SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
RHODE ISLAND

COMMITTEES:
AGING
BUDGET
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
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January 6, 2017

Chairman Douglas Grout
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chairman Grout:

As you know, our oceans are changing at a rapid pace. Warming and acidifying waters are changing the underwater and coastal landscapes along the Atlantic seaboard. Rhode Island fishermen are seeing these changes firsthand on their hooks and in their nets. It's no wonder that the New York Times focused its December 30, 2016 article, "*Fish Seek Cooler Waters, Leaving Some Fishermen's Nets Empty*," on Rhode Island.

In recent years, Rhode Island has seen a tremendous increase in black sea bass, a species that has historically been centered much further south. Other commercially and recreationally important species have also been showing a northward trend as they follow cooler waters. Black sea bass, though, has become the archetype for the disconnect between fishermen, timely science, and effective management in my state.

New England fishermen are still struggling to recover from fisheries collapses, while simultaneously battling other economic, environmental, and regulatory headwinds. They are seeing their lobster and whiting stocks heading north. Other fisheries species are coming in from the south to fill these recent openings in the ecosystem, but due to the distribution of current catch limits to states, Rhode Island fishermen cannot take advantage of the fish that are moving in. Instead, they are forced to throw back valuable and plentiful black sea bass and other species that could help supplement the income lost as their historical catches leave traditional fishing grounds.

The science used to make black sea bass management decisions has been woefully out of date for too long, and I was grateful to see the benchmark assessment of black sea bass completed in December and pass peer review. Experts with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management contributed to the assessment, and I'm eager to see it available for consideration in management decisions. Now, as the science begins to catch up and confirm what Rhode Island fishermen and others have been saying, it is the responsibility of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) to incorporate this science into its decision-making.

I urge the ASMFC to incorporate the latest black sea bass science as quickly and completely as possible into its management decisions that better reflect the new distribution of the species. The long delays are undercutting the progress made to rebuild trust and open communication between

fishermen and regulators in New England. The Council should also go further and develop comprehensive and progressive management strategies that recognize climate-driven changes and shifts in distribution of important species, like black sea bass.

As the oceans change, we must change as well to keep pace. Every valuable black sea bass thrown overboard as bycatch is another little chip in the credibility of fisheries management. Please keep me and my staff (Adena Leibman, adena_leibman@whitehouse.senate.gov) informed of your progress.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Douglas E. Grout (NH), Chair *James J. Gilmore, Jr. (NY), Vice-Chair* *Robert E. Beal, Executive Director*

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

January 23, 2017

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Whitehouse,

Thank you for your correspondence dated January 6, 2017 urging expeditious incorporation of the 2016 Black Sea Bass Benchmark Stock Assessment into management decisions. Your letter was addressed to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) Chairman, Doug Grout, and I am responding on his behalf. We will distribute your letter to the members of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board.

On January 25, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet to review the 2016 Black Sea Bass Benchmark Stock Assessment and peer review results. The SSC is expected to provide recommendations for annual Acceptable Biological Catch levels for 2017-2019. Following the SSC meeting, a joint meeting of the Commission and Council will be convened on February 15, 2017 to establish 2017-2019 catch limits.

As you may know, black sea bass is managed jointly by the states (through the Commission) and NOAA Fisheries (through the Council). Although Rhode Island is not a formal member of the Council, its primary opportunity to influence black sea bass management is through membership on the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board.

We are scheduled to meet with your Ocean and Coastal Policy Advisor, Adena Leibman, on January 26, 2017 to update her on the development of state management decisions being considered at the Commission. We are grateful for your interest in Atlantic coastal fisheries management and will continue to work closely with your staff.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Beal

L17-9

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIX TO THE SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BOARD REVIEW

Scup Commercial Quota Management

This draft document was developed for Management Board review and discussion. This document is not intended to solicit public comment as part of the Commission/State formal public input process. Comments on this draft document may be given at the appropriate time on the agenda during the scheduled meeting. If approved, a public comment period will be established to solicit input on the issues contained in the document.

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

February 2017

1.0 Introduction

This Draft Addendum is proposed under the adaptive management/framework procedures of Amendment 12 that are a part of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries are managed cooperatively by the states through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in state waters (0-3 miles), and through the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the NOAA Fisheries in federal waters (3-200 miles).

The management unit for scup in US waters is the western Atlantic Ocean from Cape Hatteras North Carolina northward to the US-Canadian border. The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board) approved the following motion on December 13, 2016:

> *Move to initiate a scup addendum for the Commission with alternative 1 (no action), alternative 2 (move October to winter II), and alternative 3 (move first half of May to winter I and October to winter II).*

This Draft Addendum proposes alternate approaches for the management of the scup commercial quota periods.

2.0 Overview

2.1 Statement of the Problem

Since 2011, commercial scup landings have been 20-47% below the commercial quota. In recent years, the Commission and Council Advisory Panel members requested modifications to the dates of the quota periods with all other regulations related to the quota periods, including the allocations and possession limits, remaining unchanged. The requested changes are intended to allow higher possession limits for a longer period of time each year, thus increasing the likelihood that the commercial fishery will fully harvest the quota in the future.

2.2 Background

The Scup FMP was incorporated into the Summer Flounder FMP through Amendment 8 and established several coastwide management measures for the scup fishery. At the time, the scup stock was overexploited. Amendment 8 included several measures to rebuild the stock, including a coastwide commercial quota beginning on January 1, 1997. During development of Amendment 8, the Commission and Council considered, but did not fully develop, a system of quota allocation and possession limits. They agreed to submit Amendment 8 to NMFS before fully developing these measures so the other measures in the Amendment could be implemented as quickly as possible and the rebuilding program could begin. However, without trip limits and seasonal allocations, the annual quota could be fully harvested early in the year, which could have economic implications for the entire fishery and created the potential for issues regarding equitable access to the fishery. Traditionally, larger vessels harvested scup offshore during the winter months and smaller vessels harvested scup inshore during the summer. If larger vessels harvested the full annual quota early in the year, smaller vessels would not be able to harvest scup in the summer. To address this issue, the Commission and Council developed three quota

periods, each allocated a percentage of the annual commercial quota and each with different possession limits. These measures were first implemented in 1997 through a regulatory amendment to the FMP (MAFMC 1996; 62 Federal Register 27978, May 22, 1997).

The dates of the quota periods and the allocation percentages have not changed since they were first implemented. These measures include a Winter I period, lasting from January 1 through April 30 and allocated 45.11% of the annual quota; a Summer period, lasting from May 1 through October 31 and allocated 38.95% of the annual quota; and a Winter II quota period, lasting from November 1 through December 31 and allocated 15.94% of the annual commercial quota (Table 1).

The Summer quota period allocation is further divided into state shares. The state shares have been modified since they were first implemented. The current state shares are shown in Table 2. State shares were removed from the Council's FMP but are managed by the Commission through Addendum V (ASMFC 2002).

Commercial landings data from 1983 through 1992 were used to define the dates and allocations for the quota periods, including the state allocations for the Summer period. These years were chosen because they were thought to best represent historical participation in the fishery and included years when scup were abundant (though they have become far more abundant since then) and available to both northern and southern states (MAFMC 1996). There was some concern that these data underestimated harvests from state waters with some gear types, especially in Massachusetts. To address this concern, the state summer shares were modified in 2002 through Addendum V to the Commission's FMP (ASMFC 2002).

The seasonal possession limits have been modified several times since they were first implemented. Current management measures include a 50,000 pound possession limit during Winter I. If 80% of the Winter I quota is harvested, the possession limit drops to 1,000 pounds for the remainder of the Winter I period. The initial Winter II possession limit is 12,000 pounds. If the Winter I quota is not fully harvested, unused quota may rollover to the Winter II period. If this occurs, the Winter II possession limit may increase up to a maximum of 18,000 pounds. There are no Federal waters possession limits during the Summer period; however, various state-specific possession limits are enforced in state waters. These possession limits are all much lower than the Winter I and Winter II possession limits (Table 3).

The Federal commercial scup fishery is closed coastwide when the allocation for a given quota period is reached. Any overages during a given quota period are subtracted from that period's allocation for the following year. If the Summer period quota is exceeded, overages from a given state during the Summer period are subtracted by the Commission from the state's Summer period share in a future year. If an individual state exceeds its Summer quota, but the overall Summer quota is not exceeded, deductions are not applied.

Although the dates of the quota periods have not been modified since their initial implementation, Framework Adjustment 3 to the FMP, implemented in 2003, allows landings during April 15-30 by state-only permitted vessels to be counted towards that state's Summer

period allocation in years when the Winter I fishery closes before April 15 and when the state makes such a request in writing (68 Federal Register 62251, November 3, 2003).

2.3 Description of the Fishery

Scup are highly sought after by commercial and recreational fishermen throughout Southern New England and the Mid-Atlantic. Scup support commercial fisheries from Massachusetts to North Carolina. Commercial landings peaked in 1960 at 48.9 million pounds, and then ranged between 11.02 and 22.04 million pounds until the late 1980s. From the 1987-1996, commercial landings averaged 10.8 million pounds, and then declined to an average of 8.8 million pounds from 1997-2014. In 2015 commercial landings were 15.86 million pounds, about 75% of the commercial quota. Since 1979, commercial landings have largely come from Rhode Island (38%), New Jersey (26%), and New York (16%).

An initial analysis of the potential impacts of the changes to the quota period dates requested by advisors is presented in this section. The figures and tables at the end of this document show scup landings by month (Figure 1, Table 4), scup prices by month (Figure 2, Table 5), and number and size of vessels landing scup by month (Figure 3, Table 6, Figure 4), as well as the importance of each month to scup landings in each state (Table 7).

Although October is within the Summer quota period, it had similar average values to the Winter II quota period in terms of scup landings (Figure 1, Table 4) and number of vessels landing scup (Figure 3, Table 6). The size distribution of vessels which landed scup in October was in between that of September (Summer quota period) and November (Winter II quota period; Figure 4) during 2011-2015. The month of May, which is currently in the Summer quota period, had values for scup landings which were in between the months of April (Winter I quota period) and June (Summer quota period; Figure 1, Table 4). The number and size of vessels landing scup in May was similar to the number and size of vessels landing scup in June (Figures 3 and 4, Table 4). In general, October appears to be more similar to the Winter II period than the Summer period in terms of landings and number of vessels. May appears to be more similar to the Summer period than the Winter I period in terms of the number and size of vessels landing scup per month, but in between Winter I and Summer in terms of scup landings.

If each month contributed equally to scup landings, 8% of annual landings would occur in each month. The month of October contributed to more than 8% of annual scup landings in Rhode Island. The month of May contributed to more than 8% of annual scup landings in the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York (Table 7).

At their July 2016 meeting, the Monitoring Committee discussed ideas for analyzing the impacts of modifying the scup quota period dates. Monitoring Committee members noted that if October were moved to the Winter II period, this would allow a higher commercial possession limit (on the order of 12,000 pounds) and if scup are close inshore during that time of year, this could potentially impact recreational fisheries which mostly operate in state waters. Data from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) includes recreational catches and landings by two-month periods known as waves. From a coast-wide perspective, waves 3 (May-June), 4 (July-August), and 5 (September-October) each contributed about one third of annual scup landings from 2013 through 2015. Wave 3 dominated the scup landings (i.e. greater than 50% of the

annual landings) in Massachusetts. Wave 5 dominated the scup landings (i.e. greater than 50% of annual landings) in New Jersey Virginia and was also important (i.e. greater than 40% of annual landings) for Connecticut and New York (Table 8).

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) fall bottom trawl survey and the Northeast Area Assessment and Monitoring Program (NEAMAP trawl survey) suggest that commercial-sized scup are available in both state and Federal waters during October (Figures 5-9). However, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) trawl survey, the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography (URI GSO) Narragansett Bay trawl survey, and the state of New Jersey Ocean Trawl Survey suggest that scup are present in state and Federal waters during October, but most of those scup are below the commercial size (Figures 10-14).The NEAMAP, RI DEM, URI GSO Narragansett Bay, and Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) trawl surveys suggest that commercial-sized scup are present in state and Federal waters during May 1-15 (Figures 10-14).

2.4 Status of the Stock

The most recent peer-reviewed benchmark assessment for scup (Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop 60, NEFSC 2015) was completed in May 2015. The assessment utilizes an age-structured assessment model called ASAP. Results of the assessment indicate the scup stock was not overfished or experiencing overfishing was occurring in 2014 relative to the updated biological reference points established in the 2015 SAW 60 assessment. The fishing mortality rate was estimated to be 0.127 in 2014, below the threshold fishing mortality reference point F_{MSY} = 0.22. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated to be 403.6 million pounds (182,915 mt) in 2014, about two times the biomass target SSB_{MSY} = 192.47 million pounds (87,302 mt). The 2014 year class is estimated to be above average at 112 million fish at age 0.

3.0 Proposed Management Program

The follow alternatives were developed based on analysis referenced in section 2.3 'Description of the fishery'. If selected, these options would be implemented as soon as possible, possibly adjusting the 2017 summer and winter II quota periods' start and end dates.

Alternative 1: No action/*status quo*

- Winter I: January 1 – April 30 (120 days)
- Summer: May 1 – October 31 (184 days)
- Winter II: November 1 – December 31 (61 days)

Alternative 2: Move October to the Winter II period

- Winter I: January 1 – April 30 (120 days)
- Summer: May 1 – September 30 (153 days)
- Winter II: October 1 – December 31 (92 days)

Alternative 3: Move October to the Winter II period and move the first two weeks of May to the Summer period

- Winter I: January 1 – May 15 (135 days)
- Summer: May 15 – September 30 (138 days)
- Winter II: October 1 – December 31 (92 days)

Alternative 3.A: Modify the dates of the quota periods as described under alternative 3 and leave the Winter I and Summer quota counting procedures unchanged

The Federal regulations at 50 CFR 648.123(a)(2)(iv) state: "During a fishing year in which the Winter I quota period is closed prior to April 15, a state may apply to the Regional Administrator for authorization to count scup landed for sale in that state from April 15 through April 30 by state-only permitted vessels fishing exclusively in waters under the jurisdiction of that state against the Summer period quota. Requests to the Regional Administrator to count scup landings in a state from April 15 through April 30 against the Summer period quota must be made by letter signed by the principal state official with marine fishery management responsibility and expertise, or his/her designee, and must be received by the Regional Administrator no later than April 15."

Under alternative 3.A, the Summer quota period would start on May 16 (rather than on May 1, as under the no action alternative) and the regulations at 50 CFR 648.123(a)(2)(iv) would remain unchanged. This could create a situation in which, in certain circumstances, state-only permitted vessels fishing in state waters would be allowed to land scup during April 15-30 and those landings would count towards the respective state's Summer quota. However, the regulations, as currently written, do not allow for landings in this circumstance during May 1-15; thus, if the Summer period were to start on May 16, as proposed under alternative 3, then there would be a two-week period during which certain vessels would be allowed to land scup (April 15-30), followed by a two-week period during which the fishery would be closed (May 1-15) prior to the start of the Summer period.

Alternative 3.B: Modify the dates of the quota periods as described under alternative 3 and modify the end date of the Winter I and Summer quota counting procedures

Under alternative 3.B, the Summer quota period would start on May 16 and the regulations at 50 CFR 648.123(a)(2)(iv) (described in the previous section) would be modified such that landings by state-only permitted vessels fishing in state waters during April 15 – May 15 (rather than April 15 – April 30 as under alternative 3.A) could count towards the Summer period quota for those states. This would increase the length of the period for this special quota counting procedure by two weeks.

Alternative 3.C: Modify the dates of the quota periods as described under alternative 3 and modify the start and end dates of the Winter I and Summer quota counting procedures

Under alternative 3.C, the Summer quota period would start on May 16 and the regulations at 50 CFR 648.123(a)(2)(iv) (described under alternative 3.A) would be modified such that landings by state-only permitted vessels fishing in state waters during May 1 – May 15 (rather than April

15 – April 30 as under alternative 3.A) could count towards the Summer period quota for those states. Although these dates would be modified, the length of the period during which these special quota counting procedures could be in effect would remain unchanged (i.e. two weeks). The regulations would also be modified such that states would have to request these special provisions by May 1.

4.0 Compliance

Following the May 2017 Joint Board/Council Meeting, the Commission and Council would recommend to NOAA that the selected alternative be implemented through the federal rule making process. Once implemented, if quota period start and end dates are adjusted through the selected alternative, both federal and state permit holders will be notified.

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Commercial scup quota period dates, percentage of annual quota allocated, and Federal waters possession limits.

Quota Period	Dates	% of annual quota	Possession limit
Winter I	Jan 1–Apr 30	45.11%	50,000 pounds
Summer	May 1–Oct 31	38.95%	State-specific (Table 3)
Winter II	Nov 1–Dec 31	15.94%	12,000-18,000 pounds depending on amount of unused quota from Winter I

Table 2. State allocations of commercial scup quota for the Summer quota period.

State	Share of summer quota
Maine	0.1210%
New Hampshire	0.0000%
Massachusetts	21.5853%
Rhode Island	56.1894%
Connecticut	3.1537%
New York	15.8232%
New Jersey	2.9164%
Delaware	0.0000%
Maryland	0.0119%
Virginia	0.1650%
North Carolina	0.0249%

Table 3. Commercial scup possession limits for trawl vessels in state waters during the Summer quota period (May 1 – October 31) in 2016.

State	Dates	Possession limit
Maine	May 1 – Oct 31	None
New Hampshire	May 1 – Oct 31	None (allocated no quota)
Massachusetts	May 1 – Oct 31	800 lb
Rhode Island	May 1 – Oct 31	10,000 lb per vessel per week
Connecticut[a]	May 1 – July 2	1,500 lb
	July 3 – November 1[b]	750 lb
New York	May 1 – Oct 31	800 lb
New Jersey	May 1 – Oct 31	5,000 lb
Delaware	May 1 – Oct 31	None (allocated no quota)
Maryland	May 1 – Oct 31	None
Virginia	May 1 – Oct 31	None
North Carolina	May 1 – Oct 31	None

[a]Adjusted periodically to maintain consistent weekly landings rate, prevent in-season closure, and take 100% of summer period quota allocated to Connecticut.

[b]As of August 26, 2016. Possession limit may be further adjusted prior to end of Summer quota period.

Landings by Month

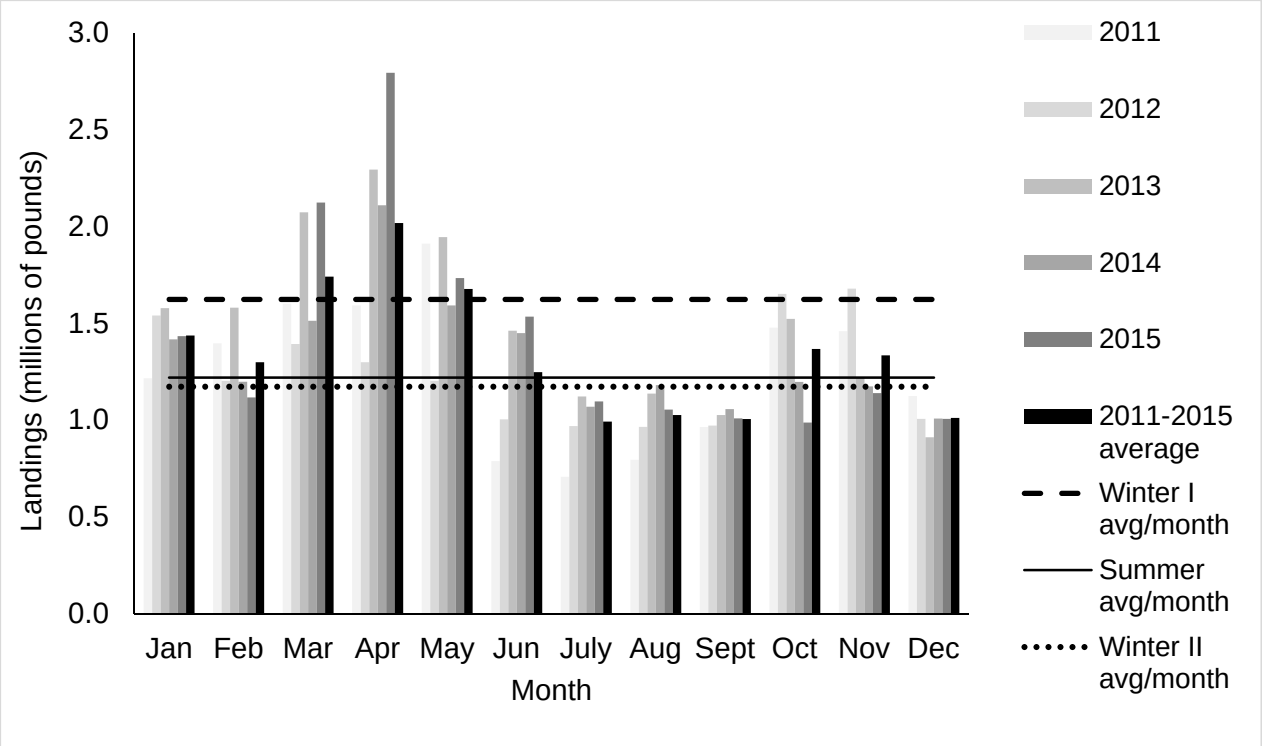

Figure 1. Commercial scup landings per month, 2011-2015 shown with average landings per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods.

Table 4. Commercial scup landings per month, 2011-2015 shown with average landings per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods.

Year	**Landings** (millions of pounds)											
	Jan	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**July**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**
2011	1.22	1.40	1.60	1.59	1.91	0.79	0.71	0.79	0.96	1.48	1.46	1.12
2012	1.54	1.20	1.39	1.30	1.20	1.00	0.97	0.96	0.97	1.65	1.68	1.01
2013	1.58	1.58	2.07	2.29	1.95	1.46	1.12	1.14	1.03	1.52	1.22	0.91
2014	1.42	1.20	1.51	2.11	1.59	1.45	1.07	1.18	1.06	1.20	1.17	1.01
2015	1.43	1.12	2.12	2.80	1.73	1.53	1.10	1.05	1.01	0.99	1.14	1.01
Average	1.44	1.30	1.74	2.02	1.68	1.25	0.99	1.03	1.01	1.37	1.34	1.01
Winter I avg/month	1.62											
Summer avg/month	1.22											
Winter II avg/month	1.17											

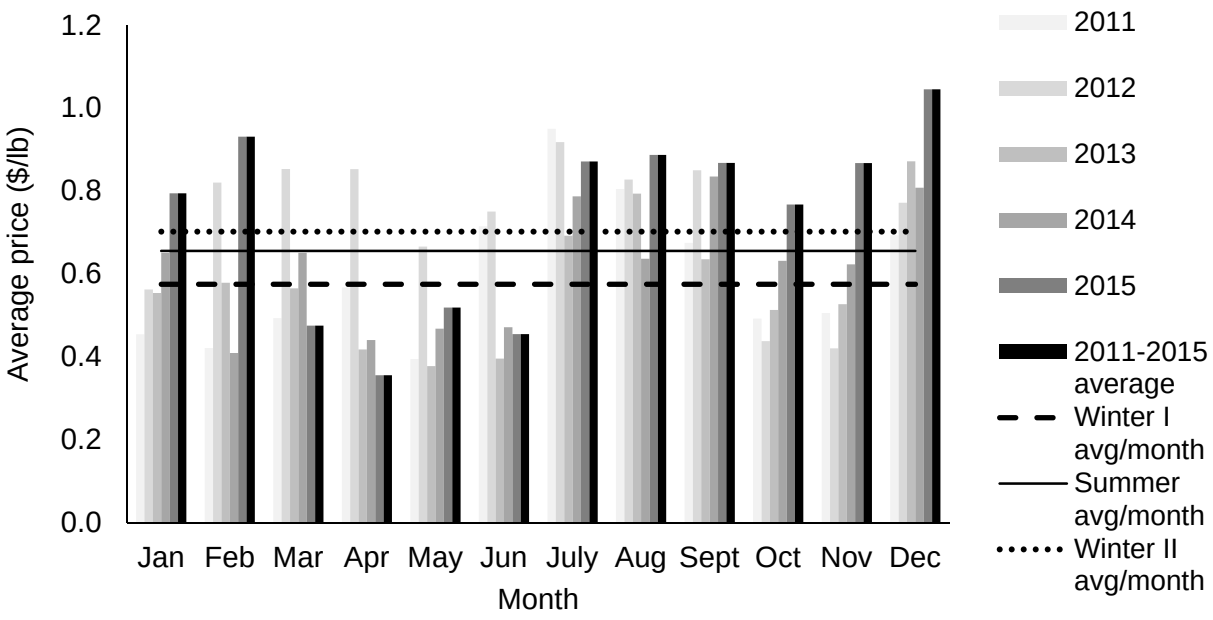

Figure 1: Average scup price per month, 2011-2015 shown with average price per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods.

Table 5: Average scup price (in dollars) per month, 2011-2015 shown with average price per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods. Values are not adjusted to account for inflation.

Year	**Average Price** (Dollars)											
	Jan	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**July**	**Aug**	**Sept**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**
2011	0.45	0.42	0.49	0.57	0.40	0.72	0.95	0.81	0.68	0.49	0.51	0.69
2012	0.56	0.82	0.85	0.85	0.67	0.75	0.92	0.83	0.85	0.44	0.42	0.77
2013	0.55	0.58	0.57	0.42	0.38	0.40	0.69	0.79	0.64	0.51	0.53	0.87
2014	0.65	0.41	0.65	0.44	0.47	0.47	0.79	0.64	0.84	0.63	0.62	0.81
2015	0.79	0.93	0.48	0.36	0.52	0.46	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.77	0.87	1.05
Average	0.61	0.62	0.59	0.649	0.47	0.53	0.983	0.79	0.77	0.55	0.57	0.83
Winter I avg/month	0.58											
Summer avg/month	0.66											
Winter II avg/month	0.70											

Number of Vessels by Month

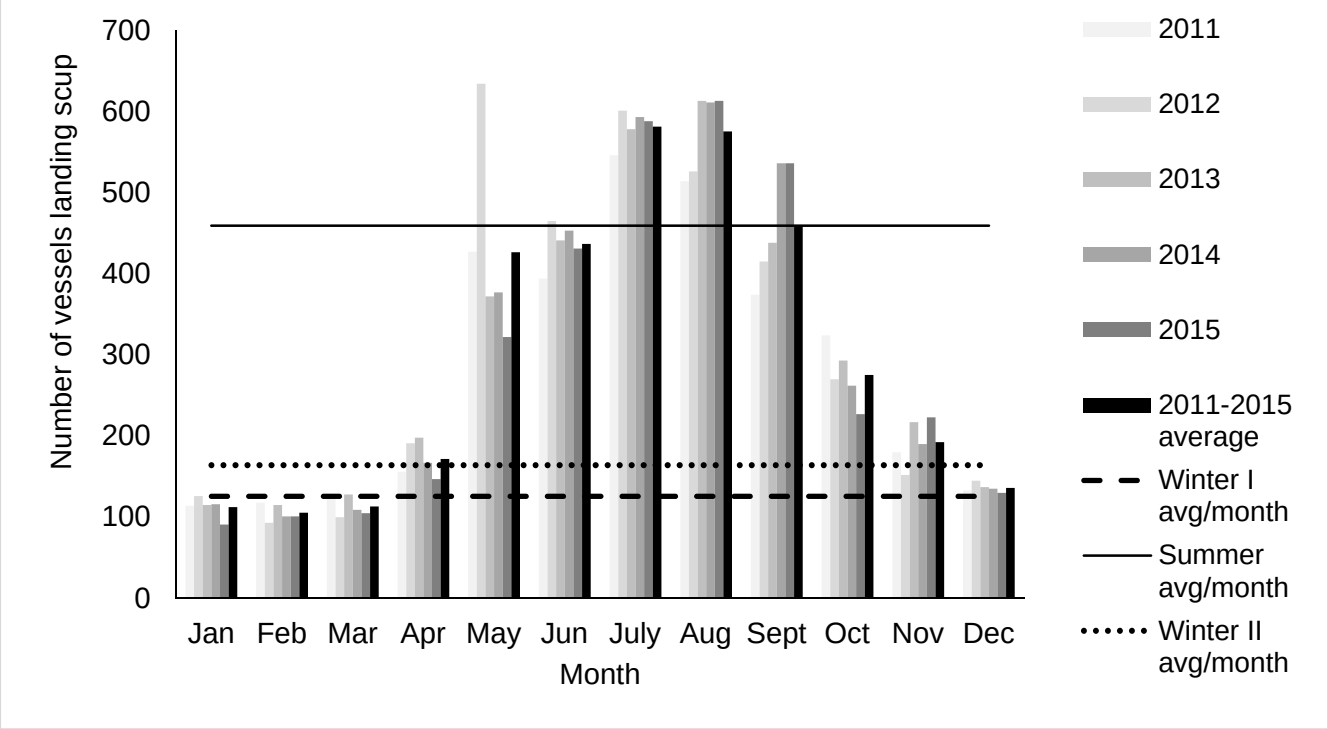

Figure 3: Number of commercial vessels which landed scup per month, 2011-2015 shown with average number of vessels per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods. Number of vessels was determined based on a combination of permit number and hull number, as shown in dealer data. Vessels with an unknown permit number and an unknown hull number are not included in this figure.

Table 6: Number of commercial vessels which landed scup per month, 2011-2015 shown with average number of vessels per month during the Winter I (January – April), Summer (May-October), and Winter II (November and December) quota periods. Number of vessels was determined based on a combination of permit number and hull number, as shown in dealer data. Vessels with an unknown permit number and an unknown hull number are not included in this table.

Year	Number of Vessels											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2011	114	118	124	156	427	394	546	514	372	324	180	133
2012	126	93	100	191	634	465	601	526	415	270	152	145
2013	115	115	128	198	372	441	578	613	438	293	217	137
2014	116	101	109	167	377	453	593	611	536	262	190	135
2015	91	101	105	147	322	431	588	613	536	227	223	130
Average	112	106	113	172	426	437	581	575	460	275	192	136
Winter I avg/month	126											
Summer avg/month	459											
Winter II avg/month	164											

Landings by Month by State

Table 7: Percent of annual scup landings by month by state. "C" refers to confidential data representing fewer than three vessels and/or dealers.

Month	MA	CT	RI	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC
Jan	13%	15%	3%	9%	19%	0%	22%	11%	11%
Feb	5%	14%	4%	6%	19%	0%	25%	9%	75%
Mar	3%	12%	7%	10%	20%	0%	30%	39%	1%
Apr	3%	17%	7%	16%	23%	0%	21%	24%	7%
May	16%	3%	15%	10%	1%	C	0%	1%	0%
Jun	6%	6%	10%	11%	1%	0%	0%	C	0%
Jul	23%	5%	7%	4%	0%	0%	0%	C	0%
Aug	21%	4%	9%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sep	6%	3%	11%	3%	1%	C	0%	0%	0%
Oct	2%	6%	14%	7%	2%	C	0%	1%	0%
Nov	2%	7%	9%	12%	6%	C	0%	6%	0%
Dec	2%	7%	5%	9%	8%	C	2%	8%	6%

Landings by Vessel Size

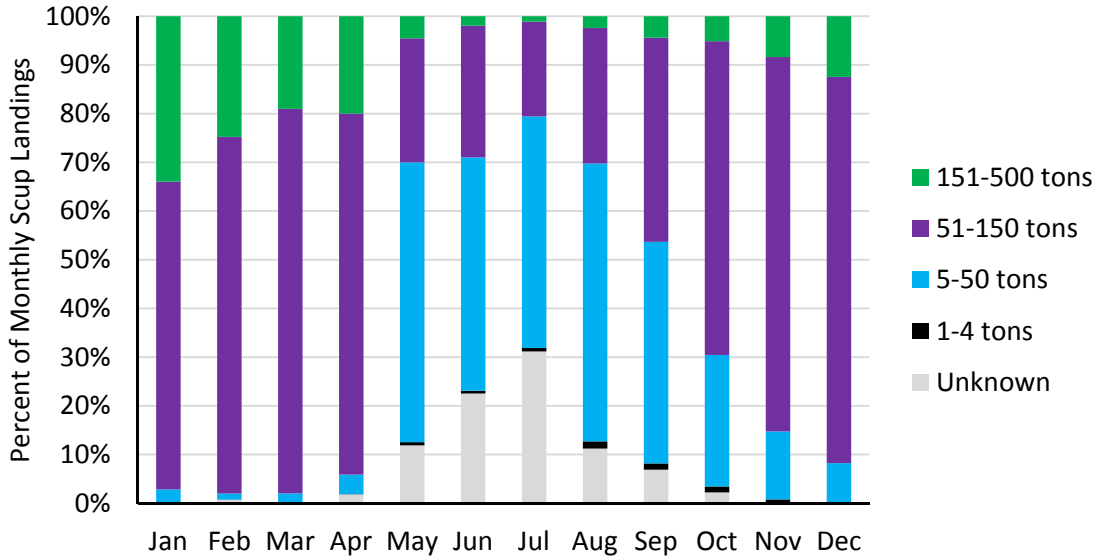

Figure 4: Average scup landings by month by vessel ton class, 2011-2015. Data for vessels greater than 500 tons are confidential and are not shown.

Recreational Landings

Table 1: Percent of annual landings by wave and by state, 2013-2015. (Source: MRIP data, downloaded January 11, 2017).

State	May/June	July/Aug	Sept/Oct	Nov/Dec
MASSACHUSETTS	73%	15%	11%	0%
RHODE ISLAND	16%	44%	40%	0%
CONNECTICUT	10%	42%	48%	0%
NEW YORK	9%	46%	44%	2%
NEW JERSEY	0%	27%	73%	0%
DELAWARE	7%	4%	0%	89%
MARYLAND	0%	0%	3%	97%
VIRGINIA	0%	35%	65%	0%
NORTH CAROLINA	40%	16%	39%	5%
Total	**32%**	**34%**	**33%**	**1%**

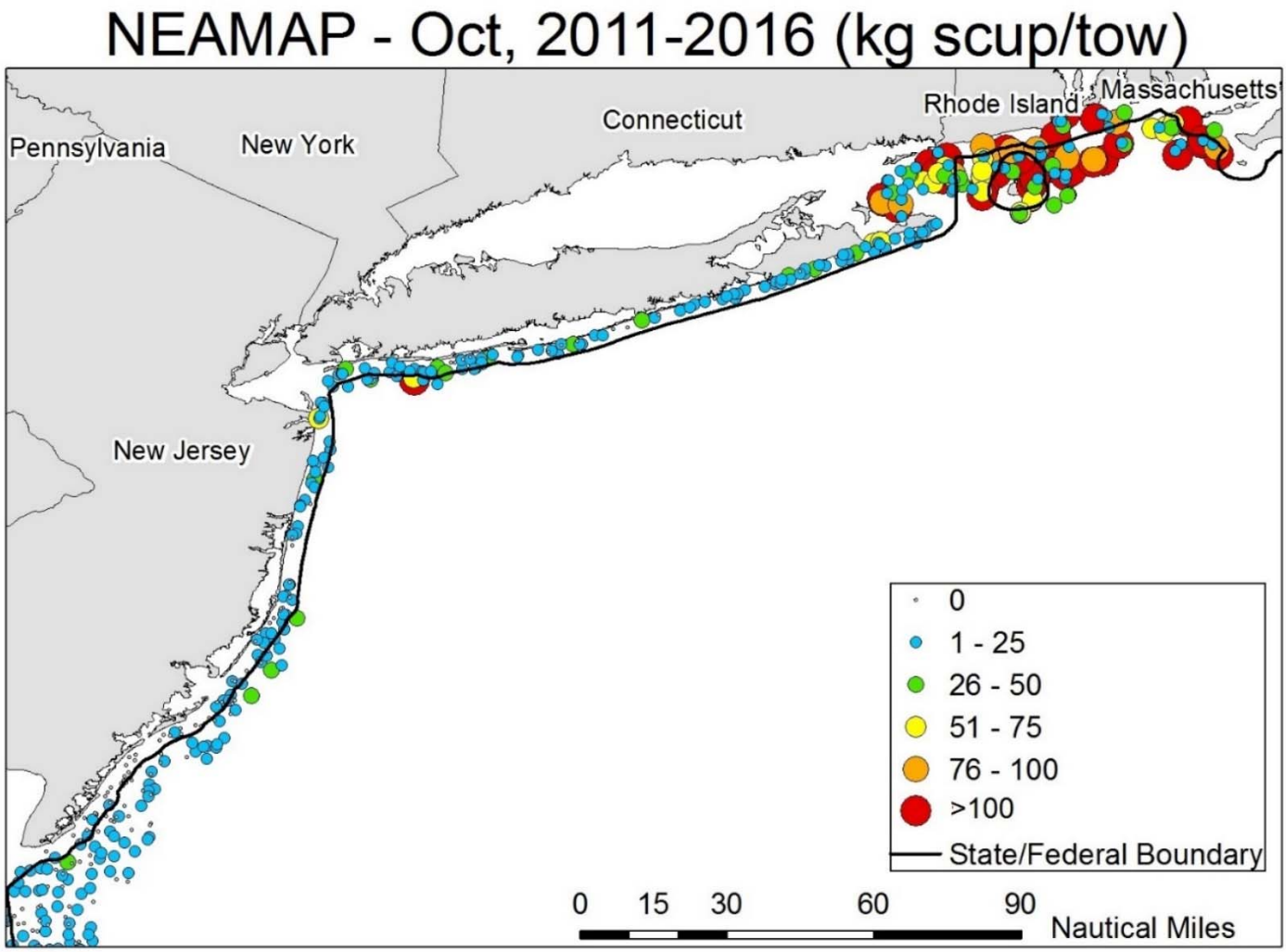

Figure 5: Scup catch per tow in October, 2011-2016, in the NEAMAP trawl survey off the states of Massachusetts through New Jersey.

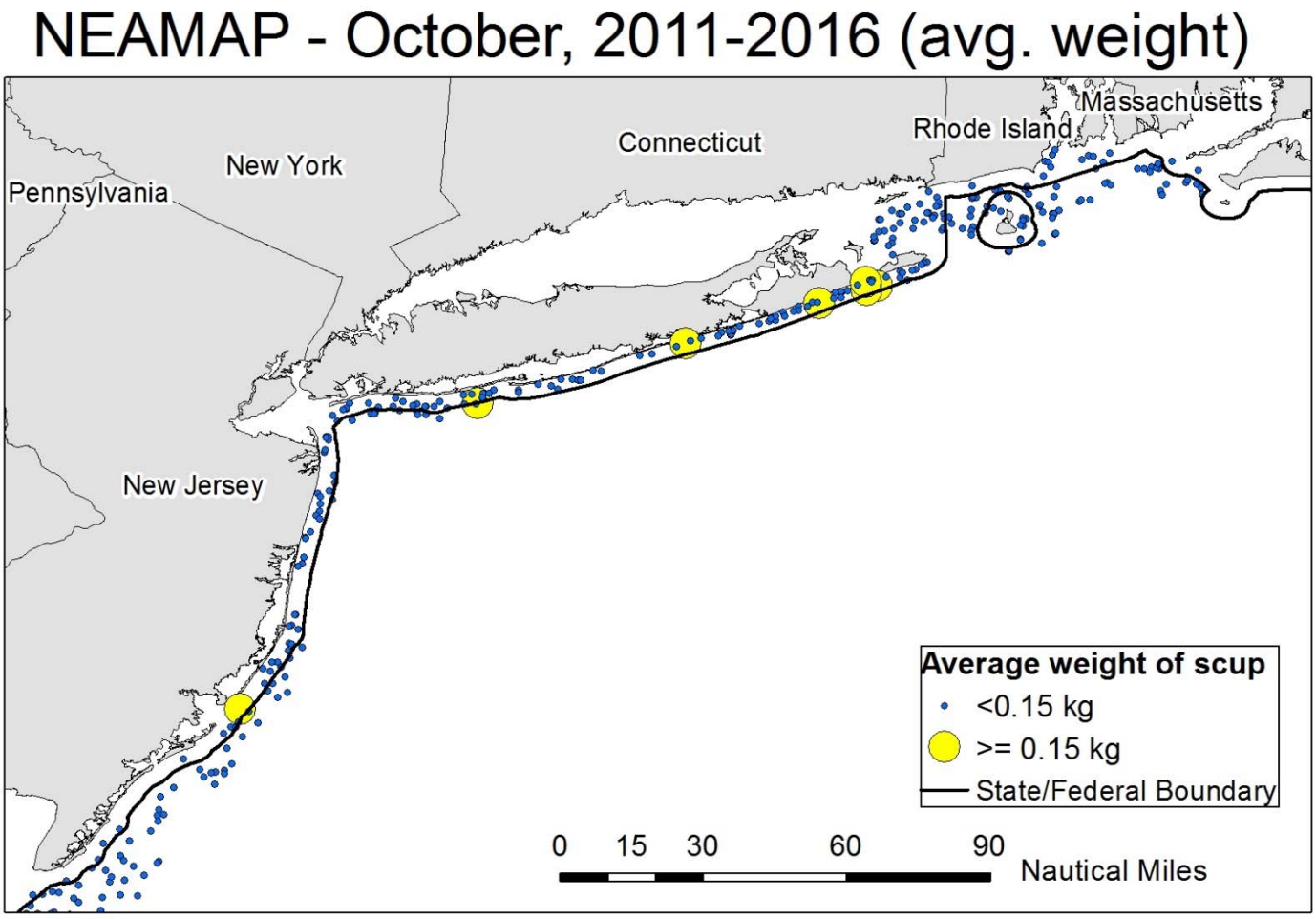

Figure 6: Average weight per scup in NEAMAP tows from Massachusetts through New Jersey, October, 2011-2016. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

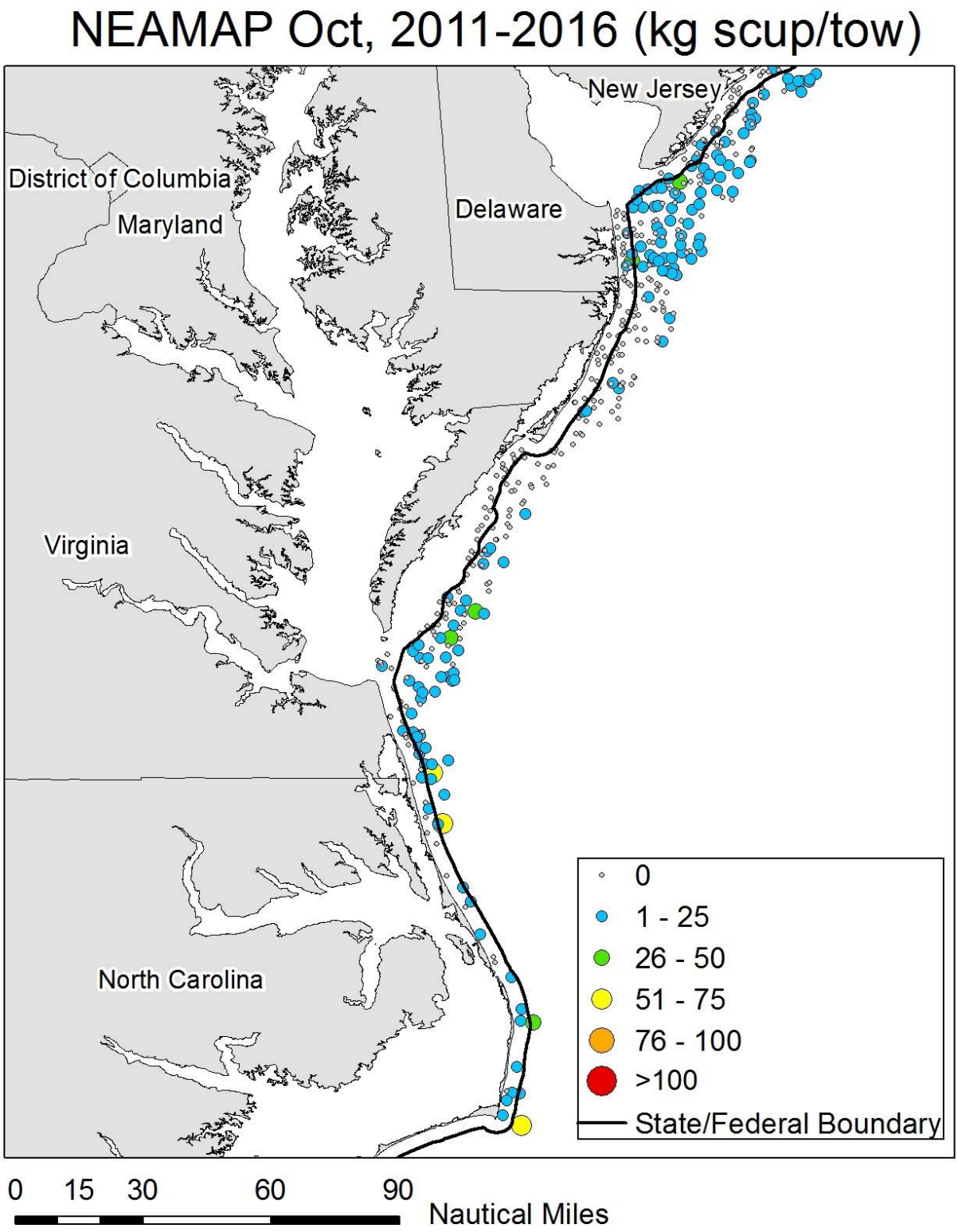

Figure 7: Scup catch per tow in October, 2011-2016, in the NEAMAP trawl survey off the states of Delaware through North Carolina.

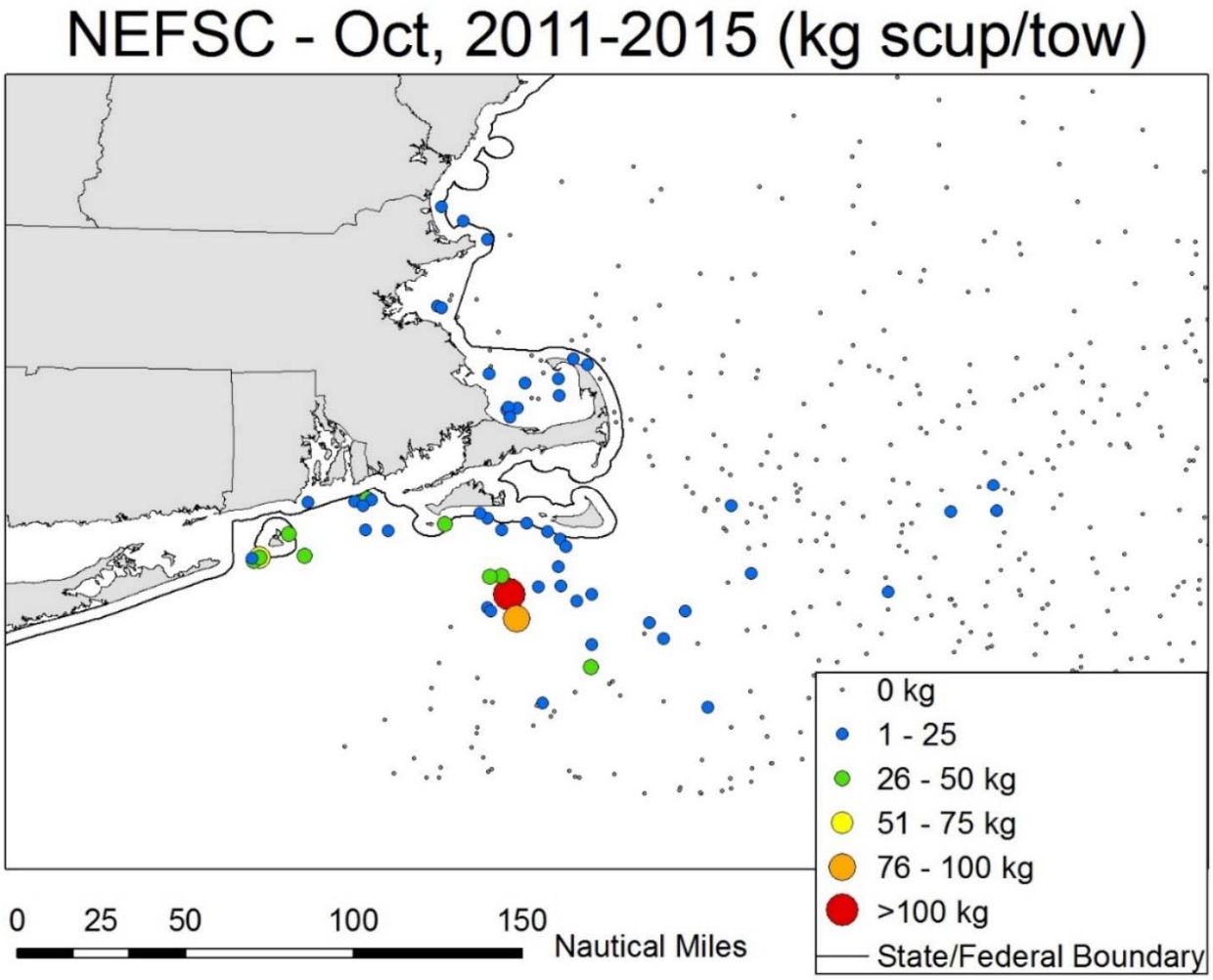

Figure 8: Scup catch per tow in October, 2011-2015, in the NEFSC fall bottom trawl survey.

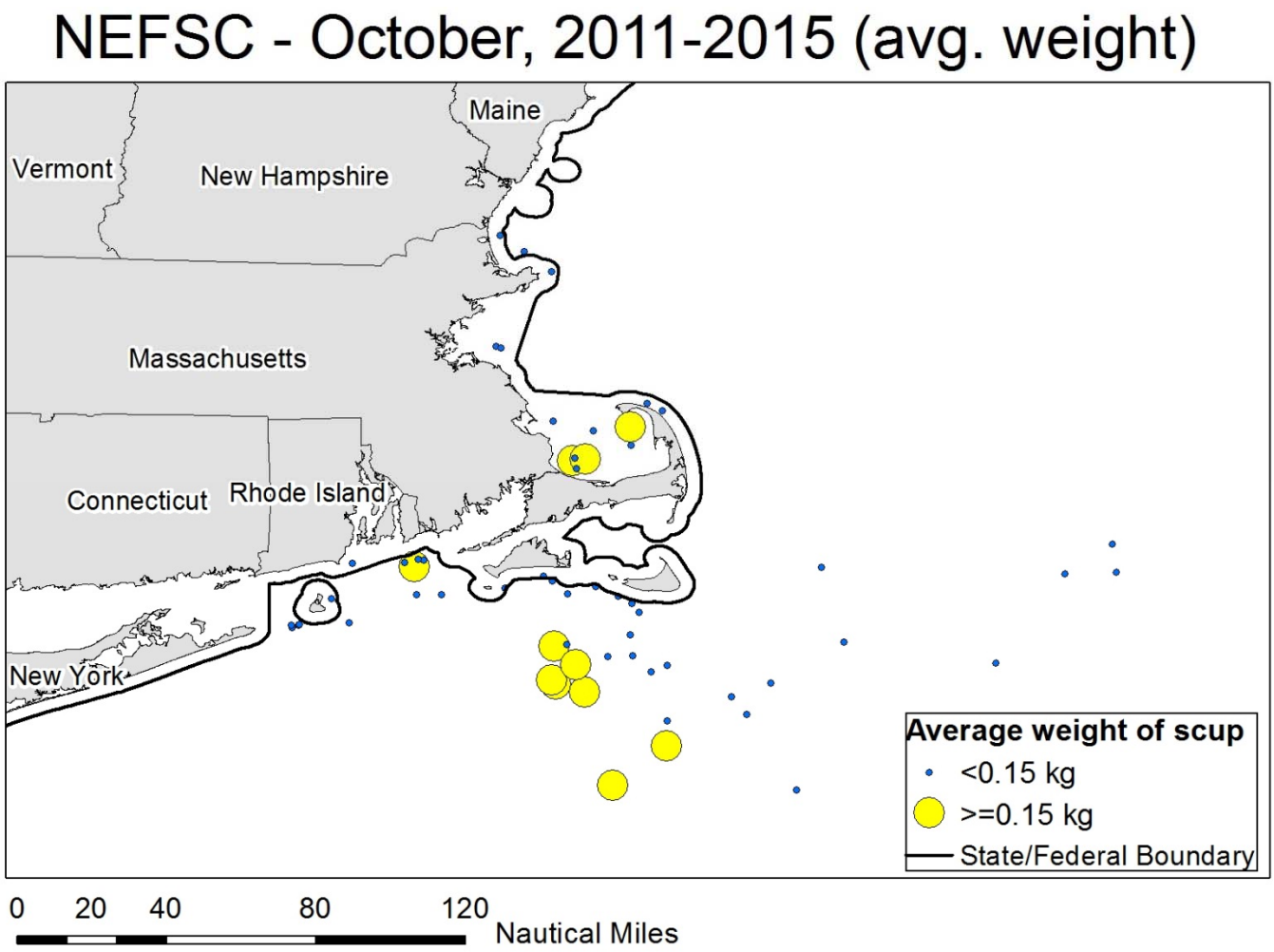

Figure 9: Average weight per scup in NEFSC fall bottom trawl survey tows, October, 2011-2015. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

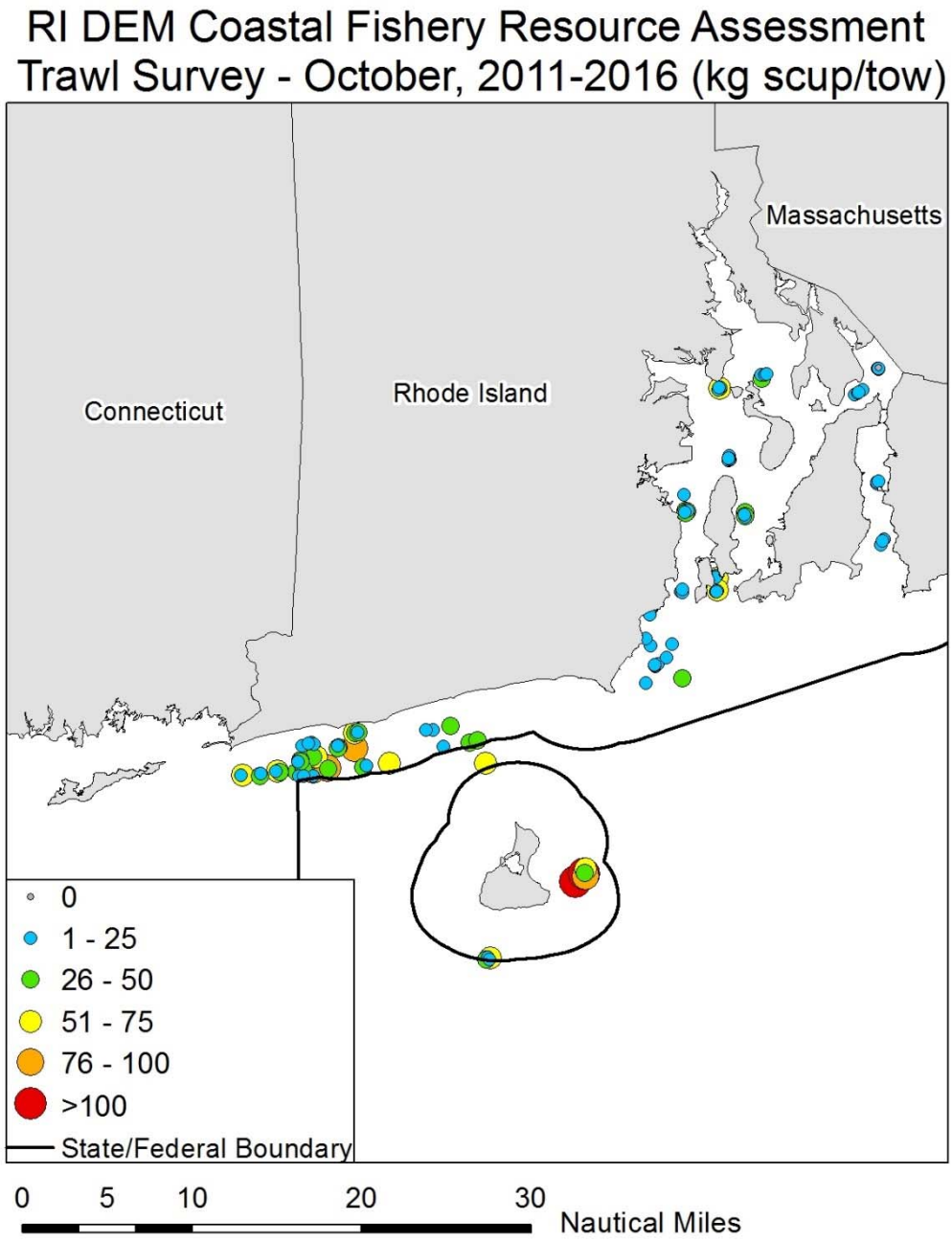

Figure 10: Scup catch per town in the RI DEM coastal fishery resource assessment trawl survey, during October, 2011-2016.

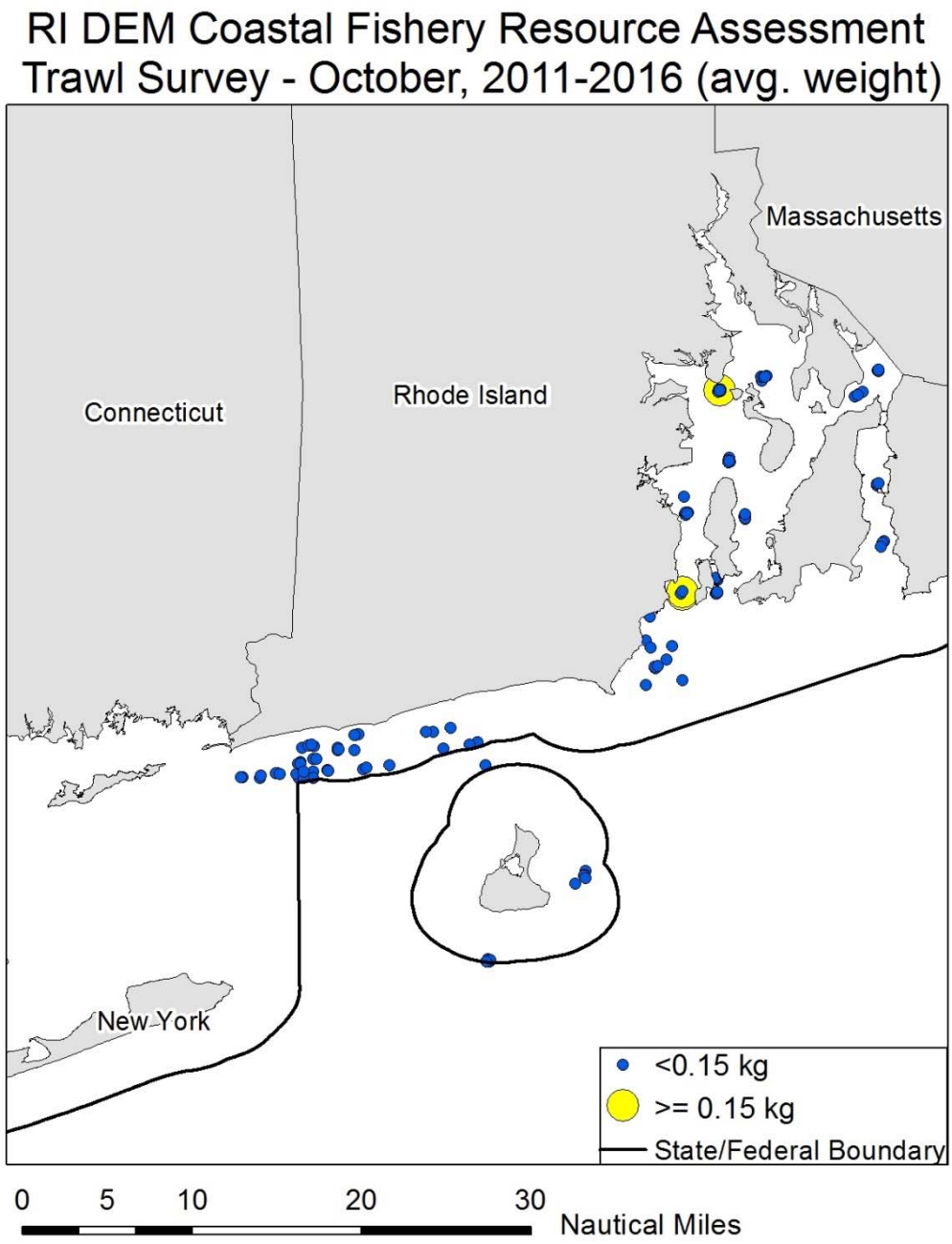

Figure 11: Average weight per scup in the RI DEM coastal fishery resource assessment trawl survey, October, 2011-2016. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

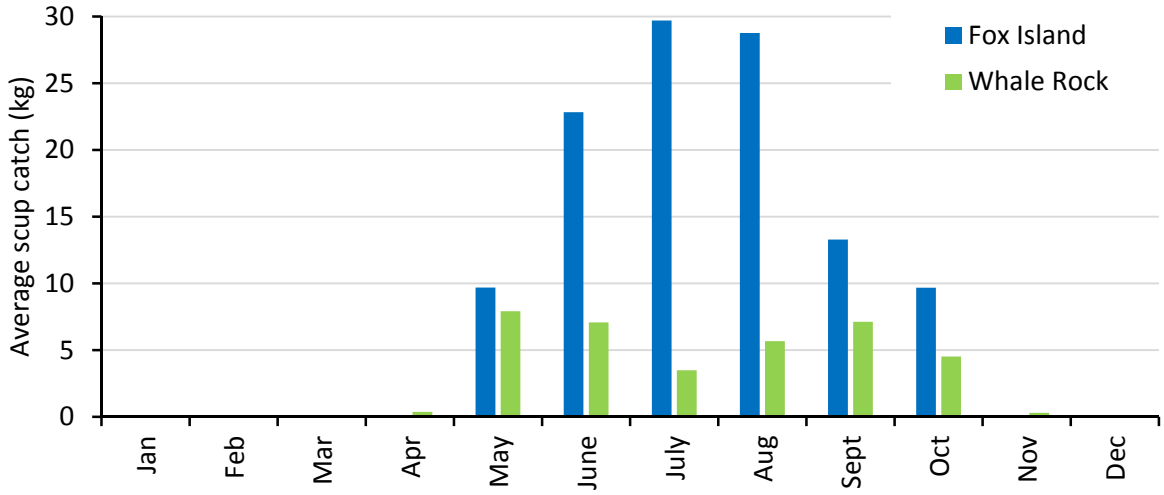

Figure 2: Average scup catch by month in the URI GSO Narragansett Bay fish trawl survey, 2011-2015.

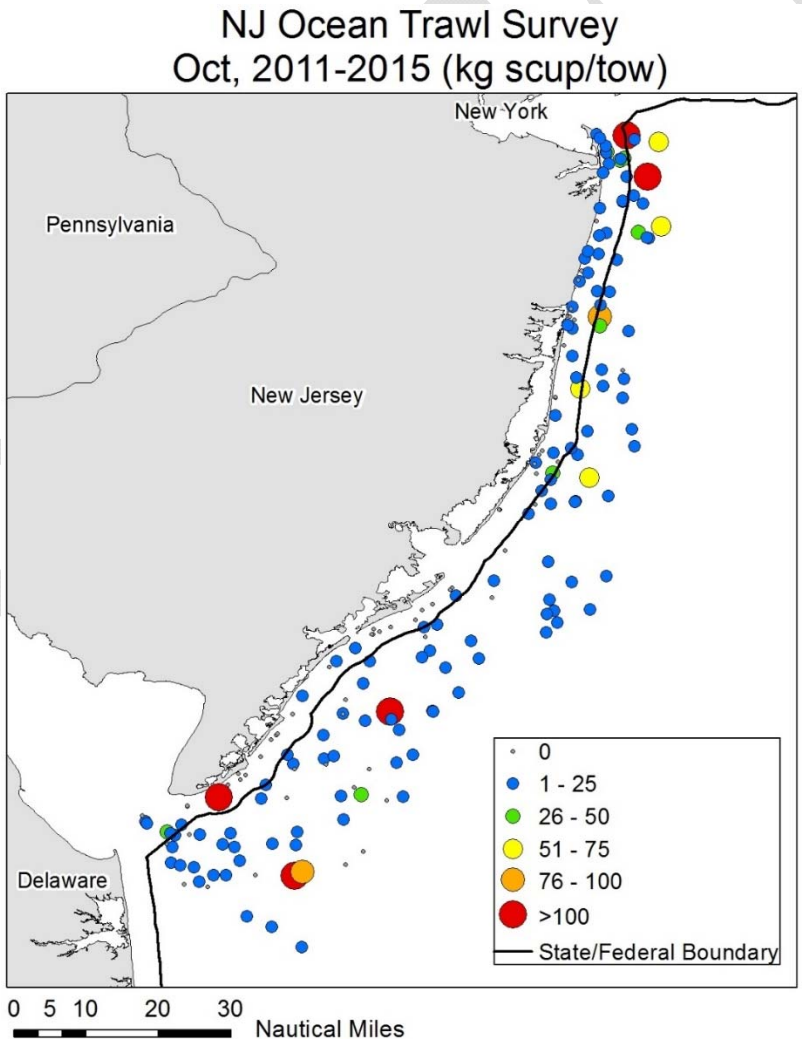

Figure 3: Scup catch per tow in October, 2011-2015, in the New Jersey Ocean Trawl Survey.

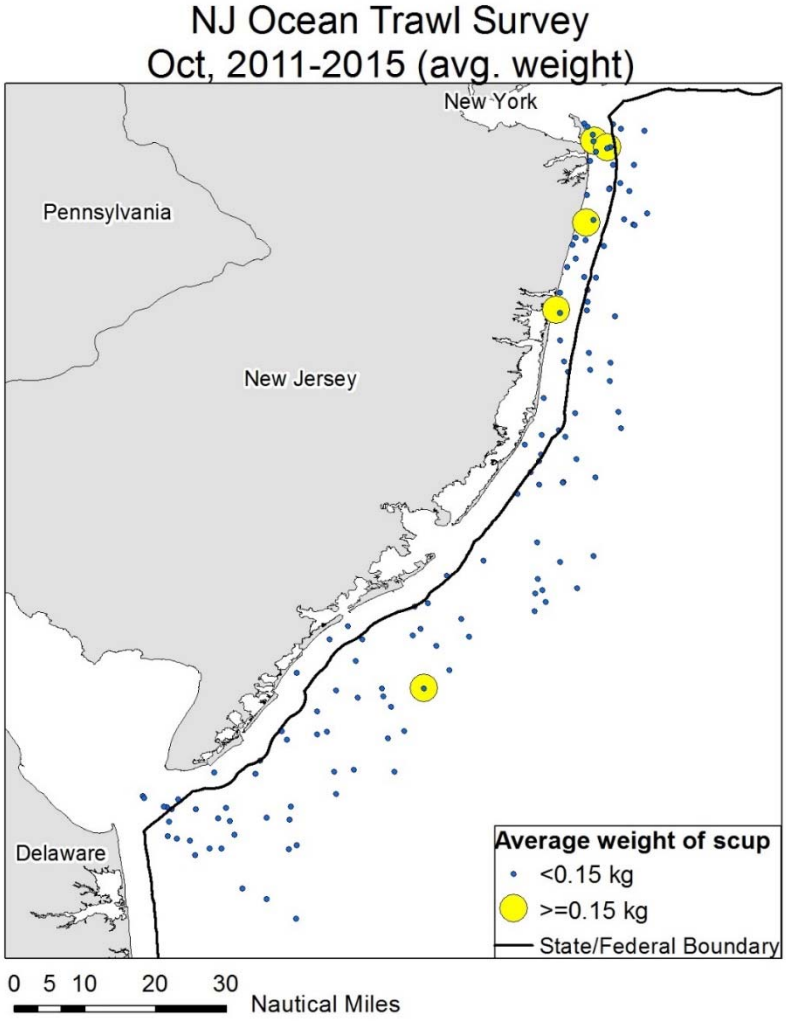

Figure 14: Average weight of scup caught in in the New Jersey Ocean Trawl Survey, October, 2011-2015. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

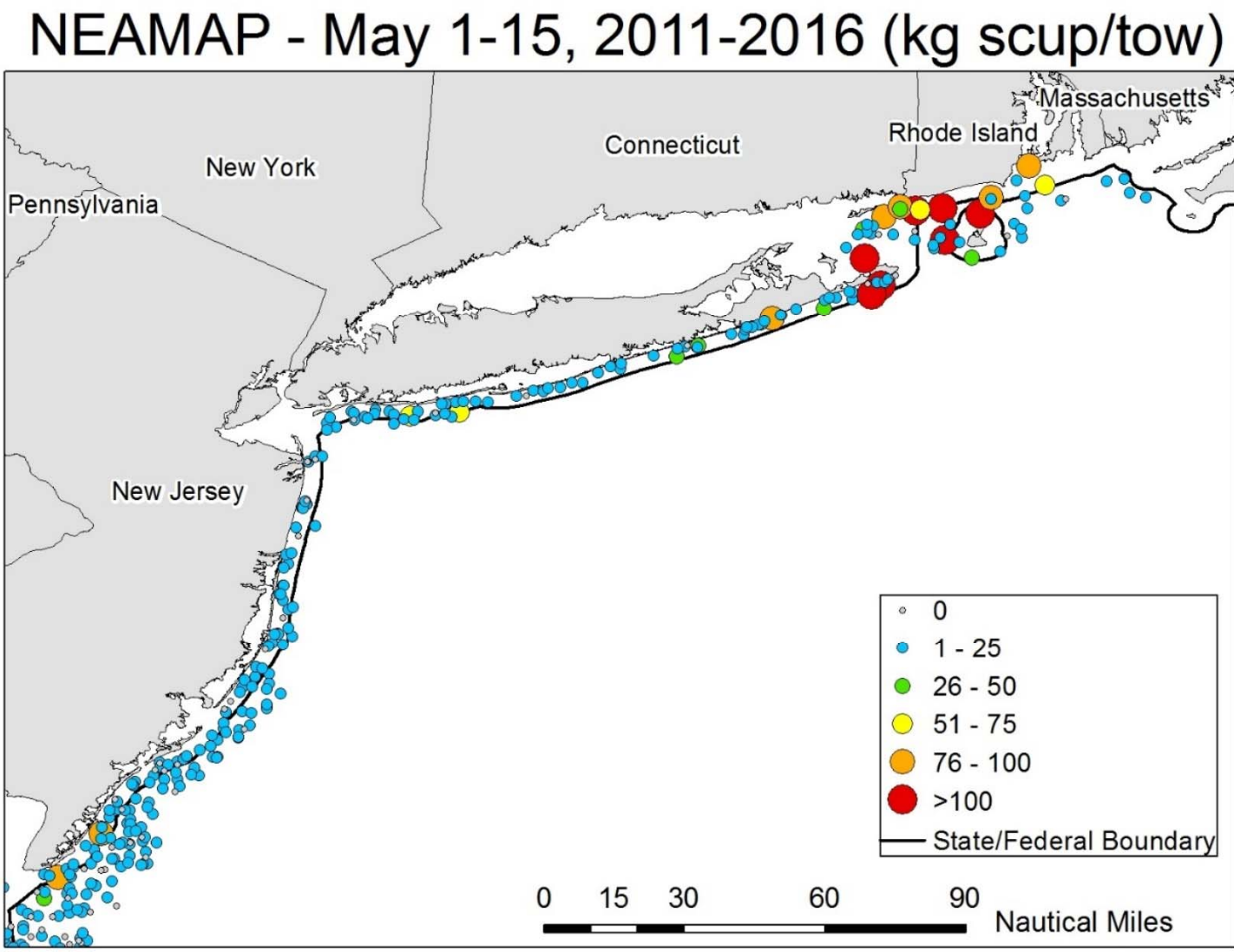

Figure 15: Scup catch per tow, May 1-15, 2011-2016, in the NEAMAP trawl survey off the states of Massachusetts through New Jersey.

