



## New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116

John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

# MEETING SUMMARY

## Skate Plan Development Team

The PDT held an in-person meeting on May 7, 2019 and a conference call on May 10, 2019. The PDT discussed limited access in the skate bait and wing fisheries.

### Limited Access

1. The PDT reviewed potential objectives for Amendment 5 that were from scoping comments, as requested by the Committee (Table 1). The selection of objectives is a policy decision; therefore, the PDT did not recommend any objectives but has a few comments (as noted in Table 1).
2. The Committee tasked the PDT to estimate the number of vessels that would qualify for a limited access program as proposed by the AP. The AP members present (there was no quorum at its 4/23/19 meeting) suggested using different qualification criteria for the bait and wing fisheries (Table 2 and Table 3).
3. The PDT noted that the qualification criteria suggested by AP members are based on vessels who land skate in bait or wing form. There are other fisheries that interact with skate but discard instead of land. Some consideration may need to be given to these fisheries to be consistent with the motion passed at the 4/25/19 Committee meeting (motion to include as an objective that any management measure adopted in this limited access action does not have a direct impact on any other fisheries that have interactions with skates).

### Skate Bait Limited Access

1. The PDT used the qualification criteria to categorize vessels landing bait skate into four categories. The fourth category was necessary because there was a group of participants that did not qualify for permit categories 1 and 2 but landed more bait skate than the incidental amount of skate bait used to define the incidental permit category (3). The number of vessels qualifying for each category and their associated landings and revenues are summarized in Table 4.
2. The trip frequencies were plotted for each permit category, including the additional category (X). These data are considered preliminary, as they were obtained by merging 2 independently pulled data sets and the figures could benefit from some further work to fix inconsistencies resulting from that. There typically is no definitive pattern for skate bait landings, however, more trips landing higher amounts of bait occur for permit categories

1 and 2 (Figure 1 and Figure 2). More trips with lower amounts are seen for permit categories 3 and X (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

### **Skate Wing Limited Access**

1. The PDT used the qualification criteria to categorize vessels landing wing skate into 4 categories. The 4<sup>th</sup> category was necessary because there was a group of participants that did not qualify for permit categories 1 and 2 but landed more skate wings than the incidental permit category (3). The number of vessels qualifying for each category and their associated landings and revenues are summarized in Table 5.
2. The trip frequencies were plotted for each permit category, including the additional category (X). These data are considered preliminary, as they were obtained by merging 2 independently pulled data sets and the figures could benefit from some further work to fix inconsistencies resulting from that. (e.g. state or aggregated landings included in one and not the other). Typically, plots of skate wing trip frequencies have 3 peaks – incidental amounts, trips constrained by season 1 possession limits, and trips constrained by season 2 possession limits. Figure 5 indicates that permit category 1 is being affected by the seasonal possession limits and has fewer incidental trips occurring. Figure 6 suggests permit category 2 is also being constrained by the possession limits. The pattern shifts for Figure 7 and Figure 8 where we see more incidental amounts being landed on trips.

Table 1 – Potential objectives for Amendment 5 in scoping comments

- Limited access could preserve the current social and cultural components of towns dependent on skate. (PDT note – might require alternatives restricting where landings could occur. Does the Council want to restrict landing locations?)
- Limitation of participants could help prevent overfishing and overcapacity that would reduce likelihood of triggering of the incidental possession limit.
- Limited access is necessary to limit overcapacity because the reduced uncertainty buffer no longer acts as a buffer to overcapacity
- LA would protect the business and access to skates for vessels that built fishery
- Generate value for limited access permits
- Amendment could establish additional effort controls with the creation of skate DAS instead of using GF DAS (PDT has concerns about skate DAS)
- Could improve efficiency for participating vessels – e.g. if ITQ in the wing fishery is created
- Reduce ability to shift effort onto skates
- Allow some separation of bait and wing management

Table 2 – Bait fishery qualification criteria and structure of limited access program as proposed by AP members present at the April 23, 2019 meeting

	Qualification	Trip Limit (lb)
Permit Category 1	LOA prior to CD + active 2014 - 2018	25,000
Permit Category 2	LOA + 50,000 lb in any 1 yr between 09-18	10,000
Permit Category 3	Incidental amounts	1,200

Table 3 – Wing fishery qualification criteria and structure of limited access program as proposed by AP members present at the April 23, 2019 meeting

