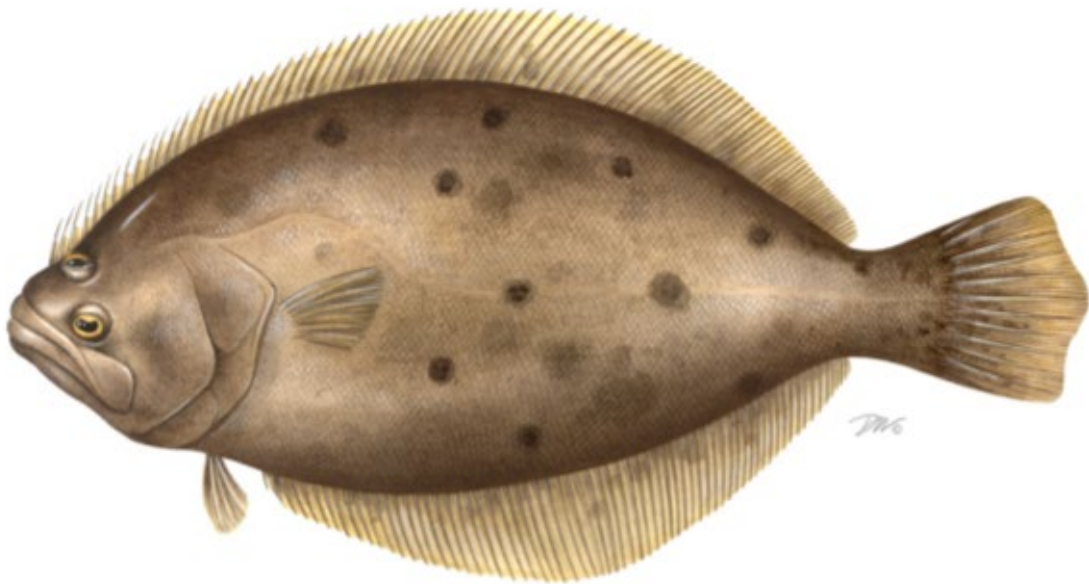


# ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

## REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

### FOR SUMMER FLOUNDER (*Paralichthys dentatus*)

2018 FISHING YEAR



Prepared by the Plan Review Team

Approved by the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board  
October 2019

## Review of the ASMFC Fishery Management Plan for Summer Flounder

### I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

The summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) fishery of the Atlantic Coast is managed jointly by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC or Council). The original ASMFC Fishery Management Plan (FMP), established in 1982, recommended a 14" minimum size limit. The 1988 joint MAFMC-ASMFC Plan established a 13" minimum size limit. Since then, twenty amendments have been developed and approved; it should be noted most but not all amendments have been implemented jointly by the Commission and Council.

The Council and Board approved revised FMP goals and objectives in March 2019 to reflect modern management priorities for summer flounder. The goals and objectives will be effective upon implementation of the commercial issues amendment.<sup>1</sup> At the time of this FMP review the original FMP goals are still in place, which are to: 1) reduce fishing mortality of summer flounder to ensure overfishing does not occur; 2) reduce fishing mortality on immature summer flounder to increase spawning stock biomass; 3) improve yield from the fishery; 4) promote compatible management regulations between State and Federal jurisdictions; 5) promote uniform and effective enforcement of regulations; and 6) minimize regulations to achieve the stated objectives.

The management unit includes summer flounder in US waters in the western Atlantic Ocean from the southern border of North Carolina northward to the US - Canada border. States and jurisdictions with a declared interest in the summer flounder FMP include all those from North Carolina through Massachusetts except Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia, as well as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). An ASMFC Plan Review Team, Technical Committee, species board, and the MAFMC Demersal Committee are actively working on this plan.

