Joint Monkfish-Skate Advisory Panel Meeting

September 16, 2025
Webinar

New England
Fishery Management Council

Joint Monkfish-Skate Committee Meeting

September 17, 2025
Hybrid, South Kingstown, RI

New England
Fishery Management Council

Introductions

Monkfish (M) and Skate (S) Advisory Panels	
Jeff Kneebone, MA (S Chair)	Linda Hunt, NH (M)
Gregory Mataronas, RI (M Chair, S)	Andrea Incollingo, RI (S)
Terry Alexander, ME (M)	Sam Martin, NJ (M)
Bonnie Brady, NY (M)	Randall Morgan, MD (M, S)
Aubrey Church, MA (M, S)	Daniel Nordstrom, RI (S)
James Dopkin, NJ (M, S)	Chris Rainone, NJ (M)
Patrick Duckworth, RI (M, S)	Lucas Raymond, NH (M)
Sonja Fordham, DC (S)	John Whiteside, MA (S)
Tim Froelich, NY (M)	

Council Staff
Emily Bodell, Skate PDT
Jenny Couture, Monkfish PDT
Rachel Feeney, Skate PDT

Monkfish Committee
Matt Gates, CT DEEP (Chair)

Skate Committee
Scott Olszewski, RI DEM (Chair)

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Introductions

Monkfish (M) and Skate (S) Committees	
Matt Gates, CT DEEP (M Chair)	Jackie Odell (M, S)
Scott Olszewski, RI DEM (M, S Chair)	John Pappalardo (M, S)
Peter Aarrestad, CT DEEP (S)	Ted Platz (M, S Vice-Chair)
Togue Braun (M, S)	Paul Risi, MAFMC (M)
Pete Christopher, GARFO (M)	Robert Ruhle, MAFMC (M)
Joseph Grist, MAFMC (S) *New!*	Kelly Whitmore, MADMF (M, S)
Eric Hansen (M, S)	Jake Wiscott, MAFMC (M) *New!*
Dr. Jay Hermsen, GARFO (S)	Lisa Wooleyhan, MAFMC (M) *New!*

Council Staff
Emily Bodell, Skate PDT
Jenny Couture, Monkfish PDT
Rachel Feeney, Skate PDT

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AP Agenda

10:30	Introductions, approve agenda, 2025 timeline and other updates
11:00	Specifications Actions: Overfishing limits, Acceptable Biological Catch, associated specifications
12:30	Lunch
1:00	Specifications Actions continued: Effort controls
2:30	Alternative Gear Marking Framework
3:15	Break
3:25	2026 Council work priorities related to monkfish and skates
4:15	Other Business (application for 2026-2028 AP term)

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Any revisions?

Committee Agenda

9:00	Introductions, approve agenda, 2025 timeline, and other updates
9:20	Monkfish and Skate Joint Advisory Panel report
10:00	Specifications Actions: Overfishing limits, Acceptable Biological Catch, associated specifications
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Specifications Actions continued: Effort controls
3:30	Break
3:45	2026 Council work priorities related to monkfish and skates
4:30	Other business
5:00	Adjourn

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Any revisions?

2025 Council Priorities

FMP	Topic	Timing	Progress
Monkfish	Develop FY 2026-2030 specifications	2025	Final action in Sept/Oct (moved up from Dec)
	Support management track assessment	2025	Cancelled; NEFSC provided data update in August
	Support research track assessment	Multiyear, review in 2027	Paused (not on 2026 schedule)
Skate	Develop FY 2026-2030 specifications	2025	Final action in Sept (moved up from Dec)
	Support management track assessment	2025	Cancelled; NEFSC provided data update in August
Monkfish & Skate	Coordinate Committee and AP activities and review effectiveness of joint planning	Multiyear	Joint PDT, AP, Cte meetings in 2025; development of staff white paper paused due to moving final action on specs
Habitat	Omnibus action: update monkfish, skate, herring and cod EFH designations, led by Habitat Cte	2025	Final action in Sept/Oct

Timeline

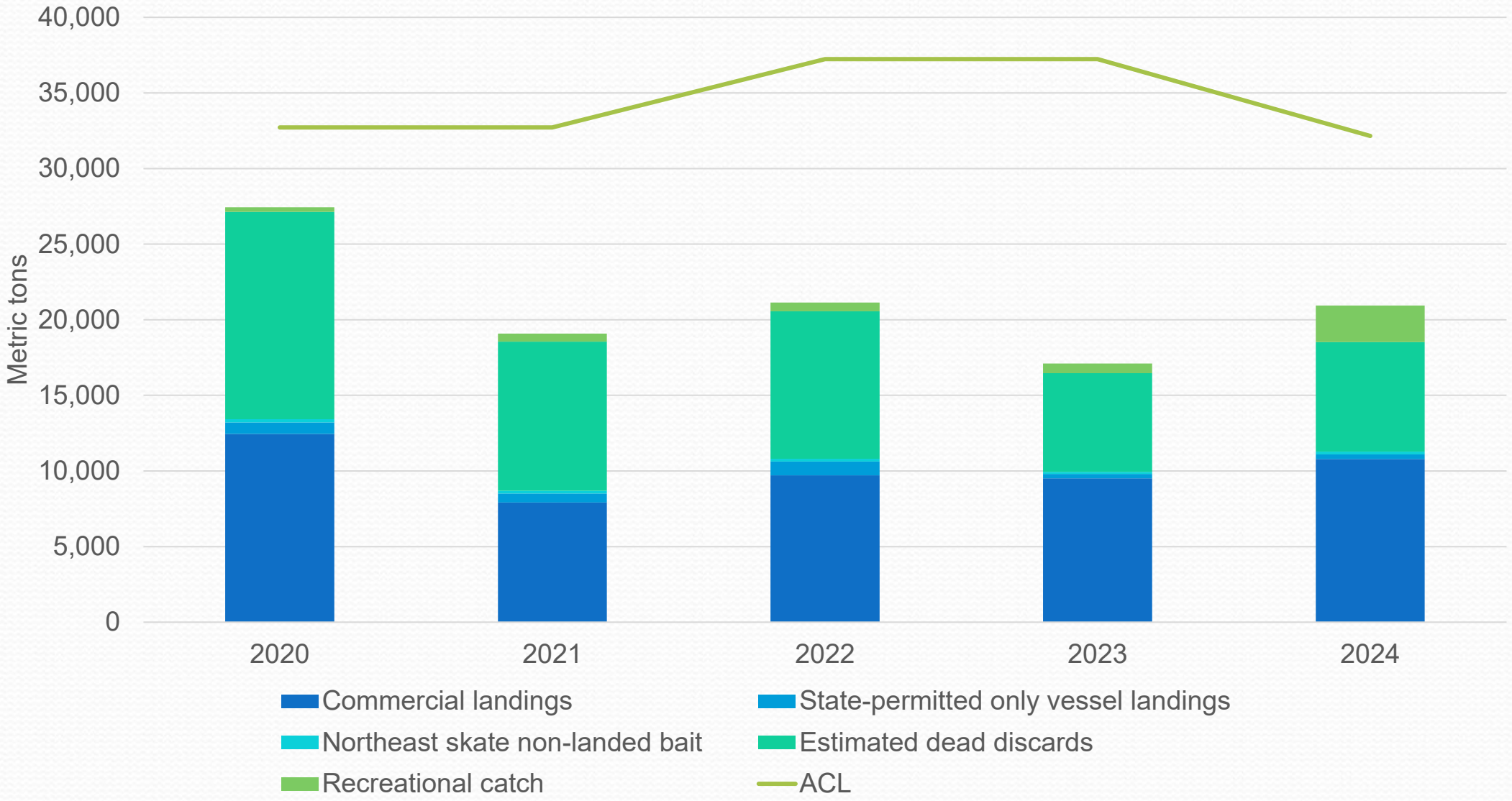
Month	Meeting	Topics
Aug. 5	Skate PDT (webinar)	Discuss NEFSC data update, FY 2024 catch accounting; develop memo to SSC re ABCs, risk policy matrix
Aug. 7	Monkfish PDT (webinar)	
Aug. 19	SSC (hybrid)	Recommend OFLs and ABCs
Aug. 21	Monk-Skate PDT (webinar)	Discuss SSC outcomes; develop Joint Cte tasking, any potential changes in effort controls
Sept. 16	Monk-Skate AP (webinar)	Recommend final preferred alternatives
Sept. 17	Monk-Skate Committee (hybrid)	
Sept. 23	NEFMC	Final action Omnibus Management Flexibility Action, then for Skate Specifications & Monkfish FW17
Oct. 8	MAFMC	Final action for Monkfish FW17

Setting specifications through FY 2030

- **Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment** – initiated in June, final action in Sept.
  - Each FMP modified to allow for specification frequency of up to 5 years
  - Would allow for flexibility to recommend specifications for 1-5 years
  - Greater flexibility in planning stock assessments/data updates & subsequent management actions
  - Could eventually allow Council to spread out its specifications-related actions throughout the year (vs final actions on most specifications in Sept. or Dec.)

- **Monkfish & Skate Specifications actions** – include specifications through FY 2030
  - Omnibus Management Flexibility action needs to be approved/implemented first
  - Intent of longer specifications: to supersede existing regulations → allow Council to turn the FY 2029-2030 monkfish / skate specs into future year catch advice

Skate ACL vs Catch



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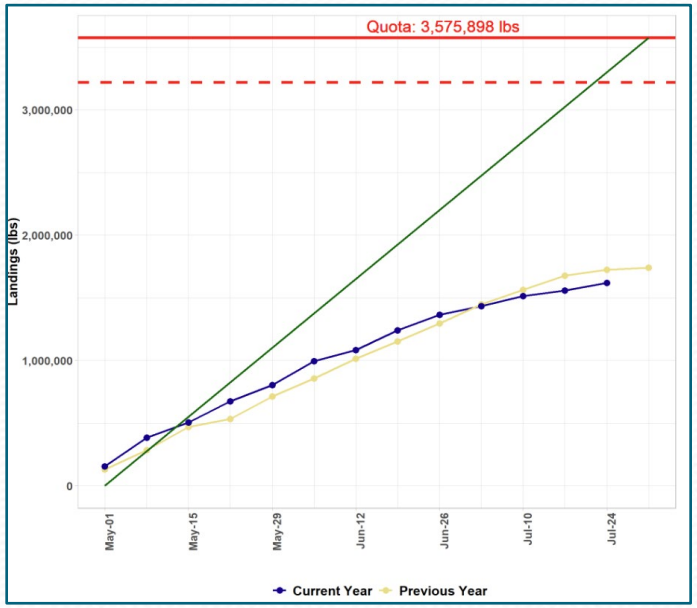
Skate TAL vs Landings

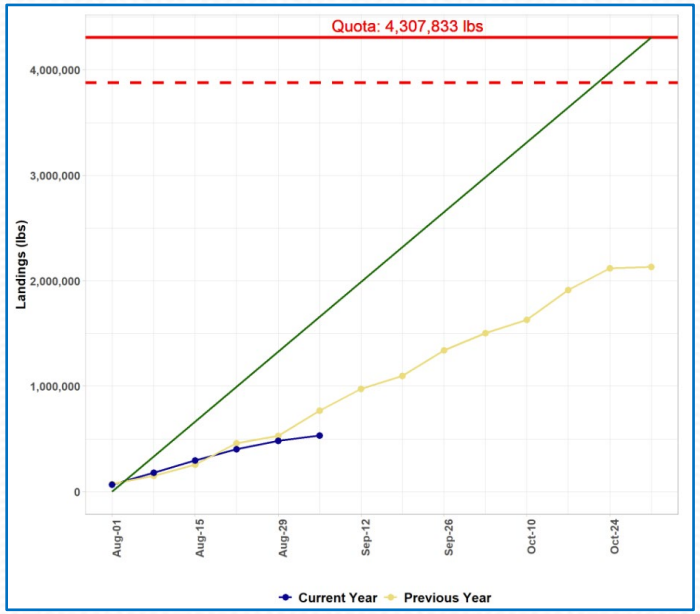
- In FY 2020-2024,
  - Wing TAL: 42-77% landed/year
  - Bait TAL: 45-65% landed/year

