

RI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Division of Marine Fisheries

Pre-hearing Workshop

February 5, 2024



Purpose of Workshop



- ✓ Provide stock status and 2023 fishery performance on selected finfish species
- ✓ Provide Division proposals for 2024 management under consideration; provide opportunity for comment and additional proposals to be considered for noticing

Virtual Meeting Participation



- All participants will be muted throughout the meeting.
- To make a comment or ask a question you must use the Raise Hand feature in the zoom webinar.
- The meeting facilitator will un-mute one participant at a time to make their comment or ask their question, the participant will then be re-muted.

**Please minimize background noise while unmuted! –
Thank you**

Process and timeline



- **Feb. 5:** Workshop
- **Feb. 28:** Public Hearing*
- **April 1:** RI Marine Fisheries Council
- **May 1:** Rules effective

* Stay tuned for listserve announcing noticed rule and 30-day comment period



Striped Bass

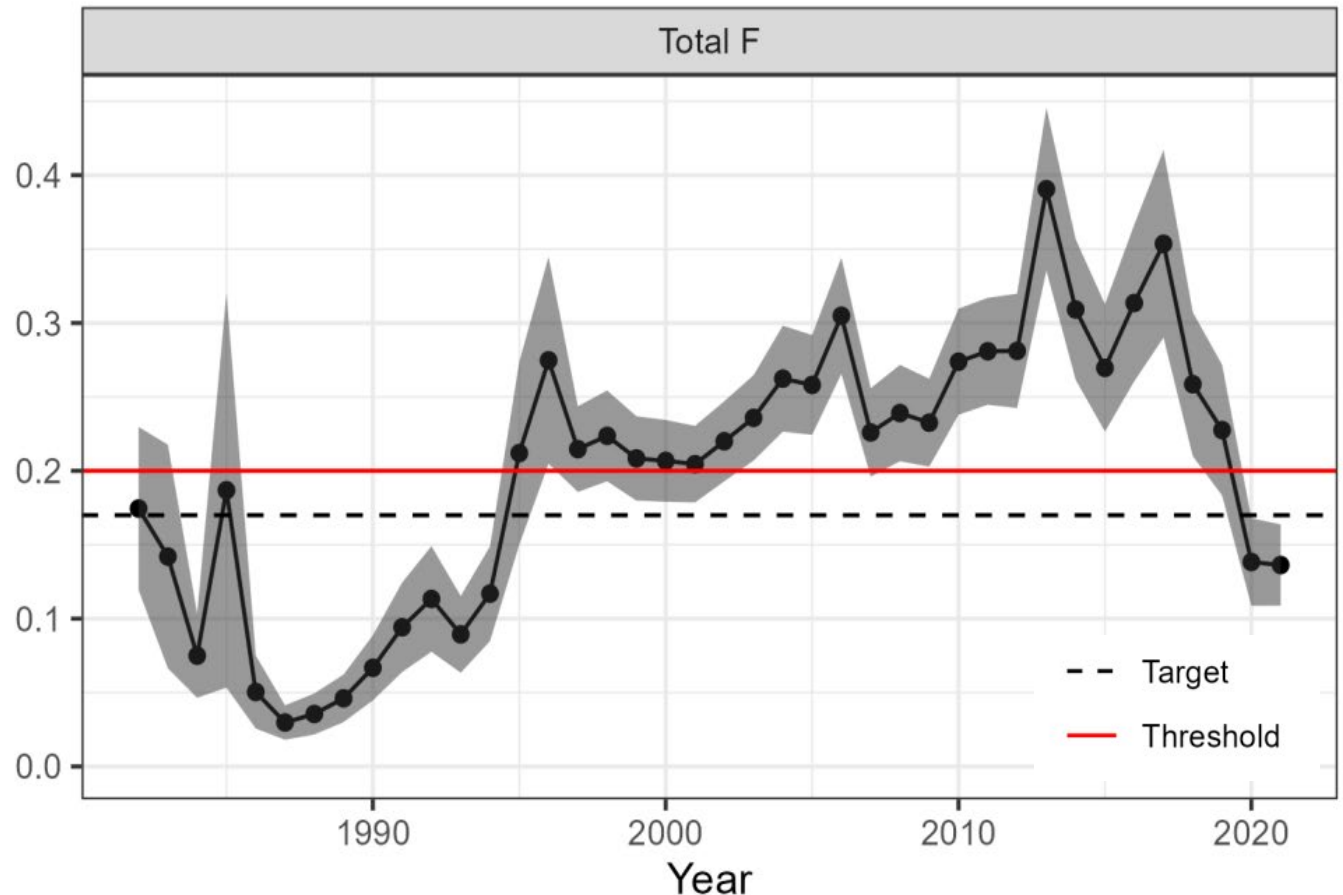
- ✓ Summary of stock status
- ✓ 2023 recreational fishery performance
- ✓ 2024 recreational management
- ✓ 2023 commercial fishery performance
- ✓ 2024 commercial management

Striped Bass - Stock Status



- 2022 Stock Assessment update indicates the striped bass stock is overfished and overfishing is not occurring relative to BRPs

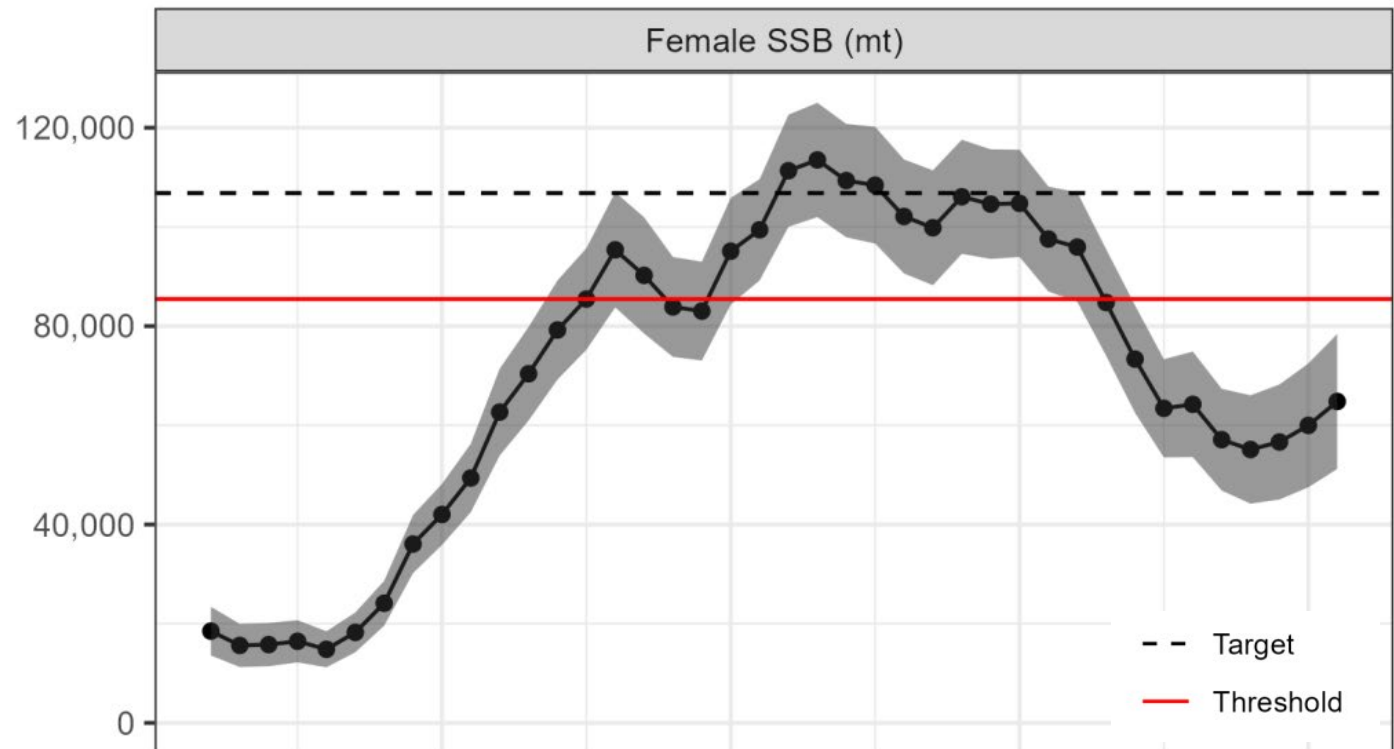
- Fishing mortality (F) was estimated to be 0.14 in 2021; below both the F threshold = 0.20 and the F target = 0.17





Striped Bass – Stock Status

- SSB was estimated to be 143 m lbs in 2021, below both the threshold and target (188 m lbs and 235 m lbs respectively)
- Projections indicate under 2021 F, a 97% probability the stock will be rebuilt by 2029



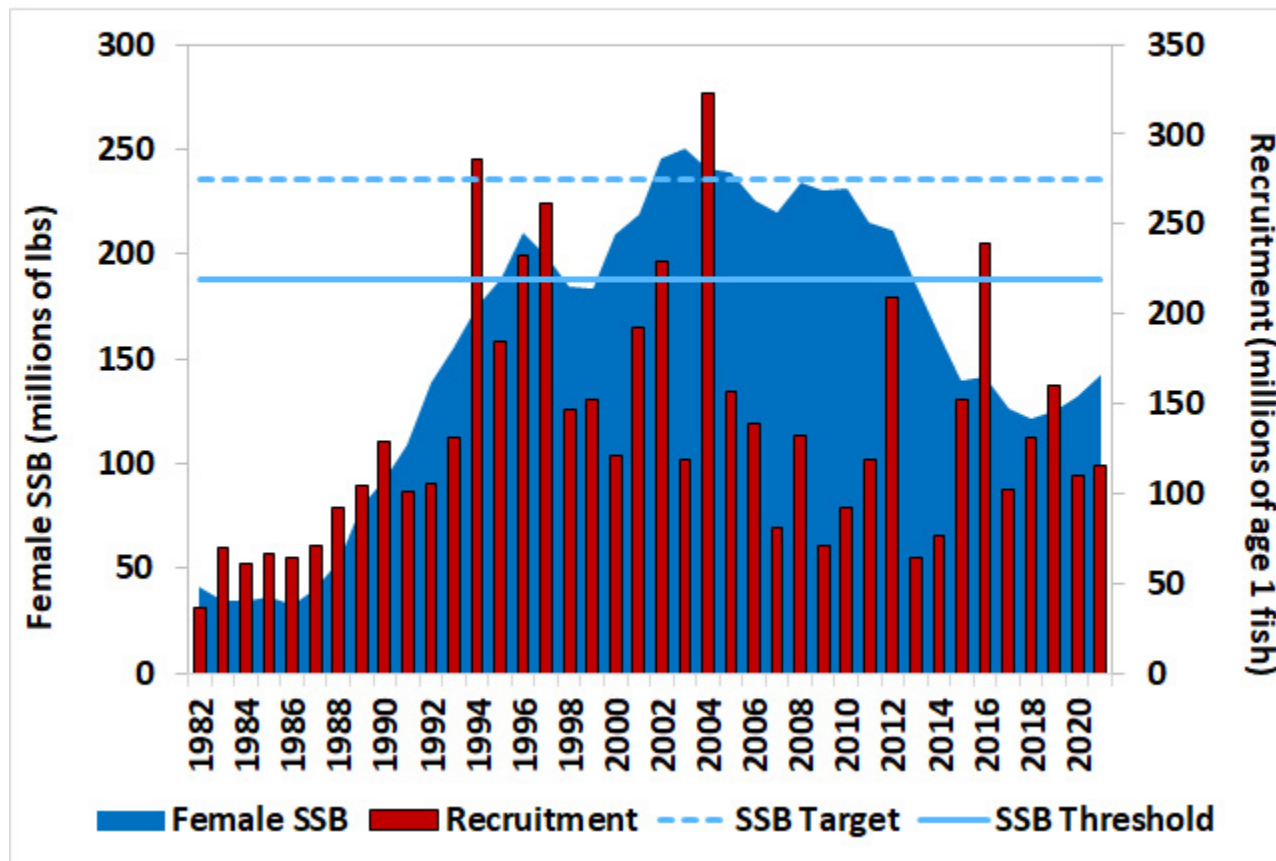


Striped Bass – Stock Status

- Strong recruitment of age-1 fish was estimated in 2012, 2015, and 2016

Atlantic Striped Bass Female Spawning Stock Biomass and Recruitment

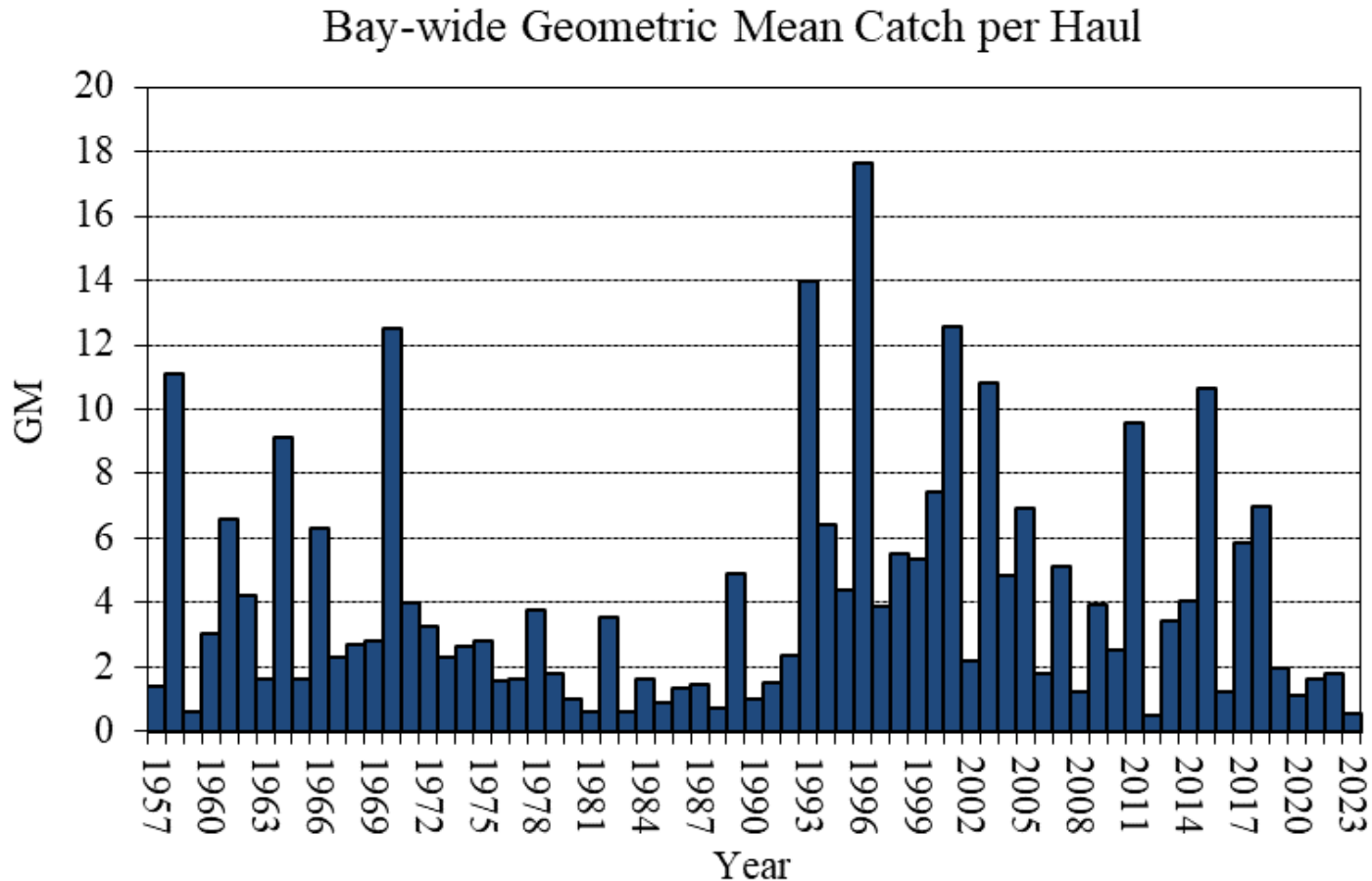
Source: Atlantic Striped Bass Stock Assessment Update, 2022



Striped Bass – Stock Status



- MD YOY survey indicated 2023 was the 2nd lowest year on record and the 5th consecutive year of low recruitment

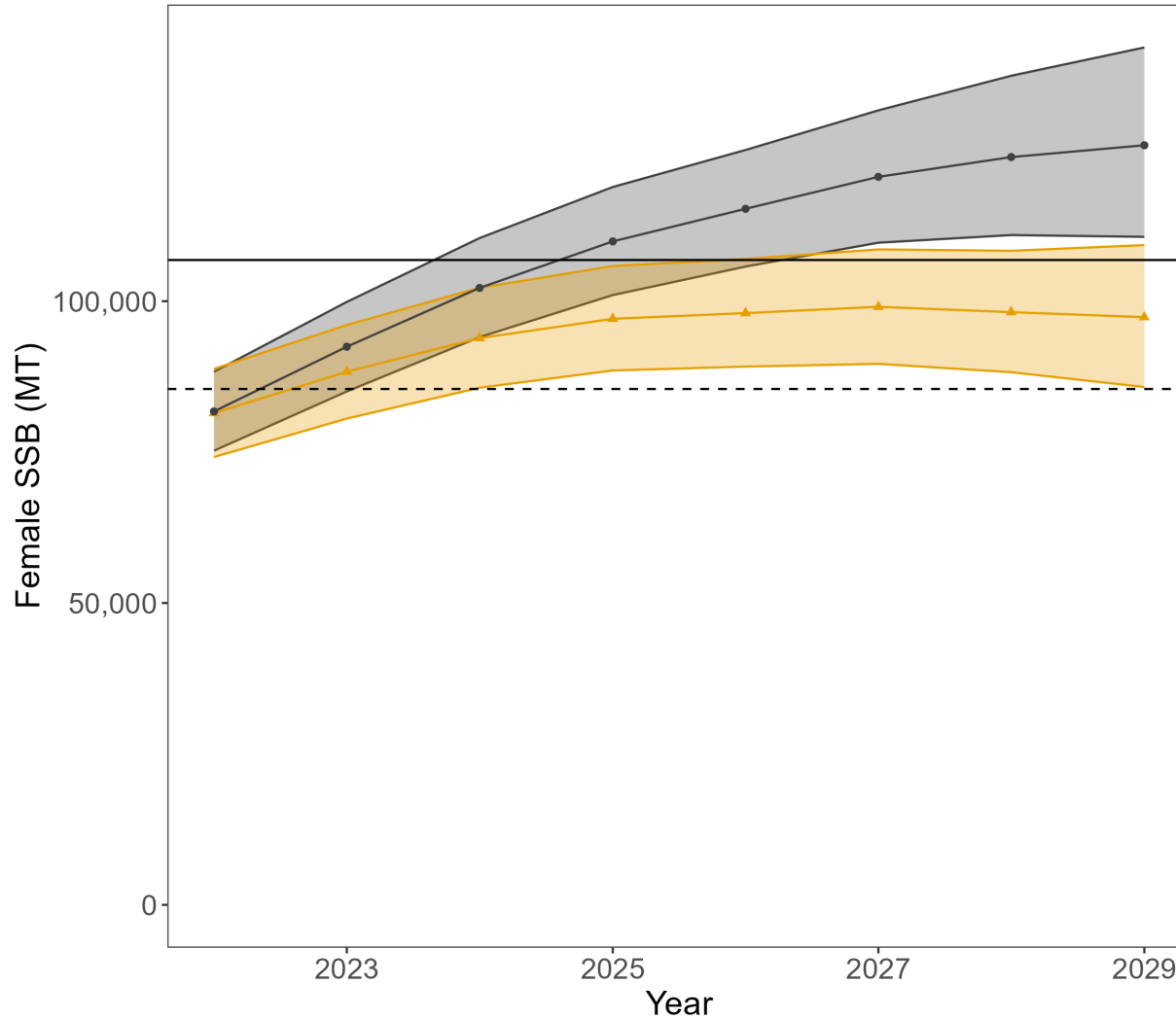


ASMFC Striped Bass Management



- Large increase (40%) in 2022 removals compared to 2021:
 - 91% increase in recreational harvest
 - 3% increase in recreational live releases
- Updated stock projections showed the probability of rebuilding the stock by 2029 dropped from 97% to <15% if 2022 rates continued
- In May 2023, the Board passed an emergency action requiring all recreational fisheries to implement a reduced slot of 28 – 31”
 - One goal of the action was to protect the strong 2015-year class

