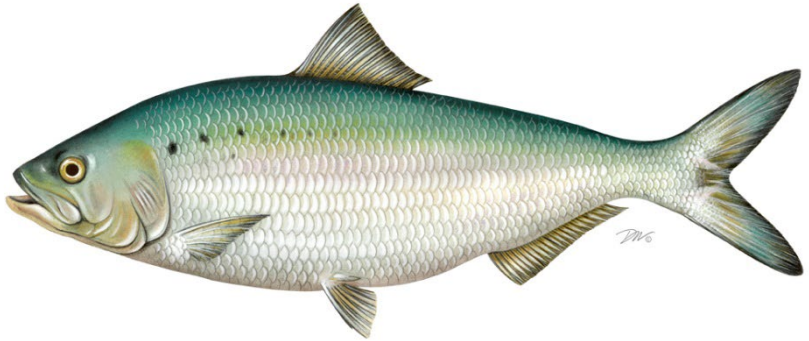
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Updated Plans for American Shad and River Herring



ASMFC Shad and River Herring Management Board

November 10, 2026

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Items for Board Consideration

- Update to the Delaware River Basin Cooperative's American shad habitat plan
- Maine American shad SFMP Update
- South Carolina river herring AMP Update
- Update on Florida's American shad SFMP
- Review of New York's sustainability metrics for the river herring
- Review of South Carolina's sustainability metrics for the American shad
- **All items were recommended for approval by the Technical Committee**

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

SFMP & AMP Background

- Amendments 2 & 3 of the Shad and River Herring FMP require states wishing to have a fishery to submit a Sustainable Fishery Management Plan (SFMP) that will:
  - "demonstrate their stock could support a commercial and/or recreational fishery that will not diminish the future stock reproduction and recruitment"
- The Management Board can approve a proposed alternative management program (AMP) if the state or jurisdiction can show to the Management Board's satisfaction that the alternative proposal will have the same conservation value as the measures contained in the FMP
  - May be appropriate for systems with no known harvest
- Plans are updated and reviewed every 5 years to reassess stock status and sustainability

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Shad Habitat Plan Background

- Amendment 3 also requires all states and jurisdictions to submit habitat plans for American shad
  - Plans should be a summary of current and historical spawning and nursery habitats, threats to those habitats, and habitat restoration programs
- Most plans were originally submitted in 2014, and many were updated in 2021
  - There are no requirements in Amendment 3 about the frequency for which the plans should be updated
  - Recommendation was for the states review the plans every five years and update them as needed

DE Co-op Habitat Plan Update

- The previous habitat plan was last updated in 2021 and remains accurate for the Delaware River Basin
- The Co-op will retain the use of the 2021 plan for the next 5-year interval (2026-2031)
- In their letter, the Co-op included a list of significant habitat-related items that have occurred since the development of the 2021 Plan
  - Some examples include dams that were removed, planned future dam removals and fish passage, and changes to required dissolved oxygen levels in the Delaware River Estuary

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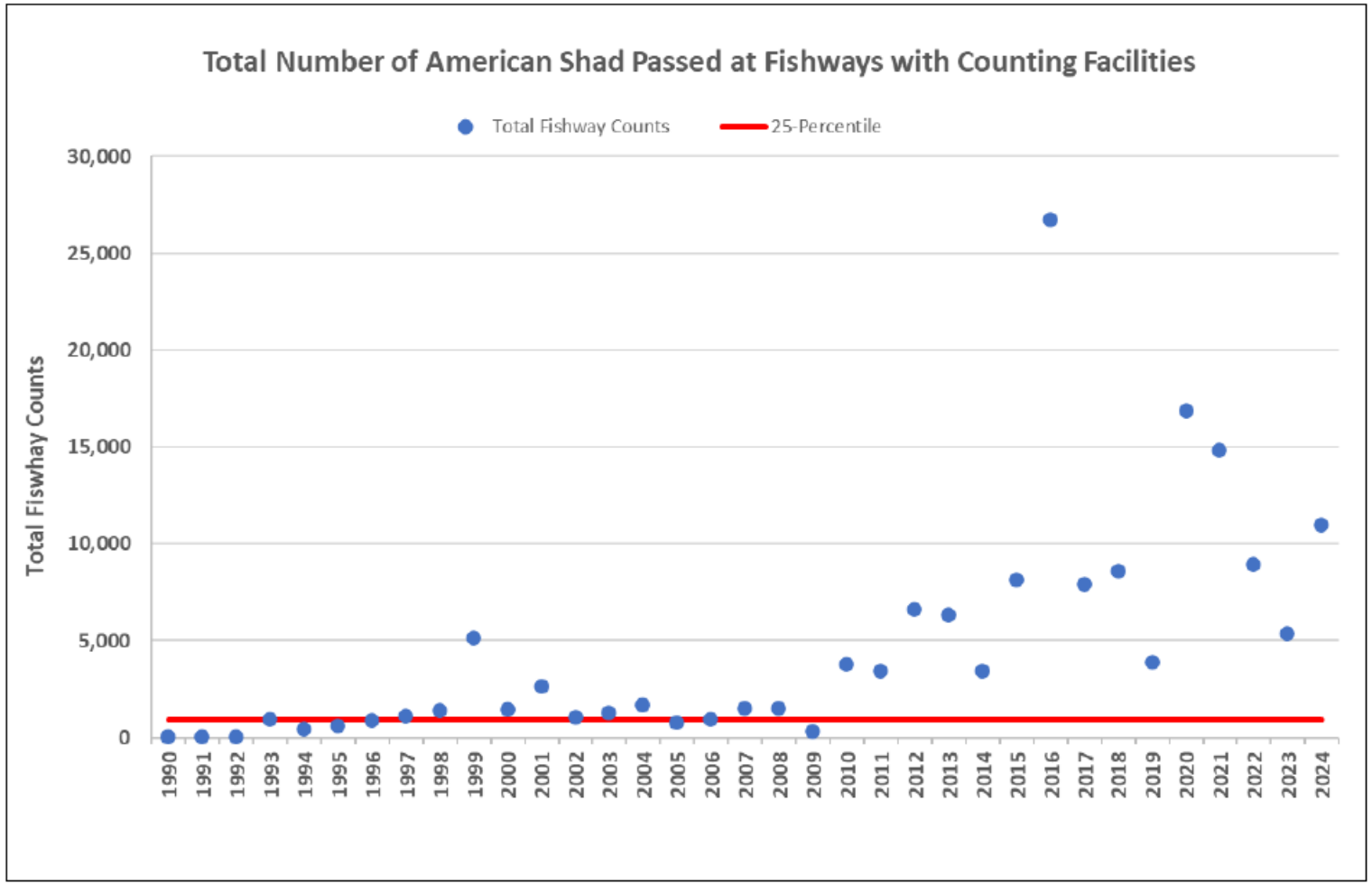
ME American Shad SFMP Update

