



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201

703.842.0740 • www.asmfc.org

Joe Cimino (NJ), Chair

Dan McKiernan (MA), Vice-Chair


Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

MEMORANDUM

Revised January 17, 2024

TO: Commissioners; Proxies; American Eel Management Board; American Lobster Management Board; Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board; Coastal Pelagics Management Board; Executive Committee; ISFMP Policy Board; Spiny Dogfish Management Board

FROM: Robert E. Beal 
Executive Director

RE: ASMFC Winter Meeting: January 23-25, 2024 (TA 24-017)

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Winter Meeting will be January 23-25, 2024 at **The Westin Crystal City**. This will be a hybrid meeting (both in-person and remote) to allow for participation by Commissioners and interested stakeholders. The room block is now closed; if you need assistance reserving a room, please contact Lisa Carty at lcarty@asmfc.org. The Winter Meeting final agenda and meeting materials (main and supplemental) are available at <https://www.asmfc.org/home/2024-winter-meeting>.

Please note the Shad and River Herring Management Board meeting, previously scheduled for Wednesday, January 24 from 12:45 – 1:30 p.m., has been cancelled. The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board will now be held from 1:15 – 4:45 p.m.

Webinar Information

Meeting proceedings will be broadcast daily via webinar beginning Tuesday, January 23rd at 12:30 PM and continuing daily until the conclusion of the meeting (expected to be 11 AM) on Thursday, January 25th.

To register for the webinar, please go to:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8556735274724277084> (Webinar ID 795-025-635).

If you are joining the webinar but will not be using voice over internet protocol (VoIP) via your computer, you can also call in at 631.992.3221, access code 426-309-773. A PIN will be provided to you after joining the webinar; see webinar instructions for details on how to receive the PIN.

For those who will not be joining the webinar but would like to listen to the audio portion only, press the # key when asked for a PIN.

Meeting Process

Board chairs will ask both in-person and virtual board members if they wish to speak. In-person members can simply raise their hands at the meeting without logging on to the webinar, while virtual

MAINE • NEW HAMPSHIRE • MASSACHUSETTS • RHODE ISLAND • CONNECTICUT • NEW YORK • NEW JERSEY • DELAWARE
PENNSYLVANIA • MARYLAND • VIRGINIA • NORTH CAROLINA • SOUTH CAROLINA • GEORGIA • FLORIDA

members will raise their hands on the webinar. The chair will work with staff to compile the list of speakers, balancing the flow of questions/comments between in-person and virtual attendees. The same process will be used for public comment. Depending upon the number of commenters, the board chair will decide how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

Each day, the webinar will begin 15 minutes prior to the start of the first meeting so that people can troubleshoot any connectivity or audio issues they may encounter. If you are having issues with the webinar (connecting to or audio-related), please contact Chris Jacobs at 703.842.0790.

We look forward to seeing you at the Winter Meeting. If the staff or I can provide any further assistance to you, please call us at 703.842.0740.

Enclosed: Final Agenda



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Winter Meeting

January 23-25, 2024

The Westin Crystal City

Arlington, Virginia

Public Comment Guidelines

To provide a fair opportunity for public input, the ISFMP Policy Board has approved the following guidelines for use at management board meetings:

For issues that are not on the agenda, management boards will continue to provide opportunity to the public to bring matters of concern to the board's attention at the start of each board meeting. Board chairs will ask members of the public to raise their hands to let the chair know they would like to speak. Depending upon the number of commenters, the board chair will decide how to allocate the available time on the agenda (typically 10 minutes) to the number of people who want to speak.

For topics that are on the agenda, but have not gone out for public comment, board chairs will provide limited opportunity for comment, taking into account the time allotted on the agenda for the topic. Chairs will have flexibility in deciding how to allocate comment opportunities; this could include hearing one comment in favor and one in opposition until the chair is satisfied further comment will not provide additional insight to the board.

For agenda action items that have already gone out for public comment, it is the Policy Board's intent to end the occasional practice of allowing extensive and lengthy public comments. Currently, board chairs have the discretion to decide what public comment to allow in these circumstances.

In addition, the following timeline has been established for the **submission of written comment for issues for which the Commission has NOT established a specific public comment period** (i.e., in response to proposed management action).

1. Comments received three weeks prior to the start of a meeting week (January 2) will be included in the briefing materials.
2. Comments received by 5 PM on Tuesday, January 16 will be included in supplemental materials.
3. Comments received by 10 AM on Friday, January 19 will be distributed electronically to Commissioners/Board members prior to the meeting.

The submitted comments must clearly indicate the commenter's expectation from the ASMFC staff regarding distribution. As with other public comment, it will be accepted via mail and email.

Final Agenda

The agenda is subject to change. The agenda reflects the current estimate of time required for scheduled Board meetings. The Commission may adjust this agenda in accordance with the actual duration of Board meetings. Interested parties should anticipate Boards starting earlier or later than indicated herein.

Tuesday, January 23

12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

American Lobster Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia

Other Members: NMFS

Chair: McNamee

Other Participants: Pugh, Truesdale, Beal, Delayne

Staff: Starks

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. McNamee*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. American Lobster Technical Committee Report (*T. Pugh*)
 - Information on Lobster Resource and Fishery Near the Northern Edge of Georges Bank
5. Jonah Crab Technical Committee Report (*C. Truesdale*)
 - Jonah Crab Stock Indicators
 - Discuss Future Management Tools
6. Discuss Implications of 2025 Size Limit Changes on Imports (*C. Starks*) **Possible Action**
7. Consider Pursuing a Management Strategy Evaluation for American Lobster (*J. McNamee*) **Possible Action**
8. Discuss Inconsistencies in Federal and Commission Rules for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2 and 3 (*C. Starks, A. Murphy*)
9. Progress Update on State Implementation of Addendum XXIX on Federal Vessel Trackers (*J. McNamee*)
10. Progress Update on American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment (*J. Kipp*)
11. Review and Populate Jonah Crab Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action**
12. Other Business/Adjourn

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.

Spiny Dogfish Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina

Other Members: NMFS

Chair: Geer

Other Participants: Baker, Newlin, Didden

Staff: Boyle

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*P. Geer*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Review 2023 Management Track Assessment (*J. Didden*)
5. Set Specifications for Up to the Next Three Fishing Years **Final Action**
 - Review Monitoring Committee and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Recommendations for 2024-2026 Fishing Years (*J. Didden*)
6. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
7. Other Business/Adjourn

4 – 5:30 p.m.

American Eel Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Chair: Kuhn

Other Participants: Carty, Beal

Staff: Starks

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*K. Kuhn*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Approval of Draft Addendum VI on Maine's Glass Eel Quota for Public Comment (*C. Starks*) **Action**
5. Consider Approval of Draft Addendum VII on Yellow Eel Coastwide Cap for Public Comment (*C. Starks*) **Action**
6. Consider Approval of Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports for the 2022 Fishing Year (*C. Starks*) **Action**
7. Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action**
8. Other Business/Adjourn

Wednesday, January 24

8 – 10 a.m.

Executive Committee

Breakfast will be available at 7:30 a.m.

(A portion of this meeting may be closed for Committee members and Commissioners only)

Members: Abbott, Burgess, Cimino, Clark, Davis, Dyer, Fegley, Gary, Geer, Haymans, Keliher, Kuhn, McKiernan, McNamee, Miller, Patterson, Rawls

Chair: Cimino

Staff: Leach

1. Welcome/Introductions (*J. Cimino*)
2. Committee Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Meeting Summary from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Legislative Update (*A. Law*)
5. Tasking for the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (*J. Patel*)
6. Commission Officer Election Procedures (*R. Beal*)
7. Review 2024-2028 Strategic Plan (*R. Beal*)
8. Discuss Future Meeting Week Format; In-Person vs. Virtual (*R. Beal*)
9. Other Business/Adjourn

10:15 – 11:45 a.m.

Coastal Pelagics Management Board

Member States: Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: NMFS, PRFC, SAFMC

Chair: Woodward

Other Participants: Giuliano, Pearce

Staff: Franke, Tuohy

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*S. Woodward*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Approval of Terms of Reference for the SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review of Atlantic Migratory Group (AMG) Cobia Stock Assessment (*C. Tuohy & A. Giuliano*) **Action**
5. Update from Cobia Plan Development Team on Recreational Reallocation Addendum Scoping (*C. Tuohy*)
6. Consider Approval of Spanish Mackerel Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports for the 2022 Fishing Year (*E. Franke*) **Action**
7. Update from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council on Mackerel Port Meetings and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Framework Amendment 13 (*J. Carmichael*)
8. Elect Vice-Chair **Action**
9. Other Business/Adjourn

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Lunch Provided for Commissioners & Proxies

1:15 – 4:45 p.m.

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Chair: Ware

Other Participants: Lengyel Costa, Mercer

Staff: Franke

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*M. Ware*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Draft Addendum II for Final Approval **Final Action**
 - 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**
 - 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**
7. Other Business/Adjourn

Thursday, January 25

8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Other Members: DC, NMFS, PRFC, USFWS

Other Participants: D. Blacklock

Chair: Cimino

Staff: Kerns

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Cimino*)
2. Board Consent (*J. Cimino*)
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Executive Committee Report (*J. Cimino*) **Action**

5. Review and Discuss 2023 Commissioner Survey Results (*A. Law*)
6. Consider Jurisdiction Requests for Species Declared Interest **Final Action**
7. Discuss Aquaculture in the Exclusive Economic Zone (*D. Blacklock*)
8. Review NOAA Fisheries White Paper for an Industry-Based Survey (*K. Ford*)
9. Update on Ongoing Stock Assessments **Action**
10. Review Noncompliance Findings, If Necessary **Action**
11. Other Business/Adjourn

10:30 – 11 a.m.

Commission Business Session

Member States: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida

Chair: Cimino

Staff: Beal

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Cimino*)
2. Board Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Approval of Revision to 2024 Action Plan (*T. Kerns*)
 - Addition to Goal 1 to Develop an Action with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council for Summer Flounder Commercial Measures
5. Review and Consider Approval of 2024-2028 Strategic Plan **Final Action**
6. Review Noncompliance Findings, If Necessary **Final Action**
7. Other Business/Adjourn

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

American Lobster Management Board

January 23, 2024

12:30 – 2:30 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 (*J. McNamee*) 12:30 p.m.
2. Board Consent 12:30 p.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment 12:35 p.m.
4. American Lobster Technical Committee Report (*T. Pugh*) 12:45 p.m.
 - Information on Lobster Resource and Fishery Near the Northern Edge of Georges Bank
5. Jonah Crab Technical Committee Report (*C. Truesdale*) 1:00 p.m.
 - Jonah Crab Stock Indicators
 - Discuss Future Management Tools
6. Discuss Implications of 2025 Size Limit Changes on Imports (*C. Starks*) 1:25 p.m.
Possible Action
7. Consider Pursuing a Management Strategy Evaluation for American Lobster (*J. McNamee*) **Possible Action** 1:35 p.m.
8. Discuss Inconsistencies in Federal and Commission Rules for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2 and 3 (*C. Starks, A. Murphy*) 1:45 p.m.
9. Progress Update on State Implementation of Addendum XXIX on Federal Vessel Trackers (*J. McNamee*) 2:10 p.m.
10. Progress Update on American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment (*J. Kipp*) 2:20 p.m.
11. Review and Populate Jonah Crab Advisory Panel Membership (*T. Berger*) **Action** 2:25 p.m.
12. Other Business/Adjourn 2:30 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

American Lobster Management Board

January 23, 2024

12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Chair: Dr. Jason McNamee (RI) Assumed Chairmanship: 02/22	Technical Committee Chair: Tracy Pugh (MA)	Law Enforcement Committee Representative: Rob Beal (ME)
Vice Chair: Pat Keliher (ME)	Lobster Advisory Panel Chair: Grant Moore (MA) Jonah Crab Advisory Panel Chair: Sonny Gwin	Previous Board Meeting: October 16, 2023
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, VA, NMFS, NEFMC (12 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. American Lobster Technical Committee Report (12:45-1:00 p.m.)

Background

- In October the Board tasked the lobster Technical Committee (TC) with compiling information on the lobster resource and fishery in and around the Northern Edge of Georges Bank in relation to a potential action at the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) considering scallop fishery access on the Northern Edge.
- The TC developed a report responding to the Board Task (**Supplemental Materials**).

Presentations

- TC Report on Lobster Resource and Fishery around the Northern Edge by T. Pugh

5. Jonah Crab Technical Committee Report (1:00-1:25 p.m.)

Background

- The 2023 Jonah Crab Benchmark Stock Assessment indicated that the Jonah crab stock has not been depleted to historical lows. However, the Peer Review noted substantial uncertainty about stock status, and recommended monitoring the stock closely.

- In October the Board tasked the Jonah Crab TC with making recommendations regarding stock indicators and potential future management measures. The TC developed a report responding to the Board task (**Briefing Materials**).
- The TC also requested feedback from the Jonah Crab AP on potential market and economic factors driving trends in the fishery. The AP met on December 14, 2023 to review the benchmark stock assessment for Jonah crab and provide input to the TC (**Briefing Materials**).

Presentations

- Jonah Crab TC Report by C. Truesdale

6. Discuss Implications of 2025 Size Limit Changes on Imports (1:25-1:35 p.m.) Possible Action

Background

- The Mitchel provision of the Magnuson-Stevens Act exists to prevent imports of lobster below the US minimum size into US commerce.
- The 2025 size limit change required under Addendum XXVII could result in differing size limits for the US and Canada. Questions have been raised about enforcement and other issues due to this difference.

Presentations

- Overview of Size Limit Implications by C. Starks

Board Actions for Consideration at the Meeting

- Consider making recommendations to NOAA Fisheries regarding clarification of how the Mitchell Provision applies to lobster imports

7. Consider Pursuing a Management Strategy Evaluation for American Lobster (1:35-1:45 p.m.) Possible Action

Background

- In May 2021 the Board reviewed TC recommendations on a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the lobster fishery. The TC recommended the Board pursue a two-phase MSE focused on the GOM/GBK stock, with the goal of providing short-term management guidance at the stock-wide scale while concurrently building the framework to expand the MSE to provide long-term, spatially-explicit management advice. As next steps, the TC recommended a formal process to develop management goals and objectives for the future of the lobster fishery, and forming a steering committee for additional scoping and work plan development (**Briefing Materials**).
- The Board expressed interest in pursuing an MSE but postponed any action on development of an MSE in order to prioritize work on Draft Addendum XXVII. This issue was last discussed by the Board in August 2021.

Presentations

- Overview of Management Strategy Evaluation by J. McNamee

Board Actions for Consideration at the Meeting

- Consider initiating an MSE for American Lobster

8. Discuss Inconsistencies in Federal and Commission Rules for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2 and 3 (1:45-2:10 p.m.)

Background

- NOAA fisheries has published an [interim rule](#) that responds to the Commission’s 2013 recommendations to NOAA to adopt the measures in Addenda XXI and XXII in federal waters. The Addenda aimed to scale the capacity of the Southern New England (SNE) fishery to the diminished size of the SNE resource. However, over a decade has passed since the date when the Commission intended for these federal measures to be implemented.
- Due to the delay between the Commission’s adoption of the Addenda and federal implementation, there have been significant changes in the fishery. Also, some aspects of the federal rulemaking differ from the measures included in Addenda XXI and XXII.

Presentations

- Overview of Federal and Commission Rules for LCMAs 2 and 3 by C. Starks and A. Murphy

9. Progress Update on State Implementation of Addendum XXIX on Federal Vessel Trackers (2:10-2:20 p.m.)

Background

- Addendum XXIX was approved in 2022 and established electronic tracking requirements for federally-permitted vessels in the American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries.
- The Addendum is effective as of December 15, 2023, though there have been some delays in state regulations.

10. Progress Update on American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment (2:20-2:25 p.m.)

Background

- A benchmark stock assessment for American Lobster is scheduled for completion in 2025.

Presentations

- Progress on American Lobster Benchmark Stock Assessment by J. Kipp

11. Review and Populate Jonah Crab Advisory Panel Membership (2:25-2:30 p.m.) Action

Background

- Denny Colbert, a commercial offshore tarp fisherman from Massachusetts, has been nominated to serve on the Advisory Panel (**Briefing Materials**).

Board Actions for Consideration at the Meeting

- Approve Advisory Panel nomination

12. Other Business/ Adjourn



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmf.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: American Lobster Management Board
FROM: American Lobster Technical Committee
DATE: January 17, 2024
SUBJECT: Board Task on Lobster Information for the Northern Edge of Georges Bank

At the Board's October 2023 meeting, it tasked the Technical Committee (TC) with compiling information on the lobster resource and fishery in and around the Northern Edge of Georges Bank. This task is in response to a potential action at the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) that is considering scallop fishery access on the Northern Edge of Georges Bank (see Figure 1). The Board requested information that could help characterize potential impacts on the lobster population and fishery in the area.

The TC met on December 8th, 2023 to discuss this task and identify available information relevant to the Board's request. Below are data sources that may be valuable in assessing the potential impacts of scallop fishery access in the Northern Edge area; they are organized by the topic areas included in the Board task. The TC did not have adequate time to perform analysis of these data, but where possible, preliminary conclusions are included. In addition, links to previous documents addressing concerns related to opening Closed Area II to mobile gear are included at the end of this memo, as the information contained within remains relevant.

1. Information on the presence and abundance of lobsters, including ovigerous lobsters, in and around the Northern Edge by month/season

- Data on lobster catch rates in scallop dredges by month in the area surrounding the potential scallop fishery access areas are available from the Coonammesset Farm Foundation's (CFF) seasonal bycatch scallop dredge survey. This work documented little seasonal variation in the catch of male lobsters, but a rapid increase in female lobsters in June that remained high until November; these lobsters were skewed to the larger sizes (C. Huntsberger, personal communication).
- The Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) has some fishery-dependent data for the areas north and south of the Northern Edge area (by statistical area) from their Lobster and Jonah Crab Research Fleet. Data include sex and size specific information, but can only be used to characterize the lobster catch, not to estimate relative abundance (the program is not designed to estimate CPUE or abundance). Data from inside the area of interest are not available. Data will need to be summarized to avoid confidentiality issues.
- New Hampshire Fish and Game (NHF&G) and Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association (AOLA) can provide data from commercial logbooks collected in 2015, including spatial data on egg-bearing lobsters.
- Spatially explicit data are available from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) federal trawl survey are sparse but can inform the distribution of lobsters (including large females) in May and October.

M24-12

- Tagging data are available from a recent collaborative study (AOLA, NHF& G and Maine Department of Marine Resources (MEDMR). The TC can assess the utility of these data for better understanding movement patterns on Georges Bank.
- Some federal observer data exists for the northern portion of the proposed area, which can be used to characterize lobster catch (catch rates, size, sex ratios, presence of egg-bearing females). Most of the data from this region were collected between 2013 and 2015 with 2015 being the most recent available data.
- It is possible that limited seasonal mobile gear access may be timed to avoid aggregations of reproductive female lobsters but further analysis on seasonal movement patterns is needed.

2. Lobster fishery effort in and around the Northern Edge by month/season

- Addendum XXIX requires federally-permitted lobster vessels to install tracking devices that capture the vessel's location once per minute. The only state that has implemented vessel trackers currently is Massachusetts. Using the limited data that have been received and processed by ACCSP (only since May 2023) from Massachusetts vessels only, a preliminary analysis was performed to assess fishing activity in the area. The analysis searched for trip records inside the eight 10-minute squares that encompass the Closed Area II Habitat Management Area. The results, summarized below, indicate that fishing activity has been occurring in or near the Closed Area II Habitat Management Area. It should be noted that numbers below represent an absolute minimum of fishing activity and only account for the few vessels that have installed tracking devices that had delivered the data successfully as of January 12, 2024.
 - 5 *identifiable* vessels were operating in the target area from May 2023 – January 12, 2024.
 - 34 trips, that could be matched by ACCSP, were taken in the target area from May 2023- January 12, 2024. More trips may have occurred over the time period.
 - Over 50,000 locations were sent to ACCSP where the vessel speed is calculated to be less than or equal to 5 knots. This is a proxy for when vessels are hauling or setting gear. This number does not equate to any number of traps or hauls.
- Data on the spatial distribution of fishing effort and catch rates in lobster traps are available through federal trip reports with vessels reporting one set of spatial coordinates per trip. Fishing effort is highly seasonal and a portion of the effort is reported inside the bounds of the proposed closure. Details of this data cannot be released at this time due to confidentiality but may be released with permission in the future.
- Seasonal effort location can be examined via Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data and more recent 10-minute square harvester reporting data. This will necessitate a data request to NMFS to include all available data (mostly NH & MA boats). Data display will likely be problematic due to confidentiality issues, but a general summary of patterns in the area should be possible.
 - New Hampshire has VTR data aggregated in over a 10-year period that can inform fishing effort in the Northern Edge area. Some of these data are likely to be confidential.
- Addendum XX to the Lobster FMP prohibits lobster gear in a portion of Closed Area II from November 1 to June 15 annually based on an agreement with the groundfish sector to prevent gear conflicts. This prohibited area is south of the Habitat Management Area where scallop

access is currently being considered. Opening access to mobile gear in the Habitat Management Area may cause additional trap gear displacement.

- CFRF Research Fleet data may provide some insight; however, the data cannot fully characterize effort, only indicate that there is some activity when/where Fleet sampling sessions occur.
- CFF data indicate higher levels of lobster bycatch (mostly female) in the scallop surveys immediately south and west of the area of interest occurred in late summer and early fall (the surveys were excluded from the actual area of interest). Anecdotal reports from former CFF staff (C. Huntsberger, personal communication) observed higher density of lobster gear in the area of interest in late summer.

3. Potential impacts of mobile gear on the lobster population in this area

- Data generated by the CFF scallop surveys in a nearby portion of Closed Area II indicate that lobsters retained in commercial scallop dredges are vulnerable to significant damage, with 34% of 783 observed lobsters experiencing lethal damage (Garcia et al. 2017). An additional 27% experienced moderate (likely sub-lethal) damage. The probability of lobsters experiencing moderate or lethal damage is partially linked to shell hardness, and thus the seasonality of the molt cycling. Therefore, lobster mortality may be partially mediated by seasonal restrictions in dredging activities.
- Addendum XX included a report from the TC on “Assessment of Trawl-Induced Damage to American Lobster” (Appendix A in Addendum XX). A study referenced in the TC report suggested that damage from scallop dredges was minimal, but the TC report highlighted that the lobster sampled in the study cited were on average much smaller than lobster in the population around Georges Bank. The TC noted that lobster size can affect damage rates as well as retention rates in the gear so these results may not apply to the area being considered.
- Analysis of environmental impacts of spatial management alternatives on the lobster population was included in the NEFMC Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 approved in 2018.

4. Information on the habitat type and depth preference of lobsters which could inform our understanding of lobsters on the Northern Edge if there are limitations in the data

- Several studies have shown that adult lobsters tend to exhibit seasonal movement patterns, migrating to deeper water in the colder months and to shoal waters in the warmer months (Cooper and Uzmann 1971; Krouse 1973; Campbell and Stasko 1986; Campbell 1986). These directed movements may increase the rate of egg development, by increasing the degree-days they accumulate, and certain areas appear to be more attractive to reproductive females than others. Aggregations of egg-bearing lobsters have been documented on GBK (Campbell and Pezzack 1986; Henninger and Carloni 2016) as well as other offshore shoals in close proximity to deeper basins (Campbell 1990; Carloni and Watson 2018).
- The TC can examine existing Federal observer, CFRF Research Fleet, and NEFSC trawl survey data to evaluate whether the datasets could be used to characterize habitat associated with lobster catch (e.g., depth) in nearby areas accessible to these programs.
- The TC can request data from CFF and CFRF to further examine depth related patterns in size frequency, sex ratio, and reproductive status of the lobster catch.

5. Whether current reporting by Area 3 vessels is representative, or an underestimate, of lobster effort in the Northern Edge area and how future requirements will impact the data availability

- VTR data can be analyzed to gain some understanding of the seasonality of the lobster fishery effort in the Northern Edge area. The spatial resolution of the VTR data is limited because vessels report only a single latitude/longitude location instead of the coordinates for each trawl. However, virtually all vessels fishing this region since 2013 have been submitting federal VTRs, so estimates of total effort should be representative.
- Federal eVTRs will become required for all Federal American lobster permit holders beginning on April 1, 2024 which will improve the coverage of effort reporting for the Area 3 fleet and may improve data quality.
- Full implementation of vessel trackers on federally-permitted lobster vessels will greatly enhance our ability to address several of the questions raised. Note that because the area of interest is a small area, it is likely that effort data will be confidential at certain scales.

The TC will continue to evaluate data relative to this task as it becomes available, and can provide the Board with a more detailed report at the May meeting. In the meantime, the TC encourages the Board and NEFMC to revisit past documents relevant to mobile gear access to portions of Closed Area II which are linked below, and continue to exchange information with partners to avoid negative impacts to the lobster resource relative to the development of the NEFMC action. If NEFMC moves forward with allowing seasonal access to mobile gear in the Northern Edge area, the TC recommends it also implement observer requirements to document and characterize lobster bycatch. This will allow improved identification and evaluation of any potential lobster-related bycatch concerns within the currently closed area.

Links to Relevant Documents

Lobster Addendum XX (2013):

https://www.asmf.org/uploads/file/amLobsterAddendumXX_May2013.pdf

Technical Committee Memo (2015):

https://www.asmf.org/uploads/file/659d587dTC_ReportOnClosedAreaII_Reopening_Jan2015.pdf

NEFMC Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 (Updated 2016):

https://d23h0vhs26o6d.cloudfront.net/OA2-FEIS_Vol_5_FINAL_161208.pdf

References

Campbell, A. 1986. Migratory Movements of Ovigerous lobsters, *Homarus americanus*, tagged off Grand Manan, Eastern Canada. *Marine Biology*, 92 (3): 393-404.

Campbell, Alan and D. S. Pezzack. 1986. Relative Egg Production and Abundance of Berried Lobsters, *Homarus americanus*, in the Bay of Fundy and off Southwestern Nova Scotia. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences* 43: 2190-2196.

Campbell A. and A.B. Stasko. 1986. Movements of lobster (*Homarus americanus*) tagged in the Bay of Fundy, Canada. *Marine Biology*, 92 (3): 393-404.

Carloni J.T., Watson W.H. III (2018) Distribution of ovigerous American lobsters near the Isles of Shoals, New Hampshire. Bull Mar Sci 94: 555–570.

Cooper, R.A. and J.R. Uzman. 1971. Migrations and growth of deep-sea lobster, *Homarus americanus*. Science, 171: 288-290.

Garcia, L, L Siemann, C. Huntsberger, S. Inglis, D. Rudders, R. Smolowitz. 2017. Optimizing the Georges Bank Scallop Fishery by Maximizing Meat Yield and Minimizing Bycatch. Final report for the 2015 Sea Scallop Research Set aside. (NA15NMF4540059)

Henninger H.P., Carloni J.T. 2016. Improving American lobster biological & catch/effort data for Georges bank, and characterizing American lobster seasonal eggger aggregation in closed area II (Statistical areas 561 & 562). Final report.

Krouse, J. 1973. Maturity, sex ratio, and size composition of the natural population of American lobster *Homarus americanus*, along the Maine coast. Fisheries Bulletin, 71: 165-173.

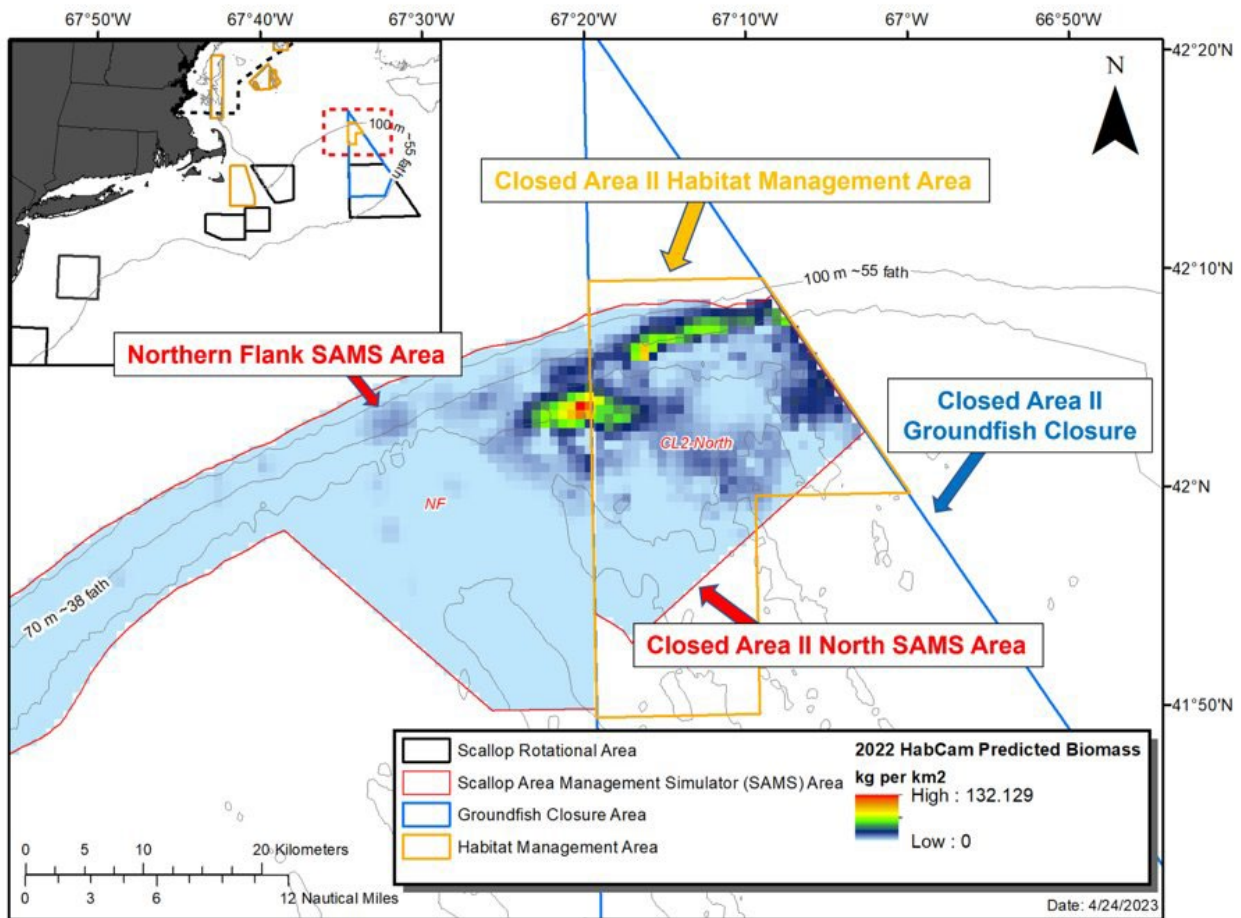


Figure 1. Closed Area II Habitat Management Area and surroundings. The Northern Edge is roughly defined as the area encompassed within the Closed Area II Habitat Management Area (HMA) and the adjacent portion of the Northern Flank of Georges Bank. Image source: New England Fishery Management Council (<https://www.nefmc.org/library/northern-edge>)



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • www.asmfc.org

American Lobster Public Input Meeting for LCMA 2 and LCMA 3 Meeting Summary

Webinar

January 10, 2024

Attendance: Dennis Abbott, Kerry Allard, Kurt Blanchard, Charles Borden, David Borden, Colleen Bouffard, Chris Campanale, Domenic Campanale, Beth Casoni (MIA), Joe Clancy, Joe Colbert, Patrick Duckworth, Dustin Delano, Lanny Dellinger, Robert Duseau, G F, Timothy Field, Tegan Gale, Marty Gary, Robert Glenn, Jay Hermsen, Jeff Kaelin, Toni Kerns, John Lake, Julia Livermore, Chip Lynch, Chris Mayhew, Daniel Mckiernan, Conor Mcmanus, Jason Mcnamee, Peter Mendonca, Jeff Mercer, John Moore, Grant Moore, Scott Olszewski, Otto Osmers, Stephen Ouellette, Marc Palombo, Justin Pellegrino, Tracy Pugh, Story Reed, Christopher Scott, Hank Soule, Renee St. Amand, Caitlin Starks, Brian Thibeault, Scott Travers, Corinne Truesdale, Peter Brodeur, Dennis Colbert, Allison Murphy, Derek Pascale, Devon Campanale, Jarrett Drake, John Maniscalco, Cheri Patterson, Jack Russo, Jon Williams

Summary

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) held a meeting on January 10, 2024 to gather input from industry stakeholders in the American lobster fishery, specifically Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMA) 2 and 3. The requested input was in relation to NOAA Fisheries' rulemaking on LCMA 2 and LCMA 3 ownership caps and trap cap reductions, which responds to the Commission's Addenda XXI and XXII (2013). Addendum XXI established an ownership cap of 800 traps per person, but included a banking provision allowing permit holders to retain up to 1600 traps for the period of time while trap reductions were ongoing (2015-2020). Addendum XXII established reductions to the LCMA 3 maximum trap cap per permit; the maximum trap cap would start at 2000, and decrease by 5% per year for five years. However, the recommended federal rules in the Commission addenda were not published by NOAA until December 2023, a decade after the Commission's approval of the addenda, and there are several differences in the current rulemaking compared to what was recommended in 2013. The differences include the exclusion of the trap banking provision for LCMA 2, and a maximum trap reduction schedule for LCMA 3 of three years instead of five.

LCMA 2 Stakeholder Input

Fishermen with LCMA 2 permits commented on how the current rulemaking by NOAA would affect their business. A representative of the Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association commented that in conversations with Area 2 fishermen they have agreed that the sunset date included in the rule (May 1, 2022), after which permit holders cannot acquire more traps, needs to be moved forward. The fishermen cannot respond to a retroactive sunset date. If there is no change to this date then fishermen who purchased traps after the sunset date will lose those traps and should be compensated for them; they should not have been allowed to purchase tags in excess of the cap if the rulemaking was already in process. Five others also stated that the May 1, 2022 date should be changed to a future date, so that it

is a prospective change that the industry can plan for. A range of timeframes for a new control date was suggested from this year to 2030.

The LCMA 2 fishermen that commented on this action did not support the maximum ownership cap of 800 traps. They argued that in order to maintain a business, they need two permits each with a maximum allocation of 800 traps. They commented that the landscape of the fishery has changed drastically in the last ten years, and the context in which these rules were expected to be implemented is not the same as it is today. Changes mentioned include increases in the cost of bait and fuel, the loss of fishing ground to wind energy development, marine mammal protections, and the expansion of the Jonah crab fishery. They also commented that ten years ago these measures addressed concerns that the fishery could be consolidated or monopolized, which would negatively impact owner/operator businesses. Now, they do not think current conditions would allow for such a monopoly to occur. With the potential of facing more reductions in the future for whales or other circumstances, they feel they need to keep the flexibility offered by the two permit and 800 traps per permit maximum. Other reasons they advocated for maintaining the maximum of two permits with 800 traps each were (1) it would allow families to pass permits and allocations down to their heirs, (2) some businesses have two permitted vessels that alternate between different target fisheries (e.g., one fishing gillnets while the other fishes lobster gear), and (3) the 10% conservation transfer tax is still in place and will keep effort from increasing.

Six of the fishermen commented that the definition of “entity” in the federal rule is unclear and needs to be better explained. It is not clear whether it refers to an individual person, permit, vessel, or corporation.

LCMA 3 Stakeholder Input

For those with LCMA 3 permits, input was provided on the ownership caps and maximum trap cap reductions. Five stakeholders, including two representatives from the Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen’s Association (AOLA), commented that they do not support the trap cap reductions for LCMA 3. They explained that at the time this reduction plan was proposed, most of the offshore fleet supported it. But back then the offshore fishery was made up of majority owner/operators and the goal was to prevent a monopoly. The largest entity back then had 10-12% of the traps, and today the largest entity has 26% of the traps. With the shift toward larger fleets, like Shafmaster, limiting consolidation would be harmful to the offshore fishermen. The larger fleets employ well-paid fishermen and have some benefits. The reductions would make it more difficult to keep their crew, and make them less efficient. It would also limit the ability of owner/operators to sell their allocations and gain value.

Besides the consolidation that has already occurred, other changes like the development of the Jonah crab fishery, marine mammal protection rules, the resource condition, and wind farms should also be taken into account. Two fishermen mentioned that these measures would hurt the fishermen that are now targeting Jonah crab instead of lobster; as the lobster declined, Jonah crab has picked up the slack.

Another concern raised was that the purpose of these measures was to benefit the conservation of the Southern New England (SNE) stock. However, there is not an understanding of where the traps that are cut would come from; it is not certain they would come out of the SNE fishery. One person mentioned that the environmental impact assessment included with the rulemaking indicates that the proposed reductions would not really benefit the stock, and may cause latent effort to come back into the fishery.

The Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association (AOLA) is not in favor of the trap reduction schedule laid out in the final rule because combined with increased business costs related to marine mammal protection, the proposed 20% trap reductions would result in a significant reduction in revenue, without producing any real biological benefit. Additionally, they oppose the ownership caps, which do not have anything to do with benefitting the stock.

A few people commented that the measures are not really going to reduce the number of traps in the water. Instead, they think it will simply spread them out across more permits. One person said the number of traps in the water should just be capped at what it is now, and no latent effort should be allowed to come back into the fishery.

One former Area 3 fisherman disagreed with the other comments provided. He argued that lowering the trap cap would make the fleet more efficient. It would lead to lower bait and fuel costs, and would also provide the lobster some reduction in fishing pressure. He mentioned that the closed areas that cannot be fished will result in about 5,000 traps being moved somewhere else. The bottom area is decreasing but the number of traps is not decreasing, and this is a problem in SNE. Reducing number of traps is needed. He also noted that the expected trap reductions were included as credit toward risk reductions for whales, but if they do not decrease the traps then that credit would be lost and reductions would have to come from somewhere else. He thinks the proposed trap reductions can help protect the fishery. Eventually, Closed Area I will open to the scallop fishery and displace lobster traps, which will be a disaster.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQ.
ATTORNEY AT LAW AND PROCTOR IN ADMIRALTY

85 EASTERN AVENUE
SUITE 306
GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01930

Telephone: (978) 281-7788
Facsimile: (978) 281-4411

E-mail: stephen.ouellette@fishlaw.com
<http://www.fishlaw.com>

Also Admitted in Maine

January 10, 2024
Via Electronic Submission

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Region
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Attn. Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director

Re: Comments on Interim Final Rules Modifying American Lobster Regulations for Lobster
Managements Areas 2&3 for Lobster Management Board
NOAA-NMFS-2022-0032
Docket No. 230929-0224
88 FR 67667

Dear Ms. Kearns and Mr. Beal,

I am submitting the following comments on the ASFMC's review of the proposed changes to regulations governing the Area 3 American lobster fishery on behalf of the Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association and its members, including Little Bay Lobster¹ of Newington, NH and JB Clancy Fisheries², as follows:

We have reviewed the Environmental Assessment, Regulatory Impact Review, Regulatory Flexibility Analysis ("EA") and remain perplexed as to how the Agency can justify the reduction in traps in Lobster Management Area 3 ("LMA3"). Most fishing effort in LMA3 occurs offshore in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Banks ("GOM/GB") areas, where lobster stocks are at near record highs, EA page 3, and effort, while a high percentage of authorized traps are active, remains relatively low. In these areas, as far as 200 miles offshore, the present gear results in suitable returns for owners, operators and crew, and the EA notes that the proposed trap

¹ Little Bay Lobster operates and manages a fleet of 14 offshore lobster boats and employs approximately 84 captains and crew and about the same number of shoreside employees.

² JB Clancy Fisheries operates and manages a fleet of 3 offshore lobster vessels and employs approximately 30 captains and crews fishing out of Gloucester, MA.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQUIRE

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director
January 10, 2024

-2-

reductions will have no impact on the resource, EA at page 148, in these areas, but will reduce landings by 18%. Further, there is no basis for imposing an ownership cap within the LMA3 component of the lobster fishery, particularly given its unique nature. We strongly urge the Agency to abandon the Area 3 trap reduction and ownership cap, as set forth above and as examined below:

THERE IS NO NEED OR JUSTIFICATION FOR TRAP REDUCTIONS IN THE LMA3 FISHERY

In its introductory paragraphs, the EA notes that the GOM/GB lobster stocks are at record high and the proposed trap reduction in LMA3 will have no effect on the Southern New England lobster stocks of concern. Yet the Agency nonetheless imposes a trap reduction in LMA3. The LMA3 fishery is primarily prosecuted on Georges Banks and the Eastern Gulf of Maine, to the Hague Line, up to 200 miles offshore. According to the EA, there are only about 62 vessels actively fishing, EA at P 73, with approximately 104,000 traps authorized, although presumably fewer actually being fished. Trawls are composed of up to 45-50 traps³, each trap up to 52 inches long and set in trawls with lengths of about 1.7 NM, with minimum separation between trawls of .5 NM. Practically speaking, trap density does not exceed 50 traps per square mile in the LMA3 fishery.⁴

According to the 2023 NOAA permit database, there are some 78 vessels issued LMA3 permits, of which 39 have allocations above the proposed maximum of 1548 traps. Of these, 22 are known to belong to AOLA members and fish exclusively in the offshore areas of Georges Banks and the Gulf of Maine, "...areas experiencing near record high abundance of lobster," EA at sec. 7.3.1, page 148. None of these vessels fish for lobster in Southern New England or West of the 070 line in the GOM. These vessels are in the 70 foot plus range, carry crews of 4-7 men and fish for 7-14 days per trip. Their profitability and ability to travel offshore and fish for extended trips is based on the quantity of gear they fish. Anecdotal evidence indicates vessels are seeing exceptional brood stocks with traps being loaded with up to 90% egger lobster, which are returned to the sea alive. Landings have remained stable, if not increasing per unit of effort.

The EA acknowledges that the proposed trap reductions will have no effect on stocks in the GOM/GB areas, as there is no need for conservation. The effect of trap reductions will be largely to turn profitable offshore operations into less profitable, or unprofitable ones, possibly forcing them to fish closer to shore. The forced re-allocation of traps to permits with smaller

³ LMA3 lobstermen have had to "trawl-up", increasing the number of traps per trawl to reduce vertical buoy lines to protect right whales, thereby favoring larger fishing platforms.

⁴ LMA3 consists of approximately 120,000 square miles, so less than one trap is allocated per square mile.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQUIRE

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director
January 10, 2024

-3-

allocations will only encourage smaller boats, unable to fish offshore, to either upgrade to larger vessels and change their fishery from day boats to trip boats fishing offshore, which is unlikely, or to increase their effort inshore, including Southern New England and the inshore Gulf of Maine, which is more likely. The proposed rule may only undermine conservation efforts in Southern New England and reduce landings from offshore at a time when the fleet can least afford it. As AOLA has noted recently to the Regional Administrator, the costs of weak rope are expected to put significant financial strain on the offshore fishery, and further restrictions for the protection of right whales are expected to have significant financial impact on all lobster fisheries, including the offshore fleet. Now is not the time to impose unnecessary restrictions on the offshore lobster fishery and the Agency's actions can only be characterized as arbitrary and capricious.

**LMA3 TRAP REDUCTIONS ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE
NATIONAL STANDARDS**

AOLA and its members contend that the proposed rule directly contradicts National Standards which provide in pertinent part that:

- (1) Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery for the United States fishing industry.
- (2) Conservation and management measures shall be based upon the best scientific information available.
- (5) Conservation and management measures shall, where practicable, consider efficiency in the utilization of fishery resources; except that no such measure shall have economic allocation as its sole purpose....
- (6) Conservation and management measures shall take into account and allow for variations among, and contingencies in, fisheries, fishery resources, and catches.
- (7) Conservation and management measures shall, where practicable, minimize costs and avoid unnecessary duplication....”

16 USC Sec. 1851

Since landings are stable and stock is at a near record high in LMA3, trap reductions will reduce yield and prevent the fleet from achieving optimum yield on a continuing basis. The science, as set forth in the EA does not support the need for LMA3 trap reductions, it supports the status quo for the offshore fleet.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQUIRE

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director
January 10, 2024

-4-

AOLA believes that the trap limit rules were proposed ten or more years ago in an attempt to re-allocate the financial gains from the fishery by forcing larger operations to transfer trap allocations to smaller operations. With no conservation benefit, forcing larger entities to split up their trap allocations into smaller ones, or to transfer to other operators, is purely an economic reallocation prohibited by the National Standards.

The proposed trap limits do not take into account the needs of the offshore fishery to use sufficient gear to justify transits of up to 200 miles and multiple days trips. Reduced trap limits will reduce landings, without a proportionate reduction in costs or time spent fishing, much of which is traveling 100-200 miles to and from the gear. The continued success of the LMA3 fishery has been in the relatively low gear densities, due to low overall trap allocations which are spread over a very large area.

LMA3 trap reductions increase costs and require more vessels to fish the gear currently in place, actually increasing costs and requiring duplication of effort as more vessels will be required to fish the existing traps and land the current quantities of fish, all at a lower profit to owners and crew.

The EA is silent on the anticipated, yet significant impact on crews, communities, shoreside employees and owners, all considerations under the National Standards. Buried in the EA is the economic analysis of the reduction of traps in LMA3, EA at page 128. Our data indicates offshore vessels' gross landings are in the \$1.5M to \$2.0M range. Assuming a mid-range of \$1.75M, the proposed trap reduction will result in an 18% reduction in landings. The Agency assumes a 5% loss in profitability based on trap reductions for vessels of over 55 feet based on its models. The LMA3 trap reduction is 18%. This results in a loss of 18% of each vessel's gross earnings, with no reduction in fixed expenses. For trip boats travelling 200 miles offshore, there will be few reductions in trip expenses, unless boats fish closer to shore. A quick calculation shows that the earnings of hundreds of crew members will be reduced by at least 22% or more, and owners' profits will, by the Agency's figures, pretty much be wiped out. Shoreside employees will suffer similar losses as owners are unable to keep vessels operating without significant cost-cutting. Local economies will suffer accordingly. For reasons unclear to AOLA, NMFS did not take these factors into consideration in following through with this rulemaking, as this further established violations of the National Standards and the National Environmental Policy Act.⁵

THERE IS NO DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR OWNERSHIP LIMITS IN THE LMA3 SECTOR

⁵ The terms crew wages, crew earnings, and crew share do not appear anywhere in the analysis, and consideration of owner's profits is only briefly discussed at the end of the document.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQUIRE

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director
January 10, 2024

-5-

AOLA contends that there is no need for ownership limits or caps in LMA3. The EA does not actually set forth a justification for limiting owner percentage share in the fishery. The LMA3 fishery is one component of a much larger lobster fishery and constitutes 2-4% of the overall American lobster fishery. Its peculiar offshore nature has supported, for at least a few fleet owners, a model that favors economies of scale in terms of fleet management, at no loss to fishing captains or crews. While vessels are still constrained by their trap limits, the employment of crews and captains remains the same as in smaller scale fishing operations. The present per-vessel trap limits require manageable sized vessels and ensure that 4-7 crew are supported by each permit. There is no ability to consolidate effort onto larger platforms and reduce the workforce. The offshore fleet model works because it releases the crew from the need to perform shoreside maintenance and of the operators to deal with the financial strains of ownership, such as cost and impact of breakdowns, juggling mortgage and insurance payments, etc., all of which have been the demise of many smaller operations. Larger operations can maintain replacement components, standardized across the fleet and minimize vessel downtime. Crews can fish 250 days a year, with no obligations between trips, and earn a lay share. The captains' shares exceed what most owner operators net, especially after factoring in the additional burdens of ownership placed on owner when not fishing, as many owner operators spend 50-60 days on maintenance ashore.

It is unlikely that the level of fishing necessary to harvest optimum yield offshore could be maintained by owner operators or a larger fleet of smaller vessels that the LMA3 trap reductions would seem to encourage. As with any business, the ability to remain profitable is based on many factors. The Blue Harvest bankruptcy is proof that even large, consolidated operations can fail. On the other hand, AOLA members Little Bay Lobster, JB Clancy and others have managed to run fleets and keep fishermen employed, well paid and content.⁶ We are not aware of any serious concerns raised by fishermen that the current level of consolidation is negatively impacting fishermen's earnings or the communities in which they, and the companies' shoreside workers, live and work. To the contrary, an operation like Little Bay Lobster employs 84 well paid crewmembers and captains and an equal complement of shoreside workers and is a substantial part of New Hampshire's coastal economy and a major presence in the Port of Newington. We strongly urge NMFS to eliminate the ownership limits in the LMA3 fishery.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT HAS WANED FOR TRAP REDUCTIONS AND OWNERSHIP CAPS

⁶ Larger fleet owners also are more likely to provide worker benefits like health insurance, retirement packages and tax withholding, perform preventative drug screenings and maintain vessels as safe working platforms through employment of shore captains who are independent of fishing operations.

STEPHEN M. OUELLETTE, ESQUIRE

Robert F. Beal, Executive Director
Toni Kerns, Fisheries Policy Director
January 10, 2024

-6-

As comments at the recently held ASFMC public comment session and written comments have revealed, industry support for these measures have changed. The LMA3 fishery has shifted away from single boat owner/operator, and financial pressures, including inflationary issues, marine mammal protection and development of offshore wind, have all changed the nature of the fishery. Reallocating traps to smaller permits and ownership caps might have seemed favorable 12 years ago to a large segment of the LMA3 fishery, it is not supported by the industry as it exists today.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, AOLA and its members, including Little Bay Lobster and JB Clancy Fisheries, strongly urge the Commission to recommend that NMFS to eliminate the trap reductions in LMA3 and the ownership cap and leave the fishery functioning as it is to achieve optimum yield for the Nation and allow permit holders to continue to employ high-paid captains, crew and shoreside workers and to support their families and their communities. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Commission's review of the interim final rule.

Very truly yours,

/s/Stephen M. Ouellette
Stephen M. Ouellette, Esq.

From: [denny](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] area 2/3 rules
Date: Sunday, January 14, 2024 1:15:57 PM

Trying to keep comments short

I do not agree with the proposed rule to reduce trap cap on a individual boat,also i oppose an ownership cap.....
(i think most of us would not like to see in fifty years one company own area 3,but i don't know the answeryet)

Jimmy Violet said it best in his comments.....The facts are that the majority of guys that pushed the plan in
2012,are no longer in the fishery
an sold their business to the very companies they opposed to owning more boats an traps.....i don't blame them
.....just saying....

At one time we fished 2500 traps ish.....we are down to 1550that is quite a reductionthere is no more
room for error....
i believe industry went 170k to 90k ish.....

Our boats (virginia Marie.....Miss Julie)have changed the way we fish.....
We don't hunt for lobsters as much as we use to.....because at 1550 every trap countsblank traps add
nothing to the trip.....i personally would like
to get back to 1800...(which i was in favor of 20 yrs ago)

Thats where jonah crabs come into the picture....i agree with Jon Williams comments....."the impacts of the rule
could (will)affect the fishery dramatically"....

As far as the stock assessment.....i think that needs more work.....

thank you for the time

Denny Colbert

From: [Robert Duseau](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Area 3 conservation proposal
Date: Sunday, January 14, 2024 1:25:18 PM

My name is Robert Duseau I own the fishing vessel McKinley federal permit number 410594
And we fish in area 3.

I am vehemently opposed to the proposed Trap reduction schedule in area 3 !

The stock assessments being used in this proposal are outdated, and the fishery is changed greatly since this trap reduction schedule was considered almost 11 years ago.
To the best of my knowledge, there has never been a stock assessment of the Jonah crab fishery, which is a major part of area 3 fishing. We need a new stock assessment that includes Jonah crab !!

*** Dragging for the survey of Lobster and crab is not optimal.***

All permits and traps in area 3 have already been qualified. The number of traps fishing in area 3 have already been dramatically reduced.

When it comes to the ownership cap, more needs to be thought about and discussed regarding the pros and cons. We should stay at status quo until there have been more deliberations.

Best regards
Robert Duseau

From: [CHRIS CAMPANALE](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Lobster Conservation and Management Areas 2 and 3 Proposed Rule
Date: Sunday, January 14, 2024 3:54:46 PM

Hello Board members,

My name is Chris Campanale. I have been a lifelong participant in the Area 3 lobster fishery as deckhand, captain and now vessel owner along with my father and brother. I am writing this to express my strong opposition to the proposed trap reductions in the Area 3 Offshore Lobster Management Area. As a member of the fishing community with a family-owned and operated business, I believe that these reductions will have severe and detrimental consequences for our industry.

The proposed trap reductions pose a significant threat to the livelihoods of fisherman in Area 3, particularly those, like myself, who operate larger vessels with higher operational expenses. The potential economic impact of these reductions on our businesses cannot be understated.

I would like to highlight since 2013 the significant increases in cost of essential resources for our operations, such as bait, fuel and traps. Despite facing rising expenses, the market has not reflected these increased costs. Along with the trap reductions, there is the possibility of the Hudson Canyon sanctuary area closures which will force us to vacate some of the most productive waters we fish. This financial strain compounds the challenges faced by fishermen and further underscores the necessity to reconsider the trap reduction proposals.

Furthermore, the division of Area 3 into separate regulatory trap limit areas raises serious concerns. This approach may force Area 3 fishermen to make difficult decisions about where to fish each year, leading to unnecessary crowding of traps and potential conflicts amongst industry participants. Such a scenario not only jeopardizes the economic stability of fishing operations but also poses challenges to the overall harmony within the Area 3 fishing community. I'm also concerned about the environmental implications of concentrating traps in specific areas. This could inadvertently increase the risk of whale entanglement, a critical issue that requires careful consideration.

I urge the Board to reconsider the current trap reduction proposals and work towards solutions that prioritize the sustainability of the lobster fishery while minimizing adverse effects on fisherman.

Very truly yours,
Chris Campanale

From: scampanale5@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Lobster Conservation and Management Areas 2 and 3 proposed rule
Date: Sunday, January 14, 2024 1:41:15 PM

To whom it may concern,

My family and I own and operate 3 offshore lobster vessels, that fish only in area 3. We have been fishing in area 3 for 41 years. At this time all 3 vessels fish only in the Southern New England portion of area 3.

- 1. We Do Not support the reduction of traps again. Over the last decade the number of participants and the fishery itself has changed.**

We used to own 4 area 3 vessels. But after the last round of trap reductions we transferred hundreds of traps from our vessel the Mark Darren onto 2 of our other vessels, so they could fish back up to the 1945 max trap cap. A trap cap, which is a number far below the traditional 3250 traps each vessel fished before the original trap reductions began. These transfers were necessary in order to keep the vessels profitable.

We paid the 10% trap transfer fee. Then we sold the Mark Darren without any trap allocation or permit.

If we have to reduce again, down to 1448 traps what happens to our nearly 500 traps allocation per vessel that we are allowed to fish now?

- 2. We Do Not support the idea of reducing the trap cap only in the Southern New England portion of area 3.**

At some point it will force us to move our vessels to the other portions of area 3 that have a higher trap allocation. Something we do not want to do! Nor is it something the vessels fishing in those other portions want to see! It would mean more gear fishing in a smaller area. It would also cause gear conflicts among lobstermen and over fishing in those areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

**Roy Campanale Pres.
Campanale & Sons Inc.
6 Jennifer Court
Narragansett, RI 02882
Tel. 401-742-1793**

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

MEETING OVERVIEW

American Eel Management Board

January 23, 2024

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Chair: Kris Kuhn (PA) Assumed Chairmanship: 10/23	Technical Committee Chair: Danielle Carty (SC)	Law Enforcement Committee Representative: Rob Beal (ME)
Vice Chair: VACANT	Advisory Panel Chair: Mari-Beth DeLucia (TNC)	Previous Board Meeting: October 19, 2023
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, D.C, NMFS, USFWS (19 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. Consider Draft Addendum VI on Maine’s Glass Eel Quota for Public Comment (4:15-4:45 p.m.) Action

Background

- In August 2023, the Board initiated Draft Addendum VI to address the quota for Maine’s glass eel fishery for the 2025 fishing year and beyond. The current quota expires at the end of 2024.
- The Plan Development Team met several times to develop the Draft Addendum for Public Comment. Draft Addendum VI considers options for Maine’s commercial glass eel quota level and duration (**Briefing Materials**).

Presentations

- Draft Addendum VI on Maine’s Glass Eel Quota for Public Comment by C. Starks

Board Actions for Consideration

- Approve Draft Addendum VI for Public Comment

5. Consider Draft Addendum VII on Yellow Eel Management and Monitoring Requirements for Public Comment (4:45-5:25 p.m.) Action

Background

- In response to the stock assessment findings that the American eel stock is depleted to historically low levels, and recommendation to reduce yellow eel fishing mortality, the Board initiated an addendum to consider changes to the coastwide cap for yellow eel harvest.
- The PDT met several times to develop the Draft Addendum for Public Comment. The Draft Addendum includes options that consider reducing the coastwide cap for commercial yellow eel harvest using the *I_{TARGET}* tool recommended in the assessment, and the management response if the cap is exceeded (**Briefing Materials**).
- Draft Addendum VII also considers options to modify monitoring and harvester reporting requirements consistent with stock assessment and Technical Committee recommendations (**Briefing Materials**).

Presentations

- Overview of Draft Addendum VII for Public Comment by C. Starks

Board Actions for Consideration

- Approve Draft Addendum VII for Public Comment

6. Consider Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance Reports for the 2022 Fishing Year (5:20-5:25 p.m.) Action

Background

- State Compliance Reports were due on September 1, 2023.
- The Plan Review Team reviewed each state report and compiled the annual FMP Review (**Briefing Materials**).
- New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia, and Georgia have requested and meet the requirements for *de minimis* for their yellow eel fisheries. Florida requested but does not qualify for *de minimis* as the state landings in 2022 exceed 1% of the coastwide yellow eel landings.

Presentations

- Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2022 Fishing Year for American Eel by C. Starks

Board Actions for Consideration

- Approve Fishery Management Plan Review, State Compliance Reports, and *de minimis* requests

7. Review and Populate Advisory Panel Membership (5:25-5:30 p.m.) Action

Background

- Sara Rademaker, an eel aquaculturist from Maine, has been nominated to serve on the Advisory Panel (**Briefing Materials**).
- Timothy LaRochelle, an elver fisherman from Maine, has been nominated to serve on the Advisory Panel (**Supplemental Materials**).

Board Actions for Consideration at the Meeting

- Approve Advisory Panel nomination

8. Other Business/Adjourn



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • www.asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

January 17, 2024

To: American Eel Management Board
From: Tina Berger, Director of Communications
RE: Advisory Panel Nominations

Please find attached two new nominations to the American Eel Advisory Panel – Sara Rademaker, an eel aquaculturist, and Timothy LaRochelle, a commercial net fisherman. Both are from Maine. Sara replaces David Allen and Timothy replaces Patricia Bryant on the Panel. 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: Caitlin Starks

M23-103

AMERICAN EEL ADVISORY PANEL

Bolded names await approval by the American Eel Management Board
Bolded and italicized name denotes Advisory Panel Chair

January 17, 2024

Maine

Sara Rademacher (aquaculture)
186 One Pie Road
Waldoboro, ME 04572
Phone: 260.417.2883
sara@americanunagi.com

Timothy LaRochelle (comm net)
706 Middle Road
Woolwich, ME 04579
Phone: 207.319.9890
Tim192@comcast.net

New Hampshire

Vacancy – comm/trap

Massachusetts

Vacancy – dealer/comm fisherman

Connecticut

Steve Lewis (rec/non-eel angler)
654 Cypress Road
Newington, CT 06111
Phone: (860)667-2515
Appt. Confirmed: 5/21/97
Appt. Reconfirmed 10/1/01
Appt Reconfirmed 10/05
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

New York

Vacancy – rec/pot for bait eels

New Jersey

Vacancy – commercial

Pennsylvania

Mitchell Feigenbaum (buyer/exporter)
17 Weirwood Road
Radnor, PA 19087
Phone (day): (215)859-0428
Phone (eve): (610)964-8465
FAX: (610)277-4051
feigen15@yahoo.com
Appt. Confirmed: 8/17/04
Appt Reconfirmed 8/07

Vacancy – recreational

Delaware

Lawrence Voss (comm./pot)
3215 Big Oak Road
Smyrna, DE 19977
Phone: (302)359-0951
shrlvss@aol.com
Appt Confirmed 10/22/18

Maryland

William R. Legg (comm./pot)
110 Rebel Road
Grasonville, MD 21638
Phone (eve): (410)310-4072
Phone (eve): (410) 820-5841
Appt. Confirmed 8/17/05
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

Vacancy – comm/pot

Virginia

Warren M. Cosby Jr. (comm/fyke & gillnet/aquaculture)
9321 Turkey Hill Lane
New Kent, VA 23124
Phone: (804)932-4735
Appt. Confirmed: 5/21/97
Appt. Reconfirmed 10/1/01
Appt Reconfirmed 10/05
Appt Reconfirmed 5/10

Vacancy – comm/pot, fyke & gillnet

North Carolina

2 Vacancies – comm/pot & dealer

AMERICAN EEL ADVISORY PANEL

Bolded names await approval by the American Eel Management Board
Bolded and italicized name denotes Advisory Panel Chair

January 17, 2024

South Carolina

Richard Stoughton (comm/fyke net)
1933 Culver Avenue
Charleston, SC 29407
Phone: 843.729.5203
captrichard@live.com
Appt Confirmed 10/22/18

Florida

Vacancy (dealer/aquaculture/
intl exp.)

PRFC

James I. Trossbach (comm/pot)
46377 Drayden Road
Drayden, MD 20630
Phone (day): (301)481-8906
Phone (eve): (301)994-3577
Appt Confirmed 11/10/04
Appt Reconfirmed 11/07

At-Large Seats

Tim Brush (hydropower)
Normandeau Associates
917 Route 12, #1
Westmoreland, NH 03467
603-355-2333
603-355-2332 fax
tbrush@normandeau.com
Appt. Confirmed: 10/21/97
Appt. Reconfirmed 10/1/01
Appt. Confirmed 8/05

Mari-Beth DeLucia (environmental)
The Nature Conservancy
2101 North Front St.
Building #1 Suite 200
Harrisburg, PA 17110
(717)232-6001 x 215
mdelucia@tnc.org
Appt Confirmed 5/21/13



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: _____ State: _____
(your name)

Name of Nominee: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please provide the appropriate numbers where the nominee can be reached:

Phone (day): _____ Phone (evening): _____

FAX: _____ Email: _____

.....
FOR ALL NOMINEES:

1. Please list, in order of preference, the Advisory Panel for which you are nominating the above person.

1. _____

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 _____ 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):

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.

I started working with eels in 2012 in an effort to bring eel aquaculture to Maine. In 2014, I founded American Unagi and started growing out eels using land-based aquaculture.

Nominee Signature: Sam Rubin

Date: 11/27/23

Name: _____
(please print)

COMMISSIONERS SIGN-OFF (not required for non-traditional stakeholders)

State Director

Megan Ware

State Legislator

On Behalf of Maine Commissioners

Governor's Appointee



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: Pat Keliher State: Maine
(your name)

Name of Nominee: Timothy J LaRochelle

Address: 706 Middle Road

City, State, Zip: Woolwich, ME 04579

Please provide the appropriate numbers where the nominee can be reached:

Phone (day): 207-319-9890 Phone (evening): —

FAX: — Email: tim192@comcast.net

FOR ALL NOMINEES:

1. Please list, in order of preference, the Advisory Panel for which you are nominating the above person.

- 1. _____
- 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 no

If "yes," please list them below by name.

NEFSA _____

4. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for during the past year?

tuna _____ lobster _____
ground fish _____
elvers _____

5. What kinds (species) of fish and/or shellfish has the nominee fished for in the past?

tuna _____ lobster _____
ground fish _____ scallops _____
elvers _____

FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN:

1. How many years has the nominee been the commercial fishing business? 40+ years

2. Is the nominee employed only in commercial fishing? yes no

3. What is the predominant gear type used by the nominee? nets

4. What is the predominant geographic area fished by the nominee (i.e., inshore, offshore)? combination of both: neither predominant

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? 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.

I have been ever fishing since they have had ~~is~~ licenses
and I have been tuna fishing my whole life
commercial?

Nominee Signature: 

Date: 01/13/24

Name: Timothy J LaRoche
(please print)

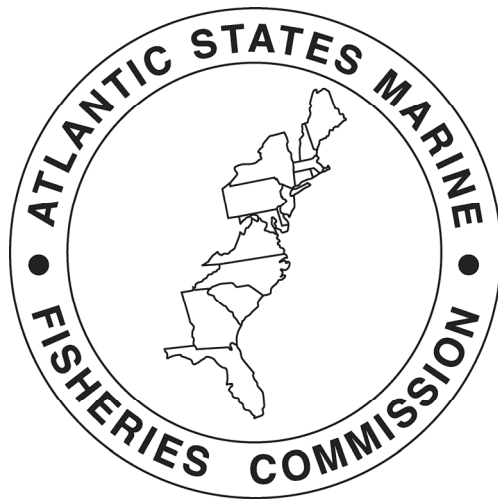
COMMISSIONERS SIGN-OFF (not required for non-traditional stakeholders)

Megan Ware On behalf of Maine Commissioners
State Director State Legislator

Governor's Appointee

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
(January 12, 2024)

Five-Year Strategic Plan 2024-2028



*The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources
as assets which it must turn over to the next generation
increased and not impaired in value.*

Theodore Roosevelt

Introduction

Each state has a fundamental responsibility to safeguard the public trust with respect to its natural resources. Fishery managers are faced with many challenges in carrying out that responsibility. Living marine resources inhabit ecosystems that cross state and federal jurisdictions. Thus, no state, by itself, can effectively protect the interests of its citizens. Each state must work with its sister states and the federal government to conserve and manage natural resources.

Beginning in the late 1930s, the 15 Atlantic coastal states from Maine to Florida took steps to develop cooperative mechanisms to define and achieve their mutual interests in coastal fisheries. The most notable of these was their commitment to form the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in 1942, and to work together through the Commission to promote the conservation and management of shared marine fishery resources. Over the years, the Commission has remained an effective forum for fishery managers to pursue concerted management actions. Through the Commission, states cooperate in a broad range of programs including interstate fisheries management, fisheries science, [fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data collection and management](#), habitat conservation, and law enforcement.

Congress has long recognized the critical role of the states and the need to support their mutual efforts. Most notably, it enacted the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (Atlantic Coastal Act) in 1993, which built on the success of the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act of 1984. Acknowledging that no single governmental entity has exclusive management authority for Atlantic coastal fishery resources, the Atlantic Coastal Act recognizes the states' responsibility for cooperative fisheries management through the Commission. The Atlantic Coastal Act charges all Atlantic states with implementing coastal fishery management plans that will safeguard the future of Atlantic coastal fisheries in the interest of both fishermen and the nation.

Accepting these challenges and maintaining their mutual commitment to success, the Atlantic coastal states have adopted this five-year Strategic Plan. The states recognize circumstances today make the work of the Commission more important than ever before. The Strategic Plan articulates the mission, vision, goals, and objectives needed to accomplish the Commission's mission. It serves as the basis for annual action planning, whereby Commissioners identify the highest priority issues and activities to be addressed in the upcoming year. With 27 species/[species complexes](#) currently managed by the Commission, finite staff time, Commissioner time and funding, as well as a myriad of other factors impacting marine resources (e.g., changing ocean conditions, protected species interactions, offshore energy, and aquaculture), Commissioners recognize the absolute need to prioritize activities, dedicating staff time and resources where they are needed most and addressing less pressing issues as resources allow. Efforts will be made to [balance the competing needs of stability/predictability in fisheries management and the necessity for adaptability to respond to changing fishery and environmental conditions](#). [streamline management by using multi-](#)

...of the Atlantic coast of the United States by the protection and enhancement of such fisheries, and by the avoidance of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause. Applying such management to the East Coast Regional [Fishery](#) Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries.

Mission

The Commission's mission, as stated in its 1942 Compact, is:

To promote the better utilization of the fisheries, marine, shell and anadromous, of the Atlantic seaboard by the development of a joint program for the promotion and protection of such fisheries, and by the prevention of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

The mission grounds the Commission in history. It reminds every one of the Commission's sense of purpose that has been in place for over ~~82~~77 years. The constantly changing physical, political, social, and economic environments led the Commission to restate the mission in more modern terms:

To promote cooperative management of marine, shell and diadromous fisheries of the Atlantic coast of the United States by the protection and enhancement of such fisheries, and by the avoidance of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

The mission and nature of the Commission as a mutual interstate body incorporate several guiding principles. They include:

- States are sovereign entities, each having its own laws and responsibilities for managing fishery resources within its jurisdiction
- States serve the broad public interest and represent the common good
- Multi-state resource management is complex and dependent upon cooperative efforts by all states involved
- The Commission provides a critical sounding board on issues requiring cross-jurisdictional action, coordinating cooperation, and collaboration among the states and federal government, [including NOAA Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey.](#)

Vision

The long-term vision of the Commission is:

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Values

The Commission and its member states have adopted the following values to guide its operations and activities. These values affirm the Commission's commitment to sustainable fisheries management for the benefit of [all fisheries participants recreational anglers, and commercial fishermen harvesters](#) and coastal communities. They also acknowledge the growing importance of managing fisheries in a more holistic and adaptive way, seeking solutions to cross cutting resource issues that lead to long-term ecological and socio-economic sustainability.

- Effective stewardship of marine resources through strong partnerships
- Decisions based on sound science
- Long-term ecological sustainability
- Transparency and accountability in all actions
- Timely response to new information through adaptive management
- Balancing resource conservation with the economic success of coastal communities
- Efficient use of time and fiscal resources
- Work cooperatively with honesty, integrity, and fairness

Driving Forces

The Commission and its actions are influenced by a multitude of factors. These factors are constantly evolving and will most likely change over the time period of this Strategic Plan. However, the most pressing factors affecting the Commission today are [climate-induced changes to the ocean environment, fisheries, and coastal communities; changing ocean conditions](#), resource allocation, the quality and quantity of scientific information; competing ocean uses; a growing [demand](#) to address ecosystem functions; and interactions between fisheries and protected species. - The Strategic Plan, through its goals and broad objectives, will seek to address each of these issues over the next five years.

[Climate-Induced Changes](#) [Changing Ocean Conditions](#)

Changes in ocean temperature, currents, acidification, and sea level rise are [occurring rapidly](#), affecting nearly every facet of fisheries resources and management at the state, interstate, and federal levels. Potential impacts to marine species include [degraded water quality, altered prey and habitat availability, susceptibility to disease, changing migration patterns, and changes to reduced prey and habitat availability, water quality, susceptibility to disease, and spawning and reproductive potential, and declines in survival](#). [It is often difficult for fisheries stock assessments and management to keep pace with changes in](#) The distribution and productivity of fishery stocks [are often changing at a rate faster than fisheries stock assessments and management can keep pace with](#). Several Commission species, such as northern shrimp, [Southern New England American](#) lobster, Atlantic cobia, [Atlantic croaker, Atlantic striped bass, Spanish mackerel](#), black sea bass, and summer flounder are already responding to changes in

the ocean. In the case of northern shrimp and ~~Southern New England-American~~ lobster, warming ocean waters have created inhospitable environments for ~~species~~ reproduction and survivability in some areas. For cobia, black sea bass, and summer flounder, changing ocean conditions have contributed to ~~altered shifts in~~ species distributions, with some species expanding their ranges and others moving into deeper and/or more northern waters to stay within preferred temperature ranges. Where shifts are occurring, the Commission may need to reconsider state-by-state allocation schemes and make adjustments to our fishery management plans (FMPs). For other species depleted due to factors other than fishing mortality (e.g., habitat degradation and availability, predation), the states will need to explore steps ~~that can be taken~~ to aid in species recovery. And, if a stock's viability is compromised, Commission resources and efforts should be shifted to other species that can be ~~recovered-rebuilt~~ or sustainably maintained-as-a-rebuilt-stock.

Since 2021, the Commission and other marine fishery management organizations along the U.S. East Coast have been exploring governance and management issues related to climate change and fishery stock distributions. This effort recognizes the need to plan for how fishery management organizations and coastal communities can best adapt to environmental changes in a thoughtful and deliberate way. Over the span of this Strategic Plan and beyond, the Commission and other East Coast marine fishery management organizations will be prioritizing actions around three overarching themes of cross-jurisdictional governance; managing under increased uncertainty; and data sources and partnerships to plan for possible future outcomes.

Allocation

~~As noted above, r~~Resource allocation among the states and between various user groups will continue to be an important issue over the next five years. Many of the Commission FMPs divvy up the available harvestable resource through various types of allocation schemes, such as by state, region, season, or gear type. The changing distribution of many species has further complicated the issue of resource allocation with traditional allocation schemes being challenged and a finite amount of fishery resources to be shared. Discussion may be difficult and divisive, with some states (and their stakeholders) wanting to maintain their historic (traditional) allocations, while others are seeking a greater share of the resource given increased abundance and availability in their waters. States will need to seek innovative ways to reallocate species so that collectively all states feel their needs are met. What will be required to successfully navigate these discussions and decisions is the commitment of the states to work through the issues with honesty, integrity, and fairness, seeking outcomes that balance the needs of the states and their stakeholders with the ~~ever-changing~~ever-changing realities of shifting resource abundance and availability.

Science as the Foundation

Accurate and timely scientific information form the basis of the Commission's fisheries management decision-making. Continued investments in the collection and management of fishery-dependent and -independent data remain a high priority for the Commission and its member states. The challenge will be to maintain and expand data collection efforts in the face

of shrinking state and federal budgets. Past and current investments by state, regional and federal partners ~~have established of~~ the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) ~~have established the program~~ as the principal source of marine fishery statistics for the Atlantic coast. State and regional fishery-independent data collection programs, in combination with fishery statistics, provide the scientific foundation for stock assessments. Many data collection programs will continue to be strained by budget restrictions, scientists' workload capacities, and competing priorities. The Commission remains committed to pursuing long-term support for research surveys and monitoring programs that are critical to informing management decisions and resource sustainability.

Ecosystem Functions

Nationally, there has been a growing demand for fisheries managers to address broader ecosystem functions such as predator-prey interactions and environmental factors during their fisheries management planning. Ecosystem science has improved in recent years, though the challenges of comprehensive data collection continue. ~~While the A~~majority of the Commission's species are managed and assessed on a single species basis, ~~there have been significant advancements in the development and use of ecological reference points for Atlantic menhaden management. Horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin are also managed~~~~ment in an ecosystem context to account for the forage needs of migratory shorebirds. When ecosystem information is available, the Commission has managed accordingly to provide ecosystem services.~~The Commission remains committed to seeking ecological sustainability over the long-term through continuing its work on multispecies assessment modeling and the development of ecosystem-based reference points in its fisheries management planning process.

Competing Ocean Uses

Marine spatial planning has become an increasingly popular method of balancing the growing demands on valuable ocean resources. More specifically, the competing interests of commercial and recreational fishing, ~~offshore wind~~ ~~renewable energy~~ development, aquaculture, marine transportation, offshore oil exploration and drilling, military needs, and habitat restoration are all components that must be integrated into successful ocean use policies. ~~The Commission has always emphasized cooperative management with our federal partners; however, the states' authorities in their marine jurisdictions must be preserved and respected. The Commission will continue to prioritize the successful operation of its fisheries, but it will be imperative to work closely with federal, state, and local governments on emerging ocean use conflicts as they diversify into the future.~~

Protected Species

Like coastal fishery resources, protected species, such as marine mammals, sea turtles, and listed and candidate fish species, traverse both state and federal waters. The protections afforded these species under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act can play a significant role in the management and prosecution of Atlantic coastal fisheries. The Commission and the states have a long history of supporting our federal partners to minimize interactions with and bycatch of marine mammals and sea turtles. The listing of Atlantic

sturgeon under the Endangered Species Act has added a whole new level of complexity in the ability of the Commission and its member states to carry out their stewardship responsibilities for these important diadromous species. The species spends the majority of its life in state waters and depend on estuarine and riverine habitat for their survival. Listing has the potential to jeopardize the states' ability to effectively monitor and assess stock condition, as well as impact fisheries that may encounter listed species. It is incumbent upon the Commission and its federal partners to work jointly to assess stock health, identify threats, and implement effective rebuilding programs for listed and candidate species.

More recently, the depleted status of the Northern right whale population and the potential impacts to this population by entanglement in fishing gear, particularly lobster and crab gear, has heightened concern for both whales and the lobster industry.

Increased Cooperation and Collaboration among the States and between the States and Our Federal Partners

Demands for ecosystem-based fisheries management, competing and often conflicting ocean uses, and legislative mandates to protect marine mammals and other protected species, further complicate fisheries management and require quality scientific information to ~~help~~ guide management decisions. ~~Federal agencies have a long track record of providing scientific support to the Commission and collaborations recently expanded in some areas. However there is a developing trend of reduced support for fundamental data collection and assessment support in recent years. Year to year static funding results in decreased scientific support due to inflationary cost increases.~~ There is a growing concern among fishery managers that some "control" over fisheries decisions and status has been diminished due to political intervention and our inability to effect ~~climate changes changing ocean conditions~~ and other environmental factors that impact marine resources. Fisheries management has never been more complex or politically charged. State members are pulled between what is best for their stakeholders versus what is best for the resource and the states as a whole.

While the issues may seem daunting, they are not insurmountable. In order for the Commission to be successful, the states must recommit to their collective vision of "Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries," recognizing that their strength lies in working together to address the fisheries issues that lie ahead. Given today's political and environmental realities, the need for cooperation among the states has never been more important. It is also critical the states and their federal partners seek to strengthen their cooperation and working relationships, providing for efficient and effective fisheries management across all agencies. No one state or federal agency has the resources, authority, or ability to do it alone.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Commission will pursue the following eight goals and their related strategies during the five-year planning period, from 2024~~19~~ through 2023~~8~~. It will pursue these goals through specific objectives, targets, and milestones outlined in an annual Action Plan, which is adopted each year at the Commission's Annual Meeting to guide the subsequent year's activities. Throughout the year, the Commission and its staff will monitor progress in meeting the Commission's goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies. While committed to the objectives included in this plan, the Commission is ready to adopt additional objectives to take advantage of new opportunities and address emerging issues as they arise.

Goal 1 - Rebuild, maintain, fairly allocate, and promote sustainable Atlantic coastal fisheries

Goal 1 focuses on the responsibility of the states to conserve and manage Atlantic coastal fishery resources for sustainable use. Commission members will advocate decisions to achieve the long-term benefits of conservation, while balancing the socio-economic interests and needs of coastal communities. Inherent in this is the recognition that healthy and vibrant resources benefit stakeholders. The states are committed to proactive management, with a focus on integrating ecosystem services, socio-economic impacts, habitat issues, bycatch and discard reduction measures, and protected species interactions into well-defined fishery management plans. Fishery management plans will also address fair allocation of fishery resources among the states. Understanding ~~changing ocean conditions~~ climate change and ~~its their~~ impact on fishery productivity and distribution is an elevated priority. Successful management under climate change ~~changing ocean conditions~~ will depend not only on adjusting management strategies to be more adaptable and flexible, but also in reevaluating and revising, as necessary, the underlying conservation goals and objectives of fishery management plans. Changing climate and ocean conditions can impact fish stocks, fish habitats, and interactions between species and fisheries. The Commission will strive to proactively consider ecosystem level impacts when making management decisions to take a more holistic consideration of issues. Improving cooperation and coordination with federal partners and stakeholders can streamline efficiency, transparency, and, ultimately, success. In the next five years, the Commission is committed to ending overfishing and working to rebuild overfished Atlantic coast fish stocks, while promoting sustainable harvest of and access to rebuilt fisheries. Where possible, the Commission will seek to aid in the rebuilding of depleted stocks, whose recovery is hindered by factors other than fishing pressure.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Manage interstate resources that provide for productive, sustainable fisheries using sound science
- Strengthen state and federal partnerships to improve comprehensive management of shared fishery resources
- Create management frameworks that are nimble, adaptable, and robust to climate change.
- ~~Adapt management to address emerging issues~~

- Practice efficient, transparent, and accountable management processes
- Evaluate progress towards rebuilding fisheries
- Promote sustainable harvest of and access to rebuilt fisheries
- Strengthen interactions and input among stakeholders, technical, advisory, and management groups

Commented [RB1]: Further discussion may be needed to consider access to stocks that are rebuilding but not fully rebuilt.

Goal 2 – Provide ~~sound~~robust, actionable science to ~~support~~informed management ~~decisions~~actions

Sustainable management of fisheries relies on accurate and timely scientific advice. The Commission strives to produce ~~sound~~robust, actionable science through a technically rigorous, independently peer-reviewed stock assessment process. Assessments are developed using a broad suite of fishery-independent surveys and fishery-dependent monitoring, as well as research products developed, in cooperation with the fishing industry, by a broad network of fisheries scientists at state, federal, and academic institutions along the coast. The goal encompasses the development of ~~novel and new~~, innovative scientific research, ~~and modern~~ assessment methodology, and ~~the~~ enhancement of the states' stock assessment capabilities. It provides for the administration, coordination, and expansion of collaborative research and data collection programs. Achieving the goal will ensure ~~sound~~robust science is available ~~to serve~~ as the foundation for the Commission's evaluation of stock status and adaptive management actions.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Proactively address research priorities through cooperative state and regional data collection programs; strengthen stakeholder involvement in ~~and~~ collaborative research projects, including stakeholder involvement
- Explore the use of new emerging technologies to improve fishery-independent surveys, monitoring, and the timeliness of scientific products
- Provide training to enhance the expertise and involvement participation of state and staff scientists in the development of conducting stock assessments
- Streamline assessment data assimilation within individual states, and among states and ASMFC
- Conduct stock assessments based on comprehensive data sources and rigorous technical analysis; deliver direct, concise scientific advice in order to achieve clear endpoints in the assessment process; generate indicators/rapid assessments for all stocks
- Balance requests from fisheries management with finite assessment workload capacity
- Support the development and utilization of industry-based surveys and other cooperative research opportunities.
- ~~Characterize the risk and uncertainty associated with the scientific advice provided to decision makers~~

Commented [RB2]: Should this bullet edited to note that there are some assessments where ASMFC relies on federal capacity and others where ASMFC and the member states complete the analyses?

- ~~Proactively address research priorities through cooperative state and regional data collection programs and collaborative research projects, including stakeholder involvement~~
- ~~Explore the use of new technologies to improve surveys, monitoring, and the timeliness of scientific products~~
- Utilize ecosystem and climate science products to inform fisheries management decisions, including projected shifts with quota allocation implications
(Action): Integrate estuarine/state waters and federal waters environmental data for use in stock assessments
- ~~Promote effective communication~~ with stakeholders to ensure scientific advice and on-the-water observations and science are consistent
Characterize the risk and uncertainty associated with the scientific advice provided to decision-makers

Goal 3 - Produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries

Effective management depends on quality fishery-dependent data ~~and fishery-independent data~~ to inform stock assessments and fisheries management decisions. ~~While Goal 2 of this Action Plan focuses on providing sound, actionable science and fishery-independent data to support fisheries management,~~ Goal 3 focuses on providing timely, accurate catch, ~~and effort,~~ and biological data on Atlantic coast recreational, for-hire, and commercial fisheries to support fisheries management.

Goal 3 seeks to accomplish this through the activities of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), a cooperative state-federal program that designs, implements, and conducts marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and integrates those data into data management systems that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. ACCSP partners include the 15 Atlantic coast state fishery agencies, the three Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, NOAA Fisheries, ~~and~~ the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Focus on activities that maximize benefits, are responsive and accountable to partner and end-user needs, and are based on available resources.
- ~~Cooperatively~~ develop, implement, and maintain coastwide data standards through cooperation with all program partners
- Provide electronic applications that ~~improve~~ efficiently align partner data collection
- Integrate and provide access to partner data via a coastwide repository

- Facilitate fisheries data access through an on-line, user-friendly, system while protecting confidentiality
- Support [data systems modernization and integration](#) ~~technological innovation~~

Goal 4 – Protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnerships and education

Goal 4 aims to conserve and improve coastal, marine, and riverine habitat to enhance the benefits of sustainable Atlantic coastal fisheries and resilient coastal communities in the face of changing ecosystems. Habitat loss and degradation have been identified as significant factors affecting the long-term sustainability and productivity of our nation’s fisheries. The Commission’s Habitat Program develops objectives, sets priorities, and produces tools to guide fisheries habitat conservation efforts directed towards ecosystem-based management.

The challenge for the Commission and its state members is maintaining fish habitat under limited regulatory authority for habitat protection or enhancement. Therefore, the Commission will work cooperatively with state, federal, and stakeholder partnerships to achieve this goal. Much of the work to address habitat is conducted through the Commission’s Habitat and Artificial Reef Committees. In order to identify fish habitats of concern for Commission managed species, each year the Habitat Committee reviews existing reference documents for Commission-managed species to identify gaps or updates needed to describe important habitat types and review and revise species habitat factsheets. The Habitat Committee also publishes an annual issue of the *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*, highlighting topical issues that affect all the states.

The Commission and its Habitat Program endorses the National Fish Habitat Partnership, and will continue to work cooperatively with the partnership to improve aquatic habitat along the Atlantic coast. Since 2008, the Commission has invested considerable resources, as both a partner and administrative home, to the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP), a coastwide collaborative effort to accelerate the conservation and restoration of habitat for native Atlantic coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fishes. As part of this goal, the Commission will continue to provide support for ACFHP, under the direction of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Identify fish habitats of concerns through fisheries management programs and partnerships
- Educate Commissioners, stakeholders, and the general public about the importance of habitat to healthy fisheries and ecosystems
- Better integrate habitat information and data into fishery management plans and stock assessments
- Engage local state, and regional governments in mutually beneficial habitat protection and enhancement programs

- Foster partnerships with management agencies, researchers, and habitat stakeholders to leverage scientific, regulatory, political, and financial support
- Work with ACFHP to foster partnerships with like-minded organizations at local levels to further common habitat goals

Goal 5 – Promote compliance with fishery management plans to ensure sustainable use of Atlantic coast [resources fisheries](#)

Fisheries managers, law enforcement personnel, and stakeholders have a shared responsibility to promote compliance with fisheries management measures. Activities under the goal seek to increase and improve compliance with fishery management plans. This requires the successful coordination of both management and enforcement activities among state and federal agencies. Commission members recognize that adequate and consistent enforcement of fisheries rules is required to keep pace with increasingly complex management activity and emerging technologies. Achieving the goal will improve the effectiveness of the Commission’s fishery management plans.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Develop practical compliance requirements that foster stakeholder buy-in
- Evaluate the enforceability of management measures and the effectiveness of law enforcement programs
- Promote coordination and expand existing partnerships with state and federal natural resource law enforcement agencies
- Enhance stakeholder awareness of management measures through education and outreach
- Use emerging communication platforms to deliver real time information regarding regulations and the outcomes of law enforcement investigations

Goal 6 – Strengthen stakeholder and public support for the Commission

Stakeholder and public acceptance of Commission decisions are critical to our ultimate success. For the Commission to be effective, these groups must have a clear understanding of our mission, vision, and decision-making processes. The goal seeks to do so through expanded outreach and education efforts about Commission programs, decision-making processes, and its management successes and challenges. It aims to engage stakeholders in the process of fisheries management, and promote the activities and accomplishments of the Commission. Achieving the goal will increase stakeholder participation, understanding, and acceptance of Commission activities.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Increase public understanding and support of activities through expanded outreach at the local, state, and federal levels

- Clearly define Commission processes to facilitate stakeholder participation, as well as transparency and accountability
- Strengthen national, regional, and local media relations to increase coverage of Commission actions
- Use new technologies and communication platforms to more fully engage the broader public in the Commission's activities and actions

Goal 7 – Advance Commission and member states' priorities through a proactive legislative policy agenda

Although states are positioned to achieve many of the national goals for marine fisheries through cooperative efforts, state fisheries interests are often underrepresented at the national level. This is due, in part, to the fact that policy formulation is often disconnected from the processes that provide the support, organization, and resources necessary to implement the policies. The capabilities and input of the states are an important aspect of developing national fisheries policy, and the goal seeks to increase the states' role in national policy formulation. Additionally, the goal emphasizes the importance of achieving management goals consistent with productive commercial and recreational fisheries and healthy ecosystems.

The Commission recognizes the need to work with Congress in all phases of policy formulation. Several important fishery-related laws may be reauthorized over the next couple of years (i.e., Atlantic Coastal Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act, and Anadromous Fish Conservation Act). The Commission needs to proactively engage with reauthorization efforts, this includes advocating for increased funding from sources such as Wallop-Breaux Trust Fund, Sportfish Restoration Trust Fund and the Atlantic Coastal Act. The Commission will be vigilant in advancing the states' interests to Congress as these laws are reauthorized and other fishery-related pieces of legislation are considered.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Increase the Commission's profile and support in the U.S. Congress by developing relationships between Members and their staff and Commissioners, the Executive Director, and Commission staff
- Maintain or increase long-term funding for Commission programs through the federal appropriations process and other available sources, this includes for non-federal surveys and to support our partnerships with outside organizations such as U.S. Geological Survey.
- Engage Congress on fishery-related legislation affecting the Atlantic coast
- Promote member states' collective interests at the regional and national levels
- Promote economic benefits of the Commission's actions (return on investment)

Goal 8 – Ensure the fiscal stability & efficient administration of the Commission
(Should this goal be removed since fiscal administration is an ongoing obligation that has little room for interpretation, or should it should stay in and not be reflected in annual action planning, or stay as is?)

Goal 8 ~~focuses on will~~ ensuring ~~e that~~ the business affairs of the Commission are managed effectively and efficiently, including workload balancing through the development of annual action plans to support the Commission’s management process. It also highlights the need for the Commission to efficiently manage its resources. The goal promotes the efficient use of legal advice to proactively review policies and react to litigation as necessary. It also promotes human resource policies that attract talented and committed individuals to conduct the work of the Commission. The goal highlights the need for the Commission as an organization to continually expand its skill set through training and educational opportunities. It calls for Commissioners and Commission staff to maintain and increase the institutional knowledge of the Commission through periods of transition. Achieving this goal will build core strengths, enabling the Commission to respond to increasingly difficult and complex fisheries management issues.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Conservatively manage the Commission’s operations and budgets to ensure fiscal stability
- Utilize new information technology to improve meeting and workload efficiencies, and enhance communications
- Refine strategies to recruit professional staff, and enhance growth and learning opportunities for Commission and state personnel
- Fully engage new Commissioners in the Commission process and document institutional knowledge.
- Utilize legal advice on new management strategies and policies, and respond to litigation as necessary.

**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
COASTAL PELAGICS MANAGEMENT BOARD**

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

October 17, 2023

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Call to Order, Chair Joe Cimino..... 1

Approval of Agenda 1

Approval of Proceedings from August 2, 2023..... 1

Public Comment 1

Progress Update on SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review Atlantic Migratory Group (AMG) Cobia Stock Assessment 1

 Review Stock Assessment Roadmap and Planned Commission and State Involvement 2

Consider Approval of State Recreational Management Measures for AMG Cobia for the 2024 Fishing Year..... 3

Technical Committee Report..... 9

 Review Recent Trends in State, Regional, and Coastwide AMG Cobia Landings..... 9

Update from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council on Mackerel Port Meetings and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Framework Amendment 13..... 18

Elect Vice-Chair..... 19

Adjournment 20

INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Coastal Pelagics Board Proceedings of August 2, 2023** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to maintain status quo state waters recreational management measures for Atlantic cobia for the 2024 fishing season** (Page 7). Motion by Shanna Madsen; second by Spud Woodward. Motion passes by consent (Page 8).
4. **Move to initiate an addendum addressing recreational Atlantic cobia quota reallocation. The Board recommends that the Plan Development Team explore options outside of the current state-by-state quota allocation system, specifically a coastwide soft target with regional management measures designed to meet the coastwide soft target while considering the need for fishing opportunity based on the seasonality of the species in various regions** (Page 13). Motion by Shanna Madsen; second by Chris Batsavage. Motion passes (9 in favor, 2 null, 2 abstentions) (Page 18).
5. **Move to elect Mr. Spud Woodward from Georgia as the Vice Chair of the Coastal Pelagics Management Board** (Page 19). Motion by Chris Batsavage; second by Malcolm Rhodes. Motion passes by unanimous consent (Page 20).
6. **Motion to adjourn** by consent (Page 20)

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

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Jason McNamee, RI (AA)	Bryan Plumlee, VA (GA)
Jesse Hornstein, NY, proxy for M. Gary (AA)	Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for K. Rawls (AA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Jerry Mannen, NC (GA)
Joe Cimino, NJ (AA)	Chad Thomas, NC, proxy for Rep. Wray (LA)
Jeff Kaelin, NJ (GA)	Malcolm Rhodes, SC (GA)
John Clark, DE (AA)	Ben Dyar, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Roy Miller, DE (GA)	Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
Craig Pugh, NY, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)	Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Lynn Fegley, MD (AA, Acting)	Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Russell Dize, MD (GA)	Ingrid Braun, PRFC
David Sikorski, MD, proxy for Del. Stein	John Carmichael, SAFMC
Shanna Madsen, VA, proxy for J. Green (AA)	Jack McGovern, NMFS

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

Ex-Officio Members

Angela Giuliano, Cobia Technical Committee Chair

Staff

Robert Beal	Kristen Anstead	Katie Drew
Toni Kerns	Madeline Musante	Jainita Patel
Tina Berger	Chelsea Tuohy	Geoff White
Tracey Bauer	James Boyle	Trevor Scheffel
Emilie Franke	Jeff Kipp	Alex DiJohnson

Guests

Max Appelman, NOAA	James Fletcher, United National Fishermen's Assn.	Steve Meyers
Pat Augustine	Dawn Franco, GA CRD	Tina Moore, NC DMF
Alan Bianchi, NC DMF	Tony Friedrich, ASGA	Brian Neilan, NJ DEP
Karyl Brewster-Geisz, NOAA	Marty Gary, NY (AA)	Thomas Newman
Simon Brown, MD DNR	Pat Geer, VMRC	Rebecca Nuzzi, ME
Robert T. Brown	Lewis Gillingham, VMRC	Lobstermen's Assn.
Jeffrey Brust, NJ DEP	Joseph Grist, VMRC	George O'Donnell, MD DNR
Benson Chiles	John Harker, Avangrid	Ronald Owens, PRFC
Brian Cloutier	Caela Howard, Avangrid	Will Poston, Saltwater Guides Assn.
Heather Corbett, NJ DEP	Todd Janeski, VCU	Jill Ramsey, VMRC
Caitlin Craig, NYS DEC	Chuck Karr, NJ DEP	Kathy Rawls, NC (AA)
Dustin Delano, NEFSA	Kathy Knowlton, GA DNR	Jeff Renchen, FL FWC
Bill DeSteph, Senate of VA	Brooke Lowman, VMRC	Harry Rickabaugh, MD DNR
Bill Dunn	Chip Lynch, NOAA	Paul Risi
Julie Evans, Evans Communications	John Maniscalco, NYS DEC	Katherine Rodrigue, RI DEM
	Joshua McGilly, VMRC	Brendan Runde, TNC

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

Guests (continued)

Lela Schlenker, Avangrid
Erin Schnettler, NOAA
Zachary Schuller, NYS DEC
Christopher Scott, NYS DEC
Alexei Sharov, MD DNR
Ethan Simpson, VMRC
Helen Takade-Heumacher,
NOAA

Scott Travers, RI Saltwater
Anglers Assn.
Troy Tuckey, VIMS
Verena Wang, East Carolina
University
Craig Weedon, MD DNR
Holly White, NC DMF
Shelby White, NC DMF

Kate Wilke, TNC
Chris Wright, NOAA
Justin Yost, SC DNR
Daniel Zapf, NC DEQ
Erik Zlokovitz, MD DNR

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

The Coastal Pelagics Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Rachel Carson Ballroom via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Tuesday, October 17, 2023, and was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Chair Joe Cimino.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR JOE CIMINO: Welcome everyone, we'll get started. I'm going to call the Coastal Pelagics Management Board to order. My name is Joe Cimino; I am the Administrative Commissioner for the state of New Jersey. This will be my last meeting as Board Chair. I've had the pleasure of serving with two fantastic FMP coordinators.

My thanks to Chelsea, here beside me, and I'm going to assume Emilie is online. I don't have my laptop with me, but many thanks to both of you here.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR CIMINO: We'll go through Approval of the Agenda. If there are any edits or additions to the agenda. Seeing none; we'll consider the agenda approved.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR CIMINO: Then approval of the proceedings from the August, 2023 meeting, any concerns or edits with what was sent out for that. Not seeing any; we'll consider that approved as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR CIMINO: I'm going to open up for Public Comment. Any public comment on items not on the agenda. Not seeing any; we will have a couple final action items, and we'll take public comment on those items when we get to them.

PROGRESS UPDATE ON SOUTHEAST DATA, ASSESSMENT, AND REVIEW ATLANTIC MIGRATORY GROUP (AMG) COBIA STOCK ASSESSMENT

CHAIR CIMINO: I'm going to turn it over to Chelsea for the Progress Update on the Cobia Stock Assessment.

MS. CHELSEA TUOHY: This is going to be a very brief overview of where we're at with the 2025 stock assessment for Atlantic cobia. Given that the assessment has not started yet, again this is just going to be very brief, so I'm going to be talking about a few new challenges facing this assessment, and the proposed assessment timeline.

The 2025 stock assessment for Atlantic cobia will function different than SEDAR 58, which was the previous stock assessment, for a number of reasons. To start off with the Southeast Fisheries Science Center served as the sole assessment lead during the previous stock assessment. However, this time around the Center has expressed several concerns with the assessment, and the responsibility of taking on the role as sole lead.

Most notably, the Center noted that a full reconsideration of the data and analytical methods will be needed. Data sources outside of the Southeast Region will be required. New state and federal partners will need to participate, and that SEDAR may not be the appropriate process for the assessment moving forward, given changes in the data and in cobia distribution. With that being said, the cobia stock assessment is scheduled to be completed and peer reviewed in 2025 through the SEDAR process. The SEDAR Steering Committee met earlier in October, and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center will be providing a lead analyst for the assessment. But given that the Center is only providing a lead analyst, the assessment is going to require significant participation from Commission and the states.

The assessment is likely to operate more like a research track or benchmark assessment, because of some of the challenges. Because the assessment

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

will require more heavy participation from the states, as opposed to previous assessments, we will need to form a Stock Assessment Subcommittee or SAS.

SAS nomination forms will reach your inboxes shortly after the annual meeting, so that work on the assessment can begin as planned in November. As I mentioned, the 2025 assessment will face some significant challenges due to the stock expanding northward outside of the southeast region. The previous assessment relied on recreational survey data, and the sole abundance index for that assessment was the Southeast Region Headboat Survey.

Unfortunately, that survey ended in 2015, leaving us with no abundance index for the Beaufort Assessment model, which requires an abundance index and the age data. The 2025 assessment will need to consider new datasets, and consider different model structures or platforms that are better equipped for the available data.

The time needed to look at this potential new modeling framework has been estimated in the timeline, but it may take longer than expected if initial model choices don't work out. This is something that will also be mentioned later today by Angela, and so I'm going to ask that everyone hold their questions until the whole presentation has been given.

But the Cobia Technical Committee has indicated that there is interest in pursuing a new evaluation of the management boundary for Atlantic cobia, which currently sits off the Georgia/Florida Line, and the interest in this analysis arose due to new tagging data, specifically acoustic and satellite tagging information that was not available during the previous Stock ID Workshop that is available today and that may provide some more insight into the way that Atlantic cobia move up and down the coast. Again, Angela will be discussing this during here reallocation presentation, so you will be hearing a little bit more about that later today.

REVIEW STOCK ASSESSMENT ROADMAP AND PLANNED COMMISSION AND STATE INVOLVEMENT

MS. TUOHY: Finally, I'm just going to wrap up the presentation here with an overview of the stock assessment timeline that was sent out to the Board in the Stock Assessment Roadmap Document as part of the meeting materials. I do want to note that challenges associated with the assessment, the data exploration and potential new models may change portions of this timeline.

But this is the plan as of right now. The only tasks for 2023 would be to form a SAS, which will occur shortly in October, followed by a call for data in November. Then in February, 2024, there will be a data scoping webinar, followed by data workshop webinars, which will be held between April and June. It is the hope that assessment ready data products will be ready by March, 2025, and that a full assessment will be available by October, 2025, which would mean that the Board would receive the assessment results and report at the Commission's 2026 winter meeting. That wraps up my updates on the 2025 cobia assessment, and I'm happy to take any questions.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank you, Chelsea, any questions for Chelsea? Go ahead, Shanna.

MS. SHANNA MADSEN: Just a quick process question. Chelsea, when did you expect needing the Board to put together a SAS, because it seems like we probably should hop on that pretty quickly. Just checking in on when you wanted that from us.

MS. TUOHY: Yes, so the SAS, we didn't want to do it at this meeting, because we knew that time was going to be a little bit limited. Basically, immediately after this meeting, next week we'll be sending out those SAS nomination forms to the Board.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thanks, Shanna. I think, you know I personally kind of like that model. We've been doing that quite a bit. It gives us a chance to check

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

in with staff, make sure they have that availability, and then as long as there are no objections, once we see that list that is usually approved by consent. Any other questions? Oh yes, hi, Jay.

DR. JASON McNAMEE: I think this question is now answered for me, but I was wondering, because the Southeast Center is involved. I was wondering if it was going to be like a federal working group construct. It sounds like it's going to be like the Commission will be setting up the SAS, that's how this will work.

MS. TUOHY: It's going to be a blend. Toni may have a better answer for you here.

MS. TONI KERNS: It's my understanding it's sort of a blend of the SEDAR process plus state scientists to be on that work group. I'm not sure. I don't normally participate in the SEDAR process as often, so John can correct me if I'm wrong. I don't think that the SEDAR is going to approve the state scientists. I think we're going to kind of let them know these are the people that are helping out with the state data, and they'll kind of be folded into the mix. But it will be the SEDAR.

MR. JOHN CARMICHAEL: Yes, you're right. I mean the SEDAR process basically just sets up a schedule, and then it hands over the care and feeding of it to what we call the cooperator, which in this case is this Board of the Atlantic States Commission. Your process, our process is used to appoint people and handle all the logistics.

CHAIR CIMINO: Any other questions on the path forward with the assessment? Go ahead.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, sorry. It was mentioned that this is going to be more like research track, benchmark, whatever version you want to call it. Does that mean, I know there were concerns about BAM, not concerns about BAM, but I'm thinking that the modeling platform might not be able to handle this species anymore. Is it being entertained that other, like modeling approaches, will be vetted?

MS. TUOHY: Yes, I think the BAM will be run for continuity purposes, but there will be exploration of other modeling frameworks, because we no longer have the abundance index, so the SAS and the Assessment Lead will have to do some testing and exploration there.

CHAIR CIMINO: Are you good, Jay? Okay, good, any other questions? We will continue to move forward. We appreciate any states that have the capacity to put forward some assistance on this. It's going to be interesting to see what we can get through, awkward timing, considering what we're dealing with MRIP estimates, of course.

But we'll move forward with hopefully something that we feel comfortable with for management in the next few years. We know that we are at a point where doing projections is not necessarily appropriate anymore. Unfortunately, we have to move forward with what we have. We'll see where we go, so we'll move on.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF STATE RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR AMG COBIA FOR THE 2024 FISHING YEAR

CHAIR CIMINO: Turning this over to Chelsea and Angela, as we look at the State Recreational Management Measures.

MS. TUOHY: For this presentation, we're going to be discussing recreational management measures for Atlantic cobia for the 2024 fishing year, and the Technical Committee's recommendations for those management measures. To start off the presentation, I'm going to give a brief overview of the specifications process as outlined in the FMP, and then Angela will be going over the TC report and TC recommendations.

As you all recall, in August, the Coastal Pelagics Board set a new total harvest quota for the 2024 through 2026 fishing years, prompting the Cobia Technical Committee to evaluate recent state harvest against each state's recreational soft target, to determine if non-de minimis states' recreational

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

management measures need to be changed for the 2024 through 2026 fishing years.

Amendment 1 outlines the process by which recreational management measures may be changed after a new total harvest quota is set, and Amendment 1 states that recreational landings will be evaluated against state recreational harvest target at the same time as the specifications process. Recreational landings for each non-deterministic state will be evaluated against that state's target, as an average of annual landings.

The timeframe for this average will only include years with the same recreational season and vessel limit. Because recreational management measures for some states were changed in 2021, following the approval of Addendum I, the timeframe for evaluating state harvest targets for the 2024 fishing year is 2021 through 2022. Amendment 1, excuse me. During the harvest target evaluations, the Cobia TC determines if each state's two-year average landings exceeded or fell below their soft target value.

If the state's average recreational landings exceeded its annual recreational harvest target, that state must adjust its recreational vessel limit or season, to reduce harvest such that future annual landings would be expected to achieve that soft recreational harvest target. Then states that report a consistent underharvest during an evaluation time period for a minimum of two years, may present a plan to liberalize recreational management measures, or they can choose to keep their management measures status quo. Up on the screen behind me you will see the results of the 2021 to 2022 harvest target evaluations, with each state's soft target shown in the second column from the left, as outlined in the orange box. Then each state's average landings are shown in the second column from the right in the second orange box there. As you can see, based on recent landings, using the typical process for setting recreational management measures, Virginia and Georgia would need to restrict measures, due to their two-year averages exceeding their soft target.

Then North Carolina and South Carolina have the option to liberalize measures or remain status quo, due to consistently harvesting under their soft target level in 2021 and in 2022. However, in August, the Board tasked the Cobia Technical Committee with determining the impacts of status quo coastwide recreational management measures for the 2024 fishing year. Now I'm going to pass it over to Angela, who is going to talk a little bit more about the TC's recommendation, and how they came to that recommendation.

MS. ANGELA GIULIANO: The Technical Committee met twice since September of 2023, to discuss landings and recent trends related to both this Board motion, as well as the one we'll be discussing in the next presentation. The first thing we reviewed were the average 2021 through 2022 harvest data, which Chelsea just went through.

As a reminder, in 2021 coastwide, you were over the quota by just under 14,000 fish. In 2022, landings were about 7,000 fish below the coastwide quota, averaging out to about 3,400 fish above the quota between the two years. Based initially on these data, the TC felt that there was probably a reasonable probability that the coastwide quota may not be exceeded on average, due to state overages. Some states balance out, finding underages that occurred in others.

But after our first meeting, we also wanted to look at the preliminary Waves 1 through 3, 2023 harvest data. These are the Waves 1 through 3 harvest data for 2020 through 2023. We'll focus more on the last three columns there, with 2020 being kind of an odd year with COVID, and the borrowing of data that had to occur there.

As Chelsea mentioned, 2021 and 2022 are really the years that we were using for evaluation. You'll see in 2023, at that point landings at the first part of the year were slightly above where they had been in the past couple years. Again, 2021 is the one that ended up being over quota. We also looked at these Waves 1 through 3 data by state for the non-

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

de minimis states, and it was pretty variable, depending on which state you were looking at.

You can see that Georgia has had a pretty steady increase in their Wave 1 through 3 harvests since 2020. North Carolina's harvest is, particularly in 2023, is estimated to be very low. Virginia's harvest was up relative to '21 and '22, and South Carolina's harvest is fairly similar to 2021 and less than 2022.

One of the analyses we undertook was trying to see if we could come up with an estimate of what we thought 2023 harvest might be, based off of what had already been harvested in Wave 1 through 3. This was a very simple linear regression by state, based on the historical Waves 1 through 3 harvest and where the final harvest estimate ended up for that year. In general, the relationships were very tight for Georgia and South Carolina, likely because a lot of their harvest has already occurred by Wave 3, and some of that uncertainty started being added in once you start looking at North Carolina, and especially Virginia's landings. Part of that I think just has to do with more of their harvest occurring later in the year. Unfortunately, we weren't able to look at this for the de minimis states, because a lot of their harvest happens later in the year as well, and there just isn't as many years of estimates to come up with a value there.

For North Carolina and Virginia, we explored a range of different options to try and get a handle of some of the uncertainty. We have the linear regression estimate, which is just straight from the linear regression. We also looked at the last five years, the most recent five years, to see what was the minimum amount of additional harvest that occurred in Waves 4 through 6, the mean amount as well as the maximum.

You can see from this table here, we came up with a range anywhere from 65,000 fish to 86,000 fish, and you can tell that the first few estimates, well three estimates, are below our soft target for the non-de minimis states at 76,139 fish, and that maximum estimate was above. Some caveats to this first one

is a big one that again, this only includes non-de minimis states.

In recent years the non-de minimis states have harvested anywhere from 1,500 to 5,000 fish, based off of MRIP estimates. But the biggest thing at this point is that yesterday afternoon MRIP put out their Waves 1 through 4 cumulative estimates, and currently for these four non-de minimis states, the harvest is being estimated at 74,837 fish.

We are already at this point about where that 2023 mean estimate lies. Given we still have two more waves of the year, I suspect we will be somewhere between the mean and maximum estimate, but the TC has not been able to meet, obviously for discussing of any data. There are some uncertainties the Board should be considering when they are considering whether to go forward with status quo regulations in 2024.

The first and probably most important here is that the 2023 full year harvest estimates that we developed were based on historical fishery performance, so any changes from that or deviations would obviously trigger all the higher estimates. The Technical Committee also discussed the incorporation of COVID years and the 2021 through 2022 harvest target evaluations.

That applies probably more to '21 than '22, and just whether they are representative of future harvest trends or effort from the fishery. Of course, as we heard this morning, there will also be potential changes to the catch in effort estimates, likely in 2026, from the MRIP FES pilot study. Based on the data that the Technical Committee had in September, we recommended staying status quo for 2024, due to a recently low probability of exceeding the coastwide recreational quota. With that we can take any questions.

CHAIR CIMINO: Nobody is getting off easy today, I guess. I'll open it up to the Board, questions for the TC. Obviously, a lot to think about here. Obviously the two main things we're dealing with are this newest piece of information, which is the latest

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

update to the wave estimate, and then just the fact that we really don't know what the FES is going to do in the future. But we do know that for now, we're more or less in a holding pattern with the estimates we have. The Board has before them a decision on what we're going to do for this next year with all this in mind. We'll get more into this on the performance and in the next agenda item, but let's start with questions for Angela. Go ahead, Chris.

MR. CHRIS BATSAVAGE: Thank you, Chelsea and Angela, for the report. Angela, you said it was about 75,000 fish, just short of that through Wave 4, non-de minimis states only. Is there a harvest estimate for the de minimis states?

MS. GIULIANO: Yes, so currently the harvest estimate was around 270 fish. Surprisingly, the only state with an estimate at this point is Rhode Island, with over 100 percent PSE, but there were either 0 or no estimates for Maryland through, I guess that would be Connecticut.

CHAIR CIMINO: Lynn and then Shanna.

MS. LYNN FEGLEY: Thank you, Chelsea and Angela. Would you mind going back to the slide, you had a slide that showed landings, and I think it included some de minimis landings in that. Yes, right there. I mean it looks like, does the TC have some conversations about the numbers of unaccounted fish.

Sort of what that might look like in the northern de minimis states, because those numbers in those columns are pretty high. I'm just trying to figure out how we should be sort of thinking about it, or crunching up against that soft target, how should this handle potential de minimis landings?

MS. GIULIANO: Are you referring to unaccounted for de minimis in the '23 estimate at this point?

MS. FEGLEY: Yes, I was, thank you. Sorry for muttering and being unclear.

MS. GIULIANO: I was going to say, it was like de minimis was included here for the totals. Yes, I guess at this point it seems like it could be low. I mean one way the Board could handle it, when thinking about it, would be looking at recent years at the range of de minimis landings. Obviously, we can't know for certain yet what '23's final number will be. But probably the best guidance at this point.

CHAIR CIMINO: I'm going to go to Shanna, but I'll also jump in that I guess one of the things that we don't have in front of us is what potential reductions might look like at a state level. To kind of understand what that number of fish means, by way of something like shorter seasons for some states isn't something that we have before us yet. If we need to have those discussions, it's something that we can talk about. It may be a special Board meeting to get us there, but Shanna.

MS. MADSEN: Thank you so much, Angela. I just wanted to say, you know I was a part of watching these deliberations, and I was really impressed by the thoroughness of you guys going through all of this. The final slide that you showed us was the mediums and the maximums. It was some just really good work.

I just wanted to say how much I appreciated getting to see those things. The one question I did have, we're kind of facing this weird conundrum where we have a recommendation from the TC, and then all of a sudden, we have Wave 4 estimates. What are the PSEs looking like broken-down state by state on those Wave 4 estimates? I don't know if you guys have that available or not.

MS. GIULIANO: Chelsea had some up, and I have some in my Excel files. I have them by state, unfortunately, not per slide. Georgia's Wave 1 through 4 estimates for '23 has a PSE of 56 percent. South Carolina is at 61 percent, North Carolina is at 65 percent, and Virginia is at 42. Yes, all red and yellow, for caution.

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

MS MADSEN: Right, okay so that was my question. We're all in either red zone, don't use it or yellow zone caution. Okay, thank you. I appreciate that.

CHAIR CIMINO: Other questions? Well, if not I'll be looking to, well, Shanna, you have your hand up.

MS. MADSEN: If we're not going to do questions, I do have a motion to start the discussion.

CHAIR CIMINO: Let's do that.

MS. MADSEN: To start the discussion, I would like to **move to maintain status quo state waters recreational management measures for Atlantic cobia for the 2024 fishing year**, and if I get a second, I can speak to that.

CHAIR CIMINO: Spud, is that a second? You have a second, Shanna, go ahead.

MS. MADSEN: You know like I said before, we're sort of stuck in this weird place where we've got our TC, who did all of this excellent work to figure out whether or not status quo was something that we could go through for 2024. Now we have some pretty high Wave 4 estimates, but with some pretty terrible looking PSEs.

My logic here is kind of the same one that I spoke to at the previous meeting, where we tasked the TC to kind of start looking at status quo measures, with the intent of us having the next conversation that we're going to have, regarding whether or not the allocation scheme that we're under right now really makes sense for the way that we should be managing this fishery, and ensuring that, you know all of our states have opportunities for cobia. Really my main reason for putting this up here is because I think we're dealing with some shaky data. I don't particularly feel comfortable basing reductions off of PSEs that look like the ones they look like. I have some very big concerns for, essentially management whiplash, given that I believe that once we have our conversation following this one.

My hope is that we can start to think about much more thoughtful ways of managing this fishery, instead of recreational soft targets that are state by state, that really just aren't working out. You know we tested this theory. It's not working. I think it's time for us to go back to the drawing board, and I would just like to press pause for the next year, until we do that.

CHAIR CIMINO: I'll look to the seconder. Spud, do you have any comments you would like to make?

MR. A. G. "SPUD" WOODWARD: Just pretty much, obviously I am in agreement with what she said. Plus, I think from a more practical matter, I'm not sure how the state of Georgia could convince the Board of Natural Resources to change regulations to prevent the capture of 347 fish, when we have no better resolution under data that we have. You know from a practical standpoint it is impractical. I certainly endorse this. I think it's a reasonable risk management decision going forward.

CHAIR CIMINO: Any other discussion? Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: I'm torn on this one. You know assuming that the Board initiates an action to look at how we allocate and manage recreational fishery, having some stability in place for 2024 makes sense, despite the high PSEs, which have been part of the cobia estimates in our management since we, well forever. Yes, they are pretty high, close to basically the target to get through for this year. Although the de minimis estimates really jump around, they are particularly low this year.

I think when we all know that there are probably more than 270 cobias caught north of Maryland. I probably can count more pictures on the internet than that. Yes, I don't know if there is an opportunity for some sort of, instead of taking the full reduction, if there is something in between, or we just hold our nose and go with status quo in '24, with the intent on trying to come up with a better way to manage this in '25.

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

CHAIR CIMINO: Further discussion? I'm going to go to Lynn and then back to Shanna.

MS. FEGLEY: I would go on the record to agree with Mr. Batsavage, because we are going to likely see that target. If we go to implement a new sort of allocation scheme in '25, we're still going to be working with the same target, I think. If we're not, correct me. I just have a little concern. I don't think I would oppose it, but I think I just want to go on the record as I'm not super comfortable with that. I don't think I'll call that good.

CHAIR CIMINO: Shanna.

MS. MADSEN: I do want to thank Lynn and Chris for their comments on that. They definitely don't go unheard. The one thing I will say is, I went back to my amazing staff at VMRC, and kind of had them start to look at some of the data to determine, you know based on the '21 and '22 estimates, what we would be facing. Frankly, they said if we left our status quo management measures in place for 2024, the calculations come out to about a 15 percent decrease in our landings anyway.

At best, I feel like if we did take some level of reduction, unfortunately I feel like for, not along the same lines as Spud, but along the same lines as Spud. I think I would kind of just be throwing darts, trying to figure out a way of making some sort of reduction coastwide. If we leave it alone, at least right now, the math says we're already doing so. We're kind of stuck in a weird spot now.

CHAIR CIMINO: Any other comments from the Board? If not, I'm going to open this up to public. I don't see any hands from the Board. Is there anyone from the public that wishes to comment on this motion? Okay, not seeing anyone, we have heard some concern, but at the same time I think I'll give it a shot and see if there are any objections to this motion.

MR. BATSAVAGE: No objection, but just a 30 second caucus, one minute caucus?

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, sorry, sure go ahead, Chris. Does anyone need more time? I don't see any hands, so call the question again. Is there any objection to this motion? Go ahead, Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, could you just read it back in, for the record. I think folks online want to make sure they understand exactly what we're voting on.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, I'll do that. This is a **move to maintain status quo state waters recreational management measures for Atlantic cobia for the 2024 fishing season. Not seeing any objection, we'll say this motion passes by consent.** All right, we're going to turn it back over to Angela. Go ahead, Jay, sorry.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, I wanted to make comment on it. I didn't want to disrupt what was going on, so thanks for giving me just a minute. I was really intrigued by the regression analysis. You know the concept of using a modeling approach to try and predict or understand what would happen, you know with the missing waves, was interesting. I was wondering kind of a little bit about how exactly the calculations were done.

But I guess what I really wanted to say is, I like that approach. I like that approach. I would suggest if this type of approach is used again, there are a couple other methods out there that we might want to investigate, like for instance, generalized additive models. Just to capture some of the nonlinear with what may be there. I approve of the modeling approach, and maybe just a little more information next time, in checking a couple other methods might be worthwhile to do as well.

MS. GIULIANO : Sure, thanks for the suggestion.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thanks, Jay, appreciate that. This is a species where we are dealing with pretty much one data source for everything that we have. Not a lot of signals coming from other places, and so the importance of what we have is always tricky.

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

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

CHAIR CIMINO: We're going to turn it back over to Angela for what the Board has asked for on this Technical Committee Report, once again to go through the trends here with cobia.

MS. GIULIANO: As he said, we'll be going through the recent trends in cobia harvest and catch, an overview of the presentation. I'll first review the Board motion from the last meeting, as well as the current recreational harvest allocation. Then we'll look at some trends in coastwide harvest and catch as well as some different regional through things that the Technical Committee explored.

We'll briefly cover some tagging data, which was used to look at movement between different areas of the stock, and then go through the Technical Committee recommendation. At the August Board meeting there was a motion to task the Cobia Technical Committee to develop a fishery review that characterizes recent trends in state and regional landings compared to their harvest target, including de minimis landings. I want to make a brief note here that as I mentioned on the last slide, we'll focus mainly on the coastwide and regional trend analyses. However, I do have individual state graphs in the extra slides portion.

If there are any particular states that the Board is interested in reviewing, at least for non de minimis states, we have individual slides for those. We also have some figures there if there are questions about confidence intervals around some of these estimates at the various regional scales, there are also figures that we can pull up that give 95 percent confidence intervals as well for the Board to peruse.

The current recreational harvest targets are based on the state's percentages of their coastwide historical landings in numbers of fish. Fifty percent of that allocation is based on the ten-year average landings from 2006 to 2015, and 50 percent of that allocation is based on the 5-year average landings from 2011 to 2015.

In the table here you can see how that breaks out between the different states under the current harvest quota. I think the thing to point out here is, again to note, that all of this as you go through uses data through 2015.

REVIEW RECENT TRENDS IN STATE, REGIONAL, AND COASTWIDE AMG COBIA LANDINGS

MS. GIULIANO: As you'll see on some of the following slides, there have definitely been some changes since that timeframe.

This figure goes through the coastwide harvest. Over the time series the average harvest has been about 40,000 fish, and the harvest has been increasing through time, peaking in 2018. The harvest has generally been over that time series average since about 2003, and often at or above 50,000 fish per year since 2015.

Of note on here, and hopefully you guys can see it in the back. For over 2020 through 2022, this slide does show the recreational harvest quota to where our landings have ended up. I apologize if it's hard to see in the back. Similarly, catch has also increased greatly through time, and pretty steadily, again peaking in 2018.

As I said the catch has also been steadily increasing, peaking in 2018, and catches have been over 300,000 fish between 2018 and 2021. The Technical Committee considered a few different regional approaches to this. While we looked at the traditional, you know North Carolina South Boundary that you would see in MRIP for the South Atlantic, there was a lot of movement of fish, particularly between North Carolina and Virginia.

We ultimately decided to go forward for this presentation with North Carolina North, which is on the top graph in orange, and South Carolina and Georgia as the separate region, in green below. Again, in black on here is the current soft targets for those two regions, based off of the current quota. Again, there has been this growth in landings

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

through time in the northern region, peaking in 2018.

Whereas, you'll see in the southern region landings have been much more stable through time, averaging about 9,500 fish. That is in comparison to the northern harvest, which has been on average at about 31,000 fish, so again since 2013 we have been above that average. Looking at the regional catch, again similar, not surprisingly given most of the harvest was occurring in North Carolina and Virginia to see a steady increase in catch through time in the northern region. But you also see some of these increases in the South Carolina, Georgia region, as well as more stable through time. But you can tell in 2018 the catches had increased as well.

In addition to this, we looked at another approach of three regions sort of split. The South Carolina and Georgia figures are the same as the ones you just saw. But in this view of it, we separated out the Maryland north regional harvest, as well as the North Carolina, Virginia regional harvest.

You can see through this that the de minimis harvest has been sporadic through time, with large peaks occurring periodically over the years, with notably 2012. But harvest has been consistent since 2020 in the de minimis states, ranging anywhere from 1,579 fish to 5,334 fish, which is above the soft harvest target of 769 fish.

As I mentioned before, the majority of harvest occurs in North Carolina and Virginia, with a time series average of about 29,700 fish. We've had higher landings since 2013, probably averaging around that 60,000 fish line. Then as I mentioned before, the South Carolina, Georgia landings have been much more stable.

With these sorts of trends, the TC felt that it lent support more to the idea of a range expansion rather than a full shift of the stock, with landings being so consistent in the south. Similar to before, we have the sporadic catch in de minimis states, but since 2018 you see again that increasing trend

through time for North Carolina and Virginia, peaking in 2018.

The more stable catch in the southern region, with increases in catch since 2018. As I mentioned, the Cobia Technical Committee also reviewed tagging data from many of the states. Primarily we reviewed conventional tagging data, so there is some acoustic and satellite tagging data available.

However, these data are currently under review for publication, so we aren't able to discuss much about it at this time. But hopefully that will be out soon. But generally, the tagging data showed movement of fish between North Carolina and Virginia. They also showed movements of fish to states north of Virginia and south into Florida.

I guess the one caveat with some of this is that obviously there has been a growing interest in the fishery, and so there have been some changes in the numbers of fish tagged, number of returns through time with that as well. I think it would probably take a little bit more work to fully tease out some of that through time, to figure out movement patterns.

Based off of some of this initial discussion, and some of the new data that has been coming out since the last Stock ID Workshop. The Technical Committee was interested in reexamining the boundary between the two stocks, acknowledging the likely mixing zone in northeast Florida, which even was pointed out at the last ID workshop. The preference would be for these efforts to either occur before, or as an initial step for the next stock assessment. Hopefully at that time, as I said, we would be able to bring I some of the other acoustic and satellite tagging data. Based on these recent trends, and how they have changed in the states since the previous allocation period, the Technical Committee did recommend taking action to address the recreational allocations. However, we did want to bring up some things the Board may want to consider, particularly regarding the timing.

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

Again, with the timing of the upcoming MRIP FES follow up study, obviously any changes there could affect the allocations, dates or regions, or whichever direction the Board goes with that, as well as any potential reexamination of the cobia management boundary, so it's a stock assessment. Should anything with that change, that would also probably factor into your allocation discussion. With that I can take any questions.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank you, Angela, and I want to thank the TC for this work. Looking at the timeframe for the soft targets, obviously it is time to revisit. What is happening with this fishery is changing somewhat. However, as noted by the TC, and as we've talked about earlier today, we have the possibility of getting an entirely recalibrated MRIP estimate in the near future. Certainly, the timing of this is a challenge. I'll look to questions for Angela, and the work that the TC has put forward. Go ahead, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: You certainly show an intriguing case for some shifts in this stock, especially saying it looks like potentially range expansion, not just shifting, which then has really important consequences for the upcoming assessment. I hope the TC is keeping this in mind as the assessment gets planned and plotted out, what is going to be requested from the analyses.

Because if the range is expanding, and ecologically the carrying capacity is increased, because these fish are covering a bigger area. Then the stock productivity may be higher now than what it was back in those early time years when we show much lower landings. If all of that gets plugged into the model, you know the model is going to take sort of, what's the average over time, most likely.

It's going to underestimate productivity, based on what you're experiencing right now, and then would be exacerbating these issues with bumping up against soft limits, because the limits are based on a productivity estimate that is too low. You know we grapple with this a lot at the Council, and dealing with the stock shifts that are going on, you

know handing this stock over to you guys is part of the response.

But I think it's really important, and it would be nice to see if this assessment can get into, you know really considering what's the productivity look like five years from now, when we're going to be setting regulations, and not so much, what was it like 25 years ago? On the Atlantic it does seem to be increasingly irrelevant.

What we're worried about is what the future holds, and it would be really great in this assessment if, you know the Commission group can work with the Center and come up with something that gives us a good estimate of future productivity, so that we're not grappling with these limits, particularly with the state-by-state thing. You know we can really account for a stock that maybe is doing better. Climate change is usually talked about in the context of losers, but there are going to be winners in this climate change thing as well. Cobia looks like a potential winner.

CHAIR CIMINO: I'm going to go to Lynn, and then I also have a question.

MS. FEGLEY: I appreciate the comment from John. One of my questions was, at what point are we developing terms of reference for this assessment? I have some fear, because there is so little data, and there was a really great conversation last meeting between, I think John and Jay, about developing an index or seeing if we could find an index that we could monitor between stock assessments, to understand a little bit about how the stock is doing, since the stock assessments are still far and few between.

I just wanted to bring that back up, and say that I think it's a great idea. However, with the limited amount of data, I just don't know how possible it is. But if it's something that should be considered, either as a Stock Assessment Subcommittee is formed, or outside of that. I just wanted to flag that, that it could be helpful going forward.

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

MS. TUOHY: Thank you for your question. The Stock Assessment Roadmap that was sent around didn't have defining the terms of reference explicitly in the roadmap, but we have been informed that that typically happens before the Data Workshop Webinars. As of right now, those Data Workshop Webinars are scheduled for April to June of 2024, so early to mid-2024, I guess would be our best guess as of right now.

CHAIR CIMINO: My question, and I was around during the last ID Workshop. I am curious, and I'm not even sure who I am directing this question to. But what does it take to get that process started again? John, could you help maybe on that engagement?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, and that is a good question. Stock ID is often one of the most controversial things that goes into the assessment. Part of that is because it could be really hard to define, especially if you don't have good information on movements, and good information on genetics. It can be hard just using our regular fisheries data to figure out where stocks are divided.

But it's also complicated, because while it's an assessment and a scientific question, it has pretty significant management consequences a lot of time, particularly as things cross jurisdictions. It is one of those things where there is a lot of considerations that have to be brought to bear. Normally the way, like SEDAR has approached this, and the way this was approached last time, was to have essentially a Stock ID Workshop, prior to getting into the stock assessment, to bring all the information available, and kind of hash it out going into the assessment. Because then it's very important to know that as you go in, so you know the universe over which you're looking for data. We may need to make a harder look, if a state like Virginia and Maryland try and get data. Maybe there are some studies in the Chesapeake that could lead to an index like you know Lynn mentioned, that haven't really been looked at before, because until the last 10 years there weren't that many fish up there. You would have to do those sorts of things, but I think this

would just be a matter of maybe the Commission supporting getting the relevant scientists together, maybe a few months in advance of the April/June Data Workshops, and say okay, we've got to settle this stock ID question. There are some good references on the kind of information that you can go through to make this decision. I think Steve Cadrin is an author of a book that we've used a number of times.

It lays out a process of, you know these are the different things that you could look into, and a way to evaluate it, to decide if you really are seeing some shifts in a stock. Yes, I think the important thing is getting the good representation of the TC and Stock Assessment Committee, and all the different states involved in the data together, early enough to have a decision, so you go in the assessment and you know what you're dealing with.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thanks, John, I appreciate that. Go ahead.

MS. GIULIANO: Just to add to that, and for those that aren't as familiar with what was done last time. At the last time E-Workshop, it was like looking at tagging data, but also genetics and life history data. I will admit that the TC through this recommendation was mainly focused on the tagging data, and I'm not aware of what might be available for the other datasets, particularly genetics. I'm not sure if there are any genetic studies or not.

CHAIR CIMINO: I might throw that out there to the Board as well. I know South Carolina had done some work in the past. Just curious if there is anyone up here that knows of maybe some newer or recent stuff that has been done. Go ahead.

MR. BEN DYAR: Yes, in 2018 we were in South Carolina. In the southern portions of South Carolina there has been genetically unique identified species in the spawning areas, and some of our inlets in the southern region. Because of our specific management change that was done to account for

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

that, so not harvesting those in that spawning time period, and that was done through genetics.

CHAIR CIMINO: Further comments, thoughts from the Board, and I'm curious what we're thinking, as far as, you know timing is extremely important for this. I'll take Shanna, and then Erika you're up next.

MS. MADSEN: I actually have another motion prepared, to kind of get our conversation started, and if I have a second again, I would speak to the reasons why I think this might be a better way for us to go, so we get that up there. I would like to **move to initiate an addendum addressing recreational Atlantic cobia quota reallocation. The Board recommends the Plan Development Team explore options outside of the current state by state quota allocation system, specifically a coastwide soft target with regional management measures designed to meet the coastwide soft target, while considering the need for fishing opportunities, based on the seasonality of the species in various regions.**

CHAIR CIMINO: Do we have a second? Chris, is that a second? Okay. Shanna, do you want to speak to this?

MS. MADSEN: I full disclosure, need to give my neighbor in the south a lot of credit for working on this over lunch, and unfortunately, no beers were involved, because it was lunchtime, but I still think that it was really good conversation. This is tough, right? We know that we've been managing on soft targets we're all bumping up against, that are based off of very outdated MRIP numbers, and it doesn't make a lot of sense to keep doing what we're doing. My intention of going with status quo during our last motion, was to make sure that we initiate this addendum, do start to explore looking at different ways of reallocation.

The only thing that I kind of wanted to signal to the Board is, I recognize that if we kept things going state by state, and just said that we were going to update those state-by-state quotas using more recent MRIP data, Virginia would gobble up

absolutely all of the quota, and that is not at all my intention here.

I do want to just go ahead and signal that, because I recognize allocation is a pretty touchy subject. But the thought process here is with all of the things that we're facing, you know if there is a change in magnitude, due to the calibration of the FES survey, having a coastwide soft target, that magnitude might end up changing later, when that goes through the stock assessment.

However, it wouldn't make any change at the time, so we would stick to that 76,000 fish, but we would make it make more sense, such that regional management measures could reflect where the fish are, and the time of year that those fish reach those certain regions. It's kind of a logic there, and I'm hoping that folks understand where I'm coming from, and not trying to be that state that is gobbling up all of the cobia. We don't want to do that.

CHAIR CIMINO: Chris, do you want to speak to the motion?

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes, I think Shanna hit the main points on it, but yes, I think really, we're just trying to find a way to manage the recreational fishery, understanding just the inherent limitations of MRIP with a species such as cobia, a pulse/rare-event species. Yes, I think the state-by-state allocations, quite frankly, is probably overusing the available MRIP data. Again, if we could figure out a way to manage based on seasonality, and stay within the harvest limit, it provides maybe a little more resilient way to manage with potential changes to MRIP estimates coming up in the next few years.

CHAIR CIMINO: I need to take a minute, I want to apologize, because I had, that motion got away from me a little bit. I had Erika in the queue. Erika, do you have a question or comment outside of this motion before we get to the comment on the motion?

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

MS. ERIKA BURGESS: I'll hold mine in case the conversation comes up again. I'll let you all discuss the motion.

CHAIR CIMINO: Okay, thank you. Malcolm.

DR. MALCOLM RHODES: This could come back to a problem for South Carolina. Years ago, when Virginia's catch was so large that the feds closed the cobia fishing in federal waters, South Carolina's laws are set such that when federal waters are closed, state laws follow the federal. We had two years where we could not catch a cobia in the state at all, because of federal closure. We need to have some way where we aren't caught in that situation again, and the state does not allow the DNR to do the laws, they are all legislative. There is no quick way of addressing that issue. That is part of what came about in that first place, because we had two years where cobia was not allowed to be caught in South Carolina, because of the federal closure.

CHAIR CIMINO: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Generally, I agree. We've got to do something different. I think one of the challenging issues right now, and maybe the makers and seconder can address this. There is this concern of this FES situation hovering over our head. How do we prevent ourselves from making decisions that we might regret having made, given the unknowns that we're facing?

I know you and I talked a little bit about it. Is this more about discussing alternative methods without specifics? But the problem with allocations is it all comes down to specifics. That is always the problem. It's the numbers that come out at the end of the calculator that end up driving the decision. I think that is where there might be a little anxiety about this, and the timing of it.

But the same as we discussed earlier today, we're looking at two or three years before we may have anything definitive on the FES bias affect. We're in a little bit of a trap here, knowing that we need to do something different, but not willing to do

something different that we'll later regret, when we find out that the basis of our decision was flawed. I don't know, maybe there is some discussion that can allay my fears on this.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, I'm with you. It really does go back to; I don't think we're getting off easy this afternoon. I will look to the makers of this motion for a response on their intent. But giving a heads up to staff too, I would like to have a little bit of a conversation on timing. Putting aside the FES though, just more along the lines of how do we do this in step with an assessment? I'll go to Chris and then Shanna. I think both of you had your hands up, if you would like to respond. Go ahead, Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: Yes, I don't know if this will solve our problems, maybe it will address the problems that we currently have. I guess conceptually the way I was thinking about this is not have the coastwide allocation allocated to regions. I think that is not the way to go, with the existing data we have, regardless of what might happen with MRIP in the future those problems are going to exist. This is looking more at kind of the seasonal patterns that we're currently seeing with cobia. That is subject to change in the future, of course, to where the fish are available at certain times of the year, and certain states as they move south to north. If the PDT was able to maybe craft some potential management measures that kind of address the seasonality, with bag and size limits mixed in for the different regions.

You know to give folks an opportunity to catch the fish without exceeding the RHL, while not give it explicitly, you know carving up the 76,000 fish into regions, because I think that is not going to work. It might be an oversimplified way of trying this, but that was the thought I had, just as a concept of managing under the MRIP data that we have, the uncertainty in the MRIP data.

CHAIR CIMINO: Shanna, did you want to respond as well?

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

MS. MADSEN: I think Chris covered it incredibly well. Part of the way I guess I thought about this too, was if we go this way of trying to determine a better way of utilizing the coastwide quota. We're thinking about instead of dividing the pie, the whole pie is now for all of us, but we all think about it, in making sure that we're giving opportunity to the states who see the fish first. You know like Chris was saying, we're thinking of a rolling sort of opening.

I don't want to pretend to be smarter than a PDT here, because you know they could look at this and say, hey, we've got some better ideas. But I would love to give a PDT the chance to see what they can do with this, and make sure that we're all trying to ensure that the southern states are still getting their opportunities with these fish, and they are not getting shut out of it before they even get the chance to fish. The other thing I'd say, I guess, to the FES calibration is we don't have time to waste, I think for the FES calibration.

We're looking at an FMP that kind of directs us to take action when we see our de minimis states popping in and out of de minimis. We don't really know what to do with them right now. While the timing might not seem optimal, I think we can build something that would not be as impacted by just a magnitude change, which is what at least right now MRIP is giving us.

They are giving us a change in magnitude and not a change in specifics. I think we know how to tackle that, and again I think that kind of addresses the fact that hey, that pie might get bigger. We're seeing potentially a range expansion. We're going to be combining that in with the new FES calibrations, and I think it makes sense to kind of go about it this way first. We need to take action.

CHAIR CIMINO: As I mentioned, I'm going to look to staff before we continue this discussion, to talk about timing a little, so Toni.

MS. KERNS: I want to clarify to make sure I'm understanding what Shanna and Chris are asking

the PDT to do. What I heard was you are looking for seasons for each of the states, and that's how we are going to kind of constrain this harvest, which is different than what our objectives were when we took over this FMP, where we wanted to maintain a year-long season, and not have closures.

Now we are seeking closures, and that is how the PDT is going to develop the document, because I don't know how we constrain regions to a coastwide soft target, without putting in some pretty tight, what I think would be maybe some tighter seasons, if you are looking to try to give availability to all of the states at some point. I just want to make sure that that is what I'm hearing, and that the whole Board is hearing, and that is the direction that the Board is looking for, and then we can talk about timing.

CHAIR CIMINO: We'll start with Shanna then Chris if you need to follow up.

MS. MADSEN: I guess Toni, yes, that is kind of what I'm suggesting here. We already don't have a year-long cobia season, we are down to three months now, and states who are following our management measures are also constrained to that three-month season. Yes, that is what I'm suggesting, and I think that in the regions like the Mid-Atlantic, where we would be catching quite a bit of the fish, we would take hard consideration into when our season ended, in order to ensure that the northern states, as the fish move up the coast, would also have access to those fish.

CHAIR CIMINO: Chris, you good? Okay. All right, so we've got a little bit more information on what we're thinking about here. I'm still kind of curious on, is this something that we're expecting a document to go before the public pre-assessment or post-assessment? Any thoughts, Shanna?

MS. MADSEN: Yes, definitely pre-assessment was my intention with this, and the motions actually I think that we put together last meeting, was to have the TC come back to us with this report, with intent of initiating an addendum either at this

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

meeting or the next meeting, with intent of making sure that the outcome of that was implanted for 2025, so pre-assessment.

MS. KERNS: I don't know if we would be able to have a document completed and be able to implement for 2025 or not. I think it depends on how difficult it is to develop options. Another thing that we need to think about is the interaction with federal waters, and what their measures will be, and whether or not, if we start to have these more constrained seasons, instead of open all year, how NOAA will constrain in their waters.

Because right now they would have just a pretty open, generous set of regulations, and in some cases the states have possession limits that restrict those federal measures, in some cases they don't. We would need to try to figure out how to manage that interaction with the federal measures, and more restrictive state measures. I don't know how much time that will take. It would take us a little while to resolve what we did the last time around.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Just to talk a little bit more about timing. I think no matter what we do here we're in a really awkward and kind of bad timing spot. We've got 2026 assessment, we've got 2026 potential recalibration of the MRIP with a new FES number, and we've got a Board and a fishery that shouldn't and is not willing to wait until those things are resolved.

You know there is a number of issues here that the Board correctly is wrestling with. Based on the conversation now, the Board is going into this, eyes wide open. We know there is going to be uncertainties. We know there is going to be things that may have to change after we implement something and let it sort of evolve as we get more information.

I think let's start down this road, get the PDT to do some of the work that they do, and just kind of check in. I think that is when the Board will understand, is there too much uncertainty for their comfort level, or is the path we're on, are they

comfortable that there is enough certainty here that we're going to end up in a place we hope to end up in at the end of this, which is constraining the fishery to the soft target, while not overly restricting the fishery itself.

It's a delicate balance, especially when there is a lot of uncertainty in the data. We don't have the ability to do projections moving forward on what the target should be in the fishery. There are a lot of things we don't have. There are more things we don't have than what we do have, but I think if we can start going down this road and see what some of the seasonal options may look like, and is it doable and workable for the Board once we do all the math and all the projections? But you've got to get it started and see how it goes, I think.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes. I'll tell you this, it's tough. I think one thing that may benefit this Board is, you know if this process brings in public comment, because as of right now, you know we tend to have these Board meetings with very little public input. It may take something like starting this process to have those important discussions with the help of our fishing community. Spud, help us out here.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, I certainly don't want to bog us down in a philosophical debate, but some of these hinges on, what the heck is as soft target? I mean we've sort of created this phrase. I think accepting that we've got unavoidable imprecision in the data that we use to manage this species, but we haven't set parameters of what makes it soft versus hard. We just discussed that when we were talking about fish specifications.

It's like okay, so well once you go over a certain amount, well that soft target becomes a hard target, then you've got to do something in response to it. Part of this, if we can never expect that cobia catch estimates are going to be any better than they already are, then to me the conversation needs to be, what is that soft target, and what are going to be the acceptable variabilities around those numbers that we're willing to live with.

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

Otherwise, we're going to find ourselves in this destructive, to do loop of having these same things, because I can just tell you for the state of Georgia, those estimates are all over the place. If you look at them historically, I mean their 2,000 this year, 11,000 this year, that needs to be part to me of how we take a fresh look at managing a species like this. I mean we have an 8-month season trying to bracket when those fish are available to be caught, because they don't behave the same way they used to. They don't just push through there in the spring like they used to. I think we've got east/west movement; we've got north/south movement. Now these fish are showing up in the summertime, not necessarily in great numbers, but they are still there to be caught. We're just kind of slamming the door, it's like eh, this one's hard. Maybe we should give it back to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

CHAIR CIMINO: Chris, I see your hand. I'm just going to look around. Are there any other comments, or even questions from Board members? I don't see any new faces, so Chris, go ahead.

MR. BATSAVAGE: I think that is a great question Spud raises regarding the soft targets, and we're discussing just that term. Right now, in the FMP it's like a three-year average of catch versus the harvest, you know the allocation. That is probably a good thing for the PDT to look at is looking at the three-year average appropriate? I think with cobia, Spud's question of maybe giving this back to a different agency.

I think when we took this on, I had a feeling that just the way cobia are and still are, moving around, we're probably going to have to adjust management more than other FMPs. I think we had a nice little reprieve from having to do that. But I think whatever we do here, hopefully will work for a while, knowing that we're probably going to have to make some adjustments in the future.

CHAIR CIMINO: Shanna.

MS. MADSEN: Mr. Chair, I appreciate it, and I really do appreciate Spud's comment. The one thing I do want to say is, we didn't develop this motion to try to limit the PDT. I think a lot of times, you know the PDT goes into a room and they don't have anything to start with, and you're staring at a blank piece of paper.

We wanted to make sure to give them something, so they could kind of start exploring. However, if they get in there and they think, hey we've come up with this amazing different way of doing this. I do want to make sure that I'm signaling that they have freedom to be creative, and I do think that we should definitely take note of Spud's comment on the soft targets, and see if we can get that as another thing that the PDT looks at, as they kind of open this book.

CHAIR CIMINO: We were having a bit of a sidebar here too. I think along with an e-mail on staff, there will be an e-mail to the states to nominate PDT members for this task. Spud, did you have your hand up?

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, maybe for some of the folks that are sort of new to this process. Maybe it helps, because you know an addendum or amendment kind of have an "ooh" factor to it, like we're fixing to have to do something pretty serious here. But in this case, you know this is necessary to initiate the actions and activities of the Plan Development Team.

Because I think sometimes, we just ask for staff to generate a white paper or to do something, you know less formal. In this case though, the goal is to activate a Plan Development Team to study these issues, to address them, leading to action. Is that what everybody understands this to be? It leads ultimately to some change in the status quo when it comes to allocation.

CHAIR CIMINO: I will say that that is how I see it, and that I would look to any Board member that thinks that this is open to another interpretation that they have concerns, let's discuss that now. But

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

otherwise, I agree, Spud. I think that is what we're looking for here. Any further discussion? Toni, go ahead.

MS. KERNS: Just to set some expectations. I think what would probably happen is we would get a PDT together, and we'll have Chelsea and Emilie work together on this probably, since Emilie will hopefully be doing some striped bass public hearings.

We'll try to tackle some of these issues, and probably come back to the Board in January with some questions, and probably the PDT might be asking for some direction. Then try to come back to the Board with a draft document in the spring meeting, if we can. We may need more time, I'm not sure. That would be a goal, to start off with.

CHAIR CIMINO: Okay, yes that sounds fair. I think we're getting closer. I'm going to give a two-minute caucus before I call the question. Can I see hands if anyone needs more time. Not seeing any hands, and from a previous cue from our Chairman, I will have this motion read back in. But I'm going to ask Ms. Madsen to do that for us, since it's a rather lengthy one, and I think she would have a better shot at it than I.

MS. MADSEN: The motion is: Move to initiate an addendum addressing recreational Atlantic cobia quota reallocation. The Board recommends the Plan Development Team explore options outside of the current state by state quota allocation system, specifically a coastwide soft target with regional management measures designed to meet the coastwide soft target, while considering the need for fishing opportunity based on the seasonality of the species in various regions.

CHAIR CIMINO: Great, can I see a **show of hands for all those that are in favor of the motion. All those opposed. Null votes. Any abstentions?** I'm going to get that tally, but for those online there was a nice mix of everything, apparently. **The vote is 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 nulls, 2 abstentions. All right. The motion passes.**

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

Again, and if Chelsea, if there is anything else to add to this, we will be doing by e-mail nominations for a SAS and a PDT. Look for that, and have some good names ready to do some work. Okay, with that we'll move on to seven. Like a director that always likes to work with a great actor, I tend to have John here as much as possible.

UPDATE FROM THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL ON MACKEREL PORT MEETINGS AND COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT 13

CHAIR CIMINO: I'm going to check this over with my good friend, John Carmichael, with the South Atlantic Management Council to give us an update on where the Management Council to give us an update on where they are with Spanish mackerel and the Port meetings that we are all going to be doing our best to get the people out, and get the South Atlantic Council as much help on this as possible. Thanks, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, with that, thank you, Mr. Chair. Quick update. We are working on the Framework Amendment 13, it's pretty narrow in its scope. It's just looking at adjusting the catch levels to respond to the latest stock assessment. We did at our last meeting discuss the impacts of the FES bias on the various actions that the Council is considering.

This is one that we are continuing to move on, despite knowing that there is a potential for some changes on the horizon, due to the FES. Primary reason for that is, it is getting the currency of this stock to be managed under the FES, instead of the old CHTS. You know, we talked about that a little bit earlier, when we got the presentation on the FES and this acronym soup.

We're not looking at any changes in allocations, and that's really where the potential bias in the absolute estimates coming out of FES, are going to have the biggest impacts on our fishery. Recreational versus commercial sectors is one, and then depending on how this potential question bias plays out in

different regions and different states, it could affect the regional allocations.

Hopefully, we can have information that is corrected for this bias, by the time we get around to looking at actually implementing changes in the various allocations under this fishery. The plan now is for hearings on this amendment, this framework adjustment in the spring of 2024, with approval in June of 2024, and that would put in these new catch levels. Then simultaneously, we're going to be working on the Port Meetings which were mentioned.

Basically, between this coming December and through maybe early summer, June of 2024, to go through the Port Meetings, which is to get input from fishermen throughout the range of the species on what they are seeing and what they would like to do differently with Spanish mackerel into the future. Big issue is, the regional allocations and the varying closures in the different regions, so addressing that. What can we do to be more climate prepared, climate resilience to use the language we're faced with by NMFS quite often in the Council system. You know just being more resilient to how the species is changing. I've long thought that coastal migratory pelagics, just consider their name and you've got to get a good idea they are probably likely going to be early fish to respond to climate changes. As they're moving, they can always go find prey and better water temperatures, and that seems to be what they do. I think that's going to be really exciting to do these Port Meetings, and we appreciate the support of the Commission.

We're also working with the Mid-Atlantic and New England, because these things aren't going quite a far north these days, to get input from throughout the range of the stock in those Port Meetings, and they will be facilitated meetings with the fishermen, trying to say, you know here is your chance to give us information.

We're not coming to you with a bunch of management measures you're not going to like, and

you want to tell us you don't like them. But really, to have kind of an open forum. We've got some people that have had a lot of training in this, and a lot of experience. I think they are well equipped to go out and have these kinds of conversations with fishermen.

We will definitely appreciate all the support we can get from you guys on doing that. Then once that process wraps up, we will start the next amendment, so probably around September, 2024 is the plan to get started on a fuller amendment that will address any of the issues that come up out of the Port Meetings, and hopefully have that for approval in December of 2025.

CHAIR CIMINO: Any questions for John? Not seeing any around the room, and none online, then we can move on. I appreciate that again, John. Go ahead, Shanna.

MS. MADSEN: Just one really quick. When you guys start your meetings, can we get an e-mail shot out, maybe to us, so that we can make sure that we connect with you at the appropriate timeframe?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, I think definitely. Do you want us just to reach out to the whole Board here?

MS. MADSEN: It would be great, thank you.

ELECT VICE-CHAIR

CHAIR CIMINO: Up next, as I mentioned, this is going to be my last meeting as Board Chair. We are looking for a nomination for Vice-Chair. I look to Chris Batsavage. I **move to nominate Spud Woodward as Vice-Chair for the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.**

CHAIR CIMINO: Thanks, Chris, do we have a second, Malcolm Rhodes.

MR. WOODWARD: Hey, in for a penny, in for a dollar, you know is all you can say. By the way, for the record, that null vote was not to go past the personality. I actually had a fellow delegate on the

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Pelagics Management Board.

The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

phone, so just so you all, for the record, I saw some quizzical looks around there like, what happened, how do you have a null vote with one person?

CHAIR CIMINO: That's fair to put that out there before this nomination is voted on, I suppose. **Any objection to Mr. Woodward being? Excellent, that's good.** I didn't think so. Spud, I don't envy you, but I think you are an excellent choice for the job here. It's going to be an interesting couple of years. Many thanks and congratulations to Spud.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR CIMINO: Any other business to come before the Board? Not seeing any; motion to adjourn. I got a thumbs up, John Clark and a second by Jeff Kaelin, thank you, we are adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 4:45 P.m. on October 17, 2023)



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfmc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Coastal Pelagics Management Board

FROM: Cobia Plan Development Team

DATE: January 10, 2024

SUBJECT: Recreational Reallocation Draft Addendum Scoping Progress and Ongoing Questions

The Cobia Plan Development Team (PDT) met via webinar on January 8, 2024, to begin scoping the recreational cobia reallocation Draft Addendum, develop questions for Board clarification, and review the timeline for this action.

PDT Members in Attendance: Nichole Ares (RI), Zachary Schuller (NY), Brian Neilan (NJ), Angela Giuliano (MD), Somers Smott (VA), Kathy Knowlton (GA)

ASMFC Staff: Chelsea Tuohy, Emilie Franke

Others in Attendance: Shanna Madsen (VA, Board Proxy), Josh McGilly (VA)

Background

Addendum I to the Atlantic Cobia Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) allocates 96% of the coastwide total harvest quota to the recreational sector and 4% of the quota to the commercial sector. The recreational quota is further allocated to non-*de minimis* states as harvest targets or “soft targets” with a 1% set aside for harvest in *de minimis* states. Approved in 2019, Amendment 1 to the Cobia FMP defines the process by which the recreational quota is allocated to non-*de minimis* states where allocations are based on “states’ percentages of the coastwide historical landings in numbers of fish, derived as 50% of the 10-year average landings from 2006-2015 and 50% of the 5-year average landings from 2011-2015” (Table 1).

In October of 2023, recognizing that the distribution of Atlantic cobia landings has shifted since allocations were previously addressed, the Coastal Pelagics Management Board (Board) initiated an Addendum to the Cobia FMP to address reallocation of recreational cobia quota. Specifically, the Board expressed interest in considering alternatives to the current state-by-state allocation system with one option being a regional approach where regional management measures are designed to meet the designated target (coastwide, regional, or state) while considering the need for fishing opportunity based on the seasonality of the species in various regions. The Board also noted that when developing the Addendum, the Cobia PDT should examine the timeline for setting recreational measures in addition to allocations. Currently,

M24-07

recreational management measures for cobia are set every three years or when a new stock assessment is available, and measures are adjusted based on each state's performance relative to their respective harvest targets.

Options Under Consideration

The Cobia PDT discussed three preliminary alternatives to the current allocation system that could be included in the Draft Addendum. The PDT is seeking Board input on the viability of proposed options and allocation data timelines.

Continued State-by-State Allocation

The first option the PDT is proposing to explore would continue state-by-state allocations using an updated data range to calculate harvest targets. Additionally, the PDT is interested in further examining the potential for an automatic allocation trigger where allocations could be updated with new data via Board action if distribution changes are indicated or a state falls out of *de minimis*. An automatic allocation trigger would allow for allocations to be updated without the need for an Addendum. However, the PDT will need to further explore what scenarios outside of a state losing *de minimis* status would serve as a trigger for an allocation update.

The Cobia PDT is seeking Board feedback on the appropriateness of including an automatic allocation trigger in a state-by-state approach to reallocation of recreational quota.

Additionally, the PDT is seeking guidance on what scenarios outside of a state falling out of *de minimis* status would constitute a reallocation.

Regional Allocation

The second option explored by the PDT was the potential for regional allocations using one of the following two regional breakdowns:

- Two Region Allocation –
 - Northern Region (States north of South Carolina)
 - Southern Region (South Carolina and Georgia)
- Three Region Allocation –
 - Northern Region (States north of Maryland)
 - Mid-Atlantic Region (North Carolina-Maryland)
 - Southern Region (South Carolina and Georgia)

Using this approach, each region would be allocated a harvest target based on the allocation data timeline chosen by the PDT and Board. Recreational management measures in each region would consist of the same bag and size limit with seasons determined by cobia availability in each region (“rolling seasons”).

Coastwide Allocation

The final option the PDT considered was to remove state and/or regional allocations in favor of only a coastwide recreational quota. In this scenario, a coastwide size and bag limit would be established for all states, and rolling seasons would be implemented based on cobia availability in each state.

Rolling Seasons

The regional and coastwide allocation alternatives both propose the idea of rolling seasons based on cobia availability. The PDT would need to determine how to develop proposed season dates for each region. One initial idea is seasons could be based on when X% (percentage threshold to be determined, e.g., 60%) of the cobia harvest in the state/region occurs throughout the year.

While the PDT will further explore the option for rolling seasons based on a coastwide or regional approach, there were a number of concerns. First, there was an equity concern regarding the coastwide or regional quota being caught before cobia migrate to the southern region. The PDT will need to examine how rolling seasons would work compared to current regulations and the ability to incorporate regional differences and consideration of cobia spawning behavior into season openings (Table 2). Additionally, the **PDT is seeking guidance from the Board regarding the feasibility of upfront regulatory changes needed with this approach, which would require all states in a region to have the same regulations in place.**

Recreational Allocation Data Requirements and Timeframe

Given that reallocation of recreational cobia quota would require updating the timeseries used to determine allocations, the PDT discussed the appropriate timeline to use moving forward assuming a state-by-state or regional allocation system. The current allocation system distributes recreational quota based on historical landings where 50% of the allocation is determined by the 10-year average landings from 2006-2015 and 50% of the allocation is determined by the 5-year average landings from 2011-2015. However, events during the most recent ten years of cobia landings would prevent certain years from being included, such as the closure of the recreational cobia fishery in 2016-2017. Additionally, the PDT discussed the merits of including COVID years (2020-2021) in allocations given the pause in sampling and use of imputed data in the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) time-series. Table 3 illustrates differences between 2006-2015 average harvest and 2017-2023 average harvest.

The Cobia PDT is seeking Board feedback on whether COVID years should be included in allocation calculations.

Reviewing Changes to Recreational Measures

Atlantic cobia recreational management measures are reviewed each time a new total harvest quota is set through the specifications process (approximately every three years). **The Cobia PDT is seeking Board feedback on preferred timelines for recreational measures setting and review.** Specifically, the PDT discussed data availability concerns given the timing between assessments, lack of projections for the species, and uncertainty surrounding the modeling framework for SEDAR 95 scheduled to be completed in 2025.

Incorporating Uncertainty into Management

The PDT briefly discussed interest in exploring how uncertainty factors into recreational management of Atlantic cobia, a pulse/rare event species with high state-level PSEs. The group listed the following as topics of interest:

- Incorporating an upfront uncertainty buffer to the harvest target.
- Including a buffer around state-level soft targets to indicate when management action is needed.
- Applying a quota borrowing system to prevent management whiplash, e.g., if a state/region overage is balanced by a state/region underage, management action is not needed.

The Cobia PDT is seeking Board feedback on interest in exploring uncertainty buffers and quota borrowing systems as they relate to recreational cobia management.

Tables

Table 1. Current allocation of recreational cobia quota (number of fish).

State	Allocation Percentage	Current Recreational Target
Georgia	9.4%	7,229 fish
South Carolina	12.1%	9,306 fish
North Carolina	38.1%	29,302 fish
Virginia	39.4%	30,302 fish
De minimis	1.0%	769 fish
Total	100%	76,908 fish

Table 2. 2023 Atlantic cobia regulations.

State	Recreational Measures	Commercial Measures
RI	<i>De minimis</i> Minimum Size: 37 in total length Vessel Limit: 1 fish per vessel Season: year-round	<u>Coastwide</u> Possession Limit: 2 fish per person Minimum Size: 33 in fork length or 37 in total length Vessel Limit: 6 fish If commercial fishing in state waters is closed, commercial fishing in federal waters will be recommended to mirror state closures <u>Deviations</u> -Rhode Island possession limit is 2 fish per vessel -Virginia possession limit is per licensee rather than per person -North Carolina has 36 minimum fork length -No commercial harvest in South Carolina state waters
NJ	<i>De minimis</i> Minimum Size: 37 in total length Vessel Limit: 1 fish per vessel Season: year-round	
DE	<i>De minimis</i> Minimum Size: 37 in total length Bag Limit: 1 fish per vessel Vessel Limit: 1 fish per vessel	
MD	<i>De minimis</i> Minimum Size: 40 in total length Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Vessel Limit: 2 fish per vessel Season: June 15-September 15	

PRFC	<p>Minimum Size: 40 in total length (only 1 fish over 50" per vessel) Bag limit: 1 per person Vessel Limit: 2 fish per vessel Season: June 15-September 15</p>	<p>-Georgia possession limit is 1 fish per person (not to exceed 6 per vessel) and minimum size is 36 in fork length</p>
VA	<p>Minimum Size: 40 in total length (only 1 fish over 50" per vessel) Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Vessel Limit: 2 fish per vessel Season: June 15-September 15</p>	
NC	<p>Minimum Size: 36 in fork length Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Season: May 1-December 31 <u>Private Vessel Limit</u> May 1- June 30: 2 fish July 1-Dec 31: 1 fish <u>For-Hire Vessel Limit</u> May 1-Dec 31: 4 fish</p>	
SC	<p>Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Minimum Size: 36 in fork length Vessel Limit: 6 fish Season: Open year-round <u>Southern Cobia Management Zone:</u> Minimum Size: 36 in FL Season: June 1-April 30 (closed in May) Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Vessel Limit: 3 fish -If recreational fishing in federal waters is closed, recreational fishing in all SC state waters is also closed.</p>	
GA	<p>Bag Limit: 1 fish per person Minimum Size: 36 in fork length Vessel Limit: 6 fish Season: March 1-October 31</p>	
<p>*Florida has a declared interest in the Atlantic Coastal Migratory Group, but their cobia fisheries are managed as part of the Gulf of Mexico Migratory Group due to cobia stock boundaries.</p>		

Table 3. Comparison of changes in average harvest (numbers of fish) between current recreational allocation timeline and proposed recreational allocation timeline. Note: 2023 only includes preliminary Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data through Wave 5.

	Southern Region (Georgia-South Carolina)	Mid Atlantic (North Carolina-Maryland)	Northern Region I (North of South Carolina)	Northern Region II (North of Maryland)	Total
2006-2015	12,013.00	38,558.50	46,574.00	1,853.30	52,424.80
2011-2015	13,099.60	44,467.60	55,491.80	3,657.40	61,224.60
2014-2015, 2017-2019, 2022-2023	9,818.71	67,292.14	72,309.14	812.00	77,922.86

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR
SPANISH MACKEREL
(Scomberomorus maculatus)
2022 FISHING YEAR



Draft for Board Review

January 2024



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Table of Contents

I.	Status of the Plan	1
II.	Status of the Stocks.....	3
III.	Status of the Fishery	3
IV.	Status of Assessment Advice	4
V.	Status of Research and Monitoring	5
VI.	Status of Management Measures.....	6
VII.	Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements for 2022	9
VIII.	Recommendations of the Plan Review Team	10
IX.	References	11
X.	Figures.....	13
XI.	Tables	16
	Appendix.	21

I. Status of the Plan

Date of FMP Approval: Original FMP – November 1990

Amendments: Omnibus Amendment to Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout (Amendment 2) – August 2011

Addendum: Addendum I – August 2013

Management Area: The Atlantic coast distribution of the resource from Rhode Island through the east coast of Florida

Active Boards/Committees: Coastal Pelagics Management Board; Spanish Mackerel Plan Review Team; South Atlantic Species Advisory Panel

The Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources (1983 and subsequent amendments) and the [Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spanish Mackerel](#) (1990) manage Atlantic group Spanish mackerel in federal and state Atlantic waters from Rhode Island through the east coast of Florida. All states in that range, excluding Pennsylvania, have a declared interest in the Interstate FMP for Spanish mackerel. The Coastal Pelagics Management Board serves to manage Spanish mackerel for the Commission. The Interstate FMP for Spanish mackerel is a flexible document intended to track the federal FMP; thus, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) has the lead on Atlantic group Spanish mackerel management.

[Amendment 1](#) to the Spanish mackerel FMP, as part of an Omnibus Amendment to the ISFMP Management Plans for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout, was approved in August 2011. The primary objective of this amendment was to bring the FMPs for all three species under the authority of ACFCMA to provide more efficient and effective management and changes to management for the future. In addition, the amendment made the Commission's Spanish mackerel FMP consistent with federal Spanish mackerel requirements determined by the SAFMC.

[Addendum I](#) was approved in August 2013 to allow for a two-year pilot program (2013 and 2014) that allowed states to reduce the minimum size limit of Spanish mackerel for the commercial pound net fishery to 11.5 inches from 12 inches for July through September.

The goals of the ISFMP are to complement federal management in state waters, to conserve the Atlantic group Spanish mackerel resource throughout its range and to achieve compatible management among the states that harvest Spanish mackerel. In accordance with the 2011 Omnibus Amendment, the updated FMP's objectives are to:

1. Manage the Spanish mackerel fishery by restricting fishing mortality to rates below the threshold fishing mortality rates to provide adequate spawning potential to sustain long-term abundance of the Spanish mackerel populations.

2. Manage the Spanish mackerel stock to maintain the spawning stock biomass above the target biomass levels.
3. Minimize endangered species bycatch in the Spanish mackerel fishery.
4. Provide a flexible management system that coordinates management activities between state and federal waters to promote complementary regulations throughout Spanish mackerel's range which minimizes regulatory delay while retaining substantial ASMFC, Council, and public input into management decisions; and which can adapt to changes in resource abundance, new scientific information and changes in fishing patterns among user groups or by area.
5. Develop research priorities that will further refine the Spanish mackerel management program to maximize the biological, social, and economic benefits derived from the Spanish mackerel population. See Table 1 for state Spanish mackerel regulations in 2020-2021.

In 2019, several inconsistencies between the two FMPs were brought to the Board's attention, but the Board decided to postpone any changes to the Commission's Spanish Mackerel FMP until after completion of the next stock assessment in 2022. As the SAFMC has the lead on Atlantic Spanish mackerel management, the measures summarized below are those of the federal FMP.

The SAFMC manages Atlantic group Spanish mackerel with guidance from its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The SAFMC determines needed adjustments to regulatory measures, including allowable catch, bag limits, size limits, and trip limits. The SAFMC deliberations are assisted by a Mackerel Cobia Committee that includes representatives from the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and an Advisory Panel with South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic industry representation. Since the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources FMP is a joint plan with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC), any plan amendments to this FMP must be approved by both Councils. Actions that can be completed through the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP's framework procedure and only address Atlantic group Spanish mackerel, do not require approval from the GMFMC.

The federal FMP divides the commercial fishery and defines quotas for the Atlantic and Gulf migratory groups. Within the Atlantic migratory group, there are two zones- the Northern (consisting of the states from New York through North Carolina) and the Southern (South Carolina to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County border, Florida). For the Atlantic migratory group in the 2020/2021 year, in accordance with CMP Framework Amendment 2, the full commercial quota was 3.33 million pounds with allocations of 662,670 pounds and 2,667,330 pounds to the Northern and Southern zones, respectively. An adjusted Southern quota of 2,417,330 pounds was used to determine trip limit reductions in the Southern commercial zone. The 2020-2021 fishing year began on March 1st, 2020 and closed on July 22, 2020 in the Northern Zone. The Southern Zone reduced the commercial trip limit on January 29, 2020, to 500 lbs. until March 1, 2020.

The federal commercial trip limit is a year-round 3,500 pound daily possession/landings limit for the states from New York through North Carolina, with South Carolina through Florida's commercial trip limit varying depending on the percent of quota remaining. Following the implementation of Amendment 20B and CMP Framework Amendment 2, the federal trip limit for the Southern zone (SC through FL) decreases as quota is caught. When 75% of the "adjusted" Southern zone quota¹ (1,812,998 pounds ww) is caught, the trip limit is reduced from 3,500 pounds to 1,500 pounds. When 100% of the adjusted Southern zone quota (2,417,330 pounds ww) is caught, the commercial trip limit is further reduced to 500 pounds. When 100% of the Southern zone commercial quota is met, harvest is prohibited for the remainder of the fishing year in federal waters, with limited commercial harvest remaining open in some state waters. In both the Northern and Southern zones, the recreational bag limit is set at 15 fish. The minimum size limit for both fisheries is 12 inches fork length (the total length equivalent, 14 inches, is used for some state waters).

II. Status of the Stocks

In 2012, Spanish mackerel was assessed and peer reviewed through the SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR). The results of the 2012 assessment (SEDAR 28) indicated that the stock was not overfished and was not experiencing overfishing. In 2022, an operational assessment (i.e., update to the last assessment) was completed through the SEDAR process with data through 2020. This most recent assessment (SEDAR 78) indicates the same stock status: the stock is not overfished and is not experiencing overfishing based on a three-year average of fishing mortality. However, in the terminal year of the assessment (2020), the model found the estimated fishing rate to be above the maximum fishing mortality threshold (Figure 1) indicating that if the 2020 overfishing rate continues, the stock may fall into an overfishing status. For spawning stock biomass, the assessment indicates spawning biomass has remained above SSBMSY throughout the time series (Figure 2).

III. Status of the Fishery

On July 1, 2018, the Marine Recreational Information Program recalibrated recreational harvest estimates from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) to the mail-based Fishing Effort Survey (FES). Estimates used in this report are now those of the FES, but Figure 3 shows a comparison of CHTS and FES estimates. The federal FMP quotas are still based on previous CHTS estimates, but FES estimates will be incorporated into management through a future Plan Amendment to the Federal Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP.

Spanish mackerel are an important recreational and commercial fishery in South Atlantic waters, with some landings in the Mid-Atlantic region, particularly in recent years (Tables 2-4). While the fishery is managed according to a March – February fishing year, landings summarized in this report are shown by calendar year, unless otherwise stated. Total landings of Spanish mackerel in calendar year 2022 are estimated at 6.5 million pounds. The commercial fishery harvested approximately 38% of the total and the recreational fishery about 62%, according to MRIP recreational harvest estimates.

¹ The adjusted quota is the Southern zone quota minus 250,000 lbs.

From 1950 to 2022, commercial landings of Atlantic coast Spanish mackerel have ranged between 1.8 and 11.1 million pounds, although landings have been relatively stable hovering around the 10-year average of 3.4 million pounds for the past few decades. Coastwide commercial landings have generally been below 4 million pounds since 1995, coinciding with the entanglement net ban in Florida, with the exception of 2010 (4.52 million pounds) and 2011 (4.35 million pounds). Gill nets were the dominant commercial gear in Florida prior to the ban, after which the use of cast nets increased. In 2022, coastwide commercial landings were 2.4 million pounds (Figure 4), of which 1.25 million pounds (52%) were landed in Florida and approximately 0.9 million pounds (38%) were landed in North Carolina (Table 2). The 2022 landings are a 49% decrease from 2021 levels, driven primarily by a decrease in Florida's landings (63% decrease in Florida's commercial landings).

According to MRIP, recreational anglers harvested 4.0 million Spanish mackerel (4.0 million pounds) in 2022, which is a 54% decrease in pounds from 2021 (Tables 3 and 4; MRIP query January 2024). The number of recreationally harvested fish appears to show a cyclical trend, with low harvests in the early to mid-80s and mid to late 90s, interspersed with higher harvests (Figure 5). Florida and North Carolina have historically accounted for the majority of recreational landings in both number and weight. However, recreational landings in Florida significantly decreased in 2022 by 88% in pounds, while South Carolina's landings increased by 54% in pounds. In 2022, North Carolina landed 46% of the coastwide recreational landings in pounds, South Carolina landed 19%, and Florida landed 17%. In 2021, North Carolina landed 22% of the coastwide recreational landings in pounds, South Carolina landed 6%, and Florida landed 64%.

Regarding the 2022 decrease in landings, Florida noted that areas off central east Florida are increasingly closed to vessels by the U.S. Coast Guard to create safety zones associated with space launches. This has prevented fishermen from accessing areas where they would traditionally fish for Spanish mackerel. The establishment of these temporary safety zones has contributed to a decline in Spanish mackerel landings and fishing effort, and this topic is currently being investigated by the SAFMC.

The number of recreational releases of Spanish mackerel has generally increased over time. In 2022 there were 4.3 million Spanish mackerel released alive, which is lower than 2020-2021 but higher than all years prior to 2020 (Table 5, Figure 5). Live releases comprised 52% of the total recreational catch, slightly above the previous 10-year average (2012-2021) of 45%.

IV. Status of Assessment Advice

In 2012, Spanish mackerel was assessed and peer reviewed through the SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR). The input data (through 2011) were applied to two assessment models, with the primary model being a statistical catch at age model called the Beaufort Assessment Model (BAM); while a secondary surplus-production model (ASPIC) provided a comparison of model results. The Review Panel concluded that the statistical catch at age model was the most appropriate model to characterize the stock status for management purposes. The most recent assessment, SEDAR 78, used the same model configuration with

some updates, including an updated growth model, shortened time series to a new start date, and alternative pooling of commercial age compositions due to low sample sizes.

After SEDAR 78 was complete, it was reviewed by the SAFMC's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The SSC noted some concerns about the assessment, including some missing age compositions, data gaps due to small sample sizes, uncertainty around the spike in 2020 recreational data, and need for updated natural mortality and steepness estimates. The SSC concluded that the SEDAR 78 base model is adequate for determining stock status but did not support the stock projections. The SSC noted the projections are not sufficiently robust and influenced greatly by uncertain data in terminal year (2020), and the indications of a declining stock are not consistent with observations or recent data.

V. Status of Research and Monitoring

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) continues to monitor length and weight at age and size frequencies, fishing mortality, and migration; collect age data and catch per unit effort by area, season, fishery, and gear; monitor shrimp trawl bycatch; investigate methods to predict year class strength; calculate estimates of recruitment, and develop conservation gear to reduce bycatch. The NMFS is also collecting discard data through a bycatch logbook in the mackerel and snapper-grouper fisheries. The Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Development Foundation and several states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida) have evaluated finfish bycatch in the southeastern shrimp trawl fishery, including bycatch of Spanish mackerel. The South Atlantic component of the Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) collects Spanish mackerel data in its coastal trawl survey from Cape Hatteras to Cape Canaveral. Additionally, the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP) began regular spring and fall surveys between Martha's Vineyard and Cape Hatteras in the fall of 2007.²

Abundance trends continue to be monitored primarily through fishery-dependent sources. The states and the SEFSC monitor catch data through the cooperative commercial statistics collection program and the recreational fisheries survey. Commercial trip reports are tallied more frequently in the winter and early spring by the state of Florida and NMFS as the commercial quota is approached.

North Carolina also conducts fishery independent monitoring. Three fishery independent gill net surveys were initiated by the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries in May of 2001, 2003 and 2008, respectively. These surveys utilize a stratified random sampling scheme designed to characterize the size and age distribution for key estuarine species in Atlantic Ocean (ended in 2015) and Pamlico Sound as well as the Pamlico, Pungo, Neuse, Cape Fear and New Rivers. The overall Spanish mackerel CPUE from these surveys was extremely low and therefore lacks the desired precision and confidence needed for the data to be used for management purposes.

² Many states and regional surveys experienced an interruption in sampling efforts in both recreational and commercial fishery surveys during the 2020 calendar year.

VI. Status of Management Measures

2008 Framework Adjustment (Federal)

In February 2008, NOAA Fisheries finalized a framework adjustment to change the beginning date for trip limits in the Atlantic Spanish mackerel fishery off the east coast of Florida. The 3,500 pound trip limit begins March 1 each year to correspond with the beginning of the fishing year (as changed in Amendment 15).

Omnibus Amendment (Interstate)

In August 2011, the Management Board approved an amendment to the Spanish Mackerel FMP to address three issues: compliance measures, consistency with federal management in the exclusive economic zone, and alignment with Commission standards. Through the Omnibus Amendment, the following fisheries management measures are required for states within the management unit range:

Recreational Fishery

- 12" Fork Length (FL) or 14" Total Length (TL) minimum size limit
- 15 fish creel limit
- Must be landed with head and fins intact
- Calendar year season
- Prohibited gear: Drift gill nets prohibited south of Cape Lookout, NC
- Decrease in the recreational quota the following year via reduced bag limits if the Total Annual Catch Limit (ACL) is exceeded and stock is overfished.

Commercial Fishery

- Prohibited: purse seines; drift gill nets south of Cape Lookout, NC
- 12" FL or 14" TL minimum size limit
- March 1 – end of February season
- Trip limits (per vessel, per day)
NY-GA: 3500 lbs
FL: 3500 lbs, 3/1-11/30;
3500 lbs Mon-Fri & 1500 lbs Sat-Sun, 12/1 until 75% adjusted quota taken;
1500 lbs, when 75% adjusted quota taken until 100% adjusted quotas taken;
500 lbs after 100% of adjusted quotas taken (the adjusted quota compensates for estimated catches of 500 lbs per vessel per day to the end of the season)
- Commercial quotas decreased the following year if Total ACL is exceeded and stock is overfished

Since approval of the Omnibus Amendment, several changes (described below) have been made to the federal FMP that are not currently reflected in the Commission management through the Omnibus Amendment. The Board has been informed of these changes and will likely consider changes to better align Commission and federal management documents following the approval of the 2022 stock assessment.

Amendment 18 (Federal)

In August 2011, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic, Fishery Management Councils approved Amendment 18 to the joint FMP for Coastal Migratory Pelagics. The primary action under consideration established Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs) for the cobia, king mackerel, and Spanish mackerel. The amendment designates ACLs and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs) for each of the two migratory groups of Spanish mackerel (Atlantic and Gulf). For the Atlantic migratory group, the commercial sector ACL is set equivalent to the commercial sector quota of 3.13 million pounds. The AM for the commercial sector is that the commercial sector will close when the commercial quota is reached or projected to be reached. In addition, current trip limit adjustments will remain in place. When the commercial sector closes, harvest and possession of Spanish mackerel would be prohibited for persons aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for Spanish mackerel has been issued.

For the recreational sector, the ACT is set to 2.32 million pounds, while the ACL is set at 2.56 million pounds. Regarding the AM, if the stock ACL is exceeded in any year, the bag limit will be reduced the next fishing year by the amount necessary to ensure recreational landings achieve the recreational ACT, but do not exceed the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. A payback will be assessed if the Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel is determined to be overfished and the stock ACL is exceeded. The payback will include a reduction in the sector ACT for the following year by the amount of the overage by that sector in the prior fishing year.

Addendum I (Interstate)

In August 2013, the Commission's South Atlantic State-Federal Fisheries Management Board approved Addendum I to the Omnibus Amendment to for Spanish mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout.

Addendum I to the Omnibus Amendment establishes a pilot program that would allow states to reduce the Spanish mackerel minimum size limit for the commercial pound net fishery to 11 ½ inches during the summer months of July through September for the 2013 and 2014 fishing years only. The measure is intended to reduce waste of these shorter fish, which are discarded dead in the summer months, by converting them to landed fish that will be counted against the quota.

The Addendum responds to reports about the increased incidence of Spanish mackerel ¼ to ½ inch short of the 12-inch fork length minimum size limit in pound nets during the summer months. While the fish are alive in the pound, once the net is bunted and bailing commences, they die before being released. This may be due to a combination of temperature, stress and crowding. While individual fishermen have experimented with different wall or panel mesh sizes depending on the target species, there is no consistent use of cull panels. Those who have used cull panels have noted the difficulty and lack of success in being able to release the undersized fish quickly enough to prevent dead discards during this time of year.

The measures in Addendum I only applied for the 2013 and 2014 fishing seasons. The South Atlantic Board formally extended the provisions of Addendum I for the 2015 through 2018

fishing seasons. After 2018, North Carolina, the only state to implement the reduced minimum size limit, stopped requesting approval of the program due to no further request from pound net fishermen to continue the program, and due to recent closures in federal waters.

Amendment 20A (Federal)

Effective July 2014, this Amendment addresses the sale of bag limit caught Spanish mackerel. The amendment rose from concerns that the recreational sales of bag limit caught fish, which are counted toward commercial quotas, are contributing to early closures of the commercial sector. In addition potential double counting of these fish could be causing erroneous landings estimates. In response, the Amendment prohibits bag limit sales with the exception of recreationally caught fish from state permitted tournaments in the South Atlantic region. This amendment also included an action to remove income requirements for federal CMP permits.

South Atlantic CMP Framework Action (Federal)

Effective December 2014, this action allows Spanish mackerel, harvested with gillnet gear in the South Atlantic EEZ off Florida (north of the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line) that is in excess of the trip limit, to be transferred to another federally permitted vessel that has not yet harvested the trip limit. The Framework stipulates that the transfer can only occur if: 1) allowable gillnet gear was used to harvest Spanish mackerel; 2) the transfer takes place in federal waters between vessels with valid commercial permits; 3) the receiving vessel does not have more than 3 gillnets aboard after the transfer; 4) all fish remain entangled in the meshes of the net until the transfer; 5) the quantity of the fish transferred does not exceed the daily trip limit; and 6) there is only one transfer per vessel per day.

CMP Framework Amendment 1 (Federal)

This Framework Amendment, effective December 2014, increases the Atlantic Spanish mackerel ACL to 6.063 million pounds. The modification to the ACL followed the 2013 stock assessment which concluded that the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The Amendment divides the ACL between the commercial sector (3.33 million pounds) and the recreational sector (2.727 million pounds).

Amendment 20B (Federal)

Effective March 2015, this Amendment separates commercial quotas of Atlantic Spanish mackerel between a Northern zone (north of NC/SC line) and a Southern zone (South of NC/SC line). The Amendment arose from concerns that the commercial quota could be filled by fishermen in one state before fish are available to fishermen in another state. In order to prevent this from happening, a zone is closed when its respective quota is met. Quota for each zone was based on landings from 2002/2003-2011/2012.

CMP Framework Amendment 2 (Federal)

Implemented July 2015, this Amendment modifies the commercial trip limit system in the Southern zone. The rule establishes a trip limit of 3,500 lbs for Spanish mackerel in Federal waters offshore of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. When 75% of the adjusted southern zone commercial quota is caught, the commercial trip limit is reduced to 1,500 lbs. When 100%

of the adjusted southern zone commercial quota is met, the commercial trip limit is further reduced to 500 lbs. This limit remains until the end of the year or the total Southern zone commercial quota is met.

CMP Framework Amendment 5 (Federal)

Implemented August 2017, this Framework Amendment allows commercially permitted vessels to operate as private recreational vessels when the commercial season is closed for Spanish or king mackerel.

Amendment 34 (Federal)

Implemented in 2023, Amendment 34 allows cut-off (damaged by natural predation) Atlantic Spanish mackerel caught under the recreational bag limit, which comply with the minimum size limits, to be possessed, and offloaded ashore.

Framework Amendment 13 (Federal) – *Development of this action is currently paused.*

Initiated in 2023, Framework Amendment 13 responds to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 78) and was intended to update catch levels based on the SSC recommendations and address recreational accountability measures. This action would provide recreational catch levels in MRIP FES units. In December 2023, this action was paused until the completion of the 2024 port meetings.

VII. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements for 2022

All states must implement the requirements specified in section 5 of the Omnibus Amendment (5.1 Mandatory Compliance Elements for States; 5.1.1 Mandatory Elements of State Programs; 5.1.1.1 Regulatory Requirements). **The PRT found no inconsistencies among state management measures from the FMP requirements.**

De Minimis Requests

A state qualifies for *de minimis* status if its previous three-year average combined commercial and recreational landings is less than 1% of the previous three-year average coastwide combined commercial and recreational landings. Those states that qualify for *de minimis* are not required to implement any monitoring requirements, as none are included in the plan.

The states of Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, and Georgia request *de minimis* status. All states except Georgia meet the requirements of *de minimis*. Georgia's three-year average combined landings is 1.04%, just above the 1% threshold. Georgia notes the following rationale for their *de minimis* request in the state's compliance report:

Recognizing Georgia's average combined three-year commercial and recreational harvest is slightly greater than the 1% de minimis definition, an additional perspective is gained by reviewing the 10-year Georgia Spanish mackerel harvest and de minimis designation history. In most years, there is no Spanish mackerel commercial harvest in Georgia. Georgia's de minimis calculation is dependent on recreational harvest. Except for 2019 and 2020, recreational harvest is below 75,000 pounds, thereby resulting in de

minimis status seven of the last nine years. The recreational estimates are also very imprecise with an average PSE of 59% since 2013. Based on these factors, we respectfully request being granted de minimis status even though the average combined harvest for the most recent three years exceeds the 1% definition by 0.04%.

Regulation Changes

Rhode Island declared an interest in Spanish mackerel in 2021 and joined the Coastal Pelagics Management Board at that time. In 2022, Rhode Island implemented regulations to meet the FMP requirements for Spanish mackerel.

Some states implemented reduced commercial trip limits via proclamation or public notice when federal waters closed in 2022 (Table 1).

VIII. Recommendations of the Plan Review Team

Additional research recommendations can be found in the most recent stock assessment found [here \(pdf 84-85\)](#). The PRT had the following additional research recommendations:

- Understanding the dynamics across the regions is important for future management considering. Consider extending management measures into the New England region (as far north as Massachusetts) as consistent catches and anecdotal sightings of Spanish mackerel have occurred in parts of this area and are increasing in frequency. Also determine whether more northerly fish are of the same stock as fish further south, and the impact of the potential regions in future stock assessments. The PRT notes some of this regional analysis could be completed in the forthcoming paper that will be developed by the Spanish Mackerel Technical Committee to characterize the recreational and commercial fisheries along the Atlantic Coast based on fishery profiles submitted by each state.
- A need for understanding the life history components for Spanish mackerel, particularly from fishery independent surveys. Length, sex, age, and CPUE data are needed for improved stock assessment accuracy. Data collection is needed for all states, particularly from Virginia north. Evaluation of weight and especially length at age of Spanish mackerel.
- Investigate discard mortality in both the commercial and recreational fisheries. Specific information should include an estimate of total amount caught and distribution of catch by area, season, and type of gear.
- Continue coordination between ASMFC and the SAFMC on future management action to address differences between the Interstate and Federal FMPs (see Appendix). These differences will be particularly important to address when catch levels are updated in the next federal management action.

IX. References

- Branstetter, S. 1997. Final implementation of high-priority objectives of a bycatch reduction research program for the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic shrimp fishery. NMFS 93-SER-059.
- Gaddis, G., D. Haymans, J.L. Music, Jr., and J. Page. 2001. Interstate fisheries management planning and implementation. Final Report. Award No. NA86FG0116. USDOC/NOAA/NMFS. Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Management Act (P.L. 103-206).
- GMFMC (Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council)/SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2011. Amendment 18 to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at: http://safmc.net/Library/pdf/Final_CMP_Amend18.pdf
- GMFMC (Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council)/SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2013. Amendment 20A to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/2014/am20a/documents/pdfs/cmp_am20a_ea.pdf
- GMFMC (Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council)/SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2014. Amendment 20B to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/2014/am20b/documents/pdfs/cmp_a20b_ea.pdf
- Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel (MSAP). 2003. 2003 Report of the Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel. Award No. NA17FC2203 and NA17FC1053. Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, Tampa, Florida & South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Charleston, South Carolina. 31 pp.
- Ottley, A., C.N. Belcher, B. Good, J.L. Music, Jr., and C. Evans. 1998. Interstate fisheries management planning and implementation. Final Report. Award No. NA57FG0170. USDOC/NOAA/NMFS. Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Management Act (P.L. 103-206).
- Page, J., D. Haymans, and P. Geer. 2004. Interstate fisheries management planning and implementation. Final Report. Award No. NA16FG1219. USDOC/NOAA/NMFS. Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Management Act (P.L. 103-206).
- SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2013. South Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagics Framework Action 2013 for the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at: http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/Resource%20Library/pdf/CMPFramework_DecisionDoc_Sept2013_draft.pdf

SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2014. Framework Amendment 1 to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at:

http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/Resource%20Library/pdf/CMP%20Am/CMPFrameworkAmendment1_29May2014_FINAL.pdf

SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2014. Framework Amendment 2 to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. Available at:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/2014/framework_am2/documents/pdfs/cmp_frameworka2_ea.pdf

SAFMC (South Atlantic Fishery Management Council). 2016. Framework Amendment 5 to the fishery management plan for coastal migratory pelagic resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions.

SEDAR (SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review). 2012. SEDAR 28- South Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment Report. SEDAR, North Charleston SC. 438 pp. available online at: http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/Sedar_Workshops.jsp?WorkshopNum=28

SEDAR. 2022. SEDAR 78 South Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment Report. SEDAR, North Charleston SC. 177 pp. available online at: <http://sedarweb.org/sedar-78>

X. Figures

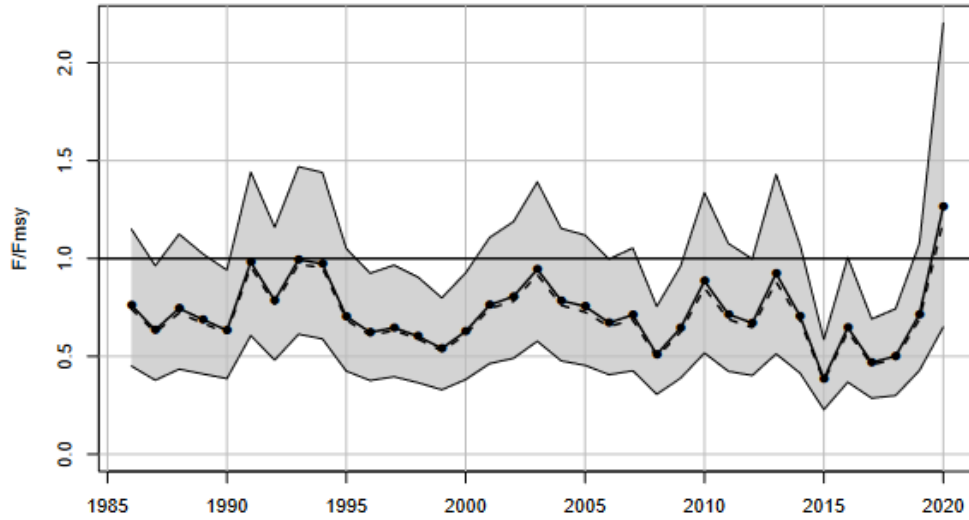


Figure 1. Estimated time series of Atlantic group Spanish mackerel fishing mortality rate (F) relative to F_{MSY} benchmark. Solid line indicates estimates from base run of the Beaufort Assessment Model; dashed lines indicate the median of the Monte Carlo Bootstrap analysis trials; grey error bands indicate 5th and 95th percentiles of the Monte Carlo Bootstrap analysis trials (SEDAR, 2022).

