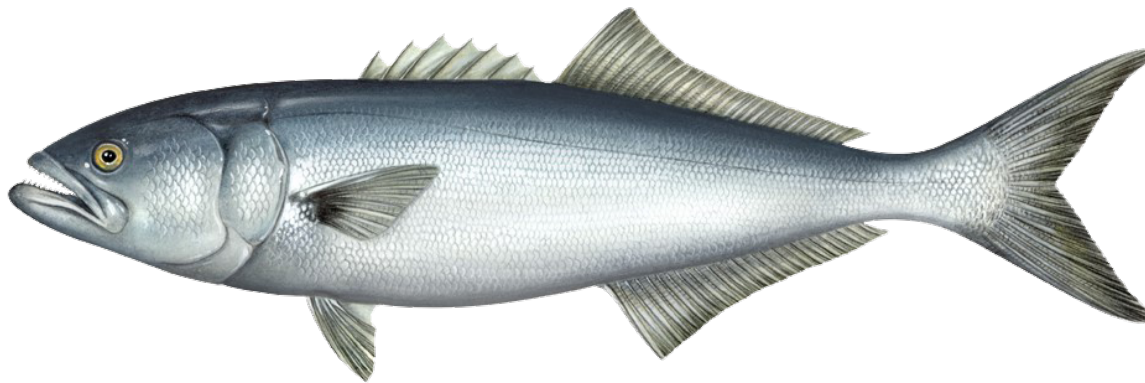




Bluefish Technical Committee Recommendations on Age and Length Frequency Data Sampling



**Bluefish Management Board
December 15, 2020**

Board Tasking



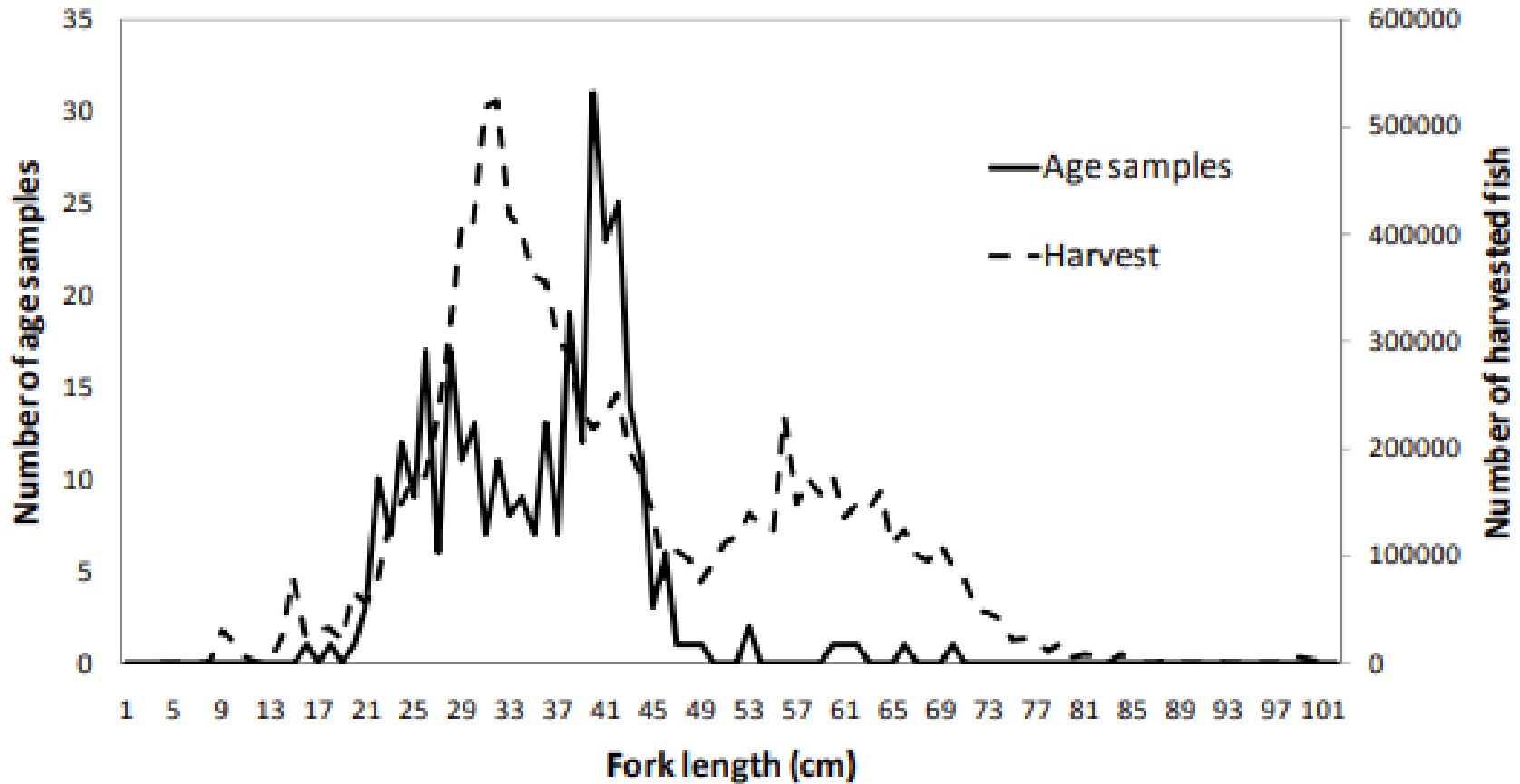
- In August 2020, the Bluefish Management Board tasked the Technical Committee (TC) with reviewing the effectiveness of the Addendum I sampling design and reevaluating the optimal geographic range and sample size for bluefish age data.
- Bluefish Technical Committee met on September 28th, 2020

