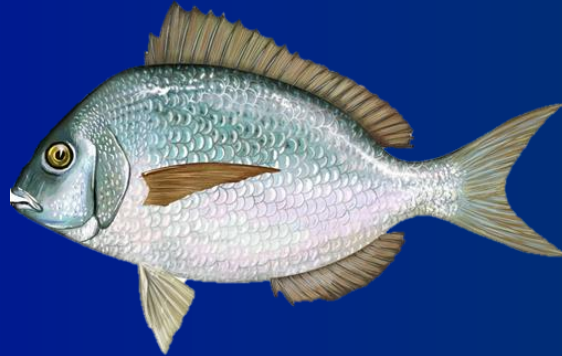




Scup Gear Restricted Areas

Framework Meeting 1



Council Meeting
Annapolis, MD
December 8, 2015

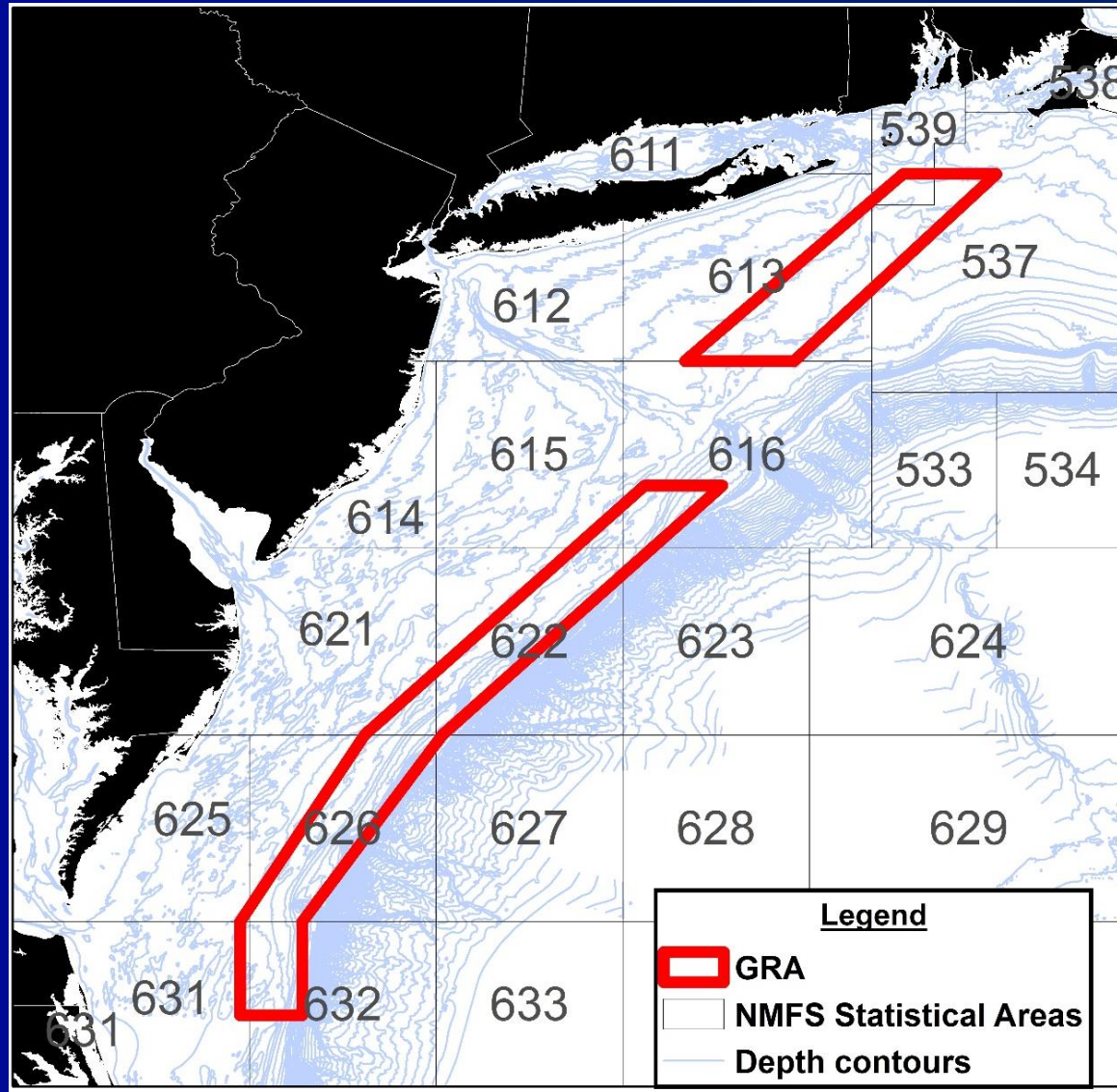
Framework Timeline

- **February 2014:** Framework meeting 1
- **March 2014:** Advisory Panel webinar
- **April 2014:** Update, add alternatives
- **June 2014:** Further development postponed
- **December 2015:** Framework meeting 1 (again)
- **February 2016:** Framework meeting 2

Objectives

- Review history of GRAs
- Review recent analysis of GRAs
- Review advisor comments
- Decide on range of alternatives for framework to modify GRAs

Current Scup GRAs



Current GRA Regulations

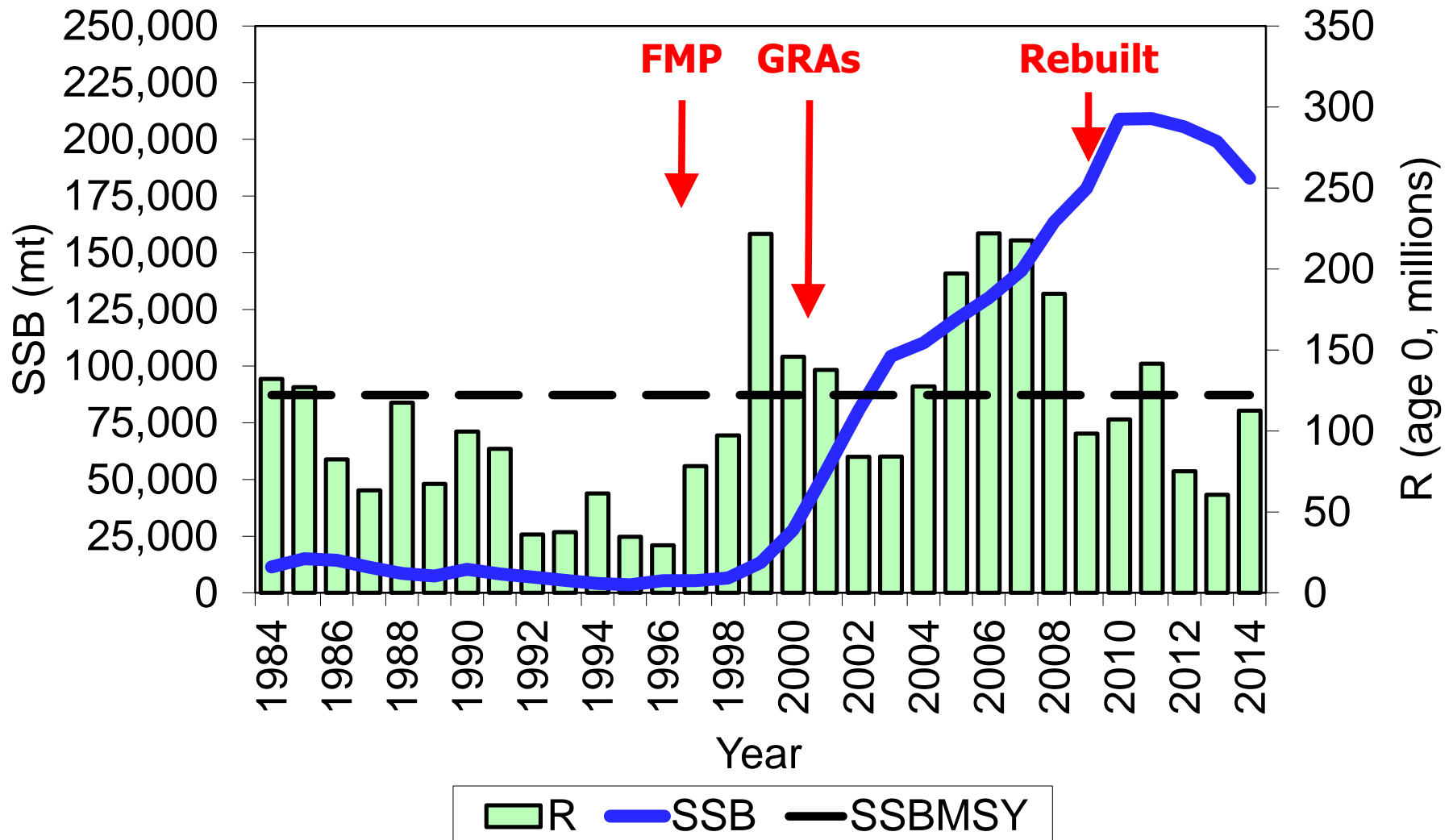
- Apply to trawl vessels that fish for or possess longfin squid, black sea bass, or silver hake/whiting
- Must fish with nets with ≥ 5 inch diamond mesh
- In the southern GRA from Jan 1 - Mar 15
- In the northern GRA from Nov 1 - Dec 31

