



Stripers Forever 2009 Annual Fishing Survey Results

In 2009 we utilized Survey Monkey software, and its superior approach helped us gather 906 surveys, by far the greatest number since we began in 2003. We had double digit returns from most states from NC to ME, with over 100 each from MA, NJ, ME and for the first time RI. We believe that this year's survey has again produced a good representative sampling of sentiments from fishers all along the striper's migratory range. We will send this information to the press and to fishery policy makers everywhere. We hope that you will use it personally, and that you will share it with your local club or fishing organization to advocate for the goal of coast-wide striped bass game fish.

The complete Excel spreadsheet of *Survey Totals* is also attached to this same web page. Another document entitled *Key Comparisons* can be found there also along with the actual survey.

Here is a summary of the answers by question #.

2, 3. About 58% of respondents fish predominately from a boat and about 34% mostly from shore. We had some difficulty quantifying the years of experience question which we will fix next year, but it appears that our survey is still predominately made up of experienced fishers.

4. A record 69% of the anglers in 2009 indicated that the quality of fishing for stripers was worse or much worse – up from 59% in 2008. Only 15% felt that it was improved, compared to 21% in 2008. It should be noted that the meaning of “quality” is quite subjective.

5. As to the size of the stripers being caught, 51% reported the average size of the stripers they caught was smaller, compared to 28% seeing an increase.

6. Last year the percentage of anglers reporting catching fewer fish per hour jumped to an alarming 66%. In 2009 this number grew to 72%. Only 7% of anglers reported they caught more fish. Fishermen in every state along the coast report a decline in the number of fish caught.

7. Members who said that they were equally or more inclined to take guided trips dropped further to 44% from last year's previous low of 51%. This should be another reason for fishery managers to take this situation very seriously.

8, 9, 10. 72% of responding anglers felt that a small fish should be allowed for food. Of those, 67% felt that it should be offered instead of a larger fish. These responses were virtually the same as in 2008.

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11, 12. Support for a slot limit to take the pressure off large breeders remained about the same at 75%. Members in every state widely favored a slot limit in our survey. Interestingly, the slot limit was most popular in Maine, the only coastal state that allows anglers to keep a small striper, instead of forcing fishermen to kill a breeding age female if they want to keep a fish to eat.

13. The mission of Stripers Forever – to achieve game fish status for striped bass -- is frequently challenged by those who claim that our real goal is to give all the fish presently caught by the commercial fishery to the recreational sector; the “quota grab” accusation. The results from every one of our seven annual member surveys show just how wrong that interpretation is. 83% of those surveyed want at least half of the commercial catch reserved for conservation and not assigned to increased recreational bag limits.

14, 15. The use of a stamp to buy out the commercial fishery was favored by 69% of respondents, down slightly from 2008. This may be due to the upcoming requirement for either a state or federal salt water license beginning in 2010.

Guides Section

This year we received surveys from a record 82 guides. Unfortunately 69% of them report that their businesses have been adversely affected by the smaller number of striped bass generally available. Fishery managers, are you listening? These are good sustainable jobs that can be maintained through the ups and downs of the population cycle with catch and release fishing.

Other Comments

We received a variety of comments that can be read on the second tab of the *Survey Totals* Excel spreadsheet. Comments made repeatedly included: put an end to the commercial fishery, use more “fish-friendly” tackle like circle hooks; and adopt management measures to take the pressure off larger striped bass.

Question # and answer ME NH MA RI CT NY NJ PA DE MD VA NC SC totals % of responses

**Personal use angler's section
State of the Fishery 2009**

1. What state	107	10	213	103	51	94	182	15	38	38	16	20	19	906		
2. I fish from a boat what percentage of the time.																
<25%	31	5	63	35	12	40	56	6	17	6	3	7	10	291	36	
25 - 49	7	1	17	5	2	6	14	0	2	2	1	1	0	58	7	
50-74	4	0	19	3	5	3	10	0	1	2	0	2	0	49	6	
>75%	67	4	90	50	30	33	73	5	13	28	10	10	8	421	52	819
3. I have fished regularly for stripers for this many years.																
<5 years																
5-9 years																
>10																
4. In my opinion striper fishing in the past five years has changed as follows:																
much worse	68	2	54	16	5	18	17	2	8	6	2	6	10	214	24	
worse	34	7	93	49	23	49	77	8	14	19	7	8	5	393	45	
same	2	0	30	12	9	15	41	3	11	9	3	2	1	138	16	
improved somewhat	3	1	15	21	10	9	37	1	4	2	3	3	3	112	13	
improved greatly	0	0	2	3	2	1	8	1	1	1	1	0	0	20	2	877
5. The average size of the stripers that I catch now has changed as follows:																
much smaller	18	2	32	12	11	19	26	3	5	4	1	2	2	137	16	
somewhat smaller	29	6	70	35	16	39	66	5	14	14	4	12	3	313	35	
no change	16	2	37	22	9	19	46	3	12	12	3	2	3	186	21	
somewhat larger	40	0	49	29	12	13	40	4	6	7	5	4	10	219	25	
much larger	2	0	11	3	2	2	4	0	1	0	2	0	1	28	3	883
6. The number of stripers I catch per hour of fishing time on the water is:																
many fewer	79	5	71	32	8	28	41	5	17	9	6	6	7	314	35	
fewer	23	5	82	41	23	40	72	4	6	15	2	2	8	323	37	
about the same	4	0	33	21	14	16	47	4	9	11	6	6	3	174	19	
more	1	0	10	8	4	4	16	1	4	2	2	2	1	55	6	
many more	0	0	1	0	1	2	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	11	1	877
7. Because of the changes in the striped bass fishery my inclination to take a professionally guided striped bass trip has changed as follows:																
less likely	66	7	98	55	27	50	99	8	19	20	13	10	10	482	56	
about the same	35	2	88	38	20	39	60	5	15	14	1	9	6	332	38	
more likely	4	1	8	8	3	4	19	0	1	2	2	0	2	54	6	868
<i>Bag and size limit</i>																
8. Forgetting for a moment current striped bass regulations, and starting with a clean sheet, I think that recreational anglers should be able to keep at least one school striper (possibly different from state to state, but probably between 18 and 28 inches in length) per day for personal consumption.																
yes	72	6	135	74	30	64	139	12	29	32	14	13	13	633	72	
no	31	4	64	28	20	29	39	3	9	6	2	6	5	246	28	879

