

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

May 2, 2023
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 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.
This meeting will include a 10-minute break.

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*M. Gary*) 8:30 a.m.
2. Board Consent 8:30 a.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from January 2023
3. Public Comment 8:35 a.m.
4. Update on Striped Bass Cooperative Tagging Program (*J. Newhard*) 8:45 a.m.
5. Technical Committee Report (*M. Celestino*) **Possible Action** 9:00 a.m.
 - Projections Using 2022 Preliminary Data and Quota Utilization Scenarios
 - Consider Management Response to the Technical Committee Projections
6. Consider Approval of Addendum I on Ocean Commercial Quota Transfers 10:30 a.m.
Final Action
 - Review Options and Public Comment Summary (*E. Franke*)
 - Review Advisory Panel Report (*E. Franke*)
 - Consider Final Approval of Addendum I
7. Other Business/Adjourn 12:00 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

May 2, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Hybrid

Chair: Marty Gary (PRFC) Assumed Chairmanship: 01/22	Technical Committee Chair: Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI)	Law Enforcement Committee Rep: Sgt. Jeff Mercer (RI)
Vice Chair: Megan Ware (ME)	Advisory Panel Chair: Louis Bassano (NJ)	Previous Board Meeting: January 31, 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 January 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. Update on Striped Bass Cooperative Tagging Program (8:45-9:00 a.m.)

Background

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service coordinates the Atlantic Striped Bass Cooperative Tagging Program, including winter tagging of striped bass each year.

Presentations

- Update on 2023 and future winter tagging by J. Newhard

5. Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee Report on Projections using 2022 Preliminary Data and Quota Utilization Scenarios (9:00-10:30 a.m.) Possible Action

Background

- In November 2022, the Board tasked the Technical Committee (TC) with evaluating whether 2022 removals remained at a level associated with the 2021 fishing mortality rate.
- In January 2023, the Board tasked the TC with conducting projections to determine how ocean commercial quota utilization scenarios would impact the stock rebuilding timeline. The Board requested projections in time for the May 2023 Board meeting, and requested the projections include 2022 preliminary removals data.

- The TC and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) met in March 2023 to develop projections addressing both Board tasks, and to review a correction to the rebuilding probabilities in the 2022 Stock Assessment Update Report **(Briefing Materials)**.

Presentations

- Technical Committee-Stock Assessment Subcommittee Report by M. Celestino

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Consider potential management response, if needed.

6. Draft Addendum I on Ocean Commercial Quota Transfers (10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.) Final Action

Background

- Draft Addendum I proposes options to allow for the voluntary transfer of striped bass commercial quota in the ocean region between states that have ocean commercial quota. It was approved for public comment in November 2022.
- Public comment was gathered from November 2022 through January 13, 2023 **(Briefing Materials)**.
- The Advisory Panel reviewed the draft addendum on January 17, 2023 **(Briefing Materials)**.
- In January 2023, the Board postponed final action until May 2023 and tasked the Technical Committee with developing stock projections for specific quota utilization scenarios **(Briefing Materials)**.

Presentations

- Overview of options and public comment summary by E. Franke
- Advisory Panel report by E. Franke

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Select management option and implementation date.
- Approve final document.

7. Other Business/Adjourn (12:00 p.m.)

Atlantic Striped Bass

Activity level: High

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

Committee Task List

- TC – June 15th: Annual compliance reports due
- TC-SAS – Review 2022 landings
- TC-SAS – Conduct projections for quota utilization scenarios

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

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

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

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

The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
Hybrid Meeting

January 31, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Call to Order, Chair Martin Gary1

Approval of Agenda.....1

Approval of Proceedings from November 7, 2022.....1

Public Comment1

Addendum I on Ocean Commercial Quota Transfers for Final Approval.....1

 Overview1

 Public Comment Summary **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

 Advisory Panel Report6

 Consider Final Approval of Addendum I9

Adjournment 19

INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings of November 7, 2022** by consent (Page 1).
3. **Main Motion**
Move to approve Option D (Board discretion commercial quota transfer provision (with overfished conservation tax)) (Page 9). Motion by John Clark; second by Steve Train. Motion substituted.
Motion to Substitute (Page 11)
Move to substitute to postpone action on Addendum I and task the Technical Committee (TC) with running two population projections:
 - **One which assumes harvest of the entire ocean commercial quota from all states**
 - **One which assumes harvest of the ocean commercial quota from all states except New Jersey (since their quota is reallocated out of the commercial fishery) The TC may use their expert judgement on other needed assumptions for the projections (i.e., selectivity) to produce the most realistic output for consideration by the board.**Motion by Jason McNamee; second by Justin Davis. Motion carried (13 in favor, 3 opposed) (Page 18).
Main Motion as Substituted
Move to postpone action on Addendum I and task the TC with running two population projections:
 - **One which assumes harvest of the entire ocean commercial quota from all states**
 - **One which assumes harvest of the ocean commercial quota from all states except New Jersey (since their quota is reallocated out of the commercial fishery) The TC may use their expert judgement on other needed assumptions for the projections (i.e., selectivity) to produce the most realistic output for consideration by the board.**Motion carried (15 in favor, 1 opposed) (Page 18).
4. **Move to adjourn** by consent (Page 19).

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

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

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

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

Ex-Officio Members

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

Staff

Bob Beal	Tracey Bauer
Toni Kerns	Kurt Blanchard
Madeline Musante	Pat Campfield
Tina Berger	Emily Franke

Guests

Jerry Audet	Ingrid Braun, PRFC	Allison Colden, CBF
Pat Augustine, Coram, NY	Jeff Brust, NJ DEP	Margaret Conroy, DE DFW
Roland Beatty	Craig Cantelmo	Heather Corbett, NJ DEP
John Bello	Patrick Cassidy	Michael Cool
Jessica Best, NYS DEC	Nicole Caudell, MD DNR	Caitlin Craig NYS DEC
Sean Betham	Mike Celestino, NJ DEP	Jessica Daher, NJ DEP
Alan Bianchi, NC DENR	Matt Cieri, ME DMR	Evan Dintaman
Jason Boucher, NOAA	Peter Clarke, NJ DEP	Phil Edwards, RI DEM
Colleen Bouffard, CT DEEP	Germain Cloutier	Paul Eidman

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Guests (continued)

Peter Fallon, Maine Stripers	Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)	Jack Stoddard
Tony Friedrich, SGA	Conor McManus, RI DEM	David Stormer, DE DFW
Tom Fuda	Steve Meyers	ElizaBeth Streifeneder, NYS DEC
Jerry Gaff	Drew Minkiewicz, Kelley Drye	Kevin Sullivan, NH F&G
Lewis Gillingham, VMRC	Steve Minkinen, US FWS	Colin Temple
Angela Giuliano, MD DNR	Chris Moore, CBF	Michael Toole
Willy Goldsmith, SGA	Chris Piatek	Andrew Valmassoi, NC DENR
Kurt Gottschall, CT DEEP	Michael Pierdinock	Taylor Vavra
Tyler Grabowski, PA F&B	Nicole Pitts, NOAA	Beth Versak, MD DNR
Brendan Harrison, NJ DEP	Marisa Ponte, NC DENR	Walt Vieser
Brian Hayes	Will Poston, SGA	Mike Waine, ASA
Jay Hermsen, NOAA	Jill Ramsey, VMRC	Michael Watkins
Peter Himchak, Cooke Aqua	Cody Rubner	Craig Weedon, MD DNR
Carol Hoffman	Erin Schnettler, NOAA	Ben Whalley
Sean Hogan	Zachary Schuller, NYS DEC	Ritchie White
Harry Hornick, MD DNR	Tata Scott, NOAA	Brian Williams
Jesse Howe	Alan Siegel	Charles Witek
Bob Humphrey	Jason Seman	Steven Witthuhn
Ayden Jewell	Phillip Sheffield	Greg Wojcik, CT DEEP
Kekoa Kiana, Ofc. Sen. Reed	Greg Shute	Paul Wolfe
Richard Kuhlman	Amanda Small, MD DNR	Anthony Wood, NOAA
Jared Lamy, NH F&G	Ethan Simpson, VMRC	Michael Woods
Toby Lapinski	Andrew Sinchuk	Chris Wright, NOAA
Ed Liccione	Skip Smith	Dennis Zambrotta
Shanna Madsen, VMRC	Ross Squire	Erik Zlokovitz, MD DNR
Joshua McGilly, VMRC	Michael Stangl, DE DFW	

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The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Westin Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia, via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Tuesday, January 31, 2023, and was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Chair Martin Gary.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MARTIN GARY: Welcome everyone to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission winter meeting of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board. My name is Marty Gary from the Potomac River Fisheries Commission; I'm the Board Chair. Our Vice-Chair is Megan Ware from Maine, and Emilie Franke is our ASMFC FMP Coordinator.

I'm also joined at the front by ASMFC Science Lead, Dr. Katie Drew. For today's meeting before we get going, I would like to recognize some new faces around the table for the Board. First, virtually attending, we have from Maine Representative Allison Hepler from Maine, so Allison, online, welcome to the Striped Bass Board. Also at the table, not necessarily new, he's been at the Board before, but not in a while is Jesse Hornstein from New York.

Jesse, welcome to the Board. Also, we have Chad Thomas with the state of North Carolina. Chad, on the far right there, welcome, Chad. We also have several commissioners who are participating virtually today, including Cheri Patterson from New Hampshire, David Borden from Rhode Island, Tom Fote from New Jersey, Craig Pugh from Delaware, Mike Luisi from Maryland, Jerry Manning from North Carolina. I may be missing a couple, but I'll be looking to Emilie to help me out, to allow those folks to participate in our meeting today.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR GARY: We'll go ahead and start off with approval of the agenda. I would ask if there are any modifications or additions to the agenda. I'll look to the Board for those. None here in person, anybody online, Emilie? No. Seeing none; the agenda is approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR GARY Let's go to approval of the proceedings from the November annual meeting in November, 2022.

Are there any edits to the proceedings of the meetings from November, 2022? Not seeing any here in the room, none online, then by consent we'll approve the proceedings from November, 2022.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR GARY: Next up on the agenda, Public Comment for items that are not on the agenda today. I'll look to the room to see if there is any public comment. Raise your hand, please, and I would also ask if there is anybody online for any comment for items that are not on the agenda.

I am not seeing any hands raised in the room. Emilie, are there any hands up online? Seeing none; we're going to go ahead and continue to move on.

ADDENDUM I ON OCEAN COMMERCIAL QUOTA TRANSFERS FOR FINAL APPROVAL

CHAIR GARY: We will move on to Item Number 4, which is Addendum I on Ocean Commercial Quota Transfers for Final Approval, a three-step process. We're going to Review the Options and Public Comment Summary. Emilie is going to provide that to us. Then we're going to Review the Advisory Panel Report; Emilie will give that to us. Then we'll move into action. Emilie, I'll turn to you for the Review of the Options and the Public Comment Summary.

OVERVIEW

MS. EMILIE FRANKE: Today I will provide an overview of the Draft Addendum, the proposed management options, as well as the public comment summary and the Advisory Panel report. The Board action for consideration today is to select a management option and consider final approval of Addendum I. Starting with the statement of the problem for this Draft Addendum. There have been several questions and concerns raised about the

Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

striped bass commercial quota system over the years.

For example, particular concern about the use of 1970s as the reference period for the quotas. These questions and concerns were included as part of the scoping document for Draft Amendment 7 back in 2021, but the issue of commercial quota was not selected for further development at that time, and some Board members did express support for addressing commercial quota issues separately from Amendment 7.

In August, 2021, the Board initiated this Draft Addendum I to consider allowing for the voluntary transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region specifically. This action was initiated to consider a management option that could provide some more immediate relief to states that are currently seeking a change to the commercial quota.

Other commission-managed species do allow for quota transfers between states, and these transfers can address issues like shifting stocks, quota overages, et cetera. Here is the timeline for this management action. After the Board initiated the Draft Addendum in August, 2021, the Board then postponed the Addendum until August, 2022, at which point the Board provided additional guidance to revise the draft.

Then the Board approved the revised Draft Addendum in November 2022 for public comment. Then we had public hearings and public comments accepted throughout December 2022 and January 2023. Then today the Board is considering final action on this Addendum. Just a brief background for this Addendum.

First being, the status of the striped bass stock. As a reminder, we just had the 2022 stock assessment update for striped bass, which indicates that the stock is still overfished but no longer experiencing overfishing, relative to the reference points. The assessment also indicated that under the current fishing mortality rate there is about 78 percent chance the stock will rebuild to the spawning stock

biomass target by 2029, which is the rebuilding deadline.

Moving on to commercial management specifically within the striped bass fishery for the ocean fishery, the FMP establishes state-by-state commercial quotas. Then for the Chesapeake Bay the FMP establishes one total Bay-wide quota, which is then allocated per the mutual agreement of the Chesapeake Bay states amongst themselves. Then for all the quotas, any overages are paid back the following year. The rollover of unused quota from one year to the next is not permitted, and then currently quota transfers between states are not permitted. The focus here of this Draft Addendum is considering quota transfers in the ocean region specifically. You can see here this is the table of the current state-by-state commercial quotas for the ocean. This does incorporate any approved conservation equivalency programs.

You can see the total ocean quota across all states is about 2.4 million pounds. As a reminder, Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut and New Jersey prohibit the commercial harvest of striped bass, and then also note that New Jersey does reallocate their commercial quota to the recreational bonus program.

For the most recent fishing year we have data for, which is 2021, saw about 5.1 million removals of striped bass across both the commercial and recreational sectors. About 12 percent of that total in 2021 was commercial harvest. About 2 percent was commercial dead discards. About 36 percent was recreational harvest, and about 50 percent was recreational release mortality.

For commercial landings, specifically in 2021, the ocean commercial fisheries landed about 1.8 million pounds out of their 2.4-million-pound quota. Then Chesapeake Bay landed about 2.4 million pounds out of their 3-million-pound quota. The ocean commercial fishery does consistently underutilize its total quota.

Some of that quota is not used because striped bass are not always available in state waters. This is

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particularly true for North Carolina, which holds about 13 percent of the ocean quota, but has had 0 ocean commercial harvest since 2012. Then second, as I mentioned, some quota is not used because some states prohibit commercial harvest.

Those states that prohibit commercial harvest collectively hold about 10 percent of the ocean quota. Then for states that do have active commercial fisheries, there are several factors that impact how much of the quota is harvested each year, including year class availability, overall abundance, nearshore availability, overall effort, and also state management programs.

This table shows what percent of each state's quota was landed for the past three years. Again, you can see the states that prohibit commercial fishing obviously landed 0 percent of their quota in the commercial fishery. The other states with active commercial fisheries, most of them landed over 90 percent of their quota in 2021.

Again, the exception is North Carolina, which has used 0 percent of the quota, again, because the fish just haven't been there off the coast of North Carolina. Looking across all state quotas, the bottom row you can see about 76 percent of the total ocean quota was landed in the commercial fishery in 2021.

This is just a longer look at that quota utilization for the past ten years. You can see the landings have been below the quota up there in red, every year somewhere between 50 and 76 percent of the quota has been landed in the commercial fishery. There is some concern that allowing commercial quota transfers could increase how much of that ocean quota is utilized. This could potentially undermine the goals of the Addendum VI reductions that were implemented back in 2020. Since the fishery has consistently underutilized its quota, due to the fish availability and also to some states prohibiting harvest, Addendum VI assumed that the commercial fishery will continue to underutilize its quota to the same degree. This assumption might be violated if commercial quota transfers are allowed, and that unused quota starts to be used.

I'll go now to the five proposed management options in the Draft Addendum. The options consider allowing for the voluntary transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region, between states that have quota. These options do not address the Chesapeake Bay quota at all, and they do not consider transfers between the ocean and the Chesapeake Bay or vice versa.

Also, note that commercial quota that has been reallocated to a state's recreational fishery, so for example New Jersey's quota that has been reallocated to their recreational fishery is not eligible to be used for quota transfers. If transfers are permitted, quota would be transferred pound for pound between states, and there would be some uncertainty associated with transfers between states that harvest different sized fish.

We know state fisheries catch different size striped bass due to a variety of reasons, including the variability in size distribution of striped bass along the coast. Also, states have different commercial size limits, different gears, seasons, et cetera. Then also through conservation equivalency over time states have adjusted their commercial size limits from the historical standard size limit.

This has resulted to changes in some state quotas over time. Overall, a pound of striped bass quota is not equal across all states, and some of the proposed options do incorporate a provision to try and address this discrepancy. Looking at the specific options. First, we have Option A. This is the status quo in which commercial quota transfers are not permitted.

All of the alternative options B through E would allow voluntary quota transfers, and they range from sort of the least restrictive option, Option B, all the way through the most restrictive option, Option E. I'll get into each of those in more detail. Option B is the general transfer provision. Voluntary transfers would be permitted with no restrictions, but there would be a conservation tax if the stock is overfished.

There would be no limit on how much quota could be transferred, but if transfers occur when the stock is overfished, there would be a 5 percent

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

conservation tax to address the issue that a pound of quota is not equal across all states. For example, if State A transfers 10,000 pounds to State B while the stock is overfished.

State B would receive 9,500 pounds of that transfer, and the remaining 500 pounds would be that conservation tax, which would be no longer available for harvest that year. Option C would limit transfers based on stock status. Transfers would be permitted, except transfers would not be permitted at all when the stock is overfished.

There is no limit on how much could be transferred, but when the stock is overfished transfers could not happen at all. It is important to note that because the stock is currently overfished, this type of option would not provide near-term relief to states that are currently seeking additional quota. Option D is the Board discretion option. For this type of option, the Board would decide whether voluntary transfers are permitted every one to two years, based on information available on stock status and the performance of the fisheries. If the Board does decide to allow transfers when the stock is overfished, there would be a 5 percent conservation tax to address that issue that a pound of quota is not equal across states.

The other aspect of this Option D is that the Board can, in addition to deciding whether or not transfers are allowed, the Board can specify certain criteria for these transfers. The Board could, for example first, set a limit on the transferrable amount of quota, so how much quota could be transferred in a given year.

The Board could also set a seasonal limitation on that limit. For example, the Board could say no more than 50 percent of how much can be transferred, can be transferred in the first half of the year. Then finally, the Board could also determine a state's eligibility for a transfer, based on how much a state has landed.

For example, the Board could say, a state cannot ask for a transfer until they've landed X percent of their quota. If the Board does select this option today, the Board could also decide whether or not to allow 2023 transfers for this year at this meeting. Then the

Board would start this regular process of deciding about transfers in advance.

For 2024 the Board would need to make that decision by the fall of this year. Then finally, we have Option E. This would be the most restrictive option. Just like the previous option D, the Board would have discretion and decide whether transfers are permitted every one to two years, except for this option no transfers could occur at all when the stock is overfished.

The Board could still set certain criteria, but transfers couldn't happen at all when the stock is overfished. Again, important to note that because the stock is currently overfished, this type of option would not provide near-term relief to states. If transfers are permitted with any of those alternative options, there is a general process for how voluntary transfers occur.

Transfers require a donor and a receiving state and transfer between states may occur upon agreement of those two states at any time during the year, and up to 45 days after the calendar year ends. The Board today when approving the Addendum, could specify any number from 0 to 45 days if the Board wanted to limit when transfers can occur after the year ends.

The Administrative Commissioners from each state must submit a signed letter to the Commission regarding the transfer. The transfer becomes final when states receive written confirmation letters back from Commission staff, and then once quota has been transferred, the state receiving quota becomes responsible for any overages to that quota, and also any transfers don't permanently impact state quota shares, so every state resets to their original quota amount each year.

The final section of the Addendum is the compliance section. Any measures approved by the Board through this Addendum would be effective immediately, and if transfers are permitted, states would need to account for any potential additional quota through transfers, when they are determining how many commercial tags they need for the next

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season. Also, just a note here that if the Board does select status quo Option A today, that would mean that there is no change to current management. In that case, there would be no final addendum document, because management is not changing. We would add a note to the FMP Review to acknowledge that the Draft Addendum I process took place, what was discussed. But if Option A is selected that is no change to current management.

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

MS. FRANKE: I'll now provide a summary of all the public comments that we received on this Draft Addendum.

Public comments were accepted through January 13, 2023. We received a total of 1,979 written comments. Those included 759 individual written comments, 1,190 comments through 6 different form letters, and also written comments from 30 organizations. Eight public hearings were held that covered 12 jurisdictions in December and January.

Five of those hearings were webinar only, two of them were hybrid format, and then one of them was in person only. We had 193 public individuals attend the hearings. That is not including state staff, commissioners, commission staff. Live polls or a show of hands were used at most hearings for the proposed options.

Also note that some people did attend multiple hearings and provide comments at multiple hearings. Here is the comment count. You can see that the vast majority of comments favored the status quo, Option A, no transfers permitted, with 1,950 written comments, and 155 public hearing comments in favor of the status quo, Option A.

Of those who did favor the alternatives, Option B through E, Option B, which is transfers allowed with the overfished conservation tax, had the most support of those alternatives. For those favoring Option A, the status quo, the majority of comments. The most common rationale was concern about expanding harvest and increasing fishing mortality when the stock is rebuilding when the stock is

overfished, and also when the stock is experiencing poor recruitment.

Commenters noted that management should focus on rebuilding the stock and not maximizing harvest. Comments noted that allowing quota transfers would jeopardize rebuilding, and also noted that the Board has rejected quota transfers in the past. Some comments noted that allowing transfers would be in conflict with the stakeholder input received during the Amendment 7 process, in support of conservation.