History of the GRAs

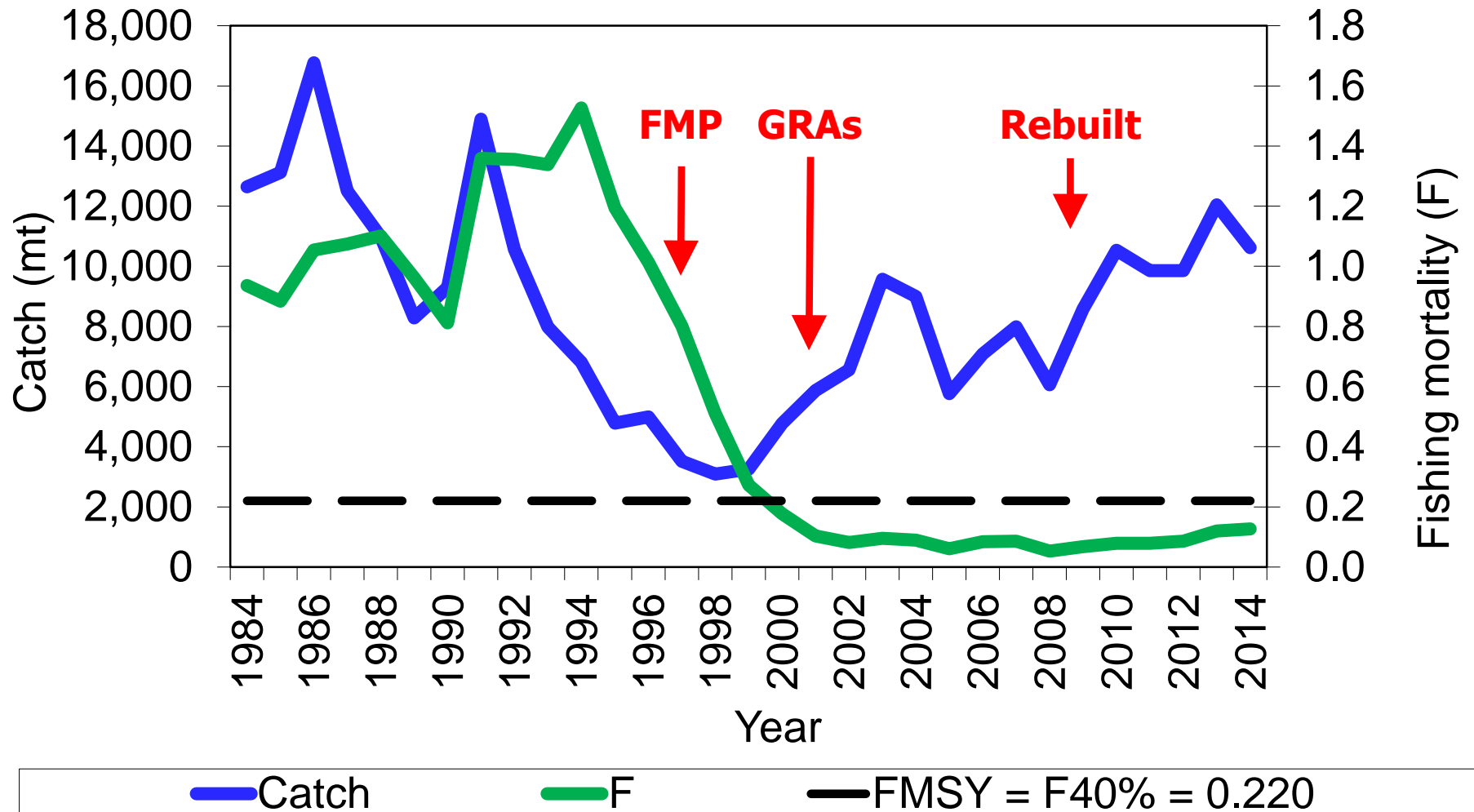
SAW 27 (1998): “Fishing mortality should be reduced substantially and immediately. Reduction in fishing mortality from discards will have the most impact on the stock, particularly considering the importance of the 1997 year class. This could be most effectively accomplished by reducing discards from small-mesh fisheries.”

SAW 31 (2000): “Fishing mortality should be reduced substantially and immediately. Reduction in fishing mortality from discards will have the most impact on the stock, particularly considering the importance of the 1999 and all future good recruitment to rebuilding the stock.”

Biomass and Recruitment



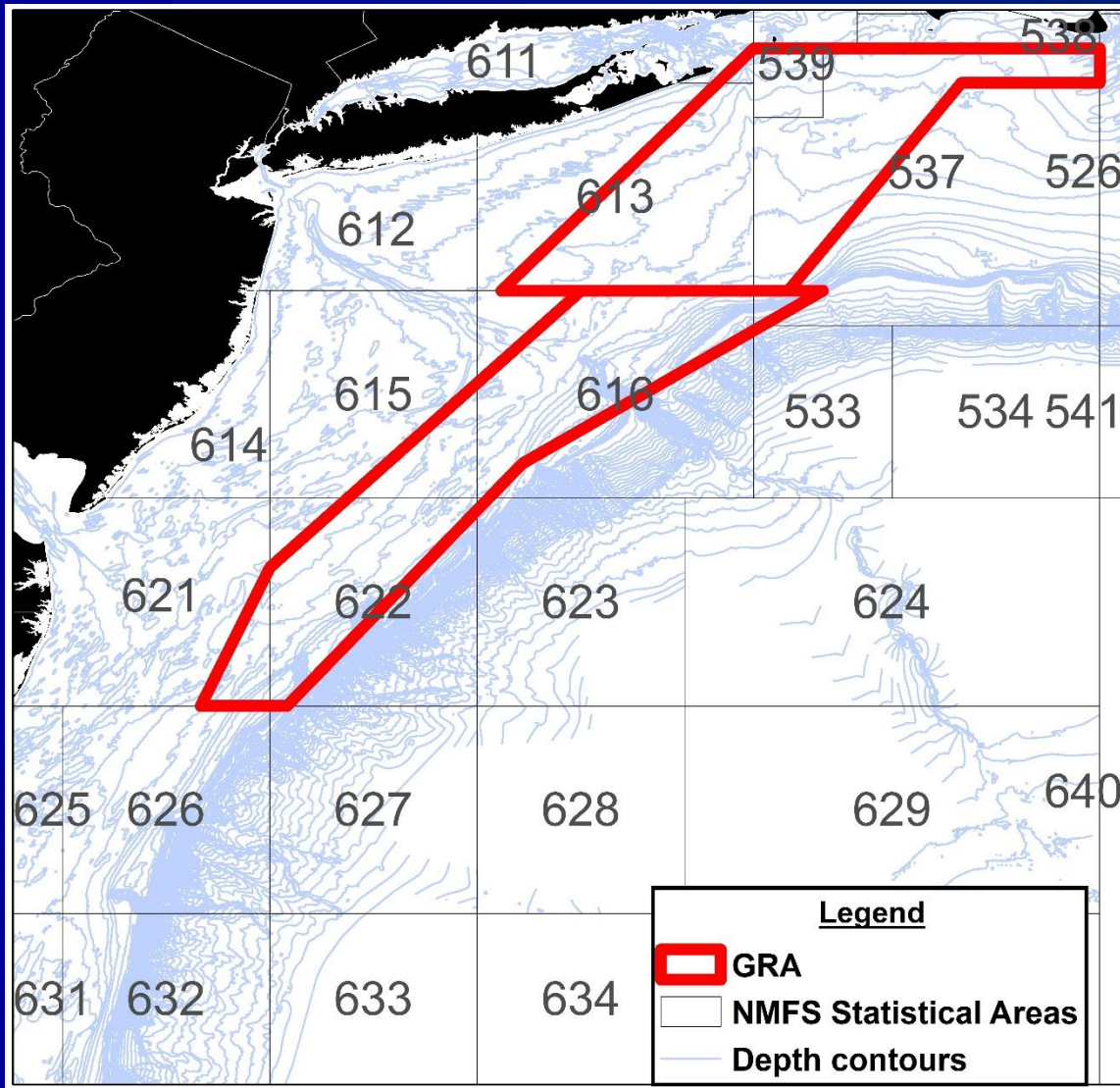
Fishing Mortality



History of the GRAs

- GRAs implemented 2000
- Modified in 2000, 2001, and 2004.
- GRA Exemption Program (2003)
 - Fish for non-exempt species with modified small mesh nets and observers on board.
 - No vessels participated. Discontinued in 2005.

