



# Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

3 Fort Wetherill Road Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835

(401) 423-1920 Fax: (401) 423-1925

## MEETING NOTICE

**March 2, 2015 – 6:00 PM**

**URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium  
South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI**

Robert Ballou  
*Chairman*

Richard Hittinger  
*Vice Chair*

Richard Bellavance

Kenneth Booth

Jeff Grant

William Mackintosh, III

David Monti

Christopher Rein

Michael Rice, Ph.D.

Agenda item	Agenda item detail	Recommended action(s)
1. Approval of Agenda	3-2-2015 RIMFC agenda.	Approval of agenda.
2. Approval of Minutes	Review of RIMFC 12-1-2014 meeting minutes	Approval of minutes.
3. Public Comments	Comments from the public on any items not on agenda	Discussion and/or possible future action.
4. New business	a. <b><u>Public hearing (11/12) items:</u></b> <i>J. McNamee; P. Duhamel</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Vibrio;</u></li> <li>• <u>Removal of escape vent placement requirements;</u></li> <li>• <u>Rec. Summer flounder;</u></li> <li>• <u>Rec. Tautog;</u></li> <li>• <u>Comm. Tautog;</u></li> <li>• <u>Rec. Scup;</u></li> <li>• <u>Rec. Black sea bass;</u></li> <li>• <u>Spiny dogfish;</u></li> <li>• <u>Rec. Striped bass;</u></li> <li>• <u>Comm. Striped bass;</u></li> <li>• <u>Comm. Striped bass floating fish traps;</u></li> <li>• <u>Editing items:</u> Quota Management section (added to Finfish and omitted from Part III); technical clarifications to Shellfish regs; general editing to Finfish regs; deletion of redundant sections from Part X – Equipment Restrictions</li> </ul>	Provide recommendations to the Director on proposed regulations.
	b. Presentation of RI Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Program Report. – <i>J. Lake</i>	Council determination as to whether program is continuing to meet its intended purpose.
	c. <u>Advisory Panel reports:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shellfish (1/21): <i>J. Grant</i></li> </ul>	Review and approval of meeting minutes

5. FYI	<p>a. <b><u>Director Decision memos:</u></b> <i>B. Ballou</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11-20-14 public hearing items (commercial fisheries) and GB Winter harvest schedule;</li> <li>• 9-3-14 Council mtg. (SMA Winter Harvest Schedules) and 9-30-14 public hearing items (comm. licensing and Sector mgmt. plans)</li> </ul> <p>b. <b><u>NEFMC Report – Nov./Dec. 2014.</u></b> <i>M. Gibson</i></p> <p>c. <b><u>ASMFC Winter Report:</u></b> <i>M. Gibson</i></p>	FYI
6. Other business	Any other matters that Council members would like to discuss.	FYI, discussion, and/or consideration for future action.
7. Adjourn		

**All RIMFC Meetings are open to the public**

Date Posted 2/25/2015



# Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

3 Fort Wetherill Road Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835

(401) 423-1920 Fax: (401) 423-1925

## MEETING MINUTES

December 1, 2014

URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium  
South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI

Chairperson: *B. Ballou*

RIMFC Members Present: *K. Booth, R. Hittinger, D. Monti, J. Grant, C. Rein, W. Mackintosh, M. Rice, R. Bellavance*

DEM: *L. Mouradjian, G. Powers, J. McNamee, J. Mercer, P. Duhamel, Sgt. Dan White*

Public: *Approximately 14 individuals were present*

1. **Approval of the Agenda:** *B. Ballou* inquired as to recommended modifications to the agenda; hearing none, the agenda was approved. He offered an additional item under new business as item 4e. for the approval of a Shellfish advisory panel meeting. Hearing no additional comments, the agenda was approved as amended.

2. **Approval of RIMFC meeting minutes from September 3, 2014 (as amended) and October 6, 2014:** *B. Ballou* inquired as to any proposed changes to the minutes or any objections to approving the minutes. Hearing none, the minutes of these two meetings were approved.

3. **Public comments regarding other matters not on agenda:** *Sarah Shuman* addressed the Council regarding a proposal for a project she was planning regarding the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on commercial fisheries. She explained that an application to the Fisheries Innovation Fund would be made by the 19<sup>th</sup>, and any other funding opportunities that she can find. The goal of the project would be to develop a steering committee that would be industry focused to develop and adaptation blueprint to address possible future needs of industry and the market. She is looking for assistance with finding individuals for the steering committee, and also in determining priorities and outcomes useful to industry. She will be sending the proposal to *B. Ballou* who will then forward to the Council for feedback prior to her submittal. *R. Hittinger* inquired if recreational fisheries would be included, to which Ms. Shuman offered that it would be possible and should be discussed.

4. **New business:**

a. **Winter Harvest schedule in Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area:**

*J. Mercer* provided a brief presentation. He offered that the Division and SAP were in agreement with status quo from last year's schedule. He offered that data is inclusive at this time but may be showing decreasing abundance (hard clam), and that additional survey's and data are needed which could result in a recommendation to decrease effort in the following year. ***M. Rice* offered a motion to recommend approval of the proposal as provided in the ePacket; 2nd by *D. Monti*. The motion passed 8 - 0.**

b. **Public hearing (11/20) items:**

• **Commercial Summer flounder (3 options presented at the hearing):**

*J. McNamee* offered that the Division's recommendation was to maintain at status quo (option 1). He offered brief explanations regarding the other two options, and that the Division was not in favor of supporting option 2. Regarding option 3, he offered that he looked at data and concluded that approximately 14 – 16 vessels are constrained by the Exemption Certificate requirement but that this option would result in increased landing. He offered that the Division wasn't necessarily opposed to the option but that it would most likely result in reduced possession limits and/or closures. A great deal of discussion took place regarding the pros and cons of option 3. ***K. Booth* offered a motion to recommend option 1 – status quo; 2nd by *R. Hittinger*. *J. Grant* then offered a substitute motion to recommend adoption of option 3; 2<sup>nd</sup> by *R. Bellavance*. This motion failed 5 – 1 (*W. Macintosh* and *R. Bellavance* abstaining; *J. Grant* in favor). A vote was then taken on the original motion, adoption of option 1 - status quo, which passed 8 - 0.**

• **Commercial Scup (1 option – status quo, presented at the hearing):**

Discussion took place regarding the stock status. ***R. Bellavance* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2<sup>nd</sup> by *D. Monti*. The motion passed 8 – 0.**

• **Commercial Black sea bass (1 option – status quo, presented at the hearing):**

*J. McNamee* offered Division support of option 1. He offered that the Division could not support option 3 due to the low quota and resulting increased catch rated and closures that would result with this option in place. ***R. Hittinger* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2<sup>nd</sup> by *J. Grant*. The motion passed 8 – 0.**

• **Commercial Monkfish (4 options presented at the hearing):**

*J. McNamee* offered that the Division was not in favor of option 3 due to excessive possession limit and additional administrative requirements needed to manage a new program. He offered that the Division provided a subsequent counter proposal with a smaller possession limit with no additional programmatic requirements. He offered that the Division was supportive of public hearing option 1 – status quo, and could support public comments option 1 but this could not be implemented until the start of the season in 2016 (May 1, 2016). *W. Macintosh* offered that he could not understand any benefit in



an aggregate possession limit; that only very few boats are involved; to which *R. Bellavance* offered that it appeared to be only 2-3 % of the Monkfish fishers. *R. Bellavance* offered a motion to recommend adoption of option 1 – status quo; 2<sup>nd</sup> by *M. Rice*. The motion passed 8 – 0.

c. (Note: No item c. – inadvertently omitted)

d. **Shellfish Advisory Panel membership application – J. Vivari to replace P. Kennedy as primary recreational representative:** *R. Hittinger* offered a motion to recommend endorsement of Mr. Vivari to serve on the panel; 2<sup>nd</sup> by *M. Rice*. The motion passed 8 – 0.

e. **Approval of Shellfish Advisory meeting:** *B. Ballou* explained that a SAP meeting may be needed to discuss *Vibrio* regulations that may be brought to the February public hearing. He inquired as to any objections or comments to holding a meeting – date and agenda specifics to be determined at a later date by Division staff and the SAP Chair. Hearing no objections, the meeting was approved.

5. **FYI Items:** FYI items were briefly discussed.

6. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55.

Prepared by *P. Duhamel*

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
MARINE FISHERIES SECTION**

**PUBLIC NOTICE CONCERNING PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGES**

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapters 42-17.1 and 20-3 of the General Laws of Rhode Island as amended, and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act Chapter 42-35 of the General Laws, the Director of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) proposes amendments to the **Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Regulations** and gives notice of intent to hold a workshop and public hearing to afford interested parties the opportunity for public comment.

Public comment will be solicited on the following proposals:

- 1) Amendments to RIMFR - Shellfish, regarding the establishment of **regulations to reduce the risk of Vibrio illness associated with the consumption of commercially harvested quahaugs** (section 6, 16, and 17);
- 2) Amendments to RIMFR - Shellfish, regarding **technical clarifications** (i.e., no actual changes proposed);
- 3) Amendments to Part XV - Lobsters, Other Crustaceans, and Horseshoe Crabs regarding **removal of escape vent placement requirement** (section 15.13.2);
- 4) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **recreational Summer Flounder** (section 7.7.1);
- 5) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **recreational Tautog** (section 7.9.1);
- 6) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **commercial Tautog** (section 7.9.2);
- 7) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **recreational Scup** (section 7.11.1);
- 8) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **recreational Black Sea Bass** (section 7.14.1);
- 9) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding management for **Spiny dogfish** (section 7.15);
- 10) Amendments to Part XII – Striped Bass, regarding management for **recreational Striped Bass** (section 12.1);
- 11) Amendments to Part XII – Striped Bass, regarding management for **commercial Striped Bass general category** (section 12.3);

- 12) Amendments to Part XII – Striped Bass, regarding management for **commercial Striped Bass floating fish trap** (section 12.5);
- 13) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding **general editing for improved clarity**;
- 14) Amendments to Part VII - Finfish, regarding **addition of a Quota Management section** (proposed section 7.1; in conjunction with hearing item #15);
- 15) Amendments to Part III – Marine Fisheries Council, regarding **deletion of the Quota Management section** (section 3.1; in conjunction with hearing item #14);
- 16) Amendments to Part X – Equipment Restrictions, regarding **deletion of redundant sections that are currently included elsewhere in RIMFR**.

The **workshop will commence at 4:30PM** on **Monday, February 16** followed by the **public hearing at 7:00PM** at the University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography, Corless Auditorium, South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882. The room is accessible to the disabled. Interpreter services for the deaf and hard of hearing will be provided if such services are requested at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing by contacting the RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at (401) 222-5300; or (401) 222-5301 (TTY); or <http://www.cdhh.ri.gov/>.

The Department has determined that small businesses may be adversely impacted by the proposed regulations. Small businesses which are either currently licensed, or in the future may seek a license to harvest, buy, sell, or produce seafood products, as well as the small businesses that provide services related to those engaged in such industries, are requested to comment on the proposed regulations on how such proposed action can be changed to minimize the impact on those small businesses affected.

Written comments concerning the proposed regulations may be submitted to Peter Duhamel, Division of Fish and Wildlife – Marine Fisheries office, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835 no later than 12:00 Noon on February 16, 2015. A copy of the proposed regulations will be available for review from January 16 through February 16, 2015 at the Marine Fisheries offices, or by mail. A copy of the proposed regulation(s) has been filed with the Office of the Secretary of State's website at <http://sos.ri.gov/ProposedRules/>. Proposed annotated regulations are also available on the DEM Marine Fisheries webpage at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pn021615.htm>.

Mark Gibson,  
Deputy Chief

# ***Vibrio* Regulations for Wild Shellfish Harvesters**

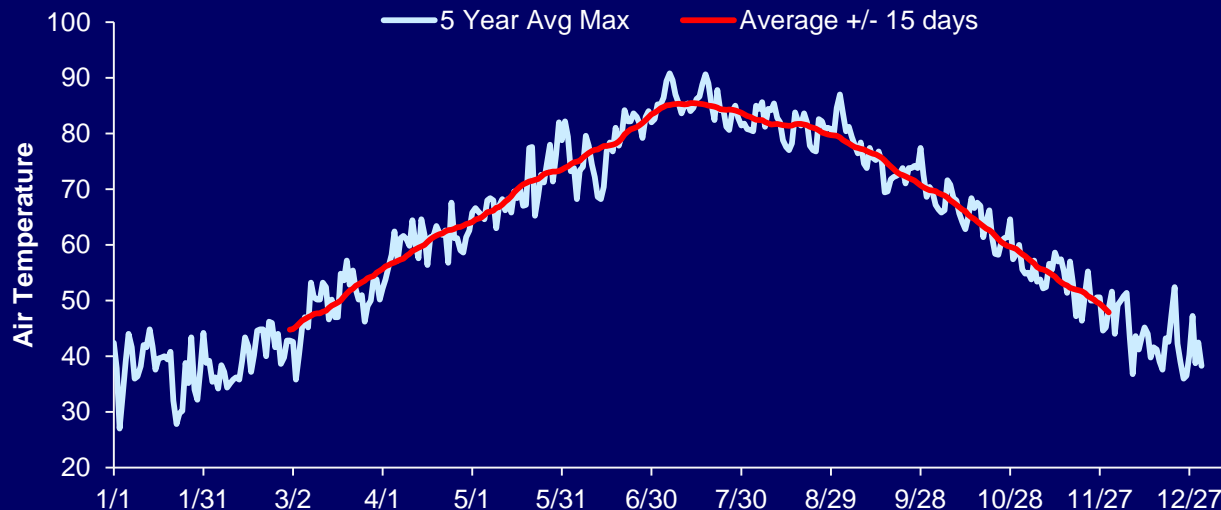
- ◆ The National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) provides guidelines to ensure safety of shellfish consumed.
- ◆ *Vibrio* are bacteria that occur naturally in warm coastal areas and are found in higher concentrations in the summer months.
- ◆ Most people become infected by eating raw or undercooked shellfish
- ◆ When shellfish are held at temperatures above 50° the bacteria multiply within the animal increasing risk of illness
- ◆ *Vibrio* causes watery diarrhea, abdominal cramping, nausea, vomiting, fever and chills. Illness is usually self-limited and lasts 3 days. Severe disease is rare and occurs more commonly in persons with weakened immune systems.
- ◆ Proper handling and cooling ASAP greatly reduces the risk of *Vibrio* illness. Thoroughly cooking shellfish kills the bacteria.



# Vibrio Regulations for Wild Shellfish Harvesters

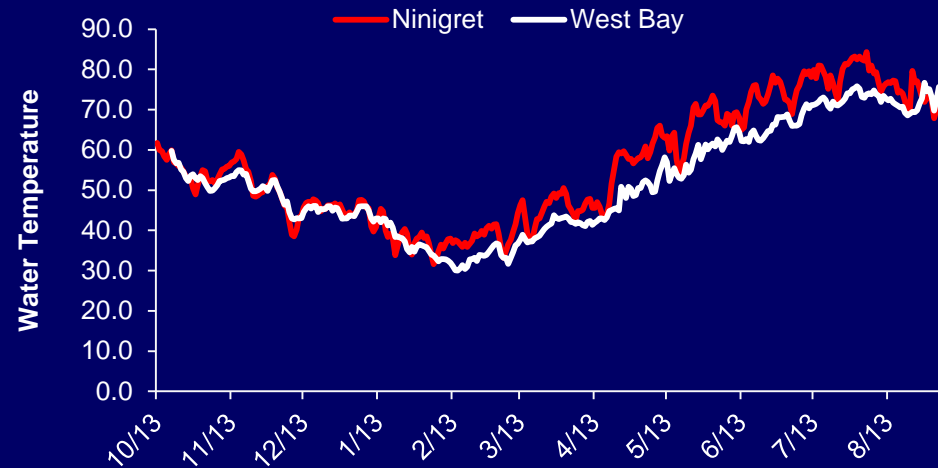
- ◆ If the risk of *Vibrio* infection from the consumption of hard clams harvested from an area is reasonably likely to occur (i.e. an annual occurrence) then a *Vibrio* control plan is necessary for warm months. Such a plan would require hard clams to be under temperature control within 5 hours. Without significant risk of illness, amount of time to dealer governed by air temperature.

Average Monthly Maximum Air Temperature	Maximum Hours from Exposure to Receipt at a Dealer's Facility
<50 °F (10 °C)	36 hours
50 °F - 60 °F (10 °C - 15 °C)	24 hours
>60 °F - 80 °F (15 °C - 27 °C)	18 hours
>80 °F (≥27 °C)	12 hours



# Vibrio Regulations for Wild Shellfish Harvesters

- ◆ Department of Health (DOH) and DEM support measures to be proactive in preventing illness. Recommend that in Narragansett Bay hard clams be delivered to dealer within 10 hours of the commencement of harvest from May 1 – October 31.
- ◆ DOH and DEM believe that the warm water temperatures (up to 85°F) in the coastal ponds present a significant health risk and recommend that shellfish be iced within 5 hours of the commencement of harvest and to dealer in 10 hrs from May 1- Oct 31.



- ◆ Harvest commencement time will be recorded on shellfish tags which will be filled out prior to shellfish being placed in the container.



# Vibrio - Proposed Regulation Changes (abridged)

## ◆ Section 6. Definitions:

Adequately Iced; Container; Designated Temperature Control Areas; Harvest; Mechanical Refrigeration; Shading; Temperature Control

## ◆ Rule 16. Commercial Tagging of Shellfish

16.1 Commercial shellfishermen must place all shellfish into containers, and tag each container with a “harvester tag” prior to shellfish being placed in the container.

## ◆ Rule 17. Commercial Temperature Control of Shellfish

17.3 From May 1st through October 31st - The maximum time between the commencement of harvest and delivery to a dealer shall be 10 hours.

17.3.1 The harvester shall provide shading to all shellfish intended for harvest aboard vessels and during land-based deliveries.

17.3.3 Harvest of quahogs or oysters from within Designated Temperature Control Areas that exceed five hours to complete shall be placed in mechanical refrigeration or adequately iced in a storage container within five (5) hours of the commencement of harvest until the shellfish are transferred to a licensed dealer within 10 hours.



# **Hearing Item #1:** Amendments to RIMFR - Shellfish, regarding the establishment of regulations to reduce the risk of Vibrio illness associated with the consumption of commercially harvested quahaugs (section 6, 16, and 17)

## ◆ **Section 6. Definitions:**

**Adequately Iced; Container; Designated Temperature Control Areas; Harvest; Mechanical Refrigeration; Shading; Temperature Control**

## ◆ **Rule 16. Commercial Tagging of Shellfish**

16.1 Commercial shellfishermen must place all shellfish into containers, and tag each container with a “harvester tag” prior to **shellfish being placed in the container.**

## ◆ **Rule 17. Commercial Temperature Control of Shellfish**

**17.3 From May 1st through October 31st - The maximum time between the commencement of harvest and delivery to a dealer shall be 10 hours.**

**17.3.1 The harvester shall provide shading to all shellfish intended for harvest aboard vessels and during land-based deliveries.**

**17.3.3 Harvest of quahogs or oysters from within Designated Temperature Control Areas that exceed five hours to complete shall be placed in mechanical refrigeration or adequately iced in a storage container within five (5) hours of the commencement of harvest until the shellfish are transferred to a licensed dealer within 10 hours.**





**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 1\***  
**RIMFR – Shellfish**

**Establishment of regulations to reduce the risk of Vibrio illness associated with the consumption of commercially harvested quahaugs**

**6. DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of these regulations, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

**Adequately Iced means that the amount and application of the ice is sufficient to ensure that immediate cooling begins and continues for all shellfish. Ice should be produced from a potable water source and shall be maintained to prevent contamination of shellfish.**

**Container means any bag, sack, tote, or other receptacle that contains shellfish to be held or transported.**

**Designated Temperature Control Areas means an area designated by the Department in which harvesters must comply with more stringent temperature controls for harvested quahogs and oysters. These areas have been determined to have a higher risk of *Vibrio* illness associated with consumption of wild quahogs and oysters due to warm temperatures or a history of illness. These areas include Winnapaug Pond (6W), Quonochontaug Pond (6Q), Ninigret Pond 6(N), Potter Pond (6P), and Point Judith Pond (6P).**

**Harvest means the act of removing any shellfish for the purpose of human consumption. Harvest commences when the first shellfish is no longer submerged.**

**Mechanical Refrigeration means storage in a container that is approved by the Rhode Island Department of Health and capable of cooling to, and maintaining, an ambient temperature of 45°F or less.**

**Shading means to shelter by intercepting the direct rays of the sun to protect the shellfish from heat. Shading may be accomplished by any means that effectively protects the harvested shellfish from direct sunlight and prevents excessive heat build-up in the shaded area.**

**Temperature control means the use of ice or mechanical refrigeration, which is capable of lowering the temperature of the shellstock and maintaining it at 45°F or less.**

**RULE 16. COMMERCIAL TAGGING OF SHELLFISH**

16.1 Commercial shellfishermen must place any and all shellfish taken by them (except those shellfish returned to the waters of the harvest area) into containers, and

must tag each and every container with a “harvester tag” conforming to the requirements of this section, prior to ~~the following:~~ **shellfish being placed in the container.**

~~16.1.1 The fisherman leaves the approved waters of the harvest area (identified on the RI Shellfish Harvest Area Tagging Map, Shellfish Management Area or the aquaculture site identified by the CRMC Assent number) in which the shellfish were taken;~~

~~16.1.2 The shellfish are removed from the vessel; or~~

~~16.1.3 The shellfish are offered for sale.~~

16.2 The harvester tag shall be durable, waterproof, and sanctioned by the R.I. Department of Health. The tag shall contain the following indelible, legible information in the order specified as follows: The harvester’s identification number as assigned by DEM; the date of harvest; **the harvest commencement time**; the harvest location as identified on the R.I. Shellfish Harvest Area Tagging Map; the shellfish management area; ~~the aquaculture site identified by the CRMC Assent number~~; the type (species) of shellfish; and the approximate quantity of shellfish. **The harvest commencement time will indicate the time that the first shellfish that the harvester is currently in possession of was removed from the water and should be the same for all shellfish that the harvester is in possession of regardless of tagging area.**

16.3 Each tag shall also carry the following statement in bold capitalized type: “THIS TAG IS REQUIRED TO BE ATTACHED UNTIL CONTAINER IS EMPTY OR IS RETAGGED AND THEREAFTER KEPT ON FILE FOR 90 DAYS”

16.4 Commercial shellfishermen shall not place shell stock harvested from more than one growing area into the same container. When the harvester is also a dealer, the harvester has the option to tag the shell stock with a harvester tag or a dealer’s tag meeting the requirements of the RIDOH regulations.

16.5 Bulk tagging of shell stock will be permitted only with prior approval of the Director under the following criteria:

16.5.1 When shell stock are harvested from one harvest area on a single day, multiple containers may be utilized on a wrapped pallet, in a tote, in a net brailer, or other container and the unit tagged with a single tag; and

16.5.2 A statement that all shell stock containers in this lot have the same harvest data and area of harvest; and number of containers in the unit.

## **RULE 17. COMMERCIAL TEMPERATURE CONTROL OF SHELLFISH**

17.1 Commercial shellfishermen shall not allow shell stock to deteriorate or decompose from exposure to excessive temperature and shall deliver shell stock to a licensed dealer before such deterioration or decomposition occurs.

17.2 Harvest of shellfish annually from sunrise on November 1<sup>st</sup> through sunset on March 31<sup>st</sup> - The maximum allowable time between the commencement of harvest of shell stock and delivery to a dealer shall be twenty hours. Possession of shell stock in excess of 20 hours is prohibited.

17.3 Harvest of shellfish annually from sunrise on April 1<sup>st</sup> through sunset on October 31<sup>st</sup> - The maximum allowable time between the commencement of harvest of shell stock and delivery to a dealer shall be 10 hours. Possession of shell stock in excess of 10 hours is prohibited.

17.3.1 The harvester shall provide shading to all shellfish intended for harvest aboard vessels and during land-based deliveries.

17.3.3 Harvest of quahogs or oysters from within Designated Temperature Control Areas that exceed five hours to complete shall be placed in mechanical refrigeration or adequately iced in a storage container within five (5) hours of the commencement of harvest until the shellfish are transferred to a licensed dealer within 10 hours.

17.34 Ocean quahaugs, ~~and~~ surf clams, and whelks are exempt from temperature control requirements.

Summary of public hearing comments - Vibrio:

- D. DeSalvo, commercial fisherman: Objected to the proposed change in harvest to dealer time requirement from 20 to 10 hours; thought 20 hours was acceptable as long as product is iced immediately. He offered that a reduction from 20 to 10 hours would create a significant hardship as would greatly reduce his ability to harvest later in the day (dealers not open, would need to keep product overnight, and therefore could not meet 10 hour requirement). He offered an alternative proposal of icing the product immediately and maintaining the 10 hour harvest to dealer requirement;
- S. DeSalvo, commercial fisherman: Also objected to the proposed change in harvest to dealer time requirement from 20 to 10 hours; he offered that neighboring states allow for immediate icing and a greater time to get product to the dealer. He offered that a reduction from 20 to 10 hours would create a significant hardship as would greatly reduce his ability to harvest later in the day;
- M. McGivney, RI Shellfisherman's Assoc.: Offered that his group had met with DOH several times to discuss the matter, and offered that the reduced time is a result of Vibrio outbreaks in neighboring states, which resulted in a change by the federal government to a minimum 12 hours, and after the meetings was in support of the change to 10 hours. He offered that he was aware of the problem this would have on afternoon fishing, and it was discussed that some dealers would remain open, and that this should still be discussed.
- Unnamed: Objected to the reduced time in the month of May as is unnecessary due to nighttime temperatures and would negatively impact afternoon fishermen and students that fish after school.
- J. McNamee: Offered that the public notice provided a start date of April 1 for this requirement but that this date had been modified to May 1 due to reduced Vibrio threat during this month. He offered support of the proposed change from April 1 to May 1.

## Lobster

- Proposal is to remove the escape vent placement requirement. Vent location is important for crab retention
- Participation by the RI Lobster Fleet in the Jonah Crab fishery
- Difficulty in mid-season vent changes
- Inconsistency between areas



# Lobster - Proposed Regulation Changes

- Section 15.13 Escape Vent Sizes:
- Section 15.13.2 – Sub-section II: The vent or gap shall be installed or made in the parlor section on the sides, ~~or~~ end panel or door of the trap. ~~A legal rectangular vent or gap or circular vent shall be located no more than three (3) inches from the sill of the trap.~~ Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections and having a central entrance funnel(s) separating the parlor sections must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in each parlor section. Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections that are linked in series (“in-line”) must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in the terminal, or end parlor section...
- **Note: This provision would also be stricken in Part X - Equipment Restrictions**



**Hearing Item #3:** Amendments to Part XV - Lobsters, Other Crustaceans, and Horseshoe Crabs regarding removal of escape vent placement requirement (section 15.13.2);

- **Section 15.13 Escape Vent Sizes:**
- **Section 15.13.2 – Sub-section II:** The vent or gap shall be installed or made in the parlor section on the sides or end panel. ~~A legal rectangular vent or gap or circular vent shall be located no more than three (3) inches from the sill of the trap.~~ Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections and having a central entrance funnel(s) separating the parlor sections must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in each parlor section. Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections that are linked in series (“in-line”) must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in the terminal, or end parlor section...
- **Note:** This provision would also be stricken in Part X - Equipment Restrictions





STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
FISH AND WILDLIFE  
&  
LAW ENFORCEMENT

## RHODE ISLAND MARINE FISHERIES STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

### **Part XV Lobsters, Other Crustaceans, and Horseshoe Crabs**



~~May 16, 2014~~

**Proposed/annotated regulations**  
**Public hearing**  
**February 16, 2015**

**AUTHORITY:** Title 20, Chapters 42-17.1, 42-17.6, and 42-17.7, and in accordance with Chapter 42-35-18(b)(5), Administrative Procedures Act of the Rhode Island General Laws of 1956, as amended.



**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 3\***  
**Remove escape vent placement requirement**

**Option 1: Remove escape vent placement requirement**

15.13.2 Subsection II: The vent or gap shall be: installed or made in the parlor section on the sides or end panel. ~~A legal rectangular vent or gap or circular vent shall be located no more than three (3) inches from the sill of the trap.~~ Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections and having a central entrance funnel(s) separating the parlor sections must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in each parlor section. Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections that are linked in series (“in-line”) must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in the terminal, or end parlor section. Any fisherman not complying with the provisions of Section 1 or Section 2 shall be fined not more than twenty dollars (\$20) for each trap not conformed to the specifications. (Penalty 20-1-16 - Part 1.16 and 15.12)

1) Summary of public hearing comments - Part XV - Lobsters, Other Crustaceans, and Horseshoe Crabs regarding **removal of escape vent placement requirement**:

- A. Eagles: *In support of the proposal;*
- Anon (name not heard): *In support as in compliance with federal regulations;*
- B. Tebow: *In support as in compliance with federal regulations;*
- S. Olszewski: *Offered support for the minor modification to the noticed language; which was presented at the hearing.*

# Recreational Summer Flounder

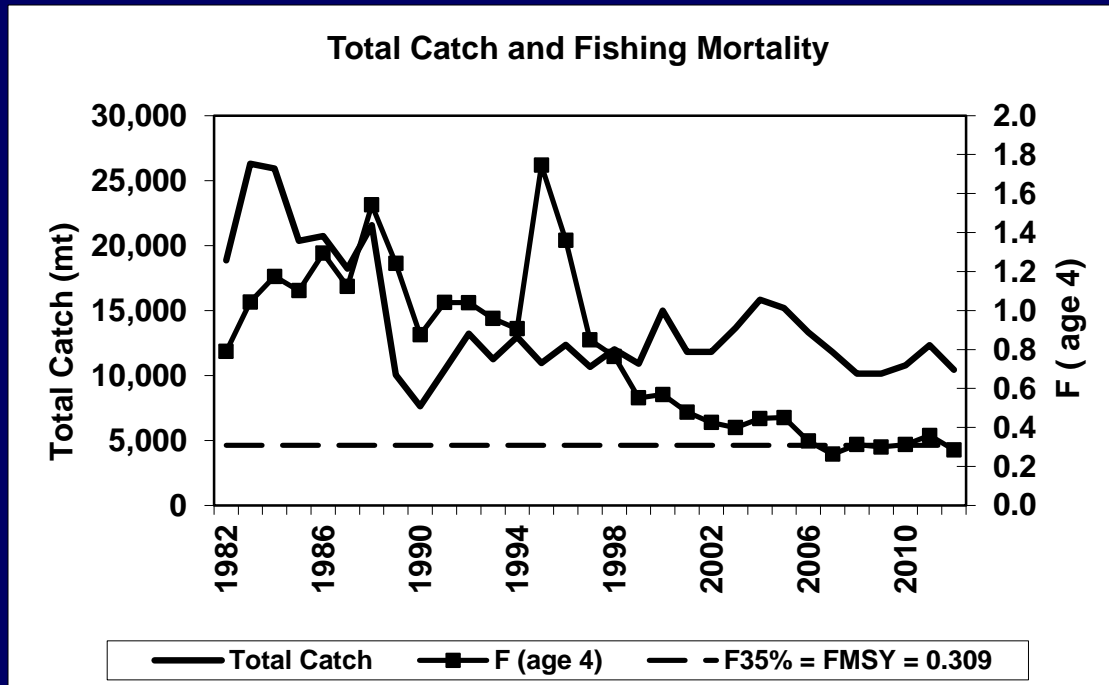
- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2014 Rhode Island Recreational Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Summer Flounder Recreational Fishery



# Summer Flounder Stock Status

## ◆ Stock Status:

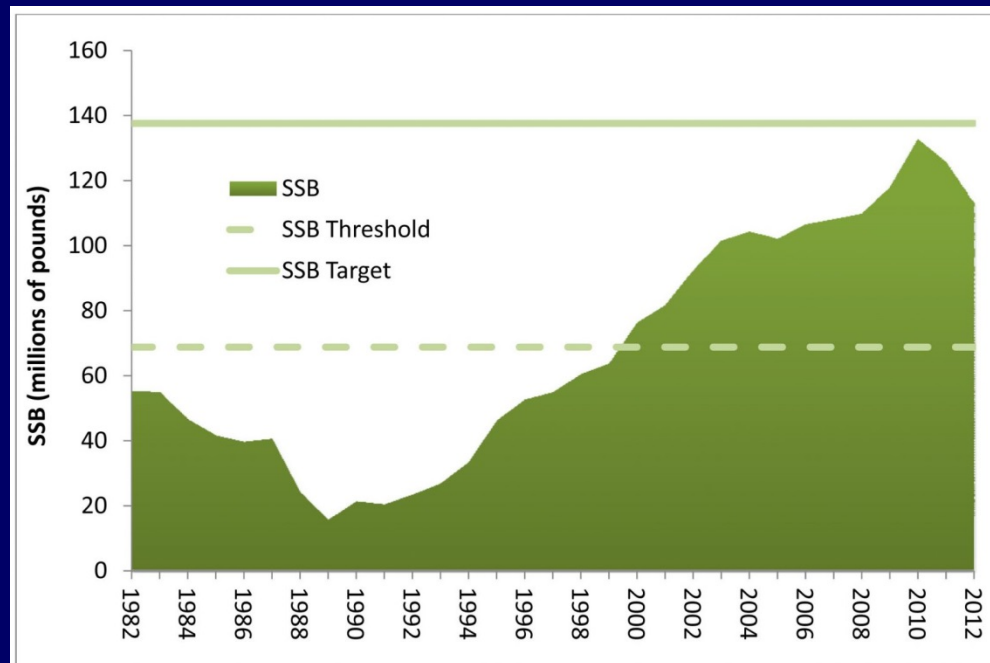
- ◆ Benchmark in 2013: SAW/SARC 57 and peer review
- ◆ The summer flounder stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring relative to biological reference points.
- ◆ Further summer flounder is considered rebuilt.
- ◆ Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.285 in 2012, below the threshold F reference point = 0.309 but above the F target = 0.255.



# Summer Flounder Stock Status

## ◆ Stock Status:

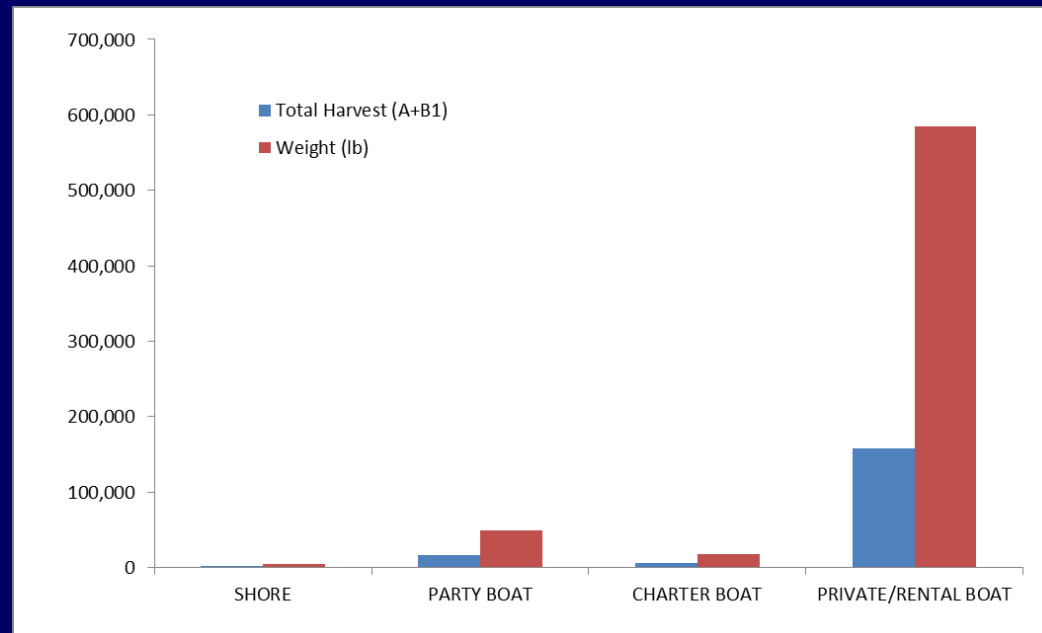
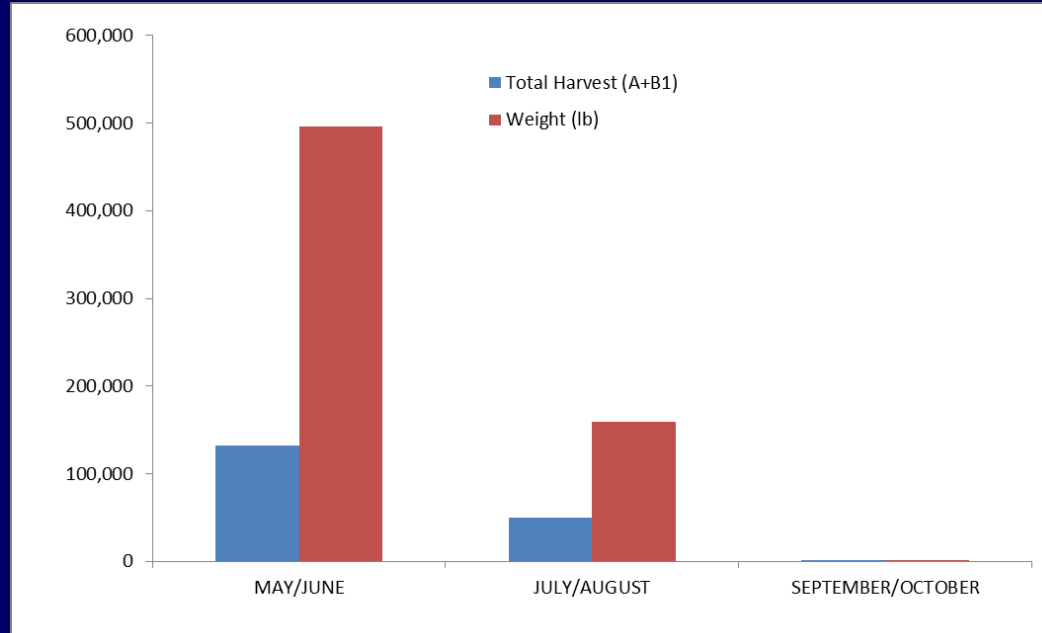
- ◆ SSB estimated to be 113 m lbs in 2012, below the SSB reference point = 137.6 m lbs but above the SSB threshold = 66.2 m lbs.
- ◆ The 2011 year class is currently estimated to be about 26 million fish, below the average of 42 million fish
- ◆ A retrospective pattern in recruitment is evident, the 2008 and 2009 large year classes have dropped significantly in recent updates



Summer Flounder Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB). Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center Stock Assessment Summary, 2013



# RI Fishery Performance – Summer Flounder Recreational Harvest



# ASMFC Management - Summer Flounder

- ◆ RI 2014 Projected Recreational Harvest = 183,000 fish
- ◆ RI assumed harvest per addendum XXV = 127,000 fish
- ◆ Addendum XXVI approved February 4, 2015
- ◆ Addendum XXVI approved status quo regions for 2015
- ◆ Despite approval of status quo, the board urged RI to adjust regulations to constrain harvest



# Recreational Summer Flounder - Proposed Regulation Changes

Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	18"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31</u> : 8 fish
Alternate based on Board Recommendation	18"	May <del>4</del> <u>17</u> – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept 21</u> : <del>8</del> <u>5</u> fish





## Hearing Item #4: Recreational Summer Flounder (Finfish - section 7.7.1);

- Noticed options:

Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
<u>Option 1:</u> Status Quo	18"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31:</u> 8 fish
<u>Option 2:</u> Change bag limit and season	18"	May <del>4</del> <u>15</u> – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept 20</u> : <del>8</del> <u>4</u> fish
<u>Option 3:</u> Change minimum size, bag limit and season	<del>18"</del> <u>18.5"</u>	May <del>4</del> <u>15</u> – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept. 20</u> : <del>8</del> <u>4</u> fish
<u>Option 4:</u> Change minimum size, bag limit and season:	<del>18"</del> <u>19"</u>	May <del>4</del> <u>15</u> – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept. 20</u> : <del>8</del> <u>5</u> fish



## Hearing Item #4: Recreational Summer Flounder (Finfish - section 7.7.1);

- New options since time of notice

Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	18"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31</u> : 8 fish
Alternate based on Board Recommendation	18"	May <del>1</del> <u>17</u> – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept 21</u> : <del>8</del> <u>5</u> fish



**\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 4\***  
**Recreational Summer Flounder**

**7.7 Summer Flounder (Fluke)**

**Option 1 (of 4): Status Quo**

7.7.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: Eighteen inches (18”) total length.
- (B) Season: May 1 through December 31.
- (C) Possession limit: Eight (8) fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this state or otherwise.

**Option 2 (of 4): Change bag limit and season**

7.7.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: Eighteen inches (18”) total length.
- (B) Season: May ~~15~~ through ~~December 31~~ **September 20**
- (C) Possession limit: **Four (4)** ~~Eight (8)~~ fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this state or otherwise.

**Option 3 (of 4): Change minimum size, bag limit and season**

7.7.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: **Eighteen and one half inches (18.5 “)** ~~Eighteen inches (18”)~~ total length.
- (B) Season: May ~~15~~ through ~~December 31~~ **September 20**
- (C) Possession limit: **Four (4)** ~~Eight (8)~~ fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this state or otherwise.

**Option 4 (of 4): Change minimum size, bag limit and season**

7.7.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: **Nineteen (19 “)** ~~Eighteen inches (18”)~~ total length.
- (B) Season: May ~~15~~ through ~~December 31~~ **September 20**
- (C) Possession limit: **Five (5)** ~~Eight (8)~~ fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this state or otherwise.

1) Summary of public hearing comments regarding recreational Summer Flounder:

- A. Dangelo: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- S. Medeiros: *Stated that the RISA board could not reach consensus on this item, but that he personally was in support of option 1, status quo;*
- Anon (name not heard): *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- S. Lundberg: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- Anon (did not provide name): *Stated that he had a note in support of option 1, status quo, signed by 65 P/C vessels, in support of option 1, status quo;*
- M. Bucko: *Proposed for boat and shore mode: May 1-Oct. 31; 18" min. size; 8 fish bag/10 fish boat limit. And for P/C mode: May 1-Oct. 31; 18" min. size; 8 fish bag;*
- G. Allen: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- S. Anderson: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- M. Ambrosia: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- D. Monti: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- F. Blount: *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- Anon (name not heard, rec. fisherman): *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- Anon (name not heard, rec. fisherman): *In support of option 1, status quo;*
- Anon (name not heard, P/C captain): *In support of option 1, status quo;*

2) Summary of written comments:

- A. Passarelli: Support option 1, status quo;
- W. Gauch: Prefer reduction in bag limit; ok with status quo;
- J. Rainone: Support option 1, status quo;
- RIPCBA: Support option 1, status quo;

# Recreational and Commercial Tautog

- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2014 Rhode Island Recreational and Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Recreational and Commercial Tautog Fishery



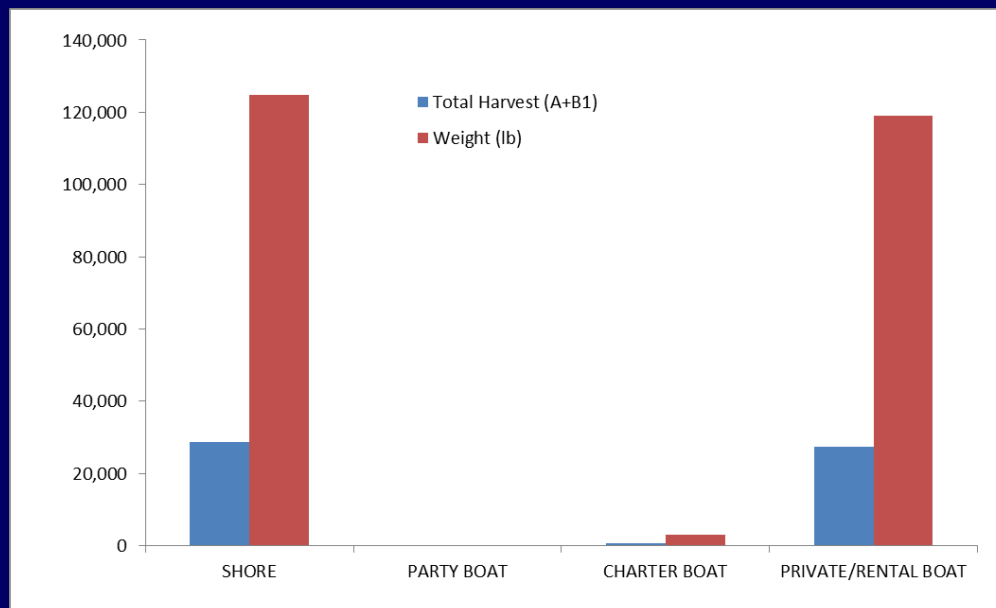
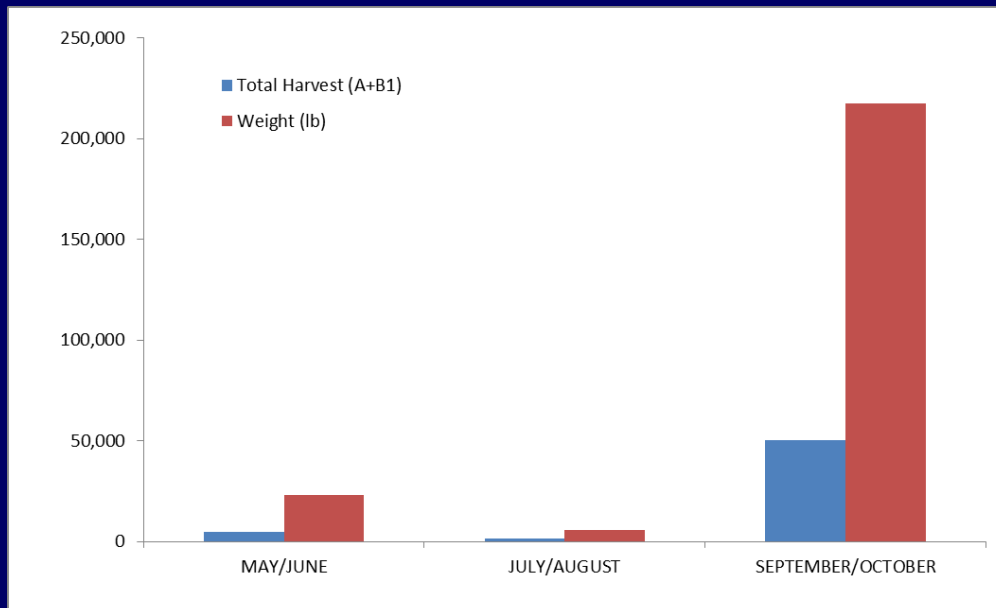
# Tautog Stock Status

- ◆ **Stock Status:**

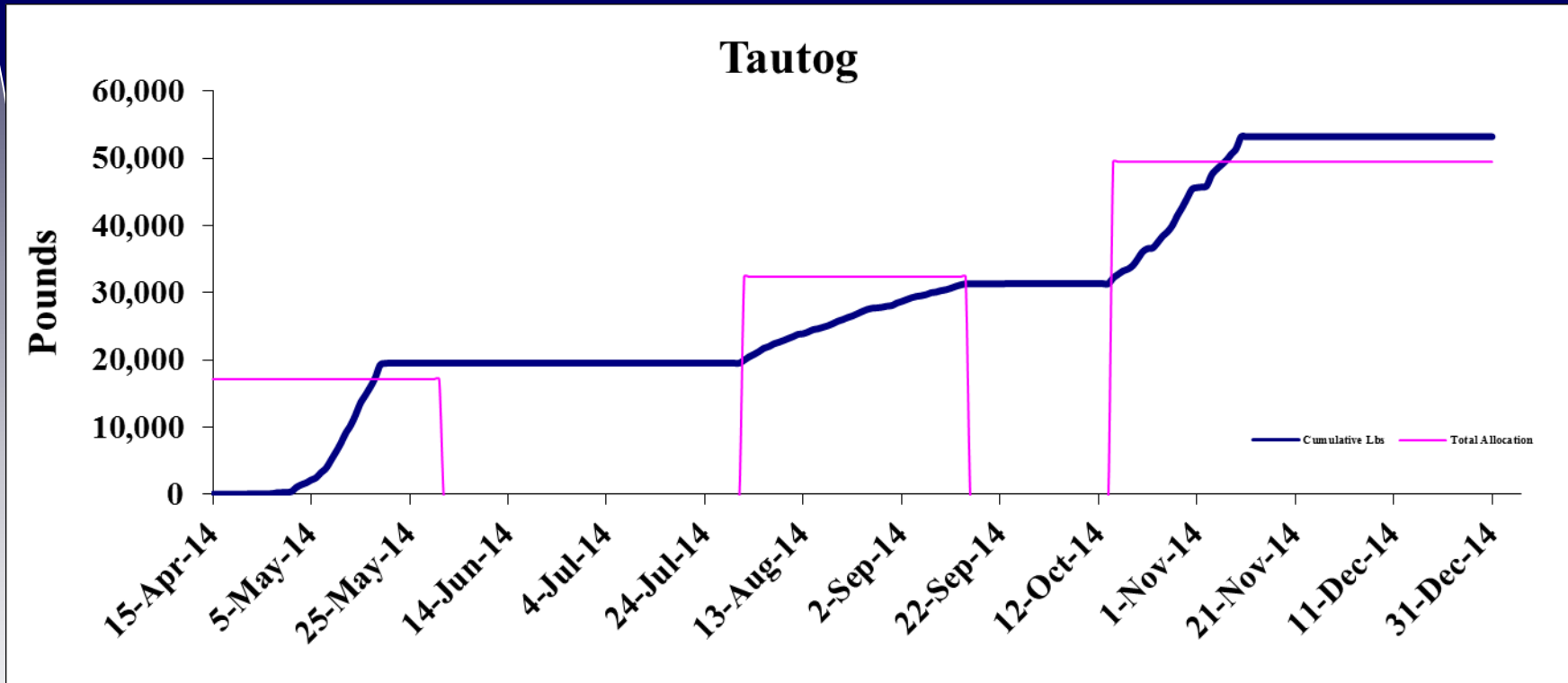
- Tautog was benchmarked in 2014
- Assessment passed peer review, but has not been formally adopted by the Board
- Due to not being adopted, stock status is not available at this time



# RI Fishery Performance – Tautog Recreational Harvest



# RI Fishery Performance – Tautog Commercial Harvest



- Total overage of 3,726



# ASMFC Management - Tautog

- ◆ Benchmark assessment completed in 2014
- ◆ Peer review panel accepted assessment
- ◆ Board did not formally accept assessment for management yet
- ◆ Sticking point is the regional configuration and choice of recommended reference points
- ◆ TC will convene in March and Board will review again in May
- ◆ Management process likely to not be completed until 2016



# Tautog - Proposed Regulation Changes

- ◆ Status quo - No changes proposed for either fishery

Fishery	Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
Recreational	Status quo	16"	<u>April 15 – May 31: 3 fish</u> <u>June 1 – July 31: Closed</u> <u>Aug. 1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. in Oct.: 3 fish</u> <u>3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. in Oct. – Dec. 15: 6 fish</u> Max 10 fish/vessel (n/a for P/C)
Commercial	Status quo	16"	<u>April 15 – May 31: 10 fish</u> <u>Aug. 1 – Sept. 15: 10 fish</u> <u>Sept. 16 – Oct. 14: Closed</u> <u>Oct. 15 – Dec. 31: 10 fish</u>

- ◆ Management restrictions will likely be needed in 2016
- ◆ Per regulation, the overage will be deducted from the summer sub-period in 2015:
  - ◆ Spring: 17,116
  - ◆ Summer: 13,390
  - ◆ Fall: 17,116



**Hearing Item #5:** Recreational Tautog (Finfish - section 7.9.1);

Option	Mode	Min. size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	Recreational	16"	<p><u>April 15 - May 31:</u> 3 fish</p> <p><u>June 1 - July 31:</u> closed</p> <p><u>August 1 - Friday before the third Saturday in October:</u> 3 fish</p> <p><u>Third Saturday in October – Dec. 15:</u> 6 fish</p> <p>* Maximum 10 fish/vessel/day.</p>
	Licensed Party and Charter vessel	16"	<p><u>April 15 through May 31:</u> 3 fish</p> <p><u>June 1 through July 31:</u> closed</p> <p><u>August 1 through the Friday before the third Saturday in October:</u> 3 fish</p> <p><u>Third Saturday in October through December 15:</u> 6 fish</p> <p>* P/C not subject to the 10 fish/vessel/day restriction.</p>



**\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 5\***  
**Recreational Tautog**

**Option 1: Status Quo**

**7.9 Tautog (Blackfish)**

7.9.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: Sixteen (16) inches.
- (B) Seasons and possession limits:
  - (1) April 15 through May 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (2) June 1 through July 31: Closed.
  - (3) August 1 through the Friday before the third Saturday in October: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (4) Third Saturday in October through December 15: Six (6) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (5) Maximum per vessel possession limit: The possession limit shall be per person per calendar day, as stated above, with a maximum of ten (10) fish per vessel per calendar day.
- (C) Licensed Party and Charter vessel seasons and possession limits:
  - (1) April 15 through May 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (2) June 1 through July 31: Closed.
  - (3) August 1 through the Friday before the third Saturday in October: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (4) Third Saturday in October through December 15: Six (6) fish per person per calendar day.
  - (5) Licensed party/charter boats are not subject to the ten (10) fish per vessel per calendar day restriction.
  - (6) Reporting: Any licensed party/charter boat participating in the tautog fishery must report each trip targeting tautog into the eREG logbook (the electronic logbook hosted by ACCSP).

1) Summary of public hearing comments - recreational Tautog:

- Anon (did not provide name): In support of opening the first sub-period earlier on April 1<sup>st</sup> as a means to support bait and tackle shops;
- M. Bucko: In support of opening the first sub-period earlier on April 1<sup>st</sup> as a means to support bait and tackle shops. He offered that the earlier opening would have no effect on the fishery as no harvest occurs;
- Anon (name not heard - P/C Captain): In support of opening the first sub-period earlier on April 1<sup>st</sup> as a means to support bait and tackle shops;
- D. Monti: In support of opening the first sub-period earlier on April 1<sup>st</sup>;
- G. Allen: In support of opening the first sub-period earlier on April 1<sup>st</sup>

Summary of written comments:

- J. Rainone: In support of option 1, status quo;
- M. Mayo: In support of option 1, status quo; modify to eliminate per vessel possession limit;
- RIPCBA: In support of option 1, status quo;

**Hearing Item #6:** Commercial Tautog (Finfish - section 7.14.2)

Option	Min. size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	16"	<p><u>April 15 - May 31:</u> 10 fish/vessel/day</p> <p><u>June 1 - July 31:</u> closed</p> <p><u>August 1 – Sept. 15:</u> 10 fish/vessel/day</p> <p><u>Oct. 15 – Dec. 31:</u> 10 fish/vessel/day</p>



**\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 6\***  
**Commercial Tautog**

**Option 1: Status Quo**

7.9.2 Commercial:

(A) Minimum size: Sixteen (16) inches.

(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The total allowable harvest of tautog will be established annually, and will be that amount allocated to the State of Rhode Island by the Regional Fishery Management Council and/or the ASMFC. The quota shall only be available during the following seasons:

(1) Spring sub-period (April 15 – May 31):

(a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota.

(b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.

(2) Summer sub-period (August 1 – September 15):

(a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota.

(b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.

(3) Fall sub-period (October 15 – December 31):

(a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota

(b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.

~~(4) Sub-period quotas may be harvested until exhausted. Any quota not harvested during a sub-period will be added to the next sub-period. If an over-harvest has occurred, that over-harvest will be deducted equally from all remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year. If an over-harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over-harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub-period of the following calendar year.~~

Summary of public hearing comments - **commercial Tautog**:

- *No comments were made for this hearing item.*

Summary of written comments:

- RIFA (letter included)



# Rhode Island Fishermen's Alliance

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P.O. Box 337  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

February 16, 2015

RI Marine Fisheries Public Hearing for proposed amendments for the 2015 **Commercial Tautog** fisheries management plan.

The Alliance proposes the following changes:

7.9.2 Commercial:

(A) Minimum size: Sixteen (16) inches.

(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The commercial harvest shall be the same seasons and the same bag limit as the recreational fishery.

~~(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The total allowable harvest of tautog will be established annually, and will be that amount allocated to the State of Rhode Island by the Regional Fishery Management Council and/or the ASMFC. The quota shall only be available during the following seasons:~~

~~(1) Spring sub-period (April 15 – May 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day. RI Marine Fisheries Regulations Part VII – Finfish Page 15 of 40~~

~~(2) Summer sub-period (August 1 – September 15): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(3) Fall sub-period (October 15 – December 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(4) Sub-period quotas may be harvested until exhausted. Any quota not harvested during a sub-period will be added to the next sub-period. If an over-harvest has occurred, that over-harvest will be deducted equally from all remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year. If an over-harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over-harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub-period of the following calendar year.~~

Note:

1. There are around one million residents in the state and around 31,000 salt water licensed residents or approximately three percent (3%) of the resident population.

2. The RI recreational fishery currently harvests over 500,000 lbs of tautog annually while the commercial fishery is limited to approximately 50,000 lbs.
3. RI non-fishing residents representing 97% of the population have less than 10% of the resource available to them.
4. Active resident recreational fishermen representing 3% of the population and non-resident fishermen take more than 90% of the resource.
5. More than half of the recreational salt water anglers fishing in RI waters are non-residents and take more than 250,000 lbs .
6. Non-resident recreational fishermen take more than 5 times as much of the Tautog resource as is made available to the non-fishing RI resident.
7. Recreational fishermen have access to the tautog resource for 174 days out of the year while non-fishing residents dependent upon commercial fishermen have access for only 111 days.

