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## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

### **FISH AND WILDLIFE**

#### **Notice of Administrative Change**

##### **Marine Fisheries**

##### **Modification of Gear Types**

##### **N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1**

**Take Notice** that, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1(p), the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (Commissioner), with the approval of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council (Council) at its January 5, 2023, meeting, has modified the gear types for recreational Atlantic striped bass fishing. The actions for Atlantic striped bass have been taken to comply with the management plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.

In May 2022, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) implemented a prohibition on the use of gaffs in the recreational striped bass fishery under Amendment 7 to the Atlantic Striped Bass Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The provision aims to reduce striped bass recreational release mortality. The plan further requires any striped bass caught on any unapproved method of take (for example J-hook with bait) to be returned to the water immediately without unnecessary injury.

([http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/62b2208dAtlStripedBassAm7\\_May2022.pdf](http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/62b2208dAtlStripedBassAm7_May2022.pdf)).

In accordance with the ASMFC's actions, the Council approved changes to Atlantic striped bass fishery management measures at N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1 prohibiting any person to gaff or

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attempt to gaff any striped bass at any time when fishing recreationally, consistent with the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass.

These changes will be reflected in the Fish and Wildlife rules at N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1(h). As required in N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1(p), changes to N.J.A.C. 7:25-18.1 will be published in the New Jersey Register, the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Marine Digest, and on the New Jersey Fish and Wildlife website.

**Full text** of the changed rule follows (additions indicated in boldface **thus**, deletions indicated in brackets [thus]):

7:25-18.1 Size, season, and possession limits

(a) – (g) (No change.)

(h) The following provisions are applicable to the recreational harvest of striped bass and striped bass hybrids:

1.- 4. (No change.)

**5. It shall be unlawful for any person to gaff or attempt to gaff any striped bass at any time.**

(i) – (r) (No change.)