	Qualification	Trip Limit (lb)
Permit Category 1	landed 100k lb in any 1 yr between FY03-CD	TBD
Permit Category 2	landed 100k lb in any 1 yr between FY14-18	TBD
Permit Category 3	incidental	500

Table 4 – Bait fishery - number of vessels qualifying for limited access program and associated landings and revenues, based on qualification criteria outlined in Table 2

Permit Category	Number of Vessels	Live lb	Revenue*
1	30	71,810,382	\$6,656,987
2	23	60,287,288	\$6,070,204
3	133	386,689	\$25,187
No category (X)	150	17,737,949	\$1,032,972

\*VTR live lb do not include revenues – they're set to zero

Table 5 – Wing fishery - number of vessels qualifying for limited access program and associated landings and revenues, based on qualification criteria outlined in Table 3

Permit Category	Number of Vessels	Landed lb	Revenue
1	92	112,846,583	\$50,474,677
2	12	6,892,359	\$3,572,182
3	391	632,919	\$378,468
No category (X)	627	55,413,637	\$28,575,643

Figure 1 – Trip frequency of Skate bait permit category 1, FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, bait possession limits are 25,000 (live) lb from May 1 – October 31 and 12,000 (live) lb from November 1 – April 30.

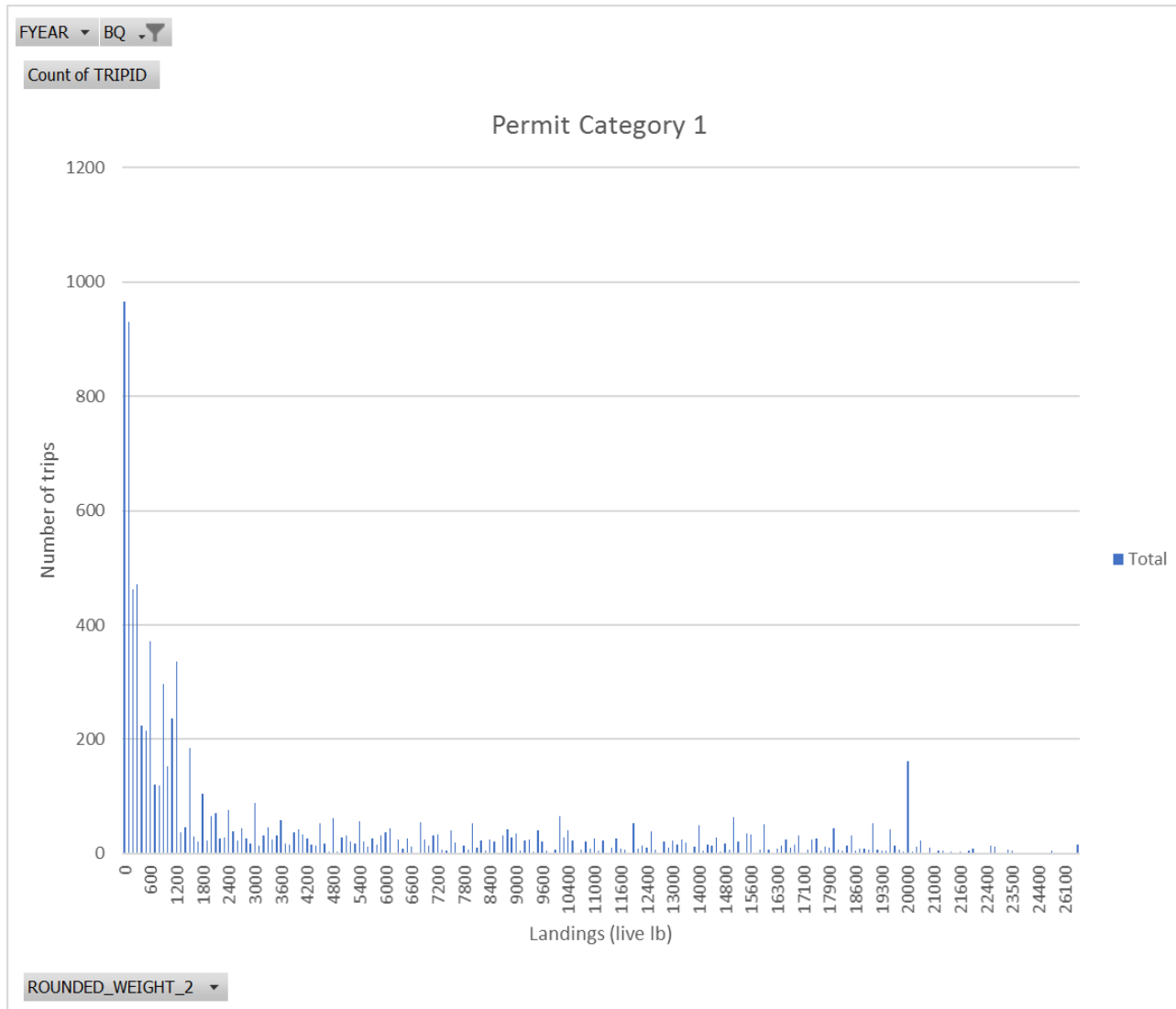


Figure 2 – Trip frequency of skate bait permit category 2, FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, bait possession limits are 25,000 (live) lb from May 1 – October 31 and 12,000 (live) lb from November 1 – April 30.