# Recreational Scup

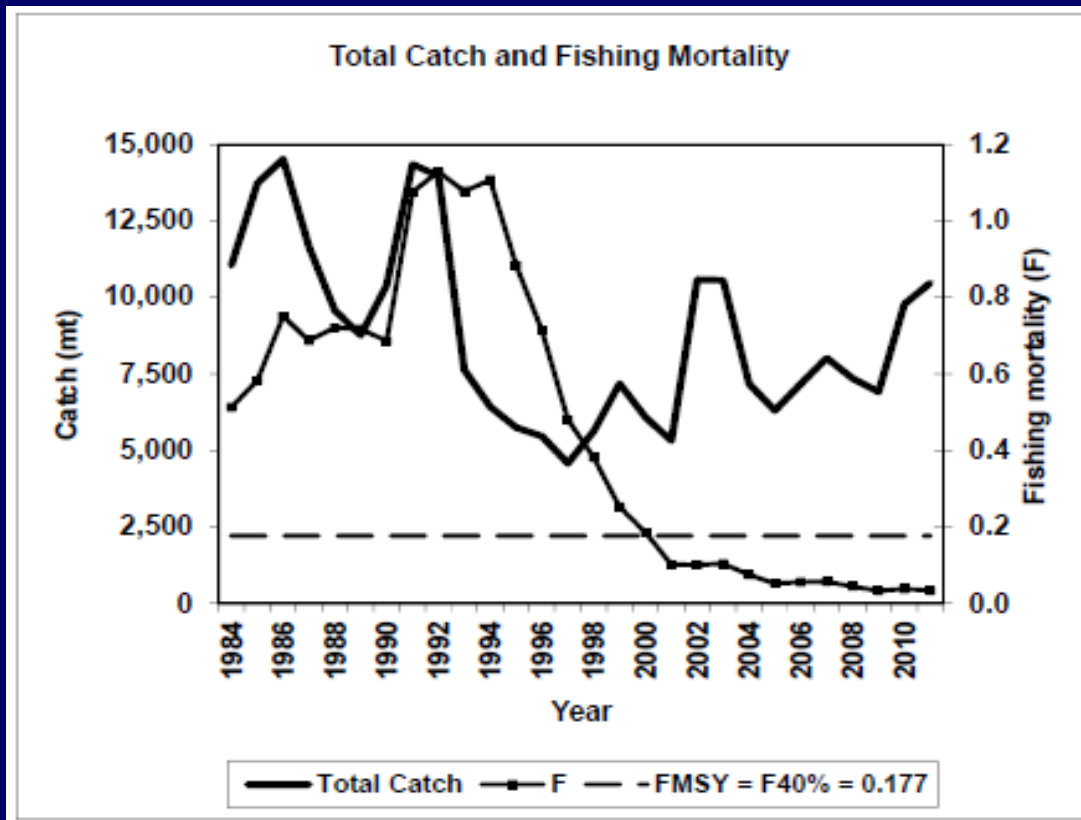
- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2014 Rhode Island Recreational Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Recreational Scup Fishery



# Scup Stock Status

- ◆ Stock Status:

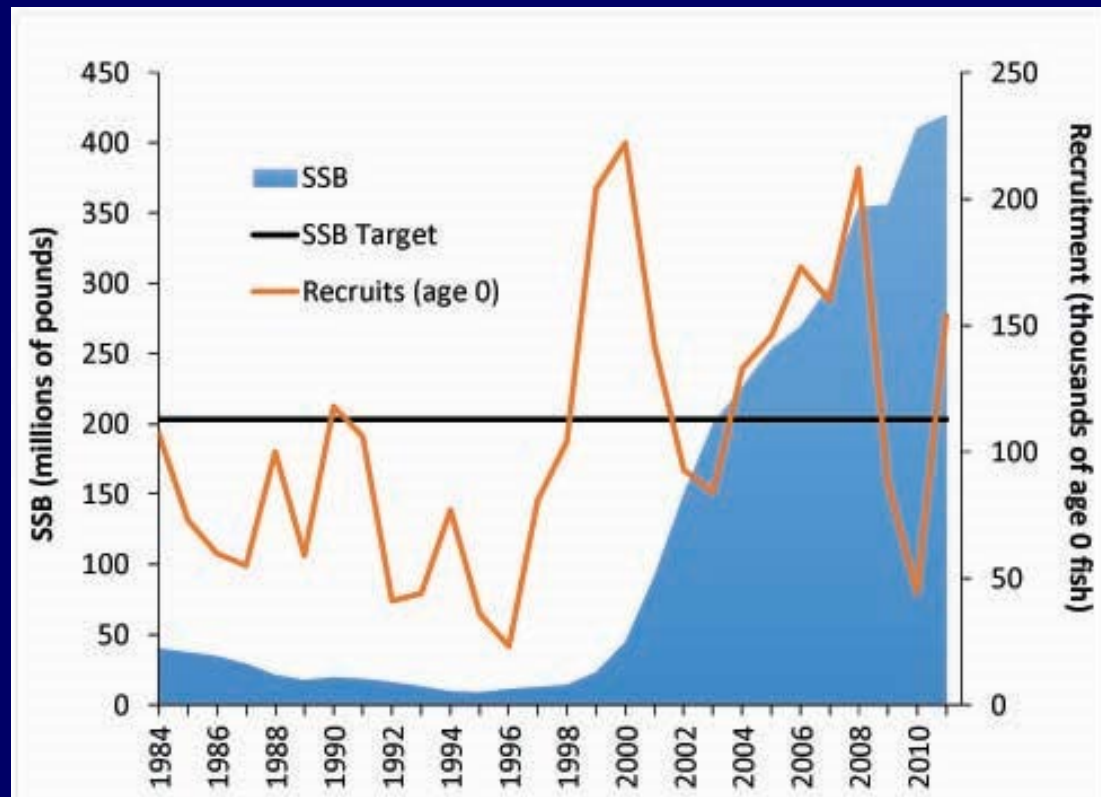
- Relative to the DPSWG biological reference points, the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
- There is a 50% probability that  $F$  in 2011 was between 0.026 and 0.042. The fishing mortality threshold is  $FMSY = 0.177$ .
- Benchmark assessment is underway, to be reviewed in 2015



# Scup Stock Status

## ◆ Stock Status:

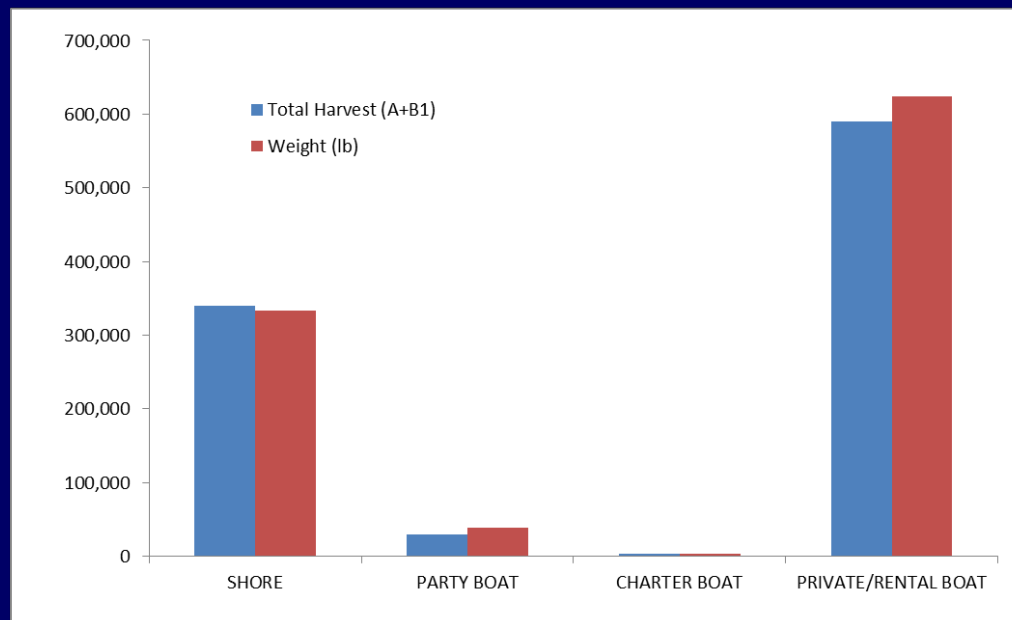
- SSB has steadily increased to about 418.8 m lbs in 2011 (slightly down from 2008) . The SSB reference point is  $SSB_{MSY} = 202.9$  m lbs. The minimum stock size threshold, one-half  $SSB_{MSY}$ , is estimated to be 101.5 m lbs.
- Recruitment exceeded the 1984-2011 average of 104 million in 2011.



Scup Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) and Recruitment. Source: NEFSC Stock Assessment Update, 2012



# RI Fishery Performance – Scup Recreational Harvest



# ASMFC Management - Scup

- ♦ Northern Region 2014 Projected Rec Harvest = 4,084,684 fish
- ♦ RI Recreational Harvest = 1,080,184 fish
- ♦ Northern Region Harvest Target= 6,313,981 fish
- ♦ Scup Board approved status quo for 2015



# Recreational Scup - Proposed Regulation Changes

Status Quo - No changes proposed

Option	Mode	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	General Fishery	10"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31</u> : 30 fish
	Party and Charter	10"	<u>May 1 – Aug. 31</u> : 30 fish <u>Sept. 1 – Oct. 31</u> : 45 fish <u>Nov. 1 – Dec. 31</u> : 30 fish
	Special Shore	9"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31</u> : 30 fish





# Hearing Item #7: Recreational Scup (Finfish – section 7.11)

Option	Mode	Min. size	Season/ Possession Limit
Status Quo	Recreational	10"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31:</u> 30 fish
	Special shore-fishing provision (India Pt. Pk.; Conimicut Pk.; Rocky Pt.; Stone Bridge; East/West Walls Harbor of Refuge; Ft. Wetherill; Ft. Adams)	9"	<u>May 1 - Dec. 31:</u> 30 fish
	P/C	10"	<u>May 1 – Aug. 31:</u> 30 fish <u>Sept. 1 – Oct. 31:</u> 45 fish <u>Nov. 1 – Dec. 31:</u> 30 fish



**\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 7\***  
**Recreational Scup**

**Option 1: Status Quo**

**7.11 Scup**

7.11.1 Recreational:

- (A) Minimum size: Ten inches (10") total length.
- (B) Season: May 1 through December 31 annually.
- (C) Possession limit: Thirty (30) Scup per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.
- (D) Special shore-fishing provision:
  - (1) Locations: India Point Park, Providence; Conimicut Park, Warwick; Rocky Point, Warwick; Stone Bridge, Tiverton; East and West Walls (Harbor of Refuge), Narragansett; Fort Wetherill, Jamestown; and Fort Adams, Newport:
  - (2) Minimum size: Nine inches (9") total length.
  - (3) Season: May 1 through December 31.
  - (4) Possession limit: Thirty (30) Scup per person per calendar day.
- (E) Licensed Party and Charter vessels seasons and possession limit:
  - (1) May 1 through August 31: Thirty (30) Scup per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.
  - (2) September 1 through October 31: Forty-five (45) scup per person per calendar day whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.
  - (3) November 1 through December 31: Thirty (30) Scup per person per calendar day whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

Summary of public hearing comments - recreational Scup:

- S. Medeiros: *In support of option 1, status quo;*

Summary of written comments:

- J. Rainone: In support of option 1, status quo;
- RIPCBA: In support of option 1, status quo;

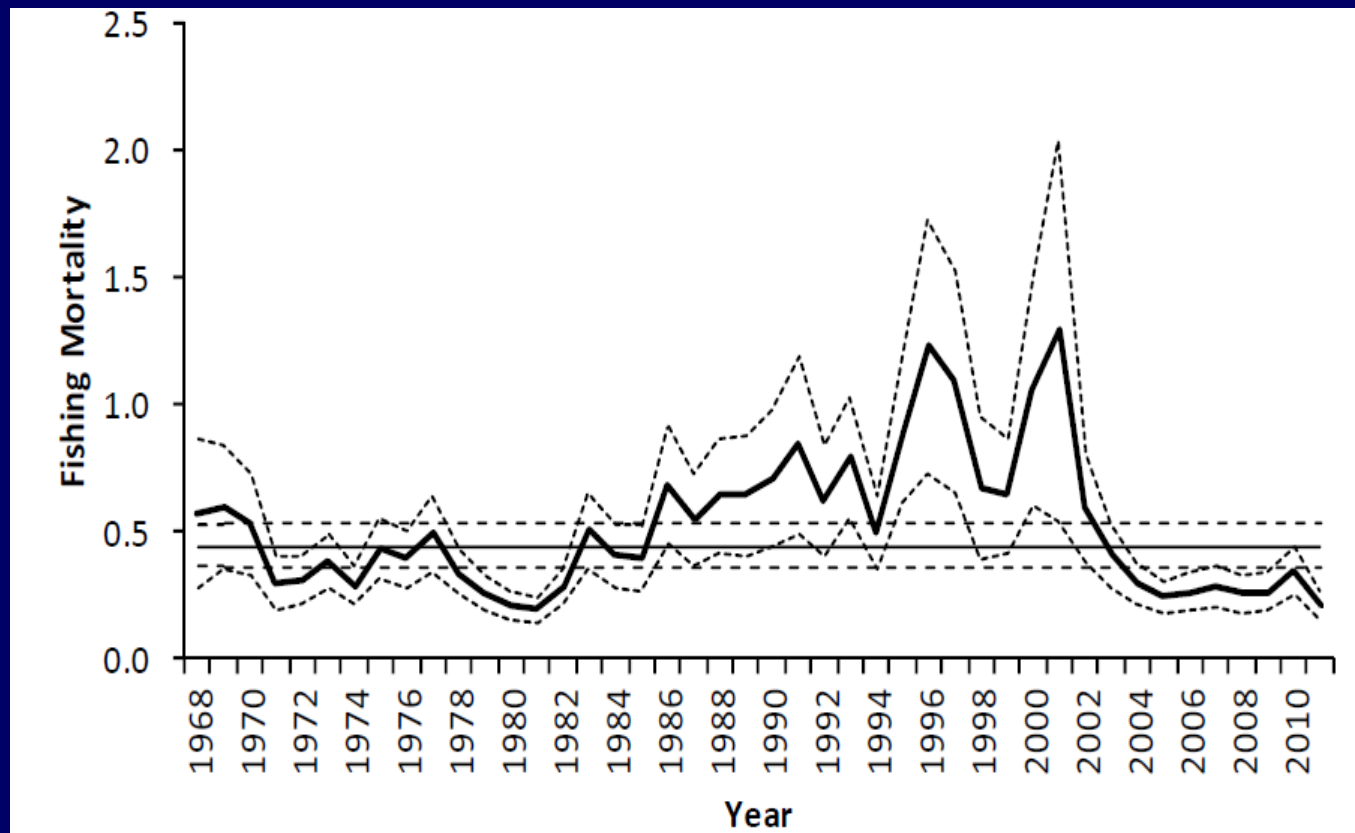
# Recreational Black Sea Bass

- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2014 Rhode Island Recreational Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Recreational Black Sea Bass Fishery



# Black Sea Bass Stock Status

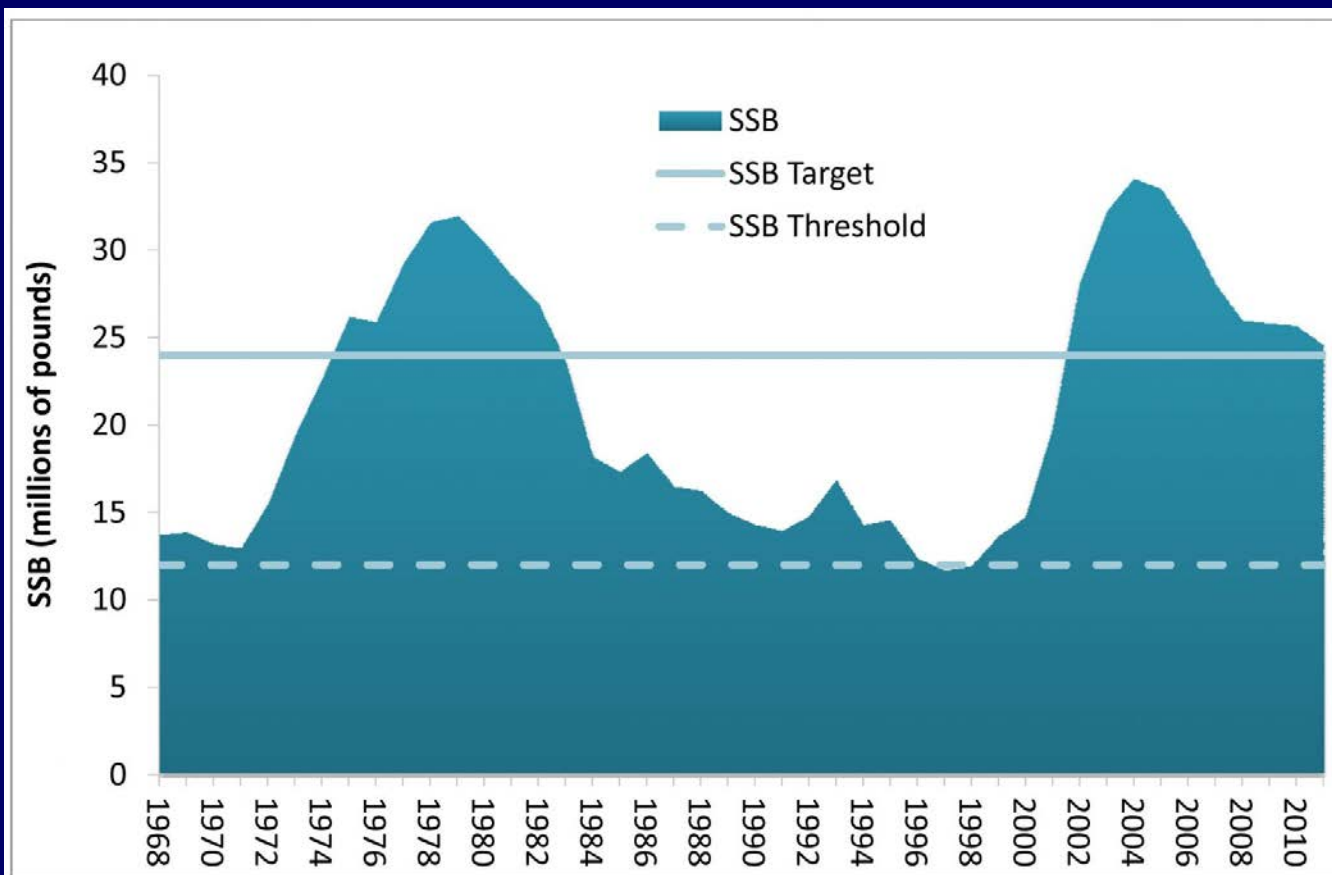
- ◆ Stock Status:
  - Relative to the DPSWG biological reference points, the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
  - Fishing mortality  $F = 0.21$  in 2011, less than the threshold  $F = 0.44$
  - Benchmark currently underway, to be reviewed in early 2016



# Black Sea Bass Stock Status

## Stock Status:

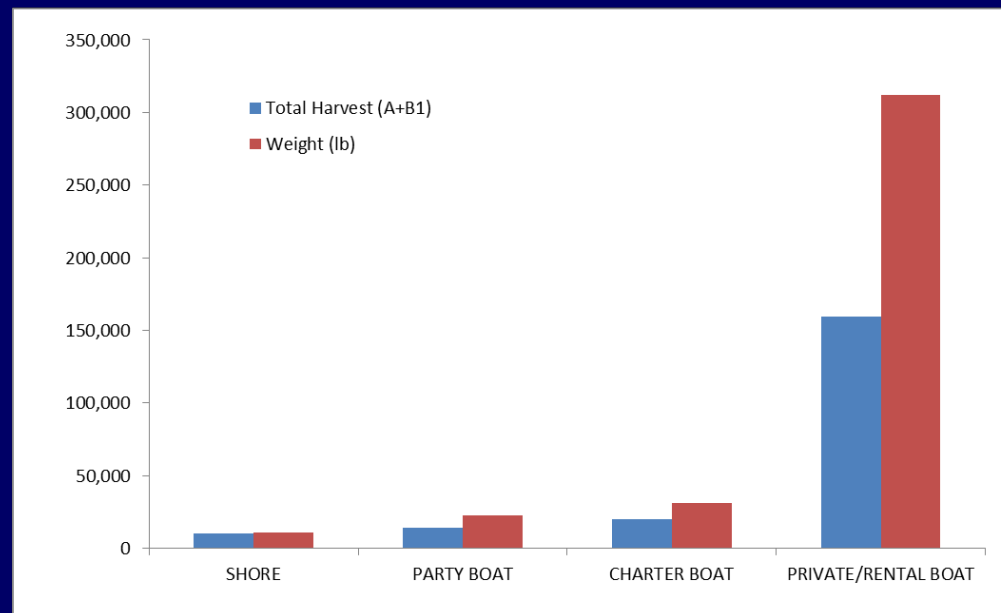
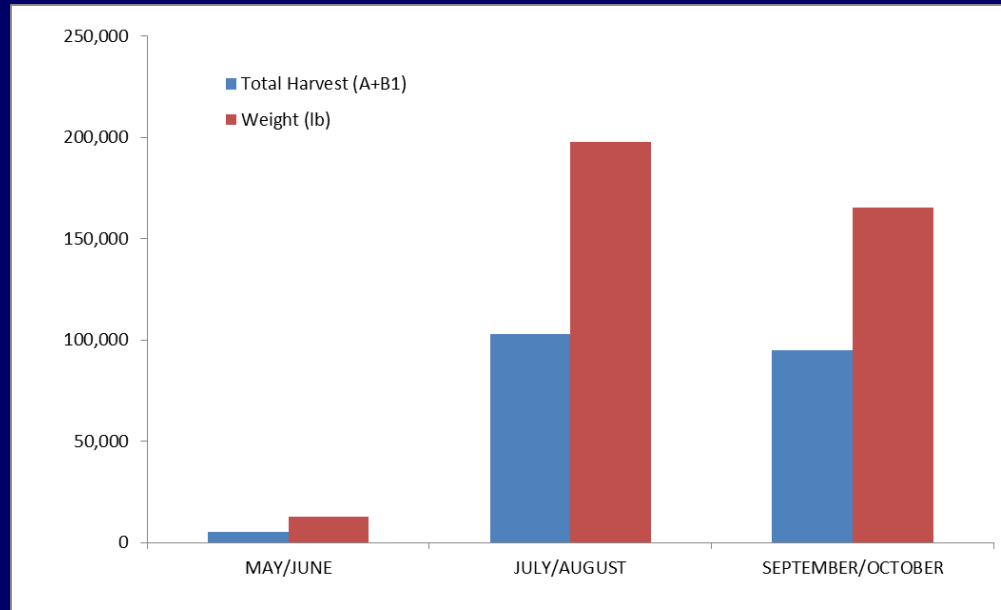
SSB was 24.6 million lbs in 2011. The SSB reference point is  $SSB_{MSY} = 24.9$  million lbs. The minimum stock size threshold, one-half  $SSB_{MSY}$ , is estimated to be 12.5 million lbs.



Black Sea Bass Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB). Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center Black Sea Bass Projections, 2012



# RI Fishery Performance – Black Sea Bass Recreational Harvest



# ASMFC Management - Black Sea Bass

- ◆ RI 2014 Projected Recreational Harvest = 170,000 fish
- ◆ RI 2015 Recreational Harvest Target = 113,900 fish
- ◆ Needed Reduction = 33%
- ◆ Black sea bass management board approved reduction methodology on February 4, 2015





# Recreational Black Sea Bass - Proposed Regulation Changes

Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
Split bag; late season closed	13"	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept. 15</u> : 7 fish
Split bag; early season closed	13"	<del>June 29</del> <u>Aug 10</u> – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish
Split bag; late season closed; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept 1 – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept 21</u> : 7 fish
Split bag; early season closed; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	<del>June 29</del> <u>Aug 9</u> – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish
Single bag; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	<u>June 29 – Sept. 28: 3 fish</u>



## Hearing Item #8: Recreational Black sea bass (Finfish – section 7.14.1)

- Noticed options

Option	Minimum size	Season/ Possession Limit
<u>Option 1:</u> Status Quo	13"	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish.
<u>Option 2:</u> Shorten early season	13"	<del>June 29</del> <u>Aug. 5</u> – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish/person/day.
<u>Option 3:</u> Shorten late season	13"	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept. 16</u> : 7 fish
<u>Option 4:</u> Dec. bag limit; single season	13"	<u>June 29 – Dec. 31: 2 fish</u>
<u>Option 5:</u> Inc. min. size; maintain seasons	<u>14"</u>	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish



## Hearing Item #8: Recreational Black sea bass (Finfish – section 7.14.1)

- New options since time of notice

Option	Minimum size	Season/Possession Limit
<u>Option 1:</u> Split bag; late season closed	13"	June 29 – Aug. 31 Sept. 1 – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept. 15</u> : 7 fish
<u>Option 2:</u> Split bag; early season closed	13"	<del>June 29</del> <u>Aug 10</u> – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish
<u>Option 3:</u> Split bag; late season closed; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	June 29 – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept 1 – <del>Dec. 31</del> <u>Sept 21</u> : 7 fish
<u>Option 4:</u> Split bag; early season closed; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	<del>June 29</del> <u>Aug 9</u> – Aug. 31: 3 fish Sept. 1 – Dec. 31: 7 fish
<u>Option 5:</u> Single bag; incr. min. size	<u>14"</u>	<u>June 29 – Sept. 28: 3 fish</u>



**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 8\***  
**Recreational Black sea bass**

**7.14 Black Sea Bass**

**Option 1 (of 5): Status Quo**

7.14.1 Recreational:

(A) Minimum size: Thirteen inches (13") total length. Total length measurement for black sea bass does not include the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.

(B) Seasons and possession limits:

(1) June 29 through August 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

(2) September 1 through December 31: Seven (7) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

**Option 2 (of 5): Change bag limit and season**

7.14.1 Recreational:

(A) Minimum size: Thirteen inches (13") total length. Total length measurement for black sea bass does not include the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.

(B) Seasons and possession limits:

(1) ~~June 29~~ **August 5** through August 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

(2) September 1 through December 31: Seven (7) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

**Option 3 (of 5): Change late season (may need additional modification based on technical review)**

7.14.1 Recreational:

(A) Minimum size: Thirteen inches (13") total length. Total length measurement for black sea bass does not include the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.

(B) Seasons and possession limits:

(1) June 29 through August 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

(2) September 1 through ~~December 31~~ **September 16**: Seven (7) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

**Option 4 (of 5): Change bag limit (may need additional modification based on technical review)**

7.14.1 Recreational:

(A) Minimum size: Thirteen inches (13") total length. Total length measurement for black sea bass does not include the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.

(B) Seasons and possession limits:

(1) June 29 through ~~August 31~~ **December 31**: ~~Three (3)~~ **Two** fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

~~(2) September 1 through December 31: Seven (7) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.~~

**Option 5 (of 5): Minimum size (may need additional modification based on technical review)**

7.14.1 Recreational:

(A) Minimum size: ~~Thirteen inches (13")~~ **Fourteen inches (14")** total length. Total length measurement for black sea bass does not include the tendril located on the caudal (tail) fin.

(B) Seasons and possession limits:

(1) June 29 through August 31: Three (3) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

(2) September 1 through December 31: Seven (7) fish per person per calendar day, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise.

## Summary of public hearing comments - recreational Black Sea Bass:

- D. Dillon, speaking on behalf the RIPCBA: Proposed 1 fish at 14” for as much of wave 4 as possible, and 8 fish for waves 5 and 6;
- S. Medeiros: In support of option 2 due to longest season available;
- M. Bucko: In support of option 5;
- S. Anderson: In support of option 2, modifying by opening as early as possible (prior to Aug. 10) with a 1 fish bag limit; 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-period ok;
- M. Ambrosia: Echoed Mr. Anderson’s proposal: In support of option 2, modifying by opening as early as possible (prior to Aug. 10) with a 1 fish bag limit; 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-period ok;
- Anon (could not hear name – rec. fisherman): In support of option 2;
- S. Lundberg: Echoed Mr. Anderson’s proposal: In support of option 2, modifying by opening as early as possible (prior to Aug. 10) with a 1 fish bag limit; 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-period ok;
- F. Blount: In support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June);
- Anon (could not hear name – rec. fisherman): Echoed Mr. Blount’s proposal - in support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June);
- D. Monti: Echoed Mr. Blount’s proposal - in support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June);
- C. Donilon: In support of option 2;
- Anon (could not hear name): In support of option 2;
- R. Hittinger: Echoed Mr. Blount’s proposal - in support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June);
- M. Bucko: Echoed Mr. Blount’s proposal - in support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June);
- A. Dangelo: Echoed Mr. Blount’s proposal - in support of option 2, modifying by reducing the bag limit in the Spring to 1 fish and in the Fall to 5 fish in order to open as early as possible, (open in June).

## Summary of written comments:

- J. Rainone: Supports split bag early season closed, of the split bag increased size and early season closed. Need to be allowed to retain fish in the late season;
- M. Mayo: Supports an increase in possession limit to 8 – 10 fish/person/day;
- RISAA BOD (Rich Hittinger): Extend length of seasons, particularly the early season, 14” min. size;
- RIPCBA: In favor of a smaller possession limit during wave 4 with the largest bag limit possible for wave 5 and 6;
- W. Gauch: Supports noticed options 3 or 4; the primary desire to keep the early part of the season open.

# Spiny Dogfish

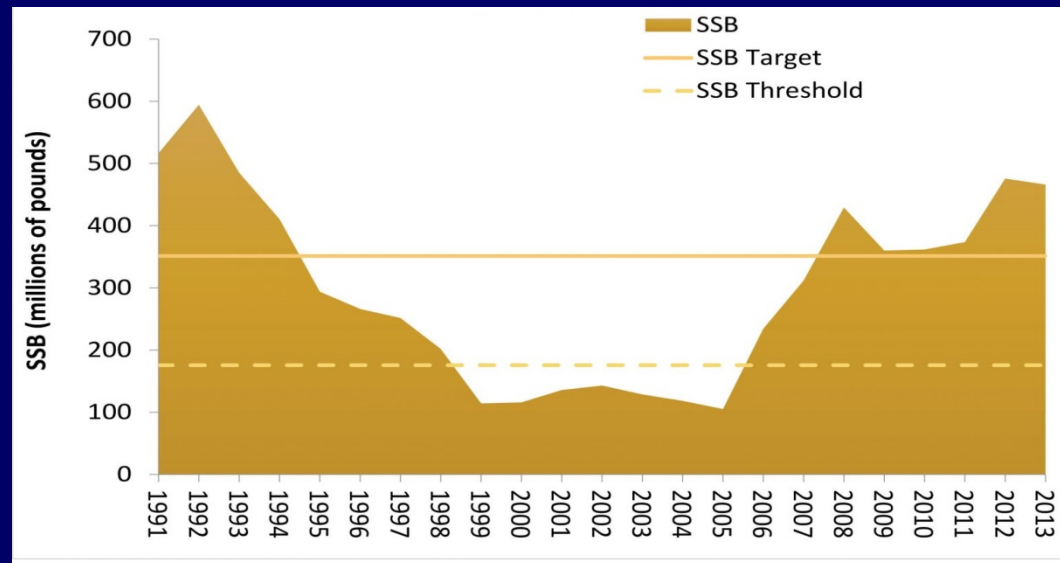
- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2013-2014 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Spiny Dogfish Commercial Fishery



# Spiny Dogfish Stock Status

- The 2014 stock assessment update, conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, estimates spiny dogfish are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.
- Spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated at 465.99 million pounds in 2013 and has exceeded the target (351.23 million pounds) for the past six years.

- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.15 in 2012, well below the plan's threshold (0.2439).



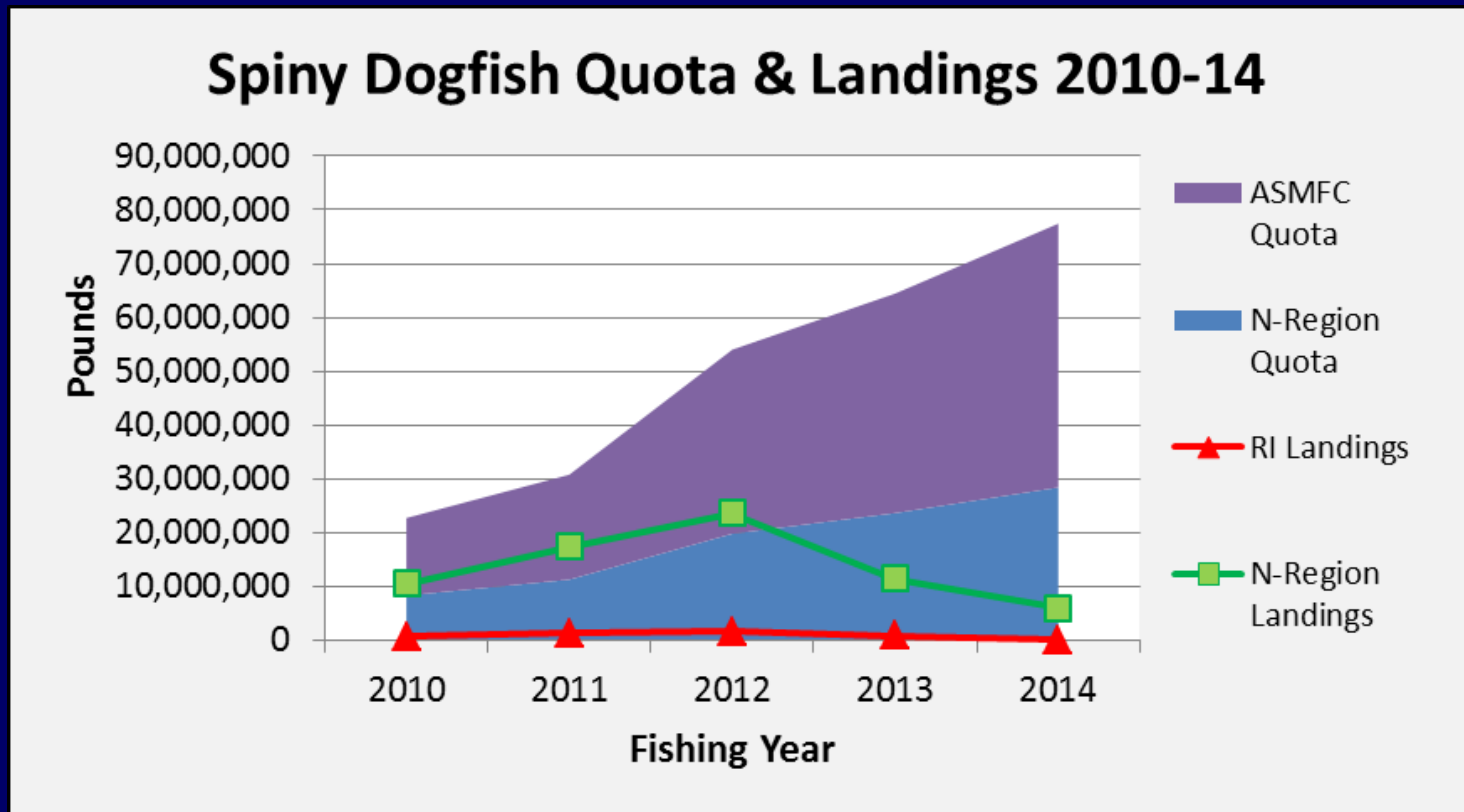
**Spiny Dogfish Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) ( $\geq 80$  cm).** Source: NEFSC Update on the Status of Spiny Dogfish in 2013 and Projected Harvests at the FMSY Proxy & PSTAR of 40%, 2013





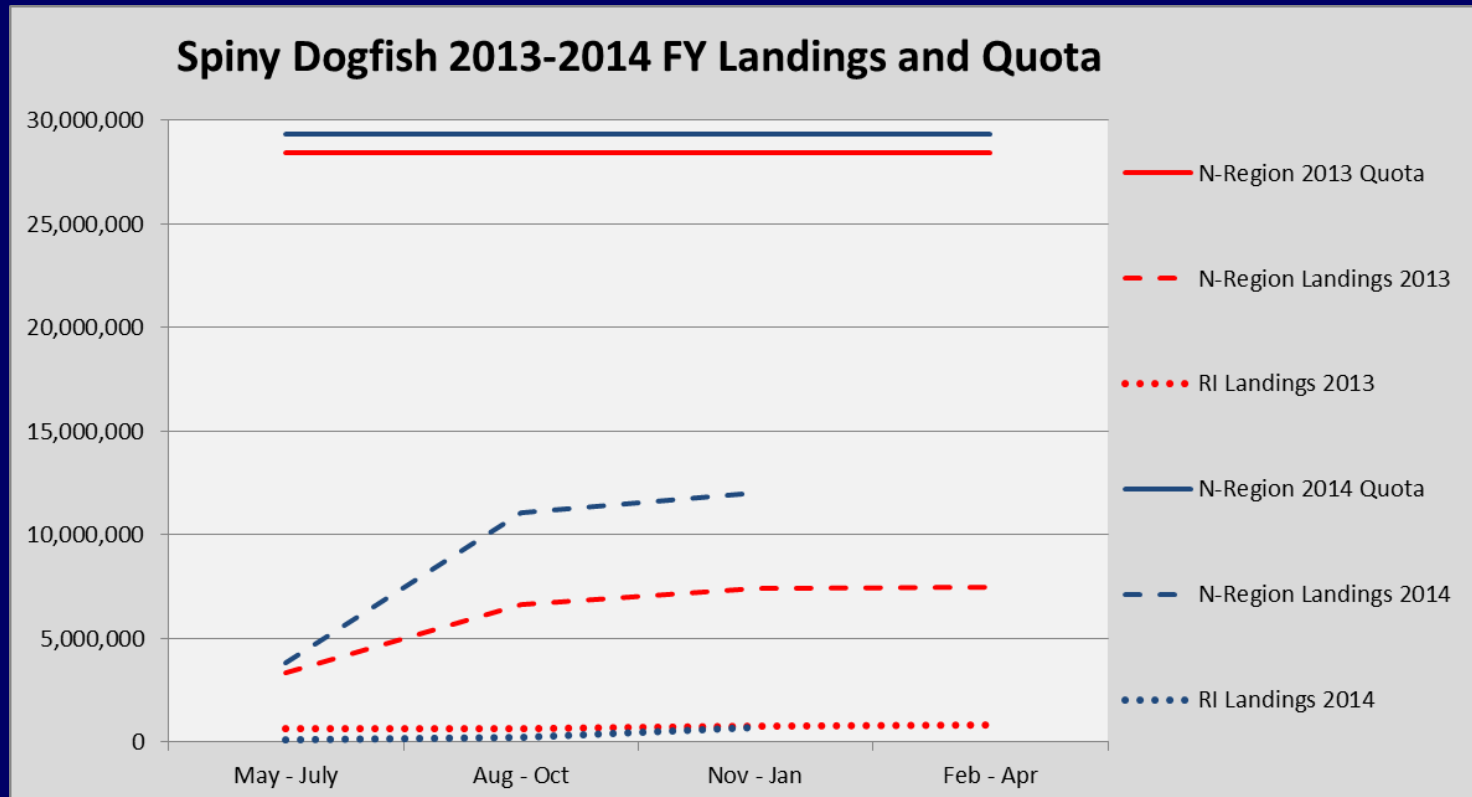
# Spiny Dogfish 2013-2014 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance

After harvesting the regional quota from 2010-2012 the Northern Region (N-Region) failed to harvest its quota for the 2013 & 2014 fishing years, resulting in significant underutilization of the resource



# Spiny Dogfish 2013-2014 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance

- During the 2013 fishing year (FY) 32% Northern Region (N-Region) quota was harvested
  - RI landed 789,334 lbs during the 2013 FY
- The 2014 FY harvest appears to be slightly ahead of 2013, but likely will not achieve the N-Region quota



# DEM Marine Fisheries Recommendations for the 2015 Spiny Dogfish Fishery (Proposed Changes)

- Update regulations to reflect the increase in the commercial possession limit from 4,000 to 5,000 pounds.
  - We implemented this change via Part III on Sept 8, 2014 consistent with ASMFC and NOAA measures.
  - This proposed change updates Part VII.
- Update the Finning Provision for consistency with Addendum V to the ASMFC FMP for Spiny Dogfish and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 by prohibiting processing at-sea, including the removal of fins.
  - Current language allows processing spiny dogfish at-sea, so long as the ratio of fins aboard the vessel does not exceed 5% of the ratio of carcasses aboard the vessel.
  - The proposed language requires fins remain naturally attached through landing.
  - The ASMFC required implementation date of this measure is May 1, 2015.



# ***Spiny dogfish – proposed regulation changes (Finfish – section 7.15.1)***

**(A) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit:** RI is currently designated as a state that is part of the Northern region. A Northern region **possession limit and** quota for spiny dogfish will be established annually by the ASMFC. The Northern region quota for spiny dogfish **and** shall be the most recent allocation by the ASMFC **and/or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce as published in the Federal Register**, which is currently set at 58% of the coastwide quota.

**(2) Possession limit:** ~~4,000~~ **5,000** pounds per vessel per calendar day.

**(B) Prohibition of Finning:** Finning is defined as the act of taking a spiny dogfish, removing the fins, and returning the remainder of the spiny dogfish to the sea. Finning spiny dogfish **shall be is** prohibited in all state waters. ~~Vessels that land spiny dogfish must land fins in proportion to carcasses, with a maximum 5% fin to carcass ratio, by weight. Fins may be removed at sea, but the corresponding carcass must be retained. All fins and carcasses must be landed at the same time and in the same location. In addition, removing any fin of spiny dogfish at-sea is prohibited (including the tail). All spiny dogfish must be landed with fins-naturally-attached to the corresponding carcass. Gutting fish at-sea is permitted, so long as the fins remain attached by a portion of uncut skin.~~



## Hearing Item #9: Commercial Spiny dogfish (Finfish – section 7.15.1)

(A) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: RI is currently designated as a state that is part of the Northern region. A Northern region **possession limit and** quota for spiny dogfish will be established annually by the ASMFC. The Northern region quota for spiny dogfish **and** shall be the most recent allocation by the ASMFC ~~and/or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce as published in the Federal Register~~, which is currently set at 58% of the coastwide quota.

(2) Possession limit: ~~4,000~~ **5,000** pounds per vessel per calendar day.

(B) Prohibition of Finning: Finning is defined as the act of taking a spiny dogfish, removing the fins, and returning the remainder of the spiny dogfish to the sea. Finning spiny dogfish ~~shall be~~ **is** prohibited in all state waters. ~~Vessels that land spiny dogfish must land fins in proportion to carcasses, with a maximum 5% fin to carcass ratio, by weight. Fins may be removed at sea, but the corresponding carcass must be retained. All fins and carcasses must be landed at the same time and in the same location. In addition, removing any fin of spiny dogfish at-sea is prohibited (including the tail). All spiny dogfish must be landed with fins-naturally-attached to the corresponding carcass. Gutting fish at-sea is permitted, so long as the fins remain attached by a portion of uncut skin.~~



# Striped Bass

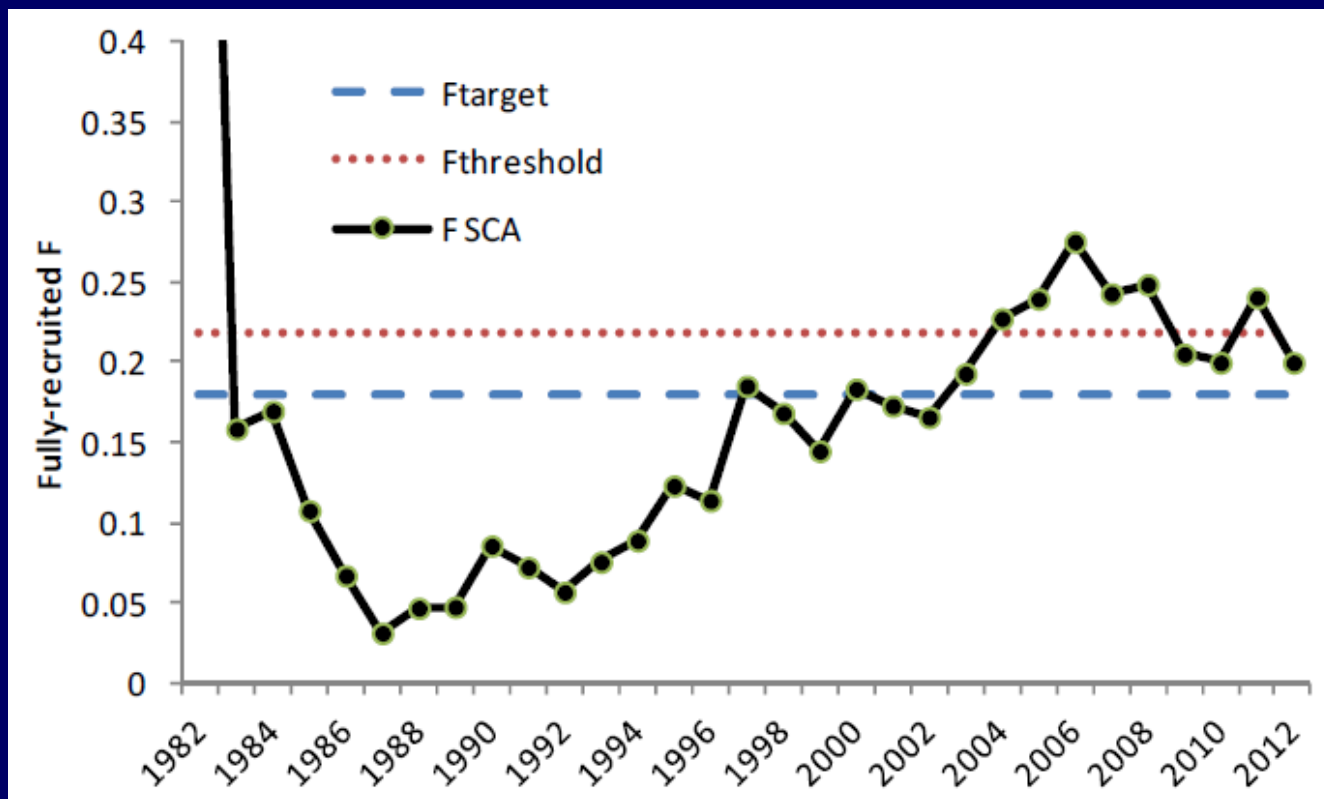
- Summary of Stock Status;
- 2014 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- Recommendations for the 2015 Striped Bass Fishery



# Striped Bass Stock Status

## Stock Status:

- Benchmark in 2013: SAW/SARC 57 and peer review
- The striped bass stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring relative to the new biological reference points.
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.20 in 2012, a value between the new fishing mortality threshold (0.219) and the fishing mortality target (0.18).



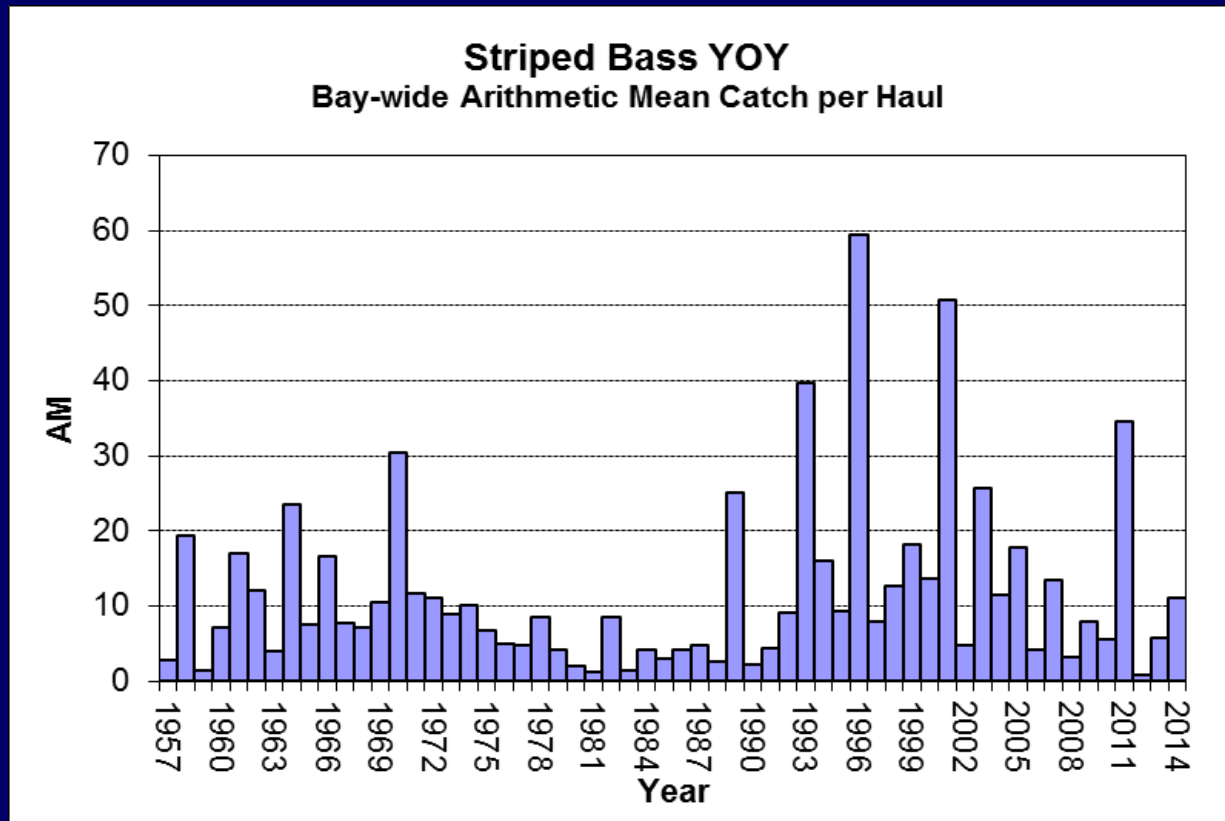
Source: 2013 Update of the Striped Bass Stock Assessment using Final 2012 Data (Figure 10)



# Striped Bass Stock Status

## Stock Status:

- SSB is continuing to decline and is estimated to be 128 million pounds, just above the threshold but below the target (127 million and 159 million respectively)
- The last strong year class observed was the 2011 year class
- Due to concern of the stock becoming overfished Draft Addendum IV was developed which proposed new fishing mortality reference points and a suite of management options for reductions in the commercial and recreational fisheries



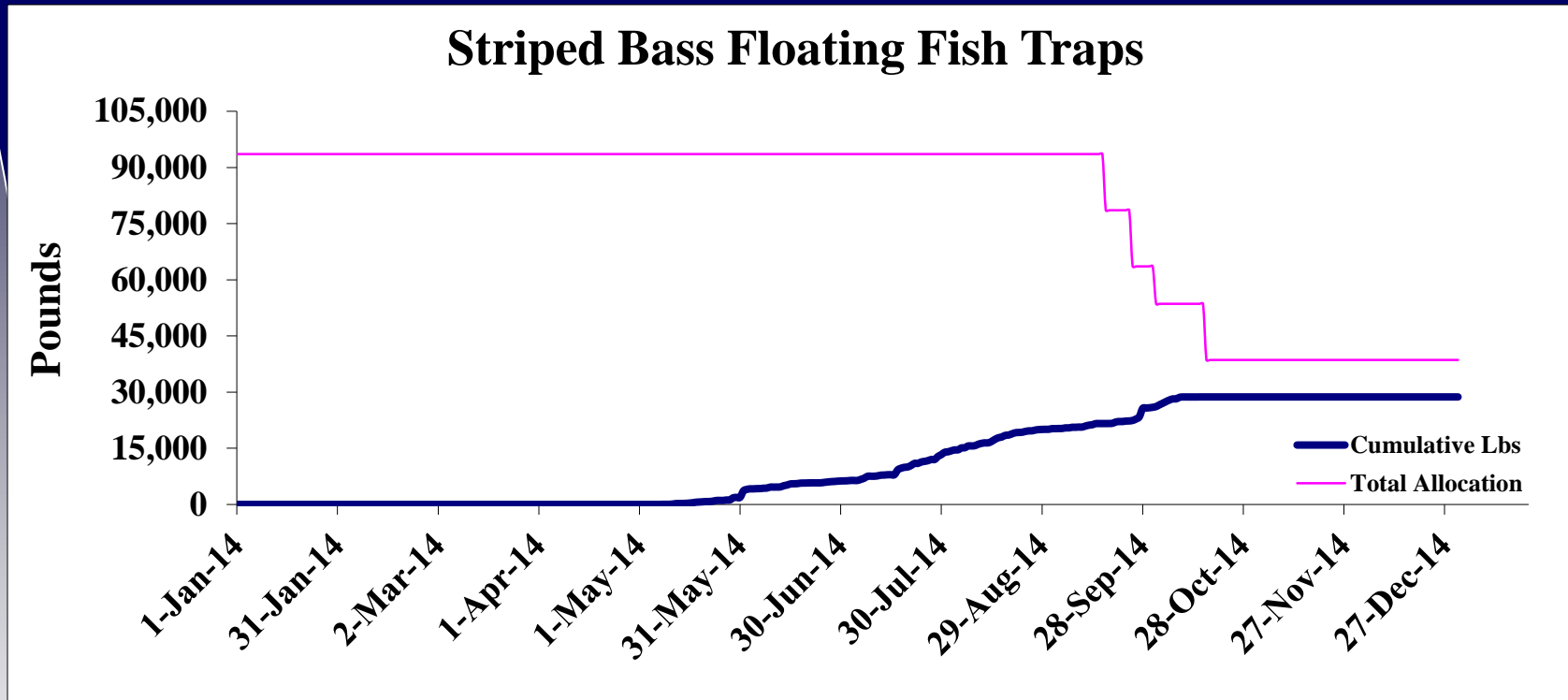


# Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV

- ♦ The striped bass management Board met in October of 2014 and voted on the options presented in Draft Addendum IV. The Board voted for:
  - ♦ Adopting the 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment F reference points (Option B)
  - ♦ The recreational fishery implementing a 1 fish bag limit with a 28" minimum size (Option B1 estimated to be a 31% reduction from 2013 harvest)
  - ♦ The commercial fishery taking a 25% reduction from Amendment 6 quotas (Option B16). The RI quota would be reduced from 243,625 lbs to 182,719 lbs
- ♦ In response to Draft Addendum IV RI submitted two conservation equivalency proposals on behalf of industry:
  - ♦ Recreational:
    - ♦ Private and shore: 1 fish bag limit with a 28" minimum size
    - ♦ For-hire: 2 fish bag limit with a 32" minimum size
  - ♦ Commercial:
    - ♦ General category: 34" minimum size
    - ♦ Floating fish trap: a 26" minimum size and 1.61% reduction to the FFT commercial allocation
- ♦ Both conservation equivalency proposals were approved by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and Striped Bass Management Board



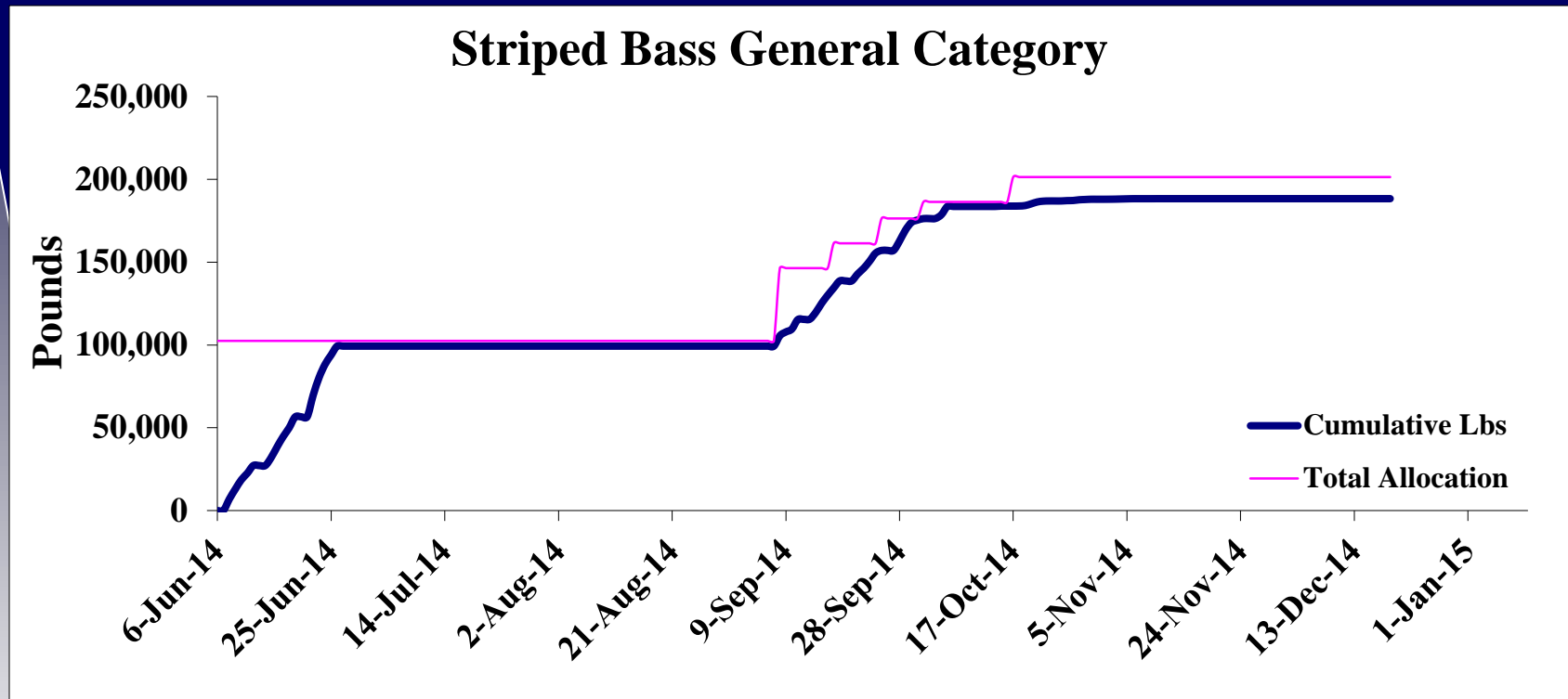
# RI Fishery Performance - Commercial Landings Floating Fish Trap



- ◆ A total of 4 rollovers from the FFT to GC totaling 55,000 lbs
- ◆ 3 of the 4 rollovers occurred prior to the 10/15 rollover date specified in regulation
- ◆ Original Allocation = 93, 586 lbs, Final Allocation = 38,586 lbs
- ◆ 9,874 lb underage in 2014



# RI Fishery Performance - Commercial Landings General Category



- ◆ Initial quota: 146,377 lbs, final quota after rollovers: 201,377 lbs
- ◆ 13,057 lb underage in 2014
- ◆ Spring season 6/8 – 6/26 (15 days)
  - ◆ Allocation: 102,464 lbs
  - ◆ Landings: 99,229 lbs
- ◆ Fall season: 9/8 – 10/6 (24 days), 10/19 – 12/31
  - ◆ Allocation: 102,148 lbs
  - ◆ Landings: 89,091 lbs



# Preliminary 2015 Commercial Allocations

- ♦ RI 2015 Proposed Commercial Quota = 182,719 lbs (25% reduction from 2014 not including conservation equivalency)
- ♦ RI 2014 Commercial Quota = 239,963 lbs (including FFT conservation equivalency)
- ♦ 2015 Allocations based on 39/61 split FFT/GC, and 70/30 split for GC Spring/Fall

Fishery	Minimum Size	2014 Quota	2015 Preliminary Quota	Season
General Category	34"	102,464	78,021	June 8 – Aug 31
		43,913	33,438	Sept 8 – Dec 31
Floating Fish Trap	28"	NA	71,260	April 1 – Dec. 31
Floating Fish Trap w/ CE	26"	93,586	70,113	April 1 – Dec 31



# Recreational Striped Bass - Proposed Regulation Changes

- ◆ The Division recommends adopting changes for 2015 that would be ASMFC compliant
  
- ◆ Recreational:
  - ASMFC Draft Addendum IV
    - All modes: 1 fish bag limit and 28” min. size
  
  - Industry conservation equivalency
    - Private and shore: 1 fish bag limit and 28” min. size
    - For-hire: 2 fish bag limit and 32” min. size
    - Mandatory reporting requirement for for-hire: will amend noticed language to say “eLogbook and/or SAFISm”

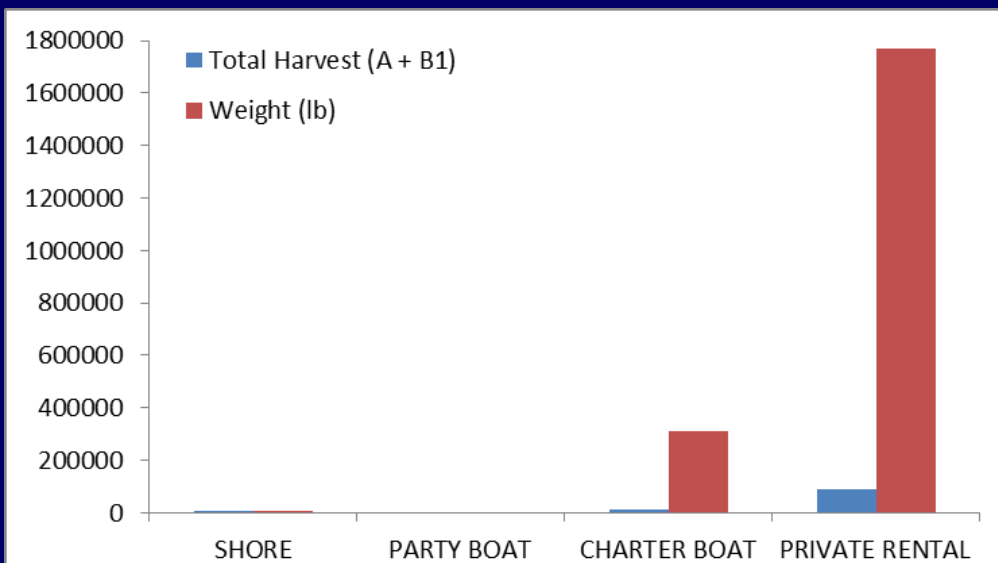
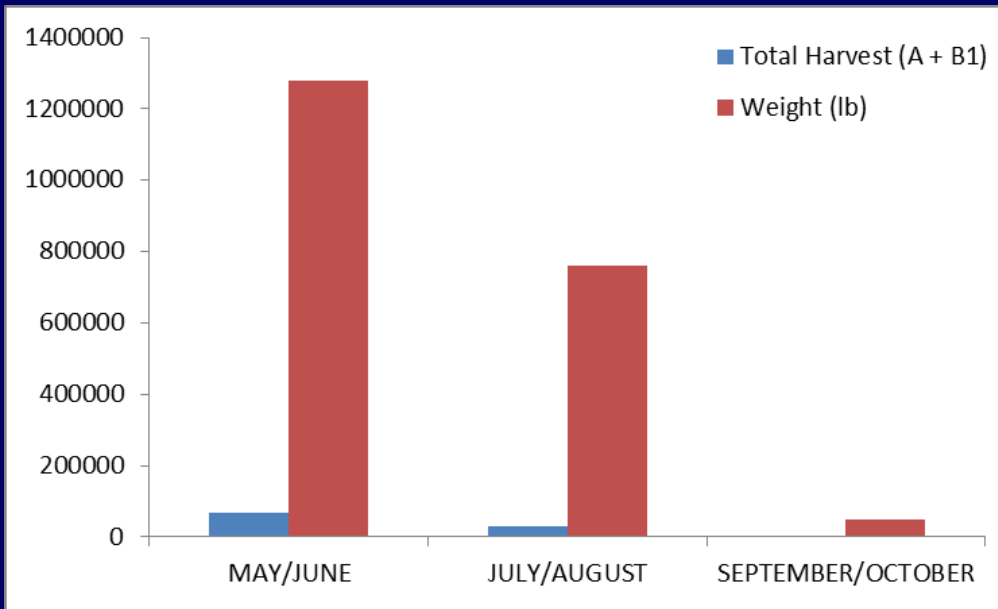


# Commercial Striped Bass - Proposed Regulation Changes

- ◆ Commercial quota and minimum sizes:
  - ◆ Option 1:
    - ASMFC Draft Addendum IV
      - 2015 commercial quota = 182,719 lbs
      - 28" min. size FFT, 34" min. size GC
  - ◆ Option 2:
    - Industry conservation equivalency
      - 1.61% reduction to FFT allocation (2015 commercial quota = 182,719 lbs)
      - 26" min. size FFT, 34" min. size GC
- ◆ Commercial allocations and seasons:
  - ◆ Status Quo:
    - FFT:
      - 39% of RI commercial quota
      - Season: 4/1 – 12/31
    - GC:
      - 61% of RI commercial quota
      - Seasons: 6/8 – 8/31; 9/8 – 12/31



# RI Fishery Performance – Striped Bass Recreational Harvest



# Hearing Item #10: Recreational Striped bass (Part XII - Striped bass, section 12.1)

Option	Min. size	Season/Possession Limit
<p><b><u>Option 1:</u></b> Dec. possession limit (ASMFC compliance)</p>	28"	No closed season: <del>2</del> <u>1</u> fish:
<p><b><u>Option 2:</u></b> <u>Rec:</u> dec. poss. limit; <u>P/C:</u> inc. min. size; maintain 2 fish bag limit; reporting requirement (industry proposal for ASMFC compliance):</p>	<p>Rec: 28" P/C: <u>32"</u></p>	<p><u>Rec:</u> No closed season: <del>2</del> <u>1</u> fish: <u>P/C:</u> No closed season; 2 fish; min. size <del>28"</del> <u>32"</u>; Reporting: <u>Any licensed party/charter boat participating in the striped bass fishery must report each trip targeting striped bass into the eLogbook (the electronic logbook hosted by ACCSP).</u></p>





**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 10\***  
**Recreational Striped bass management**

**Option 1 (of 2): Change possession limit (ASMFC compliance)**

12.1 Recreational:

12.1.1 Minimum size: Twenty-eight inches (28") in total length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State, or otherwise.

