

STRIPED BASS

Albemarle Sound Management Area (ASMA)/Roanoke River Management Area (RRMA)

(06/09 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status - *Viable* – The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Juvenile abundance indices continue to be around the average observed since the stocks were declared recovered in 1997. 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.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1999-2008 – 208,266 lbs./\$317,787 (quota managed)

2008 Commercial Landings and Value – 74,926 lbs./\$167,760 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings 1999-2008 – ASMA – 69,483 lbs (quota managed)
RRMA – 86,506 lbs (quota managed)

2008 Recreational Landings – ASMA – 31,628 lbs (quota managed)
RRMA – 32,725 lbs (quota managed)

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

Average Recreational Commercial Gear License (RCGL) Landings 2002-2008 – 2,364 lbs.,
2008 – 1,578 lbs.

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. Revision of the current N.C. Striped Bass FMP began in July 2008. An updated stock assessment is currently being conducted with data through 2008.

Research and Data Needs – Update maturation schedule, release mortality estimates for various gears, and age-1 abundance estimates.

Current Regulations – ASMA – Recreational; 18 inches minimum TL coastal, joint and inland waters, 3 fish daily creel limit. Commercial; 18 inches minimum TL and daily landing limit set by proclamation. Annual commercial quota set at 275,000 lbs. RRMA – 18 inches minimum TL and no striped bass between 22 and 27 inches in Roanoke River. Two fish daily creel limit and only 1 fish in daily creel may be greater than 27 inches TL recreational. RRMA closed to commercial harvest.

Harvest Season – ASMA – Spring (January 1 – April 30); Fall (October 1 – December 31) recreational. Spring (January 1 – April 30); Fall (October 1 – November 30) commercial.
RRMA – March 1 – April 30.

Size and Age at Maturity – males: 12 – 18 inches/2 – 3 years. females: 18 – 24 inches/3 – 6 years.

Historical and Current Maximum Age – 29 years/ 18 years

Juvenile Abundance Index 1999 – 2008 - 12.4, **2008** – 6.6

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](#).