



Spotted Seatrout Fishery Management Plan: **Draft** Amendment 1

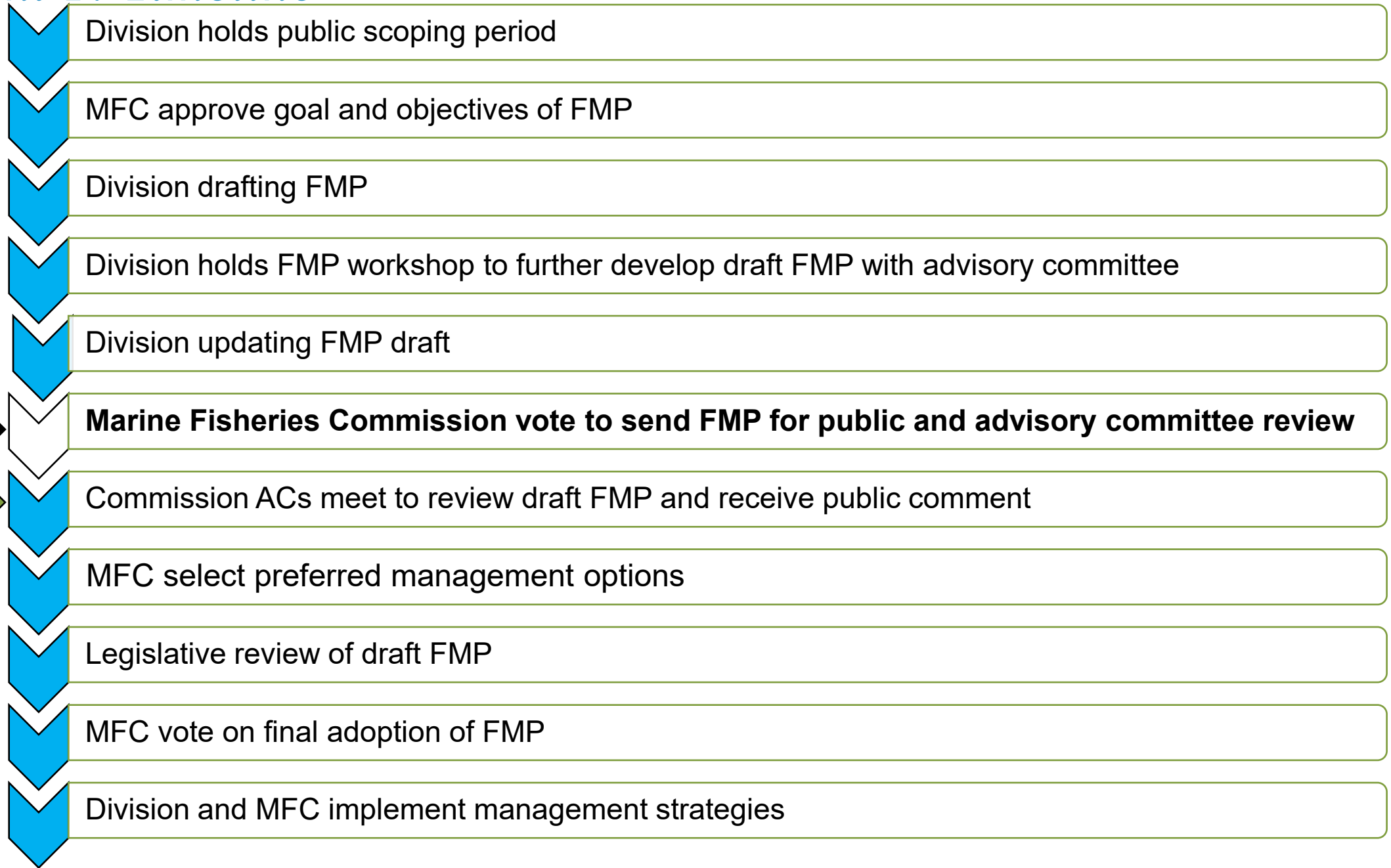
Department of Environmental Quality

Marine Fisheries

NC Marine Fisheries Commission | M. Lambert and L. Pensinger | August 22, 2024



Amendment 1: Timeline



We are here



Next step



Spotted Seatrout FMP Amendment 1

Outline



- **Draft** Amendment 1 Summary
- Base Plan
- Overview of Information/Issue Papers
- Preliminary DMF Recommendations
- Timeline



