

# Recreational Advisory Panel and Groundfish Committee Meetings

June 15, 2020



New England  
Fishery Management Council

# Ground Rules

- Please be respectful.
- In order to participate in the meeting you must register for the webinar. Instructions can be found on the meeting notice and on the Council's website.
- We are not accepting comments/questions through the chat or question features of this webinar. This is only for anyone having a problem with access to the webinar.
- To indicate you wish to comment or ask a question, please use the "Raise Hand" feature and you will be called on in order.
- When we call on you, please be sure to unmute yourself. You will need to put yourself back on mute when you are done.
- For motions, we will do a roll call vote. You will be called on one by one.

**COVID-19 Impacts on Recreational  
Groundfish Fishery: Fishing Year 2020  
measures for  
Gulf of Maine cod and  
Gulf of Maine haddock**

**Recreational Advisory Panel and Groundfish Committee**

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# COVID-19 request

- The Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association wrote requesting flexibility in the Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock management measures for fishing year 2020.
- The for-hire sector is restricted due to federal and state guidelines on carrying anglers and are projecting losses until the situation improves.
- At its meeting on April 14, the Council discussed that a Recreational Advisory Panel meeting and Groundfish Committee meeting would be held prior to the June Council meeting to review the request.

# Current Council Proposal

That the Council recommends to GARFO for fishing year 2020 recreational measures:

## Gulf of Maine cod

- Open Season: September 15-30 and April 1-14
- Bag Limit: 1 fish
- Minimum Size: 21 inches

## Gulf of Maine haddock

- Open Season: May 1 – February 28 and April 1-30
- Bag Limit: 15 fish
- Minimum Size: 17 inches

The motion *carried* on a show of hands (15/1/1).



# PDT Analysis

## Available data sources

- MRIP data – private and for-hire
- Vessel Trip Reports – for-hire
- Environmental data – indicator of favorable weather

## PDT Analysis

- Bioeconomic model projections and hypothetical scenarios under COVID-19 restrictions
- Party/charter activity during COVID-19
- Daily wave height data during COVID-19 restrictions

Table 1. FY 2020 Gulf of Maine Recreational Cod and Haddock Bioeconomic Model Simulation Projections

Option	Cod				Haddock				Angler Trips (Median)	% Under Cod ACL (out of 100 Simulations)	% Under Had ACL (out of 100 Simulations)
	Cod Limit	Cod Size	Cod Open Season	Cod Total Mortality (Median)	Had Limit	Had Size	Had Open Season	Had Total Mortality (Median)			
1 (Status Quo)	1	21"	Sep 15-Sep 30	185	15	17"	May-Feb 28, Apr 15-Apr 30	1,092	273,930	67	100
2 (Open Cod Apr 15-30)	1	21"	Sep 15-Sep 30 Apr 15-30	187	15	17"	May-Feb 28, Apr 15-Apr 30	1,094	273,998	65	100

FY 2020 rec sub-ACLs: cod = 193 mt, haddock = 6,210 mt

Options considered, but rejected because % under cod sub-ACL < 50%:

- 3) Increase cod limit (from 1 to 2 fish)
- 4) Open cod Sep 1-Sep 30 (1 fish, 21")
- 5) Open cod Sep 1-Sep 30 (1 fish, slot limit of 21" - 24")
- 6) Open cod Sep 1 -Sept 30 (1 fish, slot limit of 22" - 25")
- 7) Close cod Sep 15-Sep 30, open cod May 1-May 15 (1 fish, 21")
- 8) Close cod Sep 15-Sep 30, open cod May 16-May 31 (1 fish, 21")
- 9) Close cod Sep 15-Sep 30, open cod Aug 16-Aug 31 (1 fish, 21")
- 10) Close cod Sep 15-Sep 30, open cod Sep 1-Sep 14 (1 fish, 21")
- 11) Open cod May 1-May 15 and Sept 15-Sep 30 (1 fish, slot limit of 22" - 25")