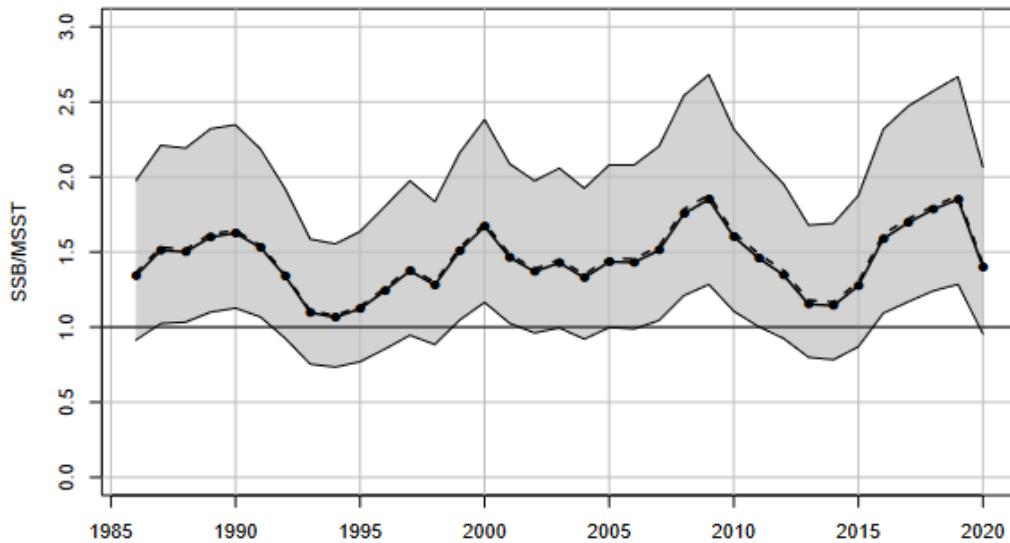


Figure 2. Estimated time series of Atlantic group Spanish mackerel spawning stock biomass (SSB) relative to MSY benchmark. Solid line indicates estimates from base run of the Beaufort Assessment Model; dashed lines indicate the median of the Monte Carlo Bootstrap analysis trials; grey error bands indicate 5th and 95th percentiles of the Monte Carlo Bootstrap analysis trials (SEDAR, 2022).

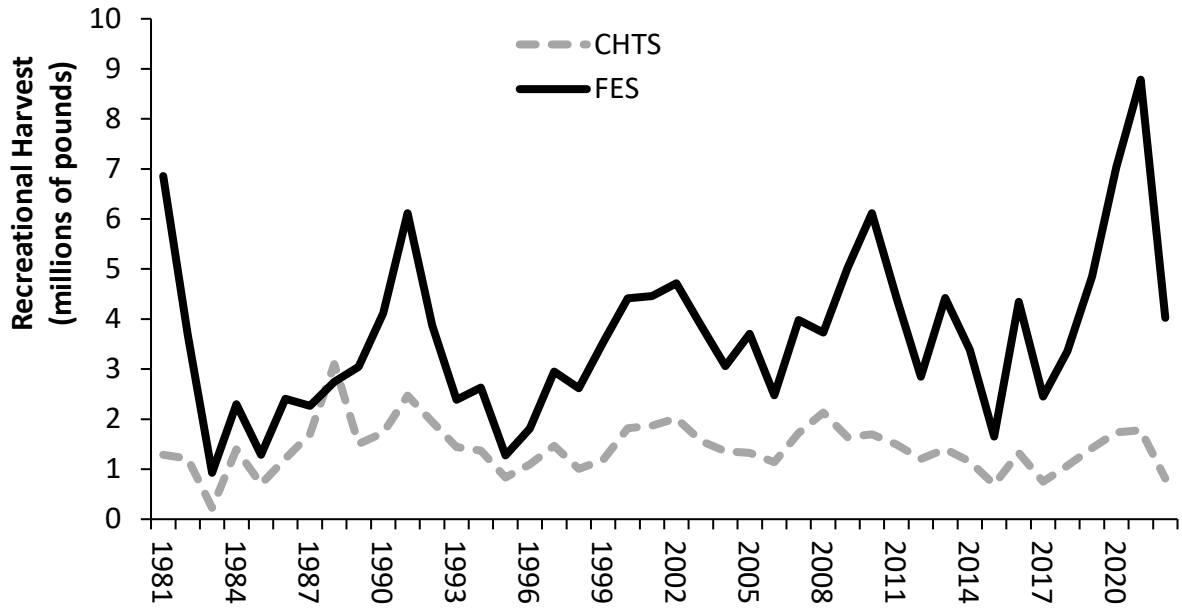


Figure 3. Recreational harvest in pounds, estimated using the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) and the mail-based Fishing Effort Survey (FES). (Source: personal communication with NOAA Fisheries, Fisheries Statistics Division. [1/2024])

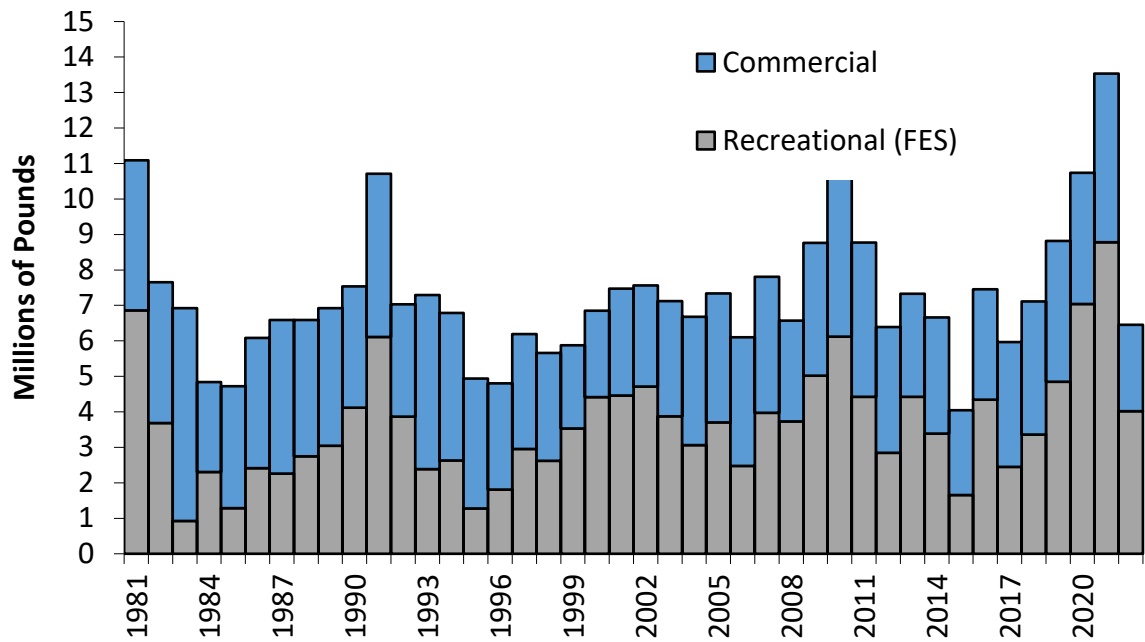


Figure 4. Commercial and recreational harvest (FES) (pounds) of Spanish mackerel, 1981-2022. (Recreational data available from 1981-present only; see Tables 2 and 4 for sources and recent values)

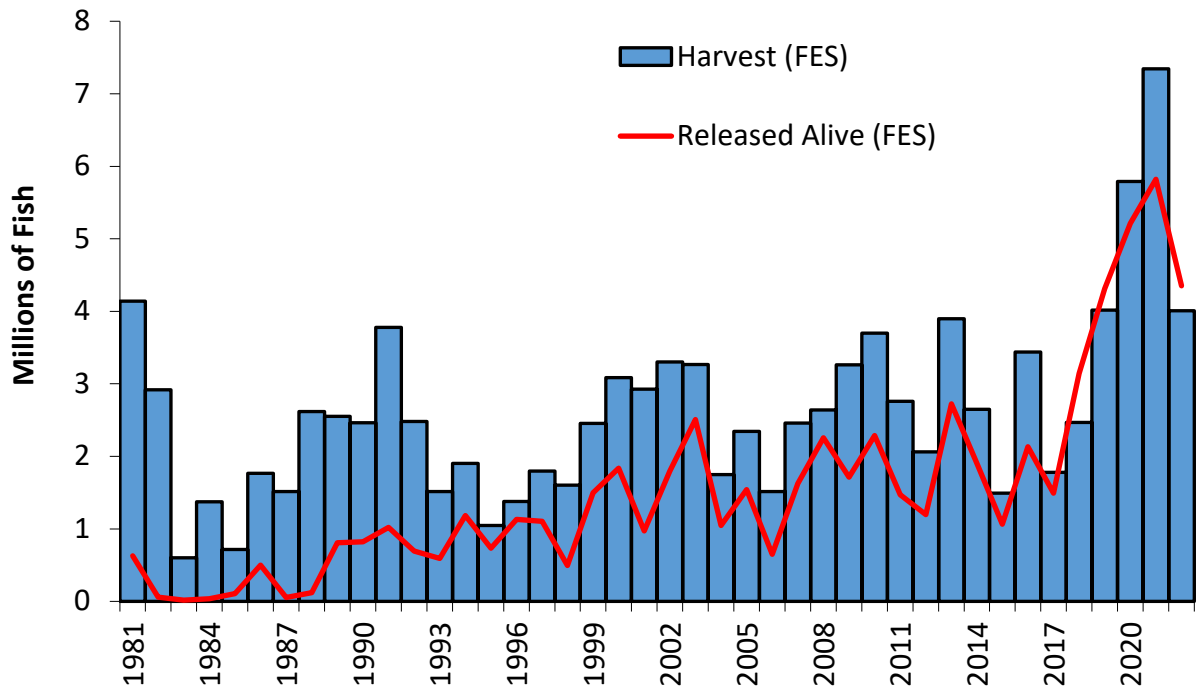


Figure 5. Recreational harvest and releases (numbers of fish; FES) of Spanish mackerel, 1981-2022. (See Tables 3 and 5 for sources and recent values)

XI. Tables

Table 1. Summary of state regulations for Spanish mackerel in 2022.

Notes: A commercial license is required to sell Spanish mackerel in all states; other general gear restrictions apply to the harvest of Spanish mackerel. Purse seines, and drift gill nets south of Cape Lookout, NC are prohibited.

State	Recreational	Commercial
RI	14" TL, 15 fish	14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit.
NY	14" TL, 15 fish	14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit.
NJ	14" TL, 10 fish	14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit.
DE	14" TL, 15 fish	14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit.
MD	14" TL, 15 fish	14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit. Public notice 7/9/2022: 500-lb trip limit when harvest in federal waters closed.
PRFC	14" TL, 15 fish	14" TL. Closure if/when both MD and VA fisheries close.
VA	14" TL, 15 fish	12" or 14" TL. 3,500 lb. trip limit. 500 lb. trip limit if/when harvest in federal waters closed.
NC	12" FL, 15 fish	12" FL; 3,500 lb. trip limit for combined Spanish and king mackerel landings. Proclamation 6/21/2022: 500-lb trip limit when harvest in federal waters closed.
SC	12" FL, 15 fish	12" FL. 3500 lbs. until 75% of adjusted Atlantic Southern Zone quota taken, then 1500 lbs. until 100% of adjusted quota is taken, then 500 lbs. until the end of year or commercial quota is met. If quota is met, then commercial sector is closed to harvest. Requires open access permit for Spanish mackerel.
GA	12" FL, 15 fish	12" FL. 3500 lbs. until 75% of adjusted Atlantic Southern Zone quota taken, then 1500 lbs. until 100% of adjusted quota is taken, then 500 lbs. until the end of year or commercial quota is met. If quota is met, then commercial sector is closed to harvest.
FL	12" FL, 15 fish. Cast nets less than 14' and beach or haul seines within 2" stretched mesh allowed	12" FL or 14" TL. Trip limits: April 1 until Nov. 30 – 3500 lb.; Dec. 1 until 75% of adjusted quota reached – 3500 lb. Monday – Friday & 1500 lb. Saturday – Sunday; >75% adjusted quota until quota filled – 1500 lb.; > 100% of adjusted quota – 500 lb. Restricted Species Endorsement Required Allowed gear: beach or haul seine, cast net, hook and line, or spearing.

Table 2. Commercial landings (pounds, calendar year) of Spanish mackerel by state, 2012-2022. (Source: Annual state compliance reports for 2022 and for all PRFC years; ACCSP for 2021 and earlier. Confidential values are shown as “C”. Coastwide totals and 'Other' totals adhere to the ACCSP rule of 3, i.e., totals are reflective of the true total if 0 or at least 3 states’ data are confidential in a given year. Otherwise, they are sums of non-confidential data.)

Year	Other*	RI	NY	NJ	DE	MD	PRFC
2012		2,135	2,293	2,806		3,634	270
2013	C	C	4,467	265		2,395	302
2014	C	43	2,550	292		1,632	12
2015		C	1,357	2,746		2,222	6
2016		C	813	1,997	C	16,205	548
2017	C	652	1,053	462		815	4,704
2018	C	951	1,283	950		3,071	420
2019	C	1,484	5,683	2,010	C	12,520	45,385
2020	C	602	3,021	C	C	6,728	10,092
2021	C	284	5,721	C		5,192	20,076
2022	C	C	6,271	1,913		6,367	11,356
Year	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL [^]	Total	
2012	18,047	916,439			2,597,097	3,542,721	
2013	7,602	620,752			2,265,505	2,901,759	
2014	7,859	673,974	C		2,585,304	3,272,609	
2015	14,472	561,407	C		1,807,967	2,390,178	
2016	32,577	601,526	C		2,461,327	3,115,168	
2017	21,483	816,017	C		2,672,634	3,517,819	
2018	23,609	796,855	C		2,926,285	3,753,425	
2019	169,152	722,396	C	C	3,004,860	3,963,720	
2020	71,953	1,033,526	C	C	2,571,019	3,698,857	
2021	143,376	1,155,289	C		3,417,236	4,752,911	
2022	221,269	926,027	C	C	1,256,115	2,429,484	

*Other: states that do not have a declared interest in Spanish mackerel and do not sit on the Coastal Pelagics Board

[^]Atlantic coast landings only for Florida

Table 3. Recreational harvest (numbers, calendar year) of Spanish mackerel by state, 2012-2022. State values shown are the recalibrated estimates using effort information from the mail-based Fishing Effort Survey (FES). Coastwide totals are also shown as estimated from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS). (Source: personal communication with NOAA Fisheries, Fisheries Statistics Division. January 2024).

Note: Past FMP Reviews showed state-by-state estimates from the CHTS and cannot be directly compared to the state-by-state totals below.

Year	Other*	RI	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA
2012						14,531	13,960
2013					41	7,187	126,656
2014						29,713	42,937
2015						15,837	14,950
2016					9	18,559	554,813
2017				8,107	28	9,687	20,000
2018				6,753	797	19,146	132,390
2019	335		21,031	8,787	1,396	109,007	587,683
2020	6,254	3,016	6,096	3,985	92	151,412	374,892
2021	622		3,143	34,323	129	152,829	344,235
2022		414	1,435	11,865	16,213	70,582	380,446

Year	NC	SC	GA	FL [^]	FES Total	CHTS Total
2012	995,852	258,281	2,824	776,659	2,062,107	835,236
2013	994,599	100,512	2,701	2,665,958	3,897,654	1,119,280
2014	1,028,925	194,367	5,365	1,348,735	2,650,497	884,490
2015	835,011	389,923	6,201	229,669	1,491,591	627,632
2016	918,352	306,235	22,637	1,618,529	3,439,134	964,253
2017	995,706	45,644	48,633	650,916	1,778,721	631,957
2018	1,012,889	289,250	49,764	956,741	2,468,046	814,653
2019	1,478,890	1,046,972	138,756	623,415	4,016,272	1,109,050
2020	1,286,131	861,349	72,308	3,025,466	5,791,001	1,309,120
2021	1,312,929	752,570	24,666	4,718,809	7,344,255	1,434,430
2022	1,898,755	1,060,999	12,583	555,443	4,008,735	716,648

*Other: states that do not have a declared interest in Spanish mackerel and do not sit on the Coastal Pelagics Board

[^]Atlantic coast landings only for Florida

Table 4. Recreational harvest (pounds, calendar year) of Spanish mackerel by state, 2012-2022. State values shown are the recalibrated estimates using effort information from the mail-based Fishing Effort Survey (FES). Coastwide totals are also shown as estimated from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS). (Source: personal communication with NOAA Fisheries, Fisheries Statistics Division. January 2024).

Note: Past FMP Reviews showed state-by-state estimates from the CHTS and cannot be directly compared to the state-by-state totals below.

Year	Other*	RI	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA
2012						37,570	14,053
2013					74	25,099	138,256
2014						72,817	47,601
2015						40,290	13,777
2016					8	30,212	620,147
2017				9,405	43	20,646	30,590
2018				5,702	1,138	41,476	207,551
2019	591		30,177	17,558	1,300	181,994	718,353
2020	10,821	3,991	11,756	4,123	95	223,090	441,654
2021	1,041		3,227	38,116	160	251,273	399,106
2022		782	1,978	17,193	19,301	150,029	489,083
Year	NC	SC	GA	FL [^]	FES Total	CHTS Total	
2012	1,327,350	262,932	6,136	1,199,766	2,847,807	1,203,016	
2013	1,242,029	88,783	4,630	2,923,753	4,422,624	1,400,212	
2014	1,193,442	213,864	7,245	1,851,493	3,386,462	1,153,238	
2015	981,867	253,620	22,185	342,598	1,654,337	693,150	
2016	907,400	192,865	39,915	2,552,216	4,342,763	1,326,428	
2017	1,094,778	75,779	72,064	1,146,112	2,449,417	751,053	
2018	1,156,702	513,271	74,910	1,354,426	3,357,009	1,069,043	
2019	1,694,247	847,163	348,469	1,011,804	4,851,656	1,423,876	
2020	1,843,314	556,882	232,439	3,714,856	7,043,021	1,735,197	
2021	1,894,535	503,374	46,879	5,645,741	8,783,452	1,777,420	
2022	1,841,527	773,139	39,885	689,100	4,022,017	810,719	

*Other: states that do not have a declared interest in Spanish mackerel and do not sit on the Coastal Pelagics Board

[^]Atlantic coast landings only for Florida

Table 5. Recreational releases (numbers, calendar year) of Spanish mackerel by state, 2012-2022. State values shown are the recalibrated estimates using effort information from the mail-based Fishing Effort Survey (FES). Coastwide totals are also shown as estimated from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS). (Source: personal communication with NOAA Fisheries, Fisheries Statistics Division. January 2024).

Note: Past FMP Reviews showed state-by-state estimates from the CHTS and cannot be directly compared to the state-by-state totals below.

Year	Other*	RI	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA
2012							32,563
2013					181		15,005
2014						2,663	19,199
2015						355	4,945
2016					1,038		111,284
2017				14,050		3,747	14,829
2018			11,859	14,372	2	2,166	168,549
2019	4,731		49,390	60,003	2,334	62,881	536,244
2020	40,572		5,395	79,458	1,367	63,467	278,173
2021	3,137	450	2,155	13,309	206	87,479	178,237
2022	1,259	503	1,458	18,224		2,894	188,201
Year	NC	SC	GA	FL [^]	FES Total	CHTS Total	
2012	591,792	313,339	4,742	254,415	1,196,851	440,742	
2013	685,692	129,909		1,892,444	2,723,231	684,862	
2014	814,064	136,783	6,967	920,213	1,899,889	490,261	
2015	514,714	321,930	4,185	219,190	1,065,319	406,561	
2016	546,950	333,635	137	1,136,663	2,130,960	416,061	
2017	688,062	300,244	17,408	453,911	1,492,251	390,862	
2018	1,019,418	322,330	18,149	1,584,579	3,141,424	986,450	
2019	1,340,366	1,588,754	14,943	652,727	4,312,373	969,046	
2020	1,267,210	1,060,185	15,301	2,403,133	5,214,261	1,009,308	
2021	1,294,525	647,701	13,733	3,579,828	5,820,760	902,748	
2022	2,268,283	1,401,659	38,885	432,592	4,353,958	663,539	

*Other: states that do not have a declared interest in Spanish mackerel and do not sit on the Coastal Pelagics Board

[^]Atlantic coast landings only for Florida

Appendix.

See the enclosed memorandum outlining differences Between the Interstate FMP and Federal FMP for Spanish Mackerel.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Coastal Pelagics Management Board

FROM: Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

DATE: October 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Differences Between the Interstate FMP and Federal FMP for Spanish Mackerel

In February 2020, the former South Atlantic Management Board, which is now split into the Coastal Pelagics Management Board and Sciaenids Management Board, discussed differences between the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Spanish mackerel and the federal Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP for Spanish mackerel. The last update to the Interstate FMP was the Omnibus Amendment for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Sea Trout (2011) and its Addendum I for Spanish Mackerel (2013).

Differences between the Interstate and Federal FMPs exist in terms of commercial management zones, commercial trip limits and closures, allowable gears, recreational season, and recreational accountability measures. Board action to consider addressing these differences was postponed until completion of the 2022 stock assessment. The differences between the Interstate and Federal FMPs are outlined below.

Definition of Commercial Management Zones

The Interstate FMP defines the Northern Zone as New York through Georgia, and the Southern Zone as the east coast of Florida. The Federal FMP defines the Northern Zone as New York through North Carolina, and the Southern Zone as South Carolina through Florida (through the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line). For the Interstate FMP, Rhode Island joined the interstate management unit in 2021.

Commercial Trip Limits and Closures

For their respective Northern Zones, both the Interstate and Federal FMPs set a 3,500-pound commercial trip limit. For the interstate Southern Zone, the trip limit starts at 3,500 pounds and is reduced throughout the season depending on the date and how much of the quota is met. For the federal Southern Zone, the trip limit also starts at 3,500 pounds and is reduced depending on how much of the quota is met.

In federal waters, each management zone closes when that federal zone's total quota is met. Under the Interstate FMP, states are not required to close state waters when federal waters close. In recent years, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina have implemented a reduced 500-pound trip limit in state waters when the Northern Zone federal waters closed.

The commercial trip limits and management zones are summarized in the following table.

Commercial Management Zones and Trip Limits	
<p>Interstate FMP</p> <p><u>Northern Zone</u> New York to Georgia (RI joined in 2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3,500-pound trip limit – Not required to close when federal waters close. <p><i>Note: In recent years, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina have implemented a 500-lb trip limit in state waters when the Northern Zone federal waters closed.</i></p> <p><u>Southern Zone</u> Florida (east coast)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3,500-pound trip limit: 3/1-11/30; – 3,500 limit Mon-Fri & 1,500 limit Sat-Sun: 12/1 until 75% adjusted quota taken; – 1,500 limit until 100% adjusted quota taken; – 500 limit after 100% adj. quota taken; – Not required to close when federal waters close. 	<p>Federal FMP</p> <p><u>Northern Zone</u> New York to North Carolina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3,500-pound trip limit – Closed when Northern Zone total quota is met. <p><u>Southern Zone</u> South Carolina to Florida (east coast)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3,500-pound trip limit until 75% of the Southern Zone adjusted quota is met; – 1,500 limit until 100% of the Southern Zone adjusted quota is met; – 500 limit after 100% of the Southern Zone adjusted quota is met; – Closed when the Southern Zone total quota met.

Allowable Gears

The Interstate FMP lists prohibited gears for each sector. For the commercial sector, purse seines, and drift gill nets south of Cape Lookout, NC are prohibited. For the recreational sector, drift gill nets south of Cape Lookout, NC are prohibited. The Federal FMP lists allowable gears: only automatic reel, bandit gear, handline, rod and reel, cast net, run-around gillnet, and stab net allowed.

Recreational Season

The Interstate FMP specifies a calendar year recreational season, while the Federal FMP’s recreational fishing year is March 1 through the end of February.

Recreational Accountability Measures

Under the Interstate FMP, if the total annual catch limit (ACL) is exceeded and the stock is overfished, the recreational quotas are decreased via reduced bag limits the following year. Under the Federal FMP, if the total ACL is exceeded, bag limits are reduced the following year to achieve the annual catch target (ACT) but not to exceed the ACL. If the stock is overfished and the ACL is exceeded, there is a payback reducing the ACT by the overage amount the following year.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

January 24, 2024

1:15 – 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*) 1:15 p.m.
2. Board Consent 1:15 p.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2023
3. Public Comment 1:20 p.m.
4. Consider Draft Addendum II for Final Approval **Final Action** 1:30 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

1:15 – 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 (1:30-4:20 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 States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

DATE: January 16, 2024

SUBJECT: Public Comment Summary for Draft Addendum II

The following is an overview of all comments received by ASMFC on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan as of December 22, 2023 (closing deadline).

A total of 2,832 written comments were received on Draft Addendum II from individual comments, organizations, and form letters. A total of 47 organizations submitted written comments. A total of 1,723 comments were received through thirteen form letters¹. The remainder of comments (1,062) came from individual comments including from private anglers, charter captains, commercial fishermen, and concerned citizens.

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. Polls or a show-of-hands vote were used at some hearings at the discretion of the hearing officer.

Across all hearings, public attendance was 693 people (includes double counting of those who attended multiple hearings).

The following pages include tables summarizing how many comments were received and how many comments were in support of each option proposed in Draft Addendum II. There is also a list of other topics commonly raised in the comments. The summary tables are followed by the letters and emails sent by organizations, form letters with total submission counts, and individual comment letters and emails. The state-by-state public hearing summaries and attendee lists were provided as a separate attachment in the [2024 Winter Striped Bass Board main meeting materials](#).

¹ Form letters (3 or more of the same comment) include comments stating support for an organization's comments; however, if the commenter provided additional comments/rationale related to management beyond the organization's or letter's comments, then it was considered an individual comment.

Total Comments Received and Hearing Attendees

Number of written comments received by individuals, form letters, and organizations, and number of people who attended each public hearing.

Written Public Comments Received	
Individual Comments	1,062
Form Letters	1,723
Organizations	47
TOTAL	2,832
Public Hearings	
State	Public Attendance*
Maine	60
New Hampshire	48
Massachusetts-Buzzards Bay	74
Massachusetts-Gloucester	54
Rhode Island	48
Connecticut-Old Lyme	24
Connecticut-Milford	17
New York-Kings Park	41
New York-New Paltz	17
New Jersey-Manahawkin	49
New Jersey/Pennsylvania	103
Delaware	16
Maryland	110
PRFC/DC	13
Virginia	19
TOTAL	693*

^ 13 different form letters received.

**Some people attended multiple hearings. Public attendees do not include state staff, ASMFC staff, or Commissioners/Proxies.*

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

*Note: 12 additional comments indicated support for either 'all mode' option B or D;
5 additional comments indicated support for either 'mode split' option C or E.*

<i>1 fish bag limit for all options</i>	Option A. SQ 28-<35	Option B. 28-31 all modes	Option C. 28-31 PS/S 28-33 FH	Option D. 30-33 all modes	Option E. 30-33 P/S 28-33 FH
Individual	14	459	78	1	2
Form Letter		1,618	24		
Organization		35	3		
Written Total	14	2,112	105	1	2
ME		29	1		
NH		48			
MA-Buzzards Bay		5	7		
MA-Gloucester		25	6		
RI		10	5		
CT-Old Lyme		2	11		
CT-Milford		7	4		
NY-Kings Park		5	8		
NY-New Paltz					
NJ-Manahawkin	4	6	2		
NJ/PA	14	24	9	6	
DE		1			
MD		7			
PRFC/DC		3			
VA		5			
Hearing Total	18	177	53	6	0

The vast majority of commenters favored ocean Option B (28-31" all modes). Commenters noted this option is the most conservative option with the highest estimated reduction, which is needed to support stock rebuilding. This option would best protect the 2015-year class, particularly considering recent low recruitment and the lack of upcoming strong year classes. Most commenters noted specific, strong opposition to any mode split options. They noted the entire recreational sector should have the same regulations and participate equally in rebuilding the stock. They also noted that all recreational anglers should have the same fishing opportunity. Some comments expressed concern that even the most conservative options would have a less than 50% chance of rebuilding the stock.

The second most-supported ocean option was Option C (28-31" private/shore; 28-33" for-hire). Support for this option was primarily from the for-hire industry. Comments noted the for-hire sector is a very small percent of ocean recreational removals, and for-hire did not see the same level of harvest increase in 2022 as private vessels/shore anglers. Comments highlighted that allowing the wider slot has a negligible impact (0.1%) on the estimated reduction. Stakeholders noted the current narrow 28-31" slot has had negative economic impacts on for-hire businesses with fewer bookings this year, as customers do not feel the trip is worth it with such a narrow slot. Comments noted a wider slot would attract customers and would support anglers who value bringing fish home for food. Comments also noted a wider slot would decrease release mortality, and that many dead fish in water have been observed this year with the narrow slot.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

Note: 14 additional comments indicated support for any 'all mode' option B1-B4.

	Option A. SQ 18" min 1 fish	Option B1. 19-23 1 fish all modes	Option B2. 19-24 1 fish all modes	Support Either Option B1 or B2 All modes	Option B3. 19-25 1 fish all modes	Option B4. 19-26 1 fish all modes	Option C1. 19-23 1 fish P/S 2 fish FH	Option C2. 19-24 1 fish P/S 2 fish FH
Individual	4	433	36	17	9	30	1	28
Form Letter		266		1,332				
Organization		20	2	6		1		3
Written Total	4	719	38	1,355	9	31	1	31
ME		29	1					
NH		48						
MA-Buzzards Bay		2	1					
MA-Gloucester		1	20				5	
RI		7						
CT-Old Lyme		1						
CT-Milford		5						
NY-Kings Park		5						
NY-New Paltz								
NJ-Manahawkin		3					1	
NJ/PA	4	32	1		2	6	4	5
DE		1						
MD			1	6		3		7
PRFC/DC		3						
VA		5	1				1	
Hearing Total	4	142	25	6	2	9	11	12

The majority of comments noted support for Chesapeake Bay Option B1 (19-23" 1 fish all modes) and Option B2 (19-24" 1 fish all modes), noting either option is estimated to meet the 14.5% reduction. Most other comments supported Option B1 specifically, noting this is the most conservative option with the highest estimated reduction to support stock rebuilding. Comments also noted the need to protect the 2018-year class. Many comments noted specific opposition to mode split options, noting the entire recreational sector should have the same regulations, should contribute to rebuilding, and should have the same fishing opportunity. Many comments also noted the need for conservative Bay regulations considering recent poor recruitment in the Bay.

Those in favor of Chesapeake Bay Option B4 (19-26" 1 fish all modes) noted that a wider slot would have the lowest release mortality.

Those in favor of Chesapeake Bay Option C2 (19-24" 1 fish private/shore; 2 fish for-hire) noted that charter businesses in the Bay could not survive with a 1-fish bag limit, and that for-hire trips have already decreased. Maryland stakeholders noted that Maryland charter vessels participate in the state's electronic reporting program and provide detailed information on trips and catch.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Clarification Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

Note: Most comments supporting Option B noted opposition to mode splits overall; they commented on this option in case a mode split is implemented.

	Option A.SQ No For-Hire clarification	Option B. Add For-Hire clarification
Individual	23	137
Form Letter	12	
Organization	7	16
Written Total	42	153
ME	1	29
NH		48
MA-Buzzards Bay	6	3
MA-Gloucester	1	3
RI	4	4
CT-Old Lyme		
CT-Milford		
NY-Kings Park	2	1
NY-New Paltz		
NJ-Manahawkin		3
NJ/PA		
DE		
MD		
PRFC/DC		3
VA		
Hearing Total	14	94

The majority of comments support Option B (add clarification that for-hire measures apply to patrons only). Most comments supporting Option B noted opposition to mode splits overall, but they commented on this option in the event a mode split is implemented.

Those who support Option A (no for-hire clarification) noted that the measure would be unenforceable.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

	Option A.SQ No filleting requirements	Option B. Add minimum filleting requirements
Individual	38	208
Form Letter	27	234
Organization	6	18
Written Total	71	460
ME		29
NH		48
MA-Buzzards Bay	7	2
MA-Gloucester	2	2
RI	4	5
CT-Old Lyme	6	
CT-Milford		1
NY-Kings Park	3	1
NY-New Paltz		
NJ-Manahawkin		3
NJ/PA		
DE		
MD		
PRFC/DC		3
VA		1
Hearing Total	22	95

The majority of comments support Option B (minimum filleting requirements) noting the need to support enforcement of the slot limit.

Those who support Option A (no fillet requirements) noted the filleting requirements would delay the turnaround time between charter trips. Charter vessels need to transition as quickly as possible between trips. Commenters noted questions and concerns about where racks would be disposed of, and noted that state/local rules would limit where racks could be disposed of.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

	Option A. Status Quo quotas	Option B. Up to 14.5% quota reduction
Individual	33	420
Form Letter	74	1,625
Organization	5	31
Written Total	112	2,076
ME		30
NH		48
MA-Buzzards Bay	3	3
MA-Gloucester	8	5
RI		6
CT-Old Lyme		
CT-Milford		3
NY-Kings Park		4
NY-New Paltz		
NJ-Manahawkin		4
NJ/PA	5	55
DE	6	1
MD	9	8
PRFC/DC		3
VA	15	3
Hearing Total	46	173

The majority of comments support Option B (up to 14.5% quota reduction), with most comments supporting the full 14.5% quota reduction for both the ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. Comments noted that all sectors should take an equal reduction to rebuild the stock. Some comments noted the reduction should be taken from landings, not from the quota.

Those in favor of Option A (status quo commercial quotas), primarily the commercial industry, noted the commercial sector should not be penalized for the increase in recreational harvest. Commercial harvest in 2022 did not increase like recreational harvest did, and the commercial sector is a very small portion of the total striped bass fishery with relatively stable landings in recent years. Comments noted that unlike the recreational sector, the commercial sector is heavily monitored with accountability through tagging and quota paybacks. Comments noted there have been multiple quota reductions the past several years, and additional reductions would be detrimental to the industry with negative economic impacts.

Section 3.3 Stock Assessment Response Options

Number of written and public hearing comments in support of each option.

	Option A. SQ Addendum/ Amendment process	Option B. Board action process (vote at meeting)
Individual	21	359
Form Letter	15	1,591
Organization	9	24
Written Total	45	1,974
ME		29
NH		48
MA-Buzzards Bay	2	3
MA-Gloucester	5	45
RI	1	6
CT-Old Lyme	1	1
CT-Milford		2
NY-Kings Park	2	4
NY-New Paltz		
NJ-Manahawkin	3	1
NJ/PA	29	32
DE	1	1
MD	1	
PRFC/DC		3
VA		1
Hearing Total	45	176

The majority of comments support Option B (Board action process) noting the need for quick, decisive action by the Board following stock assessments to rebuild the stock and quickly implement new measures. Some commenters noted that while they support a fast process, opportunities for public comment should be clearly communicated.

Those in favor of Option A (Addendum/Amendment process) noted the need for a full public comment process during the development of management actions to make informed management decisions.

Common Additional Topics Raised in Comments

Commenters raised several additional topics. Common topics included, in no particular order:

- Need to reduce recreational release mortality and increase angler education on best handling practices.
- Support for a harvest moratorium, either until the stock recovers or permanently (catch-and-release only fishery).
- Support for additional gear restrictions to reduce release mortality, including banning treble hooks.
- Support for ending commercial harvest.
- Need to address menhaden harvest in the Chesapeake Bay.

Written Comments were submitted by the following groups and organizations:

American Saltwater Guides Association
American Sportfishing Association
Annapolis Anglers Club (MD)
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers:
 New England Chapter
 New York Chapter
 New Jersey Chapter
 Pennsylvania Chapter
 Capital Chapter
 North Carolina Chapter
Berkeley Striper Club (NJ)
Cape Code Charter Boat Association
Cape Cod Salties Sportfishing Club
Center for Sportfishing Policy
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Coastal Conservation Association, National
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
East Coast Fishing Coalition
Eastern Shore Working Waterman's
Association
Fun Under Boats Dive Club (NJ)
Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association and
River Council (NJ)
Hi-Mar Striper Club (NJ)
Hudson River Fishermen's Association
Jersey Coast Anglers Association
Maryland Charter Boat Association
Maryland Oystermen Association
Massachusetts Striped Bass Association
Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass
Association
Narragansett Surfcasters
Native Fish Coalition:
 Massachusetts Chapter
 New Hampshire Chapter
New Jersey Council of Diving and Clubs
New York State Conservation Council
North Fork Anglers Fishing Club (NY)
Plum Island Surfcasters (MA)
Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat
Association
Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association
Riverkeeper (Hudson River)
Save the Bay (RI)
Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association
Strathmere Fishing and Environmental
Association (NJ)
Stripers Forever
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Twin Rivers Waterman's Association
Upper Bay Charter Captains Association (MD)
Village Harbour Fishing Club (NJ)
Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association
Virginia Waterman's Association

Written Comments were submitted via the following form letters:

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (1,298)

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (234)

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Industry (70)

Coastal Conservation Association (34)

Riverkeeper (Hudson River) (18)

Westport Striped Bass Club (7)

Massachusetts Commercial SB Association (4)

Form Letters from unknown sources:

Form Letter 1 (15) [mostly charter captains]

Form Letter 2 (12)

Form Letter 3 (10) [mostly New England anglers]

Form Letter 4 (9) [charter and rec NY-NJ]

Form Letter 5 (9)

Form Letter 6 (3) [New England anglers]

From: kevin@annapolisanglersclub.com
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Kevin](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:28:56 PM

Hello ASMFC SBMB Staff and Board Members,

My name is Kevin McMenamin and I live in Annapolis MD. I comment on behalf of the Annapolis Anglers Club which represents ~790 Recreational Anglers (both private vessel/shore and for hire anglers) mostly fishing in the Chesapeake Bay. On behalf of our Membership, I would like to provide the following feedback on the options that the SBMB is considering in Addendum II.

Ocean Recreational Fishery Options.

We support Option B. This Option helps to protect the 2015 Year Class of SB. The other Options would not protect the 2015 Year Class.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options.

We support Option B4. This Option estimates the lowest level of Recreational Release Mortality.

Commercial Fishery Options.

We support Option B with Minimum Quota (-14.5% from 2022). This Option fairly spreads the calculated 14.5% reduction across all Sectors that target and harvest Atlantic Striped Bass.

Response to Stock Assessment Updates.

We support Option B Board Action. This Option enables the SBMB to respond as quickly as possible to any future potential declines in SSB.

Implementation Schedule.

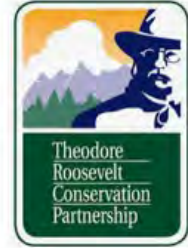
As Soon As Practical.

Thank You for the opportunity to comment on the actions being considered.

Happy Holidays

Kevin McMenamin

President: Annapolis Anglers Club



December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

On behalf of America's 7.5 million striped bass anglers and the sportfishing industry, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) regarding Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

Recreational anglers and the sportfishing industry recognize that a healthy striped bass population and fishery is critical to the east coast outdoor recreational economy and is a significant driver of angler engagement and participation along the Atlantic coast. The sportfishing community stands by the cooperative process of the ASMFC and believes that the states and their stakeholders can rebuild the striped bass fishery together again.

To help assist the Striped Bass Management Board in taking final action on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP, we submit the following comments for Board consideration.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery

- We support Option B: This is the only option that will provide the same regulations for all modes in the ocean recreational fishery while maximizing the protection of remaining above-average year classes (i.e., 2011, 2015, 2017, 2018).
- We are adamantly opposed to mode splits. If ASMFC hands out conservation passes to the for-hire mode, what incentive does any one individual angler have with a mentality that if you're a small percentage of the overall pie your slice doesn't need to bear the burden of conservation?

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- We support Options B1 or B2: Both options are estimated to achieve more than a 14.5% reduction in removals, while also applying the same reductions across all fishing modes.
- Again, we adamantly oppose mode splits. If you contribute to fishing mortality, you don't get a conservation pass.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

- We do not support either option because we adamantly oppose mode splits. The for-hire fleet introduces many anglers to sportfishing, so the conservation ethic needs to start with them.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

- We support Option B: Ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial quotas should be reduced by 14.5%, understanding that no option to reduce commercial landings is being considered.
- Unfortunately, a reduction in commercial quota does not reduce total removals because quotas currently vary from landings. For example, the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery, which accounts for approximately 80% of all coastwide commercial striped bass catch in numbers of fish, landed approximately 20% less than their quotas allowed in 2022. This indicates that a 14.5% reduction in quota in 2024 will have little to no impact on the Chesapeake Bay removals. The Board is proactively controlling recreational removals and it's time to follow through on that conservation leadership and take action to address other sources of fishing mortality.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

- We support Option B: This option allows the Board to quickly respond to overfishing through Board action. However, we emphasize the importance of ASMFC establishing a clear public comment process for Board action that allows ample time for stakeholders to provide input.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Michael Waine
Atlantic Fisheries Policy Director
American Sportfishing Association

Jeff Angers
President
Center for Sportfishing Policy

Ted Venker
Conservation Director
Coastal Conservation Association

Chris Horton
Senior Director of Fisheries Policy
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

John Gans
Northeast Field Representative
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership



December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: ASGA Comments regarding Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke and members of the Striped Bass Management Board,

Thank you for your consideration of the American Saltwater Guides Association's comments on Draft Addendum II to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. ASGA is a coalition of fishing guides, small-fishing related businesses, and conservation-minded private recreational anglers who believe in the idea of "better business through marine conservation." Striped bass are the lynchpin species along the Atlantic coast for recreational anglers, and ASGA dedicates significant time and resources towards advocating for responsible, precautionary striped bass management and successfully rebuilding the stock by 2029.

Since the 2019 stock assessment found striped bass to be overfished and subject to overfishing, striped bass management has been a heavily involved and challenging process, and we are now facing five years of failed recruitment in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay. While the Board acted quickly to end overfishing by reducing fishing mortality in Addendum VI, developing a rebuilding plan through Amendment 7 took longer and is now projected to be unsuccessful. More recently, the Striped Bass Board has indicated its willingness to rebuild this fishery by 2029 through approval of the Emergency Action and initiation of Addendum II—ASGA fully supported both measures.

The goal of Addendum II is to reduce fishing mortality to target levels in 2024. According to Technical Committee analysis, an overall 14.5% reduction is needed to lower fishing mortality to the target ($F=0.176$). Fortunately, a new stock assessment will be finalized in the fall of 2024, providing insights into the efficacy of recent management actions and new probabilities of successful rebuilding, affording management a timely opportunity to take additional action should it be necessary. ASGA looks forward to working with the Striped Bass Board to efficiently rebuild the stock. Our positions on Draft Addendum II are described below.

ASGA's Positions without Rationale:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filletting: Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Recreational Options

Draft Addendum II considers modifications to recreational measures in the ocean and Chesapeake Bay regions. In 2022, recreational striped bass harvest nearly doubled and drastically reduced the probability of rebuilding, prompting the near-unanimous approval of the 2023 Emergency Action to constrain harvest of the critical 2015 year-class. This action, which ASGA supported and still does, shrunk the recreational slot limit from 28-35" to 28-31" to allow more of the 2015s to escape harvest. Based on Technical Committee projections, the Emergency Action is projected to achieve a 30% reduction in recreational harvest in 2023 relative to 2022, but additional reductions are still necessary to reduce fishing mortality and reach target spawning stock biomass by 2029. Unfortunately, on its own, Addendum II is unlikely to rebuild the fishery, but this action will be important for "slowing the bleeding" and bringing other components of the fishery into the conservation of this resource.

In the Ocean, ASGA supports option B, 1-fish at 28-31" for both sectors. The Emergency Action slot limit has been effective at reducing recreational harvests and protecting the 2015-year class. Shifting the slot limit to increase harvests or the prosecution of the 2015s completely contradicts the intent of the unprecedented May 2023 Emergency Action and Draft Addendum II. Considering the range of options in Draft Addendum II and understanding that change may be necessary with the 2024 Stock Assessment, maintaining the 28-31" slot limit for 2024 is the most reasonable option for the stock, the recreational sector, and management and scientific purposes. While option B was the most conservative option for the ocean recreational fishery, ASGA looks forward to working with management to ensure the recreational sector continues to be accountable and contributes to successful rebuilding should additional reductions be necessary.

In the Chesapeake Bay, ASGA supports option B-1, 1-fish at 19-23" for both sectors with the same 2022 seasons. Recreational harvests in the Chesapeake Bay have declined significantly in recent years, likely due to lack of fish availability, which should be a major concern for all. However, considerable conservation is still needed after five consecutive years of failed spawns in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay. Option B-1 will effectively reduce recreational harvest in the nursery region responsible for the majority of striped bass production. Additionally, this option, achieves the most regional regulatory consistency, which had been a consistent challenge in past recreational management in the Bay.

ASGA strongly opposes the idea of mode-splits in both regions and implores the Striped Bass Board to not consider these options at this time. Striped bass rebuilding is a major uncertainty, spawning success in the most important producer region has failed the past five years, and the primary goal of Addendum II is to reduce fishing mortality to target levels; this is NOT the time

to consider, let alone approve, such a fundamental shift in striped bass management exclusively designed to allow one group to harvest more fish than others in the same sector and further threaten the long-term sustainability of this stock. The Striped Bass board should remain focused on rebuilding this stock and not create conflict and controversy within the recreational sector.

ASGA's primary goal throughout the Draft Addendum II public comment process was to focus on the major option-sets—i.e. the new recreational measures, commercial quotas, and response to the assessment. While not as impactful to the stock's health, we do have positions on option sets 3.1.3 and 3.1.4. In the event that mode-splits are approved—again, ASGA is opposed to this—we would prefer Option B, which clarifies that the for-hire regulations would only apply to trip patrons and not the captain and/or crew. On the recreational filleting issue, we support Option B. While it will not reduce fishing mortality per se, it will afford law enforcement more tools to ensure recreational anglers comply with striped bass regulations.

Commercial Options:

For Commercial Quota Reduction Options, ASGA supports Option B with a 14.5% reduction to commercial quotas in the Ocean and Chesapeake Bays regions. We support each sector contributing to conservation of this resource. Given the recreational sector took a reduction through the Emergency Action, we view a 14.5% commercial quota reduction, which is slightly higher than the projected recreational reduction, as fair. Unfortunately, there are notable inequities within this option that have negative impacts on the health of the resource and fail to engage the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries with the conservation of striped bass. Whereas the ocean region has meaningfully contributed to striped bass conservation and taken reductions nearly in lockstep with the recreational sector, the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries have consistently side-stepped these reductions and conservation measures. Because the Chesapeake Bay has not taken a meaningful quota reduction in many years and underutilizes its quota, a 14.5% reduction will likely have no impact on reducing landings. We believe this is a glaring issue with this management document and striped bass management in general.

The Bay's commercial fishery has not contributed to rebuilding and continues to harvest more fish than the entire ocean region in both numbers of fish and weight. In 2022, the Bay landed 551,520 fish or 2,483,438 pounds compared to the Ocean landing 129,295 fish or 1,904,852 pounds. These pressures in the most important producer region must be reined in, especially given the terrible string of spawning success. The Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries must take part in conservation and rebuilding this fishery.

We don't anticipate that happening due to Chesapeake Bay states' intention to not comply with any quota reduction in Addendum II. Something must be done in the Chesapeake to achieve some meaningful reduction, but the relevant jurisdictions appear entirely comfortable with continuing business as usual and placing immense harvest pressures on these fish nearly year-round.

Response to Stock Assessment:

ASGA fully supports Option B to allow the Board to respond to the 2024 via Board Action. We want to have the option to respond to the 2024 stock assessment as quickly as possible to ensure successful rebuilding by 2029. ASGA will be following the assessment process throughout the summer and sharing our perspectives with staff and managers before the 2024 Annual Meeting. All striped bass stakeholders have the ability to share perspectives with the Striped Bass Board, even in the absence of a management action; therefore, ASGA is comfortable with granting the Board this authority and potentially acting without an official public comment period. Efficiently and effectively rebuilding this fishery is the most important aspect.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions on ASGA's positions on Draft Addendum II, please do not hesitate to reach out. We look forward to continuing to work with the Commission, the Board, and the states to rebuild this fishery.

Sincerely,



Tony Friedrich
Vice President and Policy Director
American Saltwater Guides Association
tony@saltwaterguidesassociation.org
(202) 744-5013



Will Poston
Policy Associate
American Saltwater Guides Association
will@saltwaterguidesassociation.org
(202) 577-8990

**BERKELY STRIPER CLUB INPUT FOR THE ASMFC ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7
TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR STRIPED BASS**

John Kravchak
President
Berkeley Striper Club
Sea side park NJ

December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I am writing to you on behalf of the members of the Berkeley Striper Club to submit our public comments regarding the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

Established in 1966, the Berkeley Striper Club stands as one of the largest and most active surf-fishing clubs in New Jersey, comprising some of the most skilled and dedicated anglers in the state. Our common bond is our passion for the Striped Bass, and our club is committed to promoting and safeguarding recreational fishing interests while ensuring the sustainability of our natural resources.

Since 2013, our club has consistently advocated for decisive measures to protect declining Atlantic Striped Bass populations, favoring strategies that lead to the restoration of abundant stocks.

The prevailing sentiment among our membership is that the options presented in Addendum II are inadequate. Consistent with past Board actions, the options are weak, slow, and inadequately prioritized, often seeming to favor the interests of commercial stakeholders over the public good, contradicting the mandate that led to the creation of the Board.

The 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment revealed that the striped bass stock has been overfished since 2013, with ongoing overfishing. Despite the Management Board declaring Atlantic Striped Bass overfished in 2019 and implementing measures for rebuilding by 2029, the Berkeley Striper Club notes with concern the perceived sluggishness and inadequacy of these actions. The development of Amendment 7 to the FMP in August 2020 and its subsequent approval in May 2022 reflected a commitment to address the rebuilding plan. However, our apprehension grows as, just one year later in May 2023, the Board found it necessary to take emergency action due to updated projections indicating a mere 15% probability of meeting the 2029 deadline.

In this context, it seems irresponsible to request input on options that will achieve the 14.5% reduction required to provide even a mere 50% probability that the stock will be rebuilt by the 2029 deadline.

BERKELY STRIPER CLUB INPUT FOR THE ASMFC ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR STRIPED BASS

Please find our responses to specific options presented below:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Management:

Ocean Recreational Options	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Rec. Release Mortality Change
Option B. 1 fish at 28” – 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).	-14.1%	-49.9%	+2.0%

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Rec. Fishery Options:

Option	Min. Size	Max Size	Limit	Season	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Mortality Change
Option B. Consistent limits for entire Chesapeake Bay							
Option B1	19”	23”	1 fish	2022	-22.4%	-38.4%	+6.7%

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if Option C mode split option selected)

Option	Will Captain & Crew count as For Hire anglers (allowing additional harvest)
Option B	No - Captain and crew subject to 1 fish limit allowed for P/S

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance – should the board establish minimum requirements

Option	Shall management plan establish minimum requirements to retain racks in states where at-sea / shore filleting is allowed.
Option B	Yes – establishes minimum requirements

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management:

Option	Proposed Options for Commercial Fishery Management 2022 limits
Option B	14% reduction from 2022 quotas

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: If future assessments indicate Striped Bass stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029 with a probability greater than 50%

Option	Description
Option A.	Status quo – Board initiates and develops addendum (typically takes two years for implementation)

**BERKELY STRIPER CLUB INPUT FOR THE ASMFC ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7
TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR STRIPED BASS**

In conclusion, the Berkeley Striper Club urges the Board to take robust, proactive, and effective measures to restore Atlantic Striped Bass stocks promptly. Our response to the request for input should not be construed as an endorsement of the adequacy of Addendum II. We implore the Board to do better and prioritize the well-being of the species for the benefit of all public, ensuring that future actions align with the mandate to protect and sustain our natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Kravchak Jr.', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John Kravchak jr.
President
Berkeley Striper Club



BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS & ANGLERS

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

NEW YORK CHAPTER

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

CAPITAL CHAPTER

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

December 22, 2023

Via Email: comments@asmfc.org

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Attn: Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator

Re: BHA Comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP

Dear ASMFC Staff and Members of the Management Board:

In this correspondence we are writing on behalf of the Leadership Boards of the New England, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Capital and Pennsylvania Chapters of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (collectively, "BHA") to provide our comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass ("Addendum II").

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is focused on advancing proven approaches to protect our public lands, waters and wildlife, and on ensuring our outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting. As BHA's footprint has expanded, our Chapters have applied this mission across North America.

Along the Atlantic coast fishing for striped bass is as much a part of our outdoor heritage as any pursuit in the region. While our Chapters from Maine to North Carolina have been encouraged by some of the recent actions that ASMFC's Striped Bass Board (the Board) has taken to recover striped bass, which were declared overfished in 2019, we remain concerned with the current state of the fishery. According to Addendum II, *"the most recent rebuilding projections indicate a low probability of meeting [the 2029 rebuilding deadline] if the fishing mortality rate associated with the level of catch in 2022 continues"*. Addendum II further clarifies that *"a 14.5% reduction from 2022 total removals will be needed to achieve F target in 2024"*. **BHA's priorities for inclusion have been selected to maximize the odds of recovering striped bass female SSB to target by 2029**, which is a commitment that the Board made when Amendment 7 was adopted in 2022. Accordingly, our comments on specific issues and priorities for inclusion in Addendum II are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Priority for Inclusion: Option B – 1 fish at 28” to 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes)

Of the options presented only options B and C are projected to approach the necessary reduction in fishing mortality, and as a result we oppose the inclusion of options A, D and E.

Mode splits (ex. different size limits for ‘private’ anglers and ‘for-hire’ vessels) are proposed in several sections of Addendum II, including options C and E of 3.1.1. BHA urges the Board to remain focused on recovery as a primary objective that is applied evenly across all segments of the fishery, rather than providing enhanced harvest opportunities to any sub-segment. As a result, we oppose mode splits everywhere that they are proposed in Addendum II.

Option B is the only choice that meets our criteria to support for inclusion in Addendum II.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Priority for Inclusion: Option B1 – 1 fish at 19” to 23” with 2022 seasons (all modes)

Only options B1, B2 and C1 are projected to achieve the necessary reduction in fishing mortality, and as a result we oppose the inclusion of all other options. Additionally, we oppose the inclusion of option C1 because it proposes a mode split between ‘private’ and ‘for-hire’ sectors (see our note on mode splits in 3.1.1).

While both options B1 and B2 are projected to achieve at least the necessary 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality, we believe that the current state of the Chesapeake Bay fishery warrants exceptional protection. The tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay, which are collectively regarded as the most productive of the major spawning areas that support the coastal striped bass population, have experienced sustained sub-average juvenile recruitment. Until the Chesapeake population experiences successful juvenile recruitment that is likely to *“maintain an age structure that provides adequate spawning potential to sustain long-term abundance”* (Amendment 7 – 2.4 Objectives) BHA urges the Board to extend special care towards the fish we’ll be relying upon once favorable conditions do finally occur in the Chesapeake Bay tributaries by including Option B1.

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

As noted in our comments on 3.1.1, BHA does not support mode splits anywhere they are proposed in Addendum II. If the Board does choose to include mode splits we urge the inclusion of Option B, which would ensure that the benefit of enhanced harvest opportunities is only extended to patrons of for-hire vessels, rather than captains and crew.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Priority for Inclusion: Option B – establish minimum requirements for filleting

According to Appendix I in Addendum II many states already have standards that would fulfill the requirements of Option B, so it does not seem as though its inclusion would constitute an excessive burden upon anglers. BHA support the inclusion of Option B, which would increase coastwide compliance with the FMP standards and aid in the recovery of the fishery.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Priority for Inclusion: Option B – up to a 14.5% reduction from 2022 commercial quotas

We feel that all segments of the fishery should participate in its recovery, and as a result BHA supports Option B, which would authorize the Board to reduce commercial quotas by up to 14.5%. Recognizing that Option B allows the Board discretion in *how much* commercial quotas are reduced, **we also urge the Board to implement the full 14.5% reduction** allowed under the option, which would be consistent with the necessary reductions we have advocated for in other segments of the fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Update

Priority for Inclusion: Option B – Board Response via Board Action

BHA supported a similar option in Amendment 7, granting the Striped Bass Board the authority to act quickly in response to changing conditions that warranted amending the FMP standards. BHA supports Option B, which would allow the Board to implement corrective measures as quickly as possible if they are clearly needed, rather than allowing insufficient measures to persist and subsequently requiring more severe action closer to the recovery deadline to achieve a similar result.

In conclusion, the Leadership Boards of the New England, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Capital and Pennsylvania Chapters of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers urge the Striped Bass Management Board **maximize the odds of recovering striped bass female SSB to target by 2029** by including the options we have prioritized in Addendum II. These are the necessary steps to preserve our traditions of fishing for Striped Bass for current and future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input, and for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Woods



Chair, New England Chapter Board
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

And the undersigned Chapter Leadership Boards:

New England Chapter Board
(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts,
New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)
newengland@backcountryhunters.org

New York Chapter Board
newyork@backcountryhunters.org

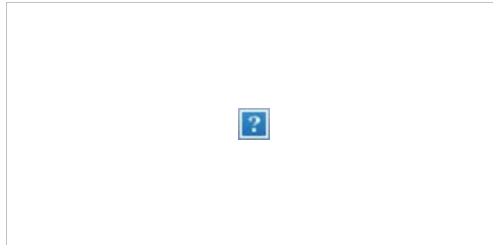
New Jersey Chapter Board
newjersey@backcountryhunters.org

North Carolina Chapter Board
northcarolina@backcountryhunters.org

Capital Chapter Board
(Maryland, Virginia)
capital@backcountryhunters.org

Pennsylvania Chapter Board
pennsylvania@backcountryhunters.org

From: [William Hatch](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Meserve, Nichola \(FWE\)](#); [Michael Armstrong](#); [Raymond Kane](#); sarah.peake@mahouse.gov; Tom.O'Shea@mass.gov
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:41:14 PM



Ms. Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 North Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

December 18, 2023

Cape Cod Charter Boat Association would like to provide comments and recommendations to Striped Bass Addendum II. Striped Bass is the backbone of the charter fleet in New England and a healthy sustainable management plan is imperative to our businesses. We thank the commission for the options that include a split mode option while making adequate reductions to ensure a healthy population.

We support **Option C for Section 3.1.1** which would give a slot limit of 28-33 inches to the for hire fleet and 28-31 inches to the private and shore anglers.

- Option C gives us an overall reduction of 14.0% which is only .1% difference between Option B and better than D and E which are 12.8%
- The large increase in recreational landings in 2022 were attributed to the private and shore modes which almost doubled this year. This high mortality in this mode caused the emergency action to reduce the slot limit from 28-35 to 28-31 inches in 2023. The for-hire fleet in 2022 did not have increased landings.
- The for-hire fleet represents 6% of the recreational catch. This small increase in the

slot size for the for-hire mode will have little effect (one tenth of one percent) on overall reduction but will help our businesses tremendously.

- The smaller slot limit of 28-31 inches led to higher discards last year as we had to catch many more fish to get our limit. Customers were very frustrated with having to throw so many fish back in order to get one to bring home for dinner. Trips were lost as customers no longer perceived the trip to be worth it with such a restrictive slot limit.
- 2023 mortality is down compared to 2022 because less trips were booked and many more were canceled due to horrible weather.
- We have seen great fishing over the past several seasons due to conservation measures we have taken over several years such as the bag limit going from 2 to 1 fish, the implementation of the 28-35 inch slot limit, use of circle hooks and eliminating gaffing.
- A big concern of the health of the striped bass population is the five years of bad recruitment in the Chesapeake Bay due to poor spawning success due to bad water quality. We should be focusing on water quality in the Chesapeake because no amount of striped bass is going to maintain a healthy population if they are unable to spawn.

We support **Option A status quo for 3.1.3** for the for hire clarification.

We support **Option A status quo for 3.1.4** for the recreational filleting allowances.

- In MA this would continue to have the skin left on and two fillets per fish. Some of the marinas do not allow filleting of fish at the dock. Disposal of racks at the dock is a major issue and dumping into the harbor is not encouraged and/or illegal. Filleting on a for-hire trip saves boats and clients time at the dock. Some of the inlets on Cape Cod Bay can only be transited during certain parts of the tide and filleting at sea vs at the dock may be the difference between doing one trip and two for the day.

We feel the split mode **Option C for 3.1.1** makes the necessary conservation restrictions while enabling us to continue to provide access to the fishery for our customers.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters. On behalf of CCCBA I wish you a healthy and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Capt. Willy Hatch
President, CCCBA

Cc: Dan McKiernan, MaDMF
Michael Armstrong, MaDMF
Nichola Meserve, MaDMF
Tom O'Shea, Ma F & G
Ray Kane, MaFAC
Rep. Sarah Peake



Date: 12/20/2023

From: Cape Cod Salties Sportfishing Club, Yarmouth, MA

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Regarding the proposed Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass discussed at the December 6th public forum, Buzzards Bay, MA, our club leadership has convened to debate and document our positions on the proposed measures and actions put forth by ASMFC. We believe it's important to note that the following represent a *minimum* set of actions necessary in an attempt to responsibly and sustainably manage striped bass populations within the North Atlantic:

- 3.1.1: Ocean Recreational Option
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors supports "Option B" - one fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)
- 3.1.2: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors supports "Option B" - one fish at 19-23"; across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons
- 3.1.3: For-Hire Management Clarification
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors supports "Option A" - Status Quo
- 3.1.4: Recreational Fileting Allowance Requirements
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors supports "Option A" - Status Quo
- 3.2.1: Commercial Quota Reduction Options
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors Supports "Option B" - with up to a 14.5% reduction to both ocean commercial fisheries and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries
- 3.3: Response to Stock Assessment Updates
 - Cape Cod Salties Board of Directors supports "Option B" - Board Action
 - However, our Board would like to explicitly state our assumption and expectation that such express authority for ASMFC Board action would be limited to action pertinent to the current situation and 2023/24 stock assessment only, and would not be an authority or power to be maintained by the ASMFC Board in perpetuity (i.e., future actions should return to the standard processes of written notices, public hearings, etc.).
- Additional comments and considerations
 - You may recall the comments from our club president, Jon Ungerland, at your MA public hearing regarding recent reporting pertaining to NOAA/MRIP data collection inaccuracies, and specifically concerning an expectation that ASMFC would explicitly address whether those (significant) data inconsistencies and errors impact your estimates or actions. Mr. Ungerland maintains his opinion that



ASMFC must transparently address the MRIP and NOAA data issues within its reports and recommendations on striped bass populations.

- Further, it will remain a desire of our club to see ASMFC collaborate with community organizations and engaged, informed, and experienced anglers to maintain and improve the quality of data collection. In particular, we hope to see ASFMC, NOAA, and others expand data collection areas for spawning data (considering changing water temps and historical migration patterns of stocks), engage anglers as citizen scientists to increase accuracy of stock management and biomass assessments, and partner with commercial/for-hire captains to locate stocks outside traditionally targeted measurement areas, etc.

The leadership of our club is concerned about a potential or impending collapse of the striped bass stock. Our collective concerns are rooted in decades of informed and engaged activity in the fishery, especially many of our leaders' firsthand experiences with similar signs and symptoms within striped bass stocks in the 1980s and 1990s. As you know, the problem then started (or was at least most immediately measurable) in the Chesapeake. Then, like now, spawning and young of year numbers signaled forthcoming struggles within the striped bass population, despite anglers reporting record catches and impressively sized stocks of large or breeder fish across many fishing grounds of the Northeast Atlantic.

In closing, we will continue to prioritize informed engagement of our membership within the fishery, and responsible enjoyment of our fishery with a view to ecological sustainability and abundant management of our precious resources. We'll continue to advocate for our members to participate in programs such as the scale program here in MA and other citizen science initiatives. Finally, our club will continue to promote responsible handling of striped bass, respectful treatment of the population under pressure, and emphasize practices such as catch and release for club activities such as our in-house derby, many club-sponsored annual for-hire trips, and private activities of our club members - *while remaining respectful of the rights of anglers across the North Atlantic to derive sustenance from our waters and maintain important cultural traditions and commercial legacies rooted in recreational and commercial angling.*

Respectfully,

Cape Cod Salties Sportfishing Club
Yarmouth, MA
www.capecodsalties.org
president@capecodsalties.org



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

November 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Submitted via email only to: comments@asmfc.org

Dear Ms. Franke:

On behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), we wish to provide the following comments on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP). CBF is the largest conservation organization dedicated solely to saving Chesapeake Bay. Our motto, **Save the Bay**, defines the organization's mission and commitment to reducing pollution, improving fisheries, and protecting and restoring natural resources such as forests, wetlands, and underwater grasses. CBF represents more than 200,000 members who support the wise management of the region's living resources with a particular focus on striped bass.

The long-term health of the striped bass population remains a serious concern in Chesapeake Bay. Just last month, Maryland and Virginia released their 2023 striped bass young of the year surveys. Maryland's results indicated a fifth consecutive year of juvenile striped bass numbers far below average with an index of 1.0 compared to the long-term average of 11.3. Virginia's results were also significantly lower this year, with a mean value of 4.25 fish, compared to an average of 7.77. This is recruitment failure.

It is likely that factors such as prey availability and climate change are already affecting recruitment, habitat availability, and the range of striped bass. ASMFC has seen ample evidence of this as North Carolina has not reported any ocean harvest of striped bass since 2012. The state also recently announced that it will not open its 2023 fall season in the Albemarle Sound management area. As noted in draft Addendum II, significant concerns over continued low

recruitment led to the development of a low recruitment scenario currently being used to derive fishery projections.

Given the current overfished status of striped bass, the low probability of rebuilding to the biomass target by the 2029 deadline, and the specter of continued recruitment failure in the Bay looming, we strongly urge ASMFC to adopt Addendum II options with the greatest probability of achieving the target fishing rate in 2024. These actions are urgently needed to get stock rebuilding back on track and prevent further losses of critical spawning stock biomass. We urge the adoption of the options specifically supported in our comments below.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Coastal recreational removals for striped bass have remained robust in the more northern reaches of the fish's range given the fact that the last strong year class (2015) is now available to many anglers in the summer and fall. This availability is driving significant increases in recreational removals. In 2022, coastal recreational removals increased nearly 40% over 2021, including an 88% increase in coastal recreational harvest.¹ This is a significant departure from what anglers in the Chesapeake Bay region have experienced as both trips and landings have decreased in recent years.

Given the significant increase in coastal removals, **Option B. 1 fish at 28"-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)** is the most appropriate path forward for Addendum II. CBF does not support options which allow for sector separation within the recreational fishery. This action creates disparities amongst fishery participants and exacerbates compliance and enforcement challenges in an already complex fishery.

Although not all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions currently have recreational spring trophy fisheries, any existing or future such fisheries would be required to have the same size limits as the ocean fishery. With ongoing low recruitment in the region, managers should consider additional conservation actions to protect spawning adult fish.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

CBF supports **Options B1 or B2 for the Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery**. Reaching a 14.5% reduction to meet the 2024 fishing rate target is of primary importance through this management action. Options B1 and B2 are the only "B" options that meet or exceed the necessary level of reduction, while balancing modest increases in post-release mortality expected to occur with the implementation of maximum size limits. These options also help achieve consistency in minimum size, maximum size, and bag limits across all Bay jurisdictions, a long-standing goal which should contribute to improved compliance and ease of enforcement.

CBF does not support sector separation in Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries (Options C1 and C2). Sector separation favors one segment of the recreational fishery over others. This is

¹ https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/6542756cAtlStripedBassDraftAddendumII_PublicComment_Oct2023.pdf

especially concerning given the number of small boat and shore-based anglers that participate in this fishery. Unlike the coastal fishery in which changes in removals in the for-hire fleet and private vessel/shore mode fisheries differed significantly (>30%) in 2022, in Chesapeake Bay, private vessel/shore mode removals increased only 3% while for-hire removals decreased.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

The striped bass resource is a shared resource between recreational and commercial fisheries. This is especially true in the Chesapeake Bay region where removals are more evenly distributed between commercial and recreational fisheries relative to the coast. Given the status of the stock and poor outlook due to recruitment failure, it is necessary for all sectors to contribute to the preservation of the striped bass population. Therefore, CBF supports **Option B for the Commercial Quota Reduction Options with no less than a 14.5% reduction in commercial fisheries quota.**

The draft addendum notes that the Board will select a specific reduction between zero and 14.5%; however, given the combination of options available in Addendum II, only a 14.5% commercial quota reduction results in a 14.5% overall reduction and a greater than 50% probability of achieving the target fishing rate in 2024. To choose any reduction less than 14.5% would run counter to the objective of this Addendum to reduce fishing mortality to target levels in 2024.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

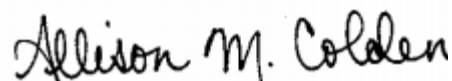
The Board should be commended for taking significant actions over the past 2 years to help improve the status of the striped bass stock. The need for timely action may increase as we near the 2029 rebuilding deadline. CBF supported the Board's use of emergency action in response to the 2022 stock assessment in Amendment 7. CBF maintains its support for giving the Board the flexibility it needs to take responsive action as a result of a future stock assessment. Therefore, CBF supports **Option B**, which would allow the Board to quickly respond to the results of future striped bass stock assessments.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments on Draft Addendum II. We hope these comments are helpful in the deliberations by the Board. We know that all stakeholders are focused on restoring this iconic species and have seen hope in the management actions that have been taken thus far.

Sincerely,



Chris Moore
Senior Regional Ecosystem Scientist



Allison M. Colden, Ph.D.
Maryland Executive Director

cc: Alison Prost, Vice President, Environmental Protection & Restoration, CBF
Christy Everett, Interim Virginia Executive Director, CBF

Ms. Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201

December 21st, 2023

The East Coast Fishing Coalition (ECFC) membership consists of many of the charter boat associations along the east coast from Maryland to Massachusetts. We are unified in our representation of hundreds of Charter and Party-Boat operators engaged in the for-hire industry along the Eastern seaboard. Our mission is simply to preserve the recreational harvest of marine fish through responsible and sustainable management. It is our belief that most recreational fishermen have the distinct goal to [“fish4dinner”](#) as a primary objective when they embark on a recreational fishing trip. The for-hire fleet has the expertise and infrastructure in place to offer that opportunity to those recreational fishermen.

We appreciate the chance to offer our comments and preferred options in the public hearing document for addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. Along the east coast no species influences the success of the for-hire fleet more than Striped Bass. We are pleased that the PDT developed, and the Board approved a fair range of alternatives in the document, all of which will enhance the current rebuilding of Striped Bass.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

We support 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.

Rationale: This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of the for-hire fleet. As noted in the document, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality, virtually leaving the emergency action measures in place.

This option considers the minor impact of the for-hire fleet on Striped Bass mortality and preserves a slightly greater opportunity for a recreational angler to harvest a fish for dinner, a core mission of the ECFC.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

The option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

We support the preferred options and rationale presented by the Maryland Charter Boat Association

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

We support 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.

Rationale: Although either option is workable, we think enforcing option B would be very difficult.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

We support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to atsea/shoreside filleting.

Rationale: The ECFC supports enforcement of existing regulations, and we recognize the challenges enforcing slot limits. This section of the document needs more time to be fully developed with stakeholder engagement and we are concerned that approving Option B may slow down the implementation of other sections.

We suggest continued collaboration with State partners, Advisory Panel members and the Public to develop workable solutions to enforcement challenges within the entire FMP.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

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

Rationale: An addendum process includes a public comment period with public hearings and an opportunity to submit written comments on the draft addendum document.

Under Option B if the Board acts via a motion at a board meeting, only limited public comment can be provided during Board meetings per the Commission's guidelines for public comment at Board meetings. Option B's faster timeline does not allow sufficient time for the public to become aware of actions that could significantly impact them.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments, we look forward to continued participation in the management of Striped Bass. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of The East Coast Fishing Coalition members.

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President

Capt. Marc Berger, Vice President

Capt. Jill Maganza-Ruiz, Treasurer

Capt. Willy Hatch, Secretary

**EASTERN SHORE WORKING
WATERMAN'S ASSOCIATION
P. O. BOX 747
ATLANTIC, VA 23303**

Comment on Addendum 2 of Amendment 7 for Striped Bass

If you were using the best science available as mandated by law it would be very easy to see the problem.

The entire increase in mortality occurred in the Recreational Fishery in 2022, with a minor decrease in the Commercial mortality. With the recreational harvest almost doubling from 2021, if they had maintained the 2021 level as the Commercial was required to there would be no need for this Addendum.

When Addendum 4 of the past Amendment was enacted, the Commercial quota dropped from 6.8 million pounds to 4.7 million pounds in the 2015 to 2019 period. And it was further reduced to 4.1 million pounds in 2020. The Commercial quota and landings have achieved a greater than 30% reduction in weight and over a 20% number reduction of fish. The number of fish harvested and the 9% discard mortality associated with the Recreational Fishery is just above the 2014 numbers. In 2022 they showed no reduction in mortality from the Recreational sector. They were supposed to achieve the same reduction in mortality as the Commercial sector, and they did not.

The emergency action that ASMFC passed last spring (2023) was enacted because of a near doubling of the Recreational catch according to ASMFC's website, with no reference to increase in the Commercial harvest. The website also states there was a small decrease in the Commercial mortality. Your strategic plan outlines science as the foundation for your decisions. It also states that the allocation of resources should be fairly allocated. By proposing a reduction in the Commercial quota you are doing neither. It also states that you should consider the socio-economics of coastal communities. There is a lot of reference to the Recreational Fishery in your proposal, including the "for hire" industry but only brief mention of the Commercial Fishery, stating some income loss and possible price increases. In the state of Virginia less than 10% of the population holds saltwater fishing licenses, with only a small percentage of them striped bass fishing. Everyone else depend on commercial fishermen for their seafood. Striped bass are consumed mainly in restaurants with easter and Mother's Day having the best commercial markets.

My ocean fishery is a mixed fishery where I catch striped bass, black drum, large bluefish, smooth dogfish, and horseshoe crabs all at the same time using the same nets. This is my most productive

time of year, with April and May accounting for at least 40% of my income. I barely have enough quota after the current reductions to account for my striped bass catch. So any further reductions will result in the striped bass being discarded dead or alive while I continue to work catching the other four species that are current at the same time.

If you reduce the Commercial quota with total disregard of science, soci-economic and fair allocation you are doing so on purely a political basis and against your federal mandate and your mission statement and your strategic plan.

Regards,

Ernest Bowden, Jr.

President

Eastern Shore Working Waterman's Association

Frank L. Macalik
525 Lakewood Road
Neptune, New Jersey, 07753

December 20, 2023

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Striped bass management program addendum II, amendment VII comments:

Dear Ms. Franke,

I represent FUB (Fun Under Boats) dive club located in Monmouth County, New Jersey. We are a group of local SCUBA divers that occasionally spearfish for striped bass.

On behalf of FUB divers, we reluctantly selected option B in section 3.1-1 with a slot size of 28 to 31 inches for the new striped bass recreational regulation for 2024. We would prefer option A with the larger slot size as we need the larger slot size to better identify a legal fish. It is very challenging to select a bass within a 3-inch parameter for harvest. The small slot size is excluding spearfishing from the striped bass fishery. That is why spearfishing should have a separate category to harvest striped bass with a 24" to 31" slot size. After all, spearfishermen do the least amount of damage to the fishery. We do not cycle through fish to take a single keeper. We just need a larger slot size to select our one fish.

On a personal note; I occasionally fish for striped bass, both surf and boats. Large bass are not getting released properly so more education is necessary there. Surprisingly, large bass are too fragile to just dump back into the water. There is a process to successfully release large fish. In addition, there would be less stress on the big bass if you stopped the use of live bait and only allowed artificial bait. Big bass will still be caught, just not gut-hooked and easier to release. FYI, treble hooks are still being used and big bass are getting gut-hooked by circle hooks.

Final thoughts, I remember when and where I caught my first striped bass. It was back in the 70's, I was trolling an umbrella rig off Coney Island, NY. Back then, catching a striped bass was an event. I was the talk of the dock. Today, striped bass are everywhere and each year is better than the last. So, overall, the conservation efforts are working.

Please consider spearfishing for any future regulations.

Sincerely yours,



Frank Macalik
Frankmacalik@gmail.com
732-754-5345



The Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association & River Council

Fred Akers – Operations Mgr.
P.O. Box 109
Newtonville, NJ 08346
609-335-3744
fred.akers13@gmail.com

OFFICERS

Julie Akers
President
Paul Ludgate
Vice President
Dick Colby
Treasurer
Lynn Maun
Secretary
Brooke Handley
Administrator

TRUSTEES

Steve Eisenhauer
Pat Sprigman
Clark Sprigman
Clay Emerson
Carol Jones
Bill Stuempfig

RIVER COUNCIL

Chair:

Gregory Gregory
Somers Point

Vice Chair:

Richard Coe
Monroe Twp.

COUNCILLORS

Julie Akers
Buena Vista Twp.
Carol Foster
Corbin City
Bill Christman
Hamilton Twp.
Ralph Bernard
Weymouth
Clark Sprigman
Winslow Twp.
John Keenan
Hammonton
Jim Owen
Estell Manor
Greg Conway
Borough of Folsom
David Brown
Egg Harbor Twp.
William Handley
Upper Twp.
Dick Colby
GEHWA

November 28, 2023

Emilie Franke Email: comments@asmfc.org
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Emilie and ASMFC;

Ending over fishing of Stripped Bass and rebuilding the stock as quickly as possible should be the primary goal of the ASMFC.

While closing the fishery for a set time period would be the best way to protect the striped bass and quickly rebuild the stock, that is unfortunately not an option under Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

Therefore, we support the following options that have the highest percentage of overall removal reductions:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishing Option B. - 1 fish at 28” to 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Comments: Option B provides the highest overall reduction of -14.1% and a -49.9% harvest change. Option B also applies to all fishing modes, which will prevent any confusion over what rules pertain to what mode, will eliminate the need for the For-Hire Management Clarification at 3.1.3, and will make enforcement more consistent.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Option B1: - Apply a standard minimum size limit of 19”, a maximum size limit of 23”, and a 1 fish bag limit for all modes.

Comments: Option B1 provides the highest overall reduction of -22.4% and a -38.4% harvest change. Option B1 also applies to all fishing modes, which will prevent any confusion over what rules pertain to what mode, will eliminate the need for the For-Hire Management Clarification at 3.1.3, and will make enforcement more consistent.

Continued on next page

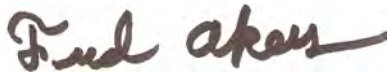
www.gehwa.org – The Official Website of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Assoc.

3.1.4 Recreational Filletting Allowance Requirements Option B: - 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 at-sea/shore.

Comments: The taking of over/undersized fish and fish over the bag limit is a serious problem for all fishing modes and needs stricter rules and enforcement measures.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction 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%.

Thank you for the very thoughtful options to better protect striped bass and the opportunity for the public to comment on them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred Akers". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fred Akers, Operations Manager
Great Egg Harbor River Council and Watershed Association

From: smachalaba@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: projectcivic91@aol.com; pbrindley91@gmail.com; tadevine1@verizon.net
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 -Striped Bass Management Plan
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 4:07:22 PM

December 14, 2023

Emilie Franke

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA. 22201
Email: comments@asmfc.org

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke:

The Hi-Mar Striper Club is herein presenting its comments regarding Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. The Hi-Mar Striper Club is a fishing club of approximately 60 members, based in Middletown, New Jersey. The Hi-Mar Striper Club has been in existence for 70+ years. Our members have seen and experienced the "peaks and valleys" of Striped Bass stocks, and are obviously very concerned regarding the proper management of this fishery for the present and future. The HI-Mar Striper Club does not believe that the proposals included in Draft Addendum II will actually help with the management of Striped Bass to attain ASMFC's projected stock rebuilding by 2029. First and foremost, the entire stock rebuilding process is called into question due to the fact that it is based upon single source stock assessment sampling performed in Chesapeake Bay. The data from this stock assessment, which was performed in 2021, is now being extrapolated to estimate Striped Bass stock throughout the entire coast, with no consideration for other Striped Bass spawning and breeding areas such as the Delaware Bay/River, Hudson River and other areas. Striped Bass stocks in Chesapeake Bay have been on the decline for many years due to several factors, including lack of forage fish (specifically, Menhaden due to the mismanagement of this fishery by Virginia and Maryland), pollution and poor water quality, higher than normal water temperatures, and invasive Blue Catfish.

Furthermore, this addendum which seeks to reduce Striped Bass mortality, actually increase it, with the 3" "slot" limit, and already put into effect by ASMFC's Emergency Action. Addendum II allows for the continuation of harvesting of small Striped Bass in Chesapeake Bay and commercial fishing for Striped Bass in some states, such as Massachusetts, with a minimum size limit of 35". Therefore, for the reasons above, the Hi-Mar Striper Club does not believe the changes proposed in Addendum II will actually help in the proper management of Striped Bass stocks. We also question as to how some of the proposals were arrived at; ASMFC and other management agencies have already created a schism between recreational and commercial fisherman, between fisherman in various states and now is seeking to drive a wedge between private boat and land based fisherman, and for-hire charter and party(head)boat fisherman with differing size and allowable limits.

The Hi-Mar Striper Club's response and comments to Addendum II, are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

We favor Option B - 1 fish at 28" to 31" This is preferred over Option D - 1 fish at 30" to 33".

Option B is selected because it will better protect Striped Bass. Some 30" to 33" Striped Bass

will be from the 2015 year class, which should be protected, Options C and D should not even be considered since they include different limits between private boat and land based anglers and "for hire" charter and head boat anglers. It is not fair to penalize someone who cannot afford to go on a charter or head boat. Option A, the Status Quo, 1 fish at 28" to 35" shouldn't even be listed, since this was taken away by ASMFC's Emergency Action.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Option B Minimum size 19" to 23" is preferred. It is the least worst out of all of these bad options. Protection of small fish in Chesapeake Bay should be a priority.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

Option B is selected. For-hire management measures should apply to patrons only; Captain and crew would be subject to private vessel/shore angler limits.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Option B is selected. This will require states that authorize filleting at sea to establish minimum requirements such as saving of racks and leaving skin on to facilitate enforcement of size and bag limits.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

Option B with a commercial quota reduction of 14.5% is selected. it does not make sense that recreational anglers are limited to a 3" slot fish while some states are allowed to continue commercial fishing for Striped Bass. Massachusetts allows anglers to become commercial hook and line fisherman, by purchasing an relatively inexpensive permit, and kill 15 Striped Bass per day, at a minimum size limit of 35"

Section 3.3

Option A - Maintaining the Status Quo in regard to development and implementation of management measures is selected. Option B, which would allow the Commission to respond more quickly cannot be approved because, as demonstrated by some of the measures included in this draft Addendum II, the recent Emergency Action and other actions, do not provide the members of the Hi-Mar Striper Club the required trust that the proper management plan actions will be taken.

Respectfully submitted, Hi-Mar Striper Club
P.O. Box 126
Middletown, New Jersey 07748

Jose Bastos, President

Stephen Machalaba, Vice President

Peter Brindley, Secretary

Thomas Devine, Treasurer

From: [Joe Albanese](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Michael Sardinias](#); [A SETIAN](#); membership@thehrfa.org
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:14:30 AM

Hello Emilie Franke,
The Elected Board and General Membership of THE Hudson River Fishermen's Association voted in favor of Option B which simply stated maintains the status quo.
Best wishes for the holidays,
Joe Albanese
President HRFA

Jersey Coast Anglers Association

Working for Marine Recreational Anglers

1594 Lakewood Road, Unit 13, Toms River, NJ 08755

TEL.: 732-506-6565 - FAX: 732-506-6975



12/5/2023

ASMFC Striped Bass Board,

I am writing on behalf of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association which represents approximately 75 fishing clubs and many thousands of fishermen throughout our state. We are pleased that you are accepting comments in regard to Addendum II to Amendment VII for striped bass. However, we are very unhappy with how you have mis-managed this species.

Had the board listened to JCAA and the vast majority of fishermen up and down the coast when they were considering Amendment VII, we would have had a minimum size limit of 35" or so which would have protected the abundant 2015 year class. Periodically raising the size limits to protect a dominant year class was the strategy that worked well in the past and what we would still support. What happened is that the 2015 year class grew to legal size and removals from the biomass dramatically increased in 2022 due to both harvest and C&R mortality. That lowered the probability of restoring the stocks by 2029 to just 15%. There are other factors in play that you cannot control such as pollution, blue catfish taking over Chesapeake Bay, and weather patterns that have not been conducive to successful spawns in the Chesapeake for the last 5 years. Despite that there are more than enough striped bass in the SSB to produce a very good spawn if we get the right conditions. Further restricting commercial and recreational fishermen may not do much good. However, one thing you can do is to eliminate or reduce the number of menhaden that are netted commercially in the Chesapeake Bay. Increasing the number of menhaden would be beneficial to stripers of all sizes in the bay. We also believe that striped bass should be a no-sale or gamefish along the entire east coast. It is reprehensible to see how many stripers are being poached in the Raritan Bay area and then being brought to New York where they are sold. We need more law enforcement and stricter penalties.

One other thing that the ASFMC/MAFMC might do is liberalize the recreational measures for other species such as fluke and sea bass. Sea bass have been rebuilt to far beyond their target for several years now. Liberalizing measures for these species would take some of the pressure off striped bass.

The fishing in the NY bight area has been phenomenal during the past couple of seasons, perhaps the best fishing in over 50 years. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a large number of "floaters" particularly larger fish that don't survive as well when they are released. The mandated use of circle hooks apparently did very little as the c&r mortality

rate has remained at 9%. We need to make a better effort in educating people as to how to properly handle and release fish.

The Raritan Bay area has become the striped bass capitol of the east coast with thousands of boats coming from all over the country to fish here. This has been occurring this fall as well as in the spring when the fish are congregating to spawn and are easy pickings. This has caused the c&r mortality rate to skyrocket. In fact, there have been some reports of c&r mortality being responsible for as much as 52% of the removals from the biomass. It certainly appears as though the board has chosen to manage stripers as a commercial and c&r fishery. The c&r crowd needs to bare some of the burden of rebuilding the stocks by having seasonal closures to both harvesting and targeting of striped bass. Further, Massachusetts commercial hook and line fishermen are allowed to keep 15 stripers per day at a minimum size of 35". At the recent NJ webinar hearing on the addendum, we were told that the reason for this is that there might be increased c&r mortality if they had to release larger fish while trying to catch smaller ones. Well, that's what the rest of us have been forced to do. It's just great that the recreational fishermen have to release stripers greater than 31" so that they can grow large and be harvested commercially in MA.

That having been said below are our preferences for the various options included on the addendum:

Section 3.1-1 Ocean Recreational Fishing Options

We favor option B, a slot of 28"-31" rather than Option D which is 30"-33". It is a tough choice between the two but we believe it gives shore-based anglers a little better chance of catching a fish that they can bring home to eat. Also, the 30"-33" fish are reaching prime breeding size. Some 30-33' stripers will still be from the 2015 year class which we should be protecting. We don't like options C or E as they give a wider ranged slot to the for-hire sector. We are adamantly opposed to sector separation but if anything, more lenient regulations should be for shore-based anglers who fish for sustenance and can't afford to go on a boat. What happened to the Environmental Justice that NOAA had been talking about?

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

We prefer Option B1 which includes a slot of 19"-23" fish for all bay jurisdictions. Options B2, 3, and 4 all have wider slot ranged. It is imperative that we try to protect these smaller fish particularly from the last two decent spawning year classes in 2017 and 2018. We do not like option C1 or C2 because once again those options create sector separation by giving a wider ranged slot to the for-hire fleet.

Section 3.1.3 For Hire Management Clarification

We prefer Option B. In the unfortunate event that sector separation is chosen the measures should only apply to the patrons. The captains and crews should be restricted to the private vessel/shore-based regulations.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

We prefer option B which will require states that authorize filleting at sea to establish minimum requirements such as saving racks and leaving the skin on.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reductions

As previously stated, we believe striped bass should be a no-sale or gamefish in all states. It is unfathomable that the ASMFC allows commercial fishing while the recreational sector is limited to a 3" slot. It is also disgraceful that the ASMFC allows the commercial hook and line boat fishermen in MA to harvest 15 stripers per day with a minimum size of 35". Much of the 2015 year class is now approaching that size and you are supposed to be protecting them! However, since these changes are not currently options, we prefer option B with a quota reduction of 14.5%.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

We prefer Option A. Option B which would allow the Board to swiftly respond to stock assessments without having to go through the more time-consuming Amendment or Addendum process might seem like a good idea. Unfortunately, though we no longer trust the board to do the right thing and we want to be assured of having our say even if our opinions are ignored. Still, we remain hopeful that some day the board will listen and begin better managing this fishery for the recreational fishermen.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Haertel
JCAA Striped Bass Committee Chairman

December 20, 2023
Ms Emily Frank
FMP Coordinator
ASMFC

Comments to amendment II

We are the voice of the Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass fishery, with a membership of over 1,000 commercial rod & reel permit holders and growing.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the ASMFC's Striped Bass Addendum II Commercial measures.

We recommend the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF Take a position in support of its small local commercial rod & reel fishermen on Addendum 2, section 3.2.1 **Option A. Status Quo.** (no reduction to the commercial quota)

The proposed 14.5% reduction equates to almost 100,000 pounds of fish. That alone equates to over \$500,000 at today's average wholesale prices, and close to 2.5 Million dollars retail.

Massachusetts has about 650 "active" (1000+ pound) permit holders. That would be almost a \$4,000 direct out of pocket hit to each one of those individual permit holders.

Furthermore a status quo vote would only equate to a 1.6% difference on the recreational sector, on what could very well be hypothetical numbers to begin with. (MRIP surveys).

The commercial sector is already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another 14.5% decrease to the quota is not justifiable now simply because the recreational sector's catch numbers are up by 88%.

The commercial striped bass fishery is and has been very well managed with each and every pound being accounted for on multiple levels. We urge you to let that continue.

On behalf of the *Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association* we ask that the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF support our local fishermen with a vote of **Option A status quo**, No reduction.

Respectfully,
The 1,000+ members of the

Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association





**Massachusetts
Striped Bass Association**

Since 1950

Emilie Franke
2022
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

December 22, 2023

Dear Emilie Franke,

RE: Public Comment on Draft Addendum 2 to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP

I submit this letter on behalf of the hundreds of recreational fishing families, for hire operators and commercial harvesters that make up the membership of the Massachusetts Striped Bass Association. The following positions have been discussed and voted upon by our membership.

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery

MSBA members report and other sources confirm that recreational catch of striped bass in 2023 were similar to the high catch rates of 2022. This knowledge added to the below average young of the year data causes a serious concern about the rebuilding timeline and the overall future of the striped bass fishery.

MSBA urges ASMFC to immediately take the 14/5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update.

3.0 Proposed Management Options

MSBA agrees with the analysis that a 14.5% reduction from 2022 removals is necessary to achieve the F target in 2024.

MSBA urges ASMFC to place maintaining the current rebuilding timeline as the top priority of this addendum and urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 7 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

- MSBA is disappointed that none of the options in this section achieve the 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality require to meet the 2029 rebuilding criteria with a greater than 50% likelihood of success.
- MSBA believes options with less than a 50% likelihood of success should be removed from consideration in all fisheries management.

Option A Status Quo (28”-35” Slot Limit):

- MSBA Opposes the status quo option. Although striped bass fishing in MA has been very good in recent years; our members notice the lack of small fish behind the 2015-year class and believe the science regarding recent below average year classes to be true. We predict recreational catch in 2023 will again be very high and that even if Addendum 2 is adopted, the results of the 2024 stock assessment update will likely require reductions well beyond the 14.5% in future years.
- We ask ASMFC to reduce fishing mortality NOW and stick to the current rebuilding timeline to slow the predicted rapid decline of the overall stock.

Option B (28” -31” slot limit):

- MSBA supports adoption of Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline.

Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28”-31” slot & for-hire anglers 28”-33”):

- The MSBA membership has voted multiple times to adopt the philosophy that “a recreational angler is a recreational angler regardless of the platform from which they are fishing.” All recreational anglers are citizens attempting to access a shared natural resource. Regulations that favor one type of recreational angler over another are simply not fair.
- MSBA feels the subject of recreational mode splits is an amendment level decision. Any consideration of recreational mode splits should include discussion and consideration of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions. None of these important subjects were considered in development of this addendum. In fact, the record shows very little analysis and discussion of this option. MSBA opposes inclusion and adoption of this option based on process.
- Conservation of striped bass is another reason to reject split mode regulations. Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- This option will encourage private anglers to register a for-hire license so that all on that vessel can avoid the smaller slot limit.
- Preservation of for hire trips is not a valid reason to split modes. This document provides no evidence that the difference in slot limits will have a measurable difference on for hire trip sales. Common sense concludes more is better however at this scale, prediction of impact is a guess. Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and MSBA urges ASMFC to reject this option.
- Another reason to reject mode splits is education. ASMFC continues to talk education as a key to rebuilding striped bass. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery. ASMFC should not encourage out of date business models to remain status quo while requiring the remainder of the recreational fishery to adapt to current conditions.
- Release mortality is not a reason to split modes. There is no evidence that release mortality is different between recreational modes. We reject the claim that for hire anglers or crew handle fish better than private anglers. For hire operations are as varied as

private anglers and there is no operational standard from which even a realistic analysis could be studied.

- Current data does not support a mode split. There is little evidence that for hire operations are more accurate in reporting catch. We acknowledge expensive controlled studies have demonstrated small groups of for hire operations can employ more accurate reporting. However, in MA we average 850 licensed for-hire operations, and most of the catch data comes from customers encountered by the same APAIS dockside survey that generates private angler catch data. MA DMF has reported multiple instances of for-hire operators instructing anglers to refuse APAIS interviews. APAIS has reported both for hire & private anglers refuse interviews at a rate of 50%. All modes have good and bad actors which is why recreational mode splits based on data quality are not justified.
- Finally, ASMFC decision makers must ask yourselves what happens next. There is no way to analyze success or failure and if enacted & mode splits will be even more controversial and difficult to manage when the next round of reductions is considered.

Option D (30” -33” slot limit): MSBA opposes Option D for the following reasons:

- Option D is projected to reduce fishing mortality by 12.8% and we prefer Option B which is projected to reduce fishing mortality by the larger number of 14.1%.
- The subsection of the recreational fishing community most affected in a declining fishery are those who fish from shore; many of whom are low income and cannot afford to fish from a boat. Many shore anglers’ fish with bait from bridges, piers, and beaches for food. Raising the lower end of the slot above 28” will not only make it much harder for these anglers but will likely increase release mortality.

Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30”-33” slot & for-hire anglers 28”-33”):

- MSBA opposes this option for the same reasons we oppose Options C & D

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- MSBA supports Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- MSBA opposes any mode split options that meet the rebuilding timeline because we oppose all recreational mode splits for the reasons explained earlier in this comment letter under ocean recreational fisheries.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- MSBA supports a reduction in the ocean commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- MSBA supports a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

- MSBA supports option A Status Quo. We agree with prior law enforcement comments regarding the difficulties of having different regulations for anglers on the same vessel

and feel Option B is an unenforceable feel good measure that accomplishes nothing in the area of conservation and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- MSBA supports Option A Status Quo. All recreational anglers should be insulted by the proposed language that suggests a mode split within this regulation. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local file at the dock prohibitions. The repeated attempts within this addendum to separate and establish privileged groups of recreational anglers while a stock is in rapid decline inspires memories of grade school lessons of violins and the burning city of Rome. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

- MSBA anticipates the results of the 2024 stock assessment update will be driven by continued high recreational catch rates and poor recruitment data. We predict the results will show the rebuilding timeline to be unlikely or unachievable without significant changes to the fishery and a major reduction in fishing mortality will be required.
- MSBA anticipates the next management action will need to be a full-blown amendment that considers significant changes to the fishery including but not limited to closed no target fishing seasons in the ocean recreational fishery, no fishing closures in portions of the producer areas when water temps drive high release mortality to protect juvenile abundance and significant commercial quota reductions. We feel this next action should move fast but also must maximize public input.
- MSBA previously supported the streamlined process that launched Addendum 2. Unfortunately, the swift consideration with little discussion and scientific analysis that inserted recreational mode splits into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit has violated the spirit of that support and prevents our organization from supporting this idea again.
- Rather than give wide open support for another streamlined process and allow ASMFC operatives to sneak other controversial ideas into an action without adequate analysis and public scrutiny; we prefer ASMFC prepare to use emergency action for a quick response and be prepared to initiate Amendment 8 upon review of the results of the 2024 stock assessment.
- MSBA Supports Option A Status Quo

In closing we thank you for the opportunity to comment and look forward to active participation in developing the next amendment that will be required in order to preserve a striped bass fishery for future generations.

Sincerely;

Mike Jones
President
MA Striped Bass Association

Patrick Paquette
Govt Affairs Officer
MA Striped Bass Association



Maryland Charter Boat Association, Inc.

December 19, 2023

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Members of ASMFC,

The Maryland Charter Boat Association represents the 377 for-hire vessels, (small business owners) that participate in the Fishing Activity & Catch Tracking System (FACTS) electronic reporting system.

We are requesting Option C-2, which is crucial for our survival. Our passengers have expressed firmly over the past years that most would not book trips if we were reduced to 1 fish per person.

Page 9 of Addendum II clearly states, Chesapeake Bay for-hire removals decreased by 27% in 2022. Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) has up-to-date catch and release data for the last three years on the charter boat / for-hire vessels.

We have seen our fishing season, which used to be 8 months long get reduced to 6 months and 3 weeks. Now Maryland Department of Natural Resources is looking to reduce our season by an additional 2-3 weeks. No one can make a living and provide for their family fishing 6 months of the year.

There has not been an Economic Impact Study completed to show the effects these decisions are having on the charter boat industry.

I would like to request that the Young of the Year Surveys in the Chesapeake Bay adapt to the environmental climate changes we had over the last few years.

Everyone is aware the migratory and spawning pattern of the female spawning stock have changed. The fish have settled into the middle to northern section of the Bay. Both the charter / for-hire, and recreational anglers have fished in this area going on 5 years because this holds the majority of the fish in the Bay.

The attached chart will show that there are no Young of Year Survey sites in this area. The current sampling sites used by MD DNR are proven to be overrun by blue catfish, an invasive species. It only makes sense that the Young of Year Survey numbers are declining in these areas.

However, over one third of the Chesapeake Bay where the female spawning stock migrates to remains unchecked. We see record numbers of juvenile fish, 14, 16 and 18 inches long, which are 1, 2 and 3 years old. This data will never show up in our current sampling sites.

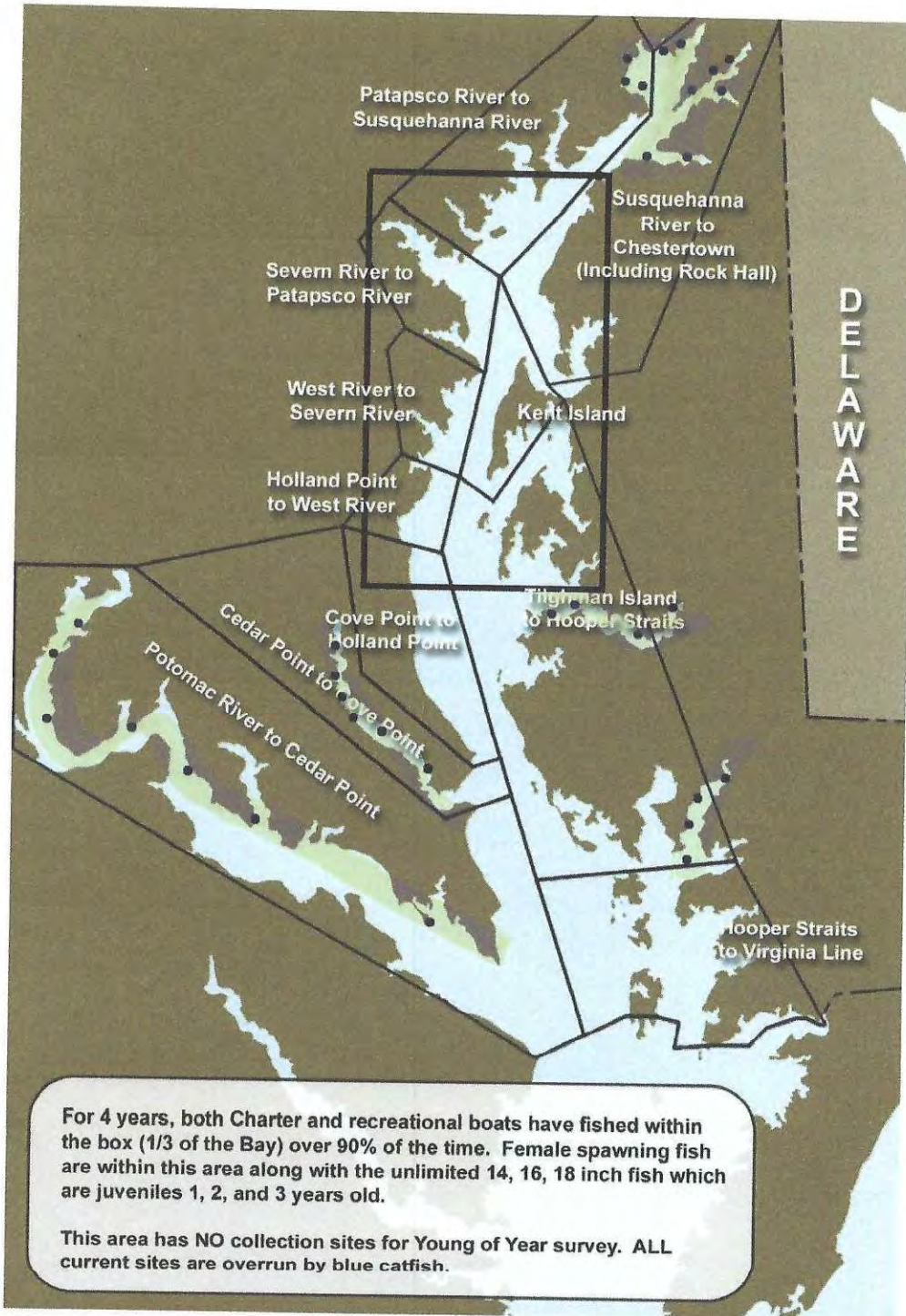
The current Young of Year data being used is incomplete and does not reflect the true stock of the Bay. The for-hire industry has been accountable through electronic reporting and should not be reduced to 1 fish per angler or additional closures.

We respectfully ask for option C-2 to survive and remain in business to support our families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian L. Hardman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Captain Brian L. Hardman
President, Maryland Charter Boat Association
410-643-7600





P.O. BOX 290
ROCK HALL, MD 21661
WWW.MDOYSTERMEN.ORG

DATE: December 11, 2023

TO: Emile Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

FROM: Jim Mullin, Executive Director, Maryland Oystermen's Association
RE: Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

Dear Ms. Franke,

The Maryland Oystermen Association's requests the status quo be maintained for the striped bass commercial fishery and that a 14.5% reduction not be considered. The commercial fishery has been stable and sound. Our concern is any further reduction in the commercial striped bass fishery would impact our oyster fishery with unintended consequences that would lead to a negative impact on our fishery with increased effort along with increased effort in additional fisheries.

We respectfully request that recreational striped bass fishery be visited with a robust discussion on taking appropriate steps to ensure that accountability and stewardship be implemented in a manner so all user groups are held to account for the success of the striped bass fishery.

Our association is most appreciative of your leadership, guidance and representation

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Mullin

MOA BOD Members

Jim Mullin
Executive Director

Cc: Robert T. Brown, MWA

Bunky Chance
Jimmy Kline
Jimmy Reihl
Chuckie White
Wayne Wilson

*"The Bay's A Big Place
And There's Room For
Everybody"*

From: [bruce bain](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:53:57 AM

Board members, we are a ri based surfcasting club and non profit organization our mission is fundraising for those in need, help and support of specific veterans programs and the continued conservation of the striped bass fisheries, after 5 years of unsuccessful spawns in the Chesapeake Bay region all 125 of our active members can tell you that our fishery has been a steady decline and is in serious trouble we feel that current measures being taken are simply not enough. Abuse of commercial quotas,poaching and lack of enforcement or punishment for breaking these laws must be addressed as well as a drastic reduction in harvesting. I just feel we are setting up for another crash to this valuable resource, please take action immediately. Sincerely,Bruce R Bain president Narragansett surfcasters

Sent from my iPad



Native Fish Coalition

www.NativeFishCoalition.org

MA@nativefishcoalition.org

December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Emilie,

The Massachusetts chapter of Native Fish Coalition would like to submit comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

Native Fish Coalition (NFC) is a nonpartisan, grassroots, donor-funded, all volunteer, 501(c)(3) national non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and restoration of wild native fish. We currently have chapters in 18 states representing thousands of members, partners, volunteers, supporters and followers. Our comments to Draft Addendum II are below.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Option: NFC supports Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For Hire Management Clarification: NFC supports Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: NFC supports Option B. We also support that the board selects the highest specific percent reduction of 14.5%.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: NFC supports Option B.

Sincerely,

Paul Roell, Chair, Massachusetts Chapter of Native Fish Coalition

CC: NFC National Board
NFC Massachusetts Board

From: [Nick Martin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Bob Mallard](#); [Emily Bastian](#); [Brian Cowden](#); [Jared Kane](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:30:33 PM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

I am writing on behalf of the New Hampshire chapter of Native Fish Coalition to provide public feedback on the Interim Management Measures that the Commission will consider at its January 2024 meeting. In summary, NFC encourages the Commission to take decisive action to address the current status of the striped bass fishery, and adopt all measures which will increase the chance of rebuilding the stock by the 2029 target date. Specifically, NFC supports the following proposed management options:

- For 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fisheries Options, NFC supports: **Option B**. NFC does NOT support mode splitting for private versus for-hire vessels.
- For 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options, NFC supports: **Option B2**.
- For 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification, NFC supports **Option B**.
- For 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements, NFC supports **Option B**.
- For 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, NFC supports **Option B**.
- For 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Update, NFC supports **Option B**.

Native Fish Coalition (NFC) is a nonpartisan, grassroots, donor-funded, all volunteer, 501(c)(3) national non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and restoration of wild native fish. We currently have state chapters in 18 states and we represent a broad constituency of members, partners, volunteers, supporters and followers.

Given that the most recent rebuilding projections indicate a low probability of meeting the 2029 rebuilding deadline, NFC urges the Commission to adopt all of these new management policies. Adopting these conservative fishing regulations is the first step in protecting the striped bass stock from potential collapse. The Commission should act now to reduce harvest for both recreational and commercial fisheries and to adopt measures that would allow the Commission to act more quickly in the future, should forthcoming stock assessments reveal that these measures do not adequately increase the chance of rebuilding the stock by the 2029 target date.

Nick Martin, Chair, New Hampshire Chapter of Native Fish Coalition

CC: NFC National Board
NFC New Hampshire Board



**NEW JERSEY COUNCIL OF
DIVERS AND CLUBS**
526 S. Riverside Drive
Neptune, NJ 07753
www.scubanj.org

11/11/23

**COMMENT – DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO
AMENDMENT 7, ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS**

The NJ Council of Divers and Clubs (NJCD&C), previously the NJ Council of Diving Clubs, is an organization of 14 dive clubs, several dive shops, and numerous individual divers dedicated to supporting the recreational sport diving community and the sport diver fishery. Spearfishing for Striped Bass has a long history and tradition in NJ going back to the 1950's. Normally it is done along the jetties and inlets from shore, usually by free diving, or by small boat off the shoreline and jetties. It is challenging, and probably the most sporting way to take stripers. For example, I estimated swimming $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 mile for every striper taken, and it took several years to get my first striper.

As you probably guessed, narrow slots and the sport diver fishery do not go together well. We must determine the size of the fish from sight alone, and do not have the option or luxury of measuring a fish and then releasing it. Our sport is being threatened by these narrow slots and it is very unfortunate that ASMFC choose to take the slot route instead of seasons or just a minimum size. Amendment 7 appears to be trying to make narrow slots a permanent feature, and the sport diver/spearfisherman cannot support that approach.

Regarding Section 3.1.1 (Ocean Recreational Fishery) the NJCD&C would prefer Option A, Status Quo. But we know the ASMFC will not select that since it has little or no probability of achieving the objective of the addendum. Therefore, the NJCD&C is forced to select Option B, 1 fish at 28 to 31 inches. This will allow the sport diver/spearfisherman to dovetail into the NJ Bonus Bass Program, allowing a larger slot of 24 to 31 inches instead of just a 3-inch slot. And that is at least do-able for the sport diver/spearfisherman, although we must reapply for each Bonus Bass tag.

Regarding Option C and Option E of Section 3.1.1, the NJCD&C does not agree with sector separation or a separate size range for the for-hire fishery. This is sending the wrong message to fishermen. It's almost like saying if you have enough money to charter a boat or pay for a party boat, then you get special privileges with a bigger size range from those that fish from shore or private craft. To me that is ethically inappropriate to say the least. It's also not a good conservation move if Striped Bass are really overfished.

Regarding Section 3.1.2 (Chesapeake Bay), Section 3.1.4 (Recreational Filleting), and Section 3.2.1 (Commercial Quota Options), the NJCD&C takes no position. However, we do believe that Striped Bass should be a sport fish only species. Regarding Section 3.3 (Response to Stock Assessment), the NJCD&C does not support Option B. That is like not allowing the fishing public any say in the management of the fishery and leaving everything up to the Board based solely on some questionable stock assessment.

In conclusion, the NJCD&C does not support narrow slots. The sport diver/spearfisherman is not responsible in any way for the excessive number of Striped Bass taken in 2022, and should not be the sector most impacted by the permanent proposed narrow slots. Other states also support spearfishing for Striped Bass, and the NJCD&C would like to see recreational sport diver/spearfishermen representation on the Striped Bass Committee.

Respectfully, Jack Fullmer
Legislative Committee

From: [Rich Strzepek](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] FW: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:12:34 PM
Importance: High

Dear Ms. Franke and Striped Bass Management Board Members,

Thank you for the previous actions taken by you to protect the Striped Bass fishery. I am the Secretary of the North Fork Anglers Fishing Club of the Town of Southold NY. I write on behalf of our 50-member fishing club who all surf cast for Striped Bass.

Using available overviews and analysis of the proposed action options available to you, I support the following actions be taken relative to Draft Amendment II:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

reduce time to it takes to reduce mortality

Thank you for considering our concern and comments and please decide on the options that will result in the most aggressive time line to result in the rebuilding of the fisheries stock.

*Richard E. Strzepek, Secretary - North Fork Anglers
Fishing Club*

Larry Welcome – President

Mike Lisowy – Vice President

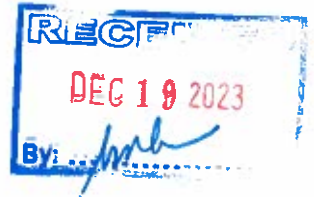
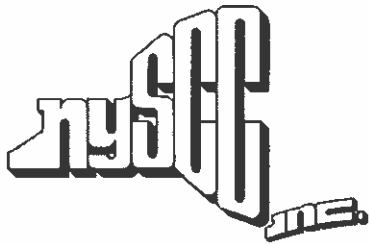
Steve Kellner – Treasurer

Leif Gobel – Board Member

John Tomici – Board Member



Virus-free www.avast.com



New York State Conservation Council Inc

1060 Broadway #1090, Albany, New York 12204

December 11, 2023

Emile Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

The New York State Conservation Council, Inc. (NYSCC) is providing the following comments on the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

NYSCC is a non-profit corporation organized in 1933, which advocates for natural resource conservation on behalf of the sportsmen of the State of New York. Its members are active in the striped bass fishery, both along the coast and in the Hudson River. It requests that the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board adopt the positions set forth below.

OCEAN RECREATIONAL FISHERY

NYSCC supports Option B, which would retain the current 28- 31-inch slot limit. Such option provides the greatest reduction in fishing mortality, provides the best protection for the 2015 year-class, and distributes the regulatory burden equally among all members of the recreational fishing community. NYSCC strongly opposes the sector separation concept embodied in Options C and E, which create special privileges for the small subset of anglers who fish from for-hire vessels.

CHESAPEAKE BAY RECREATIONAL FISHERY

NYSCC supports Option B1, which would create a 1-fish bag limit and a 19- to 23-inch slot limit for all anglers throughout the Chesapeake Bay, while retaining the current fishing seasons. The rationale for its choice is like that regarding options in the ocean recreational fishery: Option B1 provides the greatest reduction in fishing mortality, while

distributing the regulatory burden equitably among everyone involved in with the recreational fishery within the Bay.

NYSCC recognizes that Option B1 will restrict Bay fishermen to a greater degree than Option B will restrict ocean anglers. However, NYSCC also recognizes that the emergency measure adopted by the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board in May 2023 placed nearly all the regulatory burden on the shoulders of the ocean recreational fishery, and very little on anglers within the Chesapeake Bay. Addendum II is only going to apply to the 2024 fishing season. Therefore, requiring Chesapeake Bay anglers to take a greater reduction in fishing mortality for one year, while ocean anglers take a lower reduction in both 2023 and 2024, is not an unreasonable outcome.

FOR-HIRE MANAGEMENT CLARIFICATION

As already noted, NYSCC opposes Options C and E. However, should the Management Board elect to adopt one of those options, then NYSCC asks that it also adopt Option B on this issue, and require the captain and crew on for-hire vessels to adhere to the same regulations that are applicable to anglers fishing from shore and from private boats.

The rationale behind Options C and E, is that they would make it more attractive for anglers to fish from for-hire boats, and thus support the for-hire industry. That rationale does not apply to the captain and crew of for-hire vessels, and thus they should not be granted the same special harvest privileges that might apply to the paying passengers of for-hire operations.

RECREATIONAL FILLETING ALLOWANCE REQUIREMENTS

NYSCC believes that striped bass regulations should be written in a manner that maximizes their conservation value while, at the same time, makes such regulations simple to enforce. Option B would enhance Addendum II's provisions in both respects.

By requiring that the rack of any bass that is filleted at sea or at a shoreside location be retained so that law enforcement could confirm that the fish was of legal size, by requiring that no more than two fillets be possessed for each retained rack, and by requiring the skin to remain on fillets to facilitate identification of the fish that they were removed from, Option B facilitates law enforcement and, by doing so, makes Addendum II more effective.

COMMERCIAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT

NYSCC reluctantly supports Option B, and asks that the commercial quota be reduced by the full 14.5%.

NYSCC's reluctance to endorse Option B comes not from a desire to protect the commercial fishery, but from a belief that the option's benefits to the striped bass are largely illusory; NYSCC would have preferred to support an option which would have compelled the commercial fishery to shoulder a more equitable share of the conservation burden.

By basing the 14.5% reduction on quota, and not on actual landings, Amendment II has created a situation where the actual level of fishing mortality will remain largely unchanged, because the commercial fishery fell well short of catching its entire allocation. While some ocean states, including New York, will have to reduce landings in 2024, that will not be the case in the Chesapeake Bay, where commercial fishermen only caught about 80% of their quota in 2022. Although the Bay hosts the largest commercial striped bass fishery anywhere along the coast, a 14.5% quota cut will not require its commercial fishery to reduce landings at all, and would even allow landings to increase slightly above 2022 levels.

However, because Option B represents the better of two poor choices, it is supported by NYSCC.

RESPONSE TO STOCK ASSESSMENT UPDATES

Because of the poor health of the striped bass stock, NYSCC believes that the Management Board should be permitted to respond to changes in stock status as quickly as possible, and thus supports Option B, which will allow it to adopt needed management measures, as indicated in new stock assessment updates and the 2027 benchmark stock assessment, without having to first engage in a year-long addendum process.

Considering that the striped bass stock remains overfished, and that recruitment has been well below average in recent years, delay in adopting needed management measures could do serious harm to the coastal striped bass population.

NYSCC asks that the Management Board adopt the measures recommended above.

Sincerely,



A Charles Parker
President, New York State Conservation Council
cparker@nyscc.onmicrosoft.com



PLUM ISLAND SURFCASTERS

Established 1957

Emilie Franke

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Emilie,

Please find the following comments representing the membership of the Plum Island Surfcasters (PISC), a 500-member North Shore Massachusetts fishing club, input on Amendment 7 Addendum 2. The PISC is a non-profit sportfishing club committed to developing best practices in good sportsmanship, education, techniques, and conservation for future generations.

The membership of the Plum Island Surfcaster believes the striped bass stock condition is much worse than is being projected in this addendum. Since we are located toward the Northern reach of the striped bass ocean fishery, we are first to see more acute changes in the population. Many of our members that maintain detailed fishing logs have seen a 60 to 75% reduction in their catch over the past five years. While the reports we are seeing from South of us indicates that the recreational catch in 2023 is about the same as 2022 overall. Our membership believes that we must take at least a 14.5% reduction now and not wait for the 2024 stock assessment.

The Plum Island Surfcasters membership support the following Addendum 2 options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. The membership supports Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes).

While many of our members do use for hire services, we feel that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines related to the size and fish limits. We often hear that the for hire only account for a small amount, but these small amounts keep adding up. Their customers are recreational anglers and should be treated the same. We also believe that it is imperative that we protect the 2015-year class and maintain the current 28" to 31" size limit. Increasing the limit to 28" to 33" will put the 2015-year class right in the slot defeating one of the key purposes of the emergency action.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. The membership supports Option B2 at 1 fish at 19" to 24".

Our membership support option B2 since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. The membership supports Option B.

Our membership believes all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and do not support any of the options giving the for hire specific limits different from the rest of the recreational anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. The membership supports Option B.

Option B gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. The membership supports Option B.

Our membership supports a commercial quota reduction of 14.5%. This would bring the commercial quota reduction into alignment with the recreational reduction expected percentages. This is especially needed since some of the states have commercial size limits that are focused on the primary spawning stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. The membership supports Option B

Our membership supports giving the Board the ability to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock is **not** projected to meet rebuild probability. This option should be limited to only addressing assessment data that indicates the stock will not meet rebuild probability.

Sincerely

Michael Toole

toolemf@hotmail.com

Legislation Representative

Plum Island Surfcasters

P.O. Box 1585

Newburyport, MA 01950



R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association
P.O. Box 171
Wakefield, RI 02880
401-741-5648
www.rifishing.com



President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary
Director

Capt. Rick Bellavance
Capt. Steve Anderson
Capt. Andrew D'Angelo
Capt. John Rainone
Capt. Nick Butziger

December 21st, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Addendum II to AMD 7 Striped Bass FMP

Dear Ms. Franke,

The Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association (RIPCBA) is comprised of 58 charter/party boat owners that operate small businesses from ports in the State of Rhode Island. Without question, the harvest of Striped Bass is most important to nearly all our members. We are pleased that the PDT developed, and the Board approved a fair range of alternatives in the document, all of which will enhance the current rebuilding of Striped Bass. We would like to offer our preferred options and rationale for Addendum II to AMD 7 to the Striped Bass FMP.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

We support 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.

Rationale: This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of Rhode Island's for-hire fleet. According to analysis by the TC/PDT, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality. The action taken by the board under emergency action would be basically left in place.

This option considers the small impact of the for-hire fleet on Striped Bass mortality and preserves a slightly greater opportunity for a recreational angler to harvest a fish for dinner, a desire vocalized by our clients regularly.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

This option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state. The RIPCBA supports coastwide ocean management of Striped Bass.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

We support 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.

Rationale: We believe both option A and B could work, but we think enforcing option B would be very difficult.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

We support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at sea/shoreside filleting.

Rationale: The RIPCBA supports enforcement of all current and future regulations, and we recognize the challenges enforcing slot limits. This section of the document needs more time to be fully developed with stakeholder engagement and we are concerned that approving Option B may slow down the implementation of other sections.

We suggest continued collaboration with State partners, Advisory Panel members and the Public to develop workable solutions to enforcement challenges within the entire FMP. Rhode Island currently allows filleting at sea aboard for-hire permitted vessels. Option B would be huge change for us.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

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

Rationale: An addendum process includes a public comment period with public hearings and an opportunity to submit written comments on the draft addendum document. The Emergency Action process was very hurtful to our fleet in Rhode Island, leading us to favor a more open Addendum process.

Under Option B if the Board acts via a motion at a board meeting, only limited public comment can be provided during Board meetings per the Commission's guidelines for public comment at Board meetings. Option B's faster timeline does not allow sufficient time for the public to become aware of actions that could significantly impact them.

Respectfully Submitted,

Capt. Rick Bellavance

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President
RI Party and Charter Boat Association



RHODE ISLAND
**SALTWATER
ANGLERS**
Association



P.O. Box 1467, Coventry, Rhode Island 02816

401-826-2121

www.RISAA.org

December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Via email: comments@asmfc.org

RE: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke:

The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA), representing over 7500 recreational anglers in Southeastern New England is proud to make these comments regarding the proposed Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Striped Bass management. We believe that recreational fishing is an important sector of the New England economy and we know that a healthy striped bass population is important to continued growth of recreational fishing. In order that striped bass harvest can be controlled to bring the Spawning Stock Biomass back to target levels, we support the following:

- Section 3.1.1 – Option B, one fish 28” to 31” for all modes. We believe that all modes should be governed by the same regulations in all sections of this addendum.
- Section 3.1.2 – even though our members generally do not fish in the Chesapeake Bay area we recognize that harvest of striped bass in that area is important to the overall SSB status so we support Option B1 with consistent regulations for all modes and all jurisdictions.
- Section 3.1.3 – as previously stated we support consistent regulations across all modes, however if there are different regulations for For-Hire mode we would support Option B.
- Section 3.1.4 – we support Option B, with a simple requirement such as retaining the racks if filleting at sea is allowed locally.
- Section 3.2.1 – we believe that Commercial Quota should be reduced by roughly the same amount as recreational reductions, therefore we support Option B with an approximately 14.5% reduction from 2022 quotas. In addition we believe that there should be a specific report generated to evaluate the potential benefit of making the commercial size limits correspond with the recreational size limits rather than removing large female breeders from the wild population.
- Section 3.3 – We support Option A – Status Quo. Although allowing Board action to make changes would allow more rapid response, we see the value in the current process which allows significant opportunities for public comment on potentially important management changes.

At RISAA we remain concerned about how the recreational fishing community can best participate in the management decisions that are so important to all recreational fishing throughout New England. We thank you for the opportunity to provide these written comments.

Thank you for all of the work that you do.

Sincerely,

Richard Hittinger, 1st Vice President

Scott Travers, Executive Director

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201
comments@asmfc.org



Riverkeeper's comments on the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass

From Matthew Best and George Jackman

Mortality from the striped bass recreational fishery is currently unsustainable and continues to stress the spawning stock biomass and constrains stock response in reaching threshold targets as mandated by ASMFC. Status-quo is not reducing stock mortality rates, which are actually increasing from the recreational fishing pressure. We advocate for Option B for both the recreational and commercial fishery.

“Recreational: Option B - 28-31” slot size for ocean area”

While all options, other than the status quo, will ultimately bring the stock to more robust levels, we believe that Option B maintains the current emergency action and based upon projections provided by ASMFC, will achieve the desired mortality reduction and SSB growth in the shortest amount of time. This option also does not discriminate between private and for-hire fishermen.

“Commercial: Option B - 14.5% reduction in commercial quota in NYS waters”

This option both reduces the mortality rate of striped bass but also shares the burden of reduced fishing pressure with the recreational anglers. These options require an equal burden on all stakeholders and are the most fair for all stakeholders while also achieving the desired outcome at a slightly faster rate.

We strongly advocate for more stringent enforcement of existing (or newly updated) regulations in all areas (Hudson River, Ocean Area [0-3 miles off-shore], and Federal waters [+3 miles off-shore]), especially Federal waters including the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). The intentions of these regulations are not designed so much to infringe on the rights of fisherman, as they are to achieve a desired positive outcome for the Hudson River's striped bass population and the spawning stock biomass for the entire coast.

More up-to-date research is needed to accurately reflect catch and release mortality. Current research is equivocal with regards to catch and release practices. Numerous accounts

obtained from fishermen reveal significant mortality stemming from catch and release that does not appear to align with the current 9% mortality rate associated with catch and release as suggested by Diodati and Richards (1996). Previous studies have experienced much higher mortality rates (Millard et al. 2003; Bettoli and Osborn 1997), and with regard to the Hudson, Diodati and Richards (1996) state that their 9% mortality rate “is generally much lower than reported in striped bass hooking mortality studies conducted in freshwater”. There are two areas of interest associated with catch and release mortality; the use of circle hooks & the use of natural bait (i.e. herring, eels, mackerel, menhaden). It is believed that the use of natural bait in combination with warmer temperatures in freshwater lead to a higher mortality rate for striped bass (Wilde et al. 2000). Striped bass are more likely to swallow natural bait making the subsequent release far more lethal with injuries to their esophagus, pharynx, stomach or gills (MA Marine Fisheries Citizen Science Portal, Nelson 1998). When using single hooks (circle hooks), most research supports that this method causes less injury to the body and gills compared to treble hooks. However, when using circle hooks with natural bait, it is believed that striped bass would be more prone to swallow the hook potentially leading to lethal injuries rather than more benign ones. We advocate for an update to this research, specifically in the freshwater Hudson River, and advocate for potentially banning the use of natural bait in the Hudson River during spawning season or when river temperatures are expected to exceed 21°C (Nelson 1998).

It must also be acknowledged that fishing technique (once the fish is hooked) cannot be standardized or regulated. Fishermen that tend to “play fish”, or in other words reel in the fish longer than is needed, are exhausting the fish and potentially impairing their recovery, especially in warmer water and in freshwater, which is more stressful for the fish. Warmer water tends to hold less oxygen, and pre-spawn fish that are in poor condition may skip spawning entirely (Rideout 2005).

When thinking of the recovery of the Hudson striped bass fishery, we look forward to a robust striped bass population that has a sizable forage base to support the population. While striped bass are America’s premier saltwater gamefish, their recovery is contingent upon a balanced ecosystem approach that accounts for all fishes. Accordingly, one of the best ways we can help striped bass is to ensure the forage fish base is large enough to sustain a predator population. To achieve more robust levels of forage fishes, we need to reduce bycatch in the ocean and improve freshwater spawning habitat for shad and river herring, and this is mostly accomplished by removing obsolete dams. River herring and shad are at historic lows, and restoring their populations will greatly help both maturing striped bass and the SSB biomass whose provenance is the Hudson River.

Literature Cited

- Bettoli, P. W., & Osborne, R. S. (1998). Hooking mortality and behavior of striped bass following catch and release angling. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 18(3), 609-615.
- Diodati, P. J., & Richards, R. A. (1996). Mortality of striped bass hooked and released in salt water. *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society*, 125(2), 300-307.
- MA DMF. (2023). Striped Bass Citizen Science Data Portal. <https://madmf.shinyapps.io/striper/> Accessed Dec 6th 2023.
- Millard, M. J., Welsh, S. A., Fletcher, J. W., Mohler, J., Kahnle, A., & Hattala, K. (2003). Mortality associated with catch and release of striped bass in the Hudson River. *Fisheries Management and Ecology*, 10(5), 295-300.
- Nelson, K. L. (1998). Catch-and-release mortality of striped bass in the Roanoke River, North Carolina. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 18(1), 25-30.
- Rideout, R. M., Rose, G. A., & Burton, M. P. (2005). Skipped spawning in female iteroparous fishes. *Fish and Fisheries*, 6(1), 50-72.
- Wilde, G. R., Muoneke, M. I., Bettoli, P. W., Nelson, K. L., & Hysmith, B. T. (2000). Bait and temperature effects on striped bass hooking mortality in freshwater. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management*, 20(3), 810-815.



THE BAY CENTER
100 Save The Bay Drive
Providence, RI 02905
phone: 401-272-3540
fax: 401-273-7153
savebay@savebay.org
www.savebay.org

EXPLORATION CENTER
Easton's Beach
P.O. Box 851
Newport, RI 02840
phone: 401-324-6020
fax: 401-324-6022

SOUTH COAST
CENTER
Riverside Building
8 Broad Street
Westerly, RI 02891
phone/fax: 401-315-2709

via email to: comments@asmfc.org

December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke,

Save The Bay's mission is to protect and improve Narragansett Bay. We support fisheries management policies and regulations that seek to restore and maintain the populations of fish species that provide important ecological functions and support the Bay's ecosystem. This includes the Atlantic Striped Bass. We support the Striped Bass Management Board's decision to initiate Addendum II as a necessary measure to reduce mortality and increase the probability of rebuilding the stock to its spawning stock biomass target by 2029. Generally speaking, Save The Bay supports the most conservation-focused management measures being considered under Addendum II. We believe that these measures are prudent and necessary to protect the fishery until more comprehensive data is available through the next stock assessment. The specific options that we support are listed below.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Save The Bay supports **Option B**: 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Save The Bay supports **Option B1**: 1 fish at 19" to 23" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

Not applicable; Save The Bay **does not support** mode splits

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Save The Bay supports **Option B**: Establish minimum filleting requirements to aid enforcement

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Save The Bay supports **Option B** along with the maximum authorized quota reduction of 14.5%

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Save The Bay supports **Option B**: Management response via Board action

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MJ', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Jarbeau
Narragansett Baykeeper
mjarbeau@savebay.org



6 Resnick Road, Suite 208
Plymouth, MA 02360
www.stellwagenbank.org

Officers

Capt. Michael J. Pierdinock
President

Capt. Timothy Brady
Vice President

Stacie Delzingo, Secretary

Capt. Stew Rosen, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Capt. John Bunar

Capt. Jeff Depersia

Capt. William Hatch

Capt. Eric Morrow

Capt. Damon Sacco

Capt. Mike Delzingo

Trustees

Capt. Tom Depersia

Capt. David Waldrip

Capt. Charlie Wade

Capt. Peter Murphy

Capt. Brian Curry

Capt. Robert Savino

Capt. John Richardson

December 20, 2023

Ms. Emilie Frank
FMP Coordinator
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Comments to ASMFC Striped Bass Amendment II

Dear Ms. Frank:

On behalf of the Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association (SBCBA), representing charter/party boat captains and recreational anglers that fish for striped bass in Massachusetts waters, comments associated with Striped Bass Amendment II is set forth below.

- The SBCBA is pleased to see proposed mode management measures with separate slot limits for each mode type that recognizes that each mode has its own goals, objectives and financial constraints that impacts ones access to the fishery. Let us not forget the recreational anglers that reach out to the for hire fleet as the mechanism to catch and retain a fish for the dinner table.
 - The SBCBA has recommended for many years now separate seasons and bag limits for the for hire fleet that have been implemented for other species such as bluefin tuna, bluefish, scup and other species and are pleased to see such mode management approaches proposed by the ASMFC that are long overdue. This recognizes the fact that the for hire fleet needs to operate a financially viable business as well as provide a mechanism for recreational anglers to be provided access to the fishery.
 - Private shore side anglers may not have access to the fishery certain times of the year due to increased temperatures with the fish moving into cooler waters beyond the reach of an angler. Private shore side anglers may not be able to afford a private vessel or do not have the time to learn the fishery, such clientele are provided access to the fishery via the for hire fleet.
 - The for hire fleet is the bus providing recreational anglers access to the fishery that would not be possible for those that do not have the time to learn to or fish from the shore or from a vessel nor have the
-



6 Resnick Road, Suite 208
Plymouth, MA 02360
www.stellwagenbank.org

economic ability to own and operate their own vessel. As a result, the public will not book a for hire trip if the price does not reflect a reasonable slot/bag limit. If such is the case the public will not book a trip in turn not providing the public access to the fishery. With the increased cost of fuel, boat expenses, tackle etc., the for hire fleet is a time and cost effective means for the recreational community to have access to the fishery.

- The for hire fleet implemented conservation measures when the bag limit was reduced from 2 to 1 that in general reduced bookings by 30%. The recent emergency slot limit further reduced bookings significantly in 2023. We continue to implement conservation measures to the detriment of our businesses and access to the fishery by the recreational anglers. The other mode types that catch and release fish are the driver behind the significant release mortality where ultimately the for hire fleet represents a small percentage of the mortality in relation to the other modes.
- The proposed measures in **Section 3.1.1** provide options to achieve the recommended mortality reductions for each mode type. Options selected cannot be self-serving to those that catch and release or catch a fish for the dinner table nor those that don't care to consider that each mode type has its own goals, objectives and financial constraints that impacts ones access to the fishery. The following recommended measures are proposed by SBCBA.
- **Section 3.1.1** - Ocean Recreational Fishing Options – SBCBA recommends Options C/E which provides separate for hire measures of a 28"-33" slot limit that would be beneficial for our businesses and for those that catch striped bass for the dinner table that meets the required conservation measures while doing so. SBCBA recommends the implementation of for hire seasons and bag limits (Options C or E) and recommend leaving it up to the private vessel/shore side modes to select which option they prefer (Options C or E).
- **Section 3.1.3** - For Hire Management Clarification – SBCBA recommends Option A - Status Quo.
- **Section 3.1.4** - Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements – SBCBA recommends Option A - Status Quo - which would enable the for hire fleet to continue to fillet at sea.

Ultimately the reduction of a 2 to 1 fish bag limit with the mandatory use of circle hooks and emergency slot limit reduced mortality to below projections especially the for hire mode where with increased participation



6 Resnick Road, Suite 208
Plymouth, MA 02360
www.stellwagenbank.org

of the private shore side angler and private boater mode that catch and release striped bass increased the mortality beyond acceptable conservation thresholds. The for hire mode represents a small percentage of the mortality and need the Option C/E slot to continue to attract clientele and operate a viable operation that achieves conservation mortality reduction to the satisfaction of the ASMFC.

Change in environmental conditions are impacting the Chesapeake Bay striped bass spawning grounds and climatic shift is impacting the distribution and productivity of spawning areas further north. Proactive measures to address detrimental impacts to the Chesapeake Bay and further assessment of other striped bass spawning grounds including the Delaware and Hudson Rivers needs to be conducted to further assess the status of the fishery. Proactive measures are recommended such as what was conducted to address Atlantic Salmon and spawning forage species that need to be considered with the potential removal of dams located at the Raritan River, Connecticut River and Merrimack River where spawning is evident and/or elsewhere to promote and protect spawning grounds.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at the email below.

Very truly yours,

Capt Stew Rosen

Capt. Stew Rosen
SBCBA, Treasurer
sbcbaofficers@gmail.com

Cc: Mike Pentony, GARFO
Russ Dunn, NMFS
Tom O'Shea, MassF&G
Dan McKiernan, MassDMF
Ben Gahagan, MassDMF
Ray Kane, MassFAC

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: Striped Bass Public Comments
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:09:10 PM

From: Wayne.Thomas <Wayne.Thomas@kiewit.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 8:23 PM
To: G2W2
Cc: Wayne.Thomas
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Public Comments

I represent the 200 member SFEA in Upper Township NJ, Cape May County,

- We are not in favor of having 2 different sets of regulations/slots.
 - Both For-Hire and Private/Recreational groups both need to work together with a common set of Reg's
 - Having 2 different rules likely drives a wedge between these 2 groups. We need cooperation, not animosity.
 - Recreational Surf-casting/land-based enthusiast shouldn't be penalized, while those affording For-Hire offshore trips get a bigger slot.
- Of the options presented we would support B=28"-31" slot.
- We also support continuing the 24" Bonus Tag program.
- I don't object to For-Hire Captains being able to harvest a fish to feed their families.
- I would agree needs to be more enforcement out there otherwise the Reg's don't mean anything.

I am also an advisor on the NJMFC-Striped Bass committee.

Wayne D. Thomas, PE
Strathmere NJ.
President, Strathmere NJ Fishing & Environmental Association (501.c.3)
1-201-832-3351



Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator

December 22, 2023

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
M: comments@asmfc.org

Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

On behalf of Stripers Forever and our members along the Atlantic seaboard, across the U.S., and around the world, we submit our comments in support of those options we feel are the best of those made available for finalizing Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. We thank you for the opportunity to do so.

Although we continue to be disappointed in the ASMFC's lack of urgency toward meeting its mandate regarding managing this species, we will continue to do what we can to educate our members and the general public about fisheries conservation, safe handling of Striped Bass, and to raise awareness of each individual angler's responsibility for the recovery of wild Atlantic Striped Bass.

The hope was for Addendum II to go above and beyond the emergency action currently in place. The likely reality is, even with the best options selected by the board, Addendum II will ultimately fail to do enough to get the stock back on track for recovery by 2029. In the face of 5 straight years of very poor, bordering on failed recruitment in the Chesapeake, the board has put forth options which would fail to protect the 2015-year class. In fact, some of the options within Addendum II work directly against the intentions of the original motion from which it was born.

The two areas we remain the most concerned about are mode splits and the commercial quota reduction. We do not support mode splits in anyway. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. If selected, mode splits will only divide the angling community and complicate; regulations, enforcement and the work of stock assessment scientists.

The commercial reduction being taken from quota, not harvest, could in some cases mean no reduction at all. That is misleading to the public and in turn irresponsible of the board. While the ocean commercial fishery may see an actual reduction, the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery likely will not. On top of that, the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken any major reduction since 2015. Between 2015 and 2022 the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has on





average removed between 2-3 million pounds of Striped Bass from the stock. If there is any hope of rebuilding by 2029, it is time for the board to assert some control over the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery. Fair and equitable is the name of the game and currently the situation is anything but that. In addition, given five straight years of poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, this massive removal of fish from the stock is just not sustainable.

Stripers Forever continues to advocate for an equitable (commercial and recreational) harvest moratorium. We believe, given all the evidence, that it is the most efficient and full proof way to rebuild the Striped Bass stock to abundance. While we are aware that this is not an option in Addendum II, we implore the board to consider it as a viable option going forward. Below are the Addendum II options that we support and have asked others to support.

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: **Option B**—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).
 - Option B achieves the greatest overall reduction, offers the best protection of the 2015-year class and it is done in a fair and equitable way.
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **Option B1**—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 of 23".
 - Most importantly, option B1 produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay.
- 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **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.
 - We do not support mode splits in anyway. Should the board choose to adopt mode splits, additional harvest should only apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew should be subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: **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.
 - This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery, then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B adds to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by anglers.





- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **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%.
 - Status quo is just not an option at this point. An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. We ask that the board make the largest possible reduction of 14.5%. We also ask that states do all that is in their power to make sure that new commercial regulations go into effect for the 2024 season. It is very important that the angling public views these measures as fair and equitable.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **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.
 - In all likelihood, Addendum II will only be in effect for a one-year period as the next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be needed to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time-consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of the rebuilding timeline.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding Addendum II.

Taylor Vavra





ThompsonMcMullan
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

100 Shockoe Slip, Richmond, Virginia 23219-4140
Telephone: 804.649.7545 Facsimile: 804.780.1813
Website: www.t-mlaw.com

Michael J. Quinan
Direct Dial: (804) 799-4127
Facsimile: (804) 780-1813
E-mail: mquinan@t-mlaw.com

December 21, 2023

Via email: comments@asmfc.org

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke:

The Twin Rivers Waterman's Association and the Virginia Waterman's Association (collectively the "Watermen") represent the interests of commercial fishermen of Atlantic Striped Bass in the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia. The Watermen submit these comments concerning Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 ("Draft Addendum II") to the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission ("ASMFC") Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass ("ASB"). We appreciate the opportunity to submit these written comments to underscore and supplement the comments I made on behalf of the Watermen at the public hearing held on December 7, 2023 at the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.

The principal concern of the Watermen regarding Draft Addendum II is that it provides an option for further reduction of the quota limit on commercial fishermen, which is unnecessary and would be unfair.

To the extent that the striped bass population is overfished, that problem is clearly and solely the result of recreational fishing and not commercial fishing. This fact has been clearly demonstrated and is evident from the Draft Proceedings of the ASB Management Board's meeting on August 1, 2023. As the Plan Review Team reported:

"Most removals are coming from the recreational sector."

"Total recreational removals account for 90 percent of all removals, and total commercial removals account for 10 percent of the removals."

"Dead discards are 1 percent for commercial. For recreational it

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
December 21, 2023
Page 2

was 51 percent harvest and 39 percent release mortality.”

(8/1/23 Draft Proceedings, p. 2)

In the initial draft of Addendum II that was presented to the Board, the proposed measures appropriately focused on the recreational fishery. The only measure that was not limited to recreational fishing was an option to implement a maximum size limit for commercial fishing. Virginia already has a seasonal maximum size limit of 28 inches and the season when that size limit is in effect has already been extended.

The Board later modified Draft Addendum II to add the possibility of commercial quota changes. According to the ASB Technical Committee’s Memorandum of September 28, 2023, at p. 5, the reason for doing so was not because reduced quotas would benefit the fishery directly but instead was an “attempt to account for [the implementation of the maximum size limit] 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.” The Technical Committee also had these things to say about a maximum size limit:

“The TC raised concerns about the implementation of a commercial maximum size limit as a management tool.”

“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 analysis 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.”

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
December 21, 2023
Page 3

(9/28/23 Technical Report, p. 5.)

So, the only reason an option for reducing commercial quotas was even proposed was to adjust for the impact of maximum size limitations. But the impact of imposing additional size limitations was recognized by the Board's own Technical Committee to be uncertain and negligible. Consequently, before the Board published Draft Addendum II for public comment, it eliminated the option for a change in the maximum size limit. However, it did not eliminate the option to reduce the commercial quota, which makes no sense and now has no basis in the record.

In light of the fact that the commercial fisherman of the Chesapeake Bay are not responsible for the problem that Draft Addendum II is intended to address in the first place, it would be unfair and arbitrary to impose limitations on them that are of limited and questionable value to the fishery but that would result in severe adverse consequences to the fishermen.

Commercial fisherman and recreational share a common interest in the size and vitality of the striped bass population, both in the short term and in the long term. The fact is, however, that increased quotas on commercial fishermen would have a negligible impact on the health of the fishery, but a devastating impact on commercial fishing, specifically on the lives and livelihood of commercial fishermen. The Watermen of the Chesapeake Bay who rely on striped bass to support their families may be commercial fishermen, but they are not industrial fishermen. They are an historic and integral element of the economy and the environment of the Bay. They have learned to survive on the small margins that their boats and their backs offer to them. Further decreases to their already greatly reduced quotas, in particular, pose an existential threat to their way of life. The recreational fishermen will always be there, but if the small and family-based culture of commercial watermen in the Chesapeake Bay goes away, chances are it will not come back.

The Watermen, and all of the commercial fishermen of the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia, greatly appreciate your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Quinan

MJQ

cc: Douglas F. Jenkins, Sr., Twin Rivers Waterman's Association
J.C. Hudgins, Virginia Waterman's Association

Upper Bay Charter Captains Association

243 Obrecht Road
Sykesville, MD 21784
(443) 280-4410

December 11, 2023

Emile Frank
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear ASMFC:

I am writing to state my concerns with the potential cutbacks to striped bass fishing in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay as I represent the Upper Bay Charter Captains Association. We currently have 75 members who operate "For Hire Charters" in the Chesapeake Bay from Deale north past Baltimore and Rock Hall, MD.

As a charter captain on the Chesapeake Bay for over 23 years, I would like to state that the ASMFC must consider **Option C2** which allows customers on charter boats to keep two striped bass per day. A reduction to our customers in the number of fish they may keep will be catastrophic for the charter industry. Over the past several years, the charter captains have had to follow new regulations to sustain the fishery. The boat fish has been eliminated; I have endured a two-week closure during prime fishing season in July, slot size requirements were instituted by emergency regulation this year, and enrollment in the DNR FACTS program which constitutes electronic monitoring by MD DNR. Now for 2024, the State of Maryland has eliminated the trophy season and there is talk of extending the two-week summer closure in July with an additional week in August.

Other data through a recent "Public Information Act" request from MD DNR shows that the charter fleet has already had a reduction of 17% of striped bass caught over the past two years. Total striped bass harvest reported by MD Charter Boats in 2020 is 121,771 fish, in 2021 116,581 fish, in 2022 101,043 fish and as of 1 November 2023, 79,715 fish. One of the main contributors to this is the declining economy which, in turn, reduced the number of charter fishing trips taken. By looking at the numbers in the PIA the charter fleet is not the problem with the striped bass stock.

On Page 9 of Addendum II, it clearly states **Chesapeake Bay For-Hire removals decreased by 27%**.

The charter For-Hire industry is accountable for our catch and the MD-DNR knows exactly what our impact is. We are the smallest user group in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay as compared to the regular recreational anglers and commercial sectors. We have been actively engaged with the MD-DNR for years supporting measures to help striped bass recover.

If the ASMFC reduces our catch to one fish, you are essentially putting the charter fleet out of business. This reduction also affects local hotels/motels, restaurants, bait and tackle shops, etc. The trickle-down effect on the local economies cannot be made up in other ways. Our business and those depending on the charter customers will be unable to recover from loss of business.

Another major problem in the industry is the mortality rate among the recreational fishermen (not the charter fleet) and no one is addressing or policing this situation. Through the same PIA, MD DNR has sold over 300,000 saltwater licenses. Many of these licensees fish on a regular basis and continue to catch and release once they catch their limit for the day which contributes to the mortality rate. Additionally, a priority for the protection of the female breeding stock should be considered, with a moratorium, from 1 January 2024 until the recreational season opens in May 2024. This will give the breeding fish an easier path to spawn and rebuild the stock without potential harassment and unknown amount of injury and terminated spawning runs.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Captain Michael D. Smolek
Upper Bay Charter Captains Association President.



Virginia Waterman's Association

12/22/23

To: Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Subject: Striped Bass - Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7

Dear ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

The Virginia Waterman's Association strongly opposes the consideration of commercial quota reductions as described in Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Plan for many reasons.

Primarily, this is because the overfishing, overfished and excess mortality concerns this addendum is intended to address are primarily a result of years of historical overfishing in the recreational striped bass fishery. The recreational sector has habitually exceeded the F targets, thresholds and other benchmarks established in both Amendment 6, Amendment 7 and practically all of their addenda for many years with minimal consequences.

We have a number of concerns and observations, several of which are listed below.

1. As you know, unlike the recreational sector, the commercial quotas are managed as "hard caps" with any overages paid back the following year with no exceptions. Consequently, the commercial share of the coastwide mortality has been diminishing in both relative and absolute terms over time, while the recreational sector regularly exceeds its allowed F, often with little or no penalty. This is essentially the sole reason for the striped bass stock's "overfishing" and "overfished" designations as described in the conclusions of the Technical Committee and Management Board.

2. For many consecutive years the Virginia commercial fishery (and commercial fisheries in other Bay jurisdictions) have been managed so strictly that the quota is not met and the yearly underages are quite significant. For example, from 2006 to 2018 Virginia's Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery had a cumulative landings underage of 2,375,745 lbs. with no overage (or exceedance of F) in any year. That is nearly 200,000 lbs of quota each year that is allocated, but not caught due to a very conservation risk averse approach and stringent regulatory regime to protect the stocks. These underages have continued at that rate or more since the aforementioned time period. *Consequently, just Virginia by itself, has in recent years provided well over 3,000,000 lbs of uncaught quota, which has essentially provided a buffer from the effects of years of historical overfishing from the recreational sector.* There is also a large cumulative underage from the other state's commercial fisheries. The inability of these consistent and significant commercial underages to compensate for the consistent and even more significant recreational overfishing, underscores how large of a problem this is (Source: VMRC mandatory reporting data, presumably reported to ASMFC)
3. *The aforementioned overfishing from the recreational sector and the consistent underages from the commercial sector has resulted in an ongoing de facto, but unacknowledged, reallocation from one sector to another.* This is in direct contravention of the original ASMFC compact which originally specified a 50-50 percentage split between the recreational and commercial sectors based on the 1972 – 1979 landings. Though no one expects to ever get back to any semblance of the original equity agreement for many reasons, it is unacceptable to consistently punish the strictly controlled commercial sector for the overfishing of its recreational counterpart.
4. The effort controls implemented in the various addenda under Amendment 6 have one result in common. The commercial restrictions have been effective and achieved even more than their desired result, whereas the recreational effort controls have not. This is largely because of years of management premises based on faulty data. From MRFSS to MRIP, it seems that all models have thus far dramatically underestimated the recreational removals. For example, on page 2 of the 2019 Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 it states ***"The new MRIP removals estimates are on average 2.3 times higher than recreational removals used in previous stock assessments"***... . Concerning insufficient levels of striped bass SSB, one can draw a straight line to this insufficiency from the years of faulty data resulting from the implementation of faulty recreational control models. Therefore, the significant reductions in the relatively small commercial quotas, despite having met their management objectives, never had a chance to compensate for the vast levels of overfishing from the recreational sector, and still don't. That being said, if any reductions should be imposed upon commercial fisheries, those penalties should be imposed upon the specific fisheries in the specific states where any overages occur. Perhaps it is time to require remedial measures from the sectors causing the overfishing, instead of penalizing the sectors that are always in compliance?

5. Figure 5 and 6 on pages 22 and 23 of the draft document are most illustrative of the aforementioned points. Note that in Figure 5 the commercial harvest and discards are steady, predictable and trending downwards. However the recreational harvest and discards are high, erratic and have recently spiked even more so. Figure 6 shows the commercial fisheries always below quota, relatively steady and trending downwards, especially the Chesapeake Bay fisheries. This is in stark contrast to the recreational fisheries.
6. Since 1993 Virginia commercial fishermen have had mandatory reporting for every significant organism landed for any purpose and recorded on a daily form. Striped bass management has additional regulations in order to tightly control the fishery. Failure to accurately report any landings is dealt with rather severely by VMRC management and Law Enforcement. Virginia was one of the first states to have such stringent mandatory reporting for all landings for all species, if not the very first. We consider the significant burdens of our strict regulatory regime and our consistent quota underages in all of our commercial striped bass fisheries to have resulted in a conservation buffer that has helped offset the significant exceedance of F that has been endemic to the recreational fishery's management and loose enforcement.
7. The above being said, the Virginia Waterman's Association supports a robust and healthy recreational fishery that is more properly managed, so as to better protect the striped bass SSB and stocks in general. While we will refrain from opining on which options and sub-options would be best for the recreational fishery, we would like to make one general comment based on our direct empirical observations resulting from our many years of experience as both commercial and recreational fishermen. A. Slot Limits = Discards = Discard mortality. B. Narrower Slot Limits = More Discards = More Discard Mortality. C. When the available fish don't tend to fall into the slot = Even more Discards = Even More Discard Mortality.
8. With regard to the portion of the Striped Bass stock considered to be overfished, the SSB/coastal migrants, we would like to point out that many of the regulatory measures in Virginia, and others not mentioned, have resulted in the average size fish caught commercially in our portion of the Chesapeake Bay dropping by more than half in recent years. This has been intentional on our part in order to protect the SSB. We also can't help but notice that most of the jurisdictions to our North, largely, if not exclusively, concentrate on this very SSB segment of the stock that needs protection. These jurisdictions are the ones that need to be more proactive in the management measures they undertake.
9. We consider the above listed reductions and regulatory measures as proactive stock protections our commercial fishery sector has consistently undertaken, but have not been acknowledged. We have filed many of these proactive and burdensome measures away in the "no good deed shall go unpunished" file. Therefore, until some of the jurisdictions to our North better protect the SSB, and considering our years of proactive

measures to do so, we feel that a reduction in our commercial quota is unfair, unwarranted and violative of parts of ASMFC's charter, not to mention the basic rules of fairness and the universal principle of states taking responsibility for the excesses of their own fisheries.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Virginia Waterman's Association

kelltron@aol.com

757-897-1009



December 21, 2023

Memo to:

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

From:

Philip Simon, Vice President, and Legislative Chair
Village Harbor Fishing Club (VHFC)
Manahawkin, NJ

RE: VHFC comments and positions on the options for Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

General comments

1. We understand that the Recreational Demand Model and the currently used Harvest Control Rule system call for reductions in Atlantic Striped Bass harvest of approximately 14%, and that the Striped Bass Board had little choice but to follow through with options that achieve this reduction. However, based on what we see in this fishery as well as others where this set of guidelines has been used, the methods are skewed towards reductions regardless of the trends in the size of the fish stocks being analyzed. We strongly recommend that the ASMFC and the MAMFC re-visit the issues and data surrounding the implementation of the harvest control rules and issue a new set of guidelines that does not call for further restrictions in stocks where the trends in the stock size are stable and the stock size is healthy.
2. With the one-fish bag limit, recreational harvest size is driven primarily by the availability of striped bass schools to anglers during the Spring and Fall migrations. As with almost all the recreational fisheries, recreational catch of striped bass is very highly correlated to how many fish are encountered. For striped bass, this is driven both by size of the stock, and the path of much of the fish inside the EEZ, and timing of the migrations relative to when the fishing

community is still mostly active. The actual size limits imposed in the regulations have really no meaningful impact on the stock, as the balance of harvested fish and dead discards blunts the impact of the size limitations, especially as the very narrow slot drives us towards more catch and release. We would expect the recent “Emergency” reduction of the size limits to a three-inch slot to have had little or no impact on the stock nor on the 2023 harvest numbers.

3. Seasonal adjustments, especially those taken during the weeks prior to spawning, would have a more beneficial effect by reducing fishing pressure on the SSB. Again, we would recommend more focus on measures that improve the status of the stock rather than chasing after harvest numbers.
4. We would also recommend that the use of Recruitment as an indicator of stock status or guide to setting regulations be re-considered. It is well known that there is little correlation between R and SSB, except when there is a true crash in the fishery. If you examine your own figure 1 in the draft addendum, increases in SSB can be found with low trends in R (1988 – 1993) and decreases with good levels of R (2012 – 2015). Too many factors contribute to R that are independent of fishing pressure to suggest that fishing regulations can influence recruitment, nor that good or poor recruitment levels should drive decisions on fishing quotas. We would also point out that figure 1 indicates that the SSB has stabilized over the last 7 years. The results of the 2024 striped bass stock assessment will be interesting indeed.)

Recommendations for the options:

1. Ocean Recreational Fishery Options (3.1.1): Option B, because Option A would clearly not be politically acceptable to the Commission, and B is the least bad of the choices.
2. Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options (3.1.2): Option B1, because we believe that sector separation is not advisable, and that there should be some parity with the slots in the other regions.
3. For-Hire Management Clarification (3.1.3). Option A, because enforcement would be a nightmare with option B.
4. Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements (3.1.4): Option B, the parochial answer being that what is good enough for New Jersey is good enough for the rest.
5. Commercial Quota Reduction Options (3.2.1): Option B. We will continue to support the elimination of all commercial fishing for striped bass and designation of the species as a game fish. This includes continued maintenance of the bonus tag system in NJ.
6. Response to Stock Assessment Updates (3.3): Option A (status quo), because sometimes it takes some time to assess just what is going on. “Knee-jerk” responses, such as occurred with the recent “Emergency” based on an N = 1 data point do not help.

About the Village Harbour Fishing Club

95 members fishing Barnegat Bay, Little Egg Harbor, and nearby inshore grounds

President, and newsletter and website Chair: Ed Valitutto

1st VP and Publicity Rep: Dave Spendiff

2nd VP and Legislative Chair, JCAA rep: Phil Simon

Treasurer: Jerry Nichols

Weigh Master and Awards Chair: Pat Presuto

Communications: Donna Harris

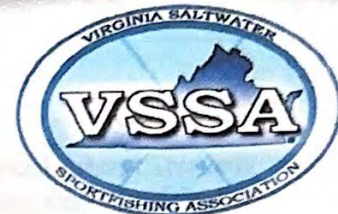
Membership: John Steubing

Library: Bill Dabney

<https://vhfishingclub.com/>

Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association, Inc (VSSA)

3419 Virginia Beach Blvd #5029
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
joinvssa.org



Steve Atkinson
President

David Tobey
Vice President

Bob Mandigo
Treasurer

Kevin Smith
Secretary

November 30, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Dear Ms. Franke:

Board of Directors

Steve Atkinson

John Bello

Brian Collins

Chris Dollar

Rick Elyar

Stan Gold

Scott Greg

Jerry Hughes

Tom Jerome

Bob Mandigo

Kevin Smith

On behalf of the Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA), I am writing to provide our comments on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP). VSSA represents over 600 Saltwater Anglers and six (6) affiliated fishing clubs in Virginia.

VSSA has serious concerns on the probability of rebuilding to the biomass target by the 2029 deadline. The actions proposed in Draft Addendum II project 14.5% reduction in 2024 vs 2022 removals. We are cognizant other factors such as lack of prey, more specifically menhaden, several years of low recruitment (juvenile abundance index), pre spawn commercial netting, and the effects of climate change all play a role in this rebuilding process. We do not believe the proposed measures will be enough to allow rebuilding by the 2029 deadline. Therefore, VSSA will support the most conservative measures proposed. Moreover, we believe both the recreational and commercial sectors must share in the rebuilding process. Our comments on the proposed options are as follows:

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

VSSA supports **Option B** - allowing 1 fish at 28'-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). Given, the last strong year class (2015) is now available to many anglers, VSSA believes Option B is the most conservative option proposed with a 14.1% reduction and is the most appropriate action considering all factors.



We do not support options providing sector separation within the recreational fishery. This only allows disparities within the sector. All recreational anglers, whether fishing from shore, private boat, or charter boat should contribute equally to reducing the harvest and restoring the Striped Bass stock to abundance.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:

VSSA support Option B1 - We can support either Option B1 or B2 for the Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery. Options B1 and B2 are the only options that meet or exceed the required reductions. We prefer Option B1 because it will provide the largest reduction and provide consistent minimum size, maximum size, and a consistent bag limit for all jurisdictions in the Ches Bay.

VSSA has long been a proponent for uniform and consistent regulations across all jurisdictions in the Chesapeake Bay. We believe consistent regulations for all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions will not only provide parity but will also lead to improved compliance as well as enforcement.

VSSA does not support sector separation in Chesapeake Bay for recreational fisheries (Options C1 and C2). Again, we believe all recreational anglers, whether fishing from the shore, private boat, or charter boat should make an equal effort to reduce the harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance.

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

VSSA does not support mode splits. Additionally, given the status of the stock, we do not believe the Captain and/or Crew should be allowed to harvest fish, when carrying passengers for hire.

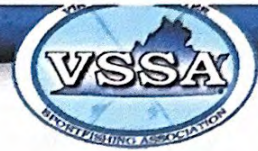
Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirement:

VSSA supports Option B. VSSA believes it should be left to the states to determine whether or not to allow "at-sea/shore-side filleting." If the state chooses to allow, VSSA believes, at the minimum, the rack and skin must be retained to ensure compliance

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

VSSA supports Option B with no less than a 14.5% reduction. Given the status of the stock, we do not believe the status quo is a viable option. Striped Bass is a shared resource between the commercial and recreational fisheries. All participants in this fishery need to participate in the recovery.

We are cognizant the board will select the specific reduction between zero and 14.5%, but we are also cognizant that any reduction less than 14.5% will have less than a 50% probability of success. Therefore, VSSA strongly encourages the board to select the largest possible reduction of 14.5%.



Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

VSSA Supports Option B. Unfortunately, VSSA believes additional future management measures will be required to meet the 2029 rebuilding deadline. Given the choice between a normal year long addendum process or giving the board the flexibility to quickly act based on a stock assessment is a simple choice. VSSA supports Option B giving the board the ability to respond without going through a full addendum process.

Section 4.0 Compliance Schedule

VSSA supports implementation dates being put in place as soon as possible.

In summary as previously stated, VSSA does not believe the proposed measures will be enough to allow rebuilding by the 2029 deadline. Therefore, VSSA supports the most aggressive and conservative measures proposed. Accordingly, VSSA strongly encourages ASMFC adopt the Addendum II options with the greatest probability of success in achieving the target levels in 2024. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectively,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Bello", is positioned above the printed name.

John J. Bello
Chairman Government Affairs

cc: Patrick Geer – VMRC
Senator Bill DeSteph
J. Bryan Plumlee

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Form Letter submitted by 1,298 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] CBF on Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:28:59 PM

Dear ASMFC Fishery Management Plan Coordinator Emilie Franke,

Striped bass are perhaps the most iconic fish in the Chesapeake Bay region. Historically, they've supported fisheries that provided untold opportunities to so many here in the watershed. Unfortunately, the number of striped bass has dwindled, and that is a huge loss for the Bay and its tributaries.

I appreciate the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's ongoing efforts to help rebuild the population. Only through strong, coastwide management action will we be able to continue efforts to rebuild the striped bass population. Please accept the following comments on draft Addendum II.

For the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay trophy striped bass fisheries, I feel that Option B. 1 fish at 28'-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes) is the most appropriate action. This will create the most level playing field for all anglers.

For Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries, I support Options B1 or B2. These options are expected to meet the conservation target for recreational fishers and make it more consistent for anglers who fish in different areas of the Bay and its tributaries.

Given the active commercial and recreational fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay region, I support Option B for the Commercial Quota Reduction Options and ask the Board to adopt a reduction of no less than 14.5% to ensure the necessary reductions in striped bass mortality are met.

Finally, I would like the Board to have the necessary flexibility to respond to future stock assessments. Therefore, I support Option B in Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on draft Addendum II.

Sincerely,

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers Form Letter submitted by 234 individuals

From: mailagent@thesoftedge.com on behalf of
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - BHA Friday,
Date: December 22, 2023 9:34:18 PM

Dear Striped Bass Board:

As a supporter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on Draft Addendum II, and to advise the ASMFC on the general priorities and specific options I would like to see included in Addendum II.

The Atlantic striped bass stock has been overfished since 2019, and in spite of prior conservation efforts undertaken by ASFMC it remains clear that additional reductions in fishing mortality are needed. I believe that all segments of the fishery should participate in its recovery, and urge the striped bass Board to exclude options that facilitate enhanced harvest opportunities for certain segments or exempt them entirely from taking reductions.

To maximize the chances that fishing mortality is reduced to target in 2024, and that the striped bass stock is recovered by 2029, I urge the Board to include the following options in Addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options - Option B
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options - Option B1
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements - Option B
- 3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options - Option B, with the full 14.5% reduction
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates - Option B

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Bay Commercial form letter signed by 70 individuals

In regard to the proposed reduction in commercial allocations for striped bass, It seems as though the commercial industry will have to take another hit. Although all the science and studies on what's causing the reduction in overall population of the striped bass is clearly not caused by commercial fishing. The accountability of commercial fishing through reporting, tagging, checking stations, buyers, being monitored and fisherman monitoring, keeps a close control in numbers of fish and pounds taken out of the population with little wasted mortality. It is shown by the ASMFC itself that the percent of fish taken out of the population by commercial men is small compared to that of the large number recreational fishermen take and waste. The relentless fishing of rockfish at times when the water is warm and lowly oxygenated leads to large numbers of discard deaths in the fish. This is a popular time for recreational fishing. Summer time warm weather is enjoyable on the water. We feel this is the main time large numbers of fish are removed from the population some used and many wasted, and the numbers are so vast with no way to count, monitor, or control. All people should be able to enjoy fishing but when what seems to be harmless recreation is really what is endangering the overall population of the fish. This is what needs to be addressed, not just taking away from all sectors of the fishery. Ever since the moratorium was lifted and a fishery reinstated the commercial man has taken reduction over reduction, while the recreational fisherman has increased fishing pressure through various means. learning new ways to catch the fish, faster more powerful boats, the overall popularity of catching the Big Fish and in certain areas the lack of other fish to target has led to the popularity of Striped Bass fishing. So while their (the recreational) fishing effort has increased and they take more and more fish, ours (the commercial mans) efforts have been reduced through cutbacks and restrictions and we are taking less and less. We the undersigned do not think taking anymore quota from commercial fishing is fair or will even start to solve the problem of the overall reduction in the population of the striped bass. Enough is enough please address the real problem of overall increases in recreation effort and mortality.

Lee Roy Carson III	Ind & VA	Commercial	Fisherman
Lee Roy Carson III	"	"	"
Merian Carson	"	"	"
Susan Carson	"	"	"

In regard to the proposed reduction in commercial allocations for striped bass, it seems as though the commercial industry will have to take another hit. Although all the science and studies on what's causing the reduction in overall population of the striped bass is clearly not caused by commercial fishing. The accountability of commercial fishing through reporting, tagging, checking stations, buyers, being monitored and fisherman monitoring, keeps a close control in numbers of fish and pounds taken out of the population with little wasted mortality. It is shown by the ASMFC itself that the percent of fish taken out of the population by commercial men is small compared to that of the large number recreational fishermen take and waste. The relentless fishing of rockfish at times when the water is warm and lowly oxygenated leads to large numbers of discard deaths in the fish. This is a popular time for recreational fishing. Summer time warm weather is enjoyable on the water. We feel this is the main time large numbers of fish are removed from the population some used and many wasted, and the numbers are so vast with no way to count, monitor, or control. All people should be able to enjoy fishing but when what seems to be harmless recreation is really what is endangering the overall population of the fish. This is what needs to be addressed, not just taking away from all sectors of the fishery. Ever since the moratorium was lifted and a fishery reinstated the commercial man has taken reduction over reduction, while the recreational fisherman has increased fishing pressure through various means. learning new ways to catch the fish, faster more powerful boats, the overall popularity of catching the Big Fish and in certain areas the lack of other fish to target has led to the popularity of Striped Bass fishing. So while their (the recreational) fishing effort has increased and they take more and more fish, ours (the commercial mans) efforts have been reduced through cutbacks and restrictions and we are taking less and less. We the undersigned do not think taking anymore quota from commercial fishing is fair or will even start to solve the problem of the overall reduction in the population of the striped bass. Enough is enough please address the real problem of overall increases in recreation effort and mortality.

George Bell
 Casey Corbin
 Billy Howard
 Bryan Hurvi
 Merrill Campbell
 William
 Christopher Stalder
 Charles Plouff
 Christian Fisher
 Dawn Fisher
 Margio Dennis
 Brittany Stealoy
 Jane Reese
 Miche Winkle
 Virginia Meon

James P. Reese Sr.
 James P. Reese Jr.
 James P. Reese III
 Steve Raab
 Tony Warfield
 Jeremy Bishop
 Terry Crockett
 Richard Crockett
 James Loipie
 Betty Gannon
 Michael Bull
 Noah Nelson
 Scott Sayre
 David Burrell
 Gary Gerald
 Heather Contreras

Sammy Horan
 Ruth Digger
 James Colon
 John Leiphardt
 Eddie Gillespie
 Don Pierce
 Jason Bean
 Jerry Janda
 Norman Pinkney
 Monte Labo
 Joseph Schwartz
 Chris Weber
 Jonathan Weber
 Paul Kellam
 Dennis Edwards
 Barbara Somers
 Jesse Stenger
 Charles Price

Daniel J. O'Connor Lic# 2941 Per# 1057

Christopher Jones - Lic# 22113 Permit# 317

Michael Lipski - Lic# 18277 Permit# 1147

David Schulte Jr - Lic# 2537 Permit# 721

Eric Joaquim Silva - Lic# 753 Permit# 200

Charles Price - Lic# 25911 Permit# 368

William Lawder - Lic# 193 Permit# 758

Donald Baines - Lic# Permit# 612

Carl Stenger Jr - Lic# 39517 Permit# 572

Richard Fluharty - Lic# 1061

William Livingston - Lic# 12064 Permit# 469

Christopher Buevicius - Lic# 99967 Permit# 200

Aldon C. Lednum - Lic# 6067 Permit# 452

Dean Price - Lic# 6432 Permit# 586 (410) 463-125

Tommy Lednum - Lic# 5938

Lezey Cambell - Lic# 15504 (443-786-1957)

Vanhan Pruitt - 9281 Campland (757) 999-18
Bellhaven, VA 23306

Coastal Conservation Association Form Letter Submitted by 34 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass addendum
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:38:41 PM

As a conservation minded angler, I support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024, and the Board to focus on meaningful reductions in mortality as future assessments require.

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23" (22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24" (15.9% reduction).

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: B. Board Action.

Implementation dates: ASAP

Riverkeeper Form Letter submitted by 18 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] sustainable fishing policies
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 1:15:09 AM

The current mortality rates in recreational fishing are unsustainable, posing a threat to the Hudson River striped bass spawning stock. Please adopt “Option B” for both recreational and commercial fishing. Additionally, I, along with Riverkeeper advocate for increased enforcement of regulations in a range of areas, including Federal waters, to benefit the striped bass population in the Hudson River.

Thank you.

Westport Striped Bass Club Form Letter submitted by 7 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 11:58:59 AM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, (ASMFC)

I am an avid recreational fisherman and a member of the Westport Striped Bass Club (WSBC), we have a passion for catching and releasing striped bass and want to provide our comments regarding the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

This is what we would like to see to improve our Striped Bass Fisheries.

Advocate for Chesapeake Bay: **I support Option B1 in section 3.1.2.** This option offers a fair and balanced approach, aligning Chesapeake Bay anglers with a 19-23" slot limit. We as a club would really like a state-wide slot limit if it's a chance to safeguard the recent healthy year classes and contribute to a thriving striped bass future.

Support Sustainable Commercial Practices: I endorse Option B of Section 3.2.1, advocating for a 14.5% reduction in commercial quotas. This step is pivotal in ensuring the longevity of our striped bass stocks.

Thank you for your time and efforts in helping our striped bass.

Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association Form Letter submitted by 4 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:22:15 PM

Comments to amendment II:

We are the voice of the Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass fishery, with a membership of over 1,000 commercial rod & reel permit holders and growing.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the ASMFC's Striped Bass Addendum II Commercial measures.

We recommend the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF Take a position in support of its small local commercial rod & reel fishermen on Addendum 2, section 3.2.1 Option A. Status Quo. (no reduction to the commercial quota)

The proposed 14.5% reduction equates to almost 100,000 pounds of fish. That alone equates to over \$500,000 at today's average wholesale prices, and close to 2.5 Million dollars retail.

Massachusetts has about 650 "active" (1000+ pound) permit holders. That would be almost a \$4,000 direct out of pocket hit to each one of those individual permit holders.

Furthermore a status quo vote would only equate to a 1.6% difference on the recreational sector, on what could very well be hypothetical numbers to begin with. (MRIP surveys).

The commercial sector is already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another 14.5% decrease to the quota is not justifiable now simply because the recreational sector's catch numbers are up by 88%.

The commercial striped bass fishery is and has been very well managed with each and every pound being accounted for on multiple levels. WE urge you to let that continue.

On behalf of the Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association we ask that the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF support our local fishermen with a vote of status quo, No reduction.

**Form Letter 1 of unknown origin submitted by 15 individuals
(primarily charter captains)**

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:32:37 PM

I support the following options.

3.1.1 option C. This option is beneficial for charter boats who may be struggling to find striped bass within the small 3” slot window for their clients to bring home fish for food.

Fish for food is a very important aspect of the striped bass fishery.

It is well within the overall reduction percentages with only a 0.1% harvest change and 0.0% change to release mortality.

3.1.4 Option A. status quo

This is a solution to a problem that doesn’t exist. Many charter boats are not able to clean fish at the dock, due to local rules or time constraints (back to back trips).

Changing this allowance is not necessary, and if changed would require additional laws regarding keeping racks, where boats may have more racks than clients on board and no filets to show for it. (back to back trips)

3.3 option A. Status quo. the public’s input is extremely important in any type or rule making process, this is viewed as a democratic process. At a time where many fishermen question the science not being consistent with observations on the water this is more important than ever.

The addendum process assures the public they are involved in the decisions and in my opinion is not that long of a process.

Respectfully

Sent from my iPhone

Form Letter 2 of unknown origin submitted by 12 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:05:28 AM

December 13, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
comments@asmfc.org
efranke@asmfc.org

Hello Emilie,

Please find my comments below. Thank you.

As to Fishery Status:

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update. Had a more aggressive option been available, I would have supported that, given the situation.

As to Management Options:

I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

As to Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

As to Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option.

As to Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.

As to Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"- 31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- To me "a recreational angler is a recreational angler" whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other.
- Any discussion of recreational mode splits should be an amendment level decision. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions must be had.
- Regardless Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. (Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.)

As to Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I do not support it.

- Option D only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

As to Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

As to Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction goal.

As to Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I support a reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

As to For-Hire Management Clarification, I support option A Status Quo

- Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Recreational Filletting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local filet at the dock prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- I believe Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit is wrong and prefer ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT!

Regards,

**Form Letter 3 of unknown origin submitted by 10 individuals,
primarily New England rec anglers**

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:49:37 AM

My name is _____ from _____. As a recreational striped bass angler I support the below positions for Addendum II.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Form Letter 4 of unknown origin submitted by 9 charter captains/crew and rec anglers from NY-NJ

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:36:49 PM

Hi,

I operate a OUPV 6-pack charter boat out of Mount Sinai Harbor, New York. Aside from running fishing charters, I also participate in Striped Bass research projects with Cornell Cooperative and Gray Fish Tag. So while I am all for the regulation and preservation of the species, a 3 inch slot limit is too small. The 28-31 inch slot limit for Striped Bass imposed in 2023, directly led to financial hardships for my business. Aside from deterring clients, the narrow slot limit actually resulted in additional pressure towards overslot sized fish, correlating to increased post release mortality. While I take the time to properly revive all fish, some release mortality is inevitable. A 28-33 inch slot limit would likely reduce charter boat pressure on Striped Bass, as for hire vessels would be able to get keepers in the boat faster, enabling them to target other species. So instead of burning fuel and releasing countless overslot Striped Bass searching for that needle in a haystack between 28-31 inches, vessels would be able to target other species such as fluke, seabass, and scup for the remainder of the trip. The increased slot of 2" is estimated to only change the harvest reduction percentage from 14.0% to 14.1%, which is almost negligible in the grand scheme of things. Increasing the slot limit would help the livelihoods of the small for hire fleet, along with reducing release mortality rates amongst large Striped Bass.

Thank you for the consideration of passing Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Option C,

Form Letter 5 of unknown origin submitted by 9 individuals

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:46:25 PM

Regarding the proposed changes, I support measures that achieve the 14.5% reduction in total removals needed to achieve F target in 2024.

- (1) maintaining the current 28-31" slot for the ocean fishery
- (2) implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay
- (3) complementary reductions in the commercial fishery
- (4) no mode splits, meaning same regulations for private and charter.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Form Letter 6 of unknown origin submitted by 3 New England rec anglers

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:53:24 AM

Good morning,

My name is _____ and I am a very concerned recreational striped bass angler from Connecticut/Rhode Island. I spend ~100 days on the water every year and have watched the decline of our fishery first hand over the past several years. While the large bass fishing has been good, there is a clear and obvious lack of abundance along the New England coast. There is no diversity in size class and the concentrations of fish are extremely localized (and pressured). My goal, along with the American Saltwater Guides Association, is to continue to advocate for **abundance** in our fishery. Although I firmly believe the actions proposed in Addendum II are unlikely to rebuild the stock by 2029, please see below for my positions on Addendum II.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thank you for your consideration,

Priority Fishing Charters, LLC

140 Jerry Lane
North Kingstown, RI 02852
401-741-5648

www.priorityfishingcharters.com



November 29, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke,

I am writing to express my strong support for the approval of distinct measures for the for-hire sector, specifically endorsing Option C in Section 3.1.1, as outlined in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. As a longtime advocate for sustainable fisheries management, I believe that this approach is critical for balancing the conservation needs of the Atlantic Striped Bass population with the socio-economic influences and recreational desires of both the for-hire fleet and individual anglers.

Option C, which proposes separate regulations for the for-hire sector, considers the unique characteristics of this segment of the fishing industry. This option recognizes the socio-economic dynamics present within the for-hire fleet, which plays a vital role in providing recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the cultural and economic well-being of coastal communities.

In addition to those broader considerations, it is important to acknowledge the recreational anglers who value the opportunity to harvest a Striped Bass for personal consumption. Recreational fishing not only offers a connection to the marine environment but also provides a means for individuals to appreciate and sustainably harvest fish for their tables. The for-hire fleet, with its expertise and infrastructure, can play a pivotal role in facilitating this experience for recreational anglers who wish to take a fish home for dinner.

By recognizing the harvest aspirations of recreational anglers and allowing for the sustainable harvest of Striped Bass, we can strike a balance that supports both the conservation goal that led to the emergency action and the cultural traditions of individual anglers. The for-hire fleet, with its role as a facilitator for these experiences, becomes an essential partner in promoting responsible and ethical fishing practices.

I do not have a preference in Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification, either option is workable to me. I question the enforceability and practicality of Option B, but we can figure it out if needed.

I would like to express my support for Option A in Section 3.1.4, which proposes Status Quo, no requirement related to at-sea/shoreside filleting. Fillet restrictions will disrupt the established business plans of for-hire operators and introduce an additional burden of disposing of racks. For-hire businesses often run back-to-back trips when Striped Bass is available, and requiring filleting at the dock or retained racks will disrupt our flow of operations, limiting the efficiency and profitability of for-hire operations. I strongly support better enforcement of the regulations, which I find critical to building a level playing field for all for hire operations and as an alternative, I would recommend working with the Striped Bass Advisory Panel to develop more workable industry solutions in a future action.

Sincerely,

Capt. Rick Bellavance

Capt. Rick Bellavance

Marc Berger Owner Operator of L S Charters Pres of The CT Charter & Party Boat Assoc VP of the E Coast Fishing Coalition

I want to express my strong support for the implementation of separate measures for the for-hire sector, specifically endorsing Option C in Section 3.1.1, as outlined in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. As a fervent advocate for sustainable fisheries management, I believe that this approach is essential in balancing the conservation needs of the Atlantic Striped Bass population with the socio-economic influences and recreational desires of both the for-hire fleet and individual anglers.

Option C, which proposes separate regulations for the for-hire sector, takes into account the unique characteristics of this segment of the fishing industry. I particularly appreciate its recognition of the socio-economic influences of the for-hire fleet, which plays a vital role in providing recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the cultural and economic well-being of coastal communities.

It is crucial to acknowledge the recreational anglers who seek the opportunity to harvest a Striped Bass for personal consumption. Recreational fishing not only offers a connection to the marine environment but also provides a means for individuals to appreciate and sustainably harvest fish for their tables. The for-hire fleet, with its expertise and infrastructure, can play a pivotal role in facilitating this experience for recreational anglers who wish to take a fish home for dinner.

By recognizing the harvest aspirations of recreational anglers and allowing for the sustainable harvest of Striped Bass, we can strike a balance that supports both conservation goals and the cultural traditions of individual anglers. The for-hire fleet, with its role as a facilitator for these experiences, becomes an essential partner in promoting responsible and ethical fishing practices.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to consider the adoption of separate measures for the for-hire sector, specifically advocating for Option C in Section 3.1.1, and supporting the exemption from fillet restrictions outlined in Option A in Section 3.1.4 within ASMFC's Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. These considerations will not only safeguard the Atlantic Striped Bass population but also ensure the continued viability of for-hire businesses, contributing to the long-term health and sustainability of our valuable fisheries resources.

My Name is Craig Cantelmo with Van Staal fishing products and I would like to Thank the New York State DEC and ASMFC for listening to our comments and actively working towards reducing striped bass mortality and taking the required steps to rebuild the SSB to Target by 2029.

The fishing tackle industry relies on a healthy and abundant striped bass population up and down the coast to remain healthy and surf anglers are the first to feel the pain when the population declines. It's great to see the 2015 year class in the fishery and anglers on the beach catching fish with the majority being released. However, the runs we see that used to last for months are now condensed into weeks affecting the charter fleet, surfcasters and the tackle industry.

I see this Addendum as a place holder for the 2024 stock Assessment and choose these options:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

To reduce time to it takes to reduce mortality

Rec Filletings option B

Thank You ,

Craig Cantelmo
255 Broadwaters Road
Cutchogue, NY 11935

Thank you for the opportunity to comment here on the Addendum process.

My name is Taylor Ingraham, I am a lifelong Connecticut Resident and recreational angler. I work with the American Saltwater Guides Association and Founded the Tightlined Conservation Coalition, which manages the Tightlined Slam Fishing Tournaments in Connecticut to raise awareness around responsible management of our fisheries.

Before I get into the specific options at hand, I want to touch on where we stand with striped bass. As I think most of us know, the recent spawning success and recruitment out of the Chesapeake Bay, where most of our striped bass are born, has been abysmal, with no signs of improving.

As a result of that, we remain extremely reliant on the 2015 class, which was the last strong spawn on record. With the stock assessment due next year, we must continue to focus on protecting that class, providing them additional opportunities to spawn.

With that, I'll just jump through the options here:

For 3.1.1 – Ocean Recreational Fishery – I support Option B, 1 Fish at 28-31”. With 2015s readily abundant, the recreational community harvested far too many fish in 2022, and we need to keep the pressure off that class as they size out of the slot. Expanding the slot, especially higher, would once again put them under immense pressure when we need them the most. We also do not support mode splits, and think all recreational anglers (charter or otherwise) should be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

Again, the spawning success of the Chesapeake Bay is critical to the striped bass fishery, and for five consecutive years we have witnessed terrible spawns. This narrowed slot, across all modes, would protect the remnants of the last few average spawning classes there while hopefully allowing for more recruitment into the ocean as younger fish age out and begin migrating. Maryland has used Conservation Equivalence in the past to allow charters to harvest more fish with devastating results to the fishery. We strongly oppose any measure that allows mode splits.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Simply put, we are not against the commercial fishery and believe that all constituents should take the same reduction in harvest, across states and regions. The important part of this is pushing individual states to put this reduction in place asap so they are not delayed until the 2025 season, when we will likely be dealing with another set of revised regulations and this process again after the stock assessment is out.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

As I have referenced a few times, the next stock assessment is likely going to be released next fall, and while we do not know what that will show, it's hard to believe, given the spawning record over the past several years, that it will paint a more positive picture than where we are now.

With that in mind, it is critical that the ASMFC respond quickly, if needed, to put additional management actions in place to remain on schedule for a 2029 rebuild, which is the timeframe we are under dating back to when the 2018 assessment revealed that striped bass were overfished.

This option would allow the Board to move quickly to implement those new management measures through a simple majority. Without this, the process could take up to a year.

Importantly, this provision would NOT preclude public input, however would put the framework in place for time-critical management to be put in place to prevent a rebuild in the next six years.

Thank you again for the time and for taking these comments into serious consideration as we move through this addendum process.

J. Piffon Henaly
Over 40 years Commercial Charter on
Chesapeake Bay: Worked through the 5 year bar
on Striped Bass. My recommendation is
2 fish for recreation and Charter
18" - 32" (mimick the Commercial size)
18" minimum is crucial to the

preservation of the fishery

Call me for more info:

Capt Piffon Henaly
or write: 425 Wye Island Rd.
Quantico Virginia 21658

1075 Tooker Avenue
West Babylon, NY 11704
December 4, 2023

Emile Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

Below find my comments on the *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan* ("Addendum II").

I
PRELIMINARY COMMENT

Addendum II is a disappointing and badly flawed management document.

At its May meeting, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (the "Management Board") adopted a motion which called for a management document "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 2002 stock assessment update (F=0.17). [emphasis added]"¹

We have been presented with an Addendum II that fails to live up to either part of that mandate.

Instead, Addendum II has only a 33 to 56 percent probability of achieving Ftarget in 2024, and an even lower, 33 to 51 percent chance of rebuilding the stock by the 2029 deadline.² While there is very substantial uncertainty surrounding such estimates, such uncertainty is not directional; it is very possible that Addendum II will prove even less effective than the estimates suggest. There is also a very good chance that at least some of Addendum II's provisions will not be in place until 2025.³

The striped bass and the public deserve better. At the least, they deserve a Management Board that lives up to its word, and delivers an addendum that has a realistic probability of reducing 2024 fishing mortality by no less than 14.5%.

It is both troubling and disappointing that we got something less.

¹ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*, October 2023, p. 1.

² Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Presentation by Dr. Katie Drew, Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee, October 18, 2023, https://asmfc.org/files/2023AnnualMeeting/AtlanticStripedBassBoardPresentations_Oct2023.pdf.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

II
THE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

A
SECTION 3.1.1: OCEAN RECREATIONAL FISHERY OPTIONS

1

Option B, which establishes a 28- to 31-inch slot limit for all participants in the ocean recreational fishery, should be adopted by the Management Board.

None of the options for the ocean recreational fishery achieve a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality. However, Option B achieves the greatest reduction, and does so in a manner that both minimizes harvest of the 2015 year class and treats all participants in the fishery equitably. It is thus the preferable option.

At its May meeting, when the Management Board took emergency action establishing the 28- to 31-inch slot limit to protect the 2015 year class, Marty Gary, the Chair of the Management Board, announced that, "Based on concern for the stock and the long-term interests of its stakeholders, the Board acted decisively to implement a 31-inch maximum size limit to protect one of the few remaining strong year classes."⁴ Such concern for the future of the stock, and the importance of protecting the 2015 year class, remain valid today. It would be a mistake to shift the slot limit up to Option D's 30-33 inches, and place additional pressure on what the Management Board admits is "one of the few remaining strong year classes."

Options C and E raise policy concerns that are better addressed under a separate heading immediately below.

2

Options C and E, which would create so-called "sector separation" in the fishery, and grant special privileges to anglers fishing from for-hire vessels, represent flawed public policy and should not be adopted.

Based on the information provided in Addendum II, sector separation, which would grant anglers fishing from for-hire vessels special privileges not enjoyed by the great majority of striped bass fishermen, would have a minimal conservation impact. However, the public policy implications of such management are significant, and do not justify its adoption.

⁴ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, "ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Acts to Support Stock Rebuilding through Emergency Action and Addendum II Initiation," May 3, 2023, available at <https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/64529753pr10AtlSripedBassEmergencyAction.pdf>

Sector separation provides only a temporary reprieve for, and holds out false hope to, the for-hire sector, as poor striped bass recruitment will inevitably lead to a sharp drop in that sector's striped bass landings.

Maryland's juvenile abundance index ("JAI") for striped bass dropped precipitously in 2019, and has not recovered;⁵ 2023 saw the Maryland JAI return the second-lowest value ever recorded in a time series dating back to 1957.⁶ Although Maryland's five consecutive years of poor spawns is longer than spawning droughts experienced elsewhere, Maryland is not alone in seeing striped bass recruitment decline. The Delaware River JAIs for 2021 and 2022 were in the 25th percentile of that time series⁷ (as this is written, 2023 data is not yet available), while Virginia saw JAIs fall into the 25th percentile of its time series in 2021, 2022,⁸ and 2023.⁹

The severity of Maryland's spawning decline cannot be overstated. The Maryland JAI's long-term average is 11.1.¹⁰ During the striped bass stock collapse of the late 1970s and early 1980s, a rolling five-year average of the Maryland JAI never fell below 3.45. For the period 2019-2023, the Maryland JAI averaged just 2.74.¹¹ The five-cohort gap that now exists in the striped bass age structure is thus more severe than any in the history of the Maryland juvenile abundance survey.

