



# **Tautog Commercial Harvest Tagging Program: Draft Implementation Guidelines**



**Tautog Management Board  
August 7, 2019**

# Outline



- Background
- Tagging program requirements
- Draft implementation guidelines
- Implementation timeline
- TC Summary
- AP Summary
- Consider Management Action

# Board Actions for Consideration



- Specify changes to draft implementation guidelines
- Adopt Guidelines as “best management practices”
- Consider management action to add specified aspects of implementation guidelines as FMP compliance requirements
  - Would require addendum

# Tagging Program Requirements



- Amendment 1 (2017) requires:
  - Uniform single use tags with unique numbers
  - Application prior to offloading
  - Allocation of tags based on biological metric
  - Return unused tags no later than February 15
  - Annual Commercial Tag Report

\*Originally required implementation by January 2019 (Now 2020)

# Draft Implementation Guidelines



- Staff worked with Board chair, LEC and TC to develop draft implementation guidelines to:
  - Provide guidance on program administration
  - Encourage consistency between state programs
  - Enhance enforceability
- Recommended procedures for tag distribution, application, accounting, reporting, tag expiration, penalties, outreach

# Draft Implementation Guidelines



## Tag Distribution

- **Year 1**
  - ASMFC purchases the tags on behalf of States. States are responsible for distributing to licensed/permitted harvesters
- Issue consecutive tag numbers to each harvester
- Number of tags based on biological metric
- Tags non-transferable
- Unlawful to reuse, counterfeit, alter, modify tags

## Tag Application

- Harvester must apply tags on the day of harvest before offloading **or carring**
- Tags applied consistently to operculum bone
- To aid in enforcement:
  - Recommend harvesters apply tags in sequential order
  - Tags must remain on fish until final sale
  - Need to restrict tag application during closures

# Example Application



Applied to the operculum bone on the left side of the fish





# Draft Implementation Guidelines



## Biological Metric

- States are required to allocate tags to commercially-permitted harvesters based on biological metric

### Example:

The State/Commonwealth/Jurisdiction of \_\_\_\_\_ requests a total of \_\_\_\_\_ tags for the \_\_\_\_\_ fishing year, based on the following biological metric:

[Insert description of data and calculations used to determine number of tags needed, and additional tags requested as a buffer. Include data used (e.g., annual landings from ACCSP, average fish weight from biological sampling) and the amount or percentage of additional tags requested as a buffer.]

## Accounting and Expiration

- Unused tags returned by February 15 of following year or within 90 days of end of season, whichever is sooner
- Harvesters should document tags lost and broken
- Annual commercial tag report should include this information
- Tags expire at the end of the fishing year

## Penalties and Outreach

- States determine appropriate penalties:
  - suspension or revocation of the commercial license/permit, wholesale dealer permit, retail dealer permit, or authorization to purchase tautog
  - confiscation of all tautog caught, possessed or sold in violation
  - seizure and forfeiture of all property used in violation
  - fines
- Outreach to raise awareness of tagging program

# Tentative Timeline



- Board considers approval of Implementation Guidelines (Today)
- States submit tag allowance biological metric to ASMFC in August/September
  - ASMFC orders tags; tags sent to the states
- Fall 2019: States distribute tags to harvesters
- January 1, 2020: Effective start date for tagging program

# TC Summary



- Where to apply tags on the fish
  - Tags can be applied to either operculum
- Biological Metric (annual request for # of tags)
  - Discussion on tag loss in application (~10%)
  - After year #1, there should be an evaluation of the appropriate tag loss rate
- Expirations date for tags
  - No consensus on the concept of a tag expiration date
  - Need to clarify expiration date of tag vs expiration date of sale of fish
  - Possibly the end of February

# AP Summary



- Number of concerns raised
  - Tag Application
    - likely higher mortality will occur than NY study concluded
    - Applying tags will be difficult on the water
  - Tag Accounting and Distribution:
    - Partial Allocation of tags, remainder distributed upon return of old tags
  - Tag Expiration:
    - Market demand around Chinese New Year (late Jan-Feb) complicates tags expiring at end of calendar year.
    - Not needed if deadline of Dec 31<sup>st</sup> is applied
  - Penalties:
    - Need to address recreational harvesters selling illegally

