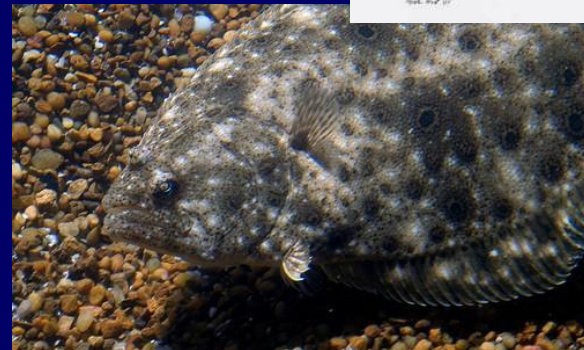


RI Department of Environmental Management

Marine Fisheries

PRE-HEARING WORKSHOP

February 6, 2017



Workshop Rules of Engagement

- RIDFW staff will provide presentation on each of the proposed regulation amendments;
- Discussion will ensue upon completion of each presentation. Discussion should focus on:
 - Understanding of the rationale behind each of the proposed amendments;
 - Recommendations of alternatives.
- IMPORTANT! The workshop discussion is *not* an official public record. *Comments and/or proposals can be submitted during the public hearing on February 13th or provided in writing/email during the public comment period (ending Feb. 24).*



Workshop Items

1. Proposed new Shellfish Management Areas
2. Proposed modification to the Bristol harbor SMA boundary
3. Recreational Summer Flounder
4. Recreational Scup
5. Recreational Black Sea Bass



Why create a Shellfish Management Area?

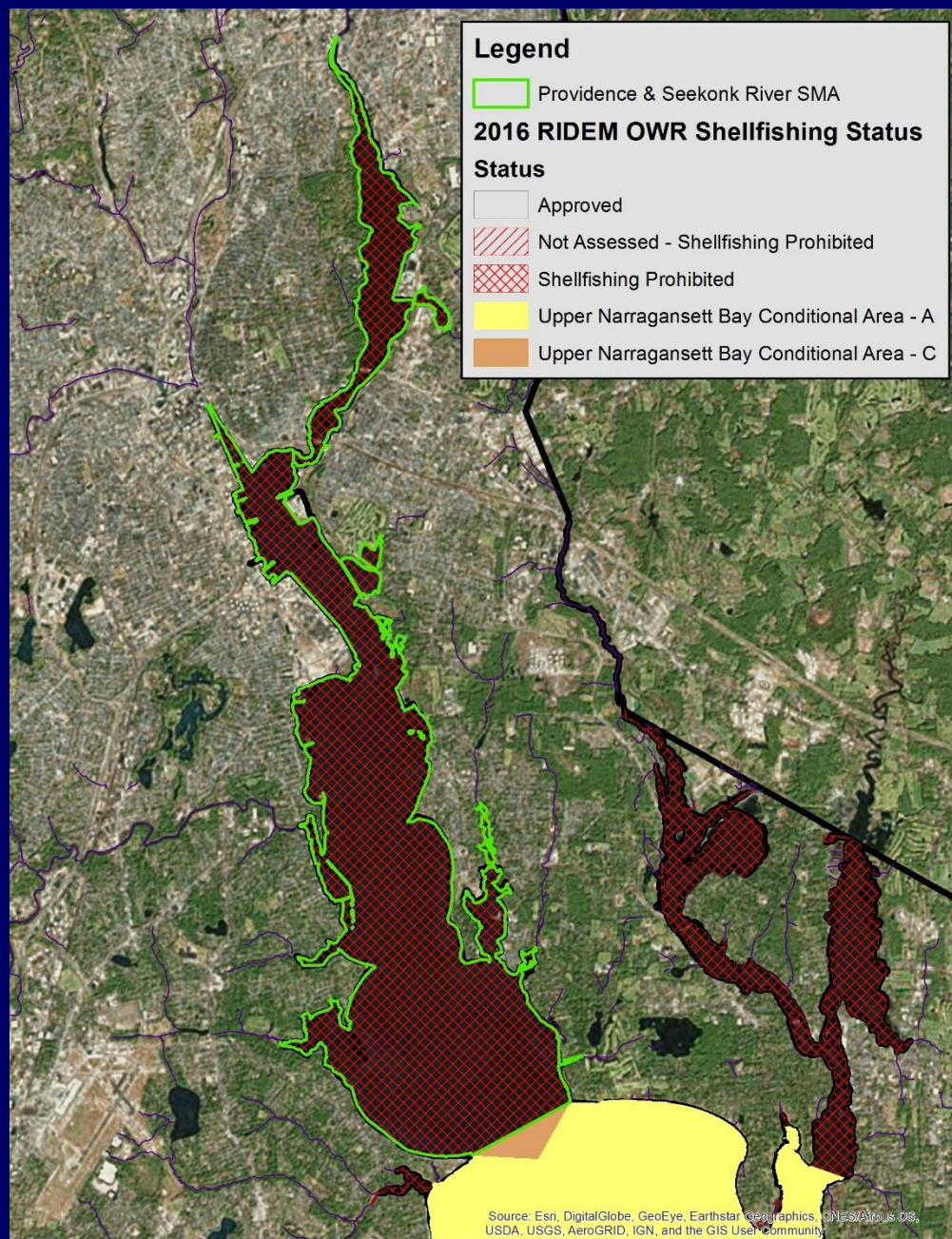
- RI General Law Title 20
- **§20-3-4 Shellfish and marine life management areas.** The council may recommend to the director of environmental management, the designation of certain portions of the shores of the public waters of the state, or land within the state covered by tidewater at either high or low tide, or portions of the free and common fisheries of the state as shellfish or marine life project management areas **for the purpose of enhancing the cultivation and growth of marine species, managing the harvest of marine species, facilitating the conduct by the department of experiments in planting, cultivating, propagating, managing, and developing any and all kinds of marine life, and any other related purpose.** The designation shall be pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act, chapter 35 of title 42, and shall be by reference to fixed landmarks. The council, upon the designation of a management area, shall propose any rules and regulations as it shall deem necessary **for the protection and management of the management area and the animal life and property in the management area, including the exclusion or restriction of persons from the area or the prohibition of certain activities within the areas or other restrictions as it may deem necessary.** Upon the designation of a management area, the director of environmental management shall place any stakes, bounds, buoys or markers with the words "Rhode Island department of environmental management" plainly marked on them, as will approximate the management area. Failure to place or maintain the stakes, bounds, buoys, or markers shall not be admissible in any judicial or administrative proceeding. The director may make any experiments or conduct any activities as in his or her discretion are appropriate in these management areas.



Providence and Seekonk Rivers Shellfish Management Area

Purpose: Facilitate potential future shellfish/oyster restoration & habitat restoration/enhancement work; allow for management of brood stock.

RI DEM OWR Shellfishing Status:
Polluted – harvest prohibited.