Amendment 2 (approved in August 1993) provided a strategy for reducing fishing mortality to the fishing mortality threshold, while avoiding unreasonable impacts on fishermen. Commercial management measures included a moratorium on federal commercial permits, vessel and dealer permitting and reporting requirements, an annual commercial quota, minimum mesh requirements with a possession threshold that triggers the minimum mesh requirements and an exemption program. Recreational fishery measures include open access for-hire permit requirements, minimum size limits, possession limits, and seasonal closures.

The management system established under Amendment 2 has been modified by the following amendments, framework actions, and addenda. Amendment 3 (approved in July 1993) revised

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<sup>1</sup> Revised goals and objectives can be found at:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/5b6db13170a6ad9068202819/1533915448597/ASMFC\\_SFlounderCommericalIssuesDraftAmendment\\_PublicComment.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/5b6db13170a6ad9068202819/1533915448597/ASMFC_SFlounderCommericalIssuesDraftAmendment_PublicComment.pdf)

the mesh requirement exemption program and modified the poundage thresholds for the mesh requirements (change to two seasonal thresholds instead of year-round 100 pounds). Amendment 4 (approved in September 1993) revised the state-specific shares of the coastwide commercial quota allocation in response to a reporting issue in Connecticut. Amendment 5 (approved in December 1993) allows states to transfer or combine their commercial quota shares. Amendment 6 (approved in May 1994) allows properly stowed nets with a codend mesh size less than that stipulated in the plan to be aboard vessels in the summer flounder fishery. Amendment 7 (approved May 1995) adjusted the stock rebuilding schedule and capped the 1996-1997 commercial quotas at 18.51 million pounds. The Commission and the Council adopted the Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plans into the Summer Flounder FMP through Amendment 8 (approved March 1996) and Amendment 9 (approved October 1996), respectively.

Amendment 10, approved by the Board in August 1997, initially sought to examine the commercial quota management system. Its scope was expanded to address a number of federal and state issues in the fishery, including: 1) allow framework adjustments to the minimum mesh size for any portion of the net; 2) require 5.5" diamond or 6" square mesh in the entire net of trawls; 3) continue the federal moratorium on commercial entry; 4) remove the requirement that federally permitted vessels must land summer flounder every year; 5) modify the federal vessel replacement criteria; 6) implement state *de minimis* criteria; 7) prohibit transfer at sea; 8) require states to report summer flounder landings from state waters to the NMFS; and 9) allow states to implement a summer flounder fillet at sea permit system. The amendment also considered alternative commercial quota schemes, including 1) a trimester quota with state-by-state shares during summer, 2) a trimester coastwide quota of equal periods, and 3) a revision to the existing state-by-state allocation formula. Ultimately, the Board and Council decided to maintain the current state-by-state quota allocation system.

Amendment 11, approved by the Board August 1998, modified provisions related to vessel upgrades and replacements, fishing history and permit transfer, establishment of vessel baselines, and voluntary relinquishment of permit eligibility, permit splitting, and permit renewal.

Amendment 12, approved by the Board in October 1998, was developed to bring the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan into compliance with the new and revised National Standards and other required provisions of the Sustainable Fisheries Act. Specifically, the amendment revised the overfishing definitions (National Standard 1) for summer flounder, scup and black sea bass and addressed the new and revised standards relative to the existing management measures (National Standard 8-consider effects on fishing communities, National Standard 9-reduce bycatch, National Standard 10-promote safety at sea). The Amendment also identified essential habitat for summer flounder, scup and black sea bass. Finally, Amendment 12 added a framework adjustment procedure that allows the Council to add or modify management measures through a streamlined public review process. Amendment 12 was partially approved by NMFS on April 28, 1999, with the disapproved

measures mostly relating to concerns with essential fish habitat measures that were later addressed.

In August 2002, the Board approved Amendment 13. Although there were some management alternatives included in public hearing drafts of the document that could have resulted in changes to summer flounder management measures, none were approved for implementation. As a result, Amendment 13 had no impact on the summer flounder fishery.

