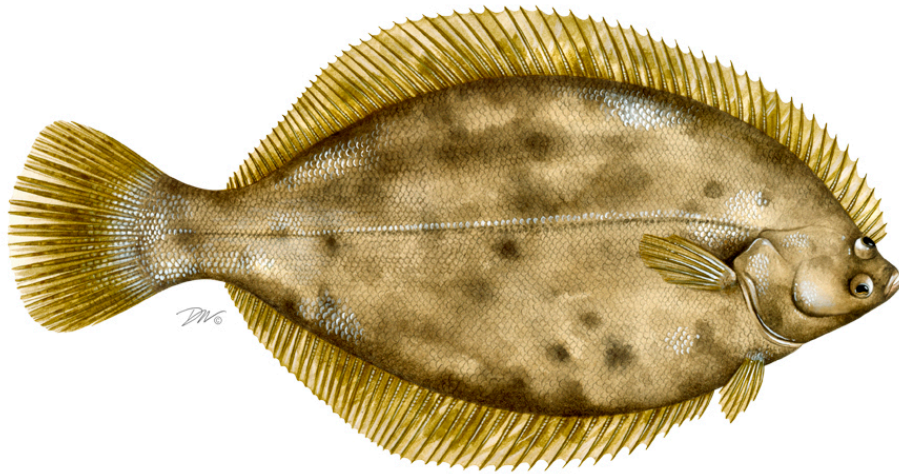


2018 REVIEW OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION'S
INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR

WINTER FLOUNDER

(Pseudopleuronectes americanus)

2017 FISHING YEAR



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Table of Contents

I.	Status of Fishery Management Plan	1
II.	Status of Stocks	3
III.	Status of the Fishery	4
IV.	Status of Research and Monitoring	5
V.	Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements and De Minimis.....	8
VI.	Research and Monitoring Recommendations	8
VII.	References	9
VIII.	Figures and Tables	10

I. Status of Fishery Management Plan

<u>Date of FMP Approval</u>	Original FMP (October 1988)
<u>Amendments</u>	Amendment 1 (November 2005)
<u>Addenda</u>	Addendum I (May 1992) Addendum II (February 1998) Addendum I to Amendment 1 (May 2009) Addendum II to Amendment 1 (October 2012) Addendum III to Amendment 1 (May 2013)
<u>Management Units</u>	Three stocks units: Gulf of Maine (GOM), Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA), and Georges Bank (GBK). Commission participates in management of GOM and SNE/MA stocks.
<u>States with Declared Interest</u>	Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey
<u>Active Boards/Committees</u>	Winter Flounder Management Board, Advisory Panel, Technical Committee, Plan Review Team

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) and the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) manage winter flounder in state and federal waters. The Commission participates in the management of two inshore winter flounder stocks: 1) the Gulf of Maine (GOM) stock, which consists of waters north of Cape Cod; and 2) the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) stock, which consists of waters south of Cape Cod to the Delaware-Maryland border. The decision to consider only inshore stocks of winter flounder was based upon the Commission's focus on fisheries in state waters, and the differences in biological characteristics from the offshore stock in Georges Bank.

Interstate Fishery Management Plan (1988)

The Commission authorized development of the first Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Winter Flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*) in October 1988. The purpose of the plan was to: 1) address management of inshore stocks of winter flounder; and 2) prominently consider habitat and environmental quality as factors affecting the condition of the resource. The original FMP and Addendum I called for reductions in fishing mortality on winter flounder. It allowed states the flexibility to achieve those reductions based on the life history characteristics of the particular stocks inhabiting each region. Implementation of the plan required cooperation between state fishery management agencies, National Marine Fisheries Service, the Council, and the Commission.

Although all states submitted plans that were approved by the Winter Flounder Management Board (Board), results from a 1995 stock assessment concluded that none of the states

achieved a fishing mortality rate corresponding to F_{30} . Subsequent analyses in early January 1997 indicated that fishing mortality on a coastwide basis was slightly higher than the F_{30} target for the SNE/MA stock complex. Fishing mortality in the GOM stock was presumed to be higher than in the SNE/MA stock, and the spawning stock biomass was estimated to be at a low level, indicating that the GOM unit might be in greater need of rebuilding than the SNE/MA unit.

In February 1998, the Board approved Addendum II to the FMP. Addendum II adjusted the implementation schedule for management measures by the participating states and called for plans to reach the target fishing mortality goal for rebuilding (F_{40}).

Amendment 1 (2005)

In May 1999, the Board acknowledged that it was necessary to update the Interstate FMP for Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder through an amendment. The original plan and addenda did not prove successful in rebuilding inshore winter flounder populations. In addition, the FMP did not reflect the goals and objectives of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA), which was established in 1993 after the original FMP was approved. The Board further noted that an upcoming stock assessment would likely provide new information on the status of winter flounder stock complexes. After the assessment was completed in late 2002, the Commission began development of Amendment 1 in February 2003.

Amendment 1 to the Interstate FMP for Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder, approved in November 2005, replaced all previous Commission management plans. It focused on joint management of winter flounder between the Commission and Council, and was designed to rebuild and maintain spawning stock biomass at or near target biomass levels. In addition, Amendment 1 prioritized restoration and maintenance of essential winter flounder habitat.

Amendment I required a minimum size limit of 12 inches for commercial and recreational fisheries for both GOM and SNE/MA stock units. Recreational creel limits were ten (10) fish in the SNE/MA stock area and eight (8) fish in the GOM. There were no required closed recreational seasons in the GOM, while a closed season of 20 days during March and April was required in SNE/MA. The 60-day open season for recreational winter flounder fishing could be split into no more than 2 blocks. States were required to implement a minimum size of 6.5 inches square or diamond mesh for the cod-end in both GOM and SNE/MA inshore waters. Additionally, a 100-pound trip limit was required if smaller mesh was being used in the SNE/MA. This “mesh trigger” was intended for the landing of a small amount of winter flounder as bycatch in small-mesh fisheries.

