



Stripers Forever 2011 Annual Fishing Survey Results

In 2011 we received 1042 responses to our annual survey. 717 of the respondents have fished for stripers for more than 10 years, so a great many of these people fished through both the last striped bass collapse and the recovery of the late 1980s and 1990s. 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, and that the results, taken with those of the previous 8 survey years paint an accurate picture of the direction striped bass fishing is heading, which, with the hopeful exception of a good year class in 2011 is not good. We will send this information to the press and to fishery policy makers everywhere. We hope that you will use this information personally to help us advocate for the goal of coast-wide striped bass game fish. Please share the results with your local fishing club, home town newspaper, and elected officials that you may know.

The complete Excel spreadsheet of *Survey Totals* is also attached to this web page. You will find both the questions and the responses listed. The second tab at the bottom shows comments that were received; as usual there were some very good ones, and they have not been edited. Another document entitled *Key Comparisons* is also included. Key Comparisons graphs out the answers to some key survey questions over the nine years we have been doing the survey.

Here is a summary of the answers by question #.

2. About 56% of respondents fish predominately from a boat and about 44% mostly from shore.

4. A record 74% of the anglers in 2011 indicated that the quality of fishing for stripers was worse or much worse – up every year from the 33% we received in 2003!!!! Only 14% felt that it was improved.

5. 49% reported the average size of the stripers they caught was smaller, compared to 30% seeing an increase.

6. In 2011 the percentage of anglers reporting catching fewer, or many fewer fish per hour was the same as in 2010, a record 76% up from only 37% in 2003. Only 7% of anglers reported they caught more fish. Many comments were received about how few fish were being caught.

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7. Members who said that they were equally or more inclined to take guided trips dropped to 44%. This agrees with guide comments found later in the responses.

9, 10. 64% of responding anglers felt that a small fish should be allowed for food. Of those, 74% felt that it should be offered instead of a larger fish. These responses are more conservative in recent years, doubtless because anglers are becoming more concerned with the direction the striped bass population is heading.

11. Of the respondents who want a high minimum size for striped bass 52% prefer 28 inches.

12. Support for a slot limit stayed at 70%, though the number has been in the 70 to 75% range every year. We think that a slot or smaller fish would be even more popular were it not for the fact that many anglers now believe that no striped bass should be killed at all given the declining condition of the fishery.

13. Of those who believe that a slot limit is right for striped bass, the votes are split quite evenly over the three choices but a slight preference exists for the two larger slot sizes probably again because of concern for the low numbers of small fish.

14. 85% of those surveyed want 50% or more of the commercial catch reserved for conservation and not assigned to increased recreational bag limits. This is the same as in 2010.

15, 16. The use of a stamp to buy out the commercial fishery was favored by 69% of respondents, and 65% said the stamp should continue even after the commercial fishery is bought out.

17. 81% of those responding to the survey said that SF should advocate for the use of circle hooks when bait fishing for striped bass.

18. 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.

Guides Section

This year we received surveys from 87 guides located in every coastal state. Unfortunately a record 74% of them report that their business has been adversely affected by the smaller number of striped bass generally available. Several guides expressed fear that the continued poor management of striped bass was going to destroy their businesses.

Guiding jobs are good, sustainable, season-long jobs that can be maintained through the ups and downs of the population cycle with catch and release fishing. *Providing the quality of fishery necessary to maintain and in fact nurture these jobs should be a top priority of fishery managers, but judging by recent ASMFC votes to continue heavy harvests that does not seem to be the case.*

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

Personal use angler's section
State of the Fishery 2011

1. What state	86	13	216	58	61	134	252	2	12	41	24	12	1	1042	100%
2. I fish from a boat what percentage of the time.															
<25%	32	3	73	28	17	65	90	1	6	0	3	0	0	318	35%
25 - 49	5	0	22	7	6	6	21	0	0	4	2	0	0	73	8%
50-74	7	2	18	7	3	12	20	0	0	4	0	2	0	75	8%
>75%	42	8	100	15	35	48	118	1	6	33	18	10	0	434	48%
3. I have fished regularly for stripers for this many years.															
<5 years	7	0	15	2	7	15	19	1	0	3	1	3	0	73	8%
5-9 years	11	3	27	10	7	13	30	0	3	6	3	1	0	114	13%
>10	68	10	172	44	47	105	201	1	9	32	20	8	0	717	89%
4. In my opinion striper fishing in the past five years has changed as follows:															
much worse	62	9	72	18	24	51	26	0	3	17	6	5	0	293	32%
worse	17	4	106	29	25	57	94	1	5	17	15	5	0	375	42%
same	3	0	27	2	5	13	44	1	4	6	3	0	0	108	12%
improved somewhat	4	0	10	7	5	10	61	0	0	1	0	1	0	99	11%
improved greatly	0	0	0	0	2	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	3%
5. The average size of the stripers that I catch now has changed as follows:															
much smaller	14	1	38	10	8	27	26	0	3	10	3	1	0	141	16%
somewhat smaller	16	5	70	15	23	51	61	1	1	23	14	6	0	286	33%
no change	7	3	28	11	13	25	61	1	5	7	7	5	0	173	20%
somewhat larger	36	3	65	17	17	27	79	0	2	1	0	0	0	211	24%
much larger	10	1	13	3	0	3	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	6%
6. The number of stripers I catch per hour of fishing time on the water is:															
many fewer	64	10	92	26	26	58	52	0	3	14	7	4	0	356	39%
fewer	19	3	89	25	23	51	80	1	6	20	14	7	0	338	37%
about the same	2	0	28	3	10	20	68	1	2	6	3	1	0	144	16%
more	1	0	5	2	1	4	43	0	1	1	0	0	0	58	6%
many more	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1%
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	62	10	105	29	33	73	134	0	8	24	14	8	0	500	56%
about the same	17	3	89	20	20	50	97	1	4	15	9	4	0	329	37%
more likely	5	0	13	7	6	7	19	1	0	2	1	0	0	61	7%
<i>Bag and size limit</i>															
9. 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	59	5	117	28	32	69	180	1	8	37	23	9	0	568	64%
no	27	8	91	27	27	62	67	1	4	4	1	3	0	322	36%

