



*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations
for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful
restoration well in progress by 2015*

Weakfish Technical Committee Report February 9, 2012



Update on NC conservation equivalency measure

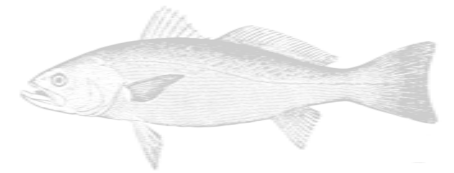


NC Conservation Equivalency

- 10% weakfish bycatch allowance with 1,000 lb cap in lieu of the 100 lb commercial trip limit

- Effective August 20, 2010

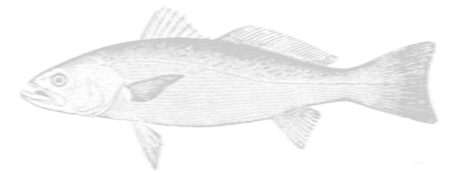
- Landings and overages summarized for three periods:
 - September – December, 2010
 - January – April, 2011
 - May – September, 2011





Landings and Compliance Summary

Period	lb weakfish	Trips with weakfish	% trips with overages	lb overages	%
Sept-Dec 2010	63,479	2,362	17%	19,519	31%
Jan-Apr 2011	33,666	1,358	6%	1,279	4%
May-Sept 2011	11,953	1,139	4%	2,269	19%

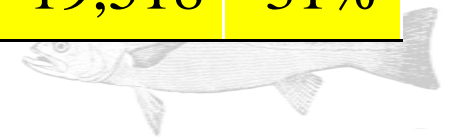




Landings and Compliance Summary

Sept-Dec 2010

Gear	lb weakfish	Trips with weakfish	% trips with overages	lb of overages	%
Winter Trawl	4,365	34	0%	0	0%
Gill Net	37,944	2,044	17%	12,576	33%
Long Haul	19,723	119	29%	6,864	35%
Shrimp Trawl	234	25	0%	33	14%
Others	1,214	140	11%	45	4%
Combined	63,480	2,362	17%	19,518	31%





Landings and Compliance Summary

Jan-April 2011

Gear	lb weakfish	Trips with weakfish	% trips with overages	lb of overages	%
Beach Seine	275	12	0%	0	0%
Winter Trawl	449	8	0%	0	0%
Gill Net	32,613	1,312	5%	948	3%
Others	328	7	29%	195	59%
Combined	33,665	1,328	5%	1,143	3%

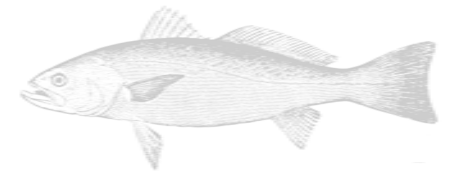




Landings and Compliance Summary

May - Sept 2011

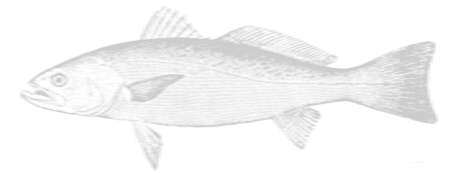
Gear	lb weakfish	Trips with weakfish	% trips with overages	lb of overages	%
Gill Net	3,758	907	2%	82	2%
Long Haul	7,034	15	19%	2,142	30%
Pound Net	882	112	7%	27	3%
Others	279	40	15%	13	6%
Combined	11,953	1,139	4%	2,269	19%





Landings Summary

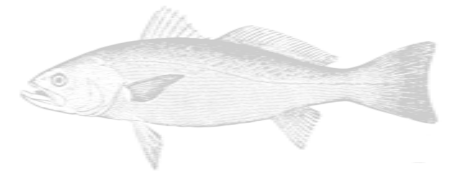
Period	Pounds per trip	Trips	% Trips	Landings (lb)	% Landings
All	≤100	4,696	97%	57,622	53%
	101-500	131	3%	27,581	25%
	501-1000	32	<1%	24,197	22%
	Total	4,859	100%	109,400	100%





What if a 100 lb trip limit was in place?

- At the TC's recommendation, various scenarios were assumed to simulate landings that may have occurred under a 100 lb trip limit
- Scenarios include assumptions for level compliance with regulations and magnitude of regulatory discards





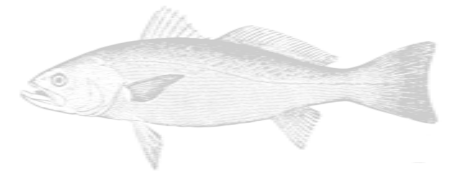
What if a 100 lb trip limit was in place?

