

RI Department of Environmental  
Management

**Marine Fisheries**

**INFORMATIONAL PRE-HEARING  
WORKSHOP**

November 16, 2015



# Marine Fisheries Informational Workshop – Rules of Engagement

- ◆ RIDFW staff will provide presentation on each of the proposed regulation amendments;
- ◆ Please hold all questions until the end, presentations are relatively brief and we can go back when complete;
- ◆ 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. Please offer your preferred option(s) and comments for the public hearing record during the public hearing that follows the workshop.
- ◆ Refer to full annotated regulations provided in public notice and Division website;
- ◆ Public comment period will end at 4:00PM on September 28.



# Workshop/Public Hearing Items

- 1) Proposed amendments to RIMFR “Finfish”:
  - a) Commercial management of Summer Flounder;
  - b) Commercial management of Bluefish;
  - c) Commercial management of Scup;
  - d) Commercial management of Black Sea Bass;
  - e) Editing.
  
- 2) Proposed amendment to RIMFR “Legislative Findings”.



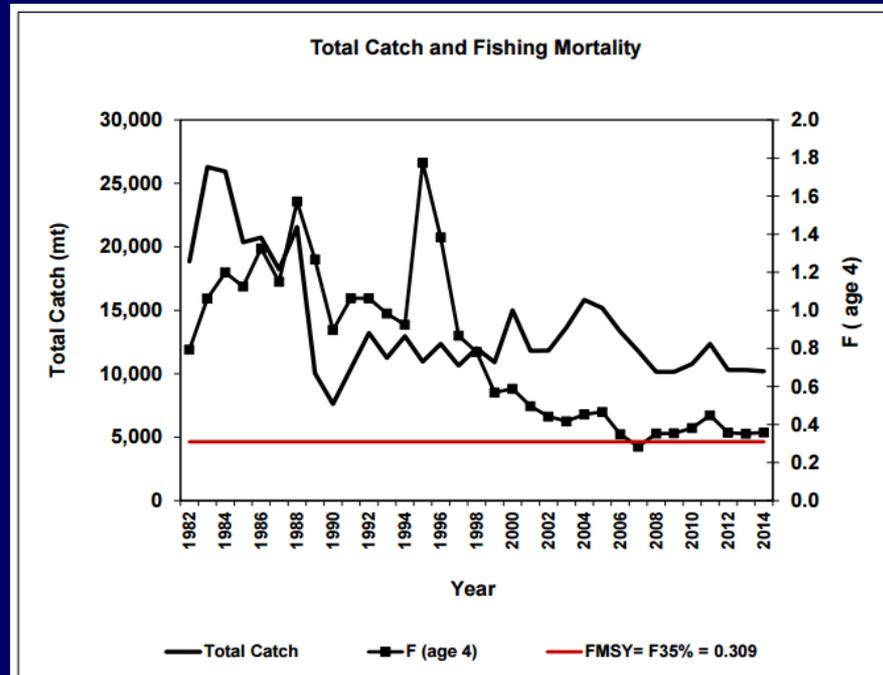
## Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ Summary of Stock Status;
- ◆ 2015 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- ◆ Recommendations for the 2016 Summer Flounder Fishery



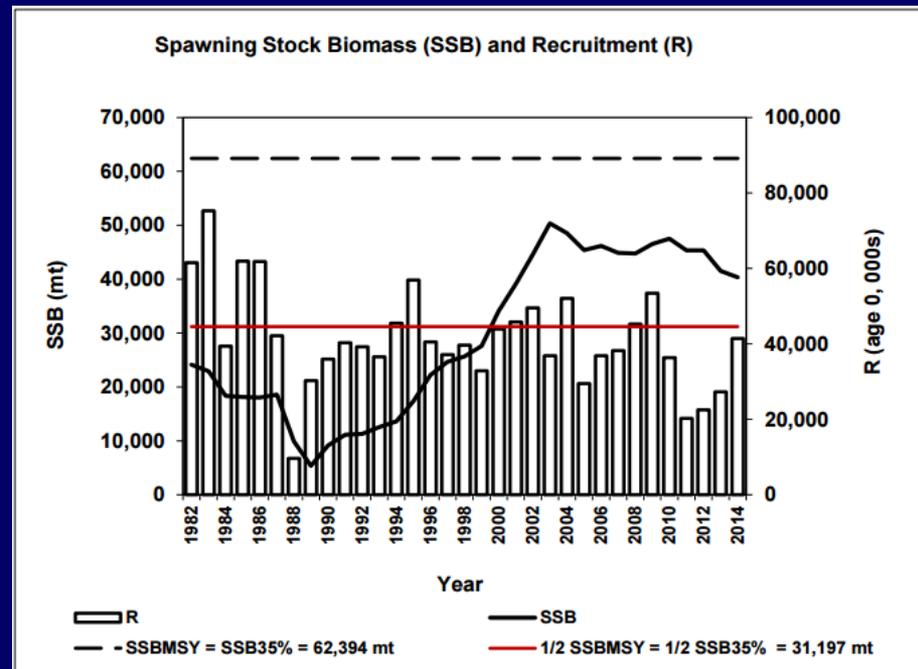
# Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ 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 2014, above the threshold F reference point = 0.309 (also above F target = 0.255).