10. 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	54	4	106	24	24	56	119	1	4	25	13	6	0	436	74%
in addition to	6	1	16	5	10	18	67	0	4	12	10	3	0	152	26%
11. If you answered no to #8 what should the minimum size be?															
28	15	2	48	15	16	27	69	0	4	4	6	4	0	210	52%
32	3	2	25	11	6	17	21	0	2	3	1	0	0	91	23%
36	7	4	18	8	6	22	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	76	19%
40	4	0	12	1	1	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	24	6%
12. Do you think we should have a slot limit for recreationally caught stripers?															
yes	69	7	144	34	34	83	186	1	7	25	14	8	0	612	70%
no	13	6	60	21	24	44	60	0	5	15	9	4	0	261	30%
13. Slot preference															
20-26	46	1	40	13	7	16	41	0	5	12	4	2	0	187	30%
22-28	17	5	44	12	14	30	86	0	2	9	1	4	0	224	36%
24-30	5	1	61	10	14	40	63	1	0	5	8	3	0	211	34%
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%															
25%	5	3	27	19	5	14	42	0	2	4	5	2	0	128	15%
50	17	1	55	11	25	28	86	0	6	13	10	5	0	257	30%
75	18	3	37	11	11	38	42	1	2	11	6	3	0	183	21%
100%	39	5	81	14	16	48	68	1	2	13	3	2	0	292	34%
15. 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	69	11	148	29	38	103	155	1	9	26	21	6	0	616	69%
no	17	2	60	26	20	27	91	1	3	15	3	6	0	271	31%
16. 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	20	8	46	11	14	33	63	0	6	15	9	1	0	226	35%
continue	49	3	107	21	25	70	103	1	4	11	13	5	0	412	65%
17. Should Stripers Forever advocate that circle hooks be required, where practical, when bait fishing for striped bass?															
yes	74	11	179	43	44	101	189	1	11	32	22	8	0	715	81%
no	11	2	29	12	15	28	56	1	1	9	2	3	0	169	19%
18. My personal comments on striped bass management that you have not covered are? See comment tab below.															
Guides Section															
19. How has your guiding business for striped bass changed because of the fishery in the last five years?															
worsened considerably	4		11	2	2	7	7		1	0	3	0		37	43%
worsened a little	5	1	7	1	2	7	2		0	1	0	1		27	31%
not changed	2		1		1	1	4		0	0	1	0		10	11%
improved somewhat			2		0	3	6		0	0	0	0		11	11%
improved a great deal			0		0	1	1		0	0	0	0		2	4%
20. How important is keeping a striped bass to your clients?															
not very important	6		13	1	2	7	4		1	0	0	1		35	42%
somewhat important	3	1	6	1	1	8	4		0	0	0	0		24	28%
very important	2		2	1	2	3	11		0	1	4	0		26	30%

21. How important to your clients is catching a lot of stripers per trip?															
not very important	2		0	0	0	2	1		0	0	1	0		6	7%
somewhat important	5	1	13	3	4	9	9		0	1	1	1		47	55%
very important	5		8	0	1	7	9		1	0	2	0		33	38%
22. How important is catching a really large striper to your clients?															
not very important	3		5	0	0	0	3		0	0	0	0		11	12%
somewhat important	5	1	13	3	4	10	10		1	1	2	0		50	55%
very important	3		8	0	1	8	6		0	0	2	1		29	33%
23. Which is more important to my clients, catching big fish or catching a lot of fish?															
big fish	2		4	1	0	8	7		0	0	3	1		26	31%
many fish	9	1	16	2	5	10	12		1	1	1	0		58	69%
24. I am more likely than I was 5 years ago to make new investments in equipment for my striped bass guiding business?															
yes	1		3	0	0	5	9		0	1	0	0		19	22%
no	10	1	16	3	5	13	12		1	0	4	1		66	78%

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

See Comments Tab below

no bunker no bass i caught one keeper and less than average bass from shore i know have a boat and i can only hope the catch is better
Keep the small fish and leave the breeders

in the ocean . taking the breeders just does not make seem logical. Reducing the breeders population reduces the amount of fry.
I think S.F. should keep up the fight to make stripers a game fish.Make it a catch and release fishery.Make it a uniform law for all eastern coastal states,the same status.One set license fee good

for all saltwater recreational anglers in all coastal water states.KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK S.F.
We must take the responsibility of setting regulations on the Striped Bass Fishery completely out of the individual states hands. They have proven themselves incapable once again and are rife with special interest groups. Time to rid ourselves of the 'allocationists'.
I did not catch a single striper this season! I fish from a bridge over the York river.
No recreational quota,all catch and release !
Enforce the law that limits the distance that the comm. fishermen can be in the chesapeake or any other estuary that have bridges. The distance should be 1 mile or more from any bridge.
Commercial quotas need to be restricted by region, not by state preference. I feel that the species is doomed without strict harvest limits.
Summer 3 months were the worst in memory then November was the best Striped Bass Fishing in history. No one can explain it.
only one fish over 36" per day
Perhaps some restrictions on how catch and release is done in the Chesapeake. A lot of fish are killed by improper technique and trollors with multiple rods(up to 16) and tandem rigs. The boats never stop and fish are killed when pulled in. I think that many fish are killed even with light tackle.Big hooks, including treble hooks are a problem and how the fish are released when pulled into the boat. This is often the case when the water is quite warm later in the summer and early fall and small schoolies are breaking the surface.
end commercial take of bait fish bunker untill their numbers rebound.
Slot limits.need to be set higher so fish can breed more
Definitely need the slot limit.

Also need Game Fish Status in all states on the east coast.
Many bass in the 30" range being caught, but very few large[above 40"] caught. And very few small[24"to 18"] being caught.
keep the quota of two fish per recreational category.
I applaud and financially support protecting this incredibly precious resource for our children and grandchildren! The first step is to end commercial fishing of stripers and their primary food source of menhaden.
all stripers should be caught with single hook lures and returned to the water
The fishing has been so bad that I quit fishing in the salt and just stay with my favorite which is trout and fish in Jersey, Wyoming and Montana
A catch and release fishery for the next 3-5 years would be the best
I think we should follow nature when it comes to size limits. In other words the strong survive. we should be able to keep schoolies and release the big breeders. The younger fish are healthier to eat too and are more relative to a meal size that a 40" cow that is more valuable as a breeder for future
I welcome paying an annual fee for the preservation of the striper population and enforcement of regulations. My only concern would be that the funds actually go to these efforts and not into a general fund to be looted by politicians like some states have done with the salt water licences. I would be happy to support the "buyout" of commercial interests, as long as there is a timeframe established so that it did not go on in perpetuity.

Lastly, I fish in 3 states for Stripers, NJ, CT and ME. The fishing in Maine has dropped dramatically over the last few years, and this past year I only caught a few, and no schoolies. In NJ, I caught mostly large fish with the average of 15-20 lbs, with very few schoolies.
In favor of a no possession moratorium for 1 to 2 years for entire east coast.
I support the "slot" length concept for recreational striper harvest. The current "over 28" approach promotes harvesting of fish that would likely reproduce. I find that the smallest keepers (28"-30") are the best table fare and for this reason, I generally do not keep fish over 32".
I fear the stamp fund although it being a good idea will only be eventually used not to enhance stripped bass production but for other purposes such as many of the current funds we have in government.
get rid of the menhaden boats
guides need to be more carefully scrutinized
Concentrate more on the estuaries- cleanup, regulate fresh water runoff, get laws to severely punish anyone who does not keep their equipment safe from toxic "spills" that foul any waters. (I'm thinking specifically of the waste treatment plant in NY that spilled untreated sewerage into the Hudson River & LI Sound TWICE within a year.)
stop the over harvesting of menhaden.
The season should be limited to a shorter term for the harvesting of fish recreationally but allowed to stay open longer for catch and release. I would also be very much in favor of requiring catch and release charters to tag a certain percentage of fish they catch to enable better hard data to be gathered to better manage the fishery in the future.
Striper conservation should be a shared responsibility along the entire coast.

I think it's important to come to a consensus among the various states as to what the regulations should be to prevent abuses in shared water.
Moratorium
none
We once again look in to the abyss as our striped bass populations decline drastically. Do we have the wherewithal to make needed changes now?
Keep up the good work...
I'd also be OK with a stamp program for stripers. That if you want to keep a fish, you are required to purchase a stamp. Otherwise, fish need to be
What management?
Its amazing to me that stripers can still be caught commercially! Stripers should be for recreation only, the financial impact on the east coast will be devastating if the numbers continue to decrease and recreational anglers disappear.
I think that all states should have the same size limit and amount of keepers per day.

