



The results of the Stripers Forever 2018 Annual Fishing Survey are finalized, and you can view all of the results on the SF at this [LINK](#). For 2018 we received 450 responses to our annual survey. The survey has again produced a good representative sampling of sentiments from fishers all along the striper's migratory range, and as usual MA and NJ vied for the greatest contributions with 114 and 112 completed surveys respectively. NY had 56, RI 44, and ME 46. 85% of our respondents had more than 10 years of experience fishing for striped bass.

2018 saw the reversal of what had been a tiny uptick in angler catch statistics. In 2015 and 2016 the percentage of anglers who said that they caught fewer or many fewer stripers per hour declined a little each year. Overall, angler sentiment was still quite negative, but it was improving. In 2017 that improvement stopped, and in 2018 anglers reported catching less striped bass for the time they put in fishing.

In all but one year of the last 7 anglers reported catching smaller striped bass. This seems to be a long term trend and certainly suggests to us that current regulations put too much pressure on large striped bass.

Answers to questions about the need for a slot limit allowing smaller-sized stripers show that our members continue to believe we should not be harvesting large, breeding stripers, and that they want to set aside a high percentage of the current commercial catch for conservation – and not harvest it themselves. Because of the need to fit a large, commercial quota into the overall striped bass plan regulators must suppress angler harvest. Regulators do that by adopting a high recreational minimum size like 28 inches so that most anglers will seldom be able to catch a keeper. The smaller stripers that the recreational anglers are prohibited from keeping, though, are instead gill-netted by commercial fishermen.

82% of our members – up slightly from 77% in 2016 - said that they are willing to buy a stamp to finance the buyout of the commercial fishery.

We had survey results from only 47 guides 2018. This is a very valuable industry. About 94% of the guide responses were that catching a lot of striped bass was either somewhat or very important to their clients. The guides know how to fish their areas, and can usually produce the best results possible from their home waters. If you are thinking about a guided trip please check out the guides and tackle shops listed on the Stripers Forever website. If you don't see your favorite guide listed on our website just send us an e-mail at stripers@stripersforever.org. and let us know about it. The listing is free.

We will send this information to the press and 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.

If you have any questions about the survey please don't hesitate to e-mail us at: stripers@stripersforever.org

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