Addendum I to Amendment 1 (2009)

Addendum I was approved in May 2009, following the 2008 GARM III stock assessment which indicated that the SNE/MA spawning stock biomass was only 9% of the target and the GOM stock was likely to be overfished and experiencing overfishing. For the GOM commercial fishery, Addendum I established a maximum possession limit of 250 pounds per vessel. This limit was estimated to reduce 2006-2007 harvest levels by 31% for state water fishing vessels.

For the GOM recreational fishery, Addendum I required states to implement regulations to reduce fishing mortality by 11% from the average of 2006-2007 levels. This 11% reduction was estimated to reach F_{MSY} . States were allowed to achieve reductions through possession limits, seasons, or a combination of both, and also had the option to submit conservation equivalency proposals to achieve the necessary reductions through alternative management measures, subject to approval by the Board.

For SNE/MA, Addendum I's management measures were designed to reach the lowest F rate possible with minimal economic and social impacts. The Addendum also sought to reduce dead discards and prevent an influx of effort into state waters. Non-federally permitted commercial vessels were allowed to possess a maximum of 50 pounds of winter flounder. This F rate was projected to reduce harvest by 65%, and was intended solely to allow for bycatch. Recreational fishermen were permitted to possess a maximum of two (2) winter flounder from inshore waters of the SNE/MA stock area. This bag limit was established with the expectation that it would reduce harvest by 46%.

Addendum II to Amendment 1 (2012)

In response to updated stock status information and federal action to substantially increase the GOM winter flounder state waters annual catch limit (ACL) subcomponent, the Board initiated Addendum II to Amendment 1 of the Winter Flounder Interstate FMP. This Addendum changed commercial and recreational management measures for the state waters component of the GOM stock only. Specifically, it increased the maximum possession limit for non-federally permitted commercial vessels to 500 pounds. It also removed the 11% reduction in F for the recreational fishery and allowed states the option to open their recreational fishing season year-round.

Addendum III to Amendment 1 (2013)

Addendum III established an annual specification process to set commercial and recreational management measures for the GOM and SNE/MA fisheries. Each year, with advice from the Winter Flounder Technical Committee, the Board can adjust trip limits, size limits, and seasons for the commercial fishery; the Board can also adjust size limits, bag limits, and seasons for the recreational fishery. The Addendum enables the Commission to quickly respond to federal actions and changes in the winter flounder fishery.

II. Status of Stocks

The most recent peer reviewed stock assessment for all three winter flounder stocks was conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in 2017. These operational stock assessments included data through 2016.

Gulf of Maine

The 2017 operational stock assessment determined that GOM winter flounder stock biomass status is unknown and overfishing is not occurring. 2016 biomass (30+ cm) was estimated to be

2,585 metric tons (mt) and the exploitation rate was estimated to be 0.086, below the exploitation threshold of 0.23. The assessment noted that there have been significant declines in commercial and recreational removals since the 1980's; however, this has not resulted in an increase in the survey biomass indices, or an expansion of the age and size structure of the catch. Significant sources of uncertainty include gear catchability and deriving absolute estimates of biomass from trawl surveys. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

The 2017 operational stock assessment concluded that the SNE/MA winter flounder stock is overfished but overfishing is not occurring. Specifically, the 2016 spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated to be 4,360 mt, well below the biomass threshold of 12,343.5 mt. In addition, fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.21 in 2016, below the threshold of $F_{MSY}=0.34$. The assessment noted that there is an overall declining trend in SSB throughout the time series; however, recruitment has increased from a historic low in 2013. Notable sources of uncertainty include the estimate of natural mortality and the length distribution of recreational discards, which are not well represented by the current sampling program. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

III. Status of the Fishery

Stockwide

Across all stocks (GOM, SNE/MA, and GBK), the winter flounder fisheries are a fraction of their historic productivity. Specifically, commercial and recreational landings have declined since the early 1980s (Table 1, Figure 6). Landings are reported for the 2017 calendar year unless otherwise stated.

Commercial landings peaked at 18,279 mt (40.3 million lbs) in 1981, the highest since 1950, but have generally declined throughout the 1990's and 2000's. In 2017, commercial landings were 1,065 mt (2.3 million lbs), an 8.4% decrease from 2016 landings of 1,162 mt (2.6 million lbs). A majority of the landings were taken in Massachusetts (Table 2). It is important to note that management action has impacted yearly landings as annual catch limits increased in 2011 and 2012, and a moratorium was in place for the SNE/MA stock between May 2009 and April 2013. (Landings source: NMFS)

The primary commercial gear used to harvest winter flounder in 2017 was the otter trawl, followed by gill nets and dredge. Landings of winter flounder primarily occurred in the months of May – October.

Recreational harvest was 62.8 mt (138,477 lbs) in 2017, a 28.9% increase from 2016 harvest of 48.7 mt (107,458 lbs) (Table 1). These recent recreational catch values represent a significant decrease from the 7,446.8 mt (16,417,409 lbs) caught in 1982. In 2017, Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire comprised the majority of coastwide recreational winter flounder landings, at 84.2%, 5.4%, and 4.5%, respectively. The PSE values around the Maine (97.1) and New

Hampshire (56.4) recreational data are very high and indicate very imprecise estimates. (Landings source: MRIP)

Note: recreational harvest was calculated using the pre-calibration values from MRIP. Figure 7 shows a comparison of the pre- and post-calibration MRIP values.

Gulf of Maine

Commercial landings of Gulf of Maine winter flounder have substantially declined since the early 1980s, with recent landings being roughly 7% of harvest levels in the 1980s. From 1964 through the mid-1970s, commercial landings were near 1,000 mt. Productivity peaked at nearly 2,793 mt in 1982, and steadily decreased to a record low of 139 mt in 2010. For the 2017 fishing year (as opposed to calendar year, May 1 – April 30), landings in the GOM winter flounder stock were 296.3 mt (does not include discards), of which 183.2 mt were landed in state waters (Source: NMFS). 2017 total discard estimates were 11.7 mt (Source: NMFS).

Recreational landings also peaked in 1982, at 3,024 mt. Landings have generally declined, and in 2017 were 59 mt. Recreational releases make up a small portion of catch.

Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

Commercial landings of SNE/MA winter flounder generally declined throughout the time series from 1964 to 2010, with periodic peaks and dips. After reaching a historical peak of 11,977 mt in 1966 and then declining through the 1970s, total U.S. commercial landings again peaked at 11,176 mt in 1981. After 1981, SNE/MA commercial landings declined to 2,159 mt in 1994 and then increased to 4,672 mt in 2001. Commercial landings have generally decreased since the 2001 peak, and were just 134 mt in 2012 (in part due to the zero possession limit in federal waters). Landings in the 2017 fishing year (as opposed to calendar year) were 428.5 mt (does not include discards), of which 22.2 mt were landed in state waters (Source: NMFS). 2017 total discard estimates were 122.0 mt (Source: NMFS).

Recreational landings of SNE/MA winter flounder peaked in 1984 with 5,510 mt and substantially declined to 4 mt in 2017. The principal mode of fishing is private/rental boats, with most recreational landings occurring during May and June.

IV. Status of Research and Monitoring

Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Winter Flounder requires the following research and monitoring activities by certain states (Table 3):

- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York are required to conduct annual surveys of juvenile recruitment to develop an annual juvenile abundance index.
- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey are required to conduct annual trawl surveys to develop an index of spawning stock biomass.

In 2017 (and early 2018), states with interest in the winter flounder FMP conducted the fisheries-independent surveys summarized below.

Maine

The Maine Department of Marine Resources conducts spring and fall bottom trawl surveys in cooperation with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Division. The Maine-New Hampshire (MENH) Inshore Trawl Survey collects length, weight, maturity stage, and age samples for winter flounder. Winter flounder biomass in the spring survey increased in 2014 (>5 kg/tow) but was slightly lower in 2015 and 2016 at 4 kg/tow. Biomass in the fall survey has been fairly steady since 2011 at roughly 3 kg/tow. Results from the 2017 survey are not yet available.

New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFG) conducts an annual seine survey of juvenile fish in its estuaries from June through November. The survey produces an index of relative abundance for each species encountered using a geometric mean catch per seine haul. The 2017 index value (0.9) decreased from 2016's value of 1.48 and is below the 1997-2017 average of 1.24. In addition, NHFG has worked with Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR) since the fall of 2000 to conduct an inshore trawl survey off of Maine and New Hampshire.

Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) completed spring and fall bottom trawl surveys covering its state waters. During the spring survey, winter flounder were present in all tows completed in the GOM region; however, the abundance index was slightly below the time series median. In SNE, the biomass and abundance of winter flounder remained well below their time series medians during the 2017 spring trawl survey. Declines in the abundance and biomass indices of winter flounder have been observed in SNE over the past two decades and that trend continued in 2017.

During the 2017 fall trawl survey, winter flounder were present in all of the survey tows in the GOM and the biomass and abundance indices were slightly above their time series means. For the SNE stock, the abundance and biomass indices increased slightly from 2016 to 2017, with both indices near their time series medians.

DMF completed its annual seine survey for young-of-the-year (YOY) winter flounder in June and July. This survey has been conducted annually since 1976, and it provides an index of recruitment for the SNE/MA winter flounder stock. The 2017 YOY index was the highest observation since 2000 and was above the time series median; however, the relatively large confidence intervals around the YOY index suggest that the catch rates were variable across the six estuaries that were sampled.

Rhode Island

Excluding the ichthyoplankton survey, which was discontinued in July of 2008, Rhode Island's Division of Fish & Wildlife conducted five studies to monitor juvenile and adult winter flounder in its state waters. The seasonal trawl survey samples 42 fixed and random stations in the spring and fall. The spring trawl survey had a 2017 CPUE of 5.25 winter flounder per tow, a decrease from 2016. The monthly survey samples 13 fixed stations each month. The Narragansett Bay Juvenile Finfish Survey samples 18 stations once a month from June through October. The 2017 CPUE was 4.07 winter flounder per seine haul, a slight increase from 2016. The Coastal Pond Seine Survey samples 24 stations in 8 coastal ponds from May through October. The 2017 survey had a CPUE of 11.08 winter flounder per seine haul, a slight increase from 2016. The Coastal Pond Spawning Stock Survey samples 6 stations with fyke nets from January to May in Point Judith pond. The 2017 survey indices remain at or near the lowest values recorded in the time series. The overall trend in winter flounder abundance for all surveys indicates a declining abundance of this species in Rhode Island waters.

Connecticut

Winter flounder have been monitored through the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey (LISTS) since 1984. Spring (April, May and June) and Fall surveys (September and October) are conducted each year. The 2017 LISTS spring (April-May) index (geometric mean fish/tow) for all ages of winter flounder was 0.99, the lowest value in the 34 year time series (lowest previous value = 3.94 in 2015). Similarly, the 2017 spring index for age-4+ winter flounder was 0.31, also the lowest value in the time series. CT DEEP also conducts a fall estuarine seine survey that provides an index of abundance for young-of-year winter flounder. The geometric mean fish/tow in 2017 was 1.03, the highest index value in the past six years of the 30-year time series.

New York

The NYSDEC has been conducting a small mesh trawl survey targeting juvenile finfish since 1987. The weekly survey runs from May through October in Peconic Bay using a small mesh sixteen foot semi-balloon shrimp trawl. A total of 127 randomly chosen stations were sampled during June and July. The YOY CPUE for winter flounder in 2017 was 0.055, the lowest ever recorded in the survey time series. CPUE for this species continues to be well below the time series average of 9.4.

The Department also conducts a seine survey in western Long Island bays, which has been ongoing since 1986, using a 200 foot $\frac{1}{4}$ inch mesh seine. Sampling is conducted at multiple stations twice a month within each bay from May through October. On average, 40 tows occur in Jamaica Bay each year during this period, and 24 tows each in Manhasset Bay and Little Neck Bay. The YOY CPUE for Jamaica Bay in 2017 was 8.21, lower than 2016 (12.3). The YOY CPUE for Little Neck Bay in 2017 was 2.33, an increase from 2016's low of 0.22. The YOY CPUE for Manhasset Bay in 2017 was 0.58, the second lowest CPUE in the time series.

