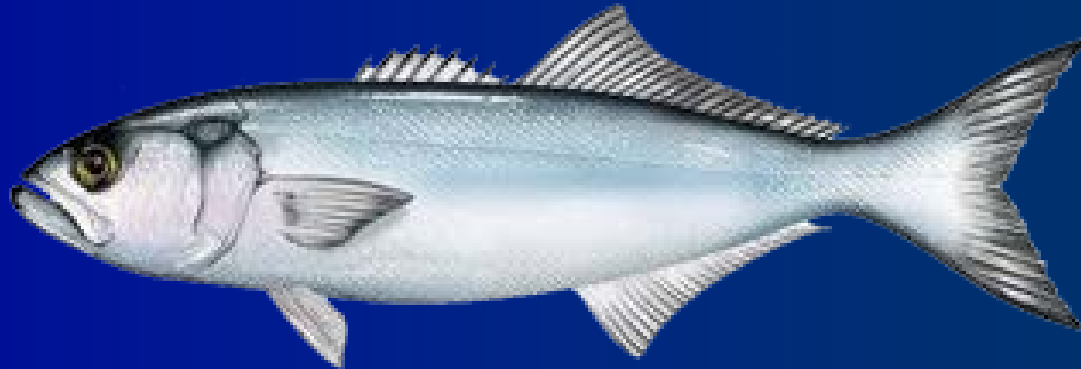


# Atlantic Bluefish



Advisory Panel Meeting

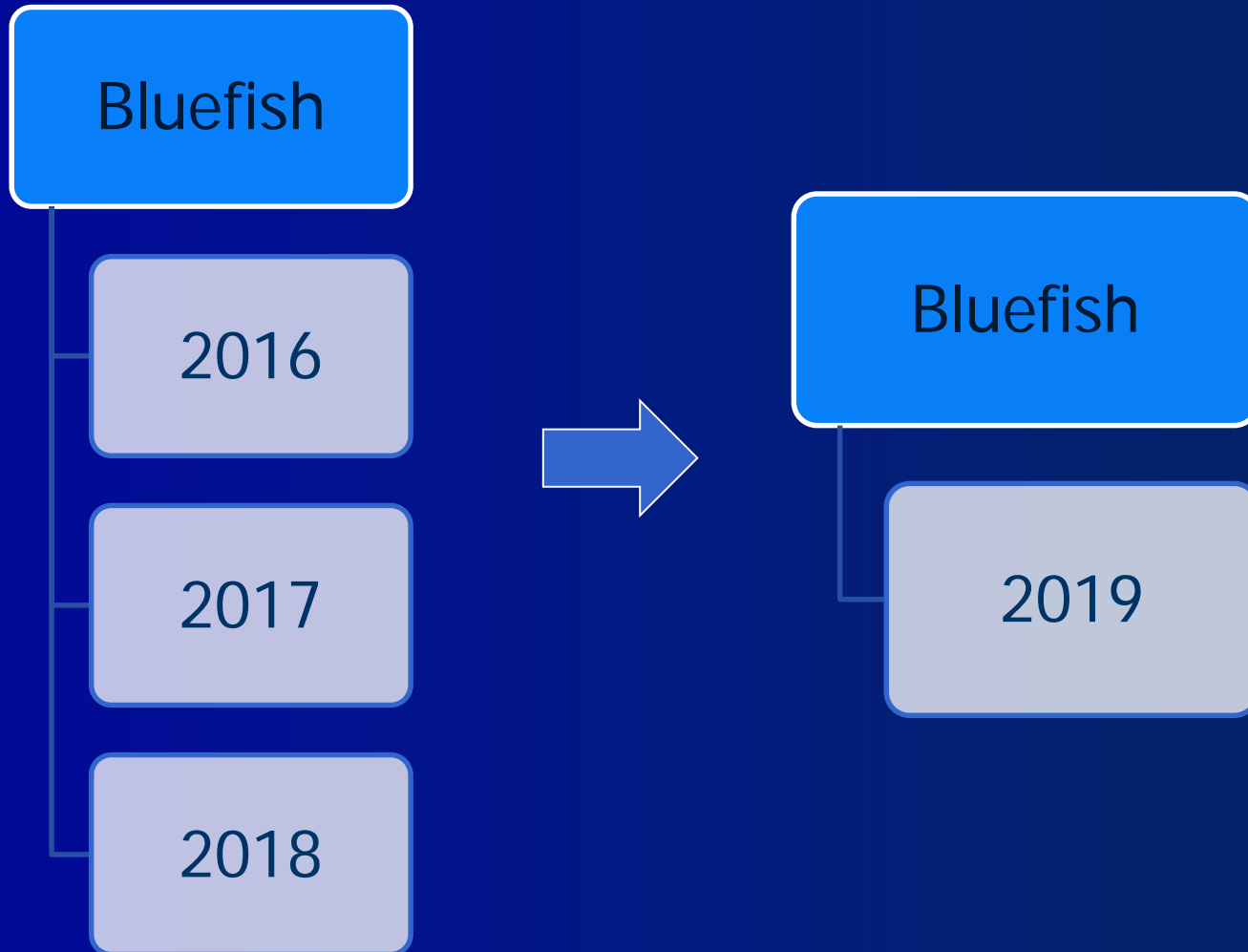
July 18, 2018

# Outline



- Review
  - Recent fishery performance
  - AP info doc
  - NEFSC data update through 2017
  - FPR
- Set specifications for 2019

