

Ladies and gentlemen, it is past time to act on striped bass. Please, no more studies, the facts are there; no more deflections nor delays.

The stripers are about all that's left in the Upper Neuse. We haven't had trout in any numbers for two years. The slot reds are virtually a mere memory. There are lots of small reds as there are small stripers, but mysteriously when they reach slot or just under slot, they disappear.

Anecdotal information from me and friends who fish for stripers all indicate that stripers from above 22-23 inches are increasingly hard to come by. The last three years of catch data by us reflects this alarming trend.

The boat ramps are almost barren most days with few anglers venturing out. That in itself should send off the alarms.

The other issue of the petition for rule change if adopted by the MFC should provide long needed help for our marine resources. It is time to take on these difficult issues and do what is right for our fisheries. I implore you to support the petition.

On the issue of the commercial licenses. This too must be addressed with aggressive action, some of which might not be popular, but necessary, nevertheless.

Thank you for serving and I sincerely hope you can begin to take on the difficult tasks for which you have volunteered and manage the fishery for not only all the citizens of the state, but for the sake of the resource.

Tim Hergenrader