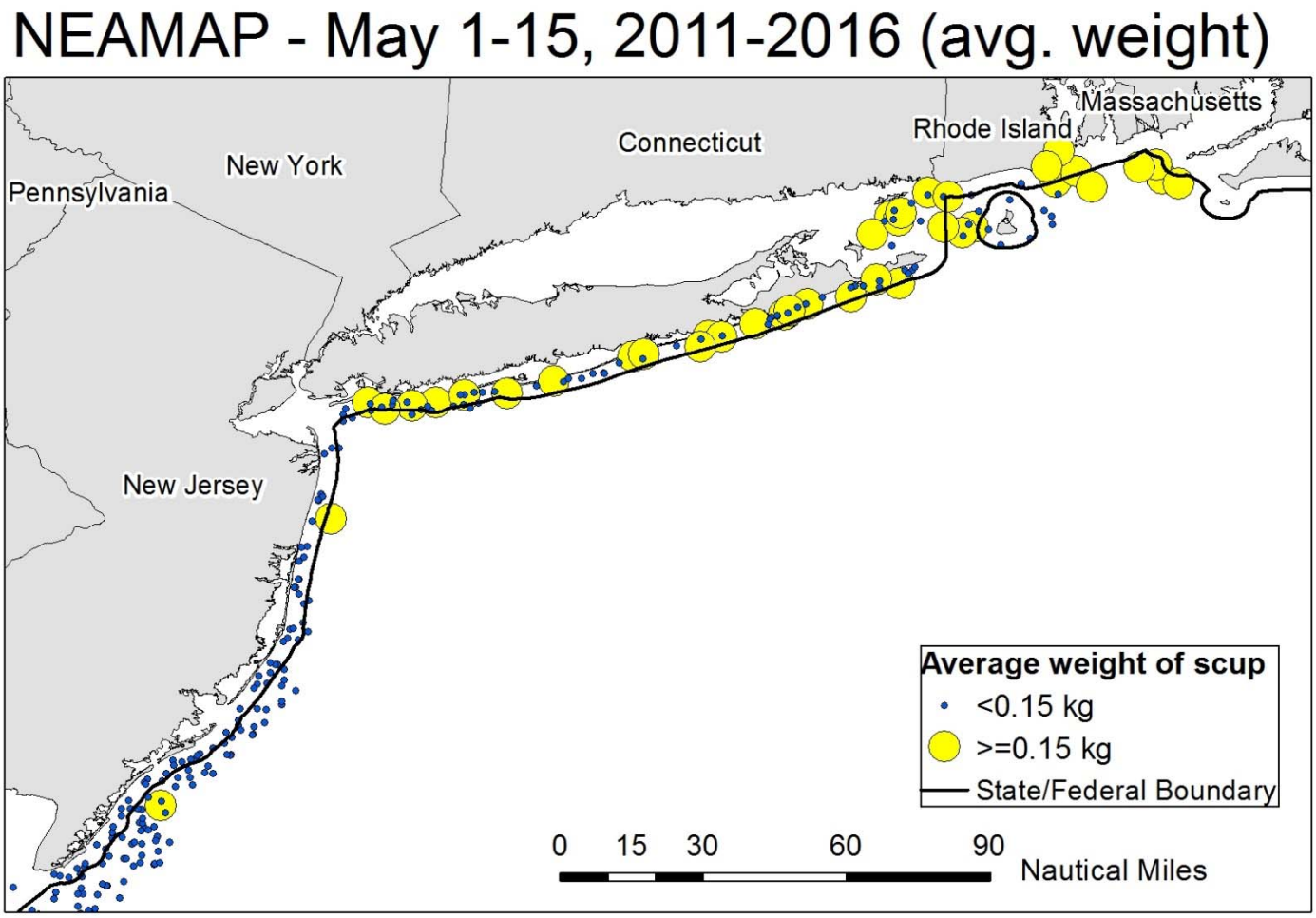

Figure 16: Average weight per scup in NEAMAP tows from Massachusetts through New Jersey, May 1-15, 2011-2016. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

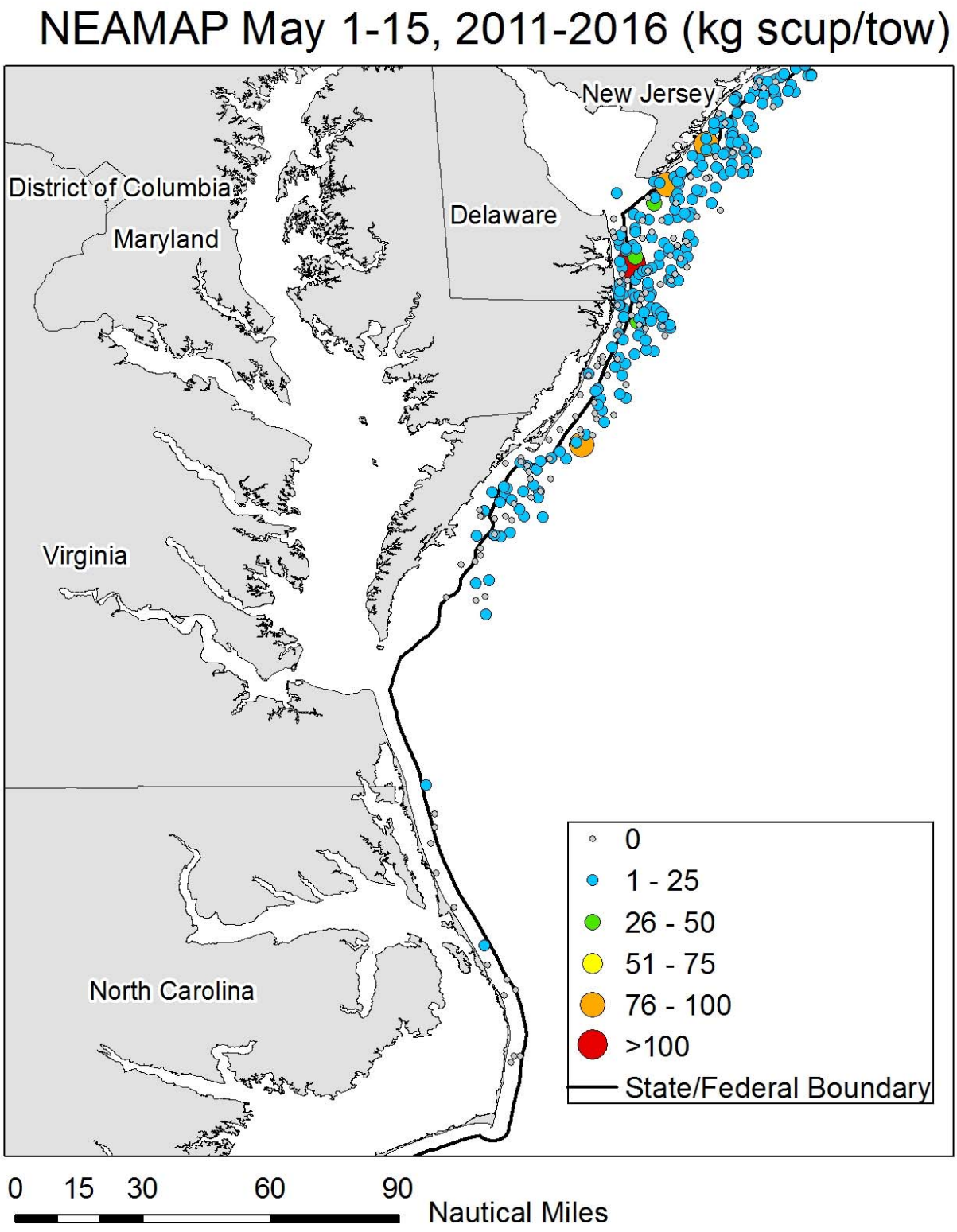

Figure 17: Scup catch per tow, May 1-15, 2011-2016, in the NEAMAP trawl survey off the states of Delaware through North Carolina.

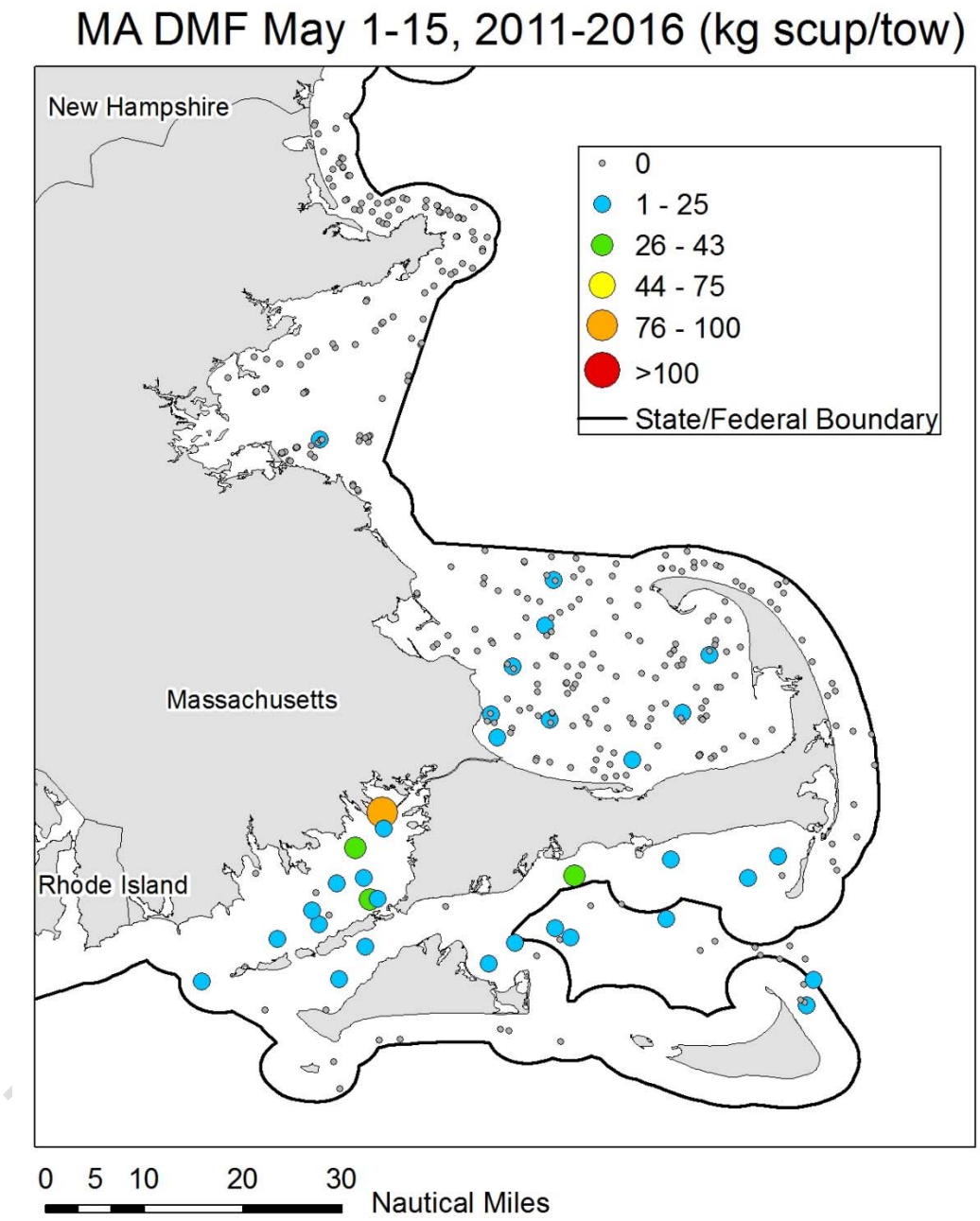

Figure 4: Scup catch per tow in the MA DMF spring trawl survey, May 1 – 15, 2011-2016.

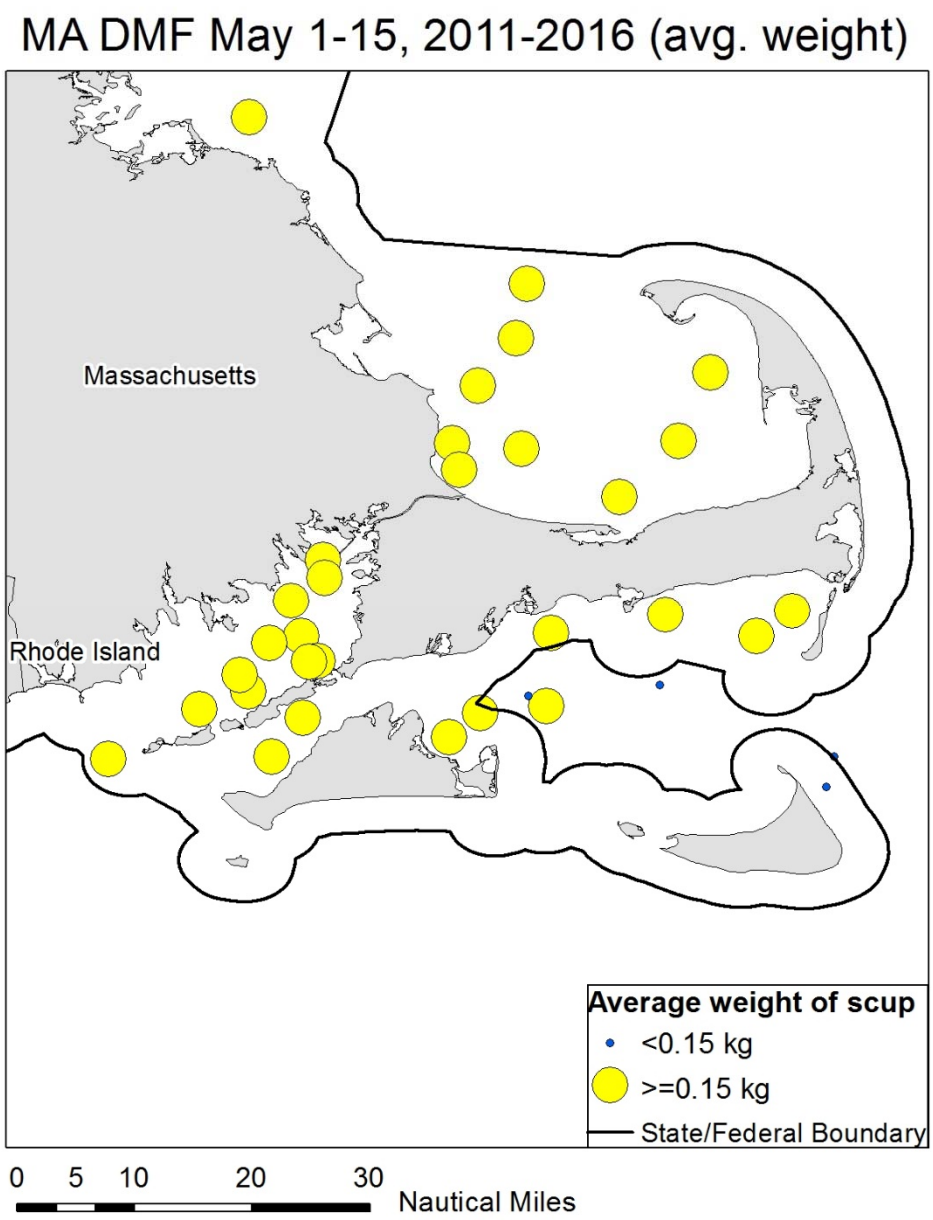

Figure 59: Average weight per scup in the MA DMF spring trawl survey, May 1 – 15, 2011-2016. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

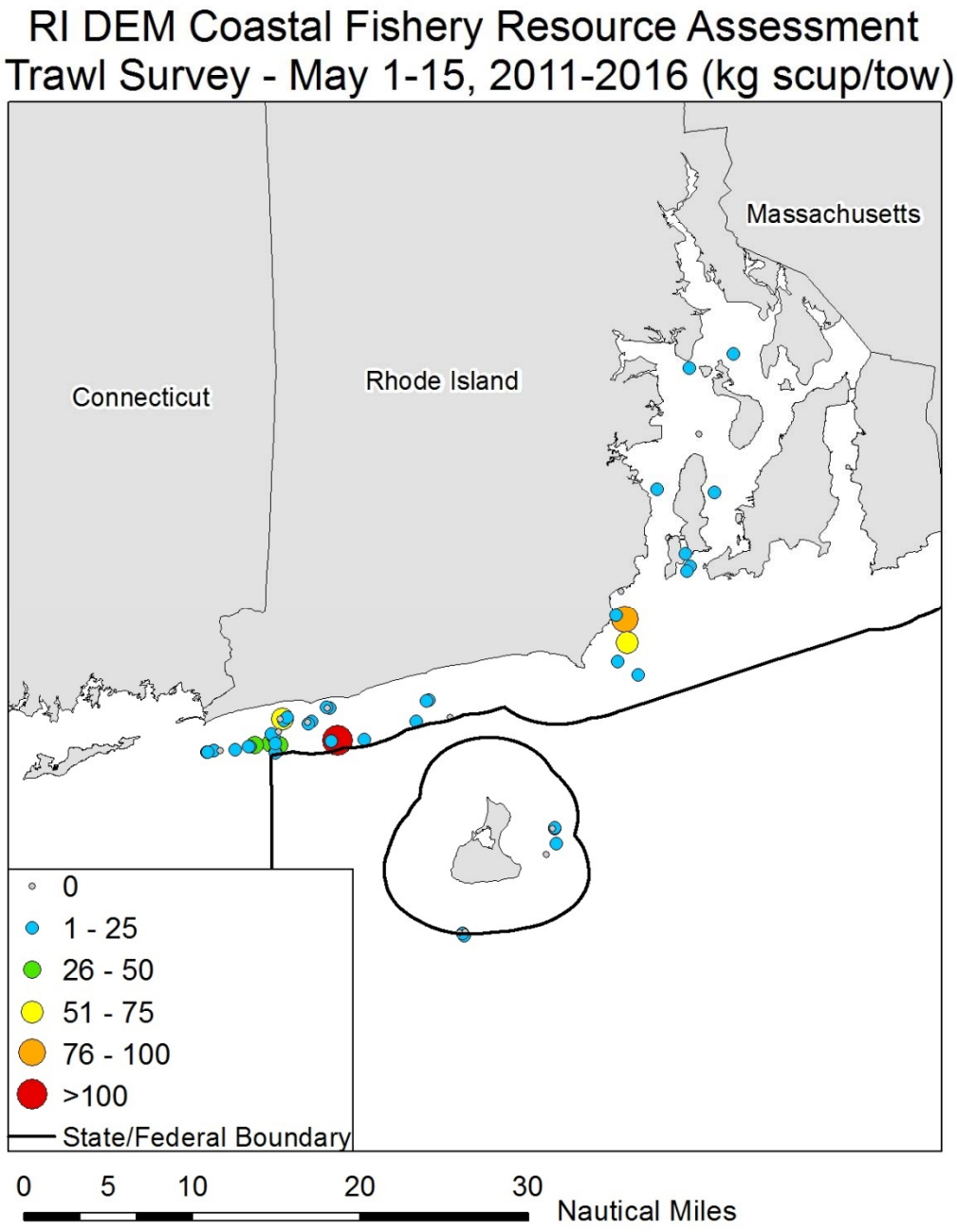

Figure 20: Scup catch per town in the RI DEM coastal fishery resource assessment trawl survey, May 1-15, 2011-2016.

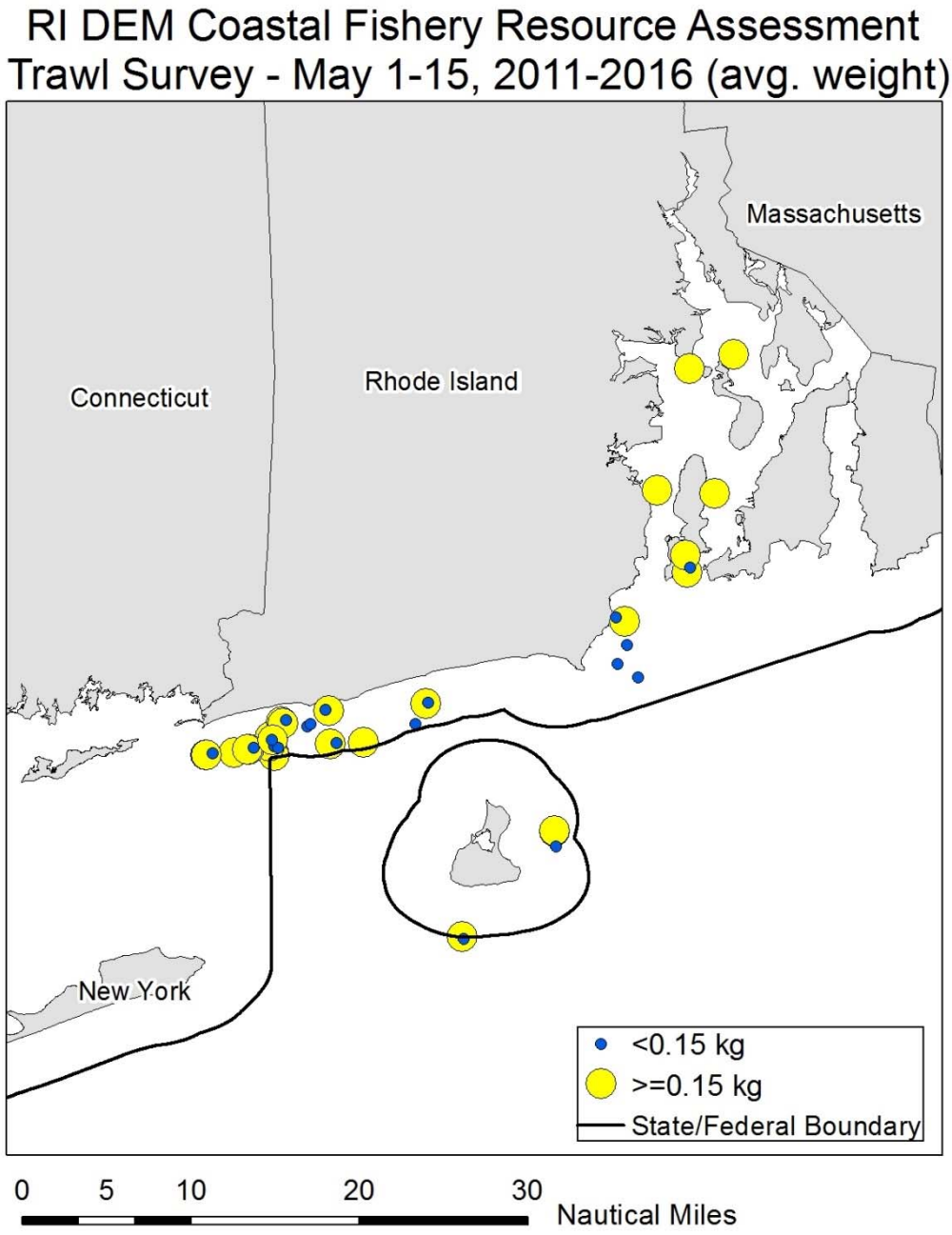

Figure 21: Average weight per scup in the RI DEM coastal fishery resource assessment trawl survey, May 1-15, 2011-2016. Average weights are shown as those less than 0.15 kg and those greater than or equal to 0.15 kg, which is approximately the weight of a scup that has reached the commercial minimum size of nine inches total length (based on Morse 1978 and Hamer 1979).

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MEMORANDUM

January 20, 2017

To: **Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board**

From: **Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Technical Committee**

RE: **TC Review of Draft Addendum XXVIII Options**

List of Participants

Greg Wojcik (CT)	T.D. Middlesworth (NC)	Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)
John Maniscalco (NY)	Mark Terceiro (NMFS)	
Peter Clarke (NJ)	Kiley Dancy (MAFMC)	Rich Wong (DE)
Angel Willey (MD)	Emily Gilbert (NMFS)	Bob Glenn (MA)

The following memo contains the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Technical Committee Review of the Draft Addendum XXVIII Options for the 2017 recreational fishery.

Draft Addendum XXVIII

The Board and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) approved Conservation Equivalency for managing the summer flounder recreational fishery in 2017 at their joint meeting in December 2016. Additionally, the Board approved Draft Addendum XXVIII for public comment. The Draft Addendum outlines the default management approach of the Summer Flounder FMP for Conservation Equivalency as well as offering alternative management approaches that include continuing regional management in 2017. The options in the draft addendum were developed to achieve harvest reductions agreed to by the Board and Council in August 2016.

Total estimated harvest for 2016 is projected to be 6.38 million pounds, exceeding the 2016 coastwide Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) and requiring a reduction of roughly 2.6 million pounds or approximately 41% to achieve the 2017 RHL of 3.77 million pounds. As the Board did not specify continuation of Addendum XXVII (2016) provisions for 2017, options in Draft Addendum XXVIII outline strategies to achieve the needed reductions by evaluating harvest performance at previously specified regional levels based in part on state-by-state allocations outlined in Addendum VIII (2004). Options 1-4 specify reductions by region to achieve a total coastwide reduction of 41%. Option 5 outlines broad management measure changes to reduce harvest by approximately 28-32% depending on how possession limit is specified for certain regions.

The TC met via conference call on January 19th to review the Draft Addendum options along with Terms of Reference (TORs) provided by Board Chair Mike Luisi, as well as consider concerns raised about the discrepancies between the language for options 2-4 and their associated tables outlining 2017 harvest targets, percent reductions, and example measures. The group reviewed tables provided by Nichola Meserve (Massachusetts Commissioner Proxy) highlighting the differences in language and numbers (Appendix A). In first addressing concerns on discrepancies in the options, the TC provided the following summary points:

- Members of the TC acknowledged that while the wording of the options 2-4 provide a set of reductions for regions of Rhode Island and Connecticut through New Jersey that differs from what is indicated in the associated tables in the draft addendum, the group was in agreement that the Summer Flounder Recreational Working Group (Rec WG) intended to enact the reductions as demonstrated in the tables, not the text. One of the reasons cited, was that the reduction as prescribed in options 2-4 would be more severe for Rhode Island than any other state or region on coast. For example, based on the wording of options 2-4, Rhode Island's reduction would be higher than indicated in the document's tables; for option 2, Rhode Island's reduction would increase from approximately -32% to -59%, for option 3 it would increase from -43% to -51%, and for option 4 it would increase from -43% to -58%. The TC members noted that the intent of the Rec WG was to have regions over their 2017 allocation based on projected 2016 harvest share the burden of the reduction and not have regional reductions higher than 50%.The current draft addendum language doesn't match that intent. **Note: Some of members of the Summer Flounder Recreational Working Group are also TC members.**

- TC members noted that if the language for options 2-4 were followed verbatim, the options would be virtually the same in their reduction amounts and measures. For example, options 3-4 set forth essentially the same reductions amounts for each region in both options. Option 2 is similar, but with different reduction amounts for the regions of Delaware through Virginia and North Carolina. One of the goals of the Rec WG was to make these options distinctly different so as to not confuse the public on one option vs another. A literal reading of options 2-4 would violate that goal.

- A key component of the wording for the options 2-4 that outline a different reduction than what is listed in the tables in the document is the last the line (underlined) "The regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest above their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (RI, CT–NJ) are responsible for the rest of the coastwide reduction…the remaining reduction is distributed among these regions according to the 1998-based proportions". TC members noted that while following the '98 allocations from Addendum VIII would make sense for allocating additional fish/harvest, using it to further apply reductions would be more punitive. For example, Rhode Island's projected harvest relative to coastwide harvest in 2016 is approximately 4.4%; the region of Connecticut-New Jersey's projected regional harvest in 2016 relative is approximately 83%. Allocating the additional reduction proportional to these regions treats their reduction burden equally relative to the coastwide harvest, when they account for significantly different percentages of it.

- Overall, TC members voiced concern with the language in the draft addendum for options 2-4 for how the reduction should be taken by the regions over their collective 2017 allocation ('98 harvest proportions from Addendum VIII) based on projected 2016 harvest. Some of the TC members recommended that the language for those options should be re-worded to achieve the intent of the Rec WG.

Following the discussion on the discrepancy in language vs tables information, the TC considered all of the options relative to the TORs. Below is the TC's summary points for each TOR:

1. *Evaluate the effectiveness and predictability of crafting measures with the current standard methodology (minimum size limits, possession limits, open seasons), using the previous year's harvest data, to control harvest the following year.*

The TC expressed concern over the predictability of crafting measures to achieve a specified harvest target at the state or regional level through the conventional tools (minimum size limits, possession limits, open seasons) and methodology (Total Reduction = (**X**+**Y**) - (**X***__Y__); **X** = The percentage decrease associated with seasonal closure(s). **Y**=the percentage decrease associated with size/possession limit) using the previous year's harvest data to constrain the following year's harvest. Harvest estimates have varied by approximately 50% in the last 3 years at the coastwide level (2.5 million – 1.6 million fish) under nearly identical measures, and volatility increases as one considers estimates at the regional or state level.

In considering the predictability of crafting measures to achieve the coastwide harvest, it's important to note that the survey has continually changed in sampling design and estimation over time. Initiated in 1979, MRFSS (Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey) on the Atlantic Coast has undergone a number of changes including the implementation of the For-Hire Survey in 2003. It was recognized by the NRC in 2006 that the then-current sampling design and catch estimation method was resulting in biased estimates. Subsequently, in 2012 catch estimates from 2004-2011 were improved, the sampling design was updated in 2013, and MRFSS was replaced with the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). Coastwide state (vs. contractor) conduct of catch sampling (APAIS or Access Point Angler Intercept Survey) began in 2016. For the purposes of management the survey has been treated as a single consistent time series, but this is not the case. The continued changes in the MRIP methodology creates instability in the data and presents further challenges to crafting measures based on the data.

The TC noted that another important challenge to crafting measures based on MRIP data is that MRIP generates harvest estimates, which include both a point estimate and a measure of precision. The current methodology makes little allowances for consideration of the percent standard error (PSE). Instead of being able to evaluate the projected harvest to the actual harvest (i.e. commercial landings), the TC's evaluation of past performance is always looking at inherently uncertain estimates to predict future harvest estimates that are equally uncertain. In addition, due to the timeline of events, the Technical Committee works almost exclusively with preliminary harvest data when performance is ultimately weighed against the final estimates not available until months later. This creates problems for truly validating the performance of measures. These challenges are not unique to summer flounder (similar issues exist for crafting management measures for other recreationally caught species), but given that summer flounder is one of the best sampled species

on the coast, a fair assumption would be that harvest estimates should be less variable year to year for this species. Recent years' data demonstrates that this is not the case.

2. *Evaluate the utility and/or pitfalls of using any single year as a baseline for making state-specific harvest allocations.*

Basing allocations upon any single year of recreational harvest estimates is problematic because it does not account for inter-annual variability or non-random changes over time. Inter-annual variability could be a result of many factors; including survey variability (in both catch and effort sampling), fish availability to anglers, and fishing effort due to weather, regulations, or fuel costs; among other things. Non-random change in harvest estimates could result from unrecognized survey changes (as briefly outlined above), or changes in the distribution and/or demographics of a species. The variability in the last 3 years (2014-2016) of recreational summer flounder harvest estimates, coastwide swings of 50% year to year, could be influenced by both stochastic variability and survey changes such as the implementation of state conduct of APAIS.

The 1998 baseline year is now almost 20 years old. When it was established, MRFSS harvest estimates indicated that Virginia harvested 16.7% of the coastwide total while Connecticut harvested 3.7% under the same exact regulations. Since then, harvest estimates have changed along the coast significantly along with fishing regulations, stock characteristics and distribution, and survey execution and estimation. Connecticut currently (2014-2016) has an open season one third as long as Virginia, and a minimum size limit 2 inches larger. Under these more restrictive rules, over the last 3 years, average Connecticut harvest is greater than Virginia's. A single historical year not only fails to account for unpredictable variation but also does not capture system wide changes.

3. *Are reduction targets (such as those found in Options 1-4) achievable with any degree of confidence using the standard methodology? Does the Committee have a basis for determining how much more effective those options may be at constraining coastwide harvest when compared to broad stroke measures such as those proposed in Option 5?*

The TC agreed that Option 5 was more likely to achieve a ~30% harvest reduction than Options 1 through 4 were likely to achieve a 41% reduction, mainly due to the fact that given all of the variability in the information on which the reduction calculations are based, the ability to achieve a more modest goal is believed to have a higher probability of being realized than a more conservative goal. Option 5 is based upon broad strokes to reduce harvest through universal minimum size increases and consistent lower possession limits. In addition to decreasing the number of fish harvested, the minimum size limit increases may grant some protection to younger year classes and it is hoped that smaller possession limits will reduce MRIP variability by dampening the inflammatory potential of heavily weighted intercepts. The measures proposed in Option 5 also continue the progress towards equitable access that have occurred under regional management thus far. In contrast, Options 1 through 4 distribute reduction burden based upon performance relative to 1998 allocations and would in some cases further exacerbate disparity among state regulations. Options 1 through 4 generally place the heaviest reduction burdens on RI and the CT-

NJ Region, although in many cases other states/regions are taking ~30% reductions. RI and CT-NJ are likely to employ size limit, possession limit, and season length to achieve the required reductions but it is not possible to determine how effective those changes will be. While the reduction value of changes to bag and season can be "calculated" as part of the standard methodology, the actual impact on harvest and harvest estimates is far less certain. We have seen that variability in actual harvest and in harvest estimates is high, and large reductions in a small number of states/regions may not be realized whereas the broad measures in Option 5 are more likely to be effective in at least some portions of the coast.

4. *In light of the results of the prior explorations, what level of confidence does the TC/MC have in using the standard methodology to manage recreational fisheries in the future?*

The standard methodology is problematic for a large number of reasons, many already pointed out above. Harvest estimates are highly variable from year to year, even when recreational measures have not changed. This was apparent in 2014-2016 under coastwide consistent measures. At the individual state level, when no changes were made to recreational measures, harvest estimates changed in 29 out of 30 cases (ranging from - 68% to +261%).

In attempting to manage the recreational fishery in a manner similar to the commercial fishery, assumptions about data accuracy and precision are being made that are not true. The RHL is provided as a target, based upon the stock assessment and fixed through the Council specification process. Up until this point, uncertainty in many different forms has been considered and no single data source predominates. By comparison, recreational management utilizes only preliminary MRIP harvest point estimates, sans measures of uncertainty, to attempt to predict/constrain future harvest point estimates.

It is very difficult to measure the effect that changing individual measures has on harvest estimates because it is rare that only one aspect (size, season or bag) has been manipulated, confounding the data. Increasing the size limit ought to result in less landed fish, resulting in some benefit to the stock. However, the relationship between size limit change and MRIP harvest estimate change (size change $\neq 0$, combined with little or no other changes made to measures) is weak and not significant ($P>0.05$, $R^2 = 0.10$, $n=23$). Change in season length (subsetting the data for no size limit change, minimal change to bag limit, and ± at least 1 day) was also not significantly related to changes in harvest estimate ($P>0.05$, $R^2 = 0.21$, $n=17$). Reducing season should reduce harvest by limiting effort. However, the value of days added or removed to a season is highly inconstant because of the potential for recoupment and the fact that data resolution forces us to consider all days within a wave to be equal (an assumption that is most likely violated). Possession limit is perhaps the hardest measure to judge effectively. Few anglers "limit out" but the perception is that when a possession limit becomes too low, angler interest fades. Individual angler experience may not change, but the for-hire industry and fishing retail businesses may suffer. The sample size of less confounded possession limit changes is insufficient to conduct an analysis. Besides a tenuous conservation benefit, reasonably low possession limits may decrease the influence that heavily weighted intercepts can have on harvest estimates. A multi-variate analysis of the impact changing recreational measures has had on harvest estimates would increase our ability to judge the effectiveness of the standard methodology. The technical committee's efforts are currently time-

constrained but looking at single factors (above) suggest that the standard methodology has performed poorly.

The TC notes there is limited time annually to undertake more extensive analysis due to the timing of when data becomes available and when the Board must make management decisions. For example, preliminary harvest estimates through wave 5 did not become available until after the Joint Board and Council meeting in December 2016 (December 16th). It is expected that preliminary data and past year's performance will be evaluated to predict the current year's performance in preparation for the ASMFC Winter Meeting. The TC has only a couple of weeks to conduct analysis during which time holidays and public comment and hearings for addenda take place. Both the timetable and data limitations, as previously stated, limit the TC's ability to fully evaluate the data and provide recommendations to effectively constraint harvest to an annual changing target.

The Technical Committee recognizes the 2013 summer flounder stock assessment and its updates through 2016 as the best available science. The assessment utilizes numerous indices and multiple catch time series. The TC agrees with the findings of the recent stock assessments for summer flounder that the resource is declining in abundance and that associated management changes are need to address this issue, in this case a reduction in the RHL. The TC recommends uniform adjustments from 2016 management measures, similar to those proposed in Option 5, to reduce harvest and fishing mortality. Given the variability of recent coastwide harvest point estimates under consistent measures (±50%), the unconsidered measures of precision surrounding those point estimates (~8%), and the poor track record of the standard methodology demonstrated in the analyses above, the TC feels that the changes made to measures under Option 5 will reduce harvest in an equitable manner without imposing undue harm to the recreational fishery.

Harvest by recreational fisheries should be heavily dependent upon fish availability so a declining population should result in declining harvest. MRIP harvest estimates do not show this trend over the last 3 years but it is only a single source of information. Consistent recreational summer flounder measures over the last 3 years has provided the Board and the TC with a new opportunity to evaluate MRIP data and determine how it is used in the future by all levels of management. The TC recommends that measures suggested under Option 5 be put in place and be allowed to remain constant until review of the next benchmark assessment results, unless future updates warrant immediate action.

While this document focuses heavily upon summer flounder, its conclusions probably apply to all recreational fisheries. Summer flounder is relatively well sampled by MRIP, and therefore the resulting harvest estimates should be relatively robust when compared to other species.

Hypocritical Math:
Using the standard methodology for calculating the reduction value of changes to measures, a 1 inch size increase combined with lower possession limits (3 fish specifically in CT-NJ) coastwide results in a ~31% reduction in 2016 harvest estimates.

Under consistent measures from 2014-2016, coastwide harvest estimates average ~6.2 million pounds requiring a 39% reduction to meet the 2017 RHL. The PSE associated with harvest estimates

of summer flounder from the North and Mid-Atlantic States is ~8%, placing the projected 2017 harvest under Option 5 within a single Standard Error of the 2017 RHL.

Appendix A.

Option 2: One-Inch Size Increase as a Minimum Reduction

This option starts by applying a one-inch minimum size increase to all regions, and projecting the regional harvests that would occur in 2017. For regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest below their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (MA, DE–VA, NC), the 2017 projected regional harvest (under a one-inch size increase) becomes their 2017 harvest target. Reduction rates for these regions are then calculated. The regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest above their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (RI, CT–NJ) are responsible for the rest of the coastwide reduction that is needed to not exceed the 2017 RHL. The remaining reduction is distributed among these regions according to the 1998-based allocations proportionally.

Option 2 Table (AS DESCRIBED IN TEXT)

	2016 Projected Harvest	2017 Allocation	Reduction from 1" Size Increase	Projected Harvest from 1" Increase	Remaining Fish to Cut	1998 Proportions	Scaled Proportions	Additional Fish to Cut	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	68,161	31%	39,083					39,083	-31%
RI	92,821	70,639	32%	63,118		5.7%	8.6%	25,040	38,078	-59%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	748,529	27%	1,271,103		60.4%	91.4%	265,339	1,005,764	-42%
DE-VA	191,636	282,557	25%	143,727					143,727	-25%
NC	17,074	69,400	26%	12,635					12,635	-26%
Total	2,099,410	1,239,286		1,529,666	290,380			290,380	1,239,286	

Yellow= indicates difference with document language/information

Option 2 Table (AS PRESENTED IN THE DRAFT ADDENDUM)

	2016 Projected Harvest	Reduction from 1" Size Increase	Projected Harvest from 1" Increase	2017 Allocation	Extra Fish To Share	1998 Proportions	Scaled Proportions	Received Fish	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	31%	39,083	68,161	29,078				39,083	-31%
RI	92,821	32%	63,118	70,639	7,521				63,118	-32%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	27%	1,271,103	748,529		60.4%	100.0%	232,194	980,723	-44%
DE-VA	191,636	25%	143,727	282,557	138,830				143,727	-25%
NC	17,074	26%	12,635	69,400	56,765				12,635	-26%
Total	2,099,410		1,529,666	1,239,286	232,194			232,194	1,239,286	

Option 3: 30% Reduction as a Minimum

This option starts by applying a 30% harvest reduction to all regions' 2016 projected harvest (based on the 30% reduction in the 2017 RHL). For the regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest below their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (MA, DE–VA, NC), the 30% reduction establishes their 2017 harvest target. The regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest above their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (RI, CT–NJ) are responsible for the rest of the coastwide reduction that is needed to not exceed the 2017 RHL. The remaining reduction is distributed among these regions according to the 1998-based proportions.

Option 3 Table (AS DESCRIBED IN TEXT)

	2016 Projected Harvest	2017 Allocation	Initial Uniform 30% Reduction	Projected Harvest from 30% Cut	Remaining Fish to Cut	1998 Proportions	Scaled Proportions	Additional Fish to Cut	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	68,161	30%	39,649					39,649	-30%
RI	92,821	70,639	30%	64,975		5.7%	8.6%	19,860	45,115	-51%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	748,529	30%	1,218,866		60.4%	91.4%	210,441	1,008,425	-42%
DE-VA	191,636	282,557	30%	134,145					134,145	-30%
NC	17,074	69,400	30%	11,952					11,952	-30%
Total	2,099,410	1,239,286		1,469,587	230,301			230,301	1,239,286	

Yellow= indicates difference with document language/information

Option 3 Table (AS PRESENTED IN THE DRAFT ADDENDUM)

	2016 Projected Harvest	2017 Allocation	Reduction for Regions < 2017 Allocation	Projected Harvest from 30% Cut	Remaining RHL	Remaining Reduction Needed (%)	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	68,161	30%	39,649			39,649	-30%
RI	92,821	70,639					53,319	-43%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	748,529					1,000,221	-43%
DE-VA	191,636	282,557	30%	134,145			134,145	-30%
NC	17,074	69,400	30%	11,952			11,952	-30%
Total	2,099,410	1,239,286		185,746	1,053,540	-43%	1,239,286	

Option 4: One-inch Size Increase and 30% Reduction as a Minimums

This option starts by applying a one-inch size increase to all regions, and projecting the regional harvests that would occur in 2017. For regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest below their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (MA, DE–VA, NC), if a one-inch size increase achieves a 30% reduction, the 2017 projected regional harvest becomes their 2017 harvest target. If less than a 30% reduction is achieved, the region must further reduce its harvest target (i.e., tighten regulations) to achieve a 30% reduction. If more than a 30% reduction is achieved, the region may increase its harvest target (i.e., loosen other regulations) to achieve a 30% reduction. The regions with their combined 2016 projected harvest above their combined 1998-based allocations for 2017 (RI, CT–NJ) are responsible for the rest of the coastwide reduction that is needed to not exceed the 2017 RHL. The remaining reduction is distributed among these regions according to the 1998-based proportions.

Option 4 Table (AS DESCRIBED IN TEXT)

	2016 Projected Harvest	2017 Allocation	Reduction from 1" Size Increase	Reduction for Regions< 2017 Allocation	Projected Harvest	Remaining Fish to Cut	1998 Proportions	Scaled Proportions	Additional Fish to Cut	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	68,161	31%	30%	39,649					39,649	-30%
RI	92,821	70,639	32%		63,118		5.7%	8.6%	24,204	38,914	-58%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	748,529	27%		1,271,103		60.4%	91.4%	256,477	1,014,626	-42%
DE-VA	191,636	282,557	25%	30%	134,145					134,145	-30%
NC	17,074	69,400	26%	30%	11,952					11,952	-30%
Total	2,099,410	1,239,286			1,519,968	280,681			280,681	1,239,286	

Yellow= indicates difference with document language/information

Option 4 Table (AS PRESENTED IN THE DRAFT ADDENDUM)

	2016 Projected Harvest	Reduction from 1" Size Increase	Reduction for Regions< 2017 Allocation	Projected Harvest	2017 Allocation	Remaining RHL	Remaining Reduction Needed (%)	2017 Target	Percent Reduction
MA	56,642	31%	30%	39,649	68,161			39,649	-30%
RI	92,821	32%			70,639			53,319	-43%
CT-NJ	1,741,237	27%			748,529			1,000,221	-43%
DE-VA	191,636	25%	30%	134,145	282,557			134,145	-30%
NC	17,074	26%	30%	11,952	69,400			11,952	-30%
Total	2,099,410			185,746	1,239,286	1,053,540	-43%	1,239,286	

DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIII TO THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, AND BLACK SEA BASS

PUBLIC HEARINGS SUMMARIES

Date	Location
January 3, 2017	Berlin, Maryland
January 5, 2017	Galloway, New Jersey
January 9, 2017	East Setauket, New York
January 9, 2017	Morehead City, North Carolina*
January 10, 2017	Old Lyme, Connecticut
January 11, 2017	Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts
January 12, 2017	Narragansett, Rhode Island
January 12, 2017	Newport News, Virginia
January 17, 2017	Dover, Delaware

January 2017

*Public Hearing was scheduled in North Carolina for January 9th but there were no members of the public present.

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Maryland
Ocean Pines Library
Berlin, Maryland

1/3/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (12 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)
David Blazer (ASMFC Commissioner)
Steve Doctor (MD DNR)

Summary:

Fifteen members of the public provided public comment. A majority of these individuals indicated their preference for Option 2 (One-Inch Size Increase a minimum reduction) under the Alternative Management Approaches. Reasons cited including an interest in sharing the burden of the coastwide reduction with other states and regions along the coast. While there was support for the option, individuals did cite concern over the use of the Marine Information Program (MRIP) for monitoring harvest and evaluating the effectiveness of management. A minority of individuals indicated their preference for option 1 fish-sharing. Reasons cited for choosing this option for these individuals include maintaining status quo measures and concern over the amount of fish harvested by northern states anglers.

In stating a preferred timeframe, a majority of the individuals providing public comment favored having the alternative management approach in place for one year (Just 2017). Reasons cited included the potential changes to the MRIP recreational harvest data in coming years and the possible next summer flounder stock assessment being completed in 2018. Two individuals stated their preference for the management approach to be utilized for up to two year (through 2018).

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 3, 2017
Maryland

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Name	Company/Organization	City, State
Kirby Rootes-Murdy	ASMFC	
Steve Doctor	MD DNR	
Steve Whitelock	Boat Captain Happy Hook	OC
Chris Muzurak	Angler Reel Boat	OC
Buddy Speigel	ASMFC, ASCSP, MSSA, OPA	OC MD
Dick Scarbrough	OP Anglers MSSA	OP, MD
Finn McCabe	MSSA	Berlin MD
Nick Clementi	GET SUM charters	OC
Brian Behe	" "	OCMD
Scott Lenox	Fish in OC	OC, MD
JOHN MC FALLS	OPA / MSSA	OC, MD
[illegible]	OPA / MSSA	OP, MD
[illegible]	MSSA	[illegible]
Monty Hawkins	OCRF	OC MD
WALT BOGE	O.P. ANGLERS	O P
JAMES SPICKNALL	MSSA / OP ANGLERS	OD
DICK WIEMAN	MSSA / OP ANGLERS	BERLIN, MD.
Craig Weedon	DNR	EASTON MD
NICK DENNY	MORNING STAR	BERLIN MD
LARRY JOCK	COASTAL FISHERMAN	OC, MD
Marie Sampson	Fish Finder Adverts	O.C. md.
Kane Bowers	Fish Board Charters	OC MD

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

New Jersey

Galloway Township Branch Library
306 East Jimmie Leeds Rd
Galloway, New Jersey

1/5/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (121 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
Tom Fote (ASMFC Commissioner)
Russ Allen (ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Peter Clarke (NJ DFG)
Jeff Brust (NJ DFG)
Heather Corbett (NJ DFG)
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

Summary:

Of the approximately 121 attendees, all in attendance were against all options offered in the draft addendum. Many spoke out against the options included in the document, specifically all options that involve possible increases to the minimum size limit in 2017. A number of attendees spoke out against the 2017 coastwide harvest limit, and voiced their support for the maintaining status quo management measures (from 2016) as well as the 2016 coastwide recreational harvest limit. Many who spoke out against options in the draft addendum cited concern over the validity of recreational harvest data from NOAA's Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP); concern regarding NOAA's fishery-independent survey the FSV Henry B. Bigelow and its ability to effectively sample summer flounder along the coast; and lastly concern that current measures have made it difficult to catch 'keeper' fish and that minimum size limit is forcing more fishing effort on females than males. Many also noted that the possible changes to management measures proposed in the draft addendum would have significant and detrimental impacts to the local economy and would in a number of instances cause the loss of businesses and jobs. Other comments focused on the lack of confidence and frustration the recreational community has in the management process; that if more restrictive measures were put in place for New Jersey in 2017, many anglers would not comply with the new measures. Some commenters did note that the change in management measures for 2016 that allowed for a Delaware Bay specific set of measures were a significant help and that the approach should be continued for 2017 if not extended further northern, possibly to Little Egg Inlet. A number of individuals who spoke against options included in the draft addendum submitted written comments that are included in the written comments section. Additionally, many who spoke were signees to an online petition addressed to the US Secretary of Commerce requesting that status quo management measures and catch limits be continued from 2016 into 2017 be maintained until a new benchmark stock assessment is completed. That petition had over 4,000 signatures as of January 19th and a majority of the signees are from New Jersey.

I counted 121 public - P. Clarke

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 5, 2017
New Jersey

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Name	Company/Organization	City, State
Noe [illegible]	oneshop	AC, NJ 08401
John Chickadel	EP SALES	
JOHN P CHICKADEL SR		
Joe Oles	Recreational Fisherman	Brick, NJ 08723
Steve Bent	Free Spirit Cowtrk	Cape May Point, NJ
Ken Marchal	JCAA, MRMTC	Brick, NJ
Tom Tabeser	MTMC	Mahwah N.J.
Nick Cicero	Folsom Corporation	My. Republican NJ
Tom Michael	Kayak Fish-NJ	Audubon NJ.
Bill Lebb	Kayak Fish NJ.	Absecon 08201
David Shotwell	Absecon Bay Sportsmen	Absecon 08201
Scott Kendall	Time Out Charters	Brick, NJ
John Zingis	Fisherman	Avalon, N.J. 08202
Steve Pratica	Fisherman	CapHuna123@gmail.com (Avalon, NJ)
Tim Lehman	Charter Boat O/O	RKMACHMANN@GMAIL.COM
Ron Nachmann	Fisherman	DMcGUNEY@COMCAST.NET
Dan McGuney	Magan Beth	ROR4477@YAHOO.COM
Rich O'Rourke		CUPCAKE1629@YAHOO.COM
Joe Karcich	Tory Tomatos - Charter	LUPY125@COMCAST.NET
Dan Yanno	Captain's Quarters	leftyoconnell@yahoo.com
Greg O'Connell	Merchantville FC	CarmFD16@hotmail.com
Carmen Forelli	HOENDGT	Fortescue NJ
Mike Rothman	Bonanza II	mike@Bonanza2.com
Andrew Rothman	Bonanza II	Arothman131@gmail.com
Nick Rothman	Bonanza II	Franklinville NJ
Steve Yurchuk		Jackson NJ
Stanley Cola	SS Bucktails	billwiggins@fin-atics.com
Bill Wiggins	Fin-atics	SPECTOS_55@YAHOO.COM
Noel Applegate	Fortescue Anglers	wohgun2@gmail.com
Doug Pombo	S+S Bucktails	DMartyMac@comcast.net
David Martin	Got Twins Sportfishing	

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
James Kawinolly	AP Consulting	Absecon NJ
Jack Ausenhammer	Fish Hawks	Toms River NJ
Jeff Salabritas	Hefty Hooker Charters	Tuckerton, NJ
Les Newhall	Rec Fisherman	Brigantine
Sergio Radossi	NJOA / HRFA / SWABC	Ridgefield Park, NJ
Richard O'Rourke	Rec Fisherman	Brielle / Maywood, NJ
Dan McGinley	Megan Beth SF	Brick NJ 08724.
Joe Karnick	Joey Tomatoes Charter	Pt Pleasant NJ 08742
Frank Virgilio	NJSFSC	Glassboro NJ [illegible]
Ed Goldman	RFA NJ	Absecon, NJ
Steve Dodge	Rec Fisherman	Tabernacle NJ
Lee Scanny	Duke O Fluke	Somers Pt NJ
Brook Koeneke	Duke O' Fluke	N. Wildwood, NJ
John J Naurath	Ray Scott's Dock	Margate NJ 08402
Robin Scott	Ray Scotts Dock	Margate, N.J. 08402
Bill Shillingford	SFEC Strathmere NJ	Strathmere NJ 08248
Howard Rawson	Butch's Tackle	LEH NJ 08087
Don Marantz	Newark Bay Fly Casting Club, PCAA, HRFA	Millstone Twp. N.J.
Rick Melton	Reel Fun Fishing	Iselin N.J 08830
John Kolias	" " "	No. Bruns, NJ 08902
Gary Zagorski	NJFishing.com	17 Montview [illegible] Edison
Paul Haertel	JCAA	Toms River, N.J. 08757
Dave Daly	RFA-NJ	Andover NJ - 07860
Nick Calio	Recreational Angler	Stone Harbor, NJ
Mike Shepherd	AC Press / Wolf Radio	Linwood NJ 08221
John Sameth	JCSA	Brick NJ 08742
Larry Hart	recreational	Old Bridge, NJ
Joe Puntasecca	JCSA	Garwood NJ
Glenn Arthur	NJ Council of Diving Clubs	Tinton Falls NJ 07724-3143
Joe Bahun	Recreational	Old Bridge NJ 08879
Dan Blas	Reelmusic	412 Bellwood Asbury NJ. 08802
Tom Smith		155 Walker Rd NJ 07[illegible]
Jon Ginsburg		6243 Pine St Mays Landing NJ
Bill Shillingford	SFEC Strathmere	20 Pinewood Ct Swainton NJ
Steve Brunn	Recreational fisherman	Absecon NJ
Dave Milkiewicz	Rec. Fisherman	Brigantine NJ
Bill [illegible]		W. Egg Harbor Twp NJ
Bill Graff	Rec.	Atco NJ.

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
DANIEL N. SIEGEL	N/A	WARETOWN, NJ; dan.seagull@gmail.com
Chip Bergman	NA	CJB08247@GMAIL.Com
Rick JAMES	N A	RJAMES1946@AOL.com
Patrick LIND	—	Gibbsboro N.J. 08026
Ben Cushinotto	—	HAMMONTON N.J. 08037 BENMAN452
	—	BENMAN452@Verizon.NET.
Bob Odell		Stephnicsdad@AOL.Com
Bob Meimbresse	Cape May County Charter Boat Assn	Cape May, NJ
Richard Mulford	Lost One Charters	Belman, NJ
Joe Gearhead	CMCOLCBA	Cape May, NJ
KEN HENGGELER	—	MARMORA, NJ.
Jack Cronier	—	Cape May, N.J.
Steve Bennett		Asbury park NJ Stephenbenne7929@comcast.net
DAVE DiMEGLIO		MYTHREESONSOC@AOL.COM
ARTHUR DANDO		AWD3@COMCAST.NET
Jim ZIMMER	SWABC	WASHINGTON TWP. NJ
CHUCK SANTORO	SWABC	PARAMUS - NJ 07652
ERIC ENGARD	FORKED RIVER TUNA CLUB	FORKED RIVER, N.J.
KURT RENART	New Jersey Beach Buggy Assoc	BUENA NJ
Nathaniel Hartman	Stockton University	Galloway, NJ
CHRIS PESZKA	ABSECON SALTWATER SPORTSMEN	Riverton, NJ
John McTaggart		JMK1N8254Z@AOL.COM
WAYNE DeHART		MULLICA TWP. NJ.
Frank Mazzeo	Live BAIT	Maysland, NJ
David A. Holmes	ASWS Club	Brigantine, N.J. dave2in hrig@gmail.com
LOU SCHOTT	ABS SW SPTSMN	GALLOWAY - NJ
JOE RICCIARDI	ABSECON SW SPORTSMAN	GALLOWAY NJ SEAFARERJOE@VERIZON.NET
Jay Hayden		Manahawkin, NJ
Kristen Ohlo	NJ general assembly	Wall Twp. NJ (LD-30)
Vince Marandola		Richboro, Pa
Evan Marandola		Richboro, PA
Dave Calcaterra		Galloway NJ
Doug KEELING	Absecon Bay Sportsman	Galloway NJ
Joseph King Jr	Absecon Bay Sportsman	Galloway NJ
Stan Hales	Barnegat Bay Partnership	Toms River NJ
Gary Caputi		caputifish@comcast.net
Ginger Tatem		ginger.tatem1112@gmail.com
Linda Mowell	Brigantine Surfcasters	(609-709-6050
Michael Isner	SOUFA	Michael-Isner@Comcast.net
PETER KALLOS		LAKEWOOD, N.J.
ROBERT SHEPARD	SPRAY FISHERMAN	" "
JOSEPH ESANDRIO	MANASQUAN RIVER	LAKEWOOD NJ
JOE R.		SEAFARERJOE@VERIZON.NET

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
JOHN TOTH	JCAA & NJOA	TOTH JOHN@VERIZON.NET MONROE TWP. N.J.
MICKEY SHEARY	FISH-HAWKS	LACY TOWNSHIP NJ
MICKEY.SHEARY	MARCANDLORI@GMAIL.COM	
Michael Cuccia	MRMTC Michael	cucc@gmail.com Pt. Pleasant
Rachel Scott	Ray Scotts Dock	Margate, NJ

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
PAT KELLY		DOROTHY/STORMVILLE NY
Bill Clark	NA	Millerton, NY
Brian Doorstadt		Millerton NY

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
George Sylvester		Cape May
John Rynkiewicz		Absecon NJ.
Linda Davoli		Brigantine NJ.
Robert Sanders		Wildwood NJ
Joe Fumo	FISHFINDER II	Brigantine N.J.
Mike Evaney	REC	Northfield NJ
Rich Barbieri	self	Northfield
	RichardBarbieri@gmail.com	
Mark Marquez II	FishingReports Now.com	Brick, NJ

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

New York

NYSDEC Office
North Belle Mead Rd
East Setauket, New York

1/9/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (16 members of the public)

State Personnel:
Steve Heins (Council Member; ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Emerson Hasbrouck (ASMFC Commissioner)
Jim Gilmore (ASMFC Commissioner)
John Maniscalco (NYSDEC)

Presentation was given by NYSDEC staff.

Summary

10 attendees provided public comment, all in favor of option 5. Reasons cited included concerns for the economic impact that options 1-4 would pose to anglers and tackle shops; interest in maintaining a long season and maintaining regulatory consistency with neighboring states. Many attendees also expressed concerns with the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) harvest data used to evaluate the recreational fishery as well as the stock assessment results. Some attendees requested that no change be made in catch limits until a new benchmark stock assessment is completed and questions around low recruitment are better understood; similarly, with concerns over the uncertainty in MRIP harvest data that reductions should not be taken until there is greater certainty in the data. 5 individuals indicated that if option 5 could not be selected, their second choice would be option 4 '1-inch size increase and 30% reduction'. All who spoke in favor of option 5 were also in favor of it being in place for two years (option 2- 2017 and ability to extend to 2018). Reasons cited for the two year time frame were an interest in having regulatory consistency for multiple years.

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 9, 2017
New York

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Name	Company/Organization	City, State
CHARLES WITEK	—	WEST BABYLON, NY
STEVE R Withhuhn	Charter / Comm	Greenlawn N.Y.
MARC HOFFMAN	ASMFC / AP	MINEOLA, NY
MARIO DESTEFANO	USCG CAPT / Privateer	Rockaway NY
Melissa Dearborn	Regal Marine Prod	Huntington, NY 11743
Mark DeTorre	Celtic Quest	Port Jeff NY
Phil Keefe	FISHY BUSINESS	ORIENT N.Y.
Richard Jensen	NANCY ANN IV	ORIENT NY
Tom Mikolesk	MBCA	Montauk, NY
NEIL DeLANO	Independent	Amagansett NY
Pat Augustine		
Thomas Catalano	Huntington Anglers	Huntington NY
Stuart Paterson	Mgmt. Charters	Northport NY
Renee Zampitti	(private)	Babylon NY
Mark Woodley	Rep. Lee Zeldin	Patchogue
Bob Danielson	NYSF	Setauket, NY

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Connecticut

CT DEEP Boating Education Center
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut

1/10/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (19 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
Mark Alexander (ASMFC Commissioner)
Matt Gates (ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Greg Wojcik (ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Technical Committee Chair)
Colleen Giannini (CT DEEP)
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

Summary:

Of the approximately 19 attendees, 12 members of the public were in favor of the option 5 'Coastwide Consistency' and for having this option in place for two years (timeframe: Option 2). Reasons cited included concern over the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) harvest estimates for Connecticut in 2016- many attendees noted that the harvest estimate was unrealistically high and didn't match well with anglers' experiences and observations. Additionally, many anglers felt that harvest that took place in other areas of the coast, specifically Rhode Island and Massachusetts was being inaccurately attributed to Connecticut. Additionally, many anglers felt that there was too much uncertainty with the harvest estimates to use them to base management measures & action off of.

Many attendees also mentioned frustration over trying to provide public comment on summer flounder management measures for 2017 without full information on black sea bass recreational measures for 2017. Many noted that as Party/Charter Boat captains, having incomplete information on black sea bass measures created challenges for commenting on summer flounder because both species are often targeted on the same trip. One individual stated that they could not support any option in the draft addendum and that as industry representative involved in the sale of recreational lures, bait, and gear, that there had been no corresponding rise in sales in Connecticut to corroborate evidence of increased summer flounder catch/harvest. This similar observation was also noted by a tackle shop owner.

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 10, 2017
Connecticut

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Name	Company/Organization	City, State
Greg Dubrule	Blackhawk	Niantic CT
Matt Chamberlin	Blackhawk	Niantic, CT
Tony Notaro	Lucky Hook Charters	Clinton CT
Chris Parisi	Fulsom Company	Bethany CT
Fred Rohlemann	[redacted]	Danielson CT
Gabe Laitzen	Plum Is. Swimbaits	West Haven, CT
Kevin Mack	Self	East Lyme, CT
Preston Clapp	Helen CT	Groton CT
Michael Marro	Bluefin Charters	Madison CT
Ryan Westerberg	AW Marina	New London CT
Jeff Johnson	Aw Marina	New London
Andy Maguirer	Carolyn Ann	New London

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 10, 2017
Connecticut

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Name	Company/Organization	City, State
TS Karbowski	Rock & Roll Charters	Clinton, CT
Kevin Bentley	Reelin Sportfishing	New London, CT
Mike Pirri	Flying Connie	Clinton, CT.
Mike PRETE	Plum Island Swimbaits	West Haven CT
Chris Wright	Self	Simsbury CT
Eric Reid	Personal	Stratford
Jeff Kaelin	ASMFC	

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Massachusetts
Bourne Community Center
239 Main Street
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

1/11/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (21 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)
Dr. David Pierce (ASMFC Commissioner)
Raymond Kane (ASMFC Commissioner)
Nichola Meserve (ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Bob Glenn (MA DMF)

Summary:

Of the attendees who provided public comment, all were in favor of option 1 'Fish-Sharing'. Reasons cited in support of option 1 were that it would allow anglers to have the same regulations in 2017 as were in place in 2016; there would not a reduction in the harvest level relative to 2016; and preference to maintain the second highest bag limit along the coast. Many also indicated concern that if Massachusetts had to take a significant reduction it could create economic hardships for the party/charter boat industry and that this would in turn impact other parts of the recreational fishing community. All individuals who provided comments indicated that if option 1 was not selected, their second choice would be option 2 '1-inch increase'. Reasons cited in favor option 2 (if option 1 was not a feasible option to get approved) were that it would allow Massachusetts to maintain the same possession limit as has been in place in recent years. In considering options 1 and 2 compared to options 3-4, many indicated concern that if Massachusetts had some of the least restrictive measures on the coast, if further reductions were needed in future years the assumption was adjusting Massachusetts regulations would be considered first in taking reductions. Other comments focused on the validity of the harvest estimates generated by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), that the numbers don't match well with what anglers have observed and that few to no individuals in attendance have been interviewed. Lastly, some individuals requested that more information on summer flounder growth rates be considered in developing size limit measures and that discard mortality estimates should be reconsidered given some angler practices.

In considering the timeframe options, nearly all in favor of option 1 (with option 2 as a second choice) were in support of the option being in place for up to two years (option 2 '2017 with ability to extend through 2018'). Reasons cited were a preference for regulatory consistency for more than one year- doing so would allow the party/charter boat captains to plan trips in advance of the season and reduce management uncertainty in measures year to year.

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 11, 2017
Massachusetts

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
JACK CREIGHTON	CAPE COD SALTIES	YARMOUTH, MA
KEN WHITING	" " "	HARWICH, MA
Bruce MacLeod	" " "	Yarmouth MA.
John Povich	" " "	E. Dennis, MA
C. Randall Sherman	" " "	W. Yarmouth
BRIAN CURRY	SBCBA -	Plymouth / Mendon
Steven Pechinski		Fairhaven MA,
KENT DUMONT	CAPE COD SALTIES	YARMOUTH MA
MICHAEL PIENKOS	SBCBSA	Plymouth, MA
JOSEPH HUKEMEYER	Helen 4 Offshore	Hyannis
(Capt.) GOU ALLEN	F/V LORI-ANN	Hyannis MA
Jeff Viamari	Bad Influence Sportfishing	Yarmouth MA
Dennis Chapple	Predatuna Sportfishing	Hyannis Mass
Willy Hatch	MACHACA charters	Falmouth, MA
STAN BAZYCKI	BARNSTABLE COUNTY	FAL MA.
Brian BELLANI		COTUIT MA
Shaun GUILES	REACTION SPORT FISHING	Fairhaven, MA
Bill KILLEEN	CAPT Bill's	FALMOUTH MA
Josh Lincoln	Lincoln Bros. Fishing	Bourne MA
Keith Baker	Kelly ANN Charters	WAREHAM, MA
Roger Whitton		Marstons Mills MA

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Rhode Island

University of Rhode Island Bay Campus
South Ferry Rd
Narragansett, Rhode Island

1/12/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (10 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
David Borden (ASMFC Commissioner)
Bob Ballou (Board Vice-Chair, ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Jason McNamee (RI DEM)
Nicole Lengyel (RI DEM)
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

Summary:

Of the approximately 10 attendees, a majority of attendees were in favor of either option 1 'Fish sharing' or option 2 'one-inch increase coastwide' a secondary choice. Reasons cited were that either option posed less of a reduction than options 3 and 4, have a higher harvest target, and it provided a longer season in the example measures. Many also noted their opposition for options 3, 4, and 5. Many cited that option 5 won't achieve the needed coastwide reduction and that reductions in options 3 and 4 would poses a significant negative impact on anglers and equitable access to the resource. All those who spoke in favor of either option 1 or 2 were in favor of having the option in place for just 1 year, 2017 only. Reasons cited for a one year timeframe were the need to develop new and different alternative regional management approaches for 2018.

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

January ~~10~~ 12, 2017

~~Connecticut~~ Rhode Island

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
Travis Barao	RISAA	Rumford, RI
Dave Monti	RISAA	Warwick, RI
Cory Blount	Traces Plead	Narr. RI
Capt Andy Dangelo	Maridee II inc	W. Kingston RI
Walter Anoushian	NOAA	Narr, RI
Scott Lundberg	Reel to Feel Sportfishing	Galilee R.I.
Mike Laptew	Laptew Productions	N. Kingstown RI
Joe Langan	URI GSO	Narragansett, RI
Nicole Lengyel	RI DEM	
Robert Murray	RISAA	Foster RI
Rick Bellavance	RIPCBA	NK RI

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan: Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2017

Virginia

Virginia Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Newport News, VA

1/12/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (7 members of the public)

State (VMRC) Personnel:
Robert O'Reilly (Chief of Fisheries Management)
Joe Cimino (Deputy Chief of Fisheries Management)
Katie May Laumann (Fisheries Planner)
Alex Aspinwall (Data Analyst)

Summary:

Seven members of the public attended and four provided public comment. For management measures, one individual preferred reversion to state-by-state allocations, but indicated that his second choice would be Alternative Management Approach 1: Fish Sharing. The other three individuals expressed support for Alternative Management Approach 1: Fish Sharing. The primary reason given for support of this option was that fishermen felt it would be unfair for Virginia/DELMARVA to take cuts, as they have not gone over their quota. Individuals indicated that businesses in Virginia are suffering due to the low numbers of flounder and many people have exited the fishery already. They did not feel fishermen in the state should sacrifice more of the fishery. They thought that states/regions with overages should take reductions. Only two individuals expressed support for either timeframe option, one individual expressed support for Option 1: For 2017 only, and one for Option 2: for 2017 with the potential to extend to 2018 with Board action.

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 12, 2017
Virginia

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
David [illegible]	PSWSFA	
Mike Avery	USSA	Hampton VA
CHUCK HARRISON (1chuck@outlook.com)	add to email lists	NEWPORT NEWS VA
Jeff Deem	FMAC	Lorton, VA
Joe Stephens	GBFA	Chesapeake
[illegible]	GBFA	Chesapeake
Steve Ellis	NOAA	Norfolk VA

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass the Interstate Fishery Management Plan

Delaware
DNREC Auditorium
Dover, Delaware

1/17/2017

Public Attendance: see sign-in sheet (18 members of the public)

State and ASMFC Personnel:
Roy Miller (ASMFC Commissioner)
John Clark (DNREC; ASMFC Proxy Commissioner)
Stew Michels (DNREC, Council Member)
Rich Wong (DNREC)
Kirby Rootes-Murdy (ASMFC)

Summary:

Of the thirteen members of the public who provided public comment, majority of these individuals (5) indicated their preference for Option 1 (Fish-sharing) under the Alternative Management Approaches. Reasons cited including an interest in maintaining the status quo regulations from 2016 for 2017 based in regional performance and not wanting to place a burden on anglers in Delaware that more restrictive measures would pose. Additional comments in support option 1 focused on a lack of guidelines for dealing with regions that went over their harvest target and not needing to further help out more northern region states. Two individuals offered that their second choice for 2017 would be option 2 (1 inch minimum size increase coastwide). Reasons cited in support of option 2 was if option 1 was not selected or a possibility based on other state's preference. Other comments offered focused on the season and possession limit. For both items, anglers noted that the current season length of open year round (365) does not reflect the fishing season as availability of fluke prior to May is uncommon due to water temperature and annual in-shore vs. offshore migration patterns; as such, it could be adjusted to reflect the 'true' fishing times. Other comments pertaining to changing the season focused on providing additional protection to fluke when they are spawning (primarily wreck habitat in the fall); doing so would help with recruitment and improve the stock condition. Regarding the possession limit, a few individuals noted that most anglers do not catch their full bag limit (4 fish); adjusting possession limit could be done with minimum impact to anglers. Other comments individuals offered cited concern over the use of the Marine Information Program (MRIP) for monitoring harvest and evaluating the effectiveness of management. A minority of individuals indicated their preference for option 5 coastwide consistency.

In stating a preferred timeframe, a majority of the individuals providing public comment favored having the alternative management approach in place for two years (2017 and 2018). Reasons cited included the need for consistency in management measures. A few individuals stated their preference for the management approach to be in place for 1 year (2017). Reasons cited focused on the uncertainty of MRIP data and the need to complete a new benchmark stock assessment in the near future (by 2018).

Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
January 17, 2017
Delaware

-- PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY --

Name	Company/Organization	City, State
BRIAN WAZLAVEK	Delaware family fishery	MILTON, DE
Scott Todd	Delaware family fishery	Lewes DE
Tom Pasquini	~~Delaware~~ DE	Milford DE 1963
HARRY AIKEN	DMS	Georgetown DE
RICH KING	DSF	Millsboro DE
GEORGE MOOD		MILLSBORO DE
DAVE SPACCARELLI		DOVER, DE
MIKE ANDROWS		DOVER, DE
ROY W. MILLER	SALTWATER FLY ANGLERS OF DE	LEWES, DE
RON SMITH	DE SALT. FLY ANGLERS	LEWES, DE
ERIC BURNLEY	Cape GAZETTE	MILTON, DE
JOHN WYKPISZ		LEWES, DE
Rich Wong		Frederica, DE
MARTIN KIRK	DMS/AMS/	NEWARK, DE
Michael Stallings	Delaware Diehard Divers	Felton DE
BILL BAKER	BILLS SPORT SHOP	LEWES DE
EDWARD RUMAIN		DOVER DE
Michael Eckert		millerd, DE
Alexa Messick	University of Delaware	Dover, DE

Written Comment Summary on Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Interstate FMP for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass

In total 4,334 written comments were received, with 9 comments provided on behalf of groups or organizations. Three additional written comments were received after the deadline and not included in the summary numbers below.

Individual Comments

Over ninety percent of written comments received (4,111) were from an online petition (change.org) calling for status quo management measures in 2017 from 2016 and maintaining the 2016 specified coastwide Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) for 2017. While the petition was not addressed to the Commission (it was addressed to the Secretary of Commerce) and it did not specifically reference Draft Addendum XXVIII, it did reference the Board and Council's action from August 2016 that set that 2017 commercial and recreational harvest limits. Additionally, the comments and signatures of the individuals who contributed to the petition were in attendance at a number of public hearings. Of written comments received that were not a part of the petition, a majority (78) were also in favor for maintaining status management measures. Reason cited included concern over the economic hardship that harvest reductions and subsequent example management measures to achieve those reductions would pose to recreational community (i.e. party/charter boats, bait/tackle shops) ; disagreement with the harvest estimates from NOAA's Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) at the state and regional; and concern that a new benchmark stock assessment is needed before any significant changes are made to management measures or harvest limits. Draft Addendum XXVIII did not include options for status quo management measures or coastwide catch limits for 2017 due to the Board and Council's prior actions to set the 2017 RHL and preliminary harvest estimates from MRIP indicated that 2016 management measures would not achieve the coastwide 2017 RHL. **Please note**: written comments indicating a preference for status quo management measures were not categorized as indicating support for option 1 'Fish-Sharing'. While a number of regions could maintain 2016 management measures in option 1 (Massachusetts, Delaware-Virginia, and North Carolina), written comments specifying status quo management measures were in many instances referencing the coastwide harvest limit as well as coastwide management measures.

Of written comment submitted selecting from options included in the Draft Addendum XXVIII, Option 5 (Coastwide Consistency) received the most support (24). Reasons cited in support included maintaining the 2016 fishing season length, tolerance for a 1 inch size increase, and concern that the other options would pose significant challenges to coastal businesses that depend on recreational fishing. A majority of comments in favor option 5 were form letter (15) that called for closing fishing for fluke in all state waters from January through February. Most individuals in favor of option 5 also indicated a preference for this option to be in place for up to two years (time frame option 2). Reasons cited in support of a two year timeframe include regulatory consistency for more than 1 year.

The second highest number of written comments in support of an option in the Draft Addendum XXVIII was option 1 'Fish-sharing' (17). Many who indicated their preference for option 1 cited that the option

would not require their region to take a reduction in 2017; that it would allow for maintaining the same measures as in place in 2016; and that regions that had overfished would take the reduction.

Options 2-4 each received 5 or less written comments in support of the option, with Option 2 '1-Inch increase' having the most (5). Reasons cited against supporting options 3 and 4 included the impact to the fishing season length and the extent of the harvest reduction.

Other Comments

Public comments received not specifying a preference already mentioned above covered a variety of topics related to regulations, harvest estimates, spawning areas, recruitment, and economic concerns regarding the recreational summer flounder fisheries. A majority of these comments (14) cited preference for switching to a slot limit over the current use of a minimum size limit as a management measure. Other comments included concerns over discrepancies between observations of the fishery and MRIP harvest estimates; concern over the accountability of regional management options when a region 'overfishes'; concerns over discard mortality and its role in lower recruitment and current overfishing; and concern that current regulations predominately target large female fish.

Group/Organization Comments

A majority (5) of the comments received from groups/organizations were not in favor of an option in the draft Addendum XXVIII but instead were in favor status quo management measures for 2017. 2 organizations indicated their preference for option 1 'Fish-Sharing' and option 2 '1-inch increase', while another organization indicated support for both options 1 and 2.

Written comments were received from the following organizations:

- New Fishing Tackle Trade Association (NYTTA)
- New York Sportfishing Federation (NYSF)
- Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA)
- Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association (RISSA)
- United Boatmen of New Jersey
- Recreational Fishing Alliance
- Rhode Island Party Charter Boat Association
- Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA)
- Marine Trades Association of New Jersey

Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII Options: Written Comments	Written Individual		Written Group		Form letters		Petition		Total Support	Total Oppose
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose		
Status Quo: 2016 Measures										
Total Status Quo	53		5		20		4,111		4,189	0
Alternative Management Approaches										
Alternative Management Option 1: Fish-Sharing										
Total Option 1	15		2						17	0
Option 1 Timeline 1	1		1						2	0
Option 1 Timeline 2	3								3	0
Alternative Management Option 2: One-Inch Size Increase as a Minimum Reduction										
Total Option 2	3		2						5	0
Option 2 Timeline 1			2						2	0
Option 2 Timeline 2									0	0
Alternative Management Option 3: 30% Reduction as a Minimum										
Total Option 3	2		1	3					3	3
Option 3 Timeline 1			1						1	0
Option 3 Timeline 2	1								1	0
Alternative Management Option 4: One-Inch Size Increase and 30% Reduction as a Minimum										
Total Option 4	2		0	1					2	1
Option 4 Timeline 1									0	0
Option 4 Timeline 2									0	0
Alternative Management Option 5: Coastwide Consistency										
Total Option 5	8		1	2	15				24	2
Option 5 Timeline 1	1								1	0
Option 5 Timeline 2	19		1						20	0

Group Comments

JERSEY COAST ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

Working For Saltwater Resource & Marine Anglers

1594 Lakewood Rd (Rt. 9), Unit 13, Toms River, NJ 08755
Phone: 732-506-6565
FAX: 732-506-6975
Web Site http://www.JCAA.org
Email: jcaa@jcaa.org

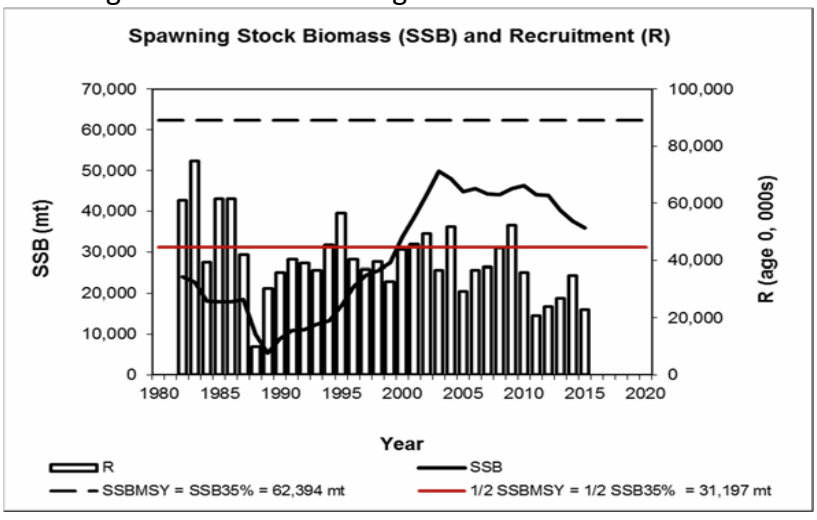
1/18/17

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII)

Kirby,

The Jersey Coast Anglers Association is opposed to any of the options in draft addendum XXVII as we believe they are unnecessary and would create a severe negative impact upon New Jersey's recreational fishing industry. Fluke is the most important recreational fish caught in our state and the draconian measures you are proposing would result in a drastic decrease in the number of fluke fishing trips in our state. People who fish for fluke want to bring some fish home to eat. It is already very difficult for most people to catch an 18" fluke let alone a 19" one. This is particularly true for those who fish from shore or in the back bays. The 19" size limit coupled with only a 2 or 3 fish bag limit and a significantly shorter season will cripple if not destroy our charter and party boat industry as well as the tackle shops and other shore are businesses that depend on fluke fishermen.

