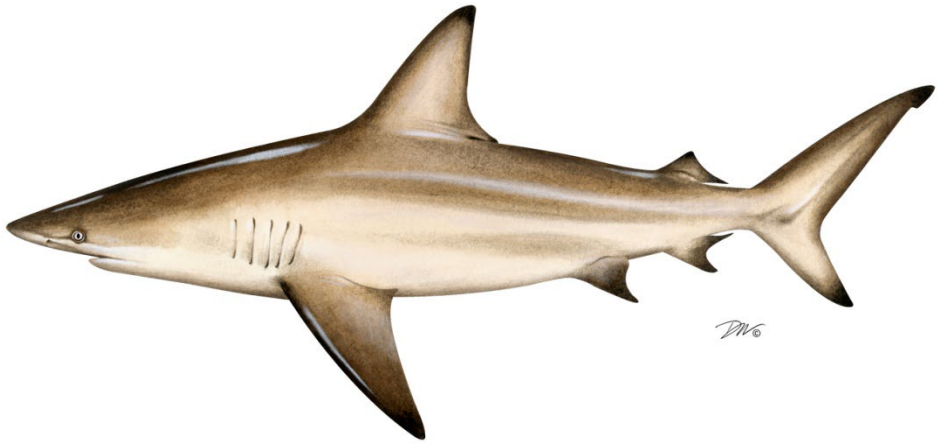
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR COASTAL SHARKS

2025 FISHING YEAR



Prepared by the Coastal Sharks Plan Review Team

Approved November 2026

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

REVIEW OF THE ASMFC FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STATE COMPLIANCE FOR COASTAL SHARKS FOR THE 2025 FISHERY

Management Summary

Date of FMP Approval:	August 2008
Amendments:	None
Addenda:	Addendum I (September 2009) Addendum II (May 2013) Addendum III (October 2013) Addendum IV (August 2016) Addendum V (October 2018)
Management Unit:	Entire coastwide distribution of the resource from the estuaries eastward to the inshore boundary of the EEZ
States With Declared Interest:	Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
Active Boards/Committees:	Coastal Shark Management Board, Advisory Panel, Technical Committee, and Plan Review Team

I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC; Commission) adopted its first fishery management plan (FMP) for coastal sharks in 2008. Coastal sharks were initially managed under this plan as six different complexes: prohibited, research, small coastal, non-sandbar large coastal, pelagic and smooth dogfish. The Board does not actively set quotas for any shark species. The Commission follows National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA Fisheries) openings and closures for small coastal sharks, non-sandbar large coastal shark, and pelagic sharks. Species in the prohibited category may not be possessed or taken. Sandbar sharks may only be taken with a shark fishery research permit. All species must be landed with their fins attached to the carcass by natural means. This was adjusted through subsequent addenda listed below. The Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks (FMP) established the following goals and objectives.

GOAL
The goal of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks is "to promote stock rebuilding and management of the coastal shark fishery in a manner that is biologically, economically, socially, and ecologically sound."

OBJECTIVES

In support of this goal, the following objectives for the FMP include:

1. Reduce fishing mortality to rebuild stock biomass, prevent stock collapse, and support a sustainable fishery.
2. Protect essential habitat areas such as nurseries and pupping grounds to protect sharks during particularly vulnerable stages in their life cycle.
3. Coordinate management activities between state and federal waters to promote complementary regulations throughout the species' range.
4. Obtain biological and improved fishery related data to increase understanding of state water shark fisheries.
5. Minimize endangered species bycatch in shark fisheries.

The FMP has been adapted through the following addenda:

Addendum I (September 2009)

Approved in September 2009, Addendum I modified the FMP to allow commercial fishermen to process (remove the fins of) smooth dogfish at sea from March – June of each year, but also requires a 5-95% fin to carcass ratio for all dressed smooth dogfish carcasses. This Addendum also removed recreational smooth dogfish possession limits, as well as the two-hour gill-net check requirement for commercial fishermen, which applied to all shark species.

Addendum II (May 2013)

Approved in May 2013, Addendum II modified Addendum I to allow commercial fishermen to process (remove the fins of) smooth dogfish at sea year-round but requires a 12-88% fin-to-carcass ratio for all dressed smooth dogfish carcasses. This ratio was consistent with the Shark Conservation Act of 2010. Addendum II also allocates state-shares of the upcoming federal smoothhound shark quota based on historical landings from 1998-2010.

Addendum III (October 2013)

Addendum III modifies the species groups to ensure consistency with NOAA Fisheries. It creates two new species groups (Blacknose and Hammerhead Species Groups). The addendum also increases the recreational minimum size limit for all hammerhead species to 78 in fork length (FL).

Addendum IV (August 2016)

Addendum IV allows smooth dogfish carcasses to be landed with corresponding fins removed from the carcass as long as the total retained catch, by weight, is composed of at least 25% smooth dogfish, consistent with federal management measures.

Addendum V (October 2018)

Addendum V allows the Board to respond to changes in the stock status of coastal shark populations and adjust regulations through Board action rather than an addendum, ensuring greater consistency between state and federal shark regulations. Addendum V allows the Board to change a suite of commercial and recreational measures, such as recreational size and possession limits, season length, and area closures (recreational and commercial), in addition to

the current specifications for just the commercial fishery, throughout the year when needed. Under this provision, if the Board chooses to adjust measures through Board action, the public will be able to provide comment prior to Board meetings, as well as at Board meetings at the discretion of the Board Chair. Additionally, the Board can still implement changes in shark regulations through an addendum.

In 2019, in response to measures implemented by NOAA Fisheries through Amendment 11 for Federal Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Permit Holders, the Board approved changes to the recreational size limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks in state waters, specifically, a 71 in straight line FL for males and an 83 in straight line FL for females. These measures were implemented in response to the 2017 Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock assessment that found the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing. The states were required to implement the changes to the recreational minimum size limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks by January 1, 2020.

Additionally in 2019, the Board moved to require non-offset circle hooks for the recreational shark fishery in state waters with an implementation date of July 1, 2020. The Board chose to do so after NOAA Fisheries requested that the states implement a circle hook requirement for the recreational fishery consistent with the measures approved in HMS Amendment 11.

In May 2022 the Board approved a zero retention limit in state waters for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks for both recreational and commercial fisheries. These measures are consistent with those implemented by NOAA Fisheries for federal HMS permit holders. This action was taken in response to the 2019 Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock assessment update that indicates the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing, with a rebuild date of 2070.

In May 2024, the Board established a zero possession limit for oceanic whitetip sharks for recreational and commercial fisheries, consistent with the NOAA Fisheries final rule adding oceanic whitetip to the prohibited species list in US waters of the Atlantic Ocean, effective February 2, 2024.

Table 1. List of commercial shark management groups under Commission FMP

Species Group	Species within Group
Prohibited	Sand tiger, bigeye sand tiger, whale, basking, white, dusky, bignose, Galapagos, night, reef, narrowtooth, Caribbean sharpnose, smalltail, Atlantic angel, longfin mako, bigeye thresher, sharpnose sevengill, bluntnose sixgill and bigeye sixgill sharks
Research	Sandbar sharks
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal	Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, and bonnethead sharks
Blacknose	Blacknose sharks
Aggregated Large Coastal	Silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, and nurse sharks
Hammerhead	Scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead and smooth hammerhead
Pelagic	Shortfin mako*, porbeagle, common thresher, oceanic whitetip*, and blue sharks
Smoothhound	Smooth dogfish and Florida smoothhound sharks

*Zero retention limits are in place for these species

II. Status of the Stocks

Stock status is assessed by species or by species complex if there are not enough data for an individual assessment. Eleven species have been assessed domestically, three species have been assessed internationally, and the rest have not been assessed. Table 2 describes the current stock status of all assessed shark species along with references for the stock assessments. More details on assessments are provided below, beginning with the most recent.

A stock assessment for sandbar sharks (SEDAR 101) is currently ongoing and expected for completion in 2027. A stock assessment for bull sharks is scheduled to begin in 2027.

A research track assessment of the hammerhead complex (SEDAR 77) was completed in 2024. Based on the 2009 stock assessment for the Northwest Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico populations of scalloped hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*), which indicated the Northwest Atlantic stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing (Hayes et al. 2009), NOAA Fisheries established a scalloped hammerhead rebuilding plan that ends in 2023. Since the assessment, research has determined that in the U.S. Atlantic, a portion of animals considered scalloped hammerheads are actually a cryptic species, recently named the Carolina hammerhead (*Sphyrna gilberti*; Quattro et al. 2013). Little to no species-specific information exists regarding the distribution, abundance and life history of the two species, therefore for now, both species are currently managed under the name scalloped hammerhead. The SEDAR 77 assessment preliminarily indicates that the scalloped hammerhead shark was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in the terminal year (2019). For smooth hammerheads it suggests overfishing most likely is not occurring and the stock has been rebuilding since 2000. The assessment found that for the great hammerhead shark the stock is overfished, and no overfishing is occurring in the terminal year.

