreational Fishing Effort Survey (FES) questionnaire design.¹⁰ This study found switching the sequence of questions resulted in fewer reporting errors and fishing effort estimates that were generally 30 to 40 percent lower for shore and private boat modes than estimates produced from the current design. However, results varied by state and fishing mode. These results are based on a pilot study that had a limited time frame (six months) and geographic scope (only four states included), and much more extensive work needs to be done to determine the true impacts of the survey design. NOAA Fisheries will be conducting a larger-scale follow-up study over the course of 2024. At this time, the potential impacts to recreational catch estimates and stock assessments are unknown.

Even if we were to assume that striped bass recreational catch was overestimated by 30-40% over the timeframe (1982-present), it would likely only change the scale of the biomass but not the overall downward trend in the population that we have seen since 2010. It would not change the fact that, using the same FES methodology, recreational harvest estimates nearly doubled from 2021 to 2022. This increased catch was supported through recreational anglers anecdotally reporting catching more fish as well as numerous states' commercial fisheries utilizing their quota more quickly or fully, particularly in ocean fisheries. The striped bass assessment will be updated in 2024 and can be used to explore how the possible overestimation of recreational catch may impact biomass and the emergency measures that have been put in place to reduce fishery removals.

¹⁰ https://apps-st.fisheries.noaa.gov/rpts/main/public_docs/Evaluating%20Measurement%20Error%20in%20the%20FES%20Consolidated%20Final%20w%20Review.pdf?method=PUB_MANUSCRIPT&id=32268

Commercial Fishery

The commercial fishery is managed by a quota system resulting in relatively stable landings since 2004. There are two regional quotas; one for the Chesapeake Bay area and one for the ocean area, which includes other bays, inland rivers, and estuaries. In 2022, the ocean commercial striped bass quota was 2,411,154 pounds, and 1,904,852 pounds were harvested in the ocean region. In the Chesapeake Bay region, the 2022 commercial striped bass quota was 3,001,648 pounds, and 2,374,988 pounds were harvested. Neither quota was exceeded in 2022. Refer to Table 1 for 2022 commercial fishery regulations by state, including size limits, trip limits, gear restrictions, and seasons.

From 2004 to 2014, coastwide commercial landings averaged 6.8 million pounds per year. From 2015-2019, commercial landings decreased to an average of 4.7 million pounds due to implementation of reduced quotas through Addendum IV. From 2020-2022, coastwide commercial landings decreased again to an average 4.1 million pounds due to further reduced quotas through Addendum VI.

Since 1990, commercial landings from the ocean fishery have accounted for an average 40% of total coastwide commercial landings by weight, with the other 60% coming from the Chesapeake Bay. The proportion of commercial harvest coming from Chesapeake Bay is much higher in numbers of fish (roughly 80%) because fish harvested in Chesapeake Bay have a lower average weight than fish harvested in ocean fisheries.

Of the total 2022 commercial harvest (combined ocean and Chesapeake Bay) by weight, Maryland landed 31%, Virginia landed 20%, and Massachusetts landed 18%. Additional harvest came from New York (15%), the Potomac River Fishery Commission (PRFC) (10%), Rhode Island (4%), and Delaware (3%).

Ocean commercial size limits, seasons, and gear types vary by state. Along the Atlantic coast, current legal minimum size ranges from 20" to 35". In general, lower minimum sizes exist in the Mid-Atlantic (where fish are primarily harvested by a combination of drift and anchor gill nets), while New England states have larger minimum sizes and harvest is predominantly hook and line. In the ocean region, only New York currently has a commercial slot size with lower and upper bounds (26–38"). Chesapeake Bay commercial size limits and gear types are more uniform with an 18" minimum size for Bay states, although Maryland has a year-round maximum size (36") while PRFC and Virginia have seasonal maximum size limits of 36" and 28", respectively. All three Bay states employ a combination of pound net, drift net, and hook and line gear types.

State commercial sampling programs indicate the mean length, weight, and age of commercially harvested striped bass are higher for the ocean fishery (Table 7). Sub-sampling of commercial striped bass harvest occurs for about 1-5% of all harvested fish in each state, and these values are assumed to be representative of each state's landings. In the ocean, mean length of harvested fish ranged from 30.2" total length (NY) to 41.1" total length (MD ocean) based on 2022 samples, with corresponding mean weights ranging from 9.9 lbs. to 25.9 lbs. In the Chesapeake Bay, mean length of harvested fish ranged from 22.2" total length (MD Bay) to 36.2" total length (VA Bay hook & line) based on 2022 samples, with corresponding mean weights ranging from 4.6 lbs. to 26.6 lbs.

3.0 PROPOSED MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

This document proposes management changes for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay fisheries. The striped bass ocean fishery (also referred to as “ocean region”) is defined as all fisheries operating in coastal and estuarine areas of the U.S. Atlantic coast from Maine through North Carolina, excluding the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound-Roanoke River (A-R) management areas. The Chesapeake Bay fishery is defined as all fisheries operating within Chesapeake Bay, except for the Chesapeake Bay recreational spring trophy fishery. The Chesapeake Bay recreational spring trophy fishery is part of the ocean fishery for management purposes because it targets coastal migratory striped bass. This document does not propose changes to the A-R fisheries, which are managed separately by the State of North Carolina.

When the Board takes final action on the addendum, there is the opportunity to select any measure within the range of options that went out for public comment, including combining options across issues.

Projecting 2024 Reduction to Achieve the Fishing Mortality Target

The same forward projecting methodology as used in striped bass stock assessments was used to estimate the removals needed to achieve F target in 2024 with a 50% probability. The projections were made using 2022 removals data (6.8 million fish total), and estimated 2023 removals accounting for implementation of the 2023 emergency action (an estimated 4.8 million fish total¹¹). A new selectivity curve for the 2023 emergency action was also developed to account for the lower selectivity of ages 7-9 fish in 2023 due to the narrower recreational slot limit. Because the calculation of F target accounts for selectivity, the F target value was re-calculated to incorporate this new 2023 selectivity (F target=0.176). Projection results indicate a 14.5% reduction from 2022 total removals is needed to achieve F target in 2024. This overall reduction can be achieved, for example, by each sector and area (commercial/recreational and Ocean/Chesapeake Bay) taking a 14.5% reduction. Were the recreational sector to be accountable for achieving the full reduction, a 16.1% reduction from 2022 recreational removals would be needed to achieve the F target in 2024.

Different combinations of ocean recreational options, Chesapeake Bay recreational options, and commercial quota reduction options will result in varying estimated reductions (Table 8) and associated probabilities of being at or above the SSB target by 2029. Option combinations with higher estimated reductions would result in a higher probability of being at or above the SSB target by 2029; option combinations with lower estimated reductions would result in a lower probability of being at or above the SSB target by 2029. Across all possible option combinations, the highest estimated reduction is 15.4% and the lowest estimated reduction is 11.0%. Assuming those reductions are realized and other factors remain constant (e.g., effort), the highest reduction option combination is 17% more likely to result in female SSB being at or above the target by 2029 than the lowest reduction option

¹¹ The TC conducted sensitivity runs to explore different assumptions of the methods used to estimate 2023 removals and the effect on the projections, and found that although the estimates of 2023 removals varied from 4.8 to 5.7 million fish, the necessary percent reduction to achieve the F target in 2024 only varied by approximately 1.5%. The June 2023 Technical Committee summaries provide additional details on these methods and results: <http://www.asmfc.org/species/atlantic-stripped-bass#meetingsummaries>

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combination¹². These are not formal rebuilding projections; they are only provided to help compare across options in the document. Formal rebuilding projections will be conducted as part of the 2024 assessment update and will incorporate the final 2023 removals as well as better information on recent recruitment, selectivity, and F .

3.1 Recreational Fishery Management

Proposed options for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries are presented below. All size limits are in total length. Bag limits are per person per day. The Board will choose one option for each region. Options for the recreational fishery are designed to reduce harvest (fishing mortality) to achieve the target F . Although these options were not designed to protect a specific year-class, they may offer protection to one or more strong year-classes.

Note on Conservation Equivalency: Since the stock is currently overfished, if the FMP standard is changed, CE programs will not be approved for non-quota managed recreational fisheries, with the exception of the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Delaware Bay recreational fisheries. The Board has discretion whether to approve CE programs for quota managed fisheries.

The proposed recreational management options were developed using MRIP harvest and live release estimates. A mortality rate of 9% was applied to all live release estimates to estimate release mortality in the recreational fishery. To characterize ocean fish availability for 2024 and develop ocean slot limit options, year-class strength in the ocean was accounted for by using catch-at-length data from 2020. 2020 was used as a proxy for 2024 ocean fish availability because the strong 2011-year class was available in the ocean at age-9 in 2020, just as the strong 2015 year-class catch will be available in the ocean at age-9 in 2024. For the Chesapeake Bay, catch-at-length data from 2021 were used to characterize Bay fish availability in 2024 because that year is assumed to more accurately represent the younger year-classes expected to be present in the Bay in 2024. Specifically, in 2024, the 2018 year-class will be age-6, the same age the 2015 year-class was in 2021. When changes in the bag limit were developed, the average reduction in removals was estimated using data from a period when there was a two-fish bag limit in Chesapeake Bay. For both regions, the same level of non-compliance with size limits as observed in 2021-2022 is assumed to occur in 2024. In the ocean, all harvest below the slot is assumed to continue, as it is a mix of non-compliance and compliance with different, regional size limits in established CE programs and difficult to separate.

Recreational options by region are outlined in the following pages.

¹² Projections for different combinations of options estimating the probability of being at or above F target in 2024 or SSB target in 2029 are available at the link below. The projections are only intended to show how the options differ from each other; formal rebuilding projections will be conducted as part of the 2024 stock assessment update.
http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/653fde1ePDTMemo_DraftAddII_Oct2023.pdf

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

All ocean options (besides the status quo) propose a change to the slot limit's maximum size; some option also change the long-standing minimum size limit. The range of options considers a distinct (wider) slot limit for the for-hire fishing mode when conducting a for-hire trip to address concerns heard from for-hire operators about the potential for increased discards with narrower slots and the general desire for anglers on for-hire trips to harvest a fish. The impact of the wider for-hire slot on the reduction to be achieved is limited due to the small contribution of for-hire removals to total ocean removals (average 6% of ocean recreational harvest and 3% of total ocean removals over the past three years). The wider for-hire slot will provide less protection to the 2015 year-class, which will be age 9 in 2024 with an estimated average length of 34".

For all ocean options (besides the status quo), the Chesapeake Bay recreational spring trophy fishery will be managed by the same size limits as the ocean fishery with the 2022 trophy season dates. If the status quo option is selected, whether the Chesapeake Bay recreational spring trophy fishery will be managed by the same size limits as the ocean fishery will depend on whether or not the continuation of Addendum VI CEs is allowed.

For all ocean options (besides the status quo), the following states would be required to submit area-specific measures to achieve the same percent reduction in total removals as the selected ocean option (relative to 2022 levels) as part of their state implementation plans:

- *New York: the Hudson River management area*
- *Pennsylvania: all state waters*
- *Delaware: the state's July–August 20–25" slot fishery.*

All state implementation plans are subject to review by the Board, Technical Committee, and Plan Review Team, and should incorporate the best available data for each area (MRIP data are not available for all areas).

Option A. Status Quo: 1 fish at 28" to less than 35" with 2017 seasons (all modes). This option allows for the continuation of the existing Addendum VI CE plans. Status quo has little to no probability of achieving the objective of this addendum.

Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Option C. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons for private vessel/shore anglers; 1 fish at 28" to 33" with 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode.

Option D. 1 fish at 30" to 33" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Option E. 1 fish at 30" to 33" with 2022 seasons for private vessel/shore anglers; 1 fish at 28"-33" with 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode.

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Ocean Recreational Options	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Rec. Release Mortality Change
Option A. 1 fish at 28" to < 35" with 2017 season dates (all modes) or approved CEs.			
Option B. 1 fish at 28" – 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).	-14.1%	-49.9%	+2.0%
Option C. Private vessel/shore: 1 fish at 28" – 31" with 2022 seasons. For-hire: 1 fish at 28" – 33" with 2022 seasons.	-14.0%	-49.5%	+2.0%
Option D. 1 fish at 30" – 33" with 2022 seasons (all modes).	-12.8%	-45.4%	+1.8%
Option E. Private vessel/shore: 1 fish at 30" – 33" with 2022 seasons. For-hire: 1 fish at 28" – 33" with 2022 seasons.	-12.8%	-45.0%	+1.8%

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

All Chesapeake Bay options (besides the status quo) propose a maximum recreational size limit; all options also change the minimum size limit resulting in additional uniformity within the Bay. Maximum size limits range from 23" to 26"; higher maximum sizes were not considered in order to provide some protection to the above average 2018 year-class, which will be age-6 in 2024 with an average estimated length of just over 26". The range of options considers a distinct (higher) bag limit for the for-hire fishing mode when conducting for-hire trips to address concerns heard from for-hire operators about the potential for reduced for-hire angler effort at lower bag limits given the ability to only access smaller fish. In the Chesapeake Bay, for-hire removals are about one-fifth of total Bay removals (average 27% of Bay recreational harvest and 18% of total Bay recreational removals over the past three years), so the impact of the higher for-hire bag limit on the reduction to be achieved is somewhat larger than the wider slot limit proposed for the ocean for-hire fishery.

Option A. Status Quo: 1 fish at 18" minimum size with 2017 seasons for all Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries. This option allows for the continuation of the existing Addendum VI CE plans. Status quo has little to no probability of achieving the objective of this addendum.

Option B. Apply a standard minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and bag limit to the Bay jurisdictions' 2022 seasons. The minimum size shall be 19" and the bag limit 1 fish. Maximum size limit options are: B1) 23", B2) 24", B3) 25" or B4) 26".

Option C. Apply a standard minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and mode-specific bag limits to the Bay jurisdictions' 2022 seasons. The minimum size shall be 19", the for-hire bag limit 2 fish, and the private vessel/shore angler bag limit 1 fish. Maximum size limit options are: C1) 23", or C2) 24".

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Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options							
	Min. Size	Max. Size	Bag Limit	Season	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Rec. Release Mortality (RRM) Change
Option A	1 fish at 18" minimum size with 2017 seasons, or approved CEs.						
Chesapeake Bay Options with Consistent Minimum Size, Maximum Size, and Bag Limit							
	Min. Size	Max. Size	Bag Limit	Season	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	RRM Change
Option B1	19" (all jurisdictions)	23"	1 fish (all modes)	same as 2022 ⁺	-22.4%	-38.4%	+6.7%
Option B2	19" (all jurisdictions)	24"	1 fish (all modes)	same as 2022 ⁺	-15.9%	-27.5%	+4.8%
Option B3	19" (all jurisdictions)	25"	1 fish (all modes)	same as 2022 ⁺	-12.1%	-21.1%	+3.7%
Option B4	19" (all jurisdictions)	26"	1 fish (all modes)	same as 2022 ⁺	-10.3%	-18.1%	+3.2%
Chesapeake Bay Options with Consistent Minimum Size, Maximum Size, and Mode-Specific Bag Limits (P/S=private vessel/shore anglers and FH= for-hire)							
	Min. Size	Max. Size	Bag Limit	Season	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	RRM Change
Option C1	19" (all jurisdictions)	23"	1 fish P/S 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-17.9%	-31.4%	+4.9%
Option C2	19" (all jurisdictions)	24"	1 fish P/S 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-11.0%	-19.3%	+3.0%

***2022 Chesapeake Bay Bag Limits**

MD: 1 fish-private vessel/shore, 2 fish-For-Hire	PRFC: 2 fish for all modes
DC: 1 fish for all modes	VA: 1 fish for all modes

+2022 Chesapeake Bay Seasons

MD: C&R only: 1.1-3.31, 12.11-12.31 No targeting: 4.1-4.30 Trophy: 5.1.-5.15 (part of ocean fishery) Open: 5.16-7.15, 8.1-12.10 No Targeting: 7.16-7.31	PRFC: No Harvest: 1.1-4.30 Trophy: 5.1-5.15 (part of ocean fishery) Open: 5.16-7.6, 8.21-12.31 No Targeting: 7.7-8.20
DC: No Harvest: 1.1-5.16 Open: 5.16-12.31	VA: No Harvest: 1.1-5.15 Open: 5.16-6.15, 10.4-12.31 No Harvest: 6.16-10.3

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected)

If a recreational mode split management option is selected for ocean and/or Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries (i.e., different recreational size or bag limit for the for-hire mode vs. private vessel/shore anglers), the Board will select one of the following options to determine how those measures would apply to individuals during for-hire trips.

Option A. Status Quo. No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass regarding how for-hire measures would apply to individuals during for-hire trips.

Option B. For-hire management measures apply only to patrons during a for-hire trip; captain and crew during a for-hire trip are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

State allowances for at-sea/shore-side filleting of recreationally-caught striped bass, especially where racks are not required to be retained for enforcement with size limits or there are not corresponding minimum/maximum fillet lengths, could make it is easier for non-compliance to occur. Enforcement with *maximum* size limits in particular may be more challenging with filleting allowances (i.e., fillets can be trimmed to correspond to maximum fish size). Minimum requirements for states that allow filleting would increase compliance. Appendix 1 lists current state filleting regulations.

Option A. Status quo. No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at-sea/shoreside filleting.

Option B. For states that authorize at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, establish minimum requirements, including requirements for: racks to be retained; skin to be left intact; and possession to be limited to no more than two fillets per legal fish. States should consider including language about when and where racks may be disposed of, specific to each mode allowed to fillet at-sea/shore.

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management

Proposed options for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries are presented below. All options use the commercial quotas and commercial size limits in place in 2022 as the starting point for applying a commercial quota reduction (Section 3.2.1). All commercial quotas are in pounds.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

All options (besides the status quo) propose implementing a commercial quota reduction for striped bass commercial fisheries in the ocean and Chesapeake Bay. A quota reduction would reduce harvest (fishing mortality) towards the goal of achieving the target F but would not aim to protect any specific year-classes. Commercial quota management provides for increased certainty with regards to achieving a harvest reduction, in contrast to the recreational fishery option. However, a reduction in quota does not always translate into the same reduction in harvest.

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Reducing commercial quotas by a certain percentage is unlikely to achieve that percentage due to annual quota underages that tend to occur. Quota underages can occur for a number of reasons including state regulations, market considerations, distribution shifts, and other factors that may affect fishing effort. During several prior management actions, this difference between commercial quota and harvest was more pronounced. However, in 2022, the majority of states with active commercial fisheries fully utilized their quota (Figure 6); therefore, quota reductions have the potential to impact those states more so than in previous years when quota was being underutilized. It should be noted, there will always be underages if there are states that choose to not have an active commercial fishery as is the case in Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut (or choose to re-allocate quota to the recreational fishery as is the case in New Jersey). Commercial harvest levels in 2022 are provided for comparison to proposed quota reductions. Reducing quotas from the realized harvest levels is not considered as it would amount to a quota reallocation which is outside the scope of this management action.

Option A. Status Quo: The ocean commercial fisheries and/or Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries will continue to be managed by their Amendment 7 quotas and size limits (i.e., 18% reduction from 2017 levels with 2017 size limits). This option allows for the continuation of the existing Addendum VI CE plans. Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum.

Option B. The ocean commercial fisheries and/or Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries will be managed by quotas representing up to a 14.5% reduction from their 2022 quotas with their 2022 size limits. The Board will select the specific percent reduction between zero and 14.5%.

Commercial quota (in pounds) reduction options for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay are summarized in the table on the next page.

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Commercial Quota Reduction Options						
	Option A. Status Quo (Amendment 7 quotas and size limits; approved CE's may continue)		Option B. Up to a 14.5% Reduction from the 2022 Quotas with the 2022 Size Limits		2022 Commercial Harvest for Reference	Hypothetical 14.5% Reduction in Landings from 2022 Levels if Quotas are Reduced**
	Amendment 7 Quota	CE-Adjusted Quota*	Maximum Quota (-0% from 2022)	Minimum Quota (-14.5% from 2022)		
ME	154	N/A	154	131	0	0
NH	3,537	N/A	3,537	3,024	0	0
MA	713,247	735,240	735,240	628,630	770,101	628,630
RI	148,889	N/A	148,889	127,300	162,434	127,300
CT	14,607	N/A	14,607	12,488	0	0
NY	652,552	640,718	640,718	547,813	623,304	532,924
NJ ⁺	197,877	215,912	215,912	184,604	rec bonus program: 36,807	rec bonus program: 31,470
DE	118,970	142,474	142,474	121,815	139,221	119,034
MD	74,396	89,094	89,094	76,175	88,069	75,299
VA	113,685	125,034	125,034	106,904	121,723	104,073
NC	295,495	N/A	295,495	252,648	0	0
MD Ches Bay	2,588,603	3,001,648	3,001,648	2,566,409	2,386,559	2,040,508
PRFC						
VA Ches Bay						

See Table 1 for 2022 commercial size limits by state, including size limits adjusted through CE.

+ Through a quota-managed CE, New Jersey transfers its commercial quota to a recreational bonus program fishery.

*Some states adjusted their commercial quotas through approved CE programs.

**If commercial quotas are reduced by 14.5%, landings would only decrease by the same amount if states continue to harvest the same percent of their available quota as they did in 2022 (e.g., if a state harvested 90% of their commercial quota in 2022, it is assumed they will harvest 90% of the future reduced quota). For states that exceeded their quotas in 2022, a 14.5% reduction in landings is estimated excluding the overage.

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3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

If an upcoming stock assessment prior to the rebuilding deadline, currently 2029, indicates the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029 with a probability greater than or equal to 50%:

Option A. Status Quo: the Board would initiate and develop an addendum to consider adjusting management measures.

- An addendum process includes a public comment period with public hearings and an opportunity to submit written comments on the draft addendum document.
- Based on assessment timing and the typical addendum development and implementation process, new measures would likely not be implemented until two years following the assessment. For example, the 2024 stock assessment is expected in October 2024. If the Board initiates an addendum in October 2024, approves it for public comment in February 2025, and then selects final measures in May 2025, the earliest implementation would likely be late 2025 or early 2026.

Option B. The Board could respond via Board action where the Board could change management measures by voting to pass a motion at a Board meeting instead of developing an addendum or amendment and different from the emergency action process.

- Public comment could be provided during Board meetings per the Commission's guidelines for public comment at Board meetings, and/or public comment could be provided in writing to the Board per the Commission's timeline for submission of written public comments prior to Board meetings.
- This option would allow a more expedited response to assessment updates. For example, when the 2024 stock assessment update is complete in October 2024, the Board could change management measures at that October 2024 meeting or a meeting shortly thereafter, which would enable new measures to be implemented for at least part of the 2025 season.

4.0 COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE

If approved, states must implement Addendum II according to the following schedule to be in compliance with the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate FMP:

[Month, Day, Year]: States submit implementation plans to meet Addendum II requirements.

[Month, Day, Year]: Board reviews and considers approving state implementation plans.

[Month Day, Year]: States implement regulations.

FIGURES

Figure 1. Atlantic striped bass female spawning stock biomass and recruitment, 1982-2021. Source: 2022 Stock Assessment Update.

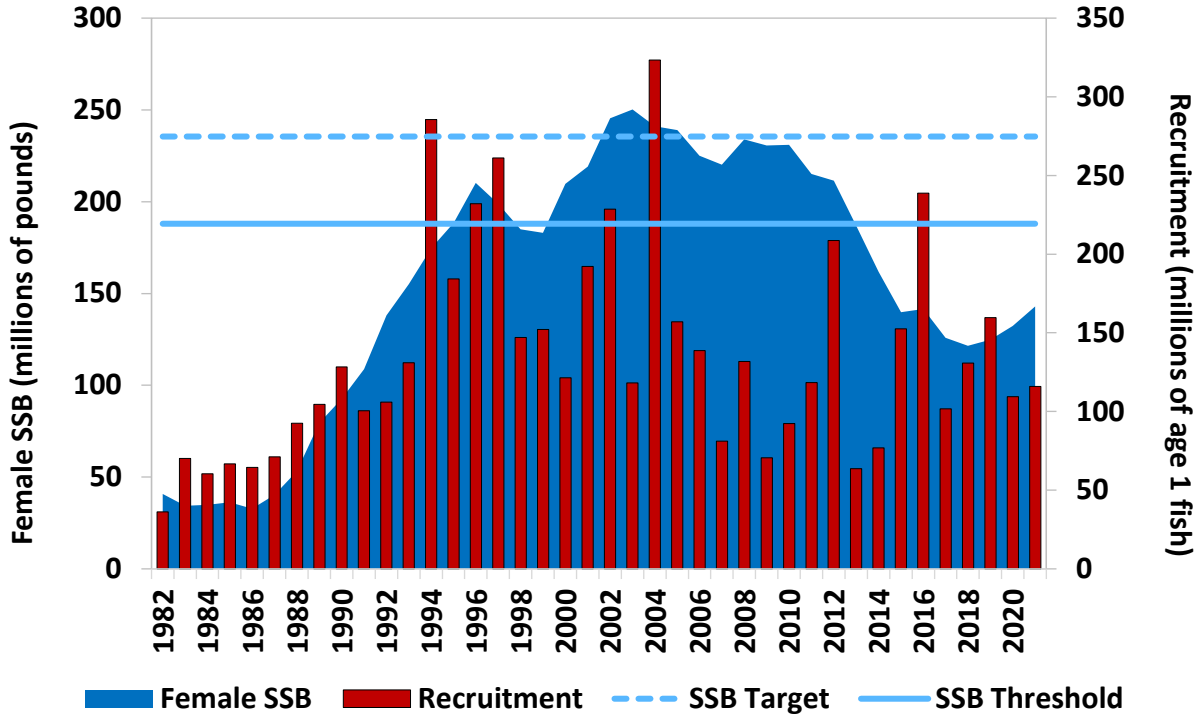
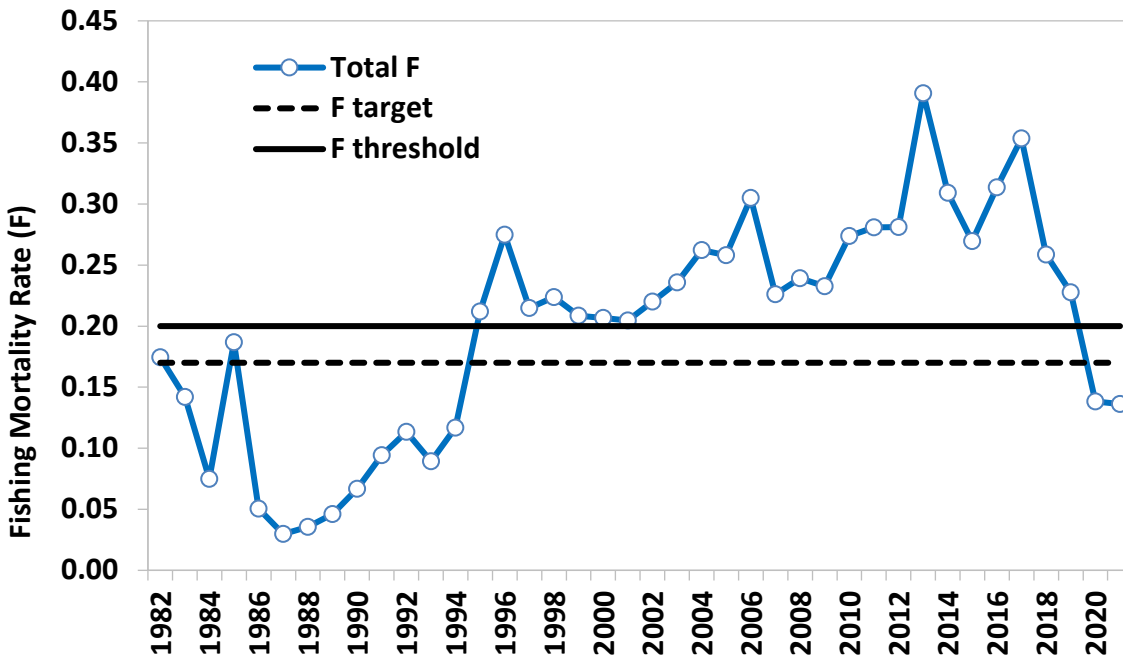
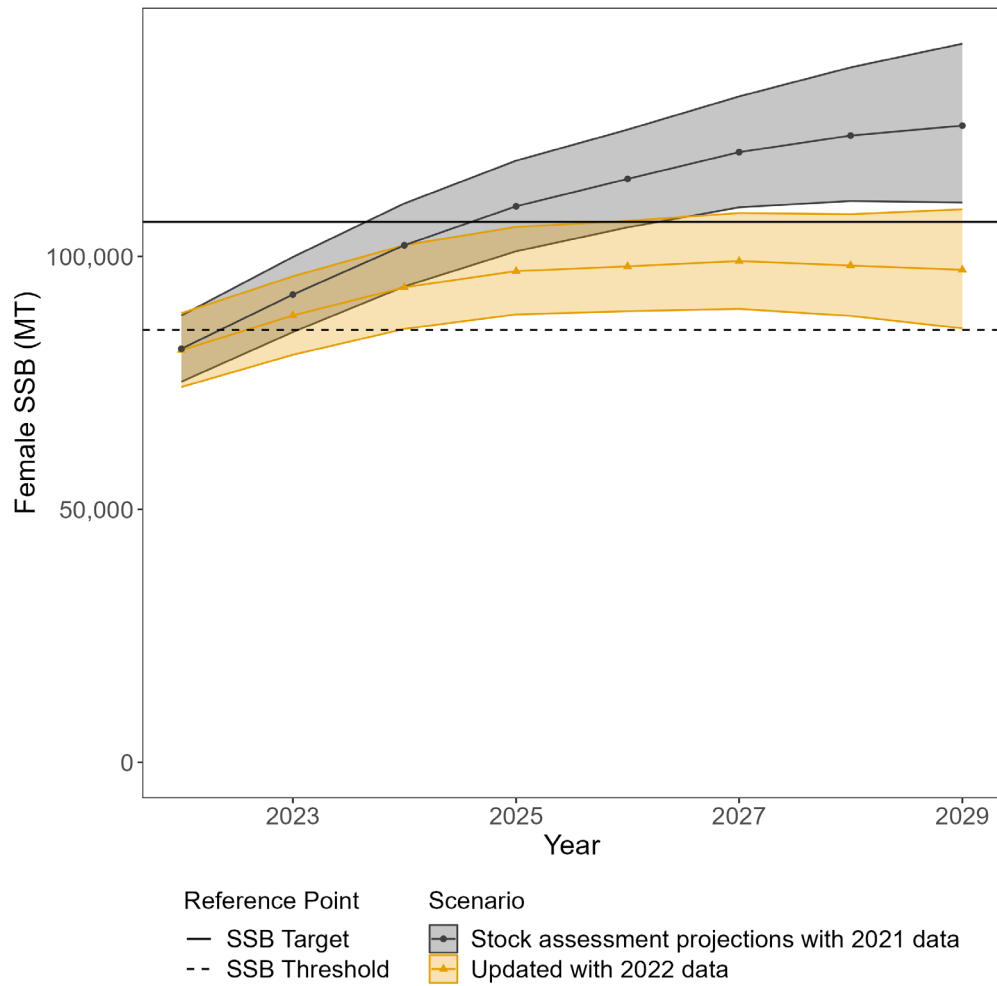


Figure 2. Atlantic striped bass fishing mortality, 1982-2021. Source: 2022 Stock Assessment Update.