# Specifications Process - *Current Multiyear specifications*

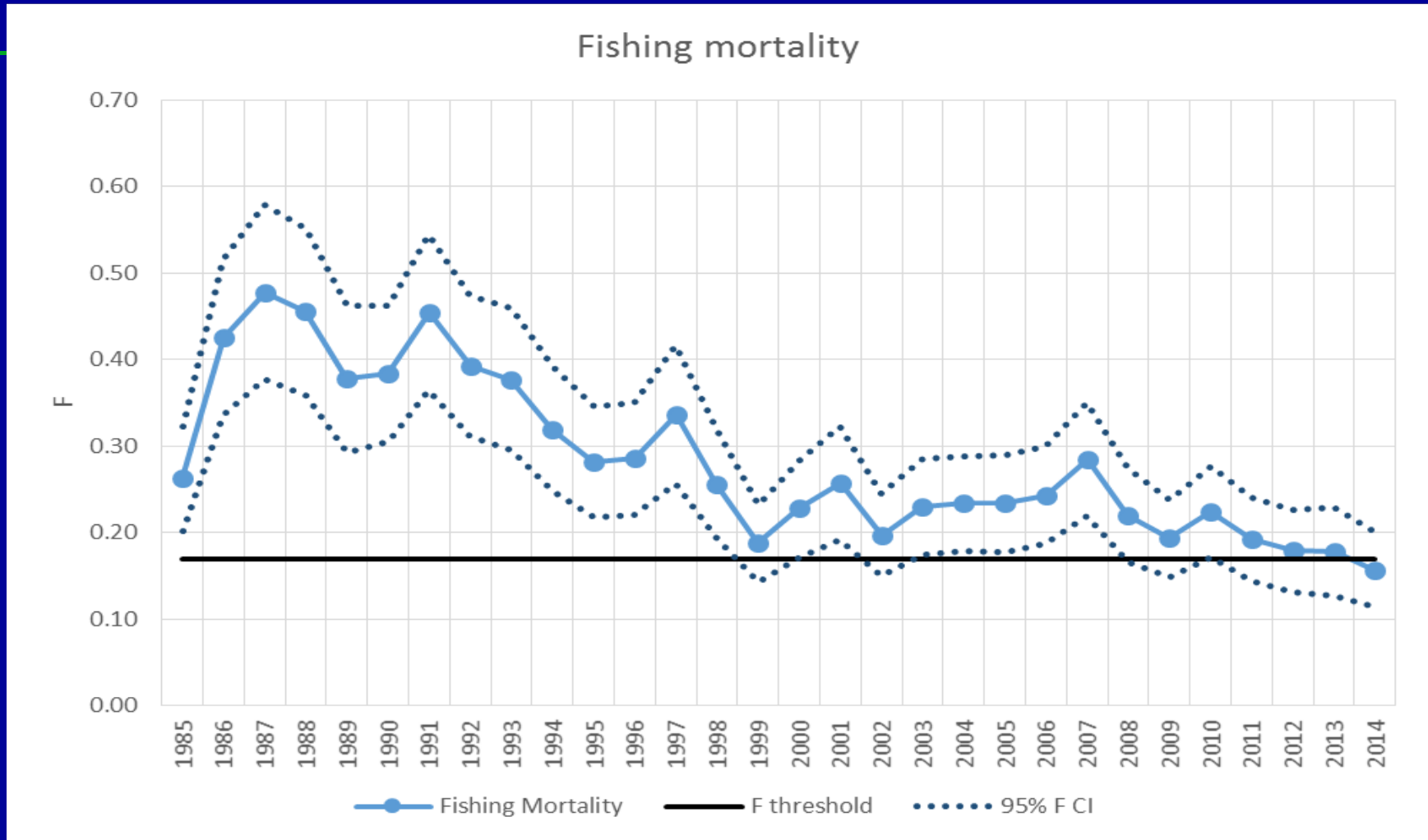


# Stock Status



- Last benchmark stock assessment: 2015
  - SAW/SARC 60
- Stock is not overfished
- Overfishing is not occurring

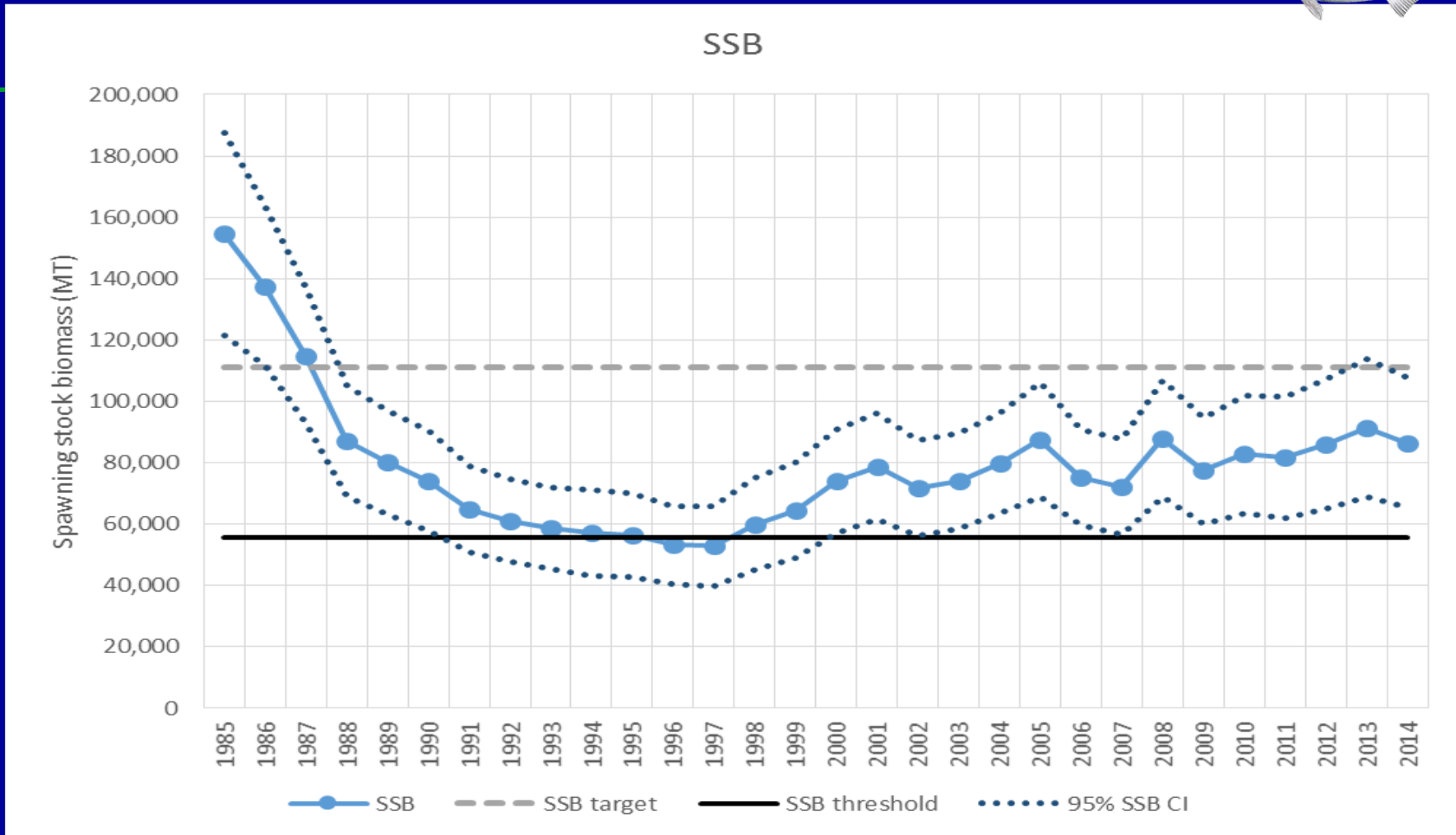
# Fishing Mortality



Overfishing not occurring

(2014  $F = 0.157$ ; below  $F_{MSY\ proxy} = F_{35\%SPR} = 0.190$ )