Spotted Seatrout FMP Amendment 1

Section overview



Base Plan

- Goal and Objectives
- Life history/biology
 - Stock status
- Fishery characterization

Information Paper



Appendix 1: Small-Mesh Gill Net Characterization in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Issue Papers



Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery



Appendix 3: Supplemental Management Options in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery



Appendix 4: Cold Stun Management



Spotted Seatrout FMP Amendment 1

Base Plan

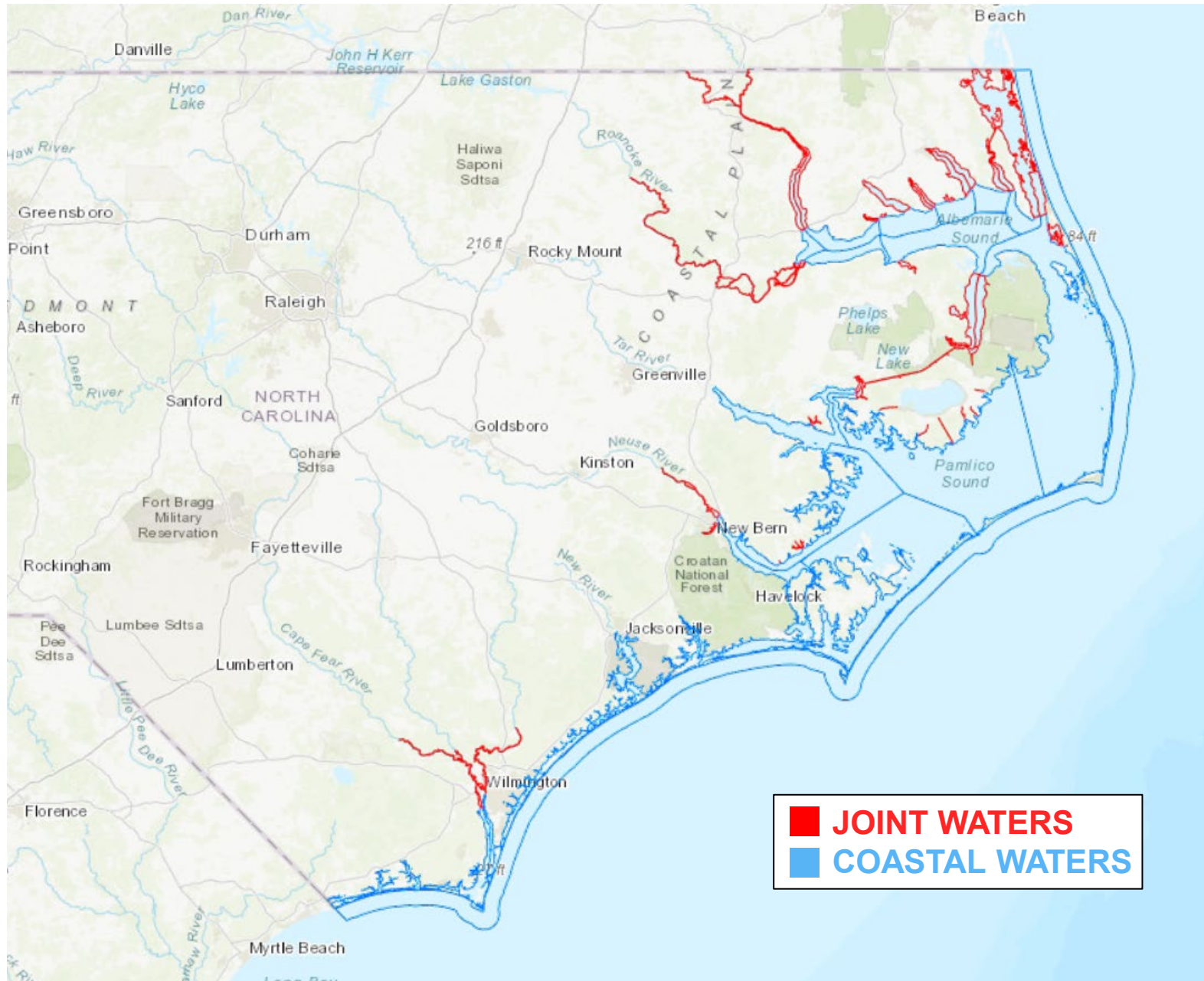


Goal and Objectives

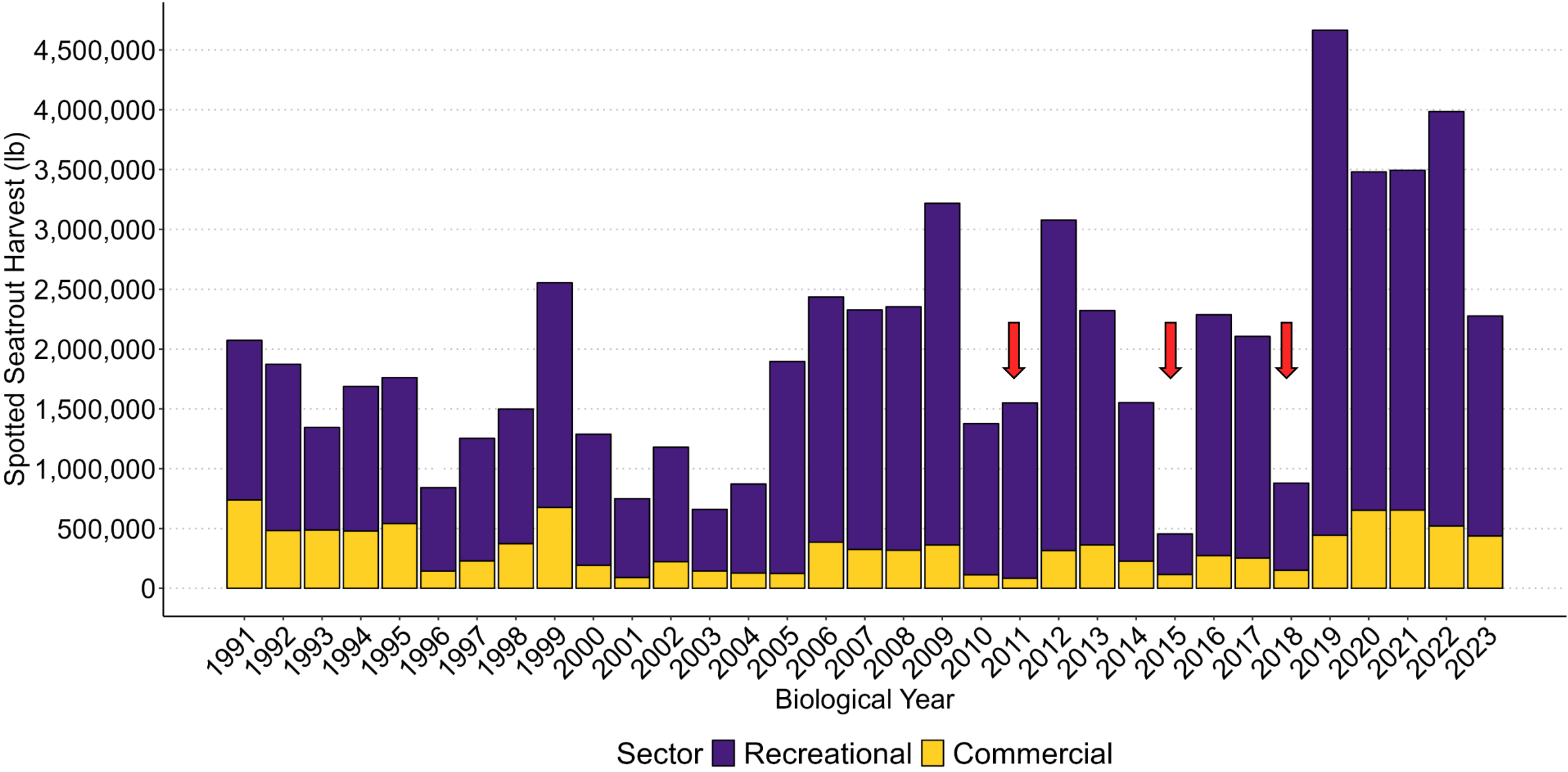
The goal of this plan is to manage the Spotted Seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) fishery to maintain a self-sustaining population that provides sustainable harvest based on science-based decision-making processes. The following objectives will be used to achieve this goal.