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Figure 3. Stock rebuilding projections using 2021 data (from 2022 assessment update) and 2022 data.



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Figure 4. Average size-at-age of the 2015 year-class (not scaled to abundance) from 2022 (top panel), 2023 (middle panel), and 2024 (bottom panel) relative to the Addendum VI/Amendment 7 ocean standard 28”-<35” slot (solid lines) and the emergency action 31” maximum size (dashed line).

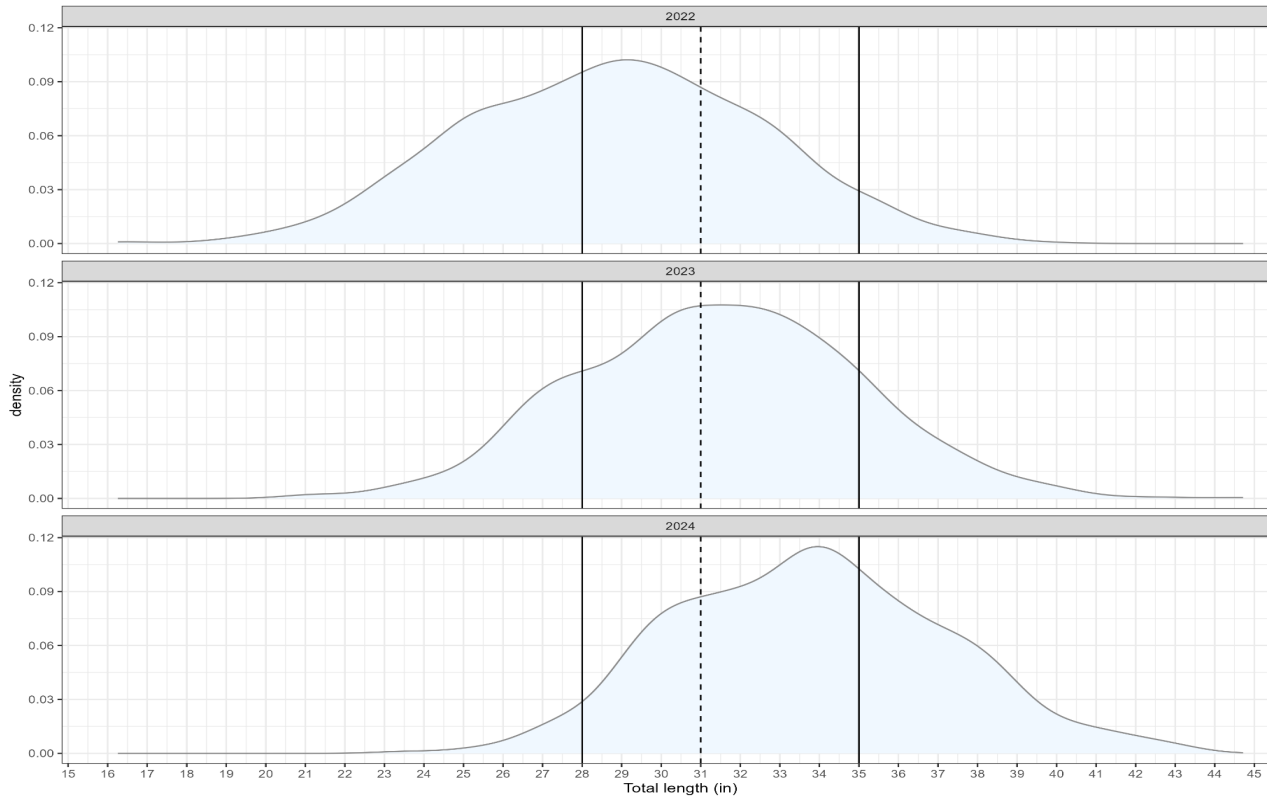
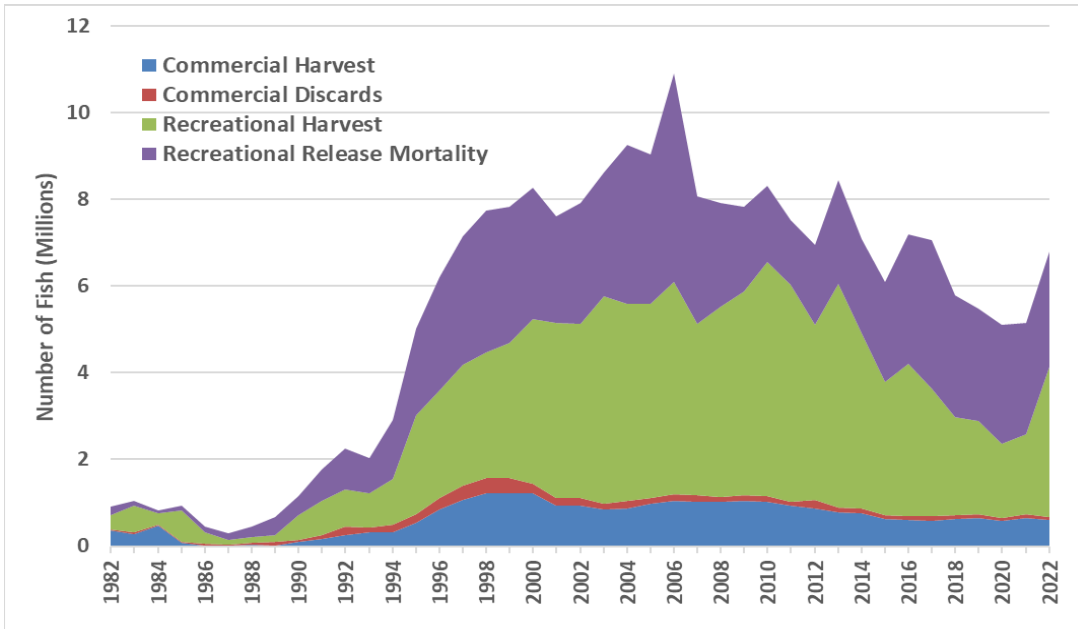
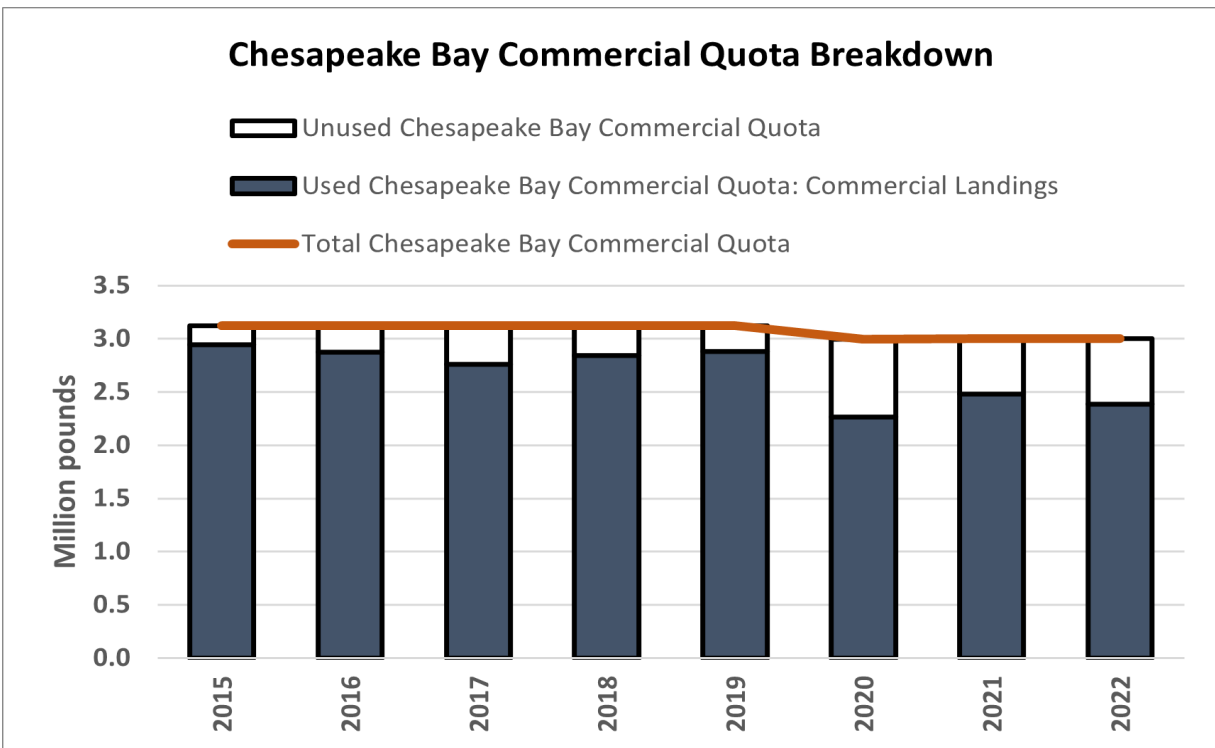
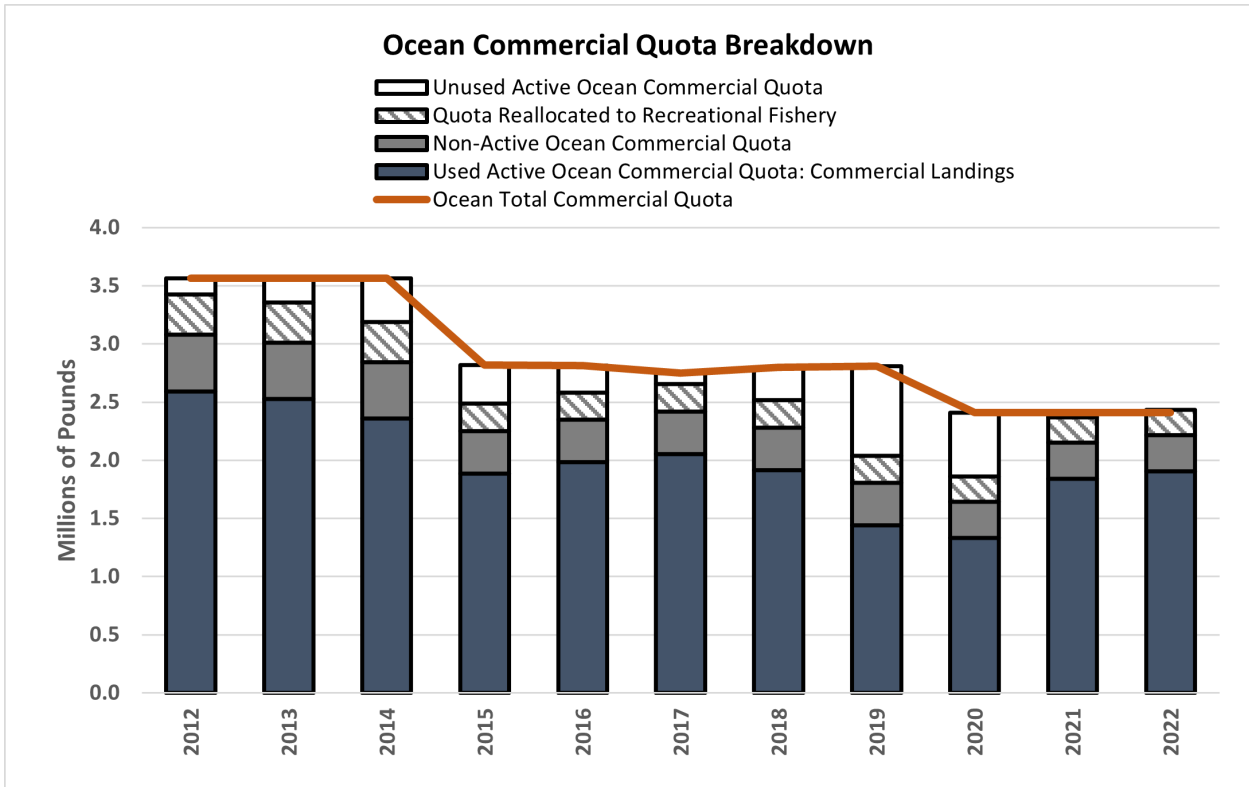


Figure 5. Total Atlantic striped bass removals by sector in numbers of fish, 1982-2022. Note: Harvest is from state compliance reports/MRIP, discards/release mortality is from ASMFC.



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Figure 6. Commercial quota breakdown by region.



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TABLES

Table 1. Summary of Atlantic striped bass commercial regulations in 2022. Source: 2023 State Compliance Reports. Minimum sizes and slot size limits are in total length (TL). *Commercial quota reallocated to recreational bonus fish program.

STATE	SIZE LIMITS (TL) and TRIP LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
ME	Commercial fishing prohibited		
NH	Commercial fishing prohibited		
MA	35" minimum size; no gaffing undersized fish. 15 fish/day with commercial boat permit; 2 fish/day with rod and reel permit.	735,240 lbs. Hook & Line only.	6.16-11.15 (or when quota reached); open fishing days of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with Thursday and Friday added on October 1 (if quota remains). Cape Cod Canal closed to commercial striped bass fishing.
RI	Floating fish trap: 26" minimum size unlimited possession limit until 70% of quota reached, then 500 lbs. per licensee per day	Total: 148,889 lbs., split 39:61 between the trap and general category. Gill netting prohibited.	4.1 – 12.31
	General category (mostly rod & reel): 34" min. Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.		6.1-7.5; 7.6-12.31, or until quota reached. Closed Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays throughout.
CT	Commercial fishing prohibited; bonus program in CT suspended indefinitely in 2020.		
NY	26"-38" size; (Hudson River closed to commercial harvest)	640,718 lbs. Pound Nets, Gill Nets (6-8" stretched mesh), Hook & Line.	5.15 – 12.15, or until quota reached. Limited entry permit only.
NJ*	Commercial fishing prohibited; bonus program: 1 fish/permit at 24" to <28"	215,912 lbs.	5.15 – 12.31 (permit required)
PA	Commercial fishing prohibited		
DE	Gill Net: 20" min in DE Bay/River during spring season. 28" in all other waters/seasons.	Gillnet: 135,350 lbs. No fixed nets in DE River.	Gillnet: 2.15-5.31 (2.15-3.30 for Nanticoke River) & 11.15-12.31; drift nets only 2.15-28 & 5.1-31; no trip limit.
	Hook and Line: 28" min	Hook and line: 7,124 lbs.	Hook and Line: 4.1–12.31, 200 lbs./day trip limit

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(Table 1 continued – Summary of commercial regulations in 2022).

STATE	SIZE LIMITS (TL) and TRIP LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
MD	Chesapeake Bay and Rivers: 18–36” Common pool trip limits: Hook and Line - 250 lbs./license/week Gill Net - 300 lbs./license/week	1,445,394 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota)	Bay Pound Net: 6.1-12.31 Bay Haul Seine: 1.1-2.28; 6.1-12.31 Bay Hook & Line: 6.1-12.31 Bay Drift Gill Net: 1.1-2.28, 12.1-12.31
	Ocean: 24” minimum	Ocean: 89,094 lbs.	1.1-5.31, 10.1-12.31
PRFC	18” min all year; 36” max 2.15–3.25	572,861 lbs. (split between gear types; part of Bay-wide quota)	Hook & Line: 1.1-3.25, 6.1-12.31 Pound Net & Other: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.15 <u>Gill Net</u> : 11.9.2021-3.25.2022 Misc. Gear: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.15
VA	Chesapeake Bay and Rivers: 18” min; 28” max size limit 3.15–6.15	983,393 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota)	1.16-12.31
	Ocean: 28” min	125,034 lbs.	
NC	Ocean: 28” min	295,495 lbs. (split between gear types)	Seine fishery was not opened Gill net fishery was not opened Trawl fishery was not opened

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Table 2. Summary of Atlantic striped bass recreational regulations in 2022. Source: 2023 State Compliance Reports. Minimum sizes and slot size limits are in total length (TL).

STATE	SIZE LIMITS (TL)/REGION	BAG LIMIT	GEAR/FISHING RESTRICTIONS	OPEN SEASON
ME	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Hook and line only and no gaffing of striped bass. Regulations define bait as it pertains to the required use of circle hooks; immediate release w/o unnecessary injury if incidentally caught on unapproved hook type; maintains the circle hook exemption for rubber and latex tube rigs.	All year, except spawning areas are closed 12.1-4.30 and C&R only 5.1-6.30
NH	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Gaffing and culling prohibited; Use of corrodible non-offset circle hooks required if angling with bait. If taken contrary to restrictions, return fish to water immediately w/o unnecessary injury.	All year
MA	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Hook & line only; no high-grading; gaffs and other injurious removal devices prohibited. Inline circle hook requirement when fishing with bait, except with artificial lures; mandatory release of catch on any unapproved method of take. No filleting at-sea except aboard for-hire vessels provided skin remains and ratio of 2 filets/fish.	All year
RI	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Circle required while fishing recreationally with bait for striped bass (except for artificial lures with bait attached); must release if caught on unapproved method of take	All year
CT	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Inline circle hooks only when using whole, cut or live natural bait. Exemption of artificial lures/ release of incidental non-circle hook provision. Spearing and gaffing prohibited. If taken contrary to the provisions, shall, without avoidable injury, be returned immediately to the waters.	All year
NY	Ocean and DE River: 28 -35"	1 fish/day	Angling only. Spearing permitted in ocean waters. C&R only during closed season, except no targeting in Hudson River during closed season. Circle hook requirements. No gaffing. Mandatory release of catch on any unapproved method of take.	Ocean: 4.15-12.15 Delaware River: All year
	HR: 18 -28"	1 fish/day		Hudson River: 4.1-11.30

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(Table 2 continued – Summary of recreational regulations in 2022).

STATE	SIZE LIMITS/REGION	BAG LIMIT	GEAR/FISHING RESTRICTIONS	OPEN SEASON
NJ	≥ 28 to < 38"	1 fish/day	Circle hooks required when fishing with bait; must release if caught on unapproved method of take	Closed 1.1 – Feb 28 in all waters except in the Atlantic Ocean, and closed 4.1-5.31 in the lower DE River and tribs
PA	Upstream from Calhoun St Bridge: 1 fish/day at ≥ 28" to <35"	1 fish/day	Unlawful to take or attempt to take fish unless the method is specifically authorized. Circle hooks required when fishing with bait downstream from Calhoun St. Bridge.	All year
	Downstream from Calhoun St Bridge: 1 fish/day at ≥ 28" to <35 (except 4.1-5.31)			All year. 2 fish/day at 21"-<24" slot from 4.1 – 5.31
DE	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Hook & line, spear (for divers) only. Inline circle hooks required when fishing for striped bass using cut or whole natural baits	All year. C&R only 4.1-5.31 in spawning grounds. 20"-25" slot from 7.1-8.31 in DE River, Bay & tributaries
MD	Ocean: ≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	Circle hooks if chumming, live-lining, or bait fishing and targeting striped bass; no gaffing	All year
	Chesapeake Bay and tribs [^]	C&R only	Circle hook requirement with bait; no eels; no stinger hooks; barbless hooks when trolling; max 6 lines when trolling; no gaffing	1.1-2.28, 3.1-3.31, 12.11-12.31
	Chesapeake Bay: 35" min	1 fish/day	Geographic restrictions apply; Circle hook requirement with bait; no eels bait; no gaffs	5.1-5.15
	Chesapeake Bay: 1 fish/day, 19" minimum size; 2/fish/day for charter with only 1 fish >28"		Geographic restrictions apply; circle hooks if chumming, livelining, or bait fishing and targeting striped bass; no gaffing	5.16-5.31
	Chesapeake Bay and tribs: 1 fish/day, 19" minimum size; 2/fish/day for charter with only 1 fish >28"		All Bay and tribs open; circle hooks if chumming, livelining, or bait fishing and targeting striped bass; no gaffing	6.1-7.15, 8.1-12.10

[^] Susquehanna Flats: C&R only Jan 1 – March 31 (circle hooks when bait fishing); 1 fish at 19"-26" slot May 16 – May 31 (circle hooks if chumming, livelining, or bait fishing and targeting striped bass).

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(Table 2 continued – Summary of recreational regulations in 2022).

STATE	SIZE LIMITS/REGION	BAG LIMIT	GEAR/FISHING RESTRICTIONS	OPEN SEASON
PRFC	Spring Trophy: 35" minimum size	1 fish/day	No more than two hooks or sets of hooks for each rod or line; no live eel; no high-grading; non-offset Circle Hooks are required when fishing for striped bass using cut or whole natural bait; no spearing or gaffing	5.1-5.15
	Summer and Fall: 20" min	2 fish/day	No more than two hooks or sets of hooks for each rod or line; non-offset Circle Hooks are required when fishing for striped bass using cut or whole natural bait; no spearing or gaffing; any fish caught other than lawful fishing activities immediately released	5.16-7.6 and 8.21-12.31; closed 7.7-8.20 (No Direct Targeting)
DC	18" minimum size	1 fish/day	Hook and line only; unlawful to take fish except as specified	5.16-12.31
VA	Ocean: 28"-36" slot limit	1 fish/day	Hook & line, rod & reel, hand line, spearing only. No gaffing. Circle hooks required if/when using live bait. Unlawful to take/attempt take by any other gear/method	1.1-3.31, 5.16-12.31
	Ocean Spring Trophy: NO SPRING TROPHY SEASON			
	Chesapeake Bay Spring Trophy: NO SPRING TROPHY SEASON			
	Bay Spring/Summer: 20"-28" slot limit	1 fish/day	Hook & line, rod & reel, hand line, spearing only. No gaffing. Circle hooks required if/when using live bait. Unlawful to take/attempt take by any other gear/method	5.16-6.15
Bay Fall: 20 - 36" slot limit	1 fish/day	10.4-12.31		
NC	≥ 28" and <35"	1 fish/day	No gaffing allowed. Circle hooks required when fishing with natural bait	All year

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Table 3. CE programs implemented for Addendum VI

State	Recreational Fisheries	Commercial Fisheries
MA	N/A	Changed size limit (35" minimum) with equivalent quota change
NY	Hudson River: Alternative size limit (18" to 28") to achieve 18% removals reduction in combination with standard ocean slot	Changed size limit (26" to 38") with equivalent quota reduction
NJ	Alternative size limit (28 to < 38") to achieve 25% removals reduction	Decreased commercial quota reduction (to 0%) with surplus recreational fishery reduction and transferred commercial quota to recreational bonus program fishery (24 to < 28", 1 fish/day)
PA	DE River and Estuary downstream Calhoun St Bridge: Alternative size and bag limit on limited seasonal basis (2 fish/day at 21 to <24" during 4.1–5.31) to achieve 18% removals reduction	N/A
DE	DE River/Bay/tributaries: Alternative slot on limited seasonal basis (20" to <25" during 7.1–8.31) to achieve 20.4% removals reduction in combination with standard ocean slot	Decreased commercial quota reduction (to -1.8%) with surplus recreational fishery reduction
MD	Chesapeake Bay: Alternative Summer/Fall for-hire bag limit with restrictions (2 fish, only 1 >28", no captain retention) through increased minimum size (19"), April and two-week Wave 4 targeting closures, and shorter spring trophy season (May 1–15) to achieve 20.6% removals reduction; ocean: FMP standard slot	Decreased ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial quota reduction (to -1.8%) with surplus Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery reduction
PRFC	Alternative Summer/Fall minimum size and bag limit (20" min, 2 fish/day) with a no targeting closure (7.7–8.20) and shorter spring trophy season (May 1–15) to achieve a 20.5% removals reduction	Decreased Chesapeake Bay commercial quota (to -1.8%) with surplus recreational fishery reduction
VA	Chesapeake Bay: Alternative slot limits during 5.16–6.15 (20" to 28") and 10.4–12.31 (20" to 36") and no spring trophy season to achieve a 23.4% removals reduction (reduction was the result of lowering prior bag limit from 2 to 1-fish per angler); ocean: Alternative slot limit (28" to 36")	Decreased ocean commercial quota (to -7.7%) and Chesapeake Bay commercial quota (to -9.8%) with surplus recreational fishery reduction

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Table 4. Estimated mean striped bass size-at-age based on the 2012-2016 state age data (weighted by state recreational catch) compiled for the 2018 benchmark stock assessment. Note: Size-at-age is highly variable along the coast and there is overlap among age classes.

Age	Estimated Mean Total Length (in)	
0	3.8	
1	6.4	
2	12.7	
3	17.0	
4	20.9	
5	24.1	2018 year class in 2023
6	26.4	2017 year class in 2023
7	28.7	
8	31.6	2015 year class in 2023
9	33.8	
10	35.5	
11	37.2	
12	39.1	
13	41.0	
14	42.2	
15+	44.0	

Table 5. Implementation of 2023 Emergency Action for striped bass (31.0” maximum size limit).

