



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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September 5, 2025

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing on Striped Bass Draft Addendum III

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on [Draft Addendum III](#) to Amendment 7 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass, which considers management measures to support rebuilding the stock by 2029. The Draft Addendum also addresses commercial tagging programs, a coastwide definition of total length for size limit regulations, and changes to the Maryland recreational season baseline.

The Atlantic coastal states from Maine through Virginia have scheduled public hearings on Draft Addendum III throughout the month of September. The full schedule is available on the ASMFC website at [Atlantic Striped Bass Action Tracker](#). **The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries is hosting two public hearings, and there is also a general public hearing webinar, details of which are provided below.** The Massachusetts hearings will have a listen-only webinar option. If you are unable to attend one of these hearings, you are welcome to participate in any of the other states' virtual or hybrid hearings. Questions about the Massachusetts hearings can be sent to Nichola Meserve (nichola.meserve@mass.gov, 978-290-1672).

Hearing	Date	Location
North Shore Massachusetts Public Hearing	Thursday, September 25 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Hilton Hotel Salons C/D/F 2 Forbes Road, Woburn, MA Listen-only link (Zoom)
South Shore Massachusetts Public Hearing	Tuesday, September 30 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Massachusetts Maritime Academy Admiral's Hall 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA Listen-only link (Zoom)
General Public Webinar Hearing	Monday, September 29 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	The webinar registration link is available here , and additional webinar instructions are below.

The ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board initiated the Draft Addendum in response to stock projections indicating a low probability of meeting the 2029 stock rebuilding deadline. The most recent stock projections estimate an increase in fishing mortality in 2025 due to the above average

2018 year-class entering the current recreational ocean slot limit. There is also concern about the lack of strong year-classes behind the 2018 year-class.

This proposed action is intended to increase the probability of rebuilding the stock by reducing fishery removals by 12% with management measures implemented in 2026. For the commercial fishery, the Draft Addendum proposes a commercial quota reduction. For the recreational fishery, the Draft Addendum considers season closures and/or size limit changes. For Maryland's Chesapeake Bay recreational fishery, the Draft Addendum also proposes changing the recreational baseline season to simplify Maryland's Chesapeake Bay regulations, which could improve compliance and enforcement, and to re-align fishing access based on stakeholder input and release mortality rates.

For commercial tagging, the FMP currently allows states to choose whether to tag commercially harvested fish at the point of harvest or point of sale. To address concerns that waiting to tag harvested fish until the point of sale could increase the risk of illegal harvest, the Draft Addendum considers commercial tagging at the point of harvest or by the first point of landing intended to improve enforcement and compliance.

There is also concern that inconsistent methods of measuring the total length of striped bass for compliance with size limits undermines the intended conservation, consistency, and enforceability of the coastwide size limits. To address this, the Draft Addendum considers a coastwide definition of total length for both sectors.

The Management Board will meet to review submitted comments and consider final action on the Draft Addendum in October 2025 at the Commission's Annual Meeting in Dewey Beach, DE.

Webinar Instructions (for General Public Hearing Webinar)

For the General Public Hearing Webinar, please click [HERE](#) and select the September 29 hearing from the dropdown menu to register. (Dates for webinar hearings in other states are also listed.) This hearing 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 ASMFC at info@asmfc.org for help (subject line: GoToWebinar help). 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. Please note that in order to comment during this virtual webinar hearing you will need to use your computer or download the GoToWebinar app for your phone. Those joining by phone 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 ASMFC via [email](#) or U.S. mail at any time during the public comment period. To attend the webinar in listen only mode, dial 914.614.3221 and enter access code 242-254-069.

Listen-Only Option for Massachusetts Hearings

For listen-only mode at the Massachusetts public hearings, the [September 25 MA Zoom listen-only link is available here](#), and the [September 30 MA Zoom listen-only link is available here](#). You do not need to register in advance.

Hearing Presentation Recording

For those unable to attend any in-person or virtual hearings, the ASMFC will also post 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 will be available by early September.

Submitting Comments

The public is encouraged to submit comments at any time during the public comment period but no later than **11:59 PM (EST) on October 3, 2025**. The Draft Addendum is available at <https://asmfc.org/resources/management-actions/draft-addendum-iii-to-amendment-7-to-the-interstate-fishery-management-plan-for-atlantic-striped-bass-for-public-comment/> or via the Commission's website at [Atlantic Striped Bass Action Tracker](#).

There are four ways to submit comments:

1. Written comments via [Atlantic Striped Bass Action Tracker](#) or comments@asmfc.org
2. The [public comment form](#), which was developed to facilitate the gathering of input on the Draft Addendum's specific options
3. Mailed written comments addressed to Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201
4. Verbal comments provided at any of the scheduled public hearings

If your organization is planning to release an action alert in response to the Draft Addendum, 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. For more information, please contact Emilie Franke at efranke@asmfc.org.