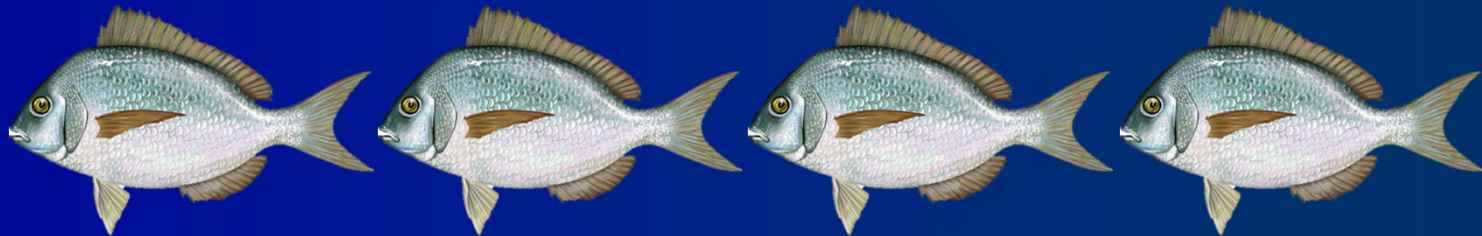


# Scup



Council and Board  
2024-2025 Specifications  
*August 8, 2023*

# Overview



Photo courtesy: M. Eversmier

## ■ Presentation:

- 2023 Management Track Assessment results
- Recent Fishery Performance and AP FPR
- SSC recommendations
- Monitoring Committee recommendations

## ■ Council/Board Objectives:

- Adopt recommendations for 2024-2025 ACLs, ACTs, comm. quota, and RHL
- Review commercial management measures and recommend changes if warranted

# Stock Status: 2023 Management Track Assessment

## Spawning Stock Biomass

- Not overfished in 2022
- Adjusted 2022 SSB = 193,087 mt
- More than double  $SSB_{40\%} = SSB_{MSY} = 78,593$  mt

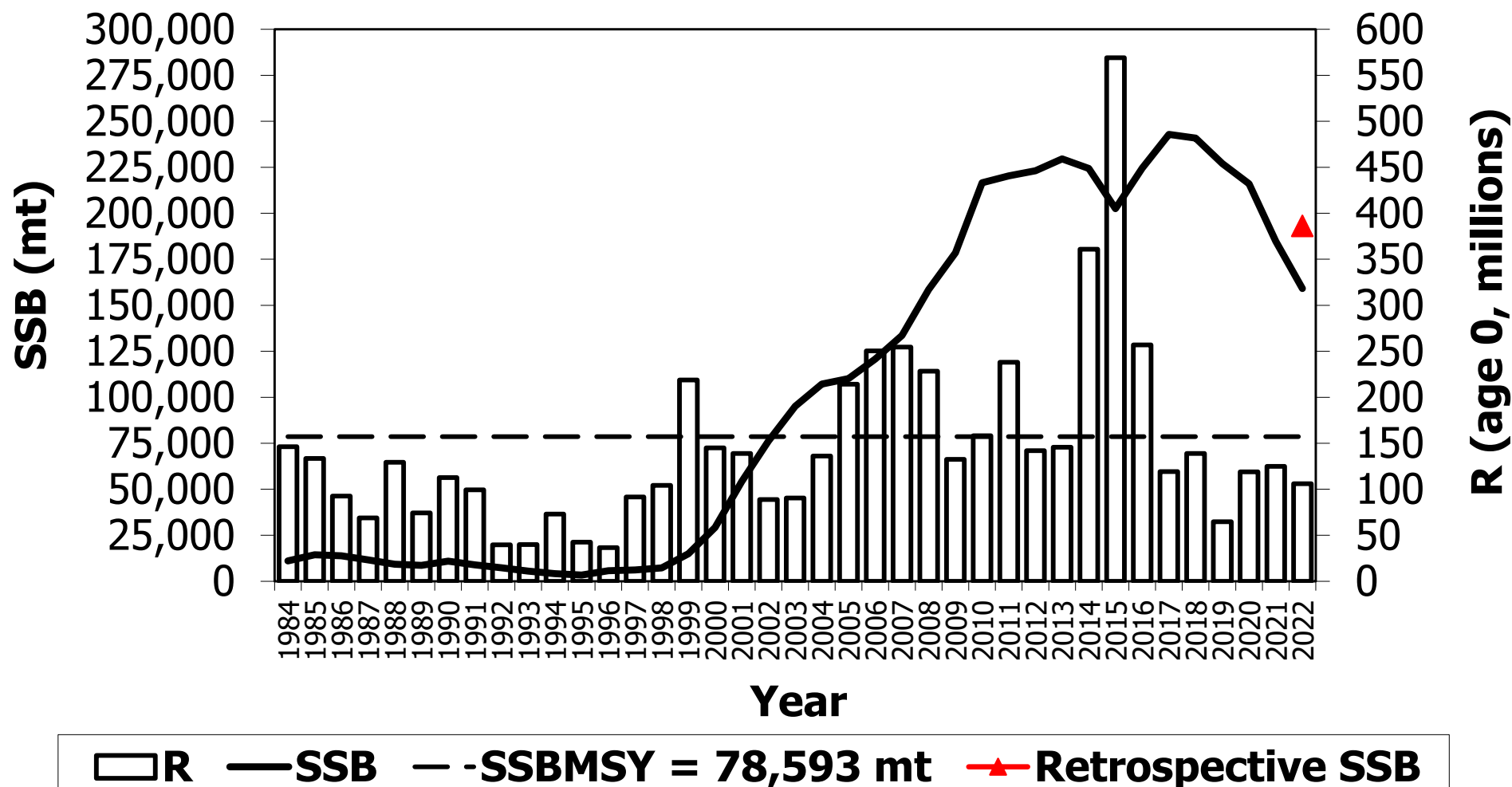
## Fishing Mortality (F)