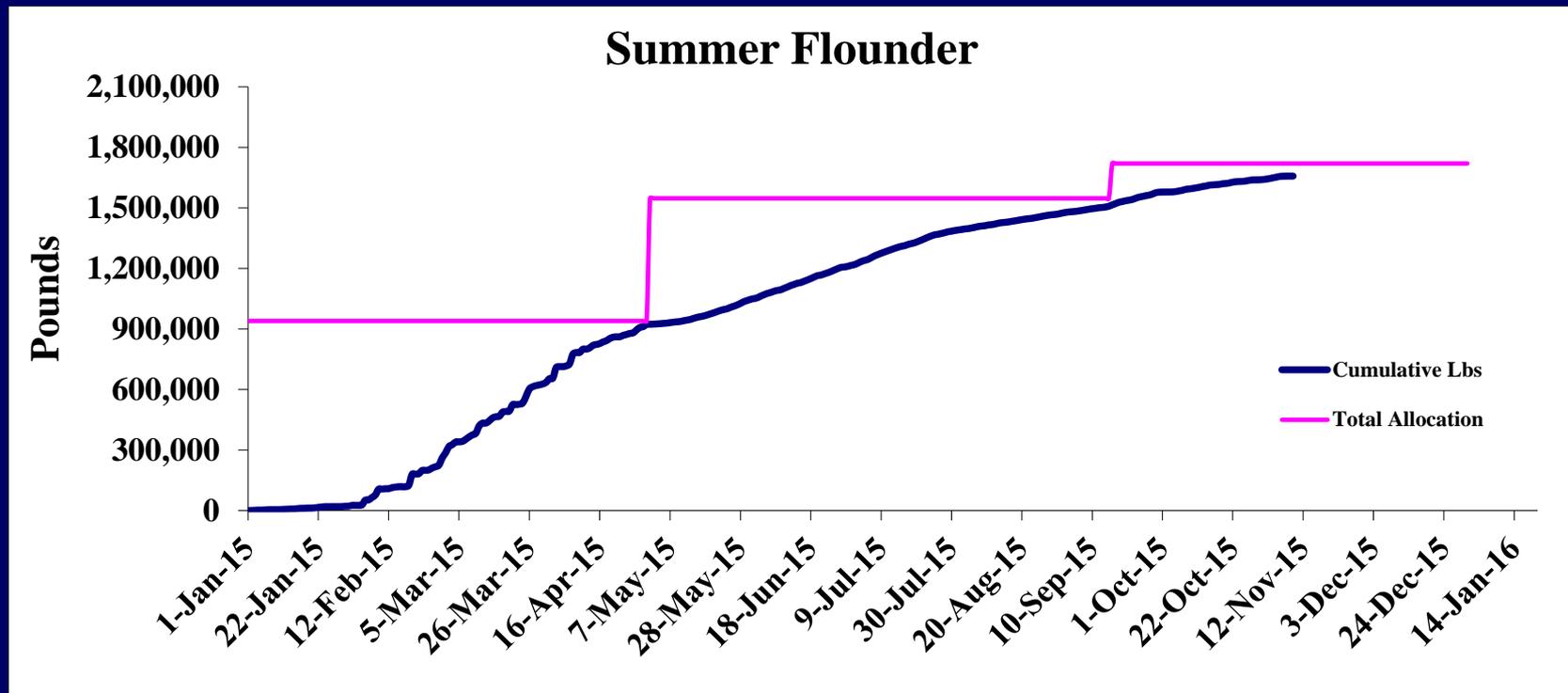
# Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ SSB estimated to be 88.96 m lbs in 2014, below the SSB reference point = 137.6 m lbs but above the SSB threshold = 66.2 m lbs.
- ◆ The 2014 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



# Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ To date, no commercial fishery closures



## Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ RI 2016 Proj Commercial Quota = 1,274,091 lbs
- ◆ RI 2015 Commercial Quota = 1,719,629 lbs
- ◆ 2016 has decrease of 445,538 lbs (~30% decr)
- ◆ 2016 Allocations based on estimated RI Quota:
  - ◆ Winter - 54% = 688,009 lbs
  - ◆ Summer - 35% = 445,932 lbs
  - ◆ Fall - 11% = 140,150 lbs
- ◆ For reference, 2015 adjusted allocations:
  - ◆ Winter - 54% = 939,438 lbs
  - ◆ Summer - 35% = 607,233 lbs
  - ◆ Fall - 11% = 172,958 lbs



# Hearing Item 1a: Commercial management of Summer Flounder

- ◆ Proposals
  - ◆ Option 1: Status quo.
  - ◆ Option 2: Reduction in starting possession limits to account for 30% decrease in quota in 2016

