

**Public Input Sought on Commercial Use of Hook and Line in Ocean Striped Bass Fishery**

**MOREHEAD CITY** – The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission has scheduled five meetings to receive public input on allowing the commercial use of hook-and-line for the ocean striped bass fishery.

N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries staff will present a variety of potential management options for allowing this fishery. The commission is seeking any other ideas from the public.

The commission has not yet decided if it wants to allow the commercial use of hook-and-line for ocean-caught striped bass, but will consider public comments at its August meeting in deciding whether to move forward with a proposal.

Currently, North Carolina’s share of the coast-wide commercial ocean striped bass annual quota is split evenly between three commercial gear types: trawls, gill nets and beach seines. The commercial use of hook-and-line in the striped bass fishery has been prohibited since 1985.

Potential management options range from keeping the fishery at status quo, to adding hook-and-line as a fourth gear under the current permit system, to replacing the use of trawl gear with the use of hook-and-line gear. Some of the options include the possibility of establishing a limited entry system for this fishery.

The meetings will be held in conjunction with advisory committee meetings at the below dates, times and locations:

Northeast Regional Advisory Committee

June 30 at 6 p.m.

Commissioners Meeting Room

Dare County Administrative Building

954 Marshall C. Collins Dr., Manteo