

ASMFC Spring Meeting
May 3-6, 2010
Alexandria, VA

Striped Bass Management Board

The Board approved the NJ proposal to adopt the following bag limit for coastal striped bass – 1 fish $\geq 24''$ and the second fish $\geq 32''$. This was judged by the TC to be conservationally equivalent to 2 fish $\geq 28''$.

Draft Addendum II

At the request of Pat Augustine (NY) and the second from North Carolina at the February meeting, staff was directed to prepare a draft addendum to increase the coastal commercial harvest of striped bass.

The coastal commercial harvest is about 40% of the total commercial harvest and about 9% of the total harvest. The draft addendum includes essentially 2 options:

1. Status quo.

An option here would for a state to move some recreational harvest to commercial harvest and have a mortality neutral option.

2. Increase the coastal commercial harvest by 20%, 30%, 40% or 50%.

These options would increase mortality but not put it over the target F.

The vote to approve the addendum for public comment was as follows:

Vote:

ME	No
NH	No
MA	No
CT	Yes
RI	Yes
NY	Yes
NJ	No
DE	Yes
PA	No
MD	Yes
PRFC	Yes
DC	Yes
VA	Yes
NC	Yes
NMFS	No
FWS	Yes

10-6, motion passes.

Public hearings will be held in June or July with a decision at the August meeting.

Once the draft document is finalized, our ASMFC committee will develop a position and strategy for opposing this addendum.

Weakfish Management Board.

The compliance date for Addendum 4 to the Weakfish FMP was May 1, most jurisdiction had rules in place complying with the 1 fish bag, 100 pound trip limit rule (We supported a moratoria on the fishery). FL changed their management area, putting them into compliance and 4 other states had regulatory difficulties that forced them to have dates in the next few months when they will be in compliance. They are technically out of compliance, but have administrative hurdles. They are trying to come into compliance.

The NC Marine Fisheries Commission willfully rejected the 100 pound trip limit and thus compliance. The Director of DMF, Dr. Louis Daniel brought forward a proposal to allow NC to retain weakfish up to 25% of the total catch, arguing that NC had large mixed species fisheries (ocean gill net, long haul and flynet fisheries) that would have significant bycatch of weakfish. Under the 100 pound trip limit these fish would be discarded and their loss unquantified. Louis's proposal was to at least bring them to shore so they can be quantified in the assessment.

His motion to do so failed for the lack of a second. The Board then voted to recommend to the ISFMP Policy Board that NC be found out of compliance with the Weakfish FMP. The vote was as follows:

MA	Yes
RI	No
CT	Yes
NY	Yes
NJ	Yes
DE	Yes
MD	Yes
PRFC	Yes
VA	Yes
NC	No
SC	Yes
GA	Yes
FL	Yes
FWS	Yes
NMFS	Abstain

The NC MFC will meet next week in Raleigh and decide whether or not to come into compliance or have their case heard by the Secretary of Commerce.