	Min. size	Quota	Sub-period	Poss. limit (lbs/vsl/day)	Aggregate poss. (lbs/vsl/wk)
<b>Status Quo</b>	14"	54%	Winter (1/1 – 4/30)	200 lbs	2,000
		35%	Summer (5/1 – 9/15)	100 lbs	700
		11%	Fall (9/16 – 12/31)	200 lbs	No aggregate
<b><u>Option 2</u></b>	14"	54%	Winter (1/1 – 4/30)	200 lbs	<b><u>1,400</u></b>
		35%	Summer (5/1 – 9/15)	<b><u>50 lbs</u></b>	<b><u>350</u></b>
		11%	Fall (9/16 – 12/31)	<b><u>100 lbs</u></b>	No aggregate



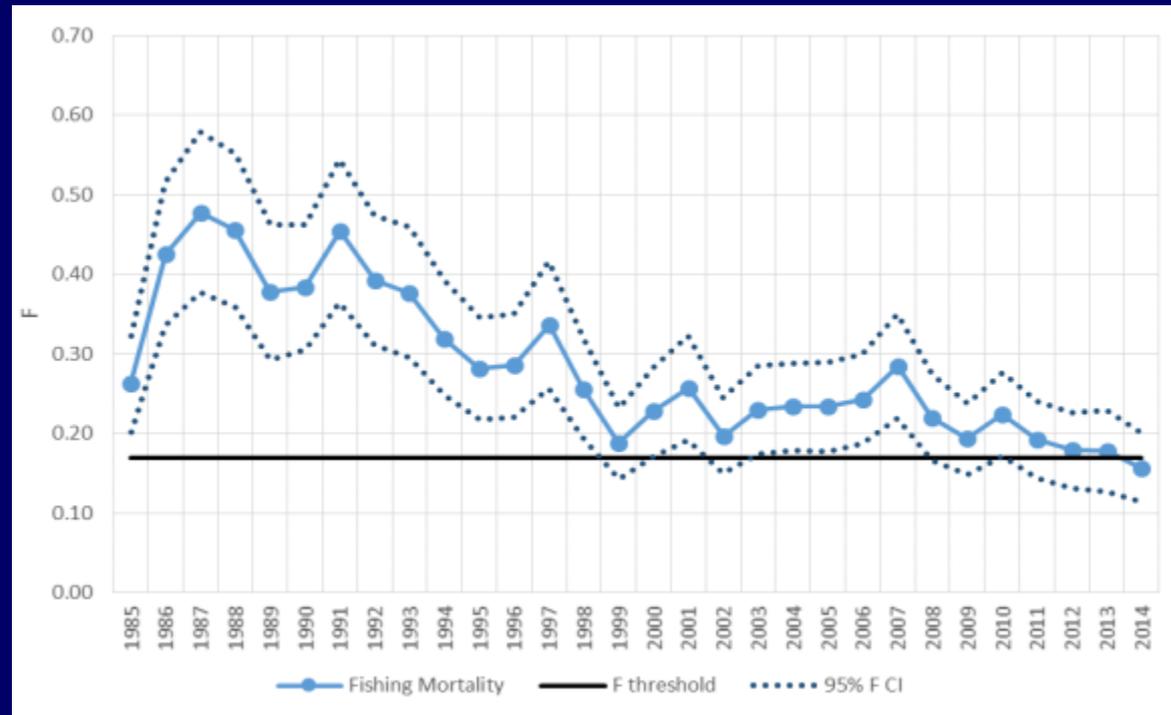
## Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ Summary of Stock Status;
- ◆ 2015 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- ◆ Recommendations for the 2016 Bluefish Fishery



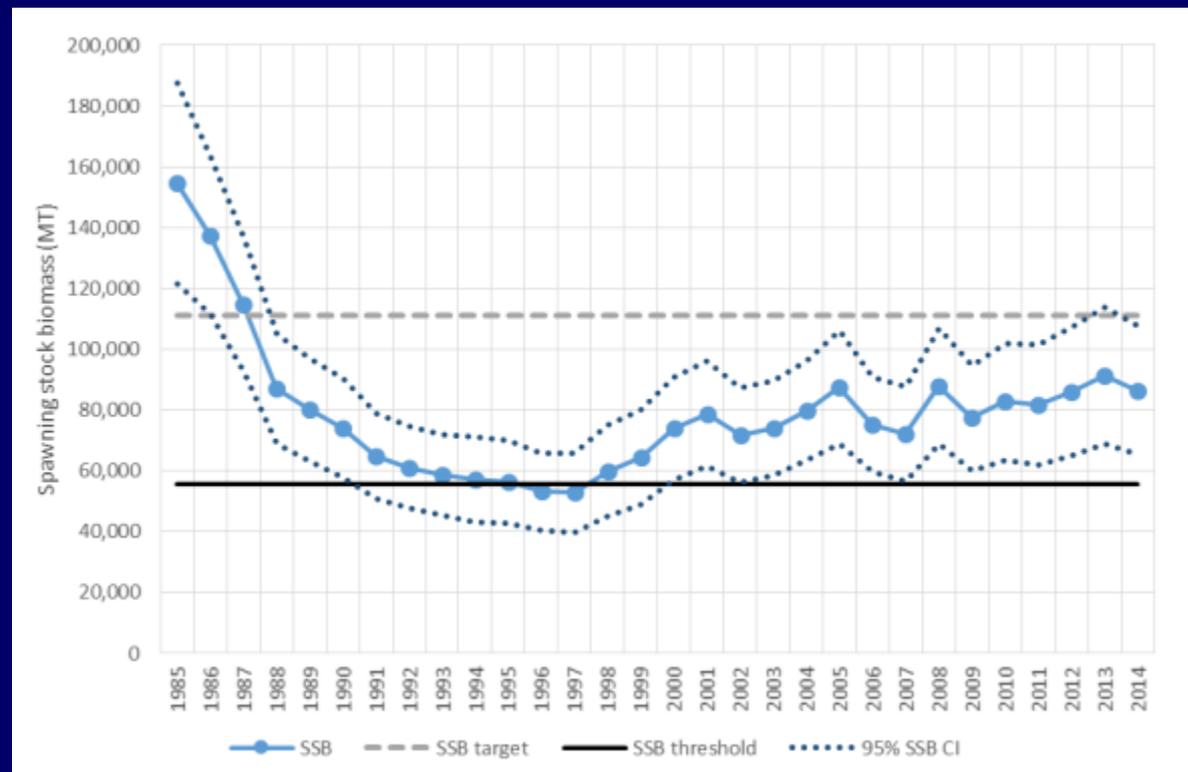
## Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ Benchmark in 2015
- ◆ The bluefish stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring relative to biological reference points.
- ◆ Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.157 in 2014, below the threshold F reference point = 0.19.