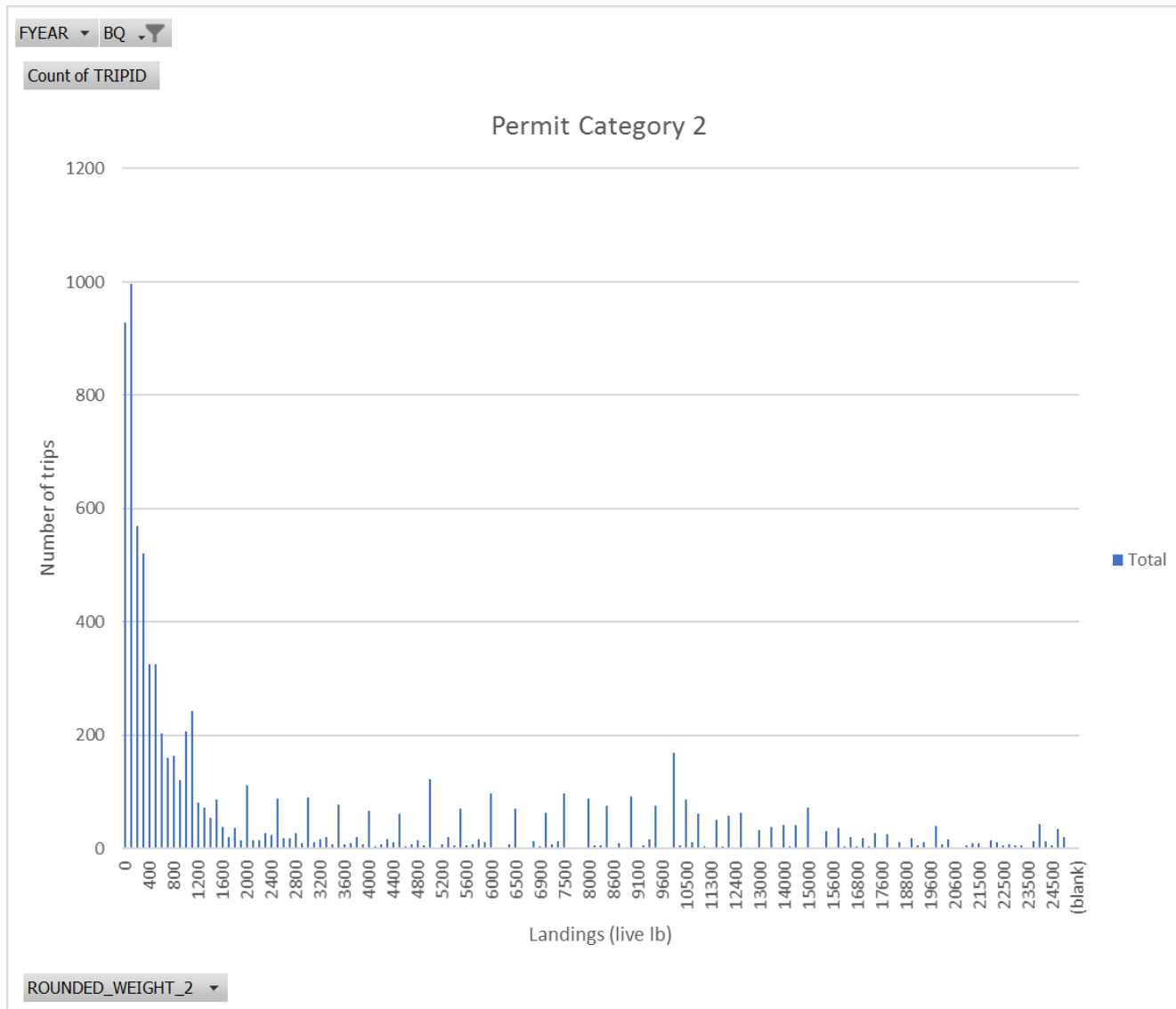


Figure 3 – Trip frequency of skate bait permit category 2, FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, bait possession limits are 25,000 (live) lb from May 1 – October 31 and 12,000 (live) lb from November 1 – April 30.

