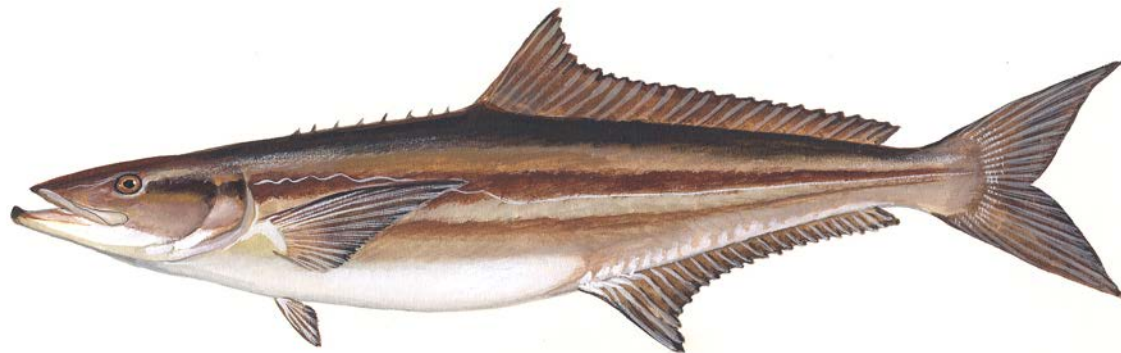




Draft Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia



October 2017

Document Development



Board Initiated Public Information Document (PID)	August 2016
Board Approval of PID for Public Comment	October 2016
Public Comment on PID	Winter 2016-2017
Board Approval of PID and Initiation of Draft Fishery Management Plan (Draft FMP)	February 2017
Board Approval of Draft FMP for Public Comment	August 2017
Public Comment on Draft FMP	September-October 2017
Board Considers Final Action on Draft FMP	October 2017
(Pending Board Approval) FMP Implementation	2018 Fishing Season

Background Information



Recreational Fishery

- Federal recreational ACL - 620,000 pounds (est. 2015)
- Landings in 2015 and 2016 exceeded 1 million pounds
 - Federal closures of the EEZ in 2016 and 2017
- Most landings GA-VA; episodic landings north of Virginia
- Table 4 in Draft FMP

Commercial Fishery

- Federal commercial ACL – 50,000 pounds (est. 2015)
- Primarily a bycatch fishery
- Majority of landings from NC
- Table 2 in Draft FMP

Written Comments

Forty-four (44) written comments received and majority (41) of comments were not specifically related to management options:

- Delay any ASMFC involvement until after an updated assessment is completed (13 comments additionally suggested assessment use of VA mandatory reporting data)
- Concerns with the quality of MRIP data and its use in management
- Concerns with the current southern boundary of AMG cobia at the Georgia/Florida line and its impacts on allocation

Public Meeting Comments

- Major theme at VA and NC hearings was to delay action until new stock assessment is completed or full management authority is granted to ASMFC.
- All regions expressed concerns over stock boundaries and MRIP.
- SC and GA meetings more concerned with EEZ closures.

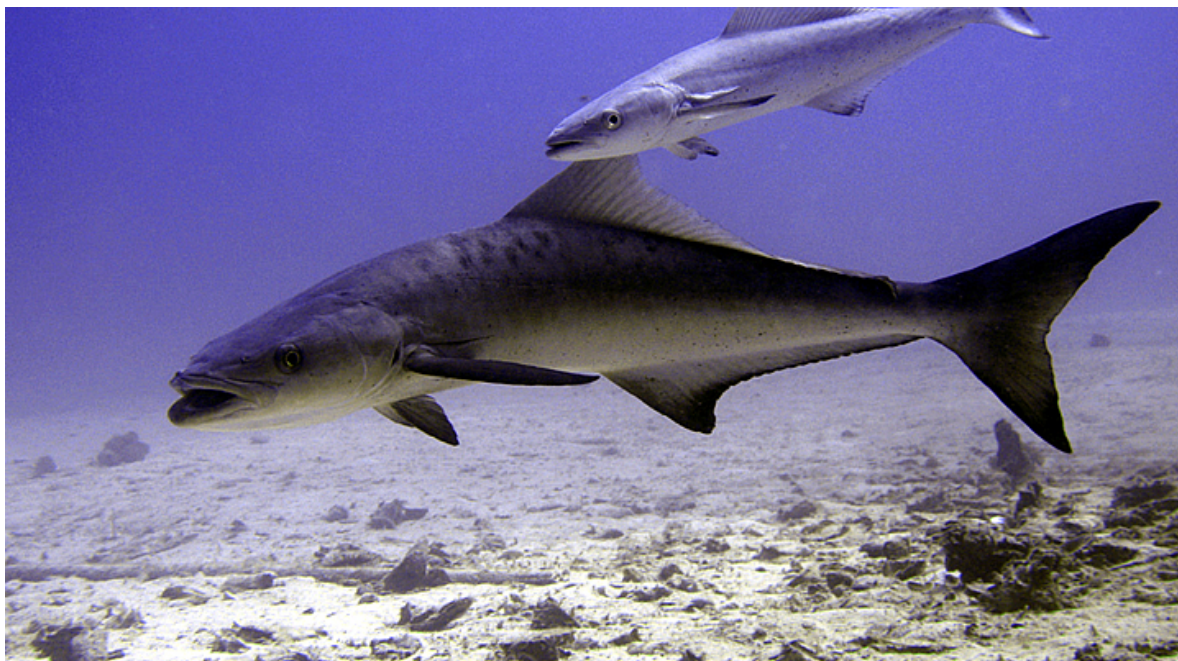
Public Comment Summary



Advisory Panel Comments

- Conference call was solicited to discuss the AP's preferred options after the public comment period closed on October 10, 2017
- Only 1 member responded and the meeting was not held
- Another member provided a comment supporting:
 - Option 2 of the recreational min. size (4.1.1) and bag (4.1.2) limit options(1 fish per person of at least 36 inches FL)
 - 3 fish maximum vessel limit
 - Option 2 (soft harvest targets) with Sub-Option f (3-year evaluation timeframe) for recreational allocations
 - A spawning season closure of some length in early summer
 - This member additionally expressed:
 - Concerns related to methylmercury levels in cobia and public awareness of these levels
 - Concerns with the quality of MRIP data.

Questions and Discussion



Complementary Measures



SAFMC Framework 4

- **Recreational:**
 - 620,000 pound ACL
 - **Min. Size Limit: 36 in FL**
 - **Bag Limit: 1 fish per person**
 - **Vessel limit: 6 per vessel**

ASMFC Draft FMP

- **Recreational:**
 - 620,000 pound RHL
 - **(4.1.1) Min. Size Limit Opt. 2: 36 in FL (or TL equivalent)**
 - **(4.1.2) Bag Limit Opt. 2: 1 fish per person**
 - **(4.1.3) Vessel limit Opt. 2: State-specific; NTE 6 per vessel**

Complementary Measures



- **4.1.1. Recreational Size Limit Options**

Option 1: Status Quo: No coastwide size limit

Option 2: Coastwide size limit: Min. size limit of 36 in FL (or TL equivalent)

Public Comment:

- 26 written comments (VSSA) supported Option 1
- 1 AP member supported Option 2

Complementary Measures



- **4.1.2. Recreational Bag Limit Options**

Option 1: Status quo: No coastwide bag limit

Option 2: Coastwide bag limit: 1 fish per person

Public Comment:

- 26 written comments (VSSA) supported Option 1
- 1 AP member supported Option 2

Complementary Measures



- **4.1.3. Recreational Vessel Limit Options**

Option 1: Status quo: No coastwide vessel limit

Option 2: Vessel limit: State-specific daily vessel limits, not to exceed 6 fish per vessel

Public Comment:

- 26 written comments (VSSA) supported Option 1
- 1 AP member supported a maximum vessel limit of 3 fish per vessel

Complementary Measures



- **4.1.1. Recreational Size Limit Options**

- Option 1: Status Quo:** No coastwide size limit

- Option 2: Coastwide size limit:** Min. size limit of 36 in FL (or TL equivalent)

- **4.1.2. Recreational Bag Limit Options**

- Option 1: Status quo:** No coastwide bag limit

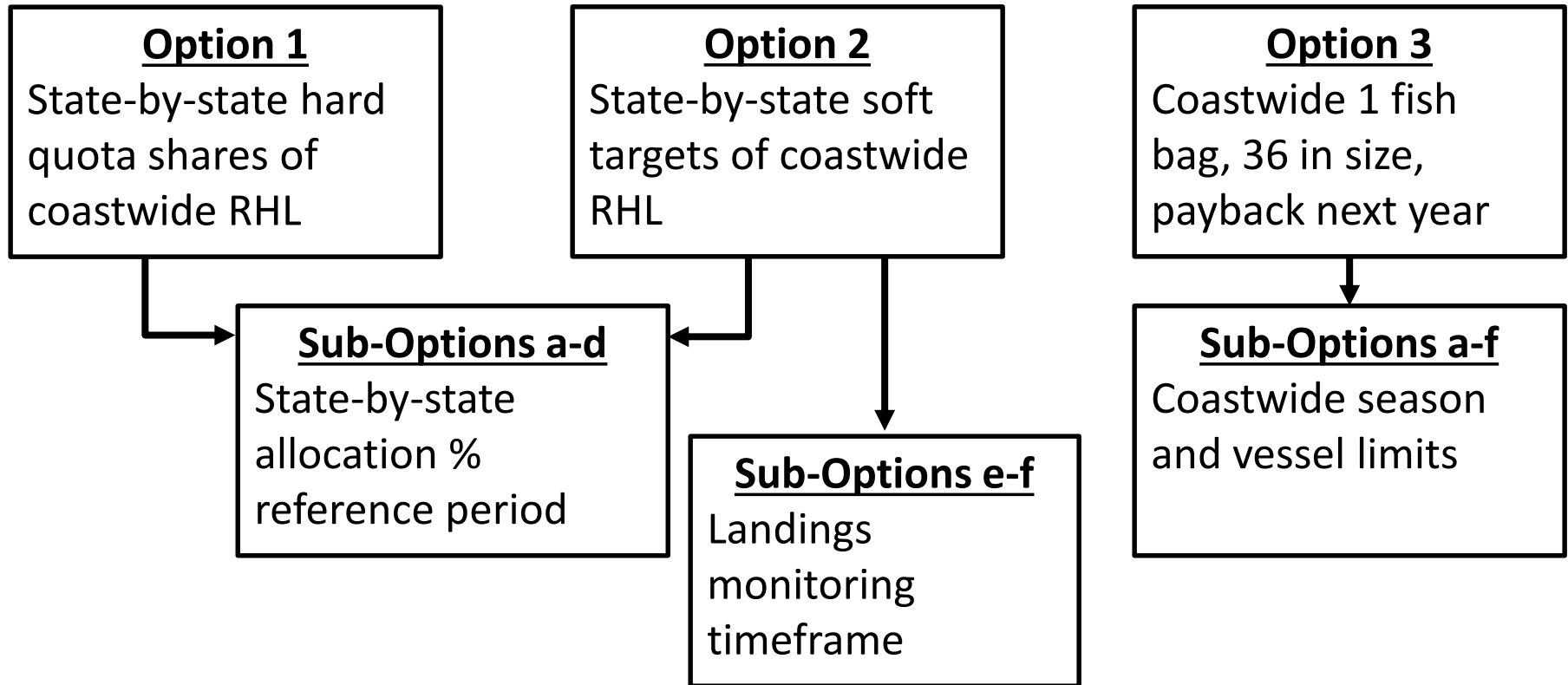
- Option 2: Coastwide bag limit:** 1 fish per person