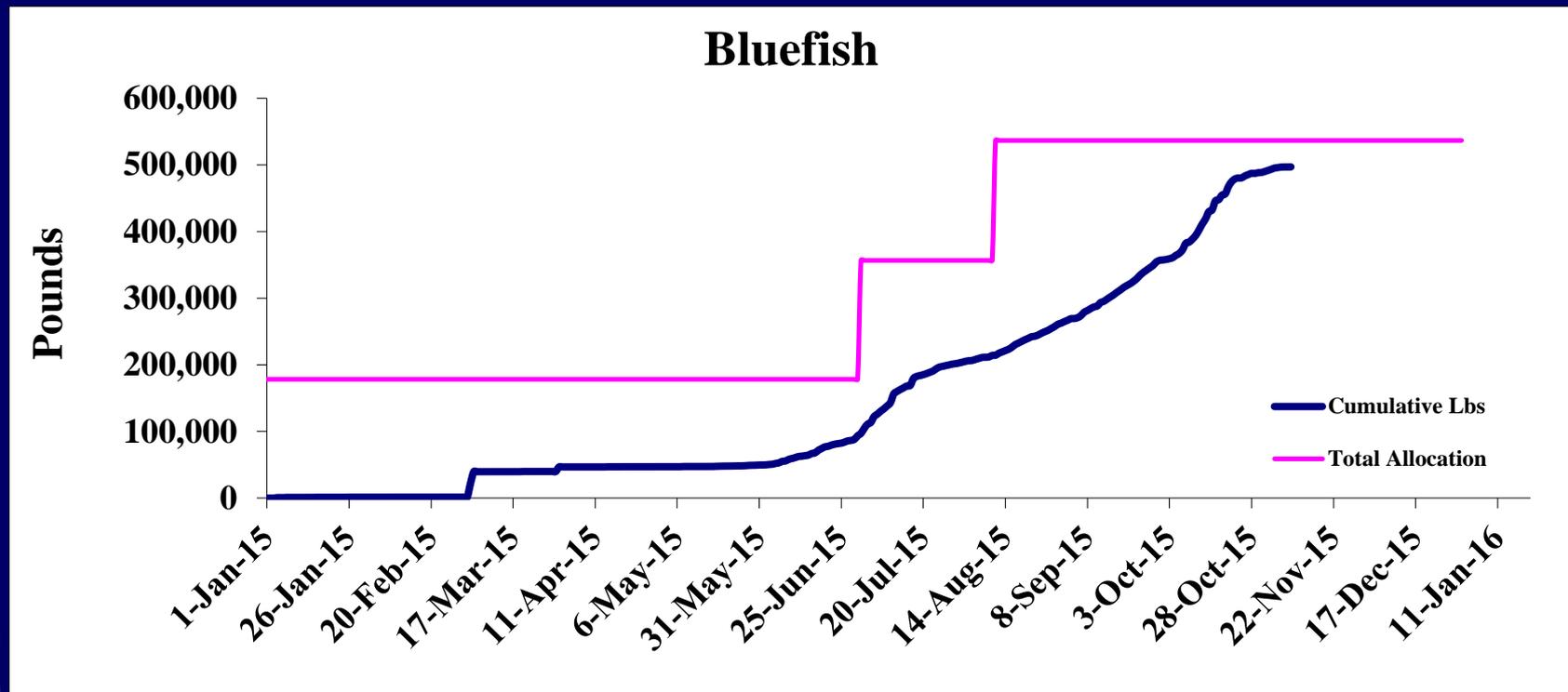
# Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ Biomass estimated to be 207.96 m lbs in 2014, above the Biomass threshold = 162.1 m lbs but below the Biomass target of 324.19 m lbs
- ◆ The 2014 year class is currently estimated to be about 29.6 million fish, above the median



## Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ To date, no commercial fishery closures, but needed transfers from other states



## Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ RI 2016 Proj Commercial Quota = 321,143 lbs
- ◆ RI 2015 Commercial Quota = 356,826 lbs
- ◆ 2016 has decrease of 35,683 lbs (~10% decr)
- ◆ 2016 Allocations based on estimated RI Quota:
  - ◆ Sub Period 1 - 50% = 160,572 lbs
  - ◆ Sub Period 2 - 50% = 160,571 lbs
- ◆ For reference, 2015 adjusted allocations:
  - ◆ Sub Period 1 - 50% = 178,413 lbs
  - ◆ Sub Period 2 - 50% = 178,413 lbs



## Hearing Item 1b: Commercial management of Bluefish

- ◆ Option 1: Status quo.
- ◆ Option 2: Remove seasons and adopt year round possession limit to account for 30% decrease in quota in 2015

	Sub-period	Allocation	Poss. Limit
<b>Status Quo</b>	1/1 – 6/30	50% of the annual quota	Unlimited
	7/1 – 12/31	50% of the annual quota	Unlimited
<b><u>Option 2</u></b>	<b><u>1/1 – 12/31</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b> of the annual quota	<b><u>3,500 lbs/vsl/week*</u></b>

\* The calendar week period begins on Sunday, 12:00 AM and ends on the following Saturday at 11:59 PM.



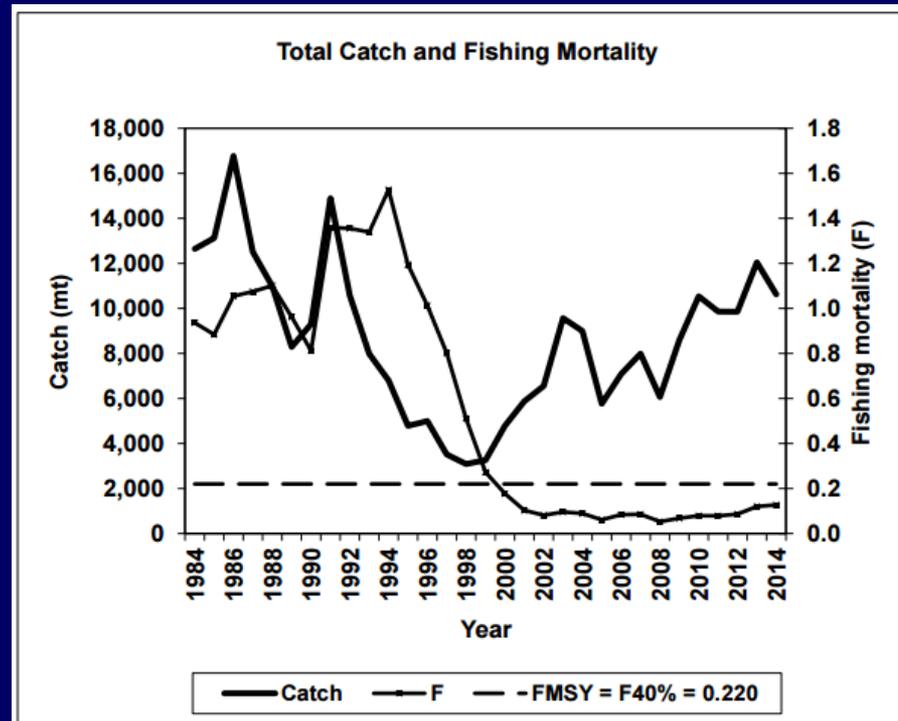
## Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

- ◆ Summary of Stock Status;
- ◆ 2015 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- ◆ Recommendations for the 2016 Scup Fishery



