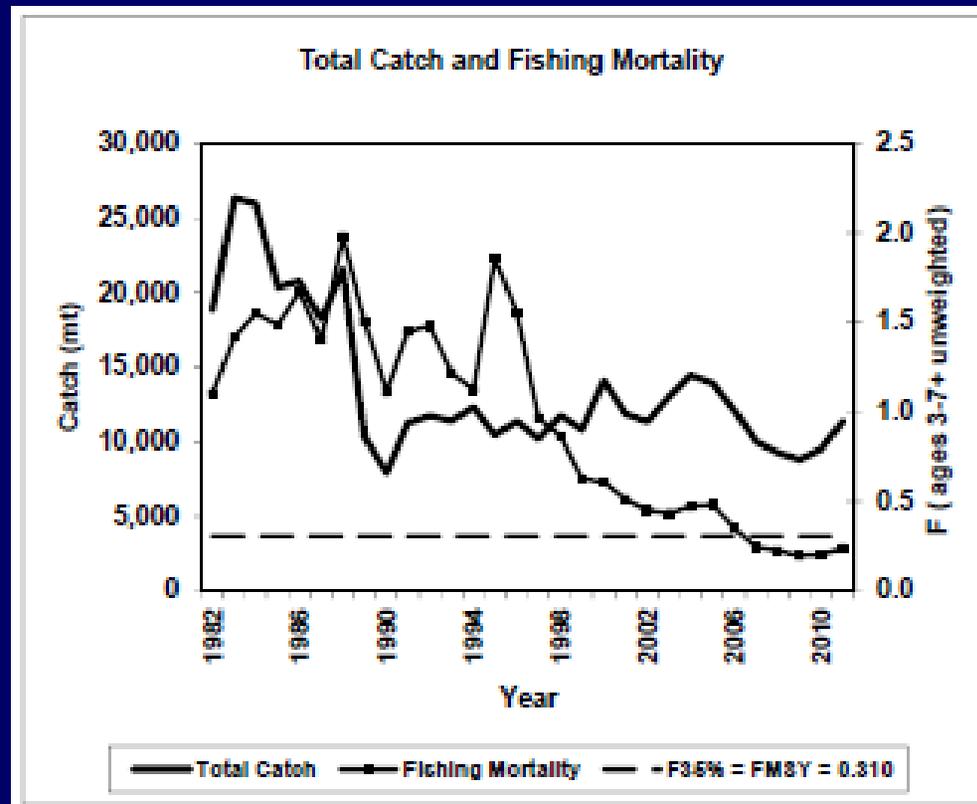


**Summary of Summer
Flounder Stock Status, 2012
Rhode Island Commercial
Fishery Performance, and
DFW Recommendations for
the 2013 Summer Flounder
Fishery**



