



Update on Strategic Plan for Black Sea Bass Management

Presented to ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup
and Black Sea Bass Management Board

August 8, 2018

Background



- In April 2018, Board and Council discussed a draft strategic plan for reforming black sea bass recreational management.
- The Board and Council supported further development, and provided input on the document.
- A group of ASMFC, Council, and NOAA staff plus several Board and Council members met in June to further develop ideas in the strategic plan.

Recreational Management Reform



- June meeting: discussed higher level ideas for long-term recreational management reform
- National Standard 1 requires an annual target in number or pounds of fish (ABC, ACL, RHL)
- Focus on improving stability by incorporating stock status and F into management
- Consider distribution and abundance of the resource with operational assessment

Strategic Plan



Interim Program

- For interim, we need a management program that can easily lead into the full program.
- 2019 recreational management challenged by timing of data and operational assessment

Long Term Program

- Working Group to further develop long-term recreational management program

May 2018 Board Motion



- May 2018 Board directive: “...3) *task the plan development team to develop a white paper that would identify the actions of considering the changes in the black sea bass abundance for future commercial and recreational management actions.*”
- Convene a Working Group of Commissioners to address commercial issues

Next Steps



- **August 2018:** Board considers options for interim program (2019 addendum)
- **September-December 2018:** Staff to continue developing long-term recreational management program. Working Group to address commercial management issues.
- **Early 2019:** Operational Stock Assessment for Black Sea Bass
- **2019:** Rec Working Group convenes to develop management document for long-term

Summary



1. Addendum for 2019 recreational management (today)
2. Addendum XXXI/FW for CE and Block Island Sound Transit (next week)
3. Working Group to address commercial issues
4. Operational Assessment (2019)
5. Long term program development (rec/commercial)
6. Benchmark Assessment?



Questions?



Black Sea Bass Recreational Management in 2019 and Beyond

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Outline



1. Background
2. Management options for 2019 (and beyond)
 - Coastwide
 - State by state
 - Regional
 - Setting measures through specifications
3. Working Group Recommendations
 - 2019 management (and beyond)
 - Options for reducing non-compliance
4. Next Steps

Background



- February 2018: Board approved Addendum XXX with allocation of RHL to 3 regions
- March 2018: regional measures approved
- Appeal of Addendum XXX by Northern Region
- May 2018: Board revised 2018 measures
 - Motion to “*develop a new action for the 2019 recreational fishery to address the changes in black sea bass abundance and distribution that consider management based on the distribution of the resource...*”

Background



- August 2018: Board to consider options for recreational management in 2019 and beyond
- New MRIP estimates available, but not in an assessment
- RHL has not been set for 2019
- Operational Assessment could affect ABC
- No management program for 2019 (except default coastwide measures)

Management Options



- Coastwide Measures (FMP default)
- State-by-state measures
- Regional measures
- Set measures through specifications process

Would need to determine state shares of RHL

Management Options



- Setting measures through specifications could follow same general process for projecting/evaluating harvest and developing measures
- Public input through state processes
- State shares not formally assigned or written into addendum
- Annual addenda would not be required

Example Timeline for Specifications



- **August 2018:** Options approved for draft addendum
- **October 2018:** Draft Addendum approved for public comment
- **December 2018:** Final approval of Addendum
- **Dec-February 2019:** States negotiate and develop preliminary measures based on guidelines set forth in addendum
- **Feb-March 2019:** States revise/finalize measures based on wave 6 data

Working Group Recommendations



1. Include option to set measures through specifications
2. Guiding principles for developing measures
3. Options for reducing non-compliance

Guiding Principles for Measures



- WG recommended these guiding principles for developing measures:
 - Regional approach (3 regions as in Add. XXX)
 - Options for regional regulatory standards
 - Completely consistent measures
 - Up to 1” size difference
 - Up to 3 fish bag difference
 - Up to 115 days, 57 days, no limit on season length difference
 - Limit differences in measures between regions
 - Bag limit of one state no more than 2x that of another state

