STRIPED BASS
(06/04 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status--*Viable*. Albemarle Sound, Atlantic Ocean (expanding age structure of stock, moderate juvenile indices, increased abundance).

--*Overfished.* Central/Southern Region of North Carolina.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1994-2003— 479,069 lb, $595,607

2003 Commercial Landings and Value—565,919 lb, $717,981

Average Recreational Landings 1994-2003
- Atlantic Ocean – 423,723lbs.
- Internal Waters (excluding Albemarle Sound and Inland Waters) – 140,855 lbs.*
- Albemarle Sound Management Area – 62,240 lbs.*

*Overlap in survey coverage occurs in some areas.

2003 Recreational Landings—
- Atlantic Ocean – 830,687 lbs.
- Internal Waters (excluding Albemarle Sound and Inland Waters) – 344,661 lbs.*
- Albemarle Sound Management Area – 51,794 lbs.*

*Overlap in survey coverage occurs in some areas.

Average RCGL Landings – 2002-2003 – 8,945 lbs., **2003** – 8,811 lbs.

Number of Citations (2003)-- 405 entries, 220 releases

Status of Fisheries Management Plan-- An amended N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass Management Plan was adopted in May 2004 by the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission to address the striped bass fisheries in all internal coastal waters of North Carolina. Amendment 6 of the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has been completed.

Research and Data Needs--Expand commercial and recreational sampling in areas other than the northern coastal counties. Fisheries dependent and independent sampling in central/southern areas.

Current Minimum Size Limit--18" TL Coastal, Joint and Inland waters
28" TL Atlantic Ocean

Recreational Harvest Season — Albemarle Sound Management Area:
Spring (January – April)
Fall (mid October/November – December)
Roanoke River Management Area: Spring (March-April)
Atlantic Ocean: Year round
Central/Southern Management Area: Year round

Size and Age at Maturity--11-22 inches, Males 2-3 years old, Females 3-6 years old

Historical and Current Maximum Age--29 years old, 18 years old

Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1955-2003- 8.4; 2003 (Albemarle Sound only)— 0.3 (validated)

Habits/Habitats--Striped bass are anadromous spending the majority of their life in saline water, migrating to fresh water to spawn in the spring. Striped bass require flowing fresh water habitats in order to spawn successfully allowing the eggs to remain suspended until they hatch, and to transport larvae to the nursery areas. Spawning takes place during late April until early June. North Carolina is host to several different stocks of striped bass. One is the Atlantic Migratory stock that over winters off the Outer Banks each year. These striped bass originate principally from the Chesapeake Bay, Delaware and Hudson River systems. They remain in their natal systems from 2 to 3 years then begin migrating along the Atlantic Coast, northward in the summer months and southward during the winter months. The Albemarle-Roanoke River area supports the largest spawning population in North Carolina. Other populations are found in the Neuse, Tar/Pamlico, and Cape Fear rivers.

For more information, see DMF Species Leads page