Beginning in 2027, when a large proportion of the 2018 year class will have grown out of the proposed 28- to 33-inch for-hire slot limit, until at least 2032, there will be a severe and completely unavoidable drop in landings for all striped bass anglers, including those of the for-hire fleet, which will make any decline in landings far greater than that attributable to the current 28- to 31-inch slot limit. It is impossible to prevent such decline, as very few slot-sized fish will exist anywhere along the coast during those years.

At best, Options C and E only can only delay the inevitable need for the for-hire fleet to adopt a new business model that is not dependent upon landing striped bass. The Management Board should not interrupt the fleet's development of such business model, which is already being ushered in by May 2023's emergency action by adopting a management option that only delays the inevitable change and create false hope that change need not occur, for the effects of recent poor recruitment will merely dash any such hopes a few years from now.

⁵ Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "Juvenile Striped Bass Survey," available at <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/striped-bass/juvenile-index.aspx>

⁶ Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "Chesapeake Bay 2023 Young-of-Year Striped Bass Survey Results Announced," October 12, 2023, available at <https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2023/10/12/chesapeake-bay-2023-young-of-year-striped-bass-survey-results-announced/>

⁷ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Review of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass (*Morone saxatilis*) 2022 Fishing Year*, August 2023, p. 16.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Virginia Institute of Marine Science, "An 'off' year for juvenile striped bass in Virginia waters for 2023," October 12, 2023, available at https://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/topstories/2023/sbss_2023.php

¹⁰ Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "Chesapeake Bay..."

¹¹ Averages calculated from data provided by Maryland Department of Natural Resources, "Juvenile Striped Bass Survey"

Sector separation inequitably discriminates between subsets of anglers and angling-related businesses.

Not all anglers who hope to take home a striped bass fish from for-hire vessels, yet sector separation singles out those who fish from such vessels and grants them special privileges; Options C and E would increase their ability to retain a striped bass by allowing them to fish pursuant to a 28- 33-inch slot limit, rather than the 28- to 31-inch slot applicable to the shore and private boat anglers who (based on 2022 data) account for 98.5% of all directed striped bass trips.¹² By doing so, such options create inequities. They would, for example, reward a relatively wealthy angler, who can, alone or with friends, afford to pay \$1,000 or more for a single day's charter, along with all associated travel, food, and lodging costs, while denying the indigent fisherman, who might fish from an urban park or unused pier in the hope of bringing home food, the same ability to retain a striped bass.

That is wrong.

Businesses are affected in a similar, unequal fashion. Although the recreational striped bass fishery is dominated by catch-and-release, there are many private boat and shore-based anglers who like to take home a fish, either on a regular basis or on scattered occasions throughout the season.

Such anglers could be dissuaded from fishing by regulations that make it more difficult to catch a legal fish, to the same degree that for-hire anglers supposedly are. Yet sector separation proposals intended to provide relief to for-hire businesses ignore the impact of restrictive regulations on other angling-related enterprises such as tackle shops, fuel docks, and marinas.

That, too, is wrong.

The striped bass stock is not doing well, and every angler, and every angling-related business, that benefits from the striped bass resource should be required to make an equitable contribution toward its recovery. No angler, and no sector of the angling community, should be allowed to shift its burden onto the shoulders of others.

Sector separation rewards an outdated business model, and discourages change in the for-hire industry.

Although we are well into the third decade of the 21st Century, much of the for-hire fleet is clinging to a business model that was well-established before the Second World War: Take passengers fishing, with the intention of landing fish to take home. It is a business model established when living marine resources were far more abundant, and the human population far smaller, than is the case today.

¹² Private communication with the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division, November 29, 2023.

Today's economic, cultural, demographic, ecological, oceanographic, and regulatory environments are very different from those that prevailed in the 1930s, '40s, and '50, yet instead of adapting its business model to reflect today's operating environment, too many industry members expect that management measures be changed to suit its practices.

In other industries, that would not be a question. Businesses that were once household names—F. W. Woolworth, Howard Johnson's restaurants, Chrysler Motors, and Sears Roebuck, among others—either fell into bankruptcy, were taken over, or were restructured after they failed to change with the times. There is no reason why backward-looking for-hire operations should not face the same fate.

That is particularly true because change is possible. The American Saltwater Guides Association, an organization that represents for-hire owners and operators throughout the range of the striped bass, opposes the concept of sector separation.¹³ Its members have found ways to run thriving for-hire businesses, targeting striped bass within the current regulatory framework.

B

SECTION 3.1.2: CHESAPEAKE BAY RECREATIONAL FISHERY OPTIONS

Option B1, which creates a uniform size and bag limit for all anglers throughout the Chesapeake Bay, and achieves the greatest reduction in fishing mortality, should be adopted by the Management Board.

I support Option B1 for the same basic reasons that I support Option B in the ocean recreational fishery; Option B1 achieves the greatest reduction in fishing mortality, and does so in a manner that spreads the conservation burden equitably among all anglers in the fishery.

Although Option C1 also achieves a reduction of more than 14.5%, its sector separation component renders it unacceptable, for the reasons set forth in section IIA2 of these comments. The remainder of the options presented do not achieve the 14.5% reduction, are thus unacceptable, and probably should not have been included in Addendum II.

C

SECTION 3.1.3: FOR-HIRE MANAGEMENT CLARIFICATION

If the Management Board approves sector separation for the ocean and or Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries, it should also adopt Section 3.1.3's Option B, requiring the captain and crew of for-hire vessels to comply with the size and bag limits applicable to anglers fishing from shore and from private vessels.

The rationale for adopting sector separation, and awarding special privileges to anglers fishing from for-hire vessels, is the alleged need to attract customers to the for-hire fleet. Such rationale does not apply to the captain and crew of such for-hire vessels, so there is no need to extend special privileges to them.

¹³ American Saltwater Guides Association, "Striped Bass Addendum II—Public Comment Guide," November 6, 2023, available at <https://saltwaterguidesassociation.com/striped-bass-addendum-ii-public-comment-guide/>

There has been some concern that it will be difficult for law enforcement personnel to enforce the provisions of Option B, particularly in the case of party boats, which typically carry larger crews. While that might prove true in some instances, the fact that a regulation might not be enforceable under all circumstances should not serve as a bar to its adoption, when adoption could nonetheless prevent many abuses of the extraordinary privilege created by sector separation.

D

SECTION 3.1.4: RECREATIONAL FILLETING ALLOWANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Management Board should adopt Option B which, should a state allow striped bass to be filleted at sea or at a shoreside location, would require the angler to retain the rack of the striped bass, keep the skin attached to the fillet, and limit possession to two fillets for each retained rack.

Managers should make reasonable efforts to prevent anglers from frustrating needed regulations. Requiring the retention of racks from filleted striped bass would make it possible for enforcement personnel to determine whether the fish were of legal size, while the requirement that skin be left on the fillets would make it easier for law enforcement to determine that the fillets did, in fact, come from a striped bass. Limiting the number of fillets in possession to two per rack helps assure that anglers do not attempt to retain more bass than bag limit allows.

E

SECTION 3.2.1: COMMERCIAL QUOTA REDUCTION OPTIONS

The Management Board should adopt Option B, and reduce commercial quotas by no less than 14.5%.

Overall fishing mortality must be reduced by 14.5% to provide a 50% probability of achieving the fishing mortality target. It will be impossible to achieve an overall reduction of that magnitude unless commercial quotas are reduced by the full 14.5% contemplated by Option B.

It is important to note that a 14.5% reduction in quota does not equate to a 14.5% reduction in commercial striped bass landings, as fishermen never manage to land the entire commercial quota. In the Chesapeake Bay, 2022 commercial landings were only about 80% of the Bay jurisdictions' quota for that year; a 14.5% reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial quota would still allow the Bay's commercial landings to *increase* by nearly 180,000 pounds in 2024.¹⁴ Thus, any quota reduction of less than 14.5% would be completely ineffective; a 14.5% reduction in commercial quota would at least have some small impact on ocean commercial fisheries.

¹⁴ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Draft Addendum II, p. 18.

F

SECTION 3.3: RESPONSE TO STOCK ASSESSMENT UPDATES

The Management Board should adopt Option B, which would allow it to respond in a timely manner to stock assessments and assessment updates, in order to conserve the striped bass stock.

When the 2018 benchmark stock assessment found the striped bass stock to be overfished,¹⁵ it triggered a management provision in the management plan which required the stock to be rebuilt within a time period of no more than ten years.¹⁶ The Management Board approved such assessment for management purposes in April 2019,¹⁷ thus establishing a 2029 deadline for rebuilding the stock.

It is now December 2023, approximately halfway through the rebuilding period, and the stock remains overfished. If the Management Board is to have any chance of fulfilling its obligation to rebuild the stock by 2029, it must be able to respond quickly to any emerging threats to the stock, as well as to any new information relevant to stock status. There is no time for the traditional addendum procedure, which typically sees the implementation of needed management measures delayed by at least one year after the need for them becomes clear.

At least three stock assessments and/or stock assessment updates are scheduled for release prior to the 2029 rebuilding deadline, and the Management Board may need to respond to the information contained in each of them in order to achieve timely rebuilding. Option B will allow them to do so in the most efficient manner possible.

III

SUMMARY

Addendum II is a badly flawed management document, which fails to propose management measures rigorous enough to ensure reducing the fishing mortality rate to its target level. Nonetheless, even an imperfect Addendum II would represent an improvement over the current striped bass management regime.

That being the case, the Management Board should adopt those options which would make the greatest contribution to reducing the fishing mortality rate, and which would also require all participants in the fishery to shoulder an equitable share of the conservation burden.

¹⁵ Northeast Fisheries Science Center, *66th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop Assessment Report*, April 2019, p. 462, available at https://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/63e6826bFIRST_PAGE_StripedBassBenchmarkStockAssessment_SAW66.pdf

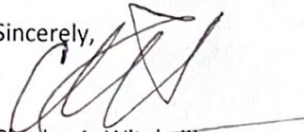
¹⁶ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*, February 2003, p. 31, available at <https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/sbAmendment6.pdf>

¹⁷ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Proceedings of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board*, April 30, 2019, p. 15, available at https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/63d801feAtlStripedBassBoardProceedings_April2019.pdf

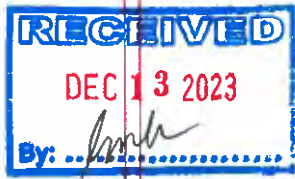
Thus, I recommend that the Management Board adopt **Option B for Section 3.1.1**, addressing the ocean recreational fishery; **Option B1 (or, at the least, Option B2) for Section 3.1.2**, addressing the Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery; **Option B for Section 3.1.3**, addressing the for-hire management clarification; **Option B for Section 3.1.4**, addressing recreational filleting allowance requirements; **Option B with a full 14.5% reduction for Section 3.2.1**, addressing commercial quota reduction; and Option B for Section 3.3, addressing the Management Board's response to stock assessment updates.

Thank you for considering my thoughts on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles A. Witek, III', written over a horizontal line.

Charles A. Witek, III



As a for hire charter operator, commercial waterman, and sportfisherman I want to comment on the ASMFC and MD DNR actions concerning the east coast/Chesapeake Bay striped bass fishery. Being a captain on the MD portion of the bay for 45 years, I have experience, knowledge, and history with that fishery.

- • As a member of FACTS reporting system I'm accountable and required to report the catch of my charters to allow my customers to keep 2 striped bass. The 2 fish limit is essential to my business. A reduction to 1 fish will cost me a majority of my for hire business.
- • Option C2 in addendum II is the only option that may allow me to stay in business. A 26" fish would improve that option. According to that addendum (on page 9) the Chesapeake Bay for hire removals have already decreased by 27%. No targeting and shorten seasons account for most of the decrease.
- • The bay spawning stock must be protected for the entire spring spawning season. With changing weather conditions and possible global warming effects, no targeting (no catch + release) of striped bass should be from March 1 to May 1. Maryland DNR has not and does not allow any commercial fishery for that reason during that time period. All other user groups should have the same policy.
- • A reasonable and verifiable recreational survey system must be adopted. The present survey system is a JOKE. It makes no sense to require mandatory reporting from 10% of the fishers (commercial/for hire) and let 90% have a no reporting "free ride". All user groups should have input and "skin in the game".

Dec 10, 2023
page 2

— • Chesapeake Bay seasons continue to be shortened for a variety of reasons. Changing weather conditions and migration patterns have to be accounted for. Maryland and all other states "young of the year" survey test sites should be assessed and, if necessary, moved to reflect these changes. The entire bay should be included for maximum information.

Being versatile and open minded to changing fishery conditions should be the priority. We must evolve with the changing fishery or continue being victims of its loss.

Captain Frank Abner
Tamsell II Charters
71 W. Mt. Harmony Rd
Owings, MD 20736

301-802-4027 - tamshell2capt@yahoo.e

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

Blow are my comments regarding the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass:

Recreational Fishery Management Plan

3.1.1 Option B; Strongly support maintaining the 1 fish at 28" to 31" current slot limit adopted last year to achieve the projected highest percentage of reduction in mortality. The 2015-year class should be protected to the greatest extent as possible in hopes that they will be the future of a successful reproductive cycle in the coming years.

I must add, that I'm opposed to Option C and E. Giving special consideration to the for-hire fleet is not in the best interest of the fishery. The striped bass fishery is at an inflection point, poor recruitment over that past five years and the goal of restoring the stock by 2029 will be a hard task, holding the line a tight as possible is what's best right now for the striped bass.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

3.1.2 Option B1; This option provides the greatest percentage of reduction along with the same season as 2022. Again, I'm opposed to giving special consideration to the charter boat/party boat operators. The striped bass fishery is in dire need of greater conservation efforts. The results of the young of the year surveys done in the Chesapeake are reason enough to hold the line with Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Option B; I support the 14.5 % reduction across all sectors of the striped bass fishery, we're all in this together and all need to make the sacrifice to help return this fishery to a healthier state.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Option B; The Board needs to respond as quickly as possible should the stock assessment be unfavorable in the probability of rebuilding the striped bass stock by 2029. To much time is wasted in preparing Amendments and Addendums, then putting out these documents and waiting for the publics respond and the make changes. The fishery has been in a downward trend for to long a time now, prompt and decisive decisions that will be positive for the striped bass is needed at this time.

Sincerely,
Christfried Arfsten
44 Clubhouse Drive
Rocky Point, NY 11778

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
comments@asmfc.org

December 22, 2023

Re: Comments on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Commissioners,

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is presiding over the steady decline of our once abundant stocks of striped bass, to the detriment of recreational anglers, commercial fishermen and coastal communities from Virginia to Maine. The Commission's action to restore our East Coast striped bass populations in the early 1990s is recognized as among the nation's most celebrated conservation achievements. Taking necessary actions to restore the current fishery will require comparable vision and determination and begins with strong action to reduce harvest and release mortality under Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

I am an avid recreational angler in New York, typically fishing from shore and by boat on the East End of Long Island. I own a bay boat and often charter guides for the arrival of fish in spring (fishing Shinnecock, Peconic and Gardiners bays) and for the fall run (in Montauk). In recent years, I have witnessed a precipitous decline in the overall number and size diversity of fish in New York waters. Based on my review of the Draft Addendum II Document (October 2023) released for public comment, I offer the following recommendations to the Commission.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Recommend Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- Option B retains the narrow slot limit currently in place and provides the best opportunity to protect the important 2015 year-class while also providing a measure of continuity for catch limits.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Recommend Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Mismanagement of the Chesapeake Bay striped bass harvest, along with the unsustainable commercial reduction fishery targeting menhaden, has contributed significantly to the decline of striped bass stocks in the Bay and coast-wide.
- ASMFC must avoid "mode splits" that would have the effect of perpetuating the unsustainable charter/for hire fishery in Maryland.
- Option B1 would harmonize the catch limits across the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions, bringing a greater degree of transparency, consistency and fairness.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Recommend Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- While some states do not utilize their full quota, the Option B reduction target sends a powerful message that all participants in the fishery bear responsibility for restoring coastal striped bass populations.
- Reductions in the Chesapeake commercial harvest are long overdue and critical to the restoration of the stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Recommend Option B—Board Action.

- ASMFC must act with urgency if information in the upcoming stock assessment indicates that the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029.
- Option B provides a roadmap for prompt Board action that, if necessary, would allow the Board to move quickly to implement new management measures to further reduce harvest and release mortality.

Although not proposed as a specific option for action, I ask that the Commission also consider actions that would encourage or require states to reduce the number of weeks during which striped bass may be harvested. Shorter open seasons across all states would provide a further measure of protection for fish that may be allowed to migrate outside a state season. Similarly, some states could implement temporary closures to reduce release mortality during warm weather months.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Addendum II and for your work to return our striped bass fishery to abundance and sustainable management.

Sincerely,

Paul Hagen

**P.O. Box 1978
Quogue, NY 11959**

Cc: New York Commissioners:

Martin Gary
Director, Division of Marine Resources
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
123 Kings Park Boulevard
Kings Park, NY 11754

Emerson C. Hasbrouck, Jr.
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Marine Program
423 Griffing Avenue, #100
Riverhead, New York 11901-3071

Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr.
3350 Noyac Road
Building B, Suite 1
Sag Harbor, NY 11963

Response to Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7

ASMFC Members,

My name is Jason Avila. I am resident of Massachusetts and a recreational fisherman. I appreciate the work being done by the commission and the opportunity to provide feedback on the management questions for the preservation of this important species.

Recent declining trends in all stock metrics are extremely troubling indicators of the health of this species and the marine ecosystem in general. The #1 responsibility of this commission (as related to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP) is to rebuild the stock by 2029 as dictated by tripping the management triggers in 2018. A failure to produce this mandated outcome would greatly call into question the motives and capabilities of this commission to successfully manage the fishery. Action is required now, up to and including, a complete “No Target” strategy, to attain this paramount goal.

Before addressing the proposed management options, I’d like to comment on the memo from the PDT to the Board : [Projection Tables 1-2 updated October 30, 2023](#) . This memo documents “Probability of being at or below F target in 2024 under different combinations of management options” and “Probability of being at or above the SSB target in 2029 under the different combinations of management options”. I was appalled to see that the highest projected probabilities, in either of these tables, with the most restrictive options, only reached a 53.7% likelihood of success in these two categories and many were significantly lower. I feel it is a dereliction of duty to not propose and allow comment on options that have a reasonable chance of achieving the mandated goals. Leaving the fate of the Striper population up to a coin flip is completely unacceptable.

Here are my thoughts on the limited options at hand:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

I support Option B to continue the current slot limit that was implemented in the Emergency Action Plan from earlier this year. All CE plans should be eliminated during this time of the stock being overfished.

I am not in favor of moving the slot to the higher 30” to 33” because I feel we need to give the 2015-year class an opportunity to move through the slot. I am concerned that we may impact the 2017- and 2018-year classes at the low end of the slot, but it seems more important to allow more of the 2015 fish to move into their prime spawning years.

I am also not in favor of splitting modes between the for-hire and private vessel anglers. This type of split will likely introduce ambiguity into the regulations and compliance thereof, so I’d discourage its introduction at this tenuous time. Beyond the reg side of the argument, there is no reason for those who have the means to pay a captain to increase their odds of catching a fish to deserve to kill an additional fish. Based on the proficiency of the for-hire captains, these anglers are likely encountering more fish and are producing an oversized proportion of recreational release mortality.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

I support Option B1 to implement the tightest slot size put forth in the options. All CE plans should be eliminated for this section of the fishery as well and mode split is unacceptable to me for the same reasons as above.

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

I am not in favor of mode splitting but if the Option is adopted, I favor Option B to only allow this measure for patrons of the for-hire trip. Captains and crew would already benefit from this easement of these restrictions and should not be allowed to take any further advantage.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

I support Option B to have more stringent and uniform requirements to provide proof for compliance with regulations. Enforcement of regulations is already difficult enough without having undue ambiguity in harvest requirements.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

I support Option B to reduce the commercial quota by 14.5%. I am not pleased that this is the only available option under consideration currently. Harvest averages over the past few years have shown that greater than 14.5% of the quota have not been utilized. This means that utilization of the quota will likely increase but harvest numbers will remain unchanged. I feel that all sectors of the fishery should be taking measures to decrease F and while this measure may stop increases in F it will not accomplish the contractions that are needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

I support Option B to allow board action rather than incurring the delays that accompany the current addendum process. Once the 2024 assessment is released, assuming it reinforces the current downward stock trajectory, there will be no time to spare to get management actions implemented to meet the 2029 rebuild requirement. While I believe it is positive to have public engagement and the time to evaluate options ahead of policy changes, I do not want that to be a hinderance to accomplishing the goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these important decisions,

Jason Avila
73 Dr. Braley Rd.
East Freetown MA 02717



Chasing Dreams Sportfishing LLC

Capt. Dave Bell

4027 Bay Drive

Middle River, MD 21220

410.218.7713; dave@chasindreamssportfishing.com

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

December 05, 2023

To whom it may concern,

As a Maryland Charter boat captain and small business owner I am writing with concern over the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)- Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

With respect to the Draft Addendum, my support is for Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option C2, which allows passengers to harvest two Striped Bass (Rockfish) while aboard a For-Hire charter boat operated by a Captain who is enrolled in Maryland DNR's Fishing Activity & Catch Tracking System (FACTS).

Some key points supporting this position:

- On page 9 of Addendum II, it clearly states Chesapeake Bay for-hire removals decreased by 27%
- Charter boats (for-hire) have participated in the FACTS reporting system for three years and are starting the fourth year. DNR has accurate numbers for our industry. We are accountable.
- There are 377 for-hire eligible vessels that can catch two fish per person by participating in the FACTS reporting system.
- Per the FACTS reporting system, for-hire boats caught 121,771 Striped Bass in 2020, 116,581 in 2021 and 101,043 in 2022 (the last year for which we have complete seasonal data). These numbers show a 17% reduction in catch from 2020 to 2022, which is largely attributed to the economy and reduced number of trips.
- My customers will only continue to book Charters if they are able to catch two fish. Otherwise, my business will significantly decline.
- The fishing season continues to be reduced each year. The season was previously six months and three weeks and two weeks of that have been just taken away.
- Recreational catch and release mortality continues to be a huge problem and is not being addressed in the Addendum.
- For-hire release mortality should be the same as commercial since only Captain and mate handle fish.
- No targeting of female spawning fish should be allowed from January 1 through May 15 if the goal is to protect female breeders. Catch and release in January, February and March needs to end.

- Young of the Year data has become less reliable. Some surveys are done in areas that are now overrun by Blue Catfish, causing little chance of producing juvenile fish. Right now the Middle Bay has no collection sites.
- Rockfish have changed their spawning areas and migrating patterns and Young of the Year collection surveys have not adapted to those changes. Additional sites need to be added.
- The for-hire vessels need two fish per angler to remain in business. If reduced to one fish per person, our business will decline significantly, and will not recover.

In the portion of the Chesapeake Bay where I live and operate my vessel, striped bass is the key target species. Operating from Baltimore County Maryland, my options of species to fish include striped bass, blue catfish, and bottom fish (primarily perch and spot). Losing access to customers of this key target species will shutter my business. This has further implications to my surrounding community as it removes revenue to the marinas in the form of slip fees, maintenance, and fuel. It impacts my local tackle shops supplying bait and tackle.

At the end of the day, I support the actions needed to protect the striped bass. I believe that as a community we can manage the population through the challenging times we face as stewards for the species. I guess the rockfish and I are really one in the same. I depend on the fish to continue to do what I was born to do, and the fish depends on me to manage for sustainability. Without the rockfish there is no me, and without me there is no rockfish.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Bell

My Name is Joe Bernat, and I would like to thank the New York State DEC and ASMFC for listening to our comments and actively working towards reducing striped bass mortality and taking the required steps to rebuild the SSB to Target by 2029.

As a recreational surf fisherman and avid outdoorsman, I whole-heartedly support the options noted below in an effort to maintain an abundant striped bass population up and down the coast. Surf anglers are the first to feel the pain when the population declines, and as a new father, I hope to be able to pass along the experience of surf fishing the Long Island coasts with my family for another generation. It's great to see the impact of the 2015 year class, and anglers on the beach catching these fish, with the majority being released, brings hope for a renewed population into the future. However, the runs we see that used to last for months are now condensed into weeks affecting the charter fleet, surfcasters and the tackle industry.

I see this Addendum as a place holder for the 2024 stock Assessment and choose these options:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

This will reduce the time to it takes to lessen the impact to the population

Thank you for helping to maintain OUR resources for many years to come,

Joe Bernat

22 Roan Lane

Riverhead, NY 11901

December, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
comments@asmfc.org
efranke@asmfc.org

Hello Emilie,

Please find my comments below. Thank you.

As to Fishery Status:

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update. Had a more aggressive option been available, I would have supported that, given the situation.

As to Management Options:

I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

As to Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

As to Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option.

As to Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.

As to Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"- 31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- To me “a recreational angler is a recreational angler” whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other.
- Any discussion of recreational mode splits should be an amendment level decision. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions must be had.
- Regardless Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. (Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.)

As to Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I do not support it.

- Option D only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

As to Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

As to Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction goal.

As to Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I support a reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

- I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

As to For-Hire Management Clarification, I support option A Status Quo

- Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local filet at the dock prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- I believe Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit is wrong and prefer ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT!

Regards,

137 Cedar Lane
Westwood, MA 02090
December 15, 2023



Sent via U.S. Certified Mail and email to:

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
c/o Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke:

I wish to express my thoughts regarding the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

By way of background, I am a recreational saltwater fisherman who fishes seasonally by boat along the Massachusetts South Shore (Boston to Plymouth) and along outer Cape Cod from Provincetown to Wellfleet, Massachusetts. I fish for striped bass using only artificial lures and for the past 36 years I have been a volunteer fish tagger for the American Littoral Society (www.littoralsociety.org) based in Sandy Hook, NJ. During this time, I've caught, tagged, and released more than 1,400 striped bass and bluefish.

Here are my observations about *Morone saxatilis*:

1. Based on my catch and release fishing results during the past 25 years and my ALS fish tagging returns, the resurgent striped bass population that Bay State fishermen enjoyed in the 1990's began to wane by the early 2000's. Coincidentally, so did several baitfish populations, particularly longfin squid (striped bass are known as "squid hounds") and inshore baitfish such as mummichogs, spearing, and other species.
2. Shown below are my fish tagging results for the years 1995 to the present. During this time, I fished approximately the same number of hours/days each season in the same coastal waters using the same fishing methods.

Calendar Year	Number of Striped Bass I caught, tagged and released
1995	109
1996	109
1997	100
1998	80
1999	60
2000	68
2001	51
2002	32
2003	24
2004	13
2005	22
2006	13
2007	29
2008	9
2009	24
2010	8
2011	9
2012	4
2013	16
2014	5
2015	2
2016	7
2017	23
2018	15
2019	8
2020	7
2021	8
2022	1
2023	Did not fish in 2023 due to shoulder surgery

3. As you can see from my tagging data, during the last 25 years I witnessed a gradual but persistent decline in the number of striped bass I caught along the Massachusetts South Shore and outer Cape Cod. During this quarter century there were several spikes in the bass population but only in specific locations. The 2022 season was one example. During July and August 2022 fishermen using live menhaden (also known as pogies) caught large numbers of stripers off the coast of Manomet (Plymouth) Massachusetts. On most days that summer there was a fleet of 400 boats fishing in one spot, competing with each other and with several juvenile whales feeding on the massive schools of pogies. The coast off Manomet was so crowded with fishermen because there was precious few

striped bass anywhere else in Cape Cod Bay. The presence of so much bait (pogies) and so many striped bass off Manomet led some fishermen to believe “there are still plenty of striped bass in Massachusetts”. I do not believe this is the case. Instead, I think these fishermen were witnessing the “last hurrah” of a once abundant gamefish.

4. Because I fish exclusively with artificial lures and try to “match the hatch” I’m always looking for the *bait du jour*. Beginning in 2004 I observed a noticeable decline in sand eels, ocean herring, squid, butterfish, and mackerel populations along Outer Cape Cod and eventually along the Massachusetts South Shore. This decline in baitfish mirrored the decline I experienced in the striped bass population.

I would like to suggest the following to The Commission:

- A. Insure the sustainability of striped bass food sources. Place a moratorium on harvesting longfin squid, mackerel, and other baitfish species that play a key role in the nutrition of *Morone saxatilis*.
- B. Discontinue the commercial harvesting of striped bass until fish stocks have recovered. This will likely require a 5-to-7-year moratorium. Until then, *pay the commercial striped bass fishermen 100% of their lost profits*. As a businessman I can tell you that, after expenses, most commercial striped bass fishermen earn very little from the sale of striped bass. It would cost surprisingly little to reimburse commercial fishermen for their *lost profits* and the benefit to the striped bass population would be enormous.
- C. For the next several years restrict recreational fishermen to one (1) striped bass per day, minimum 36-inch length, and enforce this regulation with severe penalties.
- D. Discourage or prohibit the use of live bait when fishing for striped bass until the striped bass stocks have recovered. Striped bass caught on artificial lures have a much better chance of survival compared to the same fish caught on live bait.

Thank you for listening to me. If you have any questions or want further clarification, I may be reached via email at williamjbrett@gmail.com and via mobile phone at (617) 529-3176.



William J. Brett

From: Pat Donnelly
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:47 AM
To: Isabel Gonzalez
Subject: Fw: Striped Bass public Comment

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Derek Bielitz <captderek1@yahoo.com>
To: pddmd@aol.com <pddmd@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 09:46:56 PM EST
Subject: Striped Bass public Comment

Dear Committee members,

My name is Capt Derek Bielitz. I am the owner/captain of the charter fishing vessel Fisher Price IV based out of Highlands, NJ. We are concluding our 18th season at the end of the month and our primary species we target is striped bass. I am writing this email, not because I am worried about how the stocks are (they are in great condition) but because I have worries about how the new proposed regs could damage the stocks instead of help them. As we all know, NJ is having a incredible fall run of striped bass, and it is no where even close to being done. I have talked to friends out of state, and am told that there is still fish loaded in long island sound filtering down, as well as out to the east of fire island sound with the biomass reaching parts of south jersey now.

I listened in on the last zoom meeting and was absolutely blown away by some of the comments made by others. Since October 1st I have sailed right around 70 striped bass trips and are still targeting them. I listened to comments made that people have come to north Jersey waters and have seen dozens upon dozens of dead fish floating. I can tell you first hand that this is 100% inaccurate. Since October I have fished the entire Raritan Bay, the Arthur Kill, Hudson River, East River up to Roosevelt Island, as far east as 4 miles past Debs Inlet (long island), and as far south as Asbury Park and can personally say that I have maybe seen 3-4 dead striped bass floating at most. I will also say this was earlier in October when the water was warmer and the mortality is usually higher.

As far as the proposed regulations are, I find it interesting yet also confusing. I know we are in an emergency action right now with size limits of 28-31", however for what I see on a daily basis, we are targeting a class fish that is being dominated by larger class fish. If we were to keep the regs the same for next year or even make them 31-33" aren't we then targeting the same year class fish now for an extended amount of time and we will

eventually be doing more damage than good by decimating those year class fish? This would then be a complete mismanagement of the fishery. The bass stocks have come back significantly once a bigger slot fish was put into place. I will say that I personally prefer the 28-35" regs as it will spread the numbers out of year class fish being harvested daily and overall will save the stock over time, but also is the least favorable option. If I was to have to choose an option, my choice would be for option C or E. I feel that this gives the recreational guys a chance, while also allowing the for-hire fleet a little leeway to try and get their customers to go home with fish. With the regs this fall, I was very worried about business being effected and while I am fortunate enough to still be busy, I have lost some long time customers as they don't want to fish for a fish with a 3" slot size. If the state does go to a for-hire limit, I would suggest that they were to do something similar to what NY state does and introduce a party/charter boat permit. How would anyone be able to determine who is a for-hire vessel and who is not without one? These days everyone has a Captains license and could say I am for-hire. For those of you that don't know, NY state every year has a submit a copy of our captains license as well as paper work to show that our business is legit and in good standing with the state/government. The license cost around \$250 and if NJ was to do something similar, I am sure that no full time for hire vessels would have no problem paying.

Two things that were also brought up several times at the last meeting were filleting at sea, and Captain and Crew fish. As far as filleting at sea, only inspected vessels with a fillet permit are allowed to fillet at sea. So I feel that that whole conversation was ridiculous. As far as captain and crew fish are concerned. I feel that this is a very gray area and needs attention. Me and my crew very rarely take a fish, however on occasion we may take one to bring home for dinner. I think the biggest thing with this subject is that the boats need to know, that the captain and crew are allowed to take a fish per day if they choose, however they are not allowed to give it to the customers. Once a customer has a fillet or the whole fish plus theirs, they then are illegal as they are in possession of more than one striped bass per day.

One last thing that has come to mind, and I'm not sure if it was ever brought up, but what if the state were to introduce a different open and closed season. We all know that the mortality rates are higher during the warmer water months, so hypothetically wouldn't it make sense to say have a season open from March 15th till June 15th and then shut it down and reopen it October 1st thru December 31 and close it again. This would not only take some pressure off the fish but also decrease discard mortality.

I would like to thank you for your time. If anyone would like to reach me, I can be reached at captderek1@yahoo.com or at [732-861-3394](tel:732-861-3394).

Thank you again,
Capt. Derek Bielitz
Fisher Price IV
Highlands, NJ

November 30, 2023

Dear Ms. Franke,

Please find below (and attached in a Word document for your convenience) my comments on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

This is a topic that is extremely important to me. I have been an avid recreational striped bass angler since 1984. Waters fished and following observations are primarily a result of shore angling in the states of Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York. During this time I have experienced a depleted resource in the early 1980's followed by a dramatic recovery in the 1990's due to implementation of stringent emergency harvest restrictions. Now I have experienced the steady decline of the fishery that seemed to begin in the early 1990's and continues to today. This decline clearly aligned with significantly reduced restrictions and increased harvest quotas, both for the recreational and commercial sectors.

My specific comments are as follows:

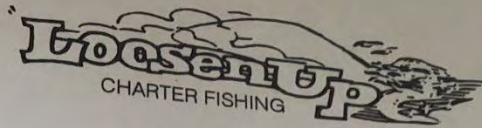
- The northeast striped bass fishery is an extremely important recreational resource. The resource's extremely close proximity to such an enormous human population underscores its importance in recreational value, but also provides a substantial amount of complexity to traditional management techniques and practices. Simply put, when populations are up and plenty of fish are being caught, many more recreational anglers potentially enter the equation due to increased success.
- The management practice of "maximum sustainable yield" or trying to allow all sectors (recreational and commercial) to harvest as many fish as possible, while still maintaining population goals, is flawed.
- Research has indicated, like many species, that striped bass recruitment is cyclical, based on a wide range of environmental conditions. Allowing increased harvests of bass, especially important mature reproducing females, during down cycles can only result in wild swings in overall population numbers that this resource has experienced.
- It is nearly impossible to predict natural upticks or downward swings in the natural cyclic nature of the fish. When these down cycles occur, regulations cannot be adjusted fast enough to protect the species and unfortunately aggressive fishing can continue during these declines, with overfishing of the remaining population.
- **I feel the current emergency options proposed do not go far enough and should be more encompassing to protect reproducing fish.**
- The striped bass fishery has experienced two dramatic recoveries over the past decades, once in the 1970's and again in the 1980's. Both times the primary factor in each recovery has been limiting recreational harvest to one fish a day 36" or more, and no commercial harvest. These measures allowed nature to respond, give breeding fish some "breathing room", and resulted in dramatic recoveries in a short period of time.
- Please consider this proven approach to immediately facilitate the recovery of this resource.

- Once the resource recovers, conservative harvest measures should be implemented to ensure dramatic swings in the population does not reoccur. Don't worry about maximum sustainable yield or upsetting a few anglers (recreational or commercial). Worry about striped bass, as the resource is far more valuable to society and many individual when swimming versus when harvested.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this critically important resource, which is at a turning point in its future. Your actions to protect for future generations are dependent on the actions you will take in the coming months. Caution and a conservative approach to harvest is imperative.

Sincerely,

Randy Carlson
122 Glory Way
Boalsburg, PA 16827
814-933-2932
rcalson96@gmail.com



12/6/2023

To whom it may concern:

I am a charter boat captain in Maryland for almost 50 years. I do not catch and release, handle fish safely and participate in E facts program. I would not be able to stay in business if we have 1 fish.

I support the amendment II for future fishing.

Thanks,

Capt. Frank Carver

License number for Maryland #1738

December 19, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
comments@asmfc.org

Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear commissioners and commission staff,

Thank you for accepting my comments on the latest proposed changes to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. I will summarize immediately below my preference (in bold) for each of the enumerated choices available in the draft document for public comment, followed by rationale for the same. As a precursor, choosing these options is the least that can and should be done to protect this resource given the options presented, and likely falls short of the stated goal:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options **Option B**

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options **Option B1**

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected instead of 3.1.1 Option B or 3.1.2 Option B instead) **Option B**

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements **Option B**

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options **Option B**

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates **Option B**

So it's options B all around for this guide, angler and owner of two small businesses that depend largely - if not entirely - on a healthy striped bass population. Options A et al represent either a status quo that has failed to meet the moment in rebuilding this crucial resource or appear catered to pressure from interests vested only in killing more fish now rather than ensuring, or at the least aspiring to, a better collective future.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: By way of background and full disclosure my charters are made up primarily of fly fishers and I currently practice catch-and-release fishing only for striped bass. This is not a moral stance on the killing of fish, as that would be a position ignorant of both catch-and-release mortality and the truth of what fishing is from the perspective of the fish. As I consume fish and other meat, including stripers caught commercially, I wouldn't fool anyone, including myself, if I claimed any high ground here. In fact, as much as I revere the species and each individual fish I encounter, my decision to insist on catch-and-release is based as much on concern for the future of my businesses. We know based on data collected for both tracking young-of-the-year and juvenile recruitment, the near term future of a healthy, stratified striped bass population is in peril. The phenomenal recent success fishing for 2015 class fish has been a reminder for anyone paying attention

Patrick H. Cassidy

31 Alder Lane Harwich, MA 02645 508-246-3757 patrick@capecodonthefly.com

of what we will lose if we don't take significant steps to reduce overall harvest, including both better catch-and-release practices and the implementation of further limits on fish harvested intentionally. Any of the other options in this section would either ignore the importance of giving the robust 2015 year class fish another opportunity to spawn or simply act to mollify the for-hire sector in which I participate, without significant benefit to its future success. I know I can't speak for all of my brethren in this regard but I personally prefer a healthy fishery in the long term rather than any potential short term gain through special treatment. Additionally, enforcement of disparate slots would be presumptively problematic, as has been highlighted during similar discussions among the board's various committees and members. To quote the Oct. 9, 2023 memorandum from the Plan Development Team: "*Simple, straightforward regulations are easier for the regulated community to understand and remember which is critical for voluntary compliance. They are also more enforceable because violations of simple regulations are easier to detect and to prove.*" The most simple, straightforward regulation in this case is Option B.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I grew up a few short miles from the Potomac River, upstream from the Chesapeake Bay. I wish I had fished there more when I was a child but my parents were originally from New York and we moved north while I was still young so my primary introduction to stripers came via stories about the heady days when my father fished Montauk and fishing trips to Cape Cod, where I now live, play and work. So, while I do not fish the Chesapeake or Montauk with any regularity I feel tied - as do many striped bass anglers - to the entire coast stripers call home. These regions are interconnected and interdependent. While I understand the rationale behind different regulations for the bay and other areas that may not see the same size fish over the same time period we enjoy farther north, it seems counterintuitive at this time to be even more liberal with regulations in the very places where the survival of these fish is so important to the overall population, where they are, in many ways, at their most vulnerable. The very least that should be done is to choose the most conservative approach proposed, albeit still short of protections needed, including those beyond this body's control. For that within your control, a precautionary approach is the only rational course. Choose Option B1.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): As stated, keep it simple. Do not confuse anglers at this critical moment by allowing one group of individuals fishing side-by-side another group to take more fish. If you choose to differentiate for whatever reason, don't compound the problem by allowing captain and crew of for-hire operations to take advantage of such an allowance. The minimal benefit to them in the short term is counter to the long term success of the fishery and the benefit accrued to everyone in the future. Providing an advantage on top of an advantage disadvantages everyone.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: The draft document states it well enough. "*Minimum requirements for states that allow filleting would increase compliance.*" It seems the only reason to oppose minimum requirements would be if one were trying to get away with something. Choose Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I can support commercial striped bass fishing within the confines of allotted quotas. The question that has yet to be dealt with, and won't be here, is whether those allotments continue to make sense based on the status of the fishery and preferential treatment of the Chesapeake Bay commercial fleet, which accounts for an astounding 80 percent of all striped bass (in number of fish) taken by commercial fishermen up and down the coast. In lieu of addressing that important question and given the purpose of this amendment, the status quo is a non-starter as alluded to in the draft document: "*Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum.*" It seems clear that iterations of Option B share the same problem, i.e. a 0% reduction in quota is the equivalent of the status quo of Amendment 7. Given the state of the fishery and the sporadic use of the

Patrick H. Cassidy

31 Alder Lane Harwich, MA 02645 508-246-3757 patrick@capecodonthefly.com

full quota in any case, the board should choose the most conservative and aggressive approach of a 14.5% reduction in the quota. While this may not mean anything for the massive part the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery plays in this process, it is the most the commissioners can do given the options to which you have limited yourselves in this area. Going forward the preponderance of commercial harvest from the bay over the ocean should be considered a problem worth addressing, as should the bay fleet's inability to reach its quota in the first place. Regulations should track reality and the reality is the bay commercial fleet takes more than its fair share of a shrinking pie even though effort and/or availability fail to equal regulatory allowances. In the absence of action in this area, the ocean commercial fleet is left holding the proverbial bag, an unfair if necessary outcome.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: Nobody is more in favor of a fully transparent and public process than me. That being said, decisive management action is sometimes needed given the lag in available scientific data and a misalignment with typical management processes. The board's emergency action in 2022 was an admirable example of why allowing the board to take action in lieu of the addendum process can be vital to meeting the challenge of a sometimes unexpected increase in pressure on striped bass populations. Choose Option B. That being said, this ability must not be abused and language should be included to restrict it from being used to liberalize regulations. Any such liberalization should track the regular addendum process, recognizing the difference between a response necessary to preserve the fishery for all and one designed to appease one sector or another.

Regardless of the actions chosen through this addendum, it seems a paltry response to the problem at hand, i.e. the inevitable regression of what was once heralded a historic conservation success story. Please continue to work toward achieving a fully recovered stock within the required timeframe. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Tight lines,



Patrick Cassidy
508-246-3757
patrick@capecodonthefly.com
capecodonthefly.com



Cape Cod on the Fly is catch and release only for striped bass.

cc: Mike Armstrong, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Raymond Kane, Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance
Massachusetts Rep. Sarah Peake
Rick Jacobson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Fax: 703-842-0740

Phone: 703-842-0741

From: Phil Coates

Email: phma@verizon.net

Cell 774-313-0941

Contents: Comments concerning draft Addendum II Of the Atlantic Striped Bass Plan

ASmFC Address
1050 North Highland St.
Suite 200A-N
Arlington VA 22201

To: Emilie Frank, striped bass plan coordinator

From: Phil Coates, former fishcrat and concerned citizen

Subject: Bass Addendum II comments

Date: Dec 19, 2023

I'm providing comments concerning draft Addendum 2 and our concerns over the growing bass crisis. I attended the joint ASMFC/Mass DMF hearing on Dec 5th in Buzzards Bay and provided brief comments and concerns at that hearing. These comments expand on those and add additional concerns and observations regarding current bass stock status. In my opinion, the current proposed Addendum falls far short of addressing the two main threats to Atlantic striped bass; rapidly diminishing spawning stock and extended poor reproduction of the primary coastal spawning population in Chesapeake Bay.

I realize, given the current situation with SSB, the Board's focus in this unprecedented emergency Addendum was stopping overfishing in hopes of achieving the 2029 rebuilding target. In my opinion the Board dropped the ball at their 10/23 meeting by eliminating significant options for public consideration including larger commercial quota cuts, recreational seasons, etc. evidently because they felt the resulting current package would achieve the paltry 14% harvest reduction recommended by the Tech. Ctte.

While I realize the Board likely felt constrained by the needed timeline of this emergency action, the results fall far short of what's needed and worse, take up a block of time that would be better served addressing the elephant in the room, prolonged poor reproduction in the Chesapeake Bay. We now have 5 years of subpar YOY production capped with the 2023 index of 1, the second lowest in recorded history. This poor 5 year block of poor reproduction is already impacting the coastal recreational fishery since 4 and 5 year old migrant fish are commonly the target of coastal catch and release light tackle and fly fishing enthusiasts. Doubtless the 2024 Chesapeake commercial fishery and recreational fishery will be impacted by lower availability of their usual targets. Obviously, the Bay states are well aware of what's about to befall them. I recall the 70's and 80's collapse when Maryland and Virginia enacted moratoria because there was not

much to catch. At the most recent Board meeting, I believe the Maryland member stated they would be considering actions beyond this Addendum.

We are disappointed with the poor performance of the Striped Bass Board at their recent meeting to decide the content of the Addendum. While the Board certainly had a menu of options to significantly strengthen this Addendum, they opted to remove most of these for various reasons because they accepted the rebuilding objective of a 14% reduction of catch which was estimated to meet the 2029 rebuilding target with 50 % chance of success. I assume the proposed rebuilding model utilized the poor 2019-2022 YoY data but not the critically low 2023 YOY index because it wasn't published before the draft Addendum was finalized. Had the 2023 YoY index been included, I believe it would have significantly raised the rebuilding bar. While this current block of poor year classes is not affecting current SSB, they will be recruiting to the spawning population in a few years significantly lessening, in my opinion, the likelihood of the SSB achieving the rebuilding target.

The Board's elimination of recreational seasons, larger commercial catch reductions, etc. is concerning but our primary concern is the time that has been spent to create and implement an action that will do little to address the growing potential for a second stock collapse. I feel this lost time would have been better spent addressing how to expedite the '24 Stock Assessment process which should bring to light the severity of lowered SSB and poor reproduction. According to the current timeline with the late '24 assessment and, at best, completed '25 actions by the Board, not the ASMFC, we're looking at late '25 or '26 before all the states, including the usual foot draggers, implement regulations.

Regarding stock collapse, we've heard several comparisons between the first documented collapse in the 1970's and 80's and the current situation. Back then both spawning and stock size had dropped dramatically but once ASMFC gained teeth, initiative and unified resolve, striped bass were recovered in what has been touted by many as one of the most successful fishery management recoveries ever.

Comparisons between then and now are difficult for various reasons but I want to emphasize that then, given the critical situation, some of the states, notably Maryland and Virginia, enacted multi-year moratoria. After current Board

approval of the gutted Draft Addendum 2, I recall Maryland indicated they may be taking additional action. Given what's coming, I understand their concern.

The objective of Addendum 2 is an attempt to recover the SSB by 2029. Other than acknowledging it's a problem, little has been done to address the elephant in the room, 5 years of poor spawning which is going to negatively impact stock growth and mortality.

I believe the minimal actions of Addendum 2 will be overwhelmed by the results of the '24 assessment and the resulting management measures, hopefully rapidly implemented, will impact the next several years' fisheries far more severely than the most recent changes. It's time to alert the public and fishers as to what's likely coming.

The block of poor reproduction is already impacting some of the fisheries. Poor Bay spawning began in 2019, and is doubtless impacting the Bay fisheries and also the coastal non harvest catch and release fisheries. My contacts in Massachusetts who love to catch and release undersize migrant bass have told me the schoolie (small bass) fishery was way off this year. Some of this impact has been doubtless buffered by decent production of Hudson River fish and Virginia's average spawning which unfortunately matches Maryland's low YoY this year. This big hole in the resource is going to dramatically impact SSB in a couple of years as the remaining fish from the 2015 and 2018 year classes disappear.

Those who are dismissing the current poor spawning in the Chesapeake as "this is what bass do" must realize that this may be what bass have done but things are dramatically changing, foremost of which is climate change. Coupled with disease, likely changes and increases in predation, reduced fresh water flow, pollution etc., I'm concerned we are the verge of a bass crisis that makes the 70's and 80's collapse pale in comparison.

The one component of the Addendum I do strongly support is Option B of Section 3.3 which empowers the Board to implement management changes without the cumbersome addendum process. This is essential. We are losing enough time with this addendum and next year's crucial assessment. Regarding the latter, anything that can be done to move up the assessment is critical. I hope I'm wrong but this assessment is going to confirm the escalating critical condition of this magnificent resource.

I realize that Atlantic Striped Bass is arguably the most important economic and socially significant fishery resource we have and severe restrictions will have major impacts on millions. I can only repeat what my old fishery biology teacher instilled in us " Without the fish, you got nothing" This isn't rocket science, we're facing a crisis which I pray we can deal with. Speaking of praying, according to the weather prognosticators, we're in a El Nino weather pattern with "cold" wet weather, a consensus spawning success parameter then and now.

Phil Coates

December 22, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Addendum II to AMD 7 Striped Bass FMP

Dear Ms. Franke,

My name is Dennis Dillon, and I am a RI Party and Charter Boat Association member. I have been in the for-hire industry since 1972. I recommend Addendum II to AMD 7 to the Striped Bass FMP.

I support Option C. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons for private vessel/offshore anglers fish at 28" to 33" with the 2022 seasons for the for-hire mode. The very narrow slot the for-hire industry striper regs of this past season has affected my business. There were days that I caught and released many stripers, but my customers went home with nothing for their families. That is not good business.

If trying to run my business under the slot of this past season wasn't bad enough, I also had to endure the debacle of the commercial fisherman catching and keeping the fish my customers and I had to throw back. The commercial boys were catching and keeping 5 fish over 34 inches during specific periods while I was catching and releasing all fish over 31". My customers witnessed this and were not pleased, saying, "That's not fair!". I agree. It is not fair and not good business.

Of course, the other thing that smacks of unfairness is that the regs for striped bass fisheries are unequal from one state to another. During the spring, summer, and fall, my customer base spans the states from Maine to Maryland.

When my mate and I start chucking stripers back into the water, it is difficult to hear, "That's not how it is in my state." I support the coastwide management of Striped Bass. Anything other than that is not good business.

Section 3.1.4 Filleting Allowance Requirements must be left alone for the for-hire industry. I support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to sea/shoreside filleting. Any restriction of filleting at sea only adds a burden to the men and women who are working on the boat because if a mate must wait until the boat returns to the dock at the end of the day and then begin filleting, then that adds 1 to 2 hours to their day!

Filleting at sea restrictions by fisheries managers is either ignorance or indifference to the way a typical 8-hour workday on the water of a for-hire vessel operates, e.g., You depart the dock at 5

AM, steam out to fishing grounds, catch fish, fillet fish while steaming back to port, arrive dock at 1 PM, send clients home, clean equipment, and boat. By not allowing filleting at sea, you have taken the hour-and-a-half steam back to port out of the day and added it to the end of the day. That is not fair to the clients, captains, or mates.
It's not good business.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates. I support Option A. Status Quo: the Board would initiate and develop an addendum to consider adjusting management measures. The Emergency Action process is inappropriate for an industry that begins booking for the upcoming season in January! Changing fishery regulations during the middle of a season hurts the for-hire industry. Clients book a boat for a particular fishery with a specific size and bag limit in mind. When that is changed, the captain has to notify the client of the change ahead of time. Often, the client will cancel the trip. That is not good business.

As I mentioned in this letter, many issues are not good business. The for-hire boats are a business. As such, they must be considered separate from recreational and commercial regulations. There is a need for the for-hire industry to have its category, keeping in mind that we are a significant contributor to tourism in whatever state we operate.

Respectfully,

Captain Denny Dillon

Captain Denny Dillon

f/v Persuader II

Narragansett, RI

Christopher B. Doggett
Post Office Box 203
Hamilton, MA 01936

November 18, 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St.
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I'm writing in response to the ASMFC's recent announcements regarding the desire to receive input regarding the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

I'm an avid and life-long recreational fisherman who cares deeply about the future of striped bass – as well as menhaden and other forage fish species they depend on – and I recognize that near-term sacrifice is necessary to ensure a robust striped bass fishery, for the coming years and our next generation.

As such, I strongly recommend and respectfully request that the ASMFC Board choose the following options from the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass:

- Recreational Ocean: Option B – 28-31" slot for all modes (14.1% reduction in total removals)
- Recreational Chesapeake Bay: B2 – 19-24" slot (15.9% reduction)
- Commercial Fishery: Option B – 14.5% reduction
- Stock Assessment Response: Option B – Board Action
- Implementation Dates: Immediate Action (as soon as possible)

Please also know that I represent one of many such recreational anglers who cares deeply about the health of the striped bass fishery who is unable to attend one of your public hearings (many of whom you may not hear directly from). We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and strongly urge the ASFMC's board to take immediate and decisive action to ensure that the stock is rebuilt by the 2029 target date.

Sincerely,



Christopher B. Doggett

December10, 2023

Emile Frank,

I wanted to let you know that I am in favor of Option C2. I have always thought that the trophy season was a mistake. I grew up fishing on the Bay since I was 10 years old in 1957. I saw the day that the charter boats were so close at the Bay Bridge that you could walk from boat to boat. I would see trash cans of rock fish.

As I grew older, The decline of our fishery was evident. The moratorium was a help at that time. What caused the decline ? People all wanting to live on the shores of the Bay ! We have work to do to clean up the bay and it is well under way.

I am retired from teaching after 37 years and still love to go fishing ! Sometimes on my boat and other times with a charter boat. Over the years Captains like Ed Darwin, Lou Napfel and Tillman Helmsley were the leaders in conservation of our fish.

I have been following the progress of DNR and ASMFC in their proposals to save the rockfish. I often go out with friends of mine that are recreational fisherman to catch and release. They injure so many more fish than the professional captains. They will jig for hours catching big fish and releasing them.

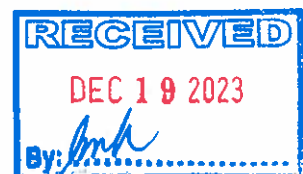
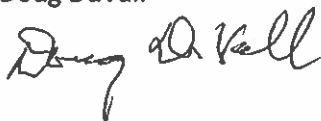
The charter boats are not the problem yet it always seems that they are the ones most effected. My rec buddies and the commercial fishery are the ones that take the most fish and injure the most .

I see on Facebook guys still doing catch and release after the season ! Covid caused two of the boats I used to fish with to go out of business. My fear is that if you reduce the charter boats to one fish they will go broke! I cannot imagine the cost that they carry each season . I don't think they are making a very big profit at two fish per angler. If you go to one it will be one and done for their livleyhood

Thought I would write in hopes of saving the working boats on the Chesapeake Bay !

Yours

Doug DuVall



December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke

Fishery Management Plan Coordinator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N

Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke and members of the ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board:

I am writing you today regarding the Draft Addendum II for Striped Bass for which I have comments below on the management options the ASMFC Board has made available to the public to review. Before I get into my selections, I do want to clearly state that I think this document does a poor job of trying to swiftly rebuild the overfished striped bass stock soon before it could collapse again. These options are all focused on creating new special carve outs that benefit the for-hire and commercial fishing sectors ability to harvest more bass while disregarding the current state of the fishery and it's more dire future. Nobody in any angling group needs to be harvesting more stripers now and I am very disappointed to see this be the focus of discussion for the ASMFC Board and Technical Committee in this Addendum. Below are my selections:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

- **Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)**
- This narrow slot limit should be retained for several years to fully protect the last strong 2015 year class, especially considering the recent poor spawns/juvenile recruitment in both the Chesapeake and Hudson stocks. This tight slot limit is protecting many stripers.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

- **Option B, B1 (23" Max). Apply a standard minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and bag limit to the Bay jurisdictions' 2022 seasons.**
- The Chesapeake is the most productive nursery in the entire world for striped bass and it does not need to be the place where young, immature fish are heavily harvested before they spawn or run the coast. The coastal fishery has a narrow slot, so the Bay should also have a consistently narrow slot limit to reduce harvest and protect larger spawning females. This option also has a significantly larger reduction in overall harvest compared to other maximum size options proposed for the slot range.

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

- **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.
- I do not understand why the ASMFC is so focused on the for-hire sector so much when they represent a small sliver of all the stakeholders in the fishery. They are recreational anglers themselves who take recreational anglers on recreational fishing trips.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- **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.
- It is important racks are retained to reduce poaching of over or under slot sized fish since a fillet cannot be used to determine the fishes total length, especially on for-hire and commercial fishing boats. Poaching is a serious issue nowadays and game wardens need every tool possible to catch and punish offenders who keep illegal sized striped bass.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

- **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.
- Reducing quota does nothing to ensure the actual total harvest or fishing mortality will be reduced. This is a very poor option that I am disappointed is the only decent choice available. ASMFC should have made this a reduction in total catch/landings (lbs), reduced sized limits or shortened seasons as these measures actually decrease fishing mortality which is what needs to happen to rebuild the fishery before it collapses again.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

- **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.
- I am choosing this option hoping it will expedite thoughtful management actions for striped bass since the stock is in such a poor state. It does not seem to matter if the public comments on Board actions. The Board seems to do what it wants independent of what our letters, comments and feedback ask for. For example, with Amendment 7 over 98% of the thousands of comments from anglers were in support of conservation and abundance focused management options yet here we are reviewing Addendum II and it is all harvest based choices with mode split options for certain groups to harvest more bass. This is unacceptable and shows how little the ASMFC Board considers public comments.

I want to close with two excerpts from an ASMFC management plan titled “Atlantic Striped Bass: Stock Status and the Recreational Fishery” written by R. Anne Richards and David G. Deuel and published in 1987. These quotes are from the “Future Conditions” section at the end:

*“Despite the variable nature of production of striped bass, **the quality of fishing could be maintained at a more consistent level if fishing mortality were lower than in the recent past. Lower mortality would extend the harvest of a dominant year class over a larger number of years, thus reducing fluctuations in harvest.**”*

ASMFC managers in the past seemed to better understand the sensitive nature of striped bass biology and fishing, combined. Recent recruitment failures in both the Chesapeake and Hudson stocks are extremely alarming and will hit us all very hard very soon. Reducing harvest now and keeping it lower long term will preserve the fishery to the benefit of the striped bass and improve the fishing to the benefit of all striper anglers. We cannot continue to pray for well-timed Spring rains for good spawns, or hope the plankton levels are just “right” in the Bays for the juveniles or that the climate will do what we wish it to do. It is time to stop with these foolish overly hopeful, voodoo-like games we can’t control and get down to solving the real issue here. The stock is over fished because of overfishing and harvest needs to be drastically reduced to rebuild the stock and then harvest must be limited long term to sustain good fishing everyone benefits from.

“Future management will need to be more restrictive than in the past to avoid repeating the experience of the 1970s.”

This came from the final sentence of the report that was written by your agency during the last stock collapse and it is ASMFC who is solely responsible for the striped bass being currently overfished again, just 35 years later. The ASMFC as a whole must do a better job of listening to it’s recreational anglers comments and focus on rebuilding a balanced sustainable fishery that does not just continue to boom and bust every few decades from short sighted management decisions. We do not need any mode splitting, we need to be doing what’s best for the fishery.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Addendum II. I will be watching what comes next for striped bass and hope to see more conservation focused management decisions that increases abundance of this incredible fish throughout the Atlantic Ocean. I am very anxious to see what the 2024 stock assessment will reveal...

Warm regards,



Eric Malone

New York



Date: December 17, 2023

Comments to:

Ms. Emilie Franke,
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,
- Atlantic striped bass Draft Addendum II

Subject: Comments - Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7

For your consideration, we provide comment to the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

Apart from the 2015-year class, habitat degradation in the Chesapeake breeding grounds has contributed to a decade of weak and failed spawns. The stock was declared overfished in 2019. The Chesapeake continues to be overfished by both recreational and commercial sectors, particularly in localized zones in Maryland waters. In addition to the rampant overfishing in the recreational sector, a three-million-pound Chesapeake Bay commercial quota further reduces the core breeding stock.

Many businesses rely on an abundant, healthy, and age-diverse striped bass stock. To rebuild the stock by 2029, substantial reductions must be taken across both sectors. In particular, the 2015-year class must be protected to provide a pathway to success in the rebuilding plan. Importantly, key aspects of the Chesapeake habitat are permanently changed will continue to negatively affect the fishery. Now and for the near future, the only management tool left available to protect the stock is an immediate reduction in harvest to align mortality rates with the parlous state of the (declining?) fishery.

A wide range of options are presented in Addendum II. Of these, we recommend the following:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options:

Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

Option B1—1 fish per angler, per day, at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions following the 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B—Board Action.

The ASMFC must seek new ways to address and eliminate overages, particularly in Maryland waters, or the stock will continue to decline. To achieve mandated management goals, the striped bass board must respond quickly and effectively to the dynamic changes which are impacting the striped bass stock. The future of the fishery depends on decisive action.

Sincerely,

Mark Eustis,
Managing Director.

Grey Owl Analytics - Davidsonville, MD - info@greyowlanalytics.com

Bonnie Sue Charter's, LLC



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

My Name is Cindy Evans and I'm a US Coast Guard licensed Master Captain. I help run a Charter Fishing Business "Bonnie Sue Charters, LLC". Charter boats are small businesses and survive on fishing.

Over the past few years our industry has lost 7 weeks of our season. It is important for our business to have Option C2, which would allow the customers on our Charter boats to keep 2 striped bass per person. If we're not allowed to keep 2 striped bass per person it will put me and a lot of Charter boats out of business.

I also believe if we are going to loose our trophy season we should prohibit catch and release season from January through May 15 so these big fish can spawn undisturbed!

**Sincerely,
Captain Cindy Evans
911 Hillside Ave.
Edgewater, Md. 21037**

December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke and Members of the Striped Bass Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

I am a for-hire operator based in Maine doing business as Gillies & Fallon Guide Service, LLC. I also run trips in Massachusetts in the spring and fall. 2024 will be my 20th year guiding striped bass charters.

As the Maine Board Members are aware, our inshore for-hire fleet is almost wholly dependent upon striped bass. Unlike most states to our south, we don't have other species to target—at least ones that generate paying trips. An abundance of striped bass is essential to the survival of my business, and I urge the Striped Bass Board to take every possible step to return us to a path of meeting the rebuilding target by 2029.

Specifically:

Section 3.1.1 – Ocean Recreational Fishery – Option B. We need to take every possible measure to protect the 2015 year class and reduce mortality across all year classes as much as possible. We also need all anglers on the recreational side of the fishery to participate equally in this effort. A mode split is not appropriate at this time. Additionally, while the *projected* reduction in mortality is only 0.1% greater under Option B, we ended up initiating this Addendum based upon actual harvest significantly exceeding previous projections. I realize that for-hire mortality makes up a small portion of the overall recreational mortality, but given the current state of the fishery, we need every little bit of reduction if we have any hope of reaching our 2029 goal.

Section 3.1.2 – Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery – Option B1. Overall projected mortality reduction of -22.4% is significantly better than all the other options in this section. We can't afford anything less. We can't ignore five consecutive year class failures in Maryland when we consider appropriate options for the Bay fishery. The current mode-specific bag limit split in Maryland must end.

Section 3.1.3 – For-Hire Management Clarification – Option B. If we do end up with any type of mode split, bag and size limits must only apply to patrons, as the argument of those in favor of the split is that they stand to lose patrons if they don't have greater opportunity for harvest for their patrons. We're not talking about a situation similar to a mode split for bluefish bag limit that doesn't differentiate between patron and captain/crew as bluefish serve as an important source of live bait in a number of for-hire fisheries.

Section 3.1.4 – Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements – Option B. Aid enforcement and make the rules more consistent across all the states.

Section 3.2.1 – Commercial Quota Reduction – Option B with quota reduction of 14.5%. Again, we must take every available option to reduce mortality as much as possible to get us back on track towards rebuilding target by 2029. The quota reduction of 14.5% should not reduce any jurisdictions' required "payback" for overharvest in 2022.

Section 3.3 – Response to Stock Assessment Updates – Option B. I'm confident that all stakeholders have ample opportunity to provide comment to the Board as a whole and to individual members. We can't afford additional delay.

I haven't spoken with anyone involved in this fishery who is optimistic about the 2024 stock assessment. As individual Board Members, if you share these concerns about the news that this next assessment will bring us, I urge you to make the most conservative choices available in Addendum II.

On a separate, procedural note: I urge the Commission to adopt a requirement that all public hearings include an option for virtual participation. It's wonderful to once again be offering in-person attendance options to stakeholders but we exclude meaningful participation when states require in-person attendance to participate. I realize this policy change isn't the responsibility of the Striped Bass Board, but surely could be driven by Striped Bass Board Members.

Respectfully,

Peter

Capt. Peter Fallon
Gillies & Fallon Guide Service, LLC
824 Main Rd
Phippsburg, ME 04562

Captain Robert Fletcher
BubbaChuck Fishing Charters
415 Pine Tree Road
Chestertown, MD 21620
410-708-6818

December 6, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fishers Commission
1050 N Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Sir or Madam:

As a member of the Maryland Charter Boat Association and a current Maryland Chesapeake Bay Charter Boat Captain, I felt it necessary to address the numerous issues for with the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

It is imperative for all Chesapeake Bay charter boats that option C2 be approved. Charter boat customers will only continue to book charters if they are able to catch two (2) fish per trip. Reducing charter boats to one (1) fish per person per trip will catastrophically affect our business. We already have to deal with the fishing season continuously being reduced each year, reducing the number of fish will undoubtedly cause a significant decline in our business. Some Maryland Chesapeake Bay charter boats will not survive that type of reduction!

Page 9 of Addendum II clearly states that Chesapeake Bay for hire removals decreased by 27%. This is known due to the fact that charter boats (for hire) have participated in FACTS reporting system for three (3) years. The Department of Natural Resources has accurate numbers for our industry because we have been accountable. Currently there are 377 charter/for hire vessels that can catch two (2) fish per person by participating in the FACTS reporting system. Per the FACTS system, the charter/for hire vessels caught 121,771 fish in 2020, 116,581 in 2021 and 101,043 in 2022. That is a 17% reduction in catch.

Recreation catch and release mortality continues to be a major issue and is not being addressed in the addendum. Charter/for hire boats release mortality should be considered the same as commercial since only the Captain and mate handle fish.

Other concerns that should be considered include:

No targeting of female spawning fish should be allowed form January 1 through May 15. If the Goal is to protect female breeders, then catch and release in March needs to end.

Young of the year data is not accurate. Surveys are being done in areas that are overrun by blue catfish and have little chance of producing juvenile fish. Currently the middle bay has no collection sites. Rockfish have changed their spawning areas and migrating pattern. Young of year collection has not adapted to those changes. Additional sites need to be added.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the aforementioned concerns and I must again stress the importance of option C2 being approved for the survival of the Maryland Chesapeake Bay Charter Boat Industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Fletcher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Captain Robert Fletcher

Emilie Franke, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N Highland Street Suite 200A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

My name is Bob Flynn, I am president of the Deale Captains Association and owner of Vickie Ann Charters. I also represent 625 of my charter customers' interests. I am writing to you today with my concerns about the upcoming changes to the Striped Bass fishing regulations. Particularly, how it affects the fishing regulations in the Chesapeake Bay.

I would like to express my support for Option C2, which allows charter customers to keep two fish. The reason this is so important to our business is that our customers will not come out to fish with us for only one fish. They feel that it is not worth their time or money to charter a boat to keep just one fish. If we lose the ability for our customers to keep two fish it will affect our business in a very negative way, up to and including, putting us out of business. This will not only affect our businesses but will also negatively impact the communities we live and work in. Ice vendors, bait shops, hotels, restaurants and other supporting industries in our State will also suffer from the loss of revenue generated by our business and the tourism it attracts.

The charter boat industry in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay has been reducing its Striped Bass harvest each year. This can be checked using the FACTS system data that has been collected for the past three seasons. Our fishing season continues to be reduced each year. We had a season spanning six months and three weeks, but two weeks of that has just been taken away. This does not look like it will be the last cut.

This is all being done to conserve the large breeding fish. I understand that. However, we also need to consider other changes to truly protect and correctly assess the breeding stock. The ban on targeting of these fish should be from January 1st to May 15th. This should apply to all groups of fishermen; Commercial, Charter and Recreational. If our goal is to protect these large breeding fish, then let's do that. If we only close the season partially Anglers will target these fish for catch and release. This will result in fish death due to stress from poorly executed releases and loss of the ability to breed, both being contrary to the purpose of our cutbacks.

Regarding assessment of the breeding stock, I would appreciate your consideration on concerns we with how the Young of the Year data is compiled. The areas where the samples are drawn are overrun with invasive species which is preventing an accurate assessment. We would like to see other sites added to the collection site list to get a more accurate picture. The middle bay has no collection site but is one of the areas where Striped Bass Spawning occurs every season. This would help everyone involved to have better faith in the data compiled.

Please take our concerns into consideration when making your decisions.

Captain Bob Flynn

PRESIDENT DEALE CAPTAINS ASSOCIATION, VICKIE ANN CHARTERS

To: Emile Franke, ASMFC Board Members, Maryland DNR Fisheries Officers

From: Captain Robert Flynn – U. S. Blues Chesapeake Charters LLC

Date: December 4, 2023

Reference: Public Comment, Striped Bass Addendum 2

Emile Franke,

I own and operate a charter fishing boat on the middle Chesapeake Bay. I am a FACTS participant for the State of Maryland. I support **option C2** in the upcoming Addendum. The State of Maryland is already eliminating, likely, 4 additional weeks from our charter season, on top of the cuts in fishing operation time from the last 10 years. If the FACTS For-Hire boats are reduced to 1 fish per client, I fully expect to be closing my business by the end of next year's season. The number of charters has decreased significantly due to season closures and economic tightening experienced by our customers. Please see FACTS charter information below to support this statement.

Per the FACTS reporting system, the For-Hire boats caught 121,771 fish in 2020; 116,581 in 2021; and 101,043 in 2022. **We have had a 17% reduction in catch over the last two years** which is largely attributed to the economy and reduced number of trips.

On Page 9 of Addendum II, it clearly states **Chesapeake Bay For-Hire removals decreased by 27%**.

The charter For-Hire industry is accountable for our catch and the DNR knows exactly what our impact is. We are the smallest user group in the Chesapeake Bay as compared to the regular recreational anglers and commercial sectors. We have been actively engaged with the DNR for years supporting measures to help striped bass recover.

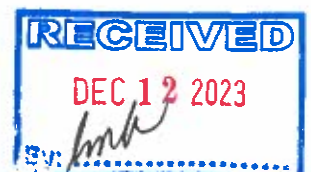
Our customers will only continue to book charters if they are able to catch two fish, otherwise our business will significantly decline further causing financial hardship and likely the closing of many For-Hire boats.

Additionally:

The no targeting of female spawning fish should be January 1 thru May 15 if the goal is to protect the female breeders. Therefore, catch and release in January thru March needs to be ended altogether to protect the breeding females. Please give the breeding fish an easier path to spawn and rebuild the stock without potential harassment and unknown amount of injury and terminated spawning runs.

Please reach out if further information/comment is needed.

Robert D. Flynn
504 Sweet Gum Road
Riva, MD 21140
443-336-4900



December 15, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing to comment on the proposed Addendum 2 to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Atlantic Striped Bass. I am a recreational catch-and-release angler who lives in Connecticut and fishes for striped bass throughout its range in the northeast. I am strongly in favor of management initiatives that will increase the long-term abundance of striped bass. I am strongly opposed to any addendum that would increase fishing mortality and/or decrease the likelihood that the striped bass population will achieve the spawning stock biomass target by 2029. Please note that I gave verbal testimony at the Maine virtual hearing on 12/14. I would encourage each state to hold virtual hearings in the interest of fairness and accessibility.

To that end, I support the following management options in Addendum 2:

3.1 Recreational Fishery Management

3.1.1: I support option B: a slot of 28-31” for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.2: I support option b1: a slot of 19-23” for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.3: n/a

3.1.4: I support option B: establish minimum requirements for fish processing.

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management

3.2.1. I support option B: reduction of up to 14.5% of quota—preferably on the average harvest rather than the pre-existing quota.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

3.3: I support option B: board action when stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029.

It is my sincere hope that the ASMFC acts in the best interests of current and future anglers by choosing management options that increase the abundance of striped bass.

Sincerely,



Todd Forrest, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Tom Fote's
Testimony on Addendum II to the Striped Board

I attended NJ's virtual striped bass hearing on November 15th. There was not a lot of support for what ASMFC is doing with striped bass. The testimony that night was a shorter version of my testimony below. I did not comment on the options then and I will not comment on them now since they are totally unacceptable. Paul Haertel will be commenting on JCAA's position on the options. I think we should go back to 28 – 35 but that is not listed as an option. Here are the reasons why: I have 45 years of experience in Striped Bass Management, I have been attending Striped Bass Board Meetings for 37 years, since 1991, even before I was appointed to ASMFC. Since I was first appointed to ASMFC I attended almost 23 years as NJ Governor's Appointee and 6 years as NJ Legislative Proxy. I retired in June and there is no one presently attending that has been there as long as I have been.

1. The reductions are being proposed because of a lack of recruitment. It is not the size of the spawning stock biomass but environmental conditions that are having a negative impact on the recruitment especially in Chesapeake Bay. That is what I have been saying for years. Any manager on ASMFC knows that. But to placate the people who believe "the sky is falling" the managers continue to restrict the recreational catch.

2. The commissioners stated a few years ago that they want to protect the 2015 year class but they did just the opposite by putting in slot limits that targeted that specific class. Again, history tells us what they should have done was the same thing we did when we rebuilt the stocks in the 80's and 90's. At that time, we had a great year class coming up and we were counting on that year class to rebuild the stock. What we did was raise the size limit to keep protecting that specific year class from being harvested. The last two addendums have targeted the 2015 years class they claim to be protecting. If we were doing this right, we would have kept raising the recreational size limit to 36 inches or above to stop harvesting that year class. The commercial fishery should be at the same high level. That is not what we have been doing. Why have we not learned from experience?

3. What is proposed in this addendum is having separate size limits for party and charter boats and leaving the remains of the recreational community to fish on a much smaller slot. This is really an environmental justice issue. I assume this is against NJ law. The Governor and our Legislature has confirmed their commitment to regulations that consider environmental justice. We should consider suing if this comes to pass.

4. Years ago, when the striped bass board was meeting on Amendment 5, Bruce Freeman and I had to leave the meeting early to catch an 8 PM flight. When we left, the NY delegation proposed to eliminate the Delaware River and the Hudson River as producing areas. NJ was not consulted. Virginia, Maryland and Potomac River all agreed. This was also supported by other states that did not want specific regulations on their producing areas. This change only restricted NJ, Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York. Since New York didn't have a commercial fishery in the Hudson River due to PCBs, this served their needs as well. NJ realized we were being disadvantaged and we tried to make the change at the next board meeting and put Delaware and Hudson Rivers back as producing areas. Because we were trying to reverse a position taken at a previous meeting, we would need a 2/3 vote. We were unable to get that since many other states were advantaged by the earlier decision. New Jersey never proposed to manage the producing areas differently than the ocean. But we wanted to have credit for what we were producing. This had an interesting impact on how we allocated the 25% of the coastal fishery to the producing areas.

5. How do we allocate the ocean striped bass fisheries based on 1990s information? The states that fish in ocean waters get 75% of the quota of the migratory stock since the Striped Bass Technical Committee estimates mature striped bass spend 25% of their time in the producing areas and the rest in the ocean. When the addendum was passed to eliminate the Delaware and Hudson Rivers as producing areas, the Chesapeake Bay producing areas got the entire 25% for their use. That was many years ago when we were estimating that 75% of the coastal migratory stocks were coming from the Chesapeake and only 25% from the other producing areas. The Delaware River had just started recuperating from the oxygen block from Camden and Philadelphia sewer systems. The stocks in the Delaware River have risen significantly. The Hudson River has always been a good producing area and has not seen the recruitment problems the Chesapeake Bay is currently experiencing. Tagging studies in the last 10 years have shown that at least 40% of the coastal migratory stock is coming from areas other than the Chesapeake Bay. We can use DNA from the Hudson River stock to prove where certain fish come from. Because

of the canal between Delaware and Maryland, there is a greater mixing of stocks in the two producing areas. If you contribute less, you should get less. We are allowing the Chesapeake Bay to get credit for 25% of the coastal migratory stock as if they were producing 100% of the coastal migratory stock. If you think about this, they are hammering their coastal migratory stock harder than they should be since the 25% should be reduced by 30 or 40%. As I pointed out in this document, in the past 10 – 12 years, the other producing areas are contributing 40% of the migratory stock. The quota for the Chesapeake Bay leads to overharvesting there. I recommend we cut their use of the ocean quota by at least 30%. This would better reflect what is currently happening and give a better chance for a higher recruitment in the Chesapeake Bay.

6. Because of climate change and other conditions in the Chesapeake Bay, I think other areas are producing a greater percentage of the striped bass. Because of the warming of the water, this may continue to increase. I have been waiting to see what happens to the stocks in the Kennebeck River since that has always been considered a producing area. It is also interesting to see if Connecticut's waters are becoming producing areas. We know that Canada is having a problem with wild Atlantic Salmon being eaten by striped bass and that may indicate more production further north. We need to do the necessary research to find out what is happening with the coastal migratory stocks and not just continue to see the Chesapeake Bay as the only producing area. At the last striped bass board meeting I attended as a commissioner, I requested we include Delaware and Hudson Rivers as producing areas. I wasn't a commissioner at the August meeting and I didn't attend because of health problems. There was no one there to champion that cause. Why am I not surprised.

7. One of the biggest problems we are having with striped bass is hook and release mortality. It has been as high as 51% of the overall mortality including both the commercial and recreational fisheries. No where in this addendum does it address this issue. Could it be that the catch and release anglers are dead set against even discussing this issue? I found it extremely interesting that a release by Stripers Forever included this quote in the Striper Forever Action release on 11/15/23: "To be honest, we still believe that an equitable (commercial and recreational) harvest moratorium is the most efficient and fool proof way to rebuild the Striped Bass stock to abundance." Why was I not surprised? I helped start Stripers Forever and was the first vice president. After a few years I resigned because they were becoming elitist, just wanting catch and release and not considering subsistence fishermen. The catch and release guys know they have been able to stop seasons being put in and they continue to fish even if there is a moratorium. They will say they are fishing for bluefish or another species with their light tackle and causing the same fish catch and release mortality. They are selfish and don't care about the rest of the community. They have no regard for subsistence fishermen and everyday anglers who just want to take home a fish for dinner. They want to privatize the catch and release fishery for their enjoyment or their customers while eliminating everyone else. Years ago, at a meeting with a number environmental groups, as we were introducing ourselves, the ASA representative stated that there were 40 million anglers in the United States. One of the representatives from an environmental group stated the reason we had so many recreational anglers was because the United States is a rich country. When I had a chance, I said the reason we have 40 million anglers is not because we are rich but because the fish do not belong to the royalty or the wealthy. The fish belong to the public. The catch and release anglers seem to have forgotten that.

In closing, on paper this addendum looks like it will accomplish something but in reality it will just make things worse. It will needlessly penalize both the commercial and recreational fisheries without protecting the long-term health of the striped bass stocks. I can't believe we strayed this far from the original plan.

Sincerely

Tom Fote

Release for Tomorrow

<@(((((< <@(((((< <@(((((<

22 Cruiser Court

Toms River NJ 08753

<tfote@JCAA.org>

Phone 732-270-9102 Cell 732-598-7669

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission 1050 N. Highland Street Suite 200 Arlington,
Virginia 22201

4/17/23

RE: Initiating an Addendum to Ensure the Striped Bass Stock Successfully Rebuilds by 2029

Dear Ms. Franke,

The American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA) is a coalition of fishing guides, fishing related businesses, and conservation minded private anglers. Our members on the Atlantic coast are reliant on a healthy population of striped bass. ASGA has engaged on every striped bass management issue in a meaningful and productive manner since our inception. Today, we believe that the striped bass fishery is at an inflection point: if action is not taken at the upcoming May meeting, the stock will not rebuild by 2029 and drastic measures may become warranted.

I am a recreational fisherman from Middletown, RI. I have been fishing the coastal and offshore waters off RI and neighboring states for over 40years. I have taught my son who is 16 now how to fish responsibly and to understand why it is important to have fishing regulations that protect the species we enjoy fishing. We discuss why there needs to be a unified set of regulations on migratory species like the Striped Bass. He completely understands that these fish are traveling across several state waterways twice a year, and are subjected to fishing pressures throughout their entire journey.

It is clear that some areas experienced excellent striped bass fishing last year. The good fishing translated into over 35 million pounds of striped bass harvested coastwide . ASGA **had deep concerns** that the slot limit would fully exploit the robust 2015-year class. These concerns are now a reality. The 2015-year class is the last robust recruitment year. While the 2017 and 2018-year classes are average, there are four consecutive years of the lowest recruitment in recent history following. This leaves the stock and those that depend on a healthy striped bass population in a very dangerous place.

Amendment 7, which was just approved and implemented in May 2022, clearly states that the stock must be rebuilt within 10 years (Striped bass was declared overfished in 2019 thus the rebuilding deadline is 2029).

2.7.2 Stock Rebuilding Schedules

If at any time the Atlantic striped bass population is declared overfished and rebuilding needs to occur (as specified in Section 4.1 Management Triggers), the Board will determine the rebuilding schedule at that time. The only limitation imposed under Amendment 7 is that the rebuilding schedule is not to exceed 10 years.

The current rebuilding plan has failed. The 2022 MRIP harvest numbers showed that harvest doubled and decreased the probability of rebuilding to 14%. The probability is considerably

lower if commercial transfers are approved as per the Technical Committee meeting on March 30th. This is unacceptable to our community and clearly violates Amendment 7's rebuilding provisions. Taking a correction now is far better than draconian measures in a few years.

¹Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division April 12, 2023. ² Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. May 2022. https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/63cb1c52AtlStripedBassAm7_May2022.pdf

Delaying action in May would represent a complete failure of the Striped Bass Management Board to address known issues with the striped bass rebuilding plan.

We are asking only that the Striped Bass Management Board follow the rules it established. A new rebuilding plan that has a minimum of a 50% chance of success must be initiated, and those regulations need to be in place by the 2024 season.

ASGA and the undersigned anglers, fishing guides, and businesses are calling on the Striped Bass Management Board to initiate Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass, ensuring the striped bass stock successfully rebuilds by 2029.

We stand by what ASGA is proposing and hope the Striped Bass Management Board will make the best decisions for the health and longevity of the Atlantic Striped Bass.

Sincerely,

Jim and Bruce Gibson

George Loomis
437 Barbers Pond Road
West Kingston, RI 02892

December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Comments sent electronically: comments@asmfc.org, Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke,

I'm submitting this letter as an avid recreational fisherman who has fished for striped bass in the waters of RI, CT, and MA for nearly six decades. Through this period, I've caught many striped bass but rarely have I killed any, opting to practice catch and release fishing with barbless hooks to minimize injury and fish mortality. My feeling is that a striped bass is too valuable to kill, and fishermen need to take personal action to help preserve populations. Like many other serious fishermen, I've spent many tens of thousands of dollars on boats, motors, kayaks, waders, and tackle pursuing stripers, which has helped to stimulate the local economy of my community.

During this 60-year period I've seen big changes in striped bass populations. The proposed draft changes to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) striped bass regulations pose an opportunity to formulate regulations to help manage the striper populations for future generations.

My recommendations to the Commission are:

1. **Option B** be selected and implemented by ASMFC to help protect and restore the striped bass stock, particularly the 2015 year class. I understand that this option is based on the 2022 fishery data available at the time of the assessment. This option will have the greatest overall reduction in harvest, although I recognize that this option is projected to increase recreational fishing mortality by 2%.
2. ASMFC select and implement **Option B1** for the Chesapeake Bay fishery that will restrict the harvest of larger bass greater than 23 inches.
3. ASMFC select and implement **Option B** for the for-hire management measures apply only to patrons during for-hire trips, and strongly recommend that captain and crew on for-hire trips are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.

4. I also recommend ASMFC select and implement **Option B** for all states relating to at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, to establish minimum requirements, including requirements for: fish 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 also adopt language about when and where fish racks may be disposed of, specific to each mode allowed to fillet at-sea/shore. This will help to lessen indiscriminant cheating of protective management measures, including conditions in Rhode Island where no applicable regulations currently exist.
5. ASMFC select and implement **Option B** relating to the ocean commercial fisheries and/or Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries be managed by quotas representing up to a 14.5% reduction from the 2022 commercial quotas and their 2022 size limits. I recommend the Board select a specific percent reduction of at least 10%, and preferably 14.5%. The 14.5% reduction will help to reduce 3.65 million bass from being harvested in the Atlantic Coastal state fisheries.
6. In addition, I strongly recommend **Option B** for the Board having the responsibility to respond, via Board action, to timely 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. Through this action, the following would occur:
 - a. 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.
 - b. A more expedited response to assessment updates would result. For example, when the 2024 stock assessment update is completed in October 2024, the Board could change management measures during the October 2024 meeting or a meeting shortly thereafter. This would allow new measures to be implemented for at least part of the 2025 season.

Separate from the proposed regulatory changes in the draft document, I recommend that ASMFC develop sound strategies, working collaboratively with state fishery biologists and communications specialists to reduce recreational fishing release mortality. Each state should be emphasizing and educating anglers about best practices for handling and releasing fish to minimize recreational fishing mortality. I know that fish mortality happens, however, fishing mortality rates of 9% are just not acceptable. Good fish handling practices can be provided and explained through various media avenues to lessen this problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Striped Bass Addendum II.

Respectfully submitted,

George Loomis

12/17/23

ASMFC Striped Bass Board,

I am an avid fisherman who used to fish for stripers from the jetties in NJ about 75 nights a year. Though I released the vast majority of stripers I caught, including some over 40 lbs., I was always a trophy fisherman who liked to keep an occasional large bass for a tournament or for a personal best to have mounted. I always dreamed of catching some sort of record sized striper and that is what I fished for. Through your management decisions that cater to commercial fishermen and the catch and release crowd you have ruined that for me. Now I can't even use a gaff to lip a bass onto the jetty. You have ruined what I used to love more than any other type of fishing and made it much more hazardous for me. At 68 years old, I can't jump around on the rocks like I used to. It is not practical for me to try to use a large net in one hand and climb down the rocks to try to net a big bass. I feel like I'm taking my life in my hands as I try to climb down and maneuver a fish so that I leader it or grab it by the gill plate.

Further, had you listened to JCAA and many others when you were first considering Amendment VII, you would have raised the size limit and protected the 2015 year class. Raising the size limit worked back in the 1980's and it would have worked better than the slot sizes you created. You forced those who like to keep fish to target the 2015 year class and because of your mismanagement, you are now forcing us to cut back further. Another point I would like to make is that larger stripers have a lower chance of survival than small ones. This is due to the buildup of lactic acid caused by a longer and harder fight by the larger fish. You forced people to harvest fish that would have had a better chance of survival rate if they were released. What needs to be done is to create a higher minimum size limit to protect the 2015, 2017, and 2018 year classes. You don't even have that as an option though. Worse still is that you do not suffer any repercussions for your poor management decisions.

Another problem is that in the NY Bight area we now have some of the best striper fishing I have ever seen in my life. This is due to the fact that the Hudson River stock is in great shape. However, we are being denied access to them because of the declining Chesapeake Bay stock. I believe that as the population of the Hudson River stock increases so does their range. They are heading further North, South and East and providing great sport in areas where they never used to travel to. I suggest you conduct a study to see for yourselves. Also, NJ and NY should be given producer status so that some of these fish can be harvested.

Specifically, regarding the addendum my preferences are below:

Section 3.1-1 Ocean Recreational Fishing Options

I favor option B, a slot of 28"-31" rather than Option D which is 30"-33". This gives shore-based anglers a little better chance of catching a fish that they can bring home to eat. Also, the 30"-33" fish are reaching prime breeding size. Some 30-33' stripers will still be from the 2015 year class which we should be protecting. I don't like options C or E as they give a wider ranged slot to the for-hire sector. That would be unfair. It is true that the for-hire sector makes their living taking people fishing. However, tackle manufacturers, bait & tackle shops and other businesses are very dependent on sales to the much larger private sector. Therefore, the same regulations should apply to everyone. We all should be equally responsible in the rebuilding the stocks. We should not make regulations more confusing and more difficult for our understaffed conservation officers to enforce.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

I prefer Option B1 which includes a slot of 19"-23" fish for all bay jurisdictions. Options B2, 3, and 4 all have wider slot ranges. It is imperative that we try to protect these smaller fish particularly from the last two decent spawning year classes in 2017 and 2018. I do not like option C1 or C2 because once again those options create sector separation by giving a wider ranged slot to the for-hire fleet.

Section 3.1.3 For Hire Management Clarification

I prefer Option B. but if sector separation is chosen, the measures should only apply to the patrons. The captains and crews should be restricted to the private vessel/shore-based regulations.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

I prefer option B which will require states that authorize filleting at sea to establish minimum requirements such as saving racks and leaving the skin on.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reductions

I agree with the JCAA stance that striped bass should be a no-sale or gamefish in all states. It is unfathomable that the ASMFC allows commercial fishing while the recreational sector is limited to a 3" slot. It is also disgraceful that the ASMFC allows the commercial hook and line boat fishermen in MA to harvest 15 stripers per day with a minimum size of 35". Much of the 2015 year class is now approaching that size and you are supposed to be protecting them! However, since these changes are not currently options, we prefer option B with a quota reduction of 14.5%.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

I prefer Option A, even though it will be more time consuming than Option B. I want to be assured of having a chance to have my say.

Sincerely,

Paul Haertel

I am writing on behalf of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association which represents approximately 75 fishing clubs and many thousands of fishermen throughout our state. We are pleased that you are accepting comments in regard to Addendum II to Amendment VII for striped bass. However, we are very unhappy with how you have mis-managed this species.

Had the board listened to JCAA and the vast majority of fishermen up and down the coast when they were considering Amendment VII, we would have had a minimum size limit of 35" or so which would have protected the abundant 2015 year class. Periodically raising the size limits to protect a dominant year class was the strategy that worked well in the past and what we would still support. What happened is that the 2015 year class grew to legal size and removals from the biomass dramatically increased in 2022 due to both harvest and C&R mortality. That lowered the probability of restoring the stocks by 2029 to just 15%. There are other factors in play that you cannot control such as pollution, blue catfish taking over Chesapeake Bay, and weather patterns that have not been conducive to successful spawns in the Chesapeake for the last 5 years. Despite that there are more than enough striped bass in the SSB to produce a very good spawn if we get the right conditions. Further restricting commercial and recreational fishermen may not do much good. However, one thing you can do is to eliminate or reduce the number of menhaden that are netted commercially in the Chesapeake Bay. Increasing the number of menhaden would be beneficial to stripers of all sizes in the bay. We also believe that striped bass should be a no-sale or gamefish along the entire east coast. It is reprehensible to see how many stripers are being poached in the Raritan Bay area and then being brought to New York where they are sold. We need more law enforcement and stricter penalties.

One other thing that the ASFMC/MAFMC might do is liberalize the recreational measures for other species such as fluke and sea bass. Sea bass have been rebuilt to far beyond their target for several years now. Liberalizing measures for these species would take some of the pressure off striped bass.

The fishing in the NY bight area has been phenomenal during the past couple of seasons, perhaps the best fishing in over 50 years. Unfortunately, this has resulted in a large number of "floaters" particularly larger fish that don't survive as well when they are released. The mandated use of circle hooks apparently did very little as the c&r mortality rate has remained at 9%. We need to make a better effort in educating people as to how to properly handle and release fish.

The Raritan Bay area has become the striped bass capitol of the east coast with thousands of boats coming from all over the country to fish here. This has been occurring this fall as well as in the spring when the fish are congregating to spawn and are easy pickings. This has caused the c&r mortality rate to skyrocket. In fact, there have been some reports of c&r mortality being responsible for as much as 52% of the removals from the biomass. It certainly appears as though the board has chosen to manage stripers as a commercial and c&r fishery. The c&r crowd needs to bare some of the burden of rebuilding the stocks by having seasonal closures to both harvesting and targeting of striped bass. Further, Massachusetts commercial hook and line fishermen are allowed to keep 15 stripers per day

at a minimum size of 35". At the recent NJ webinar hearing on the addendum, we were told that the reason for this is that there might be increased c&r mortality if they had to release larger fish while trying to catch smaller ones. Well, that's what the rest of us have been forced to do. It's just great that the recreational fishermen have to release stripers greater than 31" so that they can grow large and be harvested commercially in MA.

That having been said below are our preferences for the various options included on the addendum:

Jack Illingworth
759 Hancock St.
Abington, Ma. 02351

December 14, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Emilie Franke,

I submit this letter share my stance on the following items listed in Draft Addendum 2 to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery

Based on the continued below average young of the year data causes a serious concern about the rebuilding timeline and the overall future of the striped bass fishery. I urges ASMFC to immediately take the 14/5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update.

3.0 Proposed Management Options

I agree with the analysis that a 14.5% reduction from 2022 removals is necessary to achieve the F target in 2024. And would urge the ASMFC to place maintaining the current rebuilding timeline as the top priority of this addendum and urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 7 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I Oppose the status quo option.
- Based on ASMFC report it will not reach the desired reductions

Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- I whole heartedly support the adoption of Option B
- I feel it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline.

Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"-31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I do not support the subject of recreational mode splits.
- A fisherman is a fisherman and I don't think the way one fishes, how they get out to or on the water or amount of times they go fishing should have any bearing on the slot limits

Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I oppose Option D for the following reasons:

- Option D is projected to reduce fishing mortality by 12.8% and I prefer Option B which is projected to reduce fishing mortality by the larger number of 14.1%.

Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30”-33” slot & for-hire anglers 28”-33”):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I am not 100% familiar with the Chesapeake Bay fishery but would support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- I also oppose any mode split options because for the reasons explained earlier in this comment letter under ocean recreational fisheries.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I support a reduction in the ocean commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

- I support option A Status Quo.
- Option B would accomplish nothing in the area of conservation and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo.
- For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local file at the dock prohibitions.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

- I Support Option A Status Quo
- I would prefer ASMFC prepare to use emergency action for a quick response and be prepared to launch Amendment 8 upon review of the results of the 2024 stock assessment.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to comment and look forward to active participation in developing the next amendment that will be required in order to preserve a striped bass fishery for future generations.

Sincerely
Jack Illingworth
President Elect
Mass Striped Bass Association
781956-6158
Illingworth.jack@yahoo.com

Center for Ecological Economic and Ethical Education

Post Office Box 946
Ipswich, Massachusetts 01938 U.S.A.

Phone: 1-978-356-2188
Email: ecologicaleconomics@yahoo.com

29 November 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing to express my views on **Addendum II to Amendment 7** of the FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass. I am horrified by the near-disappearance of this fishery in recent years in my area! I fish in an estuary up here in Ipswich, MA, and the larger fish are generally only present in this estuary in late May through June. Usually, they are gone by the Fourth of July weekend; I think all the boat traffic drives them out and the water warms enough that they tend not to return until the very end of the season as they work their way down the coast, coming into the estuary only for a very short time in September and October. This year, even at the peak of what should have been the 2023 season, there were almost no fish in the estuary and they were all of a large size...

The absence of small fish – that any of my friends and acquaintances were seeing or catching – bodes ill for the future of this fishery. For this reason, along with the abysmal YOY results in all recent years since 2015 (which is almost a decade ago) and the SSB information that you people have been reporting, my own preference would be that you impose a strict **moratorium** on any and all harvests of striped bass in the commercial and recreational fisheries for this species. That is what worked in the past, during the 1970s and 1980s when this fishery crashed so terribly...

However, a moratorium is not on the table, at least not at this time. So, along with most of my recreational angling friends and colleagues, I support a more conservative fisheries policy in the various options that you have proposed for this valuable fishery. I will list my preferences below.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I support **Option B** with a one-fish daily limit of 28” to 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes). My reasoning is that this option involves the greatest reduction and the most conservative policy for protecting this resource; it also protects the 2015 year class in the fairest and most equitable way. Consequently, it is preferable to **Option A** which would expand the slot unnecessarily and inadvisably. I also oppose the “mode splits” considered in **Options C and D** as well as adopting the larger slot in **Option D**. Please support **Option B**.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I support **Option B1** with a one-fish daily limit of 19” to 23” in accord with the 2022 Chesapeake Bay season. I prefer **Option B1** because it entails the greatest harvest reduction subsequent to five very poor YOY reports in Chesapeake Bay, and allows more uniform regulations. I do not support the mode splits in other Options.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification: I would support **Option B** if for-hire mode-specific limits are selected, even though I oppose doing this, because the additional harvest in this option only applies to patrons of a for-hire trip, while the captain and crew remain subject to the same regulations as private vessel or shore anglers, so this option is more restrictive than the others.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: I support **Option B** for states that allow at-sea or shore-side filleting of striped bass, so that minimum requirements can be imposed on these anglers such as, for example, retention of racks with skins left intact and a limit of two full fillets per legal fish. States should be encouraged to include some language about disposal of these materials as well. **Option B** provides the best assurance that fish are legally harvested in conformance with the slot limit in these areas, to permit better enforcement of these regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support **Option B** so that both the ocean and the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries for wild striped bass will be held to specific quotas limited to up to a 14.5% reduction from 2022 quotas and the same 2022 size limits, as determined by the Board. The *status quo* is not a good option for achieving the needed harvest reductions, and far more preferable is an equitable commercial reduction of 14.5% for the restoration of this fishery. I should also note that states having trouble in meeting their commercial quotas are giving a very clear signal that the fishery is in trouble! Consequently, this information should not be used as an excuse not to reduce those commercial quotas, as we need to protect what is left of this fishery. It would also be very improper to apply these reductions only to recreational angling and not to do so in an equitable way to the coastal commercial fisheries as well. This is very important to me.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support **Option B** so that the Board could respond to bad news in the 2024 stock assessment by taking immediate **board action** instead of moving through a much slower process of securing public approval for various options in yet another Addendum. The striped bass stocks simply are in too dire straits to entertain further delays in any attempt to further remediate these problems. **Option B** would allow the Board to act with a simple majority. Waiting through a public comment period, though usually desirable, is just too slow a reaction.

Thank you for considering my opinions and input in your deliberations on this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Frederic B. Jennings, Jr., Ph.D., President
Center for Ecological Economic and Ethical Education

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II:

Comments

December 16, 2023

The ASMFC must pass and enforce the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update. In my opinion, an even more aggressive option is appropriate, given the current state of decline in this important fishery. All the options on the table appear *de minimus* at best.

Management Options:

ASMFC should approve Addendum 2 only with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- REJECT - the status quo option is not adequate to restore stocks and must be rejected

Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- SUPPORT - Option B provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.

Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"- 31" slot; for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- No distinction between recreational anglers is useful or necessary whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other.
- recreational mode splits ought to be amendment level decisions. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions are needed.
- Importantly, Option C should be REJECTED as reduces removals than less than Option B.
- Addendum 2 was not initiated for trip preservation and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators; customers from adapting business models ; expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.

Option D (30" -33" slot limit):

- REJECT Option D as it only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot ; for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- REJECT - same reasons as C, D – we need maximum reductions

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- ACCEPT Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it can achieve the required 14.5% reduction goal.

Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- SUPPORT reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- SUPPORT reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

For-Hire Management Clarification,

- I support option A Status Quo - Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- SUPPORT Option A Status Quo. For-Hire; private anglers face the same local file difficulties in at-the-dock prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- REJECT Recreational mode splits leave Addendum 2 due to inadequate conservation benefit
- PREFER ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and urge ASMFC to adopt the most conservative measures to preserve the striped bass fishery at this crucial time.

Regards,

David S. Kaplan
4 Beaver Path
Mattapoisett, MA 02739

December 15, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
comments@asmfc.org
efranke@asmfc.org

Hello Emilie,

Please find my comments below. Thank you.

As to Fishery Status:

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update. Had a more aggressive option been available, I would have supported that, given the situation.

As to Management Options:

I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

As to Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

As to Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option.

As to Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.

As to Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"- 31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- To me "a recreational angler is a recreational angler" whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other.
- Any discussion of recreational mode splits should be an amendment level decision. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions must be had.
- Regardless Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. (Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.)

As to Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I do not support it.

- Option D only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

As to Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

As to Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction goal.

As to Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I support a reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

- I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

As to For-Hire Management Clarification, I support option A Status Quo

- Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local file at the dock prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- I believe Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit is wrong and prefer ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT!

Regards,



John G. Kennan, Jr.

29 Ships Way Bourne, MA 02532

Comments on ASMFC Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass Management

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the ASMFC Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass Management. Having been a working striper guide since the late 1980s, I've witnessed significant changes in the striped bass fishery over the last 37 years. At this point in my career I am worried that the future is not bright for those following in my footsteps. I have been fortunate to benefit from conservation efforts and want to be sure that those successes continue.

I acknowledge the positive steps taken in the addendum to address the current challenges facing the striped bass population. However, it's equally important to emphasize the need for continued vigilance and adaptive management.

Based on my experience as a working Guide in Maine's mid coast region, I've observed shifts in migration patterns, changes in population dynamics, and fluctuations in angler success. These insights underline the complex and dynamic nature of the striped bass fishery, requiring a comprehensive and flexible management approach. As an example, I must tell you that there were no small fish in my area last summer. Great for this year's clients but very troubling for the future.

Below are the options proposed that I think make the most sense to preserve this fishery for the future.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Option B—1-fish at 28 to 31.

This option provides the greatest overall reduction, protects the 2015 year class and makes sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. I do not support mode splits. The recreational sector should continue to be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Option B1—Apply a standard minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and bag limit to the Bay.

This option produces the greatest overall reduction and the greatest harvest reduction. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (If For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): 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: Option B—For states that authorize at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, establish minimum requirements. Please keep in mind the need for practical common-sense rules that are easily followed and enforced.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B—The ocean commercial fisheries the commercial fisheries will have their quotas reduced. The status quo is not an option in my view.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support Option B—The Board could change management measures by voting to pass a motion at a Board meeting instead of developing an addendum or amendment different from the emergency action process.

I support measures that prioritize the long-term sustainability of the striped bass population while considering the interests of recreational and commercial anglers. Striking the right balance is our challenge, and any regulations should be based on sound scientific data, taking into account the unique challenges faced by different regions and groups.

I urge the ASMFC to consider the perspectives of seasoned guides and anglers who have dedicated decades to this fishery. Our collective experiences can contribute significantly to the development of effective and equitable management strategies.

Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,

Don Kleiner

Master Maine Guide

www.maineoutdoors.biz

From: [Jerry Kustich](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:53:19 PM
Attachments: [EMPTY WATER daze.docx](#)

As a 77 year lifetime angler, I totally support any measure that can help restore the striped bass fishery. Although it will benefit me very little at my age, I am a strong believer in leaving behind a legacy for future generations. Please do what it takes.

Since I am a writer, I have attached a piece for my next book that reflects my take on the issue.

Thank you. Jerry Kustich

EMPTY WATER

It has been a tough fishing year. This is the first fall season in the past nine that I have only encountered a couple striped bass at a time of year when there are always numerous 14-24 inch stripers swimming in my local waters. Many anglers have been decrying the steady decrease of the striper population in the Chesapeake Bay since 2015. Maybe the decline can be blamed on continued poor spring spawning conditions due to climate change. Or maybe water quality issues caused by pollutants. Or maybe commercial over harvesting. Or maybe chapter boats keeping 40" females during spawning season over the years. Or maybe the industrial netting of too many menhaden, a main forage fish for stripers. Or maybe too many being kept by recreational anglers one fish at a time. Whatever it is, the fears are real, leaving many anglers longing for the "good ole days." Since 2018 reproduction in the Bay's tributaries has been dismal. Fewer fish beget fewer fish, and so on. It is a spiral of death.

Tony Friedrich of the American Saltwater Guides Association has been sounding the alarm for years and the organization he represents has been working tirelessly with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and state managers up and down the coast to address the many-pronged problems facing the fishery. However, convincing a science denying public of the issues has been a difficult process. Tony has pointed out that instead of utilizing a very strong 2015 spawning class as a starting point to restore the downturn in recruitment indicated during the prior several years through stricter regulations across the board, fishery managers have been swayed by an ill-informed public and greedy fishing industry too willing to deny that the population was in serious trouble. One would think that once the striper population was restored after the crash of the 70s, everyone connected to the fishery would have been more vigilant this time around. But unfortunately, it seems, history has taught us very little.

With this cloud of gloom hovering over an uncommonly nice mid November afternoon, it promised to be an ideal day to take my kayak out a final time despite the lack of stripers. Since nasty weather was forecasted for the next week, I figured this would be a good time to call it quits for the year before the water temperature dipped further and the cold seeped too deeply into my

bones. And for the first time in months, the flow on the Susquehanna was cut back, so it would be a good fishing option for the day.

Upon arriving at the broad section of river I intended to fish, the upstream wind was riling the surface of the wide expanse of water with whitecaps. Too risky for my abilities, I decided to check out the rock-pocked stretch up river before entirely scraping my mission for the day. Surprisingly, the boulders, rocks and little islands seemed to be protecting this shallower length of river from the full force of the wind; so, as a result, the water appeared safe for paddling. Additionally, the flow was at a perfect level to possibly find one final fish despite such a dismal season. But after spending another fishless afternoon casting behind boulders in the bright sunshine, all hope faded.

As the sun began to dip below the trees on the far side of the river, its descent accentuated the end of a depressing few months that seemed to overemphasize the depleted status of the striper population in the upper Chesapeake Bay. Fighting the urge to return to the landing early, I was determined to stay out until the last drop of daylight squeezed from the sky. If only to defy fate, my steelheading past kicked in and I made a last stand casting a Clouser pattern into a defined riffle between two protruding rocks close to shore. Completely engulfed by a state of hopelessness, I drifted into the Zen-like rhythm of casting while recalling the several stripers I had hooked in this section of the river in the past. Lost in thought, I was jolted back to reality when a decent fish grabbed my fly. For a brief moment, reality magically snapped back to the way it should be.

Once this special striper was released at the side of my craft, I continued to cast. In the waning hour of daylight I managed to hook more fish than I had all fall. The final one was big. And as that striper pulled my kayak into the unsafe flow of complete darkness, it gave fright to my precarious situation. Relieved when the fly finally popped loose, the fish swam back into the night like a phantom from the past reminding me of the way things were not that long ago,

Seeking safe passage back to shore, my mind tried to grasp what had just happened while trying to put the experience into focus. Whether this was a sign of hope for the future or a haunting reminder of what we have lost by not managing this resource properly for the past several years, only time will tell. Pondering the significance of this bittersweet finale, my season came to an end when the nose of my kayak touched land.

Sadly, we are in an era when many fisheries throughout the country are facing difficulties, and it should be those of us close to troubled waters tolling the bell of concern. There are causes for alarm on so many fronts. From steelhead on the West Coast to Chinook salmon in Alaska to redfish on the Gulf Coast to brown trout in the Big Hole River, there should be a gnawing in all our souls while we cast to ghosts of the past with hopes that things will miraculously go back to the way they once were.

The hollowness I feel while fishing for a diminished striper population is not unlike what I remember when looking for the disappearing bull trout out West in the late 70s or when Montana's Jefferson River dried up in 1988 or when whirling disease severely impacted the Big Sky's Madison River in the 90s; and in retrospect, when the Niagara River was dying during my youth in the 50s. In a micro sense I have learned that our fisheries need to be constantly nurtured and cared for, and in many cases around the country environmental problems have been addressed and ailing fisheries restored thanks to concerned sportsmen and women, agencies and organizations. But regrettably, a willful ignorance seems to be pervasive these days, and there is a sense that the unified effort it took to overcome issues of the past no longer exists. I can only hope I am wrong, but if anglers can't come together on behalf of their regional fisheries, then the only thing we will be fishing for in the future is memories. And that would be the most tragic of legacies to leave behind for generations to come.

Although it seems the older I get the less fish I catch anyway, the quiet of just being out on the water when I know there are fish around is enough. It is a different kind of silence, however, when the water is empty and there are no fish except for wraiths from the past echoing through the liquid void reminding me of all that we have lost since the "good ole days."

Emilie & Commissioners,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Peter Leary, I am an NYC based surf & fly fisherman. At 27 years old I have been obsessed with stripers for the past 15 years. Having family in Rhode Island, New Jersey & Maine I put a lot of effort in across our striper coast. Striper fishing is my daily break from the hectic realities of life, whether I be the sandwiched between the East River and FDR, or on a remote outer Cape beach the pursuit of this fish gives me so much.

For these reasons and many more my response to “Striped Bass Draft Addendum II” is as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: I support **Option B**.

Reasoning: I believe 1 fish at 28-31” is the right move at this time to best protect strong year classes. The reality is that poachers are going to poach, in NYC it is rampant. Tied in with the growing number of years with poor recruitment we need to enact strict harvest limits. I believe we can easily fall below a critical biomass that we wouldn’t be able to recover. Better to act with caution, especially when you know people bend and break rules so overall the impact will be less with more liberal harvest parameters.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: I support **Option B1**.

Reasoning: From what I hear and see the Chesapeake bay is struggling for a vast array of reasons. With the poor recruitment, I reiterate that it is better to act with caution. This option will allow us to protect the few strong year classes we currently have.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support **Option B**.

Reasoning: Quotas aren’t being met for reasons and it isn’t due for lack of effort. When quotas are met it is due to the increasingly tight schooled biomass, we need to protect these fish across the entire coast on an even playing field.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support **Option B**.

Reasoning: With the dynamic nature of this fishery, it is important for the board to act effectively and swiftly with any new verified and accepted data and science to best protect with fishery so that it can be enjoyed for generations to come. Board Action is critical, and it is paramount for the board members to act in best interest of their shareholders. That is the only way any of this works. Increasing, science and knowledge. Taking a step back being self-critical and growing to be a better management. Improvement is always the goal.

Regards,
Peter Leary

December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
VIA EMAIL: comments@asmfc.org

Subject: Public Comments of Julia LeMense – Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Draft to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass is

Dear Ms. Franke and members of the ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board):

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass (“Plan”).

I am a New Hampshire resident (since September, having moved from New York, NY after 20 years). I am a recreational catch and release fly fisher, and I appreciated the opportunity to attend the New Hampshire public hearing via the Zoom connection – and am grateful you and the NH authorities made the hearing available to people remotely. Thank you for your dedication to the process.

Perhaps quite different from other commenters, I am a 25+ year environmental lawyer with recognized expertise in fisheries conservation matters. I pursued a Pelly Petition to protect tuna and dolphin populations. While working at the Rutgers Environmental Law Clinic and the Eastern Environmental Law Center, I addressed horseshoe crab habitat protections with USFWS and NJ authorities and myriad nonprofit stakeholders. In the early 2010s, I litigated the BP Oil Spill on behalf of tens of thousands of fin and shellfish fishermen and supported the NRD proceedings after that catastrophic and mismanaged program nearly decimated an entire economy and way of life with trophic cascades throughout the coastal ecosystem. I have also challenged numerous offshore and nearshore oil and gas projects that would adversely impact fisheries and marine mammals, kept gray wolves on the endangered species list in the Northeast, and participated in developing the recovery plan for bald eagles as they transitioned from endangered to threatened. I continue to volunteer to regularly advocate for measures to improve water quality and wildlife habitat and recently supported the research and writing of a Healthy Oceans Coalition/American Littoral Society publication on the importance of state protected fish areas. I also served as both an attorney for and Board member of American Littoral Society, which support fisheries research with fish tagging data since 1967. I have been a member of a number of conservation organizations that use science to guide policy and action and I am a proponent of the precautionary principle.

While I generally support and am aligned with conservation-minded fishing guides, small charter boat captains, small fishing-related businesses, and anglers who rely on a robust striped

bass population for income and recreation, and appreciate the work they have done, my background and experience with other species, and my lack of a direct financial interest in fishing in any way, compels me to recommend the Board adopt a more precautionary approach for the Plan. I would suggest that regulatory uncertainty is an easy mark and a convenient rationale to take a less protective approach and “wait in see” if the fishery collapses. There is, and always will be, inherent uncertainty in natural resources management, unless we impose a moratorium (which may be where we land). If the goal is to rebuild and then sustain stock health and abundance, then regulatory uncertainty should not be used as a basis to advocate for anything other than the most protective approach.

I urge the Board to take decisive action to rebuild the fishery and establish management reforms that position the Atlantic striped bass stock for long-term abundance and stability. This decisive action is required to address dangerously low spawning stock biomass and young-of-year numbers in upper Chesapeake Bay. My position on each of the decision points for the four major issues contained in the Draft Amendment are set forth below.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—1-fish at 28 to 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015-year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Splitting recreational anglers into ‘private vessel/shore’ and ‘for-hire’, is not the right thing to do now or ever. And it is also not consistent with international, federal and state diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, since it generally costs more to hire a boat. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the Board and law enforcement that no harvest and no target closures would be too difficult to enforce, the same applies here. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. Option B is the only option that is most protective and aligned with the Plan’s and the Board’s goals to rebuild this fishery.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—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 of 23”.

- Option B1 is the only option that has the potential to produce the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for to simplify and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

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

- I do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the Board choose to adopt (I adamantly oppose this and all commenters at the NH public hearing were against this, too) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the

potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support 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.*

- This is no time to expect less of anglers and to back off regulations. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off fillets) and keep the skin on the fillets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. Law enforcement should ensure compliance.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.*

- Status quo is not an option at this point. As stated, “Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum.” An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at rebuilding this fishery. I hope the Board will ultimately choose the percent reduction most likely to rebuild – here it is 14.5% per the Addendum, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7.
- The commercial quota reduction information is concerning.
 - First, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let’s say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. To rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return. And those of us who can give more, should.
 - Second, there was a great deal of discussion among Board members regarding their ability (or inability) to implement these new commercial regulations in time for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Addendum II reductions should not only apply to the recreational sector. The commercial sector may not like it, but they would in fact be able to respond if implemented in 2024, as they should be.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

- The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be needed to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the Board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock is in peril. Option B would allow the Board to respond by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. If the results of the next stock assessment are as dire as we anticipate, the conversation about an equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be imminent.

Striped bass are majestic, iconic, at the core of the east coast's recreational fishing community and economy. It is a key predator in the Chesapeake Bay and plays an important role in the trophic ecology. Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,
Julia A. LeMense, JD, LL.M, MPH
New London, NH 03257
Julia.lemense@gmail.com

Captain C. Richard Manley
4798 Piney Neck Road
Rock Hall, MD 21661
(410) 639-7420

December 4, 2023

Emile Frank
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear ASMFC:

I am writing to state my concerns with the potential cutbacks to striped bass fishing in the Chesapeake Bay.

As a charter captain on the Chesapeake Bay for over 25 years, I would like to state that the ASMFC must consider **Option C2** which allows customers on charter boats to keep two striped bass per day. A reduction to our customers in the number of fish they may keep will be catastrophic for the charter industry. Over the past several years, the charter captains have had to follow new regulations to sustain the fishery. The boat fish has been eliminated; I have endured a two-week closure during prime fishing season, slot size requirements were instituted, and enrolled in the FACTS program. Now for 2024, the State of Maryland has eliminated the trophy season.

Other data shows that the charter fleet has had a reduction of 17% fish caught over the past two years. One of the main contributors to this is the declining economy which, in turn, reduced the number of charter fishing trips taken. The charter fleet is not the problem with the striped bass stock.

If the ASMFC reduces our catch to one fish, you are essentially putting the charter fleet out of business. This reduction also affects local hotels/motels, restaurants, bait and tackle shops, etc. The trickle-down effect on the local economies cannot be made up in other ways. Our business and those depending on the charter customers will be unable to recover from loss of business.

I, and many other charter captains, have already paid to attend outdoor shows this winter to advertise our fishing services. It would not be prudent to spend additional funds on travel, hotel, and other costs associated with attending an outdoor show with the proposed cutbacks. And should the change to allow just one fish becomes finalized, we cannot get the money back

we already paid, if we cancel our reservations. These costs are substantial to a small business, such as ours.

Another major problem in the industry is the mortality rate among the recreational fishermen (not the charter fleet) and no one is addressing or policing this situation. Also, a priority for the protection of the female breeding stock should be considered, with a moratorium, until the recreational season opens in May.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Captain C. Richard Manley
Chesapeake Bay Charter Captain

Atlantic States Marine Fishery Commission
Re: Stripped Bass Public Comment- Amendment 7
Nicholas Manzione-Commercial Fisherman
12/21/2023

As a Commercial and Recreational Fisherman for 50 years, I am confident that the information outlined below will show that options A, B, or C are neither viable or guided by policies set forth in The ASMFC Mandate.

On this day December 21, 2024 It is imperative that the following information be reviewed and considered in regards to Amendment 7 To the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass-Interim Management Measures for a 14% reduction for Commercial Fisherman for Striped Bass.

Section 6 Standards:

- 1) Conservation and Management measures shall be based on the “best scientific information available”.
- 2) Management measures shall be designed to *minimize* waste of fishery resource.
- 3) Conservation program and management measures shall be designed to achieve equivalent management results throughout the range of a stock, or sub groups of that stock.

Title 16=Conservation-

(1) Annual stock assessments, using fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data, for the purposes of extending the long-term population record generated by the annual striped bass study conducted by the Secretaries before 1994 and understanding the population dynamics of Atlantic striped bass.

(2) Investigations of the causes of fluctuations in Atlantic striped bass populations.

(3) Investigations of the effects of water quality, land use, and other environmental factors on the recruitment, spawning potential, mortality, and abundance of Atlantic striped bass populations, including the Delaware River population.

(4) Investigations of—

(A) the interactions between Atlantic striped bass and other fish, including bluefish, menhaden, mackerel, and other forage fish or possible competitors, stock assessments of these species, to the extent appropriate; and

(B) the effects of interspecies predation and competition on the recruitment, spawning potential mortality, and abundance of Atlantic striped bass.

This chapter is comprised of Pub. L. 98-613, Oct. 31, 1984, 98 Stat. 3187-3190, as amended, which was formerly set out as a note under section 1851 of this title.

§ 5151. Findings and purposes

(a) Findings

The Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) Atlantic striped bass are of historic **commercial** and recreational importance and economic benefit to the Atlantic coastal States and to the Nation.

(2) No single government entity has full management authority throughout the range of the Atlantic striped bass.

(3) The population of Atlantic striped bass—

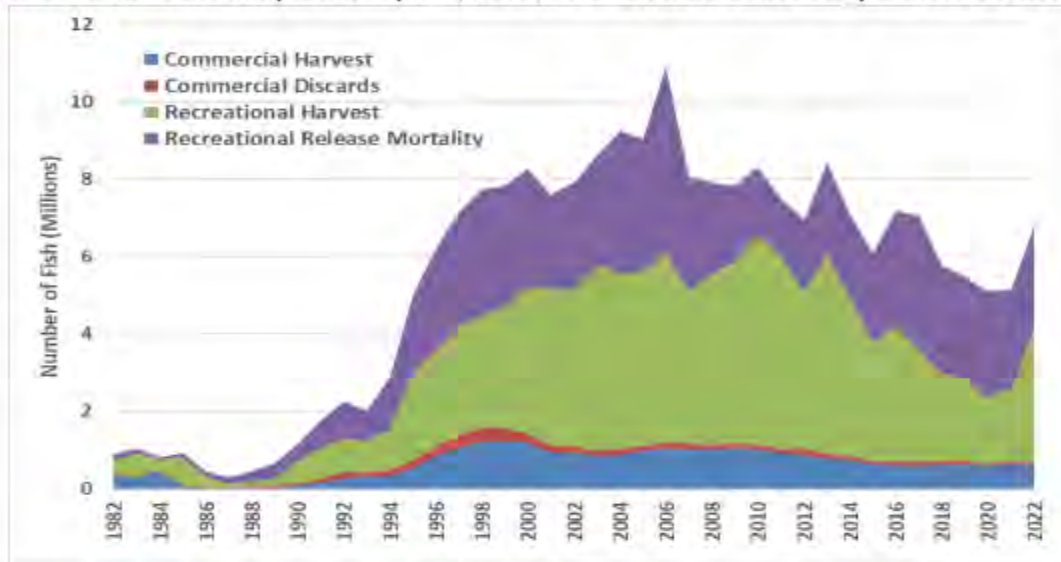
(A) has been subject to large fluctuations due to natural causes, fishing pressure, environmental pollution, loss and alteration of habitat, inadequacy of fisheries conservation and management practices, and other causes; and

(B) risks potential depletion in the future without effective monitoring and conservation and management measures.

(4) It is in the national interest to implement effective procedures and measures to

As you review Figure 5 below, we can clearly see the strict tagging-based regulations has limited the commercial fishery.

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.



Additionally, the ASMFC has zero success in trying to regulate the recreational fishery.

We can clearly and *factually* see as the population grows so does the effort and catch. The catch and release mortality (waste) are completely unacceptable, and not being addressed. A slot size limit has to lead to significantly greater amount of waste which is a direct contradictory to your mandate.

Commercial Fisherman took a 18% reduction, but due to ASMFC inability to figure out (after 40 years) how to stop the fishing power of the recreational Fisherman they didn't have the 18% reduction.

It is a fact that taking *another* 14% more from the Commercials would result in a 32% reduction in total, while giving the recreational community more fish to Kill, because at the end of the day, Figure shows that the RECS kill a lot of Striped Bass.

Table 6 will show from 1993-present day, the recreational fishery has been the machine that needs to be slowed down, not the commercial.

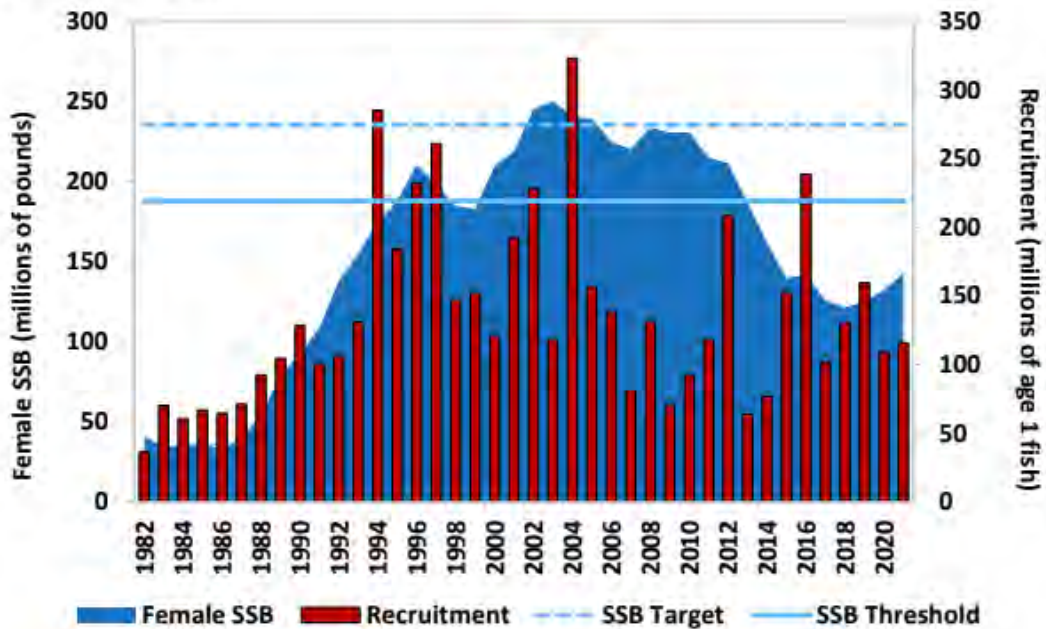
Year	Commercial		Recreational		Total Removals
	Harvest	Dead Discards*	Harvest	Release Mortality	
1993	314,526	114,317	789,037	812,404	2,030,284
1994	325,401	165,700	1,055,523	1,360,872	2,907,496
1995	537,412	192,368	2,287,578	2,010,689	5,028,047
1996	854,102	257,506	2,487,422	2,600,526	6,199,556
1997	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

It is essential that you acknowledge that the landings that the Coastal Commercial Fisherman from Delaware to Mass took 111, 757 fish. The Recs from the same states took "4,801,426. "

The is no way that the science indicates that the Commercial Fisherman need a reduction.

I beg the question as to why the commercial landings are measured in pounds, but the recs are measure by the number of fish, which clearly make is appear to be favorable when in essence they are killing a significant number of fish. As I bring your attention to the next chart, it will show that we clearly have enough fish to produce a good spawn.

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



How will a 14% reduction in the Commercial Fishery help? Title 16 mentions trying to improve the spawning and the environmental integrity to help the population.

Additionally, why isn't the report from the ASMFC as seen on the next page, cut from page 10, mentioned anywhere in this plan?

*Special Report No. 53
of the*

**ATLANTIC STATES
MARINE FISHERIES
COMMISSION**



**Evaluation of Anadromous Striped Bass
Enhancement Efforts with Emphasis on
Chesapeake Bay Stocking Activities**

Tag recoveries offered evidence that the release of striped bass at the earlier phase-I stage is a viable stocking strategy. Other tag recovery comparisons offered interesting information, but conclusions are limited by the lack of experimental designs, and hatchery effects.

Hatchery-reared and wild striped bass appear to exhibit similar behaviors with respect to movement from estuaries to marine areas. Striped bass that were stocked in Chesapeake Bay tributaries have been recovered both on the spawning grounds of their natal river, and on the spawning grounds of other Chesapeake Bay rivers and the Delaware River. The extent of straying and whether hatchery and wild fidelity are comparable are unknown at this time.

The cost of the hatchery program in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia between 1985 to 1995 was approximately \$8.7 million. This is a conservative estimate because it does not include capital costs of federal hatcheries, evaluation costs, or associated federal and state research costs. The value of coastwide commercial and recreational fisheries in 1980 was \$12 million. The expenditure of \$800,000 to \$900,000 per year to maintain and increase Chesapeake Bay spawning populations through enhancement at a time when striped bass wild populations were considered to be in jeopardy, appears to be reasonable. However, the support of a put-and-take fishery, especially when the wild population is growing, is not advisable. It appears that stocking to boost production in systems with poor reproduction in combination with management measures is a viable option.

Commercial Fisherman is defined as a group of individuals who catch fish in a commercial capacity, either for sale for trade, myself along with other commercials that performs this primitive act contribute to sustainability, and other economic advantages. One examples would be tourism where tourist often eat at local restaurants to indulge "local" fish, not fish from other countries, where regulations, are unknown and perhaps nonexistent, and this will also support the local Charter boats and tackle shop, without this we risk the loss of our seaside communities.

The fishing community commercial and recreational has reported 2023 to be one the greatest fall runs of all times, as we have seen a massive increase in the stiped bass fishery from Fire Island to south Jersey.

In closing, if the decision is made to reduce commercial fishing 14% it would be a rush to judgement by an overzealous government bureaucracy that has watched fishery after fishery collapse (flounder, bluefish, weakfish, lobster, and crab). Have you considered that the catch and size limits are not rebuilding anything, but 'wasting" all the fish in the sea?

We believe that neither the commercials or the Recs should have a reduction. We also insist that any reduction to the commercial fishery is blatant discrimination against commercial fisherman who have made the largest sacrifice to see this stock rebound.

Comments on

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

General – This addendum seeks to permanently put in place emergency action measures. The emergency action measures were designed to protect a strong 2015 year class. There is no reason to believe those same measure will work for small year classes. I recommend not taking any of the proposed actions.

Paragraph 1.0 paragraph beginning with In October- Explain why the TC's findings only apply to commercial and not recreational fishery?

Paragraph 1.1.3 Status of Fishery, Recreational Fishery Recent MRIP News Regarding Fishing Effort Survey 2nd paragraph beginning with Even – This paragraph is pure speculation without any scientific information to support it. I recommend it be removed and wait for final decisions to be made in about 18 months prior to raising defenses and establishing battle lines.

It is interesting to note this paragraph claims a 40% reduction in bad data would not have any impacts however the proposed restrictive recreational measures result in a 49% reduction and that is viewed as being sufficient and significant.

Page 14, Table Ocean Recreational Options – Columns two thru four are not discussed in the text and need to indicate units of measure. Particularly concerning column four seems to indicate Recreational Release Mortality RATE is increasing to 11% and that cannot happen. The current 9% has no dependency on length at release. Maybe it is time to take credit for implementation of circle hooks. If column four is number of dead fish it surely is not a constant 2% each year. Is this 2% for each year or cumulative. Column two overall reduction is this reduction in angler interest? Angler participation?

Maybe the results of each option could be overlaid on Figure1 to give a better sense of what is actually happening.

Thank You for your contributions to Striped Bass Management. Your work is appreciated.

Craig A. McIlrath
NJ Private Saltwater Recreational Surf Fisherman
38 Mill Park Lane Marlton NJ 08053
856-905-1711
blandmail@comcast.net

From: [Mike LA](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:49:53 AM

No mode split please.

Sent from my iPhone

December 12, 2023

Emilie Franke

Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street
Suite 200A-N Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Mike Milillo; I am currently 31 years old. I was born and raised on Long Island and currently live on Long Island. I have been surf fishing for bass since I was about 8 years old, my father got me into the sport.

Now in these past 20 or so years I have seen the population of bass dramatically change before my eyes, and not for the good. When I was a kid to a young teen all I could think about is how I can't wait to have similar memories with future kids of mine like my father and myself have. Unfortunately in my later teens and early twenties to now I have come the bleak realization that hopefully I'm going to be lucky enough to still be able to fish for bass when I'm in my 60's.

I was in attendance the other night at the public comments hearing in Kings Park N.Y. I was towards the front of the room on the right side from where you were sitting. I was sitting next to Al a recreation surfcaster who got up and spoke at one point.

This was the first public comment meeting that I attended; that night I was taking in all the information that was happening and processing it to form my own opinion on the matter. A basic take away from the night was the for-hire captains were all in agreement that the fishing had never been this good in their life and there's more fish than ever. The surfcasters had the complete opposite view the fishing is worse and worse every year.

To me, the two drastic differences in viewpoints is a major red flag. With hearing this my thought process is to review data and check the data points and figure out why there is such a stark difference from one to the other. I think with any study more data than less is a good thing. It can be used to cross reference findings and help confirm or deny information.

Has the board though about or looked into crowd sourcing data about catch and release from fisherman. If there was some type of app that can keep a log of fishing trips whether successful or not, I think this can be something beneficial and can be used to help with the data. Now there's always the downside to this which is people will use this to skew the data and try to make the fishing seem worse or better than it is. However, I think there are enough honest people out there that would not skew the data and use this tool honestly and help with the data collection, I know I would, and I think a fair amount of the guys I fish with would do the same.

I think something else to be looked at by the board would be to limit the season by a month or two and have it be catch and release only. There are sacrifices that have to be made if we do not want to decimate the population and I fear we are already behind the ball on rebuilding the stripe bass stock population.

In any event, I support the option B.

This is the closest to the 14.5% rebuilding target that is specified by the board even though it does not meet the 14.5% criteria prescribed at 14.1%.

Sincerely,

Mike Milillo
36 Vassar Street
Garden City, NY 11530

December 15, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing to comment on the proposed Addendum 2 to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Atlantic Striped Bass. I am a recreational catch-and-release angler in Connecticut who fishes for striped bass from NY up the CT coast to MA. I strongly support management initiatives that will increase the long-term abundance of striped bass. I strongly oppose any addendum that would increase fishing mortality or decrease the likelihood that the striped bass population will achieve the spawning stock biomass target by 2029.

I support the following management options in Addendum 2:

3.1 Recreational Fishery Management

3.1.1: I support option B: a 28-31" slot for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.2: I support option b1: a 19-23" slot for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.3: n/a

3.1.4: I support option B: establish minimum requirements for fish processing.

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management

3.2.1. I support option B: reduction of up to 14.5% of quota—preferably on the average harvest rather than the pre-existing quota.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

3.3: I support option B: board action when stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029.

I sincerely hope the ASMFC acts in the best interests of current and future anglers by choosing management options that increase the abundance of striped bass to sustainable levels for recreational and commercial fishermen.

Sincerely,

Mark Riser, Ridgefield, Connecticut

11 March Road
Salisbury, MA 01952
December 12, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Va 22201

Sent via Email

Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke,

As a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts, and the son, brother and nephew of Gloucester Fisherman, I have witnessed the dramatic changes in the fishing industry over the years. When I was younger, I fished with Dad during summers, and recall the abundance of many species, including the incredible New England Shrimp. Clearly, assertive and appropriate measures were not taken to protect these valuable assets. The impact on the fishing industry was dramatic, with many jobs, and businesses ended.

Today, as a recreational fisherman, I am sensing, we are in a similar situation with the striped bass population, and believe ASSERTIVE action is required now to help preserve the striped bass. I want my grandchildren to be able to enjoy this exciting and wonderful fishery.

After reviewing the *Draft Addendum II*, I have some serious concerns that:

- 1) More assertive conservation actions may not be taken by the commission
- 2) The commercial and "for-hire" fisheries will not be impacted appropriately for conservation measures. I witnessed many very large "egg bearing" bass brought in by the commercial fisherman which must have had an impact on the hatchlings.
- 3) Inadequate action is being taken to better train recreational fisherman on proper release techniques
- 4) The ongoing low staffing of enforcement officials will enable poachers to keep killing "illegal" fish. (In our area, I highlight, The Lawrence Dam, and the Cape Cod Canal being 2 major contributors to illegal poaching.)

In reviewing the various excerpts on the draft, my comments are as follows

- 3.1.1 - I would be in favor of Option B. which means all anglers would have the same guidelines.
- 3.1.2 - I would be in favor of Option B2
- 3.13 - I would be in favor of Option B-same rules should apply to the Capt., Crew as to patrons

3.14- I would be in favor of Option A as the enforcement for Option B would be challenging. Better use of our limited enforcement resources is very obvious.

3.21- I would be in favor of Option B with a preference closer to the 14.5% reduction. Here is where the lower population of larger egg bearing striped bass can be saved for future spawning.

3.3- I would be in favor of Option B, where management measures can be amended in a more expedited basis. The “emergency action” instituted in 2023 is an example how this change in regulations can better serve the future of the striped bass population.

I also strongly believe there should be a requirement for all anglers applying for salt water licenses to be better trained in proper release techniques. Possibly requiring a video to be watched, and some questions satisfactorily answered prior to the delivery of a license. Again, such an assertive action will help show the angler how critical caring for fish will help save the future of the fishery.

Thank you for reviewing my input, and I truly hope we see the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission take the most appropriate actions to help the striped bass fishery recover.

Sincerely,
Peter Novello

November 16, 2023

Capt. John Rainone 35 Ocean View Dr. Narragansett RI 02882. LilTootCharter@gmail.com
Vessel L'il Toot Charters Member of RI Party & Charter Boat Association.

Subject: Support for Separate Measures in ASMFC's Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass

Dear Emilie Franke

I am writing to express my strong support for the implementation of separate measures for the for-hire sector, specifically endorsing Option C in Section 3.1.1, as outlined in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. As a fervent advocate for sustainable fisheries management, I believe that this approach is essential in balancing the conservation needs of the Atlantic Striped Bass population with the socio-economic influences and recreational desires of both the for-hire fleet and individual anglers.

Option C, which proposes separate regulations for the for-hire sector, takes into account the unique characteristics of this segment of the fishing industry. I particularly appreciate its recognition of the socio-economic influences of the for-hire fleet, which plays a vital role in providing recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the cultural and economic well-being of coastal communities.

In addition to the broader considerations, it is crucial to acknowledge the recreational anglers who seek the opportunity to harvest a Striped Bass for personal consumption. Recreational fishing not only offers a connection to the marine environment but also provides a means for individuals to appreciate and sustainably harvest fish for their tables. The for-hire fleet, with its expertise and infrastructure, can play a pivotal role in facilitating this experience for recreational anglers who wish to take a fish home for dinner.

By recognizing the harvest aspirations of recreational anglers and allowing for the sustainable harvest of Striped Bass, we can strike a balance that supports both conservation goals and the cultural traditions of individual anglers. The for-hire fleet, with its role as a facilitator for these experiences, becomes an essential partner in promoting responsible and ethical fishing practices.

I would like to express my support for Option B in Section 3.1.4, which proposes Status Quo, no requirement related to at-sea/shoreside filleting. Fillet restrictions will disrupt the established business plans of for-hire operators and introduce difficulties in disposing of racks. For-hire businesses often run back-to-back trips, and requiring filleting at the dock could disrupt the seamless flow of operations, limiting the efficiency and profitability of for-hire operations. Striking a balance between conservation efforts and the operational needs of for-hire businesses is essential for the sustainability of both the fishery and the businesses dependent on it.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to consider the adoption of separate measures for the for-hire sector, specifically advocating for Option C in Section 3.1.1, and supporting the exemption from fillet restrictions outlined in Option B in Section 3.1.4 within ASMFC's Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. These considerations will not only safeguard the Atlantic Striped Bass population but also ensure the continued viability of for-hire businesses, contributing to the long-term health and sustainability of our valuable fisheries resources.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I trust that your decisions will reflect a comprehensive understanding of the diverse interests involved in fisheries management.

John C. Ramore

From:
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:30:10 AM

Sent from my iPhone

1. C 2 please
2. Stop all catch and release
3. Limit of 10 rods in the water trolling
4. If you give charter boats 2 fish limit it to one trip per day.
5. Show us your serious

Bonnie Sue Charter's, LLC



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

My Name is Robert Rhodes and I'm a US Coast Guard licensed Master Captain. I own my own Charter Fishing Business "Bonnie Sue Charters, LLC". Charter boats are small businesses and survive on fishing.

Over the past few years our industry has lost 7 weeks of our season. It is important for our business to have Option C2, which would allow the customers on our Charter boats to keep 2 striped bass per person.

I also believe if we are going to loose our trophy season we should prohibit catch and release season from January through May 15 so these big fish can spawn undisturbed!

**Sincerely,
Captain Bobby Rhodes
6347 Trailing Arbutus Ct.
Lothian, Md. 20711**

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Brendan Richards. I am an avid recreational angler from Rhode Island, and have been fishing for striped bass for over 25 years. In that time, I have been struck time and again by how highly esteemed these fish are at both a cultural level in the region, and at a personal level by untold multitudes of anglers, myself included. The striped bass is a special fish, and is the keystone species of the north east's inshore fishery. This is why I am deeply concerned about both the current state of the fishery, as well as its future. I am writing you today to voice my support for the most conservative options for Draft Addendum II, which are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

Recreational harvest needs to be reigned in and reduced in order to better rebuild this stock. Additionally, I oppose mode splits. Patrons of for-hire vessels are still recreational fishermen, no more, no less. Paying a fare to fish from a for-hire vessel should not grant them special privilege. Also, we cannot keep widening and moving the slot limit to follow the 2015 year class as it matures and grows to ensure a little more short-term success for archaic business models that are allegedly so reliant on dead fish. While I am far from "anti-harvest" I fully acknowledge that at this precarious time in the state of the fishery, fish in the water are more valuable than fish in the freezer.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

Consistency across the region will result in regulation that is both more strongly followed and more easily enforced. The more stringent regulation is required again to reign in recreational harvest. Again too, mode splits should be denied. For-hire fares are still recreational anglers, they need to contribute to the conservation effort the same as the other recreational anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas

In line with the theme of my comments, I support this option as the fish are in need of decisive conservation efforts. Let it be known, that I would prefer for commercial reductions to come off of *landings* rather than *quotas* as this would give the reduction more meaningful traction. However, in the absence of such options on the table, I support the uniform 14.5% reduction in quota.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

We need swift, decisive action after the release of the next stock assessment in 2024. The best way to achieve that is through allowing board action.

In conclusion, we all need to step lightly at this current moment and err strongly on the side of conservation with the future of this fishery so grimly uncertain. While I recognize the concerns of

some in the for-hire and commercial industry, the greatest benefit to all is to act with an eye to the long term. More lenient regulations may seem beneficial at the current moment, but they are most certainly to prove detrimental in the long run. And frankly, our inshore fishery is looking more sparse all the time, there will likely not be much to replace striped bass as angling opportunity should the stock crash. We all *need* these fish. We should care for them accordingly.

Thank you and sincerely,

Brendan Richards

brendan.richards1138@gmail.com

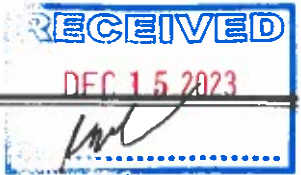
401-302-3774

3595 Post Rd, Apt. 15207

Warwick, RI 02886

NEIL ROTHKOPF, D.D.S.

GENERAL DENTISTRY



12/10/2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St.
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Va. 22201

To Emilie Franke,

I have been fishing the Long Island, New York area for 50 years as a recreational saltwater angler. My name is Neil Rothkopf, and I am a retired dentist.

Please use the options I have indicated in regard to Striped bass Addendum II of Amendment 7:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B₁
- 3.1.3 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I look forward to many more years of fishing on Long Island with my children and grandchildren.
Thank you for your help.

Respectfully,

Neil Rothkopf DDS

From: [Capt. Ron/Fishermen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 11
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 2:45:48 PM
Attachments: [AG - New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Itr 10-24-2023.doc](#)

Gentlemen,

I am sending the attached document as representation of the Party and Charter boat Captains of New Jersey.

Please note, the last page I did not include all the signatures as I wanted for you to get the just of the letter.

Thank you for your time, I am looking forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Capt.Ron Santee/Fishermen/Atlantic Highlands, NJ

November 21, 2023

Mr. Joseph Cimino
New Jersey Fish & Wildlife
P.O. Box 418
Port Republic, NJ 08241

Senator Vin Gopal
802 West Park Avenue
Suite 302
Ocean Township, NJ 07712

Mr. Jeff Kaelin
547 New England Road
Cape May, NJ 08204

Re: Striped bass bogus mortality rate

Gentlemen:

We, the undersigned New Jersey fishing boat captains, are writing because you are the three New Jersey members who represent the State of New Jersey on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (herein "Commission").

The Commission in an October 19, 2023 news release claimed that the "unexpectedly high 2022 fishing mortality rate continues" for striped bass, and it used that mortality rate to justify its emergency action in reducing the number of striped bass that can be kept (p. 1).

The Commission earlier in February 2021 issued a "Public Information Document" regarding "Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass" that stated it "currently applies a 9% hooking mortality rate. . ." based upon a study conducted by Diodati and Richards, (1996), (herein "Study"), (p. 16).

That Study stated in pertinent part (p. 301) that anglers,

...

"were limited to terminal gear consisting of unbaited lures with one to three treble hooks, single-hook rubber jigs, or baited single hooks. **Only barbed hooks were used**, (Emphasis added).

...

Mr. Joseph Cimino
Mr. Jeff Kaelin
Senator Vin Gopal
Page 2
November 21, 2023

The Commission's basis for claiming a 9% mortality rate therefore is based upon the Study. However, "barbed hooks" are no longer used to catch striped bass. The Study therefore is outdated and useless in determining the correct mortality rate for striped bass caught on circle hooks.

The mandatory use of circle hooks now **lowers** the mortality rate for striped bass. The Commission in its October 19, 2023 News Release thus acknowledged: "Circle hooks have been proven to help reduce rates of gut-hooking when fished correctly" (p. 17).

The Commission therefore must immediately stop using its bogus 9% mortality rate. That would result in not needing to impose its current regulations regarding how many (and size) striped bass can be kept. That also would result in raising the number of fish that can be caught because of a lower mortality rate.

The Commission also should rescind its 2023 mandate that only one striped bass can be kept, as it was based upon data that has no relevance to the mortality rate using circle hooks, and it should reimpose the 2022 regulations regarding size and how many striped bass can be kept.

The Commission may claim that other data supports its 9% number and that some estimates are even higher. Any such claims should be disregarded, as the Commission apparently has no credible evidence regarding the mortality rate when circle hooks are used.

The State of New Jersey should withdraw from the Commission if it refuses to act because its numbers cannot be trusted and because the Department of New Jersey Fish & Wildlife can regulate circle hooks; fish size; number of fish that can be kept; etc.

Furthermore, the Commission's August 2, 2023 news release referred to its emergency action in developing additional measures to aid rebuilding and stated that its proposed finalized Draft Amendment 11 will be considered at its winter meeting. That news release added that the Commission will include modifications to the slot limit "**with harvest season closures as a secondary non-preferred option**" (p. 1), (Emphasis added).

Objecting to Draft Amendment 11 will be a futile exercise and have no practical effect because a majority of the other member states may approve it regardless of what New Jersey does.

New Jersey anglers as a result will be bound by Amendment 11 for many years to come regardless of how onerous it may be; regardless of how inaccurate the Commission's information may be; and regardless of how unfair it may be.

There thus is no good reason for New Jersey to give up its sovereignty over its waters in exchange for such a possible bleak outcome.

Mr. Joseph Cimino
Mr. Jeff Kaelin
Senator Vin Gopal
Page 3
November 21, 2023

Accordingly, the only prudent thing to do is for New Jersey to withdraw from the Compact governing the Commission pursuant to Article XII of its Compact that enables members states to renounce the Compact by “sending six months’ notice in writing to withdraw from the compact to the other states party thereto” (p. 4).

We thank you for your attention to this matter.

Name
Email
Address

Date:

Name
Email
Address

Date:

Name
Email
Address

Date:

Name
Email
Address

Date:

Name
Email
Address

Date:

From: [Frank Santora](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass fishing addendum
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:43:46 AM

Please do what you can to protect the bass, they are only beginning to recover. My vote would be to eliminate commercial fishing as much as possible, and EXPLAIN the thinking behind the slot size so recreational fisherman respect it more. None of us understand why that particular size fish is the least valuable to the population.

My daughter caught her first striper this year and we released it and had a reproduction made. I would like to be able to go fishing with her every year and have the opportunity to catch a big fish, this creates interest in kids for life.

Please protect our bass, and I have attached a photo you can use to make the case for the value of the species beyond the dinner table. Let's not ruin their recovery! When I was a kid this would have never happened because they were over fished, let's not make that mistake again just because we had a couple good years!

Thanks,

Frank and Elise Santora

133 Ocean Avenue
Center Moriches, NY 11934
Homeostasis2100@yahoo.com
631.874.5389
04 December 2023

Emilie Frank, FMP Coordinator
1050 North Highland Street
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Dear Ms. Frank,

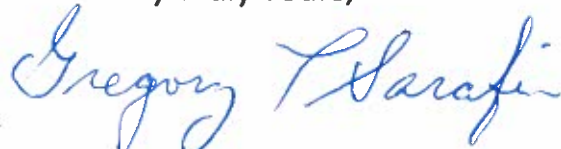
It is my feeling that the current striped bass policies overlook some important factors. I primarily fish from shore, targeting mainly bluefish and fluke. Striped bass only presents by-catch. I don't keep striped bass even of legal size due to potential increased contamination in the flesh of larger fish. Yet, releasing smaller school fish without injury is sometimes a problem due to the tackle used for bluefish. It seems obvious that many of the smaller bass become injured even with best practices and do not survive release.

Allowing a limited number of smaller school fish and leaving larger potential breeding stock alone would be a more viable practice for fishermen like me and provide a way to increase populations. I would advocate for the issuance of a limited number of tags. This would still control overfishing and I personally would not object to a reasonable fee for them. I fish for food and once I catch dinner I am done. I would also be more apt to utilize a smaller fish without excess waste.

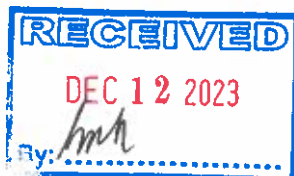
I realize that there are many considerations in drafting regulations and I support the decisions made, but I also think that alternative approaches may sometimes be equally viable

Thank you for your time and attention.

Very Truly Yours,



Gregory T. Sarafin



ASMFC Amendment 7, Addendum II Comment
Jason Seman- Owner of Maryland Fishing and Hunting, LLC
Vice President, Area 1 for the Maryland Charter Boat Association

I started my small business in 2018 in Maryland and just in this brief span of time I could have not envisioned the amount of turmoil the Striped Bass Fishery and Fishermen alike have faced. Not only economic, but the instability surrounding the State fish of Maryland.

In an act of preservation, in 2020 the State of Maryland acted to reduce harvest of Striped Bass by 18% and a total of 28% including Commercial harvest. Consequently, our industries season was shortened in a three phase effort help rejuvenate the Striped Bass population. In summary: 13 days of our Spring Fishery was eliminated, 16 days of our Summer Fishery was canceled, and the last 5 days of our Winter Fishery was closed. This effort that was once available to us as anglers can also be seen in Amendment 7's public comment on page 61 based on the 2019 data set. The alterations to the season continued into 2023 and it has now been announced that 15 additional days have been taken from our once most popular Spring Trophy Season in 2024.

In summary, we have lost 49 days of our Striped Bass Fishing Season in Maryland since 2018. As a For Hire Sector, we now only have a 6 month, 1 week window of time to support our families.

Though we are thankful for our partnership with fishery management staff within the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, we continue to live in fear year in and year out, and worry what will impact our family businesses next? Will we be able to operate in Maryland as an industry if proposed regulations continue to shorten our seasons and daily harvest limits? Will there be a positive outcome in the future as it relates to the additional closures and smaller slot limits?

Like most Charter Boats under the FACTS reporting system, we primarily operate a For Harvest based business model. Most of our customers book trips with us, to spend the day enjoying the gifts that the Chesapeake Bay has to offer, and to take home their catch to feed their families.

A short window of time ago, the fruits of our fishery were realized and supported in the Spring of 2020 during the Global Pandemic, when anglers in Maryland were allowed to feed their families as an act of sustenance by Governor Larry Hogan. It is important to have the understanding that it is not wrong to make a harvest in moderation and that it is important for all Americans to be able to do so with consideration.

As professional fishermen, we understand the consequences of catch and release fishing when using artificial bait, live bait, and cut bait. It would be devastating to watch the amount of dead discards lost on a daily basis due to deep hook sets or the mishandling of fish when forced to catch and release for entertainment beyond a one fish limit. It is our belief that when a two fish limit per angler is in place, we mitigate the consequences of over fishing by ceasing operation, and additional Striped Bass are spared. We believe that if you do not have a set limit that satisfactory for a customer to harvest, it would force anglers to catch and release in abundance, causing more harm to the resource, and more mishandling of fish which is unnecessary.

It is the key principle to why the Commercial Sectors mortality rate is so low. As professional fishermen we strongly believe our release mortality rate is equivalent to or lower than the commercial fishery in Maryland at this time. As professional fisherman we understand the correct way to handle and release fish. We are professional fisherman that hold the same credentials as all commercial fisherman, we all are required to own a Tidal Fish License or a Guide's License to participate in our fishery. There is absolutely no logical reason why we as professional fisherman, are considered to have a higher release mortality than our colleagues in the commercial fishery. The unique ability to manage of our fishery and understanding the differences between the mortality of professional fishermen and recreational fishermen is a key principle that is only defined through Conservation Equivalency. The rationale that we are reliant on MRIP data estimates and not our own reporting harvest system creates even more division and opportunity for error in the Chesapeake Bay.

It is to be noted that the most recent NOAA pilot study has concluded that the MRIP-FES data is fundamentally flawed. The Recreational Catch & Effort data could potentially be effected significantly by "Switching

the sequence of questions resulted in fewer reporting errors and illogical responses, and effort estimates that were generally 30 to 40 percent lower for shore and private boat modes than estimates produced from the current design” (Link: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/fishing-effort-survey-research-and-improvements>).

It is my belief that we will see negative impacts from too narrow of a slot limit at certain times of the season and predominantly in the upper areas of the Chesapeake Bay where there are predominantly larger fish most of the season. It will be comparable to the number of released fish when we once had a 20” minimum size limit. This has been previously described as “incredible” and my hope is that I am wrong. We believe that we have already seen small samples of this during our tenure in the fishery when for profit fishing tournaments occur. They yield heavy pressure to small areas of the Chesapeake Bay in warm water months. Discards are visibly high due to narrow size requirements, in order to capture the best catch, or winning fish. Unfortunately, most of this goes unreported because the Recreational Sector in Maryland is not utilizing an Electronic Reporting System for the most accurate data analysis. We as an industry support the initiative for Electronic Reporting to be mandatory for all fisherman alike and urge the State of Maryland to limit the amount of tournaments that take place on an annual basis.

As a For Hire Fleet, our harvest is understood to be minimal in comparison to the total data set and should be the most accurate based on its parameters. To elaborate, as professional fishermen we have been asked over a three year period to log not only harvest data of all species through the FACTS Reporting System, but all releases, method, and even bait caught. This comprehensive data set was recorded per trip and verified by random surveys by Maryland Department of Natural Resources employees. These employees were given our estimated check in time back at the dock with advanced notice during each trip. Our customers also took surveys after each trip when requested by state employees to verify our harvest data accuracy and their personal fishing history within the past season.

Not only have our Captains and Crew have been willing to better this fishery, our customers have devoted their time to it as well.

In previous years, Electronic Reporting has afforded the 377 For Hire Eligible Vessels the opportunity to attempt to function as a For Hire Sector under a two fish harvest limit through the FACTS Reporting System. Without it, our industry would have collapsed because it is our belief that the majority of our customers would not book with us for a 1 fish per angler harvest limit. Without FACTS, it would not only be devastating to our family businesses to loose a two fish limit, it is our belief that it would cause unreported over fishing, and have detrimental consequences to the fish that we care so much about.

As previously noted before Catch and Release Mortality is a huge concern. The action by the State of Maryland to close the 15 day Striped Bass Trophy Season without considering further closure of the Catch and Release Season from January to March 31st is baffling. Why would you let anglers target fish that have not spawned? Why would you let anglers interrupt their spawning cycle in the tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay, exhaust them, and then release them with no limitations? If the Stock Assessment is truly faltering, why are we not taking all measures to protect the breeding Striped Bass? “The Stock Assessment assumes, based on previous studies, that 9% of the fish that are released alive die as a result of being caught” (page 8, Addendum II), why are we not taking further Emergency Action?

This statement parallels Mr. Michael Luisi’s quote on page 28 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Meeting on October 18, 2023 “I feel pretty strongly, and I’ve made this clear to the Board, that I think no targeting closures are appropriate in this fishery, where the majority of the mortality is coming from fish being released. I realize that it is a large recreational fishery, and fish are always going to die after being released.” (Link: https://asmfc.org/files/2023AnnualMeeting/AtlStripedBassManagementBoard_October2023.pdf)

Our concerns continue in relation to the Annual Young of the Year Survey. (Link for Image Below: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/striped-bass/juvenile-index.aspx>)



If you look at the graph above you will see the 22 collection sites that have been historically utilized for the Young of the Year Study. If you are a fisherman in the Chesapeake Bay you will notice that most of these sites are located in areas with high levels of invasive species. This has caused predation issues that the State of Maryland yet to resolve. The Blue Catfish and Snake Head Species are a huge problem, and have made most species a form of prey in the Chesapeake Bay. It has been even described as biblical by fishermen in some areas of the Chesapeake Bay due to the voracity of these predators and how they adapt to new environments. It is obvious why the States Young of the Year Studies have yielded little data and this issue needs to be resolved through a Fishery Management Plan. It is my belief that credible Emergency Action has yet to take place in regards to this issue.

During the Moratorium, fishermen went to work at the fish hatcheries to revitalize the Striped Bass Population. This has been forgotten. We realize the issue of predation is occurring now but lack a comparable restocking program in these historical areas of reproduction or alternative sites. Our State has the opportunity to start a reproduction effort through sites like the Joseph Manning Hatchery (Link: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/hatcheries/manning.aspx>). This action needs to be further explored to combat environmental issues related to the spawning stocks environment and issues surrounding predation for a >1 year old Striped Bass. The effects that predation are having on ASMFC's Technical Committees model before age 1 are unknown. This needs to be studied at the current collection sites and abroad.

The Young of the Year collection site map also continues to lack of data collected in the Middle of the Chesapeake Bay. This large area from The Choptank River to Pooles Island is where most Striped Bass Fishermen spend their time and have observation year round. It causes us to have great doubt in regards to the accuracy surrounding the Young of the Year Survey and how it is conducted.

As fishermen we observe young fish in the Middle Bay but we feel that 1/3 of the Chesapeake Bay has been virtually ignored. As we all know, climate change has effected the fishery in different ways, we have even introduced a pilot program for Shrimping in the Commercial Fishery in Maryland. It is without hesitation, I can say that the Striped Bass populations migrations patterns have changed due to climate, water quality, and predation issues (including mass schools of dolphin from March- September effecting fishery). Collection sites need to be added to the Middle Chesapeake Bay to create a better understanding of what is occurring in Maryland waters.

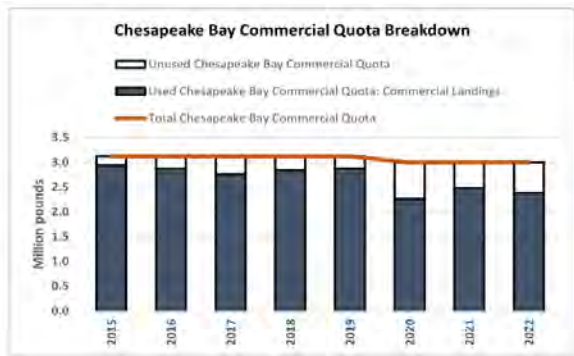
We as fishermen, fish where the fish are, and these patterns have changed drastically within the last decade. I question the data where reproductive efforts are supposedly lacking from 5 years ago, when we consistently catch an abundance of 19-26" fish. The real question at hand is where is the abundance of 26+ inch fish from June until December? Is it related to over harvest by all user groups, is this an issue in relation to lack of bait & forage to support an adult Striped Bass due to implications of the Menhaden Reduction Industry, or is this a broader multi-state environmental issue due to urban sprawl, or all of the above?

As a professional Captain on the Chesapeake Bay and a member of the For Hire Sector, I am extremely concerned about the health fishery and our local fishing industry. Potential management decisions year after year

continue to shorten our season with little evidence of observed beneficial change. On Page 9 of Addendum II, it is noted that the Chesapeake Bay For Hire Removals decreased by 27% in 2022. As a fishermen, I am not sure how much more an industry can sacrifice before it collapses. Not just due to shortened seasons and limits, but due to the negativity that surrounds it, the economic decline in America as boats sit at the dock currently, and the lack of accurate data to make the best management decisions possible.

As a whole the Chesapeake Bay’s Recreational Harvest numbers were estimated to be 20% of the coast wide harvest in 2022, down 15% from 2021 (35%). As a mariner on the Chesapeake Bay, we have noticed a decline in boat traffic on the Chesapeake Bay since the Global Pandemic. Even less in 2023 and I hypothesize that Recreational Harvest numbers will continue to decline because of Economic stress in America and because they are created by inaccurate estimations of harvest data. The economic impacts that have effected the fishery can be supported by a recent Public Information request by the President of the Maryland Charter Boat Association, where boats engaged in the FACTS reporting system caught a total number Striped Bass in the following totalities: 121,771 in 2020, 116,581 in 2021, and 101,043 in 2022. This is a 17% reduction in catch over the last two years which is largely related to the economy.

An example of this can also be seen in the Chesapeake Bay Wide Commercial Harvest Quota Breakdown on page 23 of Addendum II.



Draft Document for Public Comment

(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 Ocean: 24” minimum	1,445,394 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota) Ocean: 89,094 lbs.	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 1.1-5.31, 10.1-12.31
	PRFC	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 Gill Net: 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 Ocean: 28” min	983,393 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota) 125,034 lbs.	1.16-12.31
	NC	295,495 lbs. (split between gear types)	Seine fishery was not opened Gill net fishery was not opened Trawl fishery was not opened

Unused Chesapeake Bay Commercial Quota is comparable to the year of the pandemic and could be attributed to the economic instability in America. The Chesapeake Bay and Rivers portion of the quota was 1,445,394 lbs in 2022 (page 25 of Addendum II). The correlation of the average price per pound vs Commercial Harvest fulfillment needs to be studied to further understand if quota is not being caught because of lack of biomass or personal choice.

As a member of the For- Hire Sector, it is clear that the Upper and Mid Chesapeake Bay is predominately reliant on this fish as an industry. Our State Fish supports not only Maryland Captains, but the surrounding communities and business owners alike. In 2020 NOAA announced that Recreational Fishing in the United States contributed to \$98 Billion dollars in sales (Link: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/sustainable-fisheries/fisheries-economics-united-states>). The Fishing industry is a huge part of our economy and is pivotal to our way of life in Maryland.

As a professional fisherman on the Chesapeake Bay, in regards to option 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options, I support Option C2 on page 15 of Addendum II. It is the only option that gives us the widest slot limit and two fish limit for the For Hire Sector. This option changes our slot drastically from a 19"-31in fish to a 19"-24" fish. In my professional opinion, it will save the most fish because it will lead to fewer unnecessary releases. I support my statement with the data outlined above. My hope is that the board will take measures to make this fishery more stable through more accurate data collection methods and improved management measures.

In regards to Option "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".

I support option "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." This is the widest slot limit for the For Hire Sector while creating the most opportunity for reduction.

In regards to option "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."

I support "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." It is my belief as a For Hire Sector should be separated from the Recreational Sector based on how our data is collected through the FACTS Reporting System. It justifies our harvest data is accurate and should be an overwhelming deciding factor when further fishery management solutions are proposed.

In regards to option "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."

I support "Option A. Status quo. No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at sea/shore side filleting." I support this because it is a logistics problem when running fishing parties. To be the most efficient on the water, it is beneficial to be able to process fish in a timely manner. It should also be recognized that several marinas on the Chesapeake Bay do not allow fish cleaning. The ability to not be able to opportunistically clean your catch at sea would create unforeseen problems for many.

In regards to option "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."

I support "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%." It is my understanding that all three user groups all have an impact on this fishery. This gives the most leniency in regards to modification of the Chesapeake

Bay commercial harvest and allows the board to work within the interstate structure to meet fishery management reductions. My request is that board take leniency in regards to reduction of the commercial sector because they have already received grand reductions in the past as stakeholders. As Commercial Watermen, we are financially dependent on the fishery through harvest, and it is important to recognize the personal sacrifices that are made when reductions occur.

In regards to “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%”

I support 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.”

I support this because without a public comment period, the stakeholders in each effected fishery will not have a voice. It is important for the public to be able to interact with decision makers at all levels and to be able discuss these complex issues that effect so many in differing ways. As stakeholders, if we loose our voice, we loose our right to vote.

iFishMD.com

Sport Fishing Charters

December 21, 2023

ASMFC
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 2220

Re: Draft Addendum II
Attn: Striped Bass Board

I am writing to offer my comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. As fishing guide/charter on the Chesapeake Bay and a representative for a Maryland recreational boat manufacturer, I desire the board to take necessary action to ensure abundance of striped bass. The Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay is dependent upon the species for its sport fishery and so does my business and many others. That said, under the last set of reductions in Maryland under Addendum VI, our state department of Natural Resources shifted the burden of the reductions to the recreational/charter sector and access and opportunity to fish for our state fish in our greatest natural resource. This had a significant negative impact on my business and others that support recreational fishing. Because of this, it is my desire for the **Chesapeake Bay recreational sector to operate under status quo, Option A, while the commercial sector in the Chesapeake Bay should bear the current reduction that matches the recreational reduction under the regulatory changes enacted for the 2020 season.** This would have the commercial sector sharing in the burden of rebuilding the stock and our managers not benefiting one sector over another or the businesses that benefit from them. Should further reductions need to be made to reach targets, I recommend that the use of tighter slots be used before further loss of days available to fish are enacted.

I also recommend that whatever action the board chooses in ensuring abundance that they accept dead discards while reducing harvest as a means of lowering overall mortality. The slot options presented reduce harvest significantly and only increase release mortality minimally while allowing participation. Participation is what drives the socio-economic benefit to sport fishing. At no-time should no-target closures be considered as a means of reducing mortality given that a mortality reduction cannot be quantified over no-harvest closures and access to fishing can be provided while not allowing harvest. Guides, charters, fuel docks, marinas, marine services, tackle shops, etc. depend upon access to fishing remaining open. Closures stifle business and should be avoided at all costs!!

Sincerely

Capt Greg Shute, FGR202

Homeport: Annapolis Maryland
[410-533-1435](tel:410-533-1435) | ifishmd@gmail.com



C-Devil II Sportfishing, Inc.
331 Burdickville Road
Charlestown, RI 02813
captainkelly@cdevilsportfishing.com
(401)374-1439

November 30, 2023

Emilie Franke
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Dear Ms. Franke,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for the approval of distinct measures tailored to the for-hire sector, specifically endorsing Option C outlined in Section 3.1.1 of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. As a professional fishing charter captain of over forty years, I have been and remain a steadfast advocate for sustainable fisheries management. As such, I firmly believe that this approach is pivotal in striking a delicate balance between the conservation imperatives of the Atlantic Striped Bass population and the socio-economic influences and recreational considerations of both the for-hire fleet and individual anglers.

Option C, which advocates for separate regulations for the for-hire sector, takes into account the unique characteristics of this segment of the fishing industry. It acknowledges the socio-economic impact of the for-hire fleet, playing a crucial role in providing recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, and contributing to the cultural and economic well-being of our coastal communities.

Beyond these broader considerations, it is essential to recognize the recreational anglers who value and deserve the opportunity to harvest a Striped Bass for personal consumption. Recreational fishing not only fosters a connection to the marine environment but also provides a means for individuals to appreciate and sustainably harvest fish for their tables. The for-hire fleet, with its expertise and infrastructure, can play a pivotal role in facilitating this experience for recreational anglers seeking to take a fish home for dinner.

By acknowledging the harvest aspirations of recreational anglers and permitting the sustainable harvest of Striped Bass, we can strike a balance that supports both the conservation goals prompting emergency action and the cultural traditions of individual anglers. The for-hire fleet, as a facilitator for these experiences, is an essential partner in promoting responsible and ethical fishing practices.

Additionally, I express my support for Option A in Section 3.1.4, which proposes maintaining the Status Quo which has no requirement for at-sea/shoreside filleting. Imposing fillet restrictions would disrupt established operations for for-hire businesses and introduce an additional burden of disposing of racks. Given that for-hire businesses are fully booked when Striped Bass is available, mandating filleting at the dock or retaining racks would disrupt the seamless flow of operations, limiting the efficiency and profitability of for-hire operations and diminishing our ability to make a living. I propose working collaboratively with the Striped Bass Advisory Panel to develop practical industry solutions for future actions.

Thank you for considering these perspectives, and I trust that the ASMFC will make decisions that are based in sound science supported by actual data, and uphold the ecological health of the Atlantic Striped Bass population and the security of the for-hire sector, which greatly contributes to the economic vitality of the region.

Sincerely,

Capt. Kelly Smith

Captain Michael D. Smolek
Penny Sue Charters
243 Obrecht Road
Sykesville, MD 21784
(443) 280-4410

December 6, 2023

Emile Frank
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear ASMFC:

I am writing to state my concerns with the potential cutbacks to striped bass fishing in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay.

As a charter captain on the Chesapeake Bay for over 23 years, I would like to state that the ASMFC must consider **Option C2** which allows customers on charter boats to keep two striped bass per day. A reduction to our customers in the number of fish they may keep will be catastrophic for the charter industry. Over the past several years, the charter captains have had to follow new regulations to sustain the fishery. The boat fish has been eliminated; I have endured a two-week closure during prime fishing season in July, slot size requirements were instituted by emergency regulation this year, and enrollment in the DNR FACTS program which constitutes electronic monitoring by MD DNR. Now for 2024, the State of Maryland has eliminated the trophy season and there is talk of extending the two-week summer closure in July with an additional week in August.

Other data through a recent "Public Information Act" request from MD DNR shows that the charter fleet has already had a reduction of 17% of striped bass caught over the past two years. Total striped bass harvest reported by MD Charter Boats in 2020 is 121,771 fish, in 2021 116,581 fish, in 2022 101,043 fish and as of 1 November 2023, 79,715 fish. One of the main contributors to this is the declining economy which, in turn, reduced the number of charter fishing trips taken. By looking at the numbers in the PIA the charter fleet is not the problem with the striped bass stock.

On Page 9 of Addendum II, it clearly states **Chesapeake Bay For-Hire removals decreased by 27%**.

The charter For-Hire industry is accountable for our catch and the MD-DNR knows exactly what our impact is. We are the smallest user group in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay as compared to the regular recreational anglers and commercial sectors. We have been actively engaged with the MD-DNR for years supporting measures to help striped bass recover.

If the ASMFC reduces our catch to one fish, you are essentially putting the charter fleet out of business. This reduction also affects local hotels/motels, restaurants, bait and tackle shops, etc. The trickle-down effect on the local economies cannot be made up in other ways. Our business and those depending on the charter customers will be unable to recover from loss of business.

Another major problem in the industry is the mortality rate among the recreational fishermen (not the charter fleet) and no one is addressing or policing this situation. Through the same PIA, MD DNR has sold over 300,000 saltwater licenses. Many of these licensees fish on a regular basis and continue to catch and release once they catch their limit for the day which contributes to the mortality rate. Additionally, a priority for the protection of the female breeding stock should be considered, with a moratorium, from 1 January 2024 until the recreational season opens in May 2024. This will give the breeding fish an easier path to spawn and rebuild the stock without potential harassment and unknown amount of injury and terminated spawning runs.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Captain Michael D. Smolek
Chesapeake Bay Charter Captain

Dear Emilie,

I am reaching out to provide my commentary on the Addendum II to Amendment VII regarding Striped Bass management by the ASMFC (Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission). As an avid recreational sport fisherman for Striped Bass, I think that it is paramount to conservatively protect and manage the existing biomass stock due to declining numbers and five years of very poor spawning results.

This treasured and exciting fishery must be protected for the future. It is a public resource which is owned as much by the youth and future generations of this country as it is by the current population of adults currently partaking in it.

For these reasons my commentary on the items within the addendum are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery. Option B

Within this fishery I support carrying over a uniform slot from last year which will protect the 2015 year class (28"-31"). It is not sensible to settle for a higher slot which will retarget fish which have already survived the 2023 season. Also, it is unreasonable to entertain any splitting rules for For-Hire parties, that is simply an attempt to give a handout of a public resource for private commerce.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery. Option B2

This selection will provide a uniform slot for within the Bay (19"-24") and will in fact exceed the target of a 14.5% reduction in mortality. While I am in the favor of conservation, I would not ask the bay recreational fishery to take an outsized encumbrance which other sectors are not forced into.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management. Option B

While I consider a more permissive set of rules for For-Hire parties to be unconscionable, if the board is set on bribing For-Hire constituents with handouts I believe the customers should be the only ones to benefit in larger or more fish. The captain and crew should not be given their own more permissive allotment simply for being in the business of bringing people to fish.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance. Option A

From my listening to the summer meeting, I am under the impression that law enforcement representatives did not view filleting rules to be beneficial to enforcement ability. If the law enforcement does not view it as beneficial then I see no reason to make more rules than necessary.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota. Option B

I support a (full) 14.5% reduction in the commercial quota of each member state. This is in line with recreational reductions and there is no reasonable justification to omit the commercial parties from reductions. The stock is clearly in trouble and all (human) parties that are removing striped bass need to experience a reduction in the rate they are removing bass.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates. Option B

I support the ability for the board to respond via board action after the results of the stock assessment in the (likely) event that there is a greater than 50% probability the stock will not recover by 2029. Time is of the essence in responding. I know that it is a process with many competing interests from board members, so I support the board being able to use measures that will (hopefully) move things at a better than glacial pace.

The member on the board from my state (MA) is Dr. Mike Armstrong. I think he has impeccable judgement and is pushing for the best interest of this species. I have told him my thoughts on his work and I will tell him again in the future. If anyone is in doubt of what would be in interest of the striped bass, they should discuss it with him.

Sincerely,

Steven Robichaud
508 397 2710
Haverhill, MA

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my input relative to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 regarding the management of the Atlantic Striped Bass.

I am both Virginia native and resident in the Chesapeake Bay region. In my younger years, I sailed competitively up and down the Chesapeake Bay, as well as "outside" in the Atlantic. As an adult, I have variously been an award-winning NASA research engineer, turned award-winning economic development leader across several Mid-Atlantic states, now entrepreneur. Throughout, I have loved and long enjoyed the bounty of our region – the waters, the land, the citizenry, the wildlife – and have an especial appreciation for both the recreational and commercial interests vested in the Atlantic and Chesapeake Bay.

While I provide farther-reaching comments later in this letter, of most critical relevance to this response are my specific inputs to the pending Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) action regarding Striped Bass. Accordingly, please accept my comments regarding ASMFC's draft Addendum II and the particular Options that I endorse:

For the following Fisheries:

- **Option B: One (1) fish at 28" to 31" (all modes) is the preferred option for the *Ocean and Chesapeake Bay trophy striped bass fisheries*, establishing some degree of equity for all anglers.**
- **Option B1 or B2 – either – is the preferred option for the *Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries*, establishing some degree of consistency throughout different Bay areas while endeavoring to meet conservation improvement.**
- **Option B for the *commercial and recreational fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay region*, to implement *Commercial Quota Reduction in the amount of no less than 14.5%*, as a minimal step toward reducing striped bass mortality – a goal that must be achieved.**

Relative to Stock Assessment Updates:

- **Option B in Section 3.3 (Response to Stock Assessment Updates)**, for I specifically endorse that the Board adopt self-management measures that enable it to respond with greater flexibility to future stock assessments, as well as to adopt more effective approaches to fishery management such as science-based harvest strategies.

Below, I also present some farther-reaching perspectives on the Striped Bass mortality problem. I offer these in the hopes that they may be clarifying and helpful to the ASMFC Board – a Board with immense responsibilities made up of individuals who obviously and demonstrably care about our fisheries and our environment.

In the interest of time and space herein, I present these further perspectives in only skeletal outline, but would be delighted to present further detail and supporting materials to the Board at any future opportunity, preferably in the near term as the mortality problem for Striped Bass – as for other species you oversee – is urgent:

Please consider the following actions and implications:

1. Adopt, for Striped Bass (and all species), approaches to fisheries management that prioritize “Harvest Strategies”: i.e., science-based fisheries management plans that prioritize long-term objectives instead of short-term, yearly quotas. Determining such longer-vision and science-based plans in advance offers numerous benefits to both the Board and – of most importance – the health of the fisheries being managed. Not trivially, either, such an approach would relieve the ASMFC of much of the burdensome and inappropriate political pressures that currently beset the Board.

2. Strengthen protections for Menhaden, the critically important forage fish on which Striped Bass depend for food. As is being increasingly documented – and sadly apparent to me in simply viewing from my own home – the Menhaden population has crashed. Worse, the populations of still other critically important species dependent upon Menhaden for their survival such as Ospreys, among others, have also suffered drastic losses because of the Menhaden decline. Any approach to the correct management of Striped Bass must also see to the protection of Menhaden, as well.

3. Realize the potential legal implications of unacceptable species mortality and/or ill health. For the following, as a citizen of Virginia, I reference Virginia statute only, though the principles apply beyond Virginia:

Specifically, the drastic declines and mortality of Striped Bass in Virginia waters, as of other species under ASMFC purview, may be evidence of violation of the State of Virginia’s “Designated Use” provisions of its Water Quality Standards, as sanctioned by the Federal Clean Water Act. In particular, the Designated Use of “the propagation and growth of a balanced, indigenous population of aquatic life, including game fish, which might reasonably be expected to inhabit them” as sanctioned in Virginia Code 9VAC25-260-10 may be seen to be violated as long as the human-caused unsustainable population declines and mortality of Striped Bass (or of any other relevant species) persist.

4. End Catch-and-Release, for all and forever.

Catch-and-Release significantly increases not only fish mortality, but also unhealthy and disease-ridden fish. Those fish released – of whatever size – are at the very least seriously damaged, and will likely never be able to resume viable lives. Whether they soon die, or lingeringly live, they then become susceptible to disease/failure to thrive, and in so doing increase by infection or contamination through their sick exudation would-be healthy specimens of their own species or other. The perpetuation of unhealthy and disease states of species and the environment multiplies. Reproductive inadequacy, and mortality increase is unavoidable in such a scenario causing, further, an imbalance of indigenous aquatic life populations.

The irrefutable bottomline reality of Catch-and-Release is that it also renders meaningless any well-intentioned catch or size limits (by size or quantity). Quotas cannot be claimed to be adhered to as long as this practice is allowed. The simple and humane solution is to end this practice forever and for all.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on draft Addendum II and beyond, as I also appreciate the leadership provided by the ASMFC. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any reason.

Thank you.

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I am not a crazy environmentalist who would prefer no striped bass fishing at all. I want the resource to be healthy for future generations to enjoy and I'm concerned about what I have seen on the water over the years. I hope the striped bass board has the POLITICAL WILL to not jeopardize this resource. The Striped bass board made some progress in restoring their reputation with Amendment 7 and later, the emergency action over the summer. I hope that was the start of something new – we can't return to the status. Until multiple years of a good spawn we should be willing to make sacrifices that will pay off in the end.

For Addendum 2:

I support option B for section 3.1.1 and option B1 for section 3.1.2.

I respect that for-hire operators need to make a living. As someone who charters several times per season, one fish per angler would not deter me. Two is unnecessary.

It doesn't seem to me that commercial quotas will have much effect on the stock given that they aren't fully used and I hope commercial quotas are not used to create the appearance of a reduction with no actual effect.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Keyen Farrell

Emilie Franke

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Emilie,

I believe the striped bass stock condition is much worse than is being projected in this addendum. Since I am located toward the Northern reach of the striped bass ocean fishery, I am first to see more acute changes in the population. I maintain a detailed fishing log and have seen a 60 to 75% reduction in my catch over the past seven years. I support the following Addendum 2 options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes). While I do use for hire services, I feel that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines related to the size and fish limits. I also believe that it is imperative that we protect the 2015-year class and maintain the current 28" to 31" size limit.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B2 at 1 fish at 19" to 24".

Option B2 was selected since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B.

I believe all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and do not support Options C1 or C2, if either of these options are selected then Option B should be used.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

Option B gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

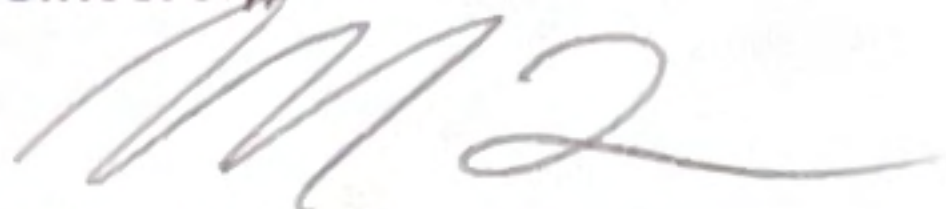
I support a quota reduction of 14.5%. This would bring the commercial quota reduction into alignment with the recreational reduction expected percentages. This is especially needed since some of the states have commercial size limits that are focused on the primary spawning stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. I support Option B

I support giving the Board the ability to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock

is not projected to meet rebuild probability. This option should be limited to only addressing assessment data that indicates the stock will not meet rebuild probability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MT', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Tambone

mametamb@gmail.com

1106 Acorn Dr.

North Andover, MA 01845

Carl Tiska
24 Van Zandt Ave
Newport RI 02840
carl.tiska@gmail.com

December 17, 2023

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Members of the Atlantic Striped Bass Board,

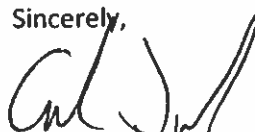
Thanks very much for holding the in-person Rhode Island hearing for the draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Striped Bass on the 30th of November. I attended and made some comments during the hearing. I appreciate how well you ran the meeting. I wanted to follow up my comments at the meeting with written input as well.

I am a recreational kayak angler in Rhode Island with a focus on harvesting, cooking, and eating my catch. While I principally target demersal species, I enjoy fishing for striped bass as well, and absolutely value an abundant striped bass population. I strongly recommend that you adopt the most conservative measures possible in order to rebuild the striped bass stock. Therefore, I support selection of the following options in the draft addendum:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). I strongly recommend against any mode-splits. I believe that all sectors of the fishing community should contribute equally to rebuild the striped bass stock.
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B to include setting the level of reduction at the 14.5% level in both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

I thank you for your work in managing striped bass and for the opportunity to provide feedback through your public comment process.

Sincerely,



Carl Tiska

mk
12/27/23

345 Arcadia Road
Hope Valley, Rhode Island 02832

December 22, 2023

Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Comment letter sent electronically: comments@asmfc.org, Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing as a recreational fisherman who regularly fishes for striped bass throughout the year, to provide input on the proposed draft changes to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) striped bass regulations. I have recreational fished for striped bass in New England for at least 50 years, primarily shore-based or nearshore kayak fishing. I rarely keep any fish, and have always sought to minimize injury and potential mortality of the fish that I land. I occasionally fish with a local, fee-based charter boat service, and the boat operator wisely practices sound catch-and-release practices to minimize injury and mortality of the released fish. I will add that the charter boat operator has told me that we are some of the few fishermen who do not keep fish that are allowed under the current slot limit, with many customers interested in keeping their allowable slot bass.

I recommend **Option B** be selected and implemented by ASMFC to help protect and restore the striped bass stock, particularly the 2015 year class. I understand that this option is based on the 2022 fishery data available at the time of the assessment. This option will have the greatest overall reduction in harvest, although I recognize that this option is projected to increase recreational fishing mortality by 2%.

I also recommend ASMFC select and implement **Option B1** for the Chesapeake Bay fishery that will restrict the harvest of larger bass greater than 23 inches.

I also recommend ASMFC select and implement **Option B** for the for-hire management measures apply only to patrons during for-hire trips, and strongly recommend that captain and crew on for-hire trips are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.

I also recommend ASMFC select and implement **Option B** for all states relating to at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, to 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 also fully consider including language about when and where racks may be disposed of, specific to each mode allowed to fillet at-sea/shore. This will help to lessen indiscriminant cheating of protective management measures, including conditions in Rhode Island where no applicable regulations currently exist.

I also recommend ASMFC select and implement **Option B** relating to the ocean commercial fisheries and/or Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries be managed by quotas representing up to a 14.5% reduction from the 2022 commercial quotas and their 2022 size limits. I recommend the Board select a specific percent reduction of at least 10%, and preferably 14.5%. The 14.5% reduction will help to reduce 3.65 million bass from being harvested in the Atlantic Coastal state fisheries.

Lastly, I highly recommend **Option B** for the Board having the responsibility to respond, via Board action, to timely 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. Through this action, the following would occur:

- 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.
- A more expedited response to assessment updates would result. For example, when the 2024 stock assessment update is completed in October 2024, the Board could change management measures during then October 2024 meeting or a meeting shortly thereafter, and would allow new measures to be implemented for at least part of the 2025 season.

Separate from the proposed regulatory changes in the draft document, I recommend that ASMFC develop sound strategies, working collaboratively with state fishery biologists and communications specialists to reduce recreational fishing release mortality. Each state should be emphasizing and broadcasting best practices to handling and releasing fish to minimize recreational fishing mortality. It appalls me that fishing mortality is 9%. I recognize that zero mortality cannot be realistically achieved, but good practices can be provided and explained through various media avenues to optimally lessen this problem.

Thank you for considering my comments on the draft Striped Bass Addendum II.

Sincerely,



James Turek

Emilie Franke

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Emilie,

Please find the following comments as my personal opinions on Amendment 7 Addendum 2.

I firmly believe the striped bass stock condition is much worse than is being projected in this addendum. Since I am located toward the Northern reach of the striped bass ocean fishery, we are first to see more acute changes in the population. The fishing in my local waters have drastically changed over the years and unless severe and swift action is taken, I fear the fishery will collapse.

I also am having a hard time conceptualizing not taking additional action towards commercial and private charter captains, as they have made their motive clear, its not about the fish, it is about their wallets. No one want to see this fishery collapse, but in order to prevent it, we all need to make sacrifices.

I support the following Addendum 2 options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. The membership supports Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes).

I feel that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines related to the size and fish limits. I also believe that it is imperative that we protect the 2015-year class and maintain the current 28" to 31" size limit.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. The membership supports Option B2 at 1 fish at 19" to 24".

Option B2 was selected since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. The membership supports Option B.

While I believe all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and do not support Options C1 or C2, if either of these options are selected then Option B should be used.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. The membership supports Option B.

Option B gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

I support a quota reduction of 14.5%. This would bring the commercial quota reduction into alignment with the recreational reduction expected percentages. This is especially needed since some of the states have commercial size limits that are focused on the primary spawning stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. The membership supports Option B

I support giving the Board the ability to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock is not projected to meet rebuild probability. This option should be limited to only address assessment data that indicates the stock will not meet rebuild probability.

Sincerely,

Kyle White

Member - Plum Island Surfcasters

Member – Massachusetts Striped Bass Association

Current Board Member, Former Vice Chair – Native Fish Coalition

From: [pamerniewilson](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 10:56:09 PM

Ladies, Gentlemen and Emily:

Supplementing my comment letter sent via email on December 1, I am attaching copies of pictures from a webpage "on the water" referring to recent South New Jersey striped bass fishing. Are we to believe the fish in these pictures were all in the "slot" or otherwise returned to the water unharmed? These are just a few examples of the striped bass fishing along the Atlantic coast evidenced by this and similar websites. Ernest G Wilson, Neavitt,MD

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone









November 30, 2023

ASMFC

comments@asmfc.org

Attn.: ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board

RE: Public Comment Draft Addendum II

I am the owner/captain/guide of a full time light tackle and fly fishing guide service on the Chesapeake Bay. The current state of the Striped Bass fishery both in the Chesapeake and coast wide is of great concern. I provide these comments as both a stakeholder and conservationists.

Section 3.1.1 – Ocean Rec

I strongly support Option B

Section 3.1.2 – Chesapeake Bay Rec

I strongly support Option B1

For-Hire Sector separation:

As part of the "for-hire" fleet I vehemently oppose any sector separation, in the Chesapeake and coast wide. This has been abused to the detriment of the fish, especially in

the Chesapeake.

Section 3.1.4 –Filleting
Support Option B

Section 3.2.1
Strongly Support Option B*

*The 14.5% reduction should be considered from the 2022 harvest as opposed to the 2022 maximum quota. A reduction from the maximum quota could theoretically yield no reduction as it would already be higher than the 2022 harvest. Commercial has taken little to no reductions since 2015. It is time to level the playing field.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and good luck moving forward with this Addendum. I don't envy the task you have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Wingate', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Capt. Brandon Wingate
Salt Tale Charters

From: [Top Hook](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] STRIPEDBASS
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:19:17 AM

Hi Emilie

Steve's Striped Bass Comments 12/13/23

- We are here due to poor management and poor science
- There is a lot of pressure on striped bass in the spring, especially since other species are not available
- An important part of rebuilding the stock is re-educating the public, which we all need to work together to do
- Re-educating should be focused on how to reduce recreational release mortality, especially for the large spawning fish which are important to the stock
- There are several small moves to reduce release mortality that can add up to help rebuild the stock
- These actions to reduce release mortality should be implemented along with keeping the same slot size of 28 to less than 35 inches with no recreational bonus fish
- Release mortality can be reduced by:
 - Educate fishermen on having a release limit of 10 fish
 - For picture taking, refrain from holding or removing big fish from the water
 - Any lure with more than one treble hook should be removed and replaced with a single hook
 - No gaffing, which has already been implemented
 - Use circle hooks when bait fishing, which has already been implemented
 - Crimping the barb to have an easier release
 - Use a large net for better handling
- In addition to reducing release mortality, science should be used to evaluate the timing of spawning to implement a closure period
- Finally, the underground world of poaching is alive and growing, and this must be addressed.

