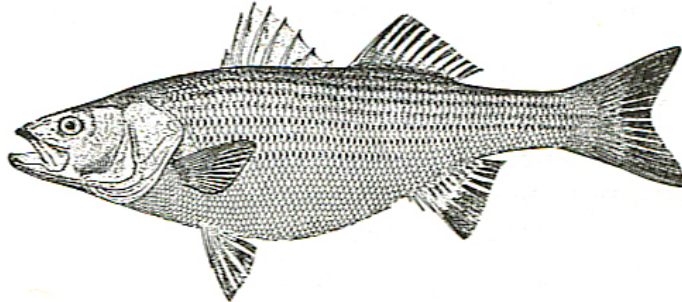


PATCHOGUE FISHING CLUB

P.O BOX 808 PATCHOGUE, NY 11729

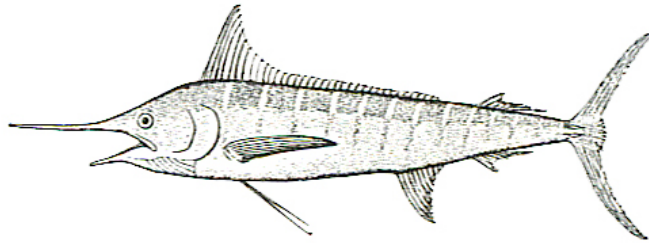


April 2005
CONSERVATION REPORT

ASMFC TO POSSABLY BAN THE USE OF EELS
AS BAIT

THE 2005 NEW YORK STATE MARINE
RECREATIONAL FISHING REGULATION WENT
INTO EFFECT AS OF APRIL 14 2005.

COMPILED BY JAMES F. SMITH



The Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission is Poised to Ban the use of Eels as a Bait

The east coast striped bass fishermen could possibly in for a very hard hit. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has decided that the common American eel is in real trouble. They are considering putting referendum into law that would ban the possession of any American Eels. This would have a very adverse effect on the local striped bass fishery, where the common American eel is used extensively as night live bait.

When I first read about this in a copy of the Northeast Saltwater magazine, I was skeptical at best. But since then there has been two articles in the "Fishermen" and I have heard several murmurings on the grape vine.

The American Eel is in trouble but not from the recreational fishermen. There is a very high-pressure commercial fishing endeavor, which is depleting the eel population quickly. Such practices as stringing vast net traps across river mouths to gather all of the migrating eels as they try to enter the sea. There is a very lucrative market for eels in Japan. The local Japanese fishing fleets have already totally wiped out the endogenous eel population. Now they are targeting our resources.

The American Eel is a very hard fish to manage, most species of fish respond very well to a minimum size limit, which allows the protected fish to spawn at least once before it is harvested. This is impossible with the eel. Eels are born in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean in the Sargasso Sea. After which they migrate to our shore and take up residence along the coast, inside bays, and estuaries. They return only once to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and then to die.

The Commission must act soon before our eel population is killed off in the same way as its Asian cousin, this is all in the name of Sushie. And as usual we, the recreational

fishermen must suffer because of others neglect and greed. There is a Public information document available from the ASMFC, which was recently released by the commission outlining some of their possible plans for the conservation of the American Eel. The PID is available on their web site www.asmfc.org or by calling 1-202-289-6400. Public hearings on this subject are scheduled to start next month. All public comments must be in by June 10th. Make your options known by e-mailing the ASMFC directly, writing Lydia Monger the Fishery Management Coordinator, 1444 Eye Street NW Sixth Floor Washington, DC, or by fax to 202-289-6051. I will try to find out more about this situation and will be updating the club when more information becomes available.

New State Implements the New 2005 Marine Recreational Fishing Regulations

As of April 9th the new 2005 marine recreational fishing regulations went into effect for New York State controlled waters. A complete list of the new 2005 regulations is available on the clubs web site.
