

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO REGULATIONS FOR STRIPED BASS — COMMERCIAL

The department would like to make three changes to the commercial striped bass fishery.

- 1) Extend the commercial individual transferable quota (ITQ) striped bass fishery season for pound net gear to December 31.

The department, in consultation with the Striped Bass Industry Workgroup, has extended the pound net fishery until the end of December for 3 years (2014, 2015 and 2016) by public notice. Changing the regulation would be a more permanent implementation of that season. The Striped Bass Workgroup is not in favor of an extension for January and February.

- 2) Require all striped bass permits fished during the common pool fishery to have the minimum initial allocation associated with the permit.

Current rules require any individual who enters into the Chesapeake Bay Common Pool fishery to have the minimum initial allocation (.0185 percent of the commercial quota). Some individuals have more than one permit entered into the fishery, but only contribute one minimum allocation to the fishery. This results in some individuals having access to higher landing limits than they have contributed to the fishery and the industry feels this is unfair. The suggested change would require every permit, rather than every individual, that is entered into the Common Pool fishery to have the minimum allocation associated with it. This would mean that every permit that is used in the common pool has contributed a minimum amount to the fishery and relieve the inequity that is currently being experienced.

This idea has been unanimously supported by the Striped Bass Industry Advisory Workgroup. The change will address fairness issues and allow greater flexibility within the industry.

- 3) Allow in-season transfers of less than all of an individual's remaining quota.

Current rules require that if an individual temporarily transfers quota within the Atlantic Ocean fishery or the Chesapeake Bay Individual Transferable Quota fishery during the season that the entirety of the remaining quota must be transferred. Permanent transfers of an individual's fishery share may only take place during the transfer window of July 15 through September 15. The Striped Bass Industry Advisory Workgroup has asked the department to begin scoping the idea of allowing a certain amount of an individual's share that is less than all they have remaining to be temporarily transferred during the season. The Workgroup has also asked the department to begin scoping the idea of allowing permanent transfers outside of the July – September transfer window. The Workgroup will be meeting in September to further discuss the finer points of this idea, such as a minimum amount that would need to be transferred. For example, Virginia requires at least 500 pounds to be transferred if an individual is transferring less than the entirety of their remaining quota. Allowing permanent transfers outside of the current transfer window, and allowing transfers of less than the entirety of an individual's remaining quota during the season would both create additional business flexibilities for the industry participants.

This idea has been unanimously supported by the Striped Bass Industry Advisory Workgroup.

Please provide comments on:

- 1) Whether in-season transfers of less than the entirety of someone's remaining quota is a good idea;
- 2) If it is a good idea, should there be a minimum to do a partial transfer?
- 3) If a minimum is required, what should it be?
- 4) Should permanent transfers be allowed outside of the transfer window? At any time of the year?