# Requested Changes



- Allow some states to delay implementation until July 1
  - Require Board Action
- Tag Application: Allow 'conservation equivalency' for states allow dealers to tag instead of harvesters
  - Require an Addendum
- Tag Expiration: Allow dealers to retain inventory into the new year.
  - Not a current FMP requirement. Would require an Addendum

# Board Actions for Consideration



- Specify changes to draft implementation guidelines
- Adopt Guidelines as “best management practices”
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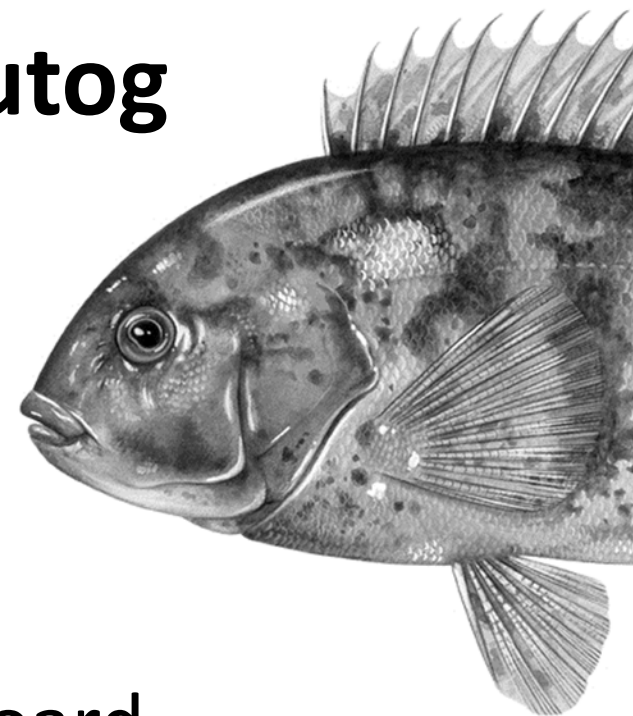




# Questions?



# 2018 FMP Review and Compliance for Tautog (*Tautoga onitis*)



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# Outline



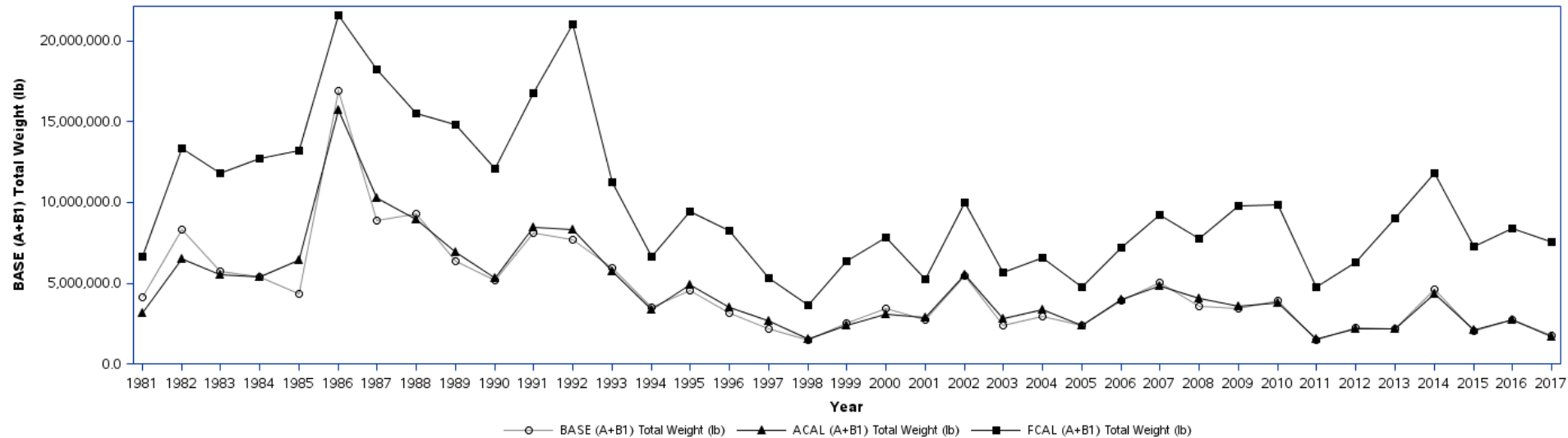
- Changes to management
- Landings trends
- Biological sampling
- Compliance & *de minimis* requests