Assumption of landings under 100% adherence to regulation

- Scenario 1 – current rule
- Scenario 2 – 100 lb trip limit with no discards
- Scenario 3 – 100 lb trip limit with discards

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
86,334	73,924	99,002

Numbers in pounds





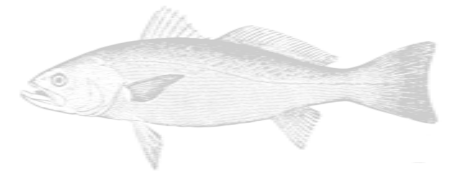
What if a 100 lb trip limit was in place?

Assumption of landings with same level of overages

- Scenario 4 – 100 lb trip limit with no discards
- Scenario 5 – 100 lb trip limit with discards

Current Landings	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
109,400	89,217	114,488

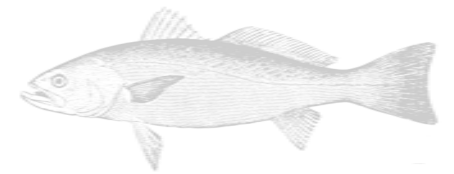
Numbers in pounds





Species most commonly landed with weakfish

Winter Trawl	Gill Nets	Longhaul
Flounder	Croaker	Spot
Croaker	Bluefish	Sea Mullet
Bluefish	Sea Mullet	Weakfish

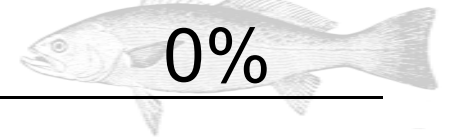




State landings and performance under current regulations

Sept-Dec 2010 (NY not reported)

State	harvest (lbs)	% lbs overages	total trips	% trips overages
NC	63,480	31%	2362	16%
RI	1,800	0%	<300	0%
NJ	7,473	13%	178	9%
DE	1,528	0%	54	0%
MD	1,754	15%	56	11%
PRFC	26	0%	7	0%
VA	48,636	3%	1421	2%
FL	20	0%	9	0%





State landings and performance under current regulations

Jan - Apr 2011 (NY not reported)

State	harvest (lbs)	% lbs overages	total trips	% trips overages
NC	33,969	4%	1358	6%
RI	1,800	0%	<300	0%
NJ	8,949	51%	91	29%
DE	181	0%	26	0%
MD	400	<50%	<10	<50%
PRFC	0	0%	0	0%
VA	1,951	0%	56	0%
FL	25	0%	21	0%





State landings and performance under current regulations

May - Sept 2011 (NY not reported)

State	harvest (lbs)	% lbs overages	total trips	% trips overages
NC	11,953	19%	1139	4%
RI	700	0%	<300	0%
NJ	1,031	0%	99	0%
DE	764	0%	125	0%
MD	53	0%	11	0%
PRFC	70	0%	9	0%
VA	6,156	<1%	408	<2%
FL	475	0%	67	0%





TC Summary

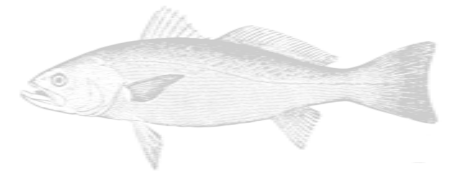
- Number of trips exceeding the bycatch allowance has decreased since regulation was implemented
- Most recently pounds landed due to overages accounted for 19% of landings (majority from a few isolated events)
- Magnitude of landings in NC within range of what was assumed to occur under 100 lb trip limit
- Issue of adherence to regulation was not unique to NC
- Overages, while not desirable, account for only a very small percentage of weakfish total mortality





NC Compliance

QUESTIONS?





*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations
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restoration well in progress by 2015*

Weakfish Fishery Management Plan Review & State Compliance Report (2010 Fishery)



**Weakfish Management Board
February 9, 2012**



Status of the FMP

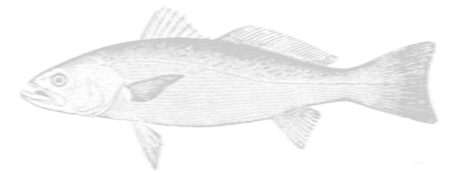
- Amendment 4 (2002)
 -) Addendum I (2005) – revise biological monitoring program
 -) Addendum II (2007) – reduce creel and bycatch limit, implement triggers
 -) Addendum III (2007) – BRD certification language
 -) Addendum IV (2009) – revise BRPs, reduce creel, implement trip limit, reduce bycatch limit and finfish trawl undersized fish allowance