9. If you answered yes to #8, should this smaller fish be allowed instead of, or in addition to, a bass of some larger size?															
instead of	64	6	108	46	23	50	68	5	16	18	7	10	11	432	67
in addition to	12	0	29	30	7	18	73	7	14	14	7	3	3	217	33
10. If you answered no to #8 what should the minimum size be?															
28	14	5	50	25	13	21	40	2	10	13	1	5	1	200	63
32	7	1	16	3	4	3	8	1	1	1	1	1	2	49	15
36	7	1	11	7	6	10	5	0	0	0	0	3	1	51	16
40	7	0	5	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	19	6
10. Do you think we should have a slot limit for recreationally caught stripers?															
yes	87	8	147	73	31	66	135	9	25	22	15	12	15	645	75
no	15	2	51	28	16	24	41	6	13	16	1	6	2	221	25
12. Slot preference															
20-26	55	2	56	24	7	15	33	1	4	10	4	5	8	224	35
22-28	21	3	41	22	13	24	64	5	15	5	6	4	4	227	35
24-30	12	3	37	27	13	28	40	3	11	8	5	3	3	193	30
13. When commercial fishing is ended, what percentage of the current commercial quota should be saved from harvest as a conservation buffer? The rest would be used to liberalize the recreational harvest. 25%, 50%, 75%, 100%															
0%															
25%	13	0	38	17	6	16	31	2	4	8	3	3	3	144	17
50	36	3	48	33	18	30	69	6	15	13	4	5	9	289	34
75	18	2	19	16	7	14	28	4	11	6	1	3	1	130	15
100%	39	4	84	31	18	30	42	3	7	11	6	8	4	287	34
14. Would you favor legislation that creates a striped bass stamp costing between \$10.00 and \$25.00 per year with the funds earmarked to buyout the current commercial fishery?															
yes	76	8	141	64	31	63	111	9	28	30	11	15	13	600	69
no	26	1	59	36	19	30	66	6	10	8	5	4	4	274	31
15. If you answered yes to #15, should this stamp program end after a fixed number of years, or should the fee continue to fund enforcement and striped bass enhancement programs?															
end	24	2	54	23	10	20	36	1	8	11	3	2	5	199	33
continue	50	6	92	44	22	46	77	8	20	19	8	13	8	413	67
16. My personal comments on striped bass management that you have not covered are? See sheet #2.															
Guides Section															
17. How has your guiding business for striped bass changed because of the fishery in the last five years?															
worsened considerably	8		10	2	0	0	5		2	4				31	38
worsened a little	3		7	4	2	2	5			1		1		25	31
not changed	2	1	5	1	3	0	4		2			1		19	23
imporved somewhat						1	4			0	1			6	7
improved a great deal										1				1	1
18. How important is keeping a striped bass to your clients?															
not very important	9		12	3	2	1	3		1	2				33	42
somewhat important	3	1	5	3	2	1	5			0	1			21	27
very important			4	1	1	1	8		1	6		2		24	31

19. How important to your clients is catching a lot of stripers per trip?														
not very important				0	0	1	4			0			5	6
somewhat important	9		13	2	4	2	7		1	3	1	1	43	56
very important	3	1	8	5	1	0	5		1	4		1	29	38
20. How important is catching a really large striper to your clients?														
not very important	1		3	0	0	1	2			1			8	11
somewhat important	6		11	4	4	1	8		1	4	1	1	41	55
very important	5	1	5	3	1	1	6		1	3			26	34
21. Which is more important to my clients, catching big fish or catching a lot of fish?														
big fish	5	1	9	3	2	0	7		1	0			28	38
many fish	6		11	4	3	3	9		1	7		2	46	62
22. I am more likely than I was 5 years ago to make new investments in equipment for my striped bass guiding business?														
yes	2		3	2	1	2	6			2	1		19	24
no	10	1	18	5	4	1	10		2	6		2	59	76

23. My comments as to how the management of striped bass is affecting my guiding business:

See Comments Tab.

both my state DNR and Federal agencies continue to exhibit a pro commercial attitude towards striped bass and still fail to acknowledge the economic benefits of recreational fisheries.

it stinks

fish this year were skinniest ever: many summer fish had lesions. Ocean run fish healthier but fewer

Test

The slot limit is better decided on by those who know more than I do. My answer is a guess based on the age and growth of breeding stock.

I will pay for a license but I want a strong voice towards regulations for gamefish and forage fish (bunker herring harvesting)

Generally speaking, there seem to be fewer fish but larger on average. This does not bode well for the future. For what it is worth I am a fly fisherman focused on the flats.

One thing to consider, in my situation I had time to target the prime time in my area but I did not notice as many small fish, ROCK ON GUYS, GOOD JOB!!!

regulations for the entire east coast, charter boats and party boats are killing too many big fish and 2 fish per angler is too many. we need serious help, before I started fishing a few years ago there were a ton of fish in B-Pool, now there are close to none unless you are chasing them in a boat.

Now that we have purchased a Saltwater License we expect, or should I say hope to see more enforcement of poachers and benefits to the fishery.

We had a strange year on Cape Cod. The spring fishing was phenomenal. We caught many, many striped bass over 28". The troubling thing was that there were very few fish under 28" and almost no fish under 24".

In the fall things were very different. The fishing was terrible. We have never seen such bad striped bass fishing. During the period from the end of the second week in September through the beginning of October we caught hardly any striped bass and not many blue fish. We normally do extremely well this time of year. This was not simply a decline, it was a plunge.

My network of fishermen think that in addition to the commercial fishing problem, the number of fish caught by recreational anglers in Massachusetts is too high. It used to be one per person until about four years ago. It should go back to one per person. We also question giving the commercial fisherman as a class anything. We have no problem with people who really rely on fishing as their primary income to be paid something but the other bandits who do this should get nothing. It is no coincidence that the two days in MA that commercial guys cannot fish are Monday and Friday. If they were really doing this as their primary source of a living, why do they not work on Monday and Friday and work on weekends. I avoid the Cape after July 1 but the commercial guys are notoriously aggressive and rude on the water. I heard many stories about the madness at Race this early summer when there was a huge school of stripers that these people decimated. They were out there in large numbers making it very hard for recreational people who want to fish with some kind of civility forced off the water.

The slot should be smaller than the options that you offered - say - 24" - 26"

Recreational take should be reduced to one fish per day.

No commercial fishing period.

its tearable

All the large breeders should be left to do their job and increase the numbers of bass.

an open season on seals would be good

Make striped bass a game fish only!!!

We have to look for ways to lessen the number of short fish that die during release

Hi Brad, Unless some serious steps are made to curtail the destructive by-catch issues, lack of bait fish and the commercial high grading we'll be back to the 70's soon if not worse. Ron

I would like to see a bag limit of one fish per man per day with no closed season.

End commercial fishing for striped bass. Commercial fisherman fish a species until there is no species.

Something needs to be done to protect this valuable resource. Commercial fishing is killing it as it has for Cod and any number of other species.

we need to also manage their food - ie menhaden. I also favor catch and release until we have reliable evidence the fishery has recovered sufficiently to sustain itself and recreational limits.

Get all states on the same page. What do we do about this disease ????????????????

Striped bass mngmt in Mass is Mismanagement!! Allowing commercials to take only big fish (females, breeders) is not sensible.

I would not favor a striped bass stamp unless it was assured that the commercial fishery had been outlawed. Also there needs to be an assurance that all monies collected are used solely to promote the striped bass fishery and cannot be used for anything else.

There is no reason to commercially fish stripers. They are one of the easiest fish to farm and they can be raised in fresh water anywhere in the country.

I keep no stripers I catch! , but have no objection to keeping an occasional fish for the table. I believe if we went from 2 to 1 fish per day , it will not only keep the folks eating them happy, but should stabilize this steady decline we seem to be in!