JCAA believes in managing our fluke stocks so that they are sustainable and would be amongst the first to call for reduced quotas and tighter regulations if we felt they were in trouble. However, they are not in trouble as evidenced by the below chart which was copied from the addendum. The chart below shows that the target of 62,394 mt has never been achieved which indicates to us that is unattainable unless perhaps we completely stop all types of fishing. We urge that this target be lowered to approximately 50,000 mt as that is where the ssb peaked in the early 2000's. Then the threshold could be reduced accordingly and we would not be faced with these draconian measures. Further, this same chart shows that we had much better recruitment when the ssb was far lower and we were harvesting more and smaller fish. We should be allowed to harvest some of the smaller males while conserving more of the breeding sized females.



We understand that a new stock assessment is due out this year or in 2018. We believe that this will contain more accurate data which will aid you in better managing this fishery. We would also like to point out that sound fisheries management is dependent on compliance with the regulations. There are already many fishermen out there who just don't care what the regulations are anymore. They keep what they want and they know that their chances of being caught are very slim. Still, the majority of fishermen are honest and abide by the rules. However, Addendum XXVIII has really touched a nerve in our fluke fishing community. People are very angry and fed up with broken promises of rebuilding stocks and relaxing regulations. The options you are proposing are the last straw and if enacted they are going to turn many more honest fishermen into pirates.

I also want to add that my fishing club, The Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County, had a booth at the Raritan Show in Edison (January 12-15) and I worked at it to promote my club and I had petitions for anglers to sign that are opposed to these stringent regulations. They were eager to sign it and most, if not all of them, **KNEW** about this issue and were **MAD** over it! Most of the comments I received were: "Don't they know that the charter/party boats will go out of business", "Fish this size are all females so why are they killing the breeders"! I also worked at the New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA) booth and I received the same type of comments. Sadly, I also heard from a number of anglers that they have given up fishing because of the increasing onerous regulations. I have not yet counted all of the names of the people who signed the petitions, but I have at least a thousand signatures if not more. Of course, this does not count the number of anglers who just passed by our booth and did not know about petitions to sign. But the main point here is that anglers do **NOT** want to see these new regulations in place! **Not one angler** expressed that these new regulations are needed or desired! The proposed regulations are touching a raw nerve of anglers that I have not seen before and they are **ANGRY** about it!

Therefore in conclusion and after considering all these above factors, we strongly recommend that you allow each region to continue to fish under its 2016 regulations while you develop a new addendum which incorporates the data which will come from the new stock assessment.

Sincerely,

John Toth

President, Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA)

President, New Jersey Outdoor Alliance (NJOA)

President, Salt Water Anglers of Bergen County

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Melissa Danko <mdanko@mtanj.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 1:54 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII Comments

Importance: High

I am writing on behalf of the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey (MTA/NJ), a nonprofit trade organization comprised of over 300 marine related businesses that are dedicated to advancing, promoting and protecting the recreational boating industry in NJ. We spend a significant amount of time and resources working to ensure that boating is healthy and continues to grow. Boating is a significant part of New Jersey's economy. The economic impact of boating supports approximately 12,000 jobs and $2 billion dollars in spending. Over a thousand small businesses provide the infrastructure, access, products and services that generate revenue, provide jobs and support a way of life for thousands of residents that live in every county of the state. Over 50% of the people who own boats use them for recreational fishing.

The recreational boating industry has faced several significant challenges over the last few years with a severe economic downturn followed by Hurricane Sandy. There are currently 151,000 registered vessels in New Jersey. In 2000, there were 240,000 registered vessels. Therefore, in a little over a decade, the industry has lost 89,000 registered vessels. Continued cuts and restrictions on recreational fishing have greatly contributed to the challenges our industry is facing.

We are incredibly concerned with the recent actions taken by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. These actions will make it nearly impossible for recreational anglers to keep any summer flounder they catch. In effect, these actions will result in a moratorium on one of our most important recreational fish species which will cripple recreational and commercial fishing in New Jersey and be devastating to our industry and our shore economy.

We represent many small marine businesses that have long depended on the recreational summer flounder fishery and therefore, strongly urge the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to overturn these actions, keep current regulations in effect and to reject the political process that puts New Jersey at a disadvantage to other states. This will allow all partners to work toward a stable management approach that provides long-term conservation of summer flounder.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide comments. If any additional information is needed, please contact me at 732-292-1051.

Melissa Danko
Executive Director
Marine Trades Association of New Jersey
2516 Highway 35, Suite 201 | Manasquan, NJ 08736
P. 732-292-1051 | F. 732-292-1041
mdanko@mtanj.org| mtanj.org | JerseyBoatExpo.com | GoBoatingNJ.org

New York Fishing Tackle Trade Association
P.O. Box 3210
Patchogue, NY 11772
nyftta@gmail.com

January 19, 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Public Comments for Draft Addendum XXVIII

The New York Fishing Tackle Trade Association (NYFTTA) represents retail and wholesale bait and tackle dealers in the New York Marine district. The livelihood of our members, our industry, depends upon healthy stocks of many species of fish. Our mission is not just to promote the sport of fishing, but also to do our part in conserving resources for the future. Conserving resources for the future is not just managing the fishery from a conservation or regulatory approach, but also accounting for the socioeconomic impact of such regulations and maintaining fair and equitable access.

We believe that the Board and Commission should reject the options and send a message to NMFS that there needs to be a new BENCHMARK stock assessment as well as a new Amendment before moving forward with extreme reductions. The addendum itself states that the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan (ISFMP) charter establishes fairness and equity as guiding principles. However, the council and board considered that a new goal of providing reasonable access was acceptable. Who defines reasonable access? The Board itself recognizes and states the problems within the Addendum – variations in stock dynamics since 1998, geographic shifts in the distribution of the resource, possible errors in 1998 harvest. In addition, the Addendum has NO MENTION OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT this will have on the industries.

We do not honestly feel that the 2017 Summer Flounder harvest limits should be set at an all-time low. We have worked hard over the last decade taking reductions to rebuild this fishery. While slight adjustment in quota may be needed to stay on track, making such huge adjustments without having the best available science and without addressing the current management issues, that they itself admit exist, just makes no sense.

Plain and simple the problems have not been fixed. Allocations have not been revisited. The full benchmark assessment that was expected has not happened. Sadly, perhaps the only remedy is putting our foot down. Accepting is easy. Fixing is hard. The ISFMP charter establishes fairness and equity! The Mid Atlantic Board and ASMFC should NOT be considering a NEW goal of PROVIDING REASONABLE ACCESS, they should be demanding a plan that is fair and equitable!!!

If the Board and Commission are not able to come to a conclusion today that no action be taken at this time, then the only Option we can support is regional management under Option 5 for 2017 with the ability to extend into 2018. This is the ONLY Option that recognizes the shortcomings in the current management plan by mitigating the full reduction as well as spreading more consistency amongst the states

Respectfully Submitted by,

Melissa Dearborn
Vice President, NYFTTA

NEW YORK SPORTFISHING FEDERATION
72-11 Austin Street, Suite 144, Forest Hills, NY 11375
www.nysf.org

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy

In regards to the proposed reductions for summer flounder for 2017, the New York Sportfishing Federation is in favor of "status quo" for the upcoming season. We support this option until a new, updated benchmark stock assessment for summer flounder is completed with justifiable data. The fishing community has asked NMFS to conduct a new benchmark assessment for summer flounder to avoid unwarranted, drastic reductions in allocation resulting from the current flawed data. This was supposed to be completed but the request simply was ignored.

We strongly believe that the data collected on the trawl surveys that were done by NMFS on their vessel "Bigelow" are grossly inaccurate. Their trawl survey vessel is improperly equipped and their gear type and methods for harvesting summer flounder are inadequate, thus rendering this data useless for management purposes.

Also, our confidence in the accuracy of the MRIP data collection program, which is still in its infancy, is low at best. Recent MRIP data on summer flounder show high variability between the measure and the performance numbers. Which respectively, are calculated and estimated, therefore rendering MRIP data inconclusive and non-credible. Implementing such unreliable data into a management model would be futile and cause the conclusions to be erroneous.

The New York Sportfishing Federation recommends that a new model, such as the Summer Flounder Sex-Specific Population Model, developed by Dr. Sullivan from Cornell University, be adopted incorporating the data collected from a new benchmark assessment.

Until such time whereas these recommended approaches can be completed and implemented, we support an option of "status quo" for summer flounder. We are supporting Senator Schumer's decision to instruct the Secretary of Commerce to force NMFS and ASMFC to forego any reductions in summer flounder allocations in order to avoid the certain economic hardships that the fishing community will incur. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Capt. Joe Paradiso
President-NYSF
NY Marine Resource Advisory Council

January 19, 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Draft Addendum XXVIII Comments

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy:

Please accept the following comments from the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) in regards to draft Addendum XXVIII. The RFA does not support any options offered in draft Addendum XXVIII because they were all developed under the premise that the 2017 acceptable biological catch should be set at 11.3 million pounds. Furthermore, options 1-4 were developed under the assumption that the recreational sector exceeded its recreational harvest limit in 2016 which RFA does not believe to be true based on the fact that the measures stayed roughly the same from 2015 to 2016 and industry data does not reflect an increase in effort or participation that would justify the assumption that the recreational harvest limit was exceeded. Therefore, RFA urges the Board to take no action on the addendum at this time. After attending and reading the reports from the public hearings that took place over the course of the past month, there was overwhelming support from the public for maintaining status quo in 2017. RFA encourages the Board to review the vast public record that has been generated in regards to Addendum XXVIII and either amend the addendum to include an option that would maintain recreational measures at status quo for 2017 or initiate a new addendum that includes such as option.

RFA supports status quo, no action, because our organization finds significant issues with the biological and landings information used leading up to NOAA Fisheries approving an 11.3 million pound. RFA believes the 2017 ABC should be set at 16.26 million pounds because there are significant issues with the current assessment, modeling approach and biological reference points.

All the options in Addendum XVIII are also based on the assumption that the recreational sector exceeded its recreational harvest limit in 2016 and that the overage would need to be deducted from 2017. RFA cannot accept that MRIP estimated that recreational landings exceeded the harvest limit in 2016. When recreational measures were set for 2016, scientists developed numerous options that had a high statistical probability of constraining landings to the recreational harvest limit. These options were approved by the ASMFC Technical committee. RFA has greater confidence that the measures put in place in 2016 were effective in keeping landings under the recreational harvest limit then the MRIP is in estimating recreational landings. A multi-year, industry funded project has gathered sex-length information on summer flounder from both the commercial and recreational sectors. This work found that statistically no male fish were above 18" meaning the vast majority of recreational summer flounder fishery is focused exclusively on female fish. This project gathered key information on sex ratios of male and female summer flounder below 18 inches. A sex-specific model was also developed

resultant of this project which takes into account the different growth rates and other life history parameters between male and female summer flounder. None of this information has been incorporated into the assessment for summer flounder. It is the contention of the RFA and many fisheries scientists that this information, once incorporated, will vastly improve the accuracy of the assessment and biological reference points for summer flounder.

Most recently, a twin sweep survey conducted in New England evaluated the catch rates of commercial style fishing gear and research gear used by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center research vessel R/V Henry B. Bigelow found that the research gear used to assess northeast fish stocks had design deficiencies that significantly reduced its ability to catch flat fish. Specific to witch flounder, the research gear caught only 26% of the witch flounder caught by the commercial gear when fished at the same time. For summer flounder, the NOAA gear caught about 50% less than the commercial gear. The research gear was particularly poor at catching small fish. A general decline in recruitment across all species can be observed when the research gear came on line when the R/V Bigelow was put into service. How this issue impacts the ABC setting process was not discussed by the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council's SSC. Had this information been available at the time it is possible that the SSC would have recommended a difference ABC. Since below average recruitment is what is primarily driving the summer flounder quota reduction for 2017, RFA contends this issue must be fully investigated before a quota reduction is enacted.

Finally, MRIP numbers for 2016 are extremely difficult to believe. Connecticut provides a clear example of our concerns with the MRIP data for 2016. MRIP estimates that the number of summer flounder caught by recreational anglers in CT increased by 828,127 fish from 2015 to 2016. This is primarily a produced of MRIP estimating that the number of trips during the peak summer flounder season increased by 38%. With an increase in effort you would expect to see a similar trend in industry data. When the industry data was gathered and analyzed, it was determined that natural baits, Gulp, by far the most popular bait used for summer flounder, and other summer flounder specific tackle sales in CT were relatively the same in 2015 and 2016. Natural bait and Gulp sale are consumables, meaning, fishermen buy and use them regardless if they caught fish or not. If MRIP estimates a significant increase in effort in one particular state you should also see a corresponding increase in sales but that was not the case which raises significant concerns. However, if one is to assume MRIP numbers are correct and the amount of bait and Gulp sales stayed the same then a strong argument can be made that catch per unit effort was higher in 2016 relative to 2015. Increased CPUE is often indicative of increased abundance.

For all these reasons, RFA is urging the ASMFC to take the following course of action:

- Take no action on draft Addendum XXVIII.
- Amend Addendum XXVIII to include a status quo option or initiate a new addendum allowing for status quo.
- Forward a request to the Secretary of Commerce to set the 2017 summer flounder ABC at 16.26 million pounds.
- Forward a request to the Secretary of Commerce to assume that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016.

- Forward a request to the NRCC that a benchmark stock assessment be conducted immediately for summer flounder.

Thank for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jim Donofrio
Executive Director

RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER
ANGLERS
Association

P.O. Box 1465, Coventry, Rhode Island 02816 401-826-2121 FAX: 401-826-3546 www.RISAA.org

January 21, 2017

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Sr. FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland St., Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVII

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association represents over 7,500 recreational anglers and 28 affiliate clubs, and we present the following comments concerning Draft Addendum XXVII to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan.

Summer flounder is the most sought after fin fish species in Rhode Island waters. It is available to anglers who fish within Narragansett Bay, the eastern and southern coastal shores and Block Island waters. Anglers who fish these various areas usually have different needs concerning minimum sizes and open season, yet our Association has always believed in a conservative, "fish first" attitude when a species stock is under stress.

The Options
We favor Option #2. Although it increases the size to 19 inches, the majority of our members prefer the opportunity to fish a longer season. And, even though few anglers ever catch their "limit" of 8 fish, the perceived ability to take 8 fish is important.

If necessary, we can support Option #3 which achieves the necessary reduction and retains the current 18" minimum size, but with a bag limit and season cut in half. The smaller size benefits bay anglers allowing them to keep the ability to take home a fish.

We oppose Option #5 which makes no sense since it does not achieve the necessary reductions, and as noted, could even trigger NMFS to step in and implement non-preferred measures to restrain harvest for 2017.

Timeframe
We support Option 1 since we believe the Board should not wait two years to develop alternative approaches. No one will be pleased with the current choice of options.

Respectfully,

Stephen J. Medeiros
President

R.I. Party and Charter Boat Association
140 Jerry Lane
North Kingstown, RI 02852
401-741-5648
www.rifishing.com

January 12th, 2017

Mr. Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

On behalf of the 65 members of the Rhode Island Party and Charter Boat Association (RIPCBA), I would like to offer the following comments regarding draft Addendum XXVIII(Addendum) to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan(FMP). Summer Flounder is one of the most important species targeted by RI's Charter and Party Boats and our industry recognizes the need for good management based on the best available science. Rhode Island's recreational fishermen have a long history of working with RI Department of Environmental Management to craft and support conservative regulations for summer flounder that achieve our Recreational Harvest Limit with a low probability of overfishing. We regret that the stock status requires a reduction for 2017, but we do appreciate the opportunity to comment on the available management options within the Addendum.

Overview:

We would like to recommend that a clear definition of fair/equitable/reasonable access be provided to the public in the future. It is challenging for us to comment on alternatives when it is unknown what the board considers fair/equitable/reasonable access. Does it imply that fisherman from one area of a species range could be required to lose opportunity so other fisherman from a different area can fish more? Are there standards to determine when this should occur or is it at all times? Across all species? Does fair/equitable/reasonable access apply to commercial and recreational fisheries, or just recreational fisheries? Should the size limits be the same? possession limits? seasons? Should a state or region's past ability of fish within its RHL be considered or should fair/equitable/reasonable access be considered regardless of past performance? If fair/equitable/reasonable access is to be a deciding factor for management we would suggest that these questions and others ought to be answered. Although the draft addendum recognizes that available management approaches are not viewed as providing a fair and equitable way to achieve the 2017 recreational summer flounder limit, we will keep fair/equitable/reasonable access, as we believe it is intended, in mind as we comment.

Options:

Because of the all-time low RHL for 2017, it was difficult to see where any of the options could be viewed as fair/equitable to all summer flounder fisherman. While we are compassionate to fisherman in areas where regulations may need to be more restrictive to allow the RHL to be achieved without overharvesting, and we are not opposed to pitching in to help neighbors, we ultimately analyzed potential benefit to all summer flounder fisherman vs the reduction and example measures that could be selected in each option.

We support **Option 1**. The largest harvest target of any of the options, option 1 represents the least amount of risk for RI fisherman to exceed the target in 2017. This is important to us as we consider options for 2017 and think about 2018.

We support **Option 2**. Although Option 1 would provide a larger harvest target and a result in a lower reduction for RI's fisherman, giving us more flexibility in choosing measures for 2017, Option 2 will provide other regions with increased opportunity when compared to Option 1. In the spirit on fair/equitable/reasonable access, we can support Option 2.

We oppose **Option 3** and **Option 4** because the significant reductions to RI's target harvest and subsequent measures necessary to keep RI's recreational fisherman from exceeding that target, far outweigh the minimal benefits to any other regions. The increased risk of exceeding the lower target harvest limit could have detrimental effects for the 2018 season and is not fair/equitable to RI's fishermen.

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE Option 5 because the reduction achieved does not meet the necessary level and we are concerned that choosing this option will lead to NMFS implementing the non-preferred coastwide measures in all state and federal waters. We cannot recall a past incident where the ASMFC's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board selected an option to be included in a public document that does not meet the required reduction and we question the reasoning for including Option 5 in this document. We believe asking the public to comment on an option that does not meet the required reduction is disingenuous and a practice that should be avoided. We feel this will set a precedent that will come back to haunt us.

Timeframe for Alternative Management Approaches:
We would recommend that this addendum be in place for the 2017 season only. There is little doubt that many summer flounder fisherman will feel disenfranchised by the measures chosen for 2017. We suggest that the ASMFC's Summer Flounder Board take immediate actions to begin developing additional alternative approaches well before management discussions for 2018 begin.

Respectfully submitted,

Capt. Rick Bellavance, President
Rhode Island Party and Charters Boat Association
Cell: 401-741-5648
www.rifishing.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: bob rush <starfishboats@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:42 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

United Boatmen of NJ appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board for consideration during deliberations of Draft Addendum XVIII. We urge Board members to take NO ACTION on the Addendum at this time, and revise the options included within or initiate a new Addendum as appropriate. At this time, the only acceptable option is to maintain STATUS QUO recreational measures for 2017.

The For Hire Industry has been hit very hard over the years with draconian regulations for not only Flounder but Sea Bass, Scup and several other species that are being managed in the same manner. These regulations are not done over and extended time period i.e. 3-5 year plan and makes it impossible to operate a business from year to year not knowing what the season and bag limits will be until a month before the season is supposed to begin. Our approach to fishery science as it is now is broken beyond repair and given that the stock status remains NOT OVER FISHED, there is simply no way to reasonably justify the severe economic implications of this action as opposed to continuing to use a phased in approach as offered in the updated National Standard One guidelines.

We request the following path be taken to move forward:

1) The SF, Scup and BSB Board takes NO ACTION on Draft Addendum XVIII at this time. The Addendum is modified or a new Addendum is initiated to allow for STATUS QUO recreational measures in 2017.

2) The Commission asks the incoming Secretary of Commerce to take emergency action on Summer Flounder and maintain the 2016 ABC for 2017 (16.26 million lbs), a level which remains below the current OFL (16.76 million lbs).

3) The Commission recommends to the NRCC that Summer Flounder be assessed in time for management use in 2018. This may require exploration of an external review process.

4) Continue work on revised management mechanisms that set size, season and bag limits on a multi-year basis with gradual changes implemented in response to stock status and not the high inter-annual fluctuations present in MRIP.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Edward Yates

United Boatmen of NJ "President"

Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association, Inc (VSSA)
PO Box 28898
Henrico, VA 23228
www.ifishva.org

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Kirby Rootes - Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A - N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Kirby Rootes - Murdy, January 16, 2017

The Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA), with over 600 members, requests the following be included as a public comment for the Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2017 Draft Addendum XXVIII.

VSSA supports option 1, Fish Sharing. It is clear by looking at the numbers, Virginia has not overfished flounder. We believe strongly that only the states that overfished should take the cuts. Given the recent harvest of flounder in Virginia it is not likely we will overfish our quota in 2017 and beyond so cutting us now would not result in any significant savings in the coastwide harvest. **Admin note:** The verbiage for Option 1 is poorly written and hard to understand. Please rewrite for clarity. Additionally, the term "Fish Sharing" may not be the best way to describe this option as all options share fish.

It is evident that the main flounder migration stocks has shifted north. While we may still experience a good flounder fishing day here and there in Virginia, most days we struggle to catch keeper flounder. We acknowledge that when we overfish we must make cuts to protect the stocks but we do not support cuts when we are not overfishing.

Please keep the regulations in Virginia the same, 4 per person at 16 inches open all year.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mike Avery
Mike Avery, President

Recreational Fishing Alliance
New Jersey Chapter
P.O. Box 3080
New Gretna, NJ 08224

Capt. Adam Nowalsky,
Acting Chairman

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Subject: Draft Addendum XVIII

January 19, 2017

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

The New Jersey Chapter of the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA-NJ) appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board for consideration during deliberations of Draft Addendum XVIII. We urge Board members to take NO ACTION on the Addendum at this time, and revise the options included within or initiate a new Addendum as appropriate. At this time, the only acceptable option is to maintain STATUS QUO recreational measures for 2017.

A driving factor behind the draconian reductions contemplated in Draft Addendum XVIII remains the near 50% decrease in allowable landings since 2015. Never before in the history of the management of this species has such a dramatic cut been contemplated. Given that the stock status remains NOT OVERFISHED, there is simply no way to reasonably justify the severe economic implications of this action as opposed to continuing to use a phased in approach as offered in the updated National Standard One guidelines. The MAFMC's Science and Statistical Committee cited concerns about recruitment in their decision to make this recommendation. However, juvenile fish continue to be encountered at a high rate by both recreational and commercial fishermen, and if MRIP data were to be taken at face value, it would be hard to believe a declining stock with low recruitment could generate an increase in harvest by approx. 30% without a change in recreational measures in a single year. Furthermore, a recent study has confirmed that the R/V Bigelow has been inadequate at sampling flatfish, particularly smaller fish like juveniles, with a simple change in gear type increasing efficiency by as much as 400%. (A Summer Flounder specific study is scheduled for next summer.) The issue of recruitment declines needs to be further examined, and we call on the Commission to request that review for potential emergency action by the incoming Secretary of Commerce.

We believe that Draft Addendum XVIII is no longer using the best available science. The reductions contemplated in this action are based on reference points from a now outdated stock assessment. A new sex specific model that previous peer review has suggested as the best way forward for assessing flatfish has been developed by Dr. Pat Sullivan and is ready to be utilized. Imposing severe economic hardships across both recreational and commercial sectors because of the desire to delay a new stock assessment until MRIP re-estimation is complete is completely unacceptable. Summer Flounder needs to be re-assessed in time for management use in 2018.

Finally, we continue to reiterate our concerns about recreational catch estimates, and their applicability for management use. The current process for changing recreational size, season and bag limit on an

Recreational Fishing Alliance
New Jersey Chapter
P.O. Box 3080
New Gretna, NJ 08224

annual basis does not work due to the high variability and inherent inaccuracy of the recreational catch estimates. A mechanism has to be put in place that sets size, season and bag limit on a multi-year basis with gradual changes implemented in response to stock status. Due to delays in the on-going Summer Flounder Amendment, we call on the ASMFC to take a leadership role in getting these changes to the table.

In summary, we do not support the draconian reductions contemplated for the 2017 fishing season for the reasons highlighted above. We offer the following path forward –

1) The SF, Scup and BSB Board takes NO ACTION on Draft Addendum XVIII at this time. The Addendum is modified or a new Addendum is initiated to allow for STATUS QUO recreational measures in 2017.
2) The Commission asks the incoming Secretary of Commerce to take emergency action on Summer Flounder and maintain the 2016 ABC for 2017 (16.26 million lbs), a level which remains below the current OFL (16.76 million lbs).
3) The Commission recommends to the NRCC that Summer Flounder be assessed in time for management use in 2018. This may require exploration of an external review process.
4) Continue work on revised management mechanisms that set size, season and bag limits on a multi-year basis with gradual changes implemented in response to stock status and not the high inter-annual fluctuations present in MRIP.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Capt. Adam Nowalsky, Acting Chairman
RFA-NJ

Individual Comments

NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MINORITY CONFERENCE LEADER
DAVID P. RIBLE
ASSEMBLYMAN, 30TH DISTRICT
1967 HIGHWAY 34, BUILDING C, SUITE 202
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January 5, 2017

Mr. Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy:

Please accept this correspondence as my public comment in opposition to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's *Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Board Review* which proposes new catch restrictions for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass in the 2017 and 2018 fishing seasons.

As a member of the New Jersey General Assembly, I would like to express my serious concerns with the *Draft Addendum XXVIII*, specifically the undue burden it would place on my constituents.

As you may be aware, my district consists of Jersey Shore towns which rely heavily on fishing and tourism for economic support. Throughout the area, there are many charter and party boats, tackle shops, marine sales and repair businesses, and thousands of recreational fishermen. These proposed catch restrictions would devastate these small businesses and impose unfair hardship on recreational fishermen who often rely on their catch to support their families.

Additionally, I understand how important it is to ensure that our marine stocks are sustainable, however the imposition of these severe restrictions on recreational fishermen is unreasonable and ill-conceived. As such, I strongly urge the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to reconsider these restrictions in lieu of other, more sensible conditions which would not impair the economic development and well-being of the Jersey Shore, particularly in our continued recovery from Superstorm Sandy.

Thank you for your attention to the correspondence and please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance in this or another matter.

Sincerely,

David P. Rible
Assemblyman, 30th District

NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

VINCE MAZZEO
ASSEMBLYMAN, 2ND DISTRICT
507 TILTON ROAD
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COMMITTEES
VICE CHAIR, TOURISM, GAMING, AND THE ARTS
REGULATED PROFESSIONS

January 18th, 2017

SENT VIA E-MAIL

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

On behalf of my constituents and numerous small businesses in Atlantic County, New Jersey, I'm writing to submit on the record **my unequivocal opposition** to the Commission's proposed addendum related to the recreational management of summer flounder.

If implemented, the draconian 40% reduction in summer flounder catch limits for 2017 and 2018 would cripple New Jersey's recreational and commercial fishing economy.

Attached to this e-mail is Assembly Resolution 206, a bipartisan measure which urges the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to immediately conduct a new summer flounder assessment and refrain from enforcing the reduced summer flounder catch limit until a new benchmark assessment of the summer flounder stock has been conducted. Please enter AR-206 into the record as well.

I stand with New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection, our United States Senators, Cory Booker and Robert Menendez, and a bipartisan coalition of our Members of Congress in opposing this measure that will devastate the fishing community.

Thank you for consideration of this letter, I hope that the right decision will be made on behalf of our anglers and businesses.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Vince Mazzeo

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 5, 2017

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

We write in regards to a final rule recently announced by NOAA Fisheries to significantly reduce the commercial quotas and recreational harvest limits for summer flounder in 2017 and 2018. This rule will have a dramatic impact on coastal communities in New Jersey that rely on the summer flounder fishery, harming the livelihoods of recreational and commercial fishermen. The consequences of allowing this rule to go forward are serious, and we respectfully request that you consider taking emergency action to prevent these quota reductions from going into effect.

As you know, the final rule announced by NOAA Fisheries reduced the summer flounder Acceptable Biological Catch by 29% in 2017 and 16% in 2018. The recreational and commercial limits were reduced by approximately 30% in 2017 and 16% in 2018 respectively.

Many of our constituents have raised concerns to us about the science and methodology used by the agency in estimating the summer flounder population to make these determinations. For example, the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimated that Connecticut and New York recreational fishermen greatly exceeded limits on summer flounder in 2016, in part due to an increase in fishing trips in July and August. In order for the MRIP estimate to be accurate, there would need to be a 68% increase in fishing trips for Connecticut in those months, and a 35% increase for New York during July and August 2016, an increase of 400,000 people fishing. However, data from the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) shows that the number of fishing trips along the Eastern Seaboard has been declining, with a drop of 8 million fishing trips from 2007 to 2014. Many of our constituents feel that a sharp reversal of this trend is unlikely.

These reductions will harm coastal communities that rely on the recreational and commercial fishing industries along the Jersey Shore. From 2007 to 2014, JCAA has reported that there was a loss of 2 million fishing trips in New Jersey, and 40% of fishing trips in New Jersey are in pursuit of summer flounder. In short, these communities are already struggling, and these reductions will result in lost jobs for fishermen, and hardship for their families. Those working in the tourism and boating industries along the Shore will be adversely impacted as well.

That is why we are respectfully requesting that you consider preventing this rule from going into effect, and directing NOAA Fisheries to reexamine its methodologies and conduct a new benchmark summer flounder assessment before making any decision to reduce summer flounder quotas. New Jersey fishermen and their families should not be made to suffer because a federal agency uses disputed data.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress

ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator

CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator

FRANK LOBIONDO
Member of Congress

TOM MACARTHUR
Member of Congress

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

CHRISTOPHER J. CONNORS
SENATOR - 9TH DISTRICT
SenConnors@njleg.org

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BRIAN E. RUMPF
ASSEMBLYMAN - 9TH DISTRICT
AsmRumpf@njleg.org

DIANNE C. GOVE
ASSEMBLYWOMAN - 9TH DISTRICT
AswGove@njleg.org

December 20, 2016

Eileen Sobeck
Assistant Administrator of Fisheries
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

RE: NOAA – Summer Flounder 2017 & 2018 Quotas

Dear Assistant Administrator Sobeck:

In representing the interests of our constituency, we are writing in opposition to the NOAA Fisheries proposal to reduce Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), recreational and commercial quotas for summer flounder 2017 and 2018.

Proudly, we represent a coastal state Legislative District in which a large segment of the population has a strong and vested interest in fisheries-related issues. In speaking with various interests in our District, it is our understanding that the proposed rules will have a dramatically negative impact on both commercial interests and recreational fisherman.

The fishing industry, which plays a significant economic role in the regional economy, is still in the process of recovering from the catastrophic damage caused by Superstorm Sandy. This economic reality must be a consideration of any proposed rule with a wide ranging impact on both the commercial and recreational fishermen.

As you are aware, New Jersey US Senator Cory Booker and New Jersey Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. have already spoken out on this issue. Please add each member of our Delegation to growing list of elected officials concerned over the potentially negative impact of the proposed NOAA summer flounder rule.

Thank you, in advance, for your attention to this communication.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER J. CONNORS
Senator – 9th District

BRIAN E. RUMPF
Assemblyman – 9th District

DIANNE C. GOVE
Assemblywoman – 9th District

CJC/BER/DCG/

JEFF VAN DREW
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BOB ANDRZEJCZAK
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BRUCE LAND
ASSEMBLYMAN
FIRST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
AsmLand@njleg.org

January 18, 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street
Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

We write today in reference to Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass fishery management plan. We have serious concerns with the proposed actions contained within this draft addendum, and the potential impact that they will have on local economies, particularly given that there seems to be little consensus over the accuracy of the recent Stock Assessment Update. Even the addendum itself recognizes that the proposed actions may not address the issue of possible overfishing of these species. Section 2.1 of the Addendum states, "The Board recognizes the management options within this draft addendum will also have shortcomings with regards to addressing this problem, and thus intends the selected option to be an interim program while focusing on the development of a more comprehensive solution for the future." There is too much uncertainty to impose such a devastating restriction.

As you are likely aware, there is widespread dispute over the accuracy of the science and methodology used by NOAA Fisheries in estimating the current populations of these fisheries, particularly that of summer flounder. As noted in a recent letter from US Senator Cory Booker (NJ) and Representative Frank Pallone (NJ), the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimated that recreational fisherman in New York and Connecticut significantly exceeded limits on summer flounder in 2016, in part due to an increase in the number of fishing trips in the summer of that year. However, according to the letter, in order for that estimate to be accurate, Connecticut would have had to have increased the number of fishing trips by 68%, and New York would have had to have seen an increase of 35% in fishing trips during the months of July and August. However, the letter states, "data from the Jersey Coast Anglers Association (JCAA) shows that the number of fishing trips along the Eastern Seaboard has been declining, with a drop of 8 million fishing trips from 2007 to 2014." The numbers simply do not add up.

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PHONE: (609) 465-0700 • FAX: (609) 465-4578

1117 EAST LANDIS AVENUE, UNIT C
VINELAND, NJ 08360
PHONE: (856) 696-7109

219 N. HIGH STREET, SUITE B
MILLVILLE, NJ 08332
PHONE: (856) 765-0891 • FAX: (856) 765-0897

It is clear, from our perspective, that a new benchmark stock assessment must be completed before any further reductions can be implemented. There are over 250,000 registered saltwater fishing anglers in New Jersey, and 40% of all fishing trips are in pursuit of summer flounder. A reduction as large as the ones being proposed in this addendum will simply be too devastating to the economy to be based off of uncertain science, especially when there is clearly minimal confidence that the solution will have a real effect on the supposed problem. No one wants to see these fish overfished. If the fish are gone, then so is the fishing. It is in everyone's interest to see the stock be healthy, but it must be done based on accurate data, and drastic decisions cannot be taken lightly.

As such, we would ask that no new reductions be implemented for summer flounder until a new benchmark assessment can be conducted.

Sincerely,

Jeff Van Drew
State Senator, NJ-1

Bob Andrzejczak
Assemblyman, NJ-1
ASMFC Commissioner

Bruce Land
Assemblyman, NJ-1

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Whelan, Sen. D.O. <SenWhelan@njleg.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 11:56 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Count

To Whom It May Concern,

I join my fellow New Jersey legislators and urge NOAA to delay proposed changes to the summer flounder limits and do a comprehensive review of the data before taking action that could negatively impact the economy of the recreational and commercial summer flounder industries in our state.

Sincerely,
Jim Whelan
State Senator – District 2
609/383-1388 (p)
609/383-1497 (f)

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30th, 2016

Ms. Eileen Sobeck
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Sobeck,

We write to urge you to proceed with previously stated plans to conduct a benchmark summer flounder assessment in early 2017. It has come to our attention that there has been dialogue about potentially delaying the benchmark assessment until a later date. We believe any delay would be a major mistake and threaten the health of the summer flounder population as well as the economy of the communities the fishery supports.

The summer flounder fishery is one of the most valuable in the Atlantic. The fishery is managed from Maine through North Carolina, and supports individual anglers, party and charter boat businesses, boat builders, fishing tackle manufacturers, bait and tackle retailers, marinas, commercial fishermen, and fish processing and distribution centers. The recreational summer flounder industry support 14,168 jobs and with an economic impact $1.13 billion. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 2014 there were 1.2 million anglers who fished for summer flounder taking 4.04 million trips during that year making summer flounder one of the most popular recreational saltwater fisheries. The summer flounder commercial fishery is the second most valuable finfish fishery on the east coast with commercial landings valued at $32.3 million in 2014.

The last summer flounder benchmark assessment took place in 2013. Since then, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the regional councils have taken precautionary measures to increase the population of the stock. An updated benchmark assessment is necessary so that we have the best available information to manage the stock in the near future. Without this information we will not know if our coastal communities and fishing industry is unnecessarily struggling due to a lack of information or if the stock of the summer flounder is unnecessarily suffering due to the lack of data. Regardless of your opinion on the matter a benchmark assessment is vitally needed as soon as possible to satisfy both conservation and economic interests.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress

Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

Walter Jones
Member of Congress

Chris Smith
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr
Member of Congress

Chepr

From:

Jan. 16. 2017

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

Saltwater fish are only replenished by the fish themselves. Because of this, we should leave every species of fish alone until they have time to spawn. Nobody should be able to catch and keep fish when they are in the spawning process. You know when and where they spawn. Right now the continental shelf has Fluke that are ready to spawn in the months of Jan & Feb. Nobody should take them (commercial and recreational fishermen) because the nets will catch them and also turn over the mud, silt and sand to cover the fertile eggs and that will also kill a lot of the eggs. The only way this would work is if all 9 states are mandated to leave the Fluke alone on the continental shelf in Jan & Feb. Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fishermen in New York can take up to 25 percent of the seasonal catch in Jan & Feb. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing businesses stay in business. (bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, dinners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.). I remember that the fishing businesses generated over a Billion dollars for Long Island alone in the 1980's. I had charter trips that came from Westchester and Queens that would buy lunches, beer & tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Suffolk county. This does not happen much anymore. The new potential Fluke regulations will put more businesses out of business from a chosen few people who benefit greatly at the expense of the recreational fishermen.

Please consider closing the taking of Fluke in all waters for all states (9) from the spawning areas in January and February. My family was in the charter boat industry for many years 1948 - 1990. We had a 40 ft. boat and held up to 25 passengers. Fishing was great back then.

I like option #3 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for ~~2016 & 2017~~ 2016 & 2018.

Thanks in advance.

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

from: Angela Buredua
21 Chanticleer Dr.
Islip NY 11751

1/19/17

To Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
Fax # 703-842-0741

I have lived on Long Island my entire life. It is terrible what is happening with recreational fishing. No WINTER FLOUNDER + Big Decrease IN Summer Flounder (FLUKE).

Commercial Fishing Boats are Killing Recreational Fishing ON LONG ISLAND. CAUSING great financial HARDSHIP for LONG ISLAND.

Please Do Not Let them Take Fluke IN All 9 STATES IN Jan + FEB, LET The FISH Spawn.

I want Option #5- More COASTWIDE consistency. Keeping management plan FOR 2017 + 2018

Thank You Ahead.

From: Arlene Stack

Jan. 16, 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

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I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance, Arlene Stack (631) 885 7045

Arlene STACK
41350 8th ST
LINDEN HURST NY 11757

DOB 4/4/57

December 28, 2016

Mid Atlantic Fisheries Council

Fax #302-674-5399

Robert A. Schrader

106 River Ave.

Point Pleasant, N.J. 08742

"If you have ten thousand regulations you lose all respect for the law."…WINSTON CHURCHHILL

Dear Council Members,

The options that you will soon choose concerning the 2017 summer flounder (fluke) regulations are not only false choices, they are bogus, unfair, cruel and WILL make pirates out of every recreational fisherman and woman who would otherwise be a law abiding good citizen.

For many decades your efforts concerning, "Maximum Sustainable Yield" have been a total failure. The research you rely on is shall we say, "Suspect?" You keep telling us that we caught too many fish and will therefore have our quota reduced year after year. Most of the people I have spoken to over the decades of regulation have never, not only never been questioned at the dock about their harvest but have never received a phone call about it either.

If you go ahead and reduce the fluke limits this next year to a possible 2 fish at 19" in N.J. and N.Y. you will be solely responsible for not only putting head boats and charter boats out of business but you will be responsible for the loss of thousands of jobs in the recreational boating industry. Yes, there are many good hard working people who not only manufacture boat, sell them, repair them, store them, paint them and move them. All those boats need to buy things like fuel, bait, ice and that requires manpower…yea jobs!

I owned a boat hauling business for over 25 years and every fall I asked most of my customers who fished how many times they caught their limit and very few ever did. I am sure you will simply exclude my information as antidotal but it is true. It is just impossible for all of us that fish to go over the quota that is foisted upon us year after year.

Please consider one other item. Over the years I have had many of those same customers that I referred to, tell me they are getting out of boating because their children don't want to go out fishing any more. It seems they are tired of throwing short fish back and not being able to keep some for dinner. Should there not at least

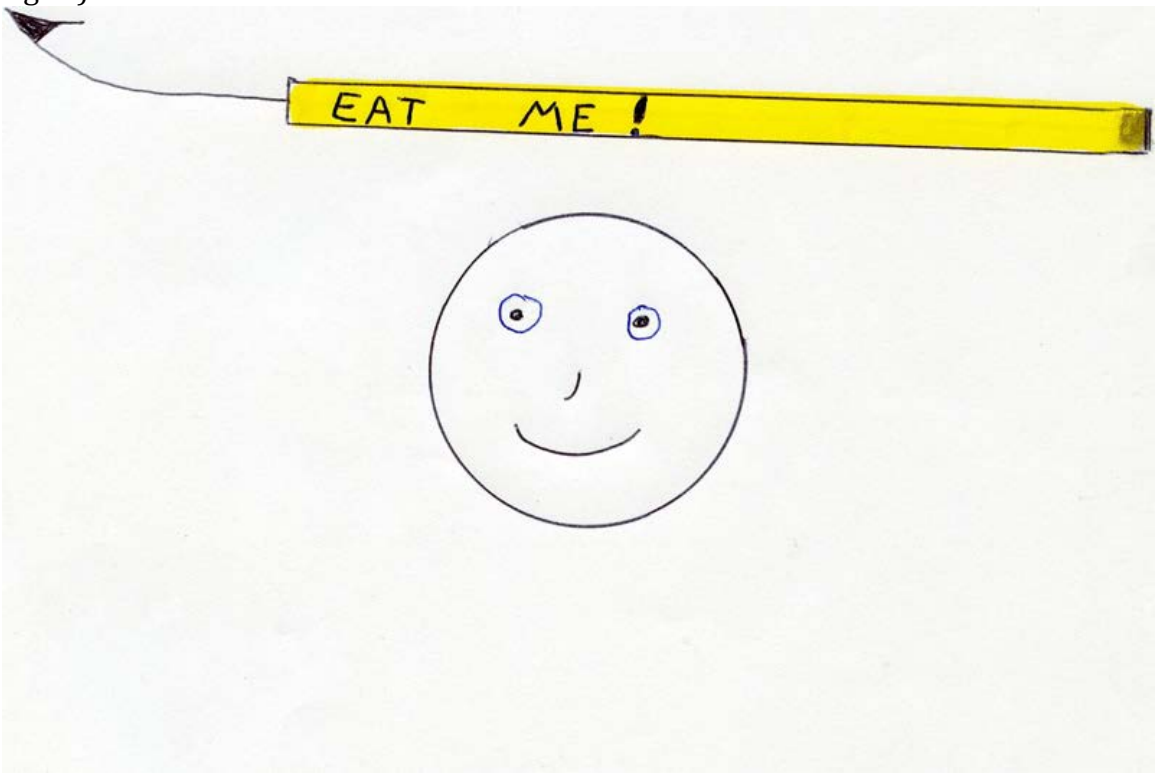
be a reduction in the size limit to keep a kid interested in spending valuable time with family and not sitting in front of a computer screen? You, and only you, can reject these new draconian restrictions on the public that just wants some small pleasures in this life to continue.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Schrader

732-330-7041

(PS. The last option will be to start my own tagging program and I will supply all the tags…)



Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

United Boatmen of NJ appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board for consideration during deliberations of Draft Addendum XVIII. We urge Board members to take NO ACTION on the Addendum at this time, and revise the options included within or initiate a new Addendum as appropriate. At this time, the only acceptable option is to maintain STATUS QUO recreational measures for 2017.

The For Hire Industry has been hit very hard over the years with draconian regulations for not only Flounder but Sea Bass, Scup and several other species that are being managed in the same manner. These regulations are not done over and extended time period i.e. 3-5 year plan and makes it impossible to operate a business from year to year not knowing what the season and bag limits will be until a month before the season is supposed to begin. Our approach to fishery science as it is now is broken beyond repair and given that the stock status remains NOT OVER FISHED, there is simply no way to reasonably justify the severe economic implications of this action as opposed to continuing to use a phased in approach as offered in the updated National Standard One guidelines.

We request the following path be taken to move forward:

1) The SF, Scup and BSB Board takes NO ACTION on Draft Addendum XVIII at this time. The Addendum is modified or a new Addendum is initiated to allow for STATUS QUO recreational measures in 2017.

2) The Commission asks the incoming Secretary of Commerce to take emergency action on Summer Flounder and maintain the 2016 ABC for 2017 (16.26 million lbs), a level which remains below the current OFL (16.76 million lbs).

3) The Commission recommends to the NRCC that Summer Flounder be assessed in time for management use in 2018. This may require exploration of an external review process.

4) Continue work on revised management mechanisms that set size, season and bag limits on a multi-year basis with gradual changes implemented in response to stock status and not the high inter-annual fluctuations present in MRIP.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Capt. Ted White

Owner/Operator

Charterboat 'Super Chic' Barnegat Light, NJ

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

from: Cathy Green
24 Seminole Street
Seldon, N.Y. 11784

1/19/17

TO Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
Fax # 703-842-0741

I have lived on Long Island my entire life. It is terrible what is happening with recreational fishing. No WINTER FLOUNDER + Big Decrease IN Summer Flounder (FLUKE).

Commercial Fishing Boats are Killing Recreational Fishing ON LONG ISLAND. CAUSING great financial HARDSHIP for LONG ISLAND.

Please DO Not Let them Take FLUKE IN All 9 STATES IN Jan + FEB, LET The FISH Spawn.

I want Option #5- More COASTWIDE consistency. Keeping management plan FOR 2017 + 2018

Thank You Ahead.

Cathy Green

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

Jan. 16, 2017

From: Charles Rothbart

To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741
Email: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

Saltwater fish [illegible] by the fish themselves. Because of this, we should leave every species of fish alone while they [illegible] should be able to catch and keep fish when they are in the spawning [illegible]. You know when and where they spawn. Right now the continental shelf has Fluke that are ready to spawn in the months of Jan & Feb. Nobody should take them (commercial and recreational fishermen) because the nets will catch them and also turn over the mud, silt and sand to cover the fertile eggs and that will also kill a lot of the eggs. The only way this could work is if all [illegible] to leave the Fluke alone on the continental shelf in Jan & Feb. Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fishermen in New York can take up to 2[illegible] percent of the seasonal catch in Jan & Feb. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing businesses stay in business. (bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, diners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.). I remember that the fishing businesses generated over a Billion dollars for Long Island each year alone in the 1980's. I know [illegible] that came from Westchester and Queens that would buy lunches, bait & tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Nassau and Suffolk County. This does not happen much anymore. [illegible] Fishermen.

Please consider stopping the taking of any Fluke in all waters for all states [illegible] from the spawning areas in the months of January and February. The fishing was great back in the 1970's and 1980's when the Fluke had a chance.

I like option #[illegible] More Coastwide Consistency, [illegible] and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance, [signature]

1075 Tooker Avenue
West Babylon, NY 11704
December 15, 2016

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suites 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr Rootes-Murdy:

I am taking this opportunity to comment on *Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment* (the "Draft Amendment"). My comments reflect the views of an angler who is active in the summer flounder fishery, and has participated in such fishery since 1961. I have fished for summer flounder in the waters of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York (bay, ocean and Long Island Sound) and New Jersey; since 1984, such fishing has primarily taken place in, but has not been limited to, waters within a 20-mile radius of Fire Island Inlet, New York.

I do not contest the findings of the *Summer Flounder Stock Assessment Update for 2016*, which found that recruitment had been below-average since 2010, and that spawning stock biomass is declining. In recent years, I have noted a marked decline in the number of smaller (below 20 inches total length) summer flounder that are being caught by myself and other anglers in the Fire Island Inlet area. The quality of summer flounder fishing over all has declined markedly in the past two or three seasons. Such observations are consistent with multiple years of low recruitment and an overall decline in summer flounder abundance.

That being the case, I do not question the need for a 30% reduction in the annual catch limit. My comments will be limited to how such reductions are achieved.

I
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission ("ASMFC") should continue to use a regional management approach to regulate recreational landings of summer flounder.

The National Marine Fisheries Service manages summer flounder as a single stock; in addition, recreational harvest estimates are most accurate when applied over the broadest possible geographic area. Thus, the management option adopted should seek the greatest practical consistency, and not support wide disparities in regulations among the states.

For that reason, single-state management of recreational summer flounder landings is not appropriate. One of the regional management options described in the Draft Addendum should be adopted.

II
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

A
FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

Season length is arguably the most important single component in the suite of recreational summer flounder regulations, as both anglers and angling-related businesses benefit when seasons are open for an extended period. Such extended seasons not only allow anglers to make more trips and thus provide greater economic support to tackle shops, for-hire vessels, fuel docks and similar enterprises, but also lessen the impact of periods of inclement weather, which will inevitably hamper fishing activities during some part of the season.

At the same time, the option selected must constrain harvest within the annual catch limit recommended by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Science and Statistics Committee (the "SSC") and ultimately adopted by the National Marine Fisheries Service ("NMFS"). With summer flounder experiencing below-average recruitment for six consecutive years, and spawning stock biomass at a mere 58% of the biomass target (and thus hovering far too near the threshold that denotes an overfished stock), care should be taken to avoid overfishing in 2017.

Finally, whatever option is ultimately adopted should promote ASMFC's declared objective "to provide recreational anglers with fair and equitable access to shared fishery resources throughout the range of each managed species."[1] Options which place a disproportionate share of the management burden upon a small number of states, while allowing other states to enjoy a far more liberal regulatory environment, are inconsistent with that objective and thus unacceptable.

B
OPTION 5 STRIKES THE BEST BALANCE BETWEEN CONSERVING THE FISHERY AND PROVIDING FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE SUMMER FLOUNDER RESOURCE, ***PROVIDED THAT*** THE SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (THE "TECHNICAL COMMITTEE") AND/OR THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE ("NMFS") IS SATISFIED THAT IT IS NOT LIKELY TO LEAD TO OVERFISHING

Option 5 appears to satisfactorily address the need to reduce harvest by 30%[2] in order to address the declining biomass, while not proving overly punitive to any region. Season length in the Connecticut, New York/New Jersey region, which accounts for about 80% of total recreational summer flounder

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[1] Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, *Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment*, December 2016, p. 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

landings,[3] would remain unchanged, the one-inch increase in size limit is tolerable and the 3-fish bag will, in reality, prove more than adequate at most times in most places, as the reduced size of the stock has resulted in less angling success.

According to the Draft Addendum, such option is unlikely to meet the 41% harvest reduction that is purportedly necessary to account for both the decline in summer flounder biomass and recreational overharvest in 2016. While, under most circumstances, such failure would be sufficient to eliminate this option from consideration, current changes to the Marine Recreational Information Program, which are just being incorporated into the harvest estimates, must be considered when evaluating this option.

One such change involves the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, which samples the catch (both releases and removals) of anglers at the conclusion of their fishing day. In New York, a new methodology was introduced in 2016, which was intended to obtain more accurate samples. While that goal appears to have been met, the change in methodology has inevitably resulted in estimates that are not directly comparable to those made in previous years.

However, the stronger argument for questioning the importance of the any supposed overage comes from the pending adoption of the Fishing Effort Survey. A pilot study of such survey found that "The new study design produced a 1.6 fold increase in the likelihood of surveying a household with at least one angler over the other pilot designs evaluated. There was also a 3-fold increase in the response rate, along with ***a 4.1-fold increase in 'the mail survey estimate of total fishing effort'*** relative to [the currently used Coastal Household Telephone Survey]. [emphasis added]"[4]

The Fishing Effort Survey was used in the determination of 2016 recreational summer flounder landings. However, when it is incorporated into all harvest estimates, the substantial increase in the estimate of total fishing effort will have such a significant impact on summer flounder management, both with respect to stock assessments and to harvest estimates, as to render the currently calculated 2016 overage insignificant.

Thus, provided that neither the Technical Committee nor NMFS objects, Option 5 should govern recreational summer flounder management in 2016.

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[3] *Ibid., See* table p. 10.

[4] Committee on the Review of the Marine Recreational Information Program, *Review of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP)* (pre-publication copy), The National Academies Press, Washington, D.C., p.41.

C

IN THE EVENT THAT OPTION 5 RECEIVES UNSURMOUNTABLE OPPOSITION FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND/OR NMFS, OPTIONS 3 AND 4 WOULD PROVIDE THE LEAST OBJECTIONABLE ALTERNATIVES

In the event that Option 5 cannot be adopted, Option 3 and Option 4 would represent the least objectionable of the remaining options. Both provide for a 99 day season, long enough to run from late May into early September and include almost all of the traditional summer flounder season (although a slight modification to the proposed seasons, which would allow the Connecticut/New York/New Jersey region to adopt a season running from the Saturday before Memorial Day through Labor Day, would be highly desirable); both have size and bag limits that don't vary more than two inches or two fish, respectively, among the several states, North Carolina excepted. Thus, it strikes a balance between season length, interstate equity and conservation concerns.

Option 1, which would impose a 59-day season, too short to include even all of Wave 4, on the Connecticut/New York/New Jersey region, is not a viable option. Summer flounder fishing is extremely important to both the anglers and angling-related businesses of the region, and Option 1's short season would cause them unnecessary hardship. The tri-state region is the heart of the recreational summer flounder fishery, as illustrated by the projected 2016 harvest, which shows tri-state landings nearly a full order of magnitude higher than landings in any other region. Placing the brunt of the management measures on a region so dependent on the summer flounder resource, while allowing other regions that are far less dependent on such resource to adopt far more liberal regulations, is both unwise and inequitable, and not necessary to properly manage summer flounder.

Option 2 yields a season for the Connecticut/New York/New Jersey region that is nearly as long as Options 3 and 4, and presumably meets the applicable conservation criteria. However, while the loss of just three days of season may appear insignificant, it is enough to keep the fishery closed throughout all of either Memorial Day or Labor Day weekend, resulting in a significant loss of recreational opportunity and recreational fishing industry income. Option 2 also allows a significant disparity between state regulations, particularly with respect to bag limits, which would range from three fish in the Connecticut/New York/New Jersey region to eight fish in neighboring Rhode Island. While such regulations might be acceptable if absolutely necessary to constrain harvest to biologically acceptable limits, they are not necessary, as more palatable options are available.

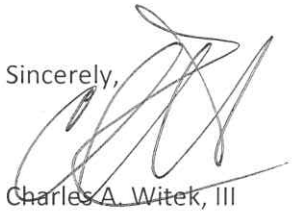
III
TIMEFRAME FOR ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Option 2, which permits alternative management approaches to be extended through 2018, should be adopted.

As discussed above in Section I, regional management, as opposed to state-by-state conservation equivalency, represents the most rational approach to summer flounder management. Recognizing that, revisiting the question each year is an inefficient use of ASMFC resources. Option 2, which permits alternative management approaches to be extended through 2018, is thus the preferred option.

Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Sincerely,



Charles A. Witek, III

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29066350v1

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
P.O. BOX 402
MAIL CODE 401-07
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402
TEL: # (609) 292-2885
FAX # (609) 292-7695

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

January 19, 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Email: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy:

I am writing regarding the Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Draft Addendum XXVIII (Addendum); the State of New Jersey has serious concerns with and opposes all options presented within the Addendum.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has undertaken an extensive analysis of the Addendum and finds that the proposed options do not meet the intended objective of protecting the stock of the species and do not set equitable harvest limits for the fishing industry. As proposed, the Addendum will serve as a de facto moratorium on summer flounder for the recreational fishing industry in New Jersey.

Summer flounder is one of New Jersey's most important recreational fish species. Anglers from New Jersey and surrounding states routinely plan their Jersey shore vacations to coincide with the summer flounder season. The Addendum threatens to jeopardize businesses such as bait and tackle shops and party and charter boats that cater to recreational anglers. The recreational fishing industry, which provides more than $1.5 billion economic benefits annually and directly supports 20,000 job in New Jersey, would be devastated.

The Addendum states that: "… [a] fundamental goal of Commission fishery management plans is to provide recreational anglers with fair and equitable access to shared fishery resources…" However, the ASMFC further admits they face challenges, "determining what is meant by fair/equitable/reasonable access, and how to achieve it." To be prudent, the ASMFC should obtain the data necessary to ensure that they fully understand what is meant by "fair/equitable/reasonable access" and how to achieve it before making such a consequential decision.

In the short-term, New Jersey urges the Commission to maintain the status quo by keeping the 2016 management measures in place. This action must be followed by an immediate benchmark stock assessment, which has not been conducted since 2013 and is long overdue. Based on updated data from the benchmark assessment, ASMFC should revisit the commercial and recreational harvest limits for the 2018 season.

In the long-term, New Jersey strongly recommends that members of the ASMFC work in coordination with federal government to create a new paradigm regarding the management of this species. If the purpose of the ASMFC is to protect the summer flounder stock while also providing equitable harvest limits for the recreational and commercial fishing industry, then annual quota shifts that are not based on the most recent science and modeling are of questionable value. Furthermore, a process created in an attempt to manage a migratory fish species based on the assumption that state boundaries extend out into the ocean, while not fully incorporating changing water temperatures which clearly have an impact on these migratory patterns, must be reexamined. The ASMFC should adopt a system where management measures are implemented for a minimum of three years in order to determine the effect the measures have on the fishery.

Again, I urge the ASMFC to keep the status quo for the 2016 season and initiate an immediate benchmark stock assessment. This will allow for the best available data and science to factor into a decision which would have a devastating effect on New Jersey's fishing industry. In the long-term, I respectfully urge the ASMFC to reexamine the methodology in order to create a new paradigm in fisheries management for this species and potentially for other species as well.

New Jersey is ready to assist the ASMFC and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) to develop and implement a new benchmark assessment and to help ensure that it is completed as swiftly as possible.

Sincerely,

Bob Martin
Commissioner, NJDEP

Kirby Rootes-Murdy 16 January 2017

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 North Highland Street Suite 200A-N

Arlington, Virginia

I am a recreational Summer flounder fishermen in the state of Virginia, I would like to thank the ASMFC for the opportunity to submit comments to the Draft Addendum XXVIII Summer Flounder and Sea Bass Management Plan. Below are my comments that I would like to summit.

1. In the regional management option, it appears that a target of 97% of the RHL is the goal, this does not allow any cushion for exceeding the total Coast wide RHL. I question why, when we were in the state by state conservation equivalency system that high of percentage of the total RHL was never aimed for.

2. In 2014 when the decision to go to Regional Management Plan was made, there was no consideration in Addendum XXV that addressed a plan of action (payback mechanism) when if the RHL was exceeded. The subsequent addenda also failed to consider a plan for addressing overages of the RHL. Now that the 2016 landings are projected to exceed the RHL, for the first time in 3 years of regional management, there is tremendous difficulty involved in choosing the best plan to constrain the 2017 landings to or below the target. How on earth can there be no ready-made plan to deal with an overage of the RHL, when the history of management of this recreational fishery is rife with overages? Now we have Addendum XXVIII out for public comment, but it seems the ASMFC prefers an ad hoc method to reconcile the needed 41% reduction for 2017, rather than spend time ensuring there is a fair plan for addressing this and future overages. I do not understand the logic of this. When we were state by state conservation equivalency system prior to 2014 there were set, prescribed methods to address overages, even on the state level, and the states knew what was expected and what action was to be taken to address overages. There is no way that this year's solution, by the ASMFC, to deal with the current overage of the RHL should be perpetuated in the future. The ASMFC needs to have a plan that can allow all of us to know what to expect when such problems occur. Words need to be added to Addendum 28 that address overages, states, regions need to be accountable when they exceed their target quotas.

3. As a Virginia Flounder fishermen, I prefer that we return to state by state conservation equivalency system for 2017, I understand as the Addendum XXVIII may offer that possibility, but I also know that it is not popular with states to our north, as the 1998 basis for 'allocation' is viewed as inadequate. I think an opportunity was missed to establish a

more modern allocation system for the recreational summer flounder fishery. In 2014 at the advent of regional management there were *de facto* allocations set by the ASMFC, and no doubt the ASMFC missed an opportunity to establish these 2014 allocations for at least a 5-year period. It just may be that this missed opportunity is one reason all of us face uncertainty for the 2017 fishery. Looking at the catch data for 2016, the Virginia/Maryland/Delaware region did not exceed its *de facto* target, and Virginia, alone, has not had the landings it did several years ago. Also, the only year class near average was the 2014 year class, and those fish are certainly available to our fishery starting in mid-April in Seaside areas. For these reasons, I think the Virginia-Maryland-Delaware region should not take any reduction in our 2017 target quota, and that the regions that exceeded their targets should take the reductions.

Concerning the options in Addendum XXVIII, I prefer Option 1 (Fish Sharing), and that the Addendum should only be in effect for 1 year.

David Agee

702 Lake Dale Way

Yorktown, VA 23693

Absecon Bay Sportsman Center

81 Natalie Terrace, Absecon, NJ 08201

tackle@abseconbay.com , www.abseconbay.com

January 5, 2017

To whom it may concern:

My name is David Showell and with my wife Judith, for more than thirty-one years, we have been owners of Absecon Bay Sportsman Center. This is a small marina and bait and tackle retail shop located on Absecon Creek serving the greater Atlantic City area.

Here in Southern New Jersey, recreational salt water fishing centers around the summer flounder. From early May thru September almost every recreational fishing trip starts out with the intention of bringing home at least a flounder dinner and possibly putting a good number of filets in the freezer. Even though other fish may find their way into the cooler. Striped Bass, Weakfish, Bluefish, Sea Bass, Tautog, Porgys, Blowfish and others are all secondary targets. It is the Summer Flounder that gets the majority of anglers on the water.

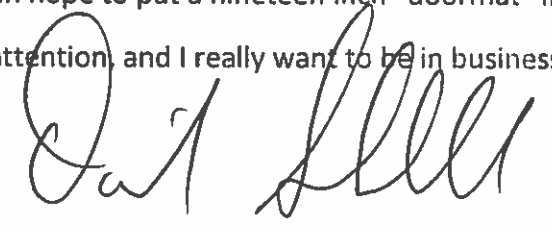
In the early 1990s the flounder were definitely in trouble. When the first size limit of thirteen inches was imposed, it was actually difficult to put keepers in the boat. I understand that conversation was and is necessary. In only a few years the improvement was more than noticeable and my customers were responding to regulations favorably. Almost all could agree that a flounder under fourteen inches really wasn't worth fileting. However as the numbers of undersized flounder increased, the legal size seemed to increase faster. Sixteen inches could still be justified, but as the size limits rose from there, I began to feel a great frustration as my bait and tackle customers complained about throwing back perfectly eatable plate sized fish.

For the last few years there has been a very serious decline in fishing participation, which I attribute one hundred percent to the eighteen inch size limit. While I have not done any strict scientific calculations, I can very clearly tell by the sale counts on my cash register and by the end of month sales tax bills which are getting smaller and smaller. I've been on the water with charters fishing on a beautiful summer day in the middle of the constricted Inter Coastal Waterway and not had another fishing boat pass me for hours at a time. My charter fishermen have had plenty of summer flounder on the line every day. Most that I would have considered very good "Eaters" and even more frustrating, they would be legal for commercial fishermen to sell to the local seafood shops. Only a few make the eighteen inch legal limit.

What will happen if the size limit goes to nineteen inches? Absolutely nothing good. I can't even imagine a plan to continue selling bait and tackle at a level necessary to provide a profit and maintain my property and feed my family. The small limit is actually a moot point as there are very few anglers who even hope to put a nineteen inch "doormat" in the box .

Thanks for the attention, and I really want to be in business in 2018.

David Showell



From: David Wormath Jan. 16, 2017

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

Saltwater fish are only replenished by the fish themselves. Because of this, we should leave every species of fish alone until they have time to spawn. Nobody should be able to catch and keep fish when they are in the spawning process. You know when and where they spawn. Right now the continental shelf has Fluke that are ready to spawn in the months of Jan & Feb. Nobody should take them (commercial and recreational fishermen) because the nets will catch them and also turn over the mud, silt and sand to cover the fertile eggs and that will also kill a lot of the eggs. The only way this would work is if all 9 states are mandated to leave the Fluke alone on the continental shelf in Jan & Feb. Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fishermen in New York can take up to 25 percent of the seasonal catch in Jan & Feb. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing businesses stay in business. (bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, dinners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.). I remember that the fishing businesses generated over a Billion dollars for Long Island alone in the 1980's. I had charter trips that came from Westchester and Queens that would buy lunches, beer & tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Suffolk county. This does not happen much anymore. The new potential Fluke regulations will put more businesses out of business from a chosen few people who benefit greatly at the expense of the recreational fishermen.

Please consider closing the taking of Fluke in all waters for all states (9) from the spawning areas in January and February. My family was in the charter boat industry for many years 1948 - 1990. We had a 40 ft. boat and held up to 28 passengers. Fishing was great back then.

I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance.

Jan. 16, 2017

From: Dennis DADD JR.

To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741
Email: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

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Please consider closing the taking of any Fluke in all waters for all states (9) from the spawning areas in the months of January and February. The Fishing was great back in the 1970's and 1980's when the Fluke had a chance.

I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance, Dennis Dadd.

Jan. 16, 2017

From: Dennis DADD - Ramirez

To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741
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I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance, [signature]

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

From Elizabeth M Stack 413 south 8th st

Lindenhurst Ny 11757

1/19/17

January 17, 2017

To Atlantic States marine Fisheries Commission :

I am 95 years old and have fished most of my life on Long Island.It is a terrible shame what is happening with No Winter flounder now, and decrease in Summer flounder.

THE COMMERCIAL FISHING BOATS ARE KILLING THE RECCREATIONAL FISHING . tHIS IS CAUSING GREAT HARDSHIP FOR IONG iSLANG. IET THE FISH SPAWN IN JAN AND fEB!!!!

Please consider closing the taking of Fluke in all 9 states in January and Febuary. So we can continue to enjoy this great sport.

I like option #5 more coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the mangement plan for 2017 &2018. Thank You Elizabeth Stack

Elizabeth Stack

From: Fred Caravousanos

January 17, 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, Virginia 22201
Tel: 703-842-0740
Fax: 703-842-0741
Email: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org

Re: Draft Addendum XXVIII to Summer Flounder

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Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fisherman in New York can take up to twenty-five (25%) percent of the seasonal catch in January and February. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing business stay in business (such as bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, diners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.).

I remember that the fishing business generated over a billion dollars for Long Island each year alone in the 1980's. I know charter trips that came from Westchester and Queens that would buy lunches, beer and tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Nassau and Suffolk county. This does not happen much anymore. The new potential Fluke regulations will put more businesses out of business from a chosen few people who benefit greatly at the expense of the recreational fishermen.

Please consider closing the taking of any Fluke in all waters for all nine (9) states from the spawning areas in the months of January and February. The fishing was great back in the 1970's and 1980's when the Fluke had a chance.

I support option #5, more coastwide consistency, regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thank you very much in advance,

By:

Jan. 16, 2017

From: George Chen
111 Carroll Pl
Westbury NY

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

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I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance,

George Chen

RECEIVED JAN 11 2017

Jan. 10, 2017

From: James M. Braun
97 Haynes Ave.
West Islip, NY 11795 Cell 1-631-678-6942

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

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→ I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance,

James M. Braun

(¥) cc: NYS Dept of Environmental Attn: James Gilmore

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

Jan 10, 2017

Dear Sir

In reference to the Summer Flounder Addendum XXVIII, I've been fishing for Winter and Summer Flounder (Fluke) for more than 50 years from shore and Party boats and rental boats. I purchased my first boat in 1969 (16FT Boston Whaler) and used that boat until 1994 when I retired and purchased my present boat (Grady-White), since then your Organization (A.S.M.F.C.) has phased me out of Winter Flounder fishing from a boat (2 fish per person) because its fiscally - inefficient. (Bait - worms $4.00 Doz Chum $3.50 per Quart, Fuel 4.00 per Gallon)

Now with Proposals, like the 19 inch limit and two fish this is also fiscally inefficient and based on flawed Science. Last year I fished on average of one day a week I caught two Keeper fish only one over 19 inches. However I caught numerous Throwback fish (under 18 in) (several Times over 20 fish). I have never been surveyed. N.J. ID: 00464032 (2016). I and my family do consume the Keeper fish I catch. I respectfully request that the A.S.M.F.C. keep the present limit (5 fish at 18 in) Status Quo, And Please do something about the low Winter Flounder limit.

Sincerely,

James J. Whittaker
420 Midstream Rd,
Brick N.J. 08724

(732) 295-2127

Statement in Opposition to Implementation of Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII.

As the Mayor of the City of Absecon, Atlantic County, New Jersey, I write to voice my firm opposition to the regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Council which would reduce the commercial quota and recreational harvest limits for summer flounder in 2017 and 2018. As I understand it, the recreation and commercial limits would be cut drastically by 30% in 2017 and 16% in 2018. Although no one should be opposed to scientifically- based efforts necessary to conserve fish population, I understand that there is a widely-held view that these reductions are not supported by accurate data and that there is a need to conduct a new benchmark summer flounder assessment before considering any changes in harvest quotas.

I am certainly not an expert in these matters, but I do know my City and I fully appreciate the role that commercial and recreational fishing plays in the life and economy of my community. Absecon is a mainland town just west of Atlantic City with considerable frontage along Absecon Creek leading into Absecon Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The City operates a municipal boat ramp for which we issued 445 seasonal permits last year. We also have four privately-operated marinas and numerous private docks along Absecon Creek which cater to hundreds of other boaters. The opportunity to catch summer flounder is the overwhelming attraction for people utilizing these public and private facilities.

Absecon's circumstances are not appreciably different than all other coastal communities along the New Jersey coast. Seasonal fishing plays a vital role in our recreationally-based economy. I understand that there has already been reported a loss of 2 million fishing trips in New Jersey between 2007 and 2014, with 40% of those otherwise in pursuit of summer flounder. Any reduction in summer flounder quotas not mandated by a reliable survey will further ravage what is already a threatened industry. Anecdotally, I have

already heard of a local marina operator deciding not to make his annual purchase of fishing supplies because of the anticipated loss of business resulting from this impending regulation.

I urge NOAA Fisheries and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Council to suspend any efforts to reduce summer flounder quotas and to conduct an accurate stock assessment to determine whether such action might be warranted in the future. Thank you.

January 9, 2017 **Absecon Mayor John Armstrong**

EP Sales Tackle Distributor, LLC
303 N. Washington Ave.
Ventnor, NJ 08406
609-822-1116

January 13, 2017

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council

Re: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Mr. Krootes-Murdy:

I am the owner of EP Sales. We are a small family run business in Ventnor, NJ that provides fishing tackle to retailers throughout the mid-Atlantic region. I appreciate you taking the time to explain the Draft Addendum to the room in Galloway, NJ. The options put forward by the commission are unacceptable. Each would be devastating to my, and many other businesses in this already depressed region. I do not feel the fishery is in the dire straits portrayed. I do have a tremendous interest, both professionally and personally, to see this fishery continue. I ask the commission to consider the opinion of most in attendance that it is the misguided efforts to restrict the harvest to only contain the breeding females that is hurting the fishery.

There are alternative ways to reach the same end while not destroying the local economy in the process. The three tools to manage this fishery are size limits, bag restrictions, and season length. The option that is overwhelmingly the most damaging to the economy is restricting the season. Please take this into consideration when making your final decision.

Sincerely,

John Chickadel

John Chickadel
EP Sales

Sincerely,

John Chickadel
EP Sales Tackle Distributor, LLC

Lorraine Restaino
936 Grant Ave
from: Farmingdale, NY 1/19/17

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

To Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
Fax # 703 842-0741

I have lived on Long Island my entire life. It is terrible what is happening with recreational fishing. No WINTER FLOUNDER + Big Decrease IN Summer Flounder (FLUKE)

Commercial Fishing Boats are Killing Recreational Fishing ON LONG ISLAND. Causing great financial HARDSHIP for LONG ISLAND.

Please Do Not Let them Take Fluke IN All 9 STATES IN Jan + FEB, LET The FISH Spawn.

I want Option #5- More COASTWIDE consistency. Keeping management plan FOR 2017 + 2018

Thank You Ahead.

L Restaino

Comments of Mike Plaia on the DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIII TO THE SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN:

I think that the board should continue regional management for the foreseeable future. Therefore, I support timeframe Option 2: For 2017 and ability to extend through 2018 (One year extension)

I believe that option 1, fish sharing, is the only equitable way to achieve the necessary reductions in the summer flounder recreational fishery. All of the other options would, unduly, penalize the states/regions, which have been conservative in managing their recreational summer flounder fishery. As a policy matter I do not believe that the board should been seen as discouraging conservative management in any fishery. Adopting any of the other alternatives, would send a message to all of the states that they should grab as many fish as they can when things are good, because when things get bad all the states/regions will be severely penalized.

As for the rationale of trying to harmonize regulations along the coast, I believe that it is irrational and counter to prior actions by the Board. The Board admitted the reality that the size and distribution of summer flounder along the coast is not equally distributed when the Board adopted regional management. Indeed, the wide discrepancy in fish availability was the sina-qua-non for the adoption of regional management. To adopt across the board increases in size limits runs directly counter to the rationale of adopting regional management.

The Folsom Corporation

43 McKee Drive • Box 616 • Mahwah, N.J. • 07430 • (201) 529-3550
P.O. Box 958 • Odessa, Fl. 33556 • (813) 926-3582
P.O. Box 23710 • New Orleans, LA. 70183 • (504) 733-3142

My name is Nick Cicero and I sit on the board of both The Save the Summer Flounder Fishery Fund and the Recreational Fishing Alliance. However, my comments today are from the prospective of how the pending regulations will affect jobs and small businesses in New Jersey and East Coast.

I'm the sales manager of the Folsom Corporation of Mahwah New Jersey. We have been a wholesale distributor and manufacturer of fishing tackle for over a 150 years! With offices in Mahwah, Tampa, New Orleans and Bentonville Arkansas we are one of the largest suppliers of fishing tackle in the country. We supply sporting goods stores, tackle shops, marinas, and chain stores throughout the country. At any given time, by looking at seasonal sales trends, I can clearly see where fishing activity for a particular species is vibrant and where angler catches, and angler gear purchases are less than normal!

And, I can clearly state that my records do not match the activity reported by the NMFS angler catch data.

Our New Jersey Folsom facility employees over 75 people who jobs depend on healthy recreational fisheries and the public's access to those stocks. In the last 15 years we have witnessed an unprecedented number of New Jersey tackle shop closures which has been, in part, triggered by the continued mismanagement of our resources by the very government that we have entrusted to watch over our saltwater fish stocks.

Gone are the days when tackle shops and the for-hire fleet were busy year round with anglers flocking to the shore to fish for Cod, Silver Hake, Red Hake, Winter Flounder and Boston Mackerel - all species that National Marine Fisheries Service and its regulatory initiatives has failed to restore to historically abundant levels! Compound the aforementioned loss of opportunity with the mismanagement of recreational quota for other critically important species like black sea bass, and scup whose numbers are thriving despite diminished angler access including a controversial yet mandatory first-quarter closure on sea bass.