May 2000

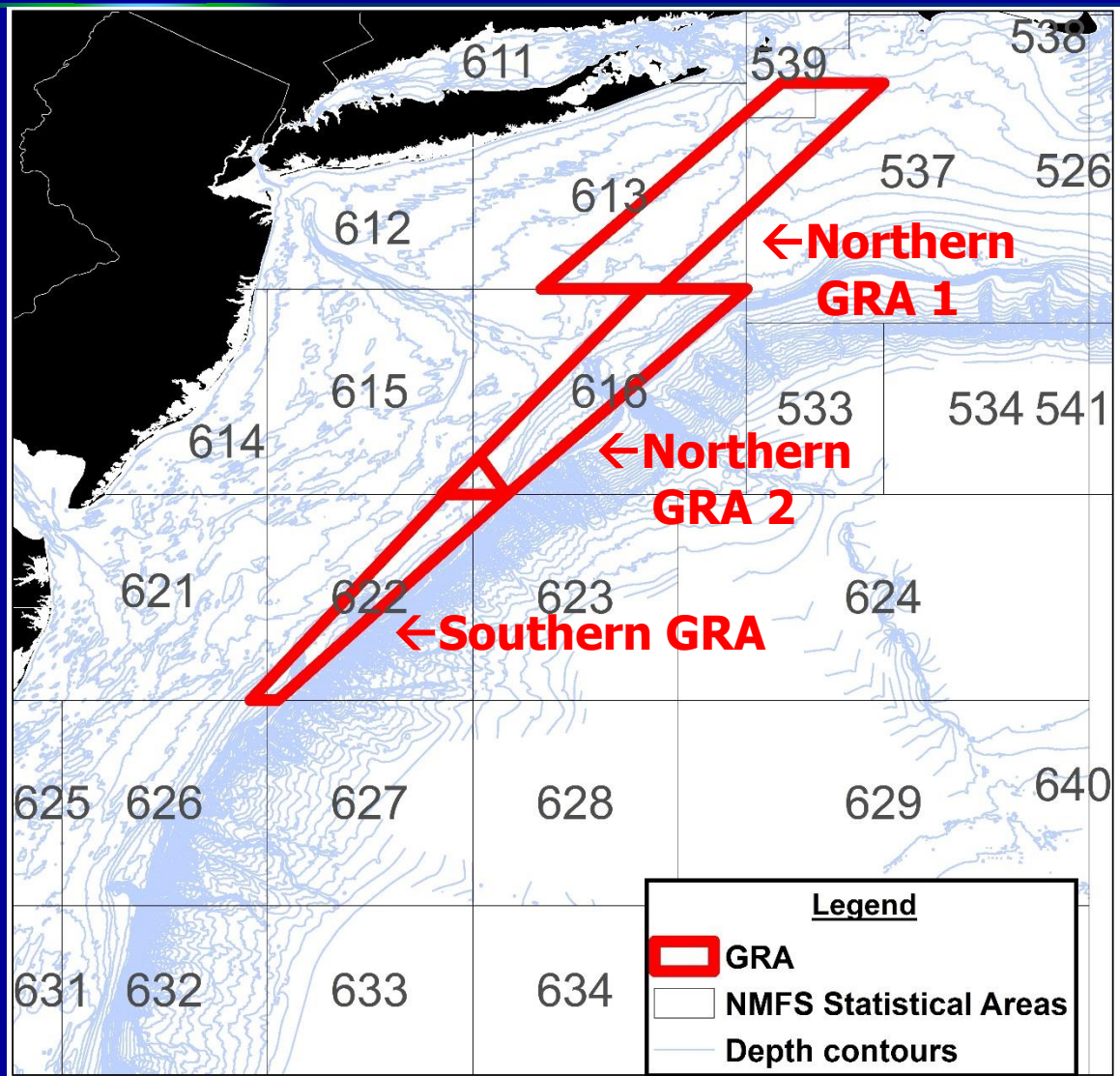


Northern GRA:
Nov 1 – Dec 31

Southern GRA:
Jan 1 – Apr 30

Minimum Mesh Size:
4.5 inches

December 2000



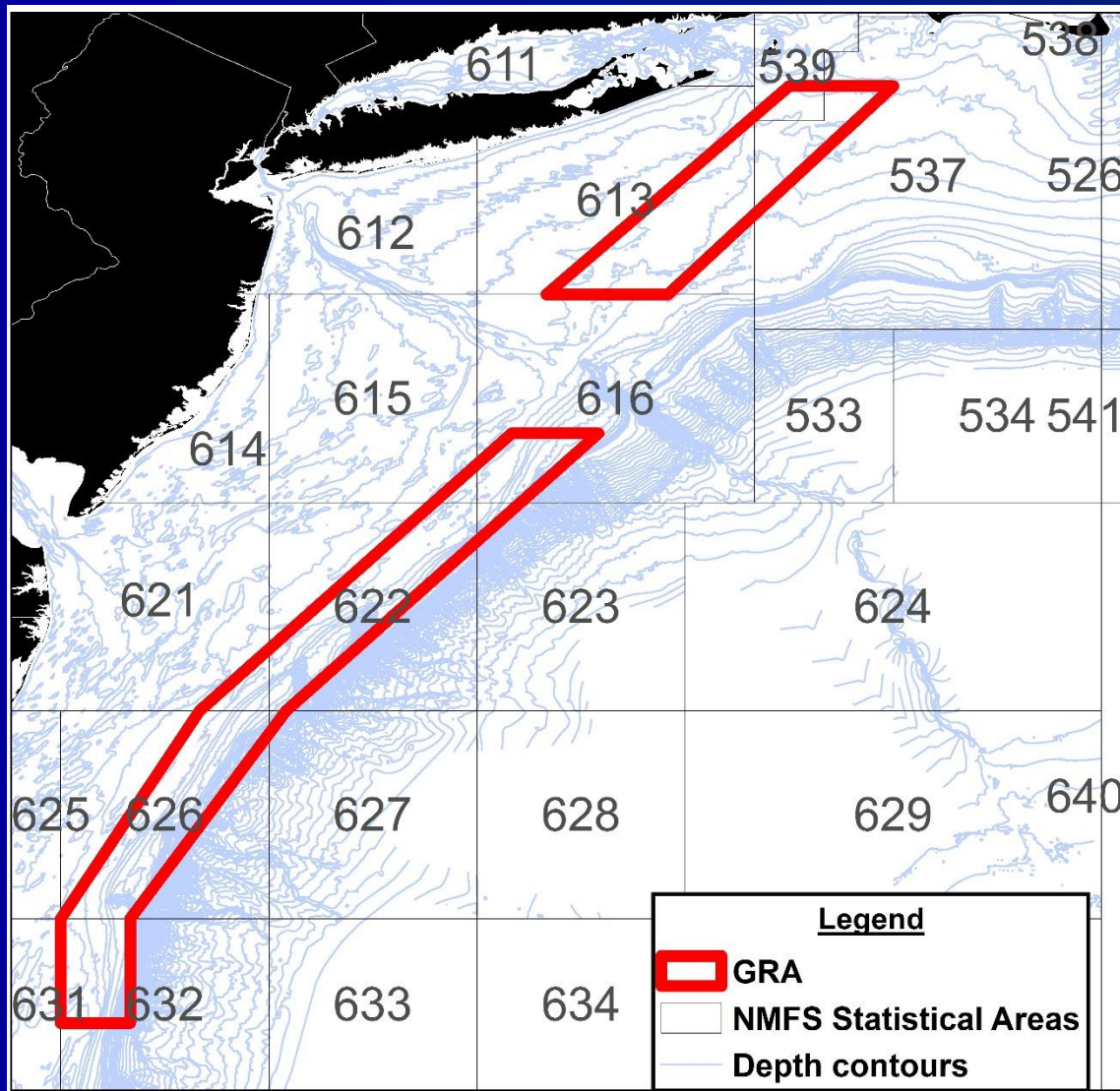
Northern GRA I:
Nov 1 – Dec 31

Northern GRA II:
Dec 1 – Jan 31

Southern GRA:
Jan 1 – Apr 30

Minimum Mesh Size:
4.5 inches

March 2001

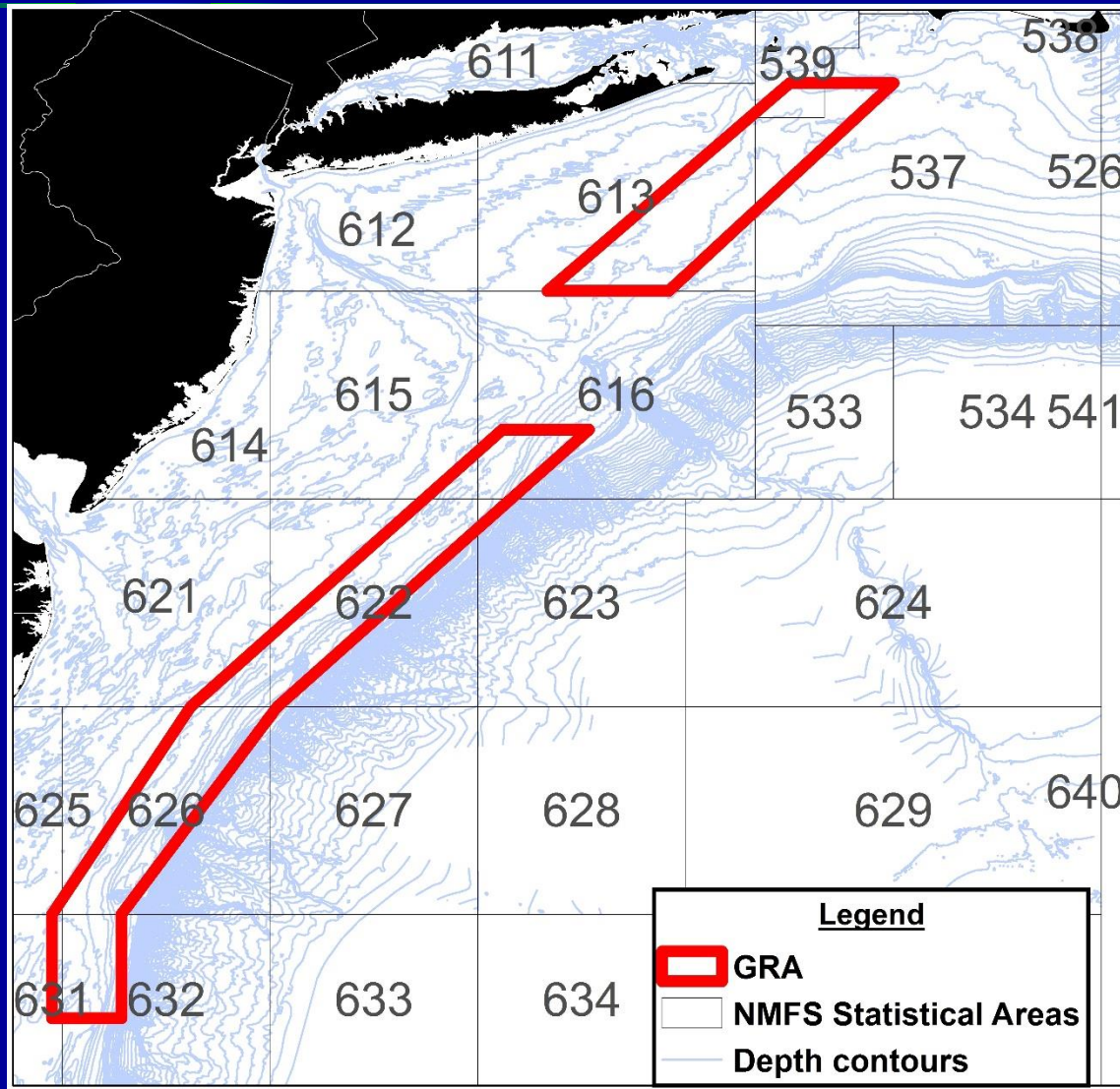


Northern GRA:
Nov 1 – Dec 31

Southern GRA:
Jan 1 – Mar 15

Minimum Mesh Size:
4.5 inches

December 2004



Northern GRA:
Nov 1 – Dec 31

Southern GRA:
Jan 1 – Mar 15

Minimum Mesh Size:
5.0 inches

NEFSC Analysis

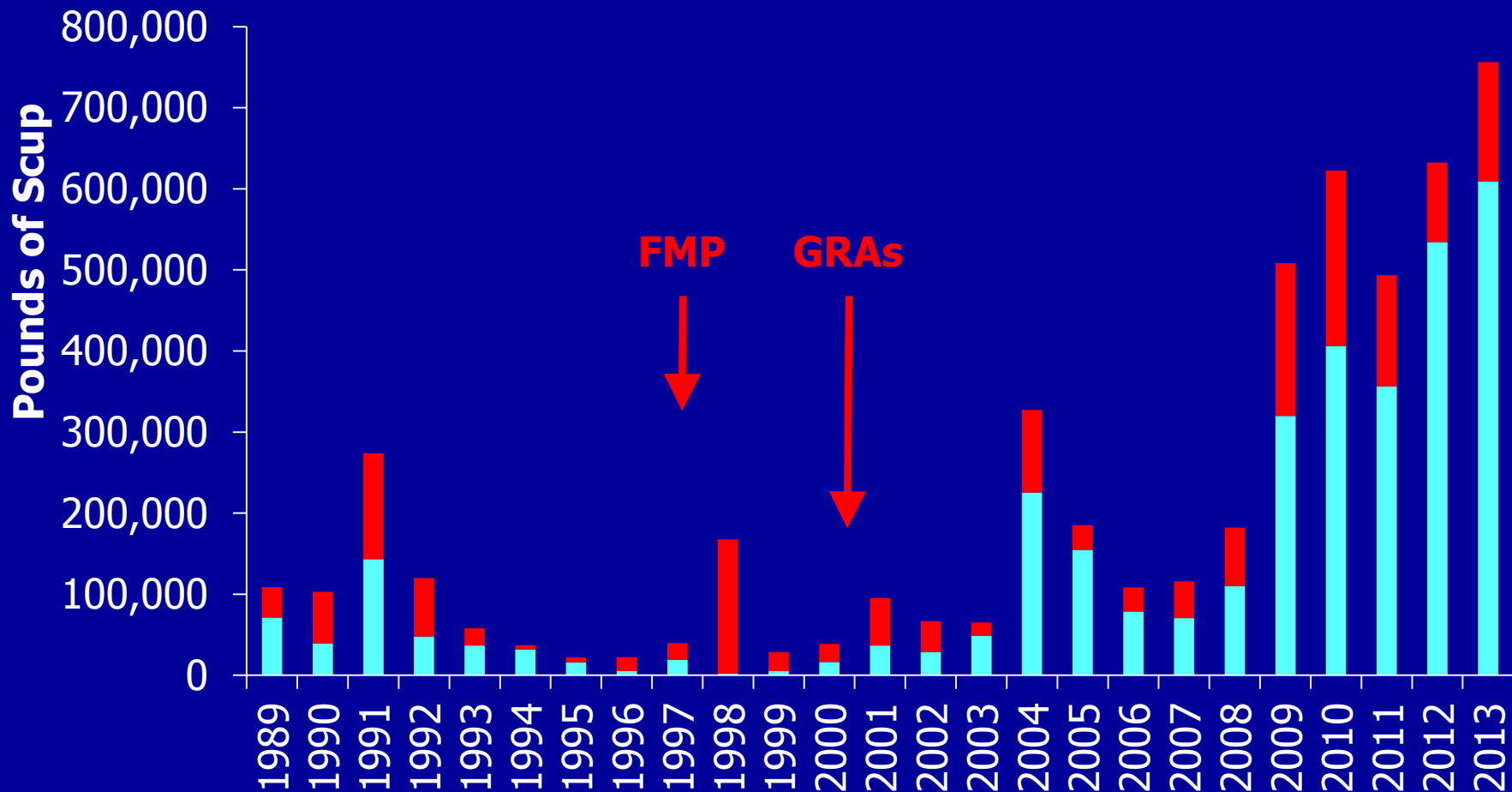
- Observer data, 1989-2013
- 1989-2013: most commercial fishery scup discards occurred in small mesh tows in statistical areas that include GRAs
- Discards have decreased since GRA implementation
- Relatively high scup discards in recent years in areas/times outside GRA