- Overfishing not occurring in 2022
- Adjusted 2022 F = 0.098
- 52% of  $F_{40\%} = F_{MSY}$  proxy = 0.190

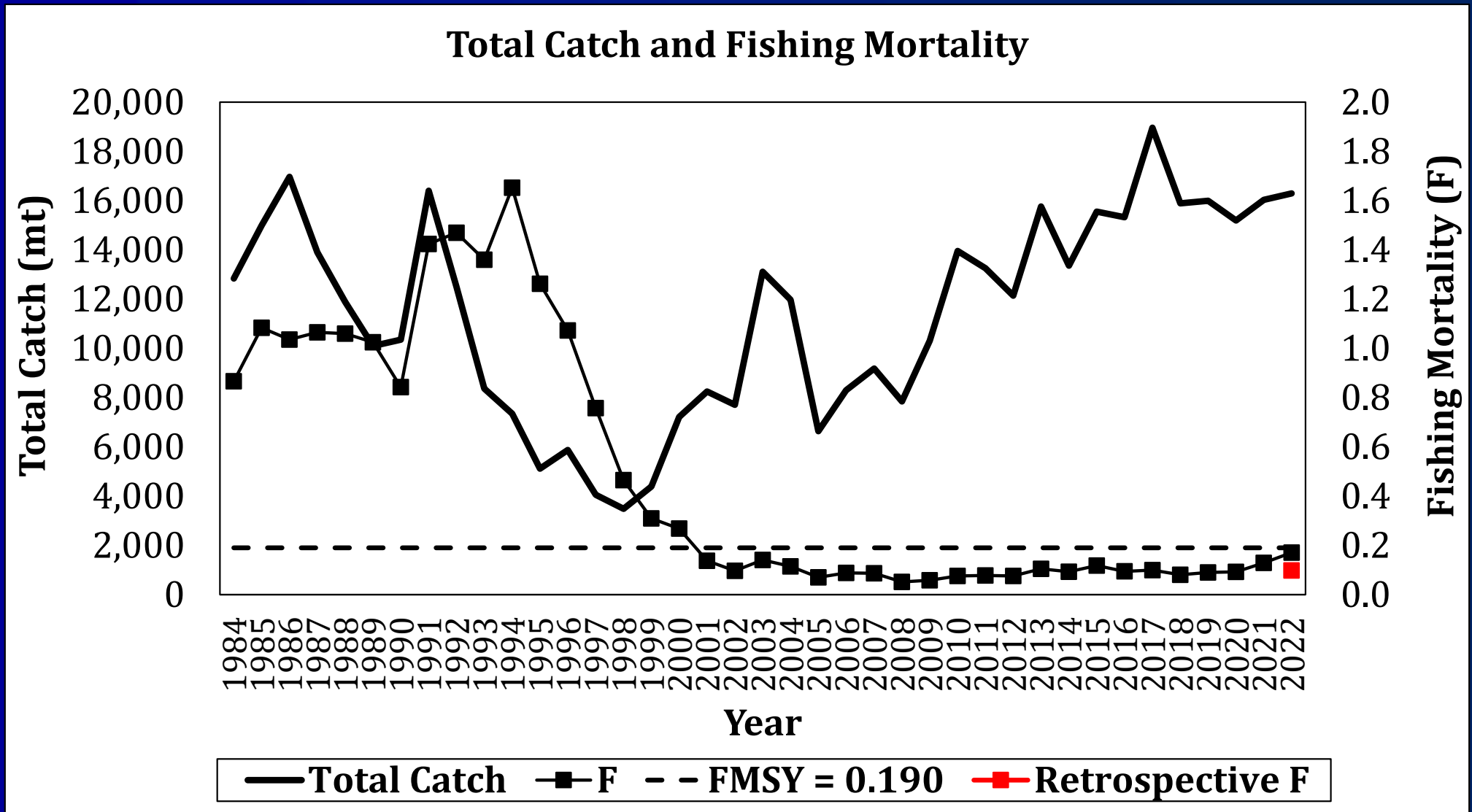
# Spawning Stock Biomass and Recruitment