WHAT MANAGEMENT? IT'S A JOKE

regs should be 1 fish 28 or under and 1 fish 28 or larger, with 1 trophy tag per year.

WHY is thier a commercial quota

N.J. does not allow commercial fishing Delete the quota And make it two fish 28" and end the debate.

You know and i know filling out forms on how many fish you catch will be false info .

the recreational fisherman needs too less greeder

Having a bonus tag from a quota that will allow comercial fisherman a step to have it implimented

is all that that quota is for DO away with it.

end of problem.

no commercial fishing or sale of striped bass

I catch and release exclusively. Would like to see the rec catch reduced significantly, especially the largest fish.

The last three autumn seasons have been awful. No bait and no migratory stripe bass to speak of.

I support making stripers a game fish only.

this Government needs to make the Striped Bass a game fish, not ruin America with the Health Care Bill from the idiots on Capitol hill

Use the stamp money to enforce it

After averaging 3-4 fish per hour and 400-500 fish per 7 week Maine coast season. I caught 200 fish 2 seasons ago, 8 1 season ago, a none last season

Institute a tag system, whereby each angler receives 4 tags per season, with an opportunity to purchase more as needed, with all funding going back into striped bass stock management, buying out commercial licenses, and habitat enhancement/restoration (both for striped bass and the forage base).

Reduce possession to 2 per week not per day. Cut commercial harvest by half.

The ending of commercial fishing is long overdue.If it is not stopped soon,there maybe no fish like there was in the early part of this centry.The fish cannot breed faster than the newer electronics are finding & netting them.If something isn't done soon,there might not be any fish left for anyone to catch....Get it through someones head,commercial fishing can't last for ever.What are they going to do when there is no fish left to catch?

Enough with all this government influence on the fishery front.If their not a part of a solution,their part of the problem.

The numbers of small fish were a little better this year, but the larger fish are not there. I personally saw or heard third hand of some very weird striped bass this year...ones with pug noses, fish with red sores and a bass that looked hybrid with a weakfish.

I would truly love for the striped bass to be a game fish, but most likely that would never happen. Money has everything to do with it.

I feel we should go for a goal more obtainable, like strickly limiting large bass kept. Heck, that was hard for me to write. I want them to be a game fish...Period!

Abolish the NJ bonus tag.

Prohibit taking breeding sows in the spring via a slot limit.

Keep the EEZ status as is.

I think stock studies should be based on the most accurate information that can be supplied. I understand that is in the hands of the MRIP now but that should be heavily policed by us fishermen to insure against political posturing and eco groups that do not have the interests in mind they were supposed to be working for.

I would also like to see readily updated and more easily accessible and centrally located studies information in the future. Right now it is much too difficult to piece together past studies with newer studies when you have to do an hours worth of research to find what you're looking for.

The methods for estimating population and harvest are too inaccurate.

last two years have been awful for rec. fishing of stripers

Gamefish status is a waste of time. Please focus on the real issue, which is the current unsustainable rec. harvest. Anything else is a distraction, and only serves to prolong the wait until we can get sensible management and start the recovery.

I support efforts to protect and preserve striped bass forage, including specifically menhaden

Rec. fishery needs to address excessive mortality both limits and c&r

make all states the same rules!

there are not enough stripers left for any quota. Commercial bass fishermen have raped this fishery twice in my lifetime. I owe them nothing.

get rid of the salt water liscense fee none of the money will be used for the fishery.

fishing stinks

In new york boaters can takt two fish per trip. some of these boats are taking 2 or 3 trips per day.

they are taking to many fish. They shoukl only be able to take one fish per person not two.

Get an independent committe to manage the Stripe Bass Program. Get the Government out of it.

The pogie population is taking a huge hit from the commercial bass fishery. Several of my buddies who are commercial striper fishermen are purchasing \$200-\$300 worth of FRESH pogies a day during the season. Multiply that by the number of days, and the number of fisherman and you have a HUGE amount of pogies being harvested, as well as bass.

GOOD LUCK

I fish 99% of the time in the surf. I teach surf fishing in Adult Ed. Spent over five weeks at Montauk this year. Put in locally, southshore LI a lot of time. This has been the worst year ever worst then the early 80's. I have not taken a bass over 15 lbs at this year.

The current management scheme is clearly unsustainable. There should be a single standard for the entire striper coast. The standard should allow anglers to keep one fish per day in a narrow slot of 20-24" All larger fish should be released. If this is not possible, only one true trophy fish per year over 50" should be allowed, and these fish should have to be reported and tagged in a way similar to deer and some west coast salmon fisheries. In-line full circle hooks (not octopus-style hooks with a curved in point) should be required for still fishing natural bait. Exceptions might be allowable for natural baits fished like lures, ex. rigged eels. I would designate the striped bass as a protected game fish; no commercial take whatsoever, but permit one bass per angler per day within a slot limit targeted at protecting breeding fish. I think that is 22" to 28" but would look to informed opinion on this one. Question no. 6 should be irrelevant; the amount of fish saved form commercial harvest should have nothing to do with the permitted recreational harvest. That regulation should be revisited annually; if the fishery improves the recreational take can be increased and perhaps, at some point, commercial activity might resume.

Smaller fish are better eating!

Striper fishing has gone from 30-40 catch and release fish per day to 1-2 both 2008 & 2009

I think the idea of allowing anglers to keep larger fish could be done through a trophy tag that would need to be affixed to any fish that is over a specified length.

Let's give the Striped Bass sport fishing only status and end commercial fishing for them.

a wonderful specimen, tasty too

Keep up the great work!

NO

STOP COMMERCIAL FISHING

I am a fishing guide in NJ one fish per angler a day with a smaller size limit to protect breeding stock. Some sort of trophy system to allow for record fish. The way it is now too many breeders are killed each year. Believe the big problem today is the bait fish. Seem to see less and less bait in the last 5 years. With this year being the worst and no one seems interested in finding the cause. We should Have a Slot limit Like Maine Does.. Enough Said.

I actually live in England but the adres part of this survey would not allow my details to go in so I put the adress that I stay when I come over to fish for striped bass, which is regularly.

Let's protect the lager (breeder) fish.

No Commercial Fishing For Stripers

Make Stripers a game fish with no commercial fishing.

To many fish being caught now it takes 7 years for a bass to get to 28", gone in an instant!

Striped Bass size limits should be down sized for a period of time to get a larger sized fish population back.

The size of the Stripers my self and friends are catching has dropped and the number as well. I believe in Catch and release I keep may be 2 fish a year. They are always at the 28 to 30 inch mark.

Leave the big ones for fun and future breeding stock!

Thanks for making a difference

Manage and protect the river herring fishery to maximize striped bass forage.

There is a dearth of school fish under 25". That having been said, I would have to rate my year as a B+ for number of fish over 28" but on average the fish were slightly smaller than the previous years and the fall run was the worse I've ever experienced.

Very interesting year. Caught my personay best (from surf) but many fewer fish...

