



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Stripped bass changes**

1 message

.com&gt;

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 8:10 AM

to: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I'm in full support with the DNR changes. But I think commercial fishing for strippers should also stop during April also. No need for the recreational anglers to stop targeting them, if the commercial guys are hauling them out in truck loads. DNR needs to stop worrying about the economics and start worrying about the Natural Resources!!!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**striped bass regs**

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 8:40 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

>

To whom....It is not good science to close catch and release when the survivability is at it's best (97%) and allow open fishing during the summer when everything caught DIES (0%).

Please close the season for 30 days during July and/or August and allow a restricted catch and release season.

EVERYONE fishing must make some sacrifices to insure the future.

Thanks ,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Regs

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 9:14 AM

I agree with the proposed changes, esp. banning early-season catch and release. It serves no purpose and adversely affects mortality.

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:03 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

As an avid recreational angler I support:

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.
2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.

As an avid recreational angler I **do not** support:

1. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

Sent from my iPhone





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Changes Proposed Good**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:22 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear DNR. I am a field biologist who focuses on birds. So my comments below reflect my personal experiences as an avid kayak fisherman.

I think the proposed regs sound very good (pasted at the end - hook rules, May 1 start, no targeted 3/1-4/30). I hear from more senior kayak fishermen that numbers seem to be as low as the moratorium years from 20-30 years ago. Catch and release is such an amazing recreational opportunity for Marylanders and out of state fisherman it makes so much sense to work to build numbers for both recreational and economic benefits.

I would really hope you might consider a slot limit for keepers - say just allowing 20-30" keepers for easy round numbers. If all fish say >30 inches had to be released, that could really help increase breeding potential of the population. Or even consider closing the trophy season as VA did. Maryland has such a great reputation for stewardship of our natural resources that it seems a shame to look bad compared to VA in this regard. Just my opinion.

Thank you for all you all do at DNR. It is such important work for the state and the Chesapeake region.

PS Please contact me if anyone would like more info or feedback from me. (

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**

COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10

The department is considering:

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.
2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.
3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

-  View the Summary and Compliance Guide

1/9/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Striped Bass Changes Proposed Good

- Submit comments to [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov) no later than 11:59 p.m. November 10, 2019.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:42 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The MD DNR has been tasked with reducing striped bass mortality by 18%. It seems that your best 3 part plan to get there thus far is as follows:

- 1) Do nothing in regards to size limits/creel/boat limits/hook restrictions. Maintain the status quo.
- 2) Move the start date of trophy season back by one week.
- 3) Close a cold water, 60 day catch and release only season during which it is already illegal to intentionally kill or mishandle a fish of any size. This fishing activity has a documented post-release mortality rate of approximately 1%.

Please reach out to me directly and explain how it's mathematically possible to achieve an 18% mortality reduction with this plan?

Thank you,

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**C&R**

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 11:21 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The proposal to close C&R for striped bass is ludicrous. Your own studies reflect only a 1 % mortality rate during the March/April season. How could you possibly even consider this measure? This is truly a politically motivated gesture and is a terrible idea.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass regulatory changes

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 11:18 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I am an avid kayak fisherman (retired from work) and fish two or more times per week. I use only single in-line replacement hooks (barbless) on all my hard baits and do not bait fish for Striped Bass. I have not harvested a Striped Bass in 2019. Not a single fish- all catch and release. Caught hundreds of Stripers, released unharmed to fight again. If you are serious about saving the fishery- cut out the trophy season, no harvest at all during the spawning season- none, commercial as well as recreational. This is like farmers eating their seed corn.  
Thank you for considering my comments.

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Latest striped bass proposals**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 11:44 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

To whom it may concern,

I'm shocked at the latest DNR proposals for reducing striped bass harvest/dead discards. As a local guide on the bay I've seen the striper decline year over year for the last 10 years! This proposal seems disingenuous at best.

Why would you close March and April completely but leave the summer months unchanged? Not only are thousands more people fishing in the summer months but low oxygen and higher water temps drastically increase striped bass mortality rates.

There are not a lot of anglers or guides targeting striped bass in March and early April. Furthermore, bay conditions during those months actually support a healthy catch and release fishery.

The proposals just do not add up. Nothing that's been suggested will do anything to get striped bass back on track. Charter captains can barely even catch spawning stock fish in the spring anymore so delaying the start of "trophy" season will have little to no impact as well.

I cannot possibly see the ASMFC signing off on these proposals.

Thanks

A very concerned captain.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass scoping comments**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 12:17 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

In short your proposed plan is silly and a mockery of the problems that I have been commenting on for the last 10 years.

1. The striped bass is suffering from over harvesting period.
2. Reduce commercial and recreational harvest equally
3. Do so by closing gill net season
4. Do so by closing the fishery by emergency declaration when water temperature reaches 80 degrees
5. Eliminate bait fishing, turn it into artificial and fly fishing only
6. Close harvest from January 1 thru May 16th for all user groups.

Comment:

Prohibiting catch and release fishing during the cool water of April and May does not seem to make scientific sense. I would like to see the science behind that thought.

Question:

What percentage of delayed mortality occurs from catch and release fishing during those months?

If you do not reduce total harvest by all user groups you will not fix the issues.

A dead fish can not reproduce whether if its caught by gill netters in December or by hook in July.

I can be reached for interview.

Sincerely

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S8 Active, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripped Bass

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 12:46 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I believe the changes would help keep the catching of pre spawn fish to a minimum . Great idea. I never go out until NDR fishing report says that the water temperature is such that the fish have spawned. I also like the idea of no catch and release, kills a lot of fish.

Sent from my iPad





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Fwd: Proposed Fisheries Regulations from a Charter Boat Captain and Guide**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 1:09 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Maryland DNR,

The proposed regulation changes for Striped Bass for 2020 are minimal and are to me a joke. If you seriously want to improve the fishery and protect a resource that is worth millions of dollars to all those who are fortunate enough to fish on the Chesapeake Bay than it is time to get serious. First off, moving Spring Trophy season back a week or two is a joke. Everyone knows the last 2-3 years on the Bay that Trophy season has been extremely poor both in the North bay and in the Middle Bay region. Very few if any big spawning class fish are being caught with any regularity. Why not instead close the trophy season and instead promote Catch & Release? Look at Redfish and how well they are doing in the southern states. Why? Because there is a slot size and the big fish are protected because they are the true breeding class fish.

It's simple you need to protect those fish that spawn. MD needs to set an example for others to follow. I have guided up on the Susquehanna flats for the last 4 years. If you think that we are hurting fish up there you got to be kidding me. First off the fishing has been terrible and if you are fortunate you may get a few good days every year where there are a few fish around couple that with terrible water conditions from Dam runoff in the spring and even the best anglers struggle to catch fish on a regular basis. Believe me C&R season is not putting a dent into the Striped bass fishery. This idea of closing C&R season seems like a scapegoat try by MDDNR. Everyone knows the mortality rate for fish caught and handled correctly in cold water is extremely low. Consider this if you want make changes to the C&R season:

Outlaw treble hooks and make it mandatory to use single J-hooks, circle hooks, or VMC hooks.

Require all fish have to be released boat side.

Make it mandatory for Anglers to watch a video or get a certificate on how a fish should properly release boat side.

Protect the big fish! Promote C&R all year. And close the Trophy Season down. It's a joke to think a week or two is going to make a big difference. Set up a slot for Summer & Fall. I bet you be amazed at how effective this would be at bringing back the fishery to sustainable levels.

Thanks,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass catch and release

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 1:18 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I feel the fish should be left alone after the close of the regular season, targeting the large pre spawn fish is not necessary. I say leave the fish alone as not to stress them prior to spawning.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripe bass comment recreational

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 1:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Proposed actions seem reasonable considering current status of fishery

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**(no subject)**

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 4:57 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Completely eliminate trophy season. Limit number of lines that can be used on the boat. If it comes down to it limit 1 fish per person.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass recreational

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 5:34 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Have seen a severe decline in size of striped bass in the surf/beach in Ocean City Md and Delaware beaches with the decline of local shad populations. When shad were plentiful in the Susquehanna I caught larger striped bass on a regular basis. Not sure if there is a link.

Thanks for your help!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripped bass

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 6:06 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please stop the striped bass catch and release until May 1 or later.  
Thank you.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational FisheryCOMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**

1 message

Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 7:07 PM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear DNR,

The idea to close striped bass fishing period from March 1 to April 30 is ill-advised and will not have any significant impact on the fish population. Catch and release with artificial lures results in less than 1% mortality in the spring.

For some reason catch and release seems to be the meat fisherman's favorite target to point the finger at. This is simply greed. Catch and release is a viable management tool and its value can easily be seen in other Maryland fisheries (trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, etc.)

Banning Catch and Release is counterproductive to maintaining a healthy fishery and maintaining strong angler participation.

Please reconsider this part of your proposed rules.

Thank you,

Sent from my mobile device. All confidentiality rights reserved

Sent from BlueMail



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass regulations

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 7:35 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hi,

I received an email recently about various proposals related to fisheries regulations. Thank you for all your efforts to solicit input from the public.

I would like to express my support for the closure of the C&R season that has historically preceded the trophy season.

Conversely, I would like to express my disapproval of the opening date change to May 1. I feel that this change would have an adverse affect on Tangier Sound fishermen. As the southern Bay waters warm more quickly than other areas in the Spring, some years the fish have already left the area. Pushing the opening day later, even by a few days, would have a negative effect on this fishery. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Sent from my iPhone





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**striped bass regulation's**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 8:08 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

A successful spawn is most important but your proposed changes are a drop in a bucket. Starting the trophy season one week later will accomplish next to nothing. The same for stopping catch and release from March 1 To May 1. I think the trophy season should be catch and release only. I think there should be a slot limit on rock like there is for red fish. I would ban chumming altogether.

It is time for you to make some meaningful changes that will bring our rock fish back where it needs to be. A large sustainable population of rockfish would benefit everyone in the state. Think of the money that would come in if we had a world class fishery here.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Recreational Striped Bass Proposed Regulations Changes**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 9:34 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Whom it May Concern:

Regarding the three ideas proposed as changes for the upcoming striped bass recreational fishing season:

1. I believe what the science tells us we need to do in the next season: reduce the catch of striped bass by 18 percent. I also believe that the reduction should come equally from the recreational fishery AND the commercial fishery. Therefore, I disagree with the idea of "putting the rules...for the recreational fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years." I believe new rules are needed to ensure an 18 percent reduction in the recreational catch, AS LONG AS THERE IS AN EQUAL REDUCTION IN THE COMMERCIAL CATCH.

2. I AGREE that the recreational and charter boat "trophy season" should be delayed until May 1. In fact, I believe a better idea for the health of the striped bass fishery would be to eliminate the "trophy season" completely. I believe the spawning population should be given every opportunity to survive. I think it is obvious that every pre- or post-spawn female killed during the "trophy season" has a potentially detrimental effect on the biomass of the species.

3. I strongly DISAGREE with the prohibition of catch and release of striped bass from March 1 to April 30. The science has shown that mortality from catch and release in the colder waters of the Bay, typical in March and April, is very low-as low as 3 percent. Alternatively, I suggest a recreational moratorium for a period of time in the summer, perhaps 30 days, when the mortality of undersized fish caught and released in very warm waters is extremely high.

Respectfully submitted,

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped bass regulations**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:05 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

So I normally keep my comments to myself, I try to anyways but these proposals are absolute garbage. Shutting down the cold water months to catch and release stripers fishing in the main bay?? Where mortality is at 1% or less along with the most minimal fishing pressure the species exhibits? That's a cop out for bigger issues. Look, I'm a charter captain, first mate, commercial fisherman, and a recreational angler. I interpret data given through stock assessments and YOY surveys along with coastwide reports and observations through day to day operations to assess the biomass. Cutting back trophy season is a start but id rather see the whole trophy season closed to preserve our big breeders while they spawn in the rivers. To deny cold water month fisheries like the one out of Solomon's and point lookout in the fall and winter is a a bullshit approach to minimizing rec mortality. The damage is done in June and July, period. We have the science to shut down the flats when water temp gets too high, why not the rest of the upper bay??!!

Freshwater and high temperatures kill striped bass, we all know that. All I'm asking is for some backbone to use the science at hand to make the best decision for the fish. Stakeholders aside this whole thing is about the fish, not my business, not anybody else's. Just striped bass. Everybody could stand to use more striped bass in the water. Especially after this years YOY survey we could both agree we don't need anymore terrible spawns or we will be in a world of pain. At this point all I wanna see is a rebound. If that means taking atleast an 18% reduction, increasing the minimum size, dropping the creel to 1 fish, shutting down during the warmer months, then so be it. Please use the available science at hand along with testimony's like mine to make sensible solutions that will make a positive mark to all stakeholders. It's supposed to be about the fish, let's keep it that way.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped bass regs**1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:48 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

You put out all year about hot weather and high water temps as the biggest cause of striped bass mortality. You put out a color coded alert system. Tell me how the proposed spring regs help that. Moving back the season to May 1 is good. But not protecting breeding fish. Make all fish over 35" be released. Most males mature at 35". This really protects the breeders. Also make charters keep only 1 fish over day 40". You have 4 to 10 people on charters going twice a day. This will protect breeders. Everyone can get a picture with the one fish.

Start making science based decisions instead of money/political/lobbying decisions. Get your heads out of the sand.

Get Outlook for iOS



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Proposed Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Sat, Oct 26, 2019 at 10:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I am pleased the department is considering reducing the striped bass harvest in our portion of the Chesapeake Bay. My comments on the proposed recreational fishery regulations:

-I SUPPORT delaying the opening of the Spring Trophy fishery until either the 4th Saturday in April, or May 1. I also RECOMMEND bringing back the Spring Trophy Season size regulations of 2007 or 2015 with a minimum size of 28", a no-take slot of 35" - 41" (2007) or 36" - 40" (2015), a 1 fish per person maximum creel limit, PLUS a 6 fish max boat limit, PLUS no more than 3 of the kept fish can be over the slot size (over 40" or 41").

-I DO NOT SUPPORT keeping the same Summer/Fall regulations as used for 2018/2019 because these regulations do not adequately address Summer recreational fishing mortality. The vast majority of mortality in this fishery occurs in the June 15 -September 15 timeframe when the weather is best (maximum number of fishable days for the most people), the fish are concentrated in the Deale - Baltimore section of the Bay due to dead zones elsewhere (large population who live in comfortable range of the concentrated fish schools), more vacation days are taken in summer (more people go fishing), bait fishing is the most prevalent technique (chumming and live-lining release mortality), and the water is hottest (peak release mortality).

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Summer recreational striped bass fishery on May 16 and close the Summer fishery on July 31. August is when the water is usually at it's hottest and there are the maximum number of alternative species for anglers to target (bottom fishing is good, bluefish and mackerel are showing up, etc.). Waiting until August 1 to close the fishery gives families with children the chance to take them summer rockfishing between the time school ends in June and the Summer fishery ends on July 31.

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Fall recreational striped bass season on September 22 (first day of Fall) and close the Fall season on December 31. Fishing mortality in this period is much lower than Summer as the water temperatures have dropped, there are more days that are unfishable for most recreational boaters due to weather, fewer people go fishing (outdoorsmen start hunting, kids are in school, etc.), trolling and jigging with artificial lures replaces bait fishing as the most common technique (much lower release mortality), and the fish have spread out from their summer concentration in the Annapolis - Baltimore area due to dissipation of the summer dead zones.

-I DO NOT SUPPORT prohibiting the targeting of striped bass in March and April by catch and release anglers. The water is cold in these months, there are many unfishable days due to weather, artificial lures are the predominant tactic, and recreational fishing pressure is very light since it is only catch-and-release. This change would have an immaterial impact on fishing mortality, and taking away access for those who want to brave the elements that time of year isn't worth doing considering the negligible benefit to the fish.

Thanks,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Regulation Comments**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 12:06 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Regarding your proposed regulations:

The department is considering:

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.
2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.
3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

I wholeheartedly agree that stricter regulations are required to protect the fishery. I agree with the above proposals and I also noticed that this year, many people were fishing while the stripers were still spawning. The states MUST protect these vital brooders!! I believe Climate Change is changing the Bay and when the fish spawns. Please start offsetting the open season to better protect the spawn. I also believe a limit of only one fish per person is justifiable and reasonable to protect this critical fish. Thanks.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## planer boards

1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 7:40 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please outlaw planer boards. They create difficult traffic problems on a busy fishing day, and elimination would help reduce harvest as well as bring some sense back to recreational fishing.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripped bass

1 message

Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 8:36 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Rockfish game fish  
Sent from my iPad



**Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>**

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**(no subject)**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 8:54 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on MD 2020 striped bass regulations. Although I strongly support the required use of circle hooks, I have found they still result in occasional gut- hooked fish. My proposed change to the regulations would allow the fisherman to keep a rockfish that is gut hooked, regardless of size. (Of course, this would count against their daily creel limit.) To do so, the fisherman would have to cut the leader and leave the hook in place while on the water. I propose this rule to help reduce the mortality rate of gut hooked rock. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Closure of Catch and release / Flats / 2020

1 message

Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 11:38 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please dont lump this fishing with Spring time Trophy Trolling. Those big fish are targeted and killed during season. This little flats fishery that we have.....was studied years ago , and it was determined that this was a safe time to practice C&R , because of lower water temps , and the large amount of under 28" fish present at the time you are considering the closure.

I understand that you Absolutely have to do something , but I ask you to reconsider this proposal.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**2020 Striper Season**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 12:03 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Whom it May Concern:

Regarding the three ideas proposed as changes for the upcoming striped bass recreational fishing season:

1. I believe what the science tells us we need to do in the next season: reduce the catch of striped bass by 18 percent. I also believe that the reduction should come equally from the recreational fishery AND the commercial fishery. Therefore, I disagree with the idea of "putting the rules...for the recreational fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years." I believe new rules are needed to ensure an 18 percent reduction in the recreational catch, AS LONG AS THERE IS AN EQUAL REDUCTION IN THE COMMERCIAL CATCH.
2. I AGREE that the recreational and charter boat "trophy season" should be delayed until May 1. In fact, I believe a better idea for the health of the striped bass fishery would be to eliminate the "trophy season" completely. I believe the spawning population should be given every opportunity to survive. I think it is obvious that every pre- or post-spawn female killed during the "trophy season" has a potentially detrimental effect on the biomass of the species.
3. I strongly DISAGREE with the prohibition of catch and release of striped bass from March 1 to April 30. The science has shown that mortality from catch and release in the colder waters of the Bay, typical in March and April, is very low-as low as 3 percent. Alternatively, I suggest a recreational moratorium for a period of time in the summer, perhaps 30 days, when the mortality of undersized fish caught and released in very warm waters is extremely high.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Regulations**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 12:52 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I fish for Striped Bass in the Chester river mainly.

1. Personally, I have no problem with the season opening as late as 01 June.
2. I have read that increasing the size limit may have a negative effect because people will still catch and have to release the under sized ones but I still think the set sizes have all been pretty low. 19 and 20 inch fish are quite small. I wouldn't mind the size limit being 21 or 22 inches if there was a positive effect.

Respectfully,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass catch and release season

1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 12:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The catch and release season should remain the same because mortality in the spring cooler water is the lowest out of all the other targeted striped bass seasons and would just damper the recreational fisherman more and diminish funds taken in from boat ramp fees and tackle shops during those months.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rock fish

1 message

Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 1:08 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I argue for the elimination of the Spring season. We know when the fish have finished spawning. Fishing -including catch/release- should be eliminated until these valuable fish have left the Bay.

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass

1 message

Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 1:08 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I think the trophy season should be totally eliminated; too many females with two being caught, disturbing their spawning



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Catch and release

1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 2:00 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

That catch and release period the water is so cold that it dose not effect the population also destroy the other species from the bigger ones eating them

Sent from my iPhone



1/9/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - I strongly agree with the proposed changes to the Striped bass season .



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**I strongly agree with the proposed changes to the Striped bass season .**

1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 2:11 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Stripped Bass (recreational fishery)**1 message

---

Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 2:18 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear Secretary,

My name is ( ) I have been fishing in the chesapeake bay for many years. The spring trophy season has been one of my favorite but the last few years the number of large trophy rockfish is way down let's be honest this fishery is in trouble, I know you folks have all the data and can confirm as much as I hate to say it I would like to see a moratorium on the trophy season for 5 years

None of these fish should be caught, I don't know of any species that the breeding stock is targeted so heavily also these large cow Rock can not tolerate catch and release, if you delay the season until May first some of these fish will still be caught because as you know it's all based on water temperature.

In summary I would like to see moratorium on the trophy season commercial waterman catch cut by 50% I know there's a lot of money involved in all decisions you have to make and people will complain but desperate measures in desperate times please consider these changes and thank you for your time.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 6:00 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Comments I would like to suggest:

1. Remove the "trophy season" language from the regulations. It leads everyone to believe that they have to catch the biggest fish possible and they will want to throw them back what would otherwise be a legal catch.
2. Move the start date of the season to 1 May as proposed.
3. 2 Fish per person per day catch limit. (Maybe set a boat limit of 12 per day, the charter boat guys are not going to be happy with this, but they deal with it for the Cobia also).
4. Reduce the minimum size to something like 15-16 inches, a size that is commonly caught and thrown back because they are "undersized" creating an increased mortality rate because of this. If those fish are put in the cooler, the recreational anglers would be heading home sooner and killing fewer fish.
5. Keep the circle hook requirements for live lining.
6. Keep the area restrictions in place for fishing the tributaries until 1 June.
7. Ban "tournaments" that specifically encourage catching the largest fish possible.
8. Ban catch and release of striped bass during the off-season (more specifically "the harassing of").
9. Move the end date for the season to 31 December.

As an angler that goes out most weekends that the weather and my schedule permits, the majority of the floating striped bass that I see are sub-legal in size that tend to fall into that 15-18" range. For every one of those fish that went back into the bay and died another came out and into a cooler with a net result of 2 fewer fish in the water, I feel that the fishery would be better served by reducing the size limit over the current regulation. The younger (smaller) fish seem to have a better resilience to being put back as long as they are handled properly. I can be reached at

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comments on Proposed changes to Striped Bass Recreational Regulations COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 8:19 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

To Whom it May Concern:

I respectfully submit my comments on the proposed changes for the upcoming striped bass recreational fishing season.

While I agree that an 18% reduction in the catch of striped bass next season is needed to sustain the fishery, I believe that this reduction should be achieved equally through changes to the recreational fishery AND the commercial fishery. Therefore, I disagree with the idea of "putting the rules...for the recreational fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years." As these rules have largely contributed to the current situation, I believe new rules are needed to ensure that an 18 percent reduction in the recreational catch will be matched by an 18% reduction in the commercial catch. To that end, I am in agreement with the proposal to delay the recreational and charter boat "trophy season" to May 1. Further, based on what I've seen on Facebook advertisements and posts from charter boat captains and recreational fishermen who take great numbers of unspawned trophy female striped bass on a daily basis, I believe elimination of the "trophy season" would greatly reduce the number of pre- or post-spawn female striped bass that are killed each year for "photo-ops" and would further DNR's stated goal of preserving and restoring this important fishery for both commercial and recreational anglers alike. In the same vein, I strongly DISAGREE with the prohibition of catch and release of striped bass from March 1 to April 30. The data have shown that mortality from catch and release in the colder waters of the Upper Bay, typical in March and April, is as low as 3%, as compared to the high mortality rate from the commercial fishery and trophy season. Alternatively, I believe the goals of DNR and recreational and commercial industry alike would be better served through a moratorium on recreational fishing for a period of 30 to 90 days in the warmer months, when the mortality rate of undersized fish that are caught and released in very warm waters is extremely high.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you should have any questions.

Regards,

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buSp9xeMeKEbrUze





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Recreational Striped Bass Adjustments**1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 9:04 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Whom It May Concern,

I wanted to reach out regarding Maryland's proposed amendments to the recreational fishery. As an avid angler myself I've seen first hand the fishery deplete over the past decade. I applaud Maryland and DNR for finally taking action. That said, I do have a few questions/comments:

1. Im all for pushing back trophy season to give breeders a chance. But, why close catch and release fishing during March/April? Water temperatures are very low during this time and with use of artificial lures release mortality is negligible (less than 1%) not the same rates seen during July/August.
2. Why not close recreational catch & keep during July/August and/or catch and release during high temperatures (as was well monitored by DNR this past summer)? Mortality is at its highest during this time when water temps and air temps are high, fish are schooled up and being fished very very hard, and most are bait fishing which carries a higher mortality rate. While this is a busy time for charters and recs it would have one of the largest impacts on the fishery.
3. Why not implement a slot limit, maximum size, or fish tag for a trophy (like deer tags) to preserve the breeding stock? We know what an impact these breeders can have on the fishery and the much needed revitalization and replenishment, why not protect and preserve them from harvest?

Thanks for your consideration and investment in our future fishery.

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Proposed 2020 Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Sun, Oct 27, 2019 at 9:27 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I would like to thank the department for considering reducing the striped bass harvest in our portion of the Chesapeake Bay. My comments on the proposed recreational fishery regulations are as follows:

-I SUPPORT delaying the opening of the Spring Trophy fishery until May 1. I also RECOMMEND bringing back the Spring Trophy Season size regulations of 2007 or 2015 with a minimum size of 28", a no-take slot of 35" - 41" (2007) or 36" - 40" (2015), a 1 fish per person maximum creel limit, PLUS a 6 fish max boat limit. I strongly recommend banning stinger hooks as this would assist in post-release mortality for the trophy slot limits.

-I DO NOT SUPPORT keeping the same Summer/Fall regulations as used for 2018/2019 because these regulations do not adequately address Summer recreational fishing mortality related to high water temperature and low salinity and dead zones. The vast majority of mortality and post-release mortality in this fishery occurs in the July 1 - September 15 timeframe when the weather is best (maximum number of fishable days for the most people), the fish are concentrated in the Deale - Baltimore section of the Bay due to dead zones elsewhere (large population who live in comfortable range of the concentrated fish schools), more vacation days are taken in summer (more people go fishing), bait fishing is the most prevalent technique (chumming and live-lining release mortality), and the water is hottest (peak release mortality), and salinity is low, therefore there is high risk of post-release mortality.

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Summer recreational striped bass fishery on May 16 and close the Summer fishery on July 31. August is when the water is usually at its hottest and there are the maximum number of alternative species in the Bay for anglers to target (bottom fishing is good, bluefish and mackerel are showing up, and general reliable, etc.). Waiting until August 1 to close the Summer fishery gives families with children the chance to take them summer rockfishing between the time school ends in June and the Summer fishery would close on July 31.

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Fall recreational striped bass season on September 22 (first day of Fall) and close the Fall season on December 31. Fishing mortality in this period is much lower than Summer as the water temperatures have dropped, and salinity and oxygen in the water tends to be higher, therefore greatly reducing post-release mortality. Additionally, there are more days that are unfishable for most recreational boaters due to weather fronts, fewer people go fishing (outdoorsmen start hunting, kids are in school, etc.), trolling and jigging with artificial lures replaces bait fishing as the most common technique (much lower release mortality), and the fish have spread out from their summer concentration in the Annapolis - Baltimore area due to dissipation of the summer dead zones.

-I DO NOT SUPPORT prohibiting the targeting of striped bass in March and April by catch and release anglers. The water is cold in these months, salinity and oxygen levels are generally good, and there are many unfishable days due to weather, and a limited number of anglers targeting rockfish before the harvest season opens. Artificial lures are the predominant tactic, and recreational fishing pressure is very light since it is only catch-and-release. This change would have an immaterial impact on fishing mortality, and taking away access for those who want to brave the elements that time of year isn't worth doing considering the negligible benefit to the fish. Reducing post-release mortality is important, but the reduction should focus on the period of the year where there will be the greatest benefit such as the summer fishery where water temperature is high, oxygen is low, and there are prevalent deadzones. There is little hope for replenishing the breeding stock of rockfish if their offspring are subject to extensive fishing pressure, and the burden of significant post-release mortality during the summer months when water quality is poorest for survival.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass C&R Comment

1 message

Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 6:29 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov  
Cc

I highly disagree with the removal of the March – April C&R changes. If anything we need to expand C&R for Striped Bass.

If anything we need to reduce season Catch and Kill during low water temp season and reduce the minimum size to 18 inches during peak summer. If we are so concerned why is the commercial quote and fishing season not being changed????

Water Quality should be our biggest focus.....





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Regulation changes

1 message

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Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 7:16 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Whom it may concern,  
I am emailing you in response to the proposed regulation changes concerning Blue crabs, Striped bass and Aquatic vegetation.

I have read the proposed changes and I am in favor of all of them.  
Thanks,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Hook regulations**

1 message

Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 9:08 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Newer regulations designed for rockfish conservation limit the kind of hooks used while live lining, chumming or chunking.

Unfortunately these regulations also apply while targeting other species of fish such as white perch, crappie, even invasives like northern snakehead.

I propose we "clarify" the regulations so as to specify its application for those targeting rockfish only.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Regulations Comment

1 message

Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 9:57 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Suggest that commercial harvest be closed when recreational harvest is closed. That way everyone is treated equitably, and the effect should be X times better on recovery.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**1 message

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Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 1:40 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear DNR,

Thank you for allowing comments to the proposed changes to our striped bass fishery. As a recreational fisherman who enjoys our PUBLIC shared resource and who has witnessed firsthand the decline in striped bass stocks, I applaud the ASMFC for beginning to take the steps necessary to rebuild the stock. In considering the approach you've proposed, which I understand is only the beginning, I have some serious reservations that it will produce the positive outcome that is so crucial for this fishery,

I agree with your assessment of keeping the circle hook regulation in place and shortening trophy season is certainly positive for the fish, but why have a trophy season at all if we are truly trying to protect the spawning stock? And, the proposal to close catch and release (CR) fishing in March and April will do little to help with rebuilding the stock as studies have shown CR fishing at this time of year produces a mortality rate under 1%. I would like to understand how we would be getting anywhere in meeting the 18% reduction in mortality by implementing this proposal? And what of the commercial sector? Both recs and comms were operating under the regulations as YOU have mandated so why should the rec sector take the hit to access to a shared PUBLIC resource without any corresponding cut in comm harvest? Again this is a SHARED public resource and as such we should share in the responsibility of sustaining it for future generations. Instead, this proposal is simply a reallocation of recreational harvest to the commercial interests in the name of conservation equivalency and I ask that you reconsider. The fish loses and so does the recreational fisherman, who provides a huge financial benefit to our local economy. As it stands, this is not about the fish, this is about special interest and money and it is counterproductive. The fish needs real science-based and conservative proposals that will have a positive impact on the stock. We need to manage for maximum abundance and not maximum harvest.

Recreational fisherman are conservationists and we will do our part in rebuilding the stock, but we must feel that the effort is not in vein. Please use a science based and conservative approach to ensure a positive outcome for these actions. I fear the proposed action of closing CR in March and April does neither.

Respectfully concerned,

.....



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**1 message

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Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 2:34 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Good afternoon,

These proposed regulations are ridiculous. We will not get to the point we need to by just delaying the trophy season a week and leaving everything else the way it is. That is basically how we got here. Prohibiting C & R during March/April is a joke, not many people do it and mortality is incredibly low. If you actually want to have an impact, close the season from June 15 - September 1. That is the time of highest mortality due to water quality, heat and fishing pressure. Your track record tells me you will ignore the best science available in favor of a temporary "fix" to save face but something drastic needs to be done and shorting the season by a week and cutting catch and release during the part of the year with the lowest mortality is a joke. Please come up with a real plan.

Regards,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Proposed Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>  
Cc: <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 8:18 PM

To whom it may concern, my comments are attached.

Sincerely,



**Striper Reg Comments.docx**

13K

In August 2019 , the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board issued a draft addendum that proposes "management options for BOTH THE COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL SECTORS to reduce removals by 18% relative to 2017." This proposal is based on sound science and I agree with this proposal only if the final regulations apply to both commercial and recreational sectors.

I agree that the trophy season should be shortened. But it should be shortened by a minimum of 50 % or eliminated completely since this season appears to target large female fish prior to spawning. These fish provide the basis for replenishing the striper stock and should be further protected to allow them to spawn.

I strongly disagree with closing the catch and release season that runs from March 1 to April 30. Previous scientific studies have shown that mortality during this cold water season is about 3%. If fishery experts think it would help the striper population, the opening of this season could be delayed by one week, but no more.

Previous studies have shown that stripers caught and released during the hot months of July and August have a very high (over 90% possibly) mortality rate. I think the fishery should be shut down for one month – either July or August whichever has proven to have the highest mortality rate.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Changes to fishery regs

1 message

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Mon, Oct 28, 2019 at 9:44 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I read some of them and I generally agree. Protect the striped bass! Good call limiting the catch and release in spring.  
Can you do anything about the commercial harvest of all the menhaden???





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**1 message

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Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 6:39 AM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

This change will do absolutely nothing to protect the fishery and panders to the catch and kill crowd that seem to run the DNR. 3a bans C&R but 3b allows trolling C&R? It seems that the DNR will allow trollers to still C&R but not light tackle fishermen? Science shows that C&R during this time period has almost 0% impact on the population. Whereas, allowing any killing during the trophy season and July/August has a major impact on the population. If Maryland is truly concerned about the population listen to the science and not the groups with the deepest pockets which is obviously the trolling charter boat captains and the groups that run the catch and kill tourneys.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass-Recreational fishery

1 message

Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 7:19 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Good morning

I am in favor of the proposed changes to the spring trophy season starting May 1st and restricting catch and release fishing.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass regulation changes for 2020**1 message

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Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 8:23 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

If we are to protect the big breeders, I'm not sure an additional 2 week delay in the start of trophy season until May 1 will do it. I understand the concept and it will certainly help to some degree. My last 3 trophy seasons, fishing mainly in the Bay Bridge area, have been extremely poor. It's been on a decline for the last 10 years and most fisherman know it. I would be fine with closing trophy season completely for 2020 to see if that helps the spawn and subsequent YOY index. Reevaluate when the 2020 YOY comes out. I lived through the moratorium years and I don't want a return of it.

That said, this a coastal problem and other states need to ante up as well, both recreationally and commercially. Coastal states, particularly in Jersey and north, need to reduce the taking of big fish. Maryland is criticized for taking trophy fish during spawning season yet these same fish are just big, healthy fish as soon as they make their way north along the coast after spawning. Double standard? Virginia, for example, needs to stop their late winter netting of these spawners as they migrate up the Chesapeake to the spawning grounds.

I'm willing to do my part but it's a coastal issue.....

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**RE: Proposed Striped Bass Regulations**1 message

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Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 4:08 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

These proposed changes will do nothing to solve the population crisis we are currently experiencing. A slot limit at the very least needs to be in place to protect the large breeding stock. No fish should be allowed to be kept over 28 inches and trophy season needs to be eliminated.