# Management Measures

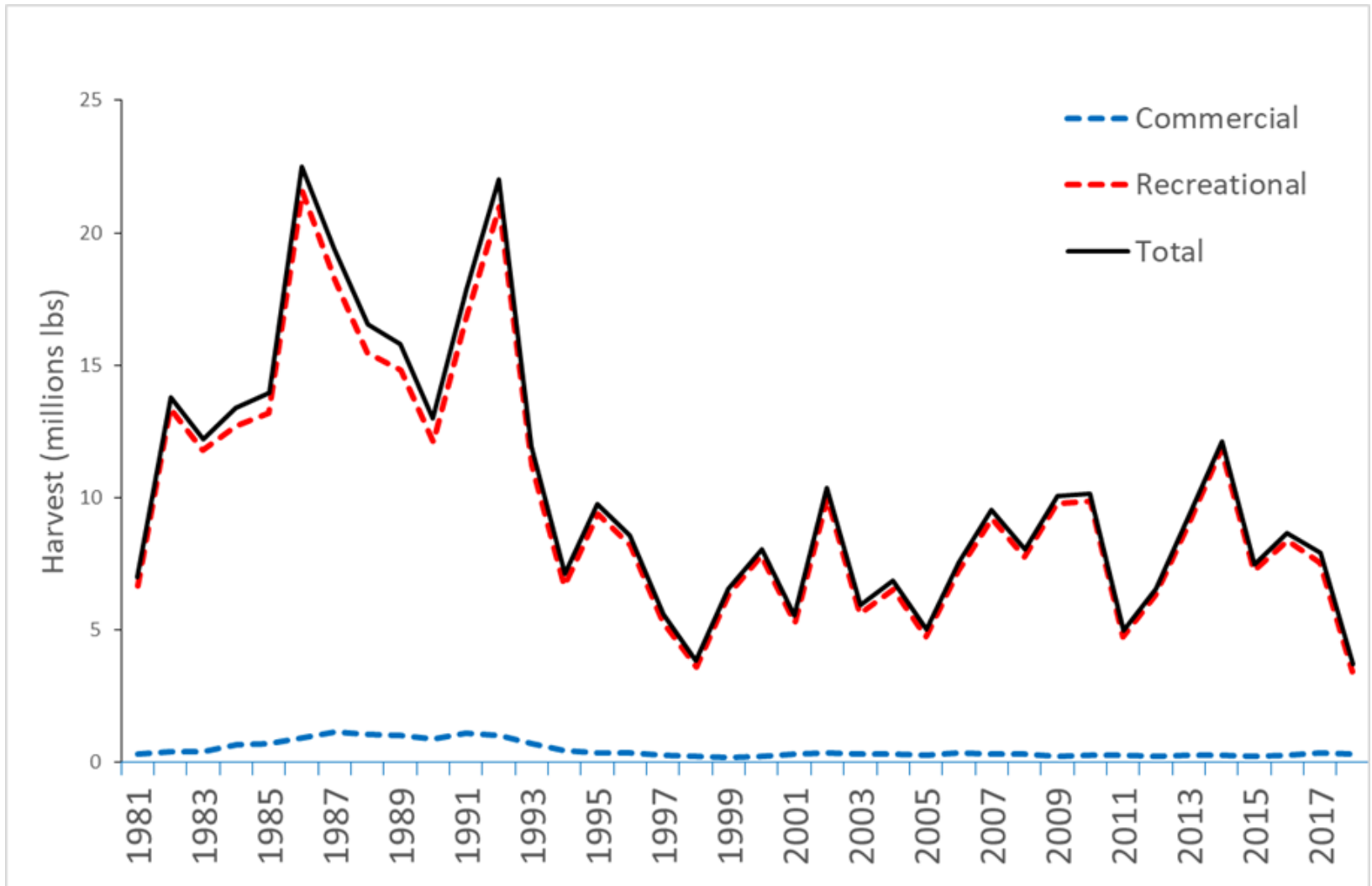


- States implemented new regulations consistent with Amendment 1
  - LIS and NJ-NYB regions put in place regulations to reduce harvest
    - LIS: Recreational measures achieve a 20.3% redux
    - NJ-NYB: Commercial and recreational measures to achieve a 2% redux
  - MARI and DelMarVA implemented regional regulations