12.1.2 Season: There is no closed season for recreational striped bass.

12.1.3 Possession limit: ~~Two (2)~~ **One (1)** fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of Rhode Island or otherwise.

(A) Possession limit compliance aboard vessels:

(1) Licensed party/charter vessels: Possession limit compliance aboard licensed party/charter vessels will be determined by dividing the number of fish by the number of fishermen onboard the boat.

(2) Multiple licensed recreational fishermen fishing from a single vessel: Possession limit compliance aboard vessels with multiple licensed fishermen will be determined by dividing the number of fish by the number of licensed fishermen on board said vessel.

12.2 Possession limit changes: Any modifications made to the possession limit as set forth in these regulations will be promulgated in the RI Marine Fisheries regulations (RIMFR) Part III.

**Option 2 (of 2): Change possession limit; Party and Charter provision allowing different possession limit, increased minimum size and mandatory reporting requirement (Industry proposal for ASMFC compliance)**

12.1 Recreational:

12.1.1 Minimum size: Twenty-eight inches (28") in total length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State, or otherwise.

12.1.2 Season: There is no closed season for recreational striped bass.

12.1.3 Possession limit: ~~Two (2)~~ **One (1)** fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of Rhode Island or otherwise.

(A) Possession limit compliance aboard vessels:

(1) Licensed party/charter vessels: Possession limit compliance aboard

licensed party/charter vessels will be determined by dividing the number of fish by the number of fishermen onboard the boat.

(2) Multiple licensed recreational fishermen fishing from a single vessel: Possession limit compliance aboard vessels with multiple licensed fishermen will be determined by dividing the number of fish by the number of licensed fishermen on board said vessel.

**12.1.4 Licensed Party and Charter vessels minimum size and possession limit:**

**(A) Minimum size: Thirty-two inches (32") in total length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State, or otherwise.**

**(B) Possession limit: Two (2) fish, whether caught within the jurisdiction of Rhode Island or otherwise.**

**(C) Reporting: Any licensed party/charter boat participating in the striped bass fishery must report each trip targeting striped bass into the eREC logbook (the electronic logbook hosted by ACCSP).**

## Summary of public hearing comments - recreational Striped Bass:

- A. Dangelo (P/C Captain): In support of option 2, modifying to allow for 1 fish each for captain and mate;
- S. Lundberg (Reel to Reel Charters): In support of option 2;
- S. Medeiros (speaking on behalf of RISAA): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- Anon (could not hear name; P/C Captain): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- G. Allen (rec. fisherman; RISAA member): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- M. Ambrosia (Charter Boat Misty): In support of option 2, modifying to allow for 1 fish each for captain and mate;
- D. Monti: In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- J. Kaczynski: In support of option 2, modifying to allow for commercial rod and reel fisherman to retain 1 fish each for captain and mate;
- Anon (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- Anon (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- Anon (unable to hear name; P/C Captain): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- Anon (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;
- P. Jenkins: In support of option 1, stating that 2 sets of rules is unnecessary and would be problematic or enforcement;
- S. Anderson (Bare Bones Charters): In support of option 2;
- F. Blount (P/C Captain): In support of option 2, modifying that possession limit should apply to # of passengers on board, and mention of captain and mate in the regulation is unnecessary;
- Anon (unable to hear name): In support of option 1;
- T. Kaminski (rec. fisherman): In support of option 1, as in favor of one set of rules for everyone as the simplest to understand and enforce;
- Anon (unable to hear name; rec. fisherman): In support of option 1;
- Mike ? (did not state name): In support of option 1;
- C. Donilon (Charter Boat Snappa): Proposed an alternative option of 1.5 fish, 28" min. size, per angler for P/C, as well as to prohibit fish for captain and mate;
- Todd Corayer (rec. fisherman): In support of option 1;
- M. Bucko: In support of option 2 and proposal offered by F. Blount;
- D. Zambrotta, representing himself and the Newport County Rec. Fishing Club: In support of option 1 (note: full comments provided also submitted in writing);
- C. Gregory: In support of option 1 (note: full comments provided also submitted in writing);
- Mike ? (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 1 and the most conservative option available to restore stocks and for simplicity for enforcement.
- D. Dillon (Charter Boat Persuader II): In favor of significant increase in license fees for out-of-state fishermen. Stated that P/C has a significant positive economic impact on the

*state and is the livelihood of P/C captains and crew. In favor of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;*

- *Peter ? (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen; RISAA member): In support of option 2, modifying to prohibit any fish for captain and mate;*
- *E. Cook (rec. fisherman): In support of option 2;*
- *R. Bellavance: Commented re: reporting for P/C (option 2) - that eTrips should be allowed in addition to eLogbook, as is easy to use with mobile devices and allows for real time reporting of catch and discards; and also that DEM conduct outreach to P/C captains to establish accounts for reporting; and also that DEM advocate on behalf of the P/C captains for eTrips reporting to replace VTR reporting and avoid duplicative reporting requirements;*
- *Joe ? (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 1;*
- *B. Patterson (P/C captain): In support of option 2, only as a means for advertisement for his business and spending money on bait/tackle rather than going to Massachusetts, but also in support of educating about catch and release;*
- *Anon (unable to hear name; rec. fishermen): In support of option 1;*
- *T. Pelto (rec. fisherman): In support of option 1;*
- *H. Baker (rec. fisherman): In support of option 1, but stated that even more conservative measures were needed;*
- *E. Pascale: In support of option 1.*

#### Summary of written comments:

- Option 1:
  - 66 individuals in support;
  - 3 groups in support: RISAA (7,500 members); Narragansett Surfcasters; Newport County Salt Water Fishing Club (125 members);
- Option 2:
  - 24 individuals in support;
  - 2 groups in support: RIPCBA (65members); Waterbury Deep Sea Fishing Club (39 signatures);
- Alternate option: Option 2, no fish captain and mate
  - 3 individuals in support
- Alternate option: Option 2, one (1) fish captain and mate
  - 2 individuals in support
- Alternate option: Option 1, no fish captain and mate
  - 1 individual in support

# Hearing Item #11: Commercial Striped bass general category (Part XII - Striped bass, section 12.3)

Option	Min. size	Season/Possession Limit
Status quo	34"	<u>January 1 – June 7:</u> Closed; <u>June 8 – August 31:</u> 5 fish/person/day; 5 fish/vessel/day; closed Friday and Saturday <u>September 8 – December 31:</u> 5 fish/person/day; 5 fish/vessel/day; closed Friday and Saturday



**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 11\***  
**Commercial Striped bass management – general category**

**Option 1: Status Quo**

12.3 Commercial – General Category:

12.3.1 Minimum size: Thirty four (34) inches or greater in total length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this state or otherwise.

12.3.2 Seasons, allocations, and possession limits: During a single calendar year, the general category Striped bass fishery shall be allowed to harvest not more than sixty-one percent (61%) of the annual Rhode Island commercial quota.

(A) January 1 – June 7: Closed annually.

(B) June 8 – August 31:

(1) Allocation: Seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota will be available in this sub-period.

(2) Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.

(3) The fishery will be closed in each calendar week from 12:00 AM Friday until 11:59 PM Saturday during this sub-period. There will be no commercial possession or sale of Striped bass on these days for general category commercial fishermen.

(4) The sub-period will close once seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota is projected to be harvested if prior to August 31.

(C) September 8 – December 31:

(1) Allocation: Thirty percent (30%) of the general category quota will be available in this sub-period.

(2) Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.

(3) The fishery will be closed in each calendar week from 12:00 AM Friday until 11:59 PM Saturday during this sub period. There will be no commercial possession or sale of Striped bass on these days for general category commercial fishermen.

(4) The sub-period will close when 30% of the general category quota is

projected to be harvested.

(5) If DFW determines that the quota will be exceeded or will not be met before the end of the fall season, DFW may adjust that catch rate accordingly on or after September 15 annually.

12.4 If the Division estimates that the Floating Fish Trap sector will not fully utilize its allocation prior to the end of the season, beginning on October 15, the Division may move the Floating Fish Trap allocation into the general category fishery. The Division will consult with the Floating Fish Trap Licensees or their designee prior to enacting any allocation roll over, and will maintain written correspondence in the form of a letter on file as proof of said consultation.

Summary of public hearing comments - **commercial Striped Bass general category**

- J. Conley, R.I. Commercial Rod & Reel Association: In support of option 1, status quo;
- J. Kazinski: In support of option 1, status quo;
- Dave ? (unable to hear name): In support of option 1, status quo;
- Anon (unable to hear name; R.I. Commercial Rod & Reel Association): In support of option 1, status quo;
- Anon (unable to hear name): Alt. proposal to open season earlier, possible the end of May;
- Joe ? (unable to hear name; R.I. Commercial Rod & Reel Association): In support of option 1, status quo;
- M. Lanny: In support of option 1, status quo;
- Anon (name not stated): Alt. proposal to open season earlier, possible the end of May, and offered that an earlier start date would be greatly beneficial to commercial fishermen;

Summary of written comments - **commercial Striped Bass general category**

- Written letters included

Summary of public hearing comments - **commercial Striped Bass floating fish trap**

- Al ? (name not stated): In support of option 1, status quo.





# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201  
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## MEMORANDUM

January 16, 2015

**TO: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board**

**FROM: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee**

**SUBJECT: Technical Review and Recommendations for Addendum IV State Implementation Plans and Conservation Equivalency Proposals**

The Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee held a conference call on November 18, 2014 to discuss Addendum IV implementation plans including protocols for states to follow if they wish to pursue conservation equivalency. Specifically the TC discussed potential data sources, treatment of data, and analyses. The outcome of that conference call was a TC Memo (M14-110; see Board Briefing Materials) which detailed the protocols, as approved by the TC, for completing conservation equivalency proposals.

The TC held a meeting on January 8-9, 2015 during which all state implementation plans, including conservation equivalency proposals, were reviewed based on technical merit and to ensure that the approved protocols as outlined in M14-110 were followed. After reviewing the state implementation plans, the TC developed a list of general comments pertaining to all conservation equivalency proposals that the Board should consider when considering state specific management options for 2015. In addition, the TC made recommendations for each of the state implementation plans. General comments, state specific proposed regulations, and TC recommendations are detailed below.

### **General Comments on Conservation Equivalency Proposals**

- The TC still maintains that there is greater certainty in the percent reductions of simple management measures (e.g., changes in bag or size limits) relative to more complex measures (e.g., slot or trophy fish options).
- Changes in angler behavior (e.g., effort, poaching, discards) are not accounted for as they cannot be quantified and may impact the overall realized percent reductions.
- Several states had concerns with data limitations (e.g., high PSE's, number of trips).
- If a state has chosen to use a release mortality rate other than the accepted 9%, they must have data to support that.
- All conservation equivalency proposals must meet the 25% reduction with 25.0% being the median percent reduction not the maximum.
- Enforcement of the proposed regulations needs to be considered including, but not limited to, slot limits and how they may be interpreted by states and enforcement officers and the potential to have differing regulations in neighboring states. Due to the latter, the Board may want to consider regional approaches to management for states that are proposing similar management measures.

M15-09

The TC approved all state options in the tables that follow. They had a few comments on the states bulleted below.

- **Connecticut:** The TC acknowledged that Connecticut did not assume perfect compliance with their recreational bag and size limit analysis (option 2) which results in more conservative reduction estimates than assuming perfect compliance as decided by the TC.
- **Maryland:** The TC raised concern regarding increased discards due to increased minimum size for the commercial Chesapeake Bay fishery (Option 4b). At the TC's request, Maryland included an estimate of commercial dead discards that would occur under an increased minimum size of 20" (Option 4b; see implementation plan). Based on this analysis, Maryland estimates that discard mortality would be less of an impact than direct harvest would be on 2011 year class if MD maintained their current minimum size (18") for the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery.
- **New York:** The TC noted that all options met the necessary reduction regardless of which release mortality rate (5%, 9% or 16%) was used.

Table 1. Proposed recreational management options by state. Please note the numbering of options matches the convention used in state implementation plans for cross referencing purposes.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Mode/Region</b>	<b>Size Limits</b>	<b>Bag Limits</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Open Season</b>
<b>Maine</b>					
ME-A	All	28" min	1	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
ME-B	All	24 - 26" slot	1	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
<b>New Hampshire</b>					
NH-1	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31
<b>Massachusetts</b>					
MA-A	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31
MA-B	(private, shore) (for-hire)	28" 32"	1 2	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
MA-C	(private, shore) (for-hire)	28" min (1) 28-34" slot, (1) $\geq$ 40"	1 2	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
<b>Rhode Island</b>					
RI-A	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31
RI-B	(private, shore) (for-hire)	28" 32"	1 2	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
<b>Connecticut</b>					
CT-1	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31
CT-2	(private, shore) (for-hire)	28" 32"	1 2	NEW (CT & RI)	1/1 – 12/31
<b>New York Marine</b>					
NY-1	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	4/15 – 12/15
NY-2	(private, shore) (for-hire)	28" 32"	1 2	NEW	4/15 – 12/15
NY-3	All	(1) 28-34" slot, (1) $\geq$ 36"	2 (1 + trophy)	Option B7 From Add 4	4/15 – 12/15
NY-4	All	(1) 28-36" slot, (1) $\geq$ 38"	2 (1 + trophy)	Option B8 From Add 4	4/15 – 12/15
NY-5	All	(1) 28-37" slot, (1) $\geq$ 40"	2 (1 + trophy)	Option B9 From Add 4	4/15 – 12/15

Option	Mode/Region	Size Limits	Bag Limits	Other	Open Season
<b>New York Delaware River</b>					
NYD-1	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31
<b>New York Hudson River (North of the George Washington Bridge River mile 12)</b>					
NYH-1a	All	18 – 28" slot	1		3/16 – 11/30
NYH-1b	All	18 – 28" slot	1	Circle Hooks Only	3/16 – 11/30
NYH-2a	All	(1) 18-28" slot OR (1) $\geq 40$ "	1		3/16 – 11/30
NYH-2b	All	(1) 18-28" slot OR (1) $\geq 40$ "	1	Circle Hooks Only	3/16 – 11/30
NYH-3a	All	(1) 18-28" slot OR (1) $\geq 44$ "	1		3/16 – 11/30
NYH-3b	All	(1) 18-28" slot OR (1) $\geq 44$ "	1	Circle Hooks Only	3/16 – 11/30
NYH-4a	All	18 – 28" slot	1		Weeks 11–19 (~3/16 – 5/8)
		28" min	1		~5/9 (wk 20) – 11/30
NYH-4b	All	18 – 28" slot	1		Weeks 11–19 (~3/16 – 5/8)
		28" min	1	CH only 5/9-6/15	~5/9 (wk 20) – 11/30
NYH-5a	All	18 – 28" slot	1		Weeks 11–20 (~3/16 – 5/15)
		28" min	1		~5/16 (wk 21) – 11/30
NYH-5b	All	18 – 28" slot	1		Weeks 11–20 (~3/16 – 5/15)
		28" min	1	CH only 5/16-6/15	~5/16 (wk 21) – 11/30
<b>New Jersey</b>					
NJ-1	All	(1) 28 to < 43" slot, (1) $\geq 43$ "	2	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
NJ-2	All	(1) 29 to < 36" slot, (1) $\geq 36$ "	2	NEW	1/1 – 12/31
<b>Pennsylvania</b>					
PA-1	DE Estuary	21 – 25" slot	2	DE Estuary	4/1 – 5/31
	DE Estuary	28" min	1	DE Estuary	1/1 – 3/31, 6/1 – 12/31
	DE River	28" min	1	DE River	1/1 – 12/31

<b>Option</b>	<b>Mode/Region</b>	<b>Size Limits</b>	<b>Bag Limits</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Open Season</b>
<b>Delaware</b>					
DE-B5	All	33" min	2	Option B5 From Add 4	1/1/ - 12/31
DE-B6	All	28 – 34" min	2	Option B6 From Add 4	1/1/ - 12/31
DE-B7	All	(1) 28 – 34" slot, (1) $\geq$ 36"	2	Option B7 From Add 4	1/1/ - 12/31
DE-B8	All	(1) 28 – 36" slot, (1) $\geq$ 38"	2	Option B8 From Add 4	1/1/ - 12/31
DE-B9	All	(1) 28 – 37" slot, (1) $\geq$ 40"	2	Option B9 From Add 4	1/1/ - 12/31
DE-CE1	All	28" min, no harvest 38 – 43"	2	NEW	1/1/ - 12/31 (catch & release 4/1 – 5/31)
	DE Bay, River and Tributaries	20 – 25" slot	2	NEW	7/1 – 8/31
<b>Maryland</b>					
MD-1a	Coastal	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 - 12/31
MD-3a	Trophy	36" min	1	NEW	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April - 5/15
MD-3b	Trophy	36" min, *plus 1 fish per charter boat 28 – 36" slot	1* (+1 for charter boat)	NEW	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April - 5/15
MD-3c	Chesapeake Bay Summer/Fall	(2) 20 - 28" slot OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 28"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	5/16 - 12/20 (includes 5 day extension)
MD-3d	Chesapeake Bay Summer/Fall	(2) 20 - 28" slot OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 28"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	5/16 – 12/15 (excludes 5 day extension)
<b>District of Columbia</b>					
DC-1	All	(2) 20 – 28" slot OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 28"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	5/16 - 12/31
<b>Potomac River Fisheries Commission</b>					
PRFC-3a	Trophy	36" min	1	NEW	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April – 5/15
PRFC-3b	Trophy	36" min, *plus 1 fish per charter boat 28 – 36" slot	1* (+1 for charter boat)	NEW	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April – 5/15
PRFC-3c	Summer/Fall	(2) 20" min OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 28"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	5/16 – 12/31

<b>Option</b>	<b>Mode/Region</b>	<b>Size Limits</b>	<b>Bag Limits</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Open Season</b>
<b>Virginia</b>					
VA-A	Coastal	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 3/31, 5/16 – 12/31
VA-B	Coastal	33" min	2	Option B5 From Add 4	1/1 – 3/31, 5/16 – 12/31
VA-C	Coastal	(1) 28 – 34" slot, (1) $\geq$ 36"	2	Option B7 From Add 4	1/1 – 3/31, 5/16 – 12/31
VA-D	Coastal	(1) 28 – 36" slot, (1) $\geq$ 38"	2	Option B8 From Add 4	1/1 – 3/31, 5/16 – 12/31
VA-CB	Chesapeake Bay	(2) 20 – 28" slot OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 36"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	5/16 – 6/15
		(2) 20 - 28" slot OR (1) 20 – 28" slot, (1) > 28"	2	Option C4 From Add 4	10/4 – 12/31
VA-T	Trophy	36" min	1	NEW	5/1 – 5/15 (Coastal), 5/1 – 6/15 (Chesapeake Bay)
<b>North Carolina</b>					
NC-1	All	28" min	1	Option B1 From Add 4	1/1 – 12/31

Table 2. Proposed commercial management options by state. Please note the numbering of options matches the convention used in state implementation plans for cross referencing purposes.

<b>Maine, New Hampshire, District of Columbia, Pennsylvania</b>					
No Commercial Fishery, OR Do Not Use Commercial Quota					
<b>Option</b>	<b>Mode/Region</b>	<b>Size Limits</b>	<b>Seasonal Quota</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Open Season</b>
<b>Massachusetts</b>					
MA-1	All	34" min	869,813 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	6/23 – 9/1
<b>Rhode Island</b>					
RI-A	General Category	34" min	111,459 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	6/8 – 8/31; 9/8 – 12/31
	Floating Fish Trap	26" min	70,113 lbs	NEW	4/1 – 12/31
RI-B	General Category	34" min	111,459 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	6/8 – 8/31; 9/8 – 12/31
	Floating Fish Trap	28" min	71,260 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	4/1 – 12/31
<b>Connecticut (No commercial fishing, use quota for recreational bonus fish program)</b>					
CT-1	All Areas	22" min (1 voucher/fish harvested)	3,018 vouchers	25% reduction from 2014 vouchers (4,025)	1/1 – 12/31
<b>New York</b>					
NY-1	All	28" min	795,795 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	7/1 – 12/15
NY-2	All	24" min	730,920 lbs	NEW	7/1 – 12/15
<b>New Jersey (No commercial fishing, use quota for recreational bonus fish program)</b>					
NJ-1	All	1 fish $\geq$ 28"	241,313 lbs	Rec Bonus Program	1/1 – 12/31
NJ-2	All	1 fish 24" to < 28 or 29"	215,912 lbs	Rec Bonus Program	1/1 – 12/31
<b>Delaware</b>					
DE-GN	Gill Net	20" min	137,831 lbs	DE Bay and River in Spring	2/15 – 5/31 (2/15 – 3/30 Nanticoke River)
		28" min		All other waters, DE Bay and River in Fall	11/15 – 12/31
DE-H/L	Hook & Line	28" min	14,509 lbs		4/1 – 12/31

<b>Option</b>	<b>Mode/Region</b>	<b>Size Limits</b>	<b>Seasonal Quota</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Open Season</b>
<b>Maryland</b>					
MD-1	Atlantic	24" min	90,727 lbs	Trawl & Drift Gill Net	1/1 – 3/30, 11/1 – 12/31
MD-4a	Chesapeake Bay	18" – 36" slot	1,471,888 lbs	Drift Gill Net H&L, Haul Seine, Pound Net	1/1 – 2/28, 12/1 – 12/31 6/1 – 11/30
MD-4b	Chesapeake Bay	20" – 36" slot	1,496,631 lbs	Drift Gill Net H&L, Haul Seine, Pound Net	1/1 – 2/28, 12/1 – 12/31 6/1 – 11/30
<b>Potomac River Fisheries Commission</b>					
PRFC-1	Gill Net	18" min 18" – 36" slot	355,810 lbs	Represents 20.5% Reduction in overall quota split among gear types	1/1 – 2/14, 11/10 – 12/31 2/15 – 3/25
	Pound Net	18" – 36" slot 18" min	130,090 lbs		2/15 – 3/25 6/1 – 12/15
	Hook & Line	18" – 36" slot 18" min	84,462 lbs		2/15 – 3/25 6/1 – 12/15
	Miscellaneous	18" – 36" slot 18" min	14,000 lbs		2/15 – 3/25 6/1 – 12/15
<b>Virginia</b>					
VA-1	Coastal	28" min	138,640 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	1/16 – 12/31
VA-2	Chesapeake Bay	18" min 18" – 28" slot	1,064,997 lbs	Represents 20.5% reduction	1/16 – 3/21, 6/16 – 12/31 3/26 – 6/15
<b>North Carolina</b>					
NC-1	All	28" min	360,360 lbs	Option B16 From Add 4	12/1 – 11/30



## Tina Berger

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**From:** Michael Toole <toolemf@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 24, 2015 10:34 AM  
**To:** Comments  
**Subject:** ASMFC winter hearing input for Executive Board

ASMFC Executive Board

Last year the ASMFC requested input on possible changes to the stripe bass regulations. While only a small percentage of the people who target stripers responded. The over whelming public response was to change the recreational limit to 1 fish at 32" or greater. The end result from ASMFC was a 1 fish at 28" façade or a conservation equivalent equal to 25%. The results are that many states are moving to a two fish limit with in some cases special treatment for charters.

As a member of the Plum Island Surfcaster Executive board I have encouraged our 205 members to be active in the fishery management process and to supply input to ASMFC when requested and to attend hearings. The common responses I get is why bother because the ASMFC will go with what the money want and ignore the input. In this case the public response showed a willingness of the public to reduce their catch in the best interest of the striper stock. The recent action by ASMFC has further resulted in the concerned public losing any trust they had in ASMFC actually being interested in public input. The fishing web pages are full of comments that once again ASMFC failed to act in the best interest in the fish and gave in to the money groups. With the most recent emergency actions taken related to the Gulf of Maine cod stocks trust in the regulators is continuing to further disappear. This mistrust in the fishery management groups on the east coast has led to many to recommend to me to start actively supporting to the New England Conservation Law Foundation. While I hate to use the legal system to resolve issues like this when you lose faith in the regulators doing the right thing there are few other choices. ASMFC had the chance to act in the best interest of the striper stock based on the public input you received but chose not to. Further eroding any trust many of us had in the regulators doing the right thing.

Michael Toole

16 Raeder Drive

Stratham, NH 03885

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

January 22, 2015

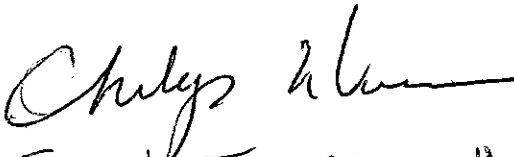
Mr. Duhamel:


We would like to propose opening the commercial striped bass season in RI to an earlier date, preferably the second or third week of May. The 2014 opening on June 8 missed a more plentiful and larger sized fish run that we have seen happen for a number of years in mid to late May. Even considering the 25% reduction in quota, an early start will hopefully allow us to actually meet the quota which has not happened the past two years, even with the fall season extended to the end of the year on December 31. We would respectfully suggest :


- Return the spring/fall split to 80%/20%.
- Consider opening the RI striped bass season in 2015 on Sunday, May 17 or May 24.


Thank you,

Bo Christensen

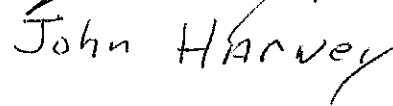


FRANK TAVAROZZ 

MICHAEL Mc ELROY 

AL EMERY 

JEFF HOWARD 

John Harvey 

John HARVEY

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

January 22, 2015

Mr. Duhamel:

We would like to propose opening the commercial striped bass season in RI to an earlier date, preferably the second or third week of May. The 2014 opening on June 8 missed a more plentiful and larger sized fish run that we have seen happen for a number of years in mid to late May. Even considering the 25% reduction in quota, an early start will hopefully allow us to actually meet the quota which has not happened the past two years, even with the fall season extended to the end of the year on December 31. We would respectfully suggest :

- Return the spring/fall split to 80%/20%.
- Consider opening the RI striped bass season in 2015 on Sunday, May 17 or May 24.

Thank you,

Bo Christensen MPURP000429

Bo Christensen

Ralph I bello 00038 MRL  
David Shylatty MPURP 100686  
Michael McGweney MPURP 205 Mark McGweney  
Richard Mower MP 130  
PLEBS, LLC MP 106 PHILIP SPADOLA

February 16, 2015

RIDEM  
Division of Fish & Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries

To whom it may concern,

This letter is in reference to the pending reduction in commercial striped bass quota and season allocations for striped bass in 2015. With an already limited fishery being cut by twenty-five percent, it is especially important that we set the allocation periods to maximize return on the quota. It seems to me that we could accomplish this best by catching the entire quota in the spring – when the weather, fishing and price are optimal.

Status-quo would be a mistake this year. In recent years, striped bass fishing has been very good in the spring season and is just beginning to peak at the time of the closure. Prices have remained high and relatively stable for the period. This is partly because the Massachusetts quota hasn't come to market yet. The September season has been a struggle at best, often very difficult to catch a limit in one trip and with smaller fish at lower prices, yet expenses remain the same. The weather is a factor also and adds to the degree of difficulty and safety concerns. Given the twenty-five percent reduction in overall quota, the status-quo option would take away the four or five best fishing days of the year (at the end of the spring season) and essentially trade them for the worst fishing days in September instead.

Conditions have changed, so we should adapt by lining up our season with the best opportunity for harvest and market – that is most certainly the spring season. The reality is that we are down to so few fishing days that a split season is no longer practical. In the new scenario, the spring season would remain the same as in recent years, or better, and the quota reduction would eliminate the September season. The economy of this single season alternative would surely help to offset the loss of quota for fishermen, whereas the status-quo option would create unnecessary hardship.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Barry M. Centracchio

Mr. Duhamel

I am writing in response to the petition written and submitted by Bo Christenson which I signed, but I wanted to also state for the record that as a inshore commercial fisherman having such a late starting date to the season in the upper bay impacts many fisherman not represented by any group, for many of us we cannot physically make the trek to the lower bay (block island) to catch the fish when they are here and by the time the season opens in the upper bay the fish are gone I believe partly due to the fact the menhaden boats mop up the bait fish and the water temp gets warmer and the fish move out to cooler water and find a food source, it seems that these two events happen during the spring and then the season opens and many fisherman who still try to fish miss the run ( I'm one of them ) and we can't go down the bay and still make a living. I know I writing rules and legislation you can't please everyone out there but I believe that there is some room to accommodate this request or at the very least move the starting date back a little earlier to accommodate a very important fishery to the upper Narragansett bay commercial fisherman

Thank you

David Ghigliotty

Vice president

R.I. Shellfishermans association

**From:** [Gerry Schey](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 7:50:06 PM

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Pete

I would like to add my name to the list of **Commercial Fisherman asking the Bass season open on May 24th 2015**. I feel a better balance is needed between bay fisherman and offshore fisherman for commercial rod & reel.

Thank you  
**Gerry Schey**  
Gtschey@cox.net

Sent from my iPad

Mr. Duhamel

I am writing in response to the petition written and submitted by Bo Christenson which I signed, but I wanted to also state for the record that as a inshore commercial fisherman having such a late starting date to the season in the upper bay impacts many fisherman not represented by any group, for many of us we cannot physically make the trek to the lower bay (block island) to catch the fish when they are here and by the time the season opens in the upper bay the fish are gone I believe partly due to the fact the menhaden boats mop up the bait fish and the water temp gets warmer and the fish move out to cooler water and find a food source, it seems that these two events happen during the spring and then the season opens and many fisherman who still try to fish miss the run ( I'm one of them ) and we can't go down the bay and still make a living. I know I writing rules and legislation you can't please everyone out there but I believe that there is some room to accommodate this request or at the very least move the starting date back a little earlier to accommodate a very important fishery to the upper Narragansett bay commercial fisherman

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David Ghigliotty

Vice president

R.I. Shellfishermans association

**From:** [Joe Macari](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Lengyel, Nicole \(DEM\)](#); [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Commercial Striped Bass proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 2:24:38 PM

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Peter-

I would like to submit the following as public input for the **Commercial Striped Bass (General Category)** Public Hearing comments

I would like to propose a change in the commercial striped bass (General Category) regulations for 2015. With the proposed 25% reduction in commercial allocation mandated by ASMFC, the forthcoming year will offer some very challenging economic options for the Rhode Island commercial fisherman.

The following proposal would optimize the prime striped bass season in the Spring when prices are usually at fair market value, fish are more prevalent, and additionally, would somewhat stretch that Spring season to approximately what is was before the drastic conservation measures taken by ASMFC.

#### PUBLIC HEARING ITEM #11

I would propose a change in the spring (June 8-August 31) season, i.e., reduce fishing days per week from 5 days to 4 days, as follows:

12.3 Commercial – General Category:

(B) June 8 – August 31:

- (1) Allocation: Seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota will be available in this sub-period.
- (2) Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.
- (3) The fishery will be closed in each calendar week from 12:00 AM Friday until 11:59 PM **SUNDAY** during this sub-period. There will be no commercial possession or sale of Striped bass on these days for general category commercial fishermen.
- (4) The sub-period will close once seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota is projected to be harvested if prior to August 31.

The above is the only proposal I am submitting. I believe the Fall season, as regulated in the past, offers the commercial fisherman another prime time to harvest striped bass while the market value is still advantageous.

Thank you for any actions taken by the RIDEM, RIMFC, and the Director.

Sincerely-

**Joe Macari**

PEL 793



[Jmacari1@cox.net](mailto:Jmacari1@cox.net)



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

January 22, 2015

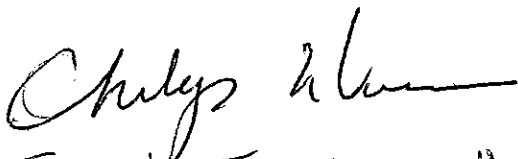
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Bo Christensen

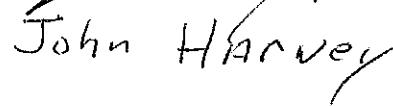


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January 22, 2015

Mr. Duhamel:

We would like to propose opening the commercial striped bass season in RI to an earlier date, preferably the second or third week of May. The 2014 opening on June 8 missed a more plentiful and larger sized fish run that we have seen happen for a number of years in mid to late May. Even considering the 25% reduction in quota, an early start will hopefully allow us to actually meet the quota which has not happened the past two years, even with the fall season extended to the end of the year on December 31. We would respectfully suggest :

- Return the spring/fall split to 80%/20%.
- Consider opening the RI striped bass season in 2015 on Sunday, May 17 or May 24.

Thank you,

Bo Christensen MPURP000429

Bo Christensen

Ralph I bello 00038 MRL  
David Shylatty MPURP 100686  
Michael McGweney MPURP 205  
Martin McGivney MPURP 205  
Richard Mower MP 130  
PLEBS, LLC MP 106 PHILIP SPADOLA

**From:** [Joe Macari](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Lengyel, Nicole \(DEM\)](#); [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Commercial Striped Bass proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 2:24:38 PM

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Peter-

I would like to submit the following as public input for the **Commercial Striped Bass (General Category)** Public Hearing comments

I would like to propose a change in the commercial striped bass (General Category) regulations for 2015. With the proposed 25% reduction in commercial allocation mandated by ASMFC, the forthcoming year will offer some very challenging economic options for the Rhode Island commercial fisherman.

The following proposal would optimize the prime striped bass season in the Spring when prices are usually at fair market value, fish are more prevalent, and additionally, would somewhat stretch that Spring season to approximately what is was before the drastic conservation measures taken by ASMFC.

#### PUBLIC HEARING ITEM #11

I would propose a change in the spring (June 8-August 31) season, i.e., reduce fishing days per week from 5 days to 4 days, as follows:

12.3 Commercial – General Category:

(B) June 8 – August 31:

- (1) Allocation: Seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota will be available in this sub-period.
- (2) Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.
- (3) The fishery will be closed in each calendar week from 12:00 AM Friday until 11:59 PM **SUNDAY** during this sub-period. There will be no commercial possession or sale of Striped bass on these days for general category commercial fishermen.
- (4) The sub-period will close once seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota is projected to be harvested if prior to August 31.

The above is the only proposal I am submitting. I believe the Fall season, as regulated in the past, offers the commercial fisherman another prime time to harvest striped bass while the market value is still advantageous.

Thank you for any actions taken by the RIDEM, RIMFC, and the Director.

Sincerely-

**Joe Macari**

PEL 793

[Jmacari1@cox.net](mailto:Jmacari1@cox.net)



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**Hearing Item #12:** Commercial Striped bass floating fish trap  
(Part XII - Striped bass, section 12.5)

Option	Min. size	Season/Possession Limit
<p><u>Option 1:</u> Status quo (industry proposal for ASMFC compliance)</p>	<p>26"</p>	<p><u>Season:</u> April 1 – Dec. 31 <u>Possession limit:</u> Fishery terminates upon reaching quota</p>
<p><u>Option 2:</u> Change min. size (ASMFC compliance)</p>	<p><del>26"</del> <u>28"</u></p>	<p><u>Season:</u> April 1 – Dec. 31 <u>Possession limit:</u> Fishery terminates upon reaching quota</p>



## Editing Items

- ◆ Multiple sections are being modified in a non-substantive way to restructure the Marine Fisheries regulations to improve clarity and readability
  - Hearing item #2: Shellfish regs
    - Clarification of language regarding the allowance for the harvest of whelk and bays scallop in polluted waters (section 8.2.1 and 8.3.1);
    - Correction of language regarding commercial harvest of surf clams (section 9.13.2);
    - Correction of inconsistent language regarding the commercial possession limit for Bay quahaug for CFL, Student shellfish license, and Over-65 shellfish license holders, for consistency with Licensing regulations (section 12.3.1);
    - Correction of language regarding the commercial possession limit for Ocean quahaug (section 12.3.6).
  - Hearing item #13: Finfish regs
    - Improved table of contents; clarifying language throughout regulation; equipment provisions for Scup and Black sea bass relocated from Part X – Equipment Restrictions; addition of Atlantic Salmon section (relocated from Part XI, section 11.7); addition of provision for Atlantic herring – vessel size and horsepower (relocated from Part X, section 10.14); deletion of Sea scallop section (previously relocated to Shellfish regulations).
  - Hearing item #14 and 15: Modification and relocation of Quota management section from Part III to RIMFR Finfish regs.
  - Hearing item #16: Deletion of redundant sections from Part X – Equipment Restrictions that are currently included elsewhere in RIMFR.



**From:** [Mercer, Jeff \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [Ballou, Robert \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Shellfish changes  
**Date:** Friday, September 19, 2014 9:33:36 AM

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Hi All,

I think we should delete 12.3.6 (A) entirely.

We already establish a 12 bushel limit for bay quahogs when dredging in the Sakonnet Management Area in 13.14.1 (A). This is currently the only area in which we allow the taking of bay quahogs by dredging. I think it makes the regs less confusing to do away with 12.3.6 (A) that states a 30 bushel limit for dredged quahogs (as Jeff G. points out, should be bay not ocean).

If we were to grant a license for dredging for bay quahogs elsewhere in the future we would still be covered by the 30 bushel limit described in RIGL 20-6-12.

The other points are good catches and we will have to reword.

---

**From:** Ballou, Robert (DEM)  
**Sent:** Friday, September 19, 2014 9:02 AM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM); 'Jeff Grant'  
**Cc:** McNamee, Jason (DEM); Mercer, Jeff (DEM)  
**Subject:** RE: Shellfish changes

Good eye! We really appreciate your careful review and feedback. As Pete said, we'll get right on it and get back to you.

Thanks so much.

Bob

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**From:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Sent:** Friday, September 19, 2014 8:33 AM  
**To:** Jeff Grant; Ballou, Robert (DEM)  
**Cc:** McNamee, Jason (DEM); Mercer, Jeff (DEM)  
**Subject:** RE: Shellfish changes

Thanks Jeff, we'll have a look as soon as possible and determine necessary steps to address. Will keep you informed.

Pete

Peter A. Duhamel, Principal Planner  
RI Department of Environmental Management



Division of Fish and Wildlife, Marine Fisheries  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835  
401-423-1927

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**From:** Jeff Grant [<mailto:jeffgrant19@cox.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 18, 2014 4:42 PM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM); Ballou, Robert (DEM)  
**Subject:** Shellfish changes

Pete and Bob,

Sorry for taking so long to get this to you, it fell off my radar for a while. Here are the changes I noticed with some explanation:

-In Definitions:

Shellfish: Channeled and Knobbed whelk added to list of species considered shellfish. This puts whelk in bacterial closures (not currently) as well as impacted by "boat harvest" schedules in management areas. While included in with the shellfish regs, they are not subject to the other restrictions put on other shellfish.

-9.13.2

It was my understanding this section was an exemption from the dredge regulations in RI sound. In its original place the wording "shall not be in violation of this section" is referring to the dredge restrictions in the other areas not covered here. That is the possession of quahogs would be allowed while surf clamming in specified areas. Now this section closes areas in Sakonett River that are open to surf clamming by management area.

-12.3.6 (A)

Word ocean added before quahogs. This limit was not for ocean quahogs, but bay quahogs. It was language used to manage authority granted in RIGL 20-6-8 as well as the above exemption. This is further supported by the fact that the limits in 12.3.6 contradict the following section. The only way to catch ocean quahogs is by dredge, and it is regulated by the high limit.

That was all I noticed on the first go around. Thanks, Jeff

**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 2\***

**RIMFR – Shellfish**

**Technical corrections**

**8. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

8.2 Shellfish grounds – polluted areas: Shellfish harvesting will be allowed in all waters except those declared by the Director to be polluted based upon water quality considerations pursuant to RIGL Chapter 20-8.1. Information on the current status of waters subject to conditional closures or emergencies due to pollution is available by calling 401-222-2900 and visiting <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/shellfish/clos/index.htm>. (RIGL 20-8.1-3)

**8.2.1 Exclusion: This section shall not apply to the harvest of Whelk or Bay scallop.**

Comment [pad1]: Language added to clarify the allowance of fishing for Whelk and Bay scallop in polluted waters

8.3 Taking or selling of shellfish from polluted areas: No person shall take shellfish from the waters of polluted areas, or knowingly sell shellfish taken from the waters of polluted areas, except pursuant to a transplant program specifically authorized by and conducted under the direct supervision of the Director. In granting permission, the Director shall first obtain the written approval of the Director of the Department of Health as to the suitability and safety for the purposes intended. The possession by any person of shellfish while in a vessel upon the waters of polluted areas between the hours of two (2) hours after sunset and sunrise shall be prima facie evidence that those shellfish were taken by that person in violation of this section. (RIGL 20-8.1-5)

**8.3.1 Exclusion: This section shall not apply to the harvest of Whelk or Bay scallop.**

Comment [pad2]: Language added to clarify the allowance of fishing for Whelk and Bay scallop in polluted waters

**9. EQUIPMENT PROVISIONS AND HARVEST METHODS**

9.13.2 Areas allowed: **Except as hereinafter provided and unless otherwise specified by regulation of the Department of Environmental Management,** dredging for surf clams by R.I. residents is allowed only in waters southerly of a line extending from Church Point, in the town of Little Compton, to Flint Point on Aquidneck Island, southerly of the coastline of Aquidneck Island, southerly of a line extending from Castle Hill Point on Aquidneck Island, to Southwest Point of Conanicut Island to Bonnet Point, Narragansett, easterly of the coastline of the town of Narragansett, southerly of the coastline of the towns of Narragansett, South Kingstown, and Charlestown, and westerly to the Connecticut line. For the purpose of this section, "coastline" refers to the land facing the open sea.

## 12. DAILY POSSESSION LIMITS (IN WATERS OTHER THEN SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT AREAS)

### 12.3 Commercial:

#### 12.3.1 Bay quahaug:

**(A)** Multi-purpose (MPURP) and Principal Effort License (PEL) holders: Twelve (12) bushels/person/day **(i.e., full harvest level)**. (RIGL 20-6-10)

**(B) Commercial Fishing License (CFL), Student shellfish license, and Over-65 shellfish license holders: Three (3) bushels/person/day (i.e., basic harvest level). (RIGL 20-2.1-5)**

12.3.6 Ocean quahaug: Twenty six (26) cages or eight hundred thirty two (832) bushels/**person/day**.

~~(A) Dredged ocean quahaugs: Thirty (30) bushels for any person licensed to take ocean quahaugs by dredge, rake, or other apparatus operated by power or hauled by a power boat. (RIGL 20-6-12)~~

Comment [PD3]: Consistent with Licensing regs section 6.8-5 and 6.8-6

Comment [PD4]: Incorrectly added "ocean" into section during last revision. Section inconsistent with other sections; possession limits specified elsewhere in reg

**\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 14\***

**Addition of Quota Management section (in conjunction with hearing item #15 – removal of same section from Part III Marine Fisheries Council)**

**7.1 QUOTA MANAGEMENT:**

**7.1.1 Modification of sub-period allocations based on under/over-harvest:**

**(A) Under-harvest: Any un-harvested quota from a sub-period allocation will be equally distributed to the allocations of the remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year.**

**(B) Over-harvest:**

**(1) Any over-harvest of a sub-period allocation will be deducted from the allocations of the remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year.**

**(2) Annually, the target allocations specified in these regulations shall be adjusted as needed by the DFW to charge over-harvest of a sub-period allocation during a given year to the same sub-period of the next following year. For the Tautog fishery, if an over-harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over-harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub-period of the following calendar year.**

**7.1.2 Modifications of allocations, seasons and possession limits: For quota managed species, in order to maintain compliance with a federal or regional fisheries management plan (FMP), the DFW has the authority to distribute allocations, including the distribution of allocations among the various gear types, modify possession limits, and change seasons, unless specifically prohibited by the Secretary of Commerce or the ASMFC, in the following manner:**

**(A) Allocation changes: If DFW projects that an allocation assigned for a sub-period, or assigned to be available for taking by a particular gear type during that sub-period, may be exhausted prior to the end of the sub-period, or may not be met for a sub-period, DFW may modify the allocation.**

**(B) Possession limit changes: If DFW projects that the allocation for a given species may be exhausted prior to the end of a sub-period or may not be met for a sub-period, DFW may modify the possession limit.**

**(C) If the quota for a sub-period allocation is fully harvested prior to the end of the sub-period, the DFW will close the fishery for the remainder of the sub-**

period.

~~7.1(D) Possession limit changes:~~ Any modifications made to the possession limit as set forth in these regulations will be promulgated in the RI Marine Fisheries regulations (RIMFR) Part III.

## **7.7 Summer Flounder (Fluke)**

### **7.7.2 Commercial:**

~~(C) Any unused portion of the quota from a sub-period will be equally distributed to the allocations of the remaining sub-periods. The over-harvest of a sub-period allocation will be deducted from the allocations of the remaining sub-periods. Annually, the target allocations specified in this section shall be adjusted by the DFW to charge over-harvest of a sub-period allocation during a given year to the same sub-period of the next following year.~~

## **7.9 Tautog (Blackfish)**

### **7.9.2 Commercial:**

~~(4) Sub-period quotas may be harvested until exhausted. Any quota not harvested during a sub-period will be added to the next sub-period. If an over-harvest has occurred, that over-harvest will be deducted equally from all remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year. If an over-harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over-harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub-period of the following calendar year.~~

## **7.14 Black Sea Bass**

### **7.14.2 Commercial:**

~~(C) Any unused portion of the quota from a sub-period will be equally distributed to the allocations of the remaining sub-periods. The over-harvest of a sub-period allocation will be deducted from the allocations of the remaining sub-periods. Annually, the quota allocations specified in the above sections shall be adjusted by the DFW to charge over-harvest of a sub-period allocation during a given year to the same sub-period of the following year.~~

### **\*PUBLIC HEARING ITEM # 15\***

### **Deletion of the Quota Management section (in conjunction with hearing item #14 – addition of modified/updated section into Part VII – Finfish)**

~~3.1 Allocations, seasons and possession limits: For species managed under quota, possession limit, and/or by seasons, compliance with a federal or regional fisheries management plan (FMP), the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), unless specifically~~

~~prohibited by the Secretary of Commerce or the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, will have the authority to distribute the allocations including the distribution of allocations among the various gear types, modify possession limits, and change seasons in the following manner:~~

~~3.1.1 Allocation Changes: DFW may project when the allocation for a species will be exhausted. This determination will be based on the period of time remaining in the allocation period, historical catch rates, and the current catch rate. If DFW determines that an allocation assigned for a sub-period or assigned to be available for taking by a particular gear type during that sub-period will be exhausted prior to the end of the sub-period or will not be met for a sub-period, it may change or redistribute the allocation assigned to be available for taking by a particular gear type during that sub-period. DFW will file a notice with the Secretary of State and submit a listserve notice announcing the change. All variances will be effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.~~

~~3.1.2 Possession limit Changes: If DFW determines that the allocation for a given species will be exhausted prior to the end of a sub-period or will not be met for a sub-period, DFW may change the possession limit; such modifications may include the increase or the decrease in the possession limit at which a sub-period commences. DFW will file a notice with the Secretary of State and submit a listserve notice announcing the change. All variances of possession limits will be effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.~~

~~3.1.3 Season Changes: Upon notification from federal authorities to alter a season for a particular species in compliance with a federal or regional FMP, DFW will file a notice with the Secretary of State and submit a listserve notice announcing the change. All changes in seasons accomplished will be effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.~~

**\*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 13\***  
**RIMFR Part VII – Finfish**

**Item #13 - general editing**

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7.2 Transiting:

7.2.1 During the closure of a Rhode Island state allocated fishery quota, a federally permitted vessel fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone may ~~traverse~~ **transit** Rhode Island state waters for the purpose of landing that species in another state, provided the vessel is in compliance with their federal permit, and the vessel nets are stowed pursuant to ~~RIMFR Part X~~ **these regulations**.

7.2.2 A federally permitted vessel fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone may ~~traverse~~ **transit** Rhode Island state waters for the purpose of landing a species in Rhode Island, provided that the species in possession do not have a state allocated quota that is currently closed, provided the vessel is in compliance with their federal permit, provided the vessel nets are stowed pursuant to ~~RIMFR Part X~~ **these regulations**, and provided that the owner or operator possesses a valid RI Landing License pursuant to DEM's "Commercial and Recreational Saltwater Fishing Licensing Regulations".



7.2.3 A vessel in possession of a managed species caught in an open area of state waters may transit a closed portion of RI state waters in possession of that species for the purpose of landing, provided the operator of the vessel has a valid commercial or recreational fishing license, and if fishing with nets, the nets are stowed pursuant to ~~RIMFR Part X~~ [these regulations](#).

### 7.3 Possession limit ~~compliance~~ aboard vessels:

7.3.1 Licensed party/charter vessels: Possession limit compliance aboard licensed party/charter vessels ~~will be~~ **is** determined by dividing the number of fish by the number fishermen onboard the boat.

7.3.2 Multiple licensed recreational fishermen fishing from a single vessel: Possession limit compliance aboard vessels with multiple licensed **recreational** fishermen will be determined by dividing the number of fish by the number of licensed **recreational** fishermen on board said vessel, except for tautog, which has a maximum possession limit per vessel.

7.3.3 Size, possession, and daily limit violations on board vessels: In any instance when there is a violation of the size, possession, or daily limit on board a vessel carrying more than one person when the catch is commingled, the violation shall be deemed to have been committed by the owner of the vessel, or the operator of the vessel, if the owner is not on board.

7.4 Net obstruction or constriction: A fishing vessel subject to minimum mesh size restrictions shall not use any device or material, including, but not limited to, nets, net strengtheners, ropes, lines, or chafing gear, on the top of a trawl net, except that one splitting strap and one bull rope (if present), consisting of line and rope no more than 3 in (7.6 cm) in diameter, may be used if such splitting strap and/or bull rope does not constrict, in any manner, the top of the trawl net. "The top of the trawl net" means the 50 percent of the net that (in a hypothetical situation) would not be in contact with the ocean bottom during a tow if the net were laid flat on the ocean floor. For the purpose of this paragraph, head ropes are not considered part of the top of the trawl net.

7.5 **Transfer at sea:** No one may transfer or attempt to transfer at sea, from one vessel to another, any finfish that are subject to these regulations.

7.6 Reporting requirements: Accurately completed copies of the federal Vessel Trip Reports or the state reporting forms prescribed by the DFW shall be kept in numerical order on board the vessel dating back to January 1<sup>st</sup> and furnished upon request. A vessel shall be exempt from this requirement if the captain of said vessel is currently enrolled in an electronic logbook program. Instead, the vessel must have all records dating back to January 1<sup>st</sup> entered electronically. Reference DEM's "*Commercial and Recreational Saltwater Fishing Licensing Regulations*".

### 7.7 Summer Flounder (Fluke)

#### 7.7.4 Rhode Island Summer Flounder Exemption Certificate:

(A) Application: ~~An a~~**Applicant's vessel is eligible to receive and may apply for an Exemption Certificate shall** provided the applicant **following:**

- (1) ~~Provide~~ a copy of the operator's valid current Rhode Island commercial fishing license or non-resident landing license, and Federal Fluke Permit if the summer flounder is to be taken in the EEZ; and
- (2) ~~Submit~~ a completed notarized application ~~for said certificate; and~~
- (3) ~~Submit~~ proof that the vessel meets the requirements set out in this section; and
- (4) Provide a completed notarized waiver authorizing the Department to access records verifying that this vessel and operator meet the criteria set forth in this section; and
- (5) ~~Provide DFW with~~ a copy of the vessel's U.S. Coast Guard documentation papers or state issued boat registration certificate proving ownership of the vessel.

(B) ~~Eligibility: DFW will issue an Exemption Certificate for a vessel if~~ the owner of the vessel or his/her representative ~~applies~~ submitted a completed application to DFW prior to January 1, 1997, ~~for the issuance of such a certificate and demonstrates~~ to the satisfaction of the Director that:

- (1) ~~The operator of the vessel possesses a valid Rhode Island commercial fishing license to land Summer flounder up to the amount permitted by these regulations; and.~~
- (2) ~~The subject vessel meets any of the following criteria:~~

~~(a) The vessel was operated by a person who possessed a valid Rhode Island commercial fishing license and landed and sold in excess of one pound of summer flounder to a Rhode Island licensed dealer during the period from January 1, 1987, through December 31, 1992; or~~

~~(b) The vessel fished exclusively in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and landed and sold in excess of one pound of summer flounder to a licensed Rhode Island licensed dealer sometime during the period January 1, 1987, through December 31, 1992. The Department may require additional supporting documents including but not limited to the ship's logs, ice and fuel slips; or~~

~~(c) The vessel replaces a vessel which was operated by a person who possessed a valid Rhode Island commercial fishing license, and the vessel being replaced landed and sold in excess of one pound of summer flounder to a Rhode Island licensed dealer during the period from January 1, 1987, through December 31, 1992, and if the vessel being replaced was lost by sinking or was otherwise destroyed, the replaced vessel is required to have been owned by the applicant at the time of the loss; or~~

~~(d) The vessel replaces a vessel which fished exclusively in the EEZ and landed and sold in excess of one pound of summer flounder to a Rhode Island licensed dealer, during the period January 1, 1987, through~~

December 31, 1992, and if the vessel being replaced was lost by sinking or was otherwise destroyed, the replaced vessel is required to have been owned by the applicant at the time of the loss.

(e) If the vessel is replacing a vessel that was lost by sinking or was otherwise destroyed, documentation must be presented from a licensed insurance company, U.S. Coast Guard report, or some other valid evidence of ownership to the satisfaction of the Director.

**Comment [PD1]:** Obsolete. Cannot no longer apply for the permit. Can review and re-establish criteria if program were to open again.

## 7.11 Scup

### 7.11.2 Commercial:

**(C) Trawl vessel gear restrictions - minimum mesh size: Owners or operators of otter trawl vessels possessing five hundred (500) pounds or more of scup from November 1 through April 30; or two hundred (200) pounds or more of scup from May 1 through October 31, may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of five (5) inches diamond (inside measure) or square mesh with a minimum length of seventy-five (75) meshes from the terminus of the net. For nets with less than seventy-five (75) mesh codends, the entire net will be five (5) inch minimum size diamond or square mesh.**

**Comment [PD2]:** From Part X, section 10.11.

### **(D) Scup pots:**

**(1) Pot limits: Each person utilizing pots in the scup fishery shall be permitted to fish up to fifty (50) pots regardless of the number of licenses on board the vessel.**

**(2) Pot construction - escape vents: All scup pots must be constructed with escape openings. Openings may be circular, rectangular, or square, and must be a minimum of 3.1" diameter, 2-1/4" X 5-3/4" if rectangular or may be constructed of 2-1/4" X 2-1/4" wire mesh. Escape vents must be attached with biodegradable fasteners which allow vents or panels to fall away from the trap after loss.**

**Comment [PD3]:** From Part XI, section 11.8.1

## 7.12 Repeated ATLANTIC SALMON

**7.12.1 Moratorium on harvest: The harvest, landing, or possession of Atlantic salmon within the territorial waters of the State of Rhode Island is prohibited.**

**Comment [PD4]:** From Part XI, section 11.7

## 7.14 Black Sea Bass

**7.14.3 Black sea bass pot construction: All black sea bass pots must be constructed with two escape openings in the parlor portion of the pot. Openings may be circular, rectangular, or square, and must be a minimum of 2.5" diameter if circular, 1- 3/8" X 5-3/4" if rectangular, 2" X 2" if square. Escape vents must be attached with biodegradable fasteners which allow vents or panels to fall away from the trap after loss.**

**Comment [PD5]:** From Part X, section 10.11.2. Also in Part XI, section 11.8.2.

## 7.19 Atlantic Herring (*Clupea harengus*)

7.19.1 Commercial:

**(F) Atlantic Herring - Vessel Size and Horsepower: No vessel harvesting Atlantic herring in the Atlantic coast herring fishery shall exceed 165 feet in length overall, and 3,000 horsepower.**

Comment [PD6]: From Part X, section 10.14

**7.23 Sea Scallops**

**7.23.1 Recreational:**

**(A) Minimum size:** Three and one half (3.5) inches shell length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise. Shell length is a straight line measurement from the hinge to the part of the shell that is furthest away from the hinge.

**(B) Possession limit:** Forty (40) pounds of shucked or five (5) bushels of in-shell scallops.

**(C) Maximum dredge size:** Ten and one half feet (10.5').

**7.23.2 Commercial:**

**(A) Minimum size:** Three and one half inches (3.5") shell length, whether caught within the jurisdiction of this State or otherwise. Shell length is a straight line measurement from the hinge to the part of the shell that is furthest away from the hinge.

**(B) Possession limit:** For any non-federally permitted RI licensed vessel, the possession limit will be four hundred (400) pounds of shucked or fifty (50) bushels of in-shell scallops.

**(C) Equipment restriction:** The maximum dredge size allowed for a vessel in possession of sea scallops will be ten and one half feet (10.5'). The ring size used in a scallop dredge possessed or used by scallop vessels shall not be smaller than 4 inches (4"). The mesh size of a net, net material or any other material on the top of a scallop dredge (twine top) possessed or used by vessels fishing with scallop dredge gear shall not be smaller than 10 inch (10") square or diamond mesh.