Updated Stock Projections



Reference Point

- SSB Target
- SSB Threshold

Scenario

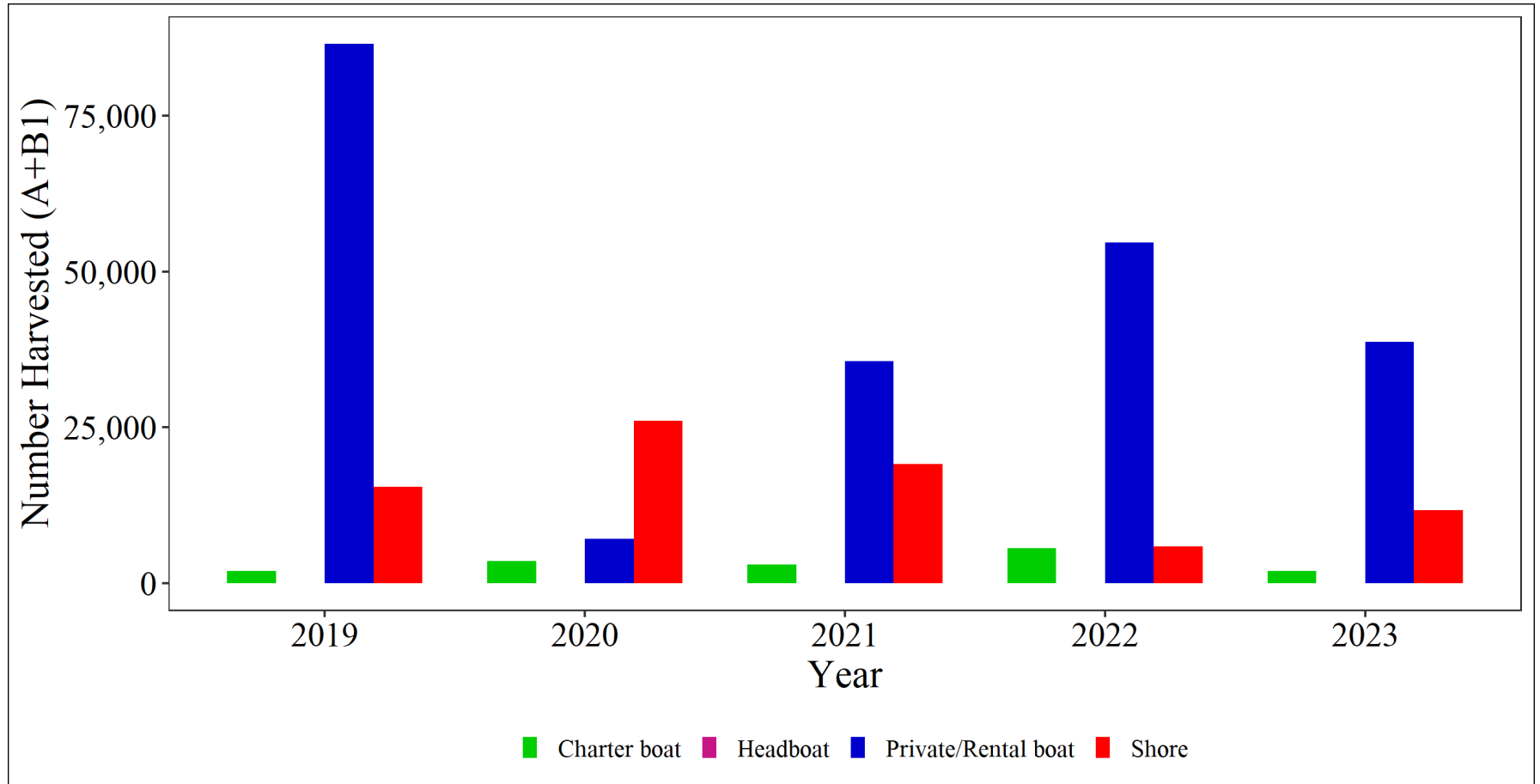
- Stock assessment projections with 2021 data
- Updated with 2022 data

ASMFC Striped Bass Management



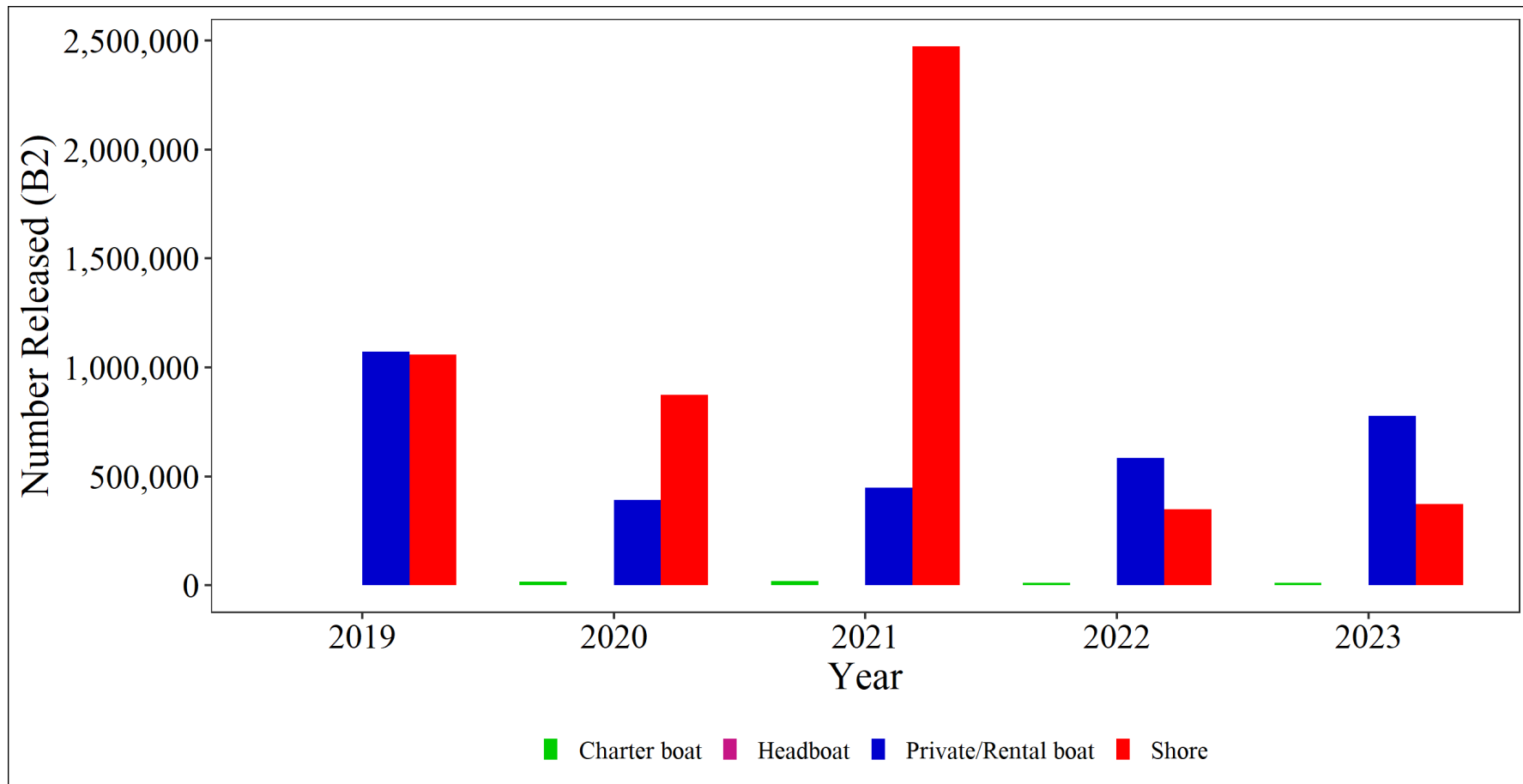
- Addendum II to Amendment 7 adopted in January 2024 to decrease F to the target by changing 2024 management measures
- 14.5 % reduction in total removals needed to have a 50% chance of being at or below the target F in 2024
- Beyond 2024, the Board will consider the results of the 2024 stock assessment update
 - Addendum II allows the Board to respond to the assessment update and take management action via Board action if $< 50\%$ probability of the stock is projected being rebuilt by 2029

Striped Bass – 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP, 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Striped Bass – 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP, 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Striped Bass – 2024 Recreational Management



Current management:

Min. size	Max. size	Season	Poss. limit
28"	< 35" <u>31"</u> (5/27/23)	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	1 fish/person/day

- Circle hooks required when fishing recreationally with bait
- Striped bass caught on any unapproved method of take must be returned to the water immediately without unnecessary injury
- Gaff prohibition when fishing recreationally

Addendum II Measures:

- 1 fish @ 28 – 31" slot
- At-sea/shore-side filleting requirements
 - Minimum: Racks must be retained and only 2 fillets per fish

Striped Bass – 2024 Recreational Management



Recreational Filleting:

- General:

- Racks must be retained and must be kept whole, meaning the head, tail, and body remain intact
- No striped bass shall be mutilated in a manner that prevents the accurate measurement of the fish
- No more than two fillets taken from legal striped bass representing the equivalent of one fish per angler
- Disposal requirements to prevent re-using racks???

Examples:

- Racks must be disposed:
 - within twenty-four (24) hours
 - prior to the next fishing trip
 - prior to the next calendar day

Striped Bass – 2024 Recreational Management



Additional Requirements:

- Private Recreational Vessels:
 - Racks must be retained until the vessel is secured to a dock or removed from the water and all of the fillets have been offloaded from the vessel
- Party/Charter Vessels:
 - Racks must be retained until the vessel is secured to a dock or removed from the water, all paying passengers have disembarked the vessel, and all fillets have been offloaded from the vessel
- Shore-based Anglers:
 - No filleting of striped bass will be permitted while still actively fishing with fishing lines in the water

Additional Workshop Proposals – Recreational Striped Bass Filleting



- No racks on board a vessel while fishing
- Racks must be disposed of prior to *initiating* the next fishing trip
- Industry request for DMF staff to provide clear guidance at the public hearing and/or RIMFC meeting on whether it is legal to dispose of fish racks in state waters (within 3 miles)

Striped Bass - 2023 Commercial GC Fishery Performance

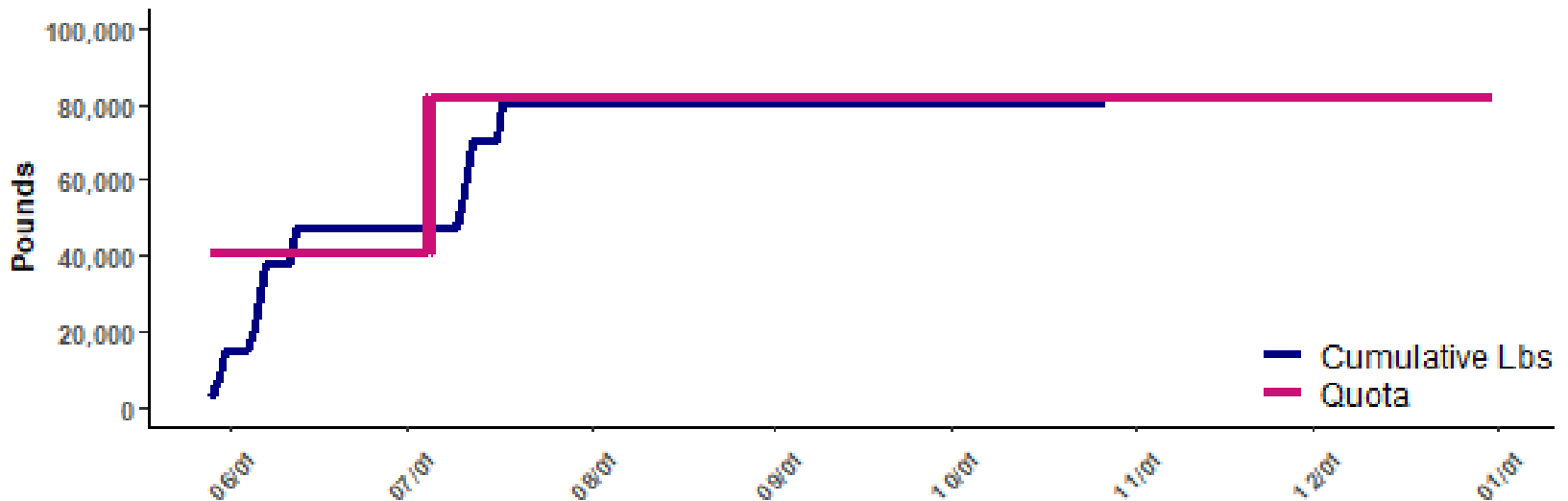


2023 Quota: 81,671 lbs (90,822 initial – 9,151 overage in 2022)

Season	Fishing Days Open	Initial Allocation	Adjusted Allocation	Landings	Underage/Overage
5/29 – 6/12*	7	40,836 lbs	N/A	45,869 lbs	-5,034 lbs
7/6 – 7/17*	4	40,836 lbs	35,802 lbs	33,236 lbs	2,566 lbs

*CLOSED Thurs, Fri, Sat, & Sun

Striped Bass General Category



Striped Bass - 2023 Commercial GC Fishery Performance



Effort Data	2021	2022	2023
License Count	232	253	233
New Licenses		30	12
Total Lbs New Licenses		1305	C
Max License/day	115	228	170
Avg Licenses/day	35	130	123
Max Lbs/day	6,458	15,036	10,489

Reported Within	% Reports	% Poundage
1 day	43	74
2 days	59	90
5 days	99	98

- *2022: 58% of reports and 56% of poundage within 5 days*

Striped Bass - 2023 Commercial FFT Fishery Performance



2023 Quota: 58,067 initial –overage in 2022

Season	Days Open	Initial Allocation	Landings
4/1 – 6/12	73	58,067 lbs	C

- Possession limit reduced from unlimited to 500 lbs/licensee/day on 6/1/23
- Quota fully harvested with no overage

Striped Bass – 2024 Commercial GC Management



Current management: 90,822 lbs

Min. size	Season	Allocation	Poss. limit	Closed Days
34"	5/29 – 7/5	50%	5 fish/person/day	Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun
	7/6 – 12/31	50%	5 fish/person/day	Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun

Addendum II:

- 7% quota reduction
- 2024 GC Quota = 84,465 lbs

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to commercial GC Striped Bass management for 2024.

Striped Bass – 2024 Commercial GC Management



Proposal 1 (Industry):

Min. size	Season	Allocation	Poss. limit
34"	5/29—7/5 <u>6/11 – 12/31</u>	50% <u>100%</u>	5 fish/person/day
	7/6—12/31	50%	5 fish/person/day

Proposal 2 (Industry):

Min. size	Season	Allocation	Poss. limit
34"	5/29—7/5 <u>7/9 – 12/31</u>	50% <u>100%</u>	5 fish/person/day
	7/6—12/31	50%	5 fish/person/day

Additional Provision for Proposals 1 & 2:

- Possession Permitted:
 - 8:00 pm Monday through 8:00 pm Thursday of each week when the fishery is open. Possession is prohibited at all other times.
- Sale Permitted:
 - 12:00 am Tuesday through 8:00 pm Thursday of each week when the fishery is open. Sale is prohibited at all other times.

Additional Workshop Proposals – 2024 Commercial Striped Bass GC Management



Proposal 3 (Industry):

Min. size	Season	Allocation	Poss. limit
34"	5/29 — 7/5 <u>6/11 — 6/20</u>	50%	5 fish/person/day
	7/6 <u>7/9</u> — 12/31	50%	5 fish/person/day

Additional Provision:

- Possession Permitted:
 - 8:00 pm Monday through 8:00 pm Thursday of each week when the fishery is open. Possession is prohibited at all other times.
- Sale Permitted:
 - 12:00 am Tuesday through 8:00 pm Thursday of each week when the fishery is open. Sale is prohibited at all other times.

Striped Bass – 2024 Commercial GC Management



Possession Limit Projections:

- Average weight of striped bass from commercial port sampling data = 23.6 pounds

Season	Possession Limit	# Fishing Days
5/29 – 7/5	5	7
	4	7
	3	7
7/6 – 12/31	5	4
	4	4
	3	5

- Drop in possession limit generally does not provide enough savings to open an additional day except when @ 3 fish in July

Striped Bass – 2024 Commercial FFT Management



Current management: 58,067 lbs

Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
26"	April 1 - Dec. 31	Unlimited; @ 70% trigger, reduces to 500 lbs/licensee/day

Addendum II:

- 7% quota reduction
- 2024 GC Quota = 54,002 lbs

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to commercial FFT Striped Bass management for 2024.

Striped Bass – 2024 Commercial FFT Management



Proposal 1 (Division): Modify reporting requirements in Part 3 to be consistent with Part 7

Proposed Rule (section 3.11.2(B)(6)):

Reporting: All floating fish trap operators shall keep daily records of striped bass landings and report landings to SAFIS ~~every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, of every week that the trap is in operation~~ no more than twenty-four (24) hours after landing.

Striped Bass Tagging: Part 3 – Finfish & Part 7 - Dealers



Proposal 1 (Division): Clarify language regarding point of sale tagging

Proposed rule (section 3.11.2(E)):

Commercial Striped Bass Tags: Each individual striped bass shall be immediately ~~marked~~ tagged at the point of sale with a striped bass dealer tags available from DEM. No striped bass may be sold unless it has been properly identified with such tag. DEM may designate tagging agents as appropriate. All designated tagging agents shall keep and maintain the required forms and reports specified by DEM. All tag reports and unused tags must be returned to DEM by January 1 of the following year. Failure to return reports and unused tags may result in the tagging agent becoming ineligible to receive striped bass tags in the future.

Proposed rule (section 7.13(A)):

Each striped bass shall be immediately tagged at the point of sale with a striped bass dealer tag issued by the Director. No striped bass may be sold unless it has been properly tagged.