December 20, 2023

Dan McKiernan
Mike Armstrong
Rep. Sarah Peake
Raymond Kane
Rick Jacobsen

Re: Amendment 7, Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan, Amendment 2

Greetings:

My name is Richard Wood and I am the owner/operator of Beth Ann Charters in Provincetown, Massachusetts. For over twenty years we have been providing thousands of families the opportunity to fish for striped bass in our waters. During this time we have seen the striped bass recreational limits adjusted to match the state of the fishery, and the majority of these actions have balanced the need for conservation measures, the economic business considerations of the for-hire fleet, and the providing of the opportunity to families to make memories as well as to have fish for dinner!

Unfortunately the emergency actions initiated in May, 2023 to reduce the size limit of striped bass to 28" to less than 31" has had a tremendous negative impact upon the last two of the above three considerations. While I agree more stringent conservation actions were required, I believe in the haste to implement "something" ASAP, a "blanket" action was taken with minimal regard to the socio-economic impact to the for hire fleet and their customers. While this action aided conservation, which we all want, it resulted in a high double digit percentage decline in our businesses up and down the East Coast.

As to items for consideration for the Striped Bass Management Plan:

1. Section 3.1.1. I support option C, 1 fish 28-31 for private vessel/shore anglers, and 28-33 for the for hire mode. Based upon your catch data amongst groups, this option would add only 1/10 of 1% to projected mortality, but could potentially retain existing customers and hopefully draw back 2023 lost customers. Additionally, let's be frank, with the multitude of factors and data being used to calculate catch, some of which can be debated, it might be argued 1/10 of 1% is really non-existent.
2. Section 3.1.4. I support Option A, status quo. The ability to fillet at sea versus time taken at the dock, allows us to "turn and burn" on charters, drop off customers and a minute later pick up new customers. This at times has allowed us to book an extra

charter a day during the high season, lessening the impact the 28-31 reduced slot limit has had on our business.

3. Section 3.3. I support option A, status quo. A public comment period is essential, not only to garner additional viewpoints from all user groups, but also to allow the for hire sector to inform their customers of possible future actions. Additionally, in order to be successful for hire businesses must adapt to changing requirements, and to do that they need up front information ASAP. A public comment period provides that.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input, and please balance the socio-economic impacts of a revised 28-33 slot limit for the for hire fleet and its customers will have versus the debatable "1/10 of 1 %" gain in conservation.

Respectfully,

Captain Rich Wood

Beth Ann Charters

Captainrichwood@Comcast.Net

From: [John Palmisano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass amendment
Date: Friday, October 27, 2023 8:18:50 AM

Good morning,

I live in Pocomoke MD, I fish sea side (Atlantic) and Bay side Chesapeake Bay. I used to fish the Pocomoke Sound often. (Chesapeake Bay) Where the river ends and the sound begins to be more specific. I would catch striped bass and speckled Trout. This area is also shared with the state of VA. Like any avid fisherman,I had my favorite spots. I mostly used lures. I caught strippers almost all the time. I always follow the law and would keep one , and most of the were around 18-23" range. I released the rest, healthy.

I do not fish the sound any longer due to all the commercial equipment. I can not compete with a net. Since commercial fishing came to that area, the fishery has been wiped out. Nets strung across my favorite spots. I can not compete with a net, nor can any sea creature that gets caught in it in dies. This commercial netting has to go, there is so much waste in commercial fishing. That it affects striped bass more than a residential avid fisherman.

I have never seen DNR in that area, I hope and pray that they are keeping tabs on these commercial boats and tallies. A Saxis , VA man was charged with 5000 pounds over a legal commercial limit of striped bass. This is happening in this rural area, where everyone knows everyone. Too often.

In short, Nets killed my fishery. We need to do something about this, I've seen them stretched across the whole sound, far as the eye can see. Nothing can survive that.

In my opinion, the residential size limit does not need to be raised, nor any residential law added. Instead, in force what is already there, and the wasteful commercial market needs to be tightened up. We know that's where the money is, but what I've seen, that is where the problem is.

Respectfully,
Brad Palmisano
USN Vet
Avid Fisherman.

From: [Evan Dintaman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2023 2:44:25 PM

Good Afternoon ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

It has been abundantly clear through on-the-water experience, scientific data, and public sentiment that the striped bass populations are in decline both from overfishing as well as a significant reduction in spawning success. Until the long overdue Emergency Action, the ASMFC board had failed to take any action that adequately addressed the magnitude of the situation. I am afraid that none of the options presented in this addendum will do enough to prevent further decline of the striped bass fishery. I predict that we will be discussing a whole new set of reactionary measures again in 2024 and 2025. This represents a failure of the striped bass management board and the public has taken notice.

Nonetheless, I am submitting the following comments regarding Draft Addendum II. My preferred options represent the largest possible harvest reductions given the options available.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: I support Option B, 1 fish @ 28-31".

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery: I support Option B1, 19"-23" All Modes

3.1.3 For Hire Management: I do not support mode splits in any fishery.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B is preferred. However, I do not support at-sea filleting.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction: I support Option B with a full 14.5% reduction, as this is the only option that is equitable with the recreational sector and responds to the magnitude of the situation. However, a 14.5% commercial reduction is still far less than what is needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: I support Option B, Board Action, as this represents the quickest path to implementing new regulations between the two options. The board shall remain aggressive in both regulations and timeline to rebuild the striped bass stock.

I believe the public comments will be loud and clear - that anglers want aggressive action to rebuild the striped bass population. I urge the board to adopt the largest possible harvest reductions allowed by this addendum, both recreationally and commercially.

Best Regards,
Evan Dintaman

From: [Frank Young](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2023 3:37:43 PM

Hello ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

My following comments are in regard to Draft Addendum II. My preference is for management changes which result in the largest harvest reduction across the board, both commercially and recreationally.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: Option B, 1 fish @ 28-31".

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery: Option B1, 19"-23" All Modes

3.1.3 For Hire Management: I do not support mode splits in any fishery.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B is preferred but I do not support at-sea filleting because it makes enforcement of size limits difficult if not impossible to enforce at the dock.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction: I prefer **Option B** with a full 14.5% reduction in harvest. Even this level of harvest reduction seems inadequate to reverse the trends we are seeing.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: Option B, Board Action.

I hope the board can make substantial improvements to the current management of striped bass because we cannot continue to kill them at an unsustainable rate and expect to maintain any fishery (commercial or recreational) for them into the future.

Thank you,
Frank Young

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023 11:37:45 AM

From: Larry Darby <fm2bird@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 3:45 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Striped Bass

I will comment on the proposed actions to help recover striped bass populations in saltwater.

I have been sport fishing for these fish in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries for about sixty years. I have seen the ups and downs. Banning highly technology- assisted commercial menhaden fishing, as it is currently practiced out of Reedville, is the only route to recovery. I have seen this operation up close many times. We have to break the bribery chain between Omega Protein and the Virginia legislature. Very few people benefit from this crazy slaughter. This is consolidation of the wealth at its extreme.

Anyone who is trying to understand this issue should read the book [The Most Important Fish in the Sea](#) by H. Bruce Franklin. It's easy to read, only a little more than two hundred pages. In the almost twenty years since it was published, this situation has gotten even worse.

Thank you,
Lawence Darby.

From: [Tim Bond](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 2
Date: Friday, November 3, 2023 9:03:00 AM

Emilie Frank,

I'm in support of Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options B2, B3, or B4. In that order. I spend a lot of time on the water above the bay bridge & have seen the impact charting fishing has on the school size Striped Bass population. Hot summer months with low salinity are the most detrimental. As fishing becomes more difficult weekend warriors will stop spending money on tackle, boats, bait, & license sales.

Thanks
Tim Bond

From: [Joe Nicosia](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, November 3, 2023 3:15:45 PM

Striped Bass Management Board,

I am submitting the following comments regarding Draft Addendum II. My preferred options represent the largest possible harvest reductions given the options available.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: I support Option B, 1 fish @ 28-31".

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery: I support Option B1, 19"-23" All Modes

3.1.3 For Hire Management: I do not support mode splits.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B is preferred.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction: I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction. However, a 14.5% commercial reduction is still far less than what is needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: I support Option B, Board Action.

Best Regards,

--

<https://www.instagram.com/onlyonthefly/>

[Instagram -at_the_vise](#)



From: [John Casabianca](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, November 3, 2023 5:55:12 PM

Hello my name is John Casabianca from Southampton New York. Give my opinion to what I would do for the stripe bass population. See a lot of people catch stripe bass and then they gotta walk to the truck to get their tape Measure and pliers. Should be a law you must have your appliers and take measures on you at all times. The second thing I would do Is only one treable hook The treable hook must be on the belly of the plug a single hook at the back barbles. So if a fish does swallow the plug at least you can get to hook out. The other thing I would recommend is Alternate months That you can keep fish. For example April catch and release may you're allowed to keep one fish per day. June Catch and release .July keep one fish And so on. Thank you.

From: [Michael Treola](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] NJ Striped bass management
Date: Saturday, November 4, 2023 2:40:01 PM

Hello,

I've been fishing the NJ shore for as long as I've been able to walk. That puts me at almost 50 years of enjoyment of this fishery through times thick and thin. Over the last many years I've watch mostly boat fisherman for lack of a better words here rape and pillage the striped bass fishery in my home turf at the Raritan Bay and surrounding waters..

I've watched fish get slammed in the spring before they are even able to make it into the river to spawn due to fleets of hundreds of boats every day. I've watched charter boats harvest unspeakable amounts of base, some captains running 3 or more trips of 6 people a day and if you do the math on how many fish are being taken it's just astounding. I've watched fishermen of all kinds handle fish so poorly it's not surprising that the state of the fishery is what it is today.

As if this is not enough as the fall run begins this circus in my home fishery starts all over again. These fish NEVER get a break now.

There is a lot of blame to go around from management choices to over fishing to the people fishing for striped bass. What is clear is that IF striped bass is continued to be fished we must have everyone follow the same and more strict set of rules.

Hearing that recreational fisherman and for hire will have a different set of regulations has to be quite honestly the most stupid idea I've ever seen come out of a regulatory commission. This cannot be allowed - everyone MUST follow the same set of regulations.

We must also get more strict on the tackle used. The circle hook rule was a good first step but for everyone else that fishes with a lure this is not helping the fishery. For years now I've been fishing with hooks that are barbless.. How come this cannot be talked about. If the mortality rate of hooked fish that are released is so high how come we are not using hooks that can help this fish with a more survivable rate.

I love fishing and I hate to say this but I would like to see the striped bass fishery closed at the very least the spring fishery. Let these fish have a chance. Let us let them migrate a breed so we have real manageable year stocks. Then in the fall - shorten the season so the yearly fish have a chance to return and put the fishery in a better place.

We ALL know we are heading in this direction anyway.

My 2 Cents.

Michael Treola
96 Bray Avenue
Middletown NJ 07748
732-768-4841

From: [Jesse Gordon](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 3:43:11 PM

Please see my comments below:

-3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: I support **Option B**.

-3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: I support **Option B-1**

-3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support **Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.**

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support **Option B—Board Action.**

Thanks you,
Jesse Gordon

Jesse Gordon
Gordon & Petkos LLP
5 Columbus Circle
Suite 710
New York, NY 10019

Telephone: (212) 765-8600
Facsimile (212) 765-7887

This e-mail is sent by a law firm and contains information that may be privileged and confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete the e-mail and any attachments and notify us immediately.

From: [Joseph Everhart](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 7:05:19 PM

Good afternoon,

As an avid angler in the Chesapeake, the "No targeting" season in April is the biggest cop out my state (Maryland) has ever pulled. That no targeting regulations are during some of the coolest and most oxygenated times of the year, where releasing fish is most viable. That should not be counted towards any sort of reduction, however I believe a no targeting rule for the whole month of July and/or August would have more effect, although that is not an option. As for options B & C, our charter boats run 2 trips a day on average so, the sector separation is sort of pointless. Many of them are not just typical 6 packs but take large groups twice a day, some keeping 50 fish a day. Of all the options, I would say I am in favor of Option B1. If we could get a full July/August no targeting as well, that would be incredible as many fish released die with our 90 degree water temps and low dissolved oxygen.

Thanks,
Joe Everhart

From: [John Hollenberg](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Reg Comments
Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2023 10:13:53 AM

My name is John Hollenberg
27 mill pond road
Harwich, Ma 02645

I would like to see the status quo kept for the slot limit
I would like to see the commercial quotas cut

Several personal opinions

The strict slot has an added benefit of moving anglers to other species after catching a few bass. U are seeing that on cape cod with both recs and charters catching bass fluke blackfish and black seas bass on the same trips

Better enforcement of regulations would be important. I am a snow bird. Florida had very good enforcement. Could serve as a model

Barbless hooks for both recs and commercials. Give the tackle companies something else to sell lol

Thank u

John

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Julian Steer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: STRIPED BASS: Public Hearing December 14
Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2023 10:30:04 AM

I understand the need and value of taking action to ensure increased population of our wonderful striped bass and need to reduce fishing limits but I don't understand why we support the significant increase and overprotection of seals in Ma which are having a significant impact on the fish stocks.

Is the plan to allow seal population to continue to grow until they reduce the fish stock such that eventually the seal population crashes and then maybe decades later the bass may recover?

So in essence we should control fishing take but do nothing to address the seal issue.. management needs to address the bigger picture I think!

Thanks for opportunity to comment .

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Department of Marine Resources <DMR@subscriptions.maine.gov>
Date: Mon, Nov 6, 2023 at 10:12 AM
Subject: STRIPED BASS: Public Hearing December 14
To: <juliancsteer@gmail.com>

Maine DMR Recreational Fishing



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

Striped Bass Stakeholders,

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has scheduled public hearings on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7, which considers management measures designed to support stock rebuilding by reducing fishing mortality to the target in 2024. **The public hearing in Maine will be held on December 14 at 6:00pm.** This is a hybrid hearing meaning stakeholders can join in-person or via webinar.

In-Person:

Maine DMR Office – Augusta
Room 118, Marquardt Building
[32 Blossom Lane, Augusta](#)

Webinar:

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 249 648 735 389 Passcode: UXEtrQ

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 207-209-4724.397100101#](tel:+12072094724397100101#) United States, Portland

Phone Conference ID: 397 100 101#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

Draft Addendum II

The Board initiated Draft Addendum II in response to the low probability of meeting the 2029 stock rebuilding deadline if the unexpectedly high 2022 fishing mortality rate continues. The Draft Addendum builds upon the 2023 emergency action by considering management measures intended to reduce fishing mortality to the target level in 2024. For the recreational fishery, the Draft Addendum proposes recreational bag and size limit options for the ocean and Chesapeake Bay regions, including options with different limits for the for-hire modes. For the commercial fishery, the Draft Addendum proposes a quota reduction option. The Draft Addendum also proposes an option that would enable the Board to respond to the results of the stock assessment updates more quickly, via Board action, if the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029.

A copy of Draft Addendum II can be found [HERE](#).

Submitting Comments

All those interested in the management of striped bass are encouraged to provide input either by participating in public hearings or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EST) on December 22, 2023** and should be

sent to Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator, at [1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200](#) A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II).

A copy of the full ASMFC press release can be found [HERE](#).

For questions on striped bass management, please contact Megan Ware at megan.ware@maine.gov or 207.446.0932

Update your subscriptions, modify your password or email address, or stop subscriptions at any time on your [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). You will need to use your email address to log in. If you have questions or problems with the subscription service, please contact subscriberhelp.govdelivery.com.

DO NOT REPLY TO THIS EMAIL AS RESPONSES ARE NOT MONITORED.

This service is provided to you as a courtesy by the [Maine Department of Marine Resources](#).

This email was sent to juliancsteer@gmail.com using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: Maine Department of Marine Resources - 21 State House Station · Augusta, ME 04333-0021 · 207-624-6550



From: [Dale William Neal](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripped Bass draft addendum II comment
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 6:57:31 AM

While I do support the restrictions necessary to help save our stripped bass population I want to say that the lack of any mention of their loss of their primary food source as a factor in their demise dumbfounding.

Your own words say the bay is suffering from pollution, warmer temperatures, and predation by invasive species. All of these factors are the exact reasons we should not also be depleting the stock of menhaden that actually make it into Virginia waters. Strippers need menhaden to thrive. You need to take this factor into account and not let your decision making be beholden to one company's need to strip mine our resources for a cheap source of protein. These resources belong to Virginians.

From: [Guy Gonzalez](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 12:33:18 PM

I propose 1 fish limit!! They are takin a beating, bluefish too!! I fished 50 yrs down there!!

From: [Robert Waldron](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass proposals
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 12:52:37 PM

Removing the slot fish at 24-28 is a good idea give those fish a chance, however based on the number of people fishing for bass this year, there was a notable decline from 2020-2022. The answers for this are :1) giving up trying to get a fish at 31",2) giving up on boating (expenses) and demographics, an aging population of fisherman.

Anecdotally there are plenty of fish off NY Mass and NJ. Not enough off Maryland DE and Virginia. The answer is lack of bait(menhaden) in those sections. The bluefish are in more trouble than bass in this regard. Paying more attention to the bait stocks would help both species but that isn't going to happen from what I see in Chesapeake.

I fish coastally from Massachusetts to Florida recreationally. Offering two fish in the 31 to 35 " range will do more for the fish than limiting or slotting. I counted 10 dead fish yesterday on the water between Spring Lake and Mantoloking off NJ. All of the fish were over 31". They are caught, someone pulls the fish out of the water, takes a picture, then launches the fish back in without moving the fish through the water to revive it. Education, eliminating treble hooks on poppers, using single hook swim shads and circle hooks for live lining will show results.

an average cost of a day fishing can be between 50 to 150 dollars a day for a person, they need to show results too. You will get better results on taking two fish at those ranges 31-35, than trying to hook fish and release them dead.
thanks,
Robert Waldron

From: bonitobob@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stop commercial fishing they only kill breathers
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 1:19:46 PM

But as always punish the little guy

[Sent from the all new AOL app for Android](#)

From: [Jeff Norton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 1:34:32 PM

Hi- a little confusing to follow what is addendum 1 versus 2 and what each means BUT at the end of the day (I'm in MA) there seems to be drastic over fishing occurring. Just simple math: MORE people/boats/fishng rods every year targeting less fish. Much better equipment technology every year too. Ban fishing in the cape cod canal. Close commercial striped bass. Many of those people (I know some) are doing it purely for the sport and do not need the \$ whatsoever.

I would be in favor of a 0 fish limit for a few years to rebuild the stock. Would be hard to limit people from fishing overall bc they could just say they're targeting blue fish but I'd be in favor of that for a few years too. Also there are lots of rule breakers out there and some that don't even bother to check to see if there are rules. They don't care. It would be nice to hire some undercover boats with honest people (like me) to monitor and report violators as I know the EP are way understaffed.

I would welcome to discuss my thoughts further but will be unable to attend the events.

Jeff Norton
617-314-3270

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Jaron Frieden](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [DAN MCKIERNAN](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II to Amendment 7 Comments
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 3:49:47 PM

Hello and thank you for the opportunity for public comment to Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7. My name is Captain Jaron Frieden and I am a charter captain and sole proprietor of Lucky 7 Fishing Charters, LLC located in Charlestown, MA. My clients largely fish for Striped Bass with about 10-15% of our trips being offshore tuna and shark. As such, Striped Bass conservation is of utmost importance to my business as is the harvesting of a sustainable amount of fish for customers to take home with them. Since the enactment of the reduced slot to 28-31", customers have expressed their deep frustration with the lack of retained fish as they have an expectation to offset the cost of the charter with fish for their families. In fact, about 1/2 of my customer base is motivated to hire charters based on harvesting of fish while the other 1/2 are in it for the good time. Because of this, I have seen a steady decline of new and repeat customers that expect to bring fish home with them since the reduced slot. A lot of these fish that are released are just over 31", so some customers beg to keep them, but I am a stickler for biding by regulations and let them know the fish must be returned. This turns what should be a great time, to disagreement and animosity which is not helpful to the charter experience, my business and repeat customers.

Based on my review of the information presented in Addendum II, it appears that Option C, that allows for 28-31" for recreational anglers and 28-33" For-Hire is only a 0.1% difference in reduction and a 0.4% in harvest change as compared to Option B. These values appear to be inconsequential and must fall well below the accuracy percentages of this study; however, Option C will allow for a stronger For-Hire business by satisfying repeat clients that are driven by bring fish home to their families. A

strong For-Hire business greatly benefits local businesses that support these efforts and ancillary services such as hotels and restaurants where these clients frequent when in town. If we keep the status quo on the For-Hire slot (Option B), there is no appreciable difference in Striped Bass conservation, but it will negatively affect For-Hire and supporting businesses that already struggle to turn a profit. I appreciate Option C and the data being presented as it appears to be the clearest choice to allow access to this fishery and maintain the targeted conservation efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jaron J Frieden
US Coast Guard Licensed Captain

Lucky 7 Fishing Charters
781-710-1190
www.fishlucky7.com

From: [Tom Bolinder](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 4:06:01 PM

All commercial fishing for striped bass should be stopped. This magnificent fish is in danger of extinction. It is to important to the economy and to recreational fishermen to allow this to happen. Please consider a total ban on commercial fishing.

Thanks

Tom Bolinder
241 Shore Rd
BourneMa. 02532

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Paul Benn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on striped bass
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 4:09:40 PM

Hello,

I have been striped bass fishing from the shores of Gloucester Massachusetts and nearby areas for over 40 years. Every year it seems a different regulation is put in place or changed. Yet You allow commercial fisherman to harvest a lot more bass than I feel they should. I primarily fish from shore because I do not have a boat. I caught a few fish this year, they would have been keepers last year, but not this year because of the slot! Maybe instead of worrying about slots how about you worry about enforcing the laws that are already on the books. For the last six years or so, I've seen more guys on the shore lines with tons of fish, even though it is supposed to be one fish per angler per day. They are doing this every night and day and nothing happens. And it always seems to be the ones that don't speak English, or so they say... where is the enforcement!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [joe rollo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Upcoming meeting
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 8:20:55 PM

My suggestion is in order to cut down on mortality rate is this. If you land a bass and is under the legal limit, and fish has swallowed hook too deep to safely retreat it then and only then the fisherman should be allowed to keep the fish. Without repercussion. Unfortunately I believe that a percentage of the mortality rate occurs because the fisherman can't keep that particular fish and has no other choice but to release it and let it die slowly. Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Timothy O'Connor](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper Bass Draft Addendum II - comments
Date: Friday, November 10, 2023 9:56:55 AM

Good morning,

I will not be able to attend the scheduled public hearing regarding the changes to the Striped Bass quota in December.

However, I do want to let you know that it seems appropriate to limit the take by both recreational and commercial fisherman.

The fish appear to be very concentrated based on the last few years, but overall there appears to be a significant drop in the number of fish.

For example, fishing in the Canal has been fantastic in recent years due to the availability of bait. However, it has not been great where I live in Hull, Massachusetts. Fish used to be spread out more evenly throughout the coast. Now, one may encounter a HUGE school of fish in one area, but in other areas along the coast, it is a desert.

Additionally, the advances in technology (i.e. fish finding equipment, sonar, and social media) have caused additional stress on the fish. Once word gets out that fish (especially large fish) are in a certain area, they get hammered! Fishing at the recreational level has become very efficient and proficient due to technology.

Also, I know many guys are NOT throwing large fish back in the water. The old school mentality of keeping the largest fish is still very much alive and there is not enough law enforcement to completely eliminate this behavior. The attitude would have to change through education. I believe that is the only way to keep fisherman from harvesting the large females.

In conclusion, I don't believe that under the current regulations the fish populations will remain healthy and sustainable, long term.

Therefore, as a life-long recreational fisherman who desires to see the fish thrive, I am in full support of any measures the Council deems appropriate to reduce fish mortality and increase striped bass populations.

Thank you,

Tim O'Connor
8 Seaview Avenue
Hull, MA 02045

781-710-3599

From: [Mark Vduccio](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Same old same old
Date: Friday, November 10, 2023 12:18:42 PM

A fifteen percent reduction in commercial catch and people are suppose to espose in your ,
Ridiculous statements
A laughing stock your organization is to anyone over the age of 50.
Can't hide it.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [dennis.mitchell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, November 11, 2023 5:07:25 PM

I fear it's too little, too late, but for Addendum II I support the most conservative Option B. Thank you.

Dennis Mitchell
1537 Marlboro Rd.
West Chester, PA 19382

From: [Gregory Polhemus](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, November 12, 2023 2:41:58 PM

I am not in favor of the striped bass draft addendum II as it pertains to recreational and commercial rod-and-reel fishing for several reasons.

1 - Common Sense: It is common knowledge that 1 commercial trawler harvests more striper in one day than all recreational boats combined. Trawling fleets are notorious for providing inaccurate data on both by-catch, and harvest amounts.

2 - History of the Striper Fishery: If a moratorium was placed on all net fishing for striper, the population would rebound. This was done in 1989 by increasing the U.S. territorial waters to 12 miles, which eliminated the threat to the striper fishery that foreign commercial trawlers posed. As a result of the lack of trawlers, the fishery rebounded, and striper season was open the following year. This had nothing to do with the moratorium on recreational fishing for striper. Further restricting recreational and commercial fishing with rod and reel while allowing commercial trawlers to pillage the fishery ignores the elephant in the room.

3 - Change in Behavior of Striper: In recent years most Striper have avoided the 3 mile coastal line, and the Chesapeake Bay as long as possible, choosing instead to feed offshore. Often by the time Striper do enter the Chesapeake Bay, they're migrating North to spawn, and they're not interested in feeding, which is why nobody is catching them. This doesn't mean that their population is severely declining. On the contrary, it is common for anyone fishing for Bluefin Tuna 13 miles offshore to unintentionally hook a dozen or so trophy sized striper while the entire charter fleet catches nothing in the Chesapeake Bay or the 3 mile coastal line.

4 - Insufficient Data collection: when analyzing data on the health of the Striper fishery as a whole, the entire population of the species needs to be analyzed, not just the population in the Chesapeake Bay (or lack thereof). To date, there is hardly any data on the offshore population of Striper, though it is common knowledge that Striper are extremely plentiful offshore.

5 - Solutions that would work: do not further restrict recreational and commercial rod-and-reel striper fishing in the bay. Instead place a moratorium on all commercial trawling for striper. Permit recreational/commercial rod-and-reel fishing offshore with a set limit of 1 fish per boat over 28 inches for recreational, and 4 per boat for commercial with mandatory reporting of catch location and size as a way to obtain data on the overall population and make informed decisions on the overall health of the fishery.

From: [robert pollard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 8:06:44 AM

I would like to know why there is no reference to the Menhaden Fishery in the bay as a contributing factor to the health of the stripped bass fishery.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [robert.pollard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 8:08:58 AM

51,000 metric tons of Menhaden removed from the bay is a. Lot of stripped bass food.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tom Merritt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 8:58:56 AM

From someone who has fished Virginia rivers and the Chesapeake Bay for 5+ decades, I have witnessed many different cycles of the fish that inhabit these waters. I have also witnessed the decline of the Chesapeake Bays health. Currently the bay has a grade of a "D" I believe. It is not a secret that the Menhaden are filter feeders and contribute greatly to the health of the bay. They are also the main food for striped bass and osprey. It's also not a secret that both of them are in decline.

Very seldom do we see the large schools of Menhaden while fishing now.

In my (and many others) opinion, the menhaden are being taken from the bay and rivers by commercial fishing (Omega/Cook) at an alarming rate. As they scoop up thousands of tons of menhaden, they also scoop up and kill fish (Bi-catch) that they shouldn't. Fish that are here to spawn and never have the opportunity. Not to mention the net tears that cause massive fish spills and illegal nets that drag the bottom and destroy the plant life in that area. This has been publicized and witnessed.

If this is not stopped, we will see the destruction of one of Gods greatest creations.

Greed seems to be the major driving factor in this problem. Not sure how the taking of the menhaden by a Canadian company is financially beneficial to the US or local areas.

I believe that if this is allowed to continue, the economical effect it will have for all the states that border the bay Will be devastating.

Please, we pray that everyone will put their heads together to develop a plan to stop this devastation.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Shaun Whitworth](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 9:46:10 AM

Why is the ASMFC refusing to acknowledge the effect of the menhaden reduction fishery on the ability of the striped bass population to rebound? I don't even target stiped bass anymore where I live in Virginia Beach so you could enact a total moratorium for all I care. Even a moratorium on recreational/commercial harvest won't make a difference though, the fish need forage to rebound and their forage is being removed. It's really not that difficult to understand but it is an inconvenient truth for those that have been bought by Omega and its subsidiaries, and that's why we are where we are. Until there is a meaningful change there won't be a meaningful recovery, period.

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: [Nicholas Fornaro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 12:26:08 PM

This is the second time in my lifetime that the Striped Bass fishery has been destroyed. I'm not sure who the decision makers are, but they've screwed it up again. If you are the decision-makers on how this fishery is managed, you've done a terrible job.

What are you doing about the menhaden reduction fishery ? Why aren't you listing it as a contributing factor in the Rockfish problem? Or are you covering up for another one of your mistakes. Allowing these menhaden boats and planes to destroy what's left of the bay. STOP THE MENHADEN REDUCTION FISHERY NOW WHY WE STILL HAVE A SEMBLANCE OF CHESAPEAKE BAY !!!!!!! Menhaden are the lifeblood of the bay and you are standing by and letting greed destroy them.

It's a disgrace and the people that have been charged with running these fisheries are a disgrace.

Nicholas Fornaro

From: [Arthur James](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 3:12:23 PM

My vote for 2024 is one fish at 28 - 31" all modes.

From: [Brad Ries](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Slot limit
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 3:59:07 PM

Good afternoon,

I would like to express my concern with the 2023 ASMFC decision to change the in place 28" to 35" slot regulations to the now absurd 28"-31" size slot limit which went into effect 6/20/23 in the state of NY.

This change to try and save a specific year spawn class fish is doing more harm than good to the fishery. From Southern NJ to MAINE the abundance of striped bass over the past decade is astronomical. By catching twice or three times the amount of striped bass and releasing those under or over the new slot has to be considered a failed attempt at preserving the year class fish.

By releasing more fish out of the slot we are certainly increasing the mortality rate from 9% to I'd say close to 35%. It doesn't make much sense to release a perfectly good fish that would feed a faking of 3/4/5 or even 6 because it's too big to keep.... Throwing these fish back to "swim another day" and the "year class fish need saving" has to be looked at again...

You can't tell me with that this regulation isn't doing more harm than good..... these fish are being studied in one particular spawn area but I'm convinced they aren't JUST spawning in the Chesapeake. The numbers are down because these fish are spawning in other areas like southern NJ, lower Hudson River, Navasink river, CT river, Peconic Rivers and beyond.

Expand the research areas to a bodies of water that isn't as contaminated as the Chesapeake Bay....

Just because these fish aren't being caught from the "Beaches" like they use to years ago doesn't mean they aren't there...

Over the past few months the abundance of striped bass from 40' to 60' of water, well beyond casting range of the beach or jetties, has been overwhelming. Miles and miles of bass being caught "and several overs" released while trying to capture the newly implemented 28"-31" slot....

Something has to change or you will see a self inflicted disaster when it comes to the striped bass fishery along the east coast....

1 fish 28" and above..... that's what it should be.....

Oh, and why is it that the commercial side has an increase in quota coming for 2024?

It makes absolute zero sense that a recreational fisherman of any kind or a paying customer on a private charter or party boat has to throw back a fish over the slot size limit of 31" but can visit their local seafood market and buy a 32" to 36" striped bass..... how does that make any sense....

Stop following the fish and follow the money!!!!

Capt. Brad Ries
Someday Came Fishing Charters
(631) 603-9910
www.somedaycamefishing.com
captbrad@optonline.net

From: [Bill Dunn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 4:53:36 PM

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Why there is no reference to the menhaden reduction fishery as a contributing factor to the health of the striped bass fishery. Currently the reduction industry is struggling to even meet the Bay Cap of 51,000 mt while very seldomly fishing in the ocean where they belong and it is destroying the forage base of many fisheries including stripers and other things that feed on them such as the Osprey's. It's time to put these facts into the equation.

Sincerely,
Wm Dunn
Dunnsville@gmail.com
Dunnsville, Virginia

A government can only give you what it takes from someone else

From: [Steve Ferrazzara](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regulations
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 7:39:44 PM

You should take a look at the party boats that are giving out thousands of bonus tags

Each boat could give out 100 per day. If the same Angler goes out on the party boat several days he can get several tags and several bonus fish but the basic Angler can only get 1 rag per season and maybe a second one.

Again the basic Angler gets the short end of the stick

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Gene Doebley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum 2
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 10:32:33 AM

My recommendation is that you make no changes at this time. you know you are working with seriously flawed data so any proposed changes are just shots in the dark. doing nothing until you can fix your survey data is the best option.

From: [Peter Farrell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 3:39:24 PM

Emilie,

thank you for your hard work. As an avid charter / recreational fly angler in RI I highly encourage The Addendum II to reflect managing stocks to one fish across the board per person particularly in the Chesapeake until 2029. With historically low spawning indexes in 2023 it feels as though

the striper stocks may never recover. The 28 inch fish don't have a chance to spawn. frankly a moratorium on keeping bass would be more in order. We had a five year moratorium in 1985, the stocks recovered and then pressure from commercial and charter fleets allowed the stocks to be decimated in a little over 10 years. the nights of catching multiple bass consistently are a faint memory. Would love to see this magnificent game fish recover and prosper for future generations. I just want to go down to the beach and catch a few bass.

Sincerely, Capt. Pete Farrell

Sent from my iPhone

From: [DOUGLAS TAYLOR](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Size limits for Stripe Bass
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 5:35:44 PM
Importance: High

Because of the interest for the taking of a Trophy size Stripe Bass, Would the **Atlantic States Marine Commission** consider a **Trophy Tag Program** for one fish/year greater than 45 inches. One tag would only be issued to the end user/fisherman and could only be used Ocean side during the Fall Season, starting Oct 1st and running till Dec 31st. No tags would be issued to the **For Hire Fleet** or **Charter Fleet**.

Thank you for your time concerning this matter and could it be addressed during all of the Public Hearings to receive a general public poll of this proposal.

Doug Taylor

From: [Sean Hughes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 9:35:30 AM

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

- There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015 year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Option A expands the slot to 28"-35", Option C and D introduce 'mode splits'. Essentially, recreational anglers are split into 'private vessel/shore' and 'for-hire', it is not the right thing to do now or ever. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the board and law enforcement that no harvest and no target closures would be too difficult to enforce, the same applies here. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. Option D shifts the slot up in size and would only do more damage to the 2015 year class as they continue to grow and enter that range.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

- Here we selected Option B1 for several reasons. Most importantly it produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): Support 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.*

- We do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the board choose to adopt (most likely against public comment) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support 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.*

- This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off fillets) and keep the skin on the fillets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. We are adding to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by the anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.*

- Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, "Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum." An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the

rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.

- We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.
 - First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let's say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us its a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, than this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.
 - Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability) to getting these new commercial regulation in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

- As we mentioned in our [summary of this past ASMFC board meeting](#), there is a really good chance that Addendum II will only be in effect for a one year period. The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be need to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. This is unfortunate, the writing has been on the wall for years and as you are probably already aware, Stripers Forever has been calling for the most conservative measures since the beginning of the Amendment 7 process. If the results of the next stock assessment are as bad as we anticipate, the conversation about a equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be back on the table.

Sean Hughes
Hughes & Cronin Public Affairs Strategies
455 Boston Post Rd, Ste 203 B
Old Saybrook, CT 06475
O: 860.346.7978 | C: 860.853.8748
Hughesandcronin.com

From: [Tom Fuda](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Justin Davis](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 9:53:18 AM

To the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

I am a recreational angler from the state of Connecticut. I fish for striped bass and other saltwater species from both private boats and shore in my home state of CT and neighboring states along the striper coast. The following are my personal preferences for the options presented in *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*. Thank you for your consideration.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option B - 1 fish at 28" - 31". I favor this option because it offers the greatest reduction in harvest, and is the best option for trying to meet the 2029 rebuilding timeline.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Option B2 - 1 fish at 19" - 24". I favor this option because it provides a significant reduction in mortality but is equitable as compared to the reductions taken by the ocean fishery under option B.

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

Option B - Captain and crew should be subject to the same regulations as private vessel / shore anglers.

I am opposed to the options in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 that provide different size limits to the for-hire fishery. I do not feel that it is equitable to expect the rest of the recreational sector to adhere to more restrictive size and/or bag limits than for-hire vessels. All user groups should share equally in the effort to reduce harvest and rebuild the SSB to target. The for-hire fishery already harvests a disproportionately high number of striped bass, when compared to the private recreational fishery. Making it easier for them to harvest more fish than the private recreational fishery does not benefit the rebuilding effort.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Option B - Racks must be retained and skin left on filets in states that allow filleting at sea. No more than two filets per legal fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Option B - Up to 14.5% reduction of the 2022 commercial quota with 2022 size limits.

I do not feel the 14.5% quota reduction adequately constrains harvest in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery and will provide 0 conservation benefit. In 2022, the bay commercial fleet harvested a total of 2.39 million pounds of striped bass out of a 3.00 million pound total quota. Reducing bay quota by 14.5% would result in a total bay quota of 2.57 million pounds, which is still more than what was harvested in 2022. So, effectively, the bay commercial fleet may in fact end up harvesting MORE striped bass under the most restrictive measures proposed by Addendum II than they did in 2022. The fact the bay fleet couldn't fill their quota in 2022 should serve as a warning to managers that the bay striped bass fishery is in serious trouble, and much more drastic cuts to the commercial quota and harvest are needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Option B - Board may respond to stock assessments by Board action. I feel this is necessary due to the shrinking rebuilding window. The Board needs the ability to expedite the management process in order to respond quickly to stock assessments that indicate the rebuilding timeline has less than a 50% of success by the 2029 deadline.

Thomas Fuda
Shelton, CT

From: [B8nTackle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Hearing: Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:11:04 AM

Hi...

Could you send me a copy of the Presentation of Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 that was held in Maine on 11/14/23 at 6:00pm. I logged into the Webinar using the link provided with the email and I was the only one attending what should have been the hybrid meeting. After quite some time I logged off when no one else logged in. Was there an issue with the broadcast or ever a meeting? Thxs.

Jerry Morgan
ASFMC/ACCSP

>-----//((° ≥ >-----//((° ≥ >-----//((° ≥ ~~~

From: jumpingcups@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 1:22:23 PM

Dear Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission

This past fishing season for striped bass was awful. Trying to catch a striper in the 3" slot was very difficult. I can understand the need for management but **everyone** including the commercial and for hire boats should all be restricted. I don't know how it is even possible that the recreational fisherman is taking more than the commercial people. It is time your data and the people collecting it need to be scrutinized. For far too long they (commercial/for hire) have had the upper hand with their catch limits. The striped bass in the ocean belong to every one of us. The average recreational fisherman/fisherwomen will not attend the meeting or even write a letter (it is not even worth the aggravation for 1 fish) so let this letter represent 3000 people unlike myself who for whatever reason don't, can't, or don't believe it will do any good to respond to these public comments period or attend a meeting. I hope this letter resonate with you as I went out of my way to write it.

Thank you for reading

Maurice Lemieux

Dartmouth MA

From: [Joshua Tanz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2023 2:40:47 PM

Hi,

I am a recreational angler based out of Orient, NY. I am in strong support of minimizing striped bass harvesting and protecting our strong year-classes to help rebuild the stock as early as possible, at least by 2029. I urge the ASMFC to take dramatic action, and action that will impact not only 2024 regulations, but regulations that will persist beyond 2024. Personally I support further landings reductions for all sectors than has been proposed in Addendum II. While significant changes may be more painful in the short-term for certain sectors, it will have material long-term positive impacts.

Directly related to the draft addendum, I support:

- **Ocean Recreational Option B.** I do not support split modes as it creates both confusion and preferences one group over another.
- **Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option B1.** This is an especially important stock of fish to protect. Previous regulations allowing 2 fish for charter boats has been particularly damaging.
 - The allowance for the Trophy season seems complete out of touch with the goals of supporting spawning. I cannot understand the allowance besides pure hubris. It should be eliminated.
- **Commercial Quota Option B.**

Thank you,
Josh Tanz

American Express made the following annotations

This message and any attachments are solely for the intended recipient and may contain confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any disclosure, copying, use, or distribution of the information included in this message and any attachments is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us by reply e-mail and immediately and permanently delete this message and any attachments.

American Express Prospective and Existing Customers: For more information about how we protect your privacy, please visit www.americanexpress.com/privacy. If you are located outside the U.S., please select your location at www.americanexpress.com/change-country/ and access the privacy link at the bottom of the page.

American Express a ajouté le commentaire suivant

Ce courrier et toute pièce jointe qu'il contient sont réservés au seul destinataire indiqué et peuvent contenir des renseignements confidentiels et protégés par le secret professionnel. Si vous n'êtes pas le destinataire prévu, toute divulgation, duplication, utilisation ou distribution du courrier ou de toute pièce jointe est interdite. Si vous avez reçu cette communication par erreur, veuillez nous en aviser par courrier et détruire immédiatement le courrier et les pièces

jointes.

Clients et prospects d'American Express: Pour plus d'informations sur la façon dont nous protégeons votre vie privée, veuillez visiter www.americanexpress.com/privacy. Si vous êtes situé à l'extérieur des États-Unis, veuillez sélectionner votre emplacement à l'adresse www.americanexpress.com/change-country/ et accéder au lien de confidentialité en bas de la page.

From: [Jeffery Fudala](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] va rockfish quote
Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 8:40:59 AM

The blue catfish in the tidal brackish waters are destroying the river and growing at rapid rates and destroying the spawning reaches where the fish reproduce by eating there eggs and all of the bait, until something is don't about the evasive catfish you will not see an improvement in the striped bass population. The commercial waterman are not ever meeting the state set quota numbers now, why lower them?

This electronic message contains information from WestRock Company (www.westrock.com) or its subsidiaries, which may be confidential, privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure. The information is intended to be disclosed to and used by only the named recipient(s). If you are not the intended recipient, then your review, use, disclosure, printing, copying, or distribution of this message or its contents is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify WestRock immediately at postmaster@westrock.com, and delete the message from your system. For information about WestRock's privacy practices, including how WestRock collects, processes, transfers, and stores Personally Identifiable Information shared with us, please visit [WestRock Privacy Policy](#). Unless previously authorized in writing, this message does not constitute an offer, acceptance, or agreement of any kind. Sender is not liable for damage, errors or omissions related to or caused by transmission of this message.

(c) WestRock Company.

From: [Matthew Miller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 12:06:37 PM

I support any action to try to save the striped bass. However, in my opinion the only thing that will work is a moratorium on the harvest of the striped bass covering both the commercial and recreational fishery.
Capt. Matthew Miller

From: [Jim Zabilansky](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 3:52:50 PM

Dear Emilie,

As a dedicated striped bass fly angler, I would like to comment on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7.

First, I believe that a complete harvest moratorium (commercial and recreational) should be imposed immediately.

In lieu of that, please refer to my comments on the Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: [Support Option B](#)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: [Support Option B1](#)

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): [Support Option B](#)

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: [Support Option B](#)

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Support Option B](#)

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Support Option B](#)

Regards,
James Zabilansky
Oxford, MA

From: [Sean Layton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II comment
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2023 4:25:55 PM

Hello - I am an avid surf and for-hire boat fisherman, targeting Striped Bass in the Spring and Fall in New Jersey, primarily in the ocean and Raritan Bay. **I am submitting comment to implore the committee to opt for Option A, status quo, 28-35" size limit on Striped Bass in New Jersey while opting to continue "Emergency Action" regulations in MD and VA.**

New Jersey has the most exciting, and one can argue healthiest, Striped Bass fishery in many generations. Conservation is an important measure to ensure a sustainable future for this amazing fishery for a generation to come - no one doubts that - but with such a great fishery unique to this area, it begs the question of whether we need to come to terms with a truth, backed by data - not all waters governed by ASMFC are created equal.

The 2023 Emergency Action was a commendable action to preserve the Chesapeake Bay stock - which isn't healthy - but data shows the Hudson River stock continues to outperform its average and there is an abundance of bass in all size ranges. In addition to scientific evidence, anecdotal reports from party boat and charter boat captains will tell you that they haven't seen the type of Striped Bass migrations in the Spring and Fall that we experience today. Those targeting other species...primarily Blackfish and Bluefin Tuna...even report that Striped Bass are a bycatch outside of EEZ waters where they need to be returned.

The 2023 Emergency Action's application in New Jersey is not backed by science, data or any educated fisherperson's POV in this area. It's an unnecessary protection that creates unnecessary barriers of entry to this sport...costing the for-hire fleet and those that it supports (bait shops and other business supported by fisherman) dearly.

Please end this unnecessary action in waters where Striped Bass remain plentiful and healthy.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sean Layton

Sean Layton
732.300.7271
seanlayton@gmail.com

From: [John "Jack" Detweiler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 3:54:51 PM

I support Option B-1 for the Chesapeake Bay Recreational Limits, Option B for the Ocean Recreational Limits and a 14.5% reduction in the Commercial Harvest. I also think that the Trophy Season should be eliminated in the Chesapeake Bay and that at least a month during the Summer, (July 15 to August 15 perhaps) should be closed to harvest.

Thank You,
John R. "Jack" Detweiler
717-215-3195

From: [Jerome Holter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 4:48:45 PM

I started fishing nine years ago when I retired. In that timeframe I have personally experienced the steady decline of our beloved bay. My area of fishing is from the Sassafras to the bay bridge.

In this area it is more evident that conditions affecting habitat are poor and getting worse. The damage Exelon is causing by not addressing the problem toxins laying behind the Conowingo dam is flagrant disregard of our environment. Maryland is not without blame, by allowing the conditions of operation to continue to pollute.

Virginia has allowed the predatory behavior of Omega to continue to deplete the vital resources our bay needs to survive.

Trophy season is paramount to raping the mothers of our future fisheries to satisfy egos.

When I see the restrictions put on recreational fishing I feel the greed and utter disregard of the solutions we should be seeking.

Stop trophy season permanently!

Instate a moratorium on striped bass in the bay, lasting several years.

Work towards improving water quality, and habitat will rebound.

I'm willing to, and already have been doing without Stripers, and am enjoying blue cats, snakehead, perch and crappie.

Act like the bay was the pond on your property. Protect it from pollution. Don't allow depletion of the stock. Nurture and enjoy its amazing benefits to nature.

Stop letting greed write the rules, please save our Chesapeake Bay!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ed Liccione](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 7:45:44 PM

I support option B1 for bay recreational fishing in the bay.

From: [Martha](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripped Bass regulations
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 6:59:34 AM

Russell Blank

I have been a member of the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association for over 25 years now and your decisions drastically impaired my business last year. I'm glad to see that there is more options on the table this year.

I support

Option C

And I also Support the fileting at sea with this idea to be added.

The fillers be kept intact until the boat has been landed no cutting or trimming of the filled at sea.

I think this would aid in enforcement.

The problem of bringing the racks back to Port is that now after landing we have to leave the harbor to discard the racks or hang onto the racks until the next day we set sail Can get VERY STINKY not to mention the BEES if people are allergic to them which I am.

Please consider my options

Thank you

Russell Blank

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [Robert Willis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 9:55:55 AM

My vote is for a slot of 19" to 26" with a one fish limit for private and charter. (P/S and F/H).
No trophy season.

Thank you
Robert Willis
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Robert Mcneil](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: information@ccamd.org
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2023 7:20:19 AM

As a recreational fisherman I fully support implementation of Addendum II with at least a 15% reduction of harvesting Striped Bass. Additionally, I would like the board to consider banning "live lining" in that it seems most of the fish caught with this method die due to the deep ingestion of the bait and hooks. Frequently when I approach an area where anglers are actively live lining, the area is littered with dead fish, both legal and undersized. Few survive the trauma of deeped hooked with the bait ingested so that fins and gills cause serious damage when forced from the bass.

Regards

Bob McNeil
46060 Wilson Ct
Lexington Park Md 2653
202-309-2082

From: [Bob Campbell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2023 4:56:40 PM

To the Commission, with respect,

Thank you for considering my input I submit here on Draft Addendum II. Those of us who were saltwater beach and boat fishing in the nineteen eighties have a vivid memory of how delays in responding sufficiently to years of striped recruitment failure and striped harvesting resulted in collapse of this fishery. We remember the economic impact on tackle shops, hotels, motels and restaurants, and the more important prospect of loss of this magnificent animal as a shared coastal treasure and resource.

As a recreational fisherman for the past fifty years, and a past resident of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and current resident of New Jersey, I respectfully ask the Commission to do everything possible right now to prevent the very likely repeat of that tragedy. Specifically, with regard to the current Addendum II, I urge and request you to approve these options:

3.1.1 -- Option B's one fish at 28 to 31 inches provides a practical sensible way to share some sacrifice equitably while protecting the 2015 year class as they grow;

3.1.2 -- Option B1 yields a simple enforceable, understandable and narrow-enough slot for the Chesapeake;

3.1.3 -- Option B has the potential to mitigate the considerable downsides to any "mode splits" which to me make little or no sense;

3.1.4 -- Option B constitutes a straightforward addressing of the reality of human nature that absent the requirement for proof, some people will game any system;

3.2.1 -- Option B, authorizing the Board to determine the commercial quota reduction percentage, provides the Board the opportunity to set it at the 14.5% upper limit. This is the only quota that is anywhere near high enough to begin the protection measures now essential; and finally,

3.3 -- Option B, because given the very high likelihood that the Fall 2024 stock assessment will point to almost no chance of reaching the 2029 stock rebuilding target, it will be essential for you to have the authority to take immediate action. Input is almost always important and instructive, but our striped bass are in jeopardy. Waiting at that time for another addendum process to be completed will be a serious mistake. It's already late in this clearly dire situation.

This past April, I wrote to you in support of your adoption of Addendum II. I noted then that my experience over forty years in working with major industries around the world revealed a universal truth in leadership decision making --

Proactive action on an issue benefits all stakeholders, no matter their divergent interests, far more than reactive remediation.

You've taken a good step in pursuing Addendum II. Please push to give it, and you, the power to start saving our striped bass.

Respectfully,
Bob Campbell
Holmdel, New Jersey

From: [Tom Kelly](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:56:08 AM

As an avid striper fisherman who's getting along in years I'm afraid that the downward spiral of the striper population is an omen of the collapse of the 1970's and 1980's . It's up to you to put measures in place to stop this decline . From what I understand your goal is to have the striper population rebuilt by 2029 . Please adopt all measures that will help you attain this goal .

From: [info](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Stiped Bass
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:08:39 AM

From: Michael Grosscup <seagrave20@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 8:58 PM
To: info <info@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Stiped Bass

Dear Atlantic states marine fisheries I,am a 64 year old man third generation fisherman, who lives on the Chesapeake Bay. I would like you to come down hard and enforce Longer closure periods in the bay, creel limits bag and size limits look good on paper. But the only way to truly protect the fish is to keep the hook out of it,s mouth. Frankly I do not trust my state to do the right thing. THANK YOU and GOD BLESS.

From: [Chesapeake Fishing Adventures](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum 2 Public Comment
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 10:13:50 AM

ASMFC,

As a light tackle guide that practices Catch & Release fishing ONLY for striped bass on the Chesapeake Bay, I don't have a dog in this fight. All my customers hop on my boat knowing they are throwing back everything they catch and they appreciate my stance.

My only concern and/or gripe is the continued demonization of CATCH & RELEASE fishing for striped bass, especially anglers that solely utilize artificial lures. Somewhere in the last 4 or 5 years release mortality has become synonymous with catch & release fishing.

Likely the case can be made for anglers that soak bait since the chances for a fish to swallow the bait and become gut hooked are significantly higher than anglers using artificial baits.

Release mortality has become a buzzword topic. A topic that has caused "experts" to think non-target closures and the limitation of access will actually make an impact in our striped bass population. Catch & Release fishing is how every angler is introduced to fishing.

Non target closures during times of the year when water temperatures are over 80 degrees and oxygen levels are at their lowest makes perfect sense. That should be the only time access to fishing for striped bass is limited.

I am no scientist or marine biologist. However, I do know there are many other factors significantly contributing to a declining striped bass population in the Chesapeake Bay and it is NOT Catch & Release practices.

Best,

--

Captain Brad Foxwell
Chesapeake Fishing Adventures
443-610-3826 - Mobile

[Chesapeake Fishing Adventures](#)

From: jsurmick6206@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass comments
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 12:44:48 PM

I don't know how many will email you with their comments, but I want to say that whoever is managing striped bass in the New Jersey area gets a big "Thank You" from me!
I have been fishing for stripers for over 20 years. I honestly never saw fishing for stripers as good as it is right now!
All I can say is whatever you are currently doing is working really well!
Keep up the good work!
And Thanks again!

Jim Surmick
570-233-1782
jsurmick6206@gmail.com
Sent from my iPad

From: [HARVEY YENKINSON](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass amendment
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 12:51:25 PM

Why our striped bass management plan is a failure even it succeeds:

An analogy:

Suppose instead of managing fish, we were managing humans. Similar to the fishery management plan, our goal was to rebuild the human population with no regards to which nationality survived as long as our total human population rebuilt itself. If a nationality were lost, our plan could still reach its goal!

Our striped bass management plan does exactly that!

We ignore the fact that our striped bass population is not a uniform population, but instead, a combination of DNA subsets from different natal producer river ecosystems! Genetic diversity is important to preserve in all species for its own inherent population sustainability and the benefits it provides to nature's systems.

Our plan ignores the viability of striped genetic diversity. Different DNA subsets look similar in this species but this is common in many animal species. Nature dictates and environmental awareness suggests we include total species survival for our plans to be successful.

There is documentation of this failure in the past, for example, when entire DNA subsets were lost when over concentration of fishing effort on the southern range of yellowtail flounder was allowed. These DNA subsets have never recovered and may well be lost forever.

I ask you, if we managed whale species in toto, and whales survived to reproductive plentitude, but we lost all the right whales, was our plan a success? If striped bass rebuild and an entire producer area never recovers, did we succeed?

Respectfully submitted

Dr Harvey Yenkinson BS VMD
Charter captain
AP member MAFMC

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Earl Moore](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 1:03:31 PM

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for allowing me to comment in writing, as I am unable to attend the in-person meeting this year.

The purpose of this letter is to, once again, express the need for accommodations for spearfishing in the regulations as opposed to traditional hook and line fishing. I understand the need for limits to manage the striped bass fishery to ensure sustainability of the resource, as in all fishery resources. However, the failure of the Commission to recognize the differences between hook and line fishing and spearfishing is a terrible oversight. Because the regulations are drafted with mortality and bycatch as key factors, the Commission should take into account the simple fact that the accidental mortality and bycatch losses in spearfishing are ZERO.

Spearfishers only kill legal fish in terms of species and size, and the regulations should reflect this key difference. Spearfishing is, in fact, the most sustainable, environmentally responsible way to harvest fish. There is no lost gear to foul our beaches, reefs, inlets and jetties. There is no bycatch. There is no accidental mortality of fish that are released if under- or over-sized, or of the wrong species. Only legal fish are killed while spearfishing, while hook and line fishermen kill many, many more fish than they ever harvest, and unnecessarily kill both members of the target species and non-target species.

Many other spearfishers I know personally feel the same way as I do... that catch and release fishing for sport is both wasteful and inhumane. But we understand the social, familial, and economic and health benefits of recreational fishing, which has largely become a catch-and-release enterprise due to the (much needed) regulations at present. Spearfishing, on the other hand, is the most conservative and least environmentally impactful way to harvest fish, with no accidental mortality and no bycatch... and the regulations should reflect that clear and simple fact.

PLEASE do the responsible thing and make the necessary distinction between spearfishing and hook and line fishing in the regulations, and allow spearfishers to take a comparable annual harvest of the striped bass fishery that is reflective of this low-impact, but highly efficient, method of taking fish. The Commission should be compelled, both ethically and scientifically, to make that distinction, and be the global leader in this regard for the sustainable management of ocean fisheries.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

--

Earl Moore, Principal
Marine Academy of Science and Technology
MCVSD
(732) 291-0995

From: [Nick Fano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commen to above
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 2:00:46 PM

I disagree with any proposal that treats for-hire Boats, any different than other recreational fishers. What I see happening in New Jersey is a charter will guide in the morning with one group of folks, and then in the afternoon with another. Not only does the Charter captain use his bonus tag, both trips, But also takes the legal limit of fish, both trips, in the same day. This is rampant. There's absolutely no reason to treat a charter captain or charter guest any different than any other recreational fishing citizen of our states. We all pay the same taxes. It would be a violation of our equal protection laws, and discriminatory to promulgate a rule in any other way.

THE FANO FIRM, P.C.

(NICHOLAS J. FANO, ESQ.)
37 VREELAND AVE.
TOTOWA, NJ 07512
PH: 973.276.1200
FAX: 973.276.1288

THIS COMMUNICATION IS INTENDED ONLY FOR THE ADDRESSEE(S) AND MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL. YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT, IF YOU ARE NOT AN INTENDED RECIPIENT LISTED ABOVE, OR AN AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEE, OR AGENT OF AN ADDRESSEE OF THIS COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERING E-MAIL MESSAGES TO AN INTENDED RECIPIENT, ANY DISSEMINATION, DISTRIBUTION, OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS COMMUNICATION (INCLUDING ANY ATTACHMENTS HERETO) IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS COMMUNICATION IN ERROR, PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY BY A REPLY E-MAIL ADDRESSED TO THE SENDER AND PERMANENTLY DELETE THE ORIGINAL E-MAIL COMMUNICATION AND ANY ATTACHMENTS FROM ALL STORAGE DEVICES WITHOUT MAKING OR OTHERWISE RETAINING A COPY.



Secured by [Paubox](#) - HITRUST CSF certified

From: [Brad Weil](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 2:00:47 PM

Good Afternoon, I am 51 years old and a lifelong recreational fisherman. It is also the main hobby for my son and I. I have a small center console boat as well as hire charter boats and go on Party Boats.

What I do not understand about this program, is why are we still allowing commercial fishing for striped bass in states other than NJ, for which I live and find the bonus tag program a great plus, it adds more recreational dollars to the economy and still harvests much less than if we had commercial fishing. The money it would take to buy out anyone that has a commercial striped bass license in other states would be far less than the affects of continued recreational fishing restrictions.

Also, being a private boat owner for my entire adult life, and the money I spend on upkeep, boat slips, equipment and tackle, I do not find it acceptable to give for hire boats less restrictive regulations, as was recently done for bluefish and now proposed for Striped Bass. The trend to do this is disturbing to me.

You can call me or email me anytime to discuss further, thank you!

Brad Weil
856-628-3695

From: [Duncan Barnes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Amendment II
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 3:34:51 PM

As a longtime striped bass angler recognizing the need to better manage the troubled Atlantic Coast striped bass resource, I support:

- .3.1.1 Recreational Ocean - Option B - 1 fish in a 28-21 inch slot
- .3.1.2 Recreational Chesapeake Bay - Option B1 -1 fish in a 19-23 inch slot
- .3.1.3 For Hire Clarification - Captain and Crew Members should be allowed to harvest only one slot fish per person per day - no matter how many charter trips they run on that day
- .3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction - Option B at full 14.5 reduction
- .3.3 Stock Assessment Response - Option B for "board action"

Thank you.
Duncan Barnes
Kennebunkport, ME
bardunc@gmail.com

From: [Mike Kostas](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 5:09:03 PM

To whom it may concern,
One fish between 25" to 40"
For everyone. No commercial netting east coast wide. No bonus tags .
Logged in at fish and game 6 fish limit per season , like deer season per state.
If it is as bad as you are saying. Until stocks are built back up .
Mike Kostas
Sent from my iPhone

From: [RICHARD PEREIRA](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regs
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 5:09:39 PM

Very unhappy seeing 3 floaters(30-40 lb) class
half dead in water. Should be a tag for that. Video capture

2 bonus tags 24-30 per season

1) 31 in thru 35 per day. Plenty of them.

From: [Robert Severi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comment
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 6:57:40 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

As a recreational fisherman who does not understand the science and methodology of estimating the striped biomass I must defer to your expert judgement in determining how to reestablish the biomass. Notwithstanding the above it's seems logical that preserving the breeders is essential. Obviously other factors such as the hostile acidic environment for fingerlings in the Cheasepeake Bay are major factors, however, they are beyond the scope of your catch limits.

Kind regards,
Bob Severi

From: fastwater3@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:10:39 PM

Circle Barbless I think would be very helpful, they still at times swallow the baits, without the barb I think it would be easier for them to pass or expel .

Chuck Hantis

From: [Guy Gonzalez](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 8:55:46 PM

Limit1 striper a day!!

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Without more wardens.
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:04:02 PM

From: Joseph Prusko <josephprusko@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 1:09 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Without more wardens.

Without more wardens to enforce regs. it is hopeless to try and manage stripers in the state. Where I fish I see shorts and over 31s taken by starvers all the time. I have the special permit and have yet to use it. The same is going on with black fish. It makes me sick even if you confront them it goes on deaf ears.

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Striped Bass Addendum
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:07:56 PM

From: Maureen Langevin <maureen@divevoyagerexpeditions.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 9:13 AM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

A few questions/comments after skimming through the addendum.

1. The addendum is focused on 8-year old fish in the 30+ range. It was not clear to me the reason why that is the case? Maybe I missed an assumption or criteria.
2. Sharing experience from fishing this 2023 fall striper season October to November 12. Out of Belmar, stripers were right outside the inlet and from 40+ feet to the beach. We and fishermen from our dock (recreational E dock) all caught large stripers mostly >38" to 40+" range, 50 pounders. I would say based on conversation there were likely <5% of fish caught were keepers, in the 28-31" range. Also, the fish finder showed and the action at the surface that there are ALOT of fish all over the bottom and mid-water. This was consistent for several weeks and continues according to fellow fishermen at the dock.
3. Off of Sandy Hook, fish we caught were in the slot range 28-31" and landed a bonus fish at 25". ALOT of fish in the Raritan bay, birds everywhere and fish finder showing a lot of fish, we did not fish since we already had 3 in the box. Bottom line is there are a lot of fish, very good season for striper fishing.
4. With all these fish, would it be a consideration to increase the range or modify the ranges (standard and bonus) to reduce mortality of a lot of catch/releases. In discussions with fishermen, everyone were catching fish and it was fun, mostly all catch and release, except for an occasional keeper (<5%).

Thank you,
Capt Maureen Langevin of the 42 foot "Voyager"
732-904-5907
[Dive Voyager Expeditions](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube Channel](#) (please subscribe)

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:08:47 PM

From: Mark Wong <mwong0919@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 5:36 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum

Hello,

I wanted to know if a study was performed correlating the Striped Bass Population from the Chesapeake Bay as compared to the NJ/NY area with certain factors such as commercial fisheries, bonus tag reporting, environmental factors, and overall waterway contributing factors.

It would be interesting to compare these two waterways with these contributing factors to determine if any Striped Bass Size Restrictions should be localized. If the migration of Striped Bass are due to these factors, size restrictions will be irrelevant to the ultimate goal.

Thank you
Mark Wong, your local angler.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Virtual Public Hearings
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:09:22 PM

From: Fisher, Christopher <Christopher.Fisher@axaxl.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 8:31 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Virtual Public Hearings

Hello Thank you for the ability to attend the public striped bass webinar. I have a few comments:

- It seems like the charter industry wants to discount the challenges and money private boaters face and spend in the pursuit of striped bass. I do not think separate limits between the charter and recreational boaters is appropriate.
- The fish cleaning stations at the north jersey marinas are not full of striper carcasses. People are not keeping a lot of fish but should be given the opportunity to take one per trip
- I like the 30-33 inch slot size model
- I would support mandatory striper tag with proceeds going to fund the efforts to promote the stock

Thank youj

You may unsubscribe from future promotional emails at any time by clicking [unsubscribe](#). Changing your email preferences will not affect any non-promotional electronic correspondence you may receive from us in the ordinary course of business.

CONFIDENTIALITY: This communication, including attachments, is for the exclusive use of the addressee(s) and may contain proprietary, confidential or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any use, copying, disclosure, or distribution or the taking of any action in reliance upon this information is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately and delete this communication and destroy all copies.

DATA PROTECTION: AXA XL is committed to compliance with applicable data protection laws. For

further information on how we use your personal data, please see our privacy policy at <https://axaxl.com/privacy-notice>

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Virtual Public Hearings
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:09:37 PM

From: Cesar Padilla <cesar2k@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 8:39 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Virtual Public Hearings

Hello!

it was my first time and I found the meeting interesting and instructive a lot of great ideas and valid points. One of my suggestions to help the stripper bass population is to increase awareness in multiple languages maybe even reach out to local community leaders. Also maybe if we change the start of the season to later date and closed the season sooner, allowing the breeding females safe passage.

Thank you again

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Chesapeake Bay Blue Catfish.
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 11:10:14 PM
Attachments: [IMG_7207.png](#)

From: Phillip Sheffield <bonefishmon@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 2:42 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Chesapeake Bay Blue Catfish.

What is being done to assess the damage blue catfish are doing to the Chesapeake Bay striped bass spawning juveniles?

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015 year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Option A expands the slot to 28"-35". Option C and D introduce "mode splits". Essentially, recreational anglers are split into "private vessel/shore" and "for-hire", it is not the right thing to do now or ever. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the board and law enforcement that no harvest and no target closures would be too difficult to enforce, the same applies here. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. Option D shifts the slot up in size and would only do more damage to the 2015 year class as they continue to grow and enter that range.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—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 of 23".

- Here we selected Option B1 for several reasons. Most importantly it produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

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

- We do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the board choose to adopt (most likely against public comment) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support 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.

- This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off fillets) and keep the skin on the fillets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. We are adding to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by the anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.

- Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, "Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum." An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.
- We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.
 - First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let's say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us it's a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, that this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.
 - Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability) to getting these new commercial regulation in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.

- As we mentioned in our summary of the past ASMFC board meeting, there is a really good chance that Addendum II will only be in effect for a one year period. The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be need to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. This is unfortunate, the writing has been on the wall for years and as you are probably already aware, Strippers Forever has been calling for the most conservative measures since the beginning of the Amendment 7 process. If the results of the next stock assessment are as bad as we anticipate, the conversation about a equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be back on the table.

Submit Your Comment

Perhaps the US Fish and Wildlife Service can intervene the way they did on the Yellowstone Lake to rid it of invasive lake trout that were eating cutthroat trout fry.

Here are my choices and explanations for the options I have chosen Addendum II. I agree with all explanations written by Taylor Vavra. I do not have time to break down and collate my own at this time.

Best regards,

Phillip F. Sheffield
12 Nauyaug Road
Mystic, CT. 06355

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: dssteele64@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 8:16:57 AM

Hi

Although a USA citizen for some 15 years I was born and raised in Scotland, UK. The plight of the striped bass on the East Coast is very similar to the situation regarding the Atlantic Salmon in UK and European waters. They are both migratory fish, they spawn in fresh water, they are sought after as table fare and their long term is in doubt due to over exploitation. Reflecting on the salmon situation, the learning was that action should be swift, extensive, united across states and aimed at protecting a natural resource and not enterprises exploiting that resource. Here's some suggestions for you:

We All Pay Appropriately

You can't play a round of golf for less than \$50, 12 months of golf for \$2,500, yet we expect to fish for a season for as little as \$0 - \$20 for a license. I'd suggest the following:

- Shore based recreational anglers pay \$150 for a single state rod license, \$250 for a 2 state license and \$300 for a national license
- Boat based recreational anglers pay \$500 in addition to the fee above.
- Boat based commercial operations (charters taking out day rods) pay \$5,000 in addition to the fees above. By all means they can recoup this from day rate guests.
- Commercial operations (netting) pay \$25,000
- Rule: You need a license to fish for striped bass. No license and fishing for striped bass or in possession of striped bass = high fine.

What to do with funds raised?

- Use the funds raised from striped bass licenses to buy out commercial netting operations as a 1st priority.
- Buy out commercial charters or incentivize them not to fish for striped bass. Or put a quota on them. Like Alligator hunters they get tags. Once tags have gone they stop fishing in each month. This would stop the daily slaughter in some places such as the Chesapeake summer chummers.
- Perhaps use funds to have some commercial operators switch from catching to protecting the resource. Inspect boats etc. make sure people comply.
- Look at hatchery operations and artificial stocking, Try it for a decade and see what happens.

Much of these steps were executed for the salmon. One individual Orri Vigfusson lead the effort. Research what they did there.

Regards & Thanks
David

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 9:07:02 AM

Emilie Franke | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703.842.0716 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

-----Original Message-----

From: doanbill (null) <doanbill@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 11:19 AM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II

I support Option B for ocean recreational regulation with the one fish between 28” and 31” and Option B1 for Chesapeake Bay recreational regulations. Larger striped bass should never be allowed to be recreationally harvested again.

Striped Bass have been repeatedly overfished and recreationally. It is important to maximize striped bass conservation to ensure the population recovers and that no overfishing is allowed to occur again. The commercial and recreational regulations should not be relaxed once the population has be rebuilt.

Thanks,
William Doan
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

From: [Andy Boynton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. - to the Board
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 10:22:54 AM

Thank you for giving me a chance to voice my opinion. I indicate which options I support below.

Andy Boynton

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B1—*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 of 23"*

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I Support 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: I Support 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*

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I Support 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%.*

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I Support 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.*

Andy Boynton
John and Linda Powers Family Dean
Carroll School of Management
Boston College
140 Commonwealth Avenue
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

boyntona@bc.edu
617-552-8420 (p)
617-552-8738 (f)

From: bscotch84@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 2:54:56 PM

I believe restrictions should be put in place to allow for recuperation of striped bass populations. Humans have historically overfished, overhunted, overdeveloped until animals and fish go extinct or can't recover. Only with governmental intervention can the striped bass population recover.

thank you.

J. Bowman
1025A Thornbury Lane
Manchester, NJ 08759

From: [Frank Pizzi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2023 4:01:42 PM

Please accept my support for Option B in each of the categories....

Thank you

frank pizzi Nahant,MA

From: [David Nguyen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 9:38:32 AM


To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my opinion on the striped bass draft addendum II. As a recreational striped bass angler from CT, I would like to see an improvement in the number of striped bass. I have observed that the quality and numbers of fish have been steadily on the decline since I started fishing for these fish 7 years ago. In order to reverse this issue, I am in support of **Option B1** for section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options. I am also in support of **Option B** for 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options.

Thank you for your consideration,
David Nguyen

From: [Brian Hoffecker](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 9:55:24 AM

I'm attaching a couple pictures for you to read. In 2015 we took reductions to fix this problem and it made it worse! Around 2018-2020, we took more reductions to address the problem that was made worse by the restrictions asmfc put in place. Now a couple years later, discard mortality has once again increased by 44% and you are once again reducing slot size limits. For almost 10 years you have made the problem worse and you are once again going to make the problem worse!!!! You all need to be fired!

 Verizon LTE

9:42 AM



April 23, 2021

10:08 PM

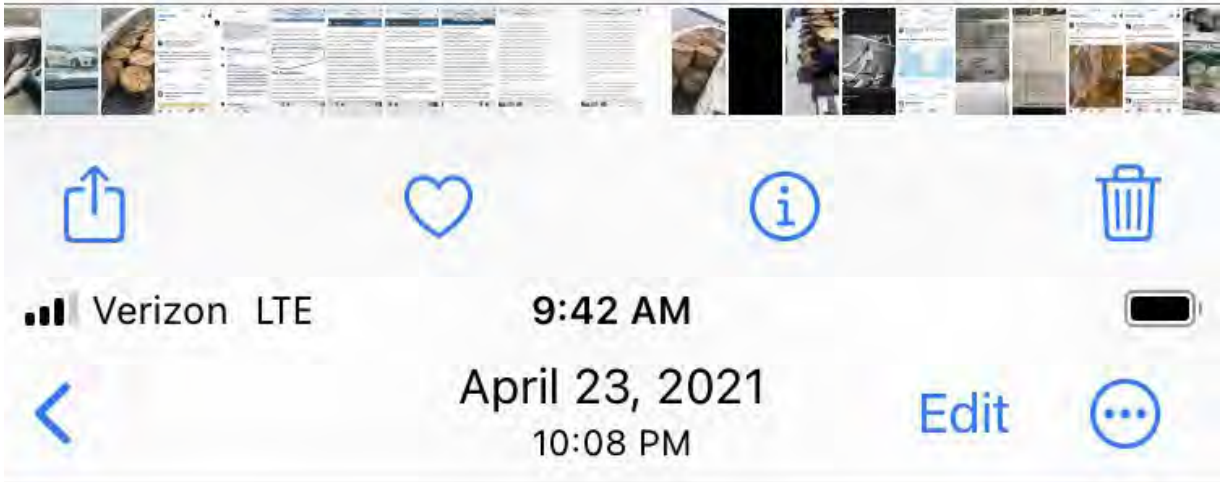
Edit



Some fishery managers say that means previous management actions to protect the population – which imposed new minimum catch sizes – may have backfired. Because the minimum size was increased in 2015, they say the number of fish that were handled and ultimately died may also have increased as anglers tossed back more small fish while trying to catch one of legal size.

“We need to rethink what we are doing,” Luisi said. “Increasing minimum sizes as a mechanism for reducing harvest only leads to more dead discards. Dead discards is a big problem.”

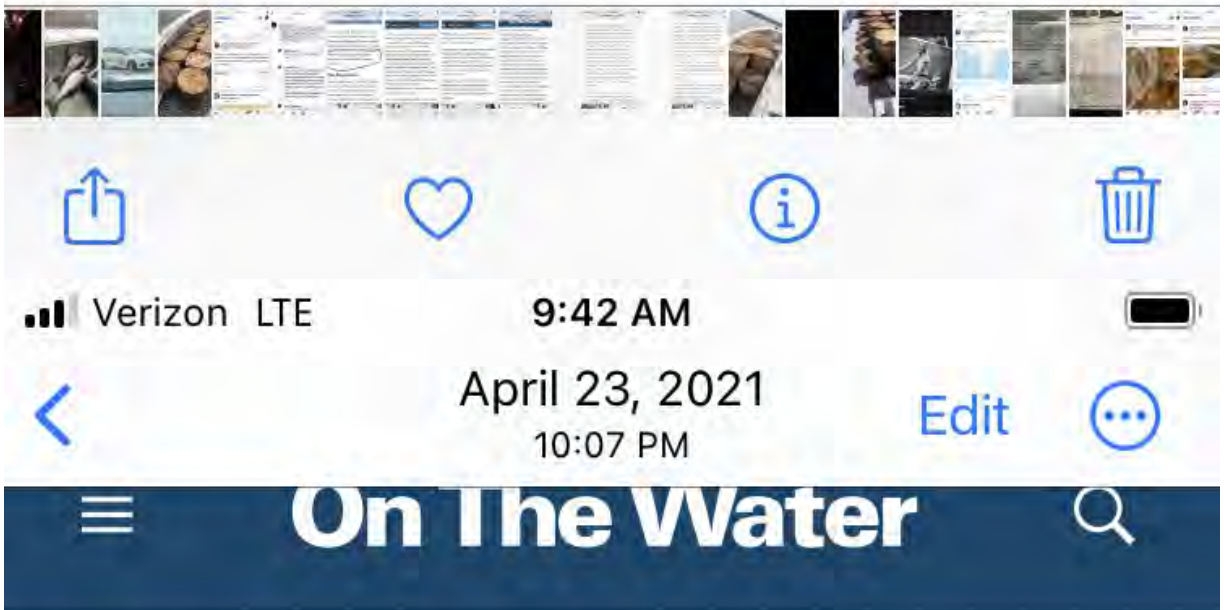
A number of fishery managers indicated they would like to see the commission consider a broader array of options to reduce harvest. That might include things like gear restrictions or shorter seasons, which could



Part of the reason for the assessment's worse-than-expected results is new data showing that mortality from recreational fishing was higher than previously thought. Of particular concern was an increase in the number of "dead discards" – fish that die after being released by anglers. The assessment estimates that 3.4 million striped bass died after being caught and handled by anglers in 2017. That was 48

percent of all striped bass killed by all fishing activities that year and higher than the 2.9 million fish that were kept by recreational anglers. Biologists estimate that about 9 percent of fish die after being handled.

Some fishery managers say that means previous management actions to protect the population – which imposed new minimum



In 2015, managers predicted that stricter striped bass regulations would reverse the decline in the stock. However, it now appears that these regulation changes did not

that those regulation changes did not achieve the necessary decrease in striper mortality. In fact, they may have contributed to an increase in catch and release mortality (fish that recreational fishermen release which do not survive). Data provided to the board showed that the number of fish that died after being released by recreational anglers in 2017 exceeded the number they actually kept.

Massachusetts is already addressing this issue and will be holding public

hearings on regulations to reduce



From: [Aram Berberian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:19:17 AM

Hi,

I am a recreational shore fisherman in CT. I am writing the commission implore it to do more to protect the striped bass fishery.

I support for Option B1 for section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational

For 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support Option B.

For 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I urge you to choose Option B.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do the right thing here.

Aram Berberian
New Haven CT

From: cnadu9@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:34:43 AM

As a recreational fisherman who appreciates the sport, I never take any type of fish. I support a moratorium on harvesting any Striped Bass, but I guess the next best option is B1 for section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options.

For 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support Option B.

For 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, Option B is best.

I would like to see much more state and federal enforcement against poachers along with HUGE fines. I'm tired of seeing guys running off with under and over slot fish and there's nothing the honorable fisherman can do to report/stop it.

Curt Nadeau
Old Saybrook, CT

From: [Charles Gargano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:59:38 AM

I am a recreational fisherman that fishes over 150 days a year. It's probably too late for me but hopefully if the proper actions are taken my kids, who are also avid fisherman, will have some stripers to catch in the years to come. For Section 3.1.2 I support Option B1. For Section 3.2.1 I support Option B and lastly for Section 3.3 I support Option B.

Thank You,
Charles Hargano
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Edward McCaffrey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 12:10:31 PM

I'm a surf fisherman in Connecticut and would like to recommend and support the following options:

1. I support **Option B1** for section **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options**. This will give the Chesapeake anglers a 4" slot that they can harvest. Coastal anglers already comply with a 3" slot limit. This will also give all Chesapeake striper fishermen (recreational and charter) the same, equal, restrictions. No separate rules. It'll also help protect the last decent year classes of striped bass. It'll give them a 19-23" slot, but that's better than the current situation.
2. I also support section **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, Option B**, which gives a 14.5% reduction to both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. That'll reduce their quotas, though fisheries that aren't able to fill their quotas due to low numbers of fish available won't be affected by this.
3. Finally, I believe **OPTION B** is best for section **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment**. This will be decided by ASMFC Striped Bass board members, and not by public comment.

Edward McCaffrey

Connecticut Surfcasters Association

Madison, CT

From: [Duane Eggie](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 12:35:09 PM

Dear Managers,

Here are my thoughts on addendum II.

- There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015 year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Option A expands the slot to 28"-35", Option C and D introduce 'mode splits'. Essentially, recreational anglers are split into 'private vessel/shore' and 'for-hire', it is not the right thing to do now or ever. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the board and law enforcement that no harvest and no target closures would be too difficult to enforce, the same applies here. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. Option D shifts the slot up in size and would only do more damage to the 2015 year class as they continue to grow and enter that range.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: [Support Option B1](#)—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 of 23".

- Here we selected Option B1 for several reasons. Most importantly it produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): [Support 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.

- We do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the board choose to adopt (most likely against public comment) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: [Support 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.

- This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off filets) and keep the skin on the filets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. We are adding to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by the anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Support 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%.

- Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, "Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum." An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.
- We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.
 - First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let's say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us its a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, than this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.
 - Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability) to getting these new commercial regulation in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Support 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.

- As we mentioned in our [summary of this past ASMFC board meeting](#), there is a really good chance that Addendum II will only be in effect for a one year period. The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be need to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. This is unfortunate, the writing has been on the wall for years and as you are probably already aware, Stripers Forever has been calling for the most conservative measures since the beginning of the Amendment 7 process. If the results of the next stock assessment are as bad as we anticipate, the conversation about a equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be back on the table.

Sincerely,

Capt. Duane R. Eggie

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Pete Novello](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II - Concerns
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 12:56:25 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am and have been an avid saltwater fisherman for more than 30 years. I have fished for striped bass as my primary target species for all of those years primarily in the western Long Island Sound in Westport, CT. I have seen a MAJOR reduction in the number of smaller striped bass over the past 10 years. I will classify "smaller striped bass" as any fish under 26 inches long. Each year numbers of these smaller fish that I have caught has dropped exponentially, this last season was by far the fewest number of smaller striped bass I have caught. Ten years ago, I would fish from early April through early December and I would literally catch many hundreds, probably thousands of smaller striped bass in a full season. To be more specific, during the spring & fall runs I would often catch 20 to 30 of these smaller fish in a 4 to 5 hour outing with 2 or 3 fish larger than 28 inches mixed into that count. I would make trips like that 2 to 3 times per week with varied success. I also was able to fish throughout the entire summer and target a large population of resident summer schoolie bass. Those summer trips would nearly always produce at least 4 of 5 fish, but many nights I would catch 1 to 2 dozen small bass. There would be far fewer 28 inch or larger fish during those summer months.

As I mentioned, the number of those smaller bass has steadily declined. This spring and early summer, from April to the end of June, during the spring run I caught a total of less than 50 fish under 28 inches long. I was fishing an average of 2 to 3 times per week during that time. Ten years ago, I would likely have easily caught 50 small bass in the first 2 or 3 weeks of April. What I did catch during the April to June time period was much better numbers of fish over 28 inches. I caught many more slot and over slot sized fish last spring. It was actually the most fish I have ever caught that were slot sized and bigger in my entire life. I would say that 90%+ of the fish that I caught were 28 inches or bigger during that time.

The summer bite from July to September is now non-existent. As I mentioned I used to fish through the summer nights and continue to catch what I believe were summer resident schoolie bass, they are nearly all gone now. That fishery no longer exists. I caught less than 10 schoolie striped bass during these summer months in 2023.

The fall run of years past would be waves of striped bass in different sizes moving through our waters. Most of the numbers of those fish were small striped bass. There were always multiple weeks straight in late October through election week in November when all of our water front would have thousands of blitzing schoolie bass nearly every day. During these weeks I would again catch hundreds of the smaller class bass. This year there were a handful of days when a few much smaller schools of small bass pushed through our area. I would say I

caught less than 75 schoolies this fall over the dozens of fishing trips I made. The reoccurring theme is that I did catch more stripers over 28 inches last fall than I have ever caught, but still far fewer than I did in the spring.

Based on what I have seen over these years, I think that the better numbers of larger fish I am catching now are the mature smaller fish I was seeing from 10+ years ago. The problem is that there are so few smaller fish now. Striped bass WILL COLAPSE in the coming years if the smaller fish are not replaced in the cycle. There needs to be a better balance in the fishery with fish of all sizes. My biggest concern is that people will see that they are catching the bigger fish and think that the fishing is better overall. Boats are harvesting thousands of the slot bass as I write this letter. I'm not a scientist. I'm not sure exactly what the solution is, but something needs to change NOW, not 2 years from now when all the slot fish have been harvested. That will be too late.

I would love to see a moratorium on striped bass to let the fish spawn and replace the smaller fish missing from the current cycle. Thank you for taking the time to read my response. Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to help. I would be happy to spend my time and effort to try and help this cause.

Best,
Pete Novello

From: [Thomas Cody](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 2:16:46 PM

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to comment on the Draft Amendment II to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped Bass. I have laid out my positions on each option below. I hope the council continues taking proactive, conservation-minded management actions to ensure a healthy striped bass population for years to come.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: **Option B**—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- I particularly want to voice my concern about mode splits. I am concerned by attempts to manage stakeholders within the recreational sector differently. We need clarity and equitable rules geared toward rebuilding the stock.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: **Option B1**—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons

- The fish in the Chesapeake are everyone's fish and allowing Maryland in particular to harvest more fish is hurting the rest of the coast. Again, please do not implement mode splits in the Bay. Striped bass are being overfished, the population is declining and now is the time for clear, conservation-minded policies.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **Option B** with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **Option B**—Board Action.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Thomas Cody

From: [Ray](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:02:20 PM

I support **Option B1** for section **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options**. This will give the Chesapeake anglers a 4" slot that they can harvest. Coastal anglers already comply with a 3" slot, the Chessy folks can do their part. This will also give all Chesapeake striper fishermen (recreational and charter) the same, equal, restrictions. No separate rules. It'll also help protect the last decent year classes of striped bass. It'll give them a 19-23" slot, but that's better than the current situation. I'm not going into all the details here and now.

For 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support **Option B**, which gives a 14.5% reduction to both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. That'll reduce their quotas, though fisheries that aren't able to fill their quotas due to low numbers of fish available won't be affected by this.

Ray Phillips

159 Thompson Hill Road

Portland, CT 06480

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Chris Lido](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 5:14:58 PM

As a deckhand and budding captain aboard a party boat and a lifelong angler along the Jersey Shore, I support **option C** which will allow the "for-hire" fleet to continue to drive tourism in the Garden State. In the 35 plus years I have been working in the fishing industry many family-owned boats and businesses have suffered, and sadly are no longer operating in large part as a result of ever-tightening regulations. Our customers who often are fishing for the first time pay good money to come home with a few dinners for their families and the 28-33-inch size limit, plus bonus tag would allow them to do just that.

Chris Lido
FV Gambler
Point Pleasant NJ

From: [vinny.vetere](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II),
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 6:19:12 PM

As a charter boat owner/captain I believe the slot limit we have now does not leave enough wiggle room to harvest a legal striper for my clients. Most fish are between 31 & 34" so I would support the changes that allow for larger fish to be retained.

I support Option E: 1 Fish @ 28' to 33"

My income is way down this season because of the strict new laws for this past season. That extra 2 inches would allow me to continue my business and make my clients once again come fish with me.

Capt Vincent Vetere
Katfish NY 2057
www.katfishsportfishing.com

Thank You

From: [RomanAround5246](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 8:49:03 PM

Hi Emilie Franke,

I have been going over the proposals that have been offered to us and unfortunately I don't think that anyone of these proposals are going to solve the predicament that the Striped Bass are in. We put in place a slot limit of 28 inches to 35 inches thinking it would make a difference, but it didn't. We tried making another change to 28 inches to 31 inches and is this working? Probably not because here we are again trying to fix the original problem.

What no one is realizing is that the 9 percent is never going to go away as long as people are fishing for them.

Alot of the Charter/Party Boats along with Guides are targeting large Striped Bass even though they are off limits. Alot of them are also using light gear which adds to the problem of survival after release. Also, after catching their limit of fish, they are still fishing for them because of the trip they paid for. Now we are going back to that nine percent mortality rate.

Unfortunately, the only way that we can truly meet the goals by 2029 is to close fishing for Striped Bass completely for a year or two. I would also like to see a season for them too. According to the Committee's release guidelines, no one between January 1 and April 15 is properly reviving these fish because the water is too cold to stick one's hands into it.

If I had to chose one option, it would be to keep the regulations the same, 28-31 inches with one fish per person for all recreational anglers including Charter/Party boats. Everybody should be on the same playing field so there will be no issues especially for law enforcement.

Thank You Emilie for taking the time to read this email and to record it.

Sincerely,

Roman Dudus

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy Z Flip3 5G, an AT&T 5G smartphone

From: [DANIEL VIAFORE](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:34:30 AM

Please do not alter the current slot limit of 28-31". It is crucial and imperative that we continue to protect the 2015 year class! Thank you
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Nick Petrucci](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 12:30:55 PM

I want to state and voice my opinion as an avid surfcaster and recreational angler that does not disrespect our oceans and habitats (that has reported numerous poachers). I am also a valued member of Connecticut Surfcasters Association and want to and hope to one day fish with my children in the surf.

I choose to support **Option B1** for section **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options**.

Furthermore, I want to voice my support for **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options**, I support **Option B**

Lastly, For **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment**, I choose to support **Option B**

Thank you very much for listening to my opinions. I hope my voice will be heard and not fall on deaf ears.

From: [GESER 3A](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 1:09:46 PM

For section 3.1.2 I support option B1 for Chesapeake Bay recreational options.

For section 3.2.1 commercial quota reductions, options, I support option B..

I am a lifelong recreational fisherman, who is willing to do what it takes to help rebuild the striped bass fishery for everyone

From: [David Pollack](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass in the Hudson
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 2:05:59 PM

I took my special needs brother fishing for striped bass four years ago in Albany. Our captain made it clear: “we do not keep any female fish and prefer if you would only remove one from the river.”

We first caught herring for bait and proceeded to catch over a dozen striped bass, taking pictures but releasing afterwards.

We MUST allow for future generations to enjoy catching striped bass and I for one am in favor of a catch limit in addition to a size limit, or, a total ban on striped bass keepers being removed from the Hudson with a sunset clause based on increased numbers.

Submitted respectfully,

David Pollack
11 Edge Water Lane
Haverstraw, NY

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Beth Darlington](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] fishing
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 2:21:06 PM

Dear friends,

Please support "Option B" for recreational and commercial fishing.

Thank you!

Beth Darlington

From: [matt kovner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass fishery management
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 2:21:55 PM

as a fisherman interested in maintaining the striped bass population for future generations, i encourage you to choose option b or option c from the current draft fishery management plan.

thanks
mk

--

Matt Kovner
144 Crispell Road
Olivebridge, NY 12461
845-389-7900
mkovner15@gmail.com

From: [Andrew Brana](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum to Interstate Fishery Management Plan
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 2:22:57 PM

Dear folks,

I strongly urge you to adopt “Option B” for both recreational and commercial fishing. In addition to this, enforcement of regulations needs to be increased, including in Federal waters, to ensure that these regulations lead to the desired level of population recovery and conservation.

Sincerely,

Andrew Brana
Yorktown, NY
914-433-3104

From: [Paul](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [MIKE ARMSTRONG](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 3:01:07 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to comment to Draft Addendum II

My clients mostly fish for striped bass and are disappointed that they can't keep any fish to take home
We do catch a lot of fish which mostly all have to be released. They would like to take I home for the grill

My business was down last year because it was just catch and release

I support Option C 28"-33" For-Hire Fleet
Option C will allow our customers with a better chance to bring a fish home
I also support the for-hire fleet to continue to fillet striped bass at sea
Thank you
Captain Paul Diggins O/O
Reel Pursuit Charters
Charlestown, Ma 02129

Sent from my iPad

From: [brandon Hakulin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 2
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 3:52:39 PM

Good day Striped Bass Management Board,

I am a recreational angler, concerned citizen, science teacher, and Marine Corps veteran from the state of NY and I am concerned about the future of our fisheries on the East Coast. I fish and spend money, all along the East Coast. I'm writing to express my support for Addendum 2 and the reduction in striped bass morality.

Please support our fisheries and your constituents, and thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Brandon F. Hakulin

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

From: [Alan Moore](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass changes
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 3:53:21 PM

The real problem is commercial overfishing and lack of enforcement of existing rules.

From: [Linda Chilcoat](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment on striped bass
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:03:10 PM

Sent from my iPad

I think that 90% of my fishing effort is for striped bass. However, the fish need to be protected. I support a moratorium against all fishing for the strippers until the stock has sufficiently recovered (per scientific assessment). Thank you.

From: [George & Donna Osing](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Rockfish Public Input
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:13:31 PM

To Whomever

I fish the mid Bay with lures and I am catch and release. My recommendation to increase the rockfish is to

1. Stop the chumming for at least 3 years. Chumming is devastating the schools which do not seem to move around. The fish at the mouth of the Patapsco river were POUNDED this year. Day after day. LURES ONLY!
2. Stop the commercial harvest of rock. Make the fish a game fish only
3. If this doesn't work (which it should) then an all out ban will be necessary.
4. If chumming is not banned at least require barbs to be smashed flat. It makes it easier to remove the hook without damaging the fish.

George Osing
Ellicott City Maryland

From: [MARYLOU ZEIS](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Riverkeeper
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:37:55 PM

I support option B.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Duffy72297](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass fishing
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 6:29:44 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I hope you will adopt more sustainable fishing regulations for striped bass. I watch a lot of nature programs and have heard about many cases where overfishing or overhunting has led to disaster. If fishing is cut back a bit, hopefully the striped bass population will really rebound.

Thank you,
Joan Raitano



Virus-free www.avast.com

From: bill.winter@verizon.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Preservation of Striped Bass habitat from Over-Fishing
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 7:05:23 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to express my earnest support for the preservation of the striped bass habitat in the Hudson River. As a concerned individual passionate about environmental conservation, I believe it is crucial to protect this iconic species and its ecosystem for the benefit of current and future generations.

The Hudson River serves as a vital home for the striped bass, playing an integral role in their life cycle and overall well-being. These magnificent fish not only contribute to the natural biodiversity of the river but also hold significant cultural and economic value for our communities.

However, the habitat of the striped bass faces various threats, including pollution, habitat degradation, and over-fishing. Without immediate action to safeguard their environment, we risk irreparable damage to this crucial ecosystem, which could have far-reaching consequences for both wildlife and our local communities.

Preservation efforts must include comprehensive strategies to mitigate pollution, restore degraded habitats, and enforce sustainable fishing practices. Collaborative initiatives involving government agencies, conservation organizations, scientists, and local communities are essential to ensure the long-term health and survival of the striped bass and its ecosystem in the Hudson River.

I urge you to prioritize the protection of the striped bass habitat through policy measures, conservation projects, and community engagement initiatives. By working together, we can make a meaningful difference in preserving this invaluable natural resource and safeguarding the ecological balance of the Hudson River for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. I remain hopeful that with collective action, we can create a healthier and more sustainable future for the striped bass and the entire ecosystem of the Hudson River.

Sincerely,

William Winter
115 Hillcrest Terrace
Staten Island, NY 10305

From: [Dan Lipsey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 7:09:13 PM

I am concerned about the "data" that is being used to formulate the plans that decide what happens to the state of the fishery. It's imperative you have good data to form a plan. I understand that it's hard to count the fish, and it's not an easy task. Let's not reinvent the wheel. Put together a taskforce to learn from other areas of the country who have fisheries and how they manage them based on the data they are learning from that is different than what we are currently doing!

Dan Lipsey

From: [your message](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option B
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 7:33:09 PM

I am a contributing supporter of Riverkeeper. I caught my first striped bass about 30 years ago, and I have caught and released tagged stripers in Connecticut. I urge you to adopt option B for commercial and recreational fishing.

From: [Ray Jarvis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 7:35:16 PM

As a for hire Captain, I do not support any increase in slot size. I do support any and all reductions in harvest coast wide.

Time to change the for hire model and treat striped bass as a game fish. I do not harvest Striped Bass on any for hire trips, and I explain to my clients why this it's important to do.

Unable to speak due to family commitment. Thank you.

Ray Jarvis

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Evan Pritchard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] re: Striped Bass as a Cornerstone of Local History
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2023 11:12:50 PM

The Dutch settlers of the Kingston area had a special interest in Striped Bass for fishing. This species of fish had a special nickname or code name among the Dutch fishermen that we today may not understand completely. They called a creek that had Striped Bass as a "Twaalfskill." Kill means creek in Dutch, and Twaalf is the number 12. This was the code name for the Striped Bass. There must have been other numbers for other fish; I have not seen these other eleven written out, but we know the Striped Bass was important because there is a Twaalfskill in both Kingston NY and near Highland Landing southeast of New Paltz. The Hudson's shores were once famous for Striped Bass spawning grounds. By preserving the Striped Bass we are preserving a cornerstone of our human history as well as our natural history.

Evan Pritchard

Author of Native New Yorkers, and Mapping Native New York

From: [Ron](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 12:34:54 AM

Hello,

I'm writing today concerning the Striped Bass addendum 2 draft hearing. As a Chesapeake Bay charter captain and tackle vendor I would like to see the board vote for option B1 as well as the 14.5 % reduction in commercial quota. I'd also suggest these measures be implemented immediately.

As mentioned above I actively charter for hire striped bass trips on the chesapeake bay and I feel these measures are important to keep myself, other captains, local tackle shops and the vast array of other entities that would be impacted if these fish were gone working. Thank you for taking my comments in to consideration and I hope you each decide to do what is right for these fish.

Ron Buffington

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ron Buffington](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II hearing
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 12:50:35 AM

As conservation minded anglers and a business that relies on a healthy fishery we support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024, and the Board to focus on meaningful reductions in mortality as future assessments require.

For Addendum II we support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23"(22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24" (15.9% reduction).

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: B. Board Action.

Implementation dates: ASAP

These measures are important to ensure healthy and plentiful stocks of fish. When the fish are plentiful all sectors can share in the rewards and good fishing equally. Thank you for taking the time to read our letter and taking our thoughts in to consideration.

The entire JLS Rods Staff

[Www.jlsrods.com](http://www.jlsrods.com)

From: [Tim Higgins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Personal comments on Striped Bass Amendment 7 Addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 8:08:36 AM

Good Day,

As a recreational fisherman seeing the decline of the striped bass population in Massachusetts, I support urgent protection of the species. Here's my input on Amendment 7 Addendum 2.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options.

I support Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options.

I support Option B2 at 1 fish at 19" to 24".

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. I support Option B

I personally do not feel that these measures go far enough, but are the best options out of those presented in the addendum.

Thank you

Tim Higgins

284 Water St., Newburyport, MA

From: [Bensonhurst00](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 8:24:46 AM

Leave the fish alone

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: mattsedgwick@yahoo.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 9:09:13 AM

Hi, hopefully you read this and understand the passion I speak with as I type this message. This fish has been a staple in my life for about 20 years now, and as a young passionate outdoors man I just am now scratching the surface of understand and figuring out this precious resource. I have dedicated my life to chasing these fish and plan on making my living off the bountiful stock that we have of this resource running and strict catch and release fishing service to ensure the safety and quality of our fish while further educating those on safe handling and practical catch and release ethics. I really hope you guys can see the damage that has come from the slaughtering of the Chesapeake bay. Look at the laws and regulations on any other spawning grounds for fish, no one is allowed to clear the house like the people in the bay do. This takes a dramatic role on the far northern fisheries. From shore fisherman to commercial! Option B1 that has been proposed should be set in stone for everyone! At least until the population of spawning fish comes back, even then me and many others believe it should still be placed there permanently. **WE NEED THIS RESOURCE TO STAY OR US AND MANY OTHERS ARE DOOMED!** This issue should be in the hands of the people who pay the money to target this incredible species, not by the people who profit off of every single fish that's caught killed and sold on a large scale market. Please take into consideration how the Guys like me feel. I have anxiety thinking that I'm going to lose my lifeline because some inconsiderate people decided to do what they do best as humans and that's erase native species. Please do what's right for the east coast striped bass fishery.

Thankyou, Matthew Sedgwick a Connecticut angler.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [pamerniewilson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Striped Bass (Rockfish) Regulations
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 10:29:01 AM

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I live on a tributary of Chesapeake Bay. My neighbors and I have noticed an alarming decline in the number of striped bass (rockfish) in our part of the bay. Daily there are website pictures posted by charterers of fishermen all along the northeast coast holding large, over 31" striped bass for "photo ops". It is clear that these fish are unlikely to survive (even if it is to be believed that they are returned to the water). In many cases the charterers are touting the large number of "cows" that are being caught. Holding fish out of water for photos should be strictly prohibited, and authorities should use the pictures on these websites as enforcement evidentiary tools. Watching the stupid slaughter of these large, egg producing "cows" is frustrating, particularly with the now clear evidence of the decline in the fishery.

Also prohibited should be the use of eels, spot and similar types of live bait. It is undeniable that fish caught on these baits usually swallow the hook with resultant impact on mortality.

My state being the principal nursery for rockfish is taking measures to try to save this fishery. Shortening the season, requiring circle hooks when using bait, and eliminating the "trophy" season are steps in the right direction. I request that you immediately impose the common sense measures taken by Maryland and those suggested here.

Ernest G Wilson
Neavitt, Maryland

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Theodore H Carski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 11:43:41 AM

I support CCA's positions.

- *Recreational Coast: Option B – Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)*
- *Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction) or B2 – 19-24” (15.9% reduction).*
- *Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota*
- *Board Response: B. Board Action.*
- *Implementation dates: ASAP.*

-Support closing the Trophy season...even if not justified by science, ie, there are no data on the probable impact, the optics are terrible, and keeping more breeder sized fish alive can't hurt.

-Support closing the catch and keep Upper Bay May season...as above, just in case the spawn is delayed, provides some added protection for the breeders.

On Option B...prefer widest spread to reduce discards. See below for remedy to FH fleet.

Thoughts for future consideration:

-Temp is a known threshold, so extend the mid summer closed season to the 4 hottest weeks of the year on average. There are temp data available, so use these data to identify the most effective closure period.

-To provide some remedy, especially to FH charters, for the above changes, add an incentive/subsidy, from DNR, to target and take blue cats. This could be cash prizes for tagged fish, or most/biggest blue cats reported via the FACTS procedure. This would also introduce the charter fishers to blue cats as a great edible fish, thus increasing the take of cats, and helping to create a larger commercial market.

-Regarding effectiveness of a slot, attempt to account for harvest estimates based on the big difference between C&R techniques used. Perhaps use 'lure' and 'bait' scenarios, rather than pit recreational vs charter. Apply a lower mortality (Flats data) to a 'lure' boat using appropriately sized gear to minimize time of fight, lures with barbless hooks, trebles removed or cut to 1 hook/treble, rubberized nets, gunnels low enough to keep fish in the water etc. Then use the 9% mortality value for bait fishing, often from a larger boat, where the fish will always come out of the water, a net is usually used, gear may be undersized to prolong the fight, often there are many fishers so multiple lines, and fish might be flopped on the deck until the fishers/crew can deal with all the lines. Model these scenarios to determine impact of the slot. The large boat bait scenario is where a single upper slot might actually fail, in that, the bait fishers will work through many fish over the slot, and many of these released fish will die from poor handling, so the total kill is much higher than

estimated, and the slot is not actually limiting the kill.

-In addition to limiting the take, come at it from the other side, and initiate a striped bass stocking program, as is now running in NC, to help compensate for the harvest. DNR could have funding, logistics, and approvals in prep, and then use NC first year's data to inform a 'go' decision for ChesBay in 2025. Although this may have previously failed in MD, the science and technology have changed, so it deserves another look.

Thanks for doing all you do! No response expected.

Ted Carski

Lifetime CCA/MD member

From: paulfish.reeltherapy.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft Addendum 2- Comment within
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 11:50:06 AM

ASMFC: Here is my comment:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

There is history we can learn from about mode splits. Maryland did a mode split for charter for hire, and it resulted in Maryland Charters harvesting more striped bass than the rest of the Chesapeake and ocean charters combined. A mode split will only exacerbate the already serious situation.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. The Chesapeake commercial quota has taken a whopping 1.8% reduction (see below).

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

I believe everyone should share equally in the sacrifice now needed to recover striped bass by 2029.

Thank you
Paul

Capt. Paul Eidman
732.614.3373
paulfish@reeltherapy.com
<https://linktr.ee/paulfish>

><(((°>`.._.._.._.._><(((°>
`.._.._.._.._><(((°>`.._.._.._.._><(((°>
><(((°>`.._.._.._.._><(((°>

www.reeltherapy.com
www.menhadendefenders.org
www.anglersforoffshorewind.org

Yes, ONE person can make a difference!

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: 2024 striped bass regulations
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 11:50:09 AM

Emilie Franke | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703.842.0716 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

From: David Boyden <dboyden@tsgcontracting.com>
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 11:34 AM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] 2024 striped bass regulations

As a 45-year resident of Maryland I wanted to express my support for any and all future regulations to protect the striped bass population. I would fully support all regulations up to and including a complete moratorium . I do not understand the complexities of providing game fish status to striped Bass but believe this would be a great step. I appreciate all the hard work and dedication.

David Boyden
The Sanchez Group
240-925-0914

From: [Linda Pistolesi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment on addendum to Interstate Fishery Management Plan
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 12:07:48 PM

To whom it may concern:

I understand from a communication from the Hudson River Riverkeeper that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is considering adding an addendum to its Interstate Fishery Management Plan to address the declining status of Striped Bass. I am writing in support of Option B for both recreational and commercial fishing and in addition I strongly favor increased regulatory enforcement in all areas, including Federal Waters, in support of the striped bass population in the Hudson River. I do not fish, but I do bird, and often these activities co-occur. For me, most often at the Piermont Pier in Piermont, NY. This has always been a popular fishing spot, but in recent years it has become even more so with many groups of fishermen lining the pier, some following regulations and others not. While I have seen checks conducted by the DEC ECOs, they seem much less frequent than needed. I am there almost daily, usually in the morning hours.

I hope you will adopt option B for the addendum to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan in support of Striped Bass.

Thank you for your consideration,
Linda Pistolesi

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] Fwd: Striped Bass Emergency Actions (comment from Maryland)
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 3:02:52 PM

From: Erik Zlokovitz -DNR- <erik.zlokovitz@maryland.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 5:17:52 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Cc: Michael Luisi -DNR- <michael.luisi@maryland.gov>
Subject: [External] Fwd: Striped Bass Emergency Actions (comment from Maryland)

Hi Emilie! Can you please add Brandon's comment below to your written comments? Thanks.

"Regarding the ASMFC Addendum II options. I will be putting my support on the smallest proposed slot and supporting NO sector separation for the "for hire" fleet as I have not practiced that from the start and do not feel it will effect my business negatively. -

Capt. Brandon Wingate
Salt Tale Charters
410-463-1252
www.salttalecharters.com

Erik Zlokovitz

Recreational Fisheries Outreach
Fishing and Boating Services
Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Tawes State Office Building
580 Taylor Ave, B-2
410-260-8324
443-569-1398

Erik.Zlokovitz@maryland.gov



[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: BRANDON WINGATE <captbrandon@salttalecharters.com>
Date: Thu, Nov 30, 2023 at 10:34 AM
Subject: Striped Bass Emergency Actions
To: josh.kurtz@maryland.gov <josh.kurtz@maryland.gov>, david.goshorn@maryland.gov <david.goshorn@maryland.gov>, erik.zlokovitz@maryland.gov <erik.zlokovitz@maryland.gov>, <MICHAEL.LUISI@maryland.gov>

Dear Secretary Kurtz, Deputy Secretary Goshorn, Mr. Zlokovitz & Mr. Luisi,

I am the owner/captain/guide for a full time light tackle and fly fishing guide service on the Chesapeake. I write this as a stakeholder and conservationists.

I have read the letter sent to MD Tackle Shop owners regarding upcoming possible emergency actions for Striped Bass and felt inclined to comment.

To start, I strongly support any decision to close/eliminate the "trophy season" in Maryland. This is an action that should have taken place a while ago. The fish that are harvested during this season are migratory spawning stock fish that are currently off limits in coastal waters and will most likely remain off limits once Addendum II from ASMFC is completed.

With that said, I strongly disagree with the proposed extension of the "no-target" closure and any "no-target" closure in any capacity. While I understand the optics of this action, I also know well and good that the original decision to enact such closures was a political measure to avoid taking cuts in harvest. Namely, the 2 fish for hire and no commercial cuts. No target closures do nothing outside of what a no harvest closure already achieves. It only paints a negative picture on catch and release fishing which can be practiced in a way that very few fish die. The winter and early spring catch and release fishery for Striped Bass in the Chesapeake is one of the best ways to experience the species the best conditions to ensure the fish survive.

My input as a professional and as someone who has been around these fish my entire life would be to tame the uncomfortable route of having gear restrictions for catch and release of Striped Bass (i.e. trolling, bait fishing cut or live). Catch and release should be lifted up as a great way to experience the fishery as it has been in so many other states for so many other species. Furthermore, Jan. - April would be a fantastic time of the year to push tagging programs to better understand these fish.

As a side note regarding the ASMFC Addendum II options. I will be putting my support on the smallest proposed slot and supporting NO sector separation for the "for hire" fleet as I have not practiced that from the start and do not feel it will effect my business negatively.

Thanks you for your time. Good luck moving forward with new regulations and actions as I understand it is a very challenging job to have.

Many Tales & Tight Lines!

Capt. Brandon Wingate

Salt Tale Charters

410-463-1252

www.salttalecharters.com

From: [Andrew Roberto](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 3:46:38 PM
Importance: High

Hi, please see below for my opinion on what to do

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: I support Option B1. This will give the Chesapeake anglers a 4" slot that they can harvest. Coastal anglers already comply with a 3" slot, the Chesapeake folks can do their part. This will also give all Chesapeake striper fishermen (recreational and charter) the same, equal, restrictions. No separate rules. It'll also help protect the last decent year classes of striped bass. It'll give them a 19-23" slot, but that's better than the current situation.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support Option B, which gives a 14.5% reduction to both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. That'll reduce their quotas, though fisheries that aren't able to fill their quotas due to low numbers of fish available won't be affected by this.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B

Thanks,

Andrew

From: [Frederick Hirsekorn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 4:06:36 PM

I read the documentation that outlines the proposed changes and have two comments/concerns.

First, the mortality numbers for striped bass released by recreational anglers are staggering. If they are accurate, improving them would be item number one on my list for addressing the health of the striped bass fishery.

Second, the 2023 size limits for striped bass are too restrictive and ignore a number of the realities of recreational fishing for striped bass, especially offshore.

Determining if a fish falls within the narrow range of 28 to 31 inches requires an accurate measurement. Thus the striper must be "unhooked," held steady in the proper configuration for measurement, and then measured. If the fish is close to either end of the range, the angler will justifiably check and perhaps recheck, none of which is salubrious for the fish, and undoubtedly leads to an increase in mortality of the very fish we wish to preserve.

As most recreational anglers want to catch a keeper, they'll keep at it until they do. With a narrow range as that above, and with the normal distribution of fish size within an off shore school, that means they will have to release on the order of five fish before they find a keeper. Given the mortality rates, we looking at killing two or more fish for each fish we catch. And those two fish will be the very fish we are trying to preserve.

I think if the range were expanded back to what it was in 2022, say 28 to 38 inches, the size can be more often be determined by inspection, and the fish can be released, if outside the range, before it's boated and subjected to the rigors of the measuring process.

As a final thought, most recreational, and commercial anglers I know are responsible people and will do their best to preserve the fishery. Giving them a broader range of options will help them do so.

From: [Jeffrey Weisman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum ii
Date: Friday, December 1, 2023 4:17:28 PM

I am writing in an effort to help save and protect the wild striped bass population. I attended the public comment meeting on November 30th 2022 in Milford Connecticut.

I am an avid recreational fisherman and I am deeply concerned about the effect that overfishing and irresponsible fishing is having on our wild fish populations.

Therefore I support the following amendment options.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jeffrey Weisman

From: [Bruce Gallaway](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment 7 addendum
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 9:48:46 AM

Dear Emillie and board members -

I am writing to express my strong support for the most stringent measures possible to preserve and restore the Atlantic striped bass population. As a recreational fisherman living in West Yarmouth Cape Cod, Massachusetts, the striped bass is very important to me, my family, and our local economy.

As a stakeholder and a citizen, I ask you to uphold your responsibility and authority under these Acts and adopt the most effective and precautionary management plan for the Atlantic striped bass.

Regarding the options for the Draft addendum 2 to amendment 7, I support the following options:

- - **3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B**—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).
 - **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1**
 - **3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): Support Option B**
 - **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support Option B**
 - **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support Option B**

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronald Gallaway

182 Silver leaf Ln,

West Yarmouth, Massachusetts

From: Scott.ward201@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment on striped bass regulations
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 3:32:53 PM

Hello,

I am writing to comment on the proposed striped bass regulation changes. I would like to say that I am in support of a slot limit of (1) 19-26" fish per angler. I do not believe that there should be an exception made for charter boats. While it is undeniable that the charter fleet has an economic impact and that the charter industry provides angling opportunities to those that would otherwise not benefit from the resource, to narrow the slot size so that charter boats may keep an additional fish will lead to a greater mortality rate in released fish. The non charter recreational fishermen add just as much if not more to the economy as the charter fleet. As the son of a charter captain I grew up during the moratorium, my Father never failed to be able to book a charter. He simply found other fish to target. Those who book on charters are looking for an experience not just seeking to take home fish. In fact many fisheries are purely catch and release industries and they thrive.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments and I hope you will consider them when making an important decision about the future of the fishery.

Scott Ward

From: [K.OSBORNE](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripers
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 4:09:04 PM

I have been fishing in the lower Chesapeake Bay for over 50 years. I have seen the stripers come and go.

What worked in the past to bring stripers back was a closure of the fishery. If you cannot close the taking of stripers now, I hope you will take the most aggressive action you can to save these wonderful fish.

Kendall Osborne
Norfolk VA

From: [william.martin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Protection and recovery of the Striped Bass
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 5:31:36 PM

I am encouraged that the ASMFC is acknowledging that the breeding population of the striped bass is again in critical condition. But, I am distressed to see that matters have again reached a critical point before concerted action is being co considered. I am doubtful that the council will take vigorous enough action to repair the condition, but finally everyone realizes that the situation is urgent.

I favor the following options:

Section 3.1.1 Option B'
Section 3.1.2 Option B
Section 3.1.3 Option B
Section 3.1.3 Option B
Section 3.1.4 Option B
Section 3.2.1 Option b
Section 3.3 Option B

Even though I am a resident of Maryland< I favor elimination of my state's so called Trophy season. I also favor closing the season for fishing when the summer water temperature is above 80 degrees. The wanton waste of undersized fish caught in hot summer water is staggering and shocking. We understand the science but fail to act with courage and knowledge.

William H. Martin, Ph.D.
Towson MD

From: [Stephen Schad](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum
Date: Saturday, December 2, 2023 10:14:18 PM

I am for the most conservative measures to protect striped bass and no sector separation between charters and recreational. Option B1 or B2 is fine

Thanks

Stephen schad
3501 S River Terr
Edgewater MD 21037

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [JD NOWA](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 7:48:25 AM

Please vote for OPTION B2.

Thanks Nowa

From: [Richard samaloni](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe Bass
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 9:13:29 AM

Size. 28 to 36in

From: [David Reid](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Interstate Fishery Management Plan
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 11:31:14 AM

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing to voice my support for adopting "Option B" for both recreational and commercial fishing in regards to upcoming changes to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

Best regards,
David Reid

From: [Mike Zsak](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: editor@fishtalkmag.com; david@ccamd.org; [Mike Waine](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 12:12:37 PM

I believe option B4 of the draft addendum is the best option available and should be supported by ASMFC.

From a recreational fisherman's viewpoint this option is the most fair for all concerned fishermen, recreational and charter (For Hire), and would likely result in the minimum release mortality rate of all the options.

My rationale for suggesting option B4 is the best available option follows.

- Regarding option B4 as compared to the other options:
 - Of all the options in the draft addendum I suggest B4 would provide, when compared to the other options, the minimum release mortality. B4 has the widest min/max spread of all the options. It is logical that having a more narrow spread would result in more catches needing to be released, which for a constant mortality rate, would result in more released stripers dying. Therefore the widest min/max spread should minimize the total number of fish dying due to catch and release.
 - As an aside, I would point out It is not clear to me how option C2 can have a mortality rate lower than B2. Both options have the same min/max spread. Unless there is data that shows the mortality rate for charter boat fisherman releases is less than releases for recreational fisherman, which I haven't seen anywhere, the rate for option C2 should be the same as that for option B2.
- Regarding options B vs options C:
 - While charter boat captains (For Hire) certainly have business expenses such as licensing, fuel, boat investments/insurance, etc., the recreational fisherman also has expenses, not unlike the charter boat captain. I pay for a MD boat registration and fishing license, purchase fuel for my boat, maintain boat insurance and have upkeep expenses. I would also point out charter captains receive payment for taking clients out fishing, I on the other hand do not receive any payment when I take family and friends fishing. Given these and other considerations I believe it is only fair to limit charter boats (For Hire) to the same bag limit that is imposed on me as a recreational fisherman.
 - I would suggest that limiting the bag limit to 1 fish per person for charter boats will not significantly reduce the number of people that pay for charter boat (For Hire) trips. Given the cost of a charter boat trip if individuals are paying for a charter boat trip to get 2 fish they need to reconsider the cost/benefit of paying for the trip. Clearly they could save money simply by buying fish at the local fish market. I believe people book charters to

experience the pleasure of being on the water, possibly learning different fishing techniques, and enjoying the interaction with other charter boat participants.

Thank you for considering my comments. If you would like to further discuss my points or have any questions regarding my comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mike Zsak
DNRid: 96762
Cell: 240 925-8530

From: [Gary B Lowe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 2:14:28 PM

Thank you for taking the time to read the comments before the hearing .

After another dismal year for an amateur angler who is one of many that support the VMRC , and all the hard work that goes into looking after the state resources and being vigilant in the commitment that involves . However my main concern is the over harvesting of menhaden that most , if not all gamefish depend on one way or another . Out of state (or country) factory ships should not be allowed in the bay at all . Much less to scoop up millions of tons of baitfish and the indiscriminate tons of “ bycatch” that’s killed or wasted . Please consider steps to stop the over harvesting within our treasured territorial waters . Thank you ,

Gary Lowe , Yorktown Va.
Lifelong supporter of Va fish and game laws.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chester Zawacki](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass plan addendum
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 2:42:31 PM

One comment .
No special sector separation for charter or open boats.

From: [Reginald Thors](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 3:35:50 PM

ASMFC Board,

My name is Rex Thors I am a 23 year old recent graduate of Colby College with a degree in Biology and a published author in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management. During the course of my lifetime I have seen many environmental changes including negative changes to the Striped Bass Population. I believe that on this current trajectory the ASMFC will not meet their 2030 goals. Additionally, given the threats posed by poor spawning conditions and mycobacteriosis now is the time to step up and protect these fish. Therefore I believe strongly that in regards to section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options, Option B is best for these fish and all of the stakeholders involved. In regards to Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options, Option B1 is best for these fish and all stakeholders involved. In regards to section 3.1.3, Option B is best. I believe this option closes any potential loopholes and increases clarity and accountability. In regards to section 3.2.1, Option B is best, Additionally I would advocate that the commercial quota is reduced to the minimum quota. Lastly, in regards to section 3.3 I advocate for option B. I believe that the ASMFC is underestimating the pressure that this population is under and therefore will need to move quickly to protect these fish. Option B of 3.3 allows for faster more efficient changes to the regulations.

Thank you for reading this,

Rex Thors

781-690-5794

From: [Yahoomail](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments for Chesapeake Bay
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 3:55:18 PM

I've been fishing the upper Chesapeake Bay for over 45 years. Without the rockfish there is little to fish for. We need the 2 fish per person as in the facts program to survive. Charter boats are not the problem with mortality, catch and release is the problem. Closing the resource to all user groups is the only way to help the fish. Close the days when the water is warmer than normal. Thank You.

Capt. Russ Green

carolgfishing@comcast.net

From: [Paul Sledzik](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 6:38:49 PM

ASMFC,

I am a Rhode Island based salt water fly fisherman. I am writing to provide my comments on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

In the past several years, my fellow anglers and I who fish the southern RI coast and Narragansett Bay (in-shore based fishing) have noted a decline in striped bass.

For all the sections 3.1.1 to 3.3, I am supportive of Option B. This will allow the stock to recover and provide additional data to be collected so that the ASMFC can make informed decisions for the future.

Thank you for allowing me to comment.

Regards,

Paul Sledzik

West Warwick, RI

From: [Steve Boswell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 8:13:25 PM

Hello All,

I'm an avid fisherman with a family that loves to spend our free on the water. We are all Stuart's of this great resource . We believe the actions listed below will help protect and persevere this resource for future generations. This is why we support the following actions to reduce fishing mortality across all user groups in 2024, and for the board to remain focused on rebuilding the coast wide population to target biomass levels.

- ***Recreational Coast: Option B – Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)***
- ***Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction) or B2 – 19-24” (15.9% reduction).***
- ***Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota***
- ***Board Response: B. Board Action.***
- ***Implementation dates: ASAP.***

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sigrid Montagano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass - Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 10:48:15 PM

ASMFC Board,

My name is Sigrid Montagano and I am a 21 year old senior at Colgate University, where I study in the biology department alongside environmentalists and conservationists. Having been briefed on the ASMFC's 2030 goals, I feel obligated to reach out on behalf of the Striped Bass population and urge you to adopt protocols better suited to those goals.

Given the population threat posed by poor spawning conditions and rampant Mycobacteriosis, proactive protective measures are critical to the maintenance of a healthy Stripped Bass population.

To that end, I recommend Option B in section 3.1.1 of the Ocean Recreational Fishery Options, which is ideal for bass, and stakeholders. In Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options, Option B1 is best choice. In regards to section 3.1.3, Option B is best.

I believe the above options close potential loopholes and increases clarity and accountability, with the bass' best interests in mind.

For to section 3.2.1, Option B is also best. Additionally, I would advocate that the commercial quota is reduced to the minimum quota. Lastly, in regards to section 3.3 I advocate for option B. I believe that the ASMFC is underestimating the pressure that this population is under and therefore will need to move quickly to protect these fish. Option B of 3.3 allows for faster more efficient changes to the regulations.

I urge you to review these important options to help ensure that the ASMFC meets their commendable 2030 goals. Thank you for your time, Sigrid

From: [Al Scardino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 3, 2023 11:05:14 PM

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

I reside in New York and am a recreational saltwater angler. Please consider the following comments regarding Addendum II of Amendment 7:

3.1.1: Option B- 1 fish at 28” to 31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2: Option B1 - 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”.

3.1.3: 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: 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.

3.2.1: 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%.

3.3: 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.

Thank You
Al Scardino

From: [Davem migliore](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:20:55 AM

My name is David Migliore I am a recreational angler, fishing guide, fly tier, rod builder and conservationist. I guide in South New Jersey flats and estuaries in and around Atlantic City and our striper population that has existed strongly for 30 years is now in shambles and the fishery is disappearing from our region. There has been a slow and steady decline over the past 15 years and now they are almost non-existent. All of the other fisheries are also in shambles so without a strong striped bass fishery I'll need to move on from my endeavors all together here unless something gives. I would like to support option 3.1.1 B1; one fish in between 28 and 31 in.

From: [William Muller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:03:19 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a retired marine biologist and professor: also an outdoor writer and competitive surf fisherman. I will keep this short and sweet in order to respect the time of the comments readers.

I support the following.

- 3.1.1: Option B. 1 fish in the slot: 28-31"
- 3.1.2: Option B 4: d) 26" size limit for bays and rivers.
- 3.1.3: Option B.
- 3.1.4: Option B.
- 3.2.1: Option B. Commercial quota maximum harvest of 14.5%
- 3.3: Option B.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to call @ 631-361-3366.

William A. Muller, PhD.

From: [Rsquire](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:17:50 PM

My name is Ross Squire and I am a New York-based recreational saltwater angler. Please consider the following comments regarding Addendum II of Amendment 7:

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

3.1.2: Option B1 - 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".

3.1.3: 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: 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.

3.2.1: 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%.

3.3: 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.

Sincerely,

Ross Squire 264 Fillmore St

Centerport, NY 11721

From: [Nathan Bruins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:40:57 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

As a conservation minded recreational angler, I would like to voice my support of Option B4. Charter boats should have to share equally in conservation and drop down to 1 fish per person. They do not have anymore right to the resource than any one else. Other livelihoods are supported by the recreational angler equally if not more than the livelihood of the charter boat captain.

Thank you,

Nathan Bruins / *PROJECT MANAGER*

REW Group Inc.

P: 301-599-5500 Ext 104

C: 301-254-8042

REW GROUP
Inc

From: [Rodney Kooney](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Support for Option B
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:12:07 PM

I am writing in support of Option B to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. I view it as an aggressive but necessary plan to ensure the fishery recovers.

Rodney Kooney

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Stephen Madden](#)
To: [Comments: MIKE ARMSTRONG](#)
Cc: stephenmadden@yahoo.com
Subject: [External] ASMFC Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 3:50:07 PM

To: Emilie Frank
FMP Coordinator

As a 2023 Massachusetts licensed Saltwater Recreational Angler, I submit my options for the **ASMFC Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.**

My choices and or recommendations:

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update. 3.0 Proposed Management Options I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction. 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit): • I oppose the status quo option. Option B (28" -31" slot limit): • I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction. Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"-31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"): • I support the idea that “a recreational angler is a recreational angler regardless of the platform from which they are fishing.” • I believe the subject of recreational mode splits is an amendment level decision. Any consideration of recreational mode splits should include discussion and consideration of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions. • Conservation of striped bass is another reason to reject split mode regulations. Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B. • Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. • Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage forhire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.

Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I oppose Option D for the following reasons: • Option D is projected to reduce fishing mortality by 12.8% and I prefer Option B which is projected to reduce fishing mortality by the larger number of 14.1%. • The subsection of the recreational fishing community most affected in a declining fishery are those who from shore; many of whom are low income and cannot afford to fish from a boat. Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"): • I opposes this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: • I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline. 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: • I support a reduction in the ocean commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline. • I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline. 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification • I support option A Status Quo • Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2. 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements • I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local file at the dock prohibitions. This document fails to

provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2. 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action. • Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit has violated the trust given last time and prevents me from supporting this idea again. • I prefer ASMFC prepare to use emergency action for a quick response and be prepared to launch a formal Amendment 8 upon review of the results of the 2024 stock assessment. • I support Option A Status Quo

Thank you for your time,

PS.

As always I personally support the opinions of myself, and many, many, other Recreational Anglers to make the Atlantic Striped Bass a Sport fish, Catch and Release only!!

Best,

Stephen Madden
7 Susan Circle
Carver, Ma. 02330

From: [Timothy Begin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 4:14:12 PM

Hello - below are my comments on draft Addendum 2 on Amendment 7 for striped bass management.

Regarding section, 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

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

The other options proposed would put a greater number of the 2015 class in jeopardy of harvest which is exactly what we can't afford right now. Option C would also result in a greater number of fish harvested.

Regarding 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

I support Option B1 - 1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons

Option A, as is stated in its own text has little to no objective of achieving the goals of the addendum. This option can not be pursued.

Option C allows mode splitting which would allow charter boats to harvest more fish... We should not be trying to harvest more striped bass at this time especially in the Chesapeake.

Option B1 should be pursued as it is the most conservative option and will not only protect the most fish but will protect the 2017 & 2018 year classes as well.

Regarding 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

I support option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Option A will allow the continuation of existing conservation equivalency plans, which will allow for the harvest of significantly more fish as the existing conservation equivalency plans have been proven to not work. We need to take the most conservative approach which is option B.

Regarding 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:

I support Option B—Board Action.

Although I am sympathetic to the aversion to board action without formalized public input, we are past the point of having time to waste. If the stock assessment in 2024 comes in a further action is required to rebuild the stock by 2029, that action needs to be taken as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your attention. I urge the board to take the most conservative path made

available by this document. With multiple poor spawns and poor recruitment we need to be conservative moving forward.

Timothy Begin

From: [Mathieu Lafleur](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 8:42:02 PM

Good evening! I myself have been working at the port of Baltimore for 17 years and also fish the bay with charters n friends frequently! I have unfortunately seen the decline in large breeders and made the decisions to never keep large “trophy” fish anymore! This past summer we all notice a huge crowd of boats come up to the patapsco and I had never seen so many dead fish floating around mostly dude to live lining on charters... unfortunately many of those are filled with inexperienced fisherman’s and stripers just swallow those bait so deep that they can’t survived ... I saw charters run up to 3 trips a day and with a limit of 2 per person and they carry 10/12/14 ppl it’s unbelievable the amount of fish taken out of the water! I’d love for this to make a difference as my own son futur of fishing this beautiful fish depends on it! I’ve heard how closing rock fishing completely in the 80s worked and I’d love to see it happen!

Thanks for taking the time to reading this

Matt Lafleur

From: [Vincent Esposito](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 8:49:16 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my comments regarding the ASMFC Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. As a data point, I am a recreational fisherman located in NYC and Eastern Long Island, although I was previously employed as a member of the for hire industry. I agree with the measure that this addendum is being viewed by the Board as a "hold over" measure until the stock assessment can be performed in 2024. I implore and strongly suggest to the board that the biomass be assessed to not only capture data from the traditional spawning areas such as the Chesapeake, but that efforts are focused on non-traditional locations like the rivers in CT, RI, Mass and Maine. As noted by many fishermen during the NYS DEC public hearing, there is a large swath of anecdotal data that conflicts with the assessment data of the current biomass. I urge the Board to utilize these existing resources and work with fishermen to collect data in a way that incorporates their subject matter expertise and meaningfully engages with the industry as trusted stakeholders. Not doing so will always cause a concern for the means and methods, and lead folks to scrutinize the data. This method is being followed for other major offshore activities, such as surf clamming, scalloping, protected species observation for OSW survey work, and deepsea marine construction (such as SouthFork Wind Farm).

As for the measures, I support Option B for Ocean Rec., Option B for Commercial Fishing, Option B1 for the Chess, and Option B for the stock assessment. I would like to note that for the segregation of rec and for hire classes, the same captains that claimed the collection data was flawed was also embracing the near-negligible impact that their industry had on overall reduction (~.1%). I'd say that this is cherry picking of data and further reinforces the point that stakeholder management is crucial during the collection/stock assessment period.

Thank you all for your time and effort in seeking a solution. Please note that all comments expressed in this submission are my own and do not represent any other individual, group, or my employer.

Sincerely,
Vincent L Esposito
914.621.1754

From: [Scott Lansing](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:42:48 PM

As a new Boat Owner who plans on Rockfishing for the next 15 years or so as I enter into retirement I fully support the effort to conserve the species so that future generations can enjoy fishing in the Chesapeake. My thoughts are since this is an emergency action then to be fair the bag limit should be the same for both recreational fisherman and for-hire fisherman. We should not be splitting "modes" to satisfy the business interest of for-hire fisherman because we are potentially mortgaging the future of the Rockfish. While I have not hired a for-hire boat I thought about doing it and taking my family on it for the enjoyment of fishing. I was not really concerned about if we were able to keep 1 fish or 2 fish and more interested in fishing together as a family. What really got in the way was scheduling of Adult kids and all their activities plus I was saving up to buy my own boat. My opinion, is that if a for-hire boat had a 1 fish limit per person the business would not really suffer. I may be naive but that is my take on it. For that reason I support CCA Maryland's position below:

As a conservation minded angler, I support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024, and the Board to focus on meaningful reductions in mortality as future assessments require.

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)
Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23"(22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24" (15.9% reduction).
Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota
Board Response: B. Board Action.
Implementation dates: ASAP

Thank you

Scott Lansing
Derwood Maryland

From: [Art Howe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Adendum II
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:42:52 PM

Greetings,

As a part-time fishing guide on Martha's Vineyard, my business has dropped appreciably over the last ten years. My clients are catching fewer fish, especially striped bass, than ever before, resulting in a diminished income for me.

I am asking to fully support the following:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.1.3 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B and
- 3.3 Option B

Thank you for your service and hard work.

<"(((((((((((((((><

Art

Arthur Howe III
860-324-0422
South Portland ME

From: [Nick Cancelliere](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:29:23 AM

I am a recreational angler from Long Island, NY. I have worked as a mate on several charter boats, and I am also a NYDEC licensed fishing guide. I've also been a long time patron of party boats and they served as my introduction to fishing.

I am most in favor of option B.

I believe one of the commenters at the NY hearing made a good point about the Housatonic and other spawning areas that should be factored in to the spawning index, unless there are scientific reasons not to.

Ultimately I believe angler education is key to reducing discard mortality and a reduction in harvest cannot be effective without properly educating anglers how to handle and properly release striped bass.

I believe part of reducing discard mortality falls on the for-hire captains and their crew to educate their patrons and properly handle fish that are caught.

And for the reason of reduced discard mortality I would support option C as a compromise - though from what I have experienced, a party boat does not stop fishing when personal limits are reached. So I don't believe that changes anything unless the angler education and catch and release factors are addressed.

I understand there has been a lot of questioning of data, but I believe if the ASMFC's data is incorrect, and striped bass are indeed flourishing as the for-hire captains claimed, what do we stand to lose from a reduced harvest?

In my time as a mate, many patrons wouldn't know the difference between a striped bass or a bluefish, and would be more than happy to keep porgy, fluke, blackfish, bluefish, or any other fish. On a boat I have worked on, some patrons wouldn't want to keep any fish and the captain would discourage releasing their fish even in those cases.

Many for-hires seem to have the notion that a reduction in harvest negatively impacts their business, but I think the effect is negligible.

In my opinion, what is hurting the for-hire business' bottom line is not stricter harvesting limits, but rather fuel costs and inflation. In addition to higher operating costs, the average party boat patron now has less disposal income to put towards a trip, rather than, for comparison, buying \$12 worth of clam bait and catching a dozen porgy from shore.

In the recent NY hearing climate change was not fully acknowledged as a real issue by some commenters. I find this absurd. As someone who is part of the generation that will have to bear the consequences of it, I hope the ASMFC continues to factor in climate change as a legitimate impacting issue in the striped bass fishery and beyond.

I hope the ASMFC continues the hard work they do and offer sincere kudos to those who have to present for and take questions from an audience as stubborn and resistant to change as fishermen are.

Thank you, and happy holidays to the ASMFC,

Nick Cancelliere

From: [Brian Lowery](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 8:58:05 AM

Good morning. As a recreational angler I support the option B-4.

Respectfully,
Brian Lowery.

From: ROCKFISH1886@msn.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Maryland Chesapeake Bay striped bass season Emilie Franke
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:33:55 AM

Hi this is Captain Bob Hunter Sr I have been charter fishing and commercial fishing the upper Chesapeake bay for 40 years. The charter boats in the facts reporting system have been reporting for 3 years the DNR has accurate numbers for are industry we have accountable . The charter boats is not the problem the C& R in the warm summer is thank you Captain Bob Hunter Sr Gloriajean charter fishing

boats need two striped bass to stay in business

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy tablet
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [MICHAEL MCNIFF](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public comment on Striped Bass addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:31:28 AM

To whom it may concern,

I have been a recreational sport fisherman in New England for more than 50 years.

I write to you today to support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreation Options: Option B-1

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1-1

3.2.1 Commercial Quota reduction options: Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B.

Sincerely,

Michael McNiff

From: [DIY Speed](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:38:22 AM

I am writing in an effort to help save and protect the wild striped bass population. I attended the public comment meeting on November 30th 2022 in Milford Connecticut.

What are my biggest takeaways from the meeting?

The officers that were at the meeting we're begging for the Housatonic River fishery to be shut down during the winter. I wholeheartedly agree and support their decision. The poaching from New York and New Jersey fish markets is destroying our Housatonic River fishery. We need to allow the fish that spawn and live in the river, a chance to survive and by allowing fishing during the winter months, you are effectively killing that population. Many other states along the eastern seaboard have already implemented these regulations for decades. Connecticut should be a bastion and leader of conservation efforts for striped bass. We should not be trailing other states in our response and our proactive approach to managing this fishery. I believe that poaching should be the utmost important topic when discussing the decline of a population. The deep is underfunded and understaffed. They fight every night against poachers in the most literal sense. These are game fish and should be considered so. Just like the sale of wild game is illegal in the United States. As well as poaching is illegal and strongly enforced. We need the same regulations for our game fish.

I am an avid recreational fisherman and I am deeply concerned about the effect that overfishing and irresponsible fishing is having on our wild fish populations. I wish for there to be an abundance of these fish for not just myself but for future generations. I do not support commercial fishing in any way. I believe that commercial fleets as well as four higher charters should not have any special regulations to help them bring in more customers. This is part of our national heritage. Just like whitetail deer, mule deer, elk, etc.

I believe it is the responsibility of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to protect these species at all cost. When the 2023 report comes out next month. If it is necessary, I support a full moratorium on catching striped bass. I believe that treble hooks and barbed hooks should not be used to catch these fish.

Therefore I support the following amendment options.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Isaac Rosner
New Haven

From: [Rachel Dean](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:44:59 AM

In regard to Striped Bass Draft Addendum II, the commercial fishery should not be required to take a reduction. The commercial fishery is a small sector of the overall take, and the reductions would make drastic direct economic impacts to commercial fishermen with little conservation return.
Rachel Dean

Patuxent River Seafood
Solomons Island Heritage Tours
www.solomonsislandheritagetours.com
301.672.3509

From: [steve_miller08](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:19:11 AM

If commercial fishing is only being reduced by 14.1 percent all other fisheries should be equal or less. I am tired of seeing rockfish being exploited by the commercial lobbyist. The rockfish should be a sport fish and stop being sold for money. Greedy , greedy, greedy!!!

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Steve Farrow](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:43:42 AM

Ban commercial fishing of Striped Bass. Make all Striped Bass fishing catch and release only.
It seems like the most logical solution.

Thank You

Anonymous Fisherman.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Spiegelman, Bruce](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Jeff Saunders](#); [Chris Dudzik](#); [Kajimura, Shingo](#); [Mark Robertson](#); [Willy Goldsmith](#); [Jeff Cartier](#); [Mittenbuhler, Melanie J.](#); [Sprenger, Hans-Georg](#); [Steven Koppel](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on commercial striped bass harvest
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:50:53 AM

Hi, I am a long-time recreational striped bass fisherman, with a boat in Dennis, on Cape Cod Bay. I am writing in response to the request for public comment on the proposed striped bass regulations in the Atlantic region. I am concerned that the commercial striped bass regulations don't fully account for the incidental mortality of smaller fish caused by commercial fishermen. Since they are limited to keeping fish 35" and over, they must release smaller fish. And since releasing stripers unharmed is never easy, especially when using **live bait**, I am certain that the commercial fishermen are killing many smaller fish. I strongly and **respectfully suggest closing commercial striped bass fishing for 1-4 years** to allow the striper fishery to fully recover and prosper.

Sincerely,

Bruce M. Spiegelman, Ph.D.

Stanley J. Korsmeyer Professor of Cell Biology and Medicine
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School
bruce_spiegelman@dfci.harvard.edu

The information in this e-mail is intended only for the person to whom it is addressed. If you believe this e-mail was sent to you in error and the e-mail contains patient information, please contact the Mass General Brigham Compliance HelpLine at <https://www.massgeneralbrigham.org/complianceline>.

Please note that this e-mail is not secure (encrypted). If you do not wish to continue communication over unencrypted e-mail, please notify the sender of this message immediately. Continuing to send or respond to e-mail after receiving this message means you understand and accept this risk and wish to continue to communicate over unencrypted e-mail.

From: [SAF JR](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Adendum
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:01:11 PM

Time for NO COMMERCIAL HARVEST! They are saying that emergency measures need to be taken, well if this is an emergency then stop commercial fishing! Those fishermen do not make a living selling Striped Bass! It's time to eat other less vulnerable species!

As for recreational fishermen, no harvest allowed! Who cares if they can't keep a Bass! There are better eating more plentiful species.

It's time to get tough before they head for extinction again like in the 80's.

More enforcement is needed too. I watch illegal fishing all the time along the Cape Cod canal. It's time for strict measures, NO HARVEST! ZERO!

And time for more enforcement before we lose this beautiful fish.

Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tony Benevides](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:14:50 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

One thing I feel is highly overlooked by most States including the State of Massachusetts is the concept of a size limit being over a certain size. When it comes to the female Striped Bass the larger the female the more eggs they lay exponentially, meaning a 22" female might produce 50 – 100 eggs while a 36 inch female could lay between 5000 – 10000 eggs. My numbers may not be exact, but I believe this is what I studied years ago. Creating a min size limit damages the population more than helping it.

Suggestion 1 is to copy the Maine theory of a bag limit on smaller bass and then a certain size over for trophies.(granted Trophy hunting or fishing is one of the worse practices when it comes to conservation and should be banned altogether)

Suggestion 2 is a bag limit only, with no throw backs over 21"

Suggestion 3 is to take a few years off from any Striper Fishing and then check the numbers

I am a die hard when it comes to Striper fishing, but better my grandchildren can enjoy the sport in the future then to sit around and tell them the Striper fishing legends my father and uncle told to me.

Thank you for your time.

Tony Benevides
(774) 526 2065
dad_karate@comcast.net
26 Spruce Street
Fall River, MA 02720

From: [KEVIN HARRINGTON](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#)
Cc: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II Amendment 7
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:25:13 PM

My name is Kevin Harrington Sr and I own a 27' Grady White for the last 24 years. I still have my boat in the water as I write this email, and plan on fishing tomorrow.

I have averaged 90 hours a year for my 24 years, and I've never seen so many Striped Bass in my life. With the slot limit of 28-31", I think there are many bigger fish caught and released that end up dying and are found on the beach.

I think you should make it one fish per person 28" and up.

The individual person should not be forgotten in this discussion, with the Commercial fishermen taking the bulk.

Or just close the Fishery for 3 years for EVERYONE.

See how the Commercial guys feel about that.

One fish per person at 28" is FAIR.

Regards

Kevin P Harrington

1515 Kenneth Ave
Baldwin, NY 11510

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Craig Mask](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Commercial
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:39:58 PM

As a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Business and, as a Sole Proprietor, I strongly request that no further restrictions be placed on the Commercial Fishery.

We have virtually no dead loss, unlike the hook and release, sport fishing. Culling for larger fish, or culling for a slot limit by the sport fishermen results in extremely high dead loss.

The basic difference between the commercial fishery and the sport fishery is that commercial fishermen cannot afford to waste time and money in any situation that does not result in an efficient cost effective harvest.

Sport fishing is practiced mainly in the warm water months, and culling is a standard practice. This results in extreme mortality because, people continue to fish even though they should have stopped, when they reached their one or two fish limit.

Expense is of no concern to most of the sport fishing community, as evidenced by the long trails of dead Striped Bass, streaming down current, from their boats.

Please remember that commercial fishermen supply seafood to the general public, including senior citizens, disabled persons and, people in low income food deserts.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:22:13 PM

From: Wade Warila <wadewarila@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:55 AM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Addendum II

Thinking about addressing fish mortality rates and targets for 2024 .

My observation while on the north coast fishing from the rocks .

One of the largest reasons for mortality with fish released being not proper size. The fisherman does not handle the fish properly. Sometimes I see them holding the fish up for pictures, taking there time to release.

Walking around casually with the fish.

Then releasing .

The proper way to release an undersized or oversized fish is to not remove it from the water.

Unhook the fish in the water . Not dangling from the line for pickup.

Better care of the catch tone released, more emphasis on better care .

Thank you for listening.

Wade

From: [Mary Johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regs
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:33:42 PM

First, thank you for the careful consideration that you give to managing the striped bass population. I am writing in response to your request for comments on the proposed Striped Bass Addendum II. I vote for retaining the current slot size of 28-31" (options B and C).

I fish in the back bay waters of southern New Jersey, where the fish are smaller than the ocean fish. I do not see fish that hit 28" until mid-November, when most of us have put the boat away for the season. Now that my fishing is over for the year, I can tell you that I would not have kept a single fish this year if the legal slot were raised to 30-33". The bonus tag saves the back bay fishery, so I hope that this program will continue.

Many ocean stripers are released because they are too large (often well over the maximum size), while most inshore stripers are released because they are too small, illustrating just how different these two fisheries are. Successfully managing the ocean fishery requires very different tactics than managing the inshore fishery. Thus, for the future, I propose that **regulations for the bays, rivers and tributaries in South Jersey be considered separately from the ocean**, just as fish in the Chesapeake are treated separately.

Finally, I am concerned that the more restrictive fishery legislation becomes, the more people will not follow the rules, defeating the purpose of regulations. Just something to keep in mind.

From: [Scott](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:39:21 PM

Greetings,

I believe the narrow slot is too restrictive and will likely impact angler participation thus having significant economic impacts. While understanding the young-of-the-year graphs, I also believe the regulations are designed to maintain the fisheries (circle hooks, etc).

If mini slots are all that's available, why not move the slot year to year? 28 to 31, then 27-30, and so on? Just continuing to harvest fish from different classes.

Good day, Scott Newhall

From: [Ben Cabot](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 2:54:27 PM

Please suspend all commercial striped bass harvest until the stocks have recovered.

Thanks,

Ben Cabot

From: [Ashley Abell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:44:33 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

From: [John Conolly](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:57:14 PM

As a long time recreational fisherman, primarily in the Chesapeake Bay, I've lived through the moratorium and do not want to see it return. If the goal of Addendum II is to actually achieve a 14.5% reduction, it must be across all sectors. That said, I would support the following options:

- *Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1% reduction)*
- *Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23"(22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24" (15.9% reduction).*
- *Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota*

Even with a 23-24" upper slot, I'm concerned about increased numbers of throw backs. I think Options B3-B4 are better choices although they do not reach the hypothetical target. There are days when you only have bigger fish biting and must weed through to find smaller ones. This problem is exacerbated for the fish when coupled with summer conditions.

Commercial fisherman, either netters or hook and line, must also abide by these restrictions. No harvesting of the spawning stock.

I must point out that I'm not in favor of any Recreational Option C choices. I have friends that run For Hire vessels but they do not belong in the Recreational category. I've had my limit cut 50% in this category for some time and the For Hire has not. This is not equitable. Recreational fishermen in private boats bring significantly more to the table in terms of economic impact.....let's be honest about this.

If keeping 2 fish per recreational person comes down to a matter of reporting catch as required by the For Hire, I'm not opposed to it. The truth is we need better data and funding to gather better data. The MRIP data has been shown to be drastically off and should not be used to make stock decisions.

Lastly, perhaps it is time to fund water quality studies in major spawning areas. There are a number of factors that impact spawning and the bio mass but this seems to be an area that is discussed occasionally and never really studied.

V/R,
John Conolly

Sent from my iPad

From: [Steve Fagan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:14:42 PM

To policy makers,

I am writing to request that you select option B-1 for striped bass fishing in the Chesapeake Bay. This option makes all modes of recreational fishing equitable and would achieve the highest stock killing reduction impact.

Respectfully,

Steve Fagan

Recreational Fisherman

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Parker](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:13:09 PM

Shut down Striped Bass fishing and the heck with the charter boat/party boat interests. West end Long Island had the best Striper fishing in years and most people didn't mind catch and release. If people want meat they should catch porgies . Also, shut down the entire freshwater Striper fishing as well and have the same size limit no matter where you fish. 16 inch Striped Bass limit on freshwater and 28 on Saltwater?, not right at all.

I'm 59 and remember how dreadful the Bass fishing was in the 1980's, lets not repeat the mistakes of the past.
MAKE BUNKER off limits to commercial fishing.

John Palmer

From: [Charlie Ashmun](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass public hearings
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 5:48:31 PM

As a charter captain for over 25 years on Nantucket Sound I support Option C which provides separate For Hire measurements of 28- 33 inch slot limits on Striped Bass. Also I would support Option A status Quo for fillet at sea. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely
Captain Charles Ashmun
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chris Vassallo](#)
To: [Comments](#); stripercomments@gmail.com; [MICHAEL LUISI](#); robert.t.brown@shopcove.net; [LYNN FEGLEY](#); [Russell Dize](#); [Dana Stein](#); davidsikorski@ccamd.org; jhowe@ccamd.org; mark.fisher@house.state.md.us
Subject: [External] Comments on Regulations for Striped Bass in Addendum 2 to Amendment 7
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:06:38 AM

ASMFC Commissioners,

I am a Calvert County resident and an avid fisherman. I live on Saint Leonard Creek and fish the creek two to three times a week. I retire this coming summer, after 21 years in the Navy and 21 years working for the Department of the Navy, and I intend to start a kayak fishing guide service, focusing on Saint Leonard Creek. My company's target market will be Wounded Warriors. Schoolie Striped Bass and White Perch were going to be the fish targeted because they were abundant and fun to catch on light tackle, while on a kayak. Both species are disappearing from Saint Leonard Creek. I've delayed opening my business until I feel confident that I can learn more about fisheries management, the environment, and other species to target. My service will be meant to show a Wounded Warrior a good time – and educate them about the environment we are enjoying!

Schoolie Striped Bass were abundant. In 2021 I caught 425, 2022 produced 102, and this year only 46. Each year I averaged 32 fishing trips where I focused on Striped Bass for a portion of the trip. I only troll for Striped Bass, in order to reduce the probability of foul-hooking them. Striped Bass are important to me personally and for my future business.

Please consider my requests and comments in making your decision for changes to 2024 Striped Bass regulations in Addendum 2:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options:

Please select Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. All modes.

I have been using an even tighter slot of 21 to 23 inches, Science tells us that Striped Bass don't spawn until they are 23 to 28 inches. If they are eaten by people they can't spawn. Striped Bass filets on fish less than 21 inches will not feed my family, so I choose to let them grow.

One fish for all modes. I do not believe that MD Charter Boats should be able to keep two fish per customer. I have several friends that run for hire fishing and they are cancelling trips due to lack of fish. The reality of the Charter Boat industry is that they are in the entertainment industry. Their customers come back because they have a good time even if they only get to keep one fish.

If they truly believe that they will go out of business, I certainly sympathize. I am a child of Detroit in the 1970s. My father's and grandfather's business (building cars) was decimated for reasons beyond their control. Like the situation with Striped Bass. The difference is that they have the opportunity to help save their industry and diversify. They need to educate their customers and diversify.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. Frankly, I believe the 14.5% reduction should be made to the Chesapeake Bay numbers that they actually caught in 2023. They did not meet the 2023 quota by more

than the 14.5%. Allowing Chesapeake Bay commercial fisherman to catch the same number of fish next year does nothing to bring abundance to the Chesapeake Bay more quickly!

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B—Board Action.

While I don't believe Maryland and other State Commissioners act in the best interests of all fisherman, for Striped Bass abundance, I am seeing glimmers of change. I believe that you should have the ability act quickly and fairly, toward bringing back Striped Bass abundance.

Thanks for your consideration,

Chris Vassallo

6721 Bond Street Saint Leonard Md 20685

From: [Jim Troupes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:15:49 AM

Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

To the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries;

For the record.

Hello, my name is Jim Troupes and as a native of "Woosta", lifelong resident, hunter and fisher, dad and grandad, retired local business owner, veteran and taxpayer. I would like your attention on two (2) issues:

1. Commercial/Recreational LIMITS & SEASONS.

My first glimpse of "legal freedoms" appeared when I was 5 or 6 years old. On the Friday before the third Saturday of April, my father announced I would be accompanying him along with grampa and grampa's fishing buddy. My father said "Go to sleep now, we'll be getting up well before dawn". Of course, the sleep now never came. The trio limited out and I got to keep the one I caught. From that day onward, I practiced "subsistence fishing". I never thought in terms of "fun", but rather I practiced my fishing skills solely "to eat".

My hope is that my eastern European ancestral heritage (both my grandfathers were born in Lithuania) of fishing is not lost to those at the top. Did I read that ASMFC is seeking opportunities to close parts of the scup season in the near future ?

2. LAW ENFORCEMENT.

I'll admit I'm an active fisherman but the sheer overwhelming numbers of poachers (Unlicensed/Undersize/Overlimit) I encounter is staggering. Lawlessness in other regards is also evident on other Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Lands. Your Committee is planning to act on flawed data. The pencil pushers and bean counters are in control. I demand the current existing laws be enforced vigorously as well. Taking more human rights away from me, the law abiding citizen, to "rebuild stock" stolen by criminals, grows old. Perhaps the Massachusetts' State Police should be consulted ?

From: [Richard Buckley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC Meeting Mass Maritime
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:41:52 AM

Yesterday I attended the meeting at Mass Maritime.

I support the 28 to 31 all modes slot limit.

As a shore based fly fisherman I am concerned about the lack of small bass, 14 to 28 inches. The area I fish goes from Plymouth to Chatham including the Bay side and the south side of Cape Cod. I keep personal logs and estimate a 40% reduction in catch and release rates in the last year.

Poor YOY rates are most troubling. Fixing the issues associated with Chesapeake Bay is another effort I fully support.

Regards

Richard Buckley
24 June Ln, East Sandwich, MA 02537

tn. 508-240-4217

From: [Brent](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:19:47 AM

I choose option B

My iphone

From: [bryan bazydlo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 striped bass proposal
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 11:42:37 AM

Sent from my iPhone

From: [bryan bazydlo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 striper regulations
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:07:15 PM

Good afternoon I've been an avid saltwater fisherman for over 25 years mostly from land as well as kayak. Option B has been working this year and there's no need to change that nor should any Charter boat or party boat or commercial boat be allowed to take a larger size fish in my personal opinion. Most of the damage to the fishery is done through charterboats And party boats not through land-based recreational anglers. possibly in the future for discussion making March through May closed to only catch and release to relieve some of the pressure from these fish during in their spawning period.

Thank you,
Bryan bazydlo
Sent from my iPhone

From: [dan feeney](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass amendment 2
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:21:36 PM

Please understand that i have every respect for our environmental officers and crew. I studied wildlife management in college and at one time was destined for a job in the field.

I have zero respect for the managers who have repeatedly twisted the regulations to favor commercial interests. We had recreational regulations back a few years that allowed us to take two striped bass over 28 inches. That was cut to one (a 50% cut) per day. That was then cut to One fish between 28 and 35" (that's another 50%? Cut) now you've reduced that again by another 50%

If you reduced the commercial allotment by the same amount you would be at less than 10 fish per week. Never mind that they are still using j hooks and are catching only the large females that are our breeders. You extend their seasons to make quotas that should not exist.
You are not acting in the best interest of the majority of fishermen nor of the resource.

Oh yes - i do understand your position about more recreational Fish being caught and the repercussions of catch and release even though i do not necessarily agree on the numbers of dead released fish.
None of the stats on dragger bycatch are considered which probably exceeds any other dead waste.

My vote would be to disband marine fisheries and start over.
It's a joke

Please pass this to those in charge

Save your jobs and change your attitudes or be prepared for a large group of pissed off fishermen to ask for your dismissal.

Sincerely
Dan Feeney

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Erik Anderson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:31:14 PM

Good afternoon,

If you are serious about saving the striped bass population, you would be pushing to end commercial fishing all along the Atlantic coast. You would be pushing for more game wardens to enforce limits/size regulations.

You guys should be doing studies to find out why the Raritan Bay has become the new mecca for striped bass. I'd bet that the fact there is no commercial fishing for striped bass and bunker in NJ waters has greatly helped. That is what needs to be going on in the Chesapeake Bay region. Its the fault of those fishermen that the bay is in such horrible shape. But we all know money talks and Omega will never let that happen and in the end you will continue to screw the Northeast recreational fisherman over while cowering to the pressure of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Thanks for nothing,
Erik

From: [bbsrv90](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II comment
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:34:30 PM

Greetings Commissioners,

It seems to me that option B would give us the best results across the board.

I think it would be a shame to squander the strong 9yr old 2015 class of fish as they enter prime breeding age. Let this class help develop an even stronger stock moving forward.

This opinion is coming from a 60yr old lifetime beach & boat Jersey fisherman that practices 100% catch and release and all techniques to help reduce mortality rate.

Given the current regs, I find it hard to believe that slightly tighter regs for the near future will be taking food off anyones table compared to the importance of how it will help the future of the stock.

My only real concern is the wellbeing of the for hire fleet. If they can survive a handful of tight years to reap the benefits in the near future, this could work for everyone.

All the best, and good luck with the decision making process.
"Tight lines"

Bobby B

From: hoffmanslandscape@yahoo.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option A
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 12:43:15 PM

Please go option A
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mike Lofton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:40:28 PM

As a Chesapeake fisherman for nearly 70 years I have witnessed the dramatic fluctuations in the availability of striped bass. Rockfish have been a pillar in the quality of life for me , my friends and family. I've had the good fortune to pursue them as a child with my parents, with my son & daughter, and now with my grandchildren.

I lived thru the 80s moratorium and the last 30 years of tightening regulations. I don't know the right answer or even if there is a right answer. But I trust that the professionals at CCA Maryland have made sound recommendations and I support them.

My father always challenged me to leave things better than I found them. That won't happen for me. But those responsible for fisheries management today must meet that challenge.

Be aggressive, dividing an ever shrinking resource is a path to failure.

Thanks

Mike Lofton

From: [William Johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 2:04:37 PM

I favor option B1 for the Chesapeake Bay.

I fish in the upper Chesapeake an average of one day a week from spring through fall, regulations permitting. It is time that we recognize just how bad the rockfish situation is and implement serious measures in an attempt to improve the population- if it is not too late.

- The "Trophy Season" was a bad idea from its inception. I hope to see it gone for good.
- The bag limit should be ONE fish for ALL recreational anglers private or for hire.

I support the status quo for the coastal fishery. Option B.

Commercial Regulations. I support whatever option allows for the maximum probability of success, especially saving the larger spawners.

Suggestion: Encourage Maryland and Virginia to sponsor coordinated "Trophy" Tournaments for Snakeheads and Blue Catfish.

Thank you for your attention.
William Johnson
Parkton, MD

From: [Christian CJ Canby](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial Rockfish Quota Reduction
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 2:07:54 PM

I Christian Canby am against any reduction in Commercial Rockfish Quota for 2024.

From: [Doug Parker](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option c.1.1 striped bass slot for hire option
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:08:43 PM

Good evening. I was at the meet g in Milford this month but wanted to make sure it is known that I am in favor of the above option.

Thank you for your consideration.

Capt. Doug out of New London


Sent from my iPhone

From: [Nick Fano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] OPTION A
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 4:43:42 PM

THE FANO FIRM, P.C.

(NICHOLAS J. FANO, ESQ.)
37 VREELAND AVE.
TOTOWA, NJ 07512
PH: 973.276.1200
FAX: 973.276.1288

THIS COMMUNICATION IS INTENDED ONLY FOR THE ADDRESSEE(S) AND MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL. YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT, IF YOU ARE NOT AN INTENDED RECIPIENT LISTED ABOVE, OR AN AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEE, OR AGENT OF AN ADDRESSEE OF THIS COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERING E-MAIL MESSAGES TO AN INTENDED RECIPIENT, ANY DISSEMINATION, DISTRIBUTION, OR REPRODUCTION OF THIS COMMUNICATION (INCLUDING ANY ATTACHMENTS HERETO) IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS COMMUNICATION IN ERROR, PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY BY A REPLY E-MAIL ADDRESSED TO THE SENDER AND PERMANENTLY DELETE THE ORIGINAL E-MAIL COMMUNICATION AND ANY ATTACHMENTS FROM ALL STORAGE DEVICES WITHOUT MAKING OR OTHERWISE RETAINING A COPY.

 Secured by [Paubox](#) - HITRUST CSF certified

From: [John Broadbent](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 7:53:11 PM

Sent from my iPad please consider this, first and foremost closing all commercial fishing along the Atlantic coast regardless of technique, secondly require all charter boats patrons to abide with the recreational fishing rules with no exceptions also along Atlantic coast and lastly continue with the slot limit guidelines for recreational fishing individuals along the Atlantic coast for the next for see able future. And add the law of snagging rigs for live bait presentations be punished by fine once again along Atlantic coast. Whatever the outcome is you must enforce it along the Atlantic coast regardless and without prejudice and penalties for violations in any fashion be multiplied to a level of notice. Thank you

From: [Robert Konz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe bass
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:36:44 PM

I believe option e would be best. 28 to 31 to restricted and to many fish being handled and released leading to more mortality

Robert Konz

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Leroy Ferstermann](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:45:21 PM

Hi my name is Leroy ferstermann tfl 412 and IAM against any reduction in the commercial stripped bass fishery

From: [Frank Ross](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:21:03 PM

I would support option C. It makes sense for the charter and open boats that make a living fishing to be able to keep more than one fish. Since I have my own boat, one fish is fine. I do not understand how you keep reporting stocks are down when the past two years have been lights out. Since most of the fish I catch are oversized I do not think lowering the keeper size to 24" would make a big difference. I would prefer the smaller fish. I did ask my AI search engine when stripers spawn and the answer was that the fish 30" to 40" are the breeders and those big fish are not. I do not think we need to open up the big fish as they are fun to catch. The rules should be standard throughout the east coast. Seeing pictures of big fish caught in another state just makes fishermen angry and they say if they take it why not me. I also would eliminate the circle hook reg's. I have had just as many hooks swallowed with the circle hook as the J hook and all it does is cause friction between fishermen.

AI response

Striped bass can live for up to 30 years, but they typically stop breeding after they reach about 20 years old. This is because their egg production declines significantly as they age. However, some individual striped bass may continue to breed into their late twenties.

Striped bass are anadromous fish, which means that they spawn in freshwater but live most of their lives in saltwater. They typically migrate to their natal rivers to spawn in the spring. Females release large quantities of eggs, which are fertilized by males as they are released. The eggs hatch within a few days, and the larvae drift downstream to the estuary, where they feed on zooplankton.

Juvenile striped bass spend several years in the estuary before migrating to the ocean. They typically reach sexual maturity at around 4-8 years old. Once they are mature, striped bass can spawn multiple times per year.

The age at which striped bass stop breeding can vary depending on a number of factors, including their overall health, diet, and environmental conditions. For example, striped bass that live in polluted waters or that are exposed to high levels of fishing pressure may stop breeding earlier than those that live in healthy waters and are less exploited.

Frank Ross

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Striped bass fishing Option A
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:52:10 AM

Emilie Franke | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703.842.0716 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

-----Original Message-----

From: Matthew Clewell <matthewaclewell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 8:21 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Striped bass fishing Option A

Good evening,

To whom this may concern I believe option A is the best option.

Thank you for your times,
Matthew Clewell,

From: [Carly Hawkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments for Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:57:55 AM

Good morning,

My name is Carly Watkins, and I am from Pasadena, MD. I am a native Marylander, and private recreational angler. I appreciate the ASMFC for allowing us to participate and comment regarding these impending changes to the striped bass fishery.

I would like my comment to stress my concerns with the overall handling of fishery management and emphasize the importance of ecological-based management. My confidence in the accuracy of the data provided by MRIP is exceedingly low. I would like to see better data collection methods and options available for future stock assessments and would like to speak for myself as a private recreational angler that I am confident many other conservation-minded anglers would be more than happy to assist however we could to better report actual catches to allow for more accurate data and numbers. When the Board is considering potential life-altering matters (i.e. the livelihood of many individuals whose businesses revolve around striped bass and the bay as a whole, I would hope they would encourage and do everything within their power to ensure accurate data is supporting proposed regulations.

I would like the Board to hear and consider all of our concerns regarding the food supply, water quality, environmental changes to the bay, as well as the huge issue with invasive competitors and their potential impacts on the striped bass population (i.e. blue catfish, snakehead, etc.). These issues are vast and complicated, and I understand the struggle the board has with proper funding, staffing, and capability of examining all of these concerns; however, the concerns are there and after attending the public meeting last night, the majority of individuals who shared their comments made a point to bring up these important factors.

The economic impact of these regulations should not be overlooked. Speaking

for myself and my husband, we have contributed significantly to this specific economy. We purchased our home specifically to be able to have easier access to the bay and its tidal rivers. We purchased our fishing vessel from a local Annapolis Marina with the intent to fish recreationally. We have spent thousands in tackle (from local Maryland businesses), bait, gear, fuel, tournaments, tax dollars, registration fees, fishing licenses, donations to groups attempting to conserve the bay and its resources, the list goes on and on. We care about the bay and every living creature and plant that makes up this incredible, diverse, and important ecosystem. We want to do all we can to preserve this resource so we and our future children and their children can enjoy the same benefits.

I would also like to state that I am in favor for enacting more measures to encourage responsible handling of fish such as regulating the methods of actual catching of fish. I commend Maryland for limiting the number of hooks, requiring circle hooks to be used when using live bait, and other mortality-reducing measures that are backed by the science available. I wish to see more of that. Maryland is one of the strictest states when it comes to fishery management, and I highly encourage other states to follow-suit if the goal is preservation, conservation, and future stock availability.

I understand that the matter at hand is to make a decision regarding Addendum II and even though I am hesitant to weigh in on a less-than-ideal situation, as a responsible angler, I will give my comment regarding the proposed options.

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B 4 - 19-26" 1 fish (all modes) (10.3%)

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: Option A-status quo and allowing for public comment

Implementation dates: ASAP

Thank you again for taking the time to consider everyone's comments and concerns.

Sincerely,

Carly Watkins, A Concerned Maryland Chesapeake Bay Recreational Angler
and CCA Member
(443) 356-2040

From: [Steve Singler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripper plan comment
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:44:11 AM

Option 1 makes the most sense. The limited slot size of 28” to 31” results in far too many discards that may or may not survive.

My vote is for option 1.

Thanks

Steve Singler
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Derick Thrappas](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 10:58:10 AM

As both a commercial charter captain and recreational angler, I support B4 and C2 . B4 Will Minimize death by undersize releases, and C2 would allow charters to still offer the 2 fish per customer.

I would also support a modified c-2 making the size restriction 19-26 " to minimize death by undersized releases.

Thanks

Derick thrappas

From: [william Hallman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regs
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:27:46 AM

I am for the current regulation of one fish 28 to 31 inches.

The decline of Striped Bass and the Chesapeake. It's got to be tied in to the removal of the Striped Bass food source, the Manhaden or as we know it the moss Bunker. In my 60 years of saltwater fishing in New Jersey, it is obvious to me that if the beach for sure around the stripers will follow. The decimation of the bunker population in the Chesapeake, regardless of what other scientific factors were discovered it's a fact that the bunker population is low. The other problem is commercial fishing for Striped Bass. The federal government declared the Striped Bass as a game fish and states like New Jersey abided by the federal request and eliminated any commercial fishing for Striped Bass. The state of New Jersey was also wise enough to prohibit bunker reduction boats from netting bunker within the state's waters.

From: [Neil Ireland](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:29:19 AM

In favor of B4
Captain Neil Ireland

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [Steven D'Ambrisi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option B1
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:32:08 AM

Do it. Rockfish are in trouble and won't turn around unless something more drastic is done.
Thanks.

Steven D'Ambrisi
Team Kinnear | Re/Max Advantage Realty
[6021 University Blvd Ellicott City MD 21043](#)
c:[443-677-0442](tel:443-677-0442) | o:[410-740-1200](tel:410-740-1200)
steve.teamkinnear.com | facebook.com/TK
download my mobile app: [Home Search](#)

From: [Joey Cover](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:33:44 AM

Regarding the Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

I am in support of **Option B2**.

Thank you,
Joel Cover

From: [Charle Jump](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:40:48 AM

Good Morning,

My comments below are in support of Recreational Bay Options. I'm an avid recreational fisherman with a boat that's been born and raised fishing the Chesapeake Bay.

I feel strongly that any of the 4 B options with the slot limit and 1 fish per person is the right change needed. Most in favor of B1. The smaller slot limit will give the striped bass population the most chance for rebound.

I'm strongly against the C options of continuing to allow charter boats to keep 2 fish per person twice a day. This is one of the leading causes of reduced fish numbers in the bay.

Thank you for reviewing my comments and considering my points.

Charles Jump
4102716479

From: [Richard Youngk](#)
 To: [Comments](#)
 Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
 Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:41:09 AM
 Attachments: [image.png](#)

I would like to state that I **support** Recreational Bay **Option B1** as I believe it will be best to rebuild the stock for years to come! As an avid Angler I think its best to consider the future of the species for years to come.

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%



From: [Ryan Chaffo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:46:28 AM

Regarding Recreational Bay Options in the Chesapeake.

I am a recreational fisherman on the Chesapeake, I make roughly 50 fishing trips per year targeting striped bass and I do keep and consume legal striped bass. I am in full support of Option B1. It is the largest reduction and most equitable distribution of the resource. During our last round of reductions the for-hire kill fleet took no meaningful reduction and this time we have an opportunity to correct that mistake. I also support year round C&R access to the fishery. During April and May closures I make few if any trips on my boat. During the closure I purchase no gas and very little tackle. If a C&R fishery existed I would make several trips which in turn supports local businesses that depend on boat traffic.

Regards,

Ryan Chaffo
Resident of Edgewater, MD

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Stefan Zaklin](#)
 To: [Comments](#)
 Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
 Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:07:21 PM
 Attachments: [image.png](#)

Dear Committee Members,

Good afternoon! I am writing to you as an avid Chesapeake Bay, light tackle, artificial lure, catch and release fisherman. My comments are specific to Recreational Bay Options. I strongly support either Option B1 or B2 from the table below. I understand the big boat charter captains think that only keeping one fish will hurt their business, but not as much as there not being any fish to catch. In the last three years of fishing, and with dozens if not hundreds of fish caught, I have unintentionally killed one fish. And I have seen so many floaters coming from the live lining fleet that I can't even count.

Please save the rockfish fishery.

Stefan

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%

--
 Stefan Zaklin

202-210-0366

From: [Wail Higazi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:07:34 PM

Hello,

I'm writing to inform you that I am in support of option B4 for the Chesapeake bay recreational fishing.

Thank you,
Wail Higazi
410-370-2829

From: [Kevin Williams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:08:27 PM

Dear ASMFC,

As a Maryland striped bass angler I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for acting to replenish the stock.

I am writing to express my wishes that you will vote in favor of option B1 for the 2024 striped bass season in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you,

J. Kevin Williams, Esq.

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 930

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

202-296-3320 ext. 3

(f) 202-659-3768

This message is being sent by or on behalf of a lawyer. It is intended exclusively for the individual or entity to which it is addressed. This communication may contain information that is proprietary, privileged or confidential or otherwise legally exempt from disclosure. If you are not the named addressee, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy or disseminate this message or any part of it. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately by e-mail and delete all copies of the message.

No offer of legal advice is made through this email.

This email shall not, at any time, establish an attorney client relationship.

Please consult your own attorney if you have questions.

From: [Brian Brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:11:07 PM

Hey,

I would like to vote for option B1 in regards to the "Chesapeake Bay Regulations" for striped bass.

Thank You!

From: [pete pupshis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Changing the 2024 Chesapeake Bay season
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:11:11 PM

Please strongly consider option B1.

Thanks

Pete

From: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:19:14 PM

To Whom This Concerns:

I am providing comments on the subject matter noted above. There are multiple options presented as an effort to "Reduce the Mortality Rate" of the Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass population. I applaud your efforts to try and bring some sanity to this complex issue.

I am in favor of Options C1 or C2. I support this decision as I run a Charter Fishing Business and rely on the ability to offer my customers more than just 1 fish. I support my selection based upon the following:

- I participate in the Maryland DNR Fishery Facts program and report all of my catch and discards which provides real time data to assist in the decisions as to how to best manage the resources.
- Cost of Entry
 - Charter Vessel (MMC \$95.00 once every 5 years plus Annual Fishing Guide License and Annual Charter Vessel Sticker "6 - Pack" costing \$360.00 each year = Total Annual Expense \$379.00)
 - Individual Recreational License at \$20.50
 - Consolidated Chesapeake Bay Sport Boat License at \$50.00.
 - No limit to the number of days allowed to harvest striped bass fish and for the Consolidated License there is no limit to the number of passengers allowed per vessel vs 6-Pack and no limit on the number of trips with new passengers on board.
- The above data points illustrates the gross imbalance in the financial impact between the 2 groups.
- Menhaden Policy & Omega - Total Silence on moving the catch area and/or reductions in the catch limits for the Canadian owned Company Omega.

At this point I believe the narrative is out of balance as the changes are being presented under the terms of "Reducing the Mortality Rate" vs taking measures to "Expand/Grow the Population". The menhaden caught by Omega is a public resource which belongs to the citizens of the United States. How and why does the "Menhaden Policy" continue to support a foreign company taking a US owned resource? Basically if there is no food then any and all efforts to grow/expand the Striped Bass population will fail. This is simple Biology 101.

To gain a "Total Buy-In" from all groups there needs to be significant reductions to the TAC for Omega and the waters where they can fish.

Respectfully submitted and hoping for a balanced and inclusive outcome.

Regards,

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



From: [ED NARIZZANO](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Chesapeake bay striped bass regulations
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:20:01 PM

Hello,

I am in favor of option B2 with a bag limit of 1 fish for both private boats and charter boats. I feel that if we are truly interested in helping the striped bass population recover, one fish per person per day is fair. As a private recreational fisherman, I spend a lot of money to pursue my hobby and most days fish alone and catch "keeper" sized fish half the time. Charter boats, on the other hand, always have at least 6 fishermen on board, have located and target the schools and go out twice a day 7 days a week. Those boats' activities equate to 200 trips to 1 vs private boats and make much more of an impact to the fish population.

Thank you,
Ed Narizzano
Bel Air, MD

From: [Rocky Zotto](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:26:20 PM

Hi, thanks for giving me this opportunity. I was at the Dec 5th meeting, didn't take the opportunity to comment but if I did it would have sounded something like this.

My name is Rocky Zotto, I am 70 years old and have been a fresh and saltwater recreational fisherman for about 50 of those years. My position would have been rather pointless, I don't fish to kill or eat Striped Bass. I love catching them for the sheer excitement. I do most of this fishing out of my kayak on the Rhode Island salt ponds using a technic called tube & worm. I've caught well over 200 this year alone each I'm proudly say were released safely.

So regardless of the option selected it would not affect my fishing trips, I'm strictly catch and safely release. BUT what that said I need to make just ONE request, the Committee must do something to give these "Hire Captains" some relief. I've taken **many** charters over the years over the entire NE and I have found these captains overall to be honest in there interpretation of the laws over those year. If Option C works the best for these people to attract more clients then they deserve that break. As stated, who wants to shell out a grand or more for a trip and come back with maybe a handful of filets, I know I would never do that now even if I wanted to.

With the rare exception these captains are true conservationist and are not part of the declining SB stock. I live in RI 6 months during the prime Spring, Summer, and Fall fishing season. In the Fall I fish the beaches religiously. I'm constantly telling people to STOP kicking fish back in the water, remove you center treble hooks on you plugs and flatten the barbs on the other. I guess what I'm saying is maybe consider giving the Hire Boats some more room to catch fish and start a campaign to teach recreational fisherman the things they can do to help decline our precision Striper population. Thank for listening (I hope).

From: [Steve Morgan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:26:51 PM
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

I am emailing to offer my comments on the proposed regulation changes for the Striped Bass Fishery. I am a recreational angler who fishes the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries several times a month, either on my personal boat or with a local light tackle guide. I practice catch & release fishing with artificial lures and believe this is the way forward. I have noticed significant changes in the state of the fishery over the last 10 years and changes need to be made immediately to preserve this resource.

I am in full support of Option 'B1' - I think a smaller slot of 19" – 23" is critical to ensuring the stabilization of the fishery. I also think that recreational fishermen have taken the brunt of changes over the last several years and that it is time to change the For Hire limits to match those of the Private/Shore anglers.

If I can be of any further assistance please let me know.

Thank you!

Steve



This electronic message and any attachment(s) contain information from PEAKE, LLC, which may be company sensitive, proprietary, privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure. The information is intended to be used solely by the recipient(s) named above. If you are not an intended recipient, be aware that any review, disclosure, copying, distribution or use of this transmission or its contents is prohibited. If you have received this transmission in error, please notify us immediately at postmaster@peake.com

From: [Timothy Alvarado](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - Comments
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:29:00 PM

Hello,

I would like to submit my comments/support for Recreational Bay Option B4. I think that it is important that there is parity between the recreational and for hire fleets and that larger slot would still engage potential customers.

thank you,

Tim Alvarado

From: [Adam Harrington](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:32:37 PM

B2 is the best proposal.

From: [Stanley Svrlinga](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:34:03 PM

Chesapeake Bay Regulations

Option B1, but any option B is better than Option C or A

Stan Svrlinga

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device

From: [Ben Nichols](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:39:33 PM

After analyzing the options looked at for the subject addendum, I strongly support options BI and BII. I believe our stripers are worth protecting and by implementing a slot like we have for redfish, we can rebuild the stock and do the right thing by these awesome migratory gamefish. Thank you ASMFC for getting involved and forcing the hands of the various State fisheries managers to make sure the right thing is done!

Best,
Ben Nichols

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: chris@bayside-insurance.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:41:09 PM

I think the B3 option for Chesapeake Bay Regulations seems most logical give the size of fish I see in the bay. If the slot is too small a lot of “overs” will be released when they could have filled a limit and then fish left alone and go focus on another species.

Thanks



Chris Schindler
Agent/VP of Sales & Marketing
Bayside Insurance Associates, Inc
t : (410)643-6641 / (410)822-2800
e: chris@bayside-insurance.com
www.bayside-insurance.com
1610 Postal Rd. PO Box 545 Chester MD
21619
706 Idlewild Ave. Easton MD 21601



IMPORTANT: This message (and any attachments) is confidential and is intended only for the addressee(s). This message may contain information that is protected by one or more legally recognized privileges. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, I did not intend to waive, and I do not waive, any legal privilege or the confidentiality of the message. If you receive this message in error, please notify me immediately by return e-mail and delete this message from your computer and network without saving it in any manner. The unauthorized use, dissemination, distribution, or reproduction of this message, including attachments, is prohibited and may be unlawful.

From: [Michael Florey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:44:29 PM

I support option B1.

I am not in favor of mode splits allowing the for hire charters to harvest 2 fish per person while the recreational anglers can harvest 1.

Additionally, I do not know if this is a topic for this discussion but I feel we need to greatly limit nets in the Chesapeake bay.

Mike Florey
Expedite Delivery System

From: [Nick Neary](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 12:48:03 PM

This email is to show support for option B1 in the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Thank you,
Nick Neary

From: [Dave S](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:24:46 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to offer comments in support of Recreational Bay Option B1. I am a kayak fisherman who has been fishing primarily the middle bay and tributaries for many years. While I strongly support Option B1, I feel like the options on the table overall probably don't go far enough to protect this vital fishery. Along with protecting Menhaden, protecting the striper stock is critical to the health of the bay food webs and ecosystem. I'd almost rather see something closer to a moratorium on commercial and rec fishing for striped bass for a year, if it would mean a strong, healthy rebuilding of the stock and more sustainable harvests in future years.

David Schmeltz

9645 East Bexhill Dr

Kensington, MD 20895

From: [Lenny Rudow](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:35:42 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-1488640139.png](#)

Dear ASMFC - I did provide public comment at a meeting, but was told written comment is also allowed, so please register my support for:

Rec Coast option B
Commercial 14.5% reduction
Board Response B
Implementation ASAP

With regards to the Recreational Chesapeake Bay season, I support option B4 and would like the Board to additionally consider:

- The recreational boating and fishing industry contribute over 3.5 billion dollars and 17,800 jobs to the economy of the state of Maryland alone (MTAM figures). True, not all of this is fishing related, but NMMA statistics show 60+ percent of boat owners use their boats to fish, so recreational fishing's portion of this contribution is substantial.
- As regulations get tightened, fewer people are motivated to go fishing and as a result, recreational boating and fishing businesses are negatively affected.
- Shifting a portion of the available take to allow for-hire charters to receive more than the wider recreational community results in less opportunity for the wider recreational community; in these options, that reduced opportunity being reflected by a smaller slot limit and/or a lower chance of rebuilding the stock. Thus, it has a direct negative economic impact on businesses serving the recreational community including boatyards, dealers, tackle shops, and more.
- While it is also true that a charter businesses may be negatively affected by a B option being chosen, claims of being "put out of business" are vastly overblown. This is evidenced by:
 - The fact that these charters already operate outside of the rockfish season (IE April catfish charters)
 - The fact that these charters continue to operate in MD waters during the July striped bass closure
 - The fact that even through the full moratorium in the 90s there were still charters operating on the Bay
- Sector separation and the "C" options are patently unfair on the face of it.

Thank you for registering my comments.



Lenny Rudow, Editor - p. 410/798-6503
cell 410/353-1981- Lenny@fishtalkmag.com
www.fishtalkmag.com

From: [Perry Davidson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:43:04 PM

To:ASMFC. I have been a charter boat captain for 25 years on Kent Island Maryland.I have supported my family by fishing.I am enrolled in the facts program so we can have accurate reporting.I have a son that would like to take over the business one day.We do not think charter fishing will survive with one fish. And I think the 19-24 inch slot limit will have a great amount of mortality from hooking and releasing fish. But I will support the option C2 thank you Captain Perry Davidson
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Alan Polk](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Maryland striped bass season
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:04:58 PM

As an avid catch and release striped bass fisherman, I support the b1 option as the season guidelines and season limits for next year. It is absolutely ridiculous that for hire charter boats to get increased limits. Under this scenario recreational anglers are discriminated against because we are not charters. If Maryland makes it illegal for charter boats to operate under different rules, this should be challenged in court.

Thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion

Richard Alan Polk
22373 St Clement's Avenue
Leonardtown, Md. 20650

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Peter Turcik](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations 2024
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:47:59 PM

To whom it should concern,

I have reviewed the proposed regulations for 2024, and I am in favor of option B, preferably Options B1 or B2. We need to do what we can to build up the striped bass population and allowing charter boats to keep 2 fish per person per day will only hinder this effort.

Thank you for your consideration,
Peter Turcik
Edgewater, MD
Editor, *Fisheries* magazine, American Fisheries Society
Writer, *FishTalk* magazine
Coastal Conservation Association Lifetime member, Annapolis Chapter

From: [John McIntyre](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum 11
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:58:59 PM

from my iPhone hello, we need to do whatever we need to save striped bass, what used to be a fishery from October until December is now only a fishery for the first two weeks in November here in central Long Island. Striped bass are depleted and we need to take all necessary action to save this great fish. It's been a long time coming.

From: [Greg Vallandingham](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:08:12 PM

I support option B1 for Recreational Bay Options. Lets rebuild stocks now.

Thank you,
Gregory Vallandingham

From: [Teddy Seward](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:13:16 PM

Hello,

I am a recreational fisherman who only uses jigs to fish for striped bass in Maryland and Virginia. I live in Salisbury, MD where I work as a registered nurse in the ICU. Fishing is my main hobby and what I spend way too much money on. In years past I have been traveling to NJ to fish for striped bass in the fall, because Maryland's striped bass run has become so poor. I support option B1, I feel as though it's our greatest hope for fixing our fishery.

Teddy Seward.

From: [Scott Sadler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II-Chesapeake Bay Regulations
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:16:27 PM

To whom it may concern,

As a charter boat Captain and conservationist, we as a whole(commercial and Recreational) need to make new and positive rules and regulations in the Chesapeake Bay for the sustainability of the striped bass . With the new options that are being proposed I personally believe the best option that is proposed is option B1. If we don't take more drastic measures now we will have a full closure being more emanate.

thanks,

Capt. Scott Sadler
Backlash Outdoor Adventures
443-764-7670

From: [David Galeone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II Chesapeake Bay Regulations
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:52:22 PM

Please consider options b3 or b4. Why should recreational fisherman face different regulations than commercial fisherman who fish much more frequently and most a couple times a day be allowed to keep and kill more fish? Most of the time if I even take another person on my boat it will be one other person. If I am lucky I fish maybe once a week. With all the regulations pushed at the recreational fisherman while not addressing the netting boats that are killing tons of fish it is doubtful there will be any substantial reduction by any of these measures. And a close of the trophy season in my opinion is way overdue.

Thank you,

David M. Galeone

12610 Somerset Ave – P O BOX 250

Princess Anne, MD 21853

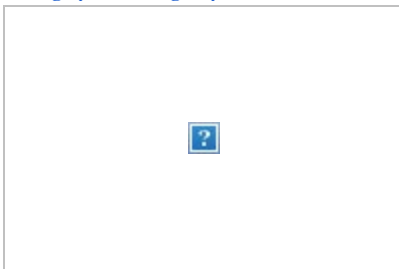
410.651.1111

1138 Parsons Rd

Salisbury, MD 21801

410.749.2220

www.garymarshallagency.com



From: [Gregg Hartley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Pending Addendum decision regarding Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 3:59:07 PM

I live on and fish the Chesapeake Bay. I am a member of CCA Maryland and the American Saltwater Guide Association (although I am just a recreational angler).

I concur with and support the following positions:

It is critical that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class and maintaining the 28-31" slot achieves that goal, while providing some consistency for anglers and the stock assessment scientists.

I do not support mode splits. The Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) be managed under the same regulations.

The States of Maryland and Virginia should complement federal ocean regulations with tough near term restrictions to protect this fish stock.

I would hope we also move forward with lowered take by commercial striped bass fishing and take aggressive action to reduce the commercial take of menhaden.

Thanks

Gregg Hartley

857 Cedar Drive
Deale, MD 20751

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin Keane](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:03:35 PM

Hello,

As a recreational angler within the state of Maryland, I would like to voice my support for option B3 in the set of Chesapeake Bay recreational options. In addition, I would also like to voice my support for keeping the catch and release fishery open throughout the winter months. There is no proof correlating cold water catch and release with high mortality or low spawning success.

Thank you,
Kevin

From: [Live Liner Fishing](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:05:15 PM

I support option B1. The C option is absurd. I spend big money and time on tackle, gear, and finding fish, it doesn't make sense for someone who pays for a charter to be allowed to keep more than me. The C option caters to the watermen who rape the bay for a living and then lie in an effort to mislead the public about the health of the fishery. Watermen don't care about conservation, they only care about how much they can profit off our natural resources today, while giving no forethought to the future of the fishery.

From: [Mike](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:16:35 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am in support of option B4. Charter Boats should not be allowed a different limit than recreational anglers. There needs to be more focus on catch and release during the cold weather months. Catch and release should be allowed when water temperatures are suitable to do so without harming fish. More importance should be placed on the months with the lowest mortality rates. I support a summer closure when water temps are the highest. MD should recognize the correlation between Menhaden stocks and striped bass and prevent its harvest within state waters.

Sincerely,

Michael Carey

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Brian Schmidt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Ammendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:20:09 PM

Dear ASMFC,

Regarding the proposed striped bass regulations for the 2024 season and beyond, I just wanted to give a few comments as a recreational angler.

Of the proposals listed, options B1 and B2 are the most equitable and most likely to help rebuild the stock.

If extreme actions must be taken, we should look at the successes of other fisheries (like the redfish, western trout streams, etc), where restricted slots and encouraging catch and release fishing have allowed stock to rebound. Catch and release data show that mortality in the colder months are less than 1.6%, and if tackle restrictions like single hooks (no treble hooks) and even barbless hooks are encouraged, then release rates are even higher.

As a experienced angler, I know live lining and bait fishing cause the most mortalities. (your data show that too)

The suggestion to stop catch and release (C&R) fishing from Jan1 - Mar 31st is also nonsensical I fell the current seasona of C&R is adequate as few fishermen venture out this time of year and the mortality is super low.

Please do the best for the striped bass, while allowing us to continue to enjoy pursuing these beautiful fish for generations to come,

Brian Schmidt
16590 Brogden road
Spencerville, MD 2868

From: [Mike Watkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 4:29:50 PM

Good Evening,

I am a recreational Chesapeake Bay angler in Maryland and I support Option B2 for Addendum II. Also as an artificial lure light tackle angler anything I can do with assistance to reporting for more accurate mortality rates regarding fishing with artificial lures please let me know.

Thank You,

Michael Watkins

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Dan Knight](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 5:00:25 PM

Hello,

I am commenting on Recreational Bay Options and I support Option B. I believe everyone should only get 1 fish wheter you are for hire or private. For hire already run 2 trips a day, and bring home the maximum as often as they can. I may only fish 5-10 times a year with a couple of guys and we always follow the rules and sometimes don't keep any fish, as we just enjoy fishing and don't need to kill everything we catch.

Option B is the best option.

Thanks,
Dan Knight

From: [Nick Crispino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:32:46 PM

Recreational Bay option
To Whom this may concern

I would be I favor of option B1 as it is the best option for the fish I support minimal harvest but strongly disagree with the closing of catch and release seasons. Closing this season will mostly affect light tackle anglers whom most of are supporters of proper fish handling and catch and release regardless of season. Closing the season will also affect local business in a negative way As a service manager of a local Boston whaler dealer I take care of hundreds of locally owned vessels and know the purpose of may of the people who own these boats is the pursuit of striped bass. I personally belive eliminating the use of live bait and cut bait would greatly reduce deep hooking fish and the mortality rate that comes with it.

Thank you for your time
Nick Crispino

From: [Jeff](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:33:27 PM

I support option B4

I am concerned that the smaller slot limits would significantly increase release mortality.