Comment [PD7]: Shellfish regs

## \*PUBLIC HEATING ITEM # 16\*

### Part X – Equipment Restrictions

#### Deletion of redundant sections that are currently included elsewhere in RIMFR

##### ~~10.1 [Repealed 1/9/2003]~~

~~10.2 Tongs – Tooth Gap and Mesh Size Regulations – No person shall take shellfish or attempt to take shellfish with, or have in his possession while on the waters of this State, any tongs constructed with teeth which are less than one (1) inch apart on the bar or having heads constructed with wires, rods, crossbars, or reinforcement that will form a rectangle smaller than one (1) inch by two and one half (2 ½) inches. A tolerance of one sixteenth (1/16) inch will be allowed as a variance in construction.~~

~~— For the purpose of this regulation, tongs shall be defined as any shellfishing implement constructed with heads attached to stales (handles) and pinned at a pivot point to allow the opening and closing of the basket mouth formed by the two.  
(RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

Comment [PD1]: Shellfish regs, section 9.8

~~10.3 Bullrake Regulations – No person shall take shellfish, or attempt to take shellfish, or have in his possession while on the waters of this State, with any bullrake, the teeth or tines and basket construction of which are closer than one (1) inch apart or having crossbars or reinforcement that will form a rectangle smaller than 1" X 2 ½". A tolerance of one sixteenth (1/16) of an inch less than the allowable limit will be permitted as a variance in construction.~~

~~— For the purpose of this regulation, a bullrake shall be defined as any curved metal instrument or basket with four (4) or more metal tines (teeth) which is primarily used to harvest quahaugs. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

Comment [PD2]: Shellfish regs, section 9.9

~~10.3.1 Use of Tongs and Bullrakes operated by Mechanical Power – Power hauling of shellfish apparatus as defined in Sections 1.3, 10.2, and 10.3 of the RIMFC regulations, and the taking of shellfish in such harvesting apparatus is permitted provided such use is consistent with the following:~~

~~A. No person shall use any power hauling equipment.~~

~~1. For any purpose other than the removal and retrieval of bullrakes and tongs from the benthic sediments;~~

~~2. During such time when bay quahaugs and oysters are being gathered into the bullrakes and tongs; or~~

~~3. In waters where such use has been prohibited by the RIMFC.~~

Comment [PD3]: Shellfish regs, section 9.5

~~B. No person shall use any power hauling equipment in the operation of~~

~~bullrakes and tongs with dimensions exceeding any of the following:~~

- ~~1. Maximum width of thirty-one and one-half inches (31-1/2") measured along a line parallel to the tooth bar;~~
- ~~2. Maximum tooth length of four and one-half (4 1/2") inches; or~~
- ~~3. Maximum basket depth of twelve inches (12"), measured along a line perpendicular to the tooth bar and extending from the tooth bar to any point on the basket.~~

~~C. Possession of bullrakes and tongs in excess of the size restrictions specified in Section 10.3.1(B) shall be prohibited aboard vessels equipped with any power hauling equipment.~~

~~D. Except as required for safety or to avoid property loss, no vessel involved in the harvest of bay quahaugs or oysters by use of bullrakes or tongs, may be moved or propelled by any source of mechanical power at any time when any bullrakes or tongs operated from such vessel are submerged in the waters of the state.~~

~~(RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

Comment [PD4]: Shellfish regs, section 9.7

~~10.4 Quahaug Diving Baskets -- No commercially licensed diver shall take or attempt to take quahaugs from the waters of the State of Rhode Island with a "diver's" quahaug harvesting basket, bag, or combination of basket and bag, or similar device whose bar spacing is less than one inch by two and one-half (1" X 2 1/2") with a one sixteenth inch (1/16") tolerance for construction, and whose bag mesh on the harvesting device is less than two (2) inches when measured on the stretch (from inside of knot to inside of the knot.) There will be an allowance of one eighth (1/8) inch for variance in the twine. The bag shall be hung on the square so that when held by the mouth, the twine forms fully opened squares. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

Comment [PD5]: Shellfish regs, section 9.10

~~10.5 Escape Vent Sizes – Penalty – Effective June 1, 1999, it shall be unlawful to fish for or take lobsters by use of a lobster trap within the territorial waters of the State of Rhode Island unless the trap is equipped with:~~

~~Subsection I~~

~~— A. A rectangular escape vent with an unobstructed opening not less than 1 – 15/16 inches (49.2mm) by five and three quarters (5 – 3/4) inches (146mm);~~

~~OR~~

~~— B. Two circular escape vents with an unobstructed opening not less than 2 – 7/16 inches (61.9mm) in diameter;~~

~~OR~~

~~— C. An unobstructed gap caused by separating both ends of a bottom lath in the parlor section 1 – 15/16 inches (49.2mm) from the bottom;~~

~~OR~~

~~— D. An unobstructed gap caused by separating both ends of two vertical laths on the end of the parlor section by 1 – 15/16 inches (49.2mm);~~

~~OR~~

~~E. An unobstructed gap created by cutting wires in a wire trap in such a manner as to meet the minimum size and number of vents required under Paragraphs A and B.~~

~~F. Lobster traps not constructed entirely of wood must contain a ghost panel with the following specifications:~~

~~1. The opening to be covered by the ghost panel must be rectangular and shall not be less than three and three quarter (3 – 3/4) inches (9.53 cm) by three and three quarter (3 – 3/4) inches (9.53 cm).~~

~~2. The panel must be constructed of, or fastened to the trap with one of the following untreated materials: wood lath, cotton, hemp, sisal, or jute twine not greater than three-sixteenths (3/16) inch (0.48 cm) in diameter, or non-stainless uncoated ferrous metal not greater than three thirty-seconds (3/32) of an inch (0.24 cm) in diameter.~~

~~3. The door of the trap may serve as the ghost panel if fastened with a material specified in previous paragraph.~~

~~4. The ghost panel must be located in the outer parlor(s) of the trap and not the bottom of the trap.~~

#### Subsection II

~~The vent or gap shall be: installed or made in the parlor section on the sides or end panel. No horizontal rectangular vent or gap or circular vent shall be located more than 3 inches from the bottom sill of the trap. Traps equipped with multiple parlor sections must adhere to the escape vent requirements specified above in each parlor section. Any fisherman not complying with the provisions of Section 1 or Section 2 shall be fined not more than twenty dollars (\$20) for each trap not conforming to the specifications. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 15.12 or 1.16; (RIGL 20-1-16)]~~

Comment [PD6]: Lobster regs, section 15.13

~~10.5.1 Maximum Trap Size -- It shall be unlawful to place, set, keep, maintain, supervise, lift, raise, or draw in from any of the waters in the jurisdiction of this state, or cause to be placed, set, kept, maintained, supervised, lifted, raised, or drawn in from any of those waters any pot or other fixed gear contrivance designed or adapted for the catching or taking of lobsters with a volume greater than 22,950 cubic inches.~~

Comment [PD7]: Lobster regs, section 15.20.3

~~10.5.2 Trap Limit/Reduction Schedule -- Effective June 1, 1999, it shall be unlawful for any person licensed under this chapter to place, set, keep, maintain, supervise, lift, raise, or draw in from any of the waters in the jurisdiction of this state any pot or other fixed gear contrivance designed or adapted for the catching or taking of lobsters which exceeds the trap limits allowed by the following schedule:~~

~~6/1/1999 – 1200 traps per vessel~~

~~6/1/2000 – 1000 traps per vessel~~

~~6/1/2001 – 800 traps per vessel~~

Comment [PD8]: Lobster regs, section 15.12.3

~~10.5.3 Penetrating Devices -- It shall be unlawful for any person to use a spear, gig, gaff, or other penetrating device to harvest lobsters.~~

Comment [PD9]: Lobster regs, section 15.20.1

~~10.6 General State Marking, Setting, and Tending Requirements. -- The following general state marking, setting, and tending requirements shall apply to all gill nets set, hauled, and/or maintained within Rhode Island waters.~~

~~10.6.1 Marking Requirement: Both the near shore and offshore ends of all gill nets must be marked with an orange or fluorescent orange bullet shaped buoy with a size of 9 x 16 inches and clearly marked with the letters "GN" with a minimum letter height of three (3) inches. No person shall set, haul, or maintain a gill net in Rhode Island waters, unless such net shall be marked, together with the buoys which are attached thereto, with the name and license number of said person.~~

~~10.6.2 Tending Requirement: Each gill net must be hauled once each day (24 hour period -- 12:00 midnight to 12:00 midnight).~~

~~10.6.3 Distance from Fish Trap: It shall be illegal to set, haul, or maintain a gill net within three thousand (3,000) feet of a fish trap licensed by the R.I. Department of Environmental Management.~~

~~10.6.3 Floating/Bottom Tending Gill Nets: No floating gill net may be set within Rhode Island waters unless constantly tended. A net will be deemed constantly tended if the person setting the net is within one hundred (100) feet of the net at all times. If any portion of the gill net is exposed at the surface, the net will be judged a floating gill net. With the exception of constantly tended nets, only bottom tending gill nets shall be set in Rhode Island waters. For purposes of this regulation, a bottom tending gill net shall be defined as any gill net, anchored or otherwise, which is fished on or near the bottom or which is fished in the lower one third (1/3) of the water column.~~

~~10.6.4 Mesh Size: No bottom tending gill net shall have a mesh size smaller than five (5) inches stretched mesh, except as provided in 10.7 and 13.5. (RIMFC REGULATION) (RIGL 20-4-12) [Penalty -- Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

~~NOTE: For a full description of all gill net regulations, refer to Part XIII.~~

Comment [PD10]: Gillnet regs, section 13.3

~~10.7 Gill Netting for Bait -- It is illegal to set, haul, and/or maintain a gill net for bait so as to obstruct the free passage of fish in the State of Rhode Island coastal waters, streams, rivers, or bays. It is illegal to set, haul, and/or maintain a bait gill net in the Pawcatuck River north of a line from Pawcatuck Rock to Thompson Point. A Size No. 1 bait gill net may be set, hauled, or maintained in the marine environment in any river, stream, or bay in the State of Rhode Island with the exception of the Pawcatuck River north of a line from Pawcatuck Rock to Thompson Pt. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty -- Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

~~Size No. 1 -- The total length of the bait gill net may not exceed one hundred (100) feet, nor may the mesh size be greater than three and three quarters (3 3/4) inches~~



~~(stretched). Anyone setting a Size No. 1 gill net for bait must be within one hundred (100) feet of the net at all times. The net must be clearly labeled with the name of the person setting or tending the net. It is illegal to possess any salmon or striped bass while gill netting for bait in a prohibited area (refer to prohibited gill net geographic areas). (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

Comment [PD11]: Gillnet regs, section 13.5

~~10.8 Dredging for Surf Clams Gear Restrictions – The following gear restrictions shall apply to vessels fishing in the territorial waters of Rhode Island for surf clams:~~

~~10.8.1 It is unlawful for any vessel to operate with any hydraulic dredge with a blade, knife, or manifold which is greater than forty-eight (48) inches in maximum width.~~

~~10.8.2 It is unlawful for any vessel to operate more than one dredge while harvesting surf clams.~~

Comment [PD12]: Shellfish regs, section 9.13

~~10.9 Fyke Net Regulations -- It shall be illegal to use a fyke net for the purpose of taking any fish if said fyke net leader exceeds one hundred (100) feet in length, has a stretched mesh greater than two and one half (2 ½) inches, a leader which extends more than four (4) feet off the bottom, is not tended every forty-eight (48) hours, and it shall be illegal to set a fyke net within two hundred and fifty (250) feet of any other fishing net. Anyone setting a fyke net must register said gear with the R.I. Department of Environmental Management. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

~~FYKE NETS PROHIBITED IN CHARLESTOWN AND QUONOCONTAUG PONDS BETWEEN JUNE 15 AND SEPTEMBER 15 ANNUALLY.~~

~~FYKE NETS PROHIBITED IN CHANNEL AREAS OF CHARLESTOWN POND (SEE MAP). (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)]~~

~~10.10 Stowage of nets -- Vessels possessing trawl devices while harvesting summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, or winter flounder, in excess of the limits specified in R.I.M.F.C. regulations may have nets with mesh less than the minimum size specified in the regulations provided that the net is stowed and is not available for immediate use in accordance with this section. A net that conforms to one of the following specifications and that can be shown not to have been in recent use is considered to be "not available for immediate use".~~

~~10.10.1 A net stowed below deck, provided:~~

- ~~--it is located below the main working deck from which the net is deployed and retrieved;~~
- ~~--the towing wires, including the "leg" wires are detached from the net; and~~
- ~~--it is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference.~~

~~10.10.2 A net stowed and lashed down on deck, provided:~~

- ~~--it is fan-folded (flaked) and bound around its circumference;~~

- it is securely fastened to the deck or rail of the vessel; and
- the towing wires, including the leg wires, are detached from the net.

10.10.3 A net that is on a reel and is covered and secured, provided:

- the entire surface of the net is covered with canvas or other similar material that is securely bound;
- the towing wires, including the leg wires, are detached from the net; and
- the cod end is removed from the net and stored below deck.

10.10.4 National Marine Fisheries Service authorized -- Nets that are secured in a manner authorized in writing by the National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Director, for the Mid-Atlantic regulated mesh area defined as "that area bounded on the east by a line running from the shoreline along 72° 30' west longitude to the intersection of the outer boundary of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

~~(RIMFC REGULATION [Penalty - Part 3.3; (RIGL 20-3-3)])~~

~~10.11 Trawl Vessel Gear Restrictions - Minimum Mesh Size~~

~~10.11.1 Scup - Owners or operators of otter trawl vessels possessing 500 pounds or more of scup from November 1 through April 30; or 200 pounds or more of scup from May 1 through October 31, may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of five (5) inches diamond (inside measure) or square mesh with a minimum length of seventy-five (75) meshes from the terminus of the net. For nets with less than seventy-five (75) mesh codends, the entire net will be five (5) inch minimum size diamond or square mesh.~~

Comment [PD13]: Finfish, section 7.11.2

~~10.11.2 Black sea bass - Owners or operators of otter trawl vessels possessing 500 pounds or more of black sea bass, from January 1 through March 31; or 100 pounds or more of black sea bass from April 1 through December 31, may only fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches diamond mesh. Inside measure, applied throughout the codend for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net, or, for trawl nets with codends (including an extension) less than 75 meshes the trawl net must have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches diamond mesh throughout. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty - Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-3-3) (RIGL 20-6-29)]~~

Comment [PD14]: Finfish regs, section 7.14.3

10.12 Trawling Ground Gear Regulations -- The use of rollers, rockhoppers or discs greater than 12 inches in diameter is prohibited while fishing in Rhode Island waters.

~~(RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty - Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-3-3) (RIGL 20-6-29)]~~

10.13 Recreational use of nets for bait: Marine species may lawfully be taken for personal use (not for sale) with nets, provided that all existing minimum size and possession limit restrictions for the species possessed are adhered to.

**10.13.1** A two-quart per person possession limit is allowed for all unregulated marine species.

**10.3.2** Beach seines or other nets, where allowed for the recreational harvest of marine species shall not exceed four (4) feet in depth and twenty (20) feet in length. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-3-3) (RIGL 20-6-29)]

~~10.14 Atlantic Herring – Vessel Size and Horsepower -- No vessel harvesting Atlantic herring in the Atlantic coast herring fishery shall exceed 165 feet in length overall, and 3,000 horsepower. (RIMFC REGULATION) [Penalty – Part 3.3 (RIGL 20-3-3) (RIGL 20-6-29)]~~

Comment [PD15]: Finfish regs, section 7.19(F)

# **Rhode Island Saltwater Recreational Fishing License Program**

**Annual Report**

**Fiscal Year 2014**

**RI Department of Environmental Management  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Section  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown RI 02835**

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## **I. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to fulfill the requirements set forth by Section 20-2.2-10 of the Rhode Island General Laws. In accordance therewith, this report provides an overview of the Recreational Saltwater License Program for Rhode Island for FY14, offers a brief review of the status of state-based recreational fishing assessments, and sets forth the FY15 programmatic budget.

The annual reporting process was initially done on a calendar-year basis. However, that approach awkwardly juxtaposed calendar-year summaries for the numbers of licenses issued and revenues received with fiscal-year budget and expenditure reporting. In 2013, the Division changed the reporting process to a fiscal-year cycle, enabling the report to be in synch with the annual budget.

## **II. Overview of License Program**

### **a. Background**

The State of Rhode Island enacted legislation in January 2010 establishing a new Recreational Saltwater License Program for Rhode Island. The program has two primary purposes:

1) It provides a state-based alternative to federal saltwater angler registry requirements, which are administered by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) pursuant to the 2006 Amendments to the federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act (section 401(g)) (hereinafter referred to as the “Magnuson Act Amendments”).

2) It provides a source of state funding for programs and activities that benefit marine recreational fishing interests in Rhode Island.

The Magnuson Act Amendments mandate the establishment of a national registry program for all saltwater anglers, for use in conducting more accurate marine recreational fisheries statistical surveys; those surveys serve as the backbone of marine fisheries management programs for the recreational fishing sector. In December 2008, NMFS promulgated the final rule creating the registry, and also established an option for states to develop their own state-based licensing programs as an alternative, provided that the state programs meet federal criteria.

The RI license fees -- \$7/year for residents (under age 65), \$10/year for non-residents, and \$5 for a 7-day license – are designed to both cover the administrative costs of the license program and provide additional support to programs and activities that serve the needs and interests of saltwater recreational fishermen in Rhode Island.

The statute establishing RI's Recreational Saltwater License Program – RIGL Chapter 20-2.2 – was shaped and supported by a Recreational Marine License Study Group, co-chaired by the R.I. Department of Environmental Management (hereinafter, the “Department”) and the R.I. Saltwater Anglers’ Association. The group included representatives from a variety of recreational fishing groups and interests from Rhode Island.

The statute includes a section titled *Accountability and oversight* (RIGL Section 20-2.2-10). Pursuant to that section, the Department is charged with preparing an annual report that details the number of recreational saltwater licenses issued, the total amount of license fee revenue received, the expenditures made during the prior year from the license fee account, and how the Department plans to allocate and use the fee revenue during the next year. The report is also slated to include any additional, relevant information relating to the administration and enforcement of the licensing program, and the status of state-based recreational fishing assessments and stock assessments.

The statute calls upon the Department to submit the report to the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council, and for the Department and Council to then conduct one or more public meetings to solicit input from recreational fishermen and the general public. The Council is then tasked with preparing an addendum to the report, setting forth its opinion on whether the licensing program is meeting its intended purpose, and offering any recommendations for modifying the program. The report and addendum are then to be submitted to the Rhode Island General Assembly.

## **b. Status**

The Department’s Division of Fish & Wildlife, Marine Fisheries Program (hereinafter, the “Division”) developed the RI recreational saltwater license program early in 2010, and the program officially took effect on April 15, 2010.

As established by the statute, anyone wishing to recreationally fish or spearfish in the marine waters of Rhode Island must possess either a RI state license, a state license from a reciprocal state, or a federal registration. The requirement solely pertains to those harvesting, or attempting to harvest, finfish for non-commercial purposes. In 2012, regulations were amended to have the requirements also include those harvesting, or attempting to harvest, squid. Exemptions are provided for the following categories:

- Children under 16,
- Anglers fishing on licensed party or charter boats,
- RI residents who are blind or permanently disabled, and
- RI residents who are on leave from active military duty.

RI residents over the age of 65, and active military personnel stationed in RI, are eligible to obtain RI state licenses at no cost.

The new federal registry requirements also pertain to for-hire vessels, requiring that they either register federally or be subject to state-based licensing. Pursuant to a previously enacted state statute – RIGL section 20-2-27.1 – Rhode Island requires for-

hire vessels (charter and party boats carrying recreational fishermen) to obtain a RI party and charter boat license.

In the summer of 2010, the Division submitted the new RI recreational saltwater fishing license program, and the existing RI party and charter boat license program, to NMFS for review. On October 25, 2010, NMFS and the Division entered into an MOU, pursuant to which the Division agreed to regularly collect and transmit to NMFS the contact information generated by the two programs.

On the basis of NMFS' review and approval of the RI license programs, and the commitments set forth in the MOU, the State of Rhode Island was officially designated as an exempted state for all anglers, spear fishers, and for-hire fishing vessels on November 8, 2010 – enabling the RI recreational saltwater fishing license program, and the RI party and charter boat license program, to serve as a valid, legal substitutes for the federal registry.

During 2010, a federal registration was available at no cost. Beginning in 2011, NMFS enacted a \$15 annual fee for the federal registration. The annual cost has since increased to \$25.

Because the federal registration did not have a fee during 2010, it was difficult to assess the metrics of the RI program during its inaugural year. Since 2011, the program has equilibrated, providing more predictable participation and revenue rates. The average number of licenses issued since 2010 is approximately 42,000 per year, generating average revenues of about \$270,000. All license fee revenues that are not retained by the program vendor to cover administrative costs are deposited into a restricted receipt account.

### **c. Benefits**

The overarching benefits of recreational license programs are their potential for improving recreational fishing management by:

- Allowing flexibility in the administration of the recreational license program to suit the needs of Rhode Island.
- Improving the quality and accuracy of marine recreational fishing data; and
- Providing an improved means for quantifying the scope of recreational saltwater fishing and spearfishing in Rhode Island, and throughout the U.S.

A key benefit of having the State of Rhode Island administer its own license program is the opportunity to make the license available at a lower cost than a federal registration. The \$7 (resident) and \$10 (non-resident) fees for the RI license compare favorably to the \$25 fee for the federal registration. Moreover, RI does not require state residents over the age of 65, or any active military personnel stationed in RI, to pay a fee



for a license. RI offers a 7-day license at a reduced rate of \$5, available to both residents and nonresidents.

An additional benefit of having RI administer its own program is that the State program offers certain exemptions that are not available under the federal program – namely, exemptions for RI residents who are blind or permanently disabled, and RI residents who are on leave from active military duty.

Another benefit of having a RI state program is reciprocity with neighboring states and federal waters. Pursuant to Rhode Island’s licensing statute, Rhode Island will extend reciprocity to any other state that offers reciprocity to Rhode Island. Any resident from a reciprocal state who is licensed by that state can fish in RI waters without having to obtain a RI license, provided that a RI resident with a RI license can fish in the waters of the reciprocal state without having to obtain a license from that state. The states currently covered by a reciprocity agreement with Rhode Island are: New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Maine.

A portion of each Rhode Island license sold, \$2 for every license sold online, and \$3 for every license sold via a vendor, is used to cover the costs of administering the licensing program. In this way, the program covers its own costs and is self-sustaining.

The balance of the revenues derived from license sales are deposited into a restricted receipt account, which is managed by the Department and subject to the exclusive-use restrictions set forth by statute. Monies from the account may only be used for: managing Rhode Island's marine recreational fisheries, with particular reference to improving State-based recreational fishery catch and effort statistics and stock assessments; and enhancing recreational fishing opportunities in the State. The availability of this dedicated revenue source for use in supporting programs and activities that address the priority interests of RI’s recreational fishing community is a major benefit associated with the RI license program. Of particular value is the opportunity to use the state funds to leverage federal funds.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Sport Fish Restoration Program provides federal funding for saltwater recreational fishing programs. The funding is administered via grants to the State; projects written into these grants require a 25% state match. The fees generated by the RI saltwater license program are used to leverage an additional \$3 for every \$1 dedicated to projects and activities that enhance recreational saltwater fishing access, as well as science and management programs that relate directly to recreational fish stocks.

#### **d. Implementation**

##### ***Internet Based System & Local Vendors***

Section 20-2.2-7 of the statute establishing the license program authorizes and directs the Department to engage the contractual services of a state-approved vendor to

develop and implement a web-based system that serves as a portal to obtain licenses. The system developed by the vendor is used directly by recreational fishermen and by authorized licensing agents.

During the initial program development stage, the Department entered into a formal agreement with Rhode Island Interactive (RII), which administers the Rhode Island state government web portal, known as RI.gov. Pursuant to the agreement, RII is responsible for developing and implementing the internet-based licensing system. RII followed through by developing and implementing a system that serves as the mechanism for issuing licenses, and for collecting all of the required contact information at the point of sale for the national registry.

The internet-based system is used by authorized vendors to provide a point of sale alternative for anglers and spear fishers to acquire a license. These vendors include bait and tackle shops, marinas and big box stores. To date, there are twenty-five (25) authorized vendors. RII is responsible for handling the business arrangements with each vendor, including billing, remittance and technical support. Vendors must pay an annual fee of \$75 to RII to cover these service costs.

To cover the overall costs of administering the web-based license program, RII retains \$2 for each license sold via the internet. If a license is sold by a vendor, RII retains \$1 and the vendor retains \$2. Neither RII nor the vendors receive any compensation for no-fee licenses issued to RI residents over the age of 65 or active military personnel stationed in RI.

RII provides all angler contact information (name, address, phone number, date of birth – and if provided, email address) to the Division monthly via electronic transfer. The confidentiality of the data is protected via the use of encryption. The Division, in turn, provides the data to the NMFS MRIP program for incorporation into the national registry.

### ***Information & Outreach***

Since the rollout of the Rhode Island Saltwater Recreational Fishing License, the Division has continued to provide information and outreach to the Rhode Island angling community. The primary vehicle is the webpage, [www.saltwater.ri.gov](http://www.saltwater.ri.gov), which provides direct access to the licensing portal. The page includes a detailed FAQ section, covering all aspects of the license program, a link to all authorized license vendors, links to recreational fishing regulations, the locations of all public boat ramps that provide access to marine waters in Rhode Island, and other information pertinent to recreational saltwater fishing.

Since 2013, the Division has contracted with a publishing company to create a recreational fishing guide for distribution throughout the state. The guide provides information on a variety of recreational-fishing-related issues, including current recreational fishing regulations, information on local fishing and boating access sites, and

commonly caught species. It also provides information on the license program. The guide has emerged as a popular, widely circulated annual publication that serves to both promote recreational saltwater fishing in RI and inform the angling community.

The Division continues to issue periodic press releases regarding the license program and produce fact sheets, informational cards and brochures for dissemination at public events, such as the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association annual New England Saltwater Fishing Show. The Division also continues to man a booth at the show to answer questions about recreational fishing, and issue licenses. The show offers an ideal opportunity to interact directly with the recreational fishing community.

To help increase awareness regarding the license program in the field, the Division also continues to maintain weatherproof vinyl signs at fishing access points throughout RI. The signs feature an illustration of the license and clear text informing the public that the license is required and how it can be acquired. RI also continues to provide informational signs to vendors to advertise the availability of licenses at their places of business.

The goal of the saltwater recreational fishing license is to foster healthy diverse recreational fisheries which are easily accessible by the fishing public. By providing funds to promote better data collection and stock assessment, the license leads to better management programs which should ensure sustainable fishing in to the future. Robust fishing opportunities coupled with modern, well thought out, and convenient fishing access is ultimately the best strategy to increase awareness of the license to ensure that all Rhode Islanders are participating in the program equally. To this end the saltwater recreational license program will continue to direct funding towards these two aspects of recreational fishing.

### ***Free Fishing Day***

In accordance with the statutory allowance for one free fishing day a year, during which all license requirements are waived, the DEM Director continues to declare a free fishing day each summer. Since 2010, the free fishing day has coincided with Governor's Bay Day

### **e. Licenses Issued, Revenues Received: Fiscal Years 2011-2014**

Tables 1-3 summarize licenses issued and fees generated since the inception of the license program. License numbers and revenues increased after FY11, as expected, as the federal registry switched from being a free alternative to being a more costly alternative. In the three years since FY11, license issued have plateaued at approximately 42,000 per year, generating an average gross revenue of about \$270,000, and average net revenue of about \$186,000. The number of licenses sold and revenue generated fall well short of initial predictions, resulting in a much more constrained budget then originally envisioned.

Table 1. RI Saltwater Recreational Fishing Licenses – Number Issued: FY11 through FY14.

<b>License Type</b>	<b>FY11</b>	<b>FY12</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY14</b>
Resident Full Year	18,658	26,556	25,864	25,938
Non-Resident Full Year	5,249	7,649	6,975	7,432
Resident 7-Day	60	122	107	144
Non-Resident 7 Day	1,310	2,505	2,730	2,958
Resident Over 65	3,635	4,613	4,653	4,667
Active Military Stationed in RI	703	993	996	1,055
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>29,615</b>	<b>42,438</b>	<b>41,325</b>	<b>42,194</b>

Table 2. RI Saltwater Recreational Fishing Licenses -- Gross Revenue: FY11 through FY14

<b>License Type</b>	<b>FY11</b>	<b>FY12</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY14</b>
Resident Full Year	\$130,606	\$185,892	\$181,048	\$181,566
Non-Resident Full Year	\$52,490	\$76,490	\$69,750	\$74,320
Resident 7-Day	\$300	\$610	\$535	\$720
Non-Resident 7 Day	\$6,550	\$12,525	\$13,650	\$14,790
Resident Over 65	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Active Military Stationed in RI	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$189,946</b>	<b>\$275,517</b>	<b>\$264,983</b>	<b>\$271,396</b>

Table 3. RI Saltwater Recreational Fishing Licenses -- Net Revenue: FY11 through FY14

License Type	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
Resident Full Year	\$88,462	\$124,413	\$120,880	\$120,736
Non-Resident Full Year	\$40,702	\$58,566	\$53,340	\$56,970
Resident 7-Day	\$174	\$352	\$304	\$411
Non-Resident 7 Day	\$3,605	\$6,528	\$6,988	\$7,794
Resident Over 65	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Active Military Stationed in RI	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$132,943</b>	<b>\$189,859</b>	<b>\$181,512</b>	<b>\$185,911</b>

### **III. Status of State-Based Fishing Assessments**

Rhode Island’s recreational catch and effort data is collected via the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). The MRIP has replaced the previous Marine Recreational Fishing Statistical Survey (MRFSS). The MRIP system is designed to improve recreational data collection by using the data generated from license sales to create a national recreational angler registry and by employing new angler survey protocols. This registry of licensees is a known sampling frame that can be drawn upon to conduct more focused surveys. Addresses taken from the registry are used to assess fishing effort, i.e., the number of anglers and the number of trips they make in Rhode Island. Catch data is collected by intercept interviews with anglers at fishing access sites. This catch data is used to calculate the number, species, and size of the fish being caught by recreational anglers in Rhode Island. Data from the two independent surveys is combined to produce regional and coast wide estimates of recreational harvest. Results are reported in two-month periods called waves. No recreational data is collected in Rhode Island during wave 1 (January - February) due to low fishing activity.

The Division has a contract with RTI International, the federally approved contractor, to perform the MRIP intercept surveys. ICF International is the federally approved contractor that conducts the effort survey. Throughout the year, the data collected by both contractors is presented to the Division for review; once approved by the Division, the data is provided to MRIP. The number of effort and intercept interviews and related statistics collected by ICF International and RTI International are displayed, by calendar year, in Tables 4 - 6 respectively. Note that the data is presented by calendar year, not fiscal year, and that 2014 is only for waves 2-5.

To date, the effort data has been collected by random telephone surveys to households in coastal communities. However, successful interview rates have been dropping over the past four years, despite large increases in sample size. This trend is a

main driving force behind the planned switch to an alternative mail-based methodology. MRIP has completed pilot research projects in several states evaluating the mail-based survey methodology. Preliminary results show that the response rates are higher and survey answers are more comprehensive using this methodology. The program is expected to fully transition soon.

Collection of catch data via angler intercepts has also been improving over the past two years, due to the new approaches employed under MRIP. The number of successful interviews is increasing, as is the spatial and temporal distribution of the interviews. A more comprehensive sampling frame of potential sampling locations with accompanying site pressures is being used to better distribute the interviews. Better statistical sample distribution is expected to increase the accuracy of the estimate. Additionally, interviews are now being conducted at night and at an increasing rate during the winter months. Intercept refusal rates have been decreasing, likely due to increased outreach activities by NOAA Fisheries and the Division, as well as the recent change in contractors used to conduct the intercepts. The professionalism of the (now uniformed) employees working for the new contractor is noticeably improved.

As an add-on to the above-described improvements, the Division is increasing the number of angler intercepts across all months using revenues from RI's recreational license program matched 3:1 with federal grant money. The funds are being used to purchase more interviews from the contractor. The Division plans to continue this practice into the foreseeable future. This state-specific increase in sample numbers is expected to further increase the accuracy and precision of recreational catch and effort data for RI.

Another important development involving the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) is that it is being transitioned from contractor-based administration to state-based administration. Beginning in 2016, the Division will be responsible for overseeing the surveys. Recreational saltwater license funds are not being used to make this transition; it is a federally funded initiative. Saltwater license funds will be used after the transition to increase the number of interviews beyond the base number funded by the federal government, in much the same way as they are now. After the Division takes over the survey, these additional interviews will be accomplished by hiring additional samplers during peak fishing waves. The Division intends to build on the recent improvements to the survey and anticipates better data collection and more accurate information will be the result of the change.

Table 4. RI phone Surveys conducted by ICF International: 2011 through 2014

Category	2011	2012	2013	2014 (Waves 2 – 4)
Successful Phone Interviews	254	244	252	215
Total Phone Calls	72834	74753	90769	98072

Table 5. 2013 RI Phone Surveys Conducted by ICF International

Category	WAVE 2		WAVE 3		WAVE 4		WAVE 5		WAVE 6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Non-Response</b>	<b>3735</b>	<b>75.80%</b>	<b>14814</b>	<b>75.70%</b>	<b>28620</b>	<b>79.10%</b>	<b>16664</b>	<b>75.50%</b>	<b>5945</b>	<b>74.00%</b>
No Contact	3480	70.60%	13816	70.60%	26601	73.50%	15725	71.30%	5424	67.50%
Busy	29	0.60%	540	2.80%	152	0.40%	182	0.80%	28	0.30%
No Answer	655	13.30%	6356	32.50%	12010	33.20%	6756	30.60%	652	8.10%
Not Available for Screening	2688	54.50%	6399	32.70%	13136	36.30%	8381	38.00%	4647	57.80%
Answering Machine	108	2.20%	521	2.70%	1303	3.60%	406	1.80%	97	1.20%
Contacted Non-Respondents	255	5.20%	998	5.10%	2019	5.60%	939	4.30%	521	6.50%
Language Problem	14	0.30%	52	0.30%	87	0.20%	92	0.40%	31	0.40%
Refused	241	4.90%	946	4.80%	1932	5.30%	847	3.80%	490	6.10%
<b>Response</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>24.20%</b>	<b>4745</b>	<b>24.30%</b>	<b>7560</b>	<b>20.90%</b>	<b>5403</b>	<b>24.50%</b>	<b>2089</b>	<b>26.00%</b>
Respondent Ineligible	874	17.70%	3808	19.50%	5981	16.50%	4399	19.90%	1663	20.70%
Failed Prescreening	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Not in Service	436	8.80%	2227	11.40%	3274	9.00%	2611	11.80%	990	12.30%
Business Phone	373	7.60%	1386	7.10%	2339	6.50%	1615	7.30%	578	7.20%
Wrong Number	0	0.00%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Wrong County	47	1.00%	126	0.60%	256	0.70%	125	0.60%	61	0.80%
Not Permanent Resident	18	0.40%	68	0.30%	112	0.30%	48	0.20%	34	0.40%
Eligible Non-Fishing Households	318	6.50%	869	4.40%	1466	4.10%	947	4.30%	414	5.20%
No Fishing Last 12 Months	300	6.10%	809	4.10%	1412	3.90%	889	4.00%	381	4.70%
No Fishing Last 2 Months	18	0.40%	54	0.30%	48	0.10%	56	0.30%	31	0.40%
First-Time Contact/Non-Fishing	0	0.00%	6	0.00%	6	0.00%	2	0.00%	2	0.00%
Eligible Fishing Households	2	0.00%	68	0.30%	113	0.30%	57	0.30%	12	0.10%
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>4929</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19559</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36180</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22067</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8034</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6. 2014 RI Phone Interviews Conducted by ICF International

Category	WAVE 2		WAVE 3		WAVE 4		WAVE 5		WAVE 6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Non-Response</b>	<b>4689</b>	<b>77.00%</b>	<b>18669</b>	<b>78.50%</b>	<b>34888</b>	<b>80.40%</b>	<b>19346</b>	<b>78.00%</b>		
No Contact	4397	72.20%	17494	73.60%	32982	76.00%	18175	73.30%		
Busy	24	0.40%	78	0.30%	671	1.50%	63	0.30%		
No Answer	645	10.60%	5461	23.00%	15331	35.30%	857	3.50%		
Not Available for Screening	3620	59.50%	11345	47.70%	16354	37.70%	17087	68.90%		
Answering Machine	108	1.80%	610	2.60%	626	1.40%	168	0.70%		
Contacted Non-Respondents	292	4.80%	1175	4.90%	1906	4.40%	1171	4.70%		
Language Problem	15	0.20%	95	0.40%	95	0.20%	72	0.30%		
Refused	277	4.50%	1080	4.50%	1811	4.20%	1099	4.40%		
<b>Response</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>23.00%</b>	<b>5105</b>	<b>21.50%</b>	<b>8523</b>	<b>19.60%</b>	<b>5452</b>	<b>22.00%</b>		
Respondent Ineligible	1048	17.20%	4100	17.20%	7110	16.40%	4347	17.50%		
Failed Prescreening	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Not in Service	524	8.60%	2168	9.10%	4105	9.50%	2328	9.40%		
Business Phone	462	7.60%	1723	7.20%	2621	6.00%	1822	7.30%		
Wrong Number	0	0.00%	3	0.00%	2	0.00%	3	0.00%		
Wrong County	38	0.60%	116	0.50%	245	0.60%	138	0.60%		
Not Permanent Resident	24	0.40%	90	0.40%	137	0.30%	56	0.20%		
Eligible Non-Fishing Households	347	5.70%	959	4.00%	1318	3.00%	1036	4.20%		
No Fishing Last 12 Months	312	5.10%	926	3.90%	1279	2.90%	978	3.90%		
No Fishing Last 2 Months	32	0.50%	33	0.10%	36	0.10%	56	0.20%		
First-Time Contact/Non-Fishing	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.00%	2	0.00%		
Eligible Fishing Households	5	0.10%	46	0.20%	95	0.20%	69	0.30%		
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>6089</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>23774</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43411</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>24798</b>	<b>100%</b>		



Table 7. 2010 – 2013 RI Intercept Interviews Conducted by RTI International.

<b>Months</b>	<b>Successful Interviews</b>	<b>Refused Interviews</b>	<b>Percent Refused</b>
<b>2010</b>			
March – April	46	9	16.40%
May – June	395	108	21.50%
July – August	527	415	44.00%
September - October	432	214	33.10%
November - December	100	54	35.10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>34.80%</b>
<b>2011</b>			
March – April	35	11	23.91%
May – June	273	85	23.74%
July – August	428	126	22.74%
September - October	323	103	24.18%
November - December	163	41	20.10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1222</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>23.05%</b>
<b>2012</b>			
March – April	65	14	17.72%
May – June	285	79	21.70%
July – August	716	219	23.42%
September - October	598	163	21.42%
November - December	124	23	15.65%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1788</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>21.78%</b>
<b>2013</b>			
March – April	6	0	0.00%
May – June	285	106	27.11%
July – August	1022	132	11.44%
September - October	496	29	5.22%
November - December	112	3	2.61%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1921</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>14.06%</b>

## **IV. Issues & Initiatives**

### **a. Increasing the Number of Local Vendors**

Although the internet remains the most convenient means for obtaining a license for most people, it is apparent that a portion of the population continues to prefer to obtain a license, in-person, at a local store or shop. Such individuals may either not have, or not be comfortable using, a home computer and printer. Or they may have the need to pay for their license using cash, instead of a debit or credit card.

To date, there are twenty-five local vendors authorized to issue licenses at their places of business. This is up from just seven vendors at the start of the 2011 fishing season. The locations of the twenty-five vendors cover the major population areas of Rhode Island, including Block Island. Increasing the number of vendors should remain a top priority, since adding more vendors to the program will make it easier for more people to get their licenses, thereby enhancing compliance.

The Division applied for and was awarded a grant from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to administer a vendor-incentive program. The program has been up and running since 2011. Pursuant to the program, the Division loans computers and printers to any establishment that agrees to vend licenses for a period of five years. . The Division has enough funds to provide equipment for up to 50 vendors. This grant ends in June of 2015. As such, the Division plans to make a concerted effort to remind all bait and tackle shops throughout RI that applications will continue to be accepted through the spring of 2015.

### **b. Developing Regulations for the License Program**

In 2010 the Division developed and enacted comprehensive regulations for the recreational license program. The regulations largely codify the key statutory provisions governing the license program, such as:

- Licenses are required for anyone who fishes or spearfishes recreationally in Rhode Island waters for finfish, with such activities defined;
- Licenses may include a valid Rhode Island license, a valid license from a reciprocal state, or a federal registration;
- Reciprocal states identified;
- Anglers and spear fishers must be in possession of a valid license when angling or spearfishing, or have it in close proximity; and
- Licenses are not required for anyone who is exempt, per the prescribed exemption categories, as long as anglers and spear fishers who are exempt carry applicable proof.

Additional provisions set forth by the regulations include:

- Licenses are required for anyone fishing for squid; and

- Licenses are not required for anyone holding a federal Highly Migratory Species Angling Permit, issued under the angler's name.

### **c. Meeting with the Recreational Marine License Study Group**

The Division plans to continue meeting annually with the Recreational Marine License Study Group. This ad-hoc group worked closely with the Division on the development of the original saltwater recreational license bill. The purpose of these annual meetings is to review and get input on the status of the overall license program, as well as the draft budget for the saltwater license restricted receipt account. These meetings are in addition to, not in lieu of, the Council and public comment processes set forth by the license statute.

### **d. Addressing Additional Options for Obtaining Licenses**

Although the internet and the increasing number of local vendors throughout the State offer convenient opportunities for anglers and spear fishers to obtain a license, it is recognized that there are still a large number of people who either do not own a computer and printer or do not have a convenient means of accessing a local library or local vendor. While this constituency may be a minority, it constitutes a meaningful portion of the recreational fishing community in Rhode Island. If too many people perceive the process of obtaining a license as too difficult or inconvenient, it may have the effect of turning people away from fishing, which is clearly counter to the spirit and intent of the license program. The Division is open to exploring options to make it easier for people to obtain a license, e.g., mail-in or call-in options. However, the additional costs for administering such options would have to be assessed and budgeted.

### **e. Allowing Volunteer Contributions to the Restricted Receipt Account**

It has been suggested that some anglers and spear fishers would welcome the opportunity to make an additional, voluntarily contribution to the restricted receipt account associated with the license program at the time they purchase their license. It is unclear whether this could be done without additional statutory authority, but if there is enough interest in the part of the Rhode Island recreational fishing community to pursue the initiative, it can be pursued. Examples of voluntary methods for contribution include license plate programs and elections on state tax forms.

### **f. Streamlining the Online License Renewal Process**

The Division has continued to coordinate with RII in an effort to streamline the renewal process, namely, by having prior contact information recalled and re-inserted, with an onus on the licensee to verify that it is up-to-date and accurate. Phone numbers remain an important data field, the system still requires phone numbers to be re-entered every year, to help ensure that they are up-to-date and accurate. The future of MRIP's methods is still unclear and will likely shift to a mail based survey. This change will

make the address of the applicant the key data element. It is unclear if the telephone number will still be required.

### **g. Compliance**

As mentioned above the number of licenses issued for the past three years has plateaued at approximately 42,000. Estimates for the number of potential licenses have proven to be highly unreliable; it can be assumed that the past three years are more representative of future license sales. It is important to know how closely the number of license tracks the actual number of anglers in order to assess the effectiveness of the saltwater license program. RIDEM Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) conducts field checks of the recreational license to ensure compliance with the saltwater license requirement with good results. In 2014, they conducted 1,161 recreational saltwater license checks resulting in 60 citations and 120 warnings of noncompliance. These results indicate an approximate 85% compliance rate with the saltwater license program. DLE states that this is similar to rates seen by other regional law enforcement agencies. While 85% is a good compliance rate it still remains necessary to promote a high level of awareness to the saltwater license program to keep noncompliance in check and foster steady participation with the program in the future.

The Division will continue working to increase compliance as well as prevent license sales from eroding. Several ideas provided by the Saltwater Recreational License advisory group will be pursued to this end. The Division collects email addresses from license applicants; these email addresses will be used in the future to send an electronic reminder to renew their licenses annually. It is generally accepted that the frequent recreational angler is aware of the recreational license requirement; a lack of compliance likely exists in the casual angling population. To address this compliance gap the Division will expand its distribution of its saltwater fishing magazine to more diverse locations such as popular tourist hotels and attractions. Additionally, the Division will reach out to the office of Boating Registration to include a reminder to get a fishing license and link to [www.saltwater.ri.gov](http://www.saltwater.ri.gov) on boating registration forms.

## **V. Expenditures and Budget**

### **a. Preface**

As noted previously, in accordance with the provisions of the RIGL Chapter 20-2.2, all funds from the saltwater license fees are deposited into a restricted receipt account that can only be used for the following purposes:

- Administering and enforcing the Rhode Island license program;
- Managing Rhode Island's marine recreational fisheries, with particular reference to improving state-based recreational fishery catch and effort statistics and stock assessments; and
- Enhancing recreational fishing opportunities in the State.

The Division undertakes a range of programs that address and support recreational fishing interests in Rhode Island. These programs are largely funded via a federal grant administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service's Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) Program. The SFR Program is derived from excise taxes on fishing and boating equipment, and is structured as a user-pay/user-benefit program. The SFR program is the primary source of funding for recreational fishing programs in Rhode Island, providing some \$2 million annually. SFR grants require a 25 percent non-federal match.

The primary RIDEM programs pertaining to recreational fishing fall into the following general categories:

- Fish stock assessments
- Recreational catch and effort estimates
- Management programs and regulations
- Boating and fishing access
- Artificial reefs and habitat protection/enhancement
- Public information, outreach, and education
- Enforcement

In developing annual budgets for the recreational saltwater license account, RIDEM draws upon the following guidelines: projects must be consistent with the licensing statute; address the needs and interests of the recreational fishing community in Rhode Island; and maximize opportunities and benefits by leveraging federal SFR funds whenever possible.

#### **b. FY14 Expenditures**

During the 2014 fiscal year, a total of \$298,397 was used for the Rhode Island Marine Recreational Fishing Program (Table 8). Of that total:

- \$119,305 was used for personnel and equipment costs in support of the Division's finfish surveys for stock assessments;
- \$26,368 was used for the management of the Marine Recreational Fisheries Program;
- \$23,771 was used to support the Division's boating/fishing access site maintenance program;
- \$103,711 was spent on the upgrade to the Galilee boat ramp;
- \$4,523 was used for public education, information, and outreach, including production of the second annual Rhode Island Recreational Saltwater Fishing Guide;
- \$18,813 was used for the purchase of additional MRIP intercept interviews; and
- \$1,906 was used for the collaborative artificial reef project between the Division and The Nature Conservancy.

Table 8. 2014 Recreational Saltwater License Program budget.

Category	FY14 Carryover	FY14 Revenue	FY 14 Available	FY14 Budgeted	FY14 Expended
Enhanced MRIP Data Collection	\$168,602	\$27,886	\$196,488	\$43,375	\$18,813
Boating/Fishing Access I	\$109,493	\$37,182	\$146,675	\$100,000	\$103,711
Boating/Fishing Access II	\$7,936	\$18,591	\$26,527	\$18,700	\$23,771
Rec Fisheries Support	\$38,696	\$18,591	\$57,287	\$26,000	\$26,368
Fish Stock Assessment Support	\$5,928	\$65,068	\$70,996	\$65,450	\$119,305
Artificial Reef	0	\$9,295	\$9,295	\$9,350	\$1,906
Public Education, Information, and Outreach	\$25,162	\$9,295	\$34,457	\$16,428	\$4,523
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$355,818</b>	<b>\$185,908</b>	<b>\$541,726</b>	<b>\$279,303</b>	<b>\$298,397</b>

**c. FY15 Budget**

The budget for FY2015 is described in Table 9. It is anticipated that the restricted receipt account will receive another \$180,000 from FY15 license sales, and the proposed FY15 Programmatic Budget, as set forth below, is based on that amount.

Table 9. 2015 Recreational Saltwater License Program budget.

Category	FY15 Carryover	FY15 Revenue	FY 15 Available	FY15 Budgeted	FY15 Expended
Enhanced MRIP Data Collection	\$177,675	\$27,000	\$204,675	\$24,000	
Boating/Fishing Access I	\$42,964	\$36,000	\$78,964	\$75,000	
Boating/Fishing Access II	\$2,756	\$18,000	\$20,756	\$18,000	
Rec Fisheries Support	\$30,919	\$18,000	\$48,919	\$27,000	
Fish Stock Assessment Support	-\$48,308	\$63,000	\$14,691	\$105,450	
Artificial Reef	\$7,389	\$9,000	\$16,389	\$0	
Public Education, Information, and Outreach	\$29,934	\$9,000	\$38,934	\$5,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$243,329</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>	<b>\$423,329</b>	<b>\$254,450</b>	

**1. Enhanced MRIP Data Collection (\$24,000)**

*Proposal.* Continue to expand the recreational catch and effort data collection program for Rhode Island (under the MRIP sampling umbrella) by providing funding for add-on intercept surveys to increase the overall precision of the State-based estimates and better enable mode-specific (e.g., shore-based) estimates. The \$24,000 investment will leverage an additional \$72,000 in federal (SFR) funds to provide \$96,000 in total programmatic benefits. The \$96,000 will allow the Division to continue ordering additional add-on interviews from the APAIS contractor (RTI) until the transition to the Division’s running of the program. There will be 85 total; 40 for private/rental mode, 40 for shore mode, and 5 for Party/Charter mode.

It should be noted that when the transition of the APAIS occurs the Division will hire additional seasonal interviewers during the high fishing months to collect more interviews. These employees will be in addition to the base number of interviewers to be hired with federal funding by the Division to conduct the survey. This significant change in doing business makes the additional interviewers the method of adding extra interviews. The ACCSP recreational technical committee, which is providing oversight for the state takeover of the shore based interviews, estimates that a single interviewer represents 20 shifts (shift = 6 hours) dedicated to interviews per month. By this logic hiring two additional seasonal interviewers should effectively add on approximately 240

shifts. This year as in the past, the Division has purchased 85 additional interviews from the contractor. Although it is unclear what the average number of interviews per shift will be, even if it is as low as one per shift, it will increase the number of interviews almost three fold. Hiring interviewers directly will not only increase the number of add on interviews but will also be less expensive.

**Rationale.** The MRIP program is the major source for marine recreational catch and effort fishing assessments. Data collected via the program is used to estimate catch (landings and discards) and effort by species/state/mode/wave. Estimates of catch and effort are used to develop status of the stock for all species, including striped bass, summer flounder, scup, tautog, bluefish, winter flounder, cod, black sea bass, and weakfish. In addition, indices of abundance using catch per unit of effort are incorporated into age-structured models to track abundance in comparison to other fisheries independent surveys. Estimates of catch and effort are quite variable due to sampling levels, which are directly correlated to the level of funding for each survey.

The marine recreational catch and effort fishing assessments yield fishery dependent information which, coupled with the fishery independent trawl and seine surveys, serve as the basis for marine recreational fishing regulations. The accuracy and fairness of recreational fishing regulations is directly related to the quality and precision of the assessments. Better accuracy and precision will lead to a better understanding of fishing activities by mode. This information is paramount if the Division is to pursue mode splits such as differential regulations for shore-based fishermen versus boat-based fishermen. Mode specific regulations require adequate survey and sampling of the two modes to enable relatively precise estimates of respective catch and effort.

It is unclear as to how the transition to a state run recreational sampling program will affect the number of interviews. The proposed enhanced data collection initiative will continue to attempt to maintain sampling to prior levels (2002-2005). An assessment of how many added interviews are derived by the hiring of additional interviewers will be conducted at the end of the year to determine whether the number of additional hires is sufficient to acquire the desired interviews. Additional interviews combined with perceived benefits of a state run recreational sampling program should help to significantly boost the quality and accuracy of the data used to assess Rhode Island's marine recreational fisheries.

## **2. Boating/Fishing Access I (\$75,000)**

**Proposal.** Improvements to Goddard State Park Boat Ramp

**Rationale.** The ramp at Goddard State Park is one of the most popular and important ramps in western Narragansett Bay, providing direct access to lots of great fishing and boating. The ramp is heavily utilized and in need of rehabilitation.

The Goddard State Park ramp ranks high on the Division's list of priority boating/fishing access sites in need of upgrade or improvement, and is a worthy candidate



for funding via the license fee account. Four other projects are slated to be undertaken, under separate funding:

- Gull Cove boat ramp improvements
- Sakonnet Harbor boat ramp improvements
- Allen's Harbor Boat ramp improvements
- Rocky Point fishing pier construction

These projects, in particular the fishing pier at Rocky Point, are candidates for future recreational licensing fees. Using \$75,000 in licensing to leverage \$225,000 in SFR funds frees up \$300,000 to be used on the other projects listed expediting the public access program as a whole.

### **3. Boating/Fishing Access II (\$18,000)**

*Proposal.* Continue to support the Division's boating/fishing access site maintenance program. The \$18,000 investment will leverage an additional \$54,000 in federal (SFR) funds to provide \$72,000 in total programmatic benefits.

*Rationale.* The Division is responsible for maintaining 60 state-owned and operated boating/ fishing access sites used by an estimated 28,000 boats that are less than 24 feet in length. In order to foster compliance and repeat participation in the recreational saltwater license program, it is as important to keep our public access points clean and functional as it is to build new ones. The Division lacks adequate resources to undertake all of the work that's needed to maintain these sites on a regular basis. The allocation of these funds from the license fee account, leveraged with federal funds, supports the Division's ability to properly maintain state-owned boating/fishing access sites throughout Rhode Island.

### **4. Recreational Fisheries Management Support (\$27,000)**

*Proposal.* Continue to provide staff time, equivalent to a full-time employee (FTE), for the Division's Recreational Marine Fisheries Program. Staff will coordinate a range of projects and activities that relate directly to priority marine recreational fishing issues. The \$27,000 investment will leverage an additional \$81,000 in federal (SFR) funds to provide \$108,000 in total programmatic benefits.

*Rationale.* In the past, the Division has never had staff time completely dedicated to marine recreational fishing programs. In 2012, the Division hired a fulltime staff person dedicated to RI's marine recreational fisheries program and proposes maintaining an FTE equivalent to focus on the following issues:

- Coordinating the overall license program, in concert with Rhode Island Interactive and local vendors; and serving as the conduit for data management between the program and NOAA Fisheries, pursuant to the Division's MOU with NOAA Fisheries.

- Coordinating recreational fishing assessments; implementing the scheduled RIDFW takeover of angler intercept sampling; serving on the ACCSP's Recreational Technical Committee; advancing Rhode Island's electronic reporting program.
- Coordinating the development of marine recreational fishing management programs in Rhode Island; applying recreational fishing assessments to recreational management programs; developing mode-specific recreational fishing management programs and other recreational fishing alternatives for important ASMFC-managed species.
- Serving as a principal point of contact for recreational fishing groups and organizations throughout Rhode Island.
- Assisting with the coordination of the Division's boating/fishing access program – including assessment, maintenance, and management of existing sites; pursuing grants to upgrade/improve existing sites and develop new sites; and conveying information on access opportunities to the Rhode Island recreational fishing community.
- Assisting with the coordination of Rhode Island's artificial reef program.

#### **5. Fish Stock Assessment Support (\$105,450)**

*Proposal.* Support the continuation of finfish stock assessment surveys of recreationally important species in Rhode Island waters. The \$105,450 investment will leverage an additional \$316,350 in federal (SFR) funds to provide \$421,800 in total programmatic benefits.

*Rationale.* The key programs funded via the federal SFR grant are the continuation of the Narragansett Bay trawl survey; the juvenile finfish seine survey conducted in the coastal ponds, and the newly developed fish pot survey. These projects are important annual finfish fisheries surveys in Rhode Island waters with long standing time series of data. In the past, these programs have been funded by the Division's federal SFR grant, and matched entirely with commercial fishing license fee revenues. Given the importance of these programs to the recreational fishing community, it stands to reason that a portion of the recreational fishing license fees should continue to cover the non-federal match requirements of the SFR grant pertaining to these projects. Project reports are submitted annually for these programs to USFWS and are available upon request.

#### **6. Artificial Reef Support (\$0)**

*Proposal.* . The Division has reallocated a dedicated staff person paid from a different grant to administer this project. The project is continuing as planned and is still considered an important recreational fishing initiative. The narrative will remain in the report as it may warrant future funding.

*Rationale.* Due to public input and interest, the Division, in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy, has undertaken a 5-year artificial reef project. The project is

designed to test the feasibility and performance of artificial reefs in Rhode Island waters. The main goal of the project is to determine if artificial reefs actually produce more biomass or merely attract/aggregate fish from surrounding areas. The outcome of this study will help to determine if permanent artificial reefs should be placed in Rhode Island waters. This project was initiated by recreational fishermen's requests for the placement of artificial reefs in RI, if necessary funds from the recreational saltwater license will be reallocated to fund and support the project in the event of loss of current funding.

## **7. Public Education, Information, and Outreach (\$5,000)**

*Proposal.* The \$5,000 taken from recreational license receipts will leverage an additional \$15,000 in SFR funding resulting in \$20,000 used for outreach and education pertaining to the recreational fishing license. The primary goal is to continue the annual Rhode Island Recreational Fishing Guide and maintain signage informing the public of the license requirement.

*Rationale.* Although compliance with the new license program has generally been good, it is clear that a number of recreational fishermen and spear fishers remain unaware of the program, not only in terms of the need to obtain a license, but also with regard to the purpose of the program and the benefits it provides to the recreational fishing community. Since the primary purpose of the license program is to develop a comprehensive database of contact information for all recreational fishermen and spear fishers, it makes sense to continue making a modest investment in public outreach, aimed at increasing awareness among the recreational fishing community regarding the license program, particularly during the summer season, thereby enhancing compliance and bolstering programmatic support.

In 2014, the Division published the second annual edition of the Rhode Island Recreational Saltwater Fishing Guide. The publication, done in a colorful and appealing magazine style, offers a wealth of information of interest to the marine recreational fishing community in the State. The guide informs fishermen on the issues associated with the licensing program and the associated benefits. It also provides recreational fishing information as well as other issues of interest to the community, including current regulations, informative articles, and lists of local bait and tackle shops and party/charter boat services. While the Division continues to provide information to the Rhode Island recreational fishing community via the Division's website and an annual abstract that features recreational and commercial fishing regulations, the magazine enhances the Division's ability to connect with and inform recreational fishermen, and to promote recreational fishing in Rhode Island. The publication has been well-received, and so it makes sense to continue utilizing a small portion of funds from the license account to fund it annually.

## **VII. Looking Ahead to FY16**

While there is reason to believe that the license program, and associated receipts received, could grow at a modest pace over the next several years, there is no clear

indication that that is likely to happen. As previously noted, the total number of licenses issued during the 2014 fiscal year was 42,194, and total revenues deposited into the license fund for the calendar year were \$185,911. ***For planning purposes, the FY16 Programmatic Budget is projected to be approximately the same as FY15, i.e., \$186,000.***

**RHODE ISLAND MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL**

Shellfish Advisory Panel

January 21, 2015, 4:00 pm

Warwick Public Library, Room 101

600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI

**Meeting Minutes**

RIMFC Members Present: J. Grant (Chair)

SAP Members Present: M. McGiveney; D. Ghigliotty; K. Eagan;

Scientific Advisor Present: D. Leavitt

Public Present: M. Bartley; J. Marmaras; D. Eagan; J. McDonald; J. Goulart; M. Weir; J. Holland; B. Stevenson

CRMC: D. Beutel

DOH: E. Julian; C. White

DEM: J. Mercer; J. Migliore; K. Blanchard

**New Business:**

***1. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Expansion: CRMC File # 2014-11-043, Arnoux, Ninigret Pond, Charlestown.***

Beutel gave a brief description of the site. Mercer presented a map of the location and noted that a field survey was not completed due to shallow nature of site and ice at the location but noted that previous assessments in the area had low densities. A brief discussion of the lease area and current operation followed. Motion made by Eagan to **not object** due to minimal impact on shellfishing, McGiveney seconded the motion.

**The board voted 3-0 to not object to the application.**

***2. Discussion of *Vibrio* regulations for commercially harvested quahogs***

An informal discussion and question and answer session regarding potential changes to shellfish regulations to address the threat of *Vibrio* illness was conducted. No votes or formal decisions were made. Topics of discussion included effective dates, species included, time period to dealer, time period to icing, delivery of catch after dealer hours, tagging, bulk tagging, definition of approved ice, different measures in coastal ponds, and educational outreach. Mercer stated that he would take into consideration the comments received at the meeting in the development of revised regulations.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Prepared by: Jeff Mercer

Recording of meeting available upon request



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**  
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 Rhode Island Relay 711  

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**Office of the Director**

**Memorandum**

To: Mark Gibson, Deputy Chief

From: Janet Coit, Director

Date: January 5, 2015

Re: Final Decisions Pertaining to November 20, 2014 Marine Fisheries Public Hearing Items; and Winter Harvest Schedule for Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area

This memo codifies the final decisions on the following five regulatory matters:

- 2015 commercial management measures for summer flounder
- 2015 commercial management measures for scup
- 2015 commercial management measures for black sea bass
- 2015 commercial management measures for monkfish
- Winter harvest schedule for Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area

In rendering these final decisions, I reviewed all relevant supporting documentation, including the November 20, 2014 public hearing document and public hearing comments; the minutes of the November 25, 2014 Shellfish Advisory Panel meeting; the minutes of the December 1, 2014 meeting of the RI Marine Fisheries Council; and your memos to me, summarizing the Division's positions, dated December 5, 2014.

**2015 Commercial Management Program for Summer Flounder**

**Issue:** In addition to status quo, two options for modifying the commercial management program for summer flounder were presented at the public hearing: (1) a proposal to maintain a consistent possession limit throughout the year; decrease the aggregate possession limit during the winter sub-period; and eliminate the summer aggregate program; and (2) a proposal to remove the exemption certificate requirement for the summer aggregate program.

**Review:** Most of the public hearing comments favored status quo, while several offered support for the proposal to remove the exemption certificate requirement for the summer aggregate program.

At the Council meeting, the Division recommended maintaining status quo. The Division also noted that while it wasn't opposed to the proposal to remove the exemption certificate requirement for the summer aggregate program, the proposal would likely result in reduced possession limits and/or closures during the summer sub-period. If

participation in the fishery remained the same, approximately 15 vessels that are currently constrained by the exemption certificate requirement would be able to participate in the summer aggregate program. However, there could be additional increases in effort if other vessels that haven't been participating in the fishery become active, incentivized by the removal of the exemption certificate requirement.

The Council engaged in a thoughtful and thorough deliberation, with considerable focus on the pros and cons of removing the exemption certificate requirement for the summer aggregate program. While the Council recognized that allowing access to the program by the 15 or so vessels that are currently ineligible to participate would likely help to reduce discards and improve efficiencies for those vessels, the Council further recognized that a significant expansion in effort would cut into the summer sub-period quota and make an already challenging situation worse, namely with regard to low daily possession limits and an early, or earlier, closure of the sub-period. On that basis, the Council voted unanimously to recommend status quo.

**Decision:** First, I want to commend the industry interests who offered the proposal, and the Council for its thoughtful consideration. Second, I am struck by the positive aspects of the proposal, particularly with regard to its potential to reduce regulatory discards and afford more flexibility to those who harvest fluke commercially during the summer sub-period. While I concur with the Council, and the Division, that maintaining status quo is the best way to proceed for this year, I urge the Division to continue working with industry interests and the Council to address the valid concerns affecting the approximately 15 vessels, active in the commercial summer flounder fishery, that do not hold exemption certificates.

*Consistent with the Council's and Division's recommendation, I support remaining at status quo for 2015*

### **2015 Commercial Management Program for Scup**

**Issue:** The only option presented at the hearing was status quo.

**Review:** One comment was offered – a suggestion to change the weekly limit to a daily limit once it becomes evident that the floating fish trap sector will not be able to harvest its full quota.

At the Council meeting, the Division recommended maintaining status quo. There was no further discussion, and the Council voted unanimously to recommend status quo.

As noted in your memo to me, management of the commercial scup fishery was very stable and consistent in 2014, with no adjustments needed.

**Decision:** *Consistent with the Council's and Division's recommendations, I support remaining at status quo for 2015.*

### **2015 Commercial Management Program for Black Sea Bass**

**Issue:** In addition to status quo, three options for modifying the commercial management program for black sea bass were presented at the public hearing: (1) a proposal to decrease the possession limit during the winter sub-period; (2) a proposal to add an aggregate limit during the winter sub-period; and (3) a proposal to maintain a consistent possession limit throughout the year, an to regulate possession limits based on numbers of fish rather than pounds.

**Review:** The comments offered at the public hearing were mixed, with some support for option (3), a fair amount of support for maintaining status quo, and the most support for option (2).

At the Council meeting, the Division recommended maintaining status quo. The Council briefly discussed the pros and cons of option (2), with particular focus on the likelihood that an aggregate program would lead to a significant increase in catch rates, which in turn would lead to an even earlier sub-period closure. While the Council was sympathetic to the bycatch and discard issues affecting the lobster fishery, the Council recognized that the very low commercial quotas are the major concern. Accordingly, the Council voted unanimously to recommend status quo.

**Decision:** *Consistent with the Council's and Division's recommendations, I support remaining at status quo for 2015.*

### **2015 Commercial Management Program for Monkfish**

**Issue:** In addition to status quo, three options for modifying the commercial management program for monkfish were presented at the public hearing: (1) a proposal to eliminate the daily possession limit and replace it with a weekly aggregate limit of 13,000 pounds; (2) a proposal to establish a weekly aggregate program with a 25,000 pound/week limit, available to certain eligible applicants; and (3) a proposal to require use of VMS for all state-water vessels participating in the directed monkfish fishery.