State Waters Gillnet Observer Program



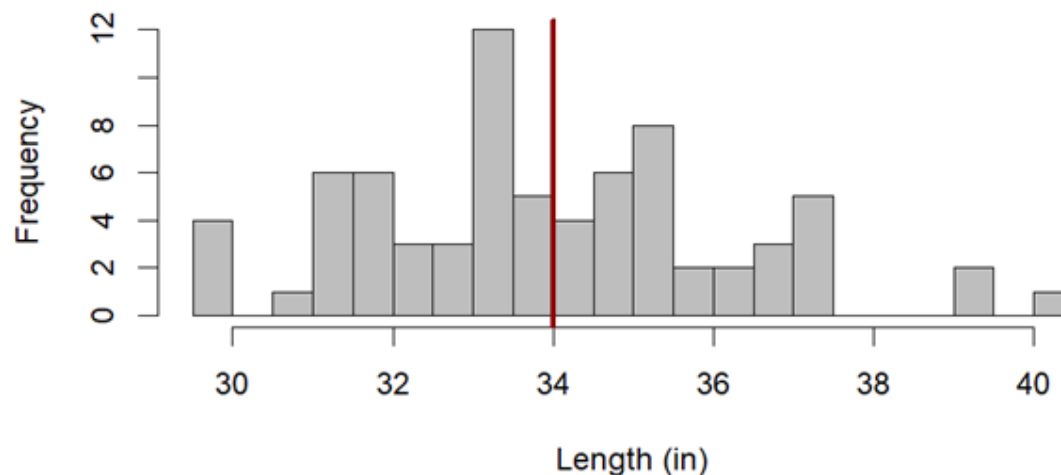
- Program started in July of 2023
- Goals of the program are to investigate:
 - Utility of weekly aggregate limits in reducing discards
 - Potential for increased effort for active gillnet fishers
 - Size distribution of discarded target species
 - Seasonality of pulse fisheries
- Increased participation sought in 2024 to ensure sufficient data is collected to characterize the potential impacts of industry proposed regulatory changes

State Waters Gillnet Observer Program



Striped Bass Data	% of Trips Encountered	Total Encountered	Legal Size ($\geq 34''$)	Sublegal Size ($< 34''$)
Total	58%	77	43%	52%
Average #/Trip		7	3	3.6
# Dead/Trip		39	1.3	2.3
# Alive/Trip		34	1.7	1.6
# Damaged		4		

Histogram of Striped Bass Legal and Sublegal Lengths





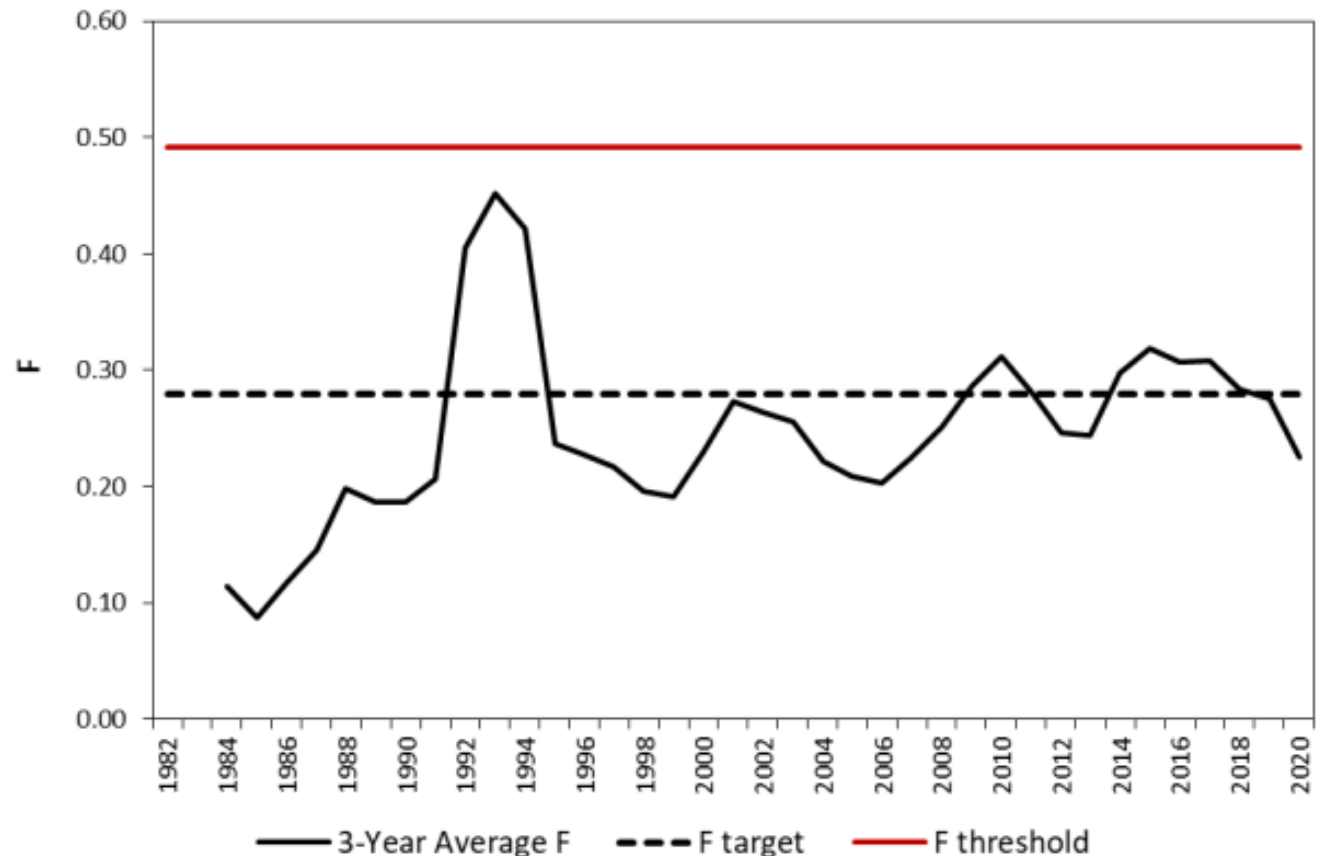
Tautog

- ✓ Summary of Stock Status
- ✓ 2023 Recreational Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Recreational Management
- ✓ 2023 Commercial Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Commercial Management

Tautog - Stock Status



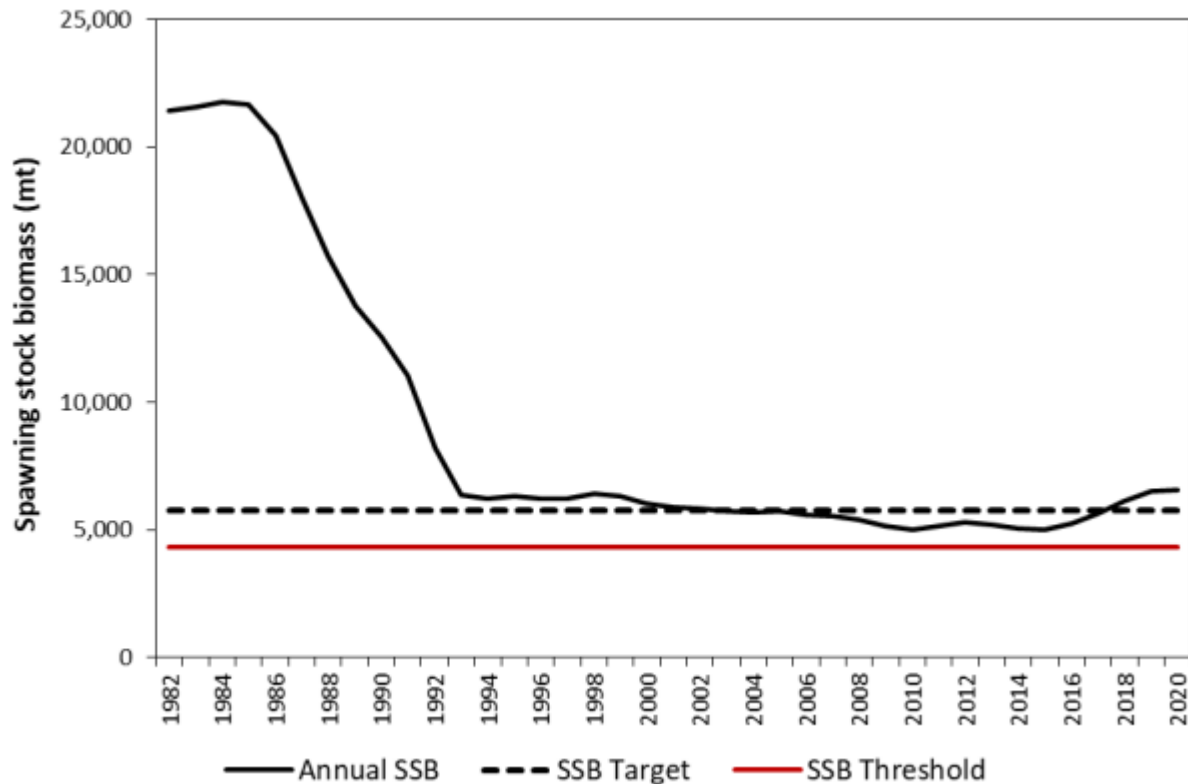
- Update assessment completed and approved by the Board in October 2021
- Tautog is not overfished, overfishing is not occurring in the MARI region
- Fishing mortality (F) estimated to be 0.23 in 2020; below the threshold F reference point = 0.49



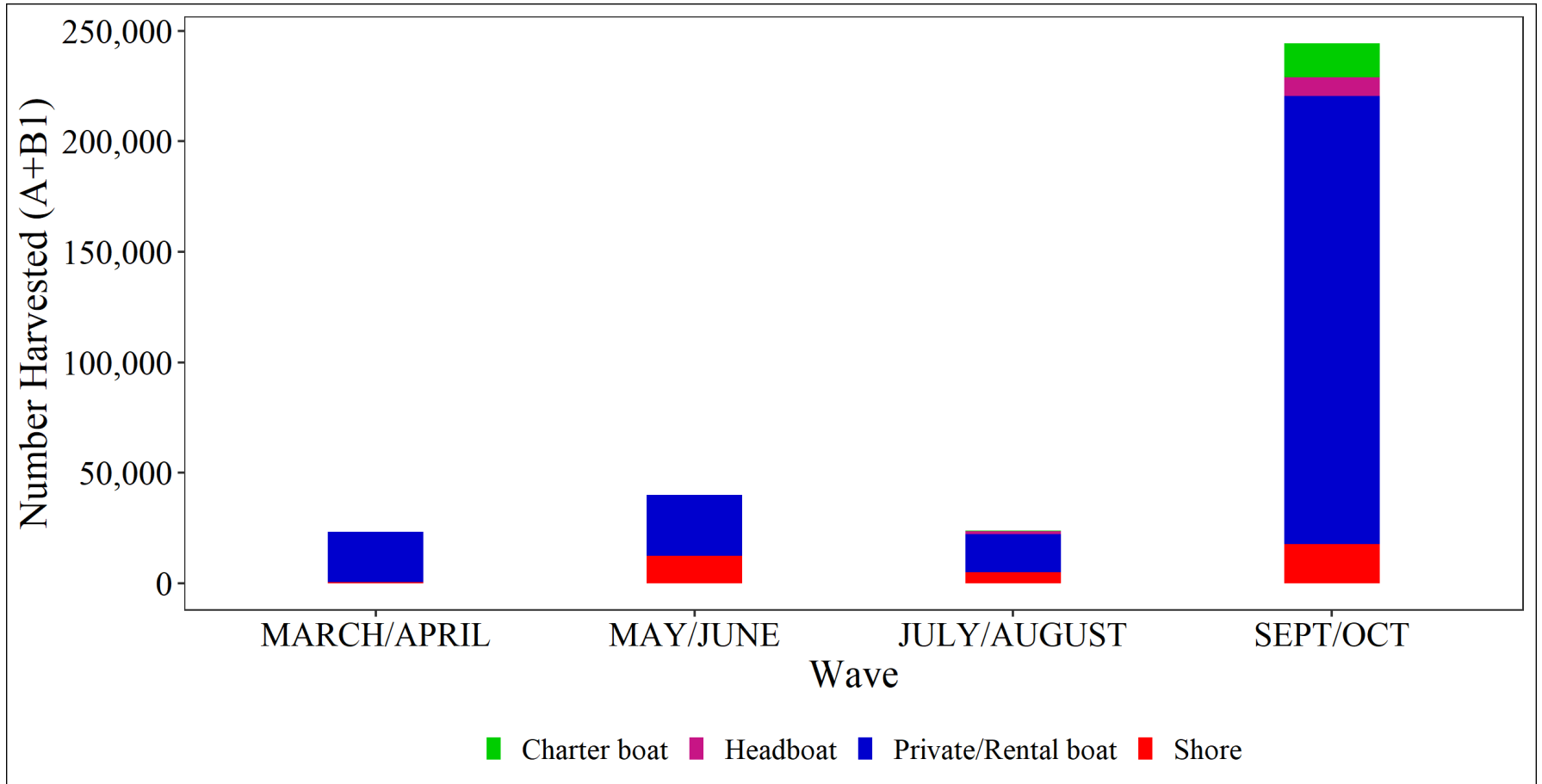
Tautog - Stock Status



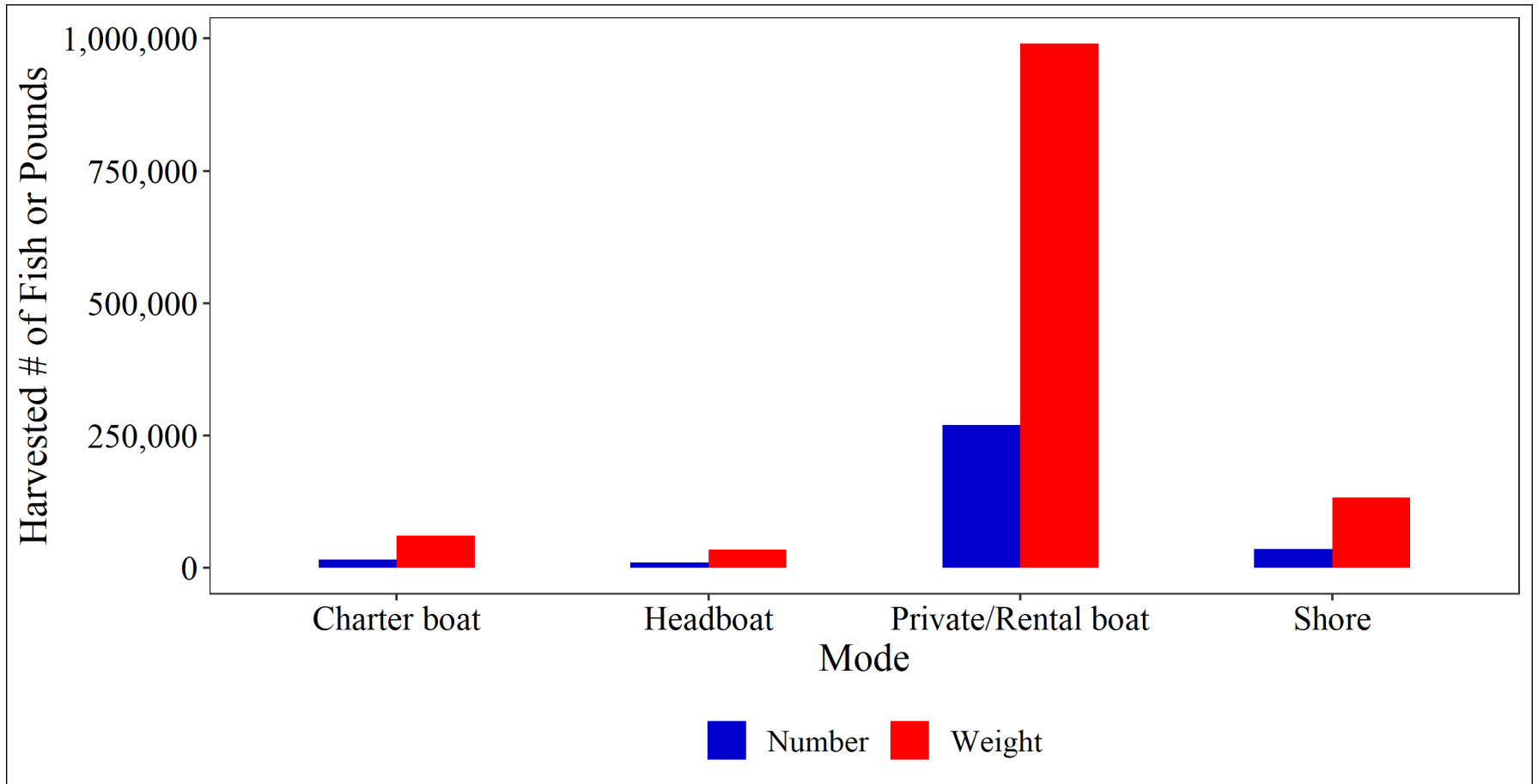
- SSB estimated at 14.9 million lbs (target = 10.09 million lbs; threshold = 7.57 million lbs)



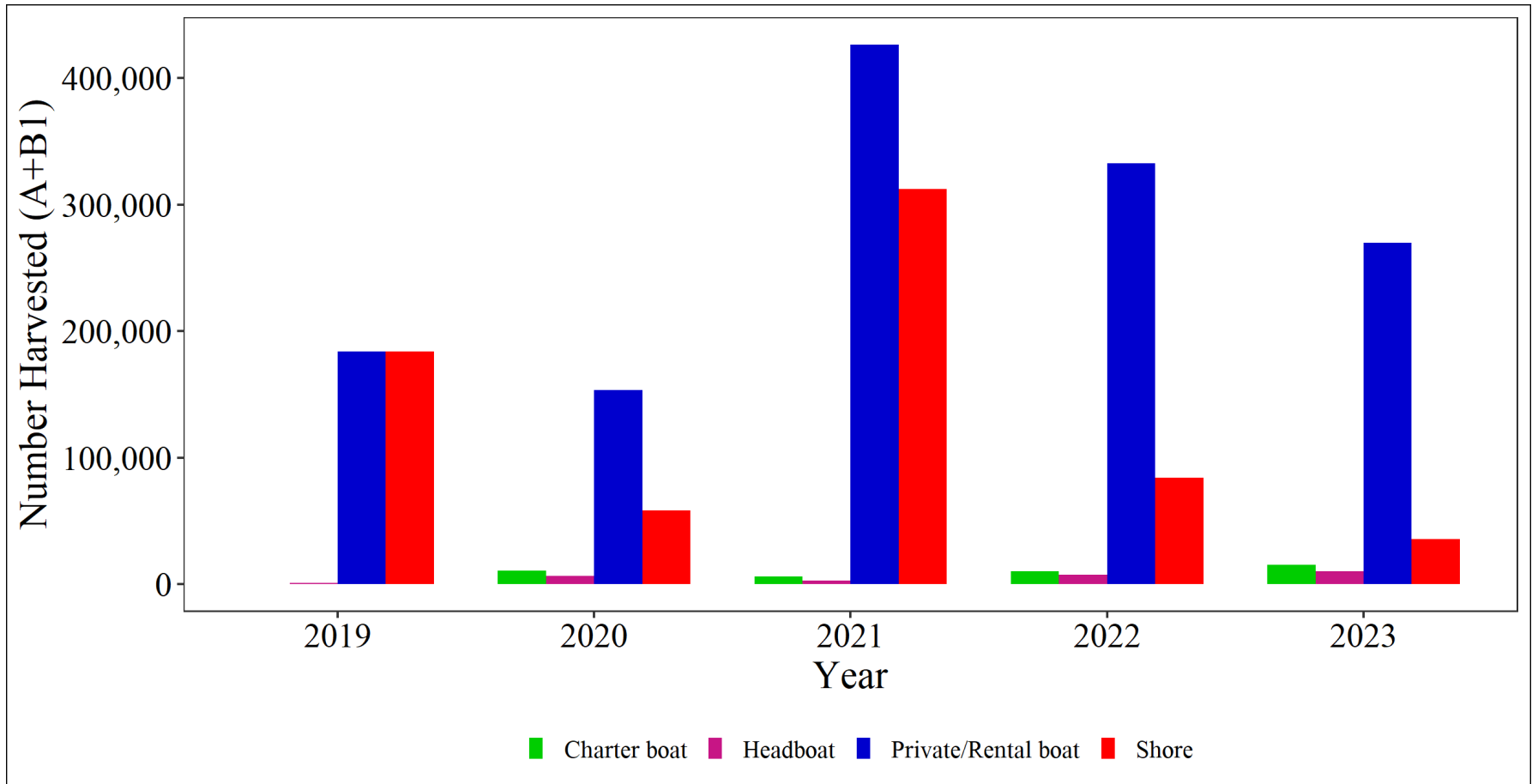
Tautog - 2023 Recreational Fishery Performance



