



[Maryland Saltwater Sportfishing Association](#)  
8461 Ft. Smallwood Rd, Suite C, Pasadena, MD 21122 - 410-255-5535 - [www.mssa.net](http://www.mssa.net)

Vince Ringgold  
Maryland Saltwater Sportfishing Association  
8461 Ft. Smallwood Rd., Suite C  
Pasadena, MD 21122

December 11, 2013

The Honorable Joseph P. Gill  
Secretary of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Gill,

On behalf of the 7,000+ members of the Maryland Saltwater Sportfishing Association, I am writing you this letter with great concern over your decision to increase the commercial quota for rockfish by 14%, the timing of such decision, the 2015 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) reductions, and Maryland's allocation of striped bass.

For the past few years we have seen numerous threats from the ASMFC to reduce our harvest of striped bass here in Maryland as well as coast wide. In 2013 those threats were confirmed with a motion to produce reduction options for 2015. While the MSSA supports the ASMFC's conservation efforts, we strongly oppose the Maryland DNR's conflicting decision to increase the commercial quota at this time. I think we can all agree that the overall consensus is that we need to take a close look at our striped bass fishery and perhaps adjust our management plan in order to better align ourselves with the current status of the striped bass fishery.

Moving forward we would also like to reference a letter dated November 11, 2010 ([Read here](#)). This letter refers to MSSA's concept called *Reallocation for Conservation*. In 2010 the MSSA saw the need for a reallocation of striped bass here in Maryland as well as a need to conserve for the future. The basic idea behind *Reallocation for Conservation* was to set aside a percentage of striped bass that no sector could touch. This *Conservation Allocation* would exist just as we have an allocation for both the commercial and recreational sectors. This may in fact align with the DNR's new 'Community' sector that we became aware of in the cost recovery exercises earlier this year.

The MSSA would like to request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss how we move forward with protecting the future of recreational striped bass fishing here in Maryland while putting in place policies that will enhance this fishery now and for future generations.

We would like to thank you in advance for your time and consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Vince Ringgold  
President