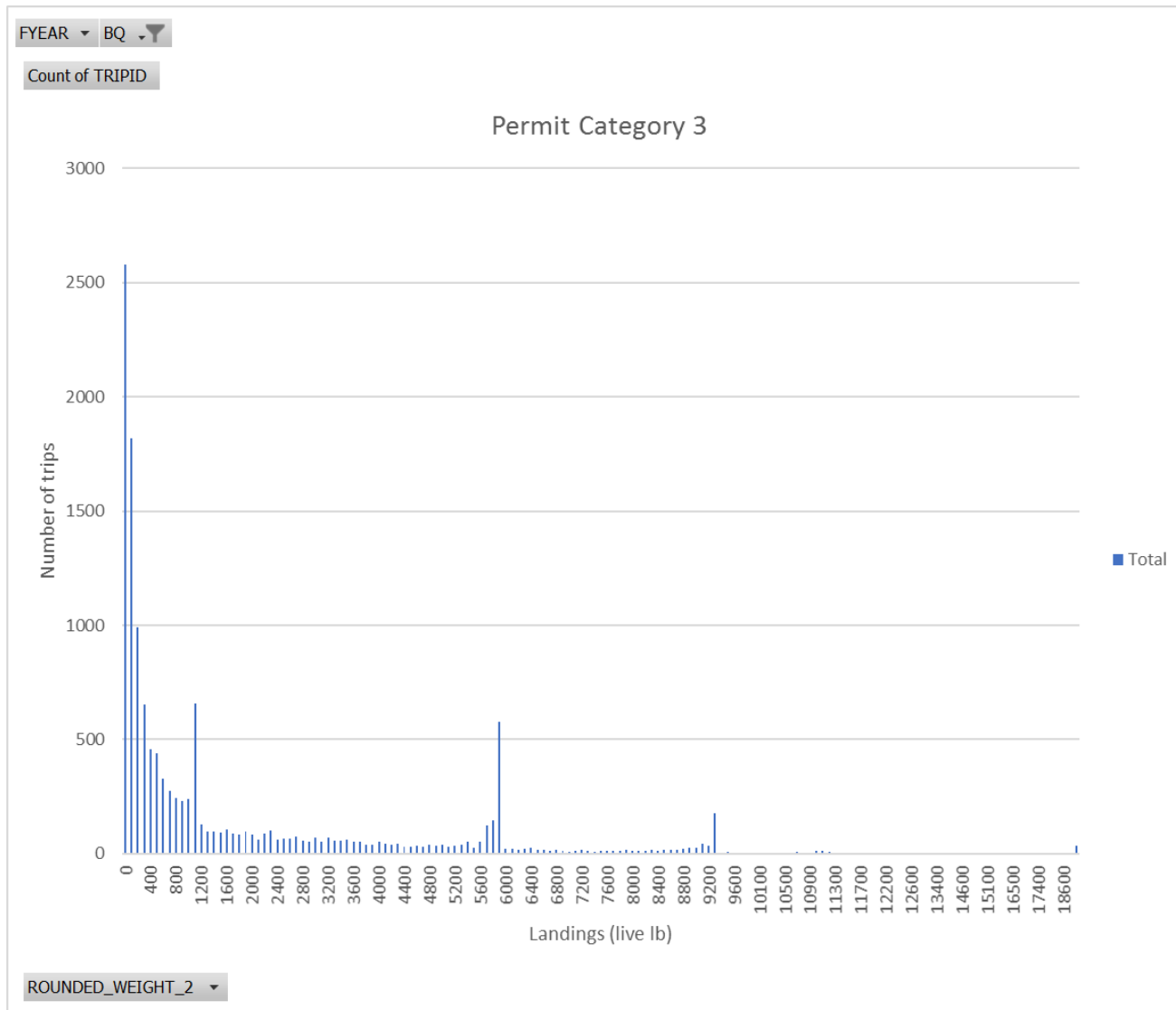


Figure 4 – Trip frequency of skate bait permit category X (all vessels not meeting qualification criteria of proposed permit categories), FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, bait possession limits are 25,000 (live) lb from May 1 – October 31 and 12,000 (live) lb from November 1 – April 30.

