

Coastal Rivers Fisheries Reports – Roanoke River

BASIC INFO:

River sampled:

Roanoke River

Fisheries Biologists conducting sampling:

Katy Potoka, Chris Smith, Jen Atherton, and Jeremy McCargo

Date of sample:

4/18/2017 & 4/20/2017

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
Striped Bass
- Numbers by spp:
American Shad- 40
Striped Bass- 282
- Size range by spp:
American Shad 15–22 inches
Striped Bass 9–39 inches
- Max size for spp:
American Shad 22 inches 3.5 lbs.
Striped Bass 38 inches 32 lbs.
- Sex ratio by spp (Male:Female):
American Shad 2.6:1
Striped Bass 55:1
- Were the fish tagged?
On Tuesday, 219 Striped Bass were tagged with yellow anchor tags and 34 were tagged with red high reward tags worth \$100. Fin clips were obtained from 40 American Shad to determine if they were propagated in the hatchery.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS:

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

Discharge was around 6,000 cfs, water was clear with temperatures around 63°C at the Gaston BAA and Weldon BAA. 68 degrees at the Gaston BAA.

Weather conditions on sampling date?

Following a cold front in the beginning of the week, by Tuesday the weather was warm in the upper 70's with clear skies.

Your observations of other people fishing on the river:

Five boats were observed at the Gaston boating access area; some were fishing in the tailrace while others went downstream. There were around 35 boats observed at Weldon on Tuesday. Most were between the rapids and big rock, with a few boats reporting success downstream. Many bank anglers were also trying their luck from the shoreline upstream of the boat ramp.

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

Striped Bass have moved on to the spawning grounds at Weldon in good numbers. Next week will likely be the start of peak spawning at Weldon. Steady flows are anticipated over the weekend, but rain in the forecast may allow for higher flows later in the week. American Shad remain in the Roanoke River around the town of Gaston. Some fish appear to be finished with spawning, while more gravid fish are showing up as well.

2017 Roanoke River Creel Survey Information:

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.

April 14–21

Upper River: WRC Boating Access Areas (BAA) near Gaston, Weldon, Scotland Neck
Boat fishing effort was steady and high this week at the Weldon BAA. Anglers reported excellent catches of Striped Bass in the upper river this week, but most fish are shorter than the legal limit of 18 inches. Persistent anglers caught keeper sized fish. Bank fishing from the area near the Weldon boat ramp has been productive as well. Finally, a few anglers are having success catching Striped Bass at the Edwards Ferry boat ramp near Scotland Neck.

Lower River: WRC BAAs near Lewiston, Hamilton, Williamston, Jamesville, Plymouth
Fishing effort has continued to be steady in the lower river at Williamston and Jamesville. Striped bass are being landed at both places, and many anglers are reporting releasing small striped bass while catching a few keeper sized fish. We also

documented Striped Bass harvest from the Hamilton and Lewiston-Woodville boat ramps. Two Striped Bass over the protective slot limit were recorded during our creel survey at the Williamston BAA this week.