Fax:

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Save Striped Bass**

1 message

Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 9:07 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please ignore the politics and do the right thing for the Striped Bass Fishery. Governor Hogan and DNR should stop supporting the few on this issue and listen and act on the science. The poor excuse proposals that Hogan and the DNR support are worthless and won't help the fishery! I hope and trust they will reconsider their poor judgment and do the right thing to truly help the fishery. Please study what Florida has accomplished for their state.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rockfish updates

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Oct 29, 2019 at 10:37 PM

Keep the circle hooks in place! They make big difference with survival. Do away with trophy season and start the summer  
May 1st  
Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed striped bass regulations**1 message

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Wed, Oct 30, 2019 at 9:22 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello,

I'm writing to comment on the proposal to close early season catch and release for striped bass in March and April. By the best available science and the science of which MD DNR it's self has done these regulations do nothing. To help rebound the striped bass population. As I'm sure you're well aware catch and release mortality in cold/ cool water is less than 1%. I'm sure you're also aware the MRIP numbers of how many fish are released and even how many anglers are using the resource at this time are very inflated and realistically very small. A regulation of this sort accomplishes nothing but further take away access of the resource. Instead I would suggest you actually encourage anglers to fish this time of the year to take advantage of a time when their impact is very low but success and enjoyment of the resource could be rewarding. It would also further help to encourage catch and release in a responsible manner.

I would much rather see closures in the warm summer months when release mortality is very high.

Further I would like to state that the commercial sector should also share some of the hit on reductions. It's is neither the recreational nor commercial sectors fault that we got where we are are. It is the fisheries managers fault, including MD DNR. Thus it is unfair for MD DNR to pick a winner and loser when deciding which sector takes a reduction and loss of fishing time.

Thank you and I hope these comments are well received and listened to.

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Public Comment for Striped Bass Recreational Fishery**1 message

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Wed, Oct 30, 2019 at 4:02 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to support each of the three (3) considerations noted below related to the recreational fishery for striped bass in Maryland waters. My additional comments are noted in CAPS below. Thank you for considering my input.

1) Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.

a) Recreational and Charter Boat Summer and Fall Fishery in the Chesapeake Bay and Its Tidal Tributaries: ☐ 19" minimum size ☐ May 16 through December 15

b) Recreational and Charter Boat Summer and Fall Fishery for Maryland Tributaries of the Potomac River: ☐ 19" minimum size ☐ May 16 through December 31

c) Hook Requirements for the Chesapeake Bay and its Tidal Tributaries: ☐ Hook requirements apply to fishing for all species, not just striped bass. Circle hooks required when chumming or live-lining. J hooks (no size restriction) or circle hooks are required when using fish, crabs, or worms as bait, or processed bait. ☐ Restrictions apply May 16 through December 15. ☐ No other hooks are allowed to be used during that time period.

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE, I AM SUPPORTIVE OF REDUCING THE ALLOWABLE RECREATIONAL TAKE OF STRIPED BASS TO ONE (1) FISH, INSTEAD OF TWO (2) FOR THE PERIOD FROM MAY 16 TO DECEMBER 15.

CIRCLE HOOKS SHOULD BE REQUIRED FOR ALL BAIT FISHING, NOT JUST LIVE-LINING. USE OF "FISH" OR "CRABS" WITHOUT CIRCLE HOOKS WILL RESULT IN INCREASED RELEASE MORTALITY FOR STRIPED BASS.

2) Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.

I SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL.

3) Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30. a) This would be in effect for all areas in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. b) Trolling would be prohibited during this time period.

I SUPPORT THE PROHIBITION OF TARGETING STRIPED BASS DURING THE SPAWNING RUNS, HOWEVER, I COULD ALSO SUPPORT THE ALLOWANCE OF VERY RESTRICTED CATCH AND RELEASE FISHING, FOR EXAMPLE, ONLY USING ARTIFICIAL LURES WITH BARBLESS HOOKS. THE ELIMINATION OF LIVE-LIVING AND BAIT FISHING IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANT DURING THE PERIOD IN WHICH STRIPED BASS ARE SPAWNING IN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY.

Thank for considering my input.

Cheers,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments Upcoming Striped Bass Season 2020

1 message

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Thu, Oct 31, 2019 at 5:05 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I agree with all of your proposed regulations, but would like to see the following added.

1. Reduce creel limit during summer months (July-Aug) to 1 fish per day per person. 19" minimum
2. Completely shut down Spring Trophy Season all together and start the Summer Season May 16th.
3. Reduce the creel limit taken by Charter Boats during Summer Season to 1 fish per person per day.
4. Reduce the catch by Hook and Line Lic holders and Gill Netters by 25% across the board.

Thank you for all you do but in order to save the species we need to take drastic measures that must be fair across the board. I would rather sacrifice now then to face another Moratorium.

Regards,

4



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass regs proposed

1 message

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Thu, Oct 31, 2019 at 4:51 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Shut down the fishery for both comms and recs from mid july to labor day.....the destruction of juvenile fish population is tragic and a waste....i personally still see as many dead and dying undersized fish down tide from the fleets as existed prior to the circle hook regulation....



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass 2020

1 message

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Fri, Nov 1, 2019 at 9:18 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear Sir/madam,

I am a Licensed Maryland Fishing Guide, I make my living light tackle fishing for striped bass year round in the Chesapeake Bay. I introduce, educate and champion the striped bass as you can see on my website

I would like to comment on the proposed 2020 regulations for Striped Bass in the Chesapeake Bay.

The ASMFC has proposed a fair and logical conservation plan to restore Striped Bass biomass - on the recreational side in the Chesapeake Bay.

1. Reduce the quota to one fish per person per day over 18"
2. Don't kill fish over 35"

This would immediately achieve the stated reduction of 18% and more!

Massaging numbers by artificially inflating mortality rates, particularly in the winter months is egregious. It will not help the stock, it will put out of business some of the most ardent supporters and champions of the striped bass population leading to the eventual demise of the fishery in its entirety. I am on the water 5-6 days a week all year round - I see things.

I am also a licensed Florida Fishing guide and I work part time in Florida during winter months. There are many examples of catch and release being a very successful stock management tool -Goliath Grouper, Sailfish, Tarpon, White Marlin etc. and notably the Striped Bass population during the moratorium.

I know that 9% of the fish I target and release in the winter months do not die. I also know that 100% of fish over 35" that are put in a cooler die. I have been told by many of my fellow industry professionals "No way we will change that in Maryland" my question is "Why not". There is a perception that a segment of the charter market will loose out in business, I think they will adapt, educate and overcome.

The complex, connived equivalency proposals are simply putting lipstick on a pig. I propose we stick to the ASMFC recommendations for recreational fishing in Coastal and Offshore zones, do away with "equivalency" as it is un-scientific and frankly unenforceable.

Best ..

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## stripped bass

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Sat, Nov 2, 2019 at 9:27 AM

Good morning,

As a recreational sportsman, I'd like to weigh in on the dwindling stripped bass population.

I would support all reasonable steps to conserve this resource; such as:  
restrict or eliminate the trophy season  
eliminate part of the season during the summer  
adjust size limits

Naturally, there should be similar reductions for the commercial fishery.

Thanks



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comment on Proposed Striped Bass Regulations Change

1 message

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Sun, Nov 3, 2019 at 3:48 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello DNR!

My name is ' ' and I live in ' '. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposed changes to the Striped Bass fishing regulations as outlined in:

[https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/Reg\\_Changes/DNR-FS-2019-04\\_Striped%20Bass%20Spring%202020\\_Small%20Business%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf?fbclid=IwAR27GUBusOhDbSXQMriXv\\_ua4o2dLIaWzkXmuz5JKsP3an8jpPQG6BTbmjw](https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/Reg_Changes/DNR-FS-2019-04_Striped%20Bass%20Spring%202020_Small%20Business%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf?fbclid=IwAR27GUBusOhDbSXQMriXv_ua4o2dLIaWzkXmuz5JKsP3an8jpPQG6BTbmjw)

I do not concur with the elimination of all catch and release sport fishing from March 1st through April 30th, and I question if there is scientific data to support the hypothesis that this would be beneficial to the Striped Bass fishery. As a sport fisherman who spends many hours on the Bay every year, I would recommend for following in addition to the rules that you have put into effect for the 2019 season:

For the 2020 Striped Bass season:

1. Define the catch and release season as January 1st through May 15th. In other words, eliminate the trophy season that permits anglers to keep one fish 35" or bigger per day. Harvesting these fish surely impacts the fishery, and the mortality rates of fish released in cold water are low. This would lead me to conclude that eliminating trophy season while maintaining a catch and release season would benefit the fishery and pose minimal risk to the fish that were caught and returned to the Bay.
2. May 16th—December 16th: Reduce the number of fish that can be kept to ONE FISH that is 19" or larger. I would assume that data and projections indicate that this would have a significant positive impact.
3. Prohibit live-lining by an angler who has caught and kept their limit of Striped Bass (one fish, 19" minimum). Gut hooking fish caught with bait is a big reason for mortality following release, and allowing anglers to continue to fish with bait once they have their limit poses undue risk to the fish. This is true especially because live-lining is usually done when the water is very warm and fish easily succumb to exhaustion following release. If an angler catches and keeps a legal fish using bait, then they can switch to artificial lures if they choose to continue fishing.
4. Prohibit keeping any fish over 28" in length in any season. Large breeders are the future of our fishery, and we cannot afford to harvest breeding fish. I have no idea why we continue to allow large fish to be harvested when our fishery is threatened.

In my opinion, sport fishermen will do whatever we need to do in order to improve the health of the Striped Bass fishery. I respectfully ask that scientific data be applied to inform the decisions on new regulations, particularly when it comes to commercial fishing of Striped Bass and Menhaden. Sport fishermen have an impact on the fishery, but that impact pales in comparison to that felt from commercial fishermen and their massive harvests of our resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to your proposed regulations. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striper Regulations

1 message

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 9:28 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Closing the stipend bass fishery completely is not warranted. Closing the Trophy Season is what is needed! Allow catch and release fishing in this period when water temps are low and mortality is very high.

If anything, the fishery should be closed or further limited when water temps are highest in July/August.

Would also support a 1 fish/day limit.

Thanks for hearing my concerns.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass season 2020

1 message

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 10:54 AM

Reply-To: joseph Wilkowski <jrwconstruction@comcast.net>

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to proposed closure of catch and release fishing of striped bass in Maryland for season 2020 and beyond. Md. dnr studies have shown very low mortality of released striped bass in waters under 60 degrees. I support catch and release fishing as a measure to enjoy the sport of recreational fishing with the lowest mortality impact on the fishery. I strongly urge yo to explore less severe measures than closing all access to fishing the Chesapeake bay for our prized striped bass. I also believe a one fish per person at 18" per trip in conjunction with catch and release would be a suitable measure to lower striped bass mortality.

Sincerely,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Recreational Regulations**

1 message

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 1:17 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Good Morning.

I keep a boat in Deale Maryland, and fish in the middle bay below the Bay Bridge, north of Holland Point.

I have found the number of keeper-sized fish to be declining over the last few years.

At the same time, the number of dead floaters – undersized striped bass that had been released that did not survive – to be at epidemic levels all this past season.

Hundreds of floating carcasses that we see in the bay every Saturday or Sunday in the summer are an unsightly reminder that the circle hooks are not sufficient protection for undersized fish caught by live-liners.

I recommend and support that DNR:

- 1) Reduce the recreational season to limit the catch of the mature breeding stock of striped bass.
- 2) Reduce the catch limit to one slot-size fish per person.
- 3) Take steps to reduce the kill of undersized fish – by eliminating the use of live bait entirely for striped bass fishing.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

## Striped Bass Regulations

2 messages

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 11:46 AM

To: "FISHERIESPUBLICCOMMENT.DNR@MARYLAND.GOV" <FISHERIESPUBLICCOMMENT.DNR@maryland.gov>  
Cc:

I am submitting the email to request that the state of Maryland follow the ASFMC recommendations in keeping with current seasons for striped bass with a change to the summer (non-trophy) season to a (1) fish over 18" limit and not pursue any "Conservation Equivalency" in lieu of the reduced limit.

A (1) fish limit will provide the greatest, most easily enforced reduction in the fishery with the least hardship on all participants in the fishery.

Shutting down C&R fishing during the cold water months of March and April will not have the effect stated on paper (it is unreasonable to use a 9% mortality figure during this time of year). The math also indicates that 8,400 fish are landed every day during this time of year. That is simply unrealistic based on the number of boats seen on the water during this timeframe. Experience a mechanical failure on the water on a weekday in March and see how long you sit there waiting for another boat to come into view.

If the state truly is concerned with improving striped bass stocks they will follow the recommendations of the ASFMC and not bow to minority special interests with "Conservation Equivalency". Following the ASFMC recommendations will also show other states that Maryland is committed to the rebuilding of this fishery.

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 2:12 PM

To: "FISHERIESPUBLICCOMMENT.DNR@MARYLAND.GOV" <FISHERIESPUBLICCOMMENT.DNR@maryland.gov>

To whom it may concern,

I agree with the sentiment expressed below that Maryland should follow the ASFMC recommendations. As an avid recreational fisherman on the bay it is truly disconcerting that a minority special interest is driving regulations in the wrong direction under the guise of "Conservation Equivalency". The ASFMC regulations proposed would not materially impact their bottom line and strict enforcement of existing regulations are needed as you still see charter and leisure boats with people setting hooks clearly showing they are not using circle hooks leading to higher mortality rates regardless. From observation I do not agree with the Enforcement and Compliance section stating that there is nearly 100% compliance. People do not always tell the truth on exist surveys and these numbers do not seem realistic based on casual observation. Also the sample size of 40 boats stopped by police also is a stretch to extrapolate this percent from. The 9% mortality rate being used across all waves is just lazy statistical analysis without giving any type of weighting to the catch

1/9/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Striped Bass Regulations

frequency per wave and an attempt to smooth the data and does not seem to be an accurate representation for the cold water months of March and April based on the below reasoning. The range for total removals being from -8% to +7% also just seems lazy as this 15% range should have been narrowed originally to be more significant.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Support catch and release

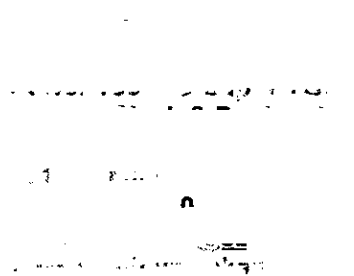
1 message

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 3:26 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Please explore less severe measures to closing all access to fishing our state's greatest natural resource for our prized fish. I support catch and release as a measure to enjoy the sport of recreational fishing with the lowest mortality impact on the fishery.

Thanks,







Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service Regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10**

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 4:49 PM

As a fishing guide and sales representative for a locally made boat company I DO NOT support the no-target regulations for striped bass March and April. This would have a significant negative impact on my businesses. I also believe it violates the intent of the Freedom to Fish that prohibits closures when less severe measures are available. I believe there are less severe measures available and that the fishery is already extremely restricted through during this time of the year. I also believe DNRs own studies on catch and release to show 1.6% mortality, which is extremely low.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Changes to Striped Bass regulations

1 message

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Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 5:30 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

My comments.....

1. Cancel spring trophy season
2. If the intent is to reduce the overall catch, commercial and recreational need to have the same percentage reductions. From a dollar perspective, the recreational impact, to include charter boats, is far higher than the commercial sector when you consider boats, charter fees, tackle stores, food and lodging.
3. Now that the ASMFC approved Addendum VI, what is the state going to do? Will an alternative be proposed that will still achieve ASMFC equivalency? When will it come out for public comment? A one fish recreational bag limit will severely impact the recreational fishery and is not an 18% reduction but a 50% reduction. Seems to unfairly target the recreationals. It should be split evenly between recreational and commercial sectors.
4. I do not agree with some of the proposals in the recent Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission meeting to include no targeting after 1000 and summer closure. How can the limited DNR staff be expected to enforce these proposals if enacted?



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass comments

1 message

Tue, Nov 5, 2019 at 8:34 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I support the proposed changes to STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10 for

1 Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.

2 Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1.

3 Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

, recreational fisherman



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed 2020 Striped Bass regulations**1 message

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Tue, Nov 5, 2019 at 11:31 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I would like to thank the department for considering reducing the striped bass harvest in our portion of the Chesapeake Bay. My comments on the proposed recreational fishery regulations are as follows:

-I SUPPORT delaying the opening of the Spring Trophy fishery until May 1. I also RECOMMEND bringing back the Spring Trophy Season size regulations of 2007 or 2015 with a minimum size of 28", a no-take slot of 35" - 41" (2007) or 36" - 40" (2015), a 1 fish per person maximum creel limit, PLUS a 6 fish max boat limit. I strongly recommend banning stinger hooks as this would assist in post-release mortality for the trophy slot limits.

-I DO NOT SUPPORT keeping the same Summer/Fall regulations as used for 2018/2019 because these regulations do not adequately address Summer recreational fishing mortality related to high water temperature and low salinity and dead zones. The vast majority of mortality and post-release mortality in this fishery occurs in the July 1 -September 15 timeframe when the weather is best (maximum number of fishable days for the most people), the fish are concentrated in the Deale - Baltimore section of the Bay due to dead zones elsewhere (large population who live in comfortable range of the concentrated fish schools), more vacation days are taken in summer (more people go fishing), bait fishing is the most prevalent technique (chumming and live-lining release mortality), and the water is hottest (peak release mortality), and salinity is low, therefore there is high risk of post-release mortality.

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Summer recreational striped bass fishery on May 16 and close the Summer fishery on July 31. August is when the water is usually at its hottest and there are the maximum number of alternative species in the Bay for anglers to target (bottom fishing is good, bluefish and mackerel are showing up, and generally reliable, etc.). Waiting until August 1 to close the Summer fishery gives families with children the chance to take them summer rockfishing between the time school ends in June and the Summer fishery would close on July 31.

-I RECOMMEND the department open the Fall recreational striped bass season on September 22 (first day of Fall) and close the Fall season on December 31. Fishing mortality in this period is much lower than Summer as the water temperatures have dropped, and salinity and oxygen in the water tends to be higher, therefore greatly reducing post-release mortality. Additionally, there are more days that are unfishable for most recreational boaters due to weather fronts, fewer people go fishing (outdoorsmen start hunting, kids are in school, etc.), trolling and jigging with artificial lures replaces bait fishing as the most common technique (much lower release mortality), and the fish have spread out from their summer concentration in the Annapolis - Baltimore area due to dissipation of the summer dead zones.

Thank you for your time and consideration.





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped bass comments**1 message

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Wed, Nov 6, 2019 at 8:02 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear DNR,

I am all for reducing the quota of striped bass. I'm also in favor of shutting the fishery down so they can rebound faster. The other season that needs to be shut down is the spring trophy season. Some friends and I fished the trophy season once about ten years ago. We all caught one fish. All six fish were big females full of row. Right there were millions of eggs that didn't make it to the spawning grounds. For this reason none of have gone back to the trophy season. The trophy season needs to be shut down because billions of eggs will never make it to the spawning grounds. With this many eggs not making it, there will not be any increase in the striped bass population.

Thank you for your time!

I hope DNR makes the right decision for the striped bass!

Regards,

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Save the fishery

1 message

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Thu, Nov 7, 2019 at 6:22 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Md should shut down the trophy season, and let these fish reproduce.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped bass regulations**

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Thu, Nov 7, 2019 at 8:58 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov, "Jeannie H. Riccio -DNR-" <jeannie.riccio@maryland.gov>, Bill Anderson - DNR- <bill.anderson@maryland.gov>, <jeannie.riccio@maryland.gov>

Bill and Jeannie,

As a charter capt and sales rep for a local boat builder, I STRONGLY ask that DNR stop playing all the games with the conservation equivalency numbers and just accept the 1 fish @18" as pre-approved by the ASMFC.

This gives us the greatest access to fishing and allows my passengers to go home with a fish. It involves no closures or confusing regulations that will only deter people from fishing.

We have had a HIGHLY successful trophy season for years with a 1 fish creel. Do I want to go to 1 fish? No but it achieves the goal of a 20% reduction and is MUCH better than the crazy other options on the table. It would be clear, concise and maintain pretty much what we have now. As a charter capt, I do NOT think a one fish creel would have as big of loss as the other options on the table.

PLEASE GO WITH THE 1 FISH AT 18"!!!!

Sincerely,

Jeannie H. Riccio  
DNR Fisheries Management  
jeannie.riccio@maryland.gov



**Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <[fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)>**

## Striped Bass

1 message

Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 10:31 AM

To: [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)

I would like to comment on options that will effect my charter business in the future.

I would like to see the closure of the Spring trophy season in April.

**Closure of the season in December.**

**A season long 1 fish per person over 18 inches.**

**A app for your phone that could be used to report daily catch information for better data collection from the recreational anglers.**

—

6



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Public Comment Regarding Proposed Striped Bass Regulations**

1 message

**DAVID SIKORSKI** <davidsikorski@ccamd.org>

Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 1:08 PM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -Dnr- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Please accept the attached comments on behalf of CCA Maryland.

As always, we appreciate the opportunity to comment, and work with Maryland DNR to shape fisheries policy for the benefit of our shared natural resources and the many users who rely on healthy fisheries.

Regards,

-David

**David Sikorski**  
**Executive Director-CCA Maryland**  
davidsikorski@ccamd.org  
(c)443-621-9186  
www.ccamd.org  
www.joincca.org

[Please Click Here to](#) Join CCA Today!

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**2 attachments**

CCA\_newlogo\_mid\_red\_MD\_WEBSIG.jpg  
52K

 **SB Reg Scoping Comments Nov 2019.pdf**  
303K

**OFFICERS**

Frank Bonanno, *Chairman*  
Michael Wissel, *Vice-Chairman*  
*Chair, Management Committee*  
Larry Jennings, *Secretary*  
Frank Bonanno, *Treasurer*  
David Sikorski,  
*Executive Director*



**RECREATIONAL ANGLERS  
WORKING TO CONSERVE, PROMOTE, AND ENHANCE MARYLAND'S  
MARINE RESOURCES**

November 8th, 2019

*Via email only to:* [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)

**RE: Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass  
DNR-FS-2019-04**

Coastal Conservation Association Maryland (CCA Maryland), is a state chapter of Coastal Conservation Association (CCA), a nationwide non-profit, and the largest saltwater recreational fishing organization in the country. As anglers, and avid users of our natural resources, CCA Maryland's more than 1400 members work hard to promote responsible angling activities, and sensible science-based management measures to support sustainable fisheries for the benefit of the general public, and the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay.

As active participants in fisheries management throughout the country, CCA leadership knows the importance of working with state level resource managers to develop cooperative measures to capture data on angling activities and recreational harvest, and the value of accurate information in properly assessing fish stocks, and the impact our activities causes on the fish.

CCA Maryland appreciates the opportunity to provide input on this proposed regulation and offer the following comments and information related to the success of such measures to meet the goals of the current requirement to reduce removals of striped bass in Maryland per ASMFC agreement for 2020 and beyond.

**Background**

As a state whose waters spawn and grow more than 70% of the entire Atlantic striped bass population from their juvenile stage into maturity, what happens in the Chesapeake Bay directly impacts the future of striped bass populations and fisheries. As a migrator species, striped bass are managed collectively through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission(ASMFC), an interstate fisheries management body in which Maryland participates.

The current stock assessment lumps together the recreational and commercial impacts as one coast wide fishing mortality target, a number which current regulations are exceeding. The recreational fishery is defined as that which is executed by private anglers and licensed charters and guides.

Unfortunately, Maryland DNR is reliant on the Marine Recreational Information Program(MRIP) to estimate the level of effort and harvest occurring in state waters for the recreational fishery. MRIP is a statistical survey program designed to understand coast-wide and year-long fishing activities. When MRIP data is used to calculate the impact of fishing on a timeline shorter than the full year, and on a

state by state basis, the imprecise nature of this data increases, fueling the complexity of management actions, and uncertainty of the in-water benefit or impacts of any such regulation.

This reliance on MRIP is a direct failure of Maryland DNR to properly fund, develop, and execute other efforts to supplement MRIP estimates by either increasing the number of surveys completed, or to develop a parallel understanding of recreational catch and effort. Having such data is key in crafting regulations which recognize the diverse nature of recreational fisheries. Without accurate data, managers are less likely to succeed in enacting proper measures to ensure the conservation and management of our fisheries resources.

### **General Comments on the Current Regulatory Proposal**

This proposed regulatory action is predicated by the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Boards approval of Addendum VI to the current Striped Bass Management Plan. A portion of this Addendum VI directs states to reduce total removals in the commercial and recreational sector by 18% based on the estimated or reported landings in 2017, or to submit Conservation Equivalency plans to meet the same level of reduction using a different methodology.

Conservation Equivalency(CE) is defined by ASMFC's Charter as:

*"Actions taken by a state which differ from the specific requirements of the FMP, but which achieve the same quantified level of conservation for the resource under management. One example can be, various combinations of size limits, gear restrictions, and season length can be demonstrated to achieve the same targeted level of fishing mortality. The appropriate Management Board/Section will determine conservation equivalency." The application of conservation equivalency is described in the document Conservation Equivalency Policy and Technical Guidance Document"*

It is understood by CCA Maryland that Maryland DNR has a stated position that they intend to use CE to enact a 20% reduction in estimated removals for the recreational fisheries based on levels of removals estimated in the 2017 fishing season to achieve the reductions required by ASMFC action.

It is also understood by CCA Maryland that this regulatory proposal presents only a portion of the CE methods that may be used to meet the decided upon reduction of removals on the recreational fishery.

Unfortunately, no economic impact study has been done to assess the impact that any proposed regulatory action may have on the recreational fishery participants, and it clearly estimated that many of the proposals being considered will have large impacts on the numerous small businesses which make up the recreational fishing sector and associated activities.

## **Specific Comments to Each Proposed Regulatory Action**

CCA Maryland recognizes the complex nature of any changes in recreational fishery regulations, and that an endless combination of options may be available to meet the prescribed reductions. CCA Maryland respectfully offers the following specific comments to each regulatory action, and a determination of our support or opposition to each proposal at this time:

### **1. Extension of hook regulation: SUPPORT**

- This action matches the ASMFC requirement to enact circle hook regulations in all states with striped bass fisheries by 2021.
- Circle hooks are an important tool that is known to limit deep hooking mortality when using live or cut bait.
- Maryland DNR has previously provided information that shows that hook and release mortality in the summer can be up to, or more than 27% when fish are deep hooked, and air and water temperatures are high. Circle hooks are a key point of reducing this hooking mortality number.
- To ensure the success of this action, it is vital that DNR focuses on the on-water enforcement of this regulation, and improves the level of cooperation with recreational fishery stakeholders and tackle companies to continue to build a knowledge of which circle hooks have the highest success rate in limiting impacts on fish that may not be legally kept, or that an angler chooses to release.
- DNR should consider what additional studies may support more knowledge of hook and release mortality related to fishing techniques and spatial and temporal impacts on striped bass.

### **2. May 1 Start for Trophy Season: SUPPORT**

- This regulation removes 13 days from the season in 2020, by moving the start date from of the trophy season from the third Saturday in April, to May 1.
- The removal of these days is likely to have a large impact on Maryland's harvest of the spawning stock fish, and provide further opportunity for fish to spawn and leave the Chesapeake Bay after spawning.
- The trophy season showcases the major trade-offs which exist in fisheries management, a balance of economic benefit and access, with the necessary conservation of spawning stock fish.
- There is general agreement amongst many recreational fishery stakeholders who have been engaged in discussions surrounding the necessary reductions that the Trophy season has been less successful for anglers and businesses in recent years, and it generally acceptable to move the date back to help conserve the resource by keeping no fish in April.

### **3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting of striped bass from March 1 through April 30. The overall benefit: OPPOSE**

- The Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission did not advise Maryland DNR to utilize this regulatory option to meet the reductions required in striped bass removals.
- Closing a season with nearly 98% survivability of fish released is not a likely way to reduce overall removals in the striped bass fishery.



- Due to the highly imprecise and inaccurate estimates related to recreational angling impacts in the March and April timeframe, CCA Maryland believes this action is unlikely to provide actual savings of fish which can be accurately quantified
- MRIP estimates for 2017 which are being used to estimate the number of fish live released, within range of 110K-916K fish (95% Conf. Interval) This is reflected by the PSE, or Percent Standard Error number of 40.1. In reviewing MRIP data for other years before and after 2017, it is clear that this time of year represents a time when there is very little accuracy in understanding of recreational catch and effort. Noting this, Maryland DNR should work with recreational stakeholders to develop systems to better understand catch and effort, instead of closing this portion of the fishery.
- If using the median number of 513,044 live releases, this would mean that just over 8400 fish were released by anglers per day, over a 61-day period, when only 9 days were open for catch and keep fishing, and it is likely that many days were unfishable due to weather.
- Catch and keep fishing is widely known to be a much popular time of year, where effort increases, so the vast majority of effort in the March and April time period exists once trophy season is opened, a portion which regulation 2 proposes to remove for 2020 and beyond.
- On the opening weekend of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, nearly all charter boats reported catching no fish, and many anglers reported that the fish were in the rivers, and off limits to catch. This anecdotal experience further discredits the numbers being used by Maryland DNR to attempt to meet the conservation needs of our striped bass resources. **Has Maryland DNR done an analysis of Charter Boat log books, or discussed this experience with multiple captains?**
- The use of the year-long coast-wide 9% hook and release mortality to quantify the impacts of angling during the March-April timeline is inappropriate, and ignores studies done by Maryland DNR that shows that hook and release mortality is only an issue when bait is used, and gear which allows for deep hooking is permitted.
- Current regulations in March-April require that those fishing with bait, and that are more likely to deep hook fish, must use a non-offset circle hook, a gear shown to have a 3.4% deep hooking rate, and therefore a de-minimus, and below average impact on overall fish stocks. (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/crsb.pdf>).
- In 1990, regulations were enacted to close all known spawning reaches and areas to the targeting of striped bass. This regulation is an important tool which is already in place to protect fish when preparing to spawn. COMAR .08.02.15.03
- CCA Maryland is unaware of any evidence that further regional protections are needed to protect fish which are in a pre-spawn state, nor is there any firm evidence as to the impact that shallow hooking and releasing of fish may have on spawning. CCA Maryland would be welcome participants in any future study in the Chesapeake to better understand the angling impacts on fish during Wave 2 where they are legally pursued at this time.
- The Susquehanna flats season, which would be closed by this action is an important economic contributor to multiple towns and businesses in the Upper Chesapeake Region.
- This flats season was only opened after cooperative studies were done with the recreational fishing community to ensure that an opening of this season would be a non-consumptive use of our shared fisheries resources
- No studies have been done to assess if any changes have occurred since the opening of the flats fishery, and therefore Maryland DNR cannot quantify the conservation savings which may occur by closing this valuable fishery. This is also true of other portions of the greater Chesapeake fishery that would be closed under this option.



## Conclusion

All removals from the waters of the Chesapeake Bay should be reduced to ensure the health and sustainability of our striped bass resources. CCA Maryland recognizes that any strategy for a reduction in removals or shortening of seasons is not an easy measure to accept for the angling community.

Unfortunately, this action has been made more difficult by Maryland DNR's decision to place nearly the full burden of reduction on the recreational sector.

The recreational sector of the fishery is known to have less accurate and precise catch data due to a failure to Maryland DNR to be proactive, and create cooperative data systems to capture more accurate and precise data to supplement MRIP data.

It is of the utmost concern to CCA Maryland that DNR is focusing upon closing a pre-season period without sufficient scientific-data to justify such a closure. Angler effort has not been accurately quantified during this period, while at the same time other information has shown limited mortality given the predominant conditions at this time of year. CCA Maryland believes that enacting such measures which fly in the face of the known information may undermine the necessary conservation measures agreed to by the ASMFC states.

It is unclear to the vast majority of the public what other measures Maryland DNR is considering to meet the conservation needs of the fishery.

No regulation should be enacted or submitted to ASMFC for approval until a full and final Conservation Equivalency package is provided to leaders of the recreational fishery industry and the public. At least one public meeting with webinar access should be held to provide a full scope of intended actions to meet the 18% reduction in removals of striped bass at this time.

*To discuss our position on these matters further please contact David Sikorski, Executive Director at [davidsikorski@ccamd.org](mailto:davidsikorski@ccamd.org) or 443-621-9186*



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Some thoughts on pending striped bass regs

1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 2:00 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it concerns,

As a native to the Annapolis area, I come from generations of fisherman. It's without question that change is needed for the fishery that's been in bad shape for years. That being said, it's a shame that the recreational sector bears the complete burden of the proposed changes. The data seems horribly skewed for winter/early spring fishing and if I'm being honest, it looks like a complete jab from the charter boat association for light tackle fisherman. Change is not change without everyone participating. There is not a single light tackle boat out there that lining hundreds of dead fish through the course of a few trips. The idea that businesses will suffer from a decrease of their meat take is absolutely outlandish. Education is the only cure for the striped bass longterm. We as Marylanders have supported the harvesting of what is perceived as an endless supply of striped bass for generations and that's where change will truly be found. Our bay would be one of the best fisheries out there if we didn't kill every keeper striped bass that came over the gunwale.

Kindest regards,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Management**1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 2:07 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To: MD DNR Fisheries Department  
Pertaining to: Striped Bass Management

I am a 35 year old resident of Calvert County. I have fished nearly weekly for the last five years all in the Chesapeake Bay. I've run my boat from the Susquehanna Flats to Cape Henry chasing stripers, drum, and cobia. Striper fishing near home in the winter is very important to me. Fishing the Chesapeake is the number one reason I choose to live in Maryland.

Please do take action to protect our Striped Bass. The population is very low. There is so much empty water. Please do not take away my opportunity to target and release Stripers in cold water. Please do not take away any recreational catch and release while any commercial catch and kill is permitted. Why is a commercial fisherman allowed to take from the resource when a non commercial, tax paying resident can not even catch and release?

I fully support reducing the trophy season, number of fish, and further reducing size limits. I fully support limitations in summer months when high temperatures increase mortality. I also support slot limits all year to protect the spawning stock. This has been effective with Red Drum. Please also consider permitting only artificial baits. This has proven effective with trout management.

In my short time in the bay, I do agree that we have reduced the population. To let it recover we need to act. We need to save the spawning stock and protect the summer residents. But, please do not take away my opportunity to enjoy the resource in catch and releasing using artificial lures.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass comments

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 2:17 PM

Hi,

I'm a CCA member for 20+ years, USCG licensed Master Captain and MD licensed guide and have been following this issue since the 1984 moratorium.