In December 2020, Southeast Data and Assessment Review SEDAR completed a benchmark assessment of the Atlantic blacktip shark (*Carcharhinus limbatus*) stock (SEDAR 65), which indicates the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

In June 2020, the International Commission on the Convention of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)'s Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) completed an assessment of Porbeagle sharks (*Lamna nasus*), which indicates the stock is overfished and not experiencing overfishing. As a result of the previous 2009 assessment, NOAA Fisheries established a 100-year rebuilding plan for porbeagle sharks; the expected rebuilding date is 2108.

The 2017 ICCAT assessment of the North Atlantic population of shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus)* indicates that the stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring. Multiple models were explored and new data sources were integrated. Combined probability of overfishing occurring and the stock being in an overfished state was 90% across all models.

The 2017 stock assessment (SEDAR 54) for sandbar sharks (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*) indicates the stock is overfished and not experiencing overfishing. This assessment used a new approach

(Stock Synthesis) instead of the State Space Age Structure Production Model that was used in the previous assessment (SEDAR 21). A replication analysis conducted using the prior model (updated with data through 2015) resulted in the same stock status as the new model (overfished, no overfishing occurring). The rebuilding date for sandbar sharks is 2070.

The 2016 stock assessment update to SEDAR 21 for Atlantic dusky sharks (*Carcharhinus obscurus*) indicates the stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. This latest review functioned as an update to the 2011 assessment (SEDAR 21), so no new methodology was introduced. However, all model inputs were updated with more recent data (i.e., 2010-2015 effort, observer, and survey data). The rebuilding date for dusky sharks is 2107.

In 2015, a benchmark stock assessment (SEDAR 39) was conducted for the smoothhound complex, including smooth dogfish (*Mustelus canis*), the only species of smoothhound occurring in the Atlantic. The assessment indicates Atlantic smooth dogfish are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

The North Atlantic blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) stock was assessed by ICCAT's SCRS in 2015. Similar to the results of the previous 2008 stock assessment, the assessment indicated the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. However, scientists acknowledge there is a high level of uncertainty in the data inputs and model structural assumptions; therefore, the assessment results should be interpreted with caution.

SEDAR 34 (2013) assessed the status of Atlantic sharpnose sharks (*Rhizoprionodon terraenovae*) and bonnetheads (*Sphyrna tiburo*). The Atlantic sharpnose shark stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. The stock status of bonnethead stocks (Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico) is considered unknown. Assessment results indicated the stock is not overfished with no overfishing occurring, however all available data pointed towards separate stocks. As the assessment framework would not allow stocks to be split, the assessment continued under a single stock scenario. The results of the assessment were rejected by reviewers noting that the stocks need to be assessed independently. A benchmark assessment is recommended for both stocks of bonnetheads.

A 2011 benchmark assessment (SEDAR 21) of blacknose sharks (*Carcharhinus acrontus*) indicated the stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. As described in the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NOAA Fisheries must establish a rebuilding plan for an overfished stock. As such, the rebuilding date for blacknose sharks is 2043.

The 2007 SEDAR 13 assessed the SCS complex, finetooth (*Carcharhinus isodon*), Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead sharks (SEDAR 2007). The SEDAR 13 peer reviewers considered the data to be the 'best available at the time' and determined the status of the SCS complex to be adequate. Finetooth, Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead were all considered to be not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

Table 2. Stock Status of Atlantic Coastal Shark Species and Species Groups

Species or Complex Name	Stock Status		References/Comments
	Overfished	Overfishing	
Pelagic			
Porbeagle	Yes	No	Porbeagle Stock Assessment, ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2020); Rebuilding ends in 2108 (HMS Am. 2)
Blue	No	No	ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2015)
Shortfin Mako	Yes	Yes	ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2017)
All other pelagic sharks	Unknown	Unknown	
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks (LCS)			
Atlantic Blacktip	No	No	SEDAR 65 (2020)
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks - Atlantic Region	Unknown	Unknown	SEDAR 11 (2006); difficult to assess as a species complex due to various life history characteristics/ lack of available data
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks (SCS)			
Atlantic Sharpnose	No	No	SEDAR 34 (2013)
Bonnethead	Unknown	Unknown	SEDAR 34 (2013)
Finetooth	No	No	SEDAR 13 (2007)
Hammerhead			
Scalloped	No	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results
Smooth	Unknown	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results; Stock assessment suggests rebuilding has been occurring since 2000.
Great	Yes	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results
Blacknose			
Blacknose	Yes	Yes	SEDAR 21 (2010); Rebuilding ends in 2043 (HMS Am. 5a)
Smoothhound			
Atlantic Smooth Dogfish	No	No	SEDAR 39 (2015)
Research			
Sandbar	Yes	No	SEDAR 54 (2017); Rebuilding ends 2070 (HMS Am. 2)
Prohibited			
Dusky	Yes	Yes	SEDAR 21 update (2016); Rebuilding ends in 2108 (HMS Am. 5b)
All other prohibited sharks	Unknown	Unknown	

III. Status of the Fishery

Specifications (Opening, closures, quotas)

NOAA Fisheries sets quotas for coastal sharks through the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and its amendments. The opening dates, closure dates, and quotas are detailed in Table 3. All non-prohibited coastal shark management groups opened on January 1, 2025. NOAA Fisheries closes commercial shark fisheries when 80% of the available quota is reached. When the fishery closes in federal waters, the Interstate FMP dictates that the fishery also closes in state waters. For 2025, the fishery did not close for any of the species groups before December 31.

Table 3. Commercial quotas for the 2025 shark fishing season. All Atlantic shark fisheries automatically opened on January 1, 2025.

Region or Sub-region	Management Group	2025 Annual Adjusted Quota*	Quota Linkages	Commercial Retention Limits for Directed Shark Limited Access Permit Holders (in-season adjustments are possible)
Atlantic	Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks	168.9 mt dressed weight (dw) (372,552 lb dw)	Linked	55 LCS other than sandbar sharks per vessel per trip. If the quota is landed too quickly, NMFS will consider in-season reduction as needed
	Hammerhead Sharks	27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)		
	Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	264.1 mt dw (582,333 lb dw)	Linked (South of 34°N. lat. only)	N/A
	Blacknose Sharks (South of 34° N. lat. only)	17.2 mt dw (37,921 lb dw)		8 blacknose sharks per vessel per trip (applies to directed and incidental permit holders)
	Smoothhound sharks	1,802.6 mt dw (3,973,902 lb dw)	Not Linked	N/A
No regional quotas	Non-Sandbar LCS Research	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	Linked	N/A
	Sandbar Shark Research	90.7 mt dw (199,943 lb dw)		
	Blue Sharks	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	Not Linked	N/A
	Porbeagle Sharks	1.7 mt dw (3,748 lb dw)		
	Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue	488.0 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)		

*1 mt dw = 2,204.6 lb dw

Commercial Landings

Commercial landings data through 2024 are provided in the NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) Report[1] in Tables 4-6. Preliminary commercial landings for the 2025 fishing year are provided in Tables 7-8.

[1] https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2026-09/safe-report-2024-2025.pdf

Table 4. Commercial Landings (lb dw) of Large Coastal Sharks (LCS) in Atlantic Region, 2020–2024. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025. Note: Blacktip shark landings were mistakenly omitted from the aggregated LCS landings total for 2023 and 2024.

Management Group	LCS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Aggregated LCS	Blacktip	131,962	106,588	106,092	158,283	150,113
	Bull	17,703	8,745	8,015	5,418	4,381
	Lemon	4,479	4,883	4,333	3,198	3,206
	Nurse	0	0	C	C	C
	Silky	223	C	C	C	C
	Spinner	71,094	63,553	97,997	102,235	51,973
	Tiger	2,232	2,516	1,921	3,565	1,160
	Unclassified, assigned to LCS	90	0	0	0	0
Total aggregated LCS		227,783	<189,000	<220,000	<115,000	<62,000
Hammerhead	Great	27,529	33,621	43,869	48,823	33,784
	Scalloped	12,024	9,947	15,077	3,222	7,700
	Smooth	0	C	C	2,002	C
Total hammerhead		39,553	<44,000	<60,000	54,115	<43,000
Management Group	LCS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total LCS carcass weight		**267,336**	**229,995**	**278,577**	**327,305**	**253,308**

Management Group	Species	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Sandbar—shark research fishery	Sandbar	49,989	108,197	86,809	49,144	123,059

Table 5. Commercial Landings (lb dw) of Small Coastal Sharks (SCS) in Atlantic Region, 2020-2024. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025.

Management Group	SCS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Blacknose	Blacknose	10,644	15,056	9,364	13,068	12,221
Non-blacknose	Bonnethead	1,818	4,620	2,844	1,878	776
	Finetooth	7,793	21,575	16,411	21,142	21,416
	Sharpnose, Atlantic	214,303	205,681	126,430	172,738	160,220
Total non-blacknose SCS		**223,913**	**231,873**	**145,708**	**195,758**	**182,412**
Total SCS carcass weight		**234,557**	**246,931**	**155,072**	**208,826**	**194,633**

Table 6. Commercial Landings (lb dw) of U.S. Atlantic Pelagic Sharks, 2020-2024. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025.

