



# **Black Sea Bass**

## **2020 Recreational Measures**

Council and Board Meeting

December 11, 2019

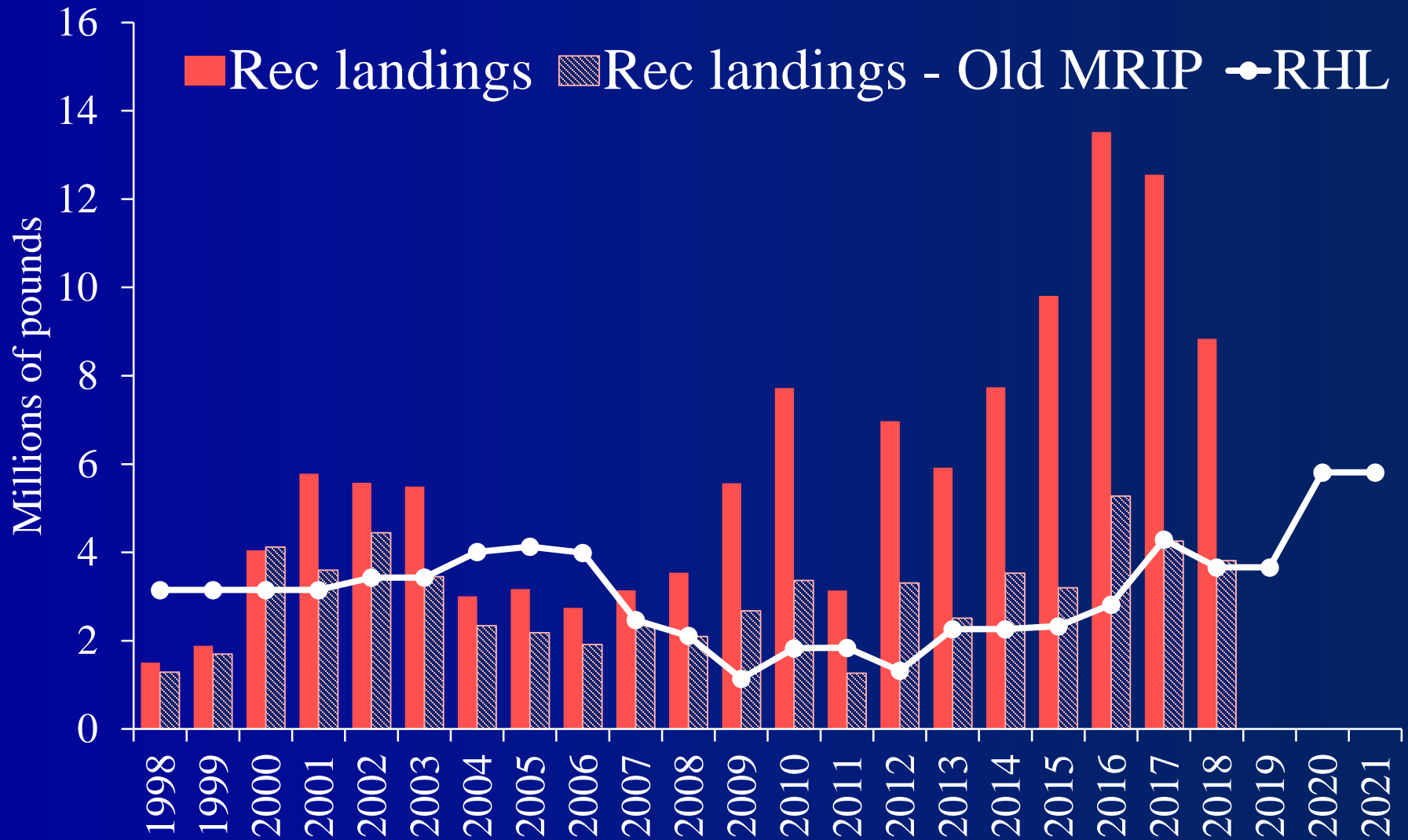
Annapolis, MD

# Objectives

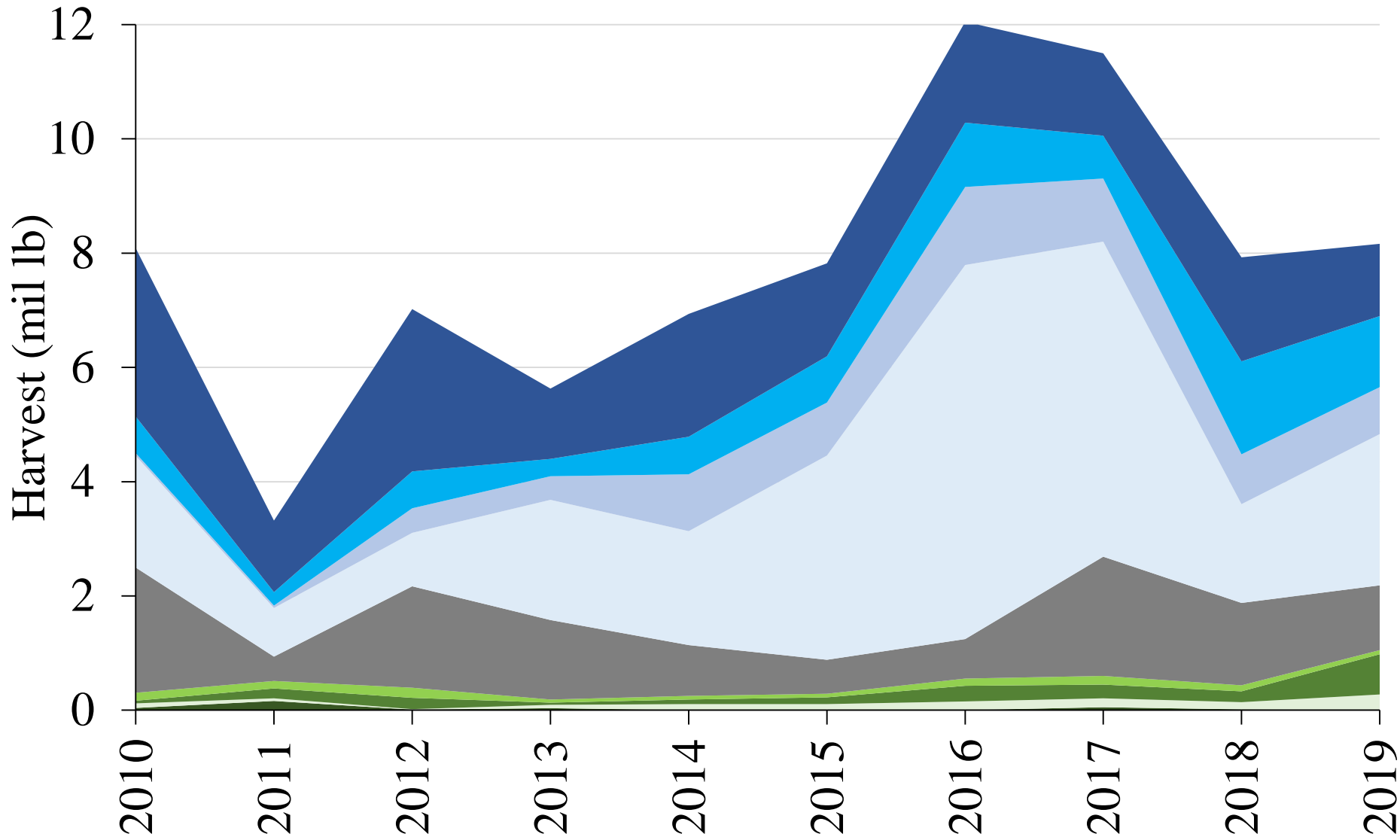
- Review recent fishery performance
- Review staff, Monitoring Committee, and AP recommendations
- Recommend 2020 federal waters recreational management measures