Bait
FY 2025

Season 1 (May-July) 45% landed



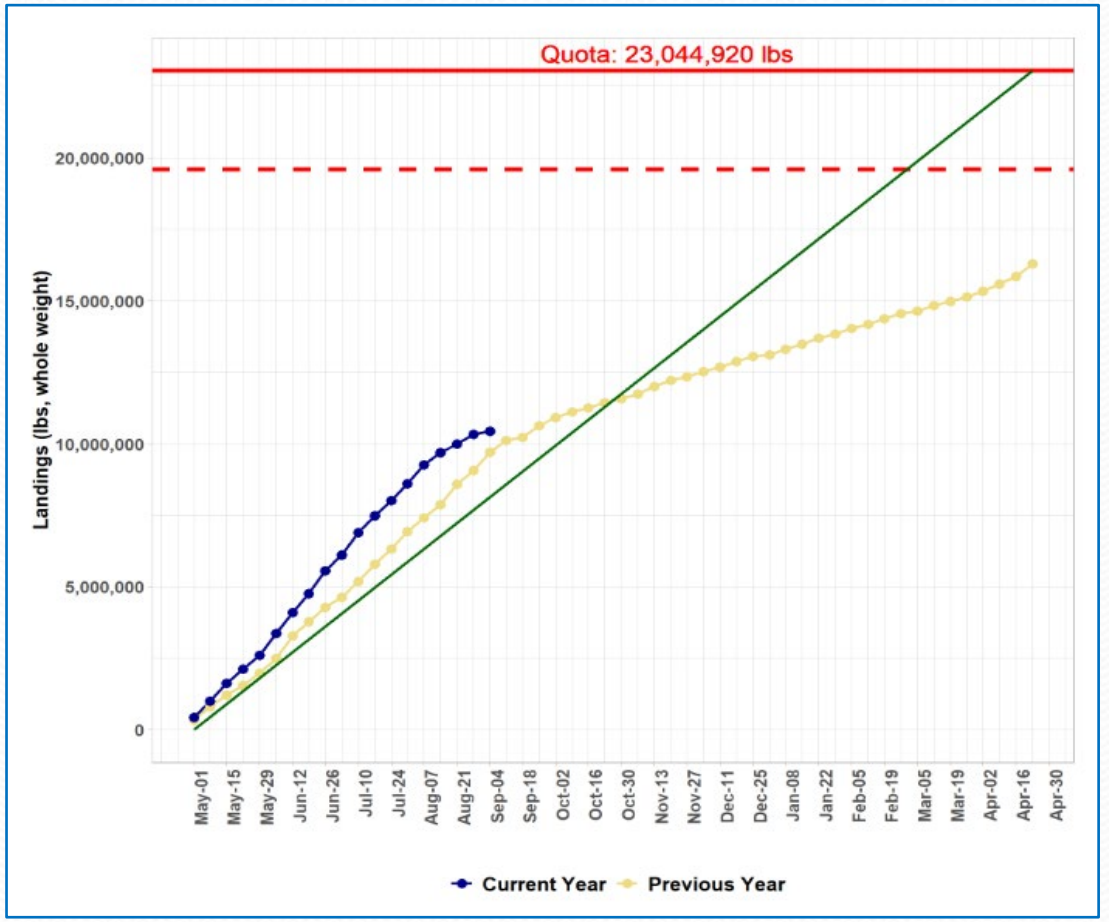
Season 2 (Aug-Oct) 12% landed



Wing
FY 2025

Season 1 (May-Aug) 76% landed

Total (May-April) 45%



Source:
GARFO Quota Monitoring

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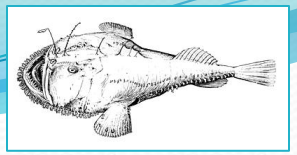
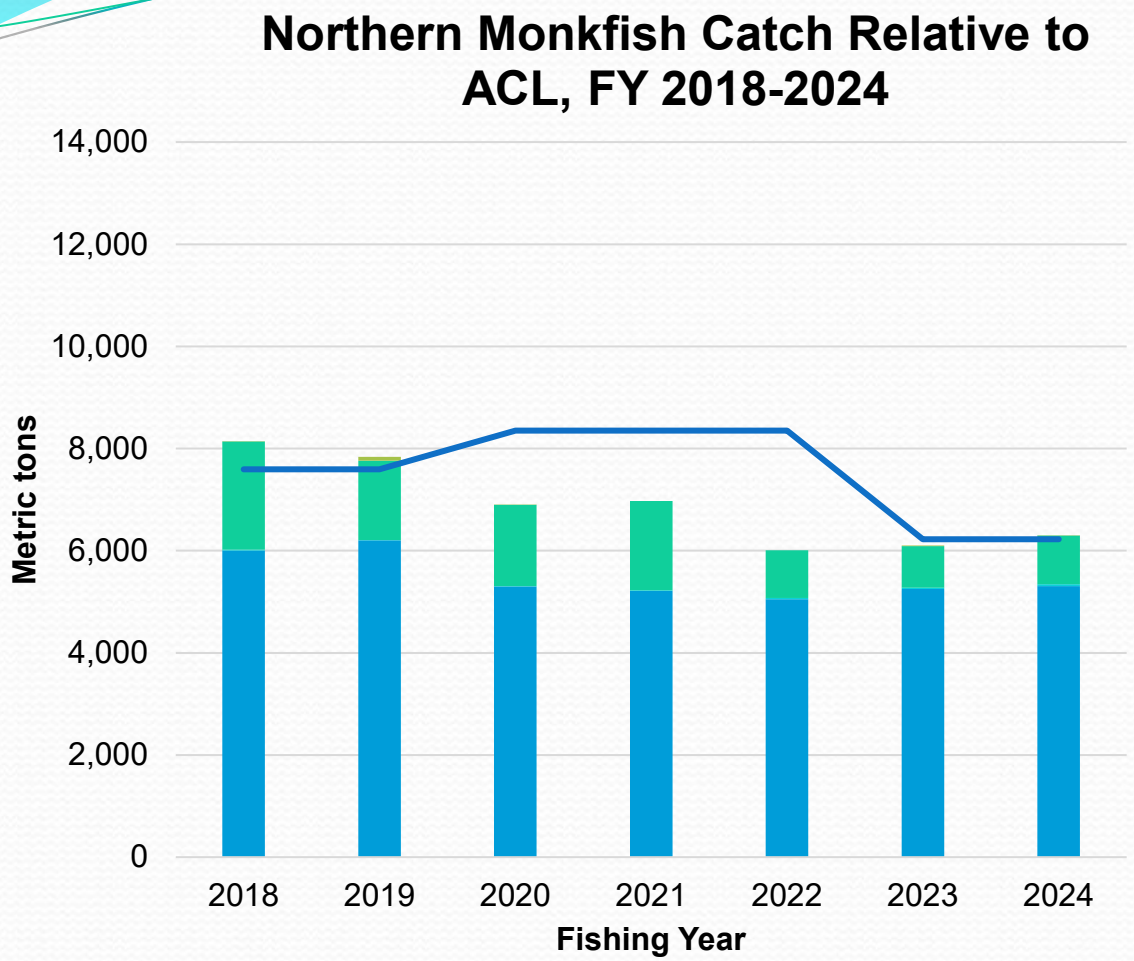
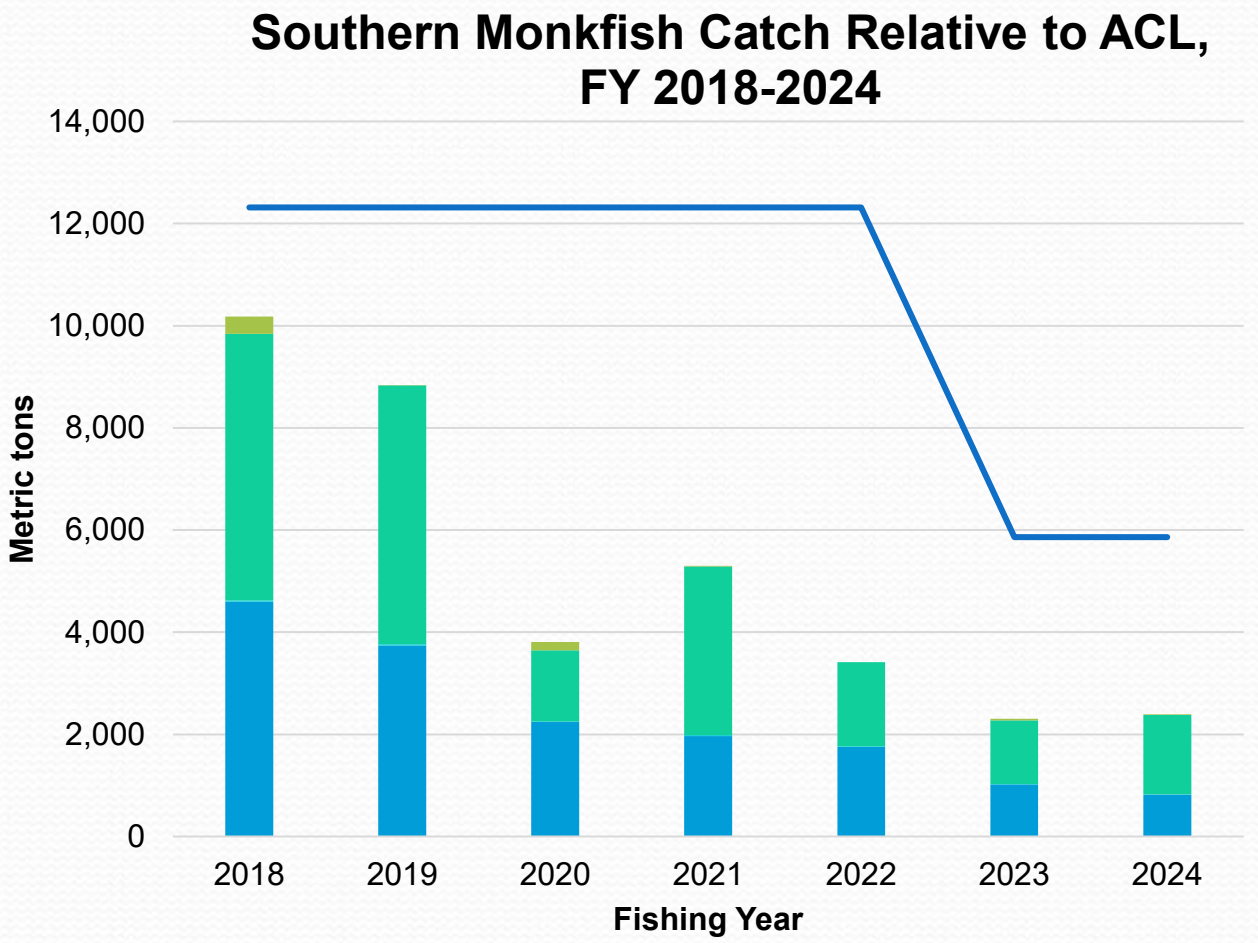
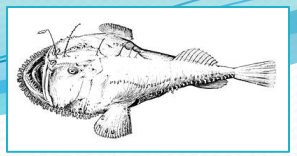
Monkfish Fishery Performance







FY2024 Monkfish ACL Accounting



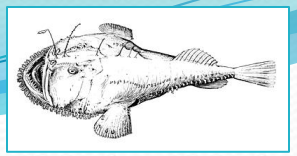
NORTH

FY2024 Northern Monkfish Catch (ACL = 6224 mt)

Region	Source	Pounds	Metric Tons	Percent ACL
NORTHERN	Commercial landings	11,697,881	5,306	85.3
NORTHERN	State-permitted only vessel landings	80,558	37	0.6
NORTHERN	Estimated dead discards	1,838,711	834	13.4
NORTHERN	Recreational dead discards	3,021	1	0.0
NORTHERN	Recreational kept	0	0	0.0
NORTHERN	TOTAL CATCH	13,620,171	6,178	99.3

Note: Total catch does NOT include recreational landings as the ACL does not include recreational landings; Source: CAMS, Observer Program, & MRIP accessed 9/2/2025

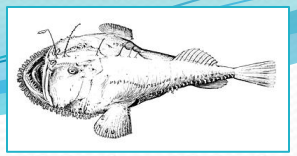
FY2024 Monkfish ACL Accounting



SOUTH

Region	Source	Pounds	Metric Tons	Percent ACL
SOUTHERN	Commercial landings	1,814,282	823	14.0
SOUTHERN	State-permitted only vessel landings	5,331	2	0.0
SOUTHERN	Estimated dead discards	3,374,178	1,531	26.1
SOUTHERN	Recreational dead discards	21,558	10	0.2
SOUTHERN	Recreational kept	166	0	0.0
SOUTHERN	TOTAL CATCH	5,215,349	2,366	40.3

Note: Total catch does NOT include recreational landings as the ACL does not include recreational landings; Source: CAMS, Observer Program, & MRIP accessed 9/2/25

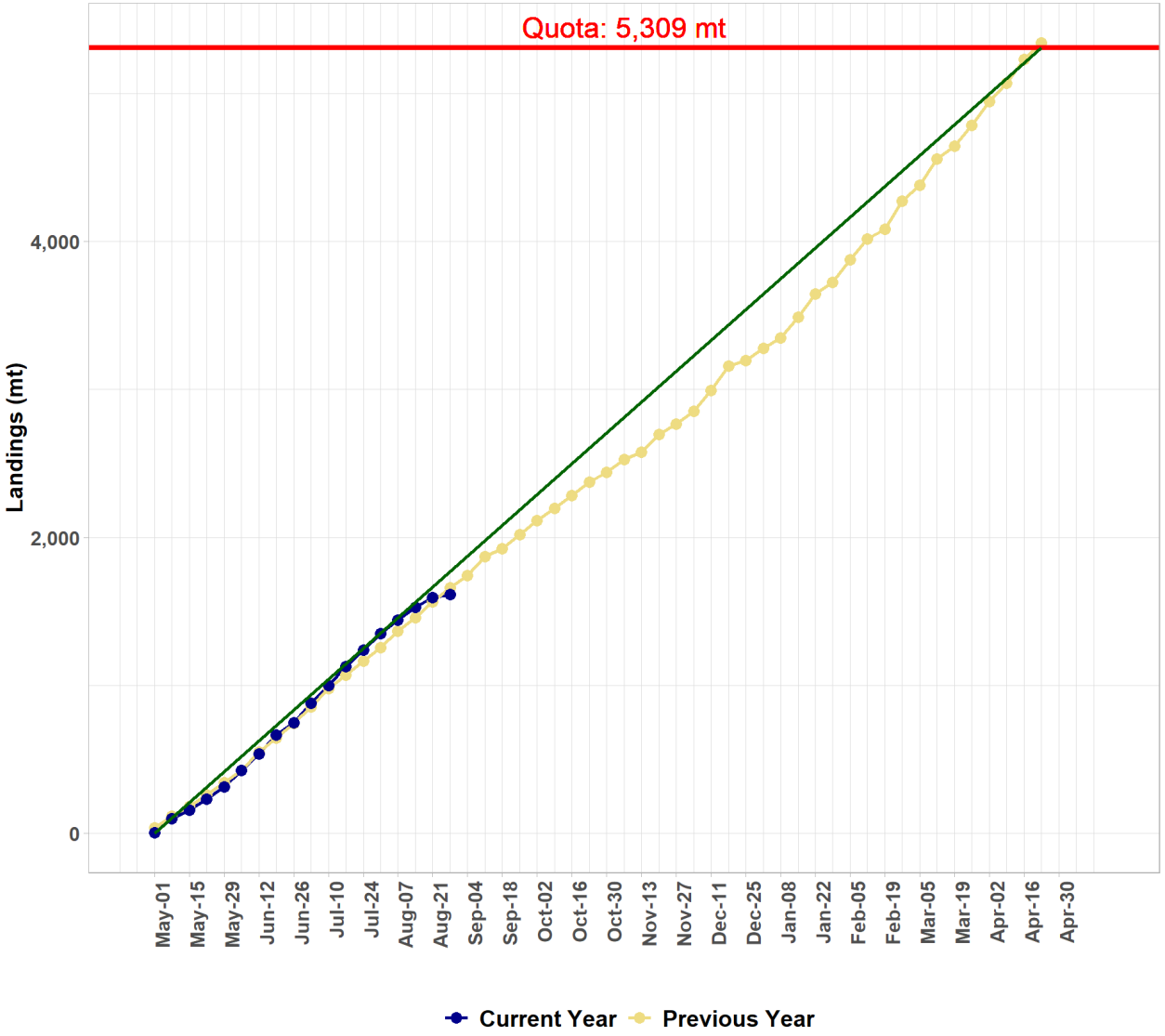


Monkfish Accountability Measure (AM) trigger authority

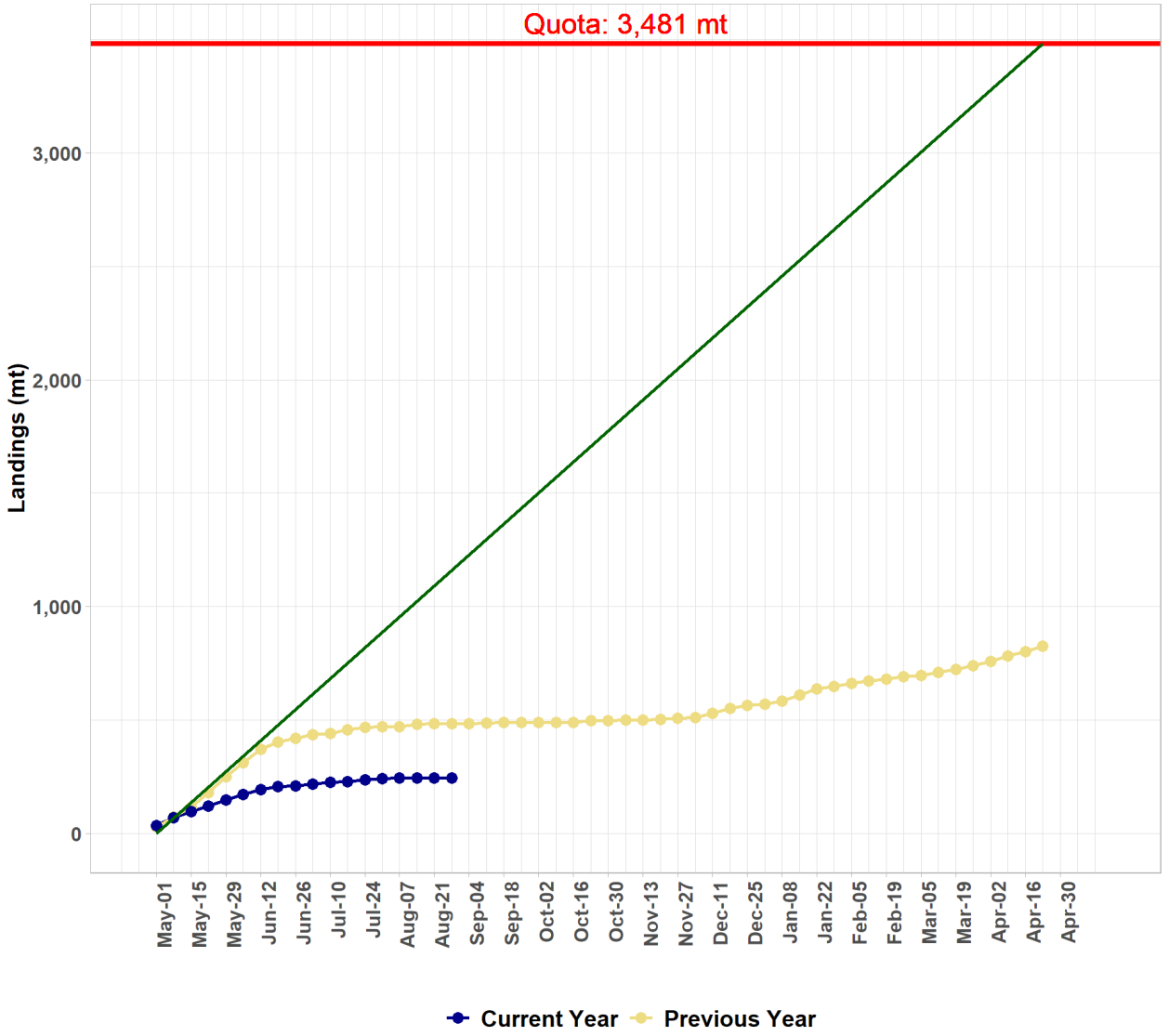
- Monkfish FW17 would eliminate the requirement for the Councils to take action to implement the ACT adjustment (50 CFR 648.96(d)(2)(i)); would not change what the AM does or how it is triggered
- → Responsibility to take action to implement the ACT adjustment would fall only to NMFS; would identify any overage via year-end catch accounting
- = Reduces the administrative burden necessary for NMFS and the Councils to coordinate

Monkfish Quota Monitoring – FY2025 to date

North



South



GARFO Quota Monitoring website as of 9/8

Discussion: Recent Fishery Performance

1. Has the change in how Monkfish DAS are allocated via Monkfish Framework 13 had an impact on the fishing industry (there was a prior DAS use restriction only in the southern area and now there are separate northern and southern DAS allocations and an overall DAS cap across areas)?

2. What impact has the increase in skate possession limits in July 2024 had on fishing for monkfish and overall monkfish & skate fishing trip efficiency?

3. Any changes in catch or general availability of monkfish and skates during the winter and spring 2025 seasons?

4. Has there been any change of price and/or marketing of monkfish and skates?
   - Any consistency across the southern regions or within certain areas of the southern fishery management area?