Management Group	Pelagic Shark	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Blue sharks	Blue	0	C	C	4,324	C
Porbeagle sharks	Porbeagle	0	C	0	C	962
Other pelagic sharks	Mako, shortfin[1]	36,029	25,942	18,623	441	C
	Oceanic whitetip[2]	0	C	0	0	0
	Thresher	62,485	58,908	39,851	44,323	39,265
Total other pelagic sharks		**98,514**	**84,850**	**58,474**	**44,764**	**39,265**
Unclassified, assigned to pelagic	Unclassified	0	0	0	0	0
Total pelagic carcass weight		**98,514**	**85,177**	**58,474**	**49,088**	**40,227**

Table 7. Preliminary landings estimates in metric tons (mt) and pounds (lb) dressed weight (dw) for the Atlantic shark commercial fisheries, Atlantic Region.

Shark Management Group	2025 Quota (dressed weight, dw)	Estimated Landings through 12/31/2025 (dw)	% of 2025 Quota	2024 Landings through Same Reporting Period (dw)
Aggregated LCS (quota linked to Hammerhead)	168.9 mt (372,552 lb)	61.8 mt (136,208 lb)	37%	84.2 mt (185,731 lb)
Hammerhead (quota linked to Agg. LCS)	27.1 mt (59,736 lb)	20.5 mt (45,162 lb)	76%	17.8 mt (39,191 lb)
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal (quota linked to Blacknose south of 34° N. lat. only)	264.1 mt (582,333 lb)	31.9 mt (70,352 lb)	12%	77.7 mt (171,377 lb)
Blacknose (South of 34° N. lat. only)	17.2 mt (37,921 lb)	2.9 mt (6,471 lb)	17%	5.4 mt (11,852 lb)
Smoothhound	1,802.6 mt (3,973,902 lb)	252.4 mt (556,196 lb)	14%	333.8 mt (735,890 lb)

Table 8. Preliminary landings estimates in metric tons (mt) and pounds (lb) dressed weight (dw) for the Atlantic shark commercial fisheries, No Regional Quotas.

Shark Management Group	2025 Quota (dressed weight, dw)	Estimated Landings through 12/31/2025 (dw)	% of 2025 Quota	2024 Landings through Same Reporting Period (dw)
Shark Research Fishery (Aggregated LCS)	50.0 mt (110,230 lb)	<13 mt (<28,660 lb)	<26%	9.1 mt (20,016 lb)
Shark Research Fishery (Sandbar only)	90.7 mt (199,943 lb)	<56 mt (<123,458 lb)	<62%	56 mt (123,059 lb)
Blue	273.0 mt (601,856 lb)	0 mt (0 lb)	0%	<1 mt (< 2,205 lb)
Porbeagle	1.7 mt (3,748 lb)	<1 mt (2,205 lb)	<59%	<1 mt (<2,205 lb)
Pelagic Sharks other than Porbeagle or Blue ††	488.0 mt (1,075,856 lb)	18.1 mt (39,887 lb)	4%	16.3 mt (35,963 lb)

Recreational Landings

The 2024-2025 NOAA Fisheries SAFE Report includes data for 2020-2024 recreational shark landings (Tables 9-11, Figure 2) . For 2025, recreational data provided in state compliance reports are summarized in Table 12.

Table 9. Estimated Recreational Harvest of Large Coastal Sharks in the U.S. Atlantic Region in Number of Fish. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025.

Species	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Blacktip	1,507	485	1,503	4,292	345
Bull	17	.	1	11	6
Hammerhead, great	5	.	1	.	.
Hammerhead, scalloped	.	.	.	.	.
Hammerhead, smooth	.	.	.	.	.
Hammerhead, unclassified	.	.	.	.	.
Lemon	.	217	11,796	16	.
Nurse	2	1	29,595	36	1,280
Spinner	27	61,228	287	5	865
Tiger	.	1	.	.	.
Requiem shark, unclassified	37,803	241	14,147	10	.
Total	**39,361**	**62,173**	**57,330**	**4,380**	**2,496**

Table 10. Estimated Recreational Harvest of Small Coastal Sharks in the U.S. Atlantic Region in Number of Fish. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025.

Species	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Blacknose	661	1,855	1,105	1,410	880
Bonnethead	28,861	34,840	15,309	18,979	86,238
Finetooth	113	166	1,476	32,382	128
Atlantic sharpnose	34,256	72,251	18,248	24,714	49,219
Total	63,891	110,835	36,138	77,484	136,465

Table 11. Estimated Recreational Harvest of Smoothhound Sharks in the U.S. Atlantic Region in Number of Fish. Source: NOAA HMS SAFE Report, 2024-2025.

Region	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Atlantic	61,128	37,535	17,541	30,627	68,524

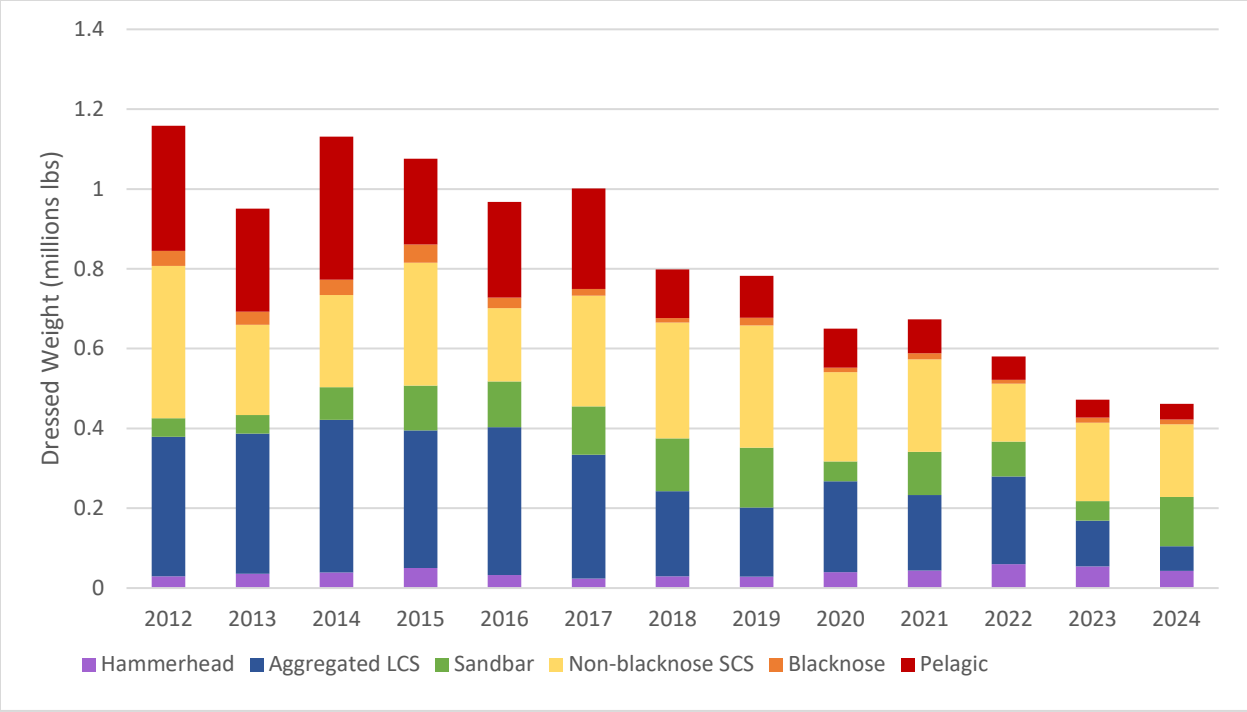


Figure 1. Commercial landings of coastal sharks off the east coast of the United States by species group, 2012-2024. Source: NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation Report, May 2026.

Table 12. Recreational harvest estimates (numbers of sharks or lbs) reported by states in 2025. Most estimates are from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) and have high percent standard error (PSE). Aggregated LCS and SCS are unspecified species reports.

Species	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL
Total Hammerhead												
Blacktip										3,113 lbs		
Total Aggregated LCS												56,359 lbs
Blacknose												15,094 lbs
Bonnethead										203,258 lbs	7,249	
Finetooth												
Atl. Sharpnose							6			26,197 lbs		
Spinner		1,640					1			286 lbs		
Thresher							3					
SCS Total									3,061			92,197 lbs
Blue												
Porbeagle	128											
Smooth dogfish	4,537	1,469	13,269	21,557	9,236	1,315		1,179	1,506	5,721 lbs		

IV. Status of Research and Monitoring

Under the Interstate Fishery Management for Coastal Sharks, the states are not required to conduct any fishery-dependent or independent monitoring; however, states are encouraged to submit any information collected while surveying for other species. This section describes the research and monitoring efforts through the 2025 fishing year, where available.

The Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery (COASTSPAN) Survey is administered by the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) through the Apex Predators Program based at the NEFSC's Narragansett Laboratory in Rhode Island. COASTSPAN has been collecting information on shark nursery areas along the U.S. Atlantic coast since 1998. It involves NOAA Fisheries scientists, along with state and university partners in New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The survey monitors the presence of young-of-year and juvenile sharks along the east coast. Longline and gillnet sampling, along with mark-recapture techniques are used to determine relative abundance, distribution, and migration of sharks utilizing nursery grounds from Massachusetts to Florida. In 2025, COASTSPAN program participants were the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and University of North Florida (samples Georgia and north Florida state waters). Standardized indices of abundance from COASTPAN surveys are used in the stock assessments for large and small coastal sharks.