I believe that we need to give the bass a break! There has to be a time of year when the schools don't get pressured. Now it's 12 months a year. There are places that limit bass fishing in the back or have C&R. Still the fish have no down time. People ignore the closed season, and we all know C&R has a mortality rate. We need to give em a break. Out front we need to give em a break too! All year long somewhere on the coast there are people fishing. Why should the recreational fisherman have to support the commercial industry, the government needs to enforce the laws that are in place. I would really be excited to see the reduction of commercially caught strippers by 25 to 50%, the fish quality that usually makes it to the supermarket is usually of poor quality & size, I question the legitimacy of lots of fish I see. The future of the commercial industry is definitely in question but I do not think it is the job of the recreational fishermen to support the industry.
Thank you for supporting the Striped Bass fishery and working to end the unrestrained commercial harvest.

I am for a saltwater license. How would the funds be used? Please discuss in your next online update(s). Again, thank you for your efforts to make Striped Bass a gamefish and protect the fishery.
use more money to stop the epidemic of poaching in the fishery. Also more enforcement of by catch is needed. The size limits are causing tons of fish to be killed and not kept as a limit quota. Keep in mind what the commercial fleet did in Oregon inlet N.C. killing tons of oversized fish. They must be stopped. Reedville manhaden spotter plane must be stopped. Curb manhaden catch way down before its all gone which in my experience is just a few I would love to see the fishery become catch and release during the spawning season I'm not for a closure because I do enjoy fishing the rivers that time of year.

striped bass fishing should be for sport only!

We must stop commercial striped bass fishing, especially in the southern states where they kill thousands that are never counted. All by-catch MUST be counted against commercial fishing, with Far Stricter Enforcement.

I believe in a tag system that will allow only so many fish kept a year per person.

The limits on commercial fishings really need to be looked at as well, as daily take rates, however with the enforcement of licenses now in the NE states more needs to be done to eradicate the taking of undersized as well as over limit none stripebass.

limit party charter boats to one trip per day they do more damage to the school size and bigger fish fish at three trips per day with over 160 fish kept per trip times 10 boats out of capture ny they are doing a number on our stocks in the great south bay I catch and release 99 % of my fish which are over 40" my fish are caught on live bait and plugs and released to fight another day

Lower amount of schoolie bass- nothing behind current mature classes

Why does SF continue to hammer the commercial industry when there is no question that the Recreational Sector is responsible for greater mortality even using the most conservative incidental death estimates. Why not go after a ban on treble hooks, or mandate barbless circle hooks?

I did not fish one time for strippers in 2011

what can I do

we must cut back on the harvest, this should be a no brainer.

The practice of catch & release should always be stressed to sportsman. The commercial industry pays such disregard to a healthy fishery that it becomes disturbing. I have always advocated the need for a stamp so that 100% of its revenue can be put back-in to promote a more sustained one fish each.

No more bunker boats

Of the fish I caught, approx 30%-40% had sores on them. Far higher than I ever seen.

any fool can see the decline in fish catch rates, if commercial fisherman can not make a living on lower catch rates they should start looking at how many licenses are issued for a given area. no guy should be able to get a license and take out his buddies and boat a boat load of fish and have it legal, nor should trowlers have so much waste

There should be a way to allow commercial and sport fishing to co-exist. I don't think a 2 fish limit is practical for sport fishing (VA). 4 fish a day would be acceptable. Most sport fisherman consume what they catch. Outlawing "upsizing" catches would be helpful.

I would like to see management for the Striped Bass, instead of for the interests of any the user groups.

These are excellent questions and reflect a thoughtful agenda! Keep up the good work.

The stripper fishery at the mouth of the Kennebec is now basically non-existent for fly fishing from the shore. I caught no fish last year. Approximately 6 or 7 years ago it was excellent. I believe there should be only catch and release now up and down the coast.

Of the 197 bass boated this year and felt that the average size of this fish in my area has gone up. I fear this because only about 20% of the fish I caught were under the 28 inch NJ minimum size limit. I feel there isn't a proportionate number of shorts. I feel the most appropriate measure would be to allow 1 trophy size bass 40 inches and over per day and 1 under 40 inches to protect the larger spring spawning bass that frequent our waters. And to make it more difficult for anglers to get 2 keepers in the fall run when the smaller fish were more prevalent.

IT IS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED AND WON'T CARE UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE FOR THE STRIPERS

For every additional regulation, rule or law Strippers Forever supports, there should be a corresponding one that Strippers Forever advocates rescinding. There are too many layers of regulation with too little or no scientific evidence of positive outcome for the fishery.

GAMEFISH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Regardless of the commercial quota, the recreational bag limit should be reduced to one fish per day!

save all forage species or it won't matter what striper regulation will be.

I fished both on Cape Cod and Cape Ann. Fishing from shore and in the estuaries on Cape Ann has seen a huge decline over the past several years with almost no schoolies in evidence.

Keep up the good work!

Commercial fishing should be ended. Recreational catch should be limited to one fish per week. Circle hooks should be eliminated.

YOUR VOICE COUNTS!!!!!! LETS KEEP THE SPORT JUST THAT!!!!!!

When you ask in Part 2 if the fishing is better or worse: compared to what? Last year or 5 years ago or 20 years ago? Get a professional surveyer to tighten up the questions so that true and consistent survey answers are given.

I would rather that a biologist answer questions 1-5 in Part 3. I am not qualified to answer them. I would follow what a biologist says rather than what the survey answers of non-professionals say. SF should do the same. cjf

Make the Strippers a Game fish

I believe we should put a moratorium on keeping any fish whatsoever for 5 years to see the impact that conservation would have. I also think the MA fisheries management team should align themselves with other states to push for tighter regulations in Chesapeake Bay and other areas where this resource is exploited.

Eliminate all treble hooks - lures and bait.

Stop the killing of the breeders

Recognize Striped Bass as a game fish and exclude it from the commercial market

Although I answered in favor of a small slot limit... I would actually prefer it to be 100% catch and release until there is a significant restoration of the striper population.

With fees it is a bit of a catch 22. The fee will cause me to not fish given the different opportunities in Maine. I would pay if fishing was like it was 10 years or more ago. Money is tight, and as a CPR fisherman, my opinion is that there still too many poachers on the recreational side. I would pay...but how much is questionable.

Need to focus on forage fish, most important!!

I do not think one should be allowed to keep a striper over 36 inches. This is a breeding fish. At least until we get the numbers back.

Potomac river is where I fish 2011 season worst in 15 yrs Lack of bait & salinity I hope, but the netters had a great spring huge #'s. I wonder if it hurt the Potomac local stock

I fish the beach and the back bay at night. I am seeing "NO" fish right now. Historically the places I fish held fish and they were always active on top. Through Nov. and Dec. we used to bail short stripers all night in the back bay and in the surf. Right now I am seeing no activity on top and catching no short fish to speak of. I would say that this is the third year in a row with this pattern, (or lack of a pattern)

It's a crime when the commercial guys locate a school of big fish and start livelining live bait, they can kill 100 or more big stripers in a day.

THERE WAS A GOOD RUN OF ABOVE SIZE FISH THIS PAST MONTH ON ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK SOUTH OF SEASIDE PARK N.J.

The winter slaughter off Va and NC has to be stopped

Bunker catches have to be reduced, most bass I caught this year were skinny and hungry

continue advocating for game fish status as well as a complete ban on bunker harvest except for bait

○ Limit is a very reasonable idea. It works everywhere else why not Stripers!!!

there should be size limit, eg...any fish over 30lbs should be released because of all the eggs that come from a fish that size or larger

Should severely limit fish killed over 40 lbs (females)

minimize rec mortality through education and best fishing practices. 1 fish is enough. trophy stamp of \$25 for fish over 38" - money used for hatcheries, or stock enhancement.