The fishery is recovered. Liberalize the recreational limits.

Make it a GAME FISH

In addition to better fishery management for striped bass, we also have to take action to ensure that the bait fish on which they feed, herring, menhaden, and a host of other species are protected. If the food source for bass continues to decline, nothing will save this fishery!

Commercial Striped bass fishery needs to end in Massachusetts

Eliminate the commercial harvest!

Protect the bait fish. Help nature to restore a natural balance. use common sense, don't trust scientist numbers. they have a job to do. Here in Maine the slot limit targets small bass on cut bait, often hauled on to bridges and docks and killed in the process. You can't feed your family with a 20" schoolie. I see the dead bass downstream from the bridges. drb

Require fish over 39" to be thrown back

Keep the funds generated by licenses or stamps out of the "general" fund (budget) - it should be dedicated to conservation too many big females are being caught & kept, need maximum size limit to protect some of big breeders only 1 fish per day over certain size

Better enforcement of areas in the state that are well known for people taking shorts.

need more EPOs

I would be in favor of a stamp if the funds would just be allocated to protection of spawning and nursery areas such as the Chesapeake bay area.

The trick is make sure the funds are used where they are earmarked and not siphoned off into a general fund.

I would like to see any licensing fees cover, in addition to general enforcement and enhancement programs, research on micobateriosis. I also would like to see some of this money go toward 'artificial' spawning (stocking) help in years when the trend of three previous years' spawning success has taken a sharp downturn.

I know this about the stripers, but I haven't fished at all this year & hardly at all last year. I'm tired of the legall crap & increasing regs. recreational gets slammed while the comercial gets away clean. The only way I will still saltwater fish (license) is if they have just 1 license for salt=no stamps & they use the monies to buy out the comercial fisherman like they did in Florida. I personally think everyone should not put another penny into the sport until something is done. are tax dollar should be worth something & where are tax dollar from this sport should go where it does the best good for the fish & the recreational angler.

stop commercial fishing

The striped bass fishing this year was awful. We do not need a slot, we need a 2 sizeover/under size. Just to pick numbers, under 24 goes back, and over 36 goes back. Way too many of the cows are being taken. Why in the world would anybody consider buying out an industry, through a government controlled sportsman's fund? What you are proposing here is private funding, because our state and federal governments won't act.

the fall run here has just started and so far its excellent

If Politicians have anything to do with the enhancement program, the fund would probably get lost in the sauce. Just like lottery taxes.

Let's also consider mgmt of prey species and habitat when strategizing how best to conserve the striped bass population.

Take the government out of the picture and the rest will take care of it self--

The menhaden reduction industry lands 96% of their catch as pre-spawn menhaden 2 yrs old and under. That size is the same size that is needed by striped bass as forage. Over half of the striped bass in the Chesapeake have myco which could be a result of less availability of forage. We have noticed a marked reduction of the menhaden schools and striped bass schools in the last three years.

stop commercial waste of striped bass

The EEZ should be opened to fishing once the stock is healthy again.

The ocean herring fishery not only devastated the anadromous herring stock but impacts striped bass forage.

The menhaden reduction fishery has a devastating impact on the striped bass particularly in the Chesapeake.

I have been out on head boats for stripers for 5 years now and every trip only 2 or 3 fish are caught. I'd say there is a problem.

Massachusetts is a huge problem with the under the table commercial (recreational) fishery scam!

It should not be under control of the Commerce Department

Stripers Forever must be fully supported! Their excellent efforts are paying dividends.

In NY there have been reports of boat owners giving their recreational tags to netters. There needs to be more policing and enforcement.

Make barbed hooks illegal. All live bait hooks should be circle hooks.

Slot limits can be disasters for weak year classes unless the minimum slot is at least the same length as current min. size. Few seem to grasp this.

I surf fish. I do not fish from a boat.

I release all stripers

CURRENT REGS NEED BETTER ENFORCEMENT AND "RECREMERICAL" LOOP HOLES NEED CLOSING.

More needs to be done to stop commercial by-catch of striped bass, particularly during migration periods. Further, more needs to be done to limit commercial fishing of the bait species to stop depletion of the biomass from which stripers feed (this includes herring and menhaden).

I would permit a slot fish and another over 28". I would not permit the harvesting of the big breeder fish.

STRIPEERS NEED TO BE CLASSIFIED AS A GAME FISH, BUNKER NETTING BY COMMERCIAL BOATS FOR A PROFIT SHOULD ALSO BE STOPPED.

As someone who experienced the dramatic decline of the striper fishery in the seventies and eighties I implore the fishery managers to err on the side of conservation and extend fishing restrictions to the various bait fish that stripers feed on.

It's totally out of control. Striped bass are the only remaining species that are being managed for Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY).

All other species are being managed on a much different scale by all Councils.

If #7 is legislative and is passed into law it will never be repealed.

we should end menhaden netting to help the striped bass feed and help the bay

Establish a game fish status with a stamp program that would provide funds earmarked directly for preservation and restoration.

Most fishermen would likely support licensing, stamp, etc if money generated were used as support for the education and conservation of the striped bass fishery and not disappearing into the general fund. This way the fishery would be in alignment with the Magnuson Stevens Act and the Striped Bass would not experience cycles of depletion.

We must end commercial fishing for striped bass. Stripers are a sport fish, exclusively

Management leans toward commercial interests. Measures are not conservative enough. It's better to err on the fish's side rather than on commercial interests. This is happening in all fishery management areas. The minority seems to be served better than the majority. This is despite the fact that recreational fishermen pump much more money into the economy.

2 things will save this fishery. 1. Institute a slot program, 1 fish limit. 2. end commercial fishing.

The fishing is worse each succeeding year.

Game Fish in VA, MD, Mass

We continue to kill very large spawner stripers every year. Soon we will crash the spawning cycle.

it is my opinion that it is not the recreational fishing that has depleted the striper stock but the high quotas along with the fact that the quotas are not policed. coupled with that commercial fishermen are allowed what is called COINCIDENTAL CATCH which all but eliminates any quotas. although I believe people have a right to earn a living something needs to be done to slow down the commercial impacted on stripers. I don't agree with the \$10.00 fee because we know the gov. will spend that money wrong

thanks for all you guys do

Guy

It is nonsense to allow the taking of PCB laden stripers that can keep the species going instead of some healthy to eat 18 to 24 inchers.

End commercial fishing completely. Where I live in Southern Maryland a group of commercial fish poachers were fined over 100K dollars and jailed. These people are ruining our recreational fishery. They need to be stopped.

end all commercial striped bass harvesting

Commercial fishing for striped bass should be suspended indefinitely for the time being .

#6) save 100% of the commercial harvest, until the stocks have rebounded to an "acceptable" level and then explore a more responsible recreational harvest.

Stripers also need to be better protected from illegal commercial harvest.

End all commercial striped bass and shad harvest until populations rebound

Fishing was very poor for me this year

Commercial fishing for striped bass has to end. All states need to be on the "same page!"

There should be no commercial fishing of striped bass.