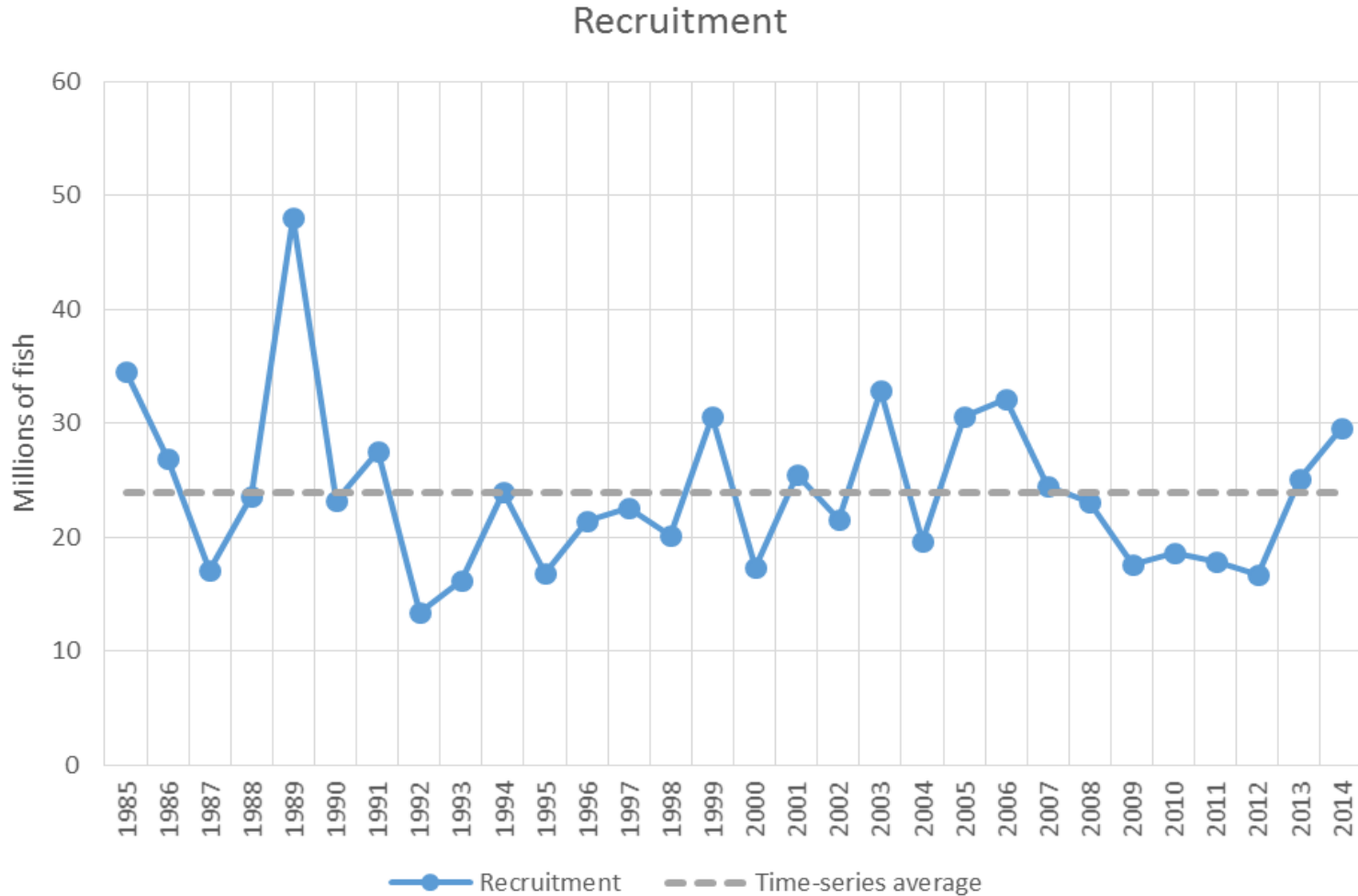
# Biomass



## Not overfished

2014 SSB (86,534 mt)  $\approx$  22% below  $SSB_{MSY \text{ proxy}}$  (111,228 mt), but still well above biomass threshold ( $\frac{1}{2} SSB_{MSY \text{ proxy}} = 55,614$  mt)

# Recruitment



# Data Update

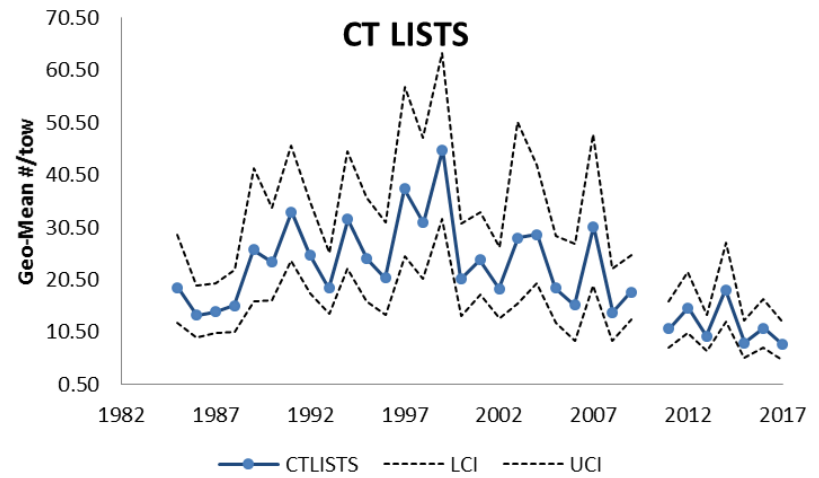
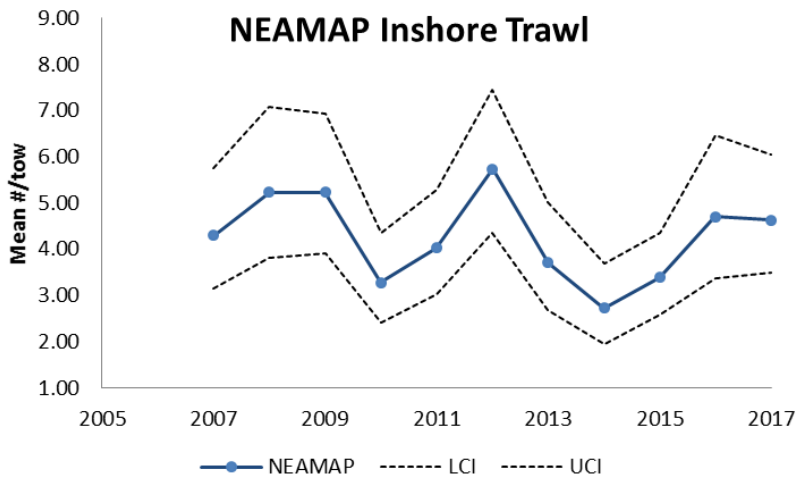
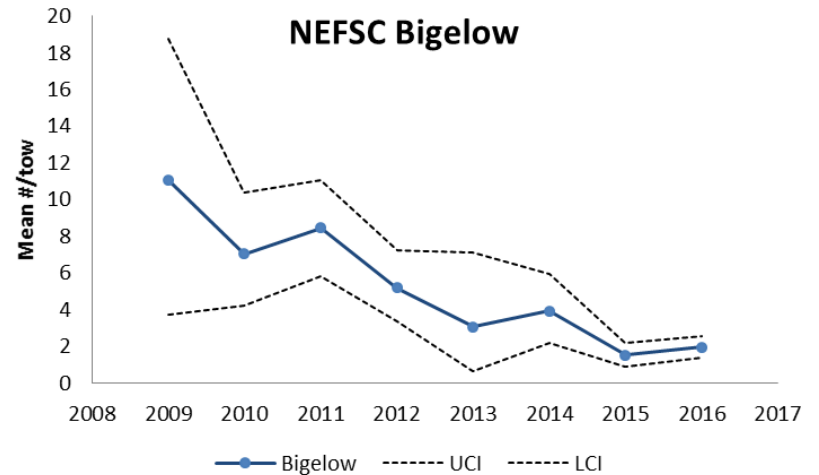
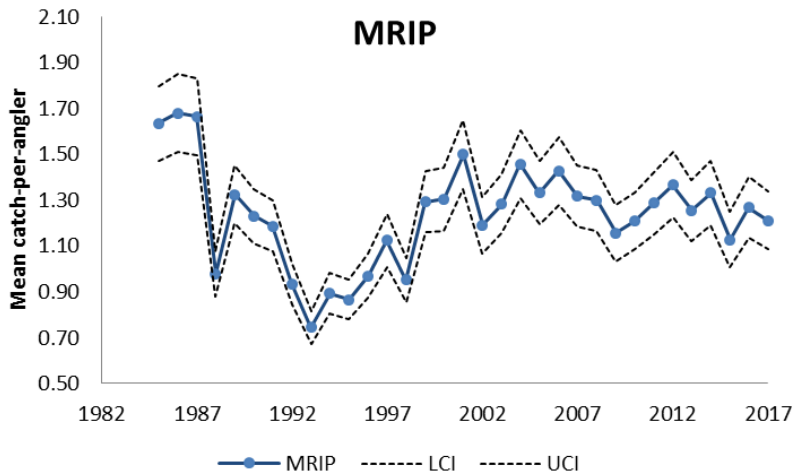