Warren River Shellfish Management Area

Option 1: Division proposal

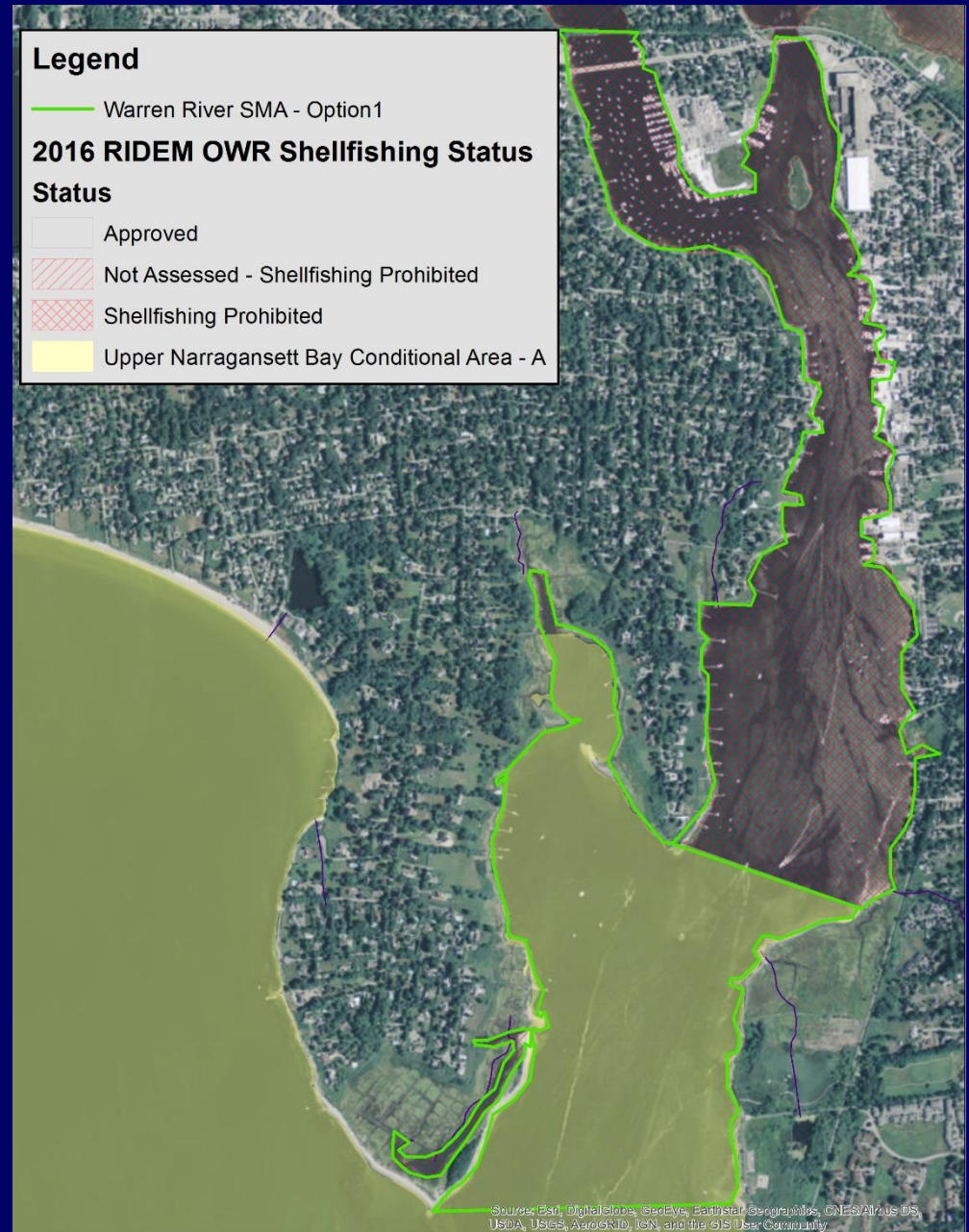
Purpose:

Facilitate potential future shellfish/oyster restoration and habitat restoration/enhancement work.

RI DEM OWR Shellfishing Status:

Polluted – harvest prohibited (Barrington, Palmer, and Warren Rivers);

Conditionally approved (Area A)



Warren River Shellfish Management Area

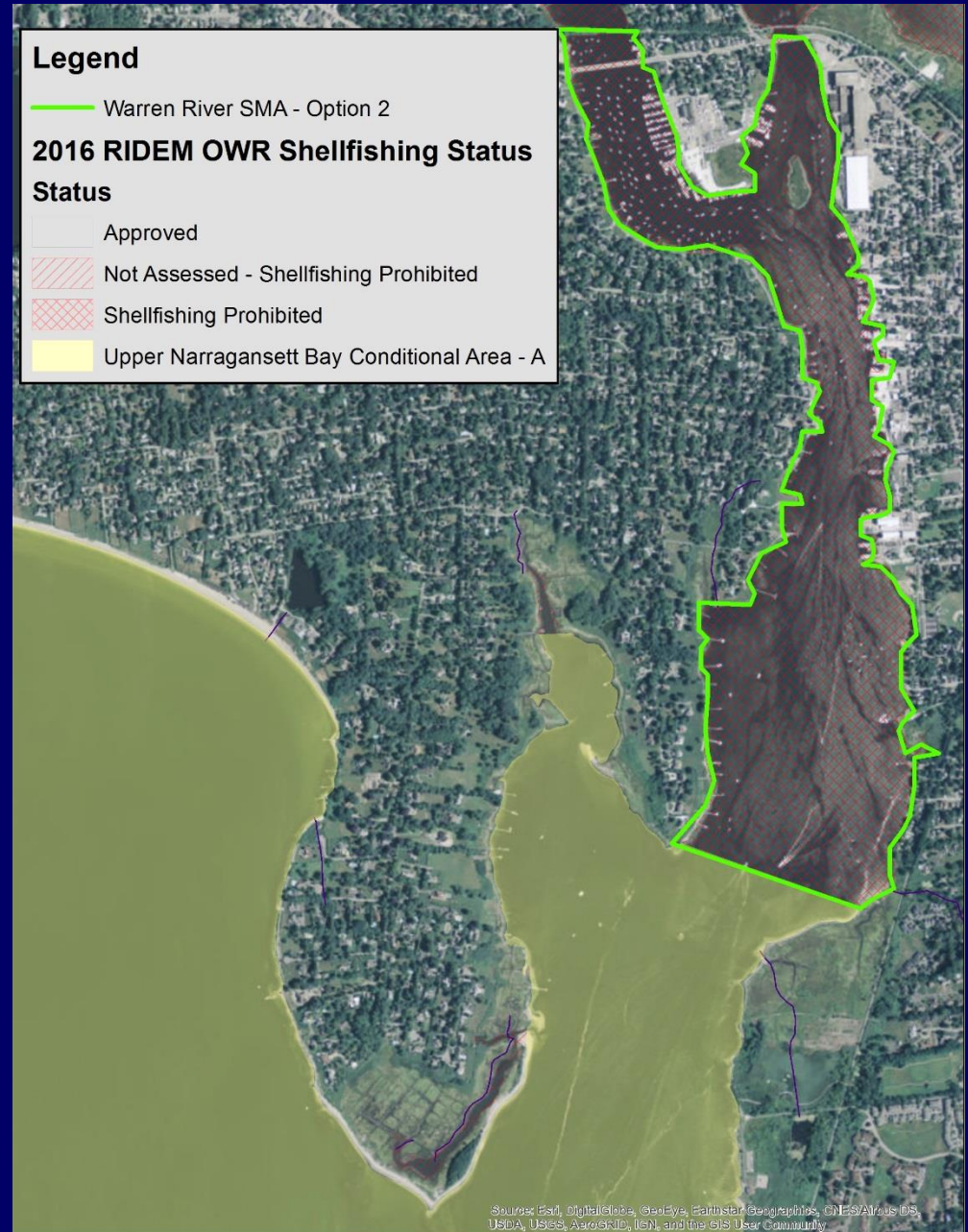
Option 2: Industry proposal

Purpose:

Facilitate potential future shellfish/oyster restoration and habitat restoration/enhancement work.