NEFSC Analysis

“...the GRAs have likely reduced the discard mortality of small scup, and are responsible for the improved post-recruitment survival of these small scup”

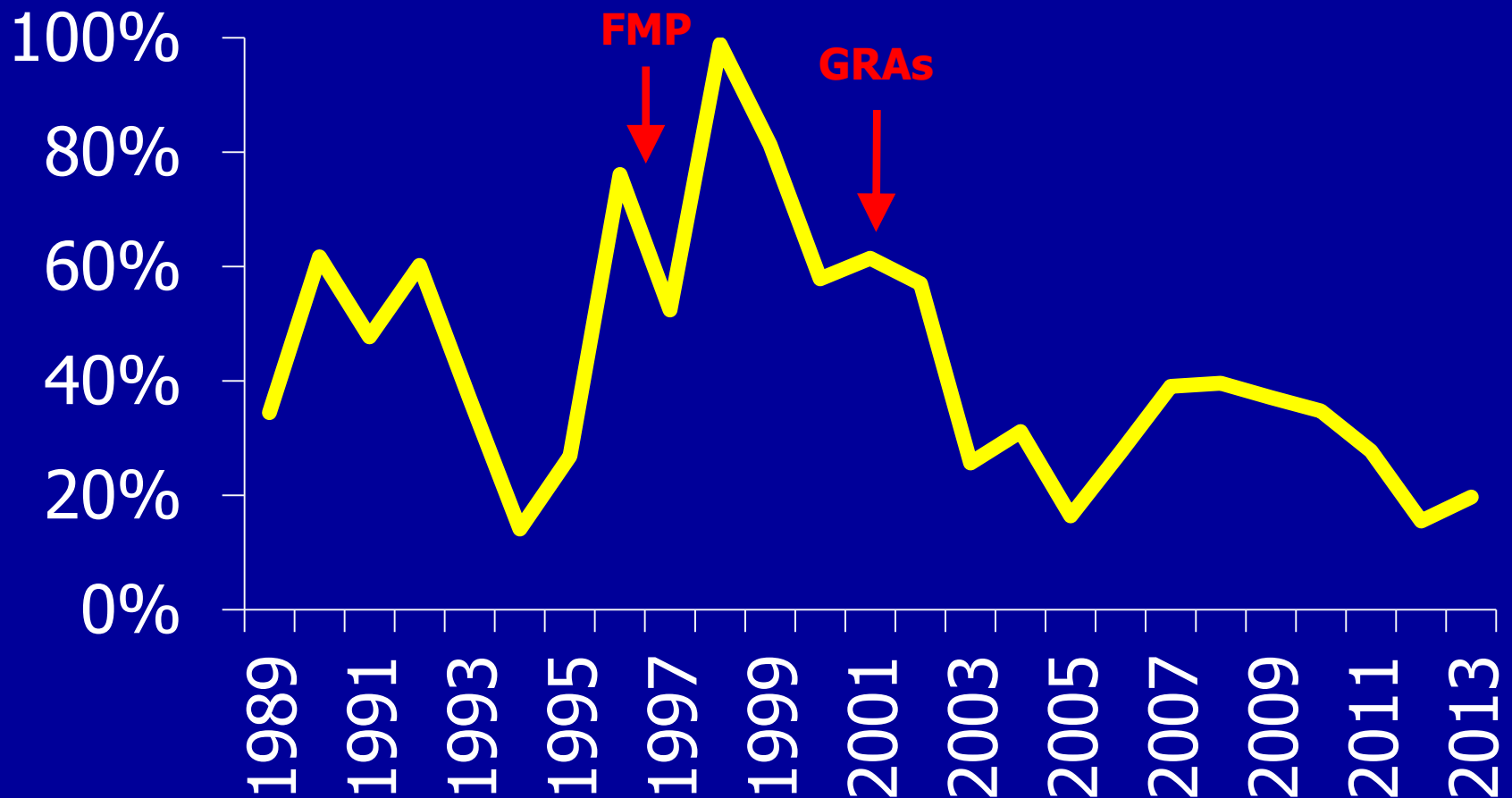
NEFSC Analysis

Observed **Kept** and **Discarded** Scup

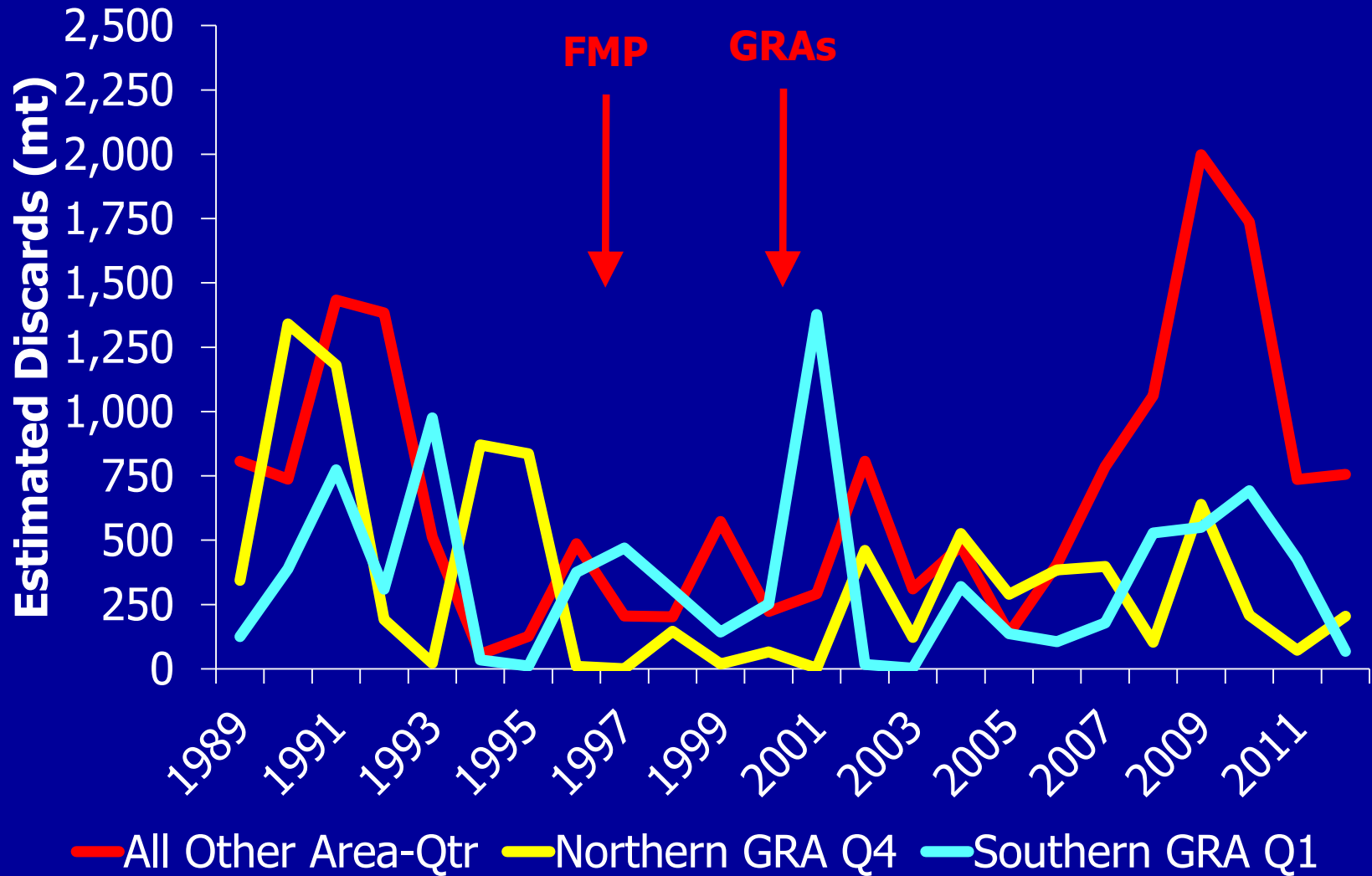


NEFSC Analysis

Observed Scup Discards as Percentage of Total Catch

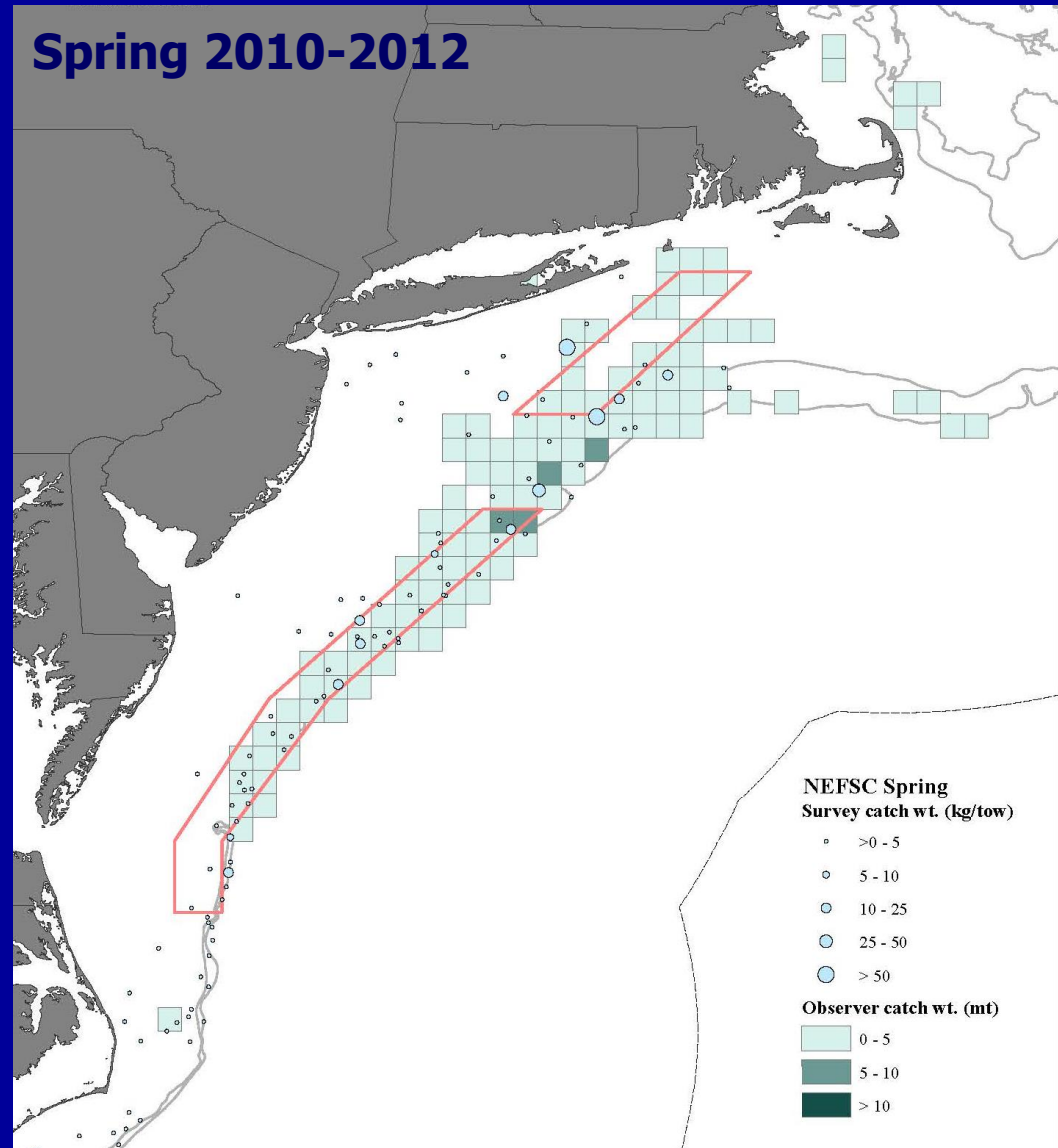


NEFSC Analysis



