Summer Flounder Rec Working Group
Discussion Summary & ASMFC Board Recap

Joint ASMFC/MAFMC Meeting
August 9, 2017
Outline

• Brief presentation from last week
  – Rec Working Group Calls Discussion and Draft Prospectus
• Brief recap of Board discussion from last week
• Questions
• Develop a new addendum for 2018 management?
  – Group was in favor of continuing regional management and current regional alignment in 2018
  – Noted challenges of moving to a different approach

• 2018 RHL & evaluating coastwide harvest
  – Group interested in treating coastwide RHL as ‘soft target’ for evaluating harvest

• Consider two year timeframe (‘18 & ‘19) for management
  – If addendum were initiated, should be crafted to the 2018 RHL.
  – Current Addendum XXVIII can be extended for an additional year (expiring on December 31, 2018)
• Consider Confidence Intervals instead of MRIP point estimates for evaluating 2017 harvest & projecting 2018 harvest.

  – TC has expressed interest in this concept, but have not had time to fully develop a new approach

  – Challenge: recent fluctuations in coastwide RHLs from 2014-2016 and 2014-2016 harvest, while measures have been constant

  – Recommendation: short term, maintain evaluation of preliminary harvest to set subsequent year measures
Draft Prospectus: Short term

• Consider different regional alignment than Addendum XXVIII
  – The group put forward no other regional alignment or regional options

• Re-consider Conservation Equivalency
  – Challenge: regional consistency while maintaining CE flexibility in setting measures.
  – Central Question: State by state CE vs Regional Management
  – Concern raised about targets being ‘de-facto’ allocation

• Discussion on Timetable of potential Addendum
  – If no new approach, new regional alignment, AND status quo evaluation of preliminary harvest continues, addendum process can’t start sooner
Long Term Strategy

- New benchmark stock assessment (Fall 2018)

- Evaluate and consider adopting an F-based management approach for the recreational summer flounder fishery (Summer 2018)
  - Via RFP administered by MAFMC
  - Aim: stabilize the fishery – making adjustments as needed, but not based on annual cycles of point-based estimates and projections and hard targets.
  - Utilize new approach to establish multi-year specifications and associated regulations, e.g., 3-year or 5-year periods
**Long Term Strategy**

- Improve use of recreational catch and effort [harvest] data (ongoing)
  - Address the impacts of MRIP recalibration
  - Mitigate the variability of MRIP data for management use
  - Evaluate opportunities to integrate/more fully utilize VTRs from for-hire sector and voluntary angler logbook data
  - Evaluate opportunities to assess catch over multiple years, e.g., 3-year or 5-year periods [factoring in stock conditions]
  - Evaluate opportunities to apply confidence intervals to catch estimates

- Undertaking visioning exercise(s) to address and plan for program development in future years (ongoing).
Rec WG Summary

• Rec WG did not reach consensus on a different recreational management approach for 2018

• 2018 Options:
  1) coastwide measures
  2) state by state measures under Conservation Equivalency
  3) Addendum XXVIII (can be extended for one more year)

Addendum not needed, unless a different approach is preferred
ASMFC Board Discussion

• Flexibility of Addendum XXVIII
  – Regional measures can be adjusted to meet 2018 RHL
  – Board did not express interest in different regions from 2016 & 2017

• One alternative put forward (incorporating lower & upper CI/PSE to evaluate 2017 harvest vs 2018 RHL)

• Fall 2017
  – Evaluate preliminary 2017 harvest and adjust regional measures to achieve 2018 RHL
Questions?
1 Alternative offered

- August 2017: Set 2018 Specifications joint meeting (next week)

- December 2017: use 2017 Prelim harvest estimates, assume 2017 harvest to be equal to the RHL adjusted by average overage/underage of the measures relative to the RHL from the previous 3 years (2014-2016).
  - calculate an upper and lower bound based on CI/PSE.

- If 2018 RHL is within the bounds of the number calculated, then no change in rec measures would occur.

- If 2018 RHL is higher than upper bound of the number calculated then allow for liberalization of the difference between the 2018 RHL & upper bound.