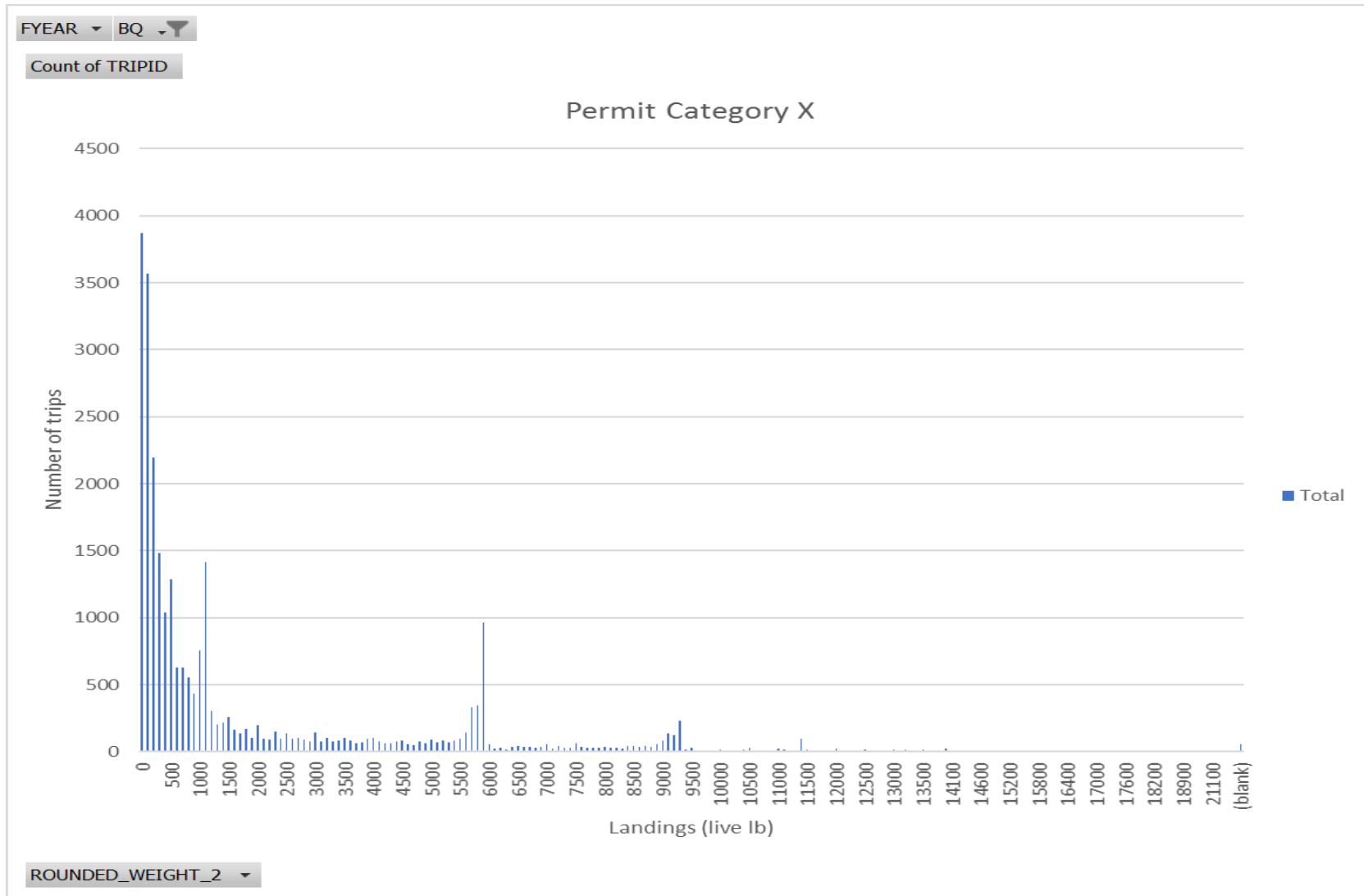


Figure 5 – Trip frequency of skate wing permit category 1, FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, wing possession limits are 2,600 lb (wing weight) from May 1 – August 31 and 4,100 lb (wing weight) from September 1 – April 30.