I'd like to see a moratorium put on all harvesting of striped bass until their spawning are recovered to the point where we are seeing historic numbers of young of the year striped bass.

Boat fishing was great this year. Beach fishing has been dismal. The worst Oct. I can remember in 20 years

I think the commercial fishing for striped bass should be outlawed and marked as a gamefish for recreation fishermen and woman only. I believe there should be a slot limit of 1 fish per day, 25 inches to 32 or up to 35.

Make it a game fish

do away with commercial striped bass fishing ASAP

Save the bait fish! Trophy fish can be kept is there is a slot limit.

Safety or health precautions regarding the identifying of sick bass.

keep fighting to protect the stripers

the commercial druggers and netters should be subject to the same rules as us. 2 or 3 fish per person a day. otherwise I feel segregated against

We need to go back to the 36" size limit here in New York, we are catching very little fish or very big fish. It looks like a whole class year is missing in the population.

Save big bass, as I have always felt that "Big Bass Breed Big Bass"

I'd pay a for a license if it helped. I think enforcement would help. I see a lot of shorts taken.

There just seem to be no more small fish. No Bunker minnow either.

This needs to be a priority, especially in my state of Md.

Yes, They (management) should have equal distribution of representative on the board of Directors from the Recreational and Commercial sectors. Right now it seems to be one sided on the Commercial sector....

Even though I fish here in Texas some of the same things apply. We have a strong striper population in Lake Texoma and I fish below the dam. The problem I've noticed is a lot of the quality fish are being kept so some conservation measures are in order here. We don't have a commercial fishing problem here but need stronger regulations and enforcement. A lot of the questions on this survey would apply here too. A lot of us flyfish and practice 100% catch and release.

any bass over 25 lbs should be released back to the water, charter boat keep 2 fish each man and their killing all the 30 to 50 lb breeders. if they want to show a fish they caught let them take a digital picture. keep bass 10 to 20 lb to eat. also stop the stupid gill netting off the beaches of Long Island.

Dis-Ban commercial fishing for the striped bass completely.

Recreational fishermen are currently taking way too many large striped bass. Ending all Chesapeake Bay commercial fishing should also be a goal.

Every year we see less and smaller striped bass. I used to catch as much as 25 per night. (catch and Release) now I cannot even catch 25 in two weeks time, and the ones we do catch can be from 10" to 16" with an occasional one in the 20's we have only caught 1 to 2 keepers per month in the back bays and ocean front.

commercial fishing for stripers should be halted for at least 5 years and dep enforcement of existing laws i.e. size limits and fishing licenses should be ramped up substantially. Most of us have seen under sized fish being kept time and time, mostly by shore fishing hispanics, most of whom are here illegally, I'd presume.

PREFER MANDATORY CATCH AND RELEASE FOR MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS. NO COMMERCIAL QUOTA!

I would ignore my responses as being not statistically significant and more tinged with emotion than science.

I'm appalled at the dropoff in the fishing. In the past two years, it has (almost) not been worth going out (if the whole experience weren't so pleasant, even with no fish to be caught). The past five years have seen a steady and dramatic decline in numbers of fish available in the estuary where I do most of my fishing.

enforce punitive damages on commercial selling of fish at the three mile line. JAIL them and sell the ship.

The numbers of all age classes are much lower in the past few years. Fly fishing the reliable rivers and estuaries has been worse each year. The fish are threatened from so many different problems such as pollution, diseases such as Microbiosis, natural predators, etc., lets at least take one out of the picture - the commercial fishery. Fishing on the Kennebec in the Augusta area has declined so drastically that I no longer seek guide service.

Striped bass are game fish

Do away with so-called pinhookers that catch way too many stripers especially those that use other peoples' licenses to catch stripers. It's outrageous what goes on at Montauk, N.Y. These people sell to all the restaurants in Montauk, and I'm sure, don't report a penny of it. Their greed is sickening.

CURRENT regulations is removing too many prime spawners. There should be SLOT but also should be an attempt to maintain a strong population of spawners by blocking out bass of 30-36"

bottom line 1 slot size fish and 1 fish over 36"

slot limits are the way to go save the breeding stock and limit guides to 1-2 fish per trip change

Mass guides limits

If you have the Conservation stamp, I would buy it if it was similar to the federal duck stamp, but not to pay off commercial interest.

What they are doing is wrong and we are not going to pay them to stop. We have a far better use for that money.

Stop commercial fishing now. Increase enforcement. Shorten their season

I strongly support: 1 slot limits for bass (makes scientific sense), 2 elimination of commercial bass fishing and menhaden reduction harvest (these industries are no longer needed – commercial bass via aquaculture, bunker products via fish parts and other chemical processing), 3 funding for targeted angler education and enforcement of recreational regulations.

This survey is better than last years, which was very slanted towards your organization's objective, but still there are some very leading questions. I truly believe that there can be a balance between recreational and commercial fishing, what we need is better management of the fishery, over all. Especially the commercial take, but recreational fisherman take far too many fish as well. 2 fish is too many. A slot limit is a good thing, Maine has this, NH and MA do not. Anyway, to the question of whether the fishing is better or worse, I would answer "different". There are still fish around, but the patterns change year to year... Do there seem to be less fish, yes, I think perhaps, but I still catch plenty, so its hard to answer that.

What management?

There needs to be a stronger correlation to fishery health and commercial quota adjustment. The Chesapeake fishery is not healthy and yet the quotas are virtually unchanged. Those commercial quota benefiting from that fishery should be cut to at least 50% until the fishery rebounds.

Every day you hear on the radio "so called" sportsmen catching and keeping fish well beyond the 3 mile limit. Then they broadcast to all their friends where they were/are so more "sportsmen can reap the illegal fish. Maybe a strong fine, if caught, would help.

I read a lot online, and current observations among fishermen show the population is in serious decline. End commercial and recreational harvesting of bass for a few years. Yes, I mean we should begin a moratorium against killing bass for at least 3 years.

We need to find a way to influence ASMFC members from NY, etc. They continue to support commercial interests beyond any reason or common sense.

Same ole same ole, The recreational sector gets pummeled, while the Comm sector kills bass as by-catch..

Make it consistent along the eastern seaboard

all "game fish" such as stripers and tuna should be regulated to be recreational only or have lower commercial quotas as well as have annual quotas per angler for fish in the 28"-38" range, larger fish shouldn't have that same quota as most of them are not in good enough condition to swim again after a good fight or being foul hooked.

game fish status

rec only 1 fish a day 36"

for many years not just long enough to see changed numbers

stripers can be farmed for food in fresh water so commercials should give up there jobs

dragners netters need to be stopped

party/charter boats shouldn't be allowed more than 1 fish per customer 36+

I am concerned that the combined commercial and recreational fishermen again are overharvesting the population of striped bass. Also, we need better monitoring and enforcement of commercial fishermen who violate harvest laws. This has been a particular problem in Maryland.

by-catch enforcement; ecosystem management to focus more on availability of food for striped bass (menhaden, small baits, water quality)

I hope Geico doesn't sue you for using their "so ez a caveman could do it" line. :-)

we need CONSISTENT management in all coastal waters, and we need to protect the bait that stripers eat....elimination of bycatch from the trawlers would be nice, too

If my state did not already increase all license fees a minimum of 100% for 2010 I would agree to the Stamp Concept, However between me and my son, The cost of hunting and fishing licenses, permits, tags etc.... has gotten way out of hand in CT.