Then some comments noted that if states aren't able to harvest their full quotas that indicates the stock may not be doing well, and so extra quota shouldn't be transferred or harvested by another state. For those in support of Option B, which is that transfer is permitted with overfished tax. Many commenters in support of Option B noted that they were commercial fishermen, and they noted that quota transfers would allow for the efficient use of commercial quota.

They also noted that the small impact of striped bass quota transfers on the overall fishery, because the commercial fishery is relatively small compared to the recreational fishery. Comments also noted that the commercial fishery already has accountability measures in place with payback for any quota overages. Also noted that transfers could help avoid regulatory discards after states filled their quota, and also noted the benefits of transfers seen for other species as well. There was no specific rationale provided for Option C, so moving on to Option D.

Those that supported this Board discretion option noted that some discretion on transfers would be beneficial, but also cautioned against too much oversight in setting overly restrictive criteria. Those in favor of Option E, which is Board discretion but no transfers at all when the stock is overfished, noted that this option would provide maximum oversight by the Board, and would support caution during rebuilding, while still benefiting states that are seeking additional quota.

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Commenters also raised additional topics, including concern that commercial fisheries are removing large breeding females from the population, concern also about ongoing CE programs and support for ending current CE programs. Comments noted that the commercial sector should have the same size limits as the recreational sector.

There is also concern about the potential for a future moratorium if the stock doesn't recover. Some support for ending commercial harvest, and making striped bass a game fish, and then concern also about menhaden harvest in the Chesapeake Bay, and concern about impacts from commercial gillnets.

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

MS. FRANKE: I'm going to also provide the Advisory Panel Report. The Advisory Panel Chair, Lou Bassano, asked that I provide the report today in his stead. The Advisory Panel met via webinar on January 17, to discuss this Draft Addendum. The AP members discussed their recommended options, and also provided some additional recommendations on the transfer process, and also on the quota system in general.

A majority of AP members on the call, 14, supported status quo, Option A, transfers not permitted. There were a few reasons. Those included transfers are not appropriate while the stock is overfished and rebuilding, and there shouldn't be any increase in either sectors harvest while the stock is overfished. The AP noted the public comments are overwhelmingly in support of Option A. Transfers will not benefit the stock, especially when the stock is overfished.

There is concern that quota transfers could set off the potential for nontransparent horse trading of quota. It was also noted that as long as the stock is overfished, the stock needs that buffer as not harvesting the North Carolina quota, and also concern that if quota is transferred north along the coast that there is concern that large breeding females will be taken out of the fishery, and there would be more loss of spawning potential there.

In general concern about moving quota around and the potential for that impacting the rebuilding analysis and our assumed size of commercial catch, since different size striped bass are caught in different states. Then it was also noted that the stock is experiencing recruitment failure in the Chesapeake Bay, so this would be a time for caution. A few AP members, 4 of them on the call did support Option B, transfers permitted with an overfished conservation tax. Those AP members noted that the quotas were developed scientifically, and the science would not set total quotas that would jeopardize the stock. Again, they noted that the commercial fishery is already constrained, and has payback and accountability provisions in place. Also noted that the fishery is primarily recreational, and with the commercial fishery only at 10 percent of total removals with relatively stable landings, that allowing transfers would not have a significant impact.

Some AP members also noted some additional recommendations about the quota transfer process itself. If the Board does allow transfers, a few AP members recommend the Board eliminate the 45-day provision allowing transfers up to 45 days after the year ends. There was concern that having this provision might lead to states being less careful about going over their quotas, since they could potentially cover a quota overage after the year ends.

A few AP members also recommended that transfers be permitted only for states that allow commercial fishing. The states that prohibit commercial fishing, Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut and New Jersey, should not be able to transfer their quota. Then 1 AP member recommends revising the quota utilization calculation.

There is concern that calculating that percent utilization incorporating those states that don't have a commercial harvest is misleading, and so those states that harvest 0 percent should not be included in the calculation. Then the AP discussed, you know if the Board does not allow transfers at this time, should transfers be considered in the future? The AP was split on that.

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

Some AP members would support revisiting transfers after the stock is rebuilt. That would be a more appropriate timing from their perspective. Some AP members don't support revisiting the transfer issue in the future at all. From their perspective transfers should not be allowed in any case, and that transfers are not an appropriate tool for the striped bass fishery.

Then some AP members were uncertain about whether transfers should be considered in the future. They noted that when the stock is rebuilt quota transfers could be a tool to respond to climate change and shifting stocks, but only if that tool was controlled properly. Then finally, there were a couple recommendations on the general commercial quota system.

A few AP members recommend the Board reexamine the quota system overall, because it's based on data from the 1970s, and the data should be reevaluated, and science has advanced since that time. Then one AP member recommends the Board take a broader perspective and reexamine the contribution of each sector to the fishery overall. That concludes the AP report, as well as the public comment summary. I'm happy to take questions on anything that I have presented.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Emilie. Before we entertain questions for Emilie from the AP report and from the public comments, we will be pivoting to the final action on the board. Please hold your motions until that time. I do want to start that part of it off with a motion, but for now we'll strictly do questions for Emilie. We do have some folks online participating virtually, so I'm going to be looking to Emilie to toggle back and forth periodically. We'll open this up for questions for Emilie. Justin Davis.

DR. JUSTIN DAVIS: Emilie, one of the comments in there in the AP summary caught my eye on that slide about whether or not, you know if the Board decides not to approve transfers at this time, should they revisit the question? The comment that transfers are not an appropriate tool for the striped bass fishery. Can you elaborate on that at all, like some of the discussion or comments around that idea?

MS. FRANKE: Yes, so there wasn't too much in that discussion there. The discussion that we always had I think was concern about, because striped bass those different sized stripe bass harvested among the states, and each states fishery is a little bit unique, that transfers are just not the most appropriate tool.

Given the uncertainty there of transferring different size striped bass among states. I think that was the primary reason in that discussion. AP members noted although transfers are used for other fisheries and other species that with that uncertainty that it just wouldn't be appropriate for the striped bass fishery.

CHAIR GARY: Additional questions for Emilie? Steve Train.

MR. STEPHEN TRAIN: Emilie, that was a great presentation. If you can follow what I've written down here and scribbling along as you talked, maybe you can explain it to me. We're currently under Addendum VI, and under that we have a 78 percent likelihood of success rate in the current management plan. That is assuming that we aren't going to use all the quota that we're going to have a likelihood of unused quota. I don't want to misquote you, but that seems to be what you said.

MS. FRANKE: The current projections for the assessment assume that we maintain the same fishing mortality rate. The Addendum VI reductions from 2020 did indeed assume that the commercial quota would have the same utilization rate, that there would still be some unused quota.

The specific assessment projections are specific to the fishing mortality rate, and not necessarily that assumption. I'll turn to Katie if I'm missing anything. You know Addendum VI specifically had that commercial quota assumption, but the assessment projections are just looking at F, which is a combination of recreational and commercial.

CHAIR GARY: Yes, Steve.

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

MR. TRAIN: I'm trying to figure this out. At a 78 percent likelihood of success under the current management plan, based on the current real mortality rate with effort, or based on what we projected? If it's real, then what was the likelihood of success not knowing what the actual fishing mortality would be, not the allotted?

MS. FRANKE: I think I followed most of that. The projections are based on the fishing mortality rate from 2021. We're based on if we maintain that same fishing mortality rate every year, the same as we had in 2021, then we'll have that 78 percent chance of rebuilding the stock. The assessment doesn't differentiate between whether, like how much of that fishing mortality rate is from the recreational or from the commercial side, it's just taking that overall fishing mortality rate. You know if commercial harvest increased but recreational removals decreased, and fishing mortality stayed the same. The assessment would just take that as fishing mortality staying the same. If that is helpful at all. I'll see if Katie has anything to add.

CHAIR GARY: Did that answer your question, Steve?

MR. TRAIN: Close. When we did most of these projections, we have a projected harvest rate and a projected success rate. You're saying we have a quota, but we know we're not going to harvest all of it. We went from what we think we're going to harvest at, which is below what we've allowed them to harvest at, to come up with this success rate. My question is more, what would the likelihood of success in this plan been if we caught the full quota?

DR. KATIE DREW: We didn't run those projections. We ran the projection assuming that we would stay at the fishing mortality rate in 2021 would give you another set of projections where we assumed that the fishing mortality rate would increase up to the F target, as well as to the F threshold, and that does bring your chance of success down. But we did not specifically look at a scenario where we did it in terms of removals of fully utilizing that commercial quota, or of increasing recreational harvest by X or Y percent. We did not do those sets of projections for the assessment update.

MS. FRANKE: If I may, Mr. Chair. We had put together this backup slide, because this was a frequently asked question during the public hearings. This question asks, 'if previously unused quota is used, how would that impact the rebuilding timeline from the stock assessment?' You know the answer is, commercial harvest could increase.

But without new projections we can't say how much that would increase F or if it would decrease that probability of rebuilding, or how much it would decrease that 78 percent chance of rebuilding. We can't say that without new projections. Again, that depends on how much of the previously unused quota is harvested or transferred, and also again, the total fishing mortality rate depends on both commercial and recreational.

We can look that up, I put a table up here, we can estimate how much removals might change. For example, these are rough estimates. You know we took a look at removals, assuming the same size fish would have been harvested as they were in 2021. If the North Carolina quota was transferred and harvested on top of what was harvested in 2021, you will see somewhere around less than a 1 percent increase in total removals.

If we're talking about the scenario that you brought up. If all the ocean quotas, every state's quota was fully utilized, including those states without commercial fisheries, you might see around a 1 percent increase in total removals. Again, this is how much removals might increase, but we can't say without new projections how much that might increase F overall.

MR. TRAIN: Thank you, that answered my question.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Steve, thanks Emilie and Katie. This time I would turn to Emilie. Are there any hands raised from Board members that are online that want to ask a question? Okay, back to the room. Any additional questions for Emilie? Dennis Abbott.

MR. DENNIS ABBOTT: The Advisory Committee expressed a concern about whether if we maintain status quo, whether we could revisit transfers in the

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future. I think in my opinion it would be clear that we always could do, a Board can do what it chooses in the future, regardless of the outcome of this, so choosing status quo would not preclude the fact of revisiting quota transfers at any time in the future, not correct.

MS. FRANKE: It's correct. The Board can absolutely revisit this in the future. From the Advisory Panel's perspective, the conversation was whether or not the Board should, from their perspective revisit it in the future. But absolutely the Board could revisit this if they would like.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Dennis, Emerson Hasbrouck.

MR. EMERSON C. HASBROUCK: Thank you, Emilie, for your presentation. I'm just looking at the slide that you have up there now, where it's an estimate that 0.2 to 0.5 percent increase from 2021 total removals if the North Carolina quota is harvested on top of the 2021 removals. Like the first line in that table. I'm just wondering, at that 0.2 to 0.5 percent, that is probably, I'm guessing, so I'll ask the question. Is that within the error bounds of that estimate of rebuilding by 2029, right that 0.5 percent?

MS. FRANKE: We haven't taken a look at those to see if that is within the error bars there. I think the important sort of caveat here is we're assuming, you know if all states decide the fish harvesting doesn't change, and for this range, is because we don't know if the North Carolina quota is transferred elsewhere, what size those fish will be. We have this range and I'm not sure if they're within the confidence intervals.

CONSIDER FINAL APPROVAL OF ADDENDUM I

CHAIR GARY: Did that answer your question, Emerson? All right. Any additional questions for Emilie? Any online? All right, so we will move to Consideration for Final Approval of Addendum I. I would look to start the conversation, if anyone has a motion. John Clark from the first state with the first hand up.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, indeed, I do have a motion. I sent it to Emilie, but not a big surprise, shall I just wait until it's up there, Emilie.

MS. FRANKE: It should be up momentarily, yes, thank you.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Short and sweet. **Move to approve Option D, Board discretion for a commercial quota transfer provision, with the overfished conservation tax.** If I can get a second, I would like to speak to it.

CHAIR GARY: Is there a second to the motion? Steve Train. We have a motion to approve Option D, Board discretion, commercial quota transfer provision with overfished conservation tax set. Motion by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Train. All right, we'll open this up to discussion. John, I look to you as the maker of the motion to expand upon your motion.

MR. CLARK: I wish I had better powers of persuasion, but let me go ahead and start here. As Emilie pointed out in the presentation, Option B is one of the more restrictive transfer provisions. It gives the Board discretion every year to decide whether the population can support transfers. You know I think that should calm some of the concerns that people have about allowing transfers, because we would be looking at it as a Board.

Why D, instead of E, which would have taken the overfished status into account, and wouldn't have allowed transfers unless the stock was not overfished? I may be alone, or in Delaware we may be alone, but these spawning stock biomass reference points are extremely conservative. It takes a while for the assessments to catch up with the population, and my thinking is that we all see striped bass in our states.

We know when the population is recovering. I thought this would help the commercial fishery in that as the Board sees recoveries occurring out there, that they may be able to approve transfers before the stock is officially considered no longer overfished. As Emilie's slide just pointed out there,

Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

we're not picking on North Carolina, of course, but North Carolina is where the unused quota is.

It is not even 1 percent of the total recreational and commercial removals. It doesn't seem too apt to be likely to have much of an effect on either the assessment results or the regulatory restrictions states must take based on the assessment. That's if the entire quota was transferred. With option D the Board has the power to approve whether the transfers will be allowed, and how much transfer will be allowed.

Because of that, of course, if the Board felt comfortable with 20 percent of the North Carolina quota being transferred, obviously that's probably a rounding in terms of our removals every year. But to a state like Delaware that would be a huge help. Why are we pursuing this approach in Delaware instead of a full reallocation, which we know people have suggested, you should just reallocate the commercial quota.

We know what a cluster fudge that reallocations turn into, and we'd be here for, I mean maybe by the time I retire, but maybe not even until after I'm dead that would probably happen. In any event, we think in Delaware that this is the fastest, easiest and hopefully a method that people could have oversight over and can agree to, to allow some states that get more quota.

Now, Delaware has been advocating for more quota for years. Obviously, the timing isn't great to be asking for quota transfer when the population status is overfished. We pursued this approach, as I said, because of the difficulty of getting reallocation done. We greatly respect the concern that recreational anglers show about this issue, but once again we want to keep it in perspective.

This is a very small amount of striped bass. The Board can defer allowing transfers until the population is recovering robustly under this option, and it brings us closer to fixing inequities in the original quota allocation. For all those reasons I'm hoping the Board can support this option. Thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Steve, as seconder, would you like to expand on John's comments?

MR. TRAIN: I have different comments, but yes. As a member of a state that has received quota transfers in a different species, I understand the importance of this type of tool, to allow a state to harvest a resource that maybe misappropriately quoted off, based on the change of the location of the resource.

I think that this option doesn't require it to be transferred. Even a full transfer from one state would still have us around a half a percent difference. I think it's something that should possibly be available. But this option is at Board discretion, which means it doesn't have to be done.

CHAIR GARY: Before we open this up to full Board discussion, I had a question for John. You may have mentioned this before, but I was curious about the scope, the sizes of the commercial fishery in Delaware that has the need for the transfers, if it's something you could comment to.

MR. CLARK: If you look at the table you'll see that Delaware, we have a very well-managed commercial fishery every spring. Our commercial fishermen get the gear in, get the gear out, because they want to move on to crabbing. We can easily accommodate more. Initially we would like to at least get back to where we were under Amendment 6, which would be probably about 50 to 60,000 pounds of quota. Once again, if the entire North Carolina quota is much less than 1 percent, we're talking really a fraction of a percent here.

CHAIR GARY: Roy Miller.

MR. ROY W. MILLER: I was wondering if you would indulge me for just a moment or two to add a little context to this request in John's motion. There are really two reasons Delaware feels that it would be important to pass Option D. One is, the '72 to '79 landings are not verifiable for a variety of reasons, at least in our state and some other states.

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There was no mandatory catch reporting in our state back in '72 to '79. The landings statistics were compiled by National Marine Fisheries Service employee coming to Delaware for an annual visit, maybe a couple times a year. The records were voluntary that the gill netters submitted for purposes of compilation of this '72 to '79 landings.

They are unverifiable. They may be overestimates, they may be underestimates, we don't know. The second reason why we feel, the first reason being we don't feel that the '72 to '79 landings, looking at it from today's point of view, are an appropriate resource to use to allocate the stock. The second reason has to do with the dissipation of the Delaware River pollution block.

In the sixties and seventies there was a 30-mile-long pollution block in the Delaware River that virtually precluded striped bass spawning from the Delaware River. You could reasonably ask, where did the landings that Delaware produced, where did they come from? Well, primarily through the C&D Canal, from transfers from Chesapeake Bay. There was relatively little reproduction in the Delaware River during that period of time, with the construction of five major sewage treatment plants in the Philadelphia area in the 1970s, and into the middle of 1980s. Gradually striped bass reproduction came back in the Delaware River, and the species was declared restored in '98.

What I'm saying is, Delaware fishermen never had the opportunity to fish on Delaware produced striped bass during the period of record, because there simply was very little production in the Delaware River during that period of record. Could their landings have been higher? I know that requires speculation, but my guess is yes, they could have been considerably higher during that period of record, had there been successful spawning.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Roy, I appreciate your personal history of exposure, and that's really very insightful, so I appreciate that. Let's go to Jason McNamee and then to Dennis Abbott. Dr. McNamee.

DR. JASON McNAMEE: Mr. Chair, what I would like to do here is offer a substitute motion if the time is appropriate to do that.

CHAIR GARY: Let me do this. I'll move that substitute. If you don't have any further comment I want to go to Dennis, and let him make his comment and then double back if that's okay. Would that work?

DR. McNAMEE: Perfectly fine, Mr. Chair, thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Jason. Dennis.

MR. ABBOTT: Jason beat me to the punch, because I was going to do the same thing.

CHAIR GARY: You made it easy, Jason, go ahead.

DR. McNAMEE: Thank you, Dennis. I would like to offer a substitute motion here. What I would like to substitute is to move to postpone action on Addendum I, and task the Technical Committee with running two population projections. The first one would be one which assumes harvest of the entire ocean commercial quota from all states, and the second one would be one which assumes harvest of the ocean commercial quota from all states except New Jersey, and then parenthetical, since their quota is reallocated out of the commercial fishery.

The Technical Committee may use their expert judgment on the other needed assumptions for the projections, i.e., selectivity, to produce the most realistic output for consideration by the Board. If I get a second to that motion, I would be happy to provide my rationale behind that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR GARY: Do I have a second to the motion? Justin Davis. We have a motion by Dr. McNamee, second by Dr. Davis. Jason, do you want to go ahead and expand on this?

DR. McNAMEE: A couple of reasons for doing this. There was a lot of discussion about this in both the public comment and the Advisory Panel also made

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mention of it, and then Steve Train also brought up a similar point. What this would do, is it would provide an answer to some of those comments, these comments about well, what would happen if the commercial quota was harvested?

Does it impact rebuilding? Does it have a meaningful impact on the stock? You know when I was reading those comments, we can answer that question with the model that we have in the projections that we run. You know they were really observant comments that were made, and I thought it would be helpful to the Board to actually have an answer, to kind of at least get some clarity on one of those things that people were bringing up.

In another manner, it seems people are uncomfortable with harvesting the commercial quota. I find that a little bit odd. I think if we are setting a commercial quota, we should be comfortable with harvesting that commercial quota. I'm not saying we should harvest the commercial quota. What I'm getting at is, this will give us an opportunity to kind of understand the commercial quota a little better in the context of the population.

If it's not an appropriate quota level we can have information and adjust it, if that's appropriate. We'll get a sense of whether or not this commercial quota is set at a reasonable level. Just a logistical one. It's my understanding that the Technical Committee is already working on some projections.

I am asking them for additional work, but at least I'm not pulling anyone off the bench, they're already out in the field playing ball. It's additional work, but hopefully not a huge burden on the Technical Committee, as they're already kind of working on some of this type of thing. Then finally, it will allow the Board to make a more informed decision when we take this back up, so I'll park it there, Mr. Chair, thank you for the time.

CHAIR GARY: Justin, would you like to add to that?

DR. DAVIS: I appreciate this motion from Dr. McNamee and support it. To me what's really clear is that the public here with this action, as with

Addendum VI as was Amendment 7, is just very concerned about the stock being rebuilt by 2029. You know in my view the public's voicing very reasonable concerns that increases in removals could affect the recovery timeline that we're on.

I think this work can inform that question, as to whether additional removals on the commercial side will materially impact the rebuilding plan. Thinking back to the November meeting, I wouldn't have been willing to consider additional removals on the recreational side, adjusting measures there without some information on what those changes would do to our rebuilding timeline.

I think here we're just asking for the same thing, given that we're considering additional removals on the commercial sideline to better understand how that might impact rebuilding. I think this is a really reasonable ask, and will hopefully allow us to make a more informed decision when we come back for final action at a later date.

CHAIR GARY: Chris Batsavage has his hand up, but I'm going to pivot to online, and do we have any hands raised there, Emilie? All right, I think we have Dave Sikorski online. Go ahead, Dave.

MR. DAVE SIKORSKI: I was originally raising my hand to be in the queue, to possibly substitute the original motion, and I'll park it for now, and just ask that you keep me on the list as things progress here. In looking at this motion, I'm against really the first sentence, or at least the first half of the first sentence in postponing action on this Addendum.

I'm in the reallocation camp. I think Roy made some really important comments about the history there. Ultimately, I think that is the right thing to do to properly provide access to this fishery. I'm in that camp once we're rebuilt. Obviously, that does push us down the timeline quite a bit, but I think that's the right thing to do, given everything we've been through, what the public is looking for.