# Harvest vs. RHL



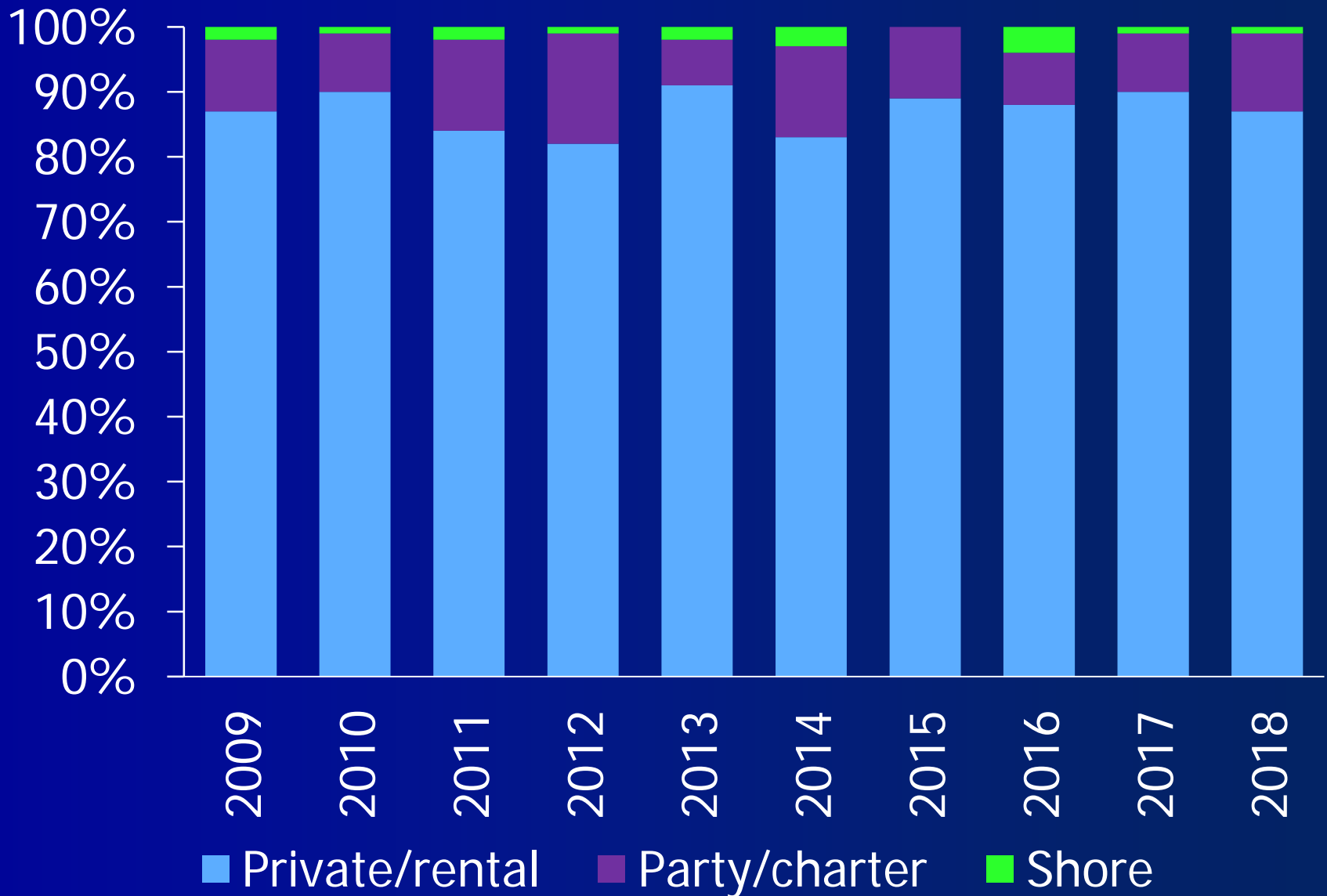
■ NC ■ VA ■ MD ■ DE ■ NJ ■ NY ■ CT ■ RI ■ MA



# % of harvest in lb from state and federal waters, 2014-2018

State	State Waters	Federal Waters
MA	89%	11%
RI	79%	21%
CT	92%	8%
NY	51%	49%
NJ	34%	66%
DE	7%	93%
MD	26%	74%
VA	26%	74%
NC	13%	87%
ME-NC	63%	37%
ME-NJ	65%	35%
DE-NC	21%	79%

# Recreational Harvest by Mode



# 2018-2019 Federal Measures

- 12.5-inch TL minimum size
- 15 fish possession limit
- Feb 1 – 28, May 15 - December 31
  - Previously closed 1/1 – 5/15 and 9/22 – 10/21

State	Size	Bag	Season
<b>ME</b>	13	10	May 19-Sept 21; Oct 18-Dec 31
<b>NH</b>	13	10	Jan 1-Dec 31
<b>MA</b>	15	5	2019: May 18-Sept 8
<b>RI</b>	15	3	June 24–Aug 31
		7	Sept 1-Dec 31
<b>CT Private, Shore</b>	15	5	May 19-Dec 31
<b>CT Party/Charter</b>	15	5	May 19-Aug 31
		7	Sept 1-Dec 31
<b>NY</b>	15	3	June 23-Aug 31
		7	Sept 1-Dec 31
<b>NJ</b>	12.5	10	May 15-June 22
		2	July 1-Aug 31
		10	Oct 8-Oct 31
	13	15	Nov 1–Dec 31
<b>DE-NC</b> (N. Hatteras)	12.5	15	DE & MD: May 15-Dec 31
			VA: Feb 1-28, May 15-31, Jun 22-Dec 31
			NC: Feb 1-28, May 17 – Dec 31