Massachusetts

DMF continued its research on the fine-scale predatory behavior of white sharks off the coast of Massachusetts. In 2025, 22 white sharks were tagged with acoustic, satellite, and/or biologging tags off the coast of Cape Cod. When combined with collaborative tagging efforts off Canada (1), Maine (4), New York (1), New Jersey (1), North Carolina (3), South Carolina (40), and Florida (1), this brings the total to 415 individuals tagged since 2009. These data will be used to examine swimming patterns (e.g., traveling, resting, hunting, foraging, mating), bioenergetics, and, ultimately, provide estimates of the intensity of white shark predation on gray seals.

Rhode Island

The RI Division of Fish & Wildlife, Marine Fisheries Section (RIDEM DMF) has conducted a monthly and seasonal trawl survey since 1979 within Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island Sound and Block Island Sound. Smooth dogfish are the only coastal shark species captured in the trawl survey regularly. The Fall survey catches smooth dogfish most frequently, with indices from the Fall and Monthly surveys greater than the Spring survey in recent years (Figure 2).

RIDEM DMF has been improving Rhode Island's monitoring efforts on coastal sharks in state waters. An acoustic receiver array is now established in RI state waters, which will detect tagged fish within 0.5-1 km of a receiver. The receiver array is traditionally deployed from mid-April through mid-November/early December. To date, the array has detected sand tiger sharks, white sharks, smooth dogfish, blue sharks, shortfin mako sharks, thresher sharks, and sandbar sharks. Additional sampling is also being conducted through a Baited Remote Underwater Video System (BRUVS) survey and shark tagging efforts to understand their

residence time in RI state waters. The BRUVS is intended to monitor various species, including sharks. The tagging is directed at the pelagic shark complex.

In 2022, RIDEM DMF began a state waters observing program with gillnet harvesters. Data are reviewed to assess catch rates for coastal shark species when encountered in commercial gillnets.

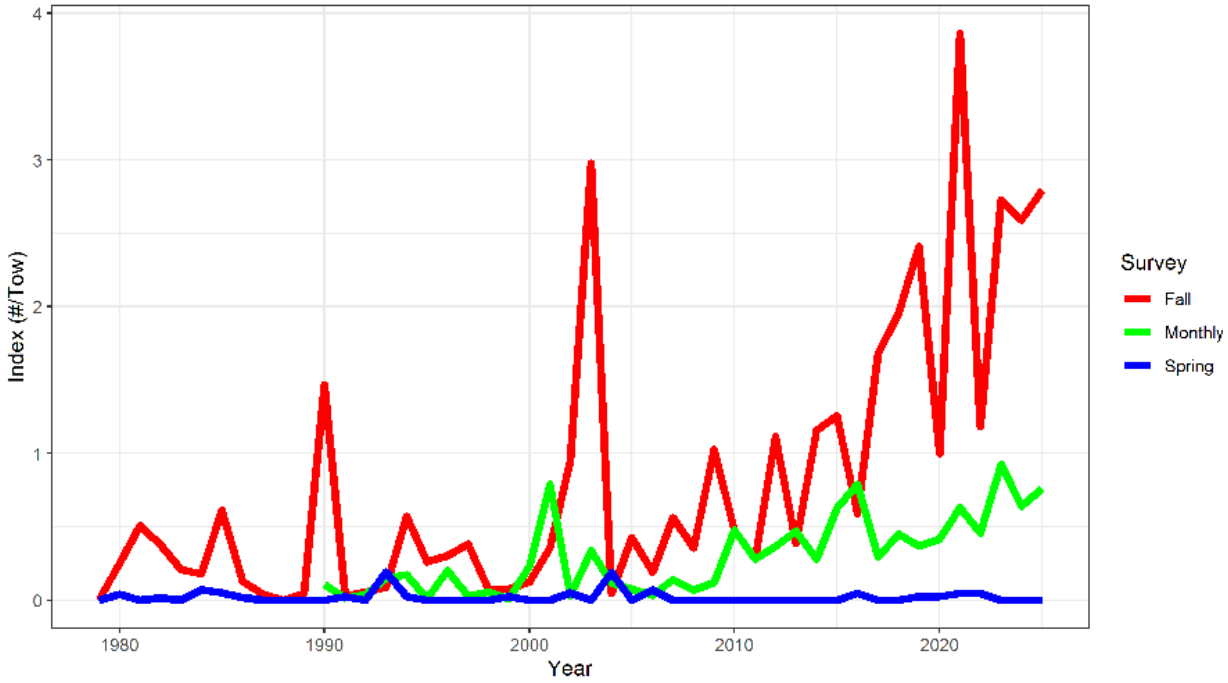


Figure 2. Smooth dogfish (*Mustelus canis*) annual mean number per tow from the RIDEM DMF bottom trawl surveys.

Connecticut

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) monitors the abundance of marine resources in nearby coastal waters with the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey. Spring (April, May and June) and fall (September and October) surveys are conducted each year. Other than smooth dogfish, coastal sharks are not typically encountered by the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey (Figure 3). The survey was not conducted in 2025. Additionally, the survey was not conducted in fall 2010 (mechanical issues) or 2020 (COVID-19 pandemic). More information on the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey report can be found here.

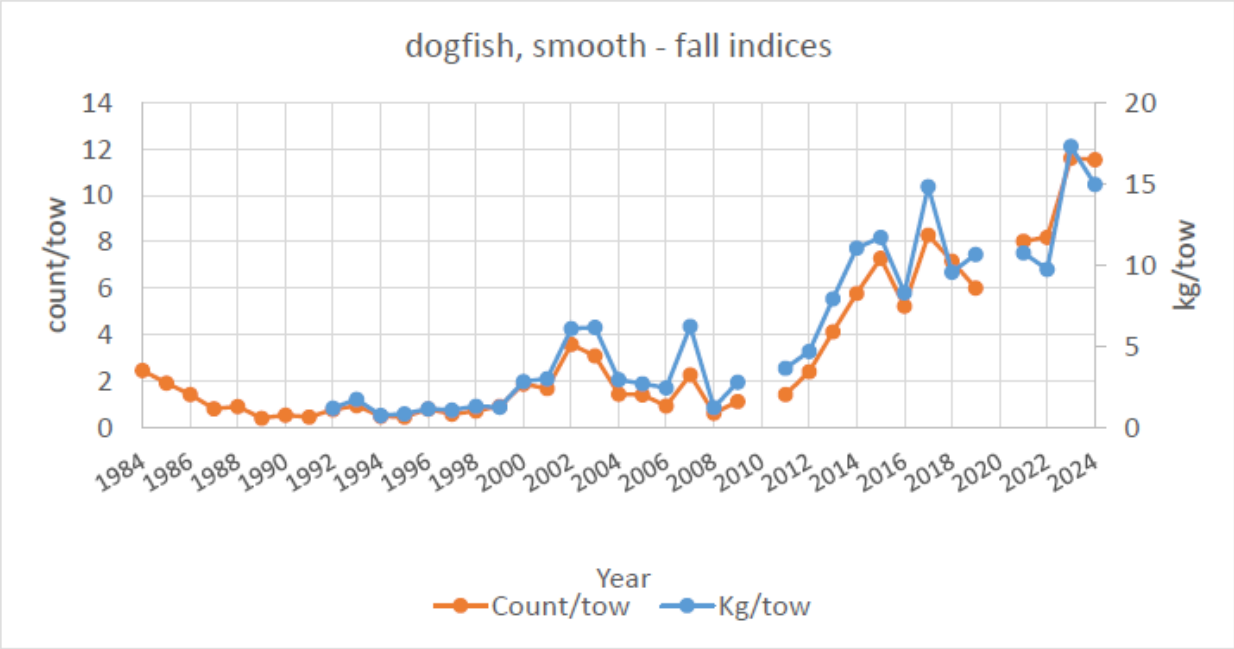


Figure 3. CT DEEP Long Island Sound Trawl Survey Smooth Dogfish Indices

New York

NYSDEC started a near shore multispecies ocean trawl survey fall of 2017. This survey was not completed in 2025 due to vessel issues.

Additionally, In 2025 New York DEC issued six special licenses to shark researchers, and each of these permit holders submitted reports of their sampling activities. Combined, these researchers sampled 11 different shark species from June–October. A total of 155 sharks were sampled and released under the purview of their permits. These researchers collected species, sex, and length information from most of the sharks sampled. Some researchers also collected muscle, fin, blood, or fecal samples as part of their studies. Collectively, these permit holders deployed 81 acoustic tags, 21 mTags, and17 satellite tags on the sharks that they sampled in 2025.

New Jersey

New Jersey does not currently conduct any fishery-independent monitoring programs specifically for Atlantic coastal sharks but does encounter sharks from the state's Ocean Stock Assessment Survey. Prolonged survey vessel maintenance resulted in no sampling for the entire 2025 calendar year.

Sharks sampled by the New Jersey Ocean Stock Assessment Survey are collected by a 30-meter otter trawl every January, April, June, August, and October since 1989. Tows are approximately 1 nautical mile and are performed via a stratified random sampling design. Latitudinal strata are identical to those used by the National Marine Fisheries Service groundfish survey. Longitudinal boundaries are defined by the 18-30, 30-60, and 60-90-foot isobaths. Smooth

Dogfish are cumulatively weighed and measured by total length in centimeters. All other shark species are sorted by gender, weighed individually, and measured by total length in centimeters.