Framework Adjustment 2 to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass FMP, adopted by the Council in January 2001, provided the information and analyses necessary to implement a system of conservation equivalency based upon the RHL for the recreational summer flounder fishery. Addendum III (approved by the Board in January 2001) corresponds with Framework 2, and allows states to customize summer flounder recreational management measures to address issues associated with the availability of summer flounder on spatial and temporal scales. Addendum III established specifications for the 2001 recreational summer flounder fishery.

The Board approved Addendum VIII in December of 2003. Under this addendum, state-specific targets for recreational landings are derived from the coastwide harvest limit based on each state's proportion of landings reported in 1998, which was the last year in which states were under a common set of management measures.

The Board approved Addendum XIII in August of 2004. This addendum modifies the FMP such that, within a given year, landings limits for the summer flounder, scup, and/or black sea bass can be specified for up to three years. Multi-year limits do not have to be constant from year to year, but instead are based upon expectations of future stock conditions as indicated by the best available scientific information during the year in which specifications are set.

The Board approved Addendum XV in December of 2004. The addendum was developed to allow for a change in the allocation scheme for the increased commercial quota from 2004 to 2005, approximately 1.3 million pounds, as well as the additional quota from 2004 to 2006, approximately 1.6 million pounds. For the fishing years 2005 and 2006, the associated quota increases were allocated to the following states as a bycatch allocation: 75,000 pounds of summer flounder were allocated each to Maryland, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts; 15,000 pounds were allocated to Delaware, 5,000 pounds to Maine, and 90 pounds to New Hampshire.

The Board approved Addendum XVII in August of 2005. Addendum XVII established a program wherein the Board could combine state-by-state recreational allocations into voluntary regions. This is an additional management tool in the management toolbox. This addendum also allowed the averaging or combining of multiple years of data (i.e. landings-per-angler, length-frequency distributions) in analyses to determine the impacts of proposed recreational management programs. The programs also included minimum fish sizes, possession limits, and fishing seasons. The averaging of annual harvest estimates is not allowed if the regional

approach is used (i.e. the 1998 based allocations cannot be averaged across multiple years to create new allocations; multi-year averaging can be used to assess management measures).

The Board approved Addendum XVIII in February of 2006. The addendum sought to stabilize recreational fishing rules close to those that existed in 2005, in part, to minimize the drastic reductions that the three states were facing at the time. The addendum allowed the three states (NY, CT, and MA) facing large reductions in their harvest targets to capitalize on harvest opportunities that were foregone by states that chose to maintain their 2005 recreational fishing rules in 2006.

Addendum XIX, approved in August 2007, broadened the descriptions of stock status determination criteria contained within the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP to allow for greater flexibility in those definitions, while maintaining objective and measurable status determination criteria for identifying when stocks or stock complexes covered by the FMP are overfished. It established acceptable categories of peer-review for stock status determination criteria. When these specific peer-review metrics are met and new or updated information is available, the new or revised stock status determination criteria may be incorporated by the Board directly into the annual management measures for each species, rather than requiring a modification to the FMP.

The Board approved Addendum XXV in February of 2014. The addendum implemented regional conservation equivalency for the 2014 fishing year, and sought to respond to the unintended consequence of using conservation equivalency (e.g., state-specific recreational management measures) such as different measures between neighboring states and across the coast. The addendum established new regional measures that in combination would constrain harvest to coastwide recreational harvest limit. For 2014, the regions were the following: Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. All states within a region have the same minimum size, bag limit, and season length. A continuation of Addendum XXV was codified in Addendum XXVI by the Board in February 2015. Addendum XXVI continued the regional management measures established in 2014 through 2015.

The Board approved Addendum XXVII in February 2016. The addendum addressed 2016 recreational summer flounder and black sea bass fisheries management, continuing regional management measures for 2016 and addressing discrepancies in summer flounder management measures within Delaware Bay. The 2016 recreational fishery was divided into six management regions, the same five regions as under Addendum XXV and XXVI, but with New Jersey separated out from New York and Connecticut into its own region, with states within the same region required to implement the same bag, size limits, and season length. By separating New Jersey into its own region, the addendum allowed the state to make regulations different in Delaware Bay than in the rest of the state. Outside of the Delaware Bay, New Jersey regulations stayed consistent with those in New York and Connecticut. Within the Bay, New Jersey regulations consisted of a similar size limit as in Delaware, the same possession limit as

Delaware, and the same season as the rest of New Jersey. The line of demarcation for regulation implementation was the COLREGS Demarcation Line.