We need to know how many commercial people there are in each state. i.e. recently commercial, years in commercial fishing, since by a stamp program you might have many more coming to the financial gain.

Stop all harvest

IF COMMERCIAL STRIPED BASS FISHING CONTINUES, IT SHOULD BE ROD AND REEL ONLY AND THE # PER DAY SHOULD BE REDUCED.

They should be a sportfish up and down the Atlantic coast if they have any chance, better yet catch and release.

Please help make striper fishing better. I don't know all the ins and outs of what it takes to make it better, but it is not as good as it was and it badly needs to get better. Thank you.

no

A FINE IMPOSED ON PERSONS FOUND CHANGING BOATS TO ENHANCE DAILY CATCH

Party boats targeting stripers should be limited to one 32" fish per customer not including captain and mates! Party boats are making multiple trips per day taking too many stripers. Why can't we stop those bunker boats especially off the coast of Virginia from starving the striper population and ruining the winter run of stripers to the outer banks!!

I would be in favor of a bass stamp if all commercial fishing for stripers were halted within 2 years

Commercial striped bass fishing should not be eliminated.

I didn't fish for stripers in 2011. Your questionnaire doesn't address the occasional fisherman. I expect to fish off MA next spring.

THERE SHOULD BE A SEASON BAG LIMIT ON STRIPERS. SUCH 10 FISH PER SEASON IN TOTAL PER CALENDAR YEAR. ONE FISH PER DAY IS WAY TO MANY PER YEAR. THESE FISH ARE BEING POUNDED AND NEED SOME HELP.

MAKE STRIPED BASS A GAME FISH!

Re: the SB stamp. It's my inclination to distrust the government's ability to equitably manage any program where money is involved. So I'd rather see Stripers legislated as gamefish. However, if that can't happen I'd support the stamp program.

the slot should be bigger: 26" > 32" or larger

We, in Maryland, need more enforcement of the rules on the books. Would be interested in seeing more programs promoting law enforcement on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

I'd like to see a maximum size limit to protect the largest females--although I know this would be a tough sell.

If things don't change soon this survey will be a mute point..... There won't be any fish left..

Decrease Maryland fishing quotas.

Keep up the good work.

I like the slot limit for one fish 24-30 and then one over 32 - I actively fish both NJ and NY waters and am encouraged by the fishery. That being said as of late I have also become a better fisherman which has increased my catches.

It's just "smoke and mirrors"

We need all of the Eastern Seaboard states on the same page, working toward better management. Florida set a great example, as did Texas with their inshore fisheries. Why can't the rest of us follow suit? It's been proven that recreational anglers generate far more money than the commercial interest, so let's get on the ball!

gamefish status needed

No commercial fishing.

During the Maryland trophy spring striped bass season, recreational anglers are allowed 1 big fish per day. Instead, that should be one (or maybe two) big fish per season. We are taking far too many of these wonderful spawners out of the population.

Thank you for being so active in the conservation of this fishery, but understand that a lot of fishermen do not share all of your positions, myself. Regulation philosophy is backwards. Regulations should better protect the larger spawners rather than the smaller fish. There should be a maximum size limit...eg no fish over 36".. Biologists should recommend what that specific size should be.

make it a game fish nation wide

I am 28 years old and have been fishing for striped bass since I was 6-7 years old. The most alarming thing that I have seen is the lack of small (20 - 30 in) fish caught as compared to ten years ago, and the amount of much larger (35+lb.) fish that are easily being caught and killed during the spring. I believe that one slot fish is fair. These guys killing two big bass a trip is hurting this fishery, and a waste because we all know they are not eating them, except for maybe a few. I also believe in sharper penalties that are enforced.

You can use some of the money from a stamp to fund more conservation officers.

State of New Jersey is one of the worst for its management of its fishery all they want is money!

It would be great to get the message out to the idiots that have a need to kill big Strippers and have the pictures in the Long Island fisherman that they are killing breeders! Take a photo and throw the fish back.

I prefer a one fish over 38 inch limit.

Eliminate commercial fishing

Do away with trophy program - just gives people away to keep an extra fish and there is no need for that. Should be a one fish limit!

I am a strong supporter of a one fish daily limit and this striped bass needs to fall within a slot length from 26"-30". There should be no harvesting of fish over 30 inches...period!

If the larger fish are the breeders, it makes more sense to take smaller fish to eat and allow the breeders to be released to increase the population.

Keep up the good work. Hopefully the fishing for Striped Bass will improve in the future with yours and our efforts. Please fight to make Massachusetts and Rhode Island non-commercial Striped Bass states!

A permit system should be developed to limit trophy strippers to one or two per license per year. Perhaps one spring and one fall.

Although the smaller bass are not as prevalent as they once were there are still some around. We need to limit the take on the larger spawning fish not the smaller ones.

One at 30" + and Two at 28" or less

The politicians need to stop their private agendas and do their jobs and the commercial fishery for bass should be ended after the videos of fish slaughter we have seen and they did practically nothing about it quite honestly I believe all politicians should get one 2 year term and that it gives them less time to get more friends in and create the mess we have now such as the PETA Agenda. Mr. Obama and his NOAA buddies have going on they are killing more fish than saving them what does PETA stand for again????? maybe they should rethink that name people who live in glass. The warning signs of a troubled fishery are staring us all in the face. Despite the catches of enormously large bass the past few seasons, it is my opinion that critical mass brood stock is in peril. Most every major collapse of a fishery has been preceded by the harvesting of large specimens of those. Continue the Bonus fish program.

Only one fish above a certain size should be allowed, perhaps 35". This should help save a larger portion of breeders.

I don't understand how some of the Southern states, i.e., Maryland, North Carolina, etc., have gotten away with the SLAUGHTER of striped bass. I firmly believe these states' commercial quotas should be reduced for the following year.

We should have a maximum size limit. Very large fish should be allowed to continue to breed.

Although northern states complain about the number of striped bass, mid-Atlantic states (NJ) are having their best year ever.

The regulations should be standardized on a coastal basis. And bait fish - eels, bunker should be protected more vigorously than previously.

I don't have enough info to answer some questions with any authority so I have left some items unmarked. Here's my story: I didn't throw a fly last summer. Went out 5-6 times for afternoon cocktails. Whoopee...

We need more enforcement. Lacking that, we need stiffer penalties for those who violate regulations.

Would be nice to have consistent regulations for the entire Atlantic coast, and game fish status for the entire Atlantic coast.

No bonus tags

Three fish per person per year

This is a tough battle but we appreciate your efforts

Make striped bass a game fish

I've fished from ME to the Cape to RI all my life. Witnessed the cycles. The stocks are down everywhere. I support: an east coast commercial ban, gamefish status with a 3-year C and R moratorium for the recreation segment to rebuild the stock.

Throw back bigger bass

Striped bass should be classed a gamefish.

I would be in favor of the recreational quota going from two to one striper 28 inches or larger. Let's do our part.

We need to begin managing the seal population as well.

No

Treble hooks should be banned. Single hook only on plugs, etc.

I am a NH guide, got bigger fish this year but much fewer smaller fish. No replenishment of the species, problem..

Striped bass managers never take into account, the amount of fish poached each year. This is impossible to stop. Fish limits need to be stricter on recreational and charter boats because of this.