- Implement management within North Carolina that ends overfishing and maintains the Spotted Seatrout spawning stock abundance and recruitment potential.
- Promote restoration, enhancement, and protection of critical habitat and environmental quality in a manner consistent with the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan, to maintain or increase growth, survival, and reproduction of the Spotted Seatrout stock.
- Monitor and manage the fishery in a manner that utilizes biological, socioeconomic, fishery, habitat, and environmental data.
- Promote outreach and interjurisdictional cooperation regarding the status and management of the Spotted Seatrout stock in North Carolina and Virginia waters, including practices that minimize bycatch and discard mortality.

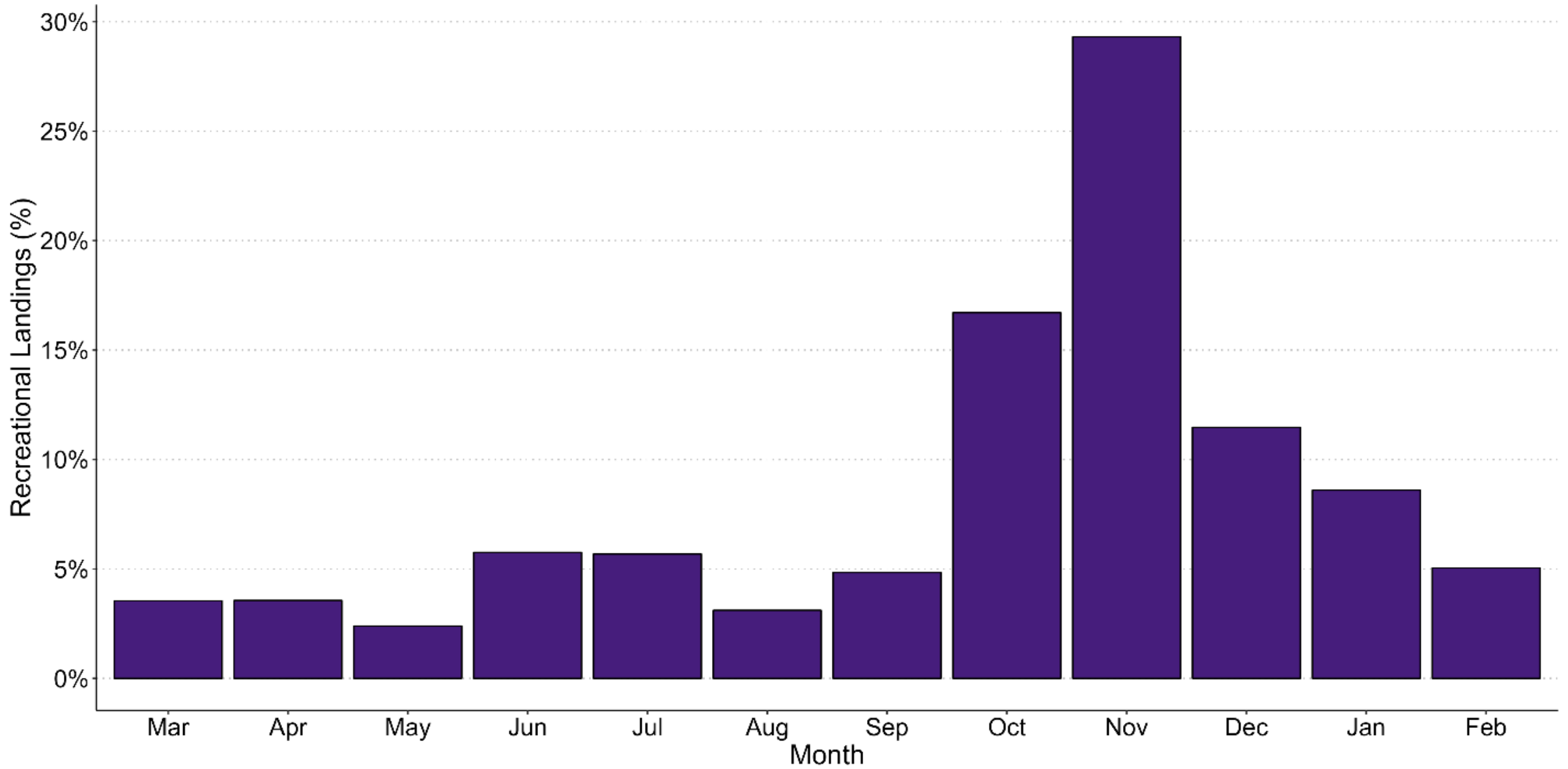
Management Unit



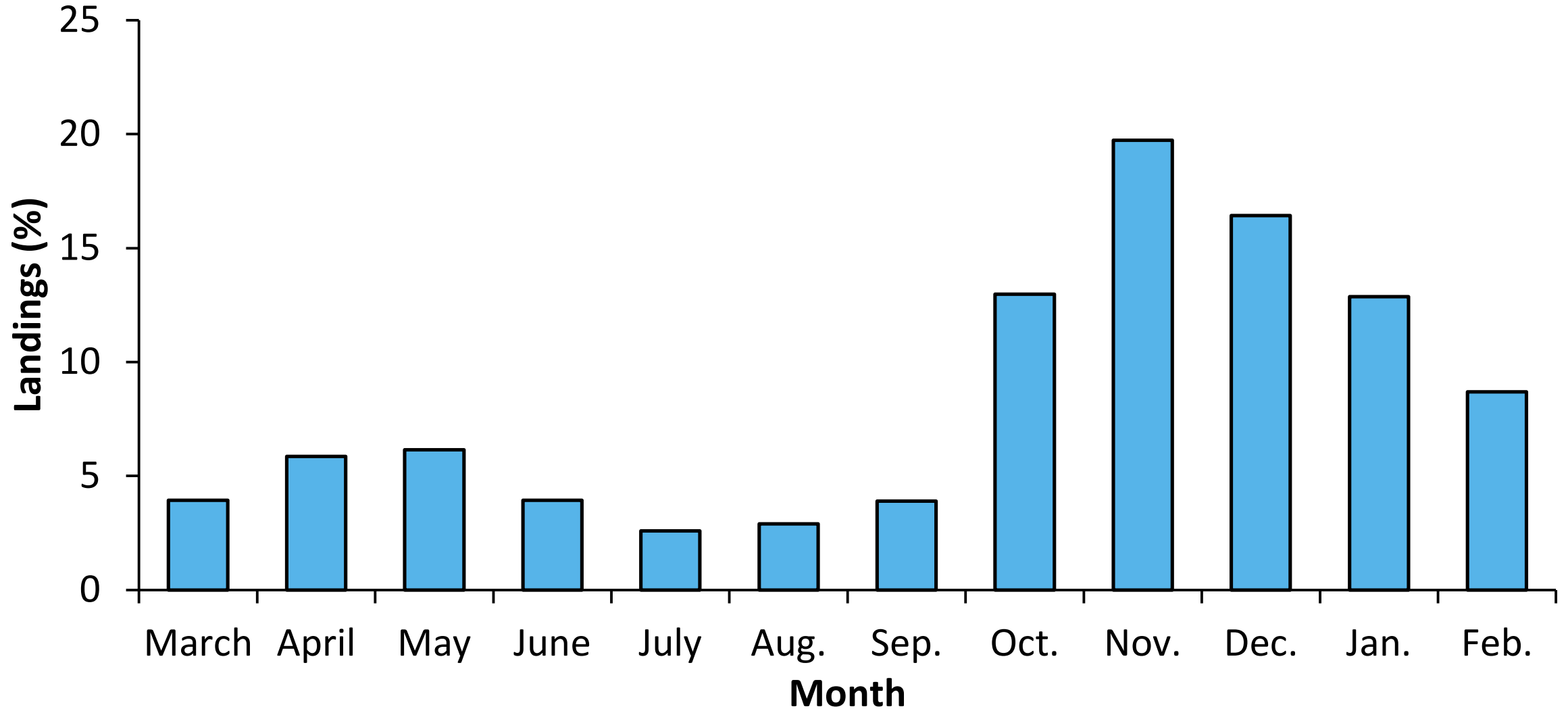
Combined Landings



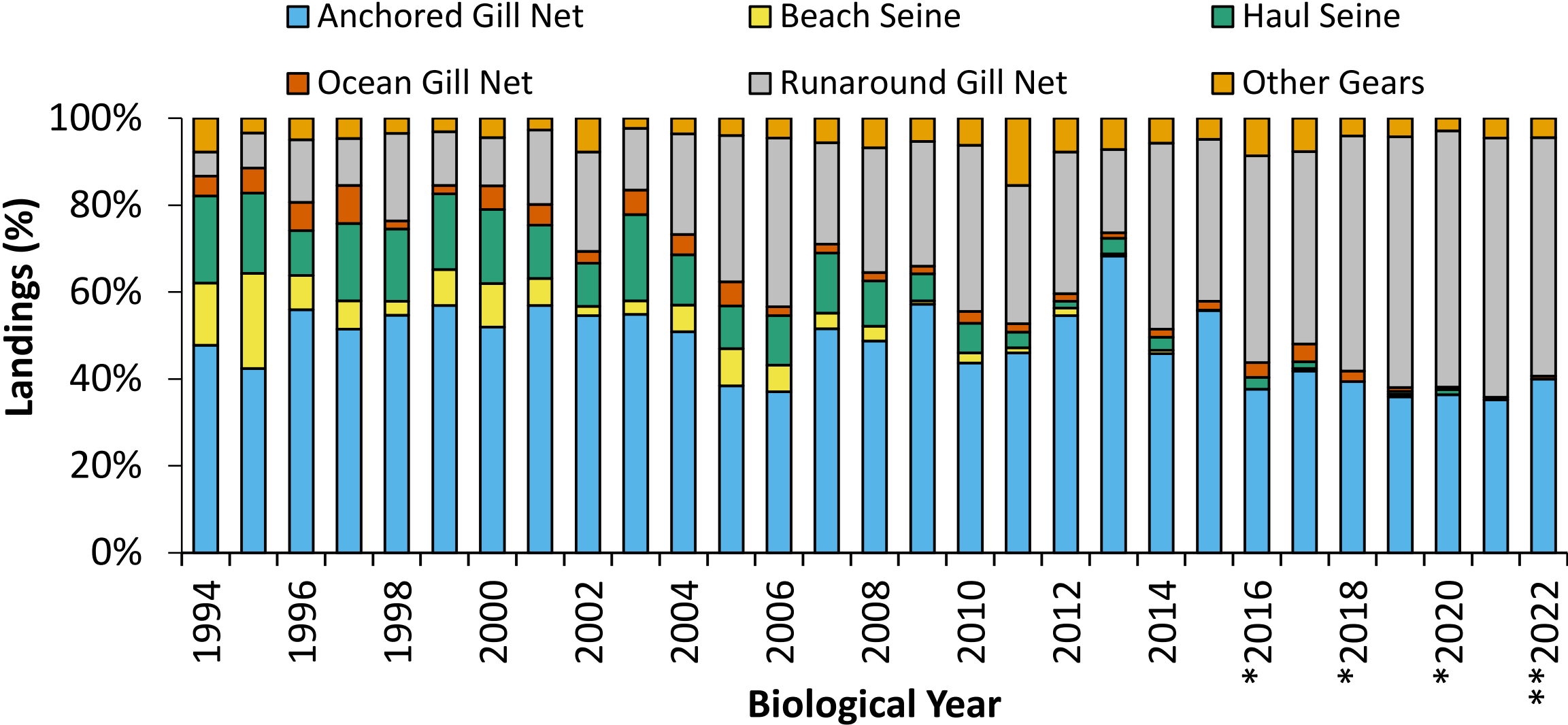