Joint Monkfish/Skate AP Meeting Recap

(see motions file)

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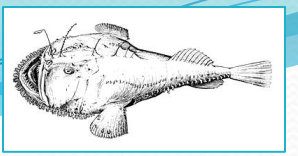
MONKFISH
NEFSC Data Updates

New England
Fishery Management Council



NEFSC data updates – Aug. 1, 2025

- NEFSC provided a data update for northern and southern monkfish in lieu of a management assessment in 2025. This update included northern and southern monkfish landings and discards through 2024 (landings beginning in 1964 and discards beginning in 1980), bottom trawl survey index of northern and southern monkfish from 1963 through 2025 (biomass, kg/tow), and stratified mean indices at length for the bottom trawl survey for northern and southern monkfish from 1963 through 2025 (*note: this is included in data update documents*).

U.S. commercial monkfish landings and discards (mt) by management area from 2018 – 2024

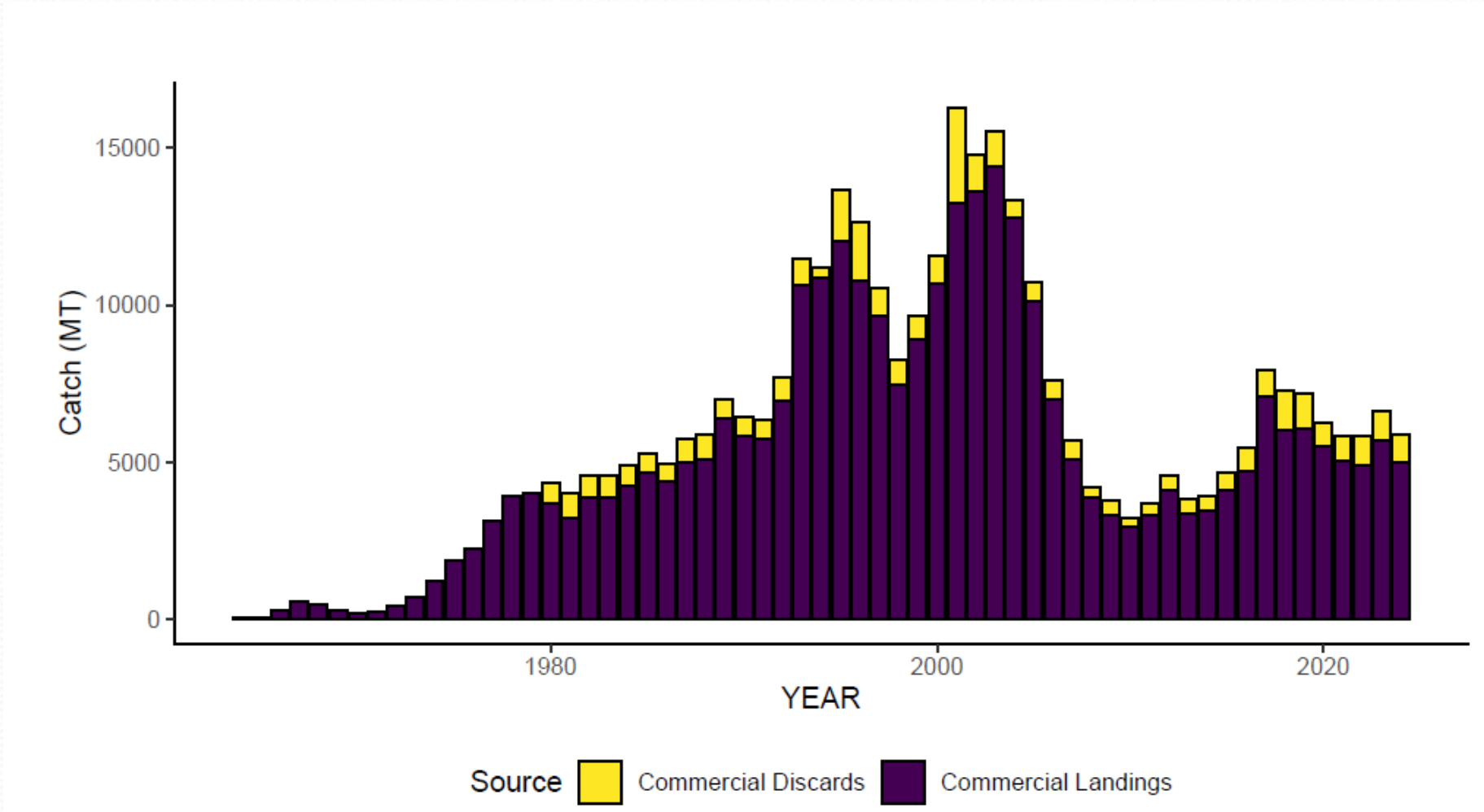
Calendar Year	Northern Fishery Management Area		Southern Fishery Management Area	
	Monkfish Landings (mt)	Monkfish Discards (mt)	Monkfish Landings (mt)	Monkfish Discards (mt)
2018	6,009	1,253	4,388	3,476
2019	6,084	1,080	4,373	3,358
2020	5,508	721	2,644	2,263
2021	5,043	788	1,954	2,317
2022	4,900	947	1,818	1,758
2023	5,687	914	1,364	1,634
2024	4,998	886	961	2,134

North:
- Landings have fluctuated over 2022-2024 while discards have declined

South:
- Landings have generally declined over 2022-2024 while discards have fluctuated

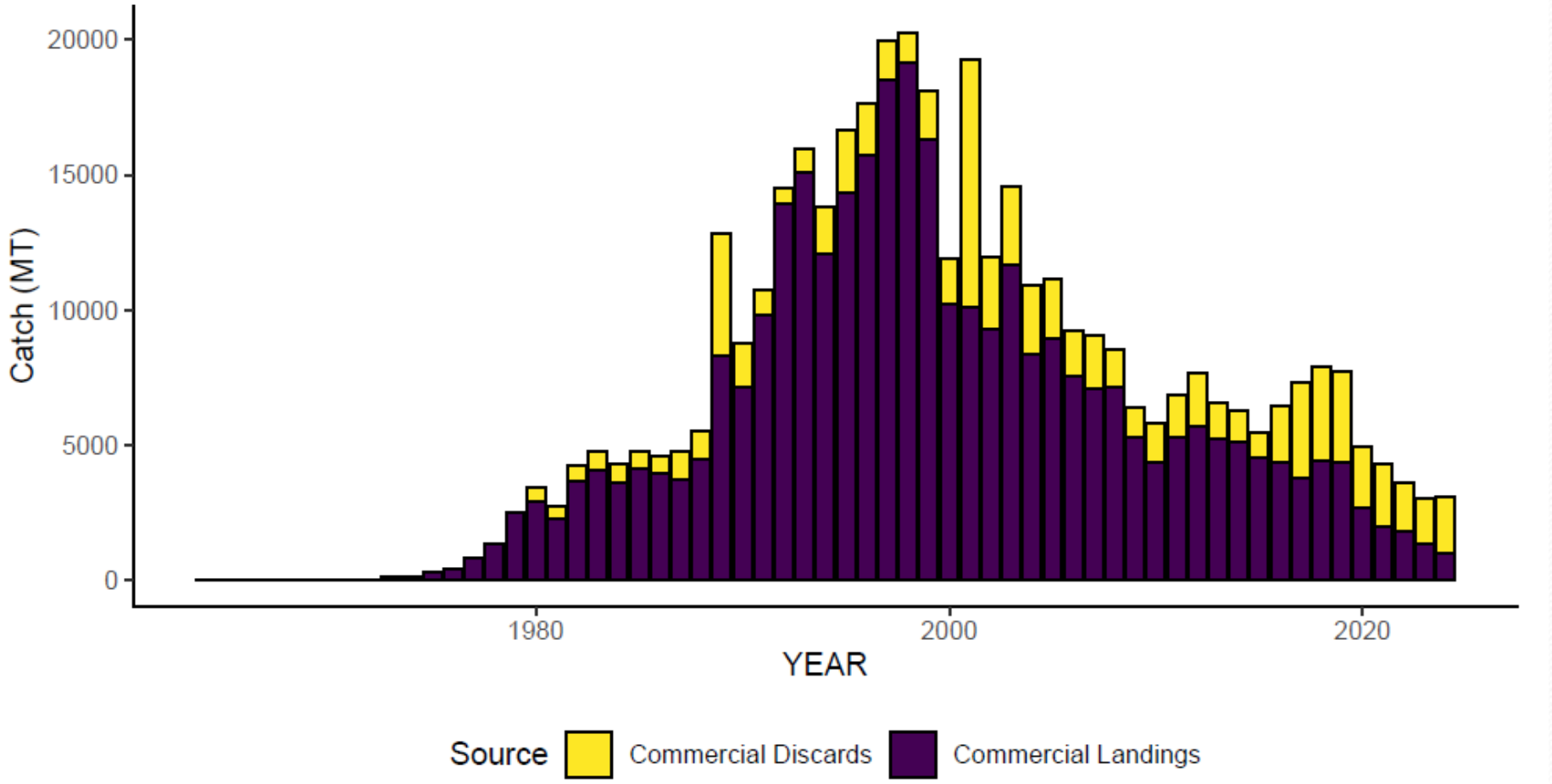
Source: 2025 NEFSC Data Update; additional years provided in data update

Monkfish landings (mt) and discards (mt) in the **Northern** Fishery Management Area from calendar year 1964 through 2024.



Source: 2025 NEFSC Data Update

Monkfish landings (mt) and discards (mt) in the **Southern** Fishery Management Area from calendar year 1964 through 2024.



Source: 2025 NEFSC Data Update

Bottom trawl survey spring and fall index (biomass, kg/tow) of northern and southern monkfish from 2018 – 2025.

Calendar Year	Northern Fishery Management Area		Southern Fishery Management Area	
	Fall index	Spring index	Fall index	Spring index
2018	2.1099	1.5277	0.2657	0.6615
2019	1.5151	1.1198	0.4706	0.3634
2020				
2021	1.2224	0.9202	0.1322	0.2588
2022	1.2406	0.9460	0.1263	0.1832
2023	1.2865		0.0955	
2024	1.3245	1.6959	0.1655	0.1584
2025		1.5028		0.2162

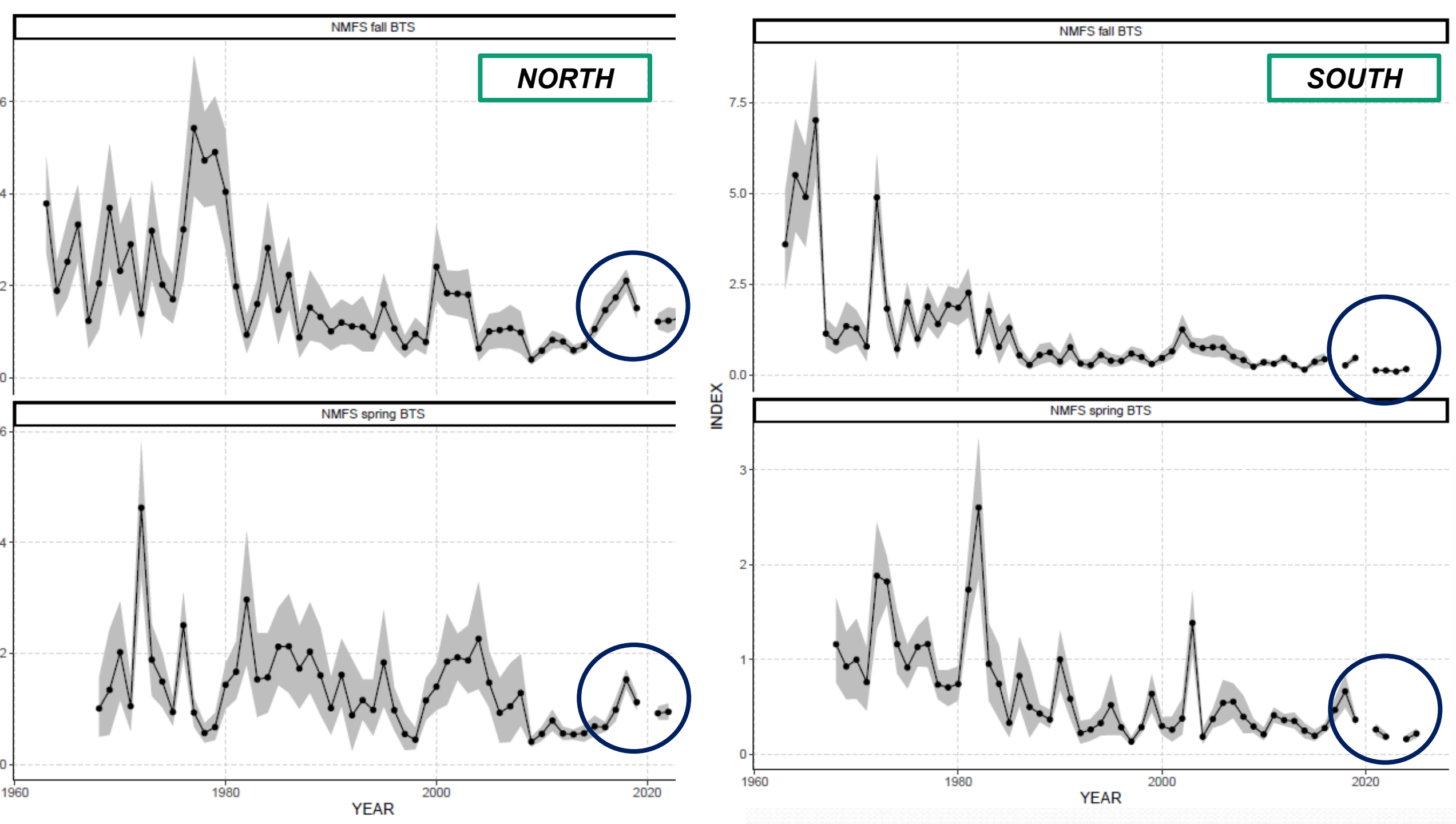
North:

- Fall: index increased by ~0.04 kg/tow in each of the last three years
- Spring: index increased by ~0.75 kg/tow from 2022 to 2024 (missing survey index in 2023) and declined by ~0.2 kg/tow from 2024 to 2025

South:

- Fall: index marginally decreased over 2021 to 2023 and increased by 0.07 kg/tow from 2023 to 2024
- Spring: index followed a similar trend as the fall during those time periods

Source: 2025 NEFSC Data Update; additional years provided in data update


NMFS fall BTS
NORTH
NMFS fall BTS
SOUTH
INDEX
NMFS spring BTS
NMFS spring BTS
YEAR
YEAR
1960
1980
2000
2020
0.0
2.5
5.0
7.5
0
1
2
3

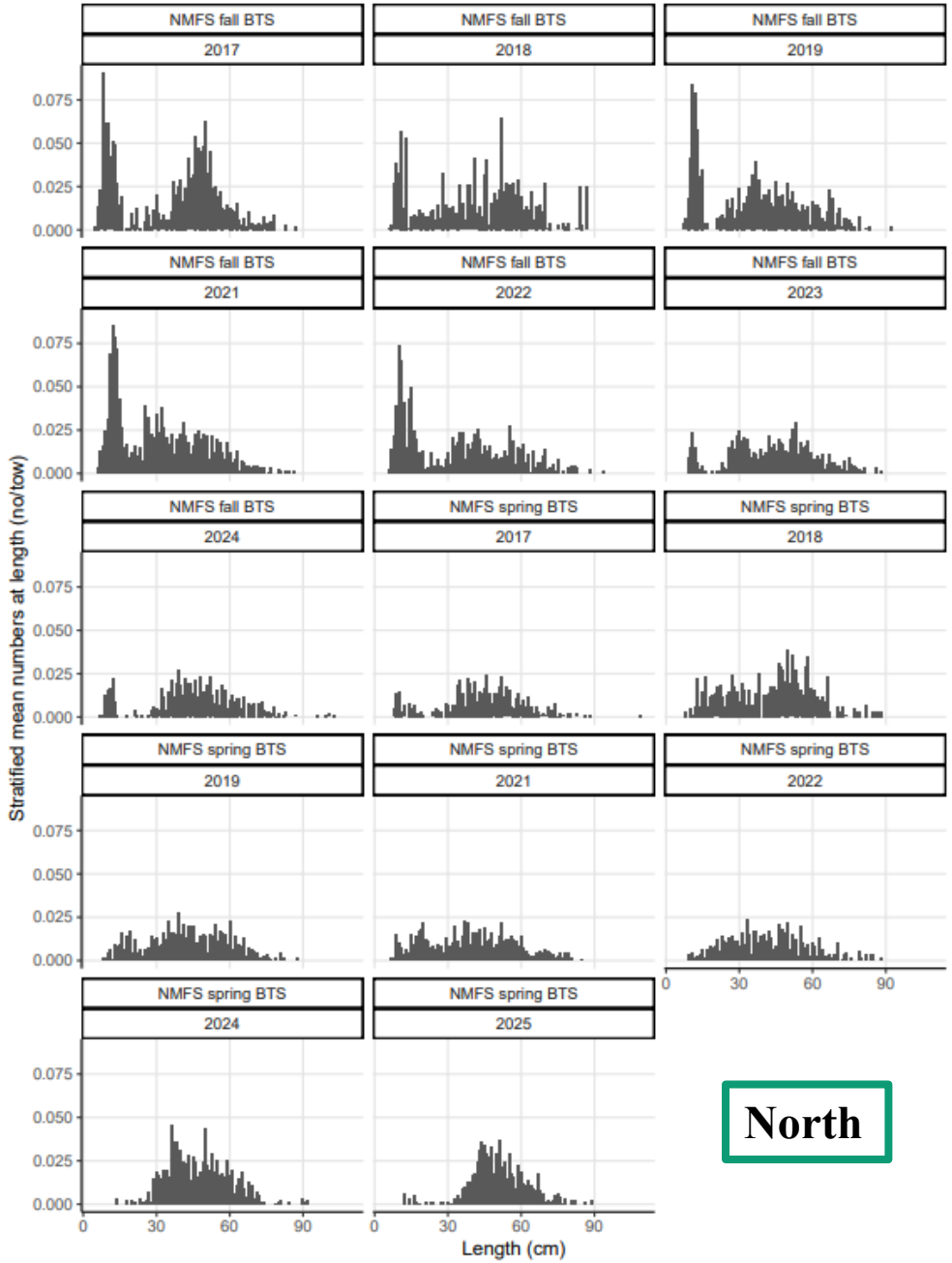


Figure 5: Stratified Mean Indices at Length for the Bottom Trawl Survey of Northern Monkfish from 2017 through 2025. Survey was incomplete in Fall 2020, Spring 2020, and Spring 2023.