RI DEM OWR Shellfishing Status:

Polluted – harvest prohibited



Town Pond Shellfish Management Area

Purpose:
Facilitate
current and
future oyster
restoration
work lead by
RWU.

RI DEM OWR
Shellfishing
Status:
Unassessed –
Harvest
Prohibited



Narrow River Shellfish Management Area

Purpose:

Facilitate future oyster restoration work, including substrate and brood stock enhancement.

RI DEM OWR Shellfishing Status:

Unassessed –
Harvest
Prohibited



Green Hill Pond Shellfish Management Area

Purpose:

Facilitate future oyster restoration work, including substrate and brood stock enhancement.

RI DEM OWR

Shellfishing

Status:

Polluted – harvest prohibited



Little Narragansett Bay/Pawcatuck River Shellfish Management Area

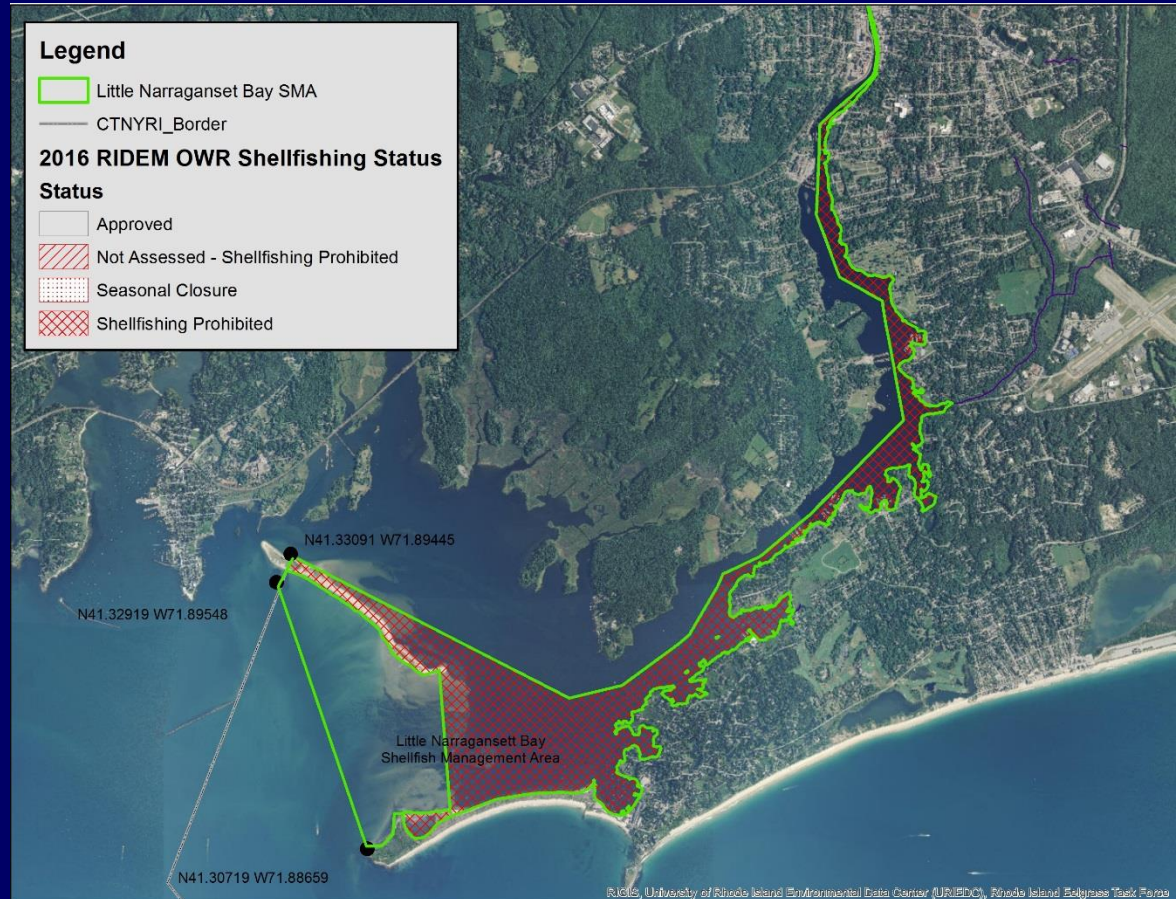
Purpose:

Facilitate potential future shellfish/oyster restoration and habitat restoration/enhancement work.

RI DEM OWR Shellfishing Status:

