

Weakfish TC/SAS Call Summary

July 11, 2023

TC/SAS Members in Attendance: Erin Levesque (TC Chair, SC), Dustin Addis (FL), Linda Barry (NJ), Ingrid Braun (PRFC), Margaret Conroy (DE), Alexa Galvan (VA), Angela Giuliano (MD), Tyler Harris (NJ), Yan Jiao (VA Tech), Eddie Leonard (GA), Paul Nunnenkamp (NY), Chris Parkins (RI), Lucas Pensinger (NC), Harry Rickabaugh (MD), Sam Truesdell (MA)

ASMFC Staff: Tracey Bauer (ISFMP), Katie Drew (Science)

Summary

The Weakfish Technical Committee and Stock Assessment Subcommittee met via webinar to begin planning the next assessment update for weakfish, which is scheduled to be completed in early 2025. In addition to informing the management of weakfish, the results of this update will also support the Ecological Reference Point Benchmark Assessment for Atlantic menhaden.

K. Drew reviewed the current status of weakfish, the timeline for the update (Table 1), and the data needs (Table 2 and Table 3). The last assessment update for weakfish was completed in 2019, with data through 2017. The assessment indicated weakfish were depleted (spawning stock biomass below the threshold) and total mortality was too high (Z above the threshold). TC and SAS members volunteered for the index standardization and catch-at-age development tasks (Table 4), and Y. Jiao, the lead modeler from the benchmark assessment volunteered to run the model again. K. Drew proposed a deadline of Sep. 15, 2023 for data through 2022, to allow TC/SAS members to begin work on developing the catch-at-age and indices earlier. The deadline for 2023 data has tentatively been set for April 2024, when the final MRIP numbers are available. However, TC members will check with their ageing labs to determine if that deadline is reasonable for the age data. The assessment will be completed with a combination of SAS and TC members, so a new SAS Chair is not necessary at this point. E. Levesque's term as TC Chair is up, so Staff is looking for volunteers to take on the TC Chair and Vice-Chair roles.

Next Steps:

- Staff will circulate the data template for data through 2022
- TC members will provide data through 2022 by **Sep. 15, 2023**
- TC members will check with their ageing labs about how soon 2023 ages could be available

Table 1: Timeline for 2025 weakfish assessment update

	Milestone	Date
✓	TC/SAS planning call	July 11, 2023
	Data through 2022 submitted	Sep. 15, 2023
	Data through 2023 submitted	April 2024
	Input data finalized	mid-May 2024
	Model runs finalized	late July/early August 2024
	TC/SAS call to review final model runs	Week of Aug. 5, 2024
	Report components to Staff	Sep. 16, 2024
	Report to TC/SAS	Oct. 14, 2024
	TC/SAS call to approve report	Week of Nov. 11, 2024
	Report to Board Materials	Jan. 15, 2025
	Presented to Weakfish Board	First week of Feb. 2025

Table 2: Data required from each state/jurisdiction.

State/Agency	Commercial landings	Commercial biosamples	Commercial discards	Rec harvest, LFs, discards	Rec CPUE	FI indices
FL	X					
GA	X					
SC	X					
NC	X	X				X
VA	X	X				X
MD	X	X				X
PRFC	X					
DE	X	X				X
NJ	X	X				X
NY	X	X				X
CT	X					X
RI	X	X				X
MA	X					
NOAA/MRIP			X	X	X	

Table 3: Indices of abundance used in the assessment

Age 1+ Indices	YOY Indices
NC Independent Gill Net Survey (NC PSIGNS)	NC Pamlico Sound Survey (NC P195)
SEAMAP	VIMS Chesapeake Bay Juvenile Fish Trawl Survey
ChesMMAP	MD Coastal Bays Juvenile Trawl Survey
DE Delaware Bay 30' Trawl Survey	DE Delaware Bay Juvenile Trawl Survey
NJ Ocean Trawl	NY Peconic Bay Juvenile Trawl Survey
NEFSC Bottom Trawl (through 2008)	CT Long Island Sound Trawl Survey (CT LISTS)
NEAMAP	RI Seasonal Trawl Survey
MRIP HPUE	Composite YOY

Table 4: Task assignments for weakfish update

Task	TC/SAS Member
Develop ALKs by year/season/region	E. Levesque
Estimate commercial discards	L. Barry
Develop CAA by year/season/region	M. Conroy, A. Giuliano, L. Pensinger
Standardize indices	TC/SAS members
Develop composite YOY – K. Drew	K. Drew
Run Bayesian model – Y. Jiao	Y. Jiao