Let me just clearly say that when I say rebuilt, I say rebuilt on the timeline and the goal we have in place, not moving that goal, something else the public has

long said. You know ultimately, I think this additional analysis would be helpful, so I'm supportive of that component. I would also hope that we could get a better picture of what F looked like through 2022.

Something I think is being viewed, possibly after the May meeting, based on November conversations, because I think that will give us a good picture of what's happening at the recreational fisheries that we know is difficult to constrain, and obviously (interference) are rebuilding the most. Generally speaking, I think we're in the margins here, as far as the potential value of this information, so that's just some comments at this point, and if I have an opportunity, I might just like possibly substitute down the road, so thank you.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Dave, I've noted you're interested in seeing how this plays out and a possible substitution. Chris Batsavage.

MR. CHRIS BATSAVAGE: Actually, Dave Sikorski's comment, actually the questions that I have about this motion is, would these population projections be based on 2022 catch, and if so, I guess a question to Emilie. This is I guess a reminder for us, it's through Wave 5, what does the 2022 recreational harvest look like compared to 2020 and 2021?

MS. FRANKE: Thanks for the question. To the first part about, would these projections proposed on the screen here use 2022 catch data. The plan as discussed in November; you know the Board expressed interest in evaluating 2022 removals as soon as possible. The initial plan is for the Technical Committee to meet in March, to take a look at the preliminary MRIP data, because at that time we'll still only have preliminary data.

We also in March will not have final 2022 commercial data. The TC for the May Striped Bass Board meeting can provide a preliminary analysis and potentially preliminary projections with 2022 catch data, perhaps incorporating these scenarios on the screen if this is something the Board wants. Then the TC could provide additional analysis at the August meeting once they have all the final 2022 data. Then as far as the preliminary 2022 MRIP data, as you

mentioned, we only have Waves 1 through 5. You know taking a quick look at those, but they are incomplete without Wave 6.

If we're comparing 2022, Waves 1 through 5 with 2021 Waves 1 through 5, recreational harvest increased, recreational live releases decreased. Overall, you did see, because of that increase on the harvest side, proportionately there is an increase in removals in 2022 relative to 2021, only for Waves 1 through 5. This is a preliminary comparison. We don't have Wave 6 yet. I'll again see if Dr. Drew has anything to add.

DR. DREW: Yes, that covers it, thanks, Emilie.

CHAIR GARY: Go ahead, Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: Thank you for that, Emilie. I guess the concern I have is, the catch that occurred in 2022 may kind of swamp out these projections, what we're looking at as far as the impacts to the commercial harvest, and put us in a different management situation when we look at the final numbers later this year. I guess with that, I don't know if I could support this motion right now.

CHAIR GARY: Dennis Abbott.

MR. ABBOTT: I came here today to vote for status quo, not entirely based on the public comments that we received in New Hampshire, but because I felt that the imposition of quota transfers would have some effect on the population. We just passed Amendment 7, where we made a commitment to rebuild the stock by 2029.

I can recall myself making a remark, probably 15 years ago that striped bass management was suffering from a thousand cuts, by making these little small changes. I agree with Jason's thoughts on going forward and looking at the commercial quota issue in its entirety, but I see that as a separate issue based on what the Addendum was asking us to do, which was to either approve status quo or four options.

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The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting

I think that we should really go back to status quo, and then as an entirely new measure, and I think it's entirely justified in looking at the commercial allocations and everything surrounding it in the future. I appreciate Delaware's positions, but again, I think that based on what we sent out to the public, we should be voting on one of those five options that is in the document, and then further on, if we stick with status quo, then consider whether we want to move this forward at some point in time.

CHAIR GARY: Additional questions on the motion? Bob, we'll go to you, but John does have a question after that.

MR. CLARK: I didn't have a question; I had a comment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Just a comment, I think, not a question, and not in favor or in opposition of this motion. But I think based on Emilie's comment where some analysis could be done on a preliminary data for the May meeting, but a more robust analysis could be done by August.

I think the Board should decide when they expect this report back from the TC if they go this route. Will there be adequate analysis by the May meeting to take action in May or is it in August? I think somehow, we need to clarify that before we vote, I would think, just so that there is common expectation of if and when this comes back up, how it would be in. It just seems like there are a couple options moving forward timing wise.

CHAIR GARY: That's right, John, you had a comment, correct?

MR. CLARK: Yes, are you taking comments now? I thank Jason for the thoughtful motion there, because to me it gets to one of the big questions here, which is for the Board just in general is how do we decide who gets the striped bass? I mean in our deliberations we're always trying to accommodate recreational.

To me it seems much more recreational than commercial right now, and I appreciate the effort of

the anglers who took the time to express their concerns about the quota transfers. But we've got to look at the big picture. As managers we want our fisheries to serve as many of our constituents as possible.

I mean, within the recreational sector we acknowledge we have a strictly recreational side of fishing, and we have a commercial side, and that is the for-hire side of recreational fishing. We hear from them, which is great. I mean they should be out here talking to us. But we don't really acknowledge it on the commercial side in addition to the commercial fisherman we have a market side of commercial fishing.

I'm not just talking about seafood market and restaurants, but to the huge numbers of the public that would like local seafood. I know in the Mid-Atlantic as we've brought up at every one of these meetings, when we've been requesting more quota, is that we have people that don't fish. But it's traditional seafood throughout the Mid-Atlantic to have striped bass. You know as I said, I just want this Board, what we were asking here, you know again less than 1 percent, if all of North Carolina's quota was transferred.

But we wouldn't be asking anywhere near that much. I mean I just want us to look at the big picture when we are considering this. If it's the Board's will to turn this into a strictly recreational species, that is a whole different conversation. But this idea that any change to the commercial quota is off limits.

I just think that is something that should be looked at by the Board over time here. I think what Jay's motion here makes clear is that we can take a look at this, and again, assess the impact of what we're actually asking. Again, Option D. The Board would have full discretion over transfers. It's a rather conservative motion, and we're not asking for a lot here. Just this idea that any change to the commercial fishery is going to be the end of striped bass, I think it's just not productive. I think we really do have to look at this from the big picture, as to who are we managing this for? Are we managing it for our entire public, or just for one sector of our public?

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The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting

Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

CHAIR GARY: In deference to some commissioners that haven't spoken yet, I would like to shift to them. We have Cheri Patterson online, and then we're going to go to Bill Hyatt and then Tom Fote, and then back to Dennis. We hopefully get close to wrapping up, so Cheri.

MS. CHERI PATTERSON: I just have a question with this substitute. What is the intent behind it, and is the intent to change? If we get answers to this, and we might want to consider a change to the Addendum? I guess I'm not quite sure why the substitute, when this can happen with the first motion, in the sense that it would be up to the Board to determine whether to move quota. We can have these answers associated to whether the Board would make that decision. I guess I'm wondering why, in reality, this motion is going to change any decision from the first motion.

CHAIR GARY: Jason, do you have a response?

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Cheri. I think it's a really good question. To clarify, my intent was not to change the Addendum at all. What I noticed in kind of reviewing the materials was this piece of it, it was a question, this question kept coming up. Our job as managers is to look at this, kind of weigh the evidence and make a decision.

But questions aren't evidence, and so I thought there was an opportunity, and so often we don't have an opportunity like questions are kind of rhetorical and we can't answer them. But here is one we can. I saw value in answering the questions about what happens if we run the projections with the commercial quota being harvested, and what is the impact? That was my intent, it just generates additional information with which we can make our final decision, not to change the Addendum.

CHAIR GARY: Thanks, Jason. Cheri, does that help?

MS. PATTERSON: Yes, it does. Thank you very much.

CHAIR GARY: All right we'll go to Bill Hyatt and then Tom Fote and Dennis Abbott, and hoping to wrap up at that point.

MR. WILLIAM HYATT: I just wanted to make a comment in response to what Bob Beal said, and in response to what Emilie said regarding the 2022 harvest data that we have so far. Bob was talking about the need regards to this substitute motion to put a timeframe on it. Is this something we're shooting for to decide in May, or is it something that we're shooting for in August?

In reaction to what Emilie was saying relative to the appearance of a higher recreational harvest in 2022, I would suggest that the answer to the question Bob was asking is that the timeframe for this should be at such time as the full confidence that the 2022 data can be worked in in its entirety. I don't know exactly the best way to go about doing that to a motion that was made to postpone indefinitely, which technically can't be amended. But I'll just throw that out there as a suggestion.

CHAIR GARY: We're now going to go to Tom Fote. Tom, the floor is yours.

MR. THOMAS P. FOTE: I was listening to discussion, and I will agree with Cheri. We don't really need this motion at all. This could be done after we basically deal with the Addendum. I don't think that's going to change the opinion of other people as we go down the line. It's going to be a decision whether we allow transfers or not have transfers. I can't support this motion. (Muffled) I think to deal with the question, now if we approved any of these, someone would, unless this is a motion to basically react upon what we're going to do. We really shouldn't try because we're just dragging this along.

CHAIR GARY: Tom, I'm really sorry. But I'm not sure what the technical difficulty was. We really couldn't hear you very clearly, it was garbled. I don't know if you need to separate, provide some distance from your microphone. Maybe we could try one more time, just maybe back away from the microphone a little bit. We just didn't quite hear you.

Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

MR. FOTE: I'm away from home, so I didn't bring my extra microphones with me, so I'm using the microphone on the computer. Can you hear me now?

CHAIR GARY: It's really difficult, Tom, I guess we have to move on. I'm sorry, Tom, we just can't hear you. We're trying.

MS. TONI KERNS: Tom, if you can dial in, that might be better if you use your telephone instead of your computer.

CHAIR GARY: Tom, if you can do that, we're going to go ahead with two other speakers and we'll reserve your spot if you can dial in. Okay, Dennis Abbot, and Craig Pugh has indicated he would like to talk, because he is a Delaware Commercial fisherman, I'm going to honor that. We'll go Dennis, Craig, and then we'll save Tom's spot if he can get on through the telephone.

MR. ABBOTT: A question for you, Marty. Assuming we go ahead and do what Jason is suggesting, which is not a bad idea on all hands. Then after we get whatever information is derived from that action, do we propose that we're going to have to go back out to public hearings, so the public can weigh in on whatever new information has been provided, or are we going to come back as a Board and make a vote? It just seems unclear to me. Are we going to be voting on the same five options based on some additional information? Is that what we're going to do, and is that where we should be going?

CHAIR GARY: Emilie, is that something we can address?

MS. FRANKE: I'll start and then I'll perhaps turn it over to Bob. Yes, if this motion to substitute were to pass and the main motion as substituted, if this motion were to pass, the Board would postpone any vote on which option to choose. The TC would conduct these projections, and would come back to the Board with that report on the projections. We would not need to take this out for public comment. The Board would be going back and looking at the

same set of five options, having this new TC report in hand. I'll turn it over to Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Generally, we don't, if there is a technical clarification, which this is to some degree, we usually don't go back out to public hearings. The same five options will be available to the Board if this sort of pass and they get back together and vote again. I would think not.

But the Board always has the prerogative to go back out for another round of hearings if they feel there is significant new information. I mean I think this is really clarifying a number of questions that the public brought up during the public hearings, so it's providing that information to the Board that the public didn't have.

I don't think the public's perspective really would change that much; I think it just provides the additional background for the Board to better understand where the public's concerns came in. I would suggest you probably don't need to go back out for public hearings.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Dennis, thank you Bob and Emilie. Dennis, did you have a follow up to that? Okay, thank you. Did we get Tom back online by any chance? We're close. I'm going to give Craig Pugh the last opportunity. Eric Reid hasn't said a word in this meeting and he asked to talk, so I'm going to power up to take the microphone next. You always have a good chance to break log jams, Eric, so maybe you can move us forward here.

MR. CRAIG PUGH: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to speak. Yes, I happen to be one of the commercial fishermen involved in the state of Delaware, and I've represented a lot of those people, not only the people that are fishermen, but the people that live here in our state.

For some it seems as though postponing or status quo is okay. Now don't get me wrong, I'm kind of interested in seeing what Dr. McNamee has provided here. I think it does answer a lot of questions. I do support that. But to think that this is something that just came up two days ago is way wrong.

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

This has been a disparaging quota that we've received in the state of Delaware for nearly 35 years. We have tried to work with this year after year after year, multiple years of waiting, and trying to deal with things and other excuses, more excuses, more excuses about waiting to move forward with this, so that maybe hopefully we could acquire a regional quota that would be acceptable and marketable for a state.

As it is now, we are a miniscule part of the coastal quota, and we represent a miniscule part of the marketability for our people, and our fishery is alive with the fish. I often hear dire things about striped bass, which we do not recognize. It's not necessarily what that would be an untruth told to us here in this state.

We would like to move forward in some fashion, I am also, as Mr. Sikorski said, I am also in the reallocation camp. But why we must wait to get a fair shake here, I don't understand. We've waited and waited; we've argued and argued. We've been through excuse after excuse. I need some help. Our people here need some help. We have the fish. I hear a lot of talk about climate change and fisheries moving northward, and I think you know black sea bass kind of goes along with that, maybe menhaden too.

This is a tool in the tool box just like the other fisheries. It will help us to a small amount, but the true thing is that it must be done as a reallocation, but not something that we're going to wait for another 20 years. We've watched two generations, now our children are moving into this type of fishery. They're kind of wondering, what can the ASMFC really do for us? If you've been this long with this disparaging quota, how much longer will this last? From what I hear today, it sounds like another 20 years.

We're listening to Mr. Abbott; he wants to postpone or stay status quo. We don't want to do that. We came here to work with the other states, and this is a true issue. It's been an issue for a long period, and we would like to move through that if we could, and then hopefully move through the other states bigger

issues. Understanding is what we need here, not cancellation.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Craig for your patience and your words. Appreciate it. We're down to two comments, we'll go to Eric Reid and we'll try Tom Fote one more time.

MR. ERIC REID: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I'll try to be brief. I support Mr. Clark's original motion, but I would prefer Mr. McNamee's motion, because I think if Mr. McNamee's would fail then we would be faced with status quo, generally speaking, and I don't think that's the way to go, I'll support Mr. McNamee's motion, because I think that's the smart way to go.

But my question really is, you know it was said earlier that a pound of transfer from one state of commercial quota to another state is not necessarily equal, right? My real concern is, in my mind, a pound of commercial quota to the recreational fishery is not equal either. We've got 215,000 pounds of quota from New Jersey that is transferred to the recreational fishery.

The commercial quota is well controlled and it has a low discard rate. The recreational fishery is an open access fishery, and that has a very high discard rate, so I would like to understand what that is, because the commercial fishery is really negligible in this whole equation, and it's just to me, if I could better understand that it would be a slam dunk to me to not worry about it and do the transfers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR GARY: Thank you, Eric, did Tom get through on the phone? We don't have him. Okay, we'll go ahead and call the question. Justin.

DR. DAVIS: I'm just wondering, returning back to Bill's comment, whether it would be good before we vote on this to have some clarification on when we're going to come back and reconsider this, and then how we go about doing that, whether we need to modify the motion or just sort of have an understanding of when the Technical Committee is going to provide the report.

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

MS. FRANKE: I would turn to Bob and Toni. Would it just be the maker of the motion could modify their motion to include timing at this point, or we need to modify the motion?

MS. KERNS: There is an agreement at the table. We know when we're coming back, that's fine.

MS. FRANKE: To clarify, Justin did you have?

DR. DAVIS: If there has been an agreement as to when we're coming back, when is that?

MS. FRANKE: We don't have an agreement yet, so I would, Jason if you had a recommendation on timing, when you would like the Board to reconsider this action, either at the May meeting with preliminary analysis or at the August meeting with final data analysis?

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, thanks. It's funny, I totally thought about this, and what I was trying to avoid at the time was kind of boxing the Technical Committee in. I didn't know how long it would take them. I'm getting the sense that they're sort of working on this. It could be in front of us in May, and that would be my preference. If we could set it to have that information back in front of us in May, I think that would be great.

CHAIR GARY: Thanks, Jason, do we need to modify?

MS. KERNS: As long as the Board agrees that Jay, are you asking that we include the preliminary 2022 recreational data in this projection or not? That we need to know. We will not have 2022 commercial data in May, well in time to bring you something for the May meeting, and we would only have the Wave 1 through 5 as preliminary for MRIP, we would not have final numbers in time.

MS. FRANKE: We would have Wave 6 preliminary as well.

MS. KERNS: Sorry.

DR. McNAMEE: Just making sure that was where we're at. You know preliminary is totally fine with

me. I think even the idea here, even in the complete absence of the actual commercial harvest. We know what the quotas are, and so we can run the projections with that. That part is dispensed with, with regard to the recreational information, yes.

If we have the first five waves, we need to make some sort of projection. In the end the interest, I mean there is interest in the recreational data, but seeing the effect of the commercial data is the real intent of this. I'm fine with May and having it be preliminary, at least elements of it.

CHAIR GARY: Dr. Davis. Just as seconder of the motion, are you okay with the decision with preliminary data for May?

DR. DAVIS: To come back in May, yes.

CHAIR GARY: All right, we'll go ahead and call the question. I might ask the Board, is a two-minute caucus sufficient? I see nods, we'll have a two-minute caucus. **All right, we'll go ahead and call the question on the substitute motion. Motion to substitute, all those in favor please raise your hand. Hold your hands, lower your hands. All those opposed raise your hands. The motion passes 13 to 3. Is that all? Is everyone accounted for? It was 13-3. Motion passes 13-3, it now becomes the Main Motion.**

MS. FRANKE: There was a question of who voted against the motion, Massachusetts, Potomac River Fisheries Commission and North Carolina.

CHAIR GARY: All right so the substitute becomes the Main Motion, is there a need for a caucus. I don't see any heads nodding, so we're going to go ahead and call the question. **All in favor please raise your hands. Lower your hands. All those opposed raise your hands. The motion passes 15-1. All right so we've gotten through that.**

The motion has passed, so we've got our options, so this has been postponement, correct, to the May meeting. Then, I guess at this point staff will present information ahead of time, so we can be prepared for that discussion at the May meeting. Are there

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Draft Proceedings of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Hybrid Meeting
January 2023

any questions following the vote with procedure, any process going forward? It seems to be straightforward. Dave Sikorski.

MR. SIKORSKI: I would just like to say that that happened rather quickly, and while I missed the opportunity to substitute, that is what I came here to do today. I'll call it a difficulty of being here on the webinar instead of being in the room, but such is life. I look forward to the next meeting, thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR GARY: Thanks, Dave. The next step is going to be any other New Business to bring before this Board. Is there any? Seeing none let's take a motion to adjourn. Justin Davis, second by Ray Kane. Striped Bass Board is adjourned, thank you.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. on
Tuesday, January 31, 2023)



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: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee

DATE: April 17, 2023

SUBJECT: Rebuilding Projections with 2022 Preliminary Data and Ocean Commercial Quota Utilization Scenarios

The Striped Bass Technical Committee (TC) and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) met via webinar on March 14 and March 30, 2023 to develop updated stock rebuilding projections as tasked by the Striped Bass Management Board. Before developing the projections, the TC-SAS reviewed a correction to the rebuilding probabilities in the 2022 Stock Assessment Update Report.

Correction to Short-Term Projections and Probabilities in 2022 Stock Assessment Update

The 2022 Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update (terminal year 2021) was reviewed by the Board in November 2022. The assessment includes short-term projections estimating the probability of female spawning stock biomass (SSB) reaching the SSB threshold and SSB target (rebuilt) under three constant fishing mortality (F) scenarios. The projections and probabilities are summarized in Table 10 and Figure 18 of the assessment report.

After the assessment report was completed, the assessment team identified an issue with the calculated error around those projections. When the assessment report was developed, the projections inadvertently used standard error, instead of coefficient of variation (CV), in the error calculations. This resulted in larger error than should have been shown around the SSB projections. The projections were later corrected using CV in the error calculations. The corrected projections have a smaller error around the projected SSB, which results in updated probabilities. This update did not affect the median SSB projection, only the error around the projection and associated probabilities.

The TC-SAS reviewed this correction on March 14, 2023, and the 2022 Stock Assessment Update Report will be updated to reflect the correction. The updated Table 10 from the Assessment Report is enclosed as an Appendix to this memo showing the change.

New Rebuilding Projections

In November 2022 and January 2023, the Board tasked the TC-SAS with two items:

- Task 1: Evaluate whether 2022 removals remained at a level associated with the 2021 fishing mortality rate.

- Task 2: Conduct stock projections to determine how specific ocean commercial quota utilization scenarios would impact the stock rebuilding timeline.

The Board requested projections in time for the May 2023 Board meeting, and requested the projections include 2022 preliminary removals data. The TC-SAS developed the following suite of projections to address both Board tasks.

Data Inputs for New Projections

Projections were conducted using the 2022 stock assessment model configuration, including using the low recruitment assumption. Age-1 recruitment was estimated using the 2021 Maryland YOY index to predict 2022 recruitment, and using the 2022 Maryland YOY index to predict 2023 recruitment for the quota utilization scenarios. The low-recruitment assumption was used for all other years.

Preliminary 2022 removals were compiled in number of fish. Preliminary 2022 commercial landings were provided by each state. It is important to note that commercial landing estimates will likely be updated as states complete final harvest accounting in the coming months. Commercial discards for 2022 were estimated by applying the 2021 discard-to-landings ratios for each region to the preliminary 2022 commercial landings. For recreational removals, preliminary 2022 MRIP data were used for recreational harvest and release mortality (9% of recreational live releases). Final MRIP data are expected to be published in late April 2023.

