

Terms of Reference & Stock Assessment Subcommittee Membership

2027 Atlantic Striped Bass Benchmark Stock Assessment

K. Drew, ASMFC



Terms of Reference (TORs)

 Striped bass will be going through the NRCC peer review process in March 2027

 Terms of reference provide guidance to the TC/SAS on important issues to address through the assessment and to the Peer Review Panel on what to evaluate to determine if the assessment passes or fails



TOR #1: Ecosystem Influences

 Identify relevant ecosystem influences on the stock. Characterize the uncertainty in the relevant sources of data and their link to stock dynamics. Consider findings, as appropriate, in addressing other TORs. Report how the findings were considered under impacted TORs.



TOR #2: FI & FD Data Sets

2. Investigate all available fisheries independent and dependent data sets, including life history, indices of abundance, and tagging data. Describe the spatial and temporal distribution of the data. Characterize the uncertainty in the data. Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the data sources and justify inclusion or elimination of datasets.



TOR #3: Total Catch

 Estimate commercial and recreational landings and discards. Characterize the uncertainty in the data and spatial distribution of the fisheries. Review new MRIP estimates of catch, effort and the calibration method if available.



TOR #4: Age-Based Model

4. Use an age-based model to estimate annual fishing mortality, recruitment, total abundance and stock biomass (total and spawning stock) for the time series and estimate their uncertainty. Provide model diagnostics, retrospective analysis of the model results and historical retrospective. Provide estimates of exploitation by stock component and sex, where possible, and for total stock complex. If multiple models have been considered, compare results and performance and justify choice of preferred model.



TOR #5: Tagging Model

5. Use tagging data to estimate mortality and abundance, and provide suggestions for further development.



TOR #6: Reference Points

6. Update or redefine biological reference points (BRPs; point estimates or proxies for B_{MSV} SSB_{MSV} F_{MSV} MSY). Define stock status based on BRPs by stock component where possible.



TOR #7: Projections

7. Explore new methods to predict future catch or F. Provide annual projections of catch and biomass under these scenarios. Projections should estimate and report annual probabilities of exceeding threshold BRPs for F and probabilities of falling below threshold BRPs for biomass.



TOR #8: Minority Report

8. If a minority report has been filed, explain majority reasoning against adopting approach suggested in that report. The minority report should explain reasoning against adopting approach suggested by the majority.



TOR #9: Research Recommendations

 Review and evaluate the status of the Technical Committee research recommendations listed in the most recent SARC report. Identify new research recommendations. Recommend timing and frequency of future assessment updates and benchmark assessments.



Questions



Stock Assessment Subcommittee Nominations



SAS Nominations

- Mike Celestino, New Jersey
- Margaret Conroy, Delaware
- Brooke Lowman, Virginia
- Gary Nelson, Massachusetts
- Nicole Lengyel Costa, Rhode Island
- Alexei Sharov, Maryland
- John Sweka, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Tyler Grabowski, Technical Committee Chair, Pennsylvania
- Katie Drew, ASMFC
- Samara Nehemiah, ASMFC



Technical Committee Report on Stock Projections

K. Drew, ASMFC

May 6, 2025





• Base case projections

Reductions to achieve 50% and 60% probability of rebuilding

• Board-requested sensitivity runs



Base Case

- Based on preliminary 2024 removals:
 - →2024 preliminary MRIP estimates + 7% reduction in commercial harvest and discards based on Add. II quotas
- Previous projections reviewed by the Board last year were based on estimating total 2024 recreational removals from waves 2-5



Base Case

 Preliminary 2024 MRIP estimates for the whole year were within the range of estimates predicted from the partial wave data







- Recruitment: drawn from 2008-2023 model-estimates of age-1 recruitment
 - Low recruitment regime, based on a change-point analysis
- F 2025: F projected to increase 17% in 2025 and then decrease in 2026 as the above-average 2018 year-class enters the ocean slot and then begins growing out of it



2026-2029 F Scenarios

• Base case: F=F_2024 for 2026-2029

• F rebuild 50%: F for 2026-2029 is equal to the F rate that will result in a 50% probability that SSB in 2029 will be at or above the SSB target

• F rebuild 60%: F for 2026-2029 is equal to the F rate that will result in a 60% probability that SSB in 2029 will be at or above the SSB target



Base Case







Scenario	Prob. of Rebuild by 2029	2026 Removals	2026 Reduction in Removals to achieve F_rebuild 50%	2026 Reduction in Removals to achieve F_rebuild 60%
F2026-2029 = F2024 = 0.123	49%	3.54 million fish	-1%	-7%



50% vs. 60% Probability





TC/SAS Comments

- Major sources of uncertainty in the projections:
 - How much F will or will not increase in 2025
 - What F will be for 2026-2029
 - \rightarrow Depend on angler behavior, fish availability, etc.



