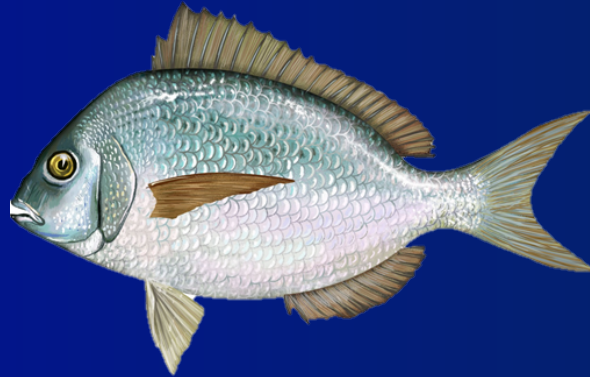




MID-ATLANTIC | FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL



Scup 2019 Specifications



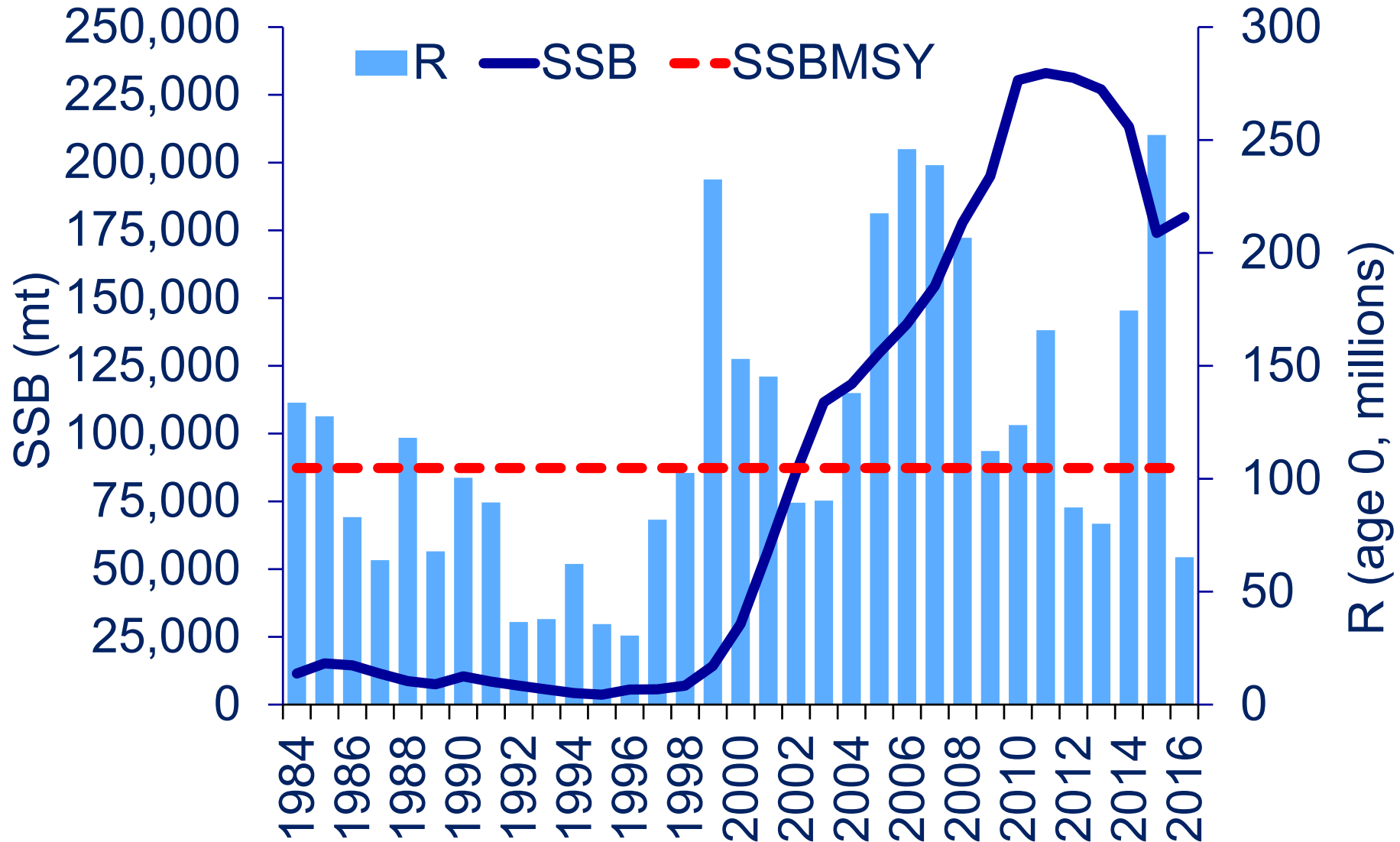
Council and Board Meeting

August 15, 2018

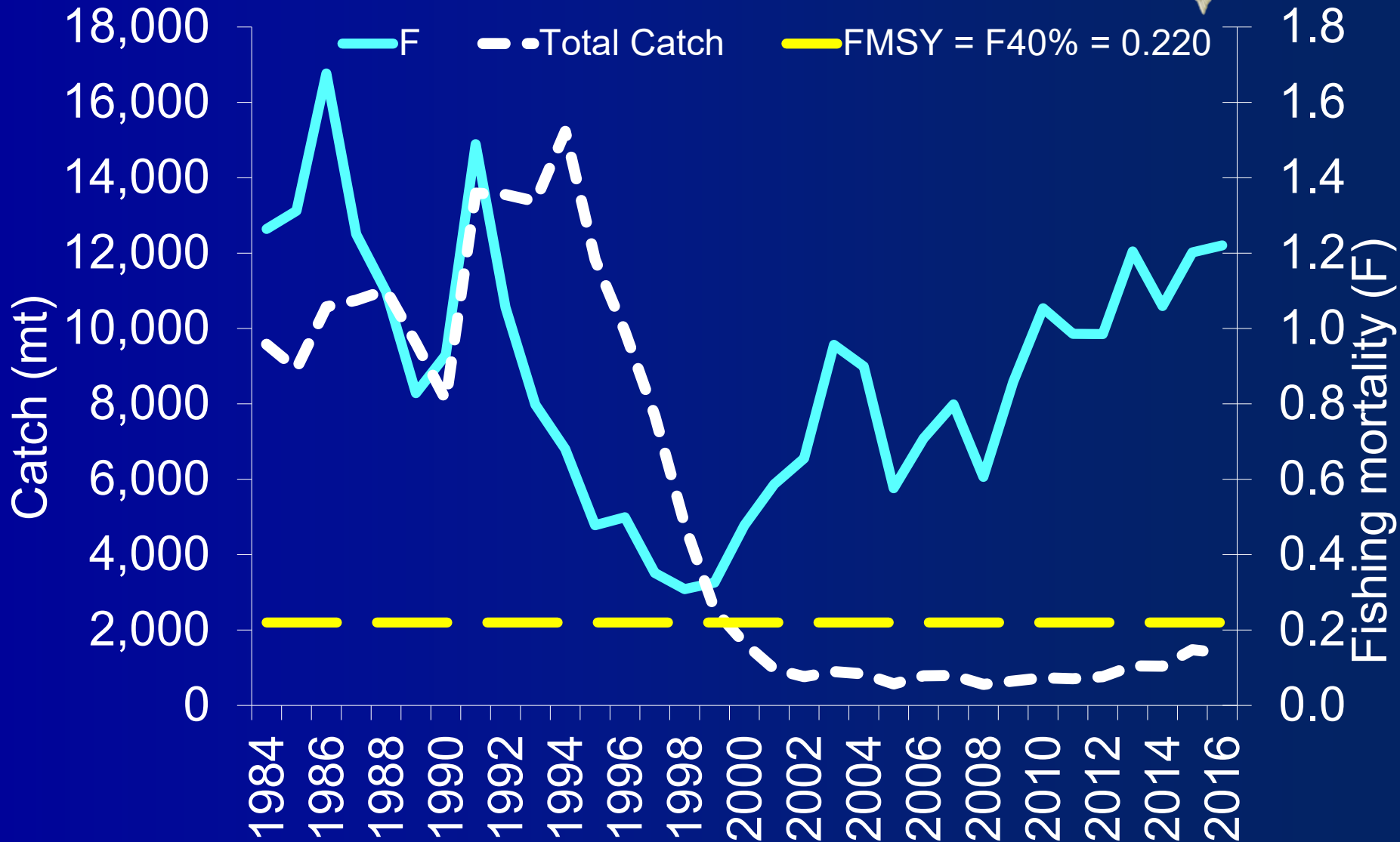
Objective

- Review SSC, MC, AP, and staff recommendations regarding previously implemented 2019 specs