In February 2017, ASMFC's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXVIII maintaining regional management for the recreational summer flounder fishery through 2017. This Addendum required a one-inch increase in size limit and lowered possession limits to 4 fish or less to reduce fishing pressure on the stock, which was experiencing overfishing.

After submitting a conservation equivalency proposal which was not accepted, the Commission found New Jersey to be out of compliance with Addendum XXVIII in June 2017. ASMFC passed on its recommendation of noncompliance to the Secretary of Commerce. However, the Secretary of Commerce did not agree with the Commission's recommendation and found New Jersey to be in compliance with Addendum XXVIII. This is the first time that the Secretary of Commerce has not agreed with the Commission's recommendation for noncompliance.

Addendum XXXI was approved by the Board in December 2018. Coupled with the Council's complementary Framework Document, this Addendum adds to the suite of tools available for managing summer flounder, scup and black sea bass, and enhances the compatibility of state and federal regulations. The Commission recommended NOAA Fisheries implement transit provisions in Block Island Sound, allowing non-federally permitted recreational and commercial vessels to transit federal waters while in possession of summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass legally harvested from state waters.

The Council's Framework also allows for the use of maximum sizes in addition to minimum sizes, commonly referred to as slot limits, to control catch in the summer flounder and black sea bass recreational fisheries.

Approved by the Board in December 2018, addendum XXXII establishes an annual specifications process for developing recreational management measures. The Board will approve regional measures in early spring each year, based on technical committee analysis of stock status, resource availability, and harvest estimates. Public input on specifications will be gathered by states through their individual public comment processes. The specifications process will provide the Board more flexibility in adjusting measures, if necessary, to constrain harvest to the annual coastwide RHL. Further, the process will enable the Board to consider a host of factors, including: regional equity; regulatory stability; species abundance and distribution; and late-breaking recreational harvest estimates.

## **II. Status of the Stock**

The most recent Benchmark Stock Assessment for summer flounder was peer reviewed and accepted in November 2018.

Relative to the biological reference points established during the 2018 benchmark assessment, the stock was neither overfished nor was overfishing occurring in 2017. Fishing mortality on the fully selected age 4 fish ranged between 0.744 and 1.622 during 1982-1996 and then decreased to 0.245 in 2007. Since 2007 the fishing mortality rate has increased and was 0.334 in 2017, 75% of the 2018 SAW66 maximum fishing mortality threshold (F Threshold = FMSY proxy = F35% = 0.448).

Spawning stock biomass (SSB) decreased from 30,451 mt in 1982 to 7,408 mt in 1989 and then increased to 69,153 mt in 2003. SSB in 2017 was estimated to be 44,552 mt, 78% of the 2018 SAW-66 SSBMSY target proxy = SSB35% = 57,159 mt, and 56% above the 2018 SAW-66 SSBMSY threshold proxy =  $\frac{1}{2}$  SSB35% = 28,580 mt.

The 1983 year class is the largest in the assessment time series at 102 million fish, while the 1988 year class is the smallest at only 12 million fish. The average recruitment from 1982 to 2017 is 53 million fish at age 0. Recruitment has been below average since 2011, ranging from 30 to 42 million and averaging 36 million fish. The 2017 year class is estimated to be below average at 42 million fish relative to the entire series average.