TC/SAS Comments

• Effectiveness of reductions of less than 10% will be difficult to measure given uncertainty in MRIP estimates

 Effectiveness of small reductions (<10%) on paper for the recreational fishery would be overwhelmed by uncertainty in the calculations themselves, including uncertainty around fish availability, effort, and angler behavior



Board Sensitivity Requests



Sensitivity Runs

• Extend base run projections to 2035

 Use the most recent 6 years of very low recruitment instead of the 2008-2023 values

- Project a moderate F value for 2026 onwards (i.e., higher than the F projected for 2024 but lower than the F target)
 - Previous projections showed that the population would stabilize between the SSB target and threshold if fished at F target under 2008-2023 recruitment



Recruitment Scenarios





F Scenarios





Sensitivity Runs

	Low Recruitment	Very Low Recruitment
F=2024	Base case Recruitment: 2008-2023 F= 0.123	Recruitment: 2019-2025 F= 0.123
Moderate F (Average of 2024-25)	Recruitment: 2008-2023 F = 0.134	Recruitment: 2019-2025 F = 0.134

 \rightarrow All projections go out to 2035



Results





Results







- Under the 2008-2023 recruitment assumption, SSB continues to increase after 2029 under F=0.123 and F=0.134
 - Previous projections showed that the population would stabilize between the SSB target and threshold if fished at F target (0.17) under 2008-2023 recruitment from 2029-2035

 Under the 2019-2025 recruitment assumption, SSB will start to decline after 2029 under both F scenarios as the 2015 and 2018 year-classes



Questions



Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum III For Board Review

May 6, 2025





Presentation

- Overview and Timeline
- Statement of the Problem
- Draft Addendum Outline and Background
- Management Options (including PDT Memo comments)
- Board action for consideration today: Consider approving Draft Addendum III for public comment.


PDT Members

- Corrin Flora (ME)
- Elise Koob (MA)
- Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI)
- Caitlin Craig (NY)

- Brendan Harrison (NJ)
- Jordan Zimmerman (DE)
- Angela Giuliano (MD)
- Emilie Franke (ASMFC)

Input from TC-SAS, LEC, AP



Introduction

Approved Board Motion from December 2024:

Move to initiate an addendum to support striped bass rebuilding by 2029 in consideration of 2024 recreational and commercial mortality while balancing socioeconomic impacts. Options should include, if needed, a range of overall reductions, consideration of recreational versus commercial contributions to the reductions, recreational season and size changes taking into account regional variability of availability, and no harvest versus no target closures. Final action shall be taken by the annual 2025 meeting to be in place for the 2026 recreational and commercial fisheries.



- Board provided guidance in February 2025 on the scope of options:
 - Options for 50% and 60% probability of rebuilding
 - Options for changes to size and/or season (not possession limits)
 - Options for recreational mode split
 - Types of size limits and seasonal closures
 - Option to consider requiring commercial tagging at point of harvest
 - Option to standardize definition of 'total length'
- Board will consider today whether to add Maryland recreational baseline season to the draft addendum



Timeline

Date	Action
December 2024	Board initiated Draft Addendum III
February 2025	Board provided guidance on scope of options
Feb – April 2025	PDT developed options and draft document
May 2025	Board approves Draft Addendum for public comment
Late May-June 2025	Public comment period
August 2025	Board reviews public comment, selects measures, final approval of Addendum III
2026 and later	States implement regulations

Note: This timeline is subject to change per the direction of the Board.



