**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 50‑13‑230, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO STRIPED BASS LIMITS, SO AS TO INCLUDE REFERENCES TO HYBRID BASS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 50‑13‑230 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 164 of 2018, is further amended to read:

“Section 50‑13‑230. (A) In the following freshwater bodies: the Ashepoo River; Ashley River; Back River in Jasper County and the Back River in Berkeley County; Black River; Black Mingo Creek; Bull Creek and Little Bull Creek; Combahee River; Cooper River system; Coosawhatchie River; Cuckholds Creek; Edisto River; Horseshoe Creek; Lumber River; Lynches River; Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers; Pocotaligo River in Beaufort, Jasper, and Hampton Counties; Salkehatchie and Little Salkehatchie Rivers; Sampit River; Santee River system except the lower reach of the Saluda River; Tulifinny River; Thoroughfare Creek; Intracoastal Waterway (Horry County); and Waccamaw River from June sixteenth through September thirtieth, it is unlawful to take, attempt to take, or to possess striped bass. Striped bass and hybrid bass taken must be returned immediately to the waters from where it came.

(B) On the lower reach of the Saluda River from June sixteenth through September thirtieth, it is unlawful to take or possess striped bass or hybrid bass. Striped bass or hybrid bass taken must be returned immediately to the waters from where it came.

(C) In the following freshwater bodies: the Ashepoo River; Ashley River; Back River in Jasper County and the Back River in Berkeley County; Black River; Black Mingo Creek; Bull Creek and Little Bull Creek; Combahee River; Cooper River system; Coosawhatchie River; Cuckholds Creek; Edisto River; Horseshoe Creek; Lumber River; Lynches River; Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers; Pocotaligo River in Beaufort, Jasper, and Hampton Counties; Salkehatchie and Little Salkehatchie Rivers; Sampit River; Santee River system; Tulifinny River; Thoroughfare Creek; Intracoastal Waterway (Horry County); and Waccamaw River from October first through June fifteenth, it is unlawful to take or possess more than three striped bass, hybrid bass, or a combination of striped and hybrid bass a day.

(D) In the following freshwater bodies: the Ashepoo River; Ashley River; Back River in Jasper County and the Back River in Berkeley County; Black River; Black Mingo Creek; Bull Creek and Little Bull Creek; Combahee River; Cooper River system; Coosawhatchie River; Cuckholds Creek; Edisto River; Horseshoe Creek; Lumber River; Lynches River; Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers; Pocotaligo River in Beaufort, Jasper, and Hampton Counties; Salkehatchie and Little Salkehatchie Rivers; Sampit River; Tulifinny River; Thoroughfare Creek; Intracoastal Waterway (Horry County); and Waccamaw River from October first through June fifteenth, it is unlawful to take or possess a striped bass or hybrid bass less than twenty‑six inches in total length.

(E) In the Santee River system from October first through June fifteenth, it is unlawful to take or possess a striped bass or hybrid bass less than twenty‑three inches or greater than twenty‑five inches, provided that one striped bass or hybrid bass taken or possessed may be greater than twenty‑six inches.

(F) On Lake Murray and the middle reach of the Saluda River it is unlawful to possess more than five striped bass or hybrid bass a day. From June first through September thirtieth, it is unlawful to take, attempt to take, or possess more than five striped bass, hybrid bass, or a combination of striped and hybrid bass a day.

(G) On Lake Murray and the middle reach of the Saluda River from October first through May thirty‑first, it is unlawful to possess a striped bass or hybrid bass less than twenty‑one inches in total length. From June first to September thirtieth there is no minimum length.

(H) On Lakes Hartwell and Thurmond it is unlawful to possess more than ten striped bass or hybrid bass or a combination of those a day and only three may be over twenty‑six inches in total length.

(I) On Lake Richard B. Russell and the Lake Hartwell tailwater it is unlawful to possess more than two striped bass or hybrid bass or a combination of those a day, and only one may be over thirty‑four inches total length.

(J) On the lower reach of the Savannah River it is unlawful to possess more than two striped bass, hybrid bass, white bass, or a combination of these. Any of these fish taken from the lower reach of the Savannah River must be at least twenty‑seven inches in total length.

(K) It is unlawful to land striped bass or hybrid bass unless the head and tail fin are intact.

(L) The department shall establish the daily possession and size limits for striped bass on all other waters of this State, provided, limits must not be set by emergency regulation.

(M) The department shall make a study of the striped bass fishery on the Santee and Cooper River systems and make recommendations on any needed modifications of this section before January 2022.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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