

## Tina Berger

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**From:** Michael Toole <toolemf@hotmail.com>  
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**To:** Comments  
**Subject:** ASMFC winter hearing input for Executive Board

ASMFC Executive Board

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

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

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