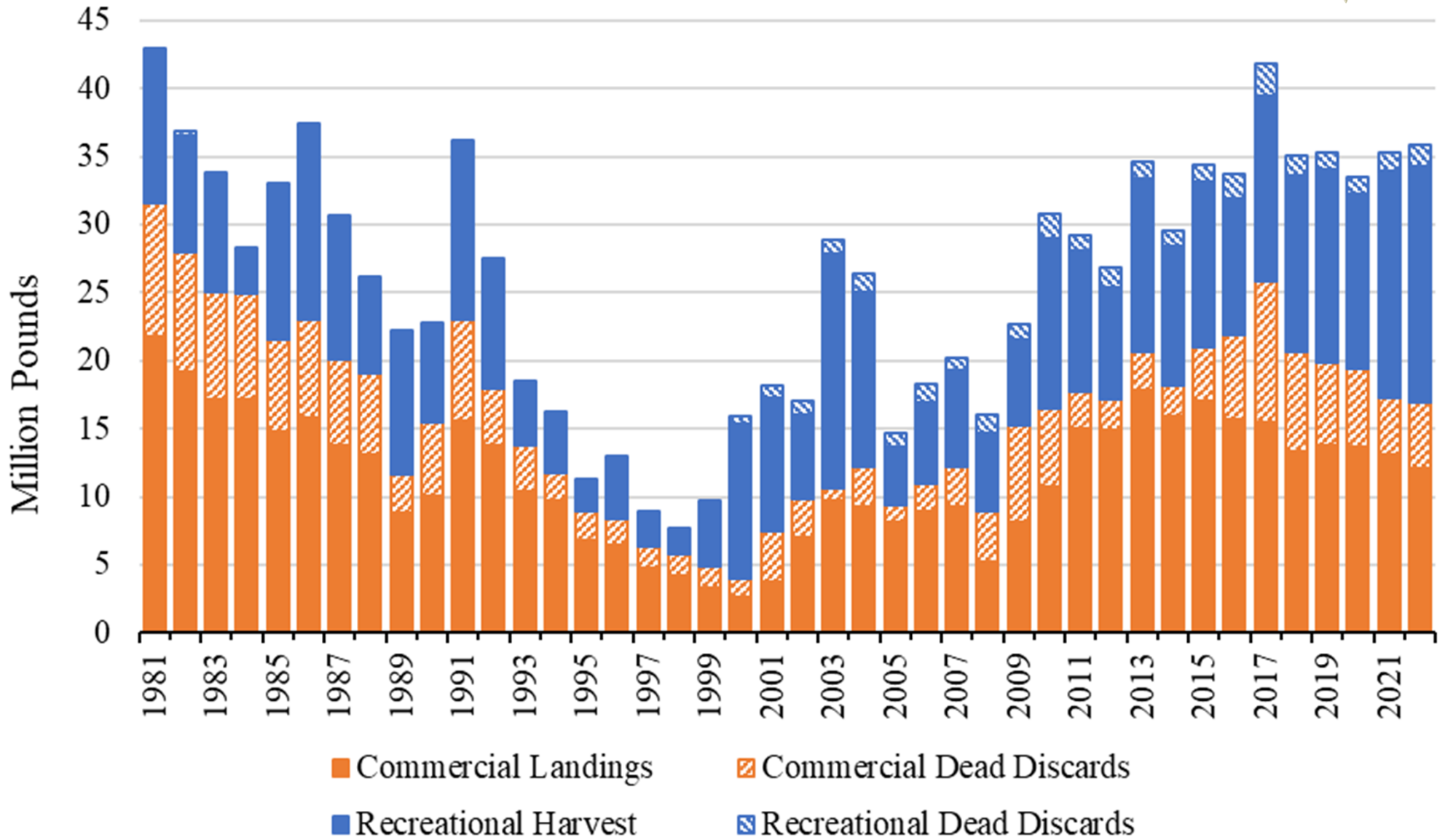
## Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) and Recruitment (R)