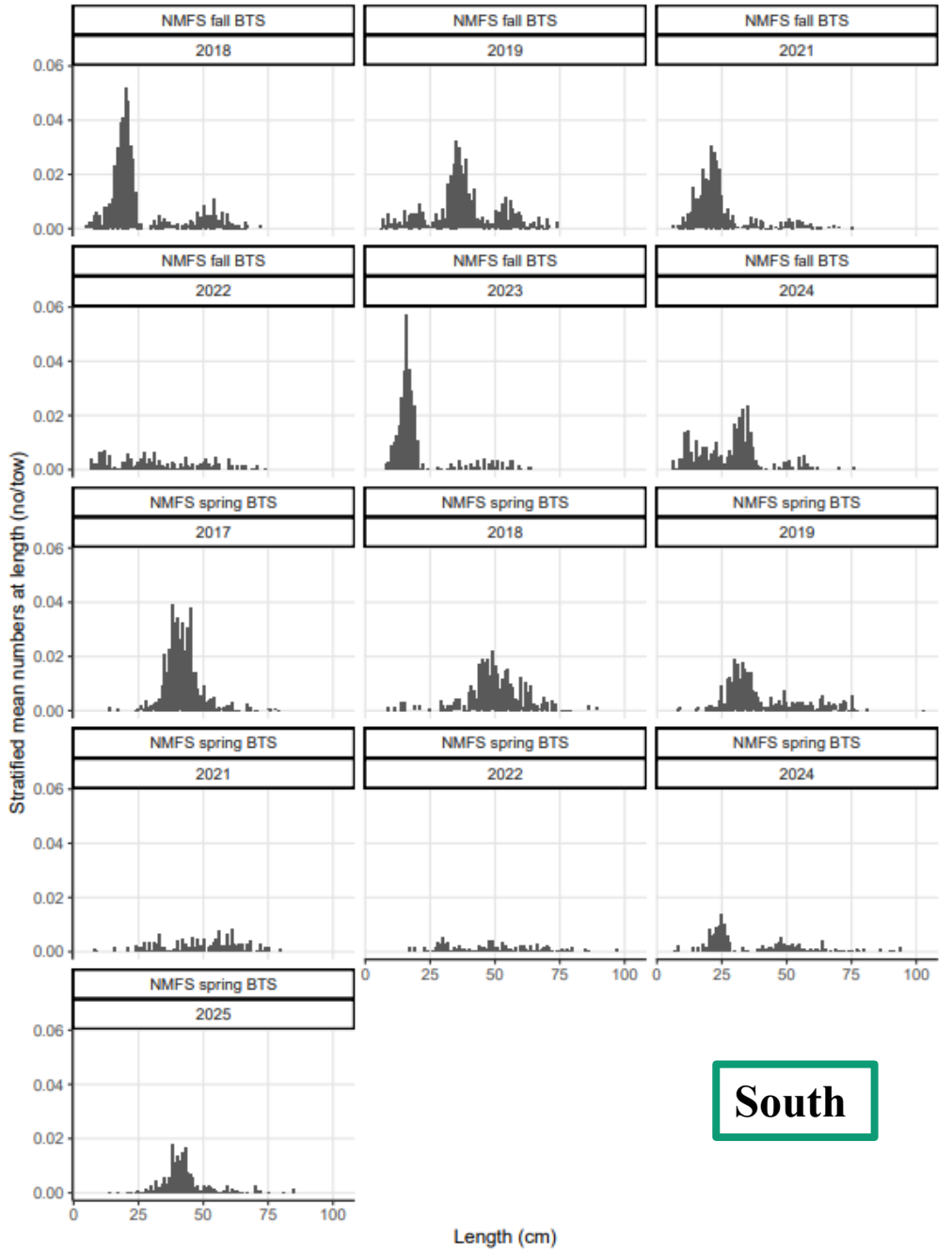
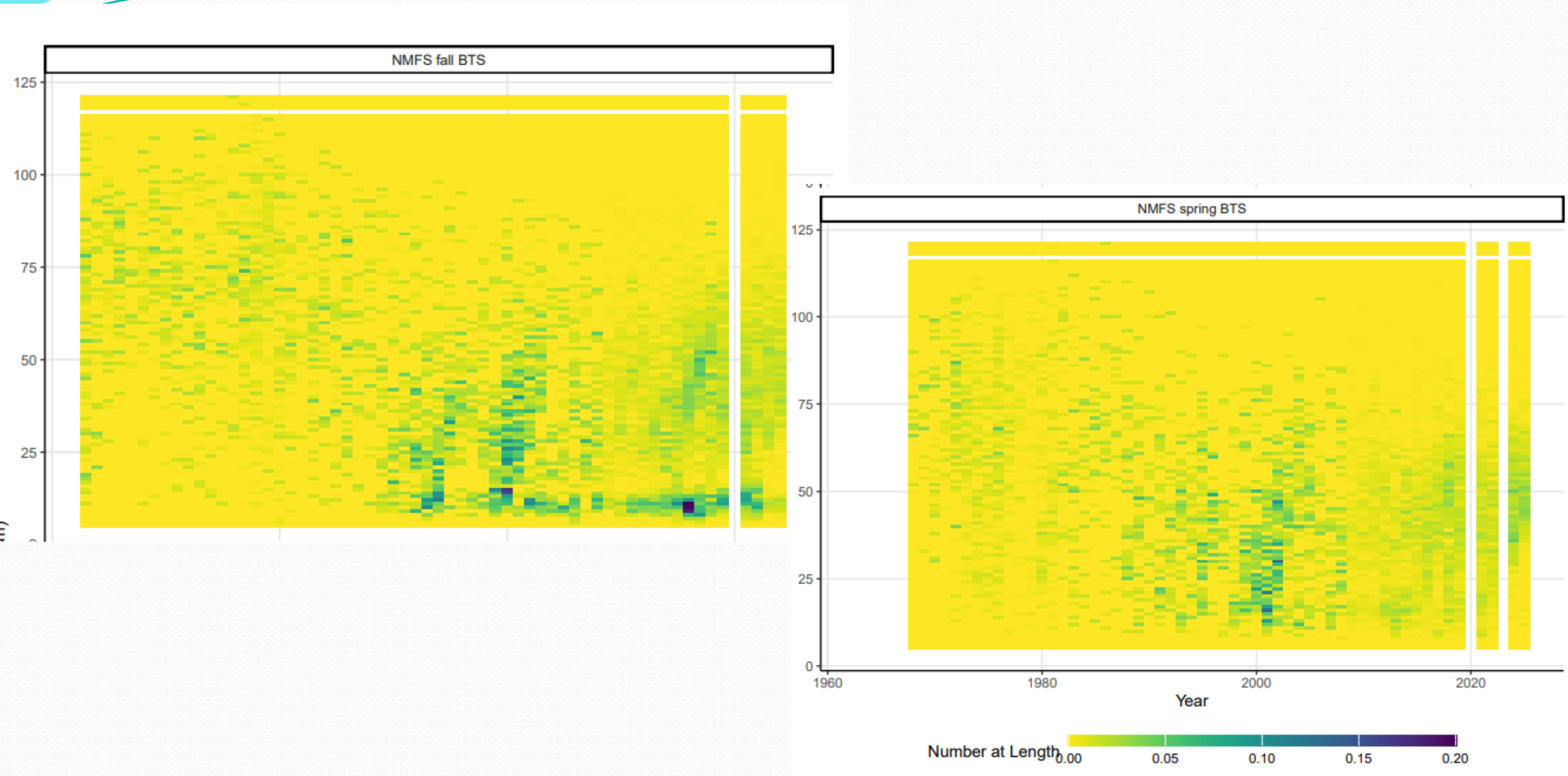
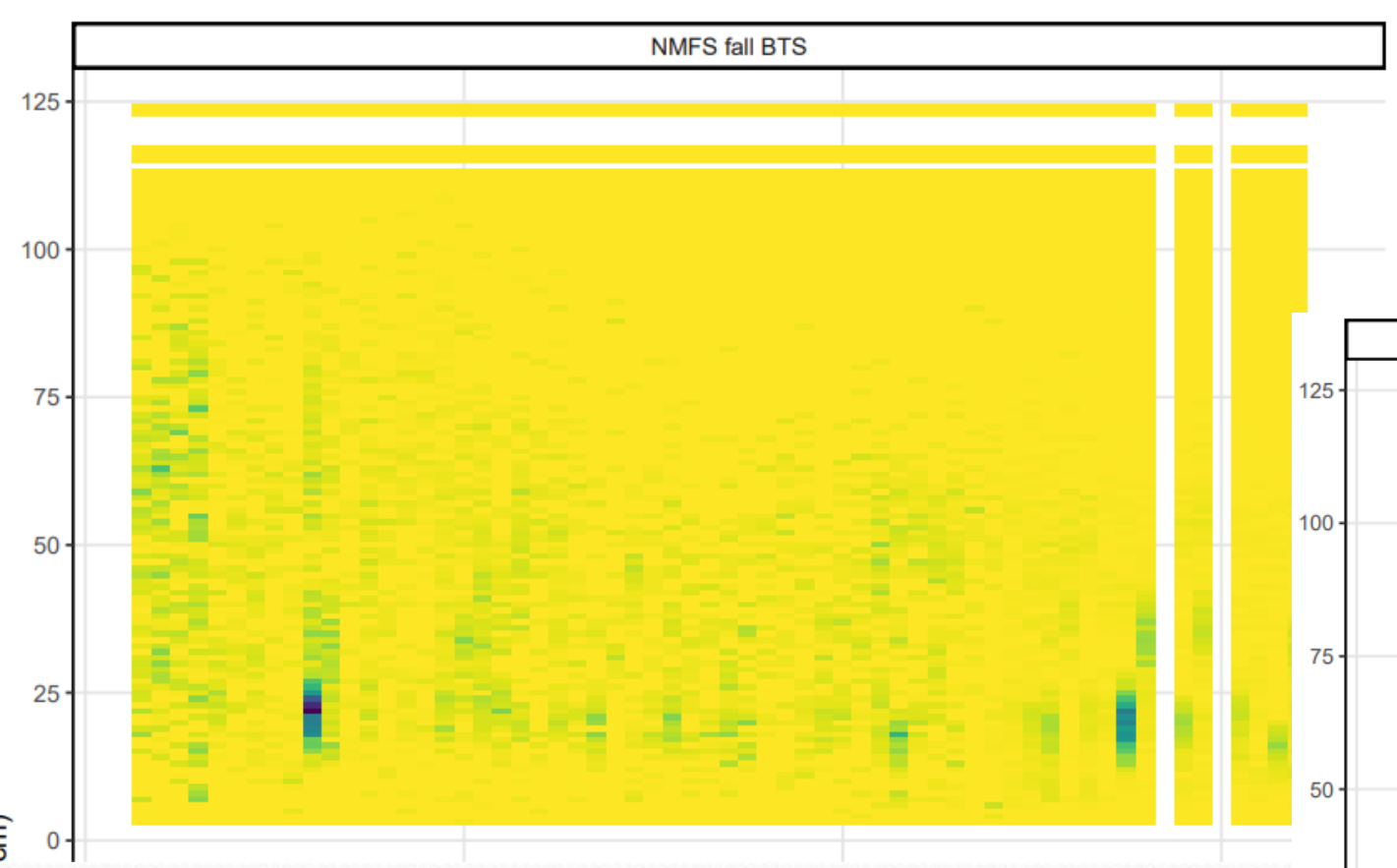


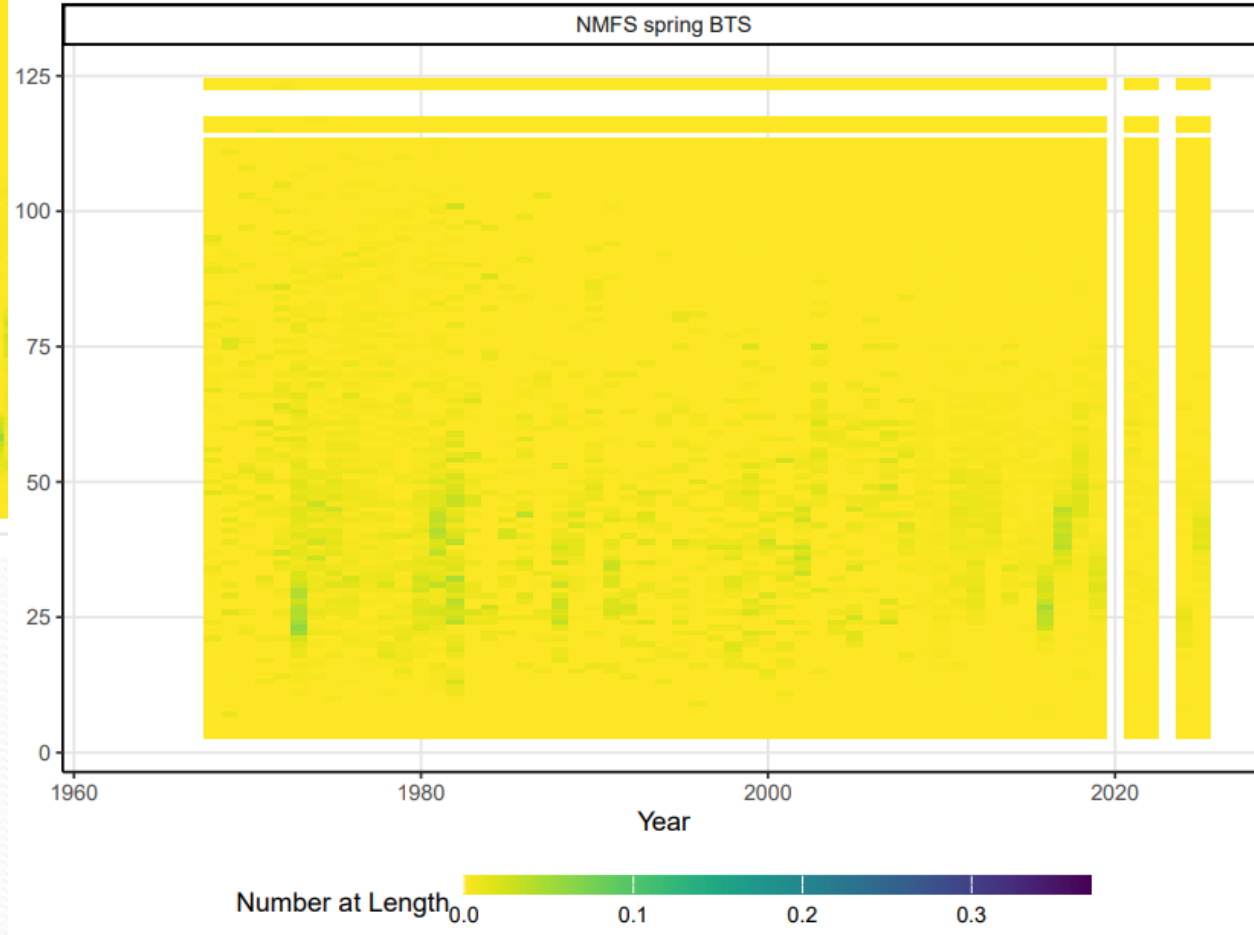
Figure 5: Stratified Mean Indices at Length for the Bottom Trawl Survey of Southern Monkfish from 2017 through 2025. Survey was incomplete in Fall 2020, Spring 2020, and Spring 2023.