Current Recreational Fishing regulations should not be altered.

I would like to see an upper size limit, where fish over say 40 inches must be released.

I think the stamp idea is a good one, but not more than \$7-10. The stamp idea should continue, and perhaps should consider encompassing other programs, such as controlling the menhaden catch in Chesapeake Bay on which the stripers feed.

On catch, I used to catch and release about 75 to 100 mostly school stripers (16-22 inches) per year in my area. In the last 2 years, I caught zero. Of course after a while of no fish, your fishing effort goes down during the season, so this may have had an impact.

The change however is pretty dramatic.

not sure on 6, 7, 8

There should be increased monitoring of by-catch and definitely an investigation into the effects of the bunker/pogie/menhaden fishery on striped bass populations.

More should also be done to protect the forage fish for striped bass so they have plenty of food. This improves reproduction and survival.

LARGE FISH ARE FULL OF EGGS. SHOULD KEEP SMALL STRIPERS NOT LARGE ONES. LET THEM SPONE. LIMIT CATCH TO 15" TO 24".

7 only if the stamp ends when the buy out is complete

If we are truly a "United States" then regulations should be applied to all ocean states instead of having each state deciding on its own

It is not managed it is mismanaged, just like the rest of the fisheries. Name a species that is not in trouble and that will tell you the success rate of fishery management!

I miss the good old days
currently it stinks
recreational fishermen should be limited to one fish per week. who eats striped bass 7 days a week? it's piggy and wasteful to allow any more than that.
The striped bass should only be a game fish. No netting at all. Striped bass can be raised for commercial use.
catch and release only
find a way to stop commercial netting of Menhaden

and by catch, put a stop to the long line netting, and extend the international fishing border to much farther out
stop commercial fishing for striped bass

I fish less with guides not because of management policies but rather the cost of a charter
it is poor. Biased toward Commercial industry. Kills too many breeder sized fish. Stripers should be a game fish on the entire US Coast.

The numbers are falling in striped bass I believe because the big bass that are most vital to breeding are being targeted more aggressively. The slot requirement is a must to see the restoration of the fishery, because I don't believe the numbers are where they should be.

it doesn't matter, nobody listens anyway

I answered yes to the stamp, but coming from Jersey I am extremely skeptical of money going where it is supposed to go!

some sort of conservation method needs to be utilized to bring the numbers of stripers back to where they were five or ten years ago.
take away the special license for party boats

striped bass need to be recreational only, and an injured fish should be allowed to be taken. Permits may be necessary to get honest fishermen involved, I don't think honest permitted fishermen would mutilate a Bass. Just be able to take the fish that is bleeding, gut hooked, or a treble hook in the eye as so often happens.

I'd favor a stamp if there was not a salt water fishing license.

I THINK IT IS ABHORRANT THE WAY STRIPER FISHING HAS CHANGED IN SOUTH JERSEY.....WE HAVE PEOPLE TAKING HUGE (40-50 POUNDS) COWS OUT OF THE DELAWARE BAY. THESE HONIES ARE LOADED WITH ROE.....IF YOU TAKE THE SMALLER ONES (MUCH TASTIER) RATHER THAN THE SUCCESSFUL BREEDERS, OUR NUMBERS WOULD GROW ENOUGH TO MAKE THE COMMERCIAL PEOPLE AND THE RECREATIONAL FISHERMAN HAPPY

Please pay attention to what is happening to the west coast stripers

I feel that some of the questions on the survey are "leading" in the way they are worded.

I didn't see as many schoolies this year as I have seen in the past. A slot from 28-34" would be nice. Add's a little sport while saving the larger mass producing population.

I was not in favor of increasing the recreational limit to two fish 28 or greater when enacted. Still do not favor it. Also do not see any good out of the commercial season.

All Atlantic states need to have exactly the same regulations

Follow the science

Fished a lot...in many areas from NYC to Mass.

We are in trouble.

THERE SEEMS TO GREAT NUMBERS OF SMALL FISH ALSO SEE NUMBERS OF DEAD RELEASED FISH

Anything that would discourage keeping big breeder size fish (a slot limit say) would be a great improvement

encourage catch and release, let's have some enforcement of the eez prohibition. We are way overdue

as a fly fisherman, who regularly takes out people with little striped bass flyfishing experience I tend to focus more on catching school sized bass than larger one. People certainly enjoy those blitzes of years passed that are virtually non-existent now. I have noticed a trend of smaller fish missing from both fall and spring runs, which leads me to believe that years of breeding did not take place due to the lack of 12" - 24" stripers. Most fish we caught this year were 25" and above, and their volume and presence was also limited. Remember this is from a fly fishers perspective.

Va's regs should be changed - too many breeders are being killed each winter!

Over the past ten years, I have come to strongly believe that there should be a limit on large breeder size fish. I would prefer that we add a smaller fish to the individual limit, and protect fish over 40". Too many large breeders are being taken. Catch and release large fish.

Let's please go beyond just the Bass and also concentrate on their food supply, especially menhaden in the Chesapeake!!!!!!

I'd like to see the recreational take limited to one fish per person within the slot for some period of time. Then go back to 28" minimum but keep the one fish per day.

Commercial fishery is not really our problem. Just not enough to allow it any more.

Recreational fishermen keep too many fish as well.

Should keep only 1-2 smaller fish per day.

Catch and release areas should be artificial bait only.

I am willing to pay to fish for striped bass by funding adequate management and conservation activities.

Yes. We could use some.

Increase min size to let more fish breed.

from what I've seen the striper population is starting to decline and this decline needs to be halted before the population crashes again.

Stop commercial harvest of striped bass and limit the amount of bunker taken to help support a healthy striped bass fishery.

Reduce comm by 50 percent and rec to 1 fish

daily limit 2 fish any size

I do not support a slot fishery, or any other change to the current regulations. I do not support a tax, a stamp a license, or any kind of fee for recreational salt water fishing. I am opposed to dragging for any species inside the 3 mile limit. Protect the forage and you will protect the apex predators.

I have been making about 6 trips a year to southern Maine since 2003, and have fished the same places (York, Ogungquit and Kittery) with consistent methods and tactics - always catch and release with barbless fly. I remember catching dozens of schoolies thru about 2005 - they were "in the way" of larger fish, but since then they have become rare. I also would catch several larger fish and would seldom drive back home without catching at least 6-20 fish a day. The last few years have seen about half my trips end up with no fish seen or caught. I also have seen very few people fishing - it clearly is not just me that has seen the drop in fish stocks. Most of my fishing has been from shore, but it has been active fishing - watching tides and time of year and driving between areas. I have even been getting skunked when I have used a guided boat in Kittery. The guide, the fly shops and my angling peers all concur that the fish math done by the government and a few short-sighted commercial fisherman is really "fishy" and the proof is the lack of fish we now have.