Additionally I would love to see Rockfish become a Gamefish. I believe this move will be critical to restoring the population back to healthy levels. Like other states have done to save fish populations

Jeff Tice
2 S River Crossing way
Edgewater MD 21037
(410)200-5132

Sent from my iPhone

From: [david.jenkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:35:29 PM

I recommend Option B2. I would also recommend limiting bait harvest and commercial nets.

Thank you,
David Jenkins
Annapolis MD

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [Jacqueline Bond](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:48:37 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

From: [Dale DEAN](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:49:39 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

From: [Susan Dean](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 6:55:46 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

From: [Lars McCarter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II -Recreational Bay Options
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:08:33 PM

Good evening. I just wanted to throw my support between option B1 for Recreational Bay Options.

I live on the bay, fish nearly year round, and have observed a noticeable decline in the striped bass stock overtime. It's clear we need aggressive approaches to improve the stability of the stock.

Thank you so much for considering my input. Cheers

--

Lars McCarter
hlmccarter@gmail.com
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/hlmccarter/>
609-638-0178

From: [Nicole Post](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:10:44 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jason Williams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:12:16 PM

The commercial fishery should not take any reductions for striped bass.

Jason Williams
TFL# 100177

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Jamie Swam](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option B1 Please
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:18:27 PM

Please implement option B1 for striped bass for 2024 forward. If we are going to save the species for our kids we need to reduce the harvest as much as possible.

Thanks

From: [chris daugherty](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:38:36 PM

Hi,
I'm in support of Recreational Bay Options B4. All angles should be treated the same weather on a private boat or charter boat.
Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Don Crawford](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 8:32:57 PM

Recreational bay options

I would be in support of option B1 we need to significantly reduce the harvest numbers of striped bass to ensure future of the species and what it brings to Maryland and the entire mid Atlantic

From: [PETER J KUPPER](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:07:08 PM

Here in central and northern Nj we have had the best years of bass fishing that I can remember. It is unfortunate that we are being peantalized for the overfishing in other states. We only take our bonuses tags out of our commercial quota so there is a lot of pounds that are not harvested. I'm my opinion the commercial quota should be reduce in other states this would better rebuild the stocks faster then restricting the anglers innNj more I am in favor of option A

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jim Frazetti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Chesapeake bay regulations
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 9:42:37 PM

Good evening,

Regarding the Chesapeake Bay striped bass regulations, my vote would be for option B3. In addition to those regulations, 6 pack charters should not be allowed to harvest 2 fish per angler. Lastly, would support catch and release in May.

Thx,
Jim

Sent from my iPhone

From: [richard.telljohann](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 11:03:24 PM

I Am writing to express my opinion for the regullations.

I support option B4

Best

Richard Telljohann

4824 Carroll Manor Rd. Baldwin md 21013

From: [B Day](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:10:26 AM

To Whom May Listen at the ASMFC,

I live in the upper Chesapeake Bay region of Maryland with proper fishing licenses for recreational fishing in the Bay and its tributaries. I have grown to love fishing in my local waters and will often travel to other parts of Maryland and Virginia to fish different areas and species.

As related to Striped Bass, I am very concerned with the current state of the fishery. Even over the last 4 to 5 years that my interest in fishing has peaked, I have seen troubling declines in numbers of Striped Bass caught, continued isolation of the main bio mass of Striped Bass in summer months, and lack of variety in sizes and that getting worse.

I practice Catch and Release on most outings, very rarely keeping my 1 allowed fish. I view Striped Bass as more of a sport fish rather than a meal. While I am a supporter of option B-1 from the proposed changes options presented, I am also a supporter of keeping Catch and Release open even in times where a harvest may not be allowed when it is not a high detriment to mortality or to clearly spawning fish.

Thank you for reading and considering my opinion,
Brandon Davis
225 Melvin Ave
Queenstown, MD 21658
410-490-3135

From: [drzimmerman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:50:32 AM

1 fish, 28" to 35" per person for 2024 season.

Thank you.

Dr. J. Zimmerman
Brigantine, NJ

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Tim Zink](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:52:16 AM

Please summon the courage to support option B1.

Please do the right thing for the resource — and our children.

Sincerely,

Tim Zink
Towson, MD

—

Tim Zink
202-870-3870

From: [Lee Goldberg](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:58:23 AM

Dear ASMFC,

I support Recreational Bay Option B4 of the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

Best Regards,

Lee H. Goldberg
Vice President

MARITIME ALLIANCE GROUP, INC.

Lloyd's Agency / AIMU Correspondent

Dundalk Marine Terminal

2700 Broening Highway

Dunmar Bldg. North, Suite 200C

Baltimore, Maryland 21222

O: 410.284.8175

M: 410.935.9469

F: 410.282.3325

E: L.Goldberg@groupmagi.com

Website: www.groupmagi.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chef Chris Mack](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 6:17:59 AM

- Chesapeake Bay Regulations Option B4 please!!! None of the C options!!

Chef Chris Mack
443-298-9739 Cell
Sent from a classified location.

From: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:22:15 AM

To Whom This May Concern:

To supplement my e-mail from 12/7/23 I want to add the following.

I am confident you know that licensed Charter Captains had to take a USCG course and pass the USCG test in order to receive their MMC and have a TWIC Card. The MMC and TWIC is a prerequisite in order to obtain a Fishing Guide License in the State of Maryland. This process takes time and money in order to open a Charter Fishing business. To add Charter Captains must pass a physical including hearing, vision and DOT Drug Testing. Charter Captains and mates under the current regulations and the proposed C1 or C2 are not allowed any fish.

Take into consideration the above scenario why would a Charter Captain under any of the proposed B Solutions pay for and upkeep their Charter Status (Six customers = 6 fish). Unlicensed/Recreational for Six Customers plus Captain and Mate = 8 fish. I know the rule of "For Hire" comes into play which only highlights the faulty logic behind the Proposed B solutions. Then why not run 4 or 5 recreational trips per day at 6 customers per trip = 32 and up to 40 fish per day. This is part of the unintended consequences which could result in even higher catch numbers and do nothing to reduce Mortality and/or regrow the population.

Under the above points be careful of what you wish for because there are real world consequences.

Respectfully submitted and thank you for your consideration

Regards,

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



On 12/07/2023 12:14 PM EST MURRAY DEMUTH <demuth4@comcast.net> wrote:

To Whom This Concerns:

I am providing comments on the subject matter noted above. There are

multiple options presented as an effort to "Reduce the Mortality Rate" of the Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass population. I applaud your efforts to try and bring some sanity to this complex issue.

I am in favor of Options C1 or C2. I support this decision as I run a Charter Fishing Business and rely on the ability to offer my customers more than just 1 fish. I support my selection based upon the following:

- I participate in the Maryland DNR Fishery Facts program and report all of my catch and discards which provides real time data to assist in the decisions as to how to best manage the resources.
- Cost of Entry
 - Charter Vessel (MMC \$95.00 once every 5 years plus Annual Fishing Guide License and Annual Charter Vessel Sticker "6 - Pack" costing \$360.00 each year = Total Annual Expense \$379.00)
 - Individual Recreational License at \$20.50
 - Consolidated Chesapeake Bay Sport Boat License at \$50.00.
 - No limit to the number of days allowed to harvest striped bass fish and for the Consolidated License there is no limit to the number of passengers allowed per vessel vs 6-Pack and no limit on the number of trips with new passengers on board.
- The above data points illustrates the gross imbalance in the financial impact between the 2 groups.
- Menhaden Policy & Omega - Total Silence on moving the catch area and/or reductions in the catch limits for the Canadian owned Company Omega.

At this point I believe the narrative is out of balance as the changes are being presented under the terms of "Reducing the Mortality Rate" vs taking measures to "Expand/Grow the Population". The menhaden caught by Omega is a public resource which belongs to the citizens of the United States. How and why does the "Menhaden Policy" continue to support a foreign company taking a US owned resource? Basically if there is no food then any and all efforts to grow/expand the Striped Bass population will fail. This is simple Biology 101.

To gain a "Total Buy-In" from all groups there needs to be significant reductions to the TAC for Omega and the waters where they can fish.

Respectfully submitted and hoping for a balanced and inclusive outcome.

Regards,

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



From: [Ron Cochran](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Abbi](#); [Eliza Cochran](#); [Krista Cochran](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:04:09 AM

To whom it may concern:

I want to comment about on your draft addendum for Chesapeake Bay Regulations. I am in favor of option B1. Ideally I want to see one regulation for both commercial and recreational anglers that will go the furthest to protect the striped bass population in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you

Ron Cochran

From: [Abigail Cochran](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:12:16 AM

To whom it may concern:

I want to comment about on your draft addendum for Chesapeake Bay Regulations. I am in favor of option B1. Ideally I want to see one regulation for both commercial and recreational anglers that will go the furthest to protect the striped bass population in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you

Abigail Cochran
Sent from my iPhone

From: [James Spies](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II.
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:06:03 AM

To whom it may concern,

I'm in favor of the option B1, or a complete moratorium of the striped bass.

Thank you for your consideration.

JR Spies.

From: [Johnson, Hayden](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass Fishing
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:43:53 AM

Hello,

Please go with one of the B options as this will hopefully restore the bay back to the way it use to be and let my kids kids keep fishing.



Hayden Johnson
Assistant Project Manager
The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company
1317 Executive Blvd, Suite 120
Chesapeake, Virginia 23230
Phone: 757-382-0002
Mobile: 757-634-5175
www.whiting-turner.com

From: [John Rainey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 9:44:21 AM

Greetings ASMFC and thank you for all the hard work you do.

I would like to comment as a recreational angler on the Striped Bass draft Addendum II.

Of the choices offered, I support Option B-1.

My thought process is that even these options do not go far enough to realize actual change and benefit.

I personally would be in support of a full moratorium on any harvesting of a striped bass whether commercially or recreationally.

I will not be in support of any option that differentiates a commercial or “for hire” population for different regulations than recreational anglers.

I am not in support of any “conservation equivalency.”

I do not embrace the current data being used on catch-and-release mortality and believe much could be accomplished with a catch-and-release only— no harvest at all— option (i.e. charters could still fish but not keep, ban gill netting).

For your demographic purposes, I am a retired professional fishing guide (18 years), I have owned a tackle store, and am now a recreational only fisherman— I understand and have lived all sides of this issue (I have run my guide service on public waters, I have worked in catch-and-release only locations, I have run a guide service on a catch-and-release only basis, I have worked through complete closures of my fishable waters, etc.) I would be happy to discuss my thoughts with you further if that would be helpful in any way.

Thanks again for your efforts,
John Rainey
575-770-7648

Sent from my iPad

From: [Brad Weil](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] NJ Striped Bass Bonus Program
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 10:28:11 AM

It is essential we (in NJ) keep the voluntary striped bass bonus program. I have been told this only uses a small portion of our striped bass commercial quota so why even consider taking it away? For those in South New Jersey who don't really get the ocean striped bass run we used to get years ago (not due to lack of fish, just seems they are taking a different migratory route) this is a necessary option for us to be able to harvest a back bay fish which typically are not above 28"s.

Thank you!

Brad Weil
856-628-3695

From: [DOUGLAS TAYLOR](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:05:40 AM
Importance: High

Concerning the options for the **Addendum II to Amendment 7** of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Stripe Bass, I am in favor of the following options:

Option B: 1 fish at 28" to 31"

Option B2 for Chesapeake Bay: 1 fish 19" to 23"

For the **Commercial Quota for all states**; Option B

As for the **Response of the Board to Stock Assessment Updates, the use of Option B** which allows for an expedited response should be allowed with one reservation. The Action of the Board will only be temporary and a full response will follow the normal procedure as outlined under Option A with the Board providing information as to why the action was taken and the public still has full recourse to go to return to the previous management measures. In doing so, the Board will not have total dictatorial power over the Management Plan for Atlantic Stripe Bass.

Because of the interest for the taking of a Trophy size Stripe Bass, Would the **Atlantic States Marine Commission** consider a **Trophy Tag Program** for one fish/year greater than 45 inches. One tag would only be issued to the end user/fisherman and could only be used Ocean side during the Fall Season, starting Oct 1st and running till Dec 31st. No tags would be issued to the **For Hire Fleet** or **Charter Fleet**.

Thank you for your time in this matter. I request that my contact information not to be made public in the comments.

Douglas A. Taylor

Turnersville, NJ 08012

fishtrek@comcast.net phone: 856-228-2642

From: [Luciano Mascari](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Luciano Mascari](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Options Input feedback following 5-Dec Meeting session
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:12:25 AM

I have been a Massachussettes fisherman for the past 50 years and I grew up on Long Island NY where I fished over 15 years prior. I remember when there was a moratorium on Striped Bass in NY to save the stock. An old salt to say the least. As always your meeting was both informative, helpful and appreciated.

The following are my suggestions for input/feedback:

- a) 3.1.1 Option B 28-31" for all modes
I would recommend upping this range to 28"-32" for all modes if possible to open the slot a little
- b) 3.1.2 Option B2 (B1 would be better but may be a hard sell currently)
- c) 3,1,3 Option B
- d) 3.1.4 Option B
- e) 3.2.1 Option B (I hold commercial fishing permits however, I would recommend a temporary commercial moratorium on Striped Bass provided that individuals who have had a commercial permit in the past retain the right to reenter the fishery once the moratorium is lifted). The commercial fishery targets the big breeding cows and does a huge damage to the future biomass.
- f) 3.3 Option B

The recreational Striped Bass fishery is the biggest money maker to the eastern seaboard. Tackle shops, hotels, charters, etc..

Kind regards,
Luciano Mascari

From: [Pedro Paz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 1:38:39 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to encourage and support option B1. I'm having trouble wrapping my head around not protecting the future of the Chesapeake Bay Fishery. As a resident of Edgewater, I have noticed that the overharvesting of fish continues to contribute to the downward decline of the striped bass population. It is by no means the only contributing factor, but it's certainly one that puts an increased pressure on an already fragile population. This past year I fished the car wrecks in the west side of the Eastern Bay near the mouth of Tanner's Creek. After riding past there a half dozen times, I noticed a consistent trend in charter boats anchoring their boats over the wrecks and pulling in and harvesting fish after fish. I fished the wreck with live spot shortly after, and pulled in fish after fish after fish in the 16-18 inch range. It was clear to me that they pulled every single fish in the 19 inch and up class.

This consistent targeting of schools of fish where two trips per day with six plus anglers on board results in the obliteration of maturing fish. My belief is that a limit to not only the number of harvesting fish, but also the application of the 19-23 inch slot will allow these schools to mature a higher number of fish; therefore, ensuring the growth of the number of healthy striped bass now and well into the future. The 2 fish per person charter harvest is a "great time" for a lot of people, but at the same time, it demonstrates a lack of respect and concern for the health and wellbeing of the future fisheries in the bay.

I hope that this email serves as only one example of the voice of the fisherman who strives for a healthy and thriving fish population for our children in the future.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I may be of any help in protecting our striped bass population.

Best,

Pedro Paz

From: [Kris Jones](#)
 To: [Comments](#)
 Subject: [External] Rockfish Slot Limits
 Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:10:07 PM

Hi. I strongly am in support of B1 on the attached chart. This population has been so mismanaged and it has significantly impacted the species in the long-run.

I've done my part by not really harvesting fish anymore, but that's not the same with many others. We don't need an all-out moratorium, but we need some massive changes because the data suggests this stock is plummeting.

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.						
<i>Chesapeake Bay Options with Consistent Minimum Size, Maximum Size, and Bag Limit</i>							
	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%
<i>Chesapeake Bay Options with Consistent Minimum Size, Maximum Size, and Mode-Specific Bag Limits (P/S=private vessel/shore anglers and FH= for-hire)</i>							
	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%

Kris Jones

From: [Joe Schoonover](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:13:56 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I am in support of option B4 as I believe this is the best option for all anglers in the Chesapeake Bay. I also support the elimination of the spring trophy season in Maryland and Virginia waters to protect the breeders.

In addition, there needs to be tighter regulation on menhaden harvesting in Virginia waters.

Sincerely,
Joe Schoonover
Preston, MD

From: [Stan21784](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:18:12 PM

Greetings. Please accept my comments regarding Recreational Bay Options. As an individual fisherman on the Chesapeake Bay I would like to provide my suggested option for future Rockfish season(s). My selection would be option B2.

I think it is also important to address mortally wounded fish. What a shame it will be to have your one fish in the box and the next one caught is hooked badly and won't survive regardless of size. Perhaps a registry of sorts that would allow the angler to keep the fish provided its registered immediately. If this happens the angler must then terminate the trip to avoid any further harm.

Something also needs to be done about the catfish. Do we really know how well the spawn is if all the fry are eaten by catfish? Perhaps a catfish tournament where the winner is the boat with the largest number of catfish. Donate the catch to local soup kitchens for those that don't want their catch. I personally plan to target catfish next season.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Stan Kos
240-417-1748

Sent from my iPad

From: [Chris Wright](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 2:56:32 PM

Recreational Bay Draft Options - commenting in favor of option B1.

Thank you for taking into consideration,
Chris Wright
410.708.0655
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Brian Brouse](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:03:46 PM

This email is regarding the Recreational Bay Options proposed for the upcoming season. I'm choosing Option B1. I feel this gives us the best chance to rebuild the Striped Bass stock in the Chesapeake Bay without shutting down the season completely. Thank you for letting us weigh in on this very important issue.
Brian Brouse
410-236-3666

From: [Debbie Sullivan Brouse](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:12:12 PM

This email is regarding the recreational bay options for the upcoming season. I am choosing option B1. I would very much like to try to save the rockfish population. Short of a moratorium, I feel this is the best route to rebuilding the rockfish stock.

From: g.georgetthenrich@comcast.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:22:51 PM

Ms. Franke:

I'm writing in response to the proposed Striped bass draft addendum II up for review by the ASMFC. It is very clear dire steps need to be taken in order to save this fishery. As president of the Plum Island Surfcasters, I can tell you many of my members are concerned over where this fishery is heading if inadequate steps are taken to recover what has been lost in the past decade. It is my opinion that the following steps be taken in order to preserve the Striped bass for the future.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes).

With the 2015 year class being the last class where the population was at its best, restoring the slot limit back to 28" to <35" puts that class right in that slot thus exposing the year class to potential decline. Leaving the limit at 28" to 31" allows the fish above that size to have more breeders available increasing the chance of recovery.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B2 at 1 fish at 19" to 24".

Option B offers the best chance at meeting or exceeding the 14.5% expected recovery rate.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B.

While I occasionally use charters for hire, I believe all recreational fishermen, including charter boats, should adhere to the same rules if the species is to recover.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

Option B allows officials the ability to enforce compliance.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

A reduction in the commercial quote will bring everyone in alignment so that the expected 14.5% recovery can be achieved. This is especially important in areas where spawning stocks are most effected.

In closing, although this is my opinion, I believe it is one shared by most of my members and that critical steps need to be taken to avert a fisheries disaster. It will be difficult over the next few years, but if everyone does his part, I am confident we can change the course of where the Striped bass is heading. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Georgette Y. E. Henrich

President, Plum Island SurfcastersSM, Inc.

Founded 1957



"Plum Island SurfcastersSM will strive to be a highly respected leader in sportfishing, committed to developing best practices in good sportsmanship, education, techniques and conservation for future generations"

66 years and going strong. Dedicated to preserving the tradition of sportfishing while practicing conservation. Check us out: www.plumislandsurfcasters.org

From: [JJ Vigil](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:33:09 PM

My comments are regarding "Recreational Bay Options. It is my preference that ASMFC select wither **B1** or **B2**, however, my preference would be **B1**. I think it is very important to tighten up the regs so that my kids can one day enjoy this fishery as much as I do. I think it is very important to get EVERYONE on the same requirements regarding how many fish you are able to keep. I have been on many commercial fishing trips and have seen the boat keep two fish per person. Many of these people went home with two fish and never got around to eating them. I know its impossible, but it would be interesting to see how many of those customers went home with fish and they ended up not being eaten. I appreciate the efforts of ASMFC and look forward to your decision.

J.J. Vigil
Vigil Contracting, Inc.
(O) 410-451-9510 X103
(C) 443-375-6256

From: [brian.scharle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:56:10 PM

Hello,

I am an avid angler and resident of Ocean Pines, MD that regularly fishes for striped bass in the bay, inlet, and ocean around Ocean City and in the Somerset County portion of the Chesapeake Bay. I am writing today to provide my comments on Addendum II.

I am in favor of **Option B** for the *Ocean Recreational Fishery*.

I am in favor of **Option B(1) or B(2)** for the *Chesapeake Recreational Fishery*.

I am in favor of **Option B** for the *Commercial Quota Reduction*.

I am in favor of using a **board action** to implement these Addendum options ASAP.

Thank you for accepting my comments and best of luck in your decision process. I hope you do what is best for the fishery so that we may enjoy this treasured resource for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Brian Scharle
(215) 350-7940

From: [Elaine Williams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 3:59:20 PM

The commercial fishery should not have a reduction to their industry
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Robert Brownstein](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 4:05:37 PM

please close the summer fishery for at least 4 weeks. high mortality even using catch and release

From: [kenneth plummer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 4:37:38 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **kenneth plummer** <05harleyhunter@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Dec 8, 2023 at 4:25 PM
Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
To: kenneth plummer <05harleyhunter@gmail.com>

Growing up during the original moratorium I certainly can appreciate the efforts in conservation so that our future generations can enjoy catching stripers.

Where is see big inconsistency in application of “rules” is between recreational, for hire commercial and coastal.

Having fished the last 10 years regularly as recreational fisherman in the middle and upper Chesapeake bay it is obvious there is an unbalanced limit between recreational and commercial. Most recreational folks get out a couple times a week catching their 1 fish limit. On the other hand we watch charter boats fishing at least 2 times a day and depending on tides sometimes get 3 trips in. They catch 2 per person and more at times (it’s been observed first hand) catching anywhere from 12-40 plus fish every trip. It’s so easy to see if you just glance at any social media site on how overfished they are by charters. Let’s face it they are making money off a natural resource we all should have chance to get.

There is no way recreational fishing puts a dent in quantity compared to commercial. It’s easy to see when fish are really schooled up and every charter up and down the bay Move the boats to locations to stay on the fish. Most recreational folks don’t have the luxury of spending every day on water and travel up and down the bay to catch limits twice a day. With that amount of pressure it takes a toll on quantity and then they are self policed by recording their catches. I know charter boats and see how they operate. What is sad is the amount of dead loss around the charters. There are some great charter captains on the bay that treasure this resource but there twice as many that just want to make the money and don’t care about dead loss. Seeing this first hand charters throwing back fish that many recreational fisherman wish they could just catch. It’s obvious over last 2 years fishing is degrading quickly.

So enough said on recreational vs charters it is very unfair in today’s standards so the numbers have to be altered.

On to these new slot sizes and dead loss. If all these bay fisherman go out catching fish but have to find fish in such a tight slot of 19-23 there will be more dead loss than put in a cooler or folks will just abuse the size limits.

We experienced that this year with the 31” slot seeing so many over that size returned and never made it again around charters mostly.

Drop that size limit to proposed when most people are catching the 20- 28” fish so many will not make it when returned.

How is that helping stabilize the population other than feeding the other bay life. Our children and grandchildren will eventually see the lose of stripers in the bay with this type of management and the other natural predators affecting crabs and stripers.

There is a lot of pressure on fish in the bay and even more abuse in coastal areas. Crazy when you hardly can find a “trophy” fish in the bay but coastal folks in other states are wiping them out.

It is good to see some type of alignment on the east coast but it has to be enforced and consistent across ALL fisherman not make recreational folks suffer and commercial still cleaning up with different rules.

If the resource needs saving it needs to be same for all in size and quota or it is just lip service and in a year or so it will be closed moratorium again.

I know this is lengthy but as a dad and grandfather who loves fishing I want to enjoy it with family and friends while on this earth since as a child we missed out on fishing stripers due to original moratorium.

Thanks in advance for at least understanding a recreational fisherman view point and from personal observations over the last few years.

Even tournaments have twisted the rules with folks catching and measuring the shrinkage of fish so they can bring in those oversized fish that will be at a lot size when they hit scales. They just promote cheating and with slot limits proposed will cause even more underhand actions. Big money tournament creates issues in a time when control to save the stripers is really needed by all.

From: [Aguiar, Adam](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:42:17 PM

Hello again,

After reading through the draft addendum, I just wanted to say I (and many others) am pleased to see that the potential January-February Susky full closure is at least up for consideration.

If possible, the opinions of boaters on the flats should be taken into consideration separately from this, in hopes to not conflate two distinct groups of anglers and concentrations of fish.

The susky (as opposed to the flats), especially above the line to the dam, has significantly more concentrated spawning-size fish. As such, it should ABSOLUTELY be closed for catch-and-release from January 1st through April. This is particularly important for the land-based fishing as in recent years its turned into a chaos of poaching, crowding, and improper catch-and-release. For more explanation and extensive examples, please see my prior emails and those of others, particularly from last season.

I am stressing my concern about this, not just as a biologist and scientist worried about the health of the bass population, but as an avid striped bass angler worried about the degradation of the art to spot-crowding and trophy fish devaluation! There is zero benefit to the bass population, your organization and its affiliates, and society at large to keep the Susky open for catch-and-release in January and February.

Dr. Adam A. Aguiar, Ph. D.
Associate Professor,
Biology Department,
School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NAMS),
Stockton University
(adam.aguiar@stockton.edu)
[732-939-5257](tel:732-939-5257)

From: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 5:08 PM
To: Aguiar, Adam <Adam.Aguiar@stockton.edu>
Subject: RE: Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass

EXTERNAL EMAIL ALERT: The sender is not using a Stockton email address. Please use caution.

Hello Dr. Aguiar,

Thank you for reaching out with another comment. Both of your comment emails will be shared with the Striped Bass Board. I'd also recommend you continue to reach out to Maryland DNR directly with your concerns.

Thanks,
Emilie

Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 6:20 PM

To: Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; Mike Rinaldi <Mike.Rinaldi@accsp.org>; Geoffrey White <geoff.white@accsp.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>; Patrick A. Campfield <pcampfield@asmfc.org>; Kristen Anstead <kanstead@asmfc.org>; Toni Kerns <Tkerns@asmfc.org>

Subject: [External] Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass

Hello,

This past month has been a chaotic mess for the spawning class striped bass in the susky.

I strongly encourage January/February be closed to catch-n-release striped bass above the Lapidum line. With the years warmer earlier, there's been tons of spawning class fish earlier. With this, there's tons of anglers, 90% of which are inexperienced with proper catch and release practices. They purposely mishandle the fish roughly, and though I understand the incentive for taking pictures (I do myself on occasion), they do extensive photo ops with the fish out of the water, carelessly bang them against rocks, and walk the fish all the way into the shoreline from far out in the river. My friends and I have witnessed mishandled fish die and float down the river, and others washed up on the river banks. I informed DNR about this, and they should be giving tickets for fish harassment at the very least, but there's not much they can do given the current January/February regulations.

If these masses of new anglers were all experienced and conservation-oriented it wouldn't be so worrisome (After all, I myself have a staunch perspective on the need for nuance in even the March/April regulations). However, their inexperience and mishandling of the fish in wrong ways and for excessive time periods exacerbates the catch-and-release mortality. Here it's exceptionally critical because these are spawning class fish, and in these warmer winters with eggs already developed.

The DNR and policy-makers are ostensibly concerned about the March/April season, but everything is moving earlier with these warmer years. 2020-2023 (last 4 years) have been warmer and thus the large striped bass arrival has occurred much sooner. This year was extreme, with us catching spawning-size stripers in mid-January!

I understand that such changes in policies would hinder my attempts to catch these fish too, but I rather have the bass population healthy just as the DNR and state supposedly do. So I am writing this not just as a marine and molecular biologist, but more importantly as an avid striped bass angler. Please encourage your superiors to make the restrictions for the Susky earlier for future years. I understand you need before and after survey data for January-Februarys to demonstrate the effectiveness of such potential policies, and that you currently do not undertake such surveys there at that time. I implore you to, at the very least, effectuate such surveying methods from the Conawingo dam to lapidum boat ramp, for shore-caught fish, during the months of January and February. I think our minds will be blown at the negative impact to the striper population that these crowds of shore-based anglers cause.

I, along with many others anglers that have shifted perspectives on this topic, agree that the area below the Conawingo dam to lapidum should be closed January-February for even catch-and-release. Its not only logical and consistent with your other policies, but it is best for the bass population! I have 2016 emails from fisheries biologists and DNR officers (Eric Durell and Sarah Widman) explaining why this area should be closed. Having the currently inconsistent regulations (February to March shift) continue as they are is embarrassing to the organization and will undoubtedly upset voters, especially as all the fish pics of mishandled/killed bass hit social media these upcoming months. I am mass emailing the DNR officers, state legislators and assemblymen too; and plan to write extensive news articles on the topic to bolster public awareness of this issue.

Again, please consider shutting down that area of the river to even catch-and-release next January-February. It would be better for our natural resource and environment, and after this last season you will have much less resistance in doing so from the recreational community who have largely switched perspectives on the matter.

Dr. Adam A. Aguiar, Ph. D.

Associate Professor,
Biology Department,
School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NAMS),
Stockton University
(adam.aguiar@stockton.edu)
[732-939-5257](tel:732-939-5257)

From: [Evan Whitten](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 5:49:27 PM

Hello all,

My name is Evan whitten, and I am emailing the commission regarding striped bass draft addendum II, with support for option b1. This option provides the opportunity to harvest a striped bass within the Chesapeake spawning range while also providing a stock rebuilding limit for the species.

Sent from my iPhone

From: spencer.hopkins@comcast.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 7:14:15 PM

ASMFC

I wish to support the B2 option for the 2024 Recreational Bay Options.

I know the Striped Bass "Rockfish" are in decline as I have fished this species for over 40 years.

Thank you,
Spencer Hopkins
240 W Lake Dr
Annapolis, MD 21403

From: [Eliza Cochran](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 8:32:33 PM

To whom it may concern:

I want to comment about on your draft addendum for Chesapeake Bay Regulations. I am in favor of option B1. Ideally I want to see one regulation for both commercial and recreational anglers that will go the furthest to protect the striped bass population in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you

From: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [MURRAY DEMUTH](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 7:51:11 AM

To Whom This May Concern:
More supplemental comments.....
Reduced Mortality by Category:

- Option A = 0%
- Option B1 = 22.4% & 38.4 %
- Option B4 10.3% & 18.1%
- Option C1 = 17.9% & 31.4%

Based upon the numbers above it seems to the logical and equitable solution is Option C1. However that selection comes with additional unseen consequences.

- Recreation Anglers will do more catch and release even when the limit is achieved.
 - To achieve the limit of 19-23 inch fish more fish will be released in order to fill the narrow slot limit = more dying fish post release.
- Charters will fill the limit and head back to the dock or switch over to catching other species. The reality is there is very little catch and release once the limit has been achieved.
 - To achieve the limit of 19-23 inch fish more fish will be released in order to fill the the narrow slot limit. Here is where there is a difference - Captains, Mates & Deckhands have more experience in releasing fish and generally handle the fish better to reduce post release mortality.

Again I see the Narrative is to REDUCE THE MORTALIT YRATE and we are Neglecting the to add the Narrative to GROW THE POPULATION. Both narratives can be achieved by retaining and rebuilding the Bay population of Menhaden. That means no more netting by Omega in the Bay and move them to outside the 3 mile limit. This has always been my number 1 question. How is it that the State of Virginia is allotted 87%+/- of the TAC for the Atlantic Coast Menhaden. What gives a small company comprised of (my best guess 100+/- employees) the exclusive right to access catch and remove 3,000,000,000+/- menhaden every year. This is a public resource given away for free and no responsibility to do no harm to the resource. This is nothing less than gross negligence and a slap in publics face over the stewardship of this resource. Biology 101 - under the rules of nature it is impossible to grow/expand a population when there is there is no food.

This Commission is asking a very large section of the public to make very austere changes and practices to save the Striped Bass. Doing so will have a serious negative economic impact on all the related support services with no promise of a positive outcome. It's time to include all of the Stake Holders using the Bay's resources and implement equitable solutions to save the Striped Bass. This includes subjecting Omega to the same level of austere changes by reducing the TAC and the areas Omega is allowed to harvest Menhaden (THE MOST IMPOTANT FISH IN THE

SEA). Then there is an equitable input and outcome by all the Stake Holders using the resources of the Chesapeake Bay.

Respectfully submitted and hoping for an equitable outcome.

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



On 12/08/2023 7:21 AM EST MURRAY DEMUTH <demuth4@comcast.net> wrote:

To Whom This May Concern:

To supplement my e-mail from 12/7/23 I want to add the following.

I am confident you know that licensed Charter Captains had to take a USCG course and pass the USCG test in order to receive their MMC and have a TWIC Card. The MMC and TWIC is a prerequisite in order to obtain a Fishing Guide License in the State of Maryland. This process takes time and money in order to open a Charter Fishing business. To add Charter Captains must pass a physical including hearing, vision and DOT Drug Testing. Charter Captains and mates under the current regulations and the proposed C1 or C2 are not allowed any fish.

Take into consideration the above scenario why would a Charter Captain under any of the proposed B Solutions pay for and upkeep their Charter Status (Six customers = 6 fish). Unlicensed/Recreational for Six Customers plus Captain and Mate = 8 fish. I know the rule of "For Hire" comes into play which only highlights the faulty logic behind the Proposed B solutions. Then why not run 4 or 5 recreational trips per day at 6 customers per trip = 32 and up to 40 fish per day. This is part of the unintended consequences which could result in even higher catch numbers and do nothing to reduce Mortality and/or regrow the population.

Under the above points be careful of what you wish for because there are real world consequences.

Respectfully submitted and thank you for your consideration

Regards,

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



On 12/07/2023 12:14 PM EST MURRAY DEMUTH

<demuth4@comcast.net> wrote:

To Whom This Concerns:

I am providing comments on the subject matter noted above. There are multiple options presented as an effort to "Reduce the Mortality Rate" of the Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass population. I applaud your efforts to try and bring some sanity to this complex issue.

I am in favor of Options C1 or C2. I support this decision as I run a Charter Fishing Business and rely on the ability to offer my customers more than just 1 fish. I support my selection based upon the following:

- I participate in the Maryland DNR Fishery Facts program and report all of my catch and discards which provides real time data to assist in the decisions as to how to best manage the resources.
- Cost of Entry
 - Charter Vessel (MMC \$95.00 once every 5 years plus Annual Fishing Guide License and Annual Charter Vessel Sticker "6 - Pack" costing \$360.00 each year = Total Annual Expense \$379.00)
 - Individual Recreational License at \$20.50
 - Consolidated Chesapeake Bay Sport Boat License at \$50.00.
 - No limit to the number of days allowed to harvest striped bass fish and for the Consolidated License there is no limit to the number of passengers allowed per vessel vs 6-Pack and no limit on the number of trips with new passengers on board.
- The above data points illustrates the gross imbalance in

the financial impact between the 2 groups.

- Menhaden Policy & Omega - Total Silence on moving the catch area and/or reductions in the catch limits for the Canadian owned Company Omega.

At this point I believe the narrative is out of balance as the changes are being presented under the terms of "Reducing the Mortality Rate" vs taking measures to "Expand/Grow the Population". The menhaden caught by Omega is a public resource which belongs to the citizens of the United States. How and why does the "Menhaden Policy" continue to support a foreign company taking a US owned resource? Basically if there is no food then any and all efforts to grow/expand the Striped Bass population will fail. This is simple Biology 101. To gain a "Total Buy-In" from all groups there needs to be significant reductions to the TAC for Omega and the waters where they can fish.

Respectfully submitted and hoping for a balanced and inclusive outcome.

Regards,

Murray R. P. deMuth

TWT Fishing Charters, LLC

Captain Murray R. P. deMuth

US Coast Guard Licensed Master 50 Ton & Assistance Towing

Licensed Maryland Resident Fishing Guide

410-952-7389

demuth4@comcast.net

<https://twtfishingcharters.com>



From: [miller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regulations
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 8:12:33 AM

I have fished the ches.bay for 32 years and have never seen striped bass fishing so poor. If we continue to allow the menhaden fleet to deplete the stock , more regulations will not will not bring back the striper fishing. There is no reason stripers to come into the bay.

Sent from my Galaxy

From: [Michael Pohuski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 8:39:27 AM

Hi Emilie,

Thanks for presenting the Striped Bass Program in Annapolis this past week – it was a tough audience, but you held your own – Good Job! I am a light tackle sport fisherman, mostly catch & release, fishing out of the Magothy River and Mid Chesapeake.

First and foremost - I support whatever regulations that help the Fish.

Additionally

1. I think that all of the Coastal States should have the same regulations.
2. It bothers me that Charter Boat patrons get to keep 2 fish and as a private boat owner, I only get to keep 1. I pay Annual Boat & Fishing License fees, and have the cost of boat, fuel, tackle and insurance. I spend a lot of money to the State and Fishing industry to go fishing – so I feel that the creel limit should be the same. A single fish limit is fine but it should be the same. My impact on the fish - is far less than a Charter Boat full of patrons, fishing every day, sometime 2 to 3 trips per day.
3. I am also curious if the Dolphins, in the Chesapeake, are affecting the Striped Bass population and not just overfishing.

I retired this past year, please let me know if you ever need volunteers for research assistance, I'm very interested in the science.

Michael

Michael Pohuski
396 North Shore Rd
Pasadena, MD 21122
443 506 3467
michaelpohuski@verizon.net

From: [Patrick Love](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 9:30:56 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in favor of option B.1. As a light tackle guide and recreational fisherman with five children of my own, I want to see striped bass regulated in a robust way so future generations have access to the resource. I want a consistent catch number across rec fishermen (1 fish) and as many days as possible to catch and release fish. This benefits guides, tackle shops, boat and rod manufactures and...the fish! It is important that the resource is accessible year round and that we use science to decide which practices will increase mortality. DNR's recent decision to close the first 15 days of May to targeting does not make sense to me, release mortality in May is known to be very low in cool, salty oxygenated May water. The closing of the season in July to targeting makes sense to me, release mortality is high in warm, fresh water. Still, catch and release mortality will ALWAYS be lower than catch and keep mortality as keep mortality is 100% and also includes release mortality, usually at higher rates as the 2-fish captains are live lining spot.

I am a 41 year old Maryland Resident who has enjoyed fishing recreationally my whole life. Recently, I opened a guide company light tackle fishing in the Annapolis region. Much of my business consists in running camps for kids to affect the way future generations think about the resource. My company website can be found here backcreekcharters.com . I only bring this up because, while I participate in the FACTS reporting system, I do not keep two fish per client. My clients know this up front, I believe it is a contradiction since, as a guide, I am allowing recreational fishermen to access the resource, the rules for rec fishermen should all be the same. The slot should be small. 19-23" fish taste the best and cannot reproduce. Even 10-14 year old kids understand this!

I have seen the conditions for striped bass deteriorate year by year. I have seen the live-line fleet thin down resident populations. This summer, while running fishing camp in July (open season), there was a decent school of fish on the Severn River Bridge Pilings. Three boats in particular harvested two fish per client every day until the school was thinned down to short fish. They continued to drop spot on top of the school, catching many shorts to get the last few fish possible. This practice is happening throughout the bay. It is irresponsible and needs to stop. We are putting too much pressure on the resource.

As a regulatory board who actually cares what the people think, I urge ASMFC to consider option B.1. With invasives, global warming, hypoxia, the over harvesting of menhaden in Virginia waters and other factors contributing to 5 young of year classes at historic lows, it is time to manage the fishery in a robust and consistent way. Choose option b.1. and keep days on the water open to fishermen who want to release fish to breed another day.

Sincerely,
Capt'n Pat Love
Back Creek Charters
Annapolis, MD

From: [Louis Licitra](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 7:44:19 PM

I live and fish in the Sandy Hook N J area. The Striper stock in this area is in great shape. Our estuaries , including the Hudson and Raritan Rivers are vibrant. Our water quality is much improved. The Striper fishing has been great for years. There is no commercial fishing for Striped Bass in NJ. There are no reduction boats netting Menhaden. There is an abundance of Striped Bass , and an abundance of forage for them to feed on. Recreational fishermen should be allowed a better opportunity to keep a Striper. One fish per angler ,28” to 38”. IE the former regulation’s. These regulations made sense for the fishermen and the fish ! Protecting young fish and the majority of our breeding stock. Thank You , Louis Licitra ; email- licitralouis@gmail.com
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ronald Wilhelm](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Rockfish 2024
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 9:22:16 PM

I'm a recreational angler who enjoys fishing for the rock . My biggest question is why dosent MD do something about the commercial netting . I fish bear creek often a saw many dead fish on surface in the nets there a that's ridicules. There must of been 100s of cormorants sitting an diving eating Fish everytime I went out anthose birds do nothing but eat small fish including rockfish . Md needs to address the commercial industry as well as recreational anglers !! These commercial boat go out sometimes 3 or more times a day with up to 15 or more people a those all get to keep 2 fish a day . This makes no sense to me . Wouldn't it benefit the rockfish if we somehow just paid the commercial netters a portion of there income from 2023 a stop the netting ! I would be willing to pay \$5 to 10 more for my license to help make this happed an I'm sure I'm not the only one . We also need to limit commercial boat limits to 1 fish daily per angler .I do like the closing of Susquehanna flats area for the entire early season . I would like to see a complete closure to trophy season in entire Bay for a year just to see what effects it has on the juvenile striped bass populations. Those big cows are what we need to spawn an bring this fishery back . I'd also like to try to see if we could open some type of hunting season on the cormorants ! I really have no clue of any positive environmental impact that those bird have .

Thank You , Ron Wilhelm

From: edtimmes@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 10:46:20 AM

For the Ocean Recreational Fishery Options, I prefer Option C since the overall reduction in mortality is only 0.1% less than Option B (my second preference) and may benefit the for-hire operations.

For the past two years I have fished primarily from for-hire vessels, although I have fished occasionally from shore at the Fishing Beach at Sandy Hook and at the juncture of the Raritan River and Raritan Bay by the Route 35 bridge. All my success has come on the for-hire vessels. My experience has been that the for-hire personnel diligently apply the limits and try to educate the uninformed of the requirements. I am not so sure, based on my observations, that all the private fishermen apply them with the same level of diligence.

Finally, since you have implemented the no gaffing requirement, I suggest you implement a restriction on the use of treble hooks on jigs and surface lures both for the safety of the fish and the for-hire personnel. Treble hooks, especially dual treble configurations on surface lures, tend to become caught in the net and pose a threat to the mate attempting to remove the fish and delays the release of the fish.

In summary, Ocean Recreational Fishery Option C with a restriction on the use of dual treble hooks on for-hire vessels is my recommendation.

Ed Timmes
182 Archangela Ave., Colonia, NJ 07067
edtimmes@gmail.com
C: 732-259-7367

From: [Brett Briggs](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 10:47:34 AM

Please support option B.

Restore fairness to fish bag limits and decrease striper harvests in a meaningful way.

From: [CARROLL MARSHALL](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] The Rockfish Issue.
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 11:32:39 AM

Good Day,

I participate in the recreational and the charter fishery for striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay. As a charter captain, and owner of Tangier Sound Charters the economic value of the Chesapeake Bay rockfish is of paramount importance. Though no one user group is responsible for the current status of this fishery, I do believe that the recreational sector is, again, taking the brunt of the reduction.

Since recreational fishing is under the microscope and release mortality is a big issue, I feel that your efforts are not focused correctly. Why allow live bait fishing in low oxygen content and warm water which yields the highest mortality rate of all sectors of recreational fishing. Ban live bait fishing for stripers.

The non-targeting of stripers during closed seasons is also absurd as it pertains to overall mortality reduction. An extremely small number of recreational fishermen participate in this fishery, and the overall mortality is miniscule. Not allowing catch and release fishing during closed season will have a tremendous negative impact on the tackle shops, marinas, charter captains, and various other ancillary businesses that depend on this participation in this fishery. For no real gain in the health of the fishery, greater harm is done to the local economies that depend on it most.

Tangier Sound Charters is in support of option C2, with an additional ban on live bait fishing for stripers. We'd also like to see a 15% cut in commercial quotas effective January 1.

Thank you,

C.L. Marshall

[Tangier Sound Charters](#)

From: [Robert Bogan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fw: STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 11:34:22 AM

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: captbogan <captbogan@aol.com>
To: "captbogan@aol.com" <captbogan@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 11:18:12 AM EST
Subject: X

Dear ASMFC

As party and charter boat owners and operators, fervent striper anglers and concerned citizens intent on preserving tourism along the Jersey Shore, we at Gambler Inc. implore you to make public comment to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in support of **Option C** in Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

Option C provides additional provisions allowing boats in the "for-hire" sector to retain a striped bass from 28 to 33 inches and furthers the use of bonus tags to retain bass from 24 to 28 inches.

Thank you

Captain Robert Bogan
Owner/operator Gambler

From: [Warren Leber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bss draft addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 12:10:08 PM

Sent from my iPhone

I fully support option c that allows boats for hire to keep 1 Striped Bass 28-32” and the use of bonus tags for fish 24-28”

From: [Don Baribeau](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 1:47:20 PM

To The ASMFC:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion on changes to the final **Striped Bass Addendum II**. The foundation for my comments are:

- Conservation is required and the 14.5% reduction is the minimum as stock conditions are much worse than projected in this addendum.
- Management of the spawning stock (Chesapeake Bay) and primary larger size spawning bass (primary commercial catch) must be the #1 priority.
- Regulations based on uniform & simple rules increase self enforcement and law enforcement as well as educational opportunity.
- Recreational anglers and charter anglers are basically the same and should be under the same rules.
- Commercial fisherman quota reduction must be the same as recreational & charter anglers (uniform & simple rules)

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options.

I support **Option B, 1 fish at 28” to 31” with 2022 season (all modes)**.

Protecting the stock is the only priority. Uniform 28’ to 31’ slot size regulation in all modes but the Chesapeake Bay (see 3.1.2) would eliminate confusion to legal slot size and aid enforcement efforts.

A major consideration based on the data I reviewed, managing the stock will be an ongoing challenge requiring rapid adjustment based on the latest information. Simple rules will speed compliance and reduce confusion when enacted.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options.

I support **Option B2 at 1 fish at 19” to 24”**.

Protecting the stock is the only priority. It is logical based on the spawning and migration cycle to have an appropriate slot size that also achieves the 14.5% reduction.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification.

I support **Option B2**.

All recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and I do not support Options C1 or C2, if either of these options are selected then Option B should be used.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements.

I support **Option B2**.

Protecting the stock is the only priority. This gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options.

I support **Option B2**.

Protecting the stock is the only priority. This will align the commercial quota reduction to the recreational & charter anglers to 14.5%. Again this would keep everyone the same for the minimum reduction required. Commercial fishermen argument that their living depends on how much they catch is a real issue. However if you believe that this is not a one time but really a longterm issue then limited action today will accelerate the problem in the near and long term. The logical conclusion is many would go out of business or see a major reduction in their net income. It is in their best interest to accept this and act today to protect the stock and their future income.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment.

I support **Option B2.**

Protecting the stock is the only priority. The ASMFC Board requires quick response authority to take action. This should be limited to stock assessment data when the projection is that the stock will not meet the rebuild probability.

I appreciate your time to consider my responses. If you have any questions please reach out to me.

Best Regards,

Donald Baribeau
PISM Member
603-508-2878
don.baribeau@gmail.com

From: [Cindy & Nick Anderson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 2:50:50 PM

Good afternoon,

I greatly appreciate the ASMFC's willingness to accept comments to inform your upcoming decision regarding Striped Bass recreational options in the Bay. As a recreational fisherman, I understand the necessity behind this decision. I feel like either B2 or B3 are the best options to reduce overall mortality while retaining harvest opportunities for fishermen.

Allowing charters to retain 2 fish per customer in the C options does not seem like a wise decision. I recognize that the slot size decreases in this scenario, but the charter fleet knows how to get on fish much better than most recreational fishermen and will have much greater success rates. Also, it seems a bit unfair that an average charter customer, who pays a few bucks to catch fish and drink with buddies, gets more opportunity to keep fish than recreational anglers who arguably have much more respect for the fishery.

Lastly, we can change slot sizes and catch limits up to and including a full moratorium, but it's not going to solve the much bigger problem we're facing in overall habitat condition. The AFMSC, along with state and federal conservation partners, must look at this problem holistically and do more to tackle the issues of water runoff and invasive species (catfish and snakehead, specifically) in addition to limiting catch.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to provide input, and thank you for all that you do to conserve this amazing species. God bless.

Regards,
Nick Anderson

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tom Hughes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 3:37:01 PM
Importance: High

I would to thank all those who worked on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

I support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024, and the Board to focus on meaningful reductions in mortality as future assessments require.

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23" (22.4% reduction)

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: B. Board Action.

Implementation dates: ASAP

Sincerely,

Capt. Tom Hughes

From: [Jesse Howe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass input
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 4:11:46 PM

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B3

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: B. Board Action.

Implementation dates: ASAP

Thanks,

Jesse Howe

Assistant Director - CCA MD

<https://www.joincca.org/>

[Join the Great Chesapeake Invasives Count](#)

[CCA MD Link Tree](#)



From: jps0886@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: "[Irene Sabatelli](#)"
Subject: [External] RE: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 4:54:36 PM

Dear Emilie,

I have been writing about this for the past 10 plus years and unfortunately we continue down the same path where not enough is being done to increase the numbers of striped bass. We continue to listen to those that continue to follow an old, unsustainable business model whereas their belief is that people only fish so they can eat the fish they catch and give away any extra away. If that were true, I don't think Tarpon fishing would be as successful as it is since most people do not eat them.

Unfortunately, this has been one of my worst seasons that I can remember and definitely my worst Fall. Below are some of my statistics. I understand some people have had a great year. However, that fishing was done offshore and in Raritan Bay and not in my local waters off the south shore of Nassau county. Most of the striped bass I caught were in the slot range which I attribute to the strong 2015 year class which the slot restrictions did a very poor job of protecting. What's even more concerning are the lack of small fish that I have caught which is also reflected in the very poor Chesapeake Bay YOY index over the past 5 years. Things are going to get much worse before they get better and I am pretty certain even more restrictive measures will be needed in the not too distance future. Due to the extremely poor fishing I have had this year and the expected very poor fishing due to the very low YOY index, I am in favor of Option B which is estimated to have the greatest decrease in harvest.

For the life of me I cannot understand why we continue to protect a group that most are already retired, collecting state pension that are more than my annual income while I go to work every day and I have three degrees. No one protected my job when I got laid off a number of years ago. Additionally, they don't seem to have the foresight to comprehend that the more striped bass that there are, the better off all stakeholders will be, especially them. The more striped bass available, the more people will get into and most likely use their services. E.g. my nephew hardly goes anymore and I go about a third of the time I used to go since there are so little around my local waters. Less trips equate to less fishing related expenditures and less trips taken.

Thanks,
James Sabatelli

2023 Statistics

31	Fish caught
16	Trips caught fish
21	Nothing caught
37	Total Trips
0.43	% of time caught fish

From: [David Dickerson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 5:58:38 PM

I support actions to reduce fishing mortality across all user groups in 2024, and for the board to remain focused on rebuilding the coast wide population to target biomass levels.

- *Recreational Coast: Option B – Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)*
- *Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction) or B2 – 19-24” (15.9% reduction).*
- *Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota*
- *Board Response: B. Board Action.*
- *Implementation dates: ASAP.*

Cell: (301) 793-2001

From: [Ryan Crist](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 6:08:05 PM

Hi,

In regards to recreational Chesapeake Bay Options:

I fish the middle bay roughly 50 days a year recreationally. My preferred options are B1 or B2, though my most preferred approach is Catch & Release artificial lures only for all anglers, private and chartered.

Thank you,
Ryan Crist

From: [Andrew Trostle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 10:50:28 PM

Good Evening,

I wanted to take a minute to submit my comments to the board after being unable to attend the in person meeting last week in Annapolis.

As an avid angler and father of two boys who are just now getting into fishing I support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024. It's been disappointing to watch my home state (Maryland) game the system year after year through conservation equivalency measures aimed at keeping the commercial and charter sectors "whole" despite year after year seeing decreasing fishery (YOY indexes etc. support this). The problem never should have been commercial vs. charter vs. recreational as it's been made here in Maryland, but instead one where anyone who "takes" from the resource is responsible for its future survival. That is where I hope that ASFMC can help to restore the balance.

For Addendum II I support the Recreational Coast Option B1 which institutes a 22.4% reduction and helps realign the charter and recreational angler as one, while offering the best chance at recovery for the resource. Second to this option I would support option B2 19"-24" slot. The current division of charters and rec anglers has infighting at the highest I've ever seen. Charters are criminalizing catch and release fishing and recreational anglers are doing the same for catch and kill. The resource is in dire straights and we should all be doing what we can to give it the best chance for my sons to enjoy the sport the same way we all have in years past. Slot limits work (Redfish recovery, Cobia, etc. have shown their effectiveness), but in my opinion it's important that we also work to realign our anglers behind a common goal vs. continue down our current path.

Lastly, these measures only work if there isn't a large commercial take to counter any positive progress made. As much as I'd love to see Striped Bass made a game fish, I'd ask that the same 14.5% reduction in quota be applied to the commercial fisherman. I'm not looking to see anyone lose their jobs, and frankly I'd support an increase in license fees to stipend them if that's what it would take, but I think moving forward anyone who supports the resource should all give in an equal fashion to get things back to where they once were.

Thanks for the efforts and emergency measures you've already taken to invest in the future of our resource, and I hope the board can take action as soon as possible to get turn the course of our future fishery.

Sincerely,

Andrew Trostle
301-525-9682 (cell)
trostle.andrew@gmail.com

From: [Steve Spinelli](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:07:11 AM

I'm a cheater boat in Belmar and I favor option C to allow my passengers to harvest and retain striped bass. Thanks
Captain Steve Spinelli
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Robert Lombardi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:21:03 AM

Recreational Bay Options

I support B1.

- *Provides the most protection to rebuild the fishery
- *NO "trophy season"
- *Close the hot water months
- *Fully support Catch & Release

Thanks, Bob Lombardi

From: [Nicholas Eliason](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:38:15 AM

Good morning. I'm writing this email to hopefully have my opinion heard as a recreational fisherman on the Chesapeake bay. Specifically , to express my support for option B2 regarding recreational bay options for striped bass for the 2024 season.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Nick Eliason
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Kevin Thomas](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS ADDENDUM II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 8:57:42 AM

Recreational Bay Options - Option B4

--

Regards and God Bless America,

Kevin Thomas
thoma2kr@gmail.com
Mobile: 410-353-1970

From: uwishufish@yahoo.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 11:13:26 AM

To whom it may concern. I am a Md. Commercial Fisherman and have served on the Md. Striped Bass Work Group for about 20 years, we have worked diligently with Md. DNR to help make the Md. Commercial Striped Bass fishery one of (if not the most accountable) fishery on the east coast. I would like to encourage the commission to take NO action on the Md. Commercial Striped Bass fishery in this matter. Clearly the commercial fishery in Maryland isn't the culprit for several very important reasons. Maryland's commercial industry took a 23+% cut several years ago these are REAL numbers. Md. is the only state that has an ITQ system with 92+% accountability. There is no other fishing group on the east coast that has taken anywhere close to the steps the Maryland commercial fishery has taken to be accountable. Taking another 14.5% cut at this time would get the commercial fishery near 40% in about 10 years that's excessive considering the "lackluster" job all other groups have done to not only bring their catch rates within the parameters set by the commission, but also cut their incredible amount of release mortality to acceptable levels. Release Mortality is clearly the culprit here, this just isn't an issue in Maryland's commercial Fishery. The commercial fishery sets quota aside that more than accounts for release mortality. Maryland also under allocates by about 3% this would more than account for any extra release mortality that could possibly occur. In closing the Maryland commercial fishery is by far the most accountable fishery on the east coast, cutting them again would just be plain wrong. Especially since other user groups have not even met the goals previously set for them by the commission. Until other user groups take steps to increase accountability, and decrease excessive release mortality I think taking from the group that has worked the most, would just be embarrassing.

Thank You,
Burl Lews
Md. Commercial Fisherman

[Sent from Yahoo Mail - Shop Smart, Shop Organized](#)

From: [Jack Creighton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Subject line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 1:51:26 PM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

I'd like to start by thanking you for allowing us to attend the public forums and for accepting public comments. I most recently attended the hearing in Bourne at the MA Maritime Academy with twelve other members of the Cape Cod Salties Sportfishing Club members. I live on Bass River in South Yarmouth, MA and recently completed a ten-year stint as president of the Cape Cod Salties. I also belong to the Martha's Vineyard Surfcasters, MA Striped Bass Association, and RISAA.

As you know, the problem starts and ends at the Chesapeake. The last five years lowest young of year ever put some of those fish in the to-be-kept bracket in the Chesapeake. We all know the 2015 class was probably in the slot limit of 28" to 31" up and down the rest of the coast. With the warm water in the Chesapeake, we have to call on all the states in ASMFC to work as one unit to try to save the striped bass. Here are my recommendations on the draft addendum.

3.1.1: Ocean Recreational Option -- Option B, one fish at 28"-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options -- Option B - one fish at 19"-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons

3.1.3: For-Hire Management Clarification -- Option A - Status Quo

3.1.4: Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements -- Option A - Status Quo

3.2.1: Commercial Quota Reduction Options -- Option B - with up to a 14.5% reduction to both ocean commercial fisheries and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries

3.3: Response to Stock Assessment Updates -- Option B - Board Action

In conclusion, I feel it is imperative that the states all work together and encourage NOAA, because of the warm water issue, to see whether the fish could possibly be using other areas for their egg deposits. I will continue to do the scale program here in MA, but I will make every effort not to keep a slot limit striped bass as my small contribution.

"Let 'em go! Let 'em grow!"

Sincerely,

Jack Creighton
10 Homer Ave.
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

From: roughwater@juno.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 1:55:09 PM

In regard to Striped Bass Draft Addendum II, I do not believe the commercial sector should take reductions. The commercial sector is held to a high standard of accountability and only accounts for a small portion of the Coastwide harvest. Reductions should be done fairly and equitably. It is certainly not equitable for the commercial sector to take a reduction.

Simon Dean

Calvert County Watermen's Association, President

Maryland

301-672-5340

From: [Christopher Terrell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:00:41 PM

I am strongly in favor of ammendment B1. We need to save these fish. I also hope striped bass can be categorized as a sport fish to stop the commercial harvest but that topic is for another day. Thank you.

From: [Robert Willis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 3:39:23 PM

I have all ready sent in my vote but also wanted to comment that after the season ends in Dec. all catch and release need to stop. They need to give the fish a break and stop harassing them. They are removing those big fish out of the water , removing their protective slim just to give them a big hug and take a picture.they swim away but are strested and could die . its not worth it.

Thank you
Robert Willis

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Kim Lim](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 6:55:11 PM

I promise a joke at the end of the rambling...

Its obvious recreational fisherman have a harder time harvesting fish compared to charters. It makes no sense in allowing charters to have double the harvest when their likelihood/frequency of harvesting is much higher. The limits should be the opposite. Recreational get 2 fish and charters get 1. Rec fisherman spend hundreds of dollars for that 1 fish. And now you want to cap the size lower than 31"? Someone is using fuzzy math.

Let's flip the limits to 2 for Rec and 1 for Charter for two seasons and keep the size limits same as 2022. How can we blame Rec fishing if we are too scared to cap the Charters/commercial fishing instead as a test. You can't keep doing the same thing every year (favoring charters and commercial fishing) and expect different results. I think people don't want to let the secret out because they won't be able to blame the Rec fishing after they see the numbers.

I call this option F1, "flip them 1"...lol. Or, I can live with option B4 "before another mistake".

Kim

Screaming in silence!

(Rec fishing 2-3 times/week...and keeping my ridiculous (1) fish @ \$100-\$125/fish after expenses)

From: [Cole Riback](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 7:15:43 PM

I am in support of option C.

Option C provides additional provisions allowing boats in the "for-hire" sector to retain a striped bass from 28 to 33 inches and furthers the use of bonus tags to retain bass from 24 to 28 inches.

From: [Brian Sittlow](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 7:15:48 PM

ASMFC,

I **vigorously support the most conservative measures** proposed in the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II to limit the amount of recreational and commercial harvest across the entire fishery. We need to rebuild the dwindling stock.

Specifically:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes). We need to protect the last remaining strong spawning year-class (2015).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. The 23” max will add a layer of protection for the average 2017- and 2018-year classes which will still have some presence in the bay. The current maximum size in MD would still allow harvest of these valuable fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thank you for allowing the public to comment on our fishery.

All the best,
Brian Sittlow
Westerly, RI
USA

From: jared.d.vaughn@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 7:28:50 PM
Importance: High

Good Evening,

I would like to submit my feedback on the options for the addendum II options in relation to striped bass conservation. I had the opportunity to listen to the NH webinar this evening and was truly moved by the feedback of many anglers from across the North East. I agree 100% that the level of conservation that needs to occur is to the greatest effect possible. We are playing a game of catchup at this point and while I agree with the science and statistics of it all as an engineer, I also know that often times the reality is with environmental related items the impacts take years to show up. There was mention of 50% or less probability of achieving the 2029 goal with today's plan and that is saddening. To think 50% is good enough is abhorrent.

I recommend that the board vote B on all options with the exception of B1 for the Chesapeake Bay fishery. Additionally, I advise that the board take the highest level of action above and beyond these specific options where possible.

Thank you for your effort in leading this discussion and thank you for your time.

Regards,
Jared Vaughn
Stratham, NH

From: [Barry Woods](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:18:48 AM

Dear ASMFC Board Members-

We have experienced 5 straight years of subpar YOY Index findings for the East Coast's primary breeding area of striped bass. You should be ashamed of your performance to date. If you were in the private sector, and this was your KPI (Key Performance Indicator) for measuring job performance, you would all be fired. Unfortunately those of us who are at your mercy must endure the next round of failures until you finally see the handwriting on the wall and set a recreational and commercial moratorium.

As a rec fishermen for 50 plus years, living in Maine and fishing the NE coast, I will likely NOT be alive to see the recovery of this fishery. That is a heavy thought but it is true. My disdain for your collective selfishness is at it's highest point in my history of submitting comments. You should feel shame and embarrassment at the legacy you are leaving the next generation of fishermen, never mind those of us currently alive with an actual experience of seeing this fishery when it was vital and healthy.

So, I hold my nose and recommend that you vote with limited options available the following way. When the next study reveals how unsuccessful this path will also be I hope you submit your resignations along with the passage of a moratorium.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): Support 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: Support 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.*

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.*

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

With deep regret,
Barry Woods

From: [Jenna Kamp](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:05:39 AM

Hi,

I am writing to give comment on Recreational Bay Options for the upcoming season. I have reviewed the proposed options and feel that option B2 would be the best. **It is absolutely crucial that charter boats and recreational fisherman have the same regulations going forward**, as both parties significantly impact the fishery.

Mortality of the fish caught during the warm summer months must also be addressed. A longer summer closure would be beneficial. In Maryland, the season closes mid-end of July. A summer closure from mid July through September would have a much more positive impact by allowing time for waters to begin to cool.

Providing more stringent criteria on how the fish are caught is also necessary. Restricting planer board use and limiting the number of rods being used will also provide an additional layer of protection for the fishery.

I greatly appreciate the work being done here and am thankful to be able to give comment.

Best,
Jenna Kamp
Maryland

From: [Carol Kamp](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Adendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:09:42 AM

This response is in regards to recreational bay options for the upcoming season. Option B-2 is my preferred option. I also feel that in Maryland when the season closes in mid July, it should stay closed until September 1 when the bay water temperatures are at their highest. There should also not be any planer boards used and only boat rods for both private and charter boats when trolling. I also feel that Charter boats should only be allowed one fishing trip a day instead of two or more. After fishing the bay for over 30 years, I have noticed the decline in the fishery. It is way past time to do something to resolve this. Thank you.

Mike Kamp
Rock Hall, MD

From: [Chris Kirk](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:40:54 AM

I am voicing my opinion that option B, 28-31" all modes is the best option.

Thank you,

Chris Kirk
175 Weed Ln
Elkton, MD 21921
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chris Kirk](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 11:49:46 AM

Sorry, to clarify this opinion is for ocean fishing. For Chesapeake bay I like option B1.

For commercial reductions I like option B.

Thanks again,
Chris Kirk
Sent from my iPhone

> On Dec 12, 2023, at 11:40 AM, Chris Kirk <chriskirk83@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> I am voicing my opinion that option B, 28-31" all modes is the best option.
>
> Thank you,
>
> Chris Kirk
> 175 Weed Ln
> Elkton, MD 21921
> Sent from my iPhone

From: [Don Pirro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Patrick Geer](#); [INGRID BRAUN](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:03:15 PM

To: Emilie Franke and the ASMFC Striped Bass Commissioners

I am a resident of Virginia and an avid angler fishing for striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay, Potomac River, as well as the coast of NJ and RI. I am also a member of Coastal Conservation Association. I have reviewed the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II in detail, have participated (listened only as no way to give online input) in the Virginia YouTube Public Hearing and am offering my comments and recommendations regarding this Addendum.

For the future, I recommend that all states be required to hold all public striped bass hearings online (ex. Zoom or Webinar) with 2-way communication available as it is not feasible for all people to drive 4 hrs. to participate in in-person hearings. One way communication like YouTube does not cut it if this is truly a public hearing.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options (all jurisdictions)

I support Option B which maintains the current emergency action slot limit of 28-31". I am disappointed that there were no options available that meet the 14.5% reduction goal as all options fell short of this goal. Having fished extensively in NJ the last few falls on party/head boats and charters, I can attest that there is no need whatsoever for Options C or E that have separate for-hire limits. The Captains have readily admitted they have no issue getting their limits for customers and the emergency action in place has not harmed their business. For the future, ASMFC should consider estimating the harvest by state (as they are not equal) and looking at restrictions by state. From experience, as an example, the number and poundage of striped bass taken from NJ has to be the greatest based on fishing pressure and fish taken that I see and perhaps should have more stringent restrictions (ex. specific season closures?).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options (MD, PRFC, DC and VA)

I support Option B2 (having one set of bag limits for everyone) but would also support Option C2 for a one year (2024) period as a transition year for the for-hire trade if indeed it is deemed a hardship for these businesses as I suspect. While I applaud the move to having common management of the bay/Potomac, I feel this Addendum is only taking "baby steps" in this regard. With the primary purpose of this Addendum being to reduce striped bass mortality, I feel ASMFC has missed the boat big time in the bay/river by not including season restrictions to better manage mortality. The highest mortality rate in the bay/river occurs during the summer season (July/Aug) as high water temperatures (80F+), low oxygen levels, and the common method using gut hooking bait (liveling/chunking) greatly affects these fish as seen by many floaters (dead fish). Virginia currently does not have a summer season and at the least, MD and the Potomac should shut down this fishery in July/August. ASMFC regularly uses size/bag limit/season to manage all fisheries but really missed an opportunity in the bay here by not having an Option that included a shorter season during the summer. Lastly I would have preferred to see a 20" minimum (current VA and PRFC reg) vs. a 19" minimum (MD reg). There is a big difference in file size of a 20" vs 19" fish in the bay and no one who spends \$175-\$200 a person on a for-hire boat wants to take home just one small 19" fish (at least make it a meal).

3.2.1 Commercial Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quota Reduction Options

Although this option is not listed in Addendum II, I would like to see a 14.5% reduction in harvest for the commercial trade vs. 2022 harvest numbers. Option B comes close for the ocean but this option allows the quota for the bay to increase (why???) vs. 2022 harvest and the bay accounts for 75% of the overall commercial harvest managed by ASMFC. If Options A or B are approved we could actually see an increase in overall harvest vs. 2022 (because of the bay quota) which will be far from achieving the 14.5% reduction goal! Additionally I would like to see a commercial maximum size limit of 31" in the ocean and bay become the same as the recreational fishery. We need to let the large female breeders live as they are the future for this fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

I support Option A which still allows a public hearing period. I would like ASFMC commissioners to act swiftly with fast implementation timelines such as the emergency action that was implemented this year. Even before 2024 Stock Assessment Results are available in 2024, ASMFC should have ready plans to implement based on a good, a bad, or a stable result. We need Board action management in January 2025 for the 2025 season.

Future Management of Striped Bass

I would like to see ASMFC become more proactive vs reactive as today action is taken based on individual year's stock assessment. Commissioners really need to address the real issue (which is the "elephant in the room") which is poor recruitment and should come up with a plan to aid in the recruitment process. Just waiting and praying for mother nature to provide the right conditions for spawning success (ex. cold winter water temps and high early spring water flow/rain) is not a plan. This may never happen especially with global warming which appears to be real. We should start thinking about funding hatcheries, creating artificial spawning areas with the right environmental conditions, providing plankton food sources in the rivers at the right time or other viable means of aiding or improving recruitment. Right now this fishery is in a death spiral and management efforts like Addendum II are just slowing the spiral as we need real measures to address the poor recruitment issue. This involves much more strategic thinking vs. staying the course of tactical action (more restrictions).

Happy Holidays,
Don Pirro
Centreville, VA

From: [John Hodges](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 12:51:55 PM

Recreational Bay Options-
I support option B4 due to its lower mortality rate

Regards
John Hodges

From: [Michael Shepherd](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:27:02 PM

From Mike Shepherd:
Sheponfishing@yahoo.com
609-350-0388

I write the Shep on Fishing weekly column in The Press of Atlantic City and have an hour-long live radio program Shep Talking Fishing on Air 7 a.m. Saturday on WOND plus three times a week reports daily.

I have many contacts in the South Jersey fishing community both stakeholders and just plain fishers like myself.

I am emphatically recommending allowing two striped bass daily measuring from 18 inches to either 24 or 26 inches plus a bonus tag allowance of one fish longer than 40 inches that can be renewed after being used.

My educated and experienced fish contacts know that striped bass measuring more than 28 inches are prime female spawners so taking big fish will be a major decimation.

Thanks for your consideration!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Connolly, David M](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 1:42:43 PM

Regarding Recreational Bay Options:

As an avid recreational angler with two sons that fish with me extensively, I would like to voice our support for option B1 or B2 and further, any "B" option as oppose to A or C. It is time to end the 2 fish limit for charters and most importantly, reduce commercial harvest. Reducing the quota is a weak-minded backhand solution as the fishery hasn't even been reaching the full quota. The use of nets needs to be eliminated at least until the striped bass population has fully recovered. This is not rocket science. Please take these important steps to avoid a full blown moratorium again.

Thank you,
David Connolly
Centreville, Maryland

Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated does not accept buy, sell or other transaction orders by e-mail, or any instructions by e-mail that require a signature. This e-mail message, and any attachment(s), is not an offer, or solicitation of an offer, to buy or sell any security or other product. Unless otherwise specifically indicated, information contained in this communication is not an official confirmation of any transaction or an official statement of Baird. The information provided is subject to change without notice. This e-mail may contain privileged or confidential information or may otherwise be protected by law, rule or regulation. Any use, copying or distribution of the information contained in this e-mail by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the sender, and delete the material from any computer on which it exists. Baird, in accordance with applicable law, reserves the right to monitor, review and retain all electronic communications, including e-mails, traveling through its networks and systems. E-mail transmissions cannot be guaranteed to be secure, timely or error-free. Baird therefore recommends that you do not send any sensitive information such as account or personal identification numbers by e-mail.

Please click here <<https://www.bairdwealth.com/globalassets/pdfs/help/consolidated-report-disclosure.pdf>> for important information about any client reports you receive.

From: [Patrick @ Old Maine Outfitters](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Joe Cimino](#); [KRISTOPHER M KUHN](#); [Justin Davis](#); [JOHN CLARK](#); [Jason E. Mcnamee](#); [John Maniscalco](#); [MIKE ARMSTRONG](#); [MICHAEL LUISI](#); [Cheri.A.Patterson@wildlife.nh.gov](#); [Patrick Geer](#); [INGRID BRAUN](#); [Daniel Ryan](#); [Megan Ware](#); [Patrick Keliher](#); [Jessica Best](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 3:53:56 PM

Hi,

Thanks again for taking public comment on these issues. I just want to stress how important taking a hard stance to revert the path of striped bass is. You all know well - they are in dire shape, and there are no good year classes to lean on anymore. When these fish get wiped out there literally will be nothing left to fill their void. The ASMFC can either be the heroes here and do the right thing for bass and businesses up and down the east coast...or you can be the villains that despite all the data, didn't do enough and flattened an industry or worse, a species. As a small business owner based in the fishing industry in Maine, I rely heavily on the abundance of striped bass. I know all the different sectors say that, but there is one difference ... the commercial and catch and kill charters will adapt and will be fine - if the entire species gets wiped out, no one will. Please take a hard stance. It's now or never. A Moratorium isn't on this docket, but keep it in the back of your mind - when the 2024 numbers come out and when we realize the ramifications of NOAAs overestimation it might be the only thing that can save us. I truly believe that this is our last shot. These 2024 measures in Addendum II aren't going to do enough - you all know that, but hopefully you all gain the ability to take emergency action and can pass some legislation that will save striped bass. We are ALL counting on you all to do the right thing for us, and the fish.

With that, I'm voicing my opinions for the following:

- **3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options:** Option B - 1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). We need to keep the current measures in place and not allow split modes. Now is not the time to change regulations to allow more fish to be killed.
- **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:** Option B1 - 1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 season. We need to protect the fish that are still in the bay because after 5 consecutive years of terrible spawning, there isn't anymore coming. No mode splits - If you give them a too fish limit, they would kill more fish then the entire coast-wide total. How could we possibly consider doubling harvest at a time like this?
- **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:** Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. It's not going to do anything since they can't currently meet their quota due to lack of fish anyway...but its principal.
- **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:** Option B - Board Action. This is so important! We are all counting on you to make actual MEANINGFUL changes that will save striped bass once the 2024 stock assessment comes out. A 50% chance of saving striped bass should not be acceptable.

We need you all more than ever to do the right thing! Please!

Thank you for your time.

Patrick Rudman
26 Bellevue Ave, South Portland ME, 04106
41103 Knight Rd, Leonardtown, MD, 20650

--

Patrick Rudman
www.oldmaineoutfitters.com

From: [Kevin Eichinger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 4:57:26 PM

Hi - I just wanted to register my support for "Option B" in the ASMFC Draft Addendum II. Protecting the fishery is critical, and option B seems to be the best way to get back on track in 2024.

Thanks,
Kevin

--



Virus-free www.avg.com

From: [Tom Kapusta](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:26:52 PM

Being a striper fisherman in the northeast for over 30 years I have witnessed the decline in the populations, especially the fish from the Chesapeake.

Concerning Draft Amendment II I am in favor of the following to protect current spawning stocks:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" The recreation sector, both private and charter should be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23"

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas

Thank You,
Tom Kapusta

From: [Herb Floyd](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:31:27 PM

I would like to submit comments regarding "Recreational Bay Options". Thank you for the privilege to submit my comments for such an important issue. I am a Maryland native resident that has been buying a fishing license for more than 50 years and have been enjoying recreational fishing since I was 12 years old.

I support Option B3 but will be satisfied with any of the Option B choices. I do not support Option A because there's no maximum size which allows for harvesting the large female breeder fish. I also do not support either of the Option C choices which has been partially in place the last two years. This seems to be an economical option to support the for-hire charter boat industry and not an option to protect the striped bass.

In addition, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND the ASMFC ban the use of treble hooks on all artificial baits/lures and require they be replaced with in-line single replacement hooks.

Lastly, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND all states in the Mid-Atlantic region follow the same regulation as proposed in Addendum II. The New England states seem to be allowed to harvest the large female striped bass all summer and fall that migrate to their waters after spawning in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thanks again for allowing me to submit my comments and for listening to our concerns for this precious fishery.

Sincerely,
Herb Floyd Jr.

From: [G2W2](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fw: [External] Striped bass
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:35:16 PM

From: Jonathan Griffiths <jonandrewgriffiths@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 5:06 PM
To: G2W2
Subject: [External] Striped bass

Hello,

I am a fly fishing/light guide for striped bass in the Chesapeake bay and Washington DC on the Potomac. I support less harvest but want to be able to catch and release these fish as often as possible and hope that catch and release angling is permitted for myself and clients during the cooler months of winter and early spring. Catch and release mortality is near zero in water temps below 65 degrees.

Sincerely
Captain
Jonathan Griffiths
301-717-3878

From: [Albano, Albert](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] Comments to Draft Addendum 2 to Amendment 7 - Striped Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 6:44:09 PM

Hello Ms. Franke and ASMFC,

My name is Albert Albano. I attended the recent public hearing on Addendum 2 located at the NYSDEC offices at Kings Park, NY. During the meeting I spoke some comments, but did not specifically identify my preferred options for the Addendum. Below, I've indicated my preferences. Please note that before walking into the meeting, I was "of the mind" to accept Option C for the Recreational Fishery, whereby the For Hire group would be given a larger slot range. But after hearing their "coordinated" talking points during the meeting, I've reconsidered and have selected Option B for that item. After leaving the meeting, there were three things that frustrated me.

1. All the captains at that meeting were older than I am. So there is no question they experienced the height of the fishery from the early 2000s. For them to pretend that the current fishery is anything like what it was back then is ridiculous. **Flat out lies.**
2. Secondly, we all know that these captains greatly enjoyed the period of time when the bag limit was two fish per angler. I'm sure they made a lot of money back then, as a result of a robust bass population. Sadly, they are too short sighted to do what is needed now to bring something like that back.
3. The for hire sector targets different species throughout the year. Generally speaking, they fish for bass when bass are present enough to make it worth their while. Conversely, the surf fishing sector (of which I am a part of) fishes almost exclusively for bass all season long. Therefore the surfcasters are likely more apt to see trends in the fishery. The for hire sector simply switches over to porgies, sea bass, fluke, etc. once striped bass move from their general location.

In any event, here are my preferred options:

Recreational Fishery: Option B (1 fish at 28" to 31" all models).

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery: Option B1 19" to 23", 1 fish, all modes

For Hire Management Clarification: Option B – Measures only apply to Patrons during a for hire trip.

Recreation Filleting Requirements: Authorize at-sea filleting, but only require fishermen to keep the racks. Not the skins.

Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B - Ocean commercial fishery quotas to be managed to a 14.5% reduction from their 2022 quotas.

Response to Stock Assessment Updates: Option B – Allow Board to move quicker by doing a "Board Action" as opposed to an addendum. This could be critical if there is any hope left for rebuilding the stock by 2029.

Thank you,

Albert S. Albano
601 Chester Road
Sayville, NY 11782

Albert S. Albano
Senior Project Manager
Long Island Rail Road
(347) 494-6020 (Office)
(516) 523-0894 (Cell)

Confidentiality Note: This e-mail, and any attachment to it, may contain privileged and confidential information and is intended for the use of the individual(s) or entity named on the e-mail. Unauthorized disclosure of this message is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail and destroy this message and all copies thereof, including all attachments.

From: [Jonathan Griffiths](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 6:56:45 PM

Hello,

I am a part time fly fishing/light tackle charter captain on the Chesapeake Bay and in Washington, DC. I would support the maximum reduction in harvest and therefore support option B1 for the Chesapeake Bay and option B across the board. Myself and my clients would like to see more fish around and are not concerned with harvesting more fish. I would also like to add that I believe catch and release in water temperatures below 65 degrees has near zero mortality and hope that the pre season catch and release is permitted outside of the spawning grounds.

Sincerely,

Captain Jonathan Griffiths
301-717-3878

From: [Robert Rasa](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:23:32 PM

Striped Bass season brings out both the best and the worst in people. We all seek out to see who can catch the biggest. Even when we get our limit we continue to fish for them just for the sport of catching them.

Looking to reduce mortality rates by limits might not be the answer, and what I might suggest I am sure will piss off a lot of tackle shops and manufacturers.

The total elimination of the use of treble hooks for recreational Striped Bass fishing should be immediately enforced.

Many of my plugs I have personally converted to in-line circle hooks. Treble hooks can severely wound fish of any size, not to mention the fisherman themselves, especially when one is required to throw it back because it is over the size limit.

I have seen some manufacturers already utilizing single hooks in place of treble hooks. The only exception would be snagging Bunker. Other than that I see no other way except for a 1-year moratorium on Striper fishing, which as we all know could be difficult to enforce.

From: [Joseph McGurrin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass: DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 7:58:04 PM

I am submitting my comments for the Draft Addendum II for the Chesapeake Bay and Ocean portion of the plan.

For the commercial fishery in the Chesapeake Bay and Ocean, I support a quota reduction of 14.5%

For the recreational fishery in the Chesapeake Bay, I support Option B-1 and for the Ocean fishery, I support option B.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Joseph McGurrin
401 Annette Ave.
Stevensville, MD 21666

From: [Richard Kuhlman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Richard Kuhlman](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 9:18:46 PM

I am a recreational catch and release fisherman. I spoke at the Maryland public meeting representing the Annapolis Anglers Club.

I am writing now to represent myself. I am concerned about the status of Striped Bass in both the ocean and especially the Chesapeake Bay. With 5 years of extremely low young of the year recruitment numbers coupled with higher than expected recreational removals, I believe ASMFC should take the most conservative approach to protect the future striped bass stock.

My preferences are:

Ocean - Option B,

Chesapeake Bay - Option B1

Stock Assessment Updates - Option B

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Richard Kuhlman
924 Perry Landing Court
Annapolis, MD 21401

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Vincent Martella](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II)
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 8:01:58 AM

Stop with the madness already! I am no scientist. I am a fisherman. I spend lots of time on the water fishing for Striped Bass. From what I can see as someone who is out there on a daily basis there seems to be plenty of Striped Bass for all the recreational and charter boats to share.

We know your information is flawed (possible 40% error in your statistics by your own admission).

Your also not taking into consideration all the Striped Bass that are offshore (past the 3 mile line)

Stop changing these regulations already until you can get more accurate statistics. And if you do find the need to change the regulations again I say make it a catch and release fishery for just a couple of years until the stock rebuilds. There are so many people releasing their fish anyway I bet it will hardly affect the charter boat industry.

And as far as the recreational fisherman Maybe you can put together some kind of tagging system so that you encourage people to tag the fish. When they get their first letter home saying where the fish was caught, and how much it grew, and how long it has been since it was tagged, they will be hooked. I know I was. But you would have to really advertise that and push it hard in order for it to work and then people will not mind the catch and release so much.

Also you must educate the public better on the handling of the fish. I see so many people with their hands in the gills. This will cut down the mortality rate for fish that they throw back. Anyway this is my opinion and comment for whatever it is worth.

Vincent Martella
917 440 3047

From: [Delmar High](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 9:18:13 AM

Good Morning,

In response to request for public comment, see below my support for the options made available.

Ocean Recreational Options. Option B gets my support.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options. Option B2 gets my support.

The commercial fishery should also be reduced to help improve stock levels. An 8% reduction would be reasonable.

Please read the link below. Until the baitfish populations are increased in the Chesapeake bay, the YOY recruitment levels will probably remain low. If the migratory spawning fish that come up through the bay to spawn have limited forage, the spawns will probably remain suppressed and the young fish will not survive as well.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/11/science/menhaden-chesapeake-bay-fishing.html>

Respectfully,

Delmar High
717-821-5703

From: mpazdon@comcast.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 10:59:50 AM

I have been following your deliberations as to Striped Bass on the East Coast. I urge you to limit the commercial fishery by number of fish and fish over a certain size more than you are suggesting in this Addendum. The decline in breeders is certainly greatly affected by those boats taking 40 or more 40 pound fish in a night (as I have witnessed) and going back the next night for more. It has been the case that states have just barely been meeting their quota – this can only mean there are not enough fish to support the current regulation. At least a 20% reduction would be the minimum I would suggest.

As well, only say 50% of them could be over 40 inches.

As for the slot sizes of fish, this regulation is *** backwards for the recreational fisherman that like to dine on stripers. A slot of 19 to 24, one fish would be better as it would not effect the breeder stock as much and also protects the angler. The larger the fish, the higher the concentration of environmental pollutants are in the flesh.

I live in NH next to the Great Bay and when I was 15, some 58 years ago, you could literally walk across the schoolies by Adam's Point at times. I saw a semblance of that 5 years ago, but last season it was disappointing to say the least. As for the pollution statement, I was an environmental laboratory director for the State of NH and some private labs where we analyzed fish and other items for pollution; so I have generated the data to prove this point.

Thank you for your time and attention, Mike

Mike Pazdon
603 770 9414

From: [Jim Simms](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [John Kaufmann](#); [Dave Bixby](#); [Ken Mcrae](#); [Dennis Morris](#); [Garry Aho](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:27:00 PM

Thank you for allowing public comment on regulations to promote a robust future for striped bass. The following are my comments on the options I deem important in Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Striped Bass.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B. One fish at 28-31 inches. This approach protects the 2015 year class. Further, a mode split that allows for-hire vessels to retain a 2 fish limit would not be equitable for all.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. Support Option B1. The minimum size limit of 19 inches and maximum size of 23 inches with a one fish limit should be implemented. After five years of poor spawns, this reduction in size protects the 2017 and 2018 year classes. Also, a carve out for the for-hire fleet that enjoys a 2 fish possession limit is discriminatory and not consistent with the intent of this addendum.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support Option B. A 14.5 per cent quota reduction falls within the spirit of the addendum, but may have a negligible effect. Since 2020, commercial harvest has hovered around 80 per cent of the quota. A 14.5 per cent reduction in landings would be more appropriate.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support Option B. With a 2024 stock assessment pending in the Fall, it is important for the board to implement immediate action on the outcome. Given that five years of poor recruitment has occurred, there is reason to assume this may continue. A majority decision by the board to implement emergency measures to rebuild the spawning stock biomass (SSB) would trump the standard process of a draft addendum, public hearings, etc., that could continue into early 2026.

Again, thanks for the opportunity to comment on this most important addendum to rebuild the SSB by 2029.

All the best,

Jim Simms

From: [Tattersall, John](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 1:36:54 PM

If there are concerns of over fishing they should be dealt with by controlling the commercial and offshore fishing companies and not recreational fishing.

Please leave rec alone and enforce your limits to the big guys who really hurt the fish populations.

Sent from my iPhone
Please excuse all typographical errors

Securities offered through LPL Financial Member FINRA/SIPC

The information contained in this email message is being transmitted to and is intended for the use of only the individual(s) to whom it is addressed. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby advised that any dissemination, distribution, or copying of this message is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please immediately delete.

From: [John Brader](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Amendment II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:02:50 PM

Dear ASMFC,

Please note regarding Striped Bass Draft Amendment II, I am in favor of Recreational Bay Option B1.

All recreational anglers must conserve our iconic Rockfish resource and reverse its decline. I trust that similar commercial conservation measures will also be accepted.

John Brader
Mount Airy, MD

From: [D.M](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:20:06 PM

As to the striped bass addendum II

My support is as follows 3.1.1 I support option B to protect the 2015 year class 1 fish at 28 to 31 inches. No exceptions for hire vessels. 3.1.2 regarding the Chesapeake Bay I support option B1 , one fish at 19 to 23, no exceptions for hire vessels. 3.2.1 I support option B , a 14.5 % reduction in commercial take which should actually be a reduction in landings. 3.3 I support option B , a full stock assessment at the end of 2024 with the goal of rebuilding the stock by 2029

From: [John Perrone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] My 2 cents on this subject
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 3:42:15 PM

Hi, I live in MA...but would like to see the rules changed for all states. Especially New Jersey and Maryland I believe striped bass are being greatly over fished and harvested to unhealthy levels. Especially the larger breeding size, I feel we should match the state of Maine for all states on the Atlantic coast that target striped bass. I would like to even see stronger and harsher penalties for those caught poaching. As for commercial fishing this species I would like to see the numbers be reduced and a lottery to be held. I spend a lot of money traveling in hotels, restaurants, guide services and would like to keep helping the local economy and I feel like if this fishery becomes worse then what it already is this species will have a very difficult time to rebound back... I want my childrens children to enjoy/this fishery

Thank you

Sent from my iPad

From: [Parker Mauck](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 4:41:37 PM

To the ASMFC and Striped Bass Advisory Board,

My name is Parker Mauck. I am co-owner of Westport Fly a saltwater fly-fishing and light tackle charter/guide service based in Westport, Massachusetts. I am also a member of the American Saltwater Guides Association. Our business relies on catching, not keeping, fish. We operate catch and release vessels for Striped Bass anglers who understand and support the need to protect the species. In addition to a relatively small number of commercial anglers, there are *hundreds* of guides and *hundreds of thousands* of recreational anglers along the Atlantic seaboard. All the angling sectors will thrive if we have abundant Striped Bass populations.

I recently participated in the ASMFC public meeting in Massachusetts on December 5, 2023 to listen, learn, and provide comment on the Addendum II for Striped Bass. Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment. The program was informative and well run. Unfortunately, it seems as though a sizable portion of the Massachusetts angling community, lead primarily by commercial anglers, is not facing the facts.

- The five most recent Striped Bass spawns were utter failures in the Chesapeake
- The Chesapeake supports 70-80% of the coastwide population of Striped Bass
- Chesapeake Bay commercial Striped Bass harvest volumes have been significantly higher than all the states combined
- The harvest mortality in recent years has increased dramatically

Past overfishing coupled with poor spawning seasons now threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for commercial and recreational anglers.

For the reasons above I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

If we are going to have a chance at rebuilding Striped Bass stocks by 2029 the board may need to act nimbly to address science and data presented to the board.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I urge the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to act and take the measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of Striped Bass for everyone.

Sincerely,
Parker Mauck
69 Masquesatch Road
Westport Point, MA 02791

pgmauck@gmail.com

(508) 496-8682

www.westportfly.com



From: [Dante Brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023 5:31:24 PM

Striped bass regulations should be no harvest during 2024 from Maryland , Jersey , New York and everywhere. For the the whole year no harvest only catch and release & anyone who steals a fish fine is \$1,200. There fish mean a lot to me and i want this population 5 years from now better than ever. I truely recommend 2-3.5 years no harvest and do everything we can to make sure they survive!

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Michael Bias](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:03:52 AM

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*.

I am the executive director of the fishing outfitters association of Montana (FOAM), a licensed Montana outfitter, a licensed guide in Idaho, and have worked in the conservation field since the 1980s. I grew up in NJ and went to college in Maine in the early 1980s, when opportunity and angling for stripers was not even heard of. Since 2012, I regularly fly fish Cape Cod in spring for stripers, and have fished the Cheeky Tournament each of the last 10 years.

In my role at FOAM, we developed an advanced guide-training course - Guiding for the Future (G4F) - that we have conducted annually since 2019. G4F focuses on teaching guides and outfitters to be better stewards of the resource in which they work. A partner of FOAM in delivering G4F is KeepFishWet, a conservation organization that promotes the use of science-based best practices to catch, handle, and release fish. Through the efforts of KeepFishWet, FOAM, the Maine Association of Charterboat Captains, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources, the G4F Montana program was adapted for the tidewater guides on the coast of Maine. The Maine G4F course was focused on striped bass. Our inaugural Maine G4F course was conducted during May, 2023. The program graduated 12 individuals. An understanding of the conservation and management of striped bass was integral to the success of the Maine G4F program.

My comments on the *Draft Addendum II* are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

I strongly support Option B. 1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- I think that because of the strong 2015 year-class of stripers, the striped bass harvest during 2022 by recreational anglers was too high. I strongly supported the Emergency Action measure. Responsible management of this fishery demands that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class and maintaining the 28-31" slot achieves that goal.
- I strongly oppose mode splits. The Recreational sector, composed of private vessel or shore anglers and for-hire, should continue to be managed under the same regulations.
- I understand that these measures will likely only be in place for just next year as the 2024 Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update is scheduled for late-2024 and another management action is probable. I understand also that there is a good chance that the assessment shows us that additional actions will be required to successfully rebuild striped bass SSB by the 2029 deadline.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

I strongly support Option B1. 1 fish at 19-23" across ALL Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- After five consecutive years of poor spawning success, the Chesapeake Bay region is in desperate need for conservation and responsible fisheries management. I support Option B1 for many of the same reasons applicable to the ocean, but now the Bay's recreational fisheries need to contribute to conservation of striped bass. Certainly, if a 3-inch slot can be applied to the Ocean fishery, a four-inch slot can be successfully applied to the Chesapeake anglers.
- I strongly opposed Mode splits in the Chesapeake Bay. Through previous conservation equivalency proposals, Maryland implemented a program to allow for-Hire passengers the ability to harvest two striped bass compared to one fish for the rest of the recreational sector. Maryland's Chesapeake Bay for-hire fleet harvested 142,098 stripers; the coastwide total for the for-hire fleet was 281,289 fish. By giving Maryland's charter fleet two fish, they harvested more than the rest of the Bay and the ocean combined. This is irresponsible management of this important fishery.
- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and harvest limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- Also, the 23-inch maximum will add a layer of protection for the average 2017- and 2018-year classes that will still have some presence in the Bay. The current maximum size in MD would still allow harvest of these valuable fish. The proposed 19-23" slot would avoid these fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

I strongly support Option B. Both the ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries will be managed with a 14.5% reduction from their 2022 quotas with their 2022 size limits.

- Of course, I understand that this option may be entirely meaningless—unless states take matters into their own hands. Since 2015 commercial landings have been less than allotted quotas. So, a quota reduction may not correspond to reduced commercial landings. While the Ocean Region has been using most of its quota in recent years and will see a reduction in fishing mortality; the Chesapeake Bay will not see much of any reduction with a 14.5% quota cut. Secondly, there is uncertainty as to when states would even implement these changes. Certain states waiting until the last minute to claim that implementing these commercial changes in 2024 would be irresponsible management and disingenuous.
- While the Chesapeake commercial quota has taken a 1.8% reduction; the Bay has not taken a meaningful and responsible quota reduction since 2015.
- Since 2020, Chesapeake Bay quota utilization hovered around 80%. This is concerning on multiple fronts: there are clearly not enough fish in the system AND quota reductions less than 20% will have no biological impact.
- The 14.5% reduction is off the quota, not commercial landings. Therefore, the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery will not be contributing to rebuilding striped bass populations because even with an implemented 14.5% reduction in quota, commercial landings could remain at the same levels as last year.
- I would strongly support communication with each state to determine whether they can implement these commercial management changes in 2024.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

I strongly support Option B. Board Action.

- I understand the above option will likely only be effective for 2024 (and if at all on the commercial side), so this option may have the greatest impact on striped bass management. This option would allow the Board to move quickly to implement those new management measures through a simple majority. Without the Board action provision, the management process could take up to a year to respond to any new stock assessment updates. Public input, while not formalized through a management action, is not precluded by this option but will require an informed and diligent public. The public would need to rely on conservation organizations to be regularly informed of pending management actions.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on management options through Addendum II. My comments reflect my grave concern for this fishery and a strong desire for the responsible management needed in the short-term to provide an abundant stock and sustainable fishery in the long-term.

Respectfully,

mike
Michael A. Bias, Ph.D.
PO Box 177
Twin Bridges, MT 59754
(406) 925-2276

From: [Joey Sadler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Chesapeake Bay For Hire Charter Boats
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:42:24 AM

Commission Members, We as Maryland For Hire Charter Boats have already take a great loss of Income over the last several years due to Covid and the Economy, Also we have had out Spring Trophy Season Taken away unnecessarily and we are Forced to take off Two Weeks in the Summer, which is our busy Season. On page 9 of Addendum II it states (Chesapeake Bay for Hire removals have decreased by 27%) .

Many of our Captains are like myself, A Full Time, Life long , Charter Boat Captain,we are Small Business Owners and can not stand any more reductions that are trying to be placed upon us.

Maryland DNR has accurate numbers on Charter Boats, we have a real time Reporting system in place, Our Boats Report Numbers of Passengers, Fish Caught, Fish Released, and Fishing Area, Daily. No Accurate Reporting System for Recreational Anglers is in Place, this needs to be Addressed.

The Chesapeake Bay Spawns about 85% of All Striped Bass on the East Coast, Us as Captains and you as Commission Members know how many Fish are really out there. I believe in Science but Maryland's Young of The Years Index showing poor recruitment over the last 5 years is Greatly Wrong. Fishermen up and down the Coast and Chesapeake Bay have never seen so many Fish of all sizes.

Maryland's Fishing Season just ended on December 10th. But Maryland continues to Allow Anglers to Target Striped Bass, Even Spawning Females all Winter long. This should not be allowed!!! As I said, the Season Ended on December 10th.

--

Capt. Joey and Karen Sadler
Captains Pride Charters
Centerville Maryland,21617
410-758-3107

From: [Joe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Joe Seiss](#)
Subject: [External] Maryland Rockfish Conservation
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:08:07 AM

To whom it may concern:

My family and I have been residents of Annapolis on the Severn River for 40 years. Fishing has been a part of that life from the very beginning.

It appears that the Bay's now constantly changing ecosystem on account of climate, pollution, and invasive species (specifically blue catfish), is making it difficult for even the experts to fully appreciate the ongoing harm to the Chesapeake. We are friends with commercial guides and avid fishermen and women. From our view, it is unanimous that no matter how much you are involved as a fisherman, everyone wants these habitats to survive.

The folks I know who have pushed back on regulations in the past to some extent, and those like me who have always been in favor of the most restrictive regs, are to the point that we simply want the ecosystem to survive.

Please take whatever measures necessary to get this habitat, whatever the natural course may be, to equalize. Give these fish the ability to fight and establish their own new reality without the danger of human inflicted death. Even catch and release at this time should be a consideration for being taken off the table. Subsidize the commercial fishermen to whatever extent necessary.

Sincerely,

Joe Donahue
410-991-8552

From: [Kenshwartz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Saltwater Edge Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:55:52 AM

TWIMC,

The striped bass situation is very similar to the climate change situation (I of course realize climate change deniers will take exception to that statement). Many want to dispute that the industry/science data is accurate especially the conclusions (for climate change that unless drastic carbon reducing measures are taken over the next 0-10 years the earth will never recover and for striped bass if drastic measures are not put in place now the stock will get severely depleted and perhaps never recover unless a full-on moratorium is adopted down the road). There should be little disputing over the fact that IF the science/data is accurate what the outcomes will be. If either the earth's temperature or the earth's stock of striped bass get to a "tipping point" (the point at which there can be no or little recovery no matter what measures are taken) it will be catastrophic.

It comes down to selflessness or selfishness. The data skeptics need be selfless and even if they are skeptical with the data accept that if they are wrong and the data is correct they will not be able to change the outcome after the tipping point is reached. If the striped bass biomass is in as bad shape as the data seems to be indicating and nothing or too little is done now it will be too late. The time is now to be selfless and accept, even though very stringent measures will affect their catch (whether recreational, commercial, for-hire etc), there is no more time to just selfishly hope the science is inaccurate.

The proposed ASMFC regulations are selfish, sorry no other way to characterize it. EVERYONE (recreational, for-hire, commercials) needs to accept NOW (not in 5-10 years or so when perhaps if the science/data is accurate there are so little fish around for everyone including our kids and grandkids) that more stringent conservation measures are needed. And those of you at ASMFC—my guess is you KNOW your proposed regulations are not stringent enough but are afraid to confront the varying special interests. Please find the courage to do the unpopular.

Thanks for reading..

Just a concerned recreational fisherman...

Ken S

Sent Ken Shwartz iPad

From: [Jim Bright](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 11:20:57 AM

Dear ASMFC:

Please select option B1. In the future I would like to see the size limit return to an 18" minimum at one fish per day, and eventually two. Allow catch and release fishing throughout the year with no treble hooks allowed.

Thanks,
Jim Bright

From: [JOSEPH DART](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II amendment 7
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:04:59 PM

Emile Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St.
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington , VA. 22201

For the past 65 years I have enjoyed the recreational pursuit of Striped Bass. Over those years witnessing the ups and downs of it's management. The half measures and the only successful measure, the 1985 moratorium. The taking of breeder stock by the commercial side is the primary reason for the decline of this fishery. The only real long term solution is another moratorium.

Since the Commission does not offer this solution, I can support the following:

- 3.1.1 Recreational Fishery Options:
 - Option B 1 Fish 28" - 31"
- 3.1.3 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery
 - Option B 1 1 Fish 19" - 23"
- 3.1.3 For Hire Management Clarification
 - No More Splits , Recreational Rules Apply
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota
 - Option B 14.5% Reduction From 2022 Quotas
- 3.3 Response To Stock Assessment
 - Support Option B Allow Board to Respond At Board Meeting Rather Than Addendum Process

Thankyou for your attention to this matter,
Joseph A. Dart

From: [Ben Whalley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:38:20 PM

To: Emily Franke, FMP Coordinator; Attn: Commissioner Pat Keliher / Megan Ware

Hello my name is Ben Whalley, I am a full-time Captain and I run a catch-and-release fly fishing guide business for stripers in Casco Bay, Maine. I am also a member of the American Saltwater Guides Association. Striped bass are my livelihood, which makes this subject particularly near and dear to me. Since Maine is the northern fringe of the striped bass migration we see impacts to the population amplified, and I can attest that the past few seasons have been lacking in size-class diversity. I appreciate the board taking action and enacting the emergency action, it was and is paramount to protect the 2015 year class but we need more to rebuild the stock.

I have sat in on all of the hybrid hearings and it is quite apparent that the vast majority of the public have voiced their desire to have the most conservative actions taken to give striped bass a fighting chance to recover. While I understand the recreational sector has the vast majority (due to sheer volume of anglers) of release mortality, I still believe we all need to make an effort to make this work. We have had 5 consecutive years of terrible recruitment and I believe we are nearing the threshold to where, without drastic measures taken by the board to preserve the remaining stock biomass, will render the goal of rebuilding the stock by 2029 impossible. I think we need to start managing this population for abundance and sustainability, rather than harvesting the resource to a threshold that we all know inherently contains lots of uncertainty. The board needs to take action swiftly to protect the stock we have to rebuild this overfished species. It terrifies me to think that my daughter and her kids one day might not be able to enjoy this fishery as I have due to poor management.

The recreational community is engaged and willing to help in any way possible, and the board should really consider alternate methods in lockstep with NOAA to improve current data streams used for management. I appreciate what a good job the board has done in holding productive public comment hearings for the Addendum II process. Hopefully these meetings will be heard and help the commissioners to vote for what the majority of the public is pleading for.

Here are my comments to the options in Addendum II to Amendment 7:

1. Ocean Rec Options: OPTION B-- 1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)
2. Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: OPTION B1 - 1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions, with the same 2022 seasons.
3. Commercial Quota Reduction: OPTION B with a 14.5% reduction to both the ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.
4. Response to Stock Assessment: OPTION B - Board Action.
5. For-hire Clarification (if applicable): OPTION B
6. Recreational Filleting: OPTION B

Thanks so much for your time and considerations.
Happy Holidays!

Ben Whalley
Capt Ben
www.benwhalleyfishing.com
(207)274-8782

From: CaptRichT1@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 1:12:28 PM

To whom it may concern,

As a charter captain for over 30 years in the State of Rhode Island, I have seen many changes in fisheries and the impacts of those changes on my business. Some of my regular customers booked 3 and 4 trips a year, now some have not returned and others have cut down to 1 trip. The basic reason for this is the changes in fisheries, specifically Stripped Bass, Fluke and Sea Bass.

I support Section 3.1.1 Option C, a separate slot limit for the for hire fishery. This may enable for hire passengers to take a fish home and therefore keep them interested in continuing to utilize charter fishing as a feasible entertainment alternative.

Thank you for your consideration,
Capt Rich Templeton

From: [Bob Meyer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:30:55 PM

I strongly support increased/continued conservation measures for Striped Bass by both Commercial and recreational anglers.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options:

I strongly support Option B1 and the continued 28-31" slot limit (one fish per day). I do not support mode splits, recreational angling (private and charter/for hire) should be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

I strongly support Option B1 - 1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions. I do not support mode splits.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I strongly support Option B with a 14.5% reduction in both the Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I strongly support Option B - Board Action. This will increase the possibility of timely and effective conservation actions being taken.

We must take the strongest Striped Bass conservation measures now, to save the Striped Bass populations and to preserve fishing opportunities in the future for all recreational, charter, and commercial fishermen.

Thank You,

Bob Meyer
9 Rickey Dr, Framingham, MA 01702
bobmeyer1@gmail.com

From: [James Jewkes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass PID
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:53:40 PM

Hello my name is James Jewkes and I'm a longtime catch and release shore based angler. I've fished from NJ to Maine for striped bass but primarily fish the plum island Mass area. My family has fished for striped bass since the 1940's till present time my grandfather and his brother fished in the 40's and my mother and myself and my children have fished for striped bass. I'm hoping my grandchildren will be able to catch them. I believe we need a total harvest moratorium on striped bass coast wide. We will be dropping off the cliff within a few years and it's going to be ugly. I know that is not on the table YET!!!

My addendum options are as follows

3.1.1 option B all modes

3.1.2 option B 1 fish @ 19-24"

3.1.3 option B no mode splits

3.1.4 option B rec filleting

3.2.1 option B commercial quota reduction although I have no skin in the game with regards to commercial fishing.

I believe all sectors need to take a haircut and I'm hoping option B will do that.

3.3 response to stock assessment

I am for option B to allow the board to respond and make management changes via board vote.

Thank you for your time

James Jewkes

430 Salem st

Woburn Mass 01801

bigjim121165@yahoo.com

Sent from my iPad

From: [Pete Susca](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - Comments
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 7:57:58 PM

To whom it may concern:

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. I live CT, but fish the waters CT, RI and NY.

I have the following comments/observations:

1. We need to protect the 2015 class of fish
2. I catch no small fish in CT, RI or NY
3. We've had 5 consecutive years of spawning failures
4. There is a cliff coming in 2027!
5. No splits should be considered!

Therefore I support the following options:

Ocean Size Limit : B

For Hire: B

Commercial Quota: B (14.5% preferred)

Chesapeake Bay : B1

Board Responsibility: B

Rec Filleting: B

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Peter Susca
Wethersfield, CT

From: [Steve Culton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Justin Davis](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:11:54 PM

To:
Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

I am a recreational angler and a professional guide from CT. Stripers are a particular passion, and I am deeply concerned about the current state of the stock and the fishery.

Since I was unable to attend any of the public hearings, I would like to enter my choices for the options to Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II into the record:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I support Option B, *1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I support Option B1

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I support Option B

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: I support Option B

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B

I am a B and B1 guy across the board!

We cannot afford to do anything less for our fishery which is in dire shape!

Thank you for your consideration,

Steve Culton

From: [Quinn Pollock](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:31:31 PM

My name is Quinn Pollock and I'm from Falmouth, ME. I am a recreational "catch and release" fisherman that grew up fishing for Stripers in Maine and Massachusetts. These past 5 years, I've noticed a considerable downturn in Amount of fish seen/caught, and, the Size of fish seen/caught.

My comments:

We need to do something drastic to protect the Striped Bass. We need to consider another Moratorium or at least Game Fish Status.

If the prevailing thought processes do not support this, then we must restrict the harvest as much as we can. I'd love to put tougher enforcement in place!

Slot limits and 1-fish/day is a good starting point (I'd love that to be 1 fish per season!)

Commercial fishing needs to be curtailed as much as the recreational fishing, especially in the Chesapeake Bay and NY/NJ spawning areas. Fair is fair.

We cannot control climate change, but We can control the harvest.

We have have restrictions for Tuna, Deer, Moose, Grouse, and Woodcock. Why not more strict management of Stripers?

If we do not help these fish now, the fishery will collapse and our children and grandchildren will never have the joy of fishing for such a wonderful fish.

Thank you,
Quinn Pollock

From: [Raymond west](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 8:54:05 PM

December 14, 2023

Miss Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street

Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

comments@asmfc.org

efranke@asmfc.org

Hello Miss Franke, and to whom it may concern,

Please find my comments below regarding Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery

I ask ASMFC to take the 14.5 % reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline, please do not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update.

3.0 Proposed Management Options

I ask ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with measures that meets or exceeds a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option A Status Quo (28” -35” Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option.

Option B (28” -31” slot limit):

- I do support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.

Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28” -31” slot & for-hire anglers 28” -33”):

- I believe a that “a recreational angler is a recreational angler regardless of the platform from which they are fishing.”
- I believe the subject of recreational mode splits is an amendment level decision. Any consideration of recreational mode splits should include discussion and consideration of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions.
- Conservation of striped bass is another reason to reject split mode regulations. Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I ask ASMFC to reject this option.

Option D (30” -33” slot limit): I oppose Option D for the following reasons:

- Option D is projected to reduce fishing mortality by 12.8% and I prefer Option B which is projected to reduce fishing mortality by the larger number.

.

Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30” -33” slot & for-hire anglers 28” -33”):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I do support a reduction in the ocean commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current

rebuilding timeline.

- I do support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve

the current rebuilding timeline.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification

- I support option A Status Quo

- Option B seems unenforceable to me and therefore fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers will face the same difficulties when it comes to local fillet at the dock prohibitions

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

- Recreational mode splits in Addendum 2, I do not support them.

- I ask the ASMFC prepare to use emergency action for a quick response and be prepared to

create a formal Amendment 8 upon review of the results of the 2024 stock assessment.

- I support Option A Status Quo

- PLEASE, I beg you....manage for maximum conservation and put measures in place to

prevent Conservation Equivalency from being deployed by any state, in all further efforts to conserve, maximize & restore the striped bass population.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Ray West

East Bridgewater MA 02333

rrwest@yahoo.com

From: [Tom Doyle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Conservation
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2023 9:27:48 PM

I am urging you to take measures to protect our precious resource of striped bass. As a fisherman of over 20 years on Cape Cod, I can say the fishery is not nearly what it used to be. I know I'm not alone on this. Let me point out that after the last moratorium these fish bounced back in a big way. Most if not all people I know who fish no longer keep the fish. The 2015 spawn class is only going to last so long.

My recommendation and hope is that the management board makes conservation of the species, and rebuilding the population, their most important objectives. I am personally onboard with whatever measures are necessary to achieve those goals as quickly as possible.

Best regards,

Tom Doyle

Dalton, MA

From: [Ken Morris](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Justin Davis](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:11:49 AM

To the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

I am a recreational angler from the state of Connecticut. I fish for striped bass and other saltwater species from both private boats and shore in my home state of CT and neighboring states along the striper coast. The following are my personal preferences for the options presented in *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*. Thank you for your consideration.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option B - 1 fish at 28" - 31". I favor this option because it offers the greatest reduction in harvest, and is the best option for trying to meet the 2029 rebuilding timeline.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Option B2 - 1 fish at 19" - 24". I favor this option because it provides a significant reduction in mortality but is equitable as compared to the reductions taken by the ocean fishery under option B.

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

Option B - Captain and crew should be subject to the same regulations as private vessel / shore anglers.

I am opposed to the options in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 that provide different size limits to the for-hire fishery. I do not feel that it is equitable to expect the rest of the recreational sector to adhere to more restrictive size and/or bag limits than for-hire vessels. All user groups should share equally in the effort to reduce harvest and rebuild the SSB to target. The for-hire fishery already harvests a disproportionately high number of striped bass, when compared to the private recreational fishery. Making it easier for them to harvest more fish than the private recreational fishery does not benefit the rebuilding effort.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Option B - Racks must be retained and skin left on filets in states that allow filleting at sea. No more than two filets per legal fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Option B - Up to 14.5% reduction of the 2022 commercial quota with 2022 size limits.

I do not feel the 14.5% quota reduction adequately constrains harvest in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery and will provide 0 conservation benefit. In 2022, the bay commercial fleet harvested a total of 2.39 million pounds of striped bass out of a 3.00 million pound total quota. Reducing bay quota by 14.5% would result in a total bay quota of 2.57 million pounds, which is still more than what was harvested in 2022. So, effectively, the bay commercial fleet may in fact end up harvesting MORE striped bass under the most restrictive measures proposed by Addendum II than they did in 2022. The fact the bay fleet couldn't fill their quota in 2022 should serve as a warning to managers that the bay striped bass fishery is in serious trouble, and much more drastic cuts to the commercial quota and harvest are needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Option B - Board may respond to stock assessments by Board action. I feel this is necessary due to the shrinking rebuilding window. The Board needs the ability to expedite the management process in order to respond quickly to stock assessments that indicate the rebuilding timeline has less than a 50% of success by the 2029 deadline.

Kenneth Morris
R.W. Eber Commercial Real Estate
RES.0794960
Sent from my iPad

From: [Darris B](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:45:57 AM

Recreational Bay Options

I would like to vote for option B2 for 2024 year.

--

Thank You
Darris Banks

From: davef@mermac.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:13:37 AM

Subject: Public Comments Addendum II ASMFC :

Good Day,

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion. I am writing as a recreational fisherman who is concerned about the future of the Striped Bass Fishery.

I am an avid Surfcaster and am active in the North Fork Anglers Fishing Club. I plan to retire in the next few years with fishing high on my activities list. I hope there will still be a striped bass fishery by then. Having read through the

available options, it is my opinion that the following options are best:

RE: 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishing :

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

RE: 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing :

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Jurisdictions

RE: 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reductions :

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Note: Given the current quota under-utilization, this may be toothless. Greater than 20% would be more impactful.

RE: 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

This will ensure quicker response to assessments

Thank You for listening,

Dave Ficken

1260 Plum Island Lane

Orient, NY 11957

From: [Alex Collis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:49:43 AM

Recreational Bay Options

I am a resident of Harford County and fish regularly as a recreational angler. I would like any of option B. I can sympathise with charter boats but they have no monopoly on taking fish home.

From: [Arden Gardell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:55:28 AM

ASMFC Public Comment Addendum II: December 4, 2023

My Name is Arden Gardell-Gross, a seaside restaurant owner in Southold, NY. I would like to thank the New York State DEC and ASMFC for listening to our comments and actively working towards reducing striped bass mortality and taking the required steps to rebuild the SSB to Target by 2029. Our coastal hospitality industry has long benefited from the patronage of anglers and tourism which in turn relies on a healthy and abundant striped bass population up and down the coast. Surf anglers such as those who normally frequent the beach in front of my restaurant are the first to feel the pain when the population declines. It's great to see the 2015 year class in the fishery and anglers on the beach catching fish with the majority being released. However, the runs we see that used to last for months are now condensed into weeks and not driving the foot traffic to my restaurant they used to. I can only assume the negative effects on other industries relying on these great fish such as the charter fleet, surf casters, and the tackle industry at large. I see this Addendum as a placeholder for the 2024 stock Assessment and choose these options:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

reduce the time it takes to reduce mortality

Thank you,

Ardeg Gardell-Gross
Little Fish Hospitality, LLC
50 N Sea Drive
Southold, NY 11971

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Addendum I I
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 9:58:24 AM

Emilie Franke | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703.842.0716 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

-----Original Message-----

From: DONALD DICOSTANZO <buzzzzbomb@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 3:10 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Addendum I I

Hello Emily, my name is Donald Dicostanzo. I'm a recreational surf caster. I live on Long Island. Not really that crazy about any of the options. Kind of being forced into status quo. Which will have to do and that is my preference. The charter boat, captains and recreational six packers most definitely had a better show at the meeting in Kingspark last week That being said, I'm not the smartest guy around, but they definitely sound like a bunch of drunken crybabies Self recordable on their catches. How can you believe anything that anyone says coming from that bunch? The cannibalistic bass statement really did it for me. How stupid is everyone else in the room the fall for that statement, it's insulting at best I'm done throwing mud. Apologies for that but I think it needed to be said. Don....
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 10:05:49 AM

[Emilie Franke](#) | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201

Phone: 703.842.0716 | Fax: 703.842.0741

efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

From: robert maietta <rmaietta@comcast.net>

Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2023 12:05 PM

To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>

Subject: [External] DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS

Greetings Emilie:

My name is Robert Maietta and I live in Charlestown RI. I currently fish for striped bass in RI, NY, and CT as I live in southwestern RI near the border of all three states. I also occasionally fish MA. I fish mostly with a flyrod (some spin fishing as well) , and fish from private boats and from shore about equally. I harvested 4 striped bass for consumption in 2023.

My background is in fisheries biology (retired) with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. I would love to tell you that I fully comprehend your data and process for developing options for this next addendum, but unfortunately I do not fully understand. I've read the document and I understand generally that all models are based on assumptions that have varying degrees of accuracy and are subject to change. I also understand that there are many "players" involved and that all need to be heard and considered.

Although I would like to believe that mortality of released fish caught while fly fishing is very low, It is clear to me from being out there actively fishing and seeing how striped bass are handled by many anglers that your estimated overall mortality of released fish is probably about right. I actually wouldn't be surprised if it might actually be a little on the low side. That being said, I can certainly see how recreational anglers account for the largest "take" of stripers.

My fly fishing brethren and members of RISAA are suggesting that we as a group should support Option B and I will stand with them on that.

God bless you for the work you do and keep up the good work. I certainly understand

how modeling populations on a coastwide level with changing environments is a difficult and thankless job at times.

Option B please

Thank you
Robert Maietta

,

From: [Michael Richardson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:22:35 PM

Option B2 makes most sense. Charter boats run 2 trips a day with at least 6 people on them. That's 24 fish every day in the summer. Recreational boats maybe have 4 people on them and can only fish certain days a year.

Also something needs to be changed with live lining for rockfish. That's the time of year you see most fish dead on the surface.

From: [Bob Preble](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:30:34 PM

I live in southern NH and fish primarily in the waters of northern MA, NH and southern ME. I fish from a boat and primarily fly fish. I'm on the water about 30 days per season, and I've been pursuing these fish for the last 30 years. In the last 2 years I have caught only a couple of fish under 20 inches, and many fish over 28 inches. To me the lack of smaller fish is incredibly alarming as I don't understand where the next generation of fish is coming from.

I want to encourage the Board to act quickly and decisively to rebuild the striped bass stock. It seems to me that we've been playing catchup on rebuilding the stock for the last few years and this won't get better with immediate action.

Here's my input on the Draft Addendum:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). No mode splits.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thanks for your consideration of my input,
Bob Preble
Hamptead, NH

From: [Doug Geddes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulation Change
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 12:46:16 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Recreational Fisherman, I would opt for Option B1 or B2. I am more concerned with rebuilding a good healthy stock than filling up my freezer.

Respectfully,

Doug Geddes
Hallieford, VA

From: [Laine, Allen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:45:32 PM

Dear Emilie,

Please see my input on Amendment 7 Addendum 2. I am a recreational angler from the north shore of Massachusetts.

I believe the striped bass is in grave danger and have witnessed the drop in smaller fish first hand fishing with my two sons that last few years. I have seen big breeding fish slaughtered and undersized fish taken illegally as there are not enough boots on the ground to enforce the laws. I catch far less fish than I did just a few years ago, a clear sign that the stock is in trouble.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B, 1 fish at 28” to 31” with 2022 season (all modes).

I feel that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines related to the size and fish limits. In fact I would be in full support of even stricter options if they were available.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B2 at 1 fish at 19” to 24”.

I selected this option since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B.

All recreational anglers should follow the same regulations and I do not support Options C1 or C2, if either of these options are selected then Option B should be used.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

Option B gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

I support a reduction of 14.5%. This would bring the commercial quota reduction into alignment with the recreational reduction expected percentages. This should help keep more of the slot and big breeders alive and spawning.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. I support Option B

I support giving the Board the ability to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock is not projected to meet rebuild probability.

Sincerely,
Allen Laine

=====
The information contained in this electronic communication is intended to be sent only to the stated recipient and may contain information that is confidential, privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient or their agent, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of the information is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender and delete all copies.
=====

From: kennedy.david1@att.net
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: Kristen.Fidler@maryland.gov
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:11:56 PM

I understand you are reviewing the 2024 Stripped Bass regulations for the Chesapeake Bay. I have reviewed the various proposals and urge you to adopt either **Option B1** or **Option B2**.

I believe it is particularly important that all modes be treated equally. The Commission should not allocated more of a public resource to one particular group's economic benefit.

Thank you for your consideration of my views and your work to sustain and grow our shared outdoor heritage.

David Kennedy
703-472-1302 mobile
3101 Ulster Court
Annapolis, MD 21403

From: [Andy Collins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:39:53 PM

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to express support for whatever restrictions give the striped bass their best chance and surviving and eventually rebuilding the stock. I have been fishing since about the age of 4 or 5 and striped bass have been a passion since my adolescence.

I grew up on an estuary on the South Shore of Massachusetts. For the past 2 years there have been almost no stripers in the river. It is abundantly clear that all measures need to be taken to give our fishery and these beloved fish the chance they deserve.

Thank You,
Andy Collins

From: [Joe Lotito](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:54:55 PM

Recreational class B3

Thank you and have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Sincerely

Joseph Lotito

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ray Weber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ROCKFISH REGULATIONS
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 2:55:38 PM

Now that catch and keep of one rockfish (striped bass) per day has ended for the year I'm disappointed that catch and release is allowed for what is becoming an endangered species. I'm even more disappointed that gill netting is having a heyday taking whole schools of rockfish that congregate in the deeper waters of the bay, south of the bay bridge in the winter. I remember when I was a child in the 1960's when we were catching rockfish for several weeks off the mouth of the Bodkin; a gill netter came in and basically scooped up the entire school. I saw the boat that day and the gill net was full of nice sized fish. After that we could not find any rockfish to catch in that area and had to look elsewhere. I like to catch rockfish and they are good to eat, but I would support a moratorium so long as it includes the commercial taking of rockfish. Also, why is there prejudice against recreational fishermen as individuals when party boats can take at least twice as many fish per person and the commercial gill netters seem to have whatever they want?

Thank you for listening.

Ray Weber

410-549-3307 (home)
276-698-0350 (cell)

From: [Randy Sigler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - Update Option B
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:22:33 PM

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Randy Sigler, and I am writing as the owner of (what I believe is) the largest/busiest guide service in the country that targets Striped Bass. With 10 (+/-) boats running one or two trips a day, virtually every day of the season June - Sept), we typically run 1,000 - 1,400 Striped Bass trips a season.

Needless to say, the health of the striped bass stock is extremely important to our business, and to the livelihood of the guides who work for me.

With that as a frame of reference, I want to express how pleased we were with this past year's size & bag limits (1 fish 28" to less than 31"). We saw first hand the surge of fish entering the legal slot in 2022 and (previous legal slot) in 2023. We are absolutely thrilled that these fish from the 2015 year class, critical to the long term success of the population, are being protected.

Our business is successful if we have fish to catch ... **it is not dependent** on sending every client home with a "keeper" striped bass. In fact, we probably average one legal fish retained for every four or five trips. We certainly catch "legal" fish frequently, but when customers understand the science behind the population, they are more than happy to release fish that could otherwise be kept.

I suspect that you will hear from some charter operators that they need better access to legal/keeper striped bass in order to attract customers. I am writing to tell you that **that is absolutely not the case** for us.

As a significant player in the striped bass charter business, representing 10+ full time striped bass charter captains, I urge you to **please Adopt Option B for striped bass regulations**, and place every emphasis possible on allowing the stock to fully recover.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Capt. Randy Sigler
Sigler Guide Service
1 Peabody Ln
Marblehead, MA, 01945
617-459-1798
www.Striper.com
randy@striper.com

From: [Jack Tatelman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:42:20 PM

I am for a complete moratorium on both Commercial and Recreational harvesting to secure a replenishment of the biomass. But if that's not possible maintain I am in favor of Option "B" in order to achieve maximum conservation.

Thank you

Jack Tatelman

Marblehead, MA

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Rogers](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:47:02 PM

I am strongly in favor of keeping the Massachusetts slot as is, Option B.

Current status of the population and another weak spawning year makes continued strong conservative necessary.

Thank you
John Rogers
8 Gregory St
Marblehead, MA

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joshua Parker](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 4:01:14 PM

Hello Emilie,

I'm writing to submit my comments regarding proposed Amendment 7 Addendum II. I have not been able to attend any of the live or virtual hearings because their timing (~6-8pm) has been incompatible with my family demands unfortunately. I hope that this email will be given as much weight that an in-person comment would.

I have two young children, ages two and five. The elder is getting interested in fishing and I want to share my love of striper fishing with him. Over the past six years since moving back to Massachusetts, I've observed my productivity on the water decrease dramatically -- by 50% or more. I worry that soon there will be no more stripers to introduce my son to, and that the stock condition is far worse than projected in this addendum.

With this, I support the following Addendum II options:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options -- **Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).**
 - I believe that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines whether personal or with a charter. I also believe it's imperative to protect the 2015 year class by maintaining the 28"-31" slot.
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options -- **Option B1. 1 fish 19"-23" all modes.**
 - I believe we're in a place where management needs to be as conservative as possible, and I oppose mode splits -- all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations, charter or not. Additionally, the 23" maximum will help protect the 2017 and 2018 year classes.
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements -- **Option B.**
 - Enforcement officials should be given as much information for their jobs as possible.
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options -- **Option B.**
 - I'm reluctant with my response here as I believe reductions should be taken off of *landings*, rather than quota (which isn't being met). But given the options in the addendum, B is preferable.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates -- **Option B board action.**
 - I believe responses to upcoming stock assessments must be made as rapidly as possible. Another addendum process could take a year wasting valuable rebuilding time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
Josh Parker

--

Josh Parker
(781) 572-6102

From: [Ryan Kim](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 5:49:10 PM

To the ASMFC and Striped Bass Advisory Board,

My name is Ryan Kim - I live in Newton, Massachusetts and do a lot of catch and release fly-fishing and light tackle fishing for Striped Bass in Buzzards Bay and Boston Harbor. I am originally from Maryland so am very familiar with the Chesapeake Bay and its importance to the entire East Coast striper ecosystem. I am one of the many *hundreds of thousands* of recreational Striped Bass anglers along the Atlantic seaboard who are concerned about the health of this amazing species.

I am worried that:

- The five most recent Striped Bass spawns were utter failures in the Chesapeake
- The Chesapeake supports 70-80% of the coastwide population of Striped Bass
- Chesapeake Bay commercial Striped Bass harvest volumes have been significantly higher than all the states combined
- The harvest mortality in recent years has increased dramatically

Past overfishing coupled with poor spawning seasons now threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for commercial and recreational anglers.

For the reasons above I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

If we are going to have a chance at rebuilding Striped Bass stocks by 2029 the board may need to act nimbly to address science and data presented to the board.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I urge the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to act and take the measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of Striped Bass for everyone.

Sincerely,
Ryan Kim
45 Bishopsgate Road
Newton MA 02459
(617) 650-6236

--

Ryan S. Kim
Castle Island Partners, LLC
(617) 650-6236
rkim@castleislandpartners.com
<https://www.castleislandpartners.com/>
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ryankim2/>

From: [Chris Chan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 6:07:28 PM

My name is Chris Chan. I am an avid saltwater recreational angler and moor a boat on the Westport River in southeastern Massachusetts. I am interested in Striped Bass and other recreational fish management. Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.

The data are highly supportive of the conclusion that in many recent years Striped Bass are not reproducing sustainably and that overfishing is both contributory and damaging. It appears a portion of the Massachusetts angling community, lead primarily by commercial anglers, is not facing the facts.

- The five most recent Striped Bass spawns were utter failures in the Chesapeake
- The Chesapeake supports 70-80% of the coastwide population of Striped Bass
- Chesapeake Bay commercial Striped Bass harvest volumes have been significantly higher than all the states combined
- The harvest mortality in recent years has increased dramatically

Past overfishing coupled with poor spawning seasons now threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for commercial and recreational anglers.

For the reasons above I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

If we are going to have a chance at rebuilding Striped Bass stocks by 2029 the board must act now to address science and data presented.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I urge the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to act and take the measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of Striped Bass for everyone.

Christopher Chan

AIA

LEED AP

Home Energy Rating System Associate

Certified Building Evaluator Safety Assessment Program

CHAN MOCK ARCHITECTS

165 Amory Street

Cambridge, MA 02139

cchan@chanmockarchitects.com

T 617 576 2508 F 617 547 8699

chanmockarchitects.com

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [facebook](#)

From: [Glenn Yoder](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 6:47:41 AM

I am writing in support of Option B4 for the 2024 Striped Bass Season.

Thank you for your consideration

Glenn Yoder, GRI, CRS
Associate Broker
Berks Homes Realty
PO Box 7
3335 Morgantown Road
Mohnton PA 19540
m. 717.575.4059
o. 484.399.4747
email: gyoder@berkshomes.com

From: [James Morabito](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 10:18:39 AM

Dear Emilie,

My name is James Morabito. Please take a look at the comments on Amendment 7, Addendum 2.

I have been an avid surfcaster for over 50 years and live on Plum Island, Newbury, MA. I am also on the board of directors of The Plum Island Surfcasters. I believe the striped bass stock condition is much worse than is being projected in this addendum. Since we are located toward the Northern reach of the striped bass ocean fishery, we will first see more acute changes in the population. Many of our members who maintain detailed fishing logs have seen a 60 to 75% reduction in their catch over the past five years.

I support the following Addendum 2 options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. I keep Option B, one fish at 28” to 31” with the 2024 season (all modes).

All recreational anglers should operate under the same size and fish limit guidelines. We must protect the 2015-year class and maintain the current 28” to 31” size limit.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options. The membership supports Option B2 at one fish at 19” to 24”.

Option B2 was selected since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B.

While all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and do not support Options C1 or C2, Option B should be used if either option is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

Option B gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options. I support Option B.

I support a quota reduction of 14.5%. This would align the commercial quota reduction with the expected recreational reduction percentages. This is especially

needed since some states have commercial size limits focused on the primary spawning stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. I support Option B

I support allowing the Board to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock is not projected to meet rebuild probability. This option should be limited to only handling assessment data that shows the stock will not meet rebuild probability.

Thank you,

James Morabito

From: [Ray Weber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 10:46:08 AM

In regards to the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II part of what is happening on the bay you need to take into account what happens with the party boats when it comes to catch and release of fish. Most of the party boats keep this a secret but there is one who routinely posts the success of landing large fish on a fishing forum. I think the AMFSC needs to take this into consideration when determining regulations going forward. The Chesapeake Bay regulations currently have catch and release open all winter as well as commercial netting of fish both of which must be having a negative impact on the breeding stock of rockfish. See the link below to read the postings on the forum.

[2023 MD Chesapeake Bay Fishing Reports - Page 17 - The Hull Truth - Boating and Fishing Forum](#)

Ray Weber

276-698-0350 (cell)

From: [Info](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 2:53:32 PM

To who it may concern,

I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both fisheries.

While I strongly supported the initiation of Addendum II, I believe that the potential outcomes of this action are not enough to ensure long-term striped bass sustainability and abundance. I think that it is critical that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class and maintaining the 28-31" slot achieves that goal, while providing some consistency for anglers and the stock assessment scientists.

I think that the Chesapeake Bay region is in desperate need for conservation and precautionary fisheries management. I support Option B1 for many of the same reasons applicable to the ocean, but now the Bay's recreational fisheries need to contribute to conservation. If the Ocean fishery can have a 3" slot, then the Chesapeake can deal with a 4" slot.

Sincerely,

Jim Bernstein
Eldredge Bros Fly Shop
1480 US Rt 1
PO Box 69
Cape Neddick Me. 03902
207-363-9269
info@eldredgeflyshop.com
www.eldredgeflyshop.com

From: [Justin Cordonnier](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 16, 2023 5:55:23 PM

Hi,

I'm writing in regards to the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

I've been fishing for striped bass in Massachusetts for over 25 years. It is sad what has happened to the striped bass population, in terms of both reduced numbers of fish overall, and the reduced number of large fish. As a result, I am in favor of the following options to hopefully help the striped bass population recover.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: I support Option B, one fish at 28" - 31" slot limit. I oppose any mode splits.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: I support Option B1, one fish at 19" - 23". I oppose any mode splits.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support Option B, with a 14.5% reduction to both ocean and Chesapeake Bay quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B, the ability of the board to take action based on the outcome of the stock assessment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Justin Cordonnier
Needham, MA

From: [kris magnotti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 12:35:02 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kris Magnotti I'm a Long Island resident living in Massapequa NY. After spending the last 20 years in pursuit of my beloved striped bass I know now more than ever you as an organization have failed over and over again to do what has been needed to do to keep this species safe. The shortsighted greed that apparently has blinded those in charge of the care of this precious resource once again reared it's ugly head. With the current situation we are faced with (striped bass deemed "overfished" by you yourselves, an "emergency slot limit" evoked, and now Chesapeake young of year number at RECORD LOWS I'd like to give my support to OPTION B across the entire addendum. I still think it's to little to late as we know by 2027 we'll be faced with record low numbers of "slots" as once again you've failed to protect the 2015 class. These fish are worth more alive than dead. The money I spend alone on tackle, travel, accommodations, in a season is significant and I haven't killed a striped bass in over 16 years. Please for my son and your children's children do the right thing.

Thanks for your time

Kris

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Abigale Howell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum public commentary
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 7:38:54 AM

Good morning,

Please let this serve as my public comment in support of protecting the overfished striped bass population and support of rebuilding the stock. If we are going to maintain our lifestyle in harmony with our oceanic wildlife populations we must respect and protect those that are in jeopardy of being overfished.

Thank you !

Abby Howell
Biddeford ME

--

Abigale R. Howell

From: [Christopher Diehl](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 8:02:52 AM

Good Morning,

I am a licensed fishing guide in Maryland, and former owner/operator of Teaser Charter Fishing, with plans to return to charter fishing in 2025. I respectfully ask that you support option C-2 for the new regulations being proposed. The charter fishing industry in MD participates the the FACTS reporting, giving fisheries managers current, up to date information on their catch. This sector of the fishery stakeholders is accountable, and is also the smallest user group as a whole in MD waters. Charterboat operators have caught 17% less striped bass per the FACTS reporting in the last 3 years. Cutting the allowable catch for this segment will have a very detrimental effect on the ability to attract clients to book dates.

Thank You,
Christopher Diehl
Conowingo, MD

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [Ron Essig](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comments
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 9:38:26 AM

Hello,

My only comment is on the ocean recreational fishery. My preference is Option B with fish at 28-31 inches. My second choice would be Option D. I don't like the other options that allow different lengths in for-hire modes. Particularly bad is Option E where for-hire can keep fish smaller than other modes.

Thank you for careful attention to this important fishery.

Ron Essig

From: [David Showell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 10:04:32 AM

To the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

My name is David Showell, I currently own and have been the owner of a small marina, Absecon Bay Sportsman Center on Absecon Creek, Absecon, NJ, for over thirty eight years. This is the access to Absecon Inlet, at the North end Of Atlantic City and the South End of Brigantine. This is the center of New Jersey's Recreational Striped Bass Fishery.

When I bought the marina in 1985, the Striped Bass literally didn't exist in South Jersey. My personal saltwater fishing mania started around 1968 when I was fourteen years old. At the time Stripers were hardly even in the vocabulary of the local fishing population except for a clique of secretive diehards that fished the migrations. Despite many, possibly hundreds of trips on the local back bays catching Summer Flounder, Winter Flounder, Weakfish, Bluefish and many Panfish I never even hooked a Striper.

Today I fish the same areas with very similar tactics almost all year and catch enough Striped Bass to target them with my successful Back Bay Guide Service, Absecon Bay Fishing Safaris, in addition to running what I consider the best Bait and Tackle Shop in South Jersey and specialize in Striped Bass Fishing.

Enough introduction and I will get to the point of the matter. In my opinion, none of the options indicated by the Commission is at all relevant to the Striped Bass Fishery. I feel with one hundred per cent certainty that the current population of Striped Bass could easily support a daily limit of one reasonable sized fish per person. I believe that the current size limit twenty eight inches, to under thirty one inches puts extreme pressure on Recreational Anglers to catch, handle, release and possibly kill many more Stripers than they would if they could catch a fish that they are allowed to harvest for consumption.

I believe that the current biomass of Striped Bass is much larger than is

reported by current science. I know that the science that is being used is supposedly the best science and that is what you have to use and that anything that I can tell you is not documented with a scientific method, so I won't go into details here. However I do remember a little bit about the scientific method. I graduated from Stockton State College in 1976 with a BS in Natural Resource Management and Planning, so I have learned how to learn and observe what is going on around me.

From hundreds of first hand reports from anglers coming into the Absecon Bay Sportsman Center and way too many hours of following internet reports about Stripers up and down the entire east coast. I am absolutely sure that there are many more Stripers in the population today than at any time in my life time. As a matter of fact even as I am writing this there is fantastic striper fishing going on from Long Island, New York to Virginia Beach. That doesn't even begin to count the Stripers who are currently outside the three mile EEZ line and appear to have taken up permanent residence out there.

I would like to thank anyone and everyone who has taken the time to read this and I hope that I have possibly put some sort of idea in your head that can help make sensible decisions on the future of the Striped Bass here in our Atlantic Ocean.

Sincerely,
Capt. David Showell

Absecon Bay Sportsman Center
81 Natalie Terrace
Absecon, NJ 08201
tackle@abseconbay.com
609-484-0409,
www.abseconbay.com
www.facebook.com/abseconbay
www.facebook.com/fishabsecon
www.battleofthebackbay.com
www.anglernetnetworkusa.com
Private Cell 609-513-1568

From: [Matt Byrnes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:08:06 AM

Dear AMFC,

As a relatively new angler who is now learning about and following the history and future of the fishery, I would strongly support the strongest possible measures to support a sustainable fishery in the near and far future. We are clearly at yet another crossroads and the idea of enacting an addendum which attempts to appease for hire and commercial fisherman, or even recreational anglers, with additional catch limits or a broader slot, simply does not make sense. As someone who has hired guides in the past, I would also say that the argument that they "need" to be able to advertise "taking fish home," is not a strong enough argument. Very few people that I know hire charters so that they can come home with fish. The vast majority want to have a fun and exciting day on the water catching fish, and don't need, or want, to bring home dinner.

Please do all that you can to hold the line on the slot so that we can all fish far into the future, hopefully with our children and grandchildren as well.

Respectfully,

Matt Byrnes

--

Matthew J. Byrnes | Head of School
He/Him
Wooster School | 91 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810
matt.byrnes@woosterschool.org | 203.830.3906
Schedule a [Quick Call](#)
Faculty [Check-in](#)

From: [Matt Byrnes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:11:41 AM

My apologies for neglecting to provide my specific support. Please see below:

3.1 Recreational Fishery Management

3.1.1: I support option B: a slot of 28-31" for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.2: I support option b1: a slot of 19-23" for all modes (no mode split).

3.1.3: n/a

3.1.4: I support option B: establish minimum requirements for fish processing.

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management

3.2.1. I support option B: reduction of up to 14.5% of quota—preferably on the average harvest rather than the pre-existing quota.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

3.3: I support option B: board action when stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029.

Respectfully,

Matt Byrnes

On Sun, Dec 17, 2023 at 11:07 AM Matt Byrnes <matt.byrnes@woosterschool.org> wrote:

Dear AMFC,

As a relatively new angler who is now learning about and following the history and future of the fishery, I would strongly support the strongest possible measures to support a sustainable fishery in the near and far future. We are clearly at yet another crossroads and the idea of enacting an addendum which attempts to appease for hire and commercial fisherman, or even recreational anglers, with additional catch limits or a broader slot, simply does not make sense. As someone who has hired guides in the past, I would also say that the argument that they "need" to be able to advertise "taking fish home," is not a strong enough argument. Very few people that I know hire charters so that they can come home with

fish. The vast majority want to have a fun and exciting day on the water catching fish, and don't need, or want, to bring home dinner.

Please do all that you can to hold the line on the slot so that we can all fish far into the future, hopefully with our children and grandchildren as well.

Respectfully,

Matt Byrnes

--

Matthew J. Byrnes | Head of School

He/Him

Wooster School | 91 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810

matt.byrnes@woosterschool.org | 203.830.3906

Schedule a [Quick Call](#)

Faculty [Check-in](#)

--

Matthew J. Byrnes | Head of School

He/Him

Wooster School | 91 Miry Brook Road, Danbury, CT 06810

matt.byrnes@woosterschool.org | 203.830.3906

Schedule a [Quick Call](#)

Faculty [Check-in](#)

From: [John Kuriawa](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II -- John Kuriawa
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:29:53 AM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to provide input on your consideration of changes to striped bass management along the Atlantic Coast. As an advocate of catch and release fishing with a strong conservation mindset, among the options you have presented with regard to Addendum II, I support those noted below:

- Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries
- Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”
- Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota
- Board Response: B. Board Action
- Implementation dates: ASAP

Additionally, I urge consideration of the expansion of both no take or no targeting zones to protect striped bass during the spring spawn and during times of when high water temperatures are known to cause mortality in the catch and release fishery. These areas should be inclusive of ALL river systems known to host spawning runs, including, but not limited to all Chesapeake Bay primary tributaries and rivers to the north such as the Delaware, Hudson, Raritan, and Connecticut. In the event that closures of spawning habitats during the spawn are not possible, I would urge consideration of only catch and release fishing using circle or barbless hooks.

While fisheries managers cannot control springtime river flows and water temperatures, we can adopt more cautionary regulations to ensure the sustainability of the most valuable sportfish on the eastern seaboard. Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,

John

John Kuriawa
320 Arundel Beach Road
Severna Park, MD 21146

From: [Dave Butler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 12:14:21 PM

Asmfc

Please fight to make strippers a game fish and make the daily bag limit the same for all red vs charter. The set thing bilogically is making it a fish that survives forever.

Thanks for listening

Dave Butler
(410)382-1866

From: [Earl Witmer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass season
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 1:20:31 PM

All that needs to be done is get Omega out of the bay and outlaw live bait.

Thank you,
Earl Witmer

From: [Doug Frazee](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 1:52:15 PM

My preference is for option B4 but really any of the b options work for me. It's ridiculous to have non-equitable limits in favor of charter boat captains. Time to reverse that decision and never do it again. Thanks for your important work!

Doug Frazee

From: [Kenneth Holt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 5:32:49 PM

Dear ASMFC,

It is clear from multiple studies and counting of the young of the year that the striped bass population is teetering on collapse. Striped bass are not the only species at risk but it is important that conservation steps are implemented for specific problems. As an avid fly fisherman, I value the striped bass and I am willing to make sacrifices to ensure the health of the stocks.

As a management board, I ask you to make conservation of the species a priority. Management for abundance rather than simply for survival seems a wise course. I applaud the recently announced steps being considered in Maryland to take a difficult stand in defense of the health of the striped bass stock and hope that such bold ideas are being discussed everywhere striped bass live and migrate.

Best regards,

Ken Holt

Sent from my iPad

From: [Corinne Green](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 6:37:24 PM

The Stripped Bass fishery has been badly mismanaged with conservation equity. Virginia has the tightest measures while it has the shortest season as well. If you were concerned about the spawn in the Chesapeake Bay of Virginia you'd have to protect the fish in other states with tighter restrictions so they can even make it to Virginia. The Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay and other states need tighter restrictions, quotas, and a shorter season as well. Commercial fishing should be reduced at the same rate as recreational.

In addition, if you were really concerned about the rebuild of the striped bass population you'd be concerned about their food source. The menhaden reduction industry is devastating the Chesapeake Bay. They are removing the most important forage fish for striped bass and many other fish and species.

Corinne Green

Sent from my iPad

From: [STOVER HUGHES](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2023 11:53:08 PM

If you want to increase striped bass and cobia population in the Chesapeake bay the menhaden boats should not be allowed to operate in the the bay. I have fished the bay since 1966 and have witnessed several species come and go but the decline of the striped bass is due mainly to the net boats in the bay with their spotter planes. Maryland had enough sense to stop them years ago. Why can't Virginia.

Thank you
Stover Hughes Sr

From: [Ray Weber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 3:10:51 PM

I have been a recreational fisherman on the Chesapeake Bay since 1955 and the demise of the Rockfish overall is disheartening. I am particularly upset about catch and release on the bay as I continue to see dead rockfish floating to rot away. I catch my one fish allowed per person then try for other types of fish other than striped bass elsewhere. I also cannot understand why commercial netters are allowed to catch rockfish this time of year as the schools are congregated south of the Bay Bridge. That is a significant drain on the rockfish population. The party boats are allowed two fish per customer so I also look at that as prejudice against the independent recreational fisherman. As such I support any of the B1-4 options or going to a complete moratorium until stock begin to recover then go to the B-4 option and monitor how when that maintains the rockfish population. Get rid of trophy season altogether, get rid of catch and release fishing and stop the commercial gill netters from raping the bay....

Ray Weber
276-698-0350 (cell)

From: [Mitchell Turnage](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 12:47:00 AM

Dear ASMFC board,

I propose the following comments regarding Striped Bass Addendum II.

- The board should consider whether a commercial fishery can really be supported in this region under current populations. While recreational are subject to a one fish slot limit commercial netters target and catch many more fish per individual/boat. In my opinion this can only be supported by an abundant population with excess biomass, not the current state of the ecosystem. When you compare by each individual stakeholder, the impact is disproportionate. I believe all stakeholders should be subject to a one fish limit.
- Any action will not be successful in restoring the biomass without regulation and restriction of localized depletion of Atlantic menhaden populations in the Chesapeake bay. The striped bass' major food source is being disproportionately affected in this ecosystem.

Regards,
Mitchell Turnage

From: [Gmail](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass amendment 2
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:35:49 AM

Greetings,

I am a VSSA member in VA and support the most conservative approach to managing the striped bass recreational and commercial harvesting. I am concerned that the fishery will not thrive and stocks will be returned to the desired level by 2029. Taking the most conservative approach now makes the most sense to give the Striper fishery a decent chance to recover and rebound.

Thank you,

Steve Anderson
515 Bel Crest Terrace
Midlothian VA 23113

804-310-6380
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tim Morris](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:09:11 AM

Good Morning,

Thank you for all of the hard work you have put in to this initiative. I am going to be brief and blunt here-- the number one issue causing the reduction in striped bass around the Chesapeake is the complete decimation of the menhaden population by the menhaden fishery. Please address this issue which has caused an imbalance in the entire ecosystem of the bay and its tributaries. We are simply wasting all of our time, as we have done for many years now, with everything else until the menhaden plant is addressed.

Sincerely,

Timothy Morris
Eastern Henrico, VA

From: [JB Benson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:20:12 AM

ASMFC,

The Striped Bass shortage calls for drastic conservation action.

Please do your duty to restore this vital fishery.

Thank you.

F. L. Benson Jr

3902 Homestead Rd.

Lanexa, VA 23089

From: [E. W. Inge](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripers
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:11:02 AM

To whom it may concern. When is someone going to wake up. You have allowed gill netting and commercial hook and lining to decimate the species for years. Removing the breeding cows is stupid and you let this continue every year. You have allowed the lobbyist and the commercial industry to control this fishery too long which has crushed the fishery. The recreational fishery infuses the local economy the most but receives nothing for their efforts. Then you let the Menhaden fishery(which is Canadian owned) to rape and pilage the Chesapeake Bay.

WAKE UP!!!!
E.W.Inge

From: [thomas.powell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:47:29 AM

To whom it may concern,

I have lived and fished on the Chesapeake Bay the majority of my life other than my time served in the United States Army. One of my fondest past times as a kid is fishing the lights on Chisman Creek and catching large Striped Bass right off the dock. In recent years this is not a thing they are no longer there. I've also stopped fishing for Striped Bass in recent years because the time and cost of fuel to catch one slot Striped Bass is not worth it to me.

If you really have concerns about the decline of Striped Bass I recommend pushing Omega Protein out of the Chesapeake Bay atleast two nautical miles like most other Eastern States. Would also recommend that they can not use spotter planes. You have continued to tighten small commercial limits as well as smaller slot sizes recreationally but have not pressured Omega Protein out the bay and tighter limits on them. We have seen that Menahaden have a direct reflection on healthy Striped Bass, Cobia, and other fish species population.

We are letting a commercial company destroy the largest estuary in the United States and the finger is being pointed at small commercial fisherman and recreational fisherman. It's very sad to watch and I'm concerned my son will not get to enjoy the Bay like I did growing up.

v/r

Thomas W. Powell

From: [Dennis Whitcomb](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 9:50:11 AM

Being an avid Striped Bass fisherman I experience the reality of the reduced numbers and size quality of this fishery.

I totally support reduction efforts to bring this fishery back.

From: [Comcast](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 10:04:06 AM

Sirs:

I support the most conservative measures for reduction of the harvest of Striped Bass everywhere on the east coast of the United States.

This could include moratoriums on commercial and recreational fishing for the foreseeable future.

Francis Murphy Sprinkel jr
625 chapman street
Ashland, Va 23005
(804)380-7328

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Curtis Backus](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 11
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 10:56:12 AM

I support a 4 year moratorium for the taking of striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay and rivers.
At the minimum a slot limit as stated for option B-1.

Regards
Curtis Backus

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Keith Workman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 11:18:06 AM

Dear ASFMC:

As a sports fisherman of the middle and lower Chesapeake Bay over the last 50 years, I suggest imposing a moratorium on the Striped Bass Fishery, both recreational and commercial, in the whole Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and Ocean (in Va waters) until the population has recovered to sustainable levels.

In my opinion from reviewing the ASFMC documents, any of the other measures are just postponing the end of the fishery.

Also, going to a "Sportfish" designation would still allow for them to be caught, but not kept.

--

Keith Workman
10925 Spray Court
Glen Allen, VA 23060
(804) 350-7635 mobile

From: [John Shannon](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 11:31:46 AM

In reference to the Recreational Bay Options, I support implementing Option B1.

John Shannon
St Leonard, Maryland

From: [Jack Bruckner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 12:03:10 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am having a very difficult time understanding how these new regulations will help build back the population of striped bass by 2029. How can you increase the population of this species when they do not have the food source required to repopulate? I understand from the public comment meeting held on December 7, 2023, that we don't want to talk about the menhaden fishing issue, but unfortunately it goes to the heart of the striped bass issue. For example, I as a recreational fishman have not caught any striped bass since 2019. I have simply purchased some striped bass from a commercial source as a food source. It is simply not economical to go fishing for these fish when the population is so low, and the restrictions are so ridged. Two weeks ago, I purchase two 5 lb. striped bass that were whole and had to be cleaned. Upon cleaning them, I discovered the stomach contents of each of the fish. Each had a small menhaden along with a juvenile striped bass in their stomachs. Does that tell you something? I live in Chesapeake, Virginia, but own property in Cape Charles, VA. I travel the Bay Bridge many times each year and I have yet to witness the sea birds working a school of menhaden in the last five years or maybe even longer. Until you address the menhaden food source issue along with regulating the striped bass regulations of the states north and south of Virginia, you will never meet any recovery goals that are set for striped bass with Virginia regulations.

Respectfully,

Charles J. Bruckner
4021 Bunch Walnuts Road
Chesapeake, Va 23322
Also
29315 Stuarts Way,
Cape Charles, VA 23310

From: [David Saavedra](#)
 To: [Comments](#)
 Subject: [External] Comments on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
 Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 12:21:12 PM

Hello,

As a Maryland resident and avid recreational fisherman in the Chesapeake Bay, I am writing to voice my support for Option B1 of the proposed Chesapeake Bay Recreation Options, shown in the table below. In general, I am favorable toward any of the B options, but I am most in favor of B1 for its greatest overall reduction in harvest.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to the decision and hope we can work together to rebuild healthy stocks.

- David

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%

From: dmwild345@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Cc: dmwild345@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 12:21:37 PM

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing to encourage the Commonwealth of Virginia to take action to increase the health of Striper fishing in the Chesapeake Bay, which has been in decline for years. Many people I know who used to go striper fishing no longer do so because the population is so low, or because of regulations or the size of the fish are smaller and fewer fish. I understand the menhaden fleets have practically depleted striper food in the Chesapeake Bay, so the fish don't come into the bay. To be profitable those menhaden fleets much take an abundance of striper food out of the bay. I ask that the fleets be outlawed or their harvest be significantly reduced. Think of all the boats that would be sold and tackle sold at local stores, all paying taxes throughout the shores of Virginia – and other states. Could the Commonwealth collect more from sports fishing that the menhaden fleets, and keep the Chesapeake Bay in a much healthier environment for all?

The Commonwealth of Virginia should manage the resources for Virginians. We must stabilize and provide an environment for the stripe bass to return to an abundant resources. Who ensures that the nets aren't killing stripers caught with other harvested fish/menhaden? What is being done to limit the commercial catch? I don't believe that the sports fisherman is the issue. Please allow the menhaden to return in order to attach striper and other species of fish to VA waters.

Thank you:

David Wild

13700 Castleway Rd.
Midlothian, VA 23114

From: [Chris Quinn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment - Atlantic Striped Bass
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 12:49:52 PM

To whom it may concern,

First, I am extremely glad that efforts are being made to protect the striped bass population. From my experiences over the last 5 years, there is a sizable decrease in the population. I have a few comments below:

1. The scientific data used to estimate recreation harvests vs. commercial harvest needs to be more readily available and presented. There is no way in my opinion in the Chesapeake Bay (not speaking for ocean harvest), that recreational boats account for 95% and commercial is 5%. Supporting information:
 - a. Many recreational anglers, especially the last few years, are coming back with no or under limit catches. The average recreational angler spends relatively few days on the water. I have a group of 5 guys that I routinely hunt and fish with. Together, we spent less than 20 total trips on the bay fishing for rockfish this year. I personally only fished for stripers 3 days, with zero keepers. Only one of those 5 guys caught a limit of rockfish this year and that was one trip, 4 people.
 - b. The four charter boat captains I use, have 7-10 trips per week and routinely fill their quotas. On one charter I used annually, we have limited out 5 years straight of 12 fish (my only rockfish above 19" last year).
 - c. In the spring, in 2006-2010, I would routinely catch 2-8 each trip spring trophy fish and go out 3-5 times. From 2015-2019, I was catching 0-1 fish a season and going out 2-3 times. In 2000s, the same charter captains were doing 2 trips a day and catching 12 breeding fish a day, 7 days a week. Those same captains are only running 1 trip a day (not 7 days a week) and except for 1-2 days in the season catching 0-2 fishing a trip (running 25 rods). In 2010, one charter I use caught over 85 trophy rockfish during the rod and reel tournament (keeping their 18 limit).
 - d. There may be many more recreational fisherman, but for most, their success rate is significantly less and they fish far less often. I would love to review the data that suggests CHESAPEAKE BAY recreational harvests are 95%. I'd love to go to a 100% reporting system on an automated system like deer check-in tied to a fisherman's license to really see these harvest numbers.
2. **Primary Comment - Based on #1, the commercial rod and reel catch should be the same as recreational, period. There are other invasive species such as catfish and snakeheads that can replace the catch. This should be a priority anyway for bay harvest.**

3. A 100% tagging/reporting system for the Chesapeake Bay for all recreation and commercial should be developed. The investment would be well worth the effort to have real data. A phone app could easily be developed. The recreational fisherman I know would have no issue having to report their catch.
4. If a slot limit is used, fishing methods should be part of the limitations. I believe mortality amounts are not accurate for live bait and summer fisheries, especially outside of the ocean due to water temperatures. All bays and tributaries should be non-live bait for targeting rockfish. The large piles observed down current of the large fleets piled up on the one or two locations holding large numbers of fish in the Chesapeake Bay from early June through the entire season is sickening (mostly commercial boats on these spots except on Saturday and then it is a 50/50 split). At a minimum, targeting rockfish with live bait after a limit should be banned. I recognize this is hard to regulate, but it at least sets the standard. The methods used for rockfish in the bay are vastly different than those employed for rockfish for primary fishing months (e.g., bottom fishing vs. suspended). Catch and release should be artificial lures only (see next comment)
5. Trouble hooks should be banned for the rear of any fishing lure where rockfish are being targeted if slot limits are imposed.

Christopher Quinn
Pasadena Maryland

From: [Rocco Risbara IV](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:02:54 PM

Hello,

It is obvious that striped bass need more help to let stocks rebuild. Please do the right thing for this fishery that means so much to all of us. I support these options for draft addendum II.

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Rocco Risbara
Scarborough, Maine

From: [Voltaggio, Robert](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:12:06 PM

To whom it may concern,

I support these options for the draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I feel like we have made some progress in taking steps to preserve our striped bass fishery and we certainly must maintain and accelerate those efforts; we simply cannot go backwards. I enjoy fishing for striped bass in my home state of NY and my second home in RI and I have been appalled by the decline in the fishery over the last few decades. I hope that someday soon, my children can enjoy the fishery that I remember from my youth, but that will take all of us working together to ensure that happens.

Sincerely,
Robert Voltaggio
NY & RI

From: [steven foceri](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:13:54 PM

Hello,

As a writer, guide, surfcaster and conservationist, who lives in the State of New York I support the options below:

- 3.1.1 - Opt. B
- 3.1.2 - Opt. B1
- 3.2.1 - Opt. B
- 3.1.4 - Opt. B
- 3.3 Opt. B

Thank you.
-SF

From: [Haynes Courtney](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:16:06 PM

Rec fisherman are already getting screwed over with a one fish per person limit. I get to go at best 4 times a month. I don't even start until about mid November because the water isn't cold enough or I have to fish dock lights at night, which isn't worth how dangerous it is. So I might get to go 6 times total a season. Which means I get to keep between 6 to 12 fish a season(if I have a second person go with me). There is no way that I am causing the depletion of striper populations. I watch a "commercial fisherman" fish all day and fill his boat up with 19" fish, which is a throwback for rec anglers. If you are going to put more restrictions on stripers, you are just going to have people keeping illegal fish to feed their families. I don't believe decreasing limit or making a tighter slot for rec anglers will help. What about the decrease in menhaden populations? Once they are gone, why would gamefish return to our waters. Maybe we should focus on that instead of penalizing rec anglers on something that is overfished by commercial guys. I pay for a fresh and saltwater license every year and all I see are public boat ramps in dire need of fixing up. Can we do something about this? If not, can that money go to something that will benefit our fishery instead of penalizing rec anglers. It just goes from one fish to another. Soon, the state will keep us from fishing at all. Doesn't sound like freedom to me. Prove me wrong and let's do something good for the people of our great state!

From: [HeyJoe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Save , preserve and support for The Striped Bass
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:18:17 PM

Greetings to whom it may concern,

Thank you is in order for this monumental task in saving a species of fish, that has created hundreds of years of its pursuit as Americas de facto sports fish.

I would like to take this to address that ultimately another moratorium needs to happen sooner than later.

In the past five years of fishing the surf here in Massachusetts & Rhode Island as well as The Cape Cod Canal I have harvested two striped bass. Two bass in five years. I can not say the same for other fishermen and women.

Whether legal size or limit what happens in the darkness of night is astounding and such a detriment to the fish. We do not have enough enforcement to slow down the constant abuse of the law by many in the illegal harvesting of such a prized fish. We are selfish and greedy and frankly speaking many of us are ignorant.

We do not have enough leadership in communicating the fragility of the species and its dismal future.

When fishing licenses are bought and given on the license whether a physical one or digital one it must be highlighted what is happening with the striped bass in several languages.

Especially with the rich diversity of people in the northeast who come from all over the world to live in this great country or simply come to fish for this amazing prized species of fish.

Use social media : tik tok / instagram and FB to your advantage. Everyone posts their catch of a lifetime, use the what is in front of you the time is now before it's too late.

In closing I support:

3.1.1b

3.1.2b

3.2.1b

3.1.4b

3.3b

Ultimately a moratorium is what I would like most from 2024-2027 but what is proposed will do for now.

Regards,
Joe Pereira
New Bedford, Mass

From: [Dan Mayberry](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:29:28 PM

Good afternoon,

I support these options for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I think we all deserve to have a healthy stripe bass fishery. I would implore for more conservative measures because once the resource is gone, there is no guarantee it will return.

Sincerely,

Dan Mayberry

New York

From: [James Rakowski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:38:53 PM

Dear Commission Members:

I support the following addendum options:

3.1.1 B
3.1.2 B1
3.2.1 B
3.1.4 B
3.3 B

I am a retired Massachusetts resident and fish for bass 9 months a year. I practice catch and release and primarily use lures with single hooks to reduce fish mortality. I urge you to adopt measures to build stock abundance. Thank you.

James Rakowski
40 North Falmouth Hy
Falmouth MA 02556

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Adam Rojek](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:40:52 PM

Hello,

As an avid recreational striped bass fisherman in the state of Rhode Island, I would like to express my support for the following in regard to the striped bass draft addendum:

- 3.1.1 - Option B
- 3.1.2 - Option B1
- 3.2.1 - Option B
- 3.1.4 - Option B
- 3.3 - Option B

The goal should always be to increase and then maintain a strong striped bass population and I firmly believe these options are what is best for all parties involved.

Thank you for your time,
Adam Rojek

From: [Peter Bravo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:47:58 PM

I am writing to express my full support for the inclusion of the following options in Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B,
3.1.2 Option B1,
3.2.1 Option B,
3.1.4 Option B,
3.3 Option B.

It's crucial to emphasize the significance of safeguarding both the present and forthcoming classes of striped bass with this addendum. The welfare of this species is at a pivotal juncture, with the looming threat of the fishery collapsing. Protecting the integrity and sustainability of the striped bass population is not only an environmental imperative but also vital for the long-term health of our fisheries and ecosystems.

By implementing these outlined options, we can take proactive measures to ensure the preservation of the striped bass population. It's imperative that we adopt policies that balance conservation efforts with the interests of stakeholders, creating a sustainable approach that safeguards the species for generations to come.

I strongly urge your consideration and support for these options within Draft Addendum II. Together, we can take decisive steps toward preserving the striped bass and securing its place in our marine ecosystems.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Peter Bravo
Milford, CT

From: [Michael Brangwynne](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:54:42 PM

Hello ASMFC,

I offer this email in support of the following options for Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I am a long time recreational striped bass angler residing in Massachusetts. My primary concern is rebuilding an abundant biomass as quickly and effectively as possible. I believe that these five options for Draft Addendum II will best accomplish that objective. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Mike Brangwynne

=====

Mike Brangwynne

From: [Andrew Connors](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 1:55:43 PM

Dear committee,

Thank you for hearing me out.

If action isn't taken to protect stripers, we will lose them. Ever wonder why there are no cod near Cape Cod anymore? A brief 3-5 year moratorium on catch/kill will likely completely rebuild the stocks to levels unprecedented. Please sirs, for the sake of future generations, I implore you to consider:

- 3.1.1 Option B***
- 3.1.2 Option B1***
- 3.2.1 Option B***
- 3.1.4 Option B***
- 3.3 Option B***

Thank you,

Andrew Connors
Chappaqua, NY

From: [Alan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:12:48 PM

Good afternoon... as a recreational angler in New York, as well as a fisherman who has followed the struggle to rebuild the SSB to sustainable levels and to achieve a healthy stock by 2029...i want to show my support for the following proposals on the table at tonight's in person NY meeting...as in the past i maintain support for ASGA and their positions for rebuilding the stock for abundance with regulations that are shared along the entire Atlantic coast, including recreational and commercial quotas that are geared toward sustainability and abundance...

Thank you for your time.

Please see below as i support the following.

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B3

Alan Berger
516-647-1391
bergersmac@gmail.com

From: [Theo Rzepski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:15:27 PM

To Members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

I appreciate the complexity and collision of data and the interests of all sides of the striped bass conservation problem.

I am 75 years old and have fished for stripers for over 50 years. I lived through the crash of the striped populations that led to the need for a moratorium. The moratorium worked. Striped bass populations surged.

But over the last 20 years I have seen the striped bass population plummet. I now practice catch and release. Every year I fish saltwater in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Every year I catch fewer fish. On rare occasions I luck into a feeding pod and catch a few fish. During the 1990's and 2000's I caught and released a huge amount of striped bass.

Regulations must be enforced to protect the stocks of stripers. Specifically I urge the adoption of the following amendments.

3.1.1 option B

3.1.2 option B

3.2.1 option B

3.4 option B

3.3 option B

The other saltwater fish I am concerned about is Bluefish. They have become scarce in the waters I regularly fish.

Thank you for your work

Ted Rzepski
64 Westland ave
West Hartford, Ct 06107

tedrzepski@gmail.com

From: [Susca, George](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:27:33 PM

I support the following options

- 3.1.1
- 3.1.2
- 3.2.1
- 3.1.4
- 3.3

I want the striped Bass fishery to be strong for the future

George Susca | Managing Partner

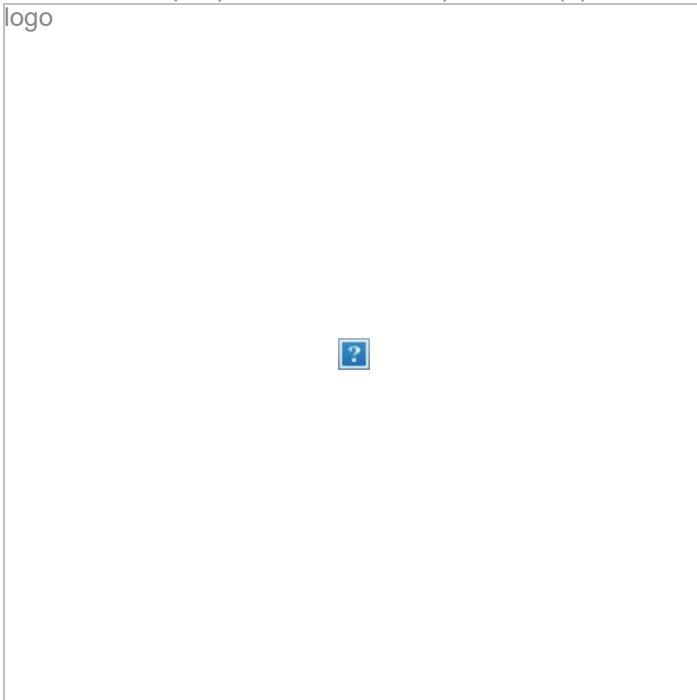
Costello's Ace Hardware

[5135 Merrick Rd.](#)

[Massapequa](#) Pk., NY 11762

516-798-5757 ph | 516-798-1420 fx | #11428 (8)

logo



From: beachfire@optonline.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass addendum ii
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:30:34 PM

I support the options of number ii, option B and option B1

These are the most logical options for all involved.

William Herlihy

N Y State Surfcaster

From: [Chris Del Toro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:40:15 PM

I support these options for draft addendum II":

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I am from Connecticut State. I feel that this is important to me because If I can't fish for striped bass, life aint worth livin'

Thank you

Chris Del toro

From: [Teddy Nesius](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:51:30 PM

I support these options for draft addendum II.

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

My name is Theodore Nesius. Recreational surf caster from Massachusetts. Thank you for taking the time to read my email and take my input into consideration. I am concerned with the poor spawning that has been taking place. I have seen a dramatic drop in the numbers of sixteen inch fish and smaller. This past season has been my worst since the early 2000's. I have taken steps to help with release mortality by, not measuring or weighing fish, I have learned to counter balance my lures with small weights so I only use 1 belly treble hook, and crush the barbs instead of 2 treble hooks, I don't have a waterproof phone or camera so I'm not tempted to take photos of fish. I've gotten a lot faster at not removing fish from the water and releasing them faster. I typically fish in Boulder fields so I am standing in waste deep water. Thank you for your time.
Teddy Nesius. Ps I wish all meetings were hybrid....

From: [Gmail](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:56:14 PM

Greetings,

As an avid recreational Striped Bass angler throughout Southern New England, I would like to register my support for the following 2024 season options as outlined in draft addendum II.

- 3.1.1 Option B

I feel strongly that all modes of fisherman should share in the efforts to conserve at the same level.

- 3.1.2 Option B1

I feel strongly that all regions and modes of fisherman should share in the efforts to conserve at the same level

- 3.1.4 Option B

These are sensible and pragmatic regulatory requirements.

- 3.2.1 Option B

All regions and modalities should share in the efforts to conserve the species.

- 3.3 Option B

Expedited response to assessment updates should be at the discretion of the Board. There are scenarios where a timely response may be critical, and empowerment of the board seems sensible.

From a personal perspective, I hope to be able to pursue striped bass recreationally for many years to come without another moratorium, and any conservation methods that will allow that are a small price to pay.

Brian Rooney
Narragansett, RI
540.422.5030

From: [William Prodouz](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Cc: [MIKE ARMSTRONG](#); [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); sarah.peake@mahouse.gov; sarah.ferrara@mahouse.org
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management Addendum
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 2:57:37 PM

Ms. Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
comments@asmfc.org
efranke@asmfc.org

NOTE TO MASSACHUSETTS MEMBERS OF ASMFC AND THEIR PROXY all CC'd

I am a long time recreational angler for striped bass. I am a past officer in several Fishing clubs (the eyes and ears on our environment because we are out there daily). I know the stocks are in trouble. I know and communicate with hundreds of anglers and while we all have occasional good days and fewer great days, there are many days with fewer or no fish. There is a noticeable shortage of sublegal bass (year classes after 2015).

Striped bass drive a large part of our spring, summer and fall economy in Massachusetts (especially Cape Cod and coastal economies). Tackle sales, bait sales, guides, transportation, meals and lodging are all reliant on a strong striped bass population and vibrant fishery. Why put that all at risk without fighting for a full 14.5% mortality reduction?

I support all measures to achieve a 14.5% mortality reduction.

Commercial quotas should be required to meet the 14.5% reduction.

Recreational anglers should be required to meet the 14.5% reduction.

For Hire Recreational Anglers should meet the 14.5% reduction too. There should be no increased size slot for recreational anglers on for hire vessels. This is short sighted and could lead to future closure options for all anglers if the decrease in mortality fails to rebuild the stocks. Give up a little now for the For Hire guides to survive in the future. As I have stated in open hearings, For Hire (charter guides) need to sell the experience not the few extra pounds in a slightly larger "legal" striped bass.

WE ALL MUST SHARE THE BURDEN. We have been and continue to be falling behind in rebuilding the stocks of the iconic Striped Bass. Don't fall short again without an angler wide effort.

I encourage the Massachusetts ASMFC representatives to be aggressive in fighting for maximum mortality reduction.

Regards,
William Prodouz

PO Box 612
Pocasset, MA 02559

Please find my official comments by Management Options for ASMFC below. Thank you.

As to Fishery Status:

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update.

As to Management Options:

I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures with at least a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

As to Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option. Let the 2015 year class survive.

As to Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction and saves some 2015 year class bass.

As to Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28"- 31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- "a recreational angler is a recreational angler" whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other. Don't sell a few extra inches of our resource that we all must manage
- Recreational mode splits should be an amendment level decision. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions must be analyzed.
- Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. (Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators and customers from adapting business models and expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.) It is in trouble for all anglers.

It is difficult enough for the Environmental Police without more "slot" options".

As to Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I do not support it.

- Option D only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

As to Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" ; for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C and D

As to Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions because it meets the required 14.5% reduction goal.

As to Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- I support a reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.
- I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the

current rebuilding timeline.

As to For-Hire Management Clarification, I support option A Status Quo

- Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire and private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local "filet at the dock" prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- I believe Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit is wrong and prefer ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment. I think the emergency cut to 28" to under 31" may have saved the 3025 year class so they may spawn again and again.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT!

Regards,

William Prodouz
PO Box 612
Pocasset, MA 02559

From: chris.malgee@vbbackwater.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regulations
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 3:38:05 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Chris Malgee, and I'm a Captain that operates a for-hire vessel for recreational anglers. For years, the Striped Bass was the primary target for both local and traveling anglers. The economic impact of this fishery was significant and has been depleted considerably along with the population of these fish. As someone who lived with and saw the benefits of the initial moratorium, but dealt with the consequences of it, I strongly believe that aggressive action needs to be taken to protect remaining stocks. The most conservative and protective recommendations should be taken to ensure we meet the 2029 biomass goals.

I support reduction in commercial harvest to meet or exceed the suggested reduction for the 2029 plan. I also support a reduction of the slot for recreational anglers – with no additional carveout for for-hire vessels.

Furthermore, please do consider 1) in conjunction with a significant reduction to commercial harvest (>25%) a “legally target but no harvest” moratorium for recreational anglers. 2) state in no uncertain terms the need of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the VMRC to address and resolve the Menhaden reduction fishing challenge that has played a role in Striped Bass availability and less body mass in the fish that do remain.

Captain Chris Malgee
Founder/Operator
757-403-2045
chris.malgee@vbbackwater.com
www.vbbackwater.com



Virus-free www.avg.com

From: [michael kilmartin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:04:42 PM

To Whom it may concern, I am in favor of the options below for draft II.

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Michael Kilmartin

A little rhody (R.I.) surf and boat recreational fisherman.

Thanks for the opportunity.

From: [Robert Groskin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:07:10 PM

Please consider my recommendations for the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 as follows.

- 3.1.1- I urge you to support option B
- 3.1.2-i urge your to support option B1
- 3.1.3- I urge you to support option B
- 3.1.4- I urge you to support option B
- 3.2.1- I urge you to support option B
- 3.3- I urge you to support option B

Although I would prefer a complete moratorium on striped bass, I realize this may not be feasible at this time. The above recommendations may hopefully be sufficient.

Thank you

Robert Groskin, DVM
344 Vandelinda Ave
Teaneck, NJ 07666

From: [rich rubin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:08:32 PM

I have been surf fishing along the Massachusetts and Rhode Island shores since 1982. I have seen the return and now the drop of the in the Stripe Bass numbers. While I believe that a moratorium on harvesting of stripe bass would be best for the striper population, this is not a current listed option. I have read the proposals and support the following options and comments by Stripers Forever:

Thank You
Richard Rubin

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

- There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015-year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Option A expands the slot to 28"-35", Option C and D introduce 'mode splits'. Essentially, recreational anglers are split into 'private vessel/shore' and 'for-hire', it is not the right thing to do now or ever. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the board and law enforcement

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

- Here we selected Option B1 for several reasons. Most importantly it produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): Support 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.*

- We do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the board choose to adopt (most likely against public comment) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support 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.*

- This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off fillets) and keep the skin on the fillets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. We are adding to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by the anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.

- Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, “Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum.” An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.
- We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.
 - First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let’s say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us it’s a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, then this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.
 - Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability) to getting these new commercial regulations in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

- As we mentioned in our [summary of this past ASMFC board meeting](#), there is a really good chance that Addendum II will only be in effect for a one year period. The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be needed to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. This is unfortunate, the writing has been on the wall for years and as you are probably already aware, Stripers Forever has been calling for the most conservative measures since the beginning of the Amendment 7 process. If the results of the next stock assessment are as bad as we anticipate, the conversation about a equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be back on the table.

■

Good health is true wealth

From: [Bob Shriber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:31:07 PM

I have been fishing for over 60 years almost exclusively for Striped Bass. I have seen the population decrease tremendously in the 80's and 90's. We must be careful not to let this happen again.

I support these options for draft addendum II":

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you

Bob Shriber

Aquinnah

Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

From: [Chris Conner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II comments
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:51:17 PM

Thank you for accepting public comments on the more restrictive striped bass regulations.

I support option B1. It's been clear for some time that we are overfishing the striped bass population, and the time has come for the most aggressive possible option currently on the table. An immediate reduction in harvest - especially in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay - is our best chance of avoiding a full moratorium like we experienced decades ago.

There should also be consistent daily limits across both the recreational and for hire sectors and I would like to see a one fish daily limit for both.

Many thanks,
Chris Conner
Arlington, Virginia

Please pardon the typos. Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jim Stephan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial Fisheries in the Bay
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 4:51:28 PM

Maybe I missed it but why don't you address the over fishing by commercial companies. Specifically the Canadian company allowed to fish the Menhaden fish which the fish depend on. I watch them deploy planes to find the schools and then deploy nets miles wide. You think they are just netting bait fish? They are netting everything feeding on it. There should be no commercial fishing by nets in the Chesapeake. I live at Grandview Island the end of the bay and have seen the destruction of the fishing for over 20 years. We have commercial netters down here who don't even check their nets for a week. And they block access to sport fisherman who try to respect the nets.. You want to fish commercially in the Bay you set lines and you check and pull them everyday. No more commercial fishing of bait fish in the bay. For Fertilizer? You got to be kidding me. I can't wait for someone to see who authorized that. Jim Stephan

From: jeff_ri@cox.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 5:21:22 PM

From:

Geoffrey McNally
84 Crest Rd
Tiverton, RI 02878

To:

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Hello,

I am a recreational shore fisherman from Rhode Island.

I have reviewed the documents located at
https://asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AtIStripedBassDraftAddendumII_PublicComment_Oct2023.pdf
and https://asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/DraftAddII_QuickRefGuideOptions.pdf.

Based on reviewing these documents, I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Signed by:

Geoffrey McNally
December 18, 2023

From: [Chris Carter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 5:25:03 PM

Dear Emilie,

Here to comment on the recent proposals to Striped Bass for the Chesapeake Bay and add real world experience. The 2023 fall season has produced larger striped bass and in larger population numbers that myself, other recreational fisherman, and for hire captains have seen in 5 years.

The graph release mortality for recreational fisherman on page 25 seem to be inflated with speculation. With the education of the recreational fishing community on the proper release of fish, how is that 1:1 / harvest: release mortality, possible? Recreational fisherman know that by taking care of the resource it will sustain.

The larger concern is commercial fishing for those targeting the species of striped bass but more so for those targeting menhaden. Commercial fisherman only have 1 agenda and that is to harvest fish. This should be the primary focus on your enquiries and enforcement.

The current 2023 recreational striped bass harvest rate is sufficient, but if a selection is needed, B4 with the 14.5% reduction for commercial fisherman.

Very humbly,

Chris

From: [James Ferguson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 5:27:35 PM

Hi ASMFC board,

I am an avid recreational fisherman, I belong to the Plum Island Surfcasters Club and also fish by myself and with many non-club members. I fish by boat primarily and also surfcast, across MA and seacoast NH, and RI.

I believe the striped bass stock condition is much worse than is being projected in this addendum. I would love to participate in the MA commercial striped bass fishery but am staunchly against it since the species is threatened. I would be happy with a moratorium on all harvest. I think licenses for commercial Striped Bass should be severely decreased or add more requirements to make it harder to get a permit to commercial striper fish. As much as I would love to make thousands of dollars, I care about the stock of striped bass much more. I believe charter and self guided trips should adhere to same regulations. I am signed up and plan to get a captains license and potentially guide in the near future. I will be a catch and release charter to protect the species.

I support the following Addendum 2 options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options. I support Option B, 1 fish at 28” to 31” (all modes).

While many of our members do use for hire services, we feel that all recreational anglers should operate under the same guidelines related to the size and fish limits. We also believe that it is imperative that we protect the 2015-year class and maintain the current 28” to 31” size limit. I would rather support a harvest moratorium but that is not an option.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: I support Option B- 1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification. I support Option B1.

Keep the slot consistent for recreational anglers without a for hire guide and those without a for hire guide. Protect that 2015 class of striped bass.

I would vote to not allow larger party boats to fish for striped bass too. They are too big to allow people to properly revive the fish upon release.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements. I support Option B.

Regardless of how hard this may be to enforce, it should be the law.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

I've spoken about this in my opening statement. As much as I would like to participate in the commercial fishery I will not sacrifice **ANY** potential damage to the striped bass stock. Most people I know who do participate in this fishery use it to put more money into their boat or even keep fish over the slot for themselves. The quality of the meat harvested is poor, often no bleeding or icing. Please reduce or even better, get rid of the commercial striped bass fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment. I support Option B.

I am proud and happy that the board took emergency action to reduce the slot size this spring. I support them being able to take emergency actions and similar.

I hope to be proud of your actions. Please limit harvest as much as possible and protect the 2015 spawn class and future classes. This fishery is so special and provides so much for local economies and peoples personal joy.

-James Ferguson

77 Pine Island Road

Newbury MA 01951

From: [Dex Chadsey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:18:01 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I personally feel that striped bass, along with many species of fish and animals, are under tremendous stress right now. Fishing pressure, development, environmental changes, technology, and many other factors are having an impact on striped bass and other species.

Therefore my recommendation and hope is that the management board makes conservation of the species, and rebuilding the population, their most important objectives. I am personally onboard with whatever measures are necessary to achieve a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality as quickly as possible.

Best regards,

Dex Chadsey

From: [Peter Morrison](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:33:11 PM

Gentlemen, I support these options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 option B
- 3.1.2 option B1
- 3.2.1 option B
- 3.1.4 option B
- 3.3. option B

I am deeply concerned about the state of the Striped Bass. Having fished for them off the surf and marshes, in New Jersey for over 60 years it is clearly time for action to ensure a larger and vigorous population of these great fish.

Respectfully I hope you enact the provisions of the Draft Amendment I have listed above.

“signed”. Peter D Morrison, Ocean City, NJ

Sent from my iPad

From: [Dima Leokumovich](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:47:37 PM

Hello,

I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B 3

As an avid fisherman and supporter of Striped Bass preservation, I believe we should be managing for abundance, not yield, and supporting these options will help save this favorite sport fish species for years and generations to come.

Dimitry Leokumovich
Brooklyn, New York

From: [Kim Taylor](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:51:00 PM

My comment concerning Striped Bass is The Native American citizens of State and/or Federally Recognized Tribes in the states affected are exempt from any restrictions due to Aboriginal Inherent Rights of the Indigenous Peoples where their Ancestral and Current Lands, Territories, Waterways, Tributary Rivers are located within and The Articles of Peace, Middle Plantation Treaty 1677 between the Pamunkey Indian Tribe and The Commonwealth of Virginia by England which includes the Tributary Indians inwhich several survived and still exist to this day. Secondly due to our extremely small population we won't have any negative impact on the striped bass populations.

I do agree having restrictions against commercial recreation fishing, fishing for sport and Military branches of the so called Incidental Takings including NASA, Federal and State Agencies, and other Corporations.

Thank you,

Kim Taylor
Pamunkey Tribal Citizen
373 Lay Landing Road
Pamunkey Indian Reservation
King William, Virginia 23086
804-317-5809

From: [Jonathan Deford](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Strippers
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 6:52:48 PM

This fish is in danger of extinction if we the people don't help it. The Maryland and Virginia bay need all the help it can get! Put limits on all rec. fisherman, commercial fisherman and charters. It's the only way to save them!!!!!! JHD

From: [Koch, Gregory E](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:01:39 PM

Public

Greetings,

I am an avid fisherman who lives on Cape Cod, Ma. I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1. Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I fish nearly every day of the season. The 2023 season was magical in terms of fish larger than 28". Please don't screw this up and let this fishery erode into near nothingness yet again – I'm getting to old for that.

Kind regards,
Greg Koch
Hyannis, Ma

This e-mail message, together with any attachments, contains information of Merck & Co., Inc. (126 East Lincoln Ave., P.O. Box 2000, Rahway, NJ USA 07065) and/or its affiliates, that may be confidential, proprietary copyrighted and/or legally privileged. (Direct contact information for affiliates is available at - [Contact us - MSD.](#)) It is intended solely for the use of the individual or entity named on this message. If you are not the intended recipient, and have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by reply e-mail and then delete it from your system.

From: [Rich Flanagan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:21:13 PM

I support these options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 option B
- 3.1.2 option B1
- 3.2.1 option B
- 3.1.4 option B
- 3.3 option B

I long to see Striped Bass conserved and protected so that they will always be around. As I love to fish and have done so my entire life.

After being introduced to the Striper fishery, I feel there is no other fish more EXCITING to pursue. I do hope and pray that they will be around for a long time and never have to fear that they won't.

Thank you
Richard Flanagan
Flanagan Construction, LLC.
License# 2705157533

From: [Brendan Holden](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:30:31 PM

To whom it may concern,

Striped Bass fishing (recreationally) is one of the most important things in my life. It helps relieve stress from work/family but more importantly it connects me with nature. The one on one interactions I have with these beautiful fish in their environment is one of the greatest feelings in the world. Complete serenity.

I support these options for draft addendum II.

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brendan Holden
Massachusetts

From: jtomici@optonline.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC Public Comment Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 7:38:27 PM

To members of the ASFMC,

My name is John Tomici. I'm a surf fisherman from the North Fork of Long Island NY and I have enjoyed catching striped bass for many years. I want to ensure that this fishery can overcome the current pressures it is being subjected to so I can continue to enjoy this hobby with other responsible anglers well into my retirement and with my children and grandchildren for years to come.

I hereby submit my recommendations for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Regards,

John Tomici
1530 Wells Avenue
Southold, NY 11971

From: [Daniel Fry](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:12:06 PM

Greetings ASMFC, I am deeply concerned about the health of the striped bass fishery on the east coast. As a father of two boys 9 & 11, I want them to have the chance to teach their kids conservation practices for this incredible species, and for generations to come.

There is certainly a lot more to the equation than managing removals, but continued moderation is key. As such,

I support the following options for draft addendum ii:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

If you guys can help me out with sensible management of removals, I will continue to dedicate my focus on restoring estuarine habitat, improving coastal water quality, and investing in sustainable alternative economic engines for coastal communities.

Let's not end up in a future where we're the crusty old Han Solo from the Force Awakens telling the future younger generation "striped bass, the great migration, It's true, all of it". Let them have the chance to experience it themselves.

kind regards,

Daniel Fry
Rye, NY 10580
646-824-4465
dkanoafry@gmail.com
[@danielflyfishing](#)

From: [Float Serve](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:19:53 PM

Hello,

I support these options: draft addendum II

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I see by far the most mortality from people fishing bait, even with circle hooks still seeing gut hooks. I would like to see striped bass be gamefish only at least for a few years with no commercial.

Bill Carlson - Angler from NH

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] public comment 2023 of Chesapeake Bay
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:24:15 PM

From: Dorothy Tuohey <captat3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2023 3:26 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] public comment 2023 of Chesapeake Bay

Emilie,

My comment for the Hire vessels on the Chesapeake Bay is option C2 of 19" to Max size of 24". 2 fish for hires and one fish for pleasures.

My reasoning for this is as follows;

As of the December 2023 meeting in Annapolis there are only 377 for hire vessels on the bay, and approx.500 licensed watermen on the bay. There is a waiting list for these licenses when they become available. I have noticed that the pleasure license the DNR sells is at 322,000 licenses. When will the DNR put a cap on pleasure licenses like they have with watermens and the for hire licenses? AS of December 10 the for hire licenses has brought in 85,000 fish for the season of 2023. If you figure everyone that has a pleasure license goes out two(2) times a week that is 644,000 per week multiplied by 4 is 2,576,000 fish per month, multiplied by 6 is 15,456,000 per year. When is the DNR going to put a cap on the licenses for recreational use? I know a lot of captains who are not licensed for hire but advertise as charter vessels and keep 2 fish from their personal vessels. Holding only a pleasure license from the Department of Natural Resources. Since the season ended on December 10, I have had people on facebook showing off the 40"- 60 plus fish that they are catching and keeping.

I have been out fishing blue and spanish mackerel on moratorium days and see many pleasure boaters going after rockfish. One instance 2 people on one vessel keeping more than 30 fish without a valid license displayed on the vessel. DNR was called. Mostly what I am seeing is the pleasure boaters do not follow any rules when it comes to the Striped Bass. We need to have the DNR step up their officers to patrol the fishing grounds more often. We as the hires violate any laws for our quota, We have to hire attorneys and go to court.

I suggest that we end the catch and release of striped bass from December 11 through May 1, since we do not have trophy season this year. This should increase the females to spawn their eggs in rivers and bays. Before being caught in the months of December to May catch and release.

Thank you

Capt Dorothy Tuohey owner

Annapolis Fishing Charters and member of
Upper Bay Charter Captains

From: [Peter Mohlin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Peter Mohlin](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass - comments on draft addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 8:34:03 PM

Ms. Franke and the ASMFC Board,

Unfortunately I could not attend Maine's public hearing on Amendment 7's draft Addendum II, but here are my comments for your review:

I support the following options in draft Addendum II in order to best protect the striped bass fishery -

3.1.1 - Option B

It is imperative to protect the 2015 year class. The majority of fish I caught and released during the 2023 season were mid 20s"-32" which tells me there is still hope for this year class to spawn in decent numbers.