# Accountability Measures

- Need to compare past ACLs to “old” MRIP data
- 3 yr avg ACL vs. 3 yr avg catch: 52% overage
- Overage payback not required due to biomass level
- Adjustments to bag/size/season should be considered, taking into account performance of measures and conditions that precipitated overage

Year	Rec. ACL	Rec. landings	Rec. dead discards	Rec. Catch	% Over ACL
2016	3.52	5.19	3.45	8.64	+145%
2017	5.38	4.16	1.27	5.43	+1%
2018	4.59	3.82	1.10	4.92	+7%
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.50</b>	<b>4.39</b>	<b>1.94</b>	<b>6.86</b>	<b>+52%</b>

# Conservation Equivalency

- Option to waive federal waters measures in favor of state measures where anglers land their catch.
- Non-preferred coastwide measures
  - Bag/size/season that would constrain harvest to RHL if implemented in all state and federal waters
  - Example: 14", May 22 – Oct 8, 3 fish
- Precautionary default measures
  - Bag/size/season used as a deterrent to encourage states to develop measures which can be approved through ASMFC process

# 2019 Harvest Projections

- Preliminary 2019 w1-4 harvest = 4.88 mil lb
- Staff memo projections:
  - Proportion of harvest by state and wave in 2018
  - 2018 and 2019 w1-4 estimates for VA and NC increased to account for Feb harvest not sampled by MRIP
  - 8.17 mil lb total projected harvest
- Monitoring Committee modification:
  - Coastwide proportions of harvest by wave in 2018
  - Reduces PSEs on input data
  - No state-specific adjustments needed
  - 7.33 mil lb total projected harvest

# 2019 Projections

State	2019 w1-4 harvest	2018 w1-4 as % of w1-6	2019 projected w1-6 harvest	% of projected 2019 w1-6 harvest
ME	0	N/A	0	0.0%
NH	0	N/A	0	0.0%
MA	1,203,200	95%	1,264,469	15.5%
RI	602,352	48%	1,243,050	15.2%
CT	620,517	76%	820,038	10.0%
NY	1,315,315	50%	2,651,282	32.5%
NJ	853,298	75%	1,131,593	13.9%
DE	26,501	37%	72,386	0.9%
MD	79,918	11%	705,083	8.6%
VA	171,585	63%	270,654	
NC	3,700	44%	8,467	0.1%
<b>Total state-by-state</b>	<b>4,876,386</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>8,167,024</b>	<b>Monitoring Committee Recommendation</b>
<b>Total coastwide</b>			<b>7,330,567</b>	

Staff memo

Monitoring Committee Recommendation



# 2020 Measures

- 2020 RHL = 5.81 million pounds
- MC projection for 2019 harvest = 7.33 million pounds
- Harvest would need to decrease by 20% to prevent exceeding 2020 RHL

# Measures For 20% Reduction

- Differs from staff memo, which considered 29% reduction based on initial staff projections
- Reduce bag from 15 to 6 fish, or
- Close w3 and 5 days in w5
  - New season: Feb 1-28 and July 6 – Dec 31
  - 2019 season: Feb 1 – 28 and May 15 – Dec 31
- Considers impact only on DE-NC, assuming measures in those states will match federal measures and state waters measures in ME-NJ will continue to be more restrictive

# *Status Quo* Rec. Measures

May result in overages of RHL (+26%), rec. ACL (23%), and ABC (+12%). OFL underage (-13%).

2020 Estimate	Value	Basis
Rec. harvest	7.33 mil lb	MC projections
Rec. discards	2.64 mil lb	Projections + assessment value for 2018
Com. landings	5.58 mil lb	2020 com. quota
Com. disc.	1.40 mil lb	Council/Board recommendation
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.95 mil lb</b>	
<b>ABC</b>	<b>15.07 mil lb</b>	SSC recommendation
<b>OFL</b>	<b>19.39 mil lb</b>	Assessment

# 15% Harvest Reduction

- Recommended in staff memo due to concerns about *status quo* resulting in ABC overage
- Reduce bag limit from 15 to 8 fish, or
- Close at least 38 days in wave 3
  - New season: Feb 1 – 28 and June 8 (or later) – Dec 31
  - 2019 season: Feb 1 – 28 and May 15 – Dec 31
- Less than 5% ABC overage and 18% OFL underage



# MC Recommendations

- **Status quo measures in state and federal waters.**
- Hard to constrain rec. catch under high availability.
- Biomass has remained well above target despite multiple consecutive years of ABC overages.
- May continue to see periodic above-average year classes with mild winters.
- Some signs of strong 2018 year class.
- Need for 20% reduction largely driven by MRIP change and sector allocation, not a conservation need.
- Scale of needed reduction could not be known until new MRIP numbers were used in assessment (August 2019).