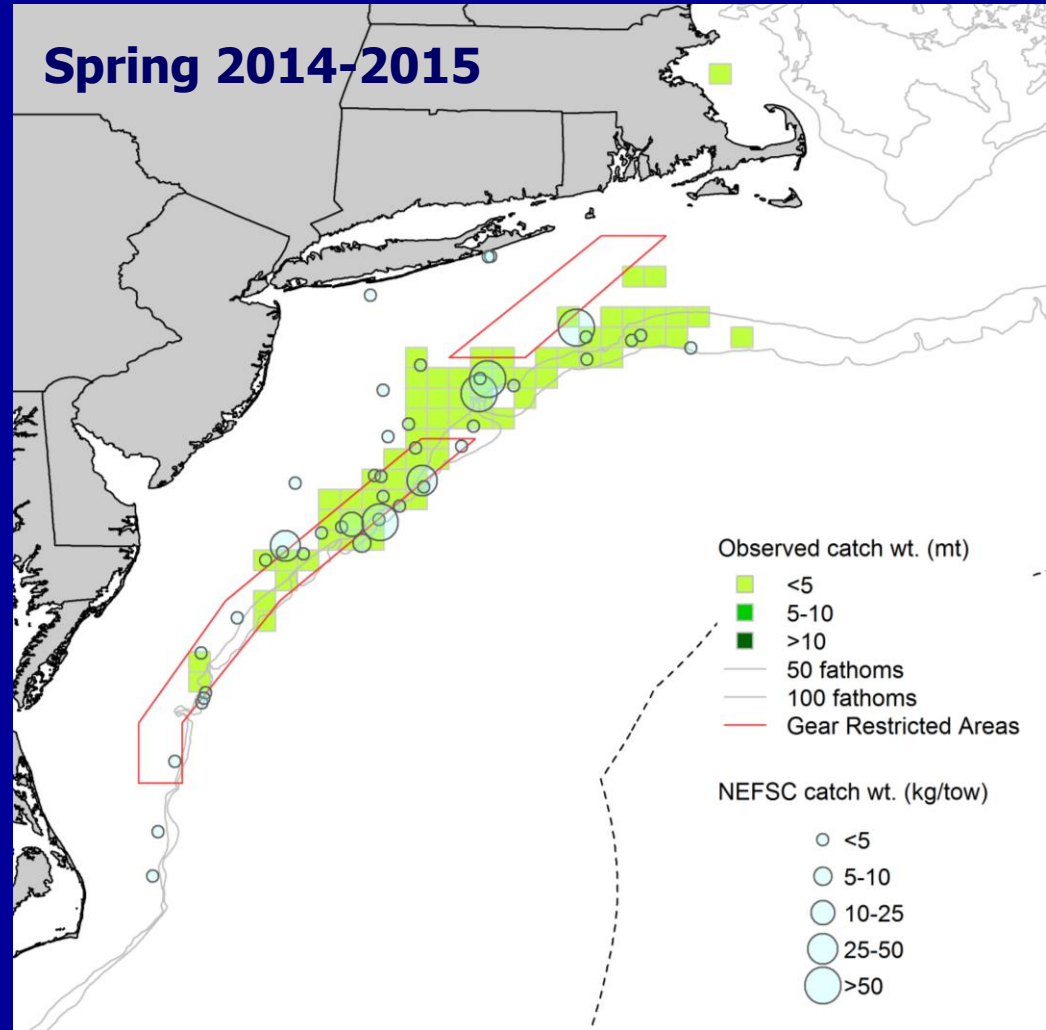
NEFSC Analysis

- Fig. 15 in Terceiro and Miller 2013
- Discards
 - 10-min squares
 - Jan-Mar 2010-2012
 - S GRA in effect
- NEFSC survey catches
 - Circles
 - Feb-Mar 2010-2012



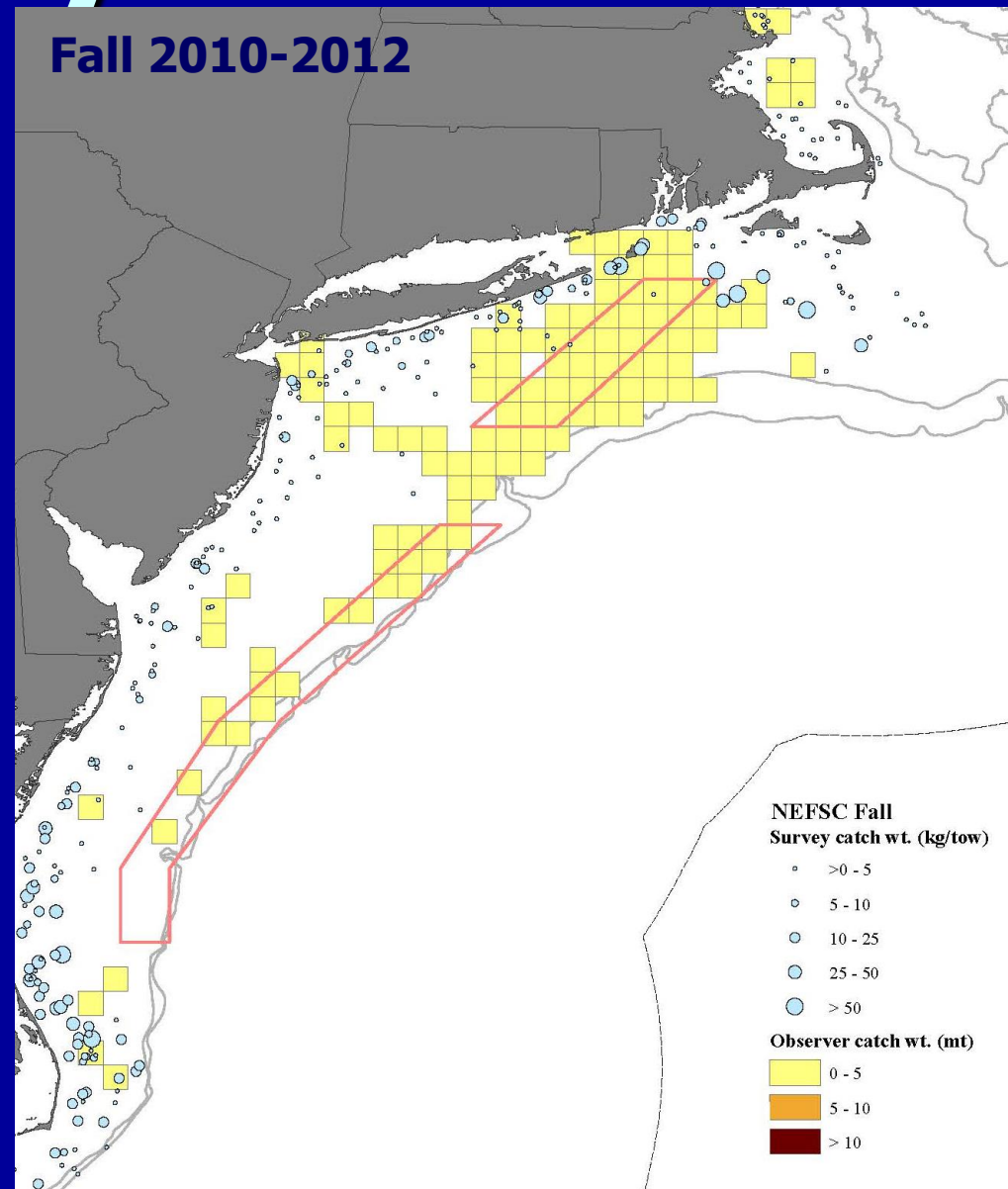
NEFSC Analysis

- Supplementary figures in briefing materials
- Discards
 - 10-min squares
 - Jan-Mar 2014-2015
 - S GRA in effect
- NEFSC survey catches
 - Circles
 - Feb-Mar 2014-2015