In addition to supporting a 1 fish @ 18 inch regulation I'm also in favor of closing the trophy season until the stock rebounds.

Regardless of whatever regulations are passed you are simply not going to solve this issue UNTIL you stop letting recreational and commercial anglers keep large roe laden females before they spawn...it's really simple to understand if you spend a little time to think about it. Better yet, send your team out to the charter fleet docks during the first week of trophy season to see how many of these trophy's that make it to the cleaning table have not had a chance to spawn and still have roe.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 2:30 PM

NO to CE!

According to your own research catch and release morality of striped bass in march and April is less than 1%? How is this going to achieve anything? All it is doing is reducing access for fisherman and decreasing revenue to the state. Secondly, you are still allowing the harvest of fish over 35"? This doesn't make any sense at all? We should be one fish per person 18-35" as recommend by the ASMFC. Also, I question why we do not have a closure July-September as these months have the highest rate of mortality!

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5th Grade Trip Information



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass regulations**1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 3:36 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hi,

I am a recreational fisherman (age 54) fishing the bay since I moved to MD in 1990. I take out guests fishing often including neophytes and skilled anglers alike. I do believe MD should use some of the conservation equivalency tools that are available. I support a summer closure and slot limits as a means of achieving the target and having the least impact on anglers and best outcome for the fish. Here are my thoughts on each.

Summer closure- These fish are stressed out in the summer with poor water quality and high temperatures. There are "floaters" everywhere which makes cruising the bay gross sometimes. There are other species in the bay to target in the summer including Spanish mackerel, perch, blues and even crabs. I think anglers can switch gears and give these fish a break when they are most vulnerable.

Slot limits - protect the breeders! I know we don't see as many cows in the bay like we used to but we need to let the big girls swim away to procreate again.

Trophy season - push it back, cancel it, whatever. Just let the big girls spawn and swim out of the bay unharmed. While there aren't other species to target in early spring (that I know of), I am sure there are other things anglers can do (snakeheads anyone?) during this time.

MRIP - I don't know how they get this data but I have never been interviewed regarding my rockfish activity in 30 years! I get interviewed often when I fish in the ocean for Pelagics but not stripers. This system appears flawed and there has to be a better way with modern technology.

Thanks for your time reading this

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

## Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass DNR-FS-2019-04

1 message

Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 4:58 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

RE: Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass DNR-FS-2019-04

Dear Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR),

As a recreational fisherman who frequently enjoys our shared public resource, I have grown increasingly concerned about the our striped bass fishery over the past few years. Simply put, myself and my fishing network had not seen the abundance of larger striped bass, including those over 35" which science has shown to be the most essential to the annual spawn. As such, I was pleased that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) found the stock overfished and that overfishing was occurring after the latest benchmark stock assessment and approved Addendum VI which calls for an 18% reduction in removals for the recreational AND commercial sectors in 2020. The ASMFC has suggested the way to get to this reduction for the Chesapeake Bay recreational sector is 1 fish at 18" or larger per angler per day.

I am writing today to provide input for how Maryland gets to their 18% share of the reduction. It is my understanding that DNR is currently exploring several options through Conservation Equivalency (CE). While I understand the need for a flexible approach between States by implementing CE, these measures must be backed up by the best available data and science to make sure the impact to the fishery has the best chance of actually occurring.

Included in these options is a proposal to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April. I vehemently OPPOSE this option as I believe the data used to assess the impact for this option is misguided. From what I understand the estimated harvest and angler effort data is being compiled from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). MRIP data is meant to be used on a coastwide basis for year-long fishing activities. When it is instead used for shorter periods of time and in a particular state, the data is imprecise, at best, and horribly misleading, at worst. I also understand that the release mortality rate being used to calculate the estimated percent reduction (i.e. the impact) is 9%, as opposed to more accurate numbers that are available (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/crsb.pdf>). Studies show that shallow hooked fish in cooler temperature waters with high salinity (the typical conditions during March and April) release mortality is closer to 1%. The same goes for using circle hooks which I believe (and so does the scientific data) can continue to help reduce mortality (I am in favor of the extension of this mandate). In both cases of the data being used, I fear the actual impact to lowering mortality will be de-minimis.

Maryland has dropped the ball when it comes to data on the recreational sector. Maryland should do a better job of data collection so that we can make sure that we are using the most accurate information we can in future fisheries management plans. I can only speak for myself when I say that I would be happy to submit catch data any time I go out. With the apps available and technology today, there is no excuse for why the Dept cannot accomplish this.

I have also not heard of any study done on the economic impact on closing our fisheries during March and April to marinas, tackle shops, hotels and restaurants and fuel providers. I know from my perspective and many of my fishing friends and guides, closing these two months would be a huge impact economically without any real savings for the fish.

It is also my understanding that DNR will be exploring closures during the hotter months of the year but, again, the estimates of mortality probably understate the impact to the fish as catch and release fishing in warmer temperatures and lower salinity markedly increases release mortality. Using only a 9% number for this option severely underestimates the amount of dead discards we will continue to have in our fishery as the most recent studies have said that upwards of 30% of fish will die if gut-hooked or not properly handled during these conditions..

Another option that is on the table is delaying the start of "trophy season" by one week. I am in favor of this option in that by definition it allows for more of the spawning stock to breed.

But an obvious question is begging to be asked - why is DNR going to such lengths and options of CE when the ASMFC has already stated that 1 fish at 18" would be sufficient? If that is our surest bet to have an ACTUAL positive impact to



the fish, why go through all these other CE circles?

As a recreational angler who wants to ensure a sustainable fishery for future generation, I feel responsible to do my part but I also want to make sure that collectively we are ALL doing our part for what's best for the fish. We must get this right if we are to have a sustainable fishery for the future. We entrust the management of our SHARED PUBLIC RESOURCE to DNR and we should expect they take this responsibility seriously by using the best available science and more accurate and timely data in that pursuit. I am concerned most by the proposed closure during March and April without any real scientific justification. I am also concerned that outside of the first few options that you have presented, the general public does not know that other closures and regulations are being considered. I thank you for your time and careful consideration in this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,

I



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass considerations**1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 5:10 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

RE: Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass DNR-FS-2019-04

Dear Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR),

I am writing to express my opinion regarding your proposed solutions to make an 18% reduction in striped bass mortality as mandated by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). I am writing to provide input for how Maryland gets to their 18% share of the reduction. It is my understanding that DNR is currently exploring several options through Conservation Equivalency (CE). While I understand the need for a flexible approach between States by implementing CE, these measures must be backed up by the best available data and science to make sure the impact to the fishery has the best chance of actually occurring. This is why I am very much opposed to your proposal of closing the catch and release fishery in March and April. You are using catch data from MRIP, which are coastwide figures meant to be used for a year round fishery while also using a 9% release mortality rate. Best available science says that under the conditions that are usually present in March and April, the release mortality is under 1%. Therefore the fish you have calculated to save will be WAY overstated, both from the catch data and from the amount of dead discards. Please do not close our shared public resource to catch and release fishing without better quantifying the actual positive impact to the fish. There is also an economic impact here that I believe hasn't been accounted for. Local businesses such as tackle shops, charter services, hotels, restaurants and marinas would all be negatively affected.

While I agree with your proposal to delay the start of trophy season by one week, perhaps the depart could look at closing this to catch and kill completely. These breeders are the fish that will help rebuild the stock and each can carry hundreds of thousands of eggs. Keeping a trophy season alive is the surest way to make sure these fish do not spawn. Attacking catch and release ahead of this is misguided.

Please do what is right for the fish and what's right for the angling public for this shared resource.

Sincerely,

...



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery comments

1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 6:10 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The department is considering:

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.

I support this management tool with proper education for circle hook usage. In-line circle hooks easily gut hook fish if you simply wait longer to set the hook than you would with a J hook. Those not willing to lose a fish and wanting to remain in compliance could use this loophole to their advantage. I suspect a gut-hooking study with hook-set times offset from the time of the bite would support my anecdotal comment here.

1. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.

I support this management tool.

1. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

I do not support this management tool. The current percent reduction for this management tool is based on 9% percent catch and release mortality which is not a reasonable assumption for these months. I also call into question the "released alive" value of 79,277 provided by MRIP query for MD inland waters for all modes combined in March/April of 2019.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments on proposed regulation changes

1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 7:43 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I respectfully submit the following comments/input on the three (3) proposed regulation changes:

- 1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.**

I agree with the hook and season that were in place for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. I suggest better enforcement on the use of the proper hooks as many anglers are not adhering to the use of straight circle hooks

I strongly disagree with the 18" regulation for commercial fishing and the 19" regulation for recreational fishing. If the limit is one or two fish per angler, allow for the 18" fish to be kept and reduce the number of fish that are injured or die as a result of being caught and released. Both the commercial and the recreational limit should be the same whether it is 18 or 19".

- 2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.**

I strongly disagree with the change on the season start to May 1<sup>st</sup>. Trophy fishing brings tremendous revenue to the state. If the season starts one to two weeks later, you will severely impact the already struggling Charter business, tackle shops and local restaurants that are supported by the recreational fishermen. The charter business is already struggling with bookings with the two (2) fish limit and limited other species in recent years. Without the Striped Bass Early Season, what else is there to fish for in the bay from mid-April thru the beginning of May?

- 3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.**

I strongly support prohibiting the targeted Catch And Release of Striped Bass prior to the season

**Outside of the proposed regulations, I suggest four (4) other changes:**

1. I think it would be appropriate to regulate the use of Planer Boards (length of lines) and the number of rods allowed per boat and/or angler. There are far too many boats using excessively long and hazardous planer board lines and most with in excess of 20 lines, often in the 30 +/- range. Make the anglers work for their catches!

2. I fail to understand the rational in not addressing the commercial fishing industry. It is my belief that the catches reported and the actual catches are far apart, leading to inaccurate catch estimates.
3. **STRONG ENFORCEMENT and AGGRESSIVE FINES.** I have fished the bay for the past 50 plus years and can count on one hand (not using all of my fingers) the number of times I have been checked. I obey the regulations but have heard of MANY INTENTIONAL OFFENDERS (Commercial and recreational) that get a slap on the wrist. **Intentional offenders need severe penalties!**

4. **Restrict the Tournaments**

**Bottom line - If the enforcement is not stepped up, any changes will have little impact.**

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my comments and hope that whatever changes are made are effective in protecting our fisheries and enforced to the maximum!

Respectfully,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## ASMFC Addendum VI Chesapeake Bay

1 message

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Fri, Nov 8, 2019 at 8:51 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

As a Maryland tidewater license holder and striped bass angler I would support the delay of Trophy Season to May 1.

I am against the elimination of the spring C&R season (Mar - Apr) as this fishery has a proven survival rate of > 98% and would do little to decrease mortality of striped bass and be a great detriment to recreational fishing in the Chesapeake Bay.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comment on Proposed 2020 Rockfish Regulation Changes**1 message

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Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 8:02 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Those Concerned,

In reference to the proposed rockfish changes noted in the document attached to this email:

I have been a light tackle fishing guide in MD for 20 years. I have followed the progression of the proposed 2020 recreational rockfish changes closely for the last few months.

These changes will directly affect my ability to operate my business, particularly during the Spring of 2020 where catch and release fishing makes up 100% of my charter fishing trips.

In my opinion the regulation changes concerning catch and release fishing in March and April defy common sense. To somehow make the case that a 2% mortality reduction will be achieved by eliminating catch and release fishing in March and April is unfounded.

Water temperatures during this period of the year range from roughly 40 to 65 degrees, a far cry from high water temps which add to Summertime catch and release mortality. Additionally, recreational fishing pressure as a whole is much reduced at this time of year.

I do not believe this decision is being made on sound science but is pure politics.

I know that my sentiment also the opinion held by many other stakeholders.

I hope that my concern will be considered before adopting any proposed changes that do little for truly reducing Rockfish harvest totals.

Sincerely,

[https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/Reg\\_Changes/DNR-FS-2019-04\\_Striped%20Bass%20Spring%202020\\_Small%20Business%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf](https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/Reg_Changes/DNR-FS-2019-04_Striped%20Bass%20Spring%202020_Small%20Business%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf)

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Regulations**1 message

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Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 8:11 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Rockfish mortality when hooked and released as well as overall stress (exhibited by weight loss and prevalence of sores) is well established to be higher during hot water conditions which generally occur during July and August. As a part of the reduction effort, why not consider closing the season for all or a portion of this time period? Besides the benefits to rockfish, there are plenty of other species for fisherman to target during this period of the year.

It is also well established that larger rockfish produce more and more viable eggs. As part of the effort to increase recruitment, why not consider adding a slot requirement during the spring and fall seasons that would prohibit take of the larger fish?





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comment on Recreational Striped bass proposed rules**1 message

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Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 11:39 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Cc:

I have the following comments:

1. It is arbitrary, unreasonable and unlawful to seek comments on more limitations on recreational fishing of striped bass without providing a detailed explanations of the reasons/basis for the "determinations" that such restrictions are necessary.
  - a. In order to be able to effectively comment, the DNR should fully disclose the evidence supporting the decision to reduce the previously established limitation of 18 inches- 28 inches (with 2 per person after trophy ends) to the current and proposed extended 19-30 inch limits
2. It is arbitrary, unreasonable and unlawful to impose further restrictions on recreational fishing without imposing restrictions on commercial fishing of striped bass. Commercially fishing comprise the largest amount of striped bass reductions. Recreational fishing is a mere fraction and shouldn't be required to bear the brunt of the reduction.
3. DNR has not demonstrated through scientific analysis/data that circle hooks in fact reduce mortality. Experience shows that simply is not the case. Striped bass devour bait deep into their gut whether or not circle hooks are used.
4. DNR needs to more aggressively enforce the current rules. I have seen firsthand many charter boats catching and keeping striped bass that were clearly smaller than 19 inches. DNR should spend time below the bay bridge and will see for themselves. That will do more for preserving fishery than imposing further restrictions on non-charter recreational fishermen.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Rockfish Regulations

1 message

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> Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 2:21 PM  
to: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I looked at lots of data, charts, tables, and words that indicate you have spent a great deal of money studying the Rockfish problem. I commend you for this.

As a long time Chesapeake Bay rock fisherman I can only comment on what I have observed and my catch rate.

My brief comments;

- 1- Many, many years ago you could not keep a rockfish in the Bay over 15 # and there were more fish than you can believe. Studies show that the number of eggs a female has increases almost exponentially after 15#. Why don't we just cap the size at a smaller length vs trophy slots. There are no proposals that I see on doing this.
- 2- Studies in the past of releasing fish in cold water greatly reduces the mortality. I recommend keeping the present catch and release regs for March and April but adding no trolling or bait (of any kind) fishing.
- 3 - Why not a slot limit say 18-26" with a 2 fish limit.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Fwd: changes to striped bass regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 2:56 PM

-----Original Message-----

From:

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@marland.gov>

Sent: Sat, Nov 9, 2019 2:50 pm

Subject: changes to striped bass regulations

These are my ideas,I .am a recreational fisherman -

Trophy season-May 1- 36" minimum

2- 18" per day May 15 Pooles Island South (anglers will catch and leave) (small boats have tough time getting to Brewerton Channel South)

Limit 10 Lines per boat (some private and charters have 30 plus lines in water)

Limit two trips per day for charters,some in middle and lower bay go out multiple times,when fishing is good.

No catch and release Bay wide March 1-May 1

Keep circle hooks for all bait

I am a 70 year old, small boat , upper bay fisherman,

Thanks for reading my ideas



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments regarding proposed Striped Bass Regulations for Maryland Waters in 2020

1 message

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To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 3:00 PM

Chesapeake Bay Conservation Equivalency Tool Proposal by Sport Fishing Advisory Commission - October 22, 2019

I support Management Tool No. 1. Prohibit the extra charter boat fish.

I support Management Tool No. 2. Pre-Season / No Targeting (March & April)

I support Management Tool No. 3. Trophy Season Start Date (May 1)

I do not support Management Tool No 4. Summer Closure/ No Targeting (22/26 Days in July)

I do not support Management Tool No. 5. No Targeting after 10 am (August 1-31)

I do not support Management Tool No. 6. 1 Fish Bag Limit (August only/August & September)

I do support Management Tool No. 7. Dec Closure/No Targeting (7/14 days at end of season)

I do support Management Tool No. 8. Slot Limits (Range from 19-30 in. to 19-28 in.)

Comments: How can we not catch Striped Bass during this closed period? Do we ban all fishing during this period? Recreational Anglers can not control what kind of fish bites his hook! Do we ban all Trolling Activities, Jigging Activities, any Fishing Activities. Our Fishing Club had a kids fishing derby at Down's Park this September (approximately 75 kids) They caught 12 small Striped Bass only, no other fish at all. No perch, spot, croakers, or cat fish in a 2 hour period! Are those type of fish endangered? I feel that any size Striped Bass that is gut hooked should be kept and the line cut, leave the hook in the fish and counted as part of the daily limit. Why kill a fish by trying to remove the hook? I feel that circle hooks size should be No. 5 or larger so smaller fish won't get gut hooked. Why not allow treble hooks on plugs? When fishing for trout, redfish, bluefish in the shallows with plugs, how do we keep striped bass off of our lures? Also the Potomac River should have the same regulations and seasons as the rest of Maryland waters. Thank You,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

---

**Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass DNR-FS-2019-04**1 message

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Sat, Nov 9, 2019 at 6:43 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

**RE: Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass DNR-FS-2019-04**

Comments to Each Proposed Regulatory Action Listed on the Above

1. Hook Requirements: **SUPPORT**2. May 1<sup>st</sup> for Start of Trophy Season: **SUPPORT**3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting for striped bass from March 1 through April 30. The complete benefit: **OPPOSE**

- Due to an inaccurate estimate related to recreational angling impacts in the March and April timeframe is unlikely to provide actual savings of fish.

- Recommend that a study be done to have scientific data on 3.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comments on proposed striped bass regulations**1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:13 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**

COMAR 08.02.05.02 and COMAR 08.02.15.03, .08, .09 and .10

The department is considering:

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.
2. I DEFINITELY SUPPORT USE OF CIRCLE HOOKS FOR ALL BAIT FISHING.
3. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April. I SUPPORT THIS. I WOULD ALSO SUPPORT ABOLISHING THE "TROPHY" SEASON ALTOGETHER TO PROTECT THE LARGE BROODING STOCK.
4. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30. YES. BUT I ALSO RECOMMEND OPENING ALL AREAS OF THE BAY TO FISHING AT THE SAME TIME. THE CURRENT CLOSURES BEYOND APRIL 30 MAKE NO SENSE. IF THE TROPHY SEASON IS OPEN, WHY SHOULD ANY AREAS BE CLOSED?



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rockfish

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:23 AM

Reply-To: '

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Go with the one fish at 18" and no trophy season

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rockfish

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 7:45 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I strongly believe that additional restrictions on both commercial and recreational fishing for rockfish are necessary to insure the viability of future rockfish fishing. I want my grandchildren and great grandchildren to be able to enjoy the thrill of catching a large rockfish. If we don't take action now to protect them they will be beyond help in the future.

Sent from my iPad





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed Rockfish Restrictions**1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 7:59 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear DNR -

I am all for whatever it takes to make sure that the rockfish population survives and rebounds. There is no doubt that there are less fish than there were even just a few years ago. However, I think the proposed regulations are missing a crucial point when looking at ways to reduce the population decline of the rockfish populations. The point is that charter boats/businesses are not recreational or sport fishers. If you do not want to label them commercial, then they should have their own category with their own restrictions. It is not fair that I, as a guy who takes his son out fishing on weekends should be treated the same as a charter captain that goes out twice a day, everyday during the season. These charter boats put out 45 lines at a time, coordinate with each other to follow the schools of fish, and come home with limits just about every time.

I went out fishing maybe fifteen times this season. I caught two keepers, and maybe five throwbacks all season. Clearly, I am not the world's greatest sport fisherman, but I am also not the reason why the population is declining. To treat me the same as the guys that are profiteering off of crushing the Bay's natural resources is ridiculous. The regulations need to look at how these charter captains operate and put restrictions on how much of the Bay's treasures they are allowed to keep for themselves (or their customers). How about one fish limits for the charters, restricting them to one trip per day, the number of lines they can put out, the numbers of days in the week they can fish, etc?

Before you shut down fishing for a month in the middle of summer - how about just shutting out the guys trying to make a buck off of the fishery instead of the guys trying to make memories with their children and friends and putting a fresh meal on the table?

The little guy rarely has a voice in matters such as these, so I hope you hear mine. If you truly care about stopping the population decline, I think this is the place to start.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Stripe Bass Regulations

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 8:05 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

In reviewing the proposals and having been a member of Annapolis Anglers (former MSSA) and CCA, I have had a few opportunities to listen to presentations regarding the stripe bass fishery. I believe a change is over due and support moving the trophy season to May 1.

WHAT I DO NOT LIKE. What are the regulations going to do to manage the commercial fishing which is making a huge impact on the fish population. DNR seems to ignore the impact the commercial fishermen have on the bio mass. Show us your proposals for the regulation affecting the Commercial fishery.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

## Re: [AAC Members] Quick React Action Alert - MD DNR 2020 Rockfish Regulations Proposed Changes

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 8:08 AM

To:  
Cc: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

In reviewing the proposals and having been a member of Annapolis Anglers (former MSSA) and CCA, I have had a few opportunities to listen to presentations regarding the stripe bass fishery. I believe a change is over due and support moving the trophy season to May 1.

WHAT I DO NOT LIKE. What are the regulations going to do to manage the commercial fishing which is making a huge impact on the fish population. DNR seems to ignore the impact the commercial fishermen have on the bio mass. Show us your proposals for the regulations affecting the Commercial fishery.

-----Original Message-----

From:  
To:  
Sent: Sat, Nov 9, 2019 10:42 pm  
Subject: [AAC Members] Quick React Action Alert - MD DNR 2020 Rockfish Regulations Proposed Changes

Hello AAC Members,

I apologize for the very short notice but the MD DNR proposed response to the new restrictions on next year's Rockfish Regulations have just crystalized in my mind from multiple sources in the past 24 hours. There are three key points that I would like to make you aware of. First, the ASMFC has handed down their requirements on all states for reducing future Rockfish harvest. Second, the MD DNR has posted their proposed changes to the regulations and opened the window for public comment. Third and most urgent, is that that the window for public comments closes at Midnight on Sunday November 10<sup>th</sup>. Thus, my apology for the short notice.

I have attached a copy of the ASMFC Guidance to all States for reducing Rockfish Mortality as well as Maryland's proposed regulation changes to meet the ASMFC reduction Requirements. There was not enough time for me to poll our Membership and provide a majority opinion for our Club. I encourage you to review the attached documents and supply your opinion and feedback to the MD DNR by sending an email message to [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)

So, if you have an opinion, then feel free to share it with the MD DNR. As always, I am also interested in hearing your opinion so that I can best represent our Club in future Fisheries Discussions.

Tight Lines,

This message is from the Annapolis Anglers Club email server. Please DO NOT reply to this email, rather send it to someone specific in Club Leadership.

Our website address is - <http://www.annapolisanglersclub.com/>  
Facebook Group is - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/annapolisanglersclub/>

#####

Members mailing list



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service - COMAR 08.02.01.12 - Released  
October 25, 2019**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 9:53 AM

Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service

Regarding the Department's Regulations for Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Protection Zones

COMAR 08.02.01.12

Released October 25, 2019

Any increased restrictive measures on recreational Rockfish fishing without similar restrictions on commercial fishing and the associated fishing of Menhaden (a significant Rockfish food source) is an exercise in futility. We need a complete, holistic approach to manage the fishing population in the Chesapeake Bay. You cannot limit and damage the small business charter businesses and restrict the individual recreational fisherman and expect a turn around in the fishing population. I caught zero trophy fish this past season and only one the two previous seasons on the Potomac River.

I recommend a complete ban (commercial and recreational) on Rockfish and Menhaden for two years.

Regards,



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## Striped Bass proposals

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 10:51 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

**DNR,**

I was born and raised in Annapolis, MD. I've always called this town home. I grew up on the Chesapeake Bay and I've always enjoyed taking advantage of all the exciting opportunities she has to offer. The bay has added so much joy to my life. I started out fishing on the bay with my father when I was 8 years old. Over the years, the addiction grew more intense and I found myself chasing striped bass any free time I had.

I decided to dedicate my life to chasing and protecting these fish. I got my USCG captains license and MD FGR license and started a small guide business to help share the bay with others. I wanted to pass down the knowledge I've gain over all these years and also educate people on the importance of protecting this fragile species.

I've seen the striper fishery decline dramatically since I was a kid. We've had ups and down since then, mostly correlated to how well the spawn was in a given year but overall the stock has been declining for a long time. Anyone who has spent as much time on the water as I have will tell you the same thing.

What I find truly disturbing is that just one generation ago, Maryland was in a complete moratorium on striped bass! Just one generation later and we've already depleted the biomass so bad that we're staring closures in the eye once again. This is pathetic and unacceptable.

Is this how we're going to continue to manage the most important species on the bay? This is unacceptable and irresponsible. It's time Maryland get serious about protecting the striped bass and not protecting the interest of the various groups of fisherman on the bay.

The proposed regulations are a start but some of the proposals seem unlikely to help the striped bass and seem politically motivated. Closing the fishery completely and targeting the catch and release community in the months of March, April and December is a flawed proposal.

For starters, the amount of anglers on the bay these months is much lower than other warmer months. Second, the cold water temps and high dissolved oxygen are perfect conditions for catch and release and science proved this results in almost 99% of these stripers surviving a release. This is going to cost myself and many other guides on the bay thousands of dollars in lost opportunity. Not to mention the economic impact on local tackle shops, gas stations, delis, hotels etc etc. I don't mind sacrificing revenue for regulations that

will help but closing cold water months completely will not only crush the local economy, it will not be the catalyst for the striped bass rebound.

A healthy catch and release fishery is great for the economy. Other states understand this. Florida realizes that fish like Tarpon, Bonefish, big Red Drum etc are worth more alive in the water than on a dock. This model can and will work for Striped Bass also.

To use the MRIP numbers as a basis for closures and regulations is another flawed approach. These numbers are founded on flawed science. MD DNR needs to invest in a mandatory fish reporting program to get a better grasp on real numbers locally here on the bay.

I'd like to see the following;

1. Eliminate the "boat fish" for charters
2. Close the warmer months completely (July/Aug)
3. Implement a mandatory fish reporting program
4. Implement a boat limit during trophy season. Not one spawning fish per angler but a max limit per boat.

Those are just examples of regulations that would have a true impact on the fishery and truly improve for the future.

I can be reached at [REDACTED] or my email above if you'd like any comment.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass comments recreational

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 11:00 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

18% reduction is good but why must the recreational side have to carry the entire reduction and the commercial side 0% ? This is a public resource that is shared by both groups. I believe the purposed restrictions on the recreational community is illegal. Hopefully a legal solution will result in a more fair distribution of the resource. Closing the season until May 15 would save more of the spawning stock in the event of cold spring and a slot limit similar to the redfish slot that most states along the coast as well as the gulf observe would help the larger females. It works! Until the rockfish is declared a sport fish , the regulations being considered are only delaying the complete collapse of the fishery.  
Frank Updike

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Recreational Fishery Scoping - CBF Comments**

1 message

**Allison Colden** <AColden@cbf.org>

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 11:00 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Please find attached the comments of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation on proposed changes to the striped bass recreational fishery. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important issue.

**Allison Colden***Maryland Fisheries Scientist*

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

6 Herndon Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21403

Direct: 443.482.2160

**CHESAPEAKE BAY  
FOUNDATION***Saving a National Treasure***Striped Bass Rec Fishery Regs\_CBF Comments.pdf**

195K





**CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION**  
*Saving a National Treasure*

November 10, 2019

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Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Fishing and Boating Services  
Regulatory Division Staff  
580 Taylor Avenue, B-2  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

*Submitted electronically via email to [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)*

**TRUSTEES**

R. Bruce Bradley

George L. Bunting Jr.

D. Keith Campbell

Michael J. Chiaramonte

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Mark S. Ordan

Anna R. Paulotta

Ann Pelham

J. Sedwick Sellers III

Sandra E. Taylor

Preston M. White

Susan P. Wilmerding

Stephen M. Wolf

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), I wish to provide the following comments on the proposed regulatory changes to the Atlantic striped bass recreational fishery. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this action.

CBF is the largest conservation organization dedicated solely to saving the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our motto, **Save the Bay**, defines the organization's mission and commitment to reducing pollution, improving fisheries, and protecting and restoring natural resources such as wetlands, oyster reefs, living shorelines, maritime forests, and underwater grasses. CBF has over 200,000 members who support the wise management of the region's living resources.

CBF has participated in the management process for striped bass for over 25 years because the population of striped bass and its fisheries are of great importance to both our members and staff. Despite their current decline in biomass, striped bass remain one of the United States' most popular recreational fisheries and valuable commercial fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay region.

**HONORARY  
TRUSTEES**

Donald F. Boesch, Ph.D.

W. Russell G. Byers Jr.

Louisa C. Duemling

Richard L. Franyo

Alan R. Griffith

Carolyn Groobey

Ann Fritz Hackett

C. A. Porter Hopkins

Robert A. Kinsley

T. Gaylon Layfield III

Byron F. Marchant

M. Lee Marston

Wayne A. Mills

Marie W. Ridder

James E. Rogers

Truman T. Semans

Simon Sidamon-Eristoff

Jennifer Stanley

Thomas H. Stoner

Bishop Eugene Taylor Sutton

Alan L. Wartzel

Striped bass are an iconic species in the Chesapeake Bay region and the state fish of Maryland, a designation that reflects not only the cultural foundation it provides to Maryland fisheries, but its important biological connection to Maryland's waters. Chesapeake Bay striped bass spawning areas and nursery habitat account for the production of more than 70 percent of the coastal migratory striped bass population.

Despite the coast-wide stock having been declared "collapsed" in the early 1980s and the Chesapeake Bay spawning stock having been described as "severely depleted" in Amendment 3 to the IFMP, the conservation measures incorporated in Amendments 3 and 4 to the IFMP restored the stock from its "collapsed" status to a level at which it was declared "recovered" in 1995 by ASMFC.

Unfortunately, the recently released benchmark stock assessment paints a concerning picture for the current status of the striped bass population, with the stock being both overfished and currently experiencing overfishing. Although the stock is not yet

considered collapsed, it is at a point that requires decisive action in order to restore this important resource along the Atlantic Coast and in the Chesapeake Bay.

We appreciate the need to move quickly to propose actions to address overfishing for the 2020 fishing season; however, we believe a more holistic approach to the regulatory development of a conservation equivalency package is necessary. Although the Department has scoped many different options with the Sport Fish and Tidal Fish Advisory Commissions, it has yet to specify which combination of options will be proposed as Maryland's CE package, making evaluation of the conservation benefit of the proposed actions difficult.


Additionally, previous conservation equivalency (CE) proposals implemented by Maryland have failed to meet their intended objectives, undermining conservation actions necessary to reverse striped bass decline. Given the poor status of the striped bass stock, there is no room for error in the development of this CE proposal. Therefore, the Department should take a measured and conservative approach to the development of this regulatory package. For example, the Department has estimated a 2.03% reduction in removals related to the closure of Wave 2, yet MRIP estimates for this time period are extremely imprecise, placing the full realization of a 2.03% reduction in question. While this does not preclude its inclusion, additional reductions must be realized elsewhere to account for such uncertainty. Actions focused on reducing harvest and release mortality during the summer months when the resource is more heavily utilized, environmental conditions are most challenging, and data is more reliable could provide a more conservative approach. We urge the Department to utilize the methods most likely to reliably achieve the necessary 18% statewide reduction in removals to protect this critical Bay resource and fishery.

We commend the Department's support of continuing the mandatory use of circle hooks and encourage continued angler education to help reduce post-release mortality of striped bass. We stand ready to work with the Department in implementing angler outreach and education initiatives, as we have done previously through our circle hook distribution and *Careful Catch* program.

As the striped bass conservation equivalency proposal comes together, we encourage the Department to engage with all stakeholders through public town halls, webinars, online FAQs, and other venues that encourage feedback and foster a better understanding of these regulations and the need for striped bass conservation.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Should you require any further information, please to not hesitate to contact me ([acolden@cbf.org](mailto:acolden@cbf.org); 410.268.8816).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison M. Colden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Allison M. Colden, Ph.D.  
Maryland Fisheries Scientist



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Proposed Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 11:43 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I am providing public comment in the negative for the proposed new striped bass regulations. The conservation equivalency as proposed does not adequately protect the diminishing striped bass population in the Chesapeake Bay and unfairly places blame and burden on the recreational fishermen. The best available science has proven many times that responsible catch and release conservation practices work. There should be NO trophy season that targets and kills breeding fish that sustain the fishery. Closing the fishery in March and April will have little impact.

- I support a one fish limit at 18" to 28" slot
- I support NO trophy season
- I would support a limited hot weather months moratorium sighting warm water release mortality

Thank you,

:

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass regulations

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 12:07 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

As a resident of Maryland and a member is Coastal Conservation Association I am disappointed in Maryland poor attempt in conservation.

After reading the proposed regulations I notice very little change! Reducing Catch and Release fishing does absolutely nothing to decreasing dead discards.

I ask that DNR follow the science available and make a decent attempt to improve the striped bass.

Please do not give into ANY special interest!!

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**RE: Amendment to Subtitle 02 Fisheries Service regarding the Department's Regulations for Striped Bass**

1 message

---

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 12:53 PM

1. delay Spring opening till May 15
2. 1 fish per day
3. Slot 18"-27"

Bay fishing for 65+ years

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on 2020 rock fish regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 1:14 PM

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 **Rock fish 2020 season comments.pages**  
124K

I would like to offer the following recommendations regarding rock fish season. I have been fishing privately in the Chesapeake Bay for over 40 years:

- Eliminate Trophy Rock season in Maryland for one year;
- Eliminate catch and release for rock for one year;
- Eliminate all live lining for rock for one year;
- Hire additional DNR staff to improve policing of public docks where charter boats clean (sometimes) undersized fish;
- Reduce the size limit from 19 to 18 inches;
- Reduce by 75% the amount of rock fish and bait fish they feed on that are taken by commercial netters and long liners.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed Striped Bass Regulations**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 3:45 PM

Please accept my comments on these proposed regulations:

1. I strongly support the required use of circle hooks when fishing for striped bass with bait. There needs to be better on water enforcement of this regulation for recreational and charter boat anglers. It would be of interest as to NRP's enforcement activity this past season: how many charter boats were inspected and the compliance rate.
2. I strongly agree with not opening the trophy season until after May1
3. I oppose the regulation that would prohibit catch and release fishing from March 1 through April 30 when water temperatures are low. I participated in studies years ago documenting low mortality for this fishery and unless there is new data refuting the original studies there is no justification for this proposal.