# Fishing Mortality and Total Catch



# Total Catch



*Total catch calculated using revised MRIP data through the timeseries*

# OFL and ABC Performance



Year	Total catch	OFL	OFL overage/underage	ABC	ABC overage/underage
2014	23.10	47.8	-52%	35.99	-36%
2015	25.85	47.8	-46%	33.77	-23%
2016	26.91	35.8	-25%	31.11	-14%
2017	32.20	32.09	0%	28.4	+13%
2018	26.84	45.05	-40%	39.14	-31%
2019	26.55	41.03	-35%	36.43	-27%
2020	33.50	41.17	-19%	35.77	-6%
2021	35.35	35.3	0%	34.81	+2%
2022	35.92	32.56	+10%	32.11	+12%
2023	--	30.09	--	29.67	--

Limits/catch values in millions of pounds  
 Total catch calculated using old MRIP data through 2019

# Commercial Fishery



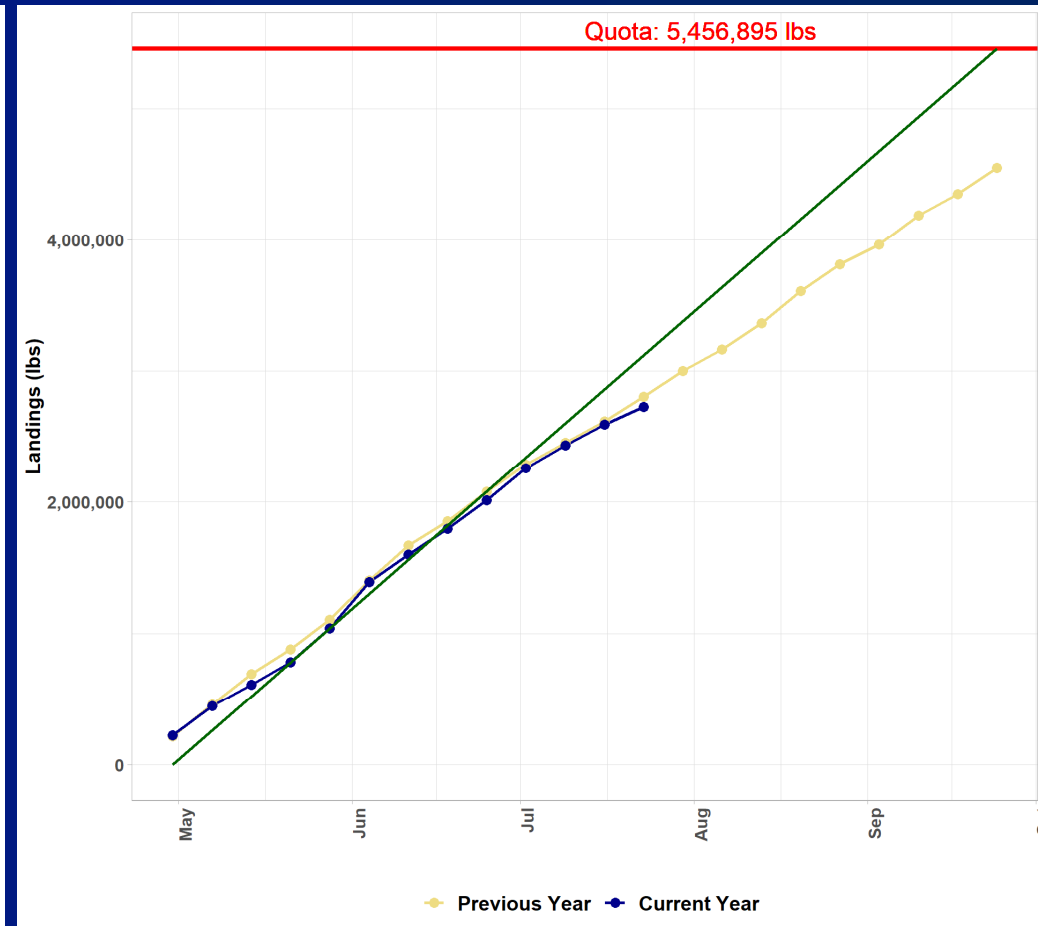
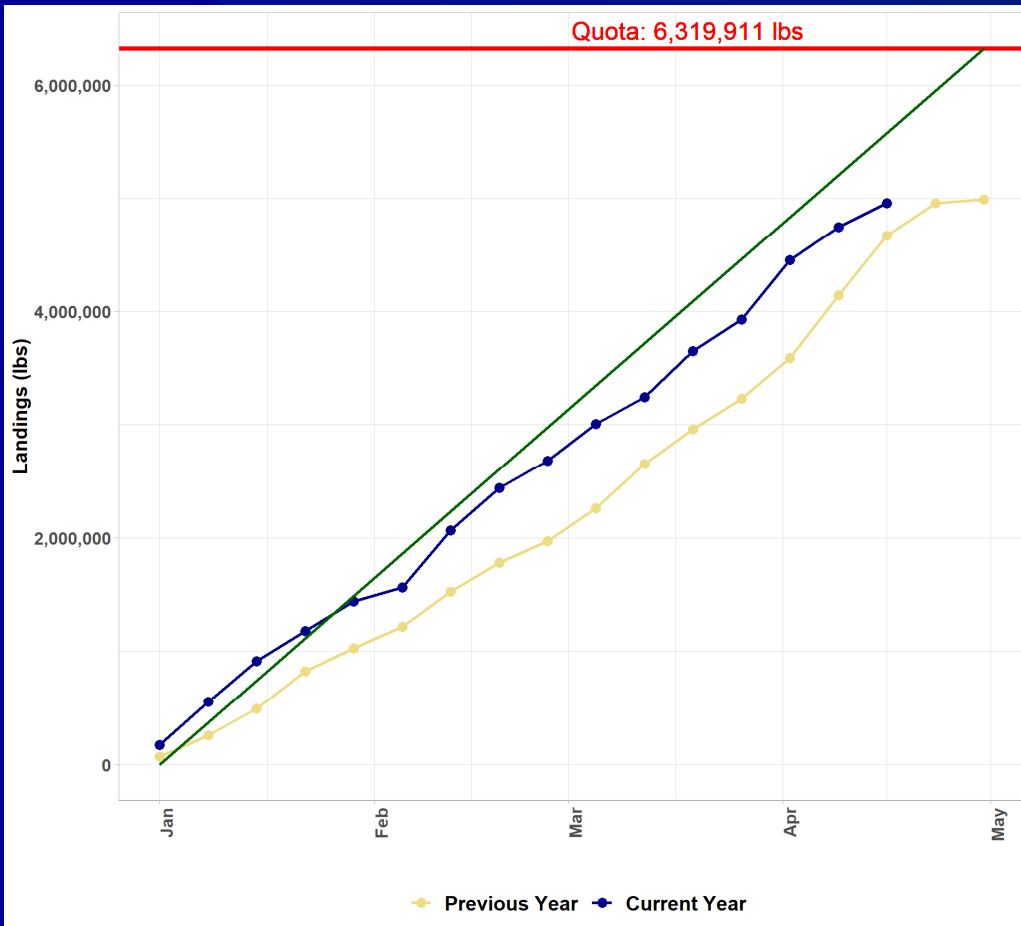
Year	Com. landings	Com. quota	Quota overage/ underage	Com. dead catch	ACL	ACL overage/ underage
2018	13.37	23.98	-44%	20.63	30.53	-32%
2019	13.78	23.98	-43%	19.91	28.42	-30%
2020	13.58	22.23	-39%	19.34	27.9	-31%
2021	12.93	20.5	-37%	17.11	27.15	-37%
2022	12.12	20.38	-41%	16.91	25.05	-33%
2023	--	14.01	--	--	19.29	--