Today's surviving tackle shops and Charter and Party boats are operating on such truncated seasons, that is so weather dependent, that a few rainy summer weekends can make or break a season for these small businesses. The proposed loss of a normal fluke season will spell the last straw for many New Jersey businesses both on and off the water!

Besides, scup and sea bass, the summer flounder are one of the bright spots in the overall picture in both angler participation and rebuilt healthy stocks. Just a few short years ago we had a fluke population that was reported to be at an historical all time high and that success was achieved, it must be pointed out, by allowing anglers and commercial fisherman quotas that were almost three times higher than the quotas that will be implemented by these proposals!

And yet, in spite of this rebuilding in the past few seasons our quotas have been decimated with even bigger cuts proposed for next year. Reductions that are both scientifically unwarranted and factually unsubstantiated!

Why? Because decisions are being made without using the best available science or the best possible data! Recent information indicates that fluke populations are shifting northward and into deeper water yet the current NMFS data is not timely enough to incorporate those dynamic changes.

1- Because the reference points that NMFS assigned to Fluke are way too high and have been since their inception! What are reference points? Truth be told it is the contrived number of fluke that theoretically would exist in a utopian ocean that remained untouched by man, by pollution, weather, nursery habitat degradation and climate changes or forage base fluctuations. Point of fact is that many of today's most respected stock assessment scientists concur and now believe that we reached our historical summit in fluke population 5 of 6 years ago and that our current population is healthy and in no present danger what so ever.

2- Because for the last 6 years NMFS research Vessel Bigelow has consistently been returning catch data on young of the year fluke that is substantially lower than previous research vessels reported Not only is that issue one that should have been questioned immediately, but more recently a review of the nets and techniques used by the Bigalow have come under scrutiny and the accuracy of the information is highly dubious at very best. Six years of low recruitment is what we're being told – But coincidentally, aren't those the same six years that the research vessel Bigelow has been conducting trawl surveys? Any real scientific protocol would warrant questioning "what's changed "rather than arbitrarily accepting new data without questioning its source or accuracy!

3- Because NMFS Recreational catch reporting is in fact nothing more than a government sponsored dartboard! The catches that have been reported in 2016 are so highly suspicious as to be comical if in fact people's very livelihoods were not in jeopardy! Not a person in this room has any faith in the data that has been supplied. To believe, as an example that Connecticut, who's anglers fish many of the same waters as Rhode Island went 3 times beyond their allowed catch while its sister state fell below is not anything that anyone with knowledge of both the fishery and the fishing pressure in both states would accept. No a single angler here believes New Jersey overfished as southern New Jersey continued to see good back bay fishing when the season was still closed in the spring and poor fishing during the open season as the fluke population continues its northward shift. We hear a lot about "peer review" needed of the science and data left on the cutting room floor and unusable by NOAA Fisheries – yet when will see a "peer review" of the recreational harvest survey changes clearly demanded by Congress over 10 years ago?

4- Because we are burdened with an outdated Stock Assessment. The last stock assessment is past its usefulness and we need a new benchmark assessment done before we can make any accurate determination on the size and distribution of the population. The newly developed sex specific model created by Dr Patrick Sullivan with funding from SSFFF and its partners needs to be incorporated as quickly as possible as it will produce a far more comprehensive and accurate look at the fishery than the currently used model.

5- Because the recent SSFFF Rutgers University onboard sex and length study results clearly detail what most fishermen already suspected which is that our current management strategy is putting undue pressure on breeding female fluke and that we would be better off harvesting a cross section of the population that would include more males. Increasing the size limit as mandated in these proposals would do nothing but increase the number of breeding females caught and retained along with increasing the angler discards.

Based on these five key points, so filled with questionable data that is not well defined or scientifically substantiated I believe there's a sound argument to be made for asking NOAA Fisheries to approve "status quo" management on summer flounder this season, and to ask that they make every effort to fast track the required benchmark assessment and peer review using all the newest information available.

All of the options developed and put forward in Addendum 28 are done so under the guidance of a 3.77 million pound recreational harvest limit. Based on the key points detailed above, New Jersey's anglers and businesses do not believe the recreational harvest limit should be set at 3.77 million pounds so we can't support any of the options in the addendum.

In order to avoid this looming disaster the US Department of Commerce must revisit and reset the 2017 summer flounder ABC to 16.26 million pounds (status quo) and NOAA Fisheries must assume that we met, but did not exceed our recreational harvest limit in 2016.

On behalf of the recreational fishermen of New Jersey and those of us in our coastal sport fishing industry, I respectfully ask our state representatives at ASFMC and the Council to respond as such to the federal fisheries service.

Tell them clearly that these options as presented are not supported by, or are in the interest of the angling public or the good people of New Jersey and east coast.

Best Regards,

Nick Cicero

Sales Manager | Folsom Corp.

Tel: 201-529-3550 | Fax: 201-529-0291

Dear MAFMC Members,

I am Robin Scott, owner/operator of Ray Scott's Dock in Margate, N.J. I am entering my 59th year in business renting boats, selling bait and tackle and running a full service small marina on the Intercoastal Waterway a mile and a half from the Great Egg Inlet, 30 miles North of Cape May, N.J. and the Delaware Bay.

Twenty-two years ago I rented boats in April to anglers looking to blow off cabin fever dust in the Margate bays and pick up flounder for dinner. Much has changed in the years since. I now start renting boats the day flounder season opens, recently in late May and am out of business when children return to school around Labor Day. Seasons, sizes and bag limits have dictated my ability to offer my services and earn a living. Layers of fishery management have taken us off course from what we understand about reproduction of wildlife. Simply put, if you kill off female mature bears, you will have no baby bears. If you kill off female mature flounder, you will have no baby flounder. Raising the size limits of flounder in New Jersey to nineteen inches (when we know anything over eighteen inches is a female) will most decidedly ruin the fishery. Our closest neighbor to the South, Delaware is a much better steward of the flounder fishery and apparently much smarter about wildlife reproduction than we are in New Jersey. Using my place as an example of what takes place on our waters, a family rents a boat, and armed with a size chart and hook out, charges forth from the dock with one goal in mind, to teach their kids to be hunter/gatherers and realize that food does not come from Shop Rite on a styrofoam tray. In the day long process of trying to nail that eighteen inch flounder, they throw back large numbers of fourteen through seventeen inch fish, many of which will not survive the trauma. Of course, around the corner from my place, commercial fisherman are able to take those size fish and just down the coast in Delaware that same family would have caught their four fish/sixteen inch limit in short order, be off the bay and on the way to invest their dollars in more entertainment at the shore. They would have enjoyed their flounder dinner and most likely been repeat customers for generations. Thus, the economy of the state is enhanced.

Raising the flounder size limits in New Jersey partnered with the previously tweaked predator population of Osprey and Striped Bass, sand mining of the top six inches of material that baby flounder feed from, and beach sand pumping which silts in the bays and inlets making a less desirable habitat for flounder is killing the fishery and its businesses.

New Jersey started as a fishery, the Lenni Lenape's caught and dried every species to feed their families. There is no reason the hard data provided to the American Littoral Society by Bill Shillingford who tags for them is not used to assure we always remain a viable flounder fishery. Bill has tagged as of this date 19,998 fish. When flounder size limits were set at fourteen through seventeen and a half inches, the flounder stock steadily increased in New Jersey. Since the limit was increased to eighteen inches the past couple of years, the stocks are declining. This information is available coast-wide.

RECEIVED JAN 19 2017

from: Ronald J. Schmucker
PO Box 516.
Babylon NY 11702.

1/19/17

TO Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.
Fax # 703 842-0741

I have lived on Long Island my entire life. It is terrible what is happening with Recreational fishing. No WINTER FLOUNDER + Big Decrease IN Summer Flounder (FLUKE).

Commercial Fishing Boats are Killing Recreational Fishing ON LONG ISLAND. CAUSING great financial HARDSHIP for LONG ISLAND.

Please DO NOT Let them Take FLUKE IN All 9 STATES IN Jan + FEB, LET THE FISH Spawn.

I want Option #5- More COASTWIDE consistency. Keeping management plan FOR 2017 + 2018

Thank YOU Ahead.

R.J. Schmucker.

Jan. 16, 2017

From: Ryan Ramirez.

To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741
Email: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

Saltwater fish are only replenished by the fish themselves. Because of this, we should leave every species of fish alone until they have time to spawn. Nobody should be able to catch and keep fish when they are in the spawning process. You know when and where they spawn. Right now the continental shelf has Fluke that are ready to spawn in the months of Jan & Feb. Nobody should take them (commercial and recreational fishermen) because the nets will catch them and also turn over the mud, silt and sand to cover the fertile eggs and that will also kill a lot of the eggs. The only way this would work is if all 9 states are mandated to leave the Fluke alone on the continental shelf in Jan & Feb. Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fishermen in New York can take up to 25 percent of the seasonal catch in Jan & Feb. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing businesses stay in business. (bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, dinners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.). The fishing business generated over a Billion dollars for Long Island alone in the 1980's. Charter trips that came from Westchester and New York City would buy lunches, beer & tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Nassau and Suffolk county. This does not happen much anymore. The new potential Fluke regulations will put more businesses out of business from a chosen few people who benefit greatly at the expense of the recreational fishermen.

Please consider closing the taking of any Fluke in all waters for all states (9) from the spawning areas in the months of January and February. The Fishing was great back in the 1970's and 1980's when the Fluke had a chance.

I like option #5 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for year 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance, Ryan Ram...

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

From: Steve Costalas
91 Haynes Ave, West Islip, NY 11795

Jan. 16. 2017

To: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N Tel 703-842-0740
Arlington, VA 22201 Fax 703-842-0741

Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII To Summer Flounder

Saltwater fish are only replenished by the fish themselves. Because of this, we should leave every species of fish alone until they have time to spawn. Nobody should be able to catch and keep fish when they are in the spawning process. You know when and where they spawn. Right now the continental shelf has Fluke that are ready to spawn in the months of Jan & Feb. Nobody should take them (commercial and recreational fishermen) because the nets will catch them and also turn over the mud, silt and send to cover the fertile eggs and that will also kill a lot of the eggs. The only way this would work is if all 9 states are mandated to leave the Fluke alone on the continental shelf in Jan & Feb. Do we know the death rate of the eggs that are laid in the spawning areas? What is the quantity of Fluke taken during the spawning season which the roe is lost from keeping the pregnant fish? The commercial fishermen in New York can take up to 25 percent of the seasonal catch in Jan & Feb. With GPS technology the poor Fluke do not stand a chance of hiding. What is the death rate of the eggs before they can become a small fish? Nature tries to have as many eggs laid to get past the natural killing cycles of other predators. Man should not add to the killing cycle. Maybe if we try to leave the fish alone this method should increase the Fluke population and other species that would help the fishing businesses stay in business. (bait & tackle, charter & open boats, deli's, dinners, gas docks, boat yards, etc.). I remember that the fishing businesses generated over a Billion dollars for Long Island alone in the 1980's. I had charter trips that came from Westchester and Queens that would buy lunches, beer & tackle to support the local businesses on Long Island in Suffolk county. This does not happen much anymore. The new potential Fluke regulations will put more businesses out of business from a chosen few people who benefit greatly at the expense of the recreational fishermen.

Please consider closing the taking of Fluke in all waters for all states (9) from the spawning areas in January and February. My family was in the charter boat industry for many years 1948 - 1990. We had a 40 ft. boat and held up to 25 passengers. Fishing was great back then.

I like option #3 More coastwide consistency, Regional and keeping the management plan for 2017 & 2018.

Thanks in advance,

Thomas Fowler
BACK BAY TOURS, L.L.C.
11 MIDDLE ROAD
NEWARK, DE 19711
302-388-1915 (Cell)
backbaytours@verizon.net

RECEIVED JAN 18 2017

January 10, 2017

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A -N
Arlington, VA 22201
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear, Sir

I own a small fishing charter company and operate my charters (6pack) on Indian River Bay and Rehoboth Bay in Delaware. I target mostly summer flounder and cater mostly to tourist. I have been charter fishing on these two bays for thirteen years and pleasure fishing for forty years on said bays. I can testify that summer flounder stock fluctuate dramatically every season, some good some bad. Summer 2016 was not a good year despite minimum flounder size being 16 inches. Last season I conducted 30 charters and averaged just under one keeper flounder per trip and fewer than five throw backs per trip. The summer of 2015 I averaged over 2.5 keeper flounder per trip and ten to fifteen throw backs per trip. I am stating these facts to point out that there are other factors involved in summer flounder stock declining. I believe that weather (last May and June were the wettest ever on Delaware's Inland Bays, perhaps affecting salinity), lack of bait fish, (whether over fished or seasonal fluctuation) and commercial fishing all have a seasonal impact on summer flounder stock. I think recreational and charter fishing have a less negative impact on summer flounder stock than commercial fishing. I hope that in future discussions amongst the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission that perhaps Delaware and or the shared states of VA, MD and DE be allowed to set a lower minimum size limit in the respected states Inland Bays and a larger minimum size limit eastward of U.S. COLREGS Demarcation line. I know firsthand that summer flounder fishing on Delaware's offshore artificial reefs consistently produce more and larger summer flounder than the Inland Bays. With all this being said, I would like to state that I am in favor of Option 1, however I am not opposed to Option 2 provided that there are guarantees that the 2018 summer flounder season remain the same as 2017 regardless of any lack of reduction in stock.

Sincerely,

Tom Fowler

Captain Tom Fowler

Good evening. My name is Tom Trageser from Brick, NJ and I'm a recreational fisherman.

My fellow anglers and I have abided by the regulations for over 2 decades. In that time frame, we have seen only increasing regulatory restrictions and an obsession to rely upon poor science to justify your actions and your existence. Recreational anglers are champions of this fishery and are conservation oriented. We want the fishery to be sustainable.

I'm here this evening to inform you very clearly, your proposal has struck a nerve throughout the recreational and commercial fishing communities. In large part, because what you are proposing is in direct conflict to what this group is experiencing on the water. We firmly believe the summer flounder fishery is healthy and abundant. The frequent size limit increases are forcing recreational anglers to keep fewer and fewer perfectly edible fish. Anglers are typically able to catch many fluke, just not keepers. To us, it makes no sense to weed through 17-17.5" and now to a proposed 19" fluke to finally land a keeper. Releasing dozens of injured fish in the hope of catching a keeper is NOT SOUND conservation. Collectively, we feel whatever you are doing is not working.

This proposal will place additional burdens on small businesses up and down this coast. The already beleaguered for-hire fleet, bait and tackle shops, marinas will all suffer. This proposal will certainly put some out of business. The summer flounder fishery has an economic impact of over $1.1B, and employs more than 14,000 people. In addition, the commercial landings were valued at more than $32M. Literally thousands of jobs are at risk.

This is a reality because significantly fewer recreational anglers are going to pay money to charter a boat or jump on a head boat to keep 2

ADDITIONAL PAGES TO TRAGESER COMMENTS WERE NOT PROVIDED

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Michael Rothman <captmike67@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 5:28 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer flounder and sea bass

Categories: Status Quo, General (no option specified)

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

United Boatmen of NJ appreciates the opportunity to submit the following comments to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board for consideration during deliberations of Draft Addendum XVIII. We urge Board members to take NO ACTION on the Addendum at this time, and revise the options included within or initiate a new Addendum as appropriate. At this time, the only acceptable option is to maintain STATUS QUO recreational measures for 2017.

The For Hire Industry has been hit very hard over the years with draconian regulations for not only Flounder but Sea Bass, Scup and several other species that are being managed in the same manner. These regulations are not done over and extended time period i.e. 3-5 year plan and makes it impossible to operate a business from year to year not knowing what the season and bag limits will be until a month before the season is supposed to begin. Our approach to fishery science as it is now is broken beyond repair and given that the stock status remains NOT OVER FISHED, there is simply no way to reasonably justify the severe economic implications of this action as opposed to continuing to use a phased in approach as offered in the updated National Standard One guidelines.

We request the following path be taken to move forward:

1) The SF, Scup and BSB Board takes NO ACTION on Draft Addendum XVIII at this time. The Addendum is modified or a new Addendum is initiated to allow for STATUS QUO recreational measures in 2017.

2) The Commission asks the incoming Secretary of Commerce to take emergency action on Summer Flounder and maintain the 2016 ABC for 2017 (16.26 million lbs), a level which remains below the current OFL (16.76 million lbs).

3) The Commission recommends to the NRCC that Summer Flounder be assessed in time for management use in 2018. This may require exploration of an external review process.

4) Continue work on revised management mechanisms that set size, season and bag limits on a multi-year basis with gradual changes implemented in response to stock status and not the high inter-annual fluctuations present in MRIP.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Mike Rothman
Owner/Operator
Bonanza II
Fortescue N.J.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Peter Haskell <funktionny@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 4:49 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy; melissa@regalbait.com
Subject: Urgent Summer Flounder Public Comment

Categories: Status Quo, Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

Hello,

In my opinion **Regional Management** is the only feasible option for regulating Summer Flounder in NY.

Of the regional options, **Option 5** that maintains a More Coastwide Consistency allowing NY/CT/NJ 19", 3 fish, 128 days will maintain stability for our industry. Any radical change in the length of the season will influence recreational fishing community to decline in interest of the sport all together.

For this reason I also support the **Status Quo**, in hopes that we can disregard the required reduction in quota slated for 2017 and wait until a new stock assessment can be done.

The **Timeframe** of all measures would be best accomplished with **Option 2**, allowing the regional approach to continue without going through a whole new addendum process.

I operate several fishing businesses in NY for over a decade and have seen first hand what radical change in our regulations can do to public perception and lack of participation. We need to offer a stable expectation to when and how long the public can expect to fish throughout a season. Without this stability, the publics own expense in the sport of fishing can become too great to participate if the length of the season isn't robust enough for them to get out a few times within their own windows of opportunity. This means boats aren't launched, fishing equipment is not bought, and our industry continues to decline.

Sincerely,
Peter Haskell
President
Excelsior Fish Corp.
Haskell's Bait and Tackle, East Quogue, NY
Haskell's Outpost, Westhampton Beach, NY
Haskell's Seafood, Calverton, NY
Phone - 1.855.HASKELL

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Sergio Radossi <sradossi@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 4:42 PM
To: =?UTF-8?Q?'kkrootes=E2=80=90murdy=40asmfc.org'?=@intel1.peregrinehw.com
Cc: Peter Grimbilas
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII Comments

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

To:
Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII)
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N Arlington, VA 22201

Subject,
Comments;

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

I am writing to provide my comments on DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIII, for summer flounder.

As you have already heard from most all New Jersey salt water anglers, the proposed 40% reduction on the summer flounder quota will result in unreasonable economic hardships for both recreational and commercial fishermen.

With the following additions, I support New Jersey's request to maintain the quota as "Status Quo" and to concurrently expedite a new Summer Flounder stock assessment.

The "whale" in the room is the expectation that "something" will change with the above request. The unstated request is get good data, review and insure that statistical methods are appropriate to the task and implement that data showing that it truly is a case of "good data in > good results out". Not the opposite as is currently perceived to be the case.

My additions to the main request follow;

Additions;
The stock assessment will only be as good as the input data. If we do not use accurate information we will relive this problem. It is accepted that there are issues with the data generated by the current survey trawls and the MRIP data. If we follow the letter of the law, one can state that the best information available is being used. If we consider the spirit of the law, we should demand that the information needed to provide an accurate stock assessment is used. Let's not settle, let us demand accurate information. This is required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), national standard #2, studies shall " Be based upon the best scientific information available",

MSA national standard #3, Requires that fisheries management shall, “take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities to provide for the sustained participation of, and minimize adverse impacts to, such communities (consistent with conservation requirements)”. The proposed 40% reduction adversely impact fishing communities. Again, it is accepted that this is being done with layered uncertainty factors which is PC talk for guesses or SWAGs.

MSA national standard #6 requires that fisheries management shall “take into account and allow for variations among and contingencies in fisheries, fishery resources, and catches”. Ocean fisheries vary. It is generally accepted that summer flounder fisheries are different north of mid - New Jersey as opposed to south of the mid-point. This difference needs to be considered in the stock assessment, total catch data and quotas.
Trawl and recreational surveys need to be based on local needs, not a one size fits all approach as is currently used.

I also am proposing that a project plan be initiated, similar to the following.

1) Freeze the recreational catch regulations at the 1995 to 2000 year regulations for as long as needed to complete the following.
2) Review and update the data collection method to insure that it meets the needs for which it is used. Get the fishing community involved to help get this done.
3) Review the SS process and insure that we can run it without “uncertainty factors”, guesswork.
4) Communicate with the fishing community at the local level to make sure people believe that this is a real fix.
5) Run a new stock assessment and crank out the numbers, set and implement new regulations, whether it’s good or bad.

Respectfully

Sergio Radossi
1/19/2017 4:37:21 PM

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: keith Diebold <thekad66@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 4:41 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fwd: Summer Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **keith Diebold** <thekad66@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Jan 19, 2017 at 4:29 PM
Subject: Summer Flounder
To: krootesmurdy@asmfc.org

I am writing to ask you to please leave the 2016 Summer Flounder regulations in effect until the new stock assessments become available. We need The Best Science Available to make an intelligent decision. Thank you Keith A Diebold

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Robert Diebold <rwdiebold@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 4:40 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fwd: Summer Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

> Please leave the 2016 Summer Flounder regulations in effect, until the stock can be better assessed in order to make an intelligent decision on regulations moving forward. Thank you,
>
> Robert Diebold, concerned fisherman

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: mikekenville@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 4:04 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Regulations

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

My name is Michael Kenville and I'm a recreational fisherman from New Jersey who spends over 50 days a year on the water. I'll keep it brief because I'm sure you've been inundated with e mail from people concerning the proposed summer flounder regulations for 2017.

I believe the efforts to protect the flounder stock are merited, my own catch records which have been declining over the past 5 years confirm this. I believe further increases in size limit, however, is a mistake. With the current size limit of 18" in New Jersey, all of the fish being harvested are large females.

I've checked the sex of every flounder I've cleaned since 2003 when the size limit was 16" and every single flounder (over 200 since 2003) has been female (as evidenced by their bright orange ovary gland). So, I ask that you consider alternative regulations such as a slot limit or even a moratorium in order to protect the spawning class.

I'd be happy to show my catch records to anyone interested.

Sincerely,
Mike Kenville
147 Pebblebrook Lane
Mt. Laurel, NJ
08054
609 922 6212

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Mark McGowan <markmcgowan80@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:48 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke Option for 2017

Categories: Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

I am writing this email to express our need for Option 5 in order to help us stay in business for the season. As a small family run business relying on sales of summer Fluke bait and tackle a reduction in our season will be disastrous for our income. We ask for a fair season reflected in option #5

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Scott <eastendbt@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:43 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: NY 2017 Fluke Season Comments

Categories: Status Quo, Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

The current decision to cut our regulations by 30 percent is absurd. The available data is seriously flawed. Anything short of the current may-sept season will be detrimental to our industry. I support a regional regulation with status quo. The only other viable option would be option 5.

Decisions like these should always include information as to how it will effect other species, not just the targeted species.

Scott Jeffrey
Owner
East End Bait & Tackle
Hampton Bays, NY

Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: James Fletcher <unfa34@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:36 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: ASMFC compliance with articles of confederation

Categories: General (no option specified)

THESE REGULATIONS DO NOT COMPLY WITH ASMFC GUIDELINES.
HAVE A VOTE ON HOW TO DEFINE PHYSICAL WASTE. as defined in Article 1 of ASMFC regulations.
CONSIDER 3 fish under 15 inches total length 45"

--
James Fletcher
United National Fisherman's Association
123 Apple Rd.
Manns Harbor, NC 27953
252-473-3287

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Clark @ OldInlet.com <clark@oldinlet.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:25 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Comments

Categories: General (no option specified)

Kirby:

My comments are as follows:

It is my understanding that public consensus at the Delaware hearing was to maintain the status quo. I was unable to attend that meeting due to a schedule conflict.

First, as I stated on the conference call I support the Delaware Bay being managed as a single unit.

Second, while I can understand the reasoning for maintaining the current
16 inch size limit in DE, I was opposed this liberalization when it was implemented several years ago believing that it was not risk averse and could lead us to exactly where were are now. I would support a 17 inch minimum size, as unpopular as it may be but it would be in our best interest in the long term.

Finally, I agree with the members of the AP that question the 2015 data.
Our records show that weather had a significant impact of landings and effort. This data should be discounted to some degree.

Your work is greatly appreciated!

--
Clark Evans
Manager
Old Inlet Bait and Tackle
25012 Coastal Highway
PO Box 129
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971
www.oldinlet.com
302-227-7974

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Bryan <anotherbryan@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:23 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

Mr. Rootes-Murdy:

I'm writing to express my support for **Option 1** on Draft Addendum XXVIII.

Thank you.

Bryan Lewis
12735 Brooks Store Dr
Bealeton, VA 22712

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: miller place bait and tackle <millerplacefishing@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 3:19 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: SUMMER FLOUNDER PUBLIC COMMENTS

Categories: Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

Hi,

I would like to voice my opinions on today's Summer Flounder options. My name is Jim Flora president of Miller Place Bait and Tackle, Inc.

1. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT OR CONSERVATION EQUIVALENCY (STATE-BY-STATE)
Option 2 – Regional Management

2. REGIONAL OPTIONS FOR 2017
Option 5 – More Coastwide Consistency - NY/CT/NJ – 19", 3 fish, 128 days

3. TIMEFRAME
Option 2 - 2017 and the ability to extend regional measures into 2018 (this allows the regional approach to continue without going through a whole new addendum process)

Thanks for listening to my opinion.

Jim Flora

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Vic Hartley <vhartley3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 2:34 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft addendum xxviii

Categories: General (no option specified)

V&C Hartley Fishing LLC
15 Martintown Rd
Woodbine NJ 08270

To:Whom it may concern

We own two party boats out of Ocean City NJ. Every year our business is declining due to the changing fishing regulations. It's hard enough to catch an 18inch flounder let alone a 19inch. Due to this our business has been struggling to make ends meet. With the size limits in the southern states smaller it will drive what's left of our customers to go further south so they can catch fish which would devastate our fishing industry hear in NJ.

With the 43 percent reduction, lose of days and size limits, this will not only effect the fishing boats, but the many small businesses like fuel suppliers, marinas and bait and tackle shops and all other local businesses that would be effected when less people visiting the local fishing towns.

Very Concerned party boat owner

Capt Victor Hartley

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Michael Eckert <mceecm2003@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 1:33 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder Options

Categories: Option 3: 30% reduction minimum

I just wanted to make a public comment and voice what I believe is right.

I'm a semi pro, recreational fisherman. I travel from Outer Banks to Gloucester chasing different species of fish.

Personally, I believe there should of been more models presented to us at the hearing. No option given will get the biomass increased quickly.

60 day seasons down the board, 2 fish limit down the board. If you're going to shake things up for 1-2 years, then do what needs to be done. Go drastic and give numbers of biomass.

Anybody that tells you the charter business will go under because of decreasing flounder for 1-2 years, never paid to go get it. It's way cheaper to go to a fresh fish market and buy it vs spending $400 - $700 for a single trip.

So, if there is no other option then the 5 presented to us, I will pick,

OPTION 3
2 YEARS

Thank you for your time.

Mike Eckert
Eckert Tile & Contracting
450 Kings Highway
Milford, DE 19963
443-744-9224

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Fishcurl <fishcurl@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 1:02 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Recreational in 2017

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

Bill Farrall - Milford De.

I would like to see Option 1 for 2 years in Delaware and am A recreational fishermen.

Thanks,

Bill Farrall

This is how I Email now

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Kristen Onto <keonto@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 12:44 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Slot Limit, General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy:

Please accept this e-mail as my opposition to all proposed options in the *Draft Addendum XXVIII*.

I have serious concerns with the accuracy of data collected which determines the state of the biomass. I believe that the ASMFC and NOAA have the ability to collect better, more accurate information from which to set more precise and up-to-date assessments of the existing biomass.

I categorically reject all options proposed and suggest using slot limits in order to avoid the acceptable catch from including mostly mature females at 18" or above.

I propose the ASMFC either continue with status quo, or adopt slot limits which would protect the mature females, until more reliable assessments can be conducted and better data ascertained.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kristen Onto

--
K. Onto
+1 848 448-4272

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Melissa Dunlevy <thestudio2505@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 11:30 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Thank you,

Melissa Dunlevy
The Studio Hair & Makeup
2505 Bayshore Road
Lower Township, NJ 08251
609-886-1713

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Peck, Howard <howard.peck@co.cape-may.nj.us>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 11:19 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Re: Summer Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Let's at least come up with one proposal that we fishermen can support. Or, better yet, let's keep the 2016 regs until more information is obtained. Thank you.

Howard Peck
Woodbine, NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Thomas Palchanes <thomaspalchanes@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 11:03 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke

Categories: General (no option specified)

Add my name to the lost job list if these new regs are put in place
Capt. Tom Palchanes

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Peter.Ogrodnik@thomsonreuters.com
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 10:01 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: proposed changes to the summer flounder (Fluke) regs for 2017, Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I am writing this email to affirm that I am opposed to any of the options set forth in the addendum for 2017. I respectfully urge the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to retain the 2016 regulations on summer flounder (Fluke) bag limits and minimum sizes until such time as the new stock assessment is made available. The options set forth in the Draft Addendum would spell the end of recreational fluke fishing via party boats and charter boats and such a drastic measure should not be taken on the basis of out-of-date data. The economic impact of such a measure would be enormous and I hope that the Commission would consider avoiding such drastic action until such time as better data on fluke populations is available. Thank you.

Peter D. Ogrodnik
9 Karen St
Spotswood, NJ 08884

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Kaitlyn Trageser <kaitlyntrageser@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 9:34 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dear Sirs-

The following letter is to inform you I reject addendum xviii. The main reasons this proposal needs to be rejected are the science used to derive these regulations are inaccurate, the socioeconomic impact is too great. Most importantly, I believe the increased size limits will harm the biomass.

For over 2 decades, recreational fisherman have conformed and abided by ever increasing regulations brought forth by this council. In that time period, nothing has been accomplished that actually helps the fluke population. Implementing this rule will not enhance the fishery.

Fisherman are conservation oriented. We want this fishery to be sustainable. Recreational fisherman target summer flounder nearly every day during the summer. We see abundant amounts of fluke in the 17"-18" range that need to be released, even if they are foul hooked to gut hooked. This is not conservation oriented behavior!

Recreational fisherman simply do not believe the catch data being provided to them. The R/V Bigelow is not using the correct gear type. As a result, the biomass and recruitment figures are drastically underestimated. The council is mandated to use "the best science available". Using the wrong gear type, and then creating a regulation based on false data is not the best science. It is a blatant fraud! The data collection methodology used to estimate catch effort was deemed a failure over a decade ago. However, the current MRIP data collection is equally as poor. Similar to the incorrect stock assessment, the MRIP data is incorrect. Using MRIP to calculate fishery effort and create regulations based erroneous data is again a blatant fraud!

The summer flounder fishery produces and economic impact of over $1.1B and supports more than 14,000 jobs. The commercial harvest produces an incremental $32M. This proposal will have a disastrous effect on the east coast regions that rely on summer tourism. The Magnuson Stevens act requires an economic impact analysis before the regulation is implemented. I have not seen that analysis. Furthermore, there is potential for this proposal to create a liquidity crisis similar to the economic meltdown in 2008. If this proposal becomes law, businesses will fail, leaving owner/operators with idle assets that don't generate revenue and ones they can't sell. The banking industry will not lend to a business that is being so heavily regulated. This lack of liquidity is exactly what happened in the housing crisis. When you complete the economic impact analysis as required by MSA, please do not forget this impact!

There are recent studies showing 95% of the fluke over 18" are female. Increasing the pressure on the breeding stock makes no sense. Male fluke die at approximately 17". We should be keeping the fish the male fish that are going to die naturally. Instead of a minimum size, there needs to be a maximum size!

I strongly urge you to reject the proposal. Spend the next 2 years perfecting the science used to measure the biomass and effort. If there is transparency in the data, the recreational community will be supportive of the revised rules.

Regards,

Tom Trageser

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: George A. Push <gpush@financialnortheastern.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 8:42 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII)

Categories: Status Quo

I am opposed to any of the options proposed in the addendum and urge them to leave the 2016 regulations in effect until the new stock assessment comes out

George A. Push
Senior Network Specialist

FNC
Financial Northeastern Companies

100 Passaic Avenue
Fairfield, NJ 07004
800-362-9876 x265

973-396-1087 Direct
866-482-4839 Fax
gpush@financialnortheastern.com

www.financialnortheastern.com

Dublin, Ohio 43017
(877) 889-1095

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Mark Marquez II <mark@fishingreportsnow.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 7:41 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Status Quo

Hello,

My comment about the addendum: I'm opposed to any of the options in the addendum and urge you to keep the 2016 regulations in effect until a new stock assessment.

On a personal note, I'm the publisher of www.FishingReportsNow.com, my sole living. I just wish that somehow the government would manage fisheries better in the interests of recreational anglers and the businesses that rely on them. Anecdotal examples: It seems to me that the striped bass population is on a serious decline within 3 miles from shore, where recreational fishing is allowed, but nothing is really being done to ensure that doesn't happen. Or the black drum population seems in tragic decline in Delaware Bay, and my concerns are similar about that. Or the fluke regulations don't take into account seriously enough making recreational fishing sustainable.

I hope my brief comments are understandable.

Thank you,

Mark Marquez II
www.FishingReportsNow.com
1 Marquez Lane
Williamstown, NJ 08094
(732) 920-6895

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Dirky2Spins <dirky2spins@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 7:41 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Opposed

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I am opposed to all the options presented in the addendum, I am in favor of keeping the same regulations in effect until the new
stock assessment comes out.

Dirk Hodorowski
400 Boxwood Lane
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: habackus@mchsi.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:50 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Status Quo, Option 1: Fish Sharing

I live and fish in Delaware. I vote for (option #1)

Thank you Harry Backus
30755 W. Lagoon Rd.
Dagsboro, DE. 19939
Phone# 302-732-9030

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: tim_walters <tim_walters@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:43 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

I am completely opposed at this proposal and confounded how you opt to regulate sport fishermen and not further restrict netting boats. This will absolutely impact the state revenue tied to sport fishing.
Use your head and think of other solutions instead.
Also why would surrounding states have differing laws?

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Ron@Bluedogfishing <rs@bluedogfishing.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:01 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

I am writing this email to put in my view on the new regulations for the Delaware Flounder size and creel limit "Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder" and would like to vote for Option 1: Fish Sharing 4 fish limit @ 16" open all year for the Summer Flounder.

Thank you,
Ron Shadwell
rs@bluedogfishing.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: ryan warford <ryanwarford2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 10:52 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: nj summer flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

the proposed summer flounder size limit is rediculious. you want to protect the fluke yet you raise the size limit so only the mature egg producing females are kept. the smart thing to do would be to have a lower slot limit size so some males can be harvested and more females released. Please reconsider the proposed new size increase and how it will have a bad effect on the fluke population, and economy of the state of nj.

Ryan Warford

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Bob Smallwood <danalynnchart@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 10:43 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I want option one. Data is not accurate and they can never show accurate data. I am out there daily and see all sizes coming and some of the best fishing in years. leave it alone!

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Tom K. <tomkaye@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 9:23 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I am a recreational angler and while I won't be affected as badly as party/ charter boats or small Mom & pop businesses catering to fishermen, I believe flawed data driving proposed fluke regulations will be catastrophic.
I urge you to please put forth a moratorium until the scientific data can be verified.
Thank you,

Tom Kowalak
10 Susan Lane
Byram Township, NJ 07821

Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Joseph Zagorski <jzagorski@crossroadsaudiovideo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 7:36 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: I am against any and all changes to fluke regs

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I support adopting existing regulations

Best regards
Joe Zagorski

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Stephen Bennett <stephenbenne7929@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 6:40 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Oppose the current fluke proposals!

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Hello,
I oppose every one of the options proposed in the addendum and urge you to leave the 2016 regulations in effect until the new stock assessment comes out! The current science is bad and very inaccurate!

Killing the female fluke will not help anything and will only lead to drastic cuts in the population over time...

There are plenty of fluke to be caught; let us keep 3 or 4 fish at 16" and a long season. It will lead to less guy hooked fish and spread out the taking of males and females!

Please accept my opposition in this matter.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Bob Steenrod <steenerb@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 6:05 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

TO: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org**:**

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout

Bob Steenrod
Dog Friendly Billmae Cottage
1011 Washington Street
Cape May, NJ -8204

609-636-4525
steenerb@comcast.net

Winter Address: November until May

15750 Bainebridge Drive

Jacksonville , Fl 32218

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: AnglerPMH@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 5:24 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Kirby,

I am opposed to any of the options proposed in the addendum and urge the ASMFC to leave the 2016 regulations in effect until the new stock assessment comes out. I fully support the reasons given by the Jersey Coast Anglers Association for doing this.

Paul Haertel

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Kennleft@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 5:16 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Comment for Summer Flounder Regulation

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Hello,

I am opposed to the options proposed in the latest summer flounder addendum and urge you to maintain a status quo and to leave the 2016 regulations in effect until the new stock assessment is released. Any of the proposed options would critically impact an already fragile set of industries that rely heavily on a regulation that does not severely discourage the primary marine product. These industries include boating, marinas, tackle shops, and tourism.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ken

Kenneth Lefkowitz
https://www.linkedin.com/in/kenlefkowitz
908-872-1114

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Mike Murphy <murphy301@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 5:03 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder regs for 2017

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I do not support the proposed regulations for 2017! At least keep last year's regulations in effect for 2017! Michael W. Murphy, a VOTER!!!!

Sent from Mike Murphy's IPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Phil Simon <sciman2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 4:45 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: TOM FOTE
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

The following are my comments on the Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan:

There are several issues with the stock assessment update that create a great deal of uncertainty in the findings of the Science and Statistical Committee (SSC)_and their recommendations to the ASMFC and the MAFMC, and their corrective measures involving severe cutbacks to the ABC and Total harvests for New Jersey, New York, and the other states on the east coast. I am especially concerned that the updated stock assessment fails to recognize the increased role of habitat degradation and reduced juvenile fish survival in the observed reductions in stock biomass and recruitment (see paragraph 3c below). Therefore, I support the recent letter submitted to Secretary Penny Pritzker by Senators Menendez and Booker, and Congressmen Pallone, Lobiando, and MacArthur, to reconsider implementing any of the provisions in the amendment, until a new benchmark summer flounder assessment can be conducted. I would also recommend an independent review of the assessment methods, practices, and conclusions as was done by the National Academy in the year 2000. My concerns are:

1. As described in the draft amendment, overfishing over the last several years, along with below average stock recruitment (R) has resulted in a steady decline in the spawning stock biomass (SSB), that if not addressed with severe cutbacks in harvest, would result in the near certain crossing of the threshold reference proxy, resulting in a new mandatory rebuilding program. In my opinion the problems with this assessment are not with the fishery independent data (SSB and R), but with the conclusion that these declines are due primarily to overfishing, and that additional cutbacks will improve the situation.

2. Let's deal with the issue of overfishing first:

    a. The estimates on the significant increases in recreational fishing effort for 2016, which then lead to a significant overestimate of the recreational catch, are not in line with reality. This issue is addressed in the congressional letter, and has been addressed in sufficiently in detail by Tom Fote of the JCAA in his editorials in the JCAA newsletter, so I will not repeat the details. If the fishing effort for 2016 was more in line with previous years, would the harvest numbers and the high value of fishing mortality (F) be the same? This should be further investigated.

    b. All reductions in SSB are not due to overfishing, in spite of the implied definitions in the stock assessment guidelines. A school of menhaden that swims into the Shark River, sucks out all the oxygen, and then dies, was not overfished. An extreme example for sure, but it is likely

that the stock models have not accounted for increases in natural mortality (M). This is critical since an underestimation of M will lead to an overestimation of fishing mortality (F). Sources of potential natural mortality increases are well known, and include increased predation by other fish stocks, normal and climate-change induced changes in habitat temperatures, ocean acidification, habitat degradation, and declines in food sources for the stock. There is no indication that the SSC has sufficiently adjusted M when running the model. Rather it has concluded that there is no evidence to indicate that M has changed all that much. Anyone associated with the current state of our coastal estuaries or the situation with climate change induced changes in the ocean would find this hard to believe.

c. Total landings for summer flounder are now at near historic lows. In 2015 landings for summer flounder had a significant decline to 64% of the recreational harvest limit (RHL), probably due to weather related reductions in fishing effort. Yet there was no impact of this severe reduction in landings on SSB. Why would we expect that further reductions in 2017 in an already severely reduced level of landings would have any significant impact on SSB? Logic suggests that the decline in SSB seen in recent years is not primarily due to the fishing harvest, but to other factors, including increased natural mortality and reduced recruitment.

d. A sad part of this story is the amount of illegal fishing going on in this fishery. Unfortunately, the trends have been that noncompliance increases with the stringency of the bag and size limits. Do we see any evidence that this trend will get better by tightening up even more?

3. So, why are recruitment levels declining in this fishery, and perhaps others such as Atlantic Striped Bass? The SSC and the ASMFC offer no explanation, but let's examine a couple of possibilities:

a. It is possible of course that the reduced size of the SSB has led to reductions in R. Historically, however, R has been poorly correlated with SSB in this fishery, and much lower levels in SSB than currently seen have produced stellar Young of the Year (YOY) numbers. So, this is not a likely cause and effect scenario.,

b. Currently, 95% of the recreational catch is composed of spawning size females. The conventional wisdom here is that removing so many large females from the SSB leads to a reduction of spawn, and thus an eventual reduction of R. Since 2011 when the decline in SSB and R became apparent, the high minimum size limits across the key states of New York and New Jersey have been cited as the main factor in causing the declines, because the size limits focused the entire recreational harvest on large females from this point on. On the surface this looks like a good argument, as less egg production would result in fewer juveniles. But, we must remember that for a fertilized egg to grow and mature into a member of the YOY class, it must make it to a coastal estuary and prosper in that environment.

c. So, are there indications that the numbers of summer flounder larvae entering our coastal estuaries has been reduced? Not really. I was as surprised to learn this as probably you are, but data indicate that the number of larvae successfully migrating from the coastal shelf breeding grounds and into the coastal nurseries along the shore has not declined, and in fact have been quite good (personal communication, Ken Able, Rutgers Marine Research Station in Tuckerton). **IF** this is the case, then the **only** explanation for reduced YOY numbers (R) would be that fewer larvae are surviving their first summer to reach a large enough size to be caught in the nets used for the surveys. The factors that affect the size of the YOY class are numerous and

varied, but again, if you are aware of the declining state of the coastal nurseries over the last couple of decades you should not be surprised that their carrying capacity for juvenile fish has been reduced. This is such an important factor in what's going on with summer flounder, and yet this has not been addressed at all in any of the discussions or documents I have heard or seen thus far.

d. Whether you believe it's (b) or (c) above, do you think that increasing the size limit is going to have any positive impact? Maybe if you reduced all fishing to 0, but even there I'm not sure.

At the end of the day I believe we are looking at real numbers in the declining SSB and R, but with all the uncertainty as to the causes, it seems both unwise and unfair to single out recreational and commercial fishing as the sole culprit. As already pointed out, these harvests are already so low that to expect further reductions to be impactful seems at best misguided and not good science. It is also clear that the strategy taken on by the council and commission during the last five to ten years to repeatedly increase the minimum size limit, is not working. The prior rebuilding program worked, but the success of that program led to increased recreational and commercial harvests, and this in turn led to the counter-productive measures currently serving as the management program. (To paraphrase a well-worn work-saying, the beatings will continue until the stock numbers improve.) It's time to step back and re-assess the whole summer flounder fishery management process.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Tom Adelsberger <tom.adelsberger@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 4:26 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Tom Adelsberger
609 602 8623

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: JOHN RADZIETA <radzieta@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:19 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Regards,

John J. Radzieta

Radzieta Funeral Home

Phone 609-465-7458

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Eburnle@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:16 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

I choose Option 1 for two years.

Eric Burnley, 16840 Randor Drive, Milton, DE, 19968.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: straycatfishing@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 3:02 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: New Jersey, Fishing bag limits

Categories: General (no option specified)

Are you people NUTS, What are you thinking- no one is that STUPID... Your not fooling me, this is just smoke- you people are up to no good. You have been pumping this shit for years and your just trying to see how far you can go.... Fuck you!!!

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: leamingt@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 1:54 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder comments

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I support Commissioner Martins statement and reject the political process that puts N.J. at a disadvantage.

Thank you,

Tom and Marie Leaming
Owners

Leamings Marina Inc.
91 Marine Rd
Waretown NJ 08758
LeamingT@aol.com
609-971-1514
Leamingsmarina.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Dona Kozlowski <morrisonslbi@att.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 1:32 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dear Mr. Kootes-Murdy,
The owners and staff of Morrison's Marina & Ship's Store are greatly disappointed with the actions taken by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, which will make it nearly impossible for recreational anglers to keep any summer flounder they catch. In effect, these actions will result in a moratorium on one of our most important recreational fish species and **greatly reduce our revenue from dockage, fishing supplies and bait**. These current and prior actions taken by the Commission and Council will cripple recreational and commercial fishing in New Jersey and will be felt sharply throughout our shore economy. I strongly urge the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to overturn these actions and keep current regulations in effect, so that all partners can work toward a stable management approach that provides long-term conservation of summer flounder without continually placing New Jersey at a disadvantage to other states.
Respectfully,
Dona Kozlowski

Morrison's Seafood Inc.
525 2nd. St.
Beach Haven, NJ 08008
609-492-2150

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Vetcraft Sportfishing <vetcraft@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 1:24 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: advisor comments Fluke Amendment XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Kirby.....I would like to submit the following comments in regards to our January 19, 2017 meeting:

I am greatly concerned about the implications of the proposed regulations for the upcoming 2017 fluke season. My particular area of concern regarding proposed options is that "fair and reasonable access," as described in most FMP's and language in the MSA be continued to be included in the regulatory process. As you are aware, the spatial distribution of the total fluke stock in regards to its density and size composition is not uniform along our coast. Over time we have seen the epicenter of the stock shift north with the resultant consequence of smaller numbers and smaller sizes of fish in the southern most portions of the range of this species.

Last year under regionalized management, the ASMFC allowed the Delaware Bay to operate under different size and bag limits than the rest of New Jersey. The few fishery related businesses that still exist in that bay have seen the benefits of such regulatory allowances. I would ask the Commission to consider the following data provided to the advisors in advance of this and previous meetings:

Comparing 2015 to 2016, the following increase in landings has occurred:

NJ up 30%
NY up 62%
Conn up 157%

Using average landings from 2013 to 2015 (a more fair assessment to eliminate more POE) compared to 2016 reveals:

NJ decr 33%
NY incr 57%
Conn incr 49%

Another words, using an average of data for the three previous years shows New Jersey is catching fewer fish in 2016 than it did on average for the three previous years.

This year the advisors were given a breakdown of the harvest by county for the state of New Jersey. The POE is higher, as you are aware using MRIP data broken down this far, but the general patterns are clear. The Delaware Bay catch was less than 1% of all of NJ's catch. Nearly 2/3 of the catch came from the northern part of the state. It is clear that the shifting fluke population has resulted in fewer numbers and smaller sizes of fish in the southern half of New Jersey, as reflected in the data mentioned above.

I would ask for "fair and reasonable" access to the fishery for the southern half of NJ, asking that it be given the same regulations as, and be included with, the Delaware Bay. I propose the line be at Great

Egg Inlet, the same line used for the division of the southern/northern line for bluefin tuna management.

Two more of my charter boat friends went out of business this year (poor striper fishery as well contributed), and my marina, once having a two year waiting list is now only at 2/3 capacity. Parking lots in marinas normally full have plenty room. One is in bankruptcy. Tackle shops are struggling. The businesses and fishermen/women of southern half of New Jersey would ask
for consideration in this matter.

Given the following:

Reduced catch in New Jersey when averaged over the previous three years
Nearly nonexistent catch of the Delaware Bay
Much lower catches in the southern half of the state compared to the north

It would seem likely that combining southern New Jersey with the Delaware Bay as a separate regulatory segment of New Jersey would have little effect on the overall harvest from New Jersey, under any regulations finalized for 2017.

Capt Harv
Vetcraft Sportfishing
Cape May, New Jersey
Call or Text 610-742-3891
Email: vetcraft@aol.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Grassy Sound Marina <jim@grassysoundmarina.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:54 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dear Sirs,

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

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Jim & Debbie Mooers
Grassy Sound Marina
13 Old N. Wildwood Blvd.
Grassy Sound, NJ 08260
(609)846-1400
Find us on Facebook

www.grassysoundmarina.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Robert Karpovich <rkarpovich@mrpfd.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:32 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

Hello,

I wanted to send over an email with my recommendation and hopeful plan that we move forward with.

I hope to see Option 1: Fish Sharing as the new plan moving into 2017.

Thank you for all your time and hard work!

Robert Karpovich | Partner Account Manager
Market Resource Partners
1650 Arch St, Suite 2210 | Philadelphia, PA 191034 | ☎: 215.587.8897
✉: rkarpovich@mrpfd.com | www.mrpfd.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Nancy Cleaver <nancy.cleaver@crestsavings.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:29 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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Nancy

Nancy E. Cleaver, SVP
Chief Lending Officer
Crest Savings Bank

3301 Pacific Ave.

Wildwood, NJ 08260

609.522.6145

NMLS# 506486

Jennifer Kita
Administrative Assistant
609.522.6144
jennifer.kita@crestsavings.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Susan Cawley <susancawley@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:16 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

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Susan Cawley
James C. Otton/Coldwell Banker Real Estate
9626 Second Avenue
Stone Harbor, NJ 08247
Cell: 609-602-4760
sjc@stoneharbor.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Lyn Crumbock <crumbockls@cmcmua.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:11 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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Linda S. Crumbock
Recycling Coordinator
Cape May county Municipal Utilities Authority
P.O. Box 610
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
(609) 465-9026 Ext. 1270

(609) 774-2441 Cell

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Kathryn <billschaffer@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 12:01 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII -

Categories: General (no option specified)

To whom it may concern:
With this latest addendum, if this goes into effect you will devastate the recreational and commercial fishing industry. This change is not required and as any person who fishes regularly can tell you, the fish stocks are healthy and coming back even stronger than before.
If this is enacted, we could only hope that President Elect Trump, when he takes office rescinds this ridiculous attempt at destroying an industry and sport.
It appears that you are attempting to destroy jobs so as to make his job much more difficult than it will already be.
I have sent a letter to President Elect Trump to this effect.
Sincerely and without much respect for this once great organization,
William Schaffer Sr.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Christopher Ohrenich <chris@christopherjohrenich.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:47 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. As a member, we are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

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Christopher J. Ohrenich
Insurance Agent & Broker
609.513.0355
Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Tablet

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Joseph Maffei <jmaffei@engineeringdesign.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:45 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: captmaff@verizon.net
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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In addition, I operate a Charter Fishing Boat business out of Fortescue, Cumberland County, NJ. The small towns within Cumberland County along the Delaware Bay also rely heavily on the recreational fishing to sustain their businesses.

From the Cape May Canal to the Delaware River, there are over 70 miles of coastline along the Delaware Bay with small towns, marinas, restaurants, tackle shops, bait shops, open party boats, charter boats and fisherman all counting on an already short recreational fishing season.

Thank you,

Capt. Joe Maffei
Charter Boat DUTCHESS
Dock #8 Fortescue State Marina
Fortescue, NJ 08321
(609) 861-0991
captmaff@verizon.net

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Channing Irwin <chan@irwinmarinenj.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:39 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Please be advised that this is an ill fatted move that will be a crippling blow to our Jersey Shore economy. Please accept my communication that strongly opposes what you are proposing to do. Thank you,

Channing Irwin

Irwin Marine
One Marine Park
Red Bank, NJ 07701
Ph. 732-741-0003
Fax 732-530-7964

Family owned and operated since 1884

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Kathi Gorman at KMCLaw <kmg@kcalemmolaw.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:33 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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.

Kathleen M. Gorman

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Thomas Creighton <coachcreighton7@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:19 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke Regs

Categories: General (no option specified)

1. Fluke regulations are unfair and NOT backed by scientific data
2- Very serious economic impact will be realized in coastal communities IF regulations for 2017 go forth
3- current regulations are resulting in the killing of prime spawners supported by the fact that Gov't numbers are showing a decline since size went up to 17 1/2 and beyond

Thanks
Tom

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: don@canyonreels.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 11:18 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Proposed 2017 Summer Flounder Quota

Categories: General (no option specified)

<=”” td=””>

Please reconsider your regulations for the 2017 summer flounder quotas. It was hard enough since hurricane sandy hit for the tackle industry!! With this proposal you will destroy New Jersey fishery economy, tackle shops, sporting good stores,party boats and many others!!
I have been flounder fishing for over 30 years and not sure where you got these numbers from? But I can tell you that it was one of the worst seasons ever for tackle shops and businesses like mine!!
I think the commercial fishery should be held accountable for the over fishing and not the recreational fisherman. Why are the allowed to keep 14 inch fish and continue to depress our stocks!! From all the businesses in New Jersey we need your help to recover from Sandy not to make us go out of business.

Sincerely,
Don Parr
Canyon Reels
www.canyonreels.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Justin McCrillis <justin.mccrillis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2017 9:39 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Addendum

Categories: Option 4: 1 Inch increase and 30% reduction

Hello,

My name is Justin McCrillis. I am a Delaware resident and a year round fisherman. I read over the management plan for the 2017 summer founder season. I feel that option 4 is the best course of action. I enjoy fishing greatly and want to see the fishery survive and thrive. When I fish, I do it out of pure enjoyment and therefore I release a lot of what I catch. If I catch legal limit fish, I would occasionally keep one or two. This is enough for myself to enjoy a meal out of it. I have never heard of a reason for recreational fisherman to keep more than they can consume. If people would follow the rules already set in place, I don't believe altercations would need to be made to the already existing plan. This is only my opinion, but I hope it helps lead to a course of action that helps sustain the fishery in Delaware for a long time to come.

Thank you,
Justin McCrillis

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Scott J <inline4sj@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 6:56 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder addendum

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

I would like to express my interest in option one. Option two would be my second choice.

Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: BUCKTAIL8@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 5:42 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Comments

Categories: Slot Limit

Since the meeting in Galloway I have been studying my over 20 years of tagging for ALS ,discussing the flounder situation with several Charter Boat Capts, tackle/marina owners and discussed with the leadership of Strathmere fishing club of over 150 members

There is total agreement that proposed regulations will do nothing but continue to destroy the summer flounder situation and cause significant economic damage to NJ and for sure South Jersey

The data in lower half of NJ as reported by me and others clearly indicates 2 major observations. The averages below are my caught and released flounder over an 11 year time frame and it is similar when I look at the previous 10 years prior

#1-- April produces the largest fluke of the year on average at 17.94" over a 11 year span, May the average size drops to 16.89" ,June 15.76" ,July 13.67" August 14.67" and Sept 14.93" , These monthly numbers vary very little year to year no more than 1/2" up or down . Clearly this demonstrates moving to a 19" size will put many out of business and a serious reduction in fluke fishermen.

#2-- When you look at the data that you produced you can see a serious decline in population that you reported as the size increased over the years. Most marine scientist I have had conversation with all report that male flounder die off beginning at 17" and rarely will you find a male over 18" . That means the only flounder allowed to be kept are females full of eggs. While I recognize fluke can spawn at 15-17" ,the data I have looked at indicates a 18" fluke will have 2-3 times the number of eggs of a smaller one

My data on my recovered tags from my tagging indicates over 80% of flounder out over 10 months from initial tagging and re-caught is re-caught 40 miles further north than originally caught which seems to support a northerly migration theory . The longer the flounder is out then further north it may travel and I have a few from as far north as NH after 2-3 years but the overall population drops the further north you go another indication of males falling out of population.

The southern half of NJ clearly has similar inshore water to Delaware with shallow bays behind the barrier islands so I would like to ask if it is possible to move the Delaware Bay line further up the coast to Atlantic city or Great Bay inlets. I think there already is a line in that area for Blue fin tuna

Another point I would like to make is looking at my tagging data on recovered tags I find that flounder only seem to remain in the inshore waters for 8 weeks rarely over 10 weeks. Flounder I tagged in April are being re-caught in ocean in late May and early June of same year which seems to support the fact that 8 weeks inshore to fatten up is normal

In my opinion based on NJ Cape May County Data going to a 19" size limit will result in a significant economic impact in many areas not just fishing.

I would ask the following to be considered

#1--look at a regulation that allows 2 -3 fish between 15-18 " and one over 18". This will allow the average fisherman to take some fish home for dinner. It will also reduce the number of dead fish being thrown back while looking for a fish 19 or over. The average fluke fisherman once he gets his limit will head home or look for another species or crabs which will result in less dead fish being thrown back

#2 While this isn't my first preference it is an option and that is leave the 2016 regulations in place until better data is available. I'm sure you heard in Baltimore the data the SSSFF group who have

had 2 Marine PHD's looking at flounder which tends to support my data and they gathered data from entire East Coast. #3 The southern half of NJ clearly has similar inshore water to Delaware with shallow bays behind the barrier islands so I would like to ask if it is possible to move the Delaware Bay line further up the coast to Atlantic city or Great Bay inlets. I think there already is a line in that area for Blue fin tuna This would be an economic boom for a already depressed recreational fishing area

thank you for listening and I am looking forward to a upbeat and positive meeting of fluke advisors on Thursday

Bill Shillingford email bucktail8@aol,com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: lobsterdiver@juno.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 4:51 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 2: 1 Inch increase minimum

Hello,

If I have to choose one, I guess I'm going with option 2.

Also, what I would like to see is that charter captains and mates are not allowed to fish or bring home fish on trips that they are being paid. They should not be able to take recreational fish during trips where they are essentially performing a commercial act.
I would like to see this kind of change implemented.

thanks,

Brian Klint
20604 Mulberry Knoll Road
Lewes, DE 19958

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: TACKLE BOX <tackleboxfishingco@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 3:38 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

SUPPORT Status Quo for SUMMER FLOUNDER 2017 Save our family business!
The Sciortino's
TACKLE BOX INC
HAZLET NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Michael Pierdinock <cpfcharters@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 10:04 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy; Ray Kane; Ray Kane; David Pierce; Melanie Griffin
Subject: Comments to the 2017- Fluke/Summer Flounder

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dave/Ray/Kirby:

The following comments are made on behalf of the RFA-Massachusetts concerning the proposed fluke/summer flounder measures for 2017. The following comments are in addition to verbal testimony provided on behalf of the RFA-Massachusetts at the Buzzards Bay public meeting:

- When recreational measures were set for 2016, scientists developed numerous options that had a high statistical probability of constraining landings to the recreational harvest limit. These options were approved by the ASMFC Technical Committee. As a result of the flawed MRIP data that is being utilized to set our 2017 bag limits we have greater confidence that the measures put in place in 2016 were effective in keeping landings under the recreational harvest limit rather then the statistically flawed MRIP estimated recreational landings reported.

- Therefore, the 2017 ABC should be set at 16.26 million pounds (status quo to 2016) as a result of significant issues with the current assessment and biological reference points.

- A multi-year, industry funded project has gathered sex-length information on summer flounder from both the commercial and recreational sectors. This work found that statistically no male fish were above 18" meaning the vast majority of recreational summer flounder fishery is focused exclusively on female fish.

- A sex-specific model was also developed that took into account the different growth rates and other life history parameters between male and female summer flounder. This model has yet to be incorporated into the stock assessment and can only be done during a benchmark assessment.

- Most recently, twin survey work done in New England on witch flounder found that the NOAA research gear used to assess northeast fish stocks had design deficiencies that significantly reduced its ability to catch flat fish due to the use of rock hopper gear. Specific to witch flounder, the NOAA gear caught only 26% of the witch flounder caught by the commercial gear when fished at the same time.
    - For summer flounder, the NOAA gear caught about 50% less than the commercial gear. The NOAA gear was particularly poor at catching small fish. A general decline in recruitment across all species can be observed when the NOAA gear came on line the R/V Bigelow was put into service. Since below average recruitment is what is primarily driving the fluke quota reduction for 2017, this issue must be fully investigated before a quota reduction is enacted.

- MRIP numbers for 2016 are extremely difficult to believe. In CT, the number of summer flounder caught by recreational anglers increased by 828,127 fish from 2015 to 2016. Industry gathered information in the form of bait, Gulp and other summer flounder specific tackle sales, found that sales in CT were the same between 2015 and 2016.

- Bait and Gulp are consumables, meaning, fishermen buy and use them regardless if they caught fish or not. If they fish, they are buying bait. If an angler purchases more bait it does not necessarily mean that they fished more or landed more fish. Therefore, bait sales can only be correlated to effort. If the amount of Gulp sales stayed the same but MRIP reported increased fluke landings then a strong argument can be made that catch per unit effort (CPUE) was higher in 2016 relative to 2015. Increased CPUE is often indicative of increased abundance. In short, the same amount of bait/Gulp caught more fish in 2016 than 2015 supporting the idea that summer flounder stock status is sound.
- NOAA concludes that the stock is in trouble and the fluke quota needs to be reduced by 41% while at the same time, the MRIP reports increased landings of summer flounder with little change in effort.

- As set forth above RFA-Massachusetts recommends that 2017 summer flounder ABC be set at 16.26 million pounds, that assumes that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016 and that a benchmark stock assessment be conducted immediately.
- If NOAA refuses to implement such measures RFA-Massachusetts recommends the implementation of the proposed options for the Massachusetts recreational anglers detailed at the Buzzards Bay meeting.

If you have any questions of comments please email or give me a call. Please confirm receipt of this email.

Thanks

Capt. Mike Pierdinock
RFA - Massachusetts Chairman
617-291-8914 (cell)

"To safeguard the rights of saltwater anglers, protect marine, boat and tackle industry jobs and ensure the long-term sustainability of U.S. saltwater fisheries."
www.joinrfa.org

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: J McWhinney <x6011@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2017 4:47 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: MD Flounder Regs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

From the choices we have, go with Option 1. IF you change, make it and April-Nov season. There are no flounder in MD in the other months, so a 365 season is a joke.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Edward Nowicki <red78walnut@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 3:39 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

I am writing due to my concern about the above proposed summer flounder regulations.

I am 74 years old and enjoy fishing from shore for the above species. I never catch many, in fact I only caught 1 keeper in each of the last two years. I recently moved to Lakewood New Jersey in order that I might get out more often in the Manasquan river to enjoy this fishery.

This proposal would deny me any fish since I have not caught one over 19 inches in several years. I personally am not concerned with the bag limit since I do not catch many anyway, but the 19 inch size would deprive me of any and probably force me to discontinue fishing for them altogether.

I hope you will reconsider this size change so that I will be able to enjoy this summer.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

Edward Nowicki
81 Rosewood Drive
Lakewood, NJ 8701

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Steve Sheldon <steven.f.sheldon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 2:46 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Hello Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission,

I am writing to express serious concerns regarding Draft Addendum XXVIII.

Managing our nation's natural resources appropriately is critical for future generations of our country.

Scientific data, which is widely accepted by scholars, should be the key consideration when determining how to manage our natural resources.

I do not believe that scientific data has been appropriately considered for the purpose of determining the 2017 Fluke regulations, and as a result I believe the proposed regulations are unfair.

I anticipate the impacts of the proposed regulations having wide ranging negative impacts on the future of the fluke fishery and the coastal communities that rely on the fishery.

Government data has shown a decline in the fluke population since the minimum size was increased to 17.5 inches and greater, which means the proposed regulations for 2017 will not serve to help the health of the overall fluke fishery, nor will the proposed regulations help our coastal communities.

I have witnessed the redfish population of Florida recover previously based on the implementation of a slot size regulation.

I urge the Commission to consider the appropriate scientific data, the overall health of the fluke fishery and the coastal communities impacted by changing regulations as well as alternative fisheries management practices not yet employed for fluke.

I would be happy to discuss this subject further.

Sincerely,

Steven Sheldon

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Vivian Salmon <salmon906@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 8:56 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: salmon906@comcast.net
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy:
With interest, I was reading Michael Shepherd's news article, "Fishers agree '17 summer flounder proposals won't work," that appeared in the January 7, 2017 edition of the Press of Atlantic City. After reading the article and reviewing the proposed changes to a 'keeper' flounder, I felt compelled to comment. I'm against the proposals outlined.

For the past five years, we would go as a family – my wife, two sons (ages 14 and 10), and a daughter (age 12) – to Corson's Inlet fishing or to the new fishing pier on 9th Street Causeway into Ocean City - at least once a week. Our first stop on each trip was to 24/7 Bait and Tackle for minnows, squid, and any tackle we would need to go fishing. We had a lot of fun together and rarely if ever got skunked – however, the vast majority of the flounder caught were not keepers and were in the 12-17 inch range.

Separately, I would go fishing in the Delaware Bay with a friend who owns a boat. He would leave from Fortescue, Money Island, or Longreach Marina. The fishing experience was very similar. We would catch a variety of fish species and numerous undersize flounder. We averaged one keeper flounder a trip. We never limited out.

Increasing the size limit to 19 inches will only make it that much more difficult to land a keeper flounder. Why would I spend my money to go fishing if I had scarcely a chance to catch a keeper? Is it possible to reduce the number of keeper flounder to 2 at 18 inches? I would also hope that size restrictions are being considered for the commercial industry, too?

Please know that I understand and appreciate the need for conservation. I can remember when the Delaware Bay was thick with weakfish – which is much different than it is today. I've been a fisherman for thirty-eight years. I endorse conservation, but there needs to be a balance. It will be difficult for me to make the decision to spend money and go fishing if I really don't have a legitimate shot at a 'keeper' flounder.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I appreciate the opportunity to voice my opinion.

Sincerely,

James E. Salmon, Sr.
Fairfield Township, New Jersey

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: TOM KELLY <tjkelly1011@optonline.net>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2017 7:58 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

Summer Flounder Alternative Management Options, I support Option 5.Thanks,Thomas J. Kelly, Babylon, NY

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Melissa Newhall <melissahumphrey@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2017 3:03 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Addendum

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Hi Folks in charge of this fluke situation,

I would like to share my displeasure with the entire situation. Fluke of both tiny, keeper and doormat size are available in New Jersey where I reside. A short season will devestate my family hobby. We love to fish for fluke. We literally live in a coastal area just to fish for fluke. Other species just round out the calendar. I can't imagine what will happen to the tackle shops, party boats and charter boats along with bucktail and jig makers and minnow trappers. Amongst so many. This all based on sloppy inaccurate data that bean counters hide behind by calling it the "best available." I say hogwash. These fish aren't like striped bass or grouper. They are vibrant and in no trouble!!! We fish every day. There are great days, good days and slow days. That's fishing for anything species. But we can see that these fish are fine. They spawn in consistent safe waters of the ocean where snowmelts and pollution have no bearing. If anything, you should consider outlawing nets on the spawning grounds. But you won't do that will you? You'll sit by and watch tackle stores go out of business and little old men in tin boats sit at the docks unable to fish.

You have to really step back and look at this for what it is. It' s not fair. It's unAmerican. And it's very disturbing. BUT it's not too late. Let's get it right. Please keep the same regulations in place for the time being while better data is collected.

Thank you,
Melissa Newhall 609 385 3728

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Mike Betsch <mbetsch@greentechenergy.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2017 10:43 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: BILL SHILLINGFORD
Subject: Flounder fishing regulation 2017

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Dear sirs,
I am a resident of Mt Laurel, NJ "South Jersey". I have been fishing recreationally for over 30 years. I have six children. I own a mid size company in south jersey. I like to think I am a creditable person.

I am opposed to any change based on insufficient data.

1. I average catching (1) to (2) fish over 18" the first week of the season out of five to ten fish. The next two weeks I average 1 fish over 18" out of ten fish. The remaining season I average 15 fish, none above the limit. I believe my kill byproduct is 10 to 20 percent. The last two years I have stopped fishing when I catch 10 with none above 18". To me it is not worth the kill byproduct.

1. The economic impact to the vast majority of people who make a living on recreation fishing for flounder will be significantly negatively impacted by the pending change. See my suggestion below.

2. The next generation, i.e. my six kids have no interest in fishing if we can't bring anything home after the first week. I consider it a generation lost to fishing. On the way home from fishing we see filets at the fish store being sold that are half the size of the fish we threw back? I difficulty explaining the logic to them.

3. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over, you get it. I concur with the slot fish idea, I have seen it work with the Florida snook population. Let the over 18" females repopulate. A good compromise (2) fish 16 to 18" and (1) fish over 18".

Thank you for your cooperation in advance.

Michael Betsch
40 Brookwood Rd
Mt laurel, NJ 08054

Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: tsternlight@yahoo.com
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2017 10:02 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: flounder fishery

Categories: General (no option specified)

Dear sir,
I realy hope the bull crap proposals are fought whit rigor!! We have given back for yrs and never get a return . the science is flawed and all know it!!!!!!! I hope u push for the fisherman of this state!!!!
Vince trasatti
Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Paul <pbjfishing@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2017 11:15 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: Capt. Dave Monti; Rick Bellavance Jr
Subject: Fluke 2017

Categories: General (no option specified)

Please consider a liberal size & bag limit for the recreational fluke fishery. With the one striped bass per angler we have been forced to turn to fluke and seabass for our charters. They pay good money for the fishing experience and we need flexibility. I had fifteen fluke trips last season and caught very well. We NEVER came close to the bag limit and typically had more throw backs than keepers. We understand the need to reduce recreational catch, however a low bag limit kills our business. Please consider limits that are reasonable. The problem is not going to be fixed in one season. We don't need a 8 fish limit at 18" as we have had. How about 6 or 7 at 18". Catching a half dozen at a reasonable size limit is ok with me. Thank you for listening.

Paul B Johnson Sr

Fluke Whisperer
Carol J Charters
401-207-6947
Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Tom Smith <smith.tom560@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2017 10:06 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIIl

Categories: General (no option specified)

To Whom it May Concern.

The comments made at the Galloway meeting about the inverse relationship between the decrease in the summer flounder biomass and the increase in size retention seems to bear a direct correlation. There's a study conducted by Rutgers University which clearly shows an extremely high percentage of fluke over 17.5 inches are female. One slide presented in the ASMFC presentation at the meeting (bottom chart page 7) has a trend line of the fluke biomass, relative to recruitment numbers (fluke reproduction) and all compared to the NMFS biomass stock rebuild quota. The data clearly shows a significant increase in the stock biomass between 1985 and 2006. Almost a 500% increase. After 2006, the biomass line trended down, not significantly but it does trend down. It makes sense the decline in the biomass trend line might coincide with the trend in increasing the yearly size restrictions resulting in more female breeders being harvested and negatively impacting the biomass and recruitment numbers. Bear in mind larger fluke, primarily all female, fetch a higher dollar value for commercial guys as well so basically the thought process is there's too many females being harvested relative to males. The data supports that possibility. So if we were to maintain a 5 fish limit similar to '16 but change the mix, establish a slot limit of maybe three smaller fish combined with 2 fish at the existing 18" limit. Give breeders a few more years to help the overall biomass. Additionally it was pointed out and I believe supported by existing science that the there is a definite relationship between the size of a female fluke relative tot he increased number of eggs produced. A larger more mature female produces millions more eggs a season. Please see attached link.

http://www.cptdave.com/summer-flounder.html

Excerpt from the article says it all!

Reproduction:
Both males and females become sexually mature at the age of 3. The fecundity (number of eggs produced in a single spawning season) of females increases with size and weight. **A 14 inch female produces about 460,000, and a 27 inch female about 4,200,000 eggs in a season**. Reproduction takes place in the fall, as soon as the fish begin migrating to wintering grounds. Peak spawning activity occurs from early September through early November in water temperatures of 53 to 66 degrees F and at depths of 60 to 160 feet. The center of spawning activity occurs off the coasts of New York and New Jersey with less concentrated activity occurring in southern New England waters. The eggs float in the water column, hatching 72 to 75 hours after being laid.

Relevance of all this is to try protecting the female population of the existing biomass, an in doing so give the larger females another one or more years to produce at levels greatly beyond the smaller less mature females while assessing the impact this has on the biomass prospectively. The data supports every aspect of this logic. It would benefit everyone to manage what could very well be the primary cause of the downward trending biomass line, and not just the effect by simply cutting creel limits and legislating taking even more larger breeders out of the biomass population. That makes no sense whatsoever.

A question was raised at the meeting regarding how the biomass goal in the Spawning Stock Biomass and Recruitment slide was arrived at of what appears to be ~ 62,000 metric tons. That size biomass appears to be at a level never attained historically in the fishery, yet it's the ultimate goal effecting every decisions

being made to manage the resource under MSA. Since that level biomass has never been attained, there's strong opinion it's set too high and should be re-evaluated considering the significant reductions in overall harvest (both recreational and commercial) over the last 30 years. Through efforts and sacrifices made by both, the biomass has improved in the last 31 years by almost 400 - 500%, NMFS themselves proclaimed in '10 or '11 the stock was rebuilt, yet once again we're faced with draconian cuts which if adopted would essentially represent an industry closure. It was said multiple times at both meetings, recreational anglers and commercial have supported NMFS efforts and the spirit of the MSA for 30 to 40 years, since Magnuson-Stevenson Act was adopted in 1976, along with all the changed regulations to rebuild the stock with the **PROMISE** and **HOPE** that once rebuilt we'd collectively enjoy the benefits of those sacrifices. And now at the eleventh hour when the stock appears to have been rebuilt, again NMFS proclaiming that fact as such five or six years ago, we're being mandated to make further sacrifices. The hope we've all clung to for the betterment of the fishery has been destroyed based on the proposals being considered.

If we're stuck for whatever reason with the elevated biomass goal, then the entire area of focus should be not just increasing the biomass but improving the ratio between males and females within the mix. For that reason, I would ask NMFS to consider making the following changes. First adopt the above changes for '17 which would represent a huge improvement over the existing options, save many businesses in the process and allow NMFS time to assess the impact of these changes to future biomass studies. Second, the above article in Summer Flounder states the following:

"Peak spawning activity occurs from early September through early November in water temperatures of 53 to 66 degrees F and at depths of 60 to 160 feet. The center of spawning activity occurs off the coasts of New York and New Jersey with less concentrated activity occurring in southern New England waters. The eggs float in the water column, hatching 72 to 75 hours after being laid."

As these fish move off shore to their winter grounds, they school up, follow very predictable routes and are easy targets for commercial fishing concerns. I'd ask the NMFS to consider protecting these fish during their **PRIME** spawning season by closing the fishery during that period to give every female fluke an opportunity to improve the biomass at least one more time. The impact of that alone would be significant not to mention the exponential effect of future procreation as a result. The impact on future recruitment numbers should be significant. Not suggesting commercial quotas be cut, suggesting NMFS enact legislation that changes the timing of that harvest to protect the spawning class every year. When all is said and done, after all the concerns over data collection, the science, how recreational catch numbers are calculated, dead catch as a result of commercial fishing etc., there's a lot to be said that if we just protect and bolster the female fluke population and give them more time to reproduce, the benefit to the biomass would be staggering and maybe we'd even hit the existing lofty goal set under MSA

One last video I'd like to share with you. You've probably seen it but to prove a point..

https://youtu.be/inSNl01unzw

Everyone of those fish discarded dead is most likely a female breeder, large female breeder. Assume there were 50 fish tossed back and each one had 3,000,000 eggs. That's 150,000,000 eggs just from the fish destroyed by one boat in one day! Can you imagine the impact on the biomass if for just one season we protected the entire spawn class. Mesh sizes can't prevent to my knowledge commercial concerns from harvesting larger fish, smaller fish but not larger fish. So change the timing of their harvest, close the season during the fall migration and reopen it when the fish have all spawned. I'm sure you have the data to project the impact of protecting the spawn, as I said it has to be enormous and since biomass seems to be the driving force MSA why not address what is arguably the largest reasons impacting that number by adopting the two suggested changes.