- Stock subject to rebuilding plan to be at or above the spawning stock biomass target by 2029
- Projections estimate increased fishing mortality in 2025 followed by decrease in 2026 due to above-average 2018 yearclass moving through the ocean slot limit
- Concern about lack of strong year-classes behind the 2018s
- Draft addendum considers implementing measures in 2026 designed to achieve a reduction to increase the probability of rebuilding by 2029



- States with commercial fisheries can choose tagging at point of harvest or tagging at point of sale; FMP requirement since 2012
- Concerns that waiting to tag until point of sale could increase risk of illegal harvest
- Draft addendum considers requiring commercial tagging at the point of harvest with goal of improving enforcement and compliance
- Change would impact three states (MA, RI, NC)
- Differences among state commercial management systems and current tagging program → difficult to determine whether point-of-harvest tagging would decrease the risk of illegal harvest in every state



- FMP specifies size limits in total length (TL), but does not define TL
- Current regulations vary by state on how to measure striped bass TL for compliance
- Concern that no standard method of measurement is undermining the conservation, consistency, and enforceability of size limits
- Draft addendum considers coastwide requirements for state regulatory definitions of TL for striped bass (both sectors)



Draft Addendum Outline

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Overview

- 2.1 Statement of the Problem
- 2.2 Background
 - Status of the Stock; Status of Management;
 - Status of the Fisheries; Social and Economic Considerations;
 - Seasonality of Rec. Catch and Effort; Equity Considerations for Regional Closures;
 - Other Species Caught/Targeted in Striped Bass Rec. Fishery;
 - Examples of MD and NC Striped Bass Season Closures.



Status of Management

- Addendum II to Amendment 7 implemented in 2024 to reduce fishing mortality and support rebuilding
- Commercial Ocean and Chesapeake Bay: 7% quota reduction
- <u>Recreational Ocean</u>: 1 fish at 28-31" with 2022 seasons
- <u>Recreational Chesapeake Bay</u>: 1 fish at 19-24" with 2022 seasons
- Requirements for at-sea/shore-side filleting
- Ability for Board to respond via Board action (no addendum) if stock assessment indicates <50% probability of rebuilding



Status of the Fisheries





Status of the Fisheries

Striped Bass Recreational Directed Trips (MRIP)





Seasonality of Rec. Fishery

Proportion of each state's directed striped bass trips by wave in the ocean region. Source: MRIP data 2021-2022-2024.

									Ocean	Ocean	Ocean
Wave	ME	NH	MA	RI	СТ	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC*
Wave 1 Jan/Feb	Х	х	Х	Х	Х	Х	х	Х	Х	Х	19%
Wave 2 Mar/Apr	Х	Х	5%	21%	23%	22%	27%	32%	10%	0%	0%
Wave 3 May/June	27%	25%	28%	24%	29%	22%	20%	22%	38%	0%	0%
Wave 4 July/Aug	47%	43%	39%	25%	19%	13%	4%	8%	3%	0%	0%
Wave 5 Sep/Oct	26%	32%	22%	19%	18%	21%	15%	9%	9%	58%	0%
Wave 6 Nov/Dec	Х	Х	6%	12%	10%	21%	33%	29%	40%	42%	81%

X indicates MRIP sampling does not occur during that wave.

*NC only considers striped bass caught in the ocean during waves 1 and 6 to be part of the coastal migratory stock.



Social and Economic Considerations

- Commercial quota reductions likely reduce profits; impacts vary depending on individual harvester circumstances (e.g., ability to diversify)
- Recreational measure changes may result in anglers modifying trip duration or location, shifting target species, or deciding not to take the fishing trip
- Angler response to season closures is difficult to predict
- Research indicates the typical striped bass angler prefers to keep larger fish
 → current narrow slot limit may reduce effort for those seeking to harvest
- Higher slot options being considered (e.g., 37"-40") would allow keeping a larger fish, but that size would be inaccessible to shore anglers



Social and Economic Considerations

- Reduction in striped bass effort could negatively impact regional economy and businesses
- Impacts on individual businesses depend on several factors, including ability to switch to other species
- Managers have to weigh potential negative economic impacts with potential long-term impact on the stock



Equity of Regional Closures

Ocean region approaches

- ME-MA and RI-NC
 - ME-MA similar peak removals
 - RI-CT peak removals/harvest different than NY-NC
 - Closures during two waves help address equity concerns in Mid-Atlantic
 - Law Enforcement Committee supports this regional configuration to ensure consistent seasons for states around Block Island Sound (RI-CT-NY)
- ME-RI and CT-NC
 - ME-MA similar peak removals/harvest; RI different peak
 - CT-NC see above; closures during two waves may help address equity concerns in Mid-Atlantic



