Outline

- Review
  - Recent fishery performance
  - AP info doc
  - NEFSC data update through 2017
  - FPR

- Set specifications for 2019
Specifications Process - Current Multiyear specifications

Bluefish
- 2016
- 2017
- 2018

Bluefish
- 2019

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Stock Status

- Last benchmark stock assessment: 2015
  - SAW/SARC 60
- Stock is not overfished
- Overfishing is not occurring
Overfishing not occurring

(2014 $F = 0.157$; below $F_{MSY \, proxy} = F_{35\%\, SPR} = 0.190$)
Biomass

Not overfished

2014 SSB (86,534 mt) \approx 22\% \text{ below } SSB_{\text{MSY proxy}} (111,228 mt), \text{ but still well above biomass threshold } \left( \frac{1}{2} SSB_{\text{MSY proxy}} = 55,614 \text{ mt} \right)
Recruitment

![Graph showing annual recruitment of fish from 1985 to 2014. The x-axis represents years from 1985 to 2014, and the y-axis represents millions of fish. The graph highlights the variability in recruitment with recent trends showing an increase.](image.png)
Data Update

- Updated fishery-independent indices through 2017

- MRI P index
- NEFSC Fall Bigelow
- NEAMAP inshore trawl
- CT Long-Island Sound Trawl
- SEAMAP Fall Trawl YoY (Age 0)
- NC Pamlico Sound Independent Gillnet
- Composite seine YoY (Age 0)

- NJ Ocean trawl
Data Update

**MRIP**

- Mean catch perangler over years 1982 to 2017
- Lines represent MRIP, LCI, UCI

**NEFSC Bigelow**

- Mean g/fow over years 2008 to 2017
- Lines represent Bigelow, UCI, LCI

**NEAMAP Inshore Trawl**

- Mean #/fow over years 2005 to 2017
- Lines represent NEAMAP, LCI, UCI

**CT LISTS**

- Geo-Mean #/fow over years 1982 to 2017
- Lines represent CTLISTS, LCI, UCI
Data Update

**SEAMAP Juvenile Trawl**

- Series 1
- Series 2
- Series 3

**PSIGNS gillnet**

- Series 1
- Series 2
- Series 3

**Composite YoY index**

- YoY index
- LCI
- UCI

**NJ Trawl**

- NJ Ocean
- LCI
- UCI
## Management Measures

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<td>32.03</td>
<td>31.89</td>
<td>34.08</td>
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<td>7.46</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>4.88</td>
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<td>Overage/Underage</td>
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<td>Total Catch(^7)</td>
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<td>-2.89</td>
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<td>4.99</td>
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\(^1\) TAC: Total Allowable Catch
\(^2\) ABC: Abundance Based Catch
\(^3\) TAL: Total Allowed Landings
\(^4\) Comm. Quota: Commercial Quota
\(^5\) Comm. Landings: Commercial Landings
\(^6\) Rec. Landings: Recreational Landings
\(^7\) Total Catch: Total Catch

See table 1 for more detailed data.
Catch (landings and discards)

Bluefish Total Catch 1985 to 2017

- Recreational Landings
- Recreational Discards
- Commercial Landings

Anthony Wood 2018, Personal communication
Recreational Fishery


- State Waters
- Federal Waters

[Bar chart showing percentage differences between State and Federal landings from 1991 to 2017]
Recreational Fishery

Recreational Landings per "Bluefish Trip"

Year


Number of Bluefish

0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5
Commercial Fishery

Atlantic Bluefish Quota Monitoring Report

- Cumulative Landings (Pounds)
  - 7,240,740
  - 5,794,992
  - 4,246,244
  - 2,897,486
  - 1,448,748

- Date:
  - 01 JAN 2018
  - 01 MAR 2018
  - 01 MAY 2018
  - 01 JUL 2018
  - 01 SEP 2018
  - 01 NOV 2018
  - 01 JAN 2019

Legend:
- Prior Year's Landings (Pounds)
- Quota Rationing Trajectory
- Quota (Pounds)
- Current Year's Landings (Pounds)
Commercial Fishery

Landings by Gear - Dealer Data 2017

- Gillnet (47%)
- Unknown (29%)
- Otter trawl, bottom fish (10%)
- Handline (7%)
- Pound net (4%)
- Other (3%)
Commercial Fishery

5% or more of the total bluefish catch in 2017
Recreational Fishery Comments

- Lot less fish (and small fish) compared to previous years
- Less for-hire trips
  - More restrictive measures for species like striped bass or target species has shifted
- Avoid increase bluefish pressure despite other species being down
- Seeing lots of bluefish inshore (bays and estuaries)
Commercial Fishery Comments

- Large runs arrived on schedule (NY)
- Habits and movement are inconsistent with previous years (NJ)
  - Timing and range
- Strong recruitment over the last few years
- Bluefish are not as abundant in typical locations and are being found further offshore
Market/Economic Comments

- Becoming increasingly important to the recreational fishery as abundance of other species decreases
- Do not want to see bluefish used as bait
- May run of large fish
  - $0.20/lb
- June-July run of smaller fish (3 lb)
  - $0.50-0.70/lb, occasionally over $1.00/lb
**Management/Fishery Regulations Comments**

- Quotas may be too cautious (NY)
  - Increase to use up the TAL
- Reduce bag limit from 15 to 10 fish
- Commercial discards still appear to be relatively low (some advisors are skeptical of the lack of commercial discards)
Research, Environmental and Other Comments

- Better understand the dynamics of inshore and offshore populations
- Address high recreational discards
- Runs of large fish 10 miles up inlets and further offshore
- What is causing these fish to move out? What factors do bluefish cue in on?
Staff ABC Recommendation

- Maintain status quo specified ABC for 2019
- Assessment update in 2019
# Current and Recommended ABCs

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<tr>
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<th>2018</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mil lb.</td>
<td>mt</td>
<td>Mil lb.</td>
<td>mt</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFL</td>
<td>27.97</td>
<td>12,687</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>21.82</td>
<td>9,897</td>
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2017 Federally Permitted Statistics
- 2,510 (2,562) commercial vessels
- 897 (908) p/c vessels
- 397 (412) dealers
- 611 (648) commercial vessels landed bluefish
- 261 (295) p/c vessels landed bluefish (VTR)
- 158 (167) dealers purchased bluefish

* Parentheses indicate numbers from 2016