- **4.1.3. Recreational Vessel Limit Options**

- Option 1: Status quo:** No coastwide vessel limit

- Option 2: Vessel limit:** State-specific daily vessel limits, not to exceed 6 fish per vessel

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Option 1:

- State-defined seasons/harvest control measures
- State-by-state hard recreational quota shares of coastwide RHL (based on **Sub-Options a-d**)
- Shares divided among non-*de minimis* states only
- Overharvest paid back in following year; under harvest does not carry over

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Option 2:

- State-defined seasons/harvest control measures
- State-by-state soft recreational harvest targets based on coastwide RHL (based on **Sub-Options a-d**)
- Limits divided among non-*de minimis* states only
- Avg. annual landings evaluated against state-allocated quotas (**Sub-Options a-d**) over multi-year period (**Sub-Options e-f**)
- Overharvest paid back in following multi-year period (**Sub-Options e-f**)
- Relaxed measures considered after under harvest

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Options 1-2:

- Historical Landings Ref. Period Sub-Options for Option 1 (a-d; in lbs with RHL of 613,800 lbs):

State	a. 3-yr Average (2013-2015) (lbs)	b. 5-yr Average (2011-2015) (lbs)	c. 10-yr Average (2006-2015) (lbs)	d. 5-yr/10-yr Average (lbs)
GA	27,621 (4.5%)	55,242 (9.0%)	61,380 (10.0%)	58,311 (9.5%)
SC	38,669 (6.3%)	66,290 (10.8%)	83,477 (13.6%)	74,885 (12.2%)
NC	295,852 (48.2%)	267,003 (43.5%)	206,237 (33.6%)	236,313 (38.5%)
VA	251,044 (40.9%)	225,265 (36.7%)	263,320 (42.9%)	244,292 (39.8%)

(Table 11. Includes 1% (6,200 lbs) *de minimis* set aside)

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Option 2:

–Landings Monitoring Timeframe Sub-Options for Option 2 (e-f):

e) 2 years

f) 3 years

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Option 3:

- Coastwide season and daily vessel limit (**Sub-Options a-f**)
- **Sub-Options (a-f)** based on SAFMC CMP Framework 4 analysis
- 1 fish per person bag limit and 36 in min. size limit
- Coastwide overages paid back with reduction in recreational RHL in the following year

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Option 3:

– Coastwide season and vessel limit Sub-Options (a-f):

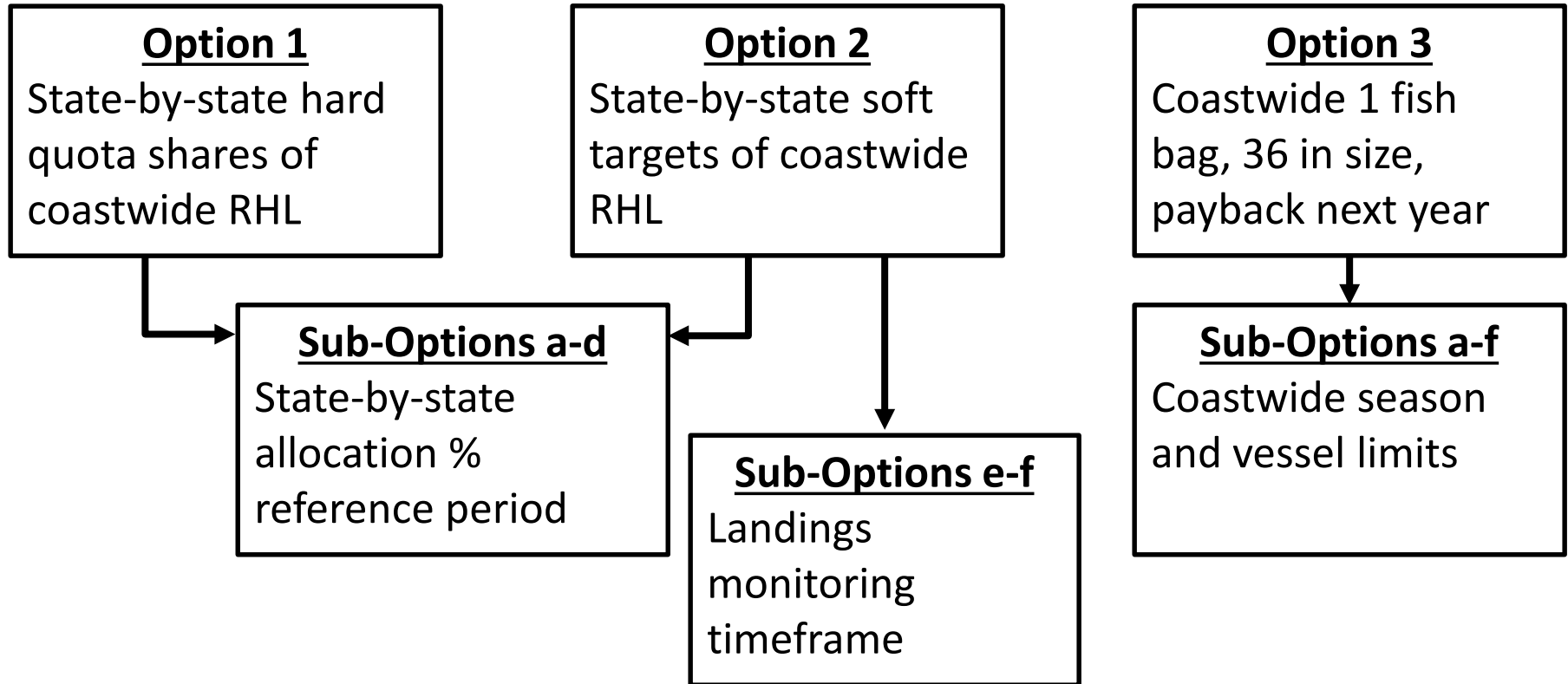
- a) January 1-August 22; 1 fish vessel limit
- b) January 1-July 28; 2 fish vessel limit
- c) January 1-July 20; 3 fish vessel limit
- d) January 1-July 18; 4 fish vessel limit
- e) January 1-July 17; 5 fish vessel limit
- f) January 1-July 15; 6 fish vessel limit

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



	Option 1					Option 2						Option 3							
	Total	Sub-Options				Total	Sub-Options					Total	Sub-Options						
		Ref. Period					Ref. Period		Timeframe				Season and Vessel Limit						
		a	b	c	d		a	b	c	d	e		f	a	b	c	d	e	f
Individual Organization				1				1							1				
Form Letter						13*													
Hearings																			
VA																			
NC						10	1												
SC						3			3		3								
GA						2		1	1	2	1	1							
TOTAL	1	0	0	1	0	28	1	1	5	2	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Other Comments	*Original comments prefer to delay ASMFC involvement until after the next assessment, pursue sole ASMFC management, then manage with soft harvest targets.																		

4.1.4. Rec. Season/Allocation Options



Complementary Measures



SAFMC Framework 4

- **Commercial:**
 - 50,000 pound ACL
 - **33 in FL size limit**
 - **2 fish per person**
 - **Vessel limit up to 6 per vessel**

ASMFC Draft FMP

- **Commercial:**
 - **(4.2.1) Min. Size Limit**
Opt. 2: 33 in FL size limit (or TL equivalent)
 - **(4.2.2) Possession Limit**
Opt. 2: No more than 2 fish per license holder, NTE 6 fish per vessel

Complementary Measures



- **4.2.1. Commercial Size Limit Options**

Option 1: Status Quo: No coastwide size limit

Option 2: Coastwide size limit: Min. size limit of 33 in FL (or TL equivalent)

Public Comment:

- 26 written comments (VSSA) supported Option 1
- 2 comments (1 at each of the SC and GA hearings) supported Option 2

Complementary Measures



- **4.2.2. Commercial Possession Limit Options**

Option 1: Status Quo: No coastwide possession limit

Option 2: Coastwide possession limit: State-specific possession limits of no more than 2 fish per license holder, not to exceed 6 fish per vessel

Public Comment:

- 26 written comments (VSSA) supported Option 1
- 2 comments (1 at each of the SC and GA hearings) supported Option 2
- 1 comment at the SC hearing recommended consideration of a per person or vessel limit

Complementary Measures



- **4.2.1. Commercial Size Limit Options**

- Option 1: Status Quo:** No coastwide size limit

- Option 2: Coastwide size limit:** Min. size limit of 33 in FL (or TL equivalent)