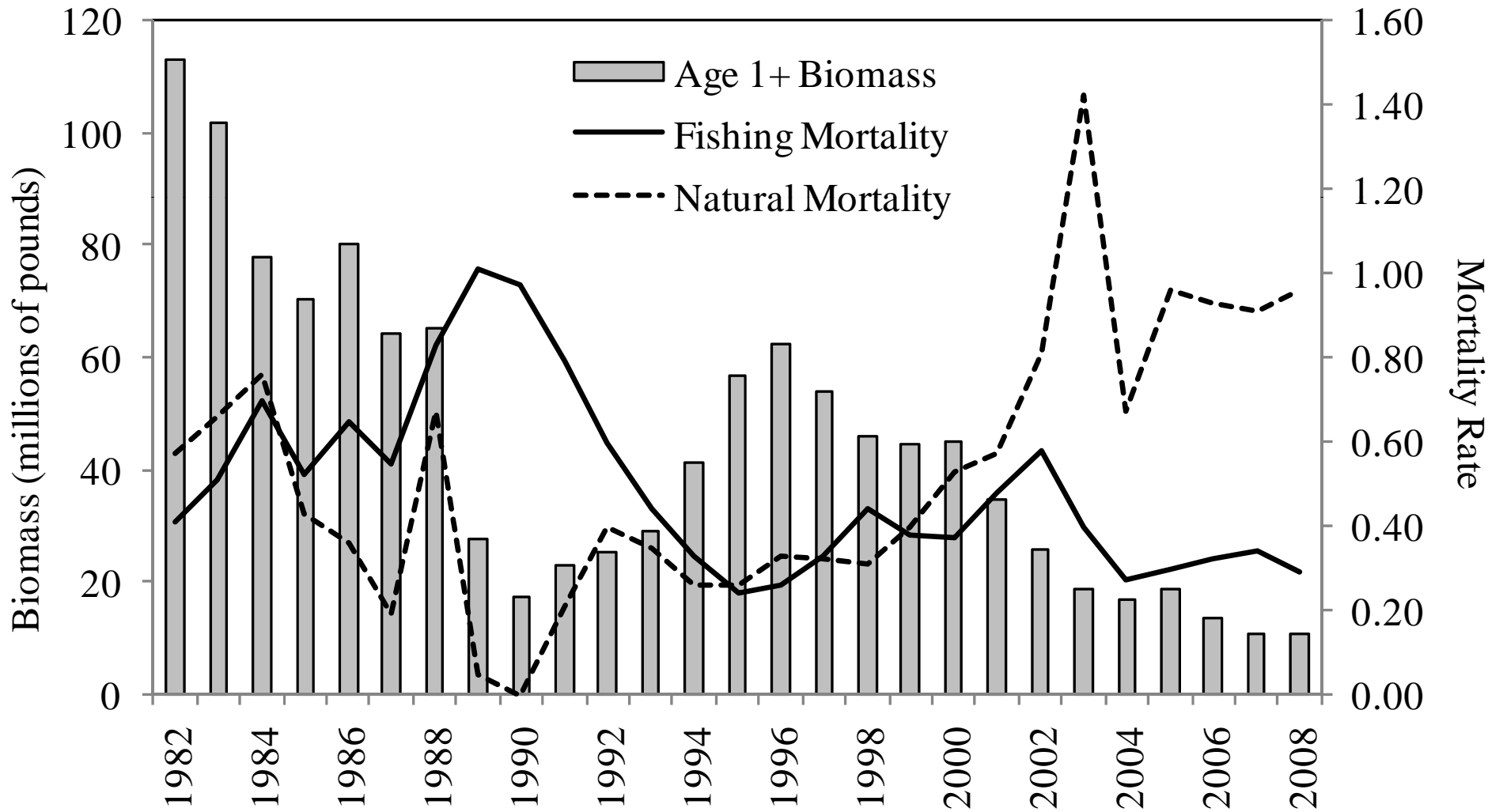
Status of Assessment & Advice

- Depleted, overfishing not occurring
- Biomass at all time low
- F modest and stable but M recently increased and driving stock dynamics
- SAW/SARC process in 2009
 -) Interim model
 -) Current level of fishery removals exacerbate stock decline