I hope everything said at the Galloway Meeting doesn't fall on deaf ears. It's in everyone's interest to have all our collective oars in the water rowing in the same direction. In the process, we can't put people's livelihoods at further risk or take away a God given past time many have enjoyed their entire lives. The above options don't propose alterations to existing 'qt catch quotas, they're intended to change

the mix of the harvest and promote future increases and production of all future spawning classes. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

PS

I tried sending this email to the Commission at the address reflected on your website comments@asmfc.org but I received a message saying that's a bad address. I'd appreciate you forwarding this email if possible to the Commission in the hopes it reaches as many readers as possible. Again thanks in advance for your understanding and consideration.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Judy LaPorta <littleoakscampground@prodigy.net>
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2017 7:31 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Judy K. LaPorta
Little Oaks Campground
314 Kings Highway CMCH, NJ 08210
609 624 1682

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Maggie Warner <Maggie.Warner@moreyspiers.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 5:19 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

To Whom It May Concern:

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Sincerely, Maggie Warner

Maggie Warner
Digital Media/Public Relations Manager
Morey's Piers and Beachfront Water Parks

3501 Boardwalk
Wildwood, NJ 08260

Tel|609.729.3700 x1253 Fax|609.729.2078
Maggie.warner@moreyspiers.com
www.moreyspiers.com


SHOW SUMMER
WHO'S BOSS
MOREY'S
Piers

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Ronald A. Sulpizi <rsulpi@sturdyonline.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:59 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

Recreational Fishing is one of the top 3 reasons visitors come to Cape May County and the 2017 proposed limits to summer flounder fishing would devastate this important segment of our tourism industry. If these proposed limits are upheld, everyone in Cape May County, New Jersey - not just the immediate fishing community - will be affected by a loss of visitors who stay in our hotels and campgrounds, eat in restaurants, visit attractions, purchase fuel, sandwiches, ice, souvenirs, need medical treatment, etc. Additionally, Cape May County, New Jersey is a peninsula bordering the Delaware Bay. The reality that our residents, businesses, and visitors who fish in the Delaware Bay are subjected to more severe size and quota limits than those of Delaware anglers places us at real disadvantage. This disadvantage will cause visitors to travel the same distance to Delaware for their fishing trips as traveling to Cape May County to fish in the same body of water. That simply does not make sense and must be changed.

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands the importance of long-term maintenance of the fishery, however the Chamber and its 800+ member businesses are seriously concerned about the negative economic impacts and loss of jobs that will ripple through our area, rooted in this one singular decision. Therefore until a more complete and equitable policy approach is taken by the regulatory agencies the Cape May County Chamber of Commerce supports maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

Ronald Sulpizi
Vice President/Branch Administrator

STURDY SAVINGS BANK

506 S. Main Street
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
Phone: 609-463-5260
Fax: 609-463-5221

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Samantha McCarraher <smccarraher@jbyrneagency.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:58 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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Thank you,

Sami McCarraher
Marine Insurance Division
609-522-3406 ext. 112
www.JByrneMarine.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Eileen Baker <ebaker@jbyrneagency.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:56 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: 'shknbake@comcast.net'; herefordinletmarina@comcast.net
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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Eileen M. Baker, AAI, ACSR
Marine Department Manager

J. BYRNE MARINE INSURANCE

Marine Insurance Division
Phone: 609-522-6600 ext: 127
Fax: 609-522-2844
ebaker@jbyrneagency.com
www.jbyrneagency.com
Click Here to Get a Free Auto Quote

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Amy Mahon <amy@reichassetmanagement.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:42 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce understands summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) is one of the most important commercial and recreational fish species in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size is important for the long-term health of the fishery. We are, however, concerned with how harvest limits are determined on an annual basis, and the timing of introducing these determinations by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is critically important to the sustainability of the fishery and fishing economy that these agencies must take a long-term approach to review of stock assessment updates, and then put forth more consistent and equitable management policies using seasonal restrictions, bag limits and minimum size to manage this important species of fish that apply across State lines. This is particularly important to fishery management policies for the Delaware Bay estuary.

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Sincerely,

Amy J. Mahon
Director of Operations & Marketing

Reich Asset Management, LLC
110 Roosevelt Boulevard, Suite 2W
Marmora, NJ 08223
P: 609.486.5073 • F: 609.486.5259

amy@reichassetmanagement.com
www.ReichAssetManagement.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Morey, Steven C <Steven.Morey@mottmac.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:39 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: Vicki Clark (vicki@cmcchamber.com)
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

To whom this concerns:

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Steven C. Morey
Co-chair, Environment and Legislative Committee
Cape May County Chamber of Commerce

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Jim Ridgway <jridgway@jbyrneagency.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:36 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Importance: High

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

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Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: JBogan5622@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 7:37 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: rcodfather@gmail.com
Subject: Summer Flounder etc.

Categories: General (no option specified)

To whom it may concern:

Any plan for 2017, regardless of time frame, with a bag limit of 2 or 3 fish(Fluke), with no Seabass or anything else to fish for , will basically put us - and the entire party boat fleet - out of business. We will have to hold YOU responsible when we fold.

Capt Joe Bogan
Capt Ryan Bogan
FV Jamaica II
Brielle, NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: ItsMeJoeB@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 7:12 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: 2017 Fluke Proposal

Categories: Status Quo

I reject the 2017 fluke proposal ! Due to the outdated stock assessment , until improvements are made I ask that status quo stand .

Joe Bahun

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Douglas Nylander <onsiteauto2202@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 6:18 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke Regulations

Categories: General (no option specified)

To whom it mat concern,
I am writing this email to you to voice my concerns in regards to the possible reduction in recreational fluke limits for NJ. I am an avid saltwater fisherman and boat owner as well as a jersey shore home owner that I use as a rental for summer tourists.
I urge the powers that be to thoroughly reconsider the current options that have been put out for consideration . With these cuts in size, time and quota limits I feel it will have a negative impact on my rentals since many of my weekly tenants do fish from surf and also charter boats.
This will also have an effect on the charter, tackle shop, and the local restaurant businesses.

On a personal level I will strongly consider selling my boat and fish much less in NJ. I will take the money I save and use it to travel to other destinations that are more fisherman friendly rather the the powers that bow to the commercial interests.

I have literally seen commercial fishing boats come along side my boat while I was fluke fishing and having a decent day of catching shorts along with a couple keepers , the commercial boat would discard his by catch by stabbing the fish which included short fluke and tossing them overboard.
Can anyone tell me the mortality of those fish?. If you are going to use the data you are some how collecting from us please use all the data from the commercial fleet.
If you want to reduce the limits to your proposal then I would rather you shut the whole fluke fishery down for both commercial and recreational until you can get the proper data.

I believe the only reason you are giving us a small limit is to allow the commercial fisheries to have a season. Similar to why I believe the winter flounder and weak fish limits are what they are.

Thank you for listening

Doug Nylander

Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Anthony Ardente <anthonyardente@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 2:49 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder regulations

Categories: General (no option specified)

I feel as an avid flounder fisherman that it's not needed and now bait shops are gonna suffer and local party boats along with guided boats as well.

Thankyou

Anthony Ardente

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Schlachter, Guy <Guy.Schlachter@scientificgames.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 1:04 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: New Jersey summer flounder

Categories: General (no option specified)

To whom it may concern,

I'm a recreational fisherman living in the Atlantic City area. I feel that the proposed summer flounder rules are somewhat extreme. A 19" or larger fish is not that common in the back bays where a lot us fish. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for conservation of the species but stricter enforcement of the current rules would go farther than further restrictions. I constantly witness under sized fish being kept. I realize the wardens can't be everywhere but my suggestion is to increase the fines to a point where the average person will not risk keeping illegal fish. A $300 fine for each fish for the first offense and $500 per fish and a 30 suspension of your driver's license for the second and subsequent violations might get the attention of the habitual offenders. If you shorten the season, lower the bag limit and increase the size, these same people are still going to break the rules because they know that even if they get caught it's not a big deal. I know I'm not the best fisherman but when my wife and I go out for a relaxing day of fishing, we're happy to come home with one keeper a piece. The long season, 128 days, gives us all that more time be out on the water enjoying ourselves. If you must change the rules, by all means increase the size limit (20"?)and cut the bag limit (1 fish per day) but please leave the season length as is or even longer. My motto has always been, "a bad day of fishing beats a good day at work, anytime". I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Thank you,

Guy Schlachter| Maintenance Supervisor | New Jersey
Scientific Games|702-532-6701 (o)|609-369-7227 (m)

19

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: st3cl@verizon.net
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 10:32 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fwd: US Marine Fisheries Commission hearing, Dover, DE

Categories: General (no option specified)

Kirby Rootes-Murdy,

Sir, I am writing to you in reference to the United States Marine Fisheries Commission hearing scheduled to be held on January 17, 2017 in Dover DE. Unfortunately I will be unable to attend the hearing as a result of family obligations but I thought it important to voice my opinion on the issue at hand.

It is my understanding that the purpose of the hearing is to formulate a plan to reduce the harvest of summer flounder by thirty percent relative to the 2016 harvest.

I have been a recreational fisherman in Delaware coastal waters for about thirty-five years. In that time I have witnessed the size and creel limits change many times. I have also witnessed the success rate of landing legal size summer flounder fluctuate as well. It has been my experience that as the size limit has increased; it causes a higher mortality rate of fish.Smaller fish are being released and a result many do not survive due to the mishandling of them. As a result I would hope that the current size limit does not change drastically because I don’t believe that would help in accomplishing the commission’s goal.

Also it is my experience that the number of summer flounder being taken in the shallow bays of Delaware has dramatically decreased in the last few years. While the success rate of catching legal size summer flounder in the deeper coastal waters has increased. I have also found that I have been catching more and more fish in the bays, the last few years that are considered tropical. Trigger Fish, Pompano, Grunts are all examples of fish that I have caught in the Indian River and Rehoboth Bays the last three years. I had never encountered those species before in those waters. As a result I believe the reduced numbers of summer flounder in the shallow bays may be the result of warmer water temperatures and not necessarily a reduction in the summer flounder stocks.

Although I am not a scientist, I am a person with 35 years of experience fishing Delaware waters. The activity is extremely important to me. In fact it is one of the primary reasons I decided to make coastal Delaware my home, following my retirement from Pennsylvania. Also I do spend a considerable portion of my income pursuing this sport. Including the purchase of a boat, fuel to power the boat, fishing tackle and the required

licenses. When you consider the many other people who spend portions of their incomes in the same way this amounts to an important part of fueling the Delaware economy.

I hope that the commission will take these things into account when making decisions that will affect the lives and livelihood of so many individuals

.

Thank you,

Stephen A. Clark

206 Wood Duck Drive

Long Neck, DE 19966

(302)947-9107

st3cl@verizon.net

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Vicki Clark <vicki@cmcchamber.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 9:36 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator
1050 N. Highland St., Suite A-N
Arlington, VA 22201

The Cape May County Chamber of Commerce (NJ) is well aware that summer flounder is one of the most important fisheries in the mid-Atlantic and that rebuilding efforts to increase stock size and quantity is important for the health and resiliency of this species. We are, however, concerned with how size and catch quotas are determined each year and the timing of introducing these determinations. It is critically important that new benchmark assessments be established to manage this important species of fish.

Therefore, we support maintaining the 2016 quotas throughout 2017.

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Sincerely,

Vicki Clark, IOM
President, Cape May County Chamber of Commerce
o: 609-465-7801
c: 609-425-5380

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Frederick Ruhlemann <fruhlemann@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 9:04 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: Mark Alexander
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 5: Coastwide Consistency

My name is Fred Ruhlemann. I am strictly a recreational fisherman, I am not a charter captain or a guide. I am a retired Connecticut State Conservation Officer with over 23 years of service to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. In 1995 I was the Senior Sergeant in the Law Enforcement Unit of the Marine District under the command of Captain Timothy Skaats.

It is my opinion that we need to stay with a regional approach to fluke management. As I stated in my comments at last nights meeting, many if not most private recreational anglers fishing out of boat launches and marinas in eastern Connecticut do not know where the State Boundary lines are in both Long Island Sound and Fishers Island Sound. From an enforcement point of view this is nothing short of a nightmare. Having a regional approach where the size limit is the same for Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island is a must.

It is also my opinion that the 2016 projected harvest figure for Connecticut is incorrect. As I stated in my comments last night most anglers fishing out of the boat launches and marinas in eastern Connecticut are not catching their fluke in Connecticut waters. They are in fact catching them in Rhode Island and New York. In May and early June anglers out of the Old Lyme, Waterford, Groton and New London areas are fishing Gardiners and Montauk. As the fluke begin to appear later in the season these same anglers are fishing the inner and outer shores of Fishers Island. The anglers fishing out of Groton and Stonington are at that point fishing for fluke off coastal Rhode Island or Block Island. Changes need to be made in the way the statistics are gathered. Connecticut is unfairly being punished for fish that are actually being caught in other states. I would suggest that in a regional approach not only should the size limit be the same but the catch limit also. That the total number of Fluke caught in the region be used (not state by state) to determine the daily catch limit for the states in that region.

Of the options given last night I would vote for option 5. My reasons being that it only requires a one inch increase in the size limit and it provides for the longest available season. I would also only go with option 1 for the time frame of the alternative management approach. I believe changes to the gathering of harvest numbers will truly reflect a more accurate harvest and will in fact require a lesser reduction.

Fred Ruhlemann

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Richard melton <zeebee83@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2017 7:45 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Dear Mr. Murdy.
I was present at the Galloway 2017 Fluke proposal meeting. At that time I choose not to coment because I was absolutely amazed at the scope of the options put forward WITHOUT SOLID DATA , by your own admission the data used has been flawed for many years. As a boat owner for nearly 45 years any of the proposed options will severly influence my private boating activity. I am also fortunate to work as a mate on a for hire boat. I was also informed that my employment is in danger if any of your options are implemented. I travel 45 min. from my home to the boat every day I work, on my way I stop at the local convenience store for breakfast and provisions for the day. after work I stop again for refreshment for the ride home. This is small but it is how I impact the local community not to mention the gas required to travel to work and back. My boat is small so my recreational fishing is limited to inshore and bay fishing (fluke and striped bass) with the proposed fluke limits I will not be using my boat as much as in other years. Same results except now my local businesses are affected. Bait&tackle shop, local ramp feel local convenience store and of course gas stations for fuel for my trailed boat. I was also looking into purchasing a new larger boat for the upcoming 2017 season. At this point I am NO LONGER CONSIDERING IT. The small charter industry will be in my opinion the most heavily impacted by re reduction in the fluke limits. No one will pay $600.00 for a 4 man charter with this limited catch potential. Anyone willing to fish will be on the large party boats where fares are much much less, the big guys will often send their potential fare to another boat if they did not get enough people to sail themselves, the small charter guy does not have that luxury. What I would like to see is that the regulations for fluke/summer flounder for NJ stay sttus quo for the 2017 season while your agency has an extended petiod to fix the flawed data problem
I could go on for almost ever on this subject, but this is where I will end for now. Sincerely Richard P Melton Private boat owner, mate on a for hire boat for now, fishing entusiast and last but not least victim of an unfair unjustified system. Feel free to contact me at this e-mail address or by phone. 732-261-7364 Thank you for y

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Doug <bassprodkeep@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2017 6:29 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer flounder draft

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Hello, my name is Doug keeping and it has come to my attention that the summer flounder regulations are the talk of the town. As a avid fishermen, and fluke fanatic the options on the table are simply terrible and un needed. Not only will this affect the average fishermen like myself, think about the bait shops, the local party boats, and local guides that depend on the fluke season to make money. For me it means buying less tackle, less fuel, less of everything because it is now cheaper and easier to go out to dinner then it is to catch it. From what I am hearing more and more anglers feel the same. I would like to see studies and data that are more reliable and accurate before any final decisions are made.

Thank you,
Dedicated sportsman

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Paul Risi <pjr587@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2017 3:46 PM
To: Kiley Dancy; Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Comments on Adendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Greetings,

It is my intention to listen in on the 19 January AP Meeting, but I have lately found it a personal challenge to participate due to the atmosphere.

Speaking broadly to the management of summer flounder, I feel the need to point out the boiling failure that we are experiencing. Despite all history and observation, the system is moving forward with complete indifference. I will explain my statement as succinctly as possible.

From 1991 thru 1994, recreational landings were in the range of 7 to 9 million pounds. During that time period, the SSB was estimated to be 12 to 18 metric tons, pretty much the lowest of over twenty years. At this harvest rate (which did not change substantially over the next ten years), the SSB increased steadily. Now, with a current SSB perhaps triple that period, we are painfully looking to manage the harvest of an ABC that is about 80 percent of what was landed back in that time.

So, with the coarse management of the eighties, we fished the species down pretty well, and with measures that were always less severe than we are looking at today and females that were of a significantly smaller average size, built it back up, and to a recorded high SSB. Simple comparison indicates that our harvest has little effect on the SSB throughout the years since. These observations are a testament to the resilience and independence of this fishery. Therefore, I find it disheartening that we have become so deeply mired in the numbers, procedures, and redundant safeguards that we now tout as the cutting edge of management processes. The only worse example of how management has renounced reality is the process we are currently following on black sea bass.

As for the more socially desirable point of commenting on how to proceed with the proposed ABC, a regional approach with some in-region flexibility on the parameters would ease the pain of the foolishness best. However, I would like to address how the point made that the "new approach is not intended to implement new state allocations and is not intended to set a precedent for new state allocations" further supports my earlier point that the current process, even in attempts to "improve," is very careful to avoid bringing newer, more accurate data and factual evidence to the process. Even when the management process spawns unintended, great insight into what is changing in the fishery, we must make a point to not allow it to influence the process.

We have political greed and deception attempting to grab as much resource as it can for their own

interests, and administrative ignorance and vacillation so fearful of being sued or proven to make an error that they cannot accept or react to reality. Having been involved in fisheries management for just about twenty years, and very active and enthusiastic for the better part of fifteen years, I must say that I am now embarrassed to be a part of this process, and over the past two years have found myself routinely apologizing to so many industry contemporaries for coercing them to accept and participate in it.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: captlvb@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:47 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

I am writing to comment on the draft addendum XXVIII for summer flounder. I am involved in the fishery from a personal and professional basis. I am a captain and deckhand on a party fishing boat that fishes for fluke and sea bass from June through the end of the season in September. I also fish for the dinner table, on my own boat on my days "off" the water.

Prior to targeting fluke and sea bass all season the party boat would fish for blues all summer. In their absence since Sandy we have switched to fluke. I have seen numbers of undersized fluke the likes I never imagined over the last four summers. Many days under our current management scheme the boat of 40 -60 fares may see 1-6 keepers, for the entire boat, with well over 150 shorts. The fact that anyone comes back after days like that seems bizarre to me, but they have in the past. If the current way of managing this fishery is to continually reduce the bag limit and to increase the size limit we will be out of the fishing business in no time. We are not expecting the days of full pails and coolers to return anytime soon, but why not allow our anglers the chance to take home a fish or two each trip.

The movement of some requesting a slot type limit is intriguing to me. Keep some sexually mature fish within a determined size range to allow older more fertile fish and sexually immature fish time to mate seems to work in some fisheries. I think the obvious success story is the red drum or redfish in southern states. If commercial vessel can keep a much smaller size fish it would seem the recreational angler could do the same without devastating the fishery. The overall poundage would be limited by the size and bag limit so overfishing could be kept in check. The current system seems flawed so let's get back to the drawing board and find something that works biologically, ecologically and economically.

Sincerely,
Louis J. Van Bergen
271 Hillside Dr
Manchester NJ 08759

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: rbobsjoy@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 2:34 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: 2017 fluke managment program

Categories: Status Quo

I would ask you to not make any changes to the fluke managment program for 2017.Thank you for considering.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Comments
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 2:01 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

From: Enrico Moretti [mailto:emoretti@nep.net]
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 1:12 PM
To: Comments <comments@asmfc.org>
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

I would like to submit a comment regarding the proposed "2017 Fluke Regulations" and the “Alternative Management Options.” As a fisherman, I see first-hand the effects that, although well intended, these proposals and past efforts to protect the fishery have had on the fluke population. Simply stated, the fluke population is down because of high size limits that create an environment whereby fisherman are catching and releasing dozens of short fluke to catch that one keeper that eludes them. This seems innocuous, but the fact is that only a small percentage of those released fluke survive because of two primary reasons:

- Most fisherman, and seemingly all manufactured fluke rigs, use too long a leader causing the fish to swallow the hook too deeply to be removed without mortal damage to the fish. So under the current and proposed regulations, we have a condition whereby fishermen are catching and killing short fluke in an effort to catch the elusive keeper. What a waste! Everyone looses. The fisherman gets nothing to show for the effort and dozens of healthy fish are killed in the de-hooking process. Wouldn’t it be better if the regulations reduced the keeper size to a length a fisherman can easily catch and then stop fishing? For example, if the limit was 2 fish at 12 inches, a fisherman would catch his/her limit and then be required to stop fishing for the day thereby saving dozens of fluke from being caught, mortally wounded, and then thrown back because they did not make the limit.

- The second problem is that many fisherman, in a misguided effort to save a throw-back’s life will simply cut the line and leave the hook in the fluke’s throat. They believe that in a short time the hook will dissolve and pass through the fish’s system. However saltwater hooks are made of stainless steel. The fish will be long dead before the slightest hook degradation has occurred because stainless steel is highly resistant to oxidation.

From what I witness as a fisherman, I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of fluke are killed because of the high size limit and generous possession limit. Both need to be reduced if we want to be successful at saving our fluke fishery. The current proposed higher size limits will simply ensure an even greater fluke mortality rate as more and more throw-backs are caught by fisherman not able to catch a keeper. The way to improve the fluke fishery is to allow a fisherman to catch and keep a small number of fluke. Wouldn’t be great if a fisherman caught and kept his/her first two fish of the day and then moved on to something else?

Significantly less fluke would meet their demise and so many more fisherman would feel successful. Everyone wins.

I hope you will take my observations into consideration.

Tight lines,

Enrico Moretti

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Comments
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 2:01 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Importance: High

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

From: dennis reilly [mailto:recognition_initiatives@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 5:21 PM
To: Comments <comments@asmfc.org>
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII
Importance: High

Dear Sir or Madam,
I want to express my opposition to the new rules contained in the subject draft.
I went fishing for flounder many times last summer-2016- in the waters surrounding Brigantine Island, the Absecon Inlet and the back bay. Most days I was lucky to catch one keeper. I did catch 4 or 5 shorts and they were always around 14". Rarely did I hear of anyone catching 5 keepers as is presently permitted. In fact, most fisherman were complaining about the 18" length because of the excessive number of throwbacks.
Fishing is an expensive and time consuming but a wonderful way to spend time with family and friends. Flounder are fun to catch and delicious to eat.
I strongly urge you to reconsider your proposal and allow the current limits to remain in place for at least one more year. I believe the large number of shorts caught this year will be within limits next year and will provide many more males that were too short this year, thus relieving the pressure on the females over 18".

Thanks in advance for your favorable consideration.

Dennis P. Reilly
Brigantine, NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Stephen Pratico <anglersteve12@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 1:20 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum

Categories: General (no option specified)

Enough of the flawed information. It is evident that the people who are making these decisions have no idea of what is going on in the ocean. Taking the bigger fish, (the breeders), will eventually wipe out the species. Give us 16 or 17 inch fish and limit the keeping of bigger fish to one a day makes more sense.

Stephen F. Pratico
Retired Charter Captain
Present avid flounder fisherman

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: david beach <davidmbeach19@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 1:04 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: 2017 Flounder Regulations Options

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

Kirby,

I think the State of Maryland should stick to option #1 and say screw you to the northern regions in terms of giving up some of our quota. We already did this back in 2013 and never received it back. I don't want to hear that they gave us sea bass quota since I do not fish offshore, I target flounder inshore the additional quota never helped me. I never liked the idea of the regions in the first place joining us with DE and VA.

My vote is option #1 to stay the same which is 16 ", 4 fish, 365 Days

David M. Beach II

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: paul schell <schellfish37@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 12:58 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke regs....

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I believe your whole concept of regulation of fishing is totally FALLACIOUS ., mainly because your accounting is INACCURATE and NEVER takes
into account the real normal Balance of Nature... So in a word " LEAVE IT ALONE
"..... Meddle not any further , the regs from last year
on BAD ENOUGH; but we will Try t live with them..!!!!!

Paul L. Schell, MD

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: stephen6834@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 12:04 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVlll

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

The New Jersey fishing council voted 9-1 against the proposals outlined in Draft Addendum XXVlll. We feel that these proposals are based on flawed data.

I am writing to urge lawmakers to keep the regulations the same as they are now.

As a New Jersey fisherman for over 50 years, and homeowner in Cape May County, I know, based on what I spend annually, how devastating the proposed regulations will be on the Jersey Shore economy.

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Allan Jay Kovitz <ALLAN@kovitzcpa.com>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 10:09 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT 2017 SUMMER FLOUNDER QUOTAS

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

I write in regard to a proposal by NOAA Fisheries to reduce the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), recreational and commercial quotas for summer flounder in 2017 and 2018. Implementing this proposed rule will have a dramatic impact on the livelihoods of recreational and commercial fishermen, damaging the economies of coastal communities that depend on this important fishery. NOAA Fisheries must reconsider this proposal, specifically by maintaining existing quota levels until it conducts a new summer flounder benchmark assessment.

As you know, the last summer flounder benchmark assessment took place in 2013, and the agency has scheduled a new assessment to take place in 2017. Would you rely on your doctor's 4 year old diagnosis to cure a problem that you might have today or would you want an updated diagnosis to see what the current diagnosis is before acting? The scale of these reductions is serious, for example, the summer flounder ABC would be reduced 29% in 2017 and a 16% in 2018. The recreational and commercial limits would both be reduced by approximately 30% in 2017 and 16% in 2018 respectively. NOAA Fisheries should make use of the best science available to ensure that it has updated numbers before making any decision of this level.

These proposed reductions would harm many coastal communities along the Jersey Shore, especially those that rely on the recreational and commercial fishing industries. These communities are already struggling. From 2007 to 2014 there was a loss of 2 million fishing trips in New Jersey, and 40% of fishing trips in New Jersey are in pursuit of summer flounder. The damage would not be limited to just fishermen; the tourism and boating industries along the Shore would be impacted as well. That is why we are respectfully requesting that NOAA Fisheries to postpone any decision on summer flounder quotas until it conducts a new benchmark summer flounder assessment. The agency should also maintain the current quotas until that assessment is conducted.
NOAA Fisheries must use the best science and updated data before it makes any decision to implement these dramatic quota cuts.

Sincerely,
Capt. Allan Kovitz
PO Box D
Point Pleasant, NJ 08742
allan@reeltimeoffshore.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John F. Peters <jfpeters@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 9:55 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy; mrobbins@cmcherald.com
Subject: Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2017

Categories: Status Quo

To Whom It May Concern,

Please keep the 2016 regulations for summer flounder season in 2017.

Thank You,

John F. Peters
267-879-7215

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: JEFFREY SCHMIDT <DHSSCHMIDT@COMCAST.NET>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 9:25 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: 2017 Flounder Regulation Public Comment

Categories: General (no option specified), Status Quo

Kirby,

After reading Larry's article, I feel just as strong and agree with him. Enough is enough. We need to focus on our area and our satisfaction. We really struggled bay fishing for Flounder last season set at 16". Particularly, the bulkhead and pier fishermen. Not everyone can afford to be a boat owner and keep running to the recks just to catch some decent flounder. Raising it to 17" would be a real disaster for the bay fishermen. It's a good feeling when you bring home some fish for your family to eat. It really sucks when you don't. It's not like the DNR refunds you any license money when you don't catch any fish. We need to keep the regulation the same as last year. #1 16", 4 fish, 365 days.

Vr,
Jeffrey A. Schmidt EPS, HMCO, DHS, USCG, (Ret).
Bay Vista Estates I President HOA, BOD
Phone (856) 261-7093
DHSSCHMIDT@COMCAST.NET

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Gary King <gking5090@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 09, 2017 12:27 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fishing

Categories: General (no option specified)

Thank you very much for your concern and I appreciate that you have returned back I also like to say it would be nice to keep what we have now having a flounder at
(18.5 inches for your (1 first catch and make the (2nd)catch A size like
(20 inches) if you are a True Fisherman and fish for the Sport of trying to succeed on catching the Big One that's Fishing I'm sure there's some people who just take fish for bragging rights but really make it worthwhile My dad always said throw it back to small to clean no meat that how to fish Or maybe we should have a choice to buy a Flounder License and then only allowed (2 Flounder per day over the size of (20 inches) Those's you don't want to buy the License and get Caught at the docks fine then at ($25.00) per Flounder and for the Big Commercial Fishing have them as well follow the rules by haven them At A Size Like (20 inches that way Flounder have a chance to grow for into the future Instead of Having them clean up and take what in the Water In Alaska they have a law enforcement on Size and pound and limit it has to be Set in Stone Big Commercial Fishing Are taking more out then they should They stop the Big Commercial Fishing in Florida on the Gulf side do the same before it to late Tuna the same the Big Commercial Fishing taking them to soon there wont be fish it has to be enforced or there's no fish in the Future Sharks coming closer to shore no food out there for them don't they see this please help Stop Big Commercial Fishing put more enforcement on them and keep them out within 100 150 miles offshore not close them the fish will be around into the future but we all have to work together and the future beyond thank you

Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Jackcomcast <mhenderson162@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 08, 2017 11:07 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke Regulations

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: General (no option specified)

You are causing a double hit to the people in my community. I'm the secretary of the Pebble Beach Homeowners in Barnegat, New Jersey. We represent 688 homeowners on the water in our community. First Sandy reduced the value of our homes 30% and it has not recovered. Now by increasing the size of the fluke catch to 19" you are going to kill the recreational fishing industry and still reduce the value of our homes.

When you hear homeowners catching 96 Fluke and only getting 6 legal size fish at the current size what is going to happen at 19"?

The larger size Fluke is the breeding size fish and by catching these your reducing the number of future Fluke. Having to throw back 90% of the fluke that is undersize from what I have been told that 25% of that catch does not live , does this make good science?

I have never heard from any of our members being checked during the season about how many Fluke have they caught, where are these checkers? We now have a New Jersey Salt Water Fishing License and one of the reasons for the license was the ability for someone in the state to call us about the numbers of fish caught. Who has ever been called?

Until you can show us the real numbers you should keep the size limit where it is.

Jack Henderson, Secretary Pebble Beach Homeowners Assoc. http://pebblebeachhoa.org/

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John Zingis <jzingishome3@verizon.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 08, 2017 10:50 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: RE: Thank you for your public comment on Draft Addendum XXVIII - Follwo up.

Categories: General (no option specified)

Good morning.

First I want to congratulate you on your presentation. I realize and have experience in being in a position where you are the messenger with bad news and no alternatives. To that end you did a good job.

Please accept this as my final comment on the matter and it goes towards the science of estimating biomass and recruitment.

We can all agree that the fluke fishing industry is critical to residents of the tri-state area. It provides for recreation, employment and a quality food source. There's no denying that fluke is an in expendable resource and should be protected and preserved to the greatest extent practicable.

The proposed management put forth is simply not based on sound science and certainly not the best available science. I would suggest that the ASMFC has known about this for years, but has done nothing to improve the science. I believe NOAA's MRIP is flawed because it not scientifically reproducible with reasonable certainty. I would suggest that the MRIP is conducted by low paid college graduates with no sincere dedication to the outcome and use of the data.

At the public hearing it was mentioned that the Academy of Science or some other entity was evaluating the accuracy of the MRIP program and similar data gathering surveys. This was not referenced and it should be immediately evaluated and presented to the community as a matter of checking the accuracy of MRIP.

Understanding the huge economic impact the proposed regulations would have on the community, and based on poor science, the ASMFC should immediately maintain current regulations and take immediate action to improve the science behind fisheries management. It's unquestionable that the science exists and funding for such studies should come from the collected taxes from the sale of all fishing related materials. To ignore this critical issue is irresponsible and the members of the ASMFC should be replaced with qualified individuals dedicated to the science of all fisheries.

Moreover, when data is collected, evaluated and published, the ASMFC did a very poor job of getting the materials to the general public with all appropriate references so that the public and other scientists can participate. I will reiterate the necessity for quality peer review and MORE open public forums. I am sure that if the ASMFC did this, and educated the public about the science and models relied upon to assess the health of the fluke population, there would be significant improvements in the end result of quality management decision. As of NOW, the ASMFC has failed and failed miserably.

Rationale in support of the aforementioned comment is based on my personal knowledge of how NOAA trains key individuals in making presentations, facilitating meetings and committing to the "stake holder" process. I have personally taken those training courses.

In conclusion, it's very clear that the science that the ASMFC employs is flawed and should be immediately modified to include other data collection methodologies, models and scientific review to significantly increase the accuracy of this fisheries management. Continuing on the current path is not solving the supposed problem of decreasing biomass and

recruitment. It is abundantly clear that the course MUST be changed and it should start immediately. All of the proposed regulations are based on unacceptable science, should be removed and the proposed regulations should maintain "status quo." The ASMFC, understanding this flawed methodology, should take immediate action to gather scientists, evaluate other data collection And models, and start employing these techniques as soon as possible for implementation next year.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to comment.

Respectfully submitted,

Z. John Zingis, Jr.
11 Tunes Brook Drive
Brick, NJ 08723
(732) 600-2700.

From: Kirby Rootes-Murdy [mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org]
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 4:12 PM
To: 'John Zingis'
Subject: Thank you for your public comment on Draft Addendum XXVIII

Thank you for providing public comment on Draft Addendum XXVIII regarding summer flounder recreational management in 2017. Your comments will be considered and presented to the ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board at the ASMFC Winter Meeting in Feb 2017.

In the meantime, if you have any further questions on Summer Flounder management or the ASMFC, just let me know.

Best,

Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Senior FMP Coordinator
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 North Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201-2196

P:703-842-0740
e: krootes-murdy@asmfc.org
w: www.asmfc.org

From: John Zingis [mailto:jzingishome3@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 3:07 PM
To: =?iso-2022-jp?B?J2tyb290ZXMbJEIhPhsoQm11cmR5QGFzbWZjLm9yZyc=?=@intel1.peregrinehw.com
Cc: TOM FOTE <tfote@jcaa.org>
Subject: Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

I respectfully submit these comments in advance of your scheduled public meeting in NJ on January 5, 2017.

In order to prepare these comments I have reviewed the following document that was provided to the public.

Draft Addendum for Public Comment
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIII TO THE SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2017

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

December 2016

(Revised

Comment #1:

As a scientist, I will state that the above document totally lacks any footnotes to references whereas the ASMFC relies upon and the public is "kept in the dark". The ASMFC **MUST** first understand that the public does have a population of scientists, statisticians and many other individuals with skills that can evaluate supportive documentation in the form of "peer review". I ask, "How in the world can the ASMFC request public comment when all the facts supporting ASMFC decisions are **NOT PUBLIC."**

To rightfully address this issue, the ASMFC MUST make available **ALL** references and extend the public comment period for 30 – 60 days. An alternative is to suspend any changes to current regulations until such time that the ASMFC makes available all supporting data and resources supporting ASMFC proposed changes.

Essentially, the public cannot provide detailed comments, when the materials that the ASMFC relies upon is not available to the public.

Comment #2:

In review of the below citation, page 6 of the above referenced document, it's stated that

"Detailed information on MRIP and the improvements can be found at http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/index. All recreational catch and effort data
considered in this document are derived from MRIP."

I have reviewed the MRIP site and personally have been interviewed. I would state with certainty that this data is not reliable to support any changes in stock biomass, either for the positive or negative. This, in my opinion and I think in any respectable scientist's opinion, would be a complete flaw in the statistical data gathering process.

WHERE IS THE DATA VAILIDATION, I am asking.

There are many means to generate data to support management decisions, none of which is considered in this publication.

Where is seining or trawling data? Where is the application of climate change? How about economic changes (i.e., crash of 2009, financial meltdown, Superstorm Sandy, price of gas?). None of these "outside parameters" are factored into the data collection.

I can say with certainty, and as an avid boater on the shore, that few boat owners were taking their boats out to fish in the two years following Superstorm Sandy. Rationale was that not many trusted the submerged waterways. Sunken debris was a concern.

Comment #3:

This is a follow up to the heavily relied upon MRIP data. Wouldn't the ASMFC consider hiring more staff scientists to board commercial boats on the form of "draggers" and "head boats" to first hand see what is being caught, what size, how many, fish mortality. The assessment of data and reliability of MRIP data alone is scientifically flawed. The ASMFC simply "cannot reproduce their own data with reasonable scientific certainty." In case the ASMFC doesn't understand this, it's a court test of reliability. Every reasonable scientific study must be backed with another study that someone can replicate. Conducting MRIP surveys and relying upon that data alone, as quoted in the above document, is severely flawed.

Comment #4:

There appears to be no "financial impact assessment" related to changing the catch limits whether increasing or decreasing. A financial impact assessment is a **MUST** for any rule promulgation. The ASMFC must implement this. I alone, as an avid fluke fisherman, will not spend the investment for "time, gas expenses, bait expenses, gear expenses" when I can be restricted to the proposed rules.

I will state that most of my catch (90%) was below the 18" minimum. As I consider myself a good fisherman and mindful of "throwbacks", I took care in releasing fish. I would still say that the fish I released suffered 5% mortality. I can further testify, while fishing with other less qualified fisherman that this mortality rate would increase substantially to perhaps 20% or one of every five fish.

Increasing the minimum size to 19" will 1) result in higher mortality rates for smaller fish and 2) only catch presumably female fish, resulting in a decrease of spawn biomass.

Comment #5:

There must be more public presentations, discussions, peer review and comment periods to assess this data. ASMFC should present their findings, report on what data the ASMFC relied upon, have a valid peer review period of at least 45 days, then hold a follow up public comment period.

Closing comments:

In closing I will make clear that there must be more improved science behind this decision making process. If there is, and it's not available to the public, than it should be made available immediately for peer review. The data that the ASMFC "is not scientifically reproducible with reasonable certainty." I would suggest that it's 50% science and 50% "art". **NOT ACCEPTABLE.** There is an easy way to improve the science behind the management practices. It will cost more money, but that's small change when compared to the impacts of this proposed rule (of which the ASMFC hasn't studied).

We must have an improved dialogue between ASMFC and the public. Data presentations should be made well in advance of rule changes and public meetings. Data and studies should be made available to the public in a greater way so that peer review and challenges to studies may be made in advance of decisions. Currently the ASMFC is doing a poor job on this matter alone.

Lastly, where is the financial impact analysis? There was none published by the ASMFC. The ASMFC must assess financial impacts prior to any changes in the regulations. Simply put, “At some point the regulations will be so onerous that no reasonable person will go fluke fishing, spend over $100 in gas and supplies, only to hope that they catch a few fish over 19”.

Respectfully submitted,

Z. John Zingis, Jr.
11 Tunes Brook Drive
Brick, NJ 08723
(732) 600-2700

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: JOHN GASPER JR <johntgasperjr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 1:01 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: flounder

Categories: General (no option specified)

i do not spend money on fishing in n.j. anymore. (not many fish) i go to florida for two months catch and release, also no beach tag's needed.,

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Robert Lynch <brllynch2@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 11:43 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

In 2016 we caught 155 flounder on our boat in 19 trips (So there are plenty of flounder)
Only 4 of those fish were above the legal limit and all were caught in May and all were female.
So there are not enough large flounder in South Jersey to make the limit 19"

South Jersey needs to be on its own separate from NY. Our larger flounder leave by memorial day. We need a slot fish.
One fish 16"-17" and one fish over 19"
When you make the limits over 18" the females are the only fish being killed.

Our boat is not large enough for trolling offshore. It is only good for inshore fishing and the only fish available is flounder.
I am currently looking at a new engine or new boat. But with the flounder regulations being proposed I will not be investing in fishing or NJ.

I strongly urge the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to overturn these actions and keep current regulations in effect or lowering them for NJ, so that all partners can work toward a stable management approach that provides long-term conservation of summer flounder without continually placing New Jersey at a disadvantage to other states.
Robert Lynch

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Bob <bayfishinbob@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 11:07 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII"

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

Kirby Rootes-Murdy,

My vote is for: option 1 fish sharing

Thank you,

Robert C. Kline

606 Howell School Rd.

Bear, DE 19701

bayfishinbob@verizon.net

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: philip <psuwelsh@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 10:54 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII)

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Hello,

I am again writing to you regarding this matter.

After the January 5 meeting, it is obvious that there is more than passing interest in the matter at hand.

With 100% rejection by those in attendance of the 5 possible regs, it seems the only solution is to freeze the regs using 2016 guidelines until the new assessment has been completed in 2017.

However, given a choice, I would be more inclined to:
a. put in a slot system that reduces the number of breeding females taken b. equalize the regs for southern NJ, Delaware and Maryland who fish the same ocean locations (cm reef, old ground, rs 11, etc).

With agreement that the current method of stock assessment is fatally flawed, why would any regs be set using a flawed method?

I urge you to reject the 5 proposals and to either support continuance of the 2016 regs, or, look to implement a slot system with equalized regs for southern NJ/DL/MD.

Thank you,

Philip Welsh
Stone Harbor

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John Kolias <jkolias@optonline.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 10:33 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Recent meeting at Galloway on Fluke Reg's

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Dear Kirby (may I call you that?),

I was in attendance at the Thursday June 5 meeting pertaining to the proposed 2017 Fluke regulations.

I would like to offer you some of my thoughts and insight's as a charter for-hire in the Highlands, NJ area of Monmouth County. I was one of the last to offer comments (Reel Fun Sportfishing) and the potential for a disastrous year ahead for me if fluke regulations get to be too severe.

First off let me say that I am fully aware that you are between a rock and a hard place offering NOAA's proposals and hearing the fishing community concerns. Let me say that I, for one, do not condone killing ANY fish for the sake of killing and go out of my way to direct my anglers to keep what they are going to use for food in the near term. Most of my fares are responsible anglers, catch and release type men and women that fully understand that going overboard on filling the cooler can lead to severe restrictions down the road. We ALL want to maintain a healthy and vibrant fishery here in New Jersey for now as well as for future generations. We don't need another Quincy Bay (winter flounder) situation here in Raritan Bay…..trust me we get it.

But, I along with many of my customers, are skeptical of the numbers that NOAA is throwing at us considering that they are using outdated and knowingly flawed (which they themselves have admitted to) data to regulate fishing in New Jersey. Many of us don't "trust", a very important word here, their numbers which I'm sure is a major stumbling block to selling their recommendations.

I am a very conservative and truthful charter captain, which my customers love me for. My fishing reports are brutally honest and many of my anglers will fish with nobody else because of that. I call it the way it is….good or bad in my fishing reports. I, along with my anglers, have returned to the water numerous "big" trophy size fish because most of all I convince them that they are females and represent the future of the stock. I can say with all conviction, that most of the Stripers from 2016 spring and fall fishing trips are still swimming as you read this. That too goes for fluke that are still alive due to my direction.

But….a very important word here, and I'm speaking for myself, all I request is '"balance" between NOAA's proposals and what I can live with to sustain my business. 2 fish at 19" WILL kill my season for fluke which happens to be what I advertise and for what people know me for. True, my charters start around April 15th for Stripers and continues till around the end of June, give or take 1 to 2 weeks, but once that's done, it's on to fluke hopefully fishing for them from end of May, June, July, August and September. I know the vast majority of my charters will NOT hire me at 2 fish, so in effect I've lost at least 4 month of business…..very bad!

Could you go without a paycheck for 4 months….I don't think so. Try to understand my position. I use the word balance to describe what I think should be EVERYONE'S objective…. "sustainable fishery and economic

stability". Also please consider the oft used term…ripple-down effect. Trust me, I won't be the only business taking a major hit here with these proposed regulations. I was told recently by an old and very wise man…"successful negotiation is where both parties come away with a win or at least a smile on their faces." Wise words, don't you agree?

May I offer an alternative? NOAA wants 2 fish at 19"…fine, now how about throwing the anglers a bone at 3 slot fish….say 15-18" something in that category for x amount of days. I think you get my drift. The slots should target the males and reduce the pressure on the females at the 19" range.

I stand ready to offer any assistance I can for you if you need me. Please feel free to call me at 908-421-4761 if you care to discuss this situation or any other fishing related subject now or in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read this lengthy message.

Sincerely Yours,

Capt. John Kolias
Reel Fun Sportfishing, LLC

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Cameron Koshland <blvdbait@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 9:47 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Regulations

Categories: General (no option specified)

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Cameron Koshland and I am the owner of Boulevard Bait & Tackle located in Ocean View, New Jersey (Cape May County). Let me start off mentioning that I am 26 years old and I have owned the bait and tackle shop going on four years. I went into business when i was just 23 years old. I would bet the odds that i am one of the youngest business owners in the fishing industry here in New Jersey. What we have going on with the summer flounder (fluke) fiasco is just pure wrong! We the fisherman know the summer flounder are not being over-fished. New Data Will emerge from the Save Summer Flounder Fishery Fund and will prove this. We need to act now before putting numerous businesses out of business! This will not only effect bait and tackle shops but also party boats, charter boats, marinas, boat sales, restaurants, hotels, etc. The coastal communities rely on tourism to succeed. FISHING brings tourists to our area. Something needs to be done and the currents options for 2017 are not the answer!

Thank you

Cameron Koshland
Boulevard Bait & Tackle

Boulevard Bait & Tackle LLC
Cameron Koshland
535 Sea Isle Blvd, Ocean View, NJ 08230
609-624-7637
www.blvdbait.com
Find Us on Facebook!

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Steve Singler <bellport1896@me.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 8:58 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Dear Kirby,

I continue to read about the proposed reductions for summer flounder, my concern grows every day, as follows:

1. This year's proposal flies in the face of rational thinking. If the spawning biomass is, as is claimed, declining every year, why on earth would there be a recommendation to go up in size to 19" fish, which are predominantly females capable of spawning. What might make sense is a reduction in size to perhaps a slot limit of 15-17", and perhaps one fish daily over 18", thereby reducing the impact on the breeding population, helping to increase the availability of spawning fish, and so improve the chances of a quicker recovery. This was not in any proposal, yet makes the most sense to help the species recovery.
2. Your statistics on existing biomass are based on MRIP extrapolations and sample trawls from the Bigelow. While I commend the attempt to gather data utilizing hauls from the Bigelow, the simple fact is that much better data can be had by sampling the catch rate of commercial boats whose very livelihood depends on the most effective and efficient method to catch fish. I've seen numerous sources of information relate how commercial boats dragging directly along with the Bigelow routinely catch three to five fold more fish, mostly because they use more effective equipment and have the know how and knowledge gleaned from a lifetime of fishing. This expertise somehow remains suspect, while, sorry to say, amateur's attempts to trawl up reliable, yet faulty, data from the Bigelow somehow are the reliable baseline. These inaccurate numbers are then utilized as a basis for fisheries management. It's no wonder statistics are flawed when the inaccuracies which are so obvious are ignored. Simply put, it's not good science, and that's no way to manage a fisheries, and, in turn, men's lives.
3. I worked for several years doing fisheries interviews in the early 90's, all I will say is that the data was simply inadequate then, and remains so today. The extrapolation of such small data samples to establish catch rates will never adequately reflect what is actually happening in the fisheries. And the use of faulty algorithms only further complicates the issue. More and more, most everyone I talk with and fish with distrust the data used to manage our fisheries, and for good reason (see #2, above).When you continually reduce quota's and limits, it results in additional fishing pressure on all species, which is not factored in to management policies. From the outside looking in, all I can say is that it appears that you basically already have your conclusions established, and then manipulate data to fit. That's no way to do good science.

In closing, I would sincerely hope that all public comments are taken into account when formulating policies, and that valid concerns are addressed and actually acted upon. Anything less will just be lip service, and that does no one any good, most of all fisheries managers who decide that fate of our fisheries.

sincerely,

Steve Singler

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Marc and Lori <marcandlori@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 8:52 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy

Categories: Status Quo

Please know that I reject all 5 options and suggest no change for fluke regulation..
Marc Sherry
Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Captain Dan Reelmusic Sportfishing <reelmusicsportfishing@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 07, 2017 6:46 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Re: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII). New Jersey

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Forgot to add this is for New Jersey

Thanks Capt. Dan Reelmusic Sportfishing

From: Captain Dan Reelmusic Sportfishing <reelmusicsportfishing@yahoo.com>
To: "krootes-murdy@asmfc.org" <krootes-murdy@asmfc.org>
Sent: Friday, January 6, 2017 7:19 PM
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII).

I feel a more reasonable option would be the following

Option 6

A (5) fish bag limit composed of
(3) fish 16 to 19"
(2) fish over 19"
as their historical data shows best reqruitment was ALWAYS when we had a smaller length limit than 18" .
It showed when the catch was spread where it possibly added males to the daily creel as well as taking smaller less egg quanity filled females the fishery reruitment was always in an upward path.
It is only since imposed limits that take 90% females and it also targets the fish carrying the most eggs to be the total daily creel. that recruitment showed a downward trend
data showes the fishery had only failed under the management plan of raising the limit to allow less target fish .

It would spread the harvest over 3 top 4 years of age class fish/
Lower our poundage due to taking fish that weigh less as part of the creel etc.
and allow many people to much better enjoy the resource.while meeting their reduction requirements.
Lower throwback mortality number status quo hasn't worked 18 inches is the wrong number to have as a starting point

Thanks Capt. Dan Reelmusic Sportfishing

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Gary King <gking5090@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 9:03 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified)

Mr Kirby
Hello,,and please note that I can't make this meeting on January 19,017 I work second shift starting at 1500
So I have been fishing in Delaware my life. I don't know what your age is but it don't matter. What concern me is Rules on Recreational Fishing Most people don't follow the Rules. People today buy supplies from a bait shop, who has to make a living to. If they cut us back what MORE Cut back on the big Commercial Fishing you claim that they go buy (weight) What is there size is it over the size limit no by pounds cut them back (30%)more and keep them out further another (. 10 ---15. ---20) off the shores lined can you just see then what it would be for us small recreational we only are allowed two per day and size not weight so please not us please Thank you recreational fishing man Over 48 years plus thank you King

Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Joe & Bonnie Mccoy <jobo001@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 7:38 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Option 1: Fish Sharing

I vote for option 1

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Joe Zaborowski <jazabski18@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 4:52 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Mr. Rootes-Murdy and members of the ASMFC,

My name is Joe Zaborowski. I am a member of the NJ Marine Fisheries Council and have made it my business over the years to better understand the process and the science. I am not writing you as a member of the council. Rather, I am a concerned recreational angler and former party boat owner operator and former marina owner, who understands and appreciates the economic importance of this species of fish. It is without a doubt the most valuable of all species harvested in our state. Reductions in harvest along with the potential regulations of a shortened season and increased fish size will completely debilitate the recreational fishery and all the businesses it supports. Many of these businesses have not fully recovered from the Super Storm Sandy.

I find it interesting that, as you pointed out last night, the summer flounder SSB has been in a down period since 2010. In 2010 NJ was forced into a regulation requiring a minimum size limit of 18". Now we all know that at 18" a summer flounder is almost certainly a female. Nearly every summer flounder kept since 2010 was a breeder. Let's assume 700,000 fish were caught each year since 2010. That means NJ recreational anglers removed 4,900,000 breeding females. Now, let's talk about NY anglers who catch as many or more summer flounder than NJ. Let's tack on another 4,900,000 fish for the seven years for them as well. That means between the 2 states, 9,800,000 breeding females were removed during a time that saw an SSB decline. I have to believe there is a relationship between the 2. Since these fish are the largest in the biomass, a 2lb average is more than a reasonable estimate of the average size. 20,000,000 lbs of breeding biomass was removed. None of the other states are factored into this! This a staggering number considering that the estimated SSB as of 2015 was approximately 44,000,000lbs. 1/10th of the biomass was removed each of those years and it was all breeding females! I also find it interesting that for the first time, there is research suggesting that reduction in SSB and large takes of breeders may be related.

It is time to change the way stocks are regulated. If I owned a chicken farm to sell eggs, I wouldn't kill all the hens and let all the roosters live. It wouldn't take too long before I was out of business. That is what is happening to the summer flounder population.

Rather than being reactive and just raising size limits and shortening seasons, let's be proactive and allow recreational anglers to keep smaller fish with a limit on how many breeders you can keep. For instance, for this year, how about NJ be allowed a 5 month season from May 7th to October 8th, keep 3 fish in a slot from 15" to 18" per day with one of those fish being over 18". So the total fish per day

would be 3 with only one potentially being above 18“. This way we would add many more males to the harvest and not hurt the breeding situation allowing for an increase in biomass.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Victor Gano <vgano@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 2:45 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Dear Kirby Rootes-Murdy,

I am writing this email to provide my public comment concerning Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII in the State of New Jersey. I am a recreational fisherman and I am against the size limit proposals that are being suggested in New Jersey for Summer Flounder. Male summer flounder die when they grow 17 1/2 inches and larger according to scientific studies. Also according to scientific study female summer flounder 18 inches and larger are breeder fish. The proposed Addendum is flawed science and makes no sense since it is generated by a computer model. If the new size limits are excepted it will have a horrible economic impact on commercial fisherman, recreational fishing stores/docks/tackle shops, party boats, charter boats, and much more. Finally, if this Addendum is excepted it will destroy the future fluke population. I propose the following for summer flounder: 16 inch size limit, 3 fish total , and 1 bonus summer flounder, 20 inches and over. Please take my comments into consideration. I am a lifetime fisherman and I believe I have a valid opinion.

Thank you,

Victor Gano

540 W. Barr Avenue

Linwood, New Jersey 08221

(609) 602-2897

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Joseph Puntasecca <jpuntase@live.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 1:21 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Public Comment for Draft Addendum XXVIII for Summer Flounder

Categories: Status Quo, General (no option specified)

I write in regard to a proposal by NOAA Fisheries to reduce the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), recreational and commercial quotas for summer flounder in 2017 and 2018. Implementing this proposed rule will have a dramatic impact on the livelihoods of recreational and commercial fishermen, damaging the economies of coastal communities that depend on this important fishery. NOAA Fisheries should reconsider this proposal, specifically by maintaining existing quota levels until it conducts a new summer flounder benchmark assessment.

As you know, the last summer flounder benchmark assessment took place in 2013, and the agency has scheduled a new assessment to take place in 2017. The scale of these reductions is serious, for example, the summer flounder ABC would be reduced 29% in 2017 and a 16% in 2018. The recreational and commercial limits would both be reduced by approximately 30% in 2017 and 16% in 2018 respectively. NOAA Fisheries should make use of the best science available to ensure that it has updated numbers before making any decision of this level.

These proposed reductions would harm many coastal communities along the Jersey Shore, especially those that rely on the recreational and commercial fishing industries. These communities are already struggling. From 2007 to 2014 there was a loss of 2 million fishing trips in New Jersey, and 40% of fishing trips in New Jersey are in pursuit of summer flounder. The damage would not be limited to just fishermen; the tourism and boating industries along the Shore would be impacted as well. That is why we are respectfully requesting that NOAA Fisheries to postpone any decision on summer flounder quotas until it conducts a new benchmark summer flounder assessment. The agency should also maintain the current quotas until that assessment is conducted.
NOAA Fisheries should use the best science and updated data before it makes any decision to implement these dramatic quota cuts.

Sincerely,
Joseph Puntasecca
Corresponding Secretary
Jersey Coast Shark Anglers
385 Herbertsville Road
Brick, NJ 08742

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John Weigner <john_weigner@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 12:41 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer flounder draft addendum XXV111

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

To Whom it may concern,

I would like to express my opinion on this matter or the summer flounder season for the New Jersey waters for 2017.
I have been fishing these waters and Delaware Bay since 1966 and have enjoyed the family fun, along with the meeting of new friends all with the same interest of fishing. What a great way to spend my free time and now a retiree I get to do it more often.
I was there for the great weakfish runs in the late 70's and the decline of that fishery. The same with the striped bass and the success of sensible regulations to bring that fishery back to what we have today. So I do support reasonable limits on size and daily limits.
The fact that so many businesses and people's livelihoods would be affected is a real concern of mine. I think of the head boats trying to make a living with a lower daily limit and increased size limits and the effects on marinas and tackle shops and every business and person this will affect.
Do we know why the numbers keep dropping on harvested fish by fisherman? I have seen my numbers drop. I hear from most fisherman the same story, smaller fish and no keepers.
So what is the answer.
A 14" fish which is a 3 yr old fish produces around 460,000 eggs opposed to a 27" fish that produces 10 times that amount to 4.2 million eggs. I am sure the survival rate is quite low and if we have a 3% survival rate that would be a lot.
With all the things that go into the possibility of reduced fish stocks do you have any concrete evidence of WHY this has happened?
Is this being caused by something other than fishing whether recreational or commercial?
Are we just in a decline period?
There are to many variables which go into this so before we start cutting limits and messing with so many peoples lives who depend on the flounder for their livelihoods let's step back and get the information we need to make a educated decision and then go from there.
We all have the interest of seeing our fish stocks increasing again, but let's be diligent in making this decision.
Would putting a slot size into effect be something that could work? Let's say keeping no fish over 26". I know no one wants to throw back a doormat but we all have to do our part.
Thank you for allowing me to express my opinion.
Let's leave everything as is until we have more data..

Thank you

John W
Pennsylvania

Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 11:32 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Proposed 2017 Fluke Regulations

Categories: General (no option specified)

Public comment

-----Original Message-----
From: Nick [mailto:nsboat01@optonline.net]
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 8:38 PM
To: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Subject: Proposed 2017 Fluke Regulations

Dear Mr. Heins:

I am writing this note regarding the proposed Fluke regulations for the 2017 season. Even though you are requesting public comment for Draft XXVIII I doubt that anything written by the public will be taken into consideration regarding the proposed reductions. I must say that when I first heard of the proposed 40% reduction in the recreational Fluke harvest for 2017 I thought it was a joke. How could a fishery that was supposedly rebuilt a couple of years ago be in such dire straights? We in New York had suffered very restrictive fluke limits both is fish size and possession limits. Our recent regulations of 5 fish at 18 inches seemed fair. Setting the regulations of 2 fish at 19 inches seems to be oppressive. The current regulations gave every angler a chance to bring back a few keeper fluke for the dinner table. Fluke fishing in New York waters has been very good the last two years. Lots of short fish with a few keepers in the mix to make the day worthwhile. However, now we are being told that we have overfished our 2016 quota and have to take severe reductions in the regs to save the fishery. Somehow, I cannot believe the science that has come up with this conclusion. Nothing that I have seen has suggested that the Fluke fishery is in trouble. It seems that every year both N.O.A.A. and ASMFC comes up with some outlandish regulations regarding our fisheries. Last year it was the restrictions on Black Seabass. The 2016 reduction in Black Seabass had many anglers scratching their heads since by all accounts the Black Seabass fishery is quite healthy. It seemed wherever you threw a baited hook you caught Seabass but the so called 'Experts' say no that is not the case. I wonder if any of these so these 'Experts' even know what a Seabass or Fluke look like.

I have been fishing for more than 50 years, have been an active boater for over 30 years. I am also a certified scuba instructor and a licensed Coast Guard Captain. As such I consider myself a conservationist. I am all for regulations to preserve the fish stocks within our region. These proposed regulations, however, seen to be quite unfair. Fluke is the most important fish in the New York area for both recreational and commercial boaters. If these restrictions pass then I am anticipating a great many party and charter boats giving up the fight and going out of business. Currently there are not many charter or party boats left in the NYC area. For private boat owners these regulations will cause many to question why bother owning a boat. People giving up fishing and boating will have a negative effect on the economy. Bait and Tackle shops, marinas, boating supply businesses all will be affected. Not to mention the loss of tax revenue for the state. I myself am beginning to question as to why I am paying marina fees, boat and insurance payments, plus bait

and tackle costs, when it appears to me that all I'm doing is wasting my time and just throwing away money trying to pursue my favorite sport.

As I have said I am all for conservation but the current and proposed N.O.A.A. and ASMFC regulations seem to be targeting the wrong species of fish. Why are you targeting Fluke and Seabass when these fisheries seem to all too healthy? Why are we ignoring the winter flounder, Tautog, and Striped Bass? Has anything been done to stop the poaching of Striped Bass or Tautog? It appears to me that nothing has been done. The burden seems to always fall on the honest recreational fisherman. Again the scientists and experts try to over manage the fishery. This applies to both Fluke and Seabass. Increasing the size limit does nothing to help grow the fishery. The large fish are almost always female. So catching these large fish remove the breeding fish from the environment. Also constantly throwing back under sized fish does not make much sense since many of these throw backs do not survive thus causing the mortality rate goes up. It appears that our 'Experts' have not taken this into consideration.

I truly believe that the data collected for making the decisions regarding regulations is wrong. I also believe that the current N.Y. regulation of 5 fish at 18 inches for Fluke is fair. Until a more accurate way of collecting data is found these regulations should stay in place. If not then I fear that many anglers will deem the regulations as too restrictive and unfair and just ignore the regulations. Many an honest fisherman who always followed the rules will now become dishonest. If this happens then goal of protecting the fluke fishery will become a joke. People will ignore the regulations and do whatever they want. At that point you might as well just ban fishing altogether. This will not make the angling community happy but it will make many of the rabid conservationist groups in existence today happy since their agenda seems to be a ban on all hunting and fishing.

As I have mentioned earlier in my response I do not think public comment will have any impact on establishing the ASMFC or the N.Y.S.D.E.C. decision regarding the 2017 Fluke regulations. I feel that the 'Experts' have already made up their minds so that comments such as mine will just be trashed.

I hope that I am wrong and that our fisheries managers will make a decision that is both reasonable and fair to the saltwater anglers of New York State as well as the other NE States that will be affected by this ridiculous proposal.

Sincerely;

Nicholas Savastano

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 11:31 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Proposed Fluke regulations

Categories: General (no option specified)

Public comment

From: Jps1010 [mailto:jps1010@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, December 24, 2016 10:47 AM
To: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>; nichola.meserve@state.ma.us; robert.ballou@dem.ri.gov; david.simpson@CT.gov; Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>; john.clark@state.de.us
Subject: Proposed Fluke regulations

Dear Fishery Managers,

I am all for the Summer Flounder reductions and do hope that they are implemented. I have been fishing for nearly 40 years and have seen the result of lax regulations. This really needs to change if we plan on having fishery that all can partake in and is something our children and their children will be able to enjoy in years to come.

As a kid growing up in the 80s, fishing for Striped Bass had gotten so bad my dad and I would fish for Fluke (Summer Flounder). We did that for a number of years until the Fluke were now over-fished and it didn't make sense to target them anymore because there were so few around. Fast forward to a few years ago, the stricter laws had allowed for the Fluke to rebound and we were now enjoying a healthy fishery that all could partake in. Not too long ago they had relaxed the restrictions and sure enough after a few years the Fluke population is in trouble once again. I say with this with firsthand experience. Just a few years ago I was catching them as a by-catch going for Striped Bass. I didn't catch one this year fishing for Bass.

In addition, I don't see how it is necessary for people need to take 5 Fluke at 18" or so. One or two Fluke would be more than enough to feed a family of 4. A lot of the times they are merely giving these extra fish away.

I strongly believe we need to change the mindset of those that make a living off of Fluke whether it be commercial fishermen or those for hire (i.e. Charter/Party Boats). They should be selling the experience of going on a boat and not one where you can take as many fish as you like. Simply put, they cannot reproduce as fast as we take them out of the water. This is a public resource that should be managed as such so that we all can partake in it. 5 fish at 18" or more is severely diminishing the population which is shutting me out as a recreational angler. That is not fair. I urge you to take this into consideration in your decision. My goal would be to maintain a fishery we all can enjoy for many years to come.

Thanks,
James Sabatelli
Long Island, NY

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 11:29 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Fluke regulations

Categories: General (no option specified), Slot Limit

Comment on the Addendum, I assume.

-----Original Message-----
From: FRED OTT [mailto:fred.ott@icloud.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 2:44 PM
To: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Subject: Fluke regulations

Hello my name is FRED OTT and I have been fishing for fluke on Long Island for over 60 years. Fluke are the mainstay for recreational fisherman all up and down the east coast and a 30 percent reduction could put tens of thousands of people out of work and ruin the recreational fishing industry. We are not greedy but give us something to fis for all summer not just July and August. I have talked to thousands of knowledgeable people in the business and the all agree we are regulating the fluke in the wrong way. The fluke population would be much better off if we had a slot limit. Let us keep 4 or 5 fluke in the 14 to 16 inch size and release the big breeding females that you force us to keep now. Those big fish are the future of the population and most people will be glad to release them. Right now the small ones are kept by the commercial men anyway. We throw them back and the commercial guys next to us keep them. A slot limit worked very very well for the stripped bass population why not for fluke. Most people will agree that they would rather go home with a few small fish than 1 large fish that does not taste as good. I guarantee this is the way to go to improve greatly the fluke population. This will also eliminate much of the keeping of ileagle small fish that goes on and cannot be controlled by the few DEC people out on the water. Please don't kill the recreational fishery in New York and put thousands and thousands of people in the boating and fishing industry out of work , not to mention taking away the millions and millions of hours of enjoyment from the recreational angler. Thank You FRED OTT

Sent from my iPad

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: tmossman <tmossman@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 9:28 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

I am a concerned recreational fisherman on the regulations that may be set for summer flounder. I have invested thousands of dollars to fish. Boat $65,000.00 trailer, dock rental, upkeep, gas, tackle insurance and so on, I may as well sell my boat if this regulation is passed. Hope you can do something to stop it.
Thank You,

Tom Mossman
609 Hay Road Absecon NJ 08201

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John Sikorski <xsplicer26@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 8:38 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FLOUNDER REGULATIONS

Categories: Status Quo

Mr. Kirby Rootes-Murdy ,

I could not attend the meeting on flounder regulations, but if I had, I would have voted to keep our flounder regs just the same as last year (16", 4 fish, 365 days). Our flounder fishing season in the bays was terrible last year. Can't understand why our fisherman should be impacted with a higher size limit.

We have given to the northern states before and if they are going over their limit, then the regulations should just be changed for the states of NY,NJ andCT.

Thank you,
John Sikorski

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Bobcope <captbobjr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 8:34 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Status Quo

I am a full time charter boat Full Ahead based in Cape May NJ I would like to say that until you can come up with real data or recognize outside science that we need to be Status Quo until such time as this an be completed You have proven that your science is what is causing the issues at hand You keep raising size limits so all that we kill are females First you need to fix your problems before shooting ft the hip This outrageous measure you are calling for will make the problem grow larger and in the process out many hard working people out of business Maybe it's time we start holding the decision makers accountable for their decisions and if they continue to make bad decisions we need to replace them Status Quo is what we all want until a new stock assessment is done and you put the right equipment on the bigilo to get good trawls Thank You Capt Bob Cope Sent from my iPhone

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Onto, Tony N <OntoTony@bfdp.com>
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 8:23 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Fluke limits

Categories: General (no option specified)

As a resident and boat owner in Ocean County I just want to inform you that I am 100% against the new legislation on fluke size and limits. I'm sure someone somewhere did some research to come up with these limits but if they have not been out in the ocean actually fishing for fluke then they are missing the boat no pun intended. It is difficult enough to get an 18 inch fluke let alone 19. I could go on and on but I think you got the point and hope that you will work to restore the limits to five and 18.

Regards,
Tony Onto
1507 Bel Aire Ct E.
Point Pleasant

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Moran's Dockside <moransdockside@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 12:39 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII)

Categories: General (no option specified)

Options on the table for the 2017 flounder regulations are not acceptable.

Trying to stay in a seasonal Bait & Tackle business with these options guarantees a financial hardship. I am fortunate my business is diverse or I would probably be forced to close.

Jim Moran
Moran's Dockside Bait & Tackle
Avalon, NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Richard Springer <rspringer70@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 6:32 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

I would like to enter a comment on the impending summer flounder regulations proposed for New Jersey in 2017. These regulations make no sense and will devastate the party boat fishery for the following reasons:

Many anglers are not going to pay $50 or more to go out on a boat only to be allowed to keep 2 fluke. The costs do not outweigh the benefits.

Second, I'm not sure how you calculate the mortality rates but if fisheries management were to actually see what goes on under the current regulations you'd realize why mortality may be higher in recent years. The logical reason is that with the size increasing seemingly every year we are forced to throw back undersized fluke that probably never have a chance of surviving after being hooked deeply. I've spoken to divers in Shark River and they report the bottom is littered with carcasses. I wonder why?

When I started fishing from a personal boat about 15 years ago we would catch over 100 fluke per day in Raritan/Sandy Hook area with most measuring less than 18 inches. When fishing the past few years all over the Jersey coast I've noticed the ratio of shorts to keepers being at least 10 to 1. I wonder how many of those 10 fish released actually survive if they are hooked anywhere other than the lip. Remember fluke must take the bait in before being able to be hooked so it's very difficult to avoid hurting some. How can we be told the stock is down when we are throwing away maybe 100 fish during a full day recreational trip?

To protect the fishery there should be regulations something like 5 fish per angler at 15 inches or above. Most people would then leave satisfied and have a fresh meal to enjoy.

How does this help the fishery when gas is ever increasing and the cost of a trip even on someone's own boat costs in the neighborhood of at least 40 per person including gas and bait?

The current and proposed regulations have never made any sense and are probably accounting for the increased mortality in the stock due to unavoidable situations based on the size restriction. I cannot remember a day when 3-4 anglers on our very experienced crew have caught their limit under 2015/16 regs. There just aren't that many larger fluke available and most are not going to get to 19inches given that mortality of throwbacks is great.

Thanks,
Richard Springer
2 Brown Drive
Hamilton, NJ 08690
609-468-4184

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Robert Heacock <heacock421@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 6:24 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Flounder regs for 2017

Categories: Status Quo

To Whom It May Concern

The new flounder regs are terrible and will make many of us fisherman quit or stop coming to NJ to fish... Catching a 19" long flounder is becoming very difficult.. My operating costs on my boat and money spent staying in NJ are getting very difficult to justify, something must be done we need to at least keep the 2016 regs...

Unhappy Fisherman
Bob Heacock

Get Outlook for iOS

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 3:37 PM
To: Tom Baum; Russ Allen
Cc: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

This guy must think I am the King of Fluke.

From: gtopontiacgp@comcast.net [mailto:gtopontiacgp@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, December 25, 2016 7:46 PM
To: Heins, Steve W (DEC) <steve.heins@dec.ny.gov>
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Please lower the measurement for flounder to 16" or at least 17" in cape May county .. Its getting to the point were its not worth having a slip if you have to throw everything back .. Thanks for your time .. Regards, Paul long

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE device

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: John Zingis <jzingishome3@verizon.net>

Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 3:07 PM
To: =?iso-2022-jp?B?J2tyb290ZXMbJEIhPhsoQm11cmR5QGFzbWZjLm9yZyc=?=@intel1.peregrinehw.com
Cc: TOM FOTE
Subject: Subject: Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

I respectfully submit these comments in advance of your scheduled public meeting in NJ on January 5, 2017.

In order to prepare these comments I have reviewed the following document that was provided to the public.

Draft Addendum for Public Comment

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

DRAFT ADDENDUM XXVIII TO THE SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2017

ASMFC Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

December 2016

(Revised

Comment #1:

As a scientist, I will state that the above document totally lacks any footnotes to references whereas the ASMFC relies upon and the public is "kept in the dark". The ASMFC **MUST** first understand that the public does have a population of scientists, statisticians and many other individuals with skills that can evaluate supportive documentation in the form of "peer review". I ask, "How in the world can the ASMFC request public comment when all the facts supporting ASMFC decisions are **NOT PUBLIC."**

To rightfully address this issue, the ASMFC MUST make available **ALL** references and extend the public comment period for 30 – 60 days. An alternative is to suspend any changes to current regulations until such time that the ASMFC makes available all supporting data and resources supporting ASMFC proposed changes.

Essentially, the public cannot provide detailed comments, when the materials that the ASMFC relies upon is not available to the public.

Comment #2:

In review of the below citation, page 6 of the above referenced document, it's stated that

"Detailed information on MRIP and the improvements can be found at

http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/index. All recreational catch and effort data
considered in this document are derived from MRIP."

I have reviewed the MRIP site and personally have been interviewed. I would state with certainty that this data is not reliable to support any changes in stock biomass, either for the positive or negative. This, in my opinion and I think in any respectable scientist's opinion, would be a complete flaw in the statistical data gathering process.

WHERE IS THE DATA VAILIDATION, I am asking.

There are many means to generate data to support management decisions, none of which is considered in this publication.

Where is seining or trawling data? Where is the application of climate change? How about economic changes (i.e., crash of 2009, financial meltdown, Superstorm Sandy, price of gas?). None of these "outside parameters" are factored into the data collection.

I can say with certainty, and as an avid boater on the shore, that few boat owners were taking their boats out to fish in the two years following Superstorm Sandy. Rationale was that not many trusted the submerged waterways. Sunken debris was a concern.

Comment #3:

This is a follow up to the heavily relied upon MRIP data. Wouldn't the ASMFC consider hiring more staff scientists to board commercial boats on the form of "draggers" and "head boats" to first hand see what is being caught, what size, how many, fish mortality. The assessment of data and reliability of MRIP data alone is scientifically flawed. The ASMFC simply "cannot reproduce their own data with reasonable scientific certainty." In case the ASMFC doesn't understand this, it's a court test of reliability. Every reasonable scientific study must be backed with another study that someone can replicate. Conducting MRIP surveys and relying upon that data alone, as quoted in the above document, is severely flawed.

Comment #4:

There appears to be no "financial impact assessment" related to changing the catch limits whether increasing or decreasing. A financial impact assessment is a **MUST** for any rule promulgation. The ASMFC must implement this. I alone, as an avid fluke fisherman, will not spend the investment for "time, gas expenses, bait expenses, gear expenses" when I can be restricted to the proposed rules.

I will state that most of my catch (90%) was below the 18" minimum. As I consider myself a good fisherman and mindful of "throwbacks", I took care in releasing fish. I would still say that the fish I released suffered 5% mortality. I can further testify, while fishing with other less qualified fisherman that this mortality rate would increase substantially to perhaps 20% or one of every five fish.

Increasing the minimum size to 19" will 1) result in higher mortality rates for smaller fish and 2) only catch presumably female fish, resulting in a decrease of spawn biomass.

Comment #5:

There must be more public presentations, discussions, peer review and comment periods to assess this data. ASMFC should present their findings, report on what data the ASMFC relied upon, have a valid peer review period of at least 45 days, then hold a follow up public comment period.

Closing comments:

In closing I will make clear that there must be more improved science behind this decision making process. If there is, and it's not available to the public, than it should be made available immediately for peer review. The data that the ASMFC "is not scientifically reproducible with reasonable certainty." I would suggest that it's 50% science and 50% "art". **NOT ACCEPTABLE.** There is an easy way to improve the science behind the management practices. It will cost more money, but that's small change when compared to the impacts of this proposed rule (of which the ASMFC hasn't studied).

We must have an improved dialogue between ASMFC and the public. Data presentations should be made well in advance of rule changes and public meetings. Data and studies should be made available to the public in a greater way so that peer review and challenges to studies may be made in advance of decisions. Currently the ASMFC is doing a poor job on this matter alone.

Lastly, where is the financial impact analysis? There was none published by the ASMFC. The ASMFC must assess financial impacts prior to any changes in the regulations. Simply put, "At some point the regulations will be so onerous that no reasonable person will go fluke fishing, spend over $100 in gas and supplies, only to hope that they catch a few fish over 19".