### **III. Status of the Fishery**

Commercial landings peaked in 1984 at 37.77 million pounds, and reached a low of 8.81 million pounds in 1997. From 2005 through present, commercial landings have been variable, with two peak years (16.91 million pounds in 2005 and 15.89 million pounds in 2011) that have been followed by steady declines. Over the last five years landings have declined in part due to annual quota limits set in response to the condition of the resource as estimated by the previous stock assessment. From 2012-2014, landings exceeded the commercial coastwide quota. 2015 and 2016 commercial landings declined to 10.6 million pounds and 7.93 million pounds, respectively. In both years, approximately 96% of the coastwide quota was harvested. The decline continued in 2017 with landings at 5.83 million pounds. 2018 landings were approximately 6.14 million pounds. The principle gear used in the fishery is the bottom otter trawl. Commercial discard losses in the otter trawl and scallop dredge fisheries are estimated from observer data, and an 80% mortality rate is assumed.

The new MRIP recreational estimates based on the new Fishing Effort Survey (FES) released on July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 were included in this report. The revised catch estimates increased the 1982-2017 total annual catch by an average of 29%, ranging from +11% in 1989 to +43% in 2017. As such, an evaluation of fishery performance comparing the newly calibrated coastwide landings estimates to previous RHLs through 2018 cannot be conducted. Recreational harvest from 2008 to present has averaged 13.03 million pounds with a high of 19.41 million pounds in 2013 and a low of 7.60 million pounds in 2018. Recreational harvest declined by approximately 2.46 million pounds in 2018 from the prior year despite less restrictive regulatory measures. The total recreational removals (harvest plus dead discards) of summer flounder in 2018 were 18.15 million pounds according to the stock assessment, the lowest since 1982.

#### **IV. Status of Assessment Advice**

The 2019 data update indicates that indices of aggregate stock size increased from 2017 to 2018 and that recruitment in 2018 was above average. Fishery dependent survey samples indicate that increased survival of summer flounder over the last two decades has allowed fish of both sexes to grow to the oldest ages estimated to date. The next management track stock assessment is scheduled for completion in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

#### **V. Status of Research and Monitoring**

Several states and NMFS conduct seasonal sampling cruises using an otter trawl to assess the condition of summer flounder populations inshore and in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Massachusetts collects age and maturity samples and local abundance indices from spring and fall otter trawl surveys, as well as young of the year information in its winter flounder juvenile seine survey. Rhode Island monitors the commercial quota for summer flounder using the SAFIS report system to monitor landings. In addition, RIDEM Marine Fisheries operates a spring and fall trawl survey that produces mean weight per tow for summer flounder. Connecticut collects indices of abundance from its spring and fall otter trawl survey in Long Island Sound and monitors commercial summer flounder landings through monthly commercial fishermen logbooks and weekly and monthly dealer reports. These reports contain daily records of fishing and dealer purchase activity. New York conducts a survey of recreational anglers on open boats throughout the marine district to collect additional data on size composition of kept and discarded fish. New York also conducts port/market sampling trips gathering sex and length data. New York maintains both a small mesh otter trawl survey in the Peconic Bays that samples summer flounder, and a nearshore trawl survey from Breezy Point to Block Island Sound in the winter, spring, summer and fall. New York requires trip level reporting from all of its commercial fishermen and monitors quota through a combination of trip reports and dealer reports. New Jersey collects data from the commercial trawl fishery and conducts an ocean trawl survey from which age, length and sex data on summer flounder are collected and catch-per-unit-of-effort and distribution information are generated for juveniles and adults. Delaware's commercial landings are monitored through a mandatory monthly harvest report from all state-licensed fishermen. Additionally, two trawl surveys are conducted annually in Delaware's estuarine waters to assess relative abundance of both adult and juvenile finfish. Maryland constructs a juvenile index from trawl and beach seine data collected in coastal bays and also collects length data from commercial trawlers in near shore coastal waters. A statewide voluntary angler survey is conducted that records location, time spent fishing, number of fish caught, number kept, and lengths of the first 20 fish caught. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission Biological Sampling Program collects length and weight data from Virginia's commercial and recreational fisheries. A sub sample provides scales for aging. Virginia also prepares a young-of-the-year index from data collected from beach seine and trawl surveys. North Carolina conducts two otter trawl surveys for juvenile fluke and collects information on age and growth and catch-per-unit-of-effort for the winter trawl fishery,

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<sup>1</sup> A description of the revised stock assessment process for the New England and Mid-Atlantic Region can be found at: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/Stock-assessment-process-june.pdf>



estuarine gill net fishery, pound net fishery, the ocean gill net fishery, commercial gig, and the long haul seine fishery.