- **4.2.2. Commercial Possession Limit Options**

- Option 1: Status Quo:** No coastwide possession limit

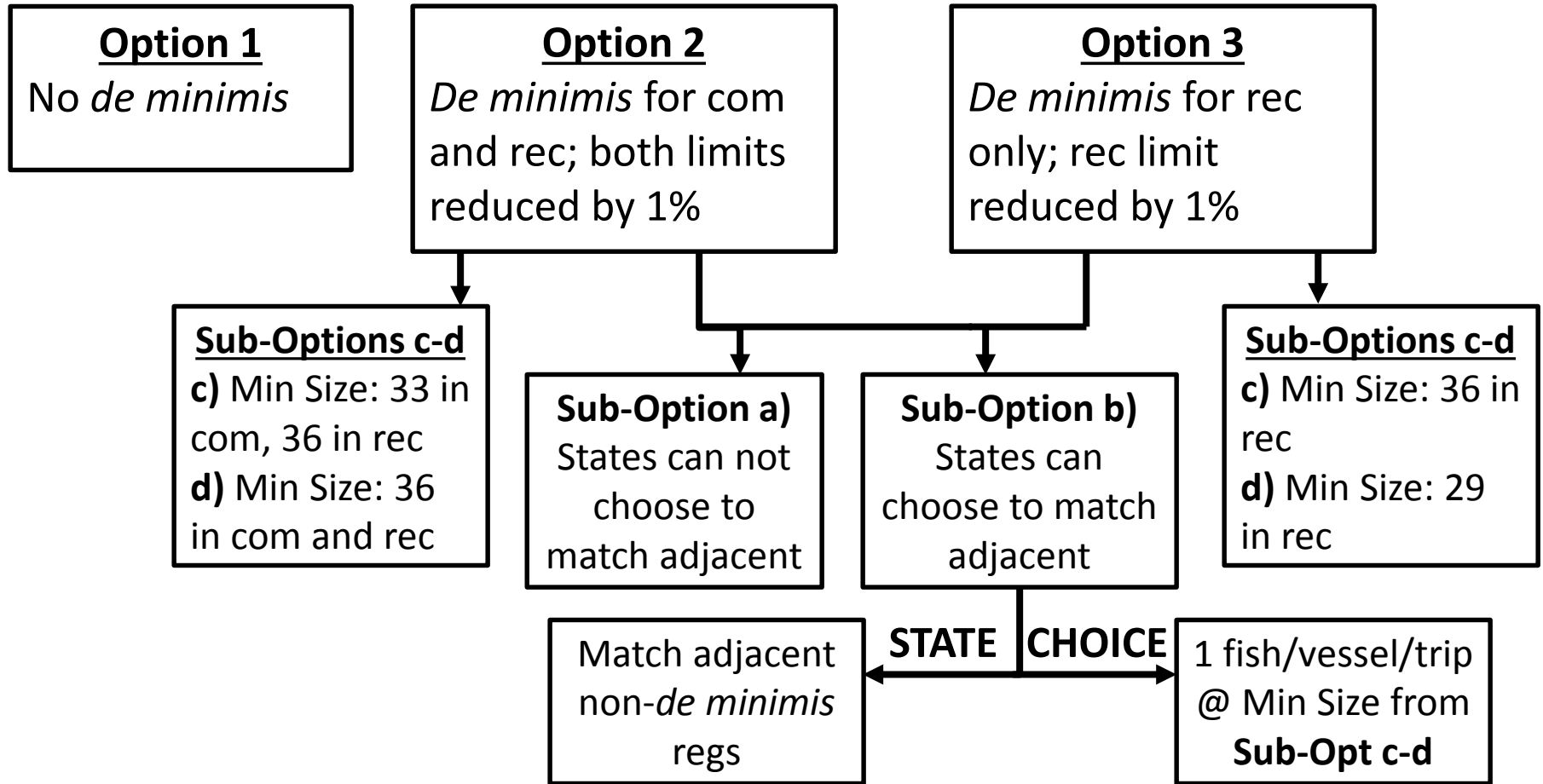
- Option 2: Coastwide possession limit:** State-specific possession limits of no more than 2 fish per license holder, not to exceed 6 fish per vessel

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- ***De minimis***: Typically exempts states with minimal fisheries for a species from biological monitoring requirements
 - FOR COBIA:
 - No biological monitoring requirements in FMP
 - Would allow states with minimal or episodic historical landings to keep a small number of cobia
- **Option 1: No *de minimis* program**
- **Options 2 & 3: Total (Option 2) or recreational (Option 3) harvest limit reduced by 1% to allow for *de minimis* landings**

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- **Option 2: Include *de minimis* program for commercial and recreational fisheries**
 - **Criteria:** State's total (commercial + recreational) landings for 2 of the previous 3 years must be less than 1% of coastwide total landings for the same time period.
 - **Regulations:** Potentially match regulations of adjacent non-*de minimis* state (**Sub-Options a-b**) OR 1 fish per vessel limit with minimum size limit (**Sub-Options c-d**)

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- **Option 2 (continued): Include *de minimis* program for commercial and recreational fisheries**
 - **Regulations: *De Minimis* able to Match Adjacent Non-*De Minimis* Sub-Options:**
 - a) **A *de minimis* state may not match management measures of an adjacent non-*de minimis* state**
 - 1 fish per vessel per trip limit with minimum size limit (**Sub-Options c-d**)
 - b) **A *de minimis* state may match management measures of an adjacent (or the nearest) non-*de minimis* state OR have a 1 fish per vessel per trip limit with minimum size limit (Sub-Options c-d)**
 - Matching includes all regulations (bag, possession, size, vessel, SEASONS, etc.)

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- **Option 2 (continued): Include *de minimis* program for commercial and recreational fisheries**
 - If *de minimis* states are required (Sub-Option a) or choose (Sub-Option b) to implement the 1 fish per vessel per trip limit
 - Regulations: Minimum Size Limits for *De Minimis* States Sub-Options:
 - c) Minimum size limits of 33 in FL for commercial and 36 in FL for recreational
 - d) Minimum size limits of 36 in FL for both commercial and recreational

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- **Option 3: Include *de minimis* program for recreational fisheries only**
 - **Criteria:** State's recreational landings for 2 of the previous 3 years must be less than 1% of coastwide recreational landings for the same time period.
 - **Regulations:** Potentially match recreational regulations of adjacent non-*de minimis* state (**Sub-Options a-b**) OR 1 fish per vessel recreational limit with minimum size limit (**Sub-Options c-d**)
 - Commercial subject to coastwide regulations

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- **Option 3 (continued): Include *de minimis* program for recreational fisheries only**
 - **Regulations: *De Minimis* able to Match Adjacent Non-*De Minimis* Sub-Options:**
 - a) **A *de minimis* state may not match recreational management measures of an adjacent non-*de minimis* state**
 - 1 fish per vessel per trip recreational limit with minimum size limit (Sub-Options c-d)
 - b) **A *de minimis* state may match recreational management measures of an adjacent (or the nearest) non-*de minimis* state OR have a 1 fish per vessel per trip recreational limit with minimum size limit (Sub-Options c-d)**
 - Matching includes all recreational regulations (bag, possession, size, vessel, seasons, etc.)

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



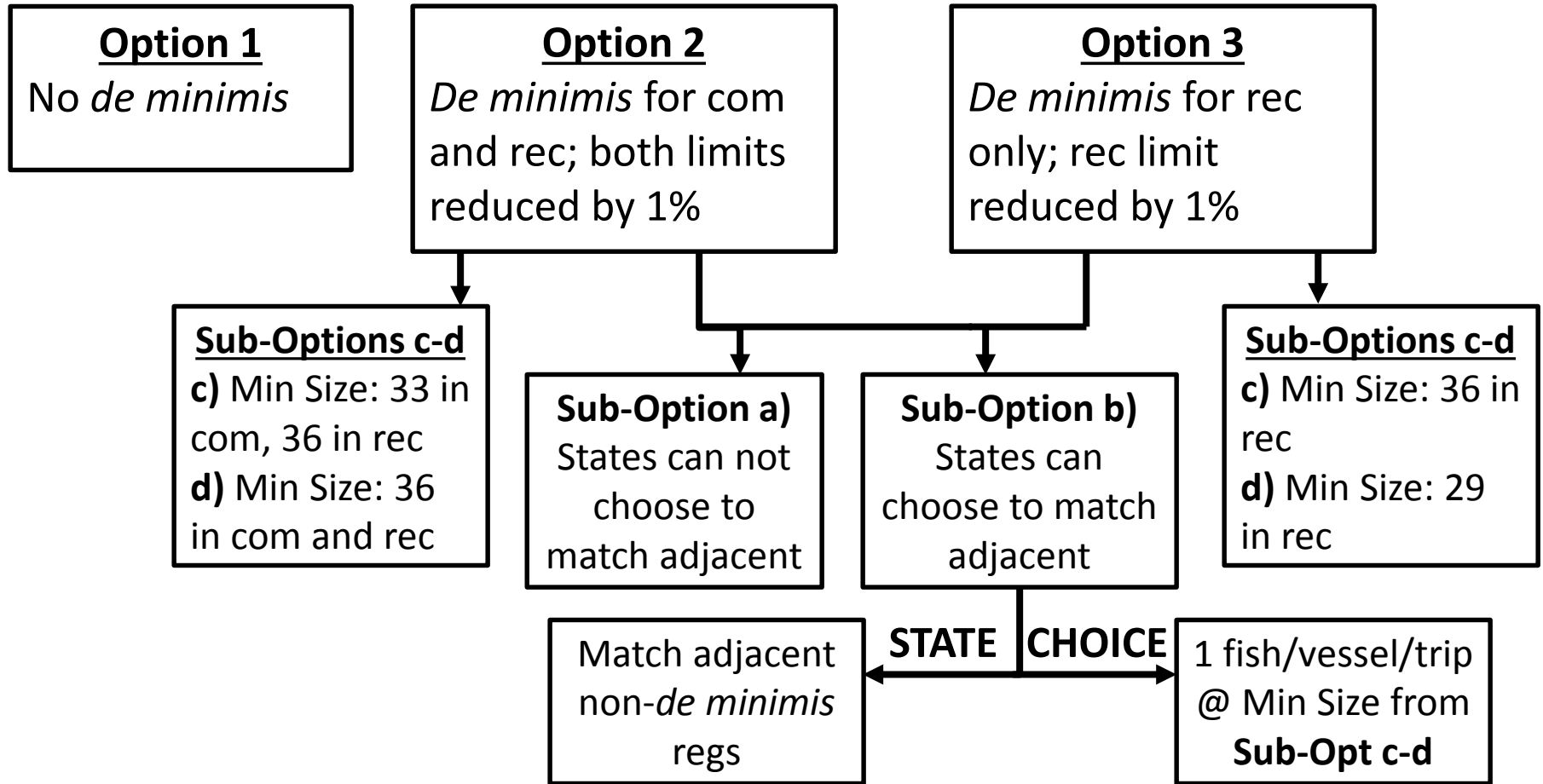
- **Option 3 (continued): Include *de minimis* program for recreational fisheries only**
 - If *de minimis* states are required (Sub-Option a) or choose (Sub-Option b) to implement the 1 fish per vessel per trip recreational limit
 - Regulations: Minimum Size Limits for *De Minimis* States Sub-Options:
 - c) Minimum size limit of 36 in FL for recreational
 - d) Minimum size limit of 29 in FL (FL at 50% maturity) for recreational

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



- One comment from the GA hearing supported a *de minimis* program (**Options 2 or 3**) with **Sub-Option b** (allow *de minimis* states to match adjacent non-*de minimis*)
- 1 written comment and several attendees of the VA and Hatteras, NC, hearings expressed concerns with growth and management of the fishery in MD
- LEC recommends consistency among *de minimis* state regulations