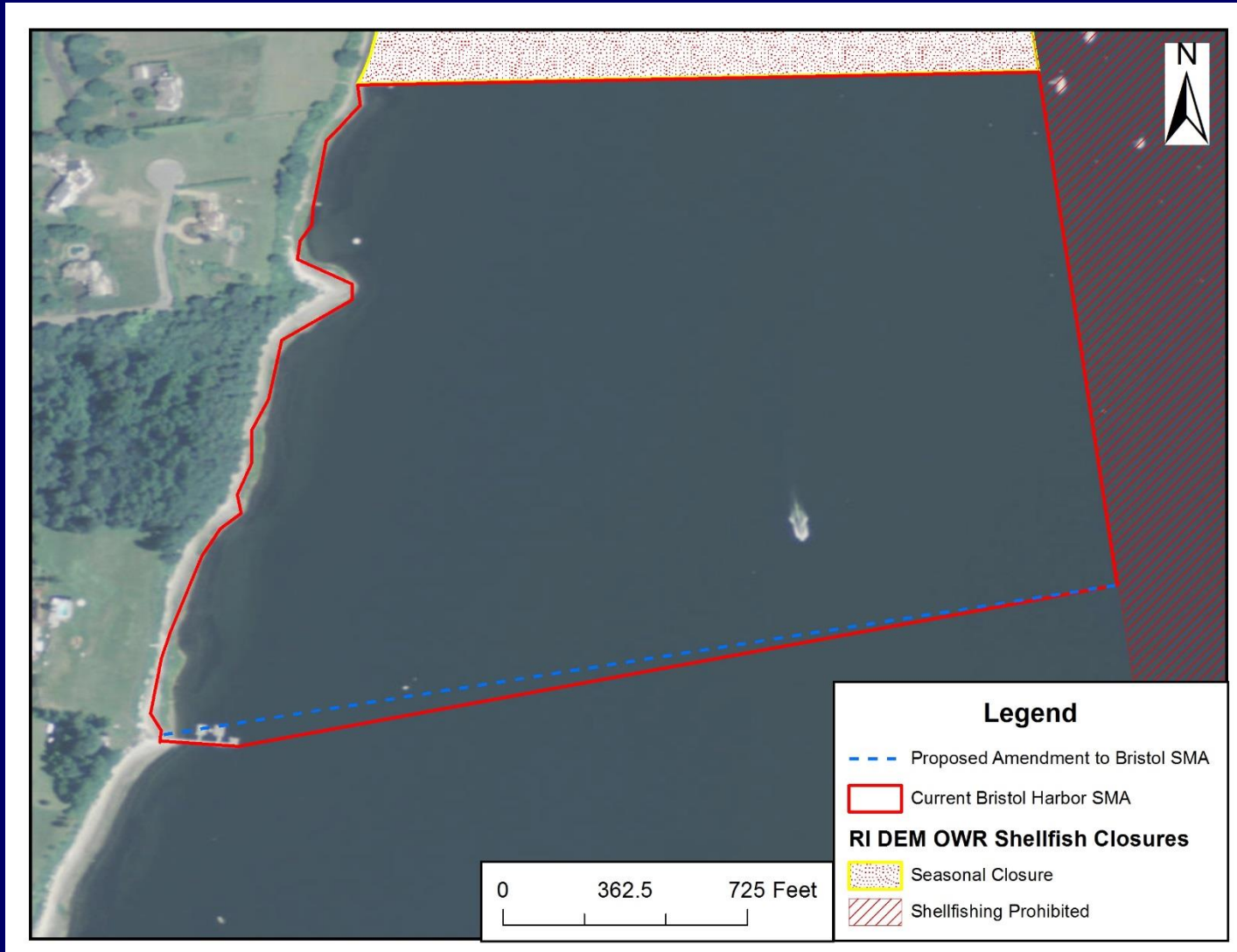
Polluted – harvest prohibited

Approved (Little Narragansett Bay)



Proposed modification to the Bristol harbor SMA boundary:

- Clarify the language defining the southern boundary line.



Proposed modification to the Bristol harbor SMA boundary:

- Clarify the language defining the southern boundary line.



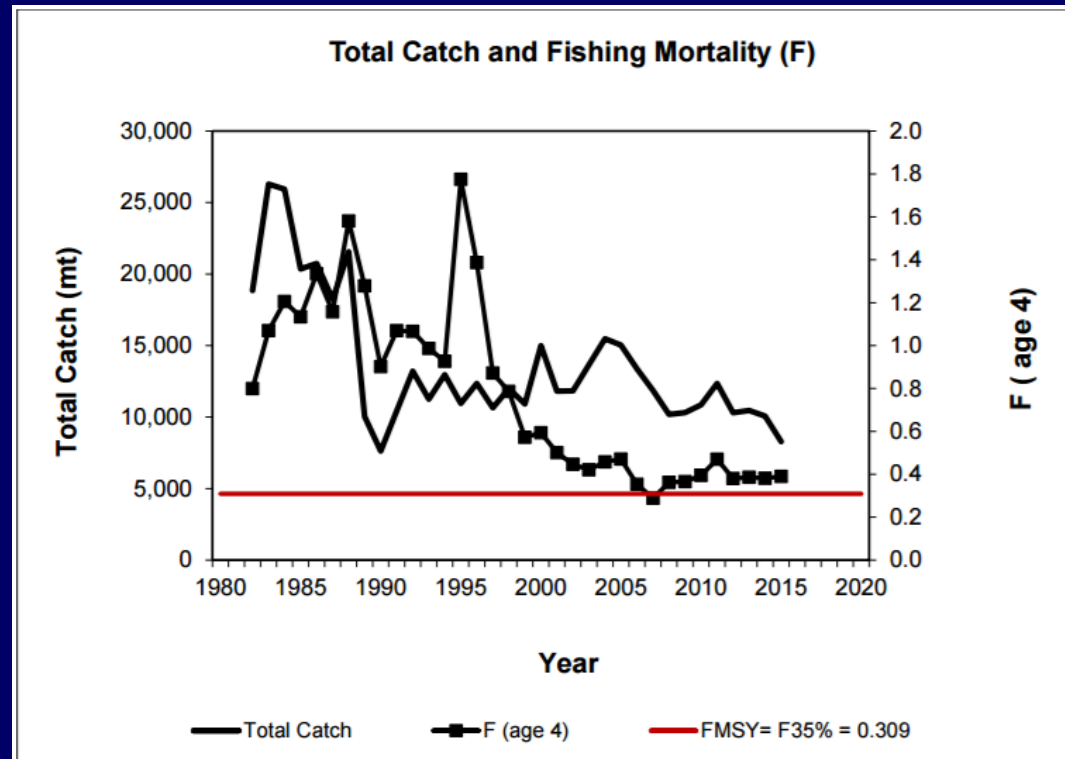
Summer Flounder

- Summary of Stock Status
- 2016 Rhode Island Performance
- Recommendations for 2017



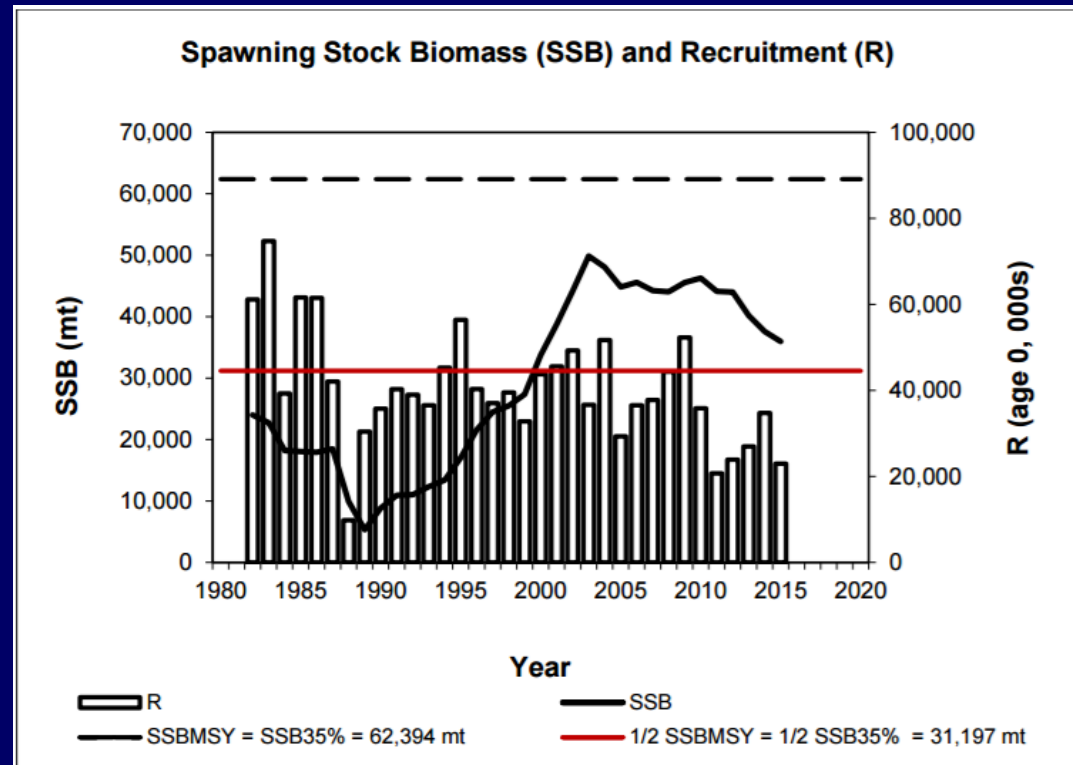
Summer Flounder Stock Status

- Update in 2015: Based on SAW/SARC 57 assessment, the summer flounder stock is not overfished, but overfishing is occurring relative to biological reference points.
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.359 in 2015, above the threshold F reference point = 0.309 (also above F target = 0.255).