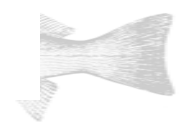
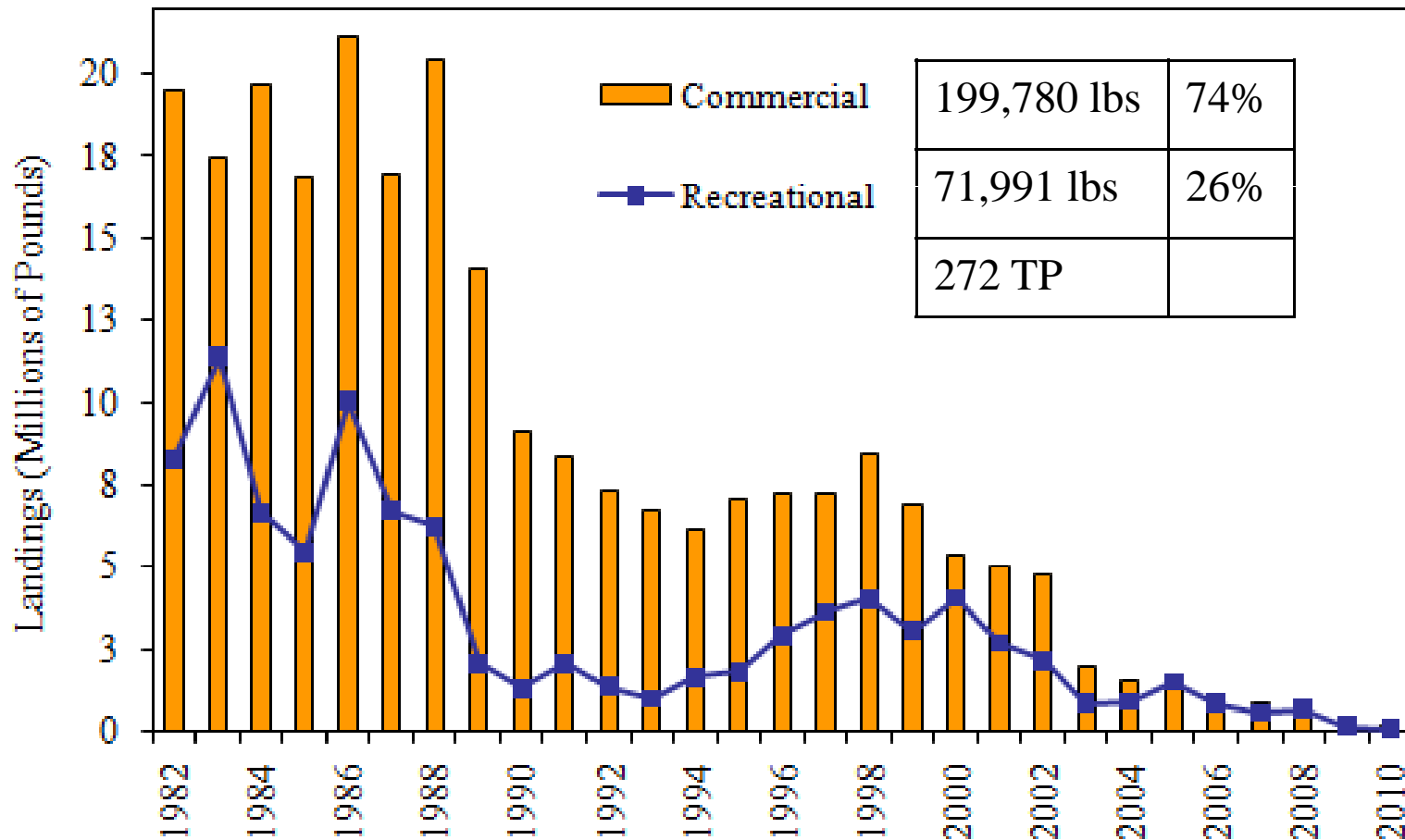


