



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901

Phone: 302-674-2331 | FAX: 302-674-5399 | www.mafmc.org

P. Weston Townsend, Chairman | Michael P. Luisi, Vice Chairman

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 4, 2023
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Kiley Dancy, Staff
Subject: Recreation Demand Model Outputs to Inform Summer Flounder Non-Preferred and Precautionary Default Measures for 2024-2025

This memo provides supplemental information for the Monitoring Committee's December 7 discussion of 2024-2025 recreational measures for summer flounder. Additional information can be found in the following documents:

1. [Monitoring Committee meeting summary from November 13-14, 2023](#) (Part 2: recreational measures)
2. [Staff memo on summer flounder recreational measures dated November 8, 2023](#)
3. [Staff presentation from November 13](#) on summer flounder measures

As noted in the previous Monitoring Committee meeting summary, the MC recommended a continuation of regional conservation equivalency to achieve the **28% reduction in harvest** needed for summer flounder (i.e., the percent difference between the projected harvest of 8.88 million pounds and the RHL of 6.35 million pounds). At the time of that meeting, Recreation Demand Model (RDM) results were not available to inform selection of non-preferred coastwide measures and precautionary default measures. The Monitoring Committee should provide recommendations for these measures after reviewing the RDM outputs below.

Staff recommend adopting coastwide 5 as the non-preferred coastwide measures for summer flounder (18.5 inches, 3 fish, May 8-September 30), and leaving the current precautionary default measures status quo (20 inches, 2 fish, July 1-August 31).

Measures are listed in the order in which they were run (note that the current non-preferred measures are run #2). The summary table provides the key results for summer flounder, while the remaining tables also include information describing the impact on scup and black sea bass harvest.

Summary

Comparison of coastwide summer flounder alternatives.				
Alternative	SF bag	SF size	SF season	Median percent change in coastwide harvest pounds (80% CIs)
Coastwide 1	3	19	May 25 - August 31	-54.40 (-56.24, -53.00)
Coastwide 2 (Status quo NP coastwide)	3	18	May 15 - Sep. 22	-15.46 (-17.89, -13.62)
Coastwide 3	3	18.5	May 15 - Sep. 22	-33.95 (-35.37, -32.66)
Coastwide 4	3	18.5	May 15 - Sep. 30	-31.59 (-32.97, -30.17)
Coastwide 5	3	18.5	May 8 – Sep. 30	-30.12 (-31.54, -28.78)

Notes: Regulations for scup and black sea bass set at 2023 status-quo values. Lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals.

Coastwide 1: 19 inches, 3 fish, May 25-August 31

RDM coastwide alternative 1 projections for 2024 (sent on 11/14/2023, revised and sent 11/16/2023)

Species	Median percent change in coastwide harvest (pounds) = (coastwide1-SQ)/SQ)*100	Lower bound	Upper bound
Black sea bass	-16.81	-20.91	-12.97
Scup	-0.35	-0.43	-0.29
Summer flounder	-54.40	-56.24	-53.00

Notes: lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals. Regulations for black sea bass set at 15-inch minimum size, a 5 fish possession limit, and a May 15 – September 8 open season. Regulations for summer flounder set at 19-inch minimum size, 3 fish possession limit, May 25-August 31 season. Scup regulations set at 2023 status-quo values.

Coastwide 2: 18 inches, 3 fish, May 15-September 22 (Current Non-Preferred Coastwide Measures)

RDM coastwide alternative 2 projections for 2024 (sent on 11/17/2023)

Species	Median percent change in coastwide harvest (pounds) = (coastwide2-SQ)/SQ)*100	Lower bound	Upper bound
Black sea bass	-0.47	-0.54	-0.41
Scup	0.14	0.11	0.18
Summer flounder	-15.46	-17.89	-13.62

Notes: lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals. Regulations for summer flounder are set at 18-inch minimum size, 3 fish bag limit, and open season of May 15 to September 22. Scup and black sea bass regulations set at 2023 status-quo values.

Coastwide 3: 18.5 inches, 3 fish, May 15-September 22

RDM coastwide alternative 3 projections for 2024 (sent on 11/22/2023)

Species	Median percent change in coastwide harvest (pounds) = (coastwide3-SQ)/SQ)*100	Lower bound	Upper bound
Black sea bass	-0.82	-0.88	-0.75
Scup	-0.17	-0.19	-0.16
Summer flounder	-33.95	-35.37	-32.66

Notes: lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals. Regulations for summer flounder set at 18.5-inch minimum size, 3 fish bag limit, and open season of May 15 to September 22. Scup and black sea bass regulations set at 2023 status-quo values.

Coastwide 4: 18.5 inches, 3 fish, May 15-September 30

Species	Median percent change in coastwide harvest (pounds) = (coastwide1-SQ)/SQ)*100	Lower bound	Upper bound
Black sea bass	-0.78	-0.85	-0.71
Scup	-0.13	-0.14	-0.12
Summer flounder	-31.59	-32.97	-30.17

Notes: lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals. Regulations for summer flounder set at 18.5-inch minimum size, 3 fish bag limit, and open season of May 15 to September 30. Scup and black sea bass regulations set at 2023 status-quo values.

Coastwide 5: 18.5 inches, 3 fish, May 8-September 30

RDM coastwide alternative 5 projections for 2024 (sent on 12/4/2023)

Species	Median percent change in coastwide harvest (pounds) = $(\text{coastwide1-SQ}/\text{SQ}) * 100$	Lower bound	Upper bound
Black sea bass	-0.78	-0.85	-0.71
Scup	-0.11	-0.12	-0.10
Summer flounder	-30.12	-31.54	-28.78

Notes: lower and upper bounds correspond to the 10th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of model output and represent 80% confidence intervals. Regulations for summer flounder set at 18.5-inch minimum size, 3 fish bag limit, and open season of May 8 to September 30. Scup and black sea bass regulations set at 2023 status-quo values.