3.1.2 - Option B 1

This provides the best overall reduction.

3.1.3 - Option B

I don't support the harvest of an overfished species by any means but this is the least damaging option to the stock.

3.1.4 - Option B

This option would give enforcement a chance to determine if a fish was legally harvested. We need more enforcement on all fronts.

3.2.1 - Option B

I urge the Board to select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.

3.3 - Option B

We don't have time for the Board to belabor over another Amendment in response to a 2024 stock assessment. I hope that a majority vote by the Board in favor of implementing regulations to meet the 2029 rebuilding plan could actually happen.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Pete Mohlin
Recreational Angler
Freeport, Maine

--

Peter Mohlin
pmohlin@gmail.com
207.294.2251

From: [Martin Alger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft Addendum II
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 9:03:18 PM

Dear ASMFC,

Regarding the upcoming draft addendum, I support the following:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

The striped bass is extremely important to me, as an avid surf caster. This is a true passion of mine and my sons. The noticeable decline of the fishery over the last number of years has been extremely disappointing and worrisome. I hope that the ASMFC will take a hard look at this and work to get the striped bass stocks moving in the right direction. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Martin Alger
Stamford, CT

Martin J Alger
(917) 693-0460 - mobile

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Andy Smallwood](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 9:08:05 PM

I support B1 option and hopefully revisit this issue in 2 years and reassess the data. I'd also like to see a ban on the industrial harvest of Atlantic menhaden inside the Chesapeake bay within 3-5 miles. Thank you.
Jonathan Smallwood.

From: [Michael Pavlov](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] My votes for Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Monday, December 18, 2023 9:46:43 PM

My name is Michael Pavlov. I live in Brewster, MA. I am a recreational fisherman. Please accept my votes below for the various draft addendum II to amendment 7 options. Thank you!

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.1.3 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

From: [Christian Martin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 2
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 12:01:12 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I was alarmed to hear that there are already new efforts to decrease the conservation impact of Amendment 7. After reading up on the proposed changes I would like it to be known that the following are the options that I support:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I would additionally like to state for the record that I see no greater priority than the conservation of the striped bass species. Money can never be an excuse for depleting a natural resource and you can't make money off a species that you wipe out anyway so the answer should be simple. Please make every effort to protect the striped bass and do not deviate from Amendment 7 via addenda or any other device of circumvention.

Thank you for your time and attention,
Christian Martin

From: [Julian Fox](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 5:18:43 AM

Dear all,

I support the following options for draft addendum II

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I fish in Massachusetts, Cape Cod to be precise. I live in the UK but come to the US for two weeks every year, and I have been for over 10 years. I only come to fish recreationally for striped bass. I would like to see the WORLD CLASS fishery that existed in the 2000s back please. I do not accept that this cannot be achieved - we need to act on abundance and protection of spawning stock. We should NOT manage for YIELD - how ridiculous is that!

thank you

Julian Fox
Solihull, UK.

From: [Matthew Spence](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "striped bass draft addendum II"
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 5:55:00 AM

To whom it may concern

I am a UK based recreational angler who annually visits Massachusetts for 10 to 14 days in late May and June to fish for striped bass. I am drawn across The Pond solely by the quality of the striped bass fishing. I spend in excess of \$3000 on the trip - nearly all on services and products run from the USA.

I strongly believe the striped bass population should be managed for abundance and not yield. I am thus writing to express my support for the following options of draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 option B
- 3.1.2 option B1
- 3.2.1 option B
- 3.1.4 option B
- 3.3 Option B

Science and economics should determine how stocks are managed. Without such considerations at the forefront the quality of the angling will decline and the money of visiting anglers will not enter the US economy

Many thanks for your time reading this

Matt Spence
(Bristol, England)

From: [Capt. Mike Ostrander](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] I support any regulation to protect striped bass, including protecting their forage
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 7:32:51 AM

I support any measure to protect striped bass, including protecting their forage. That means menhaden protection within the Chesapeake Bay.

Capt. Mike

Capt. Mike Ostrander
(804) 938-2350
Mike@DiscovertheJames.com
www.DiscovertheJames.com

From: [Benjamin Brewer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:02:41 AM

Dear ASMFC

I am a recreational striped bass angler from eastern CT and id like to give my input on draft addendum II. My preferences are as follows.

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

While i understand there are a wide range of viewpoints on this matter, what is most important at the end of the day is abundance of fish for everyone, rec or commercial. Please base decisions on fact and science, and not the loudest (often misguided) voice in the room. We conservation minded rec anglers care deeply on this matter and want there to be great fishing for our children to enjoy. Although we may not be the most populous group in attendance at meetings, our passion for our sport and these fish is up there with the rest, please help to preserve this fishery.

Thanks
Ben

From: [Frank Payne](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Rockfish
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:17:05 AM

This is a touch one because I enjoy fishing for rockfish. I would suggest you close the season for a year and the following year allow one fish 20-36 inches.

From: [John Yemma](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:53:07 AM

To the ASMFC:

My name is John Yemma and I live in Winthrop Massachusetts. I am 37 years old and I have been fishing in Massachusetts for most of my life.

I believe managing Striped Bass for abundance not only leads to the best end result for the fish, habitat and environment, but it also brings about the best economic outcome for the fishing industry, its constituents and our communities as a whole. Striped Bass is the prize sportfish of the Northeast. In some locations it is the only species that can be caught without the use of a boat. Our sport fishing industry and all associated businesses that support it, including but not limited to restaurants, hotels, convenience stores, gas stations, tackle shops and so on would face challenges without a healthy fishery. I personally know over a dozen people whose livelihoods would be put at risk if there is further decline. It is my hope that we can manage the Striped Bass for abundance and reap the economic benefits of it too. Florida has shown us what can be done with their management of the Tarpon and Redfish, for example. Those species are managed conservatively and Florida represents the lion's share of sport fishing related spending in the US to the benefit of their local economy and communities. It is time we follow their example up here in the Northeast.

I support these options for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I appreciate your attention to my comments.

Thank you,
John Yemma
Winthrop Massachusetts

--

John Yemma
j.yemma42@gmail.com
508.843.0085 mobile

From: [Chuck Soule](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:57:50 AM

Hi folks. My preference would be to have striped bass be marked as catch & release for ALL parties (recreational and chartered boats - although these should be considered the same) and no commercial harvest. Basically, no harvest of any striped bass for seasons 2024 through 2026. In 2025, reassess and determine go-forward status for 2027. Since this can't/won't happen, please consider voting as follows:

- 3.1.1 - option B
- 3.1.2 - option B1
- 3.1.3 - option B
- 3.1.4 - option B
- 3.2.1 - option B
- 3.3 - option B

Please forward this information to:

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator

Thank you for allowing for my input. We need to protect this great resource.

Sincerely,
Chuck Soule
Cape Neddick, Me

From: [Roberta K](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:59:31 AM

To the Commissioners of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

I am writing to support Option B for the Commercial Quota Reduction Options and ask the Board to adopt a reduction of no less than 25% to ensure the necessary reductions in striped bass mortality are met.

In addition, I ask that the Board reduce the Chesapeake Bay and Virginia Menhaden reduction fishery by 50% to ensure that Striped Bass have enough food supply. The population of Striped Bass will not increase unless there is enough menhaden to support a larger population. In the Chesapeake Bay, significant changes to the ecosystem have been observed, with apex predators like Osprey showing massive reproductive decline. It is probably not a coincidence that striped bass are also declining. The Bay is assaulted by stormwater runoff, pollutant discharges, and now climate change. The ASMFC should assess the Bay as a separate environment than the Atlantic for purposes of menhaden and other fish species analysis.

Finally, I would like the Board to have the necessary flexibility to respond to future stock assessments. Therefore, I support Option B in Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on draft Addendum II.

Sincerely,
Roberta Kellam

From: rmohlin552@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] comments on addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 9:50:24 AM

I support the following options in draft Addendum II in order to best protect the striped bass fishery

-

3.1.1 - Option B

It is imperative to protect the 2015 year class. The majority of fish I caught and released during the 2023 season were mid 20s"-32" which tells me there is still hope for this year class to spawn in decent numbers.

3.1.2 - Option B 1

This provides the best overall reduction.

3.1.3 - Option B

I don't support the harvest of an overfished species by any means but this is the least damaging option to the stock.

3.1.4 - Option B

This option would give enforcement a chance to determine if a fish was legally harvested. We need more enforcement on all fronts.

3.2.1 - Option B

I urge the Board to select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.

3.3 - Option B

We don't have time for the Board to belabor over another Amendment in response to a 2024 stock assessment. I hope that a majority vote by the Board in favor of implementing regulations to meet the 2029 rebuilding plan could actually happen.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Robert Mohlin
Striped Bass supporter in Southern Maine



This email has been checked for viruses by AVG antivirus software.

www.avg.com

From: [Roger and Judith Anderson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 9:52:42 AM

Sirs: it is high time that you stopped playing politics and stopped pandering to the commercial fishing industry. The scientific evidence has shown that not only are the rock fish but most all game fishes in the Chesapeake Bay have been in serious decline. Take action now! Curtail commercial fishing immediately.

Not: I have been fishing the Bay since the early 1970's and never, never experienced such poor fishing.

Respectfully,
Roger Anderson

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Mike Wright](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 9:53:00 AM

To ASMFC,

I am a resident of eastern Long Island, an avid surfcaster and a boat owner. I have watched the decline in the number of striped bass in our waters over the the last decade and it must be halted.

Please take the steps necessary for the absolute fastest rebuilding of the stock possible. The slot limit this year, even the 28-31 slot did very little to curb the number of fish that were caught by recreational anglers in our area.

I support continuing the 28-31 slot limit as the best option among those that are in proposed for addendum II. I do not think it is wise to allow charter boats a larger slot and I do think that commercial fishermen should have their quota cut as well in both the ocean and Chesapeake. And you must allow the ASMFC to take action on any new stock assessment information immediately without a season's delay.

The decline in striped bass abundance and dispersion has had major economic impacts on our local businesses and we want to see the stock rebuilt as fast as is possible.

Thank you,

Michael Wright
Southampton NY

From: [Ronnie Buttacavoli](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:04:34 AM

To Whom it may concern,

My letter and the thoughts below are based on my feeling that we should be managing for abundance, not yield, and that all involved will benefit from more fish in the water (good for the fish, for the fun of recreational anglers, and literally dollars and cents for the economy). I believe science and economic data, not policy or politics, should be driving these decisions. I live on the South Shore of Long Island, NY and this is an important issue for all of us here.

Respectfully,

-Ronnie Buttacavoli-

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

From: [Tom Bolinder](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:55:31 AM

I think it is time to stop all commercial fishing for Striped Bass. The commercial fishermen take all the breeding size fish. It is ridiculous. A lot of my friends have the license and use the money to pay for their fishing season. All can well afford it without killing our magnificent sport fish. I would not be opposed to catch and release for all sportsmen. These fish are vital to the Cape Cod economy. People come from all over the world for a chance to catch one.

Respectfully
Tom Bolinder
Bourne Village Cape Cod
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Peter Getsinger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Advisory Board,
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:10:42 AM

Being a recreational fisherman on Martha's Vineyard and the Elizabeth Islands, and having read info regarding the decline of the greater Chesapeake Bay Stripe Bass population, I am in favor of the options available within addendum II.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter W Getsinger
Sent from my iPad

From: [Hong Chu](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:15:06 AM

Hi,

just my input but stop selling license to new buyers. Like tautog and other species, trace back to a date and only allow the ones that have been fishing since to renew their license. This will cut down the numbers of the commercial fleet tremendously. Another thing to look at is that other people from other states can buy a commercial license for striped bass in Massachusetts which makes no sense. The quota is state issued/allowed and by allowing out of states to hold a license is contradicting just that. You don't have to be a resident in MA but you can purchase a commercial license. I know many fisherman from Rhode Island that hold a Massachusetts license also. Please note that only Rhode Island residents are allowed to buy or renew a license in Rhode Island.

Compare their fishery with ours and anyone can tell you that Rhode Island fishery is booming. So the question is not how can we rebuild but will we rebuild?

Southcoast Hospitals Group, which includes Charlton Memorial Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital and Tobey Hospital, is a 2022 Newsweek's World's Best Hospital.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email (including any attachments) may contain confidential, privileged or otherwise protected information. It is intended for a particular recipient. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender by reply email, delete this email and destroy any copies of the email and its attachments. Any unauthorized use or disclosure of this email and its attachments is strictly prohibited. The recipient has full responsibility for protecting its systems from viruses and other breaches of the system's integrity and Southcoast accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email or its attachments.

From: [George Baldwin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:28:02 AM

I believe that the changes proposed by the addendum are probably too weak to effectively boost the chances of rebuilding the stocks and keeping them healthy, but it's a step in the right direction if the right choices are made, and then we can work from there.

I support for **Option B1** for section **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options**. This will give the Chesapeake anglers a 4" slot that they can harvest. Coastal anglers already comply with a 3" slot, the Chessy folks can do their part. This will also give all Chesapeake striper fishermen (recreational and charter) the same, equal, restrictions. No separate rules. It'll also help protect the last decent year classes of striped bass. It'll give them a 19-23" slot, but that's better than the current situation.

For 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support **Option B**, which gives a 14.5% reduction to both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. That'll reduce their quotas, though fisheries that aren't able to fill their quotas due to low numbers of fish available won't be affected by this, since it won't reduce the amount of fish they're actually taking.

Thank you,

George R. Baldwin

From: [Ferdinand Cosentino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:35:59 AM

ASMFC,

I am a northeast surfcaster that believes the striped bass is in desperate need of our protection. We must take action now or risk losing this fishery for the next generation.

I support these options for draft addendum II

3.1.1 option B

3.1.2 option B1

3.2.1 option B

3.1.4 option B

3.3 option B

Thank You,
Ferdinand Cosentino
New York

From: [David Cornell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:43:34 AM

To the ASMFC and Striped Bass Advisory Board,

My name is David Cornell. I am a former licensed captain running fishing charters out of South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. My business relied on catching, not keeping, fish. I operated a primarily catch and release operation for Striped Bass anglers who understood and supported the need to protect the species. In addition to a relatively small number of commercial Striped Bass anglers, there are *hundreds* of guides like me and *hundreds of thousands* of recreational Striped Bass anglers along the Atlantic seaboard. All the angling sectors will thrive if we have abundant Striped Bass populations.

Past overfishing coupled with poor spawning seasons now threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for commercial and recreational anglers.

For the reasons above I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

If we are going to have a chance at rebuilding Striped Bass stocks by 2029 the board may need to act nimbly to address science and data presented to the board.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I urge the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to act and take the measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of Striped Bass for everyone.

Sincerely,
David Cornell
500 Barney's Joy Road
S. Dartmouth, MA 02748

From: [Fred T](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass death impact due to slaughter of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 11:53:26 AM

Thank you for exploring and taking action to protect striped bass and other gamefish impacts.

The cardinal and most devastating threat is the large-scale outright slaughter of menhaden, the foundational food for the striped bass and most gamefish in the Chesapeake Bay region.

Virginia is baffling us by allowing this devastation. Please stop it. Having recently returned to my former home city, Virginia Beach, I am amazed by the depletion of all game fish here due to the slaughter.

Please help stop the slaughter.

Frederick Talbott
3288 Page Avenue #1114
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
cell: 615-364-4804
fredtalbott@gmail.com

From: [SHRAMEK,GARY SHRAMEK](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] building Atlantic striped bass stock...
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:02:22 PM

I would like to comment on the depleted Atlantic striped bass stock over the years from the 1970's today. I live on Cape Cod have have fished for over 50yrs. When I first moved to the area the stock was plentiful. The main reason why the stocks in our area (Cape Cod and Islands) have been diminishing over time has less to do with legal Mass residential and local commercial fishing but rather the explosive growth and over population of seals. In the 1970s there were about 10-15,000 seals in the geographic area. Due to the 1972 federal mammal protection act that protected several species... including seals and sea lions, the region is now overpopulated with these seals that have shifted the balance of nature due to mans intervention. An adult seal eats anywhere between 35-50lbs of fish per day. The latest estimate of the seal population in our region is between 50,000-70,000. Do the math at 35lbs per day times 50,000 plus. The seals brought in Great White Sharks in large numbers and growing. They eat about 500lbs a day (fish/seals) and feed 2 to 3 times a week. Many commercial and recreational striped bass fishermen in the Cape and Island regions have stripers taken off their lines by seals and sharks. There should be some action taken to remove some species of the mammal protection act... i.e. seals in US waters or the NE coastline. The seals also pose a health hazard in some areas today due to their mammal waste and parasites.

- Address the seal over population in some regions and in some cases selective culling

Thank you, Gary Shramek, W. Barnstable, MA

From: [Mariusz Pajewski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:06:49 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I'd like to share my vote regarding Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

I'm a recreational angler from Cambridge, Massachusetts that is fishing for striped bass across whole New England coast.

I would like to continue managing the resource for abundance. There is less fish available with every year from shore. Commercial fishing's loose restrictions are not helping keeping the population grow and it's quite worrying for future generations.

Please see my choices below:

- **3.1.1 Option B**
- **3.1.2 Option B1**
- **3.2.1 Option B**
- **3.1.4 Option B**
- **3.3 Option B**

Regards,
Mariusz Pajewski

From: [Sam Barnard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Parker Mauck](#); [Chris Killenberg](#); [Peter Jenkins](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:11:19 PM

My name is Sam Barnard. I used to own a fly shop in Boston called Firefly Outfitters. I am now based in Westport, Massachusetts. I now fish recreationally and I have been a proponent of catch and release my whole life no matter what species I am targeting. I currently run a fishing tournament in Boston Harbor raising money, awareness and appreciation for the Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center. We are coming on our 15th year of this catch and release tournament. This catch and release tournament raises a ton of money for this non-profit benefiting Boston inner city middle schools. If no striped bass come to Boston Harbor the opportunity for this fund raising will disappear just so the commercial guys can keep butchering the population for a very shortsighted economic gain. In addition to a relatively small number of commercial Striped Bass anglers, there are *hundreds* of guides and *hundreds of thousands* of recreational Striped Bass anglers along the Atlantic seaboard. All the angling sectors will thrive if we have abundant Striped Bass populations. I have seen the impact of protecting a species with my involvement with the Atlantic Salmon Federation. Rather than killing off a species by overfishing, they have instilled in the indigenous population of commercial fishermen that a returning fish is far more valuable to the local economy than a dead fish served at a restaurant, and this has been proven big time!! Many of the commercial fishermen have embraced this and now guide, run lodges and supply all the infrastructure for the Northeast and Canadian Maritime provinces focusing on Atlantic Salmon.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment. Unfortunately, it seems as though a portion of the Massachusetts angling community, lead primarily by commercial anglers, is not facing the facts.

- The five most recent Striped Bass spawns were utter failures in the Chesapeake
- The Chesapeake supports 70-80% of the coastwide population of Striped Bass
- Chesapeake Bay commercial Striped Bass harvest volumes have been significantly higher than all the states combined
- The harvest mortality in recent years has increased dramatically

Past overfishing coupled with poor spawning seasons now threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for commercial and recreational anglers.

For the reasons above I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake’s jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

If we are going to have a chance at rebuilding Striped Bass stocks by 2029 the board may need to act nimbly to address science and data presented to the board.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I urge the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to act and take the measures necessary to preserve healthy, abundant, future populations of Striped Bass for everyone.

Sincerely,
Sam Barnard

From: [Ellen Wright](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - My Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:16:14 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like for you to consider the following options for addendum ii of Amendment 7 to the ASMFC striped bass management plan:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Anglers are harvesting too many striped bass, both commercially and recreationally, and it is imperative that we protect the strong 2015 stocks, especially the larger breeding fish.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Again, protecting breeding aged fish, especially in the important Chesapeake Bay, is imperative to the sustained health of the fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

It is important that the board take action after analyzing stock assessments to help positively impact the fishery.

Thank you for logging my comments. Properly managing these fish for future generations should always outweigh appeasing any user group.

Regards,

Ellen Wright

**Marketing Manager | North Point Brands
Cheeky Fishing | Wingo Outdoors**

North Adams, MA | Asheville, NC

ewright@northpointbrands.com

O: (413) 206-9248

cheekyfishing.com | wingooutdoors.com



From: [Peter Vandergrift](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:16:43 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like for you to consider the following options for addendum ii of Amendment 7 to the ASMFC striped bass management plan:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Anglers are harvesting too many striped bass, both commercially and recreationally, and it is imperative that we protect the strong 2015 stocks, especially the larger breeding fish.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Again, protecting breeding aged fish, especially in the important Chesapeake Bay, is imperative to the sustained health of the fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

It is important that the board take action after analyzing stock assessments to help positively impact the fishery.

Thank you for logging my comments. Properly managing these fish for future generations should always outweigh appeasing any user group.

Regards,

Peter Vandergrift

CMO | Cheeky Fishing | Wingo Outdoors

North Adams, MA | Missoula, MT

pvandergrift@northpointbrands.com

C: 406.240.3086

cheekyfishing.com | wingooutdoors.com



From: bob.roth@nm.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:27:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

I agree that drastic measures need to be adopted to help protect the Chesapeake ecosystem. There should certainly be a moratorium on taking any Menhaden at all.

Bob

Robert A. Roth, CLU® ChFC® AEP® | **Chief Executive Officer & Founder**
The Roth Financial Group
P: 860.570.7452 | F: 860.313.0618
1 Columbus Center Ste 1100 Virginia Beach, VA 23462
Bob.Roth@nm.com
www.rothfinancial.nm.com

[Click here to upload your documents to our secure server](#)



Our Team:

**Alexander Roth, CFP®, ChFC®, RICP® | Wealth Management Advisor
Partner**

Phone: 860.570.7427 | Email: Alexander.Roth@nm.com

Brandon Ngai | Financial Advisor

Phone: 860.570.7419 | Email: Brandon.Ngai@nm.com

Katie Fratea | Director of Operations

Phone: 860.570.7467 | Email: Katie.Fratea@nm.com

Matthew Thomas | Director of Planning & Investments

Phone: 860.570.7525 | Email: Matthew.Thomas@nm.com

Tara Gardner | Director of Insurance

Phone: 401.301.8272 | Email: Tara.Gardner@nm.com

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL PRIVATE CLIENT GROUP

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI (NM) (life and disability insurance, annuities, and life insurance with long-term care benefits) and its subsidiaries. Robert Roth is an Insurance Agent of NM and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI (long-term care insurance), a subsidiary of NM. Investment advisory services provided as an Advisor of Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company®, (NMWMC) Milwaukee, WI, a subsidiary of NM and a federal savings bank. Investment brokerage services provided as a Registered Representative of **Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC (NMIS)**, a subsidiary of NM, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser and member FINRA and SIPC. There may be instances when this agent represents companies in addition to NM or its subsidiaries.

Northwestern Mutual Private Client Group is a select group of Northwestern Mutual advisors and representatives. Northwestern Mutual Private Client Group is not a registered investment adviser, broker-dealer, insurance agency, federal savings bank or other legal entity.

While links to other websites are provided for convenience and information, please be advised that except for information related to Northwestern Mutual (NM), the inclusion of, or linking to, other websites does not imply NM endorsement of, nor responsibility for, those websites.

Please do not send orders for mutual funds or securities via email, as they cannot be processed.

Your transmission of electronic mail to this address represents your consent to two-way communication by Internet email. If you received this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from any computer on which it exists.

Any information in this email regarding products and services is considered an advertisement for Northwestern Mutual.

Northwestern Mutual, its subsidiaries and affiliates may review and retain incoming and outgoing electronic mail for this e-mail address for quality assurance and regulatory compliance purposes. Please be advised that communications with {SECURE MESSAGE} in the subject line have been sent using a secure messaging system. Communications that do not have this tag may not be secure and could be observed by a third party. Our commitment to privacy: At Northwestern Mutual, your privacy is important to us. For more information about our privacy practices, please review our [privacy notices](#).

If you don't want to receive any emails from your financial representative and any emails (except servicing emails) from Northwestern Mutual, [unsubscribe](#).

Northwestern Mutual
720 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4797.

From: [Chris Zarnitz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum options
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:27:42 PM

Good afternoon. I am writing you in regards to the proposed draft addendum. As a Striped Bass Surfcaster I would love for there to be a restriction on commercial and trawlers netting Bass. It is the only way to see the stocks replenish. Below is my options

"I support these options for draft addendum II":

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

**Sincerely,
Christopher Zarnitz
Smithtown, New York 11787**

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Andrew Taylor](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 1:50:26 PM

To whom it may concern,

While I am an avid recreational angler (Maine) and seafood restaurant owner (Maine and Massachusetts) who does from time to time both harvest a legal slot striped bass and purchase commercially harvested striped bass for our menu (in Mass only), I feel strongly that the striped bass fishery should be managed strictly and for abundance. I am very concerned about the future of the fishery given the poor recruitment in the past 5 years and I would not be upset to see both recreational and commercial harvest eliminated though I realize that is not an option on the table at this point.

That said, here are the options for the Draft Amendment II that I support:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Thank you,

Andrew Taylor
Maine

--
Chef/Owner
Big Tree Hospitality
88 Middle St.
Portland, ME

From: [Ryan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Public Comments
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 3:03:58 PM

Hello,

I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Options B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

As an avid recreational surf fisherman I truly believe that the more fish there are in the water at any point, the more opportunity the fish have to thrive. I believe conservation is not about doing the bare minimum to help the species survive, but to do whatever can be done to make sure it thrives. Far too little has been done from a regulatory standpoint to protect these fish. Do the right thing and protect these fish.

Thank you,
Ryan Cavanaugh (Massachusetts)

From: [Bucky Burrows](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Conservation
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 3:22:49 PM

Emilie Franke

My name is Bucky Burrows. I am a saltwater fly fishing guide operating out of Lake Tashmoo on Martha's Vineyard. I have been guiding since 1995. Striped bass are the target species for every fly fisher person that I take on a charter. I and every guide along the northeast seaboard need a healthy striped bass stock. Please consider my opinion on the new draft amendment.

I urge the board to support the following options

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

Charter operators should have the same regulations as the recreational fisherman.

- There is history we can learn from about mode splits. Maryland did a mode split for charter for hire, and it resulted in Maryland Charters harvesting more striped bass than the rest of the Chesapeake and ocean charters combined. A mode split will only exacerbate the already serious situation.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAJ jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. The Chesapeake commercial quota has taken a whopping 1.8% reduction (see below).

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

I believe everyone should share equally in the sacrifice now needed to recover striped bass by 2029.

Thank you

Bucky Burrows
Martha's Vineyard Fly Fishing Company
30 Wampeche Road
Vineyard Haven, MA. 02568
8016529615
[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [D.W. Bates](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 3:25:07 PM

Greetings,

I am writing to express my desire to help conserve the Striped Bass species and list the options I would like to be chosen in regards to the Amendment 7 Addendum 2.

To me, the Striped Bass is more than just a fish. Several aspects of my life are influenced by the species and it has always had a positive impact on my life. I am a conservation minded fisherman and have taken every step to ensure I am doing what I can to help protect this species. I drive around with a Striped Bass Conservation license plate offered by the state of Massachusetts and participate in a local fishing club that strives to protect this beloved fish and ensure that every best effort is made to protect this species.

To some, this fish is merely a source of income or sustenance. To me, it means much more. I am an enthusiast that spends a significant amount of time reading books and magazines, watching and listening to shows/podcasts, participating in meetings, traveling to shows and expos that are all centered around the Striped Bass.

This fish has such a tremendous socio-economic impact, more so than any other salt water fish species I can think of, and it deserves our all-out efforts to protect it. Since this fish has made such a positive impact on my life, I feel a sense of duty in taking steps to help conserve the species and I am positive there are countless other individuals that feel the same way.

Below are the options that I support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Option: Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 season (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Option B2 1 fish at 19" to 24". Option B2 was selected since it meets the desired 14.5 % reduction while holding all recreational anglers to the same size and fish limit.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification: Option B. While I believe all recreational anglers should operate under the same regulations and do not support Options C1 or C2, if either of these options are selected then Option B should be used.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Option B. as it gives law enforcement the ability to ensure compliance with regulations.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Option: Option B. To support a quota reduction of 14.5%. This would bring the commercial quota reduction into alignment with the recreational reduction expected percentages. This is especially needed since some of the states have commercial size limits that are focused on the primary spawning stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B as it gives the Board the ability to quickly address stock assessment data that indicates the stock is not projected to meet rebuild probability. This option should be limited to only address assessment data that indicates the stock will not meet rebuild probability.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and considering the options that I have listed.

Sincerely,

Dan Bates
Rockport Massachusetts

From: [Wayne Hawes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper Regulations
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:05:18 PM

I was made privy to a fellow fisherman's comment to the organization, his original email message is attached. I applaud all measures to save the Striper stocks and keep the recreational, commercial and for-hire fishing healthy and eternal. As a recreational fisherman we have adhered to a strict, self imposed catch & release policy among our group of striper fishermen. We happily release the striper in hopes they'll spawn and keep the stocks full. As my fellow fisherman advocates in his letter we need to be selfless in keeping this great sport fish viable. And we also need to be selfless is battling climate change. Stricter guidelines are necessary and education along with grass roots acceptance and adherence, needs to become the normal. There is a lot at stake. Go hard now so the future will be available.

Thank you for your efforts and consideration of these comments.

Wayne Hawes

From: Kenshwartz <kenshwartz@gmail.com>
Date: December 14, 2023 at 9:55:46 AM EST
To: comments@asmfc.org
Subject: Saltwater Edge Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

TWIMC,

The striped bass situation is very similar to the climate change situation (I of course realize climate change deniers will take exception to that statement). Many want to dispute that the industry/science data is accurate especially the conclusions (for climate change that unless drastic carbon reducing measures are taken over the next 0-10 years the earth will never recover and for striped bass if drastic measures are not put in place now the stock will get severely depleted and perhaps never recover unless a full-on moratorium is adopted down the road). There should be little disputing over the fact that IF the science/data is accurate

what the outcomes will be. If either the earth's temperature or the earth's stock of striped bass get to a "tipping point" (the point at which there can be no or little recovery no matter what measures are taken) it will be catastrophic.

It comes down to selflessness or selfishness. The data skeptics need to be selfless and even if they are skeptical with the data accept that if they are wrong and the data is correct they will not be able to change the outcome after the tipping point is reached. If the striped bass biomass is in as bad shape as the data seems to be indicating and nothing or too little is done now it will be too late. The time is now to be selfless and accept, even though very stringent measures will affect their catch (whether recreational, commercial, for-hire etc), there is no more time to just selfishly hope the science is inaccurate.

The proposed ASMFC regulations are selfish, sorry no other way to characterize it. EVERYONE (recreational, for-hire, commercials) needs to accept NOW (not in 5-10 years or so when perhaps if the science/data is accurate there are so little fish around for everyone including our kids and grandkids) that more stringent conservation measures are needed. And those of you at ASMFC—my guess is you KNOW your proposed regulations are not stringent enough but are afraid to confront the varying special interests. Please find the courage to do the unpopular.

Thanks for reading..

Just a concerned recreational fisherman...

Ken S

From: [Michael F Walker](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:26:05 PM

To the ASMFC:

I support the most restrictive options that will reduce striped bass mortality by the greatest amount. As I understand it, that is Option B, with B1 for the Chesapeake Bay.

For the record, I object to the special quotas for the Chesapeake, and favor the most restrictive quotas coastwide to allow our stocks to rebuild.

Thank you.
Michael Walker
Ipswich, MA

=====
Michael Forden Walker
mfw@pinkmantis.com
617-875-8965

From: [Mark Brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:27:30 PM

Captain Mark J. Brown
Safari Girl Charters
3551 Revolea Beach Road
Middle River Maryland 21220
410-207-8362

December 18, 2023

Emile Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite A-N
Arlington, Va. 22201

Dear ASMFC:

As a charter captain for over 33 years on upper Chesapeake Bay, I am writing to comment on Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the striped bass management plan.

Since 2019 my business has suffered through two- week closures during our busiest period of the season in July. MDNR also virtually eliminated the trophy season when the starting date was moved to May 1st. Due to warmer weather and dolphin, in recent years resident striped bass have moved north in the Bay much sooner than normal into waters closed to fishing until June 15th. For these reasons, along with a declining economy and inflation, bookings have been reduced. During this time Maryland's for-hire fleet has been responsible for a steady decline in both its removals and harvest of striped bass. Page 9 of Addendum II states that 2021-2022 for hire removals decreased 27%. A recent " Public Information Act " request obtained from MDNR shows that Maryland's for-hire harvest decreased 13% from 116,581 fish to 101,043 fish from 2021-2022 and 17% from 2020-2022. As of November 1st of this year the numbers show an even further decline. From this data, it should be apparent that Maryland's charter fleet, operating under a 2 fish per customer creel, is not a problem for the fishery. In my view, the current regulations are resulting in more than enough reduction from the for-hire fleet, and we haven't seen the end of their impact. A reduction to 1 fish per customer would cripple our businesses.

The for-hire fleet's effect on removals is limited for another reason: By and large, Maryland's charter boat operators don't allow customers to catch and release striped bass after they have caught their limit. From my experience, this isn't true of the private recreational fleet, and it's shown in the data. (27% decline in for-hire removals

vs. 3% increase in recreational removals 2021-2022.) Which brings me to narrow slot proposals for the Bay. In its June 2021 meeting summary, the striped bass technical committee " expressed concerns over the use of slot limits ...and increased dead discards associated with the use of a slot limit." In January of 2021 they state, " management measures reducing the total number of fish caught and released... are still important to the recovery of the stock." Their concerns when applied to an unprecedented slot in brackish Bay water are more than justified. RRM percentages under the proposed options are vastly underestimated in my opinion. Within our range from July through mid- October, 50-90% of the striped bass we catch on any given trip are larger than any of the proposed slots. This has been generally true for many years. Larger fish are more prone to release mortality. A slot won't reduce fishing effort associated with the private recreational fleet on the upper Bay. In recent years other popular species such as bluefish or trout aren't available to target instead. Striped bass release mortality is going to suffer very badly because of a Bay slot (other than perhaps a very narrow one designed to protect a certain year class within it) ... but not due to effort from charter boat customers. I don't think my business will survive any of the proposed slots for very long.

The attempt to minimize the significance of the use of flawed FES data in this document falls flat, especially for businesses left wondering how they are going to pay the bills under this addendum. When fishery managers feel the need to support the use of it with anecdotes, the public should be very concerned. The scale of the potential overestimation of removals and harvest using MRIP should create some urgency to get it corrected. Maryland's charter boat operators have worked with MDNR providing FACTS reporting data for 3 years. This should be used as soon as possible to support future management. Also, the 9% release mortality estimate shouldn't apply to the for-hire fleet. Since captains and mates are the only people on board handling fish, the commercial release mortality rate should apply to them.

Regarding the Board's response to stock assessment updates, I have to question the efficacy of Option B. What good is board action in the manner of the 2023 emergency action when States like New Jersey and New York were permitted to take their time implementing it?

I'm a member of both the Maryland Charter Boat Association and Upper Bay Charter Captains Association. Our industry is increasingly concerned with the effect of catch and release on pre-spawn female fish. There should be a no target closure from January 1 until the season opens in May. States should suspend striped bass tournaments. States should at the very least closely review the rules in them before issuing permits and eliminate rules that encourage anglers to mishandle fish or increase dead discards in any way.

I am not optimistic about either release mortality or my business' prospects under any of the options in this addendum, particularly considering that Maryland has already closed fishing from May 1st-15th and it is rumored that August 1st-7th may be added to the summer closure. But I am asking the board to consider Option C2 for the Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,

Captain Mark J. Brown

From: [Liam Brouillette](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:33:04 PM

I, Liam Brouillette of Chelmsford Massachusetts and Westhampton Beach New York support these following options for draft addendum 2

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I believe that these are the best options going forward to rebuild the stock, which personally from my perspective spending in excess of 180 days a year targeting striped bass is the worst I have ever seen in my life.

Thank you ,

Liam Brouillette

From: [Rick Hickox](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:34:37 PM

To whom it may concern,

As an avid surf fisherman for over 40 years, I feel very strongly about this topic. I believe that for the long-term viability of striped bass stocks, we should be managing for abundance, not yield. In this way, all stake holders will benefit.

As such, I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- **3.1.1 Option B**
- **3.1.2 Option B1**
- **3.2.1 Option B**
- **3.1.4 Option B**
- **3.3 Option B**

Thank you,

Rick Hickox

Gloucester, MA

From: [Peter Gates](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Crisis
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:49:04 PM

To the ASMFC and Striped Bass Advisory Board,

My name is Peter Gates. I am an enthusiastic saltwater angler based in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts. In good years, the local waters are teeming with striped bass; in other years they are harder to find but no less enjoyable to contend with at the end of a #8 line. I never seem to catch (and release) as many bass as my friends, but a day on the water looking for them is always a pleasure.

I have learned through fellow anglers about the ASMFC public meeting in Massachusetts on December 5, 2023 on the Addendum II for Striped Bass. Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.

It seems that

- The Chesapeake is responsible for the vast majority of Striped Bass spawning
- Recent spawns have been disappointing, to say the least
- Commercial harvests in the Chesapeake dominate the industry, and there appears to be vast overfishing
- This combines to severely threaten the future of Striped Bass fishing for both commercial and recreational anglers.

Therefore I support the following options within Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

- The 28"-31" slot limit will help protect the 2015 class and maintain a consistent regulation
- Mode splits will result in increased harvesting and are essentially not fair.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- The Chesapeake Bay needs to contribute to conservation measures like the rest of coast

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- The Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. We all need to act now if we want decent Striped Bass fishing in the future.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. I join others in urging the ASMFC and the Striped Bass Advisory Board to take the measures necessary to preserve the future of Striped Bass fishing for all.

Sincerely,
Peter Gates
16 Shore Acres Road
South Dartmouth, MA 02748

peterrgates@gmail.com

From: [Bob Pellegrino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 5:26:26 PM

RE: Public Comments Regarding Draft Addendum II

Dear Ms. Franke and members of the Striped Bass Management Board,

Thank you for your consideration of public comments on Draft Addendum II to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. My name is Robert Pellegrino, I am 37 years old from Topsfield, Massachusetts and I represent the recreational fisherman. I am also a member of The Plum Island Surfcasters fishing club based out of the North Shore of Massachusetts.

I am relatively new stakeholder in the Atlantic Striped Bass fishery but I am nonetheless committed to supporting it's recovery to an increased overall stock in the shortest amount of time possible. It is my understanding that the ASMFC has a stated goal of rebuilding the stock (to levels similar to those occurring in the mid-2000's) by 2029. It seems with the current state of the fishery and the lackluster spawning stock assessments for the past few years, the ASMFC is likely to fail in this endeavor unless more drastic action is taken. The scientific evidence seems to coincide with the anecdotal evidence from fisherman that the Atlantic Striped Bass is in a lot of trouble; stock levels are falling and there are no small fish replacing the older fish. The fish that we do have are not widely distributed; the concentrated biomasses of fish that remain are so easily found thanks to modern fish finding technology, social media, among others, that those concentrations of fish are being harassed by fleets of fisherman with reckless abandon. This is especially true in areas where commercial fleets pound on schools of commercial sized fish and in in-shore bottleneck areas where there is not enough Fish and Game enforcement (i.e. the Cape Cod Canal, the Lawrence Dam area of the Merrimack River, to name a few local areas of this kind).

Frankly, I am in favor of the most conservative measures to ensure the best possible outcomes for Atlantic Striped Bass, but I understand there are many stakeholders with different opinions and self-interests across the Atlantic coast and I understand the most conservative measures may not be a reasonable expectation. Therefore, I am in agreement with the positions of American Saltwater Guides Association when it comes to Addendum II. To be specific, I am in favor of the following positions without further rationale:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in

2024 should be found out of compliance.

I am not sure if the above proposed measures will be enough to support the goals of rebuilding Atlantic Striped Bass stocks by 2029. I understand this may represent a single step of many toward reaching the 2029 goal. However, time is already beginning to run out. I do feel strongly that we will need brave, conservative and simple-to-understand rules in place to save the Atlantic Striped Bass. Thank you, Ms. Franke and members of the Striped Bass Management Board, for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Robert Pellegrino
Topsfield, MA 01983
Plum Island Surfcaster Club Member
Email: rvpell@gmail.com
Cell: 978-413-1231

From: [Carter Grosset](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 6:10:18 PM

Hello, My name is Carter grosset, I am 18 years old from the state of Maine. I am currently living in Montana where I fish mostly for trout, however striped bass where the first fish I caught on a fly rod and will always be my favorite species. Furthermore they will always be a reason for me to return back to Maine. The passing of addendum II as well as future regulations to protect spawning grounds (specifically Chesapeake bay) will allow stripers to return to Maine, in turn allowing anglers like myself to return as well. Thank you so much for taking the time to read my comment.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Broadbent](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Please consider
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 6:27:48 PM

Please consider closing commercial fishing along the Atlantic completely as well as closing charter fishing in the manner that coincides with recreational fishing in the slot limit unless the fishing is restricted across the Atlantic uniformed it's not a productive discussion you can't have one state running nets and another state taking large stripers as chartered recreational fishing and being sold as commercial fish. Limit all Atlantic striped bass to recreational only with the existing slot limits
Sent from my iPhone

From: chriskillenberg@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 6:35:27 PM

To the ASMFC and Striped Bass Advisory Board,

My name is Chris Killenberg. I am co-owner of Westport Fly, a saltwater fly-fishing and light-tackle charter/guide service based in Westport, Massachusetts.

I attended the ASMFC public meeting in Buzzard's Bay MA on December 5th, 2023 to learn more about the status of striped bass stocks, and to hear feedback from fellow anglers about the proposed regulations for Addendum II. I came away struck by the devastating effect of the poor spawning numbers over the past few years, and by the urgent need to do as much as we can to protect mature breeding stripers now - in order to avoid a collapse of the stocks in the near future.

Those who spoke at the meeting against the tightening of regulations pointed to the significant numbers of big stripers they caught this year as a sign that the fishery is OK. I caught some of those big fish, too. But I didn't catch nearly as many schoolies this season as I did over the past few seasons. This year was notable for a significant drop in the number of schoolies in our area. With fewer schoolies here today, we'll have fewer big fish in future years. And with the poor spawning results in the Chesapeake, we have fewer schoolies in the pipeline. We're headed for trouble.

How did we get here? Some people at the meeting blamed "mismanagement." Perhaps. But even if the stocks had been managed perfectly, a major factor is that mother nature dealt us a blow. For whatever reason – warmer winters, less rain – stripers have had a couple bad spawning years in a row. Even if the stocks had been managed perfectly, the recent spawning failures would be a problem. Rather than assign blame, let's face the facts: we don't have enough young fish in the pipeline to sustain our fishery. We have to protect mature breeding stripers in hopes that we'll have a few good spawning years in the near future.

None of us "in the business" want more regulations. Regulations put an economic burden on all of us. But if small sacrifices in the short term help avoid huge problems in the long term, that's a good business decision. It's also in our personal interest. Most of the fishermen who earn income on the water love being on the water. We love that environment and all the fish and other species who live there. We don't want a desk job. If stronger striped regulations now enables us to keep doing this thing we love later, that's a no-brainer.

I urge you to adopt the following regulations for Addendum II. I hope it will be enough.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options

- Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options

- Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

- Option B with a full 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment
- Option B—Board Action

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Chris Killenberg
15 Albert Lane
Little Compton, RI 02837

Capt. Chris Killenberg
(919) 360-9792
www.westportfly.com



From: [John Bartolo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 6:52:59 PM

Good evening,

My name is John Bartolo. My family and I are recreational fisherman in the state of New Hampshire. We enjoy fishing for striped bass and are in support of measures being taken to restore the striped bass fishery. My family and I wish for the species to be managed for abundance. I support these options for draft addendum II.

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you for all your hard work and Merry Christmas.

Sincerely,

John Bartolo

New Hampshire

From: [Tom Evans](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 11
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 7:08:14 PM

Attention Emilie Franke,

I live in Cooperstown, NY.. I surf fish for striped bass in Rhode Island 4 or 5 times per year. This year, 2023, I caught no fish smaller than 26 inches. I caught only large fish, and I caught a lot of them. It is quite obvious that the striped bass fishery is about to collapse in the next few years. There are so few recruits in the pipe line. Will the board please do whatever possible to fix what they can control, that being quotas. The board has zero control over environmental factors contributing to poor spawning years. I am 73 years old. I will not live long enough to see a rebuild of the stock. I hope my kids will see it.

I support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Option B

I do not support mode splits

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option B1

I do not support mode splits

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Option B

Hoping the board will respond and do whatever is necessary as fast as they are able to act.

Thank you,

Thomas R. Evans

From: [Rui Coelho](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 7:30:05 PM

Dear ASMFC

I am not going to tell you specifically what steps you need to take, but I will tell you, you need to look at the data, you need to look at the science, you need to listen to the majority of the rational people who understand the threat to this population.

Please use all of this information to help restore the striped bass population back to its heyday, so all can benefit from recreation and commercial fishing for generations to come

Thank You
Rui Coelho
President Emeritus GBTU
MA TU Council Secretary

From: [Jimmy Grimley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 7:39:13 PM

The changes in my local striped bass fishery has me concerned for the future of the population all across the east coast. Every year people are allowed to harvest the largest most precious migratory game species we have here in Maryland and all along the east coast that is game fisher people share. It's unfair for us catch and release trophy anglers to watch the population slip from under our feet. I would love for my two children to grow up experiencing the same beautiful fish I did. It's safe to say this species has been declining similar to that of the 1979 all time low. A moratorium is not the only answer we have but tighter regulations and closing harvests of striper over 30 inches seems very fair. A slot size of 18-27 similar to the red drum slot size is perfect. The red drum population has been great with more returning to the bay every year showing that not being allowed to keep breeders severely impacts the population. I hope everyone's word gets heard and something changes for the year of 2024 thank you so much.

Sincerely

James Grimley

From: [Bill Sistad](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public comments
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:00:47 PM

Please pass some type of bill that will slow the harvest down on the striped bass fishery for the entire coast. It's been talked about many times to give striped bass game fish status. I'm am 100 % in favor of this regulation. Look, we've been through this before and it looks like it will eventually happen again. Striped bass don't grow overnight, takes years to grow to these slot sizes. Close down all pre-spawn areas until spawning has been accomplished and also close down all pre-spawn areas to commercial fishing. There are so many options to save the striped bass fishery, the slaughter of slot size fish, those year class fish this fall was horrible. My opinion. Please make the right decision on regulations this year to save our striped bass fishery. Sincerely, William A. Sistad

From: [Brian Kendall](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:52:54 PM

Hello, I am an avid catch and release recreational angler from Connecticut and I fish eastern Long Island Sound. Let's do what we have to do to bring these fish back by 2029.

I support the following options for the Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:	Option B
3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:	Option B1
3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements:	Option B
3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options: 14.5% reduction	Option B, with the full
3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates:	Option B

Thanks.

Brian Kendall
41 Lynch Rd
Lebanon, CT
860 319 7129

From: coppa3@charter.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 8:59:21 PM

public comment input; recommend both the private and commercial quota sectors be reduced by 14%. Recreational keep slot 28-31", commercial reduce quota overall by 14% each ocean sector.

Carl R Moberg
Westport Mass
MA Commercial Finfish Lic #143226/ and Avid recreational fisherman.

From: [Jackson McCrickard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 9:09:40 PM

Dear Striped Bass Management Board of the ASMFC,

My name is Alex McCrickard and I am an avid striped bass angler residing in Richmond, Virginia. I grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and I have been fishing the Chesapeake Bay for striped bass since 1996 when I caught my first striped bass at the age of 6.

This iconic fish means so much to me and many others residing in the Chesapeake Bay region and the Mid-Atlantic north to Maine and Canada. It's unfortunate that the number of striped bass has dwindled, causing major concerns for the coastwide stock. Anecdotally, I have seen the fishing change over the years, remembering acres upon acres upon acres of blitzing rockfish during the months of October and November in the Chesapeake which is now just pockets of fish here and there. Sadly, these anecdotal experiences mirror the science showing a declining coastwide stock.

I truly appreciate the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's ongoing efforts to help rebuild the population. Only through strong, coastwide management action will we be able to continue efforts to rebuild the striped bass population. Please accept my following comments on draft Addendum II below:

For the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay trophy striped bass fisheries, I feel that Option B, 1 fish at 28'-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes) is the most appropriate action. This will create the most level playing field for all anglers. Mode splits at this point in time seem like an irresponsible management strategy given the declining coastwide stock and poor recruitment over the past 5 years. Furthermore, increasing the upper end of the slot to anything greater than 31" will put the strong 2015 year class back in the slot zone which is exactly why the emergency action was initiated this past year to keep the 2015 year class protected. Let's hold strong with protecting the 2015s because there truly isn't much coming up behind them from the Chesapeake.

For Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries, I support Options B1, 1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. An upper end of 23" to the Chesapeake slot will provide some level of protection to average year classes in 2017 and 2018.

Given the active commercial and recreational fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay region, I support Option B for the Commercial Quota Reduction Options and ask the Board to adopt a reduction of no less than 14.5% to ensure the necessary reductions in striped bass mortality are met. However, with that being said I have strong concerns that a 14.5% reduction to the commercial sector in the Chesapeake Bay region will not be enough due to underutilization of the quota in recent years. With an underutilized quota, a 14.5% reduction to the quota has the potential to have no impact if the commercial sector is routinely falling 20% short of total maximization. In this scenario, a 14.5% reduction to the Chesapeake commercial fishery has zero impact to the commercial sector. Also, I would be remiss to not highlight the fact that 80% of all commercially harvested striped bass come out of Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay, the largest spawning grounds for the entire Atlantic stock. It is woefully

irresponsible to continue to allow the commercial sector to harvest juvenile fish at this level. Its time we step up and ensure that all sectors (recreational and commercial) are working together to ensure the conservation of this iconic species. If we can just give them the chance to rebound, they will.

Finally, I would like the Board to have the necessary flexibility to respond to future stock assessments. Therefore, I support Option B in Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments on draft Addendum II.

-Alex McCrickard

From: [Scott Tyndall](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 9:29:30 PM

I select Option **B for 2024 Striper Fishing regulations. I have a question. Do you think that the Omega Protein Corporation scooping up millions of pounds of menhaden from the Chesapeake Bay could be contributing to the decreasing Striper population. Just a thought. While is was fishing in the Bay this year, I witnessed the boats, surround and pick up a lot of fish. As I returned to the boat ramp, I noticed a lot of dead fish floating on the water. It is just a thought. I can't imagine that the recreational fisherman are the cause of the striper decline.**

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Patrick Spehnkouch](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:12:16 PM

Hello,

I want to offer my comment on the proposed Recreational Chesapeake Bay Options. I support option B1. Thank you for taking my comment into consideration.

-Patrick Spehnkouch 410-707-8225

From: [Daniel Hawkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:24:03 PM

Hello, I am an avid catch and release recreational angler from Connecticut and I fish eastern Long Island Sound. Let's do what we have to do to bring these fish back by 2029.

I support the following options for the Draft Addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:
Option B
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:
Option B1
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements:
Option B
- 3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options:
Option B, with the full 14.5% reduction
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates:
Option B

Thanks,

Daniel Hawkins
21 Lake Ridge Dr
Columbia, CT 06237

From: [Ryan Wimer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 Striped Bass
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:25:35 PM

Hello,

I am a recreational fisherman on the Chesapeake bay and I want to encourage ASMFC to support options B1 or B2. Most importantly let's keep the regs the same for private fisherman as our for hire counterparts.

Thank You,

Ryan Wimer
Thomas F Gowen & Sons
1-717-823-7628

From: [Stephen O'Grady](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 10:25:39 PM

To Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator:

I respectfully submit the following comment as a lifelong recreational fisherman in Massachusetts.

I support Ocean Recreational Fishery Option B, 1 fish at 28" to 31". I believe the option that achieves the greatest overall harvest reduction is appropriate for the dire circumstances of the population. This option also has the benefit of building off the education that took place since the emergency measure in May 2023 that implemented this size limit. The more regulations change, the more confused the fishing public becomes, and the less likely we are to see reliable compliance, making the complicated job of fisheries management even more complicated.

While I don't feel as strongly about measures taken in the Chesapeake, I would support Option B1, 1 fish at 19" to 23" for the same reason stated above; I prefer the most conservative management when we have such a valuable and ecologically important species in decline.

I think creating different size or creel limits for for-hire vessels would be a big mistake. We cannot let political pressure alter sound scientific management of the population. There is no good reason to let for-hire vessels keep more or larger fish, and it also risks causing confusion that leads to noncompliance among anglers who have been out on for-hire vessels.

I also support Option B from Section 3.1.3 to clarify For-Hire Management. That was presumably the intent and should be codified.

Last, I support Commercial Quota Reduction Option B. Given the status of the stock, I don't think any commercial harvest of striped bass is appropriate right now, particularly given that the size limit imposed on the commercial fishery means that the most productive breeders are harvested. Further, this has turned into a "recremercial" fishery; those taking advantage of the commercial permits are not relying heavily on this fishery, and I believe we should continue to cut back commercial harvest.

Thank you for your consideration,
Stephen O'Grady
Harwich, MA

From: [Tom C](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:32:20 AM

I support option C
Captain Tom Cusimano
Montauk

Sent from my iPhone

From: rosskess1@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:31:39 AM

My votes for SBDAll are below:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Future consideration to mode splits should include removing captain and mate from the retention allowance on the vessel. In a sense it's the same as mixing a commercial and recreational day. Being ones own 'mode' should have benefits and consequences.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Until there are multiple year classes of juvenile fish in the pipeline indicative of a robust recovery all modes should share in the reductions to tilt the scales in favor of preserving existing stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

All species managers when faced with declining numbers should have the option to not only implement emergency actions but sweeping actions to do what management can to protect species in peril.

Regards,
Ross Kessler
Rosskess1@gmail.com

From: [Robert Huddy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS Interim Management Measures
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:48:22 AM

To Whom it may concern

I am writing in response to the ASMFC request for comments on the DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS Interim Management Measures .

My name is Bob Huddy and I currently reside in Connecticut and fish for Striped Bass in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

I started fishing for Striped Bass in New Jersey in the early 1970's, so I have seen some very good years and some very, very bad years. The bad years being the years leading up to when moratorium were in place, and the years when moratorium were in place.

As I am closing in on retirement and have two sons in their 30's that will fish with me on occasion, I am very concerned about the current state of the Striped Bass fishery and even more so about the apparent trend of the fishery. I believe significant action is required in the very near term in order to avoid another period of "bad years" upon us.

My personal belief is that the best near-term solution would be a moratorium on recreational fishing that would allow fishing as catch and release only (preferably with modified hooks to prevent mortality as best as is feasible). Given that, I am voicing my support for Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes) since it is shown to have the greatest predicted result.

Thank you for your consideration of my position and comments.

From: [daniel giunta](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:49:28 AM

I am writing on support of Option C. A small increase in the slot size for the for hire fleet only changes the overall harvest percentage by .1%. This is a negligible change. The for hire fleet can more easily attain keeper size fish which will reduce the over all catch and release mortality. This will in turn kill less fish.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Mike](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:51:09 AM

ASMFC,

My business, Anglers Sportcenter, which employs between 20 to 40 people at any given time, depends to a large degree on recreational sport fishing for striped bass on the Chesapeake Bay.

As striped bass regulations have become more restrictive it has had a negative impact on my business.

Shifting part of the allowable catch from one sector of recreational anglers to another is a case of the government picking economic winners and losers, as tightening restrictions on my customer base hurts my business while giving more of the share to other forms of businesses benefits theirs.

I understand actions must be taken to preserve the striped bass fishery and am in support of that, but request that the measures taken are the least-restrictive and most economically equitable among all recreational anglers and the businesses that cater to them. I believe that in the case of the Chesapeake Bay striped bass fishery this is option B4.

Thanks,
Michael Ebersberger
410-703-5735
Anglers Sportcenter
1456 Whitehall Rd.
Annapolis, MD 21409

From: [Patrick Reynolds](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] The future of the striped bass fisheries
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:58:00 AM

I would like to see options b and B1 implemented these fish are a vital resources and must be protected

From: [Dean Major](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:01:36 AM

Dear ASMFC,

Please take my comments in support of Option B.

The low Striper counts needs the most aggressive response to control all possible measures to allow the population to recover.

The stocks are in decline and both recreational and commercial fisheries need effective rules immediately.

Small sacrifices will result in large gains as long as we have homogeneous rules for all

Do the plan B ASAP

Dean Major
Hampton Va
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Robert Krist](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC Striper Addendum II comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:11:51 AM

Following are my comments regarding option put forth in addendum II.

In general, my bias is to take action that reduce stripper harvest to establish a healthy striper population.

I am in favor of Ocean recreational option B.

I am in favor of Chesapeake Bay Option A

I am in favor of Stock Assessment Update option B

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on these critical decisions.

Rob Krist

Rpkrist@gmail.com
203-524-4627

From: [john herrick](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:18:41 AM

Thank you for providing the well written document and video attachment on YouTube. I attended the Massachusetts meeting last night and though the meeting was good, trying to yell out preferences for each category discussed was chaotic at best. Maybe just have everyone fill out a voting preference sheet in the future so the heated debates are more regulated. I figured it was just easier to email preferences at this point.

I am a commercial and charter fisherman out of Gloucester. I also teach high school science and want this fishery around for my young children.

I would vote:

- Recreational option C: I believe charter captains will fish till their clients have something to take home so this reduces the released fish.
- Chesapeake option C1
- For Hire: Option B: I don't keep fish for myself while charter fishing but I will say I believe regulating this will be tough.
- Filleting: Option B: Though I believe the racks at public marinas will make this tough.
- Commercial: Option B: I believe everyone should help the problem. I would hope the commercial is on the lower end of the % though because these numbers are already highly regulated and the data caught is most accurate.
- Response: At first I believed option B was the best but after the presentation and the board stated this current change will only take less than a year to implement, I believe the addendum document is misleading. Option A

Thank you for your time and efforts,

John Herrick

From: [Rob Savino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:28:39 AM
Attachments: [CJ Victoria11 front copy.png](#)

We support section 3.1.1 option C or E.

The would give charter boats a Striped bass slot limit of 28"-33" which is still a two inch reduction from past regulations. Not including the emergency action.

We also support section 3.1.3 option A.

Separate regulations for customers vs captain and crew doesn't do anything for conservation. It makes law enforcement even more difficult than it already is.

We also support section 3.1.4 filleting at sea. There is no recognized law breaking problems with charter boats filleting at sea for thier customers. So there is no need to solve a problem that doesn't exist. This just creates more complications for charter boat operators trying to complete trips to get ready for the next trip.

We also support section 3.2.1 option A.

There is no need for a commercial Striped Bass reduction it does not give any benefit to conservation measures. The no reduction in bass would be minimal conservation compared to what is needed in the overall recreational sector.

We support section 3.3 option A

There is no need to rush management decisions. Management need to hear from the public a a separate meeting before deciding the future of the fisheries.

Allow the public time to look at the scientific data. This has been the status quo for years and has worked well in other fisheries management.

Robert Savino

25 year Charter Captain and Owner

Advisor for the Stellwagon Bank Charter Boat association.

Advocate for healthy sustainable fish stocks and access to all fish for everyone.



C.J. Victoria
Fishing Charters

Rob Savino

617-283-5801
cjvictoria.com

From: [Michael Dooley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Patrick Keliher](#); [Megan Ware](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:42:22 AM

Hello ASMFC board,

It is with the utmost conviction that I support the following options as a resident of Maine and recreational angler:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

We must manage the stock for abundance, as we know that the fish are worth far more alive than dead on a beach or a boat deck - both from a monetary and ethical perspective. I want my daughters to be able to fish for striped bass as they grow older- the time is now for change.

Thank you for your time,
Michael Dooley

From: [Scott Silver](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:45:39 AM

Dear ASMFC,

Thank you for the work you do to help ensure the future health of striped bass populations for the east coast of the United States and for all of us who enjoy them. I strongly support Addendum II, option B for open ocean regulations and option B1 for Chesapeake bay recreational options. I am against the idea of split modes for Chesapeake bay regulations. The Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) should continue to be managed under the same regulations. Five consecutive years of poor spawns out of the Chesapeake Bay is clearly alarming, and I strongly support all measures to reduce fishing mortality by at least 14.5%. Please do the best you can for the striped bass populations now.

Sincerely,

Scott Silver



Virus-free www.avg.com

From: [Tara Bogan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Support of Option C - Striper Regs
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:53:01 AM

Hello -

As a recreational angler and a long-time advocate of the for-hire fishing boat industry, I support **Option C**. This would allow for-hire boats to be able to keep striped bass up to 33 inches. This measure will ensure that the for-hire fleets see their customer base rebound this coming fishing season, which will drive tourism to the area.

Thank you,
Tara

From: [Paulfish63](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:56:01 AM

Good day,

Under 3.1.1, Ocean Recreational Fishery Options, I would like to vote for 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. Thank you.

Regards,

Paul Galeno

From: [Geoffrey Bloss](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:57:40 AM

Good Morning -

I am commenting on the proposed adjustments to Striped Bass regulations for the upcoming seasons. I am an avid Striped Bass angler on both private and for hire vessels. I strongly support Option C. Private vessel/shore: 1 fish at 28" - 31" with 2022 seasons. For-hire: 1 fish at 28" - 33" with 2022 seasons.

Best,
Geoff Bloss

From: [John Foster](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:58:48 AM

Hello, I am writing to submit my comments regarding the proposed management measures for striped bass in 2024 and beyond.

I could not emphasize my concern for the future striped bass fishery enough. We need to do absolutely everything under our power to save this fishery while we still have ample large breeder fish around. It is imperative that we end the ability to keep striped bass for all commercial and recreational anglers until we reach our recruitment goal. This is textbook case of short term pain for long term gain. We must protect these fish however possible across our eastern seaboard before it is too late. Please please please restrict the keeping of all striped bass until recruitment hits goal levels ideally for multiple years.

Thanks,
John

--

John Foster
781-974-6507

From: [Henry Olszewski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:02:35 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of Option C, the increase of the striped bass slot size by 2" for the for hire fleet.

Thanks you,
Henry

Henry J. Olszewski, President
CA Lic # 0707110
Intermarket Insurance Agency
205 E. Main St Ste. 3-4
Huntington, NY 11743
P.631-606-3525
F.631-421-2004
holszewski@intermarketins.com
www.intermarketins.com

From: [Jake Naso-Kushner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:12:53 AM

Dear Commissioners,

I am a Rhode Island resident and avid surfcaster. Prior to moving to Rhode Island, I lived in New York and spent 15 years fishing in the surf. Throughout my years as a surfcaster, I have seen a steady decline in the striped bass fishery and urge you to take all measures to protect and restore the species. A recent knee surgery prevented me from attending any of the hearings in person this fall, however please note that I support the following options for draft addendum II

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Regards,

Jake Naso-Kushner

From: [Rich Strzepek](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:17:24 AM

Dear Ms. Franke and Striped Bass Management Board Members,

Thank you for the previous actions taken by you to protect the Striped Bass fishery. As a Striped Bass surf fisherman since the age of 12, now 76, 64 years, I have seen Striper fishing go through some highs and horrible lows. There is no doubt that we are in a very down period now.

Using available overviews and analysis of the proposed action options available to you, I support the following actions be taken relative to Draft Amendment II:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

reduce time to it takes to reduce mortality

Thank you for considering my comments and please decide on the options that will result in the most timely rebuilding of the fisheries stock.

Richare E. Strzepek <{}><



Virus-free www.avast.com

From: [James Boyle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] [Phish] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:20:17 AM

Dear Ms. Franke and members of the Striped Bass Management Board,

My name is Jaime Boyle and I'm a full time fishing guide on Martha's Vineyard MA, and I'm also the MA Board member for The American Saltwater guides Association. ASGA has submitted a letter with its position on Addendum II, I just wanted to say that I agree with ASGA's stance.

I have been guiding for over 30 years and have seen the rise and fall of the striped bass fishery. Twenty five years ago I would never have believed that we would be fighting to save striped bass stocks again. Please do the right thing to recover striped bass in a reasonable amount of time.

These are my choices for the options provided.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Thank you,
Capt. Jaime Boyle
PO Box 1534
Oak Bluffs MA, 02557
508-922-1749
boylermaker.com

From: [Fred T](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Re: [External] Striped bass death impact due to slaughter of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:48:44 AM

Ms. Franke,

Thank you for your good work.

We left the shores of the Chesapeake Bay in 1993 when sports fishing and striped bass stocks were plentiful and healthy.

We returned in 2019 and have been amazed by the decimation of almost every sports fish type. And shocked that Virginia allows the mass slaughter of menhaden, the bay's and Atlantic coast's foundational food fish for striped bass and most other sports fish. The entire bay is suffering now, and the environmental impact is wide and devastating.

Wishing you and your entire Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission team the best.

Frederick Talbott
3288 Page Avenue #1114
Virginia Beach, VA 23451
cell: 615-364-4804
fredtalbott@gmail.com

On Tue, Dec 19, 2023 at 11:53 AM Comments <comments@asmfc.org> wrote:

Thank you for providing input on the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Your comments will be shared with the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board for consideration at its next Board meeting, which will occur in January. Upon considering public input, the Board will select final management measures and consider final approval of Addendum II.

[Emilie Franke](#) | FMP Coordinator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703.842.0715 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

From: [Potvin, Brian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment 2
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:52:09 AM

Hello, I'm a rec fisherman who has been flyfishing the east coast for 25 years. I, like everyone else, have seen a dramatic diminishment in the quality of our fishery. I personally am catch-and-release only with barbless circle hooks. I know that by fishing, I'm putting some pressure on the fishery, but I'm doing it as responsibly as I can. My preference would us to give game fish status to stripers until they come back in abundance.

If we don't correct the current trajectory, I think we'll look back at the catch-and-keep crowd (yes, especially charters and commercial fishermen) as the buffalo hunters of our day.

I advocate for coast-wide regulations with "B" as my choice including strong advocacy for "B1" for the Chesapeake.

Sincerely,
Brian Potvin
Marblehead, MA

From: [Glenn Hughes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:09:21 AM

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Glenn Hughes and I am the president of the American Sportfishing Association, representing the sportfishing industry and anglers across the nation. I am also 1 of 750,000 anglers and 1 of 322,000 license holders in the state of Maryland who are concerned about the health and well-being of the Chesapeake Bay.

At ASA and for recreational anglers, we ask for 3 things – a healthy fishery, access to the fish and fairness with other forms of fishing, including charters and commercial in Maryland. Although charters are recreational fishing and we don't support separation, we do feel that recreational anglers who spend the time and money to fish from their boats, a friend's boat or from shore, should have the same 'access' to fish as the charter boat operators.

In answer to the request for opinion on the options slated in Amendment II for Striped Bass, I offer my following comments:

1. For Section 3.1.1. Ocean Recreational Fishing Options - We support Option B, with current slot of 28-31 inches; because 'B' maintains the Emergency Action and would provide stability in 2024.
2. For the Chesapeake Bay – We support Option B and sub-options because 'B' would maintain consistency between private and for hire. BUT, its important to state the precision across all options is overstated!
3. For 3.1.3. For Hire – Because we oppose the different limits for hire and private, this option would not apply.
4. Commercial Quota – Again, we support Option B to apply against all sectors because we all have a shared interest, but taking (proposed) 16.1% from recreational fishing and 0% from commercial will have a far great impact on the state anglers, and, therefore, businesses and jobs. And as Mike Luisi stated previously, "All should take ownership."

Finally, if changes like these are going to be considered, its absolutely time to perform an economic impact study. I know I personally have spent more than \$7,000 in pursuit of fish and fishing on the Chesapeake Bay during my 50 trips in 2023. I do not plan on targeting catfish or snakehead as alternatives.

The 2016 McGraw Center for Conservation Leadership Study shows us that anglers who fished for striped bass created a GDP of more than \$800 million and supported more than 10,000 jobs with salaries and wages of \$497 million in the state of Maryland alone. The impact on the sportfishing industry and the state of Maryland's anglers are a far greater impact than on the commercial fishery who I've heard did not achieve their quota in 2023.

I personally only harvested 6 rockfish all season. Most important to me is having access to fishing. If

it is determined that we can take fewer fish than we accept that, but closing the fishery to 'No Target' is completely unnecessary, especially in April and May when the waters are cold and the fish will survive.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Glenn Hughes

President

American Sportfishing Association

1001 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 501

Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.519.9691 ext. 245

Mobile: 407.782.7752

www.asafishing.org

www.KeepAmericaFishing.org

From: [Ohbro38](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public comment Striped Bass.
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:27:59 AM

Sent from my iPhone Charter Boat Oh Brother Montauk and more than 1000 of our clients Support Option C 28"-33" size for Striped Bass management as it will lessen regulatory discard mortality at least a little bit. We as a group also support a 28"-33" for the Capt and Mate.

From: [Ed Skorupski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:40:37 AM

Ms. Franke – attended Dec. 18 meeting Re: Draft Addendum @ NYSDEC Region 3 – after listening to the ASMFC information and the need to further reduce take in order to protect/increase the stock, I would support – for the Hudson River

A modified slot limit of 18-26” with a closure July & August

Also, although not directly impacting my fishing on the Hudson – the multi-mode proposal for charters to allow paying customers and additional fish is offensive.

Thank You for allowing my input

Ed Skorupski
eskorups@nycap.rr.com

From: [Sam](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:57:24 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brian Kendall <ebrkrules@yahoo.com>
Date: December 19, 2023 at 9:55:29 PM EST
To: sam <Roosta04@gmail.com>
Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

Hello, I am an avid catch and release recreational angler from Connecticut and I fish eastern Long Island Sound. Let's do what we have to do to bring these fish back by 2029.

I support the following options for the Draft Addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:
Option B
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:
Option B1
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements:
Option B
- 3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options:
Option B, with the full 14.5% reduction
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates:
Option B

Thanks.

From: [john laccetti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:02:37 PM

With regard to above:

A. Close session in summer preferably June 16th

B. 18-26"

(Although I ld rather see catch and release

Circle hooks only)

Thank you John Laccetti

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Scott A. Rager](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:12:20 PM

I agree with a&b!

Scott A. Rager

From Jess Best – DEC

When the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission meets in January, they will be deciding what reductions, if any, will be implemented for the coast and we will potentially have to decide on some changes for the Hudson River. Last night I presented the following options that may achieve any reductions we have to implement. The options are all similar in terms of the percentage reduction that they would achieve.

- A. Close season in summer (removing July-August)
- B. 18"-26" slot
- C. 19"-27" slot with season clos 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

Here's my take/opinion on each

- A. Close season in summer (removing July-August) – **OK, benefits all upper and lower – reduces temperature related release mortality**
- B. 18"-26" slot – **OK, has the least impact reduces the pressure on one year class**
- C. 19"-27" slot with season closing early June 16th – **not so good – eliminates late season fishing – more impact on lower Hudson**
- D. 21"-28" slot with season closing early August 1st – **not so good – doesn't**

address warm water release mortality

E. 21"-28" slot with season opening later April 15th – **this will not be supported by lower Hudson anglers**

F. Season opening May 1st – **NFG**

In my opinion a combination of A&B would be the least disruptive.

What do we need to do – review the options and decide which one or combinations you can support and send you comments to ASMFC at

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

Email: comments@asmfc.org

Subject line: ‘Striped Bass Draft Addendum II’

From: [Clay Emerson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:27:40 PM
Attachments: [MDDNRYOY.png](#)

Emilie,

Thank you for the ASMFC's efforts in preparing the public outreach materials for the Draft Amendment II to Amendment 7. I was encouraged that many states opted to offer both virtual and in-person meetings, and disappointed with the states that did not offer both meeting options.

I am a passionate recreational striped bass angler and resident of New Jersey, and I am concerned for the future of the pastime which I enjoy. I attended the public hearing in New Jersey and unfortunately most of the public comments which I heard were anglers or charters which expressed frustration over their perception of a lack of "good data". Many offered personal testimony of "great days" with "bass everywhere". However, personal anecdotes and social media posts detailing moments of local abundance are certainly not a valid replacement for the "good data" these commenters desire. Accurate information on angler participation, effort and removals will always be desired and never be acquired.

The best data we have is the various YOY surveys, most notably the Maryland DNR surveys of the Chesapeake Bay. That data tells an obvious story; tragically it's a story we've heard before. The historic recovery of the striped bass population through John Boreman's concept to protect the 1982 class of fish led to an abundant population of striped bass. We should continue to try to protect the 2015 fish in a similar fashion.

However, the average catch per haul index over the latest five-year period (2019-2023) is the single lowest value that has ever been measured over the entire 66 years of record. The 2019 YOY are just beginning to contribute to the spawning stock, and I fear that the next five to ten years does not hold promise for the fishery. Furthermore, the recent YOY data appears to be more variable in recent decades, perhaps due to increasing climate variability (temperature and precipitation) impacting the suitability of the bay for successful recruitment.

Now in 2023 the striped bass population is arguably in a similar state compared to what it was in the early 1980s and the primary and likely evolutionary nursery of striped bass is changing in ways that will only further impact the population. Additionally, we likely have record levels of recreational pressure on the fishery, and we have a Chesapeake Bay that is not as stable and reliable as it historically has been. I fish from a small boat and generally manage to get out at least once a week. I have perceived a relative increase in the average size of striped bass in the last few years with a notable lack of smaller fish. I know that a stable age class structure depends on reliable recruitment and the presence of young fish (less than five years). Simply put, my limited observations and those of many other anglers reinforce what the Chesapeake data are telling us; and it's not good.

As far as Addendum II is concerned, my recommendations are as follows:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Of note, I strongly disagree with any proposed mode splits, this has failed in the past and if people chose to keep fish should not be given an advantage just because they pay a charter to get them to that end. I also strongly encourage 3.3 Option B for ASMFC board action. Having attended meetings of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council, I certainly don't trust my State to make educated decisions on the matter. Overall, I don't think enough is being done and would support more

conservative measures and expedited action.

In summary, the recovery of striped bass was a shining example of successful fisheries management in action. Now in 2023, the best available data is painting the early signs in a picture of a second collapse. Let's act intelligently and quickly to reestablish a healthy population structure for future generations to enjoy.

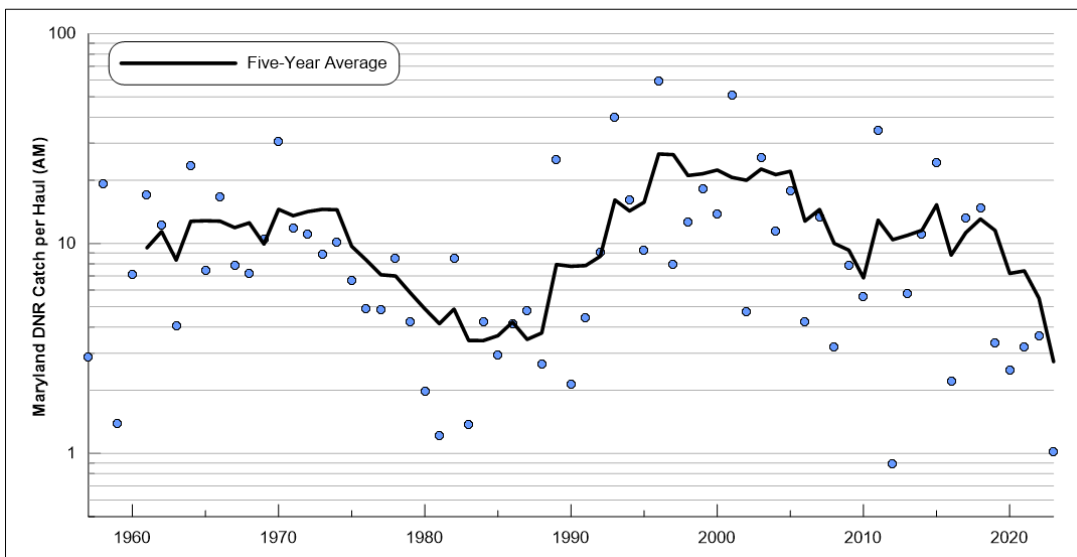
Thank you for your time and consideration,

Clay Emerson

609-203-8980

2020 Sky Daughter Trail

Hammonton, NJ 08037



From: [pj.paguaga](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II - option c
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:36:07 PM

Myself and my fisherman friends wish to support Option C to limit slot size for striped bass by no more than 2”

This will allow more striped bass to be able to live

Take care Pete
Via iPhone

From: [Mike Alesse](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public comment for asmfc
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:38:14 PM

Team mako commercial fishing
Captain:mike alesse
Ports: Beverly Newburyport Gloucester
Also member of north end boat club

3.1.1

For hire option b

Tighter regulations for hire boats going out 7 days a week. With multiple trips could result in high harvest because lets face it they are good at fishing.

3.1.2

Chesapeake fishery is broken absolutely need tighter regulations.

Option b1

3.1.3

Option b

3.1.4

Option A - this is a enforcement issue nothing to do with saving striped bass

3.2.1

OPTION A.

Absolutely no way that mass commercial should absorb any of this issue. Let's look at the chesapeake commercial fishery with the use of nets on schoolies. 3million in quota in the striped bass spawning grounds. Make them take a 50% reduction and ban nets! Time to make it even with hook and line only!

3.3

Option A public comment is needed for checks and balances of rules

serious ideas to achieve less recreational dead discards

1) focus on chesapeake spawning grounds

2) EDUCATION in order to obtain license you must complete a small course on

Proper de hooking / cutting line if needed

Measuring slot fish

How to handle

Gear to use

Carry a net

Seems simple but if it saves fish why not invest!

3)the amfc needs its own law enforcement checking boat's daily. Taking data and reporting recreational fishing.

Mass enforcement is completely maxed out and needs major help to maintain laws and

poaching of the ocean.

From: [Tom Sikes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:44:22 PM

Dear ASMFC,

While I believe an equitable harvest moratorium for recreational and commercial fishing would be the most appropriate, and most effective, way to rebuild Atlantic Striped Bass fishery, I would like to voice my support for the following Options available within the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: **I support Option B**—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes), as it produced the greatest overall harvest reduction and further protects the 2015 year class.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **I support Option B1**—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 of 23". Again, this produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **I support 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. This is only fair in keeping anglers honest. For bass populations to recover under these protections, we must do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **I support Option B at the largest possible reduction rate of 14.5%**—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%**.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **I support 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.

Thank you in advance for listening to our calls to protect this beautiful ecosystem.

Tom Sikes

--

Tom Sikes
(203) 927-8273

From: [James Ronayne](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II -James Ronayne
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:46:42 PM

My name is James Ronayne but I am sure many Chesapeake Fishermen know me as PorkChop.

PorkChop Is my 12-foot aluminum boat; she's an old girl but her bright yellow paint makes her stand out even amongst the newest boats. I use Porkchop to do everything on the bay. I fish, crab, and even tong for oysters. My favorite pastime is photography. This summer I started going out in the early morning to photograph crabbers at the mouth of the South River. I love the relationships I build with these hard working watermen and I seek to tell their story as often as I can. I've had the opportunity to photograph pound netters, Charter Boats, recreational anglers, and even big corporations like Omega Fisheries down in Reedsville.

Currently, I am a Senior at Annapolis High School. I notice that many fishermen I encounter on the bay are of an older generation. When I think about regulations, I think about the future. I think about what a fishery will look like not only for my future, but for my kids and grandkids.

I fully recognize that shutting down or restricting a fishery has massive implications for a lot of people and their livelihoods today. BUT what I keep thinking about is tomorrow. If we kill all the fish now, what does our livelihood look like next year or 5 years down the road? What does it look like for future generations?

While the past 5 years of a poor spawn can be partially attributed to poor weather conditions, it is also due to overharvesting. It does not seem fair that charter boats that possess decades of fishing knowledge, and thousands of dollars worth of fish-finding equipment can go out and keep upwards of 60 fish per day while I am limited to 1. The effort per catch on their boat vs my boat is not comparable.

The first step in bringing this fishery back to what it once was, is limiting the bag limit for ALL modes and reducing the total quota. In the past year I have spent 274 days on the water; I have met watermen and anglers of all backgrounds, and I have forged relationships with people from all parts of this fishery.

I believe that no matter our economic, political, or social divide; we are all fighting for the common goal of a healthy Bay.

I am respectfully requesting Option B2 and a reduced total quota by at least 14.5%.

Thank You,
James Ronayne - F/V PorkChop
CCA Maryland Intern
<https://www.ccamd.org/>
Environmental Photographer
(443)699-4487

From: [Al Williams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [MIKE ARMSTRONG](#); Daniel.Mckiernan@mass.gov
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 12:57:55 PM

BTo: ASMFC

Attn: Emilie Franke

From: Al Williams / Gloucester, Mass. (commercial Striper fisherman, recreational Striper fisherman; and licensed charter Captain)

Hello Emilie;

I am a life long Gloucester resident and have fished for striped bass both commercially and recreationally in Cape Ann waters for over 50 years. I also hold a Captain's license but do not actively charter.

Attached you will find my comments regarding "Striped Bass Draft addendum
Thank you for the opportunity to submit my opinions on this important document.

Section 3.1.1. Ocean Recreational fishery

Option B is my preferred option. (1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons / all modes)

From the options presented, this one optimizes the % reduction benefit (14.1%) and also strengthens the lower size buffer to the 2015 year class (which will average 34" in 2024). Also; I feel that the concept of mode splits is just too challenging to adopt at this time. If a mode split were enacted in Massachusetts, there could conceivably be 3 different size limits in effect on an open commercial day. (Comm. Limit, Rec limit; and for-hire limit). - and there is an increasing number of shore-guide businesses that I assume would also fall under the for-hire umbrella. All of this just feels too challenging to communicate and enforce for 2024. This concept may deserve a harder look if the 2024 stock assessment is not good and creative solutions are required to sustain all user groups.

Section 3.1.2. Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

I do not have a definitive preferred option given the myriad of existing sizes in the Chesapeake and my lack of familiarity with that story. Options that closely approach the targeted 14.5% reduction would be my priority.

I again emphasize my concerns about mode splits as stated in section 3.1.1.

Section 3.1.3 For-hire Management Clarification

If a mode split is approved:

I favor option "A" (status quo)

The complexity of implementing a mode split in the for hire industry (boat and shore-guide) is daunting to begin with. Adding another layer involving Captain/guide vs client just

welcomes further confusion and non compliance.
(See my comments in section 3.1.1 regarding mode splits)

Section 3.1.4. Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

I prefer option “A” (status quo)

I prefer this option because in my opinion this is an enforcement issue that does not contribute to % reduction goals.

However, I defer to law enforcement’s position if they have a favored approach that will help them do their job.

Section 3.2.1. Commercial Quota Reduction Options

I favor option “B”

This option will allow the board to choose quota reduction options ranging from “0% to 14.5%”.

There is defense for status quo, given that the commercial quota is a hard quota and did not contribute to increased removals in 2022, but; the declining status of the fishery makes it prudent and responsible to include consideration of a commercial quota reduction in concert with recreational measures for 2024.

In my opinion, some data regarding 2023 total removals should be available by ASMFC’s winter meeting in January. This data should be used to help solidify a meaningful % reduction in the commercial quota for 2024.

Section 3.3. Response to Stock Assessment Update

I favor option “B” (Board could respond via Board action)

This will allow expedited decisions as needed. The alternatives in option A just take too long. There is a high probability that the 2024 stock assessment will dictate that quick action must be taken prior to the 2025 season.

Thank you again for reviewing my responses and allowing me to participate in this process.

Al Williams
Gloucester, Mass.

From: [John Moy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:05:32 PM

Dear ASMFC:

I am a recreational angler on Nantucket, and I also take scale samples of striped bass for Massachusetts's SADCT program. Last year was the worst year in terms of samples, both for me and for the entire program, in the 10 years I have been participating. Clearly striped bass are in trouble, and something needs to be done to recover the stock. I am hoping that Addendum II will help in that regard.

Here are my comments on the Addendum:

- in 3.1.1, **Ocean Recreational Fishery Options**, I support Option B, 1 fish at 28-31". That is the best way to protect the 2015 year class.
- in 3.1.2, **Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options**, I support Option B1. This is simplest, and is the biggest reduction in an area that continues to suffer spawning failures.
- in 3.1.3, **For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected)**, I support Option B. Captain and crew should be treated differently than the paying clients.
- in 3.1.4, **Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements**, I support Option B. We have to get more serious about enforcement.
- in 3.2.1, **Commercial Quota Reduction Options**, I support Option B. There has to be an equitable reduction in harvest in order to recover the striped bass population.
- in 3.3, **Response to Stock Assessment**, I support Option B. We need to be more nimble if/when further action is required to recover the striped bass Population.

Thank you for your consideration,
John Moy
25 Eel Point Road
Nantucket, MA 02554
jmoy@ospf.org
617-784-1872

From: [John Lefebber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Commentary
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:08:24 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

My name is John Lefebber. I am an avid recreational angler, currently living in Massachusetts. I have been fishing for Striped Bass since I was five years of age, living in southern Connecticut. I have caught and released bass from Long Island Sound all the way to the Damariscotta River in Maine and everywhere in between. I fish both on fly and spin, designing all the flies and lures I use to target these amazing fish. Fishing for Striped Bass is a passion of mine that I expect to be able to pass down to my kids and others in the future. Without protection this will not be possible in the Stripers current situation. Protecting striped bass stocks, safeguarding the recreational angling industry that relies on these fish, and ensuring that future generations of anglers can enjoy our coastal fishery are paramount. With this said, I wish to support the following options in the current Addendum II draft:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options, I support: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support:** Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support:** Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I support:** Option B—Board Action.

I cannot emphasise the need for proactive management enough. The success of the Striped Bass fishing industry over the last two decades has stood on the shoulders of past anglers who saw the need for management in the 70's and 80's. Those anglers made sacrifices to their needs at the time and prioritized the fishery long term. We are in a similar situation. We can prioritize the future, or we can continue to drag our feet, see a crash and then moratorium in five years. It's up to us to manage now.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Addendum II.

John Lefebber

4/13/2022

Boston, MA

From: [Ray Jarvis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Salt of the Earth sportfishing opinion
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:08:36 PM

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Future consideration to mode splits should include removing captain and mate from the retention allowance on the vessel. In a sense it's the same as mixing a commercial and recreational day. Being one's own 'mode' should have benefits and consequences.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Until there are multiple year classes of juvenile fish in the pipeline indicative of a robust recovery all modes should share in the reductions to tilt the scales in favor of preserving existing stock.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

All species managers when faced with declining numbers should have the option to not only implement emergency actions but sweeping actions to do what management can to protect species in peril.

Thanks for all the hard work.

I feel as though this is something, but not enough in the end. This fishery will crash if we don't stop the harvest.

I'm concerned about the future of my business here in Massachusetts and I hope that common sense out ways financial decisions at some point.

Game fish status please!!

Thanks,

Ray Jarvis

Owner
Salt of the Earth Sportfishing Inc.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Shaul](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:15:16 PM

#4
Option c

From: [Andy Boynton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:16:49 PM

Dear ASMFC:

I am a serious beach recreational angler on Nantucket. For the past ten years, fishing has varied year to year, but the trend has been worse and worse fishing; fewer and fewer fish. Clearly striped bass numbers are down, and something needs to be done to recover and replenish the stock. I am hoping that Addendum II will help in that regard.

Here are my comments on the Addendum:

- in 3.1.1, **Ocean Recreational Fishery Options**, I support Option B, 1 fish at 28-31". That is the best way to protect the 2015 year class.
- in 3.1.2, **Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options**, I support Option B1. This is simplest, and is the biggest reduction in an area that continues to suffer spawning failures. This is a vital option to support.
- in 3.1.3, **For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected)**, I support Option B. Captain and crew should be treated differently than the paying clients.
- in 3.1.4, **Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements**, I support Option B. We have to get more serious about enforcement. Put teeth into the enforcement!
- in 3.2.1, **Commercial Quota Reduction Options**, I support Option B. There has to be an equitable reduction in harvest in order to recover the striped bass population.
- in 3.3, **Response to Stock Assessment**, I support Option B. We need to be more nimble if/when further action is required to recover the striped bass Population.

--

Andy Boynton
46 Weweeder Ave, Nantucket, MA

And...

John and Linda Powers Family Dean
Carroll School of Management
Boston College
140 Commonwealth Avenue
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

boyntona@bc.edu
617-552-8420 (p)
617-552-8738 (f)

From: [Patrick Vogt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC Stripers Addendum II - Written Comment
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:23:50 PM

I am writing in regard to the striped bass addendum II.

For section 3.1.2 I support option B1.

For section 3.2.1 I support option B.

For section 3.3 I support option B.

I would like to give additional comments on my strong opposition to mode splits (e.g. recreation vs. recreation for-hire) for this addendum and in the future.

When we are dealing with emergency regulatory addendums (in other words, the stock is barreling toward a crash), it is in our collective interest as fishermen, regardless of mode, to rebuild the stock as quickly as possible. Mode splits, in this case, tend to only lessen the chance of rebuilding within the desired timeframe, and should be completely disregarded in emergency situations.

Respectfully,

**Patrick Vogt
Recreational striped bass angler.
Connecticut**

From: [Chuck Vaccarino](#)
To: [Comments: Chuck Vaccarino](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:45:04 PM

Hello Emilie Franke,

Thank you for accepting comments.

I am in agree on a combination of A & C options & my proposal would be as follows:

- Close the season in summer July & August
- Tighten the slot to 19" to 27"

I fish the Hudson during striper run during the month of May from West Point to The Troy dam & the past several years have been some of the best fishing ever. Mostly boat fish with occasional shore fishing at the dam. 100% of the fish I catch are released.

I would actually be in favor of 100% catch & release for recreational anglers.

Thank you & please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks,
Chuck Vaccarino
518-858-9814

From: [Austin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:48:04 PM

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

■ There are three goals here; the greatest overall reduction, protecting the 2015-year class and making sure it is done in a fair and equitable way. Option A expands the slot to 28"-35", Option C and D introduce 'mode splits'. Essentially, recreational anglers are split into 'private vessel/shore' and 'for-hire', it is not the right thing to do now or ever. Since the inception of Amendment 7, we have heard from the board and law enforcement that no harvest and no target closures would be too difficult to enforce, the same applies here. All recreational anglers should make an equitable effort to reduce harvest and restore the Striped Bass stock to abundance. Option D shifts the slot up in size and would only do more damage to the 2015-year class as they continue to grow and enter that range.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

■ Here we selected Option B1 for several reasons. Most importantly it produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot. Option B1, with consistent minimum size, maximum size, and bag limit creates more uniform regulations across the bay. Again, as previously discussed in the ocean recreational options, mode splits are not something we can support in anyway.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): Support 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.*

■ We do not support mode splits in anyway, as discussed in the first two sections. Should the board choose to adopt (most likely against public comment) mode splits we should do what we can to minimize the potential damage. Option B only allows the additional harvest to apply to the patrons during a for-hire trip. The captain and crew are subject to the same regulations as private vessel/shore anglers.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support 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.*

■ This is no time to be lax about regulations and keeping anglers honest. If we want to get the stock back on track for recovery then we should do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit. Option B requires that, in states where at-sea/ shore-side filleting is allowed, anglers must retain the rack (what is left of the fish after cutting off fillets) and keep the skin on the fillets. This is very simple, in the event that a conservation officer boards a vessel or checks on a shore angler, it would be possible for that officer to know whether or not the fish was legally harvested. We are adding to the toolkit law enforcement has to ensure compliance by the anglers.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.*

■ Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, "Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum." An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.

■ We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.

- First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let's say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For

example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us its a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, than this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.

- Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability) to getting these new commercial regulations in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

- As we mentioned in our [summary of this past ASMFC board meeting](#), there is a really good chance that Addendum II will only be in effect for a one year period. The next stock assessment results are expected in the fall of 2024. Given the 5 years of very poor recruitment in the Chesapeake, there is a good chance that stronger management changes will be need to ensure a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding by 2029. If the board is required to do so via another Addendum, that process could take close to a year to finalize. The Striped Bass stock does not have that kind of time right now. Option B would allow the board to react by voting by a simple majority. While we prefer to have a public comment period, it just becomes a cumbersome and time consuming process which puts us farther behind in terms of rebuilding. This is unfortunate, the writing has been on the wall for years and as you are probably already aware, Stripers Forever has been calling for the most conservative measures since the beginning of the Amendment 7 process. If the results of the next stock assessment are as bad as we anticipate, the conversation about a equitable harvest moratorium will most certainly be back on the table.

Thank you,
Austin Schofield

From: [Jeff Rocco](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:50:19 PM

Good afternoon,

As a charter boat captain and advocate for fishing please consider OPTION C for the 2024 NYS fishing season.

This option will increase the slot size 2" more for the for hire fleet. The increased slot of 2" will only change the harvest reduction percentage from 14% to 14.1% This difference is so negligible it should be a no brainer and again reiterates the the tiny slice of the pie that the for hire fleet represents within the recreational sector. This will decrease catch and release mortality which will keep more Striped Bass in the water. The less time I spend Bass fishing will equate less bass killed plain and simple.

Respectfully,

Jeff Rocco
Aqualina 2 Charters

From: [Vittorio Fiorenza M.D.](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:56:36 PM

Hello Emilie Franke,

Thank you for taking the time to accept comments.
- I am a Hudson River Striper Recreational fisherman.

I would agree with a combination of A & C options to include:
- Close the season in summer July & August
- Lessen the slot to 19" to 27"

I would be in favor of 100% catch & release for recreational anglers.

Thank you,
Vittorio Fiorenza

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Richard Hutchins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 1:58:52 PM

I attended the public hearing in Portsmouth NH, but submitting the following comments.

For the ocean recreational options I vote for Option B.

For the Chesapeake Bay recreational options I vote for Option B1.

For the recreational filleting options I vote for Option B.

For the commercial quota reduction options I vote for Option B.

Although a 14.5% reduction in harvest is a step in the right direction, I feel more drastic action may be needed given the shocking reduction in the smaller fish that we are seeing now. I would be in favor of a seasonal overall limit, or even a complete catch and release on the recreational side. We can't afford to wait until it's really a crisis like we have seen before. Thanks for your consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Hutchins

CCA member and long time fly fisherman

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Frank Zima](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:03:17 PM

Hi Emilie!

Some additional thoughts on striper management regulations.

Have no angling/fishing during spawning, especially in specific spawning areas. Example: Portions of the Hudson, Delaware, and Chesapeake. This would be a similar principle to what they do in trout/salmon rivers.

Encourage...possibly mandate...the use of more single hooks, and barbless hooks (especially on trebles).

Thanks for listening...and for what you do!

Be well...

Frank Zima
Albany NY

From: [Dave Prockop](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:08:31 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I am a recreational angler living in Rhode Island and I am also friends with commercial fishermen so I am well aware of the arguments for and against most of the options in Addendum II. The picture looks very clear to me and most of those I speak with. People who ignore the data about the population as a whole simply don't want to believe what the numbers tell us, all too clearly, about the fragile state of the striper population. Unfortunately, anyone who has fished for more than one year knows that the presence of fish one season does not guarantee they will be there the next. That's the whole reason that population studies were begun in the first place and the whole reason for regulations to exist.

This is all about short-term gain vs. long-term security of the striped bass fishery. If short-term were all that mattered, we would have no need for your oversight or for any regulations at all. Your entire role is to do all that you can to ensure the long-term well-being of this fishery, for the benefit of everyone involved, even if that means making decisions that are unpopular when they are first made. Since that is the reason for your commission to exist, I trust that you will make your own decisions, rather than being swayed excessively by any sort of straw poll. Everyone who cares at all about our striper population will thank you in a few years for every careful regulation you put in place.

With all that in mind, I strongly support the options listed below.

Thanks for taking the time to consider all views and to focus on the data,

Dave Prockop
Providence, RI

-
- 3.1.1 - Option B
 - 3.1.2 - Option B1
 - 3.1.4 - Option B
 - 3.2.1 - Option B at 14.5% reduction in the ocean and Chesapeake
 - 3.3 - Option B

From: [Ben Horner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:32:00 PM

Hello,

My name is Ben Horner and I live in New Hampshire and fish for Stripped Bass mostly in MA, NH, and ME. The fishing is the worst I have seen in the 15 years or so that I have been chasing stripped bass. Not only were my numbers way down this year, but I literally did not catch a bass under 15 inches this season. There seems to be no measurable numbers of small bass. This is an ongoing theme that needs attention, the time for playing with quotas and funny math to allow continued over-harvest is long over. Please consider the bigger picture.

Regards,

Ben Horner

I support these options for Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

From: [Ryne Miller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:58:51 PM

I support Option C - increasing slot size by 2". There are too many good fish being thrown back. The fishers do comply - so give them a reasonable framework within which to comply.

Best,
Ryne

Ryne Miller

Miller Strategic Partners LLP

(212) 542 3268 | ryne@millerstrategic.co

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail and any attachments are for the exclusive and confidential use of the intended recipient. If you received this in error, please do not read, distribute, or take action in reliance upon this message. Instead, please notify us immediately by return e-mail and promptly delete this message and its attachments from your computer system. We do not waive attorney-client or work product privilege by the transmission of this message.

From: [Joe Pellegrini](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:59:28 PM

Hello, my name is Joe Pellegrini, I'm a surfcaster from Long Island and care deeply about the state of the Striped Bass population.

I ask that you strongly consider the following regarding Addendum II of Amendment 7:

3.1.1: Option B

3.1.2: Option B1

3.1.3: Option B

3.1.4: Option B

3.2.1: Option B

3.3: Option B

Warm regards and Happy New Year

Joe Pellegrini

North Bellmore, Long Island, NY

--

Joe Pellegrini
Director of Courtesy Patrol
Long Island Beach Buggy Association
516-729-8582

From: [Captain Mack](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:10:19 PM

I support Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option C2

From: [Ken Thompson](#)
To: [Fishon](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] RE: STRIPER COMMENTS DUE AT ASFMC DEC. 22, 2023
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:22:30 PM

The depletion of the primary food source of Menhaden must be regulated far better with a reduced limit and season. It is criminal that Omega is allowed to harvest the ridiculous amount that is permitted to date..

This needs to end. They are constantly inside the 3-mile line and across the mouth of the Chesapeake.

Respectfully,

Captain Ken Thompson

From: Fishon <fishon@opportunatylines.com>
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2023 11:45 AM
To: Ken Thompson <kent@architecturalwindow.com>
Subject: FW: STRIPER COMMENTS DUE AT ASFMC DEC. 22, 2023

Sent from Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association
<kevin.m.smith250@gmail.com@memberplanet.net>
Date: 12/17/23 5:13 PM (GMT-05:00)
To: fishon@opportunatylines.com
Subject: STRIPER COMMENTS DUE AT ASFMC DEC. 22, 2023

[View in Browser](#)



Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association

ifishva.org

joinvssa.org

Officers:

Steve Atkinson, President

David Tobey, Vice President

Bob Mandigo, Treasurer

Kevin Smith, Secretary

Board of Directors:

Curtis Tomlin, Advisor

John Bello

John Page Williams Jr.

Jerry Hughes

Scott Gregg

Stan Gold

Bob Mandigo

Steve Atkinson

David Tobey

Chris Dollar

Brian Collins

“CALL FOR ACTION “

**VA STRIPED BASS FISHING IN JEPORDY
PLEASE EMAIL YOUR COMMENTS TO THE ASFMC
BY DECEMBER 22, 2023**

The Virginia Saltwater SportFishing Association strongly encourages you, your friends and all anglers to email your comments to the email shown below before December 22, 2023. Your input is critical to the future of recreational striped bass fishing in Virginia's Tidal Waters and The Chesapeake Bay. Please share this information with others who you think would be willing to help.

The ASFMC Striped Bass Draft Addendum II addresses the overfished status of the fishery and the likelihood of not meeting the recovery goal by 2029. Potential recreation measures include tighter slot limits for both the Bay and Ocean fisheries with commercial measures including potential quota reductions. If you would like to read more, please click this link:

https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/6542756cAtlStripedBassDraftAddendumII_PublicComment_Oct2023.pdf

VSSA has serious concerns on the probability of rebuilding to the biomass target by the 2029 deadline. Therefore, the VSSA supports the most conservative measures proposed. Moreover, we believe both the recreational and commercial sectors must share in the rebuilding process. Our comments on the proposed options have been submitted to the ASMFC and VMRC.

Email Your Comments by 11:59 PM (EST) on December 22, 2023 to:
comments@asmfc.org

Please name your email in the Subject Line: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

Kevin Smith

Secretary
Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association

A Non- Profit 501c3 Organization for Virginia Recreational Anglers



Tom
Jerome

VSSA
3419 Virginia Beach Blvd
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
[Add us to your address book](#)
You may [unsubscribe](#) if you prefer not to receive future emails from us | [Privacy Policy](#)



From: [William Pruitt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:27:18 PM

I am a charter operator in Maryland and I'm in favor of option C2 for the 2024 season. All other options will highly impact the charter business we have in MD and may even cause some to go out of business due to lack of customers.

Thanks

Shawn Pruitt

From: [Richard Grein](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum 2 Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:29:06 PM

Hello ASMFC

I am Richard Grein. I fish my local New York waters. Please consider my comments on addendum 2.

3.1.1:B) 1 fish 28" to 31" , preferred

But after extensively discussion, at the New York meeting if the science is sound there is only a 0.1% change in reduction and 0.4% change in harvest. Option C would be a compromise since nether model actually reaches the 14.5% reduction.

The size limits should not move to protect the 2015 ,2017,2018 year classes at this time.

3.1.2:B1) Bay jurisdiction 1 fish 19" to 23"

3.1.3:B) Fire hire captain and crew are held to private shore / boat limit.

3.1.4:B) this fits my opinion the best but I see and understand why racks are to kept but do not see the need to retain the skin. And stars should consider when and where they can be disposed of.

3.2.1:B) A 14.5% max cut in commercial harvest in ocean and or Chesapeake Bay.

3.3:B) the board should have the ability to take action and vote on measures at the meetings to avoid delay.

Richard F Grein
Kings Park, NY

Sent from my iPhone

From: [RICHARD ETZEL](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:32:03 PM

To ASMFC,
I am a full time charter vessel out of Montauk NY. I would like to submit comment on Striped Bass Addendum II
3.1.1. I support option C. Thank you,
Richard Etzel

Sent from my iPad

From: [Vigmostad Ralph](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum23.1.1
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:32:23 PM

Sent from my iPad3.1.1 opt b,3.1.2 optb1, 3.1.3 opt b, 3.1.4 opt b,3.2.1 opt b,3.3 opt b

From: [Christopher Hull](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:51:38 PM

I'm in agreement with the proposed changes to the striped bass fishery

From: [PAUL stamos](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:52:35 PM

Please note I am in favor of option b for section 3.1.2 Chesapeake bay recreational options. I also support option b for 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options.

Thank you
Paul Stamos

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Albert Lorenzetti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass amendment 2
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:52:57 PM

Charter and recreational should be considered separately.

I have been a charter Captain for over 40 years. As a charter captain I pay a State fee of \$250 for my charter business. I pay for commercial insurance. I have to maintain my captain's license and renew it every 5 years. I am subject to random drug testing.

For all of these rigorous requirements I get no preferential treatment to help maintain my business and no consideration of what I do for the tourist industry in my region.

This is draconian bullying at its best based on somewhat shaky science.

Charter catch should be 28 to 35 inch or 36 and over.

Captain Al Lorenzetti
Senior outdoor writer for OWAA.
Website www.skimmeroutdoors.com

From: [Nuno Decosta](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Slot limits hurt more then they help
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:59:00 PM

Over the last few seasons, with a slot limit, we have seen more mortality with a Fish being released prior to the slot limits. Fisherman would be happy with catching a nice, 30 pound striped bass and be done for the day. Now we are releasing larger fish at a more exorbitant rate Which in the long run will have more mortality besides that when we target a small 3 inch window, We are going to have a missing size class for seasons to come.

Just a thought

<http://www.Tyalure.com>

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [fishhawk](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 3:59:53 PM

Taking into account data uncertainties in striped bass stock assessments, multiyear unfavorable environmental conditions affecting spawns, and extended multiyear poor recruitment, the largest reductions under consideration for Addendum II should be adopted because of the urgent need to reduce mortality and rebuild the depleted stock. This would be for the Chesapeake Bay Option B1. All categories of fisherman - recreational, fishing for hire, and commercial - should be treated equally with respect to striped bass take reductions with no special carve-outs for anyone other than Native Americans to the extent that a tribe and its members may have a by right take by treaty or law.

Submitted by Wayne Young, MS (Natural Resources)

From: labeast4@optonline.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:00:47 PM

I live on the east end of Long Island, Sag Harbor to be precise, and have fished Long Island waters my whole life. I.m turning 65 in Feb. and have watched the striped bass situation through good times and bad. We need to preserve this beautiful fish and if anything we need to preserve this majestic creature that we all love and admire for future generations to come. Sincerely, Pete L.

From: [Edward Fabian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:02:22 PM

Only a person that is on the take or that is stupid would not realize that the problem is that commercial fisherman are allowed to take 15 bass a day and by size they can only be breeding females . If your to stupid to read this then it falls on deaf ears . If you are able to read this then I guess we know what's really going on!

From: [Richard Rodwell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:06:39 PM

I agree with the proposed changes in striped bass management to help replenish the stock. The Northeast region is on the right path but more meaningful measures need to be taken in the critical Chesapeake Bay and Mid Atlantic region breeding areas.

Thank You,
Richard Rodwell
First Assistant Harbormaster
Town of Marshfield, MA
rrodwell@marshfieldpolice.org

From: [Brad Curtin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:07:53 PM

Hello, I am a shore based recreational saltwater angler from Massachusetts and fish in multiple New England states. I am writing to share my opinions as to which options I believe are best moving forward with addendum II.

My positions are as follows:

3.1.1 ocean recreational options: I am in favor of option B, one fish at 28-31" with the same 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay recreational options: I am in favor of option B1, one fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options: I am in favor of option B, with a 14.5% reduction to both ocean and Chesapeake Bay quotas.

3.3 response to stock assessments: I am in favor of option B, board action.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinions for the future of the fishery I greatly love. As an avid fisherman primarily targeting striped bass I feel the actions taken now are of critical importance for the future of the species, and the most aggressive actions allowed should be taken to ensure the fishery not only survives but thrives. I would love to see the population managed to abundance even if it requires strict action such as temporary moratoriums that have already proven their effectiveness previously or even game fish status, but hopefully with these forthcoming regulations that won't be necessary.

Thank you for your time. Brad Curtin

From: [Mike Delzingo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:40:26 PM

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to
Vote for **Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1** commercial quota reduction options.

The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction.
That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder.
We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary.

Respectfully,

Mike Delzingo
Commercial Striped Bass fisherman
Boston Ma.

From: [Ronan Gerns](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass management options
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:41:13 PM

As a NJ shore based angler, I endorse option A.

From: [Ross Adams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe Bass limits
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:41:28 PM

To Whom It May Concern;

The slots for recreational fishing are very limited. It seems as though they are not penalizing the commercial fishermen for their role in the Schoolies depletions.

Thank you,

R. Adams

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mark Scheuerman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Save the Rockfish! Vote Option B1
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 4:49:46 PM

Greetings,

I live on and fish the Chesapeake Bay at least once/week and see the decline of the rockfish population first hand. I also see the inconsistent application of the rules between recreational and commercial fisherman (who often take 2 trips per day!) kill our rockfish population. Please impose the most restrictive means possible! Please vote: Option B1, 19-23" across the board to help save these beautiful creatures. Thanks!

Mark G. Scheuerman

From: [Robert Maisch](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:01:54 PM

Keep current regulations.

From: [Anthony D'arrigo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum 2
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:02:54 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

It is without question, based on the negligible impact the for hire industry has on the overall striped bass harvest, that option C should be adopted for 2024. While there are other factors i believe for hire should be segregated, such as economic impact, tourism, decades of families livelihood, they are all irrelevant based on just the simple math. I am a firm believer in conservation and my love for this specific species runs deep, beyond me making a living partially targeting Striped Bass. I can assure you mortality rate on my boat is also a negligible % compared to the recreational Surfcaster that bang fish over rocks, drag them through sand and worst of all use lures with 3 treble hooks that rip the mouth gullet and gills. We police the harvest. We control the harvest based on the rules. We have educated crew that revive and release with little to no harm. We contribute to data collection. We are different and should be segregated from recreational.

Thank you
Anthony D'Arrigo
Ebb Tide Fishing.
5162979987
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sam Herzig](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Commentary
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:09:52 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

My name is Sam Herzig. I am an avid recreational angler, currently living in New York. I have been fishing for Striped Bass since I was four years old, living on Long Island. I have caught and released bass from Long Island Sound all the way to the Damariscotta River in Maine and everywhere in between. I fish both on fly and spin, often supporting small tyers and artisanal flies and lures to target these amazing fish. Fishing for Striped Bass is a passion of mine that I expect to be able to pass down to my kids and others in the future. Without protection this will not be possible in the Stripers current situation. Protecting striped bass stocks, safeguarding the recreational angling industry that relies on these fish, and ensuring that future generations of anglers can enjoy our coastal fishery are paramount. With this said, **I wish to support the following options in the current Addendum II draft:**

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options, I support: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I support: Option B—Board Action.

I cannot emphasise the need for proactive management enough. The success of the Striped Bass fishing industry over the last two decades has stood on the shoulders of past anglers who saw the need for management in the 70's and 80's. Those anglers made sacrifices to their needs at the time and prioritized the fishery long term. We are in a similar situation. We can prioritize the future, or we can continue to drag our feet, see a crash and then moratorium in five years. It's up to us to manage now.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Addendum II.

Sam Herzig

12/20/2023

New York, NY

From: [Chuck Shenberger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:20:59 PM

I support these options for draft addendum II":

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

I fish New Jersey and New York. The past 5 years I have seen a significant drop off in striped bass numbers in both size and quantity. Prime tide windows with tons of bait and a lack of striped bass during prime times which in the past would make for a great night of fishing. Something needs to be done here as the fishery is clearly collapsing before our eyes. Every season it seems to get gradually worse.

Charles M. Shenberger Plastering Inc.

Personal email- cshenberger3163@gmail.com

Business email- cmsplaster@comcast.net

Office phone- 610 942 7310

Cell phone- 215 839 2643

From: [Craig Thatcher](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:25:42 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this to show support for the size limit restriction that was implemented for recreational fishing in Massachusetts last spring. Returning fish over 31 inches in length is a great way to protect the breeding females in the Striped Bass population. Keeping this in place to help the population recover is also supported.

The commercial striped bass guidelines in the state of Massachusetts have been mismanaged for many years. In past years the commercial regulations required the group to keep Striped Bass from 35 inches and larger. Then the following year the requirements were for Striped Bass 34 inches and larger.

Male Striped Bass very seldom grow to 34 inches in length. This means the commercial striped bass regulations "required" the commercial fishing group to take only female Striped Bass. This has had to have a detrimental effect on the overall population. Requiring the commercial group to only take the larger females from the population has been a mismanagement by the State.

This year the commercial fishing group had to keep striped bass from 31 inches and larger. This would have been the first year that allowed the commercial group to keep some male striped bass in their catch, but again allowed for the removal of the larger egg-laying female striped bass.

I would support the slot for both recreational and commercial group. I think the slot is a good thing. Having it implemented for both the recreational and commercial groups is the best way to manage the striped bass species to help increase the population in the future. If the population increases in the future I would support increasing the upper catch limit size for the commercial group.

I have a hard time understanding why an "emergency" slot was created for the recreational group when the fish they return to the water to help the population recover was then able to be removed by the commercial group. All the commercial take of Striped Bass again this year of fish from 34+ inches would have been egg laying female Striped Bass. Removing these fish has had a detrimental effect in the past and will continue to have a detrimental effect on the population in the future.

Respectfully,

Craig Thatcher
Eastham, MA

From: [Riccardo Buzzanga](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:36:21 PM

I am very much opposed to any reduction of quota or fishing days. I further urge you to reinstate our ability to harvest commercial fish on open days when engaged in a For -Hire Trip.

I have participated in the Striped Bass Fishery for over 30 years and the past 5 years the management of our resource has been terribly miss managed. Both recreationally and commercially.

The recreational change with a moronic slot size has increased fish mortality exponentially. The reduction in Quota in the commercial fishery because of your mistakes and bad science is unacceptable.

There should be both additional quota and additional fishing days. Nothing less

Sincerely
Riccardo Buzzanga
F/V Trinacria

From: [Eric Files](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe bass
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:42:36 PM

The Slot limit was awful spent all day catching but nothing to bring home to eat worst I seen tons of fish you can't keep. Just put a 1 fish limit no slot
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jay Ponte](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:59:38 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jay Ponte** <jayponte650@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Dec 20, 2023 at 5:57 PM
Subject: Striped Bass Addendum II
To: <omments@asmfc.org>, <ray@capecodfishermen.org>, <tom.oshea@mass.gov>, <russell.dunn@noaa.gov>, <michael.pentony@noaa.gov>, <dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us>

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options. The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction. That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder. We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary.
Respectfully,

Capt Jay Ponte
Commercial Striped Bass fisherman
Boston Ma

From: [Howard Smith](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Changes
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 6:17:56 PM

I support option B. It's such an important
Species. If we don't help them now
What will be left for our kids ? Thanks for the
Consideration. Howard Smith. Ct. Resident.
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Adrienne O'Donnell Lefebvre](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Commentary
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 6:22:57 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

My name is Adrienne O'Donnell. I am a resident of Massachusetts. I am passionate about the ocean and healthy ecosystems. I am an avid angler that loves Striped Bass. With this said, I wish to support the following options in the current Addendum II draft:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options, I support: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support:** Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support:** Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I support:** Option B—Board Action.

I cannot emphasise the need for proactive management enough. Striped Bass stocks are incredibly low and they need active management in order to get back on track. This past year in particular I noticed a decline in small fish, which is incredibly disappointing and speaks to the declining young population. Without these fish, coastal communities and economies will be greatly impacted. I am particularly passionate about bringing more women anglers out into the ocean, and the way the stocks are now I don't know what the future of that will look like. Please, support the management of this incredible population so generations to come can share in it's beauty.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Addendum II.

Adrienne O'Donnell

12/20/2023

From: [Baratta, Anthony](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass regulations
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 6:35:28 PM

I strongly support the ASA options.

I live on the Bay and have seen the marked decline in all game fish. If there's anything that can be done to limit menhaden fishing as well as limiting commercial stripper taking that would be an improvement.

Tony Baratta
377 Deer Dr
Lusby, MD

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [Victor Gano](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment Striped Bass Draft Management Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 6:49:17 PM

Good evening, I hope you are well, I am very frustrated with striped bass management in New Jersey. Too many phd people who don't even fish are making striped bass management decisions for the masses. Recreational fisherman have no say in recreational fishing regulations. Recreational fisherman should have a say. There are too many regulations and I barely get to take home fresh fish, because the fishing is horrible most days. Also, Beach replenishment has destroyed striped bass habitat year after year along our New Jersey coast. Why are we not protecting striped bass habitat? Victor Gano 540 Barr Avenue Linwood, New Jersey 08221 Phone: 609-602-2897.

From: [John Ramirez](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:19:41 PM

Hello,

I am a recreation fisherman.

Looking at the numbers the millions on the quota. If we don't shut down commercial striped bass fishing, you will have nothing to manage .pay the fishermen . please do something.

If we don't make drastic changes you will have nothing to manage

Sincerely, John Ramirez

From: [steven foceri](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:40:12 PM

Hello,

Please continue to maintain the 28"-31" slot limits for all ocean fishery.
Please reduce the commercial fishery harvest and PLEASE no separate regulations for guides and charter services. The fishery is in trouble, please hear our voices.

We need these rules to be enforced. Illegal fishing is killing the recreational angling across the country.

-SF

From: [LINDA MARTEL](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripped bass regs
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:40:56 PM

I think all commercial stripped bass fishing should be halted in all states.

From: [Hessinger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 Striped Bass proposal
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:42:12 PM

I urge you to recommend proposal B to be enacted for the 2024 Striped Bass regulations
Barry Hessinger
President Sandy Hook Bay Anglers

From: [Kevin Handley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial Striped Bass Addendum 2
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:49:46 PM

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options. The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction. That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder. We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary.

I recommend the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF Take a position in support of its small local commercial rod & reel fishermen on Addendum 2, section 3.2.1 Option A. Status Quo. (no reduction to the commercial quota)

The proposed 14.5% reduction equates to almost 100,000 pounds of fish. That alone equates to over \$500,000 at today's average wholesale prices, and close to 2.5 Million dollars retail.

Massachusetts has about 650 "active" (1000+ pound) permit holders. That would be almost a \$4,000 direct out of pocket hit to each one of those individual permit holders.

Furthermore a status quo vote would only equate to a 1.6% difference on the recreational sector, on what could very well be hypothetical numbers to begin with. (MRIP surveys).

The commercial sector is already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another 14.5% decrease to the quota is not justifiable now simply because the recreational sector's catch numbers are up by 88%.

The commercial striped bass fishery is and has been very well managed with each and every pound being accounted for on multiple levels. WE urge you to let that continue.

I ask that the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF support our local fishermen with a vote of status quo, No reduction.

Respectfully,

-Kevin Handley

From: [rick D](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#)
Subject: [External] Subject line: Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 7:59:14 PM

To whom it may concern,

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options.

The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction.

That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder.

We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary.

Respectfully,

Rick Delacono
Commercial Striped Bass Fisherman
Groveland, Ma

From: [rob.oettinger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:00:07 PM

To whom it may concern our striped bass population is dwindling. It's not the average surf caster causing the loss of numbers. It's the commercial aspect. Hundreds of thousands of pounds a year are harvested commercially. It takes years for these fish to reach adult mature sizes and the gill net boats are simply harvesting these fish by the thousands....far quicker than they can grow and the species can replenish it's self. This fish is being over harvested. It needs to be a protected species. Catch and release only!! And a ban on all commercial fishing. This beautiful fish species should be made a game fish simply put catch and release!!! So for decades and centuries to come this species can be enjoyed. Thank you. Robert Oettinger.

From: [Pat Miele](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:28:36 PM

Please maintain the current slot limit and implement the limit on Chesapeake Bay and completely eliminate commercial fishing until the stocks rebound to a level to support a sustainable commercial fishery

From: [Dianna Beaumont](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass stop fishing for them in spring until after they drop roe for several years.
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:32:13 PM

Sent from my iPhone

From: [frittsnate](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Commentary
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:39:31 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

My name is Nate. I am an avid recreational angler, currently living in Vermont. I have been fly fishing for Striped Bass for years now, from Maine to Long Island but primarily on Cape Cod. Fishing for Striped Bass is a passion of mine that I expect to be able to pass down to my kids and others in the future. Without protection this will not be possible in the Stripers current situation. Protecting striped bass stocks, safeguarding the recreational angling industry that relies on these fish, and ensuring that future generations of anglers can enjoy our coastal fishery are paramount. With this said, I wish to support the following options in the current Addendum II draft:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options, I support: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support:** Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support:** Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I support:** Option B—Board Action.

I cannot emphasise the need for proactive management enough. The success of the Striped Bass fishing industry over the last two decades has stood on the shoulders of past anglers who saw the need for management in the 70's and 80's. Those anglers made sacrifices to their needs at the time and prioritized the fishery long term. We are in a similar situation. We can prioritize the future, or we can continue to drag our feet, see a crash and then moratorium in five years. It's up to us to manage now.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Addendum II.

Nate Fritts
12/20/23
White River Junction, VT

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Amr ElShaer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 8:54:29 PM

To the ASFMC,

I am a New Jersey resident and I wish to submit my comments to Draft Addendum II. I was hoping Addendum II would provide the options of closing all striped bass fishing in the spring until April 15 and issue a harvest moratorium for all 2024. Since those options are not available, I support the following options for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you,

Amr

From: [Zachary Elshaer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments to Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:08:14 PM

To the ASFMC,

As a New Jersey resident I would like to submit my comments to Draft Addendum II. Like many of my peers we were anticipating Addendum II would provide the options of closing all Striped Bass fishing in the Spring until April 15 and issue a harvest moratorium (commercial and recreational) for all 2024. Since those options are not available, I support the following options for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

**Thank you,
Zachary ElShaer**

From: [Daniel Parma](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#)
Subject: [External] comments to the ASMFC for Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:17:03 PM

Dear ASMFC,

As a commercial and recreational Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options. The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction. That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder. We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary. Respectfully,

Thank you

Dan Parma
978-412-6375
Dparma@delucasales.com

From: [Ben Hung](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:31:19 PM

To the Board!

Please choose option B it only makes sense to protect striped bass all along the coast.

Thanks

Best Regards

Ben Hung

From: [John Passie](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:31:56 PM

I am in complete support of option C of the striped bass draft addendum II 3.1.1 The current regulations are putting undue harm on an entire industry. Thankyou Captain John Passie
Charter Boat Windy Montauk ny

From: [Josh Moody](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:32:04 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am a private recreational fisherman based out of Port Jefferson, New York. I fish the Long Island Sound between the months of April and late November, as I have done since 2008. I go out to fish some 50-60 times per year. In my area, the striped bass population is more abundant than I have ever seen it. The fish are arriving earlier, staying longer, and many of them are over 31". I would like to see a return to a 28-35" slot limit. On any given outing, I release multiple fish between 31 and 43", with nothing in the current 28-31" slot. Moreover, I find that when releasing stripers in the summer months, the larger fish tend to die anyway. And this mortality takes place even when they are cleanly hooked in the lip, and properly/carefully released. A large fish that fights hard in water over 70 degrees simply doesn't have a good chance of survival. Please consider returning to a 28-35" slot.

Sincerely,

Josh Moody

--

Lead Pastor
Three Village Church
East Setauket, NY
(631) 941-3670

***Please keep in mind that I do not check email on Fridays.*

From: plizardman@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II comments
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:35:54 PM

I am a NY based recreational fisherman concerned with maintaining a viable striped bass population for our continued enjoyment as a renewable resource. With this goal in mind, I support the following options:

3.1.1: Option B

3.1.2: Option B1

3.1.3: Option B

3.1.4: Option B

3.2.1: Option B

3.3: Option B

I believe that like myself, most recreational fishermen are willing to forgo a take today for a secure future tomorrow. I hope you will make decisions that protect this fishery going forward.

Thank you for your consideration,

Philip W. Romano

Flushing, Queens

From: [Don Nadeau](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Raymond Kane](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#); [Dan Mckiernan](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial Striped bass quota
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 9:39:18 PM

It is difficult to make a living fishing where so many species such as cod, lobster, Black Sea bass, etc. have moratoriums on permits and limit entry into their fisheries. Striped bass, bluefish, tuna, mackerel and clamming are some of the few limited open fisheries that allow young kids the opportunity to generate enough income to make fishing for a living a reality. I also depend on these species to support my family - especially striped bass.

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options.

I know first hand that Ray has been instrumental in adjusting the bluefish quota when needed. He sees the financial impact closed seasons have financially on fishing families. I hope you all consider keeping the status quo for Commercial striped bass. The commercial striped bass season is already short and doesn't need to be limited any further. You have done a great job managing the stock and for what I see on the water it is very healthy!

Respectfully,

Don Nadeau

From: [Ted Hardy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:36:44 PM

Our government is already crushing the little business owners. This is bull crap I've fished these waters my whole life and seen many fish species out fished and you pick and choose which species to protect. If the local guides are making any money you change the rules. How about cut back on the commercial guys that's what's really happening here. My two fish a year are not hurting the species.

From: [John Connelly](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper rebuilding program
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 10:45:50 PM

Keep the current regulations, but enforce them. I am tired of seeing a 6 pack boat at my marina unload 15 stripers.

What? Oh, the captain and mate can take 2 also. Yeah right

Make it so they don't count in the total. And FINE THEM!
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gary](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:04:06 PM

I am in favor of option C of the Striped Bass Addendum II 3.1.1.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Brandon Angell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:31:12 PM

As i couldn't make it to the recent in-person meetings to express my thoughts on addendum II, I appreciate the opportunity to submit my comments via email.

Concerning ocean recreational options (3.1.1) I support option B-1 with 2022 seasons. I strongly support the measures taken to address the overharvesting of fish in 2022, particularly with the Emergency Action measure. It is important to continue safeguarding the 2015 year-class, and maintaining the 28-31" slot limit achieves this goal while providing consistency for anglers and stock assessment scientists.

I firmly oppose mode splits, and prefer the Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) to be managed under unified regulations. These measures, though temporary, are crucial until the 2024 Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update, which may necessitate further actions for successful rebuilding by the 2029 deadline.

Concerning Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support Option B1- 1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. The Chesapeake Bay region urgently needs conservation efforts after five years of poor spawning success. Option B1 provides consistency across jurisdictions, avoiding mode splits and adding protection for the 2017- and 2018-year classes.

Concerning Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction for both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. However, I share reservations about the potential lack of impact in the Chesapeake Bay due to historical underutilization and the need for states to take meaningful actions promptly.

I appreciate the distinction between the Ocean and Chesapeake commercial fisheries, understanding and supporting commercial fishing in general. I support the proposed reduction but acknowledge the need for greater cuts in the future.

Concerning the Stock Assessment, I support Option B - Board Action. Recognizing the potential impacts of poor recruitment, quick Board action is necessary for effective management. I encourage public involvement and will personally reach out to my respective Board Member to share my perspective on the fishery's future.

Thank you for considering my comments. I am committed to the sustainable management of the striped bass fishery and look forward to positive outcomes from the ongoing deliberations.

Best regards,
Brandon Angell

From: [Michael Louie](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 11:35:08 PM

To the esteemed Commissioners of the ASMFC,

Once again I am writing to you regarding the management of striped bass. I am a transplanted New Yorker who fished the waters of Breezy Point and the Rockaways, and from Caumsett rocks to the boulders of Caswells. I am now navigating the surf fishing spots of Raritan Bay, from the Hook down to Long Beach Island. This is a critical moment for management, and an important opportunity for the ASMFC to take meaningful (and positive) action.

I am a member of the Brooklyn Urban Anglers Association. Since 2009 we've worked to educate the public on the value of New York City's waterways and conservation issues regarding menhaden and striped bass. For years we have submitted letters advocating for responsible management of our fisheries, and for years we've been frustrated by the pace of the Commission's actions. I am frustrated by the Commission's lack of commitment to their own management triggers. I am frustrated by the Commission's repeated failures to keep states, like New Jersey and Maryland, accountable.

I support the following options:

— 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). I do not support mode splits.

— 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

— 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

— 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Time is running out for striped bass. I expect the ASMFC to fulfill its charter and protect the resource for future generations, and not sell out for short term gains and settle for status quo to appease two or three unscrupulous states (my current state being one of those). This is your opportunity to make it right.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Louie
Essex County, New Jersey

From: [tim.johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:05:49 AM

Striped bass fishery needs a permanent solution ONCE AND FOR ALL. Illegal alien guatamalans that are flooding our borders do not give a rats ass about slot limits, they cannot comprehend with their low IQ why it matters. Commercial fisherman are destroying our breeder sized fish when we should be incentivizing them with lifetime sport charter fishing licenses, tax cuts and public college education for themselves and kin free of charge for not harming our striped bass fishery rather than continuing this slaughter. Dismantle the commercial fishing licenses for striped bass indefinitely past previous license holders from 2022 and before whilst incentivizing them to move towards catch and release charters.

The striped bass fishery will collapse soon if the final solution is not put in place once and for all. We are sick and tired of these cycles of a decent fishery followed by a near collapse and are asking you officials to do your jobs and protect the most beloved fish on the entire eastern seaboard.

From: [Rick Odell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striper rules
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:05:14 AM

Please make rules same for charter and recreational. Also size limit in Chesapeake needs to shrink! But the major change should be commercial!!!! There should be no commercial fishing period

Thank you

Rick Odell

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Graham Stephens](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:21:27 AM

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Graham Stephens, and I am an avid recreational striped bass angler from Massachusetts.

In 2023, I primarily fished the greater Boston Harbor area, both by boat and from shore. This past season, I observed a further decline in the already depleted striped bass fishery. First, for most of the summer, Boston harbor lacked smaller, school size bass – in a noticeable departure to the fishing experience just a couple of years ago, a day on the flats or in the local estuary with light tackle might not produce a fish. Second, in stark contrast to 2022, there were few slot-sized bass to be found much of the season.

Finally, there were fewer large bass in the area, and the large bass that were around could longer be found in much of Boston harbor - the bunker school bites that have occurred every past season I can remember did not ever really materialize in 2023.

There were noticeably fewer boats fishing recreationally around Boston last year. And a lot of

boats sitting for sale in local parking lots. Kids don't want to spend a weekend day *not* catching fish. I believe that the health of the recreational striped bass fishery has a huge economic impact on our region.

I'd like to thank the ASMFC for their work to date on striped bass conservation and the current call for public comment. From my observations over years of fishing, I believe that striped bass stocks are in trouble and facing further decline. Accordingly, I'd like to recommend that the Commission takes whatever actions are necessary towards achieving a 14.5% (or greater) reduction in striped bass fishing mortality as soon as possible.

Thanks,
Graham Stephens

gccstephens@gmail.com

617-755-4640

From: [Ed Capo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:41:58 AM

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for taking the Atlantic striped bass issue seriously. Please adopt addendum II but it may not be enough.

I live on the coast in Virginia and the local fishing clubs are trying to help.

Most people here think that the depletion of the menhaden stocks are the main culprit to the decline in recruitment. We are opposing Omega Protein who uses up to 9 or more draggers to strip the Chesapeake Bay of menhaden and destroys the bottom habitat in the process. The by-catch is beyond your wildest imagination. It's an uphill battle against deep pockets.

You can change the size and bag limits and seasons all you want but there will still be nothing for the bass to eat. I personally did not see one school of bunker breaking the surface this year. Menhaden stocks are the key.
Sincerely, Ed Capobianco, Willis Wharf, Virginia. Ed211c@yahoo.com

From: [Bill Edwards](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] PROPOSED CHANGES TO STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:45:26 AM

I agree with Option B maintains the Emergency Action slot limit which would provide management stability in 2024. There should not be a split mode of private and charter fishing. Conservation and the rules need to be applied evenly across all fishermen.

Thank you,
Bill Edwards
231 Crescent Avenue
Jackson, NJ 08527

From: [Rich Heffernan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:05:07 AM

I support the adoption of Addendum II and the protection of striped bass coastwide.

Rich Heffernan
Wakefield, RI

From: [David Slater](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:15:57 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing today from Massachusetts in support of Draft Addendum II. I feel that it is important for the striped bass fishery to be properly managed. In this case, the fishery should be managed for abundance rather than yield. A healthy fishery has both economic and environmental benefits. It would be a shame to see the fishery continue to decline and the Northeast miss out on these benefits. I am in support of the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I feel these options give stripers the best opportunity to recover and thrive again. Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Slater
Concord, MA

From: [Brent Ache](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:19:39 AM

ASMFC,

With regard to updating the Chesapeake Bay Recreational Bay Options, the most important factor is to adjust catch limits such that all anglers are allowed just one fish. So, I am not in support of any of the "C" options, instead I support the "B" options. Within the "B" options, I support B1, as it will have the greatest chance of rebuilding the striped bass stock.

Thanks,
Brent Ache

From: [Taf Schaefer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum Comment
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:30:16 AM

Hello to the ASGA,

While I am an occasional fly fisher mostly when I'm with my son, Captain Kyle Schaefer, I primarily come to the industry through my art, having grown up on Cape Cod and raising my family in the Chesapeake Bay area. I fully endorse the measures the ASGA proposes to reduce the pressures on the Striped Bass population along the seacoast from Maine to the southern most part of their range allowing the stock levels to rebuild.

I endorse the ASGA's goal of the document - DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS to reduce fishing mortality by adjusting recreational measures and commercial quotas in the ocean and Chesapeake Bay regions.

Thanks for your work on the Striped Bass population and ocean fisheries in general.

Best regards, Taf Schaefer

34 Front St. PO Box 44
Exeter, NH 03833-8089
603-969-3060
tafschaefer@me.com
taf@tafschaefer.com
www.tafschaefer.com
www.instagram.com/tafschaefer

Taf Schaefer Design



From: [D.M.Palmer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:49:51 AM

You need to work at rebuilding the stripe bass population.
At least keep the current slot limit but more needs to be done to save the beautiful fish.
Less,commercial, more rules for rec anglers, and tell Maryland and the cheasapeak they are ruining it for everyone

Take control and save these fish!

From: [Michael Kennedy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:52:29 AM

I was unable to attend the virtual meeting for my region (New Jersey) but wanted to provide my input and support for Addendum II 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Option B to reduce the slot limit to 28-31".

I have been surf fishing New Jersey for 15 years, and catching fish from our local fishery has given me immense joy and pride. I am proud to say I have always practiced "Catch and Release". My general impression over the past 5 years is, the amount of people surf fishing has increased significantly. Additionally, thanks to social media and technology it has become a lot easier for people to catch fish. I have been saddened and disgusted by how people treat fish they can not keep. This past fall it seems like "kicking" fish back in the water has become the norm in my area for reasons I am unsure of. Maybe people have become too lazy pick the fish up properly and release it safely back in the water. It is truly a sickening sight to see. I would suggest each state proactively monitor the way people treat fish and educate the general public on how to safely release fish as another action to help increase fish mortality rates.

I would love nothing more than to have a healthy fishery 10-15 years from now to fish with my children and future family so they can experience the same joy I get to have. I strongly support any slot limit changes that will help protect the striped bass fishery.

Michael Kennedy
48 Franklin St.
Somerset, NJ 08873

From: [Andy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:26:08 AM

Dear ASMFC,

As a supporter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and lifelong striped bass angler, I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on Draft Addendum II and to advise the ASMFC on the general priorities and specific options I would like to see included in Addendum II.

The Atlantic striped bass stock has been overfished since 2019, and in spite of prior conservation efforts undertaken by ASFMC it remains clear that additional reductions in fishing mortality are needed. I believe that all segments of the fishery should participate in its recovery, and urge the striped bass Board to exclude options that facilitate enhanced harvest opportunities for certain segments or exempt them entirely from taking reductions. I wholeheartedly oppose all proposed mode splits.

To maximize the chances that fishing mortality is reduced to target in 2024, and that the striped bass stock is recovered by 2029, I urge the Board to include the following options in Addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options - Option B
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options - Option B1
- 3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options - Option B, with the full 14.5% reduction
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates - Option B

One last thing I'd like to mention is that while I am no scientist, it seems clear to me that the Chesapeake Bay fishery is managed wildly differently than every other part of this fishery across the Atlantic Coast. If anything, I think stricter regulations are required in the Chesapeake Bay than what is currently proposed as that region is so important for striped bass growth. I understand the need to limit mortality across the board, but we also need to better protect the spawning grounds and younger classes of fish.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Roth
Long Island, NY

From: [Randy Sigler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - Commercial Harvest
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:28:44 AM

Dear ASMFC,

I am writing to submit comment regarding the commercial quota aspect of Draft Addendum II.

For reference, I have been an active participant in the MA commercial fishery for 20+ years, and **I am currently in the top 1% of all MA striped bass harvesters**. I know the fishery and am deeply vested in the success of the fishery.

MA DMF has a wonderful track record of managing harvest levels in order to maximize exvessel pricing. As such, reductions in quota/harvest are generally accompanied by increases in pricing, thereby having negligible impact on total revenue.

A larger concern for my business is the prospect of a collapse in the fishery eliminating any commercial harvest. As such, my primary desire for management options are those which offer the highest level of protection for the population.

Based on the above, I am hopeful that the board **adopts Option B and implements a 14% reduction in harvest** in order to offer maximum protection/conservation for the stock. I don't foresee this negatively affecting my business in the short term, yet will offer the greatest security for my business in the long term.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to reach out if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Capt. Randy Sigler
1 Peabody Ln
Marblehead, MA, 01945
617-459-1798
randy@striper.com

From: [Aram Berberian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Striped BassDraft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:33:15 AM

Hello All,

The Committee has an enormous responsibility to ensure the survival of a remarkable species that has thrived in our region for countless years. This is not a popularity contest. You cannot make everyone happy. The striped bass should be swimming in our waters long after all of us are gone. It doesn't look so great right now.

We support the following proposed options:

- 3.1.1. Option B
- 3.1.2. Option B
- 3.2.1. Option B
- 3.3. Option B

We are recreational anglers in Connecticut. I have taught my wife and daughter how to fish. Both have held All Water fishing licenses in CT for years. We implore you to act in a manner that is best for the striped bass, not those who pursue it for their own benefit. We all lose without this fish in our waters.

Do the Right Thing!

Respectfully,

Aram Berberian
Theresa Razmakhnin
Caroline Berberian

From: [Ty Davidson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option C2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:34:41 AM

Good morning ASMFC,

I am writing this email to advocate for option C2. I am 29 years old and have worked on my father's charter boat Excalibur, that fishes out of Kent Island, since I could walk. Right now I am working full time as a ship captain on a sub-sea construction vessel. Growing up on my dad's boat shaped my future giving me the interest to pursue a career in the maritime industry. This is something that I also want for my newborn son. Limiting the charter industry to one striped bass per person would have catastrophic repercussions. We simply cannot survive on 1 fish per client. As my father is getting closer to retirement, taking over the family business and keeping our legacy alive has always been a dream of mine, especially since I now have a son that I want to bring up on the boat like I was. Limiting our clients to one fish would make this nearly impossible. A prime example of why that is so is when the state did sting operations and caught several charter boats breaking laws they kicked them out of the FACTs program. Which meant they could only keep 1 fish for person. Everyone of these charter boats that had this happen to them had to pay another licence holder to be on the vessel so their clients could keep 2 fish per person. Their clients would simply not come if they could only keep one fish. These lawbreakers did deserve this, however I am simply using it as an example of what would happen if you made the rest of the law abiding charter boats only keep one fish for client.

If the charter industry goes away it will also have an extremely negative impact on the local economy. Almost all of our clients are from out of town and travel a fair distance to come fishing with us. These people stay in hotels, eat several meals out, shop locally to provision for the trip, along with many other examples of bringing money to the local economy. Several of them even stay 2 nights and enjoy some other local attractions such as golf courses, sporting clay ranges, breweries, shops, etc. All of this is based around a simple fishing trip that other wise would not have boughten these people to our area to spend money.

Please chose option C2 as it will help the future of my family and the local economy here on the eastern shore of Maryland.

Thank you for your time,
Capt. Ty Davidson
410-829-9047
Excalibur Charters
Kent Island, MD

From: [Frank Leone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Hudson River Striped bass management options
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:37:26 AM

Any closures in Summer are meaningless, most of the biomass is out of the river June-August. The majority of fishing takes place March to May!! Tailoring the slot an inch this way or that is redundant and more of the same. However, the 2015ish 18-28" slot was a Godsend for stripers, no need for minute changes. Your last two options, opening the season later, are 'weak' but are the best of the bunch.

The March 1 open season in NJ is the biggest problem!!! Breeding Bass get picked off in Raritan bay and Sandy Hook on their way north to spawn in NY where the season is still closed. Thank you, Frank Leone, Hawthorne, NY

From: [Nick Montefusco](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:49:29 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am a recreational angler from NJ, who started fishing for striped bass a few years ago. I've been fishing for (mostly) trout for over 25 years and have been involved in conservation efforts targeted at wild native brook trout for most of that time. The following are my comments on draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

For the Proposed Management Options presented, I support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options - Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). The other options presented will likely not safeguard the 2015 Class to the extent necessary to provide the best chance of allowing these fish to achieve a successful spawn or hopefully multiple successful spawns should conditions allow. Further, any option which grants for-hire vessels less restrictive regulations as compared to shore-based private anglers is inherently incompatible with the concept of maintaining fairness in regulations across economic classes (i.e., people should not be able to pay for the privilege of retaining fish that couldn't be retained otherwise), irrespective of the minimal impact on the projected mortality reduction. It also opens the possibility of undermining enforcement, since it will not be immediately obvious if possession of a fish that is 31"-33" constitutes a violation. This could lead to Conservation Officers wasting time trying to ascertain legality (e.g., asking for receipts from a for-hire trip), rather than being able to take immediate action. More time spent on each possible violation would result in less time to cover more area, thus reducing overall effectiveness.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options – Option B2. This option provides a projected % overall reduction which is comparable to that for the Ocean Rec Fishery Option B. While Option B1 would project an even greater reduction, as a matter of fairness, I don't think I should ask another region to take a bigger reduction than mine.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements – Option B. If at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass is allowed, there needs to be a mechanism to ensure that anglers aren't using that as a means of circumventing the size limits.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options – Option B. The target ~14% reduction in mortality should be applied equally across both rec and commercial sectors.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates – Option B. Bureaucratic processes should not prevent a timely response to data indicating that additional action is needed to prevent a collapse of the fishery.

In addition to the management options presented in the draft Addendum, I urge the Council to consider ways to decrease mortality associated with recreational releases, which isn't directly addressed by the options above. A corresponding decrease of ~ 14% mortality should be the goal. A potential option could

be to extend or establish closed seasons in bays/rivers/estuaries during periods of higher concentration (for example, the current closure of Raritan Bay in Jan/Feb can be extended thru March). I strongly believe that the principle of fairness should be applied so that the burden of reducing fishing mortality to preserve the fishery is shared more or less equally across all sources of mortality, including Catch & Release (which happens to be the segment that applies to my personal angling).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. I hope that the Council will give serious consideration to applying rules fairly across all sectors. The short term pain in decreasing harvest (and release mortality) will hopefully ensure that we will experience much less pain in the long term, and that future generations will be able to enjoy the thrill of catching these magnificent fish. This will help ensure that those future generations will be motivated to take on the responsibility of stewardship of this resource.

Sincerely, Nick Montefusco

From: [Bryan Begley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:54:08 AM

To whom it may concern,

Where to begin, I guess back to the beginning. A tin boat, sand worms, and my Father. We all had that first moment of catching your first Striped Bass. No matter how big or how small. This love Striper fishing began for me over 40 years ago. Rolling with the ups and downs of the fishery. Which has brought us to the point that we are at now. Like the saying goes, "If we knew then what we know now". But in the now, we need to do our best to steward the protection and management of this world class fishery. I see the joy in my kids eyes when we go fishing. I would like them to share that with their children and so on. Yes, we are all going to make some major sacrifices to help to re-establish the Striper population to a manageable level for the recreational and commercial needs. There will be a huge push back on the limits that need to be set, but we need to be strong in our stance to protect this amazing fish..... With that, I wish you Godspeed and to stand strong on your morals. I will stand with you, you shall not walk alone.

Truth and sincerity, Bryan Begley.
(508)-939-0143
Valleytimberframes@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

From: [Philip Desfosses](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:04:30 AM

I support option B although , although it is not sufficient. There has been almost a complete absence of small striped in the Great Bay NH estuary for the past two years.

The current slot limit targets the last successful spawning year with ruthless efficiency. It must be protected

In the southern Maine NH area we have had access to numbers of very large striped bass The handling of these fish is criminal There should be a tarpon like measure of not allowing large fish to be removed from the water.

Please enact a moratorium on the taking of any striped bass recreational or commercial.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Dan Brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); Jeffrey.Roy@mahouse.gov
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:09:34 AM

Good Morning,

My name is Dan Brown and I am a resident of Franklin, Massachusetts. I am writing as a concerned recreational striped bass angler. I fully support the following positions for Addendum II to ensure the sustainable management of striped bass:

Ocean Recreational Options: Support for Option B, allowing 1 fish at 28-31 inches with 2022 seasons for all modes.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Endorsement of Option B1, permitting 1 fish at 19-23 inches across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions, maintaining the 2022 seasons.

Commercial Quota Reduction: Advocacy for Option B, implementing a 14.5% reduction in both Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Response to Stock Assessment: Favoring Option B for Board Action, enabling prompt and effective management responses.

Thank you for considering these positions, which I believe are crucial for the long-term health of the striped bass population.

Sincerely,
Dan Brown




Dan Brown
Digital Nerd
Kapitol Photography

■ 508 989 0931

■ dan@kapitolphotography.com



 kapitolphotography.com/

 [New England](#)

[Donate to my PMC Fundraiser](#)

From: [George Jehn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:09:40 AM

Dear Ms. Franke:

I am writing you concerning the striped bass proposal currently being put forth by the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board.

By way of a brief background, as a now-retired airline captain, editor and writer for the FISHERMAN magazine, I have fished for striped bass on Long Island and New England for over fifty years, and have no attachment whatsoever to any commercial interests. I do believe, however, that the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board must seriously consider and take under advisement the difference between commercial and recreational striped bass fishing versus party and charter boats, and come up with different size and number bass limits for the charter and party boat group. Recreational bass fishermen normally have other jobs and utilize their own boats, whereas party and charter boat operators have devoted and invested much time, effort and money into serving a specific group of striped bass anglers who do not own their own boats. As a result, this group needs and deserves bass size and number limits that are substantially greater than those of recreational anglers. I say this because first and foremost, many party and charter boat fishermen are hesitant to spend the substantial amount required for a striped bass trip and only be allowed to bring home one fish between 28 and 31 inches. Furthermore, by your own admission, there was an error made of approximately 40% in underestimating the amount of available bass, which seemingly would give you some wiggle room to come up with a plan to better serve those owners whose sole occupation and livelihood is to run and/or own a licensed party or charter boat.

I realize that you are attempting to preserve striped bass fishing for the future, and applaud your efforts, but also believe what I'm, suggesting can be accomplished in a much more fair and equitable manner by carving out higher bass keeper numbers, in both size and quantity, for party and charter boat operators and the fishermen they serve. I say this because the numbers are minuscule compared to commercial interests (which needlessly kill many bass) and recreational fishermen.

Thank you for taking this under advisement.

Sincerely yours,

George Jehn

From: [Nicholas Fox](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:13:46 AM

I'm writing in support of the positions advanced by the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA) in regards to Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. I strongly believe in protecting our striped bass stock now and in the future. Given that, I support the following:

3.1.1. - Option B

Only one fish from 28-31 should be taken, period. It should not matter how an angler finds him or herself on the water (recreational or charter). Those with greater means and access to charters should not be allowed to take more based simply on that privilege.

3.1.2 - Option B1

Create the same rules for everyone up and down the Chesapeake. Anything else simply does not make sense. Our waterways are connected - so should be our agencies and state rules.

3.2.1 - Option B

It is time for the Chesapeake to take a meaningful reduction in harvest, as the Ocean fishery has. These addendums are only being considered because we have taken too much for too long from this fishery. It is time to stop that.

3.3 - Option B

These decisions may not be pleasant but they are important to protect the striped bass and the ecosystem of the Chesapeake. Thank you.

Nick Fox

From: mattsedgwick@yahoo.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:17:18 AM

Hi, just wanted to reach out and advocate my voice for the protection of our fishery. I as a young lifetime fisherman would love to see the people who have the power actually do something in a positive way. You guys have control over a lot of people's livelihood and hobby's. There is a serious problem with the low numbers of spawning fish and you guys don't seem to take it seriously since it's all money driven. Give it a couple more years all the money that's made off of that species will cease to exist. Taking that into consideration I really hope that you guys look at this situation for the longevity of the species. Not like we can stock and manage striped bass like we do all the other native species money hungry and selfish fisherman have erased from the earth. This is really an important fishery to me and millions of others so please. Do the right thing. Thankyou -Matthew

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Jason Dutremble](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments to Striped Bass Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:20:00 AM

Good Morning,

I had attended (virtually) Maine's public hearing on Amendment 7's draft Addendum II, however I did not get a chance to comment so I would like to share my comments here via email. My views, similar to the many others, are in an effort to preserve and regrow this great fishery so that all future generations can experience a healthy stock of striped bass. I've spent many days/nights on the water over the past decade and more recently as a Maine Guide to be able to share this great fishery with others from near and far. Although we are seeing signs of bigger fish taking up the Maine coast in the summers, we have seen a significant drop in schoolie size fish and the 12-18" fish which used to be so well populated just a few short years ago. While it is great to hook into some bigger fish, it's very concerning that the age groups that follow these appear to be non-existent.

With that said, I support the following options in draft Addendum II in order to best preserve and regrow the striped bass fishery -

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

3.1.2: Option B1 - (1) fish at 19" to 23" (all jurisdictions/all modes).

3.1.3 - 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 - Option B - No filleting at sea allowed.

3.2.1 - Option B - The Board will select the specific percent reduction between zero and 14.5% (highly suggest the maximum allowable of 14.5%)

3.3 - Option B - Allow The Board to take immediate Board action to change management measures if upcoming stock assessment indicates the stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029 by the rebuilding deadline.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Feel free to reach out to me for further comment. Happy holidays.

Jason Dutremble
Recreational Angler/Registered ME Guide
Scarborough, ME
207-590-2690

From: [Matthew Roach](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:20:49 AM

To the commissioners at ASMFC:

As a recreational angler on the Chesapeake Bay, who spends 50-70 days a year pursuing striped bass on my own boats or with professional fishing guides, I am very concerned about the state of the fishery. Per the data shared on the YOY index over the last 5 years, and the SSB levels understood to presently exist, I am in favor of the following Addendum II options from the ASMFC council:

- Ocean Fishery: **Option B—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).**
 - This will help protect the all too important 2015 year class from over-harvest.
- Chesapeake Bay Fishery: **Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.**
- Commercial Fishery: **Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.**
 - Commercial fishermen must share in the sacrifice. No more favorites - Chesapeake bay commercial captains must see the same reductions in harvest.
- Response to Stock Assessment: **Option B—Board Action.**
 - The board must review the latest stock data in 2024 and quickly act to recover this fishery.

I ask you do everything possible to quickly rebuild the stock and fishery for this important, economically valuable and slow growing fish species. All fishery user groups (including commercial fishermen and charter guides) as well as all states should share in the same level of sacrifice. We owe it to the fish, our fellow fishermen, and future generations of fishermen.

Thank you.
Matt Roach
Maryland Resident

From: [John Hawes](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:30:19 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a catch-and-release recreational striper fisherman that fishes out of Buzzards Bay, MA. I am writing to express my concern for the striper population and the regulations being put in place to protect this great fish. The data on the stiper populations clearly shows a great decline in spawning numbers of striped bass since the 2015 year class. This data cannot be ignored as regulations are drafted and put in place. This species must be protected now, before it is too late and the striper population numbers can no longer be corrected. It is up to all of us to protect these fish so that our kids and grandkids can enjoy the same striper fishing that we enjoyed.

I am writing to advocate for making the stiper a game fish and stop harvesting until the population numbers return to a sustainable number. I fear that this is our last chance to get this right and correct the population numbers before it is too late. This is our responsibility and we must make the right decision and protect this fishery.

Regards,

John Hawes

From: [Ted Upton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:51:44 AM

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like for you to consider the following options for addendum ii of Amendment 7 to the ASMFC striped bass management plan:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Anglers are harvesting too many striped bass, both commercially and recreationally, and it is imperative that we protect the strong 2015 stocks, especially the larger breeding fish.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Again, protecting breeding aged fish, especially in the important Chesapeake Bay, is imperative to the sustained health of the fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

It is important that the board take action after analyzing stock assessments to help positively impact the fishery.

Thank you for logging my comments. Properly managing these fish for future generations should always outweigh appeasing any user group.

Regards,

Ted Upton
CEO | North Point Brands
Cheeky Fishing | Wingo Outdoors
North Adams, MA
tupton@northpointbrands.com
O: 413-346-4002 | C: 207.650.0831
cheekyfishing.com | wingooutdoors.com



From: [matthew witt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Rock fish
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:00:41 AM

Restrict the season to catch and release for the next five years. Once the population comes back, open the season for what it use to be ten-fifteen years ago. Also stop the netting of rock fish and here is a thought stop the Canadian boats at the Chesapeake bay bridge tunnel from netting all the bait fish plus what ever is under those fish feeding. Stop blaming the guy with his son that likes to go catch his one or two fish. You all know the problems FIX IT.

From: [charlie & cathi johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Strippers
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:07:15 AM

I feel the slot could be raised to 33" for rec and charter boats. Also one trophy fish per week could be added. They would have to purchase a permits from the state they fish in. Once used they could not take another large bass in that calendar week. A charter boat could only have a total of 2 large per trip and a rec. boat one per trip. Regardless of how many people onboard had a permit. This could help on the release of dead bass. If you're aware how difficult it can be to revive large bass. I know you have to rely on sampling but I am in Rhode Island and this year we had more bass than ever of all sizes. I have been fishing 65 years

From: [John Bunar](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass proposals
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:11:34 AM

Dear ASMFC

I am writing to support the 28-33 slot limit for charter boats. We run approximately 200 charters for bass. On occasion, the extra 2 inches on the slot would make a huge difference in customer satisfaction. That huge difference in customer satisfaction comes with a very minimal increase in mortality. If mortality was greatly different, I would not support the expanded slot. I believe in your efforts to control mortality and appreciate you maintaining the health of the fishery

Yours at Anchor

John Bunar

Sent from my iPhone

From: mikeo10129@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ADDENDUN 11
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:12:38 AM

I SUPPORT THE SLOT LIMIT 28" TO 33" AS IT WAS VERY HARD TO FIND FISH IN THE 3" SLOT LAST YEAR ,I AM A MATE ON A NUMDER OF CHARTER BOATS A HAD A LOT OF UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS AS WE WERE UNABLE TO GIVE THEM FISH TO TAKE HOME.

ALSO MY YACHT CLUB DOSE NOT LET ME CLEANE FISH AT THE DOCK. I ALSO EARN TIPS FOR CLEANING FISH AS WELL THIS IS PART OF MY PAY FOR MATING .
PEOPLE WILL JUST TAKE WHOLE FISH HOME AT THE END OF THE TRIP AND I WILL LOSE INCOME IF I CANT PROVIDE THIS SERVICE!

MICHAEL O'ROURKE
TWO SHORT
MS8574ZC

From: [James King](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:19:55 AM

To whom it may concern:

I strongly urge that the striped bass slot of 28"-31" be kept in place for all recreational fishing, including private anglers and charter/hire anglers. I do not support modality splits, as I believe they are injurious to the stock.

Chesapeake Bay- desperately needs more conservation efforts. Keep the limit @1 fish (19"-23"). NO MODE SPLITS!

Reduce the quota for commercial fisheries.

I am 76 years old, and have seen the ups and downs of striped bass, bluefish, weakfish, winter flounder, and fluke. We are not in a good position right now with any of those stocks. As an aside, I had the worst Bluefish year in my memory this year, and winter flounder are only a memory.

Thank you.

Jim King

From: crushrun2007@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:23:48 AM

FMP Coordinator Emilie Franke:

As an older person who has just been able to start enjoying fishing on a more regular basis I have been impressed with the total quality and quantity of the striped bass fishery in the northeast versus fisheries in other areas of the country where I have travelled that have been overfished (e.g. Florida - grouper, snook, and Alaska where commercial {especially foreign vessels} have decimated certain salmon populations).

I would hate to see this fishery destroyed for future generations by overfishing. My thoughts on how this can be accomplished are as follows:

- (1) maintain the 28-31" slot for the ocean fishery
- (2) implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay
- (3) complementary reductions in the commercial fishery
- (4) no mode splits meaning the same regulations for private and charter fishing boats

By keeping or enacting these tight regulations this will assist in maintain healthy populations for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you for your time.

Barry Fink

From: [Pat Abate](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:24:39 AM

Greetings,

I am a recreational fisherman and have been fishing for striped bass for 65 years. I have been a commercial striped bass fisherman, tackle shop owner and have witnessed the swings in the stocks for over six decades. If we are to have a sustainable striped bass fishery we must lower the mortality of the current and future breeding stock.

I strongly support,

3.1.1 Option B and 3.1.2 Option B1

Sincerely,

Patrick Abate

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Edward D Bertrand](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II Sec 3.1.1
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:27:38 AM

Good morning,
I'm writing to offer input during the public comment period for the striped bass regulations. I support option C as the best course.

Thank you for the chance to offer my thoughts.

-Ed Bertrand

From: [greatruncharters](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Proposed Striped bass ammendments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:36:40 AM

To whom it may concern,
As a charter captain in RI, I support the following:

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support 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.

This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of the for-hire fleet. As noted in the document, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality, virtually leaving the emergency action measures in place.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

The option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification: Support 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.

Either option is workable, I think enforcing option B would be very difficult.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at sea/shoreside filleting.

Support enforcement of existing regulations, and recognize the challenges enforcing slot limits. This section of the document needs more time to be fully developed with stakeholder engagement and we are concerned that approving Option B may slow down the implementation of other sections.

Thank you

Charles Julian

Captain, Great Run Charters

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Paul](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Charter boat striper regulations
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:39:53 AM

Carol J Charters and Capt. Paul Johnson support the following

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support 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.

Comment:

This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of the for-hire fleet. As noted in the document, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality, virtually leaving the emergency action measures in place.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

The option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification: Support 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.

Either option is workable, I think enforcing option B would be very difficult.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at sea/shoreside filleting.

Support enforcement of existing regulations, and recognize the challenges enforcing slot limits. This section of the document needs more time to be fully developed with stakeholder engagement and we are concerned that approving Option B may slow down the implementation of other sections.

Sent from my iPad

I appreciate your consideration

Capt. Paul B Johnson Sr
Carol j Charters
Galilee RI

From: hunter.priebe8@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:50:52 AM

Good morning,

My name is Hunter Priebe and I am a very concerned recreational striped bass angler from Connecticut and also fish RI and MA regularly. I spend ~75 days on the water every year and have watched the decline of our fishery first hand over the past several years. While the large bass fishing has been good, there is a clear and obvious lack of abundance along the New England coast. There is no diversity in size class and the concentrations of fish are extremely localized (and pressured). My goal, along with the American Saltwater Guides Association, is to continue to advocate for abundance in our fishery. Although I firmly believe the actions proposed in Addendum II are unlikely to rebuild the stock by 2029, please see below for my positions on Addendum II.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

While not a popular opinion and not an option provided, I believe placing a state wide moratorium on harvesting striped bass is the best course of action to ensure the species rejuvenation and ultimately the long run growth of the fishing community. Thank you for your consideration,

Hunter Priebe

From: [Michael Lyons](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:51:17 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

It is clear that Striped Bass face huge challenges. Please do the right thing and do not allow the commercial industry to take advantage of the rules. We MUST reduce harvest and protect the very few breeder fish that will allow us all to enjoy these fish for years to come. The population of fish is worth substantially more to the US economy and the American people than to a smaller number of commercial interests.

I support the following:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

It would be outrageous to apply a different set of rules to the charter industry and the recreational industry. The charters take out recreational anglers that have money to hire boats. They are the SAME anglers that are "recreational".

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

With YEARS of poor recruitment, the Bay should do all in its power to ensure the few young fish that survive are kept alive and able to breed one day.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

The fish are spawning in January and February. If you continue to allow a robust commercial harvest in the winter, there will be no more breeders! This won't be easy but it is necessary.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thank you all for your time. These options are not easy but they are necessary. There won't be a commercial or charter industry in a few years if these changes aren't made. It is just a matter of time.

Respectfully,

Michael Lyons
Director of Digital Sales
The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
Email: mlyons@rowman.com

From: [Mike Wissel](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:53:24 AM

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Michael Wissel and I am a recreational angler, a customer of commercial fishing and a client of charter boats and guides. I live in Maryland but fish for striped bass all up and down the east coast. I'm also a father of three children who enjoy getting out on the bay and bringing a fish home for the table. From each of these perspectives, the decline of the striped bass population and the recruitment failure of the past many years is deeply troubling. But this isn't about the who, what, why and when of the decline, it's about what meaningful actions are going to be taken. The stock isn't where it was right before the last moratorium, but the window of opportunity to take remedial actions is closing.

As a recreational angler I am willing to do my fair share to ensure the sustainability of this resource. But this is a shared resource and with that comes shared responsibility. It troubles me that in the State of Maryland it's currently being managed through sector separation and based upon data widely recognized as insufficient in managing harvest and discard estimates. Maryland's recreational anglers have shouldered a disproportionate burden of responsibility through sector specific bag limits and seasonal closures, even for catch & release. It's my hope that the upcoming actions do not take this same approach and that Maryland DNR employs resources to better understand the impacts that water quality, air and water temperatures and fishing gear have on discard mortality.

For these reasons I support actions to reduce fishing mortality across all user groups in 2024, and for the board to remain focused on rebuilding the coast wide population to target biomass levels. These include:

- *Recreational Coast: Option B – Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)*
- *Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction) or B2 – 19-24” (15.9% reduction).*
- *Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota*
- *Board Response: B. Board Action.*
- *Implementation dates: ASAP.*

A well-respected member of our community once said that if we “put the fish first” all stakeholders will benefit in the long run. I urge that you act with that in mind and I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Wissel

Westminster, MD

From: [Josh Givelber](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:04:19 PM

Dear ASFMC committee members,

I am a NJ based angler, who primarily fishes from the shore. I fish mostly for striped bass in NJ but take an annual trip up to New England to target the fish during the summer months. While the fishing has been decent the past couple of years, it seems like it was mostly driven by the maturing of 2015 fish class which was the last good spawning year. I think it is imperative to protect these fish as they move out of the slot and think that keeping the slot at the 2023 emergency action levels (28"- 31") established this past summer. I find it very troubling that achieving the SSB sustainability target by 2029 has fallen so low.

Therefore, I support the following options for the Draft Addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.1.3 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I can appreciate the impact that tighter limits may have on charter and head boats, but I think that everyone would be better served with the more conservative limits as it has the best chance of giving us a healthy fishing stock in the future.

Thanks for allowing me to comment.

Joshua Givelber
Westfield, NJ

From: [Doug Klimavich](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 Striper Regulations
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:06:57 PM

I strongly support an option for a 28-33 inch slot limit for the "for Hire" vessels. It's getting harder and harder to present potential clients with a reason to hire a fishing charter on Cape Cod.

Fishing Charters bring a lot of revenue into the communities and having a difference in sizes from recreational fishermen gives us something extra to offer.

Tight Lines and Smooth Seas

Capt. Doug Klimavich
[St. Pete Sport Fishing](#)
West Dennis, MA 02670
508-284-8511

From: [Robert Malouin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:08:00 PM

Good morning!

I'm emailing today in support of Option B in section 3.1.1.

I know the party and charter boats want us to support option C, but I disagree. I would really like to see the laws change so that captain and mates cannot keep stripers during charters. I.E if I'm out with my six pack and a mate, I don't need to keep 8 fish. All I need is a fish per customer.

Tight lines,
Capt. Robert Malouin

From: [Jacobsen, Eric D.,MD](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft amendment II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:10:32 PM

I am writing to support continuation of the current 28-31” slot limit. This should apply to for-hire and recreational anglers. Where I fish in MA, most “commercial” striped bass fisherman have other jobs that are in no way related to commercial fishing and are using commercial fishing for striped bass to fund an at-times expensive hobby. Continuing to target large breeding females via a commercial fishery makes no sense and further limitations should be placed on the commercial fishery (I.e., further catch reductions). Best, Eric Jacobsen

The information transmitted in this electronic communication is intended only for the person or entity to whom it is addressed. It may also contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any use of the information transmitted by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is strictly prohibited. If this email was sent to you in error and includes sensitive Dana-Farber information (for example, patient information, Social Security Numbers, credit card information), please communicate this to Dana-Farber’s Compliance Hotline at www.compliancereport.org <<http://www.compliancereport.org>>. If the information transmitted does not contain such sensitive information, please contact the sender and properly dispose of the email.

From: [Carl Forsberg](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:17:13 PM

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Carl forsberg and I represent the Viking Fleet in Montauk, NY. We are a 4 generation family owned and operated business consisting of 6 USCG certified Party and charter boats. We support option C. The Party/charter boats have been separate from the private angler in the past here in the state of NY and it only makes sense to do so again to help mitigate the economic losses that we have occurred this year with the draconian slot size limit of 28-31 inches...while also finding that balance necessary to help support the stock of the Striped Bass and their recovery.

Thank you,

Carl B. Forsberg

From: [Aj Coots](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:23:51 PM

Hi Emilie,

Red Top Sporting Goods in Buzzards Bay Mass checking in about the proposed changes to the Striped Bass Management. We fully support the recommended changes drafted by Mike Waine as noted in the ASA Guide to Draft Addendum II for Atlantic Striped Bass.

These changes are:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.3 Option A

Thanks,

Aj

From: [JDMillerFish](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:34:54 PM

I am in full support of draft addendum II. We need to do everything possible to correct the issues facing our striped bass population as quickly as possible.

Thank you,

JD Miller

From: [Paul Lynch](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regulations and fillet at sea
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 12:35:54 PM

To whom may this concern,

My name is Paul Lynch. In 2023 I received my Merchant Mariner Credential and started a fishing charter business with my father who is also a Captain. The name of the Company is City Hawk Charters located out of Salem MA. We strongly agree with the new regulations to make the limit for recreational striped bass fishing 28"-33". This will help out a lot of charter businesses and will make clients happy to give them a better chance in taking home a striped bass for consumption. Filleting at sea is a huge part of running a successful charter boat business. A lot of times we run two trips a day. Especially when we go offshore for ground fish. Bringing out 6 people and getting the bag limit of haddock and other species in the mix is a lot cleaning to do. Not being able to fillet at sea means spending all that time at the dock while the customers just sit on the boat watching us clean their fish. By the point they are very tired and want to go home, shower and go enjoy the rest of the day.

Sincerely,

Captain Paul Lynch

City Hawk Charters, LLC

Salem MA

From: [Solstice](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:07:24 PM

Dear commissioners and commission staff,

From the voice of a guide and lifelong angler from Cape Cod, I am in support of the most extreme measures possible to help rebuild the Striped Bass population. Although a recreational and commercial harvest moratorium is not on the table this time, it's obvious we will end up there. The striped bass population is struggling and any way we can get the population back on track should be prioritized. Lastly, working on proper data collection is vitally important to ensure our assessments are useful. Please hear our voice and take appropriate action.

Below are the options that I support in Bold for Addendum II.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: **Option B**

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **Option B1**

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **Option B**

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: **Option B**

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **Option B**

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **Option B**

As an angler, guide and owner of a business that depends on the health of the Striped Bass population these options I support are a step in the right direction but not extreme enough for the current circumstances. There is a population failure right in front of us and we have the ability to get ahead of it and protect these fish.

I encourage anyone to reach out to help gather any comment or information that may be useful in protecting Striped Bass.

Sincerely,

Kevin LaCroix

508-367-8871

<https://solsticeflyfishing.com/>

4 Leslie Lane, Yarmouthport, MA 02675

From: [Shawn Kimbro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:10:53 PM

I am writing in support of the following. I admit that I am jaded because of the ASMFC's disregard for public opinion in the past, but I work in the recreational fishing industry, and I have worked in the commercial fishing industry in the past and I have a deep vested interest. I hope the commission will do the right thing and take the maximum available conservation action, both in Maryland and coast wide.

- **Recreational Coast: Option B – Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)**
- **Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction)**
- **Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota**
- **Board Response: B. Board Action.**
- **Implementation dates: ASAP.**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,
Shawn Kimbro

Shawn Kimbro, RST, RPSGT
The George Washington University
2021 K Street NW, Suite 104
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 741-2232

Confidentiality Note: This e-mail is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise protected from disclosure. Dissemination, distribution, or copying of this e-mail or the information herein by anyone other than the intended recipient, or an employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, is prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please destroy the original message and all copies.

From: [Jon Coen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:24:32 PM

I am in favor of the changes to striped bass management by the Atlanta States Marine Fisheries Commission. Recreational striped bass fishing is very important to my family and crucial to our economy.

Perhaps the slot size can be revisited after this year.

Thanks,
Jon Coen

From: [Ed Walsh](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II"
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:26:43 PM

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [John Sanchez](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [JEFF KAELIN](#); [Adam S. Nowalsky](#); [VIN GOPAL](#); [Joe Cimino](#); [ANITA A KULIK](#); [DAVID M. DELLOSO](#); [KRISTOPHER M KUHN](#); [LOREN W.LUSTIG](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:27:20 PM

John C. Sanchez
 221 West Euclid Ave.
 Haddonfield, NJ 08033
john.sanchez@comcast.net
 609.992.0906

December 21, 2023

Emilie Franke
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
 Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my public comment on the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

As a lifelong surfcaster and sportsman, I am deeply concerned about the adequacy and responsibility of the options presented in Addendum II. It is troubling to observe that some of these options fall short of the recommended 14.5% reduction, as indicated by the technical committee, leaving only a 50% probability of the stock being rebuilt by the 2029 deadline. Despite clear signals of a decline in Atlantic Striped Bass stocks since 2013, the Board's response has been slow and weak.

Rather than taking proactive measures, the Board has deferred critical decisions, leading to the current urgent need for emergency action. I question the Board's commitment to fulfilling its mandate to protect Striped Bass. The behavior of the Board reflects a conflict of interest that prioritizes the interests of commercial and for-hire fishermen over the health of the stocks. Over a 10-year period, we have witnessed the tragedy of the commons play out.

Specifically, my responses to the proposed options are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Management:

Ocean Recreational Options	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Rec. Release Mortality Change
Option B. 1 fish at 28" – 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).	-14.1%	-49.9%	+2.0%

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Rec. Fishery Options:

Option	Min. Size	Max Size	Limit	Season	Overall Reduction	Harvest Change	Mortality Change
Option B. Consistent limits for entire Chesapeake Bay							

Option B1	19"	23"	1 fish	2022	-22.4%	-38.4%	+6.7%
-----------	-----	-----	--------	------	--------	--------	-------

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if Option C mode split option selected)

Option	Will Captain & Crew count as For Hire anglers (allowing additional harvest)
Option B	No - Captain and crew subject to 1 fish limit allowed for P/S

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance – should the board establish minimum requirements

Option	Shall management plan establishes minimum requirements to retain racks in states where at-sea / shore filleting is allowed.
Option B	Yes – establishes minimum requirements

3.2 Commercial Fishery Management:

Option	Proposed Options for Commercial Fishery Management 2022 limits
Option B	14% reduction from 2022 quotas

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: If future assessments indicate Striped Bass stock is not projected to rebuild by 2029 with a probability greater than 50%

Option	Description
Option A.	Status quo – Board initiates and develops addendum

Despite the urgency to act promptly, I cannot support Option B in 3.3 due to a history of inaction, the perception of a conflict of interest, and a lack of transparency. The existing approach has already shown a noticeable 50% chance of failure, coupled with a track record of shortcomings. If the Board were genuinely committed to acting in good faith, it should be putting forth more substantial measures without delay. Additionally, the Board should provide a clear outline of contingency options that will be implemented based on the outcomes of forthcoming stock assessments.

I want to emphasize that my response to the request for input should not be seen as an endorsement of the adequacy of Addendum II. I urge the Board to strive for more effective solutions, placing a higher priority on the well-being of the species for the benefit of the public. It is essential that future actions align with the mandate to protect and sustain our natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide my input to the matter of public importance.

Very Respectfully,

John C. Sanchez
Haddonfield, New Jersey

DRIVEN TO PRECISION ®

John C. Sanchez | President & Chief Executive Officer | **Mustang Expediting, Inc.**
| john@mustangexpediting.com | 35 Stanley Drive | Aston, PA 19014-2245
w 610.497.6360 | m 609.992.0906 | www.mustangexpediting.com

signature_206965080



book a meeting with John [here](#)

From: [Richard Jensen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft amendment II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:29:59 PM

I support option C
Sent from Capt. Rich

From: [Mark Sherer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Mark Sherer](#); [Rick Bellavance Jr](#)
Subject: [External] Comments - For Hire Stb ADD II Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:31:04 PM

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support 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.

This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of the for-hire fleet. As noted in the document, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality, virtually leaving the emergency action measures in place.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

The option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification: Support 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.

Either option is workable, I think enforcing option B would be very difficult.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: Support Option A Status Quo: No requirement in the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass related to at sea/shoreside filleting.

Support enforcement of existing regulations, and recognize the challenges enforcing slot limits. This section of the document needs more time to be fully developed with stakeholder engagement and we are concerned that approving Option B may slow down the implementation of other sections.

Captain Mark Sherer
Gannet Outdoor Adventures
East Greenwich, RI

From: [Monty Hawkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] On Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:34:09 PM

Trust No Data From MRIP.
None.

Capt Monty Hawkins
Mhawkins@morningstarfishing.com
Info@ocreefs.org

From: [Sam Rescigno](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] (Striped Bass Addendum II)
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:36:08 PM

To Whom it may concern

The owner, operators and crew of the popular New Jersey charter boat, the Mary M IV, support option C in the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 of the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

Respectfully
Sam Rescigno
Charter Boat Mary M IV
Barnegat Light NJ

From: [George Reinhardt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:39:11 PM

I am in strong support of
Option C
Thank you

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

From: [William Barrett](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:39:18 PM

Dear ASMFC-

I have been fishing for a long time and would like to continue. I'm very worried about the stocks and how they are managed. Ten years ago, things were much better. I think the problem has been relaxing the limits

I support these options for draft addendum II":

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you.

Bill Barrett

Massachusetts

From: [John Potter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:42:49 PM

There should be a total shut down of fishing above the I-95 bridge Nov. 1 to April 14 to on the whole east coast to protect over wintering and spawning bass. We should have a total no kill for bass for 3 or more years. coast

John Potter
246 Neptune Dr.
Groton Ct. 06340
cell: 860-248-9634

From: [Ryan Collins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:46:52 PM

Dear Emilie and ASMFC,

I personally feel that striped bass, along with many species of fish and animals, are under tremendous stress right now. Fishing pressure, development, environmental changes, technology, and many other factors are having an impact on striped bass and other species.

Therefore my recommendation and hope is that the management board makes conservation of the species, and rebuilding the population, their most important objectives. I am personally onboard with whatever measures are necessary to achieve a 14.5% reduction (or greater) in fishing mortality as quickly as possible.

Thank you!

Ryan Collins



Founder & Creator
myfishingcapecod.com

From: [Nickie Wallace](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] stripped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:48:02 PM

I completely support option C!!!
Nickie Bumble

From: [Anita Alford](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Strip bass draft addendum 11
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:50:37 PM

Support option C
Anita Alford

From: [John Dupuis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 11
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 1:55:40 PM

I John Dupuis Support these options for draft addendum 11

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 option B 1

3.2.1 option B

3.1.4 option B

3.3. Option B

John Dupuis 399 Central St. E., Bridgewater, MA. I believe this is the way to increase the Population of the striped bass in mass

Thank you John Dupuis

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rick Drew](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:14:46 PM

To the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

I am a recreational angler from the state of New York. I fish for striped bass and other saltwater species from both private boats and shore in my home state of NY and neighboring states along the striper coast. The following are my personal preferences for the options presented in *Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*. Thank you for your consideration.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option B - 1 fish at 28" - 31". I favor this option because it offers the greatest reduction in harvest, and is the best option for trying to meet the 2029 rebuilding timeline.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

Option B2 - 1 fish at 19" - 24". I favor this option because it provides a significant reduction in mortality but is equitable as compared to the reductions taken by the ocean fishery under option B.

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

Option B - Captain and crew should be subject to the same regulations as private vessel / shore anglers.

I am opposed to the options in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 that provide different size limits to the for-hire fishery. I do not feel that it is equitable to expect the rest of the recreational sector to adhere to more restrictive size and/or bag limits than for-hire vessels. All user groups should share equally in the effort to reduce harvest and rebuild the SSB to target. The for-hire fishery already harvests a disproportionately high number of striped bass, when compared to the private recreational fishery. Making it easier for them to harvest more fish than the private recreational fishery does not benefit the rebuilding effort.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

Option B - Racks must be retained and skin left on filets in states that allow filleting at sea. No more than two filets per legal fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Option B - Up to 14.5% reduction of the 2022 commercial quota with 2022 size limits.

I do not feel the 14.5% quota reduction adequately constrains harvest in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery and will provide 0 conservation benefit. In 2022, the bay commercial fleet harvested a total of 2.39 million pounds of striped bass out of a 3.00 million pound total quota. Reducing bay quota by 14.5% would result in a total bay quota of 2.57 million pounds, which is still more than what was harvested in 2022. So, effectively, the bay commercial fleet may in fact end up harvesting MORE striped bass under the most restrictive measures proposed by Addendum II than they did in 2022. The fact the bay fleet couldn't fill their quota in 2022 should serve as a warning to managers that the bay striped bass fishery is in serious trouble, and much more drastic cuts to the commercial quota and harvest are needed.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

Option B - Board may respond to stock assessments by Board action. I feel this is necessary due to the shrinking rebuilding window. The Board needs the ability to expedite the management process in order to respond quickly to stock assessments that indicate the rebuilding timeline has less than a 50% of success by the 2029 deadline.

Rick Drew
East Hampton, NY

From: [Alex Blouin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:21:19 PM

Dear Emilie Franke,

I am writing to you on behalf of Far Bank Enterprises (Sage, Redington, RIO, Fly Water Travel) to express our full support of all measures that will best safeguard the surviving year classes of striped bass. As manufacturers of premium fly fishing tackle, we, along with our specialty retail network made up of small local fly shops, rely on this fishery for the long-term health and success of our businesses. Additionally, the striped bass angling community supports a unique culture that drives innovation and inspiration around the world. It is critical that we do everything we can to guarantee successful stock rebuild, and the long-term health of this fishery and culture.

Our recommendations are as follows :

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Being located in the Puget Sound area of Washington, we have had a front row seat to the collapse of our wild steelhead fisheries over the past few decades. Measures to protect these fisheries have largely come too-little-too-late, and angling opportunities across the region have dwindled to a small fraction of what they were – with keystone pieces of our culture having all but disappeared. Rivers and steelhead populations like the famed Skykomish and Stillaguamish that drove Spey fishing innovation in North America have all but become a thing of the past. The ASMFC still has the opportunity to prevent this same situation from happening with Atlantic Striped Bass.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

-Alex

Far Bank Enterprises



ALEX BLOUIN / *Far Bank Enterprises / Sage Marketing Manager*
8500 Northeast Day Road, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

TEL (206) 842-6608



From: [Rob Moss](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial striped bass / administrative member 45 yrs commercial bass fishing Chatham Ma
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:50:33 PM

Sent from my iPhone

From: [pelagic33](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 2:55:19 PM

I support option C

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Stephen Barone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:00:50 PM

Dear Commissioners and Commission team:

Thank you for considering my comments on the latest proposed changes to the Management Plan for Striped Bass. I am 36 years old and have been fishing for striped bass in Massachusetts and Rhode Island for over 30 years. Some of my fondest memories are as a child fishing recreationally for striped bass with my father in Boston Harbor in our Boston Whaler. I have two young kids of my own now and I'm afraid they won't get to experience this fishery like I did as a child.

While I doubt it will be enough to save this beloved fish, below are the options I support.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: **I support Option B**

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **I support Option B1**

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **I support Option B**

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: **I support Option B**

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **I support Option B**

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **I support Option B**

Thank you for your hard work. We need to do everything we can to save this fish.

--

Stephen Barone
617-460-5611
stephenbarone2@gmail.com

From: [gslipper7 \(null\)](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:12:01 PM

Please stop all stripe bass hook and line fishing. I have personally seen people fish all day catching fish after fish throw their limit in cooler and keep fishing til they get a bigger fish and they throw the fish that is in cooler back and been dead for an hour. Size limits won't help. They have blatant disregard for any species of fish. As a commercial fisherman it is piss poor that we get the blame for so much. When I could never fish commercially for them, I found so many good fish floating dead from sports fishermen that I could not pick up because I held a commercial license. Those fish would've fed families.

From: [Rich Gardner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:19:14 PM

I support the following Options, and provide the following additional comments:

Ocean Rec fishery Option B (1 fish 28" - 31")

Additional Comment 1: I don't support different size/creel limits within the recreational sector for the For Hire portion.

Chesapeake Bay Rec fishery Option B4.

Additional Comment 2: Overall Reductions from these B options are significantly understated. Changing the Charter Boats to 1 fish/day would be a much more significant reduction in mortality than shown. The charter boats at 2 fish/day, the good ones often running with 8-14 anglers on board, two trips/day for much of the season, in boats that can fish in any Bay weather, and the network they have to keep track of fish locations in the Bay mean they harvest WAY more fish than the non-for hire sector. Going to a B option would have a much more significant impact than the model currently shows. It would also result in a reduced number of charter fishing trips targeting striped bass.

Additional Comment 3: I encourage Maryland DNR to follow the PRFC and VMRC lead in establishing striped bass seasons. In Maryland there are lots of other species to fish for in July-September. Though not presented as an Option in Draft Addendum II, my preferred approach to reduce recreational sector striped bass mortality in Chesapeake Bay would be to mimic the PRFC or VMRC season timings. Being closed when water temps are hottest would also reduce C&R mortality since release mortality is therefore highest during the hottest water temps.

For-Hire Management Clarification Option B.

Recreational Filleting Allowance Option A.

Additional Comment 4: This is not a material impact on striped bass mortality and therefore need not be addressed in Addendum II.

Commercial Quota Reductions Option B.

Additional Comment 5. While not an option in the Addendum, I would support designating striped bass a gamefish and eliminating commercial harvest of the species. The recreational economic benefits of a strong striped bass fishery far outweigh the benefits of keeping a commercial fishery.

Response to Stock Assessment Option A.

Additional Comment 6: The public input period is critically important. The data the board is relying on is obviously flawed. For example, the release mortality data. Of the 6.8M fish killed in 2022, 2.7M of them were from recreational release mortality - that's so blatantly wrong it's laughable! And Maryland's YoY Index may be obsolete with the way striped bass movement and migration patterns have changed in Chesapeake Bay). Until the data issues can be improved, I won't support the Board taking action without receiving and considering Public input.

From: [Jonathan Foley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:20:14 PM

I, Captain Jonathan Foley, support the following options.

3.1.1 option C. This option is beneficial for charter boats who may be struggling to find striped bass within the small 3" slot window for their clients to bring home fish for food. Fish for food is a very important aspect of the striped bass fishery. It is well within the overall reduction percentages with only a 0.1% harvest change and 0.0% change to release mortality.

I wholeheartedly agree with opening a larger slot limit for charter boats. Having a larger slot benefits our clients and helps incentivize repeat customers. I am very adamant about making sure clients are aware of what they're bringing back and to not over take. Seeing clients need to split fillets between a charter of 6 is not fair when they release countless above or below slot limits.

3.1.4 Option A. status quo This is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Many charter boats are not able to clean fish at the dock, due to local rules or time constraints (back to back trips). Changing this allowance is not necessary, and if changed would require additional laws regarding keeping racks, where boats may have more racks than clients on board and no filets to show for it. (back to back trips)

I currently run my own operation by myself so filleting on the way in is crucial so I don't have a dirty boat or dock and am ready for my second trip.

3.3 option A. Status quo. the public's input is extremely important in any type or rule making process, this is viewed as a democratic process. At a time where many fishermen question the science not being consistent with observations on the water this is more important than ever. The addendum process assures the public they are involved in the decisions and in my opinion is not that long of a process.

Fully relying on "at sea observers" should not be the only count taken for statistical purposes. It constricts the actual data and with it gives a false analysis. The more information given is beneficial for a more accurate idea on how the fishery is doing. Good or bad.

**Captain Jonathan Foley of the "Ave Maria" and "Tunaverse"
Boston Fishing Charters
South Shore Anglers**

From: [Christopher Kline](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:25:47 PM

To the ASMFC,

I am a recreational angler in Massachusetts, and support the strictest possible measures necessary to rebuild the stock of striped bass as quickly as possible.

Regarding the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II, my recommendations are as follows:

- I would maintain the current 28-31" slot for the ocean fishery
- I recommend implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay
- I recommend complementary reductions in the commercial fishery
- I do NOT support "mode splits" -- we should have the same regulations for private angling and charter fishing

Regarding specific items in addendum:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options (all jurisdictions)
 - I recommend option B: 1 fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options (MD, PRFC, DC and VA)
 - I recommend Option B(2): 1 fish at 19-23", 2022 seasons
- 3.2.1 Commercial Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quota Reduction Options
 - I recommend Option B and would like to stress that the ASMFC must reduce ocean and Chesapeake Bay commercial quotas by 14.5% or greater.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates
 - I recommend Option A: maintaining the addendum process

Thank you for your time, and for taking the concerns of recreational anglers and the decline of the striped bass population seriously.

Sincerely,
Christopher Kline
Quincy, Massachusetts

From: [Peter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:28:30 PM

Hello,

I'm writing in support of the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. I feel it is critical to do whatever we can to protect this vital natural resource going forward.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Peter Twombly

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



Virus-free www.avg.com

From: [Andrew shelhorse](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:30:21 PM

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Andrew Shelhorse and I am from the state of NY. Striped bass are important to me because As someone who has fished Long Island beaches for Striped Bass for the last 20 years I have experienced the Striped Bass decline first hand and fear that without immediate and drastic changes, the fishery will disappear. I typically fish over 100 trips per season and exclusively practice catch and release. Ten years ago, there were many days and nights that we caught and released multiple Striped Bass over 30". Now we are lucky to get a couple of 30" fish for the whole season. I've never objected to those taking legal limit of Striped Bass, but we are in a state of emergency and must make changes now. I commented on the options I support below but I personally believe that the changes should be even more aggressive such as elevating Striped Bass to sport fish status, C&R only, like Tarpon and Bonefish.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—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 of 23".

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

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.s where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.

Thank you very much for accepting my comments

- Andrew Shelhorse
631-219-2588

From: [Foster Lott](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment on ASMFC addendum
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:30:58 PM

To it may concern,

I'm writing to comment on the Atlantic states Marine fishery commission addendum to emergency action related to stripe Bass.

I support the addendum, a follow up to the emergency action striped bass slot limit of 28-31 inches taken this past spring. The purpose of the addendum is to establish measures to reduce striped bass fishing mortality by 14.5%.

It is essential for the Marine Fishing commission to enact this amendment to reduce straight bass, mortality, and improve the fishery for recreational fishing which is in an enormous source of revenue for multiple parties in the Atlantic states(guides, Bait And Tackle shops, marine stores, restaurants, hotels and the states via taxes).

From: [Brian Corville](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:31:47 PM

Striped bass :I support the amendment 3.1.1 option c as a long time charter Captain in falmouth mass as current restrictions on a all too small slot are not good for the character industry's of Massachusetts. Or anywhere else. Please keep status quo on fileaing at sea for charters this is better on discarding racks outside the harbor..and status quo for charter clarification. Please take a side to improve fishing charters. As there has been a steady but consistent loss in our fishing quotas to the dismay of both charter captains and the loss of those no longer willing to take a for hire fishing boat because of imposed restrictions in size and quantity sincerely
Captain Brian Courville. 15 Madeleine rd east Falmouth
Bluefin charters. <((()))><.

From: [Andrew Dzenis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:42:09 PM

I support Alternative C.

The reality is, none of these measures matter if DEC does not enforce problem, consistent offenders. Busting a recreational or charter fisherman harvesting one bass that is half an inch too big should not be a priority of the DEC.

The NYS DEC should be focused on stopping organized poaching schemes and activities in major problem areas, especially in early season as bass are still spawning:

- Raritan Bay
- NY Harbor
- Jamaica Bay
- Breezy Point

On any given night, you will see people of all different ethnicities harvesting garbage bags full of striped bass of all sizes.

Thank you.

From: [Richard Booth](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fwd: Striper comments to ASMFC.org- striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:44:05 PM

>

>

> I am writing to support the following options for Draft Addendum II:

>

> 3.1.1 Option B

>

> 3.1.2 Option B1

>

> 3.2.1 Option B

>

> 3.1.4 Option B

>

> 3..3 Option B

>

> I am from New York State, where the NY DEC is attempting to work with share holders that are aware of the issues we face on the Hudson River.

