

STRIPED BASS

(06/07 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status -

Atlantic Ocean Migratory Stock – *Viable* – The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Age structure of the stock continues to expand, with an increased number of age 13+ fish in the population since the adoption of Amendment 6 of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP) in 2003. Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) is leveling off at ~55 million pounds, above the target of 38.6 million pounds. Age-1 recruitment continues to be around the average observed since stocks were declared recovered in 1995. Addendum I to Amendment 6 addresses bycatch concerns and was approved by the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board in Nov 2007. For more information about the status of the Atlantic Coastal Migratory stocks visit the ASMFC website at www.asmfc.org.

Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Areas (ASMA/RRMA) – *Viable* – The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The overall age structure of the stock continues to expand, with an overall increase in abundance of age 8+ fish in the population. SSB is continuing to increase and has been above the recommended threshold since 2002.

Central/Southern management Area (CSMA) – *Depleted* – Surveys on the spawning grounds show very low relative abundance and truncated age structures, with very few older fish in the population. Ongoing sampling programs are collecting dependent and independent data that will be used for future stock assessments.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1997-2006 –

Atlantic Ocean – 358,690 lbs./\$494,482

ASMA – 205,635 lbs./\$290,588

CSMA – 30,388 lbs./\$41,375

2006 Commercial Landings and Value –

Atlantic Ocean – 63,458 lbs./\$153,870

ASMA – 186,399 lbs./\$451,596 (quota managed)

CSMA – 21,076 lbs./\$50,204 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings 1997-2006 -

Atlantic Ocean – 1,370,923 lbs.

ASMA – 72,816 lbs.

RRMA – 83,681 lbs.

CSMA (2004 – 2006) – 15,224 lbs.

2006 Recreational Landings –

Atlantic Ocean – 2,199,558 lbs.

ASMA – 35,985 lbs. (quota managed)

RRMA – 84,523 lbs. (quota managed)

CSMA – 7,356 lbs.

Average Recreational Commercial Gear Landings – 2002-2006 – 5,873 lbs., 2006 – 3,381 lbs.

Average Number of Citations 1997- 2006 (35 lbs.) – 335 (192 releases), 2005 - 512 (73 releases)

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - An amended N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass FMP was adopted in May 2004 by the N. C. Marine Fisheries Commission to address the striped bass fisheries in all internal coastal waters of the state. Atlantic striped bass are currently included in the state's Interjurisdictional FMP, which defers to ASMFC FMP compliance requirements. Amendment 6 of the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass by the ASMFC was completed in 2003. Addendum I to Amendment 6 is in review by the ASMFC striped bass Technical Committee, and addresses the issue of striped bass discards in all sectors of the striped bass fishery.

Research and Data Needs - Expand commercial, recreational, and dependent sampling in the Central/Southern Management Area.

Current Regulations – (2007)

Atlantic Ocean – 28 inches Total Length (TL)

ASMA - 18 inches TL coastal, joint and inland waters

RRMA - 18 inches TL and no striped bass between 22 inches and 27 inches in Roanoke River

CSMA – 18 inches TL coastal, joint, and inland waters

Recreational Harvest Season–

Atlantic Ocean – year round

ASMA - Spring (January – April); Fall (October – December)

RRMA - March-April

CSMA: year round

Size and Age at Maturity – Males: 11 inches/2-3 years. Females: 22 inches/3-6 years

Historical and Current Maximum Age – 29 years/ 18 years

Juvenile Abundance Index (ASMA only) - **1997 – 2006** - 12.22, **2006** – 3.0 (validated)

Habits and Habitats - Striped bass are anadromous spending the majority of their adult life stage in the high salinity waters of the near-shore ocean and estuaries, 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 two to three years then begin migrating along the Atlantic coast, northward in the summer and southward during the winter. The Albemarle Sound-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](#).