Equity of Regional Closures

Ocean region approaches

- DE-NC explored as separate third region, but PDT did not move forward
- Low catch/effort and sporadic fishery activity
- Very limited MRIP data and high PSEs

Chesapeake Bay state closures

- MD and VA peak removals in the Bay during Wave 6, MD removals more evenly distributed across waves
- Seasons already differ among Bay jurisdictions (e.g., VA already closed for all of Wave 4 and part of Wave 5)

Supplementary memo with state-specific reductions for context



Other Species Caught/Targeted

- Possible result of season closures is anglers targeting other species
- Analysis of 1) which species are commonly targeted on trips that also targeted striped bass and 2) which species are commonly caught on trips that also caught striped bass
- Some insight on which species may be available during striped bass closures
- However, some of these species may only be targeted/caught with striped bass because anglers are already targeting striped bass
- Anglers may not necessarily switch to these species; may not take the trip at all or switch to entirely different species



Existing Closure Examples

- Striped bass season closures recently implemented in Maryland Chesapeake Bay and North Carolina's Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River
- Some insight into changes in removals, effort, and angler behavior
- Several factors will contribute to changes in catch and effort from a closure (e.g., angler preferences, availability of other species)



Draft Addendum Outline

3.0 Proposed Management Options

- 3.1 Method to Measure Total Length
- 3.2 Commercial Tagging: Point of Sale vs. Point of Harvest
- 3.3 Reduction in Fishery Removals

Board to consider whether to add Maryland Recreational Season Baseline option

4.0 Compliance Schedule



Proposed Management Options: 3.1 Measuring Total Length



- FMP specifies size limits in TL but does not define method for measuring TL
- Some states require squeezing the tail, some states allow angler discretion, some states require the tail be left natural or fanned out → result in different TL measurement
- MADMF analysis indicates a minor difference for natural vs. squeezed tail but a more substantial difference for natural vs. forcibly fanned tail
 - E.g., 32.38" fish measures 31" when tail is forcibly fanned
- Forcibly fanning the tail could allow harvest of striped bass over the maximum size limit, undermining conservation intent



Total Length (TL)

- Law Enforcement Committee supports consistent, specific, and easily understood language on how to measure striped bass TL
- Advisory Panel consensus in support of a standard coastwide definition of TL
 - PDT requested AP input on whether requirement to lay fish flat would be reasonable, especially for shore anglers
 - AP noted every angler is responsible for ensuring they can properly measure the fish, no matter if fishing from shore, boat, pier
- PDT notes there will still be some inconsistencies even with coastwide definition (e.g., rack of a fillet fish may measure differently than whole fish even if using same method)



Total Length (TL)

Option A. Status Quo: No Definition of Total Length

Option B. Mandatory Elements for Total Length Definition (Both Sectors)

- Adopt mandatory elements for each state's regulatory definition of striped bass TL
- All states must require: 1) squeezing the tail; 2) a straight-line measurement;
 3) the fish is laid flat; and 4) the mouth is closed.
- States may use the following language or submit alternative language for Board consideration.

Total length means the greatest straight line length in inches as measured on a fish (laid flat on its side on top of the measuring device) with its mouth closed from the anterior most tip of the jaw or snout to the farthest extremity of the tail with the upper and lower fork of the tail squeezed together.



Proposed Management Options: 3.2 Commercial Tagging



- States with commercial fisheries can choose tagging at point of harvest or tagging at point of sale; FMP requirement since 2012
 - MA, RI, NC implement tagging at point of sale
- Concerns that waiting to tag until point of sale could increase risk of illegal harvest
- Differences among states' commercial management systems and current tagging program → difficult to determine whether point-of-harvest would decrease the risk of illegal harvest in every state
- Current consequences if unused tags are not returned: harvester/dealer cannot receive the next season's tags, or they receive a reduced number of tags until unused tags have been returned or a record of tag accounting is submitted



Commercial Tagging

- Majority opinion of Law Enforcement Committee supports tagging at point of harvest to improve enforcement from total time the species is in possession, reduce the ability to high-grade, and increase accountability
- Opposing opinion within LEC supports continuation of point-of-sale tagging noting concerns about fishers trading tags under point of harvest system → would tag trading potentially increase illegal market fish?
 - Also noted administrative burden of distributing tags, especially for states not managing with ITQs