- Recommend changes to 2019 specs if necessary

Biomass



Fishing Mortality



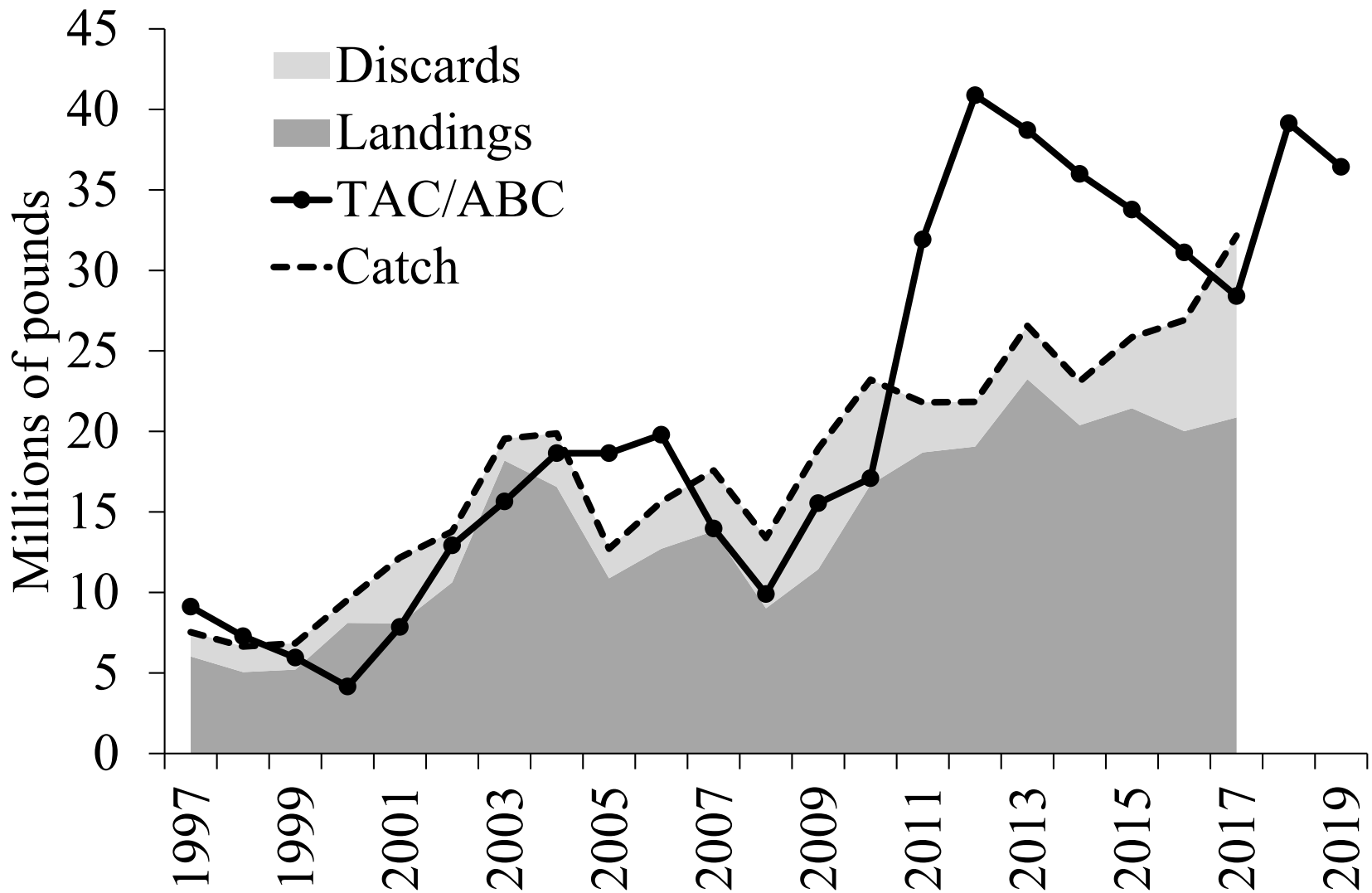
2018 Data Update

- Many survey indices show record or near-record highs in 2015, 2016, or 2017
- Some survey indices (including NEFSC) decreased since peaks in 2015 or 2016
- No NEFSC fall 2017 index because survey did not sample “scup strata”
- Large 2015 year class