- No significant changes in 2026 update
- Sustainability Targets
  - JAI Series (1984 - 2024)
  - Total Fishway Counts (1990 - 2024)
  - Mean Fishway Counts (1990 - 2024)
- If for three consecutive years either the JAI survey or one or more trap counts fall below the 25th percentile, the American shad harvest will be reduced to a one-fish bag limit, or a defined fishing season will be implemented to reduce effort to an equivalent level
- If for three consecutive years both the JAI survey and one or more trap counts fall below the 25th percentile, the American shad fishery will be closed to harvest

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ME American Shad SFMP Update

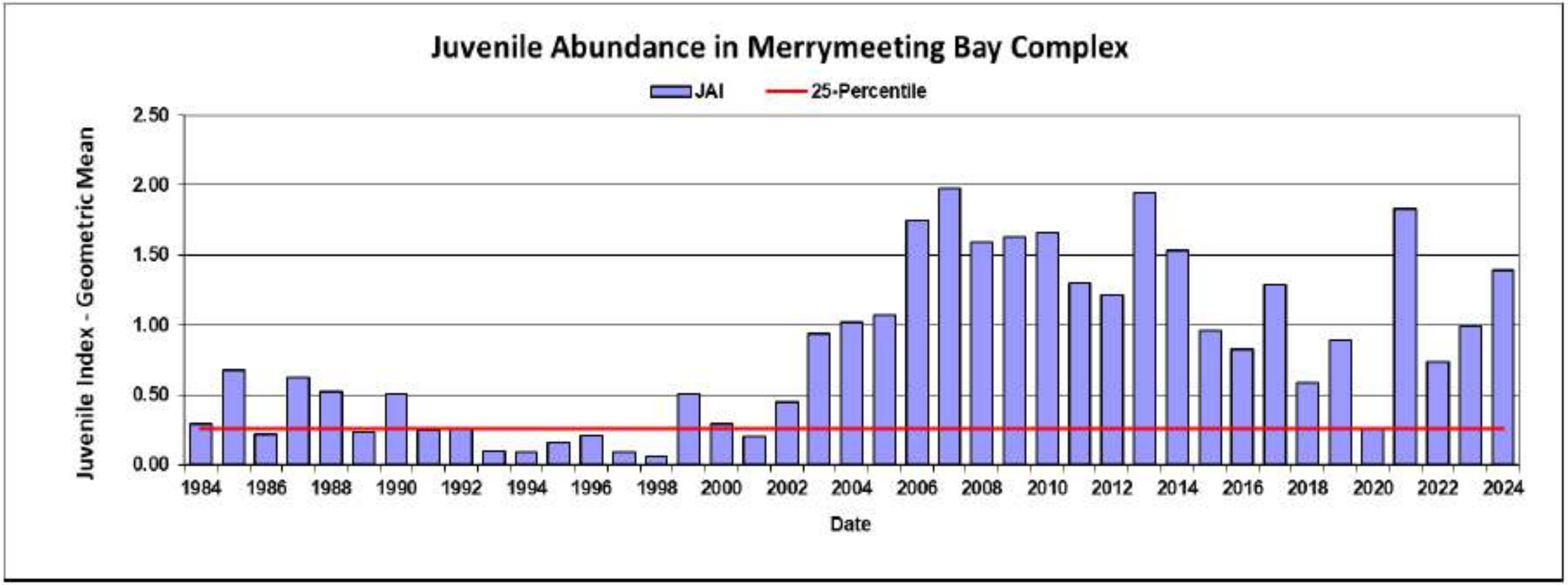
Figure 13. Cumulative upstream passage counts of American shad on all Maine rivers with counting capability.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

ME American Shad SFMP Update

Figure 14. American shad JAI survey in Merrymeeting Bay 1984 – 2024.



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

SC River Herring AMP Update

- No significant changes in 2026 update
- The purpose of SC's AMP for river herring is to allow waters of the ACE Basin and Savannah River watersheds to remain open for recreation fishing purposes
- 1 bushel fish aggregate daily creel for blueback herring in all rivers throughout the state
  - SC is unaware of any directed recreational fishing for river herring other than in the Santee-Cooper system, which is managed under a separate SFMP

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

SC River Herring AMP Update

- SCDNR will continue current fishery-dependent and fishery-independent monitoring
- If MRIP survey reveals positive harvest of river herring for 3 consecutive years, SCDNR will initiate a review process to demonstrate sustainability for these river systems
- If sustainability cannot be demonstrated, SCDNR will initiate regulatory changes for these rivers systems

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Update to FL American Shad SFMP

- After 9 consecutive years below sustainability metrics in the St. Johns River System, FWC voted to changed the fishery to catch-and-release
- Therefore, Florida has decided to remove their American Shad SFMP for the St. Johns River System, as SFMPs are not required for catch-and-release fisheries
- Florida will submit a new SFMP if conditions improve and they would like to resume harvest

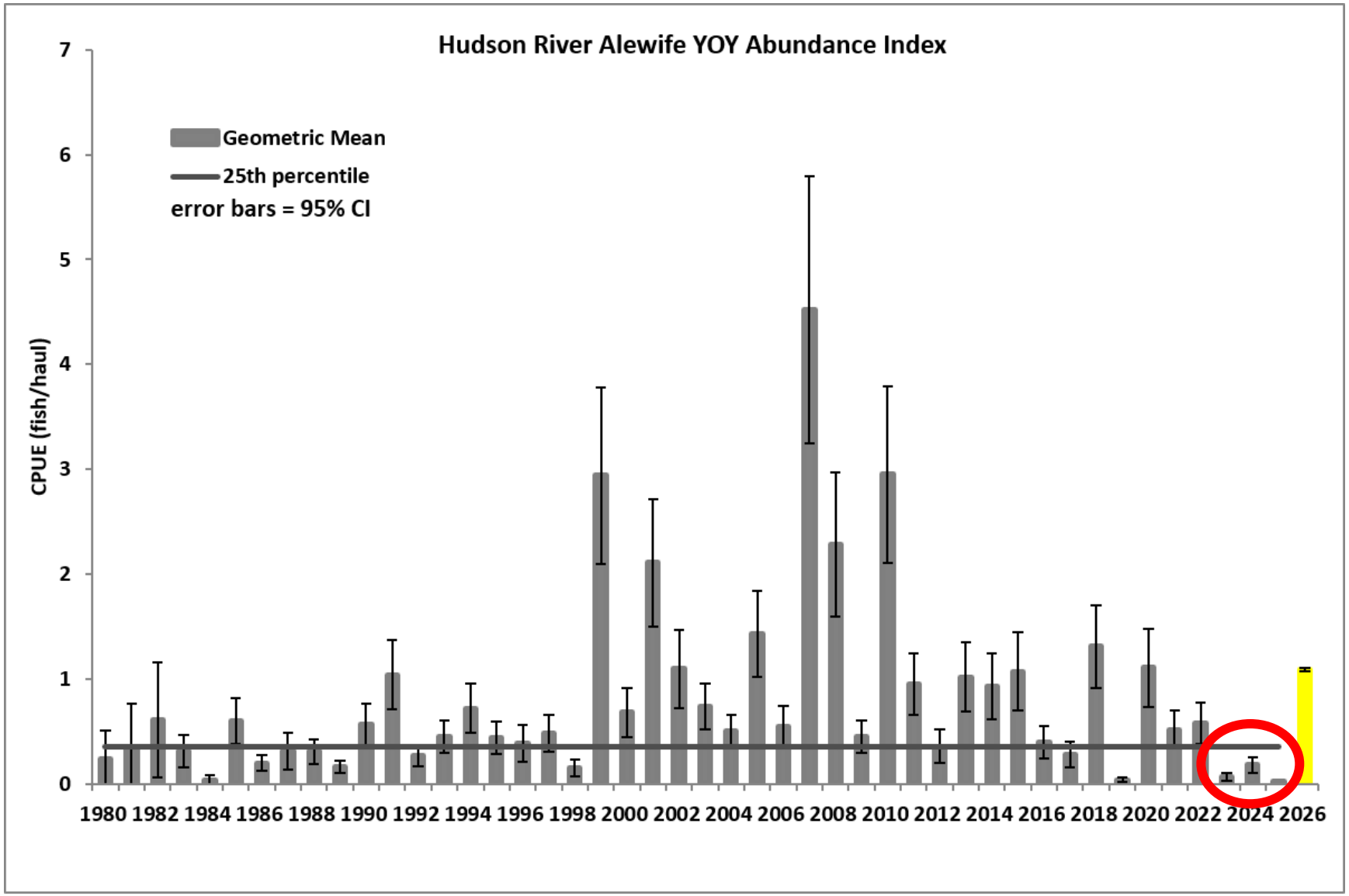
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Review of NY Sustainability Metrics