# 2023 Preliminary Commercial Landings

## Winter Period – 2023

## Summer Period – *as of Aug. 7, 2023*



# Recreational Fishery



Year	MRIP data used	Rec. landings	RHL	RHL over/under	Rec. catch	ACL	ACL over/under
2018	Old MRIP (pre- revision)	5.61	7.37	-24%	7.03	8.61	-18%
2019	Old MRIP (provided by NEFSC)	5.41	7.37	-27%	6.64	8.01	-17%
2020	New MRIP (post-revision)	12.91	6.51	+98%	14.10	7.87	+79%
2021		16.62	6.07	+174%	18.06	7.66	+136%
2022		17.36	6.08	+186%	18.99	7.06	+169%
2023		--	9.27	--	--	10.39	--

*2020 harvest estimated using imputation methods incorporating 2018-2019 proxy data*

# AP Fishery Performance Report

## *Scup – Stock Availability and Trends*

- Multiple advisors noted that scup catch overages were due to abundance of stock
- One advisor said scup is being overregulated and the current management system seems backwards
  - Recommended loosening regulations for abundant stocks (i.e., scup and black sea bass), and tightening regulations for less abundant stocks (i.e., summer flounder)



# AP Fishery Performance Report



## *Scup – Market/Economics and Commercial Fishery*

- One advisor noted he could viably target scup if he could use smaller codend and operate during the night
- The same advisor said scup are plentiful in Massachusetts, but the lack of a market discourages targeting them