Addendum I Requirement

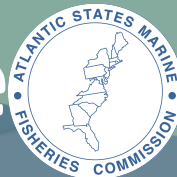


- Under Addendum I, states that account for more than 5% of total coastwide bluefish harvest for the 1998-2008 period (in addition to Virginia) are required to collect a minimum of 100 bluefish age samples (50 from January through June, 50 from July through December).

Length frequencies of bluefish harvest and age samples for 2004



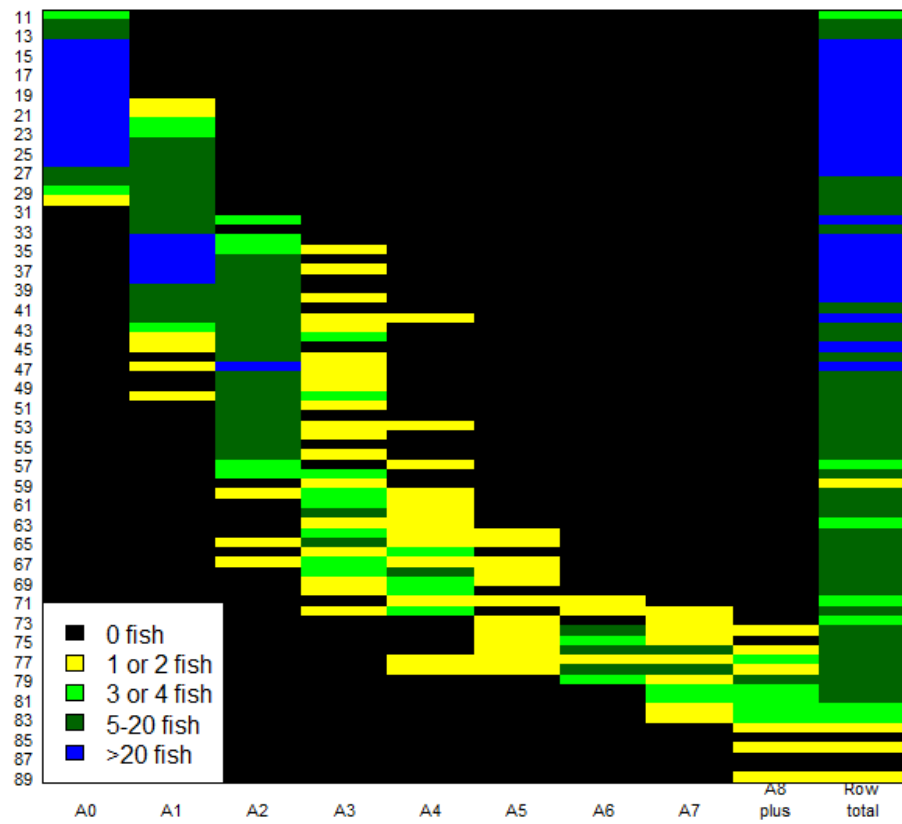
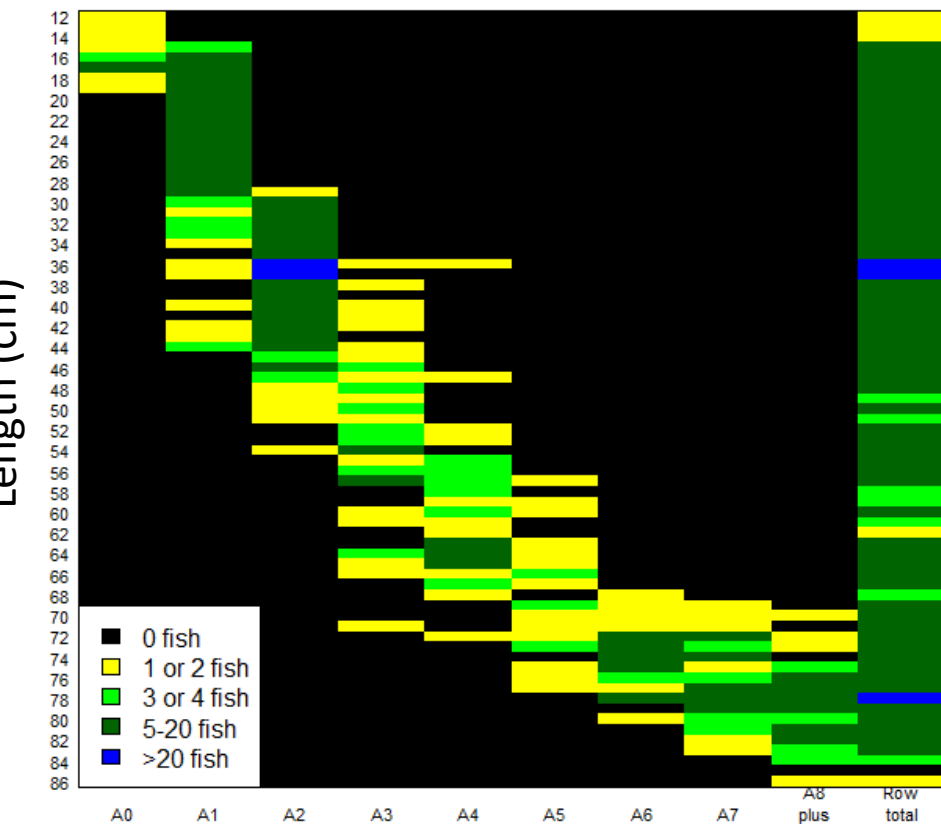
Age Data Collection Performance



