

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Virginia Marine Resources Commission

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Virginia Marine Resources Commission takes action to protect striped bass.

~ Virginia takes an important first step to address the striped bass decline and calls on other states to follow suit to protect this crucial species. ~

Fort Monroe—Today, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to enact an emergency closure for the spring recreational striped bass trophy season.

A recent scientific assessment of striped bass shows the striped bass population has been below the sustainable threshold for the past 6 years and overfishing has been occurring since 2010.

“Virginia has always been a conservation leader, and this is a time to step up. The recent stock assessment shows that early action is needed to slow the decline and restore this fishery to sustainable levels,” **Virginia Marine Resources Commissioner Steven G. Bowman said.** “I am proud of the swift action taken by the Commission.”

“There has to be a starting point for conservation. Today’s action was the first step, and the Marine Resources Commission will continue to look at other measures for both recreational and commercial sectors to further reduce fishing mortality,” **Commissioner Bowman said.**

“However, we cannot act alone. We also need swift and lasting conservation measures enacted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC),” **Commissioner Bowman said,** “ASMFC should incentivize and encourage other states to follow Virginia’s lead and take action this fishing season.”

The emergency measure will eliminate the spring striped bass trophy season in the Bay from May 1 through June 15, the Coast from May 1 through May 15, and the Virginia tributaries to the Potomac River from April 29 through May 15.

Starting May 16 through June 15 fishermen will be able to catch and keep two striped bass from 20 to 28 inches.