Preliminary MRIP data for 2022 indicate a 91% increase in recreational harvest and 3% increase in recreational live releases, relative to 2021. This results in an overall 40% increase in recreational removals, with a preliminary estimate of 6.2 million fish in 2022 relative to 4.4 million fish in 2021.

Total preliminary removals from both sectors was estimated to be about 6.9 million fish in 2022, a 33% increase from 5.2 million fish in 2021. These removal estimates will be updated in August 2023 as part of the FMP Review Report for the 2022 Fishing Year based on state compliance reports, but the TC does not expect significant changes from these preliminary numbers.

For the ocean quota utilization scenarios, the projections assume there would be additional commercial harvest starting in 2023 to reflect using all, or most of, the ocean commercial quota. To estimate commercial harvest for 2023 under Scenario 2 (full ocean quota used), any unused 2022 ocean quota was converted from pounds to number of fish and added to the total removals. For states with active commercial fisheries, unused 2022 quota was converted to number of fish using state-specific average commercial fish weight. For states with inactive commercial fisheries (ME, NH, CT, NJ, and NC), unused quota was converted to number of fish using the coastwide ocean average commercial fish weight (15.3 pounds). For Scenario 3 (full ocean quota used except NJ), New Jersey's quota in number of fish was subtracted from that additional harvest. Scenario 3 reflects the fact that New Jersey's commercial quota is currently unavailable for quota transfers because it has been re-allocated to the recreational fishery.

Projection Scenarios and Assumptions

The TC-SAS focused on three scenarios with constant F projections through 2029. Scenario 1 is based on preliminary 2022 removals only. Scenarios 2 and 3 have different assumptions for 2023-2029 by accounting for the ocean commercial quota utilization scenarios requested by the Board and by using a constant removals assumption between years 2022 and 2023 instead of a constant F assumption as in scenario 1. The TC-SAS decided to apply these quota utilization scenarios starting in projection year 2023 because 2023 is the first year that quota transfers could potentially be permitted.

For 2023-2029 projection years, all three scenarios assume a constant three-year average F . The TC-SAS emphasized that striped bass catch and F rates vary from year-to-year, even under the same regulations. Using a three-year average acknowledges that variability. The estimated F rate for 2022 (scenario 1) or the estimated F rate for 2023 + additional quota utilization (scenarios 2 and 3) were averaged with F rates from 2019 and 2021. 2020 was not included due to COVID-19 uncertainty. The 3-year average F was very close to the $F_{prelim2022}$, and projections with constant $F_{prelim2022}$ were explored as a sensitivity run.

Scenario 1 uses preliminary 2022 removals (6.9 million fish) to estimate F in 2022. For 2023-2029 projections, $F_{prelim2022}$ is averaged with F_{2019} and F_{2021} .

Scenario 2 uses preliminary 2022 removals data to estimate F in 2022. Starting in 2023, F is adjusted to account for harvesting the full ocean quota each year; active fisheries use all their quota and inactive fisheries transfer all their quota via commercial quota transfers. $F_{2023+fullquota}$ is calculated assuming preliminary 2022 removals plus an additional commercial harvest (~41,500 fish) are removed from the 2023 population. For 2023-2029 projections, $F_{2023+fullquota}$ is averaged with F_{2019} and F_{2021} . Because the landed NJ commercial quota is counted both in the “full commercial quota” and in the re-allocation of the commercial quota to the recreational fishery, those fish are double-counted for this scenario.

Scenario 3 uses preliminary 2022 removals data to estimate F in 2022. Starting in 2023, F is adjusted to account for harvesting the full ocean quota each year except for New Jersey’s quota; active fisheries use all their quota and inactive commercial fisheries, except NJ, transfer all their quota via commercial quota transfers. $F_{2023+fullquotaminusNJ}$ is calculated assuming preliminary 2022 removals plus additional commercial harvest (~27,400 fish) are removed from the 2023 population. For 2023-2029 projections, $F_{2023+fullquotaminusNJ}$ is averaged with F_{2019} and F_{2021} .

Projection Results

For all scenarios, projected F rates were between the current F target of 0.17 and F threshold of 0.20. These projected F rates are higher than F_{2021} of 0.14. If F stays between the target and the threshold from 2023-2029, the probability of rebuilding the stock to SSB target by 2029 decreases substantially compared to the rebuilding probability associated with F_{2021} . The 3-year average F was very close to the $F_{prelim2022}$ and the projection results using $F_{prelim2022}$ as a sensitivity run were not substantially different from the results presented here.

Table 1 summarizes the projected F rates for each scenario and the associated rebuilding probability of reaching the SSB target by 2029. The table also includes the 2022 Stock Assessment Update projection based on F_{2021} for comparison.

Table 1.

Description	Scenario	Year	Projected F	Pr SSB > target in 2029	Pr SSB > thresh- old in 2029
2021 Fishing Mortality from 2022 Stock Assessment Update	-	2022-2029	F in 2021	97.5 %	99.9 %
2022 Preliminary Removals	1	2022	F in 2022	15 %	94 %
		2023-2029	Average F (2019,2021, 2022)		
2022 Preliminary Removals + Full Ocean Quota in 2023	2	2022	F in 2022	11 %	91 %
		2023-2029	Average F (2019,2021, 2023+fullquota)		
2022 Preliminary Removals + Full Ocean Quota minus NJ in 2023	3	2022	F in 2022	11 %	91 %
		2023-2029	Average F (2019,2021, 2023+fullquota minusNJ)		

Figure 1 shows the SSB projection and the probability curves for reaching the SSB threshold and SSB target for each scenario. For comparison, Figure 1 also shows the SSB projection and probability curves associated with constant F_{2021} from the 2022 Stock Assessment Update.

Discussion of 2022 Removals

Increased recreational removals in 2022 are driving the increased F rates and lower rebuilding probabilities in all scenarios. The projections indicate SSB will increase over time before stalling between the target and threshold. Since the estimated $F_{\text{prelim2022}}$ (and all other projected fishing mortalities) is between the F target and threshold, it is expected that SSB will also remain between the SSB target and threshold, without fully rebuilding to the SSB target level. Because the F reference points are calculated to achieve the SSB reference points in the long-term, SSB will reach its target over the long-term only if F is at (or below) its target. In order to meet the SSB target by 2029 (i.e., a short-term timeline), F would need to be below its target, as demonstrated by the high rebuilding probabilities associated with F_{2021} , which was below F target.

While the projections indicate a low probability of rebuilding to the *target* by 2029 under these higher F rates, the probability of reaching the SSB threshold in 2029 (no longer overfished) is above 90% for all scenarios. The TC-SAS noted that angler effort and behavior continue to be an

important factor and source of uncertainty. As the stock recovers and strong year classes become available to the recreational fishery, effort may increase, contributing to both increased harvest and live releases.

The outcome of projections is dependent on which constant F or catch level is assumed (as well as assumptions about recruitment and selectivity). The TC-SAS emphasized that projections assuming a constant F or constant catch are not necessarily representative of future years since striped bass catch and F vary from year-to-year. These new projections based on 2022 removals represent a higher catch outlook, while the projections based on 2021 removals represent a lower catch outlook (Figure 2). If future catch and F are somewhere in the middle, the rebuilding probability may also fall between the low 15% associated with 2022 removals and the high 97% associated with 2021 removals. The ocean quota utilization scenarios overlap almost completely with the 2022 removals scenario, indicating the additional quota utilization has a minimal impact on the projections compared to the increase in total removals from 2021 to 2022 (Figure 2). For the first years of the projections, the three new scenarios overlap significantly with the 2021-based projection, but diverge further in later years, where we have less confidence in our assumptions about F and recruitment (Figure 2).

Discussion of Quota Utilization Scenarios

The 2023-2029 projected F for the ocean quota utilization scenarios 2-3 is based on a worst-case scenario and is only about 2% higher than the projected F for the 2022 removals scenario 1. This slight increase in F results in a slightly lower (-4%) probability of rebuilding by 2029. However, this slight difference results from the assumptions used to generate the projected fishing mortality rates more than the addition of the ocean quota utilization. In scenario 1, an average F (2019,2021,2022) was applied to all remaining projection years (2023-2029), while in scenarios 2-3, an average F (2019,2021,2023) was applied to all remaining years (2023-2029). Consequently, both population dynamics between 2022 and 2023 and increased quota utilization are responsible for the differences between scenario 1 and 2-3.

The projections indicate that the impact of additional quota utilization on F and rebuilding probability is negligible. The maximum quota utilization scenario 2 only adds 41,500 extra fish to removals, which is less than 1% of total removals. The addition or subtraction at a scale of tens of thousands of fish relative to the total removals scale of several million has negligible impacts on overall F , as also demonstrated by the negligible difference between scenarios 2 and 3 (difference of 14,000 fish).

Discussion on Interim Projections

The TC-SAS discussed the benefits and challenges of conducting stock projections between stock assessments. In this case, the benefit of these interim projections is a timely update to the Board considering the significant increase in recreational catch in 2022 following two low catch years, which also included COVID-19 uncertainty. In addition, 2022 aligned with the emergence of the strong 2015-year class in the ocean fishery, which likely contributed to the large change between 2021 and 2022. The TC noted these projections are not the same as a full

stock assessment update where the model would be re-run to include the 2022 catch-at-age and index data to produce estimates of F and SSB in 2022 to determine stock status.

The TC-SAS noted that conducting annual stock projections would not be particularly useful given interannual variability in removals under constant regulations, and the life history of striped bass (long-lived, slow to mature, etc.). Instead, the TC-SAS talked about the potential benefits of aligning projections and assessments with planned management changes.

If the Board is considering management changes, the TC-SAS recommends the Board be as specific as possible with the types of measures they would consider and their intent (e.g., reduce removals to a particular F rate or rebuilding probability, protect year classes, etc.).

TC-SAS Members in Attendance on March 14 and 30

Nicole Lengyel Costa (TC Chair, RI), Mike Celestino (SAS Chair, NJ), Michael Brown (ME), Kevin Sullivan (NH), Gary Nelson (MA), Kurt Gottschall (CT), Caitlin Craig (NY), Brendan Harrison (NJ), Tyler Grabowski (PA), Margaret Conroy (DE), Alexei Sharov (MD), Luke Lyon (DC), Ingrid Braun (PRFC), Brooke Lowman (VA), Joshua McGilly (VA), Charlton Godwin (NC), Steve Minkkinen (USFWS), John Sweka (USFWS), Tony Wood (NOAA)

Board Members and Public in Attendance on March 14 and 30

Chris Batsavage, David Borden, Emerson Hasbrouck, Max Appelman, David Sikorski, Mike Wilberg, Rob Latour, Adena Schonfeld, Samara Nehemiah, Alan Bianchi, Jessica Best, Evan Dintman, Glen Fernandes, Tony Friedrich, Peter Himchak, Jesse Hornstein, Nichola Meserve, Chris Moore, Marisa Ponte, Will Poston, Cody Rubner, Patrick Rudman, Antonia Santegata, Ross Squire, David Stormer, Taylor Vavra, Mike Waine, Esther Wang, Charles Witek, Steve Witthuhn, Michael Woods

ASMFC Staff: Katie Drew, Emilie Franke

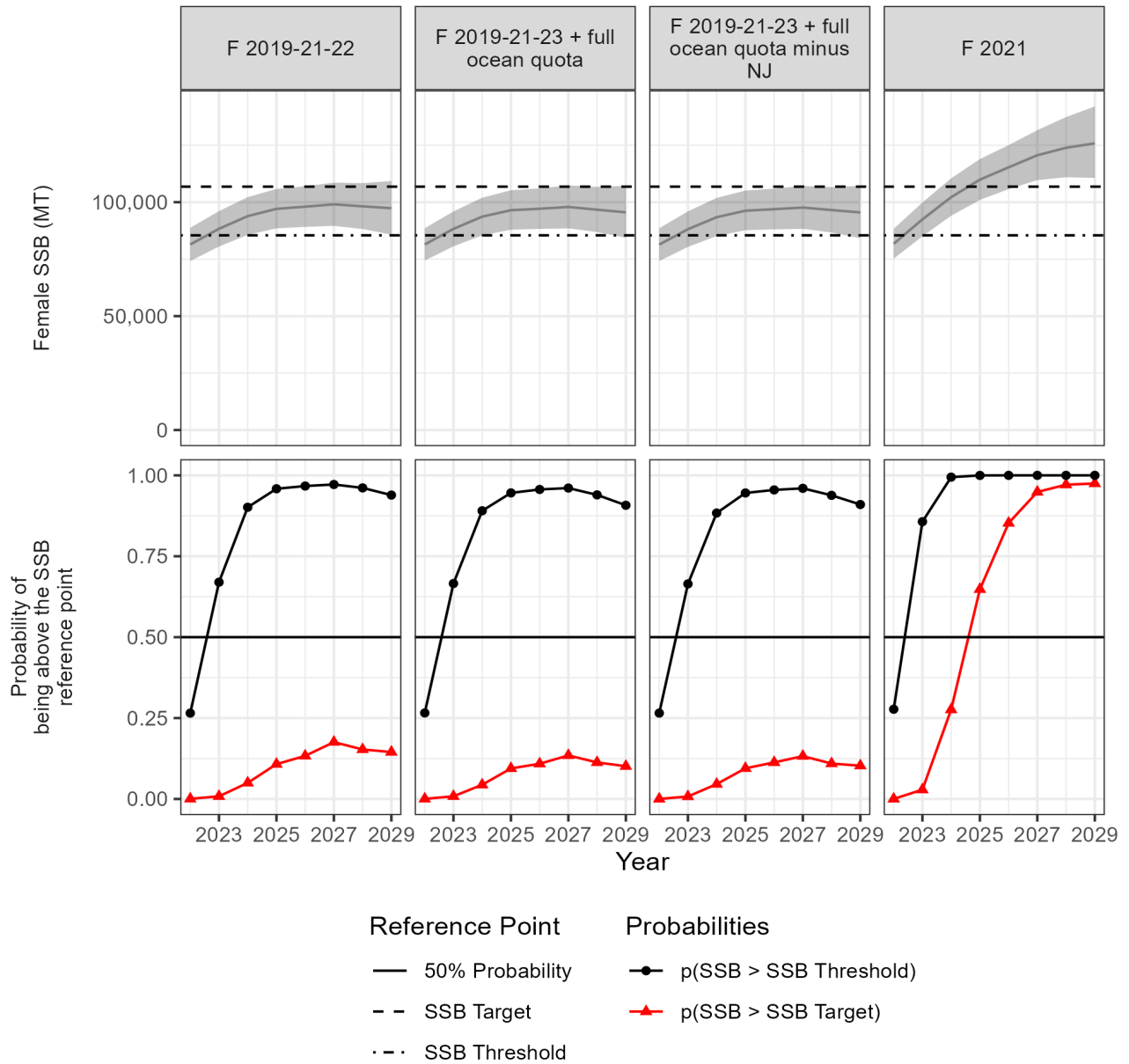


Figure 1. Projected female SSB with 95% confidence intervals (top row) and the probability of SSB being above the SSB reference point (bottom row) for the three new projection scenarios and for the original F_{2021} projection scenario from the 2022 assessment update.

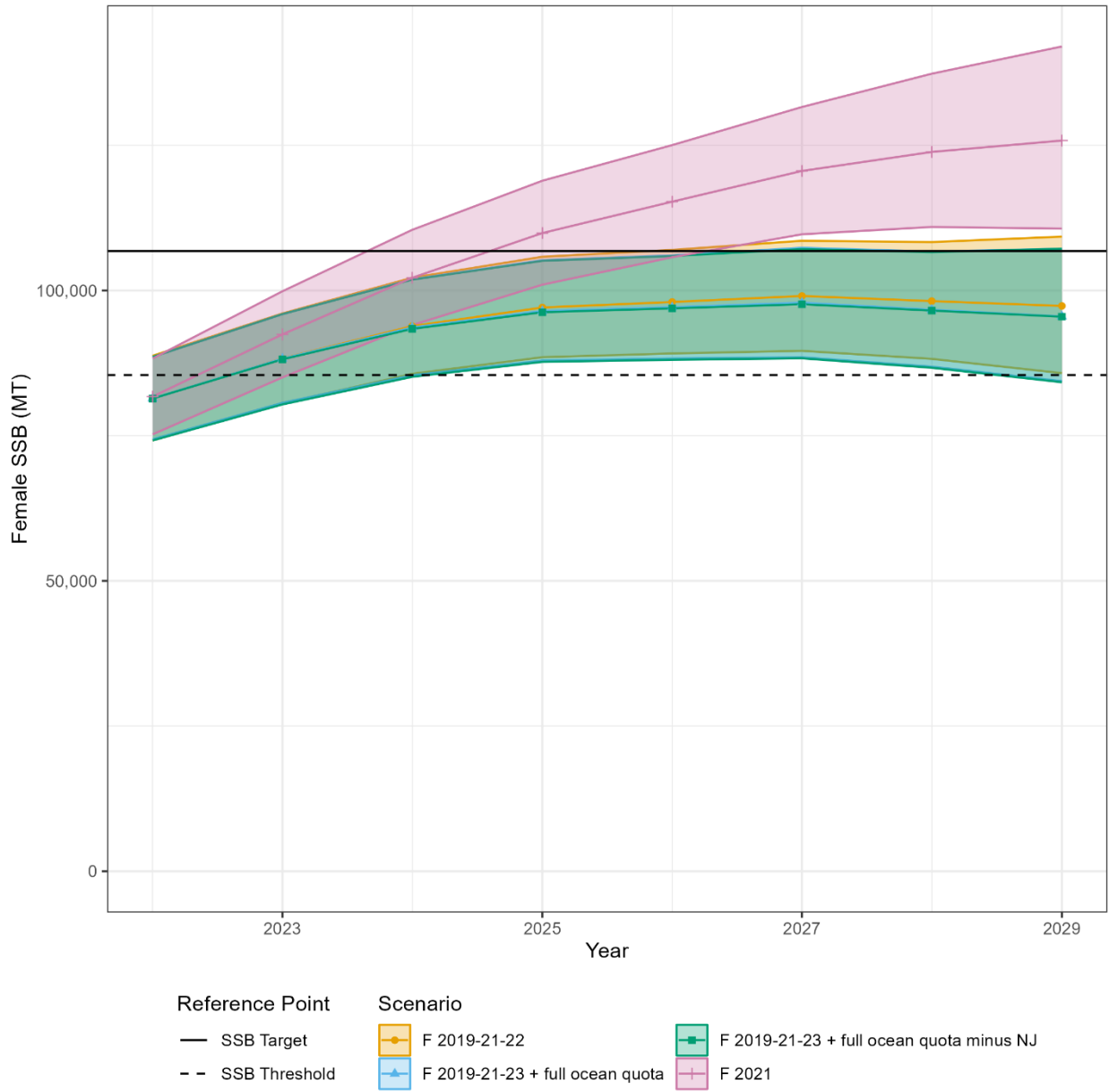


Figure 2. Projected female SSB with 95% confidence intervals for the three new scenarios (yellow, blue, green) and the original F_{2021} projection scenario from the 2022 assessment update (pink).

Appendix. Correction to 2022 Stock Assessment Update Report

Table 10, Figure 18, and associated text in the 2022 Stock Assessment Update Report will be updated to reflect the correction.

Table 10 Corrected. Probability of SSB being at or above the SSB threshold or target under different constant F scenarios. Bolded final row indicates 2029, the rebuilding deadline. Shaded green columns are the corrected probabilities compared to the originally reported values in grey text.

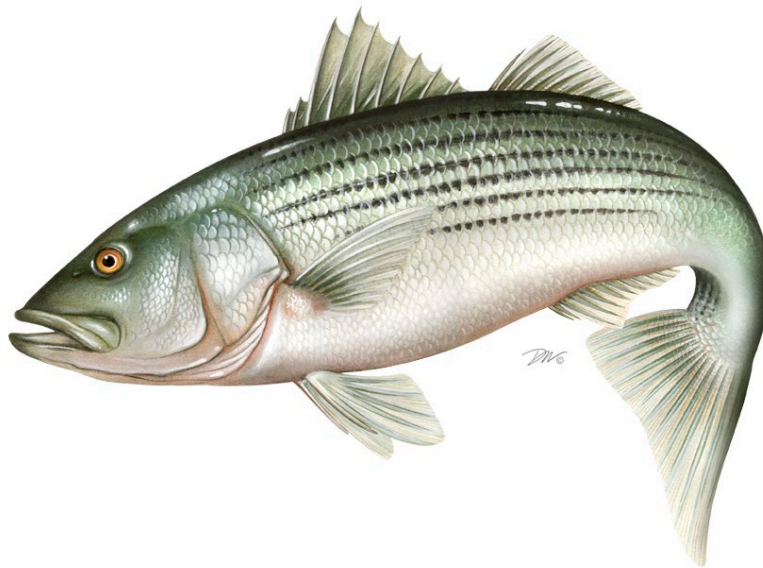
Year	Probability SSB ≥ SSB threshold under current F		Probability SSB ≥ SSB target under current F		Probability SSB ≥ SSB threshold under F target		Probability SSB ≥ SSB target under F target		Probability SSB ≥ SSB threshold under F threshold		Probability SSB ≥ SSB target under F threshold	
2021	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2022	34.4%	27.9%	0.4%	0.0%	34.5%	27.4%	0.4%	0.0%	34.5%	27.4%	0.4%	0.0%
2023	70.2%	86.1%	14.9%	2.8%	61.9%	76.5%	13.1%	1.3%	53.2%	61.2%	11.6%	0.5%
2024	86.0%	99.3%	39.0%	27.6%	74.1%	95.3%	29.2%	10.0%	61.8%	80.7%	23.2%	2.2%
2025	91.8%	99.9%	56.1%	64.7%	79.3%	99.1%	40.3%	25.1%	64.3%	87.7%	28.6%	4.7%
2026	94.1%	99.9%	65.7%	85.1%	81.4%	99.6%	45.5%	36.7%	63.4%	88.3%	30.3%	5.3%
2027	95.7%	99.9%	72.7%	94.8%	82.8%	99.8%	49.9%	49.0%	63.4%	87.3%	31.9%	5.9%
2028	96.4%	99.9%	76.6%	97.2%	82.8%	99.8%	52.0%	53.4%	61.7%	83.5%	31.6%	5.7%
2029	96.7%	99.9%	78.6%	97.5%	82.4%	99.6%	52.5%	53.9%	59.4%	76.9%	30.5%	5.4%

Corrected values in green

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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

Commercial Quota Transfers in the Ocean Region



November 2022



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Draft Document for Public Comment

Public Comment Process and Proposed Timeline

In August 2021, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board initiated the development of Draft Addendum VII to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass to consider allowing voluntary transfers of ocean commercial quota. Since then, Amendment 7 to the FMP was approved, so this draft addendum is now Draft Addendum I to Amendment 7. This Draft Addendum presents background on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s management of striped bass commercial fisheries; the addendum process and timeline; and a statement of the problem. This document also provides management options for public consideration and comment.