# AP Fishery Performance Report



## *Scup – Recreational Fishery Performance*

- Some advisors questioned the significant increase in recreational scup catch
  - Expressed disbelief in MRIP estimates
  - Questioned where the significant increase in catch is coming from
  - Hard to believe that amount of scup caught in NY is greater than coastwide harvest of summer flounder
- One advisor noted the need to get a better understanding of harvest and asked if others are seeing this level of harvest
  - One advisor noted NY headboats are catching large quantities but was unsure if it was to the level of MRIP estimates
  - Another advisor noted not experiences that level of harvest in NJ and that for-hire vessels were not regularly catching scup

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## *Scup – Recreational Fishery Issues*

- Several advisors were frustrated with 2023 recreational season in NJ (Aug. 1 – Dec. 31)
  - Too restrictive and unfair given neighboring states are open several months prior
  - Seems disproportionate given NJ landings constitutes such a small percentage of coastwide harvest
- Some noted the NJ start date is detrimental to for-hire vessels
- One advisor concerned with the ripple effect the regulations would have on other businesses (e.g., tackle shops, marinas, etc.)
- One advisor recommended better aligning NJ regulations with other states

# AP Fishery Performance Report



## *Scup – Recreational Fishery Issues continued*

- Two advisors stressed the importance of keeping scup year-round for the for-hire sector
  - Especially important to boats that don't target summer flounder and during times when black sea bass is closed
  - Requested recreational sector separation
- One advisor noted importance of keeping scup open in NJ due to decline in ling (red hake) catch



# AP Fishery Performance Report



## *Email/Phone Comments (Scup)*

- Multiple advisors noted commercial ex-vessel prices decreased
- One advisor recommended cell phone private rec. catch reporting requirements, use of a total cumulative length limit, prohibition on discards, and larger hook sizes





# *Scup Specifications 2024-25*

- The SSC reviewed results of a Level 2 MTA of the updated assessment through 2022.
- Current biomass is 246% of Bmsy; fishing mortality is 52% of Fmsy.
- Concerns: dome shaped selectivity pattern (i.e., lower mortality on older fish)
- SSC applauded efforts to evaluate long term effects of Gear Restricted Areas.
- SSC increase estimate of OFL CV from 60% to 100% (see Attachment 5). Need for retrospective adjustment now required.
- **SSC recommended ABCs of 19,876 mt for 2024 and 18,028 mt for 2025.**
- Highlighted need to consider risks along with uncertainty when making projections.