Thank you.

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7





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Feedback on Striped Bass Conservation Equivalency measures**1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 4:40 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I have been actively fishing the Chesapeake Bay for the past 10 years. I only do light tackle fishing with artificial baits. I have never trolled nor live lined. I replace all treble hooks with inline hooks on my hard lures along with crushing the barbs to increase overall success of releasing a healthy fish. I don't fish for striped bass in July and August. I practice safe handling of the fish as much as possible. Never holding a fish to be released vertical. Always support the mid section, and most of all unhook at the side of the boat and revive the fish.

I have kept one fish so far this year which was 22". I will never keep a fish over 28". With the correct sized lures and hooks, I rarely ever catch a fish that I don't think will survive being released. I do a fair amount of fishing during the colder months and have found the fish to be the most healthy and to recover the best for Catch and Release.

My concern comes with lumping together all forms of C&R. In my mind, the only consistently survivable C&R is by using artificial lures. I don't believe fishing with live bait or chumming should be remotely considered C&R. The best I can come up with that is Catch and Drown. Not much different than Catch and Kill for fish that are kept. Sit down stream of the fleet chumming and live lining during the summer months at Love Point and see how that looks.

Trolling should not be lumped in to the C&R realm as well as dragging a fish behind a boat at 3 mph for 10 minutes while someone reels in the fish has little chance of surviving. I was just out on Saturday and watch several trollers reel in one undersized fish after another that was pulled out of the water and the hooked yanked out for the fish to drop into the water from 3-4 ft.

Lumping all of these under the C&R umbrella and banning C&R during March and April is akin to banning guns from law abiding citizens to curb gun violence. It absolutely makes no sense.

It is amazing to me how politics can override common sense time and time again. I imagine the closing of C&R in March and April was more than likely a proposition to appease the charter boat community with delaying the opening until May. What you have proposed is absurd. Please look at the science behind properly released fish in cold water temperatures. Please take a look at last year and the previous years and see how poorly your conservation equivalency measures fared. Maryland has proven to be the biggest offender once again.

How about banning Catch and Kill tournaments? How about stepping up educating the fishing community on safe release practices? How about showing the benefits of using the proper Circle hooks for bait fishing? I would love to see a guy that says he still gut hooks with circle hooks paired up with a guy that never gut hooks with circle hooks on the same boat and compare the two techniques to see the reason for the difference.

How about not pandering to special interest groups and do what is best for the Chesapeake Bay? The immense amount of money the recreational community spends on fishing will be down and felt by our local communities. It is not just fishing gear or boats. Think about all of the downstream affects such as

1/9/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Feedback on Striped Bass Conservation Equivalency measures

buying food and gas, hotels, restaurants, bars.... Starting to look like time to move to a state that gives a crap about sustaining a fishery.

CCA member

Concerned recreational fisherman.

Most of all , I vote!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**How come everytime restrictions are placed on the recreational fishermaen who can only keep 2 fish if they catch any at all. The commercial fishermen are allowed to catch hundreds at a time with their nets. I've seen a lot of undersized fish in those nets.**

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 4:43 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thank you

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## 2020 Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 4:53 PM

To whom it may concern:

I agree that the season should be opened later in the spring, not before May1, and not having catch and release before that. The best thing to do for a year or two would be to close the trophy and flats season entirely.

I agree with only circle hooks when using bait.

I also think that the season should be closed in July and that the daily limit should be 1 fish of not less than 20 inches or more than 28 inches.

Thank you.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Additional Comment on 2020 Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 4:58 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it may concern:

In addition to my other comments, I think that the commercial sector also needs to have some restrictions placed on the amount of fish that they can kill.

Thanks.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Recreational striped bass changes**1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:04 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I have felt for many years that the start of the striped bass trophy season was too early and that May 1st would be a better start date. But to combat some of the other suggestions that have been put forth lately I would suggest the recreational and charter season should begin the second Saturday in May. This would insure that the spawn is over and the most eggs have been released to help bring the numbers of young rockfish back. Also no catch and release on the flats should be allowed until the start of the season.

Another approach is to find a way to enforce the 2 fish per fisherman. The charter captains for the most part are doing a good job of ending their charters once the fish are caught. There are too many recreational fishermen staying out on the bay for hours once they have caught their limit. It is those fishermen who share a major responsibility of the amount of dead discards as they cull for bigger fish.

I would also like to see the recreational season end by November 30th each year.

If these efforts are put in place for the next 3 years, the numbers will increase without hindering the recreational and commercial seasons further.

Thanks

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striper regulations

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:11 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello,

I live near Annapolis and I fish recreationally for striped bass. The extremely slow spring seasons that we have had the past few years are good evidence that we need to change something. When entire charter fleets get skunked, that is our cue that something is wrong!

I think that the striper fishery here in Maryland should be managed to protect the large breeding fish. I agree with the changes in the regulations on hooks as well as the delay of the spring striper season. I do not agree with stopping catch and release in the spring. I don't think mortality in early spring has been shown to be statistically significant and I do not think this will make any difference whatsoever in the striper population.

Furthermore, I would suggest that we should implement a slot limit similar to the one in place for red drum. Let's not keep anything less than 36 inches. These large breeders are too valuable to just catch once!

Thanks.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**The single most important step to increase overall biomass is to eliminate the catch and release season on the Susquehanna. The released spawned will live but the roe is destroyed. Do you think any pregnant animal can be held upside down, be slammed on the floor, fought to exhaustion, and then procreate effectively. Nonsense. That's why many trophy fish caught during the trophy season have grey discolored roe in the process of being dissolved.**

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:26 PM

Sent from my iPhone





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striper requirements

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 6:43 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Think we need to be a bit more restrictive. When trolling only 1rod in the water for each person on board. If C&R no bait can be used. Close the bay for fishing during July and August, when the water temps are the highest. If the Susquehanna will open 5/16 that is when the entire bay should be open

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 7:10 PM

I am STRONGLY opposed to Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30. This fishery has been proven to have an extremely low mortality rate by DNR's own study. It would be ludicrous to eliminate responsible catch and release as a conservation effort.

regards,

/



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass/ Rockfish regulations

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 7:19 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

As a recreational fisherman with over 40 years experience I have seen the drastic changes to the fish population. I would highly encourage the state of Maryland to take the lead and close the fishing season completely to fish over 35 inches if only for one or two years and then reevaluate the numbers to see if any improvements have been made. I highly encourage Maryland to push the northern States to do the same. Protecting the overall breeders can and will increase the numbers

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Rockfish regulation feedback.**

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 8:27 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Good evening, I live in the Annapolis area. I am a recreational fisherman. I purchased a house on the water to have access to our fishery. My house is worthless to me without having a sustainable fishery. The SSB data doesn't lie, the mega breeders are in trouble and that has been reflected by the charter fleet and recreational fisherman.

I think that the striper fishery here in Maryland should be managed to protect the large breeding fish. I agree with the changes in the regulations on hooks as well as the delay of the spring striper season. I do not agree with stopping catch and release in the spring. I don't think mortality in early spring has been shown to be statistically significant and the data shows that it won't make an impactful difference the striped bass population. I feel that we should implement a slot limit similar to the one in place for red drum. One fish per person 18-30 inches. Over 30 have to be released. There also needs to be summertime restrictions. The general public has show ignorance when it has come to properly handling and releasing fishing in the summer. I propose restricting days that can be fished for rockfish in July and August.

Regards,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass

1 message

Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 9:22 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Hello,

I am in favor of motion 1 and 2 for improving the striped bass fishery. Banning catch and release will have a minimal impact on the Striped Bass recovery. We need to harvest one fish per person during the season, not two fish.

1. AGREE - Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.
2. AGREE - Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.
3. DISAGREE - Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

Thanks,

Sent from my iPad



## Striped Bass Comments

1 message

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 10:00 PM

Hello, my name is [redacted] striped bass enthusiast, author of [redacted] books on [redacted] contributor to [redacted] publications consultant and sponsored angler to [redacted] and operator of a [redacted] I have been a part of many conversations and meetings on the topic of striped bass regulations and submit the following comments to the proposed regulations during the scoping period:

### 1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.

Bait fishing is the most detrimental type of striped bass fishing as far as mortality is concerned. In general, I am opposed to fishing with bait for striped bass because of the potential damage. However, circle hooks represent the best possible alternative to the tremendous mortality cause by J Hooks. I will also add that J Hooks should be removed from the verbiage in Section 1, bullet "c". Many anglers are using Circle Hooks while chumming and J Hooks for live lining, which are showing high rates of deep hooking, and hence, mortality. J Hooks should be prohibited entirely to avoid this loophole.

### 2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.

Once again, it's hard to support a Trophy Season in the current state of the fishery. If saving breeders is truly a concern, Trophy Season should be Catch and Release only. The 2017 numbers show ~74,000 harvested breeders. A small discard mortality exists during that time, but even using the 9% mortality figure, 67,000 would be saved to breed again. This said, if converting to a C&R only format for the next few years is not on the table, I support moving the Trophy Season a week to May 1.

### 3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

Prohibiting C&R during cold, oxygenated water periods yields virtually no harvest reductions, as supported through several DNR studies. I oppose this regulation especially under the verbiage in the Freedom to Fish Act signed by Governor Ehrlich, which establishes important standards that must be met before any of the state's waters can be closed to fisherman. This law recognizes the social and economic importance of recreational fishing and helps protect the rights of saltwater anglers in MD. Under this law the state has to evaluate whether less severe management measures will be effective before an area can be closed to recreational fishing. By simply looking at the most recent 2019 MRIP data, and using DNR's Susquehanna Flats study during the March through April 30, less than 800 fish (both breeders and schoolies) are impacted. This is the least detrimental period of time to fish, and the DNR biologists performing the study encourage regulations geared towards these times of year, rather than warmer months. The science and the law supports a non closure during this time period.

Anglers need be present on the water, which are harbingers of danger to the fish stock. They take notice before the science catches up. Removing them from the equations removes the anglers historically responsible for raising concerns on the health of a fishery.

Local tackle shops surrounding historic C&R areas will suffer during this non-consumptive early season.

MRIP data is also highly suspect during this period, yielding high PSE scores during these months. Additionally, the first week of trophy season overlaps with the March/April MRIP data, which cannot be separated but likely

results in a significant portion of the figures. I suspect a 9% mortality rate were ascribed to the MRIP numbers, which is not appropriate and only appears on paper as a reduction, not a reduction in reality.

Additionally, statements made about females dropping eggs have been shown to be completely erroneous, yet the story continues to be pervasive in C&R discussions. No study has been done to support such claims, but variability in the environment and conditions result in natural variations in appetite to spawn and not attributed to fishing pressure.

## Conclusion

I recognize the challenges of a multi faceted fishery, however, when the recreational anglers bear all of the burden, the challenge for them is hard to accept. When 79% of the commercial fishery (by numbers of fish) occurs in the Chesapeake, it's hard to comprehend why a shared resource does not share the reduction. Regardless of profession, no one has a greater right to the resource than another, and picking winners and losers is should not be in the jurisdiction of the regulatory body.

I support Items 1 and 2, and strongly oppose Item 3. I also support ASMFC proposal of 1 Fish @ 18", which a max top size limit to protect the breeders forever. This type of commonsense approach is widely supported by the fishing community as it achieves a real reduction, saves the breeders and gets the charter boats their 18" fish while allowing minimal impact to anglers and businesses alike. Anglers want real reductions, not empty accounting practices. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Regulations Comments

1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 11:14 PM

Reply-To: <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>  
To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To DNR,

First of all, I'm a MD recreational angler and a tidal and non-tidal license holder since 1972. I've lived through the striped bass moratorium back in the mid-1980s and don't want to see our precious state fish succumb to that again. I'm currently a light tackle angler and largely a catch and release angler that practices extreme catch and release techniques. The Susquehanna Flats spring catch and release season is one of my favorite seasons giving other ethical anglers and I a chance at a lunker striped bass to be caught and released unharmed. I'd hate to see that season cancelled. I also practice catch and release in the fall while keeping a fish or two in the 19"-26" range to eat on occasion. I rarely troll and never fish the trophy season because I don't want to stress the huge female stripers during their spawning run. I also do some live-lining and chumming with circle hooks in the summer.

I support an equal reduction for both the recreational and commercial anglers.

I would support changing the creel limit to one fish between 19" and 26" per day during the open season.

I'd also support a closed season when water temps reach an unsafe temp in July/August.

I do support the recent change to 19" minimum size being extended for future years.

In addition, here's my specific comments to your proposed changes.

1. Extension of hook regulation: I fully **support** the mandatory circle hook regulation (for all Mid-Atlantic states) and would push for it to take effect in 2020 instead of 2021. I practice this now when I live-line and/or chum.
2. May 1 Start of the Trophy Season: I **support** this new start date and would even support a May 15th start date to ensure our spawning fish are protected.
3. Prohibiting catch and release or targeting of striped bass from March 1 through April 30: I **oppose** this regulation but would counter propose the following. Don't allow lures with treble hooks and consider not allowing trolling because I believe trolling further stresses a fish and may even cause drowning and/or death.

Lastly, I'll forward you my comments that I sent to ASMFC about a month ago outlining some specific recommendations to improve catch and release practices and an app for recreational angler self reporting to improve your data for the recreational angler population.

Sincerely,







Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Fwd: Comments for Draft Addendum VI for Atlantic Striped Bass**1 message

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Sun, Nov 10, 2019 at 11:22 PM

Reply-To

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

As promised, below are the comments I sent to the ASMFC in October 2019.

My wife and I attended the Striped Bass Management Meeting on Oct 3rd in Cambridge. It was largely attended by commercial watermen and a few recreational anglers like myself. I'm a very passionate fisherman and practice extreme conservation measures both on and off the water. My wife and I are very concerned about the health of our precious Chesapeake Bay and its wildlife. We volunteer and are members of CBF, CCA, Blackwater Wildlife Refuge, and Shore Rivers (formerly Mid-Shore River Keepers). We live on a tributary of the Choptank River which is one of the rivers the Striped Bass spawn in each year. I have been a Maryland tidal and non-tidal license holder since my 16th birthday back in 1972. With all that said, you know a little bit about my/our background and passions, below are my comments.

1. I support Option 2 and Sub-Options 2-A2 and 2-B4 but recommend the slot be increased to 20"-26"

2. Conservation Equivalencies (CE)

a. Strongly consider eliminating the Trophy Season or at least delay it until May 1st with the hope that most female striped bass have already spawned. (if we had a shortage of humans, we wouldn't kill our pregnant women!)

b. Enforce no catch and release after a fish limit has been achieved

c. Consider a closed season when water temps reach a dangerous level for fish release mortality (July/August)

d. Consider temporarily closing the Susquehanna Flats Catch & Release season

3. Circle Hook Provision:

I support Option B. All States/jurisdictions require Mandatory use of Non-Offset Circle Hooks for all bait fishing (live-lining, chumming, etc.)

4. Promote and educate proper Catch & Release methods such as:

- a. use of single hooks (such a VMC In-Line Single hooks) vs. treble hooks that are found on many artificial lures
- b. use barbless hooks
- c. cut the line on a gut hooked fish instead of trying to remove the hook
- d. Don't hold a fish with a towel which removes the protective slime coating
- e. Don't weigh a fish by a scale attached to the fish's mouth (boga grip, etc.) that will be released
- f. Keep the fish in the water while unhooking if possible or take a quick picture before releasing it
- g. Ensure to revive a stressed fish before releasing it

5. Require/encourage recreational anglers to self report their catch data by creating a user friendly on-line app. This will allow for more accurate data for recreational anglers.

6. Promote invasive species (northern snakeheads, blue catfish, etc.) fishing

Thank You,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**1 message

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To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 5:41 AM

To whom it may concern,

Based on science and sound management the spring trophy season should be eliminated and the summer fishery reduced to 1 fish 18" or longer. The removal of Catch and Release in April will do nothing to help the population and directly targets a group of fishermen that are fighting the hardest to protect the resource.

I started fishing the Chesapeake for Striped bass in 2011. During that time there were plenty of fish around for everyone. Even as late as 2016 one could find a nice grade of 30" fish throughout the bay. However, over the past 2 -3 years it has become harder and harder for a lot of people to find fish that size. And, the spring trophy catch rate has dropped dramatically. This is all due to over harvest of our resource.

d.  
  
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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Please don't close offseason catch and release for Rockfish

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 6:18 AM

—  
Regards and God Bless America,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rule Changes

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 6:23 AM

1. Putting the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years.

Yes

2. Changing the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. The current start date is the third Saturday in April.

No, against the start date as many things in the calendar year are based around this timing.

3. Prohibiting catch-and-release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30. (All forms of fishing – trolling, light tackle jigging and bait fishing – that specifically targets stripers would be prohibited).

Prohibit trolling with stinger hooks and bait fishing, not light tackle jigging.

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Regards and God Bless America,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## striper comment

1 message

Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 7:35 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please adopted Option 2 per ASMFC. No rockfish larger 36". Allow C&R for 3 weeks only. Close July.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Disagre with Targeting Ban

1 message

Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 8:31 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I am a kayak fisherman who goes in the bay and its tributaries for striped bass. I agree with the other regulations including circle hooks but I strongly disagree with no targeting for recreational fisherman.

We should be strongly discouraging the keeping of the larger, breeding/spawning stripes but no targeting at all in March and April unduly punishes recreational fisherman (especially those who catch and release or keep only smaller fish).



**Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>**

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**Public comment on proposed changes.**1 message

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Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 11:28 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello I am just a recreational fisherman on the Chesapeake Bay that for the most part who targets striped bass. I do not understand why Maryland is trying to play with the numbers instead of making the necessary changes to preserve the striped bass fishery. There was no point in even voting on the plan B reduction and slot limit at the Atlantic States Fishing Commission meeting. There should be no conservation equivalency. Eliminating catch and release in winter months does very little as your studies have shown it's not a 9% fatality rate but a 1%. I fully support circle hooks which Maryland has already implemented. With the majority of the Atlantic rockfish population coming from the Chesapeake we should be trying to make more than the 18% reduction as a state. This would help rebuild the spawning biomass in a shorter period of time. The regulations would be much easier to enforce and be successful with a 1 fish a day at the 18" minimum. I know I'm just a recreational fisherman enjoying our wonderful resources and my voice doesn't matter in the grand scheme of things but should be the leader in rebuilding this fishery. Time to think about our resources and not the money. If we cannot turn things around there will a great loss of revenue from the commercial fisherman to the tackle shops in our great state of Maryland.

Thank you for your time,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed striped bass regulations**1 message

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Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 6:18 PM

Reply-To

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I would like to submit my concerns over the proposed regulations.

I understand that the fish population is in trouble, and that everyone needs to accept less take in order to save the species.

I am a light tackle guide and, while I do run mainly catch and release trips. I only run a few preseason trips each year, so the cutting of c&r for March and April is not a significant cut for me business wise. But the apparent twisting of scientific data to indicate that this cut will have any significant reduction in mortality is plainly smoke and mirrors.

I am in favor of a slot limit, where no fish over 35 inches can be kept. This sort of limit has been successful in other fisheries in helping species rebound.

I am not in favor of the time slot for late summer, you are significantly cutting access to working people and their families who would like to go out in the evenings.

I would like to point out that the recreational fishery is an extremely large part of the economy in the Chesapeake watershed. DNR must account for all stakeholders and the fishery itself to maintain a healthy fishery and economy.

I urge DNR to adopt the the ASMFC recommendations and not the equivalency model.

Thank you

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Regulations**1 message

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Tue, Nov 12, 2019 at 3:46 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I first wat to say I feel we do need change in regulations. The Bass populations have dwindled over the years and now is the time to help curve that. I think both commercial and recreational laws need changed, it would be careless to only regulate one side and not the other.

Myself I keep very few fish (about 10per year) that is out of hundreds that are caught. We practice catch and release most of the time we are out fishing. We keep a eye on our catch and can tell you are release rate is very high due to the lures we use barbless single hooks and the way we handle them . We use all artificial lures. I also fish in the colder weather months spring and Fall /winter . I feel your mortality rates are high during these periods.

A gillnet does not care about size . There is no way to release these fish after they are in the nets. This is an area that could be looked at for some real change that would make a big difference.

It is not popular in my business to say these things but fishing and keeping all these big female fish during the late fall winter is just not good conservation. In NJ and MD in Nov and dec and in VA January Febuary. These pictures of limits of big females is just sickening to me.

Please use my thoughts for consideration in the new rules for the 2020 season.

Thank you

“ ”



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Nov 12, 2019 at 5:49 PM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

A few things for consideration:

1. Have you thought about changing the regulations to 1 fish per man, 18" and over, from 1 May to 31 Dec?
2. Have you also considered that the mortality rate escalates in the hottest part of the season? You're regulating based on the spawning season but not considering the rate of survival which I believe to be extremely high when the water is cold. You should go with a forced barbless season until 1 May, and maybe I've missed that all together.
3. Are you reducing commercial harvest during March to May when the breeding stock is subject to being targeted by gill netting?
4. Are you doing anything to ensure trap nets don't closeout bay/creek access? I think there should be a minimum distance from the shoreline of nets to give these fish a better chance of migrating the shallows as is their habit.

R



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Rec Fishery Comment**1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Nov 12, 2019 at 9:23 PM

Please consider going further with the proposed new restrictions. I am an active recreational fisherman, and have been seeing the striped bass fishery decline dramatically over the past five years in the area I fish out of Solomons, MD. Catches of larger fish, 26 inches and up are a rarity now. While there are many reports of very good striped bass numbers north of the bay bridge, there simply aren't any larger resident fish in any numbers anymore in the Solomons area. The rivers are still full of juvenile fish, but the adult fish are few and far between, and many of the charters move elsewhere during the summer.

I do not understand why Maryland would maintain a spring trophy season, while Virginia has now outlawed it and imposed a slot limit. As Marylanders, we need to protect this resource, and I fear we are doing too little too late. I cannot believe that Virginia, with their look the other way attitude on Omega Protein, is enacting more restrictive regulations than we are. Even charter fishermen are talking about the need for a new moratorium, and there are more than few threads on the local fishing boards resigned to the fact that we won't do enough, and will need to enact a new moratorium.

I hope that is not the case, but the proposed rules don't go nearly far enough. We need to take more than just a step in the right direction. I understand there are multiple constituencies at issue here, but I urge you to base your decision on the science, and not the perceived needs of any particular constituency.

I recognize these comments may be out of time, but just saw the notice and felt the need to comment. I have not done so before, but am so concerned about the state of this resource that I have pledged to work to protect it. I hope you will consider them.

Thank you,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striper Harvest Reductions**1 message

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Wed, Nov 13, 2019 at 9:17 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

In regards to the options of how to reduce the number of strip basses harvested in Maryland, my first choice is to see a closure of the season for a large portion of July. As a fisherman and an avid boater it is hard to see the mortality rate of fish caught in July when the water temps are nearing 90 degrees. You find dead fish floating up and down the bay in large numbers. My daughters like to play a game to see how many dead stripers they can count floating between stops on the boat. I know not all of these fish deaths are due to fishing, but I do not fish for stripers in the heat of the summer because I know it is sure death for a fish that I catch.

I would also favor closing the season earlier in Dec. I do fish cold weather, but could certainly stop fishing a few weeks earlier for the good of the species.

My last choice of options for limiting the harvest would be limiting the number of stripers per angler to 1 fish. It is hard to catch stripers. I often get "skunked" when I go fishing with family or friends and when I do get lucky enough to catch a few with my daughters, wife, or friends it would put a fast end to a fishing day and limit my time on the water with family and friends if there was a 1 fish limit.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**•Commercial License Targets**1 message

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Thu, Nov 21, 2019 at 11:14 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Cc:

I have been informed that catch and release of Rockfish in 2020 may no longer be allowed.

I understand that the mortality rate is whats in question.

Heres what I know from actually fishing. Not reading someones elses tilted reports.

I have released no bloody rockfish during c&r. I have not seen any floating in the early season on the flats.

I did however witness charter boats this summer w fish floating around them.

I also know Maryland allows for gill netting by commercial fisherman to the tune of over one million pounds.

If c&r is being retriected or removed, then what possible sence does it make to allow commercial folks to remove ANY fish?

Those commercial guys are killing them, rec guys like myself are trying to save them?

Someone would have to be Evil or Extremely Greedy not to see this.

If the fish are in trouble, then commercially those folks need to adjust.

Dairy farmers have done this for decades, might be time to look into a new line of work.

Because no matter how you try to protect the commercial fish market, you will fail as long as millions of pounds of rockfish and their forage are removed. The sooner this is stopped, the sooner the population can rebound. Put the boats in moth balls fellows, get a newspaper and get a job that not subsidized by the public fishery.

If you are truly interested in saving the bay, then do it.

It hurts to make changes, but as overseers of the earth

we need to do whats necessary. There should never be a

single thought of "unlimited finfishing" in this millennium, anywhere, are not any of you scientists of biology?

Don't ask for public comment and then sweep it under the rug.

Extremely disappointed,

Maryland Rec fisherman

unlimited



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments on proposed "Striped Bass Management" final

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Jan 4, 2020 at 11:52 AM

My comments are my own and do not reflect the position, if any, that may be taken by any organization.

Just eliminate catch and release (C/R), as it is the largest cause of discard mortality according to your own data. Or maybe allow C/R from November 1 to March 1 during the cold water months.

The statement "Maryland sees the required management change as an opportunity to reduce discard mortality and to **expand protection for large migratory fish...**" especially protection for the large fish, to me suggests that a maximum size limit should also be imposed. During the shortened Spring Season, additional protection for the large fish could be realized by allowing a one fish 19" - 28" for recreational and charter anglers. The last few Spring Seasons in my opinion have been terrible, compared to just a few years ago.

I favor separation of the charter operators from the recreational or private anglers. Restricting charters to one fish during the Summer Season will put many charter operators out of business needlessly. The majority of charter operators catch their fish and move on to other opportunities or return to the harbor. Requiring them to use FACTS is a reasonable burden to be eligible for a two-fish limit.

The simplest set of actions and my option would be May 1 – December X one fish 19-28 inches for private anglers and two fish 19-28 inches for charters. We had no trophy season during the moratorium and eliminating it now would realize a reduction in the harvest of the large fish.

And pick a Summer Season closure (no targeting), although the August 17-31 period would be my choice. Looking at a graph of 2019 July 1 – August 31 water temperatures at the Gooses Reef shows little difference is highest temps across that range.

Given that my option is not among the table of options, Option 4 comes closest so I would vote for Option 4, especially since it's the only option of those presented that gives Charter operators a two-fish limit.



My last comment is editorial. I would suggest that the "bonus" extra fish for charters be rephrased from "Prohibit extra fish..." to "Eliminate extra fish..." or "No extra fish" as is used elsewhere.

Regards,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripped Base Regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Jan 5, 2020 at 4:06 PM

To Whom it may concern;

In order to meet the 18% mortality reductions and to begin stabilizing the Rockfish population in the Bay, I am in favor of the following:

- 1) Eliminate the spring catch and release season and the trophy season. We need to start protecting the breeding females. Let these big fish alone, so that they can spawn and then get out of the Bay and go back to the ocean.
- 2) Close the season for recreational fishing and commercial pound net fishing for a 4-6 week period during the hottest part of the summer, say for at least the whole month of July.
- 3) Continue to require circle hooks for bait fishing and limit the daily recreational catch to one fish/day in the 21-26 inch size range and require a corresponding limit for the commercial sector.

Thank you.

**Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>**

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**Rockfish**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 6, 2020 at 4:38 PM

I have been fishing a long time, and hopefully longer. I think eliminating the catch and release should happen. Why put unnecessary stress on spawning fish? Let them do what is necessary, it doesn't make sense to stress out a fish for a 30min battle to release it. Allow the fish to spawn without stress, the population will increase without the needed stress of catch and release. How many actually die or don't produce healthy eggs?

The summer season, keep the fish you catch, just limit the number. Dead fish would somewhat be eliminated. Everyone is concerned about size, be happy with a catch



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Limitation on Striped Bass fishing for the 2020 season**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 6, 2020 at 11:40 PM

I would like to add my \$.02. I own 2 boats and fish a fair amount each year. Anywhere from 125 to over 200 hours each year. I spend a lot of money in the local marine businesses each year. Close to \$10,000/season. I have been concerned for years about dwindling catches each year, for the last 5 or 6 years. A lot of us responsible fishermen do not keep big fish ( cows) for that reason. I have not kept any fish over 38" in 5 years.

I understand limits have to be put in place. I'm OK with limiting Trophy season. I understand about hot weather C & R in July & August ( I like after 10 AM). BTW, your 9% mortality rate for recreational C & R fishing is flawed.

I have two concerns that I think MUST be addressed: Commercial gill netting in Feb. Mar. & Apr. It is indiscriminate and kills a lot of fish full of eggs.

Secondly, Allowing Charter boats to target big cows and allowing them 2 or 3 trips ( 3<sup>rd</sup>. trip on long summer days) every day! That has to stop!

I understand the commercial guys have a big lobbying effort. We don't. But understand if us recreational fishermen take the brunt of the limitations, the local economy will take the brunt of the economic loss. Tackle shops are nervous. A lot of people are on the edge of selling their boats in the spring, once these regs come out. Be mindful of that. Recs put over 10 times the money in the local economies that the comms do. They should be farming Rockfish anyway!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Proposed Striped Bass Proposals

1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 9:31 AM

Reply-To:

1&gt;

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

To Whom It May Concern,

I am an avid fisherman and a part time fishing lure builder that helps in every way possible to keep the fishery thriving for my children to enjoy... At the rate we are going nothing will be there to enjoy, all of the proposals currently are all "conservation equivalency" proposals, and NOT on the table is the most commonsense option recommended by the Atlantic States Marine Fishery Commission. CE is code for looking for fuzzy math to take reductions on paper that don't occur in reality.

For example, going after the very low impact spring catch and release, where they'll apply a 9% mortality rather than the much lower mortality that their own studies suggest....this gets a larger reduction on paper than occurs in reality. We want real reductions to save the fish, and many of us have real concerns that these options won't even get us close. I have a big problem with DNR favoring certain businesses over others. We, recreational anglers, are a \$440,000,000 economic impact in Maryland alone and are treated like second class citizens because we don't have a large unified voice. The secretary of DNR comes from a family of waterman, so no surprise how things have erred on anti conservation and pro harvest, we need CHANGE UP AND DOWN THE COAST AND WE NEED IT NOW, Please get rid of the CE proposals and make some real change. Thank you

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**MD proposed striped bass regulations, please do not outlaw pre-season catch and release**1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 10:54 AM

To: "Fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;Fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I stand for one fish per person from May 16<sup>th</sup>-Dec 15

Please do not stop preseason catch and release fishing

In regards to the proposed regulations, I want to voice my opinion as a US Coast Guard Captain, recreational fishermen and as a concerned citizen. It doesn't make sense to outlaw catch and release fishing in the off season before trophy season when we continue to allow charter captains to harvest when there are pre-spawn migratory fish in the system. Catch and release is a proven management technique (Susquehanna Flats catch and release study) to conserve the species. There is very little mortality in water temperatures below 70 degrees with the higher dissolved oxygen. There are thousands of anglers and charter captains who use the resource and do not need to harvest fish to enjoy the resource. There will be more fish if we catch and release. Yes there is some mortality with catch and release fishing but negligible compared to fishing during the warmer months. Very little will be conserved if we stop pre season catch and release fishing. Please consider reducing the harvest limit to one fish per person in the summer season and push back the trophy season to May 1<sup>st</sup> to allow more fish to spawn. The first week of the opener I have seen most fish harvested to still have eggs. Please let them spawn before harvest. Also, the recreational fishermen spend more money on numerous fishing trips than a charter boat client who may only fish once a year. Allowing charter boats to harvest two fish per person but not the recreational fishermen will do little to the overall economy. Recreational fishermen spend more money at tackle shops, gas stations, DNR licenses etc than charter boat clients who may only fish once a year. Most charter boats run several trips a day. Please reduce the harvest number across the board for everyone to one fish per person at 18 inches. Or even close the harvest of striped bass to everyone and only allow catch and release fishing. I also support the summer closure during the high temperature and lowest dissolved oxygen period.

Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Rockfish proposal

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 11:10 AM

- Allow catch and release on Flats since data show very low mortality in cool water
- Delay start of Trophy season until 1 May, and convert trophy season to catch and release only...4.18 plus additional points for all C&R...?
- For entire season eliminate extra fish for Charter boat...0.08
- For entire season 1 fish/person recreational, 2/person for charters...9.99
- For entire season, must release all fish >34in, to save all large females...?
- Close winter season early, Dec2...2.92

Known values provide 17.17. Added points for moving Trophy to C&R and eliminating kill of all fish >34in, should provide 20. Note 34in might not be correct number based on data (it is just the value I use on my boat).

Thanks for working to preserve our rockfish!

Sent from my iPad





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed 2020 Striped Bass Regs**1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 11:13 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Cc:

d

As a lifelong MD resident and avid recreational fisherman, please count me in favor of the ASMFC proposal of 1 fish over 18" as the 2020 standard, for recreational AND charter anglers. I would also like to see the Spring Trophy season made 100% catch and release only - no taking of breeding fish.

As someone who fishes 3-4 times a week, it's an extraordinary burden to have to decipher all of the proposed DNR regulations - recreational fishermen shouldn't have to check the calendar and decipher regulations every time we go fishing, nor should we bear the entire reduction goal - charter and commercial fishermen must be made to make positive reductions as well.

Current DNR proposals strike me, and many many others as a deceptive shell game that will be a nightmare from a compliance/enforcement perspective that places all the burden on recreational fishermen, uses questionable mortality estimates (specifically for Spring season where past DNR studies show much lower numbers than are used in the proposals), and so is likely to fall short of conservation goals.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comment on the Fisheries Proposal to Suspend Catch and Release of Striped Bass**1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 1:20 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The recreational fishing industry in Maryland contributes \$440,000,000 each year to local businesses and state and local government agencies. The Spring Catch and Release fishery alone generates millions of dollars from in-state and out-of-state recreational anglers through boat registration and licensing fees. Millions more are generated through the purchase of fishing and boating gear and at local restaurants and hotels. I believe the recent proposal to suspend catch and release fishing of striped bass would significantly reduce the positive contribution to the local economy while doing little to nothing to further the conservation efforts the rule is intended to promote.