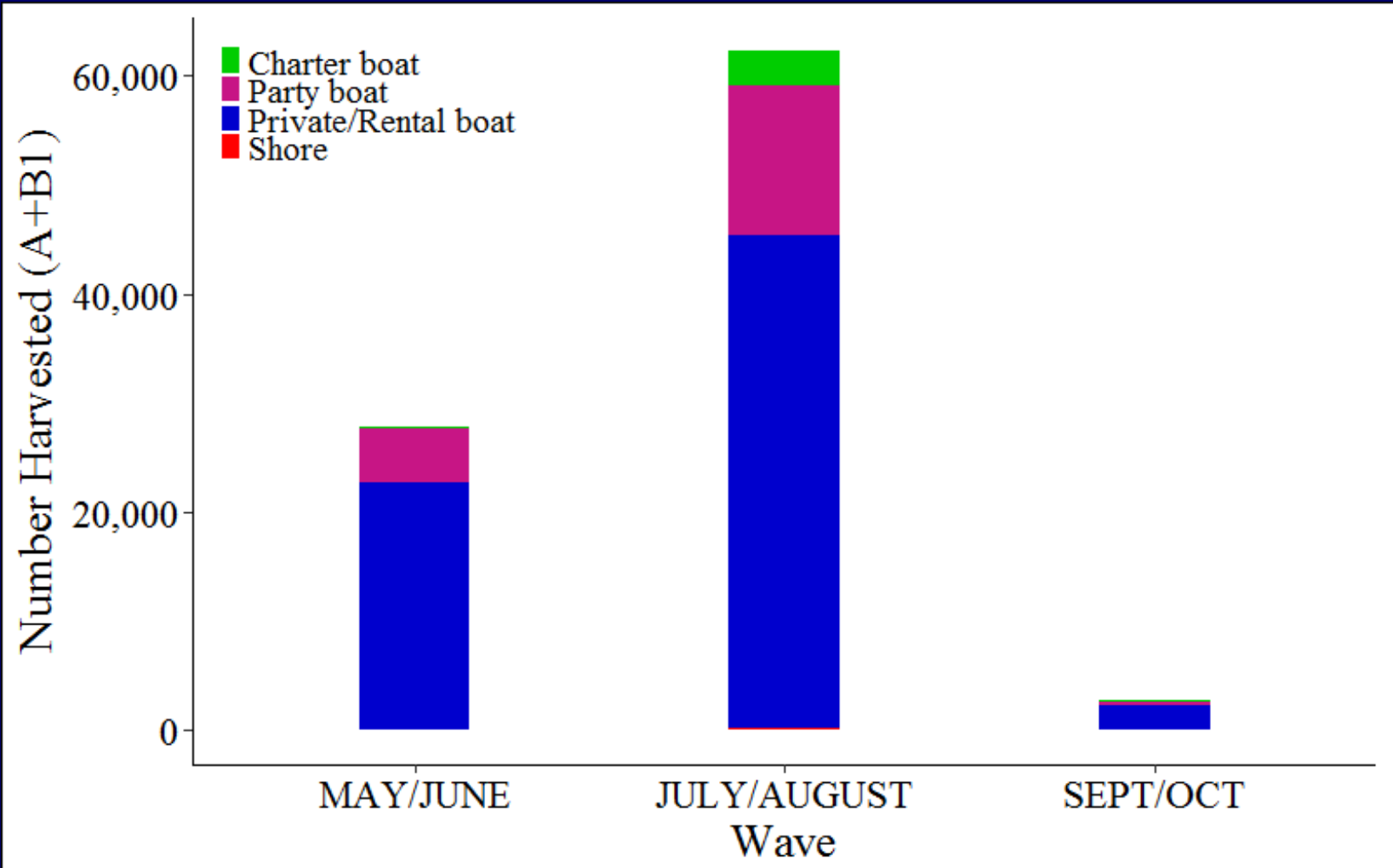


Summer Flounder Stock Status cont'd:

- SSB estimated to be 79.9 m lbs in 2015, below the SSB reference point = 137.6 m lbs but above the SSB threshold = 66.2 m lbs.
- The 2015 year class is currently estimated to be about 41 million fish, at the average of 42 million fish.
- A retrospective pattern in recruitment is evident, the 2008 and 2009 large year classes have dropped significantly in recent updates.



2016 RI Recreational Summer Flounder Fishery Performance



- **Note:**
Data only through wave 5



ASMFC Management of Summer Flounder

- RI 2016 recreational harvest projected to be less than 2015 harvest
- 2016 coastwide summer flounder harvest came in over target, coupled with a need to reduce an additional 30%, therefore there is a need for regions to reduce harvest to meet the 2017 RHL
- Addendum XXVIII went before ASMFC on February 2, 2017
- The ASMFC selected Option 5
 - RI delegation did not support this option
 - Requires RI to meet a 34% reduction, and is prescriptive
- Additional uncertainty remains
 - Option 5 does not meet the needed reduction
 - If GARFO does not accept option 5 as CE, default measures enacted



Recreational Summer Flounder

Proposed Management Options:

Option	Minimum size	Season	Possession Limit
<u>Current management:</u> *	18"	May 1 – Dec. 31	8 fish
<u>Option:</u>	<u>19"</u>	May 1 – Dec. 31	<u>4 fish</u>
<u>Default:</u>	<u>19"</u>	<u>June 1 – September 15</u>	<u>3 fish</u>