Tautog - 2023 Recreational Fishery Performance



Tautog - 2023 Recreational Fishery Performance



Tautog - 2024 Recreational Management



Current management:

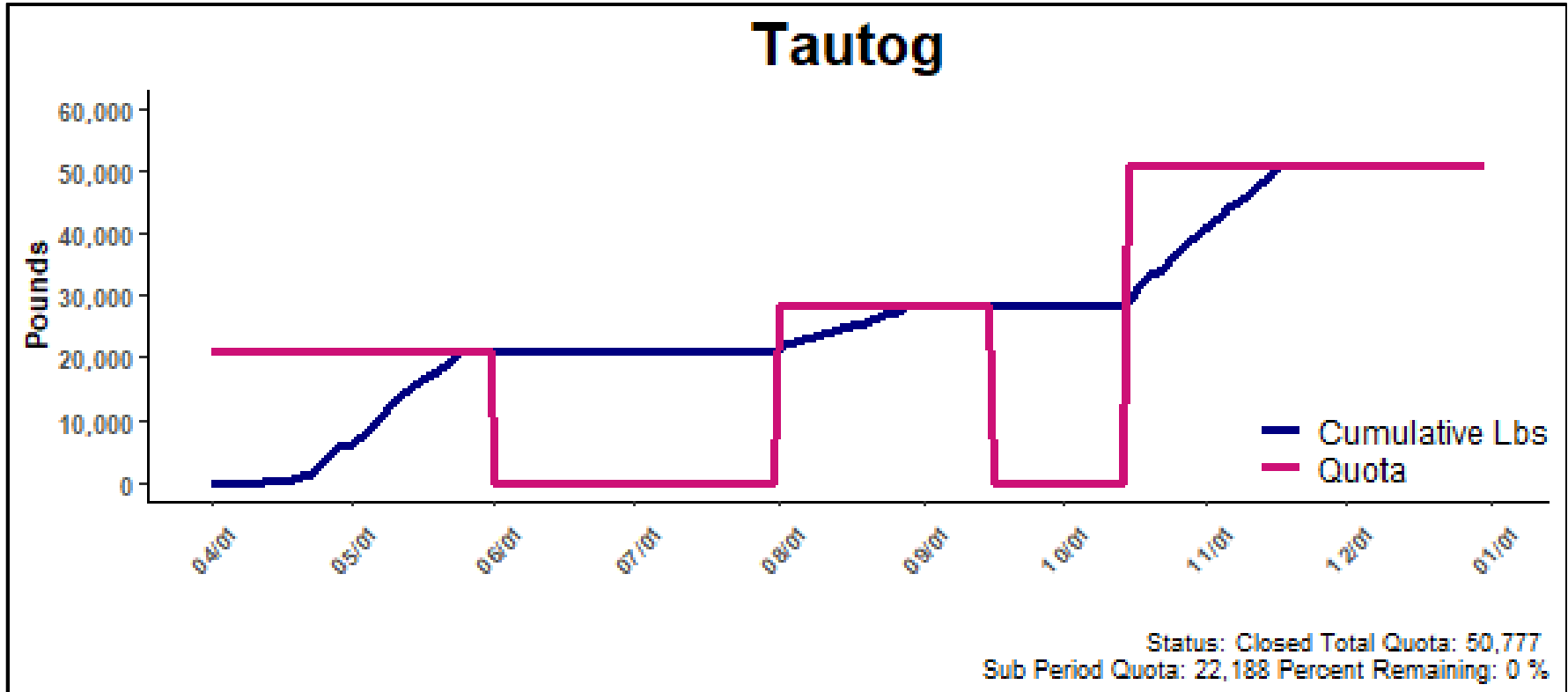
Min. size	Season	Poss. limit*
16" **	Jan. 1 – March 31	Closed
	April 1 – May 31	3 fish/day
	June 1 – July 31	Closed
	Aug. 1 – Oct. 14	3 fish/day
	Oct. 15 – Dec. 31	5 fish/day

*10 fish/vessel maximum

** Only 1 fish may be > 21"

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to recreational Tautog management for 2024

Tautog - 2023 RI Commercial Fishery Performance



- In 2023 there was a small overage of 53 lbs
- There is no quota change for 2024. 2024 is anticipated to be 51,348lbs – 53 lbs (overage from 2023)

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Current management:

Min. size	Season	Allocation	Poss. limit
16"	January 1 – March 30		Closed
	April 1 – May 31	42.5%	10 fish/vsl/day
	June 1 – July 31		Closed
	August 1 – September 15	15%	10 fish/vsl/day
	September 16 – Oct. 14		Closed
	Oct. 15 – Dec. 31	42.5%	10 fish/vsl/day

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to commercial Tautog management for 2024

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Industry Proposal: Aggregate Program

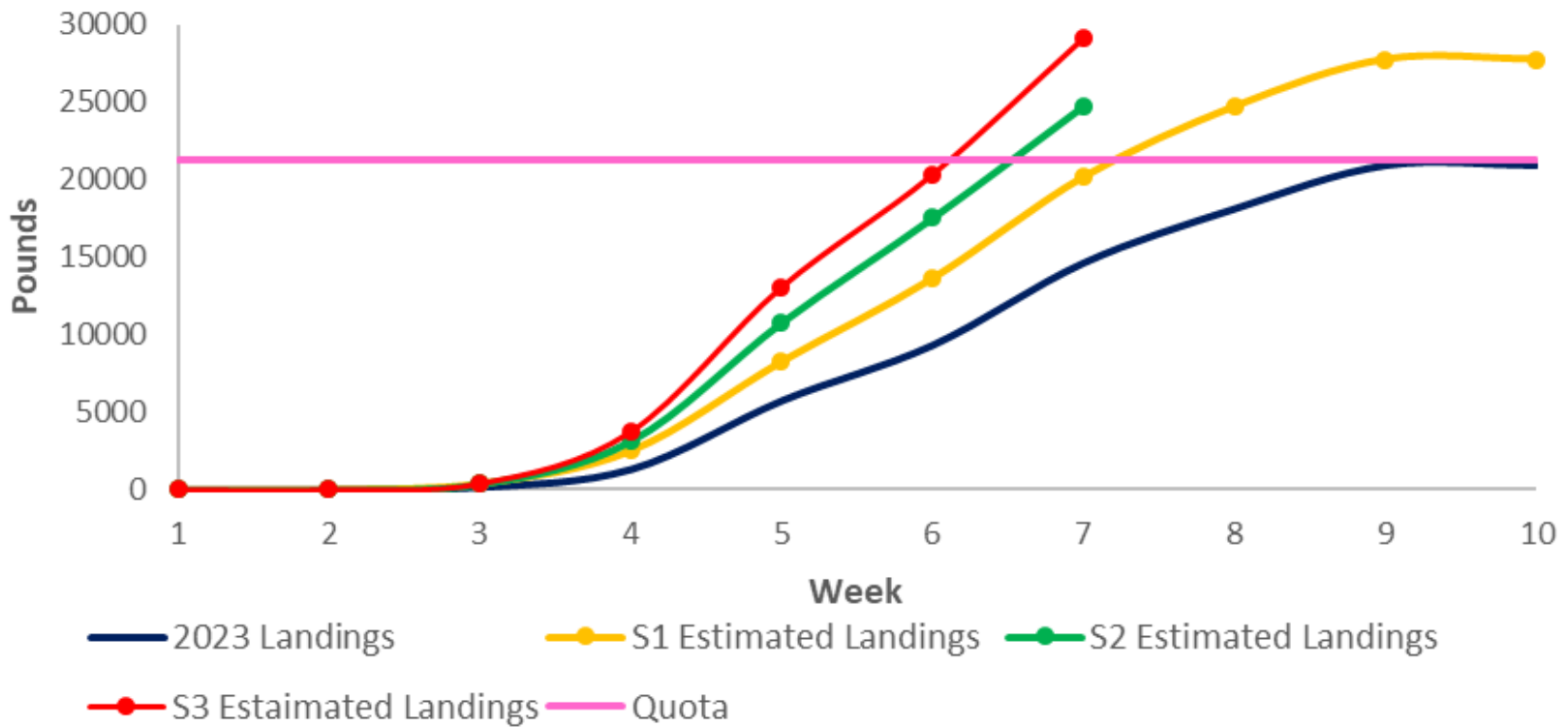
For all sub-periods 3 scenarios were considered

- **Scenario 1:** For those who maxed out of 75+0% of their trips per week, assume they would land 70 fish/week (10 fish/day * 7 days)
- **Scenario 2:** For those who maxed out of 50+0% of their trips per week, assume they would land 70 fish/week (10fish/day * 7 days)
- **Scenario 3:** For those who maxed out of 25+0% of their trips per week, assume they would land 70 fish/week (10fish/day * 7 days)

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Industry Proposal: Aggregate Program Sub-period 1 (Apr 1–May 31)
 2023 Sub Period 1 (April 1 - May 31)



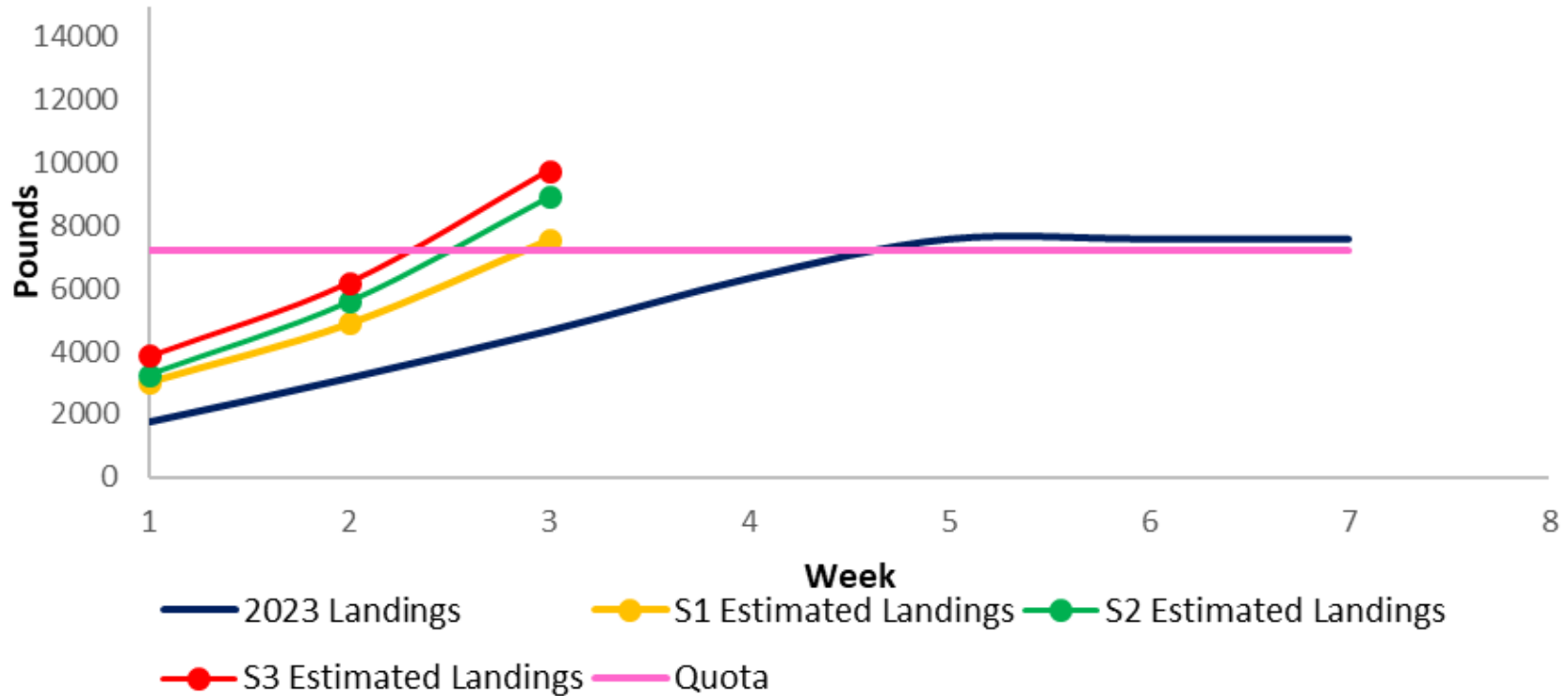
Year	Actual Management	<u>Scenario 1</u>	<u>Scenario 2</u>	<u>Scenario 3</u>
2021	Closed May 20 (Week 8)	Close week 6	Close week 5	Close week 5
2022	Closed May 26 (Week 8)	Close week 6	Close week 5	Close week 5
2023* shown above	Closed May 26 (week 9)	Close week 7	Close week 6	Close week 6

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Industry Proposal: Aggregate Program Sub-period 2 (Aug 1–Sept 15)

2023 Sub Period 2 (August 1 - Sept 15)



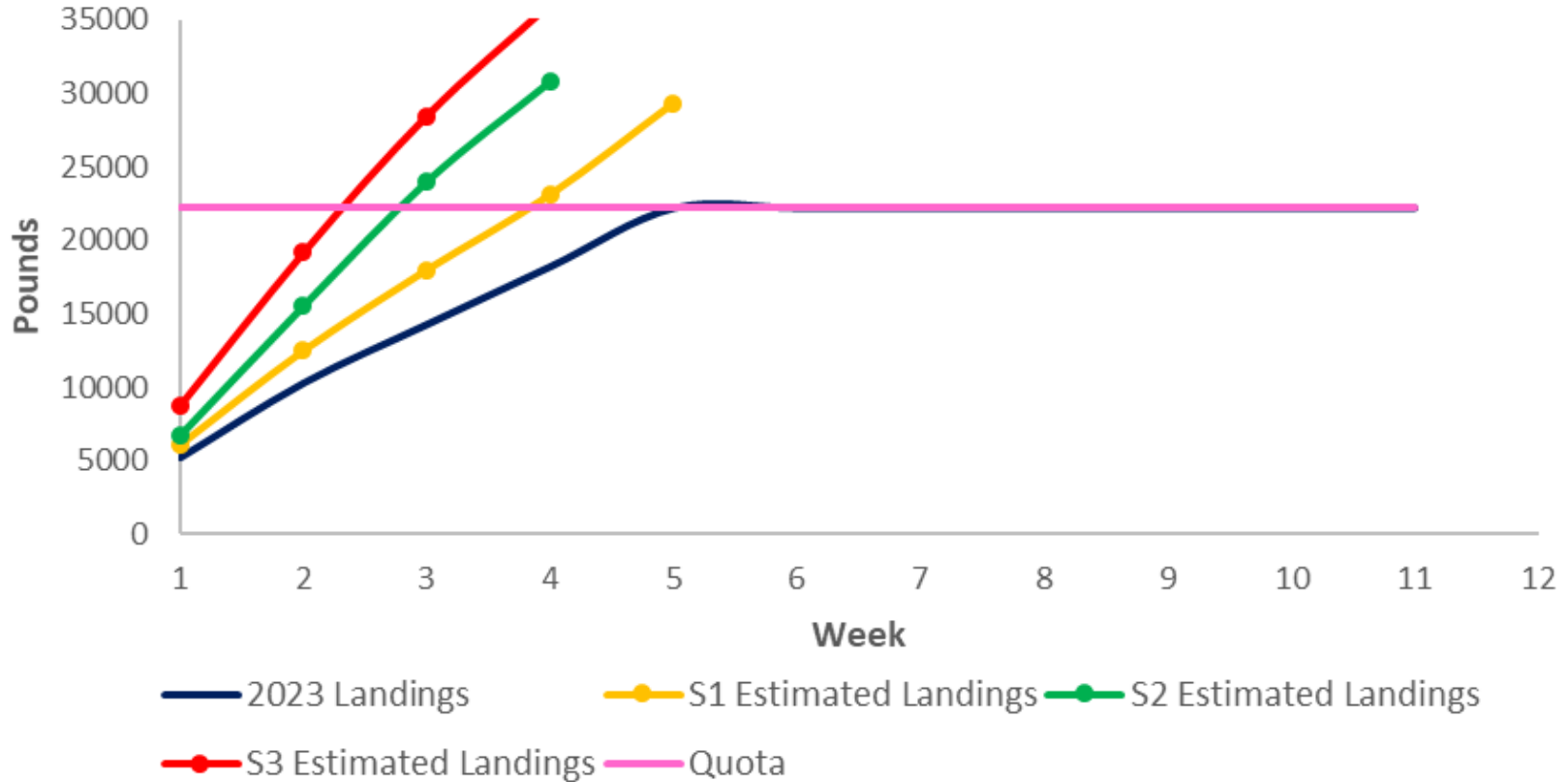
Year	Actual Management	<u>Scenario 1</u>	<u>Scenario 2</u>	<u>Scenario 3</u>
2021	Closed Aug 19 (Week 3)	Close week 1	Close week 1	Close week 1
2022	No Closure	Close week 3	Close week 2	Close week 2
2023* shown above	Closed Aug 31 (week 4)	Close week 2	Close week 2	Close week 2

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Industry Proposal: Aggregate Program Sub-period 3 (Oct 15-Dec 31)

2023 Sub Period 3 (Oct 15 -Dec 31)



Year	Actual Management	<u>Scenario 1</u>	<u>Scenario 2</u>	<u>Scenario 3</u>
2021	Closed Nov 20 (Week 5)	Close week 3	Close week 2	Close week 2
2022	Closed Nov 13 (Week 5)	Close week 2	Close week 2	Close week 2
2023* shown above	Closed Nov 17 (week 5)	Close week 3/4	Close week 2	Close week 2

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



Industry Proposal: Aggregate Program

Division Concerns:

- Projections show it would be *extremely* difficult to manage
- Would likely result in early closures (all scenarios 2+ weeks earlier) and overages

Additional Requirements:

- Run like other aggregate programs
 - Opt-in program
 - VMS required
 - Electronic reporting required
- Reduced weekly possession limit or change sub-period allocations

