

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

*October 29, 2014
10:15 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Mystic, Connecticut*

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change;
other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*D. Grout*) 10:15 a.m.
 2. Board Consent 10:15 a.m.
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from August 2014
 3. Public Comment 10:20 a.m.
 4. Draft Addendum IV for Final Approval (*M. Waine*) **Final Action** 10:30 a.m.
 - Review Options (*M. Waine*)
 - Public Comment Summary (*M. Waine*)
 - Technical Committee Report (*C. Godwin*)
 - Advisory Panel Report (*K. Place*)
 - Law Enforcement Report (*K. Blanchard*)
 - Consider Final Approval of Addendum IV
- Lunch Break 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.*
5. Other Business/Adjourn 6:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held at:
The Mystic Hilton, 20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, Connecticut (860) 572.0731

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

MEETING OVERVIEW

Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 29, 2014

10:15 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Mystic, Connecticut

Chair: Doug Grout (NH) Assumed Chairmanship: 02/14	Technical Committee Chair: Charlton Godwin (NC)	Law Enforcement Committee Rep: Kurt Blanchard (RI)
Vice Chair: Jim Gilmore (NY)	Advisory Panel Chair: Kelly Place (VA)	Previous Board Meeting: August 5, 2014
Voting Members: ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, PRFC, VA, NC, NMFS, USFWS (16 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from August 2014 Meeting

3. Public Comment – At the beginning of the meeting, public comment will be taken on items not on the agenda. Individuals that wish to speak at this time must sign-in at the beginning of the meeting. For agenda items that have already gone out for public hearing and/or have had a public comment period that has closed, the Board Chair may determine that additional public comment will not provide additional information. In this circumstance, the Chair will not allow additional public comment on an issue. For agenda items that the public has not had a chance to provide input, the Board Chair may allow limited opportunity for comment. The Board Chair has the discretion to limit the number of speakers and/or the length of each comment.

4. Draft Addendum IV (10:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.) Final Action

Background

- Draft Addendum IV proposes changes to the fishing mortality reference points and management options to reduce fishing mortality to a level that is at or below the target within one or three years. It was approved for public comment in August (**Briefing Materials**).
- Public comment was gathered via nineteen public hearings in August and September (**Briefing Materials**).
- Public comments were submitted via email and mail in August and September (**Supplemental Materials**).
- The Technical Committee commented on the biological implications of Draft Addendum IV (**Briefing Materials**).
- The Advisory Panel reviewed Draft Addendum IV to formulate recommendations to the Board (**Supplemental Materials**).
- The Law Enforcement Committee presented comments on the management options of Draft Addendum IV for public comment at the Board's August meeting. The LEC comments will be presented again.

Presentations

- Overview of options and public comment summary by M. Waine
- Technical Committee Report by C. Godwin
- Advisory Panel Report by K. Place

- Law Enforcement Report by K. Blanchard

Board Actions for Consideration

- Select management options and implementation dates.
- Approve final document.

5. Other Business/Adjourn

DRAFT

DRAFT

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**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Crowne Plaza - Old Town
Alexandria, Virginia
August 5, 2014**

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board.
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

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INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of agenda by consent** (Page 1).
2. **Approval of proceedings of May 2014 by consent** (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve North Carolina's 2013 Benchmark Albemarle/Roanoke Stock Assessment for management use** (Page 3). Motion by Michelle Duval; second by Jim Gilmore. Motion carried (Page 3).
4. **Move to approve all of the recommendations of the Striped Bass Board Subcommittee to remove the options B-14, B-15, C-9, C-10 and D-6 from Draft Addendum IV to the Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.** (Page 18). Motion by Paul Diodati; second by Emerson Hasbrouck. Motion carried (Page 19).
5. **Move to include an option under Option B that would reduce the Amendment 6 state coastal commercial quotas by 30 percent** (Page 19). Motion by G. Ritchie White; second by Michelle Duval. Motion defeated for lack of a majority (Page 21).
6. **Move to add Option C to Section 2.5.2, Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Points, where the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions would manage the Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass Fisheries so as not to exceed a target fishing mortality rate of F equal 0.058** (Page 21). Motion by Tom O'Connell; second by Rob O'Reilly. Motion defeated (Page 29).
7. **Move to include a sunset provision in 3 years after implementation for Section 3.0** (Page 30). Motion by Tom Fote; second by Steve Meyers. Motion defeated (Page 34).
8. **Motion to add an option to take necessary harvest reductions (25%, 17%, 7+7+7%) from the 2012 harvest for the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions instead of the 2013 harvest** (Page 37). Motion by Rob O'Reilly; second by Martin Gary. Motion carried (Page 40).
9. **Move to include in Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment the reductions that would be obtained in the coastal recreational fishery with options of one fish at 30 inches or one fish at 32 inches** (Page 40). Motion by Emerson Hasbrouck; second by Michelle Duval. Motion carried (Page 43).
10. **Move to adopt Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP for Public Comment as modified today** (Page 43). Motion by Dennis Abbott; second by Bill Adler. Motion carried (Page 43).
11. **Motion to adjourn by consent** (Page 43).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Terry Stockwell, ME proxy for P. Keliher (AA)	Tom Fote, NJ (GA)
Rep. Walter Kumiega, ME (LA)	Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Andrzejczak (LA)
Steve Train, ME (GA)	Leroy Young, PA, proxy for J. Arway (AA)
G. Ritchie White, NH (GA)	Bernie Pankowski, DE, proxy for Sen. Venables (LA)
Doug Grout, NH (AA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Sen. Watters (LA)	John Clark, DE, proxy for D. Saveikis (AA)
Rep. Sarah Peake, MA (LA)	Tom O'Connell, MD (AA)
Paul Diodati, MA (AA)	Russell Dize, MD, proxy for Sen. Colburn (LA)
Bill Adler, MA (GA)	Bill Goldsborough, MD (GA)
Mark Gibson, RI, proxy for B. Ballou (AA)	John Bull, VA (AA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Rob O'Reilly, VA, Administrative proxy
Rick Bellavance, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Kyle Schick, VA proxy for Sen. Stuart (LA)
David Simpson, CT (AA)	Catherine Davenport, VA (GA)
Lance Stewart, CT (GA)	Michelle Duval, NC proxy for L. Daniel (AA)
Rep. Craig Miner, CT (LA)	Martin Gary, PRFC
James Gilmore, NY (AA)	Dan Ryan for Bryan King, DC
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Steve Meyers, NMFS
Sen. Phil Boyle, NY (LA)	Sherry White, USFWS
Russ Allen, NJ, proxy for D. Chanda (AA)	

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Ex-Officio Members

Charlton Godwin, Technical Committee Chair

Staff

Robert Beal
Toni Kerns

Mike Waive
Mark Robson

Guests

Joe Fessenden, MD DNR
Elizabeth Silleck, PEW Trusts
Joseph Gordon, PEW Trusts
Donald Lajavic USCG
Mike Sorbrau, USCG
Mike Leonard, American Sportfishing Assn.
Melanie Sturn, American Sportfishing Assn.
Phil Langley, PRFC
Alexei Sharov, MD DNR
Angela Giuliano, MD DNR

Arnold Leo, E. Hampton Baymens Assn.
Ed Liccione, CCA
Tony Friedrich, CCA
Raymond Kane, CHOIR
Brandon Muffley, NJ DFW
Desmond Kahn, Newark, DE
Ed O'Brien, MCBA
Dave Smith, MD Saltwater Sportfishing Assn.
Patrick Paquette, MA Striped Bass Assn.

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Presidential Ballroom of the Crown Plaza Hotel Old Town, Alexandria, Virginia, August 5, 2014, and was called to order at 1:05 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Douglas E. Grout.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN DOUGLAS E. GROUT: Welcome to a meeting of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board. My name is Doug Grout; I'm chair of the board right now. We have a lot of work to do today. We're going to be receiving a technical committee report on the North Carolina stock assessment and then, of course, we will be considering Draft Addendum IV for public comment today, along with reports from the Law Enforcement Advisory Committee and our subcommittee that we tasked with making revisions to Addendum IV.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIRMAN GROUT: To start off with, we have an agenda here. Are there any changes to the agenda? Wilson.

DR. WILSON LANEY: Mr. Chairman, could we please add under other business a very brief update on the cooperative winter tagging cruise.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: It sounds good; I think we should make that a standing other business item. Any other changes? Seeing none, we will consider the agenda approved as modified.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We also have the proceedings from our May 2014 meeting. Does anybody have any changes to that? Michelle.

DR. MICHELLE DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, I apologize, I was at that meeting, but in just reviewing the motions it appears that there might be just a copy-and-paste error in Motion Number 8, which was a motion as amended. The text of that does not actually reflect that the amendment passed. I'd be happy to get with staff with that afterwards.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, we'll look at that and make the correction as needed. Any other changes? Seeing none, is there any objection to approving the minutes of the May 2014 meeting? Seeing no objections, they approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We now have a point on the agenda where public comment can be made.

These are public comments for items that are not on the agenda; so, for example, if your comments refer to anything in Addendum IV, we will be taking comments at that time and not now. But if there is something else that is not on the agenda; I have two people that have signed up. I know I talked to one Des Kahn; that it sounds like his comment is related to the addendum; is that correct, Des?

MR. DES KAHN: I think so.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: And then I believe there is another, Jeff Deem; is that related to the addendum? Okay, we'll take public comment on that at that particular time. Are there any other comments from the public on something that's not on the agenda? Seeing none, we will move forward to Item Number 4, which is the technical committee report on the North Carolina Stock Assessment.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE NORTH CAROLINA STOCK ASSESSMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Our technical committee chairman, Charlton Godwin, will be providing a report for us.

MR. CHARLTON GODWIN: As background, at the 2013 winter meeting the board tasked the technical committee with developing stock-specific reference points for the Albemarle/Roanoke River Stock. In July the technical committee reviewed the results from the 2014 North Carolina Benchmark Stock Assessment. This is the Albemarle/Roanoke stock. This presentation just informs the board

on the results of the assessment and the technical committee discussion.

The tagging data continued to suggest minimal mixing between the Albemarle/Roanoke stock and Chesapeake Bay stocks, Delaware and Hudson River stocks. As far as total abundance, the Albemarle/Roanoke stock is smaller and is migratory older ages compared to the other stocks. The female maturation schedule is different for the Albemarle stock than it is for the Chesapeake Bay stock or for the maturation schedule using the coastal assessment.

Due to these facts, age-structured stock assessments of the Albemarle/Roanoke stock have provided stock-specific reference points of F and spawning stock biomass and fishing mortality since 1992. The current assessment of the Albemarle/Roanoke stock also is an age-structured assessment program; and it uses similar methodology as the coastal stock assessment to estimate reference points.

Due to the differences in the life history of the Albemarle/Roanoke stock and the ability to develop stock-specific reference points for the A/R stock, the ASMFC Striped Bass Technical Committee recommendation to the board is to use the reference points developed through the North Carolina Albemarle/Roanoke stock assessments for management use.

The technical committee will continue to review Albemarle/Roanoke benchmark stock assessments and make recommendations to the board as to the appropriateness of each assessment's results for management use. We will just go through a couple of slides showing the results of our most recent stock assessment.

The proposed new reference points for fishing mortality and spawning stock biomass are listed; 0.33 for a target and 0.41 for a threshold for fishing mortality. This level of fishing is associated with the target and threshold spawning stock biomass much like the coast-wide model. Also, our recreational and commercial fisheries in our Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River are managed on a quota-based system; so we have a quota each year which we may managed to not exceed.

The total allowable landings associated with those fishing mortalities are 305,000 pounds and 325,000 pounds, respectively. From our last stock assessment, the current quota that were using for our Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River is 550,000 pounds; so this is a reduction from that due in part to just changing in stock size abundance.

This next graph shows the – these are results from our assessment. It shows recruitment and it shows SSB. Currently our stock exhibits a lot of the same similar trends in recruitment that some of the coastal stocks, specifically the Chesapeake Bay stocks exhibit; and we are in a period of decline in abundance. Right now our SSB is in between the target and threshold.

The next slide is going to show total abundance as well as where our F rate is; so currently we are just above our F target, below the F threshold. The most recent years in the assessment for this model tend had a lot of uncertainty with them, especially with the total abundance. You can see in those couple of years that abundance is probably going to come back down with a couple more years of data.

The last slide is just upcoming management of the Albemarle/Roanoke fisheries. Within our North Carolina state fisheries management plan, we have a trigger that if the F is over the F target, mortality will be reduced to bring the F estimate below the target. The 2012 point estimate as stated in the terminal year is above the new effort's reference point.

At our next Marine Fisheries Commission meeting, which happens later on this month, we will be presenting this information to our Marine Fisheries Commission and we will developing options to reduce harvest to necessary levels based on projections to take out to the public with management implementation tentatively scheduled for January of 2015. I will take any questions if anyone has any.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Thank you, Charlton; that was very interesting. You said there was minimal mixing between the Albemarle/Roanoke stock and the coastal stock. Is there a size component to the mixing; do you

see more mixing as the females get bigger. What percentage of the stock would you say as the fish do get to the larger size, eight-plus years old, does mix with the coastal stock?

MR. GODWIN: You're absolutely correct. The fish in the Albemarle/Roanoke, as you know, as you get down further latitudinally, striped bass become less and less migratory. North Carolina stocks with striped bass in the Pamlico Sound, for instance, are not migratory at all. Our Albemarle/Roanoke striped bass, it is the larger females, 30, 35, 36, 38 inches and greater, that we do see.

We certainly get tag returns from states on the east coast, New York, New Jersey; but our fish just are not migratory nearly at an earlier age. We do not have an actual estimate of – we've never quantified the actual estimate of the portion of the Albemarle/Roanoke stock that migrates up and down the coast.

That has been one of the things we have tried to do in recent years is to account for that mortality. Dr. Jody Callahan recently published a paper that looked at the 25 or 30 tagging dataset that we have in the Albemarle Sound on our spawning grounds; and he came up with migration probabilities.

We were able to incorporate that information in our state-specific stock assessment to try to get a little better handle on the mortality to some of our nine-plus group. Our assessment uses a nine-plus group. We do not at this time have a specific number of fish that are migrating. Our nine-plus group fish, though, to put it in perspective, is estimated to be in the tens of thousands of fish, not hundreds of thousands of fish.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Charlton? Seeing none, we need a motion here to approve the assessment of the North Carolina Stock Assessment for management use. Michelle.

DR. DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make the motion that we approve North Carolina's 2013 Benchmark

Albemarle/Roanoke Stock Assessment for management use.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second-James Gilmore. Discussion on the motion? Is there any objection to this motion? **Seeing none, it is approved.**

DRAFT ADDENDUM IV FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

REVIEW

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Now we're moving on to consideration of Draft Addendum IV for public comment. We're first going to have a report from the PDT Chair on the addendum, which will also include the report of the subcommittee.

Then we'll have a report from law enforcement, followed by the advisory panel. I'll stop at the end of each of those reports and give you a chance to ask questions of the various presenters. What I do hope is you've heard me in the past we try and avoid getting into the deliberative phase of this as we'll have that opportunity after the reports. Again, try and limit your questions of the presenter. I'll start off with our illustrious PDT Chair Mike Waine.

MR. MICHAEL WAINE: Just to catch everybody up with how we arrived at this point, the board accepted the 2013 benchmark stock assessment at their October meeting. That assessment recommended new fishing mortality reference points that match with the SSB reference points already implemented.

We started an addendum to change the F reference points. At that same time the board charged the technical committee with considering stock-specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stocks, which you've heard about over the last several meetings. We were working on options as the plan development team to reduce F to its target level over two different timeframes. One was within one year and the other was within three years.

This draft addendum currently contains those options and timeframes for management. In terms of the addendum timeline, the board at this meeting is considering the document for public comment. If approved, we would send this document out for the public comment period, which would occur over the next couple of months.

We'd hold public hearings, summarize all that comment and bring it back for board review at its annual meeting in October and which final options would be selected. It is intended – at least the board's stated intention was to implement management measures for the 2015 fishing season. This is a slide that just contains all the different topics that are discussed in the addendum.

I will be working through each one of these starting with the statement of the problem. As I mentioned, there is new proposed F reference points. Under those new reference points, F is currently above the target and SSB has been below the target since 2006. A similar downtrend has been observed in total harvest.

To address all these concerns, this addendum contains management options to reduce F to a level that is at or below target within one or three years. In terms of reference points, the 1995 SSB level, which has not changed through the assessment – it stayed the same – was a management reference point that has been useful for striped bass.

The issue is that under the current reference points that we have, which are Fmsy reference points, we're not able to achieve that SSB level. The benchmark assessment went through and recalculated F reference points that would match up with the SSB reference points; and those were the ones that were accepted by the board for management use at their 2013 meeting. This is just a pictorial representation of what I just described.

The current reference points are in gray and the new reference points proposed are in black; and then you can see the fishing mortality estimates through time. What I wanted to point out is you can see that the fishing mortality has been

maintained below the solid gray line, which is our current F target; except if you go to the next figure, this figure shows spawning stock biomass as the trend line.

You can see even though we've maintained F below the target, our SSB has declined below its target since 2006 and is currently very close to the dashed line, which is our SSB threshold. The vertical bars are just recruitment and that pattern in the SSB is driven by poor recruitment over the last several years. As we've talked about before, there is an emergence of this strong 2011 year class.

Regarding the stock-specific reference points, the Chesapeake Bay uses a quota management system in which they adjust their quota based on biomass changes similar to what I just described. The idea here is that they established a lower fishing mortality reference point in Amendment 5; and that was because they were harvesting on a smaller fish, so they essentially took a penalty and resulted in a lower F that they were fishing at.

The Chesapeake Bay stock, though, is not assessed independently as it is part of the coastal migratory stock and it assessed with the benchmark stock assessment we completed in October or the board reviewed in October. We just heard from our technical committee chair, Charlton Godwin, about the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock, how it contributes minimally.

It has enough data for an independent assessment; and they have quota management that is matching up with F and SSB targets that are specific to the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock. Also included in the addendum – this slide is titled wrong. This is ecosystem considerations in which we described the food web relationship should be considered when pursuing management changes. The idea here is as striped bass populations increase, demand on prey species may impact other species under rebuilding.

As we know, striped bass is a predator for some of our finfishes that we manage; specifically shad and river herring and weakfish. The

description of the fishery is pretty straightforward. It just reviews what the landings' history was; and to conserve some time I'm going to skip through those and go to the reference points.

In terms of reference points, the document considers reference points for coast-wide population, which includes the Chesapeake Bay, Hudson, and Delaware areas and the Chesapeake Bay stock and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock. For the options of the reference points, Option A is status quo; so these would be Fmsy reference points that are based off the last updated assessment that was in 2011.

Option B is the reference points from the 2013 benchmark, which as I mentioned earlier match up with the SSB reference points. In terms of the Chesapeake Bay stock, as reported to you at our May meeting from the technical committee, Option A is status quo; the lower target that was established for harvest of the smaller fish.

Option B is the use of the coast-wide population reference points as described in the section we just left; and that was because the technical committee could not reach consensus on the reference points for the Chesapeake Bay Management Area at this time and that the coast-wide reference points incorporated the mortality of those smaller fish and represent the best scientific advice for management at this point.

The technical committee did note that they wish to continue development of stock-specific reference points for the future for the Chesapeake Bay. Charlton just went through the A/R stock reference points. Option A would be the reference points that were established in Amendment 5; and then Option B would be essentially the reference points that the board just approved for management use a few minutes ago.

In terms of how we're evaluating the stock status, there is a bunch of management triggers that are included in Amendment 6 that aimed to prevent overfishing and ensure the objectives of that amendment are met. There is one on the juvenile abundance indices. There is one that

deals with overfishing and overfished. There is also a couple that deal with sort of the in-between, which I'll discuss right now.

This is a little bit hard to read, but it is text taken right from Amendment 6. This is actually Management Trigger 3. This deals with the timeline to reduce F to the F target. That was a stated goal of this addendum. In Amendment 6 one of the management triggers is if the board determines the fishing mortality is exceeded in two consecutive years and the female SSB falls below the target within either of those years, the management board must adjust the striped bass program to reduce the fishing mortality rate to the level that is at or below the target within one year.

That is essentially Option A; that is a one-year timeframe to reduce F to the target. At its May meeting the board approved a potential change to this management trigger to have it read within three years as opposed to within one year. The intent there was to provide some management flexibility that would hopefully minimize the social and economic impacts by splitting out the harvest reduction through time.

Let's talk about those harvest projections. What we've essentially got is three management scenarios, that each have a probability of around 50 percent of achieving F target. To reduce F to the target within one year, that would take a 25 percent reduction from the 2013 harvest. To reduce it within three years, that would take a 17 percent reduction from the 2013 harvest.

The way that scenario would work is the reduction would be taken all in that first year and then you would hold the management constant; and over that three-year timeframe you would end up reaching your F target. The third scenario is reduce F to the target within three years, but take it in a stepwise approach with equal reductions occurring in each of the three years. That was calculated to be a 7 percent reduction that is needed for three consecutive years to reduce F to the target.

Just for contrast, status quo is less than a 1 percent probability of achieving F target over any of these timeframes if the fishery remains

status quo. Just to give you a picture representation of what I just described, in the figure you can see the three different shades of gray indicate the different years. The vertical line on top is where we are at currently with our F rate. The vertical line on the bottom is where we're trying to get to, or our F target.

These lines that are associated with the reductions represent the various timeframes I just went through. If you take a 25 percent reduction in harvest, you reach F target all within the first year, which is 2015. If you take a 17 percent reduction in harvest, you don't quite get there in 2015; but through time, as you protected a lot of fish up front, you end up reaching F target over the three-year time span. Then you can see the step-wise reduction gets there in three different management steps.

That showed you what the fishing mortality would be doing over that timeframe. Now let's look at what spawning stock biomass will do in response to those management actions. This figure shows the different projections of spawning stock biomass under those different management scenarios.

I'll start with the bottom-most line, which is this dashed dot line that is essentially status quo. You can see that SSB is projected to continue to decline and will not likely increase very much under status quo conditions. The next line above that, the dotted line, is the 7/7/7 reduction; so taking 7 percent in three consecutive years. The line above that is the 17 percent reduction.

The line that gets us closest back to the SSB threshold is that 25 percent reduction. The take-home message here is the more conservative you are in terms of reduction, the quicker SSB will begin to increase back towards the SSB threshold and eventually to the target. The projections become more uncertain the farther time you go.

What are the options that are associated with these three timeframes? There is just a note in here about conservation equivalency programs that are currently in place. If the management was to change, conservation equivalency programs would need to be updated to account

for that new change. They would be, of course, reviewed and approved by both the technical committee and the board.

As always, states can voluntarily implement more conservative management programs than any that are contained within the document. The way the document is split out from here is by option; and the option is associated with those timeframes that I was just talking about. Option A is the status quo, which essentially holds the fishery with the current regulations that are being used right now; so I'll jump right into Option B.

Option B is that 25 percent reduction from the 2013 harvest to reduce F to the target in one year. The document is broken up into recreational fishery and the commercial fisheries, splitting it between both the coastal component and the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River.

These options represent the coastal recreational fishery; and you can see that the percent reduction from 2013 harvest is the column on the right. That is the estimated reduction that each one of these options would achieve; so these are just various options that could be used to reduce the coastal recreational fishery to the level that is needed. I'll mention that some of these options are limited by datasets.

As you start to incorporate both size restrictions and bag restrictions, you have to start looking at the MRIP-measured fish; so it starts to basically minimize the dataset that you're allowed to use to really estimate what these harvest reductions end up being.

These are the options in the document that achieve the necessary reduction from the Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery. At the last meeting the board have included an option to allow the bay to continue to operate under their quota management system; so there are options that are contained through the document that provide the bay the flexibility to do that based on that 2013 quota level.

Then regarding the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River recreational fishery, you've heard from

Charlton and just approved management of that resource by the state of North Carolina; so this represents basically a placeholder for all the options for them to manage their fishery with the quota that they established through their assessment.

One thing I actually forgot to mention is in my report I'll also comment on the subcommittee did meet between the last meeting, which was May and our current meeting now to give guidance on the addendum. The intent of those calls were to help the PDT and the technical committee address all the concerns that came up at the last meeting.

I've incorporated a lot of their input into the background portion of the document; so I won't highlight those changes, but I will talk about specifically options that they recommended removing from the document. With that, we're on to the coastal commercial fishery for this 25 percent reduction. There are two different options.

One takes that reduction from the Amendment 6 quota, noting that wouldn't achieve the reduction that we need to achieve if all the states harvested up against their quotas. Then there is an option that takes a 25 percent reduction from the 2013 harvest and then allocates the remainder of that to all the states using the same allocation percentages used in Amendment 6.

The board's subcommittee actually recommended removing this option because it unfairly distributes the reduction that is needed to be taken because it is taking away quota from states that harvested all the way to their quota and giving it to states that didn't harvest their quota at all. That's essentially what these tables show in terms of the quota breakdown for the specific options that I just walked you through.

In terms of the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery, Option B-15 is that the quota would remain at its 2013 level. The board subcommittee recommended removing this option because it does not achieve a reduction from either quota or harvest. In terms of Option B-16, that does take the reduction from the 2013 commercial quota. I'll note that for all the

Chesapeake Bay commercial quotas there isn't an option that currently takes the reduction from harvest, which is what the projections say is needed. This is just the placeholder for the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River.

Option C is now we're transitioning into this second timeline, which is the three-year timeline to reduce F to the target. This option looks at taking the reduction all up front and then holding that constant to reduce F to the target over that three-year timeframe. Because you're not having to reduce F to the target all in one year, you don't need as significant of a reduction to do so.

These are the coastal recreational fishery options that achieve roughly that percent reduction; and these are all in the document. These are size and bag limit combinations, including trophy fish options, that achieve the reduction for the Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery, including a quota as well. Once again the placeholder for the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River fishery.

Then on to the coastal fishery; we have very similar options as we had for that one-year timeframe. It is take it from the quota or take it from the harvest and reallocate it to all of the states. Once again, the subcommittee recommends removal of this option that takes the reduction right off the top of the 2013 harvest and then ends up allocating the remainder of that to the states.

The intent there is that it's not taking equal reductions from all the states to achieve the overall reduction that is needed. This table just shows what the actual quota allocations would be under these options. For the Chesapeake Bay we have once again an option that is keeping the bay quota at its 2013 level. The subcommittee recommended removal of that because it doesn't achieve the reduction from harvest or from the quota.

Then there is an option to take the 17 percent reduction from their 2013 commercial quota. Another placeholder for the Albemarle/Roanoke stock in their commercial fishery. Then we're into the last option of the document, which is the

step-wise approach to reducing F; and it ends up being a 20 percent from the 2013 harvest.

That reduction is achieved with a consecutive three-year reduction and that is taking 7 percent in each year. That is what this figure represents. You'd take a 7 percent reduction implemented in 2015, another 7 percent implemented in 2016 and the last 7 percent implemented in 2017. What do the options look like to achieve this?

For the coastal recreational fishery, assuming you stayed with a size limit change; so because the management measures would need to change every year for three consecutive years, the PDT focused on options that would be relatively easy to implement given that management scheme. The way this would work is a one-inch size limit increase starting with 30 inches in the first year and ending with 32 in the last.

The Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery has similar options. There is an option for a slot limit for the bay to be managing with a changing slot limit through time. All of these options are matching up with the percent reduction that is needed in each year. Some of them are in a perfect match, which is why you see some variations in the numbers that don't match perfectly, but they achieve the percent reduction that is needed. The bay could also do it with a quota, which is Option D-4. The placeholder for the A/R recreational fishery.

The coastal commercial fishery, Option D-5 is taking this 7 percent reduction sequentially from the Amendment 6 quota. The way these quota reductions would work sequentially is the first year would be taking from Amendment 6 and then the following year would be taking from the 2015 quota and then the last year would be taken from the 2016 quota; so it is a sequential reduction through time.

Option D-6 is that same option that you saw in the timeframes that takes the reduction off the top from 2013 harvest and then reallocates the remainder to the states. Once again the board subcommittee recommended removal of this option because it unequally takes the reduction from all the states.

For the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery, there is an option in here for the sequential reduction to be taken from the commercial quota starting with the 2013 quota and then taking a sequential reduction through time in each year. Then once again the placeholder for the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River commercial fishery that will be managed with the reference points we just approved. That was a very quick run-through of some complicated timeframes and all the options that go along with that.

There are a couple of other options in the document that deal sort of overall with a specific management timeframe. They weren't exclusive to one timeframe or another. It was just an option that the board could consider regardless of the timeframe they chose or option they ended up going with. That was a commercial quota transfer provision that currently is not allowed in the fishery, but would provide some flexibility if it were allowed. This is a very similar quota transfer program as we've seen our other ASMFC-managed species.

Then commercial size limits was something that the plan development team considered as well considering that we were looking at options that changed the recreation size limit. The status quo in the document is if the recreational size limit changed, the commercial size limit would also change to match that.

The PDT sort of talked this through and thought that it would be worthwhile to have another option in the document that maintained the commercial size limits where there are at now even if the recreational size limits changed. That is Option B, essentially allowing for the size limits to remain status quo, noting you would be reducing the quota with maintaining the same size limits.

The compliance schedule, as was previously stated, for the board was to implement in 2015; and we would have to work back from there to get implementation plans together for implementation on January 1, 2015. Then there is just an option in the document that provides the board an opportunity to recommend to NOAA Fisheries implementation of any options that considered in this draft addendum for the

exclusive economic zone. With that, I'll take any questions.

MR. ROB O'REILLY: I have four short ones; and I think it would be easier if I just went through them. They're not substantive; they're just some clarification mostly. That would save others a chance to speak as well. The first one is relating to the consensus that the technical committee failed to achieve on the Chesapeake Bay Biological Reference Points.

I know that there was a reason the technical committee pursued that course to determine a biological reference point. I guess I'm uncertain when it is stated that the best scientific advice for management is the coast-wide basis that is there now for biological reference points. Is that mainly because at this time there is not a Chesapeake Bay Biological Reference Point or a coastal biological reference point? That's one.

The second relates to the 25 percent reduction having the best probability of the SSB being back to the threshold; and I guess my question is that because that measure would be in place for three years? We know Amendment 6 says management measures have to be in place for at least three years. With that being considered, it does make sense that if you're staying at that reduction of 25 percent for three years that you would have the best chance; so maybe if you could comment on that.

The third is relating to the lack of examples where the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions achieve a 25 percent reduction in harvest. I think the basis for that was the last meeting at the board a motion was made to consider reducing from the quota specifically because of ITQs, and a pretty long explanation of all that last meeting; but besides that, the other part is when you look at the 50 percent probability, I think we realize that when you take tags from a commercial fishery or quota, then that's gone until the next time it is allowed to be there.

In fact, if you take a 25 percent reduction in harvest, then you're essentially taking 25 percent right off the top of the commercial quota. It is a little different than the recreational fishery; and it is pretty clear that combine the effect gives

that 50 percent probability. The commercial fishery is different; and I can talk about that a little later on.

That was just a statement that we did talk a lot about ITQs last time; and that was the reason for the motion not to reduce from the harvest. The other thing is the coastal commercial options; there was an indication that the subcommittee said to remove – I think it's more than just the reductions weren't taken equally. Those quotas for the last 20 years have been individual state quotas.

The allocation was set up in Amendment 5; and it was 20 percent of the 1972 to 1979 landings. That has never changed. Amendment 6 brought that up to 100 percent. The problem really was there is reallocation involved in those options that you pointed out, Mike. Those are just my points and I thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I heard two questions and two comments. Do you want to handle the two questions?

MR. WAINE: I'll start with the second one because I'm going to try and kick the first one to Charlton. If you go back in the presentation to the figures that show the timeframe reductions with the SSB, I want to make a little bit of a clarifying point here. It is Slide 19 and 20. On this slide, the one that shows projections, the reductions we're trying to achieve are to reduce fishing mortality to the target level.

That 50 percent probability of achieving F target is associated with each one of these reduction scenarios. Let me explain what that means. With the one-year timeframe and the 25 percent reduction in harvest, we have a 50 percent probability of it reducing F to its target level within 2015. Then the same thing applies to the 17 percent reduction except the 50 percent probability of achieving F target is within three years instead of one year. That applies to the 7 percent reduction as well.

That's different than this next slide which shows how spawning stock biomass is going to respond to each one of those harvest reduction scenarios, which is different from F. The idea is the more

aggressive you are at reducing F to the target, the quicker SSB responds to that management action in terms of increasing back towards the threshold or the target.

MR. THOMAS O'CONNELL: Does this projection assume that the 25 percent reduction is kept in place for just 2015 or for three years?

MR. WAINE: That's the point I forgot to clarify. All of these management actions and timelines are trying to get us back to sort of what is a stable position. It would be in place for – well, I guess it really depends on how long the board wants them to be in place, but there is no sunset provision written into the document. The idea would be to be maintaining F at its target level; and by maintaining F at its target through these harvest reductions through time, you would end up increasing SSB back to its target. By fishing and maintaining the F rate at its target level, you'll achieve the SSB target.

It is not going to happen in the next several years, but through time it would. The idea here is to get that level of harvest at the level that's equivalent to an F target. Of course, there will need to be – you know, there will be another stock assessment in the future in which we would assess sort of how the SSB has responded, et cetera, how F has changed and be able to sort of redo these. This is just to give you an idea of how things would go in the near future or over the next three years.

MR. G. RITCHIE WHITE: Following Rob's lead, I'll ask a couple of questions. The first is can the document refer to the time to reach the reductions? The one that says one year, that reflects Amendment 6; and the one that is three years is a change in Amendment 6. If those could be added to clarify the document for the public so that they know if you're going to go to a three-year timeframe, that is a change from Amendment 6. Can that take place? The second is I believe in the document it says even with proposed measures, probability of stock being overfished in 2015 and 2016 is high. If that happens, are additional steps necessary?

MR. WAINE: Regarding your first point, Ritchie, let's chat offline because I think if I

showed in the document where it kind of ties that together, I think it might answer your concern. If it doesn't, we can clarify it further. Regarding your second question, technically if SSB fell below the threshold, that would trigger Management Trigger 2. This is in Amendment 6.

Management Trigger 2 in Amendment 6 says that you need to rebuild the SSB back to its target over a specified timeframe that should not exceed ten years. I think there is sort of a combination of things happening. The board is acting to reduce F. Through that action we see the projections showing that SSB will start increasing towards its target, but we're uncomfortable with projecting out far enough to tell you when it will reach its target because the further on the projections we go the more uncertainty that is involved. Therefore, I think the trend is to get back towards the target, but we can't tell you exactly how quickly that will happen.

MR. MARK GIBSON: I'd like to know what the mechanism is for maintaining – well, this F gets maintained at the reduced level; and first off the 25 percent, given that we have fixed commercial quotas and input controls for the recreational fishery, how is F maintained at the 25 percent reduced level. In the second option, what is the mechanism by after we make the first reduction in F; how does it continue to fall with fixed commercial quotas and recreational input controls?

We're not specifying catch limits every year based on the stock assessment to deliver an F target. I'm just now seeing the precision in the system that's going to ensure that either F stays at its 25 percent reduced level across the remainder of the time series or what is the mechanism that gets us from 17 to 25 after the initial bite is made. What is the mechanism that takes away the next bite of mortality?

DR. KATIE DREW: That's an excellent point for the system that we have now. We do have a commercial quota in place. The way the projections are working is we put in a fixed catch every year over the short amount of time. In 2015 we take the 25 percent reduction; and

that is essentially within the model treated as a quota throughout the rest of the projections, which is how you get that reduction in F.

Similarly, when you take either the 17 percent reduction over that time is put in as three separate fixed amounts or the 7 percent reduction every year is put in as fixed amounts over that time period but you're right that there is some error or uncertainty in the fact that we're controlling the recreational fishery through effort controls and not a fixed quota.

We present you with these options that will in theory reduce catch, but we hope that we have conveyed the fact that they're definitely based on assumptions about how fishing behavior or angler behavior is going to change in relation to these regulations that may not be 100 percent correct.

We can provide you with estimates of how much you will reduce catch by implementing size limits or bag limits, but there is no guarantee that those will in fact bring you to the recreational harvest that you need. There is no way for us to predict how effort will change; and there is no way for us to implement that within the projection model.

MR. GIBSON: Given that, I now have questions about the 50 percent probability of the achievement level. I guess maybe that's preserved maybe for the next part of the discussion and not so much a question. It is a question about the adequacy of it given what was just said.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Yes, I think that would be good to save until we get into the policy debate.

MR. DAVID SIMPSON: I think Mark's question is covered and mine adequately.

MR. THOMAS FOTE: Why didn't we go out in these tables – that table there out to 2018 and 2019, because that's when the 2011 year class would come into play there; and that's going to change the whole dynamic with the numbers of fish that was in the 2011? Wouldn't it make more sense if you go out to two periods?

I know it is less certainty, but we also went to less certainty about the regression analysis when we looked at the years previous and we all of a sudden find that the mortality is not as great as it is. We're making assumptions on this end and why don't we make the same assumptions on the other end?

DR. DREW: The technical committee was tasked with finding the management options that would reduce F to the target within a set amount of timeframes. We had no instructions regarding additional information that you would like to see on SSB. The SSB is presented for information, but it doesn't relate to any of the management options or the tasks that we were instructed. The 2011 year class is beginning to move through the system.

There is selectivity on those younger fish on starting in three, four and five; so they are moving into the system and being picked up by the projection model. That in fact is why you see the SSB start to tick up even in the absence of reductions. That is that status quo line. If the board wanted us to extend the projections further, it would increase the uncertainty, but we could do that. It was not part of the tasks or the management options that we were asked to consider.

MR. FOTE: I just think before we go out we should basically do that out to 2019 because we know that year class is there. It should be part of the document so people can make more informed decisions.

MR. EMERSON C. HASBROUCK, JR.: Thank you, Mike, for that excellent presentation and trying to pull all those different options together so that they make sense to us. Thank you, also, Mike, for helping me out over the phone a couple of times over the last couple of weeks on some issues. I have three questions.

One is I know that this is a model projection that you have up on the screen now. Do we know where we were in 2013 in terms of spawning stock biomass and F? Other than just the model projections; do we know where we were with that?

MR. WAINE: The terminal year of the 2013 benchmark assessment was 2012; and so that's the last year of those estimates that we have. The projections is where it picks up from there. We have projected SSB and F for those years from 2012, but not coming from that benchmark assessment.

MR. HASBROUCK: And we won't know what that is until you just do an update I guess next year?

MR. WAINE: We talked about when would be the best time to update this assessment, pending sort of management action, evaluation of how the stock responds to that management action. I think that's a discussion that has come up, but we haven't formerly addressed because we have been focused on the management change.

MR. HASBROUCK: My second question is are the commercial percent reductions that you included under those various scenarios; are they based on continuing a 28-inch minimum size?

MR. WAINE: Yes, they're based on continuing the same size limits that all the states currently have. That was originally based on the 28-inch size limit, but they're noting there is conservation equivalency proposals already in place based off of that.

MR. HASBROUCK: And my last question is kind of in response to your response to Tom's question about how long these measures will be in place; and the response was, well, kind of as long as the board wanted them to be. Being relatively new to the commission; is that going to require a new addendum? I know this is a little premature, but I'm just wondering if we are successful as we hope we are; then does that require an addendum or how does that work in the future?

MR. WAINE: Unless these provisions contain a sunset clause that would revert back to some other management that was already in place; the way the board would make management changes moving forward would be through the addendum process very similar to what we're doing now.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Rob, do you want your second question answered first?

MR. O'REILLY: How did you know? We have the best scientific advice for management based on the coast-wide reference points. There was a lot of effort on the part of the technical committee; and in fact there were two what we're calling interim reference points; one by staff and one by Alexei Sharov. I'm wondering would the advice to management be better with a Chesapeake Bay Biological Reference Point which has existed for the past 20 years.

MR. GODWIN: The technical committee, as we talked about the last time, could not come to a consensus on the best, at this time, appropriate reference point for the bay; could not come to a consensus that one different from the coast-wide reference would be adequate due to the reasons that we explained.

The different in the selectivities – the difference in the F reference point for the bay as currently estimated from the statistical catch-at-age model for that bay fleet is relative to the entire coastal stock as well as not just a bay stock fleet. I mean, it is not a bay stock F mortality that comes out of the model. It is relative to the entire coastal stock complex.

Without more information about the mixing between the stocks and the sex ratios, at this time the selectivities in the model – the different selectivities for the bay and the coast account for the different sizes in the fleet; and the technical committee just considers this at this time still the best reference point to be using for management.

MR. FOTE: With Rob talking, I'm just remember, there was at one point that the Chesapeake Bay didn't count I think the winter fishery when the coastal – because they were allowed so much of the coastal fishery; and so this is only on a certain part of their fishery. If I remember in Amendment 6 somewhere that they got credit for the coastal fishery, and they were allowed to harvest on the coastal fishery. Am I right or wrong in my estimation on that?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Well, if you're talking about the coastal commercial quota, they have a

separate quota for their coast that they're fishing under larger sizes; and then they have a different one in the Chesapeake Bay that applies both to the recreational harvest and the commercial harvest. Go ahead, Rob.

MR. O'REILLY: This might help. Going into Amendment 5 there was a situation where the Chesapeake Bay would have 25 percent of the coastal migrants; and instead of that what was designed was 25,000 as a cap on the coastal migrants. That later was raised a little bit; and then eventually it was based on the entire spawning stock of the coast, a portion thereof that went to that what is called trophy fisheries for the coastal migrants.

MR. O'CONNELL: Just to follow up for Charlton, in regards to the bay-specific reference points, what I've been told is that when the interim reference points were first brought to the technical committee; that the technical committee objected to them because they were overly conservative.

Recognizing the comments that you just made and as to the reasons why there wasn't consensus; is it correct that if those reference points were utilized on a temporary basis with the bay, that they would be more conservative?