>

> "I think it is extremely important for the ASMFC Board to work and make decisions that allow the stripers an opportunity for a fishing FUTURE for all of our children and grandchildren!! It appears that they continue to kick the can down the road to make difficult decisions.

> I hope that they do not repeat the history of the shad of the Hudson River, now we are concerned about stripers for the future. I hate to use a historical reference but in this case it appears appropriate.

>

> "When the situation was manageable it was neglected, and now that it is thoroughly out of hand we apply too late the remedies which then might have effected a cure. There is nothing new in the story. It is as old as the sibylline books..... Want of foresight,

> unwillingness to act when action would be simple and effective, lack of clear thinking, confusion of counsel until the emergency comes, until self-preservation strikes its jarring gong-these are the features which constitute the endless repetition of history"

> Winston Churchill, 1935.

>

> Thank you for opportunity to comment on this issue./ Captain Richard E. Booth, of Reel Happy Fishing Charters, Cairo, New York 12413.

From: [Gary Morrissette](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: stripers@stripersforever.org
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:44:11 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I fully support the following options to preserve with a transition to healthy increased stocks of Striped Bass in the future. My preference would be for Striped Bass to be classified as a Game Fish.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Support Option B1—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 of 23".

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

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Support 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%.

1. Status quo is just not an option at this point. As stated, "Status quo has a reduced probability to achieve the objective of this addendum." An equitable reduction in harvest gives us the best possible chance at getting the rebuild back on track. While it is unfortunate that the board will ultimately get to choose the percent reduction, the bottom line is Option B will reduce commercial harvest beyond the 18% reduction put in place by Amendment 7. In your comments please suggest that the board select the biggest possible reduction of 14.5%.
2. We should note that there are several concerning matters surrounding a commercial quota reduction.
 1. First off, it is important to understand that the reduction is to the allowable total harvest number, not to the actual harvest. So, states that do not max out their quota may not see any actual reduction in mortality. Let's say a state only harvests 80% of its total allowable quota. In that case a 14.5% reduction in quota would not save a single fish. For example, in the past we have reported on Massachusetts struggling to fill its commercial quota. To us it's a clear sign that there are just not enough fish around but the troubling part is that if history repeats itself, then this best case scenario of a 14.5% reduction could mean no actual change in commercial harvest. As we have always said, to rebuild this stock we need equitable reductions in mortality. We all need to give something to get something in return.
 2. Secondly, there was much discussion between board members regarding their ability (or inability)

to getting these new commercial regulations in place for the 2024 season. The main reason seemed to stem from the timing of this Addendum II process. Public comments would be taken through December and then final board action would be taken in January. Several board members said it would be very difficult or flat out impossible for them to change commercial regulations at that point. It seemed to hinge on the production of the physical tags but in reality it really just seemed like they were reaching for an excuse to not get the job done. While this mainly pertains to more southern states where the commercial season begins earlier, it would be a complete farce if Addendum II reductions are only applied to the recreational sector.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Support 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.*

Thank you

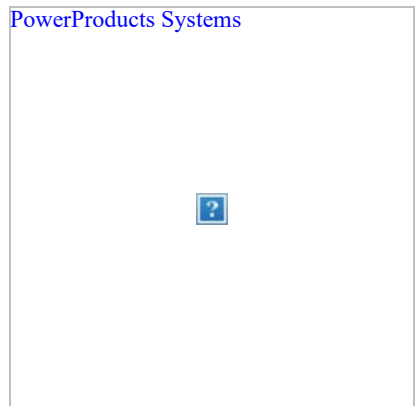
Gary Morrissette
Ipswich, Massachusetts

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Gary Morrissette

Territory Sales Representative

90 Bay State Road
Wakefield, MA 01880
gmorrissette@wwilliams.com
o: (781) 246-1810



From: [Katharine Alter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment on ASMFC proposal
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:45:46 PM

To it may concern,

I fish regularly in the mid Atlantic region and on the waters on/around Cape Cod
I am writing to comment on the Atlantic states Marine fishery commission addendum
to take emergency action related to stripe Bass.

I support the proposed addendum, a follow up to the emergency action striped
bass slot limit of 28-31 inches taken this past spring. The purpose of the
addendum is to establish measures to reduce striped bass fishing mortality by
14.5%.

It is essential for the Marine Fishing commission to enact this amendment to reduce
straight bass, mortality, and improve the fishery for recreational fishing which is in an
enormous source of revenue for multiple
parties in the Atlantic states(guides, Bait And Tackle shops, marine stores, restaurants,
hotels and the states via taxes).

Katharine Alter

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [COLIN ARCHER](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:49:28 PM

Thanks for considering my opinion-

I am a fly fishing guide based in New Jersey. I practice catch and release with striped bass 100% of the time using barbless single hooks.

I was encouraged by the the steps the ASMFC took with the Emergency Action and the slot limit however I have some concerns. While the goal is to meet the 2029 rebuild deadline, increase the SSB, and protect the 2015 year class I fear the slot limit will hurt other year class fish around that slot. I also believe there should be consistent harvest regulations across the East Coast states. Why would there be different rules for the Chesapeake and Raritan Bays?

Going forward I hope maybe there is consideration for seasonal closures on some of the waters that have become pinch points during sensitive times of the striped bass' staging and migration.

That said I vote for the following-

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options Option B. (Although I think a slot rotation should maybe considered, different sizes, different years)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options Option B1

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Option B

I commend the efforts of fisheries management, although I don't always agree, and do believe that money and politics are involved and get in the way of common sense at times.

I would also ask that the ASMFC and the states look at the regulations concerning the use of circle hooks. Is it a single hook? Multi circle hooks in snag and drop type fishing?

And finally can there be consideration for single treble hooks per plug/lure/fly only to reduce injury and mortality. That rear hook isn't needed and at times does more bad than good.

Thank You for reading,

Colin Archer
The Average Angler

Titusville, New Jersey

From: [Emma Andrews](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 3:55:08 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like for you to consider the following options for addendum ii of Amendment 7 to the ASMFC striped bass management plan:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes). Anglers are harvesting too many striped bass, both commercially and recreationally, and it is important that we prioritize protecting the strong 2015 stocks, especially the larger breeding fish.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Again, protecting breeding aged fish, especially in the important Chesapeake Bay, is **crucial** to the sustained health of the fishery.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

It is important that the board take action after analyzing stock assessments to impact the fishery in a positive way.

Thank you for taking time to review my comments. Properly managing these fish for many generations to come should **always** outweigh appeasing any user group.

Regards,

--

Emma Andrews
Warehouse Associate

Cheeky Fishing | Wingo Outdoors
North Adams, MA

eandrews@northpointbrands.com

Office: 413.346.4002

cheekyfishing.com | wingooutdoors.com



From: [Capt. Wally Williams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft addendum 2 to ammendment 7 comment
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:05:10 PM

All sectors within Chesapeake bay should be fishing to the exact same size restrictions. If the intent of these restrictions is to conserve specific year classes of Striped Bass it does no good for recreational/ charter anglers to release fish that can be caught and kept later by commercial methods. Each sector should be under exactly the same lower and upper limits.

From: [Ryan Brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:08:43 PM

Hi Emilie,

I wanted to take a moment to provide my input on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. As an aquatic ecologist who works in marine and estuarine ecosystems and is also an avid (my wife and kids may say rabid!) striped bass angler, I have an educated and hands on perspective on a species that is near and dear to my heart. I treasure our ecosystems and teach my girls about how important all components of nature are ... and how a simple change to one piece often ripples through an entire ecosystem. I studied the mysis shrimp stocking situation in the western lakes and studied mysis shrimp stocking in Moosehead Lake, Maine during my Master's research. We all know how important the delicate balances are. This includes both recreational and commercial interests with respect to striped bass.

I have devoted far too much of my life over the past 2 decades chasing, studying, living and breathing striped bass. I've seen ups and downs in the annual migration availability and yes, had some great fishing this year. However, by and large it is immediately apparent that the striped bass population on a whole is in dire straits. Sure there are some immense schools that have stayed close to shore these past few years and provided great sport, but the indicators are clear with the annual spawning stock measurements that the population is no longer sustaining and will absolutely continue to crash until continued drastic measures are taken. It's clear the ASMFC knows this as well as evidenced by the measures put in place this spring. It is the right step, and needs to be continued. As such, here are my recommendations with respect to the six sections of recommendations.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

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

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:

Option B1—*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 of 23".*

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

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 Filletting Allowance Requirements:

Option B—*For states that authorize at-sea/shore-side filletting 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.*

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

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%.*

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:

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.

I am passionate about my work as an ecologist, and my sport as an angler, and I know you are as well. I appreciate the opportunity to put forth my beliefs and thank you for your consideration.

Wishing you a Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. Here is to the survival, and hopefully a once again flourishing success story of striped bass.

-Ryan Brown

46 Navesink Ave

Rumson, NJ 07760

(908) 565-0888

From: [Kevin Blinkoff](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:10:44 PM

I am a Massachusetts resident and the editor in chief of On The Water Media, which produces On The Water Magazine, On The Water TV, the Striper Cup tournament, and the StriperFest celebration. Our business depends on a healthy, well-managed population of striped bass. I am writing today as a private angler who has fished recreationally for striped bass since moving to Massachusetts 23 years ago, and my comments are not being made on behalf of my employer.

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction. I do not support a mode split because: 1) I support the idea that a recreational angler is a recreational angler regardless of the platform from which they are fishing; 2) recreational mode splits should be an amendment-level decision.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

I support Options B and a reduction in the ocean and the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

Conservation efforts should be shared equally between the recreational and commercial sectors because everyone that uses the resource has a shared interest in its future. The reductions for the commercial sector are based on Amendment 7 quotas instead of 2022 harvest potentially allowing for an increase in removals if the quotas are fully utilized. This contradicts the intent of the Addendum.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important issue.

Kevin Blinkoff
Cataumet, MA

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:32:48 PM

From: LARRY BUCHSBAUM <lbventures@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:28 AM
To: efranke@asmfc.org <efranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

To Emilie Franke:

I strongly urge the ASMFC to adopt for 2024 the following striped bass provisions....

- Maintain the 28-31" slot for ocean fishery and
- Complimentary reduction for commercial fishery

Thank you,
Larry Buchsbaum

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] Public comment regarding Striped Bass fishery.
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 4:35:14 PM

From: Keepin it Reel Sportfishing <keepinitreelfish@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:58 AM
To: efranke@asmfc.org <efranke@asmfc.org>
Subject: [External] Public comment regarding Striped Bass fishery.

Hello,

My name is Chris Oliver. I live in Poughkeepsie, NY which is located on the Hudson River. I began fishing for striped bass on the Hudson River in 1994 as a young boy. In 1994, I do not recall many days where we caught a fish let alone an abundance of fish. It wasn't until 2005-2010 I started seeing the Hudson River produce some really decent fishing. In 2018 I became a licensed captain of keepin it reel sportfishing. From then on I have spent every day of the spring run on the Hudson with my clients. The abundance of fish which seems to grow every season is truly remarkable. I am regularly marking schools of fish several miles long several feet thick. The Hudson River is a unique area for striped bass. The water is cold and the salinity level is about zero. I feel this makes the release mortality number completely irrelevant to the Hudson River. We average about 1,000 fish caught per 6 week season and very rarely do we have an issue successfully releasing them. Furthermore, I fish montauk and block island during the summer months for striped bass and they seem to be very abundant there. So plentiful to the point I have started to decline accepting charters because there are just so many fish that are in the slot and way over the slot that it's just too hectic on the boat and I have been focusing on convincing clients to fish other species.

My point is that although the "data" suggests the bass are in a decline. I feel it is truly imperative that new research methods be implemented to get better data. Most of the techniques and technologies date back to when I started striped bass fishing in the mid 90s. There needed to be a more adaptive wholistic approach to assessing the true biomass of the striped bass.

I love striped bass, i have young children, I want my children and future generations to be able to enjoy and experience the striped bass fishery. If I truly felt that there was a decline or the biomass was suffering I would be one of the first to want to implement stricter regulations but I do not feel that is the case. I feel that the bass are changing their spawning habits trending north away from the Chesapeake bay mainly because of the sedimentation and warming of the water due to corporate pollution. There needs to be a much deeper look into all of the tributaries from the Chesapeake to Maine. This will shine light on what I feel is a new trend that our research methods from the 90s is overlooking. We need to get away from the broad stroke approach when looking at striped bass populations and look into the microscopic migration patterns that have been changing since the 1970s.

Thank you for your time.
Capt. Chris Oliver

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Rainone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:26:16 PM

I support option C in section 3.1.1 I am a for hire Captain of 44 yrs and my charter boat business was decimated last year with the emergency regulations that did not help the bass situation but increased the mortality on the striped bass stocks. Many customers cancelled their trips because they felt they would not be able to catch a fish to take home for dinner, and they were right. After mid July almost all of the striped bass caught around Block Island were over 35" to 50". We saw many big striped bass that were released from the fishermen using live eels just floating on top, and they continued to keep catching and releasing this beautiful fish. Originally the regulations were set at 28-35" to preserve the over 35" fish so they could breed, but this was for the recreational and for hire fleet, but the commercial fleet was allowed to harvest Bass over 35" The so called breeders....How did this regulation make any sense? Now the new regulation is smaller and is targeting the recreational and for hire fishermen again. Commercial fishermen can still take fish over 35" How is this fair and equitable to the fish and other user groups...The for hire fleet is a business just like a commercial fishermen and in fact contributes more to the economy and fishery than the commercial fishermen. We need to have a chance to be regulated differently from the Recreational fishermen because we are a business and we are a small group of fishermen as compared to the growing numbers of recreational anglers that are fishing now.

Thank you.

Capt. John Rainone f/v L'il Toot

--

L'il Toot Charters Inc.
35 Ocean View Dr.
Narragansett RI 02882
401-497-6683

www.LilTootCharter.com

www.facebook.com/pages/Lil-Toot-Charter/268318656187

From: [Nancy Jensen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:27:01 PM

I vote and support option C
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Spencer Bode](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Support RI Charter Part Association
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:36:46 PM

Good evening,

I am emailing supporting RI Charter boat Association letter regarding the striped bass fishery.

I am a professional fisherman and fully support RIPCBA letter entailing the desired options.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: [jack strickland](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:37:27 PM

I would strongly advise the most conservative Striped bass slot limits as possible. I would recommend a slot limit of 18-26 inches (same as drum). This would allow the larger breeding fish to continue increasing the population. Recreational and commercial fishermen should help to continue conserving this species.

--

Jack Strickland
Captain, JetBlue Airways
757-478-4969

From: [Aaron Mann](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:41:42 PM

Hi,

My name is Aaron Mann located in Brooklyn, New York.
I am an avid boat fisherman with near 10 years experience fishing the NY Bight

3.11

I am in favor of Option B : 1 fish at 28"-31" for the Ocean Recreational fishery

3.12

For the Bay fishery, I am in favor of option B-B1: 1 fish at 19"-23"

3.14

Recreational filleting should follow option B

3.2.1

The commercial allocation should also follow option B

3.3

I believe the board should be more responsive in light of the stock assessment update next year. Option B is preferential in this case

I am very concerned about the future of Striped Bass and hope the management of the stock will head in the right direction.

Thank you,
Aaron

From: [John DiPietro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:46:23 PM

I don't think Charter Boats should be allowed to have a greater slot size than a private angler.
John DiPietro Harvey Cedars NJ

From: [Johan Frenje](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:48:39 PM

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Johan Frenje and I'm born and raised in Sweden, and fishing has been a big part of my life since I was 4 years old. I came to the Boston area in the late 90's for work and a couple of years later I discovered the incredible striped-bass fishery in New England. I'm a passionate fly fisherman who cares deeply about our striped-bass fishery.

I personally feel that the striped-bass population is under tremendous stress right now. Fishing pressure, new developments, environmental changes, improved technologies, and several other factors are having a big detrimental impact on the striped-bass population. I have come to this conclusion by simply looking at my fishing logbook that dates back to 2002, which indicates that my best seasons were from 2003 to 2005. Although I'm a much better fisherman today than 20 years ago, I don't come close to the numbers of landed fish in those days. I find this very telling about the state of the striped-bass population.

Therefore, I strongly recommend that the management board prioritizes, first and foremost, the conservation and rebuilding of the striped-bass population while at the same time considering the fact that the fishing pressure will continue to increase going forward (more fishermen, better technologies, additional environmental changes etc...). That being said, I strongly support the following options outlined in draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Best regards,
Johan Frenje
Beverly, MA

From: [Jimmy Fee](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:52:20 PM

I am a Massachusetts resident and the editor of On The Water Media, which produces On The Water Magazine, On The Water TV, the Striper Cup tournament, and the StriperFest celebration. Our business depends on a healthy, well-managed population of striped bass. I am writing today as a private angler who has fished recreationally for striped bass for 28 years while living in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and now, Massachusetts, and my comments are not being made on behalf of my employer.

I urge ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction. I do not support a mode split because: 1) I support the idea that a recreational angler is a recreational angler regardless of the platform from which they are fishing; 2) recreational mode splits should be an amendment-level decision.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the 14.5% reduction to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

I support Options B and a reduction in the ocean and the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.

Conservation efforts should be shared equally between the recreational and commercial sectors because everyone that uses the resource has a shared interest in its future. The reductions for the commercial sector are based on Amendment 7 quotas instead of 2022 harvest potentially allowing for an increase in removals if the quotas are fully utilized. This contradicts the intent of the Addendum.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important issue.

Jim Fee
Falmouth, MA

From: [Robert Allen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II - Comment
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:52:59 PM

To ASMFC -

Taking into account data uncertainties in striped bass stock assessments, multiyear unfavorable environmental conditions affecting spawns, and extended multiyear poor recruitment, the largest reductions under consideration for Addendum II should be adopted because of the urgent need to reduce mortality and rebuild the depleted stock.

This would be for the Chesapeake Bay Option B1. All categories of fisherman - recreational, fishing for hire, and commercial - should be treated equally with respect to striped bass take reductions with no special carve-outs for anyone other than Native Americans to the extent that a tribe and its members may have a by right take by treaty or law.

Rob Allen
Reston, VA
703-626-2668

From: [Bill Scituro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper regs
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:03:44 PM

Good Evening,

As a recreational fisherman in Atlantic waters it is critical that we protect the striped bass fishery. I would like to support there ASA proposed solution as outlined here

- ASA is advocating for (1) maintaining the 28-31" slot for the ocean fishery, (2) implementing a maximum size in the Chesapeake Bay, (3) complementary reductions in the commercial fishery and (4) no mode splits meaning same regulations for private and charter

The ability for the Chesapeake Bay fishery to harvest small striped bass in ways that go against the efforts of the rest of the states makes no sense and needs to be addressed.

Sincerely

Bill Scituro

Ct angler

From: [Captain Sloan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option C. Striped bass addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:06:45 PM

I am fully in favor of option C for the striped bass addendum 2.

Capt Sloan
www.OrientPointFishing.com
(516) 819-5731

From: [Ryan Collins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:08:11 PM

I forgot to add that out of the options laid out in the addendum, I feel option B across the board makes the most sense.

Thanks so much!

Ryan Collins



Founder & Creator
myfishingcapecod.com

On Thu, Dec 21, 2023 at 1:46 PM Ryan Collins <ryan@myfishingcapecod.com> wrote:

Dear Emilie and ASMFC,

I personally feel that striped bass, along with many species of fish and animals, are under tremendous stress right now. Fishing pressure, development, environmental changes, technology, and many other factors are having an impact on striped bass and other species.

Therefore my recommendation and hope is that the management board makes conservation of the species, and rebuilding the population, their most important objectives. I am personally onboard with whatever measures are necessary to achieve a 14.5% reduction (or greater) in fishing mortality as quickly as possible.

Thank you!

Ryan Collins



Founder & Creator
myfishingcapecod.com

From: [John Carpenter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Regs for 2024
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:19:36 PM

Hello my name is Jack Carpenter and I run jackhammer charters in RI.

I believe in the stock rebuilding programs and are willing to help in any way that we can.

But if we don't have a business to run then there is no way for us to spread the word and help others help us rebuild.

With these restrictions in place we lost approximately 45% of our business from 2021 to the end of the 2023 season. If this continues it would be very unlikely that a lot of small businesses like ours to succeed. This would result in the lost revenue for us as well as the state of RI.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider making the for hire group there own group and set the limits so we can bring the business back to RI and our local businesses.

I would like to see the slot limit a little easier to fill like the proposed 28 to 33 inch or greater. This gives a customer a little better chance at taking home dinner and might just be enough to get some people back to RI.

The filleting option would be better left at the current regs. Since this leaves our docks and beaches cleaner and the sea gulls away from spreading any of the disease or mess that they leave while looking for a meal on shore or close to it.

Most for hire boats don't mind helping a restocking program as long as it makes sense to there businesses.

It is easier to promote and keep track of especially since we have to report all catches electronically every day.

How often does the recreational or shore fisherman have to report there catch.

So much easier to regulate even though we only make up approximately 2% of the recreational group at this point.

Hopefully this falls into a hand that actually reads it and can help us the small businesses stay in business for awhile longer.

Thank you for listening to our concerns over this.

I am available by ph or email most of the time during the winter months and when we are not on the water after that.

Capt John Carpenter
Jackhammer charters
401-744-2804
captjackhammer2@gmail.com

From: [Jerry Lombardo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Regs
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:25:23 PM

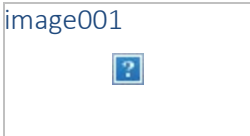
I have been fishing the New Jersey waters for 50 years

It is too hard to try to get a fish in the slot size (between 28-31) when you have a bunch of guys on the boat.....

.....if you must....why can't you allow **one fish over 31 inch-- PER BOAT-- Per day**

-

J. Lombardo
Manasquan



Please note our address has changed:

C.J. Lombardo Company

Jerome Lombardo, President

235 Moore Street, 3rd Floor

Hackensack, NJ 07601

Telephone: (201) 488-2550

Fax: (201) 488-7419

[Jlombardo1@verizon.net](mailto:jlombardo1@verizon.net)

-

From: [Levi Opsatnic](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:37:55 PM

Hello,

My name is Levi Opsatnic and I'm a recreational angler who lives in Connecticut but fishes for striped bass all along the eastern Atlantic. I want to thank you for providing me the opportunity to make these comments, and I really appreciate you all taking the time to read them and put them into consideration. Striped bass and the improved health of their biomass is near and dear to my heart, but instead of telling you why they're so significant, I'll get right to my comments about Addendum II.

Here are the choice that I'd like to see come from Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B. 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries. 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Thank you, once again, for your time and I truly hope that this has an impact on the future of this fishery,

Levi Opsatnic

From: [Preston McQueen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:39:06 PM

Hi ASMFC gurus,

I'm for a healthy robust Striped Bass population in our estuaries, bays, and oceans! To help ensure this we all need to determine the best approach using scientific data that we already have and also in the future when new data exists.

I immediately recommend reducing the catch by all participants!

Remember, we all live downstream!

Thanks in advance -

Preston McQueen
111 Winding Ridge Drive
Cary, NC 27518

From: [jensenw](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:40:47 PM

As a NY fisherman I hereby notify you that I am
Writing to support option C of the above referenced striped bass draft addendum.

Thank you,

W Jensen
Greenport NY
Jensenw@optonline.net

Warren Jensen
via Samsung Galaxy Note, smartphone

From: [Eli Tica](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass addendum 2
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:43:37 PM

I am in favor of option C for the striped Bass addendum 2 as it will give some relief to the professional fishermen's ability to support their families.

Elieth Hoffman
Long Island, NY

From: [John Torosian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 6:55:30 PM

I am Opposed to any reduction of the commercial quota. I feel it is unfair to punish commercial fisherman when the science shows that recreational fisherman are removing the vast majority of the fish.

thank you john torosian haverhill ma

From: [Paul Wagner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:03:11 PM

Hello,

My name is Paul Wagner and I'm a recreational angler living in Pennsylvania . I appreciate the ASMFC reading this and taking my comments into consideration. The following reflects the selections that I'd like to see come out of Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B. 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries. 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Thank you,

Paul

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Thomas Falco](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:11:40 PM

Hello,

My name is Capt Tom Falco, owner/operator of Jenny E Charters, a six pack charter fishing the south shore of Long Island, NY.

A healthy and abundant striped bass fishery is not only vitally important to my business; this fishery is integral to the culture of Long Island as well as countless other communities up and down the East Coast.

I have reviewed the Draft Addendum, here is what I support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options

OPTION B-- 1 fish @ 28-31"

This slot will continue to protect the 2015 class.

I DO NOT support mode splits; private and charter/for-hire should continue to be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options

OPTION B1-- 1 fish @ 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons

The C-Bay has suffered five consecutive years of poor spawning, and is in dire need for conservation and precautionary fisheries management. C-Bay's recreational fisheries must contribute to conservation with a 4" slot just like the Ocean fishery's 3" slot.

I strongly oppose mode splits. It really makes no sense at this juncture to allow Maryland charter/for hire anglers to harvest 2 striped bass when the rest of the rec sector harvests 1.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

OPTION B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas

The Ocean commercials have taken reductions; now it's time the Chesapeake Bay commercials do the same.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

OPTION B--Board Action

Striped Bass are at a precipice and this option would allow the Board to move quickly to implement any new management changes through a simple majority.

I trust that my input will be considered, and I hope that we can rebuild this fishery for generations to come.

Thank you for your hard work.....

Regards,
Capt. Tom Falco
Jenny E Charters

From: [Martha](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripped Bass comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:13:26 PM

Russell Blank, Striker Charters

I would like to say first, that I'm so glad that this year you have listened to the for hire industry and have looked at the data and are trying to give us a slot limit that we can try to persuade our customers to take a fishing trip to target Stripped Bass and have a chance on catching fish in the slot limit rather than catch and release. With that said Pleas keep listening and make a informed decision that has the right outcome for everyone.

3.1.1

I support Option C

This gives the for hire a bigger slot and keeps the target goal for the restoration of the Stripped Bass with no impact.

3.1.3

I support Option A

I think that trying to enforce Option B would be very difficult.

3.1.4

I support Option A

For us to filled at the dock would create a hardship. In Point Judith they don't want the carcasses discarded in the harbor as a lot of people don't pop the air bladder and causes the fish to float Gets Very Stinky.

If we have to go back out to discard the fish racks that's more time and if we came in to beat a storm that means we have to go back out in harms way again. Just a bad idea I'm sure that going down the road we can find the right solution.

Thank you for considering my request
Capt Russell Blank

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [Michael](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II)
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:23:05 PM

Hello,

I am in favor of Addendum 2 for helping the striped bass.

I would also like stricter regulations such as 100% catch and release and more EP officers to patrol .

I know additional regulations are hard to enforce so Addendum 2 is a start to help out the striped bass

Thank you

Michael Schraffa

[Yahoo Mail: Seamless Account Control](#)

From: [Robin Calitri](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:27:52 PM

I began fishing for Striped Bass in the 1950's out of NY and Mass. and found it tough. By the mid to late sixties, I became proficient enough to sell my catch. All my friends did it and the shame was we didn't need to make blood money off Stripers to live. I knew very few, full time commercial Striped Bass fisherman. By the seventies, I had my fill of clam chum, wire line, umbrella rigs, blood, and glory. I became a dedicated surf rat and released most of my Stripers. Then the Striper fishery collapsed! The moratorium and the severe size limits worked and by the eighties we were catching Stripers of all sizes. Management worked. I became dedicated to fly and light tackle to fish for Stripers with a heavy orientation to catch and release.

For the last 23 years, I have been Fly and light tackle guide operating out of Jamacia Bay, Huntington and Montauk, LI and Portsmouth New Hampshire. Of the hundreds of trips my clients have asked me to kill very few fish over 23 years. All the rest have been released to fight again. I have participated in tagging, fin clipping and surveys involving Striped Bass. In some cases we have receive little or no information back form the sponsoring agencies to help inform us. Anecdotally the fishery in New Hampshire has changed dramatically in the last few seasons. It is more difficult to find active fish. It is more difficult to find smaller fish which are the staple of the light tackle and fly fishery. The schools of 40-inch fish found in the NH waters are thinning. Last year 24–27-inch Stripers were dominant. This will make them ripe for slaughter with the 28 – 35-inch slot liming next year. My guide friends from NY, NJ, Mass. Conn., Maine and NH are reporting the same trends to me.

The fishery cannot sustain any more abuse such as the three trip per day head boats, careless release, and poorly regulated commercial fishing. The New Jersey trophy bonus is a joke. This doesn't address environmental factors. I would support the most restrictive policies regarding Striped Bass, but I understand that the options for me to comment upon are limited to the actual proposed amendments. The Chesapeake Commercial fishery is a deciding factor in the 5 years of poor spawn without significant reduction in a quota. There must be a serious reduction in the Chesapeake at least at the same level as the recreational which might be 14.5 % of the harvest catch yield in 2022, not the quota. I urge the Commission to take strong and decisive action, if the situation involving **Striped** Bass deteriorates further. Please ignore the stalling with excuses such as printing tags in Maryland. I also support allowing the commission to take emergency actions through Board discretion without the tedious amendment process. Therefore, I support B 3.11, B1 3.1.2, B3.21, and B 3.3. Thank you for your hard work. Captain Robin Calitri, Seacoast Fly Fishing

Robin Calitri

From: [Montgomery Deihl](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment 7 Comments
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:30:14 PM

Striped Bass are Overfished, and according to results of the 2022 fishing season, Overfishing continues to occur. The clear reason for these two conditions are the recreational release mortality, which is greater than the Commercial harvest and Recreational harvest (legal keeper catch) combined. There is no particular blame to cast here except that there are simply too many people recreationally targeting striped bass and the biomass cannot sustain this onslaught; the recreational fishing industry has simply been too successful advertising and recruiting people to this pastime. It makes no logical sense to further cut the commercial harvest of striped bass as it has proven to be extremely controllable and consistent year-over-year, and it is this fishery that provides the largest amount of people the ability to access and purchase this fish to eat and enjoy. The control and limitation of the recreational harvest is the only way rebuild this biomass. If recreational harvest is not limited or controlled, then repeating the complete moratorium of Congressional Striped Bass Act of the mid-1980s will be the result to save this stock.

From: [STEVE & CLAUDIA CHAFFEE](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] SB options
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:33:32 PM

My opinion.
3.1.2 B1
3.2.1 B
3.3 B
Thank You.

Regards

Chafee

Best

Steve

From: [michael platt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:35:59 PM

Commissioners,

I would like to first thank you all for your continued work in managing our fisheries. With that said the time for action with Striped Bass is now! As a charter business in CT as well as the CT board member of the ASGA, I am on the water more than most and have seen first hand the decline of the Striper population along the CT coast and often hear from other guides and captains from other states expressing their concerns about the lack of abundance that we once enjoyed. While I'm aware that you all must walk a tight line between what's best for the fishery as well as what's best for the commercial and recreational industries. The gravity of your decision must be heavily weighed as the future of this iconic fish rests in your hands. I urge the commission to support the following guidelines as suggested by the ASGA

ASGA supported the Emergency Action measure, and we still do. It is critical that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class and maintaining the 28-31" slot achieves that goal, while providing some consistency for anglers and the stock assessment scientists.

I do not support mode splits. The Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) should continue to be managed under the same regulations.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

After five consecutive years of poor spawning success, the Chesapeake Bay region is in desperate need for conservation and precautionary fisheries management. ASGA supports Option B1 for many of the same reasons applicable to the ocean, but now the Bay's recreational fisheries need to contribute to conservation. If the Ocean fishery can have a 3" slot, then the Chesapeake can deal with a 4" slot.

Mode splits in the Bay are fiercely opposed. Through previous conservation equivalency proposals, Maryland implemented a program to allow Charter/For-Hire passengers the ability to harvest two striped bass compared to one fish for the rest of the recreational sector. Maryland's Chesapeake Bay for-hire fleet harvested 142,098 stripers; the coastwide total for the for-hire fleet was 281,289 fish. By giving Maryland's charter fleet two fish, they harvested more than the rest of the Bay and the ocean combined. This is what happens when a state agency picks favorites.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

I understand that this option may be entirely meaningless—unless states take matters into their own hands. For one, due to quota underutilization, a reduction in quota does not guarantee an actual reduction in fishing mortality—the ocean region has been using most of its quota in recent years and will see a reduction in fishing mortality; the Chesapeake Bay will not see much of any reduction with a 14.5% quota cut. Second, there are huge question marks around when states would even implement these changes. This seems disingenuous when certain states wait until the last minute to claim that implementing these commercial changes in 2024 would not be possible? I have a hard time buying this. Yes, commercial landings accounting is far more robust than in the

recreational sector. But, if Maryland really wanted to take part in meaningful conservation, they would work through the challenges and issue new tags and IFQs for 2024.

Another piece of context is to distinguish the Ocean and Chesapeake commercial fisheries, because in general, ASGA is not opposed to commercial fishing. The Ocean commercial fishery has taken all the reductions placed on the recreational sector, with the Emergency Action being the only outlier.

The Chesapeake Bay has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. The Chesapeake commercial quota has taken a whopping 1.8% reduction

Since 2020, Chesapeake Bay quota utilization hovered around 80%. This is concerning on multiple fronts: there are clearly not enough fish in the system AND quota reductions less than 20% will have zero impact.

The 14.5% reduction is off the quota, not landings (the amount of fish harvested commercially). That means once again the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery will not do their part to restore striped bass, as landings could be the same as last year.

I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both fisheries.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

While the above options will likely only be effective for 2024 (and if at all on the commercial side), so this option may have the greatest impact on striped bass management. Next fall (likely at the 2024 Annual ASMFC Meeting), the Striped Bass Board will see the results of a new stock assessment update. We won't speculate much other than by saying this string of poor recruitment is going to have a significant impact on the rebuilding projections, and additional management changes are needed to improve the odds of rebuilding by 2029. This option will allow the Board to move quickly to implement those new management measures through a simple majority. Without the Board action provision, the management process could take up to a year to respond.

There you have it. The ASGA team thoughtfully considered every dynamic possible when examining options for Addendum II. My final position is a reflection of our grave concern for this fishery and a strong desire to do what is needed in the short-term in order to have an abundant stock and sustainable fisheries in the long-term.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for preserving this iconic fishery for future generations.

Regards,
Mike Platt

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joe Pagano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:54:24 PM

To whom it may concern,

I have been a charter boat captain for over forty years and for the past few years there has been a steady decline in people booking trips for striped bass. Striped bass trips occupy over 95% of my trips booked every season. I believe although, it's not much a 28"-33" slot for the "for hire" fleet would not hurt the striped bass stocks and would potentially attract and bring more people who like fishing for striped bass and eating one now and then, back to the for hire fleet. Not to mention the increased tourism and money put into the Ocean States economy.

Sincerely,

Captain Joe Pagano
Stuff It Charters
(401)808-0452

From: [Josh Berenbach](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass Fisheries
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:56:39 PM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission (ASMFC),

I am writing you in order to express my full support of all measures that will best safeguard the surviving year classes of striped bass.

My recommendations are as follows :

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B-1-fish at
28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1

-1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B-Board
Action.

Josh Berenbach

From: [Charlie Puha](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass limits
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 7:56:43 PM

Too many larger size in the previous slot size are being caught and don't survive after removing a hook that was deep in its throat. don't understand why they can't be kept instead of wasted and thrown back, I think slot size should be increased to 35 inches. and one over 41 inches

From: [christopher brown](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:13:15 PM

Please note that I support/endorse the following :

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options : I support Option B
- 3.3.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options : I support Option B
- 3.1.3 For Hire Management Clarification (if for hire mode specific limits are selected) I support Option B
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements : I support Option B
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options : I support Option B
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment : I support Option B

Thank You

From: [Jake Hardy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:27:03 PM

I'm a recreational angler from New York, and before sharing my Addendum II comments, I need to say I'm very disappointed NY and all the other states that decided to end hybrid hearings. In my opinion it's unacceptable. Of all the anglers I know, only one was able to make a hearing. During the holidays, at 6pm, with traffic around here, with the technology available? Some of us can't skip out of work to sit in traffic for 2 hours just to waste your time like many of the captains denying basic science and your data in person.

I'd also like to highlight ZERO recreational anglers voiced support for the preferences of these for-hire and party boat captains. I urge the ASMFC to discount their short-term financial interests and commit to reasonable science-based regulations that manage for abundance for all recreational anglers. Everyone who doesn't have a financial stake in killing striped bass knows the fishing is great and YOY figures are abysmal.

I support

3.1.1 Option B

All recreational anglers should have the same regulations and the 2015 year class must be protected.

3.1.2 Option B1

Similarly, If captains are calling for mode splits, whose interests are they speaking for? All recreational anglers should have the same harvest restrictions!

3.1.4 Option B

If regulations were enforced regularly I'd feel differently about this one. Every year several party boats (most recently Captree again) are caught with under size bass and coolers full of undersize fillets. ECO officers must be able to measure length and enforce the regulations.

3.2.1 Option B

Why hasn't the Chesapeake commercial fleet taken a reduction since the last successful year class?

3.3 Option B

I beg the board to respond ASAP to the 2024 stock assessment with responsible management measures.

From: [Shthca](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:34:16 PM

I support the Stripe Bass Draft Addendum II
James Dinizio Jr.
209 Providence Street
Stafford, Virginia 22554
1(631) 477-8161

From: [Germain Cloutier](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:35:35 PM

Hello,

In Regards to Striped Bass Draft Addendum II here are what seem to be the best options put forth by the board:

Ocean Size limit should be Option B: 28-31". The emergency action was necessary and still is applicable today. There should be NO separation from For Hires and everyday recreational anglers. The thought that could lower release mortality is a false statement. Big party boats catch their limits and then still will catch a few hundred bass, so having them try to harvest more quickly and lower release Mortality will not be achievable. Any angler that pays a for hire for 6 hrs will fish those 6 hrs regardless if they keep their limit in the first 30min of the trip.

Chesapeake Bay Size/Bag Limit should be Option B1. The Bay has been suffering for a long time now and it's time to get reductions in the Bay.

For Hire Clarification should be Option B, although there should NOT be separate regulations for for hires. That is unnecessary.

Commercial Quota Options should be Option B a Full 14.5% reduction is much needed. All sectors need to be having harvest reductions if this stock is ever going to rebound.

Recreational Filleting should be Option B. That is low hanging fruit and an easily enforceable action.

Boards Response to Stock Assessments should be Option B. There needs to be quick action when things are going down fast. It is much needed and regulations need to be put in place quickly.

Striped Bass spawns have been Tanking, I though we were managing for abundance?? There needs to be action from the Board to prevent this collapse that is getting worse each year. If we continue this trend the stocks will not be Rebuilt by 2029 and a moratorium will 100% be necessary. There should be a push for GAMEFISH status or at least an option for public comment. I think the board would be greatly surprised at how much support that would gain! No one out there makes a living from killing striped bass. A harvest moratorium is going to be on the table soon if things continue. Please Please Please do the right thing for this species. Everyone is willing to take cuts and do whatever it takes to save these fish we all love. In the end an Alive Striped Bass is worth A LOT more then a dead Striped Bass.

Thank you for your time,
Germain Cloutier

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Ryan Franklin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:41:59 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am Ryan Franklin, an advocate for the conservation of our local fishery. Having fished the shores and shoals of Cape Cod for over thirty years, I aspire to continue this tradition with my newborn son. In recent years, I've observed a significant increase in the popularity of recreational fishing. It is our responsibility as anglers to safeguard the species inhabiting our waters, ensuring that future generations can relish the same experiences I cherished in my youth fishing on Cape Cod. As a new father, this sentiment resonates more profoundly.

I eagerly anticipate the day when my son catches his first striped bass. My greatest concern is that he may miss this opportunity if we fail to address the threats to our fishery. Without protective measures, the risk of overfishing, poaching, and inadequate angler education persists. I firmly believe in the necessity to safeguard the fishery and wholeheartedly support any protective measures required to reduce the mortality rate of this vital resource.

I stand by the motto, "Let them go so they can grow!"
Sincerely,

Ryan Franklin

From: [Jay Atkinson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: jbirdr300@gmail.com
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:49:28 PM

Dear Emilie,

I am sending this message to comment on the above addendum. I have fished in the middle bay since the early 1980s. My family and I have enjoyed fishing for all types of fish since I was a small child and the fisheries have always been cyclical and fish species have come and gone and returned over the years. The striped bass have been here in great numbers since the late 90s and are very popular.

I am very concerned with the release mortality rate statistics for recreation fishermen and do not believe this to be accurate. Very few fish released from methods other than live bait usually swim away rapidly and do not float back up injured. Live bait and Eeling methods have a higher risk of injury but very few anglers in VA live bait fish in the last 10 years.

Reading your statistic brings concern to me and others in VA and NC that the majority of fish are caught in northern states with no season limitations while VA, MD, and NC have limited seasons for recreational and for hire recreational fishermen. We currently have a 3 1/2 month season to catch these fish.

Also an area of concern is the fact that Gill netting, and hook and line commercial fishing is allowed when fish are traveling up the bay and tributaries to spawn. These fish do not even get a chance to reproduce before they are caught. Recreational fishermen are not allowed to fish for them until the spawn run is complete and the fish are moving back out of the rivers.

If seasons limitations are not options for the entire East coast habitat area, I support the B4 option and C2 for commercial fishermen. Season limitations and commercial restrictions during spawning season would seem to have a far greater affect on the striper mass as a whole rather than the majority of recreational fishermen who fish 1 once a week if the weather cooperates over a 14 week period in VA waters. If this is truly a cooperative action for all concerned, season limitations in other states should be mandated to help the whole of the striper mass.

These fish are the resource of the states in which they travel, the residents of these states should be the first priority over commercial interests who profit from these resources.

Thank you for this opportunity for comment,
Jay Atkinson

Sent from my iPad

From: [Eric Harrison](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 8:56:03 PM

I support option B1 with no mode splits. All sectors need to recognize the value of having the striper population rebound as quickly as possible.

As a 30+ year user of the resource, I've never seen so few small fish. And as an old guy, I don't see what I'll be fishing for in 10 years.

Thanks

Eric Harrison

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [TIM DRUMMEY](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comment
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:03:46 PM

Any and all measures to protect and save the striped bass population should be taken to protect what's left of this depleting stock. I am a weekend recreation fisherman who fishes MA, RI and CT from the shoreline and by kayak. This past season was beyond disturbing. An average season I catch triple digit stripers for the season. This year I caught in total "7" stripers covering three states. 4 of the 7 were slot or larger. I actually caught more Albies than stripers.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this dire situation.

Tim Drummey

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Craig McLaughlin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II"
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:05:22 PM

As a matter of fact the fishery management enforcement is weak at best. I am both a guide, recreational fisherman and run a youth summer camp for kids so I am on the water and fishing 150 times a year.

Snag and drop is preventable if people start getting fined- this could be a starting point of some serious enforcement.

Start with enforcement , close both the recreational and commercial fishery to give the fish a chance. The amount of commercially taken breeder fish is staggering from my perspective I shake my head on every commercial day. Snag and drop every cast and massive fish kept on board.

We need to work in short term units and measure success so we can rebound this stock! The stock is down. The eyes tell the story.

Craig McLaughlin
USCG Licensed Captain
6178289058

--

Craig

From: [Diana D](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:11:57 PM

I support option C.

From: [Michael Potts](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:15:26 PM

Re: Ocean Recreational Options

I support Option C.

Thank you,

Capt Michael Potts
631.680.4800 Call or text
www.BLUEFINIV.com

From: [Sullivan, Tom \(SHB\)](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: tjsullivan11@comcast.net
Subject: [External] Striped Bass - Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:20:42 PM

I write in support of the conservation plan to limit striped bass removal. I believe we should take all reasonable measures to preserve the species and rebuild the stock. Thank you.

Thomas J. Sullivan

Partner

Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.

2001 Market St., Suite 3000

Philadelphia, PA 19103-7014

Direct: 215.575.3130

Cell: 215.680.4218

tsullivan@shb.com



SHOOK, HARDY & BACON L.L.P. CONFIDENTIAL ATTORNEY-CLIENT COMMUNICATION
CONTAINING WORK PRODUCT AND/OR ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS
FROM RETAINED OUTSIDE COUNSEL

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail message including attachments, if any, is intended for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message. Thank you.

From: [Justin Friedman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 9:51:33 PM

Hello,

I am an avid Striped Bass angler from New York and I support option b1 which I feel has the best chance of rebuilding the stock by 2029 by best protecting the stronger year classes such as 2015, 2017 and 2018. We need to have a diverse array of healthy year classes, so that when spawning conditions are right, we can ensure a good Chesapeake spawn and help rebuild the stock.

Thank you.

--

Justin Friedman
Director, Artist Relations & Marketing


www.dangelicoguitars.com | @dangelicony
www.suprousa.com | @suprousa
www.pigtronix.com | @pigtronix

From: [Jesse](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass management
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:03:03 PM

To who it may concern,
I am in support of 3.1.1 option 3 as it is well within the overall reduction percentages with only a 0.1% harvest change and 0.0% change to release mortality.
Thank you for your consideration.

From: [Todd Lussier](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:17:40 PM

Good evening, I am an avid striped bass fly fisherman. I'm very concerned for the future of striped bass. From what I've been reading it seems they are being over fished and spawning success has been historically low. Please act now in the best interest of saving this fish that myself and many others love! I personally would like to see strict catch and release only regulations at least until spawning and fish numbers hopefully improve. But I do realize that would be difficult to sell to all parties involved. Please just keep this amazing fish in your best interest. The future of striped bass depends on it!

Thank you for your time

Todd Lussier

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sam Denious](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:25:12 PM

Hello,

I am writing to advocate for stricter regulatory measures for the Atlantic Striped Bass fishery. There should be a moratorium on recreational and commercial harvest to let the stock recover, especially in the Chesapeake Bay. Addendum II was a step in the right direction but not enough. These fish are struggling and we need to ensure that there will be a healthy population to fish for in the future.

Regards,

Sam Denious

From: [Henry Marchetti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:37:17 PM

Rebuilding the stock of striped bass in our waters must be prioritized so that we can benefit from them long term!

My views-

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Thank you for allowing public comment!

Henry Marchetti

From: [katie egan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:39:36 PM

Hello,

I am an avid catch and release recreational angler from Connecticut and I fish eastern Long Island Sound. Let's do what we have to do to bring these fish back by 2029.

I support the following options for the Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:	Option B
3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:	Option B1
3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements:	Option B
3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Reduction Options: 14.5% reduction	Option B, with the full
3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates:	Option B

Thank you!

Katie Egan
270 Hartford Ave #2
Wethersfield, CT 06109
860-810-6504

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jeff Clabault](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass comment
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:43:42 PM

Hello-

As a former owner of a tackle shop on Cape Cod (from 1999-2018), I am very familiar with the history and the decline of the Striped Bass. The conservative size limits enacted this year, though late in coming, were crucial. If we are to see a return to a healthy fishery, it is vital that the few remaining breeding sized females are protected. Please do not cave to the pressure that is sure to come from the commercial/ charter boat side. They will blow smoke, with few facts to back them up, but it is imperative that you guys stick to the plan. Thank you.

Jeff Clabault- former owner of
Forestdale Bait and Tackle.

From: [Barbara](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II for Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 10:47:06 PM

To the ASFMC,

I am a New Jersey resident and fisherwoman. I am writing to submit my comments to Draft Addendum II. I don't think the addendum goes far enough to allow the striped bass to recover from the over fishing I believe is rampant today. With respect to the options presented in draft addendum II, I choose the following:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Regards,
Barbara

From: [Suzanne Harchik](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Striper Slot Limits
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:03:46 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

Please do not “cave” to the charter boat community. The limit should be the same for all: public/private/groups/solitary angler. Be more conservative with the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware River, Barnegat Bay areas.

Suzanne Harchik
2250 Bear Den Road, Unit 303
Frederick, MD 21701
Sent from my iPhone

From: [nhlombardi](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2023 11:05:29 PM

Dear ASMFC,

Please cancel the recreational and commercial season. Make Striped Bass a catch & release fishery for 3-5 years so the stock and rebuild. There are far less big fish in my local waters of Nantucket Island compared to 10 years ago. These fish take so long to grow, the remaining biomass cannot handle the recreational and commercial pressure. Every year thousands of tourists come here to Nantucket to go striper fishing. Our fishery needs to improve out here for our local economy. We must achieve a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality as soon as we possibly can. PLEASE DO THE RIGHT THING FOR OUR ISLAND COMMUNITY. Thank you!

Nick

From: [Greg Peterson](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#)
Cc: [Greg Peterson](#)
Subject: [External] Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum feedback
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:05:10 PM

December 22, 2023

Ms. Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
comments@asmfc.org
efranke@asmfc.org

Dear Ms. Franke:

Though we have never met, I am a member of the Falmouth Fisherman's Association, and I want to provide feedback on the proposed options to maximizing the odds for successful rebuilding of the Atlantic Striped Bass as shared with me by friends and fishing clubs I belong to. I want to note that as a recreational fisherman for more than 50 years across the USA, I am more interested in protecting our resources than I am in offending any particular group of sportsmen who may have a significant vested interest in the status quo. Take that as my weak apology to anyone put off by my comments and view of the situation.

Thank you.

As to Fishery Status:

I support ASMFC to take the 14.5% reduction in removals needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline and not delay reductions until the 2024 stock assessment update.

Given the situation and low odds that everything falls into place as planned, I encourage ASMFC to consider more aggressive options sooner before we reach a more extreme situation.

I would consider more aggressive action now and increase the odds of successfully rebuilding the fishery .

As to Management Options:

I urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 2 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the 14.5% reduction.

As to Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

As to Option A Status Quo (28"-35" Slot Limit):

- I oppose the status quo option.

As to Option B (28" -31" slot limit):

- **I support Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction.**

As to Option C (Split Mode – private anglers 28" - 31" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- To me "a recreational angler is a recreational angler" whether fishing from land, jetty, boat or other.
- Any discussion of recreational mode splits should be an amendment level decision. Deep dive discussions of separate allocation, separate monitoring, separate data requirements, separate accountability measures and separate financial contributions must be had.
- Regardless, Option C provides less reduction in removals than Option B.
- Trip preservation is NOT the reason Addendum 2 was initiated and I urge ASMFC to reject this option. (Another reason to reject trip preservation is education. Mode splits will discourage for-hire operators & customers from adapting business models & expectations of catch to the current state of the fishery.)

As to Option D (30" -33" slot limit): I do not support it.

- Option D only reduces mortality by 12.8% vs. 14.5% goal.

As to Option E (Split Mode – private anglers 30"-33" slot & for-hire anglers 28"-33"):

- I oppose this option for the same reasons I oppose Options C & D

As to Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:

- **I support Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons because it meets the required 14.5% reduction goal.**

As to Commercial Quota Reduction Options:

- **I support a reduction of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.**
- **I support a reduction in the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries of 14.5% to preserve the current rebuilding timeline.**

As to For-Hire Management Clarification, I support option A Status Quo

- Option B is unenforceable and fails to advance the purpose of Addendum 2.

As to Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

- **I support Option A Status Quo. For Hire & private anglers face the same difficulties when it comes to local filet at the dock prohibitions. This document fails to provide justification that this option advances the purpose of Addendum 2.**

As to Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B—Board Action.

- I believe Recreational mode splits being placed into Addendum 2 with very little conservation benefit is wrong and prefer ASMFC to use emergency action for a quick response and then launch a formal Amendment 8 after the 2024 stock assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide feedback.

Greg Peterson

Cape Cod.

From: [Will Poston](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Daniel Ryan](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:05:17 PM

Dear Striped Bass Board,

My name is Will Poston, and I am a DC resident that fishes for striped bass from DC throughout much of the Northeast. I work for the American Saltwater Guides Association and sit on the Board of the Friends of Fletcher's Cove and the Tidal Potomac Flyrodders, but these comments are on my behalf and represent my personal views alone. As a young conservation-minded angler in my 20s, I have never experienced what a truly abundant striped bass population looks like. Have I had some good fishing, absolutely I have. But I know it's nothing like it used to be, and now I'm hearing ominous comparisons to what it was like before the stock's crash in the late 70s. I'm seeing it too; DC's schoolie bite in late spring has been terrible in recent years, and reports from friends up and down the coast are saying there are good fishing opportunities, but it is very concentrated and not as distributed as it should be.

Unfortunately, Addendum II alone will not rebuild stripers, but it will be an important step in the right direction. While I am not against harvesting striped bass, and do take a legal fish home from time to time, the collective striped bass community needs to keep as many fish in the system as we can. Similarly, I am not against the commercial striped bass fishery. However, I do believe what has been permitted in the Chesapeake Bay is completely irresponsible and threatens the coastwise population. The fact that Maryland and Virginia are allowed to harvest more fish in the Chesapeake (again the MOST important producer region) than the entire Ocean fishery is absolutely insane. Similarly, the fact that the Chesapeake Commercial fisheries will likely not comply with components of Draft Addendum II and are not taking reductions off their landings is another grave concern. This harvest pressure on immature and spawning fish is completely counter to our attempts to conserve and rebuild this fishery. Once the failed year classes begin to enter SSB, we are going to see massive holes in the population and SSB is going to decline. Striped Bass managers must maintain a long-term view for this fishery that prioritizes abundance and precautionary management.

Considering five consecutive years of recruitment failure in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay, the stock remaining in an overfished condition, and the rebuilding plan projected to fail, I am calling on the Board to take the most conservative action through Draft Addendum II to lower fishing mortality to the target and assist in rebuilding by 2029.

Below are the options I support.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: I do not support mode-splits at this time, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B. I would prefer to see the Chesapeake take a impactful quota reduction—i.e. where a reduction would be expected to reduce landings.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action. I know that I can talk to striped bass managers at any time to ask questions or share my perspective, so I am not concerned about the limited public input through this option.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality.

Thank you for considering these comments and please let me know if I can answer any questions or be of any assistance in and around DC's waters.

-Will Poston

From: [Mark Philippe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:10:39 PM

To the Commission Members,
I am writing you to express my selection of the options in Striped Bass Addendum II.
I am in favor of Options B and for the Chesapeake B1.
Thank you,
Mark Philippe
Burlington, CT
06013

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Charlie Lauer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Support option C for Striped Bass Management.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:16:23 PM

Good morning, I consider myself a an avid angler and catching stripe bass is certainly my favorite type of fishing.

I recognize that in order to have fish in the future management is essential. As I release 99% of the fish that I catch.

I also recognize that charter and party boats are a valuable resource for CreAsian fisherman who are not able to own a boat. as such, I feel that option that allows poor hire boats the best opportunity to service. Their customers who are in frequent is the most logical choice. Thank you for your time.

Charlie Lauer

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Edward Moukawsher](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:29:23 PM

I have reviewed the above referenced proposal for addressing the plight of the declining population and reproduction of the striped bass population and it is extremely disappointing and inadequate.

AMFC continues to protect and insulate the commercial exploitation of striped bass. This was evident last year in the so-called emergency measure to reduce striped bass mortality that did not include any restrictions on the commercial harvest but instead entirely targeted recreational fishermen. It was laughable to assert that an emergency measure was needed to reduce bass mortality that may occur through catch and release while ignoring actual intended and directed mortality in the commercial fishery.

The new proposed options permit commercial mortality of between 2,588,603 to 2,040,508 striped bass and it does not appear that there is any narrow slot for the size of this catch.

The result will be that large fish of breeding size will still be harvested. In light of the dismal run of the young of the year indexes of recent years, particularly an index of 1 this year, the commercial harvest should be severely restricted, as the recreational fishery has been restricted.

Striped Bass Draft Addendum II is a pathetic response to a dire situation, making it clear that the Commission is in the pocket of commercial interests. It foretells the destruction of one more fishery by the "management" of the Commission.

From: [James Mace](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Ammendment II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:35:23 PM

Everyone (private, charter and commercial) fishermen should all share equally in protecting the resource and ensuring we all can enjoy ourselves.

I'm not 100% sold on the idea of a 28 to 31 inch slot. That can be a tall order...Leading many anglers to catching many fish, while trying to find a slot fish. Perhaps, lowering the slot to 24 to 28 inches...Many more anglers would catch a slot fish and then call it a day. Thereby sparing many fish from being hooked and traumatized.

Commercial harvest totals must be reduced.

Thank you

From: [Chris](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:35:52 PM

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

In my opinion would like to see 28-31 inch slot retained. I would like to see commercial quotas brought in line with the recreational ones and ASMFC allowed to act immediately

On coming stock assessments. Thanks

From: [Anthony Sarcona](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:42:16 PM

Dear ASMFC,

My name is Tony Sarcona, a recreational fly angler in Maine. I would like to support option B across the board and B1 for the Chesapeake Bay. We have an obligation as anglers and conservationists to protect and sustain the dwindling remainder of the Atlantic Striped Bass population. I've been emailing, commenting, and participating in the public hearings on Addendum II from the beginning. Although there is always a vast majority of public support to not over fish and conserve the species, the actions of the board don't always show the same momentum. The issue is only getting worse, please decide to take action towards conservation, the entire Atlantic eco system relies on it. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Tony Sarcona

From: [Michael Nguyen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Ben Gowell](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:53:09 PM

Dear ASMFC Board,

I stand behind option B-1 (fish at 28-31") for the upcoming year 2024.

It is critical that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class. This will be one of the many efforts that will help us successfully rebuild the SSB by the 2029 deadline.

Thank you,

Michael Nguyen

Michael D. Nguyen
Graduate Research Assistant
School of Marine and Environmental Programs
University of New England

This e-mail may contain information that is privileged and confidential. If you suspect that you were not the intended recipient, please delete it and notify the sender as soon as possible.

From: [Scott LaRochelle](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:54:18 PM

As an avid and ethical recreational fisherman, I am writing due to my concerns regarding the proposed regulations for the 2024 striped bass seasons. I would like to see option B for the ocean season and option B1 for the Chesapeake Bay season. I do not fish in the ocean, I only fish the Chesapeake Bay. I am a proponent of circle hooks and responsible catch and releasing any out-of-slot fish, with a strict adherence to bag limits.

I would also like to see reduction fishing in the Bay for Menhaden eliminated. The study of Osprey chick mortality rates due to starvation by the Virginia Marine Institute and several studies showing a correlation in striper populations linked to reduction fishing should provide enough data to immediately consider stricter enforcement and lower harvest limits.

Respectfully,
Scott LaRochelle
Richmond, VA

From: [James Shanley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 12:55:03 PM

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St.
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,

I would like to go on record as supporting the following options for the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean recreational Fishery Options : Option B

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: Option B1

3.1.1 For-Hire Management Clarification: Option B

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B

I believe the above options have the best chance of helping ASMFC meet the stated 2029 rebuilding goal. In addition, I believe that these Options spread the burden on all sectors of the fishery. Everyone must do their part if we are going to hit the target.

I have been fishing for striped bass in New Hampshire and Massachusetts for thirty-five years and have seen what can happen when strong conservation measures are enacted, and the resulting decline when they are relaxed. This past season I caught no fish under 18", the rest were between 24" and 36". While it is always fun to catch big fish, the lack of small fish gives me great concern for the future of the fishery.

Now is not the time to kick the can down the road. Now is the time for action on behalf of the fish and their future.

Thank you for recording my input.

Sincerely,

James Shanley
170 McKinley Rd
Portsmouth, NH 03801

From: [steven wax](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] (Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II)
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:03:56 PM

Hi.

I support section 3.1.4 filleting at sea. The fishing charter boats need to do this so that they are ready for the next charter. Let the fisherman run their business the way it has always been.

I support section 3.2.1 option A.

There is no need for a commercial Striped Bass reduction. I believe it does not give any benefit to conservation measures. The no reduction in bass would be minimal conservation compared to what is needed in the overall recreational sector.

I support section 3.3 option A

Management needs to hear from the public a a separate meeting before deciding the future of the fisheries. Allow the public time to look at the scientific data. This has been the status quo for years and has worked well in other fisheries management. There is no need to rush management decisions.

Please do not make fishing charters less profitable as they allow people to see the ocean, fish and get in touch with nature.

Thank you,

Steven Wax
Rent Realty, LLC
rent617@gmail.com
6172012032

From: [Ken Moeller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:07:00 PM

Hello,

My name is Ken Moeller and I'm a recreational angler living in the state of New Hampshire. I appreciate the ASMFC taking the time and effort in reading this and considering my comments. The following reflects the selections that I'd like to see come out of Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B. 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries. 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Thank you,
Ken Moeller

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Zach](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:16:47 PM

Hey just letting you guys know what I see on the ground every summer, there are a ton of people who don't know or care about slot limits, they kill schools and 30 pounders indiscriminately. I think our best bet is to have a few years of just shutting down the striped bass fishery. Have it be known in every tackle shop if you are caught with any striped bass that is dead it is heavy fines and gear confiscation.. there are too many people who simply don't care about the reasoning behind the slot limits. People can live for a few years without eating a striped bass.

From: [Joseph Esposito](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:23:50 PM

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options - I support option B.
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options - I support option B-1.
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options - I support option B.
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment - I support option B.

From: [Nicola cicero](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:24:15 PM

I'd like to see current regulations left unchanged except for more restrictions in the Chesapeake to help the escapement of juvenile striped bass

From: glenn@guydist.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:26:36 PM

OK with option B any slot

Would be good with extended closed season during summer.

Would favor fall season to run until late Dec. at least, Like Potomac open til end of year.

If any catch and release were considered, I would favor barbless hooks. I used them years ago when chumming for stripers on a charter boat. I could release undersize fish without removing them from the water or touching them.

Worked great, long as the captain didn't see me. He liked to measure everthing??

Glenn Guy
Leonardtown, Md
glenn@guydist.com

From: [Robert Trenz](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:47:13 PM

> I am writing to support the following options for draft addendum II:

>

> 3.1.1 Option B

>

> 3.1.2 Option B1

>

> 3.2.1 Option B

>

> 3.1.4 Option B

>

> 3..3 Option B

>

> I am writing these comments from New York State, where the NY DEC is attempting to work with share holders that are aware of the issues we face on the Hudson River.

>

> "I think it is extremely important for the ASMFC Board to work and make decisions that allow the stripers an opportunity for a fishing FUTURE for all of our children and grandchildren!! It appears that they continue to kick the can down the road to make difficult decisions.

> I hope that they do not repeat the history of the shad of the Hudson River, now we are concerned about stripers for the future. I hate to use a historical reference but in this case it appears appropriate.

>

> "When the situation was manageable it was neglected, and now that it is thoroughly out of hand we apply too late the remedies which then might have effected a cure. There is nothing new in the story. It is as old as the sibylline books..... Want of foresight,

> unwillingness to act when action would be simple and effective, lack of clear thinking, confusion of counsel until the emergency comes, until self-preservation strikes its jarring gong-these are the features which constitute the endless repetition of history"

> Winston Churchill, 1935.

>

Thank you for opportunity to comment on this issue./Capt. Bob Trenz Off the Charters LLC Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gregory Buckner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:55:36 PM

Hello,

Capt. Gregory C. Buckner, owner of Miss Susie Charters. I strongly oppose any measures which bring the Creel Limit to 1 fish per charter customer. I charter fish for a living and employ a full time Captain to run my 2nd boat and have 2 full time first mates. I have a very diverse clientele but with out a doubt, 50% to 60% of my clients will not charter with only one fish creel limits. In addition, I believe it is imperative to keep the slot as wide as possible to keep discard Mortality as low as possible. And it is super important that Maryland get reduction credit for the recent announcement of no Spring Trophy Season. Even if it is only a 3 to 5% reduction, ever little bit helps and hopefully would allow for a 19 to 26 inch slot.

Thank You,
Capt. Greg Buckner
301 873 1327
Gcbuckner@hotmail.com
www.MissSusieCharters.com

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [william.martin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:00:27 PM

I am writing to share my preferences regarding protection of the iconic striped bass from overharvest. It is sad to see the population once again reach such disastrous low levels. I have fished for stripers for 80 years and during that time I have watched poor management decisions bring us once more to crisis.

I favor the following options: Option B on all decision choices.. And a 14.5% reduction or more in commercial harvest.

That we still allow a so-called trophy season in Maryland is a ridiculously terrible choice. It is foolish that we allow fishing for small fish in the late summertime when high water temperatures lead to the immoral killing of huge numbers of released undersized fish in the upper bay (the future breeders). That we fail to police the illegal wintertime overfishing from unmanaged "ghost nets" is unconscionable.

That we only use license fees to finance enforcement is a failing source of funds needed to protect striped bass. We need to access general funds in Maryland.

William Martin, Ph.D.

From: [Garland Vance](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:03:00 PM

While we all want the striped bass fishery to prosper each group is biased for there on reasons. I would Hope Virginia and Maryland would consider what the state of Florida has done with its fishery. Every fish is a valuable resource not only to the states but to the residents whether they take part in fishing or not. Each and every fish that is taken from the waters of our surrounding areas generates cash through out our economy in both Virginia and Maryland, that long term economical impact should foremost in the current and future decisions on how our states fishery is managed. No single interest should be given any more consideration than that of the states own economical impact. Free state of Florida, the public and even the commercial fishing interests all have benefited from how Florida manages its fisheries which produces the greats amount of tax revenue for all that live in the state of Florida, those who fish or not...

Garland Vance
206 Wicomico Harbor Dr
Heathsville, VA 22473

Sent from my iPhone

From: [joseph stemba](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stopped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:08:10 PM

My personal thoughts are to protect the fish when spawning. To many guys targeting the breeders using live bait like blood worms. Even if not mortaly hooked, stressed fish will release eggs upon being caught because they are stressed. Keep limit on kept fish reasonable to keep from over populating with the smaller fish.

From: [Tom Brightman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:11:31 PM

Hello:

Thank your the opportunity to weigh in on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.

I am a resident of Dover, New Hampshire, and fish recreationally, both from shore and occasionally from a guided boat. I fish approximately 20 or more days a season. I feel that the striped bass fishery is on the brink of collapse, and that all states and sectors of the fishery should be tasked with recovering the striper population. Therefore, I am I support of the following options:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Tom Brightman, 1 Clearwater Drive, Dover, NH 03820 Cell 610-733-4974

From: [Tom Lilly](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on striped bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:13:09 PM

(please acknowledge receipt if possible)

I have read through your proposed addendum and I can't find any reference to the striped bass food supply, or the ERP science you spent 10 years developing. By ERP definition striped bass are the species "most sensitive" to menhaden harvest levels.

You could have prevented the widespread damage to bay wildlife 10 or 15 years ago by protecting their food supply from factory fishing. The spring migration of menhaden schools into the bay to rebuild the forage base for our ospreys and spawning stock is relentlessly targeted by factory purse seining and spotter planes. Our large striped spawning fish are in those schools. Fish stick with their food supply. Thousands of schools are being caught as they try to migrate to Maryland but nothing is done to protect them. What's going on here that lets this go on and on?

Millions of our children (and grandchildren) have grown up missing all the natural treasures the bay once offered. Many have lost interest in trying to protect the bay because they have found you don't listen and don't care about them.

This Addendum could have recommended protections for the striped bass food supply. It still can. If you did this you could start on a path to use the people's natural resources to promote their happiness and welfare by restoring Chesapeake Bay.

I attended a service last night called "Blue Christmas" where people joined together to seek comfort from divorce, sickness or the grief of losing a child, friend or spouse. Do you managers stop to think that the time all of us have enjoying the Bay with the people we love is so fleeting and fragile. It came all come crashing down in a heartbeat. Each of you managers have a lot of control over our quality of Bay life and culture, in short, the happiness of people. Many of us now look back on those wonderful days we had on the bay when the kids were growing up to help us get through the hard times now but today's generation won't have those wonderful memories to offset the bad stuff. It hurts when we hear of the benefits to the ospreys and striped bass in NY and NJ due to abundant menhaden because they outlawed factory fishing. This is what our children and grandchildren have missed out on in Chesapeake Bay by this waste of our bay's food supply. What they missed out on is gone forever. What about the new generation? How will they be treated? That's your decision about what you value.

Tom Lilly. Whitehaven MD

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Syed Abbas](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:32:28 PM

Hello,

1. Charter boats and private anglers should have same slot limits (28 to 33).
2. You should ban commercial fishing for stripers. They can catch other type of fish.

Specially in NY beaches/bays, we have very limited type of fish which we can catch, like blues and stripers, limits should be lenient in NY and it should be more in other states.

If you will put too much regulations/restrictions, people will do more violations.

Regards,
Ali.

From: [JOSEPH MUSTARI](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:33:21 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joseph Mustari. I am a charter captain in New Jersey. I fish mainly the waters of Raritan Bay both in New York and New Jersey. I believe that striped bass are being overfished, and I'm in full support of option B with a 14.5% reduction to the commercial quota. I do not support any mode splits.

Joseph Mustari
[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Tom Kling](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:34:43 PM

To: Emilie Franke,

My name is Thomas Kling, I reside in Monmouth County, NJ and live about a mile and a quarter from the ocean. I am 72, retired, and Striped Bass fishing in the surf is my main retirement activity, I fish pretty much every morning from April through December. I caught my first Striper in 1967 so I have been doing this for awhile. So far this year I'm up to 258 bass, I usually only keep one bass a year although this year I have not kept any. I have a BS in Marine Biology although I never really used it since I went into a whole different career path. I will list what Options I am in favor of before I list a few things that I see as problem areas in the Striped Bass fishery.

3.1.1 option B, 3.1.2 option B1, 3.1.3 option B, 3.1.4 option B (racks kept intact, I just read about a Long Island boat being caught with short bass filets), 3.2.1 option B, and 3.3 option B.

Fishery problems: As someone who is out on the beach almost every day I have noticed that since COVID, participation in the striped bass fishery in NJ has grown enormously, there are places where I don't go on weekends because there are so many other anglers, even during the summer when historically Striped Bass fishing is slow since most of the bass have migrated north there are still many, many guys out there even during the week. Also it seems like more fish are being kept, there is a different mindset among the many new anglers out there about keeping every thing they can. Unfortunately I am also seeing many short fish come off the beach, I've seen guys bury fish in the sand, go put one in the car and then come back and catch another and keep it, etc. There is a lot of poaching going on in NJ. I am not sure how recreational landings are estimated but I personally think the real number of fish being taken out of the fishery is higher than what is being estimated.

The Raritan Bay fishery in the spring is also an area that needs to be looked at, it is legal to start fishing on March 1st for these fish that are beginning to gather before they head up the Hudson to spawn. I personally don't participate in this because I don't think we should be targeting the pre-spawn fish. I have gone up there and have been amazed at the number of people who do. From what I hear from guys I know who do fish up there tell me poaching is rampant there as well. Plus even if you are practicing catch and release I think the mortality rate would be higher than the estimated 9% when you catch a large female bass that is loaded with eggs. I would like to see some kind of seasonal restriction on catch these pre-spawn fish, like not opening the fishery until May 15th instead of March 1st.

NJ has a bonus tag program that allows anglers to keep a second bass in a slot size range, I don't believe other states have this option and its another thing that allows for a great deal of fish being taken out of the population. Party boats run everyday and everyday most guys come home with 2 fish. If the population is in trouble the practice should be ended.

This year I have caught very few small fish, fish under 20 inches, and I don't think this is a good sign, most of my fish have been 24 -30 inch range, even now at the end of the fall run, I'm not seeing the small fish we usually catch.

Striped Bass fishing has a long legacy at the Jersey Shore I hope you guys can come up with some viable solutions to restore the stock to healthy levels.

Best Regards,
Thomas Kling

From: [Albert Sergio](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:37:19 PM

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

As someone who has shore-fished for Striped Bass since 1978, I well know the signs of the Striped Bass population on the path to near-extinction, such as we experienced in the late 70's/early 80's. Accordingly, I support the following as regards ASMFC Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B —*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I support 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: I Support 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.*

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I Support 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%.*

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I Support 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.*

Regards,

Albert Sergio
1705 Tall Oak Lane
Toms River, NJ 08755

From: [STANLEY WATKINS](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:38:01 PM

It is difficult to see how the minimal proposed reductions are going to change the direction of the collapse of our fishery
Please close trophy season and keep season closed until spawning fish have left the Bay
Eliminate fishing on the Flats until spawn is over
Restrict # of lines on boats to one per person
One fish 19-23 is reasonable
Decrease Bay and Coast commercial catch by 25-30%
Stripers are in terrible shape--a 15 or 20% reduction is NOT enough. Unless you take definitive action - will need a complete closure.
We are beyond "sustainable harvest" at this point. Look at the facts and not the politics.
Stanley Watkins

From: [Buck Smith](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 3
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:46:59 PM

I believe that putting tighter restrictions on the commercial side of the fishery would definitely ease some of the pressure. As the commercial fisherman can take yearling as well as breeding age fish, the detrimental effect to the stock has to be part of the decline of the fishery.

Buck Smith

From: [Casey Dixon](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:51:41 PM

I feel commercial fishing should have tighter regulations if we are serious about building a larger population of striped bass. But that's only my opinion.

Thank you for your time,
Casey Dixon

From: [Joe Pheifer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:58:54 PM

Hello,

I am a recreational fisherman from New Jersey and the striped bass is the most important species in our coastal waters. I am deeply concerned about the current stock levels and poor spawning results.

Regarding Draft Addendum II, please see my preferences below to best manage the striped bass fishery.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Furthermore, please note that I do not support mode splits. I believe that the Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) should continue to be managed under the same regulations.

Thank you.

Joe Pheifer
84 John Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Sent from my iPhone

From: gj.beidler@comcast.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:59:06 PM

To whom it may concern;

I am a surf fisherman from Pennsylvania who fishes the Jersey coast. I continue to be concerned with this particular fishery not only today, but for future generations of fisherman. Therefore, I support the following options for for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Fisheries should be managed for abundance, not yield. I ask that science and good economic data drive decisions and not policy and politics because when there are more fish in our waters, it becomes a win-win for all.

Thank you,
-Greg B (PA)

From: [Glen Truelove](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addium 11
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 2:59:59 PM

Keep the size limit the same on private boats and boats for hire.

From: [Liam Rosati](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:01:54 PM

Greetings, and Merry Christmas!

I am writing in favor of the following options-

3.1.1) Option B

3.1.2) Option B

3.1.3) Option B

3.4) Option B

Thank you.

Regards,

Liam

Liam Rosati ><(((((*>

PO Box 872, Old Lyme, CT 06371, USA

Tel 800-628-1447 (US) 860-434-9624

Fax 860-434-8605

Email: Liam@angleradventures.com

Website: www.angleradventures.com

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/angleradventures> Blog: <http://angleradventures.wordpress.com/>

From: [John T. Billings](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:02:10 PM

Dear ASMFC Striped Bass Board:

My name is John Billings. I am a recreational angler. I formerly worked as a mate on for-hire charters and head boats out of Chesapeake Beach, MD, and I am a holder of a MD LCC commercial crabbing licence (no striped bass allocation, of course). Most importantly, I am a father of three young anglers. I want to preserve the fishery for them.

My son and I attended the hearing in Annapolis - thank you for holding this. It was great to hear the opposing viewpoints.

I support the following specific options, with explanations below:

Recreational Coast: Option B - 28-31" for all fisheries.
Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23" for all modes
Commercial: Option A. Status Quo
Board Response: B. Board Action.
Implementation dates: ASAP

Option B1 will protect the 2015, 2017, and 2018 class years. In this time of low recruitment and increased harvest, it is best to protect a wider range of breeding populations, especially because the 2017 and 2018 year class is just beginning to reach full spawning productivity.

I do not support separating "for-hire" and "private" modes. We are all recreational fishermen and should be treated equally. I understand the Captain's concerns that they may have a reduction in clientele if they can only keep one striped bass, but there are other fish in the water for harvest. Yes, they may have to adapt to the changing times, but we all do. Speckled sea trout, white perch, redfish, bluefish, Spanish mackerel and sea bass are all available to catch as well. They can supplement any client's desire for meat with most of these options, and nearly all can be caught using the same or very similar techniques and equipment they currently employ.

A 14.5% reduction in the commercial harvest is not necessary with quotas at their current level. They do not currently fill their quota and the data indicates that increase in harvest is due to the recreational angler and for-hire boats. Commercial overall take is relatively low (albeit not insignificant). Harvest is, by its nature, the necessary objective of a commercial fishery. For the recreational angler, harvest is not the sole objective.

Assuming the Board does allow for a modicum of public comment, as described in the Addendum II document for public comment, the Board should be able to act in reaction to the upcoming stock assessment. The interests and comments are not likely to be significantly different from what you have heard in response to Addendum II.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Merry Christmas!,

John T. Billings
Email: john.t.billings@gmail.com

From: [Mike Jones](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Patrick Paquette](#); [Mike Jones](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Comment
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:08:32 PM

Good afternoon, Emily,

As an Avid Striped Bass enthusiast since 1970 when I caught my first Striped Bass, I have seen the status of the resource roller coaster several times. You would think from a management standpoint that previous lessons learned would be crucial in future management decisions when it comes to protecting the resources. Unfortunately, recent management decisions by ASMFC seem to be hyper focused on the dollar and not the resource! I understand Socioeconomics of the recreational fisheries but also know that the true economic impact to the fishery is \$0 if there is no viable Striped Bass Stock. The recent mindset of go get'em while you can, has taken hold

of anyone that stands to make a dollar at the expense of the Striped Bass knowing that the days of available slot sized fish is quickly closing with the poor YOY recruitment statistics.

- 3.0 Proposed Management Options I

I agree with the analysis that a 14.5% reduction from 2022 removals is necessary to achieve the F target in 2024. I urge ASMFC to place maintaining the current rebuilding timeline as the top priority of this addendum and urge ASMFC to only approve Addendum 7 with a package of measures that meet or exceed a 50% probability of achieving the **14.5%** reduction.

- Option B (28" -31" slot limit): I fully support adoption of Option B because it provides the best chance of meeting the 14.5% reduction needed to maintain the current rebuilding timeline.

- **Option C** (Split Mode – private anglers 28”-31” slot & for-hire anglers 28”-33”):

I, Vehemently OPPOSE any SPLIT MODE! Recreational fishing is 1 MODE! anything else is a money grab. I pay very similar operational cost to enjoy my time on the water. Why should I or anyone else fishing recreationally be prejudiced upon because we choose not to make a quick dollar while enjoying a cash business / tax break taking non boat owners for a boat ride. There are Great For-Hire captains who run successful charter business without any assistance from perks of the lobbyists who influence management decisions. Preservation of fishing trips applies to every boater, not just a select few.

Thank You.

Mike Jones
Carver, Massachusetts

From: [Steve Bosley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:09:28 PM

I agree with the changes. Wouldn't hurt if the fishery went total catch and release for a season or two

From: [Brandon Poulter](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:14:11 PM

We should put a moratorium on Striped Bass until the stocks in the Chesapeake Bay recover. It's probably too late already but these fish have gone from overwhelmingly abundant to scarce in a decade. I feel like I'm reliving my childhood during the 80s when stripers were like unicorns. But it won't matter what happens unless we can do away with the harvesting of menhaden inside of the Chesapeake Bay. Period.

From: [Brian Nolt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:22:14 PM

Hello,

I am a recreational fisherman that enjoys fishing the New Jersey coast for striped bass. I have fished both on charter boats and from the shore. I do not believe that there should be any "mode split" or different slot limits for charter boats and private anglers. I think they should all abide by a 28-31" slot limits. Furthermore, I don't think the season should be shortened to avoid stressing the large cows that are trying to spawn in the Chesapeake Bay.

Best Regards,
Brian

From: [Kristi Grahame](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:29:24 PM

Dear ASMFC,

While I believe an equitable harvest moratorium for recreational and commercial fishing would be the most appropriate, and most effective, way to rebuild Atlantic Striped Bass fishery, I would like to voice my support for the following Options available within the Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: **I support Option B**—1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes), as it produced the greatest overall harvest reduction and further protects the 2015 year class.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **I support Option B1**—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 of 23". Again, this produces the greatest overall reduction of -22.4% and the greatest harvest reduction of -38.4%. After 5 years of very poor spawns in the Chesapeake Bay, it is time for some simplification and a narrow slot.

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **I support 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. This is only fair in keeping anglers honest. For bass populations to recover under these protections, we must do all that we can to make sure fish are legally harvested and within the slot limit.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **I support Option B at the largest possible reduction rate of 14.5%**—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%**.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **I support 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.

Thank you in advance for listening to our calls to protect this beautiful ecosystem.

Kristi Grahame

From: [Zach Faucher](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:31:36 PM

Hi Emilie,

Below are my comments regarding draft addendum II. I have noticed a drastic decline in the striper population in the areas that I fish on Cape Cod and also Long Island sound in CT. While there are still some fish left in prime areas the remainder of the sea is void of stripers. We also seemed to be lacking the small schoolie stripers this year that are typically present. This coincides with the poor spawns in recent years. The latest report on the poor spawn in the Hudson River is not too promising either. I think that anything that can be accomplished to preserve the current population a stripers should be implemented to help this fishery rebound as quickly as possible.

Section 3.1.1 I think that Option B is best. 1 fish at 28"-31". I don't think there should be any special exceptions for the for hires like the other options suggest.

Section 3.1.2 I think that option B1 is best. The smallest slot limit seems like the better option for the striper population.

Section 3.1.3 I think that option B preferred

Section 3.1.4 Option B preferred

Section 3.2.1 Option B preferred assuming this equals an actual reduction in commercial quota.

Section 3.3 Option B preferred. A more expedited response sounds like the better option.

Thanks,
Zach Faucher

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Ryan Brock](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:33:36 PM

It's obvious that management efforts to this point have been short sighted or downright negligent. Half measure after half measure hasn't solved anything. A conservative approach has put us in a place where stocks haven't been for 35-40 years. Drastic measures need to be taken.

I'm 100% behind a complete moratorium. No harvest of striped bass period. Recreational and commercial, until a time where stocks have had a chance to rebuild enough to insure future commercial and recreational harvest will be viable in a sustainable way.

I want my ten month old son to be able to experience striper fishing. If things keep going the way they're going that won't be possible in his lifetime.

From: [Chris Comeau](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 11
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:40:16 PM

Keep the slot 28-31”

Eliminate commercial fishing entirely

Implement a maximum recreational size limit in the Chesapeake bay

No mode splits , same size for private and charter

I fish in Maine , Massachusetts and New Hampshire. I’ve caught more big fish in the last 2-3 years than I’ve ever caught in over 20 years . I’m not seeing a ton of schoolies like I used to so it’s a bit concerning for the future .

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joan Hildreth](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:44:21 PM

Greetings,

For the past ten years my son, a fishing guide, and I have fished for stripers in southern Maine. We fish from shore as well as from his boat, releasing all the stripers we catch. We believe in and support the conservation efforts protecting our striped bass population. I support the long term management options listed below:

Sent from my iPad

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B—*I-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*
3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B1
3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I Support Option B
3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: I Support Option B
3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I Support Option B
3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I Support Option B

Thank you for your time.
Joan Hildreth
Hancock, ME

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kevin Howley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Base Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 3:48:58 PM

As a New England saltwater fisher of over 60 years, I'd like to address this draft.

First, the options I support:

- 3.1.1 - option B
- 3.1.2 - option B1
- 3.2.2 - option B
- 3.1.4 - option B
- 3.3 - option B

Second, a few words. As I mentioned, I've fished our east coast for a long time, mostly my home state of **MAINE** and the coast of Rhode Island, but also some in Connecticut and Florida.

I've seen the ups and downs and do not want my children to have to face the particularly scary moments that might be ahead of us if we fail to protect our resources now.

I do feel that most fishers right now value the *experience* much more than simply taking home a fish or two. And even the smaller numbers that do complain usually seem to forget about those complaints in a couple years, seeming grateful for the better resource. So that conversation has changed dramatically over the past 10 or 15 years. People get it now. Yes, there's always the guy looking to sneak an illegal fish, the guy who only considers what he wants, when he wants it--which, of course, is always right now. But that is not most people any more.

So I strongly feel that we'd be better off erring on the side of too much protection (if there is such a thing) if that is the choice. The dollars being spent now are for the experience, not the end product. My son and his generation--Gen X- seem almost entirely experience driven, as are the millennials. Both generations, I think, will be very disappointed in us if we mess things up for them, so that they never get to experience what I was luckily enough to experience, just because we acted instead to please a minority who's only concerns were for immediate gratification.

(Also, I oppose the idea of letting some areas, or some states, play by looser rules. Chesapeake Bay and Ocean waters, for example, should both share the one fish requirement. It will benefit everyone, including them, in the long run.)

Thank you for the work you do. I think it's more than a job; I think it's a sacred trust, and I appreciate you caring for the fish and ocean so many of us love. I'm sure that's not always easy.

Have a Nice Holiday!

Kevin Howley
Wilton, Maine.

From: [Lacie Gaskins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Amendment 7 Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:01:01 PM

As a commercial striped bass tag holder, I do not support any additional cuts to commercial striped bass quota. With the tagging system currently in place commercial quota can be easily regulated and has been proven to be consistent year over year. The issue with the decline is the catch and release mortality by recreational fishermen. It's not justifiable to cut the commercial quota, yet again, of those who use it to make a living for an afternoon of fun reeling in fish to throw back.

From: [Goguen, Rod](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Fisheries
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:03:32 PM

As a occasional recreational fisherman for striped bass, I am concerned about the future fishing for that species.

With a 28" - 31", 1 fish limit, I believe that the recreational fishermen have sacrificed the maximum. Any further reduction in the amount of fish taken needs to come from charter boats and commercial fishing. Any further reduction to the recreational fisherman would severely hurt the amount of recreational fishermen.

All fishermen should abide by the same length.

Thank you for reading this email and allowing me to state my concerns.

Rod Goguen
Maine Saltwater Fisherman

From: [MARY-K ROACH](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:03:57 PM

To the commissioners at ASMFC:

As a recreational angler on the Chesapeake Bay, who spends 20-50 days a year pursuing striped bass on my own boat or with professional fishing guides, I am very concerned about the state of the fishery.

Per the data shared on the YOY index over the last 5 years, and the SSB levels understood to presently exist, I am in favor of the following Addendum II options from the ASMFC council:

Ocean Fishery: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

This will help protect the all too important 2015 year class from over-harvest.

Chesapeake Bay Fishery: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

Commercial Fishery: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Commercial fishermen must share in the sacrifice. No more favorites - Chesapeake bay commercial captains must see the same reductions in harvest.

Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

The board must review the latest stock data in 2024 and quickly act to recover this fishery.

I ask you do everything possible to quickly rebuild the stock and fishery for this important, economically valuable and slow growing fish species. All fishery user groups (including commercial fishermen and charter guides) as well as all states should share in the same level of sacrifice. We owe it to the fish, our fellow fishermen, and future generations of fishermen.

Thank you.

Ed Roach

Maryland Resident from Calvert County

From: [Alan Meadows](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:04:01 PM

I would like to show my support for the proposed striped bass regulations, shown below.

Option B2, Slot Size 19"-24"/ Bag Limit 1 Fish
Option B1, Slot Size 19"-23" / Bag Limit 1 Fish

While there are many ideas to improve the striped bass populations, I don't believe there is one solution.

The slot limit similar to what has worked for the red drum is a good starting point.

The entire Chesapeake Bay ecosystem should be considered important for the recovery process.

The elimination of industrial netting in the entire bay should be considered the most important step. Nets have historically caught and killed everything they get near and have on multiple occasions left wildlife dead on our shorelines.

Eliminating the industrial removal of fin fish, with bait fish, marine mammals, sea turtles and prized game fish as bycatch, should be considered, regardless of ANY political pressure.

Regards,
Alan L. Meadows
Huntingtown, Maryland

From: [James Oleksa](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:09:41 PM

Stop the destruction of the striped bass population by stopping all commercial pillage of Menhaden in our water by Omega. That is the most important and viable way to help our striped bass and the health of our bay and many other species. Their bycatch of striper alone exceeds any recreational fishing mortality in any given year.

STOP MENHADEN fishing by Omega!!!

James Oleksa

From: [Evan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:09:45 PM

I have just started fly fishing for strippers and would like to continue for my whole life. Please protect them.
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Myron Schulman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:16:03 PM

Dear Commission Members:

The future of the Striped Bass population is unquestionably on the decline again.

I strongly favor Option B and for the Chesapeake - B1.

Thank you,

Myron Schulman
West Hartford, CT
06107

From: [Harry Johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addemunt 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:17:41 PM

Catch and release single hook only, no commercial fishing.

From: [Greg Erisman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:18:20 PM

Make it a game fish . Stop the netting and hook and line . Charters same as regular boats . They make 3 trips a day every one nose it .
Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Ballance](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:26:09 PM

Against
J. H. Ballance Jr.

From: [Kenny Mendez](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:30:44 PM

VIA EMAIL

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke and ASMFC Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concerns and recommendations as a passionate recreational angler deeply committed to the preservation of the striped bass population. Since 2019, most of my fishing has been in the Washington, DC area on the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. I also fish the coastal waters of Rhode Island and the South Coast of Massachusetts. From 1993-2012, I spent significant time fishing in Casco Bay in Maine, the waters of Nantucket, and Monomoy Island on Cape Cod. I discovered fishing for striped bass immediately after the 1985-1990 moratoriums and I experienced the benefits of that moratorium in subsequent years with robust populations in these waters. Since the late 1990's, I have experienced a decline in the volume of fish in all these areas. Unless we act now to conserve striped bass stocks, I believe we will need another moratorium to allow the stocks to recover.

The health and sustainability of this iconic species are crucial not only for our recreational enjoyment but also for the overall ecological balance of our coastal ecosystems. I urge the commission to implement conservative harvest limits that prioritize the recovery of the striped bass population. It is imperative to base these limits on the best available scientific data to accurately assess the current state of the fishery. Implementing protective slot limits, which prohibit the harvest of fish within a certain size range, can contribute significantly to the preservation of the spawning stock. By allowing more reproductive individuals to reach maturity, we can enhance the overall health of the striped bass population.

With this in mind, I support the following within Addendum II

- Ocean Recreational Options: Option B--1 fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)
- Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1--1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons
- Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.
- No mode splits
- Response to Stock Assessment: Option B--Board Action.

I commend the ASMFC for its efforts to address the challenges facing the striped bass fishery through Addendum II. As stakeholders, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that we strike the right balance between conservation and recreational opportunities to guarantee the long-term viability of the striped bass population. I urge the ASMFC to prioritize the conservation of the striped bass population in Addendum II. By adopting science-based, precautionary measures and involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, we can

work together to ensure a thriving and resilient striped bass fishery for generations to come.

Thank you for your dedication to the stewardship of our marine resources.

Sincerely,

Kenny Mendez
Arlington, VA and Tiverton, RI

From: [Robert Pistorino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:35:17 PM

Hi

I'm a 67 year old guy who has been passionately been fishing for strippers all over cape cod since I was 12. I've done a little comm fishing for them too.

I can see the writing on the wall, I've been to a few meetings and listening to Dr. Armstrong just amplifies what I have noticed over the last decade. The fish here are not near as omnipresent as they ounce were. I've caught 300 or so bass this year. (all released) I doubt ten were under 20 inches. I know what that means.

I'm in favor for as much restrictions and reductions as possible. My gut tells me it's pointless until the YOY improves, as unlikely as that seems.

So, I support keeping the current slot limit of 28-31 inches for everyone, including charter fishermen. I fear it's just to extend the fishing for a few more years before as Dr Armstrong referenced, "The train is coming."

Thank you for your attention.

Bob Pistorino

Sent from my iPad

From: [Bran Dougherty-Johnson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:36:35 PM

Dear Ms Franke and the Striped Bass Management Board members:

I am a surfcaster from Long Island, NY and I am writing in to comment on the Draft addendum proposals. I love fishing for striped bass! I noticed a huge decline in small schoolies this year, while the 28" - 37" fish in my area seemed to be way more prevalent. I support these options:

Ocean Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B: 1 Fish @ 28-31"

This will continue to protect the 2015 Year Class

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishing Options:

Option B1: 1 Fish @ 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictions

Commercial Quota Reductions Options:

Option B: 14.5% reduction for both Ocean and Bay Quotas

Response to Stock Assessment:

Option B: Board Action

reduce time to it takes to reduce mortality

Thank you very much for your work, I wish to urge you to manage the fishery for abundance and rebuilding the stock as soon as possible.

Best,

Bran Dougherty-Johnson

From: [Francis Hemsley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:47:47 PM

Good afternoon,

This is in response to the proposed new regulations concerning striped bass on and around the Chesapeake Bay. We are in support of Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option C2.

It is of utmost importance that more accurate scientific data is collected before life altering and industry changing regulations are put into effect. Economic impact surveys need to be administered to truly understand the overall impact newly proposed regulation would have on the bay. We are not just talking about commercial watermen or charter boat operations. This has the potential to be devastating to an entire industry.

Data also needs to be collected regarding the harvesting of the Chesapeake's food source at the mouth of the bay, resulting in thousands of dolphin migrating into brackish waters to chase their food. Historically, the middle to upper Chesapeake never saw the amount of dolphin that make their way there now, and to put it bluntly, are wreaking havoc on all species, most importantly the striped bass and crab. As the dolphin make their way up the bay, they "bottle neck" the striped bass into pockets of the bay and rivers, frantic and desperate to escape the dolphin. This has been an on-going, unnatural occurrence in the Chesapeake for as long as Canadian-owned company, Omega, from Reedville, VA, have been allowed to over harvest and deplete the Menhaden population at the mouth of the bay. Coincidence?

The striped bass are not being over harvested by commercial fisherman or charter boats. Until Omega is held responsible and the right scientific data is analyzed, nothing will change. This includes the young-of-the-year testing. These tests are inaccurate from the beginning, being analyzed from several locations on the Chesapeake that are known blue catfish territories. Literally zero testing is conducted in areas where there are the highest concentrations of striped bass.

We need better, more accurate data, before a serious talk in regulation needs to be considered.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Crew aboard the Pal-O-Mine

From: [Bob Burger](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass changes
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:56:27 PM

Hello

I would like to make my opinions part of the public record regarding striped bass management. They are a stock that is overfished and regulations should continue to ensure that the stock is rebuilt in an appropriate amount of time. This is not the time to start making accommodations to the for-hire industry to allow the taking of moser fish to make their lives easier. They are making a living off a public resource that belongs to the fishing PUBLIC. Please ensure that the current regulations remain in place to help stripers recover

Thank you

Bob Burger
Guilford CT

From: mheadly052@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:05:40 PM

To Whom It May Concern—as a long time Mid Atlantic and Chesapeake Bay angler, I am writing to provide comment on the ASMFC’s Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. In general, I support the most conservative measures proposed (and indeed would support even tighter restrictions) for both recreational and commercial fishing. Of the options proposed in the document, I am in favor of the following:

Recreational Coast—Option B
Recreational Chesapeake Bay—Option B1
Commercial –14.5% reduction
Board Response B for Board Action
Implementation—ASAP

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Mark Headly
8431 Red Fox Lane
Warrenton, VA 20186

From: [Colin Temple](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:10:34 PM

Good evening ASMFC striped bass board,

I am writing to you this evening as a primarily shore based recreational fly angler from Massachusetts. My goal for all fisheries is that they are managed for abundance. Everyone benefits from an abundant stock. I am glad to see Addendum II being formed but I do still worry that we aren't doing enough to rebuild the stock before 2029.

The basis of my comments and feedback is that the board should exercise all options to maximize reductions across all geographies and sectors. I do not support a mode split as I believe it is not aligned with the primary goal of rebuilding the stock by 2029.

I support the following options:

For Ocean Recreational (3.1.1) - Option B - 1 fish at 28-31"

For Chesapeake Bay Recreational (3.1.2) - Option B - 1 fish at 19-23"

For Commercial Quota (3.2.1) - Option B - a 14.5% reduction to BOTH the Ocean & Chesapeake Bay quotas

For Response to Stock Assessment (3.3) - Option B - I would like to see the board take action based on the newest available information

Thank you very much for taking the time to review these comments.

Best regards,
Colin Temple

--

Colin J Temple
(802)558-6431

From: [Richard E](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:13:10 PM

Hello ASMFC,

I am a long time Maine striper fisherman who would like to add my comments to the upcoming discussions:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B—*I-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B1

3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I Support Option B

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: I Support Option B

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I Support Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: I Support Option B

Thank you,

Richard Everett
Camden, ME
207-664-8647

From: [Kyle Schaefer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:15:30 PM

Good Evening,

Please see below for my selections on draft addendum II. I am a full time charter captain in Maine.

I also want to note that it is clear that these measures will likely not be effective enough to meet the rebuilding timeline especially when you consider 5 years or spawning failure.

Confidence in ASMFC is at a low and likely only going lower as we continue to watch stripers collapse due to a lack of proactive, transparent and bold actions from the commission. We sincerely hope the commission will take a good look at how stripers and all stocks are being managed and consider fixing this broken system.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Best,

Kyle Schaefer
603.969.3050
Soul Fly Outfitters // Maine
Soul Fly Lodge // Bahamas
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Patrick Mickles](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:23:33 PM

All of these regulations are only as good as the enforcement of them. I've saw many illegal Stripers get thrown into coolers this fall as well as not handling the fish correctly. We need more fish and game wardens up and down the entire east coast if the rule makers are serious about the conservation of Stripe Bass. East coast State Governor's need to put some money on their Budgets for this beloved game fish.

From: [Jacob Jaskiel](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comment
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:28:28 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jacob Jaskiel, I am from Massachusetts, and I am an avid recreational surfcaster and lover of striped bass. Below are the options for draft addendum II that I support, followed by an additional sentence or two about why I believe more aggressive conservation action is needed in order to avoid a stock collapse and continue the benefits of the fishery to as many stakeholders as possible.

I support:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

I firmly believe that aggressive interventions via reductions in commercial/recreational harvest, shifting slots to protect key year classes, and increased enforcement of existing regulations will be key in retaining some of the remaining biomass we have until the large gaps in the age structure of the fishery are filled through successful (hopefully) future spawning events. Ideally, I would prefer striped bass receive the status "gamefish" throughout the Atlantic coast to preserve the iconic fishery on which so many people depend. Including more aggressive conservation action in future drafted changes to regulations would be useful in gauging public support on such issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft addendum.

Best regards,
Jacob Jaskiel

From: [Brian Collins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Emilie Franke](#)
Subject: [External] ASMFC striped bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:30:06 PM

Hello, the Addendum II for striped bass is woefully remiss to exclude the over harvesting of Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay is a separate ecosystem for Menhaden and Striped Bass from the ocean and is the nursery for 90% of East Coast Striped Bass where the Striped Bass live for 9 years before heading to the ocean.

We are starving the fish and the stock is collapsing along with Osprey nesting.

What can explain the exclusion of consideration of industrial fishing of Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay for preserving the Striped Bass population on the East Coast.

Blaming recreational and commercial fishing of striped bass alone is an incomplete analysis and science to solve the problem.

Thanks, Brian
Brian Collins
brian.c1@me.com
703-795-8169

From: [Will Fabian](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:33:56 PM

Hello,

I would like to comment in support of Addendum II options 3.1.1 B, 3.1.2 B1, and 3.2.1 B and urge for stronger, more conservative action to preserve the fishery.

As a recreational angler, I would like to see a complete restriction in both the recreational and commercial harvest of fish until stocks return to sustainable level.

Please also consider a seasonal harvest restriction in the Housatonic river from November - April.

Thank you,
Will Fabian

From: [Justin Mangiante](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:37:41 PM

I support option b across the board and option b1 for Chesapeake bay

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sean Savage](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:48:48 PM

Hello,

I'm an angler who loves fishing for striped bass. Our striped bass population is in dire straits and the most restrictive slot possible should be implemented. A larger slot for charters should not be considered. A pay-to-play system for such a critical and threatened fish is an abomination to a healthy ecosystem and paid charters should have the same slot as recreational anglers.

Obviously this is only one tiny (though crucial) step for striped bass health as Omega Proteins in the Chesapeake Bay is killing off most of the bass by removing their food source with their awful nets. Their indiscriminate netting of menhaden has plundered our waters lifeless but they fill the pockets of our lawmakers so what to do?

From: [blake sutherland](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External]
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:52:34 PM

Stop catch and release fishing for stripers at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Leave those big girls alone and wish them well on their spawning journey. Reduce commercial fishing by 20%. Good luck and thanks for all you do.

From: [Tim](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public comments on Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:52:46 PM

Hello,

I am a tourism-dependent Maine business owner and an avid recreational angler. Rebuilding the striped bass stock is of critical importance to my business success as well as my own enjoyment. I have been an avid striped bass angler for over 30 years and I know first hand that immediate improved management is needed to save this special fishery.

My positions on Addendum II are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Rec Options:

-Option B with 1 fish at 28"-31" for all modes

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Rec.

-Option B1, 1 fish at 19"-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction

-Option B with 14.5% reduction to ocean and Chesapeake bay quotas

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

-Option B, Board Action

Thank you for hearing my public comment

Tim Adams
Oxbow Brewing Co

From: [Flynn Willsea](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:56:03 PM

To the ASMFC Striped bass board,

3.1.1 ocean recreational options: option B-1 fish at 28-31”

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay recreational options: B-1 fish at 19-23” across all of Chesapeake Bay

3.3 Response to stock assessment: optionB board action

Thank you

From: [Ronald Lajda](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Option C for Striped Bass Draft Addendum.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:07:16 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am in support of Option C for Striped Bass Draft Addendum 11 Section 3.1.1.
Option C is the most fair and equitable option for both Private and For Hire modes.
Any further restrictions on the very abundant Striped Bass fishery would be absurd.
I do not believe there is enough data, or should I say enough accurate data to further restrict this fishery.

Sincerely,

Capt. Ronald T. Lajda
Coyote II Sportfishing Charters
Orient Point, New York

Sent from my iPhone

From: [James Stone](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:07:27 PM

As a conservation minded angler, I support all portions of the coast wide fishery implementing at least a 14.5% reduction in fishing mortality for 2024, and subsequently I urge the Board to focus on meaningful reductions in mortality as future assessments require. It is time to quit fooling around the edges of the stripped bass problem, and address the issue in a holistic fashion - Ocean & Bay - Commercial & Recreational conservation and recovery balance. Do it!!

For Addendum II I support the following specific options:

Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31” for all fisheries. (14.1%)

Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23”(22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24” (15.9% reduction).

Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota

Board Response: B. Board Action.

Implementation dates: ASAP

Thank you - J. Stone

From: [Carl DiRocco](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Fishing Regulations
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:11:19 PM

Dear ASMFC,

I feel option B makes the most sense to me but, I would really like to see Striped Bass become a Gamefish. Whatever measures you take I am personally on board to achieve a 14.5% reduction in the fishing mortality.

Thank You, Carl DiRocco

From: [Scott Wain](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Ban commercial Strped bass fishing
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:13:02 PM

Hello,

As an angler and sportsmen I find it ridiculous with the current state of the striped bass fishery to allow ANY commercial harvest whatsoever. This is basic common sense. How is it that nobody in the fisheries department management proposes this is absurd. Just like with Cod, shut down the fishery and let the stock recovery. The commercial fisherman will have to fish for something else that is not in decline year after year. In northeast Massachusetts where I reside, the striped bass is king and is mostly all anglers can fish for except for the occasional bluefish run, which are a far cry from what they were 25 years ago. It doesn't take a PHD to understand its time and has been for serious conservation with regards to our fisheries. In my opinion total ban commercial striped bass fishing for 5 years, then see where the stock is, and make adjustment accordingly. Common sense approach...

Best,
Scott M Wain

From: [James Dowd](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Slot Limit on Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:15:59 PM

Please continue the 28 to 31 inch slot limit on striped bass.

Sincerely,

James J Dowd

From: [Bert Olmstead](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:25:44 PM

18” - 31”. Needs to comply for commercial fishing/. Tonage . For majority in Virginia !! Commercial needs to comply for not keeping females holding major portion of ‘eggs” for future hatching. Charters catches catch same as recreational fishermen,, not revised for one fish per person. Since charters are classified in recreational fishermen classification either give same catch per equal per person per boat or recreational needs 2 fish per person per boat. The other revision is limiting fishing dates for strippers . Climate changes are tending for a later season . So make it until December 30. Cut it out more during the “bad hot. Summer. .

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [Tyler Nonn](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:32:10 PM

Hello,

I am a life long charter Capt for the last 16 years, my entire working career, and I support CCA's stance on there has to be something done to improve the stock for our future. B1 or B2 make sense to me out of all the options. What I strongly disagree with is any type of "catch and release" closures. When almost all the catch and release striped bass fishing occurs the water is cold, and the mortality is extremely low and should generally be negated. There is no significant impact, in fact, I bet a large portion of these fish get called multiple times, and still survive, healthy and strong. I have done thousands of charters in the bay and thousands more trip in my young adult life. I believe that closing the targeting of these fish during the winter months, would have a massive economic impact on both myself and many local businesses. Please consider CCA's recommendations and also please take into account. What would happen if there was any type of catch and release closures.

Thank you,
Tyler Nonn
Tidewater Charters

From: [JOHN EVANS](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:49:50 PM

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Toby Frey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II ~ Amendment 7 Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:52:09 PM

Addendum II, Amendment 7

Dear Members,

I have lived and fished on the Chesapeake, more directly, the Choptank River for 70 years. During the 85-90 Moratorium I raised Striped Bass in Pond aquaculture in Dorchester County MD. I am a Maryland resident.

Direct Response for choices proposed:

- **Recreational Coast: Option B - Status Quo 28-31" for all fisheries. (14.1% reduction)**
- **Recreational Bay: Option B1 19-23"(22.4% reduction) or B2 - 19-24" (15.9% reduction). Prefer B1**
- **Commercial: 14.5% reduction in quota**
- **Board Response: B. Board Action.**
- **Implementation dates: ASAP.**

The fishery needs to be managed PROACTIVELY:

The state of Maryland has consistently managed all the species using the Max Sustainable Catch policy. They have allowed allocations to be transferred in the commercial fishery, allowed the for hire/charter business enjoy benefits (2 fish vs 1 Striped bass: 5 vs 3 blue fish) beyond state policy which regulates the For hire/guides operate under the recreational fishery policies. Maryland has failed to reduce the commercial fishery allocations. It is time to be PROACTIVE and manage our fisheries in an Optimum Yield manner, equal to all. I am against the policy of one group benefiting at the cost of another group. 2 fish vs 1, 5 blues vs 3...etc

M.R.I.P. was initiated in 1976, all marine scientists realizing it is flawed but they continue using it even though when it came out, it was stated that it was not to be used as it is being used today. Since 1976, technology has grown very rapidly and in the last 10 year exponentially. If there is any hope in really coming to grips with a fishery, there needs to be many dollars allocated to designing the next system to manage our fisheries. An example, look at how badly the numbers were on the Gulf's redfish population/state when NOAA finally spent money to do a resurvey. MRIP is failing the fishery.

Other thoughts and steps to improved the stock base

- Stop fishing when the season closes. In MD, the season is May 15 to Dec 10 (2023) No catch and release when season is closed. There was a study done on Salmon, catch and release, that concluded that catch & release did

Coastal Conservation Assoc. MD ~ Board Member
Mid Shore Fishing Club ~ Board Member
MD Sport Fishing Advisory Commission
Brotherhood of the Balloon
Salt Strong Insider

Please be a responsible emailer:

Be considerate when forwarding messages, remove names and email addresses of previous recipients and my name as sender. Another courtesy is to use Bcc: for any "bulk" e-mailings, instead of the To: or Cc: to keep our addresses private. This will help to cut down on spam and computer identity theft. Thank you.

From: [Matthew Butcka](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:58:02 PM

Good evening,

As a recreational angler and aspiring charter captain who fishes the waters of CT, RI, and NY, I support the following:

3.1.1- Ocean recreation options: Option B, 1 fish 28"-31"

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas

Best regards,

Matthew Butcka

From: [robert_young](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:59:52 PM

Dear ASMFC Board

I would like to reiterate my position as stated from my in-person attendance at the NH Fish and Game meeting.

I would like the board to consider the overwhelming public comments to select option B on all subjects related to Addendum II, with one exception; I option for B-1 for 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options.

Thank you for your time and attention to this extremely critical situation we find ourselves regarding the future of striped bass.

I am not a guide, nor a charter captain. I'm a flats focused, recreational, fly fisherman who has seen first-hand, a rapid decline in the numbers of small fish (less than 22") over the last three seasons. These fish are in trouble and everyone knows it. It's time to take the corrective action necessary before it's too late.

My sincere wishes to you all for a safe and healthy, holiday season.

Best,

Robert Young
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Cody Rubner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:03:04 PM

ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board,

Below are my preferred options for Addendum II for Striped Bass Management.

The current stock age distribution is very poor. We basically have two major classes carrying the entire fishery - and somehow, we're allowing self-interest to drive consideration for opening up a field day on those classes. There is literally nothing coming down the pipeline. We're sitting on a historically bad stretch of spawns while playing patty cake and pretending like this half-decade of abysmal classes won't soon be the core of the fishery.

Suppose we have any chance of abundant fisheries in the future. In that case, we need to shift this mentality from a race to the bottom of the barrel and the last fish — who can get 'em while they're here until they're gone — and instead a race to the top, how can we maximize the productivity of this fishery and maximize the value of the resource for the betterment of all sectors and businesses

PLEASE VOTE OPTION B ACROSS THE BOARD:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Option B —1-fish at 28-31", all modes.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Option B1 —1 fish at 19-23" across all jurisdictions.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Option B — with a 14.5% reduction for Ocean and Bay.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Option B — Board Action.

Happy Holidays to all those who truly care about getting our shared fishery rebuilt! And a stocking full of coal for all those who have allowed special interests to delay a coastwide effort to conserve an iconic resource.

Best,
Captain Cody Rubner

*A 12-year resident of Massachusetts
Now operating business in Stuart, Florida
www.highrollerguideservice.com*

From: [Chris Fay](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:03:46 PM

The ASMFC Striped Bass Board needs to initiate Addendum II to implement the necessary changes for the 2024 fishing season.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Andrew Murphy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:05:36 PM

Hello sir/madam,

I am writing to you in order to comment on draft addendum II with regards to striped bass management,

Here is my stance on the proposed II,

3.1.1 Option B; 1 fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)

3.1.2 Option B1; 1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay.

3.2.1 Option B; 14.5% reduction quota both Ocean and Chesapeake.

3.3 Board action.

Thank you for your time,

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rosie](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Management Plan - Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:05:44 PM

Good evening,

We wanted to support the continuation of the recreational 28"-31" slot, the removal of the mode splits on for-hire vessels, and a significant reduction in the commercial fisheries for striped bass. Consistency is key, and it doesn't seem right that there should be different regulations for fish caught in the same waters. Furthermore, there are plenty of individuals that we have seen and tried to dissuade that have been keeping over- and under-slot fish, suggesting that these measures are not enough on their own to fix the issue. Hopefully there are enough people that would rather ensure the survival of stripers for generations to come, especially given the other plentiful species that are equally good, if not superior, table fare.

Thank you,

Rosie and Team
Rosie's Bait and Tackle, LLC
IG: rosies_baitandtackle

From: [Sean Davies](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:11:20 PM

Greetings Emilie

My name is Sean Davies and I'm an avid saltwater/striped bass angler based in Boston, Mass. I wanted to write to express my full support for the most conservation-focused approach for Addendum 2. I believe this species needs extreme support from the conservation movement, and all measures to reduce mortality need to be taken immediately.

There is no longer any doubt that the striped bass population is hurtling towards catastrophe. While there "are fish around", there are VERY few young fish, which is a terrifying problem. I myself caught only one fish of well over a hundred this year that was smaller than 24". This is over the course of dozens of extensive fishing excursions in the Boston area, covering vast swathes of water. The writing is on the wall -- without action, we are headed towards a total collapse.

I would also add that we need more action to protect striped bass forage -- mehanden and mackerel stocks have been decimated in recent years, and need protection as well to help with the rebuilding movement

I would deeply appreciate the ASMFC stepping up to the plate and delivering substantial conservation measures to bring the population back to where it needs to be. Striped bass fishing is a gift to all who partake, and the species must be protected.

Thank you for your time.

--

Sean Davies
sean.o.davies@gmail.com

From: [Michael McKay](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:15:11 PM

Striped bass are my favorite fish. They deserve to be respected and protected. I feel that any measure necessary to reduce their mortality to 14.5 % and further protect the 2015 year class is worth a try. I think that option B makes the most sense of the available options. Please act now to protect these fish for our and their future.
Sent from my iPhone

From: cnirome@optonline.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:15:51 PM

Absolute supporter of Saltwater Guides Association position commercial and recreational harvest. Been fishing a long time and every year it's a slip hard for someone new to the world of it grasp a sense of what was and what's gone missing.
Peter Bartley

From: [Joe Gugino](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum 2 for Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:19:07 PM

Hello Board,

I fully support the conservation of our striped bass fishery being our top priority in addendum 2.

Below are my preferred options:

3.1.1 - B
3.1.2 - B1
3.2.1 - B
3.3 - B

Thank you.

— Joe

Boston Harbor Rec
Industry Representative
Massachusetts Resident

Joe Gugino
29 Billows St.
Winthrop, MA 02152
(860) 402-5903

From: [Ron Jawin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass regulations
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:23:46 PM

I am writing to suggest that stirred bass be given game fish status. The stock has become poorly managed and many more fish are taken than reported. The present system is causing the collapse of the stock with commercial harvest and recreational interest to blame. More money is spent on fishing which will stop when the fish become even more scarce which is already underway.

Regards

Ron Jawin

From: [Scot Calitri](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Need to be more protective of Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:29:01 PM

All “B” and “B1” in the Chesapeake please.

Thank you for the work you do trying to balance conservation and commercial interests. It can't be easy as economic pressures weigh while nearly every stock of fish continues to dwindle. However we need to do better. A 50 percent success prediction is a losing grade and we're just as likely to lose them (again) as to recover. An entire generation missed Striped Bass in their childhood. That's not right. We need to make maximum sustainable yield a term of the past.

I have spent time in commercial fishing, commercial shellfishing, fishmongering and decades of sportfishing and strongly support **More conservative measures**.

At the most basic level, we have an overfished stock with low recruitment. Any additional killing will further jeopardize the recovery plan.

Look at the trend charts. We are rapidly heading toward repeating the past sins of the late 70s and early 80s.

I'm not sure how well these are read, but if someone gets this far, **I would enjoy engaging with your team to help revise the process**. ASMFC has been around since the 1940s and although some minor wins have happened, the approach is all wrong.

Abundance maximizes the long term economic value of fisheries, insulates against climate change and buffers against one time weather events or "acts of god".

Let's change the model and celebrate future wins.

Options B and B1 for the Bay please.

- Scot Calitri
970-390-4997
Durham, NH

From: [Shannon T. Richards](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Shannon T. Richards](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:32:59 PM

December 22, 2023

Mr. Shannon T. Richards
626 Riverside Drive, 18-B
New York, NY 10031

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke,
c/o Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC),

I am writing you today to communicate my profound support for ASMFC to take unprecedented, yet scientifically clear and necessary actions on behalf of the restoration of striped bass populations along the eastern US Atlantic States fisheries. Note my absence in directing any comments to any one or more specific states; including my home state of New York. This is a grave situation that requires overarching intervention, the support and sacrifice of all related States, professions, commercial and recreational angling communities. No prioritized group or groups should advocate or solicit preference or exception at this crucial moment of intervention. We all should rise equally on this common tide; to the benefit first and foremost of the striped bass population recovery. ASMFC must speak first for these fish, and their importance to the many invested parties, while also to an unwavering commitment to the 2029 successful stock rebuilding target. Any actions compromising anything less than our best efforts towards 100% attainment of this goal should already be seen as failure. We cannot be in this for the 50-50 flip of a coin. Every proposed regulatory action that improves the forecast for successful stock recovery must be deemed paramount. We are in it to win it! As such, speaking as a recreational angler with the privilege (not entitlement) to target this extraordinary fishery, please add my support for the following recommendations:

- 3.1.1 - Ocean Recreational Options: option **B** - one fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (**all modes**)

- 3.1.2 - Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: option **B-1** - one fish at 19-23" across **all CBAY** jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons
- 3.2.1 - Commercial Quota Reduction Options: option **B** with a **full 14.5% reduction** to both the Ocean **and** Chesapeake Bay Quotas
- 3.3 - Response to Stock Assessment: option **B** - Board action

Be aggressive, be scientifically driven, be stalwart and resolved. ASMFC stands at the vanguard in the defense of this striped bass fishery recovery. We are dependent on you to hold the line against all equivocation, all biased "compromise" to the lobbied advancement of any particular affected party. All anglers are "the affected parties," all present-day anglers and all future anglers; those active in the targeting of this species and all those who have yet partake. All those who live in these Atlantic States and all those who may come to visit and participate in this fishery. You protect us All; please take the necessary and accorded actions to restore this fishery with the highest likelihood of successfully obtaining 2029 stock rebuilding goals. Thank you.

With sincere regard,

Shannon Richards

From: [Scott Mackie](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:34:02 PM

“Those who do not learn history, are doomed to repeat it.”

It's unfortunate that is happening with the striped bass....if we are lucky, we'll have a moratorium like we did in the late 80's and give the bass an opportunity to recover and ultimately thrive again.

Please, please, please make it a gamefish. We needed action a decade ago, unfortunately I think we've reached the point where a moratorium would be best.

I truly hope you'll do whatever is in your power to eliminate the harvest of the bass, it will pay dividends in the future for the species and both the recreational and commercial fishermen alike.

Scott Mackie
617-851-9073

From: [Justin Kaufman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:35:02 PM

I would like to start by saying that I have fished the bay since I could walk with my father and mated for him since I was 8 years old. I have owned and operated my own charter boat for 9 years now. I would like to say that if the limit for charter boats goes to a one fish per person limit it will dramatically affect my business, the majority of paying customers will stop booking trips for just one fish. We all want what is best for this fishery and the future generations, I understand now more than ever that I have a 2 week old boy at home that I would like to have all the experiences and great times on the Chesapeake Bay chasing Striped Bass that I had growing up. I do believe that the big gap in the middle of the bay where there are no testing areas for the young of the year needs to be addressed because for the last 5 years all our fishing has been in this area. I also believe that for the most accurate number on the fish being taken from the bay we need to have all recreation fishermen be in a program just like the charter boats to report their catch for the day if not mandatory then incentivise them to want to report. I would also like to see more DNR presence on the bay visiting boats fishing and preventing them from keeping over the limit allowed. All that being said, I am in favor of **Chesapeake Bay Recreational Option C2**.

Thank you
Captain Justin Kaufman

From: [Mack Hartwell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Thank you for accepting public comment
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:41:27 PM

To do the best we can to allow the striped bass fishery to recover, I support the American Salt Water Guides Association recommendations as follow:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Sincerely,

Mack Hartwell
mack_hartwell@yahoo.com
614.975.6225

Sent from my iPad

From: [Joshua Dionne](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment on Addendum 7 - Striped Bass Management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:42:56 PM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Board,

I am writing as a concerned supporter of striped bass conservation to express my views on Addendum 7 to the Striped Bass Management Plan. While I appreciate the ASMFC's efforts to address the challenges facing the striped bass fishery, I am deeply concerned about the current state of the management measures proposed in the addendum.

1. **Commercial Conservation Emphasis:** The proposed options predominantly focus on recreational measures, with limited emphasis on addressing commercial fishing impacts. Given the historical decline in striped bass populations and the crucial role of commercial fisheries in this decline, it is imperative to strengthen conservation measures within the commercial sector.
2. **Commercial Quotas and Landings:** The data provided to us indicate a significant decline in coastwide commercial landings since 2004, yet the proposed addendum lacks substantial measures to further reduce commercial quotas. I urge the ASMFC to consider more stringent commercial quotas and gear restrictions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the species.
3. **Transparency and Accountability:** Concerns have been raised about the transparency and decision-making processes within the ASMFC, especially regarding potential interactions between the council, commercial fishermen, and lobbyists. I strongly urge the ASMFC to enhance transparency, providing the public with clear insights into the decision-making behind proposed management measures.
4. **Alternative Management Approaches:** The addendum should explore alternative management approaches, such as incentivizing selective gear types, implementing catch shares, or promoting habitat protection. Diversifying the management toolbox will contribute to more effective and sustainable long-term conservation.
5. **Public Engagement:** There is a need for increased public engagement and collaboration in the decision-making process. The ASMFC should actively seek input from a diverse range of stakeholders, including conservation organizations, recreational anglers, and the scientific community.

In conclusion, I implore the ASMFC to reconsider the proposed measures in Addendum 7, placing a stronger emphasis on commercial conservation, ensuring transparency in decision-making, exploring alternative management approaches, and actively engaging the public in the process.

Striped bass conservation is a shared responsibility, and I trust that the ASMFC will prioritize the long-term health of the species for the benefit of current and future generations.

Sincerely,

Joshua Dionne
South Berwick, Maine

From: [jrfv](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:50:10 PM

December 22, 2023

Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Hi!

My name is John Forrest. I am a resident of Gwynn's Island Virginia. I have a degree in Economics from The University of Virginia. I was born in Norfolk Virginia in 1957 and have lived only in Virginia my whole life. I have earned nearly all of my income as a commercial fisherman starting in 1965 when I turned 8. I went to the public hearing at the VMRC about this topic a couple of weeks ago. I'd like to expand on some of what I said there. I also have a proposal which would solve much of the recreational over harvesting.

First of all is to reinforce my observation that the conflict between 2 user groups that this commission focuses on is in fact much more complex and actually involves at least three user groups and the vastly larger one is not even considered in your rule making process. Let's call these groups A, B, and C. Group A represents recreational fishermen and the A stands for Angler. Group C obviously represents and stands for commercial fishermen. Group B represents everyone else who is not in either A or C which I will call the Basic Broad and Biggest user group. Group B has no representation or consideration in any decision making concerning the allocation or distribution of the Striped Bass resource. Group B consumes Stripped Bass as food; acquired at a retail seafood market or at a restaurant. As the ASMFC only considers allocation between group A and C and ignores group B this distribution or resource appears to be a ZERO sum game. If you do include B then obviously the situation changes. I received a Virginia Stripped Bass permit when the moratorium ended years ago. At that time the promise and understanding of parties A and C was that each of us would get 50% of the available fish. Steadily over time that agreement has been disregarded to where now group C gets 9% and group A gets 91%. This number considers overall mortality presented at the public hearing. It is not a zero-sum game however because group B gets their fish from and through the efforts of group C. Unless a member of group B can find a member of group A to give them Stripped Bass then they are not only net losers but also absolute losers. It is not lawful for members of group A to sell, barter, or trade Stripped Bass. If group A people do these unlawful transfers they are engaging in unpermitted commercial fishing. In Virginia the penalties for violation of Commercial Fishing Rules are quite severe, especially with regard to Stripped Bass.

Now I said this subject is more complex than simply a dispute between 2 user groups. In economics, we consider something called opportunity cost. Group A has low opportunity cost, for example; if I was a recreational fisherman I have a boat at my pier in my front yard. I can get in my boat travel one quarter mile to the bridge to Gwynn's Island and catch a Stripped Bass any time. This is about as low an opportunity cost as there is to be in group A. Now there is a range from zero opportunity cost all the way up to the most cost anyone would bear to be a member of group A. There are many factors that enter into calculating opportunity cost and they are more than just money. There are also more reasons to want to be in group A than just access to a food source to the extreme that some people just like to kill things for entertainment, sport, and then just discard what they killed. It happens; I have seen it. So group A by definition has low opportunity cost to kill, for whatever reason, stripped bass. Group B on the other hand is different. They only consider Stripped Bass as food and their opportunity cost is very high relative to group A. As an extreme example let's consider someone in Chicago who wants some stripped bass for dinner one night. How is she going to get it? Consider time, money cost, effort and

actual knowledge of how to catch one herself. Obviously is very high compared to my opportunity cost. What about group C? Group C members are the agents of group B and driving up group C's cost hurt both C and B. As a little observation group B consists of all sexes of people with whatever their overall percentage of their general population. The same cannot be said about group A which is nearly all one sex. Maybe the ASMFC should do a study of who actually harvests the Stripped Bass. Just a thought. Reducing group B's allocation of Stripped Bass is sexist and might be unlawful in and of itself. In reality the economic and social function of group C is to reduce the opportunity costs of group B to where they get their "fair" share of stripped bass.

What is group B's fair share? In Virginia there are approximately 8 million people, probably more. There are about 100,000 recreational anglers. And there are about 1000 commercial fishermen. How does group A get 91% of the fish with 1.25% of the population and group B get 9% of the fish with 98.75% of the population? Is this fair? The original agreement was a 50 50 split. I submit that the actions of the ASMFC and their subordinate regulation authorities partners is an extremely obvious example of regulatory capture by a motivated group to gain complete control of a resource for their exclusive benefit to the detriment of society as a whole. Group A has been pushing for years for the elimination of groups C's access to the resource which in effect eliminates all access to the resource for group B by never admitting that any group other than A and C even exists.

I need to move on to a solution to A's over fishing. In summary A's opportunity cost to attack C is very low while C's opportunity cost to defend itself from A's constant attack is very high.

Solution: Tags for group A, group C already has them and they work. Several people have asked for this solution but the regulators' objection is they cost too much; \$1 each!

I just reviewed the Virginia game laws on deer. SO, to hunt deer in Virginia you need a general hunting license plus an additional deer stamp. This gets you max 2 deer in one day and 6 total per season only 3 can have antlers. Now these regulations are quite complex and there are some ways to possibly get a few more deer per season. However there is no legal path to get one or two deer each and every day of the season. The basic deer stamp is \$23. There are also very specific days available to hunt.

Here is my proposal: You need a consistent limited fishing season for the entire region including within state boundaries. I suggest each state have a 90 day season. August, September, October for Maine and New Hampshire. September, October, November for Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York. October, November, and December for New Jersey, and Maryland. November, December, January for Virginia and North Carolina. This eliminates all recreational harvest during spawning season. Then the ASMFC can decide the total number of fish to allow for harvest and divide this number of tags between the total number of recreational fishing licence holders who also have the new add on stripped bass endorsement. This would create a more enforceable limit on the total number of fish any one angler could take in any season. Charge enough to cover the cost of supplying the tags and the objection over administrative cost disappears.

While I was studying economics at the University of Virginia I took a course called "Economics of Regulation". It was a 400 level course that I needed for my degree or I would not have ever taken it is it seemed like a very boring class. After I finished it turned out to be one of my best class experiences. We studied many things including regulatory capture, but the one of interest now is how to price a fine for violation of a regulation. This is the one thing sorely missing in regulating recreational fishing. The

pricing formula is actually simple and straight forward: You have to eliminate all economic incentive to violate the regulation. How to do that? Determine the dollar value benefit of the violation and account for the chance of arrest for the violation. Example: If the value is ten dollars with a one hundred percent chance of capture then the fine must be more than ten dollars. With the same value but only a ten percent chance of capture the fine must be more than one hundred dollars to eliminate the economic benefit to the scofflaw. So, if there is only a 1% chance of arrest the fine will need to be \$1,000. You should see that humans actually do respond to logical consequences of their actions much of the time. A stripped bass violation by C is extremely costly whereas a violation by A is inconsequential with low chance of capture and low cost even if captured.

Lastly for hire stripped bass fishing. Every person on the boat , including the Captain and Mate, needs to have the stripped bass permit with their own tags. Once they use up their tags they can't keep any more fish that season. Now some people like to fish and don't want to keep them anyway. Recreational fishing is supposed to be a sport. It is not sporting to use barbed hooks. You can still catch fish with barbeless hooks that cause less damage to the fish which reduces the fish mortality rate. And after all isn't that what this plan is designed to accomplish?

Sincerely

John Forrest
VMRC ID 2995

Sent from [ProtonMail](#), encrypted email based in Switzerland.

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

From: [Sarah Machesko](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:50:24 PM

ASMFC,

Please prioritize rebuilding this fishery in the fast manner possible! I love fishing for stripers every spring and I'm scared about what the future holds with all of these bad spawns.

3.1.1 - B

3.1.2 - B1

3.2.1 - B

3.3 - B

Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Machesko

Recreational Striped Bass Angler

From: [Nick Praver](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:51:04 PM

Hello asmfc,

I am emailing to comment on Addendum II in concern to rebuilding the striped bass stock. I feel that the 28"-31" slot should be maintained for the ocean fishery. People want to catch fish more than they want to eat them. This narrow slot is adequate. Also a maximum recreational size needs to be implemented in the Chesapeake Bay. Complementary reductions also should happen for the commercial fishery. Lastly there should be no mode splits from the private to charter fleets. The simpler the regulations are to follow the better. Though inherently smaller the charter fleet is on the water far more than recreational fishermen and therefore do more damage.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Captain Nick Praver
Boothbay Harbor, Maine

From: giuseppe67@comcast.net
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Commercial fishing
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:56:45 PM

Please put an end to the commercial striper fishing for the next two years. This will greatly help the population recover. As we all know there is so much waste from commercial fishing, so many fish killed .

Also NO MODE SPLITS we're all in this together, and it will only work by all of us, Abiding by the same rules.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Fernando Melendez](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Emilie Franke](#); [Fernando Melendez](#)
Cc: reprobwittman@mail.house.gov; glenn.youngkin@governor.virginia.gov
Subject: [External] DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:10:32 PM

Dear Ms. Franke,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed limitations on rockfish fishing in 2024. While I understand the need for sustainable practices to protect marine life, these limitations have devastating consequences to charter fishermen and “for-hire” vessels, like mine, who are trying to eke out a living.

Both charter and commercial fishermen have faced sky-high fuel, maintenance, equipment and insurance costs, not to mention licensing, documentation and permit costs. With the 2022 Virginia regulations, charters were limited to one fish per person which diminished demand for people to charter boats. Striped bass attracts anglers to charter boats, especially in the southern part of the Chesapeake Bay, and it may be necessary to go across the bay to go to the optimal fishing areas. The further the distance we need to travel, the more it costs in fuel and wear and tear on the boat. If the limitations continue at status quo, or are further restricted, it will reduce demand and inhibits our ability to charge enough for charters to cover our costs.

Virginia already has more restrictive rules than other states from Maryland all the way to the Maine. The proposed regulations further restrict the fish we can catch.

We support our local economy by utilizing local mechanics and bait shops. It helps encourage tourism to a relatively depressed area in the Chesapeake Bay in Middlesex County. Rockfish is a huge attraction that brings people to this area. The proposed restrictions will negatively impact the local fishing community and businesses along the Chesapeake Bay that rely on these species for their livelihoods, leading to financial hardships for many families.

I recommend that the limitations for for-hire vessels be as lenient as possible. If the limitations for for-hire vessels are greater than those of the private vessels (or shoreline fishing), then it will encourage more people to hire fishing charters and keep our business afloat.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter. I hope that we can work towards a solution that safeguards rockfish populations while also supporting the needs of our fishing communities on the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Captain Fernando Melendez III
Owner
Atlantic Coast Fishing Charters

From: [John Sheriff](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II to AMD 7 Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:22:08 PM

Ms. Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission 1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
RE: Addendum II to AMD 7 Striped Bass FMP

Dear Ms. Franke,

As a Captain of the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association,

I would like to express my support of Option C regarding potential Striped Bass Regulations

Thank you!

Respectfully,

Captain John Sheriff
Captain Sheriff's Fishing Charters.
www.fishingchartersri.com
401-450-2549

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: [John Tighe](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:24:48 PM

ASMFC,

Please do what is necessary now to preserve and protect the Striped Bass fishery! The actions you take now will impact generations to come. I've been fishing the waters of Massachusetts for Striped Bass for the last 15 years and have seen a progressive decline in the fishery, especially over the last three years.

Please take a stand and protect these amazing fish!

Regards,

John

JFTighe2@gmail.com

From: [Derek Cummings](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Megan Ware](#); [Cheri Patterson](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:25:04 PM

My name is Derek Cummings, I am a current resident & recreational angler in New Hampshire originally from Connecticut. Every summer, I fish the coast of New England from Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire & Maine from boat, kayak & shore.

Deeply concerned does not begin to describe my disappointment in the recent track record of the ASMFC & the mediocre proposal options for Addendum II. A 50% chance of success by 2029 means this plan has already failed, these measures are not proactive enough to protect this fishery & "manage the striped bass stock for abundance" a phrase ASMFC members like to hang their hats upon.

All of the latest data points in one direction, to the definitive & imminent downfall of the striped bass population from year of the young to breeding biomass. We are well on our way to repeating history & the utter failures in fishery management from the 1990s.

We cannot allow states like Maryland & Massachusetts to continue to monetize the last of **our** breeding biomass with extremely disproportionate commercial allocations. We cannot allow states like New Jersey to continue to abuse conservation equivalency plans to maximize the impact of recreational harvest with trophy seasons. I should not have to remind members of the ASMFC that this is a **shared Atlantic resource** & the downfall of it will impact recreational & commercial anglers coastwide.

As quoted in 2018 by Robert Beal, the executive director of ASMFC to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.... *"Commercial striped bass fishing pumped \$103.2 million into the regional economy in 2018 and recreational striped bass fishing accounted for \$7.7 billion (yes billion) in revenue."*

The current priorities of the ASMFC are being questioned as legitimate, along with your credibility as a fishery management board. Conservation equivalency is not the solution, mode splits are not the solution, open commercial fisheries while the status of the stock is experiencing overfishing is not the solution, non-hybrid meetings to minimize public input is not the solution, using the recreational fishery as a scapegoat is not the solution.

Maine & New Hampshire have pioneered conservation measures for this fishery for decades, with strict regulations surrounding the use of circle hooks, no gaffs, retaining racks etc. The majority of my comments above are not directed at representatives of these states, I'm proud of what our state regulations have accomplished despite what happens south of our coastal waters. Our impact is next to none, and we are being taken advantage of by other states constantly looking for loopholes to continue monopolizing, monetizing & ultimately, depleting the future of this fishery. We need an enforceable set of coastwide regulations for all commercial & recreational fisheries, **yesterday**. Or we'll be looking at a moratorium **tomorrow**.

I encourage the ASMFC & Striped Bass Management Board to do everything within their power to restore this fishery by 2029. By whatever **equal & fair** means necessary, which

should be mandatory for all sectors & all states. Everyone has played a part in the recent downfall, it is on everyone to rebuild this fishery for future generations to enjoy.

I appreciate your time & detailed review of my concerns above, my comments directly related to Addendum II are shortlisted below. Thank you & happy holidays.

I am in favor of option B across the board with all proposed measures in Addendum II, with the exception of option B1 for Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fisheries. I highly encourage the ASMFC to ensure a 14.5% reduction in commercial fisheries against last year's harvest (not a quota they haven't filled), and mandate participation from states who will take advantage of any opportunity to delay in 2024. Act fast, act now & be proactive with impactful changes to restore this fishery before it's too late. Thank you.

From: [Christopher Pizaro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:25:57 PM

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1] -1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

From: [Jake Smith](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:26:18 PM

To whine it may concern,

I support the following options for draft addendum II:

- 3.1.1 option B
- 3.1.2 option B1
- 3.2.1 option B
- 3.1.4 option B
- 3.3 option B

The striped bass fishery needs to be managed the same across all the states or else no meaningful effect will occur. This fishery means much more to those who enjoy it and to the economy alive and swimming in the ocean.

Thank you,
Jake smith

From: perryjoshua16@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:32:27 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a recreational fisherman and marine biologist on Long Island. I support these options for draft addendum II:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Preserving and protecting these fish for future generations ensures not only Love and appreciation for our local waterways. But it also generates a thriving income for many.

Thank you so much for your time.

- Joshua Perry

From: [Capt. Eric Wallace](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass...
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:34:50 PM

Come on !!!! Let's do the right thing for this fishery,,, WTH !!!! This is nuts that we are needing to write in time and time again because the bullshit and lack of forward think from ASMFC... B across the board and B1 for the bay. How hard is it to protect this for its true value!!!!!! Let's do the right thing this time ASMFC

Capt.Eric Wallace
Ph 207-671-4330
coastalflyangler.com

From: [Henry, Ryan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II"
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:37:17 PM

Dear ASMFC,

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. Would be a good measure to ensure the safety of our future striped bass stocks

From: [Kevin Moffitt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:41:52 PM

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to express my concern over the current state of the striped bass fishery, along with potential for loosening regulations and loosening regulations for for-hire vessels.

I've been fishing for striped bass for 30 years now. I remember in the 90's as the fishery was exploding, catching all the schoolies you wanted. A keeper was an unexpected surprise, and big fish were virtually unheard of (for me anyway).

As I got older and went away for college, and moved for jobs far away from the Northeast, striper kind of become an afterthought. 10 years ago, I found myself drawn back....I was completely astonished by what the fishery had become. "Cows" became commonplace, and the passion which had laid dormant was revived.

I now fish for striped bass 100+ days a year. Fishing from Maine to NJ, from private boats, charters, and my true passion, the surf. Over the past 5 years I have seen a considerable change in the size of fish....both good and bad. I am catching bigger stripers than I ever have, but I've also seen my annual catch of sub-28 inch fish drop year over year, despite an increased effort, and largely targeting the same areas. This is not the sign of a healthy fishery, and as I understand it, mirrors what happened prior to the last crash.

I have a 4 year old son and a 2 year old daughter. My dream is for them to one day join me in my passion for this incredible fish, and it pains me to think that we're not doing everything possible to protect them.

Please make the correct decision on this matter and look at the long term consequences, as opposed to the vocal minority pushing for a short sighted "solution". I fully appreciate that charter captains have livelihoods that depend on catching fish, but look at Florida—there are more successful fishing captains there than arguably anywhere in the world, and there livelihoods are not negatively impacted by catch and release for fish like tarpon, bonefish and sailfish.

Thank you,

Kevin Moffitt

833 Willow Ave apt 2
Hoboken, NJ 07030

From: [Caroline Clukey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:46:02 PM

Hello,

I am writing this letter in support of option B on the proposed striper regulation. I feel the current slot limit in place best suits the needs of lower mortality and continued growth of the species to be admired and enjoyed by all.

There are many uncontrollable elements which contribute to this issue, but this is one way we can make our best efforts in mitigating.

Thank you,

Caroline Clukey

From: [Thomas Perkins](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:48:21 PM

My thoughts:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]-1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Please do what's right for the species!

From: [Paul Blanchard](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:49:15 PM

I wanted to write as a resident of Milford CT where I fish striped Bass on the Housatonic and Sound, that plan B is the best option for longevity of the species.

Thank you

Paul
Milford CT
Sent from my Phone

From: paulh7891@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:55:15 PM

Commissioners,

We must reduce striper mortality. I fish for stripers from Connecticut to Virginia, mostly in the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River - the fishing has been good for sizable fish, but there are no small fish. Spawning success seems to be dismal (for years now). Disaster is looming. Accordingly, I support the following choices as the most appropriate of the options presented-

3.1.1 option B - Ocean recreational 1 fish 28"-31". 2022 seasons all modes

3.1.2 option B2 for Chesapeake Bay recreational- 1 fish 19"-23" across all Chesapeake jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial quota reduction option B - 14.5% reduction for both ocean and Chesapeake Bay

3.3 - option B, board action in response to stock assessments.

Best Regards,

Paul Heinold
Alexandria, Va

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Papciak](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:56:00 PM

Dear ASMFC Associate,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the latest set of options to support the recovery of the striped bass population.

I am writing to you from New York.

To keep this letter short I offer my preferred options;

Preferred Options

3.1.1 B

3.1.2 B1

3.2.1 B

3.3 B

I should note that the accompanying conservation data provided by ASMFC suggests very little difference in the options.

It would seem the only meaningful change we are considering at this point is a possible split in the regulations (different regs for For-Hire). As far as New York is considered, the public would require much more transparency on the overlap of those who are licensed to take recreational fishermen for-hire, but also hold permits to harvest striped bass commercially. We appear to have a population of commercial fishermen who essentially want to be the voice of recreational fishermen. We simply need better disclosure (data that New York has) to understand the extent to which we have conflicts of interest here.

Thank you

John Papciak

From: [Doug Caplan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II Commentary
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:56:09 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:

My name is Doug Caplan. I am an avid recreational angler, currently living in Framingham, Massachusetts. I have been fishing for Striped Bass since I was a kid, and I have caught and released this wonderful species from Long Island Sound all the way to the Damariscotta River in Maine and everywhere in between. Fishing for Striped Bass is a passion of mine that I expect to be able to pass down to my kids and others in the future. Without protection, this will not be possible given the current population crisis Stripers are experiencing. Protecting striped bass stocks, safeguarding the recreational angling industry that relies on these fish, and ensuring that future generations of anglers can enjoy our coastal fishery are paramount. With this said, I wish to support the following options in the current Addendum II draft:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options, I support: Option B—1-fish at 28-31” with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options, I support: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23” across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options, I support: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment, I support: Option B—Board Action.

I cannot emphasize the need for proactive management enough. The success of the Striped Bass fishing industry over the last two decades has stood on the shoulders of past anglers who saw the need for management in the 1970s and 80s. Those anglers made sacrifices to their needs at the time and prioritized the fishery long term. We are in a similar situation. We can prioritize the future, or we can continue to drag our feet, see a crash, and then a moratorium in five years. It's up to us to manage now.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Addendum II.

Doug Caplan
12/22/2022
Framingham, MA

From: [Alan Battista](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:56:16 PM

I am writing in favor of:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Alan Battista

From: [Justin Foley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:58:46 PM

To the respected members of the ASMFC,

I am typing this letter to express my interest in preserving the Striped Bass population.

*I believe that this is an absolute critical time to do so!
After reading through about 30 pages of script, my opinion is as follows...*

I am supporting the following options for Draft Addendum II":

- 3.1.1 Option B*
- 3..1.2 Option B1*
- 3.2.1 Option B*
- 3.1.4 Option B*
- 3.3. Option B*

I am a surfcaster located in Rhode Island. I fish just about every single day and/or night from mid-April to early December.

My biggest concern for this population is obviously commercial fishing. I don't agree with much, or any part of the industry.

Another concern is the amount of fish being poached. I have (in the last season, alone) approached about 30

different people that were harvesting undersize and oversized fish: Striped Bass and other species included. The poaching is at a level I have never seen before. I have contacted our local DEM numerous times, but the poachers are relentless. Harsher penalties must be employed, but this is another topic.

Us anglers put our faith in the ASMFC to make the right decisions. Please consider our fishery for now, and for our future.

*Respectfully,
-Justin Foley*

From: [Eric Larsen](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:59:02 PM

In regards, to the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II, I would like to comment as follows:

1. For Ocean Size Limit, I am in favor of option B (28-31) all modes.
2. For Commercial Quota, I am in favor of option B (up to 14.5% reduction from 2022 quotas.
3. For Chesapeake Bay Size/Bag Limit, I am in favor of Option B1 (19-23. all fish modes)

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Eric Larsen

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Draft Addendum
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:00:17 PM

From: kavester@aol.com <kavester@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:25 PM
To: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Cc: ARNOLD ULRICH <kavester@aol.com>
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum

Good Day Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, We would like to stay with Option B of the Striped Bass Management Plan.

Thank You
Arnold Ulrich
164 Jefferson Street
Wood-Ridge, New Jersey, 07075
phone 201 304 4691
kavester@aol.com

From: [Aubrey Peterson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:15:11 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

Please know that I am writing to recommend measures that achieve the 14.5% reduction in total removals needed to achieve F target in 2024. Please consider:

- (1) maintaining the current 28-31” slot for the ocean fishery
- (2) implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay
- (3) complementary reductions in the commercial fishery
- (4) no mode splits, meaning same regulations for private and charter.

I hope you will do what is necessary to maintain or better yet revitalize diminishing strike Bass populations to a sustainable level that will benefit all. Thank you for your time.

Aubrey H. Peterson
141 Town Lane
East Hampton, NY 11937

From: [Eric Burnley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:22:33 PM

Maintain the 28 to 31 inch slot in the ocean and keep the 19 to 23-inch slot in the bays. All recreational fishermen are the same no matter if they are on a for-hire boat, their own boat or fishing from shore. Eric Bruce Burnley, Sr. 16840 Randor Drive, Milton, Delaware, 19968

From: [Dillon Waters](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:22:33 PM

Striped Bass Management Board,

I am submitting the following comments regarding Draft Addendum II. My selected options represent the greatest reductions in harvest given the options available.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery: I support Option B, 1 fish @ 28-31".

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery: I support Option B1, 19"-23" All Modes

3.1.3 For Hire Management: I do not support mode splits.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B is preferred.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction: I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction. However, a 14.5% commercial reduction is still less than what will be required to rebuild the populations.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates: I support Option B, Board Action.

Thank you,

Sent from my iPhone

From: [KC Kerr](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:26:59 PM

ALCON,

In favor of:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Very Respectfully,

KC Kerr

From: [Matt Jacobus](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:40:04 PM

To the Advisors and Board members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

My name is Matthew Jacobus and I am an avid Striped Bass fisherman living on the North Shore of Massachusetts. I first wrote during the Amendment 7 comment period, and I was very happy that many protective measures passed that will help protect this valuable natural resource.

In the time that has passed since I originally wrote, we've had another 2-3 failed Chesapeake spawns, and quite frankly, the future is looking bleak. Next year is the first year where the initial push of migratory schoolies in May will hail from the first of the 5 failed recruitment year classes. Hey, I'll be out there in May and will hope for the best, but deep down, I'm not optimistic.

I urge the commission to select the addendum options that will provide the stock the greatest chance of recovery; the options I believe will do this are listed below.

-Matthew Jacobus (Marblehead, MA)

- **3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:** Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

- **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:** Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

- **3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected):** Support 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:** Support 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.*

- **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:** Support 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%.*

- **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:** Support 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.

From: [Jayson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:42:09 PM

Good evening - these are the options I support.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Thank you for your time.

Jayson Mellinger

From: [Clayton Baddley](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:50:04 PM

Hello,

I am in favor of these options.

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]-1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1] -1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]-Board Action.

Sincerely,
Clayton Baddley

This message is for the designated recipient only and may contain privileged, proprietary, or otherwise private information. If you have received it in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete the original. Any other use of this email is prohibited.

From: [Brad Ayres](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass regulations
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:55:35 PM

It's time that the charter boats and sports fishermen have the same regulations. In the Chesapeake Bay there are so many charter boats running full charters twice a day and limiting out. Around these boats I've seen countless dead striped bass from releases that caused another dead fish.

From: [Bob Strassel Jr.](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:57:43 PM

Emilie Franke

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission FMP Coordinator 1050 N. Highland Street Suite 200 A-N Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Franke:

I would like to recommend Option B be selected and implemented by ASMFC to help protect and restore the striped bass stock, particularly the 2015 year class. I understand that this option is based on the 2022 fishery data available at the time of the assessment. This option will have the greatest overall reduction in harvest, although I recognize that this option is projected to increase recreational fishing mortality by 2%.

I recommend ASMFC select and implement Option B1 for the Chesapeake Bay fishery that will restrict the harvest of larger bass greater than 23 inches.

I recommend ASMFC select and implement Option B for the for-hire management measures apply only to patrons during for-hire trips, and strongly recommend that captain and crew on for-hire trips are subject to the private vessel/shore angler limits.

I recommend ASMFC select and implement Option B for all states relating to at-sea/shore-side filleting of striped bass, to 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 also fully consider including language about when and where racks may be disposed of, specific to each mode allowed to fillet at-sea/shore.

I recommend ASMFC select and implement Option B relating to the ocean commercial fisheries and/or Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries be managed by quotas representing up to a 14.5% reduction from the 2022 commercial quotas and their 2022 size limits.

I recommend the Board select a specific percent reduction of at least 10%, and preferably 14.5%. The 14.5% reduction will help to reduce 3.65 million bass from being harvested in the Atlantic Coastal state fisheries.

I recommend Option B for the Board having the responsibility to respond, via Board action, to timely 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.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Strassel Jr.
24 Cos Cob Ave, Apt. 3
Cos Cob, Connecticut 06807

Licensed Fly Fishing Guide
Connecticut & New York

From: [Anthony Hancock](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:58:52 PM

To the Striped Bass Advisory Board and ASMFC as a whole, I know that you will have a difficult but very important decision to make on behalf of millions of people who depend on striped bass up and down the Atlantic seaboard. As one angler I would like to express a few feelings that I have and know that thousands more will be sending their comments your way as well. Please do everything in your power to protect the 2015 year class of striped bass and our breeding biomass. I believe in equal reductions across the board as a goal of 14.5%. We all have a chance on both the recreational and commercial sectors to try and protect the species we live so much. As a fisherman hailing from Maryland, please consider option B1 or B2 for the recreational fishery segment within the Chesapeake Bay. We need to show that we can do better than a 14.5% reduction and lead the charge to save the largest segment of future breeders contributing to the future breeding biomass for the sake of the entire East coast. There should be NO mode shifts. 1 legal striped bass is plenty and it should be a fair harvest across the board, no exceptions should be made for for hire vessels.

I would like to also see ASMFC ask for more science from the scientific body related to a northern shift in breeding striped bass as we continue to experience global climate change. Is Hudson Bay increasing in its breeding population numbers and year class strength contributing to coastal stock? Will fish that stay in water from New Jersey waters over winter spawn in Hudson Bay vs. making a brief journey to the Chesapeake to spawn? We need more tagging and really more satellite telemetry data to see how breeding stock migrations are changing. Roanoke River and NC in general is not what it used to be. Is the Chesapeake Bay losing steam as well? As time passes we may need to stand on the backs of New Jersey regulations of striped bass in order to protect the coastal stock just as much or more than the Chesapeake. Also in the Potomac River fishery within the Bay where I am blessed to call home, I have pursued "rockfish" for over 30 years. We are still seeing great numbers of 20-30 inch fish yearly and a good assemblage of year classes vs. other breeding rivers within the Chesapeake. Are we seeing certain micro- populations of fish flourishing in certain tributaries vs. others. We need to figure out the right ingredients that make certain spawning rivers more productive than others. Again satellite tracking data or tagging data would help to determine where this fish are actually migrating to and successfully spawning. We need an ecosystem based approach and more scientific data may help persuade political powers at be.

My last little thought. Striped bass, my beloved rockfish, mean the world to me and countless others. The only fish my 3 year old daughter knows is a "rockfish". She constantly asks me to draw a rockfish for her in the driveway with sidewalk chalk, she snuggles with her rockfish stuffed animal every night, and her hand drawn rockfish pictures adorn my office desk and mark the pages in my favorite fishing books. This email is for her and the next generation of girls and boys who will love and cherish striped bass as much as I do. Please do what is required to protect this fishery and keep the hope alive for all that eat, sleep, and breathe striped bass, stripers, linesiders, and rockfish for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I pray that with all the tools at your disposal that positive outcomes will come from this draft addendum II.

Anthony Hancock

Cobb Island, MD

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

From: [NightShiftFishing](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#); [Comments](#)
Cc: [Matthew Elia](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:11:13 PM

Greetings Ms. Emilie Franke,

I would like to thank the board for the outreach provided as part of the addendum process. My general feedback is the following:

- It is 2023 and the technology that exists today affords an opportunity to provide in-person, hybrid and virtual format meetings. If the board is genuinely interested reaching as many anglers as possible all meetings for all member states should be conducted to allow both virtual and in-person participation. Even if that means two separate sessions for each meeting are needed. I personally prefer in-person meetings and I attended the session in Massachusetts at the Mass Maritime Academy.
- The board needs to look into additional mitigations beyond reducing the mortality. The board should look to develop and invest in a program to bolster the population of striped bass, similar to other programs used to breed, hatch and grow trout prior to stocking in local ponds.
- The board **MUST** develop a better, more accurate assessment of the recreational anglers' impact. The information provided at the meeting did **NOTHING** to give me confidence in the data relative to the impact of the recreational anglers the board is utilizing to make decisions. In fact, I feel **LESS** confident in the board's ability to effectively manage the species of striped bass based on the answers to questions and information provided at the meeting. The figures provided indicated that only approximately 2% of recreational anglers are surveyed for catch. This is not a sample size, this is a margin of error. There needs to be a more robust data collection effort in order for the board to have actual information representative of the true impact of the recreational anglers. I have **NO CONFIDENCE** that that board actually knows and/or understands the impact of recreational anglers based on the information provided at the meeting I attended.

In regards to the items posed, I am in favor of:

Ocean Size Limit Option: **B** 28-31 all modes

For-Hire Clarification: **B** clarify

Commercial Quota Option: **B** up to 14.5% reduction

Chesapeake Bay Size/Bag Limit: **B1** 19-23,1 fish all modes

Recreational Filleting: **B** establish minimums

Board Response: **A** status quo

Best regards,

Matthew T. Elia, MBA

From: [Adam Wiles-Rosell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:11:38 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to share my position on addendum II which is supposed to save or striped bass fishery.

This past season was an exceptional season for Maine standards. However, I fear that many, including those who have been put in powerful positions feel that this means “nothing is wrong”. I’d say that opinion might be tinted by rose colored glasses.

I would like the board to strongly consider the future of the fishery. What do you all want it to look like? Do you want no abundance and all charters to go out of business due to lack of interest by the eco tourism industry. Do you think recreational anglers will lose interest because this fight has dragged on far too long?

Sometimes the best thing to do is often the hardest thing to do. The RIGHT thing to do can often lead to anger and immense opposition, particularly by those who have become so comfortable with maintaining the status quo due to their own self interests.

The best thing to do would be to give striped bass game fish status. Take a page from Florida and what they did to protect the tarpon fishery. Someone please tell me why striped bass should be treated any differently. Tarpon are iconic to the State of Florida and Striped bass are arguably more iconic for even more States.

Protect them at all costs. Stop the harvest of these fish. Protect them. Catch and release only. No need to fuss with a slot for different states trying to dodge different rules. Make this easy for everyone and do the RIGHT thing. Protect the fish. So my kids and many others can have fun seeing what abundance looks like for an iconic SPORT fish.

Many thanks
Adam Wiles-Rosell

From: [Brody Eckert](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:18:52 PM

Atlantic striped bass should be designated as gamefish. No commercial fishing should be allowed. Commercial fishing harvest is the greatest threat to striper population. Let recreational fishermen have a reasonable limit and size restriction. Stop allowing commercial outfits to line political pockets and ruin a great fishery.

From: [abe.pearson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:23:00 PM

I am a recreational angler living in southern Maine. I strongly support the conservation efforts of the American saltwater guides association and agree with their recommendations regarding draft addendum 2.

Sincerely

Abram Pearson

Eliot, ME

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joseph Bieberich](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:19:37 PM

Please see my preferred options below:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]

From: [Patrick Donohue](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:24:17 PM

Hello,

I am reaching out as a Massachusetts resident and recreational angler in Massachusetts coastal waters. I am concerned about the future of the Atlantic striped bass population as recruitment numbers have been very low in recent years. The following are the options that I believe would be best for the future of the striped bass populations.

3.1.1: Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.1.3 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.2.1 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thanks,

Patrick Donohue

From: [Mac Huelster](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:25:25 PM

Please protect these fish.

Please continue with the 28-31 slot limit.
Please don't go with the Mode Split plan.
Please protect the Chesapeake bay fish.

It would be great if we saw more officers enforcement out there to discourage poor fish handling practices. I saw too many anglers mishandling fish. Such a shame.

Thank you
Mac Huelster

From: [Klark Goros](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:25:38 PM

Good Evening ASMFC Team,

I'm reaching out to provide my comments on the draft addendum II for striped bass. I support the following options:

- 3.1.1 Option B
- 3.1.2 Option B1
- 3.2.1 Option B
- 3.1.4 Option B
- 3.3 Option B

Thank you for taking the time to receive public comments, and specifically for taking my input into consideration. Let's get this fishery back to its best!!!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Regards,
Klark Goros

From: [Arthur Giulietti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:27:45 PM

Gentlemen,

Since the stocks of Striped Bass continue to decline. The more the stocks decline without seeing a recovery puts the entire fishery at risk.

I support all actions by the Commission to stop the downward spiral of fish stocks so the viability of the fishery will return for the benefit of all. I believe that includes support for Option B and B1 for the Chesapeake area.

In addition, each State should:

1. Enforce existing fishing regulations on Striper Fishing including possession, slot limits and the use of Circle hooks,
2. Educate the public on proper on handling of fish including limiting the time of taking a fish out of the water if you are going to release it, not handling fish with dry hands, keeping any caught fish brought out of the water horizontal and not vertical, and if you are a "Catch and Release" fisher use barbless hooks.

Hope my comments help.

Regards,
Arthur Giulietti

Sent from my iPho

From: [Oliver Hulland](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:31:01 PM

More needs to be done to reduce the commercial quota. I fully support the narrower slot limit and would encourage stronger enforcement on these matters.

I want there to be Striped Bass around for my three year old to catch them when their my age, and I worry not enough is being done to reduce yields in the face of several years of poor spawning.

Oliver Hulland MD

From: [Fred O'Neal](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:35:52 PM

Make striped bass a sport fish

From: [Skyler Davis](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:45:34 PM

Striped Bass Management Board,

I am submitting the following comments regarding Draft Addendum II. My preferred options represent the largest possible harvest reductions given the options available.

My preferred options are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]-1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]-1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]-Board Action.

Best regards,
Skyler

From: [Michael Janson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:49:05 PM

Dear ASMFC,

Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations for striped bass.

I have fished around Martha's Vineyard for many years and worked in a fish market on the Vineyard. I remember a time when striped bass were abundant and large bass were not uncommon to catch by more experienced anglers.

I believe that striped bass in the waters around Martha's Vineyard are overfished and the fishery is at risk of damage that will take decades to repair.

My recommendation is that the management board prioritize rebuilding the striped bass population and choose the option that most reduces the amount of striped bass taken each year.

Specifically, on the proposed management options, I support the following:

- 3.1.1 Ocean recreational fishery - I support Option B, which is estimated to reduce fish mortality by 14.1%. This is the most straightforward and easiest to administer approach that will most rebuild the fishery. It does not make sense to allow for-hire boats to take a different size fish. Allowing this would incentivize more for-hire fishing trips which will increase mortality. For-hire boats can prosper with the same limit as the recreational fishing community.
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options - I support Option B1. I live in Maryland and would like to fish in the Chesapeake this coming spring. I support a 1 fish bag limit with a slot of 19" to 23" because this is estimated to reduce the mortality the most of all options (22.4%). I do not support a for-hire 2 fish bag limit. There's no need to incentivize more for-hire trips in this way. There are plenty of other healthy fish stocks in the Chesapeake that can sustain the for-hire fleet, e.g., bluefish. There are tons of snakeheads and catfish, too, that for-hire boats can pursue. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources survey results, announced on October 12, 2023, indicated that the young striped population is in crisis. The index this year was 1.0 compared to the long-term average of 11.1. This calls for bold measures.
- 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification - I do not support different limits for for-hire boats. If a split management option is unfortunately chosen, however, I support Option B because the captain and crew shouldn't be allowed to take more fish than a recreational angler on a private vessel. Allowing this would incentivize more fish mortality.
- 3.1.4 Recreational filleting allowance requirements - I support Option B. This oversight would most put anglers on notice of the need to abide by the rules and to replenish the fishery. It may not be easily enforced, but the rules could have a significant deterrent effect for the benefit of the fishery.
- 3.2.1 Commercial Fishery Management - I support Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the ocean commercial fisheries and the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. There are plenty of other abundant fish that can be targeted by the commercial fisheries both in the ocean and in the Bay. The Bay quota has not significantly been reduced

since 2015. It is well past the time for the quota to be reduced.

- 3.3 Response to stock assessment - I support Option B because it will allow a faster response to assessment updates. We don't have time to wait. We need to be able to make changes in 2024 to affect as much as the 2025 season as possible.

As you know, all of the available data indicates that the striped bass fishery is in crisis. The Martha's Vineyard "Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby" hasn't included striped bass since 2020. People up and down the coast know that we need to take strong action, and that it will involve shared sacrifice. There are other fish stocks that can be targeted to mitigate the economic consequences of giving the striped bass population a chance to rebound.

I would like to see a day when the striped bass population is healthy and stable. Not just for me, but for my kids and their kids, too. So that they can have the fun of catching striped bass as part of a sustainable fishery.

Thank you for considering the public's views on this matter, and thank you for all of the work you do to protect these fisheries.

Sincerely,
Michael Janson

From: [Philip Traficanti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:54:53 PM

Keep slot limit in place and prosecute those who overfish the limit.

Reduce the quota on commercial fisherman as well.
Sent from my iPad

From: [Silas Finnegan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:55:28 PM

Hi there,

Please see my choices for the options below and strongly consider adding these changes!

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Thank you!

Best,

Silas Finnegan (born and raised on the Chesapeake)
[301-605-3700](tel:301-605-3700)

From: [Gregory Stohrer](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:57:01 PM

ASMFC,

I have read through this Addendum and after speaking/hearing countless guides, who spend more time on the water than anyone, this is an easy one to support. Common sense seems to reign supreme here! Thank you for your time and please consider this for the good of the fishery and livelihood of captains along the Atlantic coastline.

With Urgency,
Greg Stohrer

From: [Grant Deller](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:58:26 PM

I am in favor of these actions:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]-1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

- o 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B]1-1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.
- o 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake
- o Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]-Board Action.

**Thank you for your attention in this matter,
Grant Deller
Deller Excavating
(717)891-8235**

From: [Edwin G.](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:59:14 PM

I don't think reducing the size help to solve the problem...

It is more like reinforcing the fines for those guy who's poaching a lot of fish every single day they going fishing...

I know couple guy who keeps like 20 to 30 fish in a single day if they catch more they continue poaching just for sale and make money....

Thanks for give the opportunity of taking a chance to expose this guys and I know a couple too get a ticket this pass season and only pay \$100.00 dollars fine and a month or two they was catching again with over size fish and when back to court and pay another \$ 100 dollars fine and know they said it is just a \$ 100.00 dollars fine ...

I warranty next season 2024 they continue poaching a lot of strippers because they not afraid to paid another \$ 100.00 dollars fine ...

They make mor money selling strippers every day they going to fish and don't be caught...

From: [Jackson Murphy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:02:34 PM

Good evening,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.

I am a recreational surfcaster in Massachusetts who has fished for striped bass for nearly 25 years. The decline in striped bass stocks and lack of spawning success in recent years is deeply concerning.

Because striped bass are a migratory species, I believe that the successful rebuilding of this fishery requires a coordinated effort among all states they populate along the Atlantic coastline. That is why I support Ocean Recreational Option B: one fish at 28-31" (all modes). I believe private and charter-for-hire recreational fishing should be managed under the same regulations.

I also support option B1 for Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: one fish at 19-23" across CBAY jurisdictions.

In addition, I support 3.2.1 Option B for a 14.5 percent commercial quota reduction to the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay quotas; and 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Option B — Board Action.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jackson Murphy
Boston, Mass.

From: [Will Hallett](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:03:20 PM

Hi my name is William Hallett I am a fisherman from Connecticut. I'm writing to say that I support option B at 28-31 inches for ocean recreational options and option b1 with 19-23 inches for Chesapeake recreational options. I also support option B for a 14.5 % reduction for ocean and Chesapeake bay quotas as well as option b for board action in response to the stock assessment.

Thank you and have a happy holidays

William Hallett

From: [Zak Robinson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:04:39 PM

Good evening, please find my comments regarding Striped Bass management below.

Option: B Excerpt from Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery
Option: B1 Excerpt from Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery
Option: B Excerpt from Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification
Option: B Excerpt from Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance
Option: B Excerpt from Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction
Option: B Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates



Zak Robinson
Rising Tide Anglers
Guided Fly Fishing

- [6038288290](tel:6038288290)
- Zak@risingtideanglers.com
- www.risingtideanglers.com
- Portsmouth, NH and Narragansett, RI



From: [Winslow Dresser](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:18:32 PM

Hi ASMFC,

I am a recreational angler from the state of Maine writing to express my support for the options outlined below.

I also want to express my extreme disappointment with the failure of leadership in several states to appropriately respond to the impending disaster with striped bass stocks. It is absolutely shameful that commercial interests are allowed to prioritize short term gains over long term best interest of ALL (rec & commercial). I personally feel that commercial fishing for this species should end immediately and a no-harvest moratorium should strongly be considered. The science on our changing climate is clear and the impacts will be extreme. This species may not bounce back as it has before even if we do give it the chance (and right now we are not even providing that chance).

I also encourage the ASMFC to keep in mind that failure to act appropriately here may result in enough of us getting fed up that we contact our federal legislators and demand a different and more responsive system for managing this fishery.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Give the existing choices, I prefer:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: [Option B]-1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]—1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: [Option B]—Board Action.

Sincerely,
Winslow Dresser
Portland, ME

From: [Chris Bruckner](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:25:01 PM

Looks like you have to stop targeting all striped bass fishing even recreational release if you want any chance of getting the numbers back. I quit fishing for striped bass because it's not worth my time for one fish.

Need to address menhaden fishing in the bay because bass need them as a food source.

Also need to address other states regulations, it's ridiculous seeing post from states north of us being able to keep fish we can't. Until it's even across the board it's a losing battle.

Thanks
Chris Bruckner

From: [James Goodhart](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:27:49 PM

Dear Commissioners,

The striped bass stock and recruitment is in a dire situation and immediate conservation actions are necessary. As a member of the for hire fleet, I'm in favor of **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options:** Option B1—"1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons. I'm also in favor of **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:** Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas. I'm also in favor of **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:** Option B—Board Action. The members of the Commission that feel their job is to obstruct and delay action need to be reigned in. The future of the stock and our jobs is too important. If action is delayed and avoided the stock will likely take decades to recover. This is not a game!

Sincerely,
James

Capt. James C. Goodhart
Shadowcaster Charters
56 Boardman St.
Newburyport, MA 01950
(978) 463-7755
www.shadowcastercharters.com

From: [John Turvey](#)
To: [Comments](#); [TOM FOTE](#); [C. LOUIS BASSANO](#); [HEATHER CORBETT](#); [Joe Cimino](#); [Russ Allen](#); [captadam@karenanni.com](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:39:46 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to you because I am very concerned about the status of Striped Bass. I am a New Jersey fly and spin surf angler and have been in the sport for 20 years. I speak from the perspective of an almost exclusively catch and release fisherman. I started fishing in 2003, when striped bass were at their more recent peak and have had the unfortunate experience of seeing striped bass stocks get to where they are today. Striped bass fishing is my passion and each year I travel my home state and the Northeast pursuing striped bass. Along the way. This pastime takes up the majority of my disposable income on travel, accommodations, charters, fuel, and tackle. In recent years I have decreased the number of charter trips I take annually because of decreased availability of striped bass. Recreational catch and release angling is a powerful economic engine along the East Coast which bolsters coastal communities during the shoulder seasons. This could all go away if we don't do our part to protect these fish.

Conversations with charter captains, friends along the coast, and personal experience all agree with what the data is telling us. The species is contracting. With less competition striped bass are more concentrated in fewer places. Anecdotal reports of excellent fishing by boat fishermen using 21st century electronics don't override the fact that striped bass are less dispersed. Whether on boat or on shore, anglers are traveling further and having to hit more spots to locate fish. During numerous trips in the 2023 season I observed a striking absence of fish from last 5 year classes. It was also clear that striped bass were extremely concentrated in a few limited areas while other areas of the NJ coast has extremely limited fishing opportunities. This lack of dispersal is concerning regardless of whatever good fishing may be reported by those who find the "bite".

The following are my comments on the Draft Addendum II

3.1.1: (Option B) I support a continuation of the 1 fish at 28-31" regulation. I saw fewer bass harvested this season and credit this regulation with this reduction.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: [Option B1]-1 fish at 19-23" across all Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: [Option B] with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

Strident action needs to be taken to protect the Chesapeake nursery. With record low recruitment over consecutive seasons and the variety of environmental challenges facing the Bay, it's critical to maintain strict management practices to give this fishery an opportunity to recover and build back the stock of 1-5 year fish that were notably absent during our fall run in

I am very encouraged by ASMFC's work with Atlantic Menhaden and am seeing greater abundance of Menhaden than I have in years. I hope that you will take action now to prevent another striped bass moratorium and to protect the species for future generations. The longer we delay, the more challenging that recovery will be. Thank you for considering these comments and your efforts in managing one of our most underappreciated and vitally important natural resources.

Best,

John Turvey

John Turvey
7 Roebling Court
Leonardo NJ 07737

From: [Jonathan Harriott](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:40:23 PM

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options:

- I support **Option B** - 1 fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 season (all modes)

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

- I support **Option B1**- The minimum size will be 19", and the bag limit one fish. Maximum size limit of 23"

3.1.3 For-Hire management clarification (if for-hire mode-specific limits are selected)

- I support **Option B**

3.1.4 Recreational filleting allowance requirements

- I support **Option B**

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

- I support **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.

-I recommend that the board select a **14.5%** reduction

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

- I support **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.

- Jonathan Harriott

From: [Mitchell Cooney](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:58:45 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in support of the proposed additional regulations regarding the catch, release and harvest of striped bass. Specifically, I am recommending measures aimed at achieving a 14.5% reduction in total removals needed to achieve F target in 2024. In particular, I am in favor of proposed addendum items 1-4, with a particular focus on adding addendum 2 regarding Chesapeake max recreational size, and keeping addendum 1.

Best,
Mitch Cooney

Boston, MA

From: [Amelia Larkin](#)
Cc: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 12:00:23 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in support of the proposed additional regulations regarding the catch, release and harvest of striped bass. Specifically, I am recommending measures aimed at achieving a 14.5% reduction in total removals needed to achieve F target in 2024. In particular, I am in favor of proposed addendum items 1-4, with a particular focus on adding addendum 2 regarding Chesapeake max recreational size, and keeping addendum 1.

Best,
Amelia Larkin

Boston, MA

From: [Gianfranco Z](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 12:00:47 AM

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Gianfranco Zaffina I am a recreational fisherman from Southport, Connecticut and long time member of the Westport Striped Bass Club. I'm a catch and release surfcaster primarily fishing my home waters of CT up to Massachusetts from March to December. I attended the November 30th meeting in Milford but wanted to reiterate where I stand in hopes of helping this fishery rebound.

I support the following

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B

I've been chasing these fish for close to 30 years now and this cycle we are in seems dire, we are playing catch up to save the stocks but not enough is being done. Speaking with friends up and down the coast we are all in agreement things are on a drastic decline and we need to do better, the committee needs to do better to save this resource for the future by taking action immediately.

Thank you for your time,
Gianfranco Zaffina

From: [Phil Tartaglione](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] striped bass adendum
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 12:04:12 AM

please for the love of god, do not allow the mode split. If a moratorium is not a possibility, keep the current slot limit for ALL ANGLERS. Charter boats will "limit out" several times per day. It's beyond gluttonous. There shouldn't be special rules that apply to certain anglers, while other anglers get a pass. There is an entire animal species at stake, and we are directly responsible for its success or demise. Just because people pay for a charter, doesn't mean they should get special regulations.

-NJ Striped Bass Angler

From: [Eric Cronin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 12:04:16 AM

Hi,

As an avid Striped Bass enthusiast and passionate angler. I believe the striped bass population to be in danger. My log showed only 3 outings this year where I came across fish under 20" consistently.

I am in favor of any regulation changes that support a significant conservation effort to protect all striper bass and not a small portion of them.

For a fish that represents a massive economic impact to small businesses and manufacturers in the industry, if an effort isn't prioritized to rebuild the stock then your inaction is an indication that you prioritize that of political interests and commercial interest over the larger economic sector of the recreational community.

So many people have little faith in our government in our society and it extends down to small groups that govern the striped bass population. Every time an Addendum comes up and it goes in favor of not conservation the community loses faith in the governing body of the population.

Don't be the group that proves us right that our government officials can't be trusted to do the right thing.

Eric

Sent from my iPhone

From: [colin mcelroy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft Addendum II
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 12:07:58 AM

Hello to whom it may concern,

I am reaching out due to concerning actions from the recreational and Commercial fishermen/fisherwoman up and down the Atlantic coast who fish for striped bass.

What I have witnessed over the years has been really crazy in the fact of zero respect for these fish and their opportunity to spawn. I really think that there are actions we can all take to make a stronger comeback for better spawn opportunities. I really think a smaller size limit will help the larger fish be able to spawn. Also limiting the amount of fish taken by commercial fisherman.

Whatever we can do to help these fish bounce back we need to do. With this addendum II is a step closer to making that happen.

I hope for the best in this situation and hope we can all continue to enjoy the fishery we have.
Thank you

Colin McElroy

From: fishnsa@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum 2
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2023 8:31:17 AM

I believe I saw a option for a 28"-31" slot limit recreation and a 28-33" limit for hire and I believe this is what it should be going forward if we aren't going to go back to the old slot limit of 28 inches to 35 inches. I have been consistently striped bass fishing recreationally for 25 years and for higher guide for the last 15. Also commercial fishing for striped bass the last 15 years and in my experience have been able to catch fish consistently in all three phases as a striped bass fisherman. Catch and release, as a guide, and commercially. I strongly do not believe we need a 14.5% reduction in quota. Recently we have been able to meet our quota of the 7 hundred thousand lbs and shut the fishery down pretty early and take a lot of pressure off these fish during the latter months of the season. I have run into more fish after the season than during due to less pressure . The "science" and "numbers" don't always tell the whole story . The striped bass fishery is strong . From Chesapeake bay to Nova Scotia people are catching striped bass .

Sent from my iPhone

From: [PETER SCHWIND](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Peter & Anne Schwind](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Sunday, December 24, 2023 10:30:51 AM

Hi Please correct date 1040 should be 1940's. Capt. Pete

From: PETER SCHWIND
Sent: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:16 PM
To: 'comments@asmfc.org' <comments@asmfc.org>
Cc: Peter & Anne Schwind <paschwind@comcast.net>
Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II

Emilie Franke
FMP Coordinator
1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Hi,

I am a commercial Stripe Bass fisherman from Massachusetts. I have been fishing for Striped Bass since the late 1040's

I will only comment on two areas:

Ocean Recreational: I would be in favor of option D. As a holder of a 6 pack license, I understand the desire of charters (after spending hundreds dollars on the charter) desiring to take home enough fillets for a nice fish cook out. There is a significant differences between a 31 inch and a 33 inch fish.

Commercial Quota: I would be strongly in favor of Option A. Our quota has been significant deduced through the years. The reduced quota (reduced fishing time) has driven quite a few of my friends out of the business.

Current data indicates the fishery is improving and anecdotal testimony supports that. I have never seen the large number of schools of Bass as I saw last year and this year. Fish ranging from 20 to 34.5 inches. One day I trolled for 10 miles in a straight line looking for commercial fish. Fishing two lines I had a fish on almost continuously.

In the past I have trolled four rods from my boat. For the past two years I only troll 2. My guests can't understand. Are your other rods broken? Etc. We catch so many fish within 30 minutes of fishing they are pleading with me, "do we have to put out the second rod." A few years ago it was a very rare to see a school of bass on my fish finder. The last two years I don't bother looking. The only question is how big is the current school?

The fishing this Fall in New York and New Jersey is unbelievable. I read where, on an average trip, every patron on a 65 foot head boats lands at least five fish a trip in the 40 to 50 pound range. This fishing continued for weeks. Where did these fish come from? It is my believe that your data collection system has missed large schools of large fish.

Tight lines,

Capt. Pete Schwind

paschwind@comcast.net

978-314-8988

From: [John Preti](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 10:13:37 AM

I understand this comment regarding Striped Bass is late. I was medflighted due to cardiac arrest. I had lots of doctors visits during the deadline period which made it impossible to contribute.

I would like to quickly say, I've been fishing striped bass both recreationally and commercially over 47 years.

My biggest issue is the use of treble hooks used on lures by anyone, recreational or commercial. Years back I switched to in-line single hooks on every artificial lure I fish. Not only was the hook up to loss ratio GREATLY increased, releasing fish was so much easier with FAR less damage to the fish. I fish primarily commercial from Massachusetts. When I traverse the Cape Cod Canal and see literally hundreds of "recreational" anglers pitching lures with double or triple treble hooks I cringe. Many times I've netted dead discards floating out the end of the canal to and obtained a commercial limit. There is absolutely ZERO need for a recreational angler to own a treble hook. It took me quite a few years to understand the mechanics of fishing hooks. In actuality a treble hook replaced by single in-line hook on a casting lure will not only increase your hook up to landing ratio but promote a cleaner release. This said by a commercial fisherman who uses single inline hooks on every lure.

I feel this is rarely talked about but would make a huge difference in the mortality of released striped bass.

Of course being a commercial fisherman whose family depends on the income generated via striped bass, I do not support any reduction in the commercial quota. It's never made any sense to me why someone who relies on a resource for income, verses someone who relies on that same resource for "recreation" is ever an issue.

Thank you for your understanding regarding my late comments. I really hope you can put some thought into the treble hook idea, I know it will greatly reduce the mortality of released fish.

Regards,

John Preti
10 Metacom Road
Mashpee, MA 02649

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sean Cochran](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Subject: Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:30:00 AM

Thanks for this opportunity to comment on striped bass fishery management measures put forth through addendum II at a time that is a critical juncture for striped bass. I am a resident of Californian who fishes annually for striped bass in New Jersey, and here in California. I'd like to state in general I am for measures that will achieve the quickest recovery and return to abundance for striped bass, though they may seem to some to be too much. Ultimately, satisfaction of the angling public will be better suited by returning this important gamefish to population sizes well above the management triggers.

1. For Ocean Recreational Fisheries I support Option B.
2. For Chesapeake Recreational Fisheries I support Option B1.
3. For commercial fisheries I support option B.

Thanks so much,
Sean Cochran

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Tom](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II to AMD 7 Striped bass FMP
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:41:53 AM

To Whom it may concern,

Please allow me to provide my input to the management of striped bass for Addendum II to AMD 7.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean recreational fishery options

I would like to see option C approved for the striped bass retention limits.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire management clarification

I would like to see option A, which would keep it status quo.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational filleting allowance

I would like to see it status quo option A

Section 3.3 Response to stock assessment

I would like to keep it status quo option A.

Respectfully,

Thomas Logan Jr.

Fish Trap Sportfishing LLC

1655 North Ave.

Stratford, CT 06614

2033751211

From: [Kelly Bloss](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] "Striped Bass Draft Addendum II -support of Option C"
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:43:26 AM

Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. I want to communicate my support of Option C. Kelly Bloss
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Capt. Brian Coombs](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striper Bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 1:44:30 AM

I fully support the American Salt Water Guides Associations positions, Regarding this addendum.

The ASMFC Striped Bass Board needs to initiate Addendum II to implement the necessary changes for the 2024 fishing season.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT.

1. Retaining the current slot 28-31".
2. Implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay.
3. Complementary reductions in the commercial fishery.
4. No mode splits, meaning same regulations for private and charter.

Captain Brian Coombs
Get Tight Sport Fishing
Full Time Fishing Guide!

From: [Jim Triail](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripe bass addendum
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 4:34:37 AM

Only catch and release for 2 years

From: [Malcolm Gilbert](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 11
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:20:15 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am a UK resident who was introduced to the striped bass fishery in 1998 after the stock recovered from the collapse during the 1980s & early 1990s. Since that year, I (with a growing number of other European avid saltwater sport fishers) have revisited the east coast of the USA to fish for striped bass each and every year (sometimes twice a year) from Montauk, Cape Cod and the Islands (Block Island, Vineyard & Nantucket).

As non USA residents, we pump money into your economy for accommodation, car rental, food and other living expenses. The attraction is a combination of relative abundance of fish, plus a stock structure that allows occasional capture of old and therefore large bass aged 10+ – 15+. Those ‘trophy’ fish are crucial drivers of avidity.

As vacationers, we retain a very small proportion of captured fish keeping literally a couple of bass between us per visit (2 to 3 weeks) to consume. For us, the single most importance ‘value’ element of your striped bass resource is “LIVE BASS” and whilst many US residents with whom we’ve become greatest of friends like to retain and eat some of the fish they catch, it is our opinion that for the overwhelming majority, the availability of live fish to target, as opposed to the amount of meat that can be retained, is the key driver of angling effort and associated socio-economic benefits.

During recent years, our fishing successes have been largely reliant on a couple of reasonable year classes, but it is unquestionably clear that there are currently no decent year classes following them and our overwhelming concern is that within a very few years, locating and catching striped bass is going to become increasingly difficult.

The management priority, therefore, for myself and those I fish with, must be to ratchet back fishing mortality in order to preserve existing stocks as far as

possible. The precautionary principle must guide decision makers.

Given the current bag limit is already 1 fish, options for achieving a reduction in harvest levels appear to be either a reduction in the size range that can be retained (from 28 - 31 inches to 30 – 31 inches for example) or the introduction of a zero retention season plus a scientifically calculated equivalent reduction in the commercial quota.

Longer term objectives for the fishery should focus on educating recreational anglers about fish handling to reduce mortality levels from catch and release. In particular, the increased use of boga style jaw gripping devices give us cause for concern. Whilst such tools are useful for steadying a fish whilst hooks are removed with pliers, the practice of using such devices with built in weighing scales to weigh fish (intended to be returned) by suspending them from their jaws seems highly suspect for fish welfare.

The quality of life benefits for millions of recreational anglers and the economic benefits to the US coastal economies will be best served by placing the welfare of the fishery resource as the absolute priority.

Malcolm Gilbert
Nance Farm
Trink
St Ives, TR26 3JF
United Kingdom

From: [John-Ryan Quick](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 5:45:44 AM

Dear ASMFC,

Fishing for Stripers is my most cherished passion. It started at a young age when my dad and grandfather would take me out & now I get to take my dad out! It's something I can't wait to share with my future kids. Stripers are the great American gamefish.

I feel a myriad of factors contribute to the current stress of our striped bass population; weather, environmental, technology, commercial fishing, poachers, improper handling of fish, the list goes on...

Of the proposed measures, plan B is the clear option to get us to the achievable reduction in mortality rate.

I hope you select this option, and I will continue doing my part in ALWAYS catching & safely releasing, and will ensure others around me are doing the same.

Thank you for your careful consideration on this topic.

John-Ryan Quick
Milford, CT
Eastham, MA
860-604-9630
Johnryan.quick@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Paul May](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripper reg.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:38:52 AM

I propose that you keep the 28"-31" slot in place, plus add bonus fish from 24" to <28" ,also should be no different for charter fishing. Thank you, Paul May

From: [Nathaniel Pakuris](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Rick Bellavance Jr](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:41:42 AM

I am not sure if my comments mean anything due to the fact that I am not a captain but a mate on FV Fish On II. If my comment does mean anything I can absolutely agree with the opinions I just read. I have seen more striped bass floating upside down around Block Island due to folks releasing them incorrectly then I could possibly keep track of. Our 2023 fishing season was full of confused clients due to the fact that for some folks, they catch the biggest fish of their like and then we inform them that the striped bass they just caught is a few inches (in most cases only 1-2 inches) too big. Even if none of the regulations change for the 2024 fishing season on striped bass, my personal opinion is that every single person who has the intention of catching striped bass should have a much better understanding of how to properly revive and release their fish. We definitely had a few clients contact us saying that they wanted to have striped bass be the main species targeted during their charter, and once we informed them of the slot limit, they didn't even bother going any farther and booking a charter. Once again, I am not sure how much my opinion matters but that's what I have to say about the striped bass regulations.

Nathaniel Pakuris
(401)834-4600

From: [O Leyva](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 6:47:18 AM

I am writing to express my opinion on the Striped Bass Draft Addendum II before the ASMFC. I am a New York-based angler who wants to see the stock protected up and down the East coast but especially in vital spawning areas. It is vital that the board move to protect as many stripers as possible. I applaud the board for taking Emergency Action by reducing the slot limits for the 2023 season but more action is needed. We can't go back to Status Quo on any of the options presented. Here are my preferences...

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Option B

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Option B1

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements Option B

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Option B

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Update Option B

The board's response to the Stock Assessment Update is the most important of all these measures. The Board can no longer afford to slow-walk changes to the management measures. If the assessment is that stock is not expected to be rebuilt by 2029, it calls for action, not more discussion. The stock was declared overfished in 2019 and the situation hasn't only gotten worse. Take action and help restore the fishery, as soon as possible.

Othon Leyva
Brooklyn NY

From: [Comcast](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:06:09 AM

If you are truly serious about protecting the striped bass, then allowing the charter boats to harvest more or larger fish is not a good idea. Also, the commercial catch allowing 15 large fish a day seems to be a rather counterproductive idea. The 28 to 31 inch slot was supposed to protect the 2015 year class. as these fish, enter this length, why has the slot not been adjusted? Given the economic value of the striped bass the obvious answer to me appears to be game fish status. Thank you for your consideration.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Vincent Catalano](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:08:10 AM

Hello,

We're at the pinnacle point for rebuilding the stock of striped bass, with all the recent years of bad spawning I urge you to do the right thing so we have a fighting chance. We owe to the future of this fishery, the next generation of Anglers such as my kids and everyone else's...

OPTION B ACROSS THE BOARD WITH B1 FOR THE CHESAPEAKE

Thank you for your time,

--

Capt Vinny Catalano

631-766-1695

www.longislandflyfishing.com

www.joeyccharters.blogspot.com

IG : @LONGISLANDFLYFISH

From: [Brad Ries](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2024 Striped Bass options
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:34:43 AM

I would like to suggest Option C in regards to the ASMFC Amendment II proposal.

This would benefit all involved both recreational and the for hire industry.

Thank you

Capt. Brad Ries
Someday Came Fishing Charters
(631) 603-9910
www.somedaycamefishing.com
captbrad@optonline.net

From: [Brian Bacon](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Coments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:41:22 AM

Dear Ms. Franke,

My Name is Captain Brian Bacon. I own and operate Big Game Sport Fishing Charters In South Kingstown Rhode Island.

We support 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.

This option balances the need for conservation with the socio-economic needs of the for-hire fleet. As noted in the document, this option adds only one tenth of one percent to the projected mortality, virtually leaving the emergency action measures in place.

This option would allow for-hire owners a marketable solution to the concerns voiced by our clients who had difficulty catching fish in the 28–31-inch slot. Although not a huge increase, a 28–33-inch slot could be enough to convince them to return in 2024, under a 28–31-inch slot many will pass up their trip in 2024.

The option is a coast wide option, treating all ocean for-hire vessels the same and avoids one state having an advantage over a neighboring state.

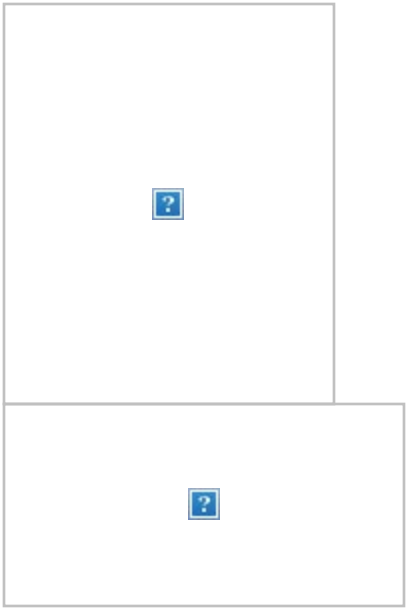
Thank you for your consideration.

Captain Brian Bacon

Big Game Sport Fishing
401-243-7046

brian@biggamefishingri.com
www.BigGameFishingRI.com

The Big Game Fleet Sails from
Point View Marina
11 Sherman Road, Wakefield RI.



Named Charter Captain of The year by Sport Fishing Magazine

From: [Mike Harney](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:42:44 AM

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

My name is Michael Harney. I am a charter captain in yarmouth. I run my charter business emmajack charters out of bass river.

I support option c for 3.3.1

Continued support for at sea filleting 3.1.4

Status quo for for hire clarification 3.1.3

Thankyou for your time

From: [Peter Bacon](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:43:17 AM

Hello, I am in support of option C for striped bass. Thank you.