New Jersey

The Bureau of Marine Fisheries has conducted an Ocean Trawl program in nearshore ocean waters since 1988. Winter flounder are most abundant in New Jersey during April, and data from this cruise have been used to develop an index of abundance for winter flounder in New Jersey waters. For each tow, information is collected on total number, total weight, and individual lengths. Stratified catch per tow (numbers) in 2018 increased by 98.1% to 1.77 from the time-series low geometric mean of 0.89. The biomass indices for 2018 resulted in a geometric mean of 0.51 kg/tow, an increase of 14.6% from the 2017 index of 0.45. For the eleventh year in a row, these indices remained significantly below the time series means of 4.67 fish and 1.91 kilograms per tow.

V. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements and De Minimis

De Minimis

Amendment I allows a state to be granted *de minimis* status if their fishery constitutes less than 1% of the coastwide commercial or recreational landings for the preceding three years for which data are available. A state that qualifies for *de minimis* status based on their commercial landings will qualify for exemptions in the commercial fishery only, and a state that qualifies for *de minimis* based on their recreational landings will qualify for exemptions in their recreational fishery only. States that apply for and are granted *de minimis* status are exempted from biological monitoring/sub-sampling activities for the sector for which *de minimis* has been granted.

Request for De minimis Status

There were no requests for *de minimis* status in the winter flounder fishery.

State Compliance

All of the states with a declared interest in the management of winter flounder have implemented commercial and recreational regulations that are consistent with ASMFC's Winter Flounder FMP (Tables 3 and 4).

VI. Research and Monitoring Recommendations

The 2017 Operational Stock Assessments noted several data needs that would improve future population estimates.

Gulf of Maine

- Additional studies on federal and state survey gear efficiency and catchability
- Quantifying the degree of herding between the doors and escapement under the footrope and/or above the headrope
- Studies quantifying winter flounder abundance and distribution among habitat types

Southern New England - Mid-Atlantic

- Additional studies on maximum age
- Additional studies on recreational discard lengths
- Investigation of localized structure/genetics of the stock

VII. References

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Commercial Fisheries Statistics Tool.

Access: <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/commercial-fisheries/commercial-landings/annual-landings/index>

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https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/reports/Sector_Monitoring/FY16_Mults_Catch_Estimates.pdf

Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2017. Operational Assessment of 19 Northeast Groundfish Stocks, Updated through 2016, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Woods Hole, Massachusetts. US Department of Commerce, NOAA Fisheries, Northeast Fish Science Center Ref. Doc. 17-17; 259 p.

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VIII. Figures and Tables

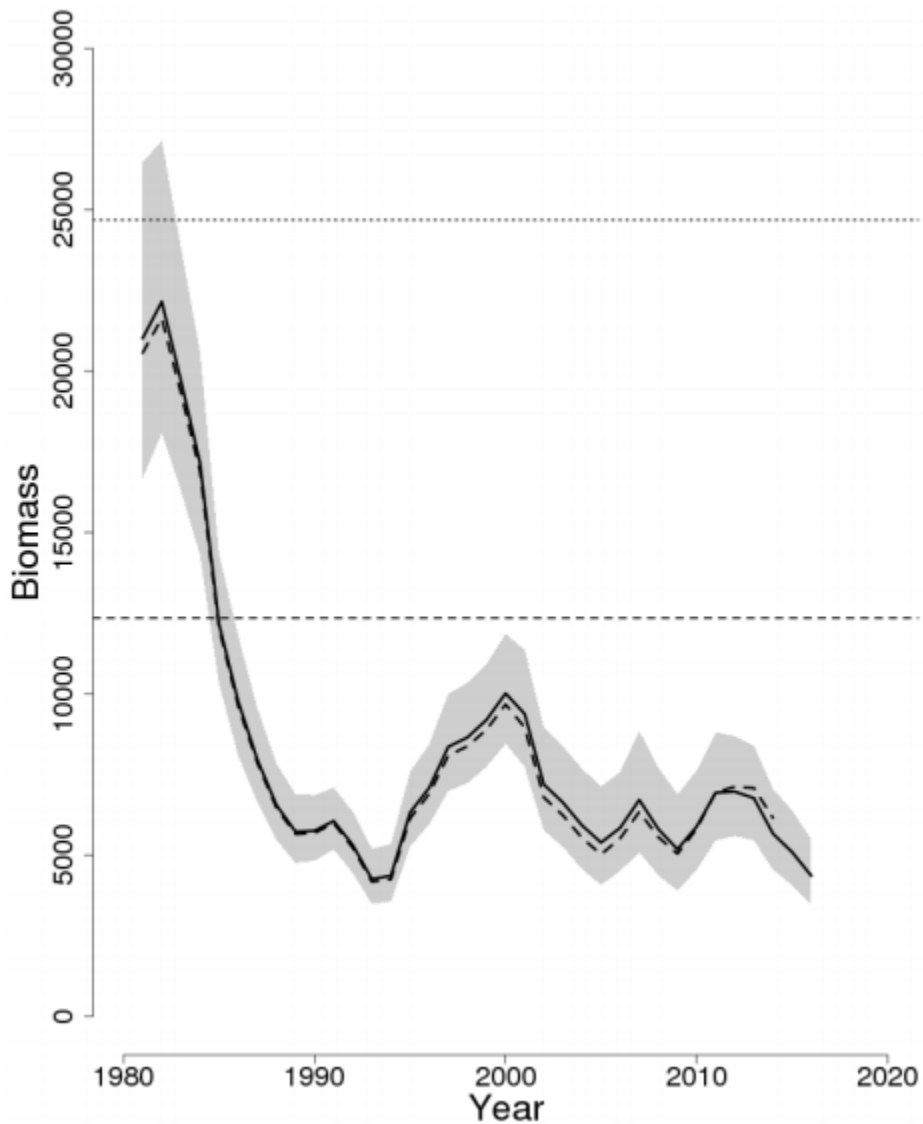


Figure 1. Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic winter flounder spawning stock biomass between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The horizontal dotted line is the SSB-target and the horizontal dashed line is the SSB-threshold based on the 2017 assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