Guiding Principles for Measures



- WG recommended these guiding principles for developing measures:
 - Information on resource distribution and angler effort should be considered in setting specifications
 - Options for duration of document:
 - Until new management is developed for the long term
 - 2 years

Options for Reducing Noncompliance



- Address uniform and effective enforcement of regulatory programs by state
- Fillet laws
- Accountability for violations by charter and party boat captains
- Assign harvest to individual anglers
- Limitations on commercial/recreational fishing on same trip

Potential Timeline



- **August 2018:** Board considers options for inclusion in draft addendum for 2019 and beyond
- **October 2018:** Board approval of draft addendum for public comment
- **December 2018:** Board approval of addendum
- **February 2019:** States propose draft measures for 2019
- **Early 2019:** Operational Stock Assessment for Black Sea Bass
- **March (?) 2019:** States finalize 2019 measures

Board Actions



- Consider options to include in draft addendum for 2019 and beyond



Questions?



Summer Flounder Recreational Management in 2019 and beyond

Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass
Management Board
August 8, 2018

Outline



- Background
 - Management
 - Recreational Data
 - Science
- Management options for 2019 (and beyond)
 - 5 possible options

Background



- 1993: Amend 2 required all states adopt the same measures
- 2001: Framework 2 created conservation equivalency
- 2004-2013: state by state conservation equivalency with state targets
- 2014-2016: Addenda XXV-XXVII mandatory regional management
- 2017: Addendum XXVIII specified for 2017 measures
 - Extended for 2018 fishing season

Background cont'd



- MRFSS/MRIP has generated recreational data since 1981
- July 2018: MRIP released revised catch and effort estimates for 1981-present
 - Based on new mail-based Fishing Effort Survey and revised Access Point Angler Intercept Survey
- Changes in summer flounder harvest estimates range from 25% increase to 210% increase from previous estimates

Background cont'd



- 2013: Benchmark assessment indicated stock not overfished and overfishing not occurring
- 2015 and 2016: Assessment Updates indicate that overfishing is occurring
 - Retrospective pattern= overestimating biomass and recruitment; underestimating fishing mortality
- 2018: Benchmark assessment to be completed in November.
 - Will incorporate calibrated MRIP estimates
 - Board and Council will consider results in Feb 2019

Proposed 2019 Specifications



| | Year | |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Fluke Landings Limits | 2018 | 2019* |
| Commercial Quota | 6.63 million lbs | 7.72 million lbs |
| Recreational Harvest Limit | 4.42 million lbs | 5.15 million lbs |

*derived from SSC Recommended ABC of 13.23 million lbs

Challenges



- MRIP data release and timing of benchmark assessment
- Landings Specifications set at next week's ASMFC/MAFMC will likely be revisited in February 2019
- If normal process is chosen, then potentially the TC would do the same work twice

Potential Options



1. Add options to Draft Black Sea Bass Addendum that would allow summer flounder recreational measures to be set through a specification process
- Setting measures through specifications could follow same general process for projecting/evaluating harvest and developing measures
 - Public input through state processes, not ASMFC process
 - State shares not formally assigned or written into addendum
 - Annual addenda would not be required

Potential Options



2. Extend the provisions of Addendum XXVIII for a year
- The ISFMP Charter allows the Board to extend provisions of the FMP for up to a year
 - Requires a 2/3 majority vote

Potential Options



3. Use the voluntary regions tool under CE to establish 2019 regulations
 - Voluntary regions are allowed under Addendum XVII (2005)
 - Regions must have the same size limit, bag limit, and season length
 - Start and end dates of the season can vary, so long as total season length is equal

Proposed Options



4. Initiate an addendum that considers recreational management strategies for 2019 and beyond.
 - Similar process as previous years
 - Including example measures would be problematic

Proposed Options



5. Work within the provisions of the FMP
 - Specify coastwide set of measures or
 - State-specific harvest targets based on state's performance in 1998
 - Board chose state specific harvest targets, decision will be need on whether to use calibrated or uncalibrated data.



Questions