Multiple studies, as well as DNR's own research, have consistently proven negligible mortality occurs in water temperatures below 62 degrees. These data are at odds with the proposal that suspension or elimination of this fishery will further the conservation equivalency effort. In the absence of scientific evidence supporting striped bass mortality, the proposal to suspend catch and release appears to be nothing more than a misguided and disingenuous attempt to allow the commercial sector to keep 2 fish. Please don't rely on hindsight at year-end to prove the overwhelming evidence of the existing science. It will only demonstrate that DNR and the commercial sector are not committed to conserving the fishery. In contrast, we recreational anglers understand and embrace conservation efforts as the only means to a viable sustainable fishery. Unfortunately, our voice is not unified and presented through lobbying like the commercial sector and thus, we as individuals have to try and assert our opinions through comments such as these.

In lieu of the suspension of catch and release, I would suggest a limit of one fish over 18" per person (commercial and recreational) to achieve the stated goals of conservation equivalency. Other states along the eastern seaboard have adopted or proposed this method as a true means of reducing striped bass mortality. Eliminating the catch and release fishery will do nothing to protect the commercial fishing industry, but will severely affect generations of recreational anglers like myself, my father, and my grandfather.

I appreciate the consideration of my comments on the proposed rule and respectfully request that DNR reconsider its proposal to eliminate catch and release fishing for striped bass in Maryland. Fishing is a wonderfully healthy hobby, and catch and release fishing, in particular, promotes respect for nature in our children while preserving our natural resources for future generations.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Addendum VI

1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 3:32 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Cc: "m"

To: Assistant Secretary Bill Anderson

As an active member of the Solomons Charter Captains Association I would like to go on record supporting the following options being considered for the 2020 Striped Bass season in Maryland.

May 16-Dec. 10; 1-fish bag limit for private angler/2-fish bag limit for charter (requires use of FACTS electronic reporting)

(Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting.

(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting.

Thank you,

I

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~ ~



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Season

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 3:43 PM

To: Maryland DNR Striped Bass public comment

As an active member of the Solomons Charter Captains Association I would like to go on record supporting the following options being considered for the 2020 Striped Bass season in Maryland.

May 16-Dec. 10; 1-fish bag limit for private angler/2-fish bag limit for charter (requires use of FACTS electronic reporting)

(Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting Striped Bass

(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting Striped Bass

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Fw: Additional email to send in public comments for Striped Bass options**1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 3:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please accept this message as my support of the options listed in the last section of this e-mail.

Solomons Charter Captains Association and current Charter Captain since 1993

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Solomons Captains <solomonscapt@gmail.com>

**To:** Solomons Captains <solomonscapt@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, January 9, 2020, 3:37:22 PM EST

**Subject:** Additional email to send in public comments for Striped Bass options

Capt's .

IMPORTANT!!!

The recreational sector is pushing to have the catch and release season stay as they are. SCCA is against the Catch and Release of the large Spawning fish in March 1 thru May 1.

This will only take you a few minutes to do and it WILL make a difference.

The department will have a public hearing on Jan. 9 at 6 p.m. at the Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd, Annapolis, to take public comment on the spring proposal and discuss options for summer and fall. We need to have our voices heard as the recreational anglers will be there in force to voice their non support.

PLEASE email your public comment today!!

SUPPORTED OPTIONS

Spring Season (Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting Striped Bass

(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting Striped Bass

Delayed start of trophy season to May 1, 2020.

If you can't make it to the meeting please take a few minutes and cut and paste this message to DNR showing your support for these options.

Spring Season (Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting Striped Bass

(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting Striped Bass

Delayed start of trophy season to May 1, 2020.

Send the email to this address. fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To: Maryland DNR Striped Bass public comment

As an active member of the Solomons Charter Captains Association I would like to go on record supporting the following options being considered for the 2020 Striped Bass season in Maryland.

May 16-Dec. 10; 1-fish bag limit for private angler/2-fish bag limit for charter (requires use of FACTS electronic reporting)

(Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting Striped Bass

1/15/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Fw: Additional email to send in public comments for Striped Bass options

(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting Striped Bass

Thank you,

Sign your name



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Public comment

1 message

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Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 4:00 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I am in support of the following Spring Season options  
(Closure) March 1-April 30; no targeting Striped Bass  
(Closure) April 1-30; no targeting Striped Bass  
Delayed start of trophy season to May 1

Catching and releasing fish that are prespawn and full of Roe can't be good for the spawning success of those fish. Many of these fish are improperly handled while out of water and dropped while getting a picture taken. Facebook posts by anglers fishing the Calvert Nuclear power plant from March thru April verifies this happens. It has to be better for the Striped Bass to allow them to go to and from their spawning areas with out being caught.

Lusby



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional): ☒ Commercial harvester ☐ Sport angler ☐ Interested citizen  
☐ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ Other (specify Charter Boat)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for Trophy Season**

- Change the start of the spring (trophy) season from the 3rd Saturday in April to May 1.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Changes/Clarifications for the Chapter**

- Corrects the reference to the Magnuson Stevens Act.
- Removes an outdated provision regarding catch and release. (The catch and release provision was added in the 1990s and contradicts several regulations that were adopted after the moratorium ended.)
- Reorganizes certain sections of regulatory text. (Makes the requirements are clear and do not occur in multiple chapters.)
- Creates a new section in Regulation .12 of the striped bass chapter that includes all of the seasonal restrictions for the catch and release of striped bass. (Makes the time periods clear for when and where a person may not target striped bass.)
- Creates a new section in Regulation .03 of the gear chapter that includes all of the hook requirements and gear prohibitions. (Makes the gear requirements clear by putting all of the restrictions in one location.)

*Consider changing trophy citation  
fish to citation size*

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**





**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional):  
☐ Commercial harvester ☒ Sport angler ☒ Interested citizen  
☐ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

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Please Check One

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.

*\* Need to discuss changes for the Chapter to understand*



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional):  
☐ Commercial harvester ☒ Sport angler ☐ Interested citizen  
☐ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☐ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

Please Check One

☐ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for Trophy Season**

- Change the start of the spring (trophy) season from the 3rd Saturday in April to May 1.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

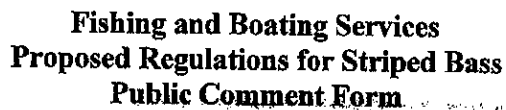
**Proposed Changes/Clarifications for the Chapter**

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Please Check One

☐ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**



Representation (optional):  
☐ Commercial harvester    ☐ Sport angler    ☐ Interested citizen  
☒ Conservation or fishing organization (specify OCA MD)  
☐ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

☒ I support      ☐ I oppose      ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

☐ I support March and April closure    ☒ I support only April closure    ☐ Other (please explain below)

- Change the start of the spring (trophy) season from the 3rd Saturday in April to May 1.

☒ I support      ☐ I oppose      ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

- Corrects the reference to the Magnuson Stevens Act.
- Removes an outdated provision regarding catch and release. (The catch and release provision was added in the 1990s and contradicts several regulations that were adopted after the moratorium ended.)
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- Creates a new section in Regulation .03 of the gear chapter that includes all of the hook requirements and gear prohibitions. (Makes the gear requirements clear by putting all of the restrictions in one location.)

☒ I support      ☐ I oppose      ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional):  
\_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester ☒ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for Trophy Season**

- Change the start of the spring (trophy) season from the 3rd Saturday in April to May 1.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Changes/Clarifications for the Chapter**

- Corrects the reference to the Magnuson Stevens Act.
- Removes an outdated provision regarding catch and release. (The catch and release provision was added in the 1990s and contradicts several regulations that were adopted after the moratorium ended.)
- Reorganizes certain sections of regulatory text. (Makes the requirements are clear and do not occur in multiple chapters.)
- Creates a new section in Regulation .12 of the striped bass chapter that includes all of the seasonal restrictions for the catch and release of striped bass. (Makes the time periods clear for when and where a person may not target striped bass.)
- Creates a new section in Regulation .03 of the gear chapter that includes all of the hook requirements and gear prohibitions. (Makes the gear requirements clear by putting all of the restrictions in one location.)

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester \_\_\_\_\_ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify Charter)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for Trophy Season**

- Change the start of the spring (trophy) season from the 3rd Saturday in April to May 1.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Changes/Clarifications for the Chapter**

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester \_\_\_\_\_ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☒ Other (specify Maryland Charterboat Assn.)

**Extend the Rules for the Recreational Fishery that were in place for 2018 and 2019**

- Minimum size of 19 inches.
- Requires the use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining.

Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

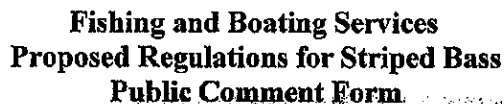
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\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify MWD Charter Assoc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

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☒ I support      ☐ I oppose      ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

☒ I support March and April closure      ☐ I support only April closure      ☐ Other (please explain below)

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**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
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Representation (optional):  
☐ Commercial harvester    ☐ Sport angler    ☐ Interested citizen  
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☐ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

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Please Check One

☐ I support    ☐ I oppose    ☒ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

*A split out Charters*

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- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Please Check One

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☒ I support    ☐ I oppose    ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**





**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester ☒ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)

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Please Check One

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**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**



**Fishing and Boating Services  
Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representation (optional):

\_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester \_\_\_\_\_ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☒ Other (specify Charter)

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Proposed Recreational Changes for March and/or April**

- Prohibit catch and release and targeting of striped bass in March and/or April.
- Prohibits trolling during March and/or April.

Close Both March & April

Please Check One

☒ I support March and April closure ☐ I support only April closure ☐ Other (please explain below)

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

**Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.**



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Proposed Regulations for Striped Bass  
Public Comment Form**

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Representation (optional): \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial harvester \_\_\_\_\_ Sport angler \_\_\_\_\_ Interested citizen  
\_\_\_\_\_ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☒ Other (specify conservative angler)

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☒ Other (specify FOR HIRE CHARTER)

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\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify CHAPTER DEPT)

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Representation (optional):  
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☐ Conservation or fishing organization (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
☒ Other (specify CHARTER BOAT CAPTAIN)

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☐ Other (specify RESIDENT FISHING GUIDE  
MCBA / VBCCA)

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Please Check One

☒ I support ☐ I oppose ☐ I oppose certain provisions (please explain below)

Please provide your written comments on the back of the form.

18" fish!!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery COMAR 08.02.05.02; COMAR 08.02.15.01, 03, .08, .09, .10, and .12; COMAR 08.02.25.03**

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 8:48 PM

DNR,

Protect the large fish! Close trophy season to catch and kill. Make it a one fish limit during open periods for recreational & charter anglers. Recreational anglers should not take a bigger reduction than charters. I've seen plenty of dead fish during the summer but I didn't see a single one this October. Mid summer heat & low salinity kills released fish. I'm all for a mid / late summer closure for everyone.

Option 5



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Chages

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Jan 11, 2020 at 5:51 AM

I found the changes to the striped bass reasonable.

I have a side question about circular hooks. They are difficult to find.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

## Propose striped bass regulations for 2020

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Jan 12, 2020 at 2:29 PM

*submitted 2 identical comments - only 1 printed*

Hello, me and my friends are avid light tackle fisherman who have enjoyed, and supported many businesses associated with, the Chesapeake bay striped bass fishery for many years now. I consider myself a steward of the striped bass, and am very much in favor of preserving this fishery for all to enjoy for many years to come.

I do want to express my dismay at some of the proposed regulations. I have participated in all of the Chesapeake bay fisheries and seasons. I do not agree with the complete proposed closure of the the spring catch and release season on the Susquehanna flats (as I understand the proposal). Jigging and other catch and release lure techniques do not produce the mortality rates discussed in the question and answer portion of this proposal, especially during this colder water period. (Or kill as many fish as any of the other striped bass fisheries still permitted) We do not target the large breeding fish, and return practically all fish to the water in good condition. Several suggestions for modification of the catch and release season might be to prohibit the use of bait as it does contribute to higher fish mortality, due to deeper hooked fish, and/or include less of the Susquehanna River proper in the flats area (as this is where many of the larger breeding fish are caught).

I have participated in the trophy season trolling fishery, as well as the chumming/bait fishery, and chose to limit my participation in these as I do not feel that they are as sustainable of a practice, or good stewardship. Complete closure of the spring catch and release season, while letting the trophy season start just one week later than usual, does not seem a fair or effective conservation measure. There will be many large, egg laden female fish intentionally killed during this season. While I don't participate in the trophy season or the summer charter (mostly chum/bait fishing) often, I also do not believe letting charter patrons keep 2 fish while recreational fisherman can only keep 1 fish is fair either (I believe I saw this as a summer proposal?) I would argue that as a recreational fisherman, I, or any other, spend more money in license, ramp permits, and in small mom and pop businesses, than any charter patrons (and I am much more likely to release any fish caught) I feel that the proposed regulations are skewed toward the large charter catch and kill business despite their obvious (& intentional) fish mortality. I believe that all light tackle, upper bay, catch and release enthusiasts, charters, and the many businesses they support should express serious concerns about the fairness of this proposal.

Another large group not addressed, or at least explained, in this proposal is any cuts to the commercial sector. As all fish targeted and caught (within regulations) are taken, this fishery is an obvious and intentional cause of much striped bass mortality. While I do understand that this is some people's livelihoods, if it is not effectively managed it will not be available for any of us in the future. I believe the public has the right to understand if, and how, this fishery will share the burden of mortality reduction changes in the upcoming years.

Please consider my concerns and suggestions. To compare a catch and release fishery (and its much lower mortality reduction goals/realities) to any of the intentional big business catch and kill fisheries is not fair. I feel that the proposed changes take away one of our (Chesapeake bay light tackle enthusiasts, as well as upper Chesapeake bay fisherman) best (and most sustainable) fisheries. I have always looked forward to the spring C&R fishery. I love the catch and release fishery, and all my friends and acquaintances/businesses that go along with it. I do not want to "join" the trophy season group and won't take up the catch and kill mentality, but I have considered that if I have to wait until May 1st to pursue Maryland striped bass I will be exploring all my other fishing options (and feeling cabin fever). Thank you for your consideration.

1/15/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Propose striped bass regulations for 2020

Sent from my iPhone



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## Proposed Striped Bass 2020 Regulations - Comments

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sun, Jan 12, 2020 at 4:54 PM

Hello, me and my friends are avid light tackle fisherman who have enjoyed, and supported many businesses associated with, the Chesapeake bay striped bass fishery for many years now. I consider myself a steward of the striped bass, and am very much in favor of preserving this fishery for all to enjoy for many years to come.

I do want to express my dismay at some of the proposed regulations. I have participated in all of the Chesapeake bay fisheries and seasons. I do not agree with the complete proposed closure of the the spring catch and release season on the Susquehanna flats (as I understand the proposal). Jigging and other catch and release lure techniques do not produce the mortality rates discussed in the question and answer portion of this proposal, especially during this colder water period. (Or kill as many fish as any of the other striped bass fisheries still permitted) We do not target the large breeding fish, and return practically all fish to the water in good condition. Several suggestions for modification of the catch and release season might be to prohibit the use of bait as it does contribute to higher fish mortality, due to deeper hooked fish, and/or include less of the Susquehanna River proper in the flats area (as this is where many of the larger breeding fish are caught).

I have participated in the trophy season trolling fishery, as well as the chumming/bait fishery, and chose to limit my participation in these as I do not feel that they are as sustainable of a practice, or good stewardship. Complete closure of the spring catch and release season, while letting the trophy season start just one week later than usual, does not seem a fair or effective conservation measure. There will be many large, egg laden female fish intentionally killed during this season. While I don't participate in the trophy season or the summer charter (mostly chum/bait fishing) often, I also do not believe letting charter patrons keep 2 fish while recreational fisherman can only keep 1 fish is fair either (I believe I saw this as a summer proposal?) I would argue that as a recreational fisherman, I, or any other, spend more money in license, ramp permits, and in small mom and pop businesses, than any charter patrons (and I am much more likely to release any fish caught) I feel that the proposed regulations are skewed toward the large charter catch and kill business despite their obvious (& intentional) fish mortality. I believe that all light tackle, upper bay, catch and release enthusiasts, charters, and the many businesses they support should express serious concerns about the fairness of this proposal.

Another large group not addressed, or at least explained, in this proposal is any cuts to the commercial sector. As all fish targeted and caught (within regulations) are taken, this fishery is an obvious and intentional cause of much striped bass mortality. While I do understand that this is some people's livelihoods, if it is not effectively managed it will not be available for any of us in the future. I believe the public has the right to understand if, and how, this fishery will share the burden of mortality reduction changes in the upcoming years.

Yet another group not addressed in this proposal, that does contribute to significant fish mortality, is the "perch/catfish" (bloodworm/bunker) fisheries. Use of these two baits in areas where/when striped bass catch and release is not permitted should not be allowed. (And possibly should not be allowed at all) Their intentional "bycatch" contributes to significant striped bass mortality.

Please consider my concerns and suggestions. To compare a catch and release fishery (and its much lower mortality reduction goals/realities) to any of the intentional big business catch and kill fisheries is not fair. I feel that the proposed changes take away one of our (Chesapeake bay light tackle enthusiasts, as well as upper Chesapeake bay fisherman) best

(and most sustainable) fisheries. I have always looked forward to the spring C&R fishery. I love the catch and release fishery, and all my friends and acquaintances/businesses that go along with it. I do not want to "join" the trophy season group and won't take up the catch and kill mentality, but I have considered that if I have to wait until May 1st to pursue Maryland striped bass I will be exploring all my other fishing options (and feeling cabin fever). Thank you for your consideration.

<"{}{}">



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

## Fwd: Striped Bass Options

1 message

**Tamara OConnell -DNR-** <tamaral.oconnell@maryland.gov>

Mon, Jan 13, 2020 at 12:20 PM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bill Anderson -DNR-** <bill.anderson@maryland.gov>

Date: Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 2:52 PM

Subject: Fwd: Striped Bass Options

To: Tamara L. OConnell -DNR- <tamaral.oconnell@maryland.gov>

Tammy,

See below.



[dnr.maryland.gov](http://dnr.maryland.gov)

William C. (Bill) Anderson  
Assistant Secretary, Aquatic Resources  
Department of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Ave., C-4  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-260-8108 (office)  
443-481-9047 (cell)  
[bill.anderson@maryland.gov](mailto:bill.anderson@maryland.gov)

[Click here](#) to complete a three question customer experience survey.

----- Forwarded message -----

From

Date: Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 1:13 PM

Subject: Striped Bass Options

To: <bill.anderson@maryland.gov>

My husband and I are retired Charter boat captains from the SCCA. We enjoyed our years running our boat. We support the Options that the association supports. No season till May 1, no targeting of stripers March 1 till May 1. Summer season 1 fish per person recreational and TWO fish per person for charters, no fish for captain or mate. It's all a little too late but it should help some. How sad to see this fishery deteriorate to this point after all the efforts in the late eighties to bring her back. No Tournaments ever again. And keep an eye on the commercial guys also. Thanks.

Sent from my iPad

--

Tamara O'Connell

Legislative & Regulatory Review, Fishing and Boating Services

Department of Natural Resources

10932 Putman Road

Thurmont, Maryland 21788

410-507-0779



1/15/2020

Maryland.gov Mail - Fwd: Striped Bass Options

TamaraL.OConnell@maryland.gov



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Fwd: Stripped Bass

1 message

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**Tamara OConnell -DNR-** <tamaral.oconnell@maryland.gov>

Mon, Jan 13, 2020 at 12:21 PM

To: Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bill Anderson -DNR-** <bill.anderson@maryland.gov>

Date: Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 2:55 PM

Subject: Fwd: Stripped Bass

To: Tamara L. OConnell -DNR- <tamaral.oconnell@maryland.gov>

And another one...



William C. (Bill) Anderson  
Assistant Secretary, Aquatic Resources  
Department of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Ave., C-4  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-260-8108 (office)  
443-481-9047 (cell)  
bill.anderson@maryland.gov

[Click here](#) to complete a three question customer experience survey.

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 2:43 PM

Subject: Fwd: Stripped Bass

To: Bill Anderson -DNR- <bill.anderson@maryland.gov>, Lynn Fegley -DNR- <lynn.fegley@maryland.gov>, Michael Luisi -DNR- <michael.luisi@maryland.gov>

Bill, Mike & Lynn -  
Feedback from

Striped Bass and thought I'd forward.

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Thu, Jan 9, 2020 at 2:41 PM

Subject: Stripped Bass

To: Michael Luisi -DNR- <michael.luisi@maryland.gov>

CC:

Mike,

Happy New Year and I hope 2020 goes smoothly for you!





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Fwd: Catch and release spring striper fishing**1 message

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Mon, Jan 13, 2020 at 12:40 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

This is the dumbest "conservation effort" I have ever heard of in my life. You know how to lower mortality of rockfish in the bay, especially breeders? Shorten the kill season and promote CATCH and RELEASE YEAR round. These are sport fish, they need to be here forever to attract people to come and explore our fishery. More of my friends and family out of state are more interested in catching them, not eating them.

&gt;

&gt; Stop letting special interest interfere with common sense.

&gt;

&gt; A fish is 100% likely to die when it is harvested. That is where you attain your "harvest reduction". More people would come in the spring for catch and release if the fishery is what it use to be.

&gt; Please use common sense and represent the people and not the special interests. Lets encourage recreational fishing!!

&gt; Thanks,

&gt;

&gt;

&gt;

&gt;

&gt;

&gt;



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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 8:37 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Good morning,

I'm writing to you today as a fisherman and concerned MD citizen regarding the Striped Bass fishery.

I've been monitoring the striped bass stock's decline and would like to express my thoughts on ways for us to recover the stock. Please see below for details.

(1) **Catch and Release Fishing:** Proposals to close the catch and release winter and early season fisheries make no logical sense, nor are they supported by the scientific literature. Mortality during this period for catch and release fishing is extremely low. Closing this catch and release fishery will be ineffective, will alienate recreational fishermen, and will prevent meaningful action on the Striped Bass stock. Some have gone as far as to say that this proposal is a smoke-screen to avoid meaningful change and cuts to constituencies with more political, economic, or nepotistic clout. I hope that is not the case, but after reviewing the DNR's own studies, I can see why some make this argument.

(2) **Big Breeders/Trophy Season:** The big breeders must be protected. Harvest on these fish during the spawn should be closed. Until the stock recovers, harvest of Striped Bass should be cutoff at the 36" mark across the board. Harvesting larger breeders from a stock in decline makes no sense outside of favoritism to charter captains. Those big breeders produce more eggs per fish than any other size class of striped bass. Furthermore, these big breeders need to pass along their genes for the health of the stock, as they've demonstrated their fitness and ability to thrive in the environment.

(3) **Gill Netting and Commercial Fishing:** I'm also concerned about the impact of gill netting and commercial fishing on the striped bass stock. While they may not be able to harvest over a certain length for striped bass, the mortality on those "released" large fish is likely very detrimental to the stock.

(4) **The Summer Fishery and High Water Temps:** The summer fishery needs to be shutdown. This issue will only become worse as climate change also worsens. Water quality is not likely to improve given the situation at the Conowingo Dam and higher water temps will make mortality on release even worse. I've been able to count dozens of "floaters" as I crossed the Bay Bridge during the summer. This is unacceptable, wasteful, and disrespectful to the stock and the species.

To close this email, I'd like to thank the fisheries managers, biologists, and regulators who have to balance the interests of numerous constituencies while also trying to manage the stock itself. I know that it's not easy work and that you all get an earful from some group or another no matter what decision you make.

In this case though, we need to act and act meaningfully. Striped Bass are an incredible species and a hallmark of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland. Catch and release is not the culprit of this stock's decline; the literature demonstrates as much. The issue here is the harvest of the large breeders and the mortality of fish "released" during high water temps. Please select your regulatory proposals accordingly.

Thanks very much for your time and have a great day.

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V/R



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 9:21 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello,

I am an avid fisherman and contribute to the funding of the DNR and local businesses in the Conowingo to Havre De Grace. I do this via purchasing licenses, fuel, baits, local restaurants, etc.

I am fully aware of the Sportsman's impact on the Striped Bass. Tackle compliance (hooks specifically) is a major factor on the fish survival for release. Just going to a larger circle hook in the June keeper season has proven this to me.

I do fish the Catch & Release season. I return from Fla early every year to do this. I have never had a fish during this season that I did not release in good shape. I 'play' the fish not 'fight' the fish bringing it to the boat in the fastest time possible. These bigger fish are the moms & dads and need to be treated with the respect they deserve to preserve the species.

The environmental impact to the bay Eco system (silt deposit) via the Susquehanna (and others) is of great concern and I'm sure it impacts the fish beds mortality rates. I takes *everyone* upstream to do their part.

I have seen the decline of numbers and size over the years in the Lapidum area of the breeders return from years ago. However I do not agree that Catch & Release season has an effect on the population or survival of the species.

With all the 'living better thru chemicals' (water treatment plant discharge) that are in our water systems today IS the culprit for the fishes decline and its reluctance to enter the bay. I have friends in Canada and the Striped Bass has showed up in droves in the rivers/bay areas which were not there years ago. So ask yourself what has changed?

The impact of Charter boats during trophy season given today's electronics has and will impact the fish population although that has been on a steady incline.

I don't know how time I have left on this earth but God willing many more years to pursue the Striped Bass.

Thanks for time. I know your job is not easy trying to please everyone but I'll do my part.

One bitch though; instead of using gps coordinates set years ago for the upper line of tidal water at the 'Twin Rocks' that are on such an angle to each side of shoreline and leave a lot of interpretation legally,..draw a line thru the Twins Rocks and put a big bright orange pile on each of the shore lines and BIG buoy between shore and Twins each side would eliminate alot of discrepancies during interpretation of legal waters.

Have a Great day !



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Public Comment- NOT IN FAVOR

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 3:53 PM

Dear a Maryland DNR,

I am 100% OPPOSED to the new striped bass regulations you are considering.

First,

If you want to reduce mortality (or are you just giving this lip service ?) you should enact fishing restrictions during the warmer months. Or find reductions that are ACTUAL REDUCTIONS. Everyone knows mortality of catch and release fish is a greater problem during the summer months NOT during March or April.

Second,

WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO ALLOW THE HARVEST OF OUR BREEDERS? It is obvious the stock is in decline yet NO EFFORTS have been made to protect the large breeders that are the most important and impactful to the abundance of our fishery.

Third,

Why should I or any other recreational stakeholder in the fishery continue to pay to fish the "resource" that you -MD DNR continue to horribly and irresponsibly mismanage? When every decision that is made favors COMMERCIAL interests over those of the recreational fisherman, and you "manage the resource" as a subsidy for a small sector of private interests, INSTEAD OF "managing for abundance" for ALL STAKEHOLDERS to partake in, then you have lost me on why I should be giving you my money in the form of a fishing license.

Disgusted,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass regs 2020

1 message

---

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 7:03 PM

Hello,

The striped bass limit should be 1 fish between 18" and 30".

Keep all other regulations the same.

Thanks.





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## MD Striped Bass Recreational Fishery Comment Submission

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 9:10 PM

Hello:

in reading the proposed regulations for the Maryland striped bass fishery, I am having a difficult time understanding why there is a proposed option to close the pre-season recreational catch and release fishery. There is a lower probability of mortality due to physical stress for the fish at the water temperatures present at this time. Additionally, I believe there are fewer anglers targeting striped bass at this time compared to the Summer/Fall time period and fewer anglers bait fishing. This appears to penalize a group of anglers and businesses that do not contribute as high of a proportion of mortality as do other options listed. I would like to hear how DNR proposes enforcing a spring C&R closure when there are other species that could be targeted with similar methods in the same time period.

I understand that there is a business aspect to this, but please refer to the data when these decisions are being made and provide a rationale for the regulations that are put in place that are in LAYMAN's terms. I believe that delaying the "trophy" season, continuing the use of circle hooks/education for bait fisherman, reducing the mortality (both C&R and harvest) during the summer, and following suit with the ASMFC regulations would benefit the fishery.

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Very respectfully,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**proposed rockfish regulations**1 message

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Tue, Jan 14, 2020 at 11:11 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear Maryland DNR

I am 100% opposed to the new striped bass regulations you are considering.

First If you want to reduce mortality ( which I doubt), you should enact fishing restrictions during the warmest months of the year or find reductions that are actual reductions. Everyone knows mortality of catch and release is a greater problem during the summer months, not during Mach and April. I still would be ok with this if you were proposing other regulations that would help our fishery but you are not.

Second. Why do you continue to allow harvest of our trophy breeding stock? It is obvious the breeding stock is in decline, yet no efforts have been made to protect the large breeders that are most important and impactful to our fishery. Reductions during the C and R season and then still allowing a trophy season is utterly irresponsible and does not result in any measurable gain for our fishery.

Third. Why should I or any other stakeholder in the fishery continue to pay to fish a resource that you the MD DNR continue to horribly and irresponsibly mismanage ? When every decision that is made favors commercial fishermen over the recreational fishermen. I have lost all respect for MD DNR. The fishery has declined on your watch and what you are proposing is ridiculous. I recently bought a new fishing license as I have done every year since I was 16. I also have a Delaware and a Florida license but it will be my last MD license I purchase if you do not enact regulations that will help our fishery. More fish in the bay is beneficial to everyone in our state. I am forwarding this message to my representatives and if nothing is done I will encourage all fishermen to vote them out of office.

Sincerely disappointed,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## 2020 Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 8:10 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Good day! I'm writing you to express my concern for the proposed regulations on our beloved Striped Bass.

I am 100% OPPOSED to the new striped bass regulations you are considering.

First, if you want to reduce mortality you should impose fishing restrictions during the warmest months. Warm water and low salinity are what kills these sacred fish! Closing our catch and release spring season which is actually the safest and lowest mortality time to target them doesn't make much sense to me! Or find reductions that are ACTUAL REDUCTIONS. Everyone knows mortality of catch and release fish is a greater problem during the summer months NOT during March or April.

Second, WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO ALLOW THE HARVEST OF OUR BREEDERS? It is obvious the stock is in decline yet NO EFFORTS have been made to protect the large breeders that are the most important and impactful to the abundance of our fishery. Reductions during the C&R season and then still allowing a Trophy season is seems kind of counter productive!

Third, Why should I or any other recreational stakeholder in the fishery continue to pay to fish the "resource" that you -MD DNR continue to horribly and irresponsibly mismanage? When every decision that is made favors COMMERCIAL interests over those of the recreational fisherman, and you "manage the resource" as a subsidy for a small sector of private interests, INSTEAD OF "managing for abundance" for ALL STAKEHOLDERS to partake in, then you have lost me on why I should be giving you my money in the form of a fishing license.

I'm all for protecting the fish! I'd gladly give up my right to target them if it benefits the species, but allow one group to take and stopped another shows favoritism and is just plain unfair!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Public comment Striped Bass

1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 8:58 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Public comment regarding 2020 Striped Bass reduction options.

I am against any reduction that is put in place that does not include prohibiting of catch and release of Striped Bass from January 1 through May 1. Data collected by MD DNR indicates a percentage of the fish will die after being released. Holding them out of the water for extended periods of time for pictures contributes to that mortality rate. Additionally, holding these fish out of the water is detrimental to their successful spawn. Catch and release should be limited to the open season dates starting May 1 and ending when the season closes.

Respectfully,

As an example of this taking place right now.

Taken from Facebook 1/15/2020

Took advantage of some beautiful January weather and an insanely hot bite yesterday.....

Overall we boated 150-200 fish. The bite started a little slow but then was pretty solid all day. Most fish were fat scrappy fish in the low to mid 20" range. Had a couple dozen from 27-32" with the pair of 48"s really capping off an amazing day. 10" John Deere green colored BKDs were putting in some work today.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments on the 2020 Striped Bass Regulations Change

1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 10:57 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To the Maryland Department of Natural Resources:

I am a recreational fisherman and have held a Maryland fishing license for nearly 30 years.

- I have seen the consistent rise and fall of the resident and migrating striped bass population on the Chesapeake Bay and in their tributaries.
- I recognize the impact of overfishing the species.

However; some of the proposed changes ignore reality and will not resolve the issues.

- These fish have been historically returned to the Bay to migrate and spawn. Closing this season will not have any positive impact on reducing Striped Bass mortality.
- The cold weather Catch and Release Fishery in the Chesapeake Bay has been proven (scientifically) to not be the culprit in over fishing. The water is cold and fish are returned quickly to swim, feed and breed another day.
- Mortality is minimal and was statistically proven many years ago by the DNR's Surveys. Use the science!
- Many popular fishing locations (launch sites, docks, etc.) provide necessary income to the local fishing shops, restaurants and motels and the impact of the closure to the local economy will be devastating.

I am in favor of the following:

- Circle hooks prevent unintended mortality and should be used through-out the Chesapeake Bay and during all seasons
- Moving the Trophy Season start date to May 1st. Starting the Trophy season earlier has consistently demonstrated a higher mortality on the migrating and breeding females. Photographs depicting the results of the early fishery are evident each spring on social media as fishermen go for their trophy. Give Striped Bass a chance by closing the Trophy Season during most of the migration period.

Summary:

The proposed regulations targeting the Catch and Release Fishery are will not provide any additional reduction in the mortality rates for Striped Bass in the Chesapeake Bay.

Regards,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## My comments on the upcoming regulations

1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 2:21 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I want to make sure my voice is heard in the input to the upcoming regulations.

- 1) Extension of hook regulation: SUPPORT
- 2) May 1 Start for Trophy Season: SUPPORT
- 3) Prohibiting catch and release or targeting of striped bass from March 1 through April 30.  
The overall benefit: OPPOSE
- 4) Not reducing commercial harvest: OPPOSE

It is a known fact that recreational fishing in MD is a big business. It supports many thousands of jobs and pays the lions to share of license fees to manage the resource. By comparison, commercial harvest contributes very little but has a much more concentrated voice. It is important for the DNR not to pick winners and losers, but to manage the fishery properly.

To do so DNR must collect information about fishing in the bay that is in addition to the general information of MRIPs. We need to understand the impacts of that fishing on fishery. Example: we know that catch and release fishing when temps are below a certain point and salinity is higher, the fish mortality is very low for fish hooked with lures. As opposed to the higher mortality of fishing in the summertime with bait where the chances of deep hooking are higher. We need to use this to properly and accurately make an adjustment to help the fishery grow.

Recreational fishery thrives on sustainability and making sure there are fish in the water. If an angler does not believe they can catch a fish they won't buy the license or equipment. Conversely, we can also argue that the commercial fishery would be improved if we had better sustainability of fish as well. We need to manage the fishery to the abundance to assure we use our great resource to the best potential we can without damaging the resource any further.

Overall, it is a disgrace to see MD DNR manage the fishery to benefit commercial and charter captains, rather than assuring the fishery is thriving and growing so all can enjoy.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 3:28 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear Maryland DNR

As a recreational fisherman who frequently enjoys our shared public resource, I have grown increasingly concerned about the our striped bass fishery over the past few years. Simply put, myself and my fishing network had not seen the abundance of larger striped bass, including those over 35" which science has shown to be the most essential to the annual spawn. As such, I was pleased that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) found the stock overfished and that overfishing was occurring after the latest benchmark stock assessment and approved Addendum VI which calls for an 18% reduction in removals for the recreational AND commercial sectors in 2020. The ASMFC has suggested the way to get to this reduction for the Chesapeake Bay recreational sector is 1 fish at 18" or larger per angler per day.