Respectfully submitted,

Z. John Zingis, Jr.
11 Tunes Brook Drive
Brick, NJ 08723
(732) 600-2700

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Rick <diehljr7cct@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 1:39 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Md. Flounder Regulations

Categories: Status Quo

I am concerned about the possible change to MD Flounder Regs. . I fish the bay at O.C. and most times it is hard to find legal fish with a 16 in. min. Raising the legal size limit will hurt the MD fisherman. Thanks for your attention! John Diehl, Manchester PA.
Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Steve Doctor -DNR- <steve.doctor@maryland.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2017 10:20 AM
To: jsn4jjc@verizon.net; Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Re: Summer Flounder

Categories: General (no option specified)

Thanks!

I a forwarding your input to ASMFC

dnr.maryland.gov

Steven Doctor
Biologist, Fishing and Boating Services
Department of Natural Resources
12917 Harbor Rd
Ocean City, Maryland 21842
410-213-1531 (office)

Steve.Doctor@maryland.gov

On Tue, Jan 3, 2017 at 5:50 PM, <jsn4jjc@verizon.net> wrote:

> I cannot be at the meeting but my son and I are passionate flounder fishermen. I would suggest raising the size limit to 17 inches and upping the limit to 5 per day. Flounder are good candidates for release. I do not remember losing a release. With the higher numbers the 17 inch will be achievable by most and the 5 limit increase the reward.
>
> Thanks for all you do! John Niedermair and son!

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Tina Berger
Sent: Sunday, January 01, 2017 5:19 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: billfishingman@yahoo.com
Subject: Fwd: 2017 flounder regs

Categories: Status Quo

Draft Addendum XXVIII public comment

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** Bill Reilly <billfishingman@yahoo.com>
> **Date:** January 1, 2017 at 3:03:09 PM EST
> **To:** "tberger@ASMFC.org" <tberger@ASMFC.org>
> **Subject: 2017 flounder regs**
> **Reply-To:** Bill Reilly <billfishingman@yahoo.com>
>
> PLEASE CONSIDER THAT CURRENT DATA IS FLAWED, LEAVE 2017 REGUIREMENTS THE SAME AS 2016 UNTIL BETTER DATA IS KNOW.
>
> Bill Reilly, handicapped 76 year old fisherman, I don't have many years left, I would like to catch a few more before its over.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Dick Toro <dicktoro@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 01, 2017 11:29 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

PLEASE RECONSIDER THIS MATTER!

I have been fishing NJ waters for fluke for 70 years and I feel this Addendum will likely be a crowning blow to a long declining fishery in NJ. I think there is a good chance the well intentioned past limits on size and catch instead of reversing the decline have accelerated it.
Think about the commercial fishery having no limits on size and catch! I have personally seen commercial boats unloading bushels and bushels of fluke, mostly undersized in the 6-10" range, while the recreational fishermen are punished with the accompanying destruction of the party and charter boats, bait and tackle shops, marinas, and restaurants as examples.
This fishery generates massive revenues to our shore economy and provides great recreational opportunities. Please do not impose these proposed limitations which I am convinced will also cause a great loss of jobs.
Thank you!!!!

Dick Toro
!
908-295-8942
dicktoro@gmail.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Tom Trageser <tomtrageser@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 31, 2016 2:43 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: 1/5/17 NJ Public hearing on Summer flounder draft addendum 28

Categories: General (no option specified)

Please let the record reflect the following:

- Proposal to reduce the recreational harvest by 40% with an approximate cut of 30% for commercial sector
- As of December 31, 2016 there is only one planned public meeting in NJ, to be held 1/5/2016 in Galloway Township, NJ
    - The venue as of today has a capacity of 90 people
    - On the AMFC webpage announcing this meeting the contact person is listed as Tom Baum
        - On December 31, 2016 I notified the designated contact person above that the venue is too small
        - The designated contact person is on vacation until 1/6/2017, one day following the meeting

For the council to assume only 90 people will show up when you are putting THOUSANDS of jobs at risk is arrogant and self-serving.
The fact the designated contact person is on vacation is further evidence of the fraud you are attempting to perpetuate.

Tom Trageser
Brick, NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: BERNARD DOERNING <doerning@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 11:33 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N Arlington, VA 22201

Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear Mr. Rootes-Murdy,

My wife and I are recreational fishers in New Jersey. We go fluke fishing a couple times a year with a small locally owned boat charter and rarely catch keepers within the current size limits. If the new fluke size and limit proposals take effect, we will stop charter fishing all together, not spending the $300+ per boat trip. Not only will this curtail our enjoyment of the sport but it will seriously damage the charter boat captains in our Raritan Bay area, probably putting them out of business.

We urge you to rethink the size and limit proposals. If you must reduce the limit numbers then it makes more sense to reduce the size. This will allow recreational fishermen to keep some of the smaller fluke that are more apt to be preyed upon and save the larger mature breeding fish to repopulate the area. It is not the recreational fishermen that are having a large impact on the fish population. We have caught many 13 to 16-inch fish that we released only to stop by the local fish market and find fluke smaller than that on ice!

My wife and I agree that fishing needs to be managed for the long term health of the ecosystem and the future of the fishing commercial and recreational industry. These new fluke proposals do not take our local economy into account, and will actually adversely affect the mature fluke breeding population.

Respectfully,

Bernie and Liz Doerning

8 Laird Road

Middletown, NJ 07748

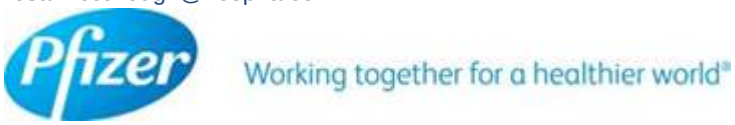
(Monmouth County)

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Mccullough, Teresa A <teresa.mccullough@pfizer.com>
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 10:16 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: FW: States Seek Input on 2017 Recreational Summer Flounder Fishery Management Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

Teresa McCullough
Hospira, a Pfizer company
4285 N Wesleyan Blvd
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
252.977.5253
teresa.mccullough@hospira.com



From: Mccullough, Teresa A
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2016 10:06 AM
To: 'murdy@asmfc.org'
Subject: States Seek Input on 2017 Recreational Summer Flounder Fishery Management Draft Addendum XXVIII

Dear Kirby Rootes-Murdy;

I am a kayak fisherman from NC and have been fishing the coastal inshore waters of NC for the past 10 years. I am all about conservation for Summer Flounder but feel that your approach for recreational anglers by increasing the size limit is not a good idea because in the past 10 years it has been harder and harder to catch your daily creel limit with most of the flounder being caught undersize and released to grow up. I feel that the best approach for NC is to make the inshore waters estuaries (nurseries) and remove the inshore netting which would give all those species that time to grow to mature levels then move up into the oceans. If we (NC) were like all other Atlantic Coastal states and remove inshore netting and trolling then NC would see an increase in all species including summer flounder. Increasing the size limit will not reduce the amount of young fish that are killed by netting. I can remember times 10 years ago that it was no problem to catch your limit in trout or flounder but each year it has gotten worse for the recreational fisherman of NC and in the past 3 years I have not caught a limit in flounder on any of the trips that I have taken which is about 15 times per year. If this continues then I will reduce the amount of trips that I take my kayak fishing to the coast and just fish freshwater lakes and ponds in the area and save money on gas, gear, lodging, etc.

Thanks you for your time and consideration.

Teresa McCullough
Hospira, a Pfizer company
4285 N Wesleyan Blvd
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
252.977.5253
teresa.mccullough@hospira.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Donald Kamienski <donkamienski@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, December 28, 2016 5:49 PM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: Status Quo

I urge you to keep the same fluke regulations in 2017 for NJ. The fluke waters I fish in central Jersey has more fluke than previous years. Thanks.

Don Kamienski
Roeblong NJ

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Fireside Insurance Agency Inc <firesideinsurance@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2016 11:24 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Cc: jphanks@comcast.net
Subject: Fw: Advisory: ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder Recreational Management: January 11, 2017

Categories: General (no option specified)

Good morning Mr. Rootes,

I am writing to provide comment on the subject referenced above. As a resident and angler here in Provincetown, I have had occasion to fish for Summer Flounder. Because of the abundant seal population here, Summer Flounder are practically non-existent. They have been decimated by the seals. While I understand that the seals are Federally protected, the flounder have been virtually wiped out by them! Does your management plan take this into consideration? I'm sure this problem is not an unusual one and not unique to Provincetown. It is a problem for the angler just the same, and one that I felt should be mentioned and considered in your management plan.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kerry

Kerry L. Adams, Secretary
HIGHLAND FISH & GAME CLUB, INC.
36 SHANK PAINTER RD., #10
PO BOX 760
PROVINCETOWN MA. 02657-0760
(508) 487-9044 FAX (508) 487-0649
My email: firesideinsurance@hotmail.com

From: Jim Hanks <jphanks@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2016 10:51 AM
To: Hanks, Jim; Stramowski, Frank; Teixeira, Ken; Veloza, Mike
Cc: Dave Frary
Subject: BCL FYI - Fwd: Advisory: ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder Recreational Management: January 11, 2017

From: marinefisheries@listserv.state.ma.us
To: "Marine Fisheries Mailing List" <marinefisheries@listserv.state.ma.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 27, 2016 9:54:53 AM
Subject: Advisory: ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder Recreational Management: January 11, 2017

December 27, 2016
MarineFisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing on Summer Flounder Recreational Management:

January 11, 2017

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum XXVIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. The document presents a suite of management approaches, including regional options, for the 2017 summer flounder (fluke) recreational fishery. The Atlantic coastal states of Massachusetts through North Carolina have scheduled public hearings. The details of the Massachusetts hearing are below; the full schedule of hearings is available here.

January 11, 2017 at 6 PM

Bourne Community Center, Room # 1

239 Main Street

Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

Draft Addendum XXVIII was initiated to consider alternative management approaches for the 2017 recreational summer flounder fisheries, while also seeking to address needed reductions due to a decrease in the coastwide recreational harvest

limit (RHL) in 2017. In August, the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council approved a 30% reduction in the 2017 coastwide RHL relative to 2016. This action was taken in response to the 2016 Stock Assessment Update which found fishing mortality was higher in recent years and population estimates were lower than previously projected.

Changes in summer flounder distribution, abundance, and availability have created problems under the static state-by-state allocations, with overages often occurring. In response, states would implement regulations to reduce harvest, resulting in differing regulations between neighboring states. In 2014, the Board shifted away from traditional state-by-state allocations to a regional approach for managing summer flounder recreational fisheries. A benefit of the regional approach is it provides the states the flexibility to share allocations. The intent is to set regulations that account for shifting distribution, abundance, and availability while providing stability and greater regulatory consistency among neighboring states, and enabling the states to meet but not exceed the coastwide RHL.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXVIII either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained here or via the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, under *Public Input*. Public comment will be accepted until **5 PM (EST) on January 19, 2017** and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703-842-0741 (FAX); or at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org (Subject line: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII).

The Board will review the public comment and consider final action at the Commission's Winter Meeting in February 2017. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703-842-0740; or Nichola Meserve at nichola.meserve@state.ma.us or 617-626-1531.

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: David Nelson <dnelson113@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 11:31 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Summer Flounder Draft Addendum XXVIII

Categories: General (no option specified)

To all whom it may concern,

The proposed 40% reduction on recreational flounder fishing is a penalty against the recreational angler for the overfishing by the commercial industry.

Perhaps a 40% reduction on commercial fishermen would make we recreational anglers feel less abused by YOUR SYSTEM !

Perhaps raising the size limit on commercial fishermen would serve the biomass of summer flounder in a positive way.

These are my two suggestions.
Thank you for taking the time to read this. Not that it matters, as YOUR decision was already made.
Sincerely, Dave Nelson

Post Script:
Every year I pump over $5,000 into the overall fishing economy. With regulations like the one you all have come up with, I'm not inclined to fish at all ! Your actions will put hundreds of boats out of business and thousands of mates out of work plus the people will revolt !

Sent from the iPhone of
David Nelson Painting Inc
"A quality paint job is not expensive,
...it's priceless."

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Lindsay Fuller <jlinfuller@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 11:30 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: Comments on 2017 Proposed Summer Flounder Program

Categories: General (no option specified)

Gentlemen:

I am unable to attend the January 5 Comment Meeting in Absecon so please accept this e-mail as my comments on the 2017 Proposed Plan for Summer Flounder.

I have actively operated a charter boat from Beach Haven since 1984. Prior to that, I had 25 years of extensive salt water fishing experience in Barnegat and Little Egg Harbor Bays and inshore in the Atlantic Ocean.

The last date when any angler on a boat I was operating caught a full possession limit of Summer Flounder was 1981. It has become routine that our anglers fish many days with NO, that's ZERO, keeper Summer Flounder. Our catch rate is not dissimilar to other charter and private boats fishing in the area. On one family charter in 2012, we had a 6 year old boy and his 9 year old sister on board. These kids worked their butts off trying to outfish each other. During their 5-hour Half-Day charter, the family caught over 50 Summer Flounder and NOT ONE was a keeper. Every one caught was about a 1/4" short. Around 11 a.m. on that trip, the little boy came up on my bridge, tugged on my shirt, and asked me a simple question ..."Capt. Lindsay, I know they need rules to protect the fish but don't you think there should be a rule that allows a person to take one fish home to eat?" Out of the mouths of babes. That 6 year old child made more sense that any fisheries regulations that have been imposed over the last 25 years.

I don't know where your regulatory organization gets its catch and fishery data but whatever the source, you need to change it simply because it is just not accurate and hurts everything and everyone associated with the fishing industry not just in New Jersey but on the entire East Coast. I also believe that the Summer Flounder fishery would not be harmed in any way if the 2016 regulations were continued while your organization develops accurate methods of collecting data on the Summer Flounder fishery and all of the other fisheries that you regulate.

In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, we caught tons of Stripers in the Bays. Then it screeched to a halt. No Stripers caught in the summers after that. Why" The eel grass beds died and there were no grass shrimp where we used to have literally tons of grass shrimp in the eel grass beds before. Those grass shrimp also fed Summer Flounder, Sea Bass and Weakfish (another species that isn't caught much any longer) along with many larger forage species that provided the Barnegat Bay, Little Egg Harbor Bay and Great Bay smorgasbords. I had a 15 day leave from the Army in 1965. My father and I fished 13 of those 15 days and caught over 300 Stripers. They only needed to be 18" back then and we only kept a few. We had several days when every single cast caught a Striper. But we caught them all on the eel grass beds in less than 6' of water and under the cut banks of the Bay's sedge islands where grass shrimp also schooled up especially on dropping tides.

Therefore, it is absolutely important that all research, analysis and regulation be done on a ecological basis not simply for discrete fisheries without taking into account the other fisheries that are closely connected and especially with the fisheries that include the forage fish that the gamefish eat. Everything in our Bays and Oceans is connected in some way. Every single thing. Not one fishery stands by itself. Regulating in a vacuum is a waste of everyone's time, efforts and money and is destroying salt water fishing.

Thank you for listening.

Capt. Lindsay Fuller
June Bug Sportfishing
110 West Newport Drive
Beach Haven, NJ 08057
609-685-2839
CaptLindsay@Fish-JuneBug.com

Kirby Rootes-Murdy

From: Jim and Carol <bigfresh@optonline.net>
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2016 8:42 AM
To: Kirby Rootes-Murdy
Subject: summer flounder management

Categories: General (no option specified)

When enacting the new summer flounder management plan, please consider whatever limit that will provide the longest season. Thank you. Jim Williams 100 Big Fresh Pond Rd , Southampton NY 11968

Petition Signatures

change.org

Recipient: US department of commerce, Wilbur Ross, Sen. Charles Schumer, Sen. Cory Booker, Rep. Frank Pallone, and Rep. Thomas MacArthur

Letter: Greetings,

Reject the MAMFC 2017 Fluke proposal and demand status Quo!
NOAA Fisheries is prepared to set an 11.30 million pound acceptable biological catch (ABC) for 2017 which represents a 29% reduction from the 2016 ABC. On top of that, NOAA Fisheries believes that recreational fishermen exceeded their recreational harvest limit in 2016 and that the recreational harvest limit in 2017 will need to be reduced by the amount of the overage. The result, the recreational sector is looking at close to a 40% reduction in 2017 which would represent the most restrictive measures in the history of the fishery's management.
Fisherman and coastal communities know that summer flounder is one of the most important fisheries in the mid-Atlantic. Rebuilding efforts increased the stock size to historic levels of abundance in 2007. What NOAA Fisheries has failed to do is update the stock assessment for summer flounder as the stock has expanded north and east. Independent reviews found that there are significant deficiencies of the summer flounder stock assessment and that improvements should be made to the modeling approach. It is expected that those changes could eliminate or lessen the need for quota reductions but NOAA Fisheries has no plans of updating the assessment before approving the 2017 ABC.

Please sign below and demand that NOAA Fisheries maintain the current flounder summer ABC at 16.26 million pounds until a benchmark assessment is conducted. Also, ask that NOAA Fisheries assumes that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016. By granting both requests, the result would be status quo in 2017. This is a fair compromise until a new benchmark assessment for summer flounder is conducted.

Comments

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Sean Lodzinski	Brick, NJ	2016-12-29	Objection to new new fluke regulation proposal.
Stephen O'Connor	Lyndhurst, NJ	2016-12-29	Flawed science.
Ronald McClelland	Red BAnk, NJ	2016-12-29	I do not believe that the science involved has proven that the biomass is being depleted.
Allen Gonzalez	Ortley Beach, NJ	2016-12-29	I want fair regulations on fluke!!!!
Dennis Carey	Holmdel, NJ	2016-12-29	These regulations are draconian and not based on adequate studies of fish stocks. It's been proven that the vast majority of fluke larger than 19" are female. How is it logical to set regulations that only take mature females??
Joseph Murray	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-29	I feel the science behind these claims is absurd. First of all every time you raise the size limit you increase the amount of breeders that are being killed as most of the fish I have filleted over 18.5 inches ALL HAVE ROE IN THEM! It is moronic to continue to keep fish with roe when there seems to be an endless supply of 15-17inch male fish. Why not institute a slot fish so the recreational angler can actually take home a fish for dinner & decrease the amount of breeding females that are kept?
Jeff Criswell	Flanders, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm signing because this reduction is unneeded and going to kill the fishing industry.
Jeff Criswe3ll, Sr	Flanders, NJ	2016-12-29	The recreational fisherman/party boats will be hurt by such a large reduction.
Robert Ard	Manville, NJ	2016-12-29	Cut commercial quota
Bobby Frade	Sparta Township, NJ	2016-12-29	It is a fucking disgrace on what you guys were doing to its Fishery
Jeff Simpson	Livingston, NJ	2016-12-29	Because it will have a huge impact on recreational fishermen as well as a host of other people.
Timothy Egan	West Deptford, NJ	2016-12-29	Because the plan is BAD.
John Mundjer	Pine Brook, NJ	2016-12-29	I believe a restriction this drastic will destroy many businesses that depend on the fluke fishery. NOAA's research is contradicted by independent study and that information is not taken into account.
Al Durso	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2016-12-29	To ensure flawed science doesn't result in unnecessary fluke quota reduction in NJ
Michael Bayer	Cliffside Park, NJ	2016-12-29	This is bs
John Olier	South Plainfield, NJ	2016-12-29	The fishing regulations are out of hand and being legislated by politicians with no idea
Dwayne Chess	Passaic, NJ	2016-12-29	Because I am a fisherman in the state of no and I fish for fluke
Jason Graham	New York, NY	2016-12-29	not only will this ruin the industry but it will end up putting boats out of business families out of jobs.
Edward Zakrzewski	Mount Holly, NJ	2016-12-29	I`ve been a avid surf and party boat fishing for more than 45 years, here in NJ, I truely enjoy walking the surf with light tackle in the summer time targeting summer flounder (fluke) I have passed that the love to my three children and have a 2 year old granddaughter that next year will be her turn to be taught the fun of catching fluke on the surf. I would hope that the people in charge will see that the impact this type of regulation will affect so many families. Best Regards, Ed
nathan franco	allenhurst, NJ	2016-12-29	reduce commercial quotas, not recreational!

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Mike Trombitas	Clifton, NJ	2016-12-29	I fish
Joe Tomaszewski	Basking Ridge, NJ	2016-12-29	I strongly urge status quo regulations for 2017.
Gerard Zagorski	Edison, NJ	2016-12-29	Let me start by saying, if the Fluke stocks were actually in trouble, I and I believe most recreational anglers would be the first to approve and abide by regulations needed to bring them back. The problem here is the science, methods and data being used to assess the stock is flawed. This is a fact that even the NFMS admits to. Lets apply some common sense and stop this bureaucratic system from ruining our sport.
Glenn Gligor	Evesham Township, NJ	2016-12-29	I am tired of fishing for fluke with ever increasing size limits which make it virtually impossible to keep a legal fish for dinner even though I spend $75 to $100 dollars per fishing trip and make over 25 trips in a season.
Johm tighe	Monroe Township, NJ	2016-12-29	2 fluke per day is ridiculous and will kill the party and charter boat business in NJ. 19" is fine, leave it at 5 fish. 90% of people wont catch their limit anyway.
jack glassen	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-29	unfair fluke quota for 2017,,leave status quo.
Robert Norris	Schuylerville, NY	2016-12-29	It is not cost effective or reasonable for me to spend more to get less fish to eat. It will also affect the head boats due to such a low limit.
Dale Wamsley	Keyport, NJ	2016-12-29	i fish as much i can not as much as i wish and id like to bring home some fish to eat
William Bracken	Putnam Valley, NY	2016-12-29	This is not about the recreational fisherman
Darius Ryfa	Laurence habor, NJ	2016-12-29	Because it would not be fair to the party boats and possible put them out of business
Jennifer Ryan	Brick, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm signing for Tom a Trageser!
Robert Schrader	Point Pleasant, NJ	2016-12-29	...their data is bogus!
Walter Schacht	Beachwood, NJ	2016-12-29	this has got to stop!
Thomas Novak	Dunellen, NJ	2016-12-29	The proposed reductions in the Fluke quota wiuld be devastating to the local economies of many states. It will put many in the fishing industry iut of work. It will hurt tourism, fishing boats, boat sales, tackle shops, bait suppliers, tackle manufacturers, and the list goes on. A reduction in the quota of this magnitude is devastating to our economy. It is known that the data used to determine these quotas is extremely flawed, so utilizing it to damage our economy would be devastating.
Chris Carle	Swedesboro, NJ	2016-12-29	I Am a fisherman that abides by the rules and the rules should be fair and the decisions should be based on fact.
Jonathan Kuncewitch	Washington, NJ	2016-12-29	NOAA is using flawed data to make their decision
Peter Ogrodnik	Spotswood, NJ	2016-12-29	I want to protect sportfishing for fluke as well all the businesses who depend on this fishery for a living like party and charter boats.
Joel Guyre	Maywood, NJ	2016-12-29	Your data is flawed!!
mike krupa	Neshanic Station, NJ	2016-12-29	Your past restrictions on recreational fishermen have done NOTHING to improve the fluke stocks. Go after the real problem - draggers that take or kill everything.
Matthew Carson	Landisville, NJ	2016-12-29	The data is wrong. The cuts and the proposed regulations is going to kill the recreational fishermen, In turn it will have a drastic effect on the local economy.
John Niedzinski	Stanhope, NJ	2016-12-29	I spend a lot of time and money at the Atlantic highlands fluke fishing. If I am unable to harvest some fluke to eat I will spend my money elsewhere.
dominick ponzio	staten island, NY	2016-12-29	Tired of recreational fisherman having to pay price because dumb ass people do not know what they are doing

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Andrew Peng	Merrick, NY	2016-12-29	This is Bullshit
alan moretti	High Bridge, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm damn tired of having to throwback dead (guthooked) fluke!
craig Kerschner	Geigertown, PA	2016-12-29	The noaa needs to change their assessment of the fish stocks across the board!
Joseph Kuncewitch	Old Bridge, NJ	2016-12-29	NOAA should concentrate on getting their weather forecasts correct instead of mismanagement of the fisheries.
Michael Russo	Monroe Township, NJ	2016-12-29	This is how I make my living.
Robert McHugh	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-29	I am tired of bearing the brunt while commercial fisherman are takinf 14" fish
Nick Levan	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-29	Nicholas Levan
Joseph Pasculli	Matawan, NJ	2016-12-29	Deckhand, Capt John Keyport Nj
Stephen Hagerman	Toms River, United States Minor Outlying Islands	2016-12-29	your going to kill the lively hood of the party boat owners and employee's that depend on the fishery...
Ryan Gallagher	Easton, PA	2016-12-29	Save the recreational fisherman!!
Robert Rommel	somerville, NJ	2016-12-29	Insufficient data collected to determine this.
Charlie Banashefski	Wyoming, PA	2016-12-29	I like flounder fishing in the Maryland and NJ areas and flounder also taste very good
Eddie Goodell	Belmar, NJ	2016-12-29	This is a completely garbage proposal.. this isn't stopping wegmans and other grocery stores from selling a 14-15 inch fillet... but yet we are the ones suffering!!
Brandon Matusiewicz	Brick, NJ	2016-12-29	Because fishing is my lively hood and is what puts food on my kids table and a roof over there head.
Brian Lennen	Abington, PA	2016-12-29	Regulations based on erroneous data should never be accepted.
scott bailey	fairless hills, PA	2016-12-29	These proposed regs are stupid!
Ken Kimble	South Plainfield, NJ	2016-12-29	This is absurd!
Peter Schkeeper	Red Bank, NJ	2016-12-29	We need better data. I do not believe the data based on my fishing experience and that of my fishing friends.
Timothy Gelsebach	Leesport, PA	2016-12-29	a new assessment is the only way to know the facts !
Capt. Rich Newallis	Highlands, NJ	2016-12-29	The data is flawed
Kraig Leiby	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-29	This reduction would put many hard working charter and party boats out of business. Also would devastate the bait and tackle shops, marinas, fuel docks, motels, stores etc.
Vince Vivona	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-29	I'm signing because this restriction will remove fishing as a sport in this area.
John Luchka	Bordentown, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm a Charter Captain in NJ and you will destroy my way of life! This is unacceptable! You will hurt more families and businesses like mine!!!
Ilin Martinez	Allentown, PA	2016-12-29	Im signing this cause this will destroy the summer fishery in the northeast which has already been hit with restrictions on seabass
RICHARD SIEGMUND	Slatington, PA	2016-12-29	I love going fluke fishing and I am coming from Pennsylvania to do so.
Gary Hall Sr	Ocean View, DE	2016-12-29	We don't need reductions
Buck Ballinger	Bellmawr, NJ	2016-12-29	Recreational fishing regs for flounder fishing is insane. Will put the bait and tackle shops out of business. Every year size keeps going up and fewer to keep.
Richard Kemp	Pequannock Township, NJ	2016-12-29	son

Name	Location	Date	Comment
JOHN A RIGGI	Keansburg, NJ	2016-12-29	Recreational fishermen are being dismissed and overlooked.Commercial trawlers are killing more fish and have a more powerful lobby and voice ,unfair to individuals.
Stephen Ferguson	Plainfield, NJ	2016-12-29	I am a fluke angler.
Joseph Oliveri	Bayside, NY	2016-12-29	I am a recreational fisherman that abides by regulations, but the current regs are far to severe. Last season I can count on one hand how many keeper fluke I caught. The region has many what is deemed "short" but landing a keeper is like hitting lotto. At least consider lowering keeper size to equal commercial limits and a possession of 3 fish
Bob Hoffm	Maple Shade Township, NJ	2016-12-29	The numbers are false.
Ken Higgins	Farmingville, NY	2016-12-29	Ridiculous regs based on inaccurate data , plus the taking of fluke in the January a February spawn by commercial boats need to stop . We will never get good recruiting until then and to penalize the dec sector is ludicrous!!!!
Christopher Vigario	Hillside, NJ	2016-12-29	I've been fishing since I was young just like everyone else who has a real passion for I take pride in catching my dinner as opposed to going to the store to buy the government is slowly killing industries and taking people's jobs hobbies and passions away we need to stop this madness I find it a bit ridiculous that the size limit increase I'm no biologist but I know that the bigger ones of the female so why only harvest the bigger fish this makes no sense to me or to anyone with common sense
Richard Sullivan	Browns Mills, NJ	2016-12-29	The scientific research is flawed.
Harry Davis	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-29	I am tired of all these regulations and we recreational fisherman is being pushed out!
Michael Wilson	Mansfield, NJ	2016-12-29	Last year I only caught 4 keepers. If you keep putting restrictions on the local noncommercial fishermen well have to stop fishing and sell our boats. Why not limit the draggers and grocery store fish buyers. If I go to the store I can buy all the fish I want but if I go fishing I'm limited. Someone's getting rich at out expense!
Dan and Michele Kincade	Havertown, PA	2016-12-29	I am signing to keep the regulations as they stand now. The new ones are not in our favor
William DeGroff	Chatsworth, NJ	2016-12-29	I am a recreational fisherman.
Mike Haller	Butler, NJ	2016-12-29	Because what is going on is not right and needs to be fair
Kristos Katsabanis	Lake Ronkonkoma, NY	2016-12-29	I am signing because I have made my living off the party/charter boat industry on long island for the passed 12 years. 2017 will be my 13th season in the business and the proposed regulations for 2017 will impact me and my family greatly.
David Williams	Allentown, PA	2016-12-29	I see a lot of regulation and NO improvement in the fishery!
Kevin Peterson	Westbrook, CT	2016-12-29	Because these biologists that waisted money on college have no clue. Because the biomass of fluke didn't make it to the traditional areas they go, they think the population is down. Regulate the draggers that dump millions of pounds of bicatch. Get your head out of your ass and stop the waistful killing of fluke, not the recreational guys who only have a few fish to begin with!
Tim Tesch	Matawan, NJ	2016-12-29	I don't see any data to support the reduction
Gary Carr	Hazlet, NJ	2016-12-29	More creditable data is needed before an implication like this is even thought about. This would effect hundreds of thousands of hard working people who make a living and support their families off of recreational Fishing type businesses.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Joe Viccaro	Queens, NY	2016-12-29	Fluke are more abundant now than ever before! These reductions are based on flawed research.
John Howarth	East Rockaway, NY	2016-12-29	I don't believe that fluke are over fished.
Zev sonkin	New York, NY	2016-12-29	The system is corrupt and geared for the benefit of commercial fisherman.
John Passie	Gainesville, GA	2016-12-29	My family depends on fluke fishing and this reduction will hurt my family
Paul Niederauer	Hicksville, NY	2016-12-29	I disagree with he regulations and quotas put forth to recreational fisherman
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-29	Exactly why this is being done!
PAUL Wesley	Beverly, NJ	2016-12-29	Commercial fishing has no rules and I know they can harvest any size. Not right so we take it out on the rec fisherman .
Frank Mihalic	Washington Township, NJ	2016-12-29	Unfair data colloction.
Ryan Medwig	Nesconset, NY	2016-12-29	There are more abudent fluke then ever before!
jose Rodriguez	New York, NY	2016-12-29	I'm a fisherman
Charlie Byron	Milltown, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm sick of the unfair regs.
Scott Newhall	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-29	This is absurd. Fluke are not in trouble. They are no grouper, striper, sturgeon or anything else.
Nick Verducci	Marmora, NJ	2016-12-29	The flounder fishery has been mismanaged for YEARS. wait for better data coming from the SSFF!
Joshua Favinger	Bethlehem, PA	2016-12-29	I'm signing this because our fishery is being destroyed by politicians and people who don't know, or don't care to know the real reasons for supposedly low numbers. I'm from Pennsylvania and purchased a jet ski, outfitted it for salt water fishing in NJ and usually stay over night at a hotel and eat at local establishments when I visit. During the summer that can be as much as every weekend. It is being made so that it is no longer worth my time and effort to travel. This will hurt your local businesses as well as the fishermen who have for generations made their living off the sea. Please reconsider these ludicrous reductions to our recreational fishery and consider cuts and more restrictions (if they are actually needed) to the commercial fishermen who kill and destroy more fish in a day than I'll see in 5 lifetimes.
Darell Gilbert	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-29	I am a fisherman and the regulations is too strict as it is
Giacomo Moderno	East Elmhurst, NY	2016-12-29	I care
Robert Lukens	Mantua, NJ	2016-12-29	I'm signing because of the unfair rules for recreation fishermen
john cole	pt pleasant, NJ	2016-12-29	Economic hardship will be felt buy everyone I'm a charter boat owner n operator and also manager of fishermens dock coop that service 17 trawlers we all depend on fluke Fisheres
John Roy	Lakewood, NJ	2016-12-29	It's not the recreational fishing doing the damage. I went out about 20 times and harvested 8 legal keepers. Its the draggers right off our inlets and beaches doing the damage.
Tom Kowalak	Andover, NJ	2016-12-29	Recreational fisherman will cease fishing under new rags, as well as numerous Mom & Pop bait shops, charter boats , luncheonette etc, will be driven out of business.
william bates	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-29	I love fluke fishing...
Tom Jordan	Holland, PA	2016-12-29	I didn't catch many keeper flounder this year and I don't think we as recreational fishermen are over the limits.
VITO PERROTTA	East Brunswick, NJ	2016-12-30	This is not a fair or practical agreement for recreational fishermen.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Christopher Albronda	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	This proposal will put me on the street, and put many others in the business as well. This is a disgusting proposal, the fluke fishing has been the best I've seen it in 25 years, as well as the sea bass. Change needs to be made, this is unacceptable
Lou Truppi	Bath, PA	2016-12-30	I'm concerned about the fluke regs that possibly going to be enacted for next season , they are not reasonable
Derek Bielitz	highlands, NJ	2016-12-30	I am signing because I run a charter fishing boat out of Highlands, NJ. This is my only source of income. A drastic cut in the fluke regulations will devastate my summertime business as well as other business locally such as hotels, delis, liquor stores, gas stations, bait shops, restaurants and other local tourist attractions. This could be the beginning to an end for fisherman on the jersey shore if this passes.
Jeff Baker	Nutley, NJ	2016-12-30	As a recreational fisherman this will be devastating to the whole fishing community who relies on this fish for a living. This limit will devistate the small business owner from a charter captain to the local bait shop which have been closing at alarming rate. There is nothing fare about imposing 19 inch limit while all my shorts that I throw back are being scooped up by commercial draggers. This quota will completely eliminate the recreational fisherman and put more pressure on a different species.
Dale Donnell	Cream Ridge, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a charter boat captain. Paying patrons will not pay to catch 2 fish at 19 inches.
Joseph Higgins	Sea Girt, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe that NOAA is using bad logic and faulty information. The damage this would do to the local economies could be irreversible.
Edd Doran	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke regs are too restrictive and unrealistic on the recreational fishermen.
Michael Madr	Riverhead, NY	2016-12-30	I am a local fisherman and without this fishery our local tackle stores, charter boat and head boat fleet will inevitably disappear.
GEORGE KAISER	MASSAPEQUA, NY	2016-12-30	This is totally wrong, their records are outdated and obsolete
Wayne Locklear	Nazareth, PA	2016-12-30	I'd like to be able to catch dinner
bill haberman	Woodbine, NJ	2016-12-30	I fish I vote
Daniel Delaney	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	As a summer flounder fisherman, it is frustrating to know the science behind the quota is flawed and there is no movement to review current methods.
Scott Knerr	Hamburg, PA	2016-12-30	This reduction will cause recreational fishermen will stop spending our hard earned money at local shoreline areas that relies on the summer income to support their families!!!
Daniel Lester	East Hampton, NY	2016-12-30	I am a commercial fisherman trying to make a living
Joe Arvizzigno	Scotch Plains, NJ	2016-12-30	Keep our 2017 Fluke quota at status quo.
brian nelson	laurence harbor, NJ	2016-12-30	The new regulations are bullshit!!
DONALD JAKUBEK	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	the noaa has no idea of real facts, in 4 fluke trips out of Barnegat I had 6 keepers and we went all the up to the seaside lumps and down south to garden state reef. then I see 16 in fluke in the fish markets for the commercial. it makes no sense for a hand full of commercial boats to out way the thousands on recreational fisherman
Edward Rust	Cherry Hill, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke quota should stay the same as 2016!
Dale Johnson	Budd Lake, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a kayak fisherman. We as the recreational side do not cause as much as a commercial fisherman does. Regulate the dredgers.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
capt. kevin cole	Newton, NJ	2016-12-30	the proposed regulations will cripple the charter ,party boat and tackle stores to near bankruptcy. marinas, gas stations convenience stores all take a beating.
Thomas Dudek	Neptune City, NJ	2016-12-30	A huge portion of my yearly earnings comes from the summer flounder fishery. I am mate/captain on a party boat in belmar nj. My family could never make it through the winter with the regulations that are being proposed. What am I supposed to do. I have a 20 month old son. What do we do when we can't even afford rent.
Charles Lockerman	Wilmington, DE	2016-12-30	Flounder is the tastiest fish ok the ocean, reducing the number we catch before an assessment is done is simple irresponsible! Do your research before you make a decision!
Edwin Landis	Ocean City, NJ	2016-12-30	Not fair!
greg o'driscoll	sewelll, NJ	2016-12-30	Your data is flawed and the commercials need to kill less
John Phillips	Lincolndale, NY	2016-12-30	I'm a long time sport fisherman and this will put the party boat and 6 pack charters out of business The problem ly in federal regs on commercial fishing & by catch over boards its criminal to kill all those fish just to throw their carcasses back in the ocean so you can't sell Criminal!!!
Gary Bresnick	North Babylon, NY	2016-12-30	Tired of getting my livelihood screwed!!
Andrew Thomas	Zieglerville, PA	2016-12-30	We always caught small fish and a few keepers there's a lot of fish out there
Stephen Abbott	Levittown, PA	2016-12-30	I am signing because I feel that the current system of collecting data is flawed and a more accurate assessment of the real number of fish needs to be put into place. This fishery is a major source of income for many along the shore and a necessary form of relaxation for many others.
kurt paduch	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-30	ksp
Mark Provenzano	Highland, NY	2016-12-30	I feel these regs are based on faulty science and data collection..
Frederick Bahlman	Glenmoore, PA	2016-12-30	Unreliable data used.
Shawn Deuel	Southampton, NY	2016-12-30	Tired of idiots behind a desk telling me what's in the waters I'm on everyday!!
Derek Grattan	Southold, NY	2016-12-30	Fishing is my living and if it stays this way I'm going to have to find a new career
Jsmie Quaresimo	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	The federal government is out of control with thier over restrictive regulations on fish
Edward DeMunno	Caldwell, NJ	2016-12-30	we need our fair share, I only get to fish one day a week by keepers will not amount to a drop in tub of water.
John Smith	New Britain, CT	2016-12-30	NOAA HAS TO STOP THERE BULLSHIT !!! PERIOD !!!!
Wayne Miller	East Moriches, NY	2016-12-30	Current fishing regs do not have conservation in mind.
Paul Wilson	Collegeville, PA	2016-12-30	Summer fluke Fishing is what my family and friends look forward to each year. The suggested regulations will put the bait shops and charter captains out of business!!
John Doll	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	John Doll
John Petocz	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke fisherman
Justin Gates	Australia	2016-12-30	The real issue with summer fluke is not the recreational fisherman; it's those who are dragging nets and throwing back dead fish into the water because they are not a "legal" size limit. Regulation on those boats should be the real issue.
Bob duckenfield	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	We as fishermen need to take a stand and put a stop to the bad decision making based upon unrealistic scientific data. Let's Make America Great Again and Keep America Fishing.
Jay Oxman	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-30	I want to fish.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Frank Walsh	Horsham, PA	2016-12-30	FJW
Peter Bacon	Charlestown, RI	2016-12-30	I am a charter boat captain and this would really hurt my business. We need realistic fish quotas so we have fish to catch today and in the future
robert hatch	warrensburg, NY	2016-12-30	To save the open boat fishing industry.
William De Rosa	Bayonne, NJ	2016-12-30	I enjoy fishing
Virginia Podmore	Syosset, NY	2016-12-30	We enjoy fishing and we eat what we catch. These regulations will keep us from many a meal in our house
Leon Rubba	Hammonton, NJ	2016-12-30	You are all but eliminating the summer sport of fishing in NJ. Yet you allow the commercial fisherman all the flounder they want.
Joseph Vitale	Hampton Bays, NY	2016-12-30	Its,my lively hood I'm a,fisherman like many of my life long friends..allow us to do what we do and make an honest living working hard..
Joseph Wenegenofsky	Wantagh, NY	2016-12-30	Fishing is my livelihood and I depend on fair, equitable regulations to stay in business. NOAA's proposed regulatory changes will put my business along with many on the chopping block.
Eric Olesen	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	I am fisherman I think should be 16.5 inches keep 4
Chris Theodorellis	Hauppauge, NY	2016-12-30	The biomass of Summer flounder is healthy and these cuts are nonsense.
Steve Coaxum	Beacon, NY	2016-12-30	That the fluke and summer flounders regulations stay the same as of 2016
Christopher Spies	Holbrook, NY	2016-12-30	I am a recreational angler in NY maybe waters. I am tired of being abused by the system of long outdated "best available" science that dictates our regulations.
Nick Di Ambrosio	Jackson, NJ	2016-12-30	My opinion. 18" @ 5 or 19" @ 8. Not many catch the limit anyway.
Brian Lewis	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	This proposal will effectively end fluke fishing in New Jersey and put numerous small businesses out of business. When will this madness end?
julie lofstad	Hampton Bays, NY	2016-12-30	NOAA/NMFS is destroying fishing families by relying on bad data and making bad decisions. Save an endangered species - your local commercial fisherman!
Ryan Hulse	Port Jefferson Station, NY	2016-12-30	Fishing is my livelihood and a change in regulations will decimate the party and charter boat industry.
Michael Mitchell	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	I like Fluke Fishing and 4Fish@ 16.5in is a great for everyone.
Charles Etzel	east hampton, NY	2016-12-30	Quotas are too low
Mike Kelly	Forked River, NJ	2016-12-30	Charter captain
Ray Pasieka	Freeport, NY	2016-12-30	Our laws suck !!
Gary Fagan	Bar Harbor, ME	2016-12-30	It's bogus information, a poor excuse for best available science,they bow to tree huggers who threaten to sue them.
BILL BAREFOOT	Clementon, NJ	2016-12-30	it will kill fishing i am not going to pay 65.00 dollers to catch 2 fish and thats not garented at 19in would put party boats out of bussnis i sold my boat for this reason
Rick DiIenno	West Deptford, NJ	2016-12-30	It will put alot of people out of business , as well as making it not even worthwhile to go fluke fishing . Here in NJ we are allowed 1 weakfish , now maybe only 2 flounder , what a joke when the commercial fisherman are raping the stocks
James Higgins	Islip, NY	2016-12-30	This is my lively hood and does not make any sense
william berlese	Bay Shore, NY	2016-12-30	Because I love fishing for fluke

Name	Location	Date	Comment
edward tice	Jackson, NJ	2016-12-30	Every one i talk with had 1 or 2 keeper fish all year. who comes up with these numbers ? i want to smoke the same shit they are smoking . mabey my 16 in fish will be 19 in then
Sebastian Angelico	Kings Park, NY	2016-12-30	I love to fish and these regulations will many party boats and tackle and bait stores out of bussnesd
Chris Colavito	Warwick, NY	2016-12-30	I am signing this petition as a recreational fisherman and feel that the regulations should be frozen at the current state until a new assement is conducted proving that the bio mass has been depleted. I have been fishing the east end of Long Island for the past 40 years and have never seen the quality of the fishing that we have seen over the past 5 years.
Richard Baroch	Florida, NY	2016-12-30	The additional quota squeeze is overkill. Enough of these regulations
John Hall	Guilford, CT	2016-12-30	ASMFC is destroying the livelihood of fishermen. They're using dated, questionable data in their stock assessments.
Michael Nelson	Boonton, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe your data needs to be updated.I am against any changes.Do you people understand how many lives you affect with outdated ways of collecting information. Please take another look at what your doing.
Chris Rients	Bradley Beach, NJ	2016-12-30	My friends own party boats and their livelihoods are at stake!
Michael Emers	Tabernacle, NJ	2016-12-30	The studies are so flawed it a sin i have been fishing for over 40 years and i am all for protecting any wildlife but the way they are setting the fishing regulations is rediculas they are forcing us to keep the breeding fish and release the smaller ones and in my opinion not 1/2 of the fish released survive. I think other outside the box studies need to be looked at.
Paul Keqaj	New York, NY	2016-12-30	I am a fisherman
Alfred Wynne 3	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2016-12-30	The Regs.suck.Its never getting any better
Frank parker	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Govt. is using bad science. Talk to the SSFFF people. There science is up to date!
William Van Riper	Oradell, NJ	2016-12-30	because I fish
Rob Hrbek	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	My living depends on it!
Donald Mitchell	Holtsville, NY	2016-12-30	I want to see a better method of accounting and balanced distribution before accepting the MAMFC proposal.
Carmen Fanelli III	Audubon, NJ	2016-12-30	The science behind the regulations is flawed. Increasing size limits increases harvest of female fluke and leads to more dead fish thrown back.
Brian Mullaney	Hightstown, NJ	2016-12-30	The regs are fine leqve them As is
anthony debacco	Peapack, NJ	2016-12-30	we need to all join in a fight for a resource we are being cheated out of we need to boycott the stores and stop buying fish and hurt them where it counts $$
Peter Ordemann	Howell, NJ	2016-12-30	I own a Bait & Tackle shop and this reduction will seriously affect my business.
donald ambrico	bklyn, NY	2016-12-30	Because their stock assessment is greatly flawed
Vincent Vanacore	Seaford, NY	2016-12-30	To prevent devestation to the fishing industry on long Island N.Y..
vincent gough	new windsor, NY	2016-12-30	I like to fish.
Beth Rebhan	Bayville, NJ	2016-12-30	Your quota's make it impossible to catch any keepers unless you get on a charter and go out much further than some boats can go
Dan Bias	Asbury, NJ	2016-12-30	NOAA has no idea what the stocks are currently. and them basing cutbacks on bad science is bullshit

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Robert Konz	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	The science from noaa is flawed and not complete. This will decimate the industry in my local community. Party boats are struggling now and with these regulations may put the rest of the fleet out of business.
Robert Collins	Central Islip, NY	2016-12-30	This is absurd!!!
Robert Shepard	Lakewood, NJ	2016-12-30	Even the current Quota is to low. WAKE UP NOAA Get the facts straight. This is truly IMPORTANT!
Andrew Hojnowski	Frenchtown, NJ	2016-12-30	I enjoy catching fluke. The proposed regulations are unfair and not healthy for the fluke populations or the fishing industry. Please lower the size limit to 15" so everyone can take home some fish for dinner. We all know that 90% of fluke over 18" RE female and forcing us to keep all of the mature female fish will only hurt the population more.
Chris Johnstone	Point Pleasant, NJ	2016-12-30	Do away with regions. 18" fish in NY too low and that's where the bulk of fish caught in the NY,NJ, CT region. We only share Raritan Bay.
Henry Evers	Springfield, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe the recreational fishermen get the brunt of the regulation because the commercial fisheries bring in much more money!
John chiavarini	sterling, CT	2016-12-30	The fisheries are so wrong they have no clue
Robert Ransom	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	We need better science not flawed stats
robert struening	Bethlehem, PA	2016-12-30	so many fish caught are just shy of size limit, I throw back shorts... you need to get out and catch more of these people keeping shorts and over fishing... these regulations only hurt the honest people
Matt Sampogna	Bay Shore, NY	2016-12-30	This will kill local business
Peter Paff	Calverton, NY	2016-12-30	These regulations a destroying the lives of people making a living and paying taxes in the fishing industry with inaccurate data.
Thomas Brolly	Seaford, NY	2016-12-30	I fish
Josh Webster	Morrisville, PA	2016-12-30	I don't get out as much as would like to. When I do get to go I'd like to know there is a reasonable limit of fish I can harvest and enjoy for the time, effort and money I out into the sport.
Dave Fernandes	Newark, NJ	2016-12-30	Status Quo
Joseph Eybs	Port Jefferson Station, NY	2016-12-30	I want the 2016 fluke regs for the 2017 Fluke season. Thank You
Paul Bruno	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	I need to be allowed to fish to support my family
Paul Hanley	Ventnor City, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because it is really hard to catch a keeper flounder, I fish everyday durring the season I've seen hundreads of shorts not many big fish at all. The reduction in quota won't make a difference but I still don't think you should my one lucky day I might have.
Michael Ardolino	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-30	The new regulations are insane and will put the for hire fleet out of business
allen hrehowsik	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	allen hrehowsik
klaus rondinella	Williston Park, NY	2016-12-30	These numbers ae based on voodoo science
Anthony Reyes	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-30	I want same fluke regulations in the past two years
John McIntyre	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	We did not get that many fish in 2016 I fish at least 75 day in 2016 did not get my limit one day
Roger Zavacki	Millville, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because this is an unfair attack on the recreational fishermen especially in New Jersey. New Jersey must be removed from regionalization with New Yor and CT. If it must be regionalized, then make NJ part of the DE region! Poor scientific research is being used as well.
evan wanaf	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	I support the fishing industry in Montauk

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Rick Armstrong	South Brunswick Township, NJ	2016-12-30	There is no factual science to prove recreational fishing has led to a decline in the fluke population and no way to prove we exceeded state quota. There are plenty of fish. Stop the draggers from killing everything is common sense but overlooked because of politics. Why put American tackle and charter businesses and jobs out of business. Wake up people! I'm calling Trump.
William Hayes	Massapequa Park, NY	2016-12-30	The regulations are based on flawed science
Fred Moench	Manalapan, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe its nothing but flawed science being used. As a fisherman I truly believe there is a healthy stock of summer flounder
Peter Guerne	Holtsville, NY	2016-12-30	The new regulations are unfair.
Virginia Tran	Hampton Bays, NY	2016-12-30	I want our local fisherman to earn a living; Fluke also are much more abundant than it was previously assumed.
Fred M. Kettenbeil	Peconic, NY	2016-12-30	I'm signing due to the fact our quotas are being set with flawed science.
Free Angie and reunite her with her daughter Jaime Pabalan	Old Bridge, NJ	2016-12-30	4 at 18 inches
scott mellina	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	Let's stop using complicated theories that can and are being manipulated. Start talking to the fishermen! Stop commercial fishing during the spawn. Stop closed seasons as it puts more pressure o a given fish stock...lets start using some common sense!
dwayne coppinger	Bayonne, NJ	2016-12-30	i agree need more study it not the weekend fishing it the netters
Margaret O'Brien	Beach Haven, NJ	2016-12-30	I am signing because I am very concerned about these laws. I have been a tackle shop owner for 40 years and this is the worst year ever for catching fish in the south part of NJ. Most people did not catch one keeper last year as amatter of fact some did not catch 1 fluke. Hurricane Sandy has changed our bay that we have very few fish there and beach replenishment has changed our beach keeping the fish from our shores. In addition fishing is very important to the ecomony of this state. Do not take it away. Would you pay 60 dollars to go on a boat where maybe if you caught 2 19inch fish you could take them home. What will it do to those boats. Allow people 1 smaller fish that they would have had to throw back and it probably would have died and 1 larger fish. The plan that you have been using for the last few years is not working here south of Barnegat Light. Maybe the south part of the state should be grouped with Delaware. Thanks for your time.
Rudy Petruzzi	East Northport, NY	2016-12-30	NOAA is incompetent
Terri Coleman	Holbrook, NY	2016-12-30	I am a recreational fisherman
Sarah Levin	Midlothian, VA	2016-12-30	Status quo!
Jeffrey Wanamaker	Long Hill, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a recreational Fisherman and I would like to be able to feed my family after spending time away from them!!
Thomas Cook	Freehold, NJ	2016-12-30	believe that NOAA is using bad logic and faulty information. The damage this would do to the local economies could be irreversible.
Peter Erskine	Ramsey, NJ	2016-12-30	I think the summer flounder limit needs to stay the same as last season.
Anthony Butch	Blackwood, NJ	2016-12-30	This is an injustice to the recreational anglers. These drastic cuts will have terrible Consequences to the industry and its anglers supporting local businesses. It is unjust. Keep the limit where it Is until legitimate research is complied.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Corey Solomon	Ventnor City, NJ	2016-12-30	The summer flounder is crucial to the survival of local businesses. We do not have many targetable species (that are regularly in season) in our bays and on our reefs such as tog and seabass. Why not reduce the commercial catch (and bycatch), that is destroying the summer flounder populations? How are we going to introduce young anglers to the sport of fishing when they do not have a species they can legally target?
Les Trafford	Hampton Bays, NY	2016-12-30	I believe theres a lot more fluke out there than the data is showing
Alex Krai	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm an avid fisherman and it's hard enough to be able to bring home a keeper fluke with the 2016 size limits. I only caught 2 keepers and I fished 2 days a week the entire summer flounder season.
Patrick Martin	Seaville, NJ	2016-12-30	I think the data is flawed and by making the keeper size bigger only kills off females and has a drastic effect on the mortality rate for smaller fish below the limit.
Gary Caputi	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	This is just another over reaction to bad stock assessment data and the unreliable harvest data provided by MRIP. MRIP is ten years overdue from the Congressional mandated time frame and it is providing data that is even less reliable than MRFSS.
Thomas Cupido	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	I truly fear that this will cause the loss of jobs for hardworking people
C mesiano	Wilmington, NC	2016-12-30	Government over-reach has got to stop. Gather ALL pertinent facts BEFORE enacting legislation with far-reaching impact
Christine Dassler	Bohemia, NY	2016-12-30	An outdated, inaccurate assessment should clearly be updated before such a drastic limit is put in place.
Brook Koeneke	Wildwood, NJ	2016-12-30	I own a back Bay head boat targeting flounder, the Duke o' fluke. It's vital to me that this measure be shot down. My lively hood depends on keeping the status quo until better and more current data can be developed. If this nonsense goes thru, it will result in financial devestation for hundreds of businesses which are dependent on the recreational flounder fishery for their income. The screw job must be averted.
Martin Barnhardt	Easton, PA	2016-12-30	Fairness
Bob DAndrea	hampton bays, NY	2016-12-30	I don't believe the facts and figures are correct and by lowering our quota you are going to make a lot of normally law abiding fisherman turn into poachers
Jonathan Hensler	Hamilton, NJ	2016-12-30	The science used to justify this is severely flawed. I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!
Joe Tangel JR	Medford, NY	2016-12-30	My family's life style depends on reliable fishing.
Jacob Fox	Northampton, PA	2016-12-30	Fishing is my life
Joseph Parks	Bristol, PA	2016-12-30	I haven't been able to keep a flounder in years due to the new regulations sizes of fish , every fishermen plays a large part in supporting all businesses and the local economy , this is getting quite ridiculous , come on people !
Michael Marra	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	It's not fair to the local business owners to rely on flounder fishing. Also not fair to everyone who fishes for them in the summer. This is not based on real science.
Mitchell Fulcher	East Hampton, NY	2016-12-30	Science is outdated ,inaccurate and wrongly influenced by environmental groups with different agendas.
Rob Chew	Woodbury, NJ	2016-12-30	I love to fish and support local bait shops !! And just bought a boat so I can teach my daughter how to fish !!!
paul tsoukalas	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	The science is wrong

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Stan Kosinski	Elizabeth, NJ	2016-12-30	Many businesses will go under, cut the commercial quota! Why hurt many to protect few?
Brett Ekelmann	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke fishing is very important to me and all our local tackle shops/charter boats. It is already hard enough to catch an 18 inch fish limit, 19 would be uncalled for. Especially with commerical limit being 13 inches
William Band	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2016-12-30	I fished too many times without catching a keeper. Making it 19 inches would make it even harder.
James Ignaczewski	Haddon Heights, NJ	2016-12-30	A 19 inch limit will not accomplish the goal of killing less fish and helping the population. The amount of short fish that will die due to gut hooking or mistreatment will outweigh the less fish kept.
Frank Janiec	Keasbey, NJ	2016-12-30	The economic impact will destroy the party boat industry as well as the recreational fishermen's ability to fish
David Duffy	Antrim, NH	2016-12-30	We had a limit in 2016 how can we go over that quota
Michael Modica	East Quogue, NY	2016-12-30	I fish almost every day during the summer. Fluke are as abundant now as they ever were.
Michael Holwitz	Lavallette, NJ	2016-12-30	You only cater to Daggers who are Destroying the Fluke species...and penalizing the Recreational fisherman, with false information...
Joe Morales	Bensalem, PA	2016-12-30	Because we can't afford to lose this fishery and business that comes with it.
gary hammond	Beverly, NJ	2016-12-30	Me and my father would like to catch more and bigger fish
William Powell	Long Island City, NY	2016-12-30	I fish montauk.
Bill Wilcox	Lindenhurst, NY	2016-12-30	Your information is unfounded.
Ron Redrow	Pitman, NJ	2016-12-30	How can u do this with unfinished research of the stock?
wayne kubovec	Bristol, PA	2016-12-30	I fish
Kenneth Martyn	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	I fish
Brandon Franzuela	Dover, NJ	2016-12-30	I love fluke fishing, i am a recovering drug addict and being out on the water fishing for fluke helps me tremendously. It is my only enjoyment, these new proposed limits would hurt the party boat industry, discouraging captians from goinv out, which means that in turn i will not be able to go. Please reconsider, i beg you.
Michael Dziena	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	Because your putting commercial fishermen out of business why you let the nets sweep out ocean...enough is enough!!!!!!
Davon Debow	Egg Harbor City, NJ	2016-12-30	Restrict the dredgers not the small time fisherman
Craig Perucki	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-30	I need a reason to gas up the boat.
robert hoffman	Franklin Square, NY	2016-12-30	because these regulations are so unfair.
Matt Sickler	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-30	The science is incorrect and studies have been presented with a sex bias accounted for as well as other factors but have not been considered.
Robert gordon Jr	Setauket- East Setauket, NY	2016-12-30	Signed
Chris Custer	Mount Laurel, NJ	2016-12-30	Please use true scientific research to determine stock levels of flounder caught commercially and recreationally
Robert Liotto	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke quotas are not scientifically calculated.
Kevin Seinfeld	Port Washington, NY	2016-12-30	I am an avid fisherman and feel these new guidelines are extremely unfair
Matt Spiegelman	Roslyn Heights, NY	2016-12-30	Set stricter commercial limits!
Vinny Cassilli	Wayne, NJ	2016-12-30	Its a shame that you guys keep taking from us rod and reel little guys,pleazzzze stop every year same bullshit..thanx

Name	Location	Date	Comment
steve Thompson	Greenlawn, NY	2016-12-30	I'm a recreational sea captain
Brad Rogers	bergenfield, NJ	2016-12-30	This new regulation sucks
Alan Bulvanoski	Farmingdale, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm a recreational fisherman who doesn't believe the data.
david vanhorn	furlong, PA	2016-12-30	NOAA Fisheries believes that recreational fishermen exceeded their recreational harvest limit in 2016 and that the recreational harvest limit in 2017 will need to be reduced by the amount of the overage? And what about the commercial guys? This is bullshit and we all know it!
Gary Dugan	Southampton, NJ	2016-12-30	I feel this will devistate the head boat and charter boat business! And make it nearly impossible for the recreational fisherman to enjoy the sport.
Frank McGhee	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	I have been fishing in New Jersey for over fifty years. It never ceases to amaze me that year after year the commercial fishing industry is allowed to abuse the most liberal fishing regs but the recreational fishermen are continuously blamed for the depletion of the fish population. If it wasn't so pathetic it would be laughable.
michael cucinotta	Manahawkin, NJ	2016-12-30	I mated on a 6 man charter boat last summer and we only had a hand full of keeper flukein12 trips.
carl sapolin	chagrin falls, OH	2016-12-30	I travel to Long Island to fish for these. Cut back commercial quota
Kelly Trageser	Sea Girt, NJ	2016-12-30	My family enjoys fluke fishing!
Stewart Caldwell	Hazlet, NJ	2016-12-30	Current proposed regulations are not in reality with current fish stocks .
Kaitlyn Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	I enjoy fluke fishing.
Gregoery Moench	Milltown, NJ	2016-12-30	Recreational fishing is something that keeps me, my friends and my family together.
David Arbeitman	Pt Pleasant, NJ	2016-12-30	I am signing because I am sick and tired of fisheries regulations based on faulty science and totally inaccurate recreational landings info. Their severe restrictions impact both my income and quality of life. Enough is enough!
Rick Lackner	West Babylon, NY	2016-12-30	I'm signing this petition because the system is broken and I have seen it first hand.
Douglas Nylander	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-30	I am an avid fisherman and feel the new proposed regulations would be unfair
Eric Drew	East Hampton, NY	2016-12-30	Because it's fair
Michael Sorgentoni	Cherry Hill, NJ	2016-12-30	Marine fisheries are a bunch of idiots!
Ron Musselman	Sea Isle City, NJ	2016-12-30	The management of fluke is way out of bounds. Why keep pushing recreational fishermen to keep large spawning sized fish and commercail fisherman to drag fluke up in their spawning season? This makes no sense! Look at the redfish down south. Sloth limits were put in place and now they are flourishing.
Robert Lesser	Patchogue, NY	2016-12-30	Should remain status quo until a more accurate method of the fisheries is done.
David Syfert	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-30	More regulated than the blue claw crabs. A fishery so important deserves to be protected and equally understood. The current practices could use a tuneup to understand deadloss, Harvest and impact.
Mike Zaleskik	Berlin, NJ	2016-12-30	NOAA is doing this based on factless and flawed science that is dated. There is no one out there monitoring the yearly catches. So how would they know the quota was exceeded. Higher fuel prices and less fisherman, less boats on the water does not equal the quota being exceeded. It means less fish were caught in the last TEN YEARS.
Roger Dutch	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	I feel the season start and end dates is more about satisfying commercial and charter fisherman, The new restrictions that they want to pass is ridiculous.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
noah harper	New York, NY	2016-12-30	after what I saw while out fishing last season, it's hard for me to believe there is a fluke shortage
Thomas Ehehalt	Merrick, NY	2016-12-30	This is ridiculous
Donald Reese	Hightstown, NJ	2016-12-30	Donald w Reese
Warren Flick	Mifflinville, PA	2016-12-30	I am a fisherman who used to drive 3hrs to go fluke fishing. I used to have no problem spending $400+ for 2-3 days of fishing two to three times a year when I had a chance at bringing home some food. As the size limits have increased, I can no longer expect to catch anything legal to keep. Many of my friends, whom I used to frequent their businesses, have either closed shop, limit their hours so as not to pay employees, or sold out, as I can basically guess I am not the only one who spends my money elsewhere! I don't mind "working for what for what I get", but at least want to have a chance. I have not caught a legal fluke in over 7 years in my 1-2 times a year I go down for the day!
Ryan Smith	Brooklyn, NY	2016-12-30	I fish in NY and would like to continue doing so.
David Showell	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	I am owner of Absecon Bay Sportsman Center, www.abseconbay.com and since the majority of my business is with summer flounder fishermen, my business has already been drastically cut because of prior cutbacks and with this new cut I am in serious danger of completely being forced out of business.
Pierre Juliano	Bergenfield, NJ	2016-12-30	Using erroneous data is an aggregious overuse if power.
John Becce	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	I am a fisherman and charter captain.
John Lynch	Blue Bell, PA	2016-12-30	I want to preserve fluke fishing for my children.
Kevin Bentley	New London, CT	2016-12-30	This reduction will have harm against the for hire charter industry. Couple this with in the range the fish have moved north
robert fulbrook	Mastic Beach, NY	2016-12-30	I believe sharks coming In closer to shore whales /seals are eating most of them
Stephen Zebrowski	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	This rule puts small business At risk, as well as the boating Industry!!
EDWARD Karecki	Keyport, NJ	2016-12-30	How Many More People are You Putting Out Of Work with these New Quotas !!!! 75 dollars to Fish on a Party Boat to catch 2 Fish when You allow The Overseas Companys to Sent Dirty Farm Raised Crap to the US For Pennies !! I Want My Fresh NJ Fish With Reasonable Limits !!!!!
Anthony Howell	Nottingham, MD	2016-12-30	I love fluke fishing and even with the size limit increases every year I still go out fishing at least 6 times a year fluking
jerry lynch	Millville, NJ	2016-12-30	Every year we go through the same thing. They just beat us down . What's next?
William Mulhern	East Brunswick, NJ	2016-12-30	WE demand that NOAA Fisheries maintain the current flounder summer ABC at 16.26 million pounds until a benchmark assessment is conducted. Also, ask that NOAA Fisheries assumes that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016. By granting both requests, the result would be status quo in 2017. This is a fair compromise until a new benchmark assessment for summer flounder is conducted.
John Clevenstine	Oxford, PA	2016-12-30	Most recreational anglers want to preserve the fishery so that there continues to be one for years to come. I don't believe there has been enough research conducted to warrant such a drastic change.
Michael Walsh	Eatontown, NJ	2016-12-30	The proposed plans will absolutely destroy Rec. Fishing in NJ.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Robert Gjertsen	Old Bridge, NJ	2016-12-30	This is an outrage I never had a limit of fluke in my life with all the regulation's and BS uc fishermen have to put up with.Now another 40% reduction might as well throw all my tackle in the garbage
James Behne	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-30	I am totally against the reduction. It makes no sense.. these regulations are putting us out of business
Christopher Seidelman	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Continual reductions of the recreational harvest limits is completely unjustified without completing a new benchmark assessment. The continual reductions in this and other fisheries has farther reaching affects than just the recreational fishermen.
Kenneth Warren	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	The regulations proposed seem arbitrary at best, and will surely lead to the demise of not only local business from tackle shops, to marinas, to hotels, and to many other far reaching establishments, not to mention the demise of the fish stock. It is inconceivable that targeting and taking larger fish which are the breeders for the stock will save the species from overfishing.
kevin wistuba	Toms River Twp, NJ	2016-12-30	Commercial guys are taking all the fish not the party boats are the beach fisherman,my wife and the fish every Saturday and Sunday out of point Pleasant not once have either one of us got close to limiting out let alone getting five fish between both of us
scott Hartkopf	Waretown, NJ	2016-12-30	The Jersey Shore economy in the recreational boating and fishing industry can't afford it.
Joseph Torchia	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	I am tired of flawed data determining our seasons. I am tired of catching and killing fish over 18", which science has determined are almost always female. We are killing all the breeding females. Lower the size limit.
William Kleinow	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-30	I can't afford to take my boat out to catch 2 fish. The likelihood of catching 19 inch fluke in the bay is Rediculous.
Michael Worrall	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because this is part of mine and a lot of families livelihoods. This cut in the quota would destroy many businesses and take food out of my family's mouths. This is just criminal.
Paul Stonerod	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	I don't want 2016 be my last year to fish for Summer Flounder.....
Robert Hugelmeyer	Glen Gardner, NJ	2016-12-30	This change will destroy a recreational fishery that has been cherished for generations in order to benefit commercial fishermen.
Greg Buchanan	Cape May Court House, NJ	2016-12-30	Recreational fisherman deserve better treatment
Jon Oliff	Asbury Park, NJ	2016-12-30	2 fish limits put friends of mine out of business!
Peter Garbowski	Sayreville, NJ	2016-12-30	I fish, and I vote.
Wayne Jones	Cream Ridge, NJ	2016-12-30	The reductions would put too many people out of work and destroy the fishing industry There is no survey that says the reduction would change the fish stocks either way. So why ruin the fishing industry for nothing
Richard Oeser	Egg Harbor City, NJ	2016-12-30	Without having a reasonable amount of summer flounder to catch its not worth spending the money to put my boat in the water.Along with the economic hardship it will cost the bait and tackle shops,along with a lot of other businesses that you probally wouldn't even think about. I spent a lot of quality time with my son and family fishing and was hoping to do that now with my grand children, but if there you can't keep any legal fish those memories will be lost . Just my 2 cents !
Robert Caruso	Lansdale, PA	2016-12-30	The fluke regs are out of control
Joseph Murray	Colonia, NJ	2016-12-30	THe new reg's proposed make no sense. Where is the science for this?

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Mike Paul	Margate, NJ	2016-12-30	The intended reductions are based on flawed data. The overwhelming majority of flounder that are 18" and over are females. It makes no sense, since basically every time we keep a flounder we would be culling the females.
Ellen Guritzky	Berkeley Heights, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because I do not want 2lb limits .....please keep it the way it is!
Darren Dorris	Berlin, NJ	2016-12-30	I run a charter service, and these measures would simply put me out of business!
Bernard Kennedy	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because the fishing quotas that are set are based on a small amount of data collected. Commercial drag boats take the bulk of the fluke not recreational fishing.
David Biddiscombe	Monroe Township, NJ	2016-12-30	I enjoy the recreational fishing in the region. The limits set already seem sufficient. The problem that I see is commercial fishing bycatch where thousands of fish are killed and sent out to sea so their captains are not prosecuted.
swiacki swiacki	Collingswood, NJ	2016-12-30	Tired of all this BS,all these years.
John Kostovick	Southampton, PA	2016-12-30	As an avid fisherman who regularly fishes on charter boats, I believe the reduction of the the summer flounder limit to 2 per person would kill this profession. This in turn would have a trickle down affect impacting marinas, bait shops, local sandwich shops, etc.... Please consider the overall economic impact this would have to the fishing communities. Thank You
Ron Gallagher	Langhorne, PA	2016-12-30	I'm all for protection of the species for future generations, but the data being used is not accurate. In addition, restrictions need to be implemented to eliminate dragging offshore waters during the spawning season.
mark McGowan	northport, NY	2016-12-30	This will help destroy both small businesses and recreational fishing businesses who rely on seasonal fishing. In addition, it reflects poor management from the government agencies who rely on unproven analysis of the total catch rate.
Renee Iannotti	Centerport, NY	2016-12-30	Fishing is my livelihood and the data that's being used is wrong
John Molnaur	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-30	I feel the present regulations are too strict!
Frank Bardales	Morristown, NJ	2016-12-30	The regulation should be 16” since most females are larger
Lorraine Matia	Duncannon, PA	2016-12-30	I caught one keeper last year. The rest were way too small. We did not overfish!
Richard Mucerino	Gloucester Township, NJ	2016-12-30	Not fair for the recreational fishermen.
Jon Pearson	Pelham, NY	2016-12-30	They are killing the industry over nothing
Alex Trommelen	Landenberg, PA	2016-12-30	This petition would devastate the local south Jersey bay fisherman, and deter many vacationing party boat goers with a larger catch size and reduced bag limit. Terrible proposal for this fishery
Kirk Everett	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-30	NOAA has failed to update the stock assessment. Therefore they base their decision on outdated information. They "assume" recreational fishermen exceeded the limit. This will be a huge hit on the economy as well.
Joe Mc	East Hampton, NY	2016-12-30	Fuck the dec
Robert Christ	Northport, NY	2016-12-30	I am a recreational fisherman and the proposed regulations would have a major impact on the economy of Long Island
michael giunta	Lyndhurst, NJ	2016-12-30	I am demanding that NOAA fisheries keep the current ABC at 16.26 million lbs untill a benchmark assesment is conducted. I am also asking that NOAA fisheries assumes that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016.
christopher sabbagh	staten island, NY	2016-12-30	commercial draggers should be pushed further offshore...

Name	Location	Date	Comment
George Burns	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	I think they should leave it How can you tell me I have to catch a19" fish and can only keep2 yet I can go in the store and buy a 14" fish
Jason Leck	Newtown, PA	2016-12-30	NJ limit is already higher then DE and SC and other southern states, make them increase their sizes
Brian Burns	Sicklerville, NJ	2016-12-30	It was difficult enough to catch an 18" fish, and they were few and far between, yet the trawlers keep everything.
Preston Glas	Mystic, CT	2016-12-30	The recreational catch data in CT is completely wrong. It would be nearly impossible to have caught what the data says.
Tim Edmunds	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-30	Cuts should be made to commercial quotas not recreational!
scott jagdeo	Merrick, NY	2016-12-30	There are more fluke than ever. Whoever is reading this has heard this countless times. The recreational fishermen is conservation minded and fishes with hopes of perhaps returning home blessed with freshly caught fish to enjoy a meal or two with the family. More importantly fishing also provides an outlet for stress, bonding with family and friends, meeting new people that share a common bond and last but not least enjoying a day in the sun and fresh air. Reducing the season and bag limits of fluke and other species has a detrimental effect on not just fishermen but also economically cripples many other occupations directly and indirectly involved with it. Along with boat owners, captains and deckhands the list seems endless when factoring in the bait industry, the tackle industry, the rod and reel industry, the foul weather gear industry down to the many delicatessens and restaurants patronized by fishermen and members of the fishing community. For 15 years the fishing community has been trampled on for no reason. When is it going to stop?
Jeff Evans	Waretown, NJ	2016-12-30	This will kill my charter business
LT Slomczewski	Rahway, NJ	2016-12-30	Status Quo 2017. Yes!
Nicole Wert	Gloucester City, NJ	2016-12-30	This would greatly hurt business for small businesses
Harry Sioutis	Broomall, PA	2016-12-30	I believe their studies are false
Edward Endresen	Matawan, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm an avid fluke fishermen
Lewis Maneely	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	The commercial fisherman should have their limits cut. If someone wants to eat flounder let them go to saltwater and get some exercise and catch some. Or pay a much steeper price for having the slaughter boats catch them.
Nicholas Finazzo	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	I want a fair process.
Robert Frei	Millville, NJ	2016-12-30	I request that NOAA Fisheries maintain the current summer flounder ABC at 16.26 million pounds until a benchmark assessment is conducted. I also ask that NOAA Fisheries assumes that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest limit in 2016. By granting both requests, the result would be status quo in 2017. This is a fair compromise until a new benchmark assessment for summer flounder is conducted. Not too mention that as a recreational fisherman/boater I will seriously consider NOT putting my boat in the water this year , thus not spending any money on dockage..,bait and tackle ,fuel and oil and other supplies typically needed during a boating fishing season A reduction in the bag limits and season for Fluke will hurt and may put out of business many Bait and tackle shops and small marinas that depend on the summer flounder trade....Please keep the status Quo.
Chris Taylor	Riverton, NJ	2016-12-30	The system is broken and feeds to be fixed before you start passing out regs. That are proven in effective.
William Szoke	Deerfield, NJ	2016-12-30	The regulations are out of control.
Donald Jones	Paoli, PA	2016-12-30	Data is flawed! Keep regulations the same or relax them for recreational fishermen!