State	Effective Date	Maximum Size Limit
ME	May 18	31.0” max size limit
NH	May 26	<31.0” max size limit
MA	May 26	<31.0” max size limit
RI	May 27	<31.0” max size limit
CT	May 26	<31.0” max size limit
NY	June 20	31.0” max size limit
NJ	July 2	31.0” max size limit
PA	June 3	<31.0” max size limit
DE	May 21	31.0” max size limit
MD	May 16	31.0” max size limit
PRFC	May 16	31.0” max size limit
DC	May 16	31.0” max size limit
VA	July 1	31.0” max size limit
NC	June 1	31.0” max size limit

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Table 6. Total removals (harvest plus discards/release mortality) of Atlantic striped bass by sector in numbers of fish, 1993-2022 calendar years. Note: Harvest is from state compliance reports/MRIP (June 2023), discards/release mortality is from ASMFC. Estimates exclude inshore harvest from NC.

Year	Commercial		Recreational		Total Removals
	Harvest	Dead Discards*	Harvest	Release Mortality	
1993	314,526	114,317	789,037	812,404	2,030,284
1994	325,401	165,700	1,055,523	1,360,872	2,907,496
1995	537,412	192,368	2,287,578	2,010,689	5,028,047
1996	854,102	257,506	2,487,422	2,600,526	6,199,556
1997	1,076,561	324,445	2,774,981	2,969,781	7,145,769
1998	1,215,219	346,537	2,915,390	3,259,133	7,736,278
1999	1,223,572	347,186	3,123,496	3,140,905	7,835,158
2000	1,216,812	213,863	3,802,477	3,044,203	8,277,354
2001	931,412	175,815	4,052,474	2,449,599	7,609,300
2002	928,085	187,084	4,005,084	2,792,200	7,912,453
2003	854,326	126,274	4,781,402	2,848,445	8,610,447
2004	879,768	156,026	4,553,027	3,665,234	9,254,055
2005	970,403	142,385	4,480,802	3,441,928	9,035,518
2006	1,047,648	152,308	4,883,961	4,812,332	10,896,250
2007	1,015,114	158,078	3,944,679	2,944,253	8,062,124
2008	1,027,824	108,830	4,381,186	2,391,200	7,909,039
2009	1,050,055	133,317	4,700,222	1,942,061	7,825,654
2010	1,031,448	132,373	5,388,440	1,760,759	8,313,020
2011	944,777	82,015	5,006,358	1,482,029	7,515,180
2012	870,684	192,190	4,046,299	1,847,880	6,957,053
2013	784,379	112,620	5,157,760	2,393,425	8,448,184
2014	750,263	114,065	4,033,746	2,172,342	7,070,415
2015	621,952	88,614	3,085,725	2,307,133	6,103,425
2016	609,028	91,186	3,500,434	2,981,430	7,182,077
2017	592,670	98,801	2,937,911	3,421,110	7,050,492
2018	621,123	101,264	2,244,765	2,826,667	5,793,819
2019	653,807	85,262	2,150,936	2,589,045	5,479,050
2020	583,070	58,641	1,709,973	2,760,231	5,111,915
2021	644,207	85,676	1,841,902	2,583,788	5,155,573
2022	599,615	81,200	3,454,021	2,667,846	6,802,681

* Commercial dead discard estimate for 2022 was estimated using the harvest-to-discard ratio from 2021. The entire time series for commercial dead discards will be re-estimated during the 2024 stock assessment using a generalized additive model (GAM).

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Table 7. 2022 Commercial Fishery Size Limits, Gear Types, and Commercial Sampling Results (Source: 2023 Compliance Reports). Note: Sub-sampling of commercial striped bass harvest occurs for about 1-5% of all commercially harvested fish in each state, and these values are assumed to be representative of each state's landings.

State	Size Limits	2022 Percent Landings by Gear Type	Mean Length and Range of Length Samples (TL in)	Mean Weight (lbs)	Mean Scale Age (years)
MA	35" min	100% hook & line	39.9 <i>Range: 35 - 48</i>	24.1	10
RI	General: 34" min FFT: 26" min	Conf % hook & line Conf % floating fish trap	34.8 <i>H&L Range 34 – 52</i> <i>FFT Range: 26 - 52</i>	18.2	8
NY	26-38" slot	62.2% gill nets (mostly sink) 18.3% hook & line 6.7% fixed gear 4.4% trawls	30.2 <i>Range: 24.1 – 38.7</i>	9.9	6.6
DE	GN: 28" min, 20" min DE Bay/River 2.15-5.31 H&L: 28" min	88.4% anchored gill net 11.6% drift gill net 0% hook & line	35.0 <i>Range: 20 - 45</i>	17.0	10
MD ocean	24" min	100% drift gill net	41.1 <i>Range: 32.6 – 47.6</i>	25.9	12
VA ocean	28" min	100% drift/anchored gill net	40.0 <i>Range 29 – 51</i>	24.8	14
NC	28" min	Beach seine, gill net, trawl	NA	NA	NA
MD Ches Bay	18-36" slot	53% pound net 42% drift gill net 5% hook & line	22.2 <i>GN Range: 17.7 - 35</i> <i>PN/H&L Range: 17.7 – 33.5</i>	4.6	5
PRFC	18" min; 36" max 2.15-3.25	67% anchored gill net 23% pound net 9% hook & line	23.8 <i>Range: 18.3 – 48.0</i>	6.3	5.7
VA Ches Bay	18" min; 28" max 3.15-6.15	84% drift/anchor gill net 12% pound net 4% hook & line	24.9 GN <i>GN Range: 18-49</i> 23.3 PN <i>PN Range: 17-36</i> 36.2 H&L <i>H&L Range: 18-28 and 41-49</i>	7.5 GN 5.6 PN 26.6 H&L	7.7 GN 5 PN 17 H&L

H&L=hook & line; GN=gill nets, FFT=floating fish traps; PN=pound net

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Table 8. Predicted reduction in total removals for different combinations of options.

Commercial Quota Reduction (both regions)	Chesapeake Bay Options						Ocean			
		Min. Size	Max. Size	Bag Limit	Season	Reduction	Option B. 28"-31" (All Modes)	Option C. 28"-31" (PR/SH), 28"-33" (FH)	Option D. 30"-33" (All Modes)	Option E. 30"-33" (PR/SH), 28"-33" (FH)
Board will select a quota percent reduction between zero and 14.5%.							-14.1%	-14.0%	-12.8%	-12.8%
0%	Option B1	19"	23"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-22.4%	-14.0%	-13.9%	-13.0%	-12.9%
	Option B2	19"	24"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-15.9%	-13.0%	-12.9%	-12.0%	-11.9%
	Option B3	19"	25"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-12.1%	-12.4%	-12.3%	-11.4%	-11.4%
	Option B4	19"	26"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-10.3%	-12.1%	-12.1%	-11.2%	-11.1%
	Option C1	19"	23"	1 fish PR/SH, 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-17.9%	-13.3%	-13.2%	-12.3%	-12.2%
	Option C2	19"	24"	1 fish PR/SH, 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-11.0%	-12.3%	-12.2%	-11.3%	-11.2%
-14.5%	Option B1	19"	23"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-22.4%	-15.4%	-15.3%	-14.4%	-14.4%
	Option B2	19"	24"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-15.9%	-14.4%	-14.4%	-13.5%	-13.5%
	Option B3	19"	25"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-12.1%	-13.9%	-13.8%	-12.9%	-12.9%
	Option B4	19"	26"	1 fish	same as 2022 ⁺	-10.3%	-13.6%	-13.5%	-12.6%	-12.6%
	Option C1	19"	23"	1 fish PR/SH, 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-17.9%	-14.7%	-14.7%	-13.8%	-13.8%
	Option C2	19"	24"	1 fish PR/SH, 2 fish FH	same as 2022 ⁺	-11.0%	-13.7%	-13.6%	-12.7%	-12.7%

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Appendix 1

State regulatory language pertaining to striped bass filleting at sea and/or shore-side

Maine: “It is unlawful to possess striped bass unless the fish are whole with head on, and are between 28 inches and 31 inches, inclusive.”

New Hampshire: “Striped bass shall have head and tail intact while on or leaving the waters or shores of the state except as follows: (1) A person may possess up to 2 striped bass fillets so long as they also possess the fish rack that the fillets came from with the head and tail intact and the rack measures at least 28 inches in total length; (2) Any striped bass fillet shall have the skin still attached for the purpose of identification of the fillet as striped bass.”

Massachusetts: “Recreational fishermen shall not mutilate any striped bass in a manner that prevents the accurate measurement of the fish...Operators and crew onboard for-hire vessels permitted under the authority of 322 CMR 7.10(5): Permit Requirements Applicable to For-hire Vessels may fillet or process legal sized striped bass for their recreational customers at sea provided that: 1. The skin is left on the fillet; and 2. Not more than two fillets taken from legal striped bass are in the possession of each customer of that trip, representing the equivalent of one fish per angler.”

Rhode Island: “There shall be no disposal of fish and fish parts on the bulkhead or in the waters of the State.” “It shall be unlawful for any person to place any pollutant in a location where it is likely to enter the waters or to place or cause to be placed any solid waste materials, junk, or debris of any kind whatsoever, organic or non organic, in any waters.”

Connecticut: “No person shall land or possess on the waters of this state or on any parcel of land, structure, or portion of a roadway abutting tidal waters of this state any striped bass from which the head or tail has been removed or which has otherwise been rendered unidentifiable as a striped bass or unable to be measured.” *Enforced as filleting allowed with rack retained (pers.com. CT DEEP).*

New York: “Except as provided in paragraphs (4) of this subdivision, it is unlawful for any person to possess striped bass from which the head or tail has been removed or that have been otherwise cleaned, cut, filleted or skinned so that the total length or identity cannot be determined; except that it is not unlawful if such fish is being prepared for immediate consumption or storage at a domicile or place of residence.

(4) Any person who holds a valid Marine and Coastal District Party and Charter Boat License issued pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law section 13-0336 may fillet striped bass taken on the permitted party or charter vessel identified on his or her license under the following conditions:

(i) fish may be filleted for customers only; (ii) only fish which are legally possessed may be filleted;

(iii) striped bass may only be filleted prior to customers leaving the vessel or the dock area prior to customers departing the area; (iv) it is unlawful to mutilate any striped bass carcass to the extent that the total length or species of fish cannot be determined; (v) all striped bass carcasses must be retained (unmixed with any other material) in a separate container readily available for inspection until such time as the vessel has docked and all passengers from that trip have left the vessel and the dock area. Any such carcasses are included in the possession limit; (vi) all striped bass carcasses from any previous trip must be disposed of prior to any

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person beginning to fish on a subsequent trip; and (vii) all Marine and Coastal District Party and Charter Boat License holders must provide each customer who possesses striped bass fillets with a commercially printed, dated original fare receipt, bearing the boat’s name and the owner or operator’s Party and Charter Boat License number. Any customer of a party or charter boat operated by a Marine and Coastal District Party and Charter Boat License holder who is in possession of striped bass fillets must possess an original dated receipt from that party or charter vessel.

New Jersey: “Except as provided in (e)2 and (f) below, a person shall not remove the head, tail or skin, or otherwise mutilate to the extent that its length or species cannot be determined, any species with a minimum size limit specified at (b) or (c) above or any other species of flatfish, or possess such mutilated fish, except after fishing has ceased and such species have been landed to any ramp, pier, wharf or dock or other shore feature where it may be inspected for compliance with the appropriate size limit.

(f) Special provisions applicable to a Special Fillet Permit are as follows: 1. A party boat owner may apply to the Commissioner for a permit for a specific vessel, known as a Special Fillet Permit to fillet species specified at (c) above at sea; 2. For purposes of this section, party boats are defined as vessels that can accommodate 15 or more passengers as indicated on the Certificate of Inspection issued by the United States Coast Guard for daily hire for the purpose of recreational fishing; 3. The Special Fillet Permit shall be subject to the following conditions: i. Once fishing commences, no parts or carcasses of any species specified in (c) above and no flatfish parts or carcasses shall be discarded overboard; of the species specified at (c) above, only whole live fish may be returned to the water; ii. No carcasses of any flatfish or species listed at (c) above shall be mutilated to the extent that its length or species cannot be determined; iii. All fish carcasses of species specified at (c) above shall be retained until such time as the vessel has docked and been secured at the end of the fishing trip adequate to provide a law enforcement officer access to inspect the vessel and catch; iv. No fillet of any flounder or other flatfish shall be less than eight inches in length during the period of May 1 through October 31 or less than five inches in length during the period of November 1 through April 30; v. No fish of any species less than the minimum size limit specified in (c) above shall be filleted and no fillet of any species listed below shall have the skin removed and no fillet shall be less than the minimum length in inches specified below.

Species	Minimum Fillet or Part Length
Striped bass (24 to less than 28 inches)	11 to 20 inches
(28 to 31 inches)	15 to 22 inches

vi. Spanish mackerel shall be landed with head, tail and fins attached. vii. Fish carcasses from the previous trip shall be disposed of prior to commencing fishing on a subsequent trip; viii. Violation of any of the provisions of the Special Fillet Permit shall subject the captain and permit holder to the penalties established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 23:2B-14 and shall result in a suspension or revocation, applicable to both the vessel and the owner of the Special Fillet Permit according to the following schedule: (1) First offense: 60 days suspension; (2) Second offense: 120 days suspension; and (3) Third offense: Revocation of permit, rendering the vessel and the owner not eligible for permit renewal regardless of vessel ownership.

ix. In calculating the period of suspension or revocation applicable under (f)3viii above, the number of previous suspensions shall be reduced by one for each three-year period in which

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the permit holder does not commit any other violation subject to this subsection, provided, however, that if more than one suspension is imposed within a three-year period, only one of those suspensions may be forgiven under this subparagraph; therefore, a permit holder who incurs more than one suspension in a three-year period shall not be considered a first offender under this subsection regardless of the length of any subsequent period without violation. The reduction in suspensions provided in this subparagraph applies only to determination of suspension periods; all prior suspensions shall be taken into account in calculating monetary penalties in accordance with N.J.S.A. 23:2B-14. x. Upon receipt of the notice of suspension but prior to the suspension or revocation of the Special Fillet Permit, the permittee has 20 days to request a hearing from the Department. The hearing shall be conducted pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq. and 52:14F-1 et seq., and the Uniform Administrative Procedure Rules, N.J.A.C. 1.1. If a request for a hearing is not received by the Department within 20 days of the permittee's receipt of the notice of suspension, the permit suspension or revocation will be effective on the date indicated in such notice.

Pennsylvania: “(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, it is unlawful to possess a fish in any form or condition other than in the whole or having the entrails removed while on shore, along the waters of this Commonwealth, onboard a boat or on a dock, pier, launch area or a parking lot adjacent thereto. (b) Fish may be processed fully if they are being prepared for immediate consumption. (d) Provided that the requirements of this subsection are met, this section does not apply to fish processed by a permitted charter boat/fishing guide operation. The charter boat operator or fishing guide may fully process the fish at any time provided the charter boat operator or fishing guide retains the carcass until possession of the fish is transferred to the customer on shore. The charter boat operator or fishing guide shall give the customer who receives the processed fish a signed, dated receipt on the form prescribed by the Commission.”

Delaware: “Unless otherwise authorized, it is unlawful to possess any striped bass for which the total length has been altered in any way for the purpose of retaining said striped bass in accordance with §3504.”

Maryland: “Filleting Striped Bass. (1) Except as provided in §C(2) of this regulation, a person may only land striped bass dockside as a whole fish. (2) A licensed charter boat captain or mate may fillet striped bass taken on a vessel displaying a current commercial charter boat decal under the following conditions: (a) A striped bass carcass may not be mutilated to the extent that the total length or species of fish cannot be determined; (b) All striped bass carcasses: (i) Shall be retained, unmixed with any other material, in a separate container readily available for inspection until the vessel has docked and all passengers from that trip have left the vessel and the dock area; and (ii) Are included in the possession limit; and (c) All striped bass carcasses from any previous trip shall be disposed of before any person begins to fish on a subsequent trip.”

PRFC: “Measurement shall be the greatest distance in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the end of the caudal fin or tail in a natural state, excluding the tail filament of a black sea bass. No person shall alter the natural state of any species of fish listed in (a) above such that its length cannot be measured.” *Unclear as to enforcement of filleting at-sea/shore (pers.com. PRFC).*

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DC: “It shall be unlawful to... possess aboard any boat, while fishing or while in possession of fishing equipment, any fish for which a size or weight limit is prescribed in § 1504 from which the head or tail has been removed.”

Virginia: “Alteration of finfish to obscure species identification or size prohibited. A. It shall be unlawful for any person to alter any finfish, or to possess altered finfish, aboard any boat or vessel, or on a public fishing pier (except at the fish cleaning station of the pier), such that the species of the fish cannot be determined. B. It shall be unlawful for any person to alter any finfish regulated by a minimum or maximum size limit, or to possess such altered finfish, aboard any boat or vessel, or on a public fishing pier (except at the fish cleaning station of the pier), such that its total length cannot be measured.

Allowances for filleting or cleaning. A. For finfish regulated by a minimum or maximum size limit, filleting at sea will be allowed if the carcass is retained to ensure proper species identification and compliance with size limitations. B. For finfish regulated by a minimum size, cleaning and/or filleting at sea will be allowed if the fillet or cleaned fish exceeds the minimum length for the species and at least one square inch of skin is left intact to assist in identification of the species. C. For finfish not regulated by a size limit, filleting at sea will be allowed if a minimum of one square inch of skin is left on the fillet to assist in identification of the species.”

North Carolina: “It shall be unlawful to possess aboard a vessel or while engaged in fishing any species of finfish that is subject to a size or harvest restriction without having head and tail attached.” *Enforced as filleting allowed with rack retained (pers.com. NC DMF).*



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
FROM: Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
DATE: January 8, 2024
SUBJECT: Draft Addendum II Public Hearing Summaries

Fifteen public hearings were held for thirteen jurisdictions from November 15, 2023 through December 19, 2023. Nine hearings were conducted in-person only: Massachusetts (2), Connecticut (2), New York (2), New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia. Four hearings were conducted in a hybrid format with attendees participating in-person and via webinar: Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Delaware. Two hearings were conducted via webinar only: New Jersey-Pennsylvania, Potomac River Fisheries Commission-District of Columbia.

Across all hearings, public attendance was 693 people (includes double counting of those who attended multiple hearings). Each public hearing is summarized in the following pages with the summaries ordered from north to south. Each hearing summary lists the number of public participants who attended the hearing and the number of people who commented in favor of each option. Polls or a show-of-hands vote were used at some hearings at the discretion of the hearing officer. Sign-in and attendance lists are provided following each hearing summary.

Note: A summary of all public comment (written and hearing comments) received by ASMFC on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II will be available no later than supplemental materials for the 2024 Winter Meeting.

M24-04

Maine Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 14, 2023 – Augusta, ME and Webinar
60 public attendees
(see enclosed attendance)

Hearing Officer: Megan Ware (ME DMR)

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns

Attendees included a representative from the American Saltwater Guides Association.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 29 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Need the most aggressive conservation measures.
 - Do everything to protect the 2015s.
 - Everyone should have the same fishing opportunity.
 - All sectors need to participate in the reductions.
 - Mode splits would be confusing.
 - If the for-hire sector wants something different, then they should have a quota as part of the commercial fishery.

- 1 person supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot).

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 29 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Oppose mode splits; this would allow more fish to be killed, particularly the 2018 year class in the Bay.
 - Success of spawning in the Chesapeake Bay is important for the entire coast.

- 1 person supported Option B2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish for all modes).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 1 person supported Option A (no clarification).
- 29 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 29 people supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements) for the following reasons:
 - Need for more enforceable regulations.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 30 people supported Option B (quota reduction) for the following reasons:
 - Chesapeake Bay has not taken a real reduction in the past few years.
 - All sectors should take a reduction equally.
 - Noted the Chesapeake Bay did not harvest their full quota in 2022, so the reduction will not be fully realized in the Bay. Future reductions should be from the harvest, not the quota.
 - Some noted specific support for the full 14.5% reduction.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 29 people supported Option B (Board action) noting the need for quick action and the fishery cannot afford a lag in taking action after the stock assessment.

General Comments

- Overall desire for conservation of the resource and swift action to be considered by the Board.
- Prioritize rebuilding on an expedited timeline, and manage for abundance.
- Need to do better than a 50% success rate.
- A few spoke in favor of gamefish status, a moratorium, or catch and release fishing.
- Maine is on the northern edge of the range so poor year classes significantly impacts fish availability in the northern edge of the range.
- They have seen some great fishing in recent years due to the 2015 year class, but there is concern about the lack of small fish and not a lot of fish in following year classes.
- Some spoke in favor of closures during spawning while other spoke in favor of more measures similar to those on the Sacco River.
- Several people spoke against mode splits specifically.
- Interest in upcoming MA DMF study on release mortality, and a need to consider gear restrictions.
- Fishing on spawning grounds should not be allowed.

Maine Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 14, 2023
Hybrid: Augusta, ME and Webinar

3 in-person attendees (Kevin Bassett, names not provided for others)

Webinar Attendees (primarily from Maine with some stakeholders from CT, MA, NY)

Last Name	First Name
Adams	Timothy
Bachmann	Brian
Blanchette	Larry
Catalano	Vincent
Christie	Jeanne
Cloutier	Germain
Collins	Ryan
Cummings	Derek
Dintaman	Evan
Dutremble	Jason
Fallon	Peter
Forrest	Todd
Friedrich	Tony
Gerrish	Parker
Gonnella	Eddie
Gugino	Joseph
Horst	Peyton
Howe	Art
Humphrey	Bob
Jewkes	James
Jones	Nick
Keliher	Patrick
Kleiner	Don
Landry	Capt. Aaron
Lepine	Bruce
McMenamin	Kevin
Mohlin	Pete
Norris	George
Opsatnic	Levi
P	Brad
Patterson	Cheri
Pollock	Quinn
Poston	Will

Last Name	First Name
Potvin	Brian
Pucci	Dom
Reader	Jeffrey
Reardon	Jeff
Richards	Shannon
Rubner	Capt. Cody
Sarcona	Tony
Sawyer	Capt. Ian
Sheffield	Phillip
Spear	Camden
Tirado	Lou
Uraneck	Chris
Vavra	Taylor
Wallce	Eric
Ware	Megan
Whalley	Capt. Ben
Woods	Michael
Yanders	Bob
Zlokovitz	Erik
	Ernie
	Jay
	Joe
	John
	Joshie
	Rich
	Sir Winston
	Name not provided
	Name not provided

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns, James Boyle

New Hampshire Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 11, 2023 – Portsmouth, NH and Webinar
48 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet and webinar attendance)

Hearing Officer: Cheri Patterson (NHFG)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tina Berger

Attendees included representatives for Plum Island Surfcasters, Native Fish Coalition, and American Saltwater Guides Association

Note: By a show of hands in the room and on the webinar, all members of the public in attendance were unanimously in favor of Option B for all option categories, with Option B1 for the Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery. The breakdown of public attendees was as follows: 23 in-person from NH; 10 webinar from NH; 4 webinar from MA; 3 webinar from ME; 8 webinar from other states.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 48 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - The most aggressive action is needed.
 - Mode splits are not appropriate, and any discussion of mode splits should be an amendment deliberation.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 48 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - There is DNA evidence that the majority of fish coming into our waters are from the Chesapeake; there is a lack of fish from poor spawning/recruitment for 5 years in the Bay, and we need to promote abundance.
 - General concern about the state of the Chesapeake Bay.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 48 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 48 people supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 48 people supported Option B (quota reduction) noting that all sectors need to take a cut.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 48 people supported Option B (Board action) for the following reasons:
 - Need quick and decisive action to rebuild the fishery.
 - If the Board decided to use the Board action, states could still hold their own hearings.

General Comments

- The most restrictive, aggressive action is appropriate.

- Important to practice good handling techniques.
- A goal with a 50% chance of success is too low of a bar.
- Support prohibition of live bait, and requirement to use single, barbless hooks.
- Concern that all the small fish have disappeared and lack of year classes.
- Recreational anglers should limit the number of fish they catch in a day.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 11, 2023

Portsmouth, NH

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Sgt CALITRI	CCA/NFC/ORCA/ASWFC	DURHAM, NH
Peter Whelan	CCA/ASGA	Portsmouth NH.
Witchie White	CCA N.H	Rye N.H.
Scott Klose	Bye Polar Fishing LLC	Bedford NH
PETER GLEASON	PLUM ISLAND SURCASTERS	EXETER, NH
Michael Toole	Plum Island Sordunston	Stratham, NH
Rick Hutchins	CCA/NH	Dover NH
James Shanley	NFC/CCA	Portsmouth, NH
Robin Calitri	ASGA	DOVER, NH
Doug Corcut	ASWFC NH-GA	Sunapee NH
Nick Martin	Native Fish Coalition	Cityfield NH
Lt. Delayne Brown	NHFG	Durham NH
Jim TITONE	NH FCB	SABROOK NH
Rick Fleming	N/A	Freedom, NH
Jared Kane	Native Fish Coalition	Milton Mills, NH
DO LOVELL		Northwood NH
Zak Robinson	CCA / Rising Tide Anglers	Portsmouth, NH
ROBERT YOUNG	N/A	STRATHAM, NH
HARRY MCKINNON	N/A	PORTSMOUTH, NH
Chris Callahan		Portsmouth NH
Geno McNamee	WAF	Portsmouth NH
ERIK ANDERSON	NHCEA	Portsmouth, NH
Mike Brieger	N/A	Northwood, NH
Todd Calitri	N/A	Barrington, NH

BLUEFISH

New Hampshire Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 11, 2023
Hybrid: Portsmouth, NH and Webinar

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Abbott	Dennis	NH
Amato	James	NH
Andresino	Mike	MA
Bravo	Peter	CT
Brassard	Scott	NH
Carney	Dylan	NH
Chocklett	Blane	VA
Cloutier	Germain	ME
Cummings	Derek	NH
Dintaman	Evan	MD
Friedrich	Tony	MD
Goethel	Ellen	NH
Hornick	Harry	MD
Larkin	Matthew	NH
LeMense	Julia	NH
Noonan	Chris	NH
Patles	Clayton	NH
Patterson	Cheri	NH
Petracca	Timothy	MA
Poston	Will	DC
Prodouz	William	MA
Rubner	Cody	FL
Schaefer	Kyle	ME
Sheffield	Phillip	CT
Vaughn	Jared	NH
Vavra	Taylor	MA
Vetere	Vincent	NY
Whalley	Capt Ben	ME
Zlokovitz	Erik	MD
Zobel	Renee	NH

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tina Berger

Massachusetts Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 5, 2023 – Buzzards Bay, MA
74 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: Mike Armstrong

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns

Attendees included representatives for the Massachusetts Striped Bass Association, Cape Cod Charter Boat Association, Cape Cod Salties, and Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 5 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Everyone should have the same regulations.
 - Need to stay on track for the rebuilding schedule.
 - Slot should protect the 2015 year class.
 - Consideration of a mode split should be an Amendment-level discussion, not in this Addendum.
 - If mode split is allowed, people would go buy the permit.
 - We cannot measure how successful or not successful the mode split is.