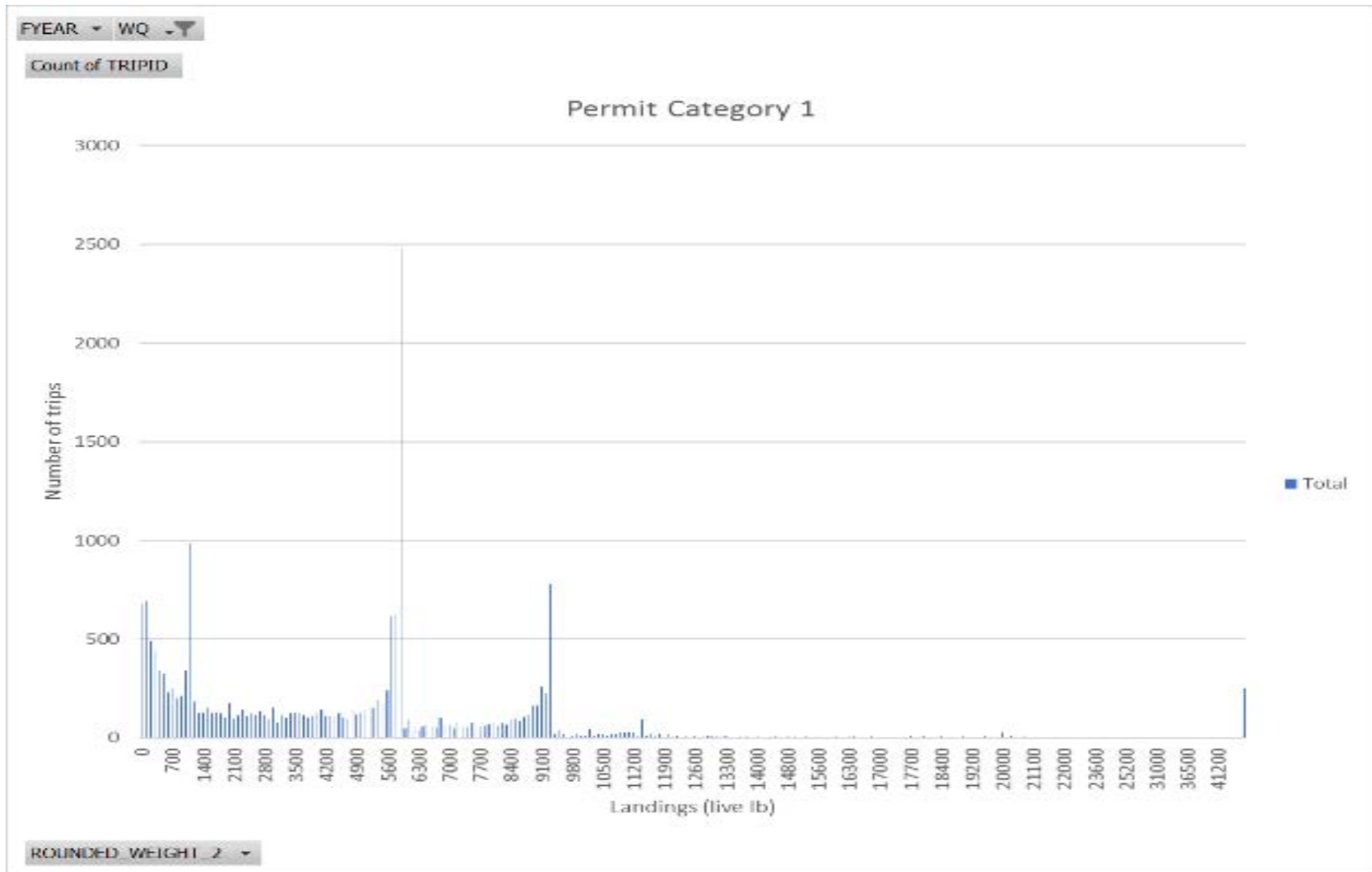




Figure 6 – Trip frequency of skate wing permit category 2, FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, wing possession limits are 2,600 lb (wing weight) from May 1 – August 31 and 4,100 lb (wing weight) from September 1 – April 30.