Stock Status



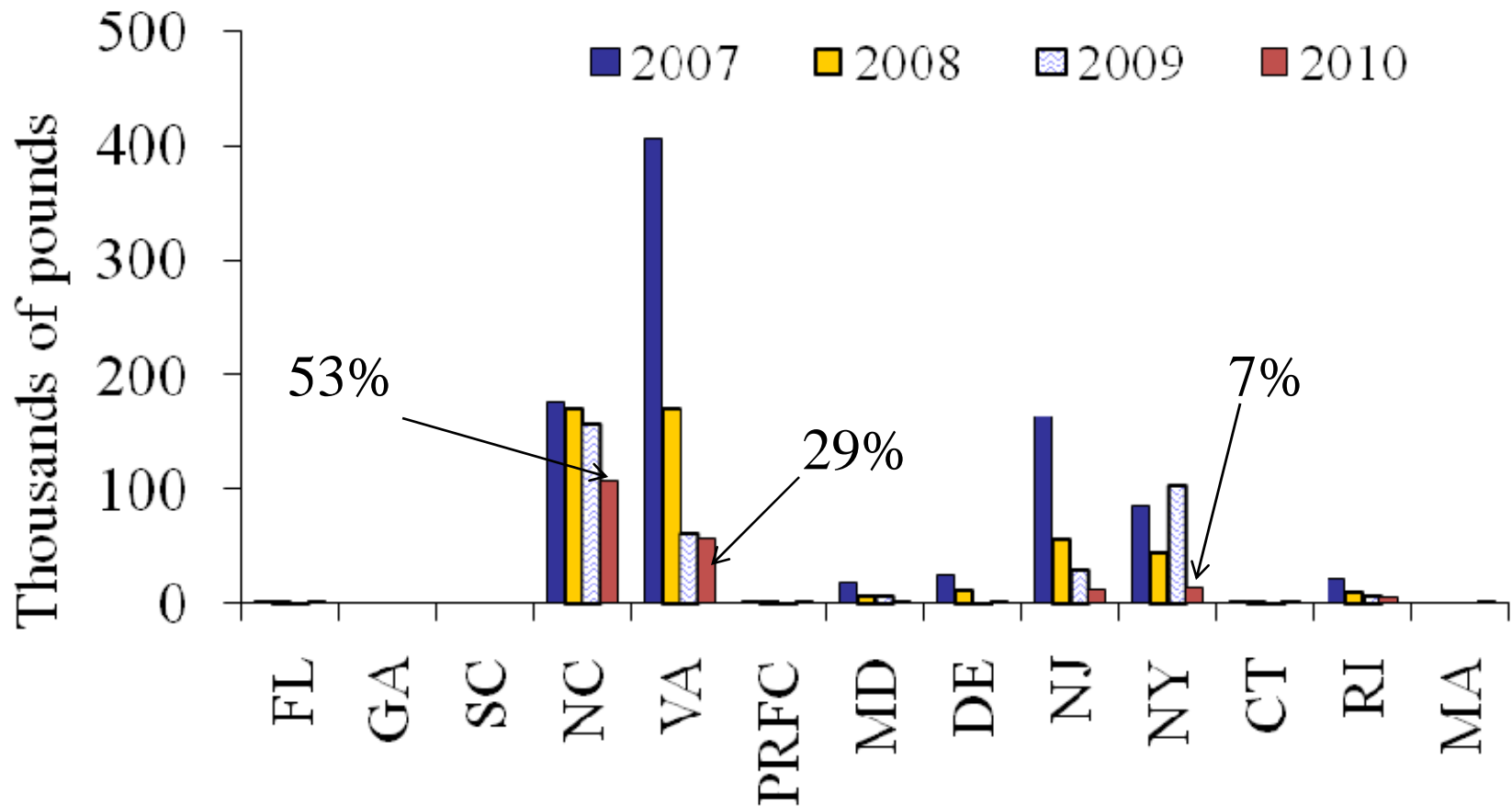


Status of the Fisheries





