



FACT SHEET
Atlantic Striped Bass Management;
Public Meetings

Issue Overview

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has recommended that NOAA Fisheries consider re-opening federal waters (from three to 200 miles offshore) to commercial and recreational striped bass fisheries. In addition, the Commission asked for a 28-inch minimum size limit and requested that states be allowed to adopt more restrictive rules for fishermen and vessels licensed in their jurisdiction.

The Commission supported their recommendations by stating that the fish stock is currently at high levels of abundance, the current management program would prevent overfishing, and a federal fishery will convert discarded bycatch to landings, which would reduce waste in the fishery. The Commission also pointed out that the fishery management plan calls for close monitoring that would trigger immediate action should the stock begin to show signs of overfishing.

Striped Bass Management History

Federal fisheries for Atlantic striped bass were closed in 1990 to support a state-sponsored rebuilding program. The stock was declared rebuilt in 1995, but federal waters have remained closed due to previous uncertainty in the strength of that recovery. The stock has grown steadily and assessments show it is being sustainably fished.

Seeking Public Input

The public has an opportunity to participate in determining the scope and significance of issues NOAA Fisheries should consider in making its decision on how to proceed. In addition, the public is invited to provide suggestions for additional management measures, such as gear restrictions, season and area closures, and size and bag limits. To gather public input, NOAA Fisheries is holding a series of meetings in the New England and Mid-Atlantic states from Nov. 5 through Dec. 10. To find out where the nearest scoping meeting is, please visit us online (see below), or call Tom Meyer at 301-713-2334.

If you cannot attend one of the scoping meetings, send your written comments to Anne Lange, Chief, State-Federal Fisheries Division, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries, 1315 East West Highway, Room 13317, Silver Spring, MD 20910; or by fax to (301) 713-0596. Written comments must be received by Dec. 22, 2003.

For More Information

More information about striped bass management and these public meetings is available online at: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/state_federal/state_federal.htm. Both the public scoping document and the Federal Register Notice will provide you with more detailed information. You may also contact Anne Lange at 301-713-2334.

