



ROY COOPER
Governor

MICHAEL S. REGAN
Secretary

STEPHEN W. MURPHEY
Director

FF-54-2019

PROCLAMATION

RE: STRIPED BASS RECREATIONAL – ATLANTIC OCEAN WATERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

This proclamation supersedes FF-83-2014 dated December 11, 2014. For striped bass harvested for recreational purposes from the Atlantic Ocean, it maintains the one fish daily creel limit and year-round open season and institutes a new harvest slot limit of 28 inches to less than 35 inches total length.

Stephen W. Murphey, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective at **12:01 A.M. on Wednesday, January 1, 2020**, the following provisions shall apply to the harvest of striped bass **TAKEN BY HOOK-AND-LINE OR FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN:**

I. AREA DESCRIPTION

Coastal fishing waters in the Atlantic Ocean of North Carolina out to three miles offshore.

II. RECREATIONAL SIZE AND CREEL LIMITS, SEASON, MEANS AND METHODS

- A. **It is unlawful to possess striped bass less than 28 inches in total length or greater than or equal to 35 inches in total length.**
- B. It is unlawful to possess more than one (1) striped bass taken in any one day.
- C. Striped bass may be taken seven days a week. The season is open year-round.
- D. It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale, or purchase striped bass taken by hook-and-line or with recreational commercial gear for recreational purposes.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G.S. 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52; and N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103, 03M .0202, and 03O .0500 et seq.
- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under his delegated authority pursuant to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 113-221.1(c) All persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- D. **The intent of this proclamation is to allow the recreational harvest of striped bass in the Atlantic Ocean to be in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Addendum VI to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan.**
- E. Results of the ASMFC's 2018 benchmark stock assessment indicated the Atlantic striped bass stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. Based on these findings the ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board adopted Addendum VI to Amendment 6 to the

Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan to implement measures to reduce total striped bass removals by 18% relative to 2017 levels in order to achieve the fishing mortality target in 2020.

- F. Addendum VI to Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan continues to use daily possession and size limits to manage recreational striped bass fisheries, and quotas and minimum size limits to regulate the striped bass commercial fisheries. **Striped bass taken in the Atlantic Ocean waters of North Carolina for commercial purposes will maintain the 28-inch minimum size limit and maintain harvest within the new 295,495 pound commercial quota for North Carolina.**
- G. N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0201 defines striped bass as striped bass and its hybrids.
- H. Holders of Recreational Commercial Gear Licenses or hook-and-line fishermen shall follow the size, creel, and season limits of the recreational fishery for striped bass.
- I. N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03M .0202 states that all striped bass that do not meet the size limit specified by proclamation shall immediately be returned to the waters from which taken regardless of condition.
- J. Existing Federal regulations prohibit recreational and commercial fishing for Atlantic striped bass in the Exclusive Economic Zone (3-200 miles from shore).
- K. Contact the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at <http://ncmarinefisheries.net>.
- L. **This proclamation supersedes FF-83-2014 dated December 11, 2014. For striped bass harvested for recreational purposes from the Atlantic Ocean waters of North Carolina, it maintains the one fish daily creel limit and year-round open season, and institutes a new harvest slot limit of 28 inches to less than 35 inches total length.**

By: 
Stephen W. Murphey, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

December 19, 2019
3:00 P.M.