**Review:** Most of the comments offered at the hearing were in support of options (2) or (3).

At the Council meeting, the Division recommended maintaining status quo. The Division further noted that while it could not support option (2), due to the administrative burden, it could support option (1). However, the division offered two key points. First, for those currently participating in the fishery, the current daily possession limit (1,826 pounds) does not appear to be constraining harvest or contributing to high levels of discards since only about 3% of the 782 monkfish trips undertaken in 2013 had landings higher than 1,500 pounds. Second, while total state-waters landings have fallen far short of the state-waters quota over the past few years, the state-waters fishery involves a relatively small number of vessels. Since the fishery remains, essentially, an open-access fishery in state waters, a weekly aggregate program could result in a significant shift of effort into the fishery, with uncertain consequences. The Division recognized that this concern gave rise to the qualification-based approach set forth in option (2), but again, the Division maintained that it would be too burdensome to have to develop and administer a new permitting program for the commercial monkfish fishery. Finally, the Division noted that it could accept and support option (3), which would help to prove that fishing activity is occurring solely in state waters and help to guard against the concern of fish being transferred from federal to state waters,



but the Division maintained that it would not be possible to get such a program in place until 2016.

The Council briefly reviewed the options, and after considering all the factors offered by the Division, the Council voted unanimously to recommend status quo.

**Decision:** I appreciate the efforts on behalf of industry interests and the Division to explore options for more fully utilizing the state's quota, in a way that minimizes the administrative burden on the Division and provides full accountability. While I concur with the Council that maintaining status quo is the best way to proceed for this year, I would urge that the proposals be subject to further evaluation and development, with a view to reconsidering a well-crafted, weekly aggregate program, with a VMS requirement, for next year.

*Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support remaining at status quo for 2015.*

### **Winter harvest schedule for Greenwich Bay Shellfish Management Area**

**Issue:** The six shellfish management areas that are subject to winter harvest schedules are reviewed every year to determine the need for any adjustments to the schedules. Final decisions on the 2015 schedules for five of the six areas were issued in December 2014. The schedule for Greenwich Bay was held, pending completion of the Division's field assessment for that area.

**Review:** On November 25, 2014, the Division presented its survey results to the Shellfish Advisory panel. The Division noted that the survey data is inconclusive, although there is an indication that quahog abundance may be decreasing. The Division supported the industry's proposal to maintain the same harvest schedule for 2015 as was in place for 2014 (with two minor tweaks to the start and end dates).

At the December 1, 2015 Council meeting, the Council voted unanimously to support the recommendation of the Panel and the Division.

**Decision:** *Consistent with the Council's and the Division's recommendation, I support remaining at status quo for 2015, with the caveat that the management area will open on January 2, 2015, and close on April 29, 2015.*



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**  
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI 02908-5767 Rhode Island Relay 711  
**Office of the Director**

**Memorandum**

To: Mark Gibson, Deputy Chief

From: Janet Coit, Director

Date: December 8, 2014

Re: Final Decisions Pertaining to Shellfish Closures Reviewed at September 3, 2014 RIMFC Meeting; and September 30, 2014 Marine Fisheries Public Hearing Items

This memo codifies the final decisions on the following regulatory matters:

- Shellfish closures at two oyster restoration sites in Ninigret Pond
- Winter Harvest Schedules for Shellfish Management Areas other than Greenwich Bay
- Annual updates to the Finfish, Shellfish, and Crustacean Sector Management Plans
- Eight amendments to the commercial licensing regulations

In rendering these final decisions, I reviewed all relevant supporting documentation, including the minutes of the August 27, 2014 Shellfish Advisory Panel meeting; the minutes of the September 14, 2014 Industry Advisory Committee meeting; the September 30, 2014 public hearing document and public hearing comments; the minutes of the September 3, 2014 and October 6, 2014 meetings of the RI Marine Fisheries Council; and your memos to me, summarizing the Division's positions, dated October 21, 2014.

**Shellfish Closures in Ninigret Pond**

**Issue:** Foster Cove, which is part of Ninigret Pond, has historically supported wild oyster populations. Currently, it represents one of the few areas in RI where the oyster population is solely habitat limited, i.e., there is not enough suitable substrate to support settlement of the oyster larvae available in the system. Accordingly, the area is being targeted for oyster habitat restoration.

In support of the habitat restoration efforts, the Division proposed closing two areas to shellfishing in the cove. The closed areas will serve as oyster reserves to protect current and future oyster restoration work in the cove. The first site is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre rectangular area on the north shore of the pond, which is slated to receive cultch for substrate enhancement as part of the EQIP restoration program administered by NRCS in cooperation with the Division. The second site is a 2.4 acre area extending 75 ft. from shore surrounding a peninsula on the east shore of the cove containing restoration plots created by TNC and the Division to evaluate alternative substrate enhancement techniques. This area along the peninsula is monitored and will be targeted for future restoration work.

Although there are few, if any, harvestable oysters located in these 2 areas, the closure is necessary to protect any recruitment that may occur as a result of the restoration practices.

**Review:** The Division presented the proposal to the RI Marine Fisheries Council's Shellfish Advisory Panel (SAP) on August 27, 2014. The SAP voted unanimously in support of the proposal, with the condition that the closure be subject to review after 5 years, and either lifted if it no longer served its purpose, or extended if additional protection is warranted. The proposal was then reviewed by the full Council on September 3, 2014. The Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal, with the same 5-year sunset provision recommended by the SAP.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division supports the proposal and concurs with the Council's recommendation regarding the 5-year sunset provision.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support the enactment of the two closures for a period of five (5) years, as presented. Prior to the sunset date, the areas shall be reviewed by both the Division and the Council to determine whether there is a basis for extending the closures.

#### **Winter Harvest Schedules for Shellfish Management Areas other than Greenwich Bay**

**Issue:** The six shellfish management areas that are subject to winter harvest schedules are reviewed every year to determine the need for any adjustments to the schedules.

**Review:** With regard to five of the six shellfish management areas – i.e., all except Greenwich Bay – the Division presented a status quo proposal to the SAP on August 27, 2014. The SAP voted unanimously to support the proposal, with the caveat that the opening of the Bristol Harbor Management Area should be changed from January 3 to January 1. The proposal was then reviewed by the full Council on October 6, 2014. The Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal, as modified to reflect the new January 1 opening for Bristol Harbor.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division supports the status-quo proposal and concurs with the new January 1 opening for Bristol Harbor.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support the status-quo proposal, modified to reflect a new January 1 opening for Bristol Harbor, as presented.

#### **Annual Updates to the Finfish, Shellfish, and Crustacean Sector Management Plans**

**Issue:** The three sector management plans are reviewed and updated every year to reflect the current status of the fisheries and management programs. The plans also identify the number of new license endorsements to be issued for the following year, per the exit/entry ratios.

The application of status quo exit/entry ratios for the restricted finfish, quahog, and soft-shell clam fisheries would result in the issuance of 21 new quahog endorsements for 2015, 12 new soft-shell clam endorsements for 2015, and 3 new restricted finfish endorsements for 2015.

**Review:** The Council's Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) met on September 14, 2014 to review the sector plans and new license endorsement proposals for 2015. The IAC voted to support the application of status-quo exit/entry ratios for 2015. The plans and new license

endorsement proposals were the subject of a public hearing held on September 30, 2014; no comments were received. The plans and new license endorsement proposals were reviewed by the full Council on October 6, 2014. The Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the updated sector plans, including the application of status-quo exit/entry ratios for 2015.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division supports adoption of the updated sector plans and the application of status-quo exit/entry ratios for 2015.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support the adoption of the updated Finfish, Shellfish, and Crustacean Sector Management Plans, as well as the application of status-quo exit/entry ratios for the finfish, quahog, and soft-shell clam fisheries, as presented. I understand that this will result in the issuance of 21 new quahog endorsements for 2015, 12 new soft-shell clam endorsements for 2015, and 3 new restricted finfish endorsements for 2015.

### **Amendments to the Commercial Fishing Licensing Regulations**

#### ***1. Opportunity for Over 65 Shellfish License Holders to obtain CFL w/Quahog endorsement***

**Issue:** The commercial licensing regulations afford priority status to new license/endorsement applicants who fall into three categories: 1) residents holding active CFLs that are endorsed in the same fishery sector for which a new license/endorsement is sought; 2) residents holding active PELs; and 3) resident crew members active in the same fishery sector for which a new license/endorsement is sought. The process does not allow holders of a 65 and Over Shellfish licenses (available only to residents) to qualify for priority status.

The regulatory process also enables holders of active Student Shellfish licenses to obtain CFLs with quahog endorsements; and further enables holders of active CFLs with quahog endorsements to obtain PELs with quahog endorsements. The process does not provide opportunities to advance for holders of 65 and Over Shellfish licenses.

The Division proposed an amendment that would enable any holder of an active 65 and Over Shellfish license to obtain a CFL with a Quahog endorsement, provided that the individual has not been cited for a violation of a RI marine fisheries law or regulation during the prior two years. The harvest opportunities associated with the two licenses are the same – both allow the holder to harvest up to 3 bushels of quahogs per day. However, the change will enable holders of active 65 and Over Shellfish licenses to obtain a CFL with quahog endorsement, qualifying them for priority status with regard to new license/endorsement opportunities, while also opening an avenue to advance to a PEL with quahog.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as presented.

2. ***Clarification that holders of PELs or CFLs with Quahog endorsements who are over 65 must pay the standard fees for all other non-shellfish-related endorsements***

**Issue:** Per statute, there is no fee for a 65 and Over Shellfish license. Per regulation, there is also no fee for a PEL with a Quahog endorsement if the holder is at least 65 years of age. It has always been understood, by DEM, that standard fees applied to any/all additional licenses/endorsements obtained by individuals aged 65 or over; however, the Department was recently challenged due to an alleged lack of clarity on the issue.

In an attempt to clarify the issue, the Division proposed language establishing that fees apply to all endorsements on PELs held by individuals age 65 and over except Quahog, Soft-Shell Clam, Whelk, and Other Shellfish endorsements.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, with one technical change, and one editorial comment.

The technical change is that the existing regulatory provision that specifically waives the fee for holders of PELs with a Quahog endorsement who are at least 65 years of age should be expanded to include, as well, holders of CFLs with a Quahog endorsement who are at least 65 years of age. This technical change is consistent with the amendment set forth above under item #1.

The editorial comment is that there may have been sufficient basis to propose that the fee waiver apply only to the license – PEL or CFL – and the Quahog endorsement, but not to any other endorsement, e.g., Soft-Shell Clam, Whelk, and Other Shellfish. However, no specific recommendation was made to modify the proposal (at hearing or by the Council). What's more, the current practice by DEM's Licensing Office has been to not charge fees for those endorsements. As such, those additional endorsements will remain available at no fee, unless modified by subsequent regulatory action.

3. ***Remove gear and fishery sector declarations from license application***

**Issue:** All applicants for CFLs and PELs are required to identify the primary gear type they intend to employ during the year. All applicants for MPLs are required to provide that same information, plus identify the fishery endorsement sector(s) into which they intend to focus their effort during the year. These declarations are expressly for informational purposes only, and are non-binding. These declarations are also unrelated to the required license endorsements that must be obtained (on CFLs and PELs) in order to be eligible to harvest and land species in the species endorsement categories and/or employ certain gear types pursuant to the gear endorsement categories.

The Division proposed eliminating these gear and fishery sector declarations, since the information is now captured -- more accurately -- by the electronic reporting system and therefore no longer needed as part of the license application process.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as presented.

**4. *Allow trips reported to SAFIS on a landing permit to be considered for activity standard***

**Issue:** To meet the standard of "actively fishing," an applicant must be able to demonstrate that he/she fished at least 75 days over the past two years pursuant to a valid RI license. Activity based on landing permits does not qualify.

The Division proposed expanding the qualification standard to include documented landings recorded on an applicant's landing permit over the past two years, provided that the applicant also held a CFL, PEL, MPL during the same period of time. This would allow consideration of a broader range of SAFIS transaction records to establish an applicant's status under the "actively fished" standard.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as presented.

**5. *Changes to provisions governing paper logbook endorsement***

**Issue:** In 2014, a new paper logbook endorsement was established. The new endorsement, which costs \$25, is only applicable to commercial finfish and lobster fishermen, fishing in RI waters, who do not submit VTRs and who wish to continue using the state-issued paper logbooks in lieu of electronic reporting. Given the newness of the provision, it was made available at any time during the year.

The Division proposed some technical amendments to the regulations governing the paper logbook endorsement, including:

- Renaming it the paper harvester catch and effort logbook; and

- Clarifying that logbooks (as well as electronic recordings) for all trips must be filled out prior to the start of the next trip, rather than at the end of each day fished;

The Division also proposed repealing the provision that allows the paper logbook endorsement to be obtained at anytime during the year and replacing it with a provision requiring all commercial license applicants to declare their reporting method at the time of license issuance or renewal, and if opting into the paper logbook reporting system, obtaining and paying for the paper logbook endorsement at that time. This change would enhance compliance with reporting, and ease the administrative burden for the Division. It was proposed as a reasonable follow-up to the first year of the new programmatic change, and appropriate given the amount of training and guidance provided by the Division over the course of the year.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee debated the matter and ultimately took no position on the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as presented.

#### 6. *Changes to provisions governing dockside sales endorsement*

**Issue:** Federal permit holders engaged in dockside sales are subject to duplicate electronic reporting requirements – they must submit VTRs as well as eTrip reports.

To eliminate the duplication, the Division proposed an amendment to the Dockside Sales endorsement provisions, establishing a process whereby everyone who obtains a Dockside Sales endorsement, will be provided with a paper dockside sales logbook, and everyone who reports their landings using VTRs will be required to use the logbooks in lieu of having to file eTrip reports.

The Division also proposed a new quarterly requirement for the submittal of dockside sales reports to be consistent with the existing harvester logbook requirements.

On a separate note, the Dockside Sales provisions require that all sales must be made from the vessel that harvested the product. That precludes specifically authorized alternative approaches, such as the one involving the lobster shack in Newport. The Division proposed a modification to the regulatory provision, maintaining the vessel-based restriction "unless otherwise authorized by the Director."

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At

the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as presented.

7. ***New proof of employment standard for establishing priority status as a crew member***

**Issue:** To meet the standard of "actively participating," an applicant must be able to demonstrate that he/she worked as a crew member at least 75 days over the past two years. The only proof required to meet the standard is one or more affidavits signed by one or more licensed captains. For some applicants, the veracity of their status as an actual crew member has been questionable, notwithstanding the claims made via the affidavits.

To address this issue, the Division proposed tightening the standard by clarifying that the applicant must have been a paid crew member, and that such status be verified via a record of payment, such as a W-2 form or paystub.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee debated the matter and ultimately took no position on the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council debated the matter and ultimately voted to recommend adoption of the proposal, with the caveat that the proposed new provision be amended to read as follows: "To be considered a paid crew member, the crew member must have a record of being paid by a vessel owner or person licensed to fish commercially ~~such as~~ by either a W-2 form, ~~or~~ paycheck stub, or 1099 form."

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** I appreciate the Council's support for a more rigorous standard governing priority status for license applicants based on their status as crew members. I also agree with the Council's recommendation to allow consideration of 1099 forms. However, I disagree with the Council's recommendation to expressly limit allowable documentation to just the three types of records. I prefer to establish a burden of proof upon the applicant, and allow the applicant to submit whatever proof they have, in the form of documented record of payment, with emphasis on the three types of records as acceptable examples. Although I am not aware of other examples that might be considered acceptable, I would prefer to structure the new provision in a way that affords some discretion in making that call. Accordingly, I ask that the final regulation be worded as follows: "To be considered a paid crew member, the crew member must have a record of being paid by a vessel owner or person licensed to fish commercially, such as a W-2 form, 1099 form, and/or paycheck stub from a financial institution." This is the same language that was originally noticed, amended only by adding "1099 form."



**8. *Balancing of endorsement opportunities to address equitable allocations among prioritization categories***

**Issue:** The commercial licensing regulations afford priority status to new license/endorsement applicants who fall into three categories: 1) residents holding active CFLs that are endorsed in the same fishery sector for which a new license/endorsement is sought; 2) residents holding active PELs; and 3) resident crew members active in the same fishery sector for which a new license/endorsement is sought. One-third of the total number of new licenses/endorsements is made available to each of the three categories. If, in any of the categories, there are fewer eligible applicants than there are licenses/endorsements available for issue, then the balance will be evenly distributed to the other two categories. Within each category, eligible applicants will be prioritized based on the length of time, in years, they have been actively fishing their license, or actively participating in the fishery as a crew member, on a continuing basis.

At times, the Department has faced situations where the number of available licenses/endorsements cannot be distributed equitably to priority applicants, per the above-described process. In such cases, the Director has had to formally authorize the issuance of an additional license/endorsement.

To address this issue, the Division proposed an amendment that would allow the Department to increase the number of available licenses/endorsements to provide an equitable allocation among the three priority categories.

**Review:** At the IAC's September 14, 2015 meeting, the committee voted to support the proposal. There were no comments offered at the September 30, 2015 public hearing. At the Council's October 6, 2014 meeting, the Council voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the proposal.

Per your memo of October 21, 2014, the Division recommends adoption of the proposal.

**Decision:** Consistent with the Council's recommendation, I support adoption of the proposal, as perfected by staff. The final wording shall be as follows:

At the end of sub-sections 6.7-6(a) and 6.7-6(b), add:

"If the selection of qualified applicants cannot be resolved equitably by the initial prioritization and lottery process, and if the number of remaining endorsements cannot be distributed evenly between the remaining categories, the number of remaining endorsements will be rounded up to provide each remaining category with the necessary endorsement(s) required to complete the selection process."



# Council Report

November/December 2014

The Council Report summarizes major actions approved at NEFMC meetings or highlights items of interest to stakeholders.

At its November 17-20, 2014 meeting in Newport, RI, the Council:

- ◆ Approved Sea Scallop Framework Adjustment 26
- ◆ Selected the range of alternatives to be analyzed in Amendment 18 to the Groundfish Plan
- ◆ Approved Framework Adjustment 53 to the Groundfish Plan
- ◆ Initiated a framework adjustment to the Monkfish Plan
- ◆ Approved fishery specifications to the Small Mesh Multi-species Plan
- ◆ Took final action on the NOAA's Vessel Baseline Amendment
- ◆ Approved a Risk Policy
- ◆ Reviewed the Annual Skate Monitoring Rept.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Next Council Meeting  
January 27-29, 2015**

## Sea Scallops

### *Framework Adjustment 26 Approved*

### *Landings projected to increase by 10 million pounds in 2015*

The Council took final action on Scallop Framework Adjustment 26, specifications for 2015, and other measures that are important to the operations of the fishery including a proactive northern windowpane flounder accountability measure, a state waters exemption provision for Northern Gulf of Maine area, consistency between the current turtle regulations, and a provision to accommodate lengthy steaming times for vessels landing scallops in southern ports. The specifics are as follows:

- A 47 million pound total projected catch with 31 days-at-sea for full-time vessels, three 17,000 pound scallop area access trips (or 51,000 per vessel);
- New closures of the Nantucket Lightship extension area and the inshore Elephant Trunk Area;
- Flexible boundaries for 2015 trips in the Mid-Atlantic access areas along with adjusted pre-landing and automatic carryover provisions (for the Hudson Canyon, Elephant Trunk, and Delmarva Areas);
- A Total IFQ allocation of 2.97 million pounds for limited access general category (LAGC) vessels including about 2,000 fleet-wide trips in access areas;
- Crew limits in access areas with a maximum of eight for full-time and part-time limited access boats, and six for full-time small dredge vessels;
- A revision to the state waters exemption program that would allow a state to request a specific exemption for vessels to fish in state waters after the federal Northern Gulf of Maine area TAC (total allowable catch) is reached;
- Consistency for turtle regulations – a May-November west of 71°W requirement for turtle deflector dredges and turtle chain mats, and a modified flaring bar rule that would allow the bar to be connected in more than one place on a dredge frame;
- Proactive accountability measures (AMs) for northern windowpane flounder that would require both limited access and LAGC scallop vessels (all permit types in all areas), fish with a *maximum* of seven rows in the apron of a dredge throughout the year; in this case the AM trigger would occur only after the *total* ACL is exceeded; and
- The ability for limited access vessels to declare out of the fishery when landing scallops in ports south of Cape May only, along with several requirements; as a result, a days-at-sea adjustment of 0.14 days-at-sea would be necessary to account for this flexibility for at least 2 years (2015 and 2016) and days-at-sea would be allocated as a fraction of a each day moving forward.

## **Carryover**

### **Provisions**

The Council voted to revise the groundfish carryover provisions so that they are consistent with a U.S. District Court ruling that vacated the carryover provisions adopted in 2013. The ruling specified that the value of the stock-specific ACL, plus the carryover of unused annual catch entitlement or ACE, may not exceed the following year's ABC.

If approved, groundfish sectors could carry forward up to 10% of their unused ACE provided that the total unused sector ACE carried forward for all sectors from the previous fishing year and the total ACL does not exceed the ABC for the fishing year in which the carryover would be harvested. Accountability measures would not change under this action.

### **Windowpane flounder**

Proposed sub-ACLs for the two stocks of windowpane were moved to the "considered but rejected" section of the framework document. The Council instead tasked the Groundfish PDT to develop a white paper to better understand the problems and potential management solutions related to these stocks.

## **Groundfish**

### ***Amendment 18 Range of Alternatives Identified***

The Council finished approving the range of alternatives for this action in November. Amendment 18 includes measures that address accumulation limits, the Hand Gear A permit fishery, data confidentiality, inshore and offshore Gulf of Maine cod rules, and an exemption area in which to target redfish. The Council determined that measures related to trading quota with Canada would not be included in this action.

The Council is scheduled to review the Amendment 18 draft Environmental Impact Statement at its April 2015 meeting in Mystic, CT and select preferred alternatives. Public hearings are expected in the summer, followed by a final decision in September.

### ***Framework 53 Approved***

### ***Gulf of Maine Cod Decisions Will Affect Both Commercial and Recreational Fishermen***

The Council took final action on Framework Adjustment 53 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP which includes specifications for a number of stocks in the groundfish complex and adjustments to both commercial and recreational fisheries measures to address the steep decline of Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod. If the framework receives final approval by NOAA Fisheries, the following could be in place beginning on May 1, 2015. Major measures include those for:

#### **Gulf of Maine haddock**

The annual catch limit (ACL) is increasing substantially (from 677 metric tons to about 1,375 metric tons). It is no longer overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The increase is intended to provide fishermen with greater opportunities to access a healthy stock and a good alternative to cod.

#### **Gulf of Maine cod**

The ACL would be reduced to about 25% of the previous year's level. Additional cod protection measures, which include spatial management measures (closed areas for the commercial fleet and no possession for the recreational fleet) would reduce cod mortality and impacts spawning cod while minimizing impacts to the fleets by providing opportunities to fish for other species. The areas would modify the current rolling closures in April, May, and June, and add closures in November, December, and January. The Council also voted for no possession of GOM cod for the recreational fishery--with no additional restrictions on where they can fish.

There would be no changes to the other groundfish closures. The Whaleback Cod Spawning Closure Area would continue to be closed to both recreational and commercial fisheries. Year round closures (Cashes Ledge and Western Gulf of Maine Area, for example) would continue to be closed to the commercial fishery.

#### **Other Issues**

The Council also voted to roll over the specifications (35% for each groundfish stock) for four months (May 1- July 31) in the event that rulemaking is delayed in the future and provided that, on a stock by stock basis, these rollover specifications would not exceed any pending acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations. In other words, the rollover ACL may not exceed the anticipated ABC for the upcoming fishing year. Also if rollover specifications are implemented, groundfish sectors would not be subject to the currently required 20% ACE holdback during the rollover specifications period.

***See sidebar this page for more Framework 53 issues.-***

## Monkfish Framework Adjustment Initiated

### *Measures formerly in Amendment 6 Fast Tracked*

Amendment 6 to the Monkfish FMP has been under development for several years. The Monkfish Committee recommended taking certain measures out of the amendment and pursuing them in a framework action. The Council responded by voting to initiate framework adjustment to the Monkfish FMP (fishery management plan), agreeing that the measures would be useful to fishermen in the upcoming fishing year.

The action would include consideration of changes to allow at-sea declarations for groundfish DAS, changes to the days-at-sea/trip limit for Category F vessels (limited access offshore boats), increase monkfish-only days-at-sea based on the higher rate of groundfish common pool days-at-sea counting, and changes to the Northern Area monkfish trip limit for vessels fishing on a groundfish day-at-sea.

During the discussion, the Council also agreed to eliminate measures in Amendment 6 that would modify the incidental monkfish limits that would apply to sector vessels while not fishing on a groundfish or a monkfish day-at-sea, and fixed gear vessels operating on a groundfish day-at-sea in the Southern Management Area. The Council also added an additional alternative to be analyzed that would allow the implementation of a sector management program in this fishery in either the Northern or Southern Management areas or in both.

Final action on this framework is expected to occur at the NEFMC's January or April Council meeting. The Council also anticipates resuming work on Amendment 6 as soon as possible.

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## Small Mesh Multispecies (Whiting)

### *Fishery Specifications Approved 2015-2017*

The Council approved specifications, or catch limits, for fishing year 2015-2017 based on updated stock assessments for northern and southern red and silver hake stocks. Changes in catch limits are warranted given the changes in estimated stock biomass and discard rates. Changes in the specifications range from a decrease of 8.2% for southern silver hake to an increase of 85% for northern silver hake.

A recent assessment update indicated that overfishing of northern red hake was occurring in 2013 and that catches exceeded the annual catch limit, or ACL. As a remedy, the Council also approved a reduction of the 5,000 pounds to the northern red hake possession limit.

The approved alternative would implement a 3,000 pound northern red hake possession limit at the beginning of the fishing year, to be reduced to 1,500 pounds when landings reach 45% of the total annual landings limit of 229,721 pounds. Under existing accountability measures, the northern red hake possession limit would be lowered to 400 pounds when landings reach 62.5% of the total landings allowed, possibly reducing the number of trips that target red hake.

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## Final Action Taken on Vessel Baseline Amendment

Following the Mid-Atlantic Council's vote to approve final action on a Vessel Baseline Omnibus Amendment prepared by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the NEFMC also approved Alternative 4 as its preferred alternative. If the agency, acting on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce, approves the proposal now supported by both Councils, the amendment could be implemented as early as next spring.

Alternative 4 would eliminate the one-time vessel upgrade limitation and also gets rid of the tonnage specifications, so that only length and horsepower would be used as baseline vessel specifications for upgrade limitations (10% size/20% horsepower limits). It is expected to reduce administrative costs and costs incurred by vessel owners trying to upgrade or replace their vessel.

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The New England Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional organizations created by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, initially enacted in 1976.

The Council develops rules for both commercial and recreational fisheries that operate between three and 200 miles off the region's coastline. NEFMC management authority extends to fishing grounds in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank and southern New England and overlaps with the Mid-Atlantic Council for some species.

## **Happy Holidays to All!**

### **NEFMC Risk Policy Finalized**

The NEFMC's Risk Policy Working Group met several times during 2013 and 2014 and recommended a step-wise approach that was approved by the Council at the November meeting. The new policy will serve as guidance to the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Council for specifying ABC and ACLs for all Council-managed species.

### **Northeast Skate Complex**

#### *Annual Monitoring Report Available*

The Council was provided with the Annual Skate Monitoring Report prepared by Skate Plan Development Team. Based on data forwarded by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center that included information collected through spring 2014, the report concluded that the status of all skates remains the same as reported in the previous status update. Thorny skate is overfished, and overfishing is still occurring on thorny as well as winter skate.

#### **Details about rebuilding skate stocks**

- ◆ The rebuilding deadline for smooth skate is 2020 (10 years from the implementation of Amendment 3), and it appears that it could be rebuilt before the deadline if the current biomass trend continues.
- ◆ The rebuilding deadline for thorny skate is 2028 (25 years from implementation of the Skate FMP), yet 10 years into the rebuilding period, the stock continues to decline. NOAA Fisheries considers it a species of concern.
- ◆ While barndoor skate is not overfished, no significant rebuilding has occurred since 2006. Adding complexity is that the rebuilding deadline is not clearly defined in the Skate FMP, due to uncertainties in basic life history parameters.





# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## 2015 Winter Meeting Summary

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

2015 Winter Meeting  
Alexandria, Virginia  
February 3-5, 2015

Toni Kerns, ISFMP, or  
Tina Berger, Communications  
For more information, please contact  
the identified individual at  
703.842.0740

### Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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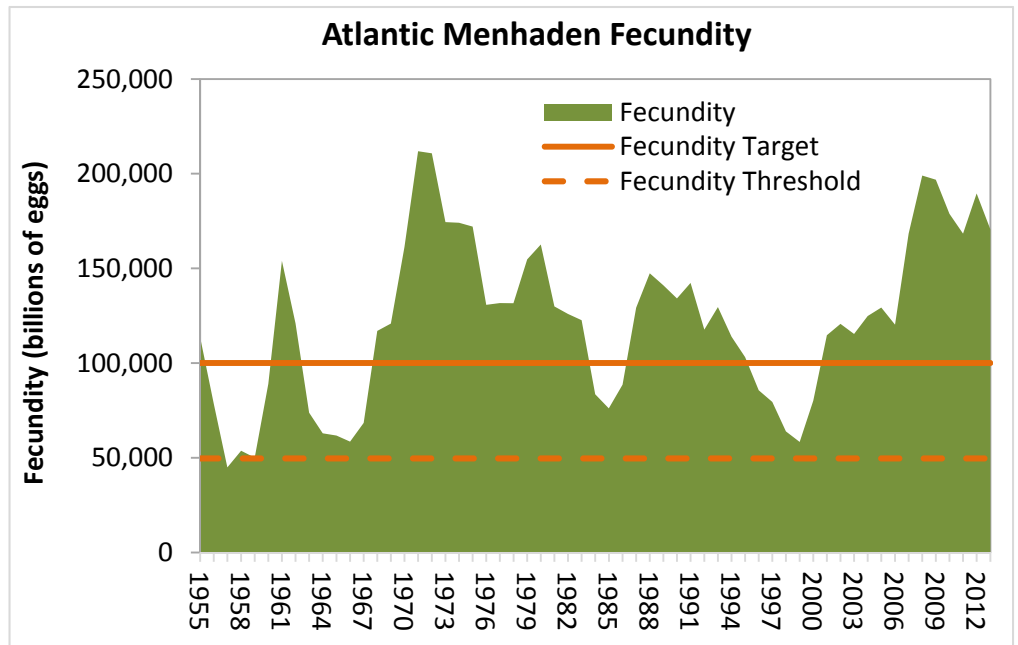
**ATLANTIC MENHADEN MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 3, 2015)**

**Press Release**

**Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Assessment Finds Resource Not Overfished and Overfishing Not Occurring**

Alexandria, VA – The 2015 Atlantic menhaden benchmark assessment indicates the resource is not overfished nor experiencing overfishing relative to the current maximum spawning potential (MSP) based biological reference points. Population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, is estimated to be 71% higher than the target value (100 trillion eggs). Additionally, total fishing mortality is estimated to be 0.27, below both the fishing mortality threshold (2.98) and target (1.03). The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board approved the benchmark stock assessment for management use.

“The assessment findings bring good news regarding the status of the Atlantic menhaden resource and sets the stage for the Board to begin to discuss how it wants to move forward in sustainably managing Atlantic menhaden. This discussion will include Board management objectives that address the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries as well as the ecological services menhaden provides as an important prey species,” stated Board Chair Robert



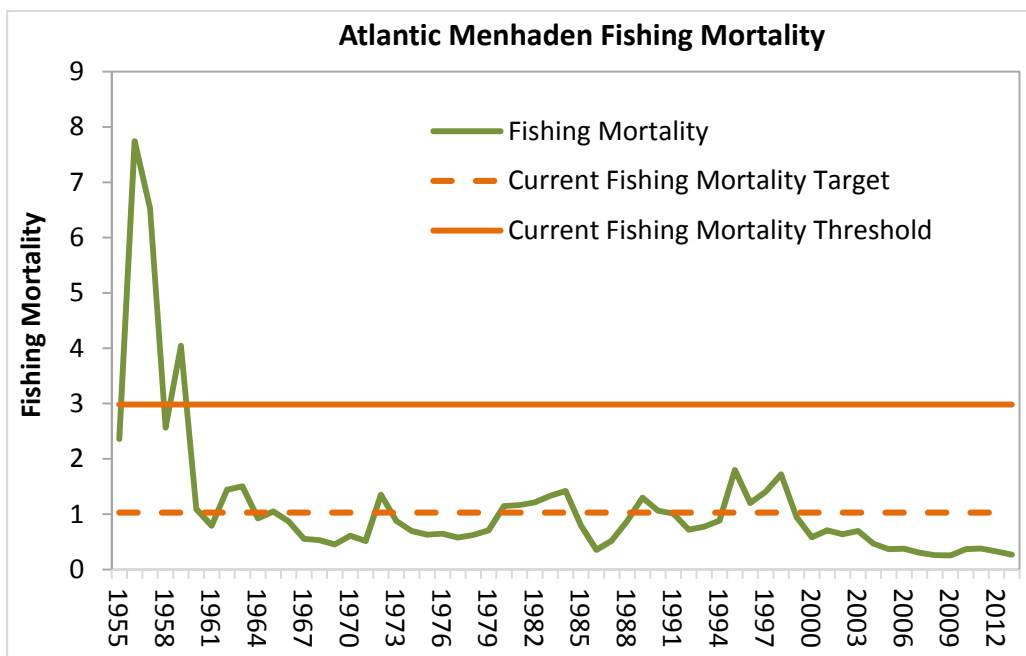
Boyles from South Carolina. “The assessment results are different from prior assessments and this is in large part due to the tremendous efforts of stakeholders, and state and federal scientists to improve upon both the data and modeling approaches used in the assessment. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication in advancing our understanding of the Atlantic menhaden stock status.”

Atlantic menhaden is harvested by both commercial reduction and bait fisheries. From 2010 to 2012, reduction fishery landings averaged 172,600 metric tons and are substantially lower than historical levels. Conversely, total bait landings have been increasing in recent years, averaging about 52,900 metric tons during 2010-2012, with peak landings of about 63,540 metric tons in 2012. In 2013, landings for both fisheries were reduced by 20%, consistent with the requirements of Amendment 2.

Through the consideration of new and existing datasets and the exploration of alternative model configurations, significant changes were made during the 2015 assessment to address the issues identified with the 2010 assessment. Below are a few of the major changes that led to significantly different assessment results.



- Using new datasets, maturity at age was corrected, resulting in a higher estimated proportion of mature fish at ages 1, 2, and 3. This higher proportion of mature fish at the earlier ages resulted in a stock that had higher reproductive potential (i.e., increased fecundity) than previously estimated.
- Two composite adult indices of relative abundance were created using nine new standardized fishery-independent indices that spanned a much broader spatial scale. This was a significant improvement from the 2010 benchmark assessment that used one Chesapeake Bay fishery-dependent pound net index to characterize adult abundance for the entire stock.
- Dome-shaped selectivity for all fishery fleets was used to account for the fact that larger sized individuals were observed in multiple fishery-independent surveys than captured by the bait and reduction fisheries during the entire history of sampling. This ultimately results in more fish at older ages because the larger fish are not being captured by the fisheries.



All these improvements combined led to significantly different assessment results. A more detailed description of the stock assessment results is available on the Commission’s website at [http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d26f852015MenhadenStockAssessmentOverview\\_Feb2015.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d26f852015MenhadenStockAssessmentOverview_Feb2015.pdf).

Following the acceptance of the assessment, the Board tasked the Technical Committee with conducting a thorough review of the peer review findings and performing projections that explore different constant harvest scenarios based on the results of the assessment and the current stock status. The Board will review the projection analyses at the Commission’s Spring Meeting and further deliberate on management objectives that address the needs of the reduction and bait fisheries as well as the ecological services menhaden provides. The final assessment and peer review will be posted to the Commission website the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), on the Atlantic Menhaden webpage. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or [mwaine@asmfc.org](mailto:mwaine@asmfc.org).

###

PR15-02

**Motions**

**Motion to accept the Atlantic menhaden stock assessment report and peer review report for Management use.**

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion carries without objection.

**Move to approve John Dean and David Sikorski to the Atlantic Menhaden Advisory Panel**

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Train. Motion carries without objection

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

***Meeting Summary***

The Executive Committee met in a closed session to discuss staff tenure and workload. The Committee reviewed the plans to meet in St. Augustine, Florida for the 2015 ASMFC Annual Meeting. Staff provided an update on the review of the Commission's guidance documents. Staff will provide suggested changes to the ISFMP Charter and the Rules and Regulations for Executive Committee review at the Spring Meeting.

Under other business, the Executive Committee discussed the trade-offs between three and four day meetings. The Committee agreed that there is little cost savings if Commissioners are required to travel the day before a three day meeting. The Committee agreed to consider providing additional detail on the criteria that can be used to appeal a Commission decision. Staff will provide draft language for consideration at the Spring Meeting. The final issue discussed was potential for increased weather related travel problems for winter meetings. The Committee did not make any recommended changes to the meeting schedule. For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance and Administration, at [lleach@asmfc.org](mailto:lleach@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

**INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

***Meeting Summary***

The ISFMP Policy Board met to discuss meeting protocols for the Northern Shrimp Section, the roles and responsibilities of the Committee on Economics and Social Science (CESS), the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Shark Draft Amendment 6, and the 2016 weakfish benchmark stock assessment terms of reference (TORs).

Under the ISFMP Charter, management boards and sections operate under Roberts Rules of Order, which includes voting on actions taken by the boards and sections. The Northern Shrimp Section is comprised of 3 states. Given the small number of states vested in the fishery, there was a request by one of the Section members that the Section consider acting by consensus versus voting. The Board discussed the request but decided to maintain the process outlined in the Charter in order to maintain consistency among its boards and sections.

The Board reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS). CESS requested the Board increase current Committee participation on ASMFC Technical Committees and Plan Development Teams. The CESS will continue assist the Board in identifying significant socioeconomic data gaps with Commission managed species and, when appropriate and budgetarily feasible, create Requests for Proposals. CESS will review and recommend to the Board its preferred consultants or researchers for socioeconomic data collection or analysis initiatives. The Board also suggested CESS create a set of standard socioeconomic data to be included in FMPs, in addition to the socioeconomic information already provided.

NOAA Fisheries HMS staff presented Draft Amendment 6 to the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), which proposes a range of management measures for the commercial shark fisheries, including pelagic, bottom longline, or gillnet gear fisheries. The proposed measures respond to a number of issues in these fisheries, including commercial landings that exceed the quotas, declining numbers of fishing permits since limited access was implemented, complex regulations, derby fishing conditions due to small quotas and short seasons, increasing numbers of regulatory discards, and declining market prices. In addition, these measures are based on recent determinations made by NOAA Fisheries as a result of the 2013 stock assessments for Atlantic sharpnose, which was found to be not overfished and not experiencing overfishing, and bonnethead sharks, whose stock status remains unknown because the assessment was not accepted.

The preferred alternatives are in the draft for the Atlantic coast include:

- **Permit Stacking:** Do not implement permit stacking (No Action).
- **Commercial Retention Limit:** Increase the LCS retention limit for directed permit holders to 55 LCS other than sandbar sharks per trip and adjust the sandbar shark research fishery quota to 75.7 mt dw (166,826 lb dw).
- **Atlantic Regional and Sub-Regional Quotas:** Split the Atlantic regional commercial quotas for certain LCS and SCS management groups along 34° 00' N Lat.; maintain SCS quota linkages in the southern sub-region; remove the SCS quota linkages in the northern sub-region and prohibit the harvest and landing of blacknose sharks in that sub-region; and establish a non-blacknose SCS TAC and maintain the current commercial base annual quota of 176.1 mt dw (388,222 lb dw).
- **Commercial Vessel Upgrading Restrictions:** Remove current upgrading restrictions for shark limited access permit holders.

The Board reviewed and approved the 2016 weakfish benchmark stock assessment and peer review TORs. The Board discussed the need for the stock assessment to explore the spatial component of the stock due to differences seen in stock availability north and south of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

### ***Motions***

**Move to approve the Terms of Reference for the Stock Assessment for Weakfish as well as the Peer Review Panel for Weakfish.**

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion carries.

## **WINTER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

### ***Press Release***

## **ASMFC Winter Flounder Board Sets 2015 Commercial and Recreational Measures for Inshore Stocks**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board maintained its winter flounder commercial and recreational management measures for the inshore waters of the Gulf of Maine (GOM) and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) for the 2015 fishing season (see Table 1).

Table 1. Minimum commercial and recreational management measures for the Inshore Winter Flounder FMP.

Stock	Sector	Trip Limit/ Possession Limit	Size Limit	Season	Gear
GOM	Commercial	500 lbs/trip/ day	12"	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5" square or diamond mesh in cod-end
	Recreational	8 fish	12"	NA	
SNE/MA	Commercial	50 lbs 38 fish/trip/day	12"	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5" square or diamond mesh in cod-end 100-lb mesh trigger
	Recreational	2 fish	12"	March 1 – December 31	

The Board maintains its commitment to work with the New England Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office to collaboratively manage winter flounder stocks throughout their range. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [myuen@asmfc.org](mailto:myuen@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

PR15-04

**Motions**

**No motions made.**

**AMERICAN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

***Press Release***

**ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves Draft Addendum XXIV for Public Comment**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s American Lobster Management Board approved Draft Addendum XXIV to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Lobster Fishery Management Plan for public comment. Draft Addendum XXIV responds to recently finalized trap transfer regulations for the federal waters of Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2, 3, and Outer Cape Cod. While the majority of the implemented federal water measures are based on Commission recommendations and are consistent with the Commission plan, there are a few measures which are either inconsistent or are not addressed by the Commission plan. Specifically, the Draft Addendum includes options to better align state and federal measures regarding the conservation tax on trap allocations when whole fishing businesses are transferred, trap allocation transfer increments, and restrictions on trap allocation transfers among permit holders who are authorized to fish both state and federal waters within a single lobster management area.

States are not anticipated to conduct hearings on the Draft Addendum, since NOAA Fisheries has already held hearings on the same issues. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXIV, which can be obtained at [http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmLobsterDraftAddendumXXIV\\_PublicComment.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmLobsterDraftAddendumXXIV_PublicComment.pdf) or via the Commission’s website, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), under *Public Input*. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on March 20, 2015 and should be forwarded to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries

Commission, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at [comments@asmfc.org](mailto:comments@asmfc.org) (Subject line: Lobster Draft Addendum XXIV).

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

###

PR15-03

### ***Meeting Summary***

The American Lobster Management Board met to address a number of issues including review and approval of Draft Addendum XXIV for public comment, consider changes to the closed season for Lobster Conservation Management Area 5 (LCMA 5), and receive a progress report on the development of the Jonah Crab Fishery Management Plan. Draft Addendum XXIV, which addresses improving consistency between state and federal trap transfer processes was approved for public comment (see above press release). The Board also approved Maryland's request to remove the mandatory season closure for LCMA 5 in April and May. LCMA 5 will remain closed for February and March, and will re-open in April. Further management for the areas will be considered when the benchmark stock assessment is finalized, which will be in 2015.

To aid in the development of the Jonah Crab FMP, Board members from Massachusetts and Rhode Island will work with Plan Development Team to address a number of outstanding issues. These issues include 1) determining what constitutes a directed trip versus a non-directed trip to help characterize the fishery; 2) identify current fishery practices to help determine appropriate management options for inclusion in the Draft FMP; and 3) determining permit requirements for participants in the Jonah crab fishery. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at [tkerns@asmfc.org](mailto:tkerns@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

### ***Motions***

**Move to approve Draft Addendum XXIV for Public Comment, contingent on changes discussed during the Board meeting.**

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Baum. Motion passes unanimously.

### ***Main Motion***

**Move to reconsider the following motion from October 2014:**

**Move to approve a closed season from April 30 to May 31 for Lobster Conservation Management Area 4 and 5 to achieve the required 10% reduction in Addendum XVII, and allow the setting of unbaited lobster traps 1 week prior to the season reopening, and replace the following measures for LCMA 5: a closed season of February 1-March 31 and with mandatory v-notching.**

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passes (Roll Call: In Favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, VA; Opposed – NJ; Abstention – NMFS).

### ***Motion to Amend***

**Motion to amend to include LCMA 4.**

Motion made by Mr. Baum and second by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion fails.

**Move to endorse Maine’s pilot trap tag program for one year.**

Motion made by Mr. Train and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion passes (9 in favor, 2 opposed).

**NORTHEAST AREA MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

***Meeting Summary***

The Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP) Board met to receive reports from its three surveys and technical committees, as well as to discuss emerging issues. The Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Nearshore Trawl Survey, the Maine-New Hampshire Inshore Trawl Survey, and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries Bottom Trawl Survey provided updates on their 2014 activities and summarized the increasing use of survey data in stock assessments. The Board also received reports from the Operations and Data Management Committees and provided feedback on how best to achieve Committee tasks. The Operations Committee presented the 2015 Operations Plan for Board review. The NEAMAP Board offered a number of suggested minor edits to the 2015 Operations Plan. The Operations Committee will review the changes and finalize the Plan for Board approval. Finally, Board members discussed the creation of an Industry Advisory Panel to provide guidance to the surveys. The Board noted that this Panel would need clearly defined goals for advice recommendations and agreed to follow-up on the idea in the future. For more information, please contact Shanna Madsen, Fisheries Science Coordinator, [smadsen@asmfc.org](mailto:smadsen@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

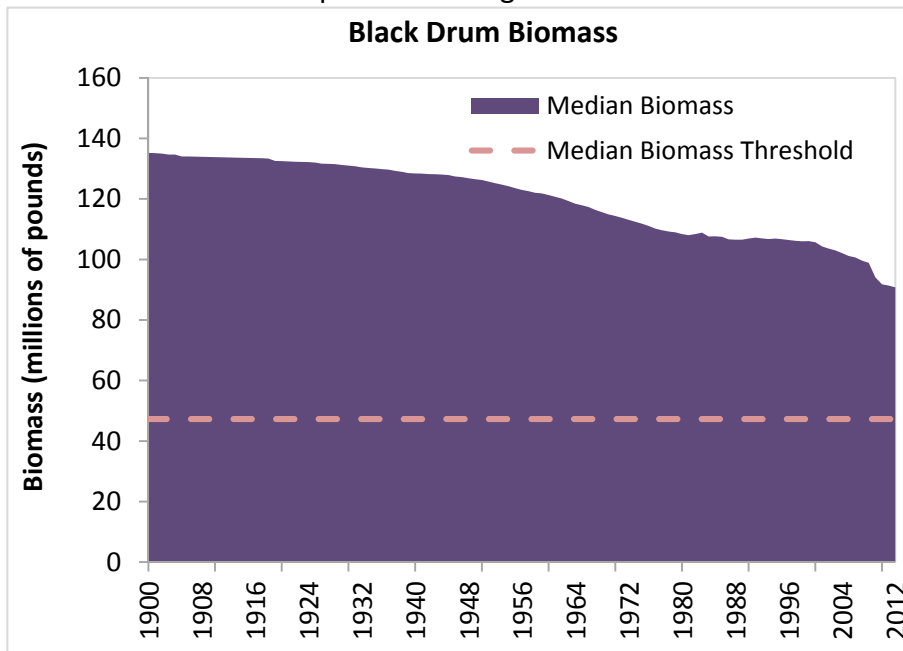
**SOUTH ATLANTIC STATE/FEDERAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

***Press Release***

**Black Drum Benchmark Assessment Finds Resource Not Overfished and Overfishing Not Occurring**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s South Atlantic State/Federal Management Board approved the 2015 Black Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use. Based on the

assessment results, black drum is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. Median biomass was estimated to have declined slowly and steadily from 135.2 million pounds in 1900 to 90.78 million pounds in 2012, though the median biomass estimate in 2012 is still well above the median biomass that produces maximum sustainable yield ( $B_{MSY}$ ; 47.26 million pounds). The median maximum sustainable yield (MSY) estimate is 2.12 million pounds and provides an annual catch target that can be used to sustainably manage the fishery. The median



overfishing limit (OFL), which provides a catch threshold indicating when overfishing is occurring, is estimated to be 4.12 million pounds.

Black drum are a data-poor species. Their rarity and migratory patterns lead to highly variable levels of encounter in state surveys and fisheries. Further, limited size composition data has been collected, making the use of age-structured models unreliable. For these reasons, data-poor, catch-based modeling methods were used for the assessment. These models estimate reference points based on historical catch data and life history information.

Three modeling methods were evaluated to estimate catch reference points for assessing population health such as MSY and OFL. These methods included Depletion-Corrected Average Catch, Catch-MSY, and Depletion-Based Stock Reduction analysis (DB-SRA). These methods have been evaluated against data-rich assessments and are considered robust given inputs and assumptions are correct. DB-SRA was selected as the preferred method based on the underlying configuration of the methods, the required inputs, and performance of the methods evaluated through sensitivity analysis and simulated projections.

The Black Drum Stock Assessment Subcommittee noted the black drum stock assessment would be improved by applying a more complex, data-rich assessment method such as a statistical catch-at-age model. Data limitations that need to be addressed to successfully make this transition are biological sampling (length and age) of recreational and commercial fisheries and a fishery-independent survey tracking abundance and the age structure of the mature stock. Additionally, information about fish discarded in commercial fisheries and movement of fish would improve the assessment.

Under the Black Drum Fishery Management Plan (FMP), which was approved in 2013, states were required to implement a maximum possession limit and minimum size limit (of at least 12 inches) by January 1, 2014, with an additional increase of the minimum size limit to at least 14 inches required by January 1, 2016. The FMP also includes a management framework to adaptively respond to future concerns or changes in the fishery or population. Given the assessment findings, the Board choose to not make any additional changes to the management program at this time.

A more detailed description of the stock assessment results is available on the Commission's website at [http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d3a0462015BlackDrumAssessmentOverview\\_Feb2015.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/54d3a0462015BlackDrumAssessmentOverview_Feb2015.pdf). The final assessment and peer review reports will be posted to the Commission website the week of February 9<sup>th</sup>, [www.asmfc.org](http://www.asmfc.org), on the Black Drum webpage. For more information on the Stock Assessment, please contact Jeff Kipp, Stock Assessment Scientist, at [jkipp@asmfc.org](mailto:jkipp@asmfc.org); and for more information on black drum management, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, FMP Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org).

###

PR15-05

### ***Meeting Summary***

The South Atlantic State/Federal Management Board met to review a number of items including the Black Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report, an update on southern flounder management, and the recent publication of Amendment 20B to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan (FMP).



Dr. Daniel provided an overview on a recent southern flounder stock assessment conducted by North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries (NC DMF). Southern flounder range from Virginia through the Gulf of Mexico, seasonally migrating from coastal estuaries offshore to the continental shelf to spawn in the fall through winter. Southern flounder are understood to be single stock in the South Atlantic from Virginia to Florida based on tagging studies from NC DMF (1980s-1990s) and state Sea Grant programs (2000s). Additionally, genetics research have shown that stock mixing may be occurring in the South Atlantic, further highlighting the migratory nature of the resource, not only nearshore to offshore, but also from north to south. In terms of harvest and landings, Virginia to Florida recreationally harvest southern flounder, and a significant commercial inshore fishery is prosecuted from in North Carolina and Florida. Currently, Virginia through Florida manage southern flounder through individual state by state FMPs. The NC DMF stock assessment indicated there has been decadal decline in indices of abundance, as well as a declining trend in North Carolina commercial landings. Due to significant emigration of the resource out of the North Carolina coastal estuarine system, the state-level stock assessment was rejected by the peer review panel. To address management and abundance concerns moving forward, the Board discussed ways to improve the exchange of data and cooperation between the South Atlantic states of Virginia to Florida to improve interstate management and move toward the development of a regional stock assessment. The Board did not move forward with initiating a new ASMFC FMP or stock assessment.

The Board was briefed on Amendment 20B to the SAFMC Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species FMP. Amendment 20B was published on January 27, 2015 and stipulates changes to the Atlantic Spanish mackerel commercial quota, creating two new subzones on the Atlantic coast (Northern subzone: New York/Connecticut/Rhode Island to the North Carolina/South Carolina border; and Southern subzone: North Carolina/South Carolina border south to the Florida Miami-Dade County line). Amendment 20B was initiated to address concerns that the previous Atlantic commercial quota could be filled by fishermen in one state before fish are available to fishermen in other states. Approximately 19.9% of the coastwide annual catch limit/quota will be allocated to the Northern subzone, with the remaining 80.1% allocated to the Southern subzone. Quota for each of the new subzones can be transferred between zones, with consent from the states in each zone. NOAA Fisheries will monitor the commercial quotas separately by zone, and close federal waters in each zone when the respective quota is met or expected to be met. Amendment 20B will take effect on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. The Board decided to not take any action in response to the Amendment 20B at this time.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

### ***Motions***

**Move to approve the Black Drum stock assessment and peer review report for management use.**

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Grist. Motion carries.



## **SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2015)**

### ***Press Release***

### **ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board Continues Summer Flounder Recreational Regional Management for 2015 & Approves State Plans for 2015 Recreational Black Sea Bass & Scup Fisheries**

Alexandria, VA –The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXVI to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, continuing adaptive regional management for the 2015 recreational summer flounder fisheries. The approved regions are Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. The Addendum provides the option for the Board to extend the adaptive regional management approach into 2016 through Board action.

Addendum XXVI was initiated to consider a continuation of regional management approved in Addendum XXV. Both addenda address concern that summer flounder management measures under state-by-state conservation equivalency were not providing recreational fishermen along the coast with equitable harvest opportunities to the resource. The adaptive regional management approach is designed to respond to changes in resource availability and effort in the fishery. The Board decided to continue 2014 management measures for the 2015 fishing season.

For black sea bass, the Board approved the methodologies used by the states of Massachusetts through New Jersey to establish their minimum size, bag limits, and season lengths to achieve a 33% reduction in the 2015 recreational harvest levels from the 2014 harvest level. The 33% reduction is required in order to achieve but not exceed that 2015 recreational harvest limit.

For scup, the Board approved the maintenance of 2014 recreational management measures for the 2015 fishing season, with the exception of Connecticut which will increase its size and possession limit to be consistent with the other states’ private and for-hire fisheries. States will finalize their regulations over the next couple of weeks for the recreational summer flounder, black sea bass, and scup fisheries.

Addendum XXVI will be available on the Commission website by the end of February. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

###

PR15-06

### ***Motions***

#### **Move to approve Option 2 Adaptive Regional Management as the management program under Addendum XXVI.**

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion passes.

#### **Move to approve regional option 1, status quo.**

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion passes (Roll Call: In favor – MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC; Opposed – NJ; Abstentions – USFWS, NMFS).

**Move to approve Option 2 under Section 3.1.1 Timeframe for Summer Flounder Measures.**

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion carries.

**Move to approve Addendum XXVI as modified today.**

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck. Motion passes (Roll Call: In favor – MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC; Opposed – NJ; Abstentions – USFWS, NMFS).

**Move to approve the black sea bass proposals and methodologies for use in 2015 management as approved by the technical committee.**

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries (Roll Call: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC; Opposed – NJ; Abstentions – NY, USFWS, NMFS).

**Move to approve Connecticut’s reduction in minimum size (10”) and increase in bag limit to 30 fish to be consistent with the states of Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York for 2015.**

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Roll call vote; motion carries without objection.

**ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2015)**

*Press Release*

**ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board  
Approves State Implementation Plans to Reduce Harvest**

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved Addendum IV implementation plans and conservation equivalency proposals for all the states and jurisdictions. The implementation plans, which were reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee, contain state-specific management options that achieve a 25% reduction in harvest from 2013 levels for the coastal fishery and 20.5% reduction in harvest from 2012 levels for the Chesapeake Bay fishery. Given the wide range of options being considered, the Board recommended neighboring states and jurisdictions work together to implement consistent management measures, especially on shared water bodies. This recommendation was also supported by the Commission’s Law Enforcement Committee. Additionally, the Board reminded states there is greater certainty in the percent reductions of simple management measures (i.e., changes in bag or size limits) relative to more complex measures (e.g., slot/trophy fish and mode-specific options).

The Board also tasked the Technical Committee with expanding the exploration of stock-specific reference points to include the other producer areas, such as the Delaware Bay and the Hudson River stocks, in addition to the Chesapeake Bay. The Board will review progress on the stock-specific reference points at its Spring Meeting in May.

States and jurisdictions must have final measures for implementing Addendum IV in place by the beginning of their 2015 fishing seasons. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mwaine@asmfc.org](mailto:mwaine@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

###

PR15-08

## ***Motions***

### **Main Motion**

**Move to approve all state implementation plans including any conservation equivalency proposals for both Recreational and Commercial fisheries submitted to and approved by the Technical Committee for the states and jurisdictions of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, and North Carolina.**

Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion amended.

### **Motion to Amend**

**Move to amend the motion to include an additional option for Maryland and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission for a spring trophy fishery, pending approval by the TC, of one fish at 28-36" or one fish over 40".**

Motion made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. Gary. Motion carries unanimously.

### **Main Motion as Amended**

**Move to approve all state implementation plans including any conservation equivalency proposals for both Recreational and Commercial fisheries submitted to and approved by the Technical Committee for the states and jurisdictions of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, and North Carolina and to include an additional option for Maryland and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission for a spring trophy fishery, pending approval by the TC, of one fish at 28-36" or one fish over 40".**

Roll call vote; motion passes unanimously.

## **TAUTOG MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2015)**

### ***Meeting Summary***

The Tautog Management Board accepted the 2015 Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use. Unlike previous assessments, which assessed the stock on a coastwide basis, the 2015 assessment evaluated stock status regionally to reflect differences in life history information and exploitation patterns. The stock assessment is the most comprehensive to date, and provides multiple alternatives for how tautog can be managed regionally.

The assessment presents a preferred three-unit stock structure: Southern New England (Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut), Mid-Atlantic (New York/New Jersey), and DelMarVa (Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia). In addition, the assessment provides an alternative three-region definition where Connecticut is part of the Mid-Atlantic region, and a two-region definition with a Northern stock (MA through NY) and a Southern stock (NJ through NC). The assessment proposed new biomass and fishing mortality reference points for all regional stock structures as alternatives for management use.

Upon acceptance of the assessment and peer review, the Board tasked the Tautog Technical Committee to continue exploring reference points for all possible stock unit definitions. This analysis will be presented to the Board at the Commission's Spring Meeting at which time the Board will consider next steps for management.

A press release and stock assessment overview on the details of the benchmark assessment will be released by February 10<sup>th</sup>. For more information, please contact Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [myuen@asmfc.org](mailto:myuen@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

### **Motions**

**Move to accept the Tautog Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report for management use.**

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion passes (7 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 null).

### **Main Motion**

**Move to move forward with exploration of two regions, northern and southern, for tautog management.**

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Augustine.

### **Motion to Amend**

**Move to amend to add “with management measures in each region to end overfishing and rebuild overfished regions to target biomass levels.”**

Motion made by Dr. Pierce and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion fails (4 in favor, 4 opposed, 2 abstentions).

### **Main Motion**

**Move to move forward with exploration of two regions, northern and southern, for tautog management with management measures in each region to end overfishing and rebuild overfished regions to target biomass levels.**

### **Motion to Substitute**

**Move to substitute to develop an addendum with 3 regions, northern, southern, and DelMarVa, with management measures in each region to end overfishing and rebuild overfished regions to target biomass levels.**

Motion made by Dr. Pierce and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion tabled.

**Move to table motion until May meeting.**

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries (8 in favor, 2 abstentions).

**Move to approve the 2013 FMP report and *de minimis* status for Delaware and North Carolina for commercial fisheries for 2015.**

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion carries unanimously.

## **SHAD & RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2015)**

### ***Meeting Summary***

The Shad and River Herring Board reviewed state compliance and the FMP Review for the 2013 fishing season. The Board granted Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts *de minimis* status for shad, and New Hampshire and Massachusetts *de minimis* status for river herring. All of these states have been granted *de minimis* in the past. The Board approved New Hampshire's request to remove the monitoring requirement for the Taylor River. The Board also received updates on Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, New England Fishery Management Council and River Herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG) actions and progress. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mhawk@asmfc.org](mailto:mhawk@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

***Motions***

**Move to approve the 2014 FMP Review and *de minimis* status for shad for the states of Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts; and *de minimis* status for river herring for the states of New Hampshire and Massachusetts for the 2015 fishery.**

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion approved without objection.

**Move to approve the proposal from New Hampshire to discontinue monitoring on the Taylor River**

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion approved without objection

Dear Director Janet Coit,

Feb. 25, 2015

I attend my first workshop and public meeting February 16. I give 5 gold stars for this process from the lean Government initiative. Having the data available a week before the meeting and the workshop and public meeting together make a lot of sense. I like giving extra time to commit after the meeting which enables me to provide extra commit of this process. The Marine Fisheries Council will then meets and provide additional direction to the Director.

This structure makes a lot of sense and less confusion in moving to this process and is more inclusive of all Rhode Island Fishermen. I have one improvement. It's not the process but the venue. The workshop would function a lot smoother if it was located in one of the meeting room across the street in the coastal institute. This would foster more face to face discussion. The public hearing then take places at the Corless Auditorium. I would increase the workshop time addition ½ hour.

Thank you

Michael J Bucko  
155 Brackett Ave  
Tiverton RI 02878

**From:** [Peter Jenkins](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Tackle Shop Owner Perspective on Striper Regs  
**Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 6:03:54 AM

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Dear Director,

I want to commend you for the transparent process conducted by Bob Ballou and rest of the team at DEM. Through out the various public hearings, comments and ultimately the new workshop format I believe all involved felt that DEM wanted to hear their opinion. I know the Fisheries Management Counsel will be making a recommendation to you shortly and the ultimate decision rests with you. You have an awesome opportunity.

The licence buying citizens have been consistent throughout this process for the most conservative measures possible with the majority support Option 1.