2017 age length keys in cm bins

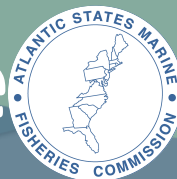
Spring 2017

Fall 2017



Age Class

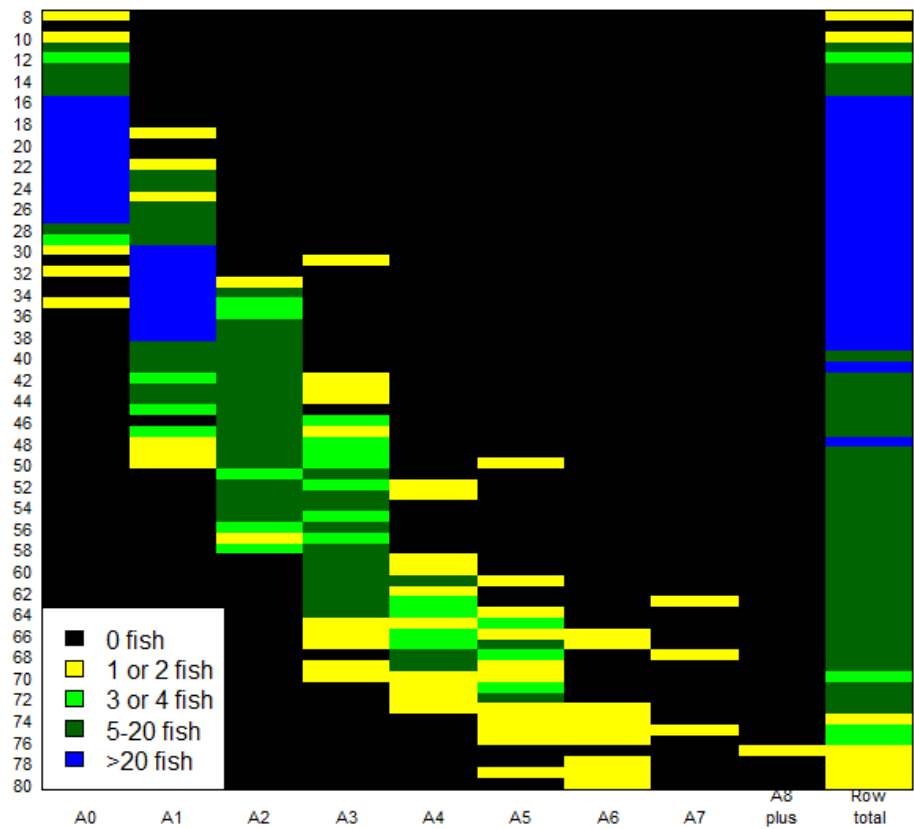
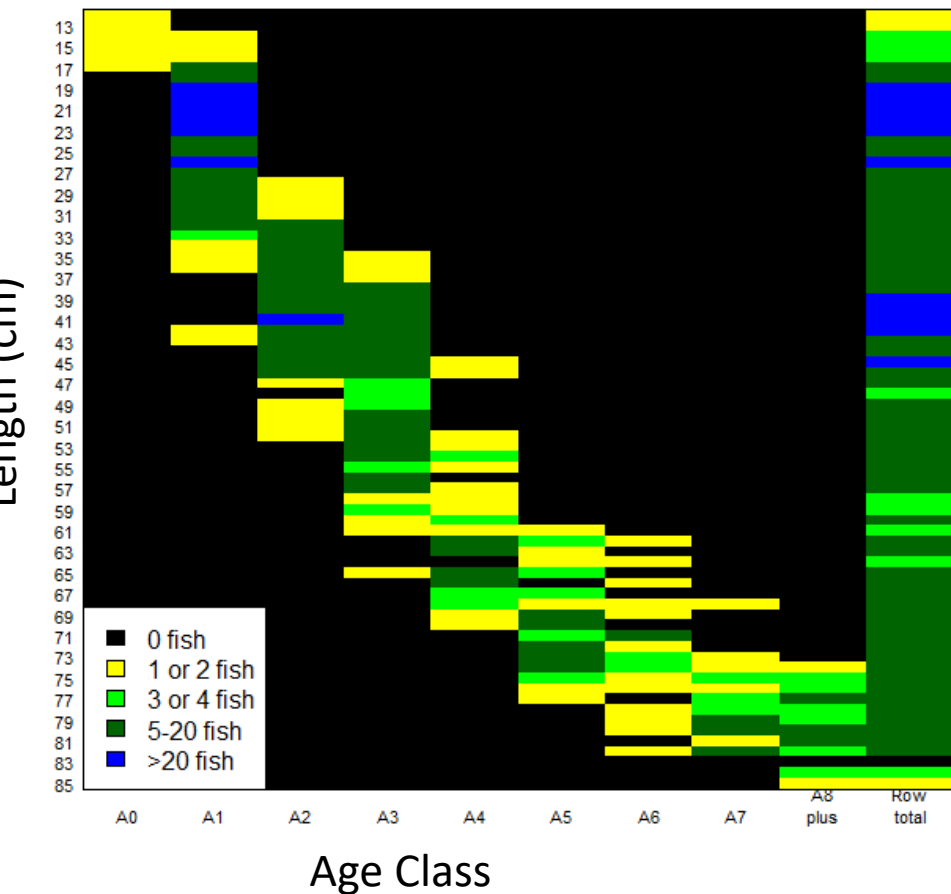
Age Data Collection Performance