Additional Workshop Proposals – 2024

Commercial Tautog Management



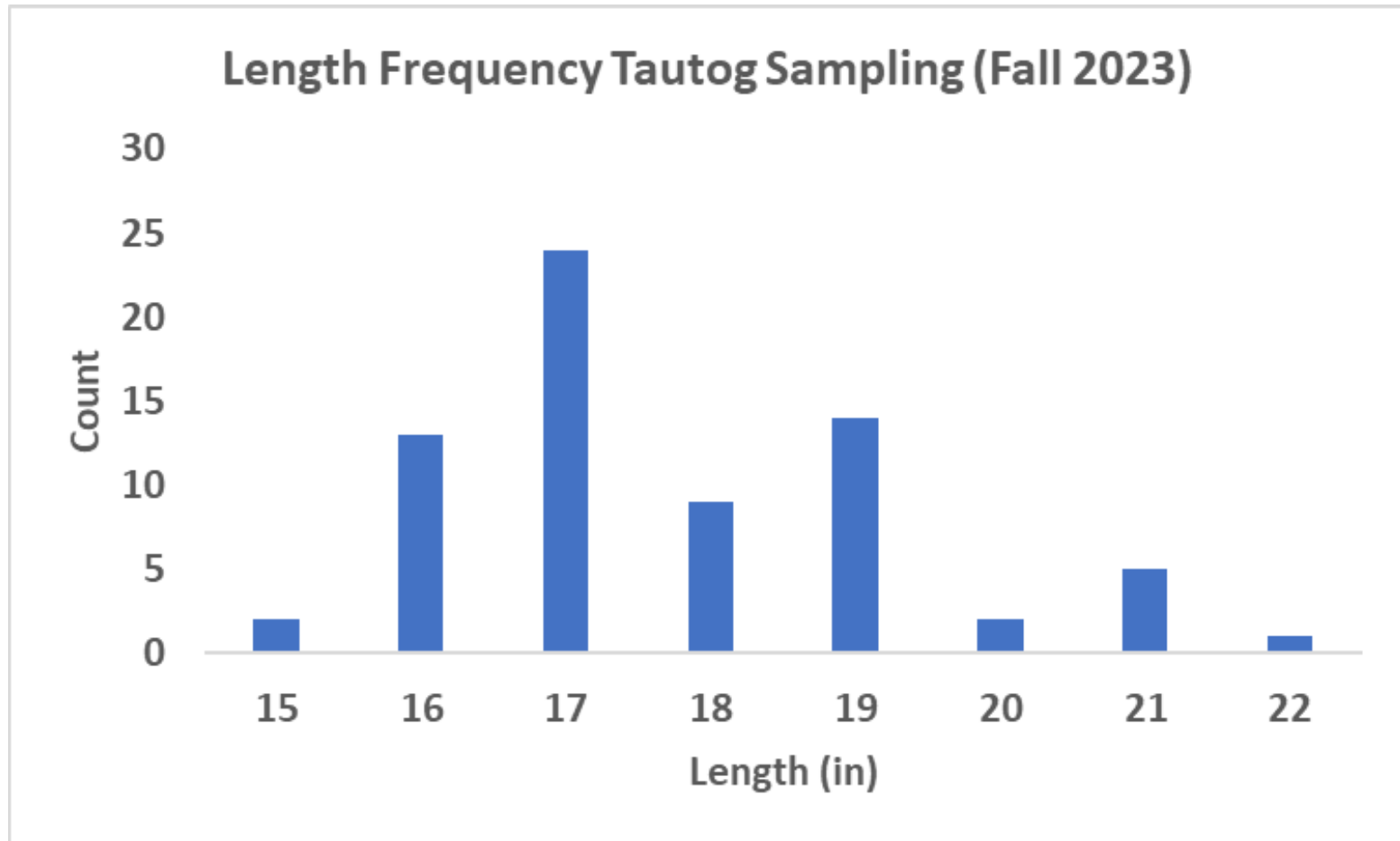
Aggregate Program:

- Limit aggregate to 10 fish/day * 5 days
- No aggregate during the August 1 – September 15 sub-period
- Make aggregate for certain gear types only (e.g., gillnet)

Tautog - 2024 Commercial Management



DMF Commercial Port Sampling: Length frequency from Fall 2023





Menhaden

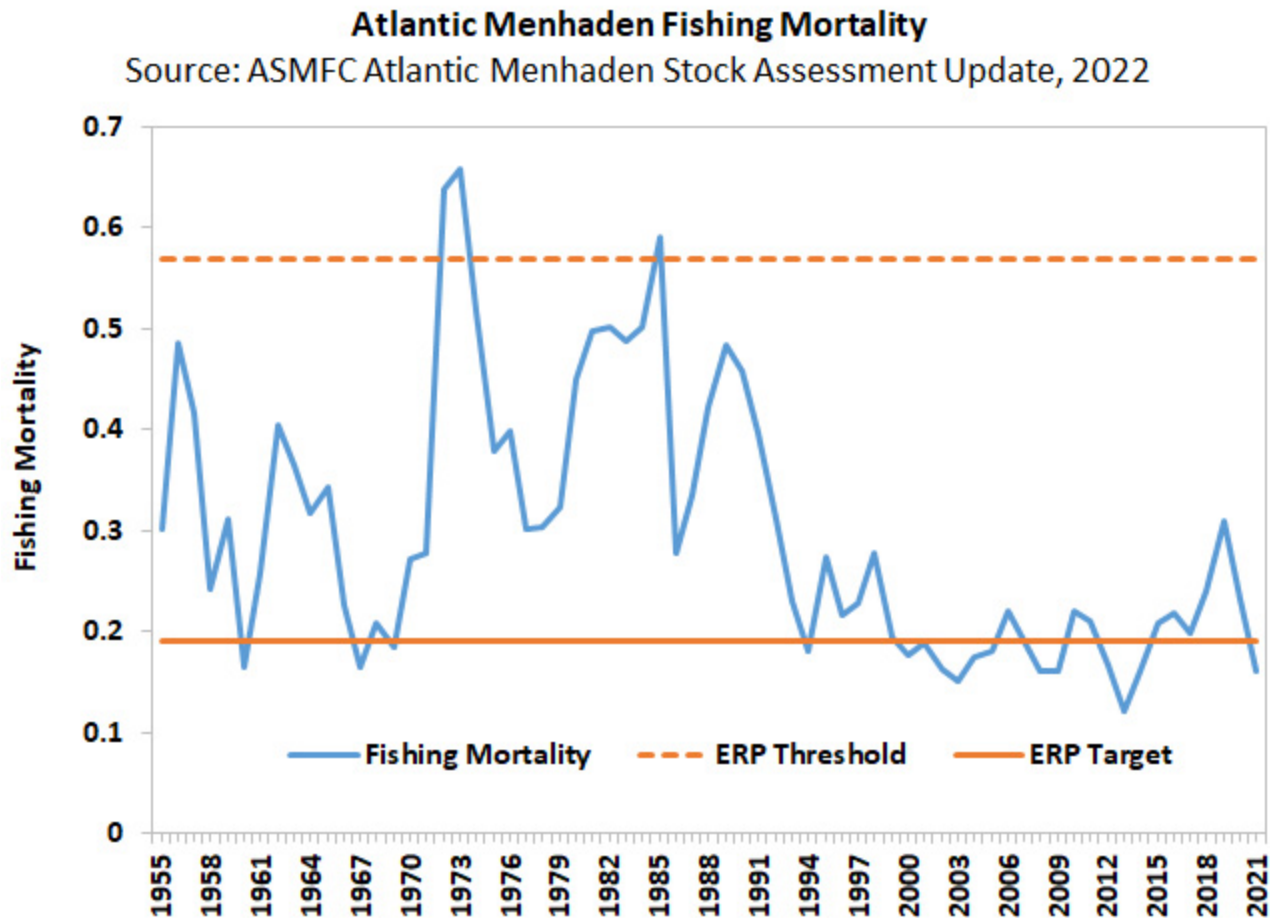


- ✓ Summary of Stock Status
- ✓ 2023 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Commercial Management

Menhaden - Stock Status



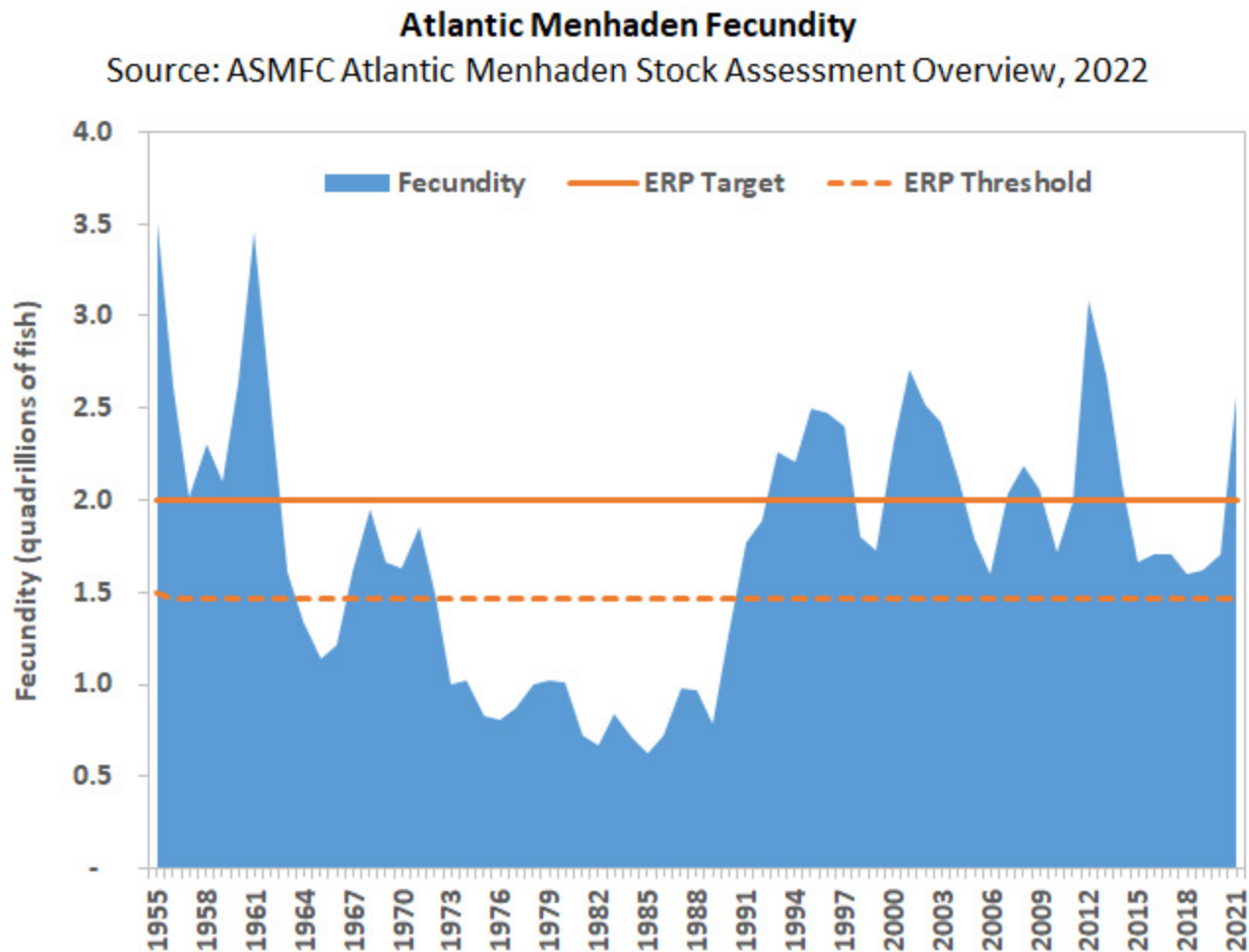
- F in 2021 estimated to be below both the ERP target and threshold, indicating the stock is not experiencing overfishing



Menhaden - Stock Status cont'd.



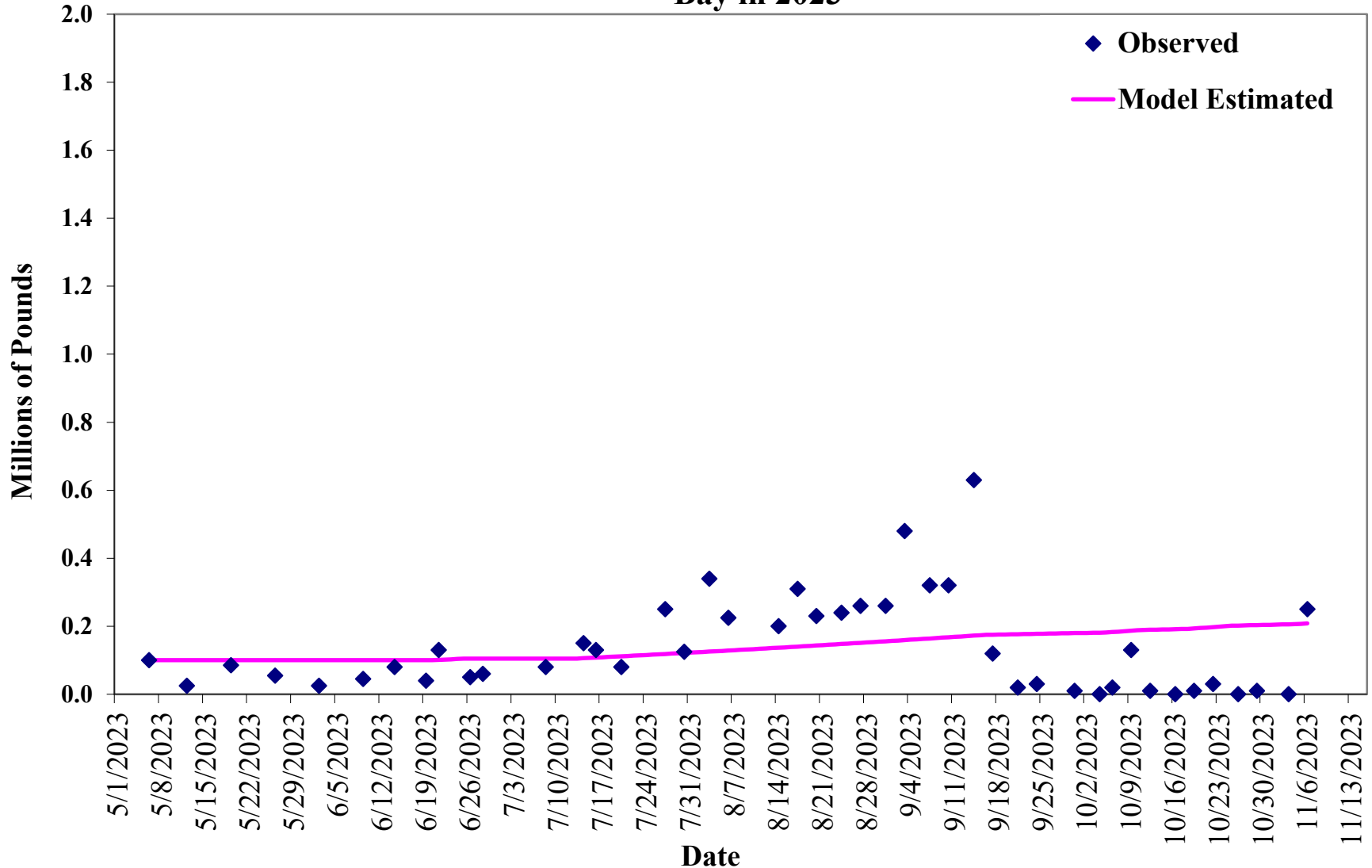
- Fecundity in 2021 estimated to be above both the ERP target and threshold, indicating the stock is not overfished



Menhaden - 2023 RI Spotter Pilot Observations



Observed and Model Estimated Spotter Index of Menhaden in Narragansett Bay in 2023



Menhaden - 2023 RI Comm. Landings and Menhaden Management Area Performance



Initial Quota	Total Landings	Transfers	Quota Remaining
4,147,882 lbs	159,875 lbs	300,000	3,688,007

- No openings of the MMA in 2023

2021 – 2023 Menhaden Performance



Year	Initial Quota	Total Landings	Transfers	Quota Remaining
2021	2,196,815 lbs	2,682,856 lbs	+ 1,590,675 lbs	1,104,634 lbs
2022	2,196,815 lbs	617,151 lbs	+ 360,000 lbs - 1,820,000 lbs	119,664 lbs
2023	4,147,882 lbs	159,875 lbs	- 300,000 lbs	3,688,007 lbs

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



Proposal 1 (Division): Clarify language in several sections

Proposal 2 (Industry):

- Move the Sakonnet River boundary for the fall opening on September 1 from “*south of a line extending from Fogland Point to Sandy Point*” to “*south of the Sakonnet Bridge*”
- Increase the possession limit for the September 1 Fall opening from 25,000 lbs/vessel/day to 120,000 lbs/vessel/day

Proposal 3 (Industry):

- Establish a weekly possession limit regardless of MMA status
- Seasons:
 - April 1 – May 31
 - September 1 – December 31 (or until quota exhausted)
- Possession Limit:
 - 25,000 lbs/vsl/week
 - Closed Days: Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Additional Workshop Proposal Comments – 2024 Commercial Menhaden Management



Workshop Comments on Proposal 2 (Industry):

- Comment that changing the Fall Opening southern boundary in the Sakonnet River could result in user conflicts

Workshop Comments on Proposal 3 (Industry):

- Make this a multi-year pilot program
- Change the season to January 1 – December 31
- Require an application and permit to participate
 - Limit the number of participants
- Require additional restrictions similar to other opt-in programs:
 - VMS requirement
- Add a rule like Massachusetts stipulating that recreational users must be avoided

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



- Proposal #3 similar to proposal vetted in 2023 (public hearing March 6th, RIMFC April 3rd)
- Tasks from Director's Decision Memo:
 1. Review potential change in context of ASMFC Menhaden FMP to ensure compliant
 2. Develop analysis to project under various realistic scenarios how this potential change may impact existing management
 3. Coordinate with DLE to consider DLE challenges with enforcing a weekly limit under the existing management area and fishery requirements

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



1. Review potential change in context of ASMFC Menhaden FMP to ensure compliant:
 - FMP compliant:
 - The proposed change would take place until RI's commercial quota allocation is exhausted
 - The Menhaden FMP specifies each state's commercial quota allocation but does not dictate how that quota will be managed

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



2. Develop analysis to project under various realistic scenarios how this potential change may impact existing management:
 - Analyzed 2021 as the last year with high biomass and MMA openings
 - Proposal season starts April 1 but no flights in 2021 until May 1
 - Assumptions:
 - Assume zero biomass observed April 1 – April 30
 - If MMA opening delayed, did not count observed comm landings that occurred prior to later opening
 - Opening/re-opening only if had > 1 landing limit in cap

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



Scenario	Model Start	# Weekly limits	# Openings	Days Open	Landings Cap
1	May 1	0	1	16	1,670,000
2	May 1	1	2	14	1,575,000
3	May 1	2	2	11	1,575,000
4	May 1	3	2	11	1,585,000
5	May 1	4	2	9	1,380,000
6	April 1	1	1	10	720,000
7	April 1	2, 3, 4	1	6	470,000

Conclusions:

- Decrease in the number of fishing days
- Decrease in landings cap or available harvest

Menhaden - 2024 Proposed Commercial Management



3. Coordinate with DLE to consider DLE challenges with enforcing a weekly limit under the existing management area and fishery requirements
 - DLE challenges:
 - Weekly limits in general will be difficult as the MMA program is currently designed to have vessel holds certified for 120,000 pounds or less per day
 - No mechanism in place to verify compliance with lesser possession limits without vessel holds being re-certified
 - Use of barrels or totes could aid in solving this problem. Would require a standard weight/unit of measurement