MY IDEA OF A SLOT WOULD ONE FISH/DAY UNDER 22" AND 3 PER YEAR OVER 40" SIMILAR TO WHAT TEXAS DOES WITH REDFISH

Make them a catch and release game fish.

i think commercial interests are running the massachusetts fisheries and is a cruel joke

We need to protect our big females by allowing anglers to keep smaller fish for the table.

i think all the states with striped bass regulations, should have the same size & bag limits.

Please do what can be done to end killing of striped bass by netters.

Stop immediately all Commercial fishing during the spawning run.

my boat is mainly catch and release more should do this commercial with one net drop get more than my whole boating club can catch in 10 years

My being new to the fishery my stand on sizes getting better or worse does not really apply.

Many fish are released injured, or stressed and probably die. Having a permit or stamp would give the serious fisherman the chance to take and injured fish.

The upper section of the Chesapeake Bay needs help with its water quality. Fees from the stamp program would help in this clean up.

I like the slot limit and I don't think one should have to decide on keeping slot fish and forgoing a possible trophy fish yet we know catch and release really works in fresh water situations so if push comes to shove I'm for less "keeping" if it means more catching.

more help is needed soon! PLEASE. Too many big fish are killed in May-June! Allow 1 a day 39" or larger

Standardize striper lengths in all East coast states.. Not 18" in Va, and 28 in NJ and NC and disallow netting of any kind

please do not back increases in cost to fish recreationally. I feel this is just another way to tax my sport its not right.

striper stamp funds MUST go to striper fishery improvement and conservation and not be pilfered in any way by state or federal government

Public needs to be educated that bait fishing causes excessive mortality. Circle hooks help reduce mortality and their use should be encouraged for those who feel they must fish with bait.

Definitely should be ruled a game fish

enforcement is a major issue regardless of the regulations

many stripers are killed by the draggers that have

been in Cape Cod Bay,

Should not be allowed in Bay

We must do what is required to save this fishery so that those who follow can enjoy this sport

Look no further than to the success of Florida's Redfish conservation measures. Blackened Redfish had decimated the species. I support a slot fish and an "oversized" fish. If we only supported a slot fish it would be detrimental to the Captains that fish the inlets and shoals of the mid atlantic coast ie. Cape May. One oversized fish per person is very reasonable and the slot fish gives the marsh/beach angler a decent meal to take home if they so choose to. The fishing that I do is strictly catch and release so I am only concerned about the health of the fishery as well as the economic realities that Captains who fish the "big water" face. One slot and an over sized fish is, in my opinion, reasonable and good for the fish and the economy.

The commercial fishery in R.I. is limited to rod & reel licenses and, when enforced, is not a significant drain on the resource. I believe the problem is by-catch, particularly with gill netters. They catch and kill huge numbers of large bass in nets designed for bluefish and large fluke. Poaching and lax enforcement is also a big problem in R.I.

Let's end commercial fishing now, and declare the striper a game fish.

The questions about size limits and slot size need to be answered by biologists. Not fishermen.

This year's fishery is the worst I have ever encountered on the Vineyard and southern Mass coasts. I would like to see commercial fishing for striped bass closed in Mass for a period of years. The recreational fisherman has a chance nor does the Striped Bass.

less numbers but larger fish for me this year, this is primarily trolling the new haven breakwalls where years past I would get 1-2 keepers a year with lots of 23-27 "ers. This year I got 4 keepers and less shorts, I hope this helps

Brian..

I see that in addition to commercial means, bycatch is a substantive issue, although not quite sure how to address.

On the recreational side, enforcement of current rules and regs would be a bonus as I regularly see illegal size fish caught and kept with little to no enforcement.

The commercial fishery for moss bunker should be greatly reduced. In Point Pleasant the boat Sea Huntress from Mass. unloads thousands of pounds of bunker every day from the middle of June until November. Tractor trailer loads are transported daily to unknown destinations.

whatever you come up with to help conserve this fishery will only work if you can get all the states along the striper coast to adopt the same policies across the board. no exceptions or it probably won't work.

bycatch needs tighter control

Personally, i don't think anglers should be able to kill any fish. If you want to eat striped bass, go to the supermarket
Some of these questions were unclear. E.G., #7. Occasionally I take two or more kids fishing each summer. Would I be responsible for paying for a stamp for each of them, or would the stamp be per boat? They may only fish with me two or three times per summer.

I am probably in the minority but I believe all stripers should be released for at least the next 5 years then see what has happened, after that figure out how to manage them.

Shut all harvest down until the stock recovers. I grew up with NO stripers to be fished to, so it's time to shut all the harvesting down!!!
The problem extends beyond Stripers now. Our fisheries are in a very poor state, and I do not see where the current management plans are helping. We need solid data for a start, then move on from there.

would like to see rules consistent from state to state

End double limit Permits for Party and Charter boats, as in NY...it's a giveaway to that industry and now that many party boats are targeting bass for DOUBLE TRIPS, DAILY, ALL SEASON, it's having a negative effect on the fishery...the law should be equally shared by all, not a select few when they cry about not being able to make a living....

I have noticed that there are many fewer 'slot' size fish this year as compared to the past. Although there were larger fish this year it was nothing compared to just 3 years ago. Pogie harvesting also needs to be regulated to increase forage.

Allow "keeping" of smaller schoolie bass & do not allow keeping of larger bass- only catch & release- as the larger bass are the producers of eggs/frie. Tighten the regulations on rainwater runoff & pollution into major estuaries. (the bays & Long Island Sound)
Regulation of recreational fishermen is like peeing on a fully engulfed house fire- it won't help much. Start with the BIG problems- pollution, commercial dragners, habitat loss, etc...

manage the illegal aliens

need to crack down on commercial interests and party boats keeping illegal fish. More enforcement is needed. I have never seen an agent on the water.

Limits for recreational anglers should be the same, regardless of whether they fish independently or from charter boat.

Increase the monitoring and associated fines for taking undersize fish.

I would like to a saltwater fishing license. The funds could help clean water ways and maybe set up cleaning stations. everyone wins.
What management? I have seen abundant schoolies of Spring stripers plummet each year in Ipswich River, Plum Island Sound from a peak in 2002-2006. Small schoolies <24" are rare. Mandatory barbless hooks for flyfishing and plugs and circle hooks for bait fisherman; stop killing breeding females. Slot limit for those who decide to keep a fish for the table.

The fall fishing off the cape has dropped off the charts in the last couple of years. If it wasn't for the Tuna showing up the fall seasons would be duds.

Currently, recreational fishermen and Charter boats do too much damage to the fishery. In my opinion, the regulators have grossly underestimated the amount of fish that the recreational fisherman harvest. This, coupled with the current commercial quota spells guaranteed trouble and we are seeing it now.

I would be in favor of the stamp if it was guaranteed the money would go for this purpose. The state has a way of dumping funds into other accounts.

If I recall, the state of NJ has a pretty strict C&R requirement, that makes larger stripers and more of them. That said I think that stricter C&R should be mandated some how

change quota to 75% rec and 25% comm

Good Luck

Something needs to be done..