## **VI. Status of Management Measures and Issues**

Management measures imposed upon harvesters of summer flounder include an annual commercial quota and recreational harvest limit, minimum sizes, minimum mesh requirements for trawls, permits and administrative fees for dealers and vessels, a moratorium on entry into the commercial fishery, mandated use of sea samplers, monitoring of sea turtles in the southern part of the management unit, and collection of data and record keeping by dealers and processors. The commercial quota is allocated to each state based on landings during a baseline period (1980-1989), and any overages are subtracted from a state's quota for the following year. The state allocations of the commercial quota are included in Table 1.

In 2019, the Board and Council approved the Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment. The Amendment revises the management program's goals and objectives specific to summer flounder and implements new state-specific commercial allocations. The new state commercial allocations are based upon a 9.55 million pound trigger point. When the annual coastwide commercial quota is at or below 9.55 million pounds, the formula for allocating the quota to the states will remain status quo, i.e., the same state-specific percentages that have been in effect since 1993. When the annual coastwide quota exceeds 9.55 million pounds, additional quota above 9.55 million pounds will be distributed as follows: 0.333% to the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Delaware and 12.375% to the remaining states. As a result, state allocations will vary over time based on overall stock status and the resulting coastwide commercial quotas. These changes are pending implementation by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and if approved, are expected to take effect on January 1, 2021.

## **VII. Summer Flounder Compliance Criteria**

The PRT found no compliance issues.

### **De Minimis**

Delaware requests *de minimis* status. The PRT notes that they meet the requirement of *de minimis*.

### **COMMERCIAL FISHERY**

The following measures may change annually. The 2018 measures are indicated.

Minimum size: 14"

Minimum mesh and threshold: 5.5" diamond, 6" square

Thresholds: 200 pounds in the winter (Nov 1-Apr 30) and 100 lb in the summer (May 1-October 31)

Regulation of mesh beyond the codend: 5.5" diamond or 6" square throughout the mesh

2018 Commercial quota: 6.44 million pounds (6.63 million pounds before overage deductions)

The following measures are not subject to annual adjustment.

Quota management provisions: States are required to adopt appropriate measures to manage their quota shares. States may transfer or combine their quota shares as specified in Amendment 5. States must document through a vessel and dealer reporting system all landings that are not otherwise included in the federal monitoring of permit holders. States are required to forward all landings information to the NMFS for inclusion in quota reporting.

Transfer at Sea: States must prohibit permitted summer flounder vessels from transferring summer flounder from one vessel to another at sea. (As specified in Amendment 10)

De minimis status: States having commercial landings less than 0.1% of the coastwide total will be eligible for *de minimis* status. (As specified in Amendment 10). Delaware has requested *de minimis* status and meets the requirements.

## RECREATIONAL FISHERY

The Management Board chose to adopt regional management through conservation equivalency for the 2018 recreational fishery under the provisions of Framework 2 (see table 4 for state measures). As such, the Federal recreational bag limit and minimum fish size were waived and the fishing season and vessel owners were subject only to the regulations in their states.

2018 recreational harvest limit: 4.42 million pounds.

## OTHER MEASURES

Fillet at sea permit: Party or charter vessels in state waters will be allowed to fillet at sea if they obtain a state issued permit allowing such activity. (As specified in Amendment 10)

### Reporting:

1. States must submit a commercial fishery management proposal by October 1 of each year. The proposal must detail the specific management measures that the state intends to use to manage their commercial quota allocation. The proposal must be reviewed and approved by the Management Board.