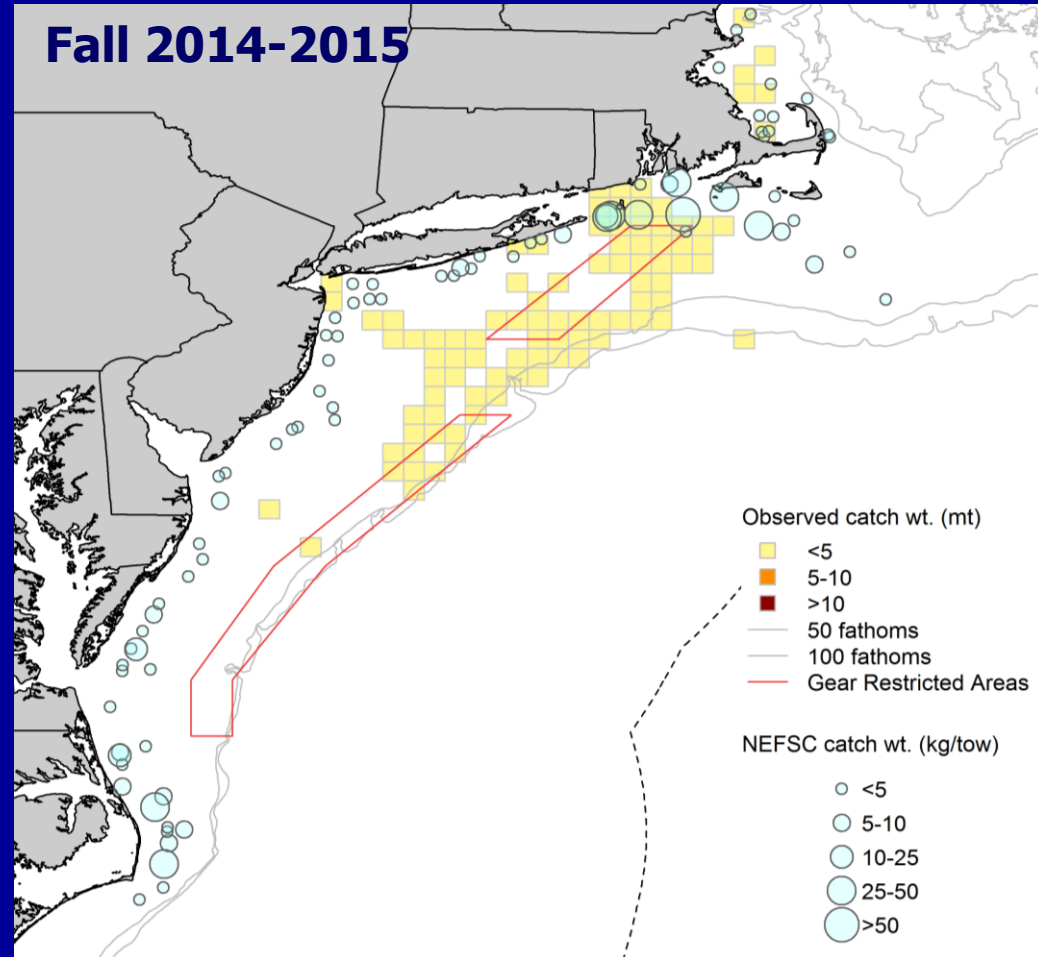
NEFSC Analysis

- Fig. 17 in Terceiro and Miller 2013
- Discards
 - 10-min squares
 - Nov-Dec 2010-2012
 - N GRA in effect
- NEFSC survey catches
 - Circles
 - Sept-Oct 2010-2012

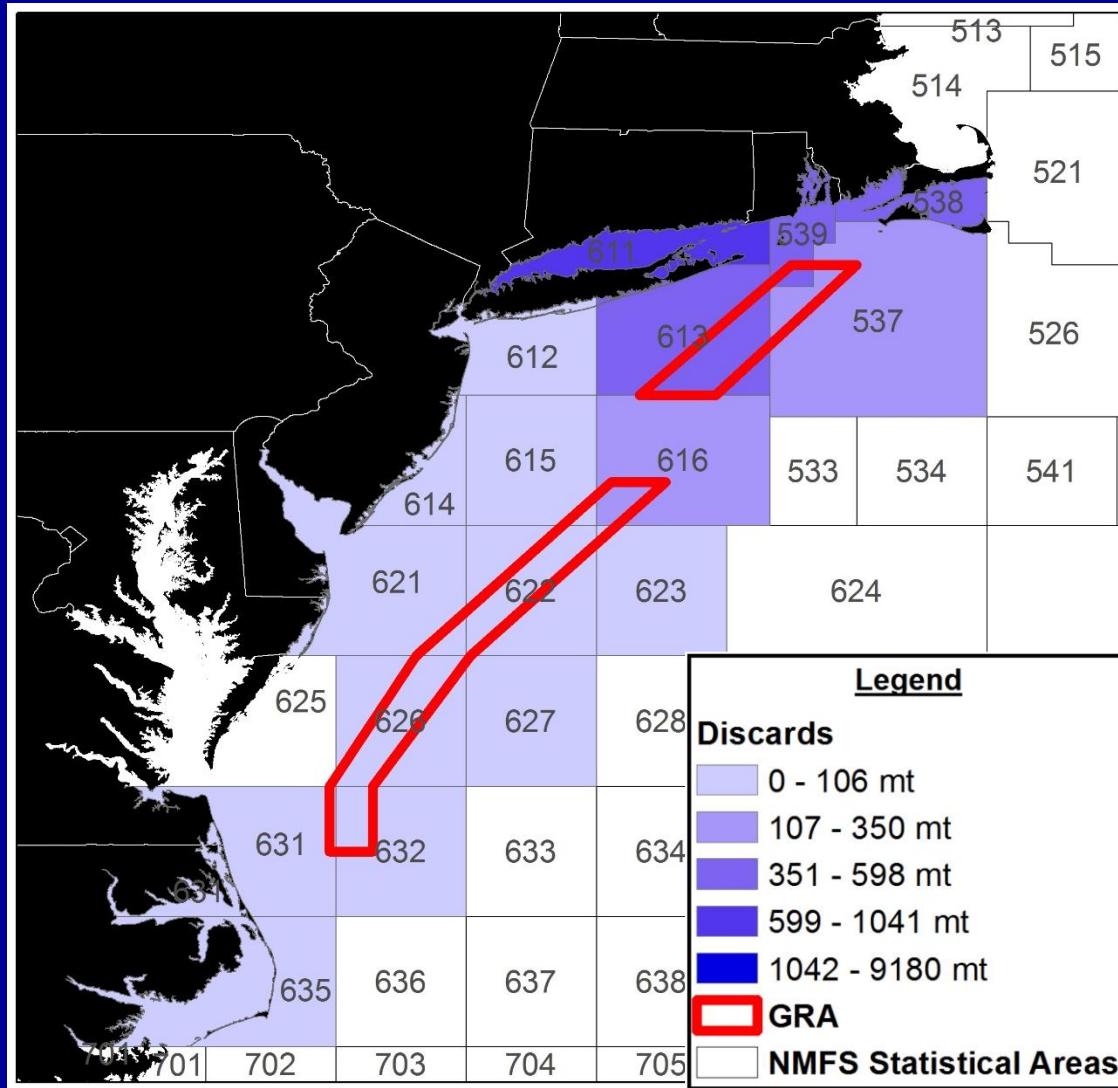


NEFSC Analysis

- Supplementary figures in briefing materials
- Discards
 - 10-min squares
 - Nov-Dec 2014-2015
 - **N GRA in effect**
- NEFSC survey catches
 - Circles
 - Sept-Oct 2014-2015