- In 2025, New York's YOY sustainability targets for both species of river herring were below their respective 25th percentile targets for the third consecutive year, triggering a management response
- However, positive results for total mortality *(Z),* mean length-at-age, and repeat spawning rates, along with stable adult relative abundance indices, suggesting that the low recruitment from 2023–2025 was environmentally driven
- Furthermore, the YOY indices for both herring species were relatively high in 2026
- New York will be closing a loophole in permitting that allows some unregulated inland river herring harvest and will consider further action dependent on the outcome of an updated creel survey scheduled for 2028, which is the first since 2003
- The TC did not recommend further action

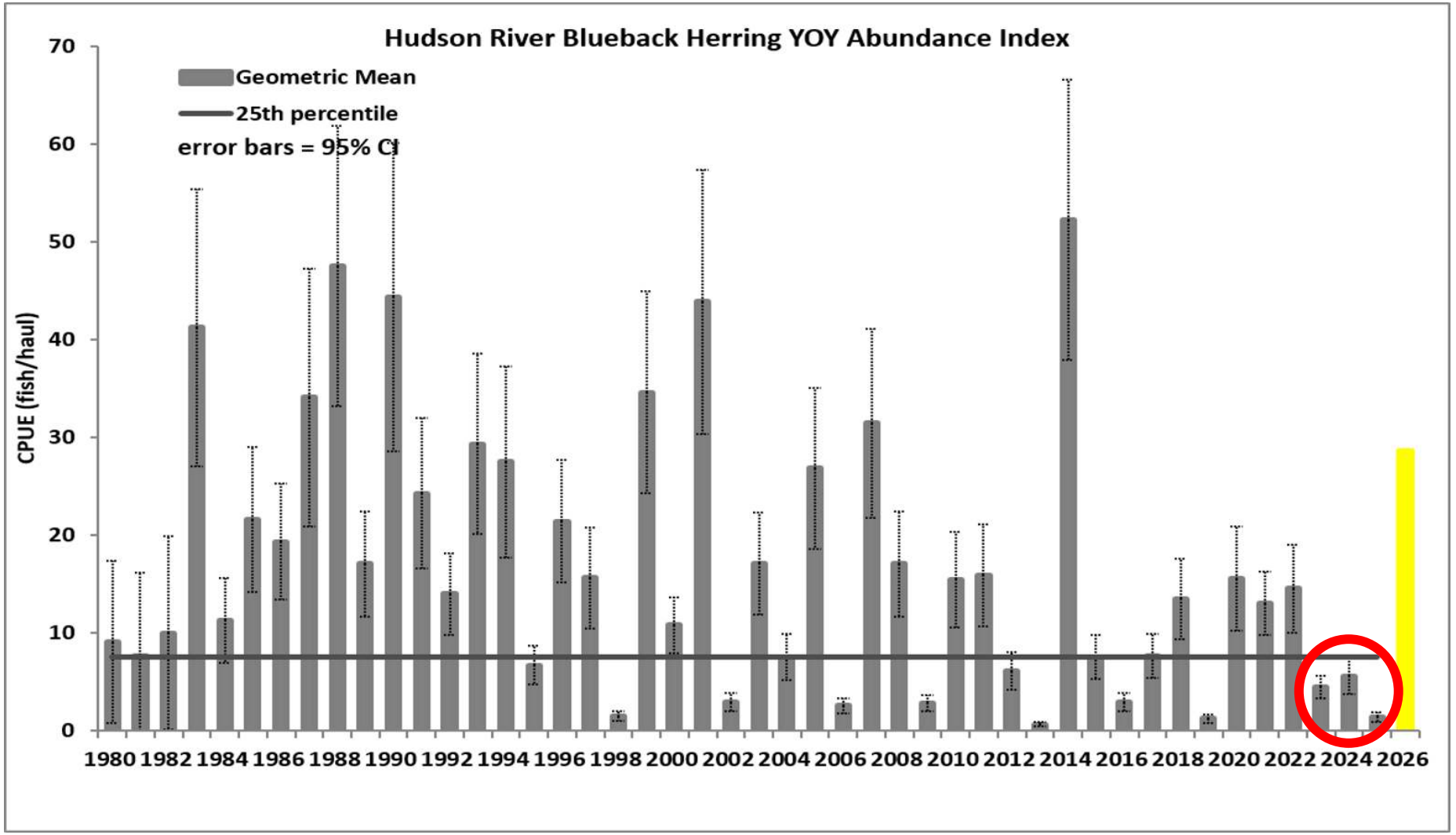
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Review of NY Sustainability Metrics