# MC Recommendations

- No changes to measures to address triggering of accountability measure.
- Conservation equivalency (waiving federal measures) *NOT* recommended – requires constraining harvest to the RHL.
- Council and Board should prioritize consideration of modifications to 51% recreational / 49% commercial allocation of landings portion of ABC.

# AP Recommendations/Comments

Not consensus statements:

- Status quo but would prefer liberalization.
- Frustrating that fishery needs to be so restricted when stock is so healthy.
- Constraining to RHL would devastate the fishery.
- Request that SSC reconsider their OFL CV recommendation.
- For-hire fishery penalized by MRIP changes, which were largely driven by private angler estimates.
- For-hire sector should be managed differently than private anglers.

# AP Recommendations/Comments

- All anglers should report electronically.
- Feb opening helped restore some of the winter fishery off VA.
- Federal conservation equivalency should not be used – state measures require use of MRIP data with high PSEs.
- Total cumulative length limit with no discards.
- Change to com/rec allocation could allow for a liberalization.
- Imports should be considered in regards to allocation.

# February Rec. Fishery

- Feb 1 – 28 open in 2018 and beyond under specific constraints.
- States must opt-in. Measures during rest of year must account for expected Feb harvest.
- 15 fish bag, 12.5" min. size.
- No changes can be made to fed. regs for 2020.
- Board discussion: Process/timeline for state participation in Feb 2020 fishery. If new states opt in, what would that mean for status quo mgmt?

State	Expected Feb Harvest
RI	288 lb
CT	57 lb
NY	9,410 lb
NJ	82,850 lb
DE	1,297 lb
MD	541 lb
VA	5,496 lb
NC	62 lb
Total	100,000 lb

# Decision Points

- 2020 federal recreational measures
- 2020 Feb fishery process/timeline for state participation

Reduction	Measures
20%	Bag reduction only: 12.5", 6 fish, Feb 1-28 and May 15 - Dec 31
	Season reduction only: 12.5", 15 fish, Feb 1-28 and July 6 – Dec 31
15%	Bag reduction only: 12.5", 8 fish, Feb 1-28 and May 15- Dec 31
	Season reduction only: 12.5", 15 fish, Feb 1 – 28 and Jun 8 – Dec 31
0%	12.5", 15 fish, Feb 1-28 and May 15 - Dec 31

# 2018 Harvest by Wave (lbs)

State	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 5	W 6
MA	0%	0%	69%	24%	7%	0%
RI	0%	0%	5%	39%	49%	6%
CT	0%	0%	12%	54%	32%	1%
NY	0%	0%	0%	46%	27%	26%
NJ	0%	0%	43%	27%	20%	11%
DE	0%	0%	45%	10%	11%	33%
MD	0%	0%	14%	27%	51%	8%
VA	0%	0%	34%	30%	35%	2%
NC	0%	2%	32%	7%	34%	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>14%</b>

# % Reduction in DE-NC Harvest

Bag Limit	2016	2017	2018	Average
10	1%	11%	16%	9%
9	2%	13%	19%	11%
8	2%	15%	23%	13%
7	3%	18%	27%	16%
6	4%	21%	32%	19%
5	7%	26%	38%	24%
4	10%	34%	44%	29%
3	13%	43%	52%	36%
2	28%	55%	61%	48%
1	49%	73%	79%	67%



Wave	Days open in 2018	% of 2018 DE-NC harvest	% of 2018 DE-NC harvest per day in wave
1 Jan-Feb	DE & MD: 0 VA & NC: 28	1.2%	0.0%
2 Mar-Apr	0	0.0%	0.0%
3 May-Jun	47	20.2%	0.4%
4 Jul-Aug	62	12.3%	0.2%
5 Sept-Oct	61	51.1%	0.8%
6 Nov-Dec	61	15.2%	0.2%

# Predicting 2020 Harvest

- Number directed BSB trips relatively stable during 2016-2018
- Varying year class strengths
  - 2015 year class more than 2x average - availability of legal-sized BSB may remain high
  - 2017 year class well below average - availability of sub-legal BSB may decrease

# SSC Remand Criteria

The Council may remand back to the SSC its ABC recommendation based on the following criteria:

- Failure of the Committee to follow the terms of reference provided to it by the Council;
- An error, in fact or omission, in the materials provided to the Committee;
- An error in fact in the calculations, if any, undertaken by the Committee in developing its ABC recommendation; and
- Failure of the Committee to follow its standard operating procedures.