2. States must submit an annual compliance report to the Chairman of the Summer Flounder Plan Review Team by June 1 of each year. The report must detail the state's management program for the current year and establish proof of compliance with all mandatory management measures and all framework changes specified for the current year. It should include landings information from the previous year, and the results of any monitoring or research program.

*This summary of compliance criteria is intended to serve as a quick reference guide. It in no way alters or supersedes compliance criteria as contained in the Summer Flounder FMP and Amendments thereto.*

1993 - 2018 Summer Flounder FMP Compliance Schedule

COMMERCIAL:

14" minimum size	3/1/97
Ability to regulate mesh in any portion of the net	1/1/98
5.5" diamond or 6" square mesh throughout entire net	6/3/98
Prohibition of transfer at sea	1/1/98
Mandatory reporting to NMFS of landings from state waters	1/1/98
Small mesh exemption program	1/21/93
Flynet minimum mesh size exemption	1/21/93

RECREATIONAL:

Regional Management Measures under conservation equivalency	2/2017
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GENERAL

Submission of annual commercial management plan thereafter	10/1/97, annually
Submission of annual landings and compliance report thereafter	6/1/98, annually

**VIII. Status of Implementation of FMP Requirements**

The PRT notes that after reviewing state compliance reports, all states are compliant with the FMP requirements with one exception: New Jersey did not include in their state compliance report regulations outlining prohibition of transfers at sea. New Jersey currently has provisions in place that mandate state permitted vessels can only transfer catch to a licensed dealer, and are only able to transfer the daily trip limit; a vessel that lands above the trip limit is subject to an over the limit infraction. Federal permit holders landing summer flounder in New Jersey are prohibited from transfers at sea and the state of New Jersey has begun the process of applying the same language to regulations pertaining to state permit holders.

**Table 1. State by state allocation for annual commercial quota**

<b>State</b>	<b>Allocation (%)</b>
Maine	0.04756%
New Hampshire	0.00046%
Massachusetts	6.82046%
Rhode Island	15.68298%
Connecticut	2.25708%
New York	7.64699%
New Jersey	16.72499%
Delaware	0.01779%
Maryland	2.03910%
Virginia	21.31676%
North Carolina	27.44584%
Total	100%

**Table 2. Summer Flounder Commercial Landings by State (2008-2018) in pounds.**

Source: ACCSP. 2018. Commercial Landings Summaries (Dealer Reports) for 2008-2018– Non-confidential; generated by Dustin Colson Leaning; using ACCSP Data Warehouse, Arlington, VA. & State Compliance Reports for 2018 data (July 2019)

State	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018**
MA	645,779	732,075	851,615	1,132,191	891,495	859,384	696,029	748,432	585,008	420,714	427,166
RI	1,473,970	1,793,920	2,289,227	2,824,026	2,409,444	2,192,541	2,056,036	1,716,095	1,306,386	896,048	996,865
CT	220,621	250,770	308,340	401,490	315,497	284,173	253,442	286,890	191,133	134,611	182,493
NY	856,996	1,142,418	1,363,560	1,517,022	1,237,820	1,033,285	832,557	829,929	603,522	503,944	645,496
NJ	1,540,811	1,798,903	2,165,791	2,830,736	2,268,593	2,004,187	1,825,611	1,681,962	1,296,913	961,840	1,046,058
DE	1,213	2,952	1,858	837	677	913	1,687	1,349	2,236	1,438	358
MD	208,977	213,725	261,451	259,408	165,273	193,543	192,049	187,811	158,996	137,470	121,414
VA	1,653,598	1,980,319	2,592,100	4,064,520	4,122,085	4,794,031	2,049,208	2,274,402	1,663,218	1,253,804	1,256,462
NC	2,407,085	2,859,064	3,293,561	2,854,297	1,089,969	541,938	2,906,822	2,878,549	2,124,231	1,563,221	1,657,761
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,009,050</b>	<b>10,774,145</b>	<b>13,127,503</b>	<b>15,884,526</b>	<b>12,500,853</b>	<b>11,903,995</b>	<b>10,813,440</b>	<b>10,605,419</b>	<b>7,931,643</b>	<b>5,873,091</b>	<b>6,334,073</b>

\*\*2018 Landings are preliminary.