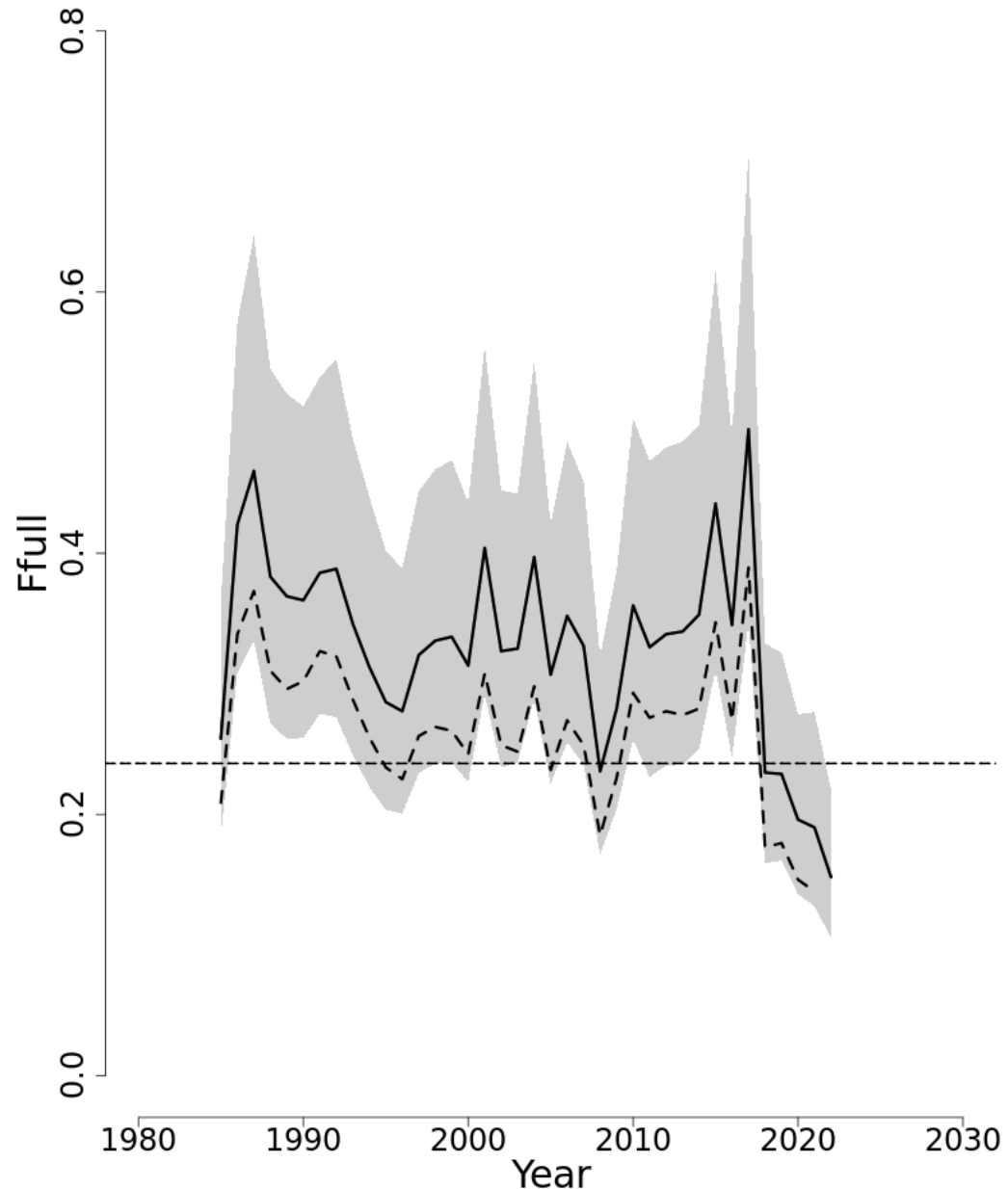
Bluefish

- ✓ Summary of stock status
- ✓ 2023 recreational fishery performance
- ✓ 2024 recreational management
- ✓ 2023 commercial fishery performance
- ✓ 2024 commercial management

Bluefish - Stock Status



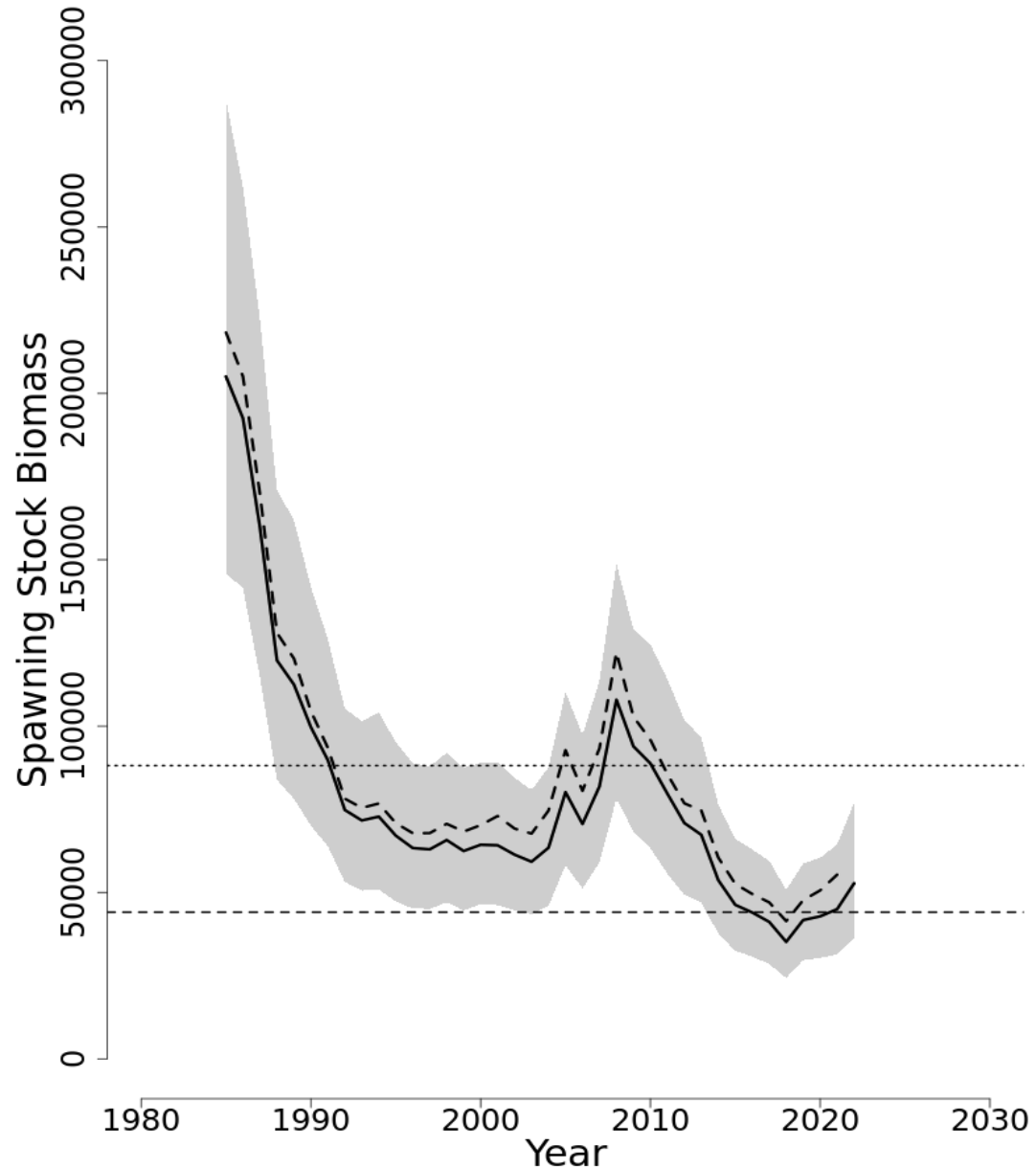
- The 2023 management track assessment indicates the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring in 2022 relative to the updated BRPs
- F was estimated to be 0.152 in 2022; 64% of overfishing threshold (F_{MSY} proxy = 0.239)



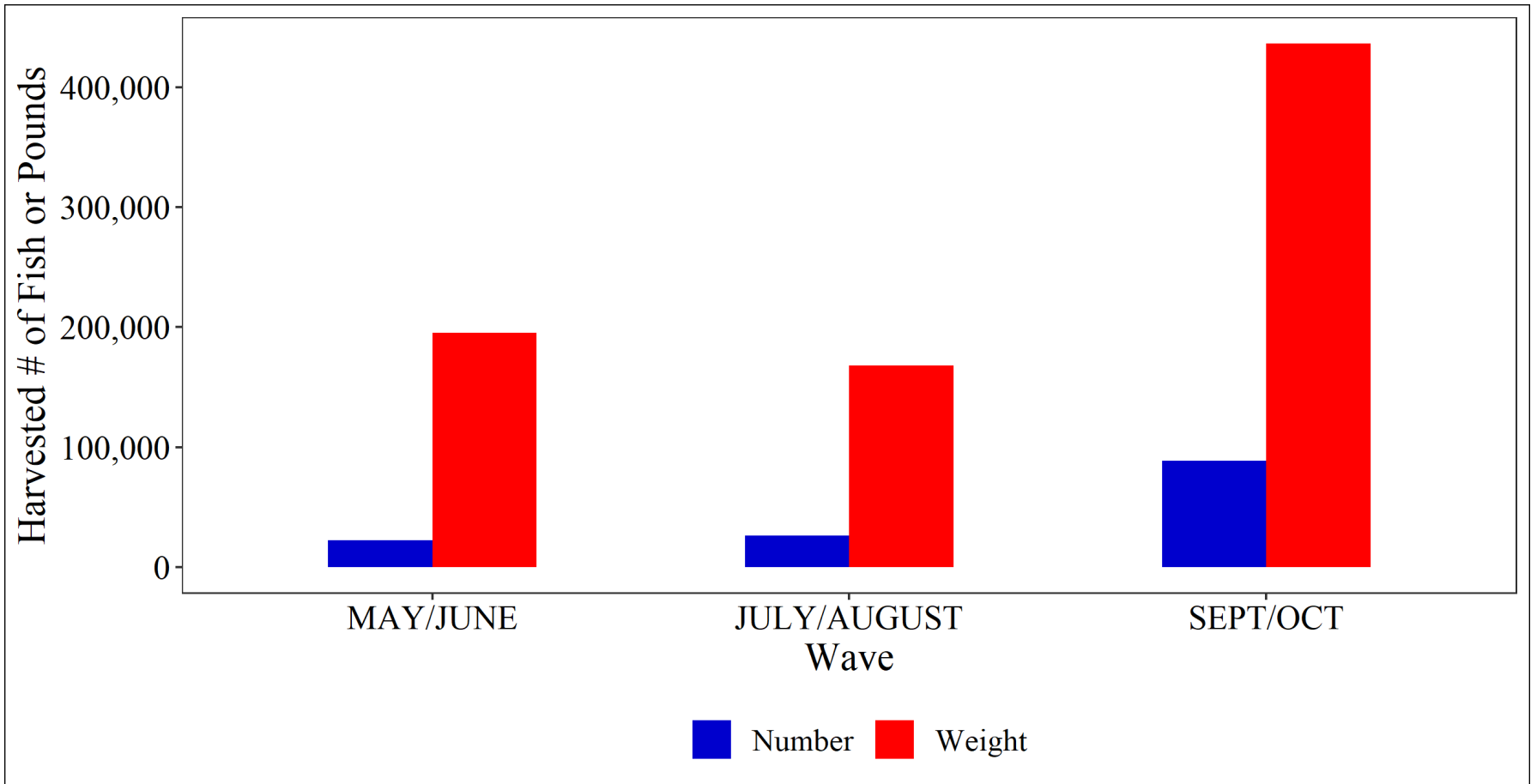
Bluefish - Stock Status



- SSB estimated to be 52,747 MT in 2022; above the SSB threshold of 44,066 MT
- Will remain in rebuilding plan until SSB target reached

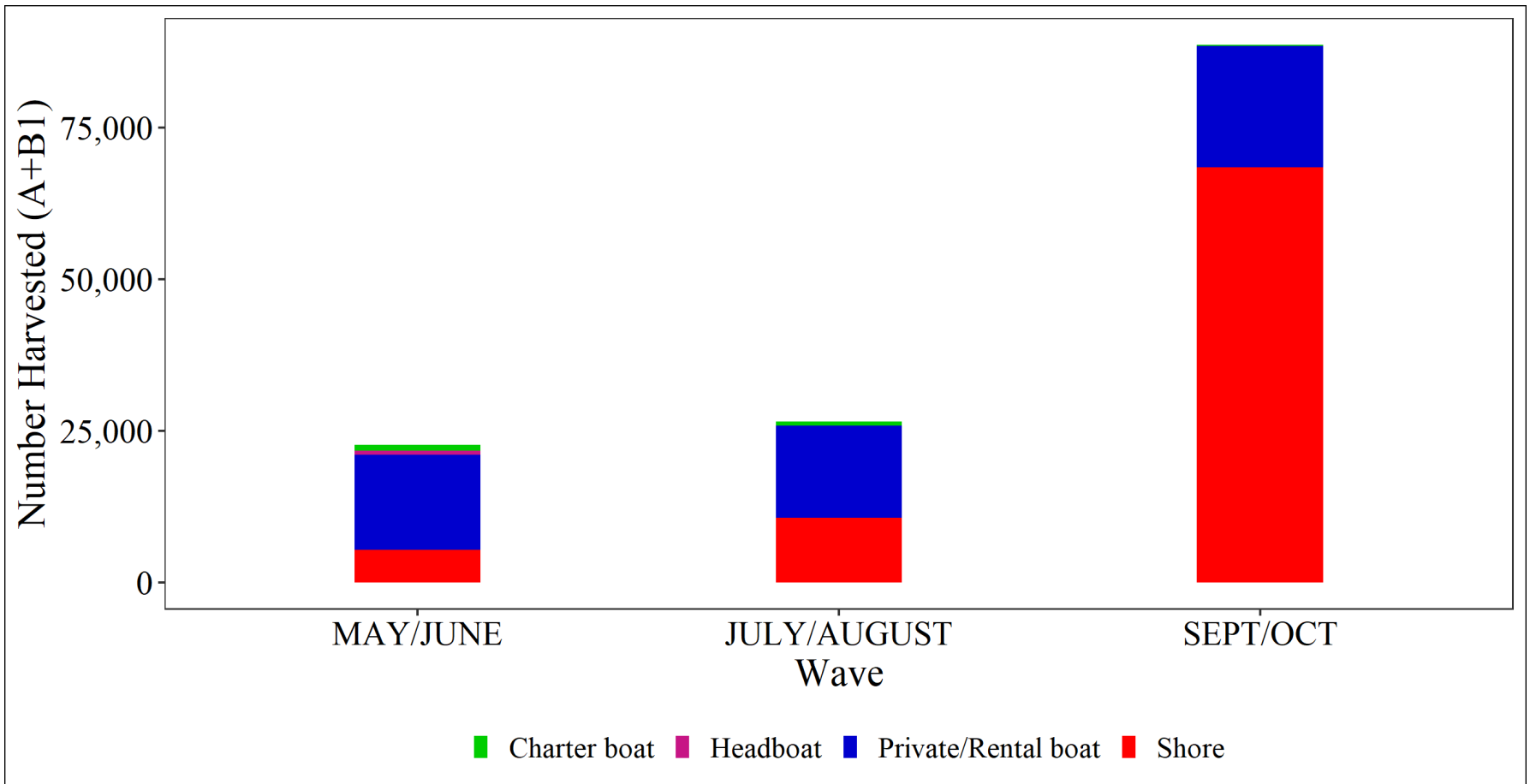


Bluefish - 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP, 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Bluefish - 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP, 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Bluefish - 2024 Recreational Management



- Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) of 11.96 million lbs set for 2023, a 15% decrease from the 2022 RHL
- Harvest still not expected to exceed the reduced RHL

Current management:

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Private/Shore	N/A	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
For-hire			5 fish/day

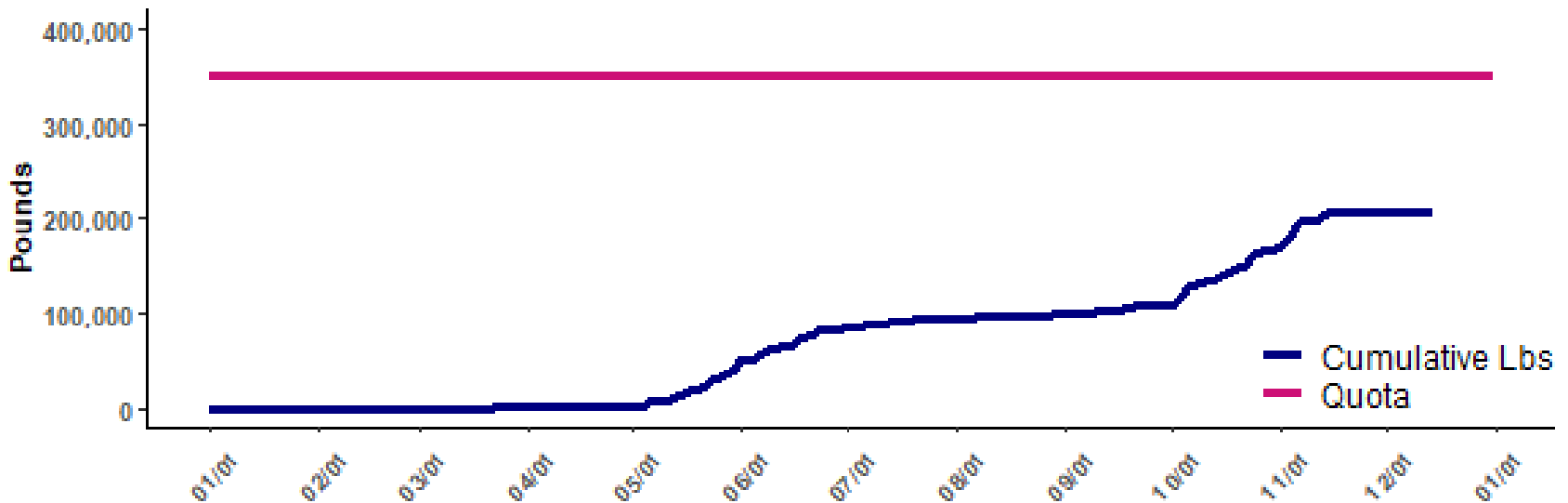
2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to recreational Bluefish management for 2024.