North


NMFS fall BTS
NMFS spring BTS
125
100
75
50
25
0
1960
1980
2000
2020
Year
Number at Length
0.00
0.05
0.10
0.15
0.20

South

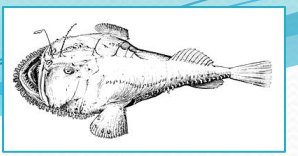

NMFS fall BTS
125
100
75
50
25
0


NMFS spring BTS
125
100
75
50
25
0
1960
1980
2000
2020
Year
Number at Length
0.0
0.1
0.2
0.3

MONKFISH
Outcomes from Aug. 19th SSC Meeting (Boston)

New England
Fishery Management Council

Monkfish SSC outcomes



[Full report]

- OFLs remain unknown

ABC (mt)	Northern	Southern
2026	6,224	5,861
2027	6,224	5,861
2028	6,224	5,861
2029	6,224	3,766
2030	6,224	3,766

Research recommendations

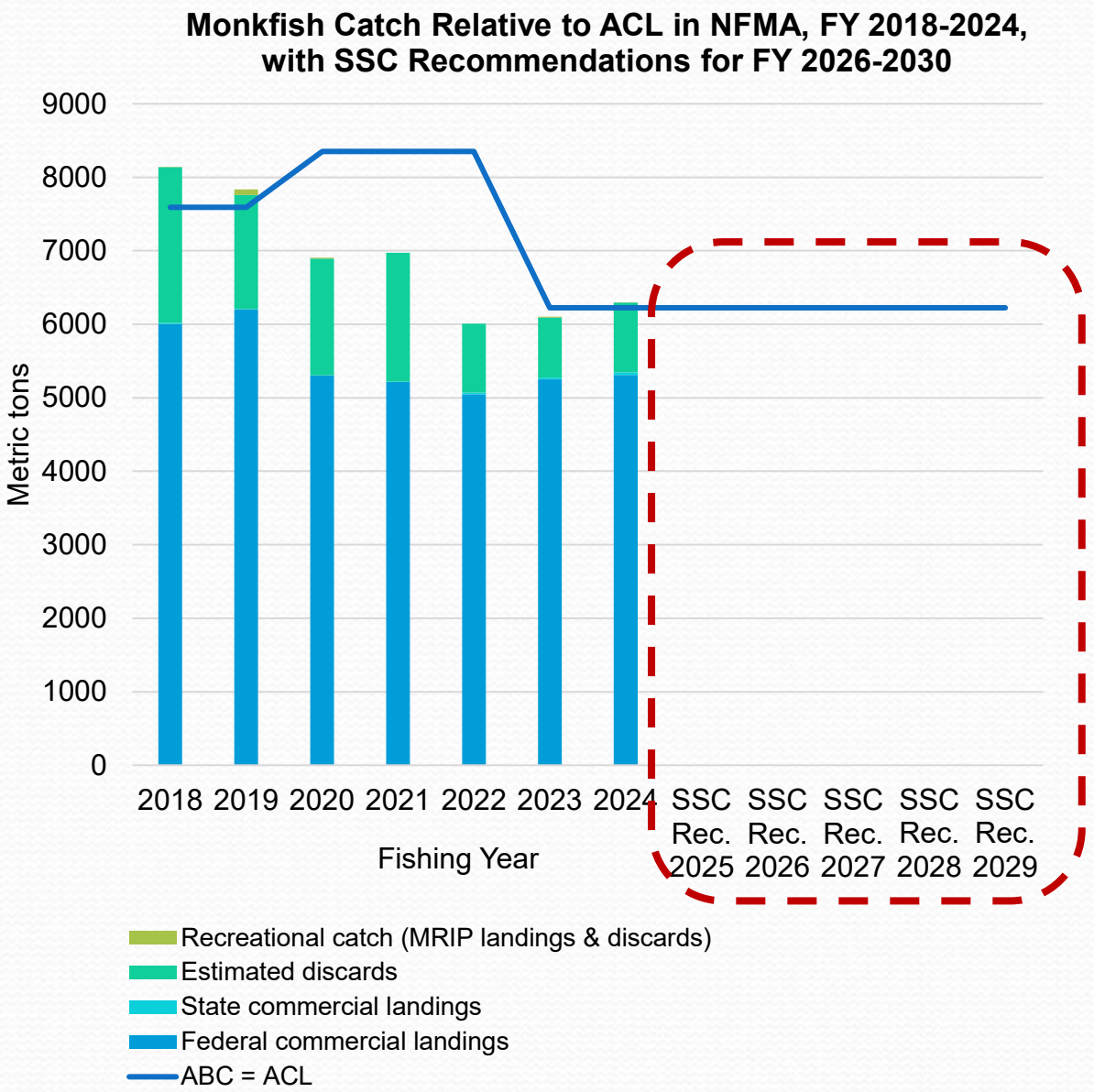
- Seek a data update in the next 2 years.
- Exploration of criteria around decision making when using a data update.
- Explore if there are truly 2 unit stocks and if the southern stock is moving/being influenced by warming.
- Move towards alternate assessment methods; explore use of alternate surveys (NEAMAP), and fishery-dependent information.

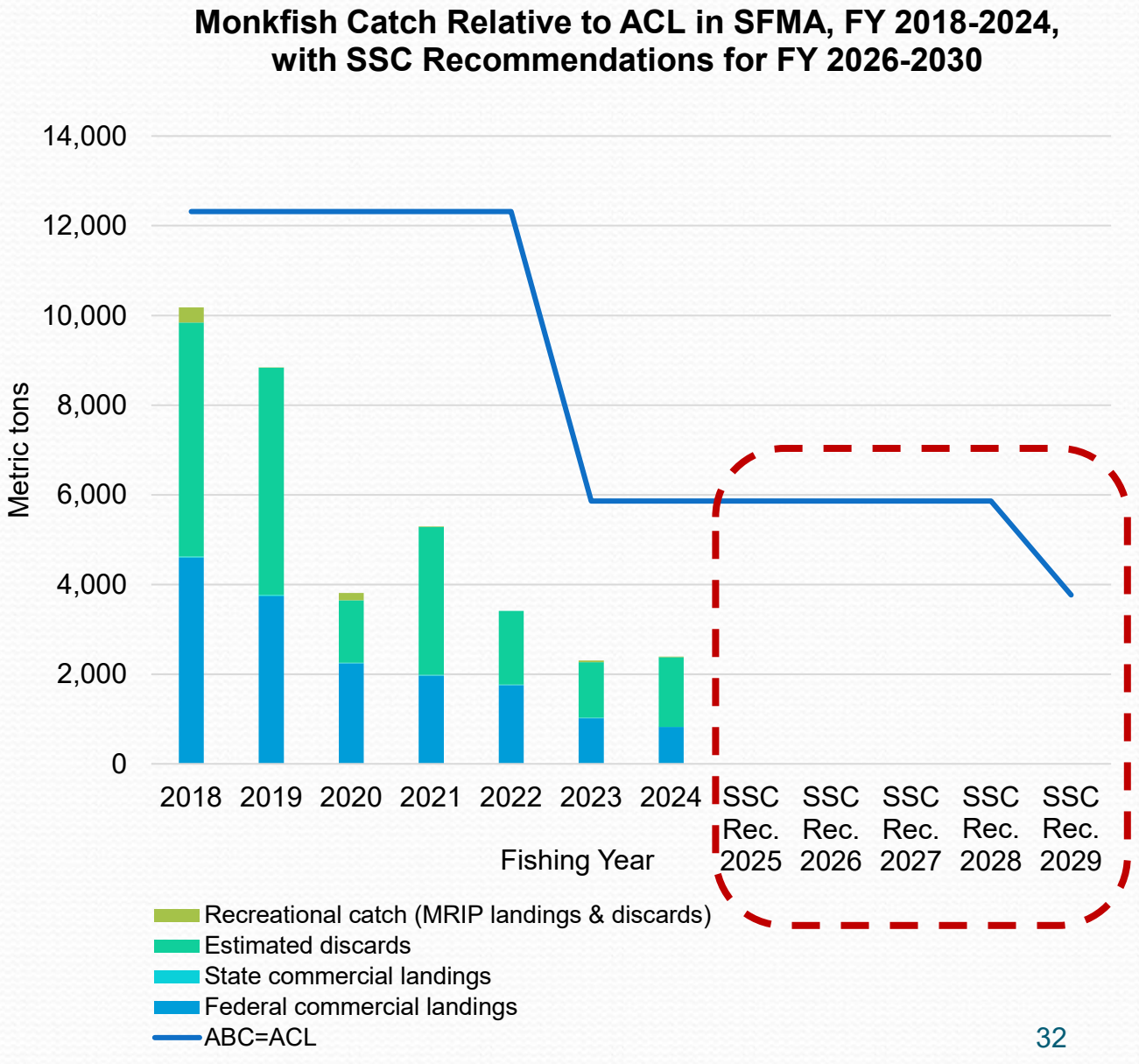
Precautionary approach; values are the Nov. 2022 SSC recommendations (before the remand) using Ismooth approach applying survey multipliers to most recent 3-yr avg catch (vs. transition approach, which is status quo ABC now for South)

SSC discussion on Monkfish - recap

- Strong discomfort setting specifications through FY2030 → want another data update/additional work before then & include rumble strips for how the SSC should react/act upon data to adjust ABCs (i.e., criteria for decision-making)
- Questions related to whether the PDTs discussed the transition period via FW13 with applying trawl survey multiplier to recent catch (vs ABC) and implications for setting specifications this year with status quo (esp. for South)
- Questions and concern related to high southern area ABC and index for last 3 years → lowest in time series, below historic levels, suggests a stable stock but in depleted state; reference to 2022 assessment & ABC being 1/3 of swept area biomass
- Several questions related to frequency at mean length figures & the difference between recent southern catch & ABC: “despite recent decreases in Southern monkfish catch, the survey indices have not responded, signaling that more precautionary advice for FY 2026-2030 may be warranted”
- Uncertainty regarding monkfish movement, changes in habitat suitability, environmental factors; catch not necessarily a proxy/indicator of stock
- Perhaps other indicators can be evaluated (SOE reports, socioecon. profiles, etc.) in lieu of data updates/assessments

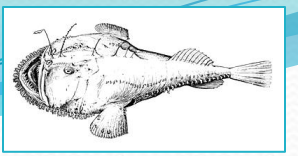
Monkfish Fishery Performance





MONKFISH
FY 2026-2030 Specifications
(FW 17)

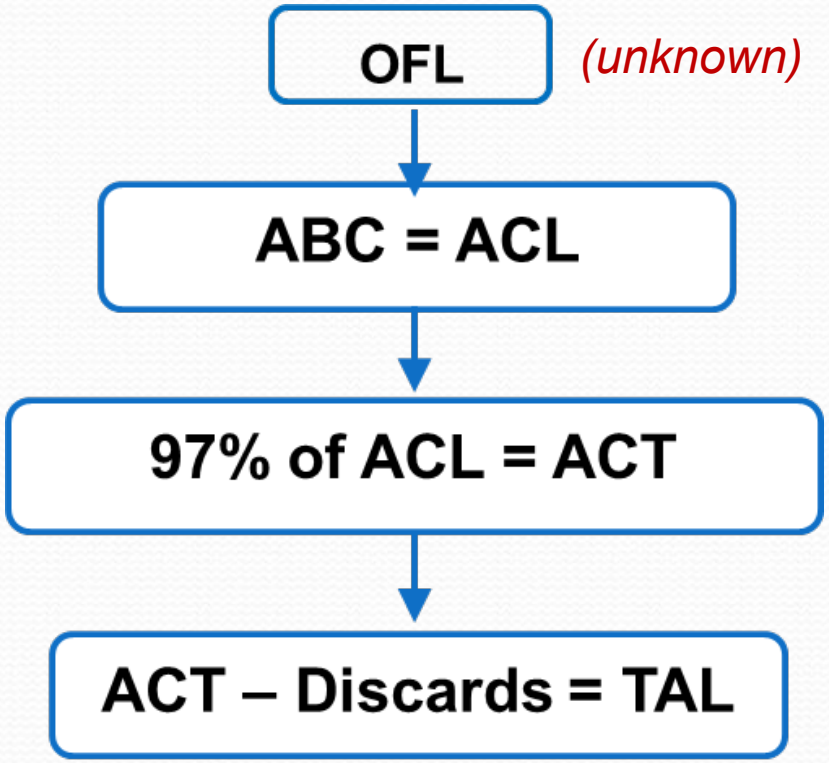
New England
Fishery Management Council



FY 2026-2030 Monkfish Specifications

Type of document: *Supplemental Information Report (SIR)*

Note: Monkfish specifications require a framework adjustment



Scope of action:

- Specifications (ABCs, TALs)
- Effort controls (Days-At-Sea, possession limits)
- Revising the ACT for a monkfish stock if it is determined that the ACL was exceeded in a given year

New England Fishery Management Council

Comparison of status quo (FYs 2023-2025) and the proposed action (FY 2026-2030) for the **Northern** Fishery Management Area

	ABC (=ACL)	ACT (97% of ACL)	Estimated Discards (10-year median)	Federal TAL (ACT – discards)	% Difference in TAL from Status Quo
Status quo	6,224 mt	6,038 mt	729 mt	5,309 mt	0%
Proposed → **Council recommendation for FY 2026-2030**	6,224 mt	6,038 mt	863 mt	5,174 mt	-3%

Comparison of status quo (FYs 2023-2025) and the proposed action (FYs 2026-2030) for the **Southern** Fishery Management Area

	ABC (=ACL)	ACT (97% of ACL)	Estimated Discards (10-year median)	Federal TAL (ACT – discards)	% Difference in TAL from Status Quo
Status quo	5,861 mt	5,685 mt	2,205 mt	3,481 mt	0%
Proposed → **Council recommendation for FY 2026-2028**	5,861 mt	5,685 mt	2,198.5 mt	3,487 mt	0%
→ **Council recommendation for FY 2029-2030**	3,766 mt	3,653 mt	2,198.5 mt	1,455 mt	-58%

Other Monkfish PDT Recommendations

- Unknown overfishing limits for northern and southern management areas
- The revised specifications would not warrant changes to monkfish effort controls (i.e., monkfish possession limits and Monkfish day-at-sea (DAS) allocations) in either region
  - Even for FY 2029-2030 in the southern area with the reduced ABC: total allowable landings not substantially different from recent catch (FY 2023-2025) → unlikely to trigger Accountability Measure
- Desire to make step-wise changes in changes to coordinated monkfish and skate effort controls → increase skate possession limits first and assess any changes to monkfish landings/constraints

Impacts: Monkfish Specifications & Effort Controls

Valued Ecosystem Component (VEC)	Expected Impacts
Target Species	Uncertain to slight + • Unknown stock status; large reductions in ABCs via Monkfish FW13 relative to FY20-22 → unlikely overfishing is occurring • More precautionary in the south for FY29-30 due to lower survey indices & recent catch similar to lower TAL; current effort controls have kept landings within TALs
Non-Target Species	Moderate + • Stock status not expected to change; catch controlled through other FMPs
Protected Species	Slight – to moderate + • Depends on status of species, gear type, interaction risk
Physical Environment/ Essential Fish Habitat	Slight – • Gillnets (in south) do not cause adverse effects to EFH; trawls (in north) do, though minimal changes in fishing effort relative to recent years
Human Communities	Slight + to +: • Unlikely to constrain fishing effort or trigger accountability measures → similar landings and revenue as FY23-25 → preventing economic disruption