Table 2. FY 2020 Predicted Gulf of Maine Angler Trips and Cod Removals by Mode

	Cod & Haddock Angler Trips <sup>1</sup>	Cod Removals (mt)
For-Hire	42,882	29
Private Boat	231,116	158
	273,998	187

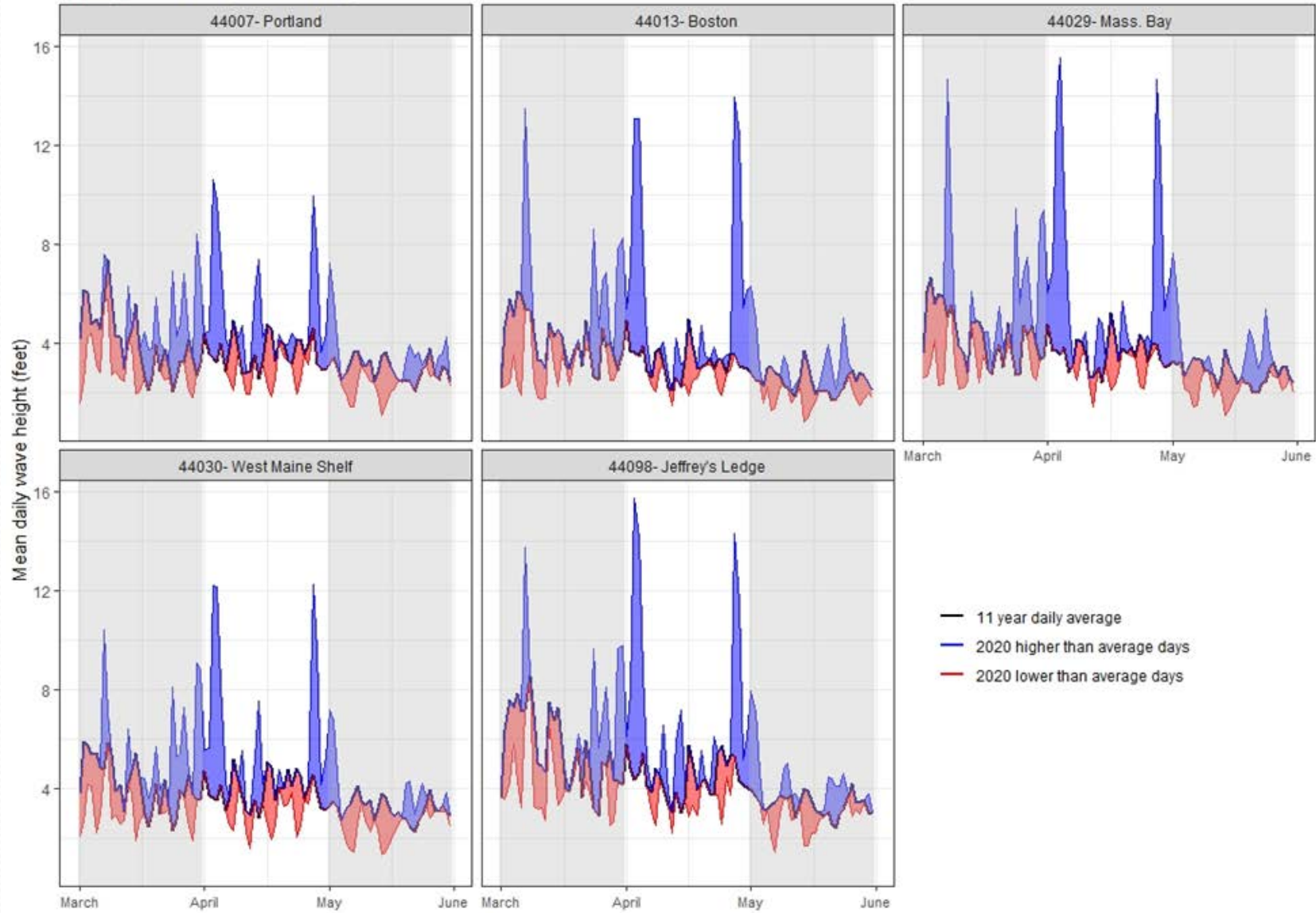
<sup>1</sup>Predicted number of angler trips targeting and/or catching cod or haddock