Delaware

Delaware conducts a 30 ft adult trawl survey and a 16 ft juvenile trawl survey in the Delaware Bay. In the adult trawl survey, the smoothhound is the most common shark species caught (Figure 4), with the sand tiger shark (Figure 5) and sandbar shark (Figure 6) taken in low numbers. Thresher, Atlantic angel, Atlantic sharpnose (Figure 7) and Dusky Shark have been rarely caught in the past. Sand tiger and sandbar shark catch per nautical mile increased in 2025 compared to 2024. Smooth dogfish catch per nautical mile decreased in 2025 and remains relatively low compared to the early 2000s. In the juvenile trawl, the species caught include sand tiger sharks (Figure 8), sandbar sharks (Figure 9) and smoothhound (Figure 10). Apart from smoothhound, the capture of coastal sharks in the juvenile trawl is a rare occurrence.

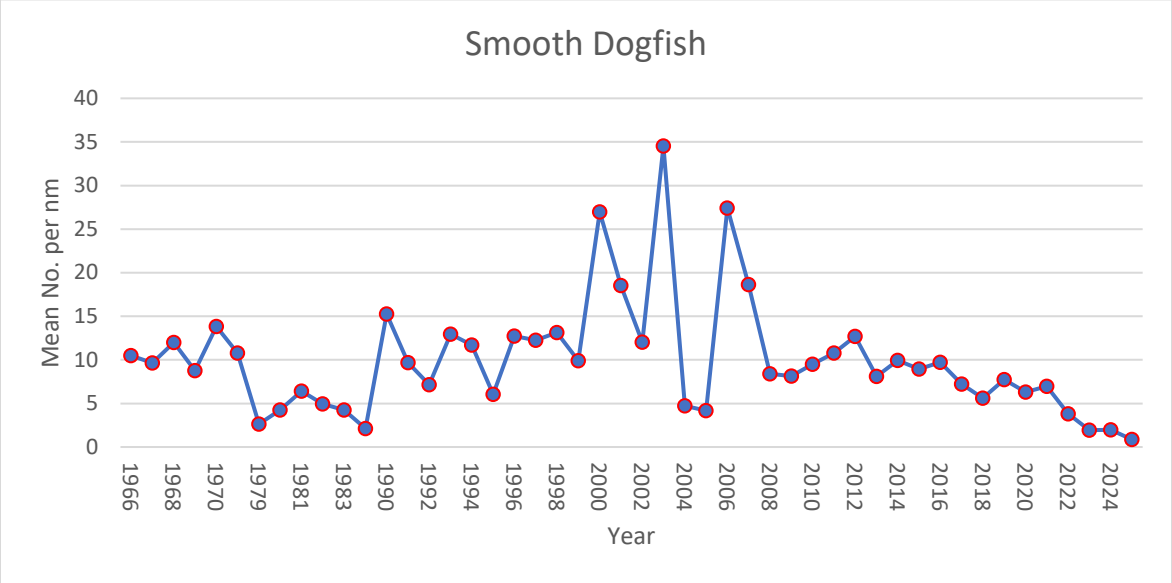


Figure 4. Smooth dogfish relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2025) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

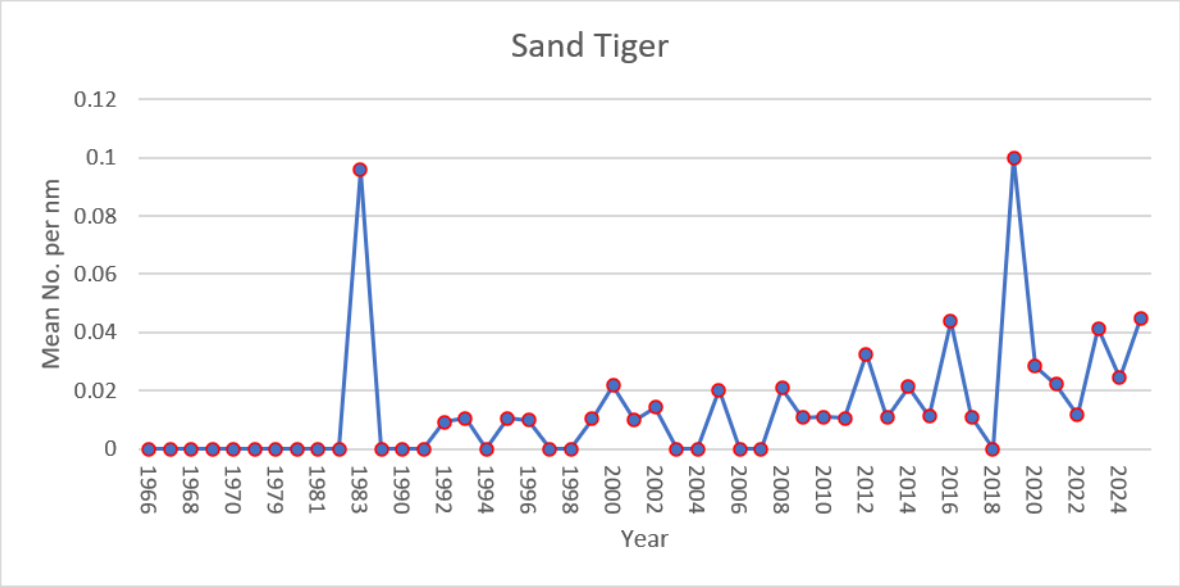


Figure 5. Sand tiger shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2025) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

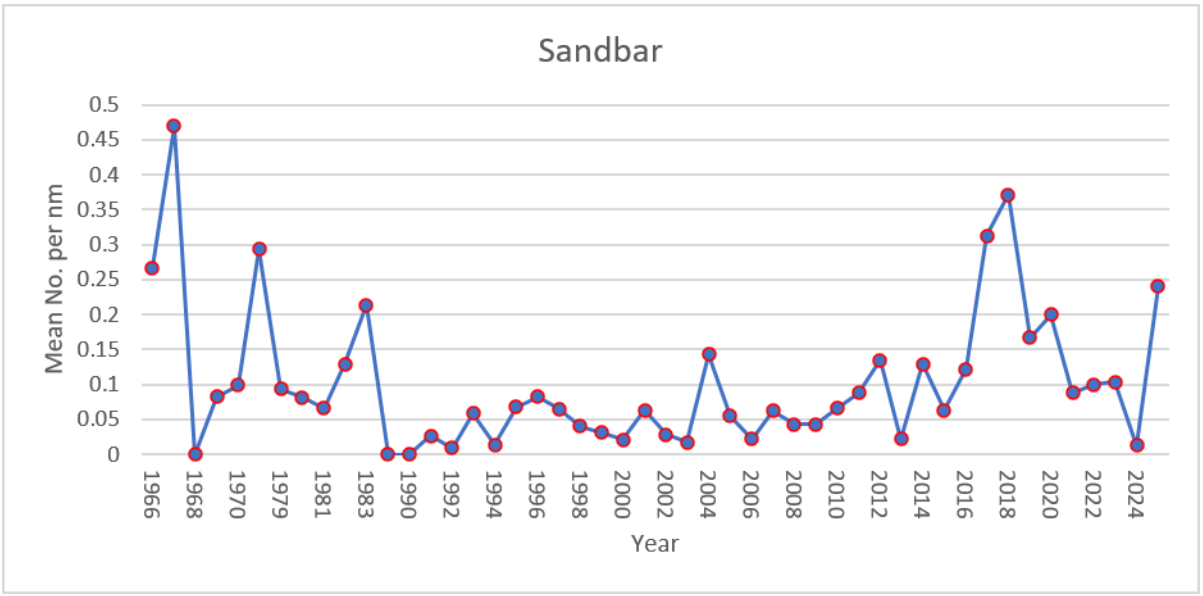


Figure 6. Sandbar shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2025) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

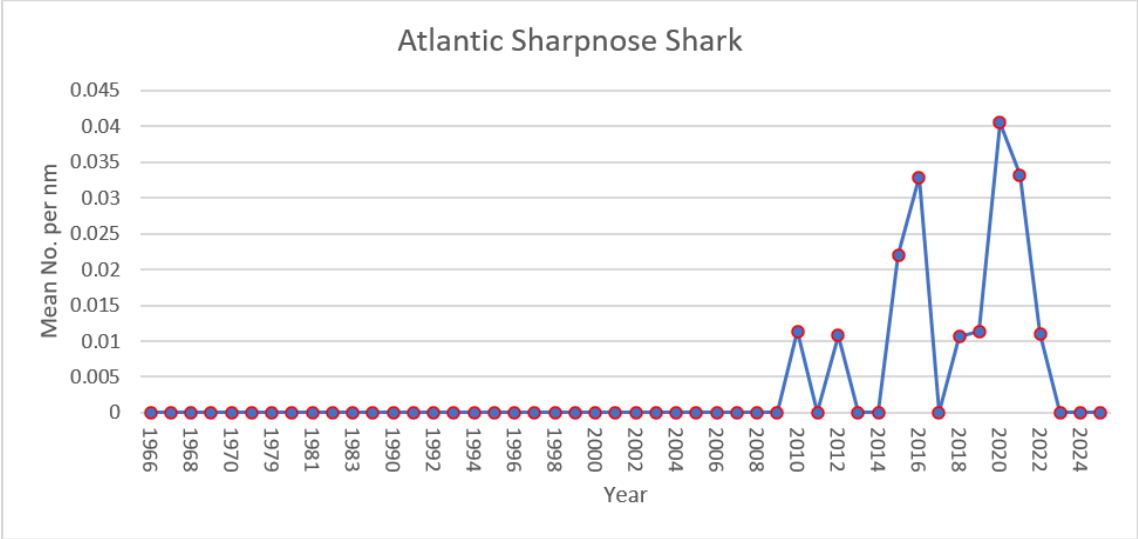


Figure 7. Atlantic sharpnose shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2025) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