4.4.3. *De Minimis* Options



Compliance Schedule



Key Dates

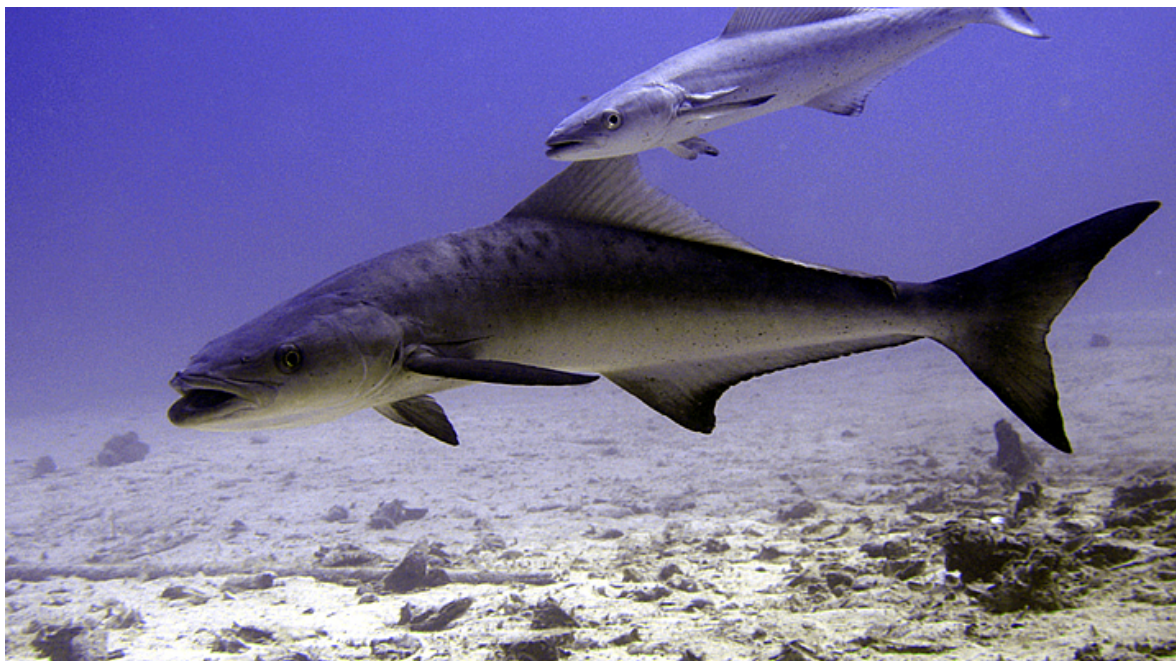
- January 1, 2018: States submit cobia FMP implementation plan for TC review and Board approval
- April 1, 2018: States implement approved implementation plan



Current Membership

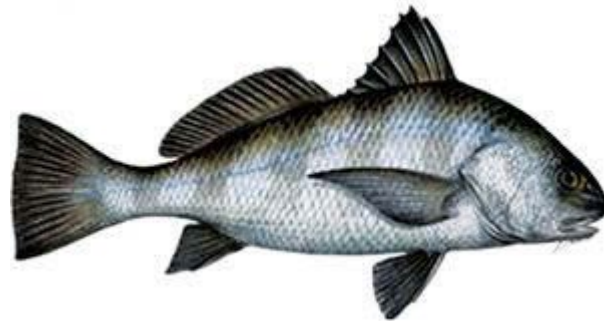
- Ryan Jiorle (VA)
- Steve Poland (NC)
- Mike Denson (SC)
- Chris Kalinowsky (GA)

Questions and Discussion





Proposal to Reopen Maryland Chesapeake Bay Commercial Black Drum Fishery



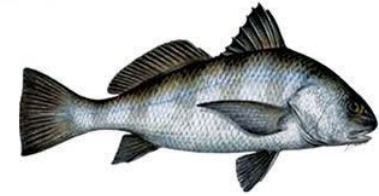
Presented to ASMFC South Atlantic
Board

October 19, 2017

Background



- May through early June fishery
- Tagging study conducted in Late 1990's to collect biological and migration information.
- Was written into regulation no commercial sale from Chesapeake Bay, but DNR may buy back black drum from pound net fishermen.
- Tagging study and buy back ended in 1999, leading to a closed Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery



Background



- There have been periodic requests to reopen the fishery, but the small scale of the fishery kept it as a low priority.
- ASMFC approval of Interstate FMP froze the Maryland commercial Chesapeake Bay fishery in a moratorium with language included in section 4.2.
- Intention of FMP is to prevent new fisheries from forming, we are requesting to reopen a preexisting fishery

Regulation History

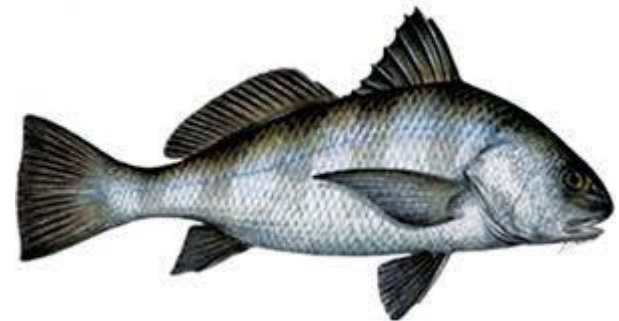
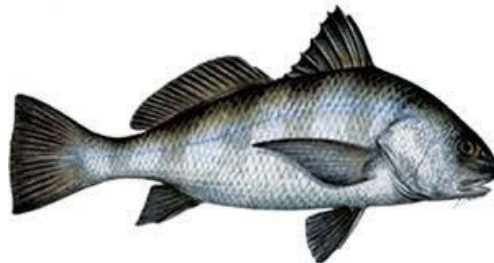
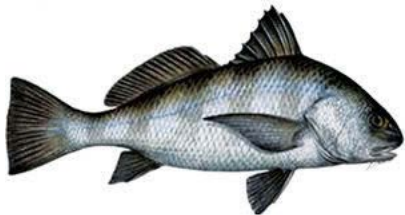


- Pre 1994 – No Regulations
- 1994 – 30,000 pound commercial cap in Chesapeake Bay and 1 fish/person/day recreational limit
- 1998 – Chesapeake Commercial fishery closed, except for scientific studies; 1,500 pound Atlantic Ocean Commercial Cap; Addition of 6 fish per boat limit for Recreational fishermen
- 1999 – No DNR buy back for tagging study and Chesapeake Bay commercial fishery remained closed.

Proposal



- To reopen the Maryland commercial fishery in Chesapeake Bay at a more restricted level of harvest.
- Harvest would be restricted by a 10 fish/vessel/day limit, and a 28 inch minimum total length size limit.



Vessel Limit

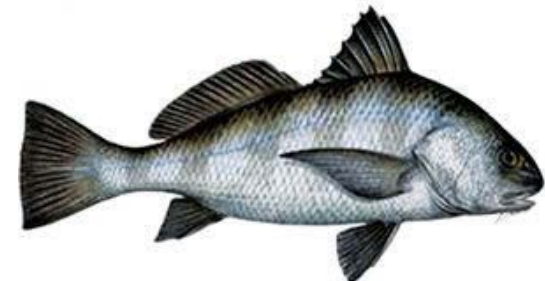


- Mean weight from tagging study (1995-1997) was 46.6 pounds (n=465)
- Ten fish at this weight would approximate the 500 pound per trip limits of NC and FL
- The mean length of this survey of 1104mm TL (n=900) was larger than the mean length of the Pound Net Survey; 883mm TL from 1993-2016 (n=131)
- 10 fish in most years will likely be less than 500 pounds.

Size Limit



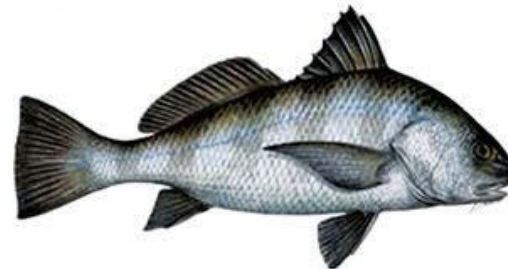
- The size limit of 28 inches TL is the length of 100% maturity, ensuring no increase mortality on sub-adult black drum
- Pound net study indicates 37% release rate (n=130; 1993-2016)
- Tagging study indicates 3% release rate (n=900; 1995-1998)
- More conservative length limit than neighboring jurisdictions



Historic Landings



- From 1973-1997 ranged from 0 (one year) to 41,552 pounds with an average annual landings of 11,475 pounds
- High inter-annual variability
- Fishery mostly unregulated during this time, and landings primarily from pound nets
- Would expect lower landings values with restrictions in place

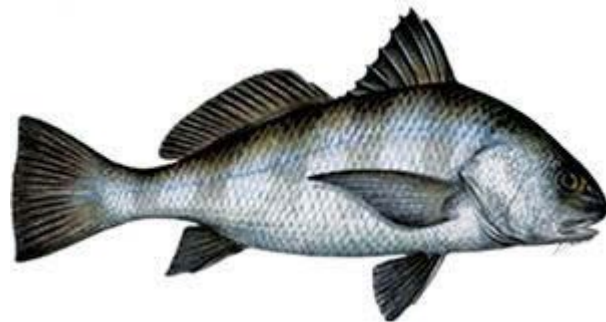


Estimated Impact



- Stock is not over fished and overfishing not occurring, with a target of 2.12 million pounds and a threshold of 4.12 million pounds
- 2015 total coastwide landings were 1.49 million pounds
- Assuming Maryland mean and max landings as the range of added landings, estimated total landing in 2015 would have been between 1.50 and 1.53 million pounds

Questions?

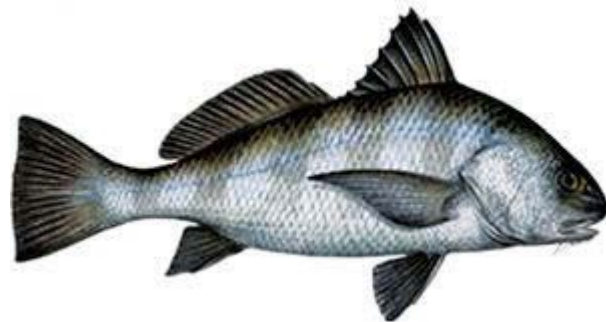


TC Review



- TC met via webinar Sept. 29, 2017
- Discussed several components of proposal, including: potential harvest levels, gears/participants, market impacts, and bio. monitoring
- **Recommendations:**
 - **The Black Drum TC recommends that the Maryland proposal to reopen their commercial black drum fishery in the Chesapeake Bay be approved, as reopening of this historic fishery would not likely lead to overfishing of this stock.**
 - **The TC further recommends that biological monitoring of black drum caught in this fishery be conducted to collect information such as size, age, etc.**