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

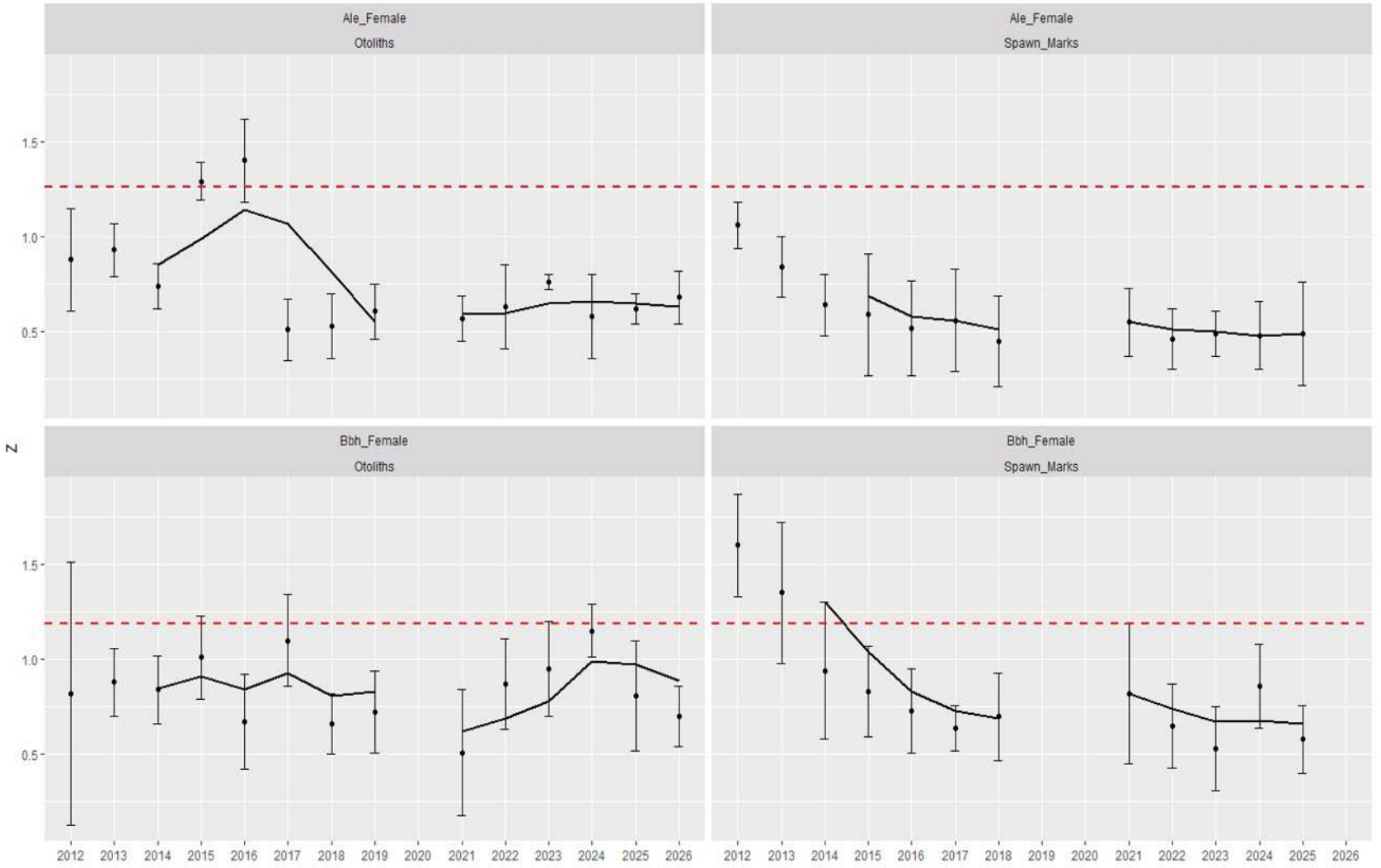
Review of NY Sustainability Metrics



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Review of NY Sustainability Metrics

- Total mortality (*Z*) is stable for both species and aging structures
- Consistently below $Z_{40\%}$



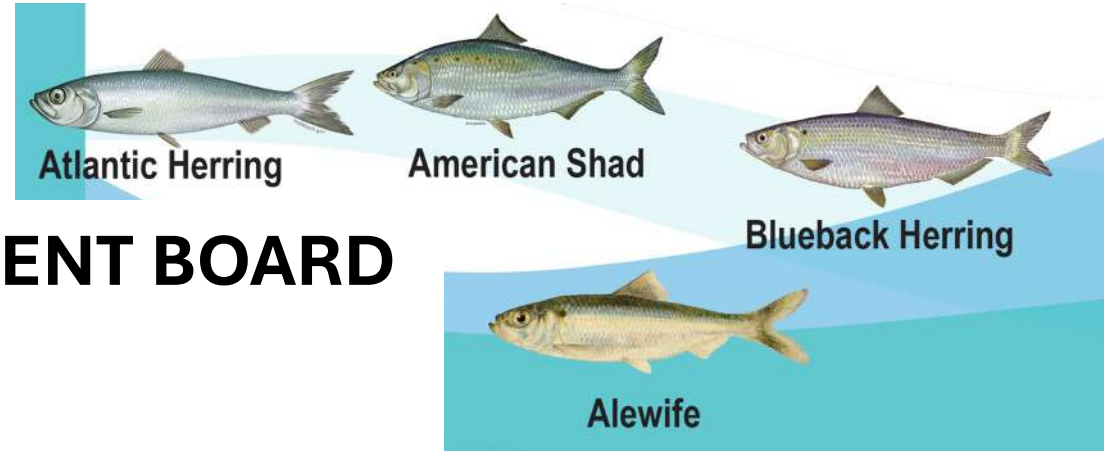
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Review of SC Sustainability Metrics

- South Carolina reported that the Edisto River fishery-dependent gillnet CPUE index has reached 3 years below the benchmark, triggering a management response
- Beginning in 2025, South Carolina reduced the allowable yards of nets in the commercial fishery (resulting in 67-78% reductions)
- Additionally, due to attrition in the commercial fishery, the sustainability metric will be updated to a more useful index in the next iteration of the SFMP
- The TC did not recommend further action

Questions?