- If the 2018 RHL is lower than the lower bound of the number calculated in 2), then require regulations to become more restrictive by the difference between the 2018 RHL and the lower bound.
• 2018 RHL & evaluating coastwide harvest
  – Group interested in treating coastwide RHL as ‘soft target’ for evaluating harvest
    • Tied to recent TC arguments on timeliness of data, imprecision of MRIP data, and Addendum XXVIII process & results
    • Approach presents challenges for joint management with MAFMC & Council Accountability Measures
    • One Rec WG members recommended using total fishing mortality instead of rec harvest
Draft Prospectus: Short term

- Consider two year timeframe ('18 & '19) for management
  - Rec WG members did not reach consensus on if a new addendum should be for more than one year.
  - Many Rec WG members indicated that if addendum were initiated, it should be crafted specifically to the 2018 RHL.
  - Staff noted that the current Addendum XXVIII can be extended for an additional year (expiring on December 31, 2018)
    - BUT current Addendum is vague in providing guidance on crafting specific regional management measures for 2018.
• Consider Confidence Intervals instead of MRIP point estimates for evaluating 2017 harvest & projecting 2018 harvest.
  – TC has expressed interest in this concept, but have not had time to fully develop a new approach
  – Challenge: recent fluctuations in coastwide RHLs from 2014-2017 and 2014-2016 harvest, while measures have been constant
  – Recommendation: short term, maintain evaluation of preliminary harvest to set subsequent year measures
    • Group: notes that using data through wave 4 to project harvest through end of year is generally stable
Recent Summer Flounder Addenda

• Starting in 2014 (Addendum XXV), Regional Management has been in place for the recreational fishery

• In 2014
  – Initial regions: Massachusetts- Rhode Island; Connecticut- New Jersey; Delaware-Virginia; North Carolina
  – Measures for each region were set up to be similar to 2013 measures
  – No regional harvest target; coastwide RHL ‘new’ target
  – Following March 2014 call, Massachusetts and Rhode Island became separate regions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEP Shore Sites</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ Island Beach</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRFC</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ Island Beach</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 fish in both years (no change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRFC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 fish in both years (no change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>131 days</td>
<td>125 day season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>245 days</td>
<td>245 day season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>176 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>151 days</td>
<td>128 day season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>133 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>365 days</td>
<td>365 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>275 days</td>
<td>365 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRFC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td></td>
<td>365 days in both years (no change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2014-2016

• Addenda XXV, XXVI, XXVII

• Nearly all measures remained constant for 3 years
  – NJ was designated its own region in 2016, with separate
    measures in Delaware Bay/COLREGs line: 17” min. size
    limit in NJ DE BAY COLREGS; 18” NJ Coast

• Coastwide Performance relative to RHL
  – Slight overage in 2014 (+5%)
  – No overage in 2015 (-36%)
  – Overage in 2016 (+14%)
Addendum XXVIII

• 2017 measures
  – All states with the exception of North Carolina and New Jersey increased their size limit by 1 inch, reduced their bag limit to no more than 4 fish (3 fish for states of CT-NJ), and maintained 2014-2016 season lengths & approximate start/end dates
  – NJ decreased season by 24 days (May 25-Sept 5)
2018 Management

• Addendum XXVIII can be extended for an additional year (expiring Dec 31, 2018), but....
  – Language is still vague in addressing region vs coastwide overages and adjusting measures
  – Standard Methodology is in place for evaluating preliminary harvest estimates from terminal year (2017) to evaluate overages and craft measures
Addendum XXVIII language for 2018:
The TC will use harvest estimates and fishery performance from 2017 to evaluate the 2018 regional management approach. **If the coastwide RHL is exceeded, then region specific harvest will be evaluated, with the understanding that more restrictive management measures will be needed to constrain regional harvest in 2018.** If the predicted 2018 combined regional harvest is higher than the 2018 RHL, regions will have to adjust their management measures in **2018.** The TC will develop proposed measures for each region that, when combined, will constrain the coastwide harvest to the 2018 RHL. Any number of size, possession, and season combinations can be evaluated when looking at regional management.
Draft Prospectus

• Outlines another approach for 2018 management (short term strategy)
  – Potentially assess harvest on multiple year basis using Confidence Intervals
  – Could use same regions as in 2014-2015, 2016, or something else: GUIDANCE NEEDED IF LATTER
  – Could establish regional harvest targets and conservation equivalency proposal timelines
  – Rethink measures by sector (for-hire vs. angler)
  – Change our annual timeline to allow states more certainty in measures for upcoming season sooner
Discussion on Draft Prospectus & 2018 Management