Captain Peter Bacon
Big Game Sport Fishing
[401-623-0353](tel:401-623-0353)
Pete@biggamefishingri.com
www.BigGameFishingRI.com
The Big Game Fleet Sails from
Point View Marina
[11 Sherman Road, Wakefield RI.](#)



Named 2017 Charter Captain of The year by Sport Fishing Magazine



From: [Blane chocklett](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:43:34 AM

Hello my name is Blane and I would like to make my comments about the addendum 2 draft. I choose B for ocean recreational options. I choose B 1 for Chesapeake Bay, for the 3.2.1 commercial quota I pick option B 14.5% reduction.3.3 I choose option B board action.

Please let's do the right thing to save Stripers before it's too late, the writing is on the wall especially in the Chesapeake. Thank you for your time

Blane CHOCKLETT

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Griffin Rovira](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:48:57 AM

Goodmorning,

My comments Id like to share/Propose is instead or along with a slot limit size,

If a Trophy Fish rule could be created where instead of catching each persons limit If 1 fish oversized could be kept per boat. The good thing about this would be instead of killing multiple fish I would be perfectly happy with 1 big one.

I also would think it would be a good idea to create tags for recreational fisherman with this same goal in mind, The slot limit that has been created is honestly too small, there are so many big fish its almost pointless to fish for the striped bass because of the amount I have to throw back. Recreational Tags mabey #5-10 that I could pay for (hopefully not a crazy price) would give me a certain amount of fish per season I could harvest happily.

I fish out of montauk Ny all summer long and I love fishing for striped bass but I personally fish for eating and its really disappointing when I put the time and energy into striped bass and cant even go home with any because they were too big.

The Friends ive mentioned these Ideas too think this would be a great idea

Thankyou for reading my email and Let me know if these comments can be considered and if there are any questions for me about ny experience with striped bass in montauk id be happy to answer them.

I would really like to see our recreational rule for striped bass turn into something everyone can be happy with.

-Griffin Rovira

From: [Jonathan Deford](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 7:49:17 AM

Dear Sirs; We need to do all that can be done to save the Striped Bass fishery. This includes maintaining the 28 to 31 inch slot in the ocean, placing a reasonable maximum size limit in the Chesapeake Bay, lowering the minimum size to lower the death rate of C & R, no mode splits for charters, and reducing the commercial allotment by 1/2. Also close the season for the month of August when it is hottest. Thank you JHD

From: [dennis Chaprales](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:09:52 AM

I am in support of :

Option c 3.1

Option 3.14

As well as status quo for 3.13

Dennis chaprales

Predatuna Sportfishing

Sent from my iPhone

From: [John Bigda](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:12:26 AM

My observations we seem to be in this predicament every 15-20 years , the question is WHY I believe we are not addressing issues quick enough to maintain a healthy population of Striped Bass that we can all enjoy.

I support your decisions wholeheartedly and would recommend a season to be implemented for the taking of striped bass that would be consistent for both recreational and commercial harvesting.

Regards,
John Bigda

From: [Greg Campbell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:43:46 AM

Shut down the plant in Reidsville. Never seen a fish that was so abundant in the 80's go missing like the stripers have. Caught so many got sick off catching them . It's hard to believe that the state of Virginia can't see that's the problem. Losing so much money from fisherman each year who would come here to caught those fish.
But we know it's all about politics and that really suck's. Do the right thing.

From: [Mike Cree](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] MA striped bass management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:44:00 AM

Dear ASMFC;

Let me start by saying that I am not against commercial fishing for stripers. Your grandmother should be able to buy fish at a market and the resource should not just be for the people who can catch their own.

However, I believe Massachusetts' desire for revenue from sales of commercial fishing licenses is hindering the management of the species here. The preservation of striped bass should take priority over license revenue. I do not know the other ASMFC's state's laws and do not want to speak about the other states besides MA, but the following may apply to other states also.

I have watched a large number of hobbyist fisherman get a commercial striped bass license just to offset the cost of their hobby. Most have day jobs and fish "commercially" for nothing but striped bass, which they would have been fishing for anyways. I have seen many large fish hit the scales over the years. These are typically large females that could do much to help this species recover.

I believe commercial licenses should only be made available to the fisherman making their primary living in this manner. These would be the people catching different species commercially as the seasons allow. Whether it be stripers, lobsters, clamming, tuna, etc.

One way to do this would be to only sell licenses to people who met a minimum reasonable sale amount in the previous year. Obviously that doesn't help prevent the hobby fisherman in year one, but it prevents that person from doing this year after year. Exceptions could be made for things like verified health issues that kept a person sidelined for a season.

Another method to consider is to have poundage minimums in order to retain a license with at least 3 different species commercially harvested. Also, similar to the sales volume method mentioned above, it does not help for year one, but stops a license from being sold to the hobby fisherman year after year.

A third method would be to increase the cost of a commercial striped bass fishing license. That could make the financial barrier for a hobby fisherman just offsetting their vacation day costs too high to have the effort be worthwhile. Or maybe some combination of the above is in order.

I realize this is just one small piece of a large management issue, but some portion of the large breeders may be saved by reducing this section of the commercial fishing effort. Quotas, size limits, slot limits, circle hooks, season restrictions, and all the other management tools need to play into this also.

Thank you for the opportunity to add my two cents towards reducing striped bass mortality.

Michael J Cree
Mansfield, MA
(508) 269-7453

From: [Joe Webster](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Addendum II Comment in Support of Striped Bass Conservation
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:58:39 AM

Dear ASMFC,

I am writing as an angler, conservationist and manager of All Points Fly Shop + Outfitter who's career depends on an abundance of striped bass. I fully support all actions to be put in place to protect and preserve the striped bass population on the east coast (see following):

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Really this is a no brainer. A fish alive is worth much more than a fish dead. Striped bass fuel an entire industry of recreational anglers. This industry supports countless small businesses and hard working people that are the back bone of the east coast culture and there is no doubt a strong economical benefit to having an abundance of striped bass. Please put all measures in place to protect this incredibly important resource.

Joe Webster

From: [Robert Nyman](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 8:59:20 AM

The current or a modified slot is fine.
No split mode! Recreational and for hire boats should have the same regs whether from a boat or beach.

Thank you, Bob Nyman

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jack Harte](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:13:45 AM

“B” across the board;

“B-1” for Chesapeake.

Thank you,

Jack Harte

From: [Hunter Zandri](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:22:16 AM

Option B

From: [Stephen Dangelo](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:27:48 AM

Hello,

My name is Stephen D'Angelo and fill in your name) and I'm a recreational angler living in Massachusetts. I appreciate the ASMFC reading this and taking my comments into consideration. The following reflects the selections that I'd like to see come out of Addendum II:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1-fish at 19-23" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

3.1.3 For-Hire Management: N/A per our positions, but Option B—applicable only to patrons if a mode split is selected.

3.1.4 Recreational Filleting: Option B. 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to the ocean and Chesapeake fisheries. 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

4.0 Compliance Schedule: Implement measures as soon as possible in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality. Jurisdictions that do not implement Addendum II's final management measures in 2024 should be found out of compliance.

Thank you,

From: [Bill](#)
To: [Comments](#); [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#); [Michael Pentony](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:46:18 AM

To all parties involved,

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options. The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction. That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder. We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary. Respectfully,

Bill Muise
Commercial Striped Bass fisherman
Gloucester, MA

*******(CLUBS LETTER BELOW)*******

The Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association Respectfully submits the attached comments to the ASMFC for Addendum II

December 20, 2023

Ms. Emily Frank

FMP Coordinator

ASMFC

Comments to amendment II:

We are the voice of the Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass fishery, with a membership of over 1,000 commercial rod & reel permit holders and growing.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the ASMFC's Striped Bass Addendum II Commercial measures.

We recommend the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF Take a position in support of its small local commercial rod & reel fishermen on Addendum 2, section 3.2.1 Option A. Status Quo. (no reduction to the commercial quota)

The proposed 14.5% reduction equates to almost 100,000 pounds of fish. That alone equates to over \$500,000 at today's average wholesale prices, and close to 2.5 Million dollars retail.

Massachusetts has about 650 “active” (1000+ pound) permit holders. That would be almost a \$4,000 direct out of pocket hit to each one of those individual permit holders.

Furthermore a status quo vote would only equate to a 1.6% difference on the recreational sector, on what could very well be hypothetical numbers to begin with. (MRIP surveys).

The commercial sector is already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another 14.5% decrease to the quota is not justifiable now simply because the recreational sector’s catch numbers are up by 88%.

The commercial striped bass fishery is and has been very well managed with each and every pound being accounted for on multiple levels. WE urge you to let that continue.

On behalf of the Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association we ask that the ASMFC and the Massachusetts DMF support our local fishermen with a vote of status quo, No reduction.

Respectfully,

The 1,000+ members of the

Massachusetts Commercial Striped Bass Association

Texting me is best but email is OK too.

Thanks,

Bill

978-204-5288

From: [Toby Lapinski](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:46:51 AM

I live in Connecticut and on any given season I fish for striped bass in as many as 5 neighboring states, putting in around 100 trips annually. I have been fishing for striped bass for more than 40 years.

Regarding Draft Addendum II, I support the following options:

3.1.1 Option B - I do not support mode splits. Even though the science shows that the for-hire group harvests a small percentage of the total private harvest annually, there is no reason that an angler within the same group should be able to harvest a different size fish simply because they paid a captain for the privilege. Further, breaking out groups within the private sector will only serve to further feed the disdain between the two groups within a fishery.

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you,
Toby Lapinski

From: [Patrick Kinlan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:56:14 AM

My opinions on the upcoming striped bass addendum.

I think the 2 weeks where you are allowed to catch striped bass up to 35 inches in the Chesapeake bay area should be eliminated. It should be 19-31 inches, just like the rest of the season.

I think the size slot in NY waters should stay at 28-31 inches for ALL fishermen. However I also feel the size limit should be reduced. Smaller fish have a higher rate of falling victim to predation in their natural habitat anyway, and larger fish have many more eggs so the fishery will be more sustainable that way. I would keep the daily limit at one fish and make the size slot maybe 20-24 inches...or even smaller like maybe 18-20 inches.

I would also install a moratorium on fishing durring their spawning cycle and for about a month before it.

Thank you
Patrick Kinlan

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [mark.darin](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Amendment 2
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 9:58:31 AM

Striped Bass mortality could be significantly reduced by limiting hooks with barbs. The large plugs with multiple barbed trebles are ripping the fish up and causing longer out of water times for anglers to release the fish. Single barbless hooks would significantly reduce mortality if only incorporated or at the very least highly recommended. I crush all my barbs and lose very few fish.....and the fish are much better off.

This is just a quick comment whether it applies or not, but I've been on the water for years recreationally and I see the abuse these fish get that could be avoided by a simple change. Pretty hard to enforce but it would really help. Like in-line bait hooks, I think most anglers would understand and mortality's rates would definitely decrease.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [the6thBurrito](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPER CONSERVATION
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:00:54 AM

Please consider putting tougher limits on sizes and fish per day in the commercial fishery, as well as the methods used (nets); the tragedy in Maine this year sticks out in my mind with nets killing off more than 2k Stripers. It seems restrictions are more stringent on the recreational anglers who don't come nearly as close to the catch potential as the commercial fishery, and that just doesn't make sense if we're really trying to make a positive change.

From: [Ben Scott](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:02:51 AM

Dear Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC),

I ask the Board to recognize the value and importance of this fish when it is alive and in abundance. I am writing to you to express my full support of all measures that will best safeguard the surviving year classes of Striped Bass. Striped Bass must be restored to abundance and need to be treated and managed with the utmost respect. It is critical that you do everything in your power to guarantee successful stock rebuild, and the long-term health of this fishery and culture. Please take this opportunity to position this treasured species for recovery and long-term success.

My recommendations are as follows:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options

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

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options

Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment

Option B—Board Action.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Best,
Ben Scott

From: kholmes9290@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:09:18 AM

I fully support "Option C".

Thank you

Ken Holmes,
Manorville, NY

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Stephen McNeil](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:10:40 AM

Hello, I am reaching out regarding Addendum II.

I am an avid saltwater fisherman. Primarily from shore, but do spend a fair amount of time fishing from boats (private and charter). I have two young daughters that I enjoy spending time with on the water, and am fearful that the fishery will not support their ability to enjoy this sport at the current harvest pace.

My general commentary for the board is to focus on consistent measures across the recreational fishery (private and charter), as well as uniformity for the states that support this fishery.

I strongly support a smaller slot limit (28" - 31") for all fisheries up/down the East Coast, including the spawning areas in the Chesapeake Bay.

I also strongly support a reduction in commercial harvest (14.5%) to ensure the long-term viability of the species.

Thanks for all you do in helping to protect this valuable resource.

Steve McNeil

From: mpaw@me.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] NYS Striped Bass management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:12:35 AM

Hello,

Please take any steps necessary to accelerate the rebuilding of our striped bass population. Keep the 28-to-31-inch slot limit, or better yet raise it higher, and let ASMFC be allowed to act on coming stock assessments immediately.

Thank you,

Tom Holmes
Westhampton, NY

From: [Connor Lynch](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II Comments
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:20:28 AM

Hi,

I'm submitting my vote for Option B and Option B1 for the Chesapeake bay.

Considering 5 consecutive years of failed spawns in the CBay, I am very worried what the future of this fishery looks like. We need to keep as many fish in the system now as we can.

Please protect these fish!

Thanks,
Connor Lynch
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jerry Audet](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [JERRY AUDET](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:20:55 AM

To the commission

I am commenting on draft addendum II for striped bass management. I am representing myself only.

Before I choose my preference for each point, I want to quickly make a broad comment. I am intensely frustrated by the consistent decision by the commission to preferentially support the commercial sector when they discuss the impact of new measures on constraining harvest, or liberating it. There is very little, or no, recognition of those businesses that rely on an abundant stock. Yes, the commission acknowledges repeatedly that private citizens value the resource primarily as a sport fishery, that they are the largest stakeholders, but there is almost no discussion of the "in between" businesses- like myself- who rely on the sport fishery, and a highly abundant stock. Certainly, there is an order of magnitude more individuals, and a proportional part of local and national economies, that rely on the sport fishery when compared to those who are directly involved in the harvest of the fish for consumption. From media, to hospitality, to gifts, to local tackle shops, tackle manufacturers and all the other niche markets, the "sport fishery industry" out strips the commercial sector considerably. So then, why is there so little representation? Instead we are lumped into the sector with "general public" or "recreational anglers." We are, arguably, the largest financial stake holder of the fishery- and without an abundant stock, we collapse. There is not species to pivot to, in the equivalent way a commercial fisherman could instead target a (more lucrative) species. There is nothing equivalent as the light tackle, inshore, and shore-based striped bass market in the north east.

Please consider that in your decisions. It should weigh heavily on the conscious of all commission members, who seem to make decisions in a vacuum, and often in disregard to what even the public asks.

With that said, I choose the following options for Amendment 7, Addendum 2:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

Thank you for reading all these comments, and giving your time in support of public service. Despite the anger often expressed in these emails, and the frustration that clearly shines through in my own email, I (and we) do appreciate your service.

Wishing you the best in the new year

J

--

Jerry Audet

Freelance Writer, Photographer, and Editor

Managing Editor & Advertising, *Surfcaster's Journal*

Columnist, *Fishing Tackle Retailer*

indeepoutdoorsmedia@gmail.com

///

www.indeepoutdoors.com

www.surfcastersjournal.com

From: [Matthew Wheeler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:32:14 AM

I recommend that the ocean commercial fisheries **AND** the Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries will be managed by quotas representing **at least** a 14.5% reduction from their 2022 quotas with their 2022 size limits.

I also recommend:

- (1) maintaining the current 28-31" slot for the ocean fishery
- (2) implementing a maximum recreational size in the Chesapeake Bay
- (3) complementary reductions in the commercial fishery
- (4) no mode splits, meaning same regulations for private and charter.
- (5) Large "Party Boat" charter boats limited to one trip per day. Ex: 50 anglers per trip x 2 trips a day = 100 slot sized fish taken each and every day. Not acceptable!

Respectfully,
Matt Wheeler

From: [Norman Davidson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:34:42 AM

I am a recreational striped bass fisherman and over the past two years my catch rate and size of catch has decreased dramatically.

I support all options that will restrict the commercial and recreational catches of striped bass. I believe there are tens of thousands of bass caught illegally by recreational and commercial fishermen that are never recorded.

The worst problem is the commercial 6 pack boats bringing 6 guys out and limiting out, sometimes twice a day.

Then I heard about and saw both commercial and recreational guys at night off the shore of Cape Ann locating a huge school of stripers and decimating them. There were sometimes over 100 boats working these fish over. I doubt regulations were followed.

These wonderful gamefish need protection or they will be wiped out. We need far stricter regulations, especially among the commercial fishery as they have the knowledge and equipment to devastate the population.

Sincerely,

Norm Davidson
4 Farragut Rd, unit 2
Ipswich, Ma. 01938

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Leone, Jim](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stripedbass Regulations
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:38:33 AM

To whom it may concern,

My position is that we would maintain current regulation. As someone who derives 100% of my income from the fishing industry, it would be a devastating blow to be further regulated or shut down a fishery as important as striped bass. My concern is that the science needs to be updated because of rising ocean temperatures in the Atlantic, changes in migration and breeding patterns. Therefore, the science that has been used for many years, specifically as it pertains to the Chesapeake, does not accurately reflect the total population that has moved further north. I believe there needs to be new research that takes into account obvious climate change before we start further restricting a fishery. Our industry and coastal communities are dependent on it.

Regards
James Leone

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Christopher Moro](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Cc: [Dan Mckiernan](#); [Raymond Kane](#); [Michael Pentony](#); tom.oshea@mass.gov; [RUSS DUNN](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:41:27 AM

As a commercial Striped bass fisherman I urge the council to Vote for Option A Status Quo for section 3.2.1 commercial quota reduction options. The Massachusetts commercial quota alone will suffer close to 100,000 pound cut with only a 1.6% improvement over the recreational sectors proposed reduction. That's a big hit to the local rod & reel fishermen who depend on this fishery. Another hard financial hit to each individual permit holder. We are already fishing at an 18% reduction from amendment 7, another cut is not necessary. Respectfully,

Chris Moro

From: [SCOTT LUNDBERG](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:43:00 AM

My name is Scott Lundberg. I am the captain and owner of Reel to Reel Sportfishing LLC in Pt. Judith Rhode Island. I have been a full time charter boat captain since 1993. I am writing to you to express my strong support for OPTION C in Section 311 as outlined in the ASMFC DRAFT ADDENDUM to Amendment 7 for Atlantic Striped bass. I would also like to express my support for Option A in Section 314 which proposes status quo. It would be a hardship for our industry and would disrupt our business efficiency. It is very difficult to find mates because of random drug testing requirements and adding hours to their day would make it even more difficult. On a side note I would suggest banning live eel fishing at least for a few years. It breaks my heart to see these beautiful creatures floating by me because they were gut hooked or not handled properly and quickly released. Banning live eel fishing would cut the recreational catch and mortality rate significantly. Sincerely, Captain Scott Lundberg

From: [Robert Huddy](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Re: DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS Interim Management Measures
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:43:12 AM

I noticed that I need to comment on a number of Options within the DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 and would like to revise my previous comments to include/be revised to the following:

3.1.1 Option B

3.1.2 Option B1

3.2.1 Option B

3.1.4 Option B

3.3 Option B

thank you again for your consideration of my comments

Bob Huddy

On Wed, Dec 20, 2023 at 8:43 AM Robert Huddy <rphud4@gmail.com> wrote:

To Whom it may concern

I am writing in response to the ASMFC request for comments on the DRAFT ADDENDUM II TO AMENDMENT 7 TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS Interim Management Measures .

My name is Bob Huddy and I currently reside in Connecticut and fish for Striped Bass in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

I started fishing for Striped Bass in New Jersey in the early 1970's, so I have seen some very good years and some very, very bad years. The bad years being the years leading up to when moratorium were in place, and the years when moratorium were in place.

As I am closing in on retirement and have two sons in their 30's that will fish with me on occasion, I am very concerned about the current state of the Striped Bass fishery and even more so about the apparent trend of the fishery. I believe significant action is required in the very near term in order to avoid another period of "bad years" upon us.

My personal belief is that the best near-term solution would be a moratorium on recreational fishing that would allow fishing as catch and release only (preferably with modified hooks to prevent mortality as best as is feasible). Given that, I am voicing my support for Option B. 1 fish at 28" to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes) since it is shown to have the greatest predicted result.

Thank you for your consideration of my position and comments.

From: mattack3@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Stop killing fish
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:43:17 AM

Stop any charters from keeping fish and make them a sport fish. You're killing one of the oceans most important fish....

From: [Paul Skydell](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:45:21 AM

Good afternoon,

I am a recreational angler (fly fishing) who has lived through the best of times and the worst of times for Striped Bass. I strongly urge the immediate adoption of Draft Addendum II.

This is not only a moral imperative, but makes good economic sense.

We have an opportunity to collectively, under your leadership, to do the right thing and not do what is merely expedient. Please do the right thing.

Kind regards,

Paul Skydell

From: [Carter Abramson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:49:21 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

ASMFC,

In regards to the striped bass addendum II, Simms Fishing supports the following messaging from the ASGA,

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Options: Option B—1-fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).

Let's face it, recreational anglers [harvested way too many fish in 2022](#), as the strong 2015 year-class recruited into the then 28-35" slot limit. ASGA supported the Emergency Action measure, and we still do. It is critical that managers continue efforts to protect the 2015 year-class and maintaining the 28-31" slot achieves that goal, while providing some consistency for anglers and the stock assessment scientists.

We do not support mode splits. The Recreational sector (private and charter/for-hire) should continue to be managed under the same regulations.

These measures will likely only be in place for just next year; the 2024 Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update is scheduled for late-2024, and another management action is probable. In other words, there is a good chance that the assessment shows us that additional actions will be required in order to successfully rebuild striped bass SSB by the 2029 deadline.

3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Options: Option B1—1 fish at 19-23" across all CBAY jurisdictions with the same 2022 seasons.

- After five consecutive years of poor spawning success, the Chesapeake Bay region is in desperate need for conservation and precautionary fisheries management. ASGA supports Option B1 for many of the same reasons applicable to the ocean, but now the Bay's recreational fisheries need to contribute to conservation. If the Ocean fishery can have a 3" slot, then the Chesapeake can deal with a 4" slot.
- Mode splits in the Bay should be fiercely opposed. Through previous conservation equivalency proposals, Maryland implemented a program to allow Charter/For-Hire passengers the ability to harvest two striped bass compared to one fish for the rest of the recreational sector. Maryland's Chesapeake Bay for-hire fleet harvested 142,098 stripers; the coastwide total for the for-hire fleet was 281,289 fish. By giving Maryland's charter fleet two fish, they harvested more than the rest of the Bay and the ocean combined. This is what happens

when a state agency picks favorites.

- Option B1 would place all of the Chesapeake's jurisdictions under the same size and creel limit, achieving far greater consistency across the region.
- Also, the 23" max will add a layer of protection for the average 2017- and 2018-year classes which will still have some presence in the bay. The current maximum size in MD would still allow harvest of these valuable fish. The proposed 19-23" slot would avoid these fish.

3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both the Ocean and Chesapeake Bay Quotas.

- Before we go any further, understand that this option may be entirely meaningless—unless states take matters into their own hands. For one, due to quota underutilization, a reduction in quota does not guarantee an actual reduction in fishing mortality—the ocean region has been using most of its quota in recent years and will see a reduction in fishing mortality; the Chesapeake Bay will not see much of any reduction with a 14.5% quota cut. Second, there are huge question marks around when states would even implement these changes. Doesn't it seem disingenuous when certain states wait until the last minute to claim that implementing these commercial changes in 2024 would not be possible? We have a hard time buying this. Yes, commercial landings accounting is far more robust than in the recreational sector. But, if Maryland really wanted to take part in meaningful conservation, they would work through the challenges and issue new tags and IFQs for 2024. Don't hold your breath.
- Another piece of context is to distinguish the Ocean and Chesapeake commercial fisheries, because in general, ASGA is not opposed to commercial fishing. The Ocean commercial fishery has taken all the reductions placed on the recreational sector, with the Emergency Action being the only outlier.
- The Chesapeake Bay has not taken a meaningful reduction since 2015. The Chesapeake commercial quota has taken a whopping 1.8% reduction.
- Since 2020, Chesapeake Bay quota utilization hovered around 80%. This is concerning on multiple fronts: there are clearly not enough fish in the system AND quota reductions less than 20% will have zero impact.
- The 14.5% reduction is off the quota, not landings (the amount of fish harvested commercially). That means once again the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery will not do their part to restore striped bass, as landings could be the same as last year.
- ASGA is supporting Option B with a 14.5% reduction to both fisheries.
- Do we think the Bay's cut should be greater or specifically target landings? Of course we do, but that is not an option in this document. Remember, to be an effective advocate you need to support options that are being considered.
- We will be reaching out to each state to determine whether they can implement these commercial management changes in 2024.

3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: Option B—Board Action.

Remember, the above options will likely only be effective for 2024 (and if at all on the commercial side), so this option may have the greatest impact on striped bass management. Next fall (likely at the 2024 Annual ASMFC Meeting), the Striped Bass Board will see the results of a new stock assessment update. We won't speculate much other than by saying this string of poor recruitment is going to have a significant impact on the rebuilding projections, and additional management changes are needed to improve the odds of rebuilding by 2029. This option would allow the Board to move quickly to implement those new management measures through a simple majority. Without the Board action provision, the management process could take up to a year to respond.

- Public input, while not formalized through a management action, is not precluded by this option. ASGA regularly communicates with SB Board Members to share our perspectives on management. You can too. Get to know your respective Board Member, ask them questions, share with them how you want this fishery to look like in 12 years. It is Important. In this day and age, public involvement is as easy as ever.

Thanks,

Carter Abramson | Social Media Specialist



From: santofuse@gmail.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II. Supporting option B: Keeping the 28"-31" slot.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:04:56 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am recreational charter captain. Between May and November, most of my time is spent on the water with clients. While it is great to end a trip with sending fish home for dinner, it is a successful day on the water, targeting and catching fish, that create memories and keep clients coming back. I fully supported the emergency slot adjustment enacted in 2023 to preserve the dwindling biomass of fish. Given the data presented in addendum II, I remain strongly in favor of Option B, maintaining the 28"-31" slot, for the recreational striped bass fishery.

Best regards,
Tony Santosus



From: [Nat Thompson](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:05:17 AM

To whom it may concern,

This couldn't be simpler:

Support **Option B** across the board...all modes. For the Chesapeake Recreational Fishery support Option B1.

Boom. DONE! Mic drop!

We must manage these fish for abundance before it's too late. *Please...do the right thing!*

Nat

Nat Thompson
Producer
Greenlight Maine
Greenlight Maine College Edition
Elevating Voices
207-831-8553



[Greenlight Maine Website](#)

From: [David Ziegler](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Slot size for striped bass.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:06:33 AM

Slot size should be 28 to 33 in inches. Commercial boats should have to
Use the same hooks that non commercial use.

From: [Emmons Whited](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] STRIPED BASS DRAFT ADDENDUM II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:07:53 AM

Please consider Option B across the board and Option B-1 for the Chesapeake.

Thank you.

From: [Stephen Kalinick](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum 2.
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:08:25 AM

Good Morning Ms. Emily Frank,

I am emailing on behalf of all the commercial Striped Bass fleet that fishes Massachusetts waters and I'm in favor of, in section 3.2.1 Option A. Status Quo. (No reduction). To start off I have been fishing the waters of Massachusetts my whole life and have more insight than most people about the general concern of the striped bass population. As a commercial fleet we do not want to see our quota continuously taken away while there is a clear indication of a healthy population of fish coast wide. We follow the rules and limited to a small quota compared to how many fish are taken yearly by recreational fisherman or mishandling. This being said I am primarily a solo fisherman when it comes to recreational and the daily occurrence I see of the amount of fish is staggering. Not only do I see it recreationally fishing but commercially as well. It's hard to believe that there is any population issue and every will be catching and seeing what I do. These fish came back from nothing and the amount of fish there is now compared to then belittles it. It's all class sizes it not just one. From schoolies to cow bass. There is plenty of fish to meet the goal by 2029. It's ridiculous to me that taking quota from the commercial fleet is even an option. We are limited to a small quota in comparison to recreational harvest and mishandling mortality. 14.5% reduction would be close to 100,000lbs. This is apart of our income, taking this much weight is a finical burden considering we are already fishing at a 18% reduction from amendment 7. Not only this we love doing it and it is tradition. It's distressing to me when my season ends as well as everyone else and limiting our season ever more would suck. I do think there's needs to initiative in educating the recreational fisherman because the amount of fish killed each year by mishandling could theoretically reproduce the whole striper population. I'm out there a lot, more than most and the amount of dead fish I see from mishandling is out of control and could be reduced. Something as simple as a class or video required to get your license as a recreational fisherman. It makes me mad seeing the amount of fish killed from ripping the hook out, throwing them on rocks or sand, suffocating them from glory pictures and the list goes on. All these issues could be addressed. I'm not going to keep going on, hopefully the state makes the right decisions in support of our local Rod and Reel fisherman.

Sincerely,
Stephen Kalinick.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Carl Nova](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass management
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:14:33 AM

I support slot management rules for all private and charter fishing. The commercial fishery should be shut down or at least The limits should be same for all. If anyone should be given a pass on a wider slot it is shore based fishermen.

Carl Nova , RI
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Capt. Carle Hildreth](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] comments on Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:18:52 AM

My name is Carle Hildreth and I have been fishing for stripers from shore and boat in Maine, New Hampshire and Cape Cod since 2003. I have been a full time striped bass charterboat captain in Portland, Maine since 2012. I have built my business around catch and release striped bass sportfishing. It is imperative we stay the course and protect as many of the 2015 year class striped bass as possible. Lifting the pedal on reducing the mortality rate of these fish would present monumental management challenges in the near future. I implore you to remember the long term vision of striped bass management. Please do not cave to the pressure and immediate desires of parties that lack or ignore the foresight of long term striped bass management or are unwilling to make short term compromises in order to ensure the fishery is sustainable. I say this with all due respect. I understand you have difficult decisions to make.

Here are the options I support:

- 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: **I Support Option B**—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes)*
- 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: **I Support Option B1**
- 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): **I Support Option B**
- 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements: **I Support Option B**
- 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options: **I Support Option B**
- 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment: **I Support Option B**

Thank you for your time and effort with this.

Carle Hildreth
No Slack! Striper Fishing Charters
PO BOX 485
Portland, ME 04112

--

Capt. Carle Hildreth
207-450-9428

From: kja270@aol.com
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:21:22 AM

Folks

I would like to register my support for the following opting regarding Amendment 7.

Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I support Option B

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options: I support Option B1

For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected): I support Option B

Recreational Filletting Allowance Requirements: I support Option B

Commercial Quota Reduction Options: I support Option B

Response to Stock Assessment: I support Option B

Thank you
Jeff Amberson

From: [Robert Schmitt](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped bass draft addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:24:11 AM

I support option 3

Captain Bob Schmitt
Sea Rogue Charters
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Chris Evans](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Subject line: Striped Bass Addendum II ***** I support the following options. 3.1.1 option C. This option is beneficial for charter boats who may be struggling to find striped bass within the small 3" slot window for their ...
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:39:58 AM

3.1.4 option A status quo

This is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. Many charter boats are unable to clean fish at their docks due to local rules or time constraints. Most of the time they are back to back trips sometimes three trips in a day. Changing this allowance is not necessary and if changed would require additional laws regarding keeping racks. Where boats may have more racks than clients on board and no fillets to show of it

3.3 option A status quo. The public input is very important in any type of rule making process. Moreover this is viewed as a democratic process. At this time many fishermen question the science not being consistent with observations on the water this is more important than ever I believe. The amendment process ensures the public that they are involved in the decisions. And in my opinion is not that long of a process.

Striped bass commercial permit holder
Christopher Evans.

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device

From: [Jeffrey Adams](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 11:54:18 AM

Dear Sirs: Please keep the 28-to- 31-inch slot limit, adjust commercial fishing quotas in line with recreational ones, and that the ASMFC be allowed to act on coming stock assessments immediately. Please take the necessary steps to accelerate the critical rebuilding of Striped Bass populations . Thank you for allowing me to comment on this vital issue. Jeffrey Adams 8 Willow Lane, Quogue, New York 11959

From: [Sean Tracey](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Striped Bass Draft Addendum II
Date: Friday, December 22, 2023 10:53:11 AM
Attachments: [STA Logo_Color.png](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a USCG-licensed fishing guide who relies on a solid population of striped bass for my charters.

My boat has a strickly “catch and release” policy, because I know our striper population is threatened.

Therefore I support:

3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options: I Support Option B—*1-fish at 28 to 31" with 2022 seasons (all modes).*

- **3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options:** I Support Option B1—*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 of 23".*

- **3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if For-Hire Mode-Specific Limits are selected):** I Support 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:** I Support 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.*

- **3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options:** I Support 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%.*

- **3.3 Response to Stock Assessment:** Support 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.

Sincerely

Capt Sean Tracey

email: sean@seantracey.com
m.603/828-6010
o 603/427-2800, ext 110
visit us: seantracey.com

401 State Street, Suite 3
Portsmouth, NH 03801





Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfmc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

DATE: January 16, 2024

SUBJECT: Advisory Panel Recommendations on Draft Addendum II Options

The Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel (AP) met via webinar on January 11, 2024 to discuss AP recommendations on the proposed options in Striped Bass Draft Addendum II to Amendment 7, and to review New Jersey's conservation equivalency proposal. ASMFC staff provided the AP with an overview of the draft addendum background, proposed options, and a summary of public hearing comments. The following is a summary of AP members' recommended options and rationale.

AP Members in Attendance

Louis Bassano (Chair, NJ recreational)	Bob Danielson (NY recreational)
Bob Humphrey (ME for-hire)	Eleanor Bochenek (NJ rec, fisheries scientist)
Peter Whelan (NH recreational)	Leonard Voss (DE commercial)
Patrick Paquette (MA recreational)	Charles (Eddie) Green (MD for-hire/rec)
Craig Poosikian (MA commercial)	Dennis Fleming (PRFC rec/processor/dealer)
Andy Dangelo (RI for-hire)	Bill Hall (VA recreational)
Toby Lapinski (CT recreational)	Kelly Place (VA commercial)
Julie Evans (NY for-hire, commercial)	Jamie Lane (NC commercial)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Public Attendees: Megan Ware (Striped Bass Board Chair, ME), Ray Kane (MA Board Member), Chris Batsavage (NC Board Member), Al Williams, Andrew M., Glen Fernandes, Mike Delzingo, Robert Moss, Taylor Vavra, Will Poston, Sarah Cvach (MDDNR), Daniel Herrick (MDDNR), Brendan Harrison (NJDEP)

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

1 AP member supports status quo Option A: 28" to <35" all modes for the following reasons:

- Too many fish are being released under the current narrow slot limit; need a wider slot.
- Can't fish for such a small size range. Need to take whatever is biting on a particular day.

M24-10

4 AP members support Option B: 28" to 31" all modes for the following reasons:

- This is the most conservative option and supports the rebuilding timeline.
- All recreational anglers should have the same fishing opportunity.
- Mode split creates division between sectors.
- There is no data justification for a mode split, and MRIP data are not designed to support such a split.
- The mode split options were developed without consideration of broader allocation. If a mode split were implemented, it would be extremely difficult to revert back to one mode in subsequent actions.
- Mode split deserves a more comprehensive, data-driven amendment-level discussion. Draft Addendum II includes very little analysis for the mode split options.
- All modes should work together to rebuild the stock.

8 AP members support Option C: 28" to 31" private-shore/28" to 33" for-hire for the following reasons:

- Wider slot would reduce discards on for-hire trips.
- Reducing fishing mortality is the primary goal, and this option is estimated to achieve about the same reduction as Option B.
- Allowing for-hire a wider slot does not impact the estimated reduction, and supports for-hire businesses. No reason not to support for-hire businesses.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

3 AP members support Option B1: 19" to 23"/1 fish all modes for the following reasons:

- Private-shore anglers face similar challenges to the for-hire fleet with short season and limited species available. All modes should have the same fishing opportunity.

1 AP members support Option B4: 19" to 26"/1 fish all modes noting that a wider slot is preferable to reduce discards.

1 AP member supports any of the B options (slot limit with 1 fish for all modes) noting that all modes should have the same bag limit, but defers to the Chesapeake Bay stakeholders on the slot size.

6 AP members support Option C1: 19" to 23"/1 fish private-shore/2 fish for-hire for the following reasons:

- For-hire businesses in the Chesapeake Bay need 2-fish to survive. Bay fish are much smaller than ocean fish and the season is already very short, so the 2-fish allowance is needed to attract customers.
- For-hire relies on striped bass to make a living. There are few other species available.
- For-hire vessels participate in electronic reporting to monitor their catch.
- 2-fish bag limit would help deter throwing back a fish on the smaller end of the slot in hopes of catching a larger one.

Section 3.1.3 For-Hire Management Clarification (if applicable)

4 AP members support the status quo Option A: no clarification needed for the following reasons:

- Enforcing different size limits on the same vessel is problematic.
- Many vessels operate both as for-hire vessels and private vessels.
- The clarification would not be enforceable at all.

1 AP member supports Option B: add clarification—for-hire measures apply to patrons only noting that while this option is not enforceable, it is a good-will gesture to support mode splits.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Requirements Options

9 AP members support the status quo Option A: no filleting requirements for the following reasons:

- It would be very difficult to develop coastwide regulatory language that could be implemented in each state.
- The complexities around fillet requirements (e.g., where to dispose of racks) are state/local issues and should be addressed as such. Not appropriate to include in a coastwide fishery management plan.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

7 AP members support status quo Option A: status quo commercial quotas for the following reasons:

- This addendum was developed to address the increase in 2022 catch, which was a result of increased recreational harvest. Commercial harvest in 2022 did not increase.
- Commercial industry should not be penalized for the increase in the recreational sector.
- This would be a significant economic loss for commercial fishermen and local markets.
- Commercial industry is highly regulated and managed by hard quota caps.
- Quotas are rarely exceeded, and if they are, there is an immediate quota payback the following year. Quota underages serve as a conservation buffer for the stock.
- The FMP originally intended for a 50-50 split between the commercial and recreational sectors; however, the fishery has become majority recreational (90-10). The commercial sector is a very small percent of the fishery.
- Commercial sector has adjusted gear to avoid large spawning fish.
- Excess mortality is coming from the recreational sector.

4 AP members support Option B: up to 14.5% quota reduction for the following reasons:

- Support a reduction in both the ocean and Bay.
- The environment is not producing enough fish, so the entire fishery (both sectors) need to take a reduction recognizing the declining stock.
- Concern about some state commercial fisheries that allow harvest of large spawners.
- Public commenters were largely in favor of this option.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Options

10 AP members support the status quo Option A: Addendum/Amendment process for the following reasons:

- Concern about losing public comment opportunity and losing advance notice of public comment.
- The Commission's existing emergency action provision allows a Management Board to take action in an emergency; that is sufficient to allow the Board quickly in an emergency. The Board should complete the Addendum process during a non-emergency.
- Frustration with the emergency action experience and the lack of AP or public comment before the emergency action was decided.
- Faster is not always better. Addendum II was initiated using a streamlined process alongside the Board's emergency action, but violated the public trust by going beyond the anticipated scope when mode split options were included with very little debate, analysis or data.
- The Commission's Addendum/Amendment process is set up to work through management issues.
- Need to avoid knee-jerk reactions.

2 AP members support Option B: Board action process for the following reasons:

- Public comments have called for the Board to act more quickly, and have criticized the Board for moving too slowly in the past.
- There is a need for quick action to rebuild the stock.

Several AP members would support a hybrid option to speed up the Addendum process in some way, but still include a formal public comment period. AP members noted there needs to be a way to speed up the Addendum process without losing the public comment opportunity.

New Jersey Conservation Equivalency Proposal

ASMFC staff provided an overview of the conservation equivalency (CE) proposal submitted by the State of New Jersey for its Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) under Draft Addendum II. Through CE, New Jersey has reallocated its commercial quota to the recreational fishery (NJ's SBBP) since 1990. The SBBP CE proposal for Draft Addendum II outlines proposed changes to the SBBP size limit, along with corresponding quota changes, depending on what the Board implements through Addendum II.

AP members asked clarifying questions about how the program works, and one AP member noted interest in the history of the SBBP size limits. One AP member commented on the importance of supporting New Jersey's SBBP, noting that New Jersey made a conscious decision on how to best use their commercial quota to support the state's economy. The AP member noted the SBBP has never exceeded its quota and has provided the necessary data and information to support the proposal.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfmc.org

MEMORANDUM

January 10, 2024

To: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

From: Law Enforcement Committee

RE: Addendum II Comments

The Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) conducted a virtual meeting on January 3, 2024 to review the proposals for Addendum II of Amendment VII of the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.

The following Committee Members participated in this meeting: Jason Snellbaker, Chair, NJ; Scott Pearce, Vice Chair, FL; Rob Beal, ME; Delayne Brown, NH; Sean Reilly, NY; Thomas Gadomski, NY; Chris Baker, MA; Nicholas Couch, DE; Jeff Mercer, RI; James Cassin, NOAA OLE; and Jeffrey Sabo, PA.

ASMFC Staff participants: Emilie Franke, Madeline Musante, and Kurt Blanchard

Mrs. Emilie Franke (FMP Coordinator) presented the proposed fisheries management options under Addendum II to the LEC for consideration.

The participating members of the LEC discussed the proposed management options in Section 3.0 of Addendum II. The committee members came to a consensus on which options were most enforceable and these options are listed below along with a discussion of why these options were chosen.

Section 3.1.1 Ocean Recreational Fishery Options

Option A. Status Quo: 1 fish at 28" to less than 35" with 2017 seasons (all modes).

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

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

Discussion on Sections 3.1.1

Consistent compliance requirements across all modes within a sector leads to enhanced voluntary compliance. Compliance is complicated when there are varied sizes, seasons and possession limits for recreational fishers who fish in different modes. The LEC recognizes and respects the desire by fishers to advocate and pursue management options for their respective modes of fishing for striped bass, however when specific management options intended to safeguard the stock of a species are complicated by differing regulations for different modes of fishing, voluntary compliance and enforceability decrease.

Section 3.1.2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Options

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".

Discussion on Sections 3.1.2

The same discussion on Section 3.1.1 applies here. In consideration of options B1-4, the law enforcement committee noted that compliance with slot limits is typically higher with larger slot limits.

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

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.

Discussion on Section 3.1.3

When considering modes of fishing, consistent regulations across all sectors create better compliance. When regulations offer a distinct size and possession limit for a specific user, based on means of fishing or a specific location of fishing, this creates confusion among the users and regulators, reducing the effectiveness of a regulation. When a standard of proving who is a patron or who is a crew member, law enforcement must now pursue evidence to prove the status of an individual on a specific for-hire trip. This is not only unreasonable for an officer in the field but may also lead to false assumptions of facts. It may also create a loophole in the compliance measure.

Section 3.1.4 Recreational Filleting Allowance Requirements

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 filets 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.

Discussion on Section 3.1.4

Exceptions allowing onboard filleting of fish or other processing of animals greatly hinder enforcement of possession limits, regardless if it is a slot limits or even a trophy fish allowance. Requiring fish to remain intact facilitates identification. Particularly for large-party charters, processing at sea or filleting out catch on board complicates enforcement. Supporting regulations requiring that skin must remain on filets, counting two whole filets as one fish regardless of size, or requiring retention of "racks" may aid enforceability in specific circumstances. Where processing at sea is allowed, respective state enforcement staff should be consulted.

Section 3.2.1 Commercial Quota Reduction Options

The LEC has offered no preferred option for this section.

Discussion on Section 3.2.1

We do ask that consideration be given to straightforward opening and closing of fishing times to meet the quota objectives. This is preferred over measures that will extend fishing, such as multiple shortened seasons or limited closure dates within a season that would complicate enforcement efforts.

Section 3.3 Response to Stock Assessment Updates

The LEC has offered no preferred option for this section.

Discussion on Section 3.3

Whenever an action is taken to change current management options, Law Enforcement would ask that all appropriate means are used to inform the regulated community of the changes.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfmc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Plan Review Team

DATE: January 16, 2024

SUBJECT: PRT Review of New Jersey Conservation Equivalency Proposal for Striped Bass Bonus Program

The State of New Jersey submitted a conservation equivalency (CE) proposal for the state's recreational Striped Bass Bonus Program (SBBP) under Draft Addendum II. Since the SBBP is based on the existing commercial quota and is managed using that quota, CE is permitted during the current overfished stock status. 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. If the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board) maintains the status quo commercial quotas through Addendum II, the current SBBP CE program is valid and no Board action is required, unless NJ considers changing the SBBP size limit. If the Board changes the commercial quotas through Addendum II, a new CE program requires Board approval for the SBBP to continue.

The Striped Bass Plan Review Team (PRT) reviewed the proposal as specified in the Commission's CE Policy and Technical Guidance Document.

Proposal Overview

New Jersey reallocated its commercial quota to the recreational fishery (NJ's SBBP) through CE during Addendum VI, which was maintained through Amendment 7. The SBBP is based on NJ's commercial quota, and the state issues a limited number of permits/tags to ensure the quota is not exceeded. Anglers can apply to the program in order to receive one permit/tag at a time that allows them to harvest a bonus fish. The current approved measures for the SBBP is a size limit of 24-28" with a quota of 215,912 pounds.

The SBBP CE proposal for Draft Addendum II outlines proposed changes to the SBBP size limit, along with corresponding quota changes to maintain the same impact on the stock via spawning potential ratio (SPR) analysis, based on what the Board implements through Addendum II:

- If the Board selects the 28-31" ocean recreational size limit or the 28-31"/28-33" mode split option and maintains status quo commercial quotas, NJ would maintain their current size limit and therefore make no changes to their current CE program. No Board action is needed to continue the SBBP.

M24-08

- If the Board selects the 28-31" or 28-31"/28-33" size limit option and reduces state commercial quotas, NJ proposes to maintain the current SBBP size limit but modify the quota accordingly with the quota reduction. Board approval is needed to continue the SBBP.
- If the Board selects the 30-33" ocean recreational size limit, NJ proposes a 24-<30" SBBP size limit. The NJ quota would be adjusted using SPR analysis and would take into account the commercial quota option selected by the Board. Board approval is needed to continue the SBBP.
- If the Board selects the 30-33"/28-33" split mode ocean recreational size limit, NJ proposes a >33-≤ 36" SBBP size limit. The NJ quota would be adjusted using SPR analysis and would take into account the commercial quota option selected by the Board. Board approval is needed to continue the SBBP.

PRT Review

The first PRT review component is whether the proposal is equivalent to the FMP standard. Depending on the commercial measures selected by the Board for Addendum II, the FMP standard for the commercial fishery will either be:

- 2017 commercial size limits and Amendment 7 state-by-state quotas, or approved CE program (NJ's approved CE program reallocated its quota to the SBBP with a size limit of 24-<28" and an adjusted quota of 215,912), or,
- 2022 commercial size limits and Addendum II state-by-state quotas, which may be reduced by up to 14.5% from Amendment 7 quotas.

The proposal demonstrates equivalency to the above FMP standards by using SPR analysis and methods outlined by the Striped Bass Technical Committee¹ to adjust NJ's commercial quota to account for NJ's proposed alternative size limits. The PRT noted that Technical Committee Review of this CE proposal was not necessary since the TC recently reviewed SPR methods in September 2023¹.

The next PRT review component is whether the proposal followed the CE standards and required proposal components outlined in the CE Guidance Document. The proposal includes all the required information: rationale; description of how program meets FMP; description of datasets; length of time state is requesting CE and review schedule; monitoring and reporting process.

Regarding the proposed SBBP size limit options, the PRT is concerned about the proposed >33"- ≤ 36" option. NJ acknowledges this option would make an additional fraction of the 2015-year class available to the fishery; however, NJ also notes that other commercial fishery size limits allow harvest within this range, and the maximum number of bonus tags issued for >33" - ≤ 36" would be less than the status quo (because the average fish weight is higher). The PRT acknowledges that some commercial fisheries have access to the 2015 year class and that the

¹ 2023 Technical Committee Memo outlining SPR methods:
http://www.asmf.org/uploads/file/653fd79fStripedBassTC_Report_Sept2023.pdf

NJ SBBP is a commercial-based CE program. However, considering the Board's recent focus on protecting the 2015-year class from recreational harvest and that SBBP participants are recreational anglers, the PRT is concerned that the >33"-≤ 36" option would allow access for NJ recreational anglers to the 2015-year-class while recreational anglers along the rest of the coast would not have access to that year class.

Regarding enforcement, NJ noted that compliance and enforcement concerns are similar to other state commercial fishery programs, and NJ has increased SBBP outreach and education to increase compliance, reporting rates, and the accuracy of data reported in logbooks. The Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) received an overview of the SBBP and proposed size limit options. The only LEC comment was agreement with NJ's preference to avoid having a gap between the bonus program slot limit and the ocean recreational slot limit. E.g., a 30-33" ocean recreational slot limit should be paired with a 24-<30" bonus slot limit instead of a 24-<28" bonus slot limit.

From: [Aguiar, Adam](#)
To: [Emilie Franke](#)
Cc: [Toni Kerns](#); [Tina Berger](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass
Date: Monday, January 15, 2024 8:04:32 AM

Hello,

I wanted to update you on my concerns about the crowd-associated catch & release mortality above the line in the Susky during January and February. Though its not near their traditional spawning time, we have been catching many many large stripers already in this very sensitive area, since January 3rd in fact. I have only seen a single DNR officer at Rock Run once to check license compliance.

As explained by your own fisheries biologists (see prior emails), this area was made closed to catch and release during March because of the ‘unnaturally high concentration’ of large striped bass there. With everything moving up earlier in season, including their spawning times, that unnaturally high concentration of bass is starting in early January now, allowing for the catch and release mortality to have a severe impact during those months.

Please, again, close this highly sensitive area to even catch and release during January and February. It will protect the most important part of the striped bass population. With the current regulations, this February will have unimaginable amounts of stripers die from normal catch and release mortality alone, which doesn’t even include improper handling and poaching. By fully closing the fishery there and fully enforcing it (like is done in March), the bass population and its future will surely benefit; which is ostensibly what one of your organization’s highest priorities is, correct?

From: Emilie Franke <EFranke@asmfc.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 2, 2023 10:13 AM
To: Aguiar, Adam <Adam.Aguiar@stockton.edu>
Cc: Toni Kerns <Tkerns@asmfc.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
Subject: RE: Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass

You don't often get email from efranke@asmfc.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL EMAIL ALERT: The sender is not using a Stockton email address. Please use caution.

Hello Dr. Aguiar,

Thank you for reaching out about striped bass in the Susquehanna River in Maryland. Your comments will be shared with the Striped Bass Management Board ahead of their Spring Board meeting.

Thanks,
Emilie

Emilie Franke | Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: [703.842.0716](tel:703.842.0716) | Fax: [703.842.0741](tel:703.842.0741)
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

From: Aguiar, Adam <Adam.Aguiar@stockton.edu>

Sent: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 6:20 PM

To: Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; Mike Rinaldi <Mike.Rinaldi@accsp.org>; Geoffrey White <geoff.white@accsp.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>; Patrick A. Campfield <pcampfield@asmfc.org>; Kristen Anstead <kanstead@asmfc.org>; Toni Kerns <Tkerns@asmfc.org>

Subject: [External] Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass

Hello,

This past month has been a chaotic mess for the spawning class striped bass in the susky.

I strongly encourage January/February be closed to catch-n-release striped bass above the Lapidum line. With the years warmer earlier, there's been tons of spawning class fish earlier. With this, there's tons of anglers, 90% of which are inexperienced with proper catch and release practices. They purposely mishandle the fish roughly, and though I understand the incentive for taking pictures (I do myself on occasion), they do extensive photo ops with the fish out of the water, carelessly bang them against rocks, and walk the fish all the way into the shoreline from far out in the river. My friends and I have witnessed mishandled fish die and float down the river, and others washed up on the river banks. I informed DNR about this, and they should be giving tickets for fish harassment at the very least, but there's not much they can do given the current January/February regulations.

If these masses of new anglers were all experienced and conservation-oriented it wouldn't be so worrisome (After all, I myself have a staunch perspective on the need for nuance in even the March/April regulations). However, their inexperience and mishandling of the fish in wrong ways and for excessive time periods exacerbates the catch-and-release mortality. Here it's exceptionally critical because these are spawning class fish, and in these warmer winters with eggs already developed.

The DNR and policy-makers are ostensibly concerned about the March/April season, but everything is moving earlier with these warmer years. 2020-2023 (last 4 years) have been warmer and thus the large striped bass arrival has occurred much sooner. This year was extreme, with us catching spawning-size stripers in mid-January!

I understand that such changes in policies would hinder my attempts to catch these fish too, but I rather have the bass population healthy just as the DNR and state supposedly do. So I am writing this not just as a marine and molecular biologist, but more importantly as an avid striped bass angler. Please encourage your superiors to make the restrictions for the Susky earlier for future years. I understand you need before and after survey data for January-Februarys to demonstrate the effectiveness of such potential policies, and that you currently do not undertake such surveys there at that time. I implore you to, at the very least, effectuate such surveying methods from the Conawingo dam to Lapidum boat ramp, for shore-caught fish, during the months of January and February. I think our minds will be blown at the negative impact to the striper population that these crowds of shore-based anglers cause.

I, along with many others anglers that have shifted perspectives on this topic, agree that the

area below the Conawingo dam to lapidum should be closed January-February for even catch-and-release. Its not only logical and consistent with your other policies, but it is best for the bass population! I have 2016 emails from fisheries biologists and DNR officers (Eric Durell and Sarah Widman) explaining why this area should be closed. Having the currently inconsistent regulations (February to March shift) continue as they are is embarrassing to the organization and will undoubtedly upset voters, especially as all the fish pics of mishandled/killed bass hit social media these upcoming months. I am mass emailing the DNR officers, state legislators and assemblymen too; and plan to write extensive news articles on the topic to bolster public awareness of this issue.

Again, please consider shutting down that area of the river to even catch-and-release next January-February. It would be better for our natural resource and environment, and after this last season you will have much less resistance in doing so from the recreational community who have largely switched perspectives on the matter.

Dr. Adam A. Aguiar, Ph. D.
Associate Professor,
Biology Department,
School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NAMS),
Stockton University
(adam.aguiar@stockton.edu)
[732-939-5257](tel:732-939-5257)

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

ISFMP Policy Board

January 25, 2024

8:30 – 10:30 am

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 (<i>J. Cimino</i>) | 8:30 a.m. |
| 2. Board Consent (<i>J. Cimino</i>) | 8:30 a.m. |
| • Approval of Agenda | |
| • Approval of Proceedings from October 2023 | |
| 3. Public Comment | 8:35 a.m. |
| 4. Executive Committee Report (<i>J. Cimino</i>) Action | 8:45 a.m. |
| 5. Review and Discuss 2023 Commissioner Survey Results (<i>A. Law</i>) | 9:00 a.m. |
| 6. Consider Jurisdiction Requests for Species Declared Interest Final Action | 9:15 a.m. |
| 7. Discuss Aquaculture in the Exclusive Economic Zone (<i>D. Blacklock</i>) | 9:25 a.m. |
| 8. Review NOAA Fisheries White Paper for an Industry-Based Survey (<i>K. Ford</i>) | 9:55 a.m. |
| 9. Review Noncompliance Findings (If Necessary) Action | 10:20 a.m. |
| 10. Other Business | 10:25 a.m. |
| 11. Adjourn | 10:30 a.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

ISFMP Policy Board
Thursday January 25, 2024
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Webinar

Chair: Joe Cimino (NJ) Assumed Chairmanship: 10/23	Vice Chair: Dan McKiernan (MA)	Previous Board Meetings: October 19, 2023
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS (19 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from October 19, 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. Executive Committee Report (8:45- 9:00 a.m.) Action

Background

- The Executive Committee will meet on February 1, 2023
- The Legislative committee is considering draft a letter of support for establishing a federal working waterfront grant program. Rep. Pingree and Sen. Collins have introduced two bills ([H.R. 6641](#) and [S. 3180](#) respectively) that would do this, but they differ in sections.

Presentations

- J. Cimino will provide an update of the Executive Committee’s work
- A. Law will present the draft letter on federal working waterfronts grant program

Board action for consideration at this meeting

- Consider approval of the federal working waterfronts grant program letter

5. Review and Discuss 2022 Commissioner Survey Results (9:00-9:15 a.m.)

Background

- Commissioners completed a survey of Commission performance in 2023 (**Meeting Materials**). The survey measures Commissioner's opinions regarding the progress and actions of the Commission in 2023.

Presentations

- A. Law will present the results of the 2023 Commissioner survey highlighting significant changes from the previous year.

Board discussion for consideration at this meeting

- Determine if any action is required based on the survey results

6. Consider Jurisdiction Requests for Species Declared Interest (9:15-9:25 a.m.) Final Action

Background

- The Commission's [Rules and Regulations](#) specify the process for a jurisdiction to declare an interest in a fishery.
- New York has requested to declare into the Atlantic Migratory Group (AMG) Cobia Fishery (**Meeting Materials**)

Presentations

- Staff will present changes to the species declared interest

Board action for consideration at this meeting

- Consider approving New York's request to declare into the AMG Cobia fishery

7. Discuss Aquaculture in the Exclusive Economic Zone (9:25-9:55 a.m.)

Background

- NOAA's Office of Aquaculture is seeking opportunities to expand US aquaculture that aligns with its [2011 Aquaculture Policy](#)

Presentations

- D. Blacklock will present an update from the Office of Aquaculture and discuss state involvement in increasing aquaculture in the EEZ (e.g. striped bass)

Board action for consideration at this meeting

- None

8. Review NOAA Fisheries White Paper for an Industry-Base Survey (9:55-10:20 a.m.)

Background

- The Commission, along with the Mid Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils, requested information on an industry-based survey that would be complementary to the NEFSC Spring and Autumn bottom trawl survey
- The NEFSC has written a white paper responding to the Councils and Commission's request (**Supplemental Materials**)

Presentations

- K. Ford will present and overview of the NEFSC white paper

Board action for consideration at this meeting

- None

9. Review Non-Compliance Findings, if Necessary Action

10. Other Business

11. Adjourn

Tina Berger

From: Janice Williams <jwilliams@co.northampton.va.us>
Sent: Friday, January 12, 2024 10:38 AM
To: info
Subject: [External] Menhaden Resolution Adopted by Northampton County, VA
Attachments: Menhaden Resolution (2).pdf

Supervisor John Coker has requested that I provide you with a copy of the resolution adopted on January 9, 2024, by the Northampton Board with regard to the industrial Atlantic Menhaden Fishing industry. It's attached.

Janice Williams
Deputy County Administrator
County of Northampton
P O Box 66
Eastville, VA 23347
757/678-0440 ext. 516

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVING THE COUNTY'S POSITION THAT INDUSTRIAL ATLANTIC MENHADEN FISHING SHOULD BE PROHIBITED WITHIN THE WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND THREE MILES OF ALL LANDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND REQUESTING THAT THE VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCE COMMISSION AND STATE AGENCIES LEGALLY ESTABLISH AND ENFORCE A PROHIBITION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ATLANTIC MENHADEN FISHERY WITHIN THE WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WITHIN THREE MILES OF ANY LANDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden are an ecologically essential keystone species of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem that support commercially and recreationally important fisheries, maintain water quality by filtering nutrients from the water, and provide essential nutrients for numerous species in the bay food chain; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay negatively impacts Northampton County by reducing the stock of menhaden available to support important fisheries and wildlife, reducing the populations of recreational and commercial fish species caught in purse seine nets as by-catch, and reducing the population of predator species such as osprey, dolphins, sharks, humpback whales, striped bass, redfish, weakfish, and speckled trout, all of which contribute to the general and tourism economy of Northampton County; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing operates on a tactical level where they use spotter airplanes that can quickly cover the entire Chesapeake Bay in a matter of hours, the planes then locate schools of menhaden by air, and then quickly dispatch their boat fleet to extract schools of menhaden from the Chesapeake Bay with purse seine nets. By design, these highly efficient industrial extraction methods cause localized depletion of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay and it is not known how long it may take the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem to recover from excessive depletion of biomass, and whether a full recovery is even possible; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and members of the Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission can not provide Northampton County scientific assurance that the spatial or seasonal stock of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay is healthy, and the impact of localized depletion due to industrialized Atlantic menhaden fishing techniques in the Chesapeake Bay (VIMS et al. [2023](#)); and

WHEREAS, both the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources published record low striped bass recruitment numbers for 2023, this is the fifth consecutive year of juvenile striped bass numbers being below the average and the second lowest striped bass index ever recorded since 1957 (MDNR et al. [2023](#), Small et al. [2023](#), VIMS et al. [2023](#)); and

Whereas, research suggests industrial reduction menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay could be responsible for a decline in striped bass (Buchheister et al. 2017, TRCP et al. 2019). The Virginia Institute of Marine Science linked striped bass starvation to a decline of forage food in the Chesapeake Bay, and starvation as a cause for predisposing fish to Mycobacteriosis, locally referred to as fish wasting disease (Cardinal et al. 2001); and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science recorded industrial menhaden trawlers catching striped bass in their purse nets in the Chesapeake Bay, the average size of the striped bass caught by these industrial menhaden trawlers was over 34 inches, well above the 31 inches established by the ASMFC, suggesting that the striped bass being caught by industrial menhaden trawlers as by-catch are of size to be important breeders for striped bass recovery (Kirkley et al. 1995, ASMF et al. 2023); and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Center for Conservation at the College of William and Mary published record low osprey chick recruitment numbers in the Chesapeake Bay, the lowest recruitment numbers since 1970 as a result of starvation, a reproduction number that is lower than what occurred at any time during the DDT era and a much lower rate than is sustainable for the Bay population of Osprey (Hafner et al. 2023); and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing has caused fish kills and fish spills that have impacted public beaches, private property, and public health in Northampton County; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting the health of our local commercial industry; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting our local sport fishing industry; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting our local tourism industry, due to the adverse effects of fish spills, fish kills, the persistent rotting odor of fish spills and fish kills, and reduced sport fishing; and

WHEREAS, all other states on the Atlantic Coast have removed industrial menhaden fishing from their bays and state waters, and have now recorded positive ecological and economic responses in doing so (Main et al. 2023); and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Board of Supervisors, this 9th day of January, 2024, establishes the County's position that industrial

Atlantic menhaden reduction fishing should be prohibited within the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and three miles of all lands on the Commonwealth and requests that the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and state agencies legally establish and enforce a prohibition of the industrial Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery within the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and within three miles of any lands of the Commonwealth.



Northampton County Board of Supervisors

The undersigned Clerk of the Northampton County Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors on January 9, 2024.



Clerk, Northampton County Board of Supervisors

From: [Debbie CAMPBELL](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] comment for ASFMC annual meeting
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:48:22 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

Greetings. My name is Debbie Campbell and I am writing from my cottage at Silver Beach on the Eastern Shore of VA, in Northampton County.

You have received, and I trust read, the resolution unanimously passed by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors. Osprey and stripers are "canaries in the coal mine" for the Chesapeake when it comes to depletion of menhaden. My personal attempts to make the issue known dates back for many years. I have personally watched this story unfold since 2000. I have had the ships line up out in front of my cottage while a spotter buzzed my home, apparently in response to me taking pictures to document their activity and observe their netting and discharge through my telescope. I have watched as they applied for and received permission to change their radio frequency to obscure what spotter plane pilots were saying. Now they have proposed legislation via HB 928, which could be seen as an attempt make it easier to pursue bogus prosecutions "prosecution pursuant to this section ay be in either the county, city, or town in which the vessel is home ported. A prosecution under this section is a bar to a prosecution under SS 29.1-554.1." Again, foreign dominance trying to dictate US law and manipulate outcomes in their favor.

The science and evidence exists. The plight of Chesapeake Bay Osprey is chronicled in Frontiers of Science magazine article Demographic Response of Osprey Within the Lower Chesapeake Bay to Fluctuations in Menhaden Stock. I have seen with my own eyes the absence of menhaden in the bay and have reviewed the reports and fishing patterns that show the bay is in collapse while I watch the industrial ships relentlessly hunt down and remove entire schools, literally sucking the life out of the Chesapeake with their giant hoses, while our native fish and wildfowl starve. Every other state along the seaboard has banned this in their state waters, yet as a commission you continue to enable a foreign-owned company to deplete this keystone species in our state waters, and we and our community pay the price. Many of you live in states that already enjoy protections for your state waters. Do you think our precious Chesapeake should be shielded by the same protections?

Yes, this is a David and Goliath scenario with us little peon neighbors trying to raise awareness of the need to stop industrial reduction fishing by an international, vertically integrated company that controls its entire supply chain, including the menhaden in OUR Chesapeake Bay. Have you seen the political contributions to VA politicians that are split across the isle? We sure have. So, having worked on this issue in earnest, I hope that regulators like yourselves will finally intervene. Our county Board of Supervisors recently unanimously passed a resolution calling for a prohibition of industrial reduction fishing in VA state waters (attached). These public servants have seen the damage and destruction, including jobs lost, economic impact, and health implications. Based on past experiences, I haven't found ASMF to be very interested in public comments or allowing us to make a presentation to provide insight on the science that should be considered. It is my recollection that most non-Virginia members don't bother to vote on the menhaden catch for VA. As

commission members, I would argue that representatives from every state need to fully educate themselves on the matter and engage in the vote. I hope that you'll follow the cry for relief called by the Northampton County Board of Supervisor's resolution and prohibit reduction fishing in VA state waters. (the real state line, not the arbitrary one that's been drawn).

If you desire more information, I will be happy to arrange one-time use links for you to see the WS McKeever documentary film individually, in deference your own busy schedule. Please let me know if you would like to avail yourself of that opportunity. I am attaching the Resolution and one of the slides from the presentation for your ease of review and to underline the importance of the crisis in Northampton County.

I trust that if you review all the materials, you'll find it prudent to honor the request. Further, I'd appreciate confirmation by individual commission members that this has reached you and has been considered.

Blessings.

Debbie Campbell
7243 Kellam Dr.
Silver Beach
Exmore VA 23350

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVING THE COUNTY'S POSITION THAT INDUSTRIAL ATLANTIC MENHADEN FISHING SHOULD BE PROHIBITED WITHIN THE WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND THREE MILES OF ALL LANDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND REQUESTING THAT THE VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCE COMMISSION AND STATE AGENCIES LEGALLY ESTABLISH AND ENFORCE A PROHIBITION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ATLANTIC MENHADEN FISHERY WITHIN THE WATERS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND WITHIN THREE MILES OF ANY LANDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

WHEREAS, Atlantic menhaden are an ecologically essential keystone species of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem that support commercially and recreationally important fisheries, maintain water quality by filtering nutrients from the water, and provide essential nutrients for numerous species in the bay food chain; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay negatively impacts Northampton County by reducing the stock of menhaden available to support important fisheries and wildlife, reducing the populations of recreational and commercial fish species caught in purse seine nets as by-catch, and reducing the population of predator species such as osprey, dolphins, sharks, humpback whales, striped bass, redfish, weakfish, and speckled trout, all of which contribute to the general and tourism economy of Northampton County; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing operates on a tactical level where they use spotter airplanes that can quickly cover the entire Chesapeake Bay in a matter of hours, the planes then locate schools of menhaden by air, and then quickly dispatch their boat fleet to extract schools of menhaden from the Chesapeake Bay with purse seine nets. By design, these highly efficient industrial extraction methods cause localized depletion of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay and it is not known how long it may take the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem to recover from excessive depletion of biomass, and whether a full recovery is even possible; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Marine Resource Commission and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources have requested that the Northampton County Board of Supervisors prohibit industrial menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay and within three miles of any lands of the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, the Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and members of the Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission can not provide Northampton County scientific assurance that the spatial or seasonal stock of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay is healthy, and the impact of localized depletion due to industrialized Atlantic menhaden fishing techniques in the Chesapeake Bay (VIMS et al. [2023](#)); and

WHEREAS, both the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources published record low striped bass recruitment numbers for 2023, this is the fifth consecutive year of juvenile striped bass numbers being below the average and the second lowest striped bass index ever recorded since 1957 (MDNR et al. [2023](#), Small et al. [2023](#), VIMS et al. [2023](#)); and

Whereas, research suggests industrial reduction menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay could be responsible for a decline in striped bass (Buchheister et al. [2017](#), TRCP et al. [2019](#)). The Virginia Institute of Marine Science linked striped bass starvation to a decline of forage food in the Chesapeake Bay, and starvation as a cause for predisposing fish to Mycobacteriosis, locally referred to as fish wasting disease (Cardinal et al. [2001](#)); and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science recorded industrial menhaden trawlers catching striped bass in their purse nets in the Chesapeake Bay, the average size of the striped bass caught by these industrial menhaden trawlers was over 34 inches, well above the 31 inches established by the ASMFC, suggesting that the striped bass being caught by industrial menhaden trawlers as by-catch are of size to be important breeders for striped bass recovery (Kirkley et al. [1995](#), ASMF et al. [2023](#)); and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Center for Conservation at the College of William and Mary published record low osprey chick recruitment numbers in the Chesapeake Bay, the lowest recruitment numbers since 1970 as a result of starvation, a reproduction number that is lower than what occurred at any time during the DDT era and a much lower rate than is sustainable for the Bay population of Osprey (Hafner et al. [2023](#)); and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing has caused fish kills and fish spills that have impacted public beaches, private property, and public health in Northampton County; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting the health of our local commercial industry; and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting our local sport fishing industry; and

Northampton County by disrupting our local sport fishing industry, and

WHEREAS, industrial menhaden fishing adversely impacts the economic well-being of Northampton County by disrupting our local tourism industry, due to the adverse effects of fish spills, fish kills, the persistent rotting odor of fish spills and fish kills, and reduced sport fishing; and

WHEREAS, all other states on the Atlantic Coast have removed industrial menhaden fishing from their bays and state waters, and have now recorded positive ecological and economic responses in doing so (Main et al. [2023](#)); and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Board of Supervisors, this 9th day of January, 2024, establishes the County's position that industrial

Atlantic menhaden reduction fishing should be prohibited within the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and three miles of all lands on the Commonwealth and requests that the Virginia Marine Resources Commission and state agencies legally establish and enforce a prohibition of the industrial Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery within the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and within three miles of any lands of the Commonwealth.



Northampton County Board of Supervisors

The undersigned Clerk of the Northampton County Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors on January 9, 2024.



Clerk, Northampton County Board of Supervisors

Industrial Menhaden Reduction Fishery

Large industrial fishing process that uses spotter airplanes, big vessels, and purse seine nets to catch giant quantities of Atlantic menhaden that are brought to a factory and reduced into pelleted fish meal or oils.

Recognized as foreign-owned industrial reduction fisheries that primarily export to non-local economies and processed food systems outside of the Chesapeake Bay

90% of 2023 Virginia Quota ~ 101M lbs



Commercial Menhaden Bait Fishery

Smaller-scale fishing process that uses boats, purse seine nets, pound nets, and gill nets to catch smaller quantities of Atlantic menhaden that are used as bait for crabbing and fishing.

Recognized as locally-owned sustainable commercial bait fisheries that sell to the local economies and redistribute to the food system of the Chesapeake Bay.

10% of 2023 Virginia Quota ~ 11M lbs

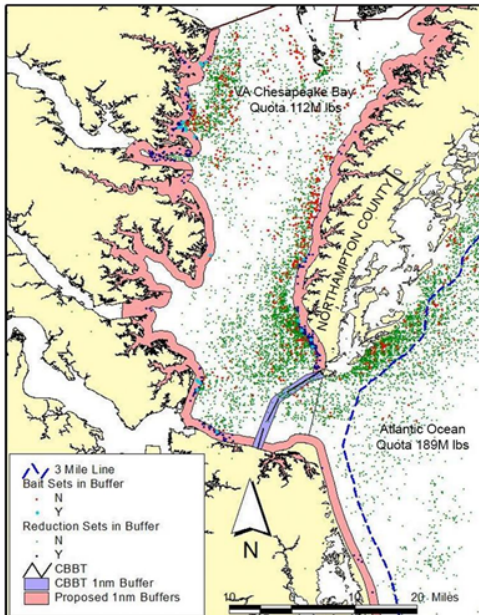
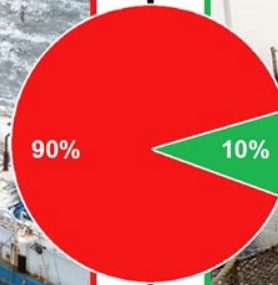


Image: Virginia Marine Resources Commission, 2022
Locations of bait sets 2018-2022 and Locations of reduction sets 2016-2020

More reduction menhaden nets are set near Northampton County than any other county in the state of Virginia.

The Northampton County Industrial Menhaden Resolution seeks to have all menhaden reduction fishing moved east of the 3 mile line and into federal waters.

Goals of resolution:

- Relieve Northampton County and the Chesapeake Bay from industrial menhaden fishing pressure, concentrated industrial extraction, and localized menhaden depletion.
- Relieve the menhaden stock in the Chesapeake Bay and address the shortage of predatory species food supply.
- Allow state agencies to conduct research and determine stock and seasonal assessments of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay as required.
- Resolve Northampton County public health issues regarding fish spills, fish kills, and beach closures.
- Resolve Northampton County economic issues regarding tourism and sport fishing.
- Allow our local commercial menhaden bait fisheries to continue operating in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Allow industrial menhaden reduction fisheries to continue operating in federal waters, as done in neighboring coastal states.

From: [Roberta Kellam](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comments to ASMFC Winter Meeting
Date: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 4:02:24 PM

Please forward my comments to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissioners in advance of their Winter Commission meeting.

Roberta A. Kellam
PO BOX 205
FRANKTOWN, VA 23354
ROBERTA.KELLAM@OUTLOOK.COM

January 16, 2024

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: **Menhaden Reduction Fishery in the Chesapeake Bay**

To the Distinguished Members of the Commission:

My name is Roberta Kellam and I reside in Northampton County, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. I am a former member of Virginia's State Water Control Board and the Northampton County Planning Commission. My husband served on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in the mid-1990s. We very much appreciate your service and the difficult issues that you must address.

The Atlantic Menhaden reduction fishery impacts to Osprey in the Chesapeake Bay requires your urgent attention. The biomass of Atlantic menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay has been so greatly reduced during critical time periods that Osprey reproduction has become unsustainable due to chick starvation in the nest. This has been well-documented in peer-reviewed studies by Dr. Bryan Watts at the Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William and Mary.

Ospreys are obligate “pescatores” which means they eat only fish. They are a keystone predator for menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay. It is a well-established principle of ecology that predator population is dependent upon prey availability. The Osprey chick starvation issue should be alarming to every government agency with the responsibility for managing fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay and nearshore Atlantic waters.

The Osprey crisis is a big red flag that something is very wrong with the Chesapeake Bay fisheries management – the sole task of your agency. I am writing to ask that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the sole federal agency responsible for ensuring that American fisheries support ecosystem services and human needs, immediately adopt a moratorium on reduction Atlantic menhaden harvesting within the Chesapeake Bay and within one mile of the mouth of the Bay. I have likewise petitioned the Virginia Marine Resources Commission to take immediate action on a moratorium, but they are under immense political pressure, as is the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, due to the influence of the sole menhaden reduction fishery upon Virginia politics.

The Northampton County, Virginia, Board of Supervisors, on January 9, 2024, unanimously adopted a Resolution in support of a prohibition on industrial menhaden fishing “within the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and three miles of all lands of the Commonwealth.” VMRC data shows that menhaden net sets are highly concentrated around the waters of Northampton County. More reduction menhaden nets are set near Northampton County than any other county in the state of Virginia. Reduction menhaden fish spills have led to public health issues in Northampton County at multiple beaches. Data from VMRC shows 17 documented menhaden net spills happened between 2018 and 2022, the dead fish ranged from 29,857 to 625,000 per year. In 2015, a fish spill caused 75,000 menhaden to wash up on the beaches of Northampton County, effectively closing Savage Neck Dune State Preserve. In July of 2022, 19,500 dead menhaden washed ashore on Silver Beach in Northampton County from a fish spill and another spill happened that same year on July 25th, where an estimated 10,000 menhaden and 12,000 pounds of mature red drum washed ashore at Kiptopeke State Park in Northampton County causing park closure. The frequency of these menhaden spills and the rotting fish and odor cause a persistent public health and tourism issue for the County.

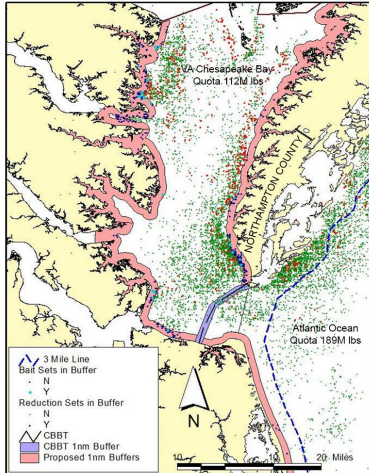


Image: Virginia Marine Resources Commission, 2022
 Locations of bait sets 2018-2022 and Locations of reduction sets 2016-2020

More reduction menhaden nets are set near Northampton County than any other county in the state of Virginia.

The Northampton County Industrial Menhaden Resolution seeks to have all menhaden reduction fishing moved east of the 3 mile line and into federal waters.

Goals of resolution:

- Relieve Northampton County and the Chesapeake Bay from industrial menhaden fishing pressure, concentrated industrial extraction, and localized menhaden depletion.
- Relieve the menhaden stock in the Chesapeake Bay and address the shortage of predatory species food supply.
- Allow state agencies to conduct research and determine stock and seasonal assessments of menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay as required.
- Resolve Northampton County public health issues regarding fish spills, fish kills, and beach closures.
- Resolve Northampton County economic issues regarding tourism and sport fishing.
- Allow our local commercial menhaden bait fisheries to continue operating in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Allow industrial menhaden reduction fisheries to continue operating in federal waters, as done in neighboring coastal states.

Again, I respectfully request that the Commission immediately adopt a moratorium on the Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery in the Chesapeake Bay and nearshore waters. Please do not let the breeding Osprey population be extirpated from the Chesapeake Bay under your watch.

Very truly yours,
 Roberta Kellam

Tina Berger

Subject: FW: [External] Request for an ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Management Board Meeting

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>

Sent: Friday, January 12, 2024 9:20:10 AM

To: Bob Beal <rbeal@asmfc.org>

Subject: [External] Request for an ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Management Board Meeting

Bob,

When are you going to schedule an Atlantic Menhaden Management Board meeting regarding “Localized Depletion of Atlantic Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay” given that:

- Striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish are dependent on Atlantic menhaden for their survival (a).
- Over 60% of the striped bass on the Atlantic Coast begin as spawn in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries (Figure 1).
- The Maryland Chesapeake Bay striped bass juvenile index is dramatically down for five consecutive years (Figure 2).
- The Maryland recreational fishing striped bass gross domestic product was over \$800 million dollars and supported over 10,000 jobs in 2016 (Figure 3).
- Maryland and Virginia are experiencing the textbook definition of “Localized Depletion of Atlantic Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay” as defined by NOAA (b) based on a dramatic decline in harvests for striped bass (Figures 4 and 5), bluefish (Figure 6), and weakfish (Figure 7).
- Finally, there has been a dramatic decline of osprey in the main stem of the Chesapeake Bay due to the lack of Atlantic menhaden (c).

Please answer the question.

Thanks for your help.

Regards, Phil

References:

- (a) <https://sedarweb.org/documents/sedar-69-atlantic-menhaden-ecological-referance-points-stock-assessment-report/> pages iii and 375
- (b) [2009_05_08 Maquire Chesapeake Bay menhaden program review report.pdf](#) (noaa.gov) page 4
- (c) [Frontiers | Demographic response of osprey within the lower Chesapeake Bay to fluctuations in menhaden stock](#) (frontiersin.org)

Figure 1

Ecological Impact Striped Bass Chesapeake Bay Contribution to Coastal Stock

Stock Composition (CB) - Only Tag-based Used

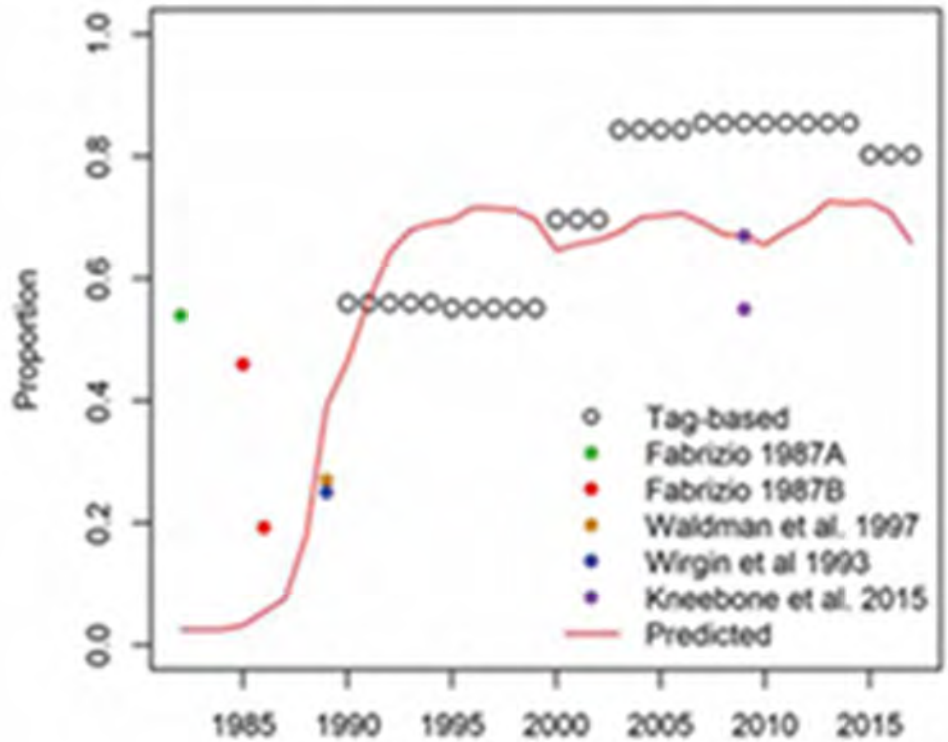


Figure B7.9. Observed versus predicted stock composition for the Chesapeake Bay stock. Literature values not used in the model fitting are indicated by the solid circles for comparison.

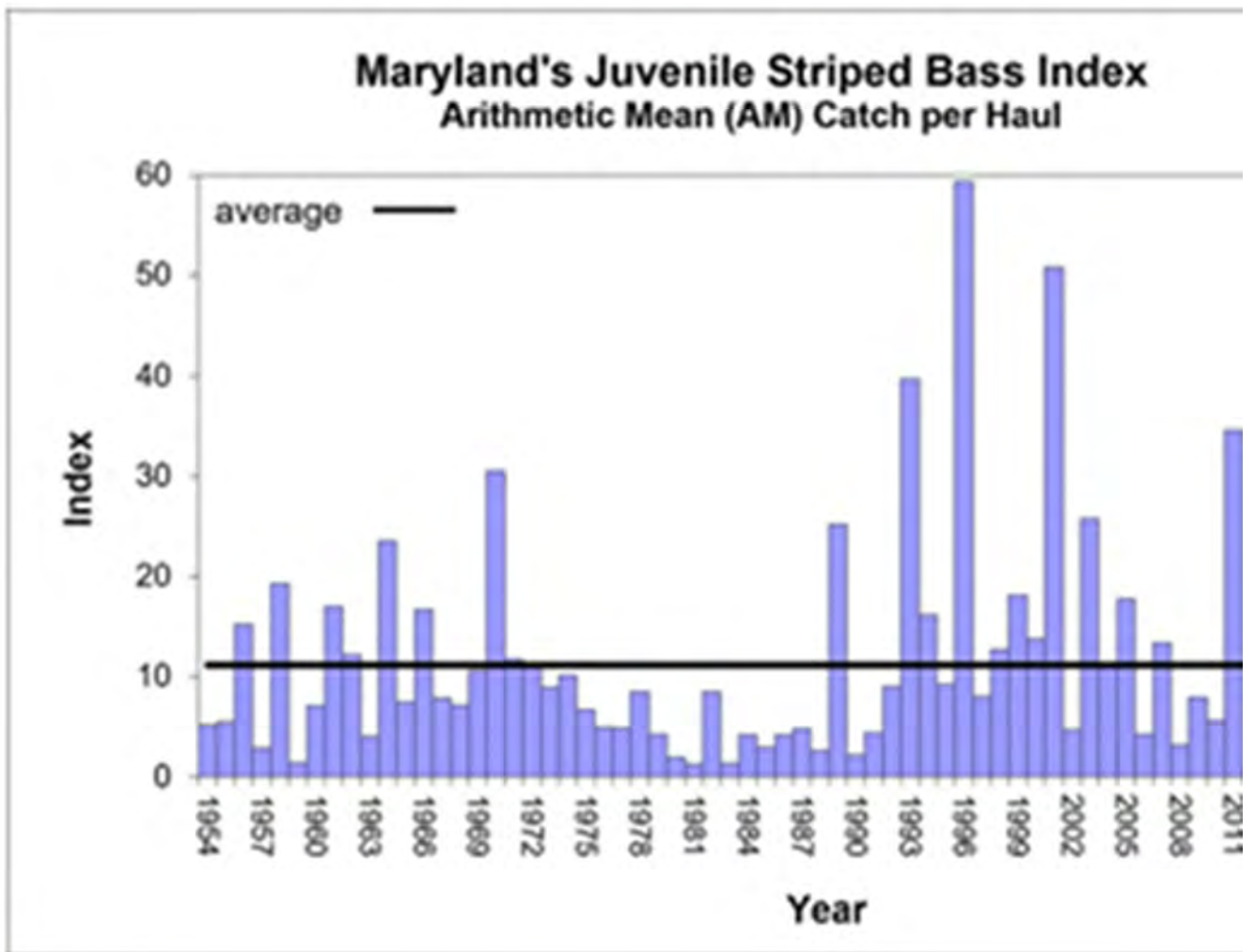
Reference:

<https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/23>

Figure 2

Ecological Impact

Striped Bass



Reference:

[Chesapeake Bay 2023 Young-of-Year Striped Bass Survey Results Annual Report](#)

Figure 3

Economic Impact

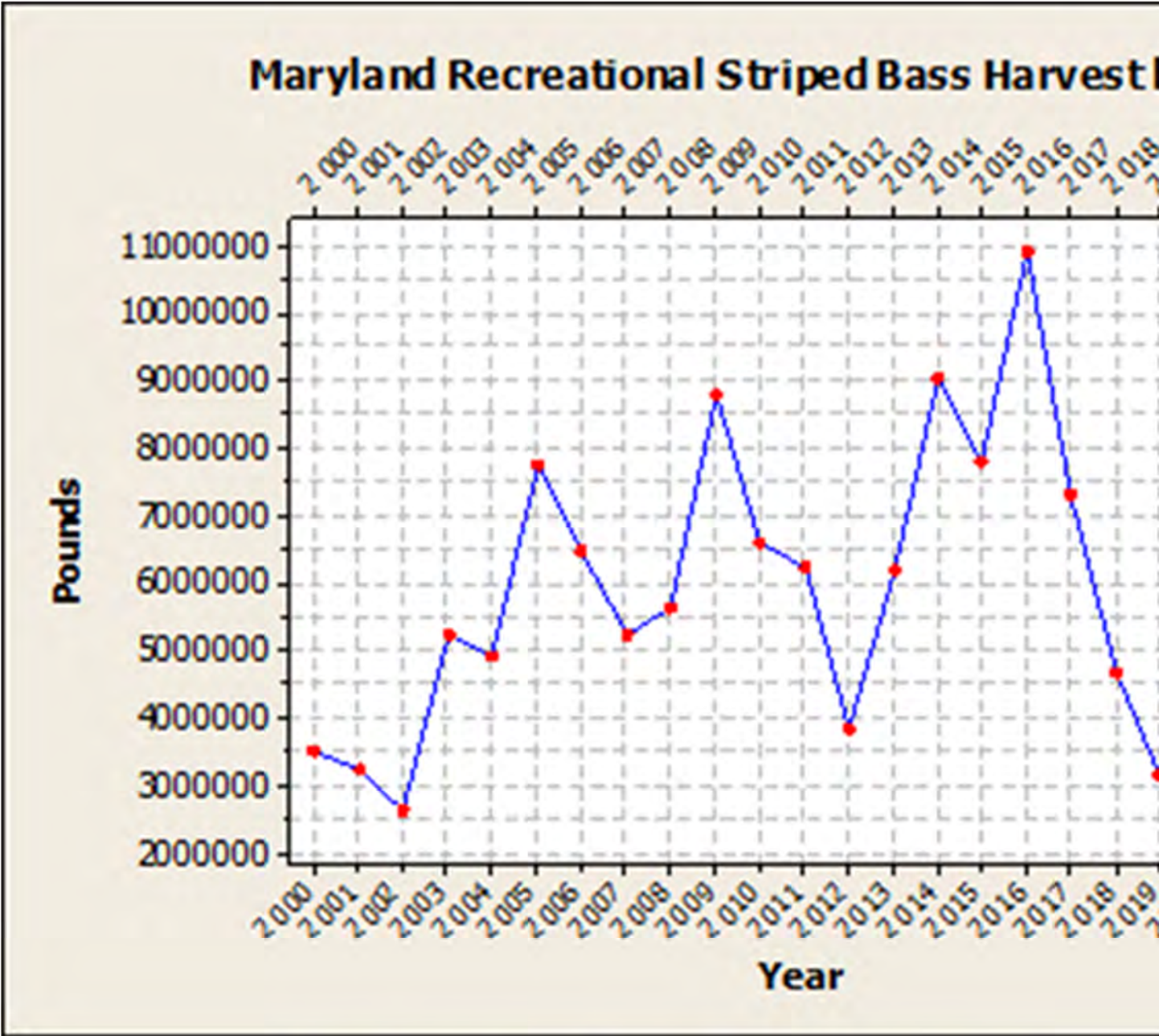
Striped Bass Related GDP for Maryland and Virginia

	Recreational GDP	Recreational Jobs	Commer GDP
Maryland	\$802,791,200	10,193	\$17,109,1
Virginia	\$106,623,300	1,444	\$12,198,1
Total	\$909,414,500	11,637	\$29,307,3

Reference:

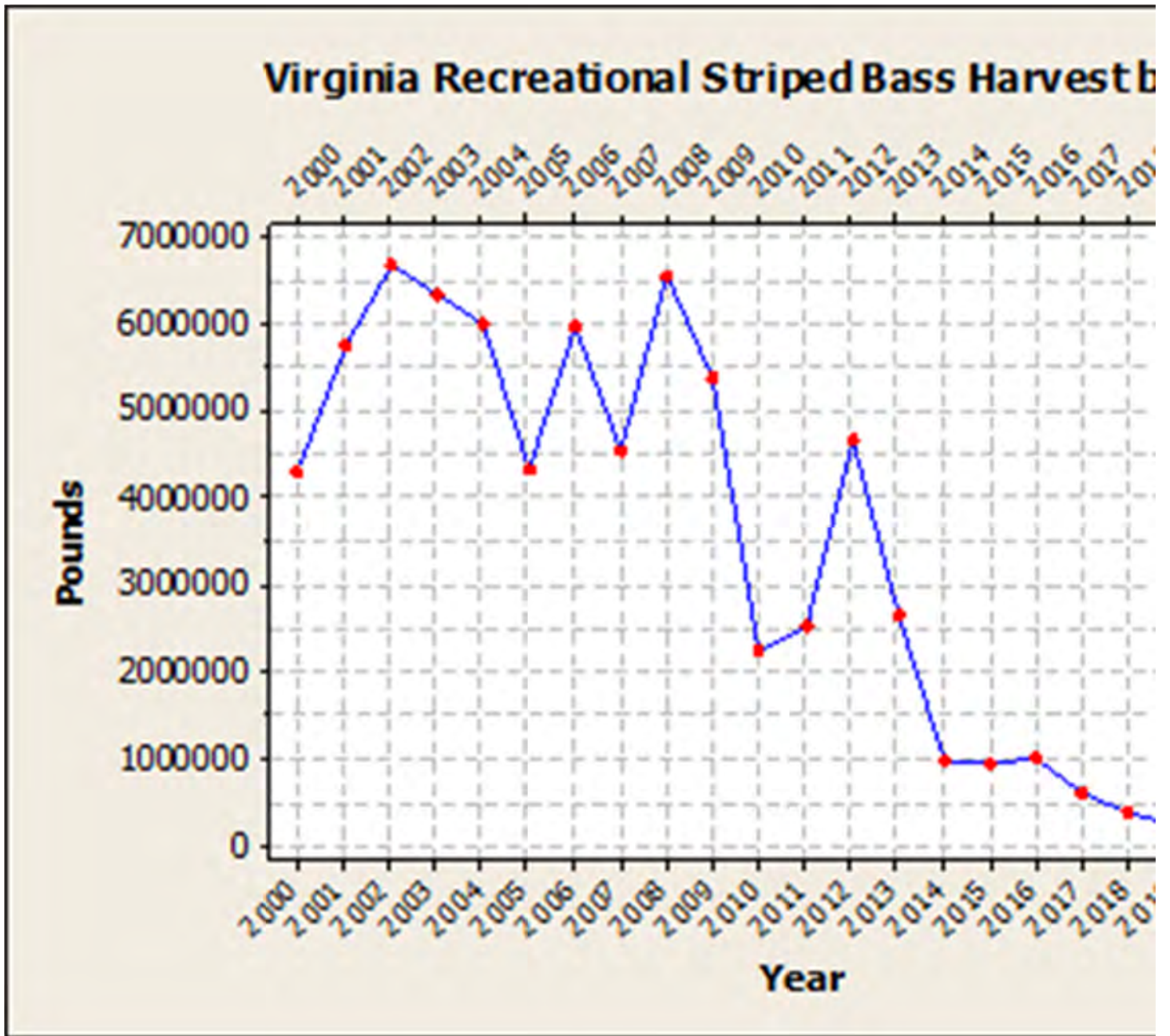
https://mcgraw.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/McGraw-Report-FINAL_compressed.pdf

Figure 4



<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/commercial/>

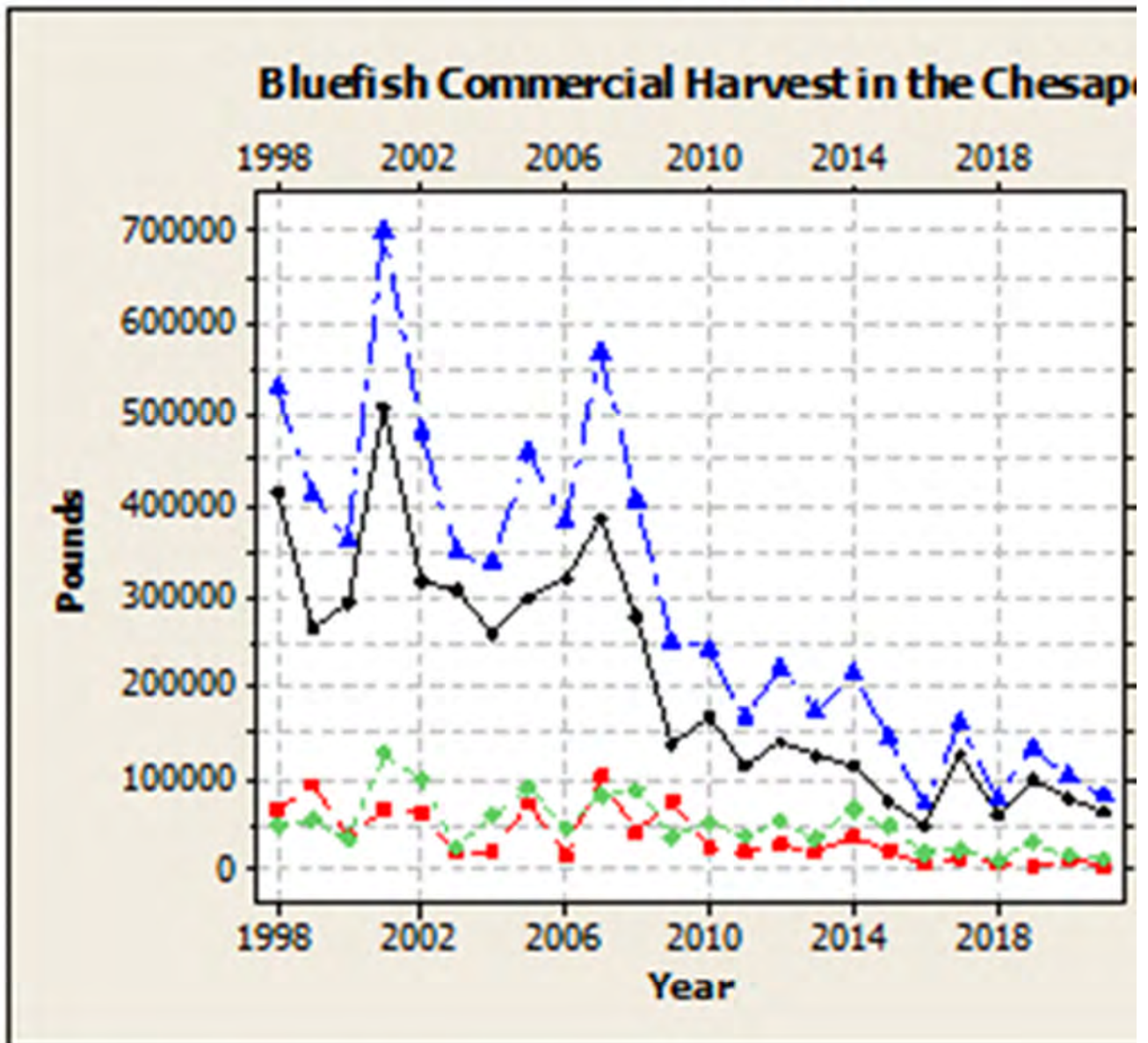
Figure 5



<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/commercial/>

Figure 6

Ecological Impact Bluefish

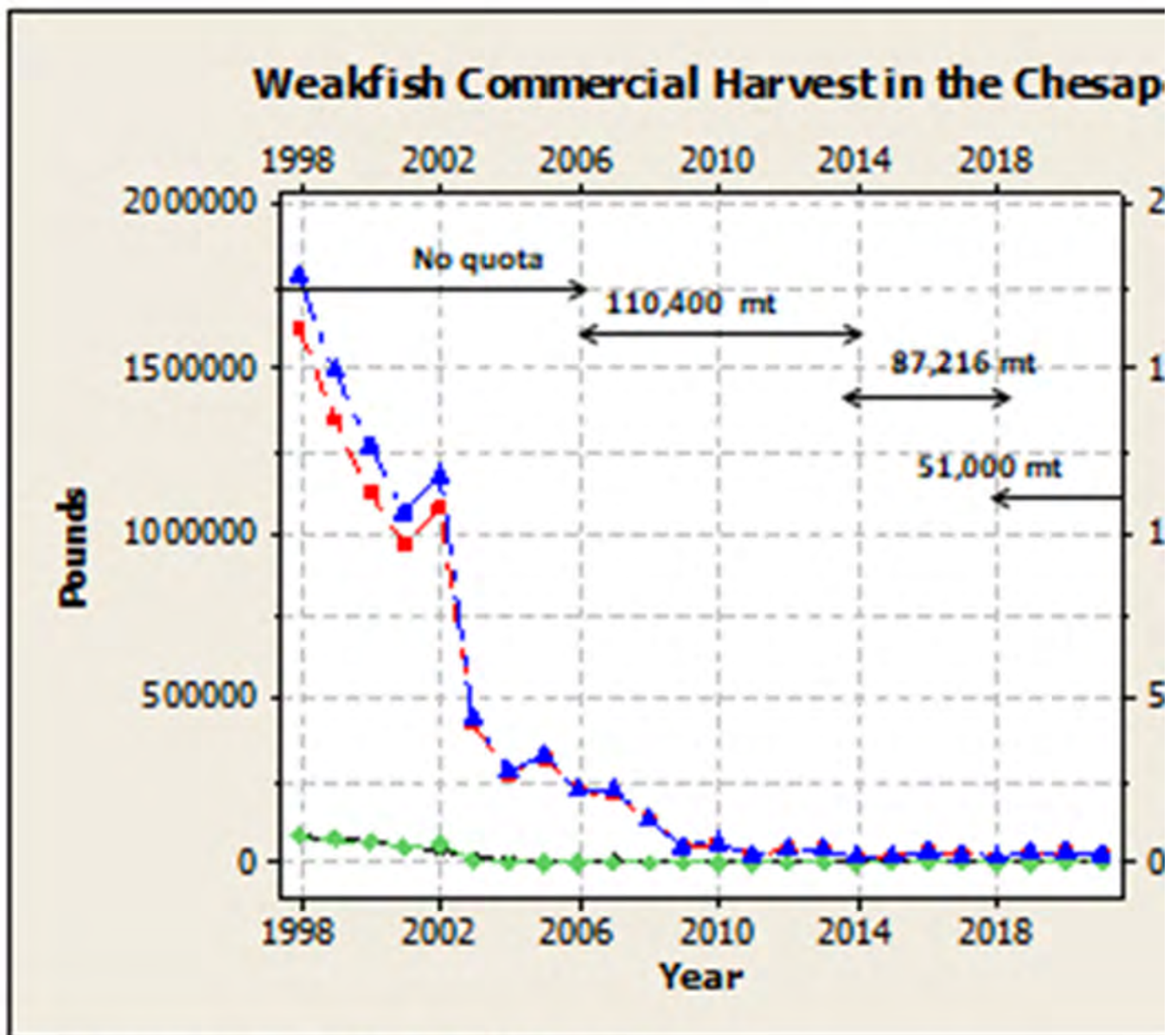


References: MD DNR, VMRC, PRFC

Figure 7

Ecological Impact

Weakfish



References: MD DNR, VMRC, PRFC

Tina Berger

From: Robert Beal
Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2024 5:26 PM
To: PHILIP ZALESAK
Cc: Conor McManus; James Boyle; Toni Kerns; david@chesapeakelegal.org; Joe Cimino; DAN MCKIERNAN; PHILIP ZALESAK; 'Dale William Neal'; 'David Reed'; 'Ron Smith'; ospreycbva@gmail.com; jthorpe@umm.edu; ROMARIC MONCRIEFFE; MICHAEL ACADEMIA; KEN SCHULTZ; sophieandfolly@yahoo.com; tomburkett@virginia.edu; bellmarineservices@gmail.com; stzalesak@gmail.com; boatman5@ymail.com; battista91@yahoo.com; dunnsville@gmail.com; donna@skylineinvestmentgroup.com; 'Brian Collins'; wsmckeever@gmail.com; JON HURDLE; JEREMY COX; Adam S. Nowalsky; Allison Colden; ALLISON HEPLER; ANITA A KULIK; Caitlin Craig; CAMERON RENY; Carolyn N Belcher; CHAD THOMAS; Cheri Patterson; CHRIS BATSAVAGE; Conor McManus; Craig A. Miner; Craig D Pugh; Dana Stein; DAVID H. WATTERS; DAVID M. DELLOSO; David Sikorski; DAVID BORDEN; Dennis Abbott; DOUG GROUT; Doug Haymans; Emerson Hasbrouck; Eric Reid; Erika Burgess; FRED W. THIELE Jr.; GARY JENNINGS; INGRID BRAUN; Bryan Plumlee; James Boyle; JEFF KAELIN; Jerry Mannen Jr.; JESSICA MCCAWLEY; Joe Cimino; JOHN CLARK; John Maniscalco; Justin Davis; KATHY RAWLS; KRISTOPHER M KUHN; LOREN W.LUSTIG; LYNN FEGLEY; MALCOLM RHODES; MARTY GARY; Capt. MATTHEW CORBIN; MAX APPELMAN; Megan Ware; Megan Ware; Meghan Lapp; Mel Bell; MICHAEL WRAY; MICHAEL LUISI; NICHOLA MESERVE; Rep. JOSEPH P GRESKO; Patrick Keliher; Patrick Keliher; Patrick Geer; Raymond Kane; Renee Zobel; ROBERT LAFRANCE; RON OWENS; Ronnie Cromer; Roy Miller; Russell Dize; Sarah Ferrara; SARAH K. PEAKE (SARAHKPEAKE@GMA.IL.COM)@server2.raptoremilsecurity.com; VIN GOPAL; SHANNA MADSEN; Spud Woodward; Stephen Train; Susan Sosnowski; Monty Mason; Thad Altman; TIM SCHAEFFER; TREY RHODES; WILLIAM HYATT; William J Carson; Tina Berger
Subject: RE: [External] The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish in the Chesapeake Bay

Phil,

Thank you for submitting additional comments. While it appears you copied the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board on this email, we will also include it in the supplemental briefing materials for the Commission's Winter Meeting.

Regarding your ongoing request for extended time during the Commission's Winter Meeting: The Commission has an open process to collect significant public input during and between meetings. You and others have fully availed yourselves of our public comment process. We are not able to accommodate your request for 30 minutes on the Winter Meeting agenda. As you know, the Commission manages dozens of fisheries and has thousands of stakeholders along the Atlantic coast. In order to treat all stakeholders fairly and consistently, we are unable accommodate requests for extended time on board agendas for public presentations.

At the upcoming ASMFC Winter Meeting, you are encouraged to provide your perspective during the public comment period at the beginning of the ISFMP Policy Board meeting at 8:30am on Thursday, January 25.

Best,
Bob

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>

Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2024 11:59 AM

To: Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>

Cc: Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Toni Kerns

<Tkerns@asmfc.org>; david@chesapeakelegal.org; Joe Cimino <joseph.cimino@dep.nj.gov>; DAN MCKIERNAN <dan.mckiernan@mass.gov>; PHILIP ZALESK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>; 'Dale William Neal' <dalewilliamneal@gmail.com>; 'David Reed' <david@chesapeakelegal.org>; 'Ron Smith' <smitty3894@aol.com>; ospreycbva@gmail.com; jthorpe@umm.edu; ROMARIC MONCRIEFFE <romaric.moncrieffe@audubon.org>; MICHAEL ACADEMIA <macademia@email.wm.edu>; KEN SCHULTZ <ken@kenschultz.com>; sophieandfolly@yahoo.com; tomburkett@virginia.edu; bellmarineservices@gmail.com; stzalesak@gmail.com; boatman5@ymail.com; battista91@yahoo.com; dunnsville@gmail.com; donna@skylineinvestmentgroup.com; 'Brian Collins' <brian.c1@me.com>; wsmckeever@gmail.com; JON HURDLE <jonhurdle@gmail.com>; JEREMY COX <jcox@bayjournal.com>; Adam S. Nowalsky <captadamnj@gmail.com>; Allison Colden <acolden@cbf.org>; ALLISON HEPLER <allison.hepler@legislature.maine.gov>; ANITA A KULIK <akulik@pahouse.net>; Caitlin Craig <caitlin.craig@dec.ny.gov>; CAMERON RENY <cameron.reny@legislature.maine.gov>; Carolyn N Belcher <carolyn.belcher@dnr.ga.gov>; CHAD THOMAS <thomascd@roadrunner.com>; Cheri Patterson <cheri.patterson@wildlife.nh.gov>; CHRIS BATSAVAGE <CHRIS.BATSAVAGE@NCDENR.GOV>; Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; Craig A. Miner <craigminer230@gmail.com>; Craig D Pugh <crabman31@aol.com>; Dana Stein <mbrassil@house.state.md.us>; DAVID H. WATTERS <DAVID.WATTERS@LEG.STATE.NH.US>; DAVID M. DELLOSO <ddelloso@pahouse.net>; David Sikorski <davidsikorski@mac.com>; DAVID BORDEN <lizzy.2@charter.net>; Dennis Abbott <swamper199@gmail.com>; DOUG GROUT <groutnhfish@gmail.com>; Doug Haymans <doug.haymans@dnr.ga.gov>; Emerson Hasbrouck <ech12@cornell.edu>; Eric Reid <Ericreidri@gmail.com>; Erika Burgess <erika.burgess@myfwc.com>; FRED W. THIELE Jr. <thielef@nyassembly.gov>; GARY JENNINGS <gjennings@asafishing.org>; INGRID BRAUN <ingrid.prfc@gmail.com>; Bryan Plumlee <bplumlee@pbp-attorneys.com>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; JEFF KAELIN <jkaelin@lundsfish.com>; Jerry Mannen Jr. <jmannen@yfmlaw.com>; JESSICA MCCAWLEY <jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com>; Joe Cimino <joseph.cimino@dep.nj.gov>; JOHN CLARK <john.clark@delaware.gov>; John Maniscalco <john.maniscalco@dec.ny.gov>; Justin Davis <justin.davis@ct.gov>; KATHY RAWLS <KATHY.RAWLS@NCDENR.GOV>; KRISTOPHER M KUHN <kkuhn@pa.gov>; LOREN W.LUSTIG <senseofwonder@pa.net>; LYNN FEGLEY <lynn.fegley@maryland.gov>; MALCOLM RHODES <rhodesmm@musc.edu>; MARTY GARY <martin.gary@dec.ny.gov>; Capt. MATTHEW CORBIN <matthew.corbin@maryland.gov>; MAX APPELMAN <max.appelman@noaa.gov>; Megan Ware <megan.ware@maine.gov>; Megan Ware <megan.ware@maine.gov>; Meghan Lapp <meghan@seafreezeld.com>; Mel Bell <bellm@dnr.sc.gov>; MICHAEL WRAY <michael.wray@ncleg.gov>; MICHAEL LUISI <michael.luisi@maryland.gov>; NICHOLA MESERVE <nichola.meserve@mass.gov>; Rep. JOSEPH P GRESKO <joseph.gresko@cga.ct.gov>; Patrick Keliher <patrick.keliher@maine.gov>; Patrick Keliher <patrick.keliher@maine.gov>; Patrick Geer <pat.geer@mrc.virginia.gov>; Raymond Kane <ray@capecodfishermen.org>; Renee Zobel <renee.zobel@wildlife.nh.gov>; ROBERT LAFRANCE <robert.lafrance@quinnipiac.edu>; RON OWENS <ron.prfc@gmail.com>; Ronnie Cromer <RonnieCromer@scsenate.gov>; Roy Miller <fishmaster70@comcast.net>; Russell Dize <maryjdize@gmail.com>; Sarah Ferrara <sarah.ferrara@mahouse.gov>; =?UTF-8?Q?SARAH_K._PEAKE_=28=C2=A0SARAHKPEAKE=40GMA?=.=?UTF-8?Q?IL.COM=29?=@server2.raptoremailsecurity.com; VIN GOPAL <sengopal@njleg.org>; SHANNA MADSEN <shanna.madsen@mrc.virginia.gov>; Spud Woodward <swoodward1957@gmail.com>; Stephen Train <FVHATTIEROSE@aol.com>; Susan Sosnowski <sen-sosnowski@rilin.state.ri.us>; Monty Mason <district01@senate.virginia.gov>; Thad Altman <thad.altman@myfloridahouse.gov>; TIM SCHAEFFER <tischaeffe@pa.gov>; TREY RHODES <trey.rhodes@house.ga.gov>; WILLIAM HYATT <hyattwilliam01@gmail.com>; William J Carson <william.carson@delaware.gov>

Subject: [External] The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish in the Chesapeake Bay

Bob,

I have reviewed the information you provided below.

Unfortunately, the data associated with the Atlantic menhaden survey for the Atlantic Coast can't be applied to the Chesapeake Bay. The Atlantic Coast and the Chesapeake Bay are two distinct marine environments with different biomass densities throughout the year. Therefore, **the mortality rate analysis of Atlantic menhaden is invalid for the Chesapeake Bay.**

The Atlantic Coast doesn't experience the same harvest intensity of Atlantic menhaden that Virginia waters do.

First, the ASMFC allocates 75.21% of Atlantic menhaden to Virginia. Virginia then allocates over 90.4% to its Atlantic menhaden reduction fishery. That is a total allocation of over 67% of the TAC for the entire Atlantic Coast to a single reduction fishery which is in clear violation of the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board "Goals and Objectives". For an Atlantic Coast TAC of 233,550 metric tons, that represents over 158,000 metric tons or 761 million (3 / 4 of a billion) fish being removed from Virginia waters based on an average of .46 pounds per fish (NOAA)

Second, the ASMFC allocates 51,000 metric tons of Atlantic menhaden to the reduction fishery in the Chesapeake Bay or over 244 million fish with the remaining 517 million fish being removed in Virginia waters just outside the Bay. That is the text book definition of "Localized Depletion of Atlantic Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay."

Third, **you can't manage what you can't measure**. Neither the ASMFC nor the Virginia Marine Resources Commission has any idea what the biomass of Atlantic menhaden is in the Chesapeake Bay during the Atlantic menhaden reduction season (May – November). Therefore, the impact on the mortality rate of striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish cannot be determined in the Chesapeake Bay. Nor can any credible economic analysis be made to determine the impact on recreational fishing business base in the Chesapeake Bay.

However, we do know that the Maryland Chesapeake Bay striped bass juvenile index has been extremely low for the last four consecutive years which is a good indicator that there are insufficient Atlantic menhaden for striped bass to eat. One could easily conclude that striped bass are not being overfished in the Chesapeake Bay. They are simply underfed and starving to death. This also appears to be true for osprey based on the latest peer-reviewed research. [Frontiers | Demographic response of osprey within the lower Chesapeake Bay to fluctuations in menhaden stock \(frontiersin.org\)](http://frontiersin.org)

I have a lot more information, however, the information above should be sufficient to justify an Atlantic Menhaden Management Board meeting on Thursday, January 24, at 1 PM as this will not interfere with what you currently have planned.

I am requesting 30 minutes to brief "Localized Depletion of Atlantic Menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay" with 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for Q&A.

Regards, Phil

----- Original message -----

From: Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>

Date: 1/10/24 11:25 AM (GMT-05:00)

To: PHILIP ZALESK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>, Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>, James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>, Toni Kerns <Tkerns@asmfc.org>

Cc: 'David Reed' <david@chesapeakelegal.org>, PHILIP ZALESK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>, Joe Cimino <joseph.cimino@dep.nj.gov>, DAN MCKIERNAN <dan.mckiernan@mass.gov>

Subject: RE: [External] RE: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Phil,

Our practice is for press releases to be reviewed by the Executive Director, Species board chair, Director of Fisheries Policy, FMP Coordinator, and Director of Communications before release.

I re-read your first post at the bottom of this thread. I think I now understand the source of confusion. In the first post you provided the following quote from the October 20, 2020 press release:

“The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (Board) approved a total allowable catch (TAC) of 194,400 metric tons (mt) for the 2021 and 2022 fishing seasons, which represents a 10% reduction from the 2018-2020 TAC level. The 2021-2022 TAC was set based on the ecological reference points (ERPs) approved by the Board in August, and reaffirms the Board’s commitment to **manage the fishery in a way that accounts for the species role as a forage fish.**”

I believe you are interpreting the underlined text to indicate the Board or Commission needed to take further action to manage the fishery to account for menhaden’s role as a forage fish. However, the intent of this text is to indicate the Board reaffirmed the August 2020 decision to use ERPs to manage the menhaden fishery. The ERPs, as adopted, account for the ecological services provided by menhaden.

The adopted ERP definitions are:

ERP F 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 F 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.

ERP fecundity target and threshold: the long-term equilibrium fecundity that results when the population is fished at the ERP F target and threshold, respectively.

As you see, these adopted ERPs are designed to support the striped bass population at the biomass target level. The menhaden quotas for 2021-2025 are consistent with the ERPs. These ERP F reference points are

lower than the single-species reference points and result in a lower menhaden TAC than would be allowed if the Board were not taking menhaden's role as a forage fish into account in management.

Based on the most recent menhaden stock assessment update (2022), the fishing mortality rate for 2021 is below the ERP threshold and target, and the fecundity for 2021 is above the ERP threshold and target. Therefore, overfishing is not occurring and the stock is not overfished. This indicates the current menhaden management program will sustain striped bass at their biomass target when striped bass are fished at their fishing mortality rate target. The ERP assessment also shows that even if we stop menhaden fishing entirely, striped bass will not rebuild unless fishing mortality on striped bass is reduced to sustainable levels (which is being addressed).

The Commission regularly reviews and updates its scientific information and stock assessments. To that end, the menhaden ERPs are undergoing a benchmark assessment for peer review and presentation in 2025 and the menhaden stock assessment will be updated in 2025. The terms of reference approved by the Board for the 2025 ERP benchmark assessment can be found here: [Spring 2023 meeting materials, with draft TORs](#) (Beginning on page 30). The ERP Work Group met in November of 2023 and the notes from that meeting can be found here: [ERP Work Group Notes](#). The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board will review the results from these analyses and adjust the management program if necessary.

Bob

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 8:36 AM
To: Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; Robert Beal <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Toni Kerns <Tkerns@asmfc.org>
Cc: 'David Reed' <david@chesapeakelegal.org>; PHILIP ZALESAK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Subject: [External] RE: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Bob,

First, do you as the ASMFC Executive Director review and approved all ASMFS press releases? Did you review and approve the release of <https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/5f8f5e30pr23AtlMenhaden2021-2022TAC.pdf>

Second, as the ASMFC Executive Director are you responsible and accountable for addressing the management of Atlantic menhaden as it relates to the striped bass fishery?

Thanks for your help.

Regards, Phil

From: Phil Zalesak [<mailto:flypax@md.metrocast.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 1:47 PM
To: 'McManus, Conor (DEM)'; 'Robert Beal'; JBoyle@asmfc.org; 'Toni Kerns'
Cc: 'David Reed'; Phil Zalesak
Subject: RE: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Conor,

I am completely familiar with the page you referenced below.

I am more concerned about management responsibility and accountability.

First, who in the ASMFC approved the forage fish press release? <https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/5f8f5e30pr23AtlMenhaden2021-2022TAC.pdf>

Second, who in the ASMFC was responsible and accountable for addressing the management of Atlantic menhaden as it relates to the striped bass fishery?

Thanks for your help.

Take care, Phil

From: McManus, Conor (DEM) [<mailto:Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 9:53 AM
To: Phil Zalesak; 'Robert Beal'; JBoyle@asmfc.org; 'Toni Kerns'
Cc: 'David Reed'
Subject: Re: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Dear Phil,

The most recent documents on Atlantic menhaden produced by ASMFC can be found on their website (<https://asmfc.org/species/atlantic-menhaden>). There is background on the last Addendum and there is the 2022 stock assessment. There are other peer-reviewed publications that have come out since 2020 I believe, but those are not directly used for management.

Best,

Conor

Conor McManus, PhD

Chief

RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries

3 Ft. Wetherill Road

Jamestown, RI 02835

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 7:09 AM
To: McManus, Conor (DEM) <Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>; 'Robert Beal' <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; JBoyle@asmfc.org <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; 'Toni Kerns' <Tkerns@asmfc.org>
Cc: 'David Reed' <david@chesapeakelegal.org>; Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Subject: RE: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Conor,

Please forward any reports by the ASMFC since the fall of 2020 which addresses the management Atlantic menhaden as it relates to the striped bass fishery.

Thanks for your help.

Take care, Phil

From: McManus, Conor (DEM) [<mailto:Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 6:31 AM

To: Phil Zalesak; 'Robert Beal'; JBoyle@asmfc.org; 'Toni Kerns'

Cc: David Reed

Subject: Re: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Dear Phil,

Atlantic menhaden is managed by ASMFC through interstate fisheries management. Regarding your quote, I believe the adoption of ecological reference points allows for managing the fishery in a way that accounts for the species role as a forage fish, particularly striped bass. TACs, the single species stock assessment, and the ecological reference point work are all conducted periodically, with some of those having been done since 2020. I believe the rationale for the 2021 TAC decision was done acknowledging the role of the menhaden as forage fish.

Best,

Conor

Conor McManus, PhD

Chief

RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries

3 Ft. Wetherill Road

Jamestown, RI 02835

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 5:50 AM

To: McManus, Conor (DEM) <Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>; 'Robert Beal' <Rbeal@asmfc.org>; JBoyle@asmfc.org <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; 'Toni Kerns' <Tkerns@asmfc.org>

Cc: David Reed <david@chesapeakelegal.org>; Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>

Subject: RE: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Conor,

From your statement, is it correct to state that no individual or organization was tasked to “manage the fishery in a way that accounts for the species role as a forage fish” since October of 2020?

Also, whose responsible was it to see that this was properly managed?

Thanks for your help.

Take care, Phil

From: McManus, Conor (DEM) [<mailto:Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>]

Sent: Monday, January 8, 2024 12:10 PM

To: Phil Zalesak; Robert Beal; JBoyle@asmfc.org; Toni Kerns

Subject: Re: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Dear Phil,

Sorry for the delayed reply. Yes I remember the drop in TAC back in 2021. In regards to your question on the ERP, the workgroup is actively addressing these questions now as they update models and reassess their utility. I am cc'ing folks from ASMFC who can speak more to currently timelines.

Best,

Conor

Conor McManus, PhD

Chief

RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries

3 Ft. Wetherill Road

Jamestown, RI 02835

From: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 10:27 AM
To: McManus, Conor (DEM) <Conor.McManus@dem.ri.gov>
Cc: Phil Zalesak <flypax@md.metrocast.net>
Subject: The Role of Atlantic Menhaden as a Forage Fish

Connor,

Recall the following . . .

First, on October 20, 2020 the following press release was made by the ASMFC:

“The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board (Board) approved a total allowable catch (TAC) of 194,400 metric tons (mt) for the 2021 and 2022 fishing seasons, which represents a 10% reduction from the 2018-2020 TAC level. The 2021-2022 TAC was set based on the ecological reference points (ERPs) approved by the Board in August, and reaffirms the Board’s commitment to **manage the fishery in a way that accounts for the species role as a forage fish.**”

<https://asmfc.org/uploads/file/5f8f5e30pr23AtlMenhaden2021-2022TAC.pdf> [asmfc.org]

The reason for this press release was that in January 2020 the Ecological Reference Point Stock Assessment Report was published and concluded that:

“A suite of five key predator and prey species were identified from diet data and other considerations (referred to as ERP focal species). Atlantic striped bass, bluefish, spiny dogfish, and weakfish were identified as key predator species of Atlantic menhaden.”

The report also showed direct relationship between the mortality rate of Atlantic menhaden and the mortality rate of striped bass.

<https://sedarweb.org/documents/sedar-69-atlantic-menhaden-ecological-reference-points-stock-assessment-report/> [sedarweb.org] pages iii and 375

Second, did the Ecological Reference Point Working Group, the Atlantic Menhaden Technical Committee, or any other person or organization every receive tasking to evaluate Atlantic menhaden role as a forage fish and its impact on predators such as striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish?

If so, please forward a copy of the tasking, date, and any subsequent reports.

Thanks for your help.

Take care, Phil

Tina Berger

Subject: FW: [External] Thoughts on no menhaden board meeting

From: Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com>

Sent: Friday, January 12, 2024 8:58:25 AM

To: Robert Beal <rbeal@asmfc.org>

Cc: James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>; Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>; PHILIP ZALESK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>; Dale William Neal <dalewilliamneal@gmail.com>; Brian <brian.c1@me.com>; steve atkinson <steveatkinson52@verizon.net>; debbie campbell <debbiescampbell@icloud.com>

Subject: [External] Thoughts on no menhaden board meeting

Bob It is very sad that after all these years and the millions of people that have described their values and the hope their children and grandchildren could enjoy Chesapeake Bay bay wildlife the way it was will not get a chance to meet the menhaden board face to face. I wonder if you took the time to listen and watch the 11 witnesses that testified at the MRC meeting in August. If you did, I have to wonder how you could be making this decision ? I personally feel that over the years the Commission has really not done anything to help..it's just got worse and worse. It's the same people year after year that are turning the people down no matter how bad things get or what new scientific information is developed. It's really to late for my generation...our ospreys chicks are dead, they won't be coming back to our nests , the grandchildren who loved to fish in front of the house ten years ago have grown up . They lost interest in most fishing years ago. The ibises and blue herons moved away years ago when the juvenile menhaden quit coming. The Charter says the staff and board should be using the people's values in your management actions. That is not being followed at all . That is the root of the people's problem here. The Commission that allocates their natural resources doesn't care what they want and doesn't care about what they need. That could not be made any clearer than right now when you denied a meeting of the menhaden board . The ERP science we waited ten years for that says the condition of striped bass and ospreys, which is dismal in the bay, chronically terrible , is to be the indicator of over harvesting but that science is just ignored. All of the assessments and formulas justifying the absurd quota to Virginia based on what is claimed is going on in the Atlantic are just smoke and mirrors. Justifying a quota of 51,000 mt in the bay and increasing VA's quota by 22,000 tons when every indicator is that all life in the bay that depends on menhaden is failing. This is what happens when there is no check or balance in this system, no neutral person or group that can look things over in the public's interest.

Are you aware there was such a lack of menhaden in the Rhode Island bay this year that it never met the forage base in the management plan and purse seining was not allowed? That was to protect the ecology of their 147 square mile bay. It seems the Atlantic biomass estimates are an illusion.

Weeks ago I asked you if you were aware that for the first time the factory fishing boats were often spending the night in the Cape Charles area because they can't catch a boatload of fish? What this means to anyone that will listen is that on many days in the Virginia bay there are virtually no schools of menhaden. If there were 50 or 100 schools of menhaden in the Virginia bay do you think this would be happening? No, it would not. Under the best science available, and that is the forage base established in Rhode Island, there should be at least 750 10 tons schools menhaden for the forage base just for bluefish and striped bass in the Virginia bay. Don't you agree that these facts indicate that on many days the forage base of Virginia bay is about nonexistent. ? Why isn't that brought up by the staff... why isn't that cause for a meeting ? Is that something the staff could look into ? What about our question for the Policy Board that the Commission is allowing Ocean Harvesters to catch thousands of schools of menhaden in the Va bay just be tore they migrate to Maryland to feed our fish and wildlife . Will the staff and the Commission take the necessary action to protect Maryland? Will the staff at least discuss what the options are here?

As you know, I have been asking the commission and the MRC to divulge the final factory total catch in Chesapeake Bay for 2023. From this exchange it is now obvious that this figure is not confidential because it must be given to the public eight months after the fact in the Va management report on Menhaden . That result should be available now along with the fishing effort data so the public can see what is going on in Virginia and if the Commission is reacting to it properly and promptly. That is not happening. Why is that number being withheld?

I would appreciate some answers to these questions particularly the data on the bay reduction landings . Is that possible? Thank you and best persoTom Lilly

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 11, 2024, at 5:26 PM, Robert Beal <rbeal@asmfc.org> wrote:

Tom,

Thank you for your continuing to provide input on menhaden management. We will include your comments in the supplemental briefing materials for the Commission's Winter Meeting.

Regarding your ongoing request for an Atlantic Menhaden Management Board meeting at the Commission's Winter Meeting: As you are aware, the Commission has an open and inclusive process to collect public input during and between meetings. You and others have fully availed yourselves of our public comment process. We will not be adding a Menhaden Board meeting to the Winter Meeting Agenda given there is a scheduled public comment opportunity at the beginning of the ISFMP Policy Board meeting at 8:30am on Thursday, January 25. I would like to reiterate 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, as we have discussed, the Policy Board has nearly identical membership to the Menhaden Management Board. The three Commissioners from the fifteen Atlantic coastal states, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA Fisheries are all represented on both the Menhaden Board and the Policy Board.

Best,
Bob

From: Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2024 3:36 PM

To: Robert Beal <rbeal@asmfc.org>; James Boyle <JBoyle@asmfc.org>; Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>; Conor McManus <conor.mcmanus@dem.ri.gov>

Cc: PHILIP ZALESK <flypax@md.metrocast.net>; Dale William Neal <dalewilliamneal@gmail.com>; Brian <brian.c1@me.com>; steve atkinson <steveatkinson52@verizon.net>; debbie campbell <debbiescampbell@icloud.com>

Subject: [External] Have a menhaden board meeting for the people's sake

To Bob Beal, Conor McManus ,James, Tina

In Bob's mail to Phil Zalesak denying a menhaden board meeting he refers of dozens of other species boards and thousands of people on the Atlantic coast that he

considered in deciding what species boards deserved a meeting in January. . .He set seven species boards : lobster, spiny dogfish , eel , striped bass, shad and river herring and coastal pelagics. Thousands may be involved with these but, with all due respect by denying the menhaden board the concerns and values of millions of people and thousands of businesses who want the factory fishing stopped in Virginia are not being heard. Not thousands but millions of people that have now made their values and concerns about menhaden made to Bob and the board ! Section six of your Charter :

"an effective fishery management program must be carefully designed to reflect the varying values....that are important to the various interest groups involved in coastal fisheries"

So what are those values and who are those groups that want to meet face to face with the menhaden board this January?

One of the better summaries of the values the interested public has in Chesapeake Bay menhaden and what they want from the MRC and the Commission is in the sworn testimony of eleven diverse and well qualified witnesses at the VA MRC hearing on menhaden 22,2023.(scan summary) Please view the video record of this testimony by going to YouTube and speaking "Virginia Marine Resources Commission" and then select the VMRC meeting date. Another source for these values is the recent documentary film by Director William McKeever " The Biggest Little Fish You Have Never Seen" that film will

be shown on local Pac 14 and will be available on ROKU tv this Saturday at 2pm. We will send access directions as soon as we have them.

Now what are the groups interested in Chesapeake Bay menhaden, what size are they and what is their connection to the quality of life and culture of Chesapeake Bay ?

10/21/2021 There are over a million Marylanders represented by the thirty senators and delegates in the Maryland Sportsmen's Caucus that asked the MRC to relocate the factory fishing.(scan) giving the science basis by Dr Bressman. Striped bass angling and charter fishing are part of our history our culture.. So are the connection the people of the bay have with our ospreys, eagles, ibises and great blue herons...these indicator species of the health of the bay are rapidly disappearing as the juvenile and adult menhaden fade away. (scan requiem for Tangier Sound) There's just not much left for the kids, generations of kids and grandkids to see any more, they are missing so much.

3/01/22 MD Senate Resolution 06 asking the ASMFC to end factory fishing in Virginia was supported by ten state wide fishing clubs and charter captains that represent the values of at least 400,000 Maryland saltwater anglers and 50,000 children and about 40,000 charter fishing clients who want fishing to improve. This was endorsed by the Maryland Sierra Club and Shore Rivers that have over 73,000 Maryland members.(scan) The Chesapeake Bay Program and CBF estimate the MD saltwater recreational fishing sector creates \$800 million in economic activity and 13,000 jobs .

6/14/2022 The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Petition to Governor Youngkin joined a

grassroots petition with 10,000 signatures with the ASA, NMMA and MRAA marine trade and boating businesses that represent over 25,000 affected jobs and hundreds of businesses in Maryland and Virginia asking to end reduction fishing in Virginia. (scan) The VSSA and multiple fishing groups in VA spoke on behalf of thousands of VA charter fishing clients and on behalf of the Virginia saltwater anglers that took 6.7 million fishing trips in the last survey year of 2017. (NOAA Lovell survey - scan) this is over a million fishermen based on six trips a year that want fishing to get better in Virginia. The measured 60% declines in trips and spending by striped bass anglers in Virginia between 2009 and 2016 (scan Southwick data) Capt Mike Ostrander, President of the VA Anglers Club testified at the August MRC that 149 charter captains had quit recently in Virginia. The same is true at Somers Cove Marina in Crisfield off Tangier sound . All but one or two of the fifteen charter boats that used to take two trips out a day striper fishing fifteen years ago have quit both head boats have been sold ..one going to Florida and the other to Maine for whale watching.

4/20/2023 Dr. Brian Watts and Michael Academic article published citing chronic and acute osprey nesting failures in Virginia tidewater due to inadequate menhaden. Thirty years of research.(scan MRC testimony). Earlier 30 menhaden scientists including those from the ASMFC, NOAA, MRC and MD DNR published a journal article tying the health and abundance of marine fish eating birds (eagles, ospreys, herons and ibises) to levels of menhaden that would support striped bass. (scan Frontiers article page 1 and 12)

8/22/2023 Three Audubon Society Board members spoke at the VA MRC meeting about the Osprey alert issued to Audubon's two million members about the

collateral damage to wildlife from menhaden overharvesting. Audubon joined Sierra Club, Shore Rivers, CCA and Issac Walton standing up for the values and concerns of its members and as spokesman for the people of Chesapeake Bay that treasure bay wildlife from ibises, great blue herons, eagles, loons and the marine mammals, the porpoises and whales that feed on menhaden and are almost all threatened in one way or another. (scan Md Ornithological Society) They know the striped bass and osprey reproductive failures signal grave damage to almost every fish eating avian species in the bay ecosystem from menhaden overharvesting. This group often referred to as "wildlife watchers" is the largest affected group with the greatest economic impact. For example, in MD DNR's 2015-25 Wildlife Action Plan about one in three Marylanders (two million people) are wildlife watchers and over 900,000 residents and visitors participate in bird watching. this activity directly generated \$483 million dollars and supported 10,807 full time jobs. The TIO (multiplier of secondary gains) was \$909 million dollars.

Virginia's wildlife watching participation is found in the Rockville Institute's Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation survey(scan) Again about one third of all Virginians (three million) participate in wildlife watching away from home, with about 24 million trips (table 28) Spending on trips and gear in all categories is about 3.3 billion dollars. For a point of reference this trip number compares with Virginia salt water fishing trips in 2017 (NOAA-Lovell survey-scan) of 6.7 million: for hire 43,684, private boat 2.5 million, from shore 4.1 million.

There is another large group of Virginia's and Marylanders involved in this. They are the power boat owners and the hundreds of marinas, marine sales,

insurance, building, repairing and storage of the 450 thousand power boats in the two states supporting 43,000 jobs and nearly 1000s of businesses (scans NMMA and MRAA data on request) Total economic impact of 5.3 billion dollars.

The experience in New York and New Jersey when they outlawed factory menhaden fishing in their waters shows just how striped bass fishing has rebounded, how charter fishing has bounced back and how ospreys are thriving. (scans- George first and Saltwater Sportsman). Fish stick with their food source. You can bet a lot of boat owners are out on the water more and all the associated business from marinas, boat sales and service, motels and restaurants are thriving. Compare this to Chesapeake Bay where charter fishing is dying out with the striped bass, ospreys, herons along with the quality of Chesapeake Bay life for millions of people and their kids and grandkids. The buck stops at the Director's office at the ASMFC> Please open that door and let in the feelings and pride the people have in Chesapeake Bay that want their bay fish and wildlife back and they want you to stop giving all that value of their precious menhaden forage to feed the fish and bank accounts of a Canadian Company... Lets keep America's natural resources in America to benefit Americans and their wildlife. Will you start to do that by letting millions of American voices be heard at a menhaden meeting? Please reply so we can tell the people of Chesapeake Bay whether they and their kids count at the ASMFC and what values the ASMFC finds important. Thanks Tom Lilly Whitehaven MD

Senate Chair
JACK BAILEY
Legislative District 29
Calvert & St. Mary's Counties

Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
James Senate Office Building, Room 402
410-841-3673 or 301-858-3673
1-800-492-7122 Ext. 3673

Senate Co-Chair
KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9



House Chair
NED CAREY
Legislative District 31A
Anne Arundel County

Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
Lowe House Office Building, Room 161
410-841-3047 or 301-858-3047
1-800-492-7122 Ext. 3047

House Co-Chair
WENDELL BEITZEL
Legislative District 1A

The Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

The Sportsmen's Best Friend in Annapolis

October 21, 2021

Steven G. Bowman
VMRC Chairman
Building 96, 380 Fenwick Road
Ft. Monroe, Virginia 23651

RE: "The Most Important Fish in the Sea" – IMMEDIATE ACTION

Mr. Bowman:

Each year the number of menhaden surviving the Virginia netting gauntlet to successfully reach Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay is declining. This scientifically documented fact is detrimental to both avian and marine species dependent upon the "Most Important Fish in the Sea". This must change.

On October 15, 2021, a fishery biology professor from Salisbury University (Dr. Noah Bressman, PhD) formally addressed the dire menhaden issue in a statement to Maryland's DNR Secretary, et al. For the record, the Maryland's Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus within the Maryland General Assembly fully supports the position taken by Dr. Bressman and urges time-sensitive compliance by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.

Here's what Dr. Bressman stated:

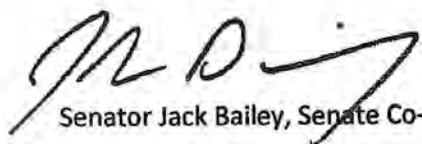
"Currently, the Virginia-based menhaden fishery is overfishing the stock of Atlantic Menhaden in and around the Chesapeake Bay, which is preventing this important forage fish from making its way into the bay and its tributaries. As an important prey item for many important species in the bay, such as Striped Bass and Osprey, the disappearance of most of the menhaden from the bay is contributing to the disappearance of many species that rely on menhaden.

Virginia has been allotted about 75% of the entire Atlantic Coast's quota, which is a drastically disproportionate amount relative to its coastline. Additionally, much of their harvesting occurs as menhaden migrate into the bay, where they enter Maryland's waters. What this essentially means is 75% of the quota for the entire Atlantic Coast is being taken in the bay or just before they enter the bay. While this may not be causing overfishing for the entire Atlantic Coast based on quotas, because all of these fish are being taken from essentially just the bay, it is having locally drastic effects on the ecosystem.

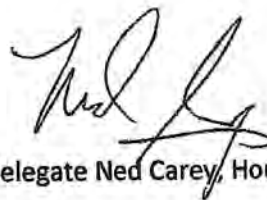
Therefore, I strongly suggest either delaying the start of the menhaden commercial season until after a significant amount of menhaden have migrated north along the Virginia coast into the Chesapeake bay (which occurs in spring/early summer), by pushing these factory fishing efforts at least 3 miles offshore into federal waters instead of along the coastline in state waters (as the fish in the state waters are most likely to migrate along the coast into the bay), pushing the commercial menhaden fishery north of the entrance to the Chesapeake bay during their migration, and/or significantly reducing the quotas of menhaden in and around the mouth of the Chesapeake bay.

These actions are necessary to ensure the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and the associated fisheries and ecotourism."

What is happening to the "Most Important Fish in the Sea" is intolerable. VMRC must stand up and do what's right.



Senator Jack Bailey, Senate Co-Chair



Delegate Ned Carey, House Co-Chair



Cc:

Members, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Dr. Noah Bressman, Salisbury University

Senator Emmett Hanger, Senate Co-Chair, Virginia Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Delegate James Easily Edmunds II, House Co-Chair, Virginia Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Jeff Crane, President, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

The Honorable Ann Jennings, Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources

The Honorable Jeannie H. Riccio, Maryland Secretary of Natural Resources

From: Noah Bressman noahbressman@gmail.com
Subject: Support for Action on Menhaden
Date: Oct 15, 2021 at 10:36:49 AM
To: jeannie.riccio@maryland.gov, bill.anderson@maryland.gov,
lynn.fegley@maryland.gov
Cc: foragematters@aol.com

Dear Secretary Riccio and DNR Menhaden Delegates,

As a Fish Biology Professor at Salisbury University with multiple collaborations with the MD DNR, former nominee to the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, an avid angler, science communicator, and concerned citizen of Maryland, I write to offer my support for action on menhaden in and around the Chesapeake Bay. Currently, the Virginia-based menhaden fishery is overfishing the stock of Atlantic Menhaden in and around the Chesapeake Bay, which is preventing this important forage fish from making its way into the bay and its tributaries. As an important prey item for many important species in the bay, such as Striped Bass and Osprey, the disappearance of most of the menhaden from the bay is contributing to the disappearance of the many species that rely on menhaden.

Currently, Virginia has been allotted about 75% of the entire Atlantic Coast's quota, which is a drastically disproportionate amount relative to its coastline. Additionally, much of their harvesting occurs as menhaden migrate into the bay, where they enter Maryland's waters. What this essentially means is 75% of the quota for the entire Atlantic coast is being taken in the bay or just before they enter the bay. While this may not be causing overfishing for the entire Atlantic coast based on quotas, because all of these fish are being taken from essentially just the bay, it is having locally drastic effects on the ecosystem.

Therefore, I strongly suggest either delaying the start of the menhaden commercial season until after a significant amount of menhaden have migrated north along the Virginia coast into the Chesapeake bay (which occurs in spring/early summer), pushing these factory fishing efforts at least 3 miles offshore into federal waters instead of along the coastline in state waters (as the fish in the state waters are most likely to migrate along the coast into the bay), pushing the commercial menhaden fishery north of the entrance to the Chesapeake bay during their migration, and/or significantly reducing to quotas of menhaden in and around the mouth for the Chesapeake Bay. These actions are necessary to ensure the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and the associated fisheries and ecotourism.

Sincerely,

Dr. Noah Bressman, PhD
Assistant Professor of Physiology
Salisbury University

Dr. Noah Bressman, PhD
Assistant Professor of Physiology
Salisbury University
Fish Biology, Biomechanics, Functional Morphology, and Behavior
Noahbressman.wixsite.com/noah
He/him/his

Begin forwarded message:

From: Noah Bressman <noahbressman@gmail.com>
Date: October 18, 2021 at 9:54:57 AM EDT
To: Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org>
Subject: Re: FW: Final Supplemental Materials for ASMFC 2021 Fall Meeting

Thanks, Tina! I want to clarify that the most important thing I recommend is that the board take action now to evaluate the options to increase menhaden in Chesapeake Bay. If action was started at Tuesday's board meeting, some or all of the measures could be in effect for the 2022 season. This can be accomplished using qualitative management methods, such as seasonal and area closures without additional research. It can also be accomplished by moving the fishing into the US federal zone as every state except Virginia has seen the necessity for doing. While I am always in support of more research for any topic (because I am a scientist), waiting for additional research on this issue that is already clear will likely lead to menhaden continuing to plummet in the bay, which will further reduce the capacity for striped bass to recover in the bay, especially after the recent report showing their abysmal recruitment over the last 3 years. A delay in action, such as a several years-long stock and recruitment reassessment of the bay before action, will lead to the problem getting worse before it gets better.

Sincerely,
Dr. Noah Bressman, PhD
Assistant Professor of Physiology
Department of Biology
Salisbury University

On Fri, Oct 15, 2021 at 2:47 PM Tina Berger <tberger@asmfc.org> wrote:

Dr. Bressman – Thank you for your public comment on Atlantic menhaden management. It was sent to the Atlantic Menhaden Board today for its consideration. – Tina

Tina Berger



Introduction

Assessment

and

Management

History

Current

Management

Challenges

and Future

Work

Lessons

Learned

Author

Contributions

Funding

Conflict of Interest

References

The Path to an Ecosystem Approach for Forage Fish Management: A Case Study of Atlantic Menhaden

Kristen A. Anstead (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1089781>)^{1*}, Katie Drew (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/990320>)¹, David Chagaris (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/495125>)², Amy MeSchueller (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1119106>)⁴, Jason E. McNamee (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1124192>)⁵, Andre Buchheister (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1120381>)⁶, Geneviève Nesslage (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1126723>)⁷, Jim H. Uphoff Jr. (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1171712>)⁸, Michael J. Wilberg (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/344791>)⁷, Alexei Sharov⁹, Micah J. Dean¹⁰, Jeffrey Brust¹¹, Michael Celestino¹¹, Shanna Madsen¹², Sarah Murray (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1096785>)¹, Max Appelman¹, Joseph C. Ballenger (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1146004>)¹³, Udana Bhat (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/359070>)^{2,14}, Ellen Cosby¹⁵, Caitlin Craig¹⁶, Corrin Flora¹⁷, Kurt Gottschall¹⁸, Robert J. Latour (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1146038>)¹⁹, Eddie Leonard²⁰, Ray Mroch⁴, Josh Newhard (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/1111904>)²¹, Derek Orner²², Chris Swanson²³, Jeff Tinsman²⁴, Edward D. Houde (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/615796>)⁷, Thomas J. Miller⁷ and Howard Townsend (<https://www.frontiersin.org/people/u/530527>)²⁵

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

aiolden?
specy?

legis

not clear

The 3

18

10

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

FWD: Menhaden

From: George Scocca george@nyangler.com

To: Tom foragematters@aol.com

Date: Mon, March 8, 2021 7:15am

Hello Tom:

I am the person that spearheaded the bill that has kept reduction fishing out of NY waters. The changes here have been unbelievable. I can talk about it all day. My single greatest accomplishment in 35 years of fisheries management.

The availability of bunker throughout our season has seen an increase in both charter and party boats carrying anglers to get in on our great striped bass fishery. Bass stick with their food source and this has kept a healthy population of stripers in our waters. It's sparked a number of for hire boats to carry more anglers than ever before.

It has also had a profound effect on our bird population. We now have about 12 dozen nest pair eagles on long island and the osprey population is thriving. All due to the amount of forage for them to eat.



And lets not forget the importance of their filtering our waters.

Thank you.

George R. Scocca
nyangler.com

Check out my Linkedin profile

Compose

Today on AOL

New Mail 3.8K

Old Mail

Starred

Drafts 902

Sent

Spam

Recently Deleted

Less

Views Show

Folders Hide

+ New Folder

Saved Mail 3

Archive

CKL

Drafts

main st

menhaden

oceanwalk

PSC

SavedIMs

tll

From Tom Lilly <foragematters@aol.com>



To

CC / BCC

Fw: VMRC meeting summary your testimony!

AA B I U S [link] [emojis] [list] [list] [list] [list]

Summary of testimony:

Christy Medice (9.49-11:39) Suggests that a 2.5 mile buffer from shore needed in bay due to depth of nets...said factory is staying a mile off Silver Beach and beaches have been clean.

Debbie Campbell (11:55-14.22) spoke as mother and grandmother with grandson Eric with her of the precious time together and importance of the lessons learned fishing by children but the kids lose interest as the fishing is so poor. Says the bay is dying- that the board has been "asked and asked" (to change this)

Dr Bryan Watts (37.59-44.5) Professor of Biology at William and Mary and founder of the Center for Conservation Biology involved in studying osprey status for decades. Spoke to importance of menhaden forage to not only ospreys but for other species such as eagles, gannets etc. Spoke to fact that 1,000s of osprey babies died of starvation in VA this season. That menhaden levels in the bay need to return to what was here in the 1980s to adequately support ospreys in the lower VA bay. Said the problem was widespread extending up into Maryland.

Julie Kacmarcik (21.36-24.35)Conservation chair of Richmond Audubon Society. ...Advises Audubon has issued a national alert to its two million members in 610 Chapters of the osprey problems in VA, about the collateral damage caused by overharvestingasked for a 50% reduction in bay harvests....spoke of menhaden as a resource owned by the public...said "cast votes not nets"

Terry Cuthriell (24.5-28.10) Past president of Virginia Society of Ornithology, William and Mary graduate, spoke to her lifetime of observing ospreys and eagles in the lower James River. Ospreys starving in first week of life, spoke to osprey's value as a filter feeder cleaning water and keeping dead zones in check. Urged restoring bay osprey to the levels in the 1980s when the bay was healthy. Spoke to New Jersey now calling itself the striped bass fishing mecca because of the abundance of menhaden since NJ banned reduction fishing in state waters. (Editor's comment See eg article Saltwater Sportsmen scan, also see similar results in NY - scan)

Andy Cortez (28.27-30.2) Furnished the Commission with an ethics document from VA Wildlife Resources Board

Captain Mike Ostrander.(30.30-32.36) Describes a 23 year history of charter fishing on the upper James River and his transition to wildlife and birdwatching tours featuring the ospreys that are thriving there where they rely on shad and catfish not menhaden. Spoke to the decades of efforts by Virginia Anglers Club members at the MRC to reduce menhaden harvests. Spoke of his survey showing 149 of his fellow charter captains had gone out of business in the lower Chesapeake Bay due to poor fishing.. Asked for relief.

Lynn Evans Johnson.(32.58-34.41) Audubon Board member. Spoke of the devastation of our natural resources,.asked the Board to consider the choices, to act as a team going forward.

Lynn Jenkins...Referred to the details/factorr which had already been provided by previous presenters. Reassured the Commissioners that we are not naive as to the complexity of the issue, but wanted another "factor" to be considered-that members of the Commission need to listen to us not just with their "heads"...but with their hearts.

Jacque Montfrans..... Spoke of ospreys as "canary in coal mine" as to menhaden over harvesting ...that improvements in menhaden

would benefit all bay species,, that Commissioners were to be stewards of VA marine resources. (editor's note the ASMFC refers to striped bass as the canary in the coal mine under their ERP definitions. 30 menhaden scientists say the same thing about the ERP status of ospreys. See page 12 Journal Article in Frontiers in Marine Science (scan) Both ospreys and striped bass are indicator species for menhaden overharvesting and both species are in chronic reproductive failure in Chesapeake bay right now. That should be enough in itself (even without the other ecologic, social and economic consequences to millions of people) for the managers to take prompt decisive remedial action but they continue to ignore reality and their own science.

Tomoko Hamada (39:03-39.54)

Wildlife artist Spoke of her anguish about ospreys "watch all the time...can't catch fishthere are no fish now...." and then "watch babies dying in front of my eyes, heart breaking"

the link to the testimony
is <https://youtu.be/hf58Z9SLNlg> Or Google
YouTube Virginia Marine Resources Commission

----- *August 22, 2023*

Send



Save

Delete

The Economic Contribution of Marine Angler Expenditures on Fishing Trips in the United States, 2017

Sabrina J. Lovell, James Hilger, Emily Rollins, Noelle A. Olsen,
and Scott Steinback



U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service

NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/SPO-201
March 2020

ONE DRIVE
Lovell survey

Table 2: Number of Angler Trips, 2017

State	Mode	Total Trips	Percent Adult	Adult Trips
Alabama	For-Hire	93,314	87%	81,183
Alabama	Private Boat	2,540,490	98%	2,489,680
Alabama	Shore	5,859,527	91%	5,332,169
Alaska	For-Hire	250,380	88%	220,334
Alaska	Private Boat	487,735	94%	458,471
Alaska	Shore	73,768	89%	65,654
California	For-Hire	636,000	88%	559,680
California	Private Boat	533,000	94%	501,020
California	Shore	2,373,000	89%	2,111,970
Connecticut	For-Hire	35,712	88%	31,427
Connecticut	Private Boat	1,336,683	97%	1,296,583
Connecticut	Shore	2,564,867	85%	2,180,137
Delaware	For-Hire	14,035	88%	12,350
Delaware	Private Boat	679,843	95%	645,851
Delaware	Shore	1,296,891	92%	1,193,140
East Florida	For-Hire	249,800	88%	219,824
East Florida	Private Boat	11,755,735	92%	10,815,276
East Florida	Shore	28,397,989	91%	25,842,170
Georgia	For-Hire	27,701	67%	18,560
Georgia	Private Boat	1,569,086	92%	1,443,559
Georgia	Shore	3,027,516	78%	2,361,462
Hawaii	Private Boat	260,865	100%	260,865
Hawaii	Shore	1,019,019	100%	1,019,019
Louisiana	For-Hire	178,723	88%	157,276
Louisiana	Private Boat	1,639,814	94%	1,541,425
Louisiana	Shore	489,815	89%	435,935
Maine	For-Hire	15,932	83%	13,224
Maine	Private Boat	649,523	90%	584,571
Maine	Shore	1,082,113	88%	952,259
Maryland	For-Hire	211,101	94%	198,435
Maryland	Private Boat	3,414,605	94%	3,209,729
Maryland	Shore	4,717,129	85%	4,009,559
Massachusetts	For-Hire	224,249	91%	204,067
Massachusetts	Private Boat	3,389,625	96%	3,254,040
Massachusetts	Shore	4,160,993	92%	3,828,113
Mississippi	For-Hire	20,642	95%	19,610
Mississippi	Private Boat	1,605,632	98%	1,573,519
Mississippi	Shore	3,225,480	97%	3,128,715
New Hampshire	For-Hire	51,005	91%	46,415
New Hampshire	Private Boat	429,629	94%	403,851
New Hampshire	Shore	491,746	85%	417,984
New Jersey	For-Hire	215,364	91%	195,981
New Jersey	Private Boat	4,848,351	96%	4,654,417
New Jersey	Shore	7,224,625	92%	6,646,655
New York	For-Hire	258,989	91%	235,680
New York	Private Boat	7,372,066	93%	6,856,022
New York	Shore	9,002,927	87%	7,832,547
North Carolina	For-Hire	149,438	90%	134,494

211,101
 3,414,605
 4,717,129

 8,342,835

State	Mode	Total Trips	Percent Adult	Adult Trips
North Carolina	Private Boat	5,044,731	94%	4,742,047
North Carolina	Shore	17,258,107	92%	15,877,459
Oregon	For-Hire	65,000	88%	57,200
Oregon	Private Boat	395,000	94%	371,300
Oregon	Shore	233,000	89%	207,370
Rhode Island	For-Hire	35,337	92%	32,510
Rhode Island	Private Boat	774,416	92%	712,463
Rhode Island	Shore	1,508,013	91%	1,372,292
South Carolina	For-Hire	87,594	81%	70,951
South Carolina	Private Boat	3,136,086	92%	2,885,199
South Carolina	Shore	6,165,228	82%	5,055,487
Texas	For-Hire	191,404	88%	168,435
Texas	Private Boat	952,829	94%	895,659
Texas	Shore	NA	89%	NA
Virginia	For-Hire	43,684	92%	40,189
Virginia	Private Boat	2,547,984	97%	2,471,544
Virginia	Shore	4,157,484	94%	3,908,035
Washington	For-Hire	83,000	88%	73,040
Washington	Private Boat	1,012,000	94%	951,280
Washington	Shore	513,000	89%	456,570
West Florida	For-Hire	772,230	91%	702,729
West Florida	Private Boat	18,025,116	93%	16,763,358
West Florida	Shore	23,042,831	87%	20,047,263

43,684
 2,547,984
 4,157,484

 6,749,152

HOW TO

([HTTPS://WWW.SALTWATERSPORTSMAN.COM/CATEGORY/HOWTO/](https://www.saltwatersportsman.com/category/howto/))

Is New Jersey the New Striped Bass Mecca?

Honachefsky

EXCERPT FROM ARTICLE

Jersey (<https://www.saltwatersportsman.com/story/sponsored-post/new-jersey-stripped-bass-fishing/>) politicians did one thing right: Getting the Omega 3 bunker boats out of state waters. That has allowed a vast biomass of menhaden to proliferate throughout

the year in Jersey waters. This draws behemoth bass into the bays, river systems and alongshore to fatten up on omnipresent adult bunker.

Walk up to the beach and black clouds of bait are present in the

<https://www.saltwatersportsman.com/howto/is-new-jersey-the-new-stripped-bass-mecca/>

Walk up to the beach and black clouds of bait are present in the surf and nearshore from spring through winter. During the fall, massive schools of smaller baits such as peanut bunker, bay anchovies and spearing push out of the backwaters and inundate the surf line. From October through December, sand eels choke the surf waters.

A catch and release striper surf tourney on a small stretch of the Jersey coast last October reported 53 bass from 40 to 52 inches (25 to 52 pounds) released in one day. And that chew lasted for days.



P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Testimony on: SJ6 "Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission – Atlantic Menhaden – Prohibition on Commercial Reduction Fishing"

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 1, 2022

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on SJ6. This resolution asks the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to exercise its authority regarding the management of the menhaden fishery to consider prohibiting commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes, in the Chesapeake Bay.

Atlantic menhaden are a keystone species for the Chesapeake Bay. As noted by this resolution, Atlantic menhaden form a critical connection between the bottom and the top of the food chain. Menhaden are filter feeders, eating plankton and rotifers and helping clear the water of nutrient-pollution.¹ They are also a vital source of food to predators, including predatory fish, dolphins, whales, osprey, and bald eagles. While this is incredibly important to the ecosystem of the Bay, it is also important to the fishing industry. Many species of fish that we harvest from the Bay rely on the menhaden as a food source, including rockfish (striped bass), bluefish, and weakfish.

The Chesapeake Bay is an important nursery for the menhaden that helps sustain the population along the entire Atlantic coast. It is deeply concerning that the number of menhaden juveniles have decreased significantly since 1976 and has stayed low in the last 20 years.²

In order to protect the natural wonders of the Chesapeake Bay, it is important that action be taken now. We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.

Marc Imlay
Endangered Species Workgroup Coordinator
marc.imlay@mdsierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

¹ <https://www.vims.edu/research/units/projects/menhaden/research/modeling.php>

² Durrell, E. Q. & Weedon, C. (2019). Striped Bass Seine Survey Juvenile Index Web Page. DNR.Maryland.gov/Fisheries/Pages/Juvenile-Index.ASPX. Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Service.

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

ONE DRIVE

CAYOZZA-MAIL PDF



Testimony in SUPPORT of SJ6 - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission - Atlantic Menhaden - Prohibition on Commercial Reduction Fishing

March 1, 2022

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in **SUPPORT** of SJ6 on behalf of ShoreRivers. ShoreRivers is a river protection group on Maryland's Eastern Shore with 3,500 members. Our mission is to protect and restore our Eastern Shore waterways through science-based advocacy, restoration, and education.

This bill sets forth a resolution by the Maryland General Assembly asking the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to take further action to prohibit the commercial reduction fishing of Atlantic Menhaden, including the use of purse seines and spotter planes in the Chesapeake Bay in order to maintain a sustainable fishery. This reduction fishery poses a major threat to many Bay species every year, and when these other fisheries suffer it increases the pressure on other fisheries, including crabs and oysters. Thus, it is of critical importance to protect a foundational species like menhaden as much as possible.

Menhaden are incredibly valuable to the Chesapeake Bay and the many other commercial and recreational fisheries that occur in the rivers of the Eastern Shore. As a vital part of the ecosystem, menhaden filter plankton from the water and help to improve water quality, and they are a necessary food source for other aquatic species like striped bass and bluefish, but also for ospreys and bald eagles. The Department of Natural Resources noted in their 2021 Striped Bass survey that while the stiped bass young-of-year showed a slight increase in population from 2020, what was of note was the increased numbers of menhaden in the rivers, notable the Choptank River. When the menhaden population thrives, so do our other fisheries. And when our fisheries are healthy, we know that water quality and habitat are at healthy levels to support those populations, which means that our economies and local communities will see a benefit.

For these reasons stated above, ShoreRivers urges the Committee to adopt a **FAVORABLE** report on SJ6.

Sincerely,

Matt Pluta,
Choptank Riverkeeper, on behalf of:

ShoreRivers

Isabel Hardesty, Executive Director

Annie Richards, Chester Riverkeeper | Matt Pluta, Choptank Riverkeeper
Elle Bassett, Miles-Wye Riverkeeper | Zack Kelleher, Sassafras Riverkeeper

Main Office
114 S. Washington St.
Suite 301
Easton, MD 21601
443.395.0511

Regional Office
111A North Main St.
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
410.810.7556

shorerivers.org

Regional Office
207 S. Water St.
Unit B
Chestertown, MD 21620
410.810.7556

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

Coastal Conservation Association



Ellen Peel

President

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



COMMENT ON THE FOOD FISH WATERMEN, CHARTER CAPTAINS, CHARTER CLIENTS, SPORT ANGLERS, FISH WHOLESALERS, MARINAS, RESTAURANTS, FISH RETAILERS , BOAT SALES, SERVICE , STORAGE AND OTHER JOBS AND BUSINESSES THAT COULD BENEFIT IF SUBSTANTIALLY MORE MENHADEN WERE LEFT IN THE WATER TO GROW HEALTHIER MORE ABUNDANT FISH.

CONVERT 100 THOUSAND TONS OF MENHADEN TO MORE FISH FOR OUR FOOD FISH WATERMEN AND SPORT ANGLERS. COMPUTE VALUE BEING GIVEN EACH YEAR TO A PRIVATE COMPANY OWNED BY A FOREIGN BILLIONAIRE

ALL THAT POTENTIAL VALUE IS LOST TO THE WORKING PEOPLE OF MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA WHEN THAT MENHADEN IS TAKEN FROM THE WATER AND EXPORTED TO CANADA AND OR USED FOR ANIMAL AND FISH FOOD.

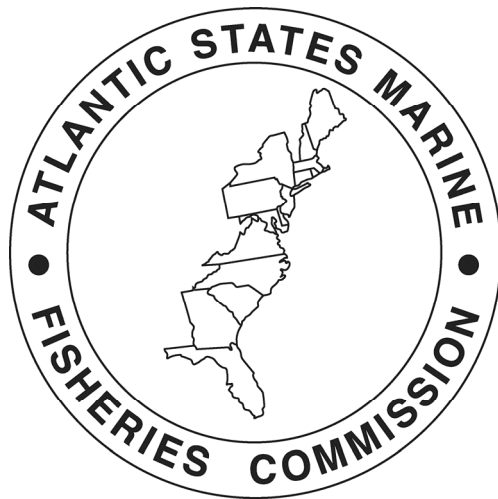
BEFORE WE LOOK AT THE DATA LETS TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE FISHING, THE CHARTERS, THE WILDLIFE AND THE STATE MARINA BUSINESS IN THE MARYLAND SIDE OF TANGIER SOUND A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THE MARYLAND-VIRGINIA LINE ACROSS THE BAY FROM REEDVILLE, VIRGINIA. THIS IS CALLED REQUIEM FOR TANGIER SOUND WRITTEN IN 2019.

THE NEXT THREE PAGES ARE THE DATA ABOUT THE PEOPLE, JOBS AND BUSINESSES AFFECTED. DO THE CALCULATIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS IF FISHING IMPROVED SO OUR FISHING FAMILIES GEARED UP AND TOOK JUST THREE MORE FISHING TRIPS A YEAR. JUST THAT SMALL DIFFERENCE COULD RESULT IN \$100 MILLION DOLLARS IN DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT SPREAD THROUGHOUT VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND.

WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS AND GRANDKIDS THAT WOULD GET SOME GREAT FISHING IN? WHAT ABOUT THE PRECIOUS MEMORIES CREATED? THIS IS THE STORY OF MY GRANDCHILDREN WHO ARE GROWING UP WHEN THE BAY HAS LOST ITS MENHADEN AND WHERE THE FISH AND WILDLIFE ARE SUFFERING. THIS IS ALEX'S STORY .

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
(January 12, 2024)

Five-Year Strategic Plan 2024-2028



*The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources
as assets which it must turn over to the next generation
increased and not impaired in value.*

Theodore Roosevelt

Introduction

Each state has a fundamental responsibility to safeguard the public trust with respect to its natural resources. Fishery managers are faced with many challenges in carrying out that responsibility. Living marine resources inhabit ecosystems that cross state and federal jurisdictions. Thus, no state, by itself, can effectively protect the interests of its citizens. Each state must work with its sister states and the federal government to conserve and manage natural resources.

Beginning in the late 1930s, the 15 Atlantic coastal states from Maine to Florida took steps to develop cooperative mechanisms to define and achieve their mutual interests in coastal fisheries. The most notable of these was their commitment to form the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in 1942, and to work together through the Commission to promote the conservation and management of shared marine fishery resources. Over the years, the Commission has remained an effective forum for fishery managers to pursue concerted management actions. Through the Commission, states cooperate in a broad range of programs including interstate fisheries management, fisheries science, [fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data collection and management](#), habitat conservation, and law enforcement.

Congress has long recognized the critical role of the states and the need to support their mutual efforts. Most notably, it enacted the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (Atlantic Coastal Act) in 1993, which built on the success of the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act of 1984. Acknowledging that no single governmental entity has exclusive management authority for Atlantic coastal fishery resources, the Atlantic Coastal Act recognizes the states' responsibility for cooperative fisheries management through the Commission. The Atlantic Coastal Act charges all Atlantic states with implementing coastal fishery management plans that will safeguard the future of Atlantic coastal fisheries in the interest of both fishermen and the nation.

Accepting these challenges and maintaining their mutual commitment to success, the Atlantic coastal states have adopted this five-year Strategic Plan. The states recognize circumstances today make the work of the Commission more important than ever before. The Strategic Plan articulates the mission, vision, goals, and objectives needed to accomplish the Commission's mission. It serves as the basis for annual action planning, whereby Commissioners identify the highest priority issues and activities to be addressed in the upcoming year. With 27 species/[species complexes](#) currently managed by the Commission, finite staff time, Commissioner time and funding, as well as a myriad of other factors impacting marine resources (e.g., changing ocean conditions, protected species interactions, offshore energy, and aquaculture), Commissioners recognize the absolute need to prioritize activities, dedicating staff time and resources where they are needed most and addressing less pressing issues as resources allow. Efforts will be made to [balance the competing needs of stability/predictability in fisheries management and the necessity for adaptability to respond to changing fishery and environmental conditions](#). [streamline management by using multi-](#)

...of the Atlantic coast of the United States by the protection and enhancement of such fisheries, and by the avoidance of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause. Adopting such management with the East Coast Regional [Fishery](#) Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries.

Mission

The Commission's mission, as stated in its 1942 Compact, is:

To promote the better utilization of the fisheries, marine, shell and anadromous, of the Atlantic seaboard by the development of a joint program for the promotion and protection of such fisheries, and by the prevention of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

The mission grounds the Commission in history. It reminds every one of the Commission's sense of purpose that has been in place for over ~~82~~77 years. The constantly changing physical, political, social, and economic environments led the Commission to restate the mission in more modern terms:

To promote cooperative management of marine, shell and diadromous fisheries of the Atlantic coast of the United States by the protection and enhancement of such fisheries, and by the avoidance of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

The mission and nature of the Commission as a mutual interstate body incorporate several guiding principles. They include:

- States are sovereign entities, each having its own laws and responsibilities for managing fishery resources within its jurisdiction
- States serve the broad public interest and represent the common good
- Multi-state resource management is complex and dependent upon cooperative efforts by all states involved
- The Commission provides a critical sounding board on issues requiring cross-jurisdictional action, coordinating cooperation, and collaboration among the states and federal government, [including NOAA Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey.](#)

Vision

The long-term vision of the Commission is:

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Values

The Commission and its member states have adopted the following values to guide its operations and activities. These values affirm the Commission's commitment to sustainable fisheries management for the benefit of [all fisheries participants recreational anglers, and commercial fishermen harvesters](#) and coastal communities. They also acknowledge the growing importance of managing fisheries in a more holistic and adaptive way, seeking solutions to cross cutting resource issues that lead to long-term ecological and socio-economic sustainability.

- Effective stewardship of marine resources through strong partnerships
- Decisions based on sound science
- Long-term ecological sustainability
- Transparency and accountability in all actions
- Timely response to new information through adaptive management
- Balancing resource conservation with the economic success of coastal communities
- Efficient use of time and fiscal resources
- Work cooperatively with honesty, integrity, and fairness

Driving Forces

The Commission and its actions are influenced by a multitude of factors. These factors are constantly evolving and will most likely change over the time period of this Strategic Plan. However, the most pressing factors affecting the Commission today are [climate-induced changes to the ocean environment, fisheries, and coastal communities; changing ocean conditions](#), resource allocation, the quality and quantity of scientific information; competing ocean uses; a growing [demand](#) to address ecosystem functions; and interactions between fisheries and protected species. - The Strategic Plan, through its goals and broad objectives, will seek to address each of these issues over the next five years.

[Climate-Induced Changes](#) [Changing Ocean Conditions](#)

Changes in ocean temperature, currents, acidification, and sea level rise are [occurring rapidly](#), affecting nearly every facet of fisheries resources and management at the state, interstate, and federal levels. Potential impacts to marine species include [degraded water quality, altered prey and habitat availability, susceptibility to disease, changing migration patterns, and changes to reduced prey and habitat availability, water quality, susceptibility to disease, and spawning and reproductive potential, and declines in survival](#). [It is often difficult for fisheries stock assessments and management to keep pace with changes in](#) The distribution and productivity of fishery stocks [are often changing at a rate faster than fisheries stock assessments and management can keep pace with](#). Several Commission species, such as northern shrimp, [Southern New England American](#) lobster, Atlantic cobia, [Atlantic croaker, Atlantic striped bass, Spanish mackerel](#), black sea bass, and summer flounder are already responding to changes in

the ocean. In the case of northern shrimp and ~~Southern New England-American~~ lobster, warming ocean waters have created inhospitable environments for ~~species~~ reproduction and survivability in some areas. For cobia, black sea bass, and summer flounder, changing ocean conditions have contributed to ~~altered shifts in~~ species distributions, with some species expanding their ranges and others moving into deeper and/or more northern waters to stay within preferred temperature ranges. Where shifts are occurring, the Commission may need to reconsider state-by-state allocation schemes and make adjustments to our fishery management plans (FMPs). For other species depleted due to factors other than fishing mortality (e.g., habitat degradation and availability, predation), the states will need to explore steps ~~that can be taken~~ to aid in species recovery. And, if a stock's viability is compromised, Commission resources and efforts should be shifted to other species that can be ~~recovered-rebuilt~~ or sustainably maintained-as-a-rebuilt-stock.

Since 2021, the Commission and other marine fishery management organizations along the U.S. East Coast have been exploring governance and management issues related to climate change and fishery stock distributions. This effort recognizes the need to plan for how fishery management organizations and coastal communities can best adapt to environmental changes in a thoughtful and deliberate way. Over the span of this Strategic Plan and beyond, the Commission and other East Coast marine fishery management organizations will be prioritizing actions around three overarching themes of cross-jurisdictional governance; managing under increased uncertainty; and data sources and partnerships to plan for possible future outcomes.

Allocation

~~As noted above, r~~Resource allocation among the states and between various user groups will continue to be an important issue over the next five years. Many of the Commission FMPs divvy up the available harvestable resource through various types of allocation schemes, such as by state, region, season, or gear type. The changing distribution of many species has further complicated the issue of resource allocation with traditional allocation schemes being challenged and a finite amount of fishery resources to be shared. Discussion may be difficult and divisive, with some states (and their stakeholders) wanting to maintain their historic (traditional) allocations, while others are seeking a greater share of the resource given increased abundance and availability in their waters. States will need to seek innovative ways to reallocate species so that collectively all states feel their needs are met. What will be required to successfully navigate these discussions and decisions is the commitment of the states to work through the issues with honesty, integrity, and fairness, seeking outcomes that balance the needs of the states and their stakeholders with the ~~ever-changing~~ever-changing realities of shifting resource abundance and availability.

Science as the Foundation

Accurate and timely scientific information form the basis of the Commission's fisheries management decision-making. Continued investments in the collection and management of fishery-dependent and -independent data remain a high priority for the Commission and its member states. The challenge will be to maintain and expand data collection efforts in the face

of shrinking state and federal budgets. Past and current investments by state, regional and federal partners ~~have established of~~ the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) ~~have established the program~~ as the principal source of marine fishery statistics for the Atlantic coast. State and regional fishery-independent data collection programs, in combination with fishery statistics, provide the scientific foundation for stock assessments. Many data collection programs will continue to be strained by budget restrictions, scientists' workload capacities, and competing priorities. The Commission remains committed to pursuing long-term support for research surveys and monitoring programs that are critical to informing management decisions and resource sustainability.

Ecosystem Functions

Nationally, there has been a growing demand for fisheries managers to address broader ecosystem functions such as predator-prey interactions and environmental factors during their fisheries management planning. Ecosystem science has improved in recent years, though the challenges of comprehensive data collection continue. ~~While the A~~majority of the Commission's species are managed and assessed on a single species basis, ~~there have been significant advancements in the development and use of ecological reference points for Atlantic menhaden management. Horseshoe crabs of Delaware Bay origin are also managed~~~~ment in an ecosystem context to account for the forage needs of migratory shorebirds. When ecosystem information is available, the Commission has managed accordingly to provide ecosystem services.~~The Commission remains committed to seeking ecological sustainability over the long-term through continuing its work on multispecies assessment modeling and the development of ecosystem-based reference points in its fisheries management planning process.

Competing Ocean Uses

Marine spatial planning has become an increasingly popular method of balancing the growing demands on valuable ocean resources. More specifically, the competing interests of commercial and recreational fishing, ~~offshore wind~~ ~~renewable energy~~ development, aquaculture, marine transportation, offshore oil exploration and drilling, military needs, and habitat restoration are all components that must be integrated into successful ocean use policies. ~~The Commission has always emphasized cooperative management with our federal partners; however, the states' authorities in their marine jurisdictions must be preserved and respected. The Commission will continue to prioritize the successful operation of its fisheries, but it will be imperative to work closely with federal, state, and local governments on emerging ocean use conflicts as they diversify into the future.~~

Protected Species

Like coastal fishery resources, protected species, such as marine mammals, sea turtles, and listed and candidate fish species, traverse both state and federal waters. The protections afforded these species under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act can play a significant role in the management and prosecution of Atlantic coastal fisheries. The Commission and the states have a long history of supporting our federal partners to minimize interactions with and bycatch of marine mammals and sea turtles. The listing of Atlantic

sturgeon under the Endangered Species Act has added a whole new level of complexity in the ability of the Commission and its member states to carry out their stewardship responsibilities for these important diadromous species. The species spends the majority of its life in state waters and depend on estuarine and riverine habitat for their survival. Listing has the potential to jeopardize the states' ability to effectively monitor and assess stock condition, as well as impact fisheries that may encounter listed species. It is incumbent upon the Commission and its federal partners to work jointly to assess stock health, identify threats, and implement effective rebuilding programs for listed and candidate species.

More recently, the depleted status of the Northern right whale population and the potential impacts to this population by entanglement in fishing gear, particularly lobster and crab gear, has heightened concern for both whales and the lobster industry.

Increased Cooperation and Collaboration among the States and between the States and Our Federal Partners

Demands for ecosystem-based fisheries management, competing and often conflicting ocean uses, and legislative mandates to protect marine mammals and other protected species, further complicate fisheries management and require quality scientific information to ~~help~~ guide management decisions. ~~Federal agencies have a long track record of providing scientific support to the Commission and collaborations recently expanded in some areas. However there is a developing trend of reduced support for fundamental data collection and assessment support in recent years. Year to year static funding results in decreased scientific support due to inflationary cost increases.~~ There is a growing concern among fishery managers that some "control" over fisheries decisions and status has been diminished due to political intervention and our inability to effect ~~climate changes changing ocean conditions~~ and other environmental factors that impact marine resources. Fisheries management has never been more complex or politically charged. State members are pulled between what is best for their stakeholders versus what is best for the resource and the states as a whole.

While the issues may seem daunting, they are not insurmountable. In order for the Commission to be successful, the states must recommit to their collective vision of "Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries," recognizing that their strength lies in working together to address the fisheries issues that lie ahead. Given today's political and environmental realities, the need for cooperation among the states has never been more important. It is also critical the states and their federal partners seek to strengthen their cooperation and working relationships, providing for efficient and effective fisheries management across all agencies. No one state or federal agency has the resources, authority, or ability to do it alone.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Commission will pursue the following eight goals and their related strategies during the five-year planning period, from 2024~~19~~ through 2023~~8~~. It will pursue these goals through specific objectives, targets, and milestones outlined in an annual Action Plan, which is adopted each year at the Commission's Annual Meeting to guide the subsequent year's activities. Throughout the year, the Commission and its staff will monitor progress in meeting the Commission's goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies. While committed to the objectives included in this plan, the Commission is ready to adopt additional objectives to take advantage of new opportunities and address emerging issues as they arise.

Goal 1 - Rebuild, maintain, fairly allocate, and promote sustainable Atlantic coastal fisheries

Goal 1 focuses on the responsibility of the states to conserve and manage Atlantic coastal fishery resources for sustainable use. Commission members will advocate decisions to achieve the long-term benefits of conservation, while balancing the socio-economic interests and needs of coastal communities. Inherent in this is the recognition that healthy and vibrant resources benefit stakeholders. The states are committed to proactive management, with a focus on integrating ecosystem services, socio-economic impacts, habitat issues, bycatch and discard reduction measures, and protected species interactions into well-defined fishery management plans. Fishery management plans will also address fair allocation of fishery resources among the states. Understanding ~~changing ocean conditions~~ climate change and ~~its their~~ impact on fishery productivity and distribution is an elevated priority. Successful management under climate change ~~changing ocean conditions~~ will depend not only on adjusting management strategies to be more adaptable and flexible, but also in reevaluating and revising, as necessary, the underlying conservation goals and objectives of fishery management plans. Changing climate and ocean conditions can impact fish stocks, fish habitats, and interactions between species and fisheries. The Commission will strive to proactively consider ecosystem level impacts when making management decisions to take a more holistic consideration of issues. Improving cooperation and coordination with federal partners and stakeholders can streamline efficiency, transparency, and, ultimately, success. In the next five years, the Commission is committed to ending overfishing and working to rebuild overfished Atlantic coast fish stocks, while promoting sustainable harvest of and access to rebuilt fisheries. Where possible, the Commission will seek to aid in the rebuilding of depleted stocks, whose recovery is hindered by factors other than fishing pressure.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Manage interstate resources that provide for productive, sustainable fisheries using sound science
- Strengthen state and federal partnerships to improve comprehensive management of shared fishery resources
- Create management frameworks that are nimble, adaptable, and robust to climate change.
- ~~Adapt management to address emerging issues~~

- Practice efficient, transparent, and accountable management processes
- Evaluate progress towards rebuilding fisheries
- Promote sustainable harvest of and access to rebuilt fisheries
- Strengthen interactions and input among stakeholders, technical, advisory, and management groups

Commented [RB1]: Further discussion may be needed to consider access to stocks that are rebuilding but not fully rebuilt.

Goal 2 – Provide ~~sound~~robust, actionable science to ~~support~~informed management ~~decisions~~actions

Sustainable management of fisheries relies on accurate and timely scientific advice. The Commission strives to produce ~~sound~~robust, actionable science through a technically rigorous, independently peer-reviewed stock assessment process. Assessments are developed using a broad suite of fishery-independent surveys and fishery-dependent monitoring, as well as research products developed, in cooperation with the fishing industry, by a broad network of fisheries scientists at state, federal, and academic institutions along the coast. The goal encompasses the development of ~~novel and new~~, innovative scientific research, ~~and modern~~ assessment methodology, and ~~the~~ enhancement of the states' stock assessment capabilities. It provides for the administration, coordination, and expansion of collaborative research and data collection programs. Achieving the goal will ensure ~~sound~~robust science is available ~~to serve~~ as the foundation for the Commission's evaluation of stock status and adaptive management actions.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Proactively address research priorities through cooperative state and regional data collection programs; strengthen stakeholder involvement in ~~and~~ collaborative research projects, including stakeholder involvement
- Explore the use of new emerging technologies to improve fishery-independent surveys, monitoring, and the timeliness of scientific products
- Provide training to enhance the expertise and involvement participation of state and staff scientists in the development of conducting stock assessments
- Streamline assessment data assimilation within individual states, and among states and ASMFC
- Conduct stock assessments based on comprehensive data sources and rigorous technical analysis; deliver direct, concise scientific advice in order to achieve clear endpoints in the assessment process; generate indicators/rapid assessments for all stocks
- Balance requests from fisheries management with finite assessment workload capacity
- Support the development and utilization of industry-based surveys and other cooperative research opportunities.
- ~~Characterize the risk and uncertainty associated with the scientific advice provided to decision makers~~

Commented [RB2]: Should this bullet edited to note that there are some assessments where ASMFC relies on federal capacity and others where ASMFC and the member states complete the analyses?

- ~~Proactively address research priorities through cooperative state and regional data collection programs and collaborative research projects, including stakeholder involvement~~
- ~~Explore the use of new technologies to improve surveys, monitoring, and the timeliness of scientific products~~
- Utilize ecosystem and climate science products to inform fisheries management decisions, including projected shifts with quota allocation implications
(Action): Integrate estuarine/state waters and federal waters environmental data for use in stock assessments
- ~~Promote effective communication~~ with stakeholders to ensure scientific advice and on-the-water observations and science are consistent
Characterize the risk and uncertainty associated with the scientific advice provided to decision-makers

Goal 3 - Produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries

Effective management depends on quality fishery-dependent data ~~and fishery-independent data~~ to inform stock assessments and fisheries management decisions. ~~While Goal 2 of this Action Plan focuses on providing sound, actionable science and fishery-independent data to support fisheries management,~~ Goal 3 focuses on providing timely, accurate catch, ~~and effort,~~ and biological data on Atlantic coast recreational, for-hire, and commercial fisheries to support fisheries management.

Goal 3 seeks to accomplish this through the activities of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), a cooperative state-federal program that designs, implements, and conducts marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and integrates those data into data management systems that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. ACCSP partners include the 15 Atlantic coast state fishery agencies, the three Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, NOAA Fisheries, ~~and~~ the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Focus on activities that maximize benefits, are responsive and accountable to partner and end-user needs, and are based on available resources.
- ~~Cooperatively~~ develop, implement, and maintain coastwide data standards through cooperation with all program partners
- Provide electronic applications that ~~improve efficiently align~~ partner data collection
- Integrate and provide access to partner data via a coastwide repository

- Facilitate fisheries data access through an on-line, user-friendly, system while protecting confidentiality
- Support [data systems modernization and integration](#) ~~technological innovation~~

Goal 4 – Protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnerships and education

Goal 4 aims to conserve and improve coastal, marine, and riverine habitat to enhance the benefits of sustainable Atlantic coastal fisheries and resilient coastal communities in the face of changing ecosystems. Habitat loss and degradation have been identified as significant factors affecting the long-term sustainability and productivity of our nation’s fisheries. The Commission’s Habitat Program develops objectives, sets priorities, and produces tools to guide fisheries habitat conservation efforts directed towards ecosystem-based management.

The challenge for the Commission and its state members is maintaining fish habitat under limited regulatory authority for habitat protection or enhancement. Therefore, the Commission will work cooperatively with state, federal, and stakeholder partnerships to achieve this goal. Much of the work to address habitat is conducted through the Commission’s Habitat and Artificial Reef Committees. In order to identify fish habitats of concern for Commission managed species, each year the Habitat Committee reviews existing reference documents for Commission-managed species to identify gaps or updates needed to describe important habitat types and review and revise species habitat factsheets. The Habitat Committee also publishes an annual issue of the *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*, highlighting topical issues that affect all the states.

The Commission and its Habitat Program endorses the National Fish Habitat Partnership, and will continue to work cooperatively with the partnership to improve aquatic habitat along the Atlantic coast. Since 2008, the Commission has invested considerable resources, as both a partner and administrative home, to the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP), a coastwide collaborative effort to accelerate the conservation and restoration of habitat for native Atlantic coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fishes. As part of this goal, the Commission will continue to provide support for ACFHP, under the direction of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Board.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Identify fish habitats of concerns through fisheries management programs and partnerships
- Educate Commissioners, stakeholders, and the general public about the importance of habitat to healthy fisheries and ecosystems
- Better integrate habitat information and data into fishery management plans and stock assessments
- Engage local state, and regional governments in mutually beneficial habitat protection and enhancement programs

- Foster partnerships with management agencies, researchers, and habitat stakeholders to leverage scientific, regulatory, political, and financial support
- Work with ACFHP to foster partnerships with like-minded organizations at local levels to further common habitat goals

Goal 5 – Promote compliance with fishery management plans to ensure sustainable use of Atlantic coast [resources fisheries](#)

Fisheries managers, law enforcement personnel, and stakeholders have a shared responsibility to promote compliance with fisheries management measures. Activities under the goal seek to increase and improve compliance with fishery management plans. This requires the successful coordination of both management and enforcement activities among state and federal agencies. Commission members recognize that adequate and consistent enforcement of fisheries rules is required to keep pace with increasingly complex management activity and emerging technologies. Achieving the goal will improve the effectiveness of the Commission’s fishery management plans.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Develop practical compliance requirements that foster stakeholder buy-in
- Evaluate the enforceability of management measures and the effectiveness of law enforcement programs
- Promote coordination and expand existing partnerships with state and federal natural resource law enforcement agencies
- Enhance stakeholder awareness of management measures through education and outreach
- Use emerging communication platforms to deliver real time information regarding regulations and the outcomes of law enforcement investigations

Goal 6 – Strengthen stakeholder and public support for the Commission

Stakeholder and public acceptance of Commission decisions are critical to our ultimate success. For the Commission to be effective, these groups must have a clear understanding of our mission, vision, and decision-making processes. The goal seeks to do so through expanded outreach and education efforts about Commission programs, decision-making processes, and its management successes and challenges. It aims to engage stakeholders in the process of fisheries management, and promote the activities and accomplishments of the Commission. Achieving the goal will increase stakeholder participation, understanding, and acceptance of Commission activities.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Increase public understanding and support of activities through expanded outreach at the local, state, and federal levels

- Clearly define Commission processes to facilitate stakeholder participation, as well as transparency and accountability
- Strengthen national, regional, and local media relations to increase coverage of Commission actions
- Use new technologies and communication platforms to more fully engage the broader public in the Commission's activities and actions

Goal 7 – Advance Commission and member states' priorities through a proactive legislative policy agenda

Although states are positioned to achieve many of the national goals for marine fisheries through cooperative efforts, state fisheries interests are often underrepresented at the national level. This is due, in part, to the fact that policy formulation is often disconnected from the processes that provide the support, organization, and resources necessary to implement the policies. The capabilities and input of the states are an important aspect of developing national fisheries policy, and the goal seeks to increase the states' role in national policy formulation. Additionally, the goal emphasizes the importance of achieving management goals consistent with productive commercial and recreational fisheries and healthy ecosystems.

The Commission recognizes the need to work with Congress in all phases of policy formulation. Several important fishery-related laws may be reauthorized over the next couple of years (i.e., Atlantic Coastal Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act, and Anadromous Fish Conservation Act). The Commission needs to proactively engage with reauthorization efforts, this includes advocating for increased funding from sources such as Wallop-Breaux Trust Fund, Sportfish Restoration Trust Fund and the Atlantic Coastal Act. The Commission will be vigilant in advancing the states' interests to Congress as these laws are reauthorized and other fishery-related pieces of legislation are considered.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Increase the Commission's profile and support in the U.S. Congress by developing relationships between Members and their staff and Commissioners, the Executive Director, and Commission staff
- Maintain or increase long-term funding for Commission programs through the federal appropriations process and other available sources, this includes for non-federal surveys and to support our partnerships with outside organizations such as U.S. Geological Survey.
- Engage Congress on fishery-related legislation affecting the Atlantic coast
- Promote member states' collective interests at the regional and national levels
- Promote economic benefits of the Commission's actions (return on investment)

Goal 8 – Ensure the fiscal stability & efficient administration of the Commission
(Should this goal be removed since fiscal administration is an ongoing obligation that has little room for interpretation, or should it should stay in and not be reflected in annual action planning, or stay as is?)

Goal 8 ~~focuses on will~~ ensuring ~~e that~~ the business affairs of the Commission are managed effectively and efficiently, including workload balancing through the development of annual action plans to support the Commission’s management process. It also highlights the need for the Commission to efficiently manage its resources. The goal promotes the efficient use of legal advice to proactively review policies and react to litigation as necessary. It also promotes human resource policies that attract talented and committed individuals to conduct the work of the Commission. The goal highlights the need for the Commission as an organization to continually expand its skill set through training and educational opportunities. It calls for Commissioners and Commission staff to maintain and increase the institutional knowledge of the Commission through periods of transition. Achieving this goal will build core strengths, enabling the Commission to respond to increasingly difficult and complex fisheries management issues.

Annual action planning will be guided by the following objectives:

- Conservatively manage the Commission’s operations and budgets to ensure fiscal stability
- Utilize new information technology to improve meeting and workload efficiencies, and enhance communications
- Refine strategies to recruit professional staff, and enhance growth and learning opportunities for Commission and state personnel
- Fully engage new Commissioners in the Commission process and document institutional knowledge.
- Utilize legal advice on new management strategies and policies, and respond to litigation as necessary.