MR. GODWIN: I don't know that the entire technical committee thought that the reference points would be too conservative. It was my understanding that the bay states thought that those reference points would be too conservative compared to what they currently were, but that's not the main issue as to why the technical committee couldn't come to a consensus on a separate specific reference point for the bay.

The main issue continues to be need more information about the mixing of the three stocks, the sex ratios and the other information that we've gone over as to why a bay-specific reference point – we could not come to a consensus on developing one at this time. It wasn't necessarily due to the idea of it being more conservative or too conservative from the technical committee.

DR. DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, I sort of refrained from asking any questions about the whole bay-specific reference points, but I think I am now – and this might be a question for Katie; but in terms of the original reference point of F of 0.27, it might be informative to explain to the board how that was calculated or how it came about previously. It was applied to the Albemarle/Roanoke stock as well before we had the additional information that we do. I just don't know if you might be able to provide a little bit of background for how that F of 0.27 came about previously.

DR. DREW: My understanding is that the previous assessment came up with a single coast-wide reference point that was based on Fmsy; and that was the 0.3/0.4 estimate. Because concerns were raised that the bay was harvesting on smaller fish that they wanted a reference point that would take that into account.

The technical committee went through and basically calculated sort of the SPR that would result from that MSY; so how much of the virgin spawning stock would you leave in the water if you were fishing at the Fmsy estimated by the model with the selectivity pattern estimated by the model and then use a different selectivity pattern that had that sort of dome-shaped selectivity focusing on younger ages that the bay exhibits and apply an F rate that would get you to that same SPR.

Because you're harvesting on those younger fishes, you have to fish at a lower level to keep the same amount of spawning stock biomass in the water. That is where that reference point came from. The technical committee did consider a similar approach for these new reference points with the bay, but we were concerned that approach doesn't adequately take into the fact that there are in fact essentially two fleets operating on this stock; that it's the bay fleet alone and it's not the coastal fleet alone.

It is this single composite fleet that covers the entire stock that's operating on that fishery so that you can't really adjust one fishery's F separately from all of the other fisheries that are still operating on it because that requires the

assumption that one fleet is the only fleet operating on that stock.

You would have to fix the coastal fleet F in some way at a certain level in order to get an appropriate amount of F that would be allowed on the Chesapeake Bay; and that's when you start getting into I think management concerns and that's where you also start getting into concerns about the sex ratio and what proportion of the stock you're actually harvesting on with those reference points. That's why we were uncomfortable using that SPR or conservation equivalency approach for the new reference points.

LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Are there any other questions for the PDT? Seeing none; we're going to move on to the Law Enforcement Report. Kurt Blanchard couldn't make it so Mark Robson is going to make the report for them.

MR. MARK ROBSON: The LEC was asked to try to convene a teleconference call, which we did on July 29, to take a look at the draft addendum and just provide some very general law enforcement perspective, understanding that obviously we would flesh out more details and have more specific written comments at a later time during the public hearing process.

We did take a look at just focusing mainly on the management options in the document and provided some general comments. I have a few of them here that I can summarize. Again, this was mostly looking at changes in the recreational management options. That's I think what the focus of the discussion was during the conference call.

In regards to that and particularly with recreational changes, there were a number of comments that if you're going to look at making these kinds of changes, obviously they would prefer to see regulations that change not every year if possible, so a three-year series of changes would obviously present the greatest enforcement challenge.

There were a number of reasons why they were concerned about that approach. One would be, of course, every time there is a change there is an element of education and outreach effort that the enforcement personnel undergo. They're out there trying to inform and educate about regulation changes just as we do in our management documents and publications.

Of course, it has been their experience that frequent regulatory changes tend to lower compliance somewhat. It varies depending on the type of change and how good the education and outreach effort is. Of course, we all know it's not cast in stone anywhere; but typically when there is a significant change in a regulation officers tend to use a little more discretion.

There may be more informational stops and more warnings given as an approach to new or changed regulations when they're encountering fishermen out there on the water. Having said all that, I think there were also a couple of comments which I wanted to convey. The Law Enforcement Committee members recognize that if you take a graduated three-year approach to, let's say, a size limit change; that there may be a value in that and that we understand a graduated approach might actually enhance public acceptance and compliance; but overall they believe and continue to reiterate that applying a change in one year would maximize compliance and minimize confusion.

There was some discussion about the recreational fishery options and particularly for the Chesapeake Bay; and at least one comment from an LEC member that for the recreational fishery a bag and size limit restriction would probably be preferable to attempted recreational quota management just because of the enforcement challenges that they encounter and cited the Chesapeake Bay experience.

Again, that would depend on the type of quota system you put in place, if it is tagged-based or however that's done. We were asked to take a look, too, at the option of possibly changing the commercial size limits to match recreational limits. If that was put in place so that they were all consistent, that could possibly minimize confusion and aid in compliance; but overall

because of the nature of the commercial fishery being more in touch with even small changes in regulations that the commercial fishermen are used to, the LEC did not really envision a major problem in commercial compliance if in fact size limits remain different – if there was a change in the recreational limits.

There was also an example given in the specific case of New Jersey where if you're going to consider a combination of slots or a minimum size limit or a slot limit to trophy size allowance, that could potentially complicate law enforcement. In the case of New Jersey where on charter or party boats, if they're allowed to fillet those fish on board, then if you do have these multiple kinds of combinations of slots and maybe a trophy-sized fish allowance, that it makes it much harder if the charter boats or party boats are required to keep those racks; and so if they are checked or they come back to the dock, it makes it a lot harder to match up fish racks or carcasses with the number of fillets on board if you have these multiple kinds of size limit or trophy limit operations. That was the general comments that we had with regard to some of those options, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions for Mark? Tom.

DISCUSSION OF LEC REPORT

MR. FOTE: Yes, just to point out that when you fillet in New Jersey, you've got to keep the racks on board unless the fillet is larger than the size of the fish you need to keep; so they really have to keep racks for all the fish they filleted on board so the size would be there to measure. That's only on charterboats fifteen and above. That is not a real problem. It's the same thing we've been doing for years.

MR. O'REILLY: The top item is one that really I think is just not applicable. The bay jurisdictions do have size and bag limits. It's just that at the end of the year the recreational harvest is part of the total bay-wide quota; so it's really for enforcement. It's still the bag and the size.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Mark? Okay, seeing none, unfortunately Kelly Place is still in transit here from Florida; so I'm going to have Mike Waine give the report of the AP.

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

MR. WAINE: The board had requested the advisory panel to take a look at this draft addendum for public comment before it was presented to the board to get a perspective of the range of options that this document has contained within it, other things that we left out, forgot about; does it contain enough perspective from the AP's standpoint for the public to be able to comment on all the various objectives that the board is trying to achieve through this document.

We held a conference call to do this. I reminded the AP that we will have a sit-down formal meeting if the board approves this document for public comment where they'll be able to specify a preference for specific options at that point. They just focused their comments on sort of the scope of this document.

Just running through their comments; they had varying opinions on the description of the fishery over the recent years; but they felt overall it was appropriate. There is a little bit of confusion about what the reference points were when the SSB had increased in the mid-2000's to the level that was above its target; so there was a suggestion to include that information in there.

Some AP members were concerned about this move away from using stock-specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay as that has been a management option that they're been used for quite some time now. There was a member that suggested that 50 percent probability of achieving the F target is low and a larger range should be considered to give a higher probability of reducing F to that target over those timeframes.

As far as the management options are concerned, there were some AP members that suggested more conservative management options should be pursued; so essentially larger

reductions on harvest than those currently contained in the document. Then there were some AP members that suggested less conservative; so less reductions in harvest than is included in the document.

There was a suggestion for a yearly review of the three-year timeframe to ensure that timeframe is being met; so getting that sort of checking period to make sure we're on track if the three-year option is considered. There were some AP members that didn't like the quota options that were based on that reduction from harvest and then allocation to all the states based on the remainder; citing the same issues that the subcommittee had, which was that the reductions are not equal across the states.

The AP felt that the states shouldn't be punishing for managing within their quota; so essentially if a state was to maintain its quota within what it was allowed, why should they be more severely than another state that just didn't harvest all of their quota. Then there a suggestion to include an option that achieves optimum sustainable yield in three years. That concludes the AP report.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions from the board regarding the AP Report? Emerson.

DISCUSSION OF AP REPORT

MR. HASBROUCK: Do we have any idea what OY is or what OY might be? The suggestion there is to include an option to use OY and three years. Do we even know what that might be?

DR. DREW: No; the optimum yield is sort of predicated on a certain MSY framework that we did not pursue for this assessment because of our concerns about the stock-recruit relationship and other factors. This is kind of an empirical and historical-based reference point; and the technical committee has not tried to calculate optimum yield in that framework.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ADDENDUM IV FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions? Okay, as we move on into the part where we will

be discussing adding and potential removing some measures, I kind of want to give an overview of some of my meeting management training and how I plan to try and handle this. One of the things I wanted to make both the public and the board members reinforce the fact that we're just considering a document for public hearing. We're not making final decisions here.

What we're looking to do is provide a range of options for the public to comment on. General public, keep in mind that I will assure that there will probably be a public hearing in every state for you to provide comments on specific measures that are in the document. The way I'd like to handle this is, first of all, before we get into debate, I have a couple of people that wanted to make some general comments from the public on Addendum IV.

I'm going to ask those people to limit their comments to about three minutes because we're already an hour and a half into this, and we do have a number of items that we may making changes here. Keep in mind, also, if a motion is made and seconded, I will take public comment pro and against that motion before we start having debate among the commissioners.

If your comments are going to relate to individual management measures that may be in or out, you may want to wait to make your comments then. From the board standpoint, what I'm going to tackle first here is recommendations from the subcommittee. There were a number of subcommittee recommendations here; and I hope my subcommittee members will make motions to implement those recommendations.

After we do that, I'll take any other suggestions for adding or removal or modifications to the document. When we get motions, from our meetings' management training, I'm going to get a list of for and against, and I will do one for, one against, one for and one against. After everybody has had a chance to speak once, depending on quickly we're moving through the document, I may give a chance for a second bite at the apple on that motion. As I time gets short, I may restrict it to one comment per board

member. So with that being said, I'm going to go to Des Kahn first. Again, if you can keep your comments on Addendum IV to three minutes, we'd appreciate it.

REMARKS OF MR. DESMOND KAHN

MR. KAHN: Ladies and gentlemen of the board; I'm grateful for just a few minutes of your time. For people who don't know me, I served on the tagging subcommittee, stock assessment subcommittee and the technical committee for quite a few years representing the state of Delaware. I'm speaking to you about an issue with this draft addendum that gives me a lot of concern; and that is the presentation in here of the stock assessment results, primarily in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2 portrays the female SSB trend and the recruitment in Figure 3 presents the fishing mortality. Now, I know the commission tries to be guided by scientific findings, which is commendable. Last year a peer-reviewed scientific paper was published in the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society. Dr. Liao and Jones from Old Dominion and technical committee members Alexei Sharov and Gary Nelson were the co-authors.

The title is "Quantifying the Effects of Aging Bias in Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment". They verified what we had found on the committee when I was a member, which is that our method of aging bass using scales produces biased estimates of the age distribution. What they found was that when this biased data is input into the statistical catch-at-age model used in the assessment; that the estimates of fishing mortality and female SSB and other parameters come out biased.

The fishing mortality estimates they found were 20 percent too high and the SSB estimates were likewise 20 percent too low. Now, to their credit, the stock assessment committee in the recent assessment evaluated this effect; and they found pretty much the same pattern, although they used the last two years, 2011 and 2012.

It's quite clear that the input put using scales that we have used is biased and that the outputs from

the assessment are biased; and yet in this draft addendum these estimates that come out of the model are presented with no indication of even any uncertainty, much less this bias. We're going out to the public, if this is sent out, with misleading estimates that makes things appear much worse than they are. This is a well-documented scientific finding at this point.

The other minor point here is that the tagging estimates of F are not even included here in any way. I've read the statements in the assessment and the previous draft addendum, which the technical committee seems to discount the tagging results, and I would point out that very few, if any, members had been trained in the tagging methodology as I and others were in the 1990's by the commission.

They don't understand the tagging methods and a lot of their comments reflect that lack of understanding. When this bias is corrected, the estimates from the SCA Model, the unbiased input data of the age distribution is used, the estimates that come out of that model are much closer to the tag estimates. They're ignored completely so I would suggest that if this goes out, it will be misleading to the public. I don't think it could said that it's in accord with the recent scientific findings. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you, Des. Jeff Deem.

REMARKS OF MR. JEFF DEEM

MR. JEFF DEEM: I would like to ask that you include another option. I'm here to represent the Chesapeake Bay fishermen. Although I represent Virginia on the Mid-Atlantic Council and a couple of state committees; I'm here personally as a recreational fisherman in the bay. The bay has been under a quota since 1997 and took a 14 percent reduction in 2013 when no other jurisdiction had to reduce.

Now that it has been determine that sacrifice alone was not enough to solve this problem, I think the fair thing to do would be either that every other state takes a 14 percent reduction in the first year and then we add whatever is

necessary in the second or third year or that we simply go back to the 2012 quotas as our base.

We've already made a serious sacrifice. It has hurt our businesses; it has hurt our fishermen; it has denied us a lot of access. My point is that I don't believe the MRIP data in anybody's opinion has the wherewithal at this point to be used as a single-year estimate of landings. I would think with something this serious that we should at least use a three-year average of the MRIP data.

In a two-year period in the bay, Virginia and Maryland has completely flipped on which is the highest, which is the lowest, and there were severe changes. It's just not strong enough for that kind of decision. Then my final point is that I can understand why this appears to be necessary to reduce the landings; but if you look at the stock like you would at any other population, it went from a very low period to a very peak and has now begun to level off.

I'm not a scientist, but everything since I was 12 years old that I learned about populations of anything from deer to rabbits to fish, that is a pretty normal pattern. The question is do we really know what our spawning stock biomass can be? We've reached a peak; we're back down to what the ecosystem – maybe what the ecosystem can sustain.

I don't know how we determine where that is and to make any sudden changes to try to reach that or to try to find out where that balance point is, I don't think is justified. I think we should go – if you do anything, go and have an option for the three-year period where we reduce a little bit each time and try to learn as we go along. Those are my comments. Thank you very much.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON DRAFT ADDENDUM IV

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you, Jeff. Okay, I'm going to bring it back to the board now. I'm going to rely on my subcommittee members to bring forward some of the recommendations from the subcommittee for the board's full consideration. Paul, you're not one of my subcommittee members but –

MR. PAUL DIODATI: No; I was going to make that comment myself that I wasn't on the subcommittee, but I appreciate the work that the board subcommittee members put into this. To cut to the chase and to give us something to talk about as a starting point, **I'd like to make a motion to approve all of the recommendations of the board subcommittee, to eliminate the Options B-14, B-15, C-9, C-10 and D-6.**

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second to that motion; Emerson. Okay, discussion on this motion? Paul.

MR. DIODATI: I just want to respond to the two previous commenters and some of the board members as well have made comments that I think just emphasize that we have essentially a grossly imprecise system that we continue to try to make elegant in our management process. I'm not going to apologize for that; that's fisheries management. I think the most obvious information shows us that this stock in particular; yes, it has been down and it went up and it has come down again; and we can see that.

I don't think there is any argument about that; so it is just a matter of acting in the most fashion and adjusting to those ups and downs. As unfortunate as it is, I feel pretty strongly that it has come to the point where it's time to take a small reduction. How we do that and how much that reduction is and how we implement it is really the question. I sense there is frustration in trying to make this extremely elegant; and I don't think we can succeed there. I think we have to be very simplistic, somewhat gross and simply take a reduction. It's as simple as that, but I'll start with this motion.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there further discussion on this motion? Seeing none; I have to tell you there is one other item that I forgot to mention, and that is that the commission received a request from one of our board members to have a roll call on every vote that we take here. We're going to be proceeding with that request because it is a request that has been made.

Do you need time to caucus? While you do that, I will read it into the record: Move to approve all of the recommendations of the Striped Bass Board Subcommittee to remove the options B-14, B-15, C-9, C-10 and D-6 from Draft Addendum IV to the Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan. Motion made by Mr. Diodati; seconded by Mr. Hasbrouck.

We're seeing if we can do something a little bit faster. Okay, we're going to have a slight modification. Anytime we have a motion, I will ask if there is any objection. If there is an objection, at that point we will have a roll call on it. That will handle the request of the board member and at the same time see if we can move along.

Is there any objection to this motion? **Seeing none; I see it approved unanimously.** Were there any abstentions? No. Okay, are there any other modifications to the document that people would like to make? Ritchie White.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Chair, I would like to make a motion to include an option under Option B that would reduce the Amendment 6 state commercial quotas by 30 percent. If I get a second, I'll talk to that a little bit.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second to that motion; seconded by Michelle Duval. Ritchie, do you want to speak to that?

MR. WHITE: The thinking in this motion is that unlike some of the motions that were just taken out of the document, there was a concern for reallocation. This eliminates any reallocation because we're staying with Amendment 6 quotas. I arrived at the 30 percent by making an assumption that North Carolina, New Jersey, Maine and New Hampshire will not harvest the majority of their quota.

That's an assumption and it's a risk. If that happens, that would equate to a 25 percent reduction in mortality. It doesn't obligate those states in any way, so all states would get their Amendment 6 allocation minus 30 percent. I think that this is something that we could reach our 25 percent reduction without any reallocation.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Can I just ask a clarifying question, Ritchie. Is this applying to the coastal commercial quotas only; so maybe we should modify to say state coastal commercial quotas?

MR. WHITE: Correct.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, further discussion? I've got a whole bunch of hands and I'm going to go down this side and come back up the other way. What I'd like to find out and going by my own rules who is speaking in favor of this motion? Who is speaking against? Steve.

MR. STEPHEN R. TRAIN: Mr. Chairman, I've been biting my tongue on a lot of these things because I notice the commercial harvest has been stagnant for years as the increase in harvest was going on in this fishery. They're expected to take a cut; so to further go after the commercial sector with an increased percentage doesn't seem right to me at all. I'm against this.

MR. O'REILLY: Mr. Chairman, my understanding the last time was that there would be a reduction from the quota, but I think 25 percent was what we left with. I'm not sure that this motion would provide that 25 percent reduction of the harvest. On the other hand, that's not part of what we're looking at right now. There was a motion made by Louis Daniel last meeting.

In Virginia we're not stagnant. We harvested 97.5 percent of the 2013 quota. We have 33 fishermen. They all have ITQs. It certainly would hit home to add on a little bit here; and they certainly would be wondering about the recreational situation with the 25 percent reduction. I couldn't support this motion.

MR. FOTE: It is based on the assumption that New Jersey would underfish its quota. Depending on what you do with the recreational measures, there will be more pressure to basically take the tags, so the opposite is going to happen. Actually, it's going to be closer to the maximum of this and we might wind up finding way of monitoring. That's my concern here.

It is based on a poor assumption that we would actually have a lower catch than we had or the same catch, which implement recreational measures in that trophy tag program will probably increase. A couple of years we went to the slot limit and the commission wouldn't give us credit for basically being conservative and then they decided to just go out and catch the trophy tag program, so we had this really almost catch that was almost up to the quota one year just to prove the point. This will prove the point when you switch the quota and you switch the management measures; so I can't agree to the assumption.

MR. GIBSON: I oppose the motion. The commercial monitoring system is probably as good as it has ever been with the evolution of the SAFIS dealer reporting system, the enforcement actions that have taken place; so we have ability to cap what I call the commercial partial F pretty well. It's the other side of this system based on input controls, the recreational measures where we don't have much confidence that the measures are connected rigorously to a partial recreational F. I don't support going after the piece that we have the most control over. I think we have to think about the other side of the ledger, the probability of achieving the Fs and the lack of connection between input controls and realized Fs. Thank you.

MR. SIMPSON: I'm just trying to make sure I'm clear on where this is in the document. This would add an option to Option B-13; that instead of each coastal state taking a 25 percent reduction, there is another alternative to take a 30. I suppose if you look at the range of alternatives on the recreational side at 28 and one fish is the 31 percent reduction. Was that part of the logic of the maker?

MR. WHITE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there any other discussion on this motion? Louis.

DR. LOUIS B. DANIEL, III: Speaking as the chairman, I think the intent, I believe – I haven't spoken to Ritchie about this so I don't know, but I believe the intent is to try to provide some more precautionary options. I don't know about

all of you, but I've gotten a lot of calls and a lot of e-mails from up and down the beach.

People are very frustrated and very concerned about the status of striped bass. I think it might behoove you to consider some more precautionary measures simply to go out to public comment on. I think there will probably be some more restrictive recreational measures proposed or suggested as well; and that may be a reasonable approach.

I'm hearing around the table a lot of concerns about any reductions when I'm hearing also a lot of concern from our citizenry. I'm hearing a lot about trophy tag systems when should we really be harvesting these trophy fish at all. In the South Atlantic we don't harvest red drum and we don't have any more trophy red drum. We don't have any world record red drum being caught. That seems to have served us pretty daggoned well with the red drum fishery.

This is our flagship stock; and as the chairman of the commission I want to make sure that whatever we do has the greatest possibility of restoring the stock back to the level that our constituents are hoping it will. Please just keep those ideas in mind. They may be valid; they may not; but it is just my sense and my feeling at this point on the issue.

MR. DENNIS ABBOTT: I feel compelled to support my fellow commissioner here at the table. I think we should keep in mind that we're not making final decisions here. This is something that would go out for public comment; and I think the public deserves a wide range, which we already have in the document, but I don't see any harm in this being in the document and going out and hearing what the public will say.

I appreciate everybody's comments that they don't support this, but we really need to know what the public is thinking. Like Dr. Daniel said what he is hearing up and down the beach, it may be a little different than the views expressed at this table; so I would ask everybody to remember on this motion and other motions that we are preparing for public comment a document. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there any comment from the public on this particular option? Okay, I am sensing that there isn't a unanimous opinion this; so I am going to give you a chance to caucus and we will have a roll call vote. I will be reading the motion: Move to include an option under **Option B that would reduce the Amendment 6 state** coastal commercial quotas by 30 percent. Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Dr. Duval. All right, is everybody ready to vote? Mr. Waïne, can you call the roll call.

MR. WAINE: Maine.

MAINE: No.

MR. WAINE: New Hampshire.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MASSACHUSETTS: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Rhode Island.

RHODE ISLAND: No.

MR. WAINE: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Yes.

MR. WAINE: New York.

NEW YORK: No.

MR. WAINE: New Jersey.

NEW JERSEY: No.

MR. WAINE: Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Delaware.

DELAWARE: No.

MR. WAINE: Maryland.

MARYLAND: Yes.

MR. WAINE: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: No.

MR. WAINE: Potomac River Fisheries Commission.

POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Virginia.

VIRGINIA: No.

MR. WAINE: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: No.

MR. WAINE: National Marine Fisheries Service.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **The vote is eight to eight; no nulls; no abstentions; so the motion fails for lack of a majority.** Tom O'Connell.

MR. O'CONNELL: I would like to make a motion related to the Chesapeake Bay Reference Points. It was an action that the board directed the technical committee to work on last October. It has been something that we've had in place for almost 20 years; and I think it provides a lot of benefit to protecting the Chesapeake Bay stock.

I know there is work to be done, but there is an option that the technical committee has developed. **I would like to move to add Option C to Section 2.5.2, Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Points, where the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions would manage the Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass Fisheries so as not to exceed a target fishing mortality rate of F equal 0.058.**

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second; Rob O'Reilly. Would you like a chance to speak to the motion, Tom?

MR. O'CONNELL: Yes, just briefly. I just would like to recall that the current Chesapeake Bay Reference Point is 0.27. This 0.58 reference point is consistent with the SCA approach. It does not account for the predominance of males in the Chesapeake Bay and is why we believe it's viewed conservatively; and it will allow the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions to continue managing annually to account the strengths and weaknesses of year classes. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: All right, can I get a list of people who are in favor of the motion. Question on the motion; go ahead, Ritchie.

MR. WHITE: The question is has the technical committee reviewed this; and if so, what is their opinion?

MR. GODWIN: This was one of the options presented. When we reviewed, there were five options that we looked at and this was one of the options. We just could not come to a consensus as to which one of those options to pick.

MR. WHITE: So, does that mean that the technical committee did not support this; was that the outcome of the –

DR. DREW: Certain people on the technical committee did support it and certain people did not support it. This was something we came back to; and it was kind of a last-minute request by the Chesapeake Bay to revisit this question. The technical committee could not come to consensus on whether this was better or as good as the coast-wide reference point that already exists. I can't speak for the technical committee; we didn't come up with a recommendation as to whether this is good or bad as a consensus at all.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: All right, who wants to speak in favor? Another question, okay; then I'm going to go to people who have questions on this. We'll start with John.

MR. CLARK: I was just wondering if Tom could elaborate if he has any idea what that would translate to in terms of the Chesapeake Bay quota for 2015.

MR. O'CONNELL: I'm not sure of what that answer is. In talking to staff, I think we'd still be looking at a reduction of 12 to 15 percent. I don't know if the technical committee or Rob may have more information to share.

MR. GODWIN: No; we were not presented with what that actual quota would have been for the 2015 year using that harvest control model.

MR. FOTE: I have the same question. I don't know what this means and without knowing what it means, I can't vote for it. I'm not a statistician and I'm not on the technical committee; so I need an answer to how much of a reduction is this actually, how much is not, and what is the difference between now and that in the existing one. I have a real concern here because I'm buying a pig in a poke.

MR. GIBSON: So this means that there will be an exploitation rate applied to whatever stock is in the bay and the catch target or catch limit will vary in accordance with year class strength; so it will go up with the 2000 year class; and as that year class goes out of the fishery – so my question is what is the monitoring system that will estimate the bay-specific exploitation rate consistent with this and where will the computations be done of available biomass. Are you reverting back to the harvest control model and direct enumeration of F tagging studies and all of that?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I think Rob wants to answer that question.

MR. GIBSON: Just as a point, I think we ought to know what this level of exploitation means on the recruiting 2011 year class. I think that's an important thing for the board to understand. I don't know what it is on the fly here and it doesn't sound like they do either, but it's a good question.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Rob, go ahead and answer the question.

MR. O'REILLY: I think Mark has most of the pieces; and, of course, the Chesapeake Bay is an area where age three to eight fish principally are part of the exploitable stock. That exploitable stock varies by year depending on weak, strong or average year classes that have move in to make that composite age group.

I know that we sent around a white paper and I hope you had a chance to look at it. It was staff who suggested the idea of sending that to you. One of the elements of that is just that fact; that certainly if there were a 2015 harvest control model run, it would result in a very high quota compared to 2013 because of the 2011 year class. I don't think anyone has that expectation in the bay. It would go up by about 4.5 million pounds.

On the other hand, I think what has been put forth as a motion here does have a lot of situations involved in it. One is, Mark, that I guess that we are obligated under Amendment 6 to have a tagging program to be able to report back on what the exploitable fraction is or the fishing mortality rate; and that is the direct enumeration of F that has been in place since 1993.

A dilemma right now without a bay reference point is twofold; one, how are we supposed to do that or are we supposed to continue to do that; and, secondly, there is an economic component here that it is quite an event to spend Wallop-Breaux money each year to have that tagging program. We have a lot wrapped up in here.

Everyone can figure out that if there is going to be a Chesapeake Bay Biological Reference Point; that means there has to be a coastal biological reference point. Under the coast-wide approach right now, it would have to be separated. I think at a minimum we would hope that this can be done. If this can't be approved today, we would certainly come back and like to know that within a year that we would be able to have reference points for both the coastal and the Chesapeake Bay stock. It is a pretty weighty issue.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, Roy Miller, you had a question, too?

MR. ROY MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I think Tom Fote and Mark Gibson addressed my concerns. Basically all the other options are relative to a percent reduction from the 2013 harvest; and this one is relative to an F rate. I just don't know how to compare this to the others. It's a difference currency to me. If I'm confused, I think the public would be equally confused.

MR. ABBOTT: Mr. Chairman, I think Roy concluded his remarks by stating what I was going to state; that if this went out for public comment, is anyone going to be able to explain this to the public?

MR. HASBROUCK: As I understand it, during the benchmark assessment the Chesapeake was running the model as a separate fleet. What fishing mortality rate was used as that fleet? Was it similar to this fishing mortality rate or was it what the coastal fishing mortality rate is projected to be?

DR. DREW: The Chesapeake Bay Fleet was modeled as a separate fleet; and part of what comes out of the model is an estimate of the F that comes from the Chesapeake Bay Fleet. Keep in mind that because we are not using stock-specific models at this point, it is a measure of the impact of the Chesapeake Bay Fleet on the total coast-wide population.

This reference point comes from basically saying, okay, over a certain period of the most recent certain periods of years how much did the Chesapeake Bay Fleet contribute to the total mortality that the stock experienced and keep it at a level that is consistent with – this is sort of a fraction of the total allowable F that is in the document for the entire coastal F; so the current coastal F is something like 0.17 as a target – 0.18 as a target, so this is a certain fraction of that 0.18 that has come from based on what the bay has contributed in the past.

MR. HASBROUCK: So then this 0.058 F; that's relative to what the fishing mortality in the Chesapeake is going to be – not relative to but

what the mortality rate that the Chesapeake Bay Fishery is going to impart on the coastal fishery. This isn't relative to just the fishing mortality rate within the Chesapeake Bay; am I following this correctly?

DR. DREW: Right; obviously, the whole coastal population is made – as we have discussed many times is made up of a bunch of different stocks; so you're getting contribution to that coastal-mixed fishery from several different systems; and the Chesapeake Bay is one of those system. We're not measuring it only on fish that are coming from the bay. It's a measure of how much it's affecting the entire coast-wide population.

MR. RUSS ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to reiterate what Roy had to say. I can understand it a little bit trying to come up with some reference points for the bay to throw out there for options; but when you put an F up there that I don't know how it equates to what percentages that are all throughout this document, it makes it real tough to stick with this motion. I'm sure I'll be against this motion unless it is clarified a little better for me.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: Would the inclusion of this in the document require additional options be added to Section 3 under the proposed management measures that would equate to this should this be the preferred option?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Do you want to answer it?

MR. WAINE: Yes; we did talk about this a little bit because essentially what is happening is your breaking the total fishing mortality into its components. Those components are the Chesapeake Bay Fleet and the coastal fleet. Then if you're going to separate the Chesapeake Bay Fleet Reference Point and to also have a coastal fleet reference point, and then you're reducing sort of your F to a target level for both of those independently and there would be a set reduction that goes along with that, I don't see any other way to do it. When you start breaking it out, you can't just do it for one piece and not for the other.

MR. NOWALSKY: So then is the answer, yes, we would need additional options added under Section 3.0, proposed management measures?

MR. WAINE: I would say the answer is, yes, you would need additional measures and you would need to revise the measures that are currently already in there that are based off the coast-wide reference points into those two separate components that I just told you about.

MR. NOWALSKY: And then how would we go about including those today for our review if our intent is to potentially vote on up or down for releasing this today, if we add that; and now you're saying if we add this we need to make a number of changes; how do we proceed with that procedurally?

MR. WAINE: What Charlton and I are sidebarring about is that the technical made a recommendation that if we start breaking this fishing mortality that we've lumped together as a coast-wide population mortality rate into its fleet components; that we would need to have separate reference points for those components and then options that reduce those F rates through their relative targets that go along with that.

MR. DIODATI: I think I'm experiencing the same problem that most people are; and that is getting a good feeling for what the rate of 0.058 means and where it comes from. I guess my question is, is 0.058 the current portion of the coast-wide F that is attributed to the bay fisheries; is that how you came up with that; that is what you think the current F rate is? Is that what that is? I guess I'm looking at both Rob and Tom.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Rob and Tom; do you want – Rob.

MR. O'REILLY: I can answer that. It was actually staff that came up with the 0.058; and as I mentioned earlier, Alexei Sharov came up with 0.62; so there were actually two estimates that were debated at the technical committee.

MR. DIODATI: But I guess my question is, is that the estimate of the current level of F?

MR. O'REILLY: I'll answer again – but I can be corrected – my understanding is that's for the age five component and staff can chime in.

DR. DREW: This is part of the other problem is there were two proposals that are sort of on the same idea of how to partition your total coast-wide F reference point into a coastal fleet and into a bay fleet, but we never resolved some of the issues which have to do with selectivity and the age at which you're fully recruited, et cetera. But, in this case if we are – and I don't have my numbers off the top of my head; but this target fishing mortality rate would be this is the target; and I believe the bay is currently slightly above the target, the same way that the coast is slightly above the – the total F is above the target.

MR. DIODATI: Okay, so I'm going to assume that this is in some way related to the current level of their contribution so –

DR. DREW: It's on the same scale, yes.

MR. DIODATI: And I can understand why you'd want this option because it sounds like it's similar to the way you're currently administering your fisheries there. You estimate an F and you put a quota out there that assimilates it; and that is how the fishery has been operating. But, if we're looking for a 25 percent reduction, wouldn't this rate then be something like 0.04? That's what I don't understand it; why would you be fishing at the current rate if we're looking for a reduction? If the reduction is 25 percent, why wouldn't you reduce that to 0.04?

DR. DREW: This target is the target the same way that the coastal 0.18 is a target in that that is not what they are fishing at currently. They are above that and they would need to reduce in some way to this target, the same way that the coast needs to reduce – or the same way that the entire complex of fisheries on the Atlantic Coast needs to reduce to this 0.18 target. They would need some kind of reduction. We have not done those projections to able to tell you what percentage that would be in terms of landings.

MR LEROY YOUNG: So, I understand there is interest in developing this Chesapeake Bay

specific reference points; but their sex ratio, unknowns and things like this; how long would it take to do that? What kind of a timeframe are you talking about?

DR. DREW: I think the technical committee is talking about more of having this completed and ready for the benchmark and not in terms of having this ready for the October meeting.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, I'm starting to get people that want to have second bites of the apple; and I just want to make sure everybody who hasn't had a – is there anybody else who hasn't spoken that wants to speak at this point? Okay, I'll go to Bill.

MR. WILLIAM A. ADLER: I just want to reiterate that whatever this – and there will probably be other parts of this – that we're taking this out to public hearing; and the public wants to know, okay, this is where we are, you're proposing some reduction, whatever those numbers are, whether they're in reference points, F points or whatever they are, and this is what my quota will be or this is what my allowance will be. That's what they'll understand. You get too complicated here and I can just picture the public hearings just going around in circle. I'll hold this not only for this one but for any other one that happens to get wound up in its own morass. Thank you.

MR. JAMES J. GILMORE, JR.: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to get a clarification because Bill actually made my point. If we adopt this, it sounded like before, this is not going out for public comment and we're not going to be able to get it out until the October meeting. If that's the case, that's a big problem.

We heard it very clearly from all our guys that we've got to get this thing out. I have no problem adding options to it, but we've got to get something out on the street so we can start getting some input on it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, now I'm going to start going through the second time. Tom O'Connell.

MR. O'CONNELL: I think just first for clarification, I don't think this motion delays the process. This is to add an option to the addendum. We set forth a charge back in October to develop both Chesapeake Bay and coastal reference points; and unfortunately we were unable to get a technical committee recommendation. To clarify, my motion is to serve as an interim reference point until the technical committee can come forward with a recommendation. Thanks.

MR. FOTE: I just want to make sure I'm clear on understanding this. This reference point includes the Delaware spawning area and Hudson spawning area and they take credit for those two spawning areas in the Chesapeake Bay because they took away – in Amendment 6 they took away the spawning status of the Hudson River and the Delaware Bay because I walked out of the room at the wrong time. I just want to make sure that is included in that big figure.

Because what I'm seeing here is if you basically do the coastal stock and base it on the coastal stock, what you're doing is you're taking credit for the production in Delaware River and the Hudson River and this allows you to be more – without explaining the contributions of those two systems.

I have asked for this for the last 25 years since I have been sitting here around this table or actually before I was sitting here. So, until we get a point – how can you draw the reference points without knowing what the contribution exactly is or even close of the Delaware River and the Hudson River?

MR. ABBOTT: Mr. Chairman, I think everybody has had a bite of this apple; and I think from where I sit I see a sense of the board. If necessary, I would like to make a motion that debate be limited if we can't get ourselves to a vote. We are under some time constraints. I think we have had enough discussion; so if necessary, I will make a motion that debate be limited and not pull a Pat Augustine and say let's move the question.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: The only thing I'd like to do is give the public an opportunity to comment on this motion.

MR. ABBOTT: I would agree.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there anybody from the public that would like to comment on this motion? Alexei.

DR. ALEXEI SHAROV: This is mostly a comment on the discussion where this number came from for a clarification point. The technical committee developed a new coast-wide reference point. We estimated what fishing mortality is required to maintain the spawning stock biomass at the target. That fishing mortality rate coastwide was estimated to be at 0.18.

This is based on the so-called bay fleets that were used in the model. The Chesapeake Bay Fleet is one component of it. The same model estimated that if you maintain the fishing mortality of 0.058 as a target for the bay; that would then be equivalent to the 0.18 coast-wide target. That is where it came from.

I also am under the impression that when you initiated Addendum IV there were two goals. One was to bring the fishing mortality to the target. The other one was specifically to develop reference points for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound. My view of this was the opportunity to introduce the interim Chesapeake Bay Reference Point that could be used; and it is not necessarily related to the specific percent reduction that you're currently considering. These are mutual goals and not conflicting ones. Thank you.

DR. DREW: I guess sort of similar to what Alexei was saying; I just wanted to clarify the intent of this motion. Is this to put this reference point on paper the same way that the 0.18 becomes on paper; but do you intend for any of the management options that we considering today – the reductions, size limits, bag limits, all of the reductions that we're going to take; do you intend for those to be based on this reference point or do you intend for future

management of the stock once this has been put into place, to take that into consideration?

MR. O'CONNELL: If this option was approved by the board in October and for the draft addendum; I'm viewing that there would be management options; that the bay jurisdictions would develop management strategies to keep their fishery at or below this target level, similar to how the Albemarle Sound stock is being managed within this draft addendum.

If this motion is approved, there would need to be additional management strategies; that the bay jurisdictions would submit a plan to demonstrate how it's going to constrain its fishery to this new target.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, Roy, you get another bite, too.

MR. MILLER: I still don't understand. If the technical committee was unable to recommend at this time Chesapeake Bay Reference Points; why are we poised to take a motion that ignores the advice of the technical committee? I just don't understand why we think we know better than the technical committee did in regard to this issue. Thank you.

MR. HASBROUCK: I'm hearing conflicting information; and in order to help me make a decision on voting on this motion, I'm going to ask a direct question and I hope I can get a direct answer. If we vote in favor of this motion and include it in the public hearing document, will we still be able to at the end of the day today approve the public hearing document or will this delay approval of the public hearing document to our fall meeting?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Michelle, would you like to give your opinion on that?

DR. DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, I guess that was a similar question I had. I support this in concept because I understand that the bay jurisdictions would like to be able to use similar management measures that they have been using. My question was really more about any delay in getting this out for public comment.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I'll ask, Tom, what is your opinion and then I'll ask some other people's opinion on this. My opinion is it would, but, Tom, maybe you can explain to me why it wouldn't.

MR. O'CONNELL: It wasn't my intent nor do I believe it would. It would add an option for a Chesapeake Bay interim reference point; and then in the management section, I had motions prepared to have an option for the bay jurisdictions to develop management strategies to constrain their fishery to at or below this reference point.

That goes out for public comment along with the other options that utilize the coast-wide reference point. The public would have an opportunity to look at options that relate to a coast-wide reference point as they apply to the bay as well as an interim Chesapeake Bay reference point, which we committed to doing last October, and give the public an opportunity to comment on both of those options.

MR. WHITE: I'm going to oppose this. The technical committee said they are going to work on this for the next assessment; and I think that's the correct way of coming up with this. It's not to quickly late in the date assign this. It needs to go through the technical committee. It needs to be figured out properly and we all need to understand it. I think there is a lot of misunderstanding around the table of think; so I'm not going to support it.

MR. WAINE: Doug was just asking me as PDT Chair if I think the document could go as Tom is suggesting. Tom, I understand your intent, I think, which is to get this out as an option very similar to how the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River. You would develop options among the bay states to restrain your F to that level.

It doesn't sound like that necessarily needs to be specific in the document but maybe you have some motions to do that. I think the question that I have I think is for the technical committee. Let's just play the hypothetical that in October the board does choose to use that bay-specific reference point; does that mean that the coast-wide reference point needs to be adjusted

because now we're separating out the components of mortality that originally contained the bay mortality in the coast-wide reference point into its own separate mortality component; so does the coastwide need to be adjusted as well? That's the question I have.

MR. O'CONNELL: I think Paul described it best. We're in a very imprecise situation. In the best of worlds, we would have had that. That was the charge back in October. I'm not suggesting that there is time to go back and recalculate the coastal points. It's a policy decision at this point. Recognizing all the issues that we have been talking about the last year and the differences that the peer reviews of the stock assessment recognize for the Chesapeake Bay; is this an acceptable policy decision for the board until the technical committee can go back and develop the Chesapeake Bay and revise the coastal reference points. It sounds like that is going to take three years.

MR. O'REILLY: What I heard was when the next benchmark is done; and that leaves a lot up in the air until then not even to have a reference point. Again, Amendment 6 at least indicates that we should be looking at the stock and determining the fishing mortality rate, which has been a tagging program for 20 years. I'm not sure a benchmark means three years even, Tom.