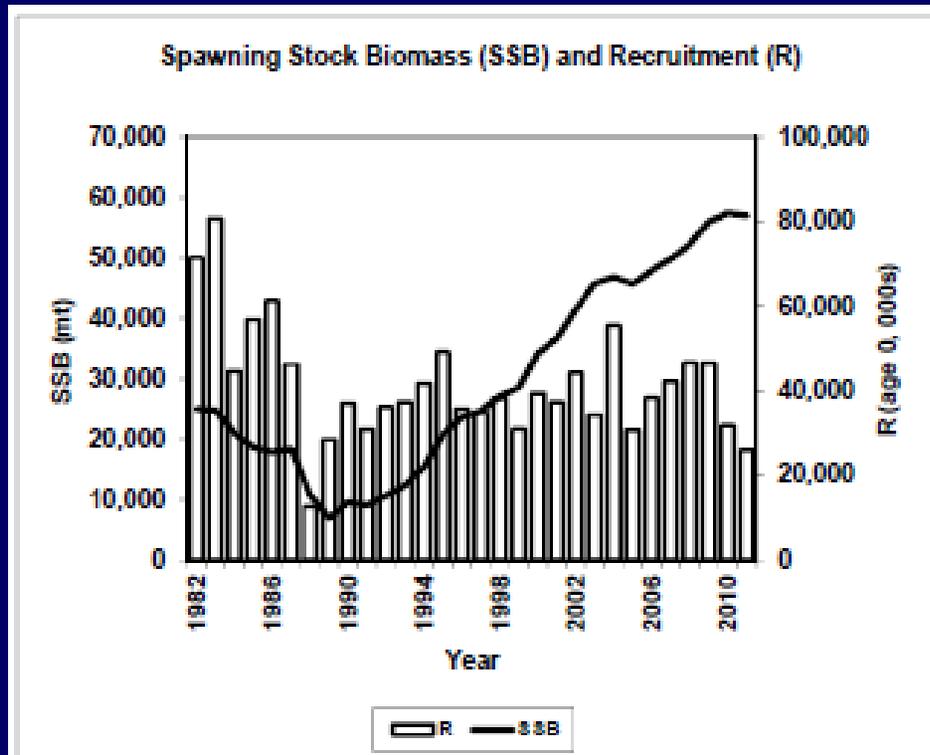
Summer Flounder Stock Status

- **Stock Status:**
 - The summer flounder stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring relative to 2008 SAW 47 biological reference points.
 - Further summer flounder is considered rebuilt.
 - Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.241 in 2011, below the threshold F reference point = 0.310 and the F target = 0.255.



Summer Flounder Stock Status

- **Stock Status:**
 - SSB estimated to be 125.7 m lbs in 2011, below the SSB reference point = 132.4 m lbs but above the SSB threshold = 66.2 m lbs.
 - The 2011 year class is currently estimated to be about 26 million fish, below 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



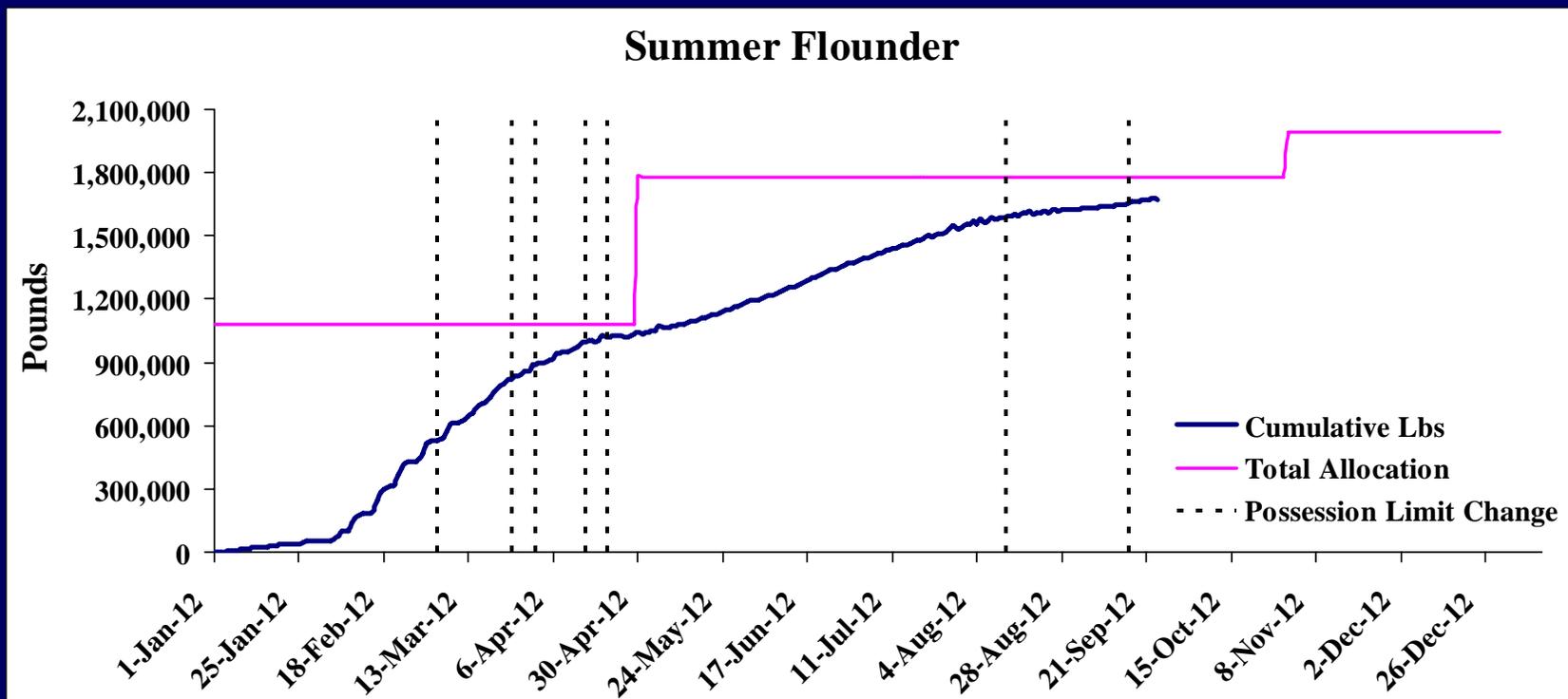
Summer Flounder Management Measure Recommendations 2013