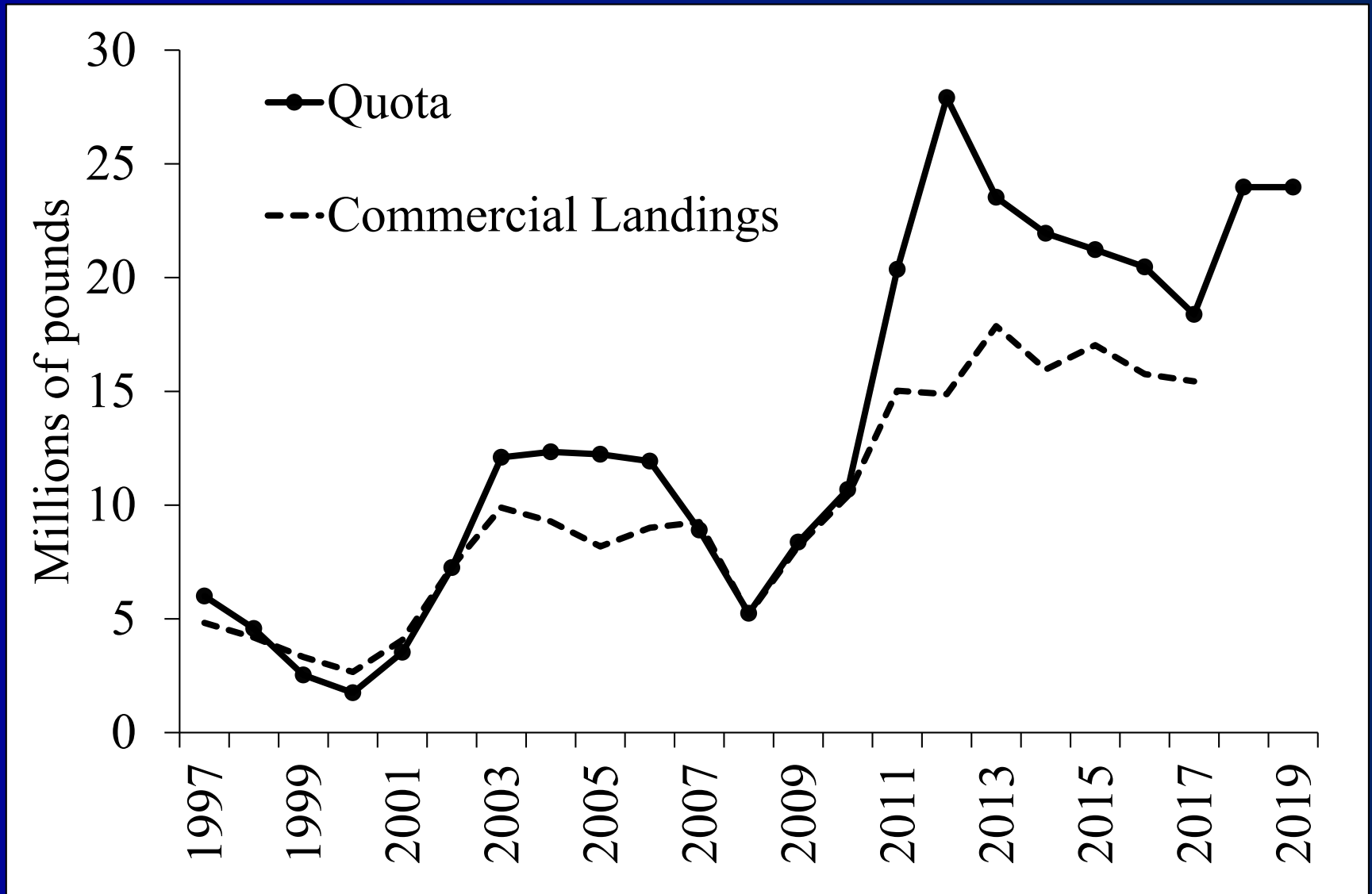
2018 Data Update - Fishery

- 2017 commercial landings 15.4 mil lb, 84% of quota
- 2017 rec. harvest 5.4 mil lb, 99% of RHL
- Commercial discards have been increasing since 2014; in 2017 were 10.4 mil lb, highest since 1981 and 71% greater than in 2016
- Rec discards increased but to much lesser extent
- 2017 ABC exceeded by 13%