I understand the situation that right now no one has the exact amount of reduction. I think Tom had indicated 12 to 15 percent. That has been the understanding. I think this is a situation where my understanding of what happened was that these dueling, I call them, sort of reference points of 0.58 and 0.62 were stymied by the fact that these are sort of an interim basis until there can be a biological reference point. To do that, obviously, you need the coastal and you need the Chesapeake Bay. I think everyone is pretty much up on that now. But, really, to wait a long time, several years, is going to pose a real problem.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: All right, John, since you haven't had a chance to speak, I am going to give you a first bite at the apple; and then I think I would like to try and move this to a vote.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Chair, I definitely sympathize with what Tom and Rob are trying to here, but I can understand the confusion. I just think one of the problems we have is that in the reference point options we have, if we go with Option B for the coastal, which is to accept the new benchmark reference points and we have to go with Option B for the Chesapeake, which is the same coast-wide reference point, and they don't have any certainty that new reference points will be developed for the bay under this Option B, I was just wondering if we could maybe clarify the language in there to give the Chesapeake some certainty that new reference points would be developed in a certain amount of time.

Right now it is just left that the technical committee agrees that stock-specific reference points are the ultimate goal for management of the species. It doesn't give them any certainty there will be new reference points before the next benchmark assessment. I'm just wondering if maybe a clarification in the wording might ease some of the concerns about how long the Chesapeake will be stuck under the coastal reference points. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, let's caucus on this; and I'm perceiving that there is not a unanimous vote on this, so we will have a roll call on this. The motion is move to add Option C to Section 2.5.2, Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Points, where the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions would manage the striped bass fisheries so as not to exceed target fishing mortality rate of F equals 0.058. The motion was made by Mr. O'Connell and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Are you all ready to vote? Okay, go ahead, Mike.

MR. WAINE: Maine.

MAINE: No.

MR. WAINE: New Hampshire.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: No.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MASSACHUSETTS: No.

MR. WAINE: Rhode Island.

RHODE ISLAND: No.

MR. WAINE: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: No.

MR. WAINE: New York.

NEW YORK: Yes.

MR. WAINE: New Jersey.

NEW JERSEY: No.

MR. WAINE: Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: No.

MR. WAINE: Delaware.

DELAWARE: No.

MR. WAINE: Maryland.

MARYLAND: Yes.

MR. WAINE: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Potomac River Fisheries Commission

POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: National Marine Fisheries Service.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: No.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **The motion fails; seven in favor, nine opposed, zero abstentions; and zero nulls.** Tom Fote.

MR. FOTE: Because I deal with legislation a lot and also deal with fisheries management plans, I always figure it's easy to pass an addendum than to basically retract an addendum. What I mean by that, it's always easy to take the fish away; but when it comes to giving them back or increasing the quota, it is very difficult.

I found that out with summer flounder; I found that out with black sea bass; and I found that out with a number of species. It is the same way trying to pass a bill. It's always easier once you get the bill but trying to change it afterwards gets to be real difficult. I would like to see included in this addendum is that there is a sunset period.

If we don't do another amendment in three years – now I'm not saying we can't do another amendment. What I'm saying is if we don't do an amendment in three years and we have all these year classes and we take a look at the document, there is no necessity to go out to another amendment to revert to what Amendment 6 does.

The history of us is once you come and take away fish, we never give them back. I don't want to do that because people have hidden agendas and we know that people have been calling for a reduction in the striped bass fishery even when the stocks were at an all-time high and now they have found the vehicle for doing that. **I wish to basically put a sunset.**

It could be two years; it could be three years. By that time we will have the year classes coming in and we should know better the status of the stocks. At that point if we decide we have to do more in an amendment, then we pass it.

Anyway, that is why I would like to make a motion if I can get a second.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Tom, what would probably help here rather than just saying a sunset provision; do you want to provide a year or a range of years to consider?

MR. FOTE: Well, I'm looking at the 2011 year class and I'm looking at the regression analysis; so in two years' time we should really start knowing what is going on with the stock again; so I'd put it in for two years; that unless we have an addendum in two years, it reverts back to – but it could be three. I'm willing to listen to people, but I will make it for two years as a starting point.

MR. WAINE: It just popped into my head that there are options in the document that look at implementing measures over a three-year timeframe; so maybe it would make more sense to correspond with those options for the sunset provision.

MR. FOTE: I think that's what I'll make it three years.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **Okay, let's have a motion up there; move to include a sunset provision within three years.** Is there a second to this motion; Steve Meyers. Discussion on this motion?

MR. SIMPSON: Okay, when would the next stock assessment occur; what is the planned interval?

MR. GODWIN: I believe the last recommendation from the technical committee to the management board, which was approved, was a benchmark every five years and an update every two years.

DR. DREW: So that would correspond to a benchmark to be completed in 2018.

MR. SIMPSON: If I could, that would be the timeframe and with the update every couple of years, we get a sense of where we are relative to our target and we'd need to be revisiting adjustments to meet our management objectives.

My thought process is this is going to happen without a sunset provision because we're managing to certain targets that presumably we'll accept in this addendum.

MR. WAINE: Except that it's automatic; so without the sunset clause, you need an addendum or an amendment to change the management. With it, you don't.

MR. TERRY STOCKWELL: Mr. Chairman, just a quick question for Tom. Is this sunset provision for all the measures in the draft addendum?

MR. FOTE: Yes, I would assume that. What I'm saying is it doesn't stop from doing addendums in between; but if no addendum is done in three years and we look at it and we've above all those levels, then it automatically reverts back to Amendment 6. That means the stock is in good health and we can do this and we don't have to go through the amendment process, which can be long and timely as we found out with this addendum that has been dragging out for two years.

MR. ABBOTT: I'd speak against the motion because I think, Tom, this could create a false expectation in behalf of the public of what might happen. I think the board has the ability to react to whatever the conditions of the fisheries are in any year, and we will be responding to any assessments that are done and do our due diligence and do at that time what is the correct thing. I don't think putting in a sunset provision does anything other than provide a false expectation on the part of the public thinking that we're going to go back to where we were in the future because we don't know what we'll be doing going in either direction.

MR. WHITE: Tom, would you consider changing the language such that it would sunset after the next assessment was delivered to the board? My concern here is that the sunset might kick in like months before we have the stock assessment and then we have to turn around and possibly go back. Could the sunset happen after we get the stock assessment and know where we are?

MR. FOTE: We do a stock assessment update every year – every two years – yes, two years, but we’re talking about waiting for a benchmark stock assessment.

MR. WHITE: I think they said it was 2018, so it would be the same exact time. My concern is that they’re six months apart or something. It’s the same year; but if you could just put the wording in that it sunsets after delivery of the next benchmark stock assessment unless there is information in there that would force us to –

MR. FOTE: Yes, but priorities have changed stock assessment due dates; so we could wind up in 2019. That’s my concern here; we wind up in 2019 or 2020 waiting for a stock assessment to come out. Then we get into the same argument which held up this amendment for two or three years; so I don’t want to be in ’20 or ’21 where we could basically be increasing it.

REPRESENTATIVE WALTER A. KUMIEGA, III: Tom, are you talking about a sunset or some kind of a trigger, because you just said a minute ago that if everything is okay, then we revert back to Amendment 6. I think that might be more acceptable is some kind of a trigger when that stock assessment comes in 2018, everything is good, then we sunset. If things are not good, then we continue on with the conservation measures.

MR. FOTE: Walter, what I’m saying is if things are not good and we keep going downhill, we’re going to put another addendum in another year or two to basically correct that. The only way this is going to get implemented is if we think we’re at the point – and I won’t be sitting at this table probably three years from now, I don’t know – but for that new management regime to look at.

The past history of trying to change something once it is in place, as we just found out with this addendum, takes a long time, even sometimes longer than the council, which is two years. I don’t want to have to wait until that process goes through, because we’re going to greatly impact the recreational fishing industry and the commercial fishing industry.

Some of us think that maybe we don’t have to impact them the way they are; but this will take care of three years out and looking at it and saying you guys have got to change it or you can put a new amendment. It doesn’t stop you from doing an amendment in 2017 to say that year class wasn’t what we thought and we have two more bad year classes to be more restrictive. That’s all I’m saying.

MR. WAINE: Before I forgot about it, I just wanted to make we’re all on the same page with what this motion means. A sunset three years from implementation would mean management measures implemented in 2015 and held constant ’15, ’16 and ’17 and then it would sunset for implementation in 2018; so ’18 would be when it reverts back.

MR. FOTE: It also means we could another addendum in ’16 or ’17. It doesn’t stop us when we see that we’ve got good spawning, we have good young-of-the-year indexes or when we do the regression analysis. That’s up to us to do a new amendment; but I’m saying if we do nothing by three years from now, we need to do something. That’s all I’m saying.

MR. DIODATI: I guess if that’s the intent and that was what I was assuming the intent was, what Mike Waine described; then I think you’d have to put that in the motion that what you really mean is you’re reverting back to Addendum III measures that manage the fishery. That is what you’d have to put in there because we may do Addendum VI before 2018.

There may be other addendums in place. Conditions in this fishery might be considerably better than they are now, and we might want to be more liberal than we are in Addendum III. I guess I see all kinds of issues being raised for no particular good reason, no benefit, by having this motion. I’m probably not going to vote for it; but if you’re going to continue with it, I think it needs to be clarified.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Bob, you wanted to make a comment?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Mr. Chairman, just to Ritchie’s point about the

timing of the potential sunseting of this Addendum IV and the assessment, in the charter any board has the ability to extend a management plan provision for six months; and then if there is an addendum being worked on, they can extend it for another six months.

If this plan is about to sunset and we're about to get the stock assessment, there are some provisions where you can sort of extend the sunset period a little while and buy the board some time to see what the stock assessment says and then initiate your next addendum. There are some tools that we can use to make sure we don't end up in a spot where you're trying to get an addendum done and wait for assessment results at the same time.

MR. TRAIN: Mr. Chair, I understand the concept behind this, but I think I'd rather be here in three years voting to increase the harvest than having this sunset in three years and having to vote all over again the way we're sitting here today. I can't support this as it is. We're here to manage fish and I'd rather sit here in three years and vote to increase the harvest a little bit because it worked than to be sitting here like we are now.

MR. NOWALSKY: Will this motion refer only to Section 3.0, the proposed management measures, or is it the intent of this that it would revert back the reference points, any transfers, any federal recommendations we make or does this specifically refer only to Section 3.0, the management measures. If so, I think that should be very clear.

MR. FOTE: I consider that a friendly amendment to put it in there, because that's basically talking about. I'm not talking about changing reference points and reverting the reference points back to Amendment 6. What I'm changing are the measures because I know how difficult it is to get a new addendum passed or an amendment.

DR. DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if it might give some folks a little bit more comfort if it was a motion to reconsider the management measures or reevaluate the impact of the management measures in three years. Tom, that

sounds like what you want to do is evaluate the management measures that we put in place through this addendum and see if they're actually still necessary. It seems like the word "sunset" is giving people some heartburn.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Tom, do you want to respond to that?

MR. FOTE: I would do that if we could basically just say, yes, we evaluate it and we automatically go back to Amendment 6 or we put an addendum to go further. What I found out in this process after doing it for 24 years sitting around the table, that is a lot easier said to do. Even though we're looking at it, there are some that people said, well, you go out to an addendum and three years from now that's what I can have.

What I'm putting here is a little caveat that says, yes, if we're evaluating it and everything is fine, it will sunset without us having to go through the amendment process. If we think it needs more going to be done, we're going to do an amendment to the plan, anyway, to basically implement that. I could put something in besides "sunset" if you think it's a better idea.

All I want to do is make sure that in three years when we reevaluate and it goes back to Amendment 6 if we don't find – if it's accomplishing what we thought it was accomplishing or we had two good producing area years come in a row and we're looking at plenty of females out there because the 2011 year class moves forward.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, I'm getting hands for second bites of the apple on this particular motion. Anybody with their first comment on this? Seeing none, Terry, you get the first try at number two.

MR. STOCKWELL: The first one was a question, Mr. Chair. That being said, Michelle's suggestion had some comfort to me; but that all being said, I have to agree with my colleague, Steve. When we come back here in three years, we're going to be carefully and closely tracking this population over the next three years. I'm not convinced when we get back, any of us are

going to want to support any of the existing measures that are in there. I'd as soon wipe the slate clean and apply what measures are needed at the time, if any at all. I'm going to be opposed to this motion.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, is there anybody in the public that would like to make a comment on this motion? Go ahead, Pat.

MR. PATRICK PAQUETTE: Patrick Paquette, recreational fishing advocate from Massachusetts. I just wanted suggest that you have a really good understanding. I don't like the motion at all. We have a stock in decline, in a pattern of decline; and so we're trying to catch one reference point in one year; to then sunset it at the end of this.

I don't believe that if we achieve one point of data, that that is enough to automatically to have a sunset kick in automatically. I hope I'm saying that correctly, but I don't believe that – so you now are making sort of an assumption with this motion. Say you stemmed it one year and you caught it; you haven't established that it worked right there.

To me a one-year achievement is not enough to automatically sunset the action taken by this addendum. In other words, you don't know whether you're going to have that SSB or – I still didn't think that we got a clear answer on what exact point is going to be used to determine if things are better. But if they are, did we turn around for two years above that point; was it we just in the third year achieved that point. I think you need some sort of a stability. I'm sort of in favor of sunsets in different ways, but it seems like we're, okay, the minute we can wipe our brow, we're going to say that it's better.

To me this is way too important especially when you consider the national outcry of the recreational community right now for stability of both our industry and our fishermen looking for stability in regulations. To sort of set something up to drop right back out the minute we've achieved a little bit of success, it seems like it's dangerous and will encourage the roller coaster to continue and not stabilize.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, any other comments from the board? Seeing none, let's caucus on this because I also perceive that we have a consensus on this. **The motion is move to include a sunset provision in three years after implementation for Section 3.0.** The motion was made by Mr. Fote and seconded by Mr. Meyers. Okay, go ahead, Mike.

MR. WAINE: Maine.

MAINE: No.

MR. WAINE: New Hampshire.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: No.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MASSACHUSETTS: No.

MR. WAINE: Rhode Island.

RHODE ISLAND: Null.

MR. WAINE: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: No.

MR. WAINE: New York.

NEW YORK: Yes.

MR. WAINE: New Jersey.

NEW JERSEY: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: No.

MR. WAINE: Delaware.

DELAWARE: No.

MR. WAINE: Maryland.

MARYLAND: No.

MR. WAINE: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: No.

MR. WAINE: PRFC.

POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES
COMMISSION: No.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Virginia.

VIRGINIA: No.

MR. WAINE: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: No.

MR. WAINE: National Marine Fisheries
Service.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE:
Yes.

MR. WAINE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **The motion fails four to eleven with one null and no abstentions.** Any other items? Go ahead, John.

MR. CLARK: I can understand the Chesapeake's concern about the reference point options that are in here as I mentioned a little while ago; so I was wondering if it would be possible under 2.5.2 to add an Option C that would essentially just be Option B with a timeframe in there for developing the new options. For example, we could add a sentence that the technical committee will develop stock-specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay by 2015.

It sounds like they're very close right now to having some stock-specific or some Chesapeake-specific reference points that could be used. Right now Option B is open ended. There is no timeframe for the developing of these Chesapeake reference points. As I mentioned if we go with the new reference points for the coastal, we have to accept the coastal reference points for the Chesapeake. It is just an idea to give a little more certainty to

when the Chesapeake reference points would be developed.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Can you make that in the form of a motion?

MR. CLARK: Yes; I'd say move to add Option C, which would be Option B, but with instructions in there to the technical committee to develop Chesapeake reference points within one year of passage of the addendum.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Let me ask a question of staff on this. Is this something that should be a task to the technical committee and giving a time period as opposed to putting something in a management document? I understand where you're coming from; that you want to have some certainty, but does that mean that the technical committee is out of compliance if they can't come to an agreement by one year.

MR. CLARK: Well, yes, that wording obviously I just off the top of my head; but if we could word it in a way, as I said, to give some certainty that new reference points would be developed. It doesn't have to be instructions to the technical committee; but if we could just say the board will allow the Chesapeake to develop new reference points within a year of approval of the addendum, something to that effect.

It seems as though they already have some reference points that I think there was a lot of interest around the table about the reference points that Tom just mentioned. Even if the Chesapeake came back with these points; that we would give that more consideration – you know, just to give some timeframe to this.

Because, as I said, as of right now by accepting the coastal reference points we have to accept the coastal reference points for the Chesapeake and there is no timeframe as to when the new reference points for the Chesapeake would be developed. We could still keep that option in there, but this new option would just add a little more certainty to when these new reference points for the Chesapeake would be able to be implemented.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, I'm going to ask for a second. Is that you, Rob?

MR. O'REILLY: Yes; and may I add that the terminology gets missed a little bit and mixed up, but obviously from all the discussion we've had today, if there is a Chesapeake Bay Reference Point, there needs to be a coastal reference point; because right now we have a coast-wide reference point.

It would be something and maybe a friendly amendment for John that he include "coastal" in there as well. I think this is a very timely motion by John, because, again, we spent about 20 years making sure that we could manage on a stock basis; and we'd hate to see that delayed even for more than about a year.

MR. ABBOTT: Mr. Chairman, I hate to be the contrarian again; but I don't think this is something that belongs in Addendum IV. I think this is something the board should decide separately whether they want to do this. I further think it's unfair to put a time limit on the technical committee on something that to this point they haven't been able to agree upon their ability to accomplish the task at all and not surely putting a time of a year on it. I think, like you say, are they going to be out of compliance. I appreciate what Mr. Clark is trying to get it; and I think we should do it in a different manner. I don't think this motion is in order as regards Addendum IV. Could I ask for your opinion on that, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: My opinion on this is that this is more of a task to a technical committee; but if the board so sees fit to put this in, it is up to them on this. Now, I've got several hands. I'd like to get some comment from people that have not spoken yet; and I'll go back and let you –

MR. CLARK: I want to clarify the wording.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, why don't you clarify since you're the maker of the motion?

MR. CLARK: Yes, I'm sorry because that wording is confusing there. Could we change it to add a line that the board will consider

Chesapeake Reference Points within one year? That way it is not a task to the technical committee because as we've already heard the Chesapeake has reference points that they have developed; that if the technical committee is still unable to agree to – come to consensus on reference points, the Chesapeake states could then propose their own reference points to the board as they did earlier today for further consideration.

I would just take out the instructions to the technical committee part because I can understand that is – I don't want to put a deadline on the technical committee because clearly there are some debates within there; but I think that there are reference points that the Chesapeake has that could be considered by the board. I would like to give them a chance to a time certain that they could bring that back to the board for consideration. Thank you.

MR. YOUNG: This goes back to the question I asked earlier; and that is why agreement isn't being reached. Is there additional data that has to be collected? Is it just a matter of the type of modeling that you're doing? I mean what do you have to actually do and how long would it actually take to get a Chesapeake Bay Reference Point that the technical committee you think could be agreeable to?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Charlton, do you want to reiterate the reasons that they couldn't come to a consensus at that point in time?

MR. GODWIN: So kind of getting back to the origination of the Chesapeake Bay Referent Point, it was done as a conservation equivalency from that particular model; and through Addendum IV – I wasn't involved with the technical committee at that time, so I'm just going off the historical. From a 28-inch fish on the coast to a 20-inch fish in the producer areas, the selectivity pattern that was used in the model was different.

With the current model, the way it is set up, that conservation equivalency exercise is not quite as comparable with the different selectivities in the three fleets; the way we have a Chesapeake Bay Fleet, a coastal fleet and a commercial discard

fleet. Those are the three fleets that go into the model currently.

They each have a different selectivity pattern so they account for the total F for all of the fisheries, so that is the sticking point and one of the reasons we can't come up with a bay-specific or a Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference point. We need some more information about the – if we want a sex-specific model, that's a different thing.

But just to get a reference point, some members of the technical committee – and as Katie said earlier, we could not come to a consensus on it. Some members of the technical committee felt that it would be okay to use the reference point. I think the majority did not. We didn't do a roll call. It is those same issues that we've looked at; and I don't know that we can guarantee a reference point one year from implementation. We can certainly continue to work on it and come back to the board with recommendations from the technical committee and our advice and then the board can make a decision on that.

MR. ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, just a clarification from John. Is it the board will consider these reference points within one year with or without technical committee approval? Is technical committee approval needed to have that happen?

MR. CLARK: Russ, I was just talking to Rob about this; and he agrees that because there is so much uncertainty in this that it would probably be best just to withdraw the motion and just task the technical committee with it as Dennis Abbott suggested. As I said, the only problem that I see is in the option as it is written there is no certainty to the Chesapeake Bay that these reference points will be developed in any time period. I mean if there is so much confusion about them, this could go on for a long while. Given the confusion that this has caused, I will gladly remove the motion and Rob has also indicated he would see it removed.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: All right, I'm going to ask is there any objection from the board to withdrawing the motion? Okay, seeing none, the motion is withdrawn and it will be a task of the technical committee. Rob.

MR. O'REILLY: Yes; I think the really important aspect of all this is just that some progress can go forward. It was alarming to hear that this might wait until 2018. Obviously, there just was a benchmark assessment. It had the fleets in it. I know the technical committee has really worked hard over the last year and a half; and so I hope, though, that this can be a priority. That's all that we would ask.

MR. WAINE: I was just thinking we could clarify in the document that the board has tasked the technical committee to continue developing these just to clarify the sentence you were talking about.

MR. DAVID V.D. BORDEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to go back and revisit an issue that the AP raised. It is the issue of the 50 percent probability. The document is basically crafted around a 50 percent probability that F will be at or below the target within a specified period of time. My problem with it is that I think what we're going to get is a reaction from a number of our constituents that this is not conservative enough.

I don't have a motion, but I think the document would be improved greatly if we instructed the technical team to craft a couple of paragraphs that talk about how sensitive that probability is. In other words, it could be nothing more than – I'm sure they've already done these probability runs so they can go back and look at the analysis.

They could calculate, for instance, if you reduced catch by 30 percent in the first year, you'd have a 75 percent probability of reaching the target or some like that. In other words, I think we'd want to have some language in here that gives the public the ability to say I want a higher degree of success or at least understand how sensitive the probability analysis is. I'm not going to make a motion because if nobody else agrees, I don't want to waste the time of the board on it; but if three are other people, I think we could work on language or at least a directive for the technical committee to develop that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: For this document; the technical committee or the PDT?

MR. BORDEN: Whichever, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, any comments on that? Dave.

MR. SIMPSON: Yes, I think if it is possible to do, it would be helpful. For example, 50 percent probability of achieving a 25 percent reduction in the first year as one of the alternatives and the other being three 7 percent reductions at the end of three years has a 50 percent probability, as I remember it. Well, it might be good for the public to read that if we take that first-year step; that at the end of three years, as we look at it now, we have something much higher than a 50 percent probability of having achieved the target. Does that make sense, Katie?

DR. DREW: Yes, I think that would be – you know, we’re just sidebarring up here about how much of that information we actually retained or would we need to go back and request that we redo these projections with different reductions. It is kind of a solver routine to get to where – so you say I want to get here; how do I do that?

I don’t know how of that data we retained along the way of, okay, we’re at 29 percent, here is what our percentage is; we’re at 30 percent and here is what our percentage is. That would require additional work on the technical committee’s part; but I know we would have information on if you take that reduction up front what is your probability after three years of being at the F target versus the other two prolonged options.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Would that get at it, Dave, something like that?

MR. BORDEN: Yes; understand I’m not trying to delay this. I do not want to delay the document. I’m more comfortable sending it out the way it is without that; but if this doable the way David just characterized, I think it would improve the document.

MR. ABBOTT: Mr. Chairman, I assume that we’re going to move ahead with David’s suggestion and add some words to the document. At this point would a motion to adopt Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for public comment be in order to send it out for public comment?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I just want to make sure that nobody else had potential changes. It looks like Rob has one and then Emerson.

MR. O’REILLY: Mr. Chairman, I’d like to make a motion to add an option to reduce harvest for the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions for a one-year or a three-year timeframe, with the reductions by 25 percent or 17 percent or 7 percent for the three-year timeframe based on 2012 state-specific harvest amounts. I’ll explain that if I get a second.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second; Martin Gary seconded that. Why don’t you provide your justification.

MR. O’REILLY: This ties in with the way management has been since 1997. There has been a Chesapeake Baywide quota. We distributed a white paper to you so you could see some of the information in case you aren’t aware of that system. It covers both commercial and recreational harvest.

The reason for asking for a 2012 basis for the Chesapeake Bay is that we have sort of lived and died by the results of the harvest control model. Although fishing mortality rates except for one year have been below target – and the year it wasn’t was 2003 – fishing mortality rates have been very modest; so that we have the exploitable stock biomass and changes to the exploitable biomass year to year.

In 2013, because of the exploitable stock biomass output, we elected to reduce the harvest by 14 percent for recreational and commercial fisheries. This wasn’t the first time that we reduced harvest. We have reduced it in other years.

Clearly, it is a situation that is voluntary. We were under quota. We've always been under quota in the baywide quota, but nonetheless it was very important for the jurisdictions to reduce that harvest. For that reason, we're asking that for the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions 2012 be the basis or the reference for any reductions.

This eliminates the situation that was created last board meeting where a reduction from the 2013 harvest for the Chesapeake Bay was removed from the document and it was left at 2013 quotas. There was also an option in a motion last time we met which said that the recreational harvest could also reduce from the quota instead of the harvest.

Obviously, some of the information that I've provided you shows you that the situation in the Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries has been managed very well on a baywide basis. We're the only jurisdictions that have tempered our harvest if we had a feeling that the exploitable stock biomass called for such a reduction. I think that's most of it. There may be some questions.

MR. NOWALSKY: Would this change be only for the commercial options or would this be for the recreational options as well that would require some analysis be done to provide some different size, season and bag limits that would reflect the reduction from the 2012 harvest instead of 2013, what is currently in the document?

MR. O'REILLY: It's for both commercial and recreational. As far as the size, season and bag, they still are not all in this document. If you've heard Mike earlier, for the Chesapeake Bay options, those haven't been filled out completely. That would be something that it would still be the 25 percent reduction. That would be something that the public would certainly understand. There might need to be a couple of sentences as to why it was 2012 as opposed to 2013.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, Rob, you made a statement there; and Mike and I were sidebarring when you said that not all the Chesapeake Bay

recreational options have been included in the document. The PDT I believe is not aware of that. Maybe you could explain the options that were supposed to be in there that aren't.

MR. O'REILLY: I may have misspoken, but are there strictly baywide options? Is there going to be any opportunity for state-specific options? That is what I meant.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: If you're talking about a conservation equivalency option, yes, any state can put in a conservation equivalency option. If we were going to choose a bag/side limit combination, that would be the basis for the bay – just like when Amendment 5 went in, it was 20 inches and one fish except Virginia got two fish, something like that. Then conservation equivalency was applied to change that.

MR. O'REILLY: Then that's fine and I retract that statement about the recreational options; but the main item here is really 2012 as the basis for the reductions. I'm happy to answer any questions on that.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: But, clearly, do you think that if we went off of 2012, we'd have to change the options that are in the – for recreational fisheries that are in the document right now?

MR. WAINE: We've done so many projections I'm trying to think about whether we have this done based off of 2012.

DR. DREW: Rob, to clarify, when you're talking about taking necessary harvest reductions, are you talking about taking that 25 percent or that 17 percent or the 7, 7, 7 from the 2012 to establish sort of a quota for the baywide states; or, are you talking about – because the issue that we had initially was that obviously 2013 harvest is higher than 2012; so if you look at the allowable harvest that the projection model says is necessary, it is 25 percent of the 2013 harvest.

So that allowable harvest; that number that comes out of the projections is a lower percentage of the 2012 landings; is that the

percentage that you want or do you want these percentages from the 2012 landings?

MR. O'REILLY: From the 2012 harvest or landings; landings for recreational, harvest for commercial. This is something that was talked about quite a bit last board meeting. It is just that it didn't get resolved; and I think probably it could be resolved pretty quickly. I'm not even sure that the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions have a higher 2013 harvest from 2012.

I know on the commercial end of it, because there was a 14 percent reduction, the commercial fishery certainly had lower harvest in 2013 by 14 percent. The recreational quota was lower, but I'm not sure on a jurisdictional basis whether the complete combined jurisdictional harvest for recreational was any higher or lower in 2012. We could certainly let you know that pretty quickly.

DR. DREW: We certainly have those numbers and we could go back and look at that. I'm just saying that the projections were done for the coast and the bay combined; so this reduction – it is still unclear to me whether you are comfortable with these percentage numbers or you want the percentages revised based on the 2012 numbers.

MR. O'REILLY: We are comfortable with those percentage reductions because of the fact that we took the 14 percent reduction in 2013. Whether it impacted the recreational harvest as much, I'm not sure, but nonetheless we would choose the same reduction scenarios that are up there right now, and it would be applied to 2013 for other jurisdictions outside the bay.

MR. YOUNG: I just have a question. In this white paper that you guys provided, Table 2 – there are two tables there; I guess A-1 and A-2 – and it shows that both Virginia and Maryland recreational harvest, if I'm interpreting this correctly, in 2013 was much higher than 2012. Am I interpreting that correctly? It seems counterintuitive if you want the same reduction from a higher harvest, you're going to end up with a – or from a lower harvest you're going to end up with an even lower harvest quota.

MR. O'REILLY: I think you are seeing that, but then again that's just the recreational; so as I mentioned before, the commercial fishery, when the 14 percent reduction was taken, that was right away a reduction for them because the bay fisheries generally come pretty close to their quota. Even throughout the process of the addendum, when the commercial fishery takes a reduction, that's it. I mean those tags are lost so that quota is lost; so I think that's what you're seeing there.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Further discussion on this motion? **Okay, seeing none, I'm going to let the states caucus and I will read the motion: move to add an option to take necessary harvest reductions (25 percent, 17 percent, 7+7+7 percent) from the 2012 harvest for the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions instead of the 2013 harvest.** Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Gary. Okay, are you ready, Mike?

MR. WAINE: Maine.

MAINE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: New Hampshire.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: No.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

MASSACHUSETTS: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Rhode Island.

RHODE ISLAND: No.

MR. WAINE: Connecticut.

CONNECTICUT: Yes.

MR. WAINE: New York.

NEW YORK: No.

MR. WAINE: New Jersey.

NEW JERSEY: No.

MR. WAINE: Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Delaware.

DELAWARE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Maryland.

MARYLAND: Yes.

MR. WAINE: District of Columbia.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Potomac River Fisheries Commission.

POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION: Yes.

MR. WAINE: Commonwealth of Virginia.

VIRGINIA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA: Yes.

MR. WAINE: National Marine Fisheries Service.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE: Yes.

MR. WAINE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: No.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **The motion carries eleven to five to zero to zero.** Emerson, you had something?

MR. HASBROUCK: Mr. Chairman, with your permission I'd like to ask Mike some questions that I had asked him on the phone a week or so ago. Mike, we had some discussion about looking at recreational measures of one fish at 30 inches and one fish at 32 inches and to see what percent reduction in fishing effort those would attain. You said if you had some

opportunity, you'd take a look at that. Were you able to look at that at all and doing an analysis on that?

MR. WAINE: The problem with those options – so you're asking about what the percent reduction would end up being and how does that relate relative to the options in the addendum. We calculated that for I think it was B-2, I believe, which was the trophy fish option.

What happens is when you end up decreasing both the bag limit and increasing the size limit, the dataset that you use to estimate the percent reduction in harvest gets a lot smaller because you need to be using the MRIP-measured fish to calculate that percent reduction in harvest. Basically what I'm saying is that the analysis is constrained by the dataset; so we couldn't estimate exactly what the percent reduction in harvest would be. That was exactly the case for Option B-2 as well. As you see, there is a footnote in there that this option is obviously more conservative than Option B-1 and yet that percent harvest reduction is less; and that's a function of the dataset.

As we talked on the phone, all that we really tell you at this point is those options would be more conservative than size limit options that are similar to the ones already in the document; so it would achieve more than a 30 percent reduction in harvest or something along those lines.

MR. HASBROUCK: So the error around that analysis is the same as it is for B-2, more or less, is that what you're saying?

MR. WAINE: Yes.

MR. HASBROUCK: **Then I would like to offer a motion that we include in the public hearing document with the same caveats that you have for B-2; the reduction that would be obtained in the recreational fishery with one fish at 30 inches and one fish at 32.**

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second to that motion. Dr. Duval seconds it. Discussion on this motion?

MR. HASBROUCK: Our interest in it is that there is a lot interest in the recreational fishery in New York to have some information on these options. I would like to provide those in the public hearing document so that fishermen from New York can at least comment on those options.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, any other comments from the board? Bill.

MR. ADLER: I briefly would just like to say this thing is something that the public can understand. Okay, I got the point and I like this or that rather than 025 reference points, whatever.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Anybody from the public wish to comment on this motion? I'll come back to the board. Jim.

MR. GILMORE: We actually got some of these things from a council meeting, which actually was an update on striped bass and not at a public meeting, but it almost turned out to be a public meeting. A lot of the correspondence that we've been getting is actually the issue about the 50 percent probability.

I think that is what these were coming from is that we went out to a higher size limit with a one-fish bag, would that get us a higher probability. Is there any way to actually calculate what the probability would be if there is an improvement on that?

MR. GODWIN: That's what the issue is; the kind of error estimate associated around that because your sample size gets small and it is not going to show much of a difference in the percentage calculation, right? Intuitively, yes, if you increase your minimum size limit and decrease your bag as well, you're going to get more of a saving than if you just decrease your bag at 28. The problem is a lot of the sample size, the error associated with that. We can do those calculations and show them to you, but –

DR. DREW: We can't give you a percentage of what is your likelihood of getting to that F target on the basis of that, but we could tell you it would reduce your harvest by 30-ish percent.

MR. SIMPSON: So I get the limitation of last year's length frequency sampling; you just don't have enough fish that are over 30-some inches to really characterize what that component of the catch looks like. That seems to turn up in some of the evaluations.

For example, I'm looking at Page 13; you know, the one-fish bag and 28 inches would produce a 31 percent reduction in harvest, but a slot limit where you'd only harvest 28 to 40 wouldn't achieve as much conservation. I mean, that's counterintuitive. I wonder if you have an ability – does it get any better if you look at what you constructed as the entire population in the last assessment for the last year, 2012, and just sort of hypothetically try to answer the question more precisely?

DR. DREW: The issue is once you start combining size and bag limits, you have to know what individual fishermen are catching, because the question now becomes – so we can look at the size structure and say, okay, we're not allowing any fish below 30 inches and cut all of that off; so it doesn't matter if they caught two fish at 28 inches on one trip or if one person caught one fish at 28 inches and one person caught one fish at 30 inches on that same trip.

Once you start moving into – you know, do you get that savings because they had two fish and you dropped one or you'd lose both of those fish in that case of the size limit, but you would keep one of them in the other scenario. The problem it is not so much about the population structure as it is about what is actually being intercepted; and so we need to know what each individual angler is catching, what their bag was and what the size of the fish in their bag was in order to be able to calculate the reductions for these.

Once you start specifying that you need to know who the fisherman was and what that fish was for them personally as opposed to just four fish spread out over three anglers and you need to know the measurements of those individual fish, that is what really reduces the sample size, and there is no way to reconstruct that data.

MR. SIMPSON: Okay, thanks, but does it still – you know, when the public goes and reads this

table, the one I'm looking at, the idea that throwing back every single fish over 40 inches has less conservation value than keeping them; I'm pretty sure I'm going to be inviting Mike to do our public hearing, and this is one of the reasons why.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Mike, do you want to respond to that?

MR. WAINE: Would the board feel more comfortable with us using similar options; so, for example, the options we keep talking about are one fish at 28; and so obviously this is a more conservative option than one fish at 28, which is why this would be hard to explain to the public. Do we want to just qualitatively just say that Option B-2, reduction in harvest, is greater than 31 percent?

We can't calculate exactly that percentage. When we did calculate that percentage, because of the limitations of the database, it's 26 percent. There is nothing further that we can do to clarify that. I tried to put in a footnote, but I think it probably will end up getting overlooked, and I'll just be talking about footnotes the whole time.

MR. SIMPSON: If I could, I think that would be preferable because logically it has to be higher; and if we have a hard time calculating it, people can appreciate that; but reporting less conservation I think is going to tangle us for fifteen minutes right there in the public hearing and it won't help.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: So I would suggest that without objection from the board that they change that to greater than 31 percent but still keep in the footnote to explain why you're putting greater than 31 percent or something to that effect so that they realize there is data limitations and that's why we're putting greater than. Terry.

MR. STOCKWELL: Mr. Chairman, I was out of the room for part of the rationale; so my question is, is this a motion for a two-fish bag limit, one at 30 inches and 32 or two separate one fish – I'm just confused.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Two one-fish bag limit options, correct, Emerson?

MR. HASBROUCK: Yes, two different options, each of which has one fish.

MR. STOCKWELL: I think then we need to wordsmith that a little bit because if this comes out in the public, Mike, you're going to be explaining it, too.

MR. WAINE: We can change it if you want, I understand as long as the board understands.

MR. WHITE: That was my question, thank you.

MR. HASBROUCK: Relative to what Dave was talking about before, we can only ask the staff to provide an explanation based on what the data is. If there is a lot of variance and a lot of error around that data; then that needs to somehow communicated in the document.

REPRESENTATIVE CRAIG A. MINER: I think if you insert the word "options" after "with" would make it clearer that it's an option of one fish at 30 or one fish at 32 so maybe add "option" and change "and" to "or".

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Are you all set with that?

MR. HASBROUCK: Yes; I'm fine with that.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Dr. Duval, are you okay with that change?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, sir.

MR. WILLIAM J. GOLDSBOROUGH: I would say in addition to that you could just make the word "reduction" plural, "the reductions that would be obtained". That might help, too.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Are you okay with that, Emerson?

MR. HASBROUCK: I'm sorry; Jim and I are having a sidebar here; I missed that.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Bill, do you want to repeat that?

MR. GOLDSBOROUGH: Just to help with clarifying the intent; I thought if you make the change that just done, to make the word "reduction" plural; that would help as well.

MR. HASBROUCK: Yes; that's fine, thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Dr. Duval?

DR. DUVAL: Yes again,

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other comments on this motion? Okay, let's caucus on this. **Move to include in Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment the reductions that would be obtained in the coastal recreational fishery with options of one fish at 30 inches or one fish at 32 inches. Motion by Dr. Hasbrouck and seconded by Dr. Duval.**

Okay, I'm going to try this first. Are there any objections to this motion? Okay, any abstentions? **The motion carries unanimously.** Anything else? Seeing none, Dennis, are you ready to make your motion?

MR. ABBOTT: I am, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to make a motion to adopt Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fisheries Management Plan to be sent out for public comment.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Seconded by Bill Adler. Any discussion on this? Jim.

MR. GILMORE: Just a quick clarification; do we put in "as modified today" or is that implied?

MR. ABBOTT: As modified today.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Bill, you're okay with that, too? Okay, is there any objection to this motion? **Seeing none, the motion passes unanimously.** Any abstentions? Okay, the motion passes unanimously. Thank you very much.

We actually are on a timeline to get through earlier today. We have one other agenda item, and that is do you something else, first?

MR. WAINE: I just wanted to give everybody a heads-up that I'll be in contact with everybody regarding scheduling public hearings so we can start working on that over the next couple of days.

OTHER BUSINESS

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, Wilson Laney, you've got an item under other business.

DR. LANEY: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to let everybody know that we did get a match Saltonstall/Kenney Grant to the Coastal Recreational Fishing License Grant that North Carolina that already given us; so we will definitely be doing a cooperative winter tagging cruise in 2015. That means we will be doing the trawling-based tagging of striped bass, which we didn't do this year because we didn't have the match.

We will also be doing the hook-and-line-based tagging as well. That will give us a second data point in addition to the one we generated in 2013 to be able to compare hook-and-line-tagged fish with trawl-based fish. We're hoping to do another one in 2016. We had to put in a new grant proposal to North Carolina because of the mismatch between our S/K grant and our CRFL grant. We will await the outcome of that grant proposal to see if we will be able to do one in 2016. I just wanted to give you that update.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you, Wilson, and thank you, board members, for putting together a draft document for public hearing with a wide range of options and doing it in a good amount of time. I'll take a motion to adjourn now. So moved; and I think it's unanimous.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 o'clock p.m., August 5, 2014.)

— — —

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

**DRAFT ADDENDUM IV TO AMENDMENT 6
TO THE ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS
INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**



*ASMFC Vision Statement:
Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

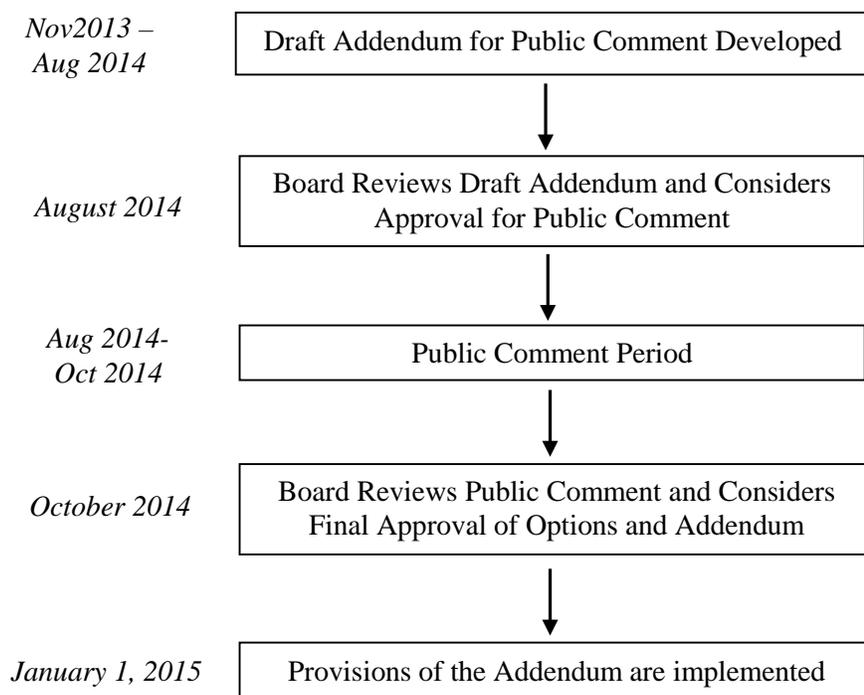
Public Comment Process and Proposed Timeline

In October 2013, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board initiated an addendum to the Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass to consider new biological reference points and management options to reduce fishing mortality to a level that is at or below the new target reference point. This draft addendum presents background on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's management of striped bass, the addendum process and timeline, a statement of the problem, and proposed management options.