New England Fishery Management Council
Atlantic Herring Update



SHAD AND RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD

ASMFC ANNUAL MEETING

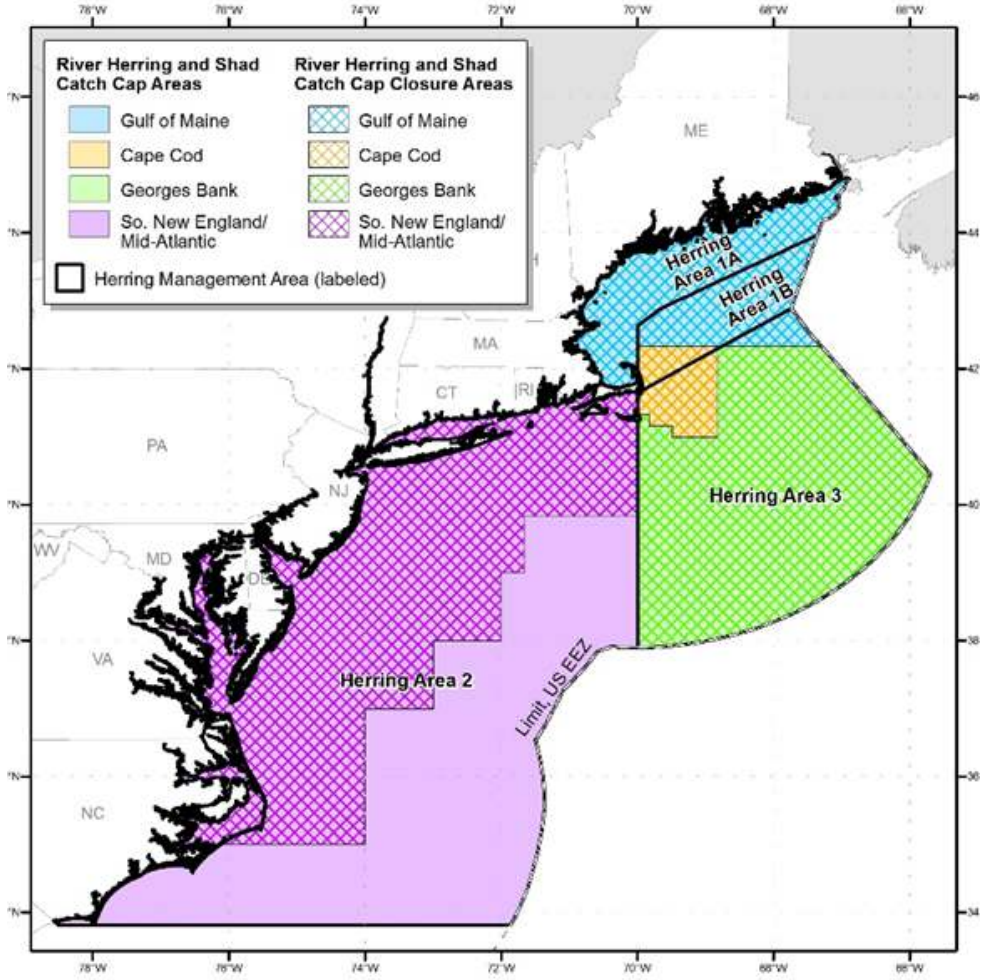
NOVEMBER 10, 2026

NEWPORT, RI AND BY WEBINAR

CURRENT RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MEASURES IN THE ATLANTIC HERRING FISHERY

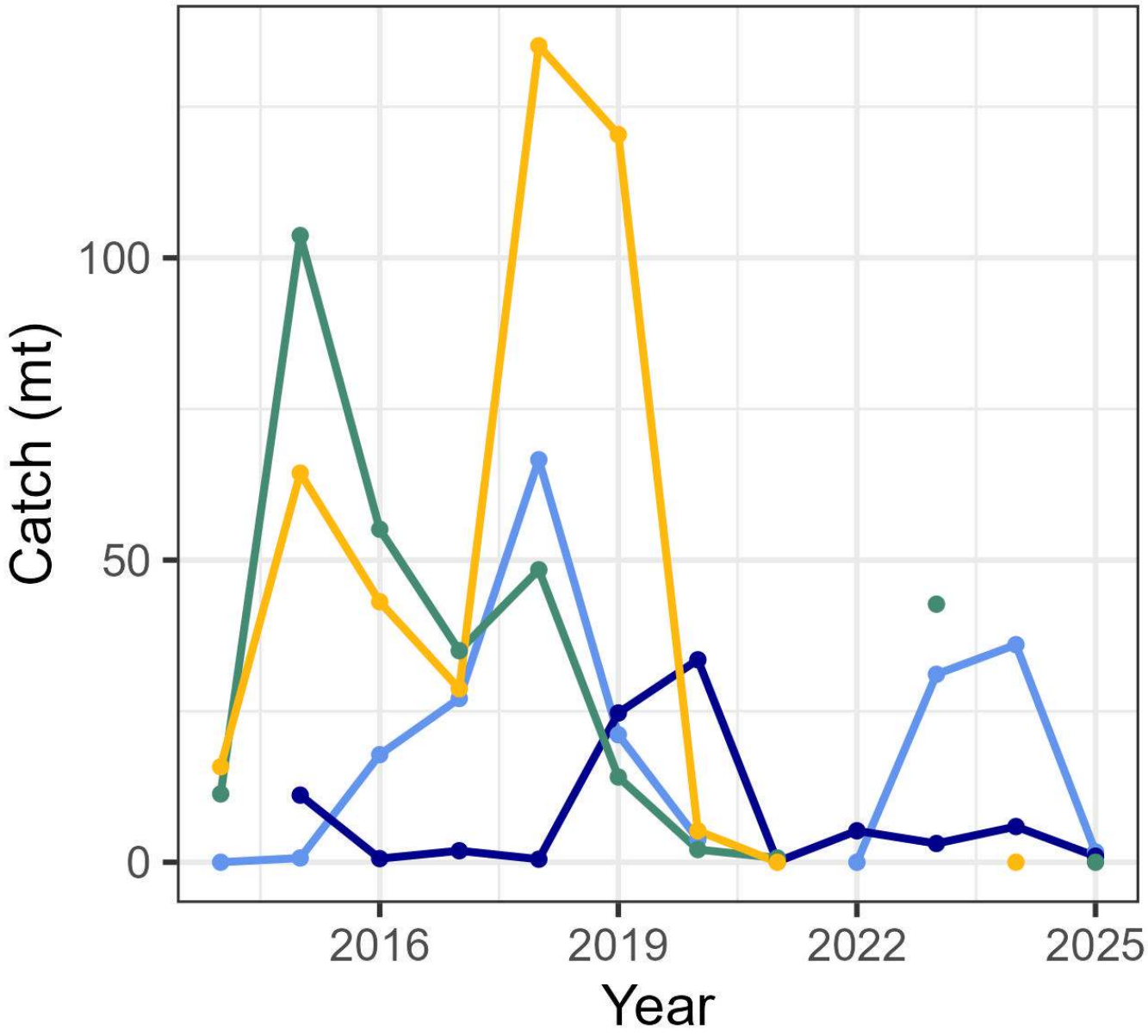
- River herring and shad catch caps first implemented in 2014 using reference period from 2008-2012
- 4 area and gear-specific catch caps; any trip landing >6,600 lb of Atlantic herring in an area count towards catch cap
- Monitored by NOAA, in-season possession limit of 2,000 lb/trip of Atlantic herring implemented when 95% of river herring and shad catch in an area is projected to be reached
- Catch cap values updated in 2016 using 2008-2014 reference period, have been the same since 2016

