

Coastal Rivers Fisheries Reports – Roanoke River

BASIC INFO:

River sampled:

Roanoke River

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Katy Potoka, Chris Smith, and Jen Atherton

Date of sample:

3/16/2017

Area(s) of river sampled, and water temps:

Gaston and Weldon

Boat ramp(s) used to access river:

Gaston BAA and Weldon BAA

Species (spp) information:

- Spp. captured:
American Shad
Hickory Shad
Striped Bass
- Numbers by spp:
American Shad- 4
Hickory Shad- 20
Striped Bass- 1
- Size range by spp:
American Shad 17-19 inches
Hickory Shad 13-18 inches
Striped Bass 17 inches
- Max size for spp:
American Shad 2.5 pounds
Hickory Shad 2.0 pounds
Striped Bass 1.5 pounds
- Sex ratio by spp (Male:Female):
American Shad 3:1
Hickory Shad 17:3
Striped Bass 1:0
- Were the fish tagged?

No fish were tagged but fin clips were taken from American Shad to determine if there were of hatchery origin.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

River level and other water quality observations (turbidity, etc.):

Discharge was around 2,200 cfs. These low flows limit our accessibility to certain sites, and sampling was somewhat limited. Water was clear, and temperatures were substantially cooler than last week. Water temperatures were around 46°F.

Weather conditions on sampling date?

The weather was sunny and cool with moderate winds, around 10 mph.

Your observations of other people fishing on the river:

No fishermen were observed at the Gaston BAA. At Weldon, only one other boat was on the water. Quite a few bank anglers were catching Hickory Shad while fishing near the Weldon boat ramp.

Comments to anglers about your sampling results, and fishing-related conclusions that can be drawn from your data:

The drop in temperature was the most notable change this week. Cooler conditions have allowed Hickory shad to remain in Weldon despite the continued low streamflow. Commission staff continue to coordinate with the US Army Corps of Engineers to recommend flows during the spring spawning season. The recent rainfall did little to increase water levels in Kerr Reservoir, so low flows are anticipated to continue for the upcoming week. Low water conditions can make navigation difficult on the Roanoke River, especially near Weldon. Please note links to USGS streamflow gages and Dominion Power projected releases at the bottom of the webpage.

2017 Roanoke River Creel Survey Information: March 10 – March 16

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 (RRMA).

Upper River: WRC Boating Access Areas (BAA) near Gaston, Weldon, Scotland Neck Boat fishing effort has continued to be relatively light in the upper river. Low streamflow and cold weather likely limited boat fishing effort this week. One angler interviewed at the Edwards Ferry BAA near Scotland Neck had a decent catch of Hickory Shad. Creel clerks indicated bank anglers have been catching Hickory Shad at Weldon as well.

Lower River: WRC BAAs near Lewiston, Hamilton, Williamston, Jamesville, Plymouth

Fishing effort in the lower river has been light this week likely due to the cold weather. Only a few interviews were conducted this week, and those anglers reported catching very few Striped bass.

Shad and Striped Bass Regulations for Roanoke River

The daily bag limit is 10 shad per angler, of which only one may be an American (white) shad on the Roanoke River and its tributaries.

The daily creel limit for Striped Bass is two fish per angler and the minimum size limit is 18 inches in total length. No fish between 22 inches and 27 inches in total length shall be retained in the daily creel limit. Only one fish larger than 27 inches in total length may be retained in the daily creel limit.

April 1–June 30 in Inland Waters of Roanoke River upstream of U.S. Highway 258 bridge to Roanoke Rapids Dam, only a single barbless hook or lure with a single barbless hook (or hook with barb bent down) may be used.