•MAFMC and ASMFC Board Approved quota for 2013:

- A coastwide commercial quota of 11.44 m lbs (10% decrease from 2012).
- RI commercial quota (15.7% of coastwide) = 1,796,080 m lbs
- No change in mesh requirements (5.5 inch diamond or 6 inch square minimum mesh), minimum commercial fish size requirements (14 inch-TL), nor other gear requirements.
- No change in the current small mesh exemption program (SMEP) or flynet exemptions.



RI Fishery Performance - Commercial Landings

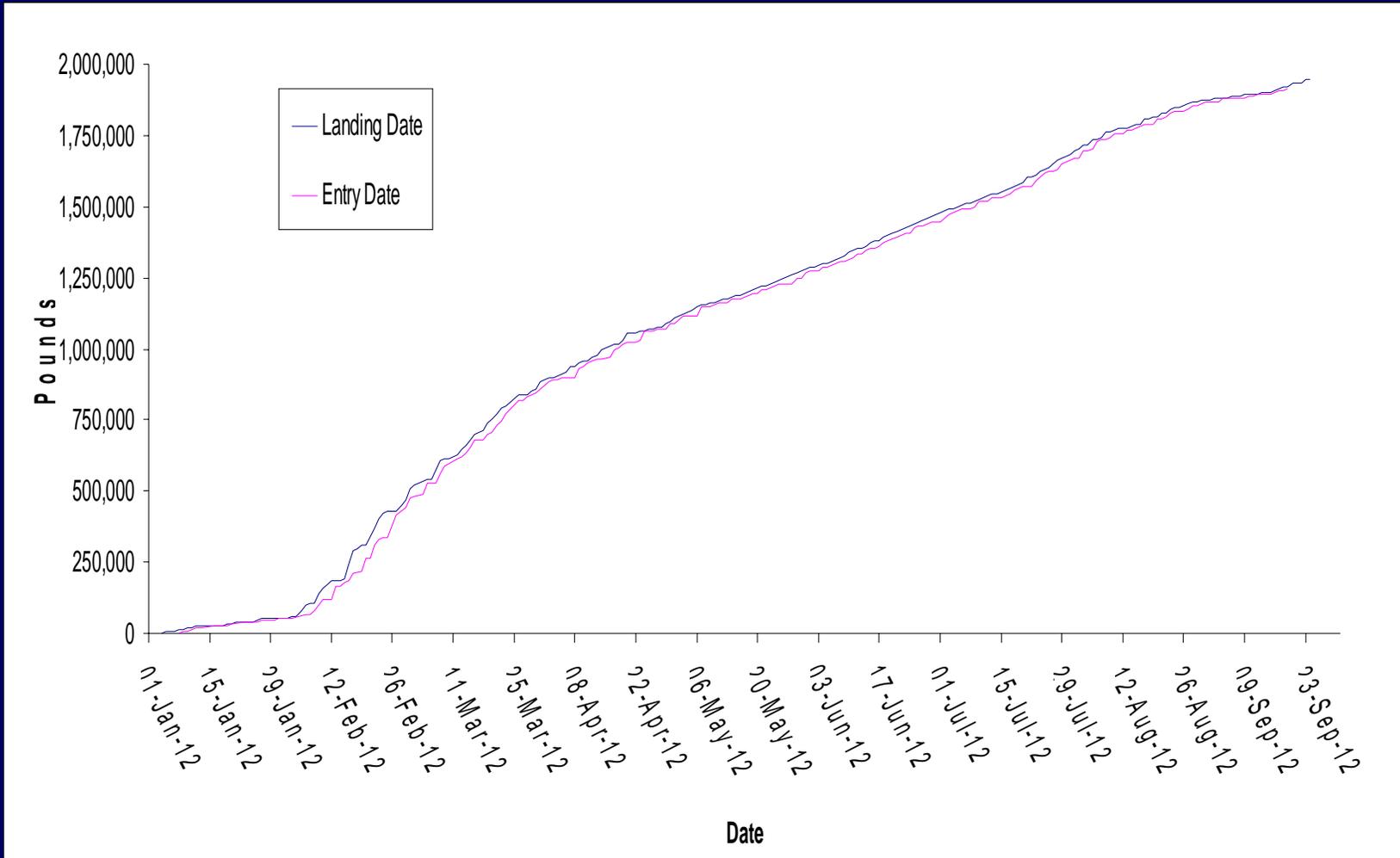


Possession Limit Changes:

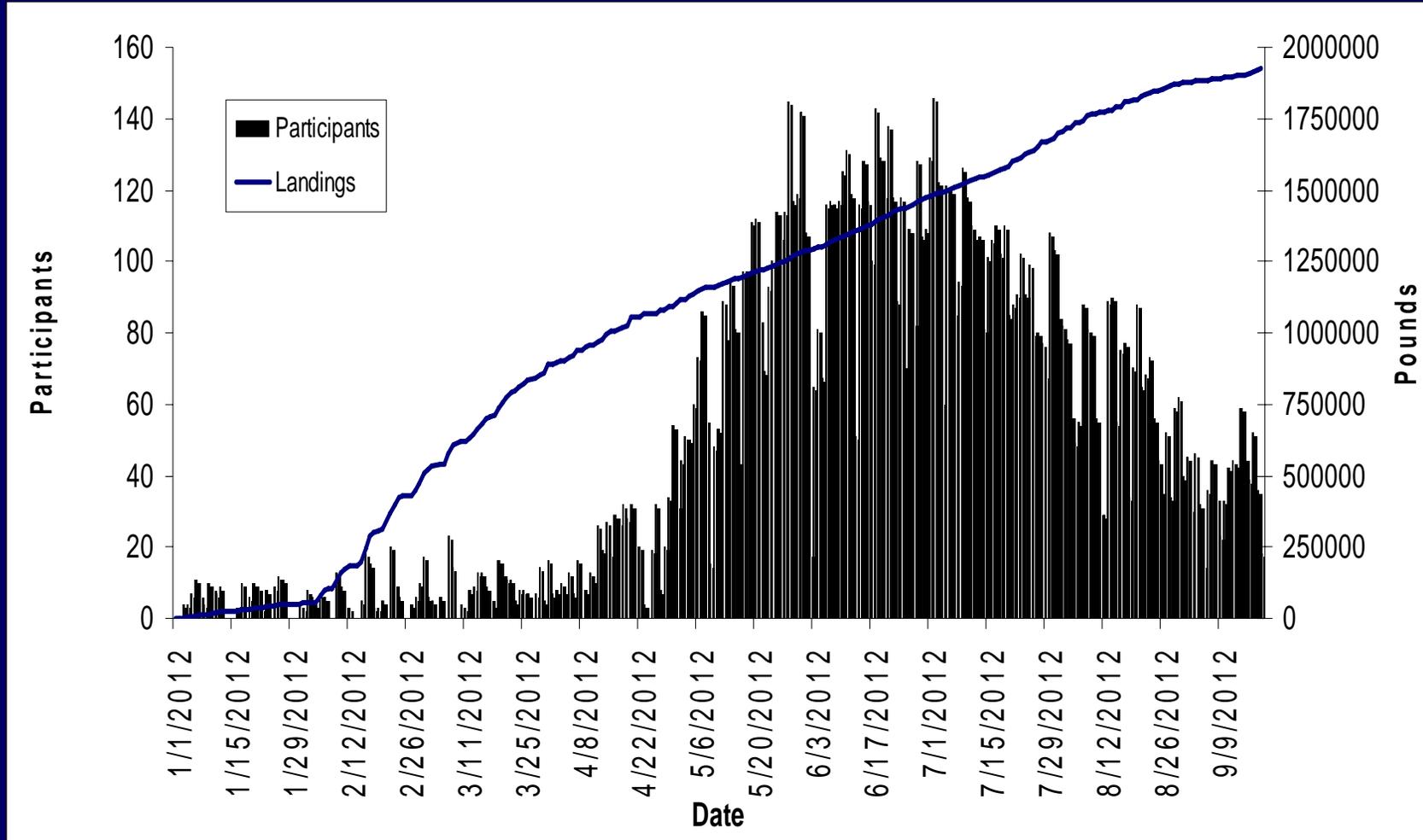
- 1/1/12 - 500 lbs/day
- 2/5/12 - 500 lbs/day; 3500 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 3/4/12 - 500 lbs/day; 2500 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 3/25/12 - 500 lbs/day; 2000 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 4/1/12 - 300 lbs/day; 1500 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 4/15/12 - 500 lbs/day
- 4/21/12 - 100 lbs/day
- 6/1/12 - 100 lbs/day; 700 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 8/12/12 - 50 lbs/day; 350 lbs/wk (aggregate)
- 9/16/12 - 100 lbs/day; 700 lbs/wk (aggregate)