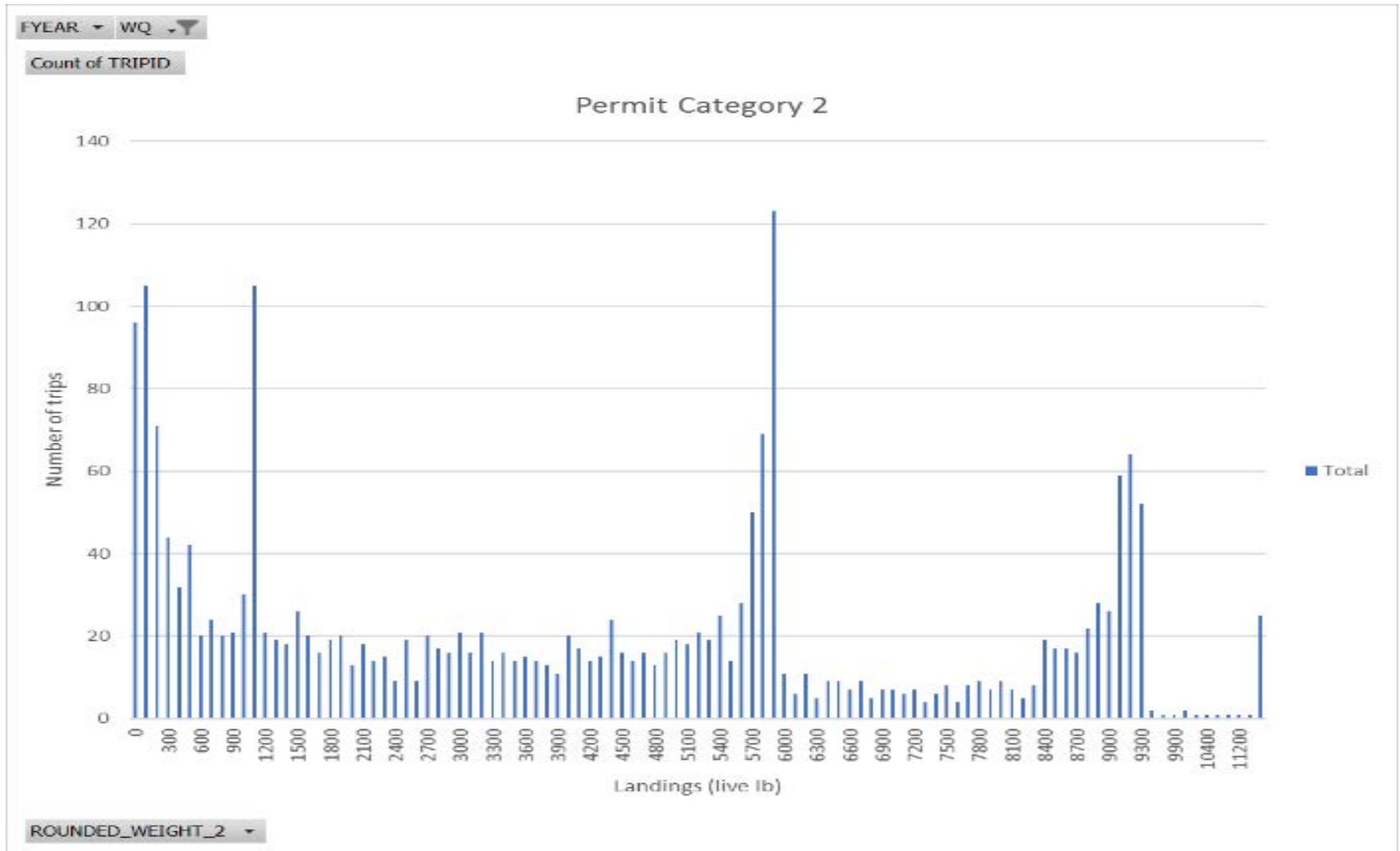


Figure 7 – Trip frequency of skate wing permit category 3 (incidental), FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, wing possession limits are 2,600 lb (wing weight) from May 1 – August 31 and 4,100 lb (wing weight) from September 1 – April 30.