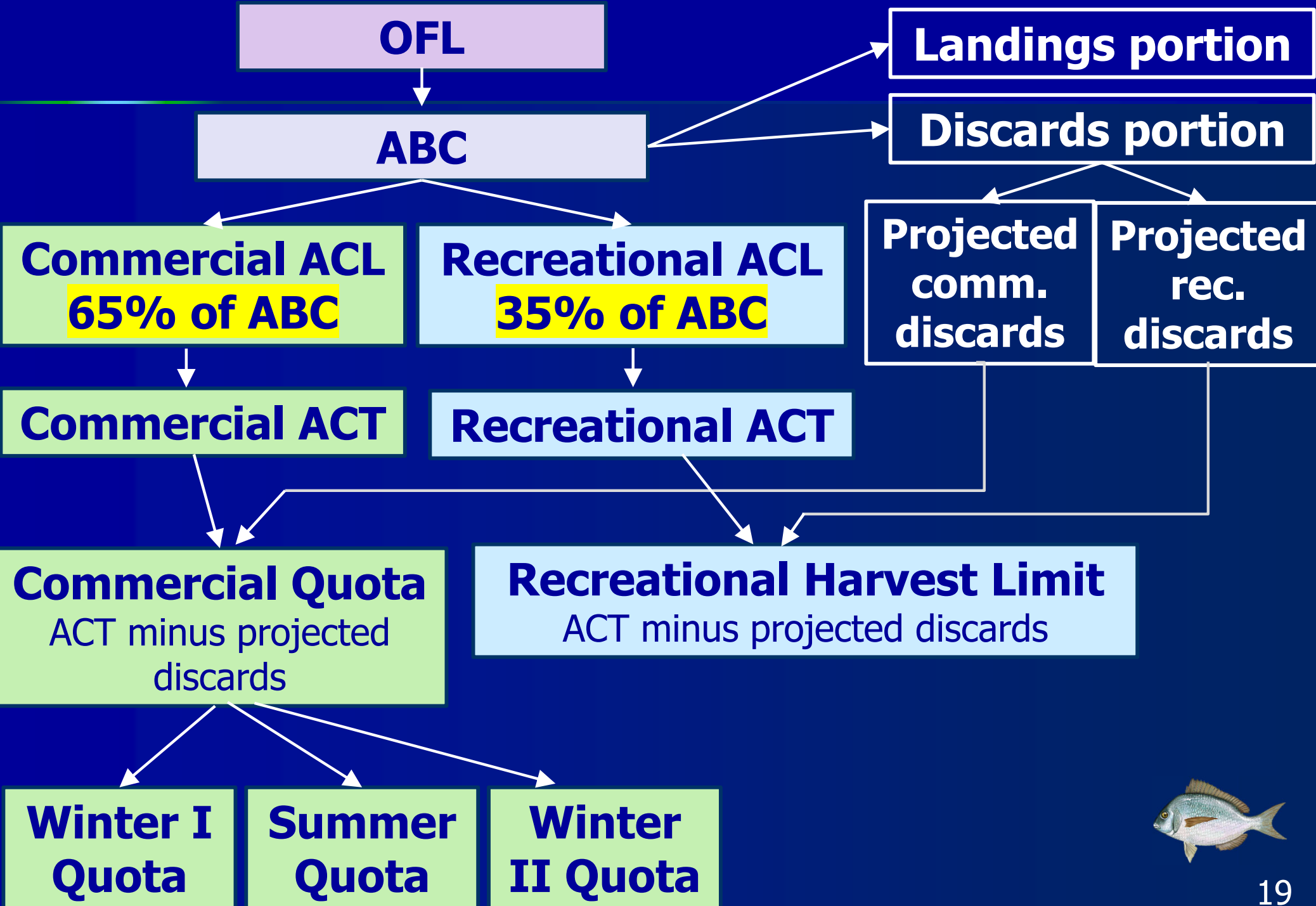
# 2024-2025 SSC Recommended ABCs

	Varying approach			
	OFL		ABC	
	mil lbs.	mt	mil lbs.	mt
2024	44.74	20,295	43.82	19,876
2025	40.58	18,408	39.74	18,028

- *One MC member noted that it would be beneficial in the future to develop a modified average (constant) approach for scup to maintain consistency over the two years*



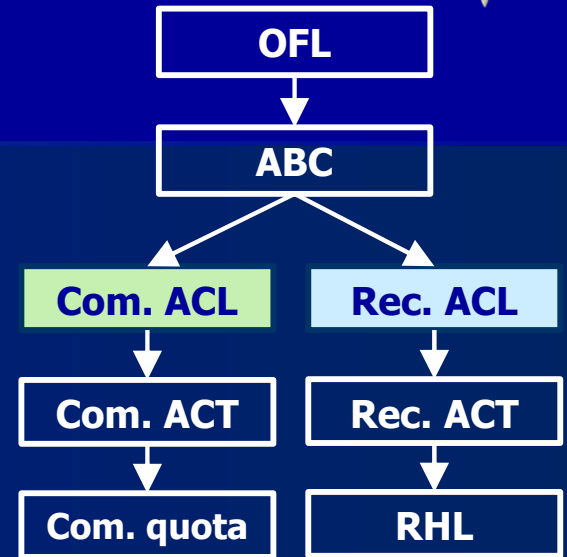
# Flow Chart





# 2024-2025 ACLs

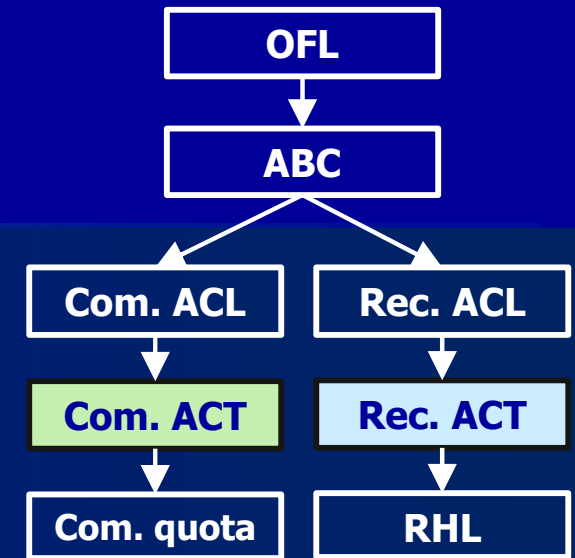
- Defined by commercial/recreational allocations
  - 65% ⇒ commercial ACL
  - 35% ⇒ recreational ACL



	Varying (mil lbs.)	
	2024	2025
<b>ABC</b>	43.82	39.74
<b>Comm. ACL: 65% of ABC</b>	28.48	25.83
<b>Rec. ACL: 35% of ABC</b>	15.34	13.91