2018 age length keys in cm bins

Spring 2018

Fall 2018



Age Class

Age Sample Size Summary



2017 age sample size summary			2018 age sample size summary		
State	Spring (Jan- June)	Fall (July-Dec)	State	Spring (Jan- June)	Fall (July-Dec)
MA	7	104	MA	0	94
RI	0	96	RI	0	102
CT	11	113	CT	4	186
NY	2	92	NY	95	60
NJ	57	63	NJ	66	157
VA	282	182	VA	235	154
ChesMMAP	3	28	ChesMMAP	18	23
NEAMAP	5	448	NEAMAP	142	316
SEAMAP	46	82	SEAMAP	42	57
NC	291	337	NC	311	358
Total:	704	1545	Total:	913	1507

Incorporating Revised Data into Sampling Design



- July 2018 Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Recalibration
- Rec landings increased in FL by an average of ~600% after MRIP recalibration

**Better Data,
Better Fishing.**



Coastwide Bluefish Removals (com and rec landings and dead discards) by State 2010-2019



State	% Contribution to Coastwide Bluefish Removals by weight			Seasonal target		Annual mandate	Targets based on fishery performance	
	Full year	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall		Spring	Fall
ME	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	-	-	-	-	-
NH	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	-	-	-	-	-
MA	12.5%	3.60%	15.0%	50	50	100	11-50	50-89
RI	4.10%	2.70%	6.8%	50	50	100	24-50	50-76
CT	8.40%	2.10%	11.2%	50	50	100	9-50	50-91
NY	20.7%	17.9%	21.2%	50	50	100	33-50	50-67
NJ	17.7%	20.9%	19.5%	50	50	100	44-50	50-56
DE	1.3%	2.3%	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-
MD	1.6%	0.5%	3.2%	-	-	-	-	-
VA	1.9%	2.3%	2.6%	50	50	100	47-50	50-53
NC	13.7%	18.2%	8.2%	50	50	100	50	50
SC	1.9%	2.9%	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-
GA	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	-	-	-	-	-
FL	15.8%	26.6%	9.5%	50	50	100	50-63	37-50

Technical Committee Recommendation



- Initiate Addendum II to update the biological monitoring program for bluefish
- PRT will continue to annually review the effectiveness of the sampling design
- Future changes to sampling protocols should be made by Board action through the specifications process