Commercial Tagging

Option A. Status Quo. States can choose point of harvest or point of sale

Option B. Require commercial tagging at the point of harvest

• Consider delaying implementation until 2027 or 2028 to account for administrative and regulatory changes to switch from point of sale

- Board discussion: Is the intent to allow tagging at point of landing or just at point of harvest?
 - One state currently specifies tagging at point of landing (i.e., before landing or putting on shore)
 - FMP does not define "point of harvest" (i.e., immediately upon possession or within specific parameters outlined by various state regulations)



Proposed Management Options: 3.3 Reduction in Fishery Removals



Reduction in Fishery Removals

- Status Quo: 49% probability of rebuilding
- Alternative 7% Reduction: 60% probability of rebuilding

- TC guidance that management changes designed to achieve small changes (less than 10%) would be difficult to measure given uncertainty. Small reductions not statistically distinguishable from status quo.
- PDT Memo includes outline of management options to achieve 10% reduction for completeness recognizing TC guidance.



Reduction in Fishery Removals

- Option 1. Status Quo. No Reduction.
- Option 2. Even Sector Reductions: Commercial -7% and Recreational -7%
- Option 3: No Commercial Reduction: Commercial -0% and Recreational -8%
- Option 4: Reductions based on Sector Contribution to Total Removals: Commercial -0.8% and Recreational -8%

7% Reduction



- Commercial: consider reduction in commercial quota
- Recreational: consider changes to size limits and/or seasons
- Since the stock is overfished, no CE for non-quota managed fisheries except Hudson River, Delaware River/Bay
- NY, PA, and DE may submit area-specific recreational measures in implementation plan to achieve the same rec. percent reduction
 - NY Hudson River; PA Delaware River spring slot; DE Delaware River/Bay summer slot
 - Fisheries occur over a few months targeting small fish to protect spawning females and/or due to availability of smaller resident fish



- Tradeoff: shorter closure during peak season or longer closure during slower season
- Type of closure: No-Harvest or No-Targeting
 - No-Targeting Assumption '<u>SB Trips Switch Target</u>' assumes all trips previously targeting striped bass would occur but would shift target species
 - No-Targeting Assumption '<u>SB-only Trips Eliminated</u>' assumes trips previously targeting only striped bass would no longer occur



- Analysis combines data across all days (weekends and weekdays)
- If adding weekend vs. weekday to analysis, FMP would have to specify what day of the week a closure would begin to determine how many weekend days and weekdays are closed
- TC recommended exploring the impact of separating weekend vs. weekday catch data
- Results from case study (18-day closure with varying start day) indicate a less than 1% difference between accounting for weekdays/weekends vs. combining all days
- Long enough closure to encompass multiple weekends



PDT Memo Questions

- Should there be options for closures less than 14 days? Or should those options be listed as a 14-day minimum?
 - TC guidance that closures less than 14 days unlikely to be effective
 - Some options calculated to meet 7% reduction in less than 14 days
- Should NC implement a closure in Wave 1 or 6, even if different than other Mid-Atlantic states? Or align with other states?
 - NC only considers striped bass caught in ocean during waves 1 and 6 to be part of coastal migratory stock



PDT Memo Questions

- How would a Wave 2 or 6 closure be implemented in NY?
 - NY ocean currently only open for harvest 16/61 days in Wave 2 and 45/61 days in Wave 6
 - If region implements new closure when NY is already closed, less harvest savings than calculated
 - If region implements new closure when NY is open, more harvest savings than calculated and larger impact on NY fishery
 - Would NY need to implement new closure during their open period, which may be different dates than neighboring states?
 - Would NY close for maximum 16 days during Wave 2?



Rec. Mode Split Considerations

FH=for-hire; PS=private/shore

- <u>For-Hire Exemption</u>: calculate all modes combined; wider slot limit for FH with all modes taking a slightly longer closure to account for FH size limit
 - Different size limit but same seasons for all modes
- <u>Separate Equal Mode Reductions</u>: calculate FH and PS separately; FH take longer closure to account for wider slot; PS shorter closure
 - Different size limits and different seasons by mode
 - LEC notes difficulty of enforcing different seasons by mode due to identifying which sector a vessel belongs to


