



DNREC – FISH & WILDLIFE

LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO 7 DE ADMIN CODE 3505 STRIPED BASS COMMERCIAL FISHING SEASONS; QUOTAS; TAGGING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)/ Division of Fish & Wildlife proposes to amend Delaware's tidal finfish regulations pertaining to striped bass (7 **DE Admin Code** 3505 Striped Bass Commercial Fishing Seasons; Quotas; Tagging and Reporting Requirements.). The existing striped bass regulations provide for an over-allocation of the commercial striped bass quota to Delaware's commercial hook and line (HL) and commercial gill net (GN) fisheries. The recent adoption of 7 Del. C. §903A provides for the transfer of striped bass quota (tags) between the GN and HL fisheries. This resulted in improved landing efficiency and, ultimately, a commercial striped bass quota overage in 2018. To prevent subsequent overages, the Department is ending over-allocation of the quota and is proposing two alternative allocation strategies. Option 1 would allocate 90% of Delaware's striped bass commercial quota to the GN fishery and 10% to the HL fishery. This option would match the proportions used prior to 1997. Historically, this option resulted in an underutilization of the quota. Option 2 would allocate 95% of Delaware's striped bass commercial quota to the GN fishery and 5% to the HL fishery. Option 2 is the allocation strategy recommended by the Advisory Council on Tidal Fin Fisheries as a way to better ensure full use of Delaware's quota.

In addition, the Department proposes to adjust the required registration date to participate in the commercial HL fishery from March 15 to February 1 to align with the commercial GN fishery and better accommodate tag transfers.

The proposed amendments may be inspected at the Department's offices located at 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901, or are available by contacting the Fisheries Section at (302) 739-9914. **A public hearing on the proposed amendments will be held October 31, 2018 at 6:00 PM in the DNREC Auditorium, located at the Richardson & Robbins Building, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901.**

The hearing record on the proposed amendments to 7 **DE Admin Code** 3505 will be open October 1, 2018 through COB November 15, 2018. Individuals may submit written comments or request additional information regarding the proposed amendments via e-mail to Lisa.Vest@state.de.us or via the USPS to Lisa Vest, Hearing Officer, DNREC, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901 (302) 739-9042.

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME THIS NOTICE WILL APPEAR.