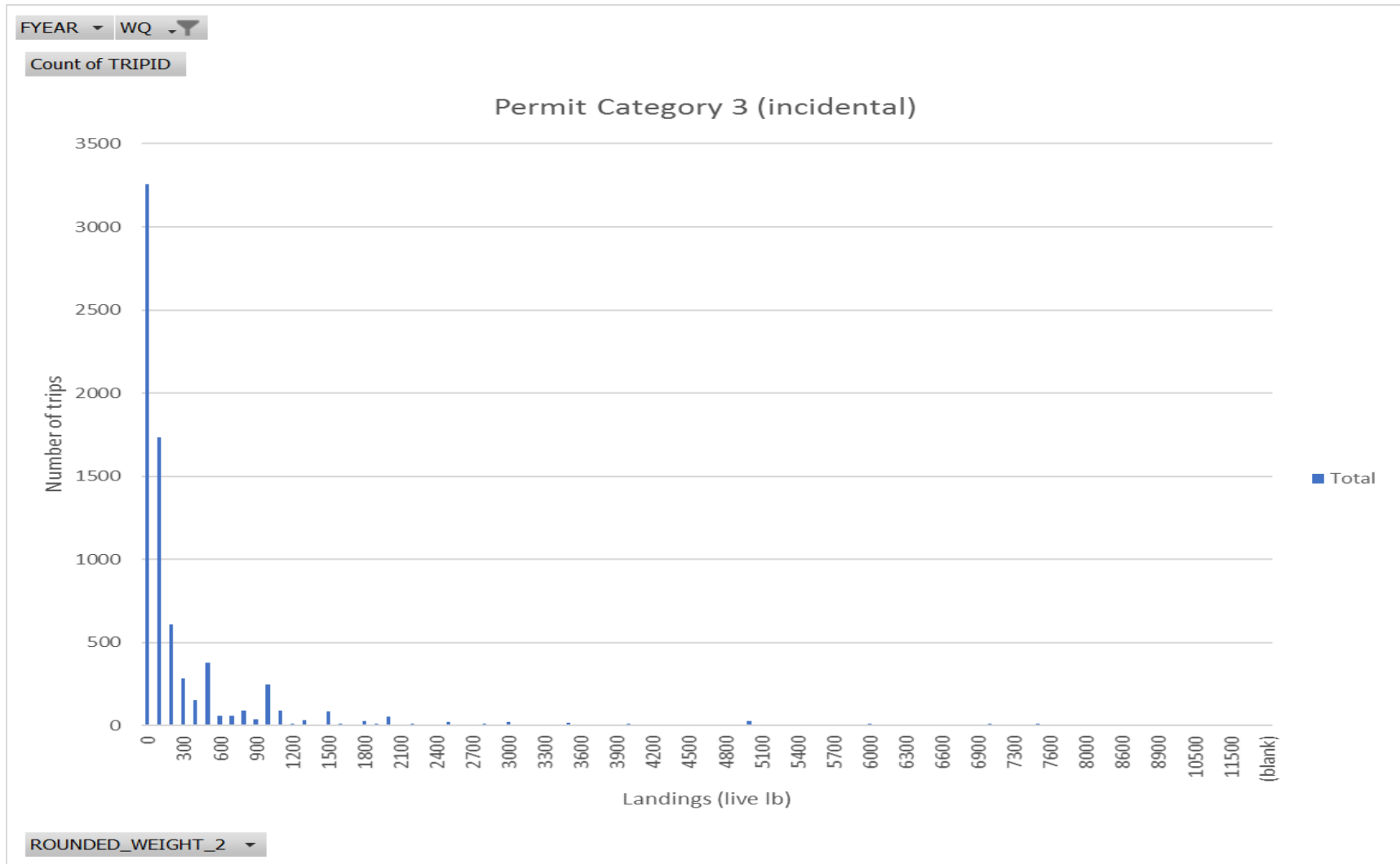


Figure 8 – Trip frequency of skate wing permit category X (all vessels not meeting qualification criteria of proposed permit categories), FYs 2010 – 2016. Currently, wing possession limits are 2,600 lb (wing weight) from May 1 – August 31 and 4,100 lb (wing weight) from September 1 – April 30.