Rec. Mode Split Considerations

PDT memo

- Board member guidance via email on mode split options
- One request to consider days off per week for for-hire instead of closing for consecutive days
- PDT concern on how to quantify reduction given effort shifting and which day of the week would close (weekday vs. weekend)
- Part-time charter businesses could shift trips around the day off, but fulltime charter businesses cannot so may experience more impact
- Across states, days off approach could have a more even impact spanning multiple Waves instead of one finite closure time period



Reduction in Fishery Removals

- Option 1. Status Quo. No Reduction.
- Option 2. Even Sector Reductions: Commercial -7% and Recreational -7%
- Option 3: No Commercial Reduction: Commercial -0% and Recreational -8%
- Option 4: Reductions based on Sector Contribution to Total Removals: Commercial -0.8% and Recreational -8%

7% Reduction

State/Region	Options 1 & 3. Status Quo & No Reduction	Option 2. -7% Reduction	Option 4. -0.8% Reduction		
	Ocean Commercial Quotas				
Maine	143	133	142		
New Hampshire	3,289	3,059	3,263		
Massachusetts	683,773	635,909	678,303		
Rhode Island	138,467	128,774	137,359		
Connecticut	13,585	12,634	13,476		
New York	595,868	554,157	591,101		
New Jersey	200,798	186,742	199,192		
Delaware	132,501	123,226	131,441		
Maryland	82,857	77,057	82,194		
Virginia	116,282	108,142	115,352		
North Carolina	274,810	255,573	272,612		
Ocean Total	2,242,373	2,085,407	2,224,434		
Chesapeake Bay Commercial Quota					
Chesapeake Bay Total	2,791,532	2,596,125	2,769,200		

Option 2 Ocean Recreational Fishery (-7%)				
	Modes	Size Limit	Season Closure Needed	Closure Table
02A	All	37" to 40" slot [-7%]	Status Quo	NA
02В	All	28" to 31" slot [0%]	-7%	Table 10
02C	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 28" to 31" slot FH: 28" to 33" slot [+1%]	-8%	<u>Table 11</u>
	Split Separate O2D Equal Mode Reductions	PS: 28" to 31" slot [0%]	PS: -7%	Table 13
020		FH: 28" to 32" slot [+12%]	FH: -17%	Table 15
0.35	Split Separate O2E Equal Mode Reductions	PS: 28" to 31" slot [0%]	PS: -7%	Table 13
UZE		FH: 28" to 33" slot [+28%]	FH: -27%	Table 15



Option 2 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery (-7%)

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	Modes	Size Limit	Season Closure Needed	Closure Table
CB2A	All	20" to 24" slot <i>[-8%]</i>	Status Quo	NA
CB2B	All	22" minimum size <i>[-10%]</i>	Status Quo	NA
CB2C	All	19" to 24" slot [0%]	-7%	Table 10
CB2D	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 20" to 24" slot FH: 19" to 25" slot [-7%]	Status Quo	NA
CB2E	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 20" to 24" slot FH: 21" minimum size <i>[-7%]</i>	Status Quo	NA
CB2F	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 19" to 24" slot FH: 19" to 25" slot [+1%]	-8%	<u>Table 11</u>
Split Separate		PS: 19" to 24" slot [0%]	PS: -7%	Table 13
Reductions	FH: 19" to 25" slot [+13%]	FH: -18%	Table 17	

Options 3/4 Ocean Recreational Fishery (-8%)				
	Modes	Size Limit	Season Closure Needed	Closure Table
03A/04A	All	38" to 41" slot [-8%]	Status Quo	NA
O3B/O4B	All	28" to 31" slot [0%]	-8%	Table 11
03C/04C	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 28" to 31" slot FH: 28" to 33" slot <i>[+1%]</i>	-9%	Table 12
Split O3D/O4D Equ Rec	Split Separate	PS: 28" to 31" slot [0%]	PS: -8%	Table 14
	Reductions	FH: 28" to 32" slot [+12%]	FH: -18%	Table 16
O3E/O4E	Split Separate	PS: 28" to 31" slot [0%]	PS: -8%	Table 14
	Equal Mode Reductions	FH: 28" to 33" slot <i>[+28%]</i>	FH: -28%	Table 16

