

**New England Fishery Management Council**

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

DATE: November 27, 2017
TO: Groundfish Committee
FROM: Groundfish Plan Development Team
SUBJECT: **Recreational Management Measures for Georges Bank cod**

The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) met on November 15 and 27, 2017, via webinar and discussed recreational management measures for Georges Bank cod. This document briefly summarizes the results of the PDT's discussion and provides some preliminary data on FY2016 and FY2017 catches.

Catch Target for FY2018-FY2020

The Groundfish Committee passed the following motion at its November 9, 2017 meeting:

Using the most recent 5-year (CY2012-CY2016) average catch (landings and discards) from the 2017 operational assessment for Georges Bank cod for the recreational fishery, arrive at a catch target for fishing years 2018-2020 and task the Plan Development Team to work with the Recreational Advisory Panel to develop measures designed to meet the target, to possibly be used to modify management measures in Framework Adjustment 57 or as a basis for Emergency Action.

The motion carried 9/1/0.

Then, the Recreational Advisors passed the following motion at its November 14, 2017 meeting:

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee that for Georges Bank cod to use the five-year recent average (138.4 mt) as a catch target for FY2018 - FY2020.

The motion carried 7/0/2.

Although, the advisors did not reach consensus on what measures to recommend at that time.

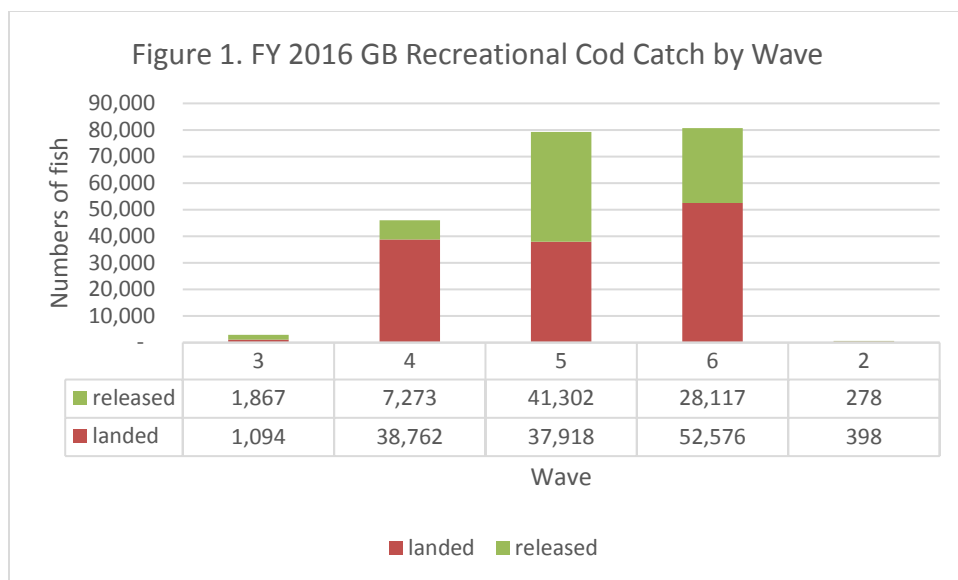
Based on the Groundfish Committee's motion, the PDT calculated the catch target as the most recent five-year (CY2012-CY2016) average catch (landings and discards) from the 2017 operational assessment for Georges Bank cod for the recreational fishery. The catch target value is 138mt.

Table 1- Calculation of the catch target for the recreational fishery. Data source: Recreational catches in 2017 groundfish operational assessments, NEFSC.

Catch (mt)	Calendar Year					Recreational Average 12-16
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Commercial landings	2,007	1,312	1,514	1,300	1,109	
Commercial discards	120	83	19	31	33	
Recreational landings	56	6	88	124	369	sum = 643
Recreational discards	1	1	2	15	30	sum = 49
Canadian landings	395	384	430	472	428	
Canadian discards	75	39	28	20	12	
Catch for Assessment	2,653	1,824	2,081	1,962	1,982	
						+ _____
						692
						5-yr avg 138.4

PDT Discussion

- The PDT agreed to use the catch target in the sub-component analysis for Georges Bank cod for the recreational catches within the state and other sub components. See PDT memo on this subject for more details.
- Based on its preliminary review of the data (see attachment), the PDT recommends the following management measures to meet the catch target:
 - Increase the minimum fish size from 22 inches up to 24 inches, and
 - Harmonize the bag limit for all modes to a 10-fish bag limit (from a 10-fish bag limit for private anglers and no bag limit for party/charter)
- Amendment 16 allows for separate measures by fishing mode, but the PDT did not have time to discuss potential options in detail for each mode.
- Preliminary data for FY2017 suggests that catches may be lower than those in FY2016. The PDT is unaware of any changes in federal or states measures that would precipitate a decline in catches between FY2016 and FY2017.
- The PDT plans to examine expanded effort data for GB cod in the next iteration of its work.
- Outreach would be needed to ensure compliance with any changes to regulations as management measures have remained unchanged for many years.
- Also, the minimum size for Gulf of Maine cod is 24 inches. An ancillary benefit of having identical minimum fish sizes between the two stocks may be improved compliance with measures.