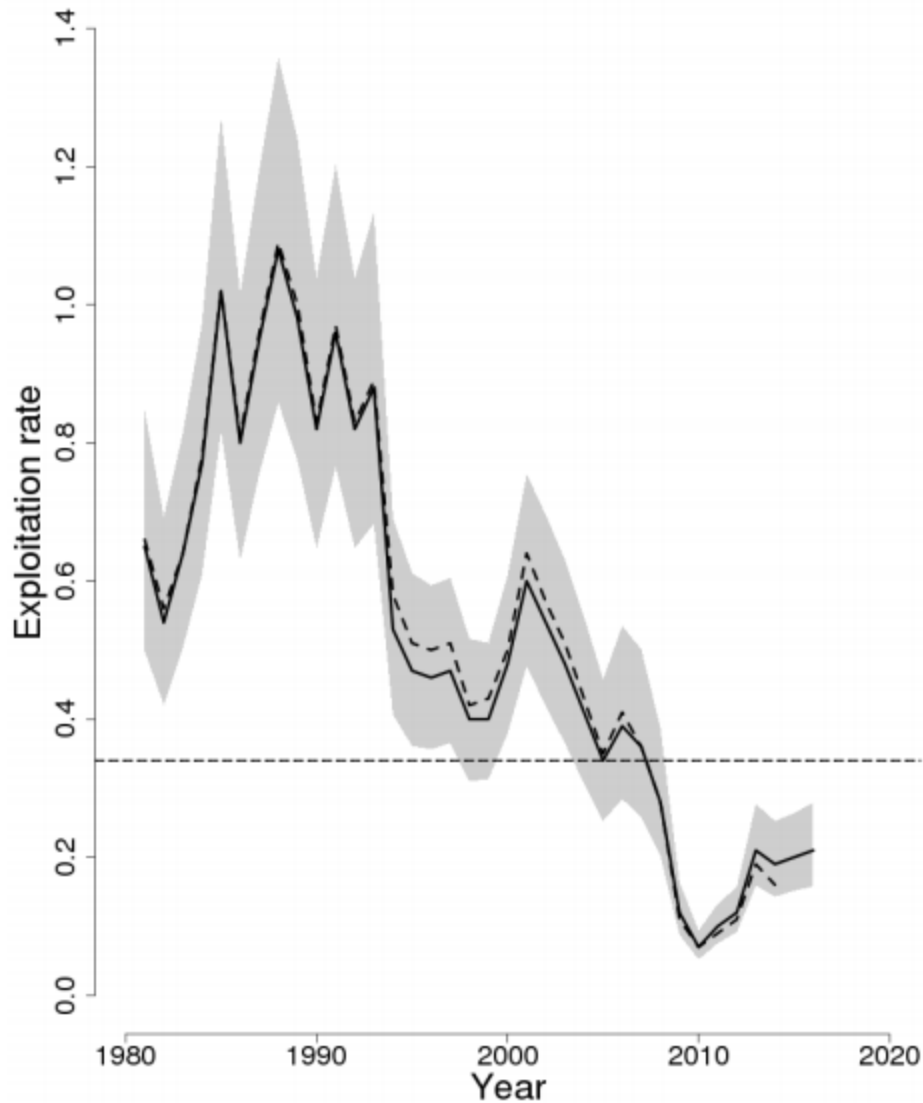


Figure 2. Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder fishing mortality between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The horizontal dashed line is the F-threshold based on the 2017 assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

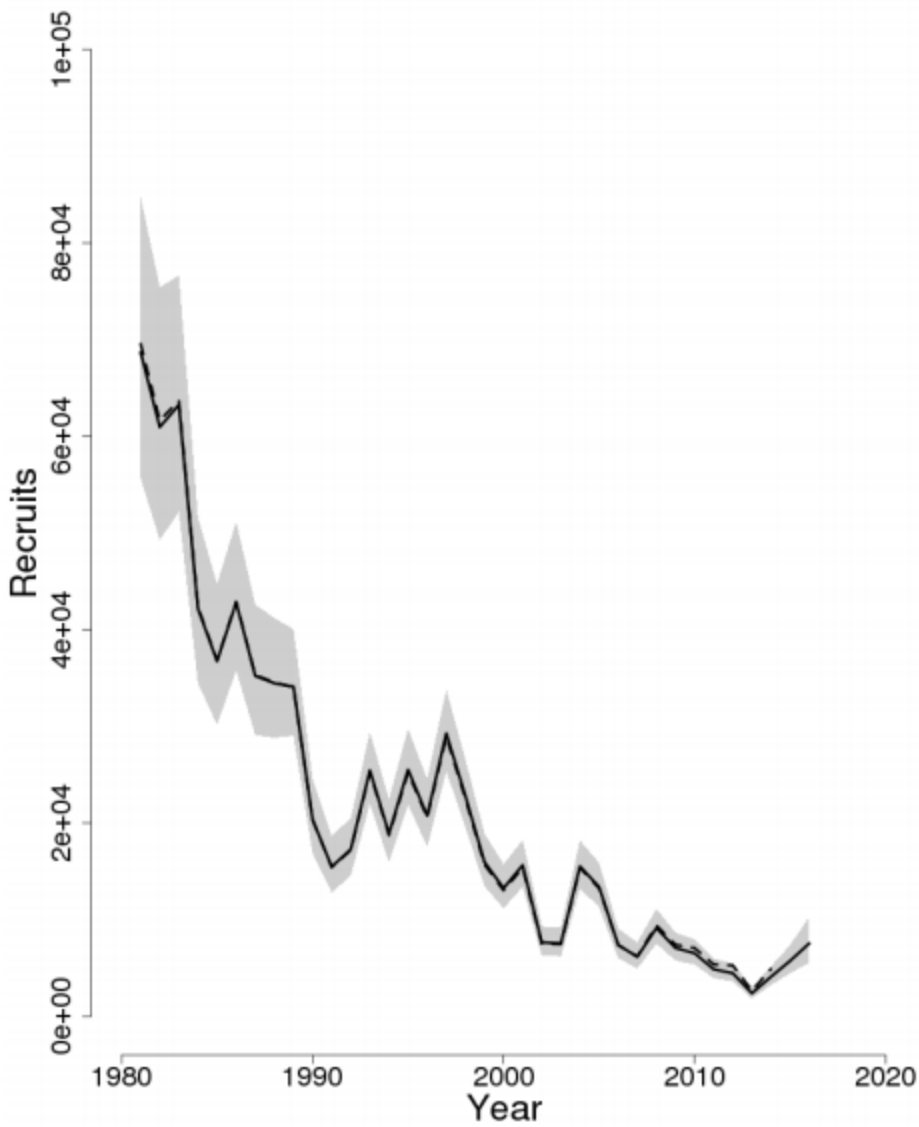


Figure 3. Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic winter flounder trends in recruits between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