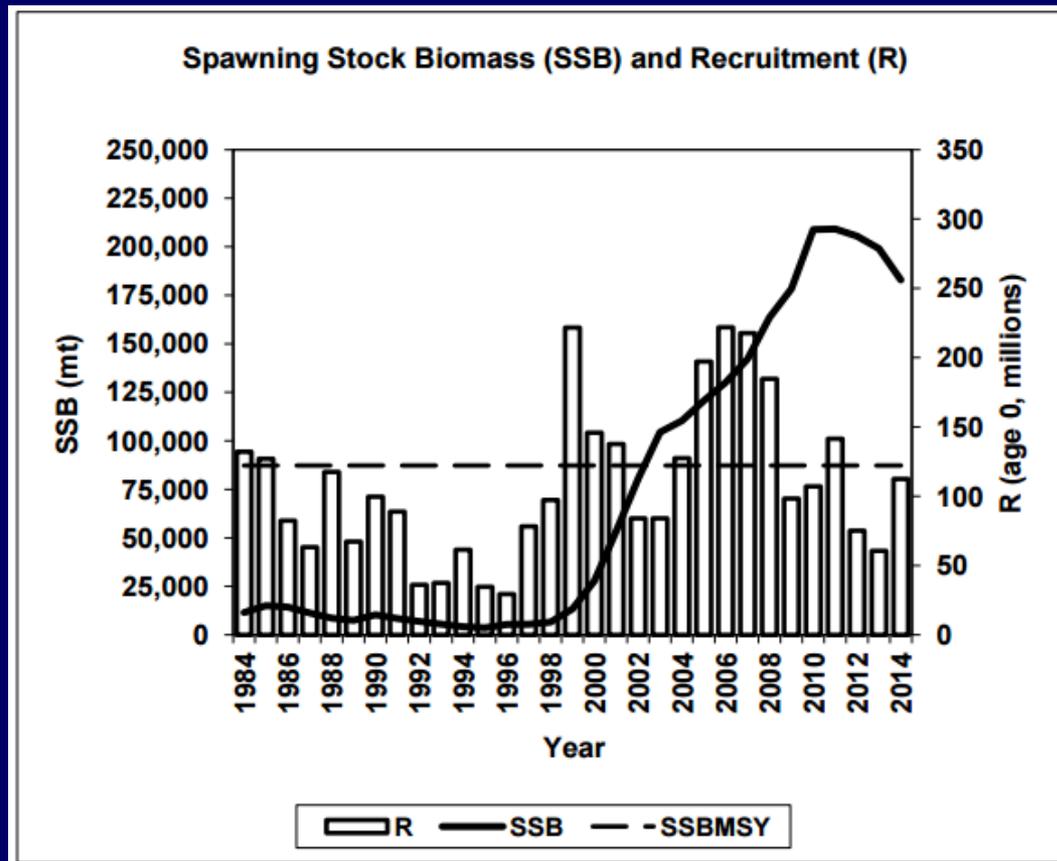
## Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ Benchmark 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



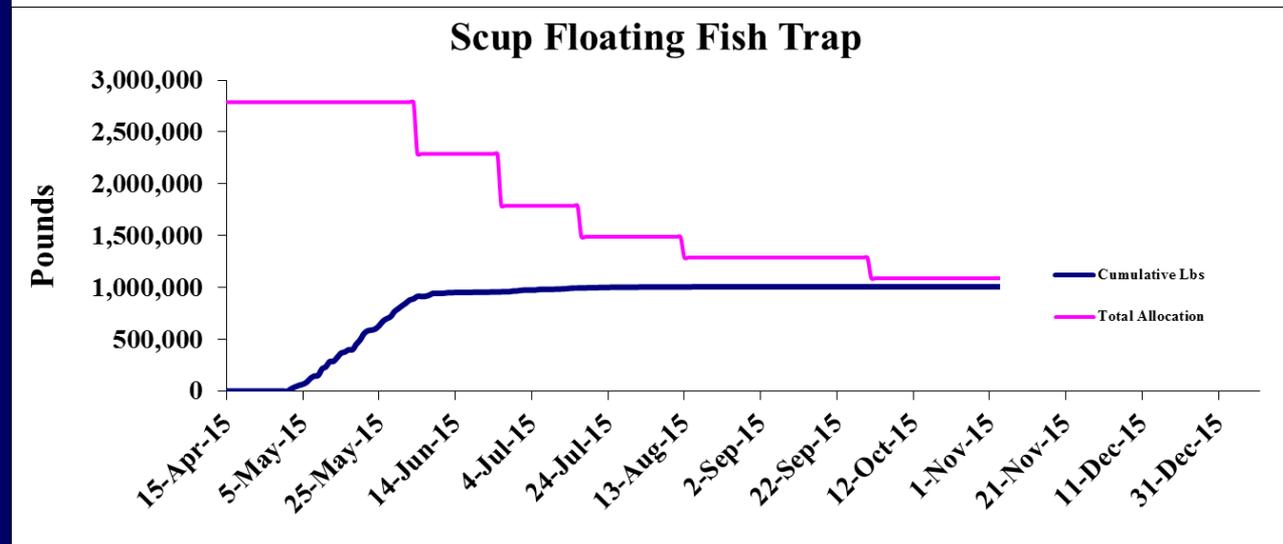
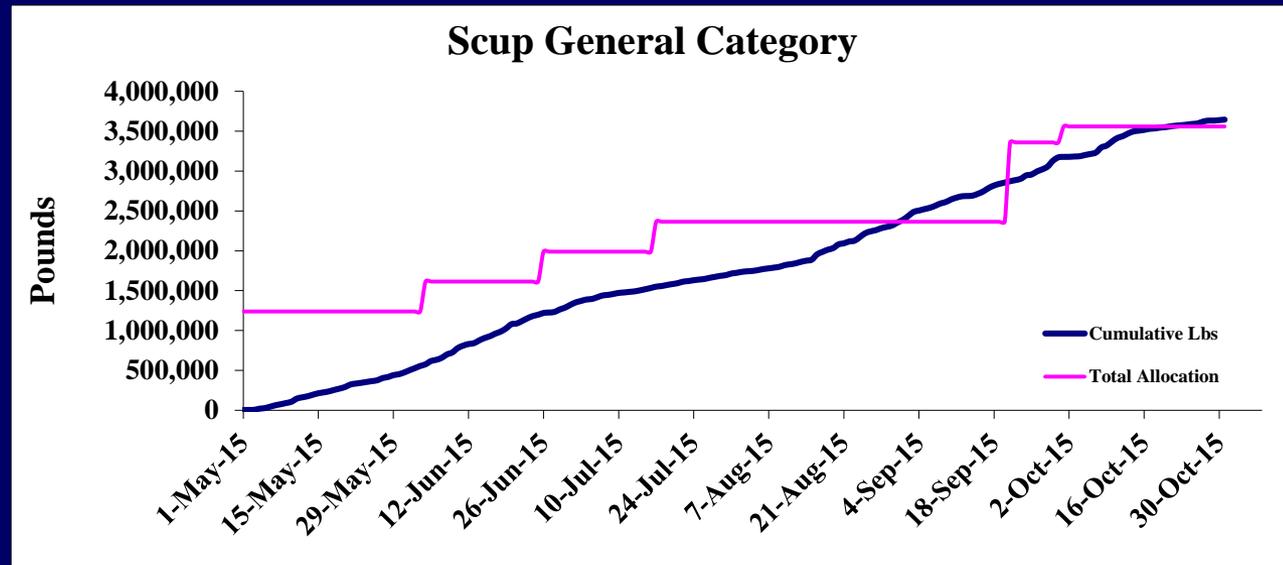
# Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ 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



# Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

- ◆ To date, no commercial fishery closures



## Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

- ◆ RI 2016 Proj Commercial Quota = 4,479,518 lbs
- ◆ RI 2015 Commercial Quota = 4,647,427 lbs
- ◆ 2016 has decrease of 167,909 lbs (~4% decr)
- ◆ 2016 Allocations based on estimated RI Quota:
  - ◆ FFT - 60% = 2,687,711 lbs
  - ◆ Gen Cat – 40% = 1,791,807 lbs
    - ◆ Summer – 66.67% = 1,194,598 lbs
    - ◆ Fall – 33.33% = 597,209 lbs
- ◆ For reference, 2015 adjusted allocations:
  - ◆ FFT - 60% = 2,788,456 lbs
  - ◆ Gen Cat – 40% = 1,858,971 lbs
    - ◆ Summer – 66.67% = 1,239,314 lbs
    - ◆ Fall – 33.33% = 619,657 lbs



# Hearing Item 1c: Commercial management of Scup

◆ Option 1: Status quo.

Min. size	Sub-period		Quota		Poss. limit
9"	<u>Winter I:</u> (1/1 – 4/30)		Coastwide		50,000 lbs/vsl/day
	<u>Summer – Fall:</u> (5/1 – 10/31)	<u>Gen. Cat. Summer:</u> (5/1 – 9/17)	40% of sub-period quota	2/3 of Gen. Cat. quota	10,000 lbs/vsl/wk
		<u>Gen. Cat. Fall:</u> (9/18 – 10/31)		1/3 of Gen. Cat. quota	10,000 lbs/vsl/wk
		<u>FFT:</u> (5/1 – 10/31)	60% of sub-period quota		Unlimited
	<u>Winter II:</u> (11/1 – 12/31)		Coastwide		18,000 lbs/vsl/day*

\* Winter 2 poss lim set after winter 1 roll over calculated



## Hearing Item 1d: Commercial management of Black Sea Bass

- ◆ Summary of Stock Status;
- ◆ 2015 Rhode Island Commercial Fishery Performance; and
- ◆ Recommendations for the 2016 Black Sea Bass Fishery