* Status quo is not an option for 2017



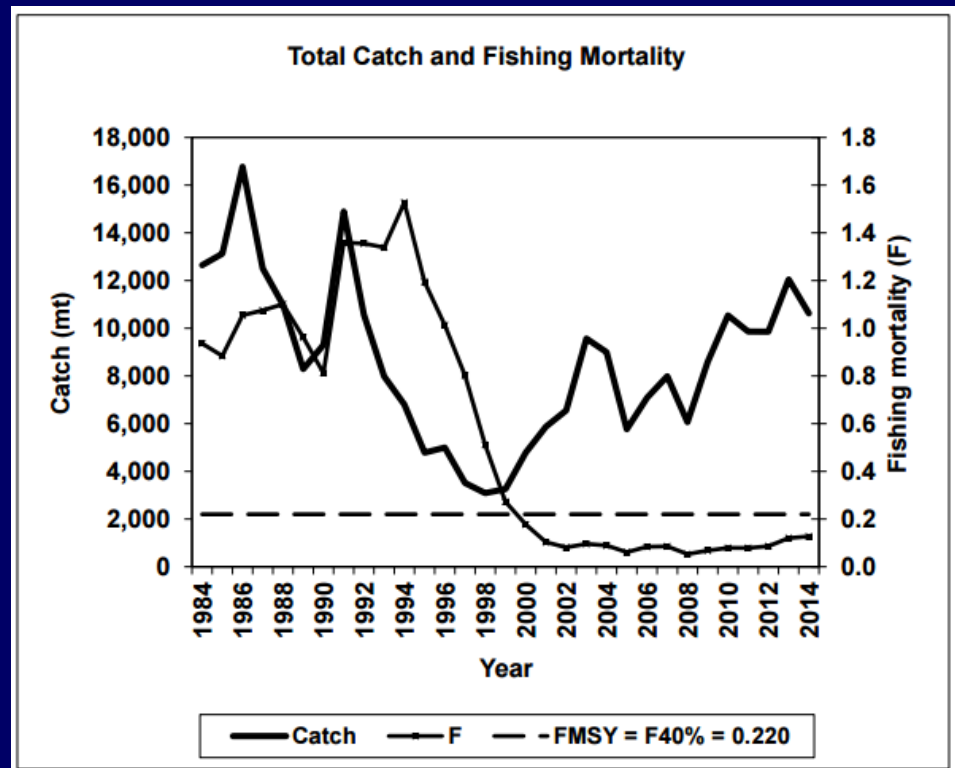
Recreational Scup

- Summary of Stock Status
- 2016 Rhode Island Recreational Fishery Performance
- ASMFC Management of Scup
- Recommendations for the 2017 Recreational Scup Fishery



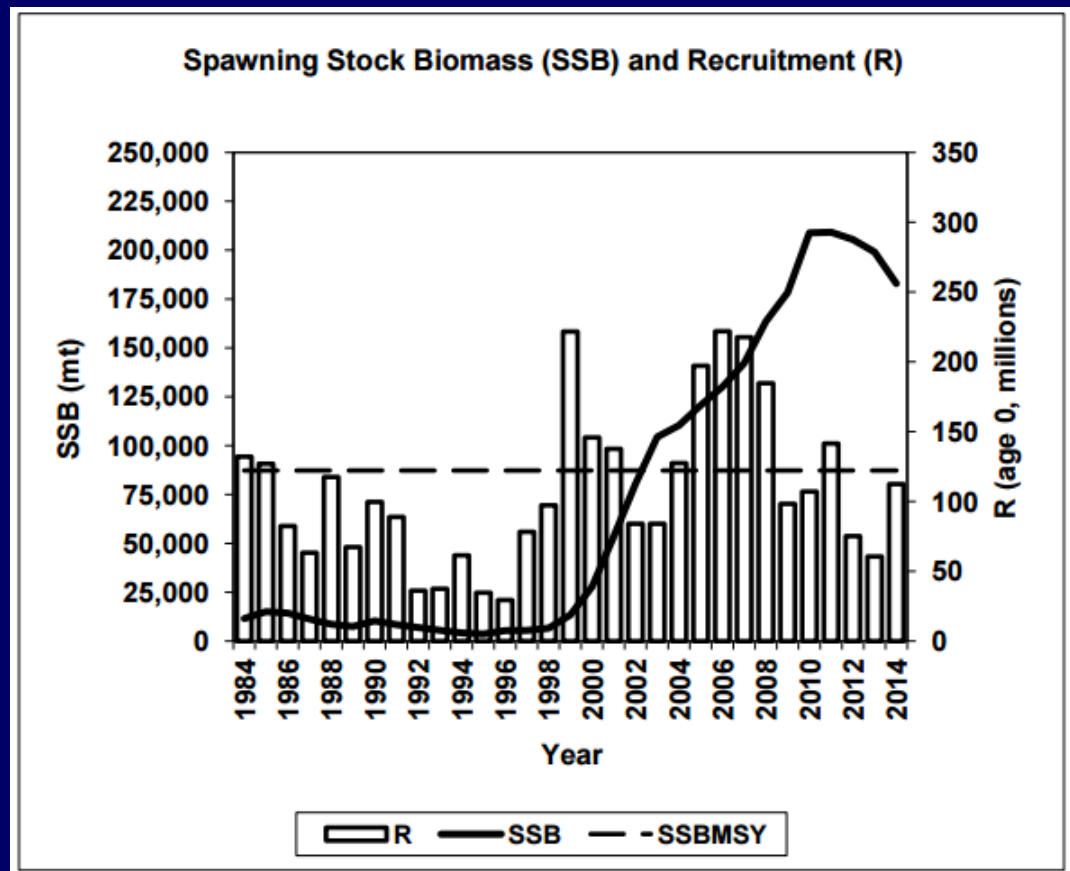
Scup Stock Status

- Benchmark completed in 2015
- The scup stock is not overfished, overfishing is not occurring relative to biological reference points
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.127 in 2014, below the threshold F reference point = 0.22
- No update assessment 2016, just a data update