The public is encouraged to submit comments regarding this document at any time during the addendum process. **The final date comments will be accepted is 5pm on September 30, 2014.** Comments may be submitted by mail, email, or fax. If you have any questions or would like to submit comment, please use the contact information below.

Mail: Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Email: mwaine@asmfc.org
(Subject: Draft Addendum IV)
Phone: (703) 842-0740
Fax: (703) 842-0741



1.0 Introduction

Atlantic striped bass are managed through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) in state waters (0-3 miles) and through NOAA Fisheries in federal waters (3-200 miles). The management unit includes the coastal migratory stock between Maine and North Carolina. Atlantic striped bass are currently managed under Amendment 6 (2003) to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and Addenda I–III.

At its October 2013 meeting, the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board (Board) approved the following two motions:

Move to develop an addendum to adopt the new biological reference points for the coastal fishery as determined by the 2013 benchmark assessment, as well as biological reference points (fishing mortality) for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle/Roanoke stocks.

Move to initiate an addendum to develop a range of management measures that reduces fishing mortality to at least the fishing mortality target with implementation in January 2015.

At its February 2014 meeting, the Board combined the two addenda into one document. As a result, Draft Addendum IV proposes changes to the biological reference points and management options to reduce fishing mortality to a level that is at or below the target within one year (implementation in January 2015).

At its May 2014 meeting, the Board continued the development of Draft Addendum IV by adding consideration of a three year timeframe to reduce F to a level at or below the target as well as management options associated with the three year timeframe. The intent of adding the three year timeframe was to reduce potential social and economic impacts by spreading out the harvest reductions over time while maintaining a January 2015 implementation date.

2.0 Overview

2.1 Statement of the Problem

The 2013 benchmark stock assessment approved by the Board for management use recommended changes to the fishing mortality (F) reference points to be consistent with the spawning stock biomass (SSB) reference points. An addendum to the FMP is required to implement new reference points for management use. Results of the benchmark stock assessment also showed F in the terminal year (2012) was above the new proposed F target, and SSB has been steadily declining below the target since 2006 (Figures 2 and 3). This indicates that even though the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and stock projections show SSB will likely fall below the threshold in the coming years. In addition, a similar downtrend has been observed in total harvest with approximately a 19% decrease since 2008. In response to these concerns, this draft addendum proposes management options that reduce F to a level at or below the target within a one or three year timeframe. The range of options included in this document broadly address several management objectives including conservation of the strong 2011 year class and conservation of large spawning fish (SSB) to enhance the long term sustainability of the striped bass resource and the fisheries that it supports.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 Biological Reference Points for Striped Bass

Biological reference points are used in fisheries management as a measure of stock status and as a reference to evaluate management plan effectiveness. There are two biological reference points used in striped bass management. The first is based on F , with a threshold value set at maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Managing a population at MSY allows the largest average catch to be taken from a stock without negatively impacting the ability of the stock to replace itself. The second reference point is based on SSB, with a threshold value equal to the SSB value in 1995; the year that the striped bass stock was declared rebuilt. These threshold levels are used to determine when the stock is experiencing overfishing or is overfished, respectively. Target levels for F and SSB provide additional performance metrics. The current F target provides a buffer to account for the uncertainty in the estimate of F_{msy} threshold, while the SSB target corresponds to 125% of the SSB threshold.

The 1995 SSB level has proven to be a useful reference point for striped bass; however, even though SSB_{1995} is a proxy for SSB_{msy} they are not the same. In other words, fishing at F_{msy} does not maintain SSB at the 1995 level. Furthermore, F has always been maintained below current F target, yet SSB continues to decline towards its threshold (Figure 2). To address this issue, the 2013 benchmark stock assessment recommended new F reference points that would maintain SSB at or above its 1995 level. The new method resulted in a fishing mortality threshold of 0.22, corresponding to the SSB threshold of 127 million pounds (57,626 mt), as well as a fishing mortality target of 0.18, corresponding to the SSB target of 159 million pounds (72,032 mt). These SSB target and threshold levels are still based on the SSB value in 1995, as estimated by the 2013 benchmark stock assessment.

This draft addendum proposes to codify the F reference points contained in the 2013 benchmark stock assessment (ASMFC 2013).

2.2.2 Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Areas

Separate F reference points for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River were established through conservation equivalency in Amendment 5 to compensate for the smaller minimum size limit granted to both of these management areas. Establishing a lower F target was intended to enable these management areas to harvest smaller fish without increasing the effects of harvest on the spawning stock.

To ensure the F in the Chesapeake Bay does not exceed the target, the Bay uses a harvest control model to set an annual Baywide quota. This quota is for both recreational and commercial fisheries for the Bay portions of Maryland, Virginia and the Potomac River Fisheries Commission. Use of the harvest control model enables flexibility that allows for the annual Baywide quota to increase or decrease as the exploitable stock biomass increases or decreases. Although the Chesapeake Bay stock has a different management program, it is still a major contributor to the coastal migratory stock and is therefore included in the coastwide assessment and not assessed as an independent stock.

The Albemarle Sound/ Roanoke River (A/R) stock differs in that it contributes minimally to the coastal migratory stock. Additionally the A/R stock is smaller in total abundance relative to the other producer areas and does not participate in the coastal migration until older ages. The female maturation schedule for the A/R stock is also different than the Chesapeake Bay stock (ASMFC 2013; NCDMF 2014). As a result, the A/R stock is not included in the coastwide assessment and is instead assessed independently by the State of North Carolina. This enables the development of A/R stock specific reference points for both F and SSB.

Since new reference points for the coastal migratory stock are being considered from the 2013 benchmark stock assessment, the Board requested options to consider adjusting the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas as well.

2.2.3 Ecosystem Considerations

When fishery management changes are being contemplated, food web relationships should be considered. The implementation of Amendment 6 in 2004 has maintained a fishing mortality rate below the F_{target} of 0.3. The success of Amendment 6 allowed the striped bass stock to expand beyond the spawning stock biomass target during this time period. However, the 2013 benchmark stock assessment indicates that spawning stock biomass levels have decreased significantly in recent years. The impacts of biomass levels of predator species on prey species should be considered as the Commission moves toward ecosystem management. Striped bass are predators of other Commission managed species, including weakfish and shad and river herring. As the striped bass population grows the demand on prey species also increases. The increased demand on prey species may have impacts on those species undergoing rebuilding plans (Hartman, K.J. 2003). The current addendum's goal of reducing fishing mortality to target levels may impact predation on other ASMFC-managed species.

2.3 Description of the Fishery

Striped bass have formed the basis of one of the most important fisheries on the Atlantic coast for centuries. However, overfishing and poor environmental conditions led to the collapse of the fishery in the 1980s and a moratorium on harvest from 1985 to 1989. Through the hardship and dedication of both commercial and recreational fishers, the stock was rebuilt and continues to support fishing opportunities along the Atlantic coast.

2.3.1. Commercial Fishery Status

Total and state-specific commercial harvests of striped bass have varied little from year-to-year because of a quota management system that was continued through Amendment 6 in 2004 (refer to Appendix 1 for jurisdiction specific regulations). The total coastal commercial harvest from 2003 to 2013 ranged between 2.53 and 3.15 million pounds (Table 1) and averaged 2.87 million pounds. Massachusetts and New York land on average 65% of the total coastal quota. The average commercial harvest since 2003 (2.87 million pounds) is approximately a 19% underage from the allocated coastal quota in Amendment 6 after accounting for conservation equivalency programs. The coastal quota underage is mainly attributed to game fish status in several states. Additionally, in recent years migratory striped bass have not been available to the ocean fishery in North Carolina, resulting in minimal harvest.

Commercial harvest in the Chesapeake Bay from 2003 to 2013 ranged between 3.29 and 4.40 million pounds and averaged 4.06 million pounds (Table 2). Chesapeake Bay commercial harvest has continued to decline since 2009 because the Bay's quota management program is adjusted based on changes in exploitable stock biomass. The Chesapeake Bay quota has historically been split among the three Bay jurisdictions based on their percent contribution to the 1994 catch as follows, Maryland = 52.359%, Potomac River Fisheries Commission = 15.226%, and Virginia = 32.414%.

Within the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas, commercial harvest (Albemarle Sound only) from 2003 to 2013 ranged from 68,214 to 273,636 pounds and averaged 165,504 pounds (Table 2).

In total, the commercial fishery harvested an estimated 5.82 million pounds in 2013, which is lower than the harvest in 2012 (6.51 million pounds) and also lower than the 2003-2012 average harvest of 7.05 million pounds (Figure 1).

2.3.2 Recreational Fishery Status

The recreational fishery is currently managed with bag and size limits (refer to Appendix 1 for jurisdiction specific regulations). From 2003 to 2013, total coastal recreational harvest has ranged from a high of 31 million pounds in 2006 to a low of 19.2 million pounds in 2012 with an average of 26.4 million pounds (Figure 1; Table 4). Landings from New York (25%), Massachusetts (19%), New Jersey (19%), and Maryland (11%) have comprised approximately 74% of annual recreational landings since 2003. The number of fish released alive increased annually after the passage of Amendment 6 to a high of 23.3 million fish in 2006. Since then, the number of fish released alive has decreased by 77% to a low of 5.2 million fish in 2012. Reasons for the decline may be attributed to a reduction in stock size from the peak in 2003, a decreased availability of fish staying in nearshore areas, and changes in angler behavior in response to socioeconomic factors.

Recreational harvest in the Chesapeake Bay, between 2003 and 2013, has ranged from a high of 5.5 million pounds in 2005 to a low of 2.4 million pounds in 2012 with an average of 3.90 million pounds. The Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River (A/R) recreational quota is set at 275,000 pounds and is divided between the two management areas equally. The average combined harvest in the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River from 2003 through 2013 was 111,598 pounds, less than half the allowable quota (Table 3).

2.3.3 Management History

Since Amendment 4, the foundation of the striped bass management program has been to maintain harvest below a target F. Amendment 6 modified the F targets and thresholds, and also introduced a new set of biological reference points based on female SSB. On a regular basis, SSB and F are estimated and compared to target and threshold levels. These reference points, as well as new management triggers, have enabled the Board to be more responsive to changes in the stock.

Amendment 6 also phased in new regulations for both the commercial and recreational fisheries. In 2004, the coastal commercial quotas for striped bass were restored to the states' historical

average landings during the 1972-1979 base period, a 43 percent increase from the 2002 coastal commercial quotas. In the recreational fisheries, all states were required to implement a two fish bag limit with a minimum size limit of 28 inches, except for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas and states with approved conservation equivalency proposals. Addendum III (August 2012) outlined measures to address illegal harvest of striped bass. States and jurisdictions are required to implement a tagging program for all commercially harvested striped bass within state or jurisdictional waters to better track harvest and minimize poaching.

The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ; 3-200 miles) has been closed to the harvest, possession and targeting of striped bass since 1990, with the exception of a defined route to and from Block Island in Rhode Island. A recommendation was made in Amendment 6 to re-open federal waters to commercial and recreational fisheries. However, NOAA Fisheries concluded opening the EEZ to striped bass fishing was not warranted at that time.

2.4 Status of the Stock

In 2012, the Atlantic striped bass stock was not overfished or experiencing overfishing relative to the new reference points defined in the 2013 benchmark assessment. Female SSB was estimated at 128 million pounds (58,200 mt) just above the SSB threshold of 127 million pounds (57,626 mt), and below the SSB target of 159 million pounds (72,032 mt; Figure 2). Total fishing mortality was estimated at 0.20, below the fishing mortality threshold of 0.22 but above the fishing mortality target of 0.18 (Figure 3).

Recruitment

Striped bass experienced several years of strong recruitment of age-1 fish entering the population from 1993-2004, followed by a period of lower recruitment from 2005-2010 (although not as low as the early 1980s, when the stock was overfished). Since the stock was declared recovered in 1995 the recruitment failure trigger (any state's juvenile abundance index value below 75% of all other values in their dataset for three years in a row) has not been met. The 2011 year-class (age-1 fish in 2012) was strong (i.e., abundant; Figure 2); however, overall the 2012 year-class (age-1 fish in 2013) was weak (i.e., low abundance). The 2013 juvenile abundance index was above average for Maine and Virginia, below average for New Jersey and Maryland, and below the 75% quartile for New York and North Carolina.

2.5 Proposed Fishing Mortality Reference Points

Adopted options (other than status quo) would replace Amendment 6, Section 2.5.1.

Fishing mortality based reference points are designed to manage the rate at which individual striped bass die because of fishing. If the current F exceeds the F threshold, then overfishing is occurring. This means the rate at which striped bass are dying because of fishing (i.e., harvest and dead discards) exceeds the stock's ability to maintain itself at SSB threshold. The value of the F target is set at a cautionary level intended to safeguard the fishery from reaching the overfishing threshold. The F target and threshold may change through updated stock assessments because these reference point values are estimated based on the best available data.

This section considers F reference points for the (1) coastwide population (which includes the Chesapeake Bay, Hudson River and Delaware River/Bay as a metapopulation) (2) Chesapeake

Bay Stock, and (3) Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock. Separate F targets for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River were established in Amendment 5 to compensate for the smaller minimum size limit granted to both of these management areas.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

This section proposes to adjust the F target and threshold, based on reference points developed in the 2013 benchmark stock assessment that were approved by the 57th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC 57) and accepted by the Board in October 2013 for management use.

Option A: Status Quo, 2011 Stock Assessment Update F Reference Points

The fishing mortality reference points remain unchanged and are based on maximum sustainable yield as estimated in the 2011 stock assessment update:

Reference Point	Definition	Value (as estimated in 2011 stock assessment update)
Fthreshold	Fmsy	0.34
Ftarget	TC recommended value more conservative than Fmsy	0.30

Option B: 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment F Reference Points

The fishing mortality reference points will be adjusted to be internally consistent with the SSB target and threshold, consistent with the recommendations in the 2013 benchmark assessment:

Reference Point	Definition	Value (as estimated in 2013 benchmark stock assessment)*
Fthreshold	F associated with achieving the SSB threshold	0.22
Ftarget	F associated with achieving the SSB target	0.18

* The F target and threshold values may change through updated stock assessments because they are estimated based on the best available data.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

This section proposes to adjust F reference points for the Chesapeake Bay management area.

Option A: Status Quo

F target is 0.27 as established in Amendment 6. This option is linked to Option A; status quo in section 2.5.1.

Option B: Use coastwide population F reference points as established in section 2.5.1.

Due to data and model limitations, the Technical Committee cannot reach consensus on separate reference points for the Chesapeake Bay management area at this time (see TC memorandum; Appendix 2). Previously, the intent of establishing a lower F target in the Chesapeake Bay was to account for the impacts of harvesting a smaller sized fish (i.e., 18 inch minimum) in the Chesapeake Bay. The new coastwide reference points coming from the 2013 benchmark stock assessment (and considered in section 2.5.1) include the effects of the Chesapeake Bay's harvest

of smaller fish on the coastwide SSB, but do not incorporate data on the sex ratio that exists in the Bay. Therefore, the coastwide population reference points represent the best available scientific advice to manage total fishing mortality on both the coastwide population and the Chesapeake Bay stock component because the Technical Committee is unable to calculate Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points at this time.

At its August 2014 meeting, the Board tasked the TC with the continued development of stock-specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay to be considered for future management use.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

This section proposes to adjust reference points for the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas.

Option A: Status Quo

F target is 0.27 as established in Amendment 6.

Option B: The State of North Carolina will manage the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River (A/R) stock using reference points from the latest North Carolina A/R stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board. If this option is selected, the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River will operate under North Carolina's Fishery Management Plan while the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean will continue to operate under the same management measures as the rest of the coastal fisheries.

2.5.4 Reference Point Evaluation

Section 4.1 of Amendment 6 contains management triggers to prevent overfishing the Atlantic striped bass resource and ensure the objectives of Amendment 6 are achieved. The management triggers will be evaluated using recent estimates of F and SSB coming from an updated or benchmark stock assessment.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

At its May 2014 meeting, the Board approved the following motion:

Move to include in Draft Addendum IV a modification of Management Trigger 3 under Section 4.1 in Amendment 6 to require the Board to adjust fishing mortality to a level that is at or below the target within three years.

Management Trigger 3 as currently written in Amendment 6 is as follows:

If the Management Board determines that the fishing mortality target is exceeded in two consecutive years and the female spawning stock biomass falls below the target within either of those years, the Management Board must adjust the striped bass management program to reduce the fishing mortality rate to a level that is at or below the target within one year.

The intent of replacing the trigger's one year timeframe with a three year timeframe was to provide management flexibility to reduce potential social and economic impacts by spreading out required harvest reductions over time.

Option A: Status quo: One year time frame

Management Trigger 3 requires reducing F to a level at or below the target within one year.

If the Board selects Option A, then the three year timeframe management scenarios presented in section 3.0 are not consistent with reducing F to a level that is at or below the target in one year and would not be viable management options.

Option B: Three year time frame.

Management Trigger 3 will be revised to require reducing F to a level at or below the target within three years instead of within one year.

If the Board selects Option B, the Board may choose management measures from either the one year or three year timeframe options in Section 3.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

The coastal area can be defined as the entire management unit (i.e., all coastal and estuarine areas of all states and jurisdictions from Maine through North Carolina) excluding the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas. It should be noted that the current management regime permits the implementation of, Board approved, alternative regulations that are conservation equivalents to regulations approved in this document (see Section 4.6 of Amendment 6 for process). Several states currently implement conservation equivalency programs in order to have management measures to meet the needs of their state's fishery (see Appendix 1). If the Board approves changes to the current striped bass management program through this document, all states would need to re-submit conservation equivalency programs for Board approval. Additionally, states may voluntarily implement management programs that are more conservative than those required herein.

Projecting Harvest Reductions to Achieve F Target

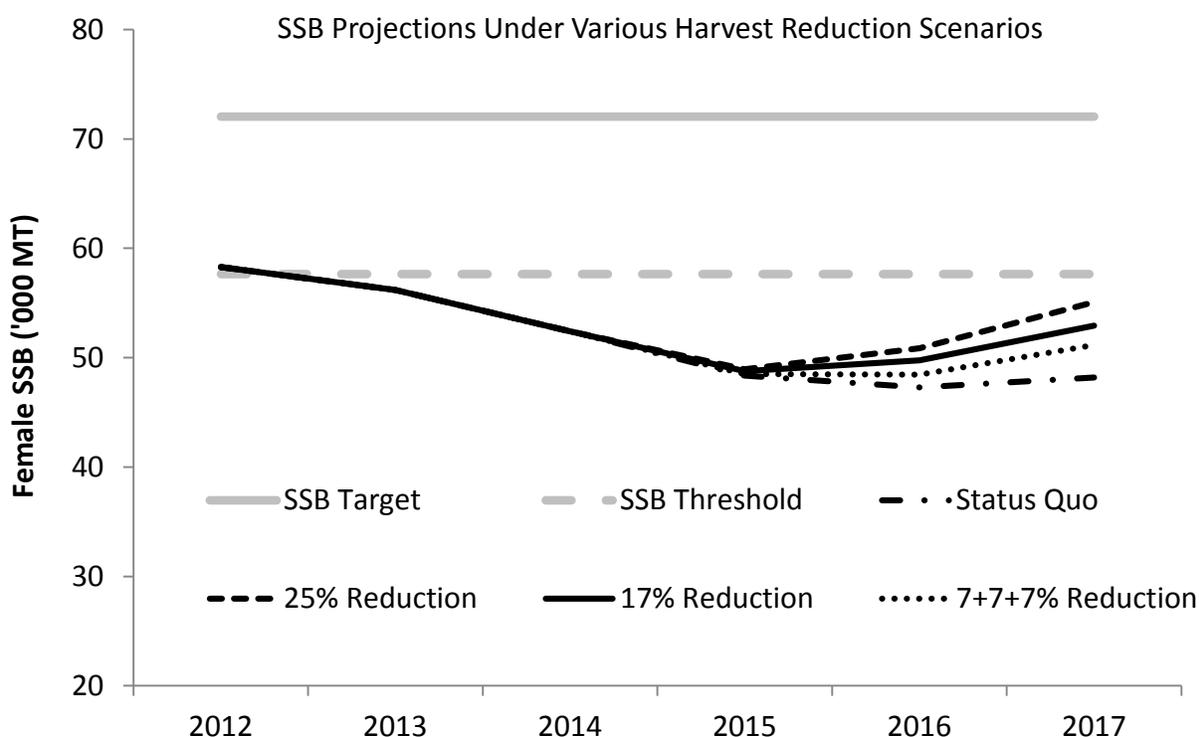
Stock projections were used to forecast future stock conditions and estimate the harvest level needed to reduce F to the proposed target over a one or three year timeframe. The Technical Committee used a forward projecting methodology to identify the percent reduction from 2013 harvest levels necessary to achieve the proposed F target over a one or three year timeframe. Projection results indicate:

- If total harvest is reduced by 25% starting in the 2015 fishing year, there is a 50% probability¹ F will be at or below its target level within one year.
- If total harvest is reduced by 17% starting in the 2015 fishing year, there is a 50% probability F will be at or below its target level within three years.

¹ A 50% probability was the minimum recommended by the TC - a higher probability of being at or below the target would require more restrictive management measures that achieve a higher reduction than the projections estimate is needed.

- If total harvest is reduced by 7% each year for three consecutive years starting in 2015 to achieve an approximate 20% reduction², there is a 50% probability F will be at or below its target level within three years.
- To contrast these options, if total harvest remains unchanged (status quo), there is less than a 1% probability that F will be at or below its target in one or three years.

It is important to note in all of the harvest scenarios, the probability of the stock being overfished (SSB less than the SSB threshold) is high and increases until 2015-2016. This means despite any reduction in harvest through these proposed scenarios, SSB will continue to decline reaching a low point in 2015-2016 before it begins an upward trajectory towards SSB target (see SSB projection figure below). This trend is driven by the lack of strong year classes currently in the fishery, and the emergence of the strong 2011 year class that matures into the spawning stock in 2016-2017.



Proposed Management Scenarios

The following section outlines four management scenarios (including status quo) that are designed to reduce *F* to a level that is at or below its target within a one or three year timeframe. These scenarios, which are all mutually exclusive, include (A) status quo; (B) a 25% harvest reduction from 2013 levels to take place in 2015 to achieve *F* target in one year; (C) a 17% harvest reduction from 2013 levels to take place in 2015 to achieve *F* target over three years; and (D) a 20% reduction from 2013 levels taken incrementally through a 7% reduction in

² A 7% reduction for three consecutive years is equivalent to an approximate 20% reduction over the three year period. For example: In the first year harvest (100 pounds for this example) is reduced by 7% (100 lb - 7% = 93lb). In the second year, harvest is reduced by another 7% (93lb - 7% = 86.5 lb). In the last year, harvest is reduced by a final 7% (86.5 lb - 7% = 80.4 lbs). So harvest in the last year is 80.4lb and harvest in the first year was 100 lb which means the overall reduction is 19.6% or approximately 20% from the first year.

harvest for each of the three consecutive years starting in 2015 to achieve *F* target over three years.

As a note for all fishery management quota options: Quotas are allocated on a fishing year basis. In the event that a jurisdiction exceeds its allocation, the amount in excess of its annual quota will be deducted from the state's allowable quota in the following year.

States with approved conservation equivalency would need to update their proposals if a new quota allocation is chosen. The requirements of Addendum III to Amendment 6 would remain unchanged if the quota allocations are adjusted.

When providing input on this document, please first identify your preferred management scenario (Option A, B, C, or D) and then select your preferred management measures within that scenario. With the exception of the status quo option, there will be management options for each fishery and management area combination (recreational measures for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries and commercial measures for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries).

Adopted options (besides status quo) would replace the corresponding sections in Amendment 6.

Option A: Status Quo

*The status quo option does not meet the projection harvest reductions needed from 2013 levels to reduce *F* to a level that is at or below its proposed target.*

Recreational Fishery Management

All jurisdictions will be constrained by a two fish bag limit and 28 inch minimum size limit, except for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River management areas that are constrained by an 18 inch minimum size limit and a bag limit that maintains target fishing mortality of 0.27. This option is estimated to achieve a 0% reduction from 2013 recreational harvest.

Commercial Fishery Management

Coastal Commercial Fishery

Each state will be allocated 100% of the base period (1972-1979) average coastal commercial landings (Section 4.3.2 of Amendment 6). This option is estimated to achieve a 0% reduction from the total 2013 commercial harvest.

	Status Quo	For Reference
State	Am6 Quota (lbs)	2013 Harvest (lbs)
Maine	250*	0
New Hampshire	5,750*	0
Massachusetts	1,159,750	1,002,519
Rhode Island	243,625†	231,280
Connecticut	23,750**	1,479
New York	1,061,060†	823,801
New Jersey	321,750**	6,096
Delaware	193,447	191,424
Maryland	131,560†	93,532
Virginia	184,853	182,427
North Carolina	480,480	0
Coastal Total	3,806,275	2,532,558
% Diff from 2013 harvest	+53	0

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

† Quota reduced through management program equivalency; NY (828,293 pounds) and MD (126,396 pounds) beginning in 2004, RI (239,963 pounds) beginning in 2007.

Chesapeake Bay

The Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions would manage striped bass fisheries so as not to exceed a target fishing mortality rate of $F=0.27$ with an 18 inch size limit. The area to be managed under a target fishing mortality rate of 0.27 is described in Section 2.4.2 in Amendment 6. This option is estimated to achieve a 0% reduction from 2013 commercial harvest.

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River

The State of North Carolina will manage the commercial striped bass fishery in the Albemarle Sound so as not to exceed a target fishing mortality of $F=0.27$. The striped bass regulations outlined in Amendment 6 for the Albemarle-Roanoke stock will cover the area described in Section 2.4.1. of Amendment 6.

Option B: Reduce F to a level that is at or below the target within one year. This represents a 25% reduction from 2013 total harvest. The desired reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
B1	1	28" min	n/a	31%
B2	1	30" min	n/a	greater than 31% ³
B3	1	32" min	n/a	greater than 31% ³
B4	1	28-40" slot	n/a	greater than 31% ³
B5	2	33" min	n/a	29%
B6	2	28-34" slot	n/a	28%
B7	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-34" slot	1 fish 36" min	28% ³
B8	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-36" slot	1 fish 38" min	26% ³
B9	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-37" slot	1 fish 40" min	26% ³

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
B10	1	18" min	n/a	31%
B11	2	21" min	n/a	29%
B12	2	18-23" slot	n/a	26%
B13	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy or 2 slot)	1 or both 18-21" slot	1 fish 36" min	29%
B14	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 2,000,915 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18")			25%
B15	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 1,800,740 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18"). Quota is based on a 25% reduction from 2012 harvest.			32%

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Recreational Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the recreational striped bass fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

It is important to note none of the management options presented in the tables achieve a 25% reduction from 2013 harvest.

Coastal Commercial Fishery

Option B16: Takes a 25% reduction from the Amendment 6 quota. This option does not achieve the proposed 25% reduction from 2013 harvest if all states harvest all of their allowable quota

³ The data available to estimate the percent reduction is limited because the combination of a bag limit and size limit changes simultaneously means only measured fish from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) were included in the analysis which is a small subsample of the MRIP dataset for striped bass.

(see table below). However, this option may achieve some level of reduction from 2013 harvest if the fishery performs similar to previous years.

	For Reference	Option B16	For Reference
State	Am6 Quota (lbs)	25% reduction from Am6 Quota (lbs)	2013 Harvest (lbs)
Maine	250*	188	0
New Hampshire	5,750*	4,313	0
Massachusetts	1,159,750	869,813	1,002,519
Rhode Island	243,625†	182,719	231,280
Connecticut	23,750**	17,813	1,479
New York	1,061,060†	795,795	823,801
New Jersey	321,750**	241,313	6,096
Delaware	193,447	145,085	191,424
Maryland	131,560†	98,670	93,532
Virginia	184,853	138,640	182,427
North Carolina	480,480	360,360	0
Coastal Total	3,806,275	2,854,706	2,532,558
% Diff from 2013 harvest	+50	+13	0

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

† Quota reduced through management program equivalency; NY (828,293 pounds) and MD (126,396 pounds) beginning in 2004, RI (239,963 pounds) beginning in 2007.

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Commercial Fishery

Option B17: Takes a 25% reduction from 2013 commercial quota.

Option B18: Takes a 25% reduction from 2012 commercial harvest.

The rationale for considering 2012 harvest data for the Chesapeake Bay fisheries as the baseline for reductions is the Bay-wide quota had already been reduced by 14% in 2013, in keeping with the Bay commitment to raise or lower quotas, with definitive changes in the exploitable stock biomass as approved by the FMP. The commercial Chesapeake Bay fisheries' quota reduction meant that harvesters were provided 14% less tags or pounds of harvestable quota in 2013, as compared to 2012 and the 2013 recreational summer and fall quotas were reduced by 14% compared to 2012. For this reason, the Chesapeake Bay requested, and the Board approved, that Draft Addendum IV also consider reductions based on 2012 harvest, rather than 2013.

This rationale also applies to options C11 and D8.

	For Reference	Option B17	Option B18	For Reference
Chesapeake Bay	2013 Harvest (lbs)	25% reduction from 2013 Quota (lbs)	25% reduction from 2012 harvest	2012 Harvest (lbs)
	3,293,337	2,666,024	2,943,629	3,924,839
% Diff from 2013 harvest	0	-19	-11	19
% Diff from 2012 harvest	-19	-32	-25	0

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Commercial Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the commercial striped bass fishery in the Albemarle Sound based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

Option C: Reduce F to a level that is at or below the target within three years. This represents a 17% reduction from 2013 total harvest starting in the 2015 fishing year. There are not additional reductions in 2016 or 2017, the 17% reduction would be taken all in the first year (2015). The desired reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
C1	2	32" min	n/a	21%
C2	2	28-36" slot	n/a	19%
C3	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-35" slot	1 fish 35" min	20% ⁴

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
C4	2	20" min	n/a	22%
C5	2	18-26" slot	n/a	18%
C6	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy or 2 slot)	1 or both 18-23" slot	1 fish 36" min	19%
C7	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 2,214,345 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18")			17%
C8	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 1,992,819 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18"). Quota is based on a 17% reduction from 2012 harvest.			25%

⁴ Reduction estimate limited by data. See footnote 3 for further explanation.

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Recreational Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the recreational striped bass fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

It is important to note none of the management options presented in the tables achieve a 17% reduction from 2013 harvest.

Coastal Commercial Fishery

Option C9: Takes a 17% reduction from the Amendment 6 quota. This option does not achieve the proposed 17% reduction from 2013 harvest if all states harvest all of their allowable quota (see table below). However, this option may achieve some level of reduction from 2013 harvest if the fishery performs similar to previous years.

	For Reference	Option C9	For Reference
State	Am6 Quota (lbs)	17% reduction from Am6 Quota (lbs)	2013 Harvest (lbs)
Maine	250*	208	0
New Hampshire	5,750*	4,773	0
Massachusetts	1,159,750	962,593	1,002,519
Rhode Island	243,625†	202,209	231,280
Connecticut	23,750**	19,713	1,479
New York	1,061,060†	880,680	823,801
New Jersey	321,750**	267,053	6,096
Delaware	193,447	160,561	191,424
Maryland	131,560†	109,195	93,532
Virginia	184,853	153,428	182,427
North Carolina	480,480	398,798	0
Coastal Total	3,806,275	3,159,208	2,532,558
% Diff from 2013 harvest	+50	+25	0

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

† Quota reduced through management program equivalency; NY (828,293 pounds) and MD (126,396 pounds) beginning in 2004, RI (239,963 pounds) beginning in 2007.

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Commercial Fishery

Option C10: Takes a 17% reduction from the 2013 commercial quota.

Option C11: Takes a 17% reduction from the 2012 commercial harvest.

	For Reference	Option C10	Option C11	For Reference
Chesapeake Bay	2013 Harvest (lbs)	17% reduction from 2013 Quota (lbs)	17% reduction from 2012 harvest (lbs)	2012 Harvest (lbs)
	3,293,337	2,950,400	3,257,616	3,924,839
% Diff from 2013 harvest	0	-10	-1	19
% Diff from 2012 harvest	-19	-25	-17	0

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Commercial Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the commercial striped bass fishery in the Albemarle Sound based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment that are accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

Option D: Reduce F to a level that is at or below the target within three years. This represents approximately a 20% reduction from 2013 total harvest achieved with a 7% reduction each year for three consecutive years starting in 2015. The desired reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

Option D1: Size limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction
2015	2	30" min	n/a	Approximately a 21% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
2016	2	31" min	n/a	
2017	2	32" min	n/a	

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

Option D2: Size limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction
2015	2	19" min	n/a	Approximately a 22% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
2016	2	20" min	n/a	
2017	2	20" min	n/a	

Option D3: Slot limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction
2015	2	18-35" slot	n/a	Approximately a 19% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
2016	2	18-28" slot	n/a	
2017	2	18-24" slot	n/a	

Option D4: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota (Baywide). Reductions applied to 2013 harvest.

Year	Quota	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction
2015	2,481,134	18" min	n/a	Approximately a 20% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
2016	2,307,455	18" min	n/a	
2017	2,145,933	18" min	n/a	

Option D5: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota (Baywide). Reductions applied to 2012 harvest.

Year	Quota	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction
2015	2,232,918	18" min	n/a	Approximately a 28% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
2016	2,076,614	18" min	n/a	
2017	1,931,251	18" min	n/a	

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Recreational Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the recreational striped bass fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

The tables below provide a suite of options for both the coastal and Chesapeake Bay commercial fisheries. When providing input on this document, please identify one preferred option each for the coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

It is important to note none of the management options presented in the tables achieve an overall 20% reduction from 2013 harvest.

Coastal Commercial Fishery

Option D6: Takes a 7% sequential reduction from Amendment 6 quota. This option does not achieve the proposed 20% reduction from 2013 harvest if all states harvest all of their allowable quota (see table below). However, this option may achieve some level of reduction from 2013 harvest if the fishery performs similar to previous years.

	Option D6	2015	2016	2017
State	For Reference Am6 Quota (lbs)	7% reduction from Am6 Quota (lbs)	7% reduction from 2015 Quota (lbs)	7% reduction from 2016 Quota (lbs)
Maine	250*	233	216	201
New Hampshire	5,750*	5,348	4,973	4,625
Massachusetts	1,159,750	1,078,568	1,003,068	932,853
Rhode Island	243,625†	226,571	210,711	195,961
Connecticut	23,750**	22,088	20,541	19,103
New York	1,061,060†	986,786	917,711	853,471
New Jersey	321,750**	299,228	278,282	258,802
Delaware	193,447	179,906	167,312	155,600
Maryland	131,560†	122,351	113,786	105,821
Virginia	184,853	171,913	159,879	148,688
North Carolina	480,480	446,846	415,567	386,477
Coastal Total	3,806,275	3,539,836	3,292,047	3,061,604
% Diff from 2013 harvest	+50	+40	+30	+21

* Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with no re-allocation of quota.

** Commercial harvest/sale prohibited, with re-allocation of quota to the recreational fishery.

† Quota reduced through management program equivalency; NY (828,293 pounds) and MD (126,396 pounds) beginning in 2004, RI (239,963 pounds) beginning in 2007.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery

Option D7: Takes a 7% sequential reduction from 2013 Chesapeake Bay commercial quota.

	Option D7	2015	2016	2017
Chesapeake Bay	For Reference 2013 Harvest	7% reduction from 2013 Quota	7% reduction from 2015 Quota	7% reduction from 2016 Quota
	3,293,337	3,305,870	3,074,459	2,859,247
% Diff from 2013 harvest	0	0	-7	-13
% Diff from 2012 harvest	-16	-16	-22	-27

Option D8: Takes a 7% sequential reduction from 2012 Chesapeake Bay commercial harvest.

	Option D8	2015	2016	2017
Chesapeake Bay	For Reference 2013 Harvest	7% reduction from 2012 harvest	7% reduction from 2015 Quota	7% reduction from 2016 Quota
	3,293,337	3,650,100	3,394,593	3,156,972
% Diff from 2013 harvest	0	+11	+3	-4
% Diff from 2012 harvest	-16	-7	-14	-20

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area Commercial Fishery

The State of North Carolina will manage the commercial striped bass fishery in the Albemarle Sound based on reference points from the latest North Carolina stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

The Board may consider commercial quota transfers for any of the four management scenarios selected above.

Option A: Status quo, no commercial quota transfers.

Option B: Commercial quota transfer provision.

Transfers between states may occur upon agreement of two states at any time during the fishing season up to 45 days after the last day of the fishing season. All transfers require a donor state (state giving quota) and a receiving state (state accepting additional quota). There is no limit on the amount of quota that can be transferred by this mechanism, and the terms and conditions of the transfer are to be identified solely by the parties involved in the transfer. The Administrative Commissioner of the agency involved must submit a signed letter to the Commission identifying the involved states, species, and pounds of quota to be transferred between the parties. A transfer becomes effective upon receipt by Commission staff of the signed letters from the donor and receiving states, and does not require the approval of the Commission staff or Board. All transfers are final upon receipt of the signed letters at the Commission. In the event that the donor or receiving member of a transaction subsequently wishes to change the amount or details of the transaction, both parties have to agree to the change, and submit to the Commission signed letters from the Administrative Commissioner of the agencies involved. These transfers do not permanently affect the state-specific shares of the quota (i.e., the state-specific quotas remain fixed).

Once quota has been transferred to a state, the state receiving quota becomes responsible for any overages of transferred quota. That is, the amount over the final quota (that state’s quota plus any quota transferred to that state) for a state will be deducted from the corresponding state’s quota the following fishing season.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

The Board may consider commercial size limits for any of the four management scenarios selected above.

Option A: Status quo with Amendment 6

In each jurisdiction, the commercial fishery is constrained by the same size limit regime established for the jurisdiction's recreational fishery. This means if the Board selects a different size limit for the recreational fishery, the commercial fishery would be constrained to the same size limit.

Option B: Status quo with existing size limits

All areas will maintain their current minimum size limit for the commercial fishery, including the Chesapeake Bay (18 inch minimum), Albemarle Sound (18 inch minimum) and the Delaware Bay shad gillnet fishery for Delaware (20 inch minimum). This option only applies if the Board selects to change the size limits for the recreational fishery.

4.0 Compliance Schedule

If approved, states must implement Addendum IV according to the following schedule to be in compliance with the Atlantic Striped Bass ISFMP:

XXXXXX: States submit proposals to meet requirements of Addendum IV.

XXXXXX: Management Board reviews and takes action on state proposals.

January 1, 2015: States implement regulations. North Carolina will need earlier implementation because their ocean commercial fishery begins on December 1, 2014.

5.0 ISSUE 8: Recommendation for Federal Waters

If options in section 2.5 or 3.0 are adopted through the addendum process, the Board would consider which options, if any should be recommended to NOAA Fisheries for implementation in the Exclusive Economic Zone.

6.0 Literature Cited

ASMFC. 2003. Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Washington (DC): ASMFC. Fisheries Management Report No. 41. 63 p.

ASMFC. 2013. Update of the Striped Bass Stock Assessment using Final 2012 Data. A report prepared by the Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee. 74 p.

Hartman, K.J. 2003. Population-level consumption by Atlantic coastal striped bass and the influence of population recovery upon prey communities. Fisheries Management and Ecology 10:281-290.

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries. 2014. Stock Status of Albemarle Sound-Roanoke River Striped Bass. N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Marine Fisheries, Moorhead City, N.C. 210p.

7.0 Tables

Table 1. Coastal commercial harvest of Atlantic striped bass by state in pounds (2003-2013).

Year	MA	RI	CT*	NY	NJ*	DE	MD+	VA+	NC**	Total Harvest
2003	1,055,439	246,312		753,261	121,410	188,419	98,149	159,786	434,369	3,057,145
2004	1,206,305	245,204		741,668	81,870	181,974	115,453	160,301	421,645	3,154,420
2005	1,104,737	242,303		689,821	29,866	173,815	46,871	184,734	454,521	2,926,668
2006	1,312,168	238,797		688,446	23,656	185,987	91,093	194,934	352,036	3,087,117
2007	1,040,328	240,627		729,743	13,615	188,668	96,301	165,587	424,723	2,899,592
2008	1,160,122	245,988		653,100	7,345	188,719	118,005	164,400	299,162	2,836,841
2009	1,138,291	234,368		789,891	10,330	192,311	127,327	140,420	189,995	2,822,933
2010	1,224,356	249,520		782,402	12,833	185,410	44,802	116,338	272,632	2,888,293
2011	1,163,865	228,163		854,731	16,332	188,620	21,401	158,811	242,600	2,874,523
2012†	1,219,665	239,913	1,062	681,399	6,285	194,324	77,551	170,788	6,226	2,597,213
2013	1,002,519	231,280	1,479	823,801	6,096	191,424	93,532	182,427	-	2,532,558

* NJ and CT values reflect striped bass harvested recreationally via the Bonus Fish Program

** NC values represent harvest during the December 1-November 30 fishing year

+MD, VA and NC harvest from ocean only. Does not include Chesapeake Bay or Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River.

†The impacts of hurricane Sandy may have caused lower harvest in 2012 in some states.

Table 2. Total (commercial and recreational) Chesapeake Bay harvest in pounds (2003-2013).