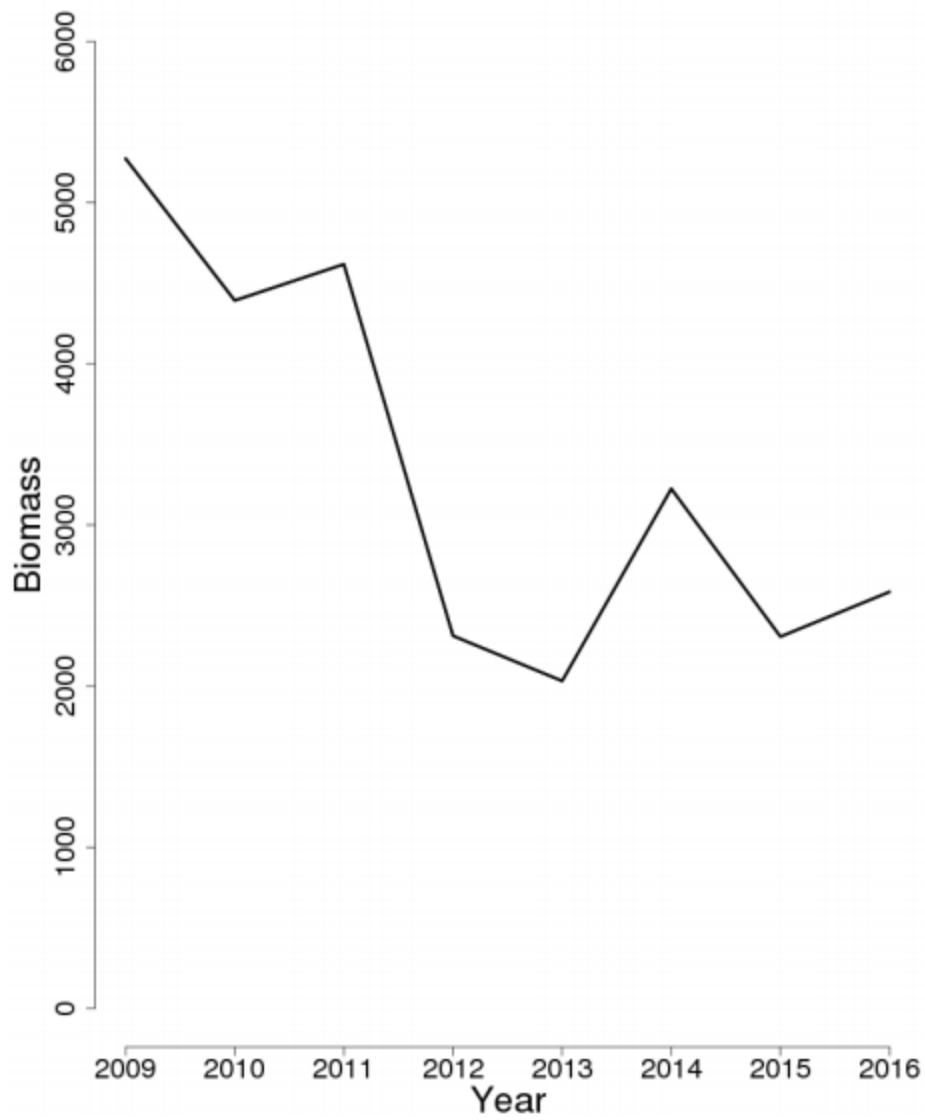


Figure 4. Estimates of exploitable biomass (30+ cm) for Gulf of Maine winter flounder between 2009 and 2016 as estimated from the fall MENH, MDMF, and NEFSC trawl surveys. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