I am writing today to provide input for how Maryland gets to their 18% share of the reduction. It is my understanding that DNR is currently exploring several options through Conservation Equivalency (CE). While I understand the need for a flexible approach between States by implementing CE, these measures must be backed up by the best available data and science to make sure the impact to the fishery has the best chance of actually occurring.

Included in these options is a proposal to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April. I vehemently OPPOSE this option as I believe the data used to assess the impact for this option is misguided. From what I understand the estimated harvest and angler effort data is being compiled from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). MRIP data is meant to be used on a coastwide basis for year-long fishing activities. When it is instead used for shorter periods of time and in a particular state, the data is imprecise, at best, and horribly misleading, at worst. I also understand that the release mortality rate being used to calculate the estimated percent reduction (i.e. the impact) is 9%, as opposed to more accurate numbers that are available (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/crsb.pdf>). Studies show that shallow hooked fish in cooler temperature waters with high salinity (the typical conditions during March and April) release mortality is closer to 1%. The same goes for using circle hooks which I believe (and so does the scientific data) can continue to help reduce mortality (I am in favor of the extension of this mandate). In both cases of the data being used, I fear the actual impact to lowering mortality will be de-minimis. Meanwhile, you are opening the trophy season (albeit one week later) which all but GUARANTEES the loss of spawning stock fish. This remains a complete hypocrisy.

I have also not heard of any study done on the economic impact on closing our fisheries during March and April to marinas, tackle shops, hotels and restaurants and fuel providers. I know from my perspective and many of my fishing friends and guides, closing these two months would be a huge impact economically without any real savings for the fish.

It is also my understanding the the proposal will be taking solely form the recreational sector and not the commercial sector. Picking winners and losers is not a duty of DNR. Your duty is to manage the fishery for sustainability and I fear that this is not being done from the options I see proposed. An obvious question is begging to be asked - why is DNR going to such lengths and options of CE when the ASMFC has already stated that 1 fish at 18" would be sufficient? If that is our surest bet to have an ACTUAL positive impact to the fish, why go through all these other CE circles unless you are picking and choosing winners? I realize that the commercial sector has a system in place for counting their discards. They played by the rules. But so did the recreational sector - and they were your rules! Why are we now to take the disproportionate cut when we were also playing by your rules?

As a recreational angler who wants to ensure a sustainable fishery for future generation, I feel responsible to do my part but I also want to make sure that collectively we are ALL doing our part for what's best for the fish. We must get this right if we are to have a sustainable fishery for the future. We entrust the management of our SHARED PUBLIC RESOURCE to DNR and we should expect they take this responsibility seriously by using the best available science and more accurate and timely data in that pursuit. I am concerned most by the continuation of a trophy season and the proposed closure during March and April without any real scientific justification. I thank you for your time and careful consideration in this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,







Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Fwd: Conservation equivalency Option 4 and modifications**1 message

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Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 8:00 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

*Submitted 2 identical comments. 1 printed*

I would like to voice my support for option 4 for the conservation plan for striped bass.

A modification made to option 4 should be that the summer season starts May 1st with the 19 to 28 inches limit.

We should have NO TROPHY SEASON.

I own and operate a charter boat. We need to protect the large fish and additionally the public perception would be much better without a "trophy season". Just start the summer season on May 1st. Simple and easy.

Maryland should only make these cuts to our season if the Atlantic states also take drastic cuts in fishing for the large breeding fish in the ocean all summer.

Maryland always suffers the consequences of over fishing while the remaining coastal states continue to crush the large breeders all year with no significant changes or penalty.

If you want to speak to me more about this issue, please do not hesitate to call me.



## Comments on the proposed new regulations of striped bass

1 message

Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 10:34 PM

to: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I'm writing this letter as an attempt to explain my complete unhappiness with the State of Maryland for the decision making process involving the management of the striped bass fishery. In addition to mating on a charter boat, and commercially hook and lining at times, I have been targeting rockfish on light tackle for most of my life. I remember the opening of the Susquehanna Flats C&R season. I have fished power plant discharges in the winter since the early 90's. I spent a considerable amount of time in Virginia during the fall and winter. I have seen the fishery peak and steadily decline over the past twenty years. I mention that only to reassure you that I wholeheartedly believe that something is broken and needs to be fixed. But to only describe the problem on your website as "The 2018 benchmark stock assessment for striped bass indicated declines, so the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has determined that conservation measures are needed for the 2020 fishing season. ASMFC is a management entity comprising 15 member states on the East Coast, including Maryland," is, to begin with, completely misleading. As written by the ASMFC, out of those 15 member states, Maryland accounts for 60 percent of the commercial harvest of striped bass and almost half of the recreational harvest. The majority of spawning also occurs in Maryland. Surely, Maryland has a moral obligation to take a proactive approach to protect this once amazing fishery considering it is responsible for such a large portion of its harvest. And surely the state should take proactive measures because it's the right thing to do, not because the ASMFC said so. [http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/5dd447baStripedBassAddendumVI\\_Amend6\\_Oct2019.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/5dd447baStripedBassAddendumVI_Amend6_Oct2019.pdf)

I would like to reference a fishing report I posted in December of 2009.

As you can clearly see, many recreational fisherman were already noting a steady decline in the fishery at this time and were begging that something was done about it. Despite our pleas, we were being told there is nothing wrong with the fishery. Now, over a decade later, with little or nothing being done, we are "suddenly" in a position where we are being forced by the ASMFC to reduce the coastwise total removals by 18 percent. If Maryland had taken a more proactive approach when the writing was so clearly on the wall for the individuals who spent the bulk of time on the water, perhaps we wouldn't be in this position in the first place. It was the failure of Maryland to listen to its recreational anglers and act appropriately that got us all here in the first place.

And yet, we find ourselves here. Four proposals have been submitted for review and public comment. A fifth one, which I understand has already been approved the ASMFC technical committee, was omitted for review-seemingly because a small number of charter boat captains objected to it- claiming it would hurt their business because it only allows them to keep one fish instead of two. Additionally, no reductions are being proposed for the commercial fishery-somewhat understandably- because the commercial fishery underwent a large reduction previously.

But, at this crucial time of conservation, when Maryland has an opportunity to take proactive measures to protect the fishery and take a step towards sustainability, it is my opinion that Maryland is, once again, managing the fishery for maximum profit of its stakeholders, and not using science to guide its conservation efforts.

Your findings, from your study, posted on your website, states that "Over a five week period in April and May 1998, three 2-day trials were conducted on the Flats. Participating anglers were instructed to use single hooked artificial lures. Fish were marked as deep or shallow hooked, transported and held for three days as in the other striped bass studies. Two size groups of fish were sought for these experiments: less than 24 inches and greater than 24 inches. This size delineation was selected because mortality data for striped bass greater than 24 inches caught at low water temperatures in fresh water did not exist in the scientific literature. The results showed that water temperature greatly influenced release mortality of striped bass caught on the Flats. Mortality was 1.6% at temperatures of 57-59EF, 3.7% at 61-62EF and 15.9% at 64-71EF. There was no difference in mortality between large (>24") and small"

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Documents/crmortalityresearch.pdf>

Let me reiterate that. **Using single hooked artificial lures, catch and release mortality was 1.6 percent at water temperatures below 59 degrees.** And this was even after these fish were put in a pen for several days. This is a DNR sponsored study, the results are posted clearly on the DNR website. And yet, knowing this, the preferred proposal is to eliminate the targeting of striped bass in March and April. Using historic NOAA data, the bay does not warm, on average, to 60 degrees until sometime in mid May. <http://www.ccpo.odu.edu/ccsiri/baydata.pdf>

Yet, during this time, you assume a 9 percent mortality rate despite this study. You also assume that during this time 600,000 fish are being caught. That's 10,000 fish daily. Where does this data come from? It is, quite literally, impossible!

How you can you pass this off as truth or even science. The real truth is that you are applying the historical numbers for the first two weeks of the trophy season, when effort is the highest, to all of March and April. It's simply misleading and false. But, you're taking advantage of the way the statistics work and attacking the low hanging fruit of catch and release season to try and preserve the bulk of the catch and kill season for its' profiteers.

I am sure somehow you can statistically explain how the data works and account for these numbers. You must be able to in order to convince the ASMFC. But in doing this you are essentially undermining the value of catch and release fishing. You are eliminating the type of fishing that is proven to be the most sustainable. MD should be doing everything it can be to promote sustainable catch and release fishing, not outlawing it. With more and more people moving into the watershed, and more recreational anglers coming into the sport each year, I can't believe that Maryland can't see that recreational catch and release is the only way this fishery will remain sustainable for future generations. The fact that the charter industry thinks it cannot survive on the fifth proposal of only keeping one fish is truly saddening to me.

Please use real science to support this once amazing fishery. Please support the wishes of the majority of recreational fisherman, not just the ones making a living off the water. Recreational fisherman in MD don't have much left. Due to continued mismanagement and increased development, almost every native fish population has declined in the past decade. The only species that have increased in numbers are snakeheads and blue catfish, both invasive fish that shouldn't even be in our waters in the first place. It's time to turn it around. Put common sense measures on bait fishing in warm water when mortality is the highest. If you must, eliminate the targeting of striped bass in warm water. Limit the number of fish that can be kept, and promote catch and release using single barbless hooks in cool water because science says that's the most sustainable way to fish. To me, this is what your studies and your science supports. Anything else is simply bending over to political lobbying pressure. Prioritize the protection of the fish before you protect those who earn a living from the water. Your track record certainly indicates you can't do both.

Thank you for at least reading.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**MD 2020 striped bass regulations**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Thu, Jan 16, 2020 at 10:39 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am an avid recreational fisherman and have been for the better part of 30 years. I wanted to share my first hand experience with you in the hopes to provide insight to those who are not anglers.

Trolling in the spring season, for the past 4 years, you are lucky if you hook up with 1 or 2 fish an outing. You also, due to how rockfish attack their prey in a trolling situation (from behind, then attempt to turn and run) are rarely if ever deep hooked. On a good day, you catch your limit and head back in.

The true problem is summer time live bait/chumming and this new trend of "light tackle jiggers". Dead floaters in the summer time are so thick around thomas point and other light houses, you could walk across them. I'm a culprit myself I have to admit, not intentionally of course, but that style of fishing lends itself to deep or gut hooking fish. When something picks up your bait, you typically give it a hard 5-10 count before turning the handle to come tight. Any sooner and you're not going to hook up. Its during this time the rockfish has the bait in his mouth, and you wait patiently for him to swallow it. It's always a gamble, the hook may slide to the corner of the fish's mouth, or what I would say happens 25% of the time, the hook becomes lodged deep, and removal would only guarantee the fish's death. Circle hooks, even 8/0 make absolutely no difference. You dont set a circle hook, you just let it come tight. So that 10 count might turn into 13, by which point the fish has completely swallowed the bait.

Additionally, most fish in these situations are under 19", so you can sit at thomas point all day picking through undersized fish, not to mention safety removing circle hooks are much more difficult than j hooks.

Another major problem is the light tackle jiggers or LTJ. They actually beleive their fishing methods are better for the stock, as they completely pound a school of undersized fish for hours. What's worse, is even after they catch their limit, they continue working the school for catch and release. Not realizing the potential mortality rate they are inflicting on the fish. The only benefit is they are using j hooks and can generally get a clean release. However, by using ultra light tackle, they are stretching the fight out and gassing the fish out.

The economy is good, more people are buying boats, and more people are out on the bay fishing. This coupled with summertime floaters and omega down south, big breeders are not coming into the bay anymore and the resident fish have been pummeled.

My honest suggestion is to stop live lining and chumming, stop catch and release fishing after your limit, and if you deep hook a fish, even undersized you have to keep the fish and you are done for the day.

The next issue is going to be cobia. With no summertime rockfish, people are going to migrate down to VA waters and start pummeling the cobia. I guarantee it. In fact in 2019, they came in numbers as far north as prince frederick. The deale and Chesapeake beach charter fleet figured this out and just demolished them. They didnt mind the daily creek limit and did two parties a day taking 6 fish everyday for the better part of 3 weeks. I saw several undersized cobia gaffed during this period on nearby boats. They are amateurs and have no experience to determine a 40 inch fish or not.

Thanks for your time,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Maryland Striped Bass**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 2:09 PM

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the lowest of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## No to Conservation Equivalency plan

1 message

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Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 2:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To Whom it may concern:

Each or the four CE plans that DNR has submitted to the Technical Committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and place an undo burden on participants in the fishery. The Natural Resources Police will also be overly burdened with regard to enforcing such complicated regulations. MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 striped bass, per person, per day at 18" and above with no changes to the other seasonal regulations as advised by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Association. The measures to close Catch & Release fishing during the months of March and April are particularly concerning. DNR's own studies show that the impact to striped bass is the lowest in March and April than other times of the year. I urge DNR to look at science for guidance in this matter rather than MRIP data which is obviously flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this time frame.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed striped bass restrictions

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 3:45 PM

I am a recreational bass fisherman that primarily fishes catch and release. I mostly fish with buck tails and storm lores. 90 percent or more of the fish I release had been hooked in the mouth and seemed to be in good shape when released. I feel that there must be a better way to protect the striped bass population than to eliminate catch and release.

**Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>**

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**Rockfish management**1 message

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Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 3:52 PM

Reply-To:

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Cc: "

&lt;t

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undue burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show fishing activity impacts the species the least. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed, as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**2020 Striped Bass Fishery Regulations**1 message

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Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 5:55 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Cc: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undue burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the lowest of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Proposed Regulations**1 message

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Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 6:07 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show fishing activity impacts the species the least. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed, as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,

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Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S10+, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Catch and release

1 message

Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 8:57 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Please don't not close catch and release. That's sinceless.... feel free to join me any day this spring to take studies on catch to kill ratio on the flat. I fish most everyday fishable March 1- mid May 🎣

Here's to many years of good fishing 🎣



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Sat, Jan 18, 2020 at 9:21 PM

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show fishing activity impacts the species the least. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed, as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**2020 stripe bass regs**1 message

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Sun, Jan 19, 2020 at 9:38 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the lowest of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Regulation Changes**1 message

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Sun, Jan 19, 2020 at 9:50 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are too complicated for the general public and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance and enforceability.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the LOWEST of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Maryland Striped Bass Management Equivalency Plans**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov  
Cc:

Sun, Jan 19, 2020 at 10:09 AM

Dear DNR and Delegates,

I wanted to take a moment to write each of you to express my concern with the state of the Striped Bass fishery in Maryland and the proposed stance Maryland has taken to correct the fishery. The ASFMC has proposed a simple, science based option to get our fishery and Maryland back on track by reducing the number of fish that can be kept from 2 to 1. While this may seem like a lot, it is simple, enforceable, and frankly something any of us would do to get the fishery back to where i was just 10 years ago.

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated, and place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show fishing activity impacts the species the least. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed, as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Please reconsider adopting the ASFMC recommended measure to get our fishery back. As a father I hope that my son can enjoy the fishery I once did and not be limited by the selfish or political motivation of the present day. Thanks for your time and consideration and please do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of any further assistance.

Thank you,

3



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**2020 Striped Bass Season Proposals**1 message

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Reply-To:

Sun, Jan 19, 2020 at 10:52 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it should concern,

As a recreational catch & release fisherman I feel that each of the four potential options for the 2020 Striped Bass season which DNR has submitted to the technical committee are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the Maryland NRP as it relates to compliance and enforcement.

I support the recommendations and comments presented via email on 11/8/2019 by the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) of Maryland to the DNR. Of particular concern to me are proposed regulatory changes to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show fishing activity impacts the species the least.

I respectfully request that DNR leaves the March-April time period as catch and release and doesn't implement the proposed closure option.

Sincerely,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Disagree with open trophy season on may 1

1 message

Reply-To:

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:03 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Do not agree with closing a c&r fishery in March and April.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Proposed Regulations -- Over 350 Signatures

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:36 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

***The following attachment contains over 350 names and businesses supporting this letter that, among other items, asks for Spring Catch and Release to remain open as well as asking for the Atlantic States Marine Fishery Commission recommended option, which is 1 Fish Limit, 18" minimum size, leaving existing regulations in place to minimize unintended consequences and lost business.***



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Striped Bass DNR Letter.pdf  
792K

## Fisheries Public Comment: Proposed Striped Bass Regulations

January 20, 2020  
Maryland DNR  
580 Taylor Ave Annapolis MD 21401

After reviewing the 4 Options Maryland is proposing for striped bass management, it is clearer than ever that this state truly does not have the fish's best interests in mind. Instead, they are using Conservation Equivalency as a tool to find ways that allow the harvest to continue at the expense of Recreational Anglers that bring over \$440M of fishing related business to this state alone.

We are extremely angered at the treatment and portrayal of Catch and Release anglers. We are the best stewards of the resource and want nothing more than to see the fish thrive. We have been demonized under the guise of a dead discard red herring, and you went after our cold water Catch and Release season, which is the one time that we can safely target and release them. We are the first responders when the fishery seems to be in trouble, and you wish to take us off the water? For that period of time, your studies show that mortality is insignificant, yet you apply a 9% mortality to those months making the reductions appear higher than reality. While the mortality numbers in March and April may include some breeding sized fish, the mortality you are assuming is largely made up of the significantly more abundant, smaller male fish that the majority of anglers catch during that time period. The following month, you open up harvest exclusively for breeders during the trophy season, illustrating an enormous hypocrisy in your management philosophy. If you truly valued saving the breeders, you would make trophy season entirely C&R allowing nearly all of our stock to return year after year to spawn. Recreational anglers struggle to swallow this enormous contradiction and view the proposal as a ploy to benefit the few. Those that wish to harvest have summer and fall, but no one should harvest during our special spring season. **We ask to keep the non-consumptive practice of spring C&R available for us to enjoy responsibly.** We want the opportunity to responsibly C&R these exciting fish for the short period of time they are here.

Additionally, it is clear that Option 4 is your preferred path, and more than likely will be the option pursued regardless of public comment, which is a disgrace to the process. Recreational Anglers see the extra burden placed upon us because you refused to pass a reduction to the Commercial Fisherman, despite the fact that 79% off commercial harvest occurs in the Chesapeake's waters. With Option 4, the Charters also walk away with virtually no reduction as they can continue fishing in the worst possible conditions of low oxygen, high water temperatures, high air temperatures, low salinity all while using bait. Mortality under these conditions is the worst possible, and your argument of reducing release mortality loses all its sincerity. You spent a year demonizing us to close low mortality cold water fishing only to open it for high mortality hot water fishing. Surely, you must see the contradiction and the reason for our anger.

It is also not lost on Recreational Anglers that the Secretary of DNR has family ties to both commercial and charter fishing. I am not sure how this is a tenable arrangement because this incredible conflict of interest gravely endangers our public resource. Recreational Anglers take nearly all of the burden, are being removed from policing the early season waters, and our massive impact to the fishing economy is being willfully ignored. DNR is driving us out of the sport to support the other sectors as a result of this

conflict of interest. The sad part is that not all DNR employees think this way, but the grumblings from within the walls suggest a culture of fear. It has been stated that the place for science is not within this administration.

How will this set of proposed regulations stem the tide of dwindling striped bass populations with a set of impossible to enforce regulations? "No Targeting" regulations will simply create groups of anglers that claim to fish for other species such as catfish, bass or perch—it's already being done elsewhere and currently discussed privately among angry anglers. Many of these species occupy the same waters at the same time, and enforcement will be a nightmare as well as create undue angst in the fishing community. We do not want such complications while trying to enjoy time on the water responsibly.

One of the major points brought up was that commercial anglers have accountability, and under the usage of the new FACTS system, charters will have accountability as well. If this is all it takes to be treated well, where is our opportunity to report responsibly? I would also ask what will be done with FACTS? Presumably, when over fishing is occurring, you'll close it, which will only lead to underreporting in order to keep fishing open.

I would also ask you to consider the diversity of Recreational Anglers. Some own boats, others like myself own kayaks and paddleboards (fastest growing segment over the past decade), and still others are bound to shore. Not every month in the bay is created equally for each of these kinds of anglers. For example, when the striped bass are in the rivers, kayakers can have access to them, but when in the main stem of the bay, it excludes that group. It's generally too dangerous and far for a kayaker to venture. For those keeping boats at marinas, a reasonable riding distance to the fishing grounds may not be possible if particular months are closed. For other marinas, they may be vacated if fishing is no longer allowed in their areas. There may be significant unintended consequences by these decisions.

**As a result of these concerns, I see no other option than opting for the ASMFC recommended option of 1 fish at an 18" minimum, leaving all other regulations in place.** A real reduction is taken and all sectors can operate as they have in previous years, minimizing unintended consequences, reducing difficulty in enforcement, and treating everyone equitably. This commonsense approach should be taken before Recreational Anglers simply get fed up and leave the sport forever, or worse yet, we have no fish to target. This pivotal time will leave a legacy for all the fisheries managers involved. Will they be known as the group that managed the greatest recovery story of all time into ruins, bowing to political whims or will they be hailed as saviors for the fish, and in doing so buoy all sectors? We'll be watching.

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***The following pages contain over 350 names and businesses supporting this letter that asks for Spring Catch and Release to remain open as well as asking for the Atlantic States Marine Fishery Commission recommended option, which is 1 Fish Limit, 18" minimum size, leaving existing regulations in place to minimize unintended consequences and lost business.***

367 typed names



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed Striped Bass management measures**1 message

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Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:36 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Gentlemen and Ladies,

I support renewal of the circle hook regulation and delaying the start of the trophy season until May 1.

However I oppose the closure of the March and April targeting of striped bass as historically the the numbers of fish caught and released in that time frame is small and closure of that fishery would probably have minimal effect on striped bass mortality. Kent Nelson's article Catch-and-Release Mortality of Striped Bass in the Roanoke River, North Carolina in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management Vol 18 Issue 1 pp 25-30 found that catch and release striped bass catch and release mortality was very low, virtually nil, when water temperature was 61° or less in the Roanoke River. I believe that the data for the proposed closure of the March - April C&R striped bass fishery is flawed and that the fishing mortality predicated from that data would not be reduced anywhere near as much as your calculations suggest.

My two cents,  
Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Rockfish Regulations for 2020

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:42 PM

**I OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for catch and release of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates used to calculate conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate (high) and will distort the conservation efforts required elsewhere.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, protecting them from any catch and release impact.

Sincerely,

,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

---

## Spring Rule Changes for Rockfish

1 message

Reply-To:

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:47 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I have fished around the middle bay for 70 of my 78 years. I support closing the pre season catch and release and targeting of rockfish. Every season I see many dead Rock floating in the Bay at this time of year. The fact is there is no accurate way to measure the effect of catch and release on the brood stock, both dead fish and stressed fish. There is very little benefit to this activity for very few people. On the other hand, the upside of more fish would benefit many. Common sense tells that it would add the fish stock and it is the right thing to do.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:48 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Cc:

s

To Whom It May Concern,

Each of the four conservation equivalency plans that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated. They place an undo burden on participants in the fishery and the Natural Resources Police as it relates to compliance and enforcement.

Maryland DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of one fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regulations as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period during which DNR's own studies show impacts the species the least. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed, as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this time frame.

Sincerely,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Striped Bass Regulations for Spring 2020

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 3:54 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear DNR,

I support the renewal of the circle hook regulation that has been in effect when targeting striped bass using bait. I believe this is effective in reducing mortality by reducing the number of fish that are "gut hooked" before release.

I also support changing the start of the "trophy season" until May 1, because I believe this will significantly reduce mortality of large, spawning age striped bass.

But I OPPOSE the closure of catch and release fishing for striped bass in March and April for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates, which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April, are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting striped bass in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect those fish when they are aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs for striped bass that are not spawning.

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## March and April Striped Bass Proposal

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 4:14 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I agree with the 3 DNR proposals, except if there is to be a trade off on a longer summer closure or allowing the spring catch and release season, I would vote for a longer summer closure.

Strong measures are needed. I think that VA has been a good leader on this so far.

Thanks,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Rockfish regulations

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 4:18 PM

to: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Rockfish gamefish....During closure I will plan trip to Florida.

Sent from my iPad



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 4:21 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

The more I read on the Maryland DNR's conservation equivalency recommendations and the absolute abysmal results in past years, the more I have lost faith in Maryland being able to make a common sense decision. Maryland is becoming the laughing stock among the East Coast fisheries. It is absolutely embarrassing that Maryland keeps proposing CE recommendations that they know are flawed and will not result in any meaningful reduction when other states are actually trying to make a difference.

The most common sense means of reducing mortality would be to limit recreational fishing to 1 18" - 28". Close targeting striped bass in July and August. Require circle hooks when live lining and chumming.

Closing Catch and Release during March and April is supposed to accomplish what? You know darn right well based on studies that Maryland had done that the mortality rate is well below the 9% level when water temps are below 50. In addition, just how many days are actually fishable in March and April? Certainly know where near enough to even come close to the number of fish being stated in your recommendations. You also know darn right well that the mortality rate during July and August while chumming and live lining is more like 40%.

Please reevaluate your options and make the tough decisions that should have been made years ago. Stop caving to the special interests of the commercial fishery and charter captains. They complain that they will lose business. Yep sure will. But that is better than them going completely out of business when a moratorium goes into place in a year or two. I hope when that happens, and it will based on your track record, that all of those people that will be out of work point the blame where it belongs. To the Maryland DNR.

Please make the right decisions for the fishery as the economic impact to Maryland will be devastating when the fishery fails. The ripple effect will be felt far and wide across many small businesses.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## **RecreationalStriped Bass Comment**

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 4:32 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Please accept these comments.

There should be a total ban on keeping the breeders that are leaving the bay after spawn. Close keeping any till June. Anglers need to realize that charter boats loading up in the spring with the breeders is Crushing the breeding stock.

Catch and release in the early spring outside of the breeding rivers should be allowed with barbless hooks only, no bait , lures only.

Other than the above I support CCAs proposals.

Thanks for reading.

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped bass rules

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 4:38 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I would like to offer my opinion on the proposed new rules for Striped bass.

Trophy season starting May 1<sup>st</sup> is good.

I would like to see catch and release allowed – same six rods / single barbless hook rule.

Changing creel limit to one over 18 inches per angler – leaving season open until December 15<sup>th</sup>.

I do not agree with allowing charter boat clients two while only one for private anglers.

Thank you - /



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments for Spring Striped Bass Changes

1 message

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Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 5:08 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

I agree with CCA Maryland and **OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for targeting of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

Best Regards,

DISCLAIMER: Privileged and/or Confidential information may be contained in this message. If you are not the addressee of this message, you may not copy, use or deliver this message to anyone. In such event, you should destroy the message and kindly notify the sender by reply e-mail. It is understood that opinions or conclusions that do not relate to the official business of the company are neither given nor endorsed by the company. Thank You.



## Comments on Rockfish Regulations

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 5:57 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>, sara.dawes@maryland.gov, harry.hornick@maryland.gov, paul.genovese@maryland.gov, jacob.holtz@maryland.gov, sarah.widman@maryland.gov, joseph.love@maryland.gov, jeannie.riccio@maryland.gov, carrie.cook1@maryland.gov, charles.glass@maryland.gov, david.goshorn@maryland.gov, eric.shirk@maryland.gov, jamesw.mckitrick@maryland.gov, bill.anderson@maryland.gov, matthew.fleming@maryland.gov, michael.luisi@maryland.gov, paul.piavis@maryland.gov, angel.willey@maryland.gov, nancy.butowski@maryland.gov

Dear Secretary Haddaway-Riccio and DNR Staffers,

I write to formally comment on DNR proposals to restrict striped bass (*morone saxatilis*) harvest to comply with ASMFC directives. I am distressed by having to write such a message as rockfish populations have seriously declined and overfishing has been allowed by Maryland and other states.

It is disturbing that this has happened as back in 1984, with rockfish populations crashing, I led the charge as a state Senator to close the rockfish fishery introducing a closure bill, testifying on legislation in Congress to close or restrict harvest in the coastal fishery, and supporting the closure announced by DNR in September 1984 effective January 1, 1985. This was after DNR vigorously opposed my closure bill just months before.

Maryland's actions led the Congressional Committees that held the hearings to enact the Federal legislation that set up the current quota system under the ASMFC.

I also served on the Rockfish White Paper Committee that devised the current system for dividing up the ASMFC quota for rockfish in Maryland at 42.5% commercial, 42.5% recreational and 15% charter boats.

Disturbingly, Maryland has failed to act in any meaningful way after the ASMFC documented in 2017-2018 the serious decline in rockfish abundance and the overfishing that was occurring leading to the decline. This failure, coupled with our failure to restore water quality in the Bay, have led to grave concerns for the future of rockfish. As a 12-year member of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, I was always proud that Maryland always seemed to act in a risk-averse fashion in fishery management well before Virginia for the same species. For example, Virginia had to be forced by the ASMFC to close its rockfish fishery well after Maryland acted to do. The same with shad.

Now, Maryland DNR seems to have reversed positions with Virginia and appears to be more concerned with the financial interests of commercial fishermen and the recreational fishery as well. It seems as if the regulated have become the regulators.

I cite the fact that confronted with the overwhelming scientific data from the ASMFC as to the crash in abundance and that overfishing had been occurring for years, DNR refused to act as Virginia did when Virginia regulators eliminated their state's 2019 spring trophy season entirely and significantly curtailed its fall fishery by capping sizes. In fact, the VMRC voted 7-0 to close the trophy season on April 23, 2019 help restore rockfish populations. VMRC called for "swift and lasting conservation measures" by "other states to follow Virginia's lead and take action this fishing season." Other coastal states also took steps to lower their harvest. But Maryland DNR kept the status quo, furthering hampering rockfish recovery.

I refer you to the most important information from the ASMFC Stock Assessment data:

1. Female spawning stock biomass (SSB) and fishing mortality rate (F) are estimated and compared to target and threshold levels (i.e., biological reference points) in order to assess the status of the stock. The female SSB threshold was estimated at 202 million pounds with a female SSB target of 252 million pounds. The 2018 benchmark stock assessment estimated female SSB in 2017 at 151 million pounds, which is 25% below the SSB threshold, indicating the stock is overfished. Further, the SSB was an alarming 40% below the target;



2. The F threshold was estimated at 0.24 and the F target was estimated at 0.20. Fishing mortality in 2017 was estimated at 0.31, which is 29% above the F threshold, and an alarming 55% above the F target; and

3. All of this documents clearly that the rockfish stock is experiencing substantial overfishing triggering the necessity of substantial reductions in harvest.

Exacerbating these problems is the most recent DNR rockfish young-of-the-year survey conducted for 67 years. This is a sound tool for measuring rockfish reproductive and survival success of young rockfish. In 2019, the young-of-the-year index was a paltry 3.37 well below the 66-year average of 11.6 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in 11 years. The young-of-the-year index has been below the average for 5 of the last 8 years. Maryland waters are the cradle of rockfish reproduction. The data cited by the ASMFC warranting bold actions to restrict fishing pressure are accentuated by the poor reproductive success in your own surveys.

Despite all of this data, DNR appears to be taking the path of least resistance whereby the favored proposal would be simply to delay the spring trophy season from April 18 to May 1, only 13 days of delay and allowing recreational fishermen to keep two rockfish at a minimum of 19 inches. Virginia acted to close their 2019 trophy season in a VMRC emergency action in 2019. This is when rockfish cows laden with thousands of baby rockfish larvae are in the Bay spawning. This take of such important spawners needs to be closed until rockfish populations have recovered. DNR should not hide behind the excuse that they need more information.

DNR should act in a risk-averse fashion and not merely take the easy way out. I suggest that DNR act now to close the trophy season entirely, not simply delay it. In addition, DNR should act to follow ASMFC Addendum VI for rockfish management, which was approved in 2019, and reduce its commercial quota by more than the 18% required. DNR also should follow the ASMFC proposals and implement a one fish bag limit and an 18" minimum size limit for Chesapeake Bay recreational fisheries. The DNR requirement for hook changes, including circle hooks, has not stanchd the alarming recreational discards of rockfish that are a major source of rockfish fishing mortality. These rockfish litter the beaches where I live near Annapolis just below CBF headquarters on the Bay.

DNR also should follow the ASMFC recommendations for a one fish bag limit and a 28"-35" recreational slot limit for ocean fisheries.

Finally, DNR should not wait until they learn if the ASMFC okays their minimalist approach for the spring season but rather should enact the measurements noted herein for the entire 2020 fishing season. How much worse does the rockfish decline and overfishing have to get before you take bold actions to restore our state fish's population?

To do less may satisfy commercial watermen and minimize opposition by recreational anglers including charter boat operators but doing less will jeopardize the recovery of the species.

Maryland used to be the leader on fishery issues but no more. The epicenter of rockfish spawning and harvest is in Maryland. To do what is proposed is a band aid on a gaping stab wound on the rockfish. Virginia and other ASMFC states are watching and awaiting Maryland's actions just like back in 1984-1985. Make no mistake about this: the 5-year moratorium led by Maryland saved the rockfish from commercial extinction. After the 5-year moratorium, rockfish populations recovered. Now, bold actions are needed again as too liberal management decisions made to please those who take rockfish have led to this serious decline.

I would note that in sponsoring a rockfish moratorium bill in 1984, I understood my Senate District I represented centered in Annapolis had many recreational, charter, and commercial rock fishers as well as several rockfish processors shipping rockfish around the U.S. I did catch some flak but doing the right thing is seldom easy. I now only ask that you at DNR do the right thing and not the politically expedient thing.

Respectfully Submitted,

1/21/2020 1:13 PM



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## 2020 proposed striped bass regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 7:21 PM

DNR,

I would propose keeping the spring Catch and Release season and delaying the Catch and Kill season on the breeders until May 15. It makes no sense to stop the C&R season which results in low mortality in the cold water and still keep a Trophy season which has 100% mortality.

Delaware Resident; Maryland Tidewater License holder since 1993



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Striped Bass Tegulations

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 7:30 PM

I oppose any changes in catch and release of striped bass during March, April and May. I favor closing the spring trophy season totally. This practice kills essential female pre spawn striped bass, the most essential part of that population.

d

7

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Changes to Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 7:32 PM

I favor keeping the circle hook regulation.