I believe Charter/Party boats should have the same Regulations as Recreationals on size and number of fish allowed to be kept. It costs recreationals who don't use Party/charter boats about as much if not more as the guys who use them. Reason being we fish more often, have to pay dockage, fuel, boat payments ect.ect... Also would like to see the Banning of DOWNRIGGERS in the Hudson River during the spawning season. I have fished here in Kingston NY for over 25 years now. Have seen how the more downriggers there are, the drop in the fishing. Also the trollers follow these schools up and down the river, 24-7 for the whole month the fish are here. The Bass can't have a normal spawn, everytime they school up, one boat finds them, and the radios light up and you have a small fleet of trollers beating up the Bass with the rigger cables, and some speed up to snag the fish. It's a Bad scene for the Bass. I'm 64 years old and have fished for Strippers all my life. Started with my Dad and his fishing buddies, belonged to S.O.S. back in the 60's, to stop Storm King, and Commercials in the Ocean. Fought against Annecondor Copper Co., and ConEdison and have seen the lean years of Striped Bass and the good years also, and it's slipping back towards the lean again. I have fished Long Island N.S. shores Conn., and N.J. no stripers over 36 should be harvested

There should be a no kill policy during certain peak months like October along with greater enforcement. I have never seen anyone police recreational fishermen. I have been fishing for over 45 years now and most recreational fish caught probably end up in the garbage. We can't just blame the commercial fishery for the decline in the bass population. Recreational fishermen are just as greedy. Why would we take away from the commercial fishermen so the recreational fishermen could kill the fish? Please also add an "I don't know" or "No Opinion" response to your survey questions.

Catch and release is the only way to go. We need strict conservation policies that protect the entire ecosystem.

educate politicians about economic advantages of recreational vs commercial fishery

The recreational angler is the problem right now. We need to stop murdering the big cows that are following the bunker schools. We know we have had bad recruitment years for young of the year stripers. We need to stop killing the breeders!!!!. When the fishery crashed in the 60 the last fish caught were the big fish..We are missing year classes.

I do not have enough scientific knowledge to answer questions 1 - 6. What would the impact of these decisions, if they were made, be to the striped bass population and health?

WHEN BAIT FISHING, IT SHOULD BE ONLY CIRCLE HOOKS. SHOULD ONLY BE ABLE TOO KEEP ONE BASS PER PERSON.IN A SLOT SIZE. 22-28 INCH FISH. WHICH SHOULD BE FOR THE EAST COAST FROM MA TOO FLS.

i think that the recreational fisherman are potentially equally if not more responsible for the decline in the fishery. also, there is likely a cyclical component. smaller slots and few fish for the recreational fisherman i believe will help the fishery.

It is linked to menhaden management.

save the menhaden

Need more data on poaching, and it's effects. Are the penalties stiff enough, and what can we do to stop it.

No

all states should have the same rules& regulations

I've been fishing for Stripers for over 50 years.Over the past 5 years say, I've seen a dramatic decline in large fish.They are definitely in trouble again.Just like the 80's.

No

fishing for striped bass should be catch and release only and no commercial harvest period...

Make it a GAME FISH!!

ASMFC should acknowledge the sentiments of the fishing public by enacting legislation that reflects these wants. The reaction of ASMFC does not appear to care what the fishing public wants.

Game fish now

Slot limit 24-28"

Fund enforcement better

enforcement hotline out on water so we can call in poachers

We must protect the forage on which the stripers exist I have noticed more and more malnourished stripers recently i.e. large head slender body I'm glad to see that the ASMFC has done something about the harvesting of bunker. It's a step in the right direction.

Not so sure about the "buy out the current commercial fishery" Regulate yes.

I seem to be seeing less smaller stripers, and the same number of large stripers

Increase fines for undersize fish possession. Make it real steep. Something like \$100 per inch for under 20 inches, and \$50 per inch for over 20 inches but not legal size.

Everyone who is in the management program of striped bass at the present time should be fired. Striped bass management at the present time is a joke. This fish needs to be made a Federal game fish on both coasts of the United States. The enforcement of the new laws must be made harsh enough to make the first time violators pay a heavy penalty . A \$1000.00 per fish should work. Commercial and Recreational fishermen shall be made subject to these penalties. Also there should and must be a maximum size limit for Striped bass in place. I 'm tired of seeing these recreational fishermen keeping 45lbs and larger fish. The size limit should be made at 42 inches. If you want to win a fishing contest take a pitchure.

Enforce gill net laws and caps on menhaden

We need to make Stripers a game fish now, before we make the same old mistakes. We should put additional pressure on our elected leaders to end the needless killing of Bass, both Commercial and Recreational.

Consideration should be given to protecting striper "breeder" stock by putting an upper limit on size of fish caught. Similar rules are used on other species of fish caught in other states i.e. Oregon/sturgeon

forage fish that stripers eat needs to be part of the management plan

I have been fishing the same water, at sunrise, many days a week, for 20 years, from my small boat. No one, guide or not, is there as much as I am year in and year out. The past two years have had a serious, and I mean serious, decline in the number of fish caught despite tons of bait in the water. I am not a scientist and do not know if a slot limit is good or bad for the stock. I catch and release 100% but it would be nice to be able to keep a schoolie now and then for the dinner table. My son wants to try Striper (that WE catch) but no way am I going to kill a big fish for that.

Make it a "game" fish

I believe Pat Augustine of NY who was appointed by the Governor has mismanaged the striped bass just to help the commercial fisherman. I would like to see him replaced by someone who has the recreational fisherman's best interest.

IN NEW YORK STATE, CUT THE DAILY TAKE BACK TO ONE FISH PER DAY.

I believe that the striped bass regulations should be 1 small fish for consumption (18" - 28") and 1 trophy fish over 40".

At 64 I'm still at it and it's great fun! We need to protect this resource for generations to come. Make it a game Fish!

I was in Chinatown in NYC a month ago and there was a table loaded with schoolies. Is anything being done about this?

limiting charter/party boats to one fish each and the end to all commercial take

this year has been the best year ever in the Barnegat NJ area. We had a nice long run of large 25+ lbs bass in the spring and another shot at these fish in early October. And now the fall bite has been insane with fish of all year classes represented.

I think you should work to end all of the netting by commercial fishermen. I would be in favor of a stamp that would buy out any form of indiscriminate gear. Go back to Rod/reel commercial fishing and watch all the fish stocks rebound.

Is there anything we can do to implement a re-stocking program like the snook program in Florida and the White Seabass program in California?
Bag limit should be one fish per trip. No fish should be taken over 35"

Gamefish Status now!
catch and release only

I would like to see stripers become game fish status.
protect baitfish

Make yo yoinng illegal also

I believe in what you guys are trying to do and will continue to support the organization but have little hope for the survival of striped bass in the future.
I also wonder about the record YOY numbers from the state of of maryland after all the concern about over harvesting and a series of bad spawning years. Guess it means commercials can continue the slaughter.

Reduce the daily limit to one keeper.

There is wholesale violation of the EEZ restriction off Southern NJ. Charter boats and recreational anglers regularly take charters and harvest stripers. there is no effective enforcement of these rampant violations.

Way too many big stripers being taken. Need to limit the number of large fish taken every year

I don't fish a lot for stripers anymore. I catch one for every three times I try. I can better guarantee a friend to catch a shark than a striper while fishing
I think you should only be able to keep one fish over 28 inches.

I would also be in favor of eliminating the keeping of any fish until the stocks have stabilized.

there appeared to be a slight increase in the return of river herring this spring. however, the juvenile mnhaden are notably absent in late summer / fall relative to a short number of years ago.

5 trips this fall = 1 under sized striped bass

Continued decline of striper catches at all sites and seasons in my area suggests we are taking too many fish, breeder population is overfished or lack of forage fish (menhaden are essentially gone this year). Probably all of the above. Schoolie runs are declining fast. Tighter management needs to be implemented immediately.