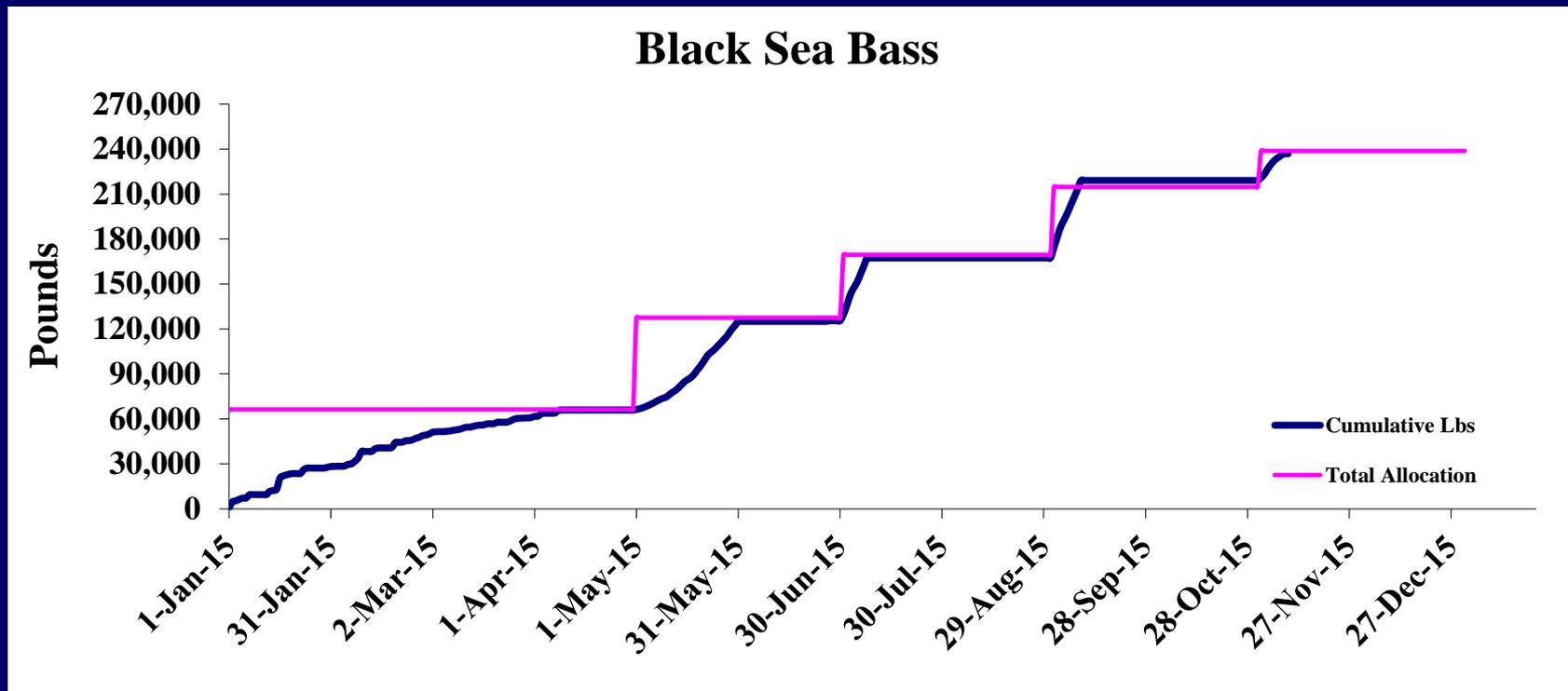
## Hearing Item 1d: Commercial management of Black Sea Bass

- ◆ Stock Status:
- ◆ Stock status still undetermined
- ◆ Mid Atl SSC adopted a new procedure in 2015 to set quota for level 4 stocks, using a data poor procedure ensemble approach
- ◆ This approach led to an increase in quota for 2016
- ◆ Benchmark assessment is underway, should be completed by the end of 2016 for potential use in 2017



# Hearing Item 1d: Commercial management of Black Sea Bass

- ◆ To date, multiple fishery closures



## Hearing Item 1d: Commercial management of Black Sea Bass

- ◆ RI 2016 Proj Commercial Quota = 298,100 lbs
- ◆ RI 2015 Commercial Quota = 238,783 lbs
- ◆ 2016 has increase of 59,317 lbs (~20% incr)
- ◆ 2016 Allocations based on estimated RI Quota:
  - ◆ Winter 1 - 25% = 74,525 lbs
  - ◆ Summer - 25% = 74,525 lbs
  - ◆ Summer – 19.5% = 58,130 lbs
  - ◆ Fall – 19.5% = 58,129 lbs
  - ◆ Winter 2 – 11% = 32,791 lbs
- ◆ For reference, 2015 adjusted allocations:
  - ◆ Winter 1 - 25% = 66,300 lbs
  - ◆ Summer - 25% = 61,193 lbs
  - ◆ Summer – 19.5% = 41,976 lbs
  - ◆ Fall – 19.5% = 45,286 lbs
  - ◆ Winter 2 – 11% = 24,027 lbs



# Hearing Item 1d: Commercial management of Black Sea Bass

- ◆ Option 1: Status quo.
- ◆ Option 2: Establish Aggregate program (Note: The DFW may adjust these numbers moderately based on additional analysis)

	Min. size	Sub-period	Quota	Poss. limit
<b>Status Quo</b>	11"	1/1 – 4/30	25%	750 lbs/vsl/day
		5/1 – 6/30	25%	50 lbs/vsl/day
		7/1 – 7/31	11%	50 lbs/vsl/day
		9/1 – 10/31	19.5%	50 lbs/vsl/day
		11/1 – 12/31	11%	100 lbs/vsl/day
<b><u>Option 2</u></b>	11"	1/1 – 4/30	25%	<b><u>1000 lbs/vsl/week</u></b>
		5/1 – 6/30	25%	<b><u>250 lbs/vsl/week</u></b>
		7/1 – 7/31	11%	<b><u>250 lbs/vsl/week</u></b>
		9/1 – 10/31	19.5%	<b><u>250 lbs/vsl/week</u></b>
		11/1 – 12/31	11%	<b><u>250 lbs/vsl/week</u></b>



## Hearing Item 1e: Editing of RIMFR – “Finfish”

- ◆ Deletion of “total length” throughout regulation; in conjunction with hearing item 2.

## Hearing Item #2: Editing of RIMFR – “Legislative Findings”

Total length: means the straight linear distance from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail of a finfish species. All finfish species minimum size are measured as total length, except for coastal sharks, in which minimum size is measured by fork length.



End of Slides!

