Black Sea Bass

2017 Recreational Measures

February 15, 2017
Outline

1. Recreational Fishery Performance
2. Regulatory Review
3. Staff Recommendation
4. Monitoring Committee Recommendation
5. Advisory Panel February Webinar Comments
## 2016 Projections

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016 RHL</strong></td>
<td>2.82 mil lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landings through wave 5</strong></td>
<td>4.55 mil lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016 Proj. Landings</strong>*</td>
<td>4.67 mil lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2017 RHL</strong>**</td>
<td>4.29 mil lb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2017 Coastwide reduction</strong></td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Projected using % landings by wave in 2015; no state adjustments given the small contribution (3%) of Wave 6 landings

** Assumes the 2017 recommended recreational ACL/ACT is approved by the Council and Board
2016 Federal Measures

- 12.5-inch TL minimum size
- 15 fish possession limit
- May 15-September 21 and October 22-December 31
Since 2011: Commission has approved “ad hoc regional management” in state waters

At Dec joint meeting: agreed to continue ad hoc regional management – at least until RHL and measures are reconsidered
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Min. Size (in.)</th>
<th>Bag</th>
<th>Open Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10 fish</td>
<td>May 19 - September 21; October 18-December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10 fish</td>
<td>January 1 - December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5 fish</td>
<td>May 21-August 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 fish</td>
<td>June 24-August 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 fish</td>
<td>September 1 - December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5 fish</td>
<td>May 1-December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT authorized party/charter</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8 fish</td>
<td>May 1-December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 fish</td>
<td>June 27-August 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 fish</td>
<td>September 1-October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 fish</td>
<td>November 1-December 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10 fish</td>
<td>May 23-June 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2 fish</td>
<td>July 1-August 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15 fish</td>
<td>October 22-December 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2016 State Measures (S)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Min. Size (in.)</th>
<th>Poss. Limit</th>
<th>Open Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRFC</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15 fish</td>
<td>May 15 - September 21 and October 22 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC (north of Cape Hatteras)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Accountability Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>3-year average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rec ACL (mil lb)</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total rec. catch (mil lb)</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landings</strong></td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discards</strong></td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage %</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td><strong>41.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage (mil lb)</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td><strong>1.21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accountability Measures

- BSB biomass is above target → adjustments to bag, size, and season as AM

- Monitoring Committee takes into account performance of past measures and conditions that precipitated the overage
  - New assessment information indicates ABC in these years would have been higher (ex. 2015, likely double) → likely no overages

- Recommend no AM be applied for 2017
Mean Weight and Percent Released

Mean Wt (lb) vs. % Released over the years from 1982 to 2016.
Delaware-North Carolina

| Year | DE (6.1%) | 2007 | 1.7% | 2008 | 2.1% | 2009 | 1.0% | 2010 | 5.3% | 2011 | 2.1% | 2012 | 2.9% | 2013 | 1.1% | 2014 | 1.0% | 2015 | 1.5% | 2016 (proj.) |
|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| MD (2.5%) | 2007 | 2.0% | 2008 | 1.8% | 2009 | 1.6% | 2010 | 5.8% | 2011 | 1.8% | 2012 | 2.3% | 2013 | 3.2% | 2014 | 2.6% | 2015 | 3.3% |         |
| VA (2.4%)  | 2007 | 2.9% | 2008 | 6.4% | 2009 | 1.3% | 2010 | 2.3% | 2011 | 0.2% | 2012 | 1.7% | 2013 | 0.9% | 2014 | 1.8% | 2015 | 1.0% |         |
| NC (0.6%)  | 2007 | 0.7% | 2008 | 0.2% | 2009 | 0.5% | 2010 | 3.8% | 2011 | 0.2% | 2012 | 0.6% | 2013 | 0.0% | 2014 | 0.1% | 2015 | 0.0% |         |
Monitoring Committee Recommendation

- 2017 RHL of 4.29 mil lb
- An approximate 8% reduction needed based on 2016 preliminary harvest
  - Subject to change with Wave 6 and Final estimates
- *Status quo* federal measures
  - 12.5” size; 15 fish possession; May 15 – Sept 21, Oct 22 – Dec 31
Continuation of ad-hoc regional management

Southern Region (DE-NC) follow *status quo* federal measures

Northern States (NJ-MA) – 8% reduction not needed and *status quo* measures

- Justification:
  - Declining stock abundance – lower availability – lower catch/harvest
  - Low F in recent years and expanding stock
  - Uncertainty around MRIP derived pt. estimate
    - Development of management strategy/control rule
    - Application consistent with N.S. 2 guidelines
If reduction is needed:
- Southern Region remain *status quo* – account for less than 5% of coastwide harvest
- Reduction achieved through Northern Region state measures
- Backup coastwide measures
  - Only needed if reduction is needed and *not* implemented by states
  - 15” size; 3 fish possession; June 15 – Sept 15
- NMFS has expressed concern regarding status quo constraining harvest to 2017 RHL
**Additional Monitoring Committee Comments**

- **Concerns with ad-hoc approach**
  - Large differences in management measures – between states and regions
  - Measures have become extremely complex
  - Little ability to predict & control harvest at state level
  - Need to prioritize consistency – regulatory & analytical

- **Differences in NJ recreational fishery**

- **ASMFC Working Group**
  - Evaluating ad-hoc management
  - Opportunities for consistent measures and consistent application of reductions/liberalizations
February 6 AP Webinar

- Comments specific to 2017 recreational measures:
  - No reductions needed, if anything, higher quotas and less restrictive measures
    - Open season, reduce size limits
    - Stock is 2.3 times target; low F
  - Management system is broken
    - Disconnect between catch in numbers, harvest limit in pounds – resulting in more reductions
    - Harvest in numbers could be same/lower, but will increase by weight because fish are bigger
Some are beginning to see a significant number of 8”-9” fish in fishery
Wave 1 (Jan-Feb) should be re-opened
  Important fishery at one time
  Utilize eVTRs to manage and track harvest
Regulatory concerns due to discrepancies between federal and northern state seasons
Need to address recreational discards
February 6 AP Webinar

- Greater accountability amongst the states in the region to ensure measures achieve results
- Concerns about MRIP reliability and accuracy
  - Low sample size expansion
  - Unique/one-time events (Superstorm Sandy, cold winters)
- Use of a mobile app to report catch
Decision Points

- **Status quo** coastwide or measures to reduce harvest by 8% (prelim.)

- If **status quo** coastwide:
  - Southern Region states = *status quo* federal measures
  - Northern Region states – measures to ensure no liberalization
    - Final measures determined at later date
  - ASMFC provides justification how measures constrain landings
## Decision Points

- **If measures to reduce harvest by 8%:**

  **Coastwide Reduction**
  - **Southern Region**
    - Federal measures
    - Approx. 8 day reduction from Wave 3 or 5
  - **Northern Region**
    - Develop measures to achieve required reduction
    - Final measures determined later
  - ASMFC justification

  **Northern Reg. Reduction**
  - **Southern Region**
    - *Status quo* federal measures
  - **Northern Region**
    - Develop measures to achieve required reduction
    - Final measures determined later
  - Backup coastwide measures
    - 15” minimum; 3 fish possession; June 15 – Sept 15
  - ASMFC justification
QUESTIONS?