**Table 3. Recreational Summer Flounder Harvest by State (2008-2018) in weight (pounds).**

Source: "Personal Communication with National Marine Fisheries Service, Statistics Division July 2019"

State	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
MA	646,606	193,304	515,535	547,366	655,903	161,396	575,285	385,987	239,844	171,757	142,540
RI	887,041	605,929	1,080,092	1,277,110	641,805	646,927	1,112,412	790,640	340,528	598,549	603,752
CT	708,260	270,745	270,235	377,004	457,523	1,808,379	935,458	998,509	1,023,887	402,712	549,268
NY	3,621,988	2,333,745	2,788,596	2,990,715	3,513,714	5,170,966	3,995,846	5,010,599	5,744,430	4,214,167	2,385,310
NJ	4,285,542	5,139,094	3,916,077	5,570,783	8,309,420	9,649,950	7,526,962	3,245,895	4,717,501	3,571,343	3,154,540
DE	272,191	509,026	447,728	399,982	305,600	319,942	449,033	270,174	435,174	258,598	205,380
MD	335,342	473,344	267,121	153,872	259,198	236,911	281,911	251,325	98,357	171,134	121,760
VA	1,447,934	1,823,965	1,709,271	1,855,447	1,702,566	1,223,570	1,142,384	719,288	528,706	528,407	345,064
NC	132,743	307,692	341,310	311,573	287,522	196,002	215,294	157,437	110,392	147,426	92,032
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,337,647</b>	<b>11,656,844</b>	<b>11,335,965</b>	<b>13,483,852</b>	<b>16,133,251</b>	<b>19,414,043</b>	<b>16,234,585</b>	<b>11,829,854</b>	<b>13,238,819</b>	<b>10,064,093</b>	<b>7,599,646</b>

**Table 4. 2018 recreational management measures for summer flounder by state.**

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Massachusetts	17	5 fish	May 23-October 9
Rhode Island	19	6 fish	May 1-December 31
Connecticut	19	4 fish	May 4-September 30
45 designated CT shore sites	17		
New York	19		
New Jersey	18	3 fish	May 25-September 22
NJ Pilot shore program 1 site	16	2 fish	
New Jersey/Delaware Bay COLREGS	17	3 fish	
Delaware	16.5	4 fish	All year
Maryland	17		January 1-March 31
	16.5		April 1-December 31
PRFC	16.5		All year
Virginia	16.5		All year
North Carolina	15	4 fish	All Year

**Table 5. 2019 recreational management measures for summer flounder by state.**

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Massachusetts	17	5 fish	May 23-October 9
Rhode Island	19	6 fish	May 3-December 31
7 designated RI shore sites	19	4 fish*	
	17	2 fish*	
Connecticut	19	4 fish	May 4-September 30
41 designated CT shore sites	17		
New York	19	4 fish	May 4-September 30
New Jersey	18	3 fish	May 24-September 21
NJ Pilot shore program 1 site	16	2 fish	
New Jersey/Delaware Bay COLREGS	17	3 fish	
Delaware	16.5	4 fish	All year
Maryland			
PRFC			
Virginia			
North Carolina	15	4 fish	January 1-Sept. 3**

\*Combined possession limit of 6 fish; no more than 2 fish at 17 inch minimum size limit

\*\*North Carolina Marine Fisheries adopted Amendment 2 to the NC Southern Flounder FMP on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, which closed the recreational fishery for the remainder of the 2019 fishing year to help end overfishing and allow the stock to rebuild. NC manages all flounder in the recreational fishery under the same regulations resulting in a de facto closure of the summer flounder recreational fishery.