

STRIPED BASS

(Atlantic Ocean Migratory Stock)

(06/09 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status – *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.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1999-2008 – 352,965 lbs./\$552,172 (quota managed)

2008 Commercial Landings and Value – 288,410 lbs./\$633,900 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings 1999-2008 – 1,471,416 lbs., **2008** – 938,703 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations (35lbs.) 1999-2008*- 346 (166 releases), **2008***-183 (9 releases)

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - Atlantic striped bass are currently included in the state's Interjurisdictional FMP, which defers to ASMFC Atlantic Migratory Striped Bass FMP compliance requirements. Addendum I to Amendment 6 addresses bycatch concerns in all sectors of the striped bass fishery 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.asmf.org.

Research and Data Needs – increase accuracy of discard mortality estimates in all sectors of the fishery

Current Regulations – recreational; 28 inches minimum Total Length (TL), 2 fish daily creel limit. Commercial is prosecuted with three primary gears; beach haul seine, gill net, and trawl. Annual commercial quota set at 480,480 lbs, seasons opened and closed by proclamation.

Harvest Season – Year round recreational. Opened and closed by proclamation for commercial.

Size and Age at Maturity – males: 12 – 22 inches/2 – 4 years, females: 22 – 28 inches/5 – 8 years

Historical and Current Maximum Age – 29 years/ 23 years

Juvenile Abundance Index 1999 – 2008 – MD – 5.83, VA – 11.68, DE – not available, Hudson – not available, **2008** – MD – 1.26, VA – 7.97, DE – not available, Hudson – not available.

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 often over-winters off the Outer Banks. These striped bass originate principally from the Chesapeake Bay, Del. 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.

*Includes ASMA, CSMA, and the Atlantic Ocean

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#).