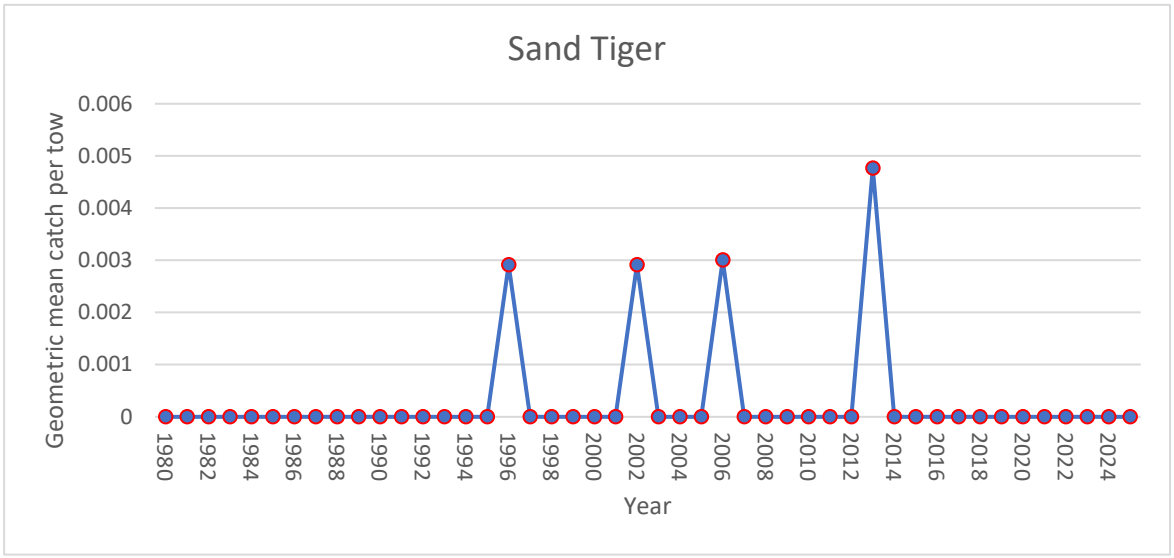


Figure 8. Index of sand tiger shark, time series (1980 – 2025) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

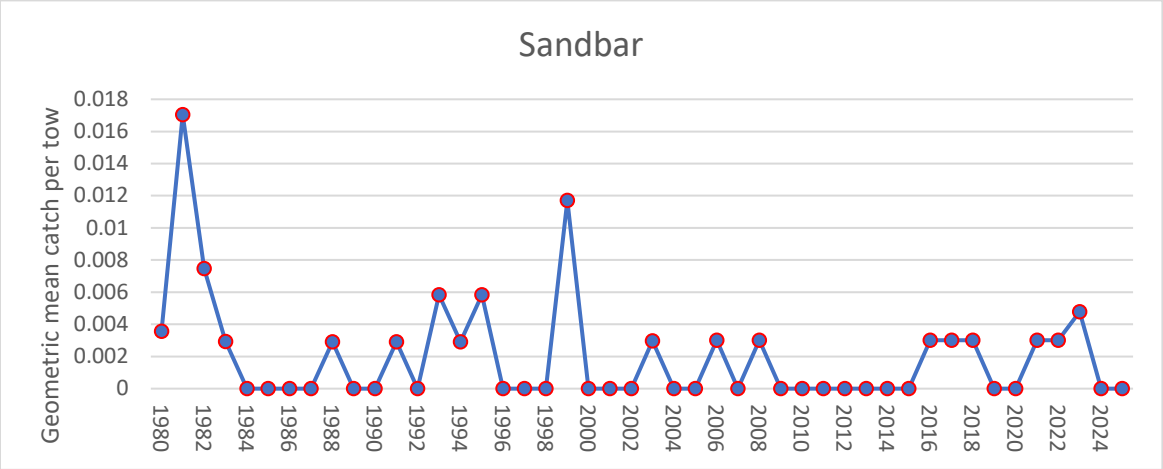


Figure 9. Index of sandbar shark, time series (1980 – 2025) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

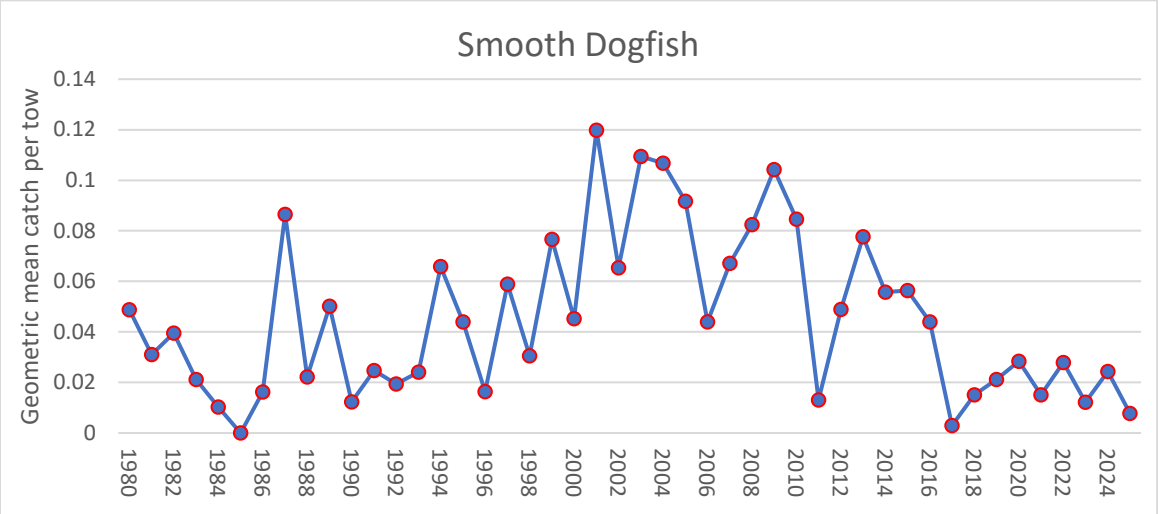


Figure 10. Index of young-of-year smooth dogfish abundance, time series (1980 – 2025) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

Maryland

No fishery-independent monitoring for Atlantic coastal sharks was conducted in Maryland state waters.

Virginia

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science Shark Research Program began in 1973 and is one of the longest running longline surveys in the world. The program has provided data on habitat utilization, age, growth, reproduction, trophic interactions, basic demographics, and relative abundance for dominant shark species. Cruise times have been variable over the time series, but sampling generally has occurred monthly from May through October. The survey utilizes a

fixed station design with six core sampling locations, although additional auxiliary locations have been sampled frequently over the years.

Beginning in 2012, a separate longline survey conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science designed specifically to target young-of-year sandbar sharks in the lower Chesapeake Bay and Eastern Shore was initiated. The new survey follows a stratified random sampling design, rather than a fixed survey design, and falls under the broader COASTSPAN umbrella survey.

In 2025, Atlantic sharpnose shark was the most commonly encountered species by the offshore survey followed by sandbar shark, spinner shark, sand tiger shark, tiger shark, scalloped hammerhead, blacktip shark, and dusky shark. Seven single blacknose sharks and one bull shark were also collected (Table 13). Seasonal patterns in survey catches were also evident with May and June showing the highest overall catches of sharks, while catches were lower during August and September.

Monthly COASTSPAN catches of neonate sandbar shark (<= 71 cm TL) in the lower Chesapeake Bay were lowest in June and increased during July and August. In the coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore, peak neonate catch occurred in July (Table 14). As in previous years, neonate total catch in 2025 was higher in the coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore when compared to that of the lower Chesapeake Bay.

Table 13. Monthly catch summaries for key shark species encountered during offshore longline cruise conducted by VASMAP, 2025 pooled across the standard six sampling sites. Effort is expressed as total longline soak time of 100 hooks.

Month	Effort (hrs)	Sand Tiger	Sandbar	Tiger	Atlantic Sharpnose	Spinner	Blacknose	Blacktip	Bull	Scalloped Hammerhead	Dusky	Silky	Total
May	29.4	10	39	2	0	9	0	5	1	4	7	0	77
Jun	33.4	0	6	6	54	3	7	2	0	1	0	0	79
Aug	28.0	2	5	3	15	4	0	1	0	3	0	0	33
Sep	19.8	0	7	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	2	0	15
Total		12	57	11	69	19	7	9	1	10	9	0	204

Table 14. Neonate catch summaries for each monthly COASTSPAN cruise in 2025, pooled across the sampling sites with the lower Chesapeake Bay and coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore. Effort is expressed as total longline soak time of 50 hooks.