ABCs vs. Catch



Quotas vs. Landings



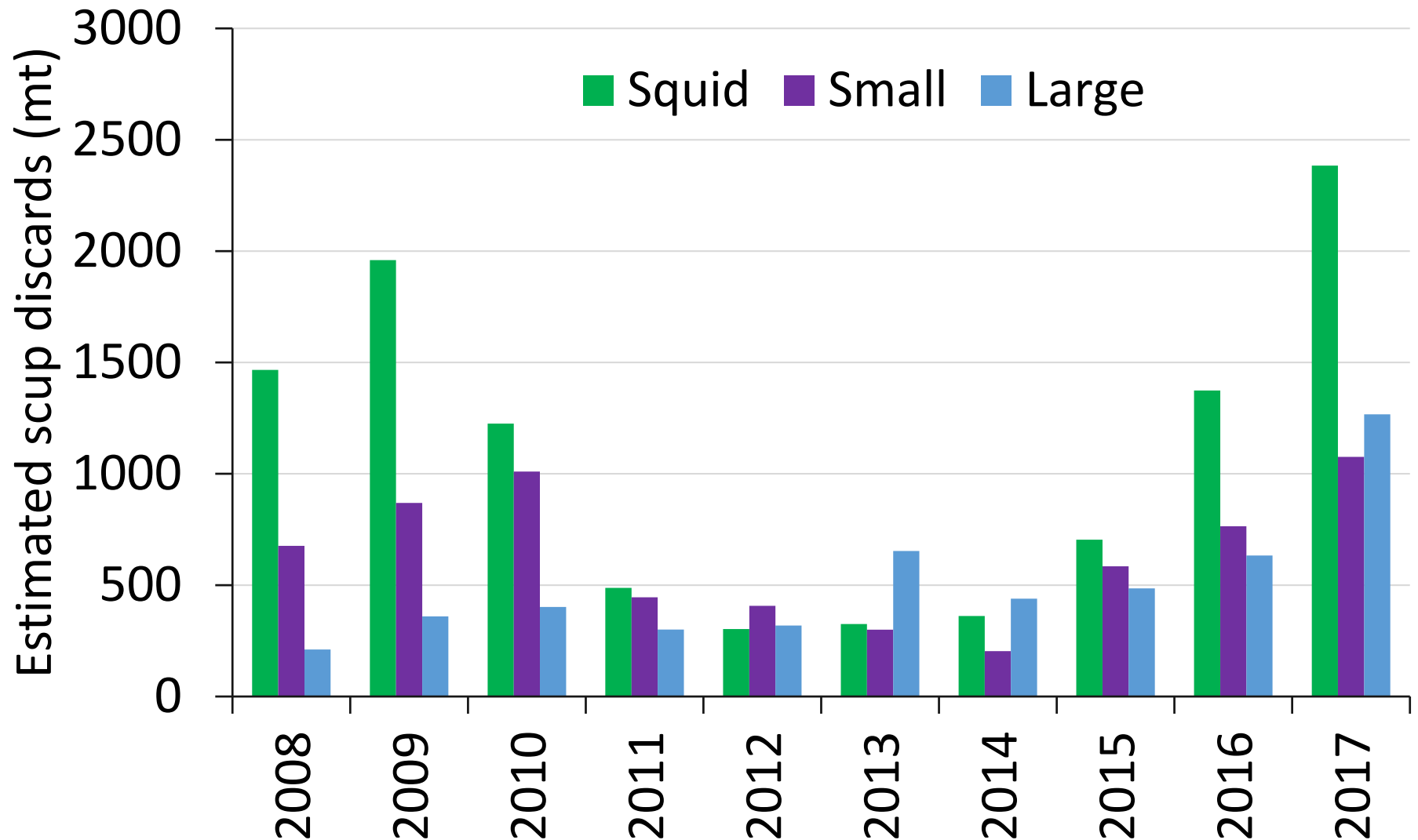
RHL vs. Landings



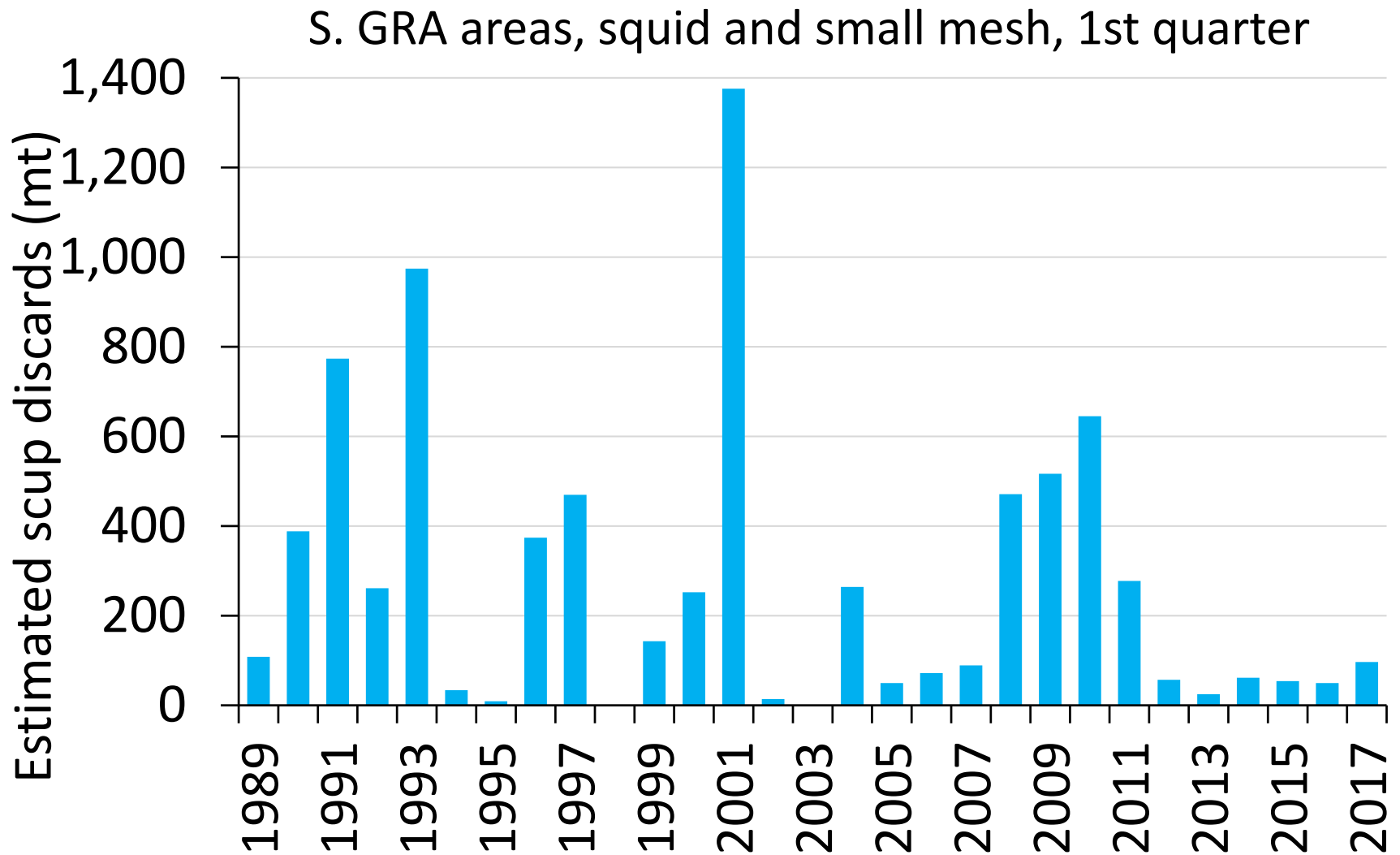
2017 Discards

- Driven by 2015 year class
- GRA change (effective Jan 1, 2017) may have played minor role