Year	Commercial	Recreational	Total Harvest	Quota
2003	4,169,585	5,335,278	9,504,863	10,500,000
2004	4,156,977	4,277,549	8,434,526	8,417,000
2005	4,102,804	5,484,312	9,587,116	9,285,588
2006	4,008,349	4,859,593	8,867,942	9,590,238
2007	4,206,503	4,228,977	8,435,480	9,590,238
2008	4,369,971	3,539,541	7,909,512	10,132,844
2009	4,403,215	4,065,721	8,468,936	10,132,844
2010	4,092,654	3,173,290	7,265,944	9,489,794
2011	3,925,048	2,914,653	6,839,701	8,825,510
2012	3,924,839	2,400,987	6,325,826	8,825,510
2013	3,293,337	2,667,886	5,961,223	7,589,937

Table 3. Albemarle Sound / Roanoke River annual quota* and harvest in pounds (2003 – 2013).

Year	Commercial		Recreational	
	Quota	Harvest	Quota	Harvest
2003	275,000	266,555	275,000	90,964
2004	275,000	273,636	275,000	187,288
2005	275,000	232,693	275,000	171,007
2006	275,000	186,399	275,000	120,518
2007	275,000	171,683	275,000	89,125
2008	275,000	74,921	275,000	64,353
2009	275,000	96,134	275,000	106,894
2010	275,000	199,829	275,000	83,507
2011	275,000	134,538	275,000	114,097
2012	275,000	115,940	275,000	159,727
2013	275,000	68,214	275,000	40,094

* Quota is allocated 25% for the Roanoke River recreational fishery, 25% for the Albemarle Sound recreational fishery, and 50% for the Albemarle Sound commercial fishery

Table 4. Total coastwide recreational harvest of Atlantic striped bass by state in pounds (2003-2013).

Year	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	Total
2003	253,910	281,549	5,120,554	1,502,455	1,537,899	4,687,685	4,545,515	303,909	2,975,437	2,789,745	772,981	24,771,639
2004	226,200	98,995	6,112,746	1,386,138	1,617,561	3,727,105	5,548,167	330,623	2,347,752	2,956,310	4,833,112	29,184,709
2005	381,058	281,114	5,097,821	1,732,581	2,173,638	5,537,432	5,958,454	286,777	4,612,417	1,996,840	2,164,859	30,222,991
2006	323,355	179,181	4,832,355	999,300	2,030,878	6,028,409	7,067,533	260,134	3,868,944	3,694,529	1,759,796	31,044,414
2007	232,328	68,142	5,136,580	1,584,354	1,468,499	7,913,817	3,718,451	99,800	3,504,041	2,392,258	876,707	26,994,977
2008	271,768	73,807	5,763,763	751,507	1,868,335	10,925,408	4,696,090	333,149	2,728,048	2,657,976	525,891	30,595,742
2009	329,064	113,705	4,786,895	1,123,434	835,970	5,004,604	4,238,319	275,410	4,278,145	1,791,058	160,922	22,937,526
2010	104,117	67,409	4,270,401	1,096,369	1,259,008	6,997,089	5,382,743	251,853	2,630,802	481,147	453,844	22,994,782
2011	91,705	370,798	3,504,522	1,257,302	758,216	8,969,762	6,197,026	241,149	2,640,309	1,160,914	2,042,981	27,234,684
2012†	57,509	163,804	5,489,928	851,460	814,310	6,540,024	2,376,866	360,106	1,260,490	1,353,351	-	19,267,848
2013	103,106	227,447	4,828,109	3,076,814	2,129,160	6,749,587	4,643,220	248,183	2,377,734	478,750	70,798	24,932,908

Notes: The 2003 to 2006 values for Virginia do not include Technical Committee estimates of wave 1 harvest. The 2013 values do not include Technical Committee estimates of wave 1 harvest and are preliminary. †The impacts of hurricane Sandy may have caused lower harvest in 2012 in some states.

8.0 Figures

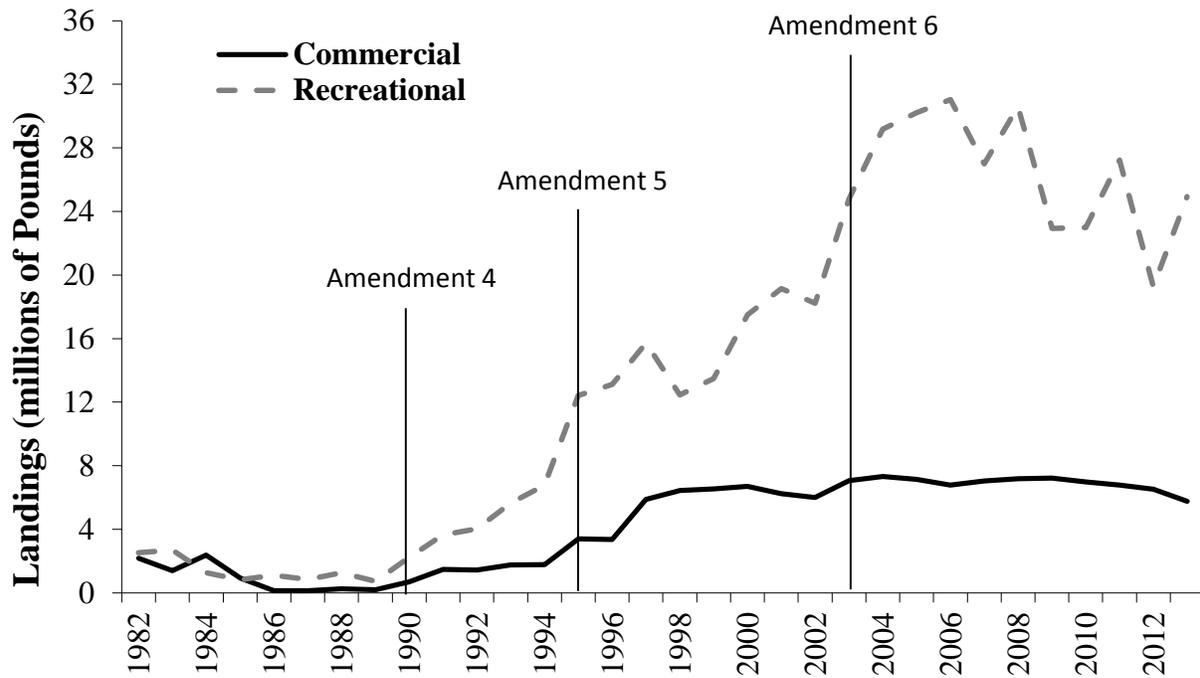


Figure 1. Annual migratory striped bass landings (in pounds) from coastal and Chesapeake Bay fisheries, 1982 – 2013.

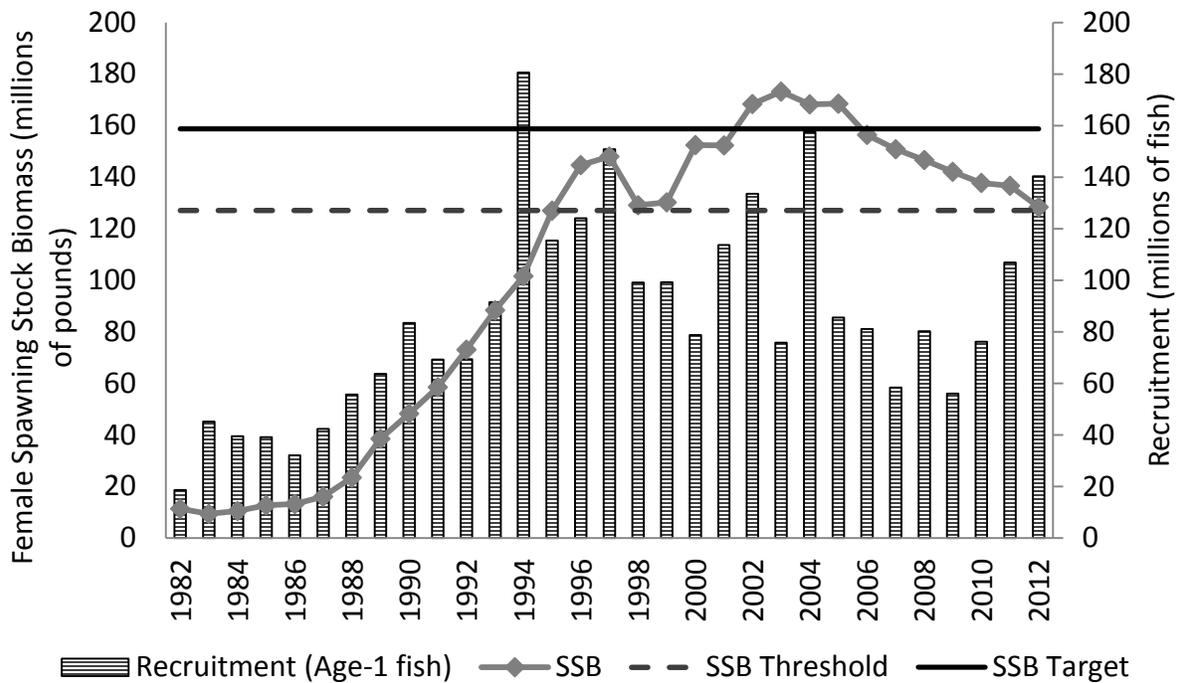
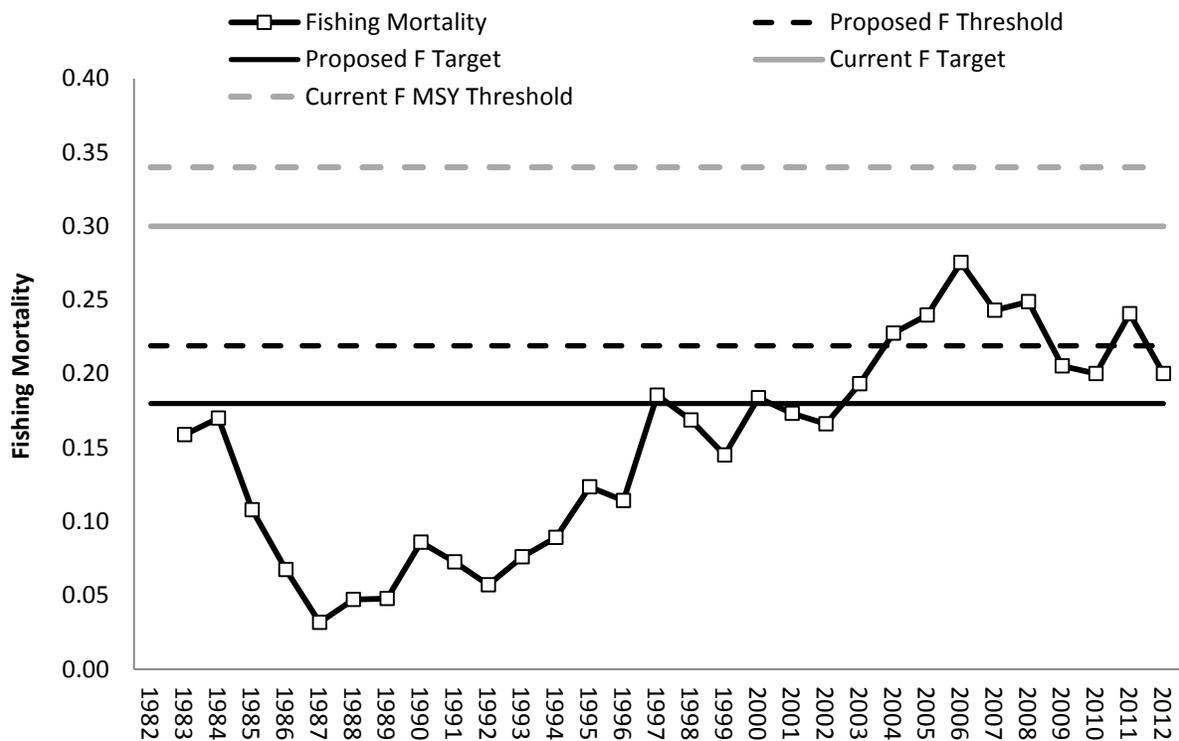


Figure 2. Atlantic striped bass female spawning stock biomass and recruitment (age-1) from 1982 to 2012.



* The F estimate for 1982 was considered unrealistic and unreasonable high, and is not shown on this graph.

Figure 3. Atlantic striped bass fishing mortality rates relative to the proposed F threshold and F target and old F MSY threshold and old F MSY target from 1982 to 2012.

Appendix 1

Summary of Atlantic Striped Bass Commercial Regulations in 2013

STATE	SIZE LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
ME	Commercial fishing prohibited		
NH	Commercial fishing prohibited		
MA	34" min.	1,159,750 lb. (minus any overage from previous year) Hook & line only	7.12 until quota reached; 5 fish/day on Sun; 30 fish/day Tues-Thurs
RI	Floating fish trap: 26" min. General category (mostly rod & reel): 34" min.	Total: 239,963 lb. (minus any overage from previous year) Split 39:61 between trap and general category. Gill netting prohibited.	Trap: 1.1 until quota reached; if 80% quota harvested before 8.26, a 500 lb/trap/day limit is imposed; from 8.27–12.31, 10,000 lb. quota set-aside available. General Category: 6.1-8.31 or 75% quota; 9.13-12.31 or 100% quota; 5 fish/day Sun-Thu.
CT	Commercial fishing prohibited		
NY	24–36" Ocean only (Hudson River closed to commercial harvest)	828,293 lb. (minus any overage from previous year). Pound nets, gill nets (6-8" stretched mesh), hook & line.	7.1 – 12.15 Gill nets <6 or >8", 7 fish/trip; trawls 21 fish/trip. Gill nets prohibited in Great South, South Oyster, and Hempstead Bays.
NJ	Commercial fishing prohibited		
PA	Commercial fishing prohibited		
DE	28" minimum except 20" spring gillnet in DE Bay/River & Nanticoke River (5.5" max mesh & 0.28mm max twine)	193,447 lb. (minus any overage from previous year)	Gillnet: 2.15-5.31 (3.1-31 for Nanticoke) & 11.15-12.31; drift nets only 2.15-28 & 5.1-31; no fixed nets in DE River Hook and Line: 4.1–12.31 Except 4.1-5.31 closed spawning areas
MD	Bay and Rivers: 18–36" Ocean: 24"	Bay and River: 1,963,873 lbs (part of Baywide quota) Gear specific quotas and landing limits Ocean: 126,396 lb. (minus any overage from previous year)	Bay Pound Net: 6.1-11.30, Mon-Sat Bay Haul Seine: 6.7-11.30, Mon-Fri Bay Hook & Line: 6.7-11.30, Mon-Thu Bay Drift Gill Net: 1.1-2.28, 12.1-12.31, Mon-Fri Ocean Drift Gill Net & Trawl: 1.1-4.30, 11.1-12.31, Mon-Fri

(Continued – Summary of commercial regulations in 2013)

STATE	SIZE LIMITS	SEASONAL QUOTA	OPEN SEASON
PRFC	18" min all year 36" max 2.15–3.25	635,623 lbs (part of Baywide quota)	Hook & line: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.31 Pound Net & Other: 2.15-3.25, 6.1-12.15 Gill Net: 1.1-3.25, and 11.11-12.31
DC	Commercial fishing prohibited		
VA	Bay and Rivers: 18" min, 28" max & complimentary gill net mesh size limit 3.26–6.15 Ocean: 28" minimum	Bay and Rivers: 1,430,361 lbs in 2012 (part of Baywide quota) Ocean: 184,853 lb. (minus any overage from previous year)	Bay and Rivers: 2.1-12.31 Ocean: 2.1-12.31
NC	Albemarle Sound: 18" Ocean: 28"	Albemarle Sound: 275,000 lb Ocean: 480,480 lb. (minus any overage from previous year) split 160,160 lbs each to beach seine, gill net & trawl	Albemarle Sound: 1.1-4.30, 10.1-12.31; daily trip limit ranging from 5 to 15 fish; striped bass cannot exceed 50% by weight of total finfish harvest; season and daily trip limits set by proclamation. Ocean: gear requirements; open days and trip limits for beach seine, gill net, and trawl set via proclamation

Summary of Atlantic Striped Bass Recreational Regulations in 2013

STATE	SIZE LIMITS	BAG LIMIT	OTHER	OPEN SEASON
ME	20 – 26” OR ≥40”	1 fish	Hook & line only	All year, except spawning areas are closed 12.1 – 4.30 and catch and release only 5.1 – 6.30
NH	1 fish 28–40” & 1 fish >28”	2 fish	No netting; no gaffing; must be landed with head and tail intact; no culling	All year
MA	28” min	2 fish	Hook & line only	All year
RI	28” min	2 fish		All year
CT	28” min, except Connecticut River Bonus Program: 22-28”	2 fish, except CR Bonus: 1 fish	CR Bonus Quota: 4,025 fish	All year, except CR Bonus 5.4-6.30 (limited to I-95 bridge to MA border)
NY	Ocean Private: 1 fish 28-40” & 1 fish > 40” Ocean Charter: 28” min Hudson River: 18” min DE River: 28” min	Ocean: 2 fish Hudson R.: 1 fish DE River: 2 fish	Angling or spearing only	Ocean: 4.15 – 12.15 Hudson River: 3.16 – 11.30 Delaware River: All year
NJ	28” min	2 fish, plus 1 additional through Bonus Program	Bonus program quota: 321,750 lb. No netting. Non-offset circle hooks required 4.1-5.31 in DE River if using natural bait.	All year except 1.1-2.28 in intra-coastal waters plus 4.1-5.31 in lower DE River
PA	Non-tidal DE River: 28” min; Delaware Estuary: 28” min. except 20-26” from 4.1-5.31	2 fish		Year round
DE	28” min. except 20-26” from 7.1-8.31 in Del. River, Bay & tributaries	2 fish	Hook & line, spear (for divers) only. Circle hooks required in spawning season.	All year except 4.1-5.31 in spawning grounds (catch & release allowed)

(Continued – Summary of recreational regulations in 2013)

STATE	SIZE LIMITS	BAG LIMIT	OTHER	OPEN SEASON
MD	Susquehanna Flats (SF): 18-26" Chesapeake Bay Trophy: 28" min Chesapeake Bay Regular: 18" min with 1 fish > 28" Ocean: 28" min	SF: 1 fish Chesapeake Bay Trophy: 1 fish Chesapeake Bay Regular: 2 fish Ocean: 2 fish	SF: non-off set circle hook if baited hooks & gap>0.5" Chesapeake Bay Quota: 2,657,102 lbs (part of Baywide quota; includes Susquehanna Flats harvest, excludes trophy harvest)	SF: 3.1-5.31; catch & release only 3.1-5.3 Chesapeake Bay Trophy: 4.18-5.15 (most tribs closed) Chesapeake Bay Regular: 5.16-12.15 (most tribs closed until 6.1) Ocean: All year
PRFC	Trophy: 28" Regular: 18" min with 1 fish > 28"	Trophy: 1 fish Regular: 2 fish	Quota: 520,055 lbs. (part of Baywide quota; excludes trophy harvest)	Trophy: 4.20 -5.15 Regular: 5.16-12.31
DC	18" min with 1 fish > 28"	2 fish	Hook & line only	5.16-12.31
VA	Bay/Coastal Trophy: 32" min (28" Potomac tribs) CB Spring: 18-28"; 1 fish >32" CB Fall: 18-28"; 1 fish >34" Potomac Tribs: 18-28"; 1 fish >28" Ocean: 28"	Bay/Coastal Trophy: 1 fish CB Spring: 2 fish CB Fall: 2 fish Potomac Tribs: 2 fish Ocean: 2 fish	Hook & line, rod & reel, hand line only Chesapeake Bay Quota: 1,430,361lbs in 2012 (part of Baywide quota; excludes trophy harvest)	Bay Trophy: 5.1-6.15 (open 4.18 Potomac tribs) Coastal Trophy: 5.1-5.15 CB Spring: 5.16-6.15 (no fish >32" in spawning areas) CB Fall: 10.4-12.31 Potomac Tribs: 5.16-12.31 Ocean: 1.1-3.31, 5.16-12.31
NC	Roanoke River: 2 fish 18- 22" OR 1 fish 18-22" and 1 fish >27" Albemarle Sound: 18" min. Ocean: 28" min	Roanoke River: 2 fish Albemarle Sound: 3 fish Ocean: 2 fish	Roanoke River quota: 137,500 lb. Albemarle Sound quota: 137,500 lb.	Roanoke River: 3.1 – 4.30 (single barbless hook required 3.1-6.30 from Roanoke Rapids dam downstream to US 258 bridge) Albemarle Sound: Spring 1.1 – 4.30; Fall 10.1-12.31 Ocean: All year



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

May 6, 2014

To: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
From: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee
RE: Reference Points for the Chesapeake Bay (Appendix 2)

The Striped Bass Management Board tasked the Technical Committee (TC) with developing reference points for the Chesapeake Bay stock. The TC evaluated five different scenarios of reference points. However, after detailed discussions, the TC concluded:

1. The TC cannot develop Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference point that explicitly accounts for migratory movements at this time.
2. The TC considered a set of reference points based on SSB/R conservation equivalency, but this methodology does not adequately take into account coastal harvest or the skewed sex-ratio of the Chesapeake Bay harvest. In addition, there is no way to measure the current F of the Chesapeake Bay fishery that is consistent with the assumptions of this type of model.
3. The TC considered a set of reference points based on SCA coastwide model. We discussed that if those were adopted, they would be very conservative because they ignore the fact that resident striped bass population in Chesapeake Bay is dominated by male fish.
4. The TC considered a method of adjustment to the SCA based reference points but the TC was uncomfortable in accepting the proposed scale of adjustment without more detailed analysis.
5. The TC agreed that stock-specific reference points are the ultimate goal for management of this species, and work on developing a sex-specific model that incorporates stock structure should be continued.
6. In the meantime the TC recommends that the new coastwide reference points should be used for the Chesapeake Bay.
7. The new coastwide reference points already include the effects of the CB fleet's unique selectivity pattern on the coastwide SSB, and represent the best available scientific advice to manage total fishing mortality on the coastwide striped bass population at this time.

The coastwide target total F is designed to maintain the spawning stock biomass at its target level over the long term. The effects of the Bay's harvest of smaller fish on the total coastwide stock are already incorporated into the coastwide population reference points due to different selectivity patterns for the Bay and Coastal fleets. As a result, the reference points approved for management use in the 2013 benchmark stock assessment represent the best available scientific advice at this time to manage fishing mortality on the entire striped bass population.

Biologically, the coastal migratory population of striped bass is comprised primarily of three stocks: the Chesapeake Bay stock, the Delaware River stock, and the Hudson River stock. Based on tagging data the Albemarle-Roanoke stock contributes insignificantly to the coastal migratory stock, and thus harvest and indices of abundance from the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River Management Areas are not included in the coastal assessment. Sexually mature adults from the coastal migratory population return to their natal rivers to spawn on an annual basis. Currently, we lack critical data on the sex- and age-specific rates of migration between the natal Bay and rivers and the coastal population. Thus, the stock assessment model treats the coastal population as a single stock. As a result, the TC cannot develop meaningful reference points specifically for the Chesapeake Bay stock at this time.

As an alternative, the TC worked to develop F reference points that would assess the impact of the Chesapeake Bay fleet on the total coastwide stock, since that can be measured through the SCA model using F estimates for the Chesapeake Bay fleet. Such estimates were developed, but it was noted that they would be very conservative due to the dominance of smaller males in the Chesapeake Bay resident population. It is recognized that the Chesapeake Bay fleet harvests primarily small males, but that is not explicitly modeled in the current SCA because it is not a sex-specific model. Therefore, given limited amount of time and constraints in the available data, the TC could not come to a consensus on whether or how to calculate a Chesapeake Bay fleet reference point at this time.

In the meantime, the effects of Chesapeake Bay's different selectivity pattern (i.e., harvest on smaller fish) are incorporated into the target and threshold total F values developed for the entire coastwide population of striped bass. By maintaining total F at the target level, the impact of the Chesapeake Bay fleet on the total coastwide population should remain sustainable.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

October 15, 2014

To: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board
From: Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee
RE: Biological Implications of Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV

The Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee met on September 9, 2014 to discuss the biological implications of the management options proposed in Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6. The following is a summary of the TC's discussion.

2.5 Proposed Fishing Mortality Reference Points

The proposed fishing mortality target ($F=0.18$) and threshold ($F=0.22$) are expected to maintain long-term average SSB at or near the corresponding SSB_{target} and $SSB_{\text{threshold}}$. However, there is a probability of SSB occasionally declining below the threshold while the fishing mortality is maintained at the target because of the response lag in SSB and natural variability in recruitment from environmental conditions beyond our control. While this formally will lead to the "overfished status" and management trigger 2 will be met, the SSB is expected to recover without any additional management action as long as the fishing mortality is maintained at or below the F_{target} .

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

Reducing F to the target in one year will be more beneficial to increasing SSB and protecting strong year classes than reducing F to the target in three years. However, higher levels of SSB that will be achieved with a one year reduction relative to a three year may not necessarily result in stronger year classes because of possible environmental effects.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Option A: Status Quo

- If total harvest remains unchanged (status quo), there is less than a 1% probability that F will be at or below its target within one or three years.

Implications of Recreational Fishery Options

Option B: Reduce F to the target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction

- Although all the recreational management options achieve the required reductions, the TC has 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, discards, poaching) may impact the percent reductions in harvest and there is no way to quantitatively account for this.

- The TC is unable to quantify biological benefits of one option over another because of uncertainties in the projections (e.g., selectivity patterns, fecundity, stock specific exploitation, maturity schedule).
- The TC does not recommend a specific recreational management option, but reminds the Board that more simple management measures (e.g., bag limits or increase in size limits) has been successful when managing striped bass in the past. One caveat: an increase in the size limit(s) will require a change in the selectivity for the affected fishery in the next assessment update.

Chesapeake Bay Management Area

- Although all the recreational management options achieve the required reductions, the TC has 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).
- The TC cautioned about option B12 (i.e., slot limit). If the Board is concerned about conserving the 2011 year class, then option B12 (i.e., slot limit) for the Bay recreational fishery would be the least preferred option.
- The TC discussed that the use of a recreational quota was a helpful option to maintain a stable fishery in the Bay because if a jurisdiction exceeded their recreational allocation in one year it would make adjustments the following year to stay within the quota.
- The Chesapeake Bay trophy fishery is accounted for in the harvest reduction analysis. Therefore options B10, B11, B14 and B15 assume the 28" for MD and 32" for VA spring trophy fisheries. Option B12 assumes no trophy fisheries, and option B13 assumes the trophy fishery is operating at 36".

Option C: Reduce F to the target within three years with a 17% harvest reduction.

- A constant harvest strategy held for several years is better for management evaluation than regulations that are constantly changing.

Option D: Reduce F to the target within three years with an incremental stepwise 7+7+7% reduction.

- The TC cautions that it is difficult to evaluate management when regulations are constantly changing.

Implications of Commercial Fishery Options

- The TC cautions that none of the proposed commercial quota options (B, C or D) achieve the level of harvest reductions necessary. The TC recommends taking the necessary harvest reduction from 2013 total commercial harvest level, and letting the Board handle the re-allocations as they see fit.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

- The TC is concerned that the percent reductions in harvest are being taken from the Amendment 6 quota, not the current level of harvest. Allowing transfers has the potential to increase harvest instead of decreasing it.
- The TC recommends that if transfers are used, conservation equivalency needs to be maintained between the state transferring quota and the state receiving the quota if the two states have different size limits. The TC also notes that a commercial tag transfer needs to be considered along with the commercial quota transfer.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- The TC does not recommend matching the commercial and recreational size limits. The TC recommended maintaining the same minimum size limits because the percent reductions are applicable to the current fishery selectivities. The TC is also concerned that an increase in the commercial size limits may result in more discards. For these reasons, the TC recommends option B.

General Comments

- The TC states that changes in MRIP methodology and implementation will make it more difficult to assess changes in harvest moving forward.



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MEMORANDUM

October 15, 2014

To: Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board

From: Michael Waine, ISFMP Coordinator

RE: Public Hearing Summary on Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6

Executive Summary

Nineteen public hearings were held between August and September in all twelve states within the management unit (ME-NC) for striped bass including the Potomac River Fisheries Commission. A few states held more than one public hearing (Massachusetts held four, New Jersey held three, and New York held two). Approximately 874 people attended all the public hearings combined, and attendance was spread along the coast with 40% at New England hearings (ME-CT), 44% at Mid-Atlantic hearings (NY-DE), and 16% at Chesapeake Bay hearings (MD, PRFC, VA).

There were three distinct groups of comments provided at the public hearings. The first were those that supported the new fishing mortality (F) reference points and the one year timeframe. The second was those that were in opposition to the one year time frame. And, lastly, there were specific to the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions.

A majority of all comments favored adopting the new proposed F reference points and were in favor of reducing F to the new target within one year. Of those that supported the new F reference points and the one year timeframe, many stated that the Commission has delayed action for too long and needs to act now to reverse the downward trend in spawning stock biomass. Additionally, many comments also favored a one fish bag limit and 32 inch minimum size limit (option B3) for the coastal recreational fishery. However, some of the charter/party boat participants were in favor of maintaining a two fish bag limit in order to remain profitable. A vast majority of comments were also in favor of a 25% reduction from Amendment 6 commercial quotas, but several people also noted the reduction falls short because it is based on Amendment 6 quota instead of 2013 harvest. Furthermore, a few of these individuals also suggested that similar reductions be taken from the Chesapeake Bay recreational and commercial fisheries. Overall, the sentiment of those supporting the new F reference points and one year timeframe was to manage the Atlantic striped bass stock for abundance so that fishing opportunities can expand to the benefit of current and future anglers as well as local businesses that rely on the striped bass fishery.

Of those commenters in opposition to the one year timeframe, many stated the data being used in the stock assessment is flawed (e.g., retrospective and ageing biases) and therefore, the assessment results are not reliable to base management on. These individuals were either in favor of status quo or the stepwise three-year 7+7+7% harvest reduction. The major concerns of those opposed to the one year timeframe include the socioeconomic impacts of the harvest reductions and that no formal impact analysis was conducted. Additionally, this group noted that

increasing the population of striped bass will impact prey populations (e.g., Atlantic menhaden, river herring, shad, weakfish).

Many commenters within the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions expressed disappointment that the Technical Committee was unable to develop Chesapeake Bay stock-specific reference points. Commenters at these hearings stated using the coastwide population reference points for the Bay is inappropriate because Bay harvest is composed of predominately male fish. As a result, a vast majority of Bay participants noted that reducing harvest on males will not help increase spawning stock biomass and, therefore, they were in favor of either status quo or the stepwise three-year 7+7+7% harvest reduction. These commenters also preferred reductions from 2012 harvest instead of 2013 quota as the Bay jurisdictions already took a 14% harvest reduction in 2013 and the additional reduction would be compounding. There was also concern that increasing the population of striped bass will have a negative impact on the blue crab fishery and may result in a spread of disease because of limited food availability in the Bay.

A common issue that came up at several hearings was illegal harvest (poaching) in both the recreational and commercial fisheries for striped bass. Commenters recognized that the U.S. Coast Guard has had more of a presence in the exclusive economic zone, but individuals think enforcement still needs to be enhanced and fines should be increased to minimize or limit poaching.

The following tables provide a numeric summary of individuals that spoke in support of each option in the Draft Addendum (signified by # column). Support for an option was only indicated in the table if the commenter directly stated preference for one or more of the options or if consensus was reached on the issue. Please note individuals speaking on behalf of a club or membership only represent one vote. Following the summary tables are state-specific public hearing summaries containing more details regarding the public input in each state/jurisdiction. Written comments that were submitted at the public hearings and hearing sign in sheets are also enclosed.

2.5 Proposed Fishing Mortality Reference Points

#	Option	2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options
12	A	Status quo, F reference points based on MSY
157	B	2013 benchmark stock assessment F ref pts
		2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options
18	A	Status quo, F target = 0.27
11	B	Use coastwide F reference points from section 2.5.1
		2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Ref Pt Options
0	A	Status quo, F target = 0.27
2	B	NC will manage A/R stock at F and SSB targets
		2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target
222	A	One year timeframe
52	B	Three year timeframe

3.0 Proposed Management Program

#	Option	3.0 Proposed Management Program
48	A	Status quo, maintain current striped bass management program
164	B	Reduce F to the target in one year. 25% harvest reduction
3	C	Reduce F to the target in three years. 17% harvest reduction
57	D	Reduce F to the target in three years. 7+7+7% harvest reduction

Option B: Reduce F to the target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

# in support	Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
27	B1	1	28" min	none	31%
6	B2	1	30" min	none	> 31% ¹
114	B3	1	32" min	none	> 31% ¹
17	B4	1	28-40" slot	none	> 31% ¹
4	B5	2	33" min	none	29%
10	B6	2	28-34" slot	none	28%
20	B7	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-34" slot	1 fish 36" min	28% ¹
0	B8	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-36" slot	1 fish 38" min	26% ¹
2	B9	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-37" slot	1 fish 40" min	26% ¹

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

# in support	Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
4	B10	1	18" min	none	31%
1	B11	2	21" min	none	29%
1	B12	2	18-23" slot	none	26%
2	B13	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy or 2 slot)	1 or both 18-21" slot	1 fish 36" min	29%
0	B14	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 2,000,915 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18")			25%
3	B15	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 1,800,740 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18"). Quota is based on a 25% reduction from 2012 harvest.			32%

¹ The data available to estimate the percent reduction is limited because the combination of a bag limit and size limit changes simultaneously means only measured fish from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) were included in the analysis which is a small subsample of the MRIP dataset for striped bass.

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

#	Option	Coastal Commercial Fishery
95	B16	Take a 25% reduction from Amendment 6 quota
Chesapeake Bay Management Area Commercial Fishery		
6	B17	Takes a 25% reduction from 2013 commercial bay quota
4	B18	Takes a 25% reduction from 2012 commercial bay harvest

Option C: Reduce F to the target within three years with a 17% harvest reduction

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

#	Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
2	C1	2	32" min	none	21%
0	C2	2	28-36" slot	none	19%
6	C3	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy)	1 fish 28-35" slot	1 fish 35" min	20% ²

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

#	Option	Bag Limit	Size limit	Trophy fish	% reduction from 2013 harvest
3	C4	2	20" min	none	22%
0	C5	2	18-26" slot	none	18%
0	C6	2 (1 slot, 1 trophy or 2 slot)	1 or both 18-23" slot	1 fish 36" min	19%
0	C7	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 2,214,345 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18")			17%
1	C8	Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota of 1,992,819 pounds (no established bag limit, but a minimum size of 18"). Quota is based on a 17% reduction from 2012 harvest.			25%

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

#	Option	Coastal Commercial Fishery
0	C9	Take a 17% reduction from Amendment 6 quota
Chesapeake Bay Management Area Commercial Fishery		
0	C10	Takes a 17% reduction from 2013 commercial bay quota
2	C11	Takes a 17% reduction from 2012 commercial bay harvest

Option D: Reduce F to the target within three years with an incremental 7+7+7% harvest reduction

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

Coastal Recreational Fishery (All jurisdictions would implement)

Option D1: Size limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

#	Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	% reduction
6	2015	2	30" min	Approximately a 21% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
	2016	2	31" min	
	2017	2	32" min	

² Reduction estimate limited by data. See footnote 1 for further explanation.

Chesapeake Bay Management Area Recreational Fishery (MD, PRFC and VA would implement)

Option D2: Size limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

#	Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	% reduction
1	2015	2	19" min	Approximately a 22% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
	2016	2	20" min	
	2017	2	20" min	

Option D3: Slot limit changes with corresponding implementation year are shown below.

#	Year	Bag Limit	Size limit	% reduction
0	2015	2	18-35" slot	Approximately a 19% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
	2016	2	18-28" slot	
	2017	2	18-24" slot	

Option D4: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota (Baywide). Reductions applied to 2013 harvest.

#	Year	Quota	Size limit	% reduction
0	2015	2,481,134	18" min	Approximately a 20% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
	2016	2,307,455	18" min	
	2017	2,145,933	18" min	

Option D5: Chesapeake Bay Recreational Quota (Baywide). Reductions applied to 2012 harvest.

#	Year	Quota	Size limit	% reduction
2	2015	2,232,918	18" min	Approximately a 28% reduction from 2013 harvest over three years
	2016	2,076,614	18" min	
	2017	1,931,251	18" min	

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

#	Option	Coastal Commercial Fishery
2	D6	Takes a 7+7+7% reduction from Amendment 6 quota
Chesapeake Bay Management Area Commercial Fishery		
0	D7	Takes a 7+7+7% reduction from 2013 commercial bay quota
7	D8	Takes a 7+7+7% reduction from 2012 commercial bay harvest

#	Option	3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers
432	A	Status quo, no commercial quota transfers between states.
5	B	Commercial quota transfers may occur between states.
3.2 Commercial Size Limits		
44	A	Commercial size limits would change with a change in recreational size limits.
78	B	Commercial size limits would remain unchanged.

State/Jurisdictions Public Hearing Summaries

Topsham, Maine
September 4, 2014
17 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Terry Stockwell (ME DMR)
Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was consensus for the new proposed F reference points, a one year timeframe to reduce F to the target, and no commercial quota transfers between states.
- Two people were in support of B3, one was in support of B1.
- Individuals think the commercial fishery is negatively impacting the resource.
- Commercial size limits should match recreational size limits, but be careful of discards.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- There was consensus for Option B. Specific comments included the following,
 - The most difficult thing is trying to explain the reference points. Putting the technical information into layman's understanding. There should be a side bar that explains the reference points. We need to make an educated decision and to do that we need to understand the document.
 - One person thinks the reference points are not enough to stop the decline that is occurring.
 - A reference point is going to establish our target, but there is not enough consideration of poaching, bycatch or climate change. His concern is that the reference points don't account for those issues.
 - He was there during Amendment 6 and they were saying there was enough biomass back then, and he thinks now this is just a splash of water on a big fire.
 - These reference points are based on MSY, but this is not a commercial fishery. He wanted to see the reference points based on optimum sustainable yield not on maximum sustainable yield.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce to F Target

- There was consensus for Option A, reduce F to the target within one year.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Comments

- Two people spoke in favor of option B3 and there were the following comments related to that option.
 - Multiple people think that the state of Maine should come up with a conservation equivalency plan with B3 that looks into using slot limits.

- One person discussed that fish did not get down east and a 32” size limit will not be suitable for Maine, and they need to use slot limits. The 32” size limit will put them out of business.
- One person was in favor of B1.

Commercial Fishery Comments

- One person is not in favor of allowing a commercial fishery coastwide.
- One person said his catch levels went down after Massachusetts had their commercial fishery. He thinks that the commercial fishery is only targeting large fish.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- There was consensus for Option A, no commercial quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- Three people are in favor of option A.
- One person is in favor of option B so that they don’t have to discard small fish to be harvesting large fish to fill the quota.

General comments

- Maine association for charter boat captains is going to submit comments.
- One person said that Maine has been telling ASMFC that it was coming for a long time, and he wishes the commission was more proactive about this so we could have avoided this large reduction.
- One person asked, when are we going to start managing the ecosystem instead of single species? There is predation on winter flounder and we can’t be looking at this one species at a time.
- The information that the charter boats are putting forward are always being pushed aside as anecdotal data. However, when you have all this data and never do anything about it. This is not the best approach to evaluating the resource because this anecdotal information is extremely important so you should use it because we keep track of it.

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

August 27, 2014

40 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Doug Grout (NH F&G), Cheri Patterson (NH F&G), Ritchie White (Commissioner), Dennis Abbott (Commissioner Proxy)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was consensus for the new proposed F reference points, a one year timeframe to reduce F to the target, no commercial quota transfers between states, and maintaining current commercial size limits.
- Seven people were in support of B3, one was in support of B5, a majority were in support of B16, and two were in support of B17.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

There was consensus for Option B. Specific comments included the following,

- CCA of New Hampshire supports option B because it was recommended by the TC and makes F internally consistent with SSB.
- International federation of fly fishers is in favor of option B using 2013 benchmark assessment reference points.
- One person is in favor for option B, but he is concerned that the commercial fishery is not going to do their part in reducing harvest.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce to F Target

There was consensus for Option A, reduce F to the target within one year. Specific comments included the following,

- CCA supports Option A. The sooner fishing mortality can be reduced the sooner SSB can be restored. Delayed management will not be effective.
- Another comment was in support of A.
- International fly fishers association supports A.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Comments

- CCA would support any option that would take a 25% reduction in harvest.
- Six people and the international fly fishers association supported option B3. Individuals provided the following justifying comments
 - One fish at 32" is enough to eat.
 - He would be ok with a more conservative option.
 - These options only support a 50% probability of achieving the target.
 - He thinks there is no reason to have more than 1 fish at 32".
 - The incremental change in size limits back in the 1980s was very effective when it went to 36".
- A charter boat owner is in favor of option B5 because it is important for their customers to be able to keep two fish.

Commercial Fishery Comments

There was consensus for Option B16. Specific comments included the following,

- CCA supports a 25% reduction in the coastal commercial fishery quota.
- One person is in support of B16, but is in support of more of a reduction and he thinks the resource can only support a recreational fishery, not a commercial fishery.
- CCA suggests that the commercial fishery on the Chesapeake Bay should take the 25% reduction in one year. Commercial reductions must be taken from 2013 to be effective.
- Two people were in favor of B17.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

There was consensus for Option A, no commercial quota transfers between states. Specific comments included the following,

- Any quota that's left over should be used as conservation benefit.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

There was consensus for Option B, maintain current size limits.

General Comments

One person mentioned the impact of mycobacteriosis and asked if that was incorporated into the assessment.