Lower Chesapeake Bay

Month	Effort (hrs)	Neonate
Jun	10.8	14
Jul	12.7	30
Aug	10.5	36
Total		80

Lagoons, Eastern Shore

Month	Effort (hrs)	Neonate
Jun	7.6	68
Jul	7.5	122
Aug	7.5	42
Total		232

North Carolina

Fishery-Dependent

Fishery-dependent sampling of North Carolina commercial fisheries has been ongoing since 1982 (conducted under Title III of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act and funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service). Predominate fisheries sampled includes the ocean gill net, estuarine gill net, ocean trawl, long haul seine/swipe net, beach seine, and pound net fisheries. Shark species were sampled from 8 commercial trips in 2025. From these trips, 24 sharks comprising five species were sampled (Table 15).

Table 15. North Carolina 2025 fishery-dependent shark sampling summary by species for total number of individuals and total sampled weight.

Shark Species	#Total Individuals	Weight (kg)
Atlantic Sharpnose	13	22.7
Blacktip	4	44.4
Hammerhead, unidentified	3	69.8
Thresher	3	39.1
Finetooth	1	6.8
Total	24	182.8

Fishery-Independent

The NCDMF has two fishery-independent surveys that collect coastal sharks: A gill net survey (Program 915) and a red drum long line survey (Program 365). Program 915 was initiated in 2001 and aims to provide annual relative abundance indices for key estuarine species in the near shore, Pamlico Sound, Pamlico, Pungo, Neuse, New, and Cape Fear rivers. The survey employs a stratified random sampling design and utilizes multiple mesh gill nets (3.0 in to 6.5 in stretched mesh, by 0.5 in increments). Program 365 was initiated in 2007 for developing an index of abundance for adult red drum, but also allows for capture and tagging of Atlantic coastal sharks in collaboration with the NOAA Fisheries Cooperative Shark Tagging Program.

Eleven species of shark were encountered in Program 915 in 2025, with Atlantic sharpnose (n=452) representing the highest abundance (Table 16). Twelve sharks representing four species were caught in Program 365 in 2025.

Table 16. Summary of shark captures from NCDMF fishery-independent gill net survey for 2025.

Shark Species	# Measured	Minimum TL (mm)	Maximum TL (mm)	Average TL (mm)
Atlantic Angel Shark	3	883	1,015	951
Atlantic Sharpnose Shark	452	272	1,020	528
Blacknose Shark	2	522	1,013	767
Blacktip Shark	31	659	1,460	1,246
Bonnethead Shark	166	438	1,195	928
Bull Shark	16	742	951	891
Dusky Shark	1	966	966	966
Finetooth Shark	15	610	1,491	1,256
Sandbar Shark	73	663	1,350	968
Smooth Dogfish	3	617	730	672
Spinner Shark	2	940	965	952
Unidentified/Misidentified LCS*	2	740	749	744

*Identified as Dusky Shark but TL below length at birth

South Carolina

Currently, data are collected from estuarine waters by the SCDNR Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery Habitat survey (COASTSPAN), the SCDNR trammel net survey, and the Coastal Longline Survey. The COASTSPAN survey monitors the presence and abundance of young-of-year and juvenile sharks in the estuaries and bays of South Carolina from April-September using gillnets, longlines and drumlines to sample index stations (Table 17).

The SCDNR trammel net survey is designed to sample recreationally important species in shallow estuarine waters. Sharks are not a target species, but their abundance as well as length and sex data are recorded (Table 12). Stations selected based on suitable habitats are randomly sampled using a multi-panel net to encircle a section of marsh. Species captured are measured, sexed if possible, and released. In addition, physical and water quality data are recorded for each sample location.

The presence and abundance of juvenile and adult coastal sharks in the bays, sounds and coastal waters of South Carolina are documented by the Coastal Longline Survey using a stratified-random approach to sample for adult red drum and coastal sharks annually from August to December. Species captured are measured, sexed, tagged, and released, and physical and water quality parameters are recorded. The data gathered from these programs are shared with the NMFS Apex Predators Program and are utilized in stock assessments and management decisions in South Carolina.

Table 17. Number of sharks captured and tagged by South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery Habitat Survey (COASTSPAN), Trammel Net Survey, and Coastal Longline survey in 2025.

	COASTSPAN		Trammel Net		Coastal Longline Survey	
Shark Species	Captured	Tagged	Captured	Tagged	Captured	Tagged
Atlantic Sharpnose	110	0	42	0	313	0
Blacknose	7	6	2	0	80	77
Blacktip	54	32	12	0	83	69
Bonnethead	209	143	167	0	20	19
Bull	10	10	2	0	4	3
Dusky	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finetooth	229	71	25	0	43	38
Great Hammerhead	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lemon	18	17	12	0	3	1
Nurse	2	0	0	0	2	1
Sand Tiger	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandbar	244	130	4	0	89	78
Scalloped/Carolina Hammerhead	39	0	1	0	6	6
Smooth Dogfish	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spinner	1	1	0	0	23	22
Tiger	0	0	0	0	0	0

Georgia

Fishery-Dependent

Although a directed fishery for sharks does not exist in Georgia waters, there is a fishery-dependent sampling project conducted by the Coastal Resources Division (CRD) that can result in the incidental capture of coastal sharks. The Marine Sportfish Carcass Recovery Project, a partnership with recreational anglers along the Georgia coast, is used to collect biological data from finfish. In 2025, no coastal shark species were included.

Fishery-Independent

Georgia has several fishery-independent surveys that sample in areas where coastal shark species are encountered and one survey specifically designed to sample sub-adult sharks in Georgia's inshore waters.

- *Coastal Longline Survey (SEAMAP):* The Coastal Longline Survey is designed to sample adult Red Drum and coastal sharks. Sampling occurs in inshore and nearshore waters of southeast Georgia from mid-June through mid-December. Sampling gear consists of a bottom set 926 m, 600 lb test monofilament mainline configured with 60, 0.5 m gangions made of 200 lb test monofilament. Each gangion consists of a longline snap and a 15/0 circle hook. Soak time for each set is 30 minutes. During 2025, CRD staff deployed 140 sets consisting of 8,400 hooks and 70 hours of soak time. A total of 225 sharks were captured, representing 11 species (Table 18).

- *Shark Nursery Survey (COASTSPAN):* The University of North Florida assumed field operations for this survey in 2016. Data for the complete time series are maintained by the NMFS Apex Predators Program in Narragansett, RI (contact: Cami McCandless).
- *Ecological Monitoring Trawl Survey (EMTS):* The EMTS is designed to sample penaeid shrimp, blue crab, and other marine organisms typically encountered in the trawl for management and monitoring purposes. Each month, a 40 ft flat otter trawl with neither a turtle excluder device nor bycatch reduction device is deployed at 36 stations across six estuaries. At each station, a standard 15-minute tow is made. During 2025, 432 tows/observations were conducted, totaling 106.68 hours of tow time. A total of 172 sharks, representing 4 species, were captured during 2025 (Table 18).
- *Marine Sportfish Population Health Survey (MSPHS)*: The MSPHS is a multi-faceted ongoing survey used to collect information on the biology and population dynamics of recreationally important finfish. Sampling is ongoing in three Georgia estuaries: the Altamaha River System, St. Andrew, and Wassaw. During the June to August period, young-of-the-year Red Drum in the three estuaries are collected using gillnets to gather data on relative abundance and location of occurrence. Between September and November, fish populations in the Altamaha River System and Wassaw Estuary are monitored using trammel nets to gather data on relative abundance and size composition. In 2025, a total of 324 gillnet and 225 trammel net sets were made, resulting in the capture of 207 sharks representing 8 species (Table 18).

Table 18. Numbers of coastal sharks captured in Georgia fishery-independent surveys in 2021 by species and by survey.

	CLS	EMTS	MSPHS
SHARK, ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE	96	23	2
SHARK, BLACKNOSE	54	---	---
SHARK, BLACKTIP	15	2	3
SHARK, BONNETHEAD	15	146	185
SHARK, BULL	1	---	1
SHARK, FINETOOTH	12	--	3
SHARK, LEMON	---	---	12
SHARK, NURSE	2	---	---
SHARK, SANDBAR	17	--	---
SHARK, SCALLOPED HAMMERHEAD	3	1	---
SHARK, SPINNER	5	---	1
SHARK, TIGER	5	---	---
ALL SPECIES COMBINED	225	172	207

Florida

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission had no fisheries-independent monitoring programs for coastal sharks during the 2025 calendar year.

V. Status of Management Measures and Issues

Coastal Sharks are managed under the Interstate FMP for Coastal Sharks, which was adopted in August 2008 and effective in January 1, 2009, Addendum I (2009), Addendum II (2013),

Addendum III (2013), Addendum IV (2016), and Addendum V (2018). The FMP addresses the management of 41 species and establishes a suite of management measures for recreational and commercial shark fisheries in state waters (0 – 3 miles from shore). Addendum V provided the Board the ability to respond to changes in the stock status of coastal shark populations and adjust regulations through Board action rather than an addendum, ensuring greater consistency between state and federal shark regulations.