There are approximately thirty tackle shops in Rhode Island and for their owners and employees a healthy striped bass fishery is vital. My shop is the largest and supports four full time year around jobs and a half dozen part timers. I spoke with over a dozen other owners and all supported Option 1.

All those I spoke with are aware of that a portion of the charter boat industry wants a different set of rules. Please recognize that a fundamental requirement of all small businesses is to adapt to changing market conditions and to provide an exemption to a portion of one user group that is detrimental to all the other small businesses involved is unfair.

Please consider the following reasons to support Option 1:

- The jobs created by tackle manufacturers and tackle shops are no less important than any other recreational fishing jobs
- From your experience with the "Lean Initiative" you recognize that conservation equivalence creates a second set of regs that mitigates the efficiency of limited enforcement resources and complicates data collection.
- Given the 50% likelihood of success and the documented decline the more conservative Option 1 is the responsible choice
- MA and CT are on record as selecting Option 1 creating regional consistency - a specific request of ASMFC
- Regional consistency will help reduce the out of state fishing pressure at Block Island. These boat plunder a RI resource and leave with no economic benefit to RI

Rhode island played a leading role in the last striped bass recovery and received national acclaim while creating an economic boom that benefited the entire region. Please choose Option 1 for the striped bass and the citizens of the Ocean State.

Respectfully,

--

Peter Jenkins  
Owner  
[The Saltwater Edge](#)



# Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council

3 Fort Wetherill Road Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835  
(401) 423-1920 Fax: (401) 423-1925

Panel Chair:  
Jeff Grant

Scientific Advisor:  
Dale Leavitt

DFW Staff:  
Jeff Mercer

Advisory Panel Members:

Commercial User Groups:

Aquaculture:  
*Primary:* Jeff Gardner  
*Alternate:* Bob Rheault

Bullrakers:  
*Primary:* David Ghigliotty  
*Alternate:* open  
*Primary:* Mike McGiveney  
*Alternate:* Bruce Eastman  
*Primary:* Robert Bercaw  
*Alternate:* James Logiodice  
*Primary:* Gerald Schey  
*Alternate:* open  
*Primary:* Owen Kelly  
*Alternate:* Martin McGiveney  
*Primary:* Donald Goebel  
*Alternate:* Michael Bradshaw  
*Primary:* William Cote  
*Alternate:* John Nolan

Tong:  
*Primary:* open  
*Alternate:* open

Diver:  
*Primary:* Bill Blank  
*Alternate:* Russell Blank

East Bay:  
*Primary:* Katie Eagan  
*Alternate:* open

Dealer:  
*Primary:* Bob Smith  
*Alternate:* open

Recreational User Group:  
*Primary:* John Vivari  
*Alternate:* open

## Meeting Notice

### Shellfish Advisory Panel

**Date: Wednesday March 4, 2015 @ 4:30**  
Fort Wetherill Marine Laboratory  
3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI

## MEETING AGENDA

1. New Lease Proposal
  - a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease: CRMC File # 2014-12-056, Pinheiro, Dutch Island Harbor, Jamestown.
2. Existing Lease Expansions
  - a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Expansion: CRMC File # 2015-01-043, Behan, Ninigret Pond, Charlestown.
  - b. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Expansion: CRMC File # 2015-01-051, Krause, Ninigret Pond, Charlestown.
3. Existing Lease Operational Plan Modification
  - a. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2013-04-057, Silkes, West passage, Jamestown.
  - b. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2011-02-049, Goerner, West passage, Jamestown.
  - c. Proposed Aquaculture Lease Modification: CRMC File # 2011-01-014, Salt Water Farms, LLC, Rhode Island Sound, Newport.

**All RIMFC Species Advisory Panel meetings are open to the public.**

For more information please contact Jeff Mercer at (401) 423-1937.



This is a letter from Capt. Andy Dangelo. I own and operate the charter boat MarideeII out of Pt. Judith, RI and have done so for the past 35+ years and have helped to support my family, my mates family, and my parents to some extent over that period of time. This is a full time business that runs from May until December. Even though it has been a successful business, regulations and the economy have given us some difficult times. We are trying to do all we can to keep not only my operation but the industry on the whole to continue to thrive.

I am writing you to ask for your support in fighting a trend that seems to be trying to limit us again. The striped bass, which makes up a majority of my business, is a species of concern at the moment. It is not a problem, but is a situation that needs watching. We have been asked to reduce the mortality by 25%. The recreational sector has asked for a 28 inch one fish per day limit. Through conservation equivalency the charter boats can meet the requirement with a two fish 32 inch per day limit. This action was approved by the board. We had a workshop and a public hearing on the bass and other species on 2/18/15. I attended this hearing and was deeply disturbed by the response that the recreational and the commercial sector attending had in relation to the striped bass. We (the for hire sector) were called everything from murderers to liars and more. We were told that we did not care about the resource and that all we cared about was the income we were getting from the trips. They also wanted to take away the fish for the captain and the mate. I like to eat striped bass, so does my 93 year old mother and my family. They are telling us that I can no longer have a bass to bring home unless I go back out and try and catch one. Not only is that ridiculous but also very expensive.

Do not think that this is based on biology or data, it is based solely on jealousy and not for use of a better word, hate. There seems to be a lot of bad feelings towards the for hire sector from everyone.

We keep the best data that they have for fish caught in RI from charter boats. We have to fill out a log every day with everything that we catch. We have exact hard data on every fish that come aboard our boats. If we fail to give this info to the NMFS they will not let us renew our permits. Some of us has been doing electronic recording along with a paper copy. We have also agreed to keep an electronic log for striped bass as we already do for tautog in RI.

As I said before striped bass stocks, I believe, are not in the "problem" category at the moment, they are only a species of concern and need to be watched. The data that the state has shows that the for hire industry catches only about 10% of the total recreational catch. This means that the recs are responsible for 90% of the mortality of a "concerned" species. Why does the for hire industry have to give up so much when the recreational sector is the problem?!

At the hearing I proposed 1 fish at 28 inches for the recreational sector and two fish at 32 inches, electronic logbooks, and (I am willing to give up one fish for the captain and mate) one fish over 32 inches for the captain and the mate.

I am asking for your support in helping to keep our industry viable. We bring a lot of money into the state of RI through fees, food, fuel, motels, etc. Lets not lose this because of pressure from the recreational sector. We need two striped bass to be able to compete with neighboring states.

We are not "murderers", if the species was in serious trouble we would be the first group to propose drastic change. We have an excellent year class from 2011 coming into the total biomass and this will help immensely. We need Two!

Thank you

Capt. Andy Dangelo

Maridee II Sportfishing Charters

Treasurer RI Party and Charter Boat Association

**From:** [Amber Hayden](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Fishing Regulation Change  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 7:00:04 PM

---

Hello Peter,

My family and I live in Massachusetts, but we often fish aboard charter boats in Rhode Island. We recently heard that RI is considering changing the Striped Bass regulation to 1 Striped Bass per person and we feel strongly that this would negatively affect our fishing experience in your state. If RI decides to move forward with this regulation change, my family and I will reconsider fishing in RI in the future and will be taking our business elsewhere.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind Regards,  
Amber Hayden

**From:** [fish.doc.1](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass regs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 11:55:30 AM

---

Peter ,  
Concerned recreational fisherman...  
1 fish @ 30 inches more exceptions  
Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE Smartphone

**From:** [al.passarelli](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass/fluke  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 12:25:26 PM

---

Mr. Duhamel, I am a member of RISSA and own a charter boat. I am an avid recreational fisherman and do only a handful of charters. I support changing the size limit from 28" to 32" for Bass. I also do not think it is important for captain and mate to take any fish since, like me, they have ample opportunities to fish our waters on their own time. As for Fluke, I see no reason to change the regulations. We have made changes in the past and seems to me, that we are doing a very good job with that species of fish. We can address this issue some other time in the future if it appears our quotas seem to show signs of breakage.

One last note, I would encourage collecting more data on how the Breeding habitat of the Striped Bass. It is my understanding that they begin to breed at 28 inches and the larger the fish, the more eggs they produce. For a long term solution, it would make sense to me that we somehow create some protection for fish over 40 inches. May one per day per boat, and I put out numbers these numbers as just an example. But going forward, I think something along those lines would be productive to protecting this species.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance and I thank you for your time on this matter.

Kindest regards,

Alfred J. Passarelli

**From:** [cfdf59@gmail.com](mailto:cfdf59@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass fishing  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 10:40:22 AM

---

I am upset to hear that the bass regulations might change from 2@28 to 1@32. I would reconsider charter fishing in rhode island if this regulation was changed to 2@32

Thank you  
Andrew Pflomm

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Andrew M. Raucci](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Outreach  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 2:37:27 PM

---

Good afternoon Mr. Duhamel

My name is Andrew Raucci and I am reaching out in support of proposed regulations for reduction in striped bass fishing. I am a long-time RI resident and a combat disabled veteran who loves fishing. I trust you to do what you think is best for the state with regards to the regulations. For years, I have tried to buy a RI multipurpose fishing license to no avail. I also have an application in for a restricted fin fishing license. It is my dream to fish for a living and I hope to one day soon fulfill that dream. If you have any ideas to augment my chances or hear of a multipurpose for sale, please let me know.

Respectfully

Andrew

Andrew M. Raucci  
310-980-6377

**From:** [G&S Cleaning - Bob Churchill](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 5:46:50 PM

---

Hello, I'm from Mass and I take fishing charters out of Pt Judy for striped bass. If the limit changes I may not.

*Bob Churchill*

G & S Cleaning Service, Inc.

508-230-7400

<http://gandscleaning.blogspot.com/>



**From:** [Bob Bob](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass regulations  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 9:29:30 PM

---

Hi Peter,

My name's Bob McKay. I regularly fish on charter boats out of Point Judith/Galilee, RI. I've heard there's consideration of limiting striped bass to one 28" fish this year. I believe that 2 fish at 32" is a more reasonable proposal, especially considering the cost of chartering a boat. I feel that the change to one fish would take the value out of chartering a boat and would lead me to find another local state to vacation to and fish in. I hope you will consider the significant impact these regulations could have on tourism and its effects on the RI charter fishing industry and all the surrounding local businesses that benefit from the business the fishing community brings. Please strongly consider the two fish at 32" proposal in place of the one fish limit. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,  
Bob

**From:** [Bill Murphy](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass regulation  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 8:36:50 AM

---

Dear Mr. Duhamel,

My name is **Captain Bill Murphy, Charter Captain** licensed in the state of Rhode Island **and recreational angler**. I would like to take this opportunity to chime in on the proposed striped bass regulations.

**I believe that the only logical choice at this point in time would be 1 Striped Bass per day/per angler, at a minimum size of 28 inches for both recreational and commercial fishermen.**

The popularity of the Striped Bass along with it's commercial and black market value has put it's population in severe decline. I believe that the harvesting pressure on this gamefish, under current regulations, has proven that this species biomass can no longer be sustained under such harvesting pressures and that more stringent regulations are necessary.

Thank you for your consideration,

**Captain Bill Murphy**  
**Little Rhody Charters**  
401-368-7830  
[www.littlerhodycharters.com](http://www.littlerhodycharters.com)  
Licensed USCG 25 Ton Master  
Licensed Charter Captain State of Rhode Island

**From:** [barry.okun@us.pwc.com](mailto:barry.okun@us.pwc.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 RI Regulations on Striped Bass: Comment  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:33:23 AM

---

Hi Peter .

I am fishing resident of Charlestown, RI, and an avid surfcaster and kayak fisherman.

While fishing over 100 days per year, I observed not only a decline in the numbers of Striped Bass, I have observed the behaviors of both surfcaster and charter boat customers.

I see no reason that both fishermen would not satisfied with one healthy legal size Striper as opposed to two. Even to the casual observer, the slaughter of two egg bearing Stripers by each customer on all the boats off Block Island on any given day is preposterous.

Please support Option 1, One Fish per day for everyone.

Thanks for listening.

Warm regards,

Barry Okun

**Barry Okun**

PwC | Partner  
Office: +1 617 530 6495 | Mobile: +1 617 331 6467  
Email: [barry.okun@us.pwc.com](mailto:barry.okun@us.pwc.com)  
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP  
125 High Street Boston, MA 02110  
<http://www.pwc.com/us>

Thoughts don't need paper to take shape.

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**From:** [BRIAN P PATTERSON](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Rhode Island Striped Bass proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 10:07:33 AM

---

Mr. Duhamel,

My name is Brian Patterson, a charter boat captain located in Bristol RI and owner of Patterson Guide Service. I would like to express my opinion on the proposed Striped Bass regulations for 2015. Ideally, I would like it if CT, RI and MA all had the same regulations which I know is hard since the decision is left up to each state. What I would like to do is propose the following: If any state chooses to only harvest 1 fish per angler regardless of the way they catch it (rec or for hire), then the other states should follow suit.

I have corrected my stance on this issue after reviewing the proposals of our adjacent states and would like to see one fish per person at 32 inches until the stock replenishes itself.

Thank you of your time,

Capt. Brian Patterson  
Patterson Guide Service

**From:** [Robert Rabiner](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Conservation  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 11:25:56 AM

---

Attention:

Director of RI DEM Janet Coit  
RI Peter Duhamel

2015 Striped Bass Regulations

I would like to voice my strong support towards saving the Striped Bass and recommend that you and your offices establish a unilateral limit of **One ( 1) fish greater than 28 inches for all of recreational fisherman** starting with the 2015 season.

We are on the cusp of yet again losing this valuable fish due to reckless overfishing and we must do something to save them.

I strongly request that you and your offices enact this important conservation effort towards preserving the striped bass.

PLEASE DO THE RIGHT THING

**Bob Rabiner**

Robert A. Rabiner

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<http://illuminoss.com>

*IlluminOss Medical*  
993 Waterman Ave  
East Providence, RI  
02914

401-714-0008 x 207 (o)  
978-815-3468 (m)  
401-714-0009 (f)

[rrabiner@illuminoss.com](mailto:rrabiner@illuminoss.com)  
[rrabiner@mac.com](mailto:rrabiner@mac.com)

**From:** [Clark Family](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 1:18:43 PM

---

Hello,

I am a Rhode Island homeowner in Charlestown. I believe we need to take a conservative approach to saving the striped bass. I would vote for and recommend that all recreational fisherman should be only able to take one fish over 28 inches. More specifically, chartered boats should not be allowed to take more than one fish. We need to save this valuable resource. Please help us in doing so. Thanks, Cory Clark

**From:** [Charlie Donilon Snappa Charters](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 1:13:32 AM

---

Peter,

For the past 44 years I have been in the charter boat business. I own and operate the charter boat Snappa out of Galilee, RI. I attended the public hearing on Monday night and voiced my opinion on the bass proposal. I went against the vote of the RI Party and Charter Boat Association even though I am a member.

I would like to see a 1 fish / person bag limit with no fish for the captain and mate. I say this for a number of reasons. First, I have seen the bass population drop dramatically over the last few years. It is my intention to stay in the charter business a few more years but if things keep going downhill as they have been, the future doesn't look that bright. If I want an occasional bass for my own consumption, most of my customers would be willing to give me a fillet if I asked for it. If the option of 1 or 2 fish for the captain and mate is approved you should pay attention to what I am about to say. Being in the business for as long as I have, I have seen some of the laws abused by some charter captains. Most recently I have seen one particular charter boat carry a 7<sup>th</sup> person (which is illegal). He claims that the 7<sup>th</sup> passenger is a mate in training and is allowed to take 2 extra bass for him. On other occasions this captain has taken his 3 grandchildren aboard and taken 6 additional bass for them. The law allows him at the present time to also take 2 fish for the captain and 2 fish for the mate. On occasion this 6 passenger charter boat takes 14 fish for the 7 passengers, 6 fish for the three grandchildren, 2 fish for the mate, and 2 fish for the captain for a total of 24 striped bass. It's absurd but it is happening.

If the option of 1 or 2 fish is considered for the captain and mate, I truly believe you should eliminate any fish for the mates or any extra people aboard. If the captain is allowed 1 or 2 fish, it should be for only 1 captain as some mates are also licensed as a captain. To keep things simple, one fish for the entire crew should be sufficient. The captain and mate are not going to be eating fish 7 days a week.

In the late 70's and early 80's we almost lost the bass completely. DEM stepped in and regulated the species to save them. The two fish / person was something we learned to live with. Now with a greater boating population and increased technology, the pressure on the bass is reaching its breaking point once again. If DEM is there to do what is right for the fish and not for the fisherman, you should err on the side of caution to protect this species by lowering the bag limits for both the charter clients and the crew.

Thank you for your consideration.

Charles Donilon  
snappacharters@cox.net  
www.snappacharters.com  
401-782-4040





DEPUTY CHIEF GIBSON;

My name is Charlie Gregory; I am a Rhode Island resident and recreational fisherman for over forty years. I am a strictly recreational angler, I fish only for my own personal recreation. I want you to know that I am **TOTALLY OPPOSED TO ALLOWING THE RHODE ISLAND FOR HIRE SECTOR TO HAVE A TWO FISH BAG LIMIT FOR STRIPED BASS** under any circumstance. I support this position for three reasons:

First, the intent of the new Striped Bass regulations is to reverse the trend of decreasing striped bass stocks. Allowing charter and party boat operators to kill more fish is counter intuitive: killing more fish insures that there will be less fish to spawn and make more bass. Additionally, giving those who have greater skill in taking more and larger striped bass (charter captains: professional fisherman are on the water more, and have superior skills than the average angler) will result in not only the loss of more bass but the larger fish that are more fertile than smaller bass. From a strictly Rhode Island view point it makes no sense to allow the for hire sector to have a two fish per angler bag limit.

Secondly, from a coast wide perspective increasing the for hire bag limit in our state, will have negative effects on rebuilding striper stocks up and down the east coast. Other state fishery managers have felt and will be compelled to petition for a two fish bag limit to remain competitive with the RI for hire sector. This is an issue of particular concern around block island. Block Island has over the last several seasons, has been one of the last places where consistent striper fishing could be found. Boats from Connecticut, Massachusetts and especially New York have been exploiting what's left of the fishery. Out of state Boats like the party boat Viking Star travel to Montauk to Block twice a day, taking obscene numbers of large bass, will eventually decimate that fishery and eliminate more bass from spawning. On a side note; these out of state fisherman pay no RI taxes, do not stimulate our economy and deplete a diminishing state resource. Allowing the RI for Hire sector would result in more dead fish that will be needed to rebuild bass stocks.

Lastly, we had this discussion before. There were meetings up and down the coast last fall in regard to new regulations intended to increase the striped bass population. I went to the first meeting that was held in Bourne Mass and I went to the RI meeting held at URI. At both meetings there was a majority of attendees that supported a one fish bag limit and length of 32" or 34". There were a few for hires that complained that this would hurt their business so the majority dropped their support of a single fish at 32" or 34" to one fish at 28". Most of the people in the meetings didn't feel like they got all they wanted but they seemed satisfied. Additionally, support of a bag limit of one fish at 28" is what a majority of individuals who spoke at the meetings or wrote letters supported as indicated by the record

kept by the marine fisheries commission. For a special interest group like the RI for hire sector to attempt to get special rules is unconscionable. **THE MESSAGE FROM THE MAJORITY OF RECREATIONAL ANGLERS IN RHODE ISLAND AND UP AND DOWN THE STRIPER COAST IS CRYSTAL CLEAR: ONE FISH AT 28 INCHES FOR ALL RECREATIONAL FISHERMAN.** Were those meetings last fall just for show?

Please do what's good for the striped bass. **Please keep the RI recreational bag limit at one at 28.** This will kill less bass in RI and not force other states to change their bag limits to remain competitive with the RI for hire sector. Lastly, the vast majority of anglers have expressed their support of a one fish bag limit as indicated by the comments letters and emails in regard to this issue. Don't let a powerful pressure group violate the desires of the majority. Allowing more bass to be "harvested" will not reverse the decreasing population of the Atlantic striped bass.

Thanks for letting me express my position. Striped bass fishing from the surf and my kayak is my passion. This passion is the reason I live where I do. It's who I am. When I see people at work or in town they don't ask me about work or my family they ask "how's the fishing" and they mean STRIPED BASS. I love my wife, family and friends dearly, but bass fishing is what makes me whole. Please don't let me and a majority of recreational anglers in RI, and along the striper coast down.



**CHARLES GREGORY**

PO BOX 1022 (37 GRANGE AVE)

LITTLE COMPTON RI 02837

TEL 401-635-4649

EMAIL [dannyplug1@aol.com](mailto:dannyplug1@aol.com)

**From:** [Grundel, Christian](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Striped Bass Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 11:05:11 AM

---

Peter;

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting, but wanted to write to you and express my support for option 1 ( 1 fish at 28 inches across the board ). Please take this into consideration in your decision making process.

**Christian Grundel**, CFP®

Financial Services Representative  
Investment Advisor Representative  
Barnum Financial Group  
Part of the MetLife Premier Client Group  
200 Crossings Blvd., Suite 200  
Warwick, RI 02886  
Direct Line: 401-243-8855  
Email: [cgrundel@metlife.com](mailto:cgrundel@metlife.com)  
[www.christiangrundel.metlife.com](http://www.christiangrundel.metlife.com)

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**From:** [chad hart](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** charter fishing in RI  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 11:37:23 AM

---

Hello peter,

I am writing to you because I heard they want to change the charter quota of 2 bass at 28in to 1 at 32in. That's very upsetting news for my friends and I who go charter fishing at least twice a year if not more. We love to fish local RI waters, we grew up here. If the quota is changed we would have to leave RI waters, and boats to fish elsewhere. However we do not want to do this so please consider not changing the quota to 1 at 32in. Thank you please here our voices

Thank you Chad Hart

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**From:** [Hongc69](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Proposed Limits  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 7:36:17 PM

---

I would like express my concerns as an avid Striped Bass fisherman. I spend a significant amount of money every year to not only go on 5-6 charters with family and friends but also reserve hotel rooms and dine at local restaurants etc. I have paid for charter trips to fish block island sound for over 10 years.

Myself along with friends/family are out of state and we all fish for one primary purpose, which is to stock our freezers full of striper fillets. Should this new proposal go thru and we are limited to only one fish at 28 inches, I would no longer come to RI to charter a boat and would drastically reduce the amount of times we vacation and spend in RI.

Thank you for hearing me out.

Regards

Chris

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Chris Keen](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Option 1: Only One Fish Greater than 28 Inches for all recreational fisherman  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 4:16:28 PM

---

Janet/Peter – I am writing you to let you know that I **adamantly support Option 1: One fish greater than 28 inches for ALL recreational fish. I have been fishing for striped bass since I was 10 years old and am a big proponent of catch & release or keeping only what is absolutely necessary.**

In the past 5 years, I have kept a log and I can tell you several things:

1. Each year the number of fish I have caught has gone down by at least 20%
2. I spend significantly less money on fishing equipment (new rods, reels) that I used to purchase from my local shop since my gear never gets tested out since I am not catching many fish – this is bad for small businesses
3. I have been going to Block Island to fish from shore for the last 3 years and this past year it was so bad that we opted to hit the bars on several occasions instead of fishing.

**I believe Option 1 is THE only option and will have the greatest chance for a revival of Striped Bass.**

Thanks,

**Chris Keen** | Account Manager | [Manhattan Software, A Trimble Company](#)    
Office: 508-381-5895 | Mobile: 484-888-6762 | [ckeen@manhattansoftware.com](mailto:ckeen@manhattansoftware.com)

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From: [Christopher McNally](#)  
To: [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#); [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
Subject: **Striper harvest**  
Date: Monday, February 23, 2015 9:49:46 AM

---

Dear Peter and Janet,

**Kindly accept this opinion in favour of a catch and release policy for RI Striped bass.**

My undergraduate degree is in Marine biology, specifically ichthyology, which course of study I chose due to my near fanatical interest in light tackle fishing. I spent close to ten years practicing the art and science of Marine biology, teaching and sharing my passion for the marine environment while teaching for St. George's school in Newport RI. The focus of my research and teaching centered on Sea turtle biology and pelagic shark conservation. I have seen first hand how good sound conservation works and when mismanaged or misguided how it DOES fail.

While studying in Florida it was with great enthusiasm that I applauded the ban on inshore gill-netting. The decision in Florida met with steep resistance from the commercial sector but the science and conservation ethic won the day and the ban passed. The rebound in the near shore fisheries was dramatic, and Florida should be, and has been commended for taking a strong position to preserve and protect with a long term perspective. We face a similar opportunity here in RI.

As a practicing attorney with a focus on Ocean and Coastal law, I understand how many different forces interact when it comes to managing resources as precious as the striped bass.

You both hold lofty and challenging positions and are, no doubt, bombarded with emails and letters suggesting what the "right" course of action should be.

I hope that you can look at the bigger picture and take the sometimes more difficult position of preserving fish stocks in the long term. **Please look beyond the noise of the commercial and segments of the charter fleet that are asking for less restrictive regulations, see the a bigger picture, and do what you know is the right thing for the fishery, the fishing economy, the environment and our future.** RI can set the bar high and be an example to our neighboring states by doing the right thing and setting restrictive take limits in all sectors and prevent the fishery from slipping into near ruin again.

Best,

**Christopher J. McNally, Esq.**

**From:** [Christian Vye](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass: 1 fish  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 3:41:15 PM

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I support the 1 fish at 28" option. I do not support the multi-fish options.



**From:** [Charlie Whitehouse](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Stripers  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 2:25:45 PM

---

Dear Peter,

I am emailing to "vote" for option 1 in the striper debate. One fish, 28" minimum.  
At least for a few years to see how the fishery responds!

Sincerely,

Charlie Whitehouse  
Newport, R.I.

**From:** [Dave Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striper Conservation  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 11:50:28 PM

---

Hello Janet and Peter,

I just wanted to drop you a quick note, I am in full support of imposing a 1 fish at 28" or greater for all recreational fishermen, to be clear, that WOULD include the for hire fleet (charter captains etc.) The striped bass is in a very precarious position right now--and we've proven once that we CAN fish them to the brink of obliteration, we should not allow this to happen again. Rhode Island's role in this is particularly important because we have, housed within our borders, one of the last strongholds of heavy breeder bass--these are the trophies being hauled in by the boatload off of the coast of Block Island. Allowing patrons of the for hire fleet to take two per person flies in the face of a measure that has only been given a 50% chance of working. The distinction between 28 and 32 inches is irrelevant, nobody is catching fish under 36 inches out at Block Island and most of these fish measure more than 45 inches. In other words, these regulations will have no effect if they are allowed to pass. Charter Captains are not the only people who rely on the striped bass to make up their livelihood. There are dozens of tackle shops who employ hundreds of citizens, there are tackle manufacturers, boat builders, rental property owners and fishing writers (like myself) that rely on the annual arrival of these fish to keep the piggy bank jingling. **It would be a bad message to send if we made special regulations for one user group that allowed them to strangle the other user groups that also rely on this resource.** Our neighboring states are recommending a one fish limit, law enforcement is just about begging for universal regulations--make the right decision. This has gone on too long and we're already at a point where it's going to take at least a decade for things to come back to something like what it was. Two fish bag limits are not sustainable and if we don't do what's necessary to right that wrong--the next crash is going to be blood on our hands, you have the power to stop it. Please do what's right.

**Dave Anderson**  
Outdoor Writer  
Tiverton, RI

**From:** [Dietrich, Donald P.](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 2015 striped bass regs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 5:02:37 PM

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Regarding the proposed 2015 striper reg's: I fish on Rhode Island charter boats numerous times each season. If the proposed striper reg's are passed I will be forced to consider fishing elsewhere. It is not fair to the charter captains or the recreational fishermen who also like to take a few meals home. Better to impose harsher regulations on commercial fishermen who kill millions of pounds of fish annually as by-catch.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Don Dietrich, West Nyack, NY

**From:** [davgor5@verizon.net](mailto:davgor5@verizon.net)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass regs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 5:18:54 PM

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Hi there, I'm Dave Gordon, **lifetime resident, long time fisherman**. I would **support option one** for our management tool. this way everyone would be treated equally. Would this also include the catch of charter captains towards their party totals? the biggest problem we have is the number of fishermen at the block island, commercial, charter and recreational. both from RI and neighboring states. They put a serious hurt on the populations that pass that way. Is there anything that can be done towards curtailing the sale of bass? That seems to be a big part of the problem. Thanks for your time, **Dave Gordon**

**From:** [Don Ingram](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** New England striped Bass regs for charters  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 7:20:51 PM

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Greetings,

I am writing this email due to news I recently was made aware of. This is in regards to the charter boats only being able to keep one Striped bass. Me and my friends look forward every year to fishing for striped bass in the R I waters. We will not be coming this year if we can only keep 1 bass. Especially if we can go to New Jersey, which is closer and have the shot at 2 bass. We have been fishing in Rhode Island for over 20 years. Give the charters 2 fish. And adjust the size accordingly.

Respectfully,

Donald W. Ingram

A recreational fishermen who charter fishes.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Dan Jennings](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Charter Boat fishing cap  
**Date:** Saturday, February 21, 2015 10:41:03 AM

---

Hello Peter,

My name is Dan and I have a concern with the possible cap on Charter boat fishing catches. I understand the need to preserve fish in the ocean but the thrill of eating and sharing a catch would be compromised. The desire to charter a boat (in my mind) would be greatly decreased. Please reconsider this proposal and help keep charter fishing a part of my families life.

Thank you,

Dan Jennings

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [David](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 Striped bass Regs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 8:09:33 AM

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Good Morning Mr Duhamel ,

My name is David Morton , i own and operate Beavertail Rod And Reel located here in North Kingstown Ri. I am also an avid Recreational fisherman from both boat and shore. I am a member of the Ri Saltwater Anglers association as well as the Narragansett Surfcasters . I was unable to attend the public meeting the other night but wanted to at least explain my point of view regarding the striped bass situation . I would like to 1 st speak as a business owner whose business is affected by what decisions get made , then as a fisherman . My point of view as an owner of a business is this , there are alot of fishermen and women who i have personally talked to and canvased on my own in everyday conversation that are concerned about what clout there opinion would have in this whole process i am sure the lack of attendance at the meeting from the recreational group is partly due to this , it is hard to convince these fishermen that what they say and do will actually make a difference , i believe there are a lot of reasons for this which i will not get into here and now . I also know that individuals like your self and the council will never make everyone happy . as a business owner that caters to both recreational as well as charter clients i feel there needs to be a balance, we all know there is a huge poaching problem in our area waters this to me is a huge issue that does not seem to get addressed that over time this has adversely affected the striped bass fisheries . I feel that the potential of what ever decisions are made will eventually affect my business but at he same time feel it will change my business in a way that more fishermen will target other species that are more available . as me talking as an avid fisherman , i truly believe we need to drop down to the 1 fish at 28 for everyone ! I personally have not taken a striped bass in 15 years all my fish are released lively and in good shape . I personally do not see the need to take more than 1 fish considering the issue we are having , this is my opinion. Next i cannot see that allowing the charter boats to take 2 fish is really going to help us out , i see pictures of the decks of charter boats filled with dead bass , this makes me sick ! We have a population problem ! I understand there lively hood is affected but would it not be better to educate there clients on why this is important that these fish are released ? I strongly feel we all need to recognize there is a population problem that needs to be fixed and fixed now , so if it means that one group has to make concessions then that is the way it should be . I will always support the 1 fish rule even if the stocks return and i was to keep fish . Lastly there is a lot of times i see small fish being caught and mishandled being thrown in the air and just stupid releases these are our future fish there is clearly a lack of education on how to treat these fish while fighting them and releasing them . Thank you for all you are doing to help restore our Striped Bass stocks , as i stated before i am believe the 1 fish at 28 is our only option for all parties to help bring this

stock back to a strong level .

Thank you for your time

**David Morton**

Beavertail Rod and Reel

(401) 215-5062

[beavertailrodandreel@live.com](mailto:beavertailrodandreel@live.com)

**[www.beavertailrodandreel.com](http://www.beavertailrodandreel.com)**



**From:** [Dave Pollack](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Recreational Striped Bass Management - a vote for Option One  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 8:06:18 AM

---

Mr. Duhamel, at last night's public hearing I voiced support for Option 2, two fish per angler on charter of for hire boats, none for the captain or mate. Then I heard the arguments in support of Option1, a straight one fish limit for all, and those arguments changed my mind.

The striped bass fishery is in trouble, with recreational shore bound anglers having noticed the most significant decline over the past several years. I cannot believe that any significant portion of anglers interested in the sport of striped bass fishing will refuse to venture out on a party or charter trip simply because he or she can bring home only one fish instead of two. And if the party and charter boats continue to account for the loss of a significant portion of our population of breeding fish, those angler will soon be refusing to venture out because there will be little chance of their bringing home even one fish.

**One fish limit for all.** Much easier to administer, and much reduced impact on the fish population.

**David Pollack**  
Wakefield, RI

**From:** [Dennis Rebelo](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Cliff Richer](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Reg reductions  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 6:51:15 AM

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Reg. Reductions-

> **Narragansett Surfcasters**

>> Mr. Duhamel,

>>

>> I am writing to you today on behalf of the Narragansett Surfcasters Fishing Club with regards to

>> the proposed ASMFC regulation reductions for STRIPED BASS conservation in Rhode Island.

>> We are a group of (107) members of shore bound recreational anglers. At our February 17, 2015

>> monthly meeting we discussed with the membership the two proposals options at hand:

>>

>> OPTION #1

>> 28" minimum size, one fish per day (applies to everyone)

>>

>> OPTION #2

>> - Individual recreational anglers: 28" minimum size, one fish per day

>> - For-Hire: two fish per angler, 32" minimum size

>>

>> After the discussion we took a vote from the members on which Option to support. **A unanimous vote**

>> **was cast by the entire membership to support OPTION #1 .**

>>

>> Our reasoning was the "rules" must be consistent, exact, and equal for all parties involved. No group,

>> whether it be the recreational shore angler or the For-Hire recreational angler, should have more rights than

>> the other. The recreational shore angler invests much more money into the R.I. economy through the purchases

>> of a R.I fishing license annually, fishing equipment, tackle, bait, kayaks, etc. than the For-Hire recreational anglers.

>> The For-Hire recreational angler basically charters a boat, doesn't purchase a R.I. fishing license, tackle, or bait which

>> is basically supplied by the For-Hire boat captain. Because of the above mentioned, the recreational angler should

>> not be singled out as the sole group to practice more conservation than the For-Hire group as stated in OPTION #2.

>>

>> We feel strongly as a group that conservation of STRIPED BASS IS NEEDED NOW and ALL MUST PARTICIPATE

>> in this conservation. Conservation should be conservation by all parties, not be "group specific". It should be practiced

>> unilaterally by all groups of anglers to achieve its goal.

>>

>> Thank you,  
>> Dennis Rebelo  
>> President, Narragansett Surfcasters Club

>>

>>

>>

>>

>>

**From:** [Dennis Valade](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 8:59:19 AM

---

I am a mate on a fishing charter in coastal Rhode Island and I would like to state my preference for the party boat / charter option allowing two fish at 32" with mandatory reporting.

Dennis Valade

Sent from my iPad

Newport County Salt Water Fishing Club, Inc.  
PO Box 2, Newport, Rhode Island 02840

February 18, 2015

RI Division of Marine Fisheries  
Attn: Mr. Peter Duhamel  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI

RI Division of Marine Fisheries,

At our January 13, 2015 regular meeting the membership (currently 125 members) of the Newport County Salt Water Fishing Club voted to support Option 1 – of the proposed 2015 RI Marine Fisheries Regulations for striped bass - 1 fish bag limit at 28" for all RI recreational fishermen.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Dennis Zambrotta, President

Support Option 1, 1 fish at 28 inches or greater for all Rhode Island recreational user groups because:

It has the highest probability of achieving the 25% mortality reduction;

It will result in fewer fish killed, especially larger breeding females;

It will be the easiest for environmental police to enforce.

By now most of you have heard the results of the ASMFC mid-winter meeting held February 5<sup>th</sup>. Although Rhode Island's two options were approved as passing ASMFCs technical muster, one of those options, a two fish bag at 32" for the for-hire industry came with some concerning caveats. The first caveat is the ASMFC Technical Committee declaring that split regulations between modes placed a greater likelihood that those regulations would NOT achieve the 25 % mortality reduction. This is further compounded if other states also enact split mode regulations or slot options. The second caveat was stated by the ASMFC Law Enforcement Committee that simple consistent measures between states that share waters would make law enforcement much more efficient than complex slot and/or split mode regulations.

In 2010 Rhode Island instituted a Recreational Saltwater Fishing License after a tough public relations battle. One of the touted benefits of this license by its proponents was that Rhode Island's recreational saltwater fishermen would become a legitimate constituency and have a powerful voice in fisheries management decisions. Using this new power RI recreational sport fishermen came out in force during the recent ASMFC Public Hearing process on the future management of striped bass. It was during this process that a majority of RI recreational fishermen overwhelmingly supported a one fish bag limit for striped bass. Newly licensed recreational fishermen in our neighboring states of Connecticut and Massachusetts also stated overwhelming support for a one fish bag limit for all modes. But there exists a license exemption for a special interest group – Rhode Island's party and charter boat industry. This exemption allows clients that fish on "for-hire" vessels a free ride by not having to purchase or even needing a RI recreational fishing license to fish. Why is Rhode Island even taking non-licensed for hire clients into consideration when discussing regulations? Allowing this special non-

licensed group of fishermen the privilege of a liberal two fish bag limit without supporting the RI license program becomes a further subsidization of the for-hire industry and is an insult to those Rhode Islander's forced to purchase a license. This is further magnified because RI waters are now under increasing pressure by not only RI recreational fishermen, but fishermen from Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts who can fish our waters because of license reciprocity. Rhode Island waters are a commodity and license reciprocity with bordering states is not a good deal for Rhode Island, its resources, or RI recreational fisherman.

The small state of Rhode Island once again has the opportunity to make a real difference for the future of striped bass management. Our state waters within 3 miles of our coastline hold what may be the last areas in the entire northeast where larger striped bass can be caught with any consistency. If Rhode Island stays at a conservative one fish bag limit for all recreational fishermen, including the for hire industry, it will have a compounded effect by also limiting fishermen from other states to one bass in possession while fishing in RI waters.

Please support a one fish bag limit for all of RI recreational fishermen, including those who fish within the for hire industry.

Thank you,

Dennis Zambrotta  
12 Florence Ave  
Newport RI 02840

**From:** [Babinski, Edward P.CIV NUWC NWPT](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass 1@28"  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 12:59:39 PM

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Dear Mr. Duhamel,

I am a recreational fisherman and also serve as Vice-President of the Newport County Salt Water Fishing Club. I am voicing my support for the new Rhode Island striped bass recreational limit to be one fish at 28" across all recreational and "for-hire" categories.

I'm sure you've heard all the arguments and rationalizations, so I'll be brief in voicing a serious concern. I've been to all the public meetings at URI and also monitor various social media websites discussing this issue. I think an important consideration for RIDEM should be the level of divisiveness and animosity that is generated by having different bag limits for the "for-hire" category. Polls and voting on this issue in recreational fishing associations and fishing clubs seem to be running around 90% to 100% of members favoring 1 fish @28".

Going forward, the negative kickback and animosity towards the "For-Hire" sector on this issue in Rhode island would be severe in the recreational fishing community if bag limits are not kept the same for everyone.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Edward Babinski  
9 Harvey Rd  
Middletown, RI 02842



**From:** [Erica Felins](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Stripe Bass: Option 1  
**Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 12:33:14 AM

---

Hello,  
I would like to support the new catch limit for stripe bass in Rhode Island!

I look forward to hearing the outcome.

Erica Felins  
Master's Student | Class of 2016  
Bren School of Environmental Science & Management  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
[570-656-2041](tel:570-656-2041)

**From:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Francesfit@aol.com](mailto:Francesfit@aol.com)  
**Subject:** February 16, 2015 hearing comment  
**Date:** Friday, February 06, 2015 3:38:47 PM

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**Pete, for the public hearing record:**

**From:** Francesfit [<mailto:francesfit@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 06, 2015 2:46 PM  
**To:** McNamee, Jason (DEM)  
**Subject:** Re: [Rimarinefisheries] Marine Fisheries Workshop and Public Hearing presentations - February 16, 2015

Hello Jason

Thanks for the heads up with the tables and presentations. Sea bass is the problem. Is there any way we can have an option that would lower the bag limit to 2 fish in the early season and maybe 5 in the fall season and have a later start date, maybe July 15th or so. If there was a closure in the fall that was the same as the federal closure, this would also be a great help towards achieving the reductions needed. Vessels with federal permits are subject to the closure anyway. As you know some boats get around this by turning in the federal permit. If we stopped that practice and had the same fall closure, it may be enough to extend the season. I am not one to usually sound the alarm bell but the fall fishery is very important to the party boat sector. I wish I was able to attend the ASMFC meeting. It sounds like it was interesting to say the least. It almost sounds like politics are taking precedent over common sense and science.

Thanks in advance for what ever you can do.

Frank Blount

**From:** [photomaker22@gmail.com](mailto:photomaker22@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Poll in favor of for hire groups position on 2 bass @ 32"  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 2:26:42 PM

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I support the RI Charter & party boats position on a 2 bass per person limit. Thank you. Fred Gallagher

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [gbell](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: STRIPED BASS MINIMUM SIZE 36"", 1 FISH/PERSON/DAY  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 6:14:04 AM

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** gbell <[gannetgil@cox.net](mailto:gannetgil@cox.net)>  
**Date:** February 20, 2015 6:08:56 AM EST  
**To:** [peter.duhamel@dem.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.gov)  
**Cc:** Janet Coit <[janet.coit@dem.ri.gov](mailto:janet.coit@dem.ri.gov)>  
**Subject:** STRIPED BASS MINIMUM SIZE 36", 1 FISH/PERSON/DAY

Good Morning Peter,  
Please consider the following thoughts:

1. No matter what decision is made not every angler or group will be satisfied.
2. Let's get away from this 28" mentality.
3. Striped bass peak breeders are from 4 years of age (18") to 8 years of age (32").  
Why would 28" even be on the table?
4. A 36" minimum size would protect these valuable breeders.

THE LITTLEST STATE HAS A PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THE LEAD IN CONSERVATION AND SET AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHER ATLANTIC STATES TO LOOK UP TO IF WE HAVE THE FORTITUDE TO ENACT THIS CHANGE.

Thank you.

Gil Bell  
RISAA Member  
IGFA Member  
Weekapaug SurfCasters Member  
Charlestown, RI  
[gannetgil@cox.net](mailto:gannetgil@cox.net)  
401.315.2529

**From:** [Glendon Elliott](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass fishing regs.  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 8:57:18 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Janet,

We need to do all we can to protect **Striped Bass** in RI waters and in Atlantic Coast waters. As a lifetime recreational fisherman and RI resident, **I support regulations that would restrict the catch to one fish greater than 28 inches for all of recreational fisherman.** The logic behind this level of catch restriction is as follows:

- 1) Any two fish option complicates data collection and compromises already thin enforcement resources. These are two puzzle pieces that need to be tight given the odds.
- 2) **A charter boat is just another way for rec anglers to get to the fish and is no different than a kayak or a pair of waders. No need for separate rules.**
- 3) Since you fish under the regs of the state whose waters you are in the "two fish" option encourages out of state boats to motor to Block (arguably the last and best piece of habitat for breeders) and return to port with no economic benefit to Rhode Island.
- 4) The true size of the black market for striped bass is real wild card. While not the best way Option 1 will mitigate the black market sale of striped bass by reducing the possession limit for rec anglers. This can only improve the data and will benefit the legitimate commercial fisherman who deserve a level playing field and their handsome fish wholesalers.

Thanks for your efforts on this issue,

Glen

**Glendon Elliott**  
President, CEO  
**Rhode Island Textile Co.**  
211 Columbus Ave.  
Pawtucket, RI 02861  
401|721|1410  
[gelliott@ritextile.com](mailto:gelliott@ritextile.com)



*Celebrating 100 years of Quality & Innovation*

**From:** [McNamara, Gregory](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Licensed CT State Fishing Guide  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 11:34:45 AM

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Hello Peter,

First I would like to thank you and your office for all you do for our fishery that we depend on for both our enjoyment and our income. I have been fishing CT waters now for over 30 years and RI waters for the past 6 and I have to say that RI DEM has spot checked me more times while fishing in the last few years than CTs DEEP ever has. I want to thank your field officers for that directly.

I am writing to you regarding the RI state regulation changes that will be occurring for our 2015 season. My concerns will fall more on the Striped Bass fishery because that is what I am most familiar with. Why do I qualify to write to you? Aside from the aforementioned length of time I have been fishing for striped bass, I am a relatively newly licensed CT State fishing guide. My income relies directly on the state of the fishery. Also, I was a co-star on Animal Planet's reality fishing competition "Top Hooker" and with that national exposure I have become very well known in the fishing industry. With that comes incredible exposure to the recreational, commercial and charter constituents. I hear all of their concerns about the Striped Bass fishery and have been for some time. The fishery is not in a good position right now. I need for you to vote for one 28" or bigger Striped Bass per person, per day, for ALL anglers including party boats and for hires and definately take time to reduce the commercial hauls. CT will probably follow suit with what RI decides so its very important to me that I voice my opinion here as it will have a direct impact on my home waters.

I am a for hire. The option favored by RISSA that would give the for hires the opportunity to take "2 fish per customer, per day or they will lose business" is not only brought up without backing or proof of business loss but the motion is just plain absurd! Why do I make this bold statement? As a "for hire" myself and as a preacher of conservation, my business has actually improved since I have been educating and persuading my charters to catch and release all fish caught. It is my belief that there are more people (and in turn customers) out there that are conservation-minded and care about the fishery than those that do not. Again, I am very well connected to the fishing community. My charters are paying for the experience not the meat. If it was just about the meat they could simply go to a fish market for much less. So why on earth would charters feel they would be loosing business with a regulation reduction is beyond logical to me. Do not let the guides and charters fool you into believing they will lose business if there is a reduction in what there charters are currently allowed to take home. They just don't seem to understand that they are depleting the stock and in the long term destroying not only there business but other businesses that rely on the fishery for survival. Why? Fear of losing short term revenue. That is pretty poor planning of their financial futures, no? As a young charter I do not want my future clients to not be able to catch Striped Bass. THAT and THAT ALONE is what will cost revenue loss for the for hires.

In closing, again I urge you to do whats right for the Striped Bass and the long and short-term economy that depends directly on the fishery. One fish at a minimum of 28" per angler per day for ALL is the right decision for 2015.

Thank you kindly,

Gregory McNamara

Licensed CT Fishing Guide

Outdoor Writer

Catch & Release Tournament Angler

gregory.mcnamara@yale .edu

203 550-1240



**From:** [Gerry Murphy](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** fish regulations  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 7:54:05 PM

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Hello Peter,

I am an avid fisherman who likes to fish on charter boats in RI, out of Galilee. I know you have a a difficult task each year determining regulations. I feel that 2 striped bass at 32 inches is a reasonable regulation when shelling out the kind of money it cost to charter a boat. To go down to one fish at 28 inches will force me to consider going to other states to fish and cost the RI. charter boats a loss in revenue. I ask to to strongly consider two fish at 32 inches. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Gerry Murphy

The content of this e-mail (including any attached files) is confidential and may be privileged and protected by law. It is intended solely for the purpose of the person to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient of this message, please notify the sender immediately and delete the message (inclusive of any attached files). In addition, if you are not the intended recipient of this message, any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking any action in reliance of the contents of this email is strictly prohibited.

2/16/15

## Proposal:

At no time will a charter boat captain & mate be allowed to fish for any species while boat is being chartered.

Purpose - This reduces the amount of fish caught and given to customers.

i.e., Rules now will allow a five (5) man charter to bring 14 striped bass back to dock. (2-Captain, 2-mate + 2 each customer = 14)

My proposal will allow a total of 10 striped bass per 5 passenger charter.

Yours Truly,  
Gerard Raso  
member RISAA  
401-782-4871

**From:** [Jonathan Alvarez](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Please consider  
**Date:** Sunday, February 15, 2015 12:34:14 PM

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Dear Mr. Duhamel,

As a lifelong New England angler, I am deeply concerned about the future of the striped bass stock, and would like to comment against allowing for-hire vessels an alternative bag limit of two striped bass per person per day. Rhode Island should join the other states up and down the Atlantic coast that are acting to protect one of our most precious and vulnerable natural resources. Considering the myriad threats that striped bass face, starting with pollution of their Chesapeake and Hudson spawning grounds, reducing to one fish per day is only a modest sacrifice. Making an exception for charters would be short-sighted, and I would discourage any of my friends or relatives from patronizing Rhode Island charters if this exception goes forward.

- Jonathan D Alvarez, CPG  
(c) 1 781-530-0754

**From:** [Amberson, Jeff](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass regulations  
**Date:** Sunday, February 15, 2015 9:29:37 AM

---

Sir

As an avid recreational fisherman, I would urge the RI Division to support a one fish limit for striped bass, for both recreational and for hire (Charters) operations. Folks who are paying \$150 a head to take a charter do not base that decision on whether or not they can keep 1 fish versus 2 fish. You can either afford the charter, or you cannot. The “extra” fish is not going to tip the scale. The vast majority of folks just want to catch fish, perhaps the fish of their life. They book a trip to go out with a bunch of friends and have fun. Fun is catching fish, not keeping fish.

Thank you for listening.

Jeff Amberson

**From:** [jamesbarrri@gmail.com](mailto:jamesbarrri@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\); Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](mailto:Coit_Janet_(DEM)_;_Duhamel_Peter_(DEM))  
**Cc:** [info@SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com](mailto:info@SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com); [Jim Barr](#)  
**Subject:** Rhode Island Striped Bass Regulations - 2015  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 2:18:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [Final letter to Coit and Duhamel re 2015 Striped Bass regulations 2.23.15.docx](#)

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February 23, 2015

Sent via email ([janet.coit@dem.ri.gov](mailto:janet.coit@dem.ri.gov), [peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov))

Dear Peter and Janet,

It's no mystery that Striped bass fishing in northeast U.S. waters is in trouble. It's been on a steady decline for the past ten years. I have been keeping personal records of stripers I have caught as a purely recreational angler as well as records of stripers caught aboard my boat as a charter captain. The numbers are down, way down. What are the reasons for this steady and precipitous decline? Depending upon who you talk to or what you read, the reasons span a broad spectrum:

- Recreational fishing mortality
- Poaching by both recreational and commercial anglers
- Commercial fishing culling the catch to take only the largest fish, i.e. pulling from the population the breeders, and injuring in the process (ultimately killing) smaller fish by poor handling
- Inadequate enforcement by regulatory authorities of laws that govern the size and numbers of legal fish
- Lack of sufficient forage i.e. overfishing of the primary forage species of striped bass such as menhaden
- Changes in the climate that affect water temperature
- The spread of mycobacteriosis, a disease that severely affects the health of striped bass in their primary nursery, Chesapeake Bay.

In Rhode Island as in nearby Massachusetts and Connecticut we are at a crossroads as respects the opportunity to have some effect on reversing this alarming trend of a striped bass decline, some would argue decimation. If it was up to me, I would implement a complete across-the-board moratorium on killing striped bass. I would afford them the protected status of a game fish, something that the organization Stripers Forever (<https://www.stripersforever.org/>) has been advocating for many years. **I can personally accomplish that for my charter business by adopting a total catch and release policy for stripers which I actually put in place beginning in 2014 that will again be in force for the 2015 season.**

Fact is, for my business ([www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com](http://www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com)), 100% of my fly fishing charter guests have always practiced catch and release for stripers, and probably 95% of my light tackle guests, same thing.... they WANT to release their fish... not just Striped Bass, but Bluefish, False Albacore and Ocean Green Bonito.

Total catch and release angling apparently is too radical a position for virtually 100% of the charter fleet to ever agree to, captains claim that affording the opportunity for their guests to harvest stripers is the make or break proposition for the livelihood of their business. Likewise, it apparently is also too radical a position for the vast majority of recreational anglers to endorse. So at least for the near to mid-term, stripers will continue to die for the reasons I've enumerated.

**As you consider what regulation to adopt for Rhode Island for 2015, please understand that of the choices under consideration, my recommendation is referred to as “Option 1: One striper greater than 28” for all of recreational fisherman.”** (This includes guests aboard any charter boat).

Thank you for accepting public input to the process of deciding the final rule for the 2015 fishing season.

Very truly yours,

**Captain James Barr**

*Skinny Water Charters* ([www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com](http://www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com))

[JamesBarrRI@gmail.com](mailto:JamesBarrRI@gmail.com)

55 Greenough Place

Newport, RI 02840

Capt. Jim Barr, CPCU, ARM

Newport, RI

401.465.8751

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/jimbarrcpcuarm>

[www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com](http://www.SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com)

[info@SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com](mailto:info@SkinnyWaterChartersRI.com)

**From:** [John Gunn](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass harvest  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 4:54:04 PM

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Director Coit:

I would like to support Option #1: ---1 fish , 28" , for all recreational fishermen. I believe this will be the easiest regulation to monitor, will be fair to ALL recreational fishermen regardless of how they access the water, and will have the highest chance of success in conserving the striped bass in the waters of RI.

Thank you,  
John Gunn  
Swansea, mass

**From:** [Hanecak, John L \(HIMCO, FIN\)](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on 2015 Striped Bass Regulations -> 1@28" across the board  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 11:14:46 AM

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Hi Peter,

I'm writing to provide my input the current discussions taking place around **striper regulations** for the upcoming 2015 season. I'm aware that some (not all) of the for-hire boats are pushing for special consideration that would allow their clients to keep two fish at 32" which has been approved by ASMFC through conservation equivalency and pushed back to the states for a final decision. Striped bass are a public resource and I feel strongly that no special consideration should be given to the for hire industry.

**In the waters around Block Island were most of the for hire boats operate on a regular basis the difference between 2@28" under the currently regulation and 2@32" under the proposed regulations is minuscule and will not result in anywhere near the 25% cut that has been mandated by ASMFC.** Last season many of these boats were limiting out on fish over 20 pounds last season with many in the 30 and 40 pound class so the difference between a limit of 28" and one of 32" is only a difference on paper and will do little to stop the numbers of big fish being killed on a daily basis.

One of the arguments being made by the for hire sector is that they will be negatively impacted financially by going to 1@28" but there is no evidence that supports their claims. They have also argued that other states are going with a two fish option for their for hire sectors but both Massachusetts and Connecticut have most recently stated that they will likely be at one fish across the board.

**Going to one fish could also cut down significantly on the numbers of fish that are being poached off of Block Island either on private vessels or by individuals booking charters for a day.** It seems to be pretty common practice for anglers from Massachusetts and New York to either fish Rhode Island waters in their own vessels or hire a charter for a day with the intention of limiting out on big striped bass and then selling them commercially in their home state which is illegal. Obviously there needs to be more enforcement in place as well to police for this activity.

I could go on and on about why **2@32" for the fore hire sector is a bad idea** and how it will not result in anywhere near a 25% cut in the numbers of fish killed but I'm sure you are getting a number of emails so I'll stop here.

Please don't bow to the demands of the special interest groups and do the right thing for the striped bass and for the general public. We really need to make a meaningful change now or we may be looking at a collapse in the population and a total closure in the next few years. The vast majority of recreational anglers support going to one fish as has been documented by public comment provided to ASMFC.

Thanks,



John Hanecak

\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\*

**From:** [Jared Henry](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Ballou, Robert \(DEM\)](#); [hittinger@risaa.org](mailto:hittinger@risaa.org); [Gibson, Mark \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed striped bass regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 2:13:15 AM

---

Hello,

I am writing to express my view on the proposed regulations for striped bass in Rhode Island. I urge you to adopt the one fish at 28" regulation for the entire recreational sector. I have personally noticed the striped bass population decrease rapidly in the past 15 years of actively fishing for them. There were once great odds of pulling a 30 pound bass from 2' of water off the rocks of Anawan Cliffs. I've personally seen this done dozens of times and all fish were released to fight another day. In comparison, it is now dead water. The numbers of fish I grew up catching are now gone. Not outside the 3 mile line, not in Chesapeake bay. The numbers of big fish are no longer around, period. There has been more unmolested bait in the past few years than I've ever witnessed. The incredible nights at the end of jetty's with everyone getting into big fish are no more. I wholeheartedly believe these fish are in big trouble and need our help. Please strongly consider one fish at 28" across the board. If there are no more fish to catch, there will be no more fisherman. Millions of dollars in revenue will leave our state. The benefit of 2 fish per person per day is going to a group that most likely will never even buy a Rhode Island fishing license, and most likely have minimal to no knowledge of the condition of the striped bass stocks. Thank you for considering my opinion on the subject and please vote one at 28". Thank you -Jared M. Henry

**From:** [jameshitchen@cox.net](mailto:jameshitchen@cox.net)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** bass regs.  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 3:32:53 PM

---

I would vote for one fish over 28".per boat.

**From:** [Justin Lewis](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 1:32:05 AM

---

Hello Janet and Peter,

As a RI resident and recreational saltwater fisherman I urge you to support changing the 2015 limit to 1 striped bass per person.

Thank you for your consideration,

Justin Lewis  
1335 Cooneymus Rd  
Block Island, RI 02807

**From:** [Rich](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: [RISAA-Legislative] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:35:59 AM

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Pete

Here is another comment – similar to several that I have received via email & phone over the past week.

Rich

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**From:** RISAA-Legislative@yahoogroups.com [mailto:RISAA-Legislative@yahoogroups.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:08 AM  
**To:** RISAA-Legislative@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: [RISAA-Legislative] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL

I think we are dancing around the issue here. We know that the striped bass are in trouble and I feel it's our obligation to do as much as we can to insure that they will continue to be The most sought after fish on the east coast. If we continue to take cows we are shooting ourselves in the foot. I personally feel that one at 28 is too lenient. We should go back to one at 36, that would give big spawners two more years to spawn and hopefully produce and couple banner years for YOTY. We are getting there at 1at 28 but that is at a slower pace. To step into the ring now and demand two fish at 28 is just ridiculous. Look, I'm sorry that these guys got into a business where they were dependent are producing numbers but why just them? Why shouldn't handicapped fishermen get two or blind fishermen or veterans? Or people with hangnails? Now, I don't mean to equate people in these circumstances but if we want to help the striped bass recover everybody has to help. To allow one section of the fishery to take more fish than another section is ludicrous. I also think that the commercial fishermen should have to prove that they are commercial rather than giving this licence to anyone with \$60. If we do want to continue a. Commercial license, let them pay for the privelege. Move the cost to \$500 and you will automatically weed out the real commercials from I just want to take more fish guys.

John Liss  
Newburyport, Ma

Sent from my iPad

On Feb 16, 2015, at 8:40 AM, "Steve Medeiros [stevem@risaa.org](mailto:stevem@risaa.org) [RISAA-Legislative]" <[RISAA-Legislative@yahoogroups.com](mailto:RISAA-Legislative@yahoogroups.com)> wrote:

To members who can not attend he most

tonight's public hearing, you can mail or email your comments.

**From:** [Jack Mogielnicki](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass limits  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 10:49:35 AM

---

Dear DEM folks,

Please help out the declining striped bass population by decreasing the limit for the 2015 season to one 28 inch bass per person per day for both recreational and charter boat anglers.

As you know, stripers are a huge part of the lure to fishing in RI waters, and a continued decline will negatively affect both the species and the RI economy.

As a resident, voter and sportsman, I sincerely hope you will take appropriate action to protect stripers. The long term health of the species is at stake.

Thank you.

John A. Mogielnicki  
16 Lucas Avenue  
Charlestown, RI 02813

**From:** Joseph Mollicone  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** option 1  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 6:44:08 PM

---

I am mostly a shore fisherman. I fish about twice a week. I think last year I saw only 6 or so bass taken by shore fisherman all season.

It doesn't make sense to allow one charter boat in half a day take to that many fish.

If the size limit is a larger fish then that is what they will catch and keep.

They are professionals.

Thank you

**From:** [Joe M](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#); [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass option 1  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 6:38:11 PM

---

Please go with option 1. I wish there was a more conservative option.  
no one needs two fish

--

**Joseph Mollicone**

Broker/Owner  
NEW MARKET REALTY  
www.newmarketrealtyri.com <<http://www.newmarketrealtyri.com/>>  
New Market Realty  
2843 South County Trail BC#1  
East Greenwich, RI 02818-1728

Sales - Property and Construction Management  
Phone 401-996-0431  
Fax-1-888-502-6316



**From:** Janet Murphy  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Regulations  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 9:40:34 PM

---

Peter

I charter fishing boats from Galilee and understand you may go to one fish at 28 inches. I would be forced to charter in other states as it would not be cost effective with just one fish. I ask you to consider other options. Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Rick Bellavance](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Saturday, February 21, 2015 8:51:18 AM

---

Pete,  
Just making sure you got this e-mail.  
Rick

-----Original Message-----

From: fishpatty-j@cox.net [<mailto:fishpatty-j@cox.net>]  
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2015 8:21 AM  
To: Peter.duhamel@dem.rigov  
Cc: Rickbellavance@gmail.com  
Subject: Striped Bass Regulations

Hi Peter,  
I know from calls from customers that they are aware of the proposed regulations for Striped Bass in RI.

Some have said they will wait to see what the outcome will be before they book trips. I know that if I tell them that it will only be one fish per person, they will be reluctant to spend about a \$1000.00 for six guys for the trip,\ the mate, food gasoline to get here from there home, sometime to stay at a hotel, You can Kiss my business godby.

I believe the RI Party & Charter boat association has a good plan.

Thank You,  
Capt John A. Parente  
Vessel Patty-J

th

**From:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [Mouradjian, Larry \(DEM\)](#); [Gibson, Mark \(DEM\)](#); [Ballou, Robert \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: striped bass limit  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 8:35:38 AM

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Pete, written comment for the record.