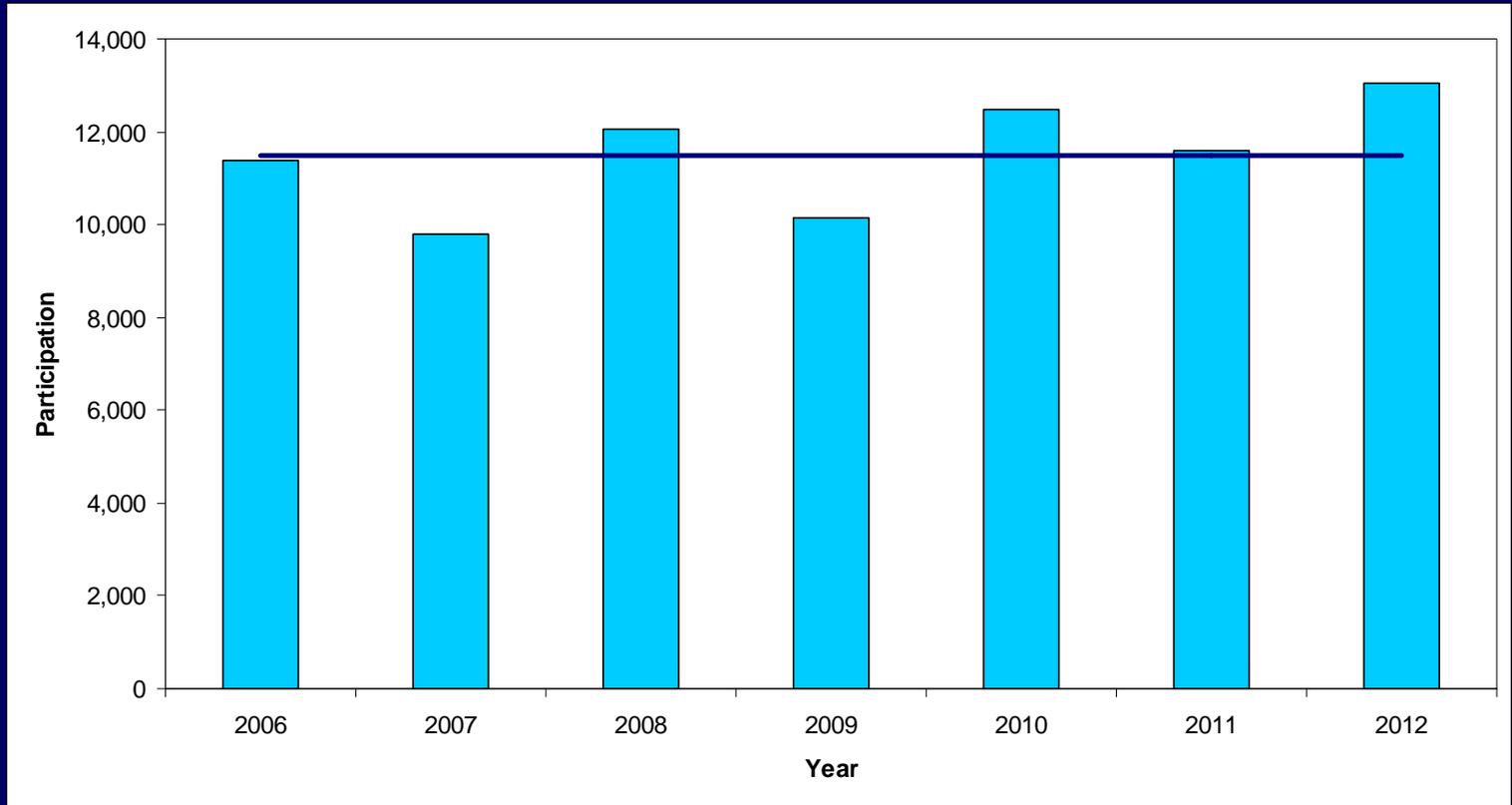
RI Fishery Performance – Dealer Reporting