Table 3. FY 2020 Predicted Cod Removals from Hypothetical Changes in Angler Trips

For-Hire	Private Boat	Cod Removals (mt)
0%	0%	187
-10%	0%	184
-10%	5%	192
-10%	+10%	200
-10%	+25%	224
-10%	+50%	263
-25%	0%	180
-25%	5%	188
-25%	+10%	195
-25%	+25%	219
-25%	+50%	259
-50%	0%	172
-50%	5%	180
-50%	+10%	188
-50%	+25%	212
-50%	+50%	251

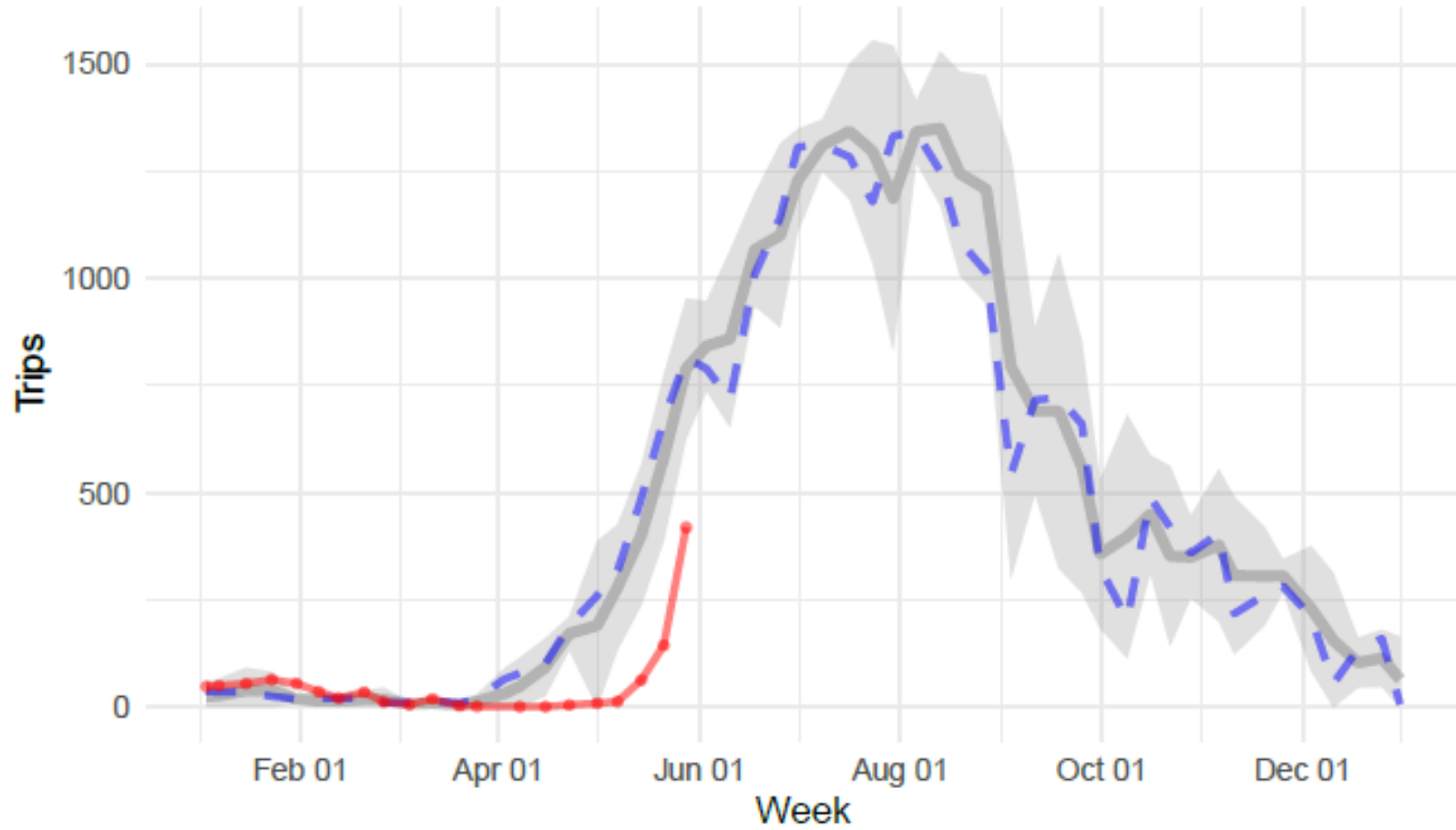


### Spring 2020 Daily Wave Height in the GOM



# Weekly Party/Charter VTR Trips

Years: 2016-2020

