



## VSSA Newsletter May 2025

**Striped Bass:** These critical fish continue to be classified as “overfished.” In response to the 2024 Stock Assessment Update, the ASMFC [Board recently initiated a Draft Addendum](#) to consider recreational and commercial management measures for implementation in 2026 to support rebuilding the stock by 2029. This action is intended to increase the probability of rebuilding the stock by adjusting future management measures to ensure the stock is on the necessary rebuilding trajectory. A range of reductions for the recreational and commercial fisheries will be considered. Recreational fishery reductions will consider season and size limits that account for regional differences, including no-harvest and no-targeting closures. Commercial fishery reductions will consider quota reductions. The Board intends to take final action no later than October 2025 with implementation in early 2026. Fishermen will have an opportunity to provide comments once they release the possible regulatory options. We are all hopeful that a colder 2025 winter has resulted in better spawn in the bay area, but we won't know until later in the summer when those numbers are released.

**Menhaden:** To no one's surprise the VMRC board declined to take action in April on yet another petition for new regulations, as proposed by the Chesapeake Legal Alliance with support from VSSA and a number of other organizations. We took the position that since the industry successfully lobbied to kill the (VIMS) menhaden study bill for a second year, they should be removed from the bay until science can show reduction fishing is not causing harm to the ecosystem. Perhaps then they would support science as they claim they do. The petition was killed in a 6 to 2 vote. (The recreational angler representative on the board voted to kill it because of a

“lack of science”). We are hopeful to see some new faces on that board once we get a new Governor.

In other news the ASMFC had a work group to explore precautionary management actions based on research showing that Osprey chicks in the main stem of the bay are starving due to lack of menhaden. After meeting for several months and much discussion, the board agreed to continue “discussion” at their August meeting.

**Red Drum:** ASMFC is considering an addendum based on splitting the stock into a southern and northern (Virginia) group. As far as we know the stock is healthy, but we will keep an eye on this and have an opportunity to comment on any proposed changes.

**MEMBERSHIP:** As a reminder VSSA exists to promote healthy fisheries in Virginia. Members now receive a 10% discount at Ocean’s East, York River Bait and Tackle, and Tacklecove.com. If your business desires to offer our members a discount in exchange for free advertising, please email Tom Fenn at [tfenn58@me.com](mailto:tfenn58@me.com).

Tight lines!