Board Tasking

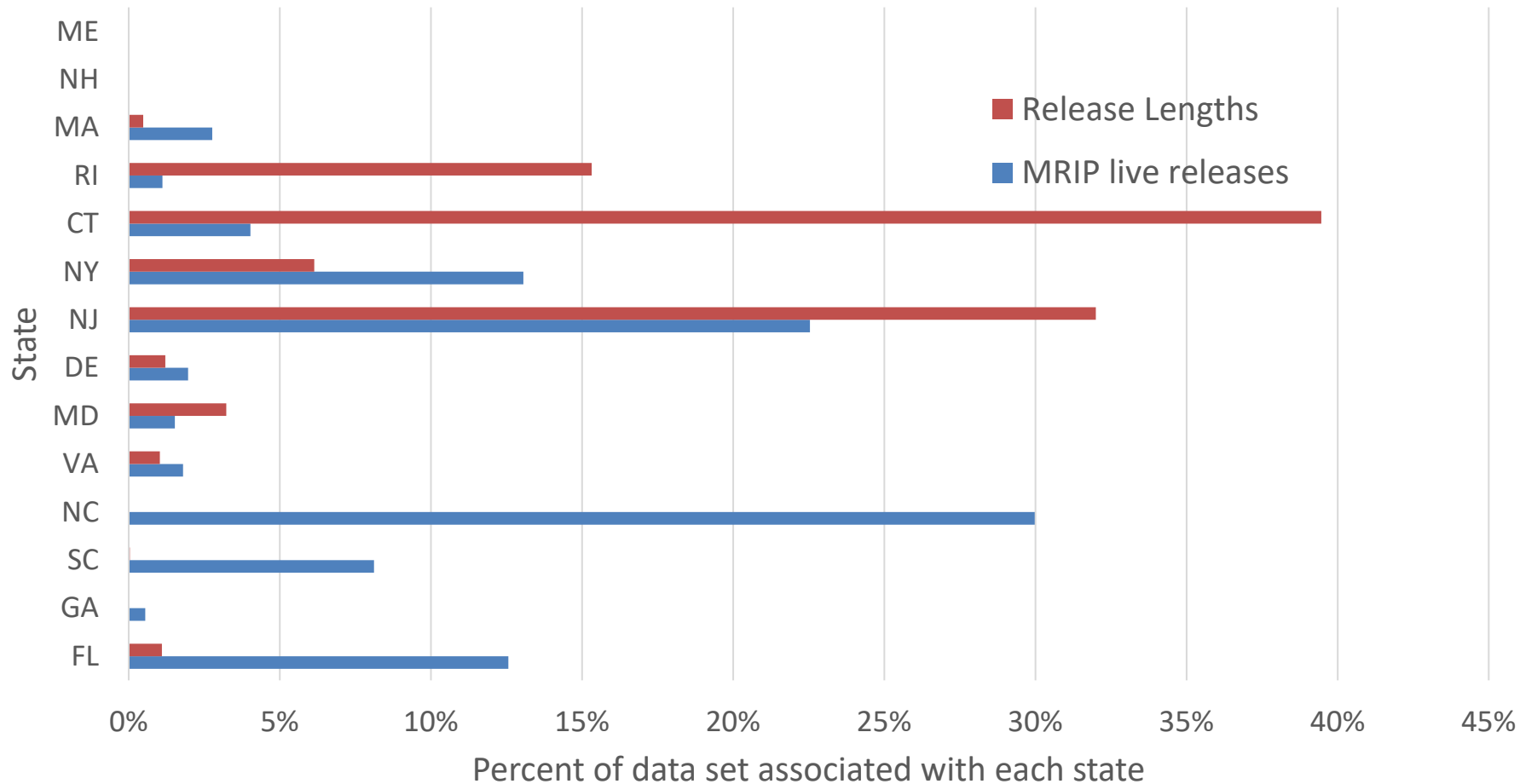


- Tasked TC with reviewing the increased importance of recreational discards in stock assessments
- RI, CT, and NJ volunteer angler survey programs provide release length data





Spatial distribution of bluefish live releases vs. release length data expressed as a percent across states (2016-2018)