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Aaron Snyder	Williamstown, NJ	2016-12-30	A lot of my friends will be out of business due to the changes I believe there needs to be a stop or heavy regulations and re-valuation on offshore/inshore netting that's where the changes need to be made to save this species
carolyn Clinch	Montauk, NY	2016-12-30	The statistics being used are outdated. Get the real facts before you kill an industry and ruin hard working people's lives.
James Rumsey	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	It's not just about the fish this is going to be a big ripel affect to the fishing economy for these states and towns that benefit from this fishery
Gary J Neil II	Williamstown, NJ	2016-12-30	OUPV Captain. This plan to cut the limit of fluke to two fish WILL PUT MANY BAIT AND TACKLE SHOPS, MARINA'S, BOAT REPAIR SHOP ETC. OUT OF BUSINESS. WHY ARE WE NOT IMPOSING LIMITS ON THE BIG COMMERCIAL BOATS?
Bill Psoras	Glen Cove, NY	2016-12-30	To make a stand and oppose these Draconian measures that are being proposed by the MAMFC
Michael Edge	Northfield, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm a charter captain
Michael Scanny	Margate City, NJ	2016-12-30	As one of many people who depend on recreational fishing to make a living, it is important that the regulations are fair and reasonable.
Joe Locurto	Milbridge, ME	2016-12-30	Commercial fisherman have had enough of these unfounded regulations and it's time we stand united against them even though they might not effect every fishery
Ryan Landolfi	Clark, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke fishing in the summer is an important part of my childhood memories and I want it to be that way for my kids also.
Nick Leverock	Vineland, NJ	2016-12-30	Because i feel it will destroy fishing for so many people
mary beckley	Somers Point, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm a recreational fisherman and this reduction is important to me.
George Ingram	Ocean City, NJ	2016-12-30	The proposed reduction will have a serious negative impact on the economy of coastal New Jersey.
Jmaes Custer	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Commercial fishing is cause and needs more control, not someone with a rod and reel. Everything they net should count towards there limit for the season and be done fishing when they reach there limit. Remember a netted fish is dead or going to be dead being dragged up from the bottom and tossing it away is a wasted fish. Commercial fishing only wants to count the fish they can sell and fish they can't sell gets tossed over and its not part the count towards there limit. Thank about who is really hurting fishing. Not the people who fish with a rod and reel.
George Campanile	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	Save the recreational boater community and the charter boat industry
Peter Kupper	Mantoloking, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe there are better solutions to this problem that would not hurt the tackle shops and party boats as hard as this will.
John Schmahl	North Babylon, NY	2016-12-30	I'm an avid fisherman. I'm out fishing from April first thru December. I've personally caught hundreds of fluke each season most of which fall a 1/2 in to an inch short. The Comercial fisheries is what is killing our fish stock. They catch short fish in there nets and return the dead back to the waters. The recreational fisherman who is out there to feed their families should not have to suffer the consequences nor the head boats that rely on the summer flounder to survive.
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	That's the goal George. Thanks for signing!
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	Me too! Thanks for signing

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Virginia Murphy	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	My family and friends are dependent on the summer flounder season, the party few party boats that are left will be negatively impacted. It will also have a negative impact on other common inshore species such as ling, cod, seabass...if you take one away something else will be targeted and overfished.
Jonathon Rampacrk	Jamesburg, NJ	2016-12-30	This is going to put a lot of good people out of work
William Mushorn	Flushing, NY	2016-12-30	I feel that all recreational fishermen are being screwed..reduce the quota on the commercial fishermen side.
David Schulze	Lewes, DE	2016-12-30	The limits placed on the commercial fishman have caused many to sell Thier boat and quit any additional limits could district the fishing industry
Jeremy Liedtka	Chesterfield Township, NJ	2016-12-30	I believe more data needs to be collected before you impose such a big decrease. The New Jersey shore communities rely on summer flounder fishing.
Almey Gray	Stumpy Point, NC	2016-12-30	Unsubstantiated, unsupported regulations are dangerous and injurious to people whose livelihood depend on fishing.
Edwin Klingenberg	Egg Harbor City, NJ	2016-12-30	i am signing because 19 inch fluke are a dream not a reality. it is not economically feasable to fish for a dream.
Tim Bush	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	The new regs on recreational fisherman is going to have a catastrophic economic impact on coastal communities.
David Holmes	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-30	Because the those responsible for setting the regulations on Flounder don't have the faintest idea what they are doing, but they think they do.
Scott Kesselman	Greenwich, CT	2016-12-30	A 40% reduction in 2017 is absurd.
Brian Seidel	Mohnton, PA	2016-12-30	Too many Fluke will most likely be killed as throw-backs than will be saved by this law.
Jason Sciullo	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	Recreational fishing is a huge part of our local economy and these regulatory changes will crush the guys who depend on the seasonal income flounder fishing creates. The amount of people who actually catch their limit is small, so if anything has to change it should be the total bag, not min size, and not a shorter season.
Ted Parente	Whitestone, NY	2016-12-30	I'm a recreational fisherman
Dave Mikionis	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-30	The real life solution cannot be to decimate many businesses, industries, families, municipalities, the trickle down effect is huge. 3-at 18. We can live with. NOT 2 at 19. That's a shut down
Barry Gootkind	Narragansett, RI	2016-12-30	Let the commercial end make up the difference
Ken Marcellus	Springfield, PA	2016-12-30	Regulations are excessive,
John Johnson	Pemberton, NJ	2016-12-30	This isn't fair to the recreational fishermen.Boaters , party boats, charters are all hurt by this as if they aren't already .NOAA doesn't consider these facts at at all with outdated and flawed data.
Jason Wymbs	Leonardo, NJ	2016-12-30	Fishing feeds my family.
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	so true
William Scull	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-30	I am opposed to any further restrictions on the fishing industry until proper data has been evaluated and the situation has been reviewed and agreed upon between Anglers and the government agencies
Billy Briscoe	Norwalk, CT	2016-12-30	I THINK THAT THE REGS THAT WE HAD LAST YEAR OF 4 FISH AT 19" WAS MORE THEN FAIR
Bob Robbins	Quincy, MA	2016-12-30	Until you set a more stringent quota on the daggers they will kill the recreational fishing. There already killing the flounder fishing.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Rocco Mockewich	Blackwood, NJ	2016-12-30	It is hard with the current regulations to be able to bring home a keeper, in the past two years i must have caught a thousand shorts that went back swimming
Edward Arentz	Ventnor City, NJ	2016-12-30	I eat flounder
Robert Cunius	Northfield, NJ, NJ	2016-12-30	In my opinion, this is an attempt to eliminate recreational fishing. Change the regulations for commercial fishing to better reduce the the amount of stock damage!
John Clynes	Manasquan, NJ	2016-12-30	The regulations lack scientific evidence. Overfishing is an obvious problem where the focus should be on the commercial fishing industry and NOT THE RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN. The decisions we make today will hurt recreational fishing for all future generations.
John Fryc	Chesterfield Township, NJ	2016-12-30	You will destroy the economy for fisherman and show along the coast
Tom Michael	Mount Ephraim, NJ	2016-12-30	The system is out of control for decades. Not proper reporting numbers to make these decisions
Louis Van Bergen	Manchester, NJ	2016-12-30	THis impacts me on a personal level because I fish for the table and for a living as a party boat captain who struggles to stay in the business.
James Bittle	Ickesburg, PA	2016-12-30	Because I think it should stay the same for recreational fishing or you will loose fisherman
STEVE SAVIETTA	Wyckoff, NJ	2016-12-30	WORSE FLUKE FISHING EVER 2016 - COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN ARE DEPLETING STOCK - EVERYTIME A NEW WAVE OF FISH COMES IN DURING THE SPRING THE DRAGGERS WIPE THEM OUT WITHIN A WEEK - LUKILY I CAN FISH DURING THE WEEK - IF I FISHED WEEKENDS ONLY I WOULD SELL MY BOAT.
Rodney Jones	Elmer, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a fisherman and I feel new regulations would hurt the fun you have with your children .
Alfred Severson	Hillsborough, NJ	2016-12-30	Laws is unfair to sportsman apply more reg. to commercial fisherman.
Frederick and Margaret Feil	Ocean View, NJ	2016-12-30	This is an unfair limit and will effect the fishing economy and many families.
CJ Walsh	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	In support of thousands of coastal jobs in the New York Bight supported by the recreational fishery for summer flounder ("fluke").
Kevin Hoffman	Pottstown, PA	2016-12-30	It needs to be signed!
Matthew Kopet	Somerville, NJ	2016-12-30	The reduction in recreational fishing limits does little to protect the biomass (compared to commercial fishing impact) and greatly damages the recreational fishing industry. This industry is critical to the shoreline communities and provides a positive economic impact to our area.
Robert Gasior	Totowa, NJ	2016-12-30	This idea is just absurd. I can't keep anything under 18 inches currently, but I can buy it in a fish store or supermarket. No you want to make the size difference I can keep even bigger. Get some more scientific data.
Joshua Friedman	Great Neck, NY	2016-12-30	the research is completely baseless. fluke are Uber abundant in long island and you are restricting a sustainable resource. you are destroying peoples lives
Charles Proto	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	Because it will bring hardship to our community the communities around us and cause hardship for Captains their business's, tackle shops, and tackle manufacture's plus all of their family's
dawn stover	fair haven, NJ	2016-12-30	Many reasons!!
Steve Yurchak	Franklinville, NJ	2016-12-30	All you do is turn rec fishermen into outlaws
Carl Cucco	West Islip, NY	2016-12-30	I vote and I fish

Name	Location	Date	Comment
ed kube	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	This was one of the best years fishing in a long time. A 2 fish limit is ridiculous not even worth going out fishing.
James Williamson	Red bank, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because these unscientific regulations being put into place each year are slowly killing an industry that has a huge impact on many people's lives.
JOHN BOGGIO	LINDENHURST, NY	2016-12-30	I'ts only right
MICHAEL LEWIS	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-30	The Summer Flounder recreational fishery is critical to the economic well being of my area. I truly hope NOAA understands not only the biological but ECONOMICAL impact, and uses true historical data and not statistical assumptions to set the 2017 ABC.
Lou Fasano	Stewartsville, NJ	2016-12-30	They need to regulate the other contries that come to our coasts and drag up and keep everything regardless of size. That's the real problem for the overfishing.
Don Hughes	Eatontown, NJ	2016-12-30	We cannot take any more reduction because of bad science
Karl Graetz	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2016-12-30	Recreational fishermen are always getting the short end of the stick with regulations
vincent fiorentino	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-30	enough is enough
Brandon Monroe	brick, NJ	2016-12-30	My late brother thought this was bs and so do I.
Ben Kevitch	Havertown, PA	2016-12-30	someone has to stick up for the tax payers, it's getting crazy
bill keene	piscataway, NJ	2016-12-30	New regulations will greatly effect a lot of things economicly from fuel usage down to locally owned bait shops
Manny Remelgado	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	This has always been a scam in order to give the commercial lobbyists more fish to sell. You have no way to accurately account for how many fish recreational anglers catch or to accurately calculate the mortality rates of fish that must be released by law.
elizabeth tart	sewell, NJ	2016-12-30	You are going to put my mom's boat out of business after 42 years
john riccardi	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	Please get involved with the fluke regulations that the ASMFC is proposing to implement. The proposed regulations for 2017 reduce the number of fish you can keep from 5 fish to 2 fish and they are also proposing the fish has to be 19 inches vs the current 18 inches in length. These proposed regulations are unjust and are based on inaccurate data. These regulations will hurt all fisherman, but will also have great effect on the rest of the NJ economy, for example the gas, the tackle shops, the party boats, the tip for the mates, food, etc. it just trickles down. If the rules trying to be put into place were for the good of the fishery I would be all for it. The fact is that fluke are not overfished, current regulations have us killing all the breeding fish (90% of fluke over 18 inches are females) reality is the size limit needs to be lowered and it will keep those financially involved solvent, it is also better for the fishery. Regulations should be put in place with real data from fisherman, boat captains and vessel trip reports and dock side checks, not MRIP models that are so inaccurate I would be embarrassed to use them. If anything, at least wait until the SSSFF data is released in early 17 before making any decisions. I have been fishing for 25 years and spend a lot of time and money fishing, these rules will cripple fisherman and the ones dependent on it for a living. Please act now and get involved. Thanks

Name	Location	Date	Comment
David piard	West Babylon, NY	2016-12-30	In the spirit of owen Johnson recreation fishing needs to be preserved and respected for it's enjoyment and economic benefits to our region
Michael Kostal	East Northport, NY	2016-12-30	There is no way we over fished.Scup were so plentiful and large most of us switched over to them.
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	John. Very well said. I agree 100% with your comments. Thanks for signing!
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	Sad. That's what we are trying to prevent.
patrick rosace jr	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	i work in the fishing industry and this could effect my job
Don Friel	C.M.Courthouse N.J., NJ	2016-12-30	I believe your data is wrong. This change you are proposing will kill the bait and tackle shops on the whole Jersey coast. Instead of comparing out catches to N.Y. why don't you compare them to Delaware. After all, I can see Delaware across the bay. N.Y. is 2 1/2 hrs away.
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	According to the fisheries "experts" the SSB is 2.1X the level it needs to be. However, at the last MAMFC meeting in Baltimore they wanted to cut the recreational bag limit from 50 to 15. When asked why, given the size of the stock the person "because 50 is too much, way too many". True story!
michael naipawer jr	Bloomingdale, NJ	2016-12-30	I want to help save fishing for the young people
Eian Donati	Egg Harbor City, NJ	2016-12-30	I love the sport of catching flounder
gilbert epstein	Long Branch, NJ	2016-12-30	there is no reason to change until the science is better. i think ther should be a slot and a one trophy fish per trip. we would then protect the larger breeder females.
todd pizzella	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	justice
BILL REILLY	mantua, NJ	2016-12-30	its time or change
Jeffrey Cameron	Southington, CT	2016-12-30	Why are the recreational anglers punished for questionable commercial practices
Gina Lawrenson	Sewell, NJ	2016-12-30	This proposal is a disgrace! We have strictly respected conservation laws in the past, and only to get penalized year after year! NO MORE!
Joe Romano	Norristown, PA	2016-12-30	This nonsense has to stop...
Dennis Haney	Lumberton, NJ	2016-12-30	I am an avid Fluke fisherman and believe the new restrictions are based on incorrect data.
Greg Carr	Swedesboro, NJ	2016-12-30	I run a charter fishing business out of barnegat light. We struggle to catch a few fish at 18 inches let alone 19 inches. Keeping and targeting the larger fish results in harvesting almost female fish exclusively. The regulations should be 3 fish at 17 inches which will allow for the harvest of some male fish and allow southern waters off New Jersey to harvest a few fish.
thomas petrick	Somerdale, NJ	2016-12-30	data capturing is flawed and too slow. If it passes as is I will sell both boats and watch tv I guess. What's left??
Cynthia Kaminsky	Mattituck, NY	2016-12-30	I'm tired of pencil pushers putting hard working fishing people out of business and I'm tired of NY being shortchanged on their share of the quota. What happened to equality?
James Daggett	Yaphank, NY	2016-12-30	The fluke population has never been stronger in recent years on Long Island
Scott Krawiec	Hammonton, NJ	2016-12-30	Chartering supports my family and this would be disastrous for us.
Jeffrey Salabritas	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-30	Government would force me to shut down my Charter Boat business if they pass any of the proposed fluke regulations.
James Kimsey	Cape May, NJ	2016-12-30	It's about time we return to fair and common sense fluke regulations.
Raymond S. Kosakowski	Bayonne, NJ	2016-12-30	Very sad what is happening to the recreational fishing. Stop the fisheries from taking all fish no matter what size & there wouldn't be a problem.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Edward Yates	Manahawkin, NJ	2016-12-30	I am signing this letter because as a full-time for hire party charter boat owner and operator I am tired of these consuls and commissions destroying Fishermans lives businesses local tackle stores my friends and neighbors of been put out of business and I am personally hanging on by a threadthere is no justification for this their data is not correct I can show him where all the young recruitment fish they want for their scientific nonsense recently someone question my marine biology degree and I explain to that individual my degree comes from the University of the north Atlantic7844 days at sea that's my degree thank you for trying to assist us with this ongoing problem also I personally recommend the realignment of national Marine fisheries service because everything starts there
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	That's what we are trying to prevent. Thanks for signing the petition.
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	Yes sir. If they had a true fisherman at the helm of the research vessel and used the best gear available, I'm pretty sure we wouldn't be in this position.
vincent karecki	Spotswood, NJ	2016-12-30	its unfair to recreational anglers
Tom Trageser	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	that was a response to a scup comment
Patricia Peck	Amityville, NY	2016-12-30	I fish often and don't want anymore limits imposed
Jim klein	Collingswood, NJ	2016-12-30	Want the limit the same
Dan Stinsman Jr	Atco, NJ	2016-12-30	this reduction will cause many businesses to close or reduce staff
Brett Taylor	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-30	I'm signing because this dramatically affects my charter fishing business and my ability to support my family.
Joseph Bellusci	Millville, NJ	2016-12-30	Keep it the same as it was in 2016
Christian Palmisano	Boonton, NJ	2016-12-30	This is nonsense. Stop the commercial fleet and all they kill!
Vincent Mattina	Monroe Township, NJ	2016-12-30	Enough is ENOUGH!!!!!!
Jim Goodger	Glenside, PA	2016-12-30	I fish summer flounder both in the surf and on the water
Carlos Rebelo	Keyport, NJ	2016-12-30	Fluke should be 5 fish at 17 inches because the commercial guys bring them in 14 and smaller.
kirk krueger	red nank, NJ	2016-12-30	stop the bullshit!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Darlene Leithauser	Perth Amboy, NJ	2016-12-30	Darlene &'Don Leithauser
Richard Dehanes	Holmdel, NJ	2016-12-30	The restrictions should be put on the commercial industry not recreational fishermen and women
Kevin Murray	Cary, NC	2016-12-30	I fish and I eat what I catch.
Kevin Stupp	Millville, NJ	2016-12-30	I do not support a reduction to the quota for 2017 summer flounder.
james wilkinson	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a charter captain and these regulations are going to hurt my business.
James Leiby	Millville, PA	2016-12-30	I'm signing because setting this limit on fluke fishing will hurt bait shops and charter boats in NJ.
Brad Klassman	Landenberg, PA	2016-12-30	I love fishing!!!
Doug Fogarty	freehold, NJ	2016-12-30	regulations being made without using the best AVAILABLE science are damaging to the management of a species
Timothy Jordan	Danbury, CT	2016-12-30	I do not support quota reductions on recreational fisherman without current updated stock assessments for the 2017 summer flounder season.
Joseph Drebit	Runnemede, NJ	2016-12-30	This reduction will kill charter boats, bait and tackle shops and marinas.
albert letts	Trenton, NJ	2016-12-30	they are using bad science to set the .quota
James Jones	San Antonio, TX	2016-12-30	Recreational fishermen aren't the problem. Commercial fisherman are decimating fish populations.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Ryan Dowling	Hillsborough, NJ	2016-12-30	The information these ppl are basing their regulations on is false
David Sikorsky	Essington, PA	2016-12-30	Flawed data . Using bad science to manage the fishery need to reduce the size to save the females. Also need to restrict commercial harvest in certain offshore areas and times.
Jeffrey Jones	Pennsauken Township, NJ	2016-12-30	I am a recreational fisherman and spend a lot of $$ on ramp and slip fees and fishing gear and equipment. I support the local bait and tackle shops. I support this petition 100%. Please explain to us how you calculate these inflated numbers and weights for recreational fisherman! Is it based off the Saltwater registry. Not everyone is fishing 7-days a week.
Robert Timmons	Abington, PA	2016-12-30	It is unfair and stupid, you are going to lose Billions of dollars in tax revenue and money spent by the recreational fishermen.
Jeff Pierce	Brick, NJ	2016-12-30	How many short fish are killed that are caught and released because they are short. If it was 16 or 17 people would get their limit quicker and not catch release or kill other fluke
Eric Klein	East islip, NY	2016-12-30	We the recreational fisherman are being punished because of faulty data and that the fishery has to be managed better than it is now, the way we manage our fisheries must change for the better in order to keep this precious resource for our children and the future. Conservation is Not Preservation!
Stephan Smith	Morrisville, PA	2016-12-30	Do not have such a restrictive measure for recreational fisherman.
Barry Connell	Howell, NJ	2016-12-30	I am signing this because this regulation is ridiculous This will KILL the charter boat industry of NJ
Ralph Lee	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-30	Someone messed up. The data is suspect. How can they be so far off? Reduce the limits somewhat, but not 40%. Do a better job with the research. Don't destroy an industry if you're just guessing.
Michael Yocius	Bridgeton, NJ	2016-12-30	Repeated quota cuts due to outdated and fictitious data is absurd. The proposed cuts will destroy thousands of family businesses that have flourished for decades, long before closed season, creel and size limits for recreational fishermen ever existed for this species.
Jeffrey Huber	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-30	Because it's so hard for us to bring anything home as it is
Jeff Bauer	Manahawkin, NJ	2016-12-30	Proposed regs r stupid. I fish 280+ days a year. Who on the governing board has any idea what's really going on.?
william behrens	Mastic Beach, NY	2016-12-30	This is asked on false data
Martin Heilman	Elkins Park, PA	2016-12-30	I want to maintain the current seasons and bag limits....
James Clearkin	Margate, NJ	2016-12-31	To demand the status quo and no changes be made
Chuck Umba	Woodbury, NJ	2016-12-31	I am a charter captain
John Aurnhammer	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-31	quit using flawed science for the stock assessment
Mark De Monaco	Sayreville, NJ	2016-12-31	Mark De Monaco
James Mahon	Deer Park, NY	2016-12-31	I like. Fluke fishing and don't own a boat these new regulations may put many party boats out of business .
Chris Bender	Manahawkin, NJ	2016-12-31	Because I do not believe it's fair to the recreational fishermen
Andrea Tamburinp	Brigantine, NJ	2016-12-31	I'm signing because I believe that 2016 regulations were fair.
Gabriel Shvartsman	Hyde Park, MA	2016-12-31	Commercial fishermen should have the same size limits as the recreational fishermen and then the population would rise
Linda Oles	Brick, NJ	2016-12-31	My 2016 experience has shown the stock to be healthy. Keeping 19"+ fish will kill more breeders.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
ROBIN Harabin	Far Hills, NJ	2016-12-31	Rules should apply to commercial too! They take more than all! How are the small boats supposed to feed their families ?
Stan Penkalski	Bayville, NJ	2016-12-31	I don't think it's right. I've been fishing since I was old enough to remember. I am 33 yrs old grew up in Bayville fluking, and I remember when the size limit was 16 inch. I feel upping the size regs and doing more harm than good, I can't count the stories I hear of fish being tossed back with hooks stuck in their bellies that are 17,173/4. They will probably just died. I just think its absolutely ridiculous if a keeper fish a 19 it takes the fun out of fishing for a young anglers
Peter Marottoli	Sayreville, NJ	2016-12-31	I am a recreational fisherman and this would kill all us fisherman and all the bait stores head boats and is totally not necasary
Andrew Waksmundzki	Jackson, NJ	2016-12-31	Go after the commercial netter who are dragging the bay and ocean clean
John Ambrose	Flemington, NJ	2016-12-31	I am to the point of giving up the sport. I spend at least $5,000.00. A year on fishing related purchases. I quite honestly tired of the regulation circus.
James Elberson	Ocean view, NJ	2016-12-31	I think the data of flounder population is flawed and also the size limits do more harm to the overall population because of the taking of breeder fish
Ted Breitowich	Red Bank, NJ	2016-12-31	Please don't let bad science destroy people's livelihood and passion.
Joe Tropea	Logan Township, NJ	2016-12-31	Reject the MAMFC 2017 Fluke proposal and demand status Quo!
Gary Cogland	Matawan, NJ	2016-12-31	Please consider this petition on behalf of NJ anglers. Thank you, Gary Cogland.
John Fusco	Norwood, CO	2016-12-31	I love Fluke I don't like this
Scott Adams	Vincentown, NJ	2016-12-31	Stop the netters from raping the population!!!!! It's not the Rec fisherman's fault!!!
Robert Loneker	Kenilworth, NJ	2016-12-31	I fish therefore I am
Raymond formoso	Mount Holly, NJ	2016-12-31	Keep the limit down!
John Cuggy	Bronx, NY	2016-12-31	The availabilty all the way to Rhode Island was exceptional this past summer.
Chip Bergman	Stone Harbor, NJ	2016-12-31	We need the size & quanity limits to be based on accurate science. Please maintain current requirements until accurate data is available.
indy summer	Lyndhurst, NJ	2016-12-31	I am signing because fishing for fluke has been a summer tradition for over 35 years. I want this to continue and feel that the recreational fishermen are suffering for the commercial industry; whereas the size of the fish they harvest is way too small; stop the trollers; implement higher fines for those that keep "shorts".
Mark Gerritsen	Howell, NJ	2016-12-31	Setting limits have gotten out of hand. Especially when they are based on old outdated data...
Dominick Marandola	Palmyra, NJ	2016-12-31	I am signing this because I do not agree with the new restrictions that will be placed for summer flounder
Vicki Piperato	Absecon, NJ	2016-12-31	Most people will not fish. We will not even put boats in water..Not enough to enjoy
Rachel Kraycirik	Milford, NJ	2016-12-31	I believe in conservation but 2 fish at 19 inches is crazy. I believe 4 fish at 18 inches would be fair.
Sheldon Wyman	Middletown, NJ	2016-12-31	It would not be worth while to rent a boat to fish for fluke if the proposed regulations are in place.
Theresa Regetz	Lyndhurst, NJ	2016-12-31	It is unjust that commercial fishers are allowed to keep, and fillet, what would be considered a short for the everyday person. Commercial fishers should have the longer length requirement, not the people.
Brian Crispin	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-31	This is out of control. Stop your bureaucratic b.s..

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Michael Getmanov	Farmingdale, NJ	2016-12-31	It's tough enough now to get a fish at 18", 19" is even worse. On a typical trip a 17" fish can be caught by the dozens. All the while commercial fishermen can take 13" fish. Refs should be the same
Chris Volpe	Merchantville, NJ	2016-12-31	Put limits on commercial fisheries that are dragging nets while i fish with 1 rod
Denise Rossi	Philadelphia, PA	2016-12-31	This needs another look. 2 at 18.
Jerry Lucey	Hanover, MA	2016-12-31	Are you kidding? This just a ruse so we accept 3 @ 18.5"?? C'mon!
Paul Cummings	Westford, MA	2016-12-31	This looks like over reach to me. -Paul
Michael Lucca	Bronx, NY	2016-12-31	Michael Lucca
Malcolm Hargrove	Franklinville, NJ	2016-12-31	Please stop cutting quotas in the recreational summer flounder fishery for New Jersey. Fuck commercial fisherman when it comes to fluke. NJ fisherman are fucking sick of getting the cuts.
Deirdre sable	Manasquan, NJ	2016-12-31	Save our local economy...
Taylor Strom	Bronx, NY	2016-12-31	I want to keep the fluke limit for recreational fishermen the same as 2016 in 2017 because i work on charter boats and we make our money by having a decent number of sizable fish to keep. The customers wont want to come out to fish for two fluke at some ridiculous size! Thus leading us to having less buisness and a harder time getting quality fish in decent quantity.
John Perri	Vincentown, NJ	2016-12-31	NJ fluke are being taken by commercial boat from points south which have larger quotas thats why NJ stocks are down
Edward Guest	ocean view, NJ	2016-12-31	the people on NOAA Fisheries have no idea what is really going on with the catch quotas. I my self went flounder fishing 11 times and only caught 4 keepers for 2016 season. the size and limit should be changed to 16" size and 5 to keep.
Theresa Higgins	Islip, NY	2016-12-31	Something needs to be done
Robert Vertolli	Vineland, NJ	2016-12-31	This proposal is unfair to recreational fishermen and businesses associated with recreational fishing.
Joseph Puntasecca	Garwood, NJ	2016-12-31	The science and data is flawed, enough is enough, this is going to put hard working men and women out of business and there is plenty of summer flounder out there. There is no reason to raise the size limit, it will kill more fish in the end than prevent being caught than a much smaller size limit.
Chris Sheridan	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-31	I'm signing this because the limits being set forth are based on flawed and outdated data with questionable methodology. This would undoubtedly create an extreme hardship for the charter and party boats in our shore communities, along with the local tourism economies themselves. As a resident, I demand better from the governing bodies. I demand parity and true conservation.
Al Haase	Northport, NY	2016-12-31	I am signing because I feel the new restrictions would be catastrophic for the recreational business fishery. It also seems that the restrictions are based on an arbitrary assessment of data.
Stephen Granieri	Villas, NJ	2016-12-31	I have fished the Cape May county waters for 50yrs , The current regulations have all but killed the local party boat and tackle shops as they are now. There is now just one 8 hour party boat left in the county out of at least 20, The marina I keep my boat in had a waiting list for slips ,not any more. So now I guess you want to attend the Funeral for the fishing community in Cape May now .
Jeffrey Posluszny	Levittown, PA	2016-12-31	Give a man a fish he eats for a day, teach a man to fish he eats for life!

Name	Location	Date	Comment
jason currier	Waterbury, CT	2016-12-31	I am a recreational fisherman we already have size and number limits we can only take what is allowed i find that commercial should be limited not recreational we are limted to max while they can take off six=ze and species and are allowed to trash over catch
Michael Cargill	Paramus, NJ	2016-12-31	nmfs has no idea of the size of the fluke stock Last year was the worst year I hav ever had
Mark Damato	North Bergen, NJ	2016-12-31	Recreational fishermen always taken the hit ,must stop!
Daniel Friel	atlantic city, NJ	2016-12-31	keep the regulations the same as 2016
Andy Kunze	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-31	We cannot teach our kids the importance of catching and eating. Give us a choice
Michael Maahs	Villas, NJ	2016-12-31	Too many females being taken in the winter months when they spawn. Size limits target female fish.
John wesolowski	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2016-12-31	Reducing quota and increasing size will only hurt the recreational fisherman and the local businesses they support
Gary Grover	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-31	I't is always the recreational fisherman, that has to suffer the consequences for all. Look at all the jobs that will be lost, and business,s that it will drastically reduce their profits.How about the law makers stop and think before they act, or is that asking too much.
Dick Shepherd	Southampton, PA	2016-12-31	I didnot get any flounder in 2016, wear do these law makers get there info???
Jessica Bills	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-31	I'm signing because the study used to make this determination is outdated. Not only will you be hurting the local fisherman community and small business, but your also hurting the fish. The size you are suggesting for us to keep are the females! How are they supposed to regenerate without females to reproduce! Maybe you should get a new study to base your decision on what the limits should be. Because at this rate the local fishing boats who do trips, will go out of business. Also, let's get rid of dragging nets across our ocean for the commercial fishing!. That's destroyong the ocean more than these local fishing boats and the local fisherman. The Florida keys have outlawed commercial fisherman from dragging nets across the ocean floor ! Why can't we? I guarantee you those commercial boats kill way more undersized fish then any local fisherman!
Patrick Gardner	Tuckerton, NJ	2016-12-31	Keep taking the big breeders, let the smaller male fish go back..DAH!
John Reinert	Cherry Hill, NJ	2016-12-31	The size regs continue to go up yet I have seen no real effect on the numbers and size of fluke caught. Therefore it is time to stop killing local businesses.
John Zingis	Brick, NJ	2016-12-31	I am deeply concerned about the science and statistics behind the drastic cutback scheduled to be forced on us. NOAA needs to be more transparent, submit their statistics for peer review and hold more public meetings where peer review can be openly debated. If you care about this, please get involved and take a few minutes like I am doing now to support the Jersey Coast Angler's Association http://www.jcaa.org/ and become active. Make this your New Years Resolution. GET ACTIVE !!! Thanks John
Walter Koscinski	Brick, NJ	2016-12-31	I believe the decision makers don't have a clue.
Rick Jankowicz	Macungie, PA	2016-12-31	The information used by NOAA is flawed.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Ken Lefkowitz	Warren, NJ	2016-12-31	I am very concerned that a severe reduction will destroy an already diminished and fragile fishing and boating industry and severely impact tourism to NJ.
Jack Shea	Barnegat, NJ	2016-12-31	I am a bay and inshore fishing guide and this cutback will virtually destroy a vital component of New Jersey's summer tourism industry. This might be justified if supported by true science, but the continued use of clearly flawed data makes a mockery of science.
elizabeth pellini	cape may court house, NJ	2016-12-31	Back bay anglers should be able to catch flounder with a attainable size limit. Go after the commercial fisheries restrict their catch size.
Howard Breitowich	Atlantic Highlands, NJ	2016-12-31	Because I fish and I vote!
chris lee	플러싱, NY	2016-12-31	fishing indusrty dead .....
john harford	Springfield, PA	2016-12-31	Because these changes are ridiculous and made by those who do not understand the fishery
christine GERRITSEN	Neptune, NJ	2016-12-31	Allan Gerritsen Neptune, nj.
Eric Revelli	Clifton, NJ	2016-12-31	R/v bigelow could not produce an appropriate population study due to inappropriate gear(rock hopper) the F/V that ran a chain sweep in the same water produced 27% greater yield...we can not cut quota based on bad science
Scott Gerrard	Johnston, RI	2016-12-31	The recreational sector always get blames for overfishing.
Thomas Kuhn	Bonita Springs, FL	2016-12-31	To stop this faulted data and bring real numbers to the table.
Gerald Sanker	West Deptford, NJ	2016-12-31	This effects the economy of all the shore people and needs further study also the past reductions have not corrected the problem..Need to decrease the commercial fishing quotes
John Lawson	Dover, DE	2016-12-31	I fish and own a small boat for recreation.
Justin LoMonaco	Boothwyn, PA	2016-12-31	I don't want to see small shops out of business
Brian OLeary	Hillsborough, NJ	2016-12-31	Economic impact on recreational fishing industry and decision is made with incomplete scientific study.
John McLaughlin	Sewell, NJ	2016-12-31	It will kill jobs
John Dwyer	Hoboken, NJ	2016-12-31	I want to keep catching fluke. Higher size limits will result in not even bothering to fish for them anymore and will kill the recreational fishing industry in NJ. The commercial fishing boats need more stringent regulations, not recreational fisherman.
Mark Delio	Staten Island, NY	2016-12-31	Im sick of the powers that be doing blanket provisions and ignoring scientific facts of slot regulations being most effective for most fish species
Keith Marsico	Wantagh, NY	2016-12-31	I don't agree what there trying to do with the fluke regulations
Pierce Dopkin	Beach Haven, NJ	2016-12-31	I am a fisherman
Michael Beans	Washington, DC	2016-12-31	NOAA biologists are idiots.
Denise Walsh	Fairfield, CT	2016-12-31	My father fishes all the time and this will but a huge damper on his enjoyment and food.
Michael Cavanaugh	new york, NY	2016-12-31	I am a fisher and I vote what is being done to the commercial fishing boats
Michael Hostomsky	New york, NY	2016-12-31	I fish for fluke every single summer and limiting what we can bring in the boat more than what it is already limited to takes the fun out of the sport and puts less food on our plates.
conrad Greer	Neptune City, NJ	2016-12-31	There are plenty of fluke here but the large size limit means I come home with no keeper fluke.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Capt. Ryan Cooke	Freeport, NY	2016-12-31	I'm signing because providing our community the opportunity to enjoy fishing, a Long island tradition, has been my business for over 20 years. These regulations will put charter boats and party boats out of business, loosing part of our Long Island heritage.
Michael Rath	Islip Terrace, NY	2016-12-31	I am a recreational fisherman that supplements my income b working on party boats. This reduction would destroy many businesses.
Tony Moutinho	Seaside Park, NJ	2016-12-31	these regulations are too restrictive
Jan Mizeski	Naugatuck, CT	2016-12-31	Update your data before setting quotas.
Al Czehut	Columbus, NJ	2016-12-31	Proposed regulations are unrealistic with no consideration to the real stock assessment
Schaeffer Robert	Bloomingdale, NJ	2016-12-31	I fish for summer flounder and believe that NOAA is using flawed data.
Michael Curran	Laramie, WY	2016-12-31	This is not sound science.
Manny Remelgado	Toms River, NJ	2016-12-31	I am a recreational fisherman. The commercial guys get more and more every year, enough is enough. Politicians, we will remember you at election time.
Barbara Beans	Smithsburg, MD	2016-12-31	Recreational anglers deserve there fair share of the quota.
Judy aubin	Bethpage, NY	2016-12-31	It is not the recreational fishermen, it is the commercial fishermen with the nets that take all the fish.
Matthew Derose	Stone Harbor, NJ	2016-12-31	I've been a flounder fisherman for 25 years. If anyone should be affected by these Regs. It should be commercial fisherman and the states that have sizes 16 and under
Michael Cizek	Englishtown, NJ	2016-12-31	The proposed fluke regulations are simply rediculous!
Henry landau	Princeton Junction, NJ	2016-12-31	Having fished the Jersey Coast for over 50 years, as beach replenishment continues these fish move on to bluer waters. As the bottom has been disturbed fish have moved to where the bait has found refuge. Can't the powers that be understand this?
Al Little	Hayes, VA	2016-12-31	We need this fish to enjoy and to feed ourselves and our family
stuart lawrence	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-01	This is absolutely unacceptable
Mike Stinson	Mount Laurel, NJ	2017-01-01	Because I feel that their regulations are so overblown it's not even funny they should Closet trying to lock in money for the commercial people because they give him so much money
Greg Pawlak	Montvale, NJ	2017-01-01	These options are being based off faulty science. Nothing is being done to curtail the commercial fishing, especially during their breeding period. Not to mention the shore businesses that will end and be financially desimated.
Arthur Rescigno	West Babylon, NY	2017-01-01	I fish!
Steve Mullen	Riverside, NJ	2017-01-01	Fishery management needs to be reviewed !!!
Eileen Truncale	East northport, NY	2017-01-01	This is not fair to the recreational fisherman. Last year I fished with my boat 12 times and took two fluke all season. What about commercial fishing boats that go out multiple times daily hitting 30 to 40 fish a trip? This reduction is unfair. Raising the size to 19 inches disgraceful. Instead of putting restrictions on recreational fisherman, impose increased restrictions to those who do the most damage to the fishery.
Michael Wlaszynowicz	Levittown, NY	2017-01-01	It's getting pretty ridiculous.
Steve Lessard	Old Lyme, CT	2017-01-01	recreational fisherman are now over regulated on top of having to pay for marine fishing licences
Phil Peroni	New Egypt, NJ	2017-01-01	As a weekend angler my time on the bay is minimal and to find a 19" fluke is absurd

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Justin Van Elsland	West Berlin, NJ	2017-01-01	A new stock assessment needs to be done and flawed science methods need to be looked at.
Sloan Gurney	Orient, NY	2017-01-01	The proposed reductions and detrimental regulatory changes will have harmful financial results to both my business, my employees, many other businesses like mine and countless other businesses that both support mine and rely on ones like mine. The system to create new regulations is 100% flawed with the use of made up false data. It's a crime that anyone can call this system scientific or matimatically accurate. I am both a professional captain in this fishery and graduate engineer and I know for a fact the data collection is a farse. Everything that stems from this false date is not true. the system needs to be re evaluated immediately and the fishery can't be shut down because the current system is completely broken.
Christopher Galamb	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-01	I'm against the new proposed regulations. Unfair to the recreational fisherman and their families.
Michael Daniels	Haddon Heights, NJ	2017-01-01	I am a recreational flounder fisherman and this proposal for a 19" limit is ridiculous and uncalled for. How can this continue going up every year when commercial fishing vessels can keep flounder much smaller. This proposal is unfair and cannot pass. For all the time and money we put into taking our kids out to fish, we just want a fighting chance to come home with a keeper and this proposal for a 19" limit just takes that away.
Brenden Rutigliano	Lindenhurst, NY	2017-01-01	Captree Bait Shop is my Life.
Mark Jones	Temple, PA	2017-01-01	rod and reel fisherman don't hurt the ocean netters destroy the population
Thomas McGuire	West Babylon, NY	2017-01-01	I disagree with the shortened fluke season
dave lilly	Hazlet, NJ	2017-01-01	over fishing is not happening . the fishery is healthy . its the killing of females causing havoc .
george torok	Larchmont, NY	2017-01-01	too severe how are fishing boats going to make a living
george costantini	Columbus, NJ	2017-01-01	the importance of manageing the modeling approach to reflect the current state of fluke reproduction on the east coast.
Richard Hommel	Elmwood Park, NJ	2017-01-01	If the proposed 2 fish @ 19" goes into affect for NJ I will not fish this year. I party boat fish exclusively.
Thomas Smith	West Orange, NJ	2017-01-01	A national past time is being taken away from us based on questionable data combined with commercial over harvest.
Paul Lenzo	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	2017-01-01	I fish, I vote
Richard Terry	Edison, NJ	2017-01-01	Enough is enough.
Michael Sites	Salem, NJ	2017-01-01	I'm signing because I am a recreational fisherman. Another year of reduction will continue the negative economic impact on businesses, all because of bad science.
Captain Jeff Gutman	Middletown, NJ	2017-01-01	The cuts are based on flawed MRIP data, poor trawl surveys by the Bigelow and condemn long time family businesses to failure through no fault of their own.
thomas butkiewicz	Edison, NJ	2017-01-01	costs me alot of money to catch a few fluke while the others make the money
Arthur Hall	Glenwood Landing, NY	2017-01-01	A new stock assessment need to be completed.we catch and release more fluke then ever before
Dave Granitzki	Chatham Township, NJ	2017-01-01	This isn't fair!
Rich DiVerniero	Mullica Hill, NJ	2017-01-01	We need to stop harvesting the large female breeders, the current system doesn't work.
Vinny Makfinsky	Perth Amboy, NJ	2017-01-01	This quote will put a financial burden on party and charter boats.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
James Mazzariello	Staten Island, NY	2017-01-01	A better study needs to be done to make a valid decision
William Grill	Deal, NJ	2017-01-01	Economic impact would be substantial.
Joseph Floridia	Mount Olive Township, NJ	2017-01-01	I feel the Sportman loses again while commercial fishermen continue to deplete the fisheries
Adele Van Pelt	Edison, NJ	2017-01-01	It's ridiculous! Two fish at 19 inches! Not worth even to fish!
Ray English	Brick, NJ	2017-01-01	I'm signing because the data collection mechanism is flawed, this will not only punish the recreational fishing community but will have a negative economic impact on the party boat fleets as well.
Thomas Licknack	Linden, NJ	2017-01-01	these restrictions are rediculous
Dennis DePalma	Montville, NJ	2017-01-01	"Family bond" , memories lasting a lifetime, also the jobs supporting this vacation industry
dennis farrell	so seaside park, NJ	2017-01-01	its not fair.....
Dominic Iadicicco	Happyvill, NY	2017-01-01	This is unfair. Use real science to measure the bio mass not some anticrated ask fisherman survey that has been proven to be fawled.
Jason Grieco	Hillsborough, NJ	2017-01-01	Use real data to make informed decisions...
allan sherman	toms river, NJ	2017-01-01	I'm am signing this because I believe good science is not being used
Karla Arroyo	Bedminster Township, NJ	2017-01-01	The proposed fluke regulations are unfair and unhealthy for the fluke population. Tighter regulations need to be placed on commercial fishing boats no recreational anglers.
Thomas LaMagna	West Babylon, NY	2017-01-01	I need to eat
Anthony Lopopolo	Princeton, MA	2017-01-02	I am an avid fisherman who disagrees with the proposed changes.
Robert Hilly	Northfield, NJ	2017-01-02	The regulations are already too harsh on the recreational fishery
Larry Browning	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-02	You are denying me the basic right to enjoy my freedom and put food on my family's table in an economic way.
James McCabe	South Plainfield, NJ	2017-01-02	why does our government place political hacks and idiots in charge of such important controls.
Richard Funaro	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-02	Save fluke Fishing Season in 2017.
Elizabeth DAgostino	Baldwin, NY	2017-01-02	It is expected that those changes could eliminate or lessen the need for quota reductions but NOAA Fisheries has no plans of updating the assessment before approving the 2017 ABC.
John Walker	Newport, RI	2017-01-02	Im a fisherman
Donald Beyer	Linden, NJ	2017-01-02	Commercial fishermen are getting away with murder of 14 inch fish
Thomas Dupras	Somerset, NJ	2017-01-02	I fish and I want to keep fishing.
Mark Chamerlain	Lake Worth, FL	2017-01-02	You are going to destroy the livelihood of so many business with this and the fluke numbers have skyrocket over the last couple years
Fran Donahue	Absecon, NJ	2017-01-02	This is an outrage!!! More govt over reaching in our lives!! Enough!!
Stephen Failla	Frenchtown, NJ	2017-01-02	This completely unfair to us and enough is enough they can keep shoving these kind of regulations down our throats
Nicholas Calio	Rio Grande, NJ	2017-01-02	I don't believe the data that we harvested too many fluke in 2016. Personal experience was very few fluke caught; same experience with many friends who fish frequently. In addition we fish out of Cape May area. Many of our favorite fishing areas are close to Delaware so we see many Delaware boats fishing the same area. It doesn't seem fair that Delaware has such less stringent regulations. I also believe that a slot limit be imposed as it is apparent that the larger fluke are predominantly female.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Marc Hrycak	Clifton, NJ	2017-01-02	There is no supported data to say the stock is declining. If you increase the size to 19", you are taking mostly breeding fish. You will put the party/charter boat industry in a position to go out of business. Why does the commercial industry keep 14" fish.
Robert Lynch	Haddonfield, NJ	2017-01-02	I'm signing because I also vote. Your Data is flawed and its wrong how people who dont use the correct data can make decisions that effect so many.
john panzera	Nutley, NJ	2017-01-02	recreational fisherman support so many more jobs than commercial fishermen
Pete Joram	New Fairfield, CT	2017-01-02	Trying to keep my charter customers into fishing not boating
Frank Silvestro	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-02	I fish and I vote!!
Tony Borowski	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-02	What is amazing to me is the way the "overfished" status is used. We had quite a few days where there were small craft warnings everywhere yet those days were counted as a day fished. The model is broken and the powers to be ignore the obvious.
Craig Alexander	Bellport, NY	2017-01-02	NOAA needs better scientific facts before crippling and industry with it's broad stroke reductions.
Davon Good	Sellersville, PA	2017-01-02	These regulations are killing the fishing industry. Regulations are based on skewed scientific data.
Guardabaso John	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-02	This quota is based on bad methods
michael olkowski	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-02	the federal governments original purpose was to act as a referee for the states. it has now become an out of control neighborhood bully who makes up the rules as it goes along no matter the empirical and anecdotal data which unquestionably indicates it has lost its gawd dang mind and has, and is, selling the public's interest out to special interest. And guess what? The Nazi's were the first ones to try turning the ocean into a big fish tank, and it is as though the same logic is being applied."Make the lie big. Keep it simple. Keep repeating it, and they will believe it." Sig heil, NOAA.
Rick Carroll	Brick, NJ	2017-01-02	This reduction is ridiculous and will hurt the fisherman and all the boating business
ALLAN KOVITZ	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-02	It's time to wake up and deal with the real science. We can't use outdated and incorrect data to force laws upon our citizens. The only thing that this will bring about is a lot of innocent people breaking the law.
Greg Bacilo	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-02	This fishery is critical to my community
dan elliott	Woodbury, NJ	2017-01-02	NOAA Fisheries believes that recreational fishermen exceeded their recreational harvest limit in 2016 and i believe in the tooth fairy, how about proof not guesses
james macfarlane	Howell, NJ	2017-01-02	I fish for fluke year round with 4 others, I don't think anyone of us caught their limit in 2016.
Robert Billerman jr	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-02	I have a family of four and need to be able to feed them with a catch of the day.
Chris Panza	Barnegat, NJ	2017-01-02	I recreationally fish for Fluke, its a rare occasion that we can get a limit of fish but this 40% reduction will stop me from fishing (I spend about $5000.00 per year at the shore on my boat and upkeep.
Kevin Patterson	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-02	I am tired of decisions on recreational catch quotas being determined w/o any accurate statistics and/or science to back it up!!!
Joe Kocinski	Mastic Beach, NY	2017-01-02	There is no shortage of fluke
thomas rummell	port monmouth, NJ	2017-01-02	Regulations will be much to stringent.
James Cha	Oakland Gardens, NY	2017-01-02	Regulations are too strict

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Joe Kisty	Woodbridge Township, NJ	2017-01-02	This proposal will be devastating blow to the economy of the coastal states during the summer fishing season. Not to mention that the regulations are predicated upon faulty data.
Thomas Wysocki	Evesham Township, NJ	2017-01-02	I am a recreational angler who spends thoundsands of dollars per year well out pacing the commercial interests that have killed our fisheries for years
Kelly Trageser	Brick, NJ	2017-01-02	There is nothing wrong with the fluke fishery. There are numerous amounts of fluke available. I do not believe the science used to justify these proposed regulations. I demand status quo
Edward Horvath	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-02	I'm a fisherman, in my 70's, and have been fishing more than 50 years. It's a shame that every year, we are being restricted to keeping less and less fish. KEEP THE 5 FISH LIMIT FOR FLUKE, AT 18"
Michael Homcha	Douglassville, PA	2017-01-02	This is not based on scientific data.
jerry malanga	Lavallette, NJ	2017-01-02	anothwr year, another restriction.....There are not many options when it comes to the inshore fishery and once we go this far, we won't go back. I've seen a huge improvement in big fish caught and released in the last year
Kevin Stanton	Florence Township, NJ	2017-01-02	I don't want the 2 fish limit.
Michael Curren	Eatontown, NJ	2017-01-02	The regulations make no sense, are based on flawed data and will negatively impact too many families.
David Risilia	Morrisville, PA	2017-01-02	I fish and I vote!
Walter Swet	Stillwater, NJ	2017-01-02	They slowly chip away at the limits and eventually this fishery will be all together eliminated for the recreational fisherman and all for the commercial fisherman.
joyce woods	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-02	I fish
Mario Tango Jr	Spring Lake, NJ	2017-01-03	I enjoy fishing. I much rather spend time and effort on catching a fish than paying extrordinary market cost. Based on allowing the commercial draggers to keep mezmerizing amounts of lbs of fluke, we recreational fisherman must suffer.
Douglas Walker	Beach Haven, NJ	2017-01-03	I fish
Nick Hanzel	Franklinville, NJ	2017-01-03	The commercial quota needs to be reduced, not the recreational.
Bruce Armitage	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-03	The regulations are fine just how they are want to bring bigger and more abundant fluke back to our water shorten the betters season and raise their size limits to the same as the recreational fishermans
Debbie Scull	Absecon, NJ	2017-01-03	I do not agree with your opinion. These rules are killing America.
Chris Gray	Fresh Meadows, NY	2017-01-03	Heavier restrictions need to be put on the draggers
Mitchell Fulcher	East Hampton, NY	2017-01-03	Should have a minimum hook size and make bait illegal, fluke stock would rebound in a year
Andrew Fedkiw	Morrisville, PA	2017-01-03	I'm 19 and actually want something to fish for in my lifetime. These regulations are complete bs and you guys know it. Way to ruin fishing for me and ruin people's livelihoods. You guys are clueless people that have no clue what your doing. You mine as well ask an ediot to make the regulations because that's what you guys are.
Caleb haniquet	Farmingdale, NY	2017-01-03	To support local business and local industry.
anthony salvaggio	Jackson, NJ	2017-01-03	The regs are not backed by complete correct science. It is voodo science. Why is it thag the commercial guys never get their quota or size changed.There is no way rod and reel guy can damage a stock like the COMMERCIALS DO . How many times i go out and catch shorts all day because the regs are killing the breeders not the rod and reel guy.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
David Dibblee	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-03	The rule changes do not reflect what is actually being witnessed on the fishing grounds. Unrealistic cutback.
Nuno Decosta	Ardsley, NY	2017-01-03	"Scientific" data is flawed as last year the entire coast experienced good fluke fishing
Tom Hill	Hackettstown, NJ	2017-01-03	tHE RLES AND REGULATIONS BEING IMPOSED ON FISHERMAN ARE REDICULUS
Karen D'Aniello	Wantagh, NY	2017-01-03	I'm a fisherman
Joseph Garcia	Brookhaven, PA	2017-01-03	I love fishing
Daniel Kelly	Rosenhayn, NJ	2017-01-03	This Fluke issue needs to be appropriately taken care of!
Fred Scherer	Absecon, NJ	2017-01-03	Shut down the commercial fishery
Edward Reilly	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	The plan is flawed. A slot would be a much better option. With this plan all we are doing is taking breeders
Robert Figurski	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-03	Present and proposed rules are blatantly unfair. I see way undersized fluke in food stores all the time sold there by commercial fishing boats. This by-catch rules for commercial fishing boats from all over the East Coast now in NJ is unfair
Ralph Fraumeni	Levittown, NY	2017-01-03	I believe the stock is healthier than the assessment being used to justify these severe reduction policies.
walter johnson	Medford, NJ	2017-01-03	this has just gone far enough , there are somany fish and somany throwbacks it just does not make sense.
Morris Sherak	Farmingdale, NJ	2017-01-03	As a boat owner and avid fisherman I find it appalling that regulations, such as this, are implemented without sound scientific data to support them.
William Kleimenhagen	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-03	These quota reductions will kill the recreational fluke fishing industry.
Larry Hart	Old Bridge, NJ	2017-01-03	I enjoy taking kids fluking and enjoy it even more when they eat their catch (often it's the only fish they will eat). The look on their faces when they have to throw back the biggest fish they ever caught is disheartening. Increased size restrictions and decreased bag limit will demoralize our kids. . . .
Ronald Maxwell	Lehighton, PA	2017-01-03	I have signed as I believe that inaccurate sampling and scientific criteria are currently being used to determine current levels for these fish.
Melissa Dearborn	Huntington Station, NY	2017-01-03	No changes should be made until a new assessment of the Summer Flounder Fishery is conducted. This reduction is going to be devastating to the recreational industry!
john french	west islip, NY	2017-01-03	Its insane to keep killing an industry and restricting tax paying citizens from pursuing a pastime based on faulty data which is skewed to advance the environmentalist agenda.
John DeBona	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	The livelihood of tens of thousands depend on better science to be developed and used than the fatally flawed system now being used.
joe Martin	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-03	Needs to be a better way. I will end up killing so many fish just to get that elusive 19 in. fish. I will not fish. Sad
Reed Riemer	Oceanside, NY	2017-01-03	I have little confidence in the data that is driving this reduction.
Steve DiGiacomo	Vincentown, NJ	2017-01-03	Commercial fishery is hurting fish quota's,not the recreational fisherman
Paul Shafer	Bethel, CT	2017-01-03	I'm signing because I feel there should be accurate data to base decisions and the cutbacks as proposed will be devastating. Fluke "recovered" with far more lenient regulations than what are being proposed...which will also focus efforts at removing the largest breeding females from the ocean.
Alex Lynn	Sicklerville, NJ	2017-01-03	Damage to a suffering industry

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Andrew Warner	mullica hill, NJ	2017-01-03	I am a recreational sport fisherman affected by this
Mike Durkin	Runnemede, NJ	2017-01-03	I am a recreational fisherman outraged by government over-regulation and incompetence he
Christopher DeFoe	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-03	The biomass is strong and anyone who fishes when conditions are favorable that the shorts to keeper ratio is staggering and if anything we should be decreasing the size to reduce overall mortality.
Henry Hyatt	Port Chester, NY	2017-01-03	I'm a recreational fisherman and misguided regulations are causing economic damage and loss of recreational family time
Michael Inzetta	East Brunswick, NJ	2017-01-03	Please stop using bad data and bad science to determine the future of a fishery.
George J Dennis	Staten Island, NY	2017-01-03	I can't see where they get their info on the recreational fisherman/woman are over fishing. When they try to explain it, it's in words most of us can't understand what the hell they are talking about.
guy mauriello	Hammonton, NJ	2017-01-03	I am an avid fluke fisherman and this will stop me from enjoying summer fishing.
Koropka Stan	Milford, DE	2017-01-03	SK
John DeBona	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	To encourage better science!
George Algard	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-03	because I'm in the business and this will be the end of life as we knew it
MICHAEL NOLAN	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	Over regulation is killing the recreational fishing in NJ and putting local merchants out of business. Save the Rod & Reel Fisherman.
kenneth mancini	Beverly, NJ	2017-01-03	I believe proposed reductions are overregulation based on outdated assessment studies of highly questionable accuracy
James Hom	New York, NY	2017-01-03	Concerned
Christopher Zegler	Nutley, NJ	2017-01-03	We need better science to understand the current stock which appears to be healthy.
Michael Waters	Massapequa Park, NY	2017-01-03	I have no faith in what the scientific community is announcing regarding over fishing and believe they have been hi jacked by the pew organization and a few others
joseph cleveland	bayville n.j., NJ	2017-01-03	I fish for the talbe ! I have a lot of money & time into my fishing ! I spend about 10,000 ayear on fishing !
Donald Detwiler	Telford, PA	2017-01-03	I am signing this petition because the proposed regulations in regard to the recreational fishery are grossly inequitable. I am requesting that NOAA Fisheries maintain the current summer ABC at 16.26 million pounds until a benchmark assessment for summer flounder is conducted.
Mark Read	Lansdale, PA	2017-01-03	Stand up for recreational fishing rights We put money back into the community's we fish in - lodging - dining - bait n tackle And charter captains - can you say the same for the commercial fishing industry
Joseph Damone	Ocean City, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing this because the statistics used to reduce the summer flounder are unrealistic.
Frederick Gaguski	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	2017-01-03	The NOAA and NMFS continue to ignore research by competent and qualified scientist's that prove, the taking of larger fish is removing mainly females or "breeders" and is hurting the fluke population as well as recreational and commercial fishing industries.
michael pylypyshyn	bloomfield, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm fed up with all the reg's that make no sense at all....time for a change

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Raymond Morasse	Caldwell, NJ	2017-01-03	I am fed up with the consistent over-regulation of the recreational fluke season in NJ, especially while commercial draggers are free to deplete the fluke fishery, and others, virtually at will.
Stephen Walls	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-03	We are over regulated as it is...
Warren Cohen	Westfield, NJ	2017-01-03	I am signing this petition because I do not believe the numbers that are being produced. Fluke fishing is instrumental to our tourist trade, and responsible for many jobs, as well as tax revenue.
Joseph Hubert	Milford, NJ	2017-01-03	I am signing this to stop getting the shaft from people who don't know which end is even up!!!!!
Drew Sunderlin	Dagsboro, DE	2017-01-03	As a recreational fisherman for over 60 years, I am tired of the ever increasing regulations our government imposes on us.
Reel in the commercial bias Walt Swartz	Levittown, PA	2017-01-03	I've watched recreational portion reduction for decades
william demarest	baldwin, NY	2017-01-03	I'm signing this because I have not been able to catch a legal size summer flounder for two years, so to feed my family I had to purchase the fluke from a seafood market that caught the fish in the same waters I was in.
elaine katz	hewlett, NY	2017-01-03	Restrictions are totally unfair
Joel Shafer	Dresher, PA	2017-01-03	I am a recreational fisherman and it is hard enough to get a "keeper". Tighten commercial fishing regulations, not regulations for those of us going out on weekends trying to get something for the table.
Scott McGahey	Island Heights, NJ	2017-01-03	The data used is Flawed!!!!!!
Walter Kobin	Morristown, NJ	2017-01-03	Because I firmly believe in the RFA and their efforts on behalf of the individual angler.
Robert Cameron	Haledon, NJ	2017-01-03	Ifish all year and to limit the Fluke to 2-3 fish is going to cause a large economic disaster for everyone who is involved including shops, marinas and fishermen.
Robert switzer	Smithville, NJ	2017-01-03	No changes in regulations should take place until a stock reassessment is completed end of 2017

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Anthony Sorrell	Larchmont, NY	2017-01-03	I am a long time fisherman from the NY metro area I recently learned that the 2017 summer flounder recreational fishery will face a reduction of up to 40 percent due to estimated declines in the stock and because of the recreational sector having been estimated to go over the quota in 2016. I am opposed to these changes because they are unwarranted and destructive to the recreational fishery. As an angler, I fully support conservation. However, I am concerned about the significant negative impacts this reduction will have on fishing participation and coastal communities. Over 10,000 jobs depend on the recreational fishery for summer flounder, which generates over $1 billion in sales. New science from Cornell University will help inform a more accurate stock assessment for summer flounder, which is desperately needed. A new benchmark stock assessment is expected in early 2017 which would replace the out-of-date assessment from 2013 that is currently being used. Given this new information will provide a more accurate indication of the true health of the fishery, NOAA Fisheries should delay such a drastic and potentially catastrophic reduction until the new stock assessment, that incorporates the science from Cornell, is complete. Knowing the history of this fishery and how important it is to the fishermen of the mid-Atlantic region, a 29 percent ABC reduction going into 2017 is unnecessary and reactionary. I recommend that NOAA approve a 16.26 million pound ABC for 2017 and 2018 and assume that the recreational sector met but did not exceed its recreational harvest of 5.42 million pounds in 2016. Drastic changes should not be made until we have good data.
Stephen Rozen	Naples, FL	2017-01-03	There is never a real reduction of commercial fishing . It almost always falls on recreational fishermen. NOAA seems to really have a love affair with the commercial sector and the PEW people who would love to see no fishing!
James L Mount	HIGHTSTOWN, NJ	2017-01-03	The data being used is very questionable.
gary couch	ocean twp, NJ	2017-01-03	New data base must be established.
Meriwether Payne	Locustville, VA	2017-01-03	I'm signing because I am a charter captain and I fish only for flounder. This would be devastating to my business as well as others in Wachapreague,VA
Larry Zozzaro	Emerson, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing because this fishery is vital for the survival of both the party and charter boat industry, tackle shops, bait stores, restaurants, and any other business that depends on the recreational fishermen.
Paul Long	Medford, NJ	2017-01-03	I am a recreational fisherman who believes that the stock assessment is not based on valid data. The financial impact of this on our recreational fishing industry could be catastrophic.
Ralph Leyrer	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-03	I fish for a living. These rules will almost put me out of business
Barry Matus	Dagsboro, DE	2017-01-03	The flounder problems are caused by the commercial boats
Steve Cooper	Elkton, MD	2017-01-03	I've fished all my life and the past few years the fluck fishing in the Raritan bay has been steady with plenty of larger fish
Marc Weiss	Bangor, PA	2017-01-03	The proposed 2017 FLUKE regulations will kill small business' in NJ!
Ann Bendersky	Vienna, VA	2017-01-03	Flounder fishing is a huge part of our recreationsl and fishing industry. The data behind this proposal is sketchy at best and deserves more research uncluttered by overreaching Washington bureaucrats.
Wendell Nanson	Freehold, NJ	2017-01-03	Its not worth paying the gas to fish. I love to fish and they are taking it away from us.
Alan Maillet	Ashland, MA	2017-01-03	14" for comm, 19' for reg and you say you are trying to regulate the fishery for long term species health? Really?

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Laurence J Leary	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-03	I believe the data used to calculate the harvest is not accurate everyone I know that fished in 2016 complained about the keepable fluke tons of throw backs continue to restrict recreational anglers and you will ruin the industry from bait stores to boat builders
Raffaele Feniello	Wantagh, NY	2017-01-03	I own a boat and I go fishing and never come home with fish because the regulations are so strict. Its ridiculous. Commercial fisherman are not required to adhere to our recreational fishing which is what's killing the fishing if anything.
Willaim Winkel Jr	Bass River, NJ	2017-01-03	I am a recreational fisherman that takes the youth out to get them hooked on fishing. It is hard enough to get an 18" keeper on their hook let alone a 19" and then a 2 fish limit on top of it??!! Get the hell out of here!
Kenneth Pontari	Linwood, NJ	2017-01-03	I would like to see a more reliable way to collect the data before implementing a drastic quota change. I have seen videos of commercial fisherman by catch of monster flounder that are just thrown overboard thousands of pounds. This is what we should be looking at first not the weekend fisherman. Talk about draining the swamp with over regulation.
Joan LoPresto	Farmingdale, NY	2017-01-03	I am for a more equitable distribution of the 2017 quota. Not the draconian reduction that would be foisted upon NY anglers.
PAUL DIGGINS	BROOKLINE, MA	2017-01-03	NOAA never comes up with the correct recreational catch EVER
bill wrubel	Blue Bell, PA	2017-01-03	we need a common sense accurate and "fair to all parties" approach to fish conservation
richard clair	WEST DEPTFORD, NJ	2017-01-03	the reduction is too severe for the recreational fisherman and would cripple the economy for many coastal towns
nick cicero	point pleasant, NJ	2017-01-03	because we have more accurate science available that is not being used at this time we should hold off until we do a new stock assessment
Peter Frederiksen	Brielle, NJ	2017-01-03	These regulations are woefully detrimental to the fishing, boating and other marine industries of the mid-Atlantic states. I do not understand how NOAA believes the stocks were overfished so soon before the year actually ended. II do not know anyone who was contacted by NOAA about their fishing success over the summer. It is incredible the government would penalize recreational fishermen for the sake of the commercial fluke harvesters. It's time to make sumer flounder/fluke a strictly sport fish with absolutely no commercial netting allowed for 10 years. Recreational fishermen have been violated with size (remember 13" ??) and limit restrictions for too long.
Paula Devos	Little egg harbor, NJ	2017-01-03	ITS TIME TO STOP THE SCREWING AROUND.LETS GET SERIOUS.. JOHN DE VOS
Doug Taylor	Blackwood, NJ	2017-01-03	Time is right to get a true assessment and not a guesstimate
joseph ciaccia	Middletown, NJ	2017-01-03	NOAA is too narrow minded to make a meaningful decision. Look at the Bluefin Tuna regulation, the same for over twenty years and yet we see no improvement to the coastal fish population. Same thing for Fluke and others..
Mark Carduner	Cranbury, NJ	2017-01-03	Flawd data provided by NOAA....I spend a great deal of time on the water. Plenty of fish available.
Mihkel Poola	East Lyme, CT	2017-01-03	NMFS data is extremely flawed.To suggest that recreational fisherman exceeded their quotas is ludicrous!
Glenn Read	Blackwood, NJ	2017-01-03	Current restrictions and limits are more than sufficient. Its hard enough to catch a keeper flounder. Restrict the commercial fisherman who are harvesting babies., not the recreational fisherman who support local businesses

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Mike Speck	New Providence, NJ	2017-01-03	Recreational fishing should be a right of every american, like voting or owning a gun. In our capitalist government, we should understand that its a privilege and not a right to buy a fish in a supermarket - its a transaction. With that said, make reductions to the commercial fisheries and not recreational fishermen. I promise to be respectful of fish stocks, but get some good data, make good science and us recreational fishermen will do our part, catch and release if needed!
Stephen Bennett	Newark, NJ	2017-01-03	The proposed regulations are ludicrous and will only help the decline of the summer flounder fishery. We are killing the FEMALES with size limits of over 18". If you kill mostly females; reproduction rates will be less, plain and simple!
Fred Desrf	Morristown, NJ	2017-01-03	I love flounder.
Donald Granger	Wantagh, NY	2017-01-03	this a crime what the gov,t is doing using old data
Jeff Brendel	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	I FISH and I VOTE!!!!!
William Kurpiecki	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-03	I do not believe the fluke information for setting regs is accurate
albert wallin	stockholm, NJ	2017-01-03	there seem to be no restrictions on commercial fisherman who kill or waste more bio-mass than recreational fisherman could ever imagine in a life time.
Brad Burnett	Montville, NJ	2017-01-03	I can't believe how many fluke I catch - and have to throw back because they are too short. The stock is fine - keep the length as is and no reductions!
Lee Scanny	Linwood, NJ	2017-01-03	Born and raised a flounder fisherman in the back bays of Margate NJ. I am now a fill in captain on a couple party boats targeting flounder operating in this area. I'm concerned not only for the businesses but the many friends made through the years who enjoy catching and eating an occasional flounder. Please help. Thanks
lou costanza	middletown, NJ	2017-01-03	i fish ,i vote , you need current data ,not a magic ball !
Joseph Pickel	Matawan, NJ	2017-01-03	More scientific evidence is need before such drastic actions are taken to reduce this fishery by 40%.
Raymond Vicari	New Milford, NJ	2017-01-03	Because I can't believe that us recreational fishermen are depleting the Fluke biomass. I went Fluking at least 10 times in 2016 and only had a few keepers, and it was the same for the rest on the party boats. One trip there was over 50 anglers and only one, yes only one keeper on that trip. There were many 17 to 17 3/4 inch throwbacks. Question, why are the size limits 14 inch for commercial and 18 inch for recreational? No wonder why we can't keep many; we only get to catch what falls through the net or the one keeper that once in a while the nets miss!
Raymond DiStase	Mays Landing, NJ	2017-01-03	Faulty"science".. Enough is enough!
FENTON JIM	West Berlin, NJ	2017-01-03	JIM FENTON
John Connell	Monroe Township, NJ	2017-01-03	This is the correct action to take
Carl Despreaux	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-03	Any fluke angler knows the data concerning fluke catches is flawed. I urge you to set a lower length size limit to prevent the harvest of only breeder size females, and to increase the commercial size limit to equal the recreational size limit. The current 14" commercial size is ridiculously unfair. Use some common sense!
William Hoyle	Dagsboro, DE	2017-01-03	I think the quota is fine where it is.
Don Fix	Lavallette, NJ	2017-01-03	The data that is being used is not accurate. I have fished for over fifty years and have never been surveyed or know of any fishing friends that have been surveyed. More imput from recreational fishermen must be considered before rules are passed!

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Robert Lukach	Wharton, NJ	2017-01-03	The loss of jobs in the commercial fishing industry and impact to recreational fishermen
Henderson Cho	Blue Bell, PA	2017-01-03	The loss of jobs in the commercial fishing industry and impact to recreational fishermen
Richard Knisell	Mullica Hill, NJ	2017-01-03	I am not convinced that reduced recreational fishing will bring a significant change in the flounder population. They need to expand/improve their measurement models and look at the real distribution before imposing such heavy sanctions.
Tom Alessi	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-03	I boat and fish
James Bufis	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	I fish all year round and tired of the recreational fishermen suffering from all the quota's they are trying to put on the guy using a hook,line & sinker to try to catch fish, as opposed to the dragger scooping up all the shorts that eventually die in there nets and don't have a chance to live another day....thanks
Joe Tekula	Roxbury Township, NJ	2017-01-03	I don't wish to see any more reductions for the recreational fisherman or the negative impact on the party boat fleet and tackle shops.
Joseph Oles	Brick, NJ	2017-01-03	My fishing experience during the last couple of years has shown there to be no shortage of fluke. However, because of the regulations, I often come home with nothing to show. I catch a lot of fluke. TH H I have been catching a lot of fluke. They all wind up being thrown back because of the regulations.
Richard Adler	Wellington, FL	2017-01-03	totally inaccurate information is being used to set catch limits
Peter Spengler	Westport, CT	2017-01-03	The proposed legislation is a very bad idea for so many reasons
john krauss	Manchester Township, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing because at 80 yrs old I can't wait for them to get this fixed so we can keep a fish now and then and stop targeting the big fish!
Gary Agness Jr	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-03	Enjoy fishing and I don't want the new regulations to handcuff the fishing industry. If the new regulations are enacted many of the party boats and charter boats will go out of business and it will make it impossible to fish anymore.
Charles Kane	Bellmore, NY	2017-01-03	I OPPOSE THE NEW REGULATIONS, THAT IS BASED ON INSUFFICIENT AND FALSE DATA
vinny chianca	Kearny, NJ	2017-01-03	its bullshit all the regs
Charles Corring	Ponte Vedra, FL	2017-01-03	I fish in NJ
Gerald L Salzer	Woodbridge Township, NJ	2017-01-03	I own a small marina. My tenants are all fishing boats. I am also a fisherman. There's no sense renting a slip, buying gas for your boat, buying bait....etc.etc if you cannot catch and keep fish.
Charles Schoonmaker	Willard, NC	2017-01-03	I fish recreationally. It is hard to believe I catch more fish than the draggers/trawlers/net boats. Once again NOAA stands for " no one accountable for anything!"
Nancy Agness	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-03	The recreational flounder fishing has been awful for 2 years. Need to relax regulations, not tighten them!

