

Roanoke River Fisheries Report – April 5, 2019

SAMPLING INFORMATION

| Sample Date | Area Sampled | Water Temp (°F) | Boat Ramp Used |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 4/4/2019 | Roanoke River near Hwy 48 | 53 | Gaston BAA |
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SPECIES INFORMATION

| Species | Striped Bass | American Shad | Hickory Shad |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Number Collected | 70 | 129 | 23 |
| Min. Size (in) | 14 | 15 | 15 |
| Max. Size (in) | 26 | 21 | 18 |
| Max. Weight (lb) | - | 3 | 1.5 |
| Sex Ratio (M:F) | 3.6:1 | 0.8:1 | 1.8:1 |

BIOLOGISTS' OBSERVATIONS & RIVER CONDITIONS

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Katy Potoka, Chris Smith, and Jeremy McCargo

Biologists' Observations:

American Shad catches in our electrofishing sample were again good this week. They are still migrating to the spawning grounds of the Roanoke River, and numbers should continue to increase as water temperatures continue to rise. Hickory Shad are near their peak and will soon be heading back downstream. Although our sampling focused on shad this week, we collected a good number of Striped Bass in the Gaston area as well. Stripers are beginning to arrive on the spawning grounds near Weldon and should continue to increase as water temperatures rise. We will begin sampling Striped Bass next week.

River level and other water quality observations:

Flow from Roanoke Rapids Dam was 18,000 cfs at the time of sampling. Water temperatures were in the low 50s, and the river was very turbid.

Weather conditions on sampling date:

During sampling, air temperatures were around 65-70 degrees, and it was breezy.

Observations of people fishing on the river:

Six fishing parties were observed near the Gaston BAA. One was in the tailrace, while most others were drifting the center channel around the Hwy 48 bridge. Another fishing party was observed fishing downstream of the paper mill. The boat anglers were observed catching Striped Bass, and one angler we spoke to reported catching a limit of stripers. Multiple bank anglers were also fishing around the boating access area.

2019 ROANOKE RIVER CREEL SURVEY INFORMATION

March 30–April 5

Upper River (Roanoke Rapids Dam to Scotland Neck)

Fishing effort was light in the upper Roanoke this week. Those anglers targeting Hickory Shad reported sporadic catches in the Weldon area and at the Edwards Ferry boat ramp near Scotland Neck. Bank anglers appeared to be having good luck around the Weldon boat ramp, but the higher water this week made bank fishing a little tough. Only a few anglers targeted Striped Bass at Weldon this week, but some were rewarded with decent catches.

Lower Region (Scotland Neck to Plymouth)

Striped Bass fishing effort continued to be concentrated around Williamston and Jamesville this week. Anglers reported success from both areas, and we also documented harvest of Striped Bass in Plymouth.

Shad and Striped Bass Regulations for the Roanoke River

The daily creel limit per angler is 10 Hickory Shad and American Shad in combination, only one of which can be an American Shad.

The daily creel limit for Striped Bass is two fish per angler, and the minimum size limit is 18 inches. No Striped Bass between 22 inches and 27 inches in total length may be possessed at any time, and only one fish greater than 27 inches may be included in the daily creel limit of two fish. Striped Bass may only be harvested March 1–April 30 unless the season is extended or closed early by proclamation.

Jeremy McCargo, Anadromous Research Coordinator of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), will share some creel survey information collected from different stretches along the Roanoke River during March, April, and May this season. The Roanoke River Creel Survey is

designed and administered by the NCWRC through Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration funding to estimate angler effort, catch, and harvest of Striped Bass in the Roanoke River Management Area.