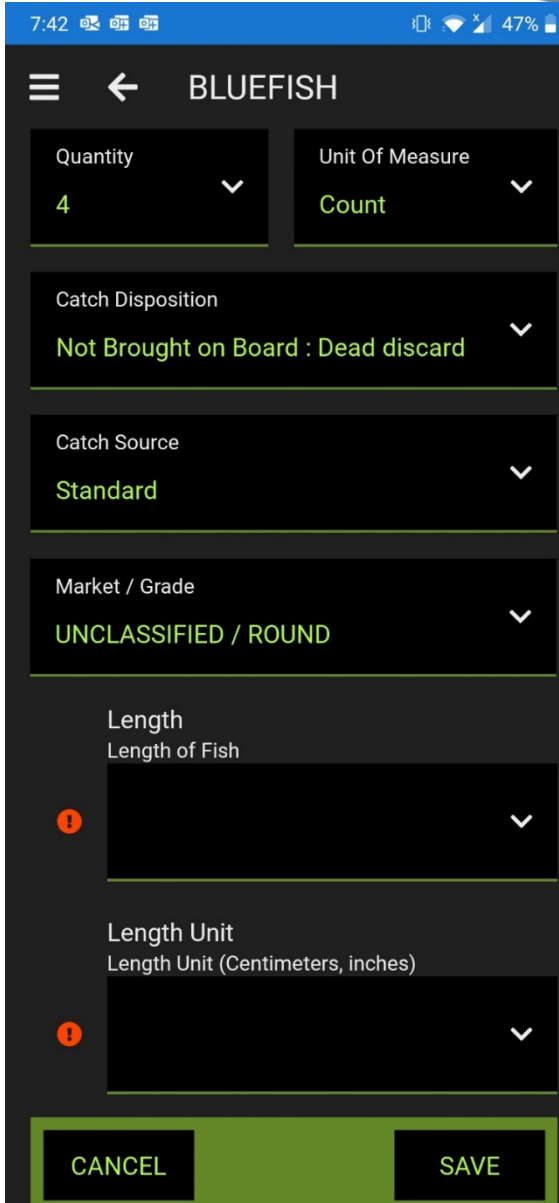


Recreational Reporting Options



- Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) staff member presented to the TC three electronic trip reporting options
 - SAFIS eTrips (mobile/web)
 - SAFIS eLogbook (web-based only)
 - SAFMC Scamp Release (mobile)