Gloucester, Massachusetts

September 3, 2014

35 attendees

Meeting Staff: Marin Hawk (ASMFC) MA DMF: Paul Diodati, Dan McKiernan, Mike Armstrong, Gary Nelson

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

All attendees agreed Option B, new reference points, should be adopted. All attendees also agreed that a one-year, 25% reduction was the preferred option. Individual comments are included below.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- General consensus in the room for Option B3. This option protects the 2011 year class and achieves a greater than 31% reduction in harvest. Participants favored this option because it was viewed as the most conservative.
- One individual expressed support for B4 because slot limits protects rapidly growing fish that are in the slot for the shortest period of time. This individual felt that a slot limit of 28" – 34" was more appropriate to protect the fish above 34".
- Several participants questioned why more stringent measures were not included (a 35% or 40% reduction). There was general sentiment in the room to encourage the Board to consider more stringent measures than are included in Draft Addendum IV. Participants felt that the spawning stock biomass threshold should be revisited and raised because more conservative SSB would lead to a healthier stock.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- A majority of participants were opposed to commercial quota transfers. One individual expressed support for Option B, allow commercial quota transfers.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- There was consensus that commercial size limits should remain the same as recreational size limits (Option A).

General Comments

- Participants desired more outreach to the recreational community to teach everyone proper handling and release techniques.
- Suggestion was made to require recreational fishermen to take a handling class before the permit is awarded.

Braintree, Massachusetts

September 4, 2014

38 attendees

MA DMF staff: Paul Diodati, Dan McKiernan, Mike Armstrong, Gary Nelson, Nichola Meserve
Meeting Participants: There were no sign in sheets available for this hearing.

2.5.1 Coastal Population Reference Point Options

- Option A (status quo): 1. Reason(s): lesser socio-economic impact.
- Option B (2013 benchmark assessment): 37. Reason(s): produces more sustainable fishery; adheres to technical advice.
-

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Option A (status quo, 1 year): 38. Reason(s): quicker rebuilding of SSB; less risk of future restrictions.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Option B: 1 year, 25% harvest reduction

There was consensus for option B, and comment was only collected on sub-options pertaining to the Coastal Recreational Fishery.

- Option B1: 8. Reason(s): most anglers don't take two fish now; compliance will be better maintaining the current size limit.
- Option B2: 1
- Option B6: 2. Reason(s): a higher bag limit is better to attract for-hire patrons as well as private anglers to the fishery.
- Option B7: 1. Reason(s): protection of spawning stock.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

- Option A (status quo, no transfers): 38. Reason(s): quota transfers will reduce state intent to stay within quota; more fish will be removed from the population if quota transfers are allowed.

Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

September 2, 2014

75 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC) MA DMF staff: Paul Diodati, Dan McKiernan, Mike Armstrong, Gary Nelson, Story Reed

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

Two participants were in favor of status quo.

Five participants were in favor of a one-year, 25% reduction in harvest.

One participant was in favor of a three-year, 17% reduction in harvest.

One participant was in favor of a three-year, stepwise reduction in harvest.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- Individuals who supported status quo felt that the information presented is not accurate. Option D, which changes the regulations every year, is not feasible because of the instability.
- A majority of participants were in favor of Option B, a one-year, 25% reduction in harvest. Individuals felt this was the best option because it is clear too many fish are being killed. Management is about maintaining a stable fishery, not economics or politics.
- The individual who supported Option C also supported Option D because they both are based on a three-year time frame. The cod fishery is shut down and taking a drastic reduction in the striped bass fishery will significantly impact fishing operations.

Recreational Fishery Comments

- Four participants supported Option B1
- Eight participants favored Option B3 (three of those participants also favored options that contained a one fish bag limit)
- Stelwagon Charter Board Association supported any option that is a two fish bag limit (B5 – B9)

Commercial Fishery Comments

- All individuals that expressed support for recreational reductions also expressed support for equivalent commercial reductions in harvest.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

There was consensus at the public hearing for Option A, no quota transfers between states.

General Comments

- Several individuals felt that a stepwise approach was not feasible for a large coastal fishery. Enforcement is difficult as it is, and this would only create difficulties for law enforcement.

- Make adjustments to the management program based on economic factors. If this does not work out, the Commission can change the plan to three years to allow flexibility as it goes.
 - There is not enough information presented to choose a timeframe.
-

Nantucket, Massachusetts

September 2, 2014

40 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC) MA DMF staff: Paul Diodati, Dan McKiernan, Mike Armstrong, Gary Nelson, Story Reed

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- A majority of participants favored reducing F to the target in one year.
- For the recreational fishery, participants favored a one fish bag limit, but had various suggestions for size limits (e.g., slot limits).
- For the commercial fishery, there should be options that take the reductions from 2013 harvest noting that the commercial fishery should be reduced by the same amount as recreational.
- A majority favored no commercial quota transfers, but a few commented it would be nice to get access to fish later in the season. There was mixed opinions about the commercial size limits.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- The reference point does not take into consideration other sources of mortality and within ecosystem management.
- There needs to be better estimates of bycatch from the observer trips, and there was a recommendation to get more funds to do this.
- There was a question about video monitoring, but it was discussed that it's in the experimental phase.
- If the state is petitioned by gear because of accidental mortality that industry should be responsible to the cost observer programs and mandatory observers.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- There was consensus for option A. Action needs to happen quickly to protect the stock so it doesn't end up like the cod fishery.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational and Charter Boat Fishery Comments

Generally, people were in favor of options that reduced the bag limit to one fish. Specific comments included the following,

- Four people are in favor of one fish bag limit at 28 inches (option B1) and this should have been done about 10 years ago.
- Two people are in favor of B3 to protect the 2011 year class.
- Two people are in favor of one fish bag with a slot from 28-34”.
- One person is in favor of a one fish bag with a slot from 28-32”.
- On charter boats the captain and the mate should not be part of the bag limits.
- There should be a one fish bag limit and one trophy fish that is harvested per year that is tagged and sent in. Make it a 50” inch fish for a trophy.
- One person supported a one fish bag for the entire charter boat trip.
- One person is in favor of either one fish in the slot or one fish at a trophy size, so a one fish bag limit.
- One person is in favor of a slot 24-32”, but why do we keep any fish over 36”. More than half the people that catch fish end up discarding them.
- Protect large spawning females through the use of a maximum size. Charter boats are taking large fish on wire line.
- Recreational count is inaccurate and should be considered moving forward.

Commercial Fishery Comments

- There should be options that take the reductions from 2013 harvest noting that the commercial fishery should be reduced by the same amount as recreational.
- Option B16 should be amended to have the 25% reduction taken from the harvest, not from the quota.
- Eliminate the out of state non-resident boats from Massachusetts waters.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

- There was a majority of individuals that supported Option A, no allowance of state transfers.
- A majority stated that if the quota is not harvested then it should go to the conservation of the resource and should not be allowed to be harvested.
- Two people were in favor of commercial transfer if they were able to catch fish later into the season.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- One person is in favor of option A.
- One person is in support of a 28” min for the commercial fishery, this should be the baseline for the state to manage their commercial fisheries within their states.

Narragansett, RI
September 17, 2014
31 Attendees

Meeting Staff (RIDFW): Nicole Lengyel (presenter), Robert Ballou, Jason McNamee, Scott Olszewski

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

2.5 Proposed Fishing Mortality Reference Points

2 of the meeting participants indicated support for option B: 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment F Reference Points. Their specific comments included:

- RI Party and Charter Boat Assoc. (RIPCBA, 65 members) President. Support for Option B, reference points to be consistent with SSB targets and thresholds for both the Coastwide and Chesapeake Bay (CB) Management Areas. (2.5.1 Option B, 2.5.2 Option B). Coastwide reference points should be used for the CB management area until the Technical Committee (TC) can develop appropriate scientific based reference points for the CB.
- RI Saltwater Anglers Assoc. (RISAA, 7500 rec anglers, 30 affiliate clubs) President (written comments also submitted at hearing). Support 2.5.1 Option B, 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment reference points for coastwide population.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- 1 of the meeting participants specifically indicated support for reducing F to the target in 3 years. Their specific comments included:
 - RI Party and Charter Boat Assoc. (RIPCBA, 65 members) President. Support for Option B: three year time frame to reduce F. Option B gives Board more options to choose from in section 3.0. Considering retrospective patterns that underestimate SSB and overestimate F, and recent years of high recruitment, makes sense to keep options open. Most important species to economic vitality of party/charter industry.
- 4 of the meeting participants specifically indicated support for Option A: reducing F to the target in 1 year.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- 21 of the meeting participants indicated support for a 25% reduction in 1 year. For the recreational fishery, two of those participants were in favor of B1, 11 in favor of B3, 7 in favor of B7, and one did not specify an option. For the commercial fishery, 8 indicated they were in favor of a 25% reduction. The specific comments included:
 - RIMFC member, RISAA member, Rec fisher. In favor of attaining 25% reduction in 1 year. Believes the option that works best for everyone (individuals and Party/charter) is a 1 fish slot, 1 fish trophy, option B7: 1 fish 28-34" slot, 1 fish 36" min satisfies that. **(NOTE: RISAA changed their position post-hearing and is now in favor of option B2, 1 fish @ 30". They submitted modified written comments on 9/24/14, enclosed).**

- RISAA President (written comments submitted). For the coastal recreational fishery support B7: 2 fish, 1 @ 28-34", 1 @ 36" min. For coastal commercial fishery option B16: 25% reduction from Amend. 6 quotas.
- RISAA/RIPCBA member, rec. journalist. In favor of B7 because allows for small fish to accommodate from shore and Bay fishermen but also maintains 2 fish with a trophy limit to accommodate the Party/charter industry.
- Surfcaster in support of 1 fish at 32" for recreational, it is about pleasure of catching fish, not eating the fish.
- Bait and tackle shop owner in Newport in favor of 1 fish @ 32". Noted the importance of striped bass to bait shops, 50% probability of success a problem. Requested better data specifically on the fish in the EEZ and illegal poaching from both rec. and comm. fishermen. Noted similarity to situation 35 yrs ago and symposium held.
- Recreational surfcaster (submitted written comments) in favor of option B3: 1 fish @ 32". Commented that shore fishermen see declines first as they cannot seek out fish and has seen decline for 6 years now.
- Rec fishermen who fished during last moratorium and lived in MA in favor of 1 fish @ 32".
- Rec fisher, RISAA member, previous RIMFC member, in support of B7. Commented that the YOY index very important to recovery of fishery, 2011 year class and large spawning females should be preserved. Concerned with lower size limit for floating fish traps.
- 2 Recreational fishers in favor of B7, 2 fish (1 slot, 1 trophy). Also in favor of 25% reduction for both rec and comm fisheries.
- Rec fisher, B7
- 5 Rec fishers, B3
- Fishermen in favor of 1 fish @ 28" to help with dead discards. 1 fish will close the blackmarket/poaching currently happening. MA fishers are fishing at Block Island (BI) as recreational fishermen but then returning to MA and selling their catch commercially.
- 5 BI Charter Boats in favor of B1 (written comments read aloud and submitted).
- Previous spearfisher, cinematographer along East coast in favor of B3. Commented that currently running on 2012 data with 2013 and 2014 looking bleak, discard mortality a problem. Counting on the 2011 year class which will be highly susceptible to mycobacteriosis. Noted poaching problem.
- Owner of online website reading his own comments and some from people that have posted to his site. 25% reduction not enough, would prefer 1 fish @ 36" but since that's not an option B3, 1 fish at 34" is next best. 25% rec and comm.
- 1 fishermen commented that he strongly recommends for the party/charter and recreational fisheries 1 fish. Charter boats are taking multiple customers on each trip w/ each customer catching two fish and may have multiple trips/day resulting in a large number of bass being harvested with no accurate data to account for this.
- 3 of the meeting participants indicated support for a 21% reduction over 3 years (Option D1). The specific comments included:
 - RI Party and Charter Boat Assoc. (RIPCBA, 65 members) President. Support for Option D1: 21% reduction from 2013 harvest over 3 years. As an alternative Option B8; 26% reduction in 2013 harvest could be considered. With 2 fish limit, a recreational

fisherman can still choose to keep only 1 fish, 2 fish essential to value associated with party/charter boat industry.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

- 8 of the meeting participants were opposed to the commercial quota transfers. The specific comments included:
 - RISSA member: similar to situation with summer flounder transfer in New York, should preserve the un-harvested fish, adamantly against quota transfers.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- 1 of the meeting participants was in favor of option B: status quo with existing size limits.

General Comments

- 8 Meeting participants commented that equal reductions should be taken from both the recreational and commercial fisheries.
- 1 Meeting participant commented that there is no accountability/records of landings in recreational fishery including party/charter boats.
- 4 Meeting participants commented that they have observed the decline while fishing.
- 1 Meeting participant commented that mortality from catch and release due to physical harm and/or handling of the fish before being released is a problem and mortality estimates are not accurate.
- 1 Meeting participant (party/charter) commented that the party/charter boats are most accountable for data due to the VTR requirement and data supplied through VTR's.
- 1 Meeting participant requested it not be permitted that bordering states be allowed different bag limits as this creates unfair advantage for one state over the other, particularly in for-hire industry.
- 6 Meeting participants commented on poaching in Block Island/illegal selling to restaurants/taking more than bag limit. Lack of enforcement is a problem and that these efforts are futile without better enforcement. Need to address RI lack of enforcement.

Old Lyme, Connecticut

August 26, 2014

76 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), David Simpson (CT DEP), Kurt Gottschall (CT DEP), Craig Miner (Commissioner)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- Overall, there was a vast majority in favor of Option B to reduce F to the target within one year. Ten individuals favored option B3, one favored B5, and two favored C3.
- Generally, the charter boat industry favored options that maintained a two fish bag limit.
- Attendees were not in favor of the commercial quota options because they may allow harvest to increase.

- There was consensus for not allowing commercial quota transfers between states.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Comments

- Not in favor of the lower slot limits, let the fish bread before they are harvested. In favor of one at 32” or 1 fish at 34” or 1 fish at 36”.
- John Potter local fly fish association in favor of option B3 or a more conservative option.
- One person is in favor of option B3. It seems the clearest and most direct and easiest to follow.
- One person commented that the 9% post mortality release is an old estimate and it was done in warmer water. The catch and release mortality is likely smaller. The charter boat captains account for 25% of the harvest and 3% of the effort. He is in favor of B3.
- Need to reduce the number of fish caught by 50%. Everyone wants to stay in business, there is a reason we are all here. The commercial fishery needs to take a reduction as well, and this needs to occur from North Carolina north. He is in favor of option B3.
- Fly and light tackle guide. Just because a fish swam away doesn’t mean it survived. He is against slot limits because he thinks it increases mortality. He is in favor of option B3. He thinks charter boats contribute more than 3%.
- He is in favor of B3, but is interested in seeing percent reduction on a more restrictive regulation.
- One person in favor of option B3, and he believes in the charter fish industry, but thinks he would hire a charter with one fish.
- Two recreational fishermen are in favor of option B3.
- One person is in favor of a two year moratorium for recreational fishermen, allow the charter boat 2 fish, but not for the recreational fishermen.
- One person is in favor of 1 fish with a 28-34” slot which is a combination of option B4 and B6.
- An individual is in favor of 1 fish at 100” and would be in favor of a striper tag for the charter boat where they are allowed one fish.

Charter Boat Fishery Comments

- President of Connecticut charter boat association. They are in favor of B5. It is important to the charter boat to be able to take fish home. There are not a lot of other recreational fishing opportunities for other species. They need to flexibility to maintain some harvest to keep business going. If the important thing is to let the people have the belief that they can retain two fish if there is not catch allowance it will put the charter boats out of business. This will negatively impact the local economy because they won’t be buying fuel, no hotel rooms for fishing trips. The other states are not going to be more restrictive voluntarily. All the states are going to have to be at that level. He believes that the commercial fishery is hurting the striped bass resource, not the recreational fishery. There is also a spear fish fishery that is killing and injuring large striped bass. If striped bass were made a gamefish, it would benefit the resource.
- Rock and Roll charters. Big fish do not survive even though they try to revive fish. He is not in favor of any options in B, but is in favor of option C3.
- Clinton Connecticut charters is in support of C3.

- Can the charter boats still have two fish, instead of one which is what the other people want? There are only few species of fish, so not giving the opportunity to catch striped bass they are not going to book trips.
- From the shore it should be a one fish bag limit and from the boat it should be two. Another person is in favor of allowing two fish for charter boats.
- One person was wondering if the voucher program could be used towards the charter boat industry. There was a discussion about whether that would be enough. He was interested in a conservation equivalency program that gave the commercial quota to the charter boats.
- Preston Glass. Charter boats don't catch a lot of fish. He is in favor of any option that has a two fish bag limit.

Commercial Fishery Comments

- B16 is not an equitable options because the standard base is Amendment 6 and the base for the recreational fishery is 2013 harvest. If the commercial fishery meets the quota there will be an increase in harvest from 2013, which is not equal to the reduction from the recreational fishery.
- One person thinks that it's unacceptable that the commercial harvest has the chance to increase. A reduction from the recreational fishery is going to put people out of business.
- Two people are in favor of a 50% reduction in commercial harvest of striped bass.
- One person would like for CT to stop using its commercial quota for the bonus fish program.
- After the rebound of the stock there were more recreational fishermen and the commercial fishery needs to share in the burden of this reduction as they are a significant impact.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- There was consensus for option A, not allowing quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- There were a few comments stating no preference on size changes, but he mentioned that the Board needs to be conscious about discards.
- If every striped bass including discards is counted against their quota then all fish would be accounted for
- Commercial fishery should focus on the methods, meaning the commercial fishery should be using rod and reel so that discards are less.

General Comments

- Problem is the fishing mortality and SSB targets that the Commission is using. How many 8+ year olds are out there, and the target that they want is 11 million fish that are 8+.
- Been on the water every day since May 10. Only seen the DEP boat twice. Needs more enforcement.
- In the Freshwater fishery there are catch and release sectors that operate without treble hooks. He believes treble hooks are the biggest impact. Why not change the regulations to a single barbless hook?
- One person suggested more conservative measures are needed to protect the resource. He has been involved in the fishery since 1980, and there was a huge push in 1985 to take drastic

measures because the stock was so low. He feels that none of the actions are adequate he wants more conservative options than what are included in the document.

- An individual from AW marina asked, where are the small fish? The big fish are dying from the fight if they aren't already being harvested.
-

New Paltz, New York

September 23, 2014

14 public attendees (all recreational anglers)

Meeting Staff: Jim Gilmore (NY DEC), Kathy Hattala (NY DEC), plus several other NY DEC staff members

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was support for the adoption of the new proposed F reference points.
- All were in favor of Option B to reduce F to the target in one year.
- There was strong support for NOT allowing commercial quota transfers between states.
- Most all participants voiced concerns about the need for increased law enforcement.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- All individuals were in favor of option B as recommended by the Technical committee.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

- No comments received.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

- No comments received.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- All participants were in favor of option A. If the stock is declining, ASMFC needs to take action within one year and not wait.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Option A: Status Quo

- None were in favor of the status quo.

Option B: Reduce F to the target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction

Coastal Recreational Fishery Comments

- Seven participants were in favor of Option B4 or B6 (slot limits). Specific comments include:
 - The striped bass fishery boosts the local economy (e.g., tackle stores, hotels, gas stations, marinas). Participants come in from all over the Hudson valley and other parts of NY or out of state.
 - They want the fishery to continue for their grand-kids.
 - There needs to be a lot of outreach and more law enforcement to get better compliance with size and bag limits.

- If the option chosen is a larger size limit – that means the harvest would focus on spawning fish, especially females.
- Three attendees wanted something more conservative for the Hudson River - a slot limit of 20 to 28 inches to protect large spawning fish.
- One participant suggested a slot limit of 24-30” and one trophy over 40”.
 - Comment – need to have a size (slot) limit for ocean waters to protect large spawning fish when they are on the coast.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Comments

- Most all stated they were not well informed enough to make a recommendation.

Coastal Commercial Fishery Comments

- Most said the same cut (for recreational) would be fair for the commercial fishery. They did not understand why it was taken from the A6 quota, which has never been met, rather than the more recent harvest.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery Comments

- Most all stated they were not well informed enough to make a recommendation.

Option C: Reduce F to the target within three years with a 17% harvest reduction

- None in favor.

Option D: Reduce F to the target within three years with an incremental 7+7+7% harvest reduction

- None in favor.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- All agreed in favor of option A, no commercial quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- All were NOT in favor of increasing the size of the striped bass for the commercial fishery. So chose Option B, maintain the current size limits.

5.0 Recommendation for Federal Waters

- No fishing in the EEZ.

General Comments

- Several individuals talked about how poaching (taking over the limit) and tournament fishing (killing large spawning fish just to win) is an issue in the recreational fishery.
 - Large spawning fish need to be protected in the river and in the ocean. Regulating the take of large females (if possible).
 - We can't control environmental factors, but we can control harvest.
 - There should be a push to change the way anglers fish: catch and release fishing only; gear restrictions: require circle hooks, stop downriggers with weighted balls, eliminate treble hooks with cut bait; move to using lures.
 - Coast-wide charter / party boats need to be held to the same take limit as everyone else.
-

Stony Brook, New York
September 16, 2014
Approximately 175 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Jim Gilmore (NY DEC), Steve Heins (NY DEC), Senator Phil Boyle (Commissioner), Emerson Hasbrouck (Commissioner)
Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was strong support for the adoption of the new proposed F reference points.
- Twenty participants were in favor of option B3 noting the decline in biomass has been observed on the water and ASMFC must act now and reduce F to the target in one year.
- Three participants favored option D noting reductions would be less burdensome if spread over three years.
- There was strong support for NOT allowing commercial quota transfers between states because the commercial fishery options are not taking the necessary reductions to begin with.
- A notable amount of participants voiced concerns about striped bass poaching and suggested increasing enforcement.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- Ten individuals were in favor of option B as recommended by the Technical committee.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

- Eight individuals were in favor of option B.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

- One individual was in favor of option B.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Fifteen participants were in favor of option A. They noted ASMFC has delayed too long and needs to take action now to address the troubling decline
- Two participants were in favor of option B.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Option A: Status Quo

- Three people were in favor of status quo. Specific comments included the following,
 - There are a lot of striped bass out there, but they are not part of SSB yet.
 - The commercial fishery has declined through attrition and the tags are not being passed on so harvest is already decreasing.
 - The commercial fishery is going to be forced to take a 25% reduction and the recreational fishery is going to end up harvesting that savings because effort will increase. He recommended taking all the reduction from recreational fishery.

Option B: Reduce F to the target within one year with a 25% reduction

Coastal Recreational Fishery Comments

- Twenty participants were in favor of option B3, including the following groups (CCA NY, coalition for recreational fishing, gateway striper club, NY coalition of recreational fishing, salty fly fishing New York, one at 32" pledge group, NY fishermen conservation association). Specific comments included the following,
 - ASMFC has delayed too long and needs to take action now and choose the one year timeline.
 - Shore fishermen, private anglers and charter boat captains have seen a serious decline in fish availability.
 - There are significant social and economic impacts if striped bass aren't around.
 - The striped bass fishery supports many local economies in NY (e.g., tackle stores, hotels, gas stations, marinas).
 - The options only have a 50% probability of achieving F target and therefore act now and choose the most conservative options.
 - Manage for abundance so that the current day average angler, and the next generation of anglers, can catch fish.
 - Law enforcement noted that one year options will be easier to enforce and will have greater compliance.
 - There is currently an unsustainable amount of harvest on large fish and continuing with a two fish bag limit will hurt the resource.
 - It is too late for the Atlantic salmon fishery which lost their livelihood and don't let that same type of collapse happen to striped bass.
- One person was in favor of B1 or B2 as a backup to B3.
- One participant suggested a slot limit of 24-32" and a two fish bag noting that catching the larger reproductive fish is counterproductive.
- One individual was in favor of two fish at 32".
- One person was in favor of option B7.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Comments

- Three individuals were in favor of option B10 or B15 because they are the most conservative options to manage the Chesapeake Bay recreational harvest.
- Two individuals were in favor of option B13.

Coastal Commercial Fishery Comments

- Two participants were in favor of option B16. However they stated that this option was not adequate because it is taken from the quota and not the harvest.
- One person stated there are so many commercial tags and the only place they can fish is off Montauk. They need to have similar management measures as the other states (e.g., Rhode Island).
- The Commercial fishery is strongly regulated through the tagging program, and he doesn't understand why the poaching is not being turned in.
- Increasing the size of the striped bass increases the pressure on the fishery because recreational and commercial fishermen are going to fish longer and harder to catch the larger fish.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery Comments

- Four participants spoke in favor of option B17 because it is the most conservative option for managing the Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery.

Option C:Reduce F to the target within three years with a 17% reduction

- One participant was in favor of option C or D.

Option D:Reduce F to the target within three years with an incremental 7+7+7% reduction

Coastal Recreational Fishery

- Three participants were in favor of option D1 including the following groups (the Town of East Hampton Commercial and for hire fisheries, and the MBCA for hire industry in NY). Specific comments included the following,
 - Without allowing a two fish bag limit, the for-hire industry will go out of business.
 - NY wants the same size and bag limits as the neighboring states to have a competitive business for clients that are choosing where to fish based on bag and size limits.

Coastal Commercial Fishery

- Two participants representing the Town of East Hampton Commercial and for hire fisheries were in support of D6. Specific comments included the following,
 - ASMFC has a duty not only to the fish, but also to the fishermen and he urges the commission to find a way to do the least harm through the use of option D.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- Ten participants were in favor of option A, no commercial quota transfers between states. Specific comments included the following,
 - Transfers would negate any reduction because options are from quota not harvest, and the point is to reduce harvest.
- Two individuals were in support of option B, allowing commercial quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- Four participants were in favor of option A, adjust commercial size limits to match recreational size limits.
- Three participants were in favor of option B, maintain the current size limits.
 - Keep slot limit from 24-36”
 - Increasing the size of the striped bass increases the pressure on the fishery because recreational and commercial fishermen are going to fish longer and harder to catch the larger fish.

5.0 Recommendation for Federal Waters

- Several individuals stated they were concerned about the poaching of fish in the EEZ.

General Comments

- Several individuals talked in detail about how poaching and highgrading is an issue in both the recreational and commercial fisheries as well as in the Exclusive Economic Zone.

- There needs to be protection for the spawning cows in all areas of the stock's range (also relevant for Hudson River).
- We can't control environmental factors, but we can control harvest.
- We should not be fishing on the spawners, leave the big ones in the population.
- Two individuals representing the town of East Hampton commercial and for hire industry noted that Dr. Kahn memo and journal article state that draft addendum IV is based on inaccurate data that underestimates SSB and overestimates F making addendum misleading and unnecessary.
- The environmental factors such as changes in water temperature and prey (bunker) need to be included in the results.
- Haul seining harvest has been an issue and there was a comment that all netting should be banned. The Twenty one fish bycatch limit should be eliminated and so should directed netting.

Ridgefield Park, New Jersey

September 9, 2014

47 attendees

Meeting Staff: Marin Hawk (ASMFC), Tom Fote (Commissioner)

Meeting participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- Thirty three participants were in favor of status quo.
- Nine participants were in favor of a one-year, 25% reduction in harvest.
- Five participants were in favor of a three-year, 17% reduction in harvest.
- Zero participants were in favor of a three-year, stepwise reduction in harvest.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- Seven participants prefer Option A, status quo. A majority of those individuals think that there is no problem with striped bass abundance and the science is flawed.
- Two individuals prefer Option B, update the reference points based on the 2013 benchmark stock assessment.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Excluding those individuals who preferred status quo, two individuals prefer a one year time frame with a 25% reduction in harvest.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- Two individuals were in favor of Option B3 and stress the importance of the one fish bag limit. These individuals felt B3 would best protect the 2011 year class and they would like this good year class to have the opportunity to spawn.
- The last individual to comment did not suggest a time frame but opposed a one fish bag limit due to its impacts on the charter boat fishery.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- Every participant who commented and/or attended the meeting was opposed to commercial quota transfers.

General Comments

- Wait to look at the upcoming year class before changing the reference points.
 - The Commission continuously “moves the line” of the reference points. If the reference points remained the same then we would be way below/above them.
 - The fish are passing offshore so there is no problem.
 - Forage fish issues need to be addressed. This management plan does not focus on the core of the problem.
 - Why isn’t there an option for a 2 fish bag limit at a lower size limit OR a one fish bag limit above 35”? This would allow the angler to decide if more fish or larger fish is more important and would impact the charter boat fishery less.
-

Toms River, New Jersey

September 15, 2014

47 Attendees

Meeting Staff: Brandon Muffley (NJDFW), Russ Allen (NJDFW), Heather Corbett (NJ DFW), Mike Celestino (NJDFW), Tom Fote (ASMFC Governor’s Appointee), Adam Nowalsky (ASMFC Legislative Proxy)

Commenters: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

Seven commenters were in favor of Option B while no one stated they were in favor of Option A.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

One commenter was in favor of Option B while no one stated they were in favor of Option A.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

There was no discussion on this topic.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

Eight commenters were in favor of Option A while no one stated they were in favor of Option B.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Management:

Commenters indicated they preferred the following options:

Option B - 1 (commenter indicated any option within B was OK)

Option B1 – 1 (this included a club of 75 members)

Option B3 – 8 (this includes the ACN which represents 3000 members and sent comments to ASMFC previously)

Option B4 – 2
Option B7 – 3 (this includes the NJBBA which represents more than 1700 members)
Option B9 – 2
Option B8 or B9 – 1
Option C1 or C3 - 1

Notes:

One commenter chose Option B10 and one commenter chose Option B15 for the Chesapeake Recreational Fishery
One commenter did not pick an option for this section

Commercial Fishery Management:

Commenters indicated they preferred the following options:

Option A – 1
Option B16 – 1
Option B17 – 1

There was not much discussion on the commercial fishery options other than general agreement (except as noted above) that commercial fisheries should operate under the same percentage reduction as required by recreational anglers.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

Fourteen commenters were in favor of Option A while no one stated they were in favor of Option B.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

One commenter was in favor of Option A while no one stated they were in favor of Option B.

General Comments

- Most attendees were in consensus that striper numbers are down and too many breeders are being taken. It is better to be proactive when moving forward since striped bass are in trouble. Also one commenter noted that the ratio of large fish to small fish is off.
- A couple of commenters discussed the need to protect the 2011 year class until it was larger than 28” and others that thought no “trophy” size fish should be allowed to be harvested. Some commenters noted they would like the ability to take have a trophy fish during tournaments.
- One person believed the data is fuzzy while a few others suggested the need for better data. One commenter suggested New Jersey reinstate the Bonus Program for party and charter boats since this was a good program that produced very good data.
- A few commenters believed that the economic value of striped bass was enormous especially in times recent years when most areas have depressed economies.
- One commenter wanted to see fair regulations for everyone that were enforceable and will increase the stock as quick as possible. Two commenters also mentioned the need to be balanced to those who did not fish much and would like to take a couple fish home to eat.
- Some commenters agreed that the ASMFC should do whatever it takes to make sure the spawning stock biomass returns to its peak and does all it can for the long term sustainability of the stocks. One commenter suggested that it will be tough to reach the target in one year.

- One commenter thought that the Chesapeake stock is dying out as is not able to support a recovery.
 - One commenter noted that spearfishers can support a slot as long as there is no gap since this is impossible to determine underwater.
 - One commenter was concerned that striped bass biomass was closing in on the threshold which could result in a moratorium in the near future.
 - One commenter believes striped bass should be classified as a game fish coastwide.
 - One commenter noted he preferred a 2 fish limit because once you go to one fish it will be hard to get the second fish back.
 - One commenter discussed the number of stripers that he sees offshore (12+ miles) and doesn't think the stock is as bad as some think.
-

Galloway, New Jersey

September 4, 2014

48 Attendees

Meeting Staff: Brandon Muffley (NJDFW), Russ Allen (NJDFW), Heather Corbett (NJDFW), Mike Celestino (NJDFW), Tom Fote (ASMFC Governor's Appointee), Adam Nowalsky (ASMFC Legislative Proxy)

Commenters: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

Three commenters were in favor of Option B while no one stated they were in favor of Option A.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

There was no discussion on this topic.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

There was no discussion on this topic.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

Two commenters were in favor of Option A while no one stated they were in favor of Option B.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Management:

Commenters indicated they preferred the following options:

Option A - 1

Option B - 2 (these commenters indicated any option within B was OK)

Option B1 – 5 (this included a club of 100+ members)

Option B3 – 1

Option B4 – 3

Option B1 or B4 - 1

Option B7 – 1 (this comment was from the NJBBA which is more than 1700 members)

2 Fish – 1 (this comment meant any option in B or C that includes 2 fish)

Commercial Fishery Management:

There was no discussion on the commercial fishery options other than general agreement that commercial fisheries should operate under the same percentage reduction as required by recreational anglers.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

One commenter was in favor of Option A while no one stated they were in favor of Option B.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

There was no discussion on this topic.

General Comments

- Most attendees were in consensus that striper numbers are down and too many breeders are being taken.
- There were a couple of commenters who requested spring closures for the spawning grounds to allow females to spawn.
- A couple of comments were made that there should be slot options that allow the taking of stripers < 28” although other commenters discussed the need to protect the 2011 year class until it was larger than 28” and others that thought no “trophy” size fish should be allowed to be harvested.
- One person believed overfishing is occurring and has been for some time while another person believed the Technical Committee’s data are askew and that there is no decline.
- A few commenters believed that the economic value of striped bass was enormous especially in times recent years when most areas have depressed economies.
- One commenter believes that enforcement is a huge problem especially in the EEZ and commercial fisheries.
- Four commenters agreed that the ASMFC should do whatever it takes to make sure the spawning stock biomass returns to its peak and does all it can for the long term sustainability of the stocks.
- One commenter thought that the Chesapeake stock has been devastated and is no longer able to produce good year classes.
- Four commenters mentioned that New Jersey should develop conservation equivalency proposals no matter what option is chosen since they did not like any options.
- There were two commenters that believed everyone should be able to take a fish home to eat while a few commented on allowing anglers to catch a fish of a lifetime.

Bristol, Pennsylvania

September 17, 2014

37 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Leroy Young (PA F&B), Mike Kauffman (PA F&B), Greg Murphy (PA F&B)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- Several attendees felt more data was needed and requested that they be contacted by Pennsylvania Fish and Boat commission to request data from license holders.
- Participants that supported a reduction were in favor of option B (one year timeframe) and most supported B3. However, there was also individuals that expressed opposition to new management measures without better data.
- There was unanimous support for NO commercial quota transfers between states.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- One participant stated that he thinks the model is seriously lacking data. He thinks the document is fatally flawed and needs to go back to the drawing board to get better numbers before we take action.
- One person is in favor of option B.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

Recreational Fishery Comments

- Nine participants are in favor of B3.
- Four people are favor of B7.
- Two people were in favor of B2.
- One person is in favor of B4 and B6. He is in favor of coastwide measures and the Commission.
- One person is in favor of B5.
- One individual who is a striper fishing tournament chair said they went to a slot limit to protect the spawners.
- One participant was in favor of a slot limit from 28-35”.
- One person is in favor of the 25% reduction with an annual check on progress. He favors a slot limit so that individuals can take fish.
- One person would like to see B4 with slot of 32-40”.
- One person was in favor of B4 with modification of the slot to 32-38”.
- One participant commented that recreational anglers release fish and he thinks that there should be a third class which is charter boats, and those should be separate from recreational anglers.

Chesapeake Bay Fishery Comments

- One individual is concerned about the size limit in the Chesapeake Bay and suggested a 24” min.
- One participant was concerned about the water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. The financial resources should be concentrated on the place where there are the most stripers.
- There is a poaching issue in the state of Maryland and why should Pennsylvania be penalized for what Maryland does.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- Nineteen participants spoke in favor of Option A, no commercial quota transfers between states.

General Comments

- Pennsylvania staff distributed a questionnaire to get feedback on how to manage their slot fishery in the Delaware system in April and May.
- Multiple participants said they would like to be contacted by Pennsylvania fish and boat commission to obtain better harvest data.

Dover, Delaware September 11, 2014 24 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), John Clark (DE F&W), Stew Michels (DE F&W), Roy Miller (Commissioner)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- Almost all individuals who provided comments were in favor of status quo.
- A majority of participants cited that no economic impact analysis was conducted and want status quo until economic data are presented.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- Two people are in favor of option A, stating that the current reference points are successful.
- National standard is to base it on MSY, in this case the current F is based on MSY. That's the national standard, but it is just federal.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Five individuals were not in favor of either options. Specific comments included the following,
 - These options are not fair without a sunset so he is in favor of neither options.
- Two individuals were in favor of option A, (one year timeframe). Specific comments included the following,
 - The one year timeframe is better thought out than a three year timeframe which seems to be an afterthought.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- Almost all attendees were in favor of status quo. Specific comments included the following,
 - There has not been a formal economic analysis of these options.
 - Since the coastal commercial fishery has under harvested their quota there is no need to conserve further.
 - There is not a lot of quota in Delaware, and they have done a good job conserving harvest, but the quota should be a fine management approach.
 - Leave it at the status quo and from the recreational point of view they have not met their quota.
 - There is no economic impact considerations, and everyone in this room has an economic interest in what is going on, also there are tackle dealers, and fuel and

hotels, and with only one fish there is going to put more pressure on other species. He thinks SSB is increasing and he wants NOAA fisheries to be opening the EEZ. Status quo two fish at 28”.

- Keep status quo the same because according to chart the recent recruitment will result in an increase in SSB in five or six years.
- The options are going to increase effort and therefore result in more discards.
- One individual was in favor of option B7. Anything less than two fish is going to be a negative economic impact and put pressure on tautog. The impacts range from mechanics to tackle shops and beyond - not just the commercial industry.
- Another participant is in favor of B7 if the Board decides to go with option B, but he still prefers status quo.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- One individual was opposed to any quota system for recreational fishermen in the Chesapeake Bay, but there is no way to get an accurate estimate of recreational harvest, so there is no way for them to accurately account for pounds to shut the fishery down so they should not be using a quota, and she be using bag limits only.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- Two people were in favor of option A no commercial quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- Three people are in favor of option B because of their shad fishery the mesh is smaller and changing it would just end up creating dead discards.

General Comments

- The charts of SSB and F are not presented with bias or uncertainty. It is clearly demonstrated that the estimate of SSB is biased low and F is biased high because of (1) ageing error and (2) retrospective bias. He feels it is irresponsible for not showing these two components of bias.
- With eleven states and including status quo there is 13 options, he feels that the public are just confused and he does not think the public has any weight and this has already been decided.
- There should be a formal economic review before the Commission goes messing with our livelihoods.
- According to section 6 in the charter, this proceeding is in violation of the standard. Any vote without the economic and social data will be a violation and would not be voted on with the current information that you have in place. Social and economic impacts are important to economic communities on this coast. Most communities on Delaware shoreline are impoverished now. They do not have flexibility in employment and income. Leaving us to one solution, dissolving the compact with the State of Delaware and ASMFC. When you don't have anything left to lose, they have nowhere else to go but to leave, and he thinks it has worked well for Texas with Red snapper. He thinks Delaware can do this on their own.

Wye Mills, Maryland**September 25, 2014****97 attendees**

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Marin Hawk (ASMFC), Tom O'Connell (MD DNR), Beth Versak (MD DNR), Angela Giuliano (MD DNR), Bill Goldsborough (Commissioner), Russell Dize (Commissioner Proxy)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was consensus for the continued development of Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points by the TC. Attendees thought managing the Bay jurisdictions with coastwide reference points was not acceptable noting the Bay harvest is predominately on males.
- Four individuals favored a one year timeframe noting that we should be responsible with taking the reductions in harvest to reverse the decline in SSB.
- Thirty one participants were in favor of option D (stepwise reduction) noting there was no socio-economic impact analysis completed, the Bay is only fishing on males and it has size limits to protect the female breeding fish. Also, there was a preference for taking reductions from 2012 harvest instead of 2013 quota because the Bay jurisdictions already took a 14% harvest reduction in 2013, so the additional reduction would be compounding.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- A majority of attendees did not think that the science was adequate or accurate enough to support a change in reference points. Specific comments included the following,
 - There needs to be better data for the assessment as specified in the data quality act.
 - Stock assessment models should include environmental factors such as salinity, temperature and water toxicity.
- CCA MD was in support of option B because it was recommended by the TC and is consistent with SSB reference points.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

- Most of the attendees thought that Chesapeake Bay reference points need to be developed before management actions are taken for the Chesapeake Bay region. Specific comments included the following,
 - There is a resident population of striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay, so a majority of the fish stay in the Bay and don't join the migratory stock.
 - The Bay harvest is predominately males and the coastwide reference points are not taking that into account.
- CCA MD was in support of option B, but would like to see Bay specific reference points expedited for management use.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

- CCA MD was in support of option B because the AR stock contributes insignificantly to the coastwide stock.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Four individuals including CCA MD were in support of option A, noting that delaying management will have little positive impact on the stock.
- Thirty one individuals were in favor of allowing a three year time frame to reduce F to the target level because it would have the least economic impact on the bay industries. Support for the three year timeframe included representation from Maryland Charter Boat Association, Maryland Watermen Association, commercial fishermen, charter boat captains, recreational anglers, and Maryland politicians

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- One participant was in favor of status quo. Specific comments included the following,
 - Basing management measures that will significantly impact people's livelihoods on assumptions and inaccurate science is irresponsible. Fishermen see more fish out there than ever before and that is what should be the basis of management.
- Four participants, including CCA Maryland were in favor of option B noting that the striped bass stock needs immediate protection. Specific comments included the following,
 - A maximum size limit for the entire coast would protect SSB and has been used successfully in other fisheries.
 - Coastal commercial reductions should be taken from harvest levels not quota, the Chesapeake Bay commercial proposal of reductions from 2012 harvest is acceptable.
 - Concern was expressed that each state and/or jurisdiction is trying to protect their piece of the striper pie while not thinking of the larger picture.
 - Striped bass availability on the water has gone down since about 2006.
 - We need to be managing for the future of the fishery and the opportunities it creates for the next generation.
 - Coastal communities rely on an abundant population of striped bass.
- One individual expressed support for Option C, but only if Option D was considered unacceptable by the Striped Bass Board.
- Thirty one participants were in favor of Option D, a three-year, stepwise reduction in harvest. Specific comments by Maryland Charter Boat Association, Maryland Watermen Association, commercial fishermen, charter boat captains, recreational anglers, and Maryland politicians included the following,
 - Several participants noted reductions will result in severe economic and social impacts to the Bay industries and it is not acceptable to implement reductions without a formal socio-economic impact analysis.
 - Option D would have the least socio-economic effect on the striped bass fishing industry.
 - Take the reduction from 2012 harvest instead of 2013 quota because the Bay jurisdictions already took a 14% harvest reduction in 2013, so the additional reduction would be compounding

- The commercial fishery is already fishing on an 80% reduction because of the limited areas that are open to fishing. An additional 25% reduction over one-year is not practical.
- Saving male fish in the Bay (70-90% of harvest is thought to be male) will not protect the female spawning stock.
- The Bay should be allowed conservation equivalency until Bay specific reference points can be developed.
- Enforcement on recreational fishery needs to be stronger since there is little accountability because they are not using a tagging system like the commercial fishery.
- Recreational fishery should not be allowed to fish on the spawning grounds.
- Individuals noted any harvest reductions would likely result in an increase in striped bass predation on blue crabs.
- Reductions are premature because the target has not yet been exceeded.
- Trophy fish should be a 36" minimum.