Board Discussion and Review

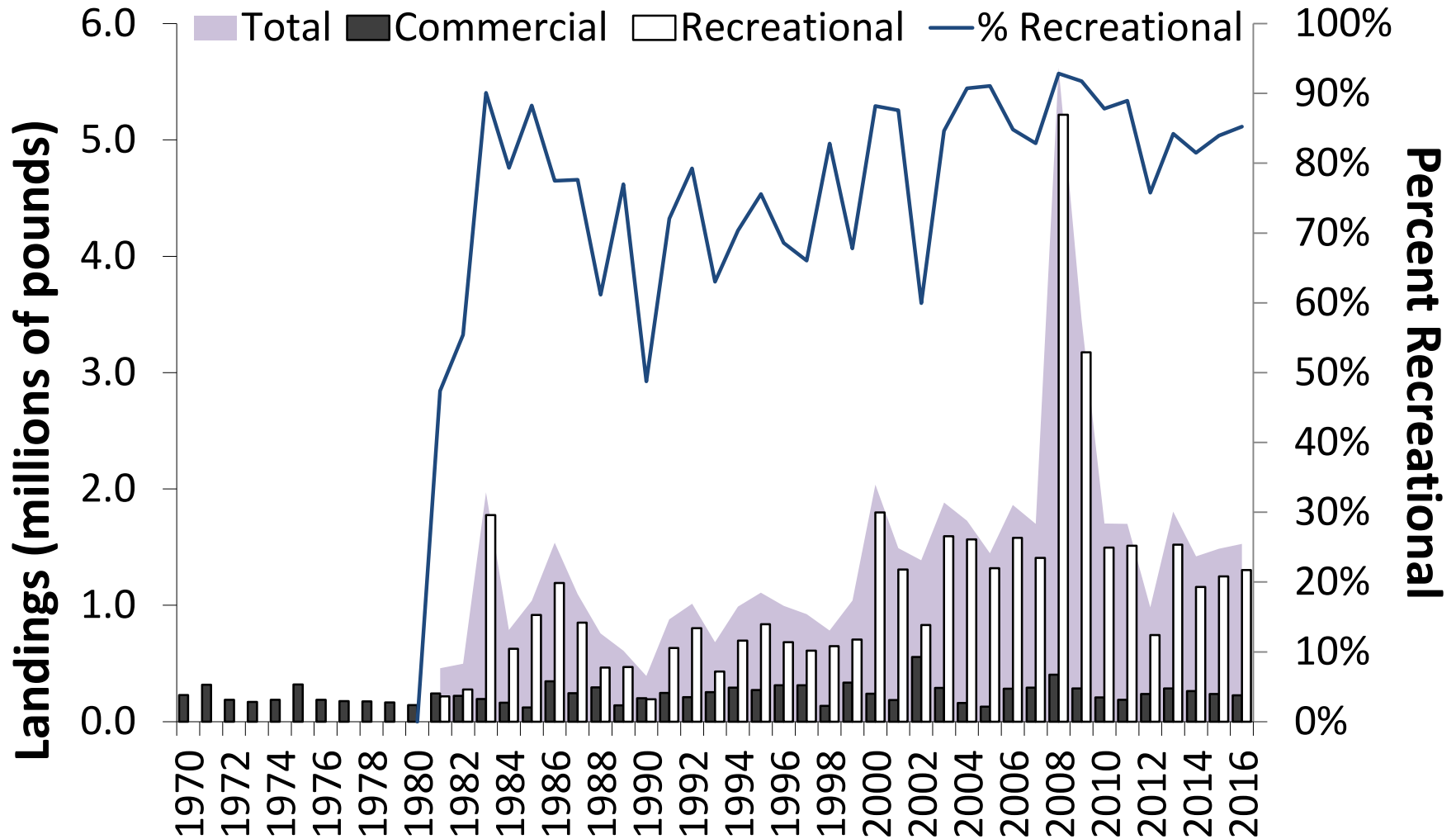




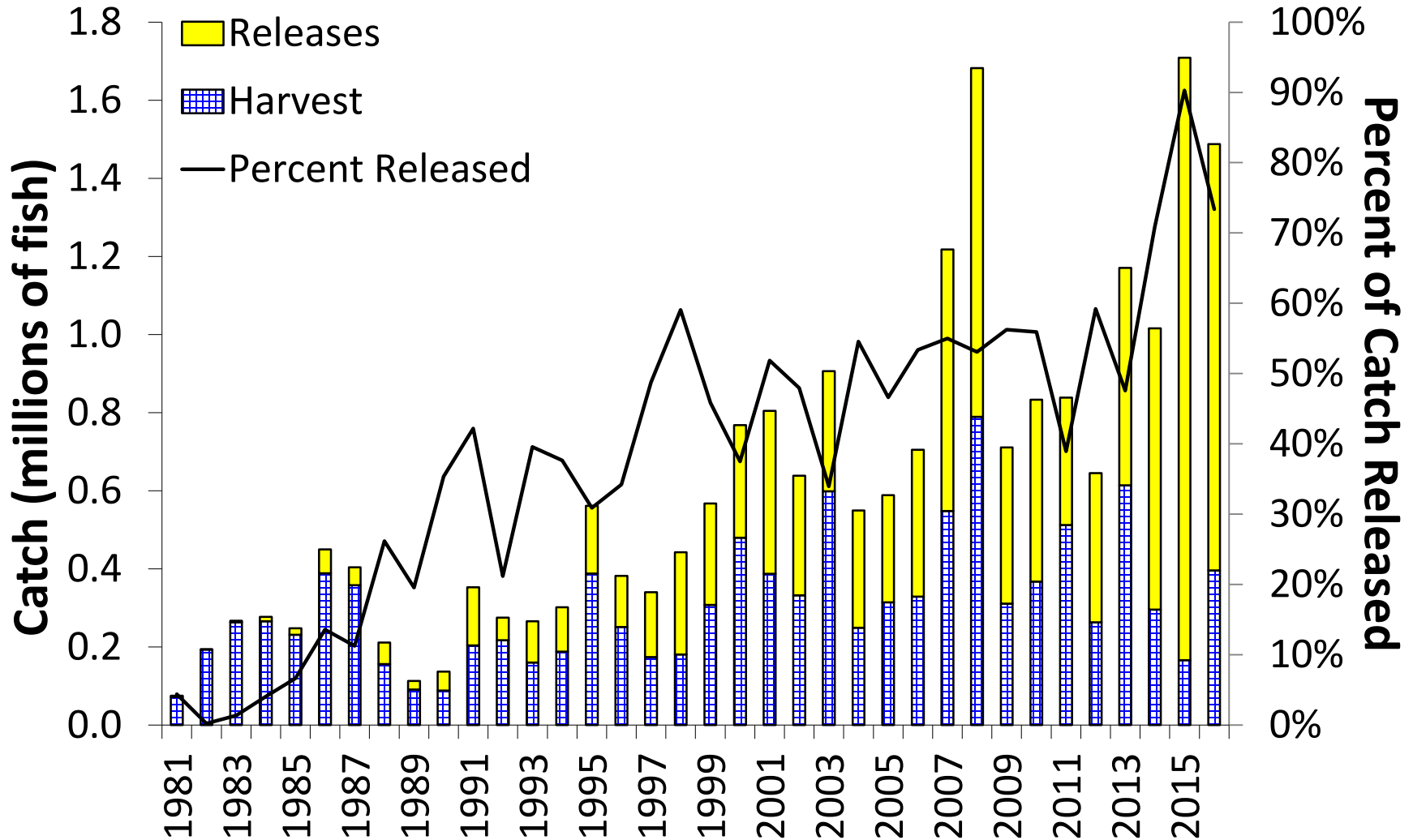
Black Drum 2017 FMP Review

South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries
Management Board
October 2017

Status of the Fishery - Total Landings



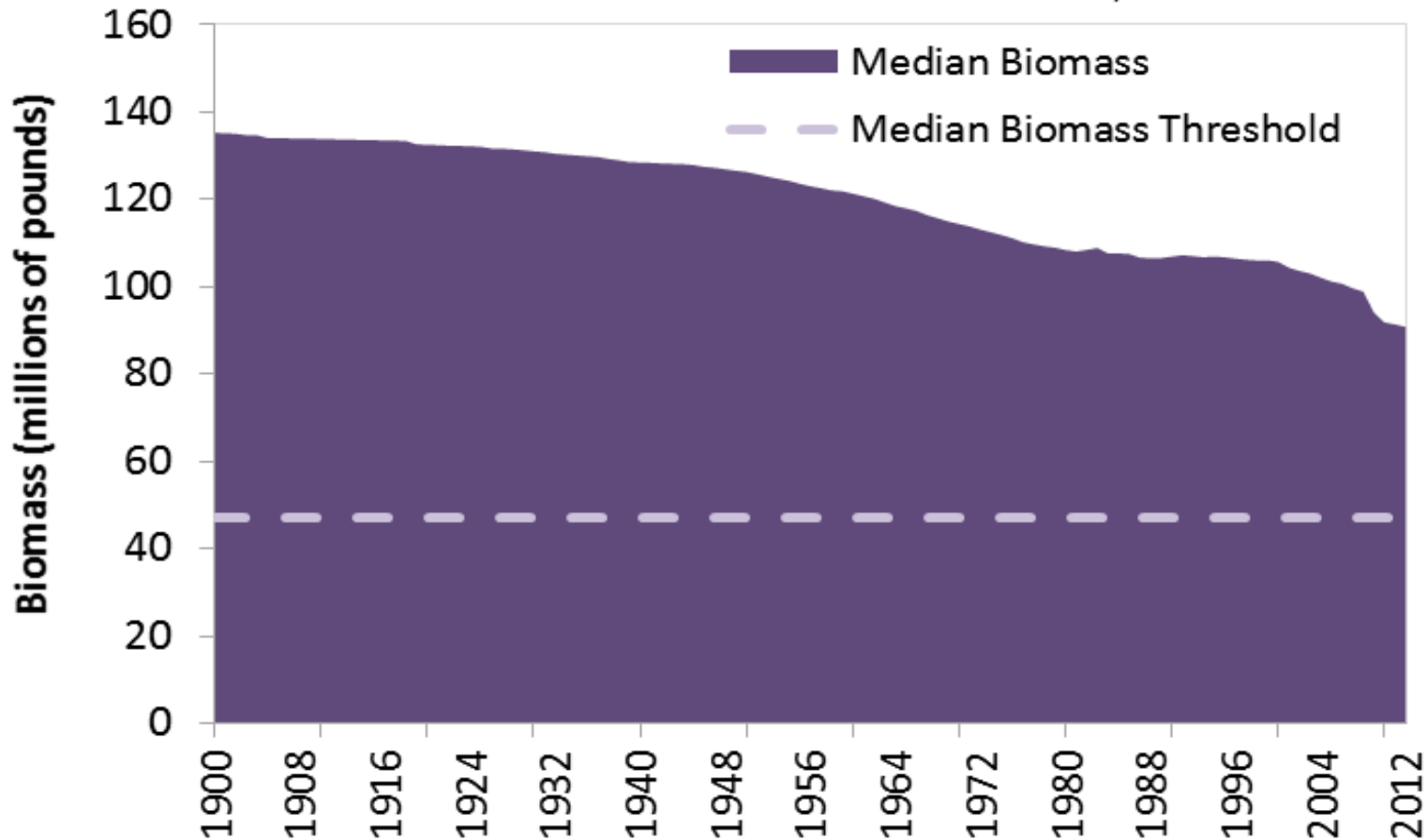
Status of the Fishery - Recreational



Status of the Stock



Black Drum Biomass
ASMFC Black Drum Benchmark Assessment, 2015



Status of Management



Black Drum FMP

- January 1, 2014 - all states must implement a maximum possession limit and a minimum size of at least 12"
- January 1, 2016 - all states must increase the minimum size limit to at least 14"

