

Summer flounder Data Update for 2022

National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water St.
Woods Hole, MA 02543

Fishery and Survey Data

Reported 2021 landings in the commercial fishery were 4,731 mt = 10.430 million lb, an increase of 14% from 2020, and 83% of the 2021 commercial quota (Figure 1). Estimated 2021 landings in the recreational fishery were 3,092 mt = 6.817 million lb, a decrease of 32% from 2020, and 82% of the 2021 recreational harvest limit (Figure 1). Total commercial and recreational landings in 2021 were 7,823 mt = 17.247 million lb, a decrease of 10% from 2020. Final estimates of fishery discards for 2020-2021 are not yet available.

There were no NEFSC bottom trawl surveys conducted in 2020. The NEFSC spring survey index of summer flounder stock biomass decreased by 41% from 2019 to 2022; the fall index increased by 6% from 2019 to 2021 (Figure 2). The NEFSC fall survey length frequency distributions suggest that an above average year class (mode at about 20 cm total length) recruited to the stock in 2018 with average to below average recruitment since (Figure 3).

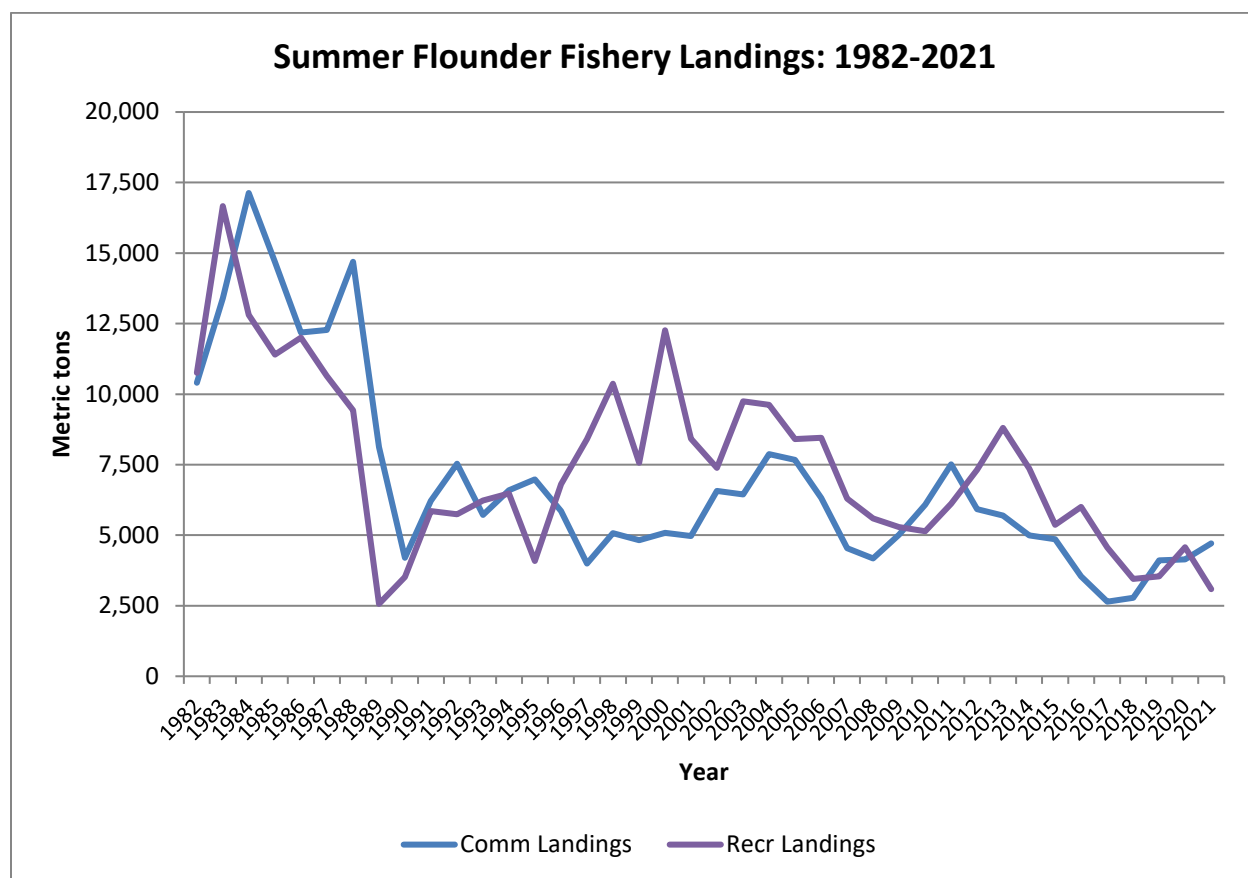


Figure 1. Summer flounder fishery landings.

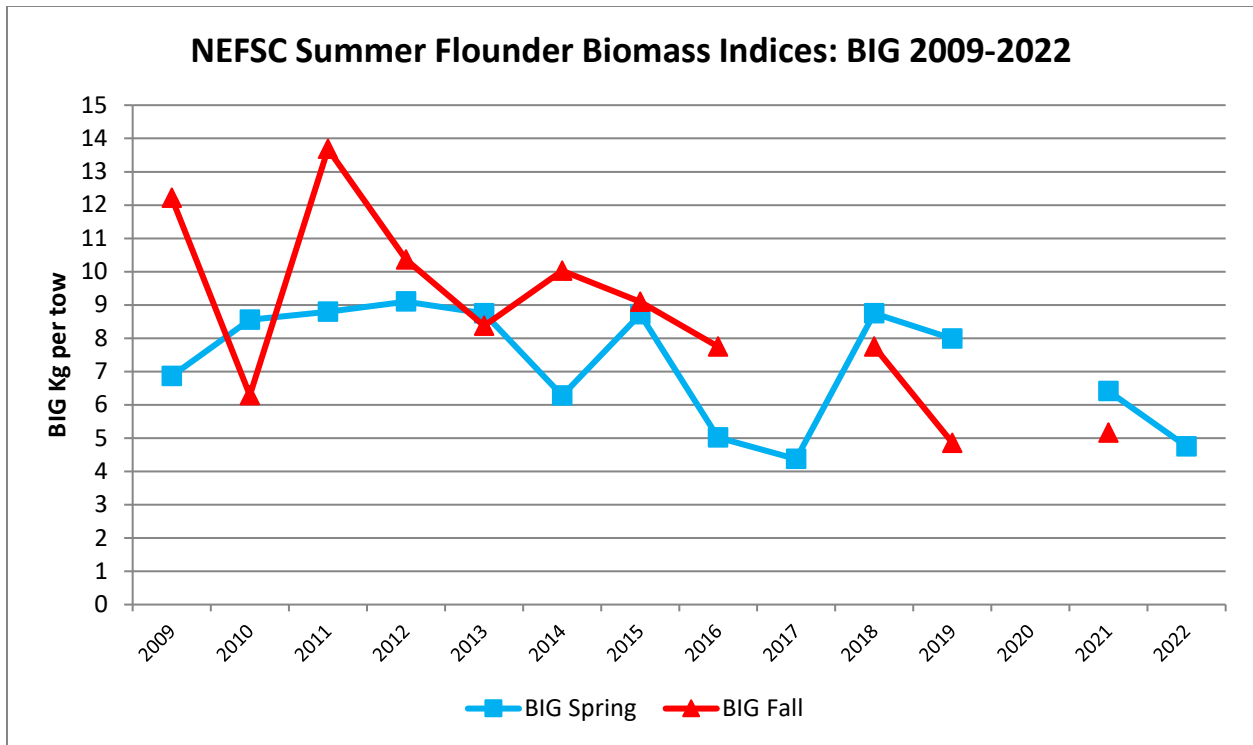


Figure 2. Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) bottom trawl survey aggregate biomass indices for summer flounder. There are no valid fall 2017 or spring and fall 2020 indices for summer flounder. Surveys have been conducted with the FSV HB Bigelow (BIG) during 2009-2022.