RIVER HERRING AND SHAD CATCH CAPS



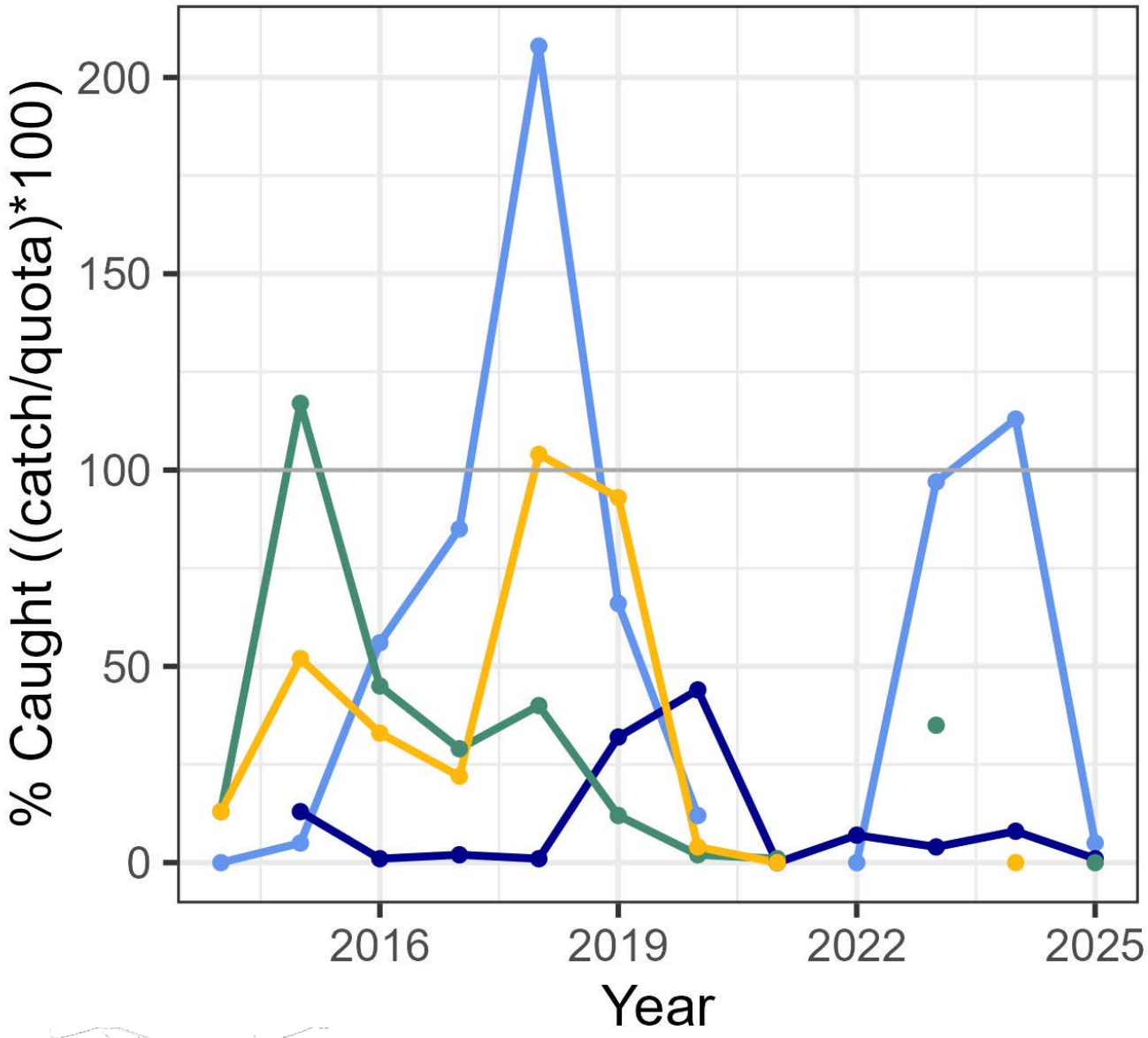
Catch Cap Area	Council's Proposal: 2027-2031 Specifications (mt)
Midwater Trawl Gulf of Maine	76.7
Midwater Trawl Cape Cod	32.4
Midwater Trawl Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic	129.6
Bottom Trawl Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic	122.3

Annual estimated catch of RH/S catch caps by area, 2014-2025



Source: NOAA/GARFO, August 27, 2026.

Annual percentage of RH/S catch cap quotas caught, 2014-2025



Source: NOAA/GARFO, August 27, 2026.

DEVELOPMENT OF RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MANAGEMENT MEASURES

September 2023	Amendment 10 initiated to address spatial/temporal allocation and management of Atlantic herring at the management unit level to minimize user conflicts, contribute to optimum yield, and support rebuilding
January 2024	Amendment 10 problem statement updated to add river herring and shad avoidance, catch reduction alternatives
March – May 2024	Council completed scoping for Amendment 10; many comments related to river herring and shad management measures. Council assigns PDT river herring and shad tasking
April 2025	Amendment 10 work paused to address other priorities
December 2025	Council added enhancing river herring and shad avoidance and other catch reduction measures to the 2026 management action
June 2026	Council split 2026 management action into 2027-2031 Atlantic herring specifications and other management measures (including river herring and shad measures)

AMENDMENT 12

- To modify Atlantic herring management measures to avoid or minimize the catch of river herring and shad
- To consider rescinding the Industry Funded Monitoring program and slippage measures for Atlantic herring and reconsidering the haddock catch caps
- To modify carryover provisions and the specifications process

Anticipated Final Action → April 2027

RIVER HERRING AND SHAD: PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM TASKING

1. Assess data availability and analyze/develop alternatives that implement time/area closures for portions of Atlantic Herring Management Areas 2 and 3 where aggregations of river herring and shad overlap with the directed Atlantic herring fishery.
    - **Developed species distribution models for river herring, shad, and Atlantic herring; hypothetical time/area closures**
2. Assess data availability and analyze/develop alternatives that implement revisions to the basis of river herring and shad catch cap values that: (1) are reflective of regional river herring/shad abundance, and (2) scale (with ceilings and floors) to changes in Atlantic herring abundance and/or regional river herring abundance.
    - **Summarized possible catch cap approaches; supported using CAMS modified approach to summarize river herring and shad catch data by gear type, year, catch cap area, and trip landing thresholds; data analysis is ongoing**
3. Analyze/develop recommendations for implementing improvements to the accuracy and precision of river herring and shad catch estimates in the directed Atlantic herring fishery.
    - **Developed 4 analyses to compare estimation methods; PDT did not recommend any major changes to current RH/S estimation methods, suggested using a gear-specific global rate when available**

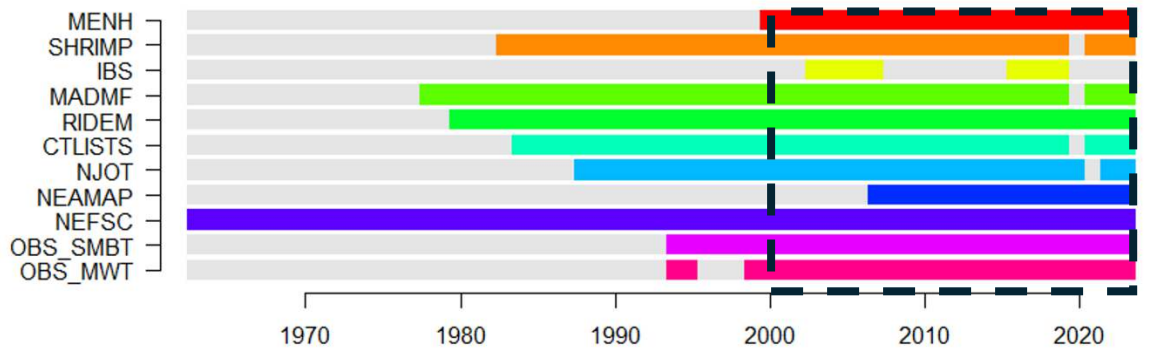
ATLANTIC HERRING PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- PDT developed species distribution models for river herring, shad and Atlantic herring, along with hypothetical time/area closures.
    - Uses coastwide data from observed fishing hauls (MWT + SMBT) and federal and state trawl surveys
    - Spans the years 2000-2022
    - Includes over 80,000 hauls/survey tows
- PDT presented its work at the joint Advisory Panel and Committee meeting on June 8.
- Provided an update to the Council at its September meeting
- Scientific and Statistical Committee sub-panel meets via webinar to review the PDT's work on November 17