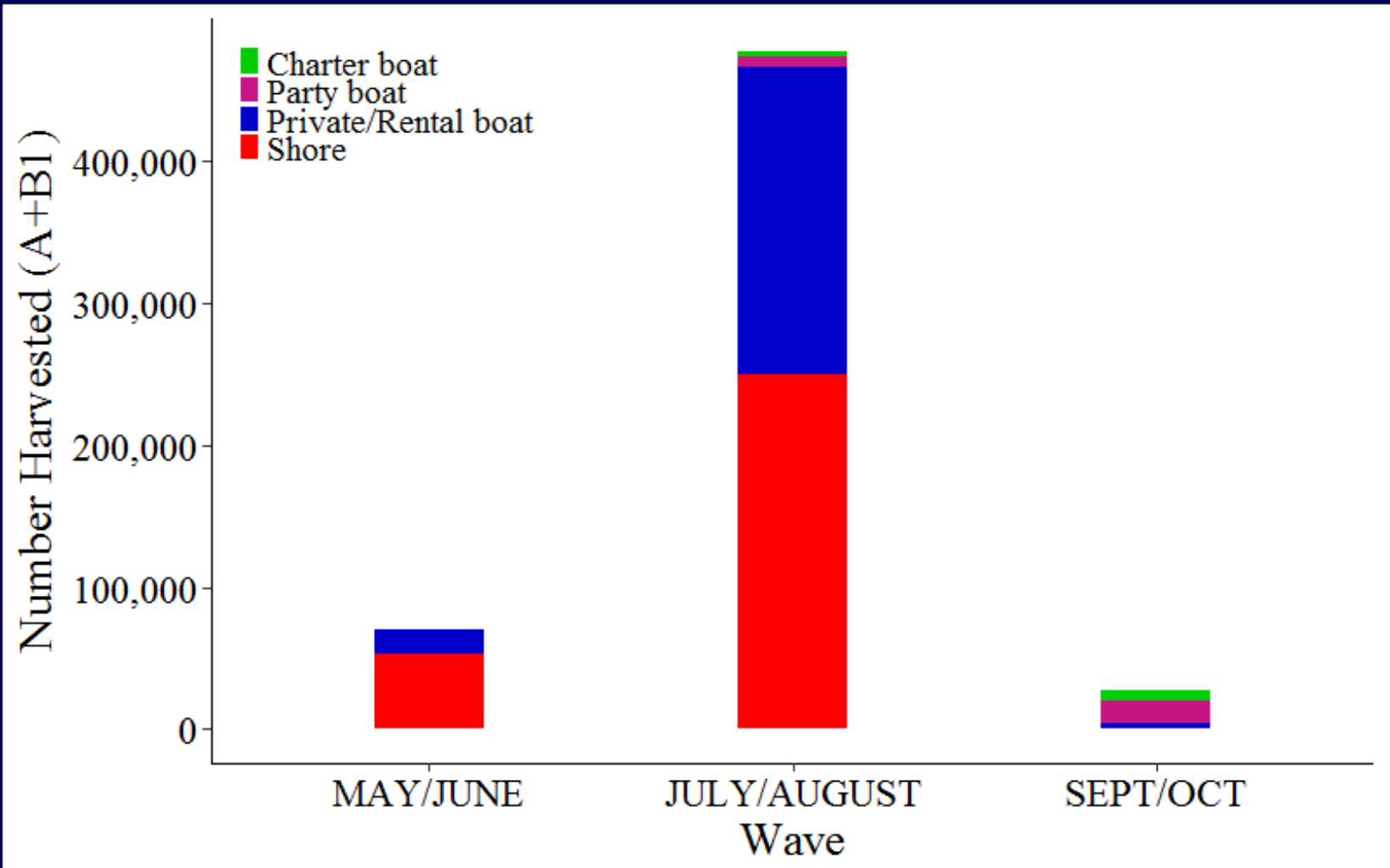


Scup Stock Status cont'd:

- SSB estimated to be 403 m lbs in 2014, above the SSB reference point = 192.47 m lbs and above the SSB threshold = 96.23 m lbs
- The 2014 year class is currently estimated to be about 112 million fish, around average



2016 RI Recreational Scup Fishery Performance



- Note:
Data only through wave 5



Recreational Scup

Proposed Management Options:

Option	Mode	Min. Size	Season/Possession Limit
<u>Option 1:</u> Current management	General Fishery	10"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31: 30 fish</u>
	P/C	10"	<u>May 1 – Aug. 31: 30 fish</u> <u>Sept. 1 – Oct. 31: 45 fish</u> <u>Nov. 1 – Dec. 31: 30 fish</u>
	Special Shore	9"	<u>May 1 – Dec. 31: 30 fish</u>



Recreational Black Sea Bass

- Summary of Stock Status
- 2016 Rhode Island Recreational Fishery Performance
- ASMFC Management of Black Sea Bass
- Recommendations for the 2017 Recreational Black Sea Bass Fishery



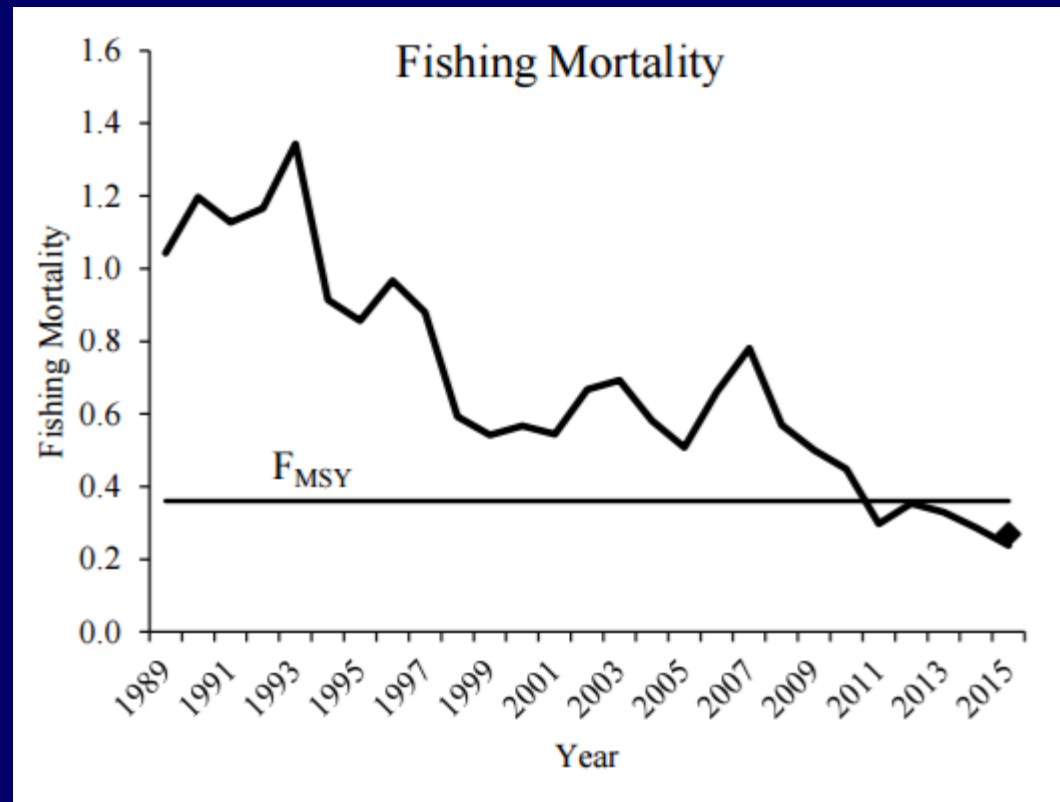
Black Sea Bass Stock Status

- Stock status (drumroll please...) not overfished, overfishing not occurring (symbol crash and confetti falls from sky)
- 2016 benchmark assessment was successful
- Quota increases set for 2017 per MA SSC meeting in Jan '17, no additional management uncertainty added by MC
- Stock is now assessed as 1 stock with meta-structure, northern portion (north of Hudson Canyon) and southern area (south of Hudson Canyon, north of Cape Hatteras)
 - Still managed as a single stock