- Not driven by one fishery, gear type, or small number of outlier trips
- 2016-2017 – relatively high observer coverage, low CVs for discard estimates

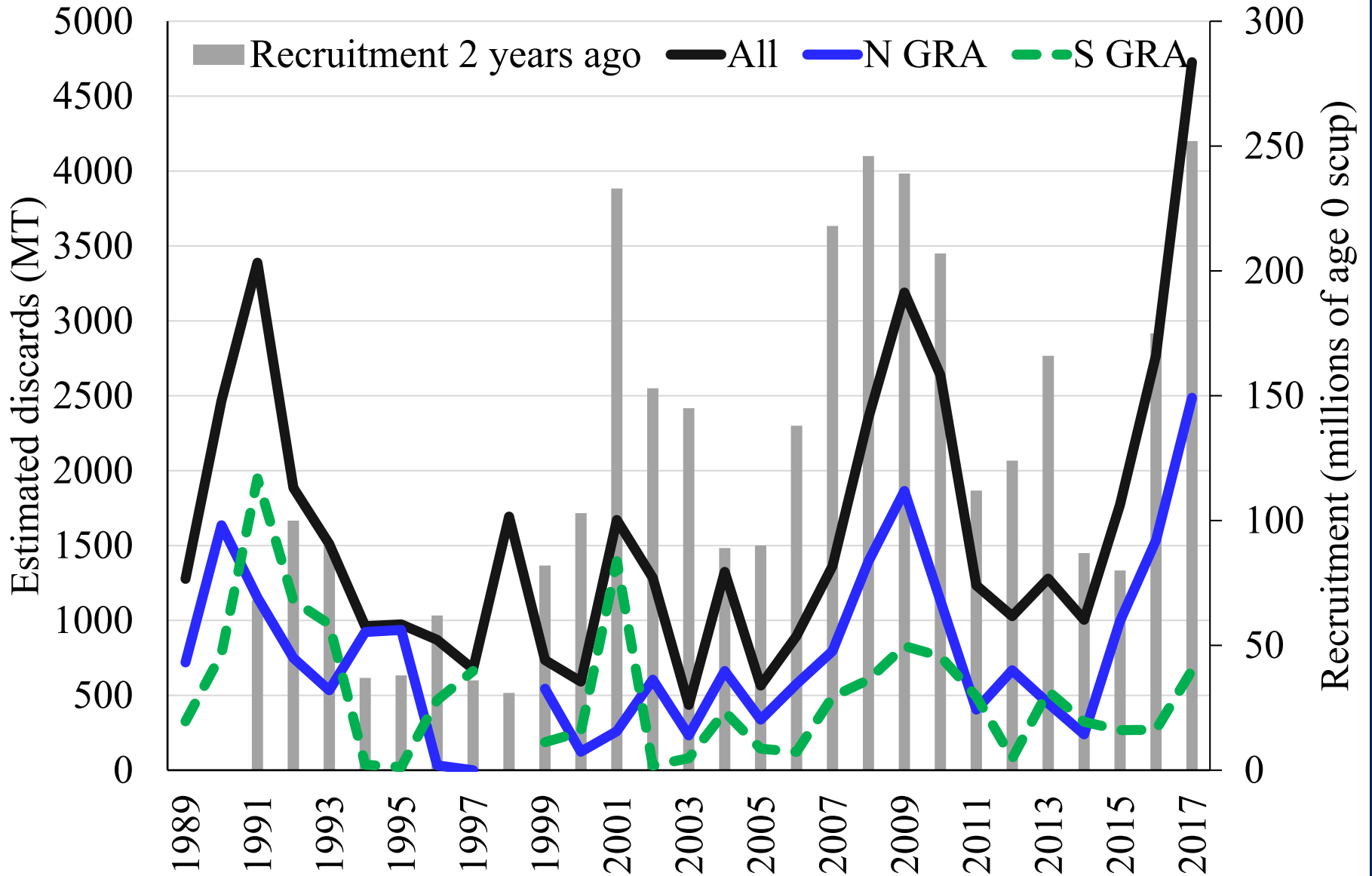
Discards increased across all mesh size categories from 2015 - 2017