- Updated fishery-independent indices through 2017

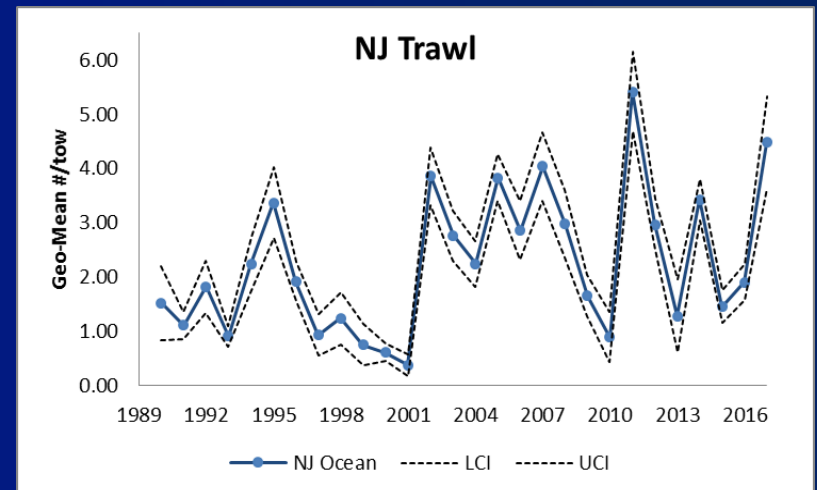
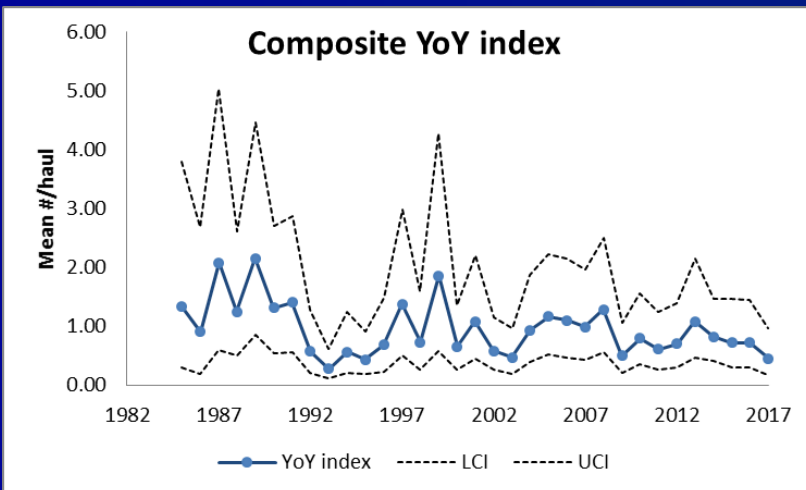
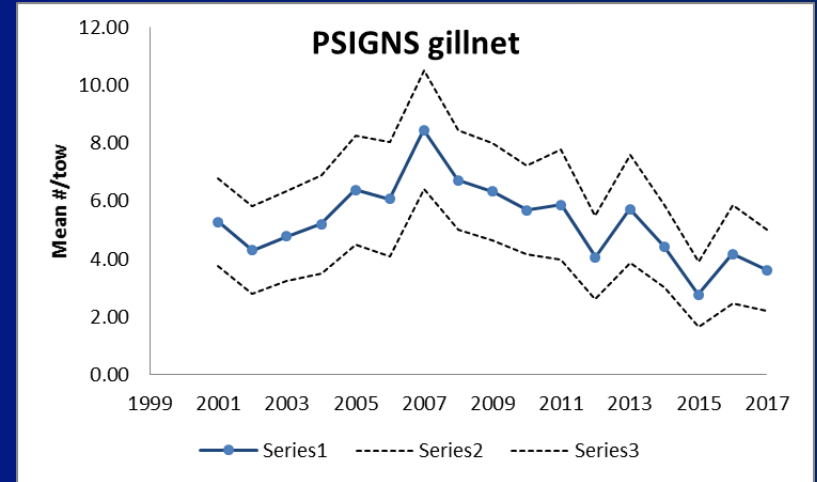
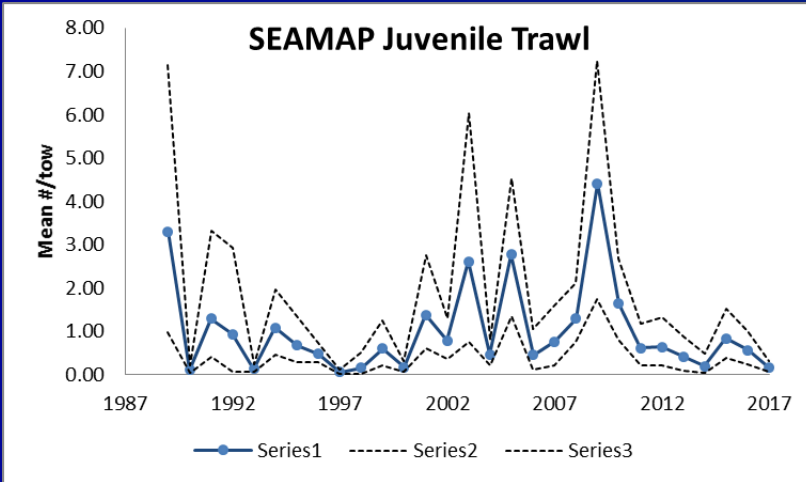