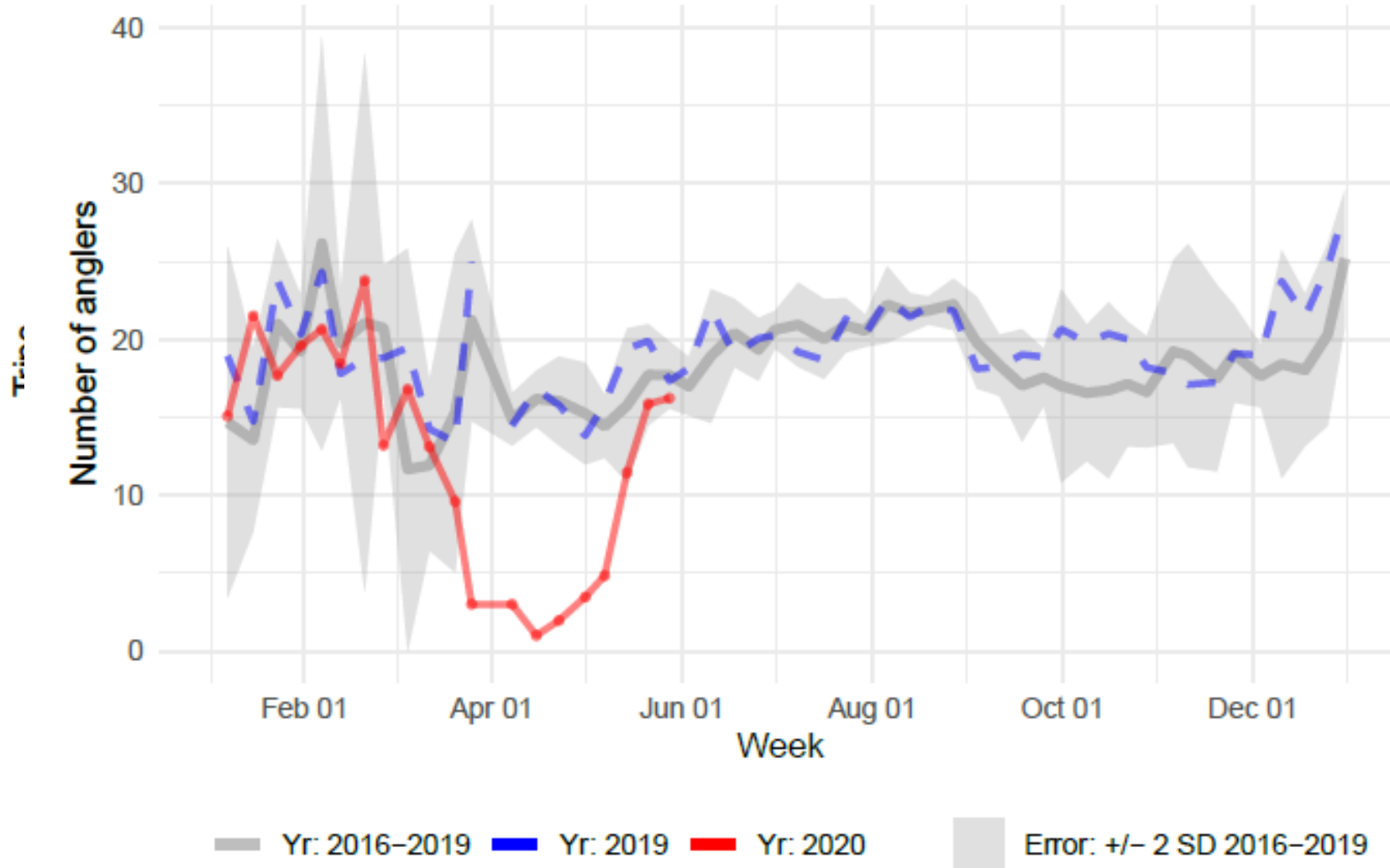


— Yr: 2016-2019    - - - Yr: 2019    — Yr: 2020    Error: +/- 2 SD 2016-2019



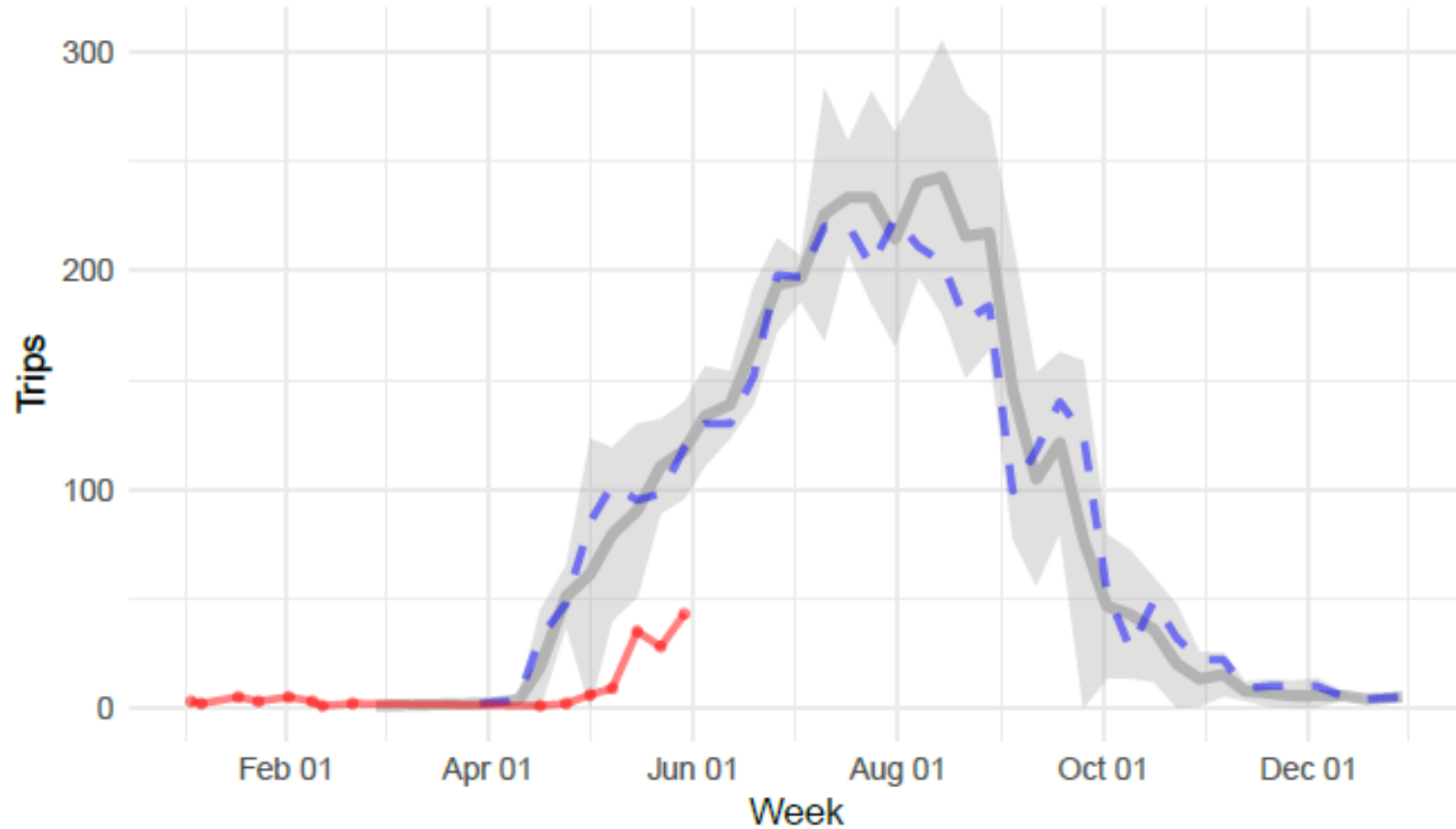
# Weekly Mean Number of Anglers on Party/Charter VTRs