2016 Management



State	Recreational	Commercial	
	Size (TL) and Bag limit	Size limit (TL)	Trip Limit and Quota
ME-NY	-	-	-
NJ	16" min; 3 fish	16" min	10,000 lbs; 65,000 lb quota
DE	16" min; 3 fish	16" min	10,000 lbs; 65,000 lb quota
MD	16" min; 1 fish, 6 per vessel (Bay)	16" min	1,500 lb quota Atlantic Coast, Ches Bay closed
VA	16" min; 1 fish	16" min	1/person/day without permit; 120,000 lb quota
NC	14" min - 25" max; 1 fish > 25"; 10 fish	14" min - 25" max	500 lbs
SC	14" min - 27" max; 5 fish	14" min - 27" max	5/person/day
GA	14" min; 15 fish	14" min	15/person/day
FL	14" min - 24" max; 1 fish > 24"; 5 fish	14" min - 24" max	500 lbs/day

Compliance and *De minimis*



- All states are in compliance with the FMP
 - maximum possession limit and the 14” min TL
- No state requested *de minimis* status through the annual reporting process.
- **PRT recommends that the Board approve the 2017 Black Drum FMP Review and state compliance reports.**
- Other research/monitoring recommendations found in FMP Review

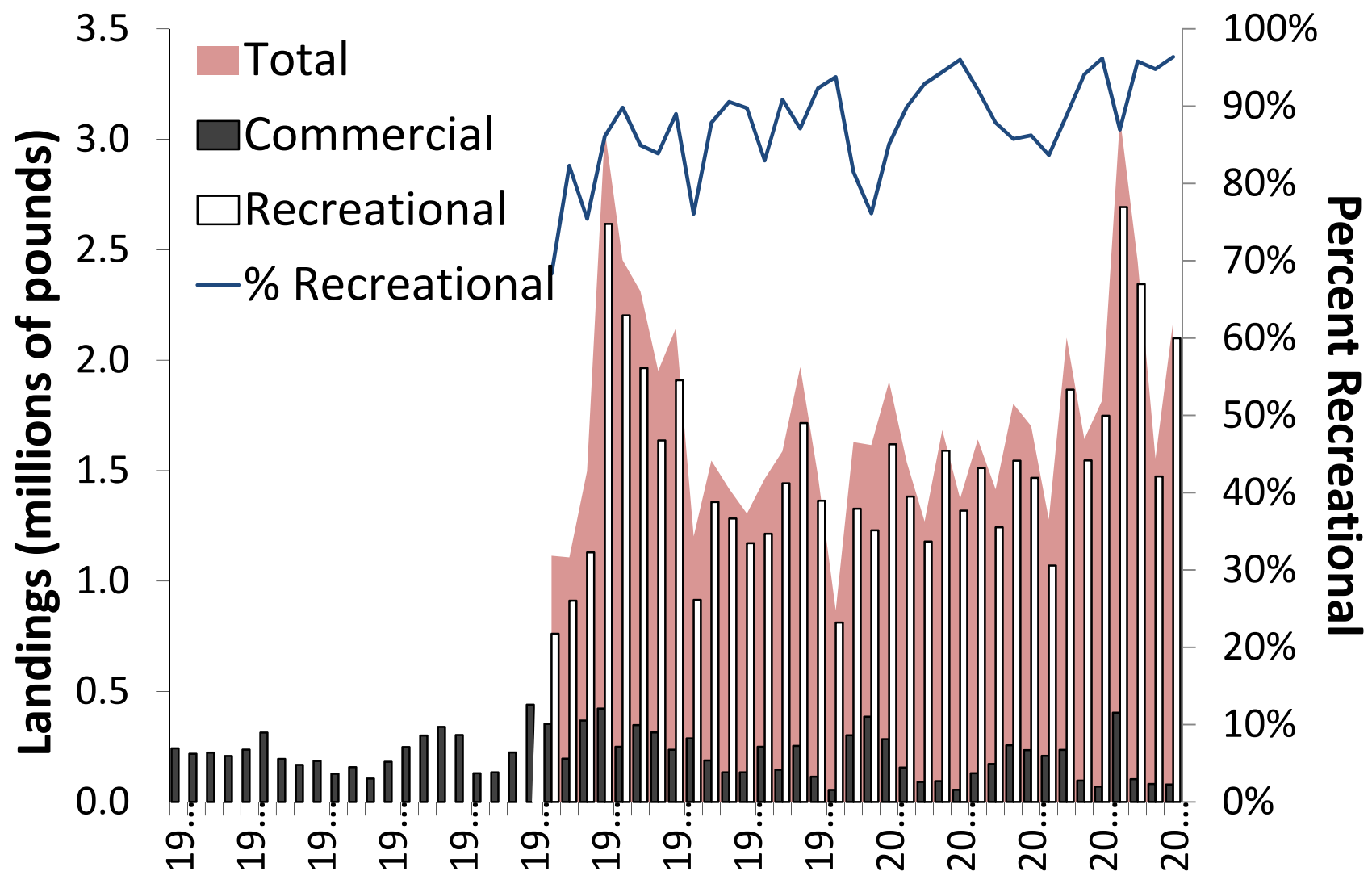


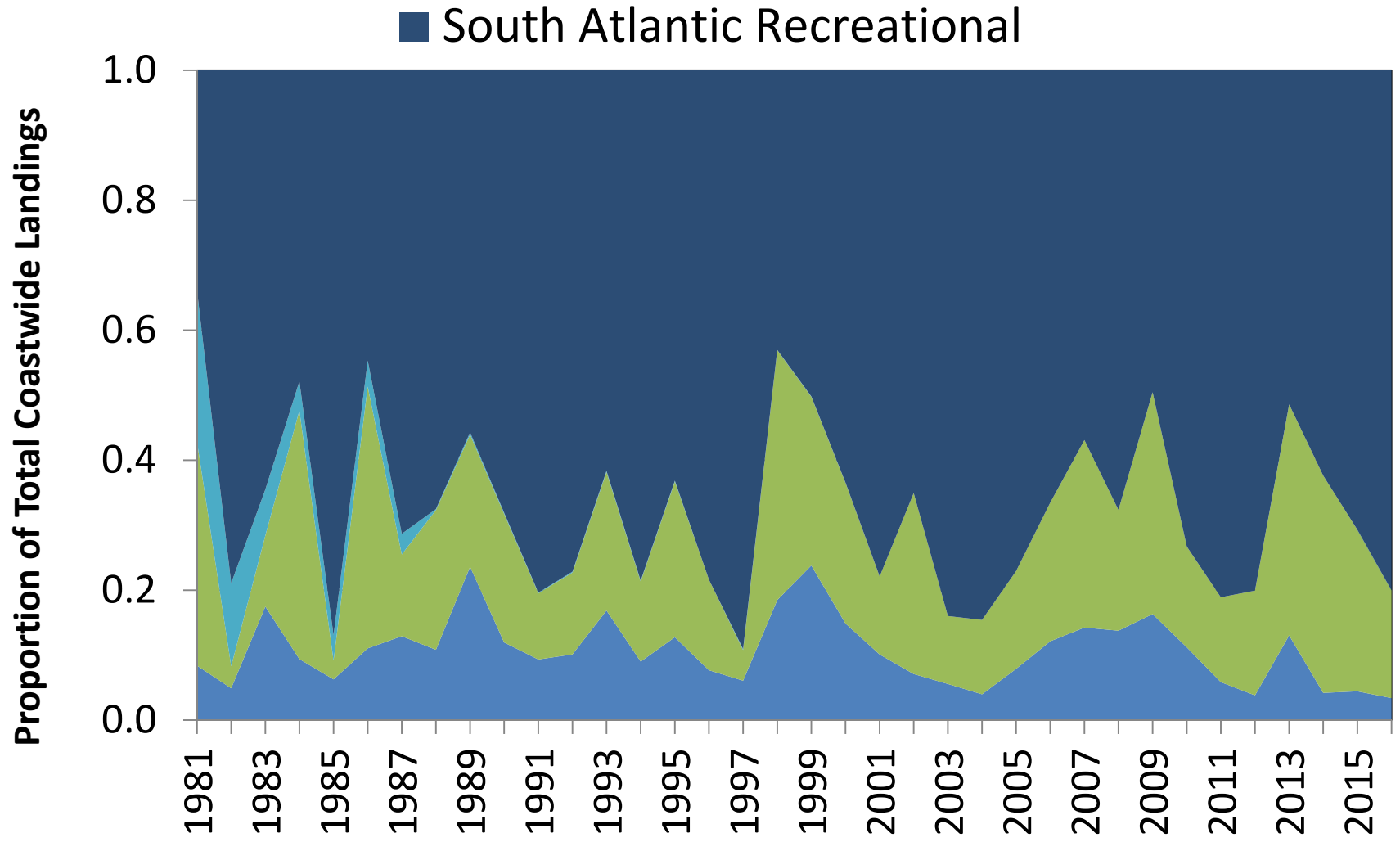
Comments or Questions?