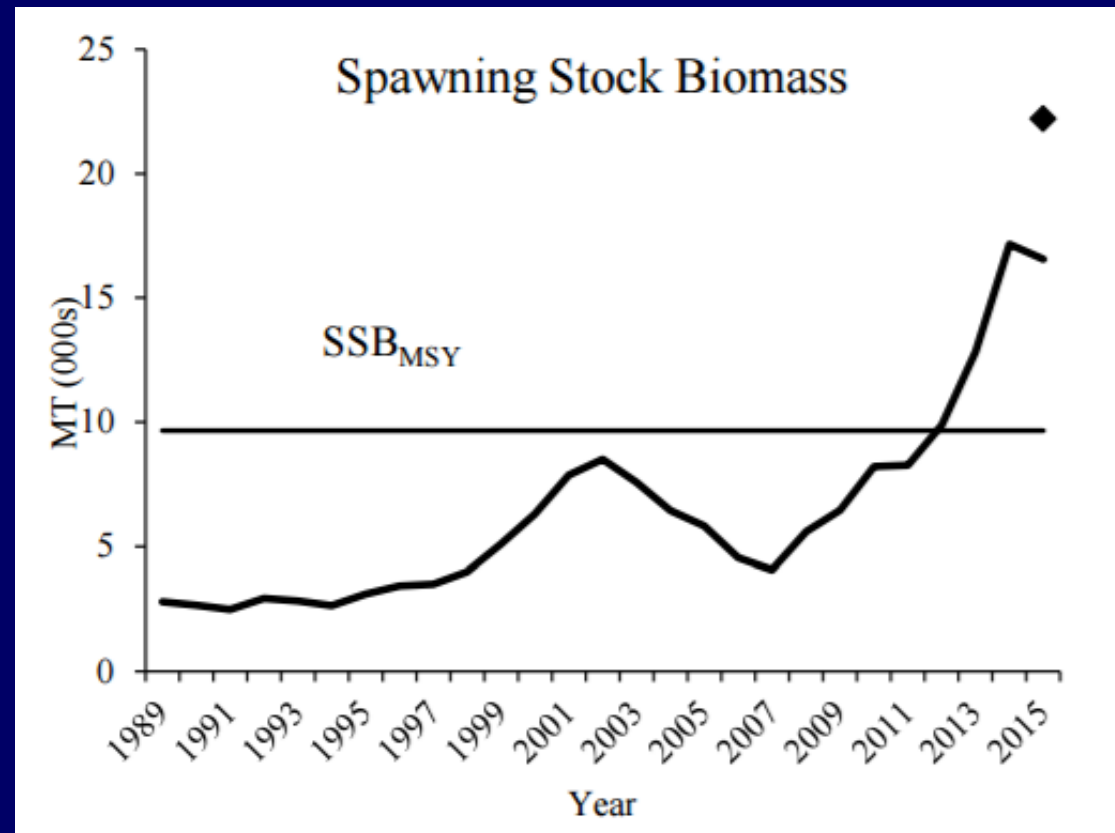
Black Sea Bass Stock Status

- Benchmark completed in 2016
- The black sea bass stock is not overfished, overfishing is not occurring relative to biological reference points
- Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.27 in 2015, below the threshold F reference point = 0.36
- 2015 estimates are retrospectively adjusted

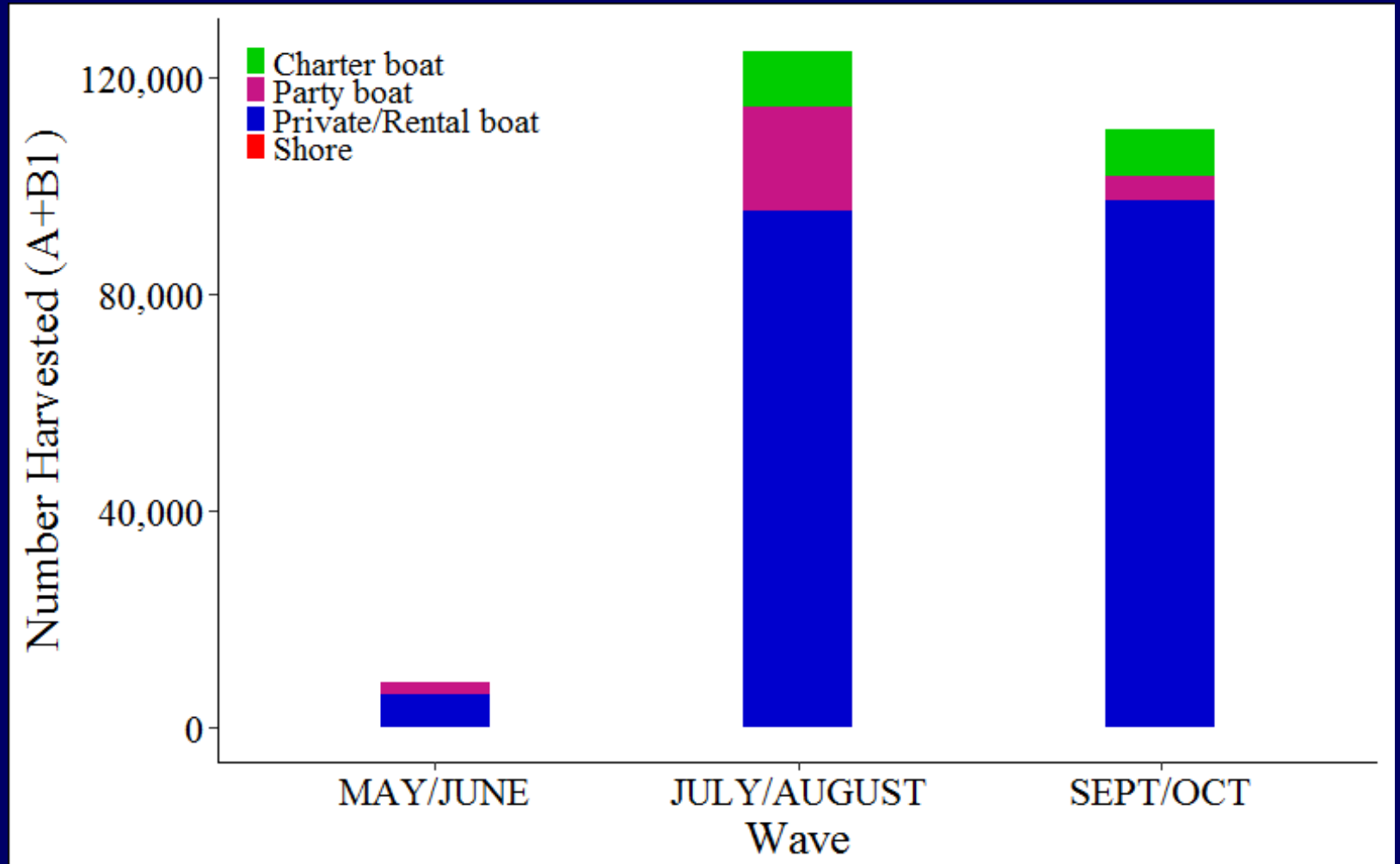


Black Sea Bass Stock Status cont'd:

- SSB estimated to be 48.9 m lbs in 2015, above the SSB reference point = 21.3 m lbs and above the SSB threshold = 10.7 m lbs
- The 2014 year class is currently estimated to be about 24.9 million fish, around average (avg = 24.3)
- Potential good recr event in 2015



2016 RI Recreational Black Sea Bass Fishery Performance



* Note: Data only through wave 5



ASMFC Management of Black Sea Bass

- 2016 Projected Recreational Harvest ~ 4.67 million pounds
- 2017 Recreational Harvest “Target” ~ 4.29 million pounds
- Needed Reduction = 8%
- Note: RI does not have a specific target as black sea bass managed through “ad hoc” regions
 - All states in Northern Region (NJ – MA) are required to reduce 2015 harvest by 8%
- MC has recommended status quo for 2017 based on MRIP uncertainty, pending GARFO approval



Recreational Black Sea Bass

Proposed Management Options:

Option	Min. Size	Season	Possession Limit
Current management	15"	6/24 – 8/31	3 fish
		9/1 – 12/31	7 fish
<u>Alternative option 1:</u>	15"	6/24 – 8/31	3 fish
		9/1 – 12/31 <u>10/21</u>	7 fish
<u>Alternative option 2:</u>	15"	6/24 <u>7/6</u> – 8/31	3 fish
		9/1 – 12/31	7 fish



End of Slides!

