

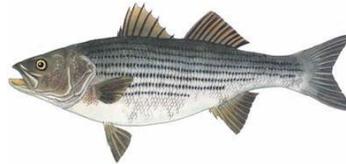


Rhode Island
Department of Environmental Management

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council, Striped Bass Advisory Panel

January 12, 2010
Marine Fisheries
3 Ft. Wetherill Road
Jamestown, RI 02835

1. Striped Bass Stock Status Report – Scott Olszewski

The 2009 Atlantic Striped Bass stock assessment update indicates that the resource remains in good condition with female spawning stock biomass (SSB) 148% of the target (SSB) and 185% of the (SSB) threshold. The 2008 fishing mortality rates are equal to or less than 0.21 which is below the target (0.30) and the threshold of (0.34).

2. Development of the 2010 fish trap commercial striped bass season and quota allocation.

The RI Fish Trap Association Proposal dated November 8, 2009 (submitted). The proposal represents the unanimous agreement of the members of the RI Fish Trap Association. (See Striped Bass Part 12). The RI Fish Trap Companies request that the Department repeal the set aside and trip limit regulations as follows:

RIMFC Regulation 12.5

Jan. 1st to August 26th annually, 100% of allocation available minus 10,000 lbs. Set aside. Once 80 % of the seasonal allocation is projected to be harvested, the possession limit shall be 500 lbs. per fish trap per calendar day.
Aug. 27th to Dec. 31st the 10,000 lb. fish trap set aside shall be available with no limit on possession.

Motion by Alan Gliden for the 2010 commercial fish trap fishery to remain status quo.
Second by John Fuscaldo

All in favor
None opposed
No abstentions
Motion passes

3. Development of the 2010 general category commercial striped bass season and quota allocation.

Discussion revolved around the start date of the Striped Bass General Category June season.

The concern between panel members and those in attendance is that the earlier the start date in June, allow the fishermen in Narragansett Bay to land a disproportionate number of fish due to their availability in the bay at that time. As June moves on the catch increases from areas of Rhode Island and Block Island Sounds.

Comments were made that June 1st opening benefits the bay fisherman. A start later in June would spread the catch over all of the participants more evenly. There should be a date that is a balance between the two groups.

The Panel requested that the Marine Fisheries staff put together data which may demonstrate the changing size composition as the catch moves from the bay to the south shore and Block Island. The Marine Fisheries Staff's ability to address this question is limited because SAFIS records only where the fish is sold, not where it is caught. (Table submitted)

Because the fish are generally larger later in June and outside the bay, the quota which is based on weight may be more evenly distributed than most fisherman realize.

Comments were made on adjusting the season split from 75% spring and 25% fall to 60% and 40% respectively and a start date of June 1 until 100% of the quota is reached. Both of which received little or no support.

Bay fisherman feel that they don't get as much of a fall fishery as the south shore fisherman do. The early start benefits the bay and the fall fishery benefits the south shore fisherman.

There is a mini economic boom created by the early June striped bass fishery in the bay benefiting multiple marinas and bait and tackle shops.

Motion by Andy Dangelo to remain status quo
Second by Ed Cook

Discussion on the motion:

Everyone assumes that this year will be the same as last. If the menhaden are not in the bay then the fishery could be very different in terms of abundance and size composition.

The Panel felt that the appropriate data is needed for the staff to make a decision on any proposed season change. (see attachment)

Motion on the table of status quo

3 in favor

3 opposed

1 abstention

Motion failed

Motion by Joe Macari for the General Category start date of June 6, 2010 until 75% of the quota is reached, closed Friday and Saturday throughout. September 1, 2010 until 25% or the remaining quota is exhausted, closed Friday and Saturday throughout.

Second by Bob Beresford

3 in favor

2 opposed

1 abstention

Motion carries as Striped Bass Advisory Panel proposal.

4. Recreational Striped Bass fishery: Striped Bass Advisory Panel recommendation for status quo.

5. Other Business: Ed Cook reported on ASMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel: The AP was not able to reach a consensus agreement on the main option of whether to allow states to roll over unused coastal commercial quota. The majority of the AP members present supported status quo (no roll over). (It should be noted that the AP members in attendance were predominantly representatives of the recreational sector.)

The AP also voiced concern that the SCA model assumes a constant natural mortality of 0.15, yet studies of mycobacteriosis in the Chesapeake Bay have estimated an increase in M.

Attendance:

Chris Anderson, RIMFC Advisory Panel Chair

Bob Ballou, RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife, Chief

Scott Olszewski, RI Marine Fisheries

John Lake, RI Marine Fisheries

John Fuscaldo, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel

Ken Booth, RICRRAA

John Martini, RICRR

Bob Beresford, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel

Ed Cook, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel alternate

Rick Bellavance, RIMFC

Bart Wagner, Narragansett Bay Commercial Fisherman

David Fewster, Narragansett Bay Coalition

Paul Bettancourt, Bay Fisherman
Paul Karlz, Bay Fisherman
Richard Golembesk, Bay Fisherman
Alan Gliden, Commercial Trap
Dennis Zambratta, Recreational Shore Fisherman
Jerry Tremblay, RICRRA
Armand Teixeira, RICRRA
John Stavrakas, RISSA
Mike McElroy, RISSA
Bo Christensen, RICRRA
Jack Demers, RICRRA
Ray Masciarelli, RI Commercial
Adam Silkes
Ray Jobin, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel alternate
John Rainone, RIPCBA
Frank Tameo, RICRRA
Andy Dangelo, RIPCBA
Mike Lanni, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel
Joe Macari, RIMFC Striped Bass Advisory Panel

2004 - 2009 RI General Category Striped Bass Period 1 (June) Landings Summary

sbyear	sbmonth	week	AvgOflbs
2004	6	1	20.26
2004	6	2	21.13
2004	6	3	21.21
2004	6	4	21.65
2005	6	1	19.62
2005	6	2	19.51
2005	6	3	20.84
2005	6	4	22.27
2006	6	2	20.73
2006	6	3	21.02
2006	6	4	20.67
2007	6	1	9.72
2007	6	2	20.53
2007	6	3	21.20
2007	6	4	21.82
2008	6	1	19.62
2008	6	2	20.36
2008	6	3	21.81
2009	6	1	18.24
2009	6	2	18.52
2009	6	3	19.29
2009	6	4	22.05
2009	6	5	23.49

Data Source: STB tag data