



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 8, 2019

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Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Approves Draft Addendum VI for Public Comment

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board) approved Draft Addendum VI for public comment. The Addendum was initiated in response to the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment which indicates the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing. The Draft Addendum explores a range of management alternatives designed to end overfishing and reduce fishing mortality to the target level in 2020.

“The Draft Addendum is a critical first step to stem overfishing as quickly as possible and begin efforts to rebuild the biomass,” said Board Chair Dr. Michael Armstrong with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries. “Following approval of the Addendum, the Board will likely initiate a new amendment to consider a longer term strategy to fully rebuild the resource.”

The Draft Addendum proposes management options for both commercial and recreational sectors in the ocean and in Chesapeake Bay in order to reduce total fishery removals by 18% relative to 2017 levels. The proposed measures include reduced quotas for commercial fisheries, and changes in bag limits, minimum sizes, and slot size limits for the recreational sector. Since catch and release practices represent a significant component of overall fishing mortality, the Draft Addendum also explores the mandatory use of circle hooks when fishing with bait to reduce release mortality in recreational striped bass fisheries.

It is anticipated the majority of Atlantic coastal states will conduct public hearings on the Draft Addendum; a subsequent press release will announce the details of those hearings once they become finalized. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under Public Input by August 19th. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on September 27, 2019 and should be forwarded to Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Addendum VI). Organizations planning to release an action alert in response to Draft Addendum VI should contact Max Appelman at mappelman@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

PR19-23

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.

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