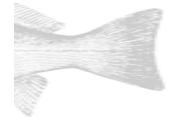
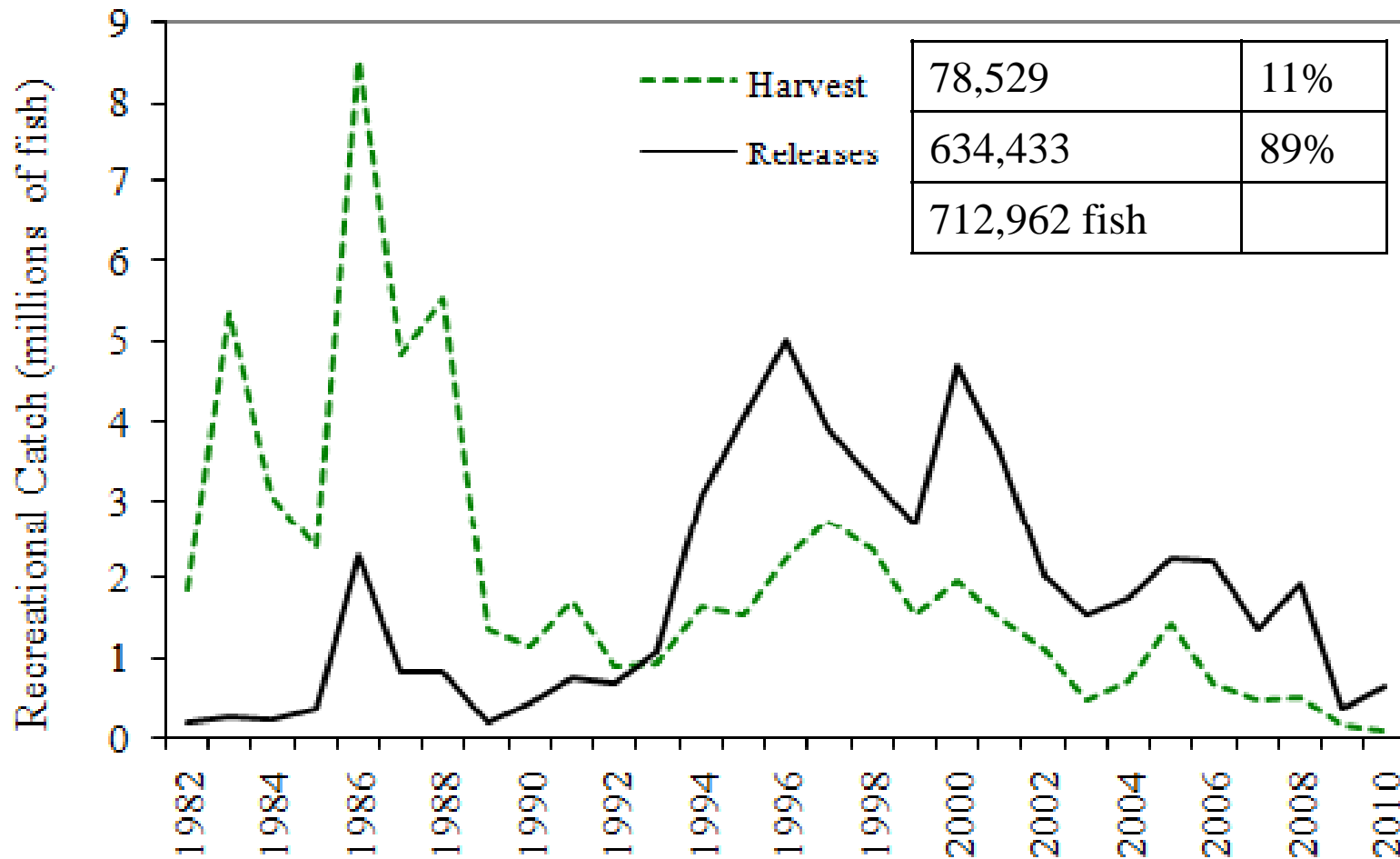
Commercial Fishery