- + Currently used for mandatory commercial/for-hire reporting
- + Most robust reporting application and mobile friendly
- + Already can report for bluefish
- Deterrent: large number of required data entry fields



7:42 47%

☰ ← BLUEFISH

Quantity 4 Unit Of Measure Count

Catch Disposition Not Brought on Board : Dead discard

Catch Source Standard

Market / Grade UNCLASSIFIED / ROUND

Length
Length of Fish

Length Unit
Length Unit (Centimeters, inches)

CANCEL SAVE

SAFIS eLogbook



- + Specifically designed for voluntary recreational reporting
- + Collects discards and lengths
- + Easily customizable
- No Mobile version

SAFMC Scamp Release



SAFMC

Catch



Measure



Record

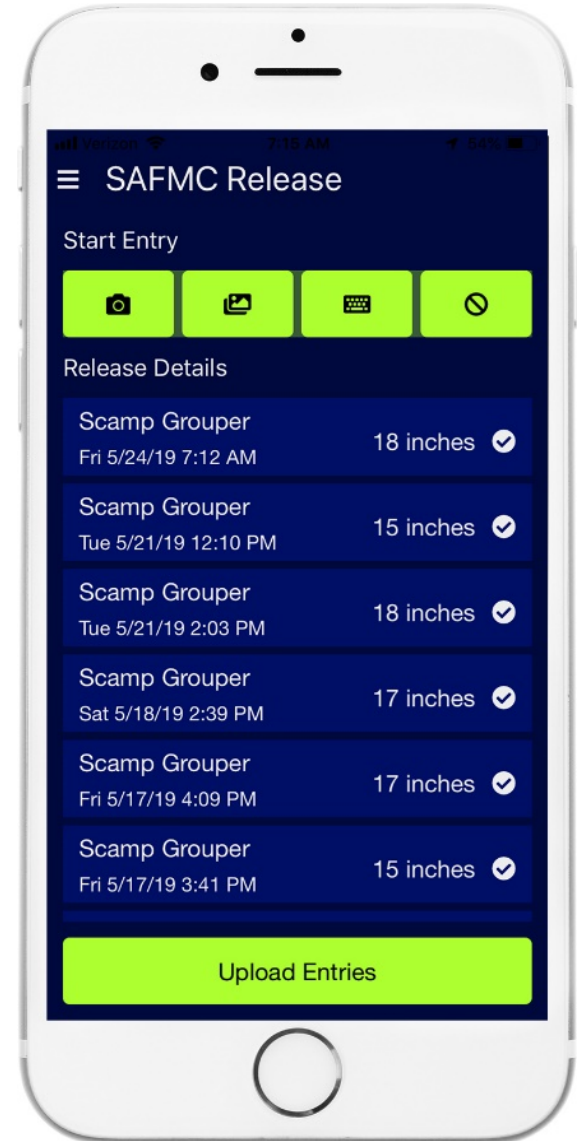


Release

Release



- + Focused on discards
- + Designed specifically for mobile
- + Expanding to other species
- Currently not designed for bluefish



Technical Committee Discussion



- Emphasized importance of acquiring additional information on bluefish releases
 - Especially in geographic gaps
- States have limited control over angler participation in release length sampling programs
- Did not recommend implementing specific state requirements related to participation

Technical Committee Discussion



- Need for release at length data not specific to bluefish
 - Relevant to all recreationally important species
- ISFMP Policy Board better suited to address comprehensive species approach
- TC recommends the Bluefish Management Board ask the Policy Board to task the Assessment Science Committee to work with ACCSP to develop a comprehensive program for reporting released fish of all recreationally important species managed by the Commission

TC Recommendation Summary



- Initiate Addendum II to update the biological monitoring program for bluefish
- States make an effort to expand release at length data collection programs
- Bluefish Management Board ask the Policy Board to task the Assessment Science Committee to work with ACCSP to develop a comprehensive program for reporting released fish of all recreationally important species managed by the Commission



BACKUP SLIDES

Draft Motions



Move to initiate an addendum to consider adjustments to the bluefish biological monitoring program consistent with the recommendations outlined in the September 28, 2020 technical committee memo to the Board.

Draft Motions



Move to recommend the Policy Board task the Assessment Science Committee to work with the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program to develop a comprehensive program for reporting released fish of all recreationally important species the Commission manages.