- 7 for-hire captains supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) for the following reasons:
 - The larger slot would attract customers.
 - For-hire mode did not significantly contribute to the increase in the harvest in 2022.
 - The smaller slot limit this year led to increased discards and angry customers and a loss of trips. The trip was perceived as no longer worth it with the smaller slot size, and clients want to bring something home to eat.
 - This 2023 season, bookings were down and mortality seems to be down.
 - Previous conservation measures having worked because we are seeing some of the best fishing we have seen in years.
 - Larger slot would reduce dead discards.
 - Charter businesses need this to survive.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 2 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 1 person supported Option B2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- General comment that all modes should have the same regulations, which is more enforceable.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification (if mode split option is selected)

- 6 people supported Option A (no clarification).
- 3 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 7 people supported Option A (state discretion on requirements) for the following reasons:

- For-hire stakeholders noted it is important to be able to fillet at-sea in order to get back to the harbor in time for the next trip.
- Retaining racks is one of the biggest problems because not allowed to discard them in the harbor.
- 2 people supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 3 commercial fishermen supported Option A (status quo quotas) for the following reasons:
 - The commercial fleet has a hard quota, and the commercial fishery harvest did not double in 2022 as the recreational harvest did.
 - Commercial fishing a part of our heritage and how we make a living. Too many reductions would lead to only a recreational fishery.
- 3 recreational fishermen supported Option B (quota reduction), noting that all sectors should take a reduction and it should be the full 14.5% reduction.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 2 people supported Option A (Addendum approach).
- 3 people supported Option B (Board action) noting that fast action is important.
 - 1 person noted this should only be a one-time option for the 2024 stock assessment.

General Comments

- The addendum will fall short of meeting the goals of rebuilding, and a moratorium may need to be considered if there is not a good year class soon.
- Concern that there are no good year classes coming behind the 2015s, and there has been 5 years of poor recruitment.
- Fishing was outstanding the past few years. Need to take a reduction to make up for that increase in fishing.
- Some recreational fisherman spoke in favor of exploring the use of seasons.
- Support for considering state-by-state regulations (like seasons), not a blanket slot limit.
- Chesapeake Bay water quality should be addressed instead of additional commercial fishery reductions.
- Need to address the new MRIP issues and problems with MRIP estimates.


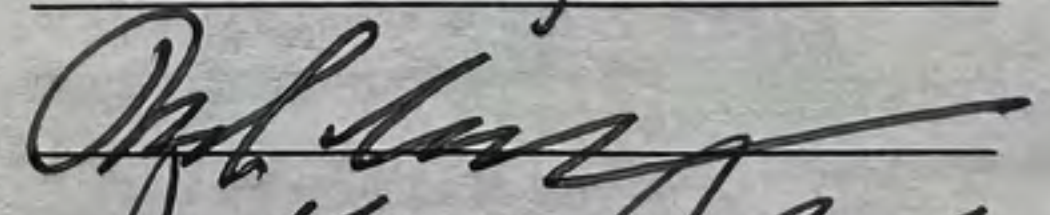
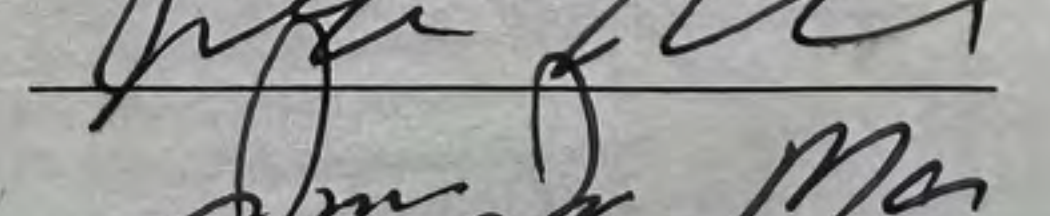
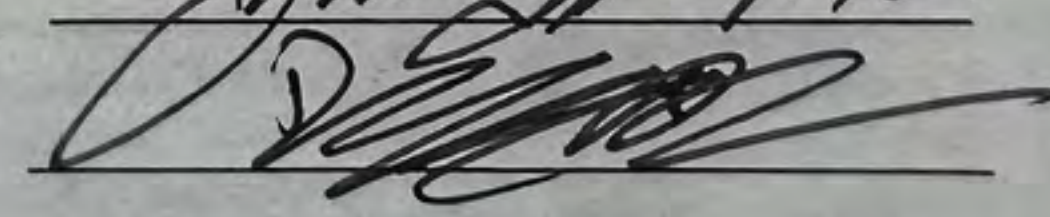
Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 5, 2023

Buzzards Bay, MA

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
JOHNS MARSH	CAPE SALTIES	MARWICH, MA
William Cotile	Cape Cod Salties	Bourne, MA
Paul Perro	SELF	Bourne, MA
Kurt Doherty	SELF	Pittsfield, MA
Mike Zarnito	SELF	MALDEN, MA
Christos Karlos	SELF	MASHPEE, MA
Parker Mauck	Westport Fly	Westport, MA
CHRIS KILLENBERG	WESTPORT FLY	Little Compton, RI
KEVIN DART	PRIVATE	PLYMOUTH, MA
John Moss	ONE STRIPED BASS	Chatham MA
Em. - Dredon	SELF emp.	PALMOUTH MA
Tim Sate	SELF	N. Truro Ma
	SELF	Chatham MA
Phil Contes	SELF	Sageone Beach 02562
Stephen Kalinick	SELF	Marwich, MA
ALAN CALLSON	SELF	BREWSTER, MA
CRAIG LORIKIAN	ASMEC	ORWELL, MA
Mark Carroll	SELF	
JACK ILLINGWORTH	MASS STRIPED BASS	
James Tukas	Plain Island surf casting	Orwell, MA
Derrell Elliott	SELF	
		taunton, ma.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Dawn W. Hanna		Barnes, MA
Laura Hanna		Bourne, MA
Bill Jenkinson		Taunton, MA
Ross Kessler	NDRK	Mattapoisett MA
Roy Jarvis		Westport, MA
907 Duma	Self	Taunton
Jack Christian	SALTIES	Yarmouth
Jay Pavlica	SALTIES	Dennis
Luciano Mascari	Abyss PM	Lincoln, MA
KEN WHITING	C.C. SALTIES	HARWICH, MA.
Rich Walker	C.C. SALTIES	Wareham, MA
Paul Conuso		Muskegeth, MA
Jonathan Hargrave		Marshfield MA
Derek Sparac		MORRISFIELD MA
Peter Turner	MSBA	HYANNIS MA
Peter Hess	CANAL SPORTSMAN	QUINCY MA
BOB PISTONINO	CANAL SPORTSMAN	Quincy MA
Abigail Archer	Cape Cod Salties	Brewster MA
Dennis Chapalez	Predator Sportfishing	Hyannis, MA
Capt Buddy Vanderkoop	Tomahawk Charters	Aquinnah MA
Willy Hatch	MACHACA Charters	Falmouth MA
Carl Boi's	Topspin charter	Nantucket
Mike Harnay	Emma Tech Charters	Yarmouth
Alan Das Mally	God Stryper	Northham
Pat Grenier	CCFF	Sandwich
Richard Binkley		Sandwich
PAUL WALD	CCOBA/NACD	
KEN DEBROWSKI	SELF	MASHPEE MA
Michael Carr		Wareham MA
T/M FEB	ON THE WATER MEDIA	FALMOUTH, MA

Name

Company/Organization

City, State

MATT ELZA
 Joseph Vando Jr
 Lore Cantello
 Dave Proos
 KEVIN BURCHWELL
 Matt Ruggieri
 J. Sullivan
 Philip Sullivan
 AV OR ML
 George Eros
 Ch. Meyer
 David Sutherland
 John Surjan

CC Sathis

Barnstable MA
 Sandwich MA
 Plymouth MA
 BOOTH MA
 Attleboro, MA
 Wareham MA
 ONSET MA
 Wareham, MA
 Wareham MA
 Falmouth MA
 MUSHONS MILLS MA MA
 Yarmouthport, MA

Massachusetts Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 19, 2023 – Gloucester, MA
54 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

DMF Staff: Daniel McKiernan (hearing officer), Michael Armstrong (Board member), Nichola Meserve, Ben Gahagan, Matt Ayer, Bill Hoffman

MA Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission members: Raymond Kane (also ASMFC Commissioner), Kalil Boghdan, Sooky Sawyer

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 25 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes). Commenters were primarily recreational anglers (including 19 members of the Plum Island Surfcasters, 1 member of Native Fish Coalition, and 3 others), but also included 1 charter captain and 1 dual-sector participant (rec/com). Reasons included:
 - Option provides greatest mortality reduction.
 - Option provides most protection to 2015 year-class.
 - Opposition to recreational mode splits: for-hire should change strategy to catch-and-release; shore and private vessel anglers’ contribution to economy outweighs for-hire; private and for-hire vessels both have the same highly-efficient technology to find fish; simplest measures easiest to enforce; everybody needs to contribute to rebuilding. One of these comments expressed a willingness to consider a mode-split after the next assessment.
- 6 people supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot). Commenters were primarily for-hire captains, but included 2 individuals that did not self-identify. Reasons included:
 - Option has insignificant effect on reduction (0.1%) but a significant benefit to for-hire businesses which provide employment and contribute to coastal economy.
 - Extra 2 inches will help attract clients that want to take a fish home.
 - Option will reduce discards; seeing too many discards under the narrow 28-31” slot
 - For-hire such a small component of total recreational catch and did not see same level of increase in 2022.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 20 people supported Option B2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish for all modes). Commenters were primarily from the Plum Island Surfcasters (19). Reasons included:
 - Option provides mortality reduction most similar to Ocean Option B.
 - Opposition to recreational mode splits.
- 4 people, all for-hire captains, supported Option C1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish P/S & 2 fish FH).
- 1 person supported either Option B1 or C1 to achieve the greatest mortality reduction.
- 1 person opposed all the options on the basis of disagreeing with the smaller minimum size limit in the Chesapeake Bay.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 1 person, a for-hire captain, supported Option A (state discretion), seeing no need for the change.

- 3 people supported Option B (patrons only). Of these, two for-hire captains considered this a reasonable compromise in order to have a mode split, but questioned the enforceability of the measure, and one angler supported the rationale that the more liberal measures are meant to attract patrons.
- 1 person questioned why captain/crew are allowed to bring home any fish from a for-hire trip.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 2 people supported Option A (state discretion). A for-hire captain indicated that disposing of racks shore-side would be problematic. An individual stated that at-sea filleting by private vessel anglers (which is illegal in MA) is so rampant that he couldn't support additional for-hire rules.
- 2 people were willing to *provisionally* support Option B (minimum FMP requirements): a for-hire captain, provided careful consideration is given to where and when racks can be disposed of; and a private angler, provided law enforcement supported the inclusion of these requirements (this sentiment seemed to have additional support within the room given questions as to whether law enforcement was recommending this).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 8 people supported Option A (status quo), primarily commercial and/or for-hire interests. Reasons included:
 - The recreational harvest increase is the cause for this action and commercial harvesters should not negatively impacted.
 - Reduction will remove \$1000s of dollars from dominant commercial harvesters' pockets.
 - Reduction will only hurt the Ocean commercial fishery, not the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery (due to quota underages) so can't support for fairness concerns.
- 5 people supported Option B (quota reduction), including one that may have been speaking for the 19 members of the Plum Island Surfcasters that were present. Of the 5 commenters, two identified as participating in the commercial fishery; they supported a smaller cut somewhere between 0-14.5% for similar reasons as stated for Option A. Reasons included:
 - Need for all participants to contribute to rebuilding given dire stock conditions.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 5 people supported Option A (addendum approach), mostly for-hire/commercial participants, on the basis of having full process for public comment, and that rules can't be liberalized by Board action.
- 45 people (by show of hands) supported Option B (Board action possible), mostly recreational participants. Reasons included:
 - Addendum process will take too long to respond to assessment, if needed.
 - Confidence in MA DMF to take the right actions to support rebuilding.

General Comments

- Multiple individuals questioned the validity of the recreational catch estimates driving this addendum and supported better methods to derive recreational catch numbers.
- Multiple individuals spoke to the need for more enforcement of regulations
- One individual supported a full closure of the Cape Cod Canal to all harvest (currently closed to commercial fishing)
- Multiple individuals supported greater angler education to reduce recreational release mortality

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 19, 2023

Gloucester, MA

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
John Russ	PISC	Newburyport
Jeremy Fortaldo	Boston Fish Charters	Boston
Steven Rubinfeld	PISC	Haverhill MA
STEPHEN DESISTO	PISC	WAKEFIELD MASS
ROBERT BRISSETO	—	DANVERS
Mike C. Sheridan	PISC	WOBURN MASS
Muchal Polson	com PBA consultant	Rockport MA
RON KLODENSKI	PISC	NEWBURYPORT
PETER Nouello	PISC	SACSBURY, ME
Nick Zgenis	PISC	Lowell, MA
Christian Martin	PISC	Nahant, MA
Tim Smith	—	Lynn MA
MIKE VELINGO	SBCBA ACSBA	Arlington, MA
Ronald Rowe		Gloucester MA
John Herrick		Gloucester, MA
matt Jacobs		Essex, MA
mike Jacobs		Gloucester, MA
BRUCE HORN	—	Rockport, MA
Nat Moody		Ipswich MA
Mark Dava		
Salvatore Russo		Gloucester MA

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 19, 2023

Gloucester, MA

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Jim Higgins	Plum Island Surfcasters	Newburyport MA
Al Williams	Comm/Rec Fisherman	Gloucester/Mass
Scott Reed	plum Island Surfcasters	Boxford, MA
James Jewkes	Plum Island surfcasters	Woburn, Ma
DON BARIBERL	PLUMISSAND SURFCASTERS	FELHAM NH
Georgette Henrich	plum Island Surfcasters	Draut, MA
Kevin Henrich	Plum Island Surfcasters	Draut, MA
Mike Tambone	Plum Island Surfcasters	N. Andover, MA
Kevin Darlay	PLUM ISLAND SURFCASTERS	SALISBURY MA
Dan Baker	PLUM ISLAND SURFCASTERS	Rockport MA
Stip Mantello	North Coast Angler	Rockport, MA
Red Littlefield	_____	NEWBURY MA
ROB SAVINO	C.J. Victoria Fishing	Charter Boston
Eric Nelson	Essex River Fishing Charters	Essex, MA
Kyle White	plum Island surfcasters	Haverhill, Ma
Chris Mitchell	_____	Manchester, Ma.
Sarah Milton	Current Angler LLC	Rockport, MA
Robbie Roberts	CAPEANN SURFCASTERS	Gloucester MA
Mike Albee	North End Boat Club	Newburyport
Steven McVally	_____	Draut MA
Matt Walsh	_____	MA, Andover

Name

Company/Organization

City, State

David Leveille
Miles Scholite

Gloucester
Gloucester

Dennis Funaro
Erik Christiansen

Plum-Island Surf

Billerica
Groveland, MA

~~DAVE LARLEY~~

~~LYNN~~

DAVE LARLEY

Styred Bassett
MA.

Rhode Island Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 30, 2023 – Narragansett, RI and Webinar
~48 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet and webinar attendance)

Hearing Officer: Jason McNamee (RIDEM)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Attendees included representatives from Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, American Saltwater Guides Association, Narragansett Surfcasters, and Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 10 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Support the most conservative option to meet the rebuilding goal.
 - All modes should contribute to rebuilding by 2029; no mode split.
 - Protecting the 2015 year-class is critical; there are no other strong year classes coming up after the slightly above average 2018 year class.
 - Does not make sense to increase the for-hire slot now, when in a few years the fishery will just be in worse shape.
 - Harvest needs to be reduced and all modes should partake equally.

- 5 people supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) for the following reasons:
 - Balance the conservation needs with the socioeconomic impacts and unique dynamics of the for-hire fleet compared to the rest of the recreational sector.
 - For-hire fleet supports local businesses and well-being, and supports rec anglers who don’t have their own boat and want to take a fish home for dinner. Clients pay to go on a trip to harvest local, fresh fish.
 - Emergency action narrow slot disrupted for-hire businesses, and will leave to more dead discards.
 - Much harder to find fish in the narrow slot; a wider slot would allow charters to move off of striped bass more quickly.
 - For-hire catch has decreased coastwide, while private/shore catch increased.
 - Concerned that customers will decide not to take trips with the narrow slot.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 7 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes), noting Chesapeake Bay recruitment has been very low and mortality should be reduced.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 3 people supported Option A (no clarification).
- 3 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).
- 1 person noted support for either option, but noted Option B may not be enforceable.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 4 people supported Option A (no ASMFC requirements) for the following reasons:
 - The proposed Option B requirements may not be the right tool, and should be further discussed by the Striped Bass Advisory Panel before moving forward.
 - The requirements would add time between charter trips and delay the next trip; requirements do not take into account the charter business model.
 - Carrying a rack around would be strange.
- 5 people supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements) noting concern about enforcement with maximum size limits and the reasonable requirement to maintain racks.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 6 people supported Option B (quota reduction), noting support for the full 14.5% and that all sectors should contribute to the rebuilding goal.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 1 person supported Option A (Addendum approach).
- 6 people supported Option B (Board action).

General Comments

- Concern a moratorium will eventually be necessary if the stock keeps moving in this direction.
- Different release mortality rates should be estimated by mode and by gear.
- Need more on-the-water data collection to understand what is going on and how many fish are being discarded.
- Regulations are only as good as enforcement; more funding and resources should be put toward enforcement.
- Concern about accuracy of MRIP data.
- Board should consider prohibition of all striped bass competitions.
- Board should consider tackle restrictions and requiring single barbless hooks.
- One attendee submitted the following blog post outlining the history of the past striped bass stock collapse: <http://oneanglersvoyage.blogspot.com/2023/12/whither-striped-bass.html>

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

November 30, 2023

Narragansett, RI

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Michael Woods	BHA	Saunderstown, RI
JON SPRENGER	CITIZEN REC.	N. SMITHFIELD RI
GREG TAYLOR		Narragansett RI
DAVE ANDERSON	THE FISHERMAN/MFG	Tiverton RI
Peter Randall	C-DEVIL SPORTSHIRTS	Narragansett RI
James Zambora	NRWFC	Newport RI
William All	RICCRA	Westerly RI
Glor. Vespe	GL	Tiverton, RI
Peter Jenkins	Saltwater Edge/ASGA	Newport, RI
Brian Sittlow	Rec Fisherman	Westerly, RI
Jet L Mercer	RI DEM LE	
Dwight Hochman	sjew-it	Waketield RI
John Lee		Waketield RI
DAVID BLACKBURN	RICCRA	WAKETFIELD, R.I.
Pat, Heaney		Newport RI
Andrew D'Agelo	RI Party charter	charter boat owner Narr RI
Rick Bellavance	RI PCBA Priority	Charter NK RI
Peter Alter	RI Mobile Sportfisherman	Westerly RI
CARL TISHK	RECREATIONAL WATER ANGLER	NEWPORT RI

Rhode Island Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
 November 30, 2023
 Hybrid: Narragansett, RI and Webinar

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name
Anisimov	Brian
B	Frank
Blanchard	Kurt
Blank	Russell
Cloutier	Germain
Costa	Nicole Lengyel
Costa	Daniel
Dudus	Roman
Fallon	Peter
Hittinger	Rich
Lake	John
Meserve	Nichola
Oliver	Zane
Olszewski	Scott
Poston	Will
R	Cody
Rainone	John
Smith	Sean
Travers	Scott
Whalley	Ben
Zlokovitz	Erik
	Veteran
	Joe
	Name not provided
	Name not provided
	Ray
	Aaron
	Tony
	Ray J
	Name not provided
	Phillip
	Bill
	Taylor

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Connecticut Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 16, 2023 – Old Lyme, CT
~24 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: Justin Davis (CT DEEP)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 2 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Important to protect the 2015 year-class.
 - Not the time to be doing half measures in the midst of poor recruitment; there should not be two different categories of regulations.

- 11 people supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) for the following reasons:
 - For-hire industry plays a pivotal role in the economy, and allows sustainable harvest of fish for people to take home to their dinner table (and for people who don’t have their own boats).
 - Balance of conservation goal and ensuring the viability of for-hire businesses in the long-term.
 - Trips have been down since the emergency action narrow slot was implemented, as customers can’t justify the price of a trip when the slot limit is so narrow.
 - The for-hire mode is such a small percent of the overall recreational sector, and has a negligible impact on the estimated reduction.
 - For-hire fleet has very low dead discards, but the narrow slot is increasing those discards due to more releases to find a fish in the slot.
 - For-hire small businesses contribute to the local community and bring people into town.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 1 person supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- No comments.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 6 people supported Option A (no ASMFC requirements) for the following reasons:
 - Every marina is different and this would be difficult to implement.
 - Unclear where racks could be discarded.
 - This would shorten trip time out on the water and would delay the turn-around time between trips.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- No comments on options.
- 1 person commented that Connecticut should allow a commercial fishery to use Connecticut’s quota.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 1 person supported Option A (Addendum approach).
- 1 person supported Option B (Board action).

General Comments

- Frustration with the emergency action.
- Stock is healthy and the stock assessment is flawed.
- For-hire industry should be asked for their data; concern about accuracy of MRIP data.
- Catch and release fishing causes high discard mortality. When fishing to take a fish home, once you take your limit you move on to a different species.
- The release mortality rate should be re-examined.
- Suggestion that catch and release fishermen limit themselves to a catch limit per day.
- Education on release mortality is very important.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

November 16, 2023

Old Lyme, CT

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Kevin Bentley	Reelin Sportfishing/CCPBA	Lebanon, CT
Robert Wade		Scotland, CT
Mike Pirri	Flying Lannue	Clinton, CT
Hannah Roby	CT DEER	Groton, CT
Sergiu Arsenau		Groton, CT
J.J. Karbowski	Rock & Roll Charters	Clinton, CT
TONY NOTARO	Lucky Hook Charters	Clinton, CT
Mitch Sandvoss	Rock & Roll Charters	Clinton, CT
Marc Berger	Lucy Service Carriers	Niantic
PHIL SHEFFIELD	CT. CATCH & RELEASE FISHING	MYSTIC, CT
Greg Dubrule	Blackhawk	Niantic, CT
Bob Berger		Groton, CT
Jonathan Weeks	WTF Charters	Haddam, CT
Cody Francis		Plainfield, CT
JAY SALVATORE	OSPREY	East Lyme, CT
Taylor Lapham	ASHA	Lyme, CT
TOBY LAPINSKI		OLD LYME, CT
MIKE KRAEMER		NORTH BRANFORD
Will Hallett	CT DEER	Clinton, CT
Gary Beers	Drifter	Lyme, CT
Seth Megard	Captain Seth Sportfishing	Groton, CT

Connecticut Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Milford, CT – November 30, 2023

17 public attendees

(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

State Staff: three CT DEEP Marine Fisheries Program staff, two CT DEEP Environmental Conservation Police (ENCON) officers

Hearing Officer: Justin Davis

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Marine Fisheries Program held a public hearing on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Justin Davis, Assistant Director of the Fisheries Division and Head of the Marine Fisheries Program, reviewed the addendum process and summarized the purpose of the addendum, the management background, and current fishery status. The addendum proposes to implement commercial and recreational measures for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay fisheries in 2024 that in aggregate are projected to achieve F-target from the 2022 stock assessment (F-0.17).

Comments from the public included:

In general, commenters were in favor of the rebuilding plan and felt that the measures implemented as part of Amendment 7 were appropriate for achieving the rebuilding goals. Opinions differed on the need for the further regulatory reductions taken via Emergency Action in 2023. Private recreational anglers commented that the measures were warranted and that the options presented in the Addendum that formally implement those changes (28"-31" all modes) were supported. For-hire operators felt that the actions implemented via Emergency Action were too restrictive and should not have applied to the for-hire sector. For-hire operators supported the expanded slot limit option of 28"-33" for the for-hire sector. They cited the need to keep fish to sell trips, particularly in the shoulder seasons when patrons book trips based on the potential to take fish home rather than just the experience of catching fish.

Comment Summary:

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fisheries Options.

Seven (7) individuals spoke in favor of Option B: 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons for (all modes). Four (4) individuals spoke in favor of Option C: 1 fish at 28" – 31" with 2022 seasons for private/shore anglers; 1 fish at 28" – 33" with 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options.

Five (5) individuals spoke in support of Option B: apply a standard minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and bag limit to the Bay jurisdictions' 2022 seasons. The minimum size shall be 19" and bag limit 1 fish. Maximum size limit option supported was B1) 23".

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

One (1) person spoke in favor of Option B. For states that authorize at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, establish minimum requirements, including requirements for: racks to be retained; skin to be left intact; and possession to be limited to no more than two fillets per legal fish. States should consider including language about when and where racks may be disposed of, specific to each mode allowed to fillet at-sea/shore.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

Three (3) individuals spoke in favor of Option B and advocated for the full 14.5% reduction to all commercial quotas.

Commenters acknowledged that reductions in quota might not result in reductions in harvest because not all jurisdictions harvested their full quotas in recent years, but felt that capping the landings at the lower quota levels was important and fair.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Two (2) individuals spoke in favor of Option B. The Board could respond via Board Action where the Board could change the management measures by voting to pass a motion at the Board Meeting instead of developing an addendum or amendment and different from the emergency action process.

Other Comments:

Gear restrictions: Some commenters thought there should be more options with gear restrictions such as banning treble hooks or other gears that cause unnecessary damage to fish.

Education: commentors thought that less experienced anglers don't handle fish in a way that maximizes survival of released fish. They thought that if there were mandatory training on proper handling and release methods, then release mortality could be reduced.

Poaching: Commentors thought that poaching, particularly in the winter Housatonic River fishery should be addressed and that more money needed to be spent on enforcement.

New York Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 4, 2023 – Kings Park, NY
41 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: John Maniscalco (NYSDEC)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Attendees included representatives from the Montauk Boatmen and Captains Association.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 5 recreational anglers supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Protect the 2015 year-class.
 - Keep the restrictive slot for at least one more year until the new assessment.
 - Should not be harvesting more fish when the stock is trying to rebuild.
 - This option has the greatest estimated reduction.
 - All recreational anglers should be treated equally, and no one should be exempt.
 - 2 people who commented in favor of Option B noted they may be able to support Option C after hearing the discussion and the estimated reduction.

- 8 for-hire captains supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) for the following reasons:
 - There is almost no impact to the reduction (0.1%) from allowing the mode split, so there should be no issue with this option.
 - The for-hire mode is such a small part of the sector, and the narrow slots have very detrimental effects on the industry.
 - Customers expect to go home with a fish.
 - Reductions in the fishery just keep coming. Over the past few years the bag limit went from 2 fish to 1 fish, lost the trophy fish size, and now the narrow slot size.
 - Customers don’t want to take trips with the narrow slot.
 - A narrow slot size results in more dead discards and increased fishing to find a fish in the slot. A wider slot size would decrease the discard mortality and shorten the trip.
 - For-hire industry puts money back into the economy.
 - 2 commenters noted Option E (30-33” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) would also be fine.
 - 2 commenters noted that Option A status quo (28–<35”) wider slot is their preferred option, but if they had to choose from the alternatives they select Option C.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 5 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 2 person supported Option A (no clarification) noting that the clarification would not be enforceable and would be irrelevant.
- 1 person supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 3 people supported Option A (no ASMFC requirements) noting that charters businesses rely on quick turn-around times between trips, and fillet requirements would delay the next trip.
- 1 person supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).
- 2 people noted they could partially support Option B (support retaining racks), but could not support the requirement to leave the skin intact. They noted a striped bass fillet is obvious without the skin on, and customers won't eat the fillet with skin on.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 4 people supported Option B (quota reduction) noting support for the full 14.5% reduction.
 - 1 person noted that even with the full 14.5% reduction in quota, commercial landings won't see that decrease.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 2 people supported Option A (Addendum approach) noting the public feedback process is important.
- 4 people supported Option B (Board action) noting the Board should be able to take action quickly.