Commercial Landings – Change in Effort Within Season 2013



Commercial Landings – Change in Effort Between Years



- Data is only through late September in each year



Commercial Landings – Aggregate Program

- Total participation was 51 in the Winter Aggregate Program and 14 in the Summer Aggregate Program
- Total times participants landed over the weekly aggregate amount were 27 to date
- The total additional pounds landed for entire state period (to date) were 6,001 lbs (less than 1% of Allocation)



RI Commercial Fishery Performance

- ◆ There was a 37,976 pound underage in first period (2% of total quota)
- ◆ This underage was split between the two remaining sub periods per regulation, therefore each sub period gained 18,988 lbs
- ◆ The summer sub period is on track to be fully utilized without a closure
- ◆ The possession limit dropped below 100 pounds for 5 weeks in the summer sub period in an effort to avoid an overage or closure
- ◆ Effort to date reached a maximum of 147 participants per day on July 7



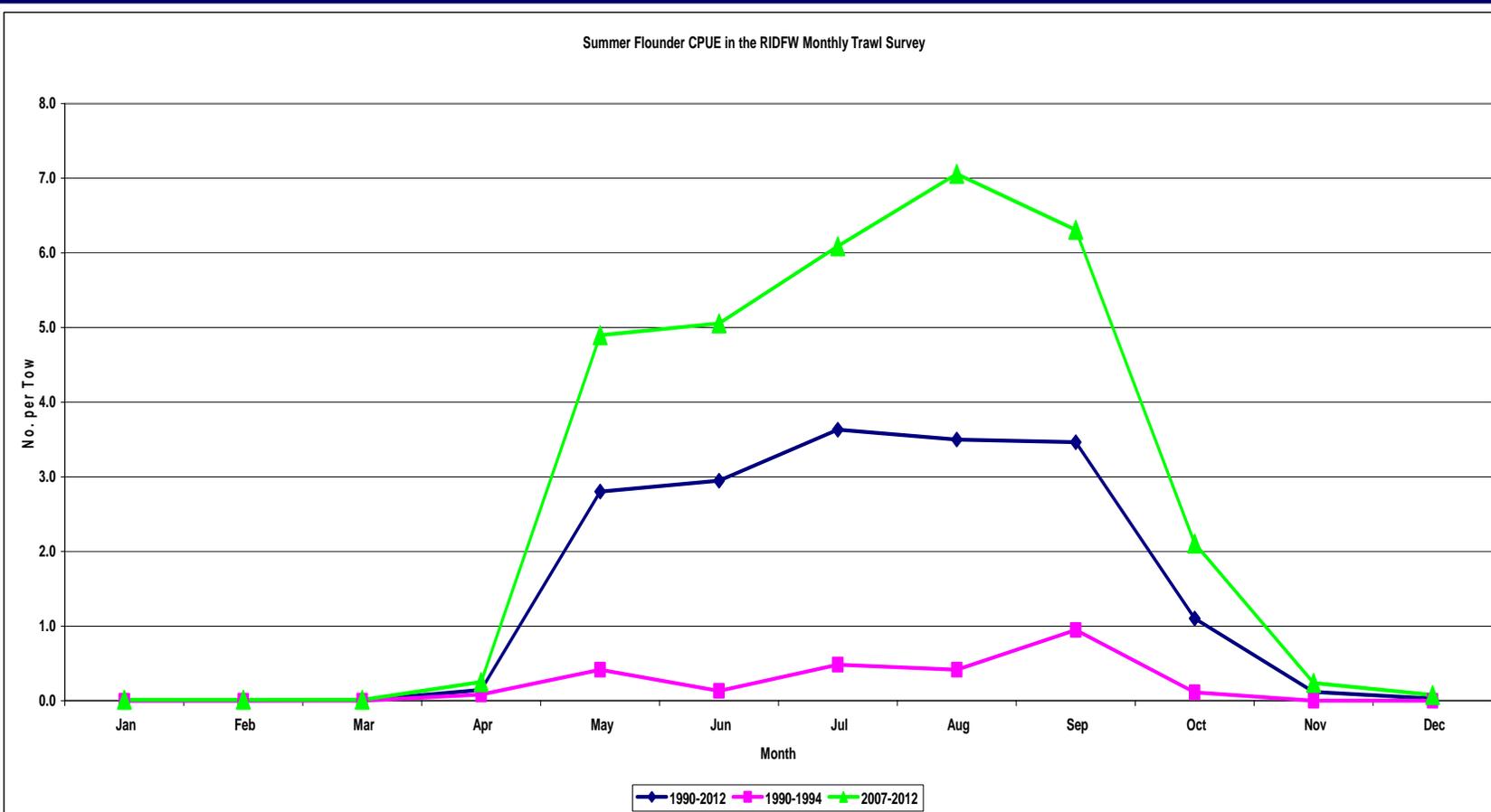
Preliminary 2013 Commercial Allocations

- RI 2013 Projected Commercial Quota (RSA included) = 1,796,080 lbs
- RI 2013 Projected Commercial Quota (w/ RSA removed) = 1,742,198 lbs
- RI 2012 Commercial Quota = 1,966,400 lbs
- 2013 has a decrease of 224,202 lbs (11% decrease)
- 2013 Allocations based on estimated RI Quota:
 - Winter 1 54% = 940,787 lbs
 - Summer 35% = 609,769 lbs
 - Winter 2 11% = 191,642 lbs
- For reference, 2012 adjusted allocations:
 - Winter 1 54% = 1,078,056 lbs
 - Summer 35% = 698,740 lbs
 - Winter 2 11% = 219,604 lbs



