



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 16, 2007

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ASMFC Striped Bass Board Approves RI and MD Proposals

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board approved proposals from Rhode Island and Maryland for alternative management. The Rhode Island proposal alters the minimum size limit and quota for the state’s commercial floating fish trap sector. The Maryland proposal opens a two-week recreational fishery in the Susquehanna Flats, a small area in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

Unable to attain their allocation of the state’s coastal commercial quota, Rhode Island’s commercial floating fish trap fishermen asked the Rhode Island Division of Environmental Management to propose a reduction in the minimum size limit from 28 inches to 26 inches for that fishery. A state may request a change to its regulations if it can demonstrate that the proposed management program is conservationally equivalent to the standards included in Amendment 6. The analysis for the proposal found that the lower minimum size limit would require a reduction in the trap fishery’s quota by 3.8 percent to be equivalent to the original size limit and quota. This resulted in quota for the trap fishery of 93,788 pounds, down from 97,450 pounds. Rhode Island hopes to implement the new size limit and quota for the remainder of 2007.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources proposed a recreational fishery in the Susquehanna Flats to provide a local fishing opportunity for anglers. The Susquehanna Flats has been limited to a catch and release fishery in the spring since the state-wide moratorium ending in 1990. The fishery will operate under a one fish creel limit and an 18-26 inch slot limit from May 16-31, 2008. Given the regulations, the fishery is expected to harvest a limited number of resident fish. The harvest will be monitored and counted towards the bay-wide quota for resident striped bass. Maryland will report back to the Board on the 2008 fishery and may propose continuation of the fishery for additional years.

The Board also approved the 2007 Fishery Management Plan Review. The FMP Review will be available on the Commission’s website under annual reports at: <http://www.asmfc.org/strippedBass.htm>. Doug Grout, Chair of the Technical Committee, provided the Board with an update on the Stock Assessment and Tagging Subcommittees’ workshops for the 2007 stock assessment. This assessment will undergo a peer review through the Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop in November. The Board also approved the nominations of John McMurray (New York) and Kyle Schick (Potomac River Fisheries Commission) to the Striped Bass Advisory Panel.

For more information on any of the Board’s actions, please contact Nichola Meserve, Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or nmeserve@asmfc.org.

PR07-20

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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