57% gill net, 14% haul seine, 13% trawl net

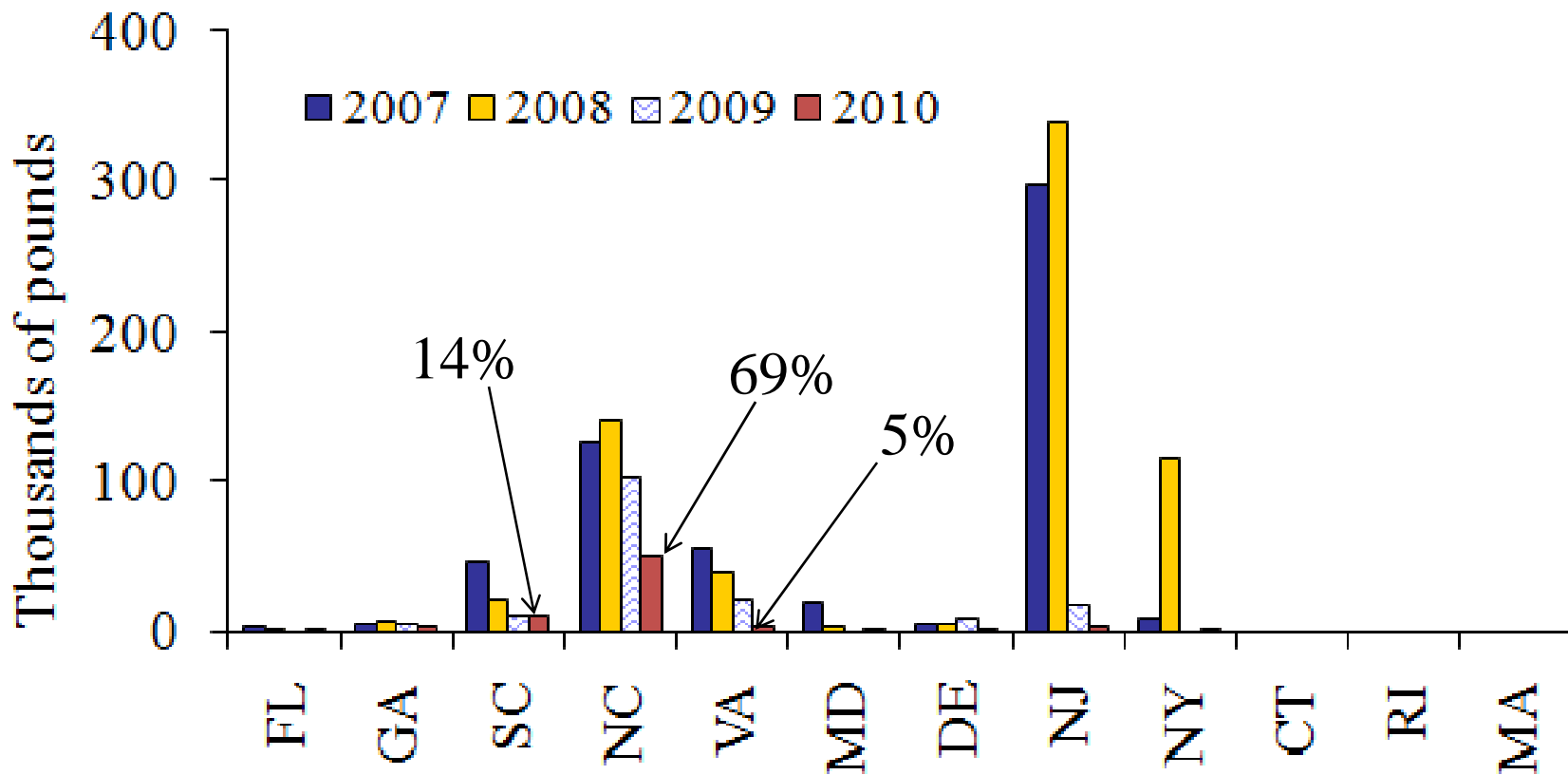


Recreational Fishery





Recreational Fishery



82% from private/rental boat, 89% May-December

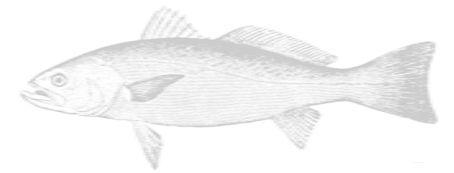


Management Issues

De Minimis

- Two-year landings average < 1% coastwide
) 4,040 pounds (2009-2010 landings)

- Requests from MA, CT, GA, FL; all qualify
) MA (0.01%), CT (0.17%), GA (0.94%), FL (0.36%)

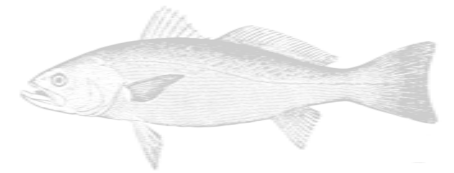




Management Issues

Addendum II Triggers

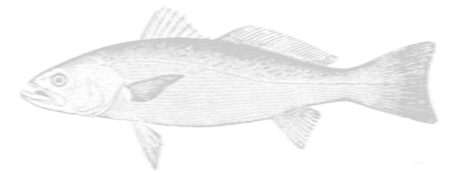
- Trigger 1: coastal commercial landings
 -) If > 80% 2000-2004 average (2.99 million lbs)
 -) 2009 landings = 199,780 pounds
- Trigger 2: state-specific total landings
 -) If >25% above five-year mean
 -) All states landings (except MA) decreased from five-year mean
- Addendum IV replaces Addendum II, but PRT will continue to report on triggers.





Compliance with Regulatory Requirements

- Compliance with Amend. 4, Add. I-IV
 -) All states in compliance
 -) NC has approved conservation equivalency measures in lieu of Addendum IV





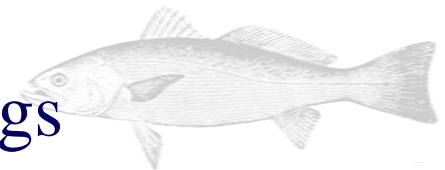
Compliance with Monitoring Requirements

➤ Addendum I Requirements

-) 6 lengths/MT commercial landings
-) 3 otoliths/MT total landings, 1000 maximum

	Samples Required		Samples Collected	
	Otoliths	Length	Otoliths	Lengths
RI	7	15	0	0
NY	20	36	4	8
DE	3	6	0	0

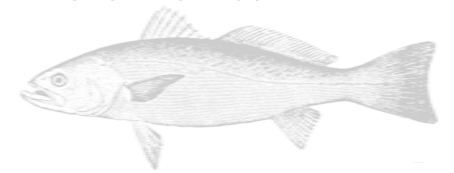
-) Causes: funding/personnel/limited landings