SKATE
NEFSC Data Update

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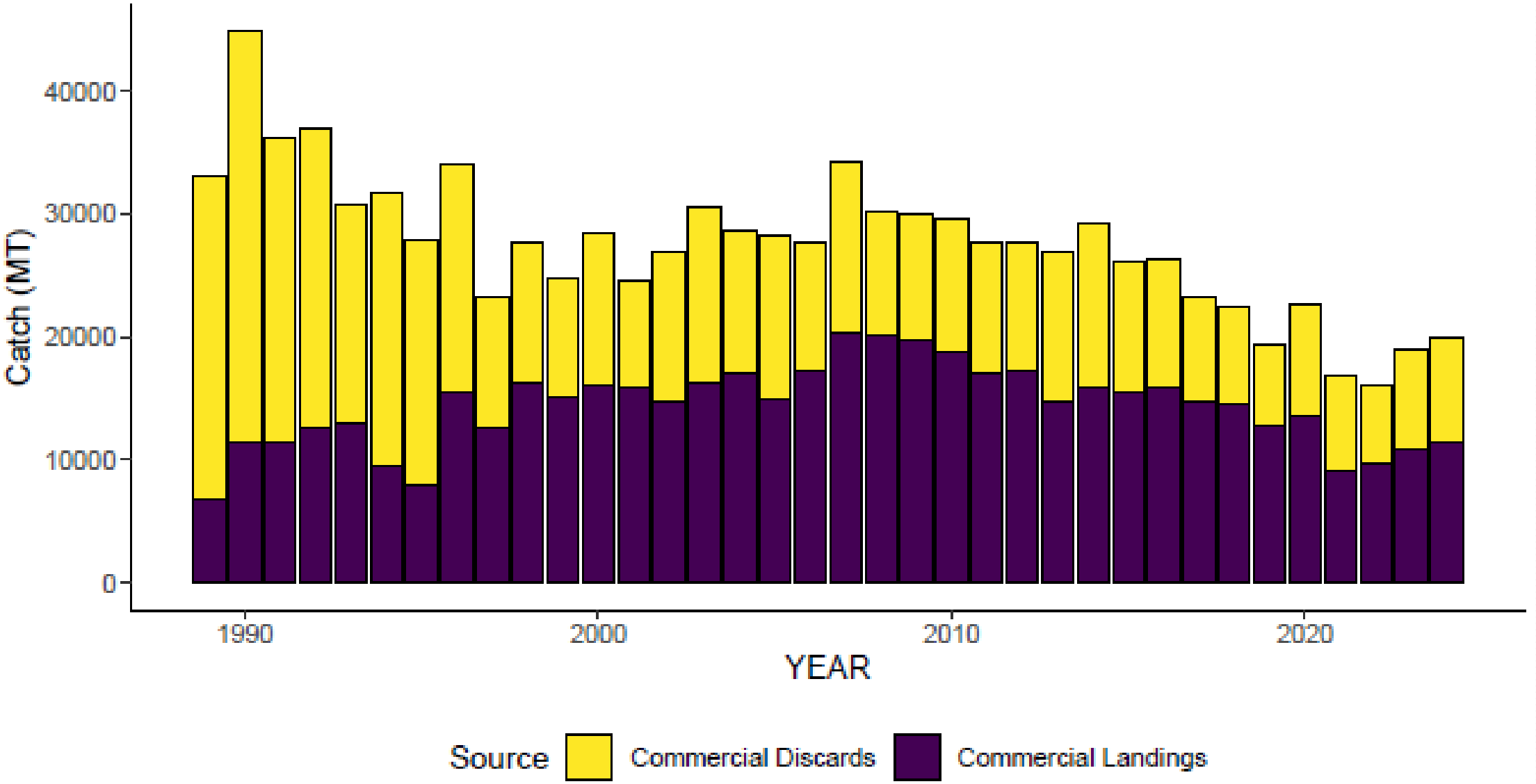
Fishery Management Council

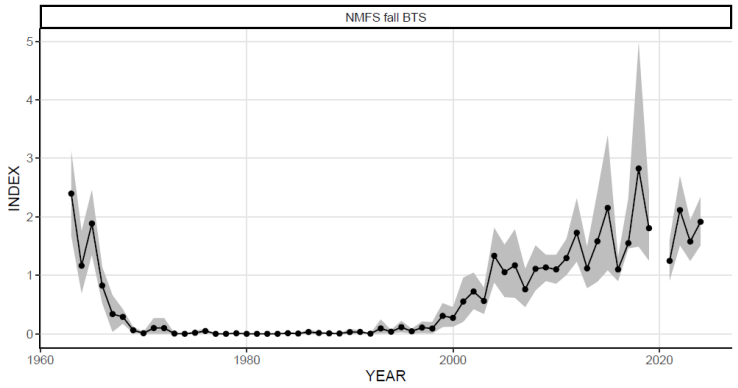
Catch Data *(commercial only)*



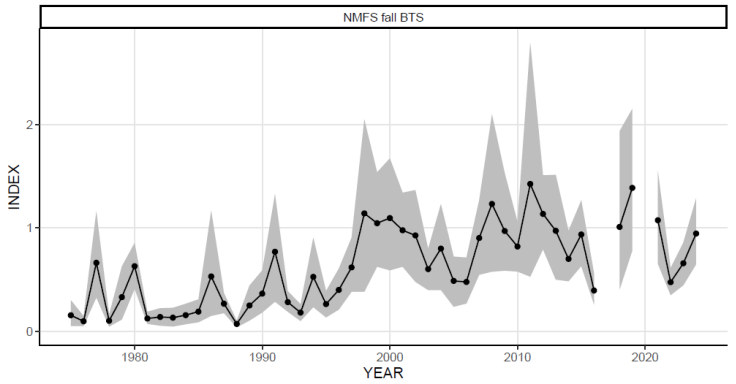
Survey Data

Survey Biomass Indices

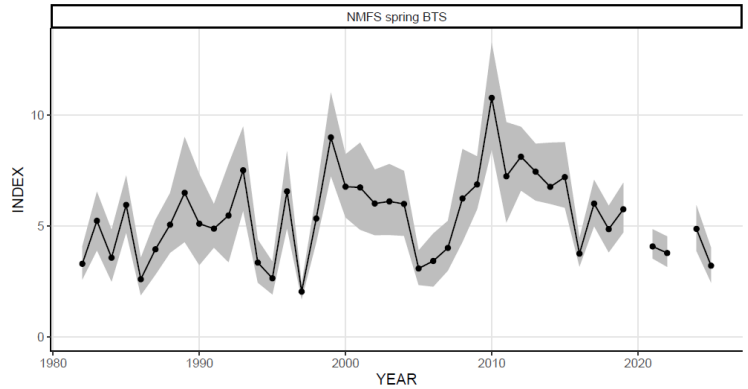
Barndoor



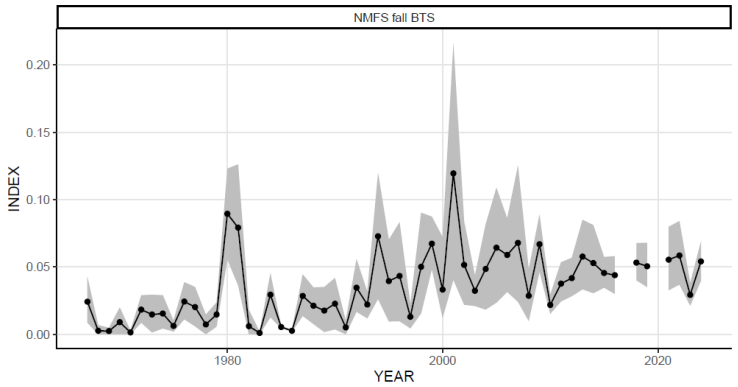
Clearnose



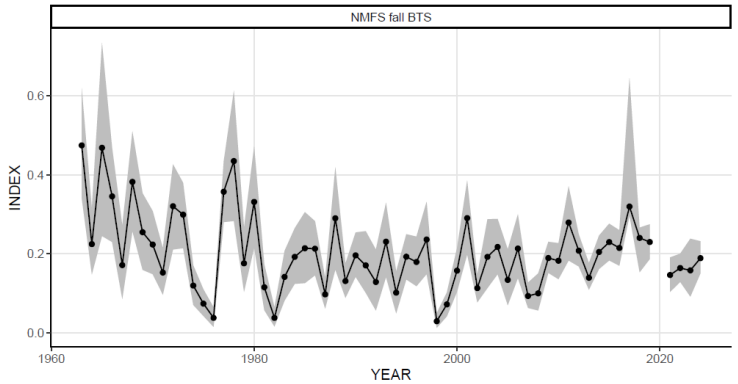
Little



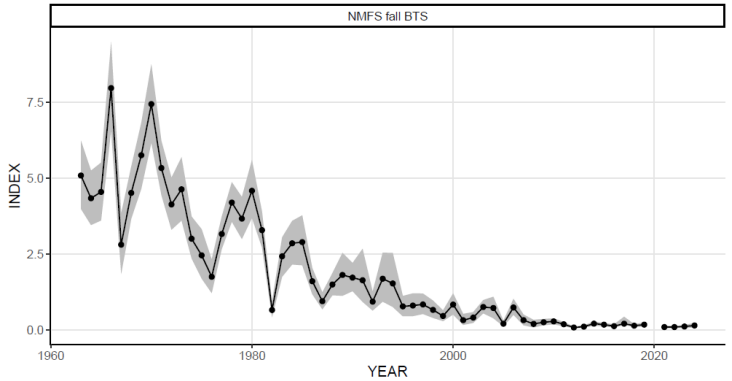
Rosette



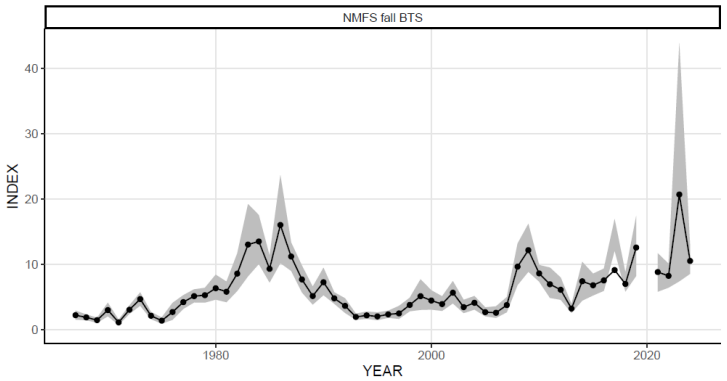
Smooth



Thorny



Winter



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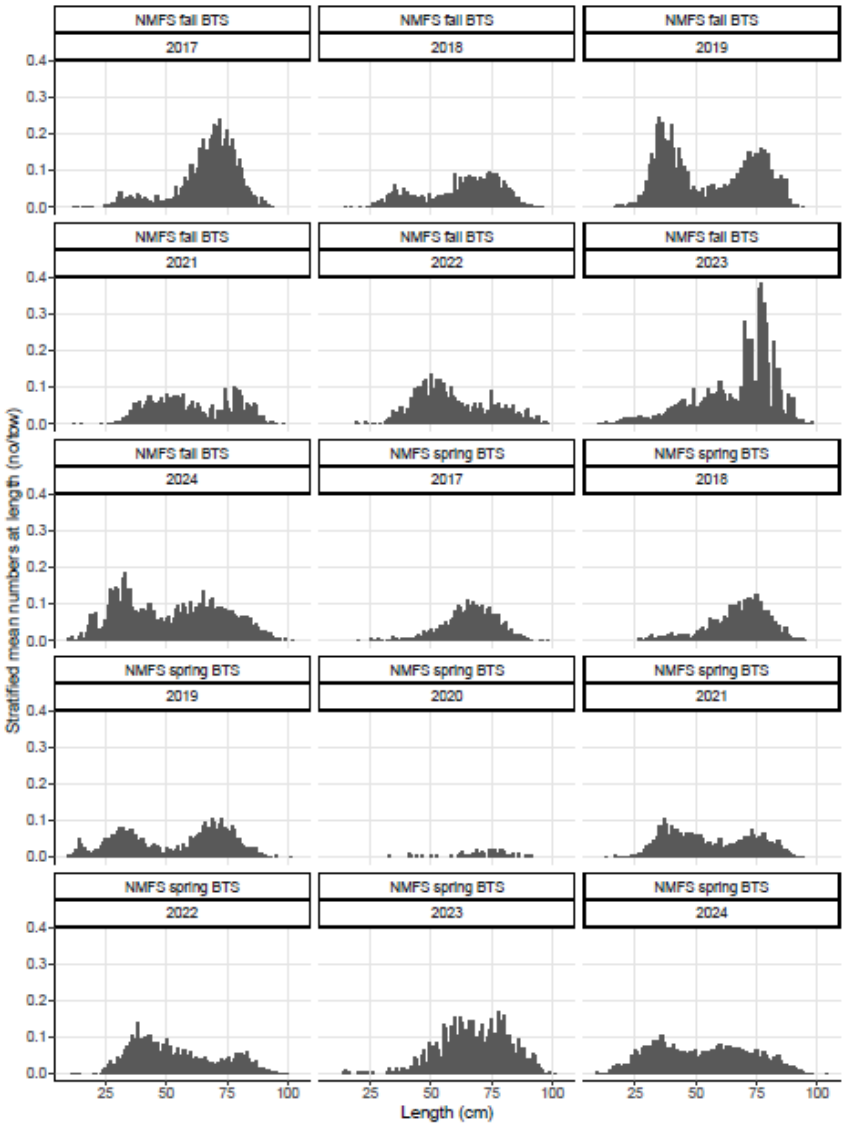
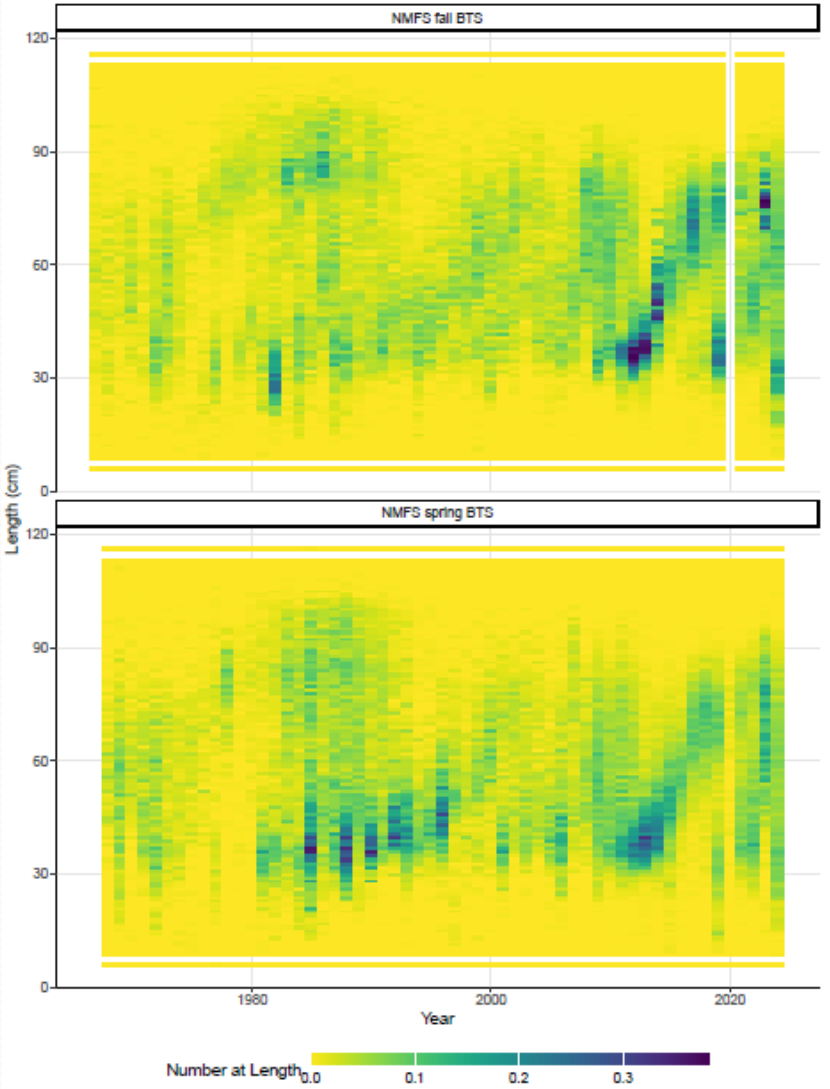
Survey Data

Stratified mean indices at length.