Recreational Seasonality



Commercial Seasonality



Commercial Gear Characterization

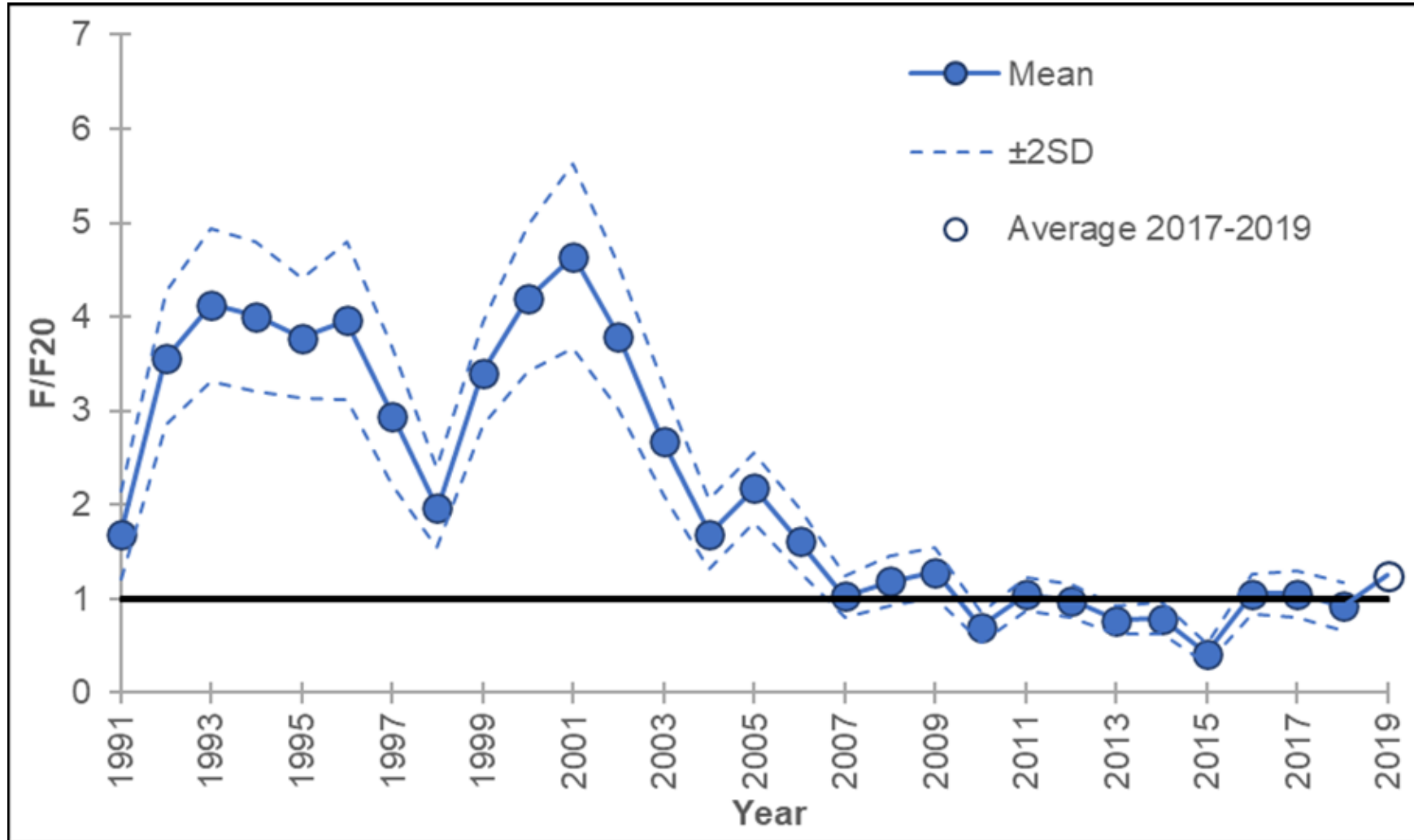


Stock Status

Not overfished

Stock Status

Not overfished



Overfishing occurring

Appendix 1: Small-Mesh Gill Net Characterization in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery



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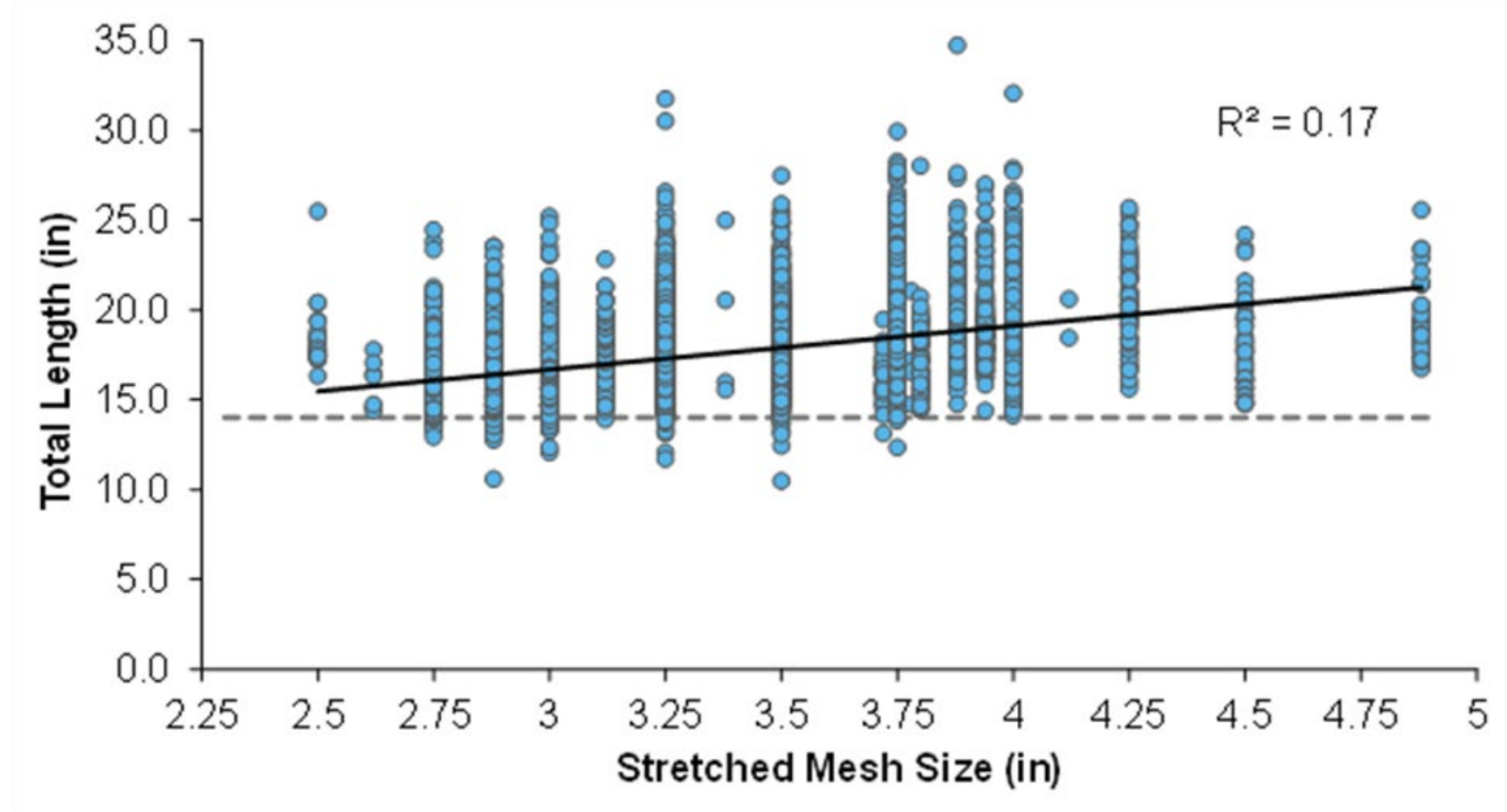
Appendix 1: Small-Mesh Gill Net Characterization in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Informs how management such as:

- Mesh size limits
- Trip limits
- Yardage limits

Can be used to reduce:

- Harvest
- Bycatch
- User group conflict



Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