- S GRA first effective in 2001
- S GRA discards nearly doubled from 2016 to 2017, but were 60% below the 2001-2017 average



All Mesh Sizes



AP Comments

- MRIP data inaccurate, should be replaced with reporting via smart phone app
- Predictability, stability in regulations needed
- Concerns about trawl survey data
- RSA should be used to fund research
- Research should be done on hook sizes, gear configurations to reduce discard mortality
- Council and Board don't listen to AP input

AP Comments

- Market issues

- Competition with tilapia
- Scup do not freeze well
- Difficult to fillet by machine
- Good taste and uniform size – could make a great food product if other challenges are overcome
- Research recommendations

AP Comments

- MRIP: ~60% scup harvested on private/rental boats – some advisors disagree but varies by state
- Haven't seen increase in rec. catch of small scup – why did rec. discards increase?
- High bag limit better for for-hire vessels than low size limit
- Increased abundance decreased demand for for-hire trips out of RI
- Scup and black sea bass seasons should start at same time
- Use of small scup for striper bait

2018-2019 projections

- Assume 87% of 2017 ABC is caught, then $F = F_{\text{MSY proxy}} = 0.220$
- OFL CV = 60%
- Risk policy, typical life history ($p^* = 40\%$)



SSC Recommendations

- Implementation error in setting 2019 ABC
 - Assumed 87% of 2017 ABC would be caught, but 113% was caught
- No compelling reason to change previous 2019 ABC recommendation

Measure	mil lb	Notes
OFL	41.03	
ABC	36.43	
ABC discards	5.08	14% of ABC (2014-2016 avg. discard %)
Projected com. discards	4.43	87.3% of ABC discards (2014-2016 avg)
Projected rec. discards	0.65	12.7% of the ABC discards (2014-2016 avg)
Com. ACL	28.42	78% of ABC (per FMP)
Com. ACT	28.42	= ACL
Com. quota	23.98	= ACL - discards
Rec. ACL	8.01	22% of ABC (per FMP)
Rec. ACT	8.01	= ACL
RHL	7.37	= ACL - discards

Proposal from MA and RI

- Increase incidental possession limit to 4,000 lb during April 15 – June 15
- Currently:
 - 1,000 lb October – April
 - 200 lb May – September
- Intent: allow seasonal inshore squid fishery to retain, rather than discard, scup

MC Recommendation

- Tentatively supported change, but recommended consideration of additional analysis
- Consider making change for 1 year or set a trigger for reverting back to current limits (e.g. if SSB falls below target)

Supplemental Memo

- Discards of legal-sized scup could be high in 2019 under current measures
- Increased incidental limit unlikely to cause 2019 quota or ABC to be exceeded
- 4,000 lb limit could lead to increased targeting of scup with small mesh, but changes in fishing behavior difficult to predict

Supplemental Memo

312 observed “squid trips”, April – June, 2015-2017 ($\geq 40\%$ landings were squid)

- 98% caught scup with small mesh
- 81% of observed scup discarded
- Discard reasons – too small (regs or market)
- 7% of trips caught $\geq 4,000$ lb scup; 10% $\geq 3,000$ lb; 14% $\geq 2,000$ lb; 28% $\geq 1,000$ lb

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
MA/RI	1,000 lb			4,000 lb		200 lb					1,000 lb		
Staff	1,000 lb						200 lb					1,000 lb	
Current	1,000 lb				200 lb							1,000 lb	

Proposal from MA

- Allow retention of 6" scup for use as live bait
- Possibly a 5 fish bag limit at 6"
- MC recommendation
 - Would add complexity to regs
 - How many immature scup likely to be harvested?
 - How many anglers would take advantage of this?
Use a special permit?
 - Consider in more detail in fall

MC Recommendations

Mesh Study (Hasbrouck et al. 2018)

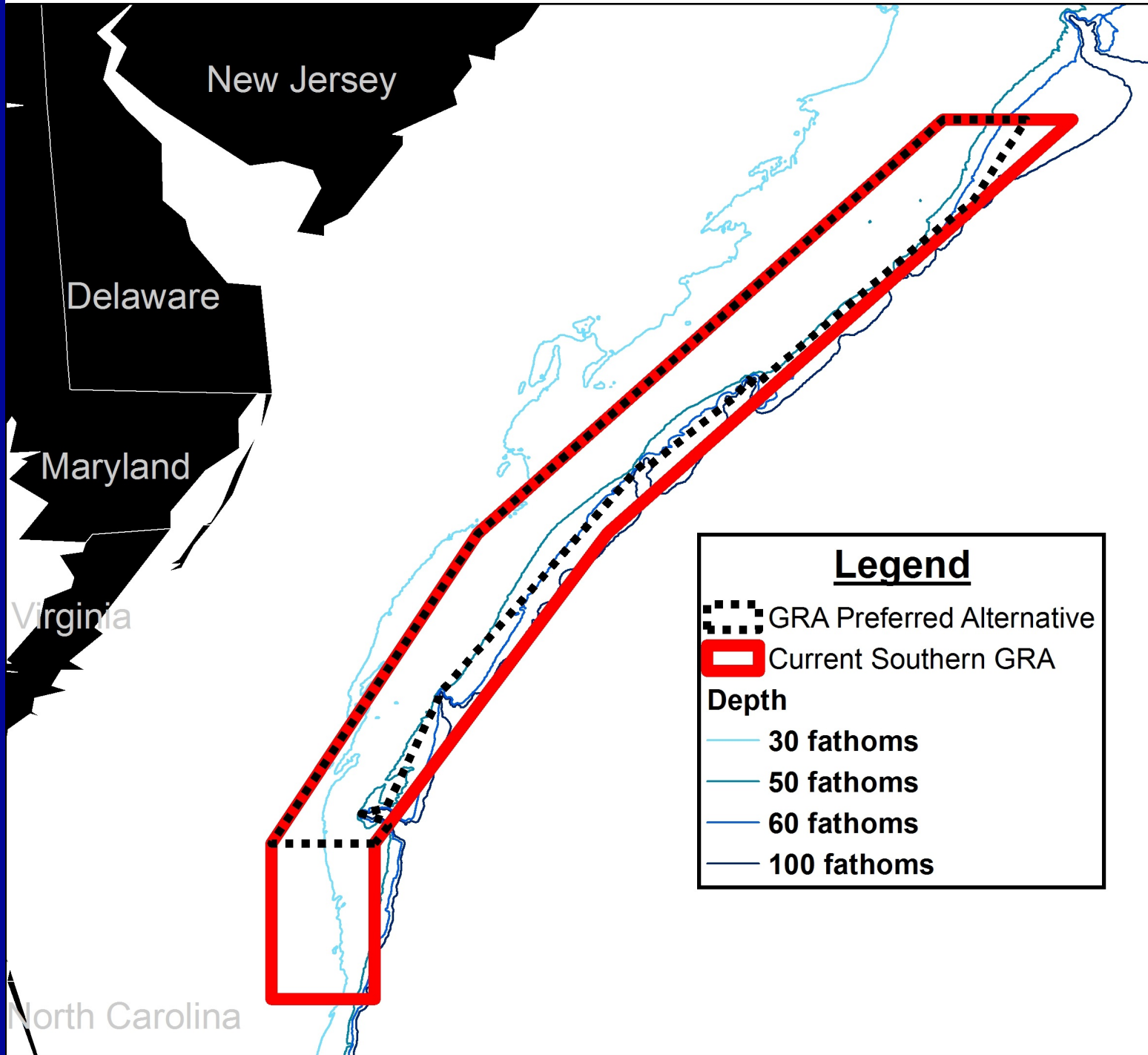
- Valuable contemporary information
- Current min mesh sizes effective at releasing catch of most undersized and immature fish
- 4.5" or 5" diamond mesh could be common min mesh size for scup and BSB
- Before pursuing specific reg changes:
 - Fishing industry feedback should be sought
 - Additional analysis should be done

MC Recommendation

- No changes to
 - Previously implemented 2019 ACLs, ACTs, quota, and RHL
 - Commercial quota periods, possession limits, rollover provisions
 - Mesh sizes
 - Pot/trap regs
 - Commercial min. fish size of 9"
 - Rec measures (will revisit this fall)

Discussion

- Changes needed to 2019 ACLs, ACTs, quota, and RHL?
- Modify incidental possession limit?
- Modify other management measures?



