



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Initiates Amendment 7 to Address Longstanding Fishery Management Issues

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board initiated the development of an Amendment to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan. As the first step in the development of a new FMP or amendment, the Public Information Document (PID) will focus on the following management topics: (1) fishery goals and objectives; (2) stock rebuilding/timeframe; (3) management triggers; (4) biological reference points; (5) regional management (recreational measures, coastal and producer areas, regional reference points); (6) recreational discard mortality; (7) conservation equivalency; (8) recreational accountability; and (9) coastal commercial quota allocation. The purpose of the PID is to solicit stakeholder input on prioritizing the importance of each topic for continued development and inclusion in the Draft Amendment.

“Now that Addendum VI measures are in place and stock rebuilding has been initiated, the Board can focus on addressing a number of issues that have been at the forefront of striped bass management for a long time,” stated Board Chair David Borden of Rhode Island.

Between the Spring and Summer Meetings, a Work Group of Board members met to discuss significant issues facing striped bass management. The Board agreed that all of the issues discussed by the Work Group are extremely important and complex, and deserve significant thought and consideration. Furthermore, the prioritization of issues to be addressed by the Amendment should be guided by stakeholder input.

“Given it’s been 17 years since the Board last considered a new plan amendment to the striped bass management program, the Board intends to be very thoughtful and deliberative as it proceeds with the development of this Amendment,” stated Mr. Borden. “It’s important that we provide the public with sufficient background information in order to solicit effective feedback from all stakeholders and ensure the Draft Amendment addresses the most pressing issues at this time.”

During its deliberations, Board members discussed the importance of addressing discard mortality in recreational striped bass fisheries given discards significantly contribute to total fishing mortality. As a result, the Board tasked the Plan Development Team and Technical Committee to review factors

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.

limiting the accuracy of discard mortality estimates for stock assessment purposes, and to identify potential actions that could improve understanding or help reduce discard mortality in the fishery.

The Work Group Report, which can be found [here](#), will serve as the foundation of the Draft PID. The Board will review the first draft of the PID at the Commission's Annual Meeting in October. At that meeting, the Board will determine if the PID is ready to be sent out for public comment or if further modifications to the document are needed. Given current, and possibly future, meeting restrictions due to COVID-19, public hearings may be conducted via webinar.

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