-J

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**From:** Mouradjian, Larry (DEM)  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2015 8:14 AM  
**To:** Gibson, Mark (DEM); Ballou, Robert (DEM); McNamee, Jason (DEM)  
**Subject:** FW: striped bass limit

FYI

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**From:** [jnperry55@verizon.net](mailto:jnperry55@verizon.net)  
**To:** Colt, Janet (DEM)  
**Sent:** Fri Feb 13 17:32:59 2015  
**Subject:** striped bass limit

Dear Ms. Colt

Please consider a total ban on the harvesting of any and all Striped Bass (*Morone saxatilis*) within the Rhode Island territorial waters. The depletion of the stock, and especially the larger fish, know as "breeders" have adversely the number(s) of this valuable resource. I also support a commercial ban. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Regards,

Jeff Perry  
55 What Cheer Road  
Narragansett, R.I. 02882  
401 789 9264  
[jnperry55@verizon.net](mailto:jnperry55@verizon.net)

**From:** [John Redmond](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [fishing@striped-bass.com](mailto:fishing@striped-bass.com)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Charter / Party Boat Allocation Poll with Rhode Island Residents  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 9:43:43 AM

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Good morning,

Thank you for taking in this additional public hearing. I run the Striped-Bass.com fishing forums, a local New England based fishing group comprised of recreational, charter, and commercial anglers in Rhode Island and the rest of New England. I was unable to attend the meeting 2 weeks ago to represent our anglers' decision to support 1 fish for all recreational anglers, including charter and party boat trips.

We took a short 5 day poll with four simple questions based on residency and supporting one or two fish. People could only vote once. Rhode Island residents polled were unanimous in supporting ONLY one fish per client on charter boats. Overall only 7% of respondents supported 2 fish per charter / party boat. Attached is a screen shot of the final results. Simple.

- I have been a recreational saltwater angler for 25 years and I can catch fish (and release) better than many, the quality of the fishing has drastically declined even when fishing the best locations at the best times. The striped bass fishery is in significant decline.
- The ASMFC has already stated that the conservation measure chosen may not be conservative enough to guarantee recovery so it is crucial that we maximize the protection of the option selected.
- The economics of Striped Bass fishing are such that a healthy and recovered fishery will generate significantly more revenue from recreational anglers as a whole than for a small subset of prospective clients on a small number of charters.
- Regulations allowing one fish will be FAR simpler to enforce and will mitigate people trying to manipulate the system.
- Neighboring states are working with just one fish.
- One fish per day is enough – we did it up and down the coast for years and the fish came back.

As a group of anglers wanting reasonable fisheries management, we appeal to you share in the recovery process and to maintain 1 fish per day for recreational AND Charter and Party boat anglers.

Best regards,

**John Redmond**

[Striped-Bass.com](http://Striped-Bass.com)

Warwick, RI, 02889

401.219.6573

[fishing@striped-bass.com](mailto:fishing@striped-bass.com)

[jredmond@linesiders.com](mailto:jredmond@linesiders.com)



**From:** [jeff](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [SNESA](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 8:32:22 AM

---

I am in favor of a **1 keeper limit** on striped bass for recreational anglers and Charter anglers. Charters provide a **fishing experience**, and not just an opportunity to keep fish. I find it hard to believe that a 1 catch limit would hurt charters, there is such a thing as catch and release and the option to target other species to keep. If you want to eat fish, it is a whole lot cheaper to purchase it a the market.

thanks,

jeff s.

**From:** [jserbent@cox.net](mailto:jserbent@cox.net)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Concerns  
**Date:** Saturday, February 14, 2015 4:25:35 PM

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Mr. Duhamel,

As an avid fisherman recognizing the delicate balance of man and nature, I want to voice my support for one striped bass per person per day at 28".

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the public comment period on Monday.

Stay warm,

Justin Serbent  
99 Mill Pond Rd  
Exeter, RI

**From:** [juliosilva@fish360.net](mailto:juliosilva@fish360.net)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Public Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:27:49 AM

---

Hi Peter,

I hope you are well. I am a member of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association. Our President, Steve Medeiros has informed me that there is a meeting today regarding Striped Bass regulations. Unfortunately, I cannot attend in person. But, I will like to submit my comment on the two options. In short, I am support Option 2 with a modification:

- Individual recreational anglers can harvest one fish per day at a minimum length of 28"
- For-Hire anglers (e.g. Charter Captains) can harvest two fish per angler at a minimum length of 32"

Thank you in advance for your much appreciated time in recording my comment.

Make it a great day!

Tight lines,  
Julio

-----  
E-Fish360, LLC  
Julio Silva, Owner  
PO Box 214  
Chelmsford, MA 01824  
<https://www.fish360.net>  
[JulioSilva@Fish360.net](mailto:JulioSilva@Fish360.net)  
1.978.413.9269



**From:** [JI](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass regs  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 10:10:54 AM

---

I would like to see a one fish recreational limit at 28" or more

I would be fine with 2 fish per charter customer , as long as the capt and crew are limited to **none**.

Thank you

**James Tollefson**  
122 Morrison Ave  
Middletown, RI 02842

401-439-7292

JAT

**From:** [Leonardo J. Velazquez](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** I support Option 1 for the striped bass fishing limit  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 5:25:07 PM

---

Hello:

I just wanted to voice my opinion regarding what new regulation to adopt to help the striped bass recover. I support option 1:

Option 1: One fish greater than 28 inches for all of recreational fisherman

Thanks.

Leonardo J. Velazquez

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [whiteghos1@aol.com](mailto:whiteghos1@aol.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 8:06:48 PM

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Dear Peter:

The following is my comment for **striper regulations** this coming season (2015). My name is **Capt. Jim White**, **I ran White Ghost Guide Services INSIDE THE BAY, for a period of 24 yrs.** I had a very successful business during that time until around 2010, when catch rates began falling dramatically. As an example, in 2006, I boated, released, more than 2,600 striped bass, that my clients caught. In 2014, that number had fallen to 186 fish.. I didn't just wake up one morning and forget, when, where, or how to catch stripers, since I'd done it from an extremely early age. I can not catch, what doesn't exist.

I lived the last striped bass decline of the late 70s/ early 80s. I was also very involved in fighting for measures that led to the moratorium, through then Congresswoman Claudine Schneider, and the late Senator John Chaffee's offices,, both of whom sponsored House Bill 4884 that was introduced to the 92nd US Congress.

It is my opinion, from decades of time and hours on the water, fishing both recreationally, as well as commercially, that we are once again witnessing a serious decline in the striped bass population.

**I would urge RI to adopt the 1 fish per angler, (including the charter boats), to hopefully curtail this current decline/downturn in our striped bass stock.**

At one time, I had clients from 38 different states, and 14 foreign countries. That pretty much ended in 2009/10, as the word spread that fishing in our bay had become a shadow of what it once was. In 2014, I ended/closed my business. In my professional opinion, the fishing is simply going to get worst before it gets any better.

There isn't one guide, captain, or professional I know, that hasn't experienced a serious decline in their rates of success. At least those who are willing to be honest about it and not lie for some self-serving reason.

The decline we are now witnessing, will in all likelihood, make the last one seem like a walk in the park. This time, there are just too many other associated stressors on the fishery that didn't exist the last time, at least not to the same degree. Way more anglers, lack of food, bad water quality, and more.

The first, and biggest, in my opinion is the Vibrio bacteria Mycobacteriosis.. Estimates from almost all research that's been done, estimates that this disease could quite possibly affect over 75% of the striped bass population. Nowhere do I see any accountability for this very serious bacteria which I've studied and followed for over 17 Years. It is simply pure ignorance to push aside, or claim "nothing is known" or we are still waiting for more info on it. There is currently 25 years worth of research and study completed by dozens of Universities, State and Federal Agencies, too include the Federal Center for Disease Control. Myco, as it's known in the short sense, should have received much more attention and consideration on its affects on the current stock status.

The second is, Poaching. Poaching of striped bass is completely off the charts. Anyone, who spends anytime on or along the water, knows how bad the poaching situation has become. A bad or poor economic status likely doesn't help that situation much, but the fact remains, it is a HUGE problem.

The ASMFC Commissioner's claim it is hard to account for, to put a number on, to quantify, etc. All one needs to do is Google, "STRIPED BASS POACHING 2003 TO 2013", and see just how many cases come up, complete with figures on pounds

of fish taken illegally. Its in the tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, and it only accounts for those who were actually "Caught", and prosecuted. To say or claim that the information is not there, nor doesn't exist, is not quantifiable, is pure folly, and appears as a simply attempt to ignore or address the situation for some unknown reason, which almost no one understands. The same could be said for the Myco problem.

We are being told that the 2011 Chesapeake Bay Young of the Year, is the savior of this fishery, therefore stricter regulations are called for. I would agree with that assumption. That year class will be 25 inches this coming spring. The forth largest index in record keeping. Yet, we haven't seen almost any 13 to 24 inch fish appear almost anywhere. When I asked the question where are these fish, to a biologist, his comment to me was, those fish don't migrate until they are 7 years old. Really? So for the last 55 years of my life, whenever a big year class occurred down there and provided good fishing in the spring, I suppose that me and everyone else I knew simply imagined, we were catching 13 to 24 inch fish. I hadn't realized that dementia occurred at such an early age.

The strictest, possible regulations are what is presently called for, and not some mis-mash of "conservation equivlancey" which at this point simply seems or appears as "who gets whats left"

I realize that you have no control over this and simply taking written comment, so I apologize for going on too much. It is simply frustrating to see this great fish, once again move towards being in serious trouble, and those who are responsible for their survival seem more concerned with politics. Who speaks for the fish?

Thank you,

Capt. Jim White

43 York Drive

Coventry, RI 02816

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail

From: [Brothers, Kevin J CIV NUWC NWPT](#)  
To: [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
Subject: FW: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL  
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 7:01:28 AM

Peter

I am a long time RI resident and recreational fisherman. I support the RISSA position on Striped Bass conservation.

- Individual rec anglers: 28" minimum size, one fish per day
- For-Hire: two fish per angler, 32" minimum size
- For Hire: two strippers for the captain and two strippers for the mate be prohibited

Thanks

Kevin Brothers

-----Original Message-----

From: SNESA@yahoogroups.com [<mailto:SNESA@yahoogroups.com>]  
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 8:40 AM  
To: SNESA@yahoogroups.com  
Subject: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL

To members who can not attend tonight's public hearing, you can mail or email your comments. PLEASE DO SO!

Written comments concerning the proposed regulations will be accepted until 12:00 PM on February 26.

and sent to:

Peter Duhamel, Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries office, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835 or by email - [peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov) The final decision will be made by Janet Coit, Director, RIDEM.

To RISAA Members:

RIDEM is conducting a special workshop and public hearing tomorrow. This will concern the 2015 Rhode Island regulations for black sea bass, fluke, scup, tautog AND STRIPED BASS.

We have all be talking about striped bass conservation for the past year, and now it comes down to what the Rhode Island Striped Bass regulations will look like.

There's a lot to read in this message, but it's important.

It's divided into two parts:

1. Meeting notice and information links
2. RISAA positions

WHEN: Monday, February 16  
WHERE: Corless Auditorium  
URI Narragansett Bay Campus, South Ferry Rd, Narragansett.  
LINK TO MAP/DIRECTIONS HERE <[http://www.risaa.org/directions/uri\\_bay.html](http://www.risaa.org/directions/uri_bay.html)>  
TIME: 4:30 PM Workshop: 6:00 PM Public Hearing

The workshop will explain in detail the reasons for various options.  
To view the presentations: <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnates/fishwild/pdf/021615p.pdf>  
To view the public hearing presentation:  
<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnates/fishwild/pdf/021615pp.pdf>

It is important for recreational anglers to attend and voice your support for the various options, ESPECIALLY FOR STRIPED BASS!

RISAA NOTE:

The RISAA board of directors, taking into account mandated reductions, considering ALL anglers (shore, boat, charter) have done their best to select options which will serve the majority AND the fish stocks.

The most controversial item will be striped bass. As you all know, the ASMFC has set regulations for individual anglers at 28 inch minimum and one fish per day which would achieve a 31% reduction (with a 50% probability). The ASMFC also set a minimum 25% reduction for all and states are allowed to adjust their own regulations, as long as they achieve a minimum 25% "conservation equivalency." The for-hire people (charter and party boats) have decided that they need two fish per person in order to keep their businesses going, and all of the states have submitted their own proposals to give their for-hire a two-fish option. The ASMFC has met and approved the proposals, but urge that neighboring states try to maintain equal regulations for enforcement purposes. In Rhode Island, the option of two fish at 32" minimum was approved by ASMFC. This would achieve a 27% reduction. Now the options must still be approved within the state in order to become regulations. What happens at the public hearing will go a long way toward this. The final decision will be made by the Director of RIDEM after hearing the testimony of the public, the Marine Fisheries Council and DEM staff.

Note: There is a little known policy that has been going on within the charter industry of coastal states. When fishing for striped bass, the charter boat is allowed to have on board the legal possession limit for each charter customer, but ALSO, they have been able to keep "two fish for the captain and two fish for the mate" thus allowing four more fish per trip. Not all of the charter companies do this. If fact, we've heard from many that they don't agree with this, and wouldn't allow it on their boats.

So, the options to be presented tomorrow at the DEM public hearing for STRIPED BASS are:

OPTION 1

28" minimum size, one fish per day (applies to everyone)

OPTION 2

- Individual rec anglers: 28" minimum size, one fish per day
- For-Hire: two fish per angler, 32" minimum size

RISAA: Realizing that the charter boats in all coastal states will be getting two fish for their customers, the RISAA board has determined it would be unfair to RI's charter boats to be restricted to one fish per customer. This would hurt the charter industry and the RI economy. But conserving striped bass is still important.

RISAA Board will voice support for Option 2-MODIFIED. RISAA agrees with for-hire's option of 2 fish at 32 inches, but the policy of "two strippers for the captain and two strippers for the mate" be prohibited. This alone should conserve hundreds of striped bass each year.

Reductions are also required for black sea bass and summer flounder (fluke). The RISAA Board wished to hear workshop input and will state the position at the public hearing. Barring any surprises, tautog and scup regulations should remain the same as in 2014.

Steve Medeiros  
per RISAA Board of Directors

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Posted by: Steve Medeiros <[stevem@risaa.org](mailto:stevem@risaa.org)>

Reply via web post

<<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SNESA/conversations/messages/68608>: vlc=X3oDMTJwmg5YhRBF9TAk3MxUSNfE0BGdGyEikAeF3NIJ5OARncBzEikAeF3MDUwNIJ30DYEhXNnSWODNip2MDqEc2VjA270qRzGsdDnBzORzGHIZOMxNDI0MDK0MDQy2  
ad=replymessage&urn=68608 > • Reply to sender <<mailto:stevem@risaa.org>> subject=Re%3A%20Important%3A%20Public%20Hearing-%20SEND%20EMAIL > • Reply to group <<mailto:SNESA@yahoogroups.com>>  
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<<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SNESA/conversations/topics/68608>: vlc=X3oDMTJwmg5YhRBF9TAk3MxUSNfE0BGdGyEikAeF3NIJ5OARncBzEikAeF3MDUwNIJ30DYEhXNnSWODNip2MDqEc2VjA270qRzGsdDnBzORzGHIZOMxNDI0MDK0MDQyBhRvY0kAeZ4YJ4A  
> (1)  
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**From:** [Kevin Costello](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** questions regarding management  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 8:13:04 AM

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Dear Janet and Peter,

I'm writing in regards to the upcoming **Striped bass management** decision. **I am a life long local fisherman, never for profit only for sport.** I don't mean to bombard your email and I respect the pressure you both are under regarding this issue...

please understand why not for profit fisherman are standing strong fighting for 1 fish @ 28 inches, we see it everyday of the season, charter captains keeping two fish for themselves and an addition two fish for their mates, that 9 out of 10 times are then sold illegally to local restaurants to make MORE profit.

Our area is coveted as one of the best Striped bass fisheries in the nation. The decline in the stock is serious. Many local businesses outside of paid charters and commercial fisherman rely on fishing ( marinas, tackle shops etc).

Please hear the voice of us who don't profit from these fish to keep it viable for the next generation. Striped Bass is our State fish please allow them to breed and keep swimming.

I appreciate the few minutes of your time reading this email... **eliminate captains and mates to keep fish, and for everyone else 1 fish @ 28in for the rest of us.** Let's be a leader in setting these rules, instead of following what other states decide!

Thank you,

**Kevin Costello**

**From:** [Kenny Landry](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped bass  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:09:21 AM

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To whom it may concern, I have been bass fishing since I was 6 years old with my dad I am now 39 I've seen the ups and downs in bass fishing. I have worked on 2 charter boats one for 4-5 seasons and the other for the past 15 yrs I can't tell you how many times I cut fish for customers and knew they were just gonna go to waste, wether it was 16 bass or 12 or 2 didn't matter and not just bass all species. The days of filling the boat with fish for the freezer is over, yeah it's nice to go home with fish when your paying for a charter but the charter guy who feels he has to do that is his own worst enemy in business. If the charter boats are worried about losing business cause they can't take 2 bass there wrong, the 800\$ they get is wrong, the decline in business I've seen is cause of price of trips keeps goin up and life gets more expensive by the day. This is supposed to be about the fish not a bunch of guys who are not full time fisherman not one of um does it for 100% of there living. Whatever regs they come up with should be the same for everyone not oh poor me with my charter business, and I work on a charter boat and this is my feelings. Last year was a slow year for the bass for the charter boats if you just trolled wire all day like most of them do instead of using eels which was a very productive way of catching bass but that costs money so they charged the customer 2\$a piece on top of charter fee ? Your paying to go fish they boast all you need is a cooler sunglasses and food we supply everything, but bait?? I think they should practice better business and work on other ways to keep customers happy rather than kill more fish. If u give them a bigger size and two fish if they catch a short bass and let it go after dragging it 350ft on wire it's gonna die I've seen it happen way too much, it happens with any method with all fish if you fight um too long they have troubles. I hope in the end of all this it ends up being about the fish and that's it not \$ cause \$ is all these guys are worried about and don't get me wrong I like \$ but I have a job chartering is second as it is to these guys too. Im all for whatever is best for the bass not for the fisherman or charter customers cause without bass you can't be a bass fisherman.

**From:** [kenny](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: RI striper regs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 8:09:13 PM

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-----Original Message-----

From: kenny  
Date: Feb 24, 2015 8:07:26 PM  
Subject: RI striper regs  
To: janet.coit@dem.ri.gov

Hi Janet, now is the time to start thinking seriously about our striper problems. Dwindling numbers, keeper fish from charter boats propped up and displayed for show. Yeah each paying customer with one fish in each hand. I have fished for stripers for over 35 years and for the past 6 years it has gotten progressively worse to almost non-existent this year. We are the Ocean State we need to lead by example not be a follower of other states around us. We need a higher size limit on stripers also better enforcement. Where does our saltwater license fee go? Since licenses came out I have fished all over this state talked to many friends and fisherman and nobody I talked to was ever asked to show that they possessed a license where is the enforcement? Maybe instead of people gawking at state beaches like Charlestown get on the beach and ask for proof of a license. Striper fishing was the worst I have ever seen it this year. You are our voice help us manage this fishery for the future. Thanks for your time Kenny White



**From:** [Jerry Powers](#)  
**To:** [janetcoit@dem.ri.gov](mailto:janetcoit@dem.ri.gov)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI striped bass  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 10:51:43 AM

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Dear Janet -

As a resident of Block Island, a shore fisherman and a sometime patron of charter boats, I urge you to support the one-fish 28" limit on striped bass to keep Rhode Island in sync with Conn. and Mass. and to help with the recovery of the species. I have been chasing stripers, mostly from shore, for almost 60 years, and it would mean a lot to me for my grandchildren to be able to do the same and to have some chance of success.

Thanks for any help you can provide.

Sincerely,

Lewis J. Powers

Block Island

**From:** [matthew benson](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Striped Bass regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 12:41:31 PM

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Hello,

I have just been made aware of a possible change to RI Striped Bass regulations for 2015.

I am told that the proposed new regulations would be: "instead of two bass over 28" per angler, it would be 1 bass over 32" per angler."

I travel down to RI from Massachusetts several times per year along with 5 other folks, to fish on a charter out of Pt Judith, and have for the last 20-25 years.

This new regulation would make it less likely for me to drive all the way to RI to go out Striped Bass fishing with a limit of 1 Bass per person on this charter.

I realize this potential change is being considered to protect fish stocks, but please bear in mind the financial effect this may well have on Charter captains as well as the financial effect it may have on other businesses (hotels, gasoline stations, restaurants etc). Many folks may decide that traveling to RI to catch Striped Bass is no longer as attractive as it has been in the past.

Are Striped Bass stocks in that much jeopardy that a change to the regulations like this is mandated?

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns.

Matthew Benson

**From:** [Ballou, Robert \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support Striped Bass Fisheries  
**Date:** Thursday, February 12, 2015 12:52:38 PM

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**From:** Mark Clancy [mailto:mclancy003@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2015 12:47 PM  
**To:** Coit, Janet (DEM); Ballou, Robert (DEM); hittinger@risaa.org  
**Subject:** Support Striped Bass Fisheries

**Please support the striped bass fishery by supporting the 1 fish @ 28 inch bag limit.**

The public opinion was loud and consistent in it's desire for a "one fish" solution. Give the public what they clearly want. Regional consistency simplifies enforcement and the reliability of the data collected to measure effectiveness. There is a high risk that a 25% harvest reduction is enough to reduce the decline and we will be in worse shape when this is revisited in three years. We must act now.

Acting now will assure that there are striped bass for future generations to enjoy.  
Thank you for consideration in this matter.

**Mark Clancy**  
[mclancy003@gmail.com](mailto:mclancy003@gmail.com)

**From:** [Mike Delzingo](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Rhode Island Basss regs  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 7:50:06 AM

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Please help support the struggling charter boat industry by supporting the taking of 2 Striped bass @ 33" per person on charter boats.

Thank you for your time.

Capt. Mike Delzingo  
Fishbucket Sportfishing.  
Boston, Ma.

**From:** [Marina](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 striper regs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 10:01:52 AM

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I fish on Rhode Island charter boats quite often each season. I will be fishing elsewhere if the proposed 2015 striper regulations are passed.

-Marina Dietrich

**From:** [Hayden, Matthew](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Fishing Regulation  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 9:06:23 AM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

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Dear Mr. Duhamel,

I've recently become aware of the proposed regulation change for the state of RI with regards to striped bass fishing on commercial/party boats, reducing the limit to 1 per person. While I understand there are many sides to any debate, I do feel this regulation would negatively impact the experience my friends and family have while visiting your state and enjoying the fishing it offers. Additionally, I would envision this severely impact the charter/party boat industry, given that the limit will reduce the number of fish that could be taken home, thereby reducing the time spent on the water and overall reducing interest in going out at all.

I strongly urge you and your colleagues to reconsider this regulation change, as I can assure you we would not be as motivated to visit your state and partake in the fishing under the new guidelines. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

Matt

**Matthew Hayden**

Associate Director, Global Reviewer Operations  
Medical Imaging

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**From:** [Matt Hayes](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Striped Bass Limits  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 12:30:50 PM

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Dear Director Coit,

As a longtime and avid recreational fisherman from Rhode Island I would like to express my support for the reduction of the daily recreational striped bass limit to one fish (>28") per fisherman, regardless of fishing location; shore, boat, charter boat. I believe that this regulation has the best chance, of those that are being considered, of having the desired affect on the local striper population.

Sincerely,

Matthew D. Hayes

President & Publisher  
East Bay Newspapers  
Tel: 401.253.6000  
Direct: 401.424.9140  
[www.eastbayri.com](http://www.eastbayri.com)



**From:** [Michael B. Hogan](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Please Choose Option 1  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 2:02:59 PM

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Hi Janet and Peter,

I am writing personally to voice my support for RI to choose **Option 1: One fish greater than 28 inches for all of recreational fisherman.**

As someone who fishes from the RI shoreline and who has personally noticed the dramatic decrease in the numbers of Striped Bass, please help save this great fish.

The number of boats fishing around Block Island and just massacring the stripers, most of them breeding females from my readings, is alarming.

Boaters from RI, MA, CT, and NY all congregate around Block Island so its imperative RI does not go to a 2 fish Option. If RI went to a 2 fish option and other states were at 1 fish, just imagine how many more boats would head over to Block Island. RI should stay at one fish for all.

It's the fairest option and also happens to be the best option for the striper's survival.

Sincerely,

Michael Hogan  
Cranston RI



**From:** [matt lejeune](#)  
**To:** [Ballou, Robert \(DEM\)](#); [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:57:47 AM

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To Whom it may concern,

As a licensed angler who primarily fishes Rhode Island waters, I am writing today to express my support of option 1, a 1 fish daily bag limit at 28" or larger for all recreational anglers both private and the charter/party boats clientele.

My personal perspective of the impending decision in front of the State of Rhode Island is as follows, and I will be brief;

While I can imagine that certain data models combined with lobbying from those who push for less regulation can be intimidating and strong forces, to ignore an ever present reality of a fishery in trouble, I can't possibly urge you enough to consider that this fishery is ours. Not only mine, but yours, theirs, OURS. A simple change to reduce the mortality (and thus anchor some longevity) of such an important resource for so many will not only preserve what is ours, but echo the preferences of the overwhelming majority of anglers as a whole, not only those with the funding to effect change. A vote for option 1 supports the idea that we all take equal share of the problem.

Please please please take an opportunity to browse social media, read some blogs and evaluate all the information available (from multiple angles), and consider the impact of continuing to allow a larger than necessary harvest threshold for an already decimated population. Remember that this is a decision that recreational fisherman deserve a vote on, and our vote has been overwhelmingly cast to reduce harvest levels as shown in over 8,000 written comments submitted to the ASMFC.

Thank you for your time,  
Matt LeJeune

**From:** [Parker, Matt](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass proposal  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 8:49:58 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Janet,

I hope you're grinning during this crazy winter. Hard to believe April is only 40 days away but I can't wait!.

I'm writing to you to urge you to push through the **1 fish greater than 28" proposal for ALL anglers fishing in RI waters**. As you know, **I've been fishing these waters for nearly 50 years** and am worried about our prized striped bass. We must act strongly and have a singular, united front across the entire region if we hope to succeed in rebuilding the stock. With only a 50% chance of the measures successfully restoring the striper to healthy levels, any variance beyond the most stringent of options is a deadly one.

Additionally:

- 1) Any two fish option complicates data collection and compromises already thin enforcement resources. These are two puzzle pieces that need to be tight given the odds
- 2) A charter boat is just another way for rec anglers to get to the fish and is no different than a kayak or a pair of waders. No need for separate rules. I worked as a mate on a charter boat out of Point Judith when I was younger and understand how hard that profession is and how tenuous the business can be. However, we waste more fish by keeping more than we need in the charter industry because we're too concerned about the "client" enjoying themselves and coming back again. Having each angler keep one fish is PLENTY to keep anglers happy and coming back. In my experience, paying customers appreciate that we're trying to protect the very resource that they're paying to catch.
- 3) Since you fish under the regs of the state whose waters you are in, the "two fish" option encourages out of state boats to motor to Block (arguably the last and best piece of habitat for breeders) and return to port with no economic benefit to Rhode Island. I witnessed HORRIFYING overfishing last summer in the waters SW of Block Island and without strict, clear, unambiguous regulation, I fear that we will be party to a massive striper decline.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to fishing with you for a morning again this spring!

Kind regards,

Matt

**Matt Parker**  
President

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**From:** [Matthew](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Striper Regulations for 2015  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:44:01 AM

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Dear Mr. Duhamel,

as an angler of striped bass along the east coast, I would like to urge you to support the one fish at 28" option for RI. A unified regulation will give striped bass the best chance of recovery, and ultimately be the most beneficial to everyone. Further, this will show other states that RI is part of the solution and not grabbing as much as possible for the "needs" of the few. The waters of RI are accessed by other states and these large fish are vulnerable to the for-hire fleet.

There is also an opportunity here to change the mindset of the occasional recreational striped bass angler from fishing for meat to fishing for pleasure. It is my observation that charter trips for bass are not about maximizing the take-home, but about maximizing the catch. More and more charter captains are realizing this and successfully changing tactics to satisfy their clients.

Thank you for your time,  
[Matthew Risser](#)

13 Wilt Rd.  
[Bechtelsville, PA](#) 19505

**From:** [Matthew Sayer](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striped bass regulations  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 9:07:56 PM

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Dear Mr Duhamel,

I am not currently a member of any fishing organizations however i am a life long resident of Rhode Island and fish it's waters fairly regularly. In fact I work at the Newport Naval Base and during the warmer months I often go down to the piers and fish for everything under the sun.

Over the past few years i have noticed a sharp decline in both the size of fish caught and the frequency of the catch particularly when it comes to striped bass. In years past we would catch a few each almost every time. It's so bad now that if one of us catches a bass it's amazing and if it's a legal keeper it's almost like winning the lottery. Fishing is always supposed to be challenging but if your goal is to put food on the table, well lately the reward has been too far and few between. For this reason I agree with lowering the creel limit to one fish per person. I feel this takes a big step in the right direction however I do think that more needs to be done. Below are a few ideas I had that may help not only the striped bass but all of Rhode Islands native species.

- 1.) Reduce commercial creel limits by 25% as has been suggested.
- 2.) If not already in place, implement a Temporary moratorium of all commercial fin fish fishing within the bay or any coastal inlets or waterways.
- 3.) Raise the minimum size by two to four inches on both recreational and commercial fishermen.
- 4.) Require a stamp or a tag for any anadromous fish native to the State. A tag could be as simple as a coded zip tie that once adhered to the fish must be cut off in order to be removed and would likely raise more revenue than the sale of a single stamp. The tags should not be prohibitively expensive, but any money raised would be set aside and used for the sole purpose of habitat reclamation and preservation.
- 5.) DEM and the Providence Water Athority should work together to allow limited access to the Scituate Reservoir by special permit only for the purposes of fishing as well as trapping, foraging, and firewood collection. The Providence Water Athority already allows for limited hunting on its property. This would simply expland upon that. I wont get into details about enforcement or regulations but i see no reason to prohibit limited shore access, motorless canoe, kayak, and ice fishing. The proceeds from these permits could be split between the Providence Water Athority for infrastructure improvments and the DEM for environmental cleanup and preservation. I personally would pay over \$100 for a weekend permit to fish the reservoir from kayak or from the ice. I think this is a potentially huge source of revenue as well as fish, game, and other resources. While the reservoir may be far removed from the bay and obviously the Dam cannot be removed, the revenue raised from a program like this could benefit the entire State and all of its waterways.

I imagine the funds being used to install fish ladders as well as for the removal of

Dams and other obsticals that no longer serve any useful purpose. I also image the funds being used to raise awareness for and fund environmental cleanup projects around the whole region.

Rhode Island would not be the first State to require tags or stamps for for prized game fish. While in Texas in 2009 I learned that the State of Texas required a stamp for Redfish as well as a few others I believe. I believe that a tag costing \$1 or \$2 each would raise a tremendous amount of revenue for the State to take on these projects. It may also allow for the stocking of more endangered species like Atlantic Salmon and Sturgeon.

Regardless of whether you favor my suggestions or not I think we will both agree that something needs to be done and that one solution is not likely to solve the problem as a whole. I believe it's going to take a multifaceted approach and that doing so can help other species at the same time. I hope you take my suggestions to heart and seriously consider them. Thank you for your time and please let me know your thoughts on the subject.

Sincerely  
Matthew Sayer  
37 Phillip St  
Coventry RI 02816  
Cell 401-601-5910  
Matthew.sayer.ctr@navy.mil

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**From:** [busylinefishing@gmail.com](mailto:busylinefishing@gmail.com) on behalf of [Norman Bardell](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 11:55:46 AM

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I am in favor of allowing the Party / Charter boat industry to retain two striped bass per person. As a charter captain, I strongly urge my customers to be conservative, and release fish that will not be consumed. However, many of my customers take their fish home to be consumed. By restricting these customers to one fish, will force many to not spend the money for a charter. This would hurt me as a business owner and the Rhode Island economy also.  
Thank You

--

Capt.Norm Bardell

**From:** [Nick](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Rhode Island charter fishing  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 10:45:00 AM

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I'll reconsider charter fishing in Rhode Island if the regulation is changed from 1 at 32" to 2 at 32".

Nick Galer



**From:** [Nick Levy](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#); [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Management.  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 11:20:04 AM

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To whom it may concern,

Since the earliest age I have been enjoying the coastal waters of Rhode Island with my family. With my mother and father I surf-casted for many years in Block Island.

It's in my blood. I wish to do the same my son. And I hope that he can do the same with HIS son. I hope that you will press the powers that be to impose as soon as possible a limit of:

One fish greater than 28 inches for all recreational fishermen

It seems to be the least we can do to save this rapidly depleted stock of important fish.

Thank you.

--

Nick Levy

**From:** [Orlando Savastano](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** public hearing regarding striped bass  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 4:29:22 PM

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AS A MEMBER OF THE RISAA, I SUPPORT OPTION 2 OF THE PROPOSED STRIPED BASS  
REGULATION. ORLANDO L. SAVASTANO

**From:** [Peter Alarie](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Fishing Limits  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 1:36:50 PM

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Hello Janet;

As a member of the RI fishing community, I would like to voice my support for reduced bag limits on striped bass. I feel that the one fish, over 28" for ALL recreational fisherman option should be the chosen regulation.

I feel strongly that the charter boat captains should have the same rules as other boat owners and shore fishermen.

We have all seen the great benefits that striped bass fishing has brought to our great state. The time is now to help preserve this great resource for present and future generations.

Best Regards,  
Peter Alarie  
2 Windward Dr.  
Barrington, RI 02806

**From:** Peter Farrell  
**To:** Coit, Janet (DEM)  
**Cc:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Subject:** rhode island striped bass regs.  
**Date:** Saturday, February 21, 2015 10:29:15 AM

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Dear Janet,

As an avid fisherman and charter captain I implore you to consider option 1 for the future management of striped bass in rhode island [waters.it](#)'s really the only realistic approach to encourage recovery of their stocks. A "conservation equivalency" for charter fleets is outrageous since the charter fleet are a big part of the depletion of the breeding female stocks surrounding block island. Please, Please, Please help to save these magnificent fish. Sincerely, Pete Farrell

Given the 50/50 odds of success the more conservative and least complicate Option 1 is the right choice at this time:

- 1) Any two fish option complicates data collection and compromises already thin enforcement resources. These are two puzzle pieces that need to be tight given the odds
- 2) A charter boat is just another way for rec anglers to get to the fish and is no different than a kayak or a pair of waders. No need for separate rules. To treat one subset of recreational fishing differently is to export a Rhode Island resource against the desire of the majority for the benefit of a of a few for those who can afford it. That is just not right.
- 3) Because you fish under the regs of the state whose waters you are in then Option 1 is the best way to protect the female breeders that congregate around Block Island. The "two fish" options have the additional consequence of encouraging out of state boats to motor to Block and return to their home port with no benefit to Rhody.
- 4) The true size of the black market for striped bass is real wild card. While not the best way Option 1 will mitigate the black market sale of striped bass by reducing the possession limit for rec anglers. This can only improve the data accuracy and will benefit the legitimate commercial fisherman who deserve a level playing field.

**From:** [Paul Gross](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#); [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striper regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 9:44:15 AM

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I love to fish for stripers in Rhode Island, and spend at least a couple of weeks every year coming down there from Vermont to enjoy fishing in Rhode Island waters. I, and most of my fishing buddies, have been extremely concerned about rapidly declining numbers of stripers. It seems like every year the fishing gets worse. I feel it's very important to take immediate action to change the daily limit to 1 fish greater than 28". This should apply to everyone, recreational fisherman as well as charter boat clients. For once let's get ahead of the problem instead of waiting too long and then having the population really crash. Frankly, who needs more than one large striper in a day anyway? A 28" fish will easily feed a family.

My friends and I generally are catch-and-release fisherman, as are many other fishermen that I know. But, we do like to catch fish. Please change the regulations so that we can continue to do so.

Also, as a related issue, I think you should really consider limiting the harvest of forage fish. None of the sport fisheries will do well if the fish have nothing to eat.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to visiting your wonderful state again in May.

Sincerely,  
Paul Gross

217 Conant Lane  
East Thetford, VT 05043

**From:** [Peter Jenkins](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Tackle Shop Owner Perspective on Striper Regs  
**Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 6:03:54 AM

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Dear Director,

I want to commend you for the transparent process conducted by Bob Ballou and rest of the team at DEM. Through out the various public hearings, comments and ultimately the new workshop format I believe all involved felt that DEM wanted to hear their opinion. I know the Fisheries Management Counsel will be making a recommendation to you shortly and the ultimate decision rests with you. You have an awesome opportunity.

The licence buying citizens have been consistent throughout this process for the most conservative measures possible with the majority support Option 1.

There are approximately thirty tackle shops in Rhode Island and for their owners and employees a healthy striped bass fishery is vital. My shop is the largest and supports four full time year around jobs and a half dozen part timers. I spoke with over a dozen other owners and all supported Option 1.

All those I spoke with are aware of that a portion of the charter boat industry wants a different set of rules. Please recognize that a fundamental requirement of all small businesses is to adapt to changing market conditions and to provide an exemption to a portion of one user group that is detrimental to all the other small businesses involved is unfair.

Please consider the following reasons to support Option 1:

- The jobs created by tackle manufacturers and tackle shops are no less important than any other recreational fishing jobs
- From your experience with the "Lean Initiative" you recognize that conservation equivalence creates a second set of regs that mitigates the efficiency of limited enforcement resources and complicates data collection.
- Given the 50% likelihood of success and the documented decline the more conservative Option 1 is the responsible choice
- MA and CT are on record as selecting Option 1 creating regional consistency - a specific request of ASMFC
- Regional consistency will help reduce the out of state fishing pressure at Block Island. These boat plunder a RI resource and leave with no economic benefit to RI

Rhode island played a leading role in the last striped bass recovery and received national acclaim while creating an economic boom that benefited the entire region. Please choose Option 1 for the striped bass and the citizens of the Ocean State.

Respectfully,

--

Peter Jenkins  
Owner  
[The Saltwater Edge](#)

**From:** [Peter Jenkins](#)  
**To:** [Gibson, Mark \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** The striped bass is such a symbol...  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 1:08:23 PM

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Dear Mark,

I did not have the opportunity to talk with you after the workshop Monday night. I wanted to share that I thought it was a good shakedown of the new process. Nice job by you and the team at DEM.

I am among the majority of the public that wants the most conservative option adopted for striped bass and I spoke **in support of Option 1**. **I also own a tackle shop** and along with the 30 or so others in this profession (as well as those who manufacture tackle in Rhode Island) we have had to adapt our business model to compensate for the downturn in striped bass. I would ask that our "livelihoods" receive equal consideration in the discussion of jobs and striped bass.

A wise man with a lot of fisheries management experience once said "when you see a decline like this you need to hit it hard". **I am very concerned that even Option 1 will be enough**. Any "two fish" option leaves the Block breeders further exposed often to out of state harvest with no economic gain for the state.

That same night you referenced your experience with Senator John Chaffee. I have since looked up his speech and his words are just as true today "Americans have "symbols" which they rally around and which signify some part of the quality of life we all seek, The striped bass is such a symbol"

It is hard not to see why some of us see Option 2 as the export of a Rhode Island resource against the stated desire of the people for the benefit of a few and for those who can afford it.

Please do what you can to maintain this great gamefish and great legacy we in Rhode Island have enjoyed for the last 30 years. Please support Option 1.

Thank for your time and consideration,

--

**Peter Jenkins**  
**Owner**  
**[The Saltwater Edge](#)**

**From:** [Pete K](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Please make option 1 a reality.  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:46:06 AM

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Good afternoon Peter,

As a lifelong recreational angler that fishes from shore, boat, and several charter trips per year for striped bass, I am in strong support of 1 @ 28" regulations with no special option for any group to kill extra fish. I hope you will act in favor of what is best for conserving and rebuilding the striped bass population. In the end, what's best for the fish is what is best for all of us... the anglers and the economy.

It is not the meat itself that generates such passionate pursuit of this majestic fish, it is the adventurous pursuit itself, and the spending surrounding each outing is what generates revenue.

Thank you for your time and your efforts in playing a role in protecting the striped bass fishery.

-Pete Kosciukiewicz



**From:** [Fluke Skywalker](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 Recreational Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 6:34:26 PM

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Dear Mr. Duhamel,

I am a recreational angler of 30-plus years, much of which has taken place along the beaches and within the water of the state of Rhode Island. I have fished many species extensively, but striped bass have most strongly captivated my imagination and passion. Having spent countless in pursuit of this species (catch and release), I am greatly invested in their preservation. I hope that my now 2 year old son can have the same opportunity as I have to enjoy this passionate sport. If appropriate actions are not taken at this crucial time, I fear for the future of this majestic species.

Due to this, I strongly urge you to choose option 1 of the proposed changes in the recreational possession limits (1 fish bag limit with a minimum length of 28"). This is what was recommended at the ASMFC meeting in Mystic, CT in October, which I attended, and it is the right thing to do. Now is the time for you and the state of Rhode Island to do the right thing and act upon the voice of the recreational fishery at large.

I strongly urge you to take the right steps when selecting the new recreational striped bass regulations and opt for the 1-fish bag limit with a minimum length of 28".

Thank you for your time,  
Patrick Miles  
Fisherman and Nautical Artist  
Ledyard, CT

**From:** [Robert Baker](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Striped Bass  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 9:44:27 AM

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Dear Sir,

It is my stance that RI recreational **AND** for hire fisherman should only be allowed 1 fish per day. Why should someone who pays a for hire have the right to take an extra fish? I spend more money per year on the sport than someone who rents a charter for the day. If people want to take more than one fish, then they should buy a fishing rod and catch another one tomorrow. It is outrageous to me to think that a for hire vessel from another state would be able to come to RI waters and take more fish than the RI resident angler who stands on her shoreline.

I believe we are once again rearing our ugly heads as humans. Why are we gambling with the life of a species? Act now, before we have to enforce another moratorium and we are not allowed to take any. The proof is there along with history. This is what is wrong with humanity, we take, take, take until there is nothing left to give.

I support 1 @ 32".

Thank you for your time,  
Robert E. Baker  
Narragansett, R.I.

**From:** [Bob & Carolyn Burrell](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Conservation  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 12:03:20 PM

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Ms. Coit,

The most fair option for increasing catch / size limits on recreational fishermen is a limit of **one fish greater than 28" for all recreational fishermen**. This option is the most fair because any two fish option complicates data collection and compromises already thin enforcement resources. A two fish option will also encourage out of state fishermen to travel via boat to Block Island or other areas of Rhode Island to fish. Also, charter boats should not be favored over surf fishermen.

Sincerely,

**Robert Burrell**  
**74 Stony Brook Lane**  
**Portsmouth, RI 02871**

February 16, 2015

To the Director, Board Members, scientists and all that have an interest in the Rhode Island marine fisheries,

My name is Richard J. Chatowsky, the owner and operator of the charter vessel Drifter out of Point Judith, RI.

I represent myself as a full time charter captain in the state of Rhode Island. I have owned and operated this vessel for almost 30 years and I am recognized as one of the longest lasting and most successful charter boat businesses in the state.

The Director should pass the two striped bass limit at 32 inches for all charter boats doing business within the state. We are a viable and important part of the economy. I have had well over 500 out of state customers walk across the docks in Galilee last season alone. Most of this incoming revenue not only supports my business, but many other businesses in the area, for example, hotels, restaurants, tackle shops, gas stations and supermarkets, just to name a few. Myself multiplied by all the others in the business supports such a great portion of the state economy that it would be senseless to put any more restrictions than the one that has been implied.

It needs to be understood that by being in this category of charter/ party boat, and being recognized as such, it shows you how different we really are compared to the recreational angler. This category requires me to uphold a captains' license, federal documentation, federal drug testing, state registration, state party and charter boat license, commercial vessel registration, operators permit and many others. If this is not enough to prove this difference, then my federal and state trip reporting requirements should be plenty enough in itself. We, as charter vessels, are highly accountable for the maintenance of our fisheries program through such requirements.

I am a strong advocate for a healthy stock of striped bass and all other species because of how much we depend on them; I feel strongly that the science behind this proposed reduction between all the user groups will lead to a strong and healthy stock for the future.

I want to thank all who have put so much time and effort into this, and hope that the decision that is made will work for all that are involved.

Thank you again for your time and consideration,

Capt. Richard J. Chatowsky

Drifter Fishing Charters

**From:** [Rick Drew](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Conservation  
**Date:** Friday, February 20, 2015 5:20:59 PM

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Hi Janet Coit,

I am writing you regarding the upcoming vote/decision on Striped Bass Management. With over 50 years of fishing experience on Eastern Long Island and Block Island it is clear to me that the Striped Bass Fishery is in decline and we need to take strong measures to help it recover.

Please vote for option 1 - One fish at over 28 inches for all recreational anglers in Rhode Island.

I feel very strongly that this is the best option for conservation, recovery and management of the Striped Bass Fishery.

You may contact me via email or cell phone at any time to discuss this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Drew  
2 Powder Hill Lane  
East Hampton, New York 11937  
Cell: 631.903.0751

**From:** [Richard Durand](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [ddurand84@cox.net](mailto:ddurand84@cox.net)  
**Subject:** striped bass regs  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:44:38 AM

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Peter - As a member of RISAA and the Narragansett Surfcasters, I wholeheartedly support one fish at 28" for all recreational fishermen including those who fish from chartered boats. First and foremost, it is the conservation of the striped bass that is off most importance. Oddly enough, the move to relax the regulation for those "fishermen" who likely fish once or twice annually and may not even own a fishing rod and reel is peculiar.

Many of the fellow I fish with have spent a small fortune on fishing gear, pursue the sport with diligence, and often release most or all of the stripers they catch. On the other hand the charter industry is interested in harvesting big fish that comprise the striper breeding stock. It was reported that on a given day in July of 2014, there were more than 200 boats fishing the vicinity of the Southwest Ledge of Block Island, in what is an inadvertent but apparent attempt to decimate the stock.

One has to wonder if the intentions of the ASMFC genuinely concern the fate of striped bass. Even a slot regulation of one fish at 28" and one legitimate trophy fish of 45" (or larger) would make far more sense.

Yours truly,  
Richard Durand



Mr. Peter Duhamel,  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries

Dear Mr. Duhamelt,

My name is Peter Nilsen, and I am the president of Rhody Fly Rodders, the oldest saltwater fly fishing club in America.

I am writing to urge you and the committee to consider adopting, Option A of the ASMFC plan, and favor the one fish at 28", as applied to recreational and for-hire fishing for striped bass.

Fifty-two years ago this club was founded by then, Rhode Island Chief of Fish & Wildlife, Harold Gibbs. Harold was a devoted conservationist, biologist and staunch ally of all fish and aquatic inhabitants of Narragansett Bay, when the term conservationist wasn't well known. We as a club have followed Harold's mission statement and his conservation ways for over 50 years.

We are a group of 80 or so members, some who are captains and for-hire guides, who have fished these waters and know this fishery better than most for over these 50 years, and are deeply concerned about the plight of these fish. As a group, we have voted for the 1@28", including the for-hire group, as a way to protect and help this fish recover.

As you know, Block Island is an wonderful bass fishery, but it's under attack from other states because of it's propensity to hold large fish (mostly breeders), and it is one reason Rhode Island must follow MA and it's adoption of the 1@28', across the board. If we do join with MA, then CT, and maybe NY, NJ, will have to follow and then there will be a block of states from Maine to New Jersey that will be unified, and give this magnificent fish a fighting chance. Also, it will make enforcement of all recreational fishers, easier and simpler for all to manage.

A fishery that is healthy and abundant – will benefit all economically, from tackle & bait shops, to guides, lodging, restaurants, and the economy in general. We need simple and consistent regulations for all, if we are to rebuild the Striped Bass stocks.

"DO YOUR JOB" were the words of the New England Patriots successful slogan. I think if we all do our jobs to the best of our ability, bringing back the stripers can be successful, too.

Thank you,

Peter Nilsen  
President / Newsletter Editor  
Rhody Fly Rodders

'America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club'  
75 Massasoit Ave., Barrington, RI 02806  
Home – 401-245-7172 Cell – 401-633-5329  
pdfish@fullchannel.net







Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association  
 P.O. Box 177  
 Narragansett, RI 02880  
 401 741-5648

[www.rifishing.com](http://www.rifishing.com)

Please Sign our Petition if you feel a limit of 2 fish per person for STRIPED BASS is important when you book your Charter Fishing Trip. Speak to our Captains for more DETAILS.

Name	Home Town	E-mail (optional)
Russell ANDERSON	EAST GRANBY CT	r.anderson22@ATT.NET
EDWARD E. FERRIN	GRANBY CT.	
Albert Guglielmo	Milford MA	
TOM LOGAN	STRATFORD CT	TL54C@GMAIL.COM
MARK RUDEWICZ	WETHERSFIELD, CT	MRUDEWILLI@COX.NET
JAMES Owczarski	WEST SPRINGFIELD MA	WSJimmyO@comcast.net
Gracie Dodge	Orange MA	budodgel@verizon.net
SKIP Roberts	Higganum CT	SKIPPY51@comcast.net
Edmund Flaherty	Norton MA	
"	"	
Joe Ward	Southington CT	BigFishLittlePond@Comcast.net
KEVIN B.	MERYDON CT	KEV CRAIG?
Calvin Bunnell	Meriden CT.	askinail@comcast.net
"	"	SHAD KING 717@AOL.COM
Don C. Fink	Wallingford, CT	JAKE957@AOL.COM
Cheryl Jacobson	Wallingford CT	Cherber45@AOL.COM
MARIE POLIFKO	Lenoxville Pa	mmp1314@gmail.com
NICK POLIFKO	LENOXVILLE, PA.	
Tip GARRITT	COLUMBIA, CT.	tip.garritt@gmail.com
DONALD DAUDELSKI	Wallingford CT-	DDWILDFIRE@YAHOO.COM.
MATT DAUDELSKI	Meriden CT -	
Paul B. Johnson	Wakefield RI	pbjfishing@yahoo.com
Bill Lemke	Chicopee, MA,	
Ken Olejarski	Chicopee MA	
Ken Dabrowski	Chicopee MA	
Moe Roy	Granby MA	reecce007@GOGT.NET





Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association  
P.O. Box 177  
Narragansett, RI 02880  
401 741-5648

[www.rifishing.com](http://www.rifishing.com)

Please Sign our Petition if you feel a limit of 2 fish per person for STRIPED BASS is important when you book your Charter Fishing Trip. Speak to our Captains for more DETAILS.

Name	Home Town	E-mail (optional)
John Storm	CONWAY MA	johnstorm.smt@icloud.com
Robert L. Muir	PORTLAND CT	TMUIR@COMCAST.NET
BOB SAVOIE	Shirley MA	SAVOIE792@GMAIL.COM
Steve Jackson	Shirley MA	Sdjackson48@aol.com
Bruce Mosher	Berlin NY	Brucefish@GMAIL.COM
Cabe Ellis	S. Hadley ma.	Cabeellis@ymail.com
Henry Monaghan	Westfield Ma. 8 SYCAMORE ST.	
Ralph Sanders	Enfield CT	RGS1260@GMAIL.COM
Therese Woodard	Bloomfield, Ct.	therewoodard@yahoo.com
James Vaill	Munson, MA	JAMESVAILL@hotmail.com
Rick P. Marino	Wolcott ct	RICK_Marino@attornet
Ryan P. Marino	Wolcott ct	Ryan.marino@comcast.com
Steve Palmer	E. Hartford CT	captsteve.ri@gmail.com
Danah Vahine	Chicopee MA	
Ken Fortyne	West SpFD MA	
Ralph Ken	West Hartford CT	
John Vello	Glast Ct.	
Mike Matts	Worthington CT	
Steve Cahn	Southington CT	MIKE.MATTS.JR@ATT.NET
	Keau MA	



**RHODE ISLAND**  
**SALTWATER**  
**ANGLERS**  
**Association**



P.O. Box 1465, Coventry, Rhode Island 02816

401-826-2121

FAX: 401-826-3546

www.RISAA.org

February 26, 2015

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Marine Fisheries  
3 Ft Wetherill Rd,  
Jamestown, RI 02835

In accordance with the published process for the submission of written comments for proposed changes to Rhode Island regulations at the RIDEM public hearing held on February 10, 2015, in such that comments must be submitted by February 26, 2015, please accept and record this letter as an official submission to the public hearing, specifically under the topic of "Recreational Striped Bass."

The Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association is hereby going on record in support of Option #1: One fish per angler with a 28 inch minimum size.

Please note that during the February 10 public hearing, I stated a position of Option 2, offering a modification to the Party/Charter section to remove the two additional fish per trip "for captain and mate."

Immediately following the public hearing, we conducted a vote for RISAA members, and learned that the majority was in favor of option 1. In addition, many of our affiliated clubs contacted us and also urged support for Option 1.

Since it is the duty of the RISAA Board of Directors to speak for the 7,500 recreational anglers we represent, this change in position is necessary. To confirm, the position of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association is in support of Option 1: One fish per angler at 28 inches and we wish this letter entered into the official hearing record.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen J. Medeiros".

Stephen J. Medeiros  
President

Cc: Janet Coit, Director

**From:** [Richie LaPlaca](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: 2015 Strped Bass Fishing Regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 4:45:48 PM

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From: "rich laplaca" <[wetski@optonline.net](mailto:wetski@optonline.net)>  
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 4:37 PM  
To: <[peter.dulamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.dulamel@dem.ri.gov)>  
Subject: 2015 Strped Bass Fishing Regulations

> I am a recreational fisherman who is very considerate about, and  
> respectful of fishing regulations. I also fish to eat as much as I do  
> for sport, and usually weigh whether or not it is cost effective for me  
> to fish. The only type of charter fishing that is usually cost  
> effective is striped bass fishing. I charter exclusively out of Rhode  
> Island port and with the new proposed regulation, it will no longer make  
> any sense for me to pay for a charter and have the limit reduced so  
> drastically. To cut the keep in half and to then not allow a fish count  
> for the captain and mate either, is the difference that will keep me  
> from hiring a charter. And my charter captain follows the rules to the  
> letter, and now he will lose a great deal of my (and my friends'  
> business) if this rule is passed. Decisions like this are going to  
> force some charter captains out of business, and for many of us are a  
> safe and productive way to fish. I'm all for managing the fish  
> population, and for keeping a healthy balance, but to penalize the  
> charter business is not the way to go. Big commercial fisherman and  
> netters are the ones's that need to be regulated in other appropriate  
> ways. Sincerely, [Richard LaPlaca](#)  
>  
>  
>  
>

**From:** [Richard Laplante](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** proposed changes in striped bass eggs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 7:32:45 AM

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My name is Richard Laplante. I live in New Hampshire and frequently travel to RI for charter fishing.

We fish most of the time for bass. I have a group of 13 friends who fish with me (6 of us at a time), most of whom live in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

We have enjoyed fishing there for over twenty years, and would like to continue to do that, but I think that if the regulations change to limit anglers to one bass, we will lose interest in the fishery and we really will have no reason to visit the state at all.

We take care of the things we like and we like the bass fishing. Please consider my opinion if you have anything to say about the regulations.

Thank you for your good work and consideration,

Rich Laplante  
603 305 5987

**From:** [Roger Lema](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** striper regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 11:20:11 AM

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Dear Peter I support the RISSA amendment #2 this satisfies the charterboat industry's request on this proposal. However it does not allow Capt. or Mate to possess any bass on charter trips. I believe that would be double dipping. Commercial fishing on charter trips should be illegal but I see many boats avoid this by catching extra fish or selling extra fish the charter party does not take home. That is wrong and absolute bullshit! They want their 2 fish per customer than abide by the damn rules!



**From:** [Richard Mandeville](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striper Regs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 1:24:38 PM

---

Hi Peter,

I am a **concerned recreational Ocean State fisherman**. I hope that cooler heads come to some type of fish management plan that helps the FISH more than the fisherman. I fish both boat and surf preferably the surf for stripers. I rarely keep any bass but when I do I try to keep the minimum sized fish primarily because I would much rather see the larger fish remain in the breeding population. **My preference(s) for a regulation(s) is /are 1 fish**. Now for the (s) part...1 fish somewhere between 28 and 30 inches or 1 slot fish between 20 and 28 inches. As far as how many of these allowed for any time period I think would be damn near impossible to enforce. I cannot eat an entire fish at one sitting so some end up in the freezer. Once that supply is consumed I then **think** about keeping another and that only happens if I have a yearning for more bass. Fluke and sea bass are far more palatable in my opinion.

I do have a little bit at stake here. **I am a very small operation custom lure builder**. The more people fish the more they need my plugs. By being a small operation I am not in it for profit mostly a hobby that I hope can keep itself going so selling a bunch of plugs is not a concern. Most of the "profits" from sales end up in more materials. Maybe a spool of line or a 1/2 tank of boat gas gets purchased but that's about it.

I hope that any action taken is with the FISH in mind!

Regards,

**Dick Mandeville**

**Fishdoc Custom Plugs**

[www.customstriperlures.com](http://www.customstriperlures.com)

**From:** [Raymond W. Potter, Jr.](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Fishing Regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 5:18:15 PM

---

Mr. Duhamel,

My Name is Ray Potter and I was born and brought up in Cumberland, RI.

Although I live in CT right now I still come up to Narragansett and fish with charters in the RI waters off the Block.

It has come to my knowledge that the limit on strip bass is now 1 fish per person. And the captain and mate are not allowed their fish any more.

If this is the case I will look elsewhere to fish in the future. I feel bad for the Captains who have spent a lifetime developing their business'. I cannot imagine how many people will follow the same track I am.

Hopefully there is some other solution to the problem. Stopping or limiting commercial fishing would be a start.

Thank You for your time.

Sincerely,

Ray Potter

**From:** [Roger Reis](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** 2015 regs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 10:26:53 AM

---

Why are we as fisher persons cower down to these charter boat captains?  
Strip bass regs  
27-30 shore angler  
30-32 everyone else

Thank You

Sent from Samsung tablet

## Duhamel, Peter (DEM)

---

**From:** Roger Reis <rogerreis96@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 4:02 PM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Subject:** Fwd: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL

All fish regs should stay as 2014 for shore anglers.  
All fish regs should be revised for boat, charter, party boat, kayaker and spearfisher.  
This will have the suggested 25% decrease and should be much tougher.  
I would go as far as a monotorium for endangered species.

Thank you  
From a concerned angler

Sent from Samsung tablet

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Pete pobiso@verizon.net [SNESA]" <[SNESA@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SNESA@yahoogroups.com)>  
**Date:** 02-17-2015 2:10 PM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** [SNESA@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SNESA@yahoogroups.com)  
**Subject:** Re: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL

To all of you on SNESA (at least 25 or 30 emails) that have commented on the Striped Bass Options on this site in the last few days, and who probably did not have the opportunity, or the inclination to attend the meeting last nite, I have this suggestion.

While you are so highly motivated to make these comments, please take the same amount of your time and make your feelings and wishes known to the people that are going to make the final decisions on these options, and send your emails to:

**Peter Duhamel**, Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries office, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835

or by email - [peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov)

**The final decision will be made by Janet Coit, Director, RIDEM., hopefully based on the comments received from those that take the time to respond.**

Written comments concerning the proposed regulations will be accepted until 12:00 PM on February 26.

Thanks for showing your interest,

Pete O

From: Roger Reis  
To: Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
Subject: Fwd: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL  
Date: Monday, February 16, 2015 9:18:47 AM

---

I have for many years tried to aviccate that all the regs should be modified by using exsiting reg for shore anglers and much more strigent regs for all boat landed fish. Not happy with any of the preposed regs but option two is more inline with my point of view.

Thank You

Sent from Samsung tablet

----- Original message -----

From: "Steve Medeiros stevem@risaa.org [SNESA]" <SNESA@yahogroups.com>  
Date: 02-16-2015 8:40 AM (GMT-05:00)  
To: SNESA@yahogroups.com  
Subject: [SNESA] Important: Public Hearing- SEND EMAIL

To members who can not attend tonight's public hearing, you can mail or email your comments.  
**PLEASE DO SO!**

Written comments concerning the proposed regulations will be accepted until 12:00 PM on February 26.

and sent to:

**Peter Duhamel**, Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries office, 3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835  
or by email - [peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov)  
The final decision will be made by **Janet Coit**, Director, RIDEM.

To RISAA Members:

RIDEM is conducting a special workshop and public hearing tomorrow. This will concern the 2015 Rhode Island regulations for black sea bass, fluke, scup, tautog **AND STRIPED BASS**.

We have all be talking about striped bass conservation for the past year, and now it comes down to what the Rhode Island Striped Bass regulations will look like.

**From:** [crich18109@aol.com](mailto:crich18109@aol.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striper regulation  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 7:26:00 PM

---

Dear Mr Duhamel:

In finalizing the respective state regulations that will affect striped bass harvest from 2015 and beyond. I support Option 1: One striper greater than 28" for all of recreational fisherman. (This includes guest aboard any charter boat).

Sincerely,

Robert Richard

**From:** [Robb Roach](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Charter Catch Limit  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 9:34:35 AM

---

Dear Peter,

I own and operate a charter boat. Starting last year I set a self imposed 1 fish per trip limit for charter guests. Rarely did they gripe and/ or insist on keeping more. Many wanted to release all striped bass caught. Other charter captains mainly on Block Island have done this as well.

We are conscious about what is happening and see the massive number of mainly recreational boats from RI, CT, MA and NY descend on Block Island each and every day of the season. It has gotten worse each year. It is completely out of control.

I personally feel that there is no reason to differentiate charter boats from recreational - in this case! I am in favor of the discussion though because there are cases where it is important to differentiate charter and rec. for financial reasons.

This is a democracy-so we need to debate, discuss and determine the best route forward.

As a charter boat operator I am not in favor of a 2 fish striped bass limit for charter/party boats. But I do believe I should have the option to also catch my one fish limit for the day while I am actively fishing with a charter.