Other Comments

- The Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery should be required to release all striped bass 22-26" through July 31st because CBEF data show large numbers of young mature females exist in the bay during late winter-early spring (to spawn) and reducing mortality on those young females would help maintain SSB.
- Every state and jurisdiction should abide by the same size limits. If everyone has to do this no one would be discontent with unequal management measures.
- Maybe lowering the minimum size would result in less dead discards and better stock health.

Potomac River Fisheries Commission Colonial Beach, Virginia September 23, 2014 15 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Martin Gary (PRFC), Ellen Cosby (PRFC)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- There was consensus for the continued development of Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points, and the attendees thought managing the Bay jurisdictions with coastwide reference points was not acceptable noting the Bay harvest is predominately on males.
- Fourteen participants were in favor of a three year phase in for the commercial Bay fishery, but the recreational Bay fishery should take the reduction in one year.
- There was consensus to take the reduction from 2012 harvest instead of 2013 quota because the Bay jurisdictions already took a 14% harvest reduction in 2013, so the additional reduction would be compounding.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- No comments

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

- A participant states it was disappointing that the technical committee was tasked to develop Chesapeake Bay reference points and failed to do so. He believes the Bay is being penalized by the fact that TC could not develop reference points.
- One participant noted the coastwide reference points are not fair because the Bay harvest is specifically on males and the coastwide reference points don't account for that.
- Consensus for continuing the development of Chesapeake Bay reference points,

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- Twelve people were in favor of a three year phase in, but the recreational fishery should take the reduction in one year.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- One participant stated with status quo the fishery would not be expanding because the 2011 year class is strong and will end up contributing to SSB just not to the extent it would under the other options.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery Comments

- Twelve people were in favor of the recreational fishery taking the reduction in one year. Specific comments included the following,
 - Changes in size or season will just increase the effort in the open seasons or the fishery will continue to fish to catch the limit. Therefore, a reduction in the bag limit is the only option that will achieve a reduction in harvest.
 - Tackle store owners want any option that keeps a two fish bag limit.
 - There was a comment that with B13 there can be a lot of mortality because increased effort to catch the largest trophy fish.
 - The only way to regulate the recreational fishery appropriately is to tag the fish and that would not allow the fishermen to make multiple trips.
 - The recreational fishery would not be effectively managed with a recreational quota.
 - One person was in favor of B12.
- One person was in favor of C4 if they were forced into option C.
- One person is in favor of D2, but said it only protects the 2011 year class, but does not protect SSB.
- One person said he doesn't think we are going to get a reduction because they are estimates and the numbers are not correct. The best available data would be to use tags for the recreational fishery so that there is accountability like the commercial tagging program.
- The recreational fishery should have mandatory reporting.

Commercial Fishery Comments

- Fourteen people were in favor of taking the reduction from 2012 harvest because the 2013 Chesapeake Bay quota was already reduced to account for declining biomass so creating a baseline for reductions off 2013 would compound the reduction.
- Fourteen people were in favor of Option D, taking the three year stepwise reduction. Specific comments included the following,
 - Three people were in favor of option D8 because it would be less economic impact on the commercial fishery and the fishery only fishes on males and not on SSB.
 - If the goals are achieved within the three year timeframe than the remaining reduction should not be taken.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- The logistics of the way the seasons work with the PRFC would make it too challenging to use quota transfers.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- There was consensus for option B, maintain current commercial size limits.

General Comments

- Prior to March 25, the cold water stopped the fish and they are not available to the fishery. The buck run is the male fish that are running up the river first. There is two runs there is a male run that waits for the female to run up. The timing is based on the temperature. 1972 was a strong year class. The PRFC has a season that protects the SSB.
- The PRFC is the last jurisdiction to get access to the fish because they are in the ocean.

Newport News, Virginia

September 22, 2014

24 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Rob O'Reilly (VMRC), Joe Cimino (VMRC)

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

Overview

- Several individuals wanted Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points and thought that managing the Bay jurisdictions with coastwide reference points was unjust because harvest is predominately on males.
- A majority of the individuals that commented were in favor of Option D the phase in approach to reductions to minimize the economic impacts. However, participants commented on all options to provide a wide range of input. There was also a preference for taking reductions from 2012 harvest instead of 2013. A few individuals preferred Option B.
- Several individuals expressed ecosystem concerns regarding increasing predation on blue crabs through the management of an increased striped bass population.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

- One participant recommended correcting for the retrospective bias in the assessment. The Chesapeake Bay should be using stock specific reference points.
- One participant was in favor of using the current reference points noting that right now we are still at a fully recovered level, and we are still above the threshold so why is there such a drastic reaction?
- CCA Virginia represented was in support of option B
- Another sportfishing association was in support of option B.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

- Three individuals were in support of option A. Specific comments included the following,
 - They commented that establishing a Chesapeake Bay reference point should remain a top priority as the Bay has had one since 1995.
 - The Bay harvest predominately males so it is biologically important to have a reference point that accounts for that so they can continue with a Baywide quota.
- CCA Virginia supports option B.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

- CCA Virginia is in favor of option A.
- Two participants were in favor of option B.
- Virginia charter boat association endorses option B.
- There needs to be another option. If the northern states want the fish take the reduction from the Delaware and the Hudson because the Chesapeake Bay has already taken their reduction.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

- VA watermens association commented the baseline for reductions is usually based on a range of years not just one year. Also, 2012 was the terminal year of the assessment so it should be an option for taking the reductions.

Option B: Reduce F to the target within one year with a 25% harvest reduction

Coastal Recreational Fishery

- One person is in favor of option B the one year timeframe. If you're going to bite the bullet take it in one year.
- CCA Virginia supports option B2.
- One person is in support of B5, if it comes down to taking a reduction in one year.
- One individual is in favor of B7.
- Charter boats on the beach are in favor of Option B7.
- A recreational angler noted that the commercial discards are a major issue and he has seen this first hand and things something needs to be done about it.
- There should be a break between the north and south because the fisheries in the north are less weather dependent and the fishery in the south is weather dependent. The north catch rates are higher because they have better weather.
- Eastern shore waterman's association commented that the size analysis is not robust enough that a two inch no take slot can make much of a difference (referring to options B7-B9). He thinks the data are based on too small of a sample size.

- We are working with flawed data, so take a 25% reduction all in one year and it will all be the same regulation for the next three years.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- CCA Virginia is in favor of B10.
- One person is in favor of option B11.
- VA bay quota is approximately 2.8 million pounds and it is being divided between recreational and commercial fisheries. He thinks that the harvest reductions are incorrect.
- The options are all terrible.
- One individual stated a one fish bag is not worth it to go fishing, but if going to a one fish bag will keep the commercial fishery at status quo then he favors that option.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery

- Three individuals and a representative from CCA Virginia are in favor of B18.

Option C: Reduce F to the target within three years with a 17% harvest reduction

Coastal Recreational Fishery

- One person is in favor of C1 if they are forced into a 17% reduction.
- Three were in favor of option C3.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- Two people are in favor of option C4.
- One person is in favor of option C8, if they are forced into it.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery

- Two people are in favor of option C11 if they are forced into it.

Option D: Reduce F to the target within three years with an incremental 7+7+7% harvest reduction

- Eleven people are in favor of option D.
- VA watermen association and a charter boat association are also in favor of option D. Specific comments included the following,
 - VA watermen association noted that Bay politicians are also in favor of option D to offset the economic impacts to the Bay fisheries.

Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery

- Two people are in favor of option D5.

Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery

- Four representatives are in support of D8. Specific comments included the following,
 - If you take the reduction from 2013 quota it would represent a 39% cut, so option D8 is the least harmful of the options being presented.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfer

- One person is in favor of option A, no commercial quota transfers between states.

3.2 Commercial Size Limits

- Three people are in favor of option B.

5.0 Recommendation for Federal Waters

- One individual stated that the assessment results are not relevant because there are fish in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that are not being accounted for. With the current regulations he believes the fishery is being forced to fish in the EEZ and get tickets.
- The EEZ needs to be looked at because striped bass distribution is all bait driven. It's the same fish that are offshore and the last two years the bait have been in the EEZ (predominately menhaden).
- VA watermen association wants the ASMFC to undertake a study to determine what type of biomass is in the EEZ.
- A participant noted the USCG has made a conscious effort to minimized harvest in the EEZ.

General Comments

- Basing reductions from 2012 data is one part economics, and second part being increased predation on what is already low blue crab levels. So the economics includes impacts to other fisheries from predation, and it is different in other states. There was an echo of this comment for predation on weakfish.
- Red drum occupy the same niche in the food chain as striped bass, and they will be competing for a limited food source with a very strong 2011 year class of stripers.
- Also, there may be negative impacts that occur from the mycobacteriosis and infection of the strong year class under limited food conditions.

Manteo, North Carolina

September 29, 2014

4 attendees

Meeting Staff: Mike Waine (ASMFC), Michelle Duval (NC DMF), Charlton Godwin (NC DMF), Kathy Rawls (NC DMF).

Meeting Participants: See enclosed sign in sheet(s)

General Comments

- A couple people expressed concern in the methods used to estimate recreational harvest. They believe that people are not being truthful with the MRIP survey and it is impacting the accuracy of the harvest estimates.
- One participant commented that stock conditions are more driven by nature and the environmental conditions and therefore, the harvest reductions will not achieve the intended goals.
- The president of the North Carolina fisheries association appreciates the opportunity to comment. The association had the following specific comments,

- The fisheries in North Carolina have been unable to access fish because of the current prohibition in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and fish are outside of three miles in North Carolina and Virginia.
- Recommend that NOAA Fisheries allow the states to manage in the EEZ as long as they prevent overfishing and maintain a healthy stock of striped bass. States are capable of managing recreational and commercial harvest in the EEZ using quotas/trip limits, seasons, size and bag limit options.
- There should be an option to keep the current benchmarks and regulate the recreational fishery which is the largest source of mortality on the resource to see if that has a positive impact on SSB.
- There needs to be greater accountability measures for recreational harvest with reduction in bag limits, seasons, and state by state quotas.
- The current striped bass decline despite a decade of solid management points towards the need for ecosystem based management.
- Whatever is decided, flexibility needs to be maintained for states to implement management measures that work for its fisheries.

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

August 27, 2014

New Hampshire

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
DON SWANSON	CCA-NH	DERRY N.H.
ROBERT GROSSKIN	IFFI	Portsmouth Newburyport, MA
WILLIAM MITCHELL		NEWFIELDS NH
William H. Coite	Seawater fishing	ME
Greg BROWN	6 COVE CHARTERS Etc	ME York
Michael Foote	Plum Island Seabasters	STRATHAM NH
Phil DeStasio		MARATHON FLA
JOHN TWITCHELL	HAMPTON NH	HAMPTON
Dave Gittins	York ME	
RITCHE WHITE	Rye NH	
JERRY BARNUM	York ME	ME
Peter WHELAN	Portsmouth NH	
Wallace Mac RITCHIE	Hooksett NH	
RICK HUTCHINS	TU	D D V E R NH
RMT + BARNES PLANNING	HARPORTER CHAMBER	RYE NH
Cassey Penning	Offshore marine outfitters	York, ME
Duncan Lake		Dover, NH
Nick Griffin	River Dog	Greenland
PICK PINNELL	SELF	GREENLAND
Dade Pike	self	Newmarket, NH
Steve HUBBARD	self	Hampton, NH
Zak Robinson	Rising Tide Anglers/SeaFari	Portsmouth, NH
ERIK JANICKI		EXETER, NH
Chris Penerty		Lee NH
Connor Roelke		Lee, NH
Bob Weathersby	seacoast nh sport fishing	Rye, N.H.
DJ LOUET		DUPHAM NH
Matthew Larkin		Newmarket, NH
DAVID O'HEARN		EXETER NH
ROB WOLFCHUCK		Brentwood, NH

Coastal Conservation Association
 Comments on the ASMFC
**DRAFT ADDENDUM IV TO AMENDMENT 6
 TO THE ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS
 INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Addendum II to Amendment 6 of the ASMFC's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Plan. As our members have been painfully aware, striped bass abundance has declined steadily since the mid 2000s. In fact, recreational releases plummeted from a high of 23.4 million fish in 2006 to a low of 5.4 million fish in 2012. Anglers were simply encountering fewer striped bass which, in our view, indicates a significant decline in abundance.

Striped bass are one the most sought after game fish on the Atlantic coast. The keys to managing any primarily recreational fishery are access and abundance. Clearly abundance has declined and must be addressed as soon possible. The stock is not in danger of being significantly harmed in the classic fishery management measure of MSY, but that style of management is antithetical to managing a primary recreational species. In the eyes of the angling public, it has already been significantly harmed due to the decrease in abundance.

Anglers desire abundance and respond readily to changes in abundance. Often the dominant fish in the recreational catch are the dominant year classes in the stock. Simply put, the most abundant ages are the ones most often caught. There is currently a very strong 2011 year class, with poor year classes surrounding it, in the population. It could suffer disproportionate harvest levels if left unprotected. However, this strong year class, if protected, could help jump-start the recovery of striped bass abundance. We believe the Board should consider further management measures that protect that year class until they can enter spawning size.

Our comments on each Option are below:

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

CCA supports Option B:

Option B: 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment F Reference Points

The fishing mortality reference points will be adjusted to be internally consistent with the SSB target and threshold, consistent with the recommendations in the 2013 benchmark assessment:

Reference Point	Definition	Value (as estimated in 2013 benchmark stock assessment)*
F _{threshold}	F associated with achieving the SSB threshold	0.22
F _{target}	F associated with achieving the SSB target	0.18

* The F target and threshold values may change through updated stock assessments because they are estimated based on the best available data.

Rationale: This is the option recommended by the Technical Committee, and makes the Fishing Mortality Reference points internally consistent with the Spawning Stock Biomass reference points.

They are more conservative and should allow for increased abundance (under average recruitment regimes) than previous reference points and should help to expand the age structure of the striped bass population.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

CCA supports Option B:

Option B: Use coastwide population F reference points as established in section 2.5.1.

Due to data and model limitations, the Technical Committee cannot reach consensus on separate reference points for the Chesapeake Bay management area at this time (see TC memorandum; Appendix 2). Previously, the intent of establishing a lower F target in the Chesapeake Bay was to account for the impacts of harvesting a smaller sized fish (i.e., 18 inch minimum) in the Chesapeake Bay. The new coastwide reference points coming from the 2013 benchmark stock assessment (and considered in section 2.5.1) include the effects of the Chesapeake Bay's harvest of smaller fish on the coastwide SSB, but do not incorporate data on the sex ratio that exists in the Bay. Therefore, the coastwide population reference points represent the best available scientific advice to manage total fishing mortality on both the coastwide population and the Chesapeake Bay stock component because the Technical Committee is unable to calculate Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points at this time.

Rationale: Until such time as we receive better guidance from the Technical Committee, the coastwide reference points represent the best available advice for management.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

CCA supports Option B:

Option B: The State of North Carolina will manage the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River (A/R) stock using reference points from the latest North Carolina A/R stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board. If this option is selected, the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River will operate under North Carolina's Fishery Management Plan while the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean will continue to operate under the same management measures as the rest of the coastal fisheries.

Rationale: Since the AR stock contributes little to the coastwide striped bass stock, it makes sense to allow for management under an approved North Carolina Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

CCA supports Option A:

Option A: Status quo: One year time frame

Management Trigger 3 requires reducing F to a level at or below the target within one year.

Rationale: The sooner fishing mortality can be reduced, the sooner abundance can begin to be restored. One of the enduring lessons from the last 30 years of fishery management is that delayed

management often has little or no management effect. Taking the necessary reductions as early as possible is usually the best solution.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

CCA supports Option B:

Option B: Reduce F to a level that is at or below the target within one year. This represents a 25% reduction from 2013 total harvest. The desired reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries.

Rationale: We see no reason to delay reducing fishing mortality. As stated previously, the sooner fishing mortality can be reduced the sooner abundance may begin to rebound.

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

QUESTION: Do we want to propose a specific size and bag or leave that up to the individual states? If so, do we support 1/day Coast and Bay?

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

For the commercial fishery many different scenarios are presented. Our basic position is:

1. Achieve the necessary 25% reduction in 1 year.
2. The projections are based on 2013, so the commercial reductions must be taken from that year's harvest level to be effective.
3. We understand the Chesapeake Bay's rationale, and can support taking a 25% reduction from the 2012 harvest levels.

Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

September 3, 2014

Gloucester, Massachusetts

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Stephen Paul Papow	Recreational fisherman	Rockport, MA 01966
Rob Roberts	" "	Gloucester MA
Al Williams	Comm/Rec	Gloucester,
Rudolf De Hoy	Comm/Rec	Gloucester MA
MICHAEL HART	IPSWICH BAY ANGLING	KOWLEY MA
Paul Spinola	rec fish	Gloucester MA
Brian Connors	Rec fish	Gloucester MA
KALIL BOGHADAN	DOWNRIVER CHARTERS	ESSEX MA
Capt Skip Mantle	North Coast Angler	Rockport
Paul Rocchio	Rec	Kowley MA
John Roberts	REC	Rockport MA
David Rimmer	Joppa Charters	Newbury MA
Tim Smith		Lynn MA
Tom Scanlon	Mariner Sportfishing	Lynn MA
Stew Holt		Georgetown, MA
DAVE LURVEY		Lynn MA
Steve Connors		Lynn, MA
IAN CROWN		Rockport MA
Herb White		Gloucester Ma.
Gary Vereja	Dreamy Catcher	Gloucester MA
PETER ANNE SCHWILD	STRIPER	Andover, MA
James Goodhart	Striper	Newburyport, MA
Steph Gules	Striper	Ipswich, MA
JOE EUGINO	Why Knot Fishing	Salem MA
MAT ZIMMERMAN	Why Knot Fishing	Beverly, MA
JACK LOVE DAY	WHY KNOT FISHING	MARBLE HEAD MA
BILL DEL FUOCO	PT 75	HAMILTON, MA
Wayne Keller	ABOUT FINE	DANVERS MA
Dennis DiMAIO	MAIKO	S. AUGUS
DAVID TESSEIN	REC. FISHING	WOBURN, MA

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

September 2, 2014

Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Bill Duff	NOAA, GARFO	New Bedford
Kristof Ketch	Rec Fisherman	East Falmouth, MA
Pong Jansz	Self	Sudbury MA
MICHAEL PIERDINOCKE	REFA/SBCBIA	Green Umbagog, VT
Derek Ashcroft		Taunton, Ma 02760
MIKE MORGAN		BUZZARDS BAY MA
Robert CASH	Retiree	BUZZARD BAY
Peter Markov	REC. FISHERMAN	ONSET, MA
Bill Mansfield	rec fisherman	Mattapoisett, MA
TOM GARNON	RESIDENT	East Manville, RI
Doug Fraser	Cape Cod Tims	Hyannis MA
JOE APISCOFF	Cape Cod SALTIES	DENNIS MA
TERRY TESSEIER	CAPE COD SALTIES	E. SWANWICK, MA
KENT PUMCOY	Cape Cod Salties	W. YARMOUTH
STEVE PAGLIERANI	OSTONVILLE ANGLERS CLUB	MARSHFIELD, MA
JOE MARCUS	REEL FISHERMAN	MASHPEE, MA
Patrick Jansz	ILSEA	Wyanet MA
Michael Carr	Rec Fisherman	Bladford MA
DAVE ANDERSON	REC/SURFCASTER	MILBURN, MA
DAVE DALVE	REC/SURFCASTER	DARTMOUTH, MA
Patrick G. Martin	MSBA	SANDWICH MA
CHARLIE GONNAY	MSBIA	FALL RIVER MA
DAVID PICKETT		BOURNE, MA
Brandon Homer	MCSBA	Plymouth, MA
Kyle Streik	MCSBA	Wareham MA
KEVIN BLWICK	ON THE WATER	BOURNE MA
JOSHUA WINGLEY		FALMOUTH MA
Paul Coates	Retired	Sagamore Beach MA
Dave Peros	Guide/Writer	Bourne MA
Stephen Madden	Buzzards Bay Anglers	CARVER MA
YEDDY O'ROURKE	MASS. FREEDIVERS CLUB	Chatham ma

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 September 2, 2014
 Nantucket, Massachusetts

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
TRIS CARPENTER		NANTUCKET MA
John Moy		Acton, MA
DAVID FRESBIC		Nantucket MA
ROBERT FRESBIC		" "
KIMBERLY NOLAN	INQUIRER + MIRROR	NANTUCKET
Nick MILLER		"
Maria Waine		Nantucket
HARRY OSTRANDER		NANTUCKET
MARY-ADAIK MAUIRA		NANTUCKET
BOB DeCOSTA	TON - BOS	NANTUCKET
Jeff Carlson	TON - Natural Resources	Nantucket
DAVID FOX		Old Greenwich Ct
David Fox		Nantucket, MA
PETE HOWELL		NANTUCKET
Don Margolis		FLORIDA - NEW JERSEY
JAMES P. ELLIS		NANTUCKET MA
Bob RANK		NANTUCKET, MA
Pete Rank	ANTHEA K	NANTUCKET, MA
MARK SCHUSTER	TOPSPIN	Nantucket MA
JOSH ELDRIE	MONOMON	NANTUCKET MA
Tara Riley	Town of Nantucket - NRD	" "
Harri Graham	Center for Aquatic Studies	Nant MA
Ramond DeCosta		Nantucket MA
FRED TONKIN	HERBERT I.	NANTUCKET, MA
Scott Bowwood		Nantucket MA
Stephenson	ABSOLUTE Sportfishing	Nantucket MA
STEPHEN WELCH	RECREATIONAL FISHERY	NANTUCKET
Libby Gibson	Town of Nantucket	Rocky Beach Nantucket
TOM MLECZKO	CAPT. TOMS Charles	Nantucket

9/2

Tom
Bob -

In case I have to leave the meeting (DR appt at 11:20) before the public comment section, I would very much appreciate your passing along this comment.

I believe we need a global slot limit.

It's the big cows that do the best job spawning.

For years I've watched the big charter boat fleet wire the huge stripers off Montauk Point. Multiply the number of boats by the number of trips by the number of customers per trip, and you have to have a large impact on the best of the spawning stock.

508961
3451

Thank you. Nick Miller



RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER
ANGLERS
Association



P.O. Box 1465, Coventry, Rhode Island 02816

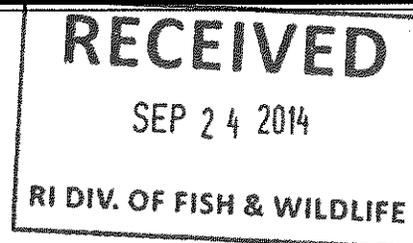
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www.RISAA.org

September 23, 2014

Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 1050 North Highland St, Suite 200A-N
 Arlington, VA 22201



The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association, representing 7,500 recreational anglers and thirty affiliate clubs, supports the following options on Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan:

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

Option B: 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment Reference Points

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target: Option A. One year time frame

3.0 Proposed Management Options

Coastal Recreational Fishery

Option B2: One fish at 30 inch minimum

Coastal Commercial Fishery

Option B16: a 25% reduction from Amendment 6 quota

Note: A correction needs to be made in reference to the 2015 commercial quota referenced in option B16. The 25% reduction from Amendment 6 Quota could actually result in an INCREASE of 13% in the commercial harvest for 2015 if the new quota is met. This should be corrected so that the actual results are 25% (minimum) reduction in harvest based on the actual 2013 harvest numbers.

3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers between states: Option A. Status quo, no commercial quota transfers

3.2 Commercial Size Limits: Option B. Status quo with existing size limits

Submitted,

Stephen J. Medeiros
 President
 RISAA Board of Directors

The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association represents over 7,500 recreational anglers and 32 affiliated clubs

- Blue Water Anglers • Bowling Green Fishing Club • Bristol County Striper Club • Buckeye Brook Coalition • Buzzards Bay Anglers Club •
- Cape Cod Salties • Connecticut Surfcasters Association • CT/RI Coastal Fly Fishers • East Bay Anglers • East Greenwich Yacht Club •
- Galilee Tuna Club • Jamestown Striper Club • Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association • Massachusetts Striped Bass Association •
- Narragansett Pier Sportfishing Association • Narragansett Salt Water Fishing Club • Narragansett Surfcasters •
- Newport County Saltwater Fishing Club • Ocean State Surfcasters • Old Colony Amphibians • Pioneer Valley Boat & Surf Club •
- Plum Island Surfcasters • Princeton Fishing Team • Rhode Island Marine Trades Association • Rhode Island Mobile Sportfishermen •
- Rhode Island Party & Charter Boat Association • Rhody Fly Rodders • Slater Mill Fishing Club • St. John's Fishing Club •
- Stripercoast Surfcasters • United Fly Tyers of Rhode Island • Weekapaug SurfCasters •

I appreciate the quality of the presentation and the sincere effort of the Commission to listen to the public.

I own a tackle business in Newport that employs 5 people full time. Fishing is the type of family fun enjoyed by a good portion of the 1.6 million visitors who come to Newport each summer. No other fish is more important to ours or the approximately 30 other tackle shops along the Rhode Island coast than the striped bass. Our business will cease to exist if the documented decline continues.

For the residents of Rhode Island there is no other saltwater fish that is more available by mode/ economic means (surf, kayak, boat) by method (bait, lures, flies) and by time of year April to November than the striped bass. From the perspective of the citizen the striped bass is "exceptional" and needs to be treated as such.

This is a very important decision yet the best science available leaves the Commission and the public with options that only have a 50% probability of reaching the intended mortality threshold. I am sure that is a frustrating reality for the Commission. A 50% probability amounts to a coin flip.

Additionally, the changes that are adopted by the Commission will very likely be in place for 3 years. In part because the Commission has other species to manage. Given that, an unmitigated disaster would be needed to "revisit" these new regulations within the next three years.

All those in attendance here tonight recognize that this is a very important decision. Potentially it could be a bad coin flip locked in for three years. With this as background the most conservative approach is warranted to return the spawning stock biomass to the minimum threshold. Not abundance mind you; but the minimum threshold defined as the 1995 level that the spawning stock biomass attained after the moratorium necessitated by the last population crash.

I would ask that you also commit to increasing the scientific and management certainty by getting better data for when we revisit this topic in three years. As we all know with coin flips "heads you win and tails you lose"

Please try and get a better handle on "lost fish" in the biomass. Two areas it seems your decision making would benefit from more certainty would be:

- 1) How many fish are in the EEZ?

2) How many striped bass are sold illegally by recreational and commercial anglers alike? These illegal sales understate the commercial catch, skew your data and steal from law abiding commercial fisherman who likely incur higher costs as a result of following the law.

Finally I would remind you of how reminiscent today's situation is of that of almost 35 years ago when a symposium was convened in Boston to bring national attention to the sharp decline in striped bass numbers. Our late Senator John Chafee opened that event with these memorable words: "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."

The recovery that ensued is regarded by many as a shining example of fisheries management and the direct result of decisive action.

I ask that you take decisive action for the citizens of Rhode Island, for the visitors to our beautiful coastline and for the tackle shops of the Ocean State

I ask that you support Section 2.6 Option A; Section 3.0 Option B3

One year, one fish at 32 inches

Respectfully



Peter Jenkins

Owner

The Saltwater Edge

peter@saltwateredge.com

Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 Comments: Dennis Zambrotta, 12 Florence Ave, Newport, RI 02840

Most of us understand that when dealing with migratory species such as striped bass that we'll have good seasons and bad seasons, good areas with plenty of fish, and areas devoid of bass, that is a given. But what I and many of my well respected surfcasting peers have witnessed is a steady downward trend in striped bass abundance for the past 6 years.

Shore based fishing is perhaps the most rudimentary recreational method used to target striped bass. For the shore based fisherman there are no electronics to find the fish. They rely on the fish being present in known historic locations of abundance – so it is the surfcaster who feels the effect of less bass first. As the late Tim Coleman so aptly described; “The shore based fisherman is the canary in the coal mine, when they start gasping for fish it’s a warning sign something is wrong.” We’ve been gasping for 6 years. I know this is anecdotal evidence as is much of what you have heard and will hear at these regional meetings – but it’s as close to a systematic scientific evidence evaluation as we can offer.

I was around for the last crash in the 1980s – much has changed, there is now so much more to incorporate, modern electronics, social media impact. We now have the technology to find and kill that last buffalo, or striped bass in this instance. So I implore you to take the most conservative plan to help restore this fishery as soon as possible. Please endorse Option B3 and no transferrable commercial quotas. I also suggest in the name of fairness that you not permit bordering states to incorporate different bag limits so as not to create an unfair advantage for one state over the other in the “for hire” industry. This has created much consternation here in Rhode Island with other fisheries. Bag limits should be consistent regionally in the for hire industry. It only takes one competing state to allow a more liberal bag to create a feeling of unfairness and a potential enforcement nightmare. Thank you.

Mike Waine
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St
Suite A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

September 15, 2014

My Name is Christopher Willi and I have lived on Block Island, Rhode Island since 1992. I am writing as an avid recreational fisherman as well as a 15 year fishing guide and charter captain here on Block Island. This letter is to support a proposed addendum to the Amendment 6 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan, specifically Option B which reduces the catch to 1 fish per day.

I want to be clear that this is my opinion as a charter captain and the owner of a bait and tackle shop - Block Island Fishworks.

There are many captains that operate what I refer to as "meat mongers charter boats" - that kill their limit because, apparently, their customers expect it and pay for it. I am not one of them and neither are my customers. In fact you will find five (5) charter boats on Block Island (all as signatories of this letter) that do not let customers take more than one striped bass per person, and some encourage a slot fish. And our customers keep returning year after year, happy.

Block Island is arguably the epicenter of big striped bass fishing in New England. What was witnessed in the waters of Block Island this past summer was nothing short of astonishing, and disturbing. We experienced the largest influx of big striped bass witnessed in 20 years. 30 to 50 pound fish were the normal catch of the day. These waters were then inundated with recreational and commercial fishermen from Rhode Island and the three surrounding states (as well as the largest number of spearfishermen ever seen). What transpired for over 6 weeks was what I can only describe as a massacre as these fish were pummeled day in and day out - with boats 'limiting out' at will. Yes, this can be good for the business we are in - but it's not good for the future of this business. Many of the Rhode Island veteran captains, with vast experience and knowledge and have

lived the days of the moratorium, are supporting the status quo or a 2 fish limit. What is sad is their legacy may very well be how they buried what was a healthy industry, instead of paying it forward for the younger generations willing to keep it alive and well.

Our support for Addendum IV Option B1s to help protect the striped bass populations - but more importantly, to protect us from ourselves. (B1)

Capt. Christopher Will
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Hula Charters
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Fish the World
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John Hunniwell
Pale Horse Charters
PO Box 1366

Block Island, RI, 0280

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
BOB VEACH	CT. Charter Boat	Waterford, CT.
Sean Curley		Wallingford, Ct.
T. Karbowski	Rock & Roll Charters	North Branford, CT.
Jordan May	Rock & Roll Charters	Hebron Ct
Rich Morris	Cora Southeastern	Enfield, ct.
Mike Kravosenko		Enfield CT
John Potter	CTPI Fishery	Groton Ct.
Julie Decker	Federation Charter	Groton Ct
Liam Rosati	Fishermen	Amston, CT
STEVEN CICORIA	CT/RE COASTAL ^{Fly}	Connecticut
Ernie Beckwith	Recreational ^{Fishes}	Haddam, Ct
MIKE KRAEMER		N. BFD, CT.
GENE LEVY	NE. Combustion Serv. Inc.	NIANTIC CT.
John HANECAK	CBA, FISHERMEN MFG	Cromwell Ct
Mark Phillips		Burlington CT
RICHARD TAYLOR	CTRE	Clinton, CT
PAT VOLIT		West Haven, CT
Rick Davidson	CTR2	Galloperry Ct
Tom Fucini		Middletown, CT
Bob Spooner		MIDDLETOWN, CT
STEVE WILLIAMS	Recreational	MADISON, CT
DZVE NELSON		Mansfield CT.
Paul Stumas		Fairfield, CT
BILL CRAMER		NEW HAVEN/NANTIC
DAVID MILES	RECREATIONAL	LEDYARD, CT
Richard Seibert	Rec.	East Hampton, CT
John Pierson	Rec.	Essex, CT
PRESTON COTTS	Rec.	Groton CT
Edward Moukawsher	State Representative CT	Groton CT
Bruce Bokac	Rec.	Chester CT.
Ted Buddacki		Meriden, Ct.
Kevin Tull		Berlin, CT
Chris Haley		Milton, CT
Aaren Wall		Wallingford, CT
Kevin Bentley	Reelin Sportfishing	New Britain CT
Katy Ryan	Recreational	Darien, CT
Dan Young	Rec/Sport	Darien CT
Joe DeRose	Rec.	OLD LYME CT
STEVE CURRIER	REC.	OLD LYME CT.
Karew Westenberg	AW Marine	New London, CT

CT STB A.IV 8/26/2014

P2

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
Michael Pirri	Flying Connie Charter	Clinton, CT
Rick Roy	Marlin's Sportfishing	East Haddam CT
Wayne Wright	Rock and Roll Charter	Clinton CT
BRUCE RICH	CFFA	E. HARTFORD, CT
Toby LAPINSKI	THE FISHERMAN MAGAZINE	S. WINDSOR, CT
Mike Kravchenko		Enfield CT
Mark Dysinger	Flyshop Charters	Killingworth, CT
Tom Salsedo	Cabela's	East Hartford CT
ROS GREISNEY	CT/RI FF	GROTON
Greg Dubrude	Blackhawk	Niantic CT
Paul Sibiga	Surfcaster	Marlborough CT
Matthew DeBacco		Rocky Hill, CT
MARC BERGER	Lucy Service Center	ATLANTIC CT
Jack Belint	Fish Connection	Preston, CT
Myron Schakman		W. Hartford, CT
George Baldwin		Northford CT
CHARLES CARANO		GUILFORD, CT
Galy BRUMMETT	CT-OUTFITTERS	Wethersfield, CT
Shawn Barkham		Middletown CT
BRIAN DUDEK		MIDDLETOWN, CT
Corry Palladini		Manchester, CT
JASON D. SAZ	TRISTATE SKINDIVERS	NORWICH CT
Michael Suzzelli	RECREATIONAL	LYME, CT
Kevin Schwatlow	Surfcaster	Milford CT
MATT LEJEUNE	SURFCASTER	DORLAND, CT
EJ VONGHAI	US FLY LAWYERS	NB CT
Jay Salvatore	OSPREY sport fish	Groton CT
Bob Buzar		Guilford CT -
Jason Risher		Old Lyme CT
Alberking	CT/RI Fly Fishing	Groton CT
Tom Skirpan	CT/RI Fly Fishing	LEDYARD, CT
Chris Staab	CT	Old Lyme CT
Russell Holmberg		Westbrook, CT
Jeff Johnson	AW Marina	New London CT
Craig Miner	CT Legislature	Litchfield, CT
MARIK KUS	Old Lyme	Old Lyme, CT

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV Hearing

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation, New Paltz NY, Sept. 23, 2014

Name (please print)	Address / City / zip	Phone	Email	Please check box if you wish to make a formal statement
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Bill ENSILE	14 Herry Ln WIPP SEKON-7	845-297-9338	Freeville 96 @optonline.net	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tom BAUDANZA	1264 ADEN CT, SAULETTES	845-246-1468	Tbaudanza@chur.m.com	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Chris Pritchard	SKINGS LN MONTROSE NY 10848	914-490-9484	CPritch@optonline.net	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Laura Jane	35 Dyck Williams Water Park NY 10487	901-906-0707	LTRAIPLE 1954 @ OUTLOOK.COM	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHARON JONES	PO Box 237 CONNECTICUT 1 centerville	845-706-4257	SALTYSHAR @YOL.COM	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Trevny	Newburgh NY	845-238-7508	OFFTHECHIMNELS@VERIZON.NET	<input type="checkbox"/>

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV Hearing

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation, New Paltz NY, Sept. 23, 2014

Name (please print)	Address / City / zip	Phone	Email	Please check box if you wish to make a formal statement
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Oyla Reville	Viking Fleet	462 West Lake Dr	Montauk - viking fleet	TOPAWAN
ERIC HANNAN	Viking Fleet	462 West Lake Dr	Montauk same	com
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WARREN DENNINGTON		5 MAREBETH CER. MELLER PL		
Joe Pecline	On The Water	35 Technology Park Drive ^{E. FALMOUTH NY} Suit 2	Joe@onthewater.com	508-579-2948
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bold



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Sam Pletenik	Self	542 RIVERS DR. Mastic Rch		
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Michael Potts	Bluefin IV	PO Box 2084 Montauk		631 688 9323
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1075 Tooker Avenue
 West Babylon, NY 11704
 September 16, 2014

Mr. Michael Waine
 Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
 Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Waine:

As an angler who has been involved with the Atlantic striped bass fishery for approximately fifty years, I am concerned with the current decline in the abundance of the striped bass stock, and am thus pleased that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ("ASMFC") is considering action on the *Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment* ("Addendum IV"). However, I am also concerned, and somewhat disappointed, that ASMFC's Striped Bass Management Board (the "Management Board") has not moved more quickly to stem the decline in the striped bass stock, and urge such Management Board to take immediate action to reduce fishing mortality and begin to rebuild the stock to target levels.

My specific recommendations to the options presented in Addendum IV are set forth below.

I

SECTIONS 2.5.1 AND 2.5.2

Fishing mortality reference points should be set at the level recommended in the most recent benchmark stock assessment.

ASMFC's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter states that "It is the policy of the Commission that its ISFMP...be based on the best scientific information available."¹

Such "best scientific information available" is included in the *2013 Atlantic Striped Bass Benchmark Stock Assessment* and the *Update of the Striped Bass Stock Assessment Using Final 2012 Data* (collectively, the "Stock Assessment"), which states that the proper fishing mortality reference points are $F_{\text{target}}+0.180$ and $F_{\text{threshold}}=0.219$.²

That being the case, Option B should be adopted in both cases.

¹ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Interstate Fisheries Management Program Charter*, 2013, p. 1.

² Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Update of the Striped Bass Stock Assessment Using Final 2012 Data*, 2012, p. 7

II
SECTION 2.6

Amendment 6 should not be revised; the entire reduction in fishing mortality must be imposed in one year

When *Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass* ("Amendment 6") was adopted by ASMFC in 2003, it contained "Management Triggers" requiring action should the biomass fall below, or fishing mortality rise above, certain specified levels.

Management Trigger 3 states "If the Management Board determines that the fishing mortality target is exceeded in two consecutive years and the female spawning stock biomass falls below the target within either of those years, the Management Board must adjust the striped bass management program to reduce the fishing mortality rate to a level that is at or below the target within one year."³

As noted in Addendum IV,

Results of the benchmark stock assessment also showed F in the terminal year (2012) was above the new proposed F target, and SSB has been steadily declining below the target since 2006. This indicates that even though the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and stock projections show SSB will likely fall below the threshold in the coming years.⁴

Thus, Management Trigger 3 has been tripped, and action within one year to reduce F to or below F_{target} is required.

The fact that "SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and...will likely fall below the threshold in coming years" is reason enough to act expeditiously and not delay making the full reduction needed to constrain landings within F_{target} in a single year.

However, the Management Board, and ASMFC as a whole, should also realize that its credibility is at stake in this decision. When the Management Board adopted Amendment 6, including Management Trigger 3, it made a covenant with the public, declaring that it would take action should that trigger be tripped. If the Management Board decides to phase in harvest reductions over three years, such phase-in would constitute a breach of such covenant, and thus a breach of the public trust, and be an effective demonstration that ASMFC's management plans may be changed arbitrarily, have no binding authority, and thus are not, in the end, worth the paper that they are written on.

To preserve the integrity of ASMFC, as well as the future of the striped bass stock, Amendment 6 should not be revised.

³ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass*, 2003, p. 31

⁴ Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Public Comment*, 2014, p. 3

III
SECTION 3.0

A

Recreational fisheries on the coast should be governed by Option B, which requires the entire harvest reduction to be achieved within one year, in the form of Option B3 on the coast, and either Option B10 or B15 should govern recreational fisheries in Chesapeake Bay

In Section II of this letter, I have already outlined the reasons why a one-year timeframe for harvest reductions should be adopted. Option B3, which would limit an angler's daily harvest to one fish no less than 32 inches in length, is the preferable option for a number of reasons.