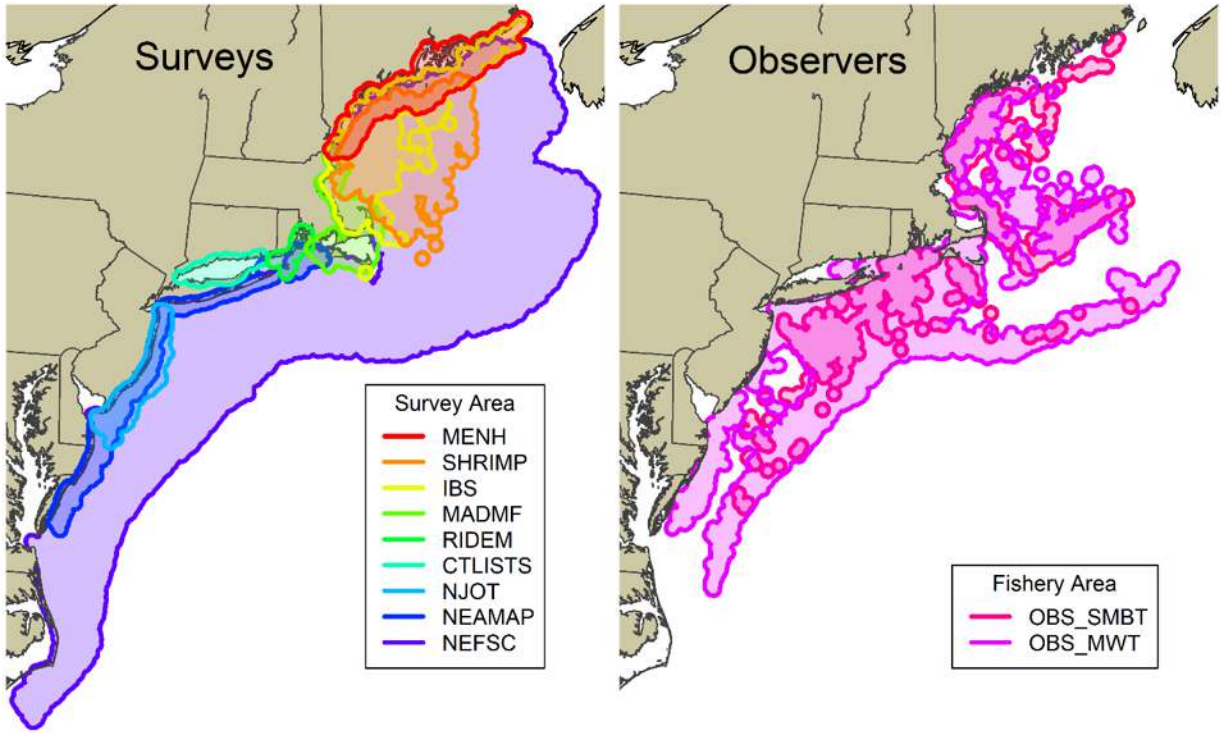
DATASET EXTENTS

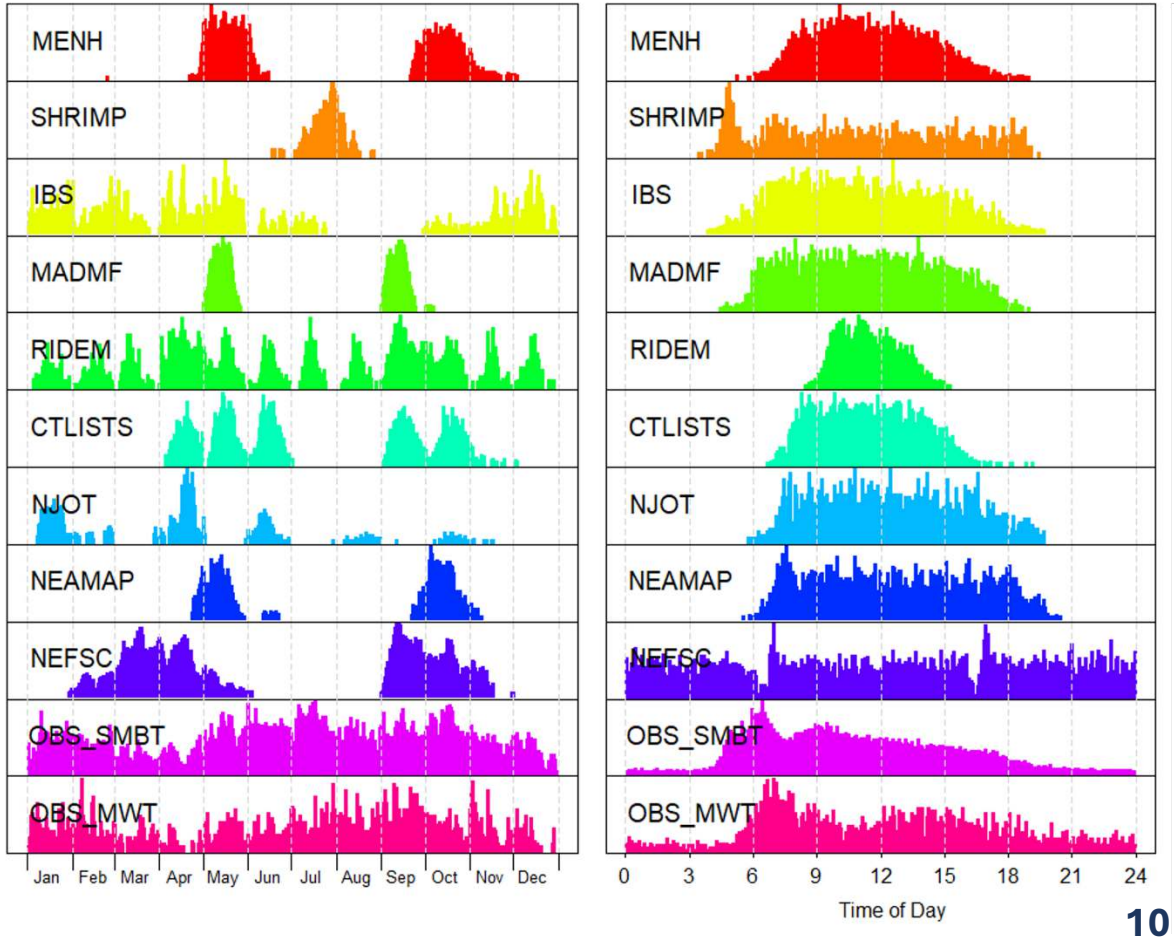
Temporal

Analysis restricted to 2000-2022



Spatial

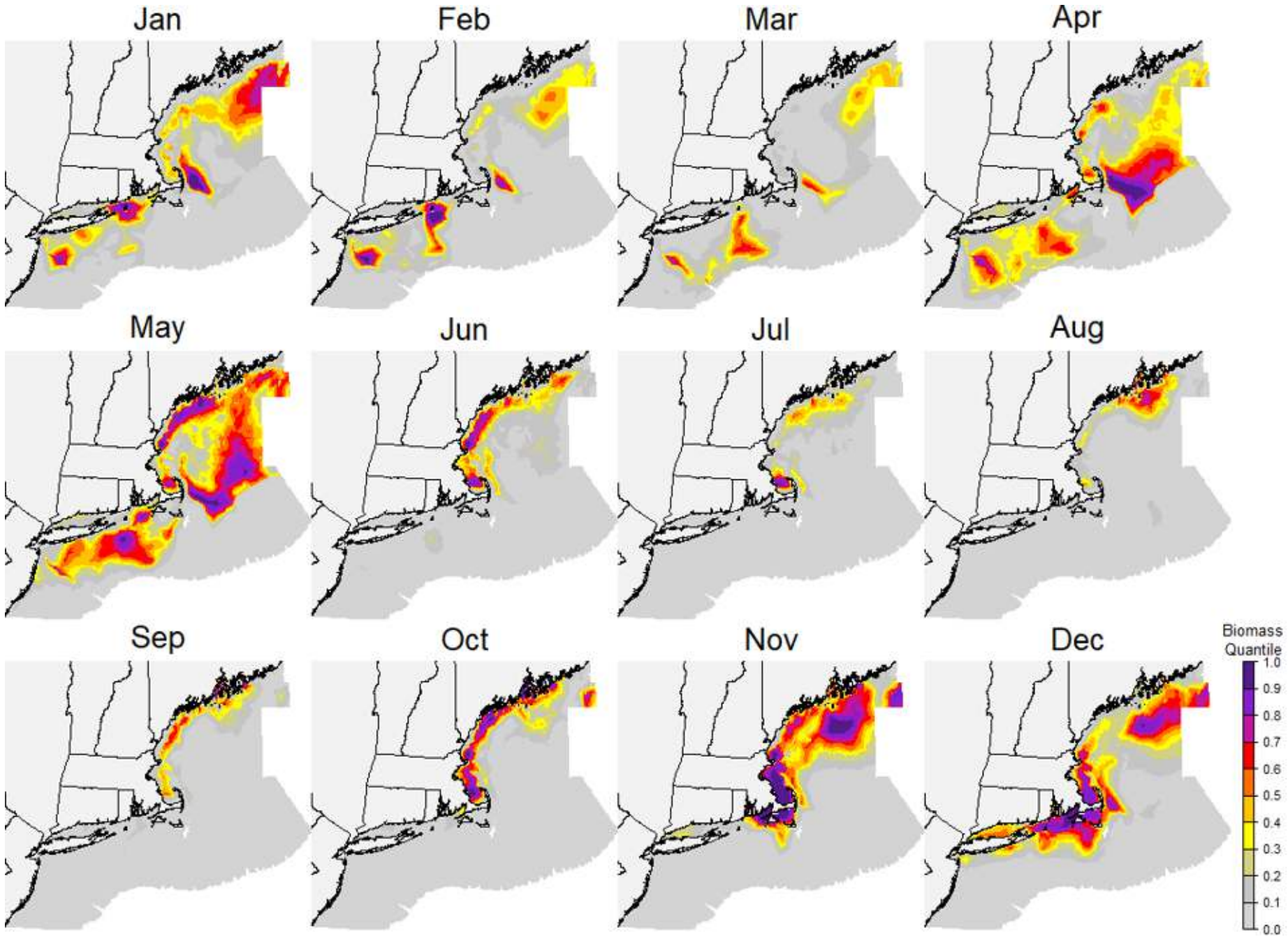




MODEL PREDICTIONS

- **All RHS Species Combined**
- Biomass Quantiles

Each color level represents the same amount of biomass, with dark purple areas having the highest density and light gray areas having the lowest density



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Alternative 1: No Action

- All river herring and shad management measures would remain unchanged and in place unless changed in a future action.

Alternative 2: Establish Time/Area Closures within Atlantic Herring Management Areas 1B, 2 and 3

- PDT species distribution models as basis
- Committee recommends developing alternatives in areas 1B, 2, and 3;
- Committee provided initial guidance on criteria for time/area closure and evaluation metrics
- Committee recommends two sets of alternatives: time/area closures to replace the current catch caps or time/area closures in addition to the current catch caps

ASMFC Annual Meeting

Newport, RI & Webinar

Atlantic Herring Management Board

Shad & River Herring Management Board

9–12 November

NEFMC Meeting

Newport, RI & Webinar

Set 2027 Council Priorities

17 November

NEFMC Meeting

Mystic, CT & Webinar

Final Action Amendment 12

13–15 April

NEFMC’s SSC Sub-Panel

Webinar

Review of PDT’s River Herring & Shad Work

8–10 December

NEFMC Meeting

Portsmouth, NH & Webinar

Update on Amendment 12

2–4 February

THANK YOU.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Timing of Next Shad and River Herring Stock Assessments

K. Drew, ASMFC

November 10, 2026

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Current Schedule

Species	Last Assessment	Next Assessment