# Data Update



# Data Update

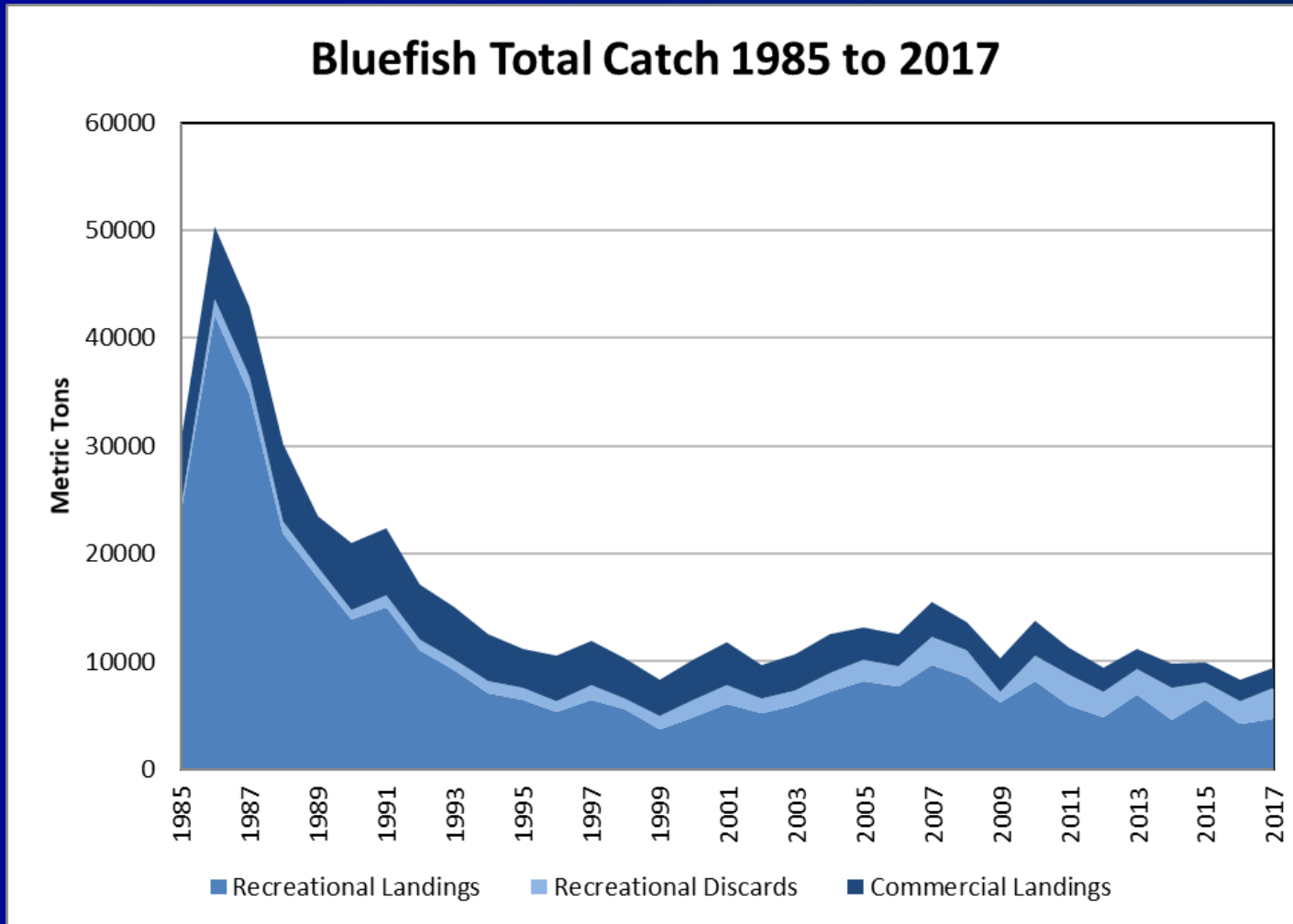


# Management Measures



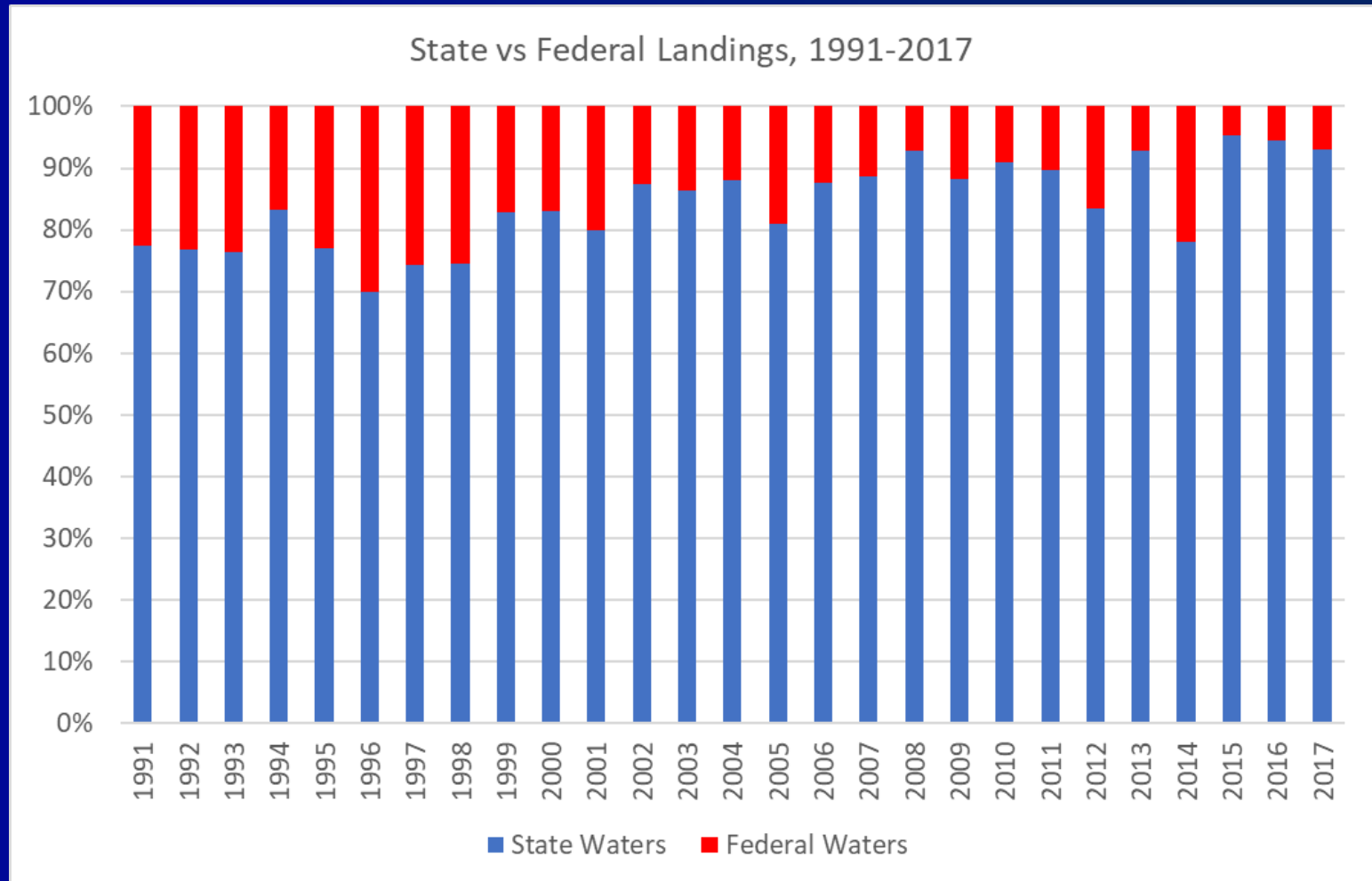
Management Measures		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
TAC <sup>1</sup> / ABC <sup>2</sup>	2000-2005 See table 1	29.15	32.03	31.89	34.08	34.38	31.74	32.04	27.47	24.43	21.54	19.45	20.64	21.81
TAL <sup>3</sup>		24.8	27.76	28.16	29.36	29.26	27.29	28.27	23.86	21.08	18.19	16.46	18.19	18.82
Comm. Quota <sup>4</sup>		8.08	8.69	7.71	9.83	10.21	9.38	10.32	9.08	7.46	5.24	4.88	8.54	7.24
Comm. Landings <sup>5</sup>		6.98	7.51	6.12	7.1	7.55	5.61	4.66	4.12	4.77	4.02	4.1	3.64	-
Rec. Harvest Limit <sup>4</sup>		16.72	19.07	20.45	19.53	18.63	17.81	17.46	14.07	13.62	12.95	11.58	9.65	11.58
Rec. Landings <sup>6</sup>		16.65	21.76	19.79	14.47	16.34	11.5	11.84	16.46	10.46	11.67	9.54	9.52	-
Rec. Possession Limit (# fish)		15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Total Landings		23.63	29.27	25.91	21.57	23.89	17.11	16.5	20.58	15.23	15.69	13.64	13.16	-
Overage/Underage		-1.17	1.51	-2.25	-7.79	-5.37	-10.18	-11.77	-3.28	-5.85	-2.5	-2.82	-5.03	-
Total Catch <sup>7</sup>		28.08	35.12	31.83	25.10	27.93	20.39	19.26	24.06	17.96	18.65	16.09	15.65	-
Overage/Underage		-1.07	3.09	-0.06	-8.98	-6.45	-11.35	-12.78	-3.41	-6.47	-2.89	-3.36	4.99	-

