



# The Watch

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The RISAA Legislative Committee’s mission is to provide, in partnership with the Affiliated Clubs, a forum for improving the knowledge and understanding of fishery-related and government issues that affect recreational anglers. An informed membership encourages involvement and advocacy. The Legislative Committee will strive to advocate responsible fishery decision.

The Committee is comprised of RISAA Members and delegates from the Affiliated Clubs. The Committee meets two or three times a year, depending on the number of fishery and/or legislative issues that develop.

## Black sea bass, fluke, scup, striped bass all face proposed regulation & quota changes

### Striped Bass

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has approved for public comment the “**Public Information Document for Draft Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.**”

*(The purpose of a Public Information Document is to inform the public of the Commission’s intent to gather information about a proposal and to provide an opportunity for the public to identify major issues and alternatives to the management of the species in question. This is usually the first step in the process of regulatory changes.)*



This step in the Amendment 7 process is a chance for all recreational fishers who are interested in striped bass to have a say in how this species is managed going forward.

The **Public Information Document (PID)** is located here:  
[http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/StripedBassAm7PID\\_PublicComment\\_Feb2021.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/StripedBassAm7PID_PublicComment_Feb2021.pdf)

This document makes it clear that the ASMFC is interested in all public comments and they ask the public many specific questions on which they wish to hear public opinion.

The RISAA Board has said in the past that striped bass is the single, most important, recreational fishing target species, and I am sure that many of you agree, so I urge you to look at this document and the many questions that the ASMFC has asked us to answer for them.

The RISAA Legislative Committee and Board of Directors will be putting together a letter with answers to these important questions and submitting it before the deadline of April 9, 2021.

### Basic questions asked in this PID include:

- Are the goals established in 2003 are still accurate today or do these goals need to be changed?

- Are the biological reference points that were established in 2003 still appropriate especially considering all of the new information and new procedures since then?
- Do the management triggers need to be updated?
- How should the Management Board determine the appropriate allocation of fishing mortality between the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean region?
- What should be done about Conservation Equivalency (CE) proposals submitted by many states to change the local size, season, or bag limits?
- What should be done to reduce the mortality of catch and release fishing now that unintentional killing of fish released accounts for as many dead striped bass as those that are taken intentionally by anglers?
- How should the Management Board hold recreational fishing responsible for all striped bass taken, both intentional harvest and dead discards?
- Are there ways that the Management Board should consider changing the commercial quota for striped bass?

### Many questions to be answered

These are some very key questions which I have been considering and for which I still have no good answers.

I do know that we had a good amount of striped bass in local waters as recently as 2007 to 2010, but in recent years these numbers are dramatically lower. This leads me to conclude that we are not doing what we need to do to properly manage this species.

I believe that the dramatically lower size requirements in the Chesapeake Bay area do not make sense to me, but I am not

familiar with that fishery.

I also know that ASMFC has allowed many states to harvest more fish in their state than allowed by coastwide regulations through the use of **Conservation Equivalency (CE)** proposals. This CE nearly always results in greater harvest and therefore is not really “equivalent” to the coastwide regulations. I therefore believe the use of CE needs much more restriction than is currently required. **(to page 27)**