# Change in Recreational Coastwide Harvest (lbs)



# Commercial & Recreational Harvest



# Biological Sampling



- New York, Delaware, and Virginia were unable to meet the 200 age sample requirement in 2018
- State reports indicate efforts were made to acquire samples
- The PRT recommends the Board find all states in compliance with the sampling requirements of the FMP

State	2018 Samples
MA	1,105 lengths; 244 otoliths, 255 spines
RI	219 lengths; 217 ages
CT	201 ages
NY	832 lengths; 148 ages
NJ	359 lengths and ages
DE	134 otoliths
MD	242 lengths and 211 otoliths
VA	26 lengths and ages

# Compliance and De Minimis Request



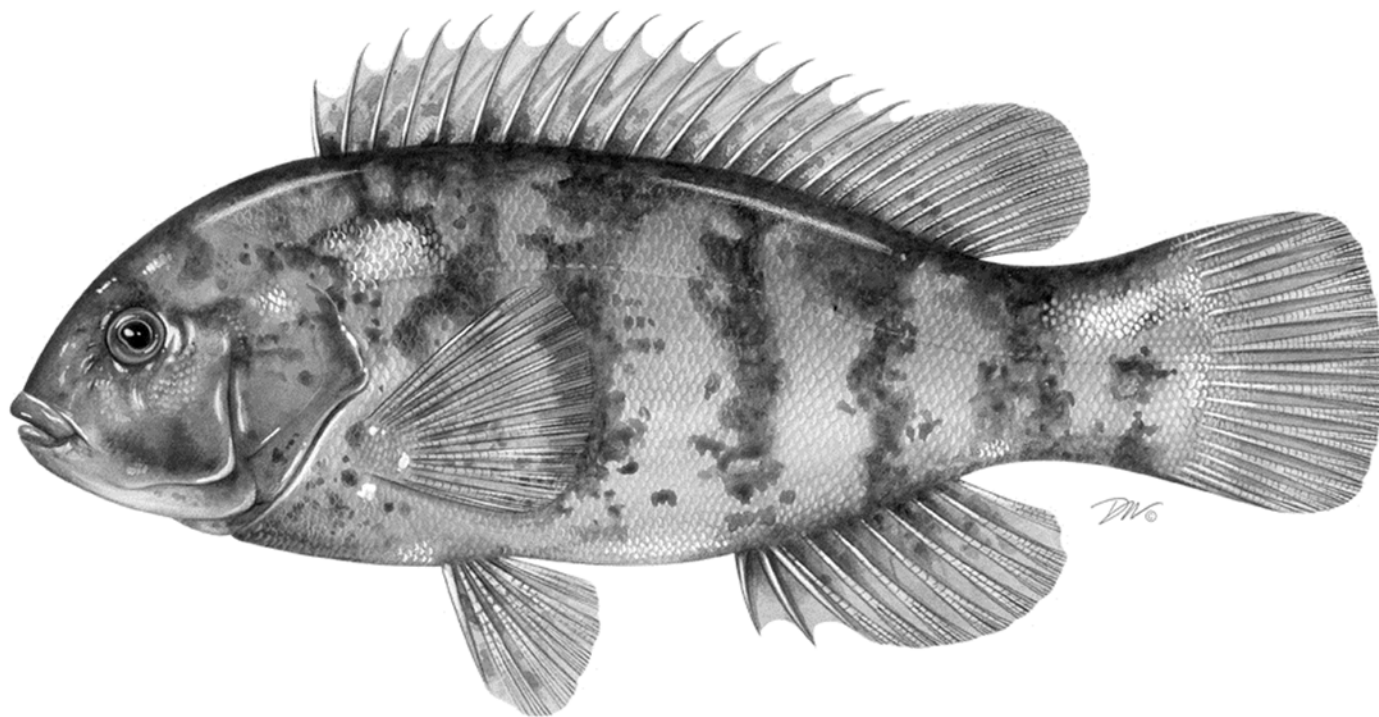
- Correction: MD Regulations for 2018
- PRT Recommendation: states should clearly state their measures and their regional management program to achieve regional F-target
- *De Minimis* requests: Delaware, Maryland
  - DE and MD qualify for continued *de minimis* status for the commercial sector.
  - The PRT recommends that the Board approve the states of Delaware and Maryland's requests.



# Board Action for Consideration



- Move to accept the 2019 Tautog FMP Review and state compliance reports and approve de minimis status for Delaware and Maryland.



**Questions?**