



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee

DATE: July 15, 2022

SUBJECT: Request for Board Guidance on Potential Reduction Measures following the 2022 Stock Assessment Update

The Striped Bass Technical Committee (TC) and Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) met via webinar on June 29, 2022 to discuss progress on the 2022 stock assessment update (results expected in October 2022) and to review the new provisions of Amendment 7, including the following provision:

If the 2022 stock assessment results indicate the Amendment 7 measures have less than a 50% probability of rebuilding the stock by 2029 (as calculated using the low recruitment assumption) and if the stock assessment indicates at least a 5% reduction in removals is needed to achieve F rebuild, the Board may adjust measures to achieve F rebuild via Board action (change management measures by voting to pass a motion at a Board meeting).

In the event that a reduction in removals is indicated to achieve F rebuild, in order for the Board to adjust measures in a timely manner following the assessment, the TC would need to calculate new management options to achieve stock rebuilding by 2029. The TC would conduct the analysis before the Board meets for the Annual ASMFC Meeting in fall 2022 and the management options would be presented concurrently with the assessment results.

The TC requests Board guidance on what types of reduction measures should be considered, if a reduction were needed:

- How should the reduction be split between the commercial and recreational sectors? Should both sectors take the same percent reduction, or should one sector take a higher or lower percent reduction?
- What recreational measures should be considered for the ocean? For the Bay? E.g., minimum size limit, different slot limit, seasonal closures?
- If considering seasonal closures, would the Board prefer a consistent coastwide closure or flexibility for states to choose closure dates (e.g., within a particular wave)?

Review of Current Measures

Amendment 7 maintains the same commercial quotas (18% reduction from Add IV) and the same recreational size/bag limits (1 fish at 28-35" for ocean; 1 fish at 18" min. for Bay) as Addendum VI, which were designed to achieve an 18% reduction from 2017 levels. As such, all

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approved Addendum VI conservation equivalency programs are maintained until such measures are changed.

Approved Addendum VI CE programs are summarized in the enclosed table. Current CE programs include seasonal closures in some Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions, and some states took <18% reduction in commercial quotas offset by >18% reduction by the recreational sector.

Baseline for Potential Reduction

The TC recognizes that current 2021 measures include a variety of Addendum VI conservation equivalency programs. While it would be possible to calculate the potential reduction under the assumption that all states implemented the Addendum VI FMP standard (instead of their CE programs), that would add additional uncertainty by trying to predict what removals would have been under different regulations.

Therefore, the TC recommends using the current set of management measures and resulting level of 2021 removals as the starting point for calculating the potential reduction. In other words, what new set of management measures would achieve the rebuilding reduction relative to the 2021 commercial quotas and 2021 recreational size limits/bag limits/seasons?

After the Board provides guidance on what types of new measures to consider, and after the assessment is complete, the TC will further discuss how to proceed with reduction calculations, including what assumptions and datasets will be used.

TC/SAS Members in Attendance: Mike Celestino (SAS Chair, NJ), Michael Brown (ME), Gary Nelson (MA), Nicole Lengyel Costa (RI), Kurt Gottschall (CT), Caitlin Craig (NY), Brendan Harrison (NJ), Tyler Grabowski (PA), Margaret Conroy (DE), Luke Lyon (DC), Brooke Lowman (VA), Joshua McGilly (VA), Hank Liao (VA), Charlton Godwin (NC), Steve Minkinen (USFWS), John Sweka (USFWS), Tony Wood (NOAA)

ASMFC Staff: Katie Drew, Emilie Franke

Table. CE programs implemented for Addendum VI

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