



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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March 3, 2022

Marine Fisheries Advisory

States Schedule Public Hearings on Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Amendment 7

Massachusetts's Hearing to be held on March 21

The Atlantic coastal states of Maine through Virginia have scheduled hearings to gather public input on the Atlantic Striped Bass Draft Amendment 7. Some hearings will be conducted via webinar and some hearings will be conducted in person. Additional details on participating in the webinars can be found later in this release. The public hearing details are as follows:

Date and Hearing Format	State/Agency	Contact
Tuesday, March 8 In-person Hearing 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Potomac River Fisheries Commission & District of Columbia Dept. of Energy and Environment Hearing Location: Potomac River Fisheries Commission 222 Taylor St, Colonial Beach, VA 22443	Martin Gary , 804.224.7148 Daniel Ryan , 202.597.1244
Wednesday, March 9 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Virginia Marine Resources Commission	Pat Geer , 757.247.2236
Thursday, March 10 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife	John Clark , 302.739.9108
Monday, March 14 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection & Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission	Joe Cimino , 609.748.2063 Kris Kuhn , 814.359.5115
Tuesday, March 15 Webinar Hearing 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management	Jason McNamee , 401.222.4700 x2772414
Wednesday, March 16 In-person Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation Hearing Location: NYSDEC Division of Marine Resources 123 Kings Park Blvd (inside Nissequogue River States Park), Kings Park, NY 11754	Maureen Davidson , 631.444.0483

Monday, March 21 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries	Michael Armstrong , 978.282.0308 x109
Tuesday, March 22 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Connecticut Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection	Justin Davis , 860.447.4322
Wednesday, March 23 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources	Megan Ware , 207.446.0932
Wednesday, March 23 In-person Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation Hearing Location: NYSDEC Region 3 21 South Putt Corners Road, New Paltz, NY 12561	Maureen Davidson , 631.444.0483
Monday, March 28 Webinar Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources	Michael Luisi , 443.758.6547
Tuesday, March 29 Hybrid Hearing 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	New Hampshire Fish and Game <i>Note: This hearing will be held in a hybrid format. To virtually attend this hearing, please follow the webinar registration instructions.</i> You can attend in person at this address: Urban Forestry Center 45 Elwyn Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801	Cheri Patterson , 603.608.6637

The Draft Amendment proposes options to address the following issues: management triggers, recreational release mortality, stock rebuilding plan, and conservation equivalency. These issues were identified during the public scoping process for Amendment 7 as critically important to help rebuild the stock and update the management program.

The Draft Amendment’s proposed options consider changes to the management triggers, which determine when the Board is required to make management adjustments, and whether to adopt new restrictions or requirements for the use of conservation equivalency, which provides the states the flexibility to tailor the management measures. For stock rebuilding, the proposed options consider the impact of low recruitment and how the Board could respond to the 2022 stock assessment if action is needed to achieve stock rebuilding by 2029. Since release mortality in the recreational fishery is a large component of annual fishing mortality, the Draft Amendment considers options to reduce the number of striped bass released alive and options to increase the chance of survival after a striped bass is released.

The last time a new plan amendment to the Atlantic Striped Bass FMP was adopted was in 2003 (Amendment 6). Since then, the status and understanding of the striped bass stock and fishery has changed considerably, and the results of the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment in particular led the Board to discuss a number of prominent issues facing striped bass management. Consequently, the Board initiated the development of Amendment 7 in August 2020 to update the management program to better align with current fishery needs and

priorities. The Board intends for this amendment to build upon the Addendum VI to Amendment 6 action to end overfishing and initiate rebuilding in response to the overfished status of the stock.

Webinar Instructions

Please note that in order to comment during virtual webinar hearings you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your smart phone. Those joining by phone (audio only) will be limited to listening to the presentation and will not be able to provide input. In those cases, you can send your comments to staff via [email](#), U.S. mail, or fax at any time during the public comment period. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 951.384.3421 and enter access code 269-324-049.

To register for a virtual public hearing webinar please click [HERE](#) and select the hearing(s) you plan to attend from the dropdown menu. Hearings will be held via GoToWebinar, and you can join the webinar from your computer, tablet or smartphone. If you are new to GoToWebinar, you can download the software by ([clicking here](#)) or via the App store under GoToWebinar. We recommend you register for the hearing well in advance of the hearing since GoToWebinar will provide you with a link to test your device's compatibility with the webinar. If you find your device is not compatible, please contact the Commission at info@asmfc.org (subject line: GoToWebinar help) and we will try to get you connected. We also strongly encourage participants to **use the computer voice over internet protocol (VoIP)** so you can ask questions and provide input at the hearing. If you are joining the webinar but will not be using VoIP, you can may also call in at 951.384.3421, access code 269-324-049. An audio PIN will be provided to you after joining the webinar.

For those who cannot attend any in-person or virtual hearings, the Commission has posted a recording of the hearing presentation on the Commission's YouTube page so that stakeholders may watch the presentation and submit comment at any time during the comment process. This recording is available at <https://youtu.be/tjUw92-Xl-4>. Additional summary resources are available on the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>.

Submitting Comments

The Draft Amendment is available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AtlStripedBassDraftAm7forPublicComment_Feb2022.pdf or via the Commission's website at <http://www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input>. All those interested in the management of Atlantic striped bass are encouraged to provide input either by participating in public hearings, which may be conducted via webinar, or providing written comment. Public comment will be accepted until **11:59 PM (EDT) on April 15** and should be sent to Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Amendment 7).

If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to the Draft Amendment, please contact Emilie Franke at efranke@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740, so she can work with you to develop a unique subject line to enable us to better organize and summarize incoming comments for Board review.