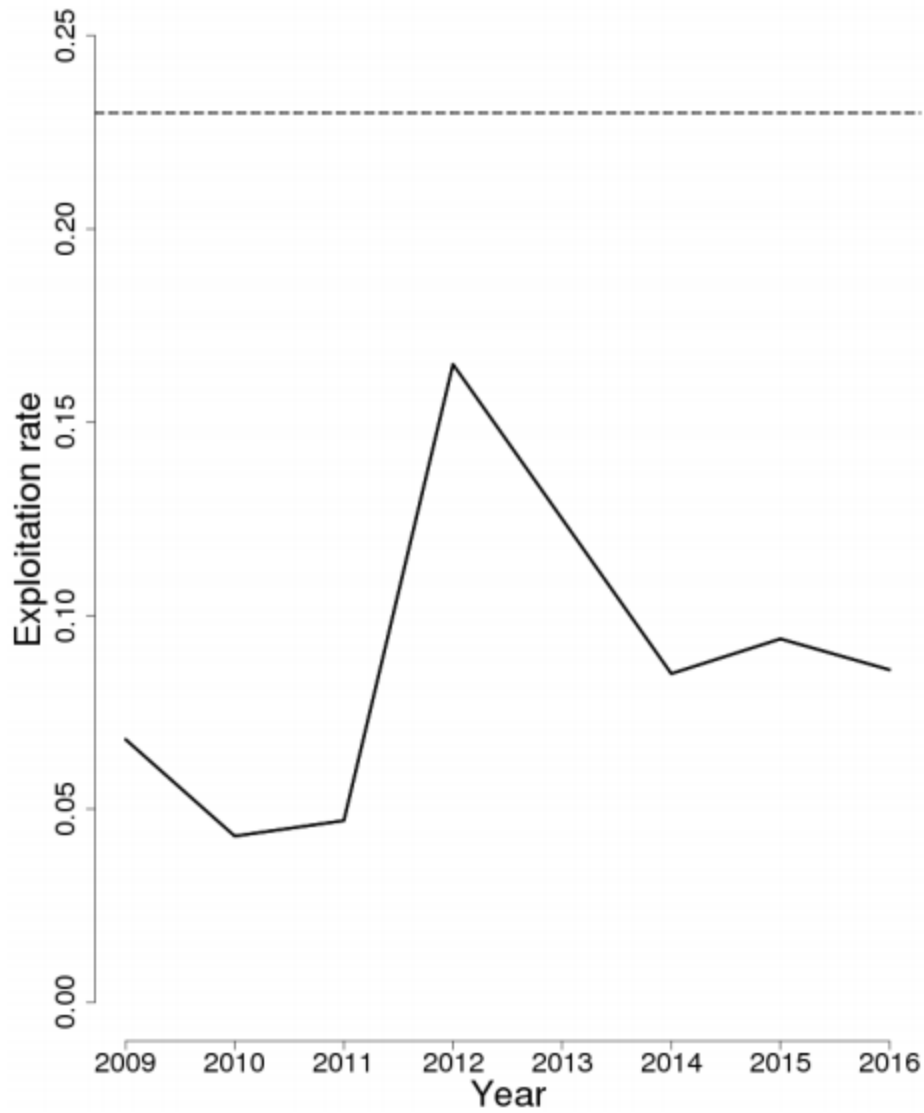


Figure 5. Gulf of Maine winter flounder exploitation rate between 2009 and 2016. The dashed line represents the corresponding F-Threshold from the 2017 assessment. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

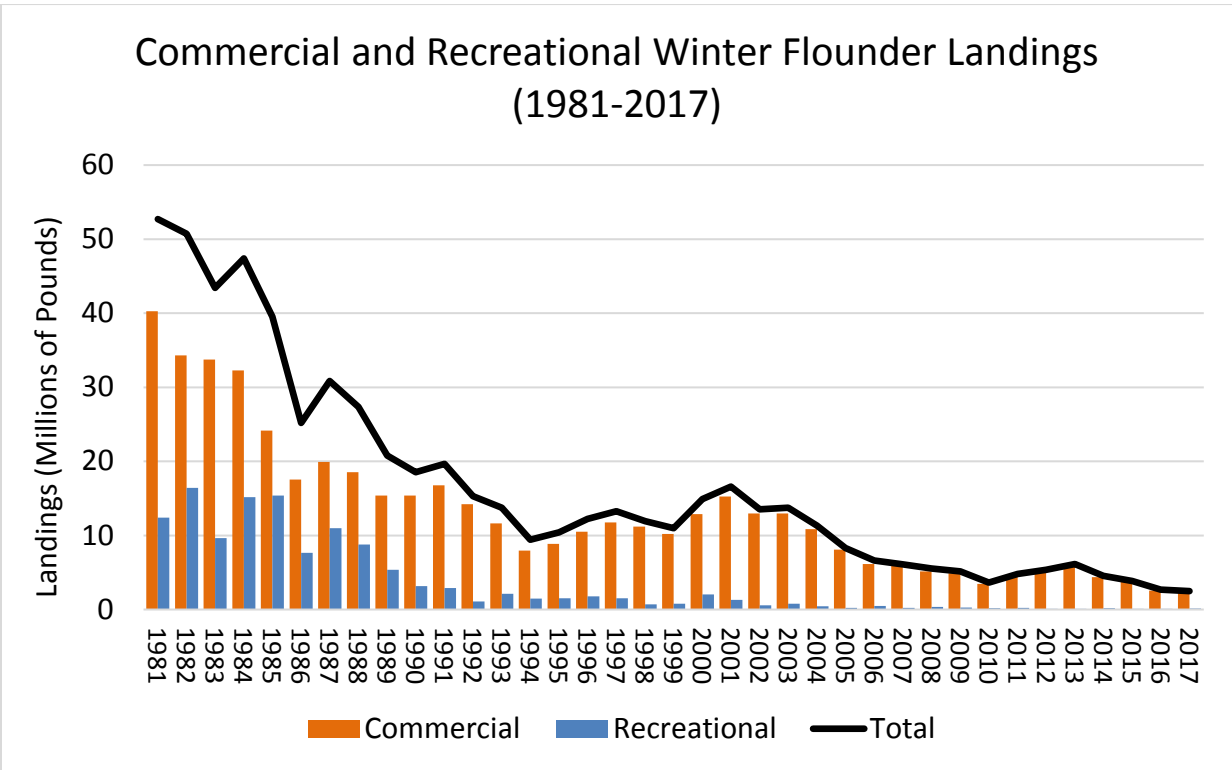


Figure 6. Total landings of winter flounder, commercial and recreational landings. (Source: ACCSP and MRIP)

