



RISAA Events & Meetings

All events and meetings can
be found online at
www.risaa.org/calendar.html

May 4 • 10:00 AM Kayak Committee
Annual Meet & Greet, Goddard Park

May 7 • 6:30 PM Fly Fishing Committee
fishing the worm hatch, Charlestown

May 11 • 9:00 AM Kayak Committee
fishing the worm hatch, Charlestown

May 14 • 6:30 PM Fly Fishing Committee
fishing the worm hatch, Charlestown

May 14 • 6:30 Board of Directors

May 18 • 5:00 PM Kayak Committee
fishing the worm hatch, Potter Pond

May 18 • 4:00 PM Fly Fishing Committee
fishing the worm hatch, Potter Pond

May 18 RISAA Party Boat Squid Trip

May 20 • 7:00 PM RISAA Seminar

May 24 • 4:00 PM Fly Fishing Committee
fishing at Potter Pond

May 25 • 6:00 PM Surfcasters Comm-
ittee fishing at Calf Psture Point, NK.

May 25 • 6:00 AM Kayak Committee
fishing Passeonquis Cove, Cranston

June 7-9 Annual Surf Fishing Club
Challenge

June 10 • 11:00 AM Fly Fishing
Committee fishing off Goddard Park

June 12 • 6:00 PM Kayak Committee
fishing off Newport/Ft. Adams

June 13 • 6:00 PM Fly Fishing Committee
fishing off Kings Park, Newport

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Notes from the President's Desk

Stephen Medeiros



Advocating for striped bass

By now you probably know that striped bass are in trouble. At the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) February meeting, the Atlantic Striped Bass Technical Committee informed the states' commissioners that the Female Spawning Stock Biomass in 2017 was 68,476 metric tons which was below the threshold of 91,436 metric tons. This meant that the stock was overfished.

In addition the fishing mortality (number of dead fish) in 2017 was 0.307 which was above the threshold of 0.240 which meant the stock experiencing overfishing. Both of these indicated a problem requiring action.

Also, that report also noted that unless harvest was reduced, "the probability of female (spawning stock biomass) being below the (spawning stock biomass) threshold in 2023 was very high, equal or close to 100%."

This may be hard to understand to anyone unfamiliar with fisheries management, but in plain words, it means that continuing the way we are, there will not be enough female breeders in the immediate future and it will likely continue to decline.

So, all of us that appreciate the opportunity to fish for striped bass can say that something needs to be done, and it needs to be done now before it's too late.

But management at the ASMFC works slowly, and with a lot of politics at play.

The 2013 Atlantic Striped Bass Assessment showed that the stock was in trouble. It too almost two years of hearings and battles between those of us (RISAA) who favored going from two fish to one fish to those who refused to give up a fish to help restore striped bass. Finally in 2015 the coastwide regulations of one fish at 28" went into effect. At the time, it was noted that

this only had a 50% chance of being successful.

So now we know, it wasn't enough, and it's time to try again.

You can bet there will be those who make money off striped bass who will fight against any reductions.

There will also be those who are opposed to every regulation that comes along and think ALL fish belong to them personally. They are called "poachers!"

As this issue goes to the printer, the ASMFC will be meeting (April 29-May 2) in Virginia.

I hope they will all put politics aside. I'm sure the battle lines are already in place - recreational vs commercial vs party/charter boats vs north and south.

They must move forward with the process of establishing stricter regulations to bring the striper population back to where it belongs.

I hope our Rhode Island commissioners will do the right thing and advocate for immediate action on striped bass.

Recreational fishermen want an "abundance" of fish. We keep hearing that word. It's the opportunity to go fishing, believing that there are plenty of fish available, and that you have a reasonable chance of catching one.

That's what really counts for us. If we get skunked and don't catch fish to take home, we will still go back and try again - as long as that abundance of fish exists.

But it's on all of us to assure that abundance happens. This can only be done when fisheries managers put the fish first, and politics second.

We may not like the resulting stricter regulations, but without them there will be no fish for the future.

We all have to do our part.

We are all "stewards" of the fisheries resources. I hope you agree.

Steve