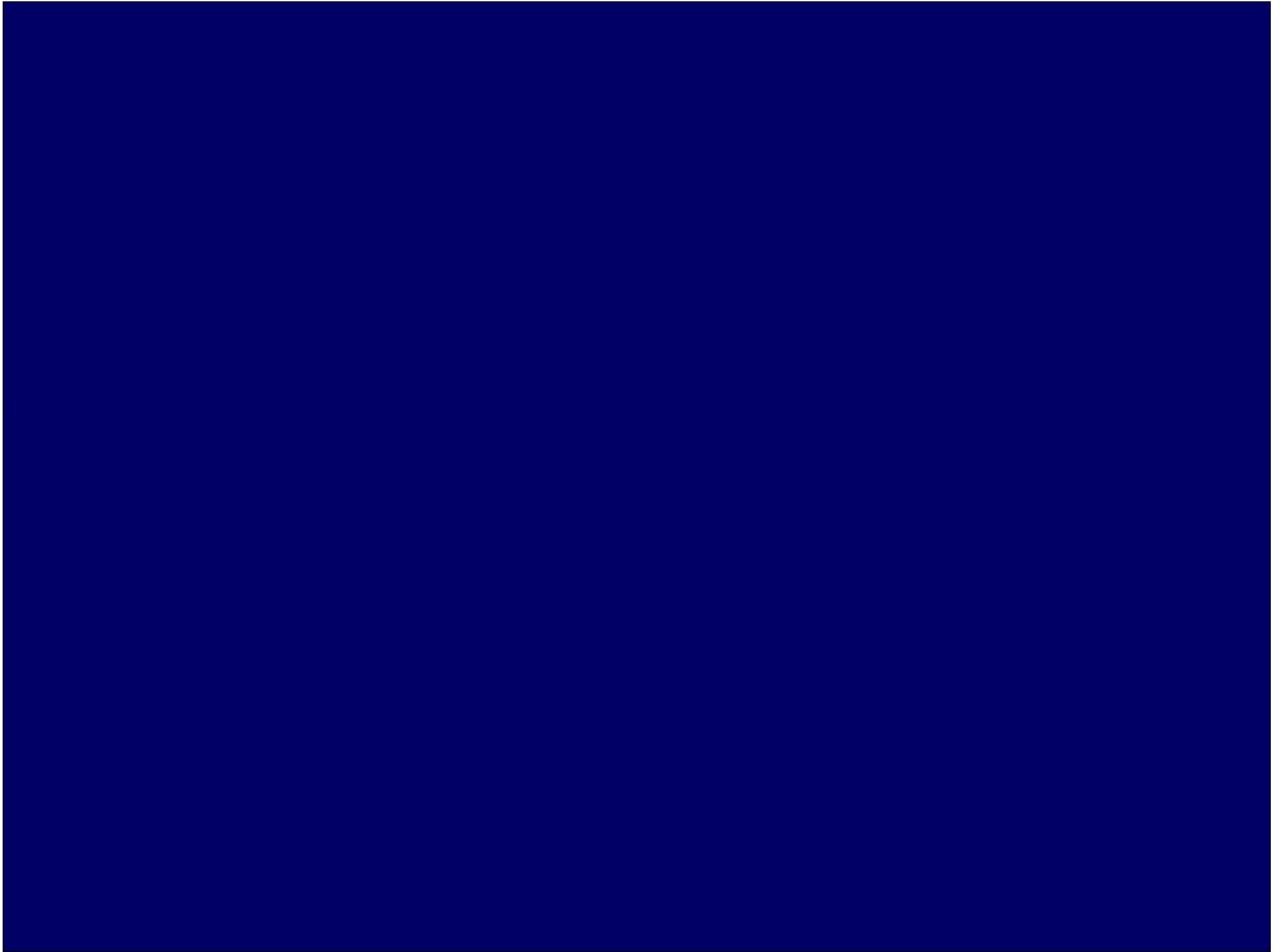




PRT Recommendations

- Consider *de minimis* requests:
 -) MA, CT, GA, FL all qualify
- Consider compliance with monitoring requirements:
 -) RI, NY, DE, below requirements;
funding/staff/limited landings as causes
- TC and SAS to explore alternative assessment techniques for next benchmark and continue to compile input data for interim model should an update be requested.



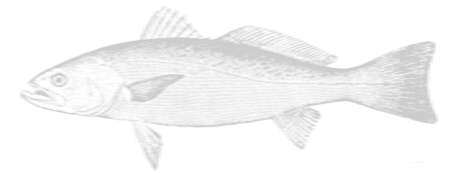




Management Issues

FL Management Area & Landings

- 11/09 Board approved FL proposal
 -) Restricted weakfish management area to St. Mary's River only in state with pure weakfish
 -) Address seatrout-weakfish hybridization, misidentification, and enforcement
 -) Commercial and recreational landings adjusted accordingly (by area, and % pure weakfish)





Lengths

Year	Samples	SC	NC	VA	PR	MD	DE	NJ	NY	RI	Total
2006	Required	na	988	712	0	88	94	562	416	123	2,983
	Collected	na	8,712	6,762	0	496	4,296	2,025	182	43	22,516
2007	Required	na	478	1106	0	49	67	443	236	57	2,435
	Collected	na	6,343	2,827	0	242	409	1046	213	14	11,094
2008	Required	na	464	466	0	16	30	152	120	13	1,262
	Collected	na	3,275	1,944	0	135	409	938	486	0	7,187
2009	Required*	na	444	166	0	13	8	79	276	17	1003
	Collected	na	2501	1359	0	64	0	130	155	0	4209

* projected sampling requirements based on previous year's preliminary landings; actual requirements will be based on current year landings





Otoliths

Year	Samples	SC	NC	VA	PR	MD	DE	NJ	NY	RI	Total
2006	Required	na	684	426	0	45	73	1000	227	114	2,569
	Collected	na	756	614	0	181	833	774	182	43	3,383
2007	Required	na	410	629	0	51	39	626	129	28	1,911
	Collected	na	560	847	0	181	159	543	49	14	2,353
2008	Required	na	422	286	0	11	21	537	215	13	1,506
	Collected	na	483	366	0	94	159	430	119	0	1,651
2009	Required*	na	362	112	0	9	17	64	138	9	712
	Collected	na	270	412	0	41	0	159	66	0	948

* projected sampling requirements based on previous year's preliminary landings; actual requirements will be based on current year landings