3

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comments on Striped Bass new regulations**1 message

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Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 7:53 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear Maryland DNR,

I am writing to you to voice my thoughts on a fishery I've enjoyed since fishing on Taylor's Island for Stripers as a kid in the 1990s. I've since seen the decline of the species but Do Not agree with closing the catch and release season in March and April. Mortality is not as affected during those months as your projections suggest. There are areas where Stripers are spawning and staging to spawn that are off limits for fishing as it should remain. Please don't allow any of the breeding class fish to be kept moving forward. While the stock is in bad shape why close catch and release and still allow a 'trophy' season to continue. No one should be keeping the breeding class of fish to allow the species to spawn and rebound.

Please consider closing the fishery during the summer when the fish have the highest mortality rate . Please put the fish first and not what the commercial sector of the fishery is lobbying for which would hardly impact them but still put severe strain on the Striper population.

Thank you,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Management**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov &gt;

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 8:00 PM

Hello DNR,

1. Put the rules (hook requirements, sizes, and seasons) for the recreational fishery that were in place only for 2018 and 2019 into place for future years. **I support this rule.**
2. Change the start of the recreational and charter boat spring season (trophy season) to May 1. **I support this rule.**
3. Prohibit catch and release or targeting striped bass from March 1 through April 30. **I do not support this rule as cold water catch and release has little to no mortality for released fish.**

**Thanks,**

Sent from my iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## proposed Striped bass laws changes

1 message

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 9:09 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I support all three proposals put forward concerning changing striped bass fishing laws.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**(no subject)**

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 10:13 PM

As a charter captain that fishes faithfully the first couple of weeks in spring season, The numbers of 40 plus inch fish are way down from the previous 5 or 6 years for the area of gas docks to Chesapeake beach, in which we mainly fish. When we have cold winters and water temps are in the low 50s for opening day there are still fish to be caught that have not left the bay to spawn. When they are in the upper 50s near 60 they have left to go spawn normally. 2013 to 2016 there were a lot of unspawned fish caught due to late spawning. I have never agreed with the catch and release in Jan thru March, and have not participated during that period. There are several fish caught and killed and I don't believe there should be any, GIVE THEM A BREAK!!!



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Proposed Striped Bass Regulations Comment**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 10:55 PM

MD DNR,

I support the renewal of the circle hook regulations and the delayed start date for Trophy Season.

However, I oppose the catch and release closure for March and April. Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish. Cold water temperatures and high levels of dissolved oxygen are the two key factors for producing minimal release mortality. These conditions are arguably at their best during the months of March and April. Limiting recreational fishing opportunities will take an economic toll on the fishing industry, thus resulting in reduced funding for continued fisheries research and regulation enforcement (Dingle Johnson Tax, License Sales, Etc.), as well as a psychological frustration among dedicated catch-and-release anglers who truly want what is best for the fishery. I believe enforcing a slot limit during Trophy Season is a good way to manage for conservation (by keeping the large breeders in the system), while still providing angler opportunity.

Please consider these requests. I look forward to reviewing the finalized decision and I hope managing for conservation remains an integral part of our long term goal for the fishery.

Respectfully,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Spring Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 6:23 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I **SUPPORT** the renewal of the circle hook regulation, and changing of the trophy season start date.

I **OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for catch and release targeting of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped bass when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

Best Regards,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped BassRegulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 6:52 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I support the proposal to use circle hooks as well as moving opening day to May 1st.

I side with the CCA of Maryland in opposing the closure of the catch and release period in March and April until such time a study shows this affects the mortality rate negatively.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## COMMENT - STRIPED BASS RECREATIONAL REGULATION

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 7:26 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Please see the attached comments.

Thank you,

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**COMMENT - 2020 STRIPED BASS PROPOSED REGS.pdf**

95K

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources

Fisheries Service

[Fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:Fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)

**Re: STRIPED BASS - Recreation Fishery Subtitle 02 Amendments**

To Whom it may Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed amendments to the Striped Bass recreational regulations. I am commenting as an avid fisherman, aspiring professional guide and concerned Maryland resident and Chesapeake Bay native.

I would like to provide both support and concern for the proposed changes.

In regard to adopting the 2018-2019 regulations of 19" min., May 16 - Dec. 15 (Bay and Tribs.) and the gear regulations, specifically circle hooks for chumming/live lining I offer full support. In my opinion I feel that these regulations helped reduce in dead discards, especially throughout the warmer months. Though not perfect, these regulations are certainly a step in the right direction.

I will also offer support for the proposed start of the 2020 "Trophy Season" being delayed until May 1. Myself and many of the fisherman I associate with have been wondering for years as to why this action wasn't taken sooner. It only makes sense to allow the spawning females time to get to the spawning grounds and allow a portion of them to exit the bay before being bombarded by tens of thousands of big plastic shads! The May 1 date seems to be a good "meet in the middle" point to help the stock as well as allow Charters and weekend warriors alike the opportunity at a truly giant fish.

The final portion of the proposal is where apprehension and confusion set in for myself. Catch and Release (C&R) practices are very common throughout the fishing community. In the Chesapeake, the time between March 1 and April 30 can be a wonderful time to practice such method. I have read through the ASMFC report which showed a significant portion of fish mortality to dead discards by recreational fisherman. I have little doubt that this is accurate as you can take a ride through the live lining hotspots during the summer months and witness as such. I do however also believe that there are proper and effective ways to release a fish in a way that they can

survive and live on, especially in the early spring when water temperature is still low and the water is clear and oxygenated.

For what it is worth I would like to offer some input on what I believe to be better options that target gear as opposed to an all-out prohibition.

- Barbless hooks
- One hook/lure per rod (i.e. no tandem rigs)
- No landing nets (no need to land a fish intended to release)
- No Planer boards
- One rod per fisherman in the on the boat. (i.e. no trolling with 20 rods over and 3 fishermen on the boat) A side note on this one, it is a way to virtually eliminate the catch and release trolling (which is not a C&R sport) without an actual prohibition against it.
- No live bait (I would prefer to see no bait at all but maybe a bit too restrictive)

These are just a few ideas that would still allow fishermen like myself to enjoy the early spring C&R season while protecting the stock.

In summary, I do understand that the Striped Bass stock is in decline and has been for quite some time. I also understand that action must be taken to protect this fishery. Overall, I feel that most of the proposed amendments are a good start but by no means a fix, this will come with trial and error. While we all have ideas and opinions on how this is to be managed it is ultimately up to the MD DNR to draft these regulations. My hope is that the Department can enact effective regulation while still using common sense methodology that does not strip the enjoyment of the fishery from the fishermen of the bay.

Very Respectively,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Comments

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 8:46 AM

Hello,

I am writing in response to the proposed regulations regarding striped bass. I would support any measure to reduce the harvest of striped bass at any time of year. I also oppose limiting catch and release fishing as it can be done with minimal mortality and helps the state economically.





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Proposal - Spring 2020

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:03 AM

To whom this may concern,

I would like to weigh in on the following regulations being proposed for Spring 2020.

- Renew the circle hook regulation we have had in place in 2018 and 2019 for live lining and chumming. - Support
- Starting the Trophy Season on May 1 - Support
- Closing March and April for targeting or Catch & Release fishing for striped bass. - Oppose

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Striped Bass Fishery Propsed changes.

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:03 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I support the use of circle hooks and the start of trophy season on 1 May.

I DO NOT support the prohibition of catch and release during March and April (when the water is cold!).

To save removals, close the season or prohibit catch and release during July and August (when the water is warm!).



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments for proposed 2020 Striped Bass regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:13 AM

Hello,

I am a recreational angler in Maryland and support the following proposed actions for the 2020 Striped Bass season:

- **Renew the circle hook regulation we have had in place in 2018 and 2019 for live lining and chumming.**
- **Starting the Trophy Season on May 1**

I am OPPOSED to additional proposed regulations.

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments for Proposed Spring Striped Bass Changes

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:34 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Hello,

I would like to comment on the proposed Spring striped bass changes. As a Maryland recreational angler, I **support** the renewal of the circle hook regulation, and changing of the trophy season start, but I **OPPOSE** the the closure of March and April for targeting of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

Thank you.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripped bass

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:44 AM

- 1 Keep circle hooks
- 2 Option #4
- 3 March & April KEEP catch and release
- 4 Rock Fish to be 18" same as commercial fishing

Active member of CCA

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## MD Rockfish comments

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:45 AM

Commissioners:

I support the delayed trophy season opening of May 1.

However I strongly disagree with the preseason catch & release measures.

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

I suggest no catch & release using live or dead bait.  
Artificials only for C&R.

Thank you.

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Spring 2020 Striped Bass Regs

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:50 AM

Maryland recreational angler for 50 years. Last 10 years my focus has been on catch and release LTJ. Have and continue to invest heavily in annual license fees and sales taxes related to my sport including boats, tackle, fuel, etc.

Support circle hook and delayed trophy season start as these measures will have a conservation impact.

Do not support closure of spring catch and release as the recreational fishing effort is minimal and studies do not prove cold water catch and release with artificially is a significant cause of mortality.

As I reach closer to retirement, I am weighing options of staying in MD or moving south where longer fishing season opportunities are present. Shortening the MD catch and release season is not necessary and will only dissuade anglers like myself from continuing to invest in the sport in Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Proposal

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:57 AM

Please do away with the options of conservational equivalencies submitted to to the tech committee and simply go with the option suggested by ASMFC of 1 fish and keep the same seasons. Many of the options proposed are silly to down right unenforceable. As well as written will be very confusing to many anglers. In addition the spring catch and release removal is at best laughable. At this time of year studies done by Maryland's own biologists show less than 1% mortality. In addition it's well know the MRIP estimates are greatly exaggerated which as you know mean that you're estimate of reduction would be much less than thought.

If you're going to close the summer season if needs to be done in a meaningful way. Most of July and all of August would have the best impact.

Lastly I would advise DNR to keep in mind you do not work solely for commercial and charter fisherman. You're funding largely comes from private citizens/ recreational anglers. It should also kept in mind that is not the job of DNR to ensure that commercial and charter fisherman have jobs. It's the job of DNR to regulate and manage the fishery. Many anglers myself included are seeing the DNR being controlled by certain special interest groups in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Striped Bass

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:01 AM

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to support all three of the proposed changes to the recreational fisheries as indicated in the "Proposed Spring Fishery Regulations"

- Renew the circle hook regulation that has been in place in 2018 and 2019 for live lining and chumming.
- Starting the Trophy Season on May 1, 2020.
- Closing March and April for targeting or Catch & Release fishing for striped bass.

Thank you for considering my input.

Cheers,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Recreational Fishing

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:04 AM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Personally, I live in Carroll County and go fishing about 3 or 4 times a month in the summer. I have no problem with circle hooks and believe it cuts down on the number of fish being killed. I saw the message put out that recreational fishing is the main reason for the depletion of Rockfish, but my taking 6 to 8 fish a month and the same with many others, is not in my opinion, the problem. I would cut out commercial fishing, crabbing and oystering for 2-3 years and the bay would come back like gang busters. Yeah, your going to piss alot of people that depend on that for a living, but if you want to save the bay for years to come, a bold action needs to happen. A couple years back poachers strung a net across a river off the bay, and it was so full of fish they had to get special rigs to pull tons and tons of fish up from those nets. Recreational fishing is not hurting the bay like the netters are. That is my 2 cents...

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
Get Outlook for Android



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Spring striped bass regulations

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:22 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

The following is my input relative to the proposed spring striped bass regulations: I am in favor of the renewal of the circle hook regulations that have been in place for 2018 and 2019. I am in favor of starting the trophy season on may 1. I oppose closure of March and april for catch and release fishing. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:25 AM

1. No Live Linning
2. No Live Linning Recreational Fishing - Exempt Charter Boats that were reg as such in 2019 (no new) {Logic~ Charter boat & Commercial, get limit & go home ~ Rec fisherman stay til they run out of live bait}
3. Slot Limit 19"-30" All categories
4. Allow Spring (Mar-Apr) catch & release
5. Limit # of Lines off a boat
6. Limit # Fish per boat (6-8)
7. Ban planner boards and out rigger use or Restrict Planner Boards. 1/ boat, 50-75 ft max length (If banned, would limit lines off a boat
8. No fish'n striped bass 45 days....Mid July- Aug
9. No fish'n 1 day a week, all year
10. Eliminate Trophy season



1 message

To: [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:33 AM

Forgot one on previous email.....

All Striped Bass Tournaments be catch & release

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Stripe bass management plan

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:36 AM

Cc:

To whom it should concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the lowest of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Regulation Changes 2020

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:47 AM

I fully support DNR's proposed changes to our current Striped Bass regulations.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 11:19 AM

As a CCA member and Northwest Fishing Club member, I support the renewal of circle hook regulation and changing the trophy season start.

However, I oppose the March and April closure as:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

I also oppose Option 4. Charter boats should not be given a separate catch limit at the expense of recreational anglers.

Thank you,





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Regulations.

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 12:06 PM

All-Please do not close down March and April I rarely have kept a fish and practice C&R almost all the time.

Sincerely,

c.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments for Chesapeake Bay Fishery

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 12:16 PM

Good morning,

Please consider making changes to the rules/regulations regarding the declining Striped Bass Fishery in our portion of the Chesapeake Bay to benefit the restoration of our Striped Bass numbers. I have noticed in the past few years a major decline in our fish numbers, especially the breeders/migrators that are heavily targeted in our spring trophy season. I regularly fish for Stripers on the recreation side and have noticed a big decline in numbers compared to previous years. Spring, summer, and fall fishing was extremely tough the past 2 years. From 2006-2012 I worked as a commercial waterman on the Bay, Harvesting Crabs and Stripers and have watched the numbers slowly dwindle. I don't think we need a moratorium, but a decreased creel limit of the Striped Bass species. Up and down the coast, states have made changes to protect the species for the future. In the hot summer months, it is not uncommon to be down tide of charter boats, finding undersized stripers belly up due to warm water temps and low oxygen levels. Please take a lesser creel limit into consideration for the Charter boats, Commercial boats, and Recreational anglers this year, in hopes to bring back strong numbers that we had in the Chesapeake in previous years. The state of Virginia has made changes to protect the Striped Bass Fishery and the state of Maryland should follow closely behind. We have made changes to restore the population of waterfowl in the region and we should make the same changes to our fishery. The health of the Chesapeake Bay and the species that rely on it, is invaluable to our state and those living and working on and around it.

I am in favor for something along these lines-

Spring Trophy Season – Catch and Release ONLY

Summer – 1 fish per person – 18"+

Fall Trophy – 1 per person - 18"-28"

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 12:17 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

To Whom It May Concern:

Please note my support for maintaining and/or extending regulations regarding the use of circle hooks as well as adjusting the start of "trophy season" for striped bass to May 1.

Please note that I do not support the prohibition of catch and release fishing for striped bass from March 1 through April 30.

It would also make sense to let members of the general public know what regulations are proposed that would affect the commercial harvest of rock fish.

I am a born and raised Marylander who grew up fishing the Bay and its tributaries. I will shortly be returning to my home State. During my absence I have continued to fish and spend time on the Bay at every opportunity. Like most reasonable people, I am distressed by the ongoing deterioration of the overall health of the Bay and its fisheries. I am also distressed at the apparent dearth of data driving new regulations. I am sure I am not alone in my perception that new regulations appear aimed at the recreational angler with little or no attempt to assess or explain why the commercial harvest would not bear further reduction during a time of obvious peril for the striped bass in the Bay.

You can rest assured that when I return to Maryland I will seek out my legislator(s) and share my views on any and all proposed regulations. In the meantime, I hope you will please let me know where I can find the data that was used to generate or support any new proposed regulations.

Thanks.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## new regulations

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 12:56 PM

Dear DNR,

I'm a CCA member and an avid fisher in the Chesapeake Bay.

I believe our Stripers are in trouble and there are changes necessary.

I do support shutting the fishery down when the water temp is too hot, and the mortality is way up. This is when everyone out there can see miles of dead fish floating every day.

I do not support shutting down catch and release during cold temperatures. I never see dead fish floating during cold temps and it is proven that mortality is way down when water temperatures are down. I believe the fishing this time of year doesn't hurt the fish and I know it helps the economy.

Please consider my thoughts and the science that supports this. Please keep politics out of your decision and take meaningful actions to help the fish and not special interest groups.

Thank you,

may contain confidential, proprietary, or privileged information. If you are not the intended stroy all copies of the original message.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Proposed Spring Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Reply-To:

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 12:57 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

MD DNR,

I welcome the opportunity to provide further comments for our precious striped bass fishery. I have sent in comments two other times previously. I'm a devoted, passionate and ethical fisherman. I'm a MD native that now lives on the lovely Eastern Shore. My wife and I are CCA members and we volunteer with CBF, Shore Rivers, ESLC, Isaac Walton, and Blackwater Wildlife Refuge. I've been buying a MD sportfishing license (DNRid 100345) since my 16th birthday back in 1972. I suffered through the striped bass moratorium and don't want to relive that again. I'm a huge light tackle catch and release guy that REALLY enjoys the Susquehanna Flats catch and release season and would hate to see that season eliminated. I've personally caught 100s of fish there on lures and practice good catch and release methods and truly believe all or nearly all of those fish survived. I have begun to switch out treble hooks with in line single hooks (VMC makes a really nice INLINE SINGLE hook) which really helps with releasing fish. I'd also like to recommend no bait and trolling for the spring catch and release season, I believe a lot of fish die from the stress of trolling as they're being dragged through the water. Lastly, I never keep a striped bass over 30" so perhaps a slot limit would help further protect the large female fish especially during the trophy season.

Here's my specific comments for the 3 proposed spring regulations.

1. I **support** the renewal of the circle hook regulation
2. I **support** starting the trophy season on May 1st
3. I **oppose** the closure of March and April for targeting striped bass based on my own personal experiences and for the same reasons specified by CCA.

Respectfully,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 1:11 PM

Reply-To:

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comment & Support to DNR of Maryland

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 1:31 PM

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ **ALSO SUPPORT** the renewal of the circle hook regulation, and changing of the trophy season start to 01 May 2020 and all subsequent years of aforementioned day and month.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ **ALSO OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for targeting of striped bass with the details as outline by the CCA endorsement.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped bass-Proposed changes to recreational regulations**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 2:17 PM

I applaud your efforts to conserve striped bass stocks and agree with most of the proposed changes- with one major exception.

The proposal to restrict the catch and release season needs some tweaking. I am concerned that restricting the season would eliminate the catch and release fishery on the Susquehanna Flats. Since the fish caught there are predominately post spawn fish caught on light tackle, there is negligible stripped bass mortality. Fish caught further south as part to the "trophy" season are much more likely to be prespawn fish and more likely to suffer mortality when caught from larger boats employing planer boards fishing many rods. These boats seldom slow to reel in or release undersized fish. Do you think that you could devise regulations that address these questions?

Thank you for your attention.





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 2:25 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 2:29 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland! you have to do regulations on netting in the bay shouldn't be allowed the bay is to polluted and the rockfish can't rebound as fast ..

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 2:47 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am the president of the American Sportfishing Association and I represent the sportfishing industry as well as the 49 million anglers across the country. Today, I am voicing my opinion as a striped bass angler who fishes the Chesapeake Bay, as I have concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study using NOAA data concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

We understand that Maryland needs to reduce the take of striped bass by 20% as we all would like abundant, sustainable fisheries and the ability to catch these fish. However, I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Don't allow the commercial boats to bully you on your decision as they are a very small part of the economic engine. And don't separate us from the recreational charter business. They are an important subset of recreational fishing, but should not be able to take more fish per person than the private owners that dominate the Bay.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 2:58 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:22 PM

Reply-To: n

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

1



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## PROPOSED SPRING STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS

1 message

1

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:37 PM

### Maryland DNR PROPOSED SPRING STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS

- **Renew the circle hook regulation we have had in place in 2018 and 2019 for live lining and chumming.**
- **Starting the Trophy Season on May 1**
- **Closing March and April for targeting or Catch & Release fishing for striped bass.**

**SUPPORT** the renewal of the circle hook regulation.

**SUPPORT** changing of the trophy season starts.

**OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for targeting of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
  - RE: Mortality Rate of Striped Bass Caught and Released with Artificial Lures During Spring on the Susquehanna Flats - Fisheries Technical Memo No. 16 - Rudy Lukacovic & Ben Florence
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.

Sincerely,

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1998crmortalityresearch.pdf  
64K

# **MD DNR Fisheries Feature Story**

## **Recreational Catch-and-Release Mortality Research in Maryland**

**Rudy Lukacovic**

The practice of catch-and-release fishing has gained widespread popularity and acceptance in the sport fishing community and has been incorporated into fishery management plans. Anglers catch and release fish for a variety of reasons: fish may not be legal size, they may be out of season or they may be caught and released simply as sport. In an intensive catch-and-release fishery high survival of released fish is essential for this to be a non-consumptive practice.

Fishing mortality is most often perceived as that portion of the catch which is kept. With the increase in catch-and-release fishing, the portion of the catch which is released often exceeds that which is kept. It is currently estimated that more than 90% of the striped bass caught in Chesapeake Bay and along the Atlantic coast are released. Several fisheries in Maryland (American and hickory shad, and the Susquehanna Flats striped bass fishery) exist only as catch-and-release fisheries and numerous trout waters in Maryland allow only catch-and-release fishing.

High angler participation in a catch-and-release fishery, even with a low mortality rate among released fish, can result in a significant number of dead fish. A study examining a striped bass catch-and-release fishery on the Roanoke River, North Carolina determined the mortality rate of released fish to be 6.4%. Because of high levels of fishing effort and high catch rates in this fishery, this relatively low mortality rate accounted for 46% of the allowable annual harvest for that river. Therefore, the mortality rate of the released fish, even if it is low, must be considered as part of total fishing mortality to properly manage a fishery.

Minimum size limits are used to protect and enhance fish populations by allowing fish to live long enough for them to spawn one or more times. It is also an effective way to provide quality fishing by preventing the harvest of smaller individuals and allowing a greater number of fish to survive to a more desirable size. Creel limits reduce fishing mortality if they are less than the typical angler catch. Minimum size limits and creel limits will work if the survival of released fish is high.

There are two main factors that influence the survival of fish that are caught and released: physical injury and stress. Fish can be physically damaged from hook wounds and during handling and release. They can be physiologically stressed by the exertion from the fight.

Numerous studies have shown that the location of the hook wound (physical injury) is the single most important factor influencing catch-and-release mortality. If the wound site is a vital organ the mortality, as expected, is high. The hook wound site can be influenced by hook size or configuration, the use of natural bait versus artificial lures (natural baits tend to be swallowed more frequently), bait size, angler experience or fish behavior.

Stress-related mortality can change because of variations in environment conditions. Studies with a wide variety of fish species have demonstrated that higher water temperatures will cause mortality associated with catch-and-release fishing to increase. The estuarine environment changes seasonally in temperature as well as in oxygen content and salinity. Temperature (both water and air), salinity and fish size have been shown to be three important, interactive factors which affect survival of caught and released striped bass. High water temperatures under low salinity conditions have been shown to increase mortality of released striped bass. Fish size has also been shown to affect survival. Larger fish fight longer and are more difficult to handle than smaller fish. Differences in the ratio of gill surface area to body volume increase as fish get larger. Therefore larger fish have a more difficult time eliminating carbon dioxide from their bloodstream and re-oxygenating their tissues after extreme physical exertion. Time out of water, particularly during hot weather, also

increases stress-related mortality.

Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Service has been conducting studies over the last seven years that evaluate the survival of fish that are caught and released by recreational anglers. These studies have included hickory shad, American shad, summer flounder, white perch, yellow perch and striped bass. Some species, such as American and hickory shad, are only briefly available to anglers at specific locations. Therefore, the environmental conditions in which they are caught, other than normal seasonal temperature increases, are not highly variable. In addition, the tackle used to catch these fish is fairly consistent. A single study for each species, with replicates over time to evaluate temperature change, has been sufficient to evaluate the catch-and-release mortality for each of these fish.

Striped bass and white perch are caught in a variety of aquatic environments by many different angling techniques. They can be caught when water temperatures reach the lower 50's (°F) and they will continue to feed as temperatures rise into the 80's. The salinities from which they are caught range from 0.0 parts per thousand (ppt) in fresh water to estuarine levels (15-20 ppt). Striped bass are also caught at marine salinities (35 ppt). Angling methods include trolling, chumming and flyfishing for striped bass. Bait fishing and casting artificial lures are techniques used for both species. Striped bass have been the focus of a number of catch-and-release studies here in Maryland because of the varied circumstances under which they can be caught.

Following will be a series of study summaries conducted by the Fisheries Service that have investigated various recreational fisheries and the release mortality that may be associated with them. These studies are being used to build predictive models of catch-and-release mortality that will be incorporated into fishery management plans and to educate anglers about ways to maximize survival of their released fish.

## **Hickory and American Shad**

Changes in regulations may allow catch-and-release fishing on a previously closed fishery. American and hickory shad have been protected in Maryland since 1980 and 1981, respectively, by moratoria because of low population size. During the mid-1990's the numbers of hickory shad returning to spawn in Deer Creek, a tributary to the Susquehanna River, and a few other streams, appeared to be increasing. Along with this apparent increase in population was an increase in angling activity for these fish. In 1996, the regulation that prohibited harvest of these species was changed to allow catch-and-release fishing. To evaluate the effects of this fishery a study was conducted to evaluate the survival of hickory shad caught and released in Deer Creek. Over a four week period in April and May 1996, 150 hickory shad were caught and used as test specimens in ten trials. Participating anglers caught hickory shad using single hooked artificial lures with 6-7 weight fly rods. Fish were transported to holding tanks set up on the shoreline. A pump supplied creek water to the tanks using a flow through system. Survival was monitored 48 hours. No fish died in any of the trials and they appeared healthy and vigorous when released. Hickory shad that were foul hooked were used as well as lip hooked fish when it became apparent that foul hooking was not an uncommon occurrence. Fish were marked at the time of release. Weekly surveys to search for dead fish in the stream were conducted concurrent with the study. These surveys documented a few dead hickory shad in Deer Creek that had physical damage compatible with hooking. None of the observed mortalities had marks indicating they were released test fish.

In April and May of 1997 a similar tank study was conducted which evaluated the survival of American shad caught and released below Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River. Volunteer anglers, who used spinning tackle and artificial lures, caught 309 American shad. These fish were used in 13 trials that ran for 48 hours each. Mortality was less than 1%.

These two studies indicated that the change in regulation to allow catch-and-release fishing for these protected species did not jeopardize stock recovery by causing a high rate of angler induced mortality.



## White Perch

White perch caught by recreational fishermen are not protected by either a minimum size or a creel limit. They are the primary species targeted by recreational anglers during their spring spawning run in rivers such as the Choptank and Chester. Currently anglers are discarding 75% of the white perch they catch during the spring spawning run fishery and most are less than 6.5 inches. If a recreational minimum size limit is ever considered, and if the mortality rate is high for released fish, then a size limit may not be an appropriate management tool.

A mortality study was conducted with white perch in Unicorn Branch, a tributary of the Chester River in March and April 1998. Recreational anglers were asked to donate to the study any white perch they would normally have released. Fish were taken from anglers that used shad darts baited with grass shrimp. White perch were observed for 48 hours in fiberglass tanks using a flow-through water system identical to the shad studies. Only one mortality was observed among 524 white perch used in 6 trials. This study indicates that if minimum size regulations, or creel limits, were to be considered in the future, survival of released fish under these circumstances is high enough for these measures to be successful.

## Yellow Perch

Currently, yellow perch caught by recreational fishermen in Maryland's tidal waters are regulated by a nine inch minimum size limit and a five fish per day creel limit except those rivers closed to harvest. Harvest is prohibited in the Magothy, Nanticoke, Patapsco, Severn, South and West rivers.

A study was conducted to evaluate survival of yellow perch caught and released by recreational anglers in Wye Stream, a tributary of the Wye River East in March 2002. Fishermen were asked to donate to the study any yellow perch they would normally have released. Fish were taken from anglers that used shad darts baited with grass shrimp or minnows. Fish were marked to separate deep-hooked fish from shallow-hooked fish. Deep-hooking was defined as being hooked past the gills. Yellow perch were observed for 48 hours in stream-side fiberglass tanks using a flow-through water system similar to the shad and white perch studies.

Most of the yellow perch, 94%, were shallow-hooked and their survival rate exceeded 99%. The deep hooking rate was 5.8% and as expected these fish died at a higher rate (35.7%). Overall mortality was 2.9%. Sub-legal fish (<9 inches) represented 43% of the fish used in this study and their mortality rate was the same, 2.9%. Male yellow perch accounted for 57% of the fish in this study.

Most of the yellow perch sport-fishery occurs in spring with cool air and water temperatures. Survival rates of both legal and sub-legal sized yellow perch are high enough under these circumstances, that size and creel limits appear to be effective management practices for this species.

## Summer Flounder

Recreational fishing reports compiled by the Fisheries Service through the mid-1990's indicated that approximately 90% of the summer flounder caught in the ocean-side bays during the summer were less than the minimum size limit and released. Two head boats operating out of Ocean City allowed biologists on board to measure summer flounder caught by their clients and to record type of terminal tackle used and hook wound location.

Natural bait is used almost exclusively for flounder and natural baits tend to be swallowed more often than artificial ones. Terminal tackle can influence the rate of deep hooking. Hook size and style were consistent during this survey. The head boat captains used a wide-gap hook (#1 or 2). This choice was presumably made to reduce the frequency of deep hooking. Handling time for the mate was reduced and fish survival was increased. Deep hooking occurred only 6.7% of the time using

this terminal tackle.

Terminal tackle used by private recreational anglers varies greatly. Several paying customers used their own tackle while fishing on the head boats. A bait-holder style hook was the most common type used by these anglers. Observations of these anglers indicates that those who use hooks other than the wide-gap style generally have a higher rate of deep hooking.

The head boats did not have the space necessary to conduct long term holding that would have allowed us to determine mortality. The 6.7% deep hooking rate could be seen as the potential maximum mortality for head boat anglers.

## Striped Bass

When Maryland's spring trophy season was limited to late April and May, chumming was not widely practiced. The large striped bass that were targeted were not densely schooled up at that time of year and were not very susceptible to that tactic. The expansion of the season through June and into early July in 1996, along with a decrease in the size limit starting June 1, resulted in an increase in chumming which targeted smaller schooling fish. The increased popularity of this fishing technique was followed by complaints of dead and floating striped bass near the fishing areas and concerns from stakeholders about the effect of these deaths on the stock. Examinations of dead fish indicated terminal tackle left in many fish and physical trauma compatible with hook damage.

Nearly 1,300 striped bass were used in catch-and-release mortality experiments conducted during 1996-2000. We conducted catch-and-release mortality experiments with striped bass were caught by chumming because it easily provided both deep- and shallow-hooked fish. One study was conducted during October 1996 and one was conducted in June 1997. Each month, from June through October 1999 and June through September 2000, two 2-day trials were conducted. Charter boats were hired to catch fish for these studies. Conventional j-style bait hook and circle hooks were used. Hook size, tackle strength and fishing location were kept consistent for each season. Cut menhaden and soft clams were used for bait. The location of the hook wound was identified when each fish was landed. Fisheries Service biologists removed the hook if the fish was shallow hooked, but left the hook in place in deep hooked fish by cutting the line. Each fish was marked to identify hook location (shallow or deep) by hole punching the tail fin. They were transported to open water net pens in DNR hatchery vessels. The most optimal conditions for survival (lowest temperature and highest oxygen) found at each site were duplicated in the tank. Their survival and water quality was monitored in the net pens for 72-96 hours.

The striped bass were checked daily for mortality. Temperature, dissolved oxygen and salinity were monitored in the pens each day. Dead fish were measured and hook location (hole punch position) was recorded. All dead fish, marked as deep hooked, were dissected to determine the nature and extent of the internal damage that caused death. All surviving fish were measured, had hook location recorded and were released.

The use of circle hooks to reduce deep hooking rates was briefly evaluated during the spring 1997 study. Striped bass were caught for the mortality study using standard J-style off-set hooks. When sufficient numbers were caught each day to meet statistical constraints for the study, non-offset circle hooks were used to catch and release fish. Deep hooking was reduced more than 75% by the same anglers fishing the same day using non-offset circle hooks.

Deep hooking was reduced 81% over the course of the 1999 study by using non-offset circle hooks and 67% over the course of the 2000 study. This magnitude of deep hooking reduction has been documented in several other Fisheries Service studies (84% in summer 1996; 75% in spring 1997).

Studies done here in Maryland have determined the deep hooking mortality rate of striped bass caught with conventional J-style bait hooks to be about 50% regardless of temperature, salinity or whether or not the hook is removed (57.7% in 1995; 41.0% in 1996, 56.3% in 1997, 53.1% in 1999 and 58.3% in 2000).

Mortality (in order of influence) was higher for deeply hooked fish, fish caught at higher air temperatures (higher in June-July, lower during August-October), and larger fish. Bigger fish were more likely to be deep-hooked. Odds of dying were more than 15-times higher if a striped bass was deeply hooked and standard, j-shaped bait hooks had a 4-times greater chance of deep-hooking than non-offset circle hooks. Fish subjected to abrupt increases in air temperature when removed from water prior to release (typically in June and July) were more likely to experience fatal disruption of their normal physiology.

## **Susquehanna Flats Catch-and-Release Fishery**

The rising popularity of catch-and-release fishing led to the development of catch-and-release fishery in the upper portion of Chesapeake Bay known as the Susquehanna Flats. This activity developed despite regulations that prohibit catching or attempting to catch striped bass in areas designated as spawning rivers and areas during the period March 1 through May 31. A workgroup comprised of stakeholders was formed by the Fisheries Service to investigate what might be done to provide better recreational fishing opportunities in those areas without impacting the spawning stock or the reproductive ability of striped bass. The workgroup recommended that the Fisheries Service design and conduct a study that would determine the mortality of striped bass associated with catch-and-release fishing on the Susquehanna Flats.

Over a five week period in April and May 1998, three 2-day trials were conducted on the Flats. Participating anglers were instructed to use single hooked artificial lures. Fish were marked as deep or shallow hooked, transported and held for three days as in the other striped bass studies.

Two size groups of fish were sought for these experiments: less than 24 inches and greater than 24 inches. This size delineation was selected because mortality data for striped bass greater than 24 inches caught at low water temperatures in fresh water did not exist in the scientific literature.

The results showed that water temperature greatly influenced release mortality of striped bass caught on the Flats. Mortality was 1.6% at temperatures of 57-59EF, 3.7% at 61-62EF and 15.9% at 64-71EF. There was no difference in mortality between large (>24") and small (<24") striped bass at these low temperatures. More than 95% of the fish caught on the flats in this study were small males.

A legal catch-and-release season was implemented in 1999 and was closely monitored by the Fisheries Service. Water temperatures remained low and the size distribution of striped bass caught in the 1999 season was very similar to that seen during the study.