Bluefish - 2023 Comm Fishery Performance

Sub-period	Projected Poundage	Landings	Possession Limit
Jan. 1 – April 30	9,785	2,105	1,000 lbs/bi-week
May 1 – Nov. 15	296,810	203,200	6,000 lbs/wk; 8,000 lbs/wk (10/8) 10,000 lbs/wk (10/29)
Nov. 16 – Dec. 31	19,570	2,356	500 10,000 lbs/wk
Total	326,165	207,661	

- Received a 40,000 pound transfer for a final allocation of **366,165** lbs

Bluefish



Bluefish - Proposed 2024 Commercial Management Options



2024 Commercial Quota: 194,201 lbs,

- 44% decrease to coastwide commercial quota
 - *40% decrease to RI quota*
- The Division will continue to adjust possession limits through the seasons and pursue commercial quota transfers in 2024 to avoid an early closure

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to commercial Bluefish management for 2024

Additional Workshop Proposals –2024 Commercial Management



Sub-period	Possession Limit
Jan. 1 – April 30	1,000 lbs/bi-week
May 1 – Nov. 15 <u>Oct. 15</u>	6,000 lbs/wk;
Nov. 16 <u>Oct. 16</u> – Dec. 31	500 10,000 lbs/wk

Sub-period	Possession Limit
Jan. 1 – April 30	1,000 lbs/bi-week
May 1 – Nov. 15 <u>Oct. 15</u>	6,000 lbs/wk;
Nov. 16 <u>Oct. 16</u> – Dec. 31	500 20,000 lbs/ wk <u>bi-week</u>



Scup

- ✓ Summary of Stock Status
- ✓ 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Recreational Management

Scup - Stock Status

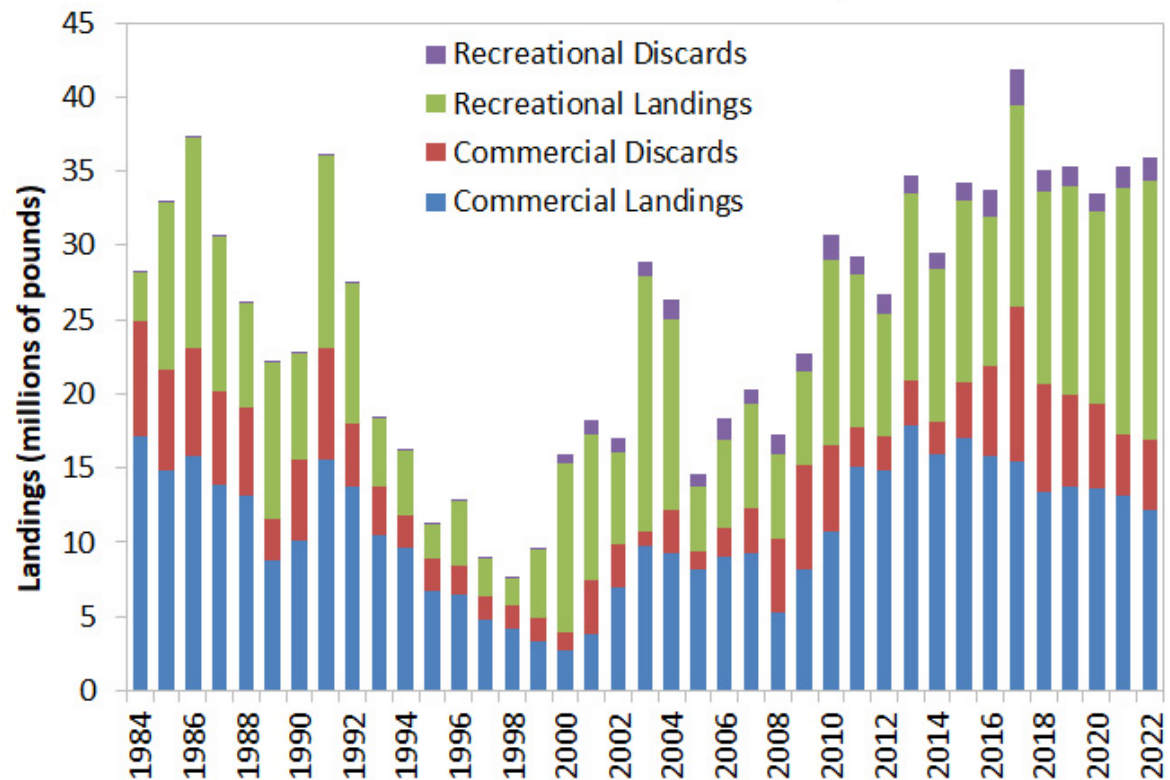


- Management Track Stock Assessment completed in 2023; biological reference points (BRPs) updated
- Scup is not overfished; overfishing is not occurring relative to BRPs

- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.098 in 2022, below the threshold F reference point = 0.19

Scup Commercial and Recreational Landings & Discards

Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 2023



Scup - Stock Status cont'd.

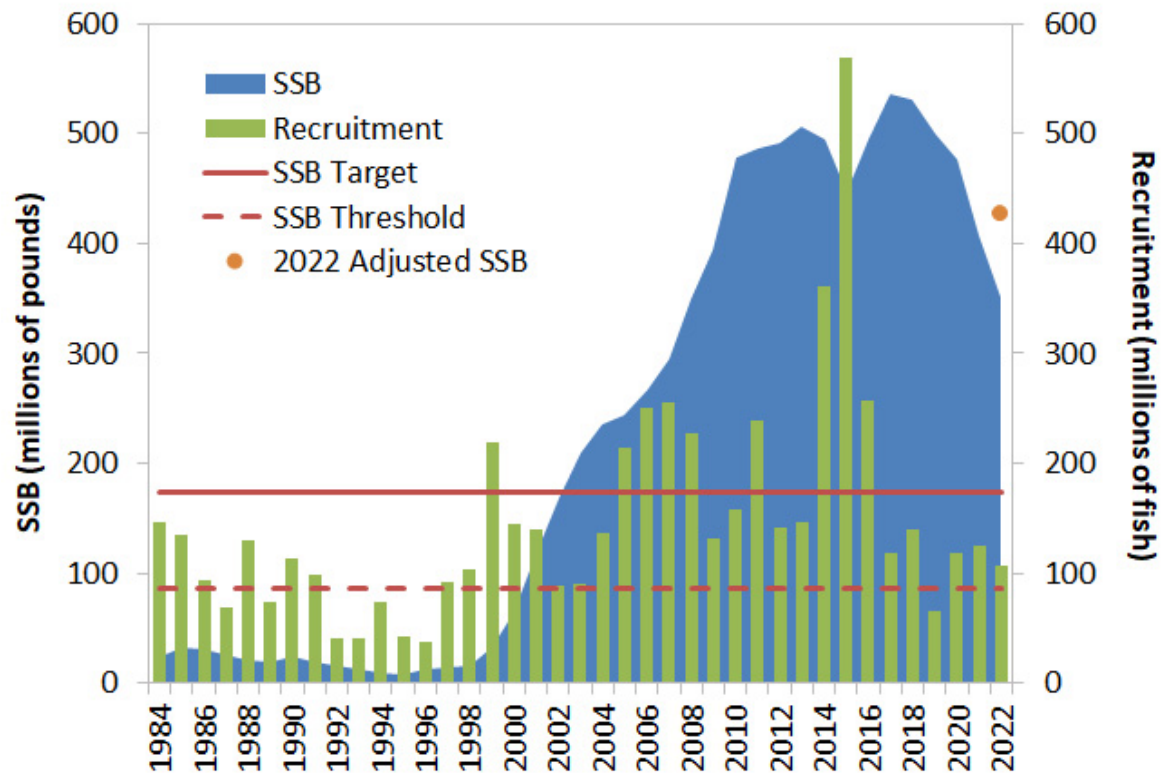


- SSB estimated to be 351 m lbs in 2022, above the updated SSB reference point = 173 m lbs

- Recruitment below average in recent years (2017-2022)
- For 2024, regulations must be changed to achieve a 10% reduction in recreational harvest

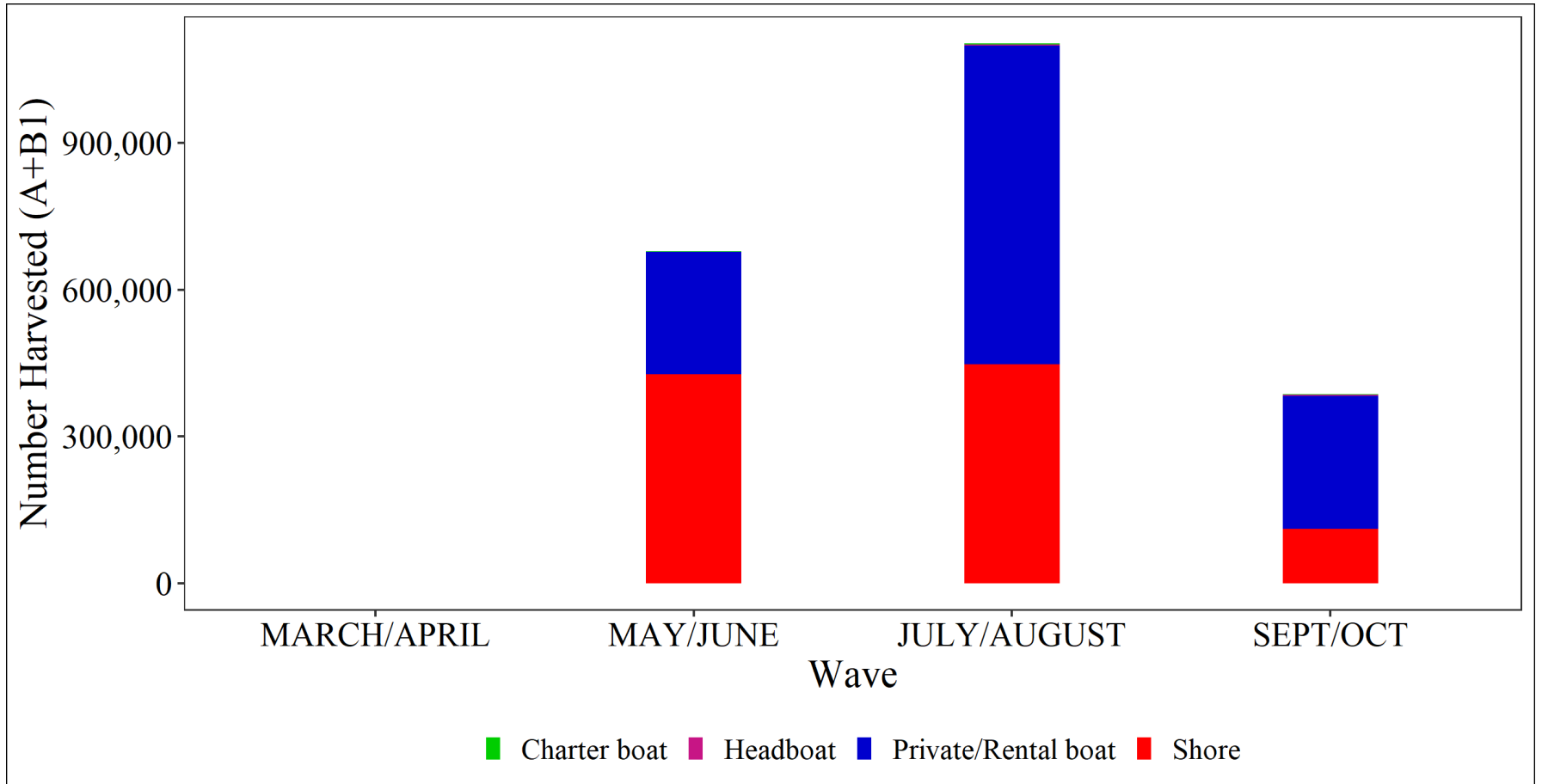
Scup Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) and Recruitment

Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 2023



Note: 2022 SSB was adjusted for a retrospective pattern with both the unadjusted and adjusted value shown below.

Scup – 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP; 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Scup - 2024 Recreational Management



- MAFMC requiring 10% coastwide reduction in 2024

Current management:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. rec.	10.5"	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day
Party/ Charter	10.5"	May 1 – Aug. 31	30 fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	40 fish/day
		Nov. 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day
Shore	9.5"	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day

2024 Management: The Division is accepting feedback on proposals for regulatory changes that would achieve a 10% reduction

Scup - 2024 Recreational Management



Proposal 1:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. rec.	10.5" <u>11"</u>	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day
Party/ Charter	10.5" <u>11"</u>	May 1 – Aug. 31	30 fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	40 fish/day
		Nov. 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day
Shore	9.5"	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 fish/day

- RI is part of Northern Region (MA, RI, CT, NY)
- Proposal 1 achieves 4.7% reduction for RI, 10% for the region

Scup - 2024 Recreational Management



Proposal 2:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. rec.	10.5"	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 <u>9</u> fish/day
Party/ Charter	10.5"	May 1 – Aug. 31	30 <u>9</u> fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	40 <u>20</u> fish/day
		Nov. 1 – Dec. 31	30 <u>9</u> fish/day
Shore	9.5"	May 1 – Dec. 31	30 <u>9</u> fish/day

- RI is part of Northern Region (MA, RI, CT, NY)
- Proposal 1 achieves 15.7% reduction for RI, 11.7% for the region

Scup - 2024 Recreational Management



Proposal 3:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. rec.	10.5" <u>11"</u>	May 1 <u>Apr. 1</u> – Dec. 31	30 <u>20</u> fish/day
Party/ Charter	10.5" <u>11"</u>	May 1 <u>Apr. 1</u> – Aug. 31	30 <u>20</u> fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Oct. 31	40 fish/day
		Nov. 1 – Dec. 31	30 <u>20</u> fish/day
Shore	9.5" <u>10"</u>	May 1 <u>Apr. 1</u> – Aug. 31	30 <u>20</u> fish/day

- RI is part of Northern Region (MA, RI, CT, NY)
- Proposal 1 achieves 9.2% reduction for RI, 11.7% for the region



Summer Flounder

- ✓ Summary of Stock Status
- ✓ 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Recreational Management

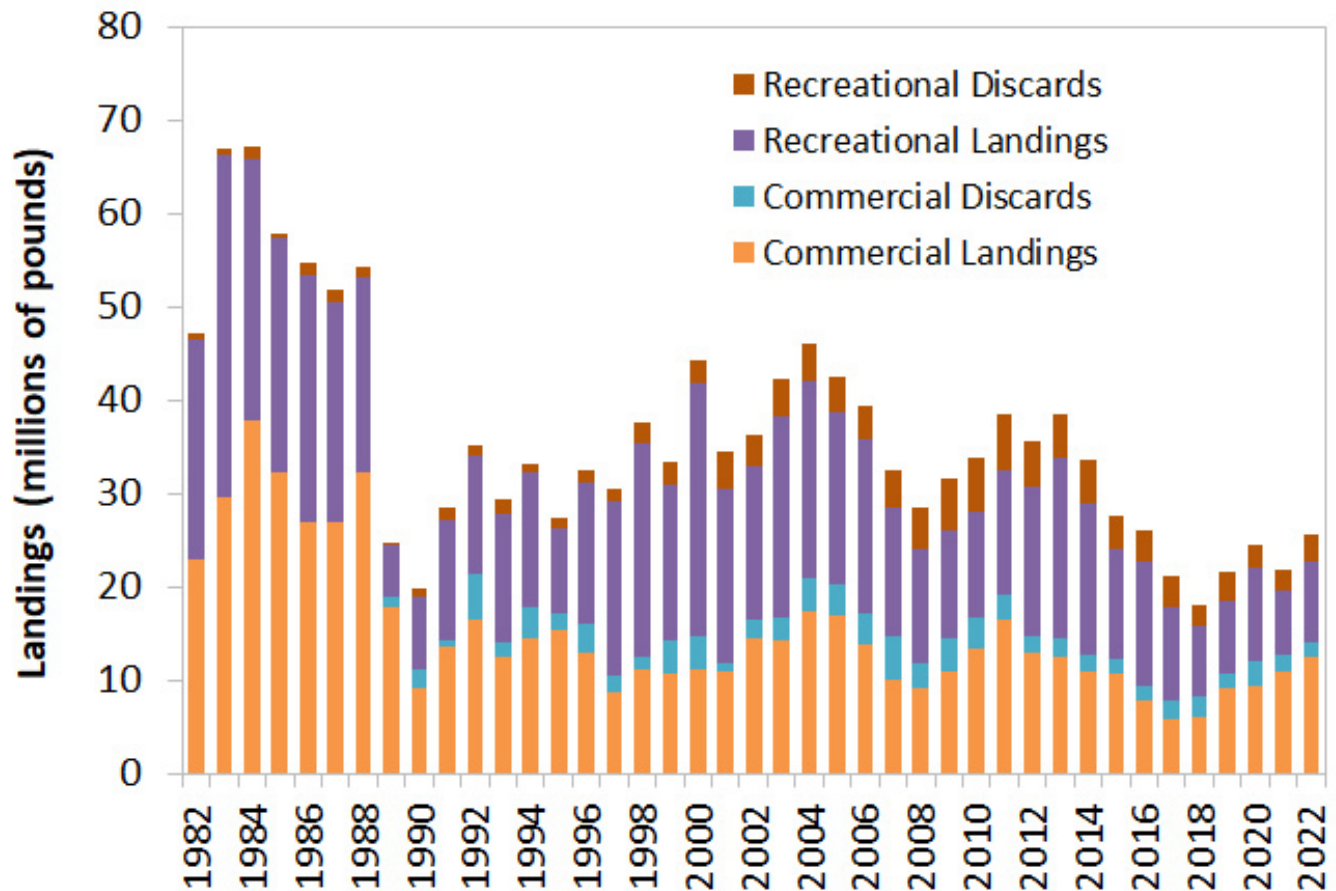
Summer Flounder - Stock Status



- Management Track Stock Assessment in 2023; biological reference points (BRPs) updated
- The summer flounder stock is not overfished; overfishing is occurring
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.464 in 2022, above the threshold F reference point = 0.451

Summer Flounder Commercial and Recreational Landings & Dead Discards

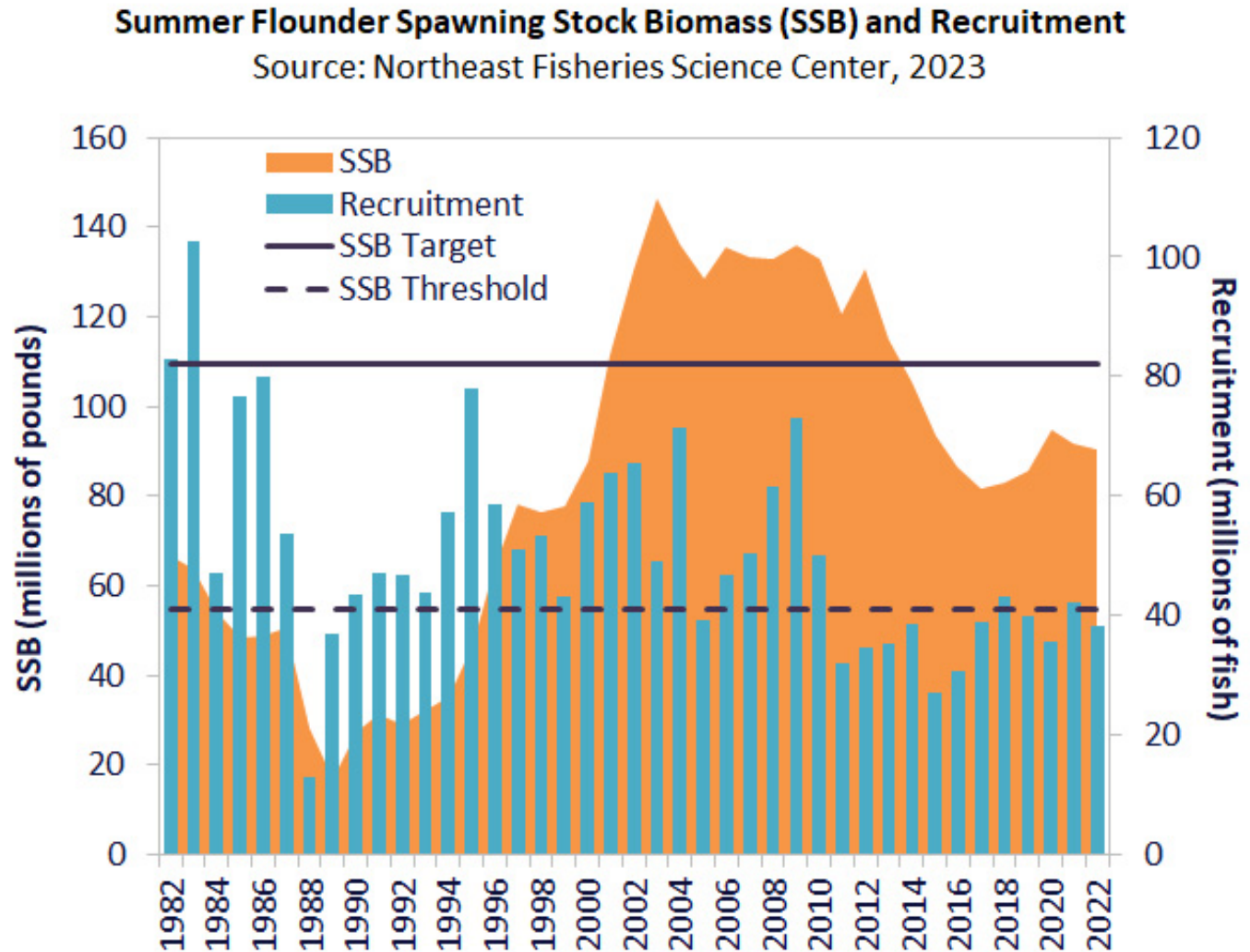
Source: Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 2023