# Catch (landings and discards)



Anthony Wood 2018, Personal communication

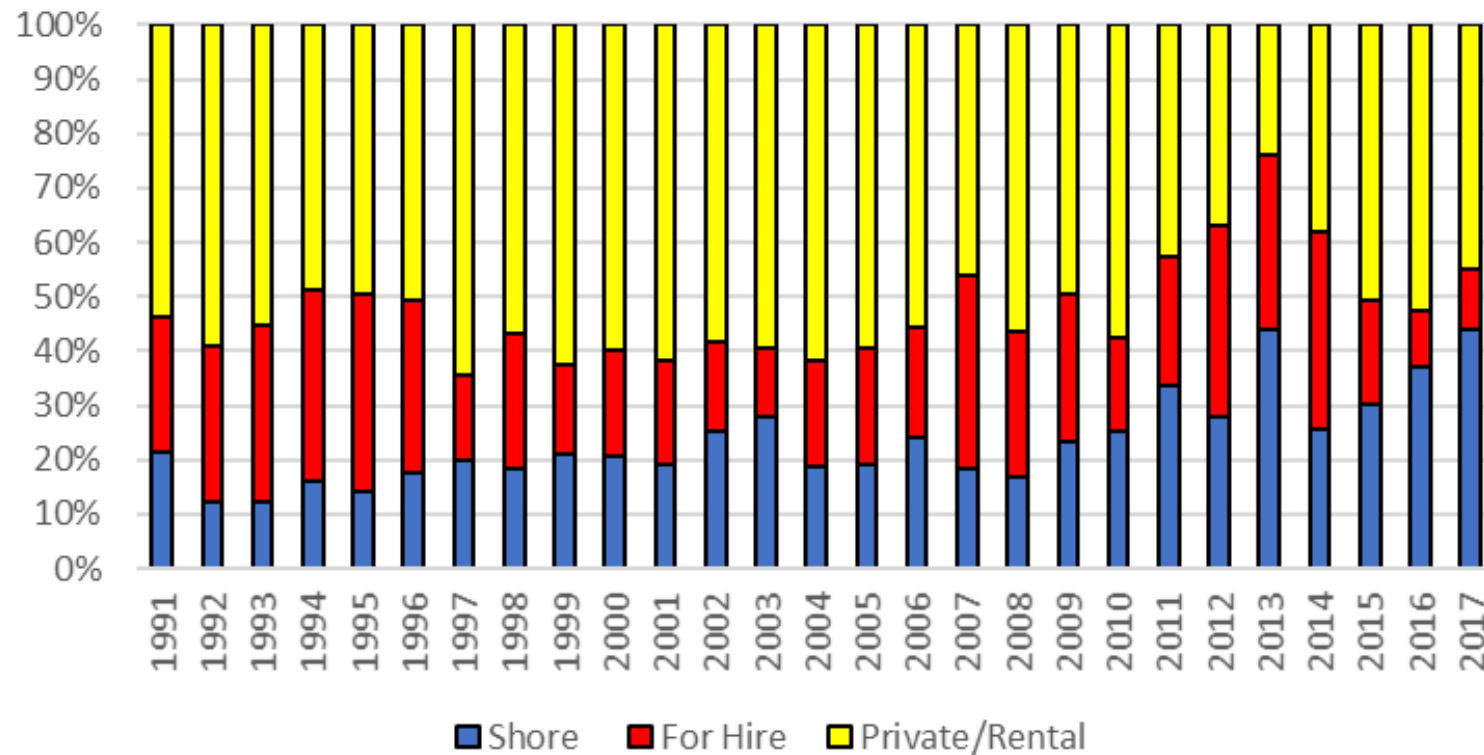
# Recreational Fishery



# Recreational Fishery



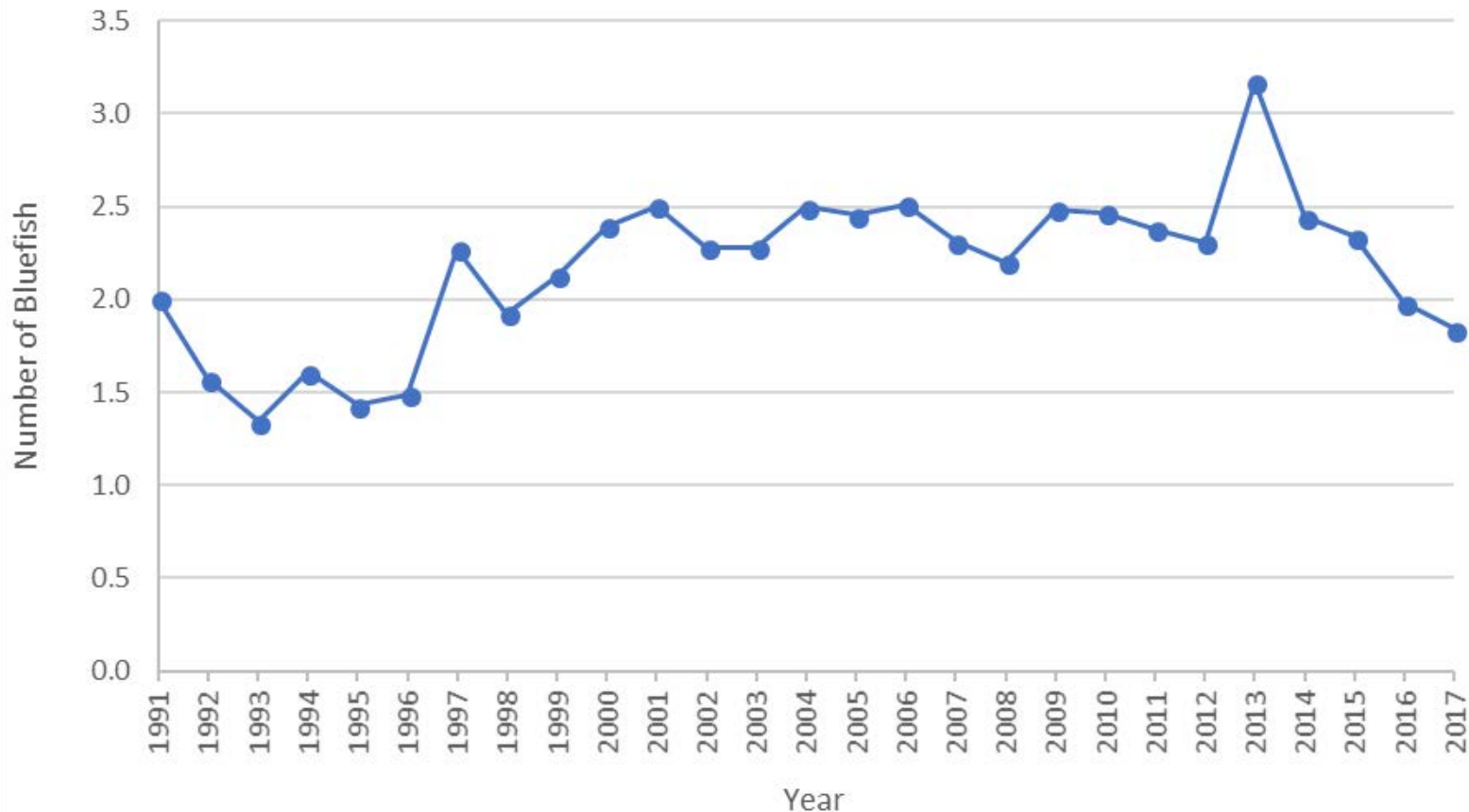
## Recreational Landings by Mode



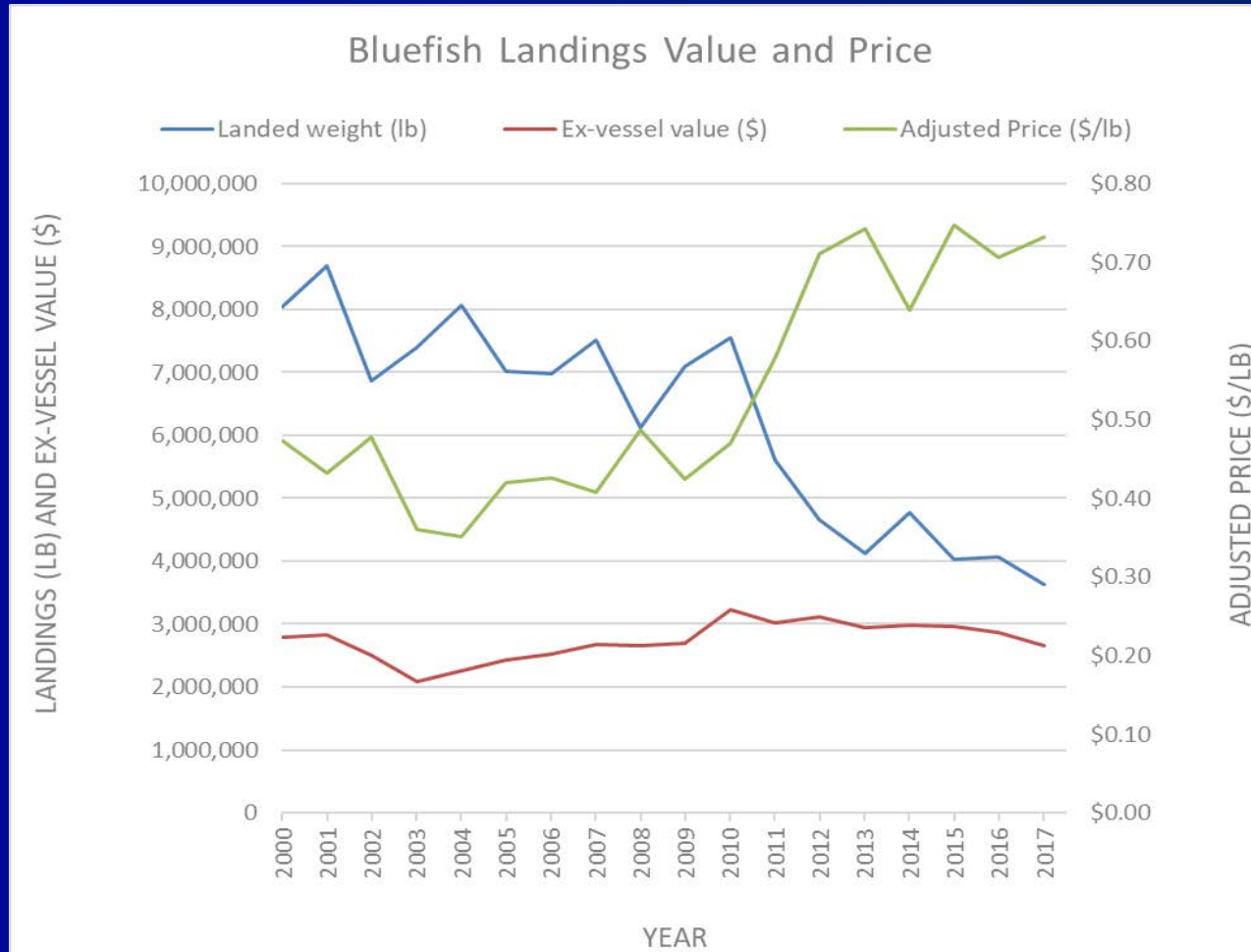
# Recreational Fishery



Recreational Landings per "Bluefish Trip"