Years: 2016–2020



# Weekly GOM Party/Charter VTR Trips

Years: 2016–2020

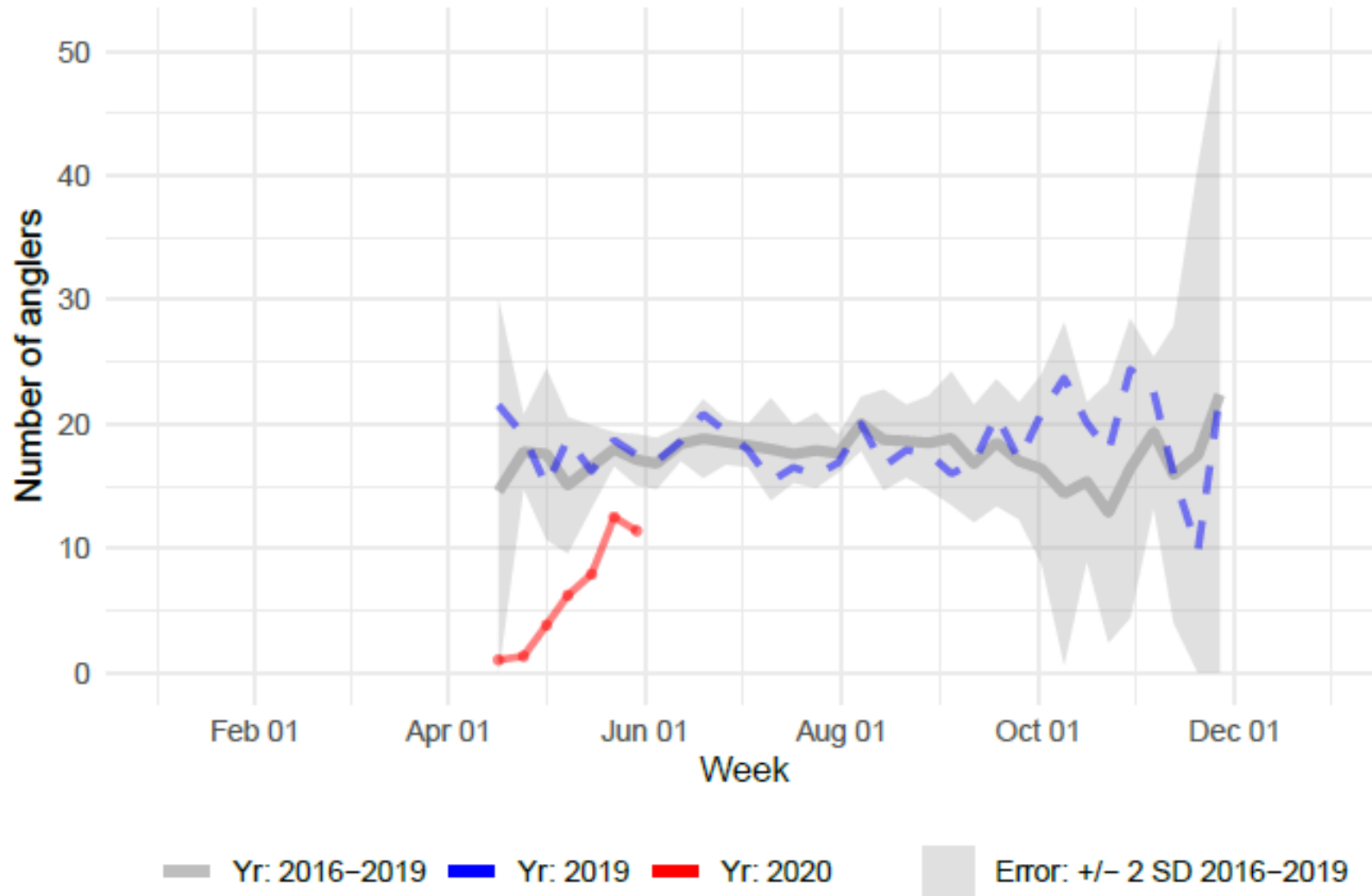


— Yr: 2016–2019    - - - Yr: 2019    — Yr: 2020    Error: +/- 2 SD 2016–2019



# Weekly Mean Number of Anglers on GOM Party/Charter VTRs

Years: 2016–2020



# PDT Discussion

## Discussion on revisiting measures proposed by the Council

- Council's proposal continues to balance the risk of exceeding the cod sub-ACL while allowing access to cod and haddock. Many uncertainties remain as to the magnitude of the impact of COVID-19 on the different modes – private and for-hire.
- Certain fishing modes are expected to be more impacted than others due to restrictions in each state (party being the most impacted over charter and private modes).



# PDT Discussion

- For-hire effort in the Gulf of Maine appears to be down compared to this time last year.
- Changes in private effort are unknown. Conditions may be favorable for increased private boat effort, like other regions, which have observed increases.
- Most of the recreational groundfish fishing typically ramps up later in the fishing year, especially in the months of July, August, and September.

# PDT Discussion

- Haddock - The recreational haddock fishery opened on April 15 and effort and catches are expected to be down – however this is very hard to estimate by how much. The current and proposed haddock measures are not predicted to be limiting.



# PDT Discussion

- Cod – Private mode accounts for most of the cod removals and it is unknown if activity in this mode has increased or decreased in recent weeks. The risk of exceeding the sub-ACL for cod depends more on what happens in the private boat mode, such that even a 5% increase in the private boat could lead to an overage. Negative impacts are likely to be greater for for-hire than private – so maybe separate measures that are more liberal for for-hire could be discussed. The risk of exceeding the cod sub-ACL is lower for a season open after Labor Day than an opening earlier in the summer.