General Comments

- The stock assessment is not accurate, and recreational data are not accurate. There is a divide between what people are observing on boats and what the assessment is telling us.
- Other rivers outside the Chesapeake Bay should be included and assessed. Although the Chesapeake Bay has had poor spawning, other rivers have many stripers, including the Hudson River and Housatonic River (CT).
- The ocean fishery is being persecuted for what happens in the Chesapeake Bay.
- The stock has changed and fish are in places they haven't been before, and not in places they used to be.
- Surf anglers note that shore fishing has slowed down, and action needs to be taken to protect the stock.
- Disappointment that Addendum II is projected to have less than a 50% change of meeting the target; Board should have developed more precautionary options.
- Pollution is contributing to stock decline, not overfishing.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Dennis Brown		Farmingville NY
ROCKY ZOTTO		NORTHPORT NY
JOHN SEIFERT		Smithtown, N.Y.
JAMES SETHWICK		General L.A.W. NY 11740
Charles Fazel		Montauk
Jamie Curesimo	Miss Montauk	Montauk
Anthony Curesimo		Montauk
Steve Kw. Hill	For - Hire	Northport / Montauk
Jill Maganza Ruiz	NOVEMBER RAIN CHARTERS	Montauk, NY
Steve Ruiz	November Rain	
Mark DeJong	For Hire Celtic Quest	Port Jeff
Joe DeVito	Captree Boatmen Assoc.	Captree - Babylon
Rick LaTorie	Captree Boatmen Assoc.	Captree - Babylon
Ken Higgins	Captree Boatmen	
Patrick Gillen	Captree Boatmen	Captree Babylon
Coch Williams	Captree Boatmen	Captree, Babylon
SAUBHOTO GOURNARE	APATS TECH	
ANTHONY DARRIGO	MBCA EBBTIDEII	MONTAUK NY
ANTHONY DARRIGO JR	MBCA EBBTIDEII	MONTAUK NY
Walter Czeka	WL Fish Farm II	Chase ST PK NY
Mike Dean		East Grege NY
ROSS SQUIRE	NYCRF	Centerport, NY
Eric Malone	NIA	New York, NY
DANIEL GIUNTA	MBCA	Montauk, NY
Rob Robert Mag. '44		Wings Park
Craig Candeloro	VAN STAAL	Cutchogue, NY
Matt Broderick	The Fisherman Hog	Head Pond, NY

New York Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 18, 2023 – New Paltz, NY (Hudson River)
17 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: Jessica Best (NYSDEC)

Hudson River Options

NYSDEC staff presented potential size limit options that may achieve the necessary reduction in the Hudson River relative to the current 18-28" Hudson River slot. Potential options presented were:

- A. Close season in summer (removing July-August)
- B. 18"-26" slot
- C. 19"-27" slot with season closing early June 16th
- D. 21"-28" slot with season closing early August 1st
- E. 21"-28" slot with season opening later April 15th
- F. Season opening May 1st

Comments on Hudson River Options

- 4 people supported closing during July-August combined with the 18-26" slot. 1 person also noted they would be okay with the 21-28" slot.
- 1 person supported closing during July-August, or the 21-28" slot closing in August, or the 18-26" slot.

General Comments

- The average 9% release mortality rate should be re-evaluated, including a study specific to the Hudson.
- Very few people keep fish.
- Commercial industry is the problem.
- Handling techniques and education are most important.
- Management should be proactive and determine which regulation has the greatest impact to protect the stock.

New Jersey Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 5, 2023 – Manahawkin, NJ
49 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

NJDEP Staff: Jeff Brust, Heather Corbett, Mike Celestino, Brendan Harrison

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

- Option A. Status Quo (28" to less than 35")
 - o 4 people support Option A
 - What they are seeing on the water does not match what the data is showing.
 - Emergency action was not needed.
 - SSB target has only been exceeded a few times. Target may be impossible to reach.
 - Data is flawed.
 - Wider slot allows anglers to take a fish home and reduce release mortality.
- Option B. 28" to 31"
 - o 6 people support Option B
 - Support stock rebuilding.
 - Assume regulations will be liberalized when assessment shows stock improvement.
 - Against mode-split regulations.
 - Provides opportunity for shore-based anglers.
 - 30" to 33" slot will harvest more 2015s.
 - Can be combined with Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) to provide spearfishers a realistic slot.
 - Avoid moratorium.
- Option C. 28" to 31" private/shore anglers; 28" to 33" for-hire
 - o 2 people support Option C
 - Regulations are destroying party boat industry.
 - Supports for-hire businesses.
 - Similar reduction to Option B.
- Option D. 30" to 33"
 - o No support.
- Option E. 30" to 33" private/shore anglers; 28" to 33" for-hire
 - o No support.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- Option A. Status Quo (18" minimum)
- Option B. Standard Min and Max size and bag limit
 - o 3 people support Option B, 1 person specifically supported B1 (23")
 - Important to protect 2017- and 2018-year classes.
 - Avoid moratorium.
- Option C. Mode-specific bag limit
 - o 1 person supports Option C, specifically C1 (23")
 - Support for for-hire industry.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

- Option A. Status Quo
 - o No support.
- Option B.
 - o 3 people support Option B
 - No rationale.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- Option A. Status Quo
 - o No support.
- Option B.
 - o 3 people support Option B
 - NJ already has requirements.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- Option A. Status Quo
 - o No support.
- Option B. Up to 14.5% reduction
 - o 4 people support Option B
 - NJ does not have commercial fishery.
 - SBBP consistently underutilizes quota.
 - Striped bass should be “game fish” or “no sale” in all states.

Section 3.3.1 Response to Stock Assessment Update

- Option A. Status Quo
 - o 3 people support Option A.
 - Do not trust the Board to take action at their leisure.
 - Desire for Board to slow down.
 - Wants the Board to listen to public comment.
- Option B.
 - o 1 person supports Option B
 - Avoid moratorium.

General Comments:

- Many comments expressed frustration with changing regulations based on flawed data. These decisions affect people’s businesses and livelihoods. Many cited the MRIP pilot study. Others commented that the fishing is phenomenal and what they are experiencing on the water is not the same as what the data shows.
- If the Board selects mode-specific regulations, it would be important to clearly define the for-hire sector (for example, bluefish: for-hire vessels must be captained by a properly credentialed operator with a valid US Coast Guard endorsement).
- Do not agree with chasing an SSB target that may be unobtainable. Have only exceeded it a few times in the timeseries. So many other things have changed, such as predator populations (seals, whales, cormorants).
- Circle hooks are not working. Many floating fish this year. Fish can still swallow and get gut-hooked. When gut-hooked, circle hooks are harder to remove than jhooks.
- Striped bass distribution is changing.
 - o No striped bass in south Jersey and the Delaware Bay.

- Serious problem in the Delaware Bay – maybe environmental.
 - Tale of 2 states.
 - Long Beach Island north to Raritan Bay – high abundance.
 - “Best fishing in their lifetime.”
 - “Catch 35 fish in 1.5 hours”
 - “Loaded from the beach to 7-8 miles out.”
- Many comments supported the continuation of the Striped Bass Bonus Program
 - Great source of accurate data.
 - Supports for-hire businesses.
 - Consistently underutilize quota so helping the fishery.
- Many comments supported maintaining consistent regulations across both modes.
- Party boat industry has been decimated by regulations so mode-split important.
- Some expressed frustration with Emergency Action and/or the ASMFC management process.
- Some challenged the 9% release mortality rate and said it should be lower.
- Mismanaged fishery. Should have implemented minimum size of 35” to protect the 2015-year class.
- Reduce commercial menhaden fishery in Chesapeake Bay.
- Need more law enforcement and stricter penalties.
- Catch & Release fishery needs to bear some of the reduction by having seasonal closures.
- Consider separate regulations for spearfishing.
- Climate is the problem. Warm water in the bays. Recruitment problems in Chesapeake Bay due to environmental conditions.
- Delaware and Hudson Rivers are contributing more to the stock than they used to. Chesapeake not as significant as it used to be.
- APAIS surveys are not accurate because anglers lie to interviewers.
- Need more education programs regarding handling and release techniques similar to options in Amendment 7.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 5, 2023

Manahawkin, NJ

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
HOWARD PAWSON	EMPIRE BAIT	L.E.H. NJ
CHRIS ARICO	BAY HEAD SHORES FISHING CLUB	PT PLEASANT NJ
Stephen Kucul	Reel Fantasea Fishing Charters	Barn Light
JACK FULLMER	N.J. Council Diver + clubs	New Jersey
Jim Hutchinsou	THE FISHERMAN	BRICK, NJ
David Etelman	Village Harbor Fishing Club	Surf City, NJ
John Kravchak	Berkeley Striper Club	seaside park NJ
Bil Under	Shkr Viver Sun	Franklin NJ
STEVE PALMER	JUNGLES BAIT / ^{MISS} ^{BEACH} ^{HAVEN}	BEACH HAVEN, NJ
Rob Crossley	Century Rolls	Forked River, NJ
Chuck Egan		Point Pleasant NJ
ALAN THOMAS	Nightwatcher Charter	Barnegat Light
Gregory R Cidrik	Fishermans Headquarters	Ship Bottom, NJ
Greg O'Connell	ASA0	Mays Landing, NJ
FRANK WADALIK	FUB DIVE CLUB	Neptune, NJ
JAMES HEALY		MANAHAWKIN, NJ
Scramy Johnson		L.E.H. NJ
Paul Bandini		Blue Bell, PA
CARL HANZM	American Angler	Dumont NJ
Brandy Hillegass	American Angler	Barnegat NJ
George B.	INSHORE SPORTS	BRICK, NJ

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Dr Pat Donnelly	NJ MFC	NJ
Tom Fete	PRIVATE Citizens	NJ
CHRIS BUCITTA	ASBURY PARK FISHING CLUB	NJ
Phil Sciortino, Jr.	Tackle Box	N.J.
Paddy Sciortino	Tackle Box	N.J.
Joe Grassi	Rec Angler	NJ
Scott Thoms	COUMPS Tackle	NJ Tom's River
Bob Jackson	self	Cape May NJ
CRAIG PERUCKI	American Angler	Barnegat NJ
MICKEY SHERRY	FISH HAWKS	BARNEGAT NJ
Jason Noonan	Cape Atlantic Striper Club	NJ
Paul Haertel	OCAA	Tom's River, NJ
Victor Hartley	JERSEY PARTY BOATS	NJ
KADIE JAMES	FV SUSAN HARRIS	NJ
Ted Grub	—	Manhasset, NJ
Joe McBeach	—	Barnegat NJ
DOUG O'BRIEN	—	TUCKERTON, NJ
Brian Adams	—	Beach
Brian Walters	—	Beachwood NJ
Frank Giacobone	Gabriele Tackle	BRICK
Ed Studley	—	Tom's River
Mike Adams	A Bomb Charters	AC, NJ
Max Goodman	Beach Haven Charter Fishing	Barnegat NJ
Niel Fete	Party	0
LAREN ADRIAN	FISHERMEN	OCEAN GROVE NJ
Francine Cudde	American Angler Betty Mikes	Seaside Park NJ
CLAY EMERSON	—	Hamilton Twp, NJ
Capt. Eric Kiber	On a mission Fishing	Belmar, NJ

HAD TO LEAVE 7:20

New Jersey and Pennsylvania Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 15, 2023 – Webinar
103 public attendees
(see enclosed webinar attendance)

Hearing Officers: Joe Cimino (NJDEP), Kris Kuhn (PFBC)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tracey Bauer

Attendees included a representative from Hi-Mar Striper Club.

Note: A webinar poll was conducted for some of the options. A breakdown of the poll results by NJ-PA-Other States is below as requested by the Board members.

Webinar Poll Results

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Rec Options	NJ	PA	Other States	Total
A. Status Quo 28-<35	8	4	2	14
B. 28-31 all modes	15	4	5	24
C. 28-31 private/shore; 28-33 for hire	8		1	9
D. 30-33 all modes	6			6
E. 30-33 private/shore; 28-33 for-hire	0	0	0	0
Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Rec Options				
Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Rec Options	NJ	PA	Other States	Total
A. Status Quo 18 min size, 1 fish	2	1	1	4
B1. 19-23, 1 fish all modes	22	3	7	32
B2. 19-24, 1 fish all modes	1			1
B3. 19-25, 1 fish all modes	2			2
B4. 19-26, 1 fish all modes	5		1	6
C1. 19-23, 1 fish private/shore; 2 fish for-hire	4			4
C2. 19-24, 1 fish private/shore; 2 fish for-hire	4		1	5
Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota				
Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota	NJ	PA	Other States	Total
A. Status Quo Amendment 7 Quotas	5	0	0	5
B. Up to 14.5% reduction from 2022 quotas	38	6	11	55
Section 3.3 Board Response to Assessments				
Section 3.3 Board Response to Assessments	NJ	PA	Other States	Total
A. Status Quo Addendum/Amendment	22	5	2	29
B. Board action (Board vote)	20	2	10	32

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 14 people supported Option A (28-<35" slot for all modes with approved CE's).
- 24 people supported Option B (28-31" slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - There have been five consecutive years of bad spawning, and the 2029 deadline is looking less attainable.
 - There needs to be an even playing field for all stakeholders; no mode splits.

- The reduction needs to be achieved to rebuild the stock.
- Average fishermen should not be discounted by having a narrower slot.
- 9 people supported Option C (28–31” P/S slot & 28–33” FH slot) for the following reasons:
 - A wider slot will help reduce dead discards. The narrow slot is increasing discards.
 - For-hire industry completes multiple fishing reports for every trip and keep track of fish better than private anglers.
 - This is how the for-hire businesses make their living and do this for work every day.
 - Only see clients once a year and they keep one fish the whole year. For-hire trip provides an opportunity for those who don’t have their own boats.
 - Lost business this year due to the narrow slot limit.
 - For-hire industry deserves a separate regulation and needs to attract customers.
 - For-hire industry drives business and tourism and is very important to the economy.
 - Without the accessibility that party/charter boats provide, many people wouldn’t have gotten involved in fishing.
- 6 people supported Option D (30-33” slot for all modes).

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 4 people supported Option A (status quo 18” min., 1 fish all modes, approved CE’s).
- 32 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - For-hire fleet from the Chesapeake Bay is a big portion of the entire coast. Regulations need to be simplified for clear compliance.
 - Important to protect the 2018 year class.
 - Fishery depends on abundance, and we need to achieve this reduction.
- 1 person supported Option B2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 2 people supported Option B3 (19–25” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 6 people supported Option B4 (19–26” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 4 people supported Option C1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish P/S & 2 fish FH) noting this is how the for-hire businesses make their living.
- 5 people supported Option C2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish P/S & 2 fish FH).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 2 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 1 person supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 5 people supported Option A (status quo quotas).

- 55 people supported Option B (quota reduction) for the following reasons:
 - All sectors should take a reduction.
 - The Chesapeake Bay hasn't taken a meaningful reduction since 2015.
 - Commenters noted support for the full 14.5% reduction.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 29 people supported Option A (Addendum approach) noting the Board needs checks and balances.
- 32 people supported Option B (Board action) for the following reasons:
 - Board should be able to act more quickly when the 2024 assessment is available.
 - The health of the stock is an issue and addendum timing is too long to achieve the 2029 rebuilding deadline.

General Comments

Stock Concerns

- Although fishing has been good in NJ, need to look at the big picture; there are not enough fish along the entire coast.
- The issue is recruitment, not spawning stock biomass. Environmental factors and water quality should be addressed to support recruitment.
- Seeing fewer juvenile fish.
- Climate change should be considered and its impact on the stock.
- Fish should be stocked in the Chesapeake. Concern about water quality, high temperatures, and catfish.

Data Concerns

- Concern about the accuracy of MRIP data.
- The reference points have been raised so many times, and we wouldn't be overfishing under the previous reference points.

Enforcement

- Need more enforcement of the circle hook requirement.
- Need for more enforcement.
- Concern about enforcement of the bonus program.

Management

- Using a slot to protect a year class will not make a difference. A high minimum size limit should be implemented, which is how the stock was rebuilt before.
- Regulations should be consistent across states.
Education is important. Many anglers are mishandling fish. There should be a catch limit per day (e.g., stop fishing when you catch x fish) and barbless hooks should be used.
- Make party boats part of the bonus program and give an extra fish to the for-hire fleet.
- The NJ bonus program is a good program and only uses 10-15% of NJ's commercial quota. NJ also has no menhaden commercial fishing.
- Suggest only allowing bonus program tags for certain times of the year.
- Need a striper tag system where folks pay for striper tags.

New Jersey-Pennsylvania Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 15, 2023
Webinar

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Archer	Colin	NJ
Bravo	Peter	CT
Barbato	Carmine	NJ
Barry	Linda	NJ
Barshinger	Cooper	NJ
Batsavage	Chris	NC
Benton	Bill	PA
Bertoline	Sue	NY
Bielitz	Derek	NJ
Bochenek	Eleanor	NJ
Bogan	Raymond	NJ
Bogan	Capt. Bob	NJ
Bogan	Erik	NJ
Brust	Jeffrey	NJ
Cadigan	Daniel	NJ
Califano	Anthony	PA
Campbell	Justin	NJ
Carpenter	Craig	NJ
Catalano	Vincent	NY
Celestino	Michael	NJ
Chesniak	Luke	NJ
Chocklett	Blane	VA
Cimino	Joe	NJ
Corbett	Heather	NJ
Cudnik	Greg	NJ
Curro	Anthony	NJ
Curtiss	Ken	NJ
Daley	Bob	NJ
Davis	Nelson	PA
Davis	Skyler	NJ
Davis	Scott	SC
DePersenaire	John	NJ
Desko	Andrew	PA
Devine	Tom	NJ
Dintaman	Evan	MD

Last Name	First Name	State
Doebley	Gene	NJ
dotcom	reelmaxlife	NJ
Eidman	Capt. Paul	NJ
Fisher	Chris	PA
Fote	Tom	NJ
Friedrich	Tony	MD
Gallen	Patrick	PA
Gary	Marty	NY
Golden	Kieran	NJ
Grabowski	Tyler	PA
Gronikowski	Suzanne	NJ
H	Josh	NJ
Haasz	Steve	NJ
Haertel	Paul	NJ
Harrison	Brendan	NJ
Hartley	Victor	NJ
Hopkins	William	NJ
Hutchinson	Jim	NJ
Kaelin	Jeff	NJ
Kameen	Paul	PA
Kane	Raymond	MA
Katona	Bruce	NJ
Kocsi	Phillip	NJ
Koestel	Jason	NJ
Koop	Alan	NJ
Kosinski	Thomas	NJ
Kuhn	Kris	PA
Kull	Laura	NJ
Langevin	Maureen	NJ
Lido	Chris	NJ
M	Nick	NJ
Machalaba	Stephen	NJ
Makfinsky	Vinny	NJ
Markezin	Jake	PA
May	Ashley	VA
McGilly	Joshua	VA
Montemuro	Gabe	PA
Moore	Capt. Jason	VA
Mostrowski	Anatoli	NJ
Nguyen	Khoa	PA
Nihart	David	PA

Last Name	First Name	State
Nowalsky	Adam	NJ
Oiler	David	NJ
Oliver	Zane	VA
Orendorff	Matthew	NJ
O'Neill	Tyler	DE
Padilla	Cesar	NY
Pannone	Joanne	NJ
Patterson	Cheri	NH
Phillips	Robert	NJ
Pierce	Daryl	PA
Porta	Mike	PA
Poston	Will	DC
Pyle	Jennifer	NJ
Riback	David	NJ
Riback	Cole	NJ
Sanchez	Virgilio	NY
Schaeffer	Timothy	PA
Schott	Louis	NJ
Sheffield	Phillip	CT
Sikorski	David	MD
Simeoli	Nick	NJ
Simon	Philip	NJ
Stuebing	John	NJ
Suriano	Michael	NJ
Surowitch	Jonathan	NJ
Switzer	Robert	NJ
Taglia	Louis	NJ
Taylor	Doug	NJ
Thomas	Wayne	NJ
Toth	Shawn	PA
Tuttle	Arthur	MA
Vassallo	Christopher	MD
Vavra	Taylor	NY
Villanova	Mike	NJ
Waine	Mike	NC
Wallace	Capt. Eric	ME
Walsifer	Peter	NJ
Whalley	Capt Ben	ME
Whelan	Peter	NH
Whipkey	Brian	PA
Williams	Capt. Brian	NJ

Last Name	First Name	State
Woods	Michael	RI
Yenkinson	Harvey	NJ
Zlokovitz	Erik	MD

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Toni Kerns, Tracey Bauer, Chelsea Tuohy

Delaware Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 28, 2023 – Dover, DE and Webinar
16 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet and webinar attendance)

Hearing Officer: John Clark (DNREC)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Madeline Musante

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 1 person supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes).

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 1 person supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- No comments.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- No comments.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 6 people supported Option A (status quo quotas) for the following reasons:
 - The commercial sector is being punished for the recreational sector actions.
 - The recreational and for-hire sectors should be held accountable, not the commercial sector.
- 1 person supported Option B (quota reduction) noting all sectors should be managed equally.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 1 person supported Option A (Addendum approach) noting that the Board action process would take stakeholder input out of the process.
- 1 person supported Option B (Board action).

General Comments

- The stock rebuilding deadline should not have to be 2029.
- Management of other species in the ecosystem is also important to consider.

Delaware Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
November 28, 2023
Hybrid: Dover, DE and Webinar

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Batsavage	Chris	NC
Casey	Mark	DE
Clark	John	DE
Cloutier	Germain	ME
Conroy	Margaret	DE
Friedrich	Tony	MD
Geer	Pat	VA
McDowell	Bob	NY
Meserve	Nichola	MA
Miller	Roy	DE
O'Neill	Tyler	DE
Patterson	Cheri	NH
Poston	Will	DC
Seaver	Francis	DE
Vavra	Taylor	NY
Zimmerman	Jordan	DE
Zlokovitz	Erik	MD

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Madeline Musante

Maryland Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 6, 2023 – Annapolis, MD
~110 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: Lynn Fegley (MDDNR)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Attendees included representatives from the Maryland Charter Boat Association, Maryland Waterman's Association, Annapolis Anglers Club, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, American Sportfishing Association, Coastal Conservation Association, Deale Captains Association, and Baltimore Waterman's Association.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 7 people supported Option B (28–31" slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Support for option that would have the largest estimated reduction.
 - Regulations should be the same across all modes.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 6 people supported Option B1 (19–23" slot, 1 fish for all modes) or Option B2 (19–24" slot, 1 fish for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Support for options with the largest estimated reduction, especially considering low Chesapeake Bay recruitment in recent years.
 - Regulations should be the same across all modes for consistency and fairness.
- 1 person supported Option B2 (19–24" slot, 1 fish for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Unfair for charter trips to have a higher bag limit when shore/private anglers are only limited to one fish.
- 3 people support Option B4 (19–26" slot, 1 fish for all modes) noting they would rather see a larger slot.
- 7 people supported Option C2 (19–24" slot, 1 fish P/S & 2 fish FH) for the following reasons:
 - The for-hire industry catch has already decreased and there are fewer trips.
 - The for-hire industry is the smallest user group and should not be penalized. The industry supports many small businesses and they already participate in electronic reporting.
 - Most of the reduction should be for shore/private recreational fishermen
 - Charter boats cannot survive on a 1-fish bag limit.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- No comments

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- No comments

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 9 people supported Option A (status quo quotas) for the following reasons:
 - The fishery is 90% recreational and only 10% commercial.
 - The commercial fishery is heavily monitored and held to the highest standard with buyers, tagging and electronic reporting. Don't know what recreational anglers are catching. Recreational sector should take the reduction and do proper reporting.
 - Commercial sector has already taken cuts, and the trend in commercial landings has been steady and sustainable.
 - Commercial industry provides food supply for people.
 - Recreational sector hasn't taken a reduction.
 - ITQ fishery already has a lot of accountability.
 - A 14.5% reduction in the commercial fishery would have very limited impact on the overall stock since the commercial fishery is such a small percent of the total fishery.
- 8 people supported Option B (quota reduction) noting support for the full 14.5% reduction so the reduction is evenly distributed across sectors.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 1 person supported Option A (Addendum approach) noting the public should have the opportunity to participate.

General Comments

- Concern about the accuracy of MRIP data.
- Concern about MDDNR YOY sampling with sites not covering sufficient area in the Bay.
- Striped bass distribution is changing in the Bay.
- Need for more funding to support high-priority striped bass research questions and DNR field work.
- Need to address invasive catfish to address concerns about juvenile fish survival.
- Need to address forage fish and food supply for striped bass, especially menhaden management.
- Concern about seeing dead floating striped bass during hot weather.
- Support for a system to better track recreational angler effort and participation.
- Instead of narrowing the recreational slot, the slot should be widened so there are less discards and less handling of fish.
- Don't want to see additional no-targeting closures. Changing slot size is not a concern, but a shorter season has negative impacts on business.
- Need an updated release mortality estimate.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 6, 2023

Annapolis, MD

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Tim Wheeler	Bay Journal	
Bobby Rhodes	BONNIE SUE CHARTERS	LOTHIAN Md.
CINDY EVANS	BONNIE SUE CHARTERS	EDGEWATER Md.
Bob Munro	MCBA	MD
John Dean	St. Marys County/Mark	M.D.
MIKE Smolek	Upper Bay Charters Capt. A.S.M.C.	MD
BRAD FOXWELL	Chesapeake Fishing Adventures	WATERVILLE, MD
Capt. Rob Newberry	Delmarva Fisheries	Chestertown, MD
Rudy Lukacovic	DUP-retired	
Bob Flynn	PCA / Vickie Anchorage	Deale, MD
Bobby McCormack	PCA/OBSESSION CHARTERS	DEALE MD / OC MD
Ernie	Mallard Charters	Kentledge
Jean Seman	Maryland Fishing and Hunting	Stevensville, MD
Joseph Soder	Captain's Pride Charters	KURT BALDWIN
PERRY DAVIDSON	MCBA-EXCALIBUR	CARDONA Md
FRANK CARVER	MCBA-LOOSEW UP	Deale, MD,
FRANK ABNER	MCBA-Tamshell II	Owings, MD
Shane Cole	Tight Times Charters	Edgewater MD
MARK BROWN	MCBA/JUBCCA SAFARI GIRL CHARTERS	MIDDLE RIVER MD
Dave Bill	MCBA Chasing Dreams Sportfishing	Middle River, MD

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Dorethy Turvey	Annapolis Fishing Chale	Annapolis MD
Scott Lausing	Recreational fisher	Derwood MD
Willy Dean	Commercial	St Mary's
Robert T. Brown Sr	MWA	Colton Point Md
Tilghman Hensley	Commercial/Charter	Queenstown Md
Andrew Hensley	CHARTER	Stevensville, MD
Francis Hensley	Commercial/Charter	Stevensville, MD
Stephanie Shields	Chasin Tail Charter	Stevensville, MD
Brandon Moore	Chasin Tail Charter	Stevensville MD
Andrew Aas	Maryland Charterboat Maverick	Queenstown, MD
Glenn Hughes	American Sport Fishing Assn.	Annapolis, MD
Rudy Lukacovic	DUP-retired	
DITH NEVENS		Stevensville, MD
Mary Dize	Commercial	Tilghman, MD
Russell Dize	Commercial	Tilghman MD
John Billings	Recreation Private	Davidsonville, MD
W SHANNON PIZZENS	CHARTER	EASTON MD
Jason Clapper	Charter	Tilghman MD
TOM LILLY	MENTHATEN PROJECT	WHITZHAVEN, MD
Joey Jank	Rusty hook Daid ? Tech	Easton md
Kevin Williams	Rec	Pasadena MD
Mark Lewis	Rec	Savage's Pt, MD
Justin Kaufman	Charter	Chester, MD
Brooke Johnson		Chester, MD
George Otonnell	Md. DNR	Chester, Md.
Buddy Carson	Comm. Fishing	Crisfield Md.
Burl Lewis	Commercial fish	Cambodge Md.
Dan Dierker	Comm. Fisherman	Rock Hall MD
Scott R Armstrong	Comm. Fisherman	Rock Hall MD

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Jamie Nummer	mate	Rock Hall
Brody Pierce	ROCK HALL fishing charters	Rock Hall
Colt Duffekski		Rock Hall
Evelyn Newman	AAWA	Tracys Landing Md
Sam Hyde	AAWA	Tracys Landing Md.
Cheryl Carr	COM + CHARTER	ROCK HALL MD
Capt Wayne Fletcher	Miss Evelyn's Charters	Rock Hall Md
Troy White	mate	Rock Hall MD
Charles Tree	Captain	Rock Hall MD
Don Perry	Natureman Captain	Rock Hall Md
Justin Perry	KCWA	Rock Hall Md
William Hawkins		Howard Co Maryland
Carly Watkins		Pasadena, MD
Betsy Jackson		Annapolis, MD
DAVE FISCHER	GoldFisch CHARTERS	PASADENA MD
Eddie Weber		Annapolis MD
Giovanni Gasparo		Annapolis, MD
MALCOLM GRAHAME	GRIFFIN'S GUIDE SERVICE	WEST RIVER, MD
Steve Griffin	Griffin's Guide Service	Lothian, MD
Jeff Baker	KCWA	Rock Hall, MD
James Stout	Captain	Church Hill, MD
Ben Manby	KCWA	Rock Hall, MD
Robert Fletcher	Bubbichuck Fishing charters	Rock Hall MD
Andrew Blumenfeld	Recreational	Crofton, Md
JOHN MENOGAN	"	ANNAPOLIS, MD
Michael Pohvski	Recreational	PASADENA, MD
Dylan Trillie		Chestertown, MD
Jonathan Bland	BayBord Guide Service	Annapolis, MD
Rich Kuhlman	Annapolis Anglers Club	Annapolis md
Allison Colden	CBF	Annapolis, MD

**Potomac River Fisheries Commission & District of Columbia Public Hearing –
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 12, 2023 – Webinar
13 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)**

Hearing Officers: Ingrid Braun-Ricks (PRFC), Daniel Ryan (DCDOE)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Caitlin Starks

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 3 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes).

