

Invasive Catfish Workgroup

POLICY SMALL GROUP

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

- Executive Order issued April 28, 2025
- Purpose:
 - Address 'overregulation' of American seafood industries
 - Level playing field benefitting foreign seafood
 - Modernize fisheries data collection
 - Combat illegal fishing

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

- Possible application to blue catfish:
 - Sec. 4(a) – “immediately consider suspending, revising, or rescinding regulations that overly burden... **fish processing industries** at the fishery-specific level.”
 - Sec. 4(c) – “...pursue additional direct public engagement to ensure executive departments and agencies are focusing core fisheries management... to support priorities needs that **support the Nation’s seafood supply chain.**”
 - Sec. 4(d) – “... develop and implement an **America First Seafood Strategy** to **promote production, marketing, sale and export** of United States fishery... products and strengthen domestic processing capacity.”
 - Sec. 4(d) – “...accelerate the Department of Agriculture’s efforts to **educate American consumers** about the health benefits of seafood and **increase seafood purchases in nutrition programs.**”

Maryland Legislative Update

- Two blue catfish bills introduced in 2025 legislative session
 - SB186/HB446 – Commercial Blue and Flathead Catfish Finfish Trotline License – Prohibited Regulations
 - SB960/HB1249 – Blue Catfish – Population Control
- Final Outcome
 - SB186/HB446 – Invasive Blue Catfish Pilot Program
 - Electrofishing
 - Bay Bridge restrictions
 - Recreational/commercial

Virginia Legislative Update

- Two blue catfish bills introduced in 2025 legislative session
 - HB2335 – Blue catfish; digital free fishing license program, sunset.
 - HB2782 – Blue catfish; Board of Wildlife Resources shall amend 4VAC15-320-25, Creel and length limits. - remove the one-fish daily limit for blue catfish longer than 32 inches in the Commonwealth.
- Final Outcome
 - HB2335 failed
 - HB2782 vetoed by the Governor

Draft Blue Catfish Legislation Review

- Allie Cavanagh, Policy Advisor for Rep. Sarah Elfreth