Example: winter skate





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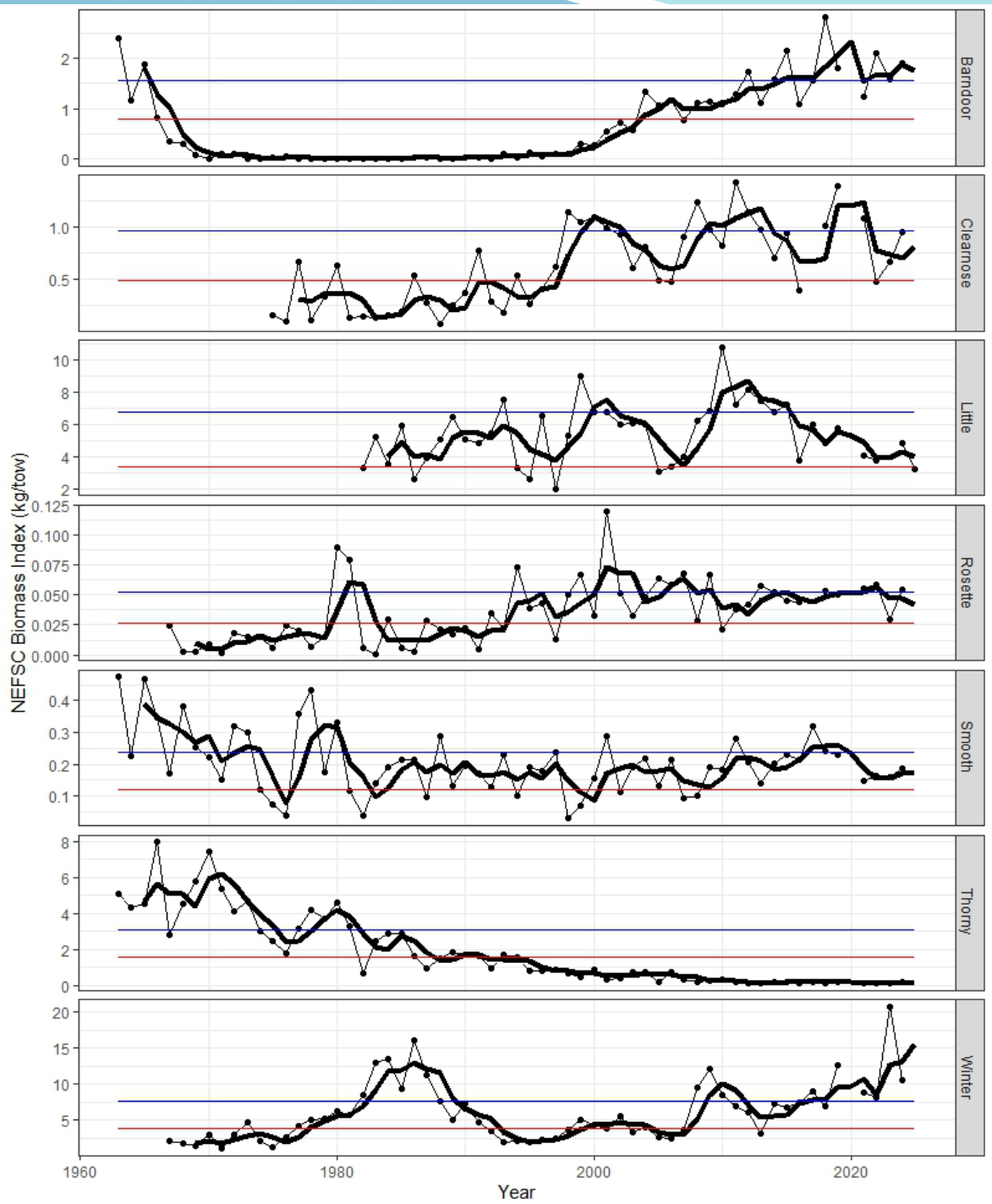
Survey Biomass Indices

In PDT report to SSC & SIR

Btarget
Bthreshold



Barndoor > Btarget

Thorny < Bthreshold, highest index

Winter > Btarget, highest index

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SKATE
Outcomes from Aug. 19th SSC Meeting (Boston)

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Skate SSC Outcomes

SSC Recommendations:

- OFL remain unknown

FY	ABC (mt)
2026	41,282
2027	41,282
2028	37,154
2029	37,154
2030	37,154

Research recommendations

- Seek a data update in the next 2 years.
- Develop methods for setting default measures that are like past ABCs, shaded up or down by risk information; a flag for the Risk Policy Working Group (how to use data updates for setting on longer time spans, setting default years).
- Continue to improve species-specific catch data.
- Revisit methods for reference points.
- Work towards using state surveys and NEMAP; potentially use VAST for creating an index from multiple surveys.
- Recommend methods for propagating uncertainty from the survey into the ABC calculations.

FY 28-30 – precautionary approach; a 10% reduction produces an ABC that is on the high end of the range of recent ABC values (32,155-37,236 mt since FY 2020).

SSC Discussion on Skates

- ABC increase consistent with control rule
  - Driven by a high 2023 winter skate index (with high error). Will this persist in future?
  - Second highest in time series and a 28% increase over current ABC.
  - Setting ABC > MSY_{proxy}.
  - Indices are improving overall, with barndoor and winter > B_{target}.
  - but little skate index is decreasing, approaching/at $B_{threshold}$.
- If skates cannot get on the NEFSC assessment schedule, encouraged work outside of assessments on skate reference points.
- Noted recreational catch in FY24 jumped to 2,423 mt (310-639 mt recently), encouraged understanding the rationale.
- Considered evidence that thorny skate isn't moving out of Gulf of Maine, but other drivers inhibiting rebuilding.
- Any evidence in effort data that could signal stock condition?

SKATE
FY 2026-2030 Specifications

New England
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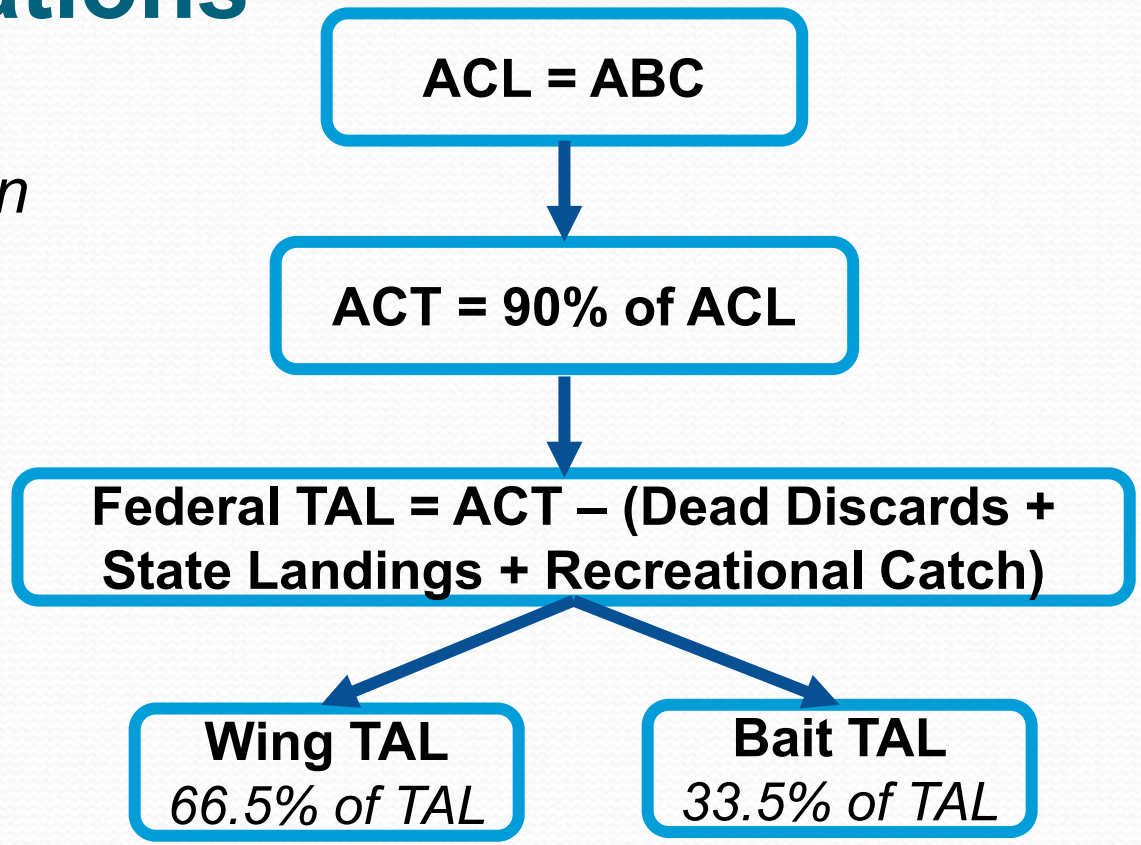
FY 2026-2030 Skate Specifications

Type of document: *Supplemental Information Report (SIR)*

Scope of action:

- Specifications (ABCs, TALs)
- Wing and bait seasonal possession limits, trigger for reducing in-season possession limit to incidental levels



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Skate ABC and Related Specifications

	FY 2024-2025		SSC Recommendation			
			FY 2026-2027		FY 2028-2030	
	(mt)	(lb)	(mt)	(lb)	(mt)	(lb)
ABC = ACL	32,155	70,889,640	**41,282**	91,010,864	**37,154**	81,910,451
ACT (90% of ACL)	28,940	63,801,779	37,154	81,909,777	33,439	73,719,406
Expected Dead Discards	12,149	26,783,960	15,486	34,140,485	13,937	30,726,689
Expected State Landings	756	1,666,695	547	1,206,662	547	1,206,662
Recreational Catch	316	696,661	154	340,073	154	340,073
Federal TAL	15,718	34,652,258	20,966	46,222,558	18,800	41,445,982
Wing TAL (66.5% of TAL)	10,453	23,044,920	13,943	30,738,001	12,502	27,561,578
	*4,605	*10,152,287	*6,142	*13,540,970	5,507	12,141,664
Bait TAL (33.5% of TAL)	5,266	11,609,543	7,024	15,484,557	6,298	13,884,404

*This value is in wing weight. Otherwise, all values are in whole weight.

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Skate Specifications Impacts Analysis

Valued Ecosystem Component (VEC)	Expected Impacts
Target Species	Slight positive • ABC increase is based on updated survey indices, would decrease in FY 2028-2030 as a precaution • ACT is substantially lower than the ABC to minimize risk of overfishing
Non-Target Species	Slight negative to slight positive (depending on stock status of species) • Catch is largely controlled through other FMPs
Protected Species	Slight negative to moderate positive • Depends on stock status of species/ risk of interacting with gillnet and/or bottom trawl gear
Physical Environment/ Essential Fish Habitat	Slight negative • Gillnets do not adversely affect EFH; bottom trawls have adverse effect
Human Communities	Slight positive • Increased TAL could lead to increased revenues • Unlikely to trigger AMs → no economic disruptions

Recommend preferred alternatives for monkfish and skate OFL and ABC specifications

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Lunch Break

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PDT tasking on monkfish and skate fishery overlaps

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Task #1

Task: ***Monkfish DAS use by permit type, area; identify CPH (confirmation of permit history) permits***

Purpose: understand directed DAS use, fleet size

Data notes: FY18, 19, 21-24; exclude Monk-groundfish combo permits (and some monk effort)

Takeaways:

- Most vessels underutilizing Monk DAS allocation, a few overages.
- Fewer vessels using fewer Monk DAS over time.
- Most vessels using 15-30 Monk DAS in south in FY23-24.
- A & B permit vessels use more Monk DAS in south than north, less pronounced for C & D permits.
- 211 permits are currently in CPH

Task #2

Task: ***Monkfish & skate landings by DAS declarations by permit type, area; include vessel count***

Purpose: understand fishing activity within components

Data notes: FY18-24; added declaration codes for NMS, some skate landings not included (bait LOA, non-DAS)

Takeaways:

- North
  - Monk landings mostly from NMS sector trips, then MNK, fluctuating over time.
  - Skate wing landings mostly from NMS sector trips, minor MNK, fluctuating.
  - Skate bait landings minor from NMS sector trips, decreasing.
- South
  - Monk landings mostly from MNK-only trips, then NMS sector, declines over time.
  - Skate wing landings mostly from MNK-only and NMS sector, fluctuating.
  - Skate bait landings mostly from NMS sector trips, and LOAs.

Task #3

Task: ***Plot % monk and skate wing PLs landed/trip by monk area, permit cat., skate season***

Purpose: understand trip constrains across the fisheries

Data notes: FY18-19, 21-24; skate possession limits increased across years; monk possession limits account for DAS charged; includes trips exceeding possession limits (skates in south, 5% of trips; monk in north and south, 38% of trips; degree of data error vs overages unknown).

Takeaways:

- Most monk DAS trips in south.
- Monk DAS trips in south: 69% landed 0-75% skate wing possession limit, 26% landed 75-100%.
- 45% monk DAS trips landed <75% of monk possession limit.

Task #4 *(low priority)*

Task: ***Maps of fishing location for Monkfish permit types with monkfish and skate wing landings on one map, focus on stat area 521, FY 13-17, 18-23; skate bait on separate maps***

Purpose: understand geographic overlaps; where skates may be constraining monkfish harvests.

Task incomplete due to lack of time and would not directly inform any changes in monkfish / skate effort controls.

Task #5 *(low priority)*

Task: ***landings frequency of monkfish and skate wings by gear type, area, skate season and monk permit***

Purpose: understand fleet differences; incidental vs targeting weight.

Data notes: FY21-23 when PLs were constant; trawl data confidential, had to pool some permit cats

Takeaways (gillnet only):

- Few trips in north
- In the south, the spread of landings by trip were consistent across wing season and monk permit category; overall more trips in south, more variation in number of trips by landings/percent trip limit landed
- On gillnet vessels with monk permits, most trips landing skates are landing over skate limits
- Monk permit category is not a strong driver of skate trip performance

Task #6

Task: ***Total monkfish & skate wing landings by trip, avg by month, FY2015-2024 for trips where >75% seasonal skate possession limits & on Monkfish DAS, in south***

Purpose: understand if/how skates constrain monkfish landings over time for directed fishery

Data notes: account for # of Monkfish DAS used (24 hr + 1 min = 2 DAS); examined trips landing 75-100% skate wing limits and all trips ≥ 75%

Takeaways: Trips landing 75-100% skate wing limits: avg monk landings were lower but varied by year, month, and permit category (13% in Nov for B/D permits to 106% in May for D permits)

- Monk landings ~ steady from Dec-March, increase in April, peak in May/June, low in Nov; range of landings and std. deviations very large with overages
- Industry couldn't take advantage of higher skate limits in July 2024
- Subset of monk trips not constrained by skate catch (esp. May/June) → inconsistent with info from fishing industry, data errors? conversion factor issues?

Task #7 (low priority)

Task: ***Info on international trade, market trends for skates / monkfish***

Purpose: identify potential for US market advantage for sustainability incentive programs

Data notes: The Monkfish Fishery Marketing Analysis for the Northeast US (Cornell report), NOAA markets workgroup

Takeaways:

- Historically relied on foreign markets (mostly frozen) esp. S. Korea (whole fish) & Japan (livers, delicacy), & EU esp. France (tails, fillets); weak domestic markets; covid impacted foreign supply chains → replacements for American monkfish
- Monk landings/prices peaked in 1990s/early 2000s, fell in 2007, rose in 2011 but since declining
- NOAA Working Group goals: interdisciplinary research on structure/dynamics/impacts of seafood trade/markets; new dashboard tool expected in 2026

Task #8 *(low priority)*

Task: ***Spatial & temporal changes in movement/distribution of monkfish, skates***

Purpose: Skates seem to be shifting NW → desire to understand any patterns in shifting stocks

Data notes: EFH shinyapp & CAMS

Takeaways:

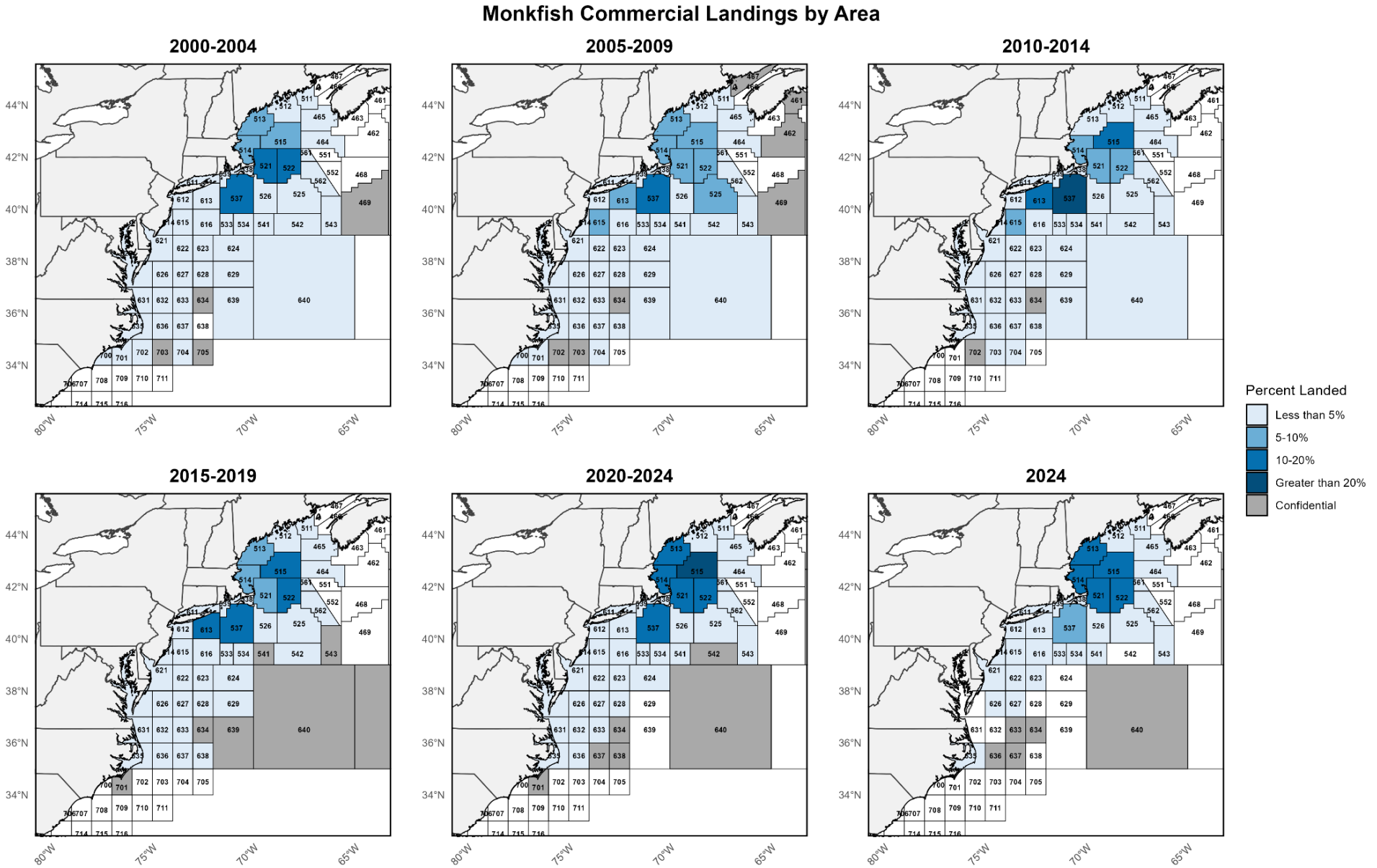
- **Monkfish**:
  - commercial landings highest in 2000-2004, lowest in 2020-2024;
  - patterns in distribution are hard to detect across time periods & seasons
- **Skates**:
  - Winter & barndoor skates prevalent across Mid-Atl. in spring, concentrated north in the fall, generally increased in abundance;
  - patterns for other species less clear/need further analysis