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 3 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- 3 people supported Option B (for-hire measures for patrons only).

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 3 people supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 3 people supported Option B (quota reduction), including support for the full 14.5% quota reduction.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 3 people supported Option B (Board action).

General Comments

- The striped bass fishery is a big part of DC fisheries and important to anglers.
- Support for the options with the greatest reduction.

PRFC-DC Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 12, 2023
Webinar

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Avila	Jason	MA
Braun-Ricks	Ingrid	VA
Chocklett	Blane	VA
Cohn	Josh	DC
Davis	Kyle	NH
Farino	Richard	DC
Fleming	Dennis	MD
Friedrich	Tony	MD
Friend	Cathy	VA
Gillingham	Lewis	VA
Griffiths	Jonathan	MD
Hornick	Harry	MD
Meyers	Steve	VA
Moore	Chris	VA
Owens	Ronald	VA
Poston	Will	DC
Rudman	Patrick	ME/MD
Ryan	Daniel	DC
Trostle	Andrew	MD
Zlokovitz	Erik	MD

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Caitlin Starks

Virginia Public Hearing – Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
December 7, 2023 – Fort Monroe, VA
19 public attendees
(see enclosed sign-in sheet)

Hearing Officer: Pat Geer (VMRC)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Attendees included representatives for the Twin Rivers Waterman’s Association, Virginia Waterman’s Association, Eastern Shore Waterman’s Association, Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association.

Note: A show of hands in the room was used for the recreational size limit, commercial quota, and response to stock assessment options.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- 5 people supported Option B (28–31” slot for all modes) for the following reasons:
 - Concern the options don’t meet the necessary 14.5% reduction.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- 5 people supported Option B1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 1 person supported Option B2 (19–24” slot, 1 fish for all modes).
- 1 person supported Option C1 (19–23” slot, 1 fish P/S & 2 fish FH).

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Clarification for Mode-Split

- No comments.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- 1 person supported Option B (minimum fillet requirements).

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- 15 people (primarily commercial fishermen) supported Option A (status quo quotas) for the following reasons:
 - Best available science shows that the recreational sector is the problem, not the commercial sector. Most removals are from the recreational sector.
 - Commercial sector should not be penalized for the increase in the recreational sector.
 - Commercial sector has already taken cuts with Addendum IV and Addendum VI, while the recreational sector has increased.
 - Managers should take into account the socioeconomic impacts of a quota reduction, which would reduce income and increase prices.
 - The Board had no basis for including options for reducing commercial quotas in this addendum. The initial intent was to change size limits and accordingly adjust quota, not to take an overall quota reduction.
 - Commercial fishermen are a historic element of the Bay, and additional reductions are a threat to their way of life. If the commercial watermen go away, the industry will not be able to come back.

- Virginia made voluntary, proactive changes (season, gill net size reduction, etc.) to reduce effort, which is why the full quota isn't being caught already; it would be unfair to take an additional reduction.
 - Issue is the recreational sector and the northern states.
- 3 recreational anglers supported Option B (quota reduction) noting that both sectors should share the responsibility of taking a reduction.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- 1 person supported Option B (Board action) noting the Board needs to react quickly.

General Comments

- Support for implementing Addendum II measures as soon as possible.
- Concern about lack of prey for striped bass and the need for more bait in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Menhaden industrial fishing must be held accountable; it is hard to find menhaden in the Bay, and menhaden have an effect on the health of the striped bass stock.
- Concern about menhaden management and Addendum II's lack of consideration of menhaden.
- The problem is the ocean recreational fishery, not the Chesapeake Bay fisheries or the commercial sector.
- Recreational anglers should have tags to track how many fish they can catch.
- Avoid catching large breeders, and make it illegal to possess striped bass when they go upriver to spawn.
- Consider a uniform size limit for everyone of 24-36".
- Require the use of barbless hooks and ban treble hooks.
- Address illegal commercial fishing and poaching.
- Northern states are harvesting the majority of striped bass.
- Initial allocation of the striped bass fishery was supposed to be 50-50 between commercial and recreational, but it has evolved to 90-10 with recreational as the majority.
- Virginia's charter industry has been hit hard and Virginia has eliminated their trophy season; on the other hand, Maryland's charter industry has kept on fishing and there has been an explosion of charter businesses in northern states. There are too many dead discards and the charter industry needs to be addressed.

ASMFC Striped Bass Public Hearing

Name	Town you're from
MICHAEL QUINAN	RICHMOND (ATTORNEY FOR WATERMEN)
John Dameron	Kinsale VA
Curtis Jenkins	Warsaw VA
John Forrest	Ewynn's Island
Bryan Sanders	HAGUE VA.
DALE NEAL	Richmond, VA
Jeff Decker	WACATAWAKE
JOHN BELLO	STUBBEN VA
Wayne Morris	Warsaw, VA
Lynnie Morris	Warsaw, VA
Larry Snider	Hampton Va
Keith Bradbury	Mathews
Jerry M Hicks	Middlesex
Kelly V. Place	Williamsburg
Aaron Stots	Yorktown
Deese Jmi	Poquoson



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

401 East State Street

P.O. Box 402, Mail Code 401-07

Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402

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PHILIP D. MURPHY

Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY

Lt. Governor

SHAWN M. LATOURETTE

Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joseph Cimino, ASMFC Administrative Commissioner, NJ

FROM: Megan Ware, Chair of Striped Bass Management Board

DATE: 27 November 2023

SUBJECT: NJ striped bass bonus program conservation equivalency proposal

In anticipation of the Striped Bass Management Board (Board) selecting one of the recreational ocean fishery options listed in Addendum II to Amendment 7 currently open for public comment, as well as the Board's consideration of commercial quota reduction options (Section 3.2.1 of Addendum II), New Jersey (NJ) has developed the attached Conservation Equivalency (CE) proposal. This proposal is limited to our striped bass bonus program (SBBP) only. Conservation equivalency is the administrative mechanism by which NJ transfers its commercial quota to its recreational sector. While Amendment 7 to the striped bass FMP makes clear that "**CE programs will not be approved for non-quota managed recreational fisheries** [emphasis added], with the exception of the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Delaware Bay recreational fisheries, when the stock is at or below the biomass threshold (i.e., overfished)," **NJ's SBBP is quota-managed** and therefore CE is permitted under Amendment 7, recent changes to ASMFC's Conservation Equivalency policy and technical guidance document notwithstanding.

NJ's intention with this preemptive approach is to allow sufficient time for TC, PDT, and Board review and to allow for implementation in NJ in time for a May 15th SBBP start date. A drawback to this approach is that we need to submit SBBP alternatives for all recreational ocean fishery options under consideration, even those that will ultimately not be selected by the Board.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

cc: T Kerns
E Franke
K Drew
J Kaelin
A Nowalsky
B Harrison
M Celestino

New Jersey Atlantic Striped Bass Addendum II to Amendment 7 Implementation Plan

Please use the following template when submitting implementation plans. Please be as concise as possible and use bullets to ensure inclusion of all important information.

Summary of Proposed Measures

Recreational Fishery

No changes proposed.

Commercial Fishery – Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP)

Table 1. SBBP options paired with specific Addendum II options:

Recreational Option		Commercial Option		SBBP option		Quota (lbs.) Commercial Option A or Option B Min. Quota (-14.5% from 2022)	Quota (lbs.) Commercial Option B Max. Quota (-0% from 2022)	Open Season
A	Status Quo [28", 35"] all modes	A	Status Quo	SQ	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
		B	Up to 14.5% reduction	1	1 @ 24" to < 28"	184,604	215,912	5/15 - 12/31
B	[28", 31"] all modes	A	Status Quo	SQ	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
		B	Up to 14.5% reduction	1	1 @ 24" to < 28"	184,604	215,912	5/15 - 12/31
C	Private [28", 31"] For-hire [28", 33"]	A	Status Quo	SQ	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
		B	Up to 14.5% reduction	1	1 @ 24" to < 28"	184,604	215,912	5/15 - 12/31
D	[30", 33"] all modes	A	Status Quo	SQ*	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
				2A	1 @ 24" to < 30"	208,674	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
		B	Up to 14.5% reduction	1*	1 @ 24" to < 28"	184,604	215,912	5/15 - 12/31
				2B	1 @ 24" to < 30"	194,677	227,693	5/15 - 12/31
E	Private [30", 33"] For-hire [28", 33"]	A	Status Quo	SQ*	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
				3A	1 @ >33" ≤ 36"	^298,689	n/a	5/15 - 12/31
		B	Up to 14.5% reduction	1*	1 @ 24" to < 28"	184,604	215,912	5/15 - 12/31
				3B	1 @ >33" ≤ 36"	^278,653	^325,912	5/15 - 12/31

* non-preferred alternative due to length gap in Add II vs SBBP regulations.

^ see Table 3 which indicates NJ has never landed more than 121,410 lbs. in any single year since the program's inception. In addition, Table 2 indicates proposed alternate SBBP options will result in fewer issuable permit/tags than status quo.

Section 1: Coastal Recreational Fishery

NJ is not proposing any change from whichever coastal/ocean recreational fishery regulation the management Board (Board) selects.

Section 2: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery (MD, VA, PRFC, DC)

Not applicable for New Jersey.

Section 3: Coastal Commercial Fishery

- New Jersey reallocated its commercial quota to the recreational fishery through CE during Addendum VI, which was maintained through Amendment 7.
 - If options A, B, or C are selected by the Board under 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options along with option A under 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options from draft Addendum II to Amendment 7, New Jersey will remain status quo and continue its existing Addendum VI Conservation Equivalency (CE) plan for the Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) of 1 fish at 24" to less than 28" with a 215,912 lbs. quota.
 - If option B is selected under 3.2.1, NJ is proposing SBBP option 1 to maintain the current SBBP size limit but adjust the quota accordingly.
 - If option D or E is selected under 3.1.1, NJ is proposing two new SBBP size limits to contiguously align with the new recreational size limits of option D or E. Two SBBP options are then associated with each new size limit to account for differences in quota associated with each option under 3.2.1.
-
- Does your proposal meet the data standards established by the TC?
 - New Jersey's proposal meets the standards as established by the TC detailed in the TC memo dated September 28th 2023 (Subject: "Spawning potential ratio adjustment for commercial maximum size options") (Attachment 1).
 - What data sources are used in the analysis (include mode or season specific if applicable)?
 - For the yield per recruit/spawning potential ratio analysis, as required in the September 28th 2023 TC memo, we used data from the coastwide assessment and as pre-populated on the "Inputs" tab of NJ_Calc_Quota_SPR_submitted.xlsx. We estimated selectivity using age length keys pooled from 2019, 2021 and 2022 (age data are from a variety of NJ fishery-independent and -dependent sampling programs including Del Bay tagging, Del River seine survey, River Herring surveys, Raritan Bay survey, Ocean Trawl, party/charter boat sampling, and fishing tournaments). We incorporated 2019 to get sample sizes for ages 11-13; 2020 was omitted because larger fish, where samples were needed, were not present in sampling in that year. Where maximum selectivity < 1, we scaled the entire selectivity vector to its maximum value.
 - Sample size summary by mode, season, or state and/or data source as applicable.
 - Our composite age length key is comprised of 1,244 aged fish.
 - Describe in one sentence how you did the analysis:
 - New Jersey used the Excel spreadsheet created by G Nelson and distributed to the TC in ~September 2023 for SPR calculations.
 - Provide a table of results as presented in G Nelson's spreadsheet or equivalent spreadsheet that is comparable with your analysis.

- Calculations and results presented in spreadsheet NJ_Calc_Quota_SPR_submitted.xlsx.
- Results are presented in Table 4.

Discussion:

Commercial conservation equivalency is the administrative mechanism by which NJ is able to transfer its commercial quota to its recreational sector.

While Amendment 7 to the striped bass FMP makes clear that “CE [Conservation Equivalency] programs will not be approved for **non-quota managed recreational fisheries** [emphasis added], with the exception of the Hudson River, Delaware River, and Delaware Bay recreational fisheries, when the stock is at or below the biomass threshold (i.e., overfished),” NJ’s SBBP is quota-managed and therefore permitted under Amendment 7. In addition, Amendment 7 allowed for the continuation of Addendum VI to Amendment 6 CE programs approved in 2020. Draft Addendum II considers commercial quota reductions in section 3.2.1 but option A allows for the continuation of existing Addendum VI CE plans and option B considers up to a 14.5% reduction from 2022 quotas and 2022 size limits. In 2022, NJ’s 2022 SBBP quota was 215,912 lbs. with a size limit of 1 fish at 24” to less than 28”.

We are submitting several SBBP options in anticipation of the Board selecting recreational ocean fishery options and commercial options listed in Addendum II to Amendment 7 currently open for public comment (options listed in Table 1, above). NJ’s intention with this preemptive approach is to allow sufficient time for TC, PDT, and Board review and to allow for implementation in NJ in time for a May 15th SBBP start date. A downside to this approach is that we need to submit SBBP alternatives for all combinations of recreational ocean fishery and commercial options under consideration, even those that will ultimately not be selected by the Board.

- Standards for state CE proposals.
 - Rationale: The alternate management program (transferring commercial quota to recreational sector as a quota managed fishery) and specifically the proposed alternate slot limits are necessary for the following reasons:
 - Socio-economic considerations:
 - For-hire sector: Public comment often states that for-hire businesses have been faced with economic difficulties in recent years and that the SBBP provides relief. For party/charter boat customers, the SBBP helps justify paying increasing fares by expanding the legal slot and increasing opportunity to take home a fish. For-hire boats state that less effort can be spent releasing under/over-sized fish in order to catch a legal fish. Lastly, it allows some boats to lengthen their season if “bonus-sized” fish are still available.

- Shore-based anglers: Public comment often states that the SBBP allows shore-based anglers more opportunity to harvest a fish since the legal slot is expanded and since generally smaller fish are more available closer to shore. This can also help address environmental justice issues.
 - Spearfishing community: Recent public comment from the spearfishing community has suggested that the narrow 28" to 31" slot limit is especially challenging for them – having a SBBP regulation with a slot limit contiguous to the ocean recreational fishery regulation helps them maintain the fishery while complying with size limit regulations.
 - Historical considerations: The SBBP has been part of NJ's striped bass fishery since 1990. The sale of striped bass is prohibited in NJ and the SBBP was thought of as a "conservation measure" to replace the commercial fishery.
 - Data Source: The fishing logs from both individual anglers and for-hire vessels generate a large dataset used in the coastwide stock assessment and help characterize NJ's striped bass fishery, including invaluable data on released fish. If the SBBP was discontinued, this source of data would be discontinued as well.
 - Compliance and Enforcement: The alternate SBBP slot limits are proposed in order to be contiguous with the ocean recreational fishery regulation which not only assists spear fishers (as mentioned above) but also is supported by law enforcement and would improve public understanding and communication of the regulations.
- Description of how alternative management program meets all relevant FMP objectives and management measures: NJ has completed an SPR analysis showing that proposed regulations are designed to be conservationally equivalent to status quo measures. See NJ_Calc_Quota_SPR_submitted.xlsx for analytical details. NJ does not allow for a commercial striped bass fishery [N.J.S.A. 23:5-45.3.], and so the transfer of quota gives NJ anglers access to commercial quota that would otherwise be unavailable, thereby representing a reasonable use of NJ quota. This transfer has happened every year since 1990. The proposed SBBP measures are comparable to other coastal state commercial fishery regulations. NJ has elected to not pursue a trophy fishery at this time in acknowledgement of the stock's status and the FMP's objectives of maintaining spawning stock and increasing fish abundance. Considering the current stock status, NJ will issue a limited number of permits based on the quota to ensure the quota is not exceeded and include a conservation buffer. See below for how NJ calculates the number of issuable permits. All proposed alternative options result in fewer issuable permits than status quo.
- Available datasets: see details provided above, Attachment 1, and NJ_Calc_Quota_SPR_submitted.xlsx. There is an assumption that the selectivity

generated from NJ's 2019, 2021-2022 ALK is representative of fish available in NJ waters in 2024 and beyond. As noted above, to reach required minimum sample sizes, we pooled an additional year of age data (2019), with attendant uncertainties. To address TC and PDT concerns over theorized vs realized selectivities, we have minimized the width of proposed slot limits.

- Duration: NJ is requesting this CE plan (and associated selected regulations) be in effect for 5-years (until December 31, 2028) or from the passage of Amendment II until such time that the Management Board initiates additional action that would invalidate the SBBP regulations, or changes the coastal recreational fishery regulation in a way that a different SBBP regulation would make sense (e.g., Addendum II option E), or until the stock is rebuilt, or until the NJ Marine Fisheries Council (MFC) advisors approve a new SBBP regulation. The measures are intended to be in place over this same period; review of the measures will take place annually and be reported in NJ's annual compliance report.
 - See below regarding the monitoring (daily) and reporting requirements; as noted above, review of this CE program will occur annually, and be included as part of NJ's compliance report.
- NJ acknowledges that recent amendments to the ASMFC Conservation Equivalency policy and technical guidance document now indicate that CE is not permitted if a stock is overfished or depleted unless allowed by the board through a 2/3 majority vote (the rules on voting in Article II. Section 1. Quorum of the Rules and Regulations apply).
 - NJ is not proposing alteration of any recreational ocean fishery regulation the Board selects, though we are interested in pursuing CE if options B are selected under 3.2.1 and/or if options D or E are selected under 3.1.1 to 1) continue to transfer NJ's allocated commercial quota from the commercial sector to the recreational sector, as NJ has done since 1990, and 2) allow for an adjustment to the SBBP size limit to make it contiguous with the size limits associated with recreational fishery options D and E, if selected. If the Board selects option A, B, or C for the ocean recreational fishery option along with option A under 3.2.1, NJ would maintain a status quo SBBP regulation (1 fish between 24" and less than 28"). However, if the Board selects an alternative option (D or E), a SBBP status quo option would leave a gap between the maximum size of the SBBP regulation and the minimum size of the ocean recreational fishery option that could be difficult for anglers to understand.
 - NJ held meetings (November 1st and 2nd 2023) to understand stakeholder interests in modifying the SBBP regulations. Our submitted CE alternatives attempt to reflect angler interests while, maintaining consistency with the Striped Bass Management Board's Addendum II intent, and consistent with the recently modified CE policy and technical guidance document, keep the number of options to a reasonable limit. Some NJ stakeholders expressed interest in a trophy fishery, but given that other states have recently expressed the potential to suspend their trophy programs, and in consideration of current stock status, and current estimated SSB levels, this is not an alternative NJ is presently considering, though as stock status improves, is one that NJ may consider in the future.

- In acknowledgement of concerns the TC and PDT have expressed related to SPR analyses and associated changes in commercial quota vs uncertainty in characterizing realized selectivity under new SBBP regulations, we have kept slot size limits narrow to help reduce uncertainty related to theorized vs realized selectivity as well as minimize quota changes from status quo.
- In the case of SBBP option 2B, the SPR-adjusted quota is a nominal amount (5%) greater than status quo quota. In addition, the number of issuable permits is less than status quo (Table 2).
- In the case of Ocean Recreational Fishery option E, there are no ideal SBBP alternatives. The status quo SBBP size limit (SQ and 1) would leave a gap between the maximum SBBP regulation and the minimum size of recreational option E. SBBP options 3A and 3B make an additional fraction of the 2015-year class available to the fishery, though we note: 1) this proposed SBBP regulation (3A and 3B) is not inconsistent with, and is arguably more conservative than (e.g., narrower size limit), some other ocean commercial fishery regulations (see column Option A in Table 1 to Attachment 1. 2) Table 3 indicates, NJ has not landed more than 121,410 lbs. in the history of the program. 3) The number of issuable permits under SBBP options 3A and 3B are less than the status quo.

Additional Striped Bass Bonus Program details:

- Individual anglers and for-hire vessels must apply to the program. Individual anglers are issued one permit/tag at a time that allows the angler to harvest one Bonus fish. A harvest report must be submitted within 24 hours. For-hire boats are issued a limited number of permit/tags allowing customers to keep one Bonus fish per permit/tag. Only one permit/tag may be issued to a customer per day. For-hire boats must submit trip reports weekly that include bonus harvest and logs of all striped bass catch and effort.
- Reporting Bonus Harvest is mandatory and is monitored daily; the program is evaluated annually, and this evaluation is included as part of NJ's annual compliance report.
- Fishing logs are completed by both individual anglers and for-hire vessels participating in the program. The fishing logs generate a large dataset used in the coastwide stock assessment and help characterize NJ's striped bass fishery, including invaluable data on released fish.
- To aid law enforcement in identifying general recreational catch versus Bonus fish, when a Bonus fish is harvested, the permit/tag must be securely attached to the fish through the gill and mouth immediately upon capture and prior to transportation.
- Compliance and enforcement concerns are similar to other state commercial fishery programs. In recent years, NJ has increased SBBP outreach and education in order to increase compliance, reporting rates, and the accuracy of data reported in logbooks.
- As a conservation measure, a limited number of permit/tags will be issued to ensure the quota is not exceeded. NJ calculates the total number of issuable permit/tags by converting the quota to number of fish based on mean weight; in

addition, as an added conservation measure, when calculating the maximum number of issuable permit/tags, NJ will apply a buffer by using the rounded-up mean weight of the largest fish possible under the slot. Biological data from NJ fishery-independent and -dependent sampling programs including Del Bay tagging, Raritan Bay survey, Ocean Trawl, party/charter boat sampling, and fishing tournaments) are used to calculate mean weight.

Table 2. Maximum number of issuable permit/tags under each SBBP option

SBBP option		Quota (lbs.) Commercial Option A	Quota (lbs.) Option B Min. Quota (-14.5% from 2022)	Issuable Permit/Tags	Quota (lbs.) Commercial Option B Max. Quota (-0% from 2022)	Issuable Permit/Tags
SQ	1 @ 24" to < 28"	215,912	n/a	27,000	n/a	n/a
1	1 @ 24" to < 28"	n/a	184,604	23,100	215,912	27,000
2A	1 @ 24" to < 30"	208,674	n/a	20,900	n/a	n/a
2B	1 @ 24" to < 30"	n/a	194,677	19,500	227,693	22,800
3A	1 @ >33" ≤ 36"	298,689	n/a	17,600	n/a	n/a
3B	1 @ >33" ≤ 36"	n/a	278,653	16,400	325,912	19,200

- 2021 - 2023 Bonus program details:
 - Preliminary number of permit/tags issued in 2023: 26,933
 - Preliminary number of permit/tags used in 2023: 8,327
 - Number of permit/tags issued in 2022: 22,473
 - Number of permit/tags used in 2022: 5,740
 - Number of permit/tags issued in 2021: 22,877
 - Number of permit/tags used in 2021: 6,457

Section 6: Timeline for Implementation

New Jersey would select an SBBP option that is paired with the Board-selected Addendum II recreational ocean fishery and commercial options (see Table 1). In the case where the Board selects options that are paired with more than one SBBP option, NJ would meet with staff and stakeholders to review the available approved alternatives, and make a single selection for implementation by May 15th 2024.

Literature Cited

ASMFC. 2022. 2022 Striped bass stock assessment update report. 192 pp

Table 3. History of NJ's SBBP quota and harvest.

Year	Harvest (lbs)	Quota (lbs)	Pct of quota harvested
1990	22	63,800	0
1991	2,244	63,800	4
1992	2,522	63,800	4
1993	2,050	63,800	3
1994	1,796	63,800	3
1995	6,078	225,000	3
* 1996	4,050	225,000	2
1997	7,678	225,000	3
1998	11,149	225,000	5
1999	13,174	225,000	6
2000	42,794	225,000	19
2001	79,774	225,000	35
2002	82,050	225,000	36
2003	121,410	321,750	38
2004	81,870	321,750	25
2005	29,866	321,750	9
2006	23,656	321,750	7
* 2007	13,615	321,750	4
2008	7,345	321,750	2
2009	10,330	321,750	3
2010	12,833	321,750	4
2011	16,332	321,750	5
* 2012	6,285	321,750	2
2013	6,096	321,750	2
2014	3,653	321,750	1
* 2015	21,479	215,912	10
2016	24,963	215,912	12
2017	14,602	215,912	7
2018	6,786	215,912	3
2019	32,000	215,912	15
* 2020	36,865	215,912	17
2021	41,867	215,912	19
2022	36,807	215,912	17

* Significant administrative or regulatory changes to the SBBP took place

Table 4. Results of analyses used to develop SBBP options.

Base Quota: 215,912 (Am. 7 CE and 2022 quota)							
SBBP Options	Size Limit	F	SPR	% Max SPR	YPR	Quota	%Quota Difference
SQ, 1	[24,28)	0.167	2.138	61.17	0.068748	215,912	0
2B	[24", 30")	0.147	2.138	61.17	0.0725	227,693	5.46
3B	(33", 36"]	0.183	2.138	61.17	0.103774	325,912	50.95
Base Quota: 197,877 (Am. 7 FMP Standard Quota)							
SBBP Options	Size Limit	F	SPR	% Max SPR	YPR	Quota	%Quota Difference
	[24,28)	0.167	2.138	61.17	0.068748	197,877	0
2A	[24", 30")	0.147	2.138	61.17	0.0725	208,674	5.46
3A	(33", 36"]	0.183	2.138	61.17	0.103774	298,689	50.95



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee

DATE: September 28, 2023

SUBJECT: Spawning Potential Ratio Adjustment for Commercial Maximum Size Options

Background

As part of Addendum II, the Atlantic Striped Bass Board requested options that imposed a maximum size limit on the Chesapeake Bay and ocean commercial fisheries. Commercial quotas are managed in weight, and changing the size limit of the commercial fishery will change the average size of the fish in the catch, potentially increasing the number of fish removed for the same poundage of quota, and will change the selectivity of the commercial fishery, thus changing the age-classes which are impacted by the fishery. In the past, when states have changed their commercial size limits, their quota has been adjusted to reflect these impacts with the intent of setting a new quota that maintains the same effect on the population in terms of the spawning potential as the Amendment 6 commercial size limits. The Board elected to take this approach for the maximum size limit options for draft Addendum II.

Methods

The spawning potential ratio (SPR) analysis requires life history information and information on the selectivity of the fishery. The selectivity is calculated from the age-length keys for each state. The TC discussed a number of issues regarding the SPR analysis to ensure that all states were using consistent methods and inputs.