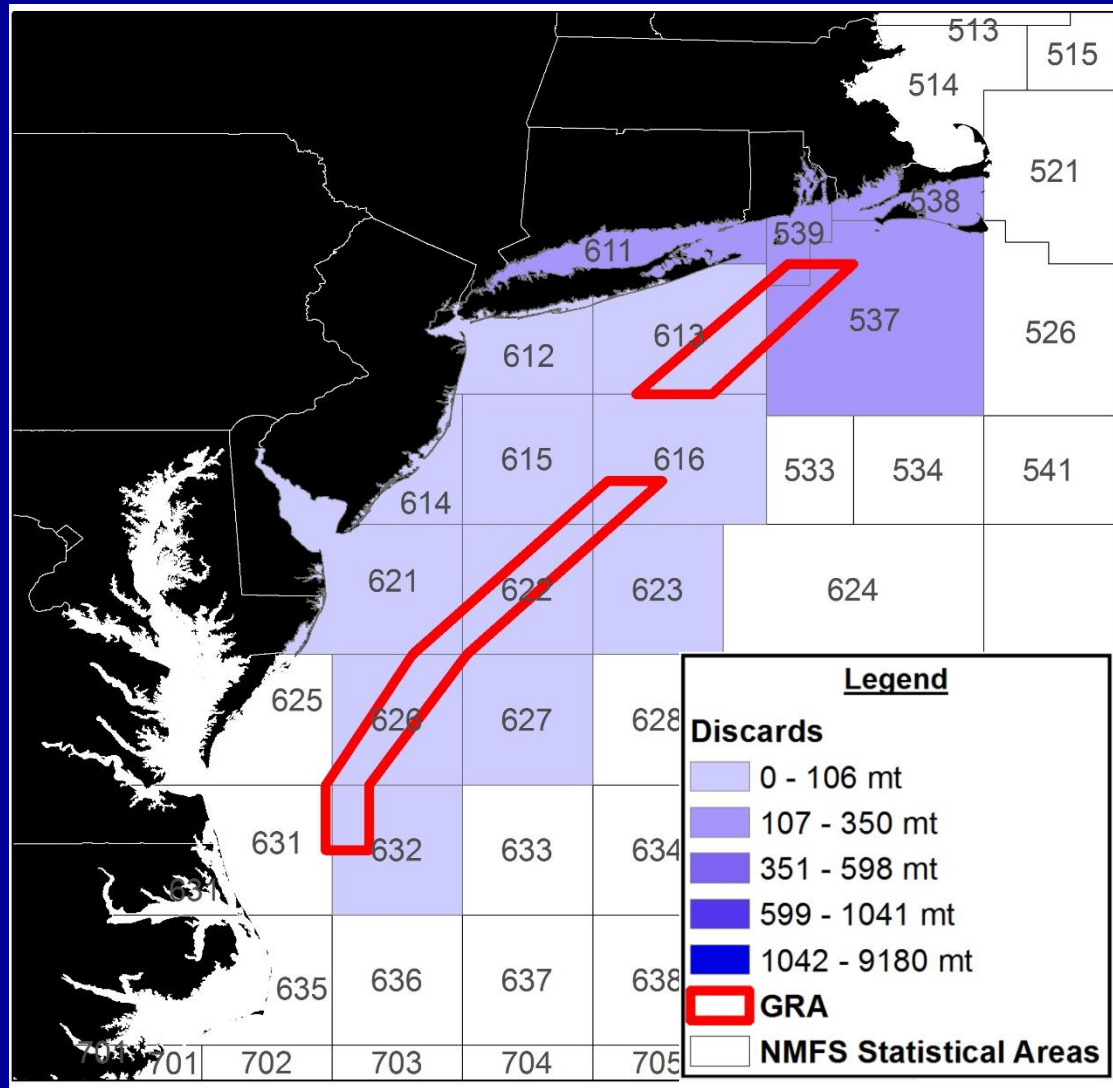


NEFSC Analysis



- Scup discards, 2010-2014
- Quarter 2 (April-June)
- Neither GRA in effect

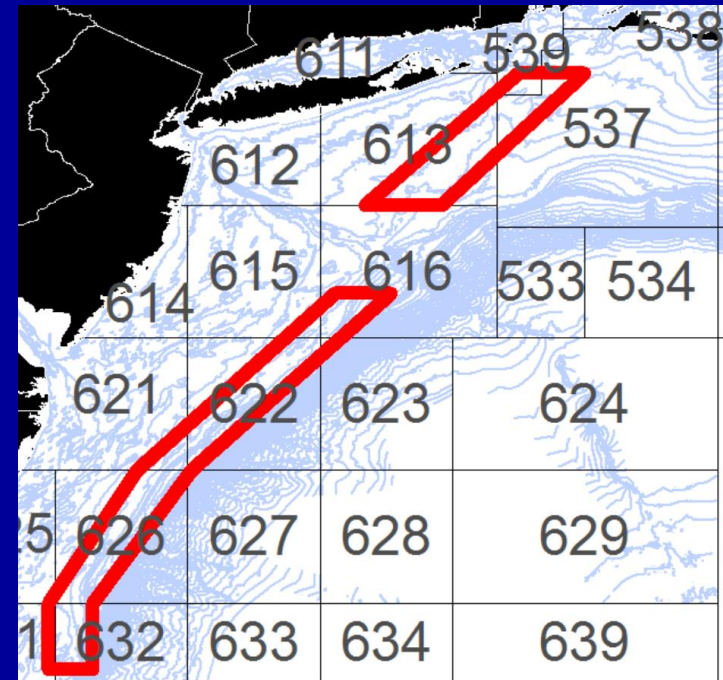
NEFSC Analysis



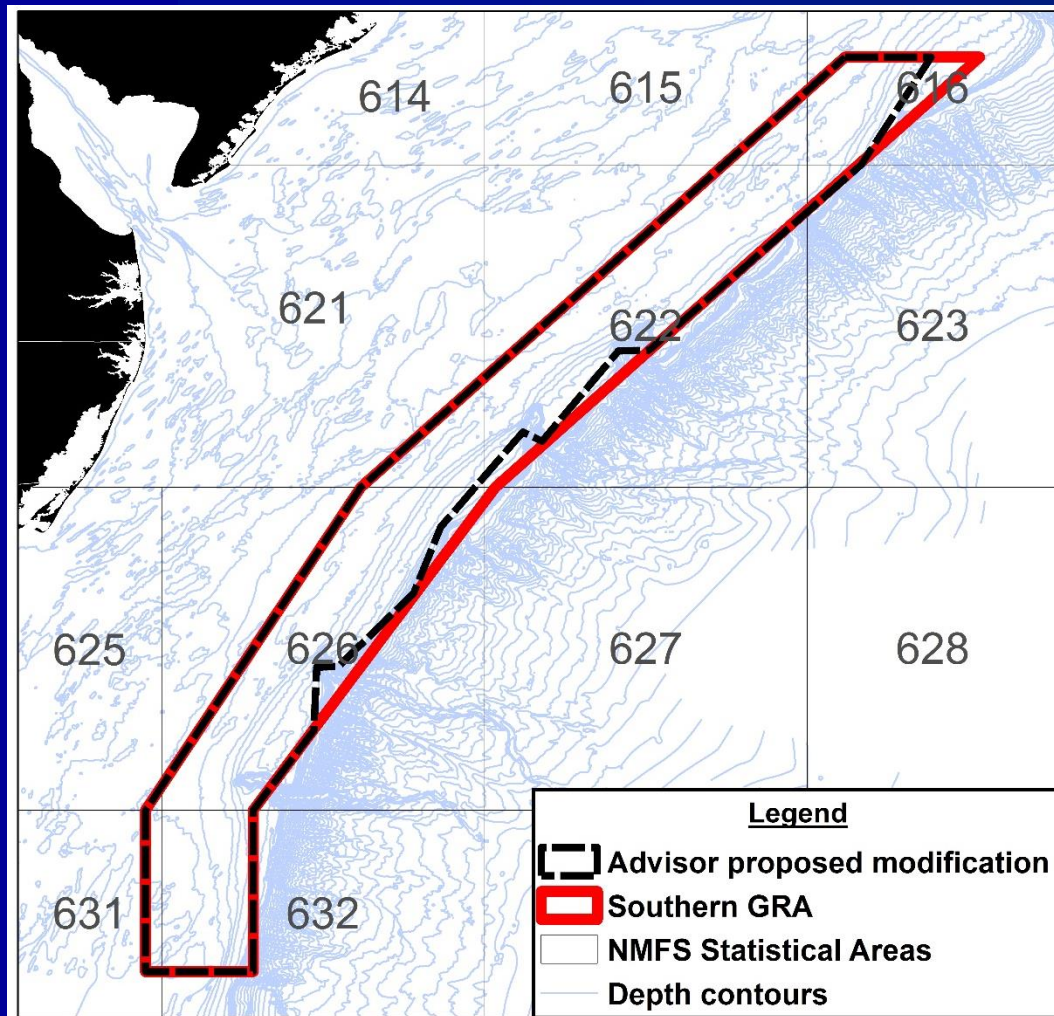
- Scup discards, 2010-2014
- Quarter 3 (July-Sept)
- Neither GRA in effect

Discards by Month

- Estimates less precise than by calendar quarter
- Should only be used for generalizations about timing of discards
- Most discards, 2010-2014, in:
 - Small mesh trips in areas 537-539, 611, May-June (neither GRA in effect)
 - Squid and large mesh trips in area 616, Jan-March (S GRA in effect)



Advisor Comments



- Southern GRA boundary modification proposed by Hank Lackner
- Intended to restore access to certain canyon areas for squid fishing
- Meant to be a draft for further refinement
- Supported by several advisors

Advisor Comments

- Multiple advisors recommend elimination of the GRAs
 - Scup rebuilt to >200% target biomass
 - GRAs pose challenges for other fisheries
- No suggestions for modifications to:
 - Boundaries of northern GRA
 - Timing of either GRA

Advisor Comments

A few requests to increase incidental possession limits through GRA framework

- Currently 500 lb Nov-Mar, 200 lb Apr-Oct
 - One recent AP request for 1000 and 500 lbs
- Council voted to add as alternative, April 2014
- MC thinks it warrants consideration
- Staff recommend doing through specifications

Advisor Comments

- One AP recommendation to include modifications to quota periods in framework

Quota Period	Current Dates	Advisor-Proposed Changes	Difference
Winter I	Jan 1 – April 30	Jan 1 – May 15	+15 days
Summer	May 1 – Oct 31	May 16 – Sept 30	-46 days
Winter II	Nov 1 – Dec 31	Oct 1 – Dec 31	+31 days

- Quota allocations and possession limits remain unchanged
- Would allow commercial fishery to reach quota

