

Atlantic Ocean Striped Bass Management Workgroup Report

September 2008



Purpose

- Update, analyze and provide information on the ocean striped bass fishery.
- Based on the information - To develop a recommendation on how to manage the AO striped bass fishery to achieve the stated goals and within the guidance outlined in G.S. 143B – 289.52 (d1) and G.S. 113 – 169.1



G.S. 143B – 289.52 (d1)

- MFC may regulate participation in a fishery that is subject to a federal FMP if that plan imposes a quota on the State for the harvest or landing of fish in the fishery....to a person who:
 - (1) Held a valid license issued by DMF to harvest, land, or sell fish during at least two of the three license years immediately preceding the date adopted by the MFC to determine participation in the fishery; and
 - (2) Participated in the fishery during at least two of those license years by landing in the State at least the minimum number of pounds of fish adopted by the MFC to determine participation in the fishery.



G.S. 113 – 169.1 (b)

- MFC may adopt rules to establish gear specific permits to take striped bass from the Atlantic Ocean and to limit the number and type of these permits that may be issued to a person. MFC may establish a fee for each permit established pursuant to this subsection in an amount that compensates the Division for the administrative costs associated with the permit that does not exceed \$10.00 per permit



Workgroup Charge

- Specifically investigate options for creating a limited access program that preserves the traditional striped bass fishermen, while promoting fisheries with less bycatch and protected species interactions, including recommendations on how to implement limited entry and determine the initial allocation of fish.



Questions ID for Written “Legal Analysis”

- Request legal review of G.S. – Determine if MFC/DMF has authority for individual allocations?
- If MFC has authority for individual allocations (quota shares) based on current statutes, can individual allocations be determined based on some other time period than a three-year period preceding the control date? For instance, can allocations be based on a 7 year period encompassing 1998 – 2005?
- Request legal review for eligibility – Does it have to be two out of three years?



Data Analysis

- Data analyzed looking at various years, groupings, with poundage criteria and without criteria.
- Period 2002 – 2005 had most fisheries open with current ASMFC TAC 480,480 lbs.
- Equal allocation regardless of the fishery



Management Options

- Status Quo
 - Implement the existing permit requirement (2009/2010 season)
 - Continue with the beach seine definition
 - Advantages
 - No additional rule changes
 - No new enforcement issues
 - Disadvantages
 - No limit on number of participants
 - Continued derby fishery
 - Glut and bust the market
 - Cost of tags to DMF



Hybrid Option 1

- Require permit
- 2 out of 3 years (G.S. 143B – 289.52 (d1)) – total participants ~350 (currently ~700 participants)
- No qualifying poundage/No individual allocations
- No tags (would still be requirement for Finfish Dealers)
- Equal allocations among gear sectors
 - Advantages
 - Can do with existing legislation
 - Longer season
 - More profitable for remaining participants
 - No rule changes
 - No new enforcement issues
 - More control over quota
 - Disadvantages
 - Assignee's cannot get a permit
 - No new participants
 - Limiting number of participants



Hybrid Option 2

- Permit
- 2 out of 3 years
- 1,000 pounds of striped bass (total participants ~225)
- Equal allocations among gear sectors
- Equal allocation among the fishermen
- Required tags issued by DMF
 - Advantages
 - Can do with existing legislation
 - Longer season
 - More profitable for remaining participants
 - More control over quota
 - Disadvantages
 - No new participants allowed in the fishery
 - Assignees cannot qualify for the permit (landings history goes to the license owner)
 - Cost of tags to DMF
 - New rules required
 - » Tagging
 - » Striped Bass Dealer Permit
 - » Rules relative to appeals for permit/applications, etc



Hybrid Option 2 – 2 out of 3 and 1,000 pounds Example

- Qualify

- Trawls – 37
- Gill nets – 126
- Beach seine – 66

Weight allocation to fishermen – difficult to monitor/manage –
set number of tags easier – average weight 25 pounds per
fish

- Share breakdown

- Trawl – 4,214 pounds (mean) – 168 tags each
- Gill net – 1,281 pounds (mean) – 51 tags each
- Beach seine – 2,426 pounds (mean) – 97 tags each
- Estimated total number of tags needed – 19,219
- Estimated annual cost of tags to DMF - \$3,000



Workgroup Conclusion

- Additional problems/issues identified by Workgroup
 - Assignee problem – not eligible to get a permit, Problem with assignments relative to trawlers. If means developed to address, question treating sectors different and legality.
 - Can assignees qualify for a permit even though they do not legally have “rights to the landings history”?
 - Can vessels qualify for a permit based on their landings history or can only individuals qualify?
 - What would be done with unused permits/allocations? Use it or lose it. If not used in X years, no longer eligible for permit
 - How would new folks get in the fishery?
 - Continued concern with possible bycatch issues with new beach seine definition
 - On initial year can a fishermen declare – going to fish in fishery they did not qualify for?
 - What happens to allocation of qualifying fishermen that passed away?



LAPP Option

- Limited Access Privilege Program
 - Require legislative action/approval