The public is encouraged to submit comments regarding the proposed management options in this document at any time during the public comment period. The final date comments will be accepted is **January 13, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. (EST)**. Comments may be submitted at state public hearings or by mail, email, or fax. If you have any questions or would like to submit comment, please use the contact information below. Organizations planning to release an action alert in response to this Draft Addendum should contact Emilie Franke, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at efranke@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Mail: Emilie Franke
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington VA. 22201
Fax: (703) 842-0741

Email: comments@asmfc.org
(Subject: Striped Bass Draft
Addendum I)

Date	Action
August 2021	Board initiated the Draft Addendum
August - October 2021	Plan Development Team (PDT) developed initial Draft Addendum document
October 2021	Board deferred consideration until May 2022, and later postponed until August 2022
August 2022	Board provided guidance to PDT for further development of the Draft Addendum
November 2022	Board reviewed and approved Draft Addendum I for public comment
November 2022 - January 2023	Public comment period, including public hearings; written comments accepted through January 13, 2023
February 2023	Board reviews public comment, selects management measures, final approval of Addendum I

1.0 Introduction

Atlantic striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*) are managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in state waters (0-3 miles) and through the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in federal waters (3-200 miles). The management unit includes the coastal migratory stock from Maine through North Carolina. Atlantic striped bass are currently managed in state waters under Amendment 7 (2022) to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

In August 2021, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board) initiated Draft Addendum VII to Amendment 6 to consider allowing for the voluntary transfer of commercial striped bass quota in the ocean region, after deciding that changes to the commercial quota system would not be considered in the then ongoing development of Draft Amendment 7. Subsequently, this draft addendum was postponed to enable the Plan Development Team (PDT) and Board to focus on the development and completion of Amendment 7, which was approved in May 2022. In August 2022, the Board considered next steps for this draft addendum and provided additional guidance to the PDT on management options to be added. Due to Amendment 7's approval during its development, this addendum is now Draft Addendum I to Amendment 7.

2.0 Overview

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Members of the Board and public have raised questions about the striped bass commercial quota system, with particular concern regarding the 1972-1979 reference period and basis for state commercial quotas. Those concerns include, but are not limited to: changes in fishing effort and resource distribution since the 1972-1979 reference period; likely inaccuracies in the commercial landings data for the 1970s reference period due to the lack of mandatory reporting across all states and/or evidence of harvesters selling fish in states other than where it was landed; and inconsistent application of the reference period landings in one management action which increased all but one of the states' quotas (i.e., Delaware in Amendment 6). These concerns, along with other questions about the quota system (e.g., fixed quotas vs. setting quotas annually), were included in the scoping document for Draft Amendment 7 in 2021, but the issue of addressing commercial quotas was not selected for further development in Draft Amendment 7. Some Board members expressed support for addressing the commercial quota issue at a different time separate from Amendment 7, noting a desire to not slow Amendment 7's progress and focus on stock rebuilding.

In order to consider a management option that could provide some, more immediate relief to states seeking a change to their commercial quota, the Board initiated this addendum to consider allowing for the voluntary transfer of striped bass commercial quota in the ocean region. Many quota-managed fisheries allow for the voluntary transfer of commercial quota between states (e.g., black sea bass, bluefish, horseshoe crab). This is a useful technique that can be utilized to address a variety of problems in the management of a commercial fishery (e.g., quota overages, safe harbor landings, shifting stock distributions). The Atlantic Striped Bass FMP is the only Commission FMP with state-by-state commercial quotas that does not

allow for the voluntary transfer of commercial quota or quota reconciliation (using end-of-year quota underages to address any overages).

2.2 Background

2.2.1 Commercial Quota Management for Atlantic Striped Bass

The Atlantic Striped Bass FMP uses a quota system to manage the commercial fishery in the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean region. The FMP establishes a separate Chesapeake Bay-wide quota, which is then allocated to Bay jurisdictions per the mutual agreement of Maryland, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC), and Virginia. The FMP establishes state-by-state quotas for the ocean region, which includes all coastal bay, inland rivers, and estuaries outside the Chesapeake Bay system. The ocean region commercial quotas are based on a proportion of the states' average landings during 1972–1979, with one exception for Delaware, and as modified by approved conservation equivalency (CE) proposals, as described in the following section.

Quota overages are paid back the following year on a pound-for-pound basis, while the transfer of quota between states and rollover of unused quota from one year to the next is not permitted.

In addition to commercial quotas, the FMP specifies commercial size limits, and requires states to implement a commercial tagging program whereby all commercially-harvested striped bass must be tagged at the point of harvest and/or the point of sale.

2.2.1.1 History of Commercial Quota Management

In general, the ocean commercial quotas are based on average landings during 1972-1979 and assuming a 28" minimum size limit. This historical base period was first used for management in 1989 under Amendment 4, which allowed for a modest relaxation of the stringent Amendment 3 requirements that had led to harvest moratoria in many states in the mid-to-late 1980s. Amendment 4 required closed seasons in order to restrict commercial harvest to 20% of the 1972–1979 base period, or an equivalent commercial quota as was elected by many of the states. The amendment allowed for separate "producer area" management (including a smaller size limit) for the Hudson River estuary, Chesapeake Bay, and inshore North Carolina. Due to New York's ban on commercial striped bass harvest in the Hudson River since 1976, this resulted in only an ocean quota for New York. In Maryland, separate Chesapeake Bay and ocean quotas were established, whereas Virginia was approved to adopt one state-wide quota for ease of management. Maryland was also authorized to employ a harvest control model to establish a flexible Chesapeake Bay quota based on projected exploitable biomass. The commercial fisheries never reopened in Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and New Jersey following their voluntary moratoria. In 1991, New Jersey started a Striped Bass Bonus Program (i.e., permit program), which reallocates their commercial quota to the recreational fishery, allowing participating recreational anglers to take a "bonus fish"; the New Jersey bonus program is still in place and currently operates through an approved CE program. Connecticut implemented a similar bonus program from 2011-2019.

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State-specific quotas were first implemented under Amendment 5 (1995) when the Commission declared the stock fully rebuilt; states were allocated 70% of their average landings during the 1972–1979 base period. Amendment 5 specified separate quotas for producer areas and the ocean, and extended producer-area status to the Delaware River and Bay, which allowed its producer-area commercial quota to be managed under a harvest control model (i.e., maintain a target F rate) similar to that used in the Chesapeake Bay. Like Virginia, Delaware was approved to combine its producer area and ocean quotas into one overall state quota beginning in 1996. The three Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions with commercial fisheries (Maryland, PRFC, and Virginia) adopted a Bay-wide commercial quota in 1997 (allocated per their own agreement) that was set using the harvest control model. Maryland maintained a separate ocean quota, while Virginia continued with a combined state-wide quota until 2002, when Virginia switched to managing the ocean and Bay quotas separately due to shifting effort into the coastal area.

Under Amendment 6 (2003), the state-by-state ocean commercial quotas were increased to 100% of the base period, except for Delaware's commercial quota which remained at the level allocated in 2002 for its statewide quota (Table 1). The decision to hold Delaware's commercial quota at the 2002 level was based on tagging information that indicated fishing mortality on the Delaware River/Bay stock was too high, and uncertainty regarding the status of the spawning stock for the Delaware River/Bay.

Producer areas were also no longer used as a management tool under Amendment 6, but the Chesapeake Bay and the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River in North Carolina were defined as their own management areas, for different reasons. The Albemarle/Roanoke stock contributes minimally to the coastal migratory stock, and is therefore managed separately by the state of North Carolina under the auspices of ASMFC. On the other hand, the Chesapeake Bay stock, which is unquestionably part of the coastal migratory stock, was established as a management area in Amendment 6 in order to have a separate management program due to the size availability of striped bass in the area. This resulted in the ongoing use of a Chesapeake Bay-wide commercial quota distinct from the ocean commercial quotas.

Amendment 6 required all states to maintain a 28-inch minimum size limit for the commercial fishery, with three exceptions. The Delaware Bay shad gillnet fishery and the Albemarle Sound commercial fishery were subject to a 20-inch minimum size limit, and the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery was subject to an 18-inch minimum size limit.

The ocean quotas were subsequently reduced by 25% in 2015 (Addendum IV) and by an additional 18% in 2020 (Addendum VI) in response to declining stock status (Table 1). Addendum IV required all states to maintain their 2013 commercial size limits and Addendum VI required all states to maintain their 2017 commercial size limits. Throughout quota management, states have used conservation equivalency (CE) to implement different commercial size limits resulting in changes to their quota amounts. Approved CE programs have used yield-per-recruit (YPR) and spawning stock biomass-per-recruit (SPR) analyses to determine how to adjust the quota to maintain the same spawning potential under a new

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commercial size limit. The Addendum IV quota reductions were applied to the Amendment 6 base quotas, whereas the Addendum VI reductions were applied to the Addendum IV quotas as modified by conservation equivalency. The Addendum VI quotas were further modified by some states through approved CE plans (Table 1). Massachusetts increased its Addendum VI base quota to account for increasing its commercial minimum size limit, and New York reduced its base quota to account for lowering the minimum size of its commercial slot limit. Additionally, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, PRFC, and Virginia increased their Addendum VI base quotas by taking a greater than 18% reduction in the recreational sector to offset the commercial sector taking a smaller reduction. Amendment 7 (2022) maintains the same commercial measures specified in Addendum VI to Amendment 6; all approved Addendum VI CE programs and state implementation plans are maintained until commercial measures are changed in the future.

Table 1. Commercial striped bass quotas for the ocean region from 2003-2022.

Year	2003-2014	2015-2019	2020-2022	
State	Am6 Quota (lbs)	Add IV Base Quotas: 25% reduction from Am6 Quota (lbs)	Add VI Base Quotas: 18% Reduction from Add IV Quotas (lbs) <i>[accounting for Add IV CE adjustments]</i>	Add VI CE-Adjusted Quotas
Maine*	250	188	154	154
New Hampshire*	5,750	4,313	3,537	3,537
Massachusetts	1,159,750	869,813	713,247	735,240
Rhode Island	243,625 ^a	182,719 ^b	148,889	148,889
Connecticut**	23,750	17,813	14,607	14,607
New York	1,061,060 ^a	795,795	652,552	640,718
New Jersey**	321,750	241,313 ^b	197,877	215,912
Delaware	193,447	145,085	118,970	142,474
Maryland Ocean	131,560 ^a	98,670 ^b	74,396	89,094
Virginia Ocean	184,853	138,640	113,685	125,034
North Carolina	480,480	360,360	295,495	295,495
Ocean Total	3,806,275	2,854,706	2,333,409	2,411,154

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

a. Amendment 6 quota reduced through conservation equivalency; NY (828,293 pounds) and MD (126,396 pounds) beginning in 2004, RI (239,963 pounds) beginning in 2007.

b. Addendum IV quota reduced through conservation equivalency for RI (181,572 lbs), NJ (215,912), and MD (90,727 lbs).

2.2.1.2. Past Consideration of Quota Transfers

Throughout its history, the Striped Bass FMP has not permitted the transfer of commercial quota between jurisdictions. The Board previously considered commercial quota transfers in the FMP through Draft Amendment 5 and Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6. The Board did not approve the use of transfers in Amendment 5 (1995) in order to focus efforts on rebuilding the stock. During consideration of Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6, the Technical Committee raised concerns that transfers had the potential to increase harvest at a time when harvest reductions were needed, which contributed to the Board not approving transfers under Addendum IV (2014).

2.2.2 Status of the Stock

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

In November 2022, the Board reviewed the results of the 2022 Stock Assessment Update, which uses the same forward projecting statistical catch-at-age model from the peer-reviewed 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment. The model uses fishery-dependent data and fishery-independent survey indices to develop catch-at-age matrices and estimate annual population size, fishing mortality, and recruitment. Data through 2021 were added to the model, and the model structure was adjusted for 2020-2021 to account for the regulation changes implemented through Addendum VI to Amendment 6.

The 2022 Stock Assessment Update found that the stock remains overfished but is no longer experiencing overfishing in the terminal year (2021). Female SSB in 2021 was estimated at 143 million pounds, which is below the SSB threshold of 188 million pounds and below the SSB target of 235 million pounds. F in 2021 was estimated at 0.14, which is below the F threshold of 0.20 and below the F target of 0.17. The reference points were updated using the low recruitment assumption, which resulted in a lower F target and F threshold compared to the 2018 Benchmark Assessment.

The assessment also indicated a period of strong recruitment (numbers of age-1 fish entering the population) from 1994-2004, followed by a period of low recruitment from 2005-2011 (although not as low as the early 1980s, when the stock was considered collapsed). This period of low recruitment contributed to the decline in SSB that the stock has experienced since 2010. Recruitment of age-1 fish was high in 2012, 2015, 2016, and 2019 (corresponding to strong 2011, 2014, 2015, and 2018 year classes), but estimates of age-1 striped bass were below the long-term average in 2018, 2020, and 2021. Recruitment in 2021 was estimated at 116 million age-1 fish, below the time series average of 135.7 million fish.

The 2022 Assessment Update also included short-term projections (using the low recruitment assumption) to determine the probability of SSB being at or above the SSB target by 2029, which is the stock rebuilding deadline following the initial overfished determination in the 2018 Benchmark Assessment. The 2022 Stock Assessment Update indicates that under the current fishing mortality rate, there is a 78.6% chance the stock will be rebuilt by 2029, indicating a reduction in catch is not necessary at this time.

The next stock assessment update is scheduled for 2024 with a terminal year of 2023.

2.2.3 Status of the Fishery

Note: Since this draft addendum applies only to commercial quota in the ocean region, this section focuses primarily on the ocean commercial fishery. For information on the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery or striped bass recreational fisheries, see the Review of the FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass: 2021 Fishing Year (August 2022).

In 2021, total Atlantic striped bass removals (commercial and recreational, including harvest, commercial dead discards and recreational release mortality) were estimated at 5.1 million fish, which is about the same as removals in 2020. In 2021, the commercial sector accounted for 14% of total removals in numbers of fish (12% harvest and 2% dead discards), and the recreational sector accounted for 86% of removals in numbers of fish (36% harvest and 50% release mortality) (Figure 1). Removals for each sector by year are listed in the Appendix.

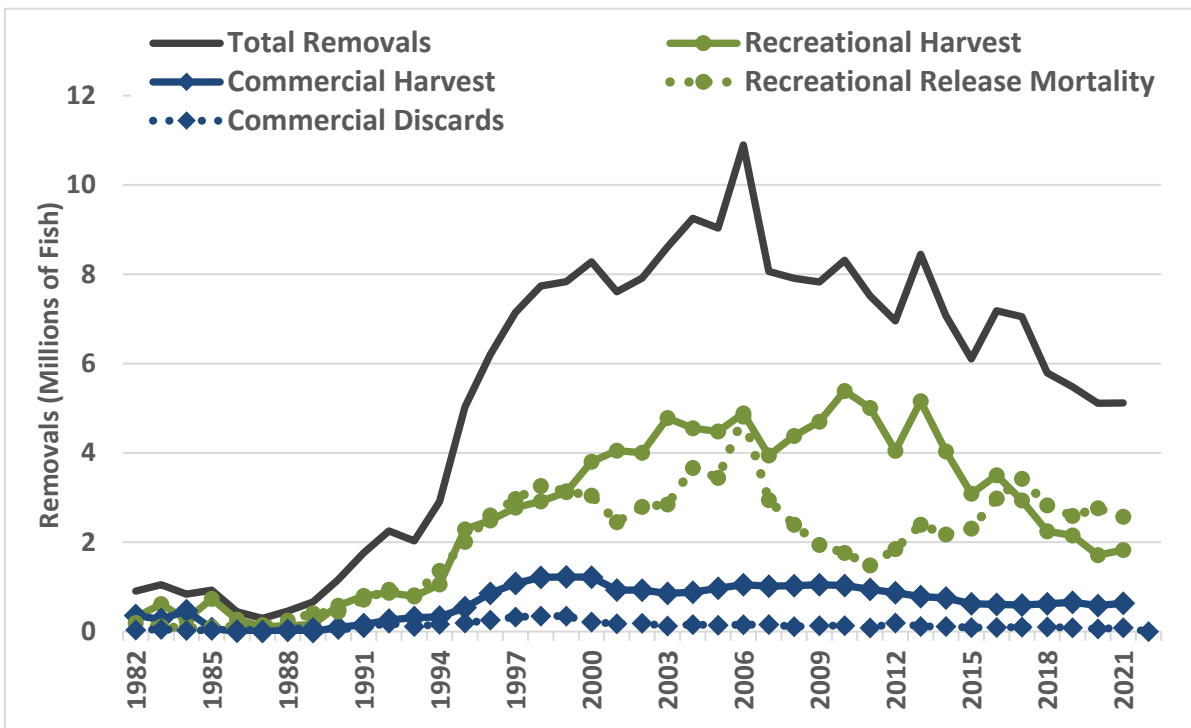


Figure 1. Total Atlantic striped bass removals by sector in numbers of fish, 1982-2021. Source: State compliance reports, MRIP, ASMFC.

Commercial Fishery Landings

In 2021, the ocean commercial striped bass quota was 2,411,154 pounds, and 1,840,693 pounds were harvested in the ocean region. In the Chesapeake Bay region, the 2021 commercial striped bass quota was 3,001,648 pounds, and 2,435,126 pounds were harvested. Neither quota was exceeded in 2021. Refer to the Appendix for 2021 quotas and landings by state, as well as 2021 commercial fishery regulations by state, including size limits, trip limits, and seasons, where applicable.

Since 1990, commercial landings from the ocean fishery have accounted for approximately 40% of total coastwide commercial landings by weight, with the other 60% coming from the Chesapeake Bay (Figure 2). The proportion of commercial harvest coming from Chesapeake Bay is much higher in numbers of fish (roughly 80%) because fish harvested in Chesapeake Bay have a lower average weight than fish harvested in ocean fisheries.

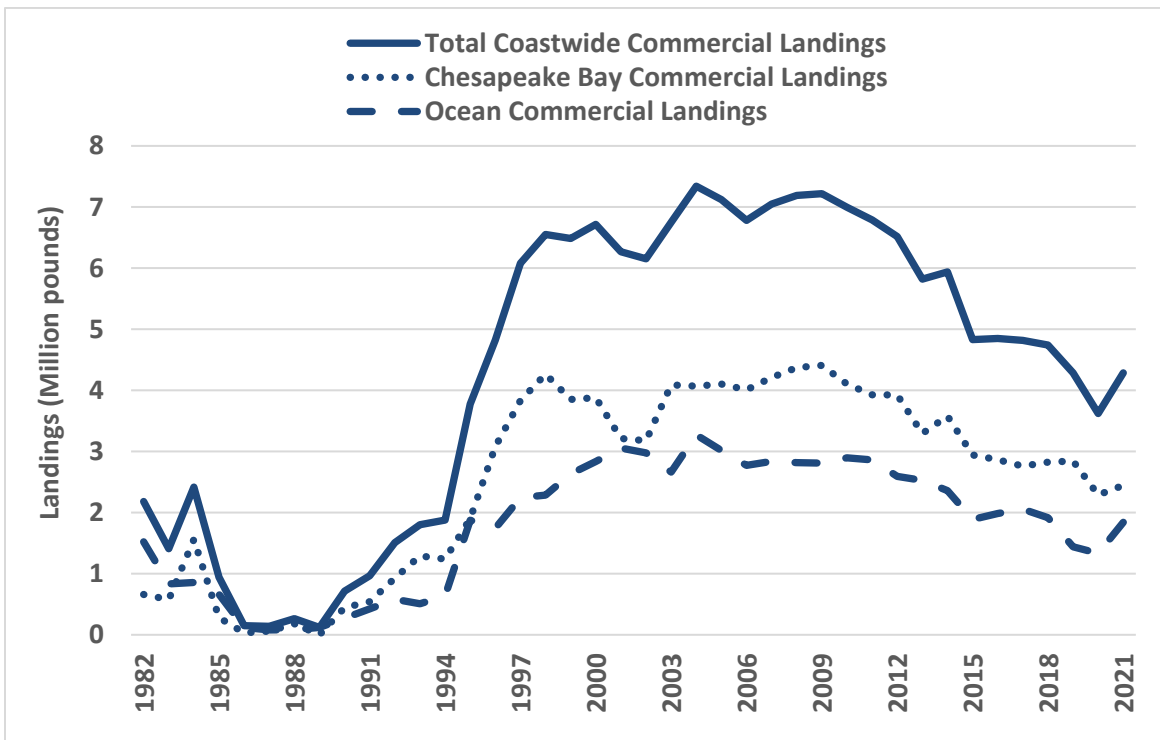


Figure 2. Commercial landings coastwide total, and by region, in pounds, 1982-2021. Source: State compliance reports.