Wave 2, 2017 MRIP data are preliminary and subject to change.

Table 1. FY 2016 GB Recreational Cod Catch by Wave (includes coefficient of variation and the number of intercepts the catch estimates were derived from)

Wave	Landings (A+B1) (numbers)	Landings (A+B1) CV	Releases (B2) (numbers)	Releases (B2) CV	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) (numbers)	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) CV	Number of Intercepts
3	1,094	0.52	1,867	0.05	2,961	0.20	4
4	38,762	0.41	7,273	0.58	46,035	0.41	24
5	37,918	0.65	41,302	0.46	79,220	0.51	69
6	52,576	0.38	28,117	0.41	80,693	0.37	53
2	398	0.43	278	0.26	676	0.30	26
	130,749	0.27	78,836	0.29	209,585	0.26	176

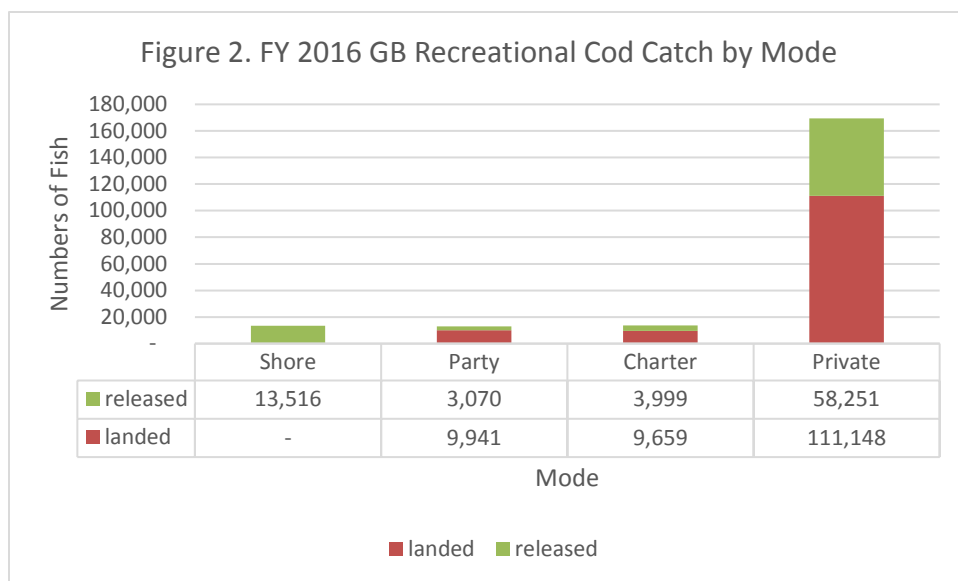


Table 2. FY 2016 GB Recreational Cod Catch by Mode (includes coefficient of variation and the number of intercepts the catch estimates were derived from)

Mode	Landings (A+B1) (numbers)	Landings (A+B1) CV	Releases (B2) (numbers)	Releases (B2) CV	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) (numbers)	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) CV	Number of Intercepts
Shore	-	0.00	13,516	0.88	13,516	0.88	2
Party	9,941	0.12	3,070	0.15	13,011	0.11	101
Charter	9,659	0.14	3,999	0.34	13,659	0.15	30
Private	111,148	0.32	58,251	0.33	169,399	0.31	43
	130,749	0.27	78,836	0.29	209,585	0.26	176