Rolling over from year to year the number of pounds of commercial stripers which were not caught in a given year to the next year should be stopped. Increased checking by enforcement wardens should occur especially with charters as there are many illegal fish being taken.

I like the stamp idea so long as it in fact 100% support buyout of commercial interests and then towards management and enforcement of regulations.

save them now while we have them!

Raise the fines for taking of small or too many stripers

All bass over 40 lbs should be released.

Large striped bass should not be harvested by any one. High PCB health issues. These large females should be allowed to spawn as often as possible.

would like to see the pogy boats that come up narragansett bay stoped they are killing hundreds of bass

Stopped guiding after the terrible 2008 season. Fished 1 day in 2009 with a well respected guide in Casco Bay (early July) and never turned a fish. Anecdotal evidence at best, but it appears the fishery has collapsed in Maine.

I am in favor of a saltwater license/stamp as away to increase funds for the enforcement of fishing regulations.

We need more officers to enforce illegal taking of short fish.

This was the poorest year I have had since the 90's. I did not catch one keeper all year. Many days we fished without even catching a schoolie.

It seems no bait came into Plymouth at all.

Even the blues never came in.

slot limits have been successful in many states, the New England states should consider this!

To promote recreational bass fishing and thereby maintain a strong constituency which will work to protect the long-term viability of the striped bass, I would consider a "trophy tag" system, whereby recreational bass anglers could buy up to, say, two trophy tags a season at a significant cost, say \$100 per tag, which revenue would go to better education and enforcement of the striped bass conservation regulations.

Max one keeper fish per angler. Ban treble hooks as destructive to the fish.
make striped bass a gamefish

Striped Bass management must not be done for any user group, it should be done for the Striped Bass.

Anecdotally, the striper fishing on the Jersey Shore (the Island Beach State Park area) seemed much better this year than most. Although my personal luck wasn't too good, I saw a large number of huge stripers at weigh in stations and a few on the beach. I am strictly a surf caster. Also, I spent some time fishing the Hudson River (on the Jersey side across from about 96th St in Manhattan) and in April and May, there were nice big stripers being caught almost every day.

SF: keep up the good work...

we should have a stamp for \$10, and slot limits that allow one fish per day, either 18-24 or 30+

To be successful, legislation must be acceptable to the charter boat community and their lobby. I would be strongly in favor of a 2 fish slot limit with much stronger enforcement. I have never been stopped or questioned about fish in my possession.

Make the laws the same in all eastern states . and No spear fishing allowed

The fish are once again slipping away from us, if we don't impact change soon it will be all academic.

Closed season including no catch & release, during prime spawning periods for five consecutive years.

Catch & release with single, barbless hooks only, including barbless circle hooks for bait fishermen.

Aggressive enforcement against poachers, including mandatory confiscation of all gear (tackle, boat, trailer, towing vehicle) and minimum \$5,000 fine for repeat offenders.

Maryland and the bay is the key, without more conservation being done and the water cleaned up - there will be less stripers
I think we should just end commercial harvest with no repayment to the commercial fishers who are just recreational fishers taking advantage of an opportunity.

Recreational Striper Fishing is not the problem. Commercial fishing is what is decimating them, both with the by-catch and their efficiency.

I like Maine's slot limit reg. Keep ONE fish

I believe people should be able to keep one fish a day, although I keep only two or three a year. Most people fish once or twice a week, thus a couple a week not seven. More real #'s of survey findings may lead to more catch and release. Thanks Sam
They should be a sport fish in every state from Maine to the Carolinas. The only way to save them. Maybe catch and release for all of us.

It appears that there isn't any at this time.

During the last two years, I have caught only THREE stripers, after perhaps seventeen days of trying. The striper population has crashed, at least for us north of Portland. The biologists are either incompetent or lying!!

Commercial provides fish to people who can't get out and catch them. The problem is people who sell off the books or out of season.

I caught 9 Stripers this year over 2 days. I used to catch Hundreds, perhaps thousands of stripers per year between 1998-2006. I pull lobster traps recreationally and used to see busting fish often when I'd make my run to the traps. I haven't seen a feed in 2 years. The stripers have more or less vanished from Casco Bay and surrounding areas for the last two seasons.

I am in favor of ending commercial fishing for stripers, and increasing the amount of fish recreational fishermen can keep. I am also very strongly in favor of opening the fishery to recreational spearfishing in Federal water and states currently prohibit it.

I believe we're on the verge of ruining our striped bass fishery, and that the commercial fishing for them in all forms and by all regulatory definitions, should be stopped.

The past four seasons have seen my striper catch drop drastically. I only caught 49 stripers this year, there were no schoolies, and the fish were larger. Lack of schoolies does not bode well for the next couple of years. I think we should go to a slot limit with one fish between 20-26 for the table and one fish over 40" per day. Taking 28" fish is like taking the cows out of the field and wondering where the calves are.

Tighter controls on trawlers and monitoring

Management needs to be uniform state to state. Make Striped Bass and totally non-commercial fish to end sales in all states.

I'd like to see a 5 year "no kill" to help restore the fishery's numbers, but at a minimum recreational limits and commercial limits need to be greatly reduced.

keep up the good work

Save the mendhaden, too!

Shut down the commercial guys with their rampant overfishing and theft and do not charge me to close them down. Just get rid of them at no cost to recreational fisherman. Did you understand that? NO COST TO RECREATIONAL FISHERMAN.

I am a shore bound fly fisher. All of my areas lack "resident" stripers for most of the year. I have a good month in the surf (fly) mid June to mid July

then not so much. Back bay is terrible and the rt 52 causeway project has taken away access to some prime sod banks. I no longer fish as often or as hard as in the previous 15 years. I think that there are too many big breeders taken during the fall run. Overall it feels

like the years previous to the last crash and then there was a LOT less fishing pressure and the fall boat slaughter was miniscule compared to today.

. JMC

Eliminate commercial harvest of striped bass

commercial fishing is destroying the fish population

Slot limit definitely needed. All these "trophy" fish are females. I would certainly support buying out the commercial people with a yearly stamp...well worth it.

Conservation consideration needs to be given to the forage fish for the striped bass population to grow.

Mortality has to be lowered across the board right now, going to a 36" rule would lower mortality in every state dramatically

I was shocked by the shortage of 14" - 20" fish this year. I find this shortage, or absence, of small fish to be a great cause of concern for the future of our fishery!!!!

1. A major problem is the small minimum size and high harvest on the Chesapeake Bay. 2. concerning the question on the minimum size: Raise the minimum size in increments until the numbers of legal fish decrease from other kinds of mortality. 3. Slot limits: Consider a maximum size over which fish must be released.

I see boats around taking too many big fish, those are the producers, allowing slots will help, especially poorer fisherman who actually want to eat. If I had the money, I would personally buy out the commercial fishery. I GUARANTEE we create more jobs than they do. I spend at least \$10K a season on gas, travel, dining, bait, tackle, etc.

Slot Fish !!!!!!! PLEASE!!!!!!