Will I be too old to fish for them when and if they return?

Enforce current and future laws. Way too many shorts being taken. Periodic check points at Sandy Hook and Island Beach State Park would be help to fix the menhaden over harvesting in the Chesapeake Bay

I would answer yes to #7 if you could seperate out the real commercial fisherman, not the rec guy with a striper permit who is killing the resource 30 fish at a time.

The commercial fishery has managed itself into the hole! So why should private fisherman, who already support other parts of the industry, be made to pay for them to stop? The right thing to do would be to put stricter regulations and tighter enforcement on the commercial fishery! That would be a SB MANAGEMENT WHAT'S THAT?? LIKE BLUEFIN STRIPED BASS WILL BECOME ENDANGERED.

I do use circle hooks often, and no barbs always. I, however, think its crazy that people who are using treble hooks are releasing short fish, and we think they will survive. Also, the big fish we keep are the successful breeders. We should be keeping short fish.

Please stop these meat boats from keeping large Striped Bass, the female fish that should be laying thousands of eggs. Allow a smaller slot fish to be kept instead to discourage killing the trophy fish.

I am a flyfisherman. My catch has significantly reduced. I catch and release almost everything if possible. I take 1 or 2 fish per year.

absolutely the most irrasponsible management hands down

Fishing on the Kennebec, 2011, was a complete bust.

I've also fished from Sagaponic, Montauk and Amaganset, NY with fairly good results. The problem is that I've also seen complete disregard for rules by the recreational fishermen in NY.

ENFORCEMENT ON COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL

I would like to see more data on recreational catch...size, season, effort, year over year etc. compared with commercial catch, size, season, etc.

Disallow tournaments and contests that are depleting the population of large fish. Recreational fishin is not competetive, has nothing to do with winning prizes, and is destroying the fishery, as competing anglers often are scored by the two largest strieprs they kill, i.e. a 20 and 35 pounder equal

I'm a fly fisherman, and what I have noticed the most over the past 3-4 years is the sharp decline in fish under 26 inches, the spawning fish of the the school fish were much heavier than normal for the same length this year (many more sand ells than last few years)

catch and release all

its fine as is

work hard to clean up the Chesapeake. Restrict commercial harvest in Va,NJ,Ma and NYS

I think there should be more policing of spear fishing for stripers...i see it ever time i go out and i call the poachers hotline and i never see anything done about itthank you

We continue to overfish our best breeders. We need regulations allowing a minimum and maximum size. I think what would conserve the stock best and the current level is 2 fish 24 to 40 inches. All bigger fish released.

Little can happen until there is Rec fish harmony

on the entire East coast

In our Cuttyhunk Fishing outings there have been fewer fishes caught during the last 3-5 years , especially in the fall.

shouldn't question #6 say "When and If" and why didn't you provide a 0% option for that answer?

The bass situation is clearly worse than in the past years- yet the Commercial reduction was not passed- i believe it stayed the same. We need to eliminate recreational and commercial killing of this fish. Barbless single hooks, circles, we have to try something.

It sucks. It promotes killing the size fish it should be protecting

I've fished much less often because of the declining catch rate I've experienced in the past few years. It's no longer worth the time it takes to prepare boat and equipment given the condition of the fishery.

Any limits or changes to the striper fishing is useless without going after less Manhaden harvesting. I noticed next to none in Narragansett bay this past season due to the draggers allowed to tow at the mouth of the bay.

Better enforcement, I have seen none at all ever, folks sell their catch and keep small fish.

Why keep the big fish? Pictures etc? The smaller fish are the better eaters. More catch & release marketing.

I have seen a dramatic decrease in stripers, over cosecutive years, the last five years in Rhode Island. Help!

Get poitical money out of the science of management of the strioped bass.

Difficult to answer these questions because there isn't anywhere to say that I favor no keeping at all, commercial or recreational, of striped bass. Catch and release only.

take 1 or 2 smaller schoolies per season, save the rest

Part of the problem as I see it (and its growing) is too many fishermen and lobstermen are ignoring the three mile limit and taking many big bass from these waters. Where is the enforcement of the Federal waters?

No more FEES in a FREE country !

nj allows 2 fish over 28" plus 1 over 28 with a bonus permit a slot fish would save 1 breeding fish per day and allow some who don't fish a lot 1 for I don't mind if recreational fishermen keep one fish per trip, but no more than this. If so, this should be a slot, as it is in Maine.-- I keep records, and although the fish I now catch are a bigger than five years ago, my numbers are down precipitously. -- My use of circle hooks, beginning about a decade ago, has brought the percentage of mouth-hooked stripers on bait to the same as my %'s with artificials.

How do we change our state representatives on the ASMFC as they do not believe in the raw facts of the decline in the striped bass fishery? In fact, they have done very little to improve fishing and the fish populations in general!

Relative to #9, educate rather than require, we are slowly getting there anyway and rules/laws are already too excessive.

Regarding question 8, I feel that we should reduce the buy out \$ amount but keep some amount for enforcement.

we need to be able to fish outside of 3 mile limit

We have seen a dearth of schoolie sized bass suggesting that there was poor recruitment over the last several years. This is consistent with juvenile census figures from the Chesapeake Bay over the last few years. Changing regulations to allow taking smaller fish, but not the larger breeding females, may help increase recruitment. That is why I favor changing the keeper size limit on stripers.

Also, Stripers Forever should promote EFFECTIVE catch and release methods through a concerted education campaign. Many of the stripers I have seen caught and released were likely to have much reduced survivorship due to rough handling and exhaustion. While catch and release is a good goal, if done poorly it may have an adverse effect in that more fish are killed than if the angler had just taken "one for the grill".

Use common sense!!! Increase the keeper size bass limit to bigger fish so the smaller fish have a chance to spawn. Use circle hooks whenever possible. Practice catch and release.

In place of a slot limit I would prefer the Canadian rules for Atlantic Salmon. Any fish up to 25"(a grilse) can be taken with a quantity limit. Any striper over this number must be returned to the water.

Please do something to protect the harvesting of Bunker.

Limit the number and size charters can take. More catch and release of "trophy" fish.

Let the big females go.

the penalty for possession of undersize fish should be enforced and much stronger.

Need to lower commercial quota.

We need much more forceful steps to reverse the drastic decline in the striped bass population. The Western Long Island Sound fishery is almost totally gone, in my view.

Slot fish only! Throw back the juvenials throw back the breaders, harvest the slot fish ONLY! It worked to bring back snook and red fish!

NO

Myself and many others witness the illegal poaching of striped bass on the shores of the Merrimack river. This is done by large droves of mostly Asians. I would suggest stronger law enforcement as well

Your slot question should have more options .

36" to 40" would be my preference.

no

we need to conserve this fishery at all costs-I want to fish with my grandson some day

3 fish per man per day from a vessel. One fish per man per day from land. This would help the fishery & the charter Capt's

Yes - you don't provide for people - like me - who think there should be a total ban on striped bass taking until the stock show a healthy rebound. This includes recreational fisherman who kill way too many fish an often see themselves as innocent bystanders to the problem.

If SF wants circle hooks for bait fishing, then it ought to want circle hooks for all types of fishing, fly included. Otherwise the regulation is unenforceable and thus meaningless.

