



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION  
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Hartford, CT 06106-5127

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## **P R E S S       R E L E A S E**

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### **DEP Offers New Opportunity for Connecticut River Anglers**

*Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Program to run from May 6 through June 30  
Free vouchers to be issued for over 4,000 striped bass*

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced the establishment of the Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Program to allow anglers to take “bonus” fish in a size range (at least 22 inches in length but shorter than 28 inches) outside the current recreational minimum length for stripers in Connecticut (28 inches). The program takes advantage of an unused commercial quota for striped bass and will allow anglers to take an additional 4,025 striped bass (stripers) from the Connecticut River from now until June 30.

For several years, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has allocated a small commercial striped bass catch quota to Connecticut. However, this quota has gone unused as the commercial harvest of stripers is prohibited in this state. “The Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Program was developed to take advantage of the opportunities that the commercial quota provides,” said Susan Frechette, Deputy Commissioner of DEP. “We are always looking for ways to increase and diversify fishing options for anglers, and this program provides a unique opportunity, especially for families and those living in the more urbanized areas along the river.”

The new bonus striped bass program may also provide some benefits to the Connecticut River ecosystem by helping to conserve river herring (alewife and blueback herring) populations. “Since 1985, the numbers of river herring in the Connecticut River have declined drastically,” said Bill Hyatt, Chief of DEP’s Bureau of Natural Resources. “This program may provide some predator control as it targets a size range of striped bass that prey heavily on river herring (alewife and blueback herring) during the spring spawning migration.”

The Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Program is limited to the Connecticut River within the Inland District (from the I-95 bridge in Old Saybrook and Old Lyme northwards to the Massachusetts border). Because the unused quota limits the harvest to 4,025 stripers in 2011, a

voucher system will be used to ensure that this limit isn't exceeded. Anglers will need to obtain these vouchers prior to fishing, and each voucher will allow the angler to keep one striped bass that is at least 22 inches in length but shorter than 28 inches. Vouchers can be used only during the months of May and June.


Anglers can obtain vouchers at the same DEP Offices where licenses are sold. There is no fee for the vouchers. A limit of two vouchers per day will be issued to each angler appearing in person. Anglers 16 years or older must have a valid Inland Fishing License to receive vouchers. Anglers under age 16 appearing in person will also receive two vouchers. Vouchers will also be distributed by ENCON Police during routine patrols along the river, through Riverfront Recapture Rangers (Great River Park in East Hartford and Riverside Park and Charter Oak Landing in Hartford) and via the Connecticut Aquatic Resources Education (CARE) program.

When a participating angler catches and keeps a striper in the proper size range, they must immediately record the date and the length of the fish on a voucher and this voucher must remain with the fish until it is brought home. Anglers should then drop the completed voucher in the mail (vouchers are pre-addressed and include pre-paid postage). The data collected from the vouchers will provide DEP with the information necessary to ensure continuation of the program.

The 2011 Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Program does not affect an angler's ability to keep their regular daily limit of striped bass. Each angler participating in the program can also keep up to two striped bass a day, 28 inches or larger in total length.

For current fishing regulations anglers should consult the new 2011 Connecticut Angler's Guide which is now available at Town Clerks Offices, many DEP offices and at tackle stores selling fishing licenses. Anglers can purchase their fishing licenses online or at participating town halls, DEP field offices and fishing tackle vendors. Additional information on the Connecticut

**2011 Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass Voucher**



Circle the date and total length (inches)

May							June						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31				
Total length: 22" 23" 24" 25" 26" 27"													

**Instructions:** Immediately upon harvest of a qualifying bonus striped bass, use an INK PEN to circle the date of harvest and total length. Drop fractional lengths, for example mark 25 9/16" as 25".

**Important:** Keep this voucher with the fish until you reach home. Once home, please drop this card in any mailbox; postage is prepaid. Mailing this voucher will provide us with important data necessary to ensure continuation of this program.

- This voucher is good for retention of **ONE (1) bonus striped bass**.
- **TWO (2) bonus fish** may be harvested from May 1 through June 30, 2011.
- Valid only if completed immediately upon harvest of a qualifying fish.
- Valid only in the Inland District of the Connecticut River (i.e. above the I-95 bridge).
- Fish must be from 22" up to (but not including) 28" total length.
- The normal limit of two fish  $\geq$  28" may also be harvested.

**Questions?**  
Web: [www.ct.gov/dep/striper](http://www.ct.gov/dep/striper)  
Phone: 860-434-6043  
E-mail: [dep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov](mailto:dep.marine.fisheries@ct.gov)

*Each voucher allows a participating angler to keep one striped bass less than 28 inches long and no smaller than 22 inches. They must record the date and the size of the bonus striper they are keeping on the voucher and mail (vouchers are pre-addressed with pre-paid postage). Over 4,000 vouchers will be available to anglers for use in May and June.*

River Bonus Striped Bass Program, the 2011 Angler's Guide and the online licensing system can all be accessed on the DEP website at: [www.ct.gov/dep/fishing](http://www.ct.gov/dep/fishing).

The listing below indicates the DEP offices where fishing licenses are sold, and where Connecticut River Bonus Striped Bass vouchers will be available. EnCon Police officers and Riverfront Recapture rangers on patrol will be distributing vouchers in the field, and some CARE program volunteer instructors will also have vouchers available.

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<i>Location</i>	<i>Hours</i>
Marine Headquarters (Old Lyme)	M-F 8:00 am-4:00 pm
Eastern Area Headquarters (Marlborough)	M-F 8:30 am-4:00 pm
Western Area Headquarters (Harwinton)	M-F 8:30 am-4:00 pm
Franklin WMA (Franklin)	M-F 8:30 am-4:30 pm
Session Woods (Burlington)	M-F 8:30 am-4:00 pm
<b>DEP Main Office, 79 Elm St, Hartford</b>	
License & Revenue, or	M-F 9:00 am-4:00 pm
DEP Store	M-F 9:00 am-3:30 pm

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