

WHY GET THE LEGISLATURE INVOLVED IN WILD STRIPED BASS OVERSIGHT/MANAGEMENT?

The answers are self-evident and the policy-based solution is very simple

Background: Currently all marine fisheries regulatory decisions regarding wild striped bass are determined by a majority vote of the Governor appointed, Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MMFAC). The MMFAC is a nine member board that was intended to represent commercial and recreational fishing interests EQUALLY according to Arthur Brownell, the former Commissioner of Natural Resources in Massachusetts and the man instrumental in creating the MMFAC.

However, **EVERY MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION BUT ONE IS EITHER A COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN HIMSELF OR IS FINANCIALLY, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, INVOLVED IN ONE OR MORE ASPECTS OF THE COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY!!!** The following PROOF is taken from the MMFAC web site:

- 1) **Mark Amorello**, Chairman. Mark has a charter boat and a commercial tuna and lobster business.
- 2) **Vito Calomo**, Vice-Chairman. Vito is a third generation commercial fisherman.
- 3) **Chuck Casella**, Clerk. Chuck is a charter boat captain (and a commercial striper fisherman ed).
- 4) **Bill Adler**. Bill heads up the Commercial Lobsterman's Association.
- 5) **Joseph Huckemeyer**. Joe is the owner/operator of a charter and party boat company.
- 6) **Raymond W. Kane, II**. Ray is the owner of a commercial lobster and groundfishing vessel.
- 7) **Edward Nasser**. Ed has worked for over 35 years in the commercial fishing industry.
- 8) **John Pappalardo**. John is the CEO for the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association.
- 9) **J. Randy Sigler**. Randy remains active as a commercial fisherman and seafood dealer.

Their collective commercial bias continues to support what is a very limited, commercial, striped bass industry. **They blindly do so at the expense and decline of a recreational industry that used to be 20 times more valuable to the economy of the Commonwealth.** Because of the make-up of the MMFAC, the wise use of our limited resources takes a back seat to market-based prejudice and commercial exploitation – especially when it comes to wild stripers - and it is costing our Commonwealth many millions of dollars.

Fact: according to NOAA, in Massachusetts the recreational catch of striped bass is down 84%! Yet, according to the MMFAC, the million pounds plus MA commercial harvest remains “untouchable” and without blame. The MMFAC foxes are in charge of the chicken coop and under their watch striper numbers are crashing! **The legislature must step in and re-define the management policy - not manage but set policy - governing wild striped bass** if these fish and the multi-million dollar recreational fishing economy they used to support are ever to recover.

The simple, **policy-based solution** is for the legislature to pass a Bill declaring that wild striped bass are to be regulated as a game only species and direct the MA Division of Marine Fisheries to manage them for their greatest social and economic worth to the Commonwealth..... just as many other states have already done. **Let the professionals at the DMF determine the best ways to implement this legislative, policy directive.** There is no need for the legislature to become involved other than to give the Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries a redefined, striped bass policy directive. It's as simple as that.