Draft Alternatives

1: No Action/ *Status Quo*

2: Modify the area of the N GRA

3: Modify the area of the S GRA

4: Modify the timing of the N GRA

5: Modify the timing of the S GRA

6: Eliminate the N GRA

7: Eliminate the S GRA

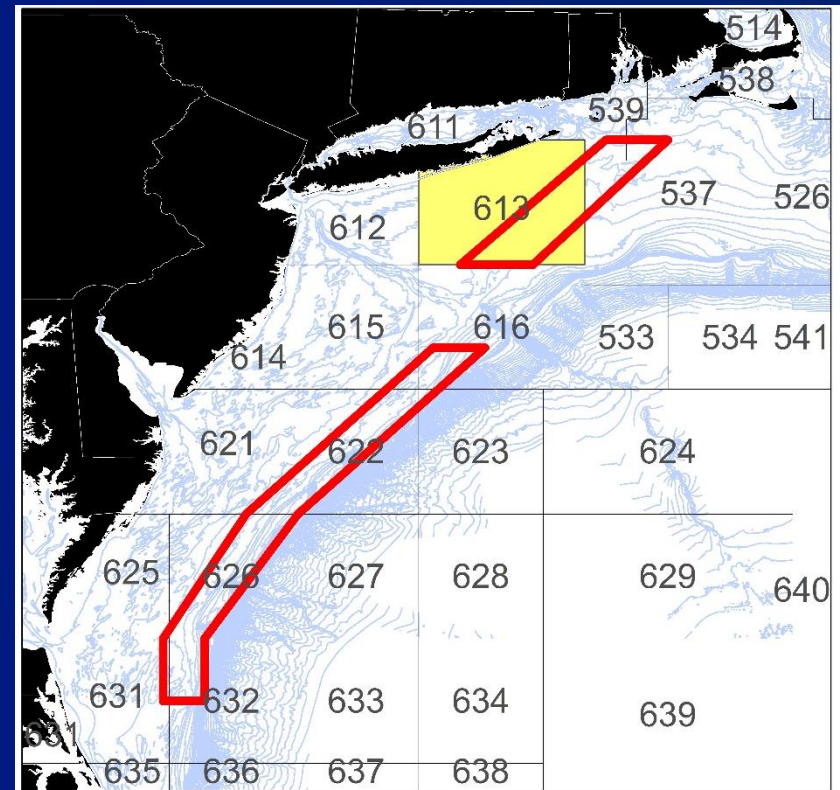


Draft Alternative 2

Modify the area of the N GRA

2a: Expand to include more of stat area 613

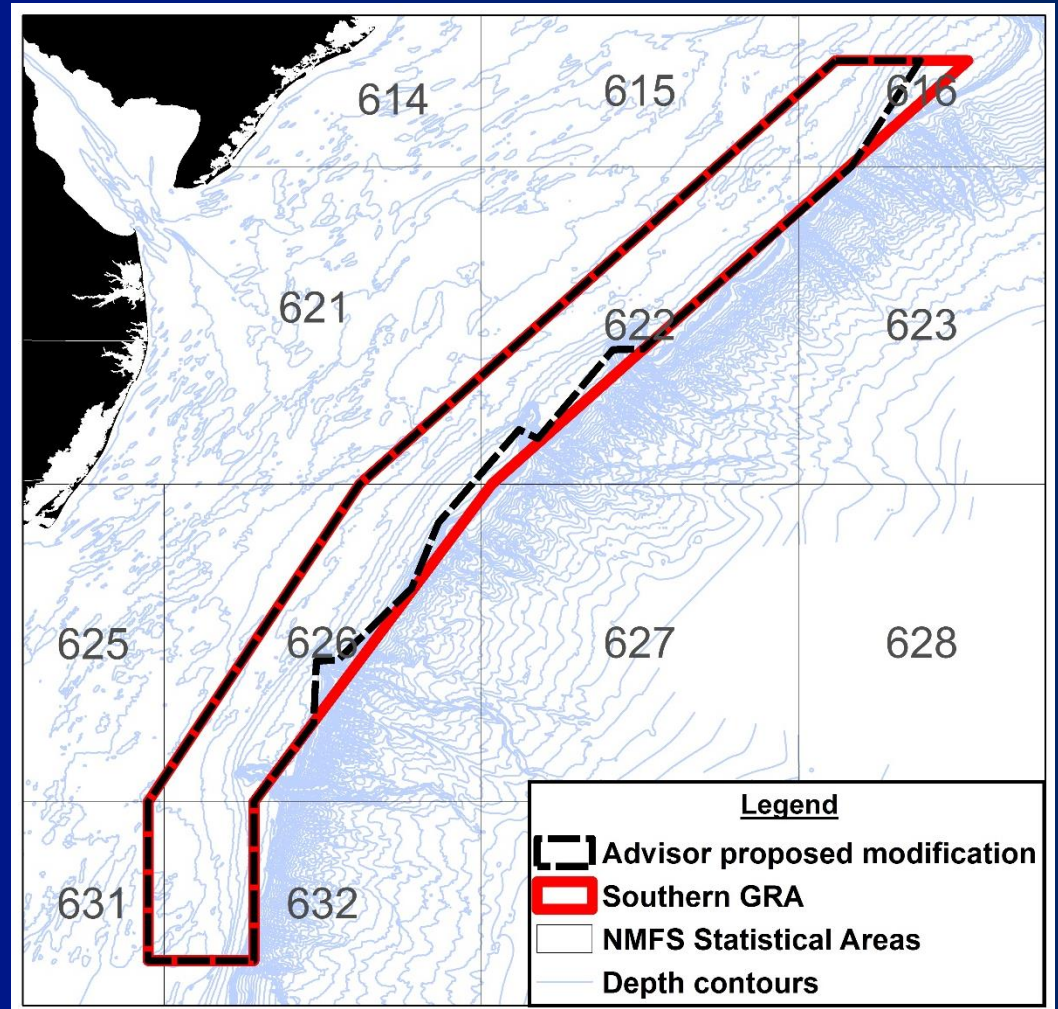
2b: Something else?



Draft Alternative 3

Modify the area of the S GRA

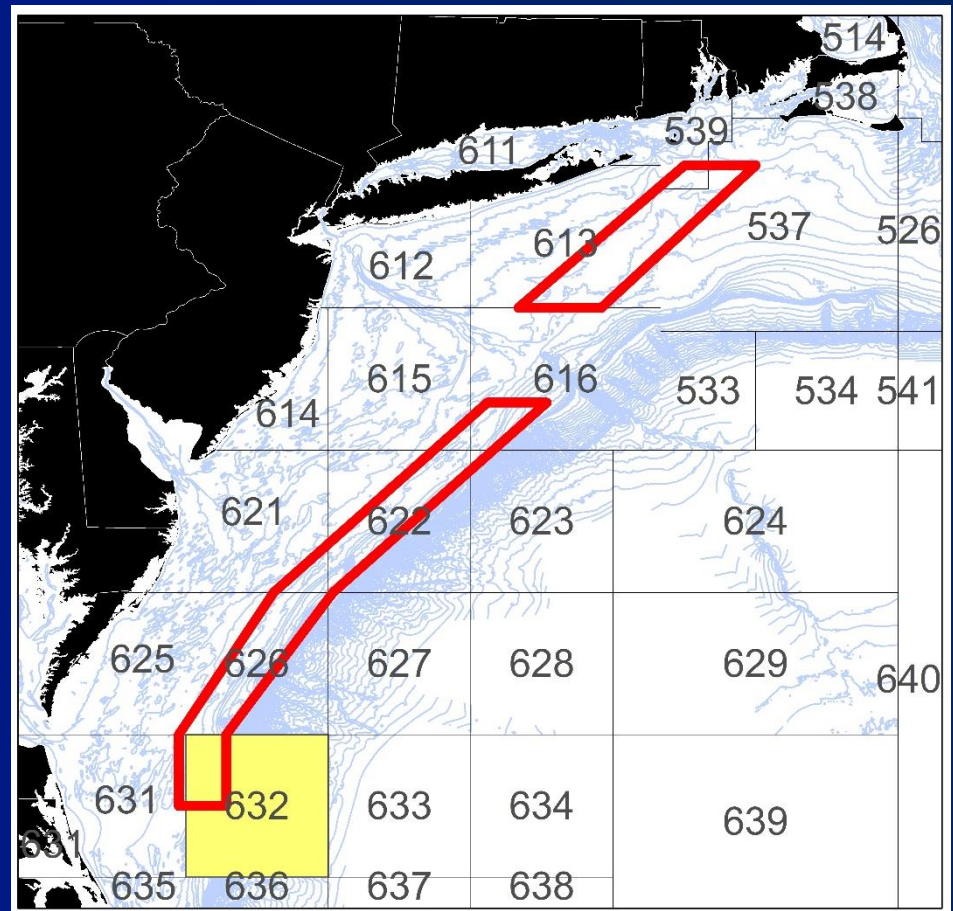
3a: Modify the eastern boundary to align with that proposed by Hank Lackner (or a similar revision)



Draft Alternative 3

Modify the area of the S GRA

3b: Remove stat area 632 from the S GRA

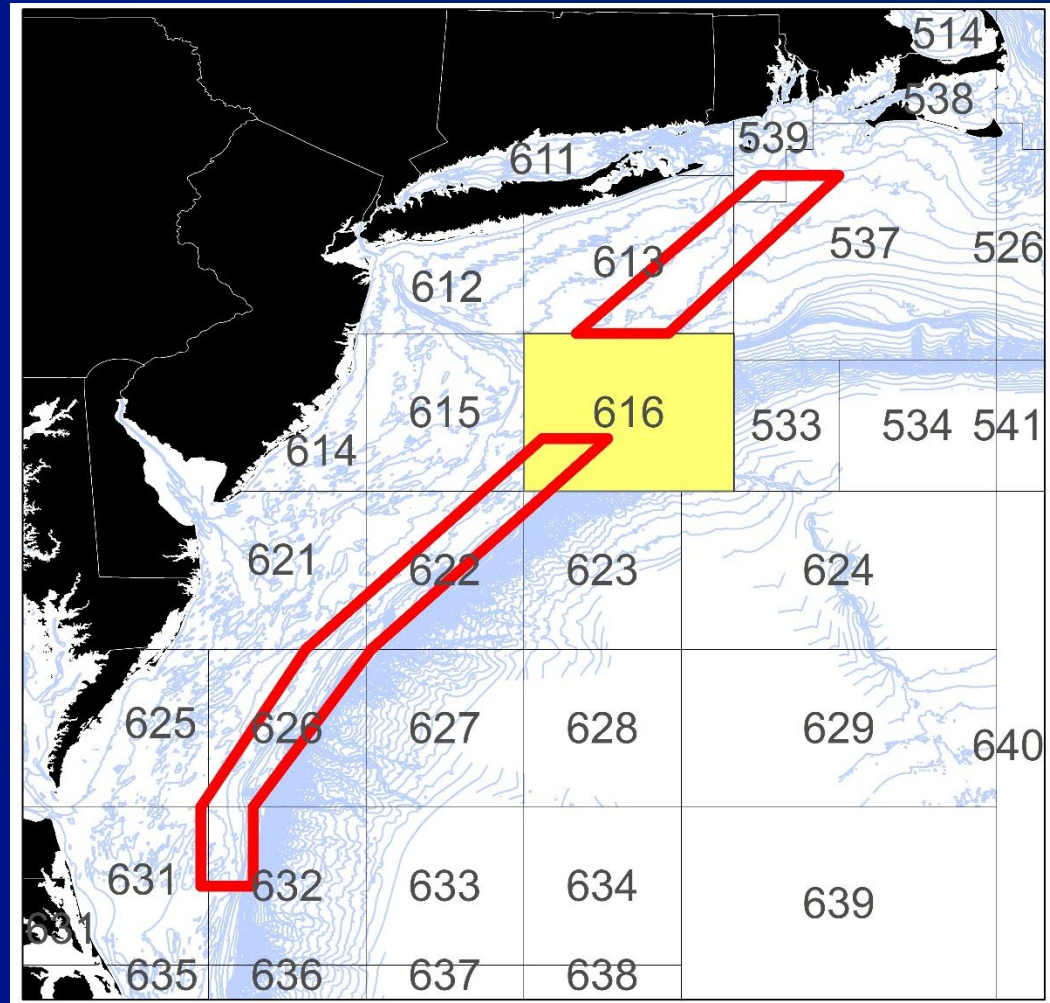


Draft Alternative 3

Modify the area of the S GRA

3c: Expand the S GRA to include more of stat area 616

3d: Something else?

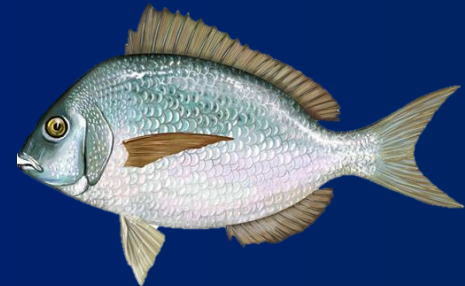


Draft Alternatives 4 & 5

4: Modify the timing of the N GRA

5: Modify the timing of the S GRA

- No strong evidence for need for change from Tercerio & Miller analysis
- No requests from APs to change timing
- Retain in framework?



Next Steps

- AP meeting (January 2016?)
- Second framework meeting
 - February 2016 Council meeting, New Bern, NC
 - Need to decide on range of alternatives today for Feb 2016 to be second framework meeting

Questions?