From 2004 to 2014, ocean commercial landings averaged 2.8 million pounds annually. From 2015-2019, ocean commercial landings decreased to an average of 1.9 million pounds annually due to implementation of Addendum IV and a reduction in the commercial quota. In the last two years under Addendum VI, ocean commercial landings were 1.3 million pounds in 2020, and 1.8 million pounds in 2021.

In 2021, Massachusetts landed 40% of the ocean commercial harvest by weight, New York landed 34%, Delaware landed 8%, Rhode Island landed 7%, Virginia landed 7%, and Maryland landed 5%. North Carolina has had zero commercial harvest in their ocean waters since 2012.

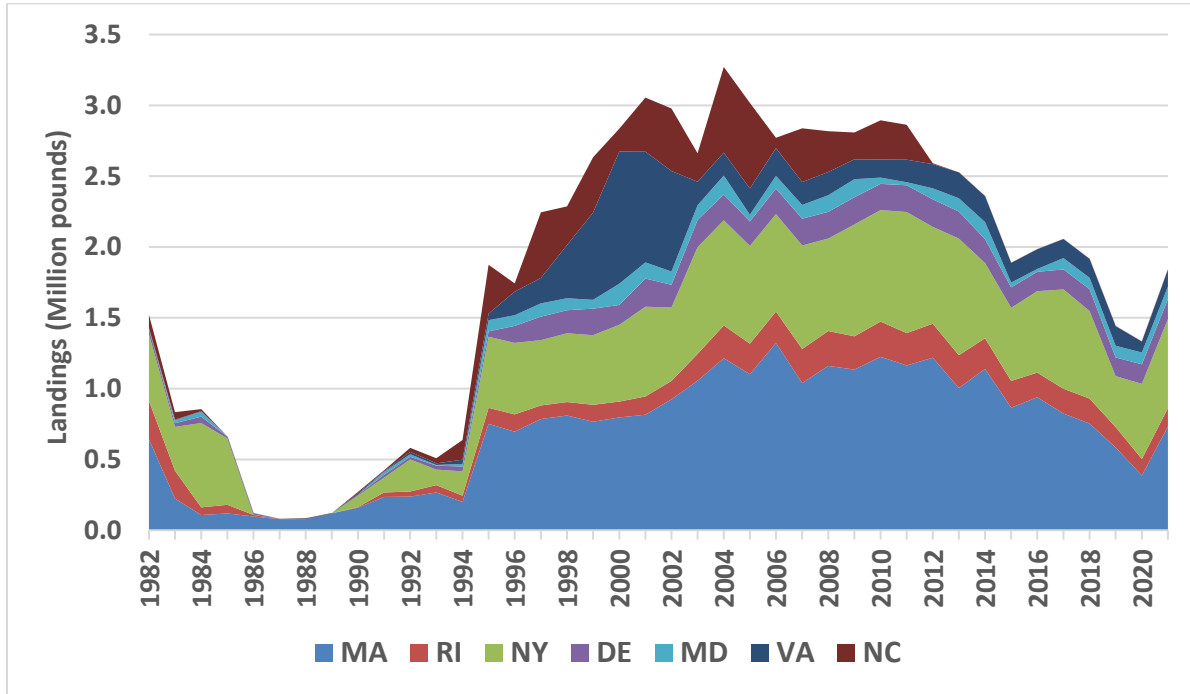


Figure 3. Commercial Atlantic striped bass landings from the ocean region by state in pounds, 1982-2021. Source: State compliance reports. Commercial harvest and sale prohibited in ME, NH, CT, and NJ. NC is ocean only.

Commercial Quota Utilization in the Ocean Region

The ocean region regularly underutilizes its cumulative quota due to lack of striped bass availability in some state waters (particularly North Carolina, which holds 13% of the ocean quota, yet has had zero ocean harvest since 2012) coupled with prohibitions on commercial striped bass fishing in Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and New Jersey (which collectively share about 10% of the ocean commercial quota).

In 2021, the commercial quota utilization in the ocean region increased from 55% in 2020 to 76% in 2021 (Figure 4). This is the highest ocean quota utilization in the past five years and is similar to the ocean quota utilization in 2017 (74%). Each state that allows commercial harvest utilized 87-99% of their ocean quota in 2021, with the exception of North Carolina which had zero ocean harvest (Table 2).

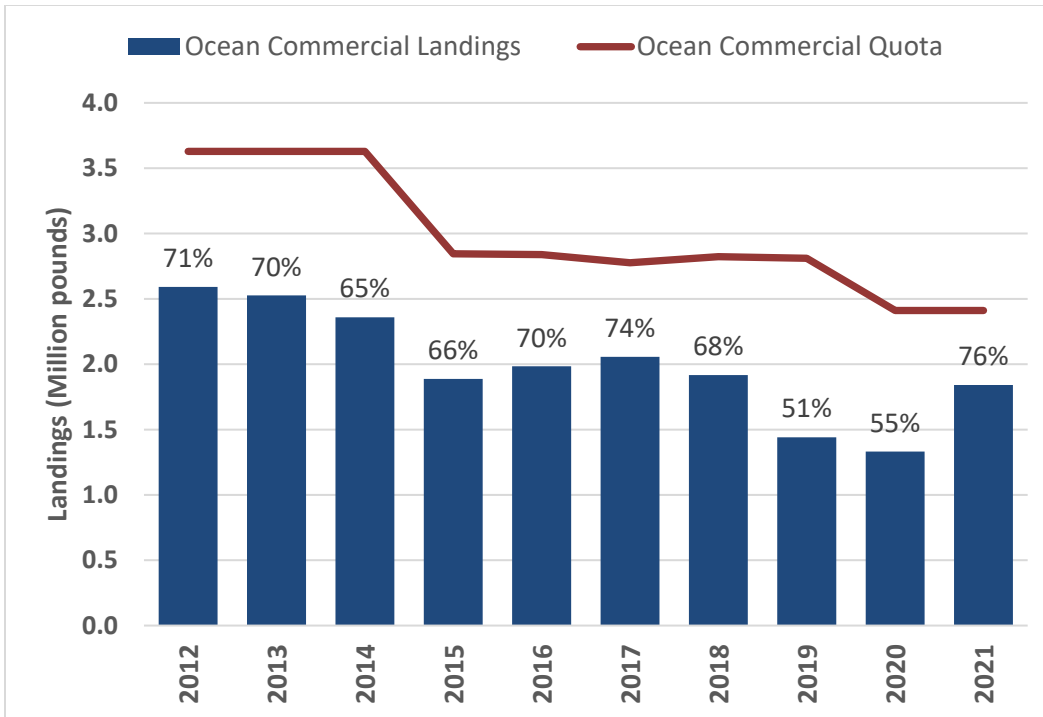


Figure 4. Ocean commercial landings and ocean commercial quota, and percent utilization, 2012-2021.

Table 2. Percent of ocean commercial quota utilized by state, 2017-2021.

State	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Maine*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
New Hampshire*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Massachusetts	103%	89%	67%	53%	100%
Rhode Island	97%	97%	79%	78%	88%
Connecticut*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
New York	88%	78%	45%	83%	98%
New Jersey**	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Delaware	98%	107%	98%	97%	98%
Maryland (ocean only)	89%	88%	91%	94%	100%
Virginia (ocean only)	97%	97%	100%	62%	96%
North Carolina (ocean only)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ocean Total	74%	68%	51%	55%	76%

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

There are several factors that could contribute to how much quota is landed each year, including year class availability, overall stock abundance, nearshore availability, fishing effort, and state management programs. These factors and their impact on striped bass commercial fisheries likely vary among states and within the seasons.

Allowing quota transfers could increase utilization of the total ocean quota, which could undermine the goals and objectives of the reductions taken under Addendum VI in 2020. The commercial ocean fishery has consistently underutilized its total quota, due to a combination of fish availability and state-specific regulations (e.g., commercial fishing prohibitions). Addendum VI was designed to achieve a specific reduction in total removals through more restrictive recreational measures and reduced commercial quotas in order to achieve the fishing mortality target. During the Addendum VI process, the Technical Committee noted the reduction in commercial quota would achieve the necessary reduction in commercial removals only if the commercial fishery performs as it has in the past (i.e., if the total quota continues to be underutilized to the same degree). This assumption may be violated if the transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region is permitted. If Addendum VI commercial quotas were fully utilized through the transfer of latent quota, commercial harvest would be higher than estimated in the Addendum VI projections and states may not maintain the desired commercial reduction.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Draft Addendum I presents options that would allow for the voluntary transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region between states that have ocean quota. However, commercial quota that has been reallocated to a state's recreational fishery (i.e., for a recreational bonus program) is not eligible to be used for commercial quota transfers. When developing CE proposals to reallocate commercial quota to a recreational fishery, states can specify reallocation of all or part of their commercial quota; any portion of the state's commercial quota that is not reallocated to the recreational fishery may be used for commercial quota transfers.

This draft addendum does not address potential transfers of the Chesapeake Bay quota among the Bay jurisdictions because the FMP does not establish state-specific shares of the Chesapeake Bay quota; Maryland, Virginia, and PRFC do so per the jurisdictions' mutual agreement. Additionally, this draft addendum does not consider allowing transfer of Chesapeake Bay quota to an ocean fishery (or vice versa) due to the distinct management programs between the regions (e.g., size and availability of fish).

If quota transfers are permitted, quota would be transferred pound-for-pound from the donor state to the receiving state. There would be some inherent uncertainty associated with transfers occurring between states that harvest different size striped bass. State commercial fisheries catch different size fish due to multiple factors, including variability in striped bass size distribution along the coast and state management programs (different size limits, gears, seasons). Further, through CE, states have been able to adjust their commercial size limits from the historical standard, which results in changes to their respective commercial quotas. Several

adjustments have been made to commercial size limits over time resulting in changes commercial quotas. Stated more simply, a pound of striped bass commercial quota is not equal across all states.

3.1 Options for Allowing the Voluntary Transfer of Ocean Commercial Quota

Option A (status quo): Commercial quota transfers are not permitted.

Option B: General commercial quota transfer provision (with overfished conservation tax).

The voluntary transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region between states that have ocean quota would be permitted. Transfers between states may occur upon agreement of two states at any time during the fishing year and up to 45 days¹ after the last day of the calendar year. All transfers require a donor state (state giving quota) and a receiving state (state accepting additional quota). There is no limit on the amount of quota that can be transferred by this mechanism, however, if transfers occur when the stock is overfished, a 5% conservation tax would be applied to address the discrepancy that a pound of striped bass quota is not equal across all states.

Example: If State A transfers 1,000 pounds to State B when the stock is overfished, State B would receive 950 pounds and the other 50 pounds would be the conservation tax that is no longer available for harvest.

All other terms and conditions of the transfer are to be identified solely by the parties involved in the transfer.

The Administrative Commissioner of the agencies involved (donor and receiving state) must submit a signed letter to the Commission identifying the involved states, species, and pounds of quota to be transferred between the parties. A transfer becomes effective upon receipt of a letter from Commission staff to the donor and receiving states, and does not require approval by the Board. All transfers are final upon receipt of the signed letters by the Commission. In the event that the donor or receiving state of a transaction subsequently wishes to change the amount or details of the transaction, both parties have to agree to the change, and submit to the Commission signed letters from the Administrative Commissioner of the agencies involved. These transfers do not permanently affect the state-specific shares of the quota (i.e., the state-specific quotas remain fixed).

Once quota has been transferred to a state, the state receiving quota becomes responsible for any overages of transferred quota. That is, the amount over the final quota (that state's quota plus any quota transferred to that state) for a state will be deducted from the corresponding state's quota the following fishing season.

¹ The Board can specify any number from 0 days up to 45 days to limit when transfers could occur after the calendar year ends.

Option C: Limited commercial quota transfer provision based on stock status.

Same as Option B except transfers would not be permitted when the stock is overfished (i.e., below the SSB threshold).

Note: Given the current overfished status of the stock, this option would not provide near-term relief to states seeking additional quota.

Option D: Board discretion commercial quota transfer provision (with overfished conservation tax).

The Board has discretion to decide whether the voluntary transfer of commercial quota in the ocean region between states that have ocean quota would be permitted in the next one or two years. Quota transfers are not permitted unless the Board decides to allow them. The Board would decide by their final meeting of the year, based on information the Board has available on the status of the striped bass stock and performance of the fisheries, whether to allow commercial quota transfers in the next one or two years.

Note: If the Board selects this option and the Addendum is approved during 2023, the Board could decide at the time of the Addendum's approval whether to allow transfers for the 2023 fishing year.

If the Board allows the voluntary transfer of commercial quota, the Board may choose to specify one or more of the following criteria:

- A limit on the transferable amount of quota (e.g., a set poundage or a set percentage of the total commercial quota), and further, a seasonal limitation on its transferability (e.g., no more than 50% of the transferable quota amount may be transferred before July 1).
- The eligibility of a state to receive a transfer based on percentage of that state's quota landed (e.g., state may not request quota until it has landed 90% of its annual quota).

If the above criteria are implemented, the Board should be as specific as possible when developing criteria (e.g., specify whether eligibility is based on total statewide quota utilization, or gear- or season-specific quota utilization within a state).

If the Board approves commercial quota transfers for a given year, transfers between states may occur upon agreement of two states at any time during the fishing year and up to 45 days² after the last day of the calendar year. All transfers require a donor state (state giving quota) and a receiving state (state accepting additional quota). All transfers must adhere to the quota transfer limitations/criteria established by the Board for that year. Additionally, if transfers occur when the stock is overfished, a 5% conservation tax would be applied to address the discrepancy that a pound of striped bass quota is not equal across all states.

² The Board can specify any number from 0 days up to 45 days to limit when transfers could occur after the calendar year ends.

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Example: If State A transfers 1,000 pounds to State B when the stock is overfished, State B would receive 950 pounds and the other 50 pounds would be the conservation tax that is no longer available for harvest.

The Administrative Commissioner of the agencies involved (donor and receiving state) must submit a signed letter to the Commission identifying the involved states, species, and pounds of quota to be transferred between the parties. A transfer becomes effective upon receipt of a letter from Commission staff to the donor and receiving states, and does not require the approval by the Board. All transfers are final upon receipt of the signed letters by the Commission. In the event that the donor or receiving state of a transaction subsequently wishes to change the amount or details of the transaction, both parties have to agree to the change, and submit to the Commission signed letters from the Administrative Commissioner of the agencies involved. These transfers do not permanently affect the state-specific shares of the quota (i.e., the state-specific quotas remain fixed).

Once quota has been transferred to a state, the state receiving quota becomes responsible for any overages of transferred quota. That is, the amount over the final quota (that state's quota plus any quota transferred to that state) for a state will be deducted from the corresponding state's quota the following fishing season.

Option E: Limited Board discretion commercial quota transfer provision based on stock status.

Same as Option D except transfers would not be permitted when the stock is overfished (i.e., below the SSB threshold).

Note: Given the current overfished status of the stock, this option would not provide near-term relief to states seeking additional quota.

4.0 Compliance Schedule

Measures approved by the Board through this Addendum would be effective immediately on the date of approval.

If commercial quota transfers are permitted, states must account for any additional quota potentially received via transfers when determining the number of commercial tags required for the upcoming season.

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Appendix. State-by-State Commercial Fishery Regulations, Commercial Landings, 2021 Quota Accounting, and Coastwide Removals by Sector

Table A1. 2021 Striped Bass commercial regulations.

Source: 2022 State Compliance Reports. Minimum sizes and slot size limits are in total length (TL).

STATE	SIZE LIMITS (TL) and TRIP LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
ME	Commercial fishing prohibited		
NH	Commercial fishing prohibited		
MA	≥35" minimum size; no gaffing undersized fish. 15 fish/day with commercial boat permit; 2 fish/day with rod and reel permit.	735,240 lbs. Hook & Line only.	6.16-11.15 (or when quota reached); open fishing days of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with Thursday and Friday added on October 1 (if quota remains). Cape Cod Canal closed to commercial striped bass fishing.
RI	Floating fish trap: 26" minimum size unlimited possession limit until 70% of quota reached, then 500 lbs. per licensee per day	Total: 148,889 lbs., split 39:61 between the trap and general category. Gill netting prohibited.	4.1 – 12.31
	General category (mostly rod & reel): 34" min. 5 fish/vessel/day limit.		5.20-6.30; 7.1-12.31, or until quota reached. Closed Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays throughout.
CT	Commercial fishing prohibited; bonus program in CT suspended indefinitely in 2020.		
NY	26"-38" size; (Hudson River closed to commercial harvest)	640,718 lbs. Pound Nets, Gill Nets (6-8" stretched mesh), Hook & Line.	5.15 – 12.15, or until quota reached. Limited entry permit only.
NJ*	Commercial fishing prohibited; *quota reallocated to recreational bonus program: 1 fish/permit at 24" to <28"	215,912 lbs.	5.15 – 12.31 (permit required)
PA	Commercial fishing prohibited		

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Table A1, continued

STATE	SIZE LIMITS (TL) and TRIP LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
DE	Gill Net: 20" min in DE Bay/River during spring season. 28" in all other waters/seasons.	Gillnet: 135,350 lbs. No fixed nets in DE River.	Gillnet: 2.15-5.31 (2.15-3.30 for Nanticoke River) & 11.15-12.31; drift nets only 2.15-28 & 5.1-31; no trip limit.
	Hook and Line: 28" min	Hook and line: 7,124 lbs.	Hook and Line: 4.1-12.31, 200 lbs./day trip limit
MD	Chesapeake Bay and Rivers: 18-36" Common pool trip limits: Hook and Line - 250 lbs./license/week Gill Net - 300 lbs./license/week	1,445,394 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota)	Bay Pound Net: 6.1-12.31 Bay Haul Seine: 1.1-2.28; 6.1-12.31 Bay Hook & Line: 6.1-12.31 Bay Drift Gill Net: 1.1-2.28, 12.1-12.31
	Ocean: 24" minimum	Ocean: 89,094 lbs.	1.1-5.31, 10.1-12.31
PRFC	18" min all year; 36" max 2.15-3.25	572,861 lbs. (split between gear types; part of Bay-wide quota)	Hook & Line: 1.1-3.25, 6.1-12.31 Pound Net & Other: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.15 <u>Gill Net</u> : 11.9.2020-3.25.2021 Misc. Gear: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.15
VA	Chesapeake Bay and Rivers: 18" min; 28" max size limit 3.15-6.15	983,393 lbs. (part of Bay-wide quota)	1.16-12.31
	Ocean: 28" min	125,034 lbs.	
NC	Ocean: 28" min	295,495 lbs. (split between gear types)	Seine fishery was not opened Gill net fishery was not opened Trawl fishery was not opened

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Table A2. 2021 Commercial quota accounting in pounds.

Source: 2022 state compliance reports. 2021 quota was based on Addendum VI and approved conservation equivalency programs.

State	Add VI (base)	2021 Quota [^]	2021 Harvest	Overage
Ocean				
Maine*	154	154	-	-
New Hampshire*	3,537	3,537	-	-
Massachusetts	713,247	735,240	732,071	0
Rhode Island	148,889	148,889	130,308	0
Connecticut*	14,607	14,607	-	-
New York	652,552	640,718	629,491	0
New Jersey**	197,877	215,912	-	-
Delaware	118,970	142,474	140,250	0
Maryland	74,396	89,094	88,652 ⁺	0
Virginia	113,685	125,034	119,921	0
North Carolina	295,495	295,495	0	0
Ocean Total	2,333,409	2,411,154	1,840,693	0
Chesapeake Bay				
Maryland	2,588,603	1,445,394	1,305,276 ⁺	0
Virginia		983,393	729,736	0
PRFC		572,861	400,414	0
Bay Total		3,001,648	2,435,126	0

Note: North Carolina's fishing year is December-November; PRFC's fishing year for gill nets is Nov-March

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

[^] 2020 quota changed through conservation equivalency for MA (735,240 lbs), NY (640,718 lbs), NJ (215,912 lbs), DE (142,474 lbs), MD (ocean: 89,094 lbs; bay: 1,445,394 lbs), PRFC (572,861 lbs), VA (ocean: 125,034 lbs; bay: 983,393 lbs).

⁺ Maryland commercial landings for 2021 are considered preliminary.

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Table A3. Commercial harvest by state and region in pounds (x1000), 1997-2021 calendar years.

Source: State compliance reports. ^Estimates exclude inshore harvest.