# Commercial Fishery

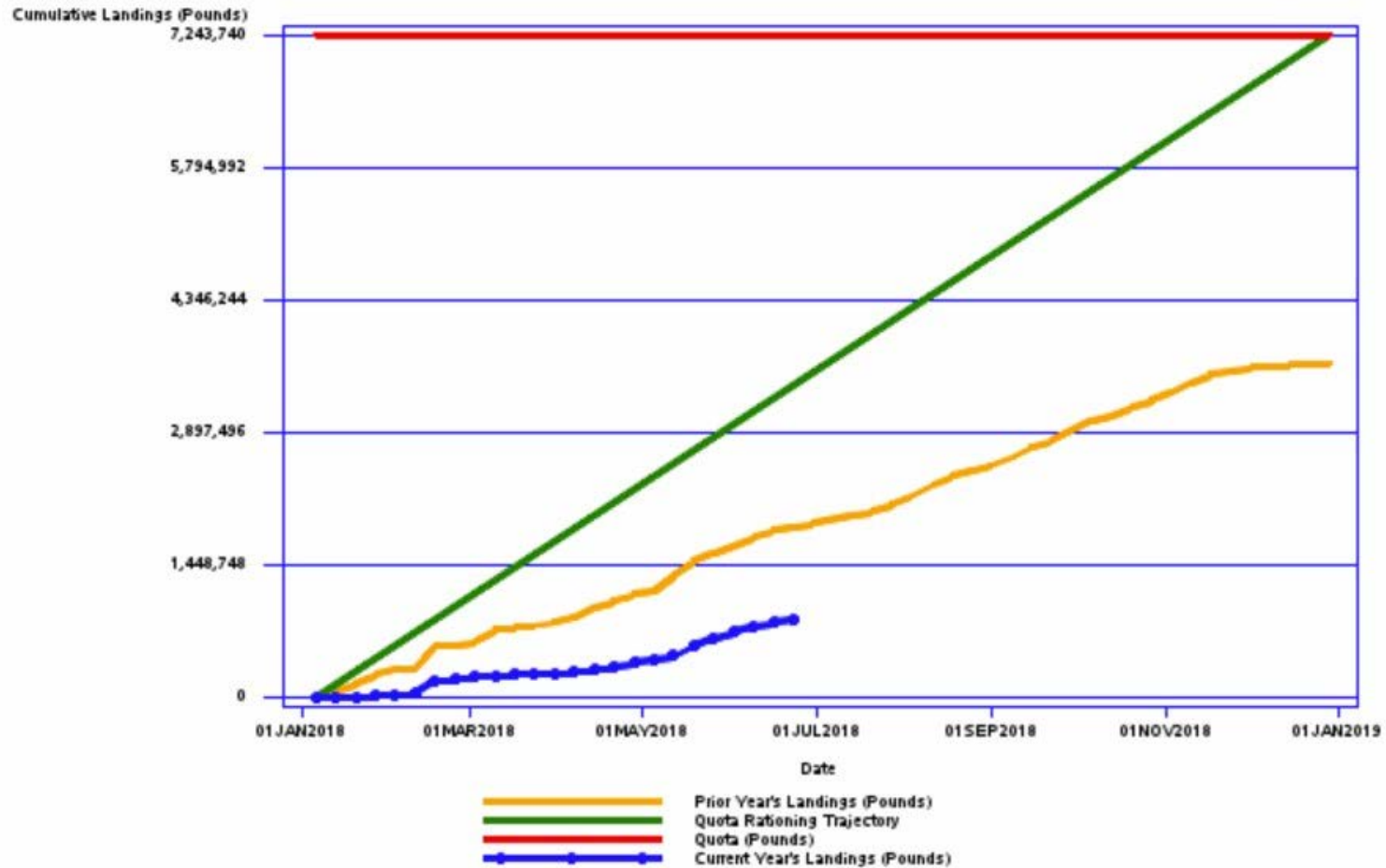




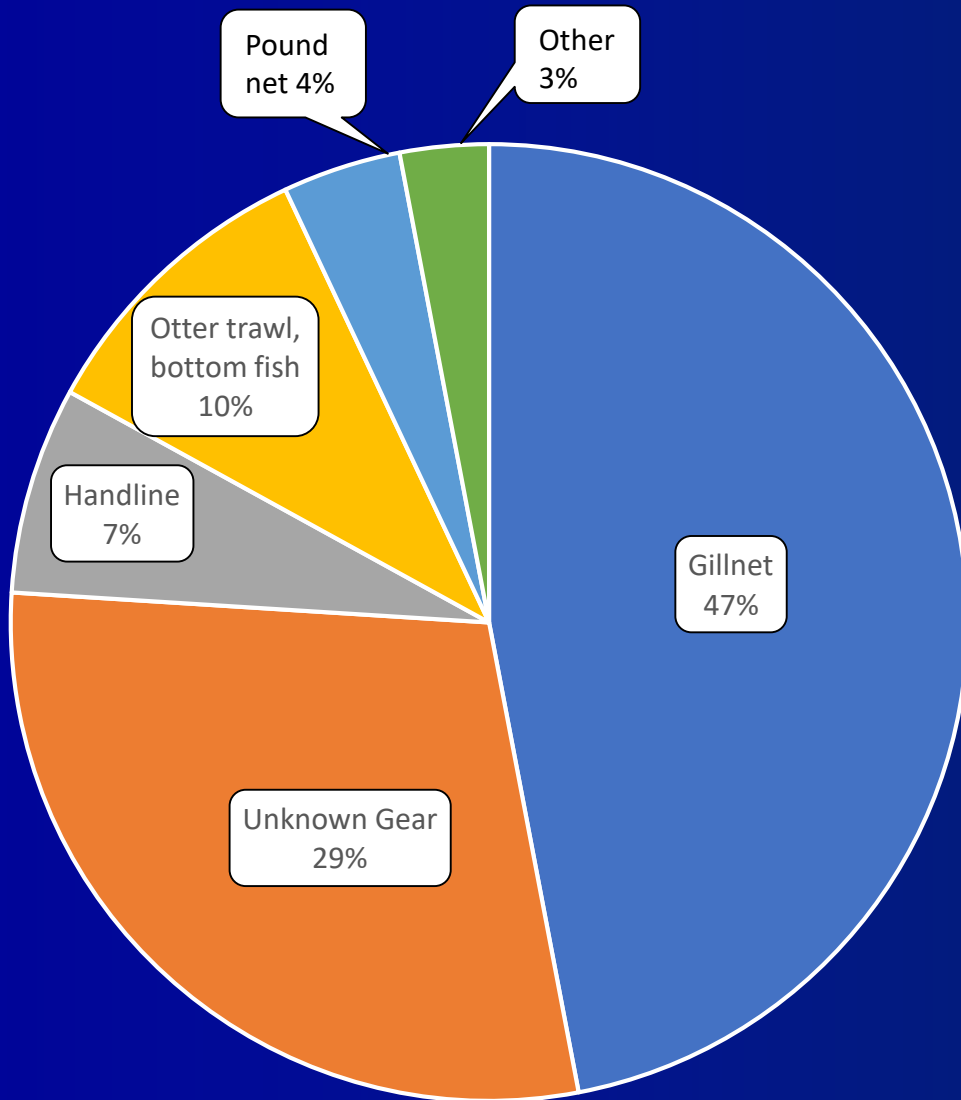
# Commercial Fishery



## Atlantic Bluefish Quota Monitoring Report



# Commercial Fishery



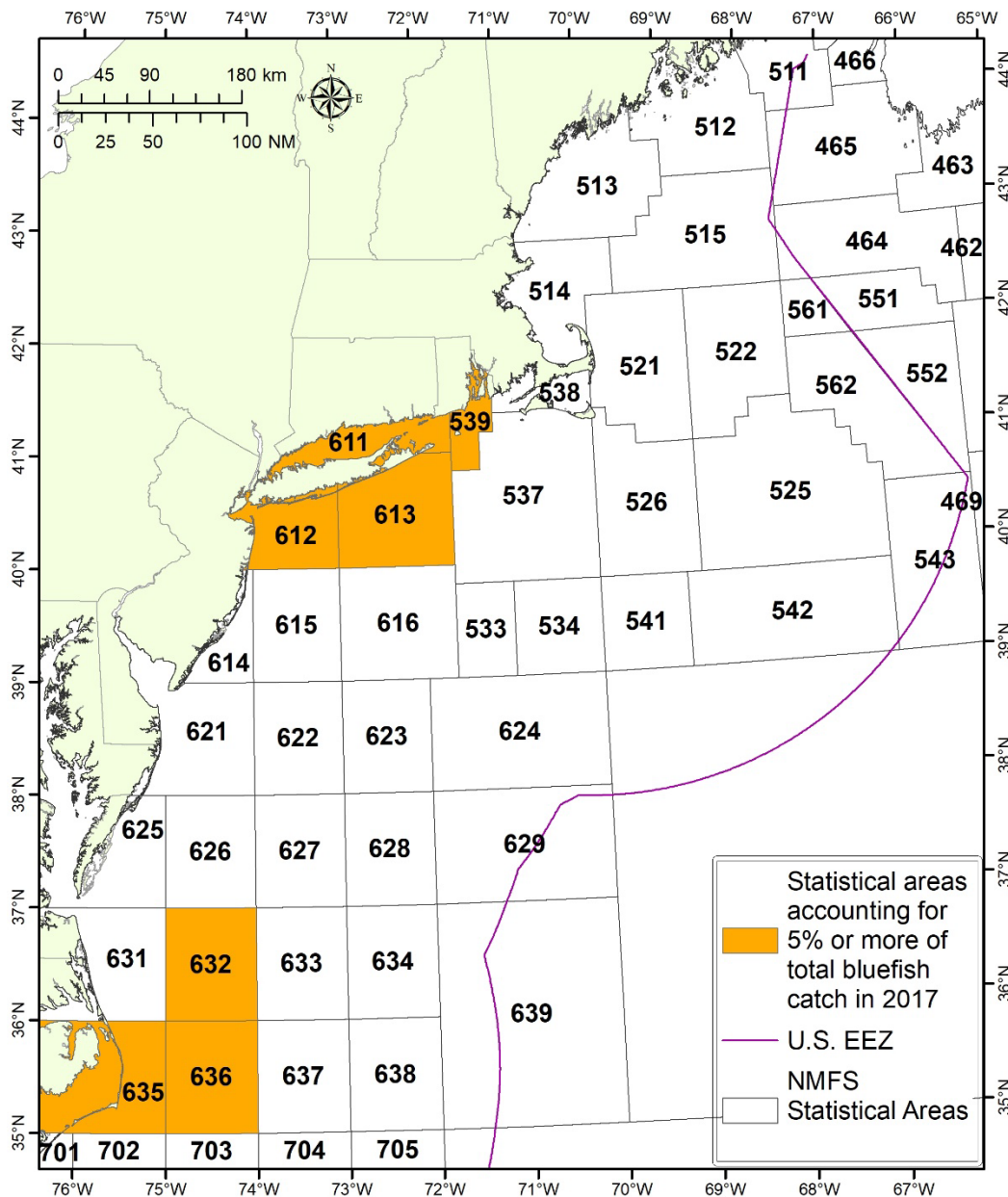
## ■ Landings by Gear - Dealer Data 2017

- Gillnet (47%)
- Unknown (29%)
- Otter trawl, bottom fish (10%)
- Handline (7%)
- Pound net (4%)
- Other (3%)



# Commercial Fishery

5% or more of the total bluefish catch in 2017



# AP Fishery Performance Report



## Recreational Fishery Comments

- Lot less fish (and small fish) compared to previous years
- Less for-hire trips
  - More restrictive measures for species like striped bass or target species has shifted
- *Avoid increase bluefish pressure despite other species being down*
- Seeing lots of bluefish inshore (bays and estuaries)

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## Commercial Fishery Comments

- Large runs arrived on schedule (NY)
- Habits and movement are inconsistent with previous years (NJ)
  - Timing and range
- Strong recruitment over the last few years
- Bluefish are not as abundant in typical locations and are being found further offshore

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## Market/Economic Comments

- Becoming increasingly important to the rec fishery as abundance of other species decreases
- Do not want to see bluefish used as bait