Figure 3. FY 2016 GB Recreational Cod Catch Frequencies

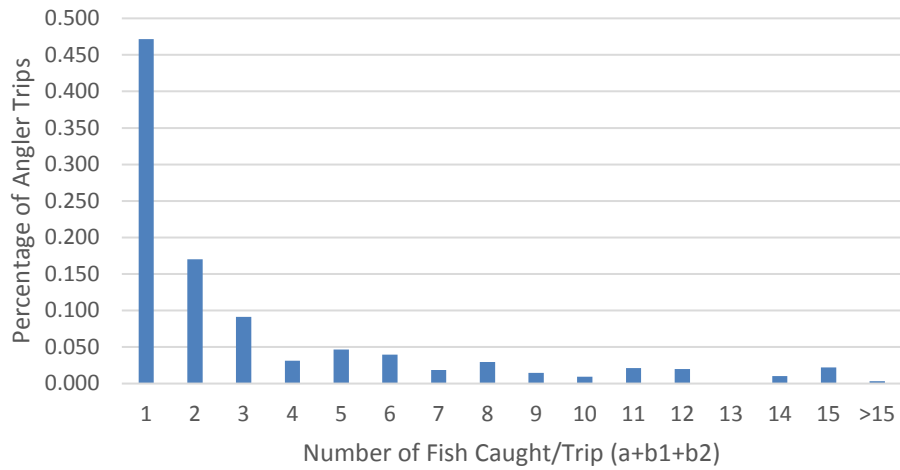
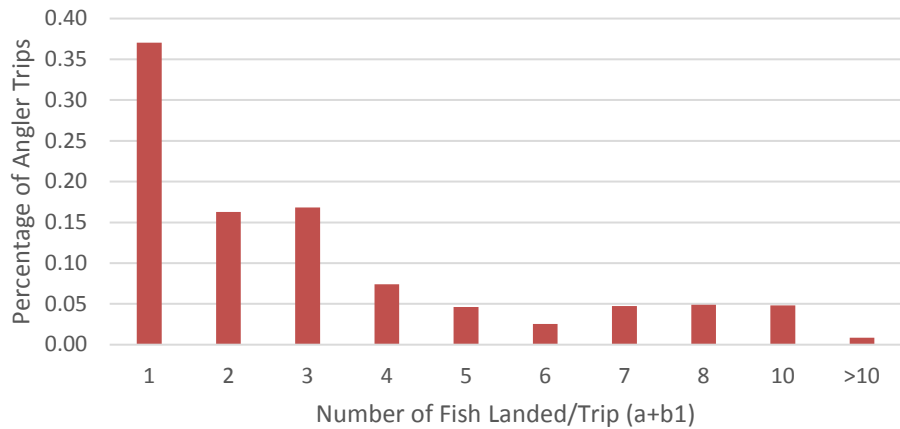


Figure 4. FY 2016 GB Recreational Cod Landings Frequencies



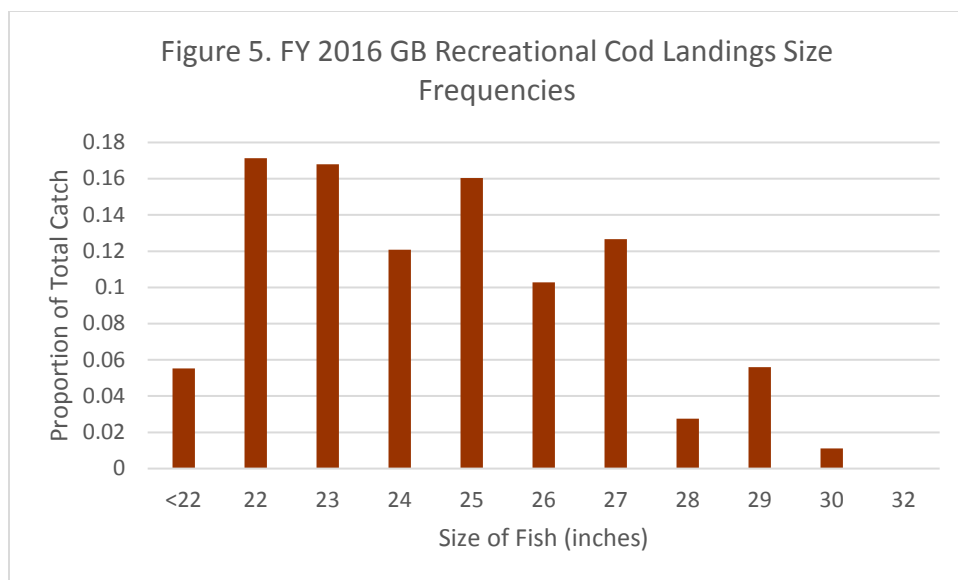


Table 3. FY 2016 and FY 2017 GB Recreational Cod Catch (waves 3, 4)

Year	Wave	Harvest (A+B1) (numbers)	Harvest (A+B1) CV	Releases (B2) (numbers)	Releases (B2) CV	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) (numbers)	Total Catch (A+B1+B2) CV	Number of Intercepts
2016	3	1,094	0.52	1,867	0.05	2,961	0.20	4
2016	4	38,762	0.41	7,273	0.58	46,035	0.41	15
		39,856	0.39	9,140	0.46	48,996	0.39	19
2017	3	5,968	0.80	3,684	0.58	9,652	0.57	8
2017	4	3,701	0.83	122	0.76	3,823	0.81	7
		9,669	0.59	3,806	0.56	13,475	0.47	15