Age-Length Keys (ALK) and Selectivity

For the age-length keys, the TC recommended:

- Pool 2021 and 2022 data to represent the most recent time period and increase sample size.
- If any ages have less than 10 lengths sampled, borrow from other years or other states to increase the sample size. This does not apply to the ages beyond the range of the commercial catch – e.g., if no age-2 or age-14 fish are present in the sampling, a state does not need to borrow data; if ages are present but poorly sampled, a state should borrow

Selectivity is also influenced by availability of fish. For example, in the Bay, when older, larger fish are present, they are fully vulnerable to the gear, but they are not available year-round, so using only samples from the Bay commercial fisheries may overstate the selectivity of the Bay fishery on older ages and overestimate the impact of a maximum size limit on the population. The TC recommended the Bay states discuss the issue and agree on how to better represent availability of age classes, not just vulnerability to the gear when developing selectivity curves. This may also be an issue for ocean states like Delaware and New York which also may not have year-round availability of the targeted size classes, but there is more state-to-state variability in the ocean fisheries. Ocean states should consider this issue as it applies to their own data and decide how to pool data from non-commercial sources to better capture the availability as well as the vulnerability of striped bass to their fisheries if necessary.

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The TC discussed whether to explicitly include the length frequency from the commercial fishery as part of the selectivity calculations, and in the end decided not to, as the length frequency is influenced by year-class strength and fisher behavior and this analysis should focus on what proportion of each age is legally vulnerable to harvest. If the ALK is predominately commercial sampling data in the ages that overlap any max size changes, the length frequency of the commercial fishery (for 2021 and 2022 or whichever years were added) will be implicitly part of the selectivity calculations.

The TC discussed whether to include the maximum size limit bin in the calculation of vulnerability. Most states calculate their length bins by flooring the measurements; i.e., the 38" bin includes fish from 38.00" to 38.99". For this addendum, the PDT is recommending inclusive size limits, so that a 38.0" fish would be legal to harvest under a 28"-38" slot limit. In this case, excluding the 38" bin from the selectivity calculations would exclude some legal fish, but including would include fish above the size limit (the 38.99" fish, for example). The TC recommended including the maximum size limit bins in the calculations and acknowledged this as a source of uncertainty.

Weight-at-Age

The TC recommended that the SSB weight-at-age and catch weight-at-age be the same values used in the most recent stock assessment reference point calculations and projections.

F Increment and F Target for Calculations

The original SPR analysis was done in R, where the F increment over which SPR is calculated is specified by the user; smaller increments give better, more precise estimates but are more computationally expensive and take longer to run. G. Nelson developed an alternative to the R calculations that can be done in Excel using Visual Basic macros which can get more precise answers more efficiently. The TC elected to use this spreadsheet version to do the calculations instead of the R method.

The F target used to start the calculations also has an impact on the final results. The method that has been used historically uses the current F target ($F=0.167$) as the base case. The TC discussed whether to continue to use the overall F target, or to use a smaller F that represents the proportion of the total F due to the commercial fishery. Although the estimated quota reduction was different between the methods, using the smaller F did not necessarily result in a smaller quota reduction. However, the current assessment model does not calculate a separate F for the commercial and recreational fleets, so the TC agreed that trying to calculate an F for each individual state's commercial fishery would increase the uncertainty in the overall analysis and recommended using the F target as had been done in the SPR calculations in the CE proposals for previous commercial size limit changes. This was highlighted as another source of uncertainty for the SPR analysis.

Discard Mortality

The TC discussed whether to adjust the estimated selectivity curves for discard mortality. One option that was considered was similar to what was done for the slot limit analysis for Amendment 7, where the proportion of fish-at-age above the legal size limit could be multiplied by a commercial discard mortality rate. In the end, the TC decided not to adjust the selectivity for discard mortality, as this would have the effect of making the new selectivity curves more similar to the status quo and reducing the difference between the status quo quotas and the SPR-equivalent quotas, meaning in most cases, the quota with discard mortality included would be higher than the adjusted quota without discard mortality included. Since commercial discards are not counted against the commercial quota, this would have the effect of allowing more directed commercial harvest while not reducing discards. Instead, the TC recommended trying to estimate the increase in commercial discards that would be expected under the different options and presenting this information in the Addendum as context. This was highlighted as another source of uncertainty for the SPR analysis.

Results:

Table 1. Ocean commercial quota changes under a maximum size of 38, 40, and 42 inches

	Option A. Status Quo (No maximum size applies)		Option B1. 42" maximum size limit		Option B2. 40" Maximum Size Limit		Option B3. 38" Maximum Size Limit	
	2022 Size Limit	2022 Quota	Size Limit	Quota (% change)	Size Limit	Quota (% change)	Size Limit	Quota (% change)
ME	N/A*	154	28 - 42"	129 (-16.2)	28 - 40"	122 (-20.8)	28 - 38"	113 (-26.6%)
NH	N/A *	3,537	28 - 42"	2,968 (-16.1%)	28 - 40"	2,796 (-21%)	28 - 38"	2,585 (-26.9%)
MA	35" min	735,240	35 - 42"	634,400 (-13.8%)	35 - 40"	581,483 (-21%)	35 - 38"	545,161 (-25.9%)
RI	26" min FFT;	148,889	26 - 42" FFT	133,040 (-10.6%)	26 - 40" FFT	128,735 (-13.5%)	26 - 40" FFT	119,905 (-19.5%)
	34" min GC		34 - 42" GC		34 - 40" GC		34 - 40" GC	
CT	N/A **	14,607	28 - 42"	22,255 (52.4%)	28 - 40"	20,642 (41.3%)	28 - 38"	18,821 (28.9%)
NY	26 - 38"	640,718	26 - 42"	704,286 (9.9%)	26 - 40"	672,744 (5%)	26 - 38"	640,718 (0%)
NJ	bonus program 24 - <28"	215,912	24 - 42"	321,708 (49%)	24 - 40"	303,825 (40.7%)	24" - 38"	284,243 (31.7%)
DE	28", except 20" for gill nets in DE Bay/River 2.15-5.31	142,474	28 - 42", except 20 - 42" for gill nets in DE Bay/River 2.15-5.31	133,506 (-6.3%)	28 - 40", except 20 - 40" for gill nets in DE Bay/River 2.15-5.31	128,252 (-10%)	28 - 40", except 20 - 40" for gill nets in DE Bay/River 2.15-5.31	118,854 (-16.6%)
MD	24" min	89,094	24 - 42"	83,141 (-6.7%)	24 - 40"	78,160 (-12.3%)	24 - 38"	72,563 (-18.6%)
VA	28" min	125,034	28 - 42"	118,768 (-5%)	28 - 40"	113,478 (-9.2%)	28 - 38"	107,008 9 (-14.4%)
NC	28" min	295,495	28 - 42"	275,782 (-6.8%)	28 - 40"	264,820 (-10.3%)	28 - 38"	245,048 (-17.1%)

*Assumes the Amendment 6 standard minimum size limit of 28".

** Assumes the minimum size (22-28") of the bonus program that CT's quota was last based on (the bonus program is no longer in use).

Table 2. Chesapeake Bay commercial quota changes under a 36 inch and a seasonal 28 and 36 inch maximum size limit.

	Option A. Status Quo (no maximum size applies)		Option E1. 36" Maximum Size		Option E2. 28" Maximum Size Limit Jan - May; 36" Maximum Size Limit Jun - Dec	
	2022 Size Limit	2022 Quota	Size Limit	Quota (% change)	Size Limit	Quota (% change)
MD Ches Bay	18 - 36"	1,445,394	18 - 36"	1,445,394 (0%)	18 - 28" Jan-May; 18 - 36" Jun - Dec	1,407,463 (-2.6%)
PRFC	18" min, 36" max during 2.15-3.25	572,861		558,626 (-2.5%)		554,767 (-3.2%)
VA Ches Bay	18" min, 28" max during 3.15-6.15	983,393		768,978 (-21.8%)		730,240 (-25.7%)

Results

Table 1 and 2 show the adjusted commercial quotas under different maximum size limit options (Table 1 is for the ocean commercial fishery and table 2 is for the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery). It should be noted some states (CT, NY and NJ) quotas increase with the change in maximum size, because their existing quotas are based on a maximum size limit that is lower than the proposed options. For states with an increase to their quota, the increase ranges from 5 to 52.4 percent. For states with decreases to their quota, the decrease ranges from 5 to 26.9 percent. A maximum size limit decreases the quota for the majority of states with active commercial fisheries with the exception of New York.

TC Comments

The TC raised concerns about the implementation of a commercial maximum size limit as a management tool. If a maximum size limit is implemented without a quota adjustment, total removals in numbers of fish will increase, as the average size of the fish in the catch is smaller and the discards of oversize fish will increase. The SPR calculations discussed here attempt to account for this by calculating an adjusted quota that will keep a state's commercial impact on the overall spawning potential of the stock the same under the new size limits so that these quotas are conservationally equivalent to the commercial quotas under the status quo regulations. However, the TC notes that there are numerous sources of uncertainty for this analysis, such as the challenge of accurately characterizing the realized change in selectivity under the new regulations, especially combined with the unpredictable effect the new regulations will have on the behavior of the commercial fishery. For example, if the new maximum size is higher than the current maximum size in a state, the SPR calculations allow the quota to be increased to account for the harvest of larger fish. However, the fishery may not actually realize harvest of larger fish due to market demands, availability of larger fish, and gear restrictions or limitations, resulting in higher overall removals with regard to SPR under the higher quota. In addition, the effects of increased discards of oversize fish and the other issues highlighted in the methods section increase the uncertainty about the effects of this management change. Implementing a more uncertain management option that is designed to have no effect on overall stock productivity increases the uncertainty around the rebuilding probabilities and the impact on the stock without having a positive impact on overall stock productivity. There is an increased downside and no upside to implementing this management change from a technical analysis.

The TC understands that the Board's intent with this option is to protect larger, older fish from harvest. However, the TC refers the Board to [previous analyses](#) evaluating the impact of slot limits vs. maximum size limits in the recreational fishery, where lower selectivity on older fish had a negligible impact on long-term spawning stock biomass and did not affect the timeline for rebuilding. Fishing mortality and total removals was the driving factor in whether the stock had a high probability of rebuilding by 2029.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • www.asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

December 5, 2023

To: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
From: Tina Berger, Director of Communications
RE: Advisory Panel Nominations

Please find attached two new nominations to the Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel. The first is Captain Julie Evans, a commercial representative, with a history in the fishery and current activities on the East Hampton Town Fisheries Advisory Committee. Julie is well versed in NY's commercial and for-hire striped bass fishery, especially on the East End. The second is Toby Lapinski, a recreational angler, freelance writer, and Editor in Chief of Fishing and Tackle Retailer from Connecticut

Please review these nominations for action at the next Board meeting.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 703.842.0749 or tberger@asmfc.org.

Enc.

cc: Emilie Franke

M23-96

Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

Maine

David Pecci (rec)
144 Whiskeag Road
Bath, ME 04530

Phone (o): (207) 442-8581
Phone (c): (207) 841-1444
FAX: (207) 442-8581
dave@obsessioncharters.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/23/02
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

Bob Humphrey (for-hire)
727 Poland Range Road
Pownal, ME 04069
Phone (day): 207.688.4966
Phone (eve): 207.688.4854
bob@bobhumphrey.com
Appt. Confirmed 2/18/20

New Hampshire

Peter Whelan (rec)
100 Gates Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone (o): (603) 205-5318
Phone (h): (603) 427-0401
pawhelan@comcast.net
Appt. Confirmed 2/24/03
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

Massachusetts

Patrick Paquette (rec/for-hire/comm)
61 Maple Street
Hyannis, MA 02601
Phone: (781)771.8374
Email: basicpatrick@aol.com
Appt. Confirmed 8/16

Craig Poosikian (comm. rod & reel)
19 Giddah Hill Road
PO Box 1878
Orleans, MA 02653
Phone: 508.240.2345
bhge@gmail.com
Appt. Confirmed 11/22

Rhode Island

Andrew J. Dangelo (for-hire)
1035 Liberty Lane
West Kingston, RI 02892
Phone: 401.788.6012
Maridee2@gmail.com
Appt. Confirmed 2/3/21

Michael Plaia (comm/rec/for-hire)
119 Currituck Road
Newtown, CT 06470
Phone: 203.512.4280
Makomike3333@yahoo.com
Appt. Confirmed 2/3/21

Connecticut

Kyle Douton (rec/tackle shop owner)
5 Rockwell Street
Niantic, CT 06357
Phone (day): (860)739-7419
Phone (eve): (860)739-8899
FAX: (860)739-9208
kyle@jbtackle.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/13/14

Toby Lapinski (rec/freelance writer)
10 Dogwood Drive
Old Lyme, CT 06371
Phone: 860.227.1872
toby.lapinski@gmail.com

New York

Bob Danielson (rec)
86 Balin Avenue
South Setauket, NY 11720
Phone: 631.974.8774
Bdan93@optonline.net
Appt. Confirmed 10/22/20

Captain Julie Evans (comm)
43 South Dewey Place
Montauk, NY 11954-5056
Phone (day): 305.747.0604
Phone (eve): 631.668.5070
jevansmtk@gmail.com

Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

New Jersey

C. Louis Bassano, Chair
1725 West Central Avenue
Ortley Beach, New Jersey 08751
Phone (c): (908) 241-4852
FAX: (908) 241-6628
lbassano@comcast.net
Appt. Confirmed 10/15/01
Appt. Reconfirmed 2/9/06; 5/17/10; 4/14/14

Eleanor A. Bochenek (retired fisheries scientists with experience in Mid-Atlantic rec. and comm fisheries)
117 Alexander Avenue
Villas, NJ 08251
Phone: (609) 425.0686
eboch@hsrl.rutgers.edu
Appt. Confirmed 11/5/21

Pennsylvania

Vacancy (rec)

Delaware

Leonard Voss, Jr. (com)
2854 Big Oak Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
Phone: (302) 653-7999
Appt. Confirmed 4/21/94
Appt. Reconfirmed 7/27/99; 7/03 and 7/07

Steven Smith (rec)
59 Burnham Lane
Dover, DE 19901
Phone (day): (302)744-9140
Phone (eve): (302)674-5186
smithbait@verizon.net
Appt. Confirmed 10/23/18

Maryland

Charles E. Green Jr. (for –hire)
7327 Woodshire Avenue
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732
Phone: 301.233.0377
greeneddie@verizon.net
Appt. Confirmed 8/3/21

Vacancy (rec)

Virginia

Vice-Chair - Kelly Place (comm; reappted chair 10/2010)
213 Waller Mill Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone (h): (757) 220-8801
Phone (c): (757) 897-1009
FAX: (757) 259-9669
kelltron@aol.com
Appt. Confirmed 5/23/02
Appt Reconfirmed 5/06 and 5/10

William Edward Hall Jr. (rec)
PO Box 235
26367 Shoremain Drive
Bloxom, VA 23308
Phone (day): (757)854-1519
Phone (eve): (757)894-0416
FAX: (757)854-0698
esangler@verizon.net
Appt. Confirmed 5/13/14

North Carolina

Jon Worthington (rec)
405 Japonica Drive
Camden, NC 27921
Phone: (252) 562-2914
ncpierrat@gmail.com
Appt Confirmed 5/5/21

Jamie Lane (estuarine and ocean gillnetter)
602 South Main Street
Robersonville, NC 27871
Phone: (252) 312-6832
Jlwinsl3@ncsu.edu
Appt Confirmed 5/4/22

District of Columbia

Joe Fletcher (rec)
1445 Pathfinder Lane
McLean, VA 22101
Phone: (703) 356-9106
Email: jmfletcher@verizon.net
Appt. Confirmed 10/30/95
Appt. Reconfirmed 9/15/99; 9/03 and 9/07

Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

Potomac Fisheries River Comm.

Dennis Fleming (fishing guide; seafood processor/dealer)

P.O. Box 283

Newburg, MD 20664

Phone: 240.538.1260

captaindennisf@gmail.com

Appt. Confirmed 2/3/21



ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Advisory Panel Nomination Form

This form is designed to help nominate Advisors to the Commission's Species Advisory Panels. The information on the returned form will be provided to the Commission's relevant species management board or section. Please answer the questions in the categories (All Nominees, Commercial Fisherman, Charter/Headboat Captain, Recreational Fisherman, Dealer/Processor, or Other Interested Parties) that pertain to the nominee's experience. If the nominee fits into more than one category, answer the questions for all categories that fit the situation. **Also, please fill in the sections which pertain to All Nominees (pages 1 and 2). In addition, nominee signatures are required to verify the provided information (page 4), and Commissioner signatures are requested to verify Commissioner consensus (page 4). Please print and use a black pen.**

Form submitted by: Julie Evans State: New York
(your name)

Name of Nominee: Capain Julie Evans

Address: 43 South Dewey Place

City, State, Zip: Montauk, NY 11954-5056

Please provide the appropriate numbers where the nominee can be reached:

Phone (day): 305 747-0604

Phone (evening): 631 668-5070

FAX: 631 66-5070

Email: jevansmtk@gmail.com

.....
FOR ALL NOMINEES:

1. Please list, in order of preference, the Advisory Panel for which you are nominating the above person.

1. Commercial Striped Bass ASMFC Panel
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

2. Has the nominee been found in violation of criminal or civil federal fishery law or regulation or convicted of any felony or crime over the last three years?

yes _____ no _____

3. Is the nominee a member of any fishermen's organizations or clubs?

yes X no _____

If "yes," please list them below by name.

East Hampton Town Fishery Advisory Committee

4. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for during the past year?
Fluke, Striped Bass, Tuna, Weakfish

Clams

5. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for in the past?

Summer flounder, Stripped bass, Scup, Porgy

Snapper, Wahoo, Cobia, Tarpon

Blackfish, Tuna, Shark

Grouper. Sailfish,

Clams

FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN:

1. How many years has the nominee been the commercial fishing business? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in commercial fishing? yes _____ no X

3. What is the predominant gear type used by the nominee? Rod and Reel

4. What is the predominant geographic area fished by the nominee (i.e., inshore, offshore)? inshore and Offshore

FOR CHARTER/HEADBOAT CAPTAINS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the charter/headboat business? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in the charter/headboat industry? yes _____ no _____

If "no," please list other type(s)of business(es) and/occupation(s): _____

Print reporter and writer, retail sales and advocacy groups

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? 37 years

If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

FOR RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN:

1. How long has the nominee engaged in recreational fishing? 48 years
2. Is the nominee working, or has the nominee ever worked in any area related to the fishing industry? yes no

If "yes," please explain.

I am employed by the Town of East Hampton as the Secretary of the Fishery Advisory Committee since 2020..

I held a License to carry up to six passengers coastwise from 2005 until very recently. I was a commercial Strped Bass fisherman from 1975 until 2007.

I ran a very successful charter business with my late husband from 1982 until 2012 both in Montauk NY and in Islamorada Florida.

FOR SEAFOOD PROCESSORS & DEALERS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the business of seafood processing/dealing? _____ years
2. Is the nominee employed only in the business of seafood processing/dealing?
yes _____ no _____ If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? _____ years
If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

FOR OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

1. How long has the nominee been interested in fishing and/or fisheries management? 40 years
2. Is the nominee employed in the fishing business or the field of fisheries management?
yes no

If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

FOR ALL NOMINEES:

In the space provided below, please provide the Commission with any additional information which you feel would assist us in making choosing new Advisors. You may use as many pages as needed.

My education and professional experience allow me a unique perspective on fishery issues. I hold a Bachelor’s Degree from NYU in Journalism and Environmental Science focusing on ecology and marine fish. I was a commercial striped bass fisherman. I was involved in the history of the fish stock that became polluted by a major US company putting many commercial fishermen out of business. My family was part of a lawsuit that resulted in the only allowable commercial fishery in NYS. I was also a journalist covering this historic settlement. I was a licensed charter boat captain both here in Montauk and in the Florida Keys along with my late husband. We were in the For Hire industry from 1982 until 2012. I am very familiar with benefits and risks of all sectors of the US commercial, recreational and For Hire Industry. I would consider it an honor to serve the salt of this earth.

Nominee Signature: _____

Date:

Name: **Julie Evans**

(please print)

COMMISSIONERS SIGN-OFF (not required for non-traditional stakeholders)

John Maniscalco

State Director

State Legislator

Governor’s Appointee

3. Is the nominee a member of any fishermen's organizations or clubs?

yes _____ no _____

If "yes," please list them below by name.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for during the past year?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for in the past?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN:

1. How many years has the nominee been the commercial fishing business? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in commercial fishing? yes _____ no _____

3. What is the predominant gear type used by the nominee? _____

4. What is the predominant geographic area fished by the nominee (i.e., inshore, offshore)? _____

FOR CHARTER/HEADBOAT CAPTAINS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the charter/headboat business? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in the charter/headboat industry? yes _____ no _____

If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/occupation(s): _____

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? _____ years

If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

FOR RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN:

1. How long has the nominee engaged in recreational fishing? _____ years

2. Is the nominee working, or has the nominee ever worked in any area related to the fishing industry? yes _____ no _____

If "yes," please explain.

FOR SEAFOOD PROCESSORS & DEALERS:

1. How long has the nominee been employed in the business of seafood processing/dealing? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in the business of seafood processing/dealing?

yes _____ no _____ If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

3. How many years has the nominee lived in the home port community? _____ years

If less than five years, please indicate the nominee's previous home port community.

FOR OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:

1. How long has the nominee been interested in fishing and/or fisheries management? _____ years

2. Is the nominee employed in the fishing business or the field of fisheries management?
yes _____ no _____

If "no," please list other type(s) of business(es) and/or occupation(s):

From: [Robert Beal](#)
To: [Tina Berger](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Fw: ASMFC refuses to disclose factory fishing landings in Chesapeake bay ,refuses to hold a menhaden board meeting.....n i
Date: Monday, January 8, 2024 9:41:09 PM

Tina,

Please include this email.

Thanks,
Bob

From: Robert Beal
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 4:29 PM
To: THOMAS LILLY <foragematters@aol.com>; Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
Subject: RE: [External] Fw: ASMFC refuses to disclose factory fishing landings in Chesapeake bay ,refuses to hold a menhaden board meeting.....n i

Tom,

We will include this email and attachments in the Winter Meeting briefing materials.

You stated “it does no good for” public to speak to the Policy Board. This is incorrect. As we have mentioned before, the Policy Board provides oversight to the Commission’s management and scientific activities. If the Policy Board identifies an issue, they can charge a species management board with taking action. Also, the Policy Board has nearly identical membership to the Menhaden Management Board.

Regarding the release of confidential data, the Commission will continue to share the total annual reduction and bait harvest as well as the Chesapeake Bay reduction harvest (to the nearest thousand metric tons) in the Annual FMP Review. In a separate email you requested weekly/monthly landings from the Bay/ocean. We are unable to provide that data due to confidentiality laws. Data confidentiality is not an ASMFC decision, it is driven by federal and state laws. Tina provided the link on confidential data protocol in the email below.

Regards,
Bob

From: Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 3:11 PM

To: Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Fw: ASMFC refuses to disclose factory fishing landings in Chesapeake bay ,refuses to hold a menhaden board meeting....n i

To Conor McManus, Bob Beal and James Boyle

The menhaden board has not scheduled a meeting at the January 23-25 ASMFC meeting. Unless you change this the public is again denied their right to present the menhaden board with their concerns and the scientific opinions that support them. It does no good for them to speak to the Policy Board as only the menhaden board can act on their concerns directly. Your founding document says your actions are

"to fully reflect the varying values....that are important to the various interest groups involved in coastal fisheries". Charter Section Six.

How can you possibly understand what the public values when you refuse to listen to them at a face to face meeting ?

I think it's fair to say that the millions of people that care about Chesapeake Bay fish and wildlife and millions of their children would ask you to immediately stop allowing purse seiners from taking any menhaden forage out of Virginia waters so their fish and wildlife can get all the food it needs to be the best, healthiest and abundant it can be. That is what they value. They would say that it is your obligation to use the menhaden natural resource for their benefit. The people want you to value them and their children not just a few special interests in Virginia.

The matters we consider urgent for the menhaden board to hear and follow at a meeting is your own ERP science definitions that striped bass are the species most

"sensitive" to the menhaden harvest.(scans). Ospreys are as well (Scan Path...article). They are the canary in the coal mine for inappropriate harvest levels (scans) Unless this board takes steps to reduce the menhaden harvest in Virginia it is telling the public that Chesapeake Bay doesn't matter, that the hundreds of striped bass charter captains who have left the business don't matter, that the millions of wildlife watchers across the bay represented by Virginia and national Audubon don't matter, that the many state and national fishing and marine trade organizations and the Maryland Legislative Caucus, MD Sierra Club and many other conservation groups supporting moving the factory fishing into the US Atlantic don't matter, that the thousands of people that have supported the TRCP petition in Virginia (scan) and now the recent Petition filed by the Chesapeake Legal Alliance don't matter either. This Petition with all the signers was emailed to you at 12:17 pm today by Phil Zalesak . All that seems to matter is protecting a few special commercial fishing interests in Virginia

Now the Commission is refusing to release the Chesapeake Bay factory catch information relevant to the bay 51,000 ton cap. I presume they are also denying releasing the fishing effort to catch that amount that can be compared to historic fishing effort numbers. That data could have been used by fisheries scientists not connected to the Commission to estimate changes in Chesapeake bay menhaden stock abundance. That is information the menhaden board should be considering but will not be unless the Commission distributes this information to them in advance of the January meeting.

The public and probably the board members are being denied a vital data point in menhaden management.

I would urge you to carry out your obligations to the people and wildlife of Chesapeake Bay as clearly set forth in the Charter and schedule a menhaden board meeting in January. Will you at least distribute the totals on the factory menhaden catch in Chesapeake Bay to the menhaden delegates so they can make their own conclusions from it and discuss it in a closed meeting ? We seem to have no other option if this data is not made public. Thank you for your consideration ...Please advise what you will and will not do at this point. Thomas Lilly, Whitehaven, MD.

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
To: THOMAS LILLY <foragematters@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 12:05:20 PM EST
Subject: Follow-up to today's call

Hi Tim – To follow-up to our call this morning, I confirmed with Bob that we will not be adding a Menhaden Board meeting to the Winter Meeting schedule. As a reminder, species management board meetings can only be called by the Executive Director with the approval of the Commission Chair.

As you and I discussed, any issues that you wish to bring before the Commission at the Winter Meeting can be raised at the ISFMP Policy Board or Business Session meetings. Your submitted comment will be part of the ISFMP Policy Board materials.

Regarding reduction fishery landings, we are restricted in providing those to you under state and federal of data confidentiality laws. More information on federal data confidentiality, please visit <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-100-protection-of-confidential-fisheries-statistics>.

Best. – Tina

*Go to the MH
management plan -
just below founder's chart
to story map*

Understanding Ecological Reference Points

Everything you need to know about the development of ERPs
for Atlantic menhaden

ASMFC Communications Team
June 22, 2021



Striped bass was the fish predator species that had the strongest response to Atlantic menhaden biomass in the ERP models. As a result, striped bass could be used as a proxy for all of the predator species when evaluating tradeoffs and setting reference points.

Think of striped bass as the “canary in the coal mine.” Because it is the most sensitive, menhaden levels that are sufficient for striped bass are not likely to cause a decline in other species.

Its important to note that even though the tradeoff analyses and reference points focus on striped bass, the other species (bluefish, weakfish, spiny dogfish, bay anchovy) are still included in the model and analyses. For example, an increase in menhaden abundance does not just affect striped bass, it also increases bluefish abundance. This also impacts striped bass indirectly, as bluefish are competitors and predators of striped bass.

With ecosystem models, there is more than one way to achieve the desired biomass level for a given species.

For example, if you wanted to increase the abundance of one species, you could reduce the harvest of that species directly, increase the abundance of its prey species, or even reduce the abundance of its competitors. To illustrate these tradeoffs, the Work Group produced a series of “rainbow plots”.

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board Adopts Ecological Reference Points

From: Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
Cc: ALL ARLINGTON STAFF <allarlingtonstaff@asmfc.org>
Date: Thu, Aug 6, 2020 5:42 pm

OR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, AUGUST 6, 2020
 PRESS CONTACT, TINA BERGER, 703.842.0740

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board Adopts Ecological Reference Points

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Atlantic Menhaden Management Board approved the use of ecological reference points (ERPs) in the management of Atlantic menhaden. By adopting ERPs, the Board will be accounting for the species’ role as an important forage fish. The 2020 Atlantic menhaden benchmark assessments, which were endorsed by an independent panel of fisheries scientists, used the Northwest Atlantic Coastal Shelf Model of Intermediate Complexity for Ecosystems (NWACS-MICE) in combination with the single-species model (Beaufort Assessment Model or BAM) to develop Atlantic menhaden ERPs by evaluating trade-offs between menhaden harvest and predator biomass.