- May run of large fish
  - \$0.20/lb
- June-July run of smaller fish (3 lb)
  - \$0.50-0.70/lb, occasionally over \$1.00/lb

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## Management/Fishery Regulations Comments

- Quotas may be too cautious (NY)
  - Increase to use up the TAL
- Reduce bag limit from 15 to 10 fish
- Commercial discards still appear to be relatively low (some advisors are skeptical of the lack of comm discards)

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## Research, Environmental and Other Comments

- Better understand the dynamics of inshore and offshore populations
- Address high recreational discards
- Runs of large fish 10 miles up inlets and further offshore
- What is causing these fish to move out?  
What factors do bluefish cue in on?




# Staff ABC Recommendation



- Maintain status quo specified ABC for 2019
- Assessment update in 2019

# Current and Recommended ABCs

	2018		2019	
	Mil lb.	mt	Mil lb.	mt
<b>OFL</b>	27.97	12,687	27.97	12,687
<b>ABC</b>	21.82	9,897	21.82	9,897

# Federal permits/activity



- 2017 Federally Permitted Statistics
  - 2,510 (2,562) commercial vessels
  - 897 (908) p/c vessels
  - 397 (412) dealers
  
  - 611 (648) commercial vessels landed bluefish
  - 261 (295) p/c vessels landed bluefish (VTR)
  - 158 (167) dealers purchased bluefish

\* Parentheses indicate numbers from 2016