Year	Ocean								Chesapeake Bay				Grand Total
	MA	RI	NY	DE	MD	VA	NC^	Total	MD	PRFC	VA	Total	
1997	784.9	96.5	460.8	166.0	94.0	179.1	463.1	2,244.4	2,119.2	731.9	983.0	3,834.2	6,078.6
1998	810.1	94.7	485.9	163.2	84.6	375.0	273.0	2,286.6	2,426.7	726.2	1,112.2	4,265.1	6,551.6
1999	766.2	119.7	491.8	187.1	62.6	614.8	391.5	2,633.7	2,274.8	653.3	923.4	3,851.4	6,485.1
2000	796.2	111.8	542.7	140.6	149.7	932.7	162.4	2,836.0	2,261.8	666.0	951.2	3,879.0	6,715.0
2001	815.4	129.7	633.1	198.8	113.9	782.4	381.1	3,054.3	1,660.9	658.7	893.1	3,212.6	6,267.0
2002	924.9	129.2	518.6	160.6	93.2	710.2	441.0	2,977.6	1,759.4	521.0	894.4	3,174.9	6,152.6
2003	1,055.5	190.2	753.3	191.5	103.9	166.4	201.2	2,662.1	1,721.8	676.6	1,690.4	4,088.7	6,750.8
2004	1,214.2	232.3	741.7	182.2	134.2	161.3	605.4	3,271.2	1,790.3	772.3	1,507.0	4,069.6	7,340.8
2005	1,102.2	215.6	689.8	173.1	46.9	185.2	604.5	3,017.4	2,008.7	533.6	1,561.0	4,103.3	7,120.6
2006	1,322.3	221.4	688.4	179.5	91.1	195.0	74.2	2,771.8	2,116.3	673.5	1,219.0	4,008.7	6,780.5
2007	1,039.3	240.6	731.5	188.7	96.3	162.3	379.5	2,838.1	2,240.6	599.3	1,369.2	4,209.1	7,047.2
2008	1,160.3	245.9	653.1	188.8	118.0	163.1	288.4	2,817.7	2,208.0	613.8	1,551.3	4,373.1	7,190.8
2009	1,134.3	234.8	789.9	192.4	127.3	140.4	190.0	2,809.1	2,267.3	727.8	1,413.3	4,408.4	7,217.5
2010	1,224.5	248.9	786.8	185.4	44.8	127.8	276.4	2,894.7	2,105.8	683.2	1,313.0	4,102.0	6,996.7
2011	1,163.9	228.2	855.3	188.6	21.4	158.8	246.4	2,862.5	1,955.1	694.2	1,278.1	3,927.3	6,789.8
2012	1,218.5	239.9	683.8	194.3	77.6	170.8	7.3	2,592.0	1,851.4	733.7	1,339.6	3,924.7	6,516.8
2013	1,004.5	231.3	823.8	191.4	93.5	182.4	0.0	2,526.9	1,662.2	623.8	1,006.8	3,292.8	5,819.7
2014	1,138.5	216.9	531.5	167.9	120.9	183.7	0.0	2,359.4	1,805.7	603.4	1,169.4	3,578.5	5,937.9
2015	866.0	188.3	516.3	144.1	34.6	138.1	0.0	1,887.5	1,436.9	538.0	967.6	2,942.5	4,830.0
2016	938.7	174.7	575.0	136.5	19.7	139.2	0.0	1,983.9	1,425.5	537.1	902.3	2,864.9	4,848.8
2017	823.4	175.3	701.2	141.8	80.5	133.9	0.0	2,056.1	1,439.8	492.7	827.8	2,760.3	4,816.4
2018	753.7	176.6	617.2	155.0	79.8	134.2	0.0	1,916.6	1,424.3	449.4	951.0	2,824.7	4,741.3
2019	584.7	144.2	358.9	132.6	82.8	138.0	0.0	1,441.2	1,475.2	417.3	951.1	2,843.6	4,284.8
2020	386.9	115.9	530.5	138.0	83.6	77.2	0.0	1,332.2	1,273.8	400.3	613.8	2,287.9	3,620.0
2021 ⁺	732.1	130.3	629.5	140.3	88.7	119.9	0.0	1,840.7	1,305.3	411.3	729.7	2,446.4	4,287.0

+ Maryland commercial landings for 2021 are considered preliminary.

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Table A4. Total removals (harvest plus discards/release mortality) of Atlantic striped bass by sector in numbers of fish, 1992-2021 calendar years. Note: Harvest is from state compliance reports/MRIP (June 2022), discards/release mortality is from ASMFC. Estimates exclude inshore harvest from NC.

Year	Commercial		Recreational		Total Removals
	Harvest	Dead Discards*	Harvest	Release Mortality	
1992	256,476	189,814	869,779	937,611	2,253,681
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	634,552	85,676	1,824,484	2,572,931	5,117,643

* Commercial dead discard estimates are derived via a generalized additive model (GAM), and are therefore re-estimated for the entire time series when a new year of data is added.

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Table A5. Proportion of total removals (harvest plus discards/release mortality) of Atlantic striped bass by sector in numbers of fish, 1992-2021. Note: Harvest is from state compliance reports/MRIP (June 2022), discards/release mortality is from ASMFC. Estimates exclude inshore harvest from NC.

Year	Commercial		Recreational	
	Harvest	Dead Discards*	Harvest	Release Mortality
1992	11%	8%	39%	42%
1993	15%	6%	39%	40%
1994	11%	6%	36%	47%
1995	11%	4%	45%	40%
1996	14%	4%	40%	42%
1997	15%	5%	39%	42%
1998	16%	4%	38%	42%
1999	16%	4%	40%	40%
2000	15%	3%	46%	37%
2001	12%	2%	53%	32%
2002	12%	2%	51%	35%
2003	10%	1%	56%	33%
2004	10%	2%	49%	40%
2005	11%	2%	50%	38%
2006	10%	1%	45%	44%
2007	13%	2%	49%	37%
2008	13%	1%	55%	30%
2009	13%	2%	60%	25%
2010	12%	2%	65%	21%
2011	13%	1%	67%	20%
2012	13%	3%	58%	27%
2013	9%	1%	61%	28%
2014	11%	2%	57%	31%
2015	10%	1%	51%	38%
2016	8%	1%	49%	42%
2017	8%	1%	42%	49%
2018	11%	2%	39%	49%
2019	12%	2%	39%	47%
2020	11%	1%	33%	54%
2021	12%	2%	36%	50%

* Commercial dead discard estimates are re-estimated for the entire time series when a new year of data is added. Note: Percent may not sum to 100 due to rounding.



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: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel

DATE: January 24, 2023

SUBJECT: Advisory Panel Recommendations on Draft Addendum I Options

The Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel (AP) met via webinar on January 17, 2023 to discuss AP recommendations on the proposed options in Striped Bass Draft Addendum I to Amendment 7 regarding ocean commercial quota transfers. ASMFC staff provided the AP with an overview of the draft addendum background, proposed options, and public comment summary.

AP Members in Attendance

Louis Bassano (Chair, NJ recreational)	Leonard Voss (DE commercial)
Dave Pecci (ME for-hire/recreational)	Chris Dollar (MD recreational)
Peter Whelan (NH recreational)	Charles (Eddie) Green (MD for-hire/rec)
Patrick Paquette (MA recreational)	Dennis Fleming (PRFC rec/processor/dealer)
Craig Poosikian (MA commercial)	Bill Hall (VA recreational)
Andy Dangelo (RI for-hire)	Kelly Place (VA commercial)
Michael Plaia (RI comm/rec/for-hire)	Jamie Lane (NC commercial)
Bob Danielson (NY recreational)	Jon Worthington (NC recreational)
Eleanor Bochenek (NJ fisheries scientist)	

Bob Humphrey (ME comm./for-hire) and Jamie Lane (NC commercial) provided comments via email, which are incorporated into this summary.

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

Public Attendees: Marty Gary (Striped Bass Management Board Chair), Will Poston, Jaclyn Higgins, Erik Zlokovitz

A majority of AP members support status quo Option A (no transfers permitted), while some AP members support Option B (transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax). The following is a summary of AP members' recommended options, discussion, and additional recommendations.

M23-10

Proposed Management Options

14 AP members support the status quo **Option A: no transfers permitted** for the following reasons:

- Considering transfers is not appropriate while the stock is overfished and rebuilding.
- The public comments are overwhelmingly in support of Option A.
- Transfers will not benefit the stock in any way, especially when the stock is overfished or overfishing is occurring.
- There shouldn't be any increase in either sector's harvest while the stock is overfished.
- Concern that quota transfers set up the potential for behind-the-scenes or non-transparent 'horse-trading'.
- The only quota likely available for transfer is the North Carolina quota since fish have not been available there inshore; as long as the stock is overfished, we need the buffer of not harvesting that quota.
- If quota is transferred north, large breeding females would be taken out of the fishery.
- A striped bass caught in southern state commercial fisheries is not the same size as striped bass caught in northern state commercial fisheries. There is concern around moving quota from an area that harvests smaller fish to an area that harvests larger fish (i.e., losing more spawning potential). Moving quota along the coast will disrupt the current rebuilding analysis and assumed size of commercial catch.
- The stock is experiencing recruitment failure in the Chesapeake Bay, so this is a time for caution and conservation.

4 AP members support **Option B: transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax** for the following reasons:

- Quotas were developed by science, and the science would not set total quotas that would jeopardize the stock.
- The commercial fishery already is already constrained and closely monitored with payback and accountability provisions in place.
- The striped bass fishery is primarily recreational, and the commercial fishery has been diminished to 10% of total removals with low, relatively stable landings; allowing transfers would not have a significant, if any, impact on the status of the stock since the commercial fishery is at such low levels.

There was no support stated for Options C, D, or E.

Additional Recommendations

Some AP members noted additional recommendations regarding the quota transfer process:

- If the Board does allow transfers, 3 AP members recommend the Board eliminate the 45-day provision that would allow transfers to occur up to 45 days after the calendar year ends. This type of provision could lead to states being less careful about exceeding their quota since they could cover a quota overage after the year ends through a transfer.

- 3 AP members recommend that if transfers are permitted, transfers should be permitted only for states that allow commercial fishing; states that prohibit commercial fishing (ME,NH,CT,NJ) should not be able to transfer their quota.
- 1 AP member recommends revising the quota utilization calculation to exclude states that do not have commercial fisheries. Currently, the percent quota utilization is calculated incorporating those states (e.g., Maine landed 0% of their quota), which seems wrong since those states have chosen not to allow commercial fishing.

If the Board maintains status quo and doesn't allow transfers through this addendum, AP members were split on whether transfers should/shouldn't be considered in the future:

- Some AP members support revisiting the issue of quota transfers in the future after the stock is rebuilt, as that would be more appropriate timing.
- Some AP members don't support revisiting the transfer issue in the future (i.e., transfers should not be allowed in any case) because transfers are not an appropriate tool for the striped bass fishery.
- Some AP members noted uncertainty about whether transfers should be considered in the future. When the stock is rebuilt, quota transfers could be a tool to respond to climate change and shifting stocks along the coast, but only if controlled and regulated properly.

Some AP members noted recommendations regarding the commercial quota system in general:

- 3 AP members recommends the Board re-examine the overall commercial quota system since it is based on outdated data from the 1970s; science has advanced since then and the quota system should be re-evaluated.
- 1 AP member recommends the Board take a broader perspective and re-examine the contribution/value of each sector (commercial and recreational) and their contribution to the striped bass fishery overall.



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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: Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

DATE: January 17, 2023

SUBJECT: Draft Addendum I Public Hearing Summaries

Eight public hearings were held for twelve jurisdictions from December 7, 2022 through January 9, 2023. Five hearings were conducted via webinar only: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland-Virginia-Potomac River Fisheries Commission-District of Columbia, North Carolina. Two hearings were conducted in a hybrid format with attendees participating via webinar and in-person: Delaware, Maine-New Hampshire. One public hearing was conducted in-person only: New York.

193 individuals (not including state staff, ASMFC staff, or Commissioners/Proxies) attended the hearings, and some of these individuals attended/participated in polls at multiple hearings. Each public hearing is summarized in the following pages and the summaries are ordered from north to south. Live polls or a show-of-hands vote were used at most hearings for the proposed options. Each hearing summary lists the number of public participants who attended the hearing as well as the number of people who provided comments and/or participated in polls during the hearing. Full attendance lists are provided following each hearing summary.

Note: A summary of all public comment (written and hearing comments) received by ASMFC on Striped Bass Draft Addendum I is provided in a separate memorandum in the 2023 Winter Atlantic Striped Bass Board main meeting materials.

**Maine-New Hampshire Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**

January 9, 2023 – Hybrid: Webinar and Portsmouth, NH

Public Attendees: 61

Hearing Officers: Megan Ware (MEDMR), Cheri Patterson (NHFG)

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns, Tracey Bauer

49 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the Maine Association of Charterboat Captains (MACC), Plum Island Surfcasters (PIS), Native Fish Coalition (NFC), American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA), Stripers Forever (SF)

Poll

Option A 48
Option B
Option C 1
Option D
Option E

Polls/Commenters from

ME 22
NH 21
Other 6 (MA, NY, NJ, MD, FL)

48 people (including MACC, PIS, NFC, ASGA, SF) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- The stock is still overfished and any increase in fishing mortality should not be considered; management should focus on rebuilding.
- Any increase in harvest would undermine rebuilding progress.
- There is only a 78% chance of rebuilding the stock by 2029, and anything that removes more fish will lower that percent chance of rebuilding and negatively impact the stock.
- Commercial fisheries target large breeding females; if additional quota is transferred to states like Massachusetts, there would be significant impact on large spawners.
- Recruitment has been very poor for the last four years, and management needs to be as conservative as possible to rebuild the stock; the Technical Committee has noted the potential future negative impact of the low recruitment.
- This is not the time to maximize quotas when the stock is vulnerable to future decline.
- Although transfers are in place for other species, the striped bass fishery is unique and the Board has decided in the past that transfers don't fit this fishery.
- Quota transfers are contrary to what the public wants.

1 person supports Option C: transfers permitted except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

Other comments included:

- Striped bass should be managed for abundance.
- Management should focus on the population as a whole and environmental balance; abundance helps insulate against forces like climate change.
- Conservation equivalency should not be part of management.
- Need to protect spawning locations.
- Live fish are more valuable than dead fish.
- Concern about the data used in the stock assessment related to COVID data quality issues.
- Commercial harvest should end and striped bass should be a gamefish.

**Maine-New Hampshire Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**

January 9, 2023

Hybrid: Webinar and Portsmouth, NH

In-Person Attendees: enclosed sign-in sheet

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Agnelli	Larry	Massachusetts
Batter	Victoria	Maine
Bauer	Tracey	Virginia
Bryand	Michael	Maine
Calagione	Sam	Maine
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Cronin	James	New York
Dart	Evan	Maine
Dutremble	Jason	Maine
Evanilla	Johnathan	Maine
Fallon	Peter	Maine
Ferdinand	William	Maine
Fitzgerald	Betsy	Maine
Fleming	Richard	New Hampshire
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Gallahue	Benjamin	New Hampshire
Hildreth	Carle	Maine
Hillier	Bryce	Maine
Hunter	Zandri	Maine
Johnson	Tom	Maine
Kingston	Jack	Massachusetts
Kleiner	Don	Maine
Lamy	Jared	New Hampshire
Landry	Aaron	Maine
Mohlin	Pete	Maine
Newman	Thomas	North Carolina
Opsatnic	Levi	Maine
Pappas	Thomas	Maine
Patterson	Cheri	New Hampshire
Phillips	Chris	New Hampshire
Poston	Will	Maryland
Roach	Eric	New Hampshire
Rubner	Cody	Florida

Last Name	First Name	State
Rudman	Patrick	Maine
Sarcona	Tony	Maine
Sawyer	Ian	Maine
Schaefer	Kyle	Maine
Spendley	Paul	New Hampshire
Sullivan	Kevin	New Hampshire
Temple	Colin	Massachusetts
Tirado	Lou	Maine
Vavra	Taylor	Maine
Wallace	Capt. Eric	Maine
Ware	Megan	Maine
Whalley	Ben	Maine
Williams	Brian	New Jersey
Willsea	Flynn	Maine
Young	robert	New Hampshire
Zobel	Renee	New Hampshire

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns, Tracey Bauer

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum I for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

January 9, 2023

Portsmouth, NH

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Ritchie White	CCANH	Rye NH
Scott Klose	Bye Polar Fishing	Bedford NH
SCOT CALITRI	ORCA	DUNHAM, NH
Dylan Carney	13 mile Fl, CO	Dover, NH
Michael Toole	Plum Island Surfcaster	Stratham, NH
Nick Martin	NFC	Litchfield NH
JOE FORRESTALL	NFC	Acworth NH
Derek Cummings		Portsmouth NH
Joshua Dionne		S. Berwick ME
Matt Larkin		Newmarket, NH
Tom Briantman		Dover, NH
Doug Goulet		Sunapee NH
DJ Lovett		Nottingham NH
Peter Whelan		Portsmouth NH
James Shanley	NFC	Portsmouth, NH
Janet Kan	NFC	Milton Mills, NH
DENNIS ARBOFF	ASMFC	NEWMARKET NH
Stephen		
Stephen Collins		Portsmouth, NH
Rob Wolfchuck		Brentwood, NH
JORDAN CHESTER		SOUTH BERWICK, ME

**Massachusetts Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 19, 2022 – Webinar**

Public Attendees: 48

Hearing Officers: Mike Armstrong (MADMF)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, James Boyle

37 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the Cape Cod Salties Fishing Club (CCS), Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association for the MA sector (RISAA-MA), Stellwagen Bank Charter Board Association (SWBCA)

Poll

Option A	29
Option B	2
Option C	2
Option D	1
Option E	3

Polls/Commenters from

MA	28
Other	9 (ME, NY, CT, FL)

29 people (including CCS, RISAA-MA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- The stock is still overfished.
- The stock is starting to improve and allowing transfers would increase mortality, which is contrary to the rebuilding plan that is an important part of Amendment 7.
- Allowing transfers would have unintended consequences as quota changes each year; allocations should be fair and equitable in the first place.
- There is a risk of concentrating harvest in certain areas if transfers are allowed; there could be unintended consequences for different breeding stocks.
- There is only a 79% chance of rebuilding and there are many scenarios where we won't achieve that goal.
- Allowing transfers would put more pressure on the commercial sector.
- The striped bass stock is fragile and we are approaching the rebuilding deadline.

2 people support Option B: transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax.

- No verbal comment provided.

2 people support Option C: transfers permitted except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

1 person supports Option D: Board discretion on transfers with overfished conservation tax.

- No verbal comment provided.

3 people support Option E: Board discretion on transfers except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

Other comments included:

- A SWBCA Board member noted that most comments opposing transfers are coming from recreational anglers.
- The surfcasting community has spent a lot of time working on improving catch and release mortality in the fishing community.

**Massachusetts Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**

December 19, 2022

Webinar

Last Name	First Name	State
Adams	Mike	Massachusetts
Armstrong	Mike	Massachusetts
Audet	Jerry	Massachusetts
Avila	Jason	Massachusetts
Ayer	Matt	Massachusetts
Bannon	Mark	Massachusetts
Batsavage	Chris	North Carolina
Boghdan	Kalil	Massachusetts
Boland	Collins	Massachusetts
Bravo	Peter	Connecticut
Castano	Raymond	Massachusetts
Clark	Dean	Massachusetts
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Creighton	Jack	Massachusetts
Cullen	James	Massachusetts
Cummings	Derek	New Hampshire
Dello Russo	Joe	Massachusetts
Delzingo	Capt. Mike	Massachusetts
Dresser	Winslow	Massachusetts
Fallon	Peter	Maine
Fetterman	Jacob	New York
Frenje	Johan	Massachusetts
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Gordon	Jesse	New York
Henrich	Georgette	Massachusetts
Hoffman	William	Massachusetts
Holden	Brendan	Massachusetts
Hughes	Ian	Massachusetts
Jewkes	James	Massachusetts
Johns	Caroline	Massachusetts
Jones	Kevin	Massachusetts
Kane	Raymond	Massachusetts
Mauck	Capt. Parker	Massachusetts
McKiernan	Daniel	Massachusetts
Meserve	Nichola	Massachusetts
Petracca	Timothy	Utah

Last Name	First Name	State
Pinkus	Will	Massachusetts
Poirier	Anthony	Massachusetts
Poosikian	Craig	Massachusetts
Prodouz	William	Massachusetts
Rubner	Cody	Massachusetts
Savino	Robert	Massachusetts
Schofield	Austin	Massachusetts
Schwond	Peter	Massachusetts
Shukis	Alex	Massachusetts
Sikorski	David	Maryland
Sullivan	Tamer	Massachusetts
Sylvestre	Capt. George	Massachusetts
Temple	Colin	Massachusetts
Thiebault	Kristen	Massachusetts
Tighe	John	Massachusetts
Ungerland	Jon	Massachusetts
Vespe	Greg	Massachusetts
Webb	Anna	Massachusetts
Whalley	Ben	Maine
White	Kyle	Massachusetts
Williams	Al	Massachusetts
Woods	Michael	Rhode Island
Zlokovitz	Erik	Maryland

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, James Boyle

Rhode Island Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 14, 2022 – Webinar

Public Attendees: 16

Hearing Officers: Jason McNamee (RIDEM)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tracey Bauer

11 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA), Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA), and American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA)

Poll

- Option A 11
- Option B
- Option C
- Option D
- Option E

Polls/Commenters from

- RI 9
- Other 2 (ME)

11 people (including RISAA, BHA, ASGA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- Increasing fishing mortality is contradictory to rebuilding striped bass, and we don't want to derail the rebuilding effort.
- If fishing mortality increases, the probability of rebuilding by 2029 will decrease and the rebuilding timeline will extend.
- The rebuilding plan is already on a razor's edge with a thin margin of error, and any increase in mortality is risky.
- The stock is still overfished, so now is not the time to maximize harvest.
- Recovering striped bass and protecting the fishery long-term is most important.
- The options that intend to provide guardrails would still increase fishing mortality.
- The Addendum VI assumption of underutilization must remain valid, and transfers would violate that assumption.
- If, through transfers, one state can harvest way more striped bass than other states, that might impact the striped bass in that area; for example, if quota ends up in a state where striped bass have not been heavily harvested in the past, there could be bigger consequences than intended.