Task #8

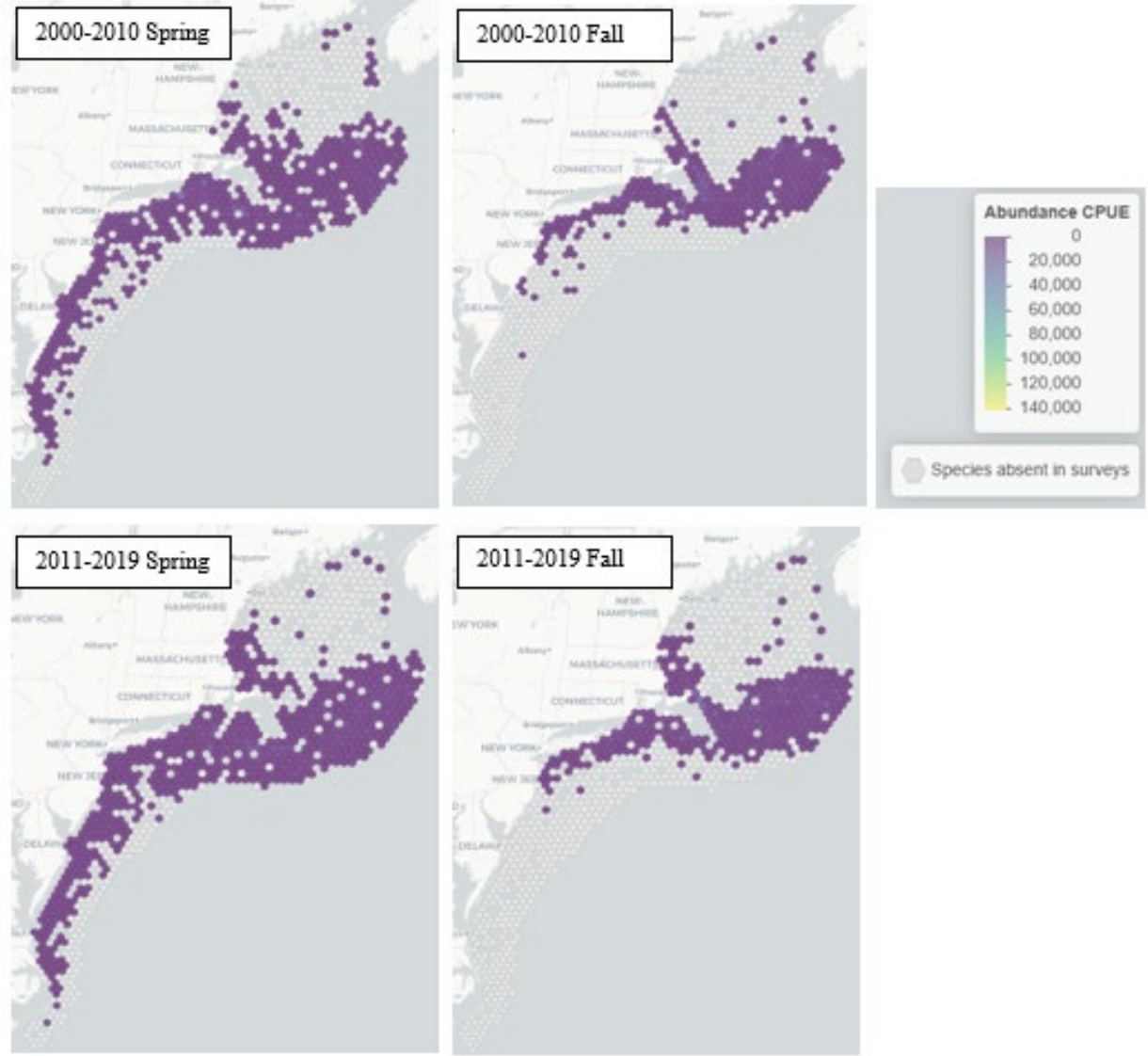
Monkfish commercial landings.

Magnitude varies across time. Up to:

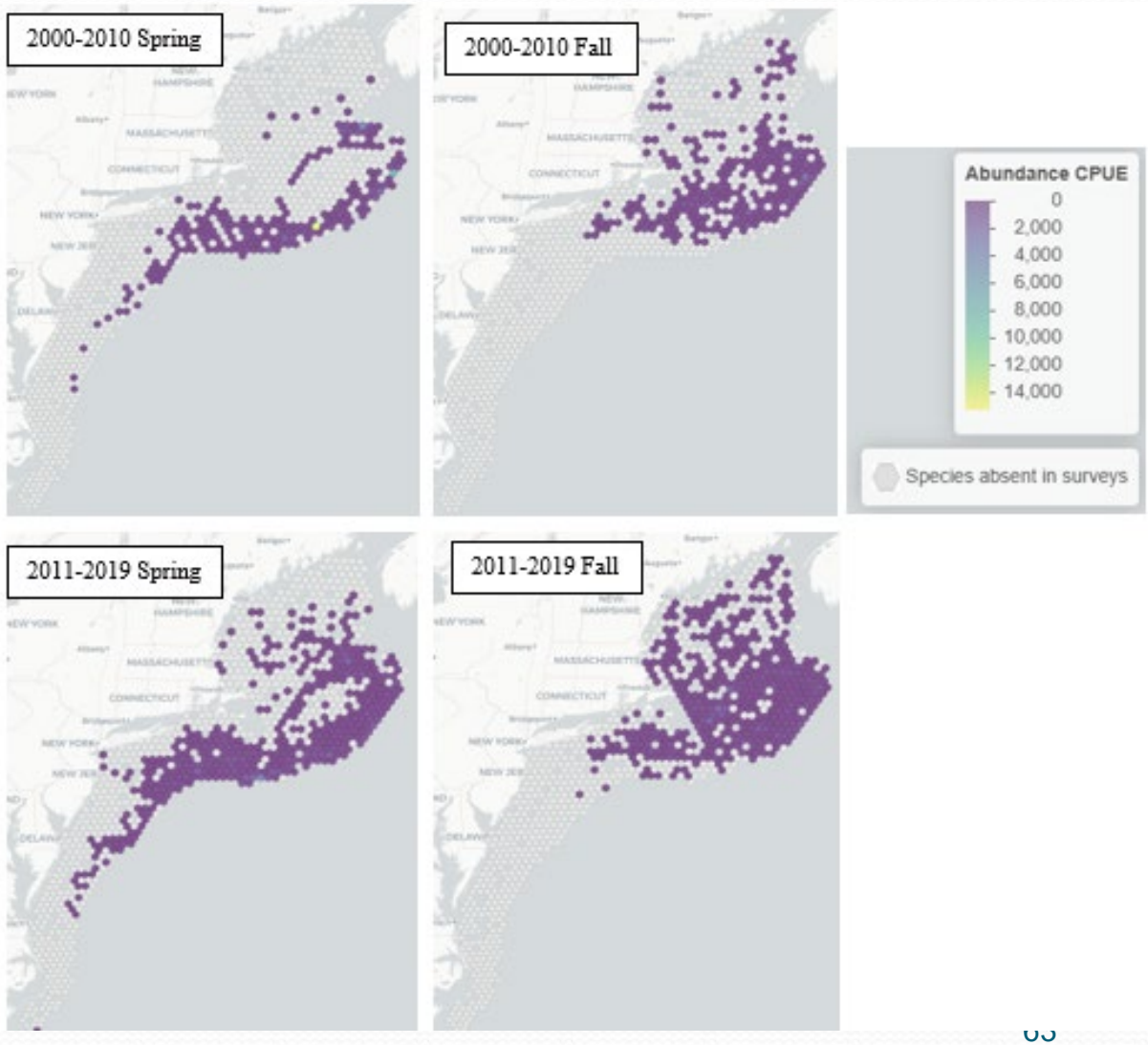
- *30 M lb 2000-04*
- *20.3 M lb 2005-09*
- *21.3 M lb 2010-14*
- *18.7 M lb 2015-19*
- *16.1 M lb 2020-24*



Winter skate CPUE



Barndoor skate CPUE



Recommend preferred alternatives for monkfish and skate effort controls

Monkfish: possession limits, days-at-sea
Skates: possession limits

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Skate Possession Limits

Fishery	Season	Dates	% of TAL	Sub-Fishery	FY 2024-2025
Wing	1	May – Aug	57%	DAS	4,000 lb wing; 9,080 lb whole
				B-DAS	275 lb wing
				Non-DAS	625 lb wing
	2	Sept – Apr	Remainder	DAS	6,000 lb wing; 13,620 lb whole
				B-DAS	275 lb wing
				Non-DAS	625 lb wing
Bait	1	May – Jul	30.8%	n/a	25,000 lb whole
	2	Aug – Oct	37.1%		
	3	Nov – Apr	Remainder		

AP Discussion (March):

- *Wing Season 1:* Increase to 6,000 lb
- *Bait:* Status Quo

PDT Recommendations (See SIR):

- *Wing Season 1:* Consider increase (5,000 – 7,000 lb) → potential 900K, 1.8M, 2.7M more landings?
- *Wing Season 2:* Consider increase (up to 7,000 lb) → potential 350K more landings?
- *Wing B-DAS, Non-DAS, Bait:* Status Quo

Alternative Gear Marking Framework

(see other slides)

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2026 Council Priorities

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Comments about 2026 Priorities

- Recommendations from APs and Committees will be considered but not guaranteed
- Already on docket for 2026:
  - Inflation Reduction Act projects
  - Executive Order 14276 de-regulatory items
  - Regulatory / required actions

Overview of July 28th Monkfish CPUE Meeting

- Council staff overview of original Monkfish FMP & how Monkfish DAS allocation was determined (80% monkfish landings occurred w/in 40 days absent or less)
- Presentation from Dr. Andy Jones (NEFSC Cooperative Research): trends in CPUE indices for trawl, gillnet, and scallop dredge gear & strawman ideas for how to use this work to adjust Monkfish DAS allocations
  - Working paper expected soon
- Presentation from Sierra Richardson (SMAST): standardized and raw catch rates for northern trawl fishery & southern gillnet fishery
  - Work anticipated to be completed in the fall
- Potential ideas for how to modify Monkfish DAS
  - Note: CPUE research needs to be peer-reviewed to be used in assessments and by management → idea for 2026+
- Meeting materials: https://www.nefmc.org/calendar/jul-28-2025-monkfish-cpue-webinar

Executive Order 14276

- Ideas from NEFMC Executive Committee for full Council consideration

3.3 Monkfish Management Modifications

Issue: Current regulations specify the absolute number of Days-At-Sea (DAS) that can be used in the northern and southern management areas, as well as bind monkfish DAS to Northeast multispecies (groundfish) and sea scallop DAS. These measures can result in limiting the areas that monkfish vessels can access in a single trip and increase reporting requirements associated with declarations of the type of DAS used.

Action: The Council could develop a white paper to evaluate how the monkfish fishery interacts with other fisheries to consider approaches that may decouple monkfish from groundfish and scallop regulations.

Rationale: Modifications to the monkfish regulations could reduce unnecessary restrictions, improve access to the fishery, and support more efficient resource use.

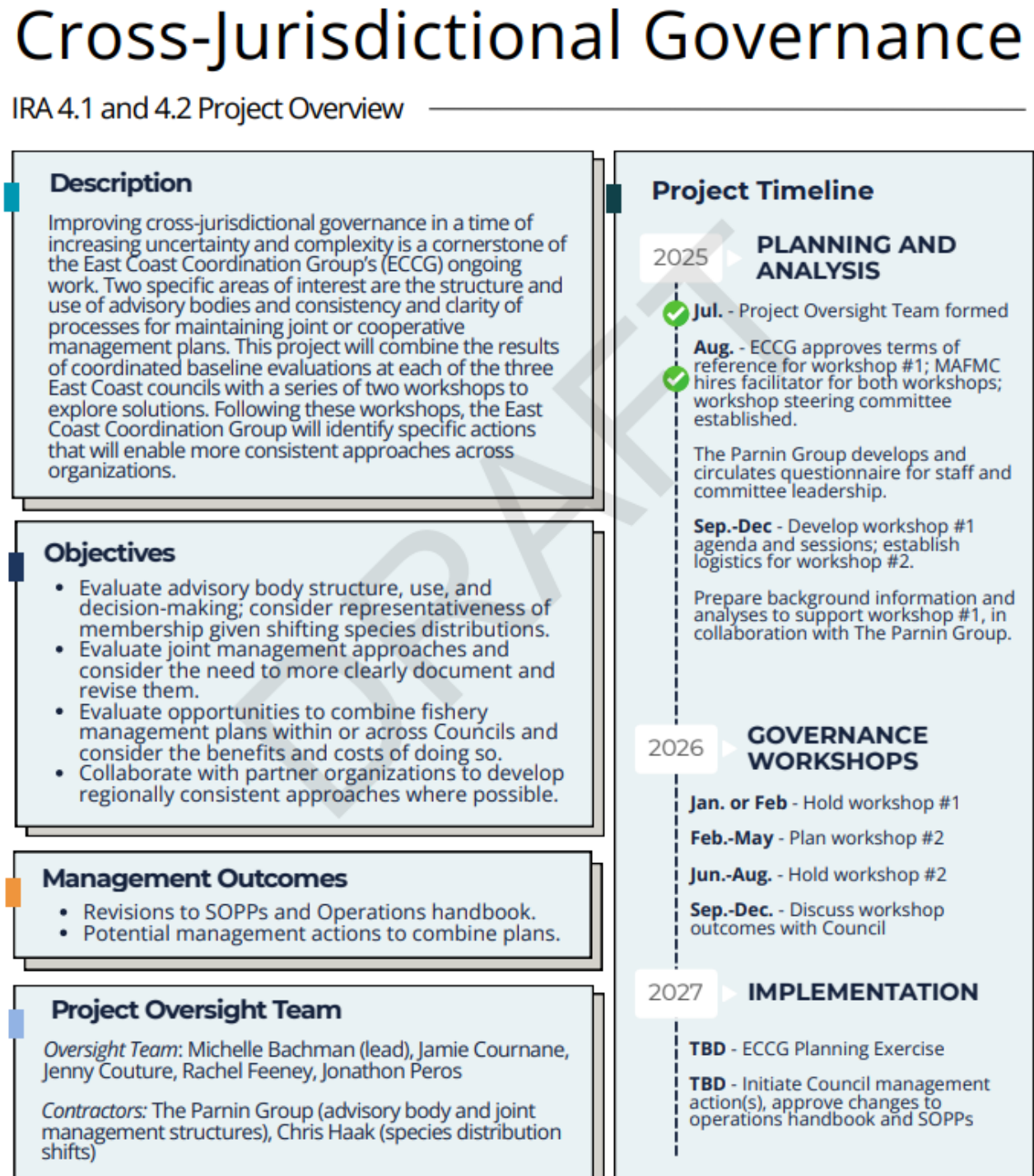
Overview of Council's IRA project pertinent to monkfish & skates

Sept. 2 Climate and Ecosystem Steering Committee meeting

Update: Joint East Coast governance workshops on advisory body use and joint management arrangements. Targeting:

- January or February 2026 for workshop 1
- Summer 2026 for workshop 2

https://d23h0vhsm26o6d.cloudfront.net/4a.-NEFMC-IRA-Project-Briefs-August-2025-DRAFT.pdf



Other ideas?

Next Steps, Other Business

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AP Solicitation Reminder – **due OCTOBER 3!**

- https://www.nefmc.org/news/nefmc-seeks-applicants-for-2026-2028-fishery-advisory-panels

Reminder: upcoming meetings

- **Joint Monkfish/Skate AP: Sept. 16th (webinar)**
- **Joint Monkfish/Skate Committee: Sept. 17th (hybrid, RI)**

Select preferred alternatives

- **NEFMC (*monkfish & skates*): Sept. 23rd (Gloucester)**
- **MAFMC (*monkfish-only*): Oct. 8th (PA)**

Final action

Adjourn

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