ASMFC will continue to respond to changes in the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species FMP and make changes as necessary to the interstate FMP.

VI. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements for 2025

Addendum III to the Coastal Sharks FMP was implemented in March 2014, which modified the recreational minimum size limits and the commercial species groupings in the FMP. The Board annually sets specifications, generally maintaining complimentary management with federal waters measures.

In 2019, the Board approved the requirement for non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures. In 2022, the Board adopted a zero retention limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks for recreational and commercial state waters fisheries. In May 2024 the Board also established a zero-possession limit for oceanic whitetip sharks for recreational and commercial fisheries.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of required coastal shark fishery regulations. All states must demonstrate through the inclusion of regulatory language that these recreational and commercial management measures were implemented.

Recreational Size Limits

Table 19. Recreational minimum size limits, 2025.

No Minimum Size	Minimum Fork Length 54 inches		Minimum Fork Length 78 inches
Smoothhound	Tiger	Nurse	Great hammerhead
Atlantic sharpnose	Blacktip	Porbeagle	Scalloped hammerhead
Bonnethead	Spinner	Thresher	Smooth hammerhead
	Bull	Oceanic whitetip	
	Lemon	Blue	
	Blacknose	Finetooth	

Commercial Species Groupings

This FMP establishes eight commercial ‘species groups’ for management (Table 1): Prohibited, Research, Smoothhound, Non-Blacknose Small Coastal, Blacknose, Aggregated Large Coastal, Hammerhead, and Pelagic. These groupings apply to all commercial shark fisheries in state waters.

VII. PRT Recommendations

State Compliance

The PRT noted one inconsistency with the coastal sharks FMP:

- Delaware's regulations regarding the circle hook requirement states "It is unlawful to use any hook other than a non-offset, corrodible circle hook when recreationally fishing for the sharks specified in this regulation, excluding smoothhound, except when fishing with artificial lures or flies." The exemption of smoothhound from the circle hook requirement is inconsistent with the Board action.

The PRT determined that all other states have fully implemented regulations consistent with the FMP requirements.

De Minimis Status

The Coastal Sharks FMP does not establish specific *de minimis* guidelines that would exempt a state from regulatory requirements contained in this plan. *De minimis* shall be determined on a case-by case basis. *De minimis* often exempts states from monitoring requirements in other fisheries but this plan does not contain any monitoring requirements.

De minimis guidelines are established in other fisheries when implementation and enforcement of a regulation is deemed unnecessary for attainment of the fishery management plan's objectives and conservation of the resource. Due to the unique characteristics of the coastal shark fishery, namely the large size of sharks compared to relatively small quotas, the taking of a single shark could contribute to overfishing of a shark species or group. Therefore, exempting a state from any of the regulatory requirements contained in this plan could threaten attainment of this plans' goals and objectives.

Massachusetts is the only state that has been granted *de minimis* status. Massachusetts can continue to have *de minimis* status until their landings patterns change or they request a discontinuation. In some cases, it is unnecessary for states with *de minimis* status to implement all regulatory requirements in the FMP. Massachusetts has implemented all regulations with two exceptions: it is exempt from the possession limit and closures of the aggregated large coastal and hammerhead shark fisheries.

VIII. Research Recommendations

Research recommendations were identified in 2018 in the Commission's Fisheries Research Priorities document (p. 42).

APPENDIX 1. OVERVIEW OF COASTAL SHARK REGULATIONS

Coastal Sharks FMP Regulatory Requirements

1. Recreational seasonal closure (Section 4.2.1)
    a. Recreational anglers are prohibited from possessing silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead in the state waters of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey from May 15 through July 15—regardless of where the shark was caught.
    b. Recreational fishermen who catch any of these species in federal waters may not transport them through the state waters of VA, MD, DE, and NJ during the seasonal closure.
2. Recreationally permitted species (Section 4.2.2)
    a. Recreational anglers are allowed to possess aggregated large coastal sharks, hammerheads, tiger sharks, SCS, and pelagic sharks. Authorized shark species include: aggregated LCS (blacktip, bull, spinner, lemon, and nurse); hammerhead (great hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, scalloped hammerhead); tiger sharks; SCS (blacknose, finetooth, Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead sharks); and, pelagic sharks (blue, common thresher, and porbeagle). Sandbar sharks and silky sharks (and all prohibited species of sharks) are not authorized for harvest by recreational anglers.
3. Landings Requirements (Section 4.2.3)
    a. All sharks (with exception) caught by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails, and fins attached naturally to the carcass. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass by making an incision at the base of the caudal peduncle as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited.
    b. All sharks (with exception) harvested by commercial fishermen within state boundaries must have the tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass through landing. Fins may be cut as long as they remain attached to the carcass (by natural means) with at least a small portion of uncut skin. Sharks may be eviscerated and have the heads removed. Sharks may not be filleted or cut into pieces at sea.
    c. Exception: Fishermen holding a valid state commercial permit may process smooth dogfish sharks at sea out to 50 miles from shore, as long as the total weight of smooth dogfish shark fins landed or found on board a vessel does not exceed 12 percent of the total weight of smooth dogfish shark carcasses landed or found on board.
4. Recreational Minimum Size Limits (Section 4.2.4)
    a. Sharks caught in the recreational fishery must have a fork length of at least 4.5 feet (54 inches) with the exception of Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, and

smoothhound which have no minimum size. Hammerhead species must have a fork length (FL) of 6.5 feet (78 inches).

5. Authorized Recreational Gear (Section 4.2.5)
    a. Recreational anglers may catch sharks only using a handline or rod & reel. Handlines are defined as a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline must be retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means.
    b. Non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks are required when fishing for sharks recreationally, in state waters. The only exception is when fishing with flies or artificial lures.
6. Possession limits in one twenty-four hour period (Section 4.2.7 and 4.3.6)
    a. Recreational and commercial possession limits as specified in Table 18.
    b. Smooth dogfish harvest is not limited in state waters and recreational shore-anglers may harvest an unlimited amount of smooth dogfish.
7. Commercial Seasonal Closure (Section 4.3.2)
    a. All commercial fishermen are prohibited from possessing silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead in the state waters of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey from May 15 through July 15. Fishermen who catch any of the above species in a legal manner in federal waters may transit through the state waters listed above if all gear is stowed.
8. Quota Specification (Section 4.3.4)
    a. When NOAA Fisheries closes the fishery for any species, the commercial landing, harvest, and possession of that species will be prohibited in state waters until NOAA Fisheries reopens the fishery.
9. Permit requirements (Section 4.3.8)
    a. State: Commercial shark fishermen must hold a state commercial license or permit in order to commercially catch and sell sharks in state waters.
    b. Federal: A federal Commercial Shark Dealer Permit is required to buy and sell any shark caught in state waters.
    c. Display and research permit is required to be exempt from seasonal closure, quota, possession limit, size limit, gear, and prohibited species restrictions. States are required to include annual information for all sharks taken for display throughout the life of the shark.
10. Authorized commercial gear (Section 4.3.8.3)
    a. Commercial fishermen can only use one of the following gear types (and are prohibited from using any gear type not listed below) to catch sharks in state waters.

i. **Rod & reel.**
ii. **Handlines.** Handlines are defined as a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline is retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means, and must be attached to, or in contact with, a vessel.
iii. **Small Mesh Gillnets.** Defined as having a stretch mesh size smaller than 5 inches.
iv. **Large Mesh Gillnets.** Defined as having a stretch mesh size equal to or greater than 5 inches.
v. **Trawl nets.**
vi. **Shortlines.** Shortlines are defined as fishing lines containing 50 or fewer hooks and measuring less than 500 yards in length. A maximum of 2 shortlines are allowed per vessel.
vii. **Pounds nets/fish traps.**
viii. **Weirs.**

11. Bycatch Reduction Measures (Section 4.3.10)

    a. Any vessel using a shortline must use corrodible circle hooks. All shortline vessels must practice the protocols and possess the recently updated federally required release equipment for pelagic and bottom longlines for the safe handling, release, and disentanglement of sea turtles and other non-target species, all captains and vessel owners must be certified in using handling and release equipment.

12. Smooth Dogfish

    a. Each state must identify their percentage of the overall quota (Addendum II, 3.1)

    b. Smooth dogfish must make up at least 25%, by weight, of total catch on board at time of landing. Trips that do not meet the 25% catch composition requirement can land smooth dogfish, but fins must remain naturally attached to the carcass (Addendum IV, 3.0; modifies Addendum II Section 3.5).

Table 20. Possession/retention limits for shark species in state waters

Recreational	*Shore-angler*	1 shark (of any species except prohibited) per person per day; plus one Atlantic sharpnose, and one bonnethead. No limit on smoothhound.
	Vessel-fishing	1 shark (of any species except prohibited) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose, and one bonnethead per person per vessel. No limit on smoothhound.
Commercial	*Directed permit*	Variable possession limit for aggregated large coastal sharks (LCS) and hammerhead shark management groups. The Commission will follow NMFS for in-season changes to the possession limit. The possession limit range for LCS is 0-55, the default is 55 sharks per trip. 8 blacknose sharks per trip. No limit for SCS or pelagic sharks.
	Incidental permit	3 aggregated LCS per vessel per trip and 16 pelagic or SCS (combined) per vessel per trip