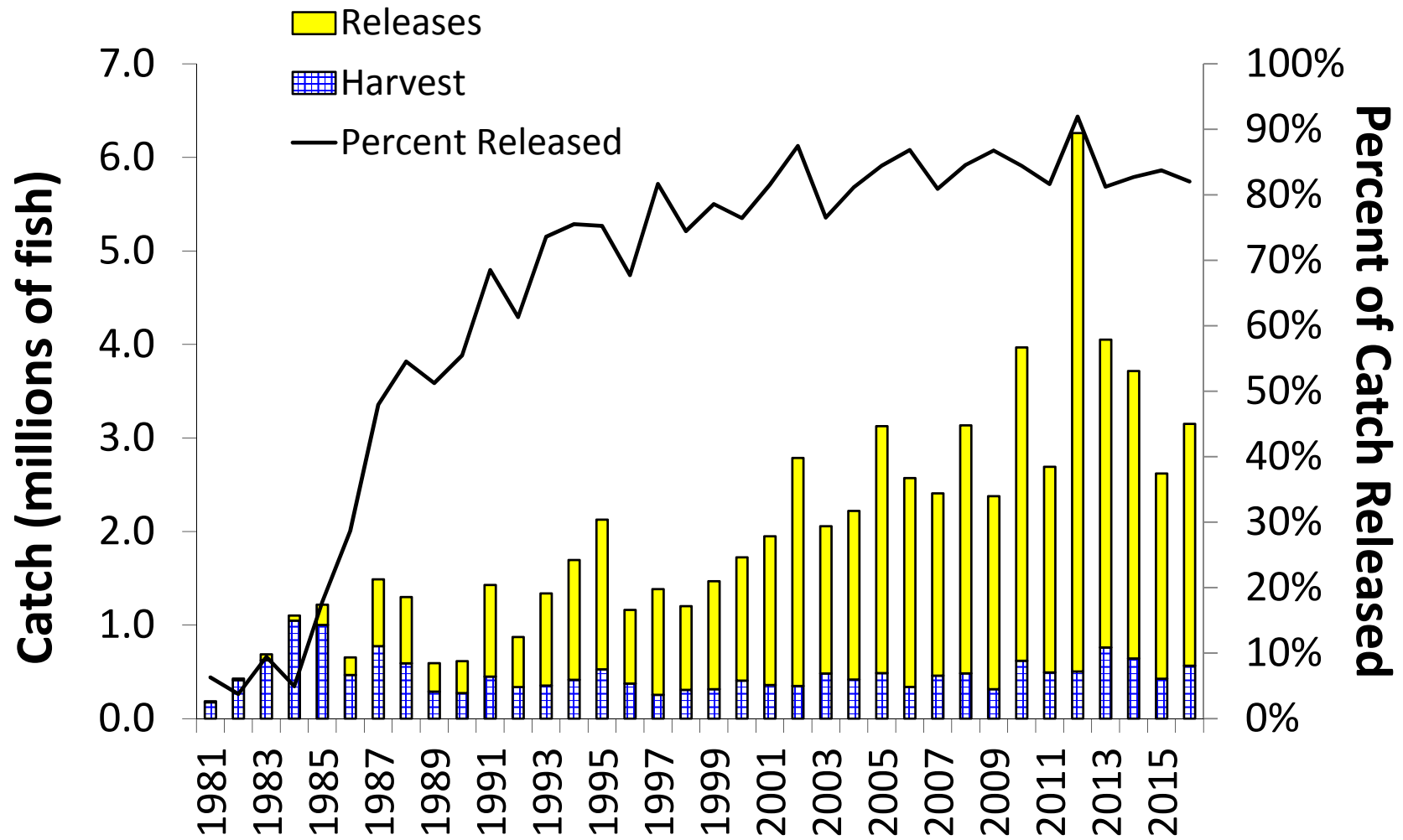


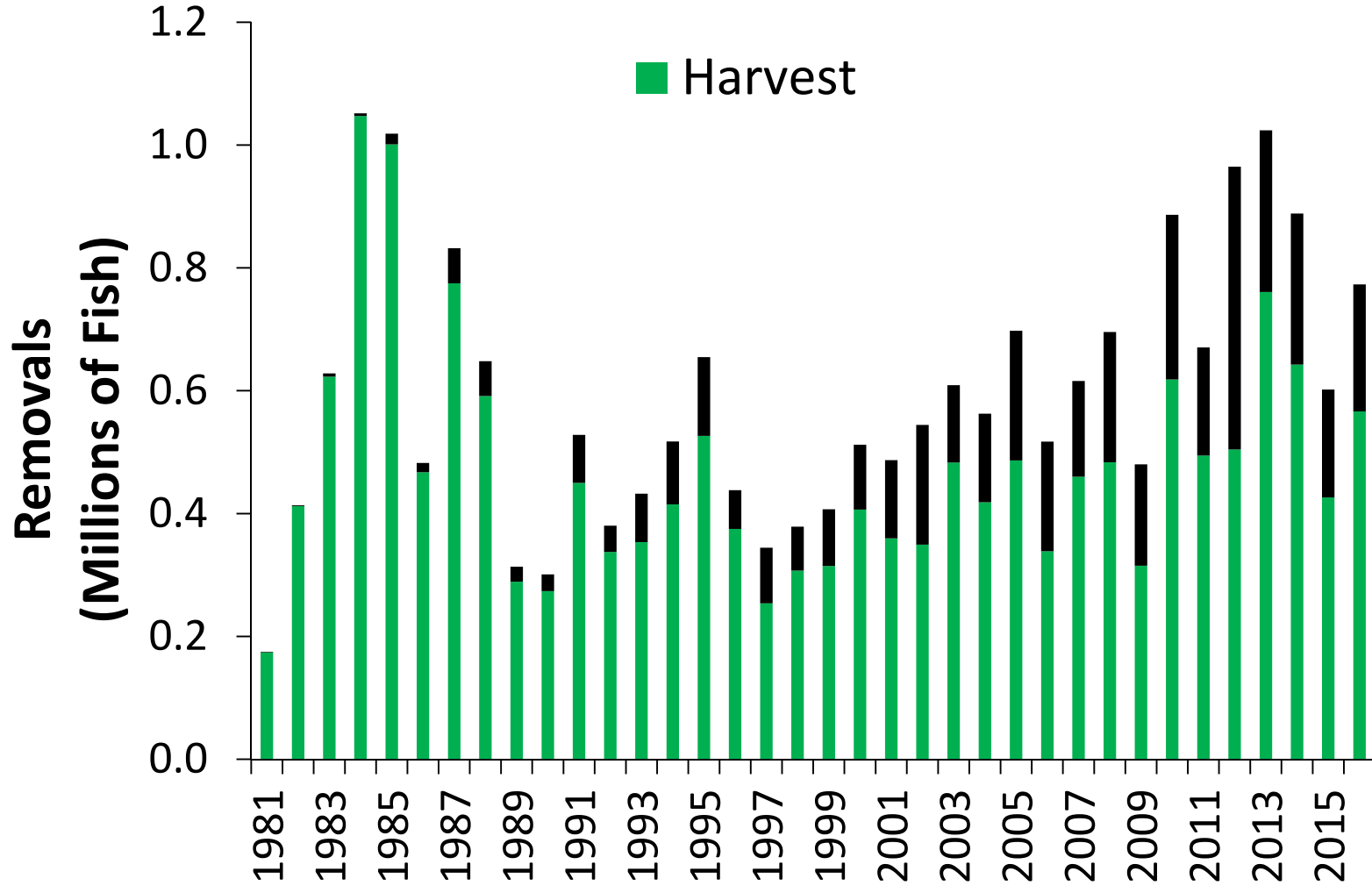
Red Drum Fishery Management Plan Review

Red Drum Plan Review Team
October, 2017



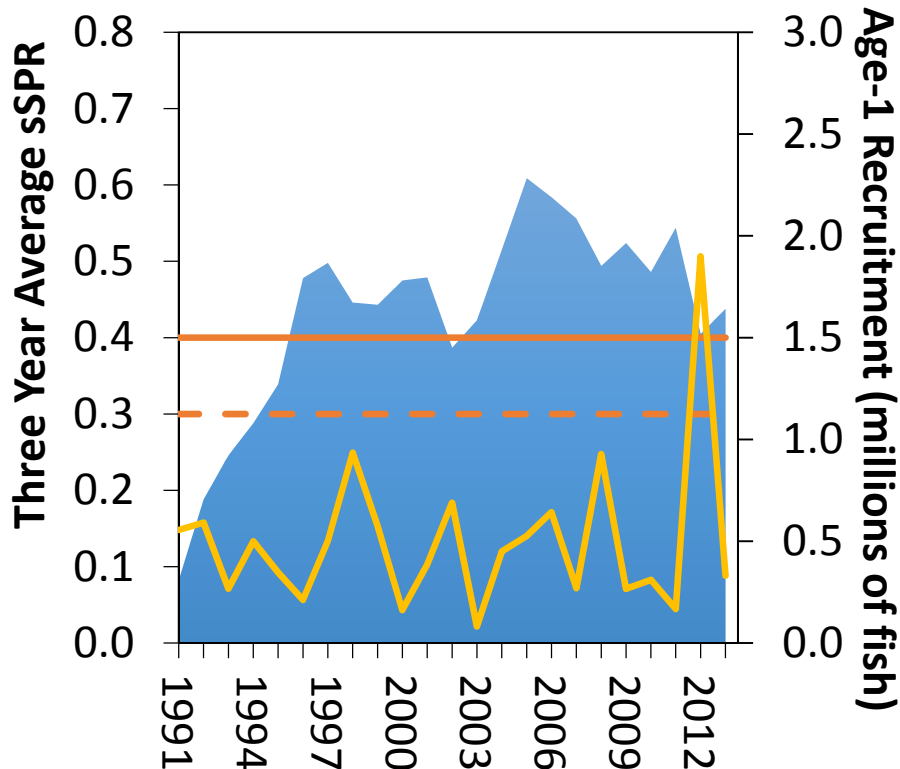






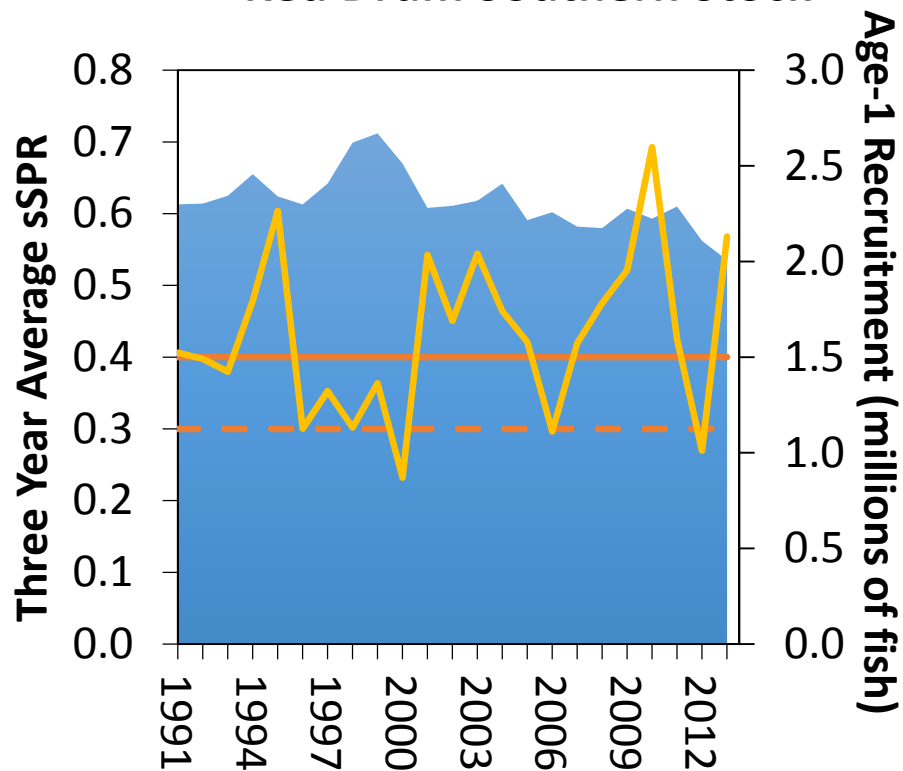


Red Drum Northern Stock



- sSPR 3 Year Average
- sSPR Target
- - sSPR Threshold
- Age-1 Recruitment

Red Drum Southern Stock



- 3 Year Average sSPR
- sSPR Target
- - sSPR Threshold
- Age-1 Recruitment



FMP for Red Drum (1984)

- Florida to Maryland
- 1988 all states implement recommended mgmt. measures

Amendment 1 (1991)

- Optimal yield: 30% SSBR

Amendment 2 (2002)

- Optimal yield: sSPR at or above 40%, 27" max size

Addendum I (2013)