“The Board took another important step in managing Atlantic menhaden in a broader ecosystem context,” stated Board Chair Spud Woodward of Georgia. “It’s the culmination of more than a decade of effort by state, federal, and academic scientists to develop ERPs that reflect menhaden’s role as a key food source for several fish species. These ERPs are not a silver bullet to resolve all our fisheries management issues, and the models on which they are based will continue to evolve. However, the use of ERPs for menhaden management will enhance the success of predator management by providing a more abundant forage base for rebuilding predator fish populations. It is important for us to keep those rebuilding efforts on track through the use of proven management tools such as controls on fishing mortality.”

In February and May, the Board tasked the ERP Work Group with additional analyses to explore the ERPs sensitivity to a range of ecosystem scenarios (different assumptions about fishing mortality for other key predator and prey species) and Atlantic herring biomass. These analyses suggested the original scenario (ERP target and threshold outlined below) most closely approximates short-term conditions for the ecosystem. As a result, the ERP Work Group recommended using the original scenario ERPs presented in the assessment report. Moving forward, the ERPs for Atlantic menhaden are:

ERP target: the maximum fishing mortality rate (F) on Atlantic menhaden that sustains Atlantic striped bass at their biomass target when striped bass are fished at their F target

ERP threshold: the maximum F on Atlantic menhaden that keeps Atlantic striped bass at their biomass threshold when striped bass are fished at their F target

Atlantic striped bass was the focal species for the ERP definitions because it was the most sensitive predator fish species to Atlantic menhaden harvest in the model, so an ERP target and threshold that sustained striped bass would likely provide sufficient forage for other predators under current ecosystem conditions. For the development of the ERPs, all other focal species in the model (bluefish, weakfish, spiny dogfish, and Atlantic herring) were assumed to be fished at 2017 levels.

In addition to adopting ERPs, the Board discussed setting fishery specifications for 2021-2022. In 2017, the Board set the total allowable catch (TAC) at 216,000 metric tons for 2018-2019, and then maintained that TAC for 2020 with the expectation that it would be set in future years using ERPs. With the adoption of ERPs, the Board tasked the Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee to run a projection analysis to provide a variety of TAC scenarios and their risk of exceeding the ERP F target to compare in setting specifications for 2021-2022. The Board will review the projection analysis at the Annual Meeting in October and then determine a TAC for 2021-2022. As stated in Amendment 3, if a TAC is not set at the Annual Meeting, the TAC from the previous year will be maintained.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

###

PR20-15

The press release can also be found here - http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/5f2c7891pr15AtlMenhadenERP_Adoption.pdf

Tina Berger
 Director of Communications
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
 Arlington, VA 22201
 703.842.0740
www.asmfc.org

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

SHARE ON

hey dont talk about the two central species being reproductive for them dont know real world as the 2nd definition requires

TOTAL VIEWS 4,617

see page 12
fish

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REVIEW article

Front. Mar. Sci., 07 May 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2021.607657> (<https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2021.607657>)



Introduction
Assessment and Management History
Current Management
Challenges and Future Work

The Path to an Ecosystem Approach for Forage Fish Management: A Case Study of Atlantic Menhaden

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is older? apply?

fish not clear

They quote and dont mention the reader

- ¹Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Arlington, VA, United States
- ²Nature Coast Biological Station, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, United States
- ³Maine Department of Natural Resources, Boothbay Harbor, ME, United States
- ⁴NOAA Fisheries, Beaufort, NC, United States
- ⁵Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Providence, RI, United States
- ⁶Department of Fisheries Biology, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA, United States
- ⁷Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Solomons, MD, United States
- ⁸Cooperative Oxford Lab, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Oxford, MD, United States
- ⁹Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Annapolis, MD, United States
- ¹⁰Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, Gloucester, MA, United States
- ¹¹New Jersey Division of Marine Fisheries, Port Republic, NJ, United States
- ¹²Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Hampton, VA, United States
- ¹³South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, Charleston, SC, United States
- ¹⁴OKEANOS Research Center, University of the Azores, Horta, Portugal
- ¹⁵Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Colonial Beach, VA, United States
- ¹⁶New York Department of Environmental Conservation, East Setauket, NY, United States

The 3 most important are fish and

the focus is on the ecosystem not the species

from BAM. All focal species had recently undergone single-species stock assessments, which provided life history, landings, and index data through 2017, as well as estimates of fishing mortality and population size. Newer data were not available for all of the groups included in the full NWACS EwE model; as a result, inputs for those groups were extrapolated from the terminal year of 2013.

The ERP WG evaluated the five ERP models based on their performance (i.e., residuals, sensitivities, and other diagnostics), their strengths and weaknesses, and their ability to inform the fundamental ecosystem management objectives (Buchheister et al., 2017a,b; McNamee, 2018; Uphoff and Sharov, 2018; Nesslage and Wilberg, 2019; Chagaris et al., 2020). The ERP WG ultimately recommended using the NWACS-MICE model rather than the other four for two reasons. First, the EwE framework used by the NWACS-MICE model was the only approach that could address both the top-down effects of predation on Atlantic menhaden and the bottom-up effects of Atlantic menhaden on predator populations, which were required to evaluate the key tradeoffs between Atlantic menhaden harvest and predator needs that were central to the identified ecosystem objectives. Second, the NWACS-MICE implementation was less data-intensive than the full NWACS model, which reduced some of the uncertainty associated with modeling the data-poor predators and prey in the full model. This meant the NWACS-MICE model could be updated more quickly and efficiently, on a timeframe that met manager's needs. Comparisons of the full and MICE versions of the NWACS model indicated that the NWACS-MICE model included the fish predators most sensitive to the menhaden population. Striped bass was the most sensitive fish predator to Atlantic menhaden harvest in both models. In the full NWACS model, nearshore piscivorous birds were also sensitive to Atlantic menhaden F , but their response was similar to striped bass over the range of scenarios explored by the full model (Southeast Data Assessment and Review [SEDAR], 2020b). This choice was consistent with a growing body of literature that has recommended models of intermediate complexity (i.e., MICE) for ecosystems as representing a compromise between complexity/realism and uncertainty for use in management (Plagányi et al., 2014; Collie et al., 2016; Punt et al., 2016). Specifically, the ERP WG recommended using the NWACS-MICE in conjunction with the single-species assessment model, BAM; the NWACS-MICE model would provide strategic advice about the trade-offs between Atlantic menhaden fishing mortality and predator biomass to set reference points, while the single-species model would be used to provide short-term tactical advice about harvest strategies to achieve the ERP F target (Chagaris et al., 2020; Southeast Data Assessment and Review [SEDAR], 2020b). The ERP report was peer-reviewed with the single-species assessment in 2019, and the ERP WG's recommended tool was deemed acceptable for management use by a panel of independent experts (Southeast Data Assessment and Review [SEDAR], 2020b). The peer-review panel also recommended the continued development of the alternative models going forward.

Current Management

The development and implementation of ERPs for Atlantic menhaden was a lengthy process (Figure 4 and Table 1), but in August 2020, ASMFC adopted the approach from the ERP WG for management use. The ERP target was defined as the maximum F on Atlantic menhaden that would sustain striped bass at their biomass target when striped bass were fished at their F target. The ERP threshold was defined as the maximum F on Atlantic menhaden that would keep striped bass at its biomass threshold when striped bass was fished at its F target. For both reference points, all other species in the model were fished at their *status quo* (i.e., 2017) F rates. Striped bass was the focal predator species for this analysis because it was the most sensitive to Atlantic menhaden F in both the NWACS-MICE and the full NWACS models. Thus, levels of Atlantic menhaden F that sustain striped bass should also sustain piscivorous birds and less sensitive predators, in the absence of significant disruptions to the ecosystem (Southeast Data Assessment and Review [SEDAR], 2020b). With these ERP targets and thresholds, the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board reviewed projections from the single-species model, BAM, and set a quota for 2021 and 2022 of 194,400 mt, a 10% decrease in the quota from 2020.

FIGURE 4



A TALE OF TWO BAYS: OSPREY FORTUNES DIVERGE

By: Bryan Watts
7/5/2023

Over the past few years, I have received questions from homeowners, watermen and keen observers around the lower Chesapeake Bay about osprey. Waterfront homeowners have been concerned about "their" pair (often nesting on a private platform). The watermen who have spent their springs out on the water for decades have been concerned about many pairs within the area where they work. The questions are generally the same. What is happening with the osprey? Why are they not producing any young? Nearly all of these inquiries have come from the main stem of the lower Bay. These are the salty polyhaline (above 18 parts per thousand salinity) areas of the Bay where osprey have historically depended on menhaden as their primary prey. Our observations over the decades suggest that the homeowners, watermen and general observers have legitimate reasons for concern.



Osprey brood on the upper James River near Hopewell, Virginia. Productivity within the tidal fresh reaches of the Bay continues to be above sustainable levels with the median brood size of 2. Photo by Bryan Watts.

One of the most prominent subestuaries of the lower Chesapeake is Mobjack Bay. We have osprey productivity data for this area dating back to 1970. Mitchell Byrd and a list of his graduate students including Bob Kennedy, Gary Seek, Chris Stinson, Tim Kinkead and Peter McLean monitored osprey within this location from 1970 through 1990. Monitoring shows that reproductive rate rises from the DDT era to a high in the early to mid-1980s and then begins to decline toward 1990. My graduate student, Andy Glass, worked in Mobjack during the 2006 and 2007 nesting seasons. More recently, Michael Academia worked in Mobjack during the 2021 nesting season. By 2006 productivity had declined to 0.75 young/pr or equivalent to rates documented prior to 1975. By 2021 productivity had declined to 0.32, a rate lower than any year since 1970.



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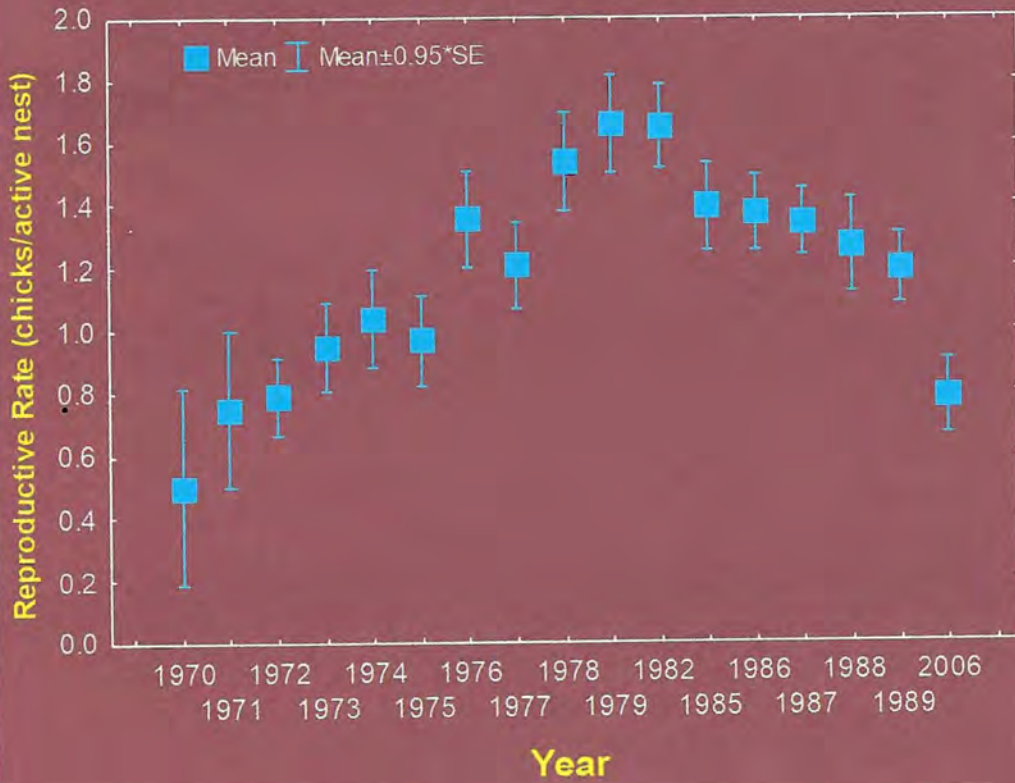
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MOBJACK BAY REPRODUCTIVE RATES (1970-2006)



Graph of known osprey reproductive rates in Mobjack Bay from 1970 through 1989 and 2006. Productivity reached a high during the early to mid-1980s and by the mid-2000s fell below sustainable levels. Data from CCB

The underlying cause of reproductive failure in Mobjack has shifted from the DDT era to the present. In 1972, the hatching rate of eggs was 36.5%. Gains in productivity from the early 1970s through the mid-1980s was driven by an improvement in hatching rate as the population recovered from DDT. By the late 1980s, hatching rate was above 90% and in 2006 hatching rate was nearly 95%. Declines in productivity after 1985 have been driven by the starvation of young in nests after hatching. Between 1975 and 2006 fish delivery rates to nests dropped by more than 50% and the importance of menhaden in the diet also dropped by 50%. For most pairs, fish availability in Mobjack Bay is not adequate to raise even a single young. The study conducted in 2021 demonstrated that experimental supplementation of nests with menhaden was effective in reducing starving rates and driving productivity above maintenance levels. This result suggests that if the menhaden population was allowed to recover, osprey could return to sustainable reproductive rates.

First Name

Last Name

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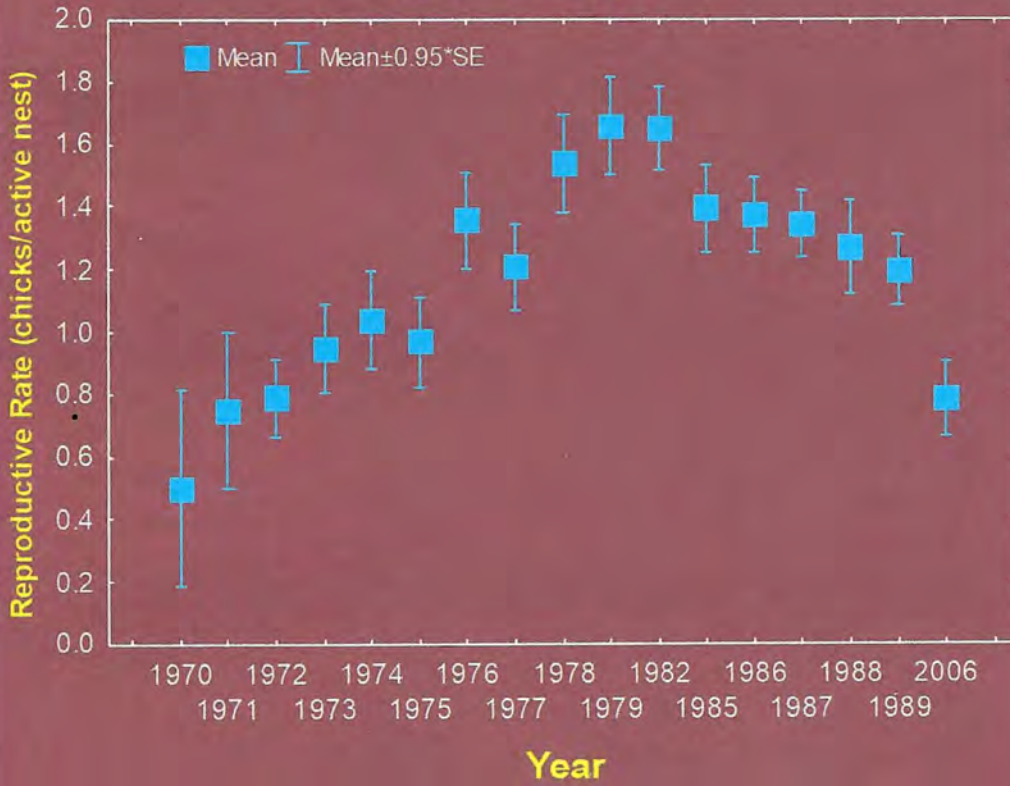
Michael Academia uses a mirror pole to check an osprey in Mobjack Bay. During the 2023 breeding season, CCB checked productivity for more than 250 nests to better understand the spatial pattern of failures. Photo by Bryan Watts.

My response to homeowners, watermen and concerned osprey watchers about the lack of young in nests around the lower Bay is that the current fish availability is not high enough to allow osprey to reproduce sustainably. Their young are starving in the nest – most within the first week after hatching.

One of the added questions that homeowners and other observers have is, "Is this just a problem with my pair or is this more widespread?" On the broader population level, the question is, "What is the geographic extent of the demographic sink or black hole?" To begin to address this question, we conducted some broader surveys during the spring of 2023 to expand our view. We surveyed three polyhaline areas of the Bay including Mobjack Bay (Ware River, North River, East River), the lower York River and the Lynnhaven River. The findings were both shocking and depressing. Of the collective 167 nests monitored, only 17 were successful producing 21 young. The reproductive rate of 0.33 is less than 30% of what is needed for the population to break even.



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First Name

Last Name

* = required field

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June 14, 2022

Governor Glenn Youngkin
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Youngkin,

As members of the recreational fishing and boating community, we ask that you move menhaden reduction fishing out of the Chesapeake Bay until science demonstrates that high volume reduction fishing for menhaden can be allowed without negatively affecting the broader Bay ecosystem.

America's anglers and boaters consistently play an integral role in the stewardship of our shared natural resources by directly funding conservation and habitat restoration efforts through licensing fees and excise taxes set up through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund on fishing equipment and boat fuel. In 2021 alone, \$399 million was apportioned to the states to fund fishery conservation programs.¹ This resulted in \$6.26 million in funds for conservation programs specifically in Virginia, funded solely by anglers and boaters.

Our recreational fishing coalition of national and Virginia-based groups is clearly dedicated to maintaining the health of the Chesapeake Bay, the region's economy, and the broader marine ecosystem in the Atlantic. A major source of our conservation ethic is the fact that saltwater recreational fishing is an economic powerhouse, especially for Virginia where fishing is enjoyed by 600,000 anglers annually, contributing \$465 million to the Commonwealth's economy and supporting 6,504 jobs.² The jobs created by these fisheries are the lifeblood of our coastal communities as more than 90 percent of the sportfishing and boating industry is made up of small businesses.

Atlantic menhaden play a vital role in maintaining the sportfishing economy and the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem by serving as the base of the food chain for many recreationally important species. Specifically, menhaden are critical to the diets of gamefish like striped bass, bluefish, weakfish, and more, that feed Americans and keep them coming to Virginia waters and spending money in our coastal communities. For example, the striped bass fishery is the largest marine recreational fishery in the U.S., driving \$166 million in recreational fishing activity in Virginia alone. However, the economic value of striped bass fishing to Virginia has declined by over 50 percent in the past decade.³

¹ Certificate of Apportionment For Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration, available at: https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/SFR%20FY22%20Certificate%20of%20Final%20Apportionment%202022Feb3_508.pdf

² Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2021, available at: https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2021-11/FEUS-2018-final-508_0.pdf

³ The Economic Contributions of Recreational and Commercial Striped Bass Fishing, 2019, available at: <https://mcgrawconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/McGraw-Striped-Bass-Report-FINAL.pdf>

⁴ Evaluating Ecosystem-Based Reference Points for Atlantic Menhaden, 2017, available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19425120.2017.1360420>

⁵ ASMFC news release, 2019, available at: http://www.asmf.org/uploads/file/5dfbd30bpr40SecretarialSupport_Menhaden_VANoncompliance.pdf

Part of the decline in the striped bass population is explained by fishing mortality being too high, and in 2014 and 2020 our coalition supported significant reductions on the striped bass fishery to address that decline. However, according to a scientific model, menhaden reduction fishing also contributes to a nearly 30 percent decline in striped bass numbers coast wide.⁴ The scientific linkage between menhaden as prey and striped bass as a main predator is undeniable. Therefore, the industrial menhaden fishery in the Chesapeake plays a role in the ability of striped bass to rebuild to healthy population levels. By removing more than 100 million pounds of menhaden every year from the Chesapeake Bay, the most important striped bass nursery on the East Coast, reduction fishing in Virginia is undermining the sportfishing economy and small businesses throughout the Commonwealth.

The detrimental impact of menhaden reduction fishing on the ecosystem is so pronounced that it is prohibited in every state along the East Coast except Virginia. However, each year, over 100 million pounds of menhaden are being removed from the Chesapeake Bay and "reduced" to fish meal and oil for pet food and salmon feed by a foreign-owned company—Cooke Inc. Locally known as Omega Protein, the corporation is exporting this keystone fish to other countries as a global commodity, despite repeated signs of the negative impact it is causing to the environment and other industries dependent on a healthy marine ecosystem. In fact, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) found Virginia out of compliance with the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic menhaden in 2019, after Omega Protein exceeded the Chesapeake Bay harvest cap by 33 million pounds.⁵

Over the past decade, recreational fishing and boating organizations, coastal businesses, and hundreds of thousands of individual anglers and conservationists have called on decisionmakers to leave enough menhaden in the water to feed the wildlife that support vibrant recreational fishing, boating and other industries that boost Virginia's coastal economy. Governor Youngkin, we urge you to use your authority to move menhaden reduction fishing out of the Bay until science demonstrates that menhaden fishing can be allowed without negatively affecting the broader Bay ecosystem. Importantly, you could put this stopgap in place and still allow Omega Protein to fish in Virginia's ocean waters.

Moving menhaden reduction fishing out of the Bay will help to protect the health of the ecosystem and help grow Virginia's outdoor recreational economy, which benefits all Virginians.

Thank you for your consideration.

Whit Fosburgh
President & CEO



Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Glenn Hughes
President



American Sportfishing Association

Frank Hugelmeyer

President

National Marine Manufacturers Association



Jim McDuffie

President & CEO

Bonefish & Tarpon Trust



Matt Gruhn

President

Marine Retailers Association of the Americas



Greg Jacoski

Executive Director

Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation



Patrick Murray

President

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Ellen Peel

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The Billfish Foundation



Brett Fitzgerald

Executive Director

Angler Action Foundation



Jared Mott

Conservation Director

Izaak Walton League of America



Jason Schratwieser

President

International Game Fish Association



Ernie Padgette

President

Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America



Virginia Angling Clubs

Steve Atkinson

President

Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association



Captain Mike Ostrander

President

Virginia Anglers Club



Chris Schneider

President

Virginia Beach Angler's Club



Joe Stephenson

President

Great Bridge Fisherman's Association



Henry Troutner

Vice President

Norfolk Anglers Club



Samuel A. Graham

President

Central Virginia Sport Fishing Association



Ed Pacheco

President

Virginia Coastal Fly Anglers



Dean Carroll

President

Eastern Shore Anglers Club



Steve Jones Jr.

President

Tidewater Anglers Club



Danny Forehand

President

Peninsula Salt Water Sport Fisherman's Association



From: [Tom Lilly](#)
To: [Tina Berger](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Menhaden concerns in the bay
Date: Monday, January 8, 2024 4:44:43 PM
Attachments: [IMG_0824.PNG](#)

Tina. Please include this to the staff, Policy Board, Striped Bass and Menhaden boards. Please acknowledge. Thanks. Tom L.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com>
Date: January 2, 2024 at 1:44:13 PM EST
To: Robert Beal <rbeal@asmfc.org>, Mel Bell <BellM@dnr.sc.gov>, James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>, Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>, Katie Drew <kdrew@asmfc.org>, CONOR MCMANUS <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>
Cc: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Subject: **Re: Menhaden concerns in the bay**

Bob and crew

Happy new year to all at the Commission. Could you please take a moment to reply to these emails? Possibly James could schedule a phone call this week to discuss it?

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 30, 2023, at 12:30 PM, Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com> wrote:

Bob. Please try to find a few minutes to look at this request we sent in two weeks ago. Does the public have access to the factory catch in the bay / ocean on a weekly/monthly basis, the aging information and where it stands on the bay catch limit for 2023 to date ? Is the ERP stock assessment group using the 2023 fishing effort ,aging information and striped bass and osprey reproduction failure in their formulas? (under the ERP science these are the two indicator species for menhaden harvest levels)

Please be aware that our osprey chicks continued their die offs locally , that most of the striped bass we see caught have empty stomachs and that the fall run of juvenile menhaden exiting our river is again almost non existent. Also during this Summer there were no striped bass much smaller than 20 inches being caught that I heard off. The complete loss of our ibises and decreased great blue herons continues. This sad situation begs for a change in management that would move the factory fishing into the US Atlantic zone away from

the bay entrance to bring back a fair and just supply of menhaden forage to Chesapeake Bay. This is a tragic waste of American natural resources that continues to damage our bay ecosystem . Isn't it maximizing the use and enjoyment of Chesapeake bay for millions of our citizens (and their children) that should be the goal of the Commission, the MRC and the MD DNR ? That is what changing the location of the factory fishing would accomplish. It is very difficult to read about and see video evidence of the remarkable recovery of striped bass , ospreys and even whales and bluefin tuna in New Jersey and New York ,where their state waters are now protected from factory fishing. And believe it they did not have a fraction of the problem we have. Please take a few minutes to consider this. Tom Lilly Menhadenproject

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 15, 2023, at 8:47 AM, Tom Lilly
<foragematters@aol.com> wrote:

Bob. Wondered if you had a chance to look at this mail. Has the staff taken a look at the factory "fishing effort" for 2023 and the aging of the catch ? The ship tracking information posted on Facebook showing daily failures to catch a load seem to be real evidence of a problem for the bay. The corroboration of the problem is the ongoing failure of reproduction of the two species that your ERP science says are menhaden harvest problem indicators. These are,of course, the striped bass and ospreys. I know of no evidence that would rebut the ERP definitions that lay the cause of serious striped bass problems with the menhaden harvest. Nothing to rebut the Commission's advice that striped bass are the "canary in the coal mine" as to menhaden harvests.

Is the staff looking at this and if so do they think the difficulty in catch and failure of the two indicators in the bay are matters of concern for the next meeting of the menhaden board? Please advise. Tom Lilly

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 30, 2023, at 9:07 AM, Tom Lilly
<foragematters@aol.com> wrote:

Bob. Please look at the post of yesterday's factory fishing . This summer there have been many days of this "unusual " activity.in the VA bay. Often the ships overnight because the catch isn't there. That is new.

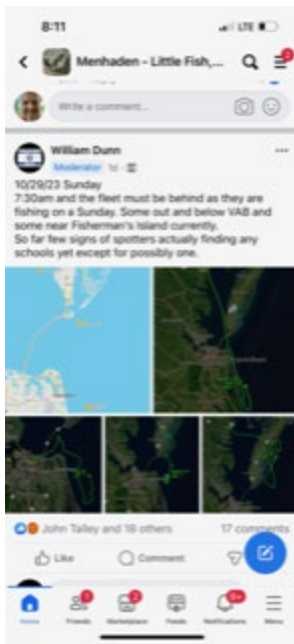
If I understand the Rhode Island calculation of the required menhaden baseline for Narragansett bay and use it for Chesapeake bay there should be 1500 ten ton schools in the bay at all times for our striped bass. This would cover the ospreys as well. So there should be 750 schools in VA . Arguably on the days they can't locate many schools to net there would not be the residual 700 schools or 500 or even 100 in the VA bay. Isn't this what logic dictates ? This is seemingly corroborated by the fact the two ERP indicator species for menhaden harvest levels,the striped bass spawning stock and ospreys, are in reproductive failure in Chesapeake Bay.

The CDFRs have the information that could confirm the conclusions from the daily tracking minute by minute ship activity.

It would seem all the information is available to apply the ERP science definitions to decide whether the menhaden harvest is appropriate or not.

I would like to discuss this if you have a few minutes. Just let me know when.
Thanks.

Tom. 443 235 4465.



Sent from my iPhone