# For Today

- Possibly make recommendations on revisiting measures for fishing year 2020 for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock.



# Framework Adjustment 6 I: Specifications (to be initiated)

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# Draft list of items for inclusion Council 2020 priorities

- 2021 total allowable catches (TACs) for U.S./Canada stocks of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod, Eastern GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder;
- 2021-2023 specifications for roughly half of the groundfish stocks:
  - Winter flounders (GB, GOM, and SNE/MA), redfish, halibut, windowpane flounders (northern and southern), ocean pout, and wolffish.
- Other measures:
  - address commercial/recreational allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data, and
  - investigate ways to increase GB haddock utilization, including modification of gear requirements



# Draft Council Milestones

- **June** – initiate the action
- **September** – receive and approve TMGC’s TAC recommendations for U.S./Canada stocks, update on any draft alternatives under other measures
- **December** – receive specifications alternatives and take final action on entire action - specifications and other measures
- Implementation by **May 1, 2021**, NMFS

# For Today

- Recommend initiating the action and identify the items for inclusion.



# 2020 Groundfish Stock Assessments – NEFSC staff

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# Executive Order Promoting Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth

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# For Today

- Identify possible items.

# Other Business

**Recreational Advisory Panel and Groundfish Committee**

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**Meeting on lunch break  
returning at xx pm**

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