DEM/Marine Fisheries Proposed Changes

- ♦ The Division feels that the current long summer sub period is not accommodating to the different user groups participating in the beginning and the end of the period
- ♦ As well the Division feels the current long summer sub period does not reflect the biological characteristics, e.g. the migratory patterns, of the current stock when in local waters



DEM/Marine Fisheries Proposed Changes

- ♦ The Division recommends the following starting possession limits for 2013:
 - ♦ Winter 1 = 300/day; Aggregate Period 2,500/week or 400/day
 - ♦ Summer = 100/day; Aggregate Period 700/week or 100/day
 - ♦ Winter 2 = 200/day
- ♦ Further the Division proposes altering the sub periods as follows:
 - ♦ Winter 1 (1/1 – 4/30; 54%) = 300/day; Aggregate Period 2,500/week or 400/day
 - ♦ Summer (5/1 – 9/15; 35%) = 100/day; Aggregate Period 700/week or 100/day
 - ♦ Winter 2 (9/16 – 12/31; 11%) = 200/day
- ♦ As well, in an effort to look towards providing fishermen with more flexibility, the Division offers the following for consideration:
 - ♦ Removing the requirement for a fluke exemption certificate for access to the aggregate program
 - ♦ The Division feels that caution should be exercised when considering this option as previous analyses have indicated a potential for increased effort, and coupled with a lower quota, could lead to premature closures
 - ♦ This is therefore a non preferred option, but the Division wishes to get feedback from the AP on this concept
 - ♦ Are there any situations where this increased flexibility could be exercised, i.e. winter only, summer only, both periods?

