Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Tautog Technical Committee
Conference Call Summary
January 11, 2017

The TC, PDT and SAS held a joint conference call to discuss the technical methods and the results of the harvest reduction and spawning stock biomass projection analysis; a Board task assigned at the October meeting. The following is an overview of the analyses results, as well as an overview of the follow-up items to calculate the recreational reductions.

HARVEST REDUCTION AND SPAWNING STOCK BIOMASS PROJECTION ANALYSIS

Task 1: SSB Projections

The TC calculated maximum removals during the 2018-2020 fishing years under two scenarios (50% and 70% chance of being at or below the F target). In addition, the TC provided the probability of being at or below F target in 3 years and the probability of being at or above SSB threshold in 3 years. This information was presented at the at the 2016 Annual Meeting. The Board also requested the year at which the stock is estimated to be at or above the SSB threshold. The TC reviewed the projection results that were available.

Task 2: Harvest Reductions

The TC is using uniform assumptions, agreed upon on a November 2016 TC call, to calculate the harvest reductions. Methodology includes:

- Calculate the regional bag limit and size limit using MRIP data
    - Pool over the same years we did the projection analysis (2013-2015) and pool at a regional level
    - Assume perfect compliance for both the reference period and the future for the regulation you are analyzing (e.g., exclude fish that are over the recreational bag limit for the bag limit analysis, but not the size limit analysis)
    - In addition to MRIP data, state data sets that have been vetted through the assessment process can be used to increase sample size (e.g., CT, VA and NJ have robust volunteer angler programs)
        - Need rudimentary analysis comparing the two; how does the additional state data compare to the MRIP data. Show distributions of bag limit and length frequency

- Seasonal closure analysis; seasonal adjustment recommendations from Jay:
    - Days open/total wave harvest = daily catch rate; make adjustments based on that
    - Consider fitting a Weibull or other distribution since beginning and end of season catch rates are lower; steeper catch rates in the middle of the season
    - Exclude fish that are out of season

After reviewing the regional analyses, the TC discussed differential approaches to calculate the recreational reductions, the addition of discard mortality into reduction calculations and the recreational imputed length and site weight information.

- Recreational Reductions
    - MARI is a using a different recreational reduction method than LIS and NJ-NYB. The TC discussed the differences between each method, most significantly the MARI method compares bag limit and season, while the other method compares bag and size limits. Given time constraints the TC will present the regional results that have been prepared. If time is available the TC can compare the approaches with the goal of developing a standardized approach (hybrid or choosing one over the other); the results of the evaluation could be presented at the May meeting.
- Discard Mortality
    - The TC will revise the calculation to include discard morality (2.5%) to the recreational analyses: size, bag and season. The 2.5% will be applied to the saved fish and then added back to the harvest; this may be done as a separate analysis or with one interaction. Updated data will be shared with the TC on Friday, January 13, 2017.
- Imputed Lengths and Site Weights
    - The TC discussed the potential difference between imputed lengths and observed lengths. J. Brust offered to develop a file showing a set of comparisons of MRIP length data. The analysis will include data from RI, NJ and VA for 2013-2015. He will compare raw unweighted, raw weighted, raw + imputed unweighted and raw + imputed weighted LF distributions.
    - Upon TC review, via email, there are some differences. Sample size is a factor: NJ had the highest number of true lengths, as well as the highest ratio of true / true + imputed. VA only had 40 true lengths, and an additional 40 imputed. RI also had pretty good N for true lengths (186) but had nearly twice as many imputed lengths. The data set is available upon request.