American shad	2020 (Benchmark)	2030 (Benchmark)
River Herring	2024 (Benchmark)	2029 (Update)

- With the current schedule, the TC/SAS would be working on the shad benchmark and the river herring assessment update at the same time

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

TC Recommendation

- Keep the river herring assessment update in 2029 as scheduled and postpone initiation of the shad benchmark until after the river herring assessment is complete

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

TC Recommendation

- Assessment update for river herring likely more informative than a new benchmark for shad
  - Recent low effort in the Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel fisheries has resulted in low estimate of river herring bycatch, and the TC would like to update the assessment to see if there has been an effect on trends in abundance and/or total mortality
  - Shad populations are monitored through the SFMPs, so the Board will still get regular information on this species
  - No major new data sources or modeling approaches on the horizon for shad

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

TC Recommendation

- Did not recommend a specific date for the next shad benchmark, but recommended evaluating the schedule after the river herring update is complete in 2029
  - TC would prefer a break between the river herring update and the shad benchmark, but the next river herring benchmark is tentatively scheduled for 2034

- Assessment Science Committee (ASC) agreed with the TC recommendation

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Board Input

- What are the Board's priorities for these assessments?
  - Accept the TC's recommendation and postpone the shad benchmark
  - Keep the shad benchmark as scheduled for 2030 and postpone the river herring update
  - Something else?