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Bob Tarantino	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm a recreational fisherman.
Maureen Tarantino	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-03	my family fishes recreationally, and this would have a negative impact on our fishing activities.
Albert Travelina	Wilmington, DE	2017-01-03	the rec.fisherman are being regulated to death, what should be done is to lower the size limits to 161/2 inch.and 1 over 19inch with a 5 fish limit
Dan Kleuskens	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-03	I don't want the flounder depleted.
Mel Deak	Perth Amboy, NJ	2017-01-03	The fisheries management process is not broken because of the science used to manage fisheries, but in how it is MISAPPLIED by the bureaucracies that control it.
keith kesheneff	Lake Hopatcong, NJ	2017-01-03	cancel 40 %reduction until improved analysis is done.
alfred nemec jr	Rocky Hill, CT	2017-01-03	goverment has to much control and why does NJ have to follow what ever New England /New York have to do
Fletcher Chayes	Oceanport, NJ	2017-01-03	Don't put me out of business. The assessment needs to be updated.
Raymond Verrelle	Sewell, NJ	2017-01-03	I am not sure where they get their information but my family and me did not get more than 10 keepers last season mostly throwbacks also we are taking mostly females at that size.
Joseph Rossi	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-03	The fluke proposal is unfounded & unreasonable.
Anthony Ciasca	Burlington, NJ	2017-01-03	I believe your regulatory policies aren't working.
Paul Bulkilvish I	Phillipsburg, NJ	2017-01-03	With the time and money I spend on my boat, slip fees , gas, food, bait and tackle I think it is only right to let me keep some legally harvested fluke for my family , which is one of our favorite meals
John Sullivan	Maple Shade Township, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing because I fish for flounder and bass.
Mike Brezee	Blackwood, NJ	2017-01-03	To support the recreational fishing industry.
Timothy McNamara	STATEN ISLAND, NY	2017-01-03	I fish and I vote
scott dean	Cherry Hill, NJ	2017-01-03	bad data determining fishery
William A Vaughan	Medford, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm sick of the supposedly scientific ways NOAA sets catch quotas. Let's get real for a change.
Charles Longenecker	Medford, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing because I primarily fish for fluke on party boats and with a 2 fish limit I doubt if I will spend the money or any of my friends will. This will kill the party boat industry because they are being so heavily regulated and there are no alternative fish to catch that they can make a living on. I'm sorry but I don't see this proposal as a viable solution.
PETER BATTISTA	Staten Island, NY	2017-01-03	Not only will this hurt the recreational fishermen but it will also hurt other businesses associated in and around recreational fishing. Keep the fluke limits the same.
William Raab	Stella, NC	2017-01-03	I'm signing because I believe that NOAA (PEW and EDF in particular) are using invalid data to push an agenda to restrict fishing to a few large corporations.
Chris Afflerbach	Quakertown, PA	2017-01-03	Chris afflerbach
Robert Britt	Harrington, DE	2017-01-03	I do not believe the NOAA assessment of the flounder stock is correct.
Mark Sartori	Lavallette, NJ	2017-01-03	This is bullshit!
Neil Franzoni	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-03	The new regulations seem absurd and will greatly reduce the amount of family fishing time

Name	Location	Date	Comment
ADAM LAROSA	Holmdel, NJ	2017-01-03	I'm signing because this would destroy the recreational fluke fishery and a multi-million dollar industry that supports it.
john shwiner	Waretown, NJ	2017-01-04	only flawed data has been used to take away our rights to fish. there is no common sense to the laws and restrictions, I spend easily thousands of dollars on fishing alone every year, not counting I am planning to buy a new boat. which is now in question
Chip Matthews	Brielle, NJ	2017-01-04	I would like to see a better assessment of this decision before making such a drastic reduction of this very important recreational fishery.
Bill Rowan	Fair Haven, NJ	2017-01-04	I am signing because of 20 years of management and they keep trying to chop the quota down. When the commercial draggers make one set offshore in january and catch more in 2 hours than all the boats fishing out of sandy hook all summer
Nick Preuhs	Seaville, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing because it will negatively effect the livelihoods of too many people. Captains, party boats, tackle shops, etc.
Michael Woertz	Runnemede, NJ	2017-01-04	Keep regs status quo, same as last year
Charles Wehmeyer	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-04	This reduction is ridiculous. You will put a lot of people out of business.
Nicholas Savastano	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-04	I'm signing because I believe that there is no reason for a reduction in the fluke fishery. The stock was supposed to be restored 2 years ago so how can it be in such dire straights this year. I also believe that the data used to establish these quotas is flawed and should not be used to establish fishery quotas. I demand that the recreational quotas remain at the 2016 levels until a new benchmark assessment can be established.
Chris Wolowitz	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-04	I have twin 4 year old boys that are just starting to fish and the rate NOAA is going, they will never enjoy the best fishery that I have grown to love. Get the correct info then evaluate your need Dummies!
JOE GULA	Hempstead, NY	2017-01-04	I love to fish for fluke and do NOT believe the statistics given on availability of fluke in NY waters, not to mention the BAD effect it would bring from the breakfast diner, deli lunch sandwich maker, bait & tackle shops and party boat owners, captains & crews. Yes, ALL would be hurt and very bad for these businesses! Which pay good money in taxes! These new regulations must be scuttled like a sinking, stinky plan that it is! May the sun rise over the waters and the fish nip your finger taking him off your hook! Good fishing to all you mateys!
Michael Longarello Jr	Seaford, NY	2017-01-04	I caught 450 Fluke on my 22' boat in 2016 and only had 7 keepers. Something is definitely wrong with the data that is being collected.
Stephen Rudolph	Breezy Point, NY	2017-01-04	I believe that the science involved, does not accurately account for the purported diminished state of the Fluke population.
lou neumann	Portland, CT	2017-01-04	The statistics of overfishing are flawed. We fish connecticut and get very few keepers in the eastern part of the sound until the season is almost over. Then 3 fishermen are lucky to get 1 keeper each
Vincent Chiavola	Lindenhurst, NY	2017-01-04	I'm sick of the weak science and the year after year beating that the rod and reel fisherman have to endure. Every year you hurt the industry as a whole why can't you people see that?
Richard DiCaprio	Broomall, PA	2017-01-04	I know the sampling data is flawed. Please don't do this.
J.J. Lovett	Massapequa Park, NY	2017-01-04	I'm a south shore Long Island recreational fisherman - fluke is the season I get to enjoy with my children. This would impact our entire family.
Joseph Varrasse	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-04	This industry is in trouble and we need sound, informed decisions to save the fishery.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Greg Heiser	Milford, NJ	2017-01-04	I am signing this document, first because I fish every summer weekend at the jersey shore. Secondly, I do not agree with your findings. Please consider using the Rutgers and Save the Summer Flounder Fund studies to farther impact the studies. Also please respect the charter and partyboat captains opinions. Thank you for your respect on this matter. Sincerely
Edward Mcguinnes	Allentown, NJ	2017-01-04	I do not believe the data being used to reduce the existing quota is accurate! Based on the amount of fish I seen caught and released in recent years.
Paul Rickershauser	Medford, NJ	2017-01-04	The data is flawed and any reductions in quota should not take place and until the data is validated.
Terence McMackin Jr.	Bergenfield, NJ	2017-01-04	You keep taking enough from the recreational fisherman !!!! Leave us alone we are not the problem !!!
Mike Farrell	Wildwood Crest, NJ	2017-01-04	I like to fish and putting these sanctions on summer flounder is ridiculous !
Jeffrey Flamme	Island Heights, NJ	2017-01-04	The current quota should be evaluated as to its inappropriateness from all aspects, not some aspects, and I don't believe the new quota was proposed based on ALL considerations. Hold quota at 2016 level until that has been done.
Denis Glennon	Fort Lee, NJ	2017-01-04	Fluke are a great family fishing activity in which all can participate...would hate to see that limited.
Donald Lee	Colchester, CT	2017-01-04	Unfair restrictions being placed on the sport fisherman, Without enough reductions and over sight on the commercial boats. They are gonna kill a multi million dollars industry supported by the sport fisherman.
Richard Brettell	Yardville, NJ	2017-01-04	These standards are getting ridiculous.
Sean Garry	Jersey City, NJ	2017-01-04	The status quo should be held. I think any change will be detrimental to the recreational fishing charter boats. Putting people out of business is not the way to go!!
John Fowler	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	You should raise the 14" minimum of commercial fishing since they take in more fish then recreation fishing could ever catch in the same time. They get to keep 90% of what we have to release someone she get their head out of the sand. So it's time to get involved we pay a lot of money to the boat and fishing industry And can't even keep dinner for a family of four. Enough!
Anthony Eaton	Linwood, NJ	2017-01-04	To many non fisherman trying to make decisions.
James Molinaro	Sewell, NJ	2017-01-04	I fish and don't like all the regulations put on the recreational fisherman
John Geyer jr	East Rockaway, NY	2017-01-04	The way data is collected is totally flawed. Recreational fisherman keep 1 out of every 18 fluke caught. We aren't the problem.
Barry Lafferty	blue bell, PA	2017-01-04	They need better information to back up their claim!
Justin Getz	Easton, PA	2017-01-04	The regs keep getting worse and worse and its hard to take young ones or get youth involved when all we get to do is throw em back...
Robert Bolger	Newtown, PA	2017-01-04	We need more/better data to back up the claims of the government agencies. The recreational fishermen keep getting more and more regulations.
Michael Collins	North Kingstown, RI	2017-01-04	the proposed regulation hurts the recreational fisherman whose dollars go to support the local agencies, the local businesses and conservation efforts. By catch is the problem, not recreational fisherman.
April McDonough	Oakdale, NY	2017-01-04	This effects my livelihood as a fisherman and deckhand, we know first hand how the fluke population is successfully sustained and there's no reason for the new regulations.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Arthur Stokes	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing this because I want my two sons to catch fish this year and every year after!!
Albert Franchetta	Millville, NJ	2017-01-04	This is ruining the recreational fishery and it is all based on inaccurate data!
Eric Meyer	Allenwood, NJ	2017-01-04	I own a business that will be hit hard by these crazy limits.
Daniel DaCosta	Trumbull, CT	2017-01-04	Commercial fishing fluke is not controlled properly
Trevor Sherwood	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	The cutbacks are getting ridiculous. It doesn't make owning a boat as a fisherman worth it anymore.
Elbert Washington	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-04	As a retiree Fluke Fishing is how I spend my summers.
Ken Kakol	Plainfield, NJ	2017-01-04	I stopped fishing for fluke because everyone was undersize.
John Vigliante	Smithtown, NY	2017-01-04	The proposal is completely unfair to the recreational fisherman
Joe Riccobono	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	Leave status quo
Bobbette Clapsadle	Waterford, CT	2017-01-04	Take a harder look at the draggers and maybe you will see where change is needed.
David Lesperance	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	Recreational fishermen are not the problem. I almost have given up fluke fishing because it is already difficult to catch a legal limit in NJ. Don't shut down this fishery. I doubt there is any real science behind the change and it is all anti fishing politically based.
Brian A O'Neill O'Neill	Keansburg, NJ	2017-01-04	I Fish and support all business that pertain to this recreation
carleson richard	Plainfield, CT	2017-01-04	I enjoy recreational fishing and support business that support recreational fishing.
Kenneth Sepe	East Islip, NY	2017-01-04	The NOAA Fisheries data is seriously flawed.
William Harris	Marmora, NJ	2017-01-04	As a fisherman, I understand the immense burden that will be placed on the economy with quotas which are unsubstantiated by accurate data.
Michael Moriarty	Spotswood, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm fed up with this bull****
Chris Arico	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	Fluke fishing is over regulated and the data is not correct in sizing up current stocks.
Dan Lisak	Westfield, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing because Harambe
Ian snook	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-04	There are better management practices that could be utilized. Current management of the fisheries suggests that things keep getting worse no matter what regulations are authorized.
William Stamper	Plainfield, CT	2017-01-04	I think the problem does not the recreational fisherman but the commercial sector
Chris Lido	High Bridge, NJ	2017-01-04	Fluke are vital to charter/party boats and tackle shops and these extreme measures would put many out of business.
Peter Casagrande	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm singing this because these cuts will economicly devastating to the the fishing and boating industry.
Darren Berry	Rumson, NJ	2017-01-04	These new regulations are a joke. NMFS you can do better than this!
David Burke	Egg Harbor City, NJ	2017-01-04	The research and management are flawed. The size limit should allow for the harvest of male and female fluke. The current 18 inch limit for recreational fishermen targets the females. Allowing commercial fishermen to take smaller fish is unfair and discriminatory. Slot limits and small bag limits should be considered. Separate management strategies for North and South of Barnegat Inlet should be considered.
Michael Buczkowski	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-04	I am in the Marina Business and this will hurt my business
Christian Eckart	Hampton Bays, NY	2017-01-04	I

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Greg oconnell	Mays landing, NJ	2017-01-04	MSA is broken.... noaa is run by idiots... flush the swamp!
Gene Doebley	Somers Point, NJ	2017-01-04	The economic impacts of the cut are devastating. No change should be made until a new assessment is completed in 2017.
William D Richold	Flemington, NJ	2017-01-04	This will negatively impact party boat charters, tackle shops and local fisherman.
Thomas Gallagher	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-04	I am against the proposal of a limit of two fluke @ 19 inches each. To much of a restriction.
robert angelini	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-04	regulations excessive. ,not worth time ,cost of bait,gas ,boat etc to only keep 2 fish. causing a hardship for fishing industry
Chris Sandoval	Gibbsboro, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing this because I've been out for the past three years and haven't caught a keeper, but watch the netters swing into areas they are not allowed. Quit going after the recreational fisherman and go after the illegal netters, they are ruining it for everybody.
Bill Belcher	Wappingers Falls, NY	2017-01-04	The commercial's and their by-catch is the main cause of the decimation of the fluke population, not the recreational fisheries, who put so much back onto the economy. Put a higher limit on the commercial catch
ernie mellon	southampton, NJ	2017-01-04	I am a charter captain and this on top of the current sea bass regulations in my opinion will put 60 percent more of the boats still fishing out of business.
William Westervelt	Lanoka Harbor, NJ	2017-01-04	I believe that the methodology for this critical decision is flawed.
Wayne Ryan	Vincentown, NJ	2017-01-04	when will they start to use sicentific data and not assume that every time we fish we catch a limit
Paul Minenna	Wharton, NJ	2017-01-04	The cuts will have a negative economic impact on NJ fishing, both recreational fisherman and spin off business to this industry. Tax impact for fishing gear sales will also be negative.
Kenneth Sass	Bordentown, NJ	2017-01-04	I believe that the NOAA methodology for estimating catch is flawed and biased against recreational fisherman.
Tony Kleva	Flushing, NY	2017-01-04	I am a recreational fisherman.
David Mornak	Clark, NJ	2017-01-04	Your killing the recreation Fishermen in this state. Go after the gill netters
Edward Fanz	Atco, NJ	2017-01-04	The past two Fluke seasons in the Atlantic City area, both inshore and offshore, have been the least productive we have seen in decades. I know of at least 50 other fishermen that I am in touch with who had the same results. As much as I appreciate the efforts of NOAA in attempting to preserve the stock, I cannot fathom that a 40% reduction in recreational harvest is necessary. This reduction will have a devastating effect on the recreational fishermen and those whose livelihoods depend on the fishermen. I would support maintaining the existing limits and have NOAA conduct a more comprehensive assessment this season. I do not know of anyone who has ever been surveyed by NOAA regarding their catch history of summer flounder. But the United States Coast Guard managed to make a grand appearance this fall boarding boats and buzzing fleets with Helicopters in search of those fishing outside of the 3 mile limit for Striped Bass. Perhaps NOAA needs to consider a more aggressive approach to assessing the catch by the Recreational sector?
Albert Burns	Millsboro, DE	2017-01-04	We need a better method of assessment. Reductions based largely on assumptions are unacceptable. Less guesswork and more hard data would go a long way toward making these quotas a more honest and believable picture of what is going on.
Robert Loughlin	Columbus, NJ	2017-01-04	I disagree with the 2017 proposal

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Ryan Wood	Holmdel, NJ	2017-01-04	Fluke fishing is important both economically and culturally. The Fluke fishery has historically been a "gateway" fishery for generations of anglers, as well as a main economic driving force for coastal communities.
John Hayes	Clifton, NJ	2017-01-04	as much as I like fishing, the cost to fish has increased to the point where is it worth it with the limits imposed by people who are clueless.
James Kazawic	Woodbridge Township, NJ	2017-01-04	this change would destroy all recreational fluke fishing. its hard enough to catch a keeper fluke
Nick Fornarotto	Long Branch, NJ	2017-01-04	I am an avid fluke fisherman. Changing the rules will hurt many businesses.
Walczak Arthur	South Amboy, NJ	2017-01-04	These cuts will destroy the local economy. The suggested cuts are draconian and destructive to both recreational and charter/party boat industry.
Michael Sullivan	MERRICK, NY	2017-01-04	Recreational fisherman deserve to be treated fairly. A 40% reduction in one year, after years of reduced allocations, is not fair.
james lutz	Avalon, NJ	2017-01-04	the information on the amount of flounder caught recreational is flawed.
Scott Croker	East Hanover, NJ	2017-01-04	This is absurd.
John Tremel	South Amboy, NJ	2017-01-04	John Tremel
Sergio Radossi	Ridgefield Park, NJ	2017-01-04	We know we are using poor data and failed management practices. It's time to stop the madness. Let us not kill the commercial and recreational fisheries.
James Candia	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing this petition because I believe the proposed restrictions are based on faulty and inadequate stock assessment methods. Further, the fact that commercial fisheries management allows the harvesting of undersized fluke further erodes confidence in the entire management process. Commercial harvesting must protect undersized fish of all species. If drag netting cannot protect against by-catch then it should be outlawed.
Stephen Burick	Blackwood, NJ	2017-01-04	The reduction will affect my family's opportunity to put some much needed fish in the freezer.
John Fullmer	Allentown, NJ	2017-01-04	Drastic cut is based on faulty science.
Ed Adams	Huntingdon Valley, PA	2017-01-04	The rules just suck
anthony orlando	brooklyn, OH	2017-01-04	fluke is one of the main species I target in summer. the quota would not make it worth gas etc to fish for them.
Robert Brunisholz	Stanton, NJ	2017-01-04	It's the right thing to do and because rec. anglers have for too long now suffered under the often inaccurate counts of NOAA.
Jennifer Gallagher	Atco, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm an avid fisher woman.
Peter Marione	South Amboy, NJ	2017-01-04	The cut is unfair to rec. fishermen
Joseph Riela	Summit, NJ	2017-01-04	I support NJ recreational fishing.
James Buchanan	Edison, NJ	2017-01-04	Manage the draggers better!
Steven Fritts	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-04	There is no way that the Their is no way that the fluke are over fishe'd this will put a lot of people out of work that depend on this to make a living
john oneill	Randolph, NJ	2017-01-04	I dont believe in this reduction
Robert Scheuerer	East Islip, NY	2017-01-04	I want NY to have thier fair share of Fluke, we always fall on the short end.
Jack Nolan	Brielle, NJ	2017-01-04	I work in the industry and this will ruin the business
bart daverso	eatontown, NJ	2017-01-04	Stop the DRAGGERS. not the sport fisherman.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Richard Hall	Brick, NJ	2017-01-04	It has nothing to do with recreational fishermen and everything to do with commercial fisherman and there by catch . I have seen them personally discard and amazing amount of illegal dead fish . It is hard with The size limit imposed at this point is such that all the anglers that I know have trouble ever catching their limit. is such that all the anglers that I know have trouble ever catching their limit . I also watch small children fishing at the inlet catching their first fish a beautiful 16 inch fluke only to be told that they have to throw it back in . It is a damn shame what the lawmakers are doing to society .
Lou Raymond	Columbus, NJ	2017-01-04	its a sin what these govt. outfits get away with by tramping on we sportsmen
Paul Pietraszka	sayreville, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm a fisherman
James Mickulus	Turnersville, NJ	2017-01-04	Please show me the actual science behind these so called numbers from Rec fishermen NOAA? Never once was I ever asked what I ever caught in the last 3 years fishing and no one I know that fishes flounder was asked. Not like fishing Tuna with a HMS permit with reporting? Your Fluke Rec number are FLAWED numbers. Last 2 years been very bad years for flounder. Maybe you should check out the commercial draggers. Maybe change your sizes down and keep the breeders living. How many throw backs are still living? Is NOAA pushing another agenda?
Charles Theodora	Asbury Park, NJ	2017-01-04	Reject -MAMFC 2017
Anthony Cirillo	Voorhees Township, NJ	2017-01-04	Because I recreationally fish and am very disappointed with: 'closed season' restrictions, low bag limits, and high size requirements for this species.
Hank Stankiewicz	morganville, NJ	2017-01-04	I have fished the Raritan bay area for over 50 years. 2016 was probably the worst year for stock available for recreational boaters. I find it hard to believe recreational boaters exceeded the harvest limit. Keep a close eye on commercial boats and allow recreational fisherman to support local communities by spending hard earned money on bait, tackle, marina slips etc.
Doug Hargrave	Vineland, NJ	2017-01-04	The stock assessment is flawed and these draconian cuts are unsound and damaging to many local businesses and to the public use of the resource.
Francis Jankowski	Marmora, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing because of the flawed data noaa is using and noaa is aware of the flawed data
Jack Riela	Summit, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm signing because the commercial fisheries are the sole reason for the recreational anglers to suffer from regulations. There is no plausable option that the reason the population of fish is declining is due to recreational fisherman.
Lawrence Martin	Lebanon, NJ	2017-01-04	i am opposed to the limits set in the bill for recreational fishermen.
joe mondi	Bellport, NY	2017-01-04	im a fisherman
John Clifford	Lynbrook, NY	2017-01-04	Ive had Enough of their dumb statistics and illogical rules .
Jerry Manning	Parsippany, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm a recreational fisherman, do not hurt us.....
chris parson	north wildwood, NJ	2017-01-04	You people don't no what your doing. Our boat hasn't caught a limit of flounder since a limit was started
Joseph Villa	Warren, NJ	2017-01-04	I fish as a recreational boater, I spend and support business in the Point Pleasant area. I vote for legislators who support outdoors recreation.
Wayne Hershey	York, PA	2017-01-04	Because I believe the proposed facts are incorrect
Barbara Ireland	Seaford, NY	2017-01-04	I don't believe the statistics. There has been an abundance of fluke the last couple of years. They have not been overfished.
Edward Dunsavage Sr.	Edison, NJ	2017-01-04	It's the fair thing to do. The recreational fishermen have been blamed and short changed too long.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Gene Sullivan	Little Egg Harbor, NJ	2017-01-04	Stupid regulators. They should use science. Drain the swamp and eliminate lobby influence.
kay Kay	Hammonton, NJ	2017-01-04	Recreational fishers don't get enough quota. The moneys spent buy them will effrct the local economys if it was not worth going fishing.
Robert Houser	Carlisle, PA	2017-01-04	Because I do not believe in the assessment and believe that it is nothing but fancy arithmetic in how noaa comes up with there quota's.
Richard Pieslak	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-04	NOAA is using faulty data to establish their annual quotas and such restricitions that are being proposed will have a severe economic impact on the Charter / Part boat / Bait and tackle industries that rely on Fluke fisherman for a large portion of their revenues.
Walter Hartman	Leonardo, NJ	2017-01-04	I would like to catch more than one fluke this year.
Robert Edney	Somers Point, NJ	2017-01-04	fluke fishing is crucial to the South Jersey economy
Mitchell Gordon	Margate City, NJ	2017-01-04	Three bait shops in my area have closed within the last year. I caught only four keepers last season. Does that sound like overfishing?
Alan Nesensohn	Sea Isle City, NJ	2017-01-04	Commercial fishermen can take all the fish leaving little for us . Give us a real please !
ronald jensen	Atco, NJ	2017-01-04	I disagree with the proposed limits on the fluke quota
Russell Dodge	Woodstown, NJ	2017-01-04	Retired NJ DEP F&W; Outdoor journalist, Cohansey Cove Publishing
Robert Whipps	Pine Hill, NJ	2017-01-04	This is crazy.
William Weatherby	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-04	I'm a flounder fisherman and you are killing the sports fisherman
cedric vohden	long beach twp, NJ	2017-01-04	I think the recs in nj are being are not being treated fair.. nj belongs with Delaware.
Jesse Thomas	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-04	I work in the tackle business and this will kill us with our boat rentals.
Wren Jeffrey	North Brunswick Township, NJ	2017-01-04	Too restrictive. This will put the party boats out of business.
John Grady	Englishtown, NJ	2017-01-04	Towards the group effort to leave the quota as is
Capt. Tim Lehman	Springfield, PA	2017-01-04	Proposed Regs will put me out of charter business. Must be changed!
Raymond Cohen	Merrick, NY	2017-01-04	I feel this would be catastrophic for the recreational fishing industry on Long Island.
Rich Snyder	Middle Island, NY	2017-01-04	I believe the numbers are incorrect if the models that they are using is antiquated and misleading.
Carl Cerruti	Freeport, NY	2017-01-04	The regulations are ridiculous. why can commercial fisherman take 14in fluke and never have there quota reduced?
Jay Berman	Pottstown, PA	2017-01-05	This will put an end to the fluke fishong which I have done for over 45 years. Why go out to catch the uncatchable. The local head boats and tackle shops can not with stand this type of flawed legisalation.
David Hans	Williamstown, NJ	2017-01-05	Netting should be lessened! Not recreational fisherman.
Ken Murray	Monroe Township, NJ	2017-01-05	I Fish
Narciso Fernandes	Lebanon, NJ	2017-01-05	Fluking regulations are out of control.
Chris Clancy	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-05	Proposed regs. are BS .... Enough already, leave it alone!!!
Paul Olinski	Kearny, NJ	2017-01-05	If anything there should be a slot limit so that we recreational fishermen can keep the smaller male flounder and release the breeder females. Also, the commercial catch should be scaled back to what it was in the 70's-about 20%.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Young Yi	Eatontown, NJ	2017-01-05	These regulations are getting carried away. Jersey shore demands superb fishing to residents and to attract visitors. Making fishing near impossible for NJ will harm local businesses within this state.
Jane Casagrande	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-05	Fishing is my only form or relaxation and fish caught can be shared to feed people. This is a horrible solution go after they commercial guys who are the culprits!
Canalside Cabins	Grand Lake Stream, ME	2017-01-05	I'm signing this because NOAA Fisheries believes that recreational fishermen exceeded their recreational harvest. See the word "BELIEVES" They don't know, were is the Scientific proof??
Scott Pierce	Drexel Hill, PA	2017-01-05	This will kill what is left of the charter/head boat industry in South Jersey
Michael Bentivegna	Manasquan, NJ	2017-01-05	The data that this proposal is based on is flawed. Until a true analysis is done with solid data then and only then should a quota be established.
Michael Ryan	Pt. Pleasant, NJ	2017-01-05	Severe restrictions will destroy the fishing fleet and only encourage taking illegal fish
Frank Powell	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-05	NOAA has no proof but they "believe" the harvest was exceeded. This is total bullxxxx!
Tom Devine	Lincroft, NJ	2017-01-05	I have watched the minimum size rise from 14 inches in about 1996 to a proposed 19 with a limit of only 2. Regulation has done nothing to help fishermen. Data used for estimates is suspect. Use party boat captain's data. They are out there every day and keep detailed logs.
Csaba Sulyok	Clinton, NJ	2017-01-05	I love go for fluke it so much fun takeing away our limit and raising size limit will make almost impossible to keep fish
John J. Kaye	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-05	Every year it's the same old story of using the skewed data instead of the data the party boat catains have been filling out for years. They are on the water every day and keep excellent records. Can't even bring home a fish to eat with these ridiculous quotas.
John Schiavo	Woodbury, NJ	2017-01-05	Iam signing because I'm a recreational angler who believes that the Fluke population is stronger than the researchers have determined. I have caught 100-1 throw back to keeper ratio last summer. You do the math.
Scott Lewis	West Allenhurst, NJ	2017-01-05	Scott Lewis
Glenn Sieber	South Amboy, NJ	2017-01-05	I am signing this because of the lack of true empirical data collection. a lack of control over commercial harvest with questionable results.
Lawrence Auletto	Mount Laurel, NJ	2017-01-05	Signing as a recreational fisherman that has grown up fishing "59yrs" This decision would not just hurt my way of life, but countless small business would be crushed. With all of the technology at NOAA's disposal you would think they would not use outdated stock assessment programs, also how can a neighboring State have a much smaller fish size!!
Steve Hoffman	Yaphank, NY	2017-01-05	a 19 inch fluke is huge fish, if that's the minimum size allowed it is going to be hard to grow smaller fish with these hungry monsters swimming around. In 2016 there were so many short fish when the limit was 17 inches, raising the size and decreasing the lot limit does not leave much for the recreational fisherman taking their children out to fish. I think the offshore quotos need a closer look first. The commercial fishing boats cant feed the world, lower their limits and restrict where they can drag the bottom.
Mike Macdougall	Long Branch, NJ	2017-01-05	Enough is enough regulate the netters
mary fine	Princeton, NJ	2017-01-05	These ristrictions by the goverment HAVE TO STOP1

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Dan Maida	Englishtown, NJ	2017-01-05	My family and I enjoy the sport which needs to look at the damage being done the commercial net fishing industry.
Guy Critelli	Runnemede, NJ	2017-01-05	Let's get a new benchmark before imposing more restrictions
William H Hallman	Riverside, NJ	2017-01-05	The commercial fishermen have depleted the flounder population and anglers are taking the blunt. Stop by a fish market and buy a 14 inch filet. The are stacked a foot high at $11.99 a pound. What can the largest contributor to the economy of the oceans fish for Sea Bss, Weakfish, Tog ? No! all closed or over restricted to surrender the stocks to the Commercial slaughter.
Thomas Hilton	Rosharon, TX	2017-01-05	I'm signing because the NMFS has demonstrated to be either incompetent, corrupt, or both when it comes to managing our nation's recreational fisheries. They need to stop putting the millions of dollars into the privatization scheme called Catch Shares and put that money towards better data. They don't want better data, as that would show that their draconian reductions in our fisheries access is unwarranted - we already know it's unwanted.
Robert Cole	Bordentown, NJ	2017-01-05	I am signing because the regs are all screwed up. They have been managing or should I say mismanaging the fishery for 40 years and they can not get it right. Time to get rid of the ones that set the rules and get some real fish managers to do the reg.
Robert Elder	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-05	The actions of the fisheries management groups are harmful to the general recreational fishing population. They do not demonstrate a reliance on good science and planning. The differences between neighboring states that share the same waters is a good example in the case of DE and NJ. It appears to the average guy that politics and other interests override the need to to protect the fisheries and the needs of sportsmen. Then there is, of course, the negative impact on the local economy. Simply stated, we need better science applied by better managers, backed by better governmental oversight.
William Juchnewich	Fair Lawn, NJ	2017-01-05	The regulations are unreasonable and harmful to local businesses !
John Jannelli	Flemington, NJ	2017-01-05	The new regulations are awful and will put many people out of business. Make all fishing by line only !
Domenic Frangella	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-05	fluke is a food source that fishermen who own a boat and pay registration fees and who like to harvest a meal should not be left with a size limits that are rare in percentage for South Jersey inland waters. Common sense Please!!
Rick Carney	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-05	You should have a slot limit so you can keep some of the small ones and throw back the larger females
Jim Abbott	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-05	NOAA has no clue what the recreational fisherman catch. This will just put another in the coffin for the boating industry.
george Royston	Westfield, NJ	2017-01-05	I do not want any reductions
Konstantinos Kapsis	Lincroft, NJ	2017-01-05	Because I love to fish and I vote.
Robert Austin	Vineland, NJ	2017-01-05	Everyone in my family loves to fish but if this goes into effect we will sell the boat!
Mark Chicavich	Queens, NY	2017-01-05	This proposal is ridiculous!!!
charles autenrieth	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-05	it's rare to catch the present limit so the few times we get to fish a good day at the present limit will keep us legal.
Don Whitehead	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-05	A 40% reduction will effectively destroy any fluke fishing in NJ.
George Buzzetta	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-05	The amount of bullshit I just read is making me want to move to the moon
Vincent Cagnina	Holbrook, NY	2017-01-05	I'm signing this because I want my fairies children to enjoy the sport I love. I do not like seeing the commercial industry destroy our fisheries.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Rita Hausman	Millstone, NJ	2017-01-05	All of the recent reductions are aimed at putting a stop to fishing, why else would NOAA keep using their junk science instead of fixing the data problems
Edward McMahon	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-05	Flounder regulations in the Cape May area make no sense when compared to Delaware which is only 11 miles away.
Michael Polaski	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-05	The damage that this will have on the local fishing economy. The lack of reliable data to justify increased regulation
Bruce Creighton	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-05	Bruce Creighton
Sergio Ortiz	Jersey City, NJ	2017-01-05	The science used behind the calculation is not valid. This process has been rushed as it has been with all other species in various locations. The recreational fisherman do not even put a dent in the catch compared to what the commercial fisherman do. Lastly, the people proposing these insane restrictions are not out on the water to see the daily catches! Somewhere along the line, this proposal is going to be used for some individuals gain and the termination of a traditional practice that families have shared since the beginning of time! Please, let me enjoy God's given fruits and cease the restriction for the greed of others!
Robert Merkle	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-05	The restriction will hurt the tourist industry and put a burden on the family's that derive a living from fishing, and reduce female spawning stock which in turn will reduce the fluke quota in future years.
Steve Max	Brick, NJ	2017-01-05	i'm signing this because this is unfair and unjust.
Don Fagan	Villas, NJ	2017-01-05	I love to fish for flounder / Fluke and I think the current (2016) regulations are fair enough!
David Stupar	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-05	I feel that placing additional restrictions on the Fluke fishery for recreational fishermen will hurt the local economy through reduced participation.
Joe Perello	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-05	Fluke regulations should remain the same as 2016. There is no need to reduce the quota with a 40% reduction.
JOHN Bennett	Brick, NJ	2017-01-05	It is known that the fluke breeder stock is limited to fish of 14" or greater and the current proposal to focus the bag limit to fish 19" or greater is counterproductive to the goal of increasing the biomass. If we must reduce the recreational catch 1) it must be parallel to a reduction in the commercial catch and 2) should be based on keeping immature rather than breeder fish.
stephan green	Farmingdale, NJ	2017-01-05	that would the fishing for the summer stop all netters
Peter Cirrinicione	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-05	There is no scientific data to warrant this reduction.
Kevin Campbell	Andover, NJ	2017-01-05	I fish and want to keep being able to fishing.
Gary Grunseich	East Moriches, NY	2017-01-05	This regulation will significantly have negative impact on an industry tah is already hurting.
William Crawford	West Islip, NY	2017-01-05	The commercial fishermen need to be regulated! The issue is hardly caused by recreational anglers.
Jeffrey Graisser	South Plainfield, NJ	2017-01-05	To change the fishery and at the same time admit to flawed science makes no sense whatsoever.
Tim Boyle	Sewell, NJ	2017-01-05	I fish and I care.
Jim Peters	Englishtown, NJ	2017-01-05	The data supplied is not correct

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Dave Nelson	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-05	Data is suspect. How did this politically appointed committee come to their conclusion? There is little or no enforcement of commercial activity on the water. I've witnessed draggers where they should not be, within restricted waters and close in to beaches. I've also witnessed recreational fishermen take illegal fish. I would work for Fish&Game for free & report all these scumbags !
Paul Kross	Manchester Township, NJ	2017-01-05	Don't want to see a traditional fishery destroyed exports lots of charterboats tackle shops etc.
Don Imbriaco	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-05	Tired of not being able to take a meal home due to the size and possession limits
John Broda	Elizabeth, NJ	2017-01-05	I fish.
Jim Starr	Brick, NJ	2017-01-05	This is BS
John Aspromonti	Morrisville, PA	2017-01-05	The data is greatly flawed! Just ask any rod and reel fisherman!!
Ted Kessler	Hopewell, NJ	2017-01-05	Fluke regs are already to restrictive.
Jim Stanford	Jensen Beach, FL	2017-01-05	Bs
JOHN JR	CRANFORD, NJ	2017-01-05	Punishing thr recreational fisherman is not the way to correct this problem
Philip Beesley	Spring Lake, NJ	2017-01-05	This is making it impossible to bring home a keeper fluke.
Joe Morgan	Swedesboro, NJ	2017-01-05	If this reg passes i will not put my boat in a slip this year!
Jim DeStephano	Newfoundland, NJ	2017-01-05	Any further cuts to recreational fishermen will kill the boating industry in N J
Jeremy Ohler	Levittown, PA	2017-01-05	Helps tackle shops and party boats of NJ...no danger of fluke extinction
Andrew Wysocki	Linden, NJ	2017-01-05	I 'm recreational fisherman for many years and only once have I been asked about my catch . I don't really know anyone else who has been asked . How good is the data that is being used to make the determination of the total harvest ?
Alan Okeefe	Albertson, NY	2017-01-05	Data is wrong have to re access
Kieran Miller	Middletown, NJ	2017-01-05	I feel our freedom to be able to fish is slipping away.
William Bennett	Brick, NJ	2017-01-05	Fed up with idiots making the ridiculous rules. Should be 5 fish@16 in. 10 per boat.
Michael Goszka	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-05	Serious changes need to be made in the commercial fishing industry.
Ronald Santangelo	Lake Hopatcong, NJ	2017-01-05	I'am signing because this is pure government overreach. Dear government you SUCK!
Doreen Holley	Hopewell, NJ	2017-01-05	Recreational fishermen have minimal impact the amount of harvest. The proposed harvest limits and sizes are unacceptable.
George Kazdin	Hampton Bays, NY	2017-01-05	Believe statistics used are not accurate
Bob Daber	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-05	I disagree with the new fluke proposal. It wont be worth putting gas in the boat for 2 fish
Anthony Lotito	Nutley, NJ	2017-01-05	I think the government is out of there mind, they let commercial fisherman keep small fluke and we have we can do to keep something! I see fluke in the fish market that are an embarrassment to us, we would never keep anything close to that size and we get blamed for this!
Richard Rosivack	Mountainside, NJ	2017-01-05	I'm signing this petition because the proposed reduced fluke quota is based on seriously flawed data. The methods of sampling catches of anglers is highly inaccurate. Thank you for your consideration.
Jason Smolinski	Rockaway, NJ	2017-01-05	I am opposed to unfounded regulation based on faulty science, especially when the commercial by catch is more than the recreational quota.
Mark Palermo	Ridgewood, NY	2017-01-05	You are driving more and business to the vrink of closure.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Александр Акиншин	Villas, NJ	2017-01-05	i'm a charter boat captain/owner
tim sokoloski	Windsor, CT	2017-01-05	i like to fluke fish. bringing it down to 2 fish hurts the recreational fisherman.
Karen McCourt	Brookhaven, PA	2017-01-05	We have enough trouble catching n keeping 17 1/2 in as it is.
Gary Eck	Fairfield, NJ	2017-01-05	The commercial fisherman has nothing but to benefit from this!!!!!!!!!!
Richard Wingate	Pelham, NY	2017-01-05	you take enough from recreational , take it from commercial fishing, they pay little & get pleanty
Mary Makoski	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-05	I think there has to be a better option. I went on a party boat and they catch and keep everything how is this fair for a True Recreational Fishermen. It is hard to catch a fish. This size doesn't help the true fisherman verses the party boat?
Blaise Turi	Brielle, NJ	2017-01-05	I am a recreational fisherman and don't agree with the proposed sharp reductions in fluke fish size and duration of the fluke season.
Ray Bergman	Key west, FL	2017-01-05	I fish in NJ waters for fluke in August, recreational reduction is unacceptable
amanda cash	Port Jefferson, NY	2017-01-06	because I fish and I vote
Mike Prosceno	Wilmington, DE	2017-01-06	Entities with an agenda and goals that do not support "a healthy, sustainable fishery with a Maximum Sustainable Yield have hi-jacked the process and the science used in the process is flawed.
vincent zecchino jr	East Hanover, NJ	2017-01-06	I think there are plenty of fluke out there when you can catch 40 fluke and not keep 1 because of the stupid size limit when you spend 100 dollars or more to go home empty handed. The bigger the size limit the more we can go over the quota .why are the meetings always when the working people can't get to them are they scare they can't answer them
Nick Orsine	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-06	It is unfair the way the fishery limits are set . I am all for preserving all of our fisheries but the information used is terribly inaccurate. Changes need to be made!
CAMPBELL RICHARD	Croydon, PA	2017-01-06	NO WAY WE CAUHGHT TO MANY FIUKE ASK ANY FISHERMAN THE COMMERCIAL DRAGERS KILL EVERTHING I THROW BACK
Melvin III Neuble	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-06	I support this petition for the simple fact that all too many fish being found in my general area which is New York bright fish are being found here that hasn't been in this area for some years now. In Jamaica Bay this summer of 2016 there was reports of Sheepshead fish being caught in June in the Bay Area fish that has not been up in this area for some time off the coast of New Jersey this summer of 2016 they were reports of redfish being caught wait into the mid fall. Now both fluke and flonder are not my target species of fish I don't like him I don't like them so I don't fish for them. I feel as though there's no challenge to him. Further more why is it whenever any species of fish populations and begins to downsize as a sports fishing in the one who end of suffering why not look at the commercial fishermen there the one with the nets dragging the ocean. Why is it in this country the little guy all ways end up suffering.
Mark Kloniecki	Manasquan, NJ	2017-01-06	Fluking brings the family together on weekends.
Philip Celmer	Waretown, NJ	2017-01-06	There is no way the recreational fishermen exceeded the limits.
Greg standish	Monroeton, PA	2017-01-06	Fishing is for some people to put food on the table !!! Some people can't always afford a dinner so they count on the catch they get from time to time !!
Genevieve McDonald	Stonington, ME	2017-01-06	I'm tired of bad science being used for fisheries management.
Joel Halpern	Brick, NJ	2017-01-06	The regulations should not be changed
Joseph Brown	toms river, NJ	2017-01-06	It's time the commercial boats (netters) start taking the brunt instead of the recreational fisherman. Increase legal size and drop quota for netters.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Leon Checinski	Barnegat, NJ	2017-01-06	I am a recreational fisherman and the new regulation is based on flawed science.
Richard Barndt	Perkasie, PA	2017-01-06	Because I don't believe the study and I think it is a crock of bull
Christin Wiggins	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2017-01-06	I am concerned that this type of reduction could severely impact local businesses who depend on fishing as part of the tourism industry.
Michael Lilley	NY, NY	2017-01-06	The proposed regs are insanely unfair to recreational fisherman
Robert mikes	East Meadow, NY	2017-01-06	I'm life long fishermen,and it will hurt the northeast recreational and commercial fishermen and there families!
Walter Siri, Jr.	Carlstadt, NJ	2017-01-06	I believe that NOAA Fisheries is utilizing flawed methods in coming up with their numbers.
Clifford Olsen	Jackson, NJ	2017-01-06	Lived ,fish and hunted in N.J. for 45 years.... and these type of Laws "that keep Us Safe from Ourselves make me dislove my New Jersey".
Andrew Snowball	Huntington, NY	2017-01-06	I love fishing and love catching. Jumbo fluke
Lewis Bene	Naugatuck, CT	2017-01-06	I'm a recreational fisherman
Dennis Pawlak	Montvale, NJ	2017-01-06	I spend over $50,000 annually on my boat to fish the New Jersey shore. In the 3 decades I have lived here, sport fishing has declined horribly and the commercial catch has more than tripled. There is no sense to the the continuous reduction in the sport fishing catch regulations economically while the biomass reduction is a commercial industry problem.
Richard Siegel	Alloway, NJ	2017-01-06	NOAA uses "best available science" which is flawed and I largely guesswork.
Mark Elliott	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-06	I'm a charter captain out of Cape May, NJ. Implementing the new regulation for summer flounder based off bogus studies will not only hurt my business but many other captains that depend on the fishery to make a living.
Thomas Kowitski	Barnegat, NJ	2017-01-06	The flawed data used to calculate the harvest is the reason the recreational sector supposedly went over the 2016 quota.
Charles Maneri	Sayville, NY	2017-01-06	Keep the fluke regulations what they were last season
Jean Amaro	New Bedford, MA	2017-01-06	As a recreational fisherman, I know first hand that the NOAA way of collecting data is outdated and should be revised.
Mark Canneto	Little Silver, NJ	2017-01-06	I'm sick and tired of recreational fishing being blamed for overfishing!
Edictor Morales	Manchester Township, NJ	2017-01-06	Summer flounder not fair
Fred Welsford	Newtown Square, PA	2017-01-06	I recreationally fish out of Cape May NJ and every year it becomes more difficult to fish due to the regs.
JOHN Henjes	MULLICA HILL, NJ	2017-01-06	I fish and I vote
Steve Grocki	Millstone, NJ	2017-01-06	NOAA has no clue what they are doing!!
Sandy Kenig	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-06	I believe the Federal Government has incorrect data on the population of Flounder.
John Wilkinson	Brigantine, NJ	2017-01-06	We need to save the breeders. Think about closing the season during the spawn, and going with a slot that will encourage the release of large fluke.
Robert Heizman	Bohemia, NY	2017-01-06	These limits are unreasonable and will impact sport fisherman in NY unfairly.
John Mondelli jr	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-06	Not only does this affect my personal fishing. It affects my industry as well. Saltwater Fishing boats. Make slot fish available. Two fish 14-16" Two fish 16" and above.
Michael Lombardi	Chatham Township, NJ	2017-01-06	I'm a fisherman and we need help

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Gene Geld	Elkins Park, PA	2017-01-06	I want an accurate measure of the biomass and not from a computer model. Please go back and give us proper measurements so that we can better assess the biomass.
Ed Hornberger	Voorhees Township, NJ	2017-01-06	I want save what's left of the summer flounder fishery. Stop making us keep only female fish! Implement a slot fish just like southern states with red drum!
Michael Spagnuolo	Nutley, NJ	2017-01-06	The government should have no right to regulate the amount and size when the comercial boats dont have no regulations of size or quota
Rich Osborn	Point Pleasant, NJ	2017-01-06	The proposal is ridiculous it's going to effect everyone except the commercial guy
Mary Lou Fricke-Neal	Villas, NJ	2017-01-06	Stock assessment has not been updated. Recreational fishermen should not be further restricted.
Marianne Greeley	North Arlington, NJ	2017-01-06	I'm signing because there are many jobs at stake, and there needs to be definite proof that it is necessary.
Tim Redmond	Oviedo, FL	2017-01-06	Towns like my hometown depend on fluke fishing to support the tourist industry and it's just wrong to recreational fishermen in general. We pay once again because of commercial overkill. There comes a time plain recreational fishermen are taken into account on how much it ruins our rights just to enjoy a day of fishing. The commercial industry which is definitely needed have to realize that their industry comes second to the common middle class people who only want to enjoy a day out with friend or family. Time again they they un continue to take until finally some species literally disappear.
Dale Carlson	Salem, NJ	2017-01-06	Stop the commercial guys that drag up everything along the shore. That's what needs to be addressed!
Ashley Regan	Warrington, PA	2017-01-06	I'm signing because i love to flounder fish and these restrictions would make it very hard to be able to keep any of the fish caught.
John Willard	Branford, CT	2017-01-06	The decision was made for these changes using inaccurate information.
Dan Csontos	Belle Mead, NJ	2017-01-06	Recreational fisherman tired of having a different standard than the commercial guys.
Robert Mueller	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-06	I am a recreational fisherman
John Meeker	Howell, NJ	2017-01-06	A 40% reduction in 2017 would represent the most restrictive measures in the history of the fishery's management.
William H Hallman	Riverside, NJ	2017-01-06	Points to consider: The anglers as a group represent the number 32 economic entity if considered a buseness .The number of people contributing to the overall Marine Fisheries by Anglers far exceed the few commercial business. Also it makes no sense to allow commercial fishing for flounder in the fall and winter spawning grounds.
James Wheaton	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-06	I do not agree with your options and the facts are based on old information.
Brian Casey	Beach Haven, NJ	2017-01-06	I want to protect and encourage recreational fishing in nj
tor larson	Beach Haven, NJ	2017-01-06	NO vote for any reduction in ABC
John J Smith	Allentown, NJ	2017-01-06	Based on all available evidence, it appears NOAA uses outdated, incomplete, inaccurate, arbitrary assessments of fish populations.
vic bary	cranford, NJ	2017-01-06	The argument that the NOAA model is deficient in not allowing for migration of stock into the treated area.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Richard O'Rourke	Maywood, NJ	2017-01-06	I feel that the statistics that are being used are flawed. We are killing the breeders by taking larger fish which are 95% female. Also the the fatalities of the gut hooked undersized fish is not being considered. Richard O'Rourke
charles cseh	East Brunswick, NJ	2017-01-06	"WAY TO GO NICK" "CHAS"
Robert Casale	Bernardsville, NJ	2017-01-06	Commercial draggers are killing more fish than they harvest. Something needs to done to control the slaughter. Why make recreational fishermen pay for the commercial murder of these wonderful fish.
William Young	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-06	As a fish tagger for the American Littoral Society, I believe the data being used to assess fish stocks is incorrect and collection methods are antiqued at best. Fish stocks are better then estimated
Cliff McL aughlan	Villas, NJ	2017-01-06	I FISH !!
Nick Naperski	Brick, NJ	2017-01-06	Sick of this !!!!! BS!!!!
Joel Anthony	East Moriches, NY	2017-01-06	I do not agree with their assessment.
Michele Hubmaster	Zieglerville, PA	2017-01-06	I don't want to see the party boats go out of business. It's their bread and butter.
John Kelly	Villas, NJ	2017-01-06	Recreational flounder fishing has a huge economic impact in the area in which I reside.
Richard Dicioccio	Atlantic City, NJ	2017-01-06	I do not want to see the regulations change. The problem is not the recreational fisherman . It's the commercial industry and the by catch of the commercial ocean clam industry .
Tim Wright	Oakdale, NY	2017-01-06	I'm a fisherman
Aaron Hoffman	Stone Harbor, NJ	2017-01-06	There is too much inaccurate data that is effecting the outcome on the Southern New Jersey fishing economy. The research needs to be reevaluated to include the difference in catch between northern new jersey's larger population/fishing structure and southern new jerseys popular/fishing structure.
William Wittenborn	Allentown, NJ	2017-01-06	Comercial fishing is destroying recreational fishing quotas ,while fair-minded asessments go unchallanged
Tom Heinlein	Ridgewood, NY	2017-01-06	I'm run a small Fishing Charter business and this will destroy me..I depend on the additional income to survive
Thomas Lonegan	Carle Place, NY	2017-01-06	I feel the data collected is flawed and more research has to be done. It will hurt the fishing industry that relies on a long season!!
Christine Ingraffia	Bayville, NY	2017-01-06	The commercial overfishing and abuse only benefits the few criminals and is ruining the stocks for MANY, MANY years to come. Charter boats, recreational fisherman out with families and friends and the whole recreational boating industry from marinas to tackle shops are left to pay the price. The data is inept while they look the other way from draggers and fish traps.
Rande Kunisch	Avon-by-the-Sea, NJ	2017-01-06	Save our fluke
Joseph Karcich	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-06	The regulation that have been enforced need serious change if they want to improve the production of the flounder? There should be a limit on the larger sizes to keep which are a larger ratio of the female reproducers. and allow smaller size fish to be caught. We are killing the reproduction of the species.
Philip Jakeway IV	Bronxville, NY	2017-01-06	I am a recreational fisherman who depends on the ability to harvest summer flounder as a main source of food and recreation for my family.
Ken Melkonich	Hamilton Township, NJ	2017-01-06	I am a recreational fisherman and am concered about fishing in 2017
Daniel Leston	Seaside Park, NJ	2017-01-06	I want to keep the fluke regulations as they were in 2016

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Capt. Steve Burnett	Mystic, CT	2017-01-06	I believe the quota ahould remain as is until more data is collected and assesed.
Toni Parlow	Brick, NJ	2017-01-06	The data they are relying upon is flawed. Their ultimate goal is to shut down the entire fishery and make us all stay home and play video games. The proposed regs are a joke, and it won't be worth fishing. There are plenty fish to be caught, so I'm not sure how they came up with their quota numbers.
William McNally	Vincentown, NJ	2017-01-06	I want the government to stop trying to control me.
Thomas Sullivan	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-07	Let's put restriction on commercial fishing,they take many9&10"
Joseph Miele	Leonardo, NJ	2017-01-07	You're making recreational fishing absolutely ridiculous I can't even enjoy time on the water with my family
Julio Cruz	Brookyln, NY	2017-01-07	Im signing because if their is no current updated assessment on fluke stocks then one should definitely be conducted before coming to a conclusion with a decade old assessment. A lot can change in one decade and we need updated studies to guide us in making large scale important decisions that will have a huge impact on recreational and commercial fishermens in the northeast. To make proper decisions we need proper studies conducted.
Dennis O'Keefe	Mendham, NJ	2017-01-07	The ideas presented are ridiculous
Michael Iannuzzi	Bloomingdale, NJ	2017-01-07	Fluke fishing is a great experience that brings family and friends together, brings business to local stores along the coast, and provides a healthy, fresh meal. The desired changes in the regulations will devastate local bait and tackle stores, ruin the fun for families and friends of the sport, and destroy a great, healthy meal option.
Paul Stoll	Manorville, NY	2017-01-07	Fluke fishing is very important to me and I'd hate to see such great restrictions on the next season.
Ed Valitutto	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-07	I believe the science behind these reductions is flawed.
Vinny Col	Hazlet, NJ	2017-01-07	I'm a recreational fisherman and this will hurt us all
Michael Hajek	Rio Grande, NJ	2017-01-07	I truly think your quote's are totally unjust. I do not believe your test models in re guard to this fish are true. Might I suggest that you may have fugged the number to make your case.
Dante Milazzo	Hicksville, NY	2017-01-07	Ny has the toughest regulations. All states need to have the same regulation. These decision makers cant track tax payers dollars correctly, i wonder how they are counting fish.
Karen Fell	Boyertown, PA	2017-01-07	I'm signing because I don't want these new regulations to be implemented. We own a small boat and enjoy fisjlhing off the jersey shore. We already struggle to catch legal fish. Increasing the required size will only make it harder. People will sell their boats and no longer support the beaches economy.
Dennis Charaton	Port Jefferson Station, NY	2017-01-07	When I fish for fluke out of NY. For every one keeper fluke I get, I have to release 5-10 shorts back into the sound.
Joseph Micallef	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-07	Reject the MAMFC 2017 Fluke proposal
Andrew Begina	Setauket- East Setauket, NY	2017-01-07	We need to get more people involved with these type of things
Gary subers	Ridley Park, PA	2017-01-07	Right thing to do.
edgar sikes	stafford springs, CT	2017-01-07	I agree with the petition, as a fisherman in long island sound and from block island to cashed ledge. To reduce the fishery on unproven guesses is both wrong and unfair. Proper assessment, and catch tallies need to be used before a determination is made

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Craig Peters	Marmora, NJ	2017-01-07	The proposals are way out of line. They are based on bad data used by NOAA. Status Quo until we have good up to date data.
Alex Mayer	New York, NY	2017-01-07	I have been fishing out of montauk new york my entire life. The fluke fishery is the heart and soul of rec fishing and must be preserved.
Carl Damm	Montvale, NJ	2017-01-07	The shortages are not from the recreational anglers. We should not be handcuffed like this.
Bruce Miller	Villas, NJ	2017-01-07	This regulation is not fair to New Jersey fishermen. We are not NY and Conn.
thomas critelli	Westwood, NJ	2017-01-07	I disagree and find fault with the assessment.
Joseph Sergi	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-07	I do not believe the NOAA has the correct account of the fishing issue
Cameron Koshland	ocean view, NJ	2017-01-07	I am the owner of Boulevard Bait & Tackle located in Cape May County. Not only will these new regulations have a huge effect on the bait and tackle industry, but it will also effect many many other businesses along the coast.
Ken Reisher	Roslyn Heights, NY	2017-01-07	The proposed regs are unfair an unreasonable
Michael Topping	Lawrenceville, GA	2017-01-07	I believe this proposed reduction is not based on the current condition of the fisherey
Adam Bollaci	Locust Valley, NY	2017-01-07	Bad data collection by all agencies,
Craig Browning	Ridgewood, NY	2017-01-07	I am an avid fisherman and commercial fishing is the cause all of the problem at hand. Recreational fishing is only the getting blame.
J Allocca	Colts Neck, NY	2017-01-07	I voted for Trump. You guys are ruining the world. Not us. Get a life.
Stephen Barrows	Clifton, NJ	2017-01-07	Love to fish withy grandchildren
Kenneth Morse	Southampton, NY	2017-01-07	THERE ARE PLENTY OF FLUKE THE powers that give us our Fluke refs is the same that tells us it's overfished You hold no credibility when you contradict yourselves
Leon Cassel	Mays Landing, NJ	2017-01-07	I'm signing because flounder fishing is an important recreational activity. All families that spend their hard earned money on boats, fuel, bait and gear should have the ability to take home a reasonable keeper size flounder for the dinner table. While the commercial fishermen are keeping everything in their net??????
Peter Cahill	Abington, MA	2017-01-07	As a member of the RFA I feel that the recreational fisherman is always getting the short end of the stick when it comes to management decisions.
STEPHEN Gilley	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-07	I caught plenty of Fluke every time I fished for them. I was able to keep 7, the rest were too short. I have 60 years experience. The average anglers likely kept far fewer. I can buy fillets from 14 inch fish anytime almost anywhere.
bob primavera	Swedesboro, NJ	2017-01-07	I'm a recreational flounder fisherman
Nei Schwartzstein	Monmouth Beach, NJ	2017-01-07	The government should extend the commercial fishing limit for foreign fishing vessels as well as limit size of fishing vessels. Limits should be put on commercial haul of fish. Everything should be done to prevent the government from limiting our pursuit of happiness.
chris fike	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-07	tired of us lil guys getting all the crap left over from larger fishing fleet boats that don't share the same limits.
Michael Mulkeen	Somers Point, NJ	2017-01-07	I'm am signing this because I agree with the petition. Thank You, Michael Mulkeen
Stephen Pisano	Staten Island, NY	2017-01-07	A reduction in the Fluke season will put multiple people out of business.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Ken Harris	Mount Laurel, NJ	2017-01-07	The rules are ridiculous. There needs to balance between Male and Female fish. You should be able to keep 6 fish per angler, 3 slot fish and only three fish over 18. This would also result in less discards of smaller fish. Also, need to stop dredging the coasts or do something about this as well , this is keeping the fish from coming into the back bays.
Chris Miller	Montauk, NY	2017-01-07	The scientific data used to determine the reduction is clearly Wrong. I own a marina with many recreational, charter and commercial anglers. It is clear to me that the fluke stocks are extremely healthy and there is no need for a reduction in the quota. I feel strongly that scientists have failed time and time again in trying to determine whether fish stocks are healthy.
Bill Reid	Lake Hiawatha, NJ	2017-01-07	I am an avid saltwater fisherman,and I fluke fish on a regular basis on NJ party boats. We has fisherman and owners of charter, party boats and tackle shops cannot take this reduction to the fluke season, it will drive hardworking people out of jobs, and sport fisherman will have no future. I along with other people in this industry demand to keep our regs the same has last season!!!!
Nick Talarico	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-08	I just got a boat and do not want to feel like going out is a waste of time because fishing restrictions are to high.
Richard Scott	Mount Ephraim, NJ	2017-01-08	I am a New Jersey boater, fisherman.
kenneth smith	Carteret, NJ	2017-01-08	I rare'ly fish for them but all the guys I know said it was a bad season 2016 .
THOMAS CINELLI	Evesham Township, NJ	2017-01-08	I do not think Noaa Fisheries are sure of what is happening. Every year there are cuts and not getting better.
Mark Iannacone	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-08	I disagree with the options for the 2017 fluke regs
Joe Lyons	Audubon, NJ	2017-01-08	Recreational fisherman need a stronger voice to protect us from NOAA's power.
Stephen Hernandez	Perth Amboy, NJ	2017-01-08	Cutting FLUKE fishing will continue destroying the summer fishery.
richard labor	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-08	i beleive that fed gov limits are unreasonable, their facts and figures do not add up
R Dennis New	Clayton, NJ	2017-01-08	New regulations will ruin fishing in NJ
Stephen Hornick Jr	Clifton, NJ	2017-01-08	I'm signing because your "so called" scientific numbers are bullshit - we never had a boat limit for the last 2-3 years whether we had 2, 3 or 4 people fishing - When I could fish, I could occasionally foul hook Fluke on a jig that's how many fish there are and since I never gave any numbers to the Fluke I caught, your so called exact total catch is again BULLSHIT!
Rosario Tornabene	Levittown, NY	2017-01-08	Data which is driving these changes need to be verified before new regulations are implemented.
Don Babbitt	Keyport, NJ	2017-01-08	The proposed increase in ridiculous!
richard marnin	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-08	I "believe" that the NOAA fisheries should get over the election & leave the recreational fisherman alone!!!!!
Georg VanderGoot	Middlesex, NJ	2017-01-08	We recreational fishermen and women are being treated unfairly based on dubious statistics. Too, resident citizens are in danger of losing their livelyhood.
Aiden Elmore	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2017-01-08	The change will effect the entire industry in a very negative way. From local charters dedicated to the species, to bait stores and products! You are putting people out of business! That is just a few things not to mention almost cutting the reduction in half!
Stephen Pino	Wenonah, NJ	2017-01-08	this is ridiculous we should lower the size limit and increase the catch limit to six flounder. and close fishing to foreign countries.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
michael ciez	brick, NJ	2017-01-09	I am a recreational fisherman who believes that the commercial quota should be reduced and the same size limits should be imposed on them. I cannot keep a 14 inch fluke but buy one at the local seafood market and fillet it myself for $4.99/lb. I throw back 6-8 each time we fish
Thomas Lindale	Camden, DE	2017-01-09	It would not help the local fisherman to reduce the amount caught by the recreational fisherman need to put it on the commercial fisherman the think they should be allowed to take all they can caught
Frank Sochacki	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-09	I have been fishing for over 60 years and the proposed new regulations are the worst that I have ever seen!!
Chris Provenzano	Ventnor City, NJ	2017-01-09	I fish I vote
William O'Hern	Spring Lake, NJ	2017-01-09	This new quota is absurd and these people wanting to enforce it probably never fished fluke in the 2016 season first hand, or else they would realize how many fish are actually out there
Chester Makowski	New York, NY	2017-01-09	I fish recreational and feel it unfair commercial fisherman can keep 17" for consumer market and i can if lucky if i can keep 1 fish for my table on tow or three fishing trip due to current size regulations. So please help
Daniel Siegel	Waretown, NJ	2017-01-09	We (recreational fisherman) will no longer let our pastime be destroyed by flawed scientific data and draconian laws. The PEW foundation will be revealed to all.
Mike Claudio	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-09	I a man fed up with these new regulations
Tom Lagocki	West Creek, NJ	2017-01-09	The commercial industry creates the impact on all fisheries, and the recreational industry who creates the jobs and supports the economy and has minimal impact has to suffer.
Sean Healey	Ocean City, NJ	2017-01-09	I'm signing because the reduction doesn't make any sense, go after commercial guys, not mom and pop.
william witkowski	East Moriches, NY	2017-01-09	this effect our community,and many of its people.
James Cooper	Ridley park, PA	2017-01-09	I fish everyday in the summer for this highly targeted species
Richard Springer	Trenton, NJ	2017-01-09	The new proposed regulations will put party boats and even private boaters off the water.
Paul Romanych	Putnam Valley, NY	2017-01-09	This is ridiculous. We are overburdened already. Cut the commercial quota first!
Linda Orsatti-Wiker	Wayne, PA	2017-01-09	I am a recreational fisherman that drives to Cape May NJ to take charter boat out to fish for flounder. If this reduction is put in place, I will no longer invest the time and money to come down.
Russ Binns	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-09	this is rediculous
Richard Kubiak	Berlin, MD	2017-01-09	I fished Assowoman Bay in Ocean Ciry, Maryland approximately 15 times this past summer and did not catch 1 keeper flounder. The commercial fisherman are absolutely decimating all fish species. It is NOT the recreational fisherman causing the damage! Please get your head out from the position of rectal defilade and see the problem for what it really is. Thank You Rick
Donald Dalesio	toms river, NJ	2017-01-09	I am a recreational fisherman and feel that the new proposed quotas to the NJ Fluke fishery are excessive. This will hurt the Marine Fisheries business and will cause negative impact to tourism industry.
Lee Jaggers	Brookhaven, PA	2017-01-09	The recreational anglers are being punished unjustly.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
cliff baldwin	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-09	too much inept government control over our fisheries
Dave Bezick	Levittown, PA	2017-01-10	I believe that recreation fishing is not hurting the fishery as much as commercial netters. Net boats are keeping shorter fish and killing everything else in their nets.
George Mills	Neptune City, NJ	2017-01-10	Enough is enough. The fluke limits are tough enough. Please don't take away the only recreation activity I have.
Eddie Tate	Absecon, NJ	2017-01-10	The limit is unfair and unjust...
James Barnes	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2017-01-10	I love to fish and and my friend runs a fluke boat high roller out of Atlantic City. On a good day they are pulling 3 keepers, but is recreation I can take my kids on for funp
Martin Fiedler	Mays Landing, NJ	2017-01-10	The regulators are not familiar with our local waters, anglers and needs
Jeffrey Stewart	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-10	Assessments are not being properly performed, especially in South Jersey.
LuighAine Schiavone	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-10	I love fishing and fluke. You're trying to regulate the recreational fishermen, and you should be regulating the commercial fishermen. That's who's over fishing!
Christopher Kobik	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-10	I believe regulations should differentiate between recreational vessels for hire and those that are private.
Patti Deegler	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2017-01-10	Fishing is a major part of our tourism and vacationing draw to the area. Recreational vessels should not be held to the commercial standard.
ROSALIA CESARINI	Ambler, PA	2017-01-10	RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERFISHING BUT COMMERCIAL NETTERS ARE.
E. Marie Hayes	Ocean City, NJ	2017-01-10	I oversee Tourism in Cape May County and I am also a recreational boater and fishing enthusiast.
RICK TRABER	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-10	I believe the data is flawed and raising the size limit only causes higher mortality with non surviving throwbacks and the taking of the larger breeding stock.
stan mcguigan	Mount Laurel, NJ	2017-01-10	We need to base these regulations on facts and not fiction. The current options would cripple the fishing industry and many families.
Carmine Taffuri	Middletown, NJ	2017-01-10	I enjoy fluke fishing, and it's already on the cusp of being a waste of time and money. I believe the commercial draggers should have their size increased to 17 inches, and recreational size limit should be reduced to 18 inches.
Jim Sheehan	Haddonfield, NJ	2017-01-10	The problem is the commercial fleet devastating the winter fluke grounds. Give commercial fluke fishing the same season as the recreational anglers and you will see a summer rebound in fluke numbers. Also the commercial fleets should have government observers on board every trip. That would give NOAA a truer picture of the health of the fishery.
Ken Gomez	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-10	We need to encourage our tourism industry, not bury it under strict and often over-reaching Governmental regulations. If we all don't help welcome tourists and give them a reason to come to CMC, they will go elsewhere! Delaware and Virginia do a great job...Lets not give our visitors the reason to cross the bay.
Vince Macaluso	Avalon, NJ	2017-01-10	It's important
Jean08402 Jacobson	Margate City, NJ	2017-01-10	Fluke fishing is important to the coastal economy
Susan Staeger	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-10	I want our fisherman and this industry to continue to be prosperous for our community.
JIM WALZ	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-10	NEED TO UPDATE DATA SET

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Bernie Kirkland	Millville, NJ	2017-01-10	I'm signing because fishing is an important economic component in NJ and NOAA should consider every assessment before virtually shutting down fluke fishing.
Robert Kelly	Marmora, NJ	2017-01-10	Data is wrong and with storms our ability to fish is limited even more particularly in September
Fred Klug	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-10	If you don' keep the 2016 regs you will put a lot of people out of work. Our fishing and boating industry is in bad shape. Go back to 2005 and see how many boating people we have lost since than. This is why I am sending this.
Mary Stewart	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-10	I'm signing this petition because of the devastating effect it will have on the fishing industry in Cape May County.
sal marsalo	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-10	Sal Marsalo
Frank Masseria	Staten Island, NY	2017-01-10	I run the charter boat Vitamin Sea out of Keyport New Jersey.. This proposal will undoubtably affect my fluke season.
Dean Malanga	Lavallette, NJ	2017-01-11	I'm a recreational fisherman
Mike McKenna	Somers Point, NJ	2017-01-11	Lack of common sense
Eric Zabawski	Oaklyn, NJ	2017-01-11	dont agree w data
Richard cabral	Ormond Beach, FL	2017-01-11	Because I am concerned about the supply and the species.
Carmine Litterio	Lyndhurst, NJ	2017-01-11	I have been in the field of law enforcement for nearly 30 years. I know that decisions made that are of a serious nature such as the 2017 fluke quota should be generated by qualified personal that has up to date, solid data of our fluke population that was gathered by proper investigation and cutting edge methods to obtain REAL data prior to making life changing decisions, which will effect countless amounts of hard working people. Every year after another fluke season weather good or bad this topic rears its ugly head once again. Along with that, its once again the recreational fisherman must deal with the threatening fact that his future fishing AGAIN is in jeopardy as well as many businesses surrounding the fishing industry. While the commercial fisherman basically goes unharmed. These methods are clearly uneffective and unjust to the recreational fisherman and their families.
Tom Kershaw	Philadelphia, PA	2017-01-12	Status quo for fluke
Craig Evans	Manorville, NY	2017-01-12	This will ruin the lives of countless men and women in the fishing industry as well as lowering tourism to the area. Countless businesses will suffer as a result of a "short" season. It's 2017, let's get some people who can regulate this quota year to year without drastic changes.
Craig Peters	Marmora, NJ	2017-01-12	we need change
Channing Irwin	Red Bank, NJ	2017-01-12	This appears to be an arbitrary decision without merit. Do not do this.
Jay Smida	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-12	I'm signing because it is the right thing to do!
David Brown	Egg Harbor Township, NJ	2017-01-12	Something that is more doable needs to be inactded
Joseph F. Walter, Jr.	Parlin, NJ	2017-01-12	Please don't limit us in this manner.
Christopher Gallagher	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-12	a 40% reduction is draconian and unfair to the recreational sector
Donald Ascolese	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	I love fishing, boating, outdoors and good food.
Larry Dalton	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	The reduction in Fluke harvest will present a detrimental effect on the economy of Cape May County, NJ.
Ronald Menear	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	I believe further regulations is not needed.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Karlson Hughes	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	Recreational Fishing is a way of life for anyone that lives at the shore. Without people coming to fish, crab, boat, swim in the ocean and so on we don't survive. Imagine your a kid that lives in the city and your dad took you to the shore fishing and you fell in love with it and with the time spent with your dad. Now all winter long you can't wait to get back to the shore to spend that time with dad and enjoying the sun, water, and the whole experience. Oh wait, your trying to take that away from that family and every other family that is having that same bonding and memorable experience. There's not enough family bonding now and you want to take away what little is left? Think about it, it would be like taking away baseball.
DAVID ZUZULOCK	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	I love to catch and eat fluke
Ted Terzian	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-12	Besides being in the boat business, I am a fisherman and the regulations have become overwhelmingly difficult to enjoy the sport! Thank you!
bRUCE McClure	Hainesport, NJ	2017-01-12	because it is wrong
Dennis Felsing	North Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	I love to fish and this is wrong
Bill Kulka	Bayville, NJ	2017-01-12	Flawed data. About time some realistic numbers are used.
Chris Thraen	Woodbine, NJ	2017-01-12	The restrictions on flounder fishing in New Jersey is unfair in comparison to other states.
Walter Skola	Point Pleasant Beach, NJ	2017-01-12	It's the right thing to do!
James Zecca	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-12	Must stop commercials from keeping 16" fish if you want to fix the problem
robert berardo	north wildwood, NJ	2017-01-12	the change will hurt every fisherman
william rebmann	Vincentown, NJ	2017-01-12	I support my family working in the marine industry on Barnegat Bay. These restrictions would cut deep into recreational fishing and we as an industry can't afford it. Not to mention, the assesment of the stock is more likely than not incorrect due to the tecniques used to harvest
maryann hinds	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-12	because I enjoy fishing and as it is now you have to throw back more than you can keep
Bob Dutra	Harwich, MA	2017-01-12	The science behind the reduction is flawed and i am a commercial fisherman who depends on this fishery as part of my income.
Dan Kleuskens	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-13	Keep the flounder regs the same.
john zelinski	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-13	john zelinski
Spencer Hondros	Forked River, NJ	2017-01-13	stop foreign fishing boats from stripping our fish.
John Buchinsky	Danville, VA	2017-01-13	I like fishing for fluke in Jersey.
William O'Quin	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-13	Political hacks and idiots run the show
Chris Mooney	Northfield, NJ	2017-01-13	This will have a direct impact on my business
Zenon R. Sapowycz	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-13	I am tired of bought and paid for corrupt government screwing over the common man for big corporation factory ships. One person gets rich, millions suffer
Mike Ryan	Seaville, NJ	2017-01-13	It negatively affects our economy and my occupation at the Jersey Shore. I also firmly believe the data is flawed.
Anthony Desena	Brooklyn, NY	2017-01-13	Ridiculous.
Rich Lauer	Kenilworth, NJ	2017-01-13	rich lauer
Albert Lykon	Hulmeville, PA	2017-01-13	How about cutting the quota on commercial catches instead

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Joe Hilker	Copiague, NY	2017-01-14	I am signing this because I believe the quota is unreasonable to our area . It effects are local economy. As well as data can not be accurate. Not once have I or any of my friends ever been asked about their fluke catches by anyone collecting data
Matthew Minnig	Middletown, NJ	2017-01-14	The system is broken and not based off science , just bad estimating!
jeff van varick	Pompton Plains, NJ	2017-01-14	We need to stop keeping the breeders. Go to a slot fish and let the breeders go. Tuns of the caught short fish never make it. Most fisherman head out for the day to return with some food for the table not to come home with doormats that make better pictures in an album than meals.
Thomas Jennings	Centereach, NY	2017-01-15	I would like to catch fish
gerard Troha	Sayville, NY	2017-01-15	Recreational fisherman are constantly getting hosed
Peter Stassi	West Islip, NY	2017-01-15	We need to go to a "Slot Fish" rule
Bob vingara	Feasterville-Trevose, PA	2017-01-15	you keep raising the size limit on flounder and its harder to catch a keeper fish so how is it over fished by your standards, 2016 I myself did not catch any legal fish to take home..
Ted Schwarting	Bay Shore, NY	2017-01-15	They keep taking away for no reason. Stop drastic cuts to recreational summer flounder harvest.
Frank Schimpf	Chesterfield, NJ	2017-01-15	I respectfully question the accuracy of the information used to calculate the new catch numbers. As you well know, these proposed limits will severely impact the many small businesses that depend on the Summertime sport , and family recreational fishermen. It is imperative that we protect our stock, but at the same time, we must also protect the livelihood of so many small business and people who depend on this industry. There has to be some type of compromise on this extremely important issue. Thanks Frank
William Dabney	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-15	Faulty data is being used to make decisions
gary aydelotte	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-16	they need more research on the best way to make changes. Always raising the size is not the correct way to fix the issues , I'm no marine biologist but after fishing for years it seems the fishing declines even when the size limit is raised and the quota is lowered.???
Michael Power	Smithtown, NY	2017-01-16	Recreational fisher and I would like to catch a keeper every once in a while
Duane Clause	Belmar, NJ	2017-01-16	Cut the commercial quotas to zero.
Brendan Walsh	Long Branch, NJ	2017-01-17	Unfair to recreational fishermen
Edward Pietrowicz	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-17	Let's be sure the modeling is correct before we impact the livelyhood of many individuals.
Welsh William Welsh	Manahawkin, NJ	2017-01-17	Please reject this unfair fluke proposal by NOAA. I question the accuracy of NOAA Fisheries for recreational fisherman. During the fluke season of 2016, I caught approximately 40 fluke and had one keeper all season at 19", and there are many other similar stories.
jerome hojnowski	Williamstown, NJ	2017-01-17	other areas are allowed more fish and the commercial fishers are killing us
jerome hojnowski	Williamstown, NJ	2017-01-17	move the commercial fishers back out to 3 miles we all love to fish and eat fish but we go out and there is no fish people who own privet bait and tackle shops can no longer earn a living you are taking the fun, food and living out of our pockets.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Alex Kenny	Township of Washington, NJ	2017-01-17	I care about my fishing rights.
Joseph Lipinski	Bayonne, NJ	2017-01-17	It's not a fair deal for fishermen !
john kraut	Southampton, PA	2017-01-17	The recreational fisherman is not the problem. What we take is a pittance.
Drew Reindel	Tuckerton, NJ	2017-01-17	From my observations as a recreational fisherman, I believe the science that NOAA is using to conclude the summer flounder stock has been over fished is in inaccurate. There needs to be change in NOAA's approach to fisheries management!
Denise Beckson	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-17	Fishing is important to the local economy and tourism.
William Weisgarber Sr.	Bordentown, NJ	2017-01-17	These restrictions are totally unfair to the recreational angler while the agencies do nothing to stop the commercial fishing during the spawning period.
Louis Evangelista	Fair Lawn, NJ	2017-01-18	Tired of not having my voice heard by the people who make these ridicules regulation against sound scientific data.
Jessica Sternberg	Toms River, NJ	2017-01-18	I'm signing because I've seen no proof whatsoever that recreational fishermen have harvested more than their limit. The recreational fishermen I know fish from the beach and there wasn't a keeper to be had for most of the season. Most speculated it was because of dredging, changes Sandy wrought, and some guessed unseen ecological issues. Overfishing by recreational fishermen was never mentioned, as most didn't know anyone that had caught keeper flounder from shore, only miles out from a boat. Coincidentally, that's also where the commercial fishermen fish. I believe that commercial interests not only have more to gain, but are more likely to have the appropriate equipment to severely overfish our flounder population, while casually deflecting blame onto recreational fishermen, who are then forced to pay steep fines and penalties under ever stringent guidelines. Please get the studies done properly, funded and conducted by third party companies that have no vested interest, as commercial fishing enterprises and agencies that derive their funding from fines levied on recreational fisherman do.
Robert Berg	Scarsdale, NY	2017-01-18	This is truly another asinine proposal. I fish for fluke recreationally in the NY area. The fluke population is at historic highs. The current catch limits are more than adequate to assure healthy fluke populations in the future. Limit the commercial catch -- that's the problem area.
Greg Hueth	Sea Girt, NJ	2017-01-18	Greg Hueth
Scott Baxter	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-18	The quota change will negatively effect the local fishing industry.
Dennis Stawicki	Henryville, PA	2017-01-18	Status Quo NNOO!!! 6 fish@ 16 inches--is fine for everyone and will save the breeders!!! I'm TIRED of seeing 17 inch fish floating all over the NJ coast.....
Frederick Mettler	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-18	Because of the drastic cut in the bag limit and inconsistencies of other states
Claudia Pennella	Linwood, NJ	2017-01-18	I have a family of fisherman.
Jeanette Higbee Dougherty	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-18	The economy in Cape May County depends on tourists. My family has been in the fishing industry for several generations
Janice Morey	Wildwood, NJ	2017-01-18	I oppose this proposal.
Richard King	Ocean City, NJ	2017-01-18	We need sensible managment that allows for a fishery that will serve both conservation and recreational goals. Killing the fishery by overmangement is worse than killing it by overfishing. How about three fish no limit. The way it is now we are taking all the breeding fish at 19+.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Michael Dunn	Emerson, NJ	2017-01-18	The proposed Fluke regulations are based on bad science and to many regulatory authorities to regulate themselves. I am a fisherman at heart and want my children and grandchildren to enjoy our great resources and great family activities at he same time. Lets get real with real regulations that protect our fisheries and our commercial and sport fisherman and all the economic activity that both provide to our great state of NJ!
Ray Morey	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-18	Reject fishing recreational band
Gail Schlue	Cape May Court House, NJ	2017-01-18	I live here..
Chris Garr	Cape May, NJ	2017-01-18	If passed, this would have a devasting impact for all who are involved. Not only party and charter boats but bait and tackle shops, restaurants and all seasonal business who depend on recreational fishermen to help the local economy.
Tony Rygiel	Harrison, NJ	2017-01-19	The quota should remain as is until a new benchmark assessment is conducted and reviewed