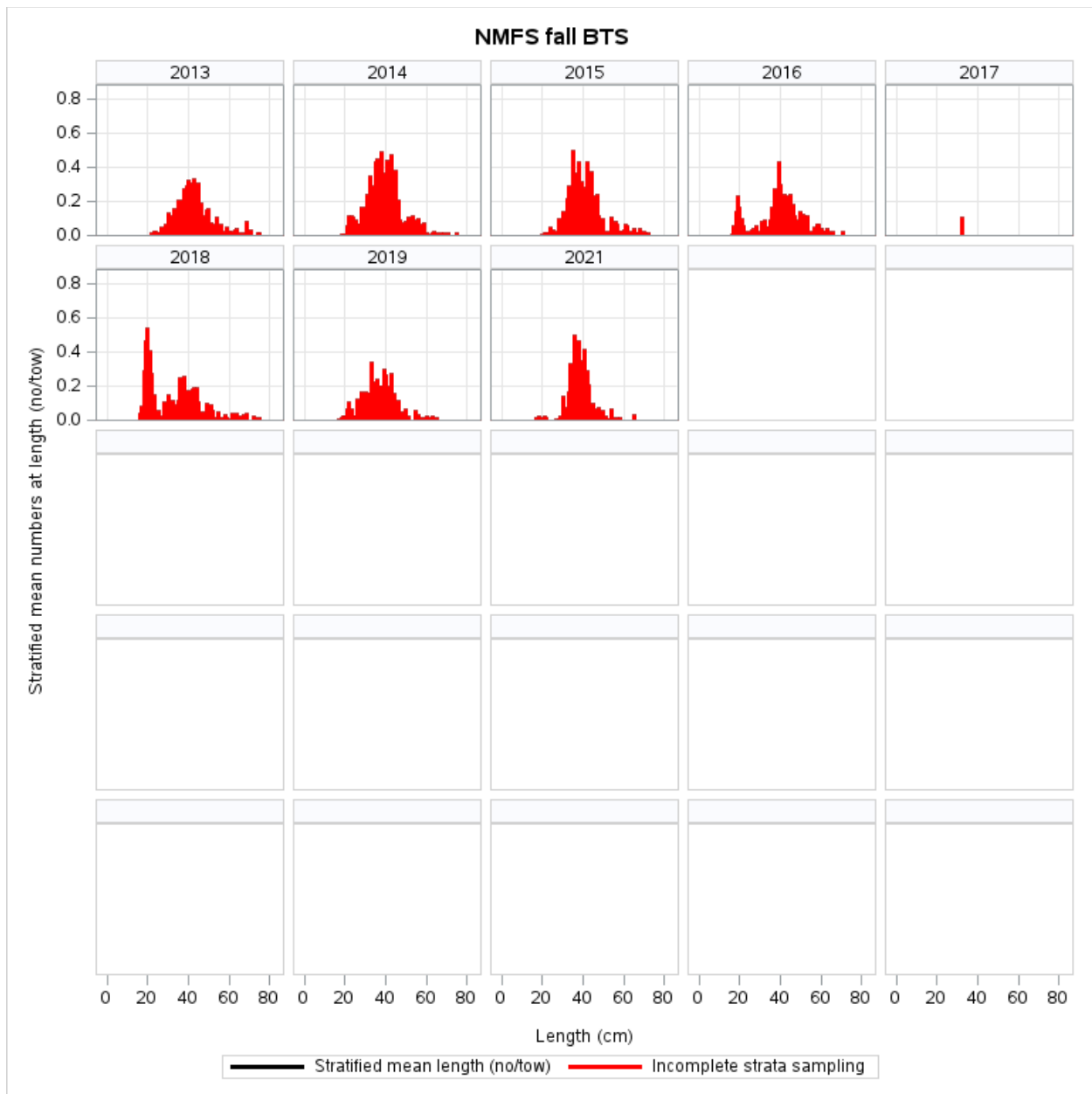


Figure 3. Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) fall bottom trawl survey FSV HB Bigelow indices at length since 2013. There was an incomplete survey conducted in 2017 and no survey conducted in 2020.