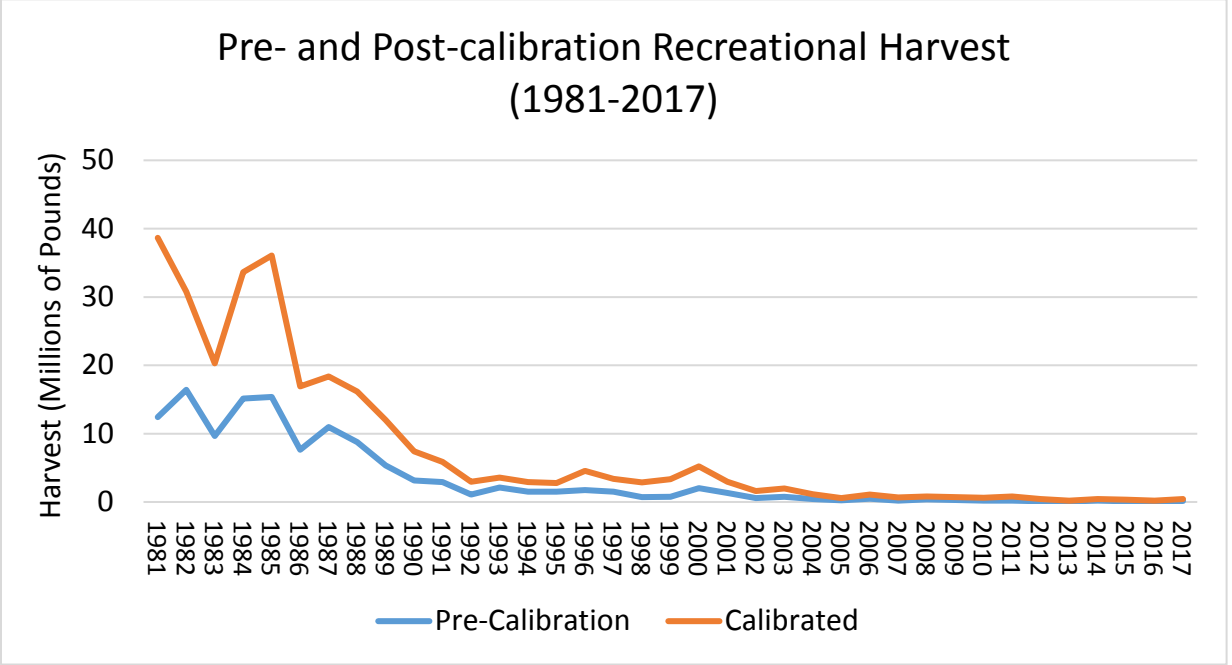


Figure 7. Recreational landings of winter flounder, pre-calibration and calibrated. (Source: MRIP)

Table 1. Coastwide commercial and recreational landings of winter flounder.

Source: ACCSP, MRIP.

Year	Commercial Landings (lbs)	Recreational Landings (lbs)	Total Harvest (lbs)
1981	40,281,800	12,424,306	52,706,106
1982	34,287,800	16,417,409	50,705,209
1983	33,762,300	9,640,481	43,402,781
1984	32,259,500	15,156,823	47,416,323
1985	24,169,500	15,372,731	39,542,231
1986	17,551,600	7,634,913	25,186,513
1987	19,900,600	10,967,183	30,867,783
1988	18,558,400	8,779,904	27,338,304
1989	15,403,400	5,363,356	20,766,756
1990	15,375,295	3,156,378	18,531,673
1991	16,755,114	2,899,482	19,654,596
1992	14,232,802	1,071,535	15,304,337
1993	11,618,074	2,129,667	13,747,741
1994	7,934,950	1,496,956	9,431,906
1995	8,869,168	1,529,595	10,398,763
1996	10,489,726	1,757,069	12,246,795
1997	11,774,996	1,514,640	13,289,636
1998	11,213,153	717,765	11,930,918
1999	10,219,341	768,056	10,987,397
2000	12,876,176	2,020,880	14,897,056
2001	15,274,384	1,304,052	16,578,436
2002	12,955,503	583,547	13,539,050
2003	12,986,593	773,793	13,760,386
2004	10,854,383	451,387	11,305,770
2005	8,074,650	233,718	8,308,368
2006	6,149,946	464,499	6,614,445
2007	5,882,975	205,645	6,088,620
2008	5,158,100	366,261	5,524,361
2009	4,877,566	285,613	5,163,179
2010	3,452,445	195,333	3,647,778
2011	4,593,883	209,318	4,803,200
2012	5,238,701	107,987	5,346,688
2013	6,054,017	74,291	6,128,309
2014	4,375,270	187,292	4,562,562
2015	3,752,672	88,223	3,840,895
2016	2,561,793	107,458	2,669,251
2017	2,347,429	138,477	2,485,906

Table 2. 2017 Winter flounder commercial landings and recreational harvest (A + B1) by weight (lbs) by state. "C" denotes confidential landings. (Source: State compliance reports, ACCSP, and MRIP)

State	Commercial		Recreational		
	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	PSE	Percent
Massachusetts	1,924,902	82.04%	116,624	33.6	84.22%
Rhode Island	299,375	12.76%	469	75.7	0.34%
New York	57,691	2.46%	963	33.9	0.70%
New Jersey	C		6,141	58	4.43%
Connecticut	52,076	2.22%	683	67.3	0.49%
New Hampshire	C		6,193	56.4	4.47%
Maine	C		7,405	97.1	5.35%
Total	2,346,365		138,478		

Table 3. Commercial winter flounder regulations.

State	Stock Unit	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Seasonal Closure (dates inclusive)	Recruitment Assessment	SSB Assessment	Min. Mesh Size	<i>De minimis Request</i>
Maine	GOM	12"	500 lbs	May 1 – June 30	N/A	N/A	6.5"	No
New Hampshire	GOM	12"	500 lbs	April 1 – June 30	N/A	N/A	6.5"	No
Massachusetts	GOM	12"	500 lbs	Open all year	N/A	Bottom Trawl Survey (May, Sept)	6.5"	No
	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	Open all year	YOY Seine Survey (June)	Bottom Trawl Survey (May, Sept)	6.5"	No
Rhode Island	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	Open all year	Narragansett Bay Juvenile Finfish Survey	Trawl Surveys	6.5"	No
Connecticut	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs or 38 fish	March 1 – April 14	N/A	Long Island Sound Trawl Survey	6.5"	No
New York	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	June 14 – Nov 30 (for all gear besides fyke nets, pound and trap nets)	Small Mesh Trawl Survey, Seine Survey	N/A	6.5"	No
New Jersey	SNE/MA	12"	38 fish	June 1 – Nov 30. Fyke net closed Feb 20 – Oct 31	N/A	Ocean Trawl Survey	6.5"	No

Table 4. Recreational winter flounder regulations.

State	Stock Unit	Creel Limit	Size Limit	Seasonal Closure (dates inclusive)
Maine	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
New Hampshire	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
Massachusetts	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1- February 28
Rhode Island	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – February 28
Connecticut	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – March 31
New York	SNE/MA	2	12"	May 31 – March 31
New Jersey	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – February 28