- If the Board wants to address broader issues with the commercial quotas, the Board should reassess the allocations first.

Other comments included:

- The figure showing the percent quota utilization is misleading since it does not show the percent of quota that was re-allocated to the recreational sector (NJ quota), which is about 9% of the quota. The figure should more clearly show how much quota is re-allocated to the recreational sector and how much quota is in states that don't have commercial fisheries.

**Rhode Island Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**
December 14, 2022
Webinar

Last Name	First Name	State
Bertoline	Sue	New York
Blanchard	Kurt	Rhode Island
Calagione	Sam	Rhode Island
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Finnegan	Owen	Connecticut
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Halavik	Byron	Rhode Island
Hittinger	Rich	Rhode Island
Jenkins	Peter	Rhode Island
Kalil	Chris	Rhode Island
Lengyel Costa	Nicole	Rhode Island
McManus	Conor	Rhode Island
McNamee	Jason	Rhode Island
Newman	Thomas	North Carolina
Poston	Will	Maryland
Spicer	Ken	Rhode Island
Tiska	Carl	Rhode Island
Vespe	Greg	Rhode Island
Whalley	Ben	Maine
Woods	Michael	Rhode Island

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tracey Bauer, Toni Kerns, Madeline Musante

New York Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 7, 2022 – Kings Park, NY

Public Attendees: 21
Hearing Officers: Jim Gilmore (NYDEC)
ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke

21 attendees participated in a show of hands/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the New York Coalition on Recreational Fishing (NYCRF) and American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA)

Show of Hands

Option A 21
Option B
Option C
Option D
Option E

Attendees from

NY 21

21 people (including NYCRF and ASGA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- Allowing transfers would increase removals and jeopardize the 2029 rebuilding plan.
- Increasing harvest is not acceptable while in a rebuilding period; harvest should not be maximized at this time.
- Rebuilding success hinges on maintaining a low fishing mortality rate, and intentionally increasing commercial harvest goes against that.
- The rebuilding plan already has a small margin of error.
- Allowing transfers would add risk and uncertainty to the rebuilding plan, especially considering recent low recruitment.
- The stock is still overfished and this action is being considered at the wrong time; it is contrary to any progress being made following Amendment 7.
- Amendment 7 public comments were overwhelmingly in support of conservative management.
- Commercial reductions for Addendum IV and Addendum VI were taken off the commercial quota, not off harvest levels, and Addendum VI assumed the same level of quota underutilization.
- The Board has rejected quota transfers twice in the past.

- The original issue was quota for just one state (Delaware); now this addendum is much broader and could lead to harvesting all unused quota and unintended consequences.
- The safeguards presented in the alternative options are not adequate. For example, the conservation tax should apply to every transfer to address the size discrepancy, not just those that happen when the stock is overfished. And in addition to no transfers when the stock is overfished, no transfers should be permitted when overfishing is occurring.
- Two commenters noted that if Option A is off the table, Option E (Board discretion with no transfers when overfished) would be the 'least bad' second choice.

Other comments included:

- The use of conservation equivalency should be stopped.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum I for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

December 7, 2022

Kings Park, NY

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Ross Squire	NYCRF	Centerport, NY
Paul Dixon	ASGA	East Hampton NY
CHARLOS WITUR		W. Babylon, NY
Craig Casatello	VANSTAAL	Cutchogue, NY
MORR SEBOTT		SAG HARBOR, NY
Matt Brackbill	The Fisherman Mag	Medford, NY
Jim Levison	ASGA	SAG Harbor NY
Dominic DeFlumeri	DBS Surfcasting	Massapequa Park, NY
Joseph Aiello		HURTINGTON NY
Dylan Jewell	All Island Surfcasters	Shirley N.Y.
APT Boyd	ALL ISLAND SURFCASTERS	SAYVILLE NY
STEVE Withuhn	For-Hire/Comm.	ELWOOD NY
Luyen Chou	Rec angler	East Hampton, NY
Susan Bertolin	ASGA	Floral Park, NY
Tom m'cheluey		Floral Park, NY
Kerry Heffernan	chef/Rec Angler	New York NY
Mike Dean	Manhattan to Montauk	East Quogue, NY
Adam Cooperstock	Rec angler	Merrick, NY
John Seifert	Rec. Flyfishing	Smithtown, NY
DAVE FLANAGAN	FORNPE	ST JAMES, NY
Vinny Catalano	for hire	Centerport, NY

New Jersey Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 20, 2022 – Webinar

Public Attendees: 34

Hearing Officers: Joe Cimino (NJDEP)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tina Berger

25 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA).

Poll

Option A	23
Option B	1
Option C	
Option D	
Option E	1

Polls/Commenters from

NJ	16
Other	9 (ME, NH, MA, NY)

23 people (including JCAA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- The stock is still overfished and transfers would go against rebuilding the stock.
- Rebuilding depends on maintaining a low fishing mortality rate, and transfers would increase commercial landings while trying to rebuild the stock.
- Transfers have not been supported by the Board in the past.
- The focus should be rebuilding the stock as quickly as possible.
- Management should strive for a higher than 78% probability of rebuilding the stock, and transfers would decrease that probability.

1 person supports Option B: transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax.

- No verbal comment provided.

1 person supports Option E: Board discretion on transfers except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

Other comments included:

- Conservation equivalency should be eliminated; continuing CE seems like an intentional loophole in Amendment 7 despite overwhelming public opposition to CE.
- Fishery has been sporadic and is not doing well coastwide.
- Make striped bass a gamefish.
- The New Jersey bonus program collects important striped bass data that should be used.

**New Jersey Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**
December 20, 2022
Webinar

Last Name	First Name	State
Araujo	Jovaun	Massachusetts
Archer	Colin	New Jersey
Barbato	Carmine	New Jersey
Bertoline	Sue	New York
Bogan	Raymond	New Jersey
Brust	Jeffrey	New Jersey
Camarata	Joe J.	New Jersey
Cantelmo	Craig	New York
Carr	Michael	New Jersey
Catalano	Vincent	New York
Celestino	Michael	New Jersey
Cimino	Joe	New Jersey
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Corbett	Heather	New Jersey
Cudnik	Greg	New Jersey
Cummings	Derek	New Hampshire
DePersenaire	John	New Jersey
Emerson	Clay	New Jersey
Friedman	Justin	New York
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Gary	Martin	Virginia
Haasz	Steve	New Jersey
Haertel	Paul	New Jersey
Harrison	Brendan	New Jersey
Harrison	Brendan	New Jersey
Kameen	Paul	Pennsylvania
Koch	Greg	New Jersey
Kosinski	Thomas	New Jersey
Lynch	David	Massachusetts
ONeill	Tyler	Delaware
Papciak	John	New York
Petersen	Daniel	Massachusetts
Poston	Will	Maryland
Rubner	Cody	Massachusetts
Taylor	Doug	New Jersey
Walsifer	Peter	New Jersey

Last Name	First Name	State
Whalley	Ben	Maine
Williams	Capt Brian	New Jersey
Woods	Michael	Rhode Island
Zorzi	Ken	New Jersey

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Tina Berger

**Delaware Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**

December 15, 2022 – Hybrid: Webinar and Dover, DE

Public Attendees: 18

Hearing Officers: John Clark (DENREC)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Madeline Musante, Toni Kerns

16 attendees provided comments, including comments on behalf of the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA)

Comments

Option A 2
Option B 12
Option C
Option D 2
Option E

Commenters from

DE 16

2 people (including ASGA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- The stock is in a rebuilding period and allowing transfers would increase harvest at the wrong time.
- The recreational slot has saved fish from the recreational sector and is contributing to the increase in spawning stock biomass; these fish were saved in order to rebuild by 2029, not to be killed before they can spawn.
- There should be no additional take as the stock rebuilds, especially take of larger striped bass.

12 people support Option B: transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax.

- All those in support of Option B are commercial fishermen.
- Support for allowing transfers as Delaware has been seeking more quota for some time.
- Option B is the only option that benefits Delaware in the near-term.

2 people support Option D: Board discretion on transfers with overfished conservation tax.

- Some oversight would be a good thing.
- However, oversight should not be excessive; for example, would not be supportive of the criteria that would not allow a state request a transfer until 90% of its quota is harvested.

Delaware Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 15, 2022
Hybrid: Webinar and Dover, DE

In-Person Attendees: enclosed sign-in sheet

Webinar Attendees:

Last Name	First Name	State
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Logan	Kenneth	Delaware
Pangman	Kelsey	Delaware
Parrott	Eric	Delaware
Poston	Will	Maryland
Satterfield	Paul	Delaware
Stangl	Michael	Delaware
Townsend	Wes	Delaware

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, Toni Kerns, Madeline Musante

Maryland-Virginia-Potomac River Fisheries Commission-District of Columbia
Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
January 5, 2023 – Webinar

Public Attendees: 29

Hearing Officers: Mike Luisi (MDDNR), Pat Geer (VMRC), Marty Gary (PRFC), Danny Ryan (DCDOE)

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns, Caitlin Starks, Madeline Musante

20 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments, including comments on behalf of the Annapolis Anglers Club (AAC) and Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF)

Poll

Option A	15
Option B	
Option C	1
Option D	
Option E	4

Polls/Commenters from

MD	6
VA	4
Other	10 (ME, MA, NY, NJ, FL)

15 people (including AAC, CBF) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- The stock is still overfished and recruitment has been low for the past few years.
- Any transfer would likely be large fish that are important to the spawning stock biomass.
- There is only a 78% chance of meeting the rebuilding deadline, so it seems inappropriate to change limits and still be able to meet the rebuilding deadline.
- Prefer changing allocations instead of allowing transfers.
- Stock productivity is already uncertain due to climate change, low recruitment, etc.

1 person supports Option C: transfers permitted except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

4 people support Option E: Board discretion on transfers except no transfers if overfished.

- No verbal comment provided.

Maryland-Virginia-Potomac River Fisheries Commission-District of Columbia

Public Hearing

Striped Bass Draft Addendum I

January 5, 2023

Webinar

Last Name	First Name	State
Batsavage	Chris	North Carolina
Catalano	Vincent	New York
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Deem	Jeff	Virginia
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Gary	Martin	Virginia
Geer	Pat	Virginia
Gillingham	Lewis	Virginia
Haile	Kayla	Maryland
Hogan	Sean	New York
Holtz	Jacob	Maryland
Hornick	Harry	Maryland
Humphrey	Bob	Maine
Kelly	Brian	Massachusetts
Koller	Stan	Virginia
LeMense	Julia	New York
Luisi	Michael	Maryland
Lynch	David	Massachusetts
Madsen	Shanna	Virginia
McCrickard	Alex	Virginia
McGilly	Joshua	Virginia
McMenamin	Kevin	Maryland
Miller	Roy	Delaware
Moore	Chris	Virginia
Musick	Susanna	Virginia
Newberry	Capt. Robert	Maryland
Nolan	Dave	Virginia
Owens	Ronald	Virginia
Poston	Will	Maryland
Pride	Bob	Virginia
Roach	Matthew	Maryland
Rubner	Cody	Florida
Ryan	Daniel	Maryland
Shoultz	Matthew	Maryland
Sikorski	David	Maryland

Last Name	First Name	State
Stoehr	Joel	New York
Whalley	Ben	Maine
Williams	Brian	New Jersey
Williams	Al	Massachusetts
Woodruff	Frederick	Maine
Woods	Michael	Rhode Island
Yarworth	Rudolph	Maryland
Zlokovitz	Erik	Maryland

ASMFC Staff: Toni Kerns, Caitlin Starks, Madeline Musante

**North Carolina Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I
December 8, 2022 – Webinar**

Public Attendees: 11

Hearing Officers: Chris Batsavage (NCDENR)

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, James Boyle

7 attendees participated in live polling and/or provided comments including the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA)

Poll

Option A 6
Option B 1
Option C
Option D
Option E

Polls/Commenters from

NC 2
Other 5 (ME, CT, MD)

6 people (including ASGA) support status quo Option A: no transfers permitted for the following reasons:

- Allowing transfers would increase mortality at a time when the stock is rebuilding.
- We should be doing everything possible to rebuild the stock to hopefully support striped bass eventually returning to NC at the southern end of the stock.
- The rebuilding plan is on a razor's edge and there are concerns about 2020 data.
- Increasing quota utilization would decrease the buffer between commercial landings and the full quota, which would reduce the margin for error in rebuilding the stock.
- Striped bass are managed differently along the coast so there are risks with transfers.
- This issue has grown from just focusing on Delaware to the entire coast.
- The fishery is mostly catch and release and should be managed as such.

1 person supports Option B: transfers permitted with overfished conservation tax for the following reasons:

- The commercial sector has relatively low harvest and discards.
- Striped bass is a profitable fish but North Carolina has not had them for ten years, so other states should be able to use the quota.
- The commercial fishery is accountable with a payback mechanism in place so it will not cause overfishing.
- The reason overfishing is occurring is recreational discards.

**North Carolina Public Hearing
Striped Bass Draft Addendum I**

December 8, 2022

Webinar

Last Name	First Name	State
Batsavage	Chris	North Carolina
Bryand	Michael	Maine
Cloutier	Germain	Maine
Friedrich	Tony	Maryland
Fuda	Tom	Connecticut
Lowman	Brooke	North Carolina
McGilly	Joshua	Virginia
Meyers	S	Virginia
Mulvey-McFerron	Owen	North Carolina
Newman	Thomas	North Carolina
Poston	Will	Maryland
Roller	Tom	North Carolina
Whalley	Ben	Maine
Williams	Scott	North Carolina

ASMFC Staff: Emilie Franke, James Boyle, Madeline Musante

Emilie Franke

From: Dave Flood <dflood621@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 10:12 AM
To: Comments
Subject: [External] Commercial quota transfers

It so frustrating that every time input from public recreational fishermen is requested for consideration that this organization seemingly disregards it every time.

Quotas for commercial harvest should not be considered.

I guess when the Striped Bass biomass equals that of the cod biomass and ZERO fishing or harvesting can occur because there won't be any fish, then the rules y'all set forth will be scrutinized.

Recreational fishermen spend BILLIONS of DOLLARS in travel, gear and the hiring of boats.

Someday the TOURISM affect off recreational fishermen will be valued.

David Flood

13 Mirador Ct.

Toms River, NJ 08757

201-232-1982

Emilie Franke

From: mzuralow@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2023 4:01 PM
To: Comments
Subject: [External] Striped Bass PID

I am a Maryland resident, 70 years old. I have been fishing on the Chesapeake Bay since the late 1970's. I own a home located on the point of Rockhold Creek and Herring Bay in Tracys Landing. I watch the charter boats out of Deale pass by each morning in season. I fish on my 25 Parker at least once a week, often more frequently, from May through November. My fishing grounds are from the Bay Bridge, Eastern Bay, and down to the south end of the Choptank. My short trips are "out front": West River to Ches Beach, or across to Poplar Island. 10 yrs ago it was quite common to limit out with 3 on board in 3-4 hrs of trolling with 4 lines in the water. Last year I was lucky to get 1 or 2 keepers every other time out running 7 lines.

Look at the charters in Deale and Ches Beach: most are running planers with 35+ rods or running 40+ miles to get north of the Bay Bridge to live line.

I think everyone agrees that the Striper stock has been depleted. My concern is that the recreational fishing community always gets the short end of the deal when it comes to solutions. I don't see me and my friends catching many rockfish. Charter boats with their 40 rods seem to do OK. What toll do the commercial fishermen bring to the rockfish population? My empirical evidence is that the "Recs" don't amount to a large percentage of the take. The managers grossly overestimate the recreational take. I'd like to see the pain evenly distributed. Charter boats – 1 fish per customer. They are professional captains that should be able to fish for a different species after the 1 fish striper limit is reached. How many fish are the commercial fishermen allowed? I never see a lack of stripers at the fish counters.

I see MD DNR is requesting fishing results for stripers from the Recs – that's a move in the right direction for identifying where the real depletion is coming from.

Bottom line: apply the conservation measures in an equitable way. There's no sanctity of watermen jobs. As in any other industry, when you use up your resource, some businesses close and some folks have to find other jobs.

Michael Zuralow
483 Leitch Rd.
Tracys Landing, MD
571-217-3974

Emilie Franke

From: katie <shugaah1130@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 2:17 PM
To: MICHAEL LUISI; Toni Kerns; Emilie Franke; Tina Berger; adrian.baker@maryland.gov; josh.kurtz@maryland.gov
Subject: [External] Susquehanna Striper Fishing

Hello,

I wanted to express my concern about the striper fishing in the susquehanna last month. There was a lot of unnecessary pressure put on the fish, especially by a lot of people not releasing or handling them correctly. Seeing this for at least a few weeks changed my opinion about closures. One of my fellow anglers suggested I reach out to you all to encourage February and January be closed to catch and release next year.

Thank you.

-Kat

From: [Emilie Franke](#)
To: ["Adam.Aguiar@stockton.edu"](mailto:Adam.Aguiar@stockton.edu)
Cc: [Toni Kerns](#); [Tina Berger](#)
Subject: RE: Please close the Susky in January and February for Catch and Release Striped Bass
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 10:13:26 AM

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 | Fax: 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 other 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. It's 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: [Aguilar, 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, March 27, 2023 9:27:15 PM

Hello again,

This one of many instances that is the direct result of the susky (above the normal closure line) being put on blast in February because it was open:

Fishing Maryland
Lou Walden · 17m · 📺

⋮ ✕

What is going on

Greg Thorpe
5h · 🌐

If I told y'all about my spot it ain't even rockfish season yet 😂😂😂



👍 😂 🤔 14

25 comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➤ Send



Greg's post

 Greg Thorpe · 6m · 

IYkyk 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

 6

3 comments

 Like

 Comment



 Like

 Comment



There was even a clip sent to the March 16th edition of the Fisherman Magazine's video forecast, which had details and pics with background to fish it before closure. I have been in contact with many other anglers and DNR officers who all say many many more anglers are risking ticketing now as a result of the chaos that was broadcast in February. And many of those anglers are keeping the fish. Again, it needs to be shut down for catch and release from January through April! This would be for the health of the bass population, the reputation of policymakers and DNR, and for upholding the standard of trophy striped bass. I hope this is all mentioned in the next ASMFC meeting.

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: 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 | Fax: 703.842.0741
efranke@asmfc.org | www.asmfc.org

From: Capt Steve Witthuhn, F/V Top Hook

March 28, 2023

Subject: Suggestions to **reduce release discard mortality** of striped bass.

It has become painfully obvious since the implementation of the slot (28" – 35"), discard mortality of large bass has sky rocketed! This coupled with marine biologist understanding that larger/older fish produce higher quality eggs, compounds the stock recovery problems.

Regulations changes to consider and include:

All RECREATIONAL FISHERS:

1. All lures/plugs are restricted to single hooks. Treble hooks illegal for striped bass fishing.
2. All barbs on circle hooks crimped/removed. (makes hook easy to remove)
3. Large (pole type) nets required to remove fish from water and return.
4. fish should not be suspended by the jaw and/or cradled for pictures.
5. Release limit of ten fish (per angler)

COMMERCIAL INDUSTRY:

1. Gill net and gill seining should be banned.
2. All commercial harvest restricted to rod and reel/hand gear. (down riggers)
3. Coastwide striped bass harvest should be limited to same min/max length fish.

ENFORCEMENT:

1. Larger penalties for poaching & pirating: Loss of permits/licenses and vessels.

CONSISTENCY:

States with striped bass gamefish status do not have commercial quotas, Only a recreational quota. Therefore, all striped bass must comply with recreational guidelines.

GEOGRAPHIC SPAWNING CLOSURES:

1. Striped bass spawning areas should be identified, and brief seasonal closures implemented to protect the breeders.

The rebuilding future of striped bass should NOT require a moratorium and can happen with full coastwide cooperation and commitment with implementation of HONEST and common regulations!

From: [Tom Fuda](#)
To: [Justin Davis](#); [Comments](#); [WILLIAM HYATT](#)
Subject: [External] Comments for the Spring Meeting of the Striped Bass Management Board
Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 8:07:58 AM

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to provide comments for the upcoming Spring meeting of the Striped Bass Management Board next month. I am a recreational angler from the state of Connecticut. I am not affiliated with any particular groups and speak for myself.

Last month's meeting in which the Technical Committee provided a summary of the preliminary recreational fishing data for the 2022 season made it very clear that recreational harvest saw a significant spike in 2022, vs the prior two years (a 90% increase over 2021 and a 106% increase over 2020, in terms of numbers of fish harvested by recreational anglers). The TC made it very clear this dramatic increase in harvest has put the rebuilding plan established by Amendment VII in jeopardy, to the point where it is far more likely to fail than succeed. This increased harvest is likely due to the availability of the abundant 2015 year class, which is now firmly "in the slot" in terms of size. Therefore, I feel it is imperative that action be taken at the upcoming May meeting to address this alarming trend and get the rebuilding plan back on track. It is time to initiate the addendum process to come up with a set of management options **for the 2024 season** that will reduce recreational harvest and get fishing mortality, and the rebuilding plan back on target. IMO this should take priority over finalizing Addendum I. We need to protect the 2015 (and eventually the 2017 and 2018 year classes) by adjusting the slot limit to take some of the harvest pressure off of them. These are the fish that we are relying on to rebuild the stock, given the very poor year classes we have had over the last four year. I feel this is one of those inflection points where the ASMFC has a chance to act in the best interests of the fishery. There will be pressure from some board members to wait until the 2024 benchmark stock assessment to get further clarification of the status of the stock. IMO, there's no time to wait until the stock assessment, since that will likely delay any management action until the 2026 season. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Thomas Fuda
Shelton, CT