I fished less this season, but the times I did go, I saw bigger fish. This was also true because most of my fishing was done off of Chatham before the comm guys slaughter the area during commercial season. Seals in that area are also hammering the fishery? It will continue to be a huge battle to overcome the commercial interest, but I do think a slot limit and tighter regs on who is "comm" would be an improvement. I would also think the by-catch problem will continue, but would have a nice effect if changes could be made on the areas that could be dragged. Thanks.

A slot limit and circle hooks are in everyone's best interest.

We are right back to 1980. Can't get much worse.

No take of large fish; circle hooks required for flies.

circle hooks only and stop this ridiculous catch and release fishery there is no need to sit on a chum pot and bail stripers for two to four hours just to brag about all the fish you can catch.. Keep your one or two for the table and be done with it.

Just make it ILLEGAL to sell striped Bass & what's taking so long to do this ?

the fall run is gone, the season is now 5/15-7/15

I see way too many big fish being kept by charter boats just to show off. Can a family of 4 really eat 8 30 lb stripers? I also know many of them sell them to restaurants.

ASMFC not meeting it's obligation to protect the resource.

Stop the trophy season in the spring when the large females are spawning.

I am fine with the stamp idea, would actually like to see an additional "trophy tag" along the same lines as a deer tag, fishermen could buy for a fee and once a season use on a trophy Bass, this would keep fishermen from high grading. High grading is also why I am against the slot limit idea, if only one bass above say 36" is allowed, then a guy catches a 36 or 37" keeps it and later gets a 47", the 36" goes back in dead..... at least with 2 over a certain amount a guy fishes and keeps one knowing he can still catch a bigger one. Lastly if we just enforced the current limits better we would make something must be done to put teeth in the enforcement of poaching. Poaching is rampant and a real problem. The poaching being done in the EEZ off of the Carolina's is doing serious damage to the wintering breeding stocks.

try banning the use of wire and lead core line as that is no sport just reeling in meat. try going after the electric reel guys east of Chatham. I would prefer a limit on the maximum size of striper, to save the large breeders. I'm a big advocate of catch and release. We are heading in the wrong direction again, as increased fishing pressure is depleting this great fishery.

Catch and release

Great job!

Recommend lures have at max one treble hook and all lure hooks barbless. 3 trebles with barbs on bomber lures destroys gills on shorts some of the coast should be patrolled better to keep the netters from sneaking in so close to shore at night with their lights off. See it all the time. crush the barb on all hooks

I am a hard core recreational striper fisherman, fishing both off land and I own a boat. You can provide whatever data you want to me but I know for a fact that the striper population is declining. Every year I catch less fish and I have better knowledge and better gear. It's getting to the point that I sometimes change my mind about going fishing because of the lack of success that I have trying to catch fish.

End the Phony Commercial Fishing

Need to pay more attention to the forage fish that striped bass feed on. ie. menhaden, sand eels

If SF can not get total Gamefish status legislation passed for striped bass it should consider gamefish status for any striped bass above 40" to protect the largest breeding fish from harvest/exploitation.

Keep up the good work.

seven fish per year must use tags, any size, that's limit

this year in RI was the worst Oct 15th to the 22 on the beach never caught ONE striper???? the next week my friends got 5 in a week's time---not

STOP THE KILLING OF LARGE BREEDING STRIPERS!

Encourage releasing larger fish, keep a schooly instead

As always Brad you continue to work for the betterment of the striper fishing in all states....Thanks for all you do....F-Man...out.

We must also make a better effort to protect the bait fish on which stripers feed.

Even though they can't harvest the striped bass, the commercial mortality rate is high on striped bass. I have seen it for myself. The menhaden netters always take bass out of the loop by killing them.

One tag per angler per year for fish over 41" .

Fishing has been so bad the past few years that I sold my boat and did not fish once this year for striped bass

Your statement in the e-mail For most of us another striper fishing season is over is wrong. The timing could not be worse for this statement.

Bring back the slot limit

less commercial fishing is the only way !

Maine's current slot limit encourages bait fishermen to target small fish, mishandle them and create high mortality. I see the floaters downstream from the bridges. They want the largest slot fish possible and cull the others roughly, the law of unintended consequences. drb

no kill policy for the at least 10 years

To much management, especially in Rhode Island, leads to corruption,

I have been fishing for Stripers for over 50 years and have seen many changes in the fishery. Many of your questions make no sense at all as every year is different and has been for as long as I have fished. When I started in the 50's any fish over 24 inches was a trophy, and if you caught 10 bass a year you had a great year. Much of the fishing is keyed on the type of bait present in that year. There have been more Bass around than I have ever seen but with the primary bait being Sand Eels around here they rarely show on top, and with so many "fisherman" just riding around and looking for bent rods, cars, and breaking fish without stopping to fish they say there are no bass. It's been a Great year and still going strong.

I think instead of worrying about circle hooks it would be better to ban gaffing stripers. I have photos of jetties covered with bleeding bass in the 20 to 40 lb range that can't be released, and that are still laying there the next morning for the beach cleaning crew to throw in the dumpster.

Control club tournaments where bass are weighed in for points and then thrown into the dumpster behind the tackle shop.

While I realize that commercial fishing is a problem recreational anglers have a lot of their own baggage to clean up first.

As far as any kind of fee or stamp goes, if you think that throwing more money is the answer to any of these problems you are dead wrong. The money NEVER goes where it was intended or "earmarked" but always ends up being wasted, for administrative costs hiring staff or used for whatever the powers that be feel like using it.

By the way, as far as the wonderful saltwater registration program is concerned that required all of us to register so that the Feds. had a list to call so they could gather all this accurate "DATA". I'm still waiting for my phone call.

There are a lot of 10 to 15 inch stripers in the surf, many 8-15 inch stripers in the Navesink and Shrewsbury Rivers and a great spawn in Chesapeake Bay. The future looks good so don't get crazy pushing for needless regulation and legislation.

Large Breeder age "Ladies" [over 30"] should be left alone for several yrs.

just stop commercial fishing

Commercial fishing and poor NOAA leaders are destroying the fisheries for striped bass as in any measure politics destroys everything perhaps we should eliminate congress and let the people vote on the issues the president proposes.

hire more wardens
stop net harvest of bass

I'm a charter captain. In my perfect world there is no commercial take, and the rec limit is two fish between 28 and 34, or one bigger than 34" if none in the slot have been taken. Circle hooks (including octopus style, which I use) required for bait fishing. I only use circles and haven't gut hooked a bass

Release the big ones in the spring
need laws for bait shop bunker netters

I say "No" to paying \$25 for a special striped bass stamp, but would agree to pay \$10.

Until the population is restored to healthy levels, party/charter boats should be limited in some way. For ex. Captains, or their customers, should be required to purchase tags for each kept fish to encourage anglers to return fish, and fund commercial buy out.

Stamp fee reviewed after say a five year sunset clause?

Until the commercial fishing industry stops sleeping with certain politicians (like here in MD), the number of rockfish will be drained like it was back in I believe rec.limits should be managed by available year class structures with changes made every according to YOY studies. For instance, when two very bad classes are approaching the current limit, change the limit to protect the year class. Complicated, yes, but would help to sustain a fishable populations of striped bass. Regulators take the easy programs of setting limits and then sit on them for years, thereby letting weak year classes to be Fisheries management hasn't a clue as to what is really happening. AS US!!!!

Ban commercial menhaden harvest and all bait fish harvest.

I think allowing for a smaller Striper to be added to the bag limit, many fishermen like myself would keep a deep or gut hooked undersized fish as part of their daily creel limit. I do use circle 80% of the time, but still have an occasional deep hooked fish, that I know has a lesser chance of survival.