- Habitat



State	Recreational	Commercial
NJ	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 27", 1 fish
DE	20" - 27", 5 fish	20" - 27", 5 fish
MD	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 25", 5 fish
PRFC	18" - 25", 5 fish	18" - 25", 5 fish
VA	18" - 26", 3 fish	18" - 25", 3 fish
NC	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 27"; 250,000 lb harvest cap with overage payback (150,000 lbs Sept 1- April 30; 100,000 lbs May 1-Aug 31); harvest of red drum allowed with 7 fish daily trip limit; 50% of catch can be red drum (lbs,); small mesh (<5" stretched mesh) gill nets attendance requirement May 1 - November 30. Fishing year: September 1 – August 31.
SC	15" - 23", 3 fish. Gigging allowed March- November	Gamefish Only
GA	14" - 23", 5 fish	Gamefish Only
FL	18" - 27", Northern Region- 2 fish; Southern Region- 1 fish	Sale of native fish prohibited



	NJ	DE
2015-2016 Average	0	0
% of Total	0%	0%
Qualify?	Yes	Yes



- All states have implemented requirements of Amendment 2
- Approve state compliance reports and *de minimis* status for New Jersey and Delaware
- Additional research/monitoring recommendations found in FMP Review document



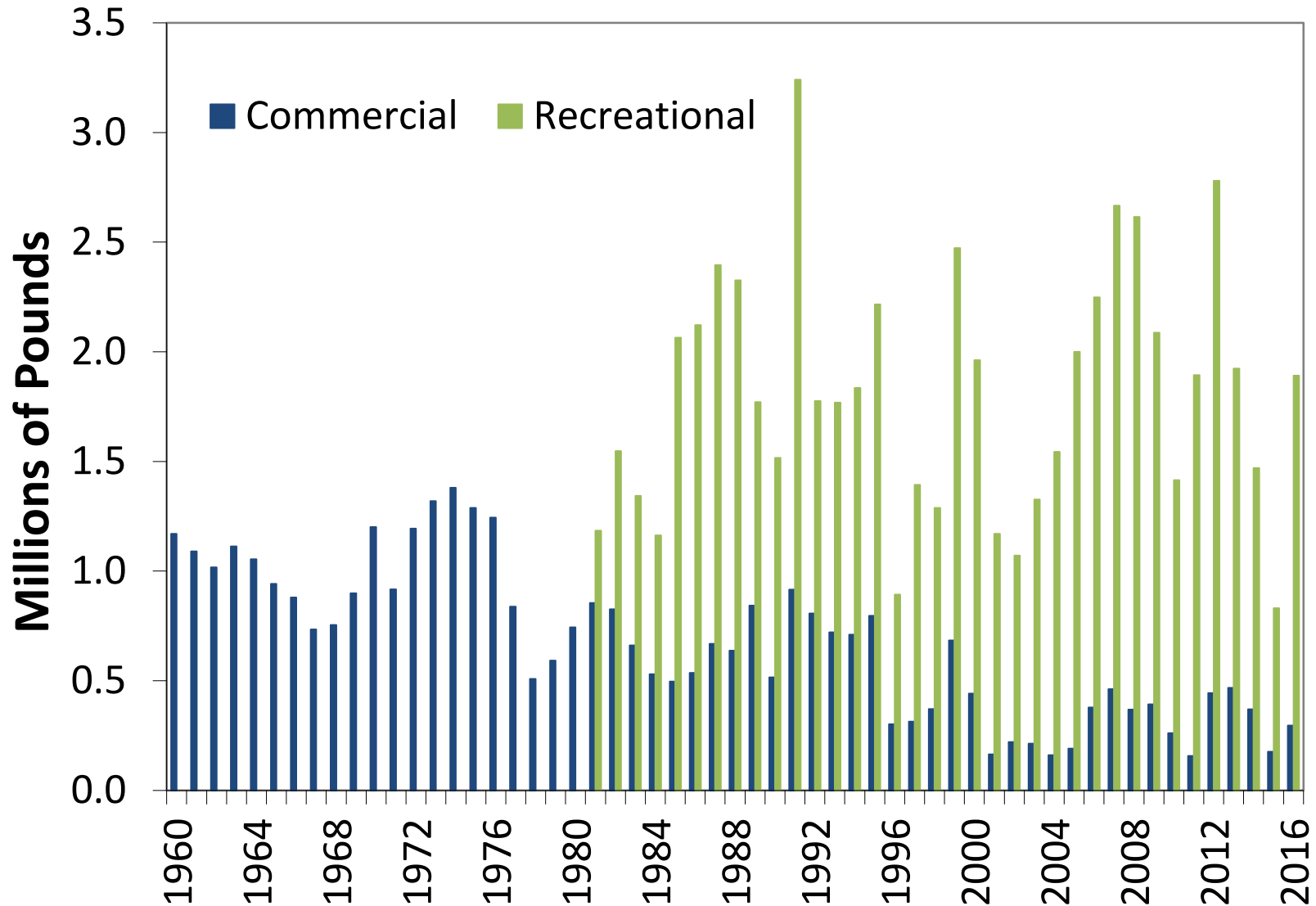
Comments or Questions?



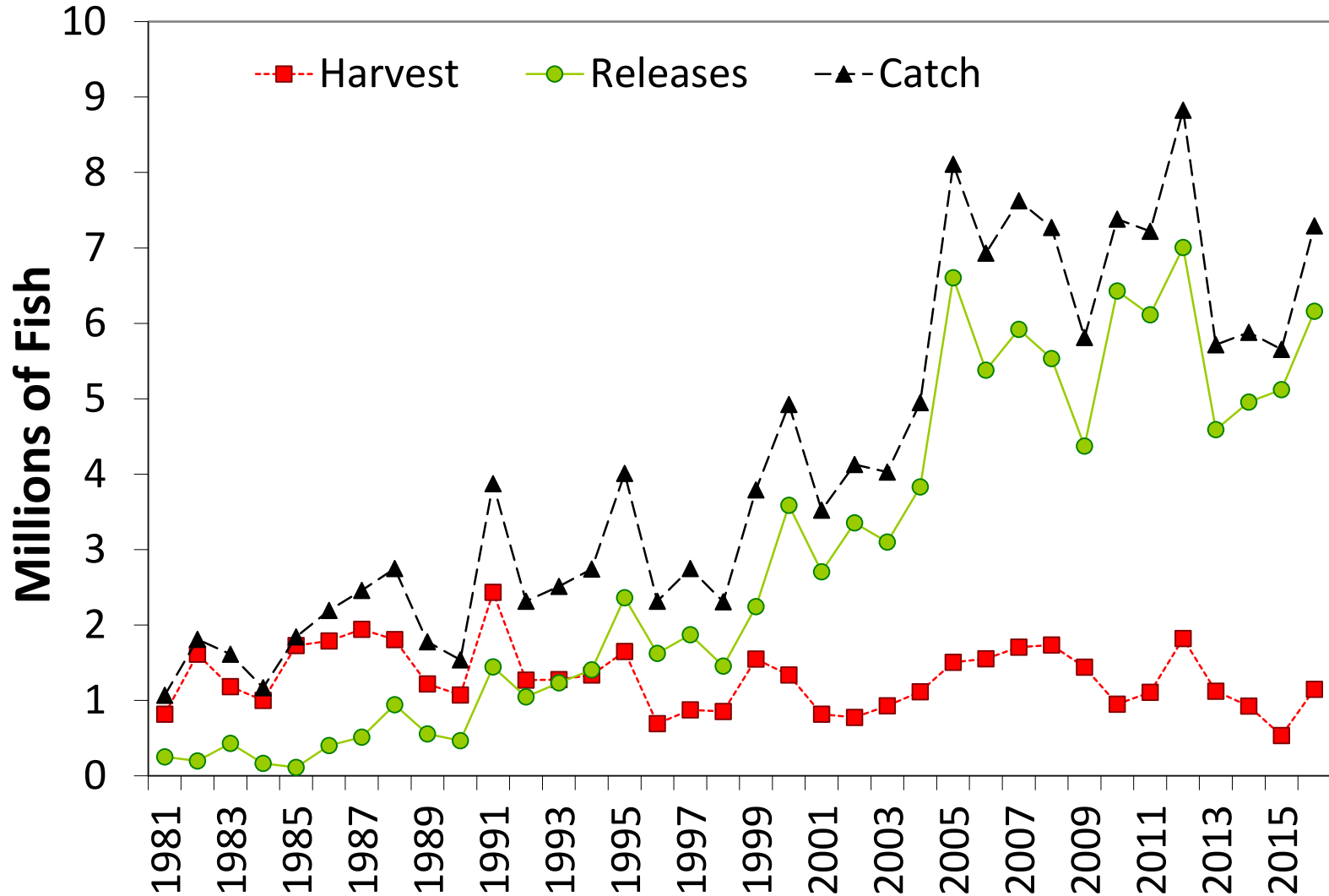
Spotted Seatrout 2017 FMP Review

South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries
Management Board
October, 2017

Status of the Fishery - Total landings



Status of the Fishery - Recreational



Status of the Stock



- No coastwide stock assessment
 - Life history/migration
 - Data availability
- 2014 VA/NC Stock Assessment
 - Age structure expanded in last decade
 - Decline in SSB after 2007
 - Decline in recruitment after 2010
- New stock assessment underway in Florida

Status of Management



State	Recreational	Commercial
New Jersey	13" TL; 1 fish	Gill net, trawl, and pound net: 13"; 100 lb/vessel/day possession and bycatch limit; seasonal closures; monthly reporting. Trawl and gill net mesh size restrictions. Hook & line fishermen must follow rec limits.
Delaware	12" TL	12" TL
Maryland	14" TL; 4 fish	14" TL. 150 lb limit per day or trip (whichever is longer). Trawl and gill net mesh size restrictions.
PRFC	14" TL; 10 fish	14" TL
Virginia	14-24" TL; 1 fish >24" allowed; 5 fish; closed season March-July.	14" TL; pound nets/seines allowed 5% by weight less than 14". Hook & line fishermen must follow rec limits. Quota: 51,104 lbs (Sept-Aug). After 80% reached, 100 lb/vessel/day possession and bycatch limit.
North Carolina	14" TL; 4 fish	14" TL; 75 fish limit. Unlawful to possess or sell Friday 12:00am-Sunday 12:00am.
South Carolina	14" TL; 10 fish. Gig March-Nov.	Gamefish status since 1987; native caught fish may not be sold.
Georgia	14" TL; 15 fish	14" TL; 15 fish. BRD requirement for trawl; gear mesh regulations.
Florida	15-20" TL slot; 1 fish >20" allowed; northeast 6 fish; northwest 5 fish; south 4 fish; hook & line/cast net only.	15-24" TL; Season varies by region; 75 fish limit or 150 fish limit with two or more licensed fishermen on board; hook & line/cast net only.

(Table 1 in FMP Review)

De Minimis



- ***De minimis***
 - 3 year average, combined com and rec, 1%
 - Requests from NJ and DE
 - Both states qualify

PRT Recommendations



- All states are in compliance with the FMP
 - 12” min TL
- Approve state compliance and *de minimis* requests from NJ and DE
- Other research/monitoring recommendations found in FMP Review (Section VIII)



Comments or Questions?