## **How have these studies affected Maryland's anglers?**

Changes in regulations and angler education have been and are being used by the Fisheries Service to reduce release mortality and to provide more recreational opportunities for anglers. Reduction in the striped bass minimum size to 18 inches for a portion of the spring season was implemented following the 1997 study. Allowing anglers to keep smaller fish reduced the number of fish that were caught and released before the creel limit of legal fish was reached. Additionally, anglers have been encouraged to use non off-set circle hooks to reduce deep hooking rates of fish that are released. Catch-and-release fishing for American and hickory shad and the Susquehanna Flats, is allowed because our research has determined mortality is low and this practice is compatible with fishery management plans. We found that catch-and-release mortality of species such as yellow and white perch is low and is not likely to impede the effectiveness of management measures in the future.

The Fisheries Service is continuing to conduct research and monitor catch-and-release losses. Work involving the cooperation of organized fishing groups (Maryland Charter Boat Association, Coastal Conservation Association and Maryland Saltwater Sportfisherman's Association) is currently underway. These studies will determine the deep and shallow hooking percentages for the major recreational fisheries. They will also provide better resolution of deep and shallow hooking mortalities under different environmental conditions, and they will investigate different techniques

and tackle that will reduce mortality of released fish.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:42 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Spring Season**1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:46 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

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Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Stripped Bass Regs 2020

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:48 PM

I would like to voice my opinion regarding the DNR proposed regulations for this season. I am in support of the May 1 trophy season start date and continuation of the use of circle hooks. I believe these measures will help reduce mortality on the fishery and lead to a healthier stock over time.

I am OPPOSED to the March/April proposed closure to 'targeting'. Cool weather C&R fishing has little verifiable negative impact to the overall health of the fishery. This part of the proposal damages the sport overall.

Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:48 PM

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I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

J

J





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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Reply-To

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:50 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

...



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**2020 Maryland Striped Bass Regulations - Much Concern with the Future**1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 3:58 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

TO: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

RE: Strict Regulations Need to Be Instituted

To Whom it may concern:

Speaking for the recreational anglers, the **Striped Bass Trophy Season needs to be abolished.** The future of a sustainable fishery depends on this regulation.

Most of the future stock of Striped Bass comes from these large fish and they should be protected. This fishery belongs to all anglers up and down that coast that choose to fish for this species. The continuation

of the practice of killing trophy fish will surely mark the end of a once great fishery. This is in the interest of ALL recreational anglers and the fishery.

If there are not enough fish in the bay, all anglers will be effected. Please do what is right for a sustainable fishery of the Striped Bass and not just for

those that choose to make a living on killing fish. All of those folks will be out of business if the current trend continues. Did we not learn anything from the moratorium in the 80's? After this moratorium the regulations should have made the fishery sustainable, but the belt was loosend and here we are.

Times have changed and so the regulations must be stricter regardless of the whining of the special interst groups like commercial and charter captains. Please take a look at the state of Florida when it comes to fishery regulations. They do an excellent of job of protecting the fisheries for all, and not just those who choose to make a living from the resource. This resource belongs to ALL. Please do the right thing.

Sincerely,

a



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:18 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Conservation Equivalency Proposal

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:35 PM

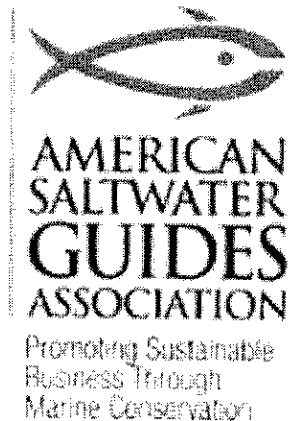
We appreciate the opportunity to comment and our position is attached.

Tony Friedrich

VP/Policy Director

American Saltwater Guides Association

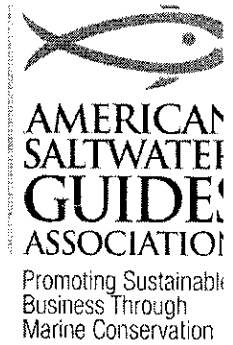
202.744.5013



**ASGA Comments Striped Bass Maryland.pdf**

88K

# American Saltwater Guides Association



Maryland Department Of Natural Resources,

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, Capt. Kyle Schaefer,  
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, Capt. Peter,  
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, Capt. Jamie, Boyle  
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Capt. Dave Monti, No  
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Capt. Ian Devlin,  
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. Capt, Paul Dixon, To  
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Capt. Jason Dapra,  
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Capt. Chris  
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Capt. Tom Roller,  
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ino, District Angling

st John McMurray,  
sident

ty Friedrich,  
Policy Director

The American Saltwater Guides Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations for the 2020 Maryland striped bass season.

We are asking that Maryland adopt 1 fish @ 18" for all modes, which is the suggested regulation from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. This option received 84% of the votes during the coast wide comment period as well.

The four options listed in Maryland's conservation equivalency proposal may look good on paper, but do little to recover the stock. In fact, the four options for conservation equivalency are crafted to benefit only one stakeholder group rather than the striped bass stock.

Closing April for targeting striped bass is the most egregious of all the suggestions. Fish are not harmed during cold water catch and release. If recovering the spawning stock biomass was a real concern, trophy season, for fish greater than 35", would not open on May 1.

You have ignored your responsibility to the resource as well as your own science by not addressing fishing in low oxygen, low salinity, and warm water conditions. A 15 day closure in August does little to address the real issue.

Striped bass, weakfish, and bluefish are all overfished. We need real regulations to turn the tide. These four proposals are disappointing as they will likely extend the rebuilding timeline for striped bass recovery.

Respectfully,

*Anthony Friedrich*

Tony Friedrich

VP/Policy Director

American Saltwater Guides Association



202.744.5013



[info@saltwaterguidesassociation.org](mailto:info@saltwaterguidesassociation.org)



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## New Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:36 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I also support the 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland. 84% of public comments agree with the 1 fish 18" minimum recommended by the Atlantic fisheries council.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Chris Wright

Sincerely,

cc

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass proposal

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:43 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

I urge you to support the prohibition on targeting of striped bass in closed seasons. I also support prohibiting catch and release striped bass fishing with bait during the summer months when the water temperatures raise the likelihood of increased mortality.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Regarding Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:47 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Please find attached my memo for submission for public comment.

Sincerely,

Glenn Hughes

President

**American Sportfishing Association**

1001 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 501

Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.519.9691 ext. 245



**MD STB CE Spring Season Memo 1.21.20.doc**

639K





## Memorandum

To: Ms. Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
From: Glenn Hughes, President, American Sportfishing Association  
Date: January 21, 2020  
Subject: Maryland's Striped Bass Spring Season

In October, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) approved an 18% reduction in striped bass total removals to end overfishing and begin rebuilding the striped bass population. America's sportfishing community is on record in favor of the reduction, recognizing that tough management decisions must be made for the benefit of our shared public resources.

As part of the ASMFC decision, the Board agreed to share the burden of the reduction equally between the commercial and recreational sectors because everyone that benefits from the resource has a shared interest in its future.

Despite direction from ASMFC, Maryland continues to pursue conservation equivalency options that:

- (1) restrict access without providing meaningful conservation to the striped bass resource
- (2) shift the reduction burden to the 260,000 private anglers in Maryland which represent the most valuable component of its striped bass fishery.

Currently, there is no meaningful economic analysis that has been completed to assess the impacts of the various management alternatives to Maryland's economy. Therefore, we offer the following comments and published economic data to demonstrate that many of the alternatives being considered will have significant and measurable impacts on Maryland's outdoor recreational economy.

### Regarding the Spring Season

× - We oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

✓ - We support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

## **American Sportfishing Association**

1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 501, Alexandria, VA 22314 • 703-519-9691 • FAX: 703-519-1872

[www.ASAfishing.org](http://www.ASAfishing.org) • [info@ASAfishing.org](mailto:info@ASAfishing.org)

- An economic study by Southwick Associates concluded that in 2016, recreational spending on striped bass fishing in MD supports more than 10,000 jobs and has an economic impact on Maryland's GDP of more than \$800 million.
- Approximately \$643 million of this spending was made by private anglers and that spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

Based on our analysis above, we continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

**American Sportfishing Association**

1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 501, Alexandria, VA 22314 · 703-519-9691 · FAX: 703-519-1872

[www.ASAfishing.org](http://www.ASAfishing.org) · [info@ASAfishing.org](mailto:info@ASAfishing.org)



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:57 PM

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Reconsidering initial inputs

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:58 PM

Being an active recreational fisherman and having been on the commercial side of things as a Charter boat first mate during the moratorium, I am convinced that a moratorium for both commercial and recreational fishing for 3 years minimum makes sense. See if the fishery can be brought back in that way, while ending the commercial/recreational debate with a season closing.

C&R, leave open with barbless hooks; no bait, no circle hooks, only artificials.

R

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## MD Striped bass management plan

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:58 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov, will.smith@senate.state.md.us, David.Moon@house.state.md.us, jheanelle.wilkins@house.state.md.us, lorig.charkoudian@house.state.md.us

To whom it may concern,

Each of the 4 conservation equivalency plans which DNR has submitted to the technical committee for striped bass management are overly complicated and therefore place undo burden on participants in the fishery and the NRP as it relates to compliance/enforcement.

MD DNR should adopt a Chesapeake Bay bag limit of 1 fish per person, per day at 18"+ with no changes to other seasonal regs as advised by ASMFC.

Of particular concern are measures to close catch and release fishing during the months of March and April, a period which DNR's own studies confirm that impact to the striped bass species is the lowest of any other time of the year. DNR should look to their own best available science for guidance in this rather than MRIP data which is clearly flawed as evidenced by the impossible catch estimates for this timeframe.

Respectfully,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 4:59 PM

Reply-To: jmcdo76@yahoo.com

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Recreational Striped Bass CE Proposal**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 5:06 PM

I do not see how the proposed CE will in any way alleviate the mass destruction of undersized rockfish that occurs throughout the summer months. The bay looks like a war-zone with dead carcasses everywhere you look throughout the summer. Closing the C&R fishery and pushing back the start of trophy season, while good to protect the breeding stock, does nothing to protect the nursery.

I oppose the MD DNR's CE proposal and vote for ASFMC's recommended solution of 1 rockfish limit at 18" minimum.

]

Annapolis, MD



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Recreational Fishery Regulations

1 message

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**Allison Colden** <AColden@cbf.org>

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 5:31 PM

To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Cc: Allison Colden <AColden@cbf.org>

Please see attached for Chesapeake Bay Foundation's comments on proposed changes to the spring recreational striped bass fishery. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Allison Colden

*Maryland Fisheries Scientist*

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

6 Herndon Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21403

Direct: 443.482.2160



**CHESAPEAKE BAY  
FOUNDATION**

*Saving a National Treasure*

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**Striped Bass Rec Spring Fishery Regs\_CBF Comments.pdf**  
250K





CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION  
*Saving a National Treasure*

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Bishop Eugene Taylor Sutton  
Alan L. Wurtzel

January 21, 2020

Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Fishing and Boating Services  
Regulatory Division Staff  
580 Taylor Avenue, B-2  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

*Submitted electronically via email to [fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov)*

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), I wish to provide the following comments on the proposed regulatory changes to the Atlantic striped bass spring recreational fishery. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this action.

CBF is the largest conservation organization dedicated solely to saving the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our motto, ***Save the Bay***, defines the organization's mission and commitment to reducing pollution, improving fisheries, and protecting and restoring natural resources such as wetlands, oyster reefs, living shorelines, maritime forests, and underwater grasses. CBF has over 300,000 members, including more than 107,000 members in Maryland, who support the wise management of the region's living resources.

CBF has participated in the management process for striped bass for over 25 years because the population of striped bass and its fisheries are of great importance to both our members and staff. Despite their current decline in biomass, striped bass remain one of the most popular and valuable recreational fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay region.

Striped bass are an iconic species in the Chesapeake Bay region and the state fish of Maryland, a designation that reflects not only the cultural foundation it provides to Maryland fisheries, but its important biological connection to Maryland's waters. Chesapeake Bay striped bass spawning areas and nursery habitat account for the production of more than 70 percent of the coastal migratory striped bass population.

Unfortunately, the recently released benchmark stock assessment paints a concerning picture for the current status of the striped bass population, with the stock being both overfished and currently experiencing overfishing.<sup>1</sup> Although the stock is not yet considered collapsed, it is at a point that requires decisive action in order to restore this important resource along the Atlantic Coast and in the Chesapeake Bay.

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<sup>1</sup> Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC). 2019. 66th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (66th SAW) Assessment Report. US Dept Commerce, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 19-08; 1170 p.

The Department of Natural Resources (Department) has proposed a suite of options to address these issues in response to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Addendum VI to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Striped Bass. We understand that because of regulatory timelines, these regulations are being promulgated in parts although the necessary reductions required to achieve compliance will rely on the full suite of regulatory actions listed in the proposal. These regulations are also being moved forward before full consideration by ASMFC. Unfortunately, this introduces a great deal of uncertainty in the regulatory process as it must be assumed that ASMFC will approve Maryland's proposal and that subsequent regulations will reliably fill whatever gap is necessary following the implementation of regulations through this action.

Considering the poor status of the stock and the failure of previous conservation equivalency (CE) proposals implemented by Maryland to meet their intended objectives, CBF supports only those measures that are both quantifiable and verifiable. We do not support the use of conservation equivalency as a means to circumvent the consensus of the Board or the processes of ASMFC. Conservation equivalency should be reserved only for those instances in which the biology of the species, the statutory or procedural requirements of the state, or a desire to enact stricter conservation measures preclude the implementation of the ASMFC Interstate Fishery Management Plan.

#### *Comments on Specific Regulatory Proposals:*

#### **Issue 1: Mandatory use of circle hooks**

CBF supports the continuation of mandatory use of circle hooks when fishing with natural baits. Studies have indicated that the primary control of post-release survival in striped bass is hook location and associated hooking injury. The use of circle hooks has been shown to reduce deep hooking and reduce post-release mortality of fish to less than 1% in water temperatures less than 95 degrees.<sup>2</sup> Given the demonstrated improvement in post-release survival associated with the use of circle hooks, we support the continued requirement for their use.

We commend the Department's support of continuing the mandatory use of circle hooks and encourage continued angler education to help reduce post-release mortality of striped bass. We stand ready to work with the Department in implementing angler outreach and education initiatives, as we have done previously through our circle hook distribution and *Careful Catch* program.

#### **Issue 2: May 1 start of trophy season**

CBF supports delaying the start of the trophy fishing season. This action is directly linked to the issue of declining spawning stock biomass that has triggered this management action. Resiliency of striped bass recruitment has been linked to female age diversity.<sup>3</sup> Protecting larger, older females that are targeted in the trophy fishery will help preserve this diversity and hopefully improve the probability of successful recruitment in the coming years.

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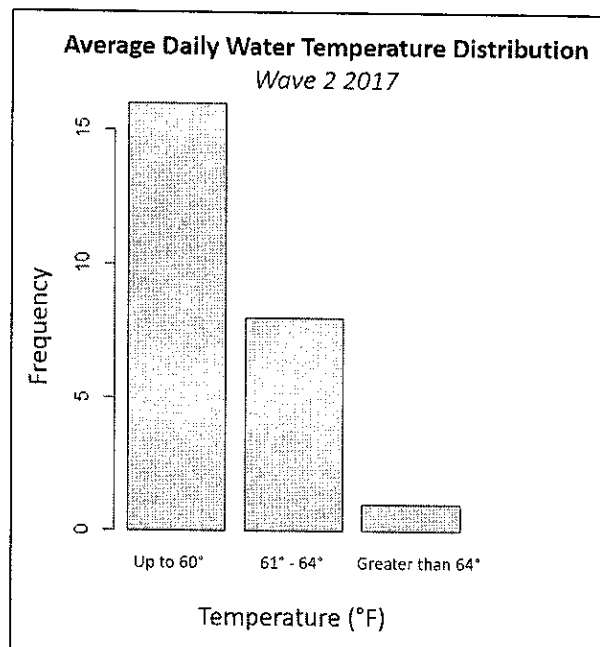
<sup>2</sup> Lukacovic, R. 1999 Striped bass catch and release results. MD DNR Fisheries Feature Story.

<sup>3</sup> Secor, D. H. 2000. Longevity and resilience of Chesapeake Bay striped bass. ICES Journal of Marine Science, 57: 808-815.

### Issue 3: Closure of March-April catch and release fishery

CBF maintains concerns about the reduction in removals associated with this proposed closure. It is our understanding that the Department is utilizing an assumption of 9% post-release mortality for all fish released in Wave 2. This is despite data from the Department indicating that mortality rate scales with temperature and is as low as 1.6% at temperatures between 57 and 59 degrees.<sup>4</sup> When combined with the use of circle hooks, post-release mortality can be reduced to less than 1%.

The graph below shows average daily water temperature measured at the Susquehanna Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System data buoy for March 1-April 30, 2017. The maximum observed water temperature was 64 degrees observed on only one day. The average water temperature for the majority of days in Wave 2 ranged from 57 to 60 degrees. Similar data were observed in 2016.



The 9% post-release mortality estimate is applied to an estimate of the total number of fish released alive in Wave 2, as determined by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). For the years 2015 to 2018, the estimate of live releases had a percent standard error (PSE) of 29.9 to 57.1%. Percent standard error is a measure of the precision of the estimate. PSEs of 25% or less are considered a good estimate, PSEs of 40% are to be considered with caution, and estimates with PSEs greater than 50% are considered very imprecise.<sup>5,6</sup> MRIP estimates for live releases in 2016 and 2018 had PSEs greater than 50%.

<sup>4</sup> Lukacovic, R. Recreational catch-and-release mortality research in Maryland. MD DNR Fisheries Feature Story.

<sup>5</sup> Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Recreational Striped Bass Fishery Study on Harvest Data. Report to the Maryland Senate Committee on Education, Health and Environmental Affairs and House Committee on Environment and Transportation. December 1, 2014. 10 pp.

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division, January 21, 2020.

Therefore, the mortality rate estimate used is likely higher than that realized in Wave 2 and is being applied to highly imprecise estimates of live releases. Functionally, this will likely result in an overestimation of the conservation benefit of this closure, resulting in less conservative management overall as this reduction is applied toward the total required reduction of 20%. While we are not opposed to the proposal to close the March and April catch-and-release fishery and restrict targeting of striped bass, we do not support crediting this action in the overall reduction due to assumptions and estimate uncertainty that prevent accurate quantification of this reduction. Additional quantifiable and verifiable conservation actions should be included in the proposal to cover the reduction currently attributed to this action.

#### Issue 4: Summer closure

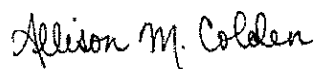
Beyond hooking injuries, the most important factors controlling post-release mortality are water temperature and salinity.<sup>7</sup> According to Maryland Eyes on the Bay water quality monitoring and comments by Department staff, July is the most challenging month for water quality conditions that cause physiological stress to striped bass. High water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen have been shown to stress striped bass, making them more susceptible to post-release mortality and disease.<sup>8,9</sup>

CBF supports regulatory options that include summer closures in July. July is the worst month for water quality and a time period of increased angler effort. The coincidence of poor water quality and high effort poses the greatest risk for post-release mortality of striped bass. Closures in July are the most likely to achieve the Department's stated goal of addressing post-release mortality.

Generally, the conservation benefit of season closures, both spring and summer, rely on managers' assumptions about shifts in angler behavior in response to regulatory action. Prior to the implementation of any season closure, the Department should devise a monitoring plan or strategy to validate their assumptions about angler behavior to improve future regulatory proposals.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me ([acolden@cbf.org](mailto:acolden@cbf.org); 410.268.8816).

Sincerely,



Allison M. Colden, Ph.D.  
Maryland Fisheries Scientist

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<sup>7</sup> Lukacovic, R. 1999 Striped bass catch and release results. MD DNR Fisheries Feature Story.

<sup>8</sup> Lukacovic, R. Recreational catch-and-release mortality research in Maryland. MD DNR Fisheries Feature Story.

<sup>9</sup> Lapointe D, Vogelbein WK, Fabrizio MC, Gauthier DT, Brill RW (2014) Temperature, hypoxia, and mycobacteriosis: effects on adult striped bass *Morone saxatilis* metabolic performance. Dis Aquat Org 108:113-127. <https://doi.org/10.3354/dao02693>



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Regulations for Striped Bass

1 message

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Reply-To

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 5:38 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear Sir,

I do not understand not doing all we can to protect the Big Females. I believe the spring season should be closed period.

I enjoyed catching and returning big Bull Reds this summer in the Chesapeake Bay. Why are they protected? Thank goodness they are! We should be doing the same for our beloved Striped Bass. Thank you,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 5:58 PM

I am strongly opposed to the elimination of catch and release as a conservation method. This statement alone is an oxymoron. The Susquehanna flats is a well known world class fishery being featured on several tv shows. To close this near zero mortality fishery for the sake of allowing charter boats to kill more fish is ludicrous. MDNR needs to go back to drawing board and resist the obvious political stench that this proposal reeks of.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Striped Bass Spring Measures comments

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 6:05 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Cc: ,

I **SUPPORT** the renewal of the circle hook regulation.

I **OPPOSE** the closure of March and April for targeting of striped bass for the following reasons:

- Maryland's own catch and release studies show that recreational fishing under current regulations in March and April is a non-consumptive practice with little to no mortality for released fish.
- MRIP Catch and Effort estimates which drive the calculations of conservation savings for March and April are highly inaccurate and imprecise, further undermining the public trust in management at this time.
- Striped bass spawning areas are closed to targeting in March and April, a measure in place since 1990 to protect striped when aggregated and preparing to spawn. These areas are separated from where catch and release fishing occurs.
- This regulation will put an undue burden on recreational anglers and provide zero conservation value – conversely, due to the known false mortality and MRIP numbers being used, the conservation equivalency being used would allow for less reductions in areas that would actually save fish and thus this regulation effectively leads to more fish being killed – NOT good for conservation and if adopted, this regulation would be a total sham.

I **OPPOSE** changing of the trophy season start to May 1.

- The MRIP numbers being used are false and thus the conservation equivalency is inflated and it would allow for less reductions in areas that would actually save fish and thus this regulation effectively leads to more fish being killed – NOT good for conservation and if adopted, this regulation would be a total sham. There have been so few striped bass caught/harvested in April in past few years that pushing trophy season start to May 1 will have near zero conservation effect.

DNR needs to stop focusing on the charter and commercial lobbies and make hard choices about summer fishing season where real conservation can happen and forget about interfering with the spring season where there is little opportunity for conservation.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**STRIPED BASS — Recreational Fishery**1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 7:26 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I want to express my support for two of the three changes proposed by DNR and appose the one of the changes. I support renewing the circle hook regulation from 2018 and 2019 for live lining. I would like to see even further restrictions on Live lining if at all possible since deep setting hooks is so destructive. I support starting the Trophy Season on May 1. I appose Closing March and April targeting for catch and release. Areas for spawning are already closed during this period , this will be impossible to enforce and if artificial lures only are used the research shows most fish will be returned without injury. Again live lining or bait fishing catch and release is the issue.

Thank You





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 7:28 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Proposed Striped Bass Regulations for the Recreational Fishery- Spring 2020

1 message

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To: "fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov" <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov> Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 7:32 PM  
Cc:

Maryland DNR Fishing and Boating Services Regulatory Staff,  
Regarding the Spring 2020 Striped Bass Regulations for the recreational fishery,  
I support changing the trophy season start date to May 1;  
I support the continued use of circle hooks when chumming and live-lining;  
I support prohibiting catch and release and targeting striped bass April 1 to 30;  
I oppose maintaining the minimum size at 19 inches and instead support reducing the minimum size to 18 inches;  
Thank you for your consideration,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Comment re. Spring Striped bass Regulation**1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 8:09 PM

Cc: c

My comments are as follows:

1. Continue the circle hook mandate
2. Discontinue the Trophy Season; these large fish are the breeding stock that we should not deplete.
3. As much as I love fishing the flats for catch and release in April, if it is proven that this hurts breeders at that time, I say stop it.

Regards,

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*I just needed to turn my life over to whoever came up with redwood trees.**- Jane Hirshfield -*6  
C



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Comments on Proposed Spring Striped Bass Regulations.

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 8:28 PM

- \* I support the renewal of the current circle hook regulations.
- \* I support starting the Spring Trophy Season on May1.
- \* I oppose closing the catch and release season in March and April in non spawning areas. I participated in studies done by Rudy Lukacovic documenting the low catch and release mortality for striped bass caught on circle hooks in low water temperatures.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments on the Proposed Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 8:31 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear a Maryland DNR,

I am 100% OPPOSED to the new striped bass regulations you are considering.

First, if you want to reduce mortality (or are you just giving this lip service ?) you should enact fishing restrictions during the warmest months. Or find reductions that are ACTUAL REDUCTIONS. Everyone knows mortality of catch and release fish is a greater problem during the summer months NOT during March or April.

Second, WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO ALLOW THE HARVEST OF OUR BREEDERS? It is obvious the stock is in decline yet NO EFFORTS have been made to protect the large breeders that are the most important and impactful to the abundance of our fishery. Reductions during the C&R season and then still allowing a Trophy season is utterly irresponsible and does not result in any measurable gain for our fishery. Please take definitive action in reducing or preferably eliminating the harvest of the striped bass breeding stock, by recreational and commercial means.

Third, Why should I or any other recreational stakeholder in the fishery continue to pay to fish the "resource" that you -MD DNR continue to horribly and irresponsibly mismanage? It seems that every decision that is made favors COMMERCIAL or charter captain interests over those of the recreational fisherman like myself. You "manage the resource" as a subsidy for a small sector of private interests, instead of "managing for abundance" for ALL STAKEHOLDERS to partake in. This is why I am thoroughly confused as to why I should be giving you my money in the form of a fishing license.

Confused and thoroughly angry,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:10 PM

Reply-To:

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

This spending creates important tax revenue for the state from items like private boats, engines, fishing equipment and fuel.

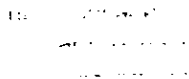
I oppose closures in March and/or April because collectively these closures will restrict access for up to 61 days and only achieve a 1.31% reduction calculated based on MRIP data with high uncertainty and an unrealistic assumption that anglers will not be targeting striped bass during this closure.

I support delaying the start of the trophy season to May 1 because this measure will reduce fishing effort and aims to conserve spawning stock fish which is expected to directly contribute to rebuilding the stock.

I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

  
John J. Smith  
1234567890



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Spring Season**1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:16 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

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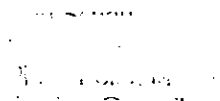
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

  
David J. Smith



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Spring Season**1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:18 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

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( )





Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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**Striped Bass Spring Season**1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:46 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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Reply-To:

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 9:55 PM

To: MD DNR Public Comments <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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## Striped Bass Spring Season

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&gt;

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:09 PM

Reply-To:

To: MD DNR Public Comments &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

Dear MD DNR Comments,

I am one of more than 260,000 Maryland anglers who fish for striped bass and is committed to conservation. I'd like to share my concerns regarding the proposals related to the 2020 striped bass spring season.

An economic study concluded that recreational anglers took more than 2.5 million trips fishing for striped bass, creating more than 10,000 jobs and generating more than \$800 million GDP for the state of Maryland!

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I continue to support 1-fish at 18" minimum across all modes and seasons as the best option to achieve the necessary reduction, spread the economic burden across the fishery, and maintain the most amount of fishing access to minimize the economic impacts to Maryland.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your support of this important fishery.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comments on Proposed Changes to Spring Striped Bass Fishery

1 message

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To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 10:48 PM

Hello,

I am writing to comment on DNR's proposed changes to the spring striped bass fishery. I am a recreational fisherman who greatly enjoys the pursuit of striped bass (with varying success), but I recognize measures have to be taken to preserve the fishery now and for the future. I also appreciate all the work that DNR has put into researching and identifying the proposed measures.

Regarding the specific proposals:

- I agree with renewing the rules around circle hooks and minimum size limit at 19"
- I agree with delaying the start of trophy season until May 1, to help conserve spawning fish which otherwise will be harvested, particularly females
- I disagree with prohibiting targeting of striped bass, or catch and release, from the period March 1-April 30. If DNR seeks to make a real impact on conserving striped bass, the focus should be on limiting bait fishing where deep-hooking is more likely (whether using circle hooks or not), closing the season or preventing targeting in the summer months when mortality rates are much higher, and reducing the overall bag limit for both recreational AND charter boats throughout the year. This point cannot be stressed enough - DNR MUST make the most changes to the areas when the most fish are likely to die or be harvested, which includes the summer months and bag limits for ALL. Making tough cuts now will be painful for many, but taking the hard steps now is highly preferable to DNR finding itself in a position to effect another moratorium in future years
- I suggest that during trophy season, and throughout the entire fishing year, that DNR enact a maximum size around 36" to preserve the larger stock. Allowing people to harvest fish above 36" serves little purpose as the larger fish are not so good to eat, and this would train anglers old and new about limits needed to preserve the fishery for future generations
- I do not think the majority of the measures should be on the recreational anglers only, as commercial harvesters across the Eastern seaboard contribute to taking large fish and breeding stock out of the water

I appreciate your attention to my comments, and my fervent hope is that DNR will not only effect measures in the spring to save the striped bass population, but especially in the summertime and to overall bag limits.



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Comment on Striped Bass Regulations

1 message

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Tue, Jan 21, 2020 at 11:17 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

I urge the State of Maryland to abandon all Conservation Equivalency options and go with the ASMFC option. 84% of the comments came in at the ASMFC meeting for the 1 fish @ 18" option, that is a substantial proportion not regularly seen at meetings. The regulations should be kept as simple as possible to not create more confusion. All the proposed options introduce lots of regulations that muddy the water on what is legal and what is illegal. There are plenty of regulations on the books that is tough to keep track, for instance the fish size limit changes during the year and where you can fish changes. Plenty of well intentioned fisherman are already confused by the regs. Also, the "no targeting" is ultimately unenforceable. I do not have to explain how much of a burden this will put on the already overstretched DNR Officers.

The spring closures are also a bogus option. First, closing the targeting of the fish for months for only a .66% reduction is misguided. The anglers that fish at that time are the most experienced and dedicated fishermen in the region. Not only are they dedicated with their time in the worst conditions of the year, but with their money. Finally a MDDNR study found that only 900 fish were killed via catch and release from January 1 to the 3rd weekend in April, that is not a lot of fish. Plus, the numbers they used are vastly overblown, in the the mortality rate, 9% versus an actual .8% and the number of fisherman (according to a bogus MRIP). So closing the fishery for only a mere .66% reduction is asinine.

While I agree that a summer closure would help the fishery, I do not see the accompanying regulations in the options fair that go with it. The entire recreation community sees the favoritism that the CE options have for the commercial and charter industry. Allowing the charter businesses to keep more fish is unfair and bad regulations. We understand they pay more to lobby. But that should not matter, since DNR has an obligation to the "sustainable future of our environment" i.e. protecting the striped bass fishery. In conclusion, abandon all the options of Conservation Equivalency and go with ASMFC's 1 @ 18", that option has the best chance to save the striped bass.

Sincerely,



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

## Comments: Striped Bass 2020 regulations

1 message

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Wed, Jan 22, 2020 at 3:19 AM

Dear Secretary Haddaway-Riccio,

As a fishing guide and small business owner I want to again share my thoughts on the Dept. of Natural Resources proposed plan to cut the striper harvest by 18%. Respectfully, I also have serious concerns about how this entire process was handled. My livelihood that of thousands of other small business owners depends on your leadership to enact sound, transparent and forward-thinking conservation regulations.

Again, I appreciate you and your staff taking time to listen to and record the thousands of anglers who've taken time to write to you on this issue. Under your leadership we can and must do better to protect our striper fishery and all natural resources for the long-term for all Marylanders, not just for the benefit of a relative small constituency.

Respectfully,

### Specific Actions

- Oppose cutting out the Spring Catch and Release Fishing for March and April. The best science Maryland has on Catch-and-Release fishing supports a cold-water fishery on the Flats and other places on the Bay. This will impact a small but important segment of the guides on the Bay who contribute to the state's economy.
- Oppose splitting the recreational sector—1 rockfish for anglers and two rockfish for charter boats. This precedent could lead us down the path of Sector Separation.
- Support placing a cap on the size of the rockfish in the Bay resident season fishery at 28".
- Support continue mandatory use of circle hooks.
- Support delaying the Trophy Season to May 1. However, I believe a slot is important to protect the big breeders. An appropriate slot could be 26"-35" one fish only.
- Support a summer closure in late July. This would have the most meaningful impact to reduce the dead discards issue that DNR insists is at the heart of the Bay striper decline.
- Support electronic reporting for all users. MRIP is a disaster that needs immediate attention.
- Support investigating what impact dead discards in the commercial sector—pound nets and Hook & Line in the summer in upper Bay- may have on rockfish population.

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Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- <fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov>

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**(no subject)**

1 message

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Wed, Jan 22, 2020 at 7:13 PM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

Dear secretary of the DNR, I have lived on middle river and fished the Chesapeake bay with my father since I was a boy,over 48 years. I feel our striped bass fishery is in great danger and I believe the only way to get the numbers back up is to eliminate spring trophy season for keeping any breeding fish. Let them fish swim free to spawn. Start the season for everyone to keep fish June 1st, and make bigger circle hooks mandatory to eliminate all the dead fish I see floating while everyone is chumming. Creel limits should be one fish per person per day 18"-30" period. Even for charters. Thank you for reading my opinion.

Sincerely



Public Comment Fisheries -DNR- &lt;fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov&gt;

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## Stripe bass mamagement

1 message

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Thu, Jan 23, 2020 at 5:37 AM

To: fisheriespubliccomment.dnr@maryland.gov

To whom it may concern

First I'am a Charter Captain in the mid bay area and have seen the best and the worse of the fishery and those who abuse it for the last 50 yrs. With that being said I fully realize something has to be done.

# 1. I fully agree with closing April to the fisheries.

# 2. Lets do away with the slot fish "no culling" please.

# 3. Stop the catch and release from the close date in Dec. until the opening date in May, leave the breeders alone please.

# 4. Reduce the length of planer board lines to twice the length of the vessel pulling them and place a 16 rod limit per boat. Vessel pulling 250 ft of planers on each side with 40 rods and 80 lures is crazy. It creates issues with other fisherman and also leads to a higher mortality of spring fish.

# 5 If you must close during amid season make it during july and reduce it to one fish for everyone during this time.

Many of my fellow fisherman agree with the above proposals but there are those which we call hogs that would try to bring harm to those that propose any gear change, therefore this is an unsigned letter.

Please take this thoughts into consideration and would like to see a simple response just to know someone actually read this