This years catch is llarger

start to manage NOW

Keep up the (your) good work

More dep checking for poachers that that are by lingual .

We must protect the breeders! Also, we must protect menhaden, herring and elvers.

I Fly Fish only and do not kill Striped Bass, I would like to see less killed by everyone, not just commercials. Circle hooks don't work with flies! I think they are good when bait fishing.

The recreational limit should be ONE fish. Charter boats too. This is the only possible, legitimate and fair measure.

The Striper is the ultimate fish for inshore fishermen as well as beach fishermen. A lot of money is generated by those who equip themselves to catch it. Recreational Striper fishing far outweighs Commercial Striper fishing in contributing to our State's economy. It's long overdue that commercial harvest of this be stopped.

Current regulations on Recreational Fishing are all wrong, forcing the harvest of mature fish that have greater reproduction value. Smaller fish, if allowed, would preserve this breeding stock.

no hook and line commercial fishery anywhere

I found some of the questions were not well designed and wonder if they were field-tested. Given the poor fishing, I am not sure any "keepers" should be allowed for a time. The questions did not allow me to express this.

Stripers should be gamefish, catch and release only

What about the commercial netters and the by-catch problem?

Even with a slot limit, there must be provision to keep a trophy - maybe one per year.

outlaw downriggers and treble hooks for trolling on migratory egg bearing fish. allow flatlining only with single hooks for trolling and limit line class usage to prevent intentional snagging and dragging on spawning fish, there are too many bandits raping the fishery when we should only be worrying about the commercial damage/loss unfortunately many people are abusing the hudson river fishery by culling fish and snagging with downriggers

I think the recreational limit should be one fish per day. Striper management also needs to be tied to preserving forage fish like bunker.

Anecdotal evidence from shore fishermen like myself is interesting but local changes in bait fish distribution from year to year makes a huge difference in my catch rate. Also I don't fish with any regularity so take my survey with a grain of salt. I wish there were better data on fish spawning runs and spawning success rate so at least we'd get a better understanding of the potential stock of stripers. I'd support a program that looked at this aspect of fisheries conservation. The commercial harvest can definitely deplete or devastate the population of stripers, but banning the commercial harvest really is a simplistic solution. Yes, I believe it would be an effective way of protecting the fishery. On the other hand there is likely a sustainable level of harvest, that should be the target quota for both commercial and recreational fishers. FWIW, I kept one legal fish this year (30") from MA waters

too few EPOs

too few EPOs

Circle hooks do NOT work for fly fishing. PERIOD. End of discussion. Even if Circle hook use was made mandatory I would risk prosecution. I fish barbless and catch and release ONLY and catch 100's of fish per year and have never hurt a fish with standard hooks.

For the past two years I have caught zero Stripers from the Tidal River I have been fishing with a flyrod for the last fifteen years. I previously caught at least 200 Striped Bass per year (May and June) from that same river. Bass smaller than sixteen inches appear to have disappeared all together from Branford. We saw no significant numbers of Stripers this year until the end of October out on Long Island Sound. Usually we can count on the Bass being around from August till November.

keep what you can consume

Enforcement is crucial. That's why I favor the stamp.

Game fish status. Limit recreational take to one fish per day.

Given the current state of the striper decline in the Chesapeake Bay, I would even support the establishment of another moratorium in order for the population to recover.

Bass need large bait, a food source. Steps should be taken to protect pogies from commercial harvest

I think that the slot limit is a great way of control. But I do not know what the size should be. There should be input from someone more

When can we expect the Striper Registry to begin to yield more realistic data? Are they using it now to do better surveys or is this just another tax? limit the big ones that are killed in the Spring. Soon Please !!!!

End commercial fishing. We should move more strongly to protect menhaden and end their commercial exploitation.

The fishery is headed toward another crash, you just cannot keep putting this much pressure on them. It is especially disturbing that Mass. and NC are still allowed a commercial harvest.

Better enforcement of the laws against poaching.

Every commercial guy should fly fish

I did not bother to fish this year for stripers, because the yield is so low relative to effort and expense (gas, gear, long trips, etc.). That is the first time in over thirty years I have not fished for striped bass. This fishery has already collapsed in Maine and will continue to collapse progressively further. Thank you for all you're doing. The stamp is a good idea, but consider what DU and Delta Waterfowl are trying to achieve by raising the cost.. \$25 should be the low end of the price.

fight all commercial bass fishing

In my experience, spring striped bass fishing is as strong as ever and on the whole the fish are getting bigger every year. This year in NJ the fall fishing is the best it's been in many years with a lot more keeper sized fish in the mix. I want to clarify about slot fish... I am in favor of being able to take 1 fish between 24 - 28" and one over 28" nothing else. I think NJ should do away with bonus tags and I think circle hooks are a great idea!

End the trophy season and save those big fish. Also save the menhaden

Let's also reduce the take of Menhaden to help improve the health of the ocean and the health of the overall fishery

Worst year ever for striper fishing in the surf. I fish Montauk Point, NY and we had only 2 days where there were fish. The rest of Long Island did not fare much better.

Thank you for all of your hard work Brad! Greatly appreciated!

I have seen a dramatic decline in any striper catching over the past 5 years.

Additional enforcement of current laws and monitoring of commercial and recreational fisheries is required for striped bass.

All cows have to be released. If caught severe fine. Other option is to shut down bass fishing completely for 3 to 5 years

one/day is adequate

Management decisions should be more conservative given the poor input data.

I would favor an entirely no-kill recreational-only fishery right now to let the striped bass recover from their current state of depletion, and then implement a slot limit that is very restrictive at first...

stop netting in the patapsco river.it is polluted

some of the questions don't have answers/options that allow me to express my opinions.

stripers should be a game fish in this state -NC.

'catch & release' as most fly fishers already do; and why trout fishing remains so good.

The population is obviously in trouble. The management folks are in denial. What will it take to get action? We will wind up with another moratorium

Make it a game fish and print the name of legislators responsible for preventing this measure

I kayak fish and have noticed that the number of fish and the size of fish goes down every year. Used to see boils of bunker, not any more. I always catch and release, only keep a fish if it would die otherwise, use popping plugs and T-man tubes, flatten the barbs and try to do as little damage as possible to the fish. Conservation measures need to be taken not only on stripers, but baitfish as well.

Stop the commercial and party boat slaughter!

There should be an increased presence of fish and game police to cull the poaching of stripers and other game fish, plus spot visits on the party boats and marinas of personal water crafts.

I believe that we need to go back to a one fish 36" limit across the board if the recs don't admit there needs to be a change then there will never be a change made by asmfs I'd like no kill but it will never happen all you can do is practice what you preach and take no fish

We noticed fewer numbers of striped bass in the Kennebec this year, and the small year-classes of fish seemed to be missing, causing our average fish to be "larger".

I feel that rear treble hooks on plugs do more damage than J hooks used by bait fishermen. The problem with J hooks is not the hook - it is the fishermen 'dead sticking' and not paying attention. If one holds the rod in their hand gut hooking rarely happens.

Tournaments hurt as well. During the LBI derby, the minimum size is 34" - prime breeding size. We also need to police ourselves better and manage the creel limit. Two-a-day is two, not two in the morning and two at night.

States involved in serve poaching should be penalized with both their Commercial and recreational harvest quota. Aside from that I'm 100% for a slot limit and a 1 fish limit to help replenish the depleted fishery.

Put a top end limit on regs, anything over 45 inches has to go back.

A slot limit is detrimental to the success of the stripers future. All big fish should be released to ensure future breeding stocks