Option 3/4 Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery (-8%)				
	Modes	Size Limit	Season Closure Needed	Closure Table
CB3A/CB4A	All Modes	20" to 24" slot [-8%]	Status Quo	NA
CB3B/CB4B	All Modes	22" minimum size [-10%]	Status Quo	NA
CB3C/CB4C	All Modes	19" to 24" slot [0%]	-8%	Table 11
CB3D/CB4D	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 20" to 24" slot FH: 19" to 24" slot <i>[-8%]</i>	Status Quo	NA
CB3E/CB4E	Split For-Hire Exemption	PS: 19" to 24" slot FH: 19" to 25" slot [+1%]	-9%	Table 12
	Split Separate	PS: 19" to 24" slot [0%]	PS: -8%	<u>Table 14</u>
CD3F/CD4F	Reductions	FH: 19" to 25" slot [+13%]	FH: -19%	Table 17



Recreational Options

Recreational season closure tables (# of days closed)

- Table 10: Closures for -7% reduction for all modes (in slides example)
- Table 11: Closures for -8% reduction for all modes
- Table 12: Closures for -9% reduction for all modes
- Table 13: Closures for -7% reduction for Private-Shore
- Table 14: Closures for -8% reduction for Private-Shore
- Table 15: Closures for -17% and 27% reductions for Ocean For-Hire
- Table 16: Closures for -18% and 28% reductions for Ocean For-Hire
- Table 17: Closures for -18% and -19% reduction for Chesapeake Bay For-Hire



days closed in each Wave

Closures for -7% Reduction for All Modes No Target (SB trips No Target (SB only Waves No Harvest Region trips eliminated) switch targets) All Wave 3 & Wave 6 9 12 18 Ocean Wave 3 18 40 47 ME-MA ME-MA 12 Wave 4 22 23 53 ME-MA Wave 5 20 29 RI-NC 17 20 42 Wave 2 RI-NC Wave 3 29 34 46 RI-NC Wave 4 62^ 62^ 62^ RI-NC Wave 5 37 49 61^ 11 14 RI-NC Wave 6 21 RI-NC Wave 2 & Wave 3 12 13 22 Wave 2 & Wave 4 RI-NC 14 17 31 Wave 2 & Wave 5 RI-NC 12 15 25 RI-NC Wave 3 & Wave 6 8 10 15 Wave 4 & Wave 6 10 13 18 RI-NC

days closed in each Wave

Closures for -7% Reduction for All Modes

Region	Waves	No Target (SB only trips eliminated)	No Target (SB trips switch targets)	No Harvest
ME-RI	Wave 3	16	30	44
ME-RI	Wave 4	13	23	25
ME-RI	Wave 5	20	28	52
CT-NC	Wave 2	17	19	40
CT-NC	Wave 3	31	37	48
CT-NC	Wave 4	62^	62^	62^
CT-NC	Wave 5	39	54	61^
CT-NC	Wave 6	10	14	20
CT-NC	Wave 2 & Wave 3	11	13	22
CT-NC	Wave 2 & Wave 4	14	17	31
CT-NC	Wave 2 & Wave 5	12	14	25
CT-NC	Wave 3 & Wave 6	8	10	14
CT-NC	Wave 4 & Wave 6	9	12	18

days closed in each Wave

Closures for -7% Reduction for All Modes

Region	Waves	No Target (SB only trips eliminated)	No Target (SB trips switch targets)	No Harvest
MD Bay	Wave 3	17	21	23
MD Bay	Wave 4	17	19	21
MD Bay	Wave 5	19	21	27
MD Bay	Wave 6	14	14	22
VA Bay	Wave 3	10	10	12
VA Bay	Wave 4	Already closed all of Wave 4		
VA Bay	Wave 5	28^	28^	28^
VA Bay	Wave 6	9	10	13

- PRFC and DC can each choose whether to implement closure during the same wave as Maryland or Virginia.
- Bay jurisdictions should coordinate to align seasons as much as possible. Consider whether new closures could be added to existing closures and whether the type of existing closure (no-targeting vs. no-harvest) should be consistent in a wave.