# 2024-2025 ACTs

- MC recommended no deductions in either sector to account for management uncertainty (ACL=ACT)
- MC commercial considerations:
  - Well monitored and in-season closure authority
  - Quota consistently not caught
  - Only ACL overage in past 10 years was driven by high discards

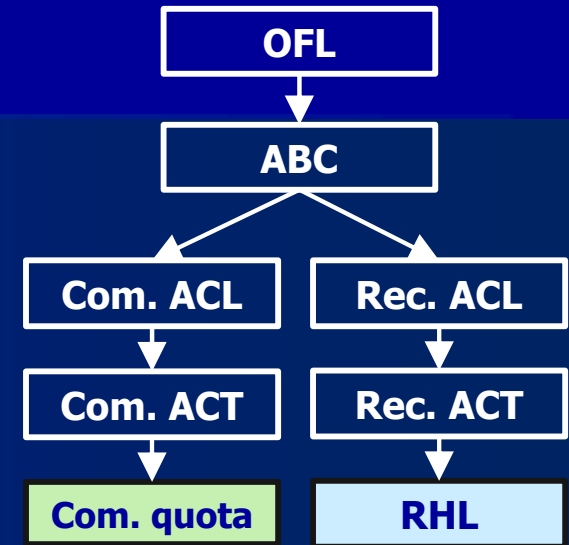


# 2024-2025 ACTs cont.

- MC recreational considerations:
  - Catch not as well controlled (data lags, no in-season closures, etc.)
  - Some recent year overages due to mgmt. decisions
  - Percent Change Approach sets a new harvest target which can differ from the RHL
  - Ongoing FW/addenda to consider new approach for setting rec. measures for 2026 and beyond
- MC noted the rec. overage in 2022 likely attributed to an OFL overage
  - If trends continue may warrant management uncertainty buffer, but due to current magnitude of scup biomass no buffer was recommended for 2024-2025

# Discards Projections to Derive Com. Quota and RHL

- MC recommend using same method as previous years
- ABC discard projections from NEFSC divided based on 3-yr. moving average proportion by sector
- Based on most recent discard data (2020-2022):
  - Com. account for 77.3% and rec. for 22.7% of ABC discards



	Commercial Discard Projections	Recreational Discard Projections
<b>2023</b>	5.28	1.12
<b>2024</b> (recommended)	7.33	2.15
<b>2025</b> (recommended)	7.04	2.07

# MC Recommendation Summary

Mgmt. measure	2024		2025		Recommendation Basis
	mil lbs.	mt	mil lbs.	mt	
<b>OFL</b>	44.74	20,295	40.58	18,408	Assessment projections
<b>ABC</b>	43.82	19,876	39.74	18,028	SSC Recommendation
<b>ABC discards</b>	9.49	4,304	9.10	4,129	Assessment projections
<b>Com. ACL</b>	28.48	12,919	25.83	11,718	65% of ABC
<b>Com. ACT</b>	28.48	12,919	25.83	11,718	No deduction from ACL for management uncertainty
<b>Projected com. discards</b>	7.33	3,327	7.04	3,192	77.3% of ABC discards (avg. % of dead discards from commercial fishery, 2020-2022)
<b>Com. quota</b>	21.15	9,592	18.80	8,526	Com. ACT minus projected com. discards
<b>Rec. ACL</b>	15.34	6,957	13.91	6,310	35% of ABC
<b>Rec. ACT</b>	15.34	6,957	13.91	6,310	No deduction from ACL for management uncertainty
<b>Projected rec. discards</b>	2.15	977	2.07	937	22.7% of the ABC discards (avg. % of dead discards from rec. fishery, 2020-2022)
<b>RHL</b>	13.18	5,980	11.84	5,373	Rec. ACT minus projected rec. discards



# MC Recommendation: Federal Commercial Measures

- Minimum size limit: 9 inches
- Quota period possession limits:
  - **Winter I:** 50,000 lbs.
    - Step down when 80% of quota landed
  - **Summer:** not managed by council, state limits
  - **Winter II:** 12,000 lbs.
    - Increases if Winter I quota not fully harvested
- Min. trawl mesh size of 5" diamond if retaining more than
  - 1,000 lbs., Oct – April 14
  - 2,000 lbs., April 15 – June 15
  - 200 lbs., June 16 – Sept. 30
- Trap/Pots – escape vent required
- *Recommend no changes for 2024*



# Council/Board Decisions Points

- Consider MC recommendations for 2024-2025 ACLs, ACTs, commercial quotas, and RHLs
- Recommendations/comments on commercial measure
  - Quota period possession limits
  - Minimum fish size
  - Gear requirements
  - Incidental possession limits



# Questions/Discussion



Photo curtesy: M. Eversmier