New Jersey







Delaware

Maryland

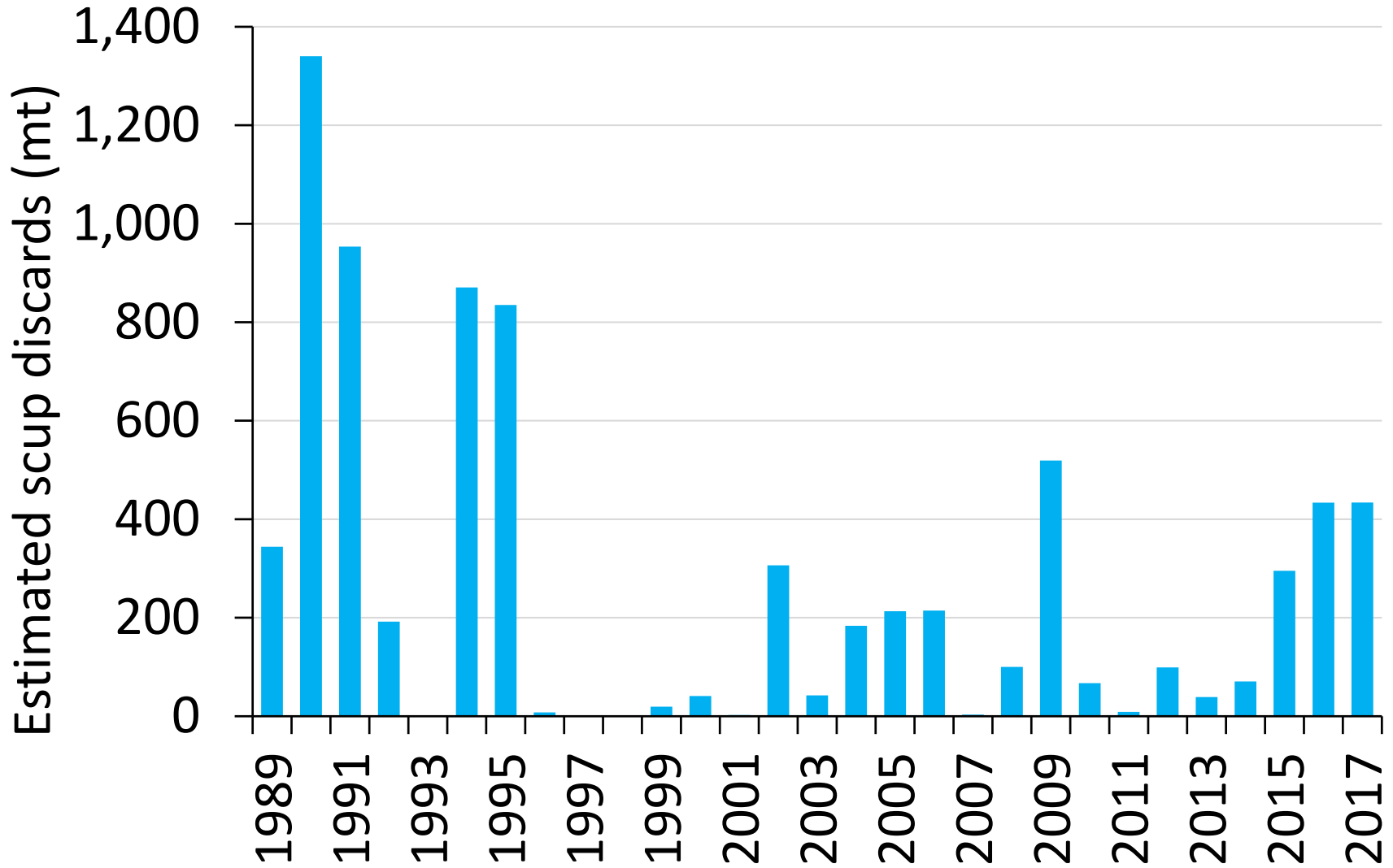
Virginia

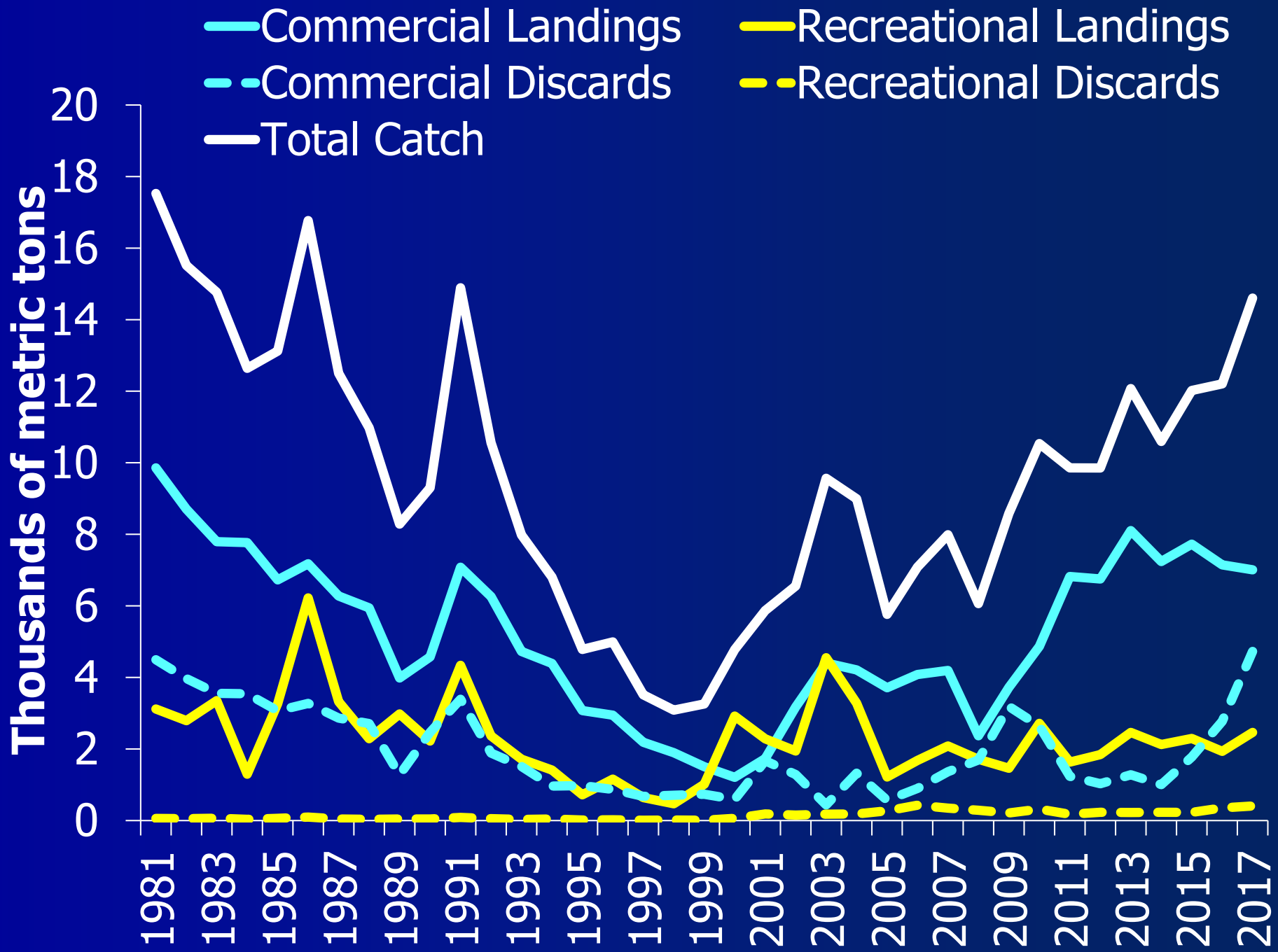
North Carolina

Legend

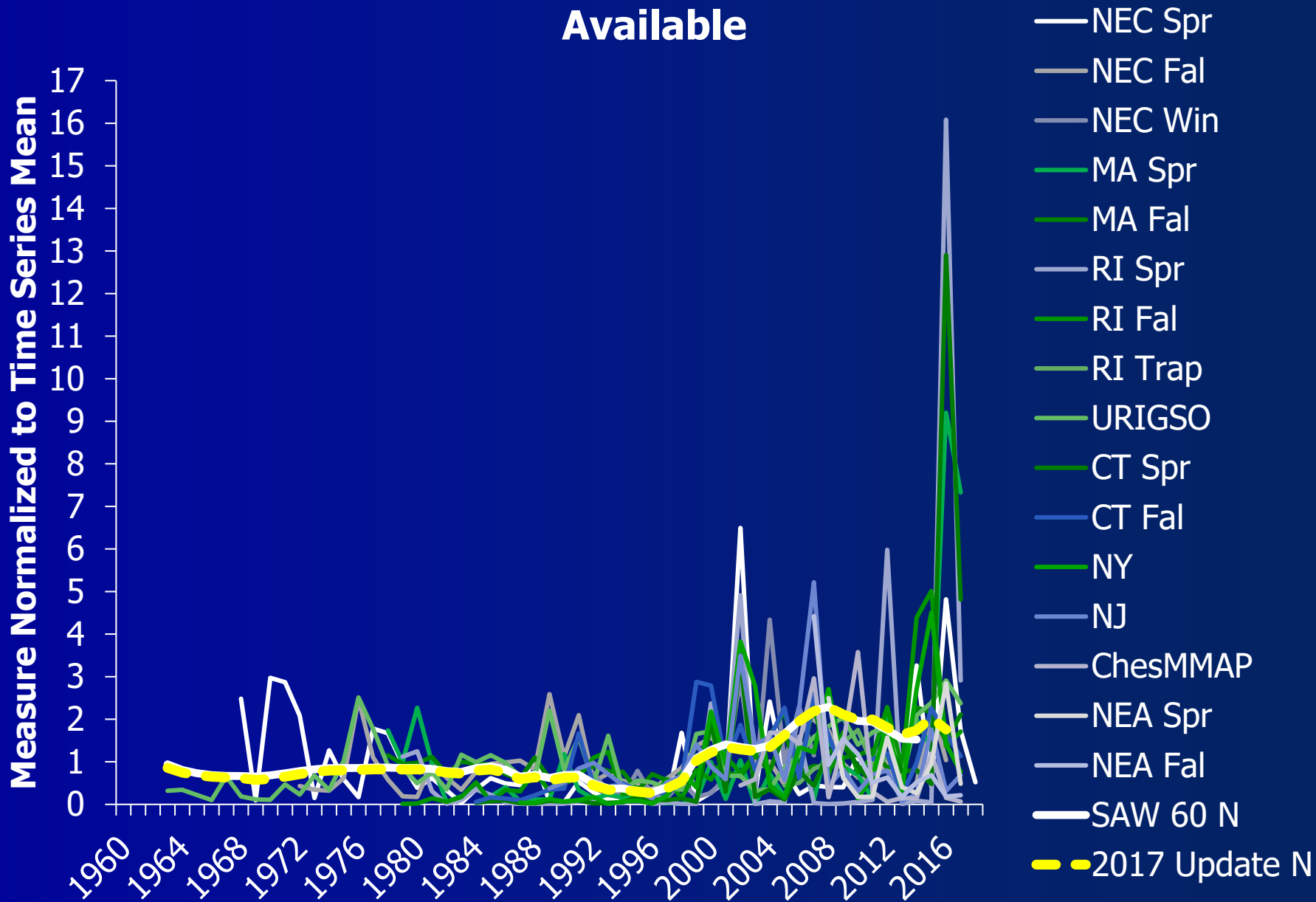
-  GRA Preferred Alternative
-  Current Southern GRA
- Depth**
-  30 fathoms
-  50 fathoms
-  60 fathoms
-  100 fathoms