Draft Addendum Outline

3.0 Proposed Management Options

- 3.1 Method to Measure Total Length
- 3.2 Commercial Tagging : Point of Sale vs. Point of Harvest
- 3.3 Reduction in Fishery Removals

Board to consider whether to add Maryland Recreational Season Baseline option

4.0 Compliance Schedule





Maryland's Baseline Adjustment Proposal



Presented to: The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

May 6, 2025



Background

- Since 2015, Maryland DNR has modified recreational measures/regulations 7 times
- Changes included:
 - Size Limits (min/max)
 - Bag limits (2 fish to 1 fish)
 - Seasonal modifications (Trophy Season Closure)
 - Gear requirements (Circle Hooks)
 - Targeting restrictions (No Targeting Closures)
- Previous changes resulted from Board actions (Addenda and Emergency) as well as Conservation Equivalency Proposals when the CE was allowed prior to Amendment 7.
- Currently, any additional changes (Addendum III...IV...etc) to the recreational measures will require Maryland to 'tack on' more restrictions to a fishing year in the Chesapeake Bay that is already too complicated.
- Stakeholders expressed concerned that, without the ability to adapt and reset our baseline, any new management actions could regulate their fishery away.
- MDNR is also interested in taking a step back and re-focusing on **efforts to re-align more closely with VA/PRFC** and protect the resident stock during the summer months when they are most vulnerable to release mortality
- A trade-off between summer no targeting closures and spring access through catch and release was explored



Current Regulations in Maryland (Chesapeake Bay)





Current Season Comparison (Complexity)

<u>General Maryland Measures 10+ Years Ago (Pre-Addendum IV to Amendment 6)</u>



Current 2025 Recreational Chesapeake Bay Measures





Current Season Comparison (Bay Jurisdictions)

Current 2025 Virginia and PRFC Recreational Measures







Joint Committee of Maryland Stakeholders



Additional Representation:

- Maryland's ASFMC Board Members (Luisi, Sikorski and Dize/Brown)
- Chairs of Maryland's Recreational and Commercial Advisory Commissions
- MD ASMFC Striped Bass Advisors

Charge to the Committee:

- Develop a comprehensive management approach for the 2026 recreational fishing year and beyond that addresses the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's goal to rebuild the Striped Bass spawning stock biomass to the target reference point by 2029.
- Solutions must have a <u>neutral or positive impact on mortality</u> in order to be considered



Technical Committee Review of our Analysis

- The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions Striped Bass Technical Committee (TC) met twice to discuss Maryland's proposal to calculate a new baseline that is comparable to the 2024 season.
- Recommendations made by the TC have been incorporated into our data analysis
 - On Release mortality, the TC recommended the 9% standard rate should be used throughout the year
 - Pooling data across years (2021-2024) should be considered whenever possible
- We are open to the idea of modifying our analysis based on Board feedback today
 - This would result Final Action on the addendum in October this year with implementation in 2026.





Proposed Baseline Adjustment





Big Picture...By the Numbers

Current Regulations

- Jan 1 March 31 (Catch and Release)
- April 1 May 15 (No Target Closure)
- May 16 July 15 (Harvest 1 @ 19-24)
- July 16 July 31 (No Target Closure)
- Aug 1 Dec 10 (Harvest 1 @ 19-24)
- Dec 11 Dec 31 (Catch and Release)

New Baseline Proposal

- Jan 1 April 30 (Catch and Release)
- May 1 July 31 (Harvest 1 @ 19-24)
- Aug 1 Aug 31 (No Target Closure)
- Sept 1 Dec 6 (Harvest 1 @ 19-24)
- Dec 7 Dec 31 (Catch and Release)

	Current Regulations	Proposed New Baseline 🎸
Catch & Release	111	147
Harvest	193	187
No Targeting	61	31
Total Days	365	365
Total Access (C&R + Harvest)	304	334
Total Access %	83%	92%





In Summary



- This proposal is an effort to **refocus our conservation effor**t on the protection of the resident population in the Chesapeake Bay and **realign with our neighboring jurisdictions.**
- Effort in Wave 4 (July August) is redistributed to the spring of the year to allow for a catch and release fishery in April and an earlier start date for the summer/fall fishery.
- The mortality savings alone from closing the entire month of August is a 'win for the fish'
- This is our opportunity to address the needs of the stock (low abundance of residents) while at the same time, **allowing access** through catch and release when conditions in the Bay are much more conducive to fishing activity (low release mortality).
- Our proposal is 'mortality' positive...meaning that it is more conservative than the status quo
- Opinions are split on this issue in Maryland, however, we would like to have the opportunity to solicit public feedback on the topic.
- We realize the challenges that this presents to states, since this is currently just a Maryland issue.
- The Board has taken significant action to address the rebuilding of the Striped Bass population throughout the range of the stock.
- This proposal is just one more action that will get us closer to that goal