First, the mandated 25% harvest reduction only carries a 50% chance of achieving the required harvest reduction.⁵ A management approach as likely to fail as succeed is just not acceptable, particularly in the case of a stock that has declined to the point that "the probability of the stock being overfished (SSB less than the SSB threshold) is high and increases until 2015-2016. This means despite any reduction in harvest through these proposed scenarios, SSB will continue to decline reaching a low point in 2015-2016..."⁶ The Management Board, having already failed in its duty to prevent the stock from becoming overfished, is now obligated to adopt a management plan with a high probability of successfully reducing the fishing mortality rate and beginning the stock's recovery.

Option B3 provides such higher probability.

By setting the minimum size at 32 inches, option B3 is preferable to Option B1 and B2, as it provides sexually mature females additional opportunities to spawn before they are recruited into the fishery. That is a particularly important consideration as the 1992 and 1996 year classes are removed from the population, and fishing effort becomes focused on the 2003 and, eventually, the 2011 year classes.

Similar reasoning applies to rejecting the somewhat appealing Option B4 and the far less acceptable Option B6; both would focus angling effort on the 2011 year class once it grows large enough to enter the slot, and is likely to cause such year class to undergo excessive fishing mortality. B4 would also concentrate effort, at least in 2015, on a portion of the 2003 year class, with a negative impact on what is arguably the most important component of the spawning stock at this time.

Given the fishery's current dependence on larger fish, and the dearth of striped bass less than 36 inches or so in length, option B5 would place too much pressure on an already depleted spawning stock, while the so-called "trophy fish" options, B7-B9, provide the smallest reductions from 2013 harvest, and offer the worst of both worlds, providing no protection for large adults while allowing fishermen to target the 2011 year class as soon as it enters the spawning stock.

Option B3 will clearly give the greatest protection to the soon-to-be overfished stock.

In Chesapeake Bay, only Options B10 and B15 provide reductions even roughly proportionate to those of option B3, and thus should be the only options considered.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Addendum IV, p. 10

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11

VI
Section 3.2

Commercial and recreational fishermen should be required to fish under the same size limits

The size at which a striped bass is harvested has implications for the health of the stock, as it determines whether, and how often, a female may be able to spawn before being harvested. Since commercial fishermen are governed by a poundage quota, a lower commercial size limit also permits the harvest of larger numbers of smaller fish. Such higher harvests can have a negative impact on affected year classes. Given the importance of the 2011 year class to the future of the striped bass stock, allowing commercial fishermen to harvest such fish at smaller sizes, rather than allowing them to make a more significant contribution to the spawning stock, would be counterproductive.

Option A, *status quo*, should be adopted.

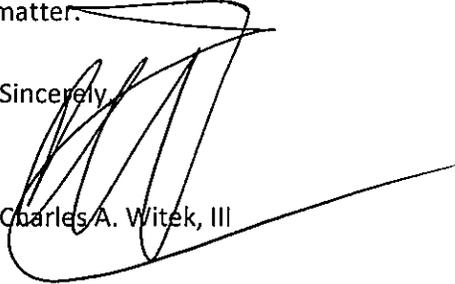
VII
Summary

In summary, I ask the Management Board to adopt the following options:

- Section 2.5.1, coastal fishing mortality reference points, *Option B*
- Section 2.5.2, Chesapeake Bay fishing mortality reference points, *Option B*
- Section 2.6, Timeline to reduce F, *Option A*
- Section 3.0, Proposed Management Scenarios, *Option B*
- Section 3.0, Coastal Recreational Fishery, *Option B3*
- Section 3.0, Chesapeake Bay Recreational Fishery, *Option B10 or B15*
- Section 3.0, Chesapeake Bay Commercial Fishery, *Option B17*
- Section 3.1, Commercial Quota Transfers, *Option A*
- Section 3.2, Commercial Size Limits, *Option A*

Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Sincerely,


Charles A. Witek, III



COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION NEW YORK
 P.O. Box 744
 Melville, NY 11747

**Coastal Conservation Association New York
 Comments on the ASMFC
 Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6
 to the Atlantic Striped Bass
 Interstate Fishery Management Plan
 September 16, 2014**

Michael Waine
 Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
 1050 North Highland Street
 Suite 200A-N
 Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Mr. Waine:

Coastal Conservation Association New York, an organization of anglers dedicated to conserving New York's marine fisheries, appreciates this opportunity to comment on the proposed draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6 of the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Plan.

CCA-NY recognizes that the management decisions the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission makes in the coming weeks may determine whether the striped bass fishery is healthy in the decades to come or whether it will collapse again. CCA NY members have long memories and none want the stock to collapse again.

The 2013 benchmark stock assessment for striped bass showed that while the stock was not overfished or experiencing overfishing relative to the new reference points defined in the 2013 stock assessment, the spawning stock biomass (the total weight of mature females) was estimated at 128 million pounds, just higher than the spawning stock biomass threshold of 127 million pounds and below the spawning stock biomass target of 159 million pounds. The spawning stock biomass has been declining since 2004, an alarming trend that those charged with protecting our fisheries have a duty to reverse. Section 2.1 of Draft Addendum IV warns, "SSB is approaching its overfished threshold and stock projections show SSB will likely fall below the threshold in the coming years."

The 2013 stock assessment also revealed that fishing has exceeded the proposed fishing mortality threshold for six of the preceding nine years. The Technical Committee found that at least a 25% reduction in mortality is necessary to reverse these declines, a measure which would have a 50% probability of success.

The Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey/Marine Recreational Information Program reports recreational harvest increased from 163,000 fish in 1990 to 2.8 million fish in 2006. After the 2006 peak, harvest declined through 2012, when anglers took 1.5 million fish. In 2006 anglers released 23.3 million fish. In 2012 -- six years later -- anglers released only 5.2 million fish. Striped bass recruitment (the number of age-1 fish entering the population) peaked in 2003. While the 2011 year class was abundant, the 2012

year class was weak. These findings depict a drastic downward trend in the health of the striped bass population. Yet, CCA NY believes that decisive management measures can stem the decline and conserve the abundant 2011 year class.

CCA NY's recommendations for the management options set forth in the Draft Addendum follow. Regarding "**2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options**," CCA NY recommends Option B, which uses coastwide population F reference points described in Section 2.5.1. Under Option B the fishing mortality reference points will be adjusted to be internally consistent with the spawning stock biomass target and threshold of the recommendations in the 2013 benchmark assessment. The Technical Committee recommended this option. These reference points reflect a cautionary approach which should help expand the age structure of the striped bass population. The reference points in Option A are unacceptably high as they reflect the status quo and are based on the 2011 stock assessment update.

Regarding "**2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options**," CCA NY recommends Option B, which employs coastwide population F reference points as established in section 2.5.1. Due to data and model limitations, the Technical Committee could not agree on separate reference points for the Chesapeake Bay management area. (See TC memorandum; Appendix 2). The rationale for the lower F target in the Chesapeake Bay was the harvest of smaller sized fish there. The new coastwide reference points of the 2013 benchmark stock assessment (and considered in section 2.5.1) include the effects of the Chesapeake Bay's harvest of smaller fish on the coastwide SSB, but do not incorporate data on the sex ratio that exists in Chesapeake Bay. Therefore, the coastwide population reference points represent the best available scientific advice to manage total fishing mortality on the coastwide population and the Chesapeake Bay stock because Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points are not available. The Technical Committee is charged with developing such stock specific reference points, but until the Technical Committee completes that work for review, CCA-NY believes coastwide reference points are best.

Regarding "**2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options**," CCA NY recommends Option B, under which North Carolina will manage the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock using reference points from the latest North Carolina Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board. If this option is selected, the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River will operate under North Carolina's Fishery Management Plan while the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean will continue to operate under the same management measures as the rest of the coast. Because the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River stock does not contribute significantly to the coastwide striped bass stock, CCA NY does not object to management under an approved North Carolina Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.

Regarding "**2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target**," CCA NY recommends Option A, a one year time frame, which is the status quo. Management Trigger 3 under Option A entails reducing F to a level at or below the target within one year. This particular issue is critical to the success of the management plan. To dilute the potency of the management measures with a three year timeframe is imprudent given the precarious state of the population. The trend in the total number of mature female striped bass is already down. To extend the timeframe threefold will allow more opportunity for the situation to deteriorate.

Regarding "**3.0 Proposed Management Program**," CCA NY recommends Option B, which reduces F to a level that is at or below the target within one year. This represents a 25% reduction from the total harvest of 2013. The reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries. Option B has a 50% chance of resulting in a fishing mortality that will be at or below its target level within one year. To implement Option B, CCA NY recommends Option B3: one fish at least 32 inches. According to the chart on page 14 of the Draft Addendum, this measure will entail a greater than 31% reduction from the 2013 harvest, which affords this management measure a greater than

50% chance of success. The 32 inch minimum size limit ought to be the same for both recreational and commercial fishing.¹⁷³

Option A, the status quo, is indefensible since it has no chance to reduce F to a level that is at or below the proposed target.

CCA NY opposes “**Commercial Quota Transfers**” under 3.1 and therefore recommends Option A (Status quo, no commercial quota transfers).

The evidence of the deterioration of the striped bass population demands decisive action. Addendum IV provides the Atlantic Striped Bass Board an opportunity to show how sound management measures can avert a potential crisis in one of our most important fisheries, which will preserve the public’s faith in fisheries management.

CCA-NY thanks the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for its consideration of these comments and thanks the commissioners for their service to our fisheries.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian P. O’Keefe
Chair
Government Relations Committee
Coastal Conservation Association NY

Bill Raab, President
Coastal Conservation Association NY

Ronald Turbin, Vice President
Coastal Conservation Association NY

Cc: Senator Philip Boyle
New York State 4th Senate District
69 West Main Street,
Bayshore, NY 11706-8313

James Gilmore
Director NYSDEC Bureau of Marine Resources
205 North Belle Mead Rd, Ste 1
East Setauket, NY 11733-3456

Emerson Hasbrouck
Cornell Cooperative Extension Marine Program
423 Griffing Avenue, #100
Riverhead, NY 11901-3071

William A. Muller
183 Oakside Drive
Smithtown, N.Y. 11787

Public Comment: Striped Bass Management

Submitted for consideration September 16, 2014.

My name is William Muller. I hold a Ph.D. in marine biology and although retired I was a professor and also a research scientist at institutions such as the American Museum of Natural History for many years. I am also a freelance outdoor writer and have spent sixty-five years of my life fishing with an intense love for the sport, and I have been a competitive surf angler since 1973.

The Striped Bass Management Board of the ASMFC is charged with the proper management of the species and yet the record of the new millennium is one of delays and concessions while the east coast striped bass population declined rapidly due to intense harvesting and poor recruitment. So I ask, why has it taken so long to adjust management regulations?

The history of striped bass management in the 20th Century can serve as a cautionary tale. Bass numbers fell like a rock in the late 1970s and early 1980s, yet management officials did not react until 1986 when the species was in such dire straights that a moratorium was needed. Managers should have learned then that delays and inaction do not cure the problem, rather exacerbate the problem.

In the 1990s when the species rebounded sharply I remember thinking: *thank God it wasn't too late, surely we've learned a lesson, and certainly the managers will never stand by and permit another precipitous decline of the species.* Yet, it is now apparent we have not learned from the lessons of history.

The ASMFC indicates that even the most stringent new rules have only a 50% chance of succeeding. To me this means act now, act significantly and, if these rules don't work or are slow to work, we must move quickly and approve even more restrictions.

With this history in mind, and the decline of the fishery in the new millennium, I urge the following options.

Section: 2.5.1. Option B – Use the 2013 benchmark assessment

Section: 2.5.2. Option B -- Use preferred Chesapeake Bay assessment

Section: 2.6. Timeline. Option A - Reduce mortality by 25% in one year

Section 3.0. Management Scenarios

Coastal Recreational Fishery: Option B-3. One fish per person per day at 32 inches or greater

Chesapeake Recreational Fishery: Option B-10

Chesapeake Commercial Fishery: Option B-17

Section: 3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers. Option A

I am against quota transfers. If quotas are not met these savings can assist the recovery. It is illogical to change the rules to permit more fish to be harvested via transfers when the point of this addendum is to reduce the harvest.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Yours truly,

I offer the following comments for the record. My name is Ross Squire and I am a member of the NY Coalition for Recreational Fishing, I serve on the Fishing Advisory Board to the NY State Parks on Long Island and I am the founder of the 1@32 Pledge page on Facebook which now numbers over 1,700 strong. The 1@32 Pledge is a grassroots movement of concerned anglers that support catch and release and have taken a pledge to harvest no more than 1 fish a day at no less than 32". We are good stewards of the resource with no agenda other than a healthy striped bass fishery.

As an avid surfcaster, I have a real concern for the health of the striped bass fishery. As last year's peer reviewed Technical Assessment proved, the striped bass fishery is in decline. The great majority of us here have seen this decline for years and I am not just talking about recreational anglers. The effort required to locate fish is greater and the results we see on the water pale in comparison to what we experienced 5 or 10 years ago.

Sadly or maybe even thankfully Management Trigger 3 has been hit and action is mandated. You must finally act. The question we are all left with is just how effective your actions will be. Will you take real action to make an immediate impact to restore the striped bass fishery or will the actions be watered down? With the great majority of options on the table only having a 50% chance of succeeding you **must act decisively**.

New York's vote is extremely important. In an article that appeared last month in the Star Democrat in Delaware, your fellow Board member is quoted as saying that the striped bass fishery remains "**at a very healthy level.**" What chance does the striped bass fishery have of being rebuilt to acceptable levels with Board Members that are so skewed and biased in their thinking that they cannot fairly assess the true condition of the striped bass fishery that they are entrusted to manage?

And that is why your vote is so important. There are state representatives that refuse to recognize what is really happening with striped bass in light of all the science and evidence. New York is a swing vote. Your vote must be consistent with the science and the spirit and mandates of Amendment 6 which requires a one year harvest reduction. Not 3 years. To buy into the socio-economic argument for the 3-year phase-in you would have to believe that the crafters of the Amendment were not sensitive to socio-economic issues. This just isn't true. They were. And they recognized that when management triggers were hit that real, immediate action was required. Your very own data presented at the Spring Meeting indicated that the one year option will rebuild the SSB faster and your Legal Enforcement Committee also indicated that the one-year option will be easier to enforce and will have greater compliance.

So for the record I endorse the following and urge your support for these options:

Section 2.5.1: Stock Assessment Reference Point Option

- **Option B:** Uses the preferred 2013 benchmark assessment.

Section 2.5.2: Chesapeake Bay Assessment Reference Point Option

- **Option B:** Uses the preferred stock assessment reference point.

Section 2.6: Timeline to Reach Harvest Reduction

- **Option A: Reducing mortality by 25% in one year.**

Section 3.0: Management Scenarios: Coastal Recreational Fishery:

- **Option B3: One fish per person per day at 32 inches.**
- **Chesapeake Recreational Fishery: Option B10**
- **Chesapeake Commercial Fishery: Option B17**

Section 3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers

- **Option A: Prohibiting quota transfers.**

Section 3.2: Commercial Size Limits

- **Option A: Requiring the same size limits for commercial harvesters should the recreational size limit be increased.**

Striped bass are without question one of the most important species in our waters. They provide great enjoyment to recreational sportsman and income to many. They keep towns like Montauk alive in the fall keeping businesses open and employing hundreds of people.

The decline of the striped bass fishery has occurred on your watch. The ASMFC is responsible. Emerson Hasbrouck, Jim Gilmore, and Senator Boyle, how quickly the fishery rebounds is in your hands. I trust that you will listen to your constituents and follow the science and the guidance of the Legal Enforcement Committee.

- **One year NOT three years**
- **Option B3: 1@32**

Thank you,



Ross Squire
1@32 Pledge
264 Fillmore Street
Centerport, NY 11721



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

159 Pantigo Road
East Hampton, New York 11937

LARRY CANTWELL
Supervisor

Tel: (631) 324-4140
Fax: (631) 324-2789
lcantwell@eamptonny.gov

Jim Gilmore, Director
Bureau of Marine Resources
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
205 North Belle Mead Road, Suite 1
East Setauket, New York 11733

September 16, 2014

Re: Draft Addendum IV, Striped Bass FMP of ASMFC

Dear Mr. Gilmore:

The Town of East Hampton, as home to the largest fishing port in New York State, respects fishing as a vital part of our economy. On behalf of the Town Board and the Town Fisheries Advisory Committee, I would like to offer support for the following with regard to Draft Addendum IV.

Commercial:

1. Option D-6, which requires a 7-percent reduction in landings for 2015, 2016 and 2017. I believe the desired 20-percent reduction can be achieved with the 7-percent sequential reductions.
2. Option B--with respect to item 3.1 (Commercial Quota Transfers)—which would allow quota transfers between states.
3. Option B—in regard to item 3.2 (Commercial Size Limits)—which would allow the commercial fishery to retain its current size limits despite changes in size limits for the recreational industry.

Recreational:

1. Option D, as follows: In 2015, a limit of two fish at 30 inches; in 2016, two fish at 31 inches; and in 2017, two fish at 32 inches.

I would also encourage further review of Dr. Desmond Kahn's writings about the Draft Addendum being based on biased estimates of Spawning Stock Biomass and Fishing Mortality.

Sincerely,

Larry Cantwell
East Hampton Town Supervisor

My name is Ernie French
I am a Coast Guard licensed captain
I hold Charter Boat permit # 1498
My boat is Flyfishmontauk.com

I have been fishing the East Hampton and Montauk waters professionally for 20 years.

As many people here I depend on my fishing income to pay my mortgage and grocery bills.

I believe I have as much right as anyone in this room to earn an income from these waters.

This year from mid May until the beginning of September I did 23 charters out of a possible 105 days.

The reason for this is that I could not advertise or solicit customers because there were no fish in the back bays to be caught. In the summer I specialize in sight fishing for striped bass in the shallow waters of Gardiners Bay. On beautiful sunny days I would move along shallow water with tremendous visibility and in places where in years past I would come across schools of striped bass from 24" to 36" I was not seeing any fish at all. I mean no fish! And I mean no fish for three months.

This was not just my experience this year but many of the captains that are here tonight as I am sure you will hear.

My ability to earn an income is being severely threatened by an inability to manage our fishery in a responsible way.

I leave the arguments of management to the experts but all I can say from personal experience is that our fishery is in trouble.

Thank you

Senator Philip Boyle
69 West Main Street
Bay Shore, NY. 11706

Honorable Philip Boyle

ASMFC may have delayed too long. It is unfortunate that changes to the striped bass Management plan have been proposed, revised, discussed, but then ultimately punted away for several years. Now, ladies and gentlemen the time has come for significant action before we teeter-totter towards the dismal population contraction of the 1980s.

Please, let us do everything possible to preserve the 2011 Chesapeake and 2007 Hudson year classes. Let us commit to restoring the stocks to populations level that existed between 1995 and 2004.

Therefore we recommend the following:

Section:2.5.1 Stock Assessment Reference Point.

Option B: Uses the 2013 benchmark assessment Point

Section: 2.5.2 Chesapeake Assessment Reference Point.

Option B: uses a preferred stock assessment point

Section: 2.6 Timeline To Reach Harvest Reduction

Option A: reduces mortality by 25% in one year.

Section: 3.0 Management Scenario Options.

Coastal Recreational Fishery: B-3 One fish per person @ 32"

Chesapeake Recreation Fishery: B-13

Chesapeake Commercial Fishery: B-17

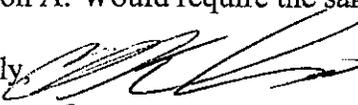
Section: 3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers.

Option A: Prohibits the transfer of quotas from one region to another should quotas not be reached in a given region.

Section: 3.2 Commercial Size limits.

Option A: Would require the same size limits for commercial harvest as recreation

Yours truly,



C. Pierre



Mr. Michael Waine
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
1050 North Highland Street
Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, Va. 22201

Dear Michael Waine

ASMFC may have delayed too long. It is unfortunate that changes to the striped bass Management plan have been proposed, revised, discussed, but then ultimately punted away for several years. Now, ladies and gentlemen the time has come for significant action before we teeter-totter towards the dismal population contraction of the 1980s.

Please, let us do everything possible to preserve the 2011 Chesapeake and 2007 Hudson year classes. Let us commit to restoring the stocks to populations level that existed between 1995 and 2004.

Therefore we recommend the following:

Section: 2.5.1 Stock Assessment Reference Point.

Option B: Uses the 2013 benchmark assessment Point

Section: 2.5.2 Chesapeake Assessment Reference Point.

Option B: uses a preferred stock assessment point

Section: 2.6 Timeline To Reach Harvest Reduction

Option A: reduces mortality by 25% in one year.

Section: 3.0 Management Scenario Options.

Coastal Recreational Fishery: B-3 One fish per person @ 32"

Chesapeake Recreation Fishery: B-13

Chesapeake Commercial Fishery: B-17

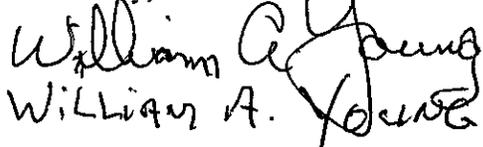
Section: 3.1 Commercial Quota Transfers.

Option A: Prohibits the transfer of quotas from one region to another should quotas not be reached in a given region.

Section: 3.2 Commercial Size limits.

Option A: Would require the same size limits for commercial harvest as recreation

Yours truly,


WILLIAM A. YOUNG

PRESIDENT N.Y.C.R.F.

One Year Option



Option B3

Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
September 9, 2014
New Jersey

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
SERGIO RANUCCI	HRFA / SWABC	RIDGEFIELD PK, NJ
Mike CARGILL	HRFA	PARAMUS NJ
John PIAZZA	SWABC	SADDLE BROOK NJ
John TOTTE	SWABC	MONROE TWP NJ
Paul Haerth	Berkeley Staff Club	Seaside Park, NJ
Kevin B MORGAN	HRFA - ALS	CRESSKILL NJ
RAYMOND ZAMPINO	HRFA	CRESSKILL N.J.
WAYNE GEIDER	HRFA	BERGENFIELD NJ
Peter Orenzo	HRFA	New Milford NJ
ANTONIO Di Modugno	H.R.F.A	EMERSON N.J.
Law COSTELLO	H.R.F.A	NUTLEY N.J.
Richard Marshall	H.R.F.A	WASHINGTON TWP. NJ
Daniel Harrison	HRFA	Dumont NJ
TONY EVANGELISTA	HRFA	N. BERGEN, NJ 07047
Edward Delapp	HRFA	GAINESVILLE, FLA. 10923
CHARLES ALTMAN	SWABC	SADDLEBROOK N.J.
JOHN SCERFO	ASBURY PARK FISHING CLUB	NUTLEY, NJ
Fred VILLANOVA	SWABC	Fair Lawn NJ
BOB GROSCHIN	I.F.F.F.	TEANECK, NJ
John Galen	HRFA + IFFF	Fort Lee N.J.
FRANK GRECCO	HRFA	PATERSON, N.J.
William H. Kuhl Jr	HRFA	LEONIA N.J.
Matt Christensen	SWABC	Lodi, NJ
HOWARD LEBMANN	HRFA	BOGOTA, NJ
Bill Tarnack	HRFA SWABC, BIF	RAWDOLPH NJ
CHUCK SANTORO	SWABC	PARAMUS, NJ
ALFRED J WHITE	SWABC	TEANECK, NJ
ALFRED GIARDINI	HRFA	BERGENFIELD NJ
TOM TYLS	SWABC	FAIR LAWN NJ
Harold V. GOSTERSON	SWABC	OAKLAND NJ
Harold Vogt	SWABC	HASKELL NJ

Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

September 15, 2014

New Jersey

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
16	JACK AVERNHAMMER		Toms River NJ
11	Phil Simon	A CONCERNED FISHERMAN (ME)	WARETOWN NJ
19	PAUL Eidman	Anglers Conserv. Network	Tinton Falls NJ
	MARY BROWN	FISHERWOMAN	TOMS RIVER, NJ
	DON BROWN	CONCERNED	TOMS RIVER, NJ
	JOE BROWN	CONCERNED	TOMS RIVER, NJ
	PAUL HARRIS	NJBBA	Bayville NJ
	Mark Pantle	NJBBA	Bayville NJ
2	JACK Fullmer	N.J. Council Wading Clubs	Allenstown, N.J.
	Patrick Perrotto	Jersey Shore Surfcasters	Wall, NJ
	NIM CANDIA	FOLKED RIVER NWACLUBS	FOLKED RIVER, NJ
12	Ryan Brown	Fishman	Rumson, NJ
14	CHRISTOPHER HEALY	NONE	LITTLE SILVER, NJ
3	TIM BURNER	NJBBA	TOMS RIVER
	GEORGE LINDSTROM	CONCERNED	ENDICOTTOWN
	MATT LINDSTROM	CONCERNED	"
5	JOE MAINO	CONCERNED SURFCASTER	RED BANK, NJ
1	Paul Hgerfel	Various	Clifton, NJ
	STEPHEN MACHALAGA	HI-MAR STRIPER CLUB	MIDDLETOWN NJ
	CETRIE BUCHTA	ASBURY PARK FISH CLUB	TOMS RIVER NJ
7	JOHN MARK BASILE	Berkeley CLUB	Toms River NJ
	DAVID Arbeitman	The Reel Seat Tackle Shop	Brick, NJ
	Bob Caracozzo	ShankRiver SUR	Brick, NJ

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
	John D Budesi	Berkeley Stripes Club	Brook NJ
(14)	CHARIE MULLER	BONVALET STRIPER CLUB	WAW NJ
	Bill Velder	SISA/CSA	Greer NJ
(15)	David Ribbeck	Queen Mary Fishing	Pt. Pleasant Beach, NJ
	Rob Winkler	NJ STATE DEPARTMENT	SPOTS DOVER NJ
(19)	Sohn Baboga		Kearny, NJ
(6)	Steven Perna	Berkeley Stripes Club	Lanetta NJ
	Rick Sauvigne	Berkeley Stripes Club	Lanetta
	JAMES KRASS	RFA NJ Chapter	Atlantic Highlands
	Jim Hill		Langhorne PA
(18)	ROST BOGAN	UNITED BOATMEN NJ	PT. PLSNT BCH. NJ
(17)	Ray Bogan	MTA	A. Pt. Beach
	Justin Johnson	Queen Mary Fishing	Brick NJ
	Ken Warbel	MRMTC	Point Pleasant
	Carmine Tingo	JSS	Manahawick NJ
	KYREN DOOLEY	Berk. Stripes Club	FORKED RIVER NJ
	Viola Monica	JSS	Union, NJ
	John Bushell Jr.	Betty + Nick	Seaside Park, NJ
(8)	Rich Ismael	STRIPPERS & ANGLERS	Union NJ
	George Strathern	Berkeley Stripes Club	Seaside Heights, NJ
	JIM MOLCHAN	"	SEASIDE PARK
(10)	JOHN A. BUDISH	"	SEASIDE PK
	Nick Cicero	FOLSOM CORP	MAHWAH N.J.
	Jim Bourne	J.S.S. JERSEY SHORE SURFCASTERS	NEPTUNE N.J.
(14)	Dave Splindoff	Harbor Village Fishing Club	
(16)	Dave Finkel		

② Tim Butler
① [unclear] [unclear]

Striped Bass Public
Sept 4, 2014
Port Republic NJ

Comment / 30 sign ups
~ 45 total¹⁸⁷

Name	Affiliation
Chuck Furimsky	
Greg O'Connell	Merchantville FC
Mike Deckard	
Bob Jackson	Brian Eggi's
Ed Teise	
Doug Taylor	NJBBA
Bill Shillingford	ASPEC
Fred Pene	
MARIA DOND	RFA
FRED DOND	"
MIKE DECKARD	
Joe Zaborowski	
Eddie God	
Phil Jan	
David Showell	Absecon Bay Sportsman Club
Frank Ruczyński	NJ Angler @ comcast.net
Harry Franks	
Michael Celestino	NJ FSW
Heather Corbett	" "
Brian Neilan	" "
Brendan Harris	" "
Tom Siciliano	Manasquan Fishing Club
Paul Haerfel	JCAA/ARC
NOEL ANGEWICCI	FORKSCUE ANGLERS
MIKE STEPHENS	AC PRESS (WOOD) RADIO
Kurt Renant	499 Pilgrim Way Buena
Tom Gardiner	Square Circle Sportsmen
Bill SAVAGE	South Jersey Squid Hounds

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Contact Info</u>
Andrew Mosley	_____	itumblr4u@201.com
George Bucci	(13) None	
Dave Messerschmid	None	
Ron Alia	N/A	
Billy Wilborn		

Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

September 17, 2014

Bristol, Pennsylvania

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
JOHN PEDRICK	DRFA	BENSALEM PA
JOE WELDON		YARDLEY, PA
Robert B. Coles	Keystone Luces	Devlestown, PA
Robert L. Bolger		Newtown, PA
PETER J. MARCOLINA	DRFA	PHILA. PA. 19154
STANLEY NOWAKOWSKI	DRFA	PHILA PA. 19114
RICK MANDSON	DRFA	" " "
Joe Newton	DRFA	Willingboro, NJ
LAURA Nieves-Newton	DRFA	" "
GEORGE HOFFMAN	DRFA	Trenton, NJ
Rich Hoffman	DRFA	Trenton, NJ
Steve Adams	AOK Tackle	BRISTOL, PA
Mike Richardson	DUFF	Bristol PA
Jason Thompson		Philadelphia PA
MARK YOCUM	Bullseye Striped Club	Doerscht, PA
Rick Kaszuba	" "	Riverside, NJ
Chuck Family		Holland, PA
WAYNE KUBOUC		BRISTOL, PA
LORI MONROE	DRST	ASTON, PA
LOU PERTI	DRST	" "
Sal Accardi		
Bill Salerno		Orville, Pa
Ron POTO	DRFA	LEVITTOWN, PA
Edward Jones		Bensalem PA
Phillip M. Kaminewski	DRFA	Phila Pa
FRANK BECK	DRFA	SOUTHAMPTON, PA
THOMAS ZERUMSKI	DRFA	FOSTERVILLE, PA 19053
Bob Slabodan	DRFA	BENSALLEN PA 19020
Bruce Conzimp	DRFA	DOCKS, PHILADELPHIA
Stephen Tuttle		MONROE, PA

PA Fish and Boat Commission Striped Bass Regulation Survey

September 17, 2014

Silver Lake Nature Center, Bristol, PA

Name:

State of Residency:

1. Do you fish the tidal Delaware River for striped bass in April and/or May?
2. Do you fish the tidal and/or non-tidal Delaware River for striped bass in March and/or June through December?
3. Do you fish the coast and/or bays for striped bass?
4. Please rank the following regulatory options for the Delaware Estuary for the April/May time period with 1 being the most preferred and 6 the least preferred:
 - No change; 20-26 inch harvestable slot limit, 2 fish per day creel limit: (Note: 11 percent of fish in the 20-26 inch range are mature females)
 - No change in 20-26 inch harvestable slot limit, 1 fish per day creel limit: (Note: expected savings from a reduced creel limit cannot be estimated based on available data)
 - No change except bait fishing hooks: 20-26 inch harvestable slot limit, 2 fish per day creel limit, circle hooks required for bait fishing; (Note: predicted 8 percent reduction in released fish mortality)
 - 20-25 inch harvestable slot limit, 2 fish per day creel limit, circle hooks required for bait fishing: (Note: predicted 27 percent reduction in losses from harvest and released fish mortality, 10 percent of the fish in the 20-25 inch range are mature females)
 - 22-26 inch harvestable slot limit, 2 fish per day creel limit: (Note: predicted 31-32 percent reduction in losses from harvest in April and May; 14 percent of fish in the 22-26 inch range are mature females)
 - 20-24 inch harvestable slot limit, 2 fish per day creel limit: (Note: predicted 31-32 percent reduction in losses from harvest in April and May; 8 percent of fish in the 20-24 inch range are mature females)

Comments:



Atlantic Striped Bass Addendum IV for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 September 25, 2014
 Maryland

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company/Organization</u>	<u>City, State</u>
Robert T. Brown	Pres. MAWA MWA	Cotton Pt. MD
Victoria Brown	MWA	" "
Jeffrey EUBLER	F/V TONY AND JAW	Ocean City, Md
George TOPPING	F/V RITA DIANE	O. C. Md
IEN RAINVILLE	TUNAHEADS	BAWD. Md
Dan Ralsted		Centerville MD
ED O'BRIEN	MCBA	CHES. BCH MD.
Bill Goldsborough	MD Gov Agent	Annapolis, MD
Kerry S. Hanning	SEA BORN INC	Berlin, Md
Joey Motowidlo	MWA	Tilghman, Md
David Maginnis	Maginnis Productions	Md
JOE TAYLOR	- J	ANNAPOLIS, MD
MARTY GARY	PRFC	Colonial Beach, VA
Butel Chambers		
Jack Scanlon		Cumby
William Herb	CCA	Chestertan MD
Linda Porchak	Off. of US Sen. for Barbara Mikulski	Salisbury MD
Beet Olmstead	MSSA Chapter #7	Kent Island Md.
Kimberly Kraton	US Sen. Ben Cardin	Salisbury, KI
Edric Green	MCBA.	Ches Beh MD
GERON K JANDA JR		Tilghman Md
Dan PIERCE	KENTON WATERMAN	
Robert Newberry	J.D. Charter Co	Craunton, MD
JOEY SADLER	WATERMAN	CENTREVILLE MD
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JEFF STOKES		TRAPPE MD
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Government Relations Committee*Tony Friedrich, *Executive Director***RECREATIONAL ANGLERS FIGHTING FOR MARYLAND'S MARINE RESOURCES**

September 25, 2014

Mr. Mike Waine,
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Subject: Draft Addendum IV
1050 North Highland Street Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Waine:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Addendum IV to Amendment 6 of the ASMFC's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Plan. In recent years recreational anglers in the Chesapeake Bay and coast wide have noticed a well-documented decline in their interactions with Striped Bass. This decline not only presents a problem for those that depend on the resource to make a portion of their living, but also the millions of recreational anglers who pursue striped bass throughout their annual migration. The changes to the fishery which this document offer are changes welcomed by our membership and many anglers who share a passion for pursuing the Atlantic coast's most revered and popular game fish.

Managing for maximum sustainable yield in a fishery that includes both recreational and commercial components can lead to a lack of abundance and an inequitable burden on the recreational sector. An abundant stock has a well-proportioned level of multiple year classes and ages and will ultimately lead to more fish available for all sectors. It is important to note that the 2011 year class is the best hope for the recovery of striped bass to levels which the public finds acceptable, and the maximum reductions available in Addendum IV represent the best hope for such a return to abundance and stable management levels in the shortest time possible. The time is now to apply strong protections for this vitally important year class, as well as a meaningful reduction of the harvest of the spawning stock biomass (SSB) to ensure a recovery of striped bass stocks.

2.5.1 Coastwide Population Reference Point Options

CCA MD supports Option B: *2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment F Reference Points.*

The fishing mortality reference points will be adjusted to be internally consistent with the SSB target and threshold, consistent with the recommendations in the 2013 benchmark assessment:

Rationale: This is the option recommended by the Technical Committee, and makes the Fishing Mortality Reference points internally consistent with the Spawning Stock Biomass reference points. They are more conservative and should allow for increased abundance (under average recruitment regimes) than previous reference points and should help to expand the age structure of the striped bass population.

2.5.2 Chesapeake Bay Stock Reference Point Options

CCA MD supports Option B: *Use coast-wide population F reference points as established in section 2.5.1.*

Due to data and model limitations, the Technical Committee cannot reach consensus on separate reference points for the Chesapeake Bay management area at this time (see TC memorandum; Appendix 2).

Previously, the intent of establishing a lower F target in the Chesapeake Bay was to account for the impacts of harvesting a smaller sized fish (i.e., 18 inch minimum) in the Chesapeake Bay. The new coast-wide reference points coming from the 2013 benchmark stock assessment (and considered in section 2.5.1) include the effects of the Chesapeake Bay's harvest of smaller fish on the coast-wide SSB, but do not incorporate data on the sex ratio that exists in the Bay. Therefore, the coast-wide population reference points represent the best available scientific advice to manage total fishing mortality on both the coast-wide population and the Chesapeake Bay stock component because the Technical Committee is unable to calculate Chesapeake Bay stock specific reference points at this time.

Rationale: Until such time as we receive better guidance from the Technical Committee(TC), the coast-wide reference points represent the best available advice for management. CCA MD feels that data on sex ratios of the Chesapeake Bay harvest should be solidified and accepted by ASMFC. Ultimately a bay wide reference point will be an important tool for the proper management of striped bass moving forward and should be pursued by the Technical Committee in an expedient fashion.

2.5.3 Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Stock Reference Point Options

CCA MD supports Option B: *The State of North Carolina will manage the Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River (A/R) stock using reference points from the latest North Carolina A/R stock assessment accepted by the Striped Bass Technical Committee and approved for management use by the Board. If this option is selected, the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River will operate under North Carolina's Fishery Management Plan while the recreational and commercial fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean will continue to operate under the same management measures as the rest of the coastal fisheries.*

Rationale: The AR stock contributes little to the coast-wide striped bass stock, it makes sense to allow for management under an approved North Carolina Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan.

2.6 Timeline to Reduce F to the Target

CCA MD supports Option A: *Status quo: One year time frame*

Management Trigger 3 requires reducing F to a level at or below the target within one year.

Rationale: The sooner fishing mortality can be reduced; the sooner abundance can begin to be restored. One of the enduring lessons from the last 30 years of fishery management is that delayed management often has little or no management effect. Taking the necessary reductions as early as possible is usually the best solution. The socio-economic impacts of taking the maximum reduction available have become a frequent topic of discussion amongst many managers and stakeholder groups. We have not seen any evidence that any short-term socio-economic impact will exceed the long-term economic impact gained by maintaining a healthy and abundant striped bass population and fishery. As future action is taken by ASMFC on striped bass, a suitable economic impact study, that includes appropriate economic indicators that include all stakeholder groups, should be included in any management changes.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

CCA MD supports Option B: *Reduce F to a level that is at or below the target within one year. This represents a 25% reduction from 2013 total harvest. The desired reduction would be achieved by approximately equal relative reductions to both the commercial and recreational fisheries.*

Rationale: We see no reason to delay reducing fishing mortality. As stated previously, the sooner fishing mortality can be reduced the sooner abundance may begin to rebound.

Proposed Recreational Fishery Management Options

Recreational fishing accounts for the majority of the fishing mortality on striped bass. Therefore it is critical that managers institute measures that meet or exceed the required amount for the recreational fishery. Every option for reducing harvest in the recreational fishery meets or exceeds the necessary amount.

CCA MD looks forward to the opportunity to work with managers and stakeholders within Maryland to decide upon the most effective management options for Maryland which will jump-start the recovery of striped bass for the recreational and for-hire sectors.

Proposed Commercial Fishery Management Options

The projections to achieve the necessary 25% reductions are based on 2013, so the commercial reductions must be taken from that year's harvest level to be effective. We are dismayed there are no options presented for achieving the 25% reduction in the coastal commercial fishery from any harvest level. We believe it is disingenuous to base the reductions on an as yet unachieved quota rather than actual harvest.

For the commercial fishery many different scenarios are presented. Our basic position is:

Achieve the necessary 25% reduction in 1 year. However we understand the Chesapeake Bay's rationale with the 14% reduction in 2013, and can support taking a 25% reduction from the 2012 harvest levels.

Striped bass were once hailed as the single greatest fisheries recovery story on the Atlantic Coast. We hope that lessons have been learned from our experiences. Coastal communities rely on an abundant population of this species. We must reduce fishing mortality evenly throughout all sectors in order to return to stock to abundant and sustainable levels. Given the natural cycle of striped bass spawning, CCA MD believes that managers should begin to discuss a maximum size limit for all striped bass fisheries. This has been a successful management tool with several other species and should be considered for striped bass as well. It could ensure the viability of the striped bass spawning stock for generations to come.

As always, we look forward to working with managers to complete this task, and look to the best available science to guide these decisions. Returning striped bass to a more abundant level will also require future actions to ensure a proper abundance of menhaden and many other forage species, which striped bass and other predatory fish rely on throughout their life cycle. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on Addendum IV and anxiously await a reduction in fishing mortality as the maximum available level to take place. The faster the recovery of striped bass can take place, the better it will be for all sectors which pursue these fish.

Regards,



David Sikorski
Chairman
CCA MD Government Relations Committee



Chesapeake Bay Ecological Foundation, Inc.
Easton, MD 21601
410-822-4400

September 30, 2014

Mike Waine
Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland St.
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Draft Addendum IV to Amendment 6
to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Dear Mr. Waine,

Chesapeake Bay Ecological Foundation (CBEF) recommends that ASMFC protect the young female striped bass spawning stock since the number of large adult migratory females has significantly declined. Most immature female striped bass migrate to coastal waters before reaching 18". The Chesapeake Bay minimum size limit of 18" protects these females until they migrate to coastal waters, where a 28" minimum size limit protects them until they return to feed and spawn in the Chesapeake Bay. Recent research by CBEF has established that large numbers of young mature females, re-entering the Chesapeake Bay to spawn, are being caught by the commercial gillnet fishery in Virginia's portion of the bay during late winter-early spring. These mature, young females (mainly 22"-26") that spawn as late as July before returning to coastal waters, should be protected.

Chesapeake Bay recreational fishermen should be required to release all striped bass 22"-26" through July 31st. Starting August 1st, fishermen could target all legal size (18" minimum) striped bass, since approximately 90% of those remaining in the Chesapeake Bay are males. Reducing harvest on young females (22"-26") would help maintain a healthy female spawning stock.

Sincerely,
James E. Price, President
Chesapeake Bay Ecological Foundation, Inc.