N. GRA areas, squid and small mesh, 4th quarter

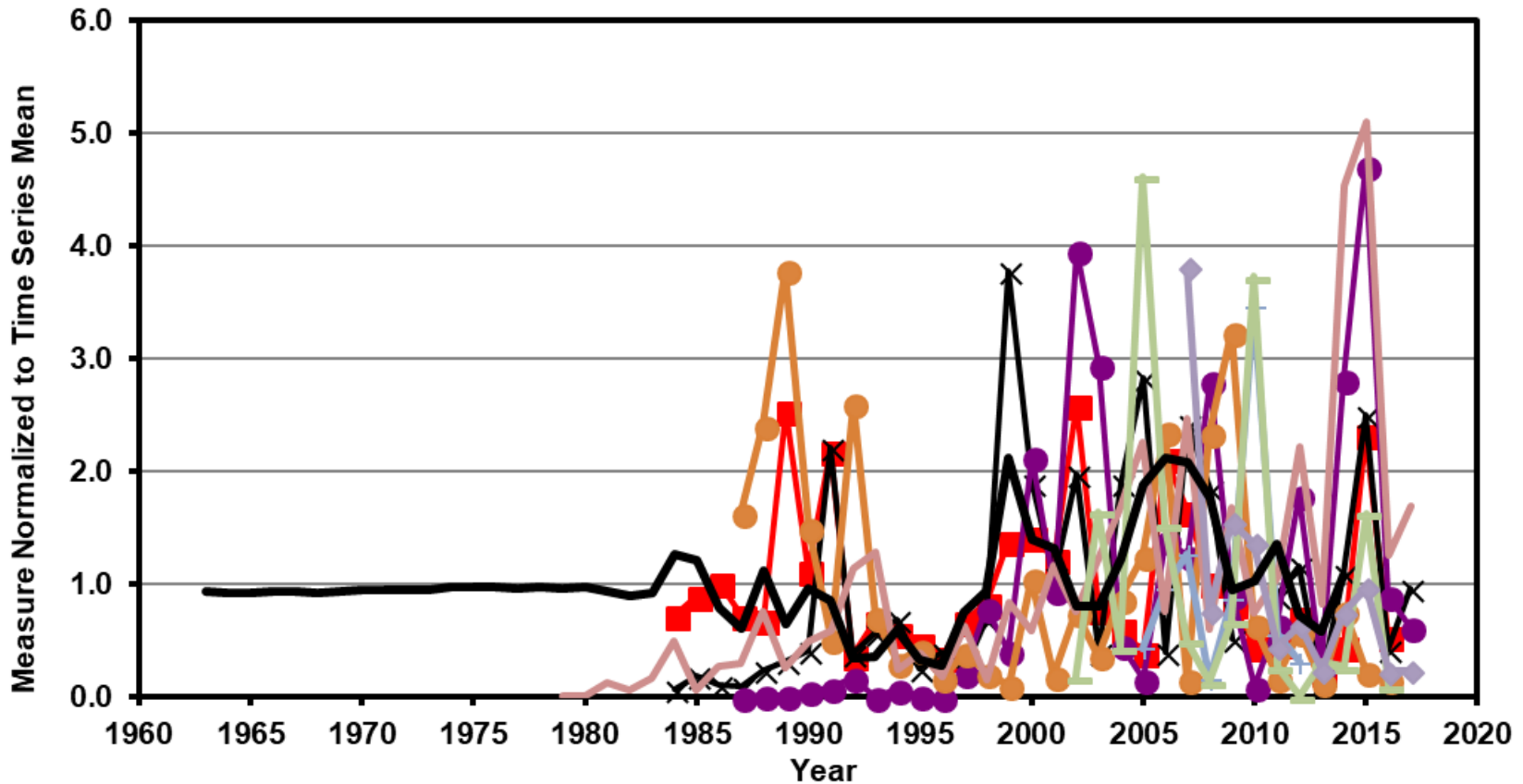




Scup Total Stock N Measures of Abundance: All Available



Scup Age 0 Measures of Abundance



■ NEFSC

× CTDEP

● NYDEC

● VIMS

◆ RIDFW Trap

— RIDFW Fall

— ChesMMAp

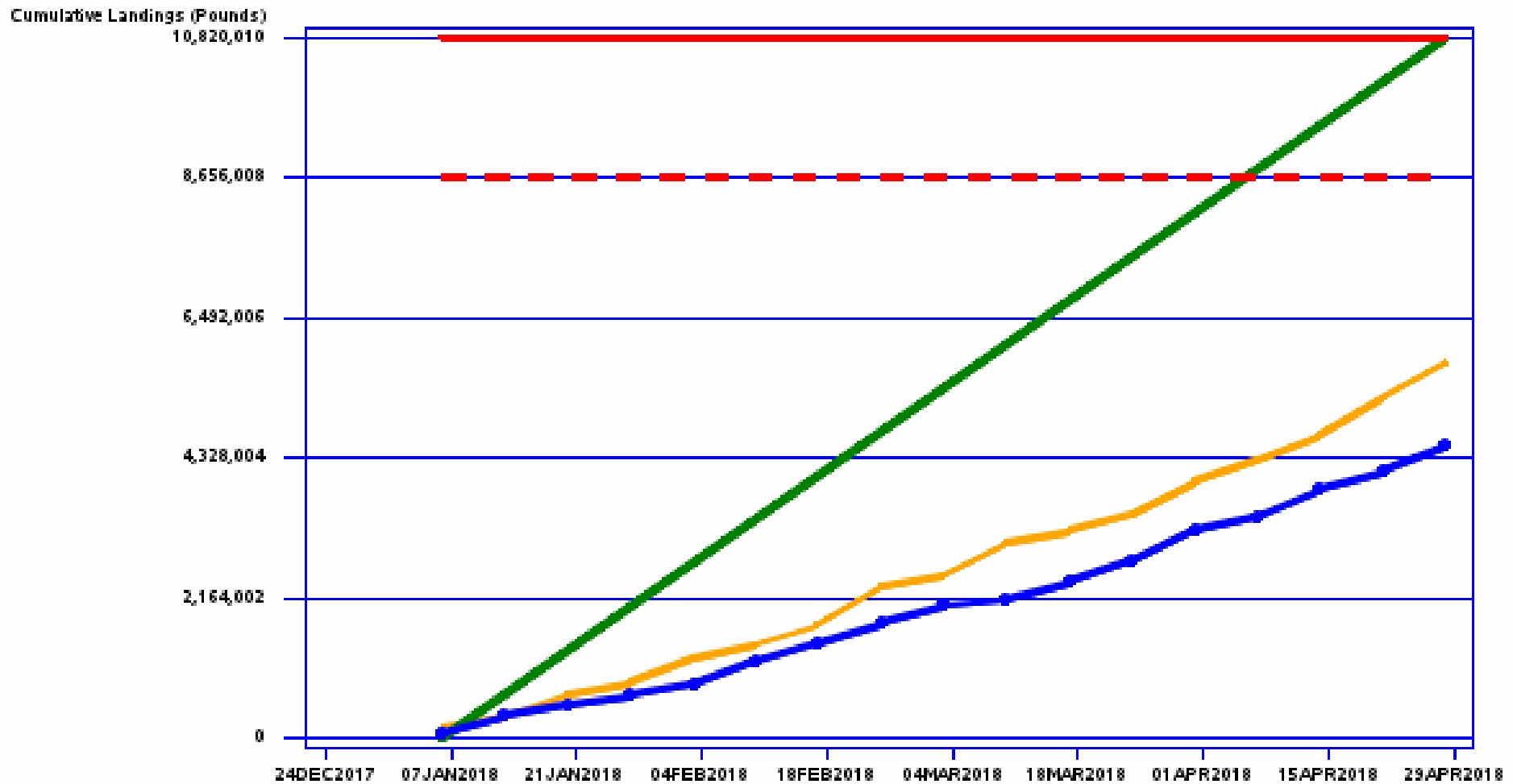
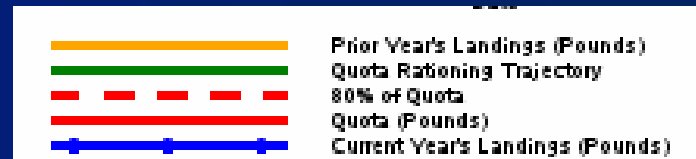
◆ NEAMAP Fall

— SAW 60 Age 0

Year first in effect	Incidental Possession Limit
1996	4,000 pounds
1997	Winter: 4,000 pounds Summer: 1,000 pounds
1999	Winter: 200 pounds Summer: 100 pounds
2002	Winter: 500 pounds Summer: 100 pounds
2005	Winter: 500 pounds Summer: 200 pounds
2016	Winter: 1,000 pounds Summer: 200 pounds

2018 Commercial Landings

Winter I (Jan 1 – April 28)



2018 Commercial Landings

Summer (May 1 – July 28*)

