



*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations  
for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful  
restoration well in progress by 2015*

## Florida Conservation Equivalency Proposal

Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

February 5, 2014



# Overview

- Amendment 2 was implemented in January 2013
- Implementation of a quota management program
- Amendment provides flexibility for Alternative management approaches that are deemed conservation equivalent



# Background

- 1995 net ban – prohibited use of gill nets in state waters
- Limited all other nets to no greater than 500 square feet of mesh area in state waters
- Effectively limited fishery to cast nets as primary gear
- Also limited cast nets to no greater than 14'



# Reporting Issues

- An estimated  $\frac{3}{4}$  of commercial landings have gone unreported
- However law states any commercial sale must be reported
- Unreported landings extend back prior to the net ban
- Estimated that occurrence of unreported landings has been consistent over time
- Industry has been alerted that they need to report bait landings moving forward



# Need for Conservation Equivalency

- FL fishers have already endured significant reduction
- FL harvest provides bait to other important fisheries
- Harvest has been reduced significantly through time
- Menhaden will remain sustainable because of their current gear restrictions
- Management of a quota based on inaccurate reporting will result in early closure of the fishery as reporting improves



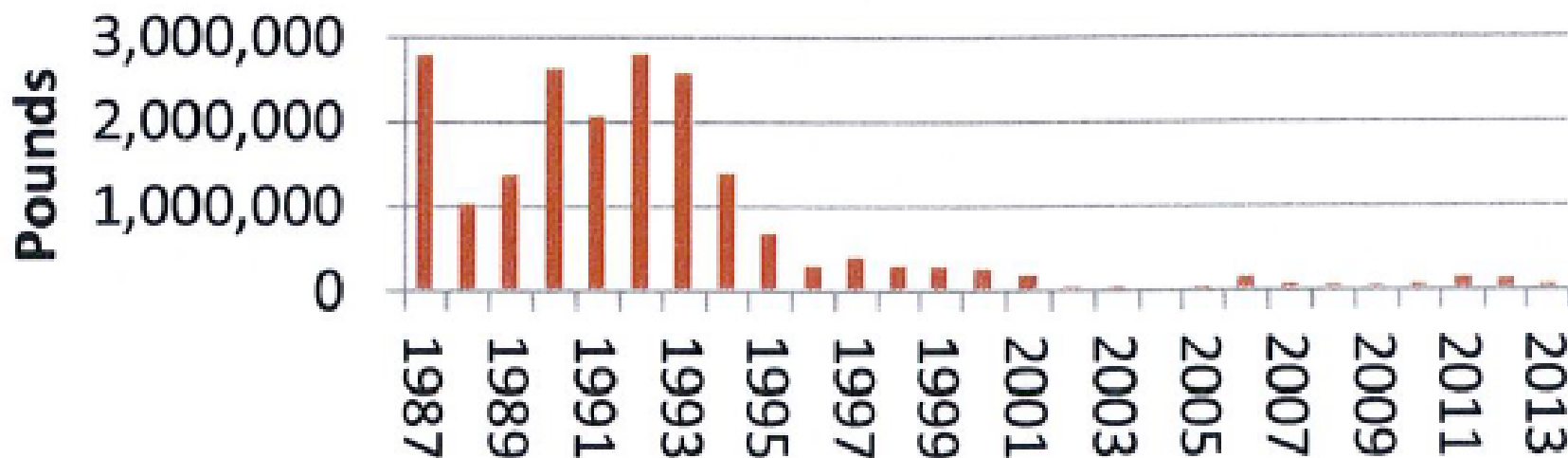
# Request

- Florida's current gear limitation regulations are a more conservative and effective approach to management than the current strategy of decreasing mortality through the use of a quota.
- Therefore, FL is requesting to be exempt from the their quota. (FL quota =66,995 pounds)



# Supporting Data

- 1986-1994 landings averaged 2.7 million pounds
- 1996-2012 landings averaged 152,000 pounds
- 94% decrease
- Level of reporting was assumed to be constant



# TC Report

- The reference period for setting the quota (2009-2011) already incorporates conservation measures cited by proposal.
- Decrease in landings since 1995 net ban may have other causes
- Other states implemented conservation measures prior the allocation period





# TC Report

- The scale of landings in FL alone are not biologically harmful, but if states with equivalent harvest to Florida file for conservation equivalency the impact could compound significantly
- It is difficult to fully evaluate conservation equivalency without knowing the species differentiations of landings in FL
- If FL does not have a quota there is the potential for other states to land menhaden in FL.