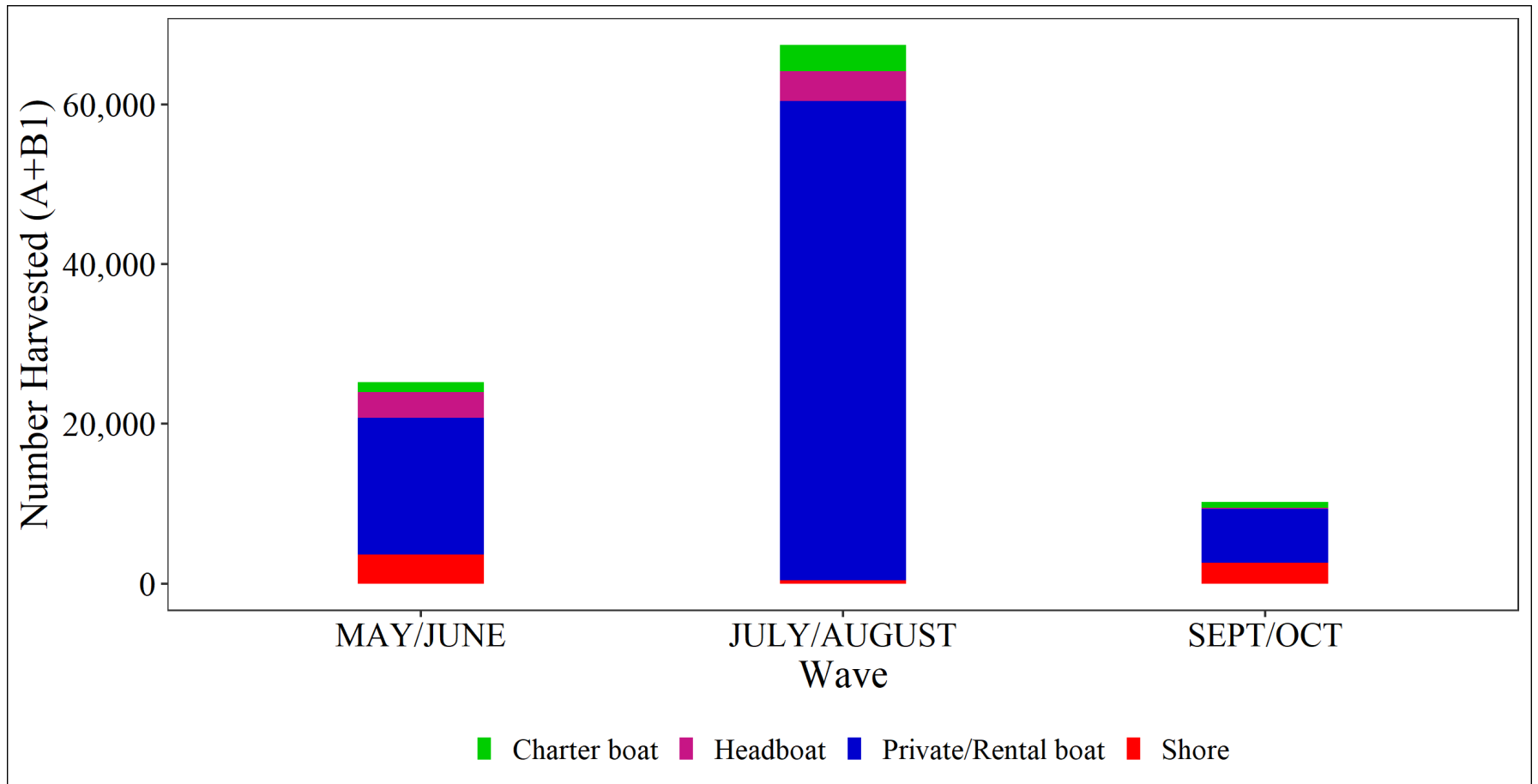
Summer Flounder - Stock Status cont'd.



- SSB estimated to be 90.4 m lbs in 2022, below the SSB reference point = 109.2 m lbs
- The 2022 year class is currently estimated to be about 49 million fish, below the average of 53 million fish
- For 2024, regulations must be changed to achieve a 28% reduction in recreational harvest



Summer Flounder – 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP; 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Summer Flounder - 2024 Recreational Management



Current management:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec.	18"	May 3 – Dec. 31	4 fish/day
Special Shore	18" (2 fish may be 17")	May 3 – Dec. 31	4 fish/day

2024 Management: The Division is accepting feedback on proposals for regulatory changes that would achieve a 28% reduction.



Summer Flounder - 2024 Recreational Management

- A 28% reduction in expected harvest is required for 2024

Proposal 1:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec.	18" <u>18.5"</u>	May 3—Dec. 31 <u>Jun. 4 – Sep. 15</u>	4 <u>3</u> fish/day
Special Shore	18" <u>18.5"</u> (2 fish may be 17")	May 3—Dec. 31 <u>Jun. 4 – Sep. 15</u>	4 <u>3</u> fish/day

- Proposal 1 achieves an estimated 28.6% reduction for RI



Summer Flounder - 2024 Recreational Management

- A 28% reduction in expected harvest is required for 2024

Proposal 2:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec.	18" <u>18.5"</u>	May 3—Dec. 31 <u>May 24 – Aug 26</u>	4 <u>3</u> fish/day
Special Shore	18" <u>18.5"</u> (2 fish may be 17")	May 3—Dec. 31 <u>May 24 – Aug 26</u>	4 <u>3</u> fish/day

- Proposal 2 achieves an estimated 28.5% reduction for RI



Summer Flounder - 2024 Recreational Management

- A 28% reduction in expected harvest is required for 2024

Proposal 3:

Sector	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec.	18" <u>19"</u>	May 3 <u>Apr. 1</u> – Dec. 31	4 <u>6</u> fish/day
Special Shore	18" <u>19"</u> (2 fish may be 17")	May 3 <u>Apr. 1</u> – Dec. 31	4 <u>6</u> fish/day

- Proposal 3 achieves an estimated 34.4% reduction for RI



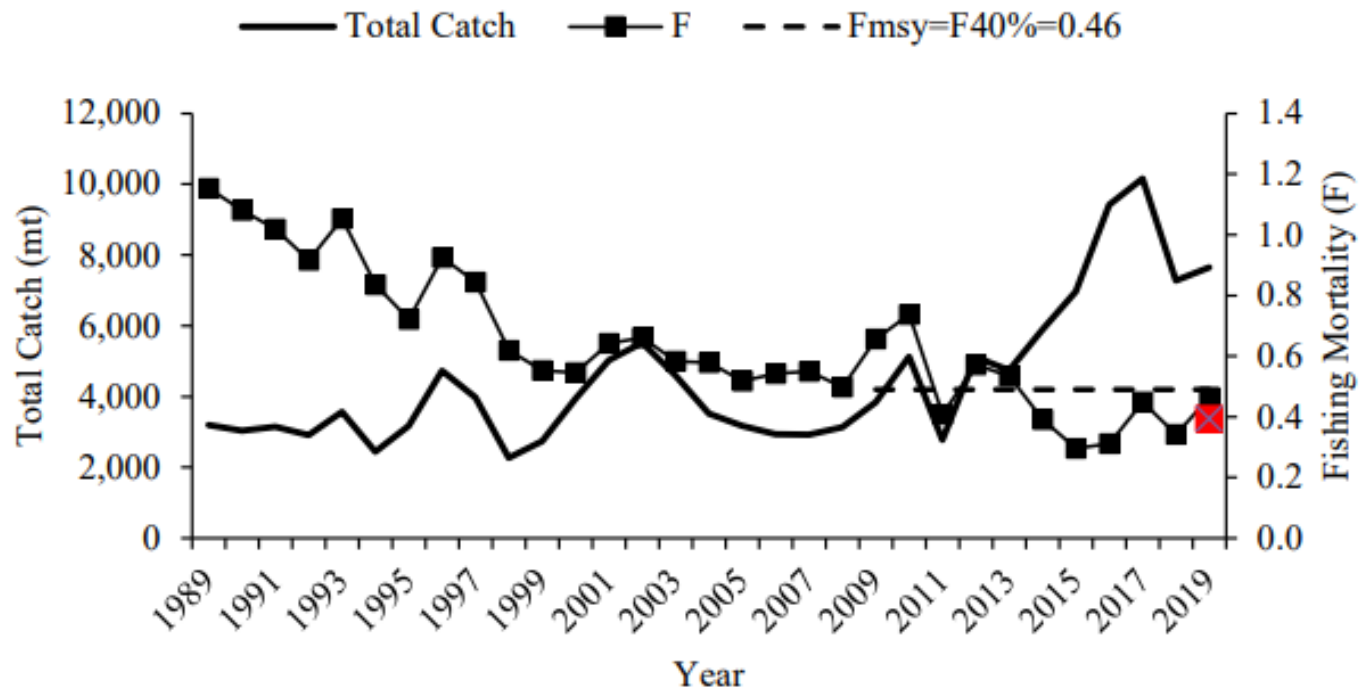
Black Sea Bass

- ✓ Summary of Stock Status
- ✓ 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance
- ✓ 2024 Recreational Management

Black Sea Bass - Stock Status



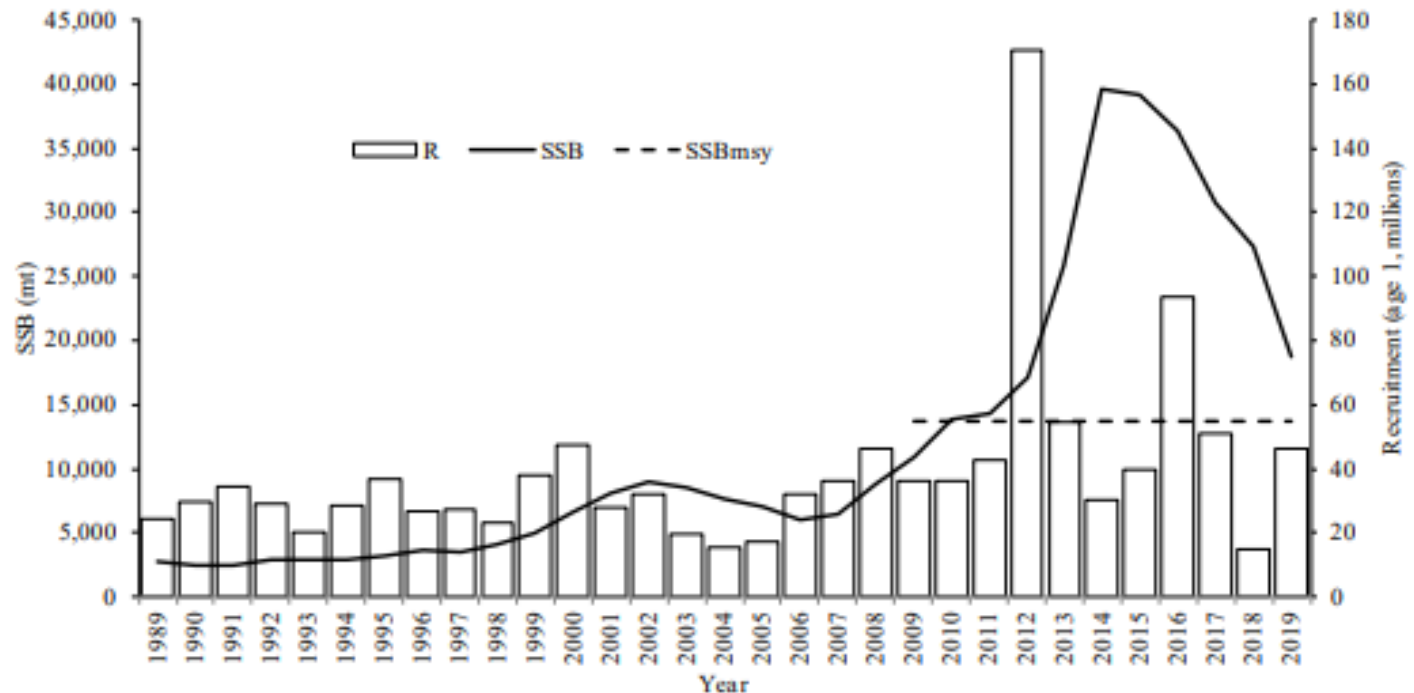
- Management Track Stock Assessment in 2021; biological reference points (BRPs) updated
- Black sea bass is not overfished; overfishing is not occurring relative to BRPs
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.39 in 2019, below the threshold F reference point = 0.46



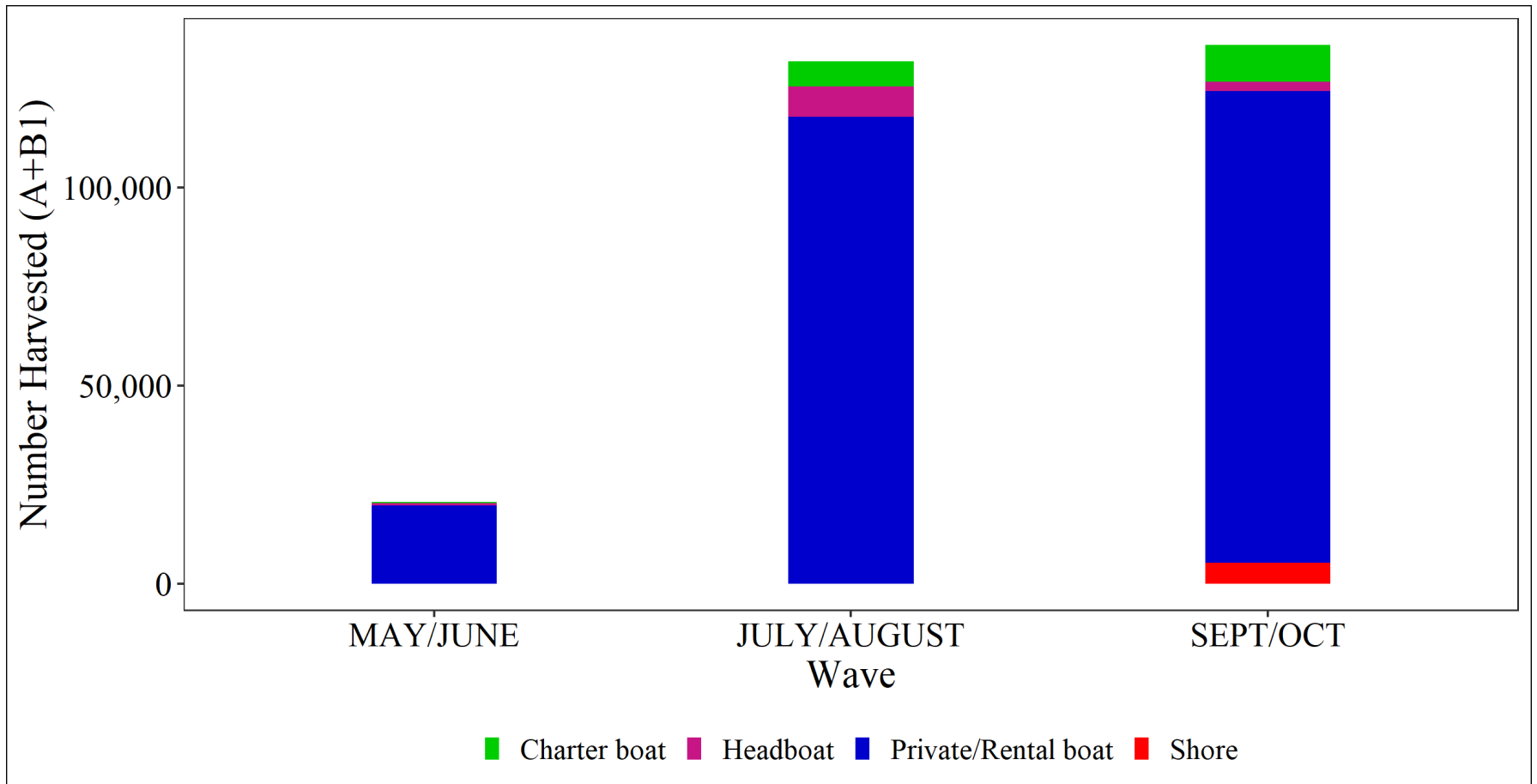
Black Sea Bass - Stock Status cont'd.



- Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) estimated to be 65.6 m lbs (29,769 mt) in 2019, 2.1X the SSB reference point = 31.8 m lbs (14,441 mt)
- Coastwide RHL has been exceeded since 2020
- Recreational regulations to remain status quo



Black Sea Bass – 2023 RI Recreational Fishery Performance



Source: 2023 MRIP; 2023 data preliminary and only through wave 5

Black Sea Bass - 2024 Recreational Management



Current management:

Mode	Min. size	Season	Poss. limit
Gen. Rec	16.5"	Jan. 1 – May 21	Closed
		May 22 – Aug. 26	2 fish/day
		Aug. 27 – Dec. 31	3 fish/day
Party/Charter	16"	Jan. 1 – June 17	Closed
		June 18 – Aug. 31	2 fish/day
		Sept. 1 – Dec 31	6 fish/day

2024 Management: The Division is not proposing changes to recreational Summer Flounder management for 2024 at this time, ASMFC has specified that black sea bass will remain status quo in 2024

Possession Limit Clarification: Part 3 - Finfish



- Modify all possession limit language to be clear that all limits are:
 - /person/vessel/day Or
 - /person/vessel/week Or
 - /person/vessel/bi-week

Lobster Vessel VMS



- Addendum XXIX to the American Lobster FMP and Addendum IV to the Jonah Crab FMP require the electronic tracking of all commercial lobster and Jonah crab permit holders who hold a federal trap allocation and are eligible to fish in the EEZ
- This is applicable to any vessel permitted by NOAA Fisheries to fish trap gear for lobsters and Jonah crabs in LMA 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

Lobster Vessel VMS



The addenda's purpose is to address the following needs:

- Spatial planning
- Stock assessment
- Fisheries interaction with protected resources
- Offshore enforcement

Lobster Vessel VMS



Proposed Rule (Effective May 1, 2024):

- It shall be unlawful for the permitted vessel or vessel operator to operate in any manner without an operable approved Electronic Tracking Device Installed or tamper with the installed device
- The Electronic Tracking Device shall be installed and activated prior to beginning a fishing trip with trap gear onboard
- Permit holders shall sign and submit a written affidavit confirming installation prior to initiating a fishing trip with trap gear on board
- The Electronic Tracking Device shall remain onboard the vessel and powered on when the vessel is in the water

Lobster Vessel VMS



The Division has taken actions to limit any burden to the fleet

- RI has secured funding to pay for devices and service plans
 - The Division has provided an application to members of the fleet for these devices
 - 84% of the fleet has responded and 64 devices have been distributed
- Additionally, vessels with these devices installed are eligible to join the Summer and Fall Fluke and Sea Bass aggregate program which provides additional value to limit any burden on the fleet

Additional Workshop Proposals – Lobster Vessel VMS



- Strong opposition to VMS requirement
- Change requirements so VMS unit does not have to be powered on all the time
 - Concerns about the unit draining the vessels battery and causing bilge pumps to fail
- VMS units required in other federal fisheries should satisfy this requirement
- Have DMF not implement requirement at all

Jonah Crab

Part 7 - Dealers



Proposal 1 (Division): Clarify language regarding the purchase of whole Jonah Crab

Proposed rule (section 7.17):

Dealers shall only purchase whole Jonah Crab.

End of Slides!



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