As far as size limit I am in favor of a slot limit. If this is not an option I am in favor of 1 fish at 28" or greater.

I appreciate the opportunity to make my comments.

**Robb Roach**

[Robb@thechemco.com](mailto:Robb@thechemco.com)

(c) 401.864.3111

(o) [401.423.3100](tel:401.423.3100)

[www.thechemco.com](http://www.thechemco.com)

**From:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [robertseigny@verizon.net](mailto:robertseigny@verizon.net); [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Recreational Striped Bass  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 10:47:54 AM

---

Pete, please enter Mr Sevigny's comment for the record (unless you don't want that, Mr Sevigny, let us know).  
Thanks  
-J

-----Original Message-----

From: robert seigny [<mailto:robertseigny@verizon.net>]  
Sent: Tue 2/17/2015 10:43 AM  
To: McNamee, Jason (DEM)  
Subject: Fw: Recreational Striped Bass

--- On Tue, 2/17/15, robert seigny <[robertseigny@verizon.net](mailto:robertseigny@verizon.net)> wrote:

> From: robert seigny <[robertseigny@verizon.net](mailto:robertseigny@verizon.net)>  
> Subject: Fw: Recreational Striped Bass  
> To: "Bart" <[baawagner@cox.net](mailto:baawagner@cox.net)>, "Nancy Christensen" <[nancyjanechristensen@gmail.com](mailto:nancyjanechristensen@gmail.com)>  
> Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2015, 10:17 AM  
>  
>  
>  
> On Tuesday, February 17, 2015 10:16  
> AM, robert seigny <[robertseigny@verizon.net](mailto:robertseigny@verizon.net)>  
> wrote:  
>  
>  
> **Do not**  
> **allow Charter boats two fish per fisherman.** That would be  
> allowing people to have an extra fish if they pay money,  
> which would go against conservation measures. Fishing  
> Charter people would be satisfied to keep one fish and  
> release the rest. Charter Captains have commercial licenses  
> and they will sell all the fish that fishermen do not keep  
> if two fish are allowed. Do not be fooled by their reasoning  
> that they will get fewer charters with a one fish limit, it  
> makes no sense. **Robert Sevigny**  
>  
>  
>  
>



## Duhamel, Peter (DEM)

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**To:** Gibson, Mark (DEM)  
**Subject:** RE: 2015 Striped Bass regulations

**From:** [RSQUIRE@aol.com](mailto:RSQUIRE@aol.com) [<mailto:RSQUIRE@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2015 11:06 AM

**To:** Gibson, Mark (DEM)

**Subject:** 2015 Striped Bass regulations

Dear Mark,

As an avid recreational angler I am writing to urge you to adopt Option A: 1 fish bag limit at a minimum of 28".

The is the only option under consideration that will offer the necessary harvest reductions to support the rebuilding of the vital striped bass fishery. I offer the following items to support adoption of Option A:

- According to the ASMFC, all options under consideration only have a 50% probability of success.
- At the recent ASMFC Winter Meeting it was disclosed that all harvest reduction percentages provided by the ASMFC assumed a 100% angler compliance meaning that they are **overstated** and **unrealistically ambitious**.
- The ASMFC Enforcement Committee endorsed "simple and consistent regulations for all recreational modes and stated that "mode exemptions, narrow slots and on board filleting are all difficult to enforce"; ASMFC leadership stressed the need for "simple and consistent regional regulations."
- The MA DMF has rejected the idea of special limits for the "for-hire" fleet and is recommending a daily limit of striped bass of 1 fish, 28" or larger; NH has already announced that they will adopt a daily limit for striped bass of 1 fish, 28" or larger.
- Connecticut has indicated they will likely align with RI's regulations with the strong likelihood that NY follows suit.
- A great majority of bait and tackle shops in RI have come out strongly in support of 1@28. The economic impact of bait and tackle shops rivals that of the for-hire industry and should not be discounted or ignored.
- There is not a single study, report or hard evidence that supports the potential negative impact to the for-hire industry caused by a 1 fish per client kill limit.

A rebuilt and abundant striped bass fishery will benefit all sectors and all constituencies. RI will play a pivotal role in the regional adoption of the 2015 striped bass regulations. I urge you select Option A and have RI serve as a true leader for striped bass conservation in the region.

Sincerely,

Ross Squire

**From:** [Capt. Roger](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Bass Limit  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 2:40:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Dear Mr. Duhamel:

As a RI citizen and member of the fishing community, I am strongly in favor of one bass at 28 inches for everyone that fishes recreationally, whether on a charter or as an individual. We charter fishermen are NOT entitled to claim a greater share of the public resource just because we derive profit from it.

And, I do not think that the number allowed will have any significant impact on the number of charters booked either. People that can afford charters are not doing so to defray the cost of groceries, they do it for the experience.

The alternative option, two at 32" would also seem to put more pressure on the more successful breeder fish, so while it may appear to be a mathematical reduction in harvest, it may be more harmful to the biomass.

I have asked other members of the fishing community to share their thoughts with you.

Thank you for your consideration.

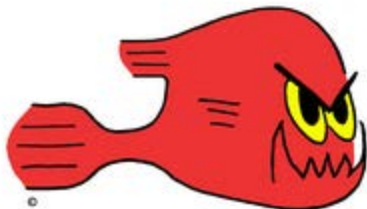
Best regards,  
Roger

**CAPT. ROGER ST GERMAIN**

**SAINT G SPORTS**

(401) 487-7954

USCG Master Mariner Credential  
with Assistance Towing Endorsement



**Duhamel, Peter (DEM)**

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**From:** scwatson10 <scwatson10@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 2:32 PM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Limits

Hello,

I am emailing concerning the upcoming decision regarding striped Bass limits for 2015.

I support the one fish at 28" rule for private and shore fisherman.

Additionally, while I understand the need for hired vessel limits to remain competitive with neighboring states, I feel strongly that allowing 2 at 32 for these boats, which will be fishing more often and exhibiting a more effective catch rate, will undermine the efficacy of the proposed regulation. This would be especially true if "captain & mate" allotments are not eliminated.

If these boats must maintain a 2 per paying customer limit, a banded slot range of one at 32 and one for a "trophy fish" (above 40"?) would provide adequate competitive parity (you can still catch 2 fish on an ri charter) while better preserving the efficacy of the new limit in protecting the future of striped Bass fishing.

Thank you for considering these remarks.

Best Regards,  
Sam Watson  
Bradford, RI  
774-722-5645  
Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

**From:** [Shane Murphy](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Fishing Regulations  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2015 8:40:05 PM

---

Peter,

Hello, I'd like to send you this email in regards to new **striped bass** regulations. While I agree that something needs to change to protect the fishery, I believe that one fish at 28 inches is too restrictive, especially for the people who rely on the fishery as their livelihood. **I believe that one fish at 28 inches would dramatically decrease the amount of business that charter boats receive as well as money coming in from other forms of fishing.**

**While I enjoy all aspect of fishing, my family and I also count on a good trip or two on a charter boat to provide some food for the year. I believe that only being able to have 1 fish per person would not validate the price for a trip, especially after you calculate travel time, lodging, food, drink, gas and time away from work.**

**Perhaps keeping the two fish limit but increasing the size to around 32 inches would be a good compromise for everyone involved.**

Thank you for you're time.

Sincerely,  
**Shane Murphy**

Sent from my iPhone

## Duhamel, Peter (DEM)

---

**From:** Charlie Donilon Snappa Charters <snappacharters@cox.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2015 1:13 AM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass

Peter,

For the past 44 years I have been in the charter boat business. I own and operate the charter boat Snappa out of Galilee, RI. I attended the public hearing on Monday night and voiced my opinion on the bass proposal. I went against the vote of the RI Party and Charter Boat Association even though I am a member.

I would like to see a 1 fish / person bag limit with no fish for the captain and mate. I say this for a number of reasons. First, I have seen the bass population drop dramatically over the last few years. It is my intention to stay in the charter business a few more years but if things keep going downhill as they have been, the future doesn't look that bright. If I want an occasional bass for my own consumption, most of my customers would be willing to give me a fillet if I asked for it. If the option of 1 or 2 fish for the captain and mate is approved you should pay attention to what I am about to say. Being in the business for as long as I have, I have seen some of the laws abused by some charter captains. Most recently I have seen one particular charter boat carry a 7<sup>th</sup> person (which is illegal). He claims that the 7<sup>th</sup> passenger is a mate in training and is allowed to take 2 extra bass for him. On other occasions this captain has taken his 3 grandchildren aboard and taken 6 additional bass for them. The law allows him at the present time to also take 2 fish for the captain and 2 fish for the mate. On occasion this 6 passenger charter boat takes 14 fish for the 7 passengers, 6 fish for the three grandchildren, 2 fish for the mate, and 2 fish for the captain for a total of 24 striped bass. It's absurd but it is happening.

If the option of 1 or 2 fish is considered for the captain and mate, I truly believe you should eliminate any fish for the mates or any extra people aboard. If the captain is allowed 1 or 2 fish, it should be for only 1 captain as some mates are also licensed as a captain. To keep things simple, one fish for the entire crew should be sufficient. The captain and mate are not going to be eating fish 7 days a week.

In the late 70's and early 80's we almost lost the bass completely. DEM stepped in and regulated the species to save them. The two fish / person was something we learned to live with. Now with a greater boating population and increased technology, the pressure on the bass is reaching its breaking point once again. If DEM is there to do what is right for the fish and not for the fisherman, you should err on the side of caution to protect this species by lowering the bag limits for both the charter clients and the crew.

Thank you for your consideration.

Charles Donilon  
[snappacharters@cox.net](mailto:snappacharters@cox.net)  
[www.snappacharters.com](http://www.snappacharters.com)  
401-782-4040

**From:** [scwatson10](mailto:scwatson10)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Limits  
**Date:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 2:32:07 PM

---

Hello,

I am emailing concerning the upcoming decision regarding striped Bass limits for 2015.

I support the one fish at 28" rule for private and shore fisherman.

Additionally, while I understand the need for hired vessel limits to remain competitive with neighboring states, I feel strongly that allowing 2 at 32 for these boats, which will be fishing more often and exhibiting a more effective catch rate, will undermine the efficacy of the proposed regulation. This would be especially true if "captain & mate" allotments are not eliminated.

If these boats must maintain a 2 per paying customer limit, a banded slot range of one at 32 and one for a "trophy fish" (above 40"?) would provide adequate competitive parity (you can still catch 2 fish on an ri charter) while better preserving the efficacy of the new limit in protecting the future of striped Bass fishing.

Thank you for considering these remarks.

Best Regards,  
Sam Watson  
Bradford, RI  
774-722-5645  
Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

**From:** [Scott Wilson](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Striped Bass Regulations Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 7:39:42 AM

---

**Peter Duhamel**

**Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries Office**

**3 Fort Wetherill Road, Jamestown, RI 02835**

[peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov](mailto:peter.duhamel@dem.ri.gov)

As a lifelong RI resident and recreational fisherman I respectfully and strongly encourage you to support Option #1 for Striped Bass maintaining a 1 fish limit for all modes keeping clear and consistent regulations for all recreational anglers fishing Rhode Island waters.

I also work in a RI tackle shop with clients up and down the East Coast and the documented decline in the population is clearly reflected through anecdotal evidence. We cannot afford another crash of this population and a move to 1 fish per angler is long overdue. As pressure increases via all modes the population has shown less than adequate year classes.

Please choose to lead on this issue as our neighboring states will likely follow suit and help assure that we have a vibrant and plentiful population for all Rhode Islanders to enjoy into the future. Please enter my comments into the official hearing record.

Sincerely,

**Scott Wilson**

11 Lawrence Terrace

**Portsmouth RI** 02871

**cc. Janet Coit**  
**Director**  
**Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management**





**From:** [Simon Winchell-Manning](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Regarding For-Hire Striped Bass Limit  
**Date:** Sunday, February 15, 2015 10:38:45 AM

---

Dear Mr. Duhamel,

As a lifelong New England angler, I am deeply concerned about the future of the striped bass stock, and would like to comment against allowing for-hire vessels an alternative bag limit of two striped bass per person per day. Rhode Island should join the other states up and down the Atlantic Coast that are acting to protect one of our most precious and threatened natural resources. Considering the myriad threats that striped bass face, starting with pollution of their Chesapeake and Hudson spawning grounds, reducing to one fish per day is only a modest sacrifice. Making an exception for charters would be extremely short-sighted, and I would discourage any of my friends or relatives from patronizing Rhode Island charters if this exception goes forward.

Thanks and best,  
Simon Winchell-Manning

**From:** [Tim Boynton](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 11:06:50 AM

---

To Whom it may concern,

I have been charter fishing every summer in Rhode Island for 5 years now. I take several trips a summer, a few of which are for Striped Bass. It is to my understanding the regulations would change from allowing 2 bass per person to 1 bass per person. If this is to happen I would strongly reconsidered spending my money on charter fishing to only take home one fish. I hope you will reconsider.

Thank you,  
Tim Boynton

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Broomhead, Edmund M - PROVIDENCE RI](#)  
**To:** [Coit, Janet \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Save the Striped Bass ..... Please !  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2015 1:48:13 PM

---

Dear Director Coit -- Just my 2 cents as a lifelong RI resident, taxpayer and recreational Fishermen . Please do all that you can to stop the decimation of the Striped Bass stocks in this great state. I would propose harvesting rules similar to Maine using a slot system but understand that is not up for debate this time around . With that, please push for consistency with Connecticut and Massachusetts with allowing only 1 striped bass greater than 28 inches per day per fisherman. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Ted Broomhead

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**From:** [Tim Gilchrist](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Hearing  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 7:45:30 PM

---

Sir,

I'm a 74 year old Rhodie and have recreationally fished our waters for many decades. My opinion is that one fish daily per person should be applicable to ALL fishing categories. Further, there should be a slot system established to determine what size would be most beneficial to species preservation.

Thank your for your consideration.

Regards,

Tim Gilchrist

RISAA Member

Sent from where the buses don't run.

**From:** [THoude3320@aol.com](mailto:THoude3320@aol.com)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Hearing Today - focus Striped Bass  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 7:52:31 AM

---

Dear Mr. Duhamel,

As a lifelong Rhode Island angler, I am deeply concerned about the future of the striped bass stock, and would like to comment against allowing for-hire vessels an alternative bag limit of two striped bass per person per day.

Rhode Island should join the other states up and down the Atlantic coast that are acting to protect one of our most precious and vulnerable natural resources. Considering the myriad threats that striped bass face, starting with pollution of their Chesapeake and Hudson spawning grounds, reducing to one fish per day is only a modest sacrifice.

Making an exception for charters would be short-sighted, and I would discourage any of my friends or relatives from patronizing Rhode Island charters in the pursuit of Striped Bass if this exception goes forward.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Houde  
Aquidneck Island Striper Team  
Skull and Bones Fishing Club  
New England Kayak Fishing

**From:** [Tom Jewett](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Options  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 2:20:20 PM

---

Dear Mr. DuHamel,

I would like to see the options exercised in a way that does these things:

- Significantly reduce the harvest, recreational and commercial
- Apply the same rules to both commercial charter fishing as recreational (1 fish limit per person)
- Prohibit Captains and Mates from keeping fish when they are engaged with a paying charter.

Thank you.

Tom Jewett



Tom Jewett  
207-242-7612  
Beautiful Downtown [Vienna, Maine](#)

Summer Address: Silver Spring Marina, Wakefield, RI ☺

## Duhamel, Peter (DEM)

---

**From:** Toby Lapinski <lapinski@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2015 3:51 PM  
**To:** Duhamel, Peter (DEM)  
**Subject:** 2015 Recreational Striped Bass Regulations

Attn: Peter Duhamel  
RE: 2015 Recreational Striped Bass Regulations

I am a recreational angler of 30-plus years, the vast majority of which has taken place along the beaches and within the water of the state of Rhode Island. In that time I have targeted a wide variety of species, but none with more passion and heart than the striped bass. I have invested thousands upon thousands of hours in this pursuit and I would like to some day be able to pass along the same joy of which I have experienced in targeting this majestic fish to my now 2-year old son. If appropriate actions are not taken at this crucial time, I fear that there may be no striped bass left for any of us to target, let alone my son.

Due to this, I strongly urge you to choose option 1 of the proposed changes in the recreational possession limits (1 fish bag limit with a minimum length of 28" .) This is what was recommended at the ASMFC meeting in Mystic, CT in October of which I attended, and it is the right thing to do. Now is the time for you and the state of Rhode Island to do the right thing and act upon the voice of the recreational fishery at large as heard in the 19 public hearing and the 2,490 written public comments which OVERWHELMINGLY supported a 1-fish bag limit.

Some items of note which should be considered when making your final decision:

- According to the ASMFC, all options under consideration only have a 50% probability of success.
- At the recent ASMFC Winter Meeting it was disclosed that all harvest reduction percentages provided by the ASMFC assumed a 100% angler compliance meaning that they are overstated and unrealistically ambitious.
- The ASMFC Enforcement Committee endorsed "simple and consistent regulations for all recreational modes" and stated that "mode exemptions, narrow slots and on board filleting are all difficult to enforce"; ASMFC leadership stressed the need for "simple and consistent regional regulations."
- The MA DMF has rejected the idea of special limits for the "for-hire" fleet and is recommending a daily limit of striped bass of 1 fish, 28" or larger; NH has already announced that they will adopt a daily limit for striped bass of 1 fish, 28" or larger.
- Connecticut has indicated they will likely align with RI's regulations with the strong likelihood that NY follows suit.
- A great majority of bait and tackle shops in RI have come out strongly in support of 1@28. The economic impact of bait and tackle shops rivals if not eclipses that of the for-hire industry and should not be discounted or ignored.
- There is not a single study, report or hard evidence that supports the potential negative impact to the for-hire industry caused by a 1 fish per client kill limit.

Again, I strongly urge you to take the right steps when selecting the new recreational striped bass regulations and opt for the 1-fish bag limit with a minimum length of 28".

**From:** [Ty Leger](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass regulation decisions  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 3:00:29 PM

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Mr. Duhamel,

With several proposals on the table with the ultimate goal of preserving **Striped Bass** stocks through reduction in catch rates I would humbly like to offer my opinion.

**In researching Striped Bass and a lifetime pursuing them in local waters** I have gained some insights into their biology and the impact of conservation measures. When I first began fishing Stripers at age 9 the minimum size limit was at 36" (and briefly 38" shortly thereafter) and, anecdotally, there seemed to be far fewer fish to be caught. Those years were following a dramatic decline and, through conservation, a strong resurgence in population was beginning to take place. I have since seen numbers rebound to levels which allowed the minimum size to decrease to 28" and 2 fish per day. In the past 10 years I have found very good returns of large numbers of fish, including this past season, and am very thankful timely conservation measures have had this result.

From a purely biological standpoint, though, I feel a minimum size is counterproductive to the fishery. I have done extensive research concerning Striped Bass and found that the larger fish (34" +) are ALL female and the egg production is directly proportional to their size. This means that the larger fish targeted by both commercial and recreational sectors are breeding stock and the more valuable (larger) fish are also more valuable than smaller fish to recruitment. School-sized fish are a mix of male and female and each female of that size class does not produce nearly as many eggs as a larger fish does. **I fully support a reduction in the number of larger fish harvested and would like to see a slot limit option considered for the future.**

**As far as charter regulations I think guests aboard would benefit from being allowed 2 fish per person** due to the expense and infrequent trips. In most cases charter customers simply do not have many opportunities to go fishing and allowing them to keep two fish per person is justifiable. **The Captain and mate, however, should be excluded from keeping fish** in addition to the customers' catch due to the fact they are on the water for many days in the season. They also have available the vessel, equipment, and (hopefully) know-how to catch Striped bass on a recreational basis on days they do not have a charter planned. There would be nothing to stop them from illegally selling excess fish and, if they want fish for the table, nothing stopping them from a pleasure trip when their fridge needs stocking.

Thank you for your consideration. I truly support conservation of Striped Bass and hope that science and research can help to determine the most effective path forward. I am hopeful that, in the future, a slot limit option is considered.

Ty Leger



**From:** [Tyler Rychener](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** RI Striped Bass Regulations  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:28:17 AM

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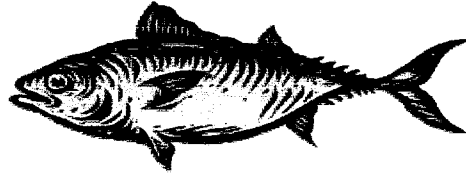
Dear Mr. Duhamel,

As an avid striped bass recreationaler angler, I am deeply concerned about the future of the striped bass stock, and would like to comment against allowing for-hire vessels an alternative bag limit of two striped bass per person per day. Rhode Island should join the other states up and down the Atlantic coast that are acting to protect one of our most precious and vulnerable natural resources. Considering the myriad threats that striped bass face, starting with pollution of their Chesapeake and Hudson spawning grounds, reducing to one fish per day is only a modest sacrifice. Making an exception for charters would be short-sighted, and I would discourage any of my friends or relatives from patronizing Rhode Island charters if this exception goes forward. Please continue to treat charter vessels as recreational fisherman and implement new limits of 1 striped bass greater than 28" for all recreational anglers.

Thank you for taking these comments under consideration,

Tyler Rychener

Waterbury Deep Sea Fishing Club, Inc.  
P.O. BOX 2503  
Waterbury, Ct 06720



**President**

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**(203) 217-3921**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**  
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**(203) 525-3556**  
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**Fred Schnarrs**  
**(203) 575-9393**  
**Trustee:**  
**Mark Madden**  
**(203) 879-1682**

To whom it may concern,

As members of the WDSFC we have been using the services of the RICBA for over 20 years. They have given us great service over the years. Living in Connecticut you do not get the options of chartering 5 or 6 when needed over a weekend. The club not only comes for the striped bass, but we also come for cod, black fish, fluke, porgies, and sea bass. As you can see we spend a lot of money in your state, not only on fish, but on hotels and restaurants as well. Your charter boats are very important to us as well as many other fishing people and tourist. All of the members below share the views of the RICBA members. Please find a solution that will keep everyone in business and happy.

Thank you for your time  
WDSFC

**Fw: STRIPER CONUNDRUM R.I.**

Saturday, February 21, 2015 12:14 PM

From: "Robert Batters" <rebatters@sbcglobal.net>

To: "JOHNTOWLE44@YAHOO.COM" <JOHNTOWLE44@YAHOO.COM>

JOHN I SENT THIS TO KENNY.

On Saturday, February 21, 2015 8:36 AM, Robert Batters <rebatters@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

STRIPER TOURNAMENT 2015

THIS YEAR WE HAVE A TOTAL OF 9 CHARTER BOATS SIGNED FOR THE STRIPER TOURNAMENT 2015

SPONSORED BY THE WATERBURY DEEP SEA FISHING CLUB ON JUNE 6/7 .

THIS REPRESENTS 54 FISHERMAN .IN ADDITION TO THE \$900.00 PER TRIP ,SPENT \$900.00 FOR CHARTERS AND \$150.00 MATES TIPS.

9X \$900.00 =\$8100.00 MANY MEMBERS SPEND 1-2 NITES AT LOCAL MOTELS AND FREQUENT GREAT LOCAL RESTAURANTS SPENDING AND STORES SPENDING ANOTHER \$1500.00 -\$2000.00.

THIS IS REAL MONEY \$10,000.00 ANNUALLY.

I HAVE RECENT RECORDS FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS WHERE 8-10 BOATS WITH 50-60 MEMBERS PARTICIPATING WE THE WATERBURY DEEP SEA FISHING CLUB AND ITS MEMBERS HAVE SPENT \$100,000 OVER THIS PERIOD.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF STRIPERS ALLOWED PER MAN AS THE FUTURE OF THIS STRIPER TRIP MAY BE IN JEOPARDY.

SADLEY SUBMITTED

BOB BATTERS

CHAIRMAN

STRIPER TOURNAMENT

W.D.S.F.C.

[REBATTERS@SBCGLOBAL.NET](mailto:REBATTERS@SBCGLOBAL.NET)

STEVE O'BRIEN

Jim Cronin

John O'Connell

Jay S. KATSKI

John J. Gannon

Mark M. Maddeu

PETER Schöpperhomer

JIM ACAS

Albert Gattuso

Stan Borysewicz

Mike K. Kelly

Giuseppe Di Cecco

Marty DeSomma

Joseph Amunoz

Ch Richmond

Wells Vely

Michael Langan

Jeff Savage

Wayne Jensen

Fred Schmaas

Jim Cronin

John Gulla

John Gulla

Robert Beland Sr

Jim Zaiko

Frank Zandria

Bill Roy

Bob Corbett

Phil ...

Francesco Natta

Bellemy John

Dan Wade

J. ...

Jay Wenzel

J. Kravczynski

Robert Prandia

Paul M. Massimo

Bob Westblock

Mike Stere

**From:** [willcooper4@comcast.net](mailto:willcooper4@comcast.net)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Stripper Reg  
**Date:** Sunday, February 15, 2015 11:50:29 AM

---

Hello,

Im writing you to voice my opinion on the current proposals for recreational fisherman.  
The best chance of success for the fishery isfor both recreational and for hire boats to  
adhere to the same 1 fish per day regulation.

**From:** [Bill Gauch](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Public hearing input  
**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2015 9:55:50 AM

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Mr. Duhamel,

I would like to provide my comment to the public hearing items for the RI recreational fishing regulation changes. Specifically, I would like to provide input on items #4, #8, #10 and #12.

Hearing Item #4:

Ideally, I would prefer a reduction in the bag limit with a status quo on size and season. Since none of the options have this, the only option which is appealing is Option 1. Catching fluke 18" or larger is often challenging from shore. Many short fish are thrown back before a single legal size fish can be caught. Often, the fish are just barely short or just barely legal size. In addition, closing of the early and late parts of the season eliminates two prime opportunities to catch fish.

Hearing Item #8:

Option 3 or 4 are acceptable. The primary desire is to keep the early part of the Black Sea Bass season open.

Hearing Item #10:

Option 2 is preferable with the RISAA-recommended addendum that the 2-fish limit only applies to the paying passengers and does not allow the captain/crew to be included in the catch limits for the boat.

Hearing Item #12:

Option 2 is the only fair and equitable option. The minimum size for commercial fishermen (fish traps) shouldn't be smaller than the minimum size for recreational fishermen.

Sincerely,

William F. Gauch  
3 Adelaide Ave.  
Middletown, RI 02842  
(401)829-5700

**From:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Francesfit@aol.com](mailto:Francesfit@aol.com)  
**Subject:** February 16, 2015 hearing comment  
**Date:** Friday, February 06, 2015 3:38:47 PM

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**Pete, for the public hearing record:**

**From:** Francesfit [<mailto:francesfit@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 06, 2015 2:46 PM  
**To:** McNamee, Jason (DEM)  
**Subject:** Re: [Rimarinefisheries] Marine Fisheries Workshop and Public Hearing presentations - February 16, 2015

Hello Jason

Thanks for the heads up with the tables and presentations. Sea bass is the problem. Is there any way we can have an option that would lower the bag limit to 2 fish in the early season and maybe 5 in the fall season and have a later start date, maybe July 15th or so. If there was a closure in the fall that was the same as the federal closure, this would also be a great help towards achieving the reductions needed. Vessels with federal permits are subject to the closure anyway. As you know some boats get around this by turning in the federal permit. If we stopped that practice and had the same fall closure, it may be enough to extend the season. I am not one to usually sound the alarm bell but the fall fishery is very important to the party boat sector. I wish I was able to attend the ASMFC meeting. It sounds like it was interesting to say the least. It almost sounds like politics are taking precedent over common sense and science.

Thanks in advance for what ever you can do.

Frank Blount

**From:** [John Rainone](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Fisheries Proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 11, 2015 10:23:39 PM

---

Peter,

I can not attend the public comment meeting do to being out of the country at that time. I would like to give my comments on the proposals. I am speaking as a charter boat captain that has been in business in RI for 35 yrs.

1. **Summer Flounder**...I believe we should remain at **Status Quo**...This is a very important fishery for recreational anglers and our customers. We should not have to lower our bag limit to help out other states that consistently go over their quota. ex. NY....

2. **Tautog**...I believe we should remain at **Status Quo** again...especially for the charter boat industry. We have provided much needed data on the catch and release efforts, sizes, etc. to DEM scientists for that species for many years now. We need our bag limit of 6 fish to maintain our customers and keep our businesses going...The majority of charter boats in RI do not fish for Tautog during the spring season when they are spawning, or the summer season....Most charter boats and head boats only fish for Tautog during the fall season.

3. **Scup**...we should stay at **status quo** once again..

4. **Sea Bass**.. Out of the recommendations we have, **I would like the split bag early season closed, or the split bag increased size and early season closed...we need to be allowed to retain sea bass in the late season.** We really do not have much sea bass fishing in the early season. I really see no reason that we have to take a reduction in the sea bass fishing....there are more sea bass in our waters than ever.

5. **Striped Bass**...I support the split modes that the ASMFC has adopted as compliant for RI...**recreational 1 fish @ 28" and for the party and charter boat industry 2 fish @ 32"**. This gives the reduction needed for the bass, and still gives the customers a chance to have 2 fish if they want. Many customers do not want 2 fish each and are happy with less bass because we have been taking them fishing for fluke, scup and sea bass to offset the pressure on the bass. Some anglers are not interested in the bottom fishing though and still want to fish for 2 bass and some blue fish. These anglers do not have the luxury of their own boats as most recreational anglers, so they save up their money to go fishing once or twice a year, and expect to go home with some quality fish for dinner...recreational anglers that have their own boats can go fishing once or twice a week or more if they want, so they really do not need to have 2 bass per person every trip.

Thank you

**Capt. John Rainone**

-- L'il Toot Charters Inc.  
35 Ocean View Dr.  
Narragansett RI 02882  
401-497-6683  
[www.LilTootCharter.com](http://www.LilTootCharter.com)



**From:** [Michael Mayo](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** New regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 10:36:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Peter,

I wanted to send you a quick note on the proposed regulations for the upcoming fishing season. I live in CT, but I do a significant amount of my fishing in Rhode Island waters usually launching my boat in Groton or Barn Island then crossing over to Rhode Island waters to fish. I spend a large amount of my time over fishing around Block Island as well. I would like to see Rhode Island adopt a reasonable slot limit for striped bass that also includes the charter/party boat segment. All too often we as recreational anglers get stuck with one set of rules while the charter/party boat guys get their own set of rules. This is just not fair but more importantly it circumvents the whole reason for the regulations in the first place and that is to reduce harvest and conserve the resource. I am a multi species fisherman who employs many different tactics to catch fish. Flyfishing, conventional, and spinfishing I use them all and enjoy all of those techniques. I very much enjoy being able to catch a nice limit of fish to bring home for the table. I have always adhered tenaciously to any and all regulations imposed on me whether I agreed or not. My feeling on the striped bass is that they have declined noticeably in the last 10 years. There was a time I could hit many of my usual haunts along the RI shoreline and I could easily catch dozens of striped bass in all size categories. This has become something that isn't really worth spending any time doing these days as most of those areas that I always knew I could find some fish have been literally devoid of them in the last few years. The one exception seems to be Block Island where there was a wholesale slaughter of huge bass last season for weeks. I unfortunately cannot always make my way over to Block Island as my boat is only 20' and is an open center console which doesn't always afford me the luxury of making my way across the sound to the island. My striped bass fishing has been and always will be 99% catch and release as I don't eat many striped bass for many documented reasons. But just because I don't like to keep many striped bass doesn't mean I don't still enjoy immensely hunting and catching them.

I guess my motivation for writing to you is hopefully that you and those who will weigh the options available to them in enacting and new regulations or changes to existing regulations will take into consideration in a very significant way the recreational angler. We are out there day in and day out just as the commercial fishermen and we as a group deserve the same consideration when it comes to regulating the fisheries we all hold dear to us. My hope is that the regulations will be fairly meted out to all interested groups and that there isn't differing regulations imposed on commercial vs. recreational anglers. I am favor of a slot limit of 28"-32" and one fish per day on striped bass both recreational and commercial. Further I would very much like to see the regulations on Black Sea bass raised to 8-10 fish per day per person. These fish are very plentiful and their numbers just seem to increase year after year. Imposing the restrictive regulations that you and other states did last season just put an end to wanting to target them until the limits were raised late in the season. As for the Tautog I don't have much against the current regulations except for the 10 fish per boat limit which is just unfair. When I go blackfishing I am usually accompanied by several other fishermen usually 4 of us. With a 10 fish per boat limit it makes it so that we do not bother fishing RI waters as the regulations make it not worth the effort. If every guy on my boat was allowed his limit

to take home instead of worrying about a 10 fish boat limit there would be no problem. Please consider removing the 10 fish per boat limit on the blackfish they are hard enough to find and catch as it is but when you do finally find a good number of them you are forced to release many keeper sized fish due to the boat limit which could lead to more fish mortality due to releasing fish that otherwise would have been retained.

Thank you for your time and hard work. I know it isn't an easy job to try and keep everyone happy frankly it is an impossible job as you can never make everyone happy but at least there are people like you that are willing to take the time to weigh the options and attempt to enact sensible regulations in order to try and conserve the resource.

## **Michael Mayo**

### **IT Administrator**

Early, Lucarelli, Sweeney & Meisenkothen  
(An Association of Professional LLCs)  
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Working Hard at Making Justice Work

**From:** [Rich](#)  
**To:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Black sea bass  
**Date:** Friday, February 13, 2015 11:19:05 AM

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Jason

The RISAA BOD is trying to come up with a preferred option for BSB for 2015. We are interested in Option 5 – 14” min size, but we don’t know what would be acceptable for bag & season. Is it possible that the length of season could be extended with a 14” min size (especially the early season)?

Our members are saying that they hate to throw back that 1 big sea bass caught as a by-catch just because the season is not open, when there are so many BSB around.

Thanks,

Rich



R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association  
70 Gladys Drive  
North Kingstown, RI 02852  
401-741-5648  
[www.rifishing.com](http://www.rifishing.com)



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Vice President  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Director

Capt. Rick Bellavance  
Capt. Steve Anderson  
Capt. Andrew D'Angelo  
Capt. Paul Johnson  
Capt. Nick Butziger

February 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Peter Duhamel**

Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Rd  
Jamestown, RI 02835

Dear Mr. Duhamel,

On behalf of the 65 members of the RI Party and Charter Boat Association, their crew members and the tens of thousands of recreational fishermen who visit RI to fish aboard our vessels each year, I would like to offer the following comments regarding proposed measures for several important recreationally caught species for the 2015 fishing season.

## **Striped Bass:**

The RIPCBA strongly supports the ASMFC Technical Committee and Board approved Conservation Equivalency proposal submitted by RIDEM that would set the management measures for the Charter/Party Sector at 2 fish per person with a 32 inch minimum size.

Regarding mandatory electronic reporting using eLogbook or eTrips: The RIPCBA supports efforts to collect more accurate and timely catch and effort data from the Charter/Party Sector and we would support implementation of mandatory electronic reporting for Striped Bass with two recommendations.

1. RIDEM would need aggressive outreach and education as well as a commitment of resources to establish the necessary eTrips/eLogbook accounts for Charter/Party permit holders.
2. RIDEM should advocate on behalf of the Charter/Party sector to the NMFS for allowing the eTrips data to be used to satisfy our existing VTR reporting requirement. All efforts should be made to avoid duplicative reporting. One stop reporting will aid in user group buy in for mandatory reporting.

## **Summer Flounder:**

The RIPCBA supports status quo for regional management of summer flounder for 2015. RI's Summer Flounder measures should remain as they were in 2014. 8 Fish per person at 18 inches with a season from May 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The RIPCBA understands that a few members of the ASMFC Summer Flounder Board would like to see RI adopt more conservative measures for 2015 based on our minor overage in 2014, but we oppose that idea based on the following:

1. RI's recreational fishermen in collaboration with RIDEM have a history of responsible management of Summer Flounder and we could have liberalized in 2014, but we chose not to.
2. MRIP Recreational Catch data is filled with uncertainty and we question the accuracy of RI's 2014 estimates for summer flounder.
3. Reducing our regulations from 2014 just to put RI in line with our neighboring states for 2015 would not achieve any measurable reductions in landings and would only serve to please the fishermen of neighboring states that chose less conservative measures in the past.
4. ASMFC did not impose any mandates that would require RI to change its measures for summer flounder for 2015.
5. When the ASMFC Summer Flounder Board voted to try regional management as a "grand experiment" for 2014, the selling point was that if the coastwide quota was not exceeded than no state or region would be held accountable for their overages. RI's is an exact example why regional management was tried.

## **Black Sea Bass:**

The RIPCBA is in favor of a smaller possession limit during Wave 4 with the largest bag limit possible for Wave 5 and 6. We can run fluke trips in Wave 4 and then switch to BSB in Wave 5 and 6. We feel the discards of Black Sea Bass encountered in Wave 5 and 6, when the resource is more available to our Mode, would be undesirable.

An example of a measure we would support:

1 Fish at 14 inches for as much of Wave 4 as possible (working backwards from August 31<sup>st</sup>) and 8 fish for Wave 5 and 6. We recognize that Wave 5 and 6 bag limits in 2014 were set at 7, but our neighboring states were at 8 fish per person.

We would also support a 7 fish bag limit in Wave 5 and 6 if it makes a difference in landings and if an 8 fish bag limit would have an effect on the number of days open on Wave 4.

## **Scup:**

The RIPCBA support **Status Quo** Measures for the 2015 Season  
30 fish per person May 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>, 45 fish from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>, and 30 fish from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The RIPCBA recommend that the RIDEM look into an increase in the bag limit for the Bonus Season for the For Hire Mode in 2016. This would be to mirror the 50 fish Federal regulation pertaining to bag limit only.

## **Tautog:**

The RIPCBA supports **Status Quo** for the 2015 Season.

3 Fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>

Closed June and July

3 Fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from August 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday on October.

6 fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in October to December 15<sup>th</sup>.

No Boat Limit of 10 fish for the Charter/Party Sector

In light of the preliminary Tautog assessment before the ASMFC Tautog Board which shows declining stock condition, the RIPCBA recommends that RIDEM make Tautog an Enforcement Priority due to a perceived high level of poaching by unlicensed fishermen.

Sincerely,

*Capt. Rick Bellavance*

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President  
R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association

**From:** [William D. Saums](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass Fishery  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 12:40:20 PM

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Mr. DuHamel,

As a resident of CT, a RI business owner, and a salt water fisherman for over 35 years, I urge you to heed the warnings about the striped bass fishery, and take steps to implement safeguards to preserve the fishery now.

I remember the eighties, when there were no striped bass; and I remember the recovery of the nineties and the first ten years of this century. As one who spends a lot of time on the water, I can tell you that the fishery here in CT (less than 10 miles from your border) is in the condition it was in 1985.

One fish per angler, regardless of whether they are on a commercial charter or not, is the only safe way to bring the population back. This is good for all of us, including the chartermen. I am friends with several of them here in CT, and privately, they say they think the fishery will be shut down completely if nothing is done.

Doing nothing will guarantee that. Anything less drastic than 1 fish per angler will only delay it.

Thank you for listening.

**Bill Saums**

O: 860-572-7181

C: 401-225-5362

**From:** [Gerry Schey](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Striped Bass  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2015 7:50:06 PM

---

Pete

I would like to add my name to the list of **Commercial Fisherman asking the Bass season open on May 24th 2015**. I feel a better balance is needed between bay fisherman and offshore fisherman for commercial rod & reel.

Thank you  
**Gerry Schey**  
Gtschey@cox.net

Sent from my iPad



**From:** [Joe Macari](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Lengyel, Nicole \(DEM\)](#); [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Commercial Striped Bass proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 2:24:38 PM

---

Peter-

I would like to submit the following as public input for the **Commercial Striped Bass (General Category)** Public Hearing comments

I would like to propose a change in the commercial striped bass (General Category) regulations for 2015. With the proposed 25% reduction in commercial allocation mandated by ASMFC, the forthcoming year will offer some very challenging economic options for the Rhode Island commercial fisherman.

The following proposal would optimize the prime striped bass season in the Spring when prices are usually at fair market value, fish are more prevalent, and additionally, would somewhat stretch that Spring season to approximately what is was before the drastic conservation measures taken by ASMFC.

#### PUBLIC HEARING ITEM #11

I would propose a change in the spring (June 8-August 31) season, i.e., reduce fishing days per week from 5 days to 4 days, as follows:

12.3 Commercial – General Category:

(B) June 8 – August 31:

- (1) Allocation: Seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota will be available in this sub-period.
- (2) Possession limit: Five (5) fish per person per calendar day, or if fishing from a vessel, five (5) fish per vessel per calendar day.
- (3) The fishery will be closed in each calendar week from 12:00 AM Friday until 11:59 PM **SUNDAY** during this sub-period. There will be no commercial possession or sale of Striped bass on these days for general category commercial fishermen.
- (4) The sub-period will close once seventy percent (70%) of the general category quota is projected to be harvested if prior to August 31.

The above is the only proposal I am submitting. I believe the Fall season, as regulated in the past, offers the commercial fisherman another prime time to harvest striped bass while the market value is still advantageous.

Thank you for any actions taken by the RIDEM, RIMFC, and the Director.

Sincerely-

**Joe Macari**

PEL 793

[Jmacari1@cox.net](mailto:Jmacari1@cox.net)



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

January 22, 2015

Mr. Duhamel:

We would like to propose opening the commercial striped bass season in RI to an earlier date, preferably the second or third week of May. The 2014 opening on June 8 missed a more plentiful and larger sized fish run that we have seen happen for a number of years in mid to late May. Even considering the 25% reduction in quota, an early start will hopefully allow us to actually meet the quota which has not happened the past two years, even with the fall season extended to the end of the year on December 31. We would respectfully suggest :

- Return the spring/fall split to 80%/20%.
- Consider opening the RI striped bass season in 2015 on Sunday, May 17 or May 24.

Thank you,

Bo Christensen MPURP000429

Bo Christensen

Ralph I bello 00038 MRL  
David Shylatty MPURP 100686  
Michael McGweney MPURP 205 Mark McGweney  
Richard Mower MP 130  
PLEBS, LLC MP 106 PHILIP SPADOLA

Peter Duhamel  
Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Road  
Jamestown, RI 02835

January 22, 2015

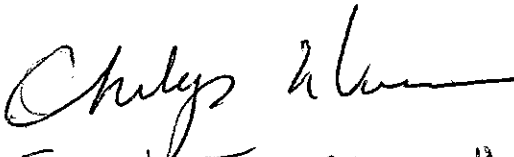
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Thank you,

Bo Christensen



FRANK TAVAROZZ 

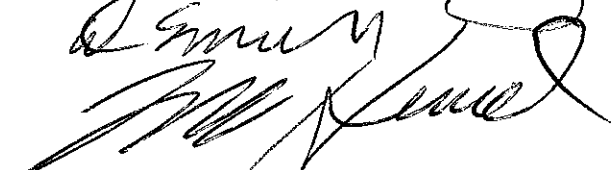
Michael Mc Elroy



AL EMERY



JEFF HOWARD



John Harvey

John Harvey

Mr. Duhamel

I am writing in response to the petition written and submitted by Bo Christenson which I signed, but I wanted to also state for the record that as a inshore commercial fisherman having such a late starting date to the season in the upper bay impacts many fisherman not represented by any group, for many of us we cannot physically make the trek to the lower bay (block island) to catch the fish when they are here and by the time the season opens in the upper bay the fish are gone I believe partly due to the fact the menhaden boats mop up the bait fish and the water temp gets warmer and the fish move out to cooler water and find a food source, it seems that these two events happen during the spring and then the season opens and many fisherman who still try to fish miss the run ( I'm one of them ) and we can't go down the bay and still make a living. I know I writing rules and legislation you can't please everyone out there but I believe that there is some room to accommodate this request or at the very least move the starting date back a little earlier to accommodate a very important fishery to the upper Narragansett bay commercial fisherman

Thank you

David Ghigliotty

Vice president

R.I. Shellfishermans association

February 16, 2015

RIDEM  
Division of Fish & Wildlife  
Marine Fisheries

To whom it may concern,

This letter is in reference to the pending reduction in commercial striped bass quota and season allocations for striped bass in 2015. With an already limited fishery being cut by twenty-five percent, it is especially important that we set the allocation periods to maximize return on the quota. It seems to me that we could accomplish this best by catching the entire quota in the spring – when the weather, fishing and price are optimal.

Status-quo would be a mistake this year. In recent years, striped bass fishing has been very good in the spring season and is just beginning to peak at the time of the closure. Prices have remained high and relatively stable for the period. This is partly because the Massachusetts quota hasn't come to market yet. The September season has been a struggle at best, often very difficult to catch a limit in one trip and with smaller fish at lower prices, yet expenses remain the same. The weather is a factor also and adds to the degree of difficulty and safety concerns. Given the twenty-five percent reduction in overall quota, the status-quo option would take away the four or five best fishing days of the year (at the end of the spring season) and essentially trade them for the worst fishing days in September instead.

Conditions have changed, so we should adapt by lining up our season with the best opportunity for harvest and market – that is most certainly the spring season. The reality is that we are down to so few fishing days that a split season is no longer practical. In the new scenario, the spring season would remain the same as in recent years, or better, and the quota reduction would eliminate the September season. The economy of this single season alternative would surely help to offset the loss of quota for fishermen, whereas the status-quo option would create unnecessary hardship.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Barry M. Centracchio



R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association  
70 Gladys Drive  
North Kingstown, RI 02852  
401-741-5648  
[www.rifishing.com](http://www.rifishing.com)



President  
Vice President  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Director

Capt. Rick Bellavance  
Capt. Steve Anderson  
Capt. Andrew D'Angelo  
Capt. Paul Johnson  
Capt. Nick Butziger

February 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

**Peter Duhamel**

Division of Fish and Wildlife Marine Fisheries Office  
3 Fort Wetherill Rd  
Jamestown, RI 02835

Dear Mr. Duhamel,

On behalf of the 65 members of the RI Party and Charter Boat Association, their crew members and the tens of thousands of recreational fishermen who visit RI to fish aboard our vessels each year, I would like to offer the following comments regarding proposed measures for several important recreationally caught species for the 2015 fishing season.

## **Striped Bass:**

The RIPCBA strongly supports the ASMFC Technical Committee and Board approved Conservation Equivalency proposal submitted by RIDEM that would set the management measures for the Charter/Party Sector at 2 fish per person with a 32 inch minimum size.

Regarding mandatory electronic reporting using eLogbook or eTrips: The RIPCBA supports efforts to collect more accurate and timely catch and effort data from the Charter/Party Sector and we would support implementation of mandatory electronic reporting for Striped Bass with two recommendations.

1. RIDEM would need aggressive outreach and education as well as a commitment of resources to establish the necessary eTrips/eLogbook accounts for Charter/Party permit holders.
2. RIDEM should advocate on behalf of the Charter/Party sector to the NMFS for allowing the eTrips data to be used to satisfy our existing VTR reporting requirement. All efforts should be made to avoid duplicative reporting. One stop reporting will aid in user group buy in for mandatory reporting.

## **Summer Flounder:**

The RIPCBA supports status quo for regional management of summer flounder for 2015. RI's Summer Flounder measures should remain as they were in 2014. 8 Fish per person at 18 inches with a season from May 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The RIPCBA understands that a few members of the ASMFC Summer Flounder Board would like to see RI adopt more conservative measures for 2015 based on our minor overage in 2014, but we oppose that idea based on the following:

1. RI's recreational fishermen in collaboration with RIDEM have a history of responsible management of Summer Flounder and we could have liberalized in 2014, but we chose not to.
2. MRIP Recreational Catch data is filled with uncertainty and we question the accuracy of RI's 2014 estimates for summer flounder.
3. Reducing our regulations from 2014 just to put RI in line with our neighboring states for 2015 would not achieve any measurable reductions in landings and would only serve to please the fishermen of neighboring states that chose less conservative measures in the past.
4. ASMFC did not impose any mandates that would require RI to change its measures for summer flounder for 2015.
5. When the ASMFC Summer Flounder Board voted to try regional management as a "grand experiment" for 2014, the selling point was that if the coastwide quota was not exceeded than no state or region would be held accountable for their overages. RI's is an exact example why regional management was tried.

## **Black Sea Bass:**

The RIPCBA is in favor of a smaller possession limit during Wave 4 with the largest bag limit possible for Wave 5 and 6. We can run fluke trips in Wave 4 and then switch to BSB in Wave 5 and 6. We feel the discards of Black Sea Bass encountered in Wave 5 and 6, when the resource is more available to our Mode, would be undesirable.

An example of a measure we would support:

1 Fish at 14 inches for as much of Wave 4 as possible (working backwards from August 31<sup>st</sup>) and 8 fish for Wave 5 and 6. We recognize that Wave 5 and 6 bag limits in 2014 were set at 7, but our neighboring states were at 8 fish per person.

We would also support a 7 fish bag limit in Wave 5 and 6 if it makes a difference in landings and if an 8 fish bag limit would have an effect on the number of days open on Wave 4.

## **Scup:**

The RIPCBA support **Status Quo** Measures for the 2015 Season  
30 fish per person May 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>, 45 fish from Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>, and 30 fish from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The RIPCBA recommend that the RIDEM look into an increase in the bag limit for the Bonus Season for the For Hire Mode in 2016. This would be to mirror the 50 fish Federal regulation pertaining to bag limit only.



## **Tautog:**

The RIPCBA supports **Status Quo** for the 2015 Season.

3 Fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>

Closed June and July

3 Fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from August 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday on October.

6 fish per person for the Charter/Party Sector from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in October to December 15<sup>th</sup>.

No Boat Limit of 10 fish for the Charter/Party Sector

In light of the preliminary Tautog assessment before the ASMFC Tautog Board which shows declining stock condition, the RIPCBA recommends that RIDEM make Tautog an Enforcement Priority due to a perceived high level of poaching by unlicensed fishermen.

Sincerely,

*Capt. Rick Bellavance*

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President  
R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association

**From:** [Michael Mayo](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** New regulations  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2015 10:36:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Peter,

I wanted to send you a quick note on the proposed regulations for the upcoming fishing season. I live in CT, but I do a significant amount of my fishing in Rhode Island waters usually launching my boat in Groton or Barn Island then crossing over to Rhode Island waters to fish. I spend a large amount of my time over fishing around Block Island as well. I would like to see Rhode Island adopt a reasonable slot limit for striped bass that also includes the charter/party boat segment. All too often we as recreational anglers get stuck with one set of rules while the charter/party boat guys get their own set of rules. This is just not fair but more importantly it circumvents the whole reason for the regulations in the first place and that is to reduce harvest and conserve the resource. I am a multi species fisherman who employs many different tactics to catch fish. Flyfishing, conventional, and spinfishing I use them all and enjoy all of those techniques. I very much enjoy being able to catch a nice limit of fish to bring home for the table. I have always adhered tenaciously to any and all regulations imposed on me whether I agreed or not. My feeling on the striped bass is that they have declined noticeably in the last 10 years. There was a time I could hit many of my usual haunts along the RI shoreline and I could easily catch dozens of striped bass in all size categories. This has become something that isn't really worth spending any time doing these days as most of those areas that I always knew I could find some fish have been literally devoid of them in the last few years. The one exception seems to be Block Island where there was a wholesale slaughter of huge bass last season for weeks. I unfortunately cannot always make my way over to Block Island as my boat is only 20' and is an open center console which doesn't always afford me the luxury of making my way across the sound to the island. My striped bass fishing has been and always will be 99% catch and release as I don't eat many striped bass for many documented reasons. But just because I don't like to keep many striped bass doesn't mean I don't still enjoy immensely hunting and catching them.

I guess my motivation for writing to you is hopefully that you and those who will weigh the options available to them in enacting and new regulations or changes to existing regulations will take into consideration in a very significant way the recreational angler. We are out there day in and day out just as the commercial fishermen and we as a group deserve the same consideration when it comes to regulating the fisheries we all hold dear to us. My hope is that the regulations will be fairly meted out to all interested groups and that there isn't differing regulations imposed on commercial vs. recreational anglers. I am favor of a slot limit of 28"-32" and one fish per day on striped bass both recreational and commercial. Further I would very much like to see the regulations on Black Sea bass raised to 8-10 fish per day per person. These fish are very plentiful and their numbers just seem to increase year after year. Imposing the restrictive regulations that you and other states did last season just put an end to wanting to target them until the limits were raised late in the season. As for the Tautog I don't have much against the current regulations except for the 10 fish per boat limit which is just unfair. When I go blackfishing I am usually accompanied by several other fishermen usually 4 of us. With a 10 fish per boat limit it makes it so that we do not bother fishing RI waters as the regulations make it not worth the effort. If every guy on my boat was allowed his limit

to take home instead of worrying about a 10 fish boat limit there would be no problem. Please consider removing the 10 fish per boat limit on the blackfish they are hard enough to find and catch as it is but when you do finally find a good number of them you are forced to release many keeper sized fish due to the boat limit which could lead to more fish mortality due to releasing fish that otherwise would have been retained.

Thank you for your time and hard work. I know it isn't an easy job to try and keep everyone happy frankly it is an impossible job as you can never make everyone happy but at least there are people like you that are willing to take the time to weigh the options and attempt to enact sensible regulations in order to try and conserve the resource.

## **Michael Mayo**

### **IT Administrator**

Early, Lucarelli, Sweeney & Meisenkothen  
(An Association of Professional LLCs)  
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265 Church Street, 11th Floor  
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c: 203.260.5539  
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**EARLY • LUCARELLI • SWEENEY • MEISENKOTHEN LLC**  
Working Hard at Making Justice Work

**From:** [John Rainone](#)  
**To:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Fisheries Proposals  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 11, 2015 10:23:39 PM

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Peter,

I can not attend the public comment meeting do to being out of the country at that time. I would like to give my comments on the proposals. I am speaking as a charter boat captain that has been in business in RI for 35 yrs.

1. **Summer Flounder**...I believe we should remain at **Status Quo**...This is a very important fishery for recreational anglers and our customers. We should not have to lower our bag limit to help out other states that consistently go over their quota. ex. NY....

2. **Tautog**...I believe we should remain at **Status Quo** again...especially for the charter boat industry. We have provided much needed data on the catch and release efforts, sizes, etc. to DEM scientists for that species for many years now. We need our bag limit of 6 fish to maintain our customers and keep our businesses going...The majority of charter boats in RI do not fish for Tautog during the spring season when they are spawning, or the summer season....Most charter boats and head boats only fish for Tautog during the fall season.

3. **Scup**...we should stay at **status quo** once again..

4. **Sea Bass**.. Out of the recommendations we have, I would like the split bag early season closed, or the split bag increased size and early season closed...we need to be allowed to retain sea bass in the late season. We really do not have much sea bass fishing in the early season. I really see no reason that we have to take a reduction in the sea bass fishing....there are more sea bass in our waters than ever.

5. **Striped Bass**...I support the split modes that the ASMFC has adopted as compliant for RI...recreational 1 fish @ 28" and for the party and charter boat industry 2 fish @ 32". This gives the reduction needed for the bass, and still gives the customers a chance to have 2 fish if they want. Many customers do not want 2 fish each and are happy with less bass because we have been taking them fishing for fluke, scup and sea bass to offset the pressure on the bass. Some anglers are not interested in the bottom fishing though and still want to fish for 2 bass and some blue fish. These anglers do not have the luxury of their own boats as most recreational anglers, so they save up their money to go fishing once or twice a year, and expect to go home with some quality fish for dinner...recreational anglers that have their own boats can go fishing once or twice a week or more if they want, so they really do not need to have 2 bass per person every trip.

Thank you

**Capt. John Rainone**

-- L'il Toot Charters Inc.  
35 Ocean View Dr.  
Narragansett RI 02882  
401-497-6683  
[www.LilTootCharter.com](http://www.LilTootCharter.com)

**From:** [Rich](#)  
**To:** [McNamee, Jason \(DEM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Duhamel, Peter \(DEM\)](#)  
**Subject:** Black sea bass  
**Date:** Friday, February 13, 2015 11:19:05 AM

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Jason

The RISAA BOD is trying to come up with a preferred option for BSB for 2015. We are interested in Option 5 – 14” min size, but we don’t know what would be acceptable for bag & season. Is it possible that the length of season could be extended with a 14” min size (especially the early season)?

Our members are saying that they hate to throw back that 1 big sea bass caught as a by-catch just because the season is not open, when there are so many BSB around.

Thanks,

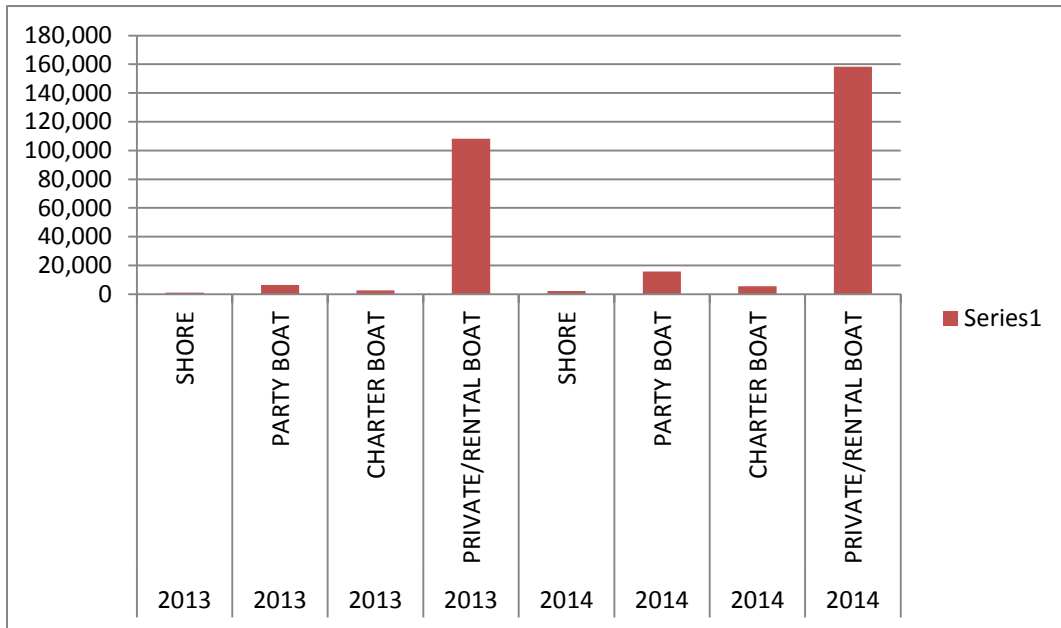
Rich

# Summer Flounder Proposal 2015

Shore and Boat mode: **Season May 1<sup>st</sup> to Oct 31, Size 18" min. Bag 8 fish, Boat limit 10.**

**This regulation limits boat mode.**

Party and Charter mode: **Season May1st to Oct31, Size 18" min. Bag 8 fish**



Michael J Bucko  
155 Brackett Ave  
Tiverton RI 02878

RECOMMENDING CHANGES TO TAUTOG MEETING February 16,2015

I recommend moving the open season from April 15 to April 1, 2015 same bag limits and size limits.

Reasoning:

The recreational tautog spring fishery is most done by shore mode fishermen. The shore mode fishermen are being shut out of the recreational fishing. The loss of winter flounder fishing, regulation size limits on summer flounder have been reducing catch from shore. This is one of the few species available from shore.

Moving the date to April 1<sup>st</sup> is the right thing to do so we can provide shore fishermen more access. The increase in harvest in 2015 , based on 2014 data would be zero. It would provide individual or family to enjoy a nice weekend day in the beginning of April, the ability to go to the beach in hopes of catching supper. The addition 14 days would provide increase access with zero mortality.

Michael J Bucko

155 Brackett Ave

Tiverton, RI 02878

mjbucko@mindspring.com

# Rhode Island Fishermen's Alliance

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P.O. Box 337  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

February 16, 2015

RI Marine Fisheries Public Hearing for proposed amendments for the 2015 **Commercial Tautog** fisheries management plan.

The Alliance proposes the following changes:

7.9.2 Commercial:

(A) Minimum size: Sixteen (16) inches.

(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The commercial harvest shall be the same seasons and the same bag limit as the recreational fishery.

~~(B) Seasons, allocations, and possession limit: The total allowable harvest of tautog will be established annually, and will be that amount allocated to the State of Rhode Island by the Regional Fishery Management Council and/or the ASMFC. The quota shall only be available during the following seasons:~~

~~(1) Spring sub-period (April 15 – May 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day. RI Marine Fisheries Regulations Part VII – Finfish Page 15 of 40~~

~~(2) Summer sub-period (August 1 – September 15): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota. (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(3) Fall sub-period (October 15 – December 31): (a) Allocation: 1/3 of the annual quota (b) Possession limit: Ten (10) fish per vessel per day.~~

~~(4) Sub-period quotas may be harvested until exhausted. Any quota not harvested during a sub-period will be added to the next sub-period. If an over harvest has occurred, that over harvest will be deducted equally from all remaining sub-periods in the same calendar year. If an over harvest has occurred for the entire year, that over harvest will be deducted from the Summer sub-period of the following calendar year.~~

Note:

1. There are around one million residents in the state and around 31,000 salt water licensed residents or approximately three percent (3%) of the resident population.



2. The RI recreational fishery currently harvests over 500,000 lbs of tautog annually while the commercial fishery is limited to approximately 50,000 lbs.
3. RI non-fishing residents representing 97% of the population have less than 10% of the resource available to them.
4. Active resident recreational fishermen representing 3% of the population and non-resident fishermen take more than 90% of the resource.
5. More than half of the recreational salt water anglers fishing in RI waters are non-residents and take more than 250,000 lbs .
6. Non-resident recreational fishermen take more than 5 times as much of the Tautog resource as is made available to the non-fishing RI resident.
7. Recreational fishermen have access to the tautog resource for 174 days out of the year while non-fishing residents dependent upon commercial fishermen have access for only 111 days.