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## Compliance Criteria for 2013 Fishing Year

Atlantic Menhaden Management Board

February 5, 2014



# Overview

- Amendment 2 was implemented in January 2013
- Compliance reports are due April 1, 2014
- Overview of criteria for compliance reports



# Directed Fishery

- Report commercial landings by year and major gear type
- Include official dated closure notice for directed commercial fisheries
- Indicate if your state participated in a quota transfer
- **NOTE:** Please send this information as soon as possible, preferably by February 15.



# Bycatch Fishery

- Report bycatch landings in the most detail possible (trip level information including gear type.
- Reminder all bycatch landings that occur prior to the closure of directed fisheries count towards the quota
- Provide an analysis of trips harvesting under the bycatch allowance by gear type to analyze the effectiveness of a 6,000 pound bycatch allowance
- NOTE: Please send this information as soon as possible, preferably by February 15.



# Bycatch Fishery

- Reminder that in 2014 all states will be limited to a 6,000 pound per vessel per trip bycatch limit regardless of the number of permit holders on the vessel with only one landing event per calendar day



# Episodic Event Set Aside

- If your state participated in the set aside, report landings in the most detail possible (trip level information including gear type)



# Mandatory Monitoring Programs

- Summarize reporting programs (e.g., frequency, harvester reporting, dealer reporting, data elements reported)
- Purse seine and bait seine vessels (or snapper rigs) must be required to submit trip level reports





# Mandatory Monitoring Programs

- Age and length data from the commercial bait harvest.
  - One 10-fish sample (age and length) per 300 MT for bait for ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE
  - One 10-fish sample (age and length) per 200 MT for bait for MD, PRFC, VA, NC



# Mandatory Monitoring Programs

- Indicate that the following mandatory catch and effort data elements are being collected for the pound net fishery
  - Total pounds landed per day
  - Number of pound nets fished per day



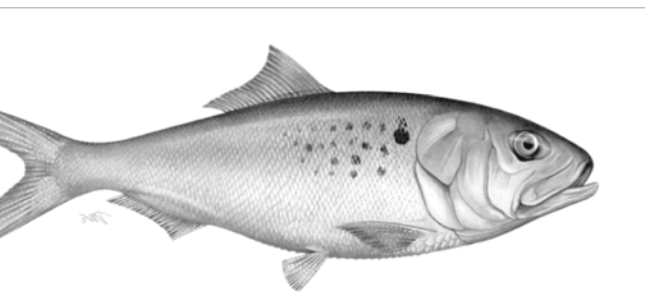


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# Atlantic Menhaden

## Stock Assessment Progress Report

February 5, 2014





## Stock Assessment Progress Report

- Benchmark assessment scheduled for 2014 (SEDAR)
- 10 meetings so far (6 webinars; 4 in-person):
  - Developed TORs
  - Identified and completed preliminary workups of new data sources
  - Held Data Workshop



# Stock Assessment Progress Report

- Jan 14-16<sup>th</sup> Data Workshop
  - Vetted all available data sources
    - Fishery dependent: landings & CPUE
    - Fishery independent: 27 surveys
    - Life history: growth, maturity, fecundity, M
    - Historical tagging project: inform M & migration
  - Developed plan for new models/configurations
  - Assigned tasks for June Assessment Workshop



# Stock Assessment Progress Report

- Next steps:
  - 2014
    - April 1 – Tentative deadline for finalizing data/model inputs
    - May 1 – Tentative deadline for public submissions of alternative models/analyses
    - June – Assessment Workshop in Beaufort, NC
    - December – peer review workshop (SEDAR)
  - 2015
    - February – Assessment results presented to Board



## Stock Assessment Progress Report: BERP WG

- Met Dec 10-11, 2013 to finalize MSVPA update in preparation for menhaden benchmark. Kinks in model being ironed out this month.
- Will meet again in spring 2014 to finalize work on AM benchmark TOR #7:
  - Identify potential ecological reference points that account for Atlantic menhaden's role as a forage fish.
  - Provide proposed methodology, a model development plan, and example results using preliminary model configurations, if time allows.