



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Marine Resources Commission
380 Fenwick Road
Building 96
Fort Monroe, VA 23651

David L. Bulova
Secretary of Natural
and Historic Resources

Joseph D. Grist
Acting Commissioner

May 1, 2026

TO: Recreational Black Sea Bass and Summer Flounder Anglers

FROM: Virginia Marine Resources Commission

RE: Recreational Regulations When Fishing in Federal Waters

On April 30, 2026, an [interim final rule in the Federal Register](#) will become effective approving conservation equivalency, which waives federal management measures in favor of state management measures, for black sea bass and summer flounder. Anglers fishing recreationally in federal waters must observe the regulations established for the state in which they are landing. This supersedes the April 10, 2026, VMRC memo stating anglers must follow federal measures when fishing recreationally in federal waters.

Effective April 30, 2026:

- The 2026 recreational black sea bass measures in Virginia waters or federal waters when landings in Virginia are established as:
 - Season: May 11 through December 31
 - Minimum size limit: 13”
 - Bag limit: 15 fish per person
- The 2026 recreational summer flounder measures in Virginia waters or federal waters when landing in Virginia are established as:
 - Season: January 1 through December 31
 - Minimum size limit: 16” (Jan 1 – May 31), 17.5” (June 1 – Dec 31)
 - Bag limit: 4 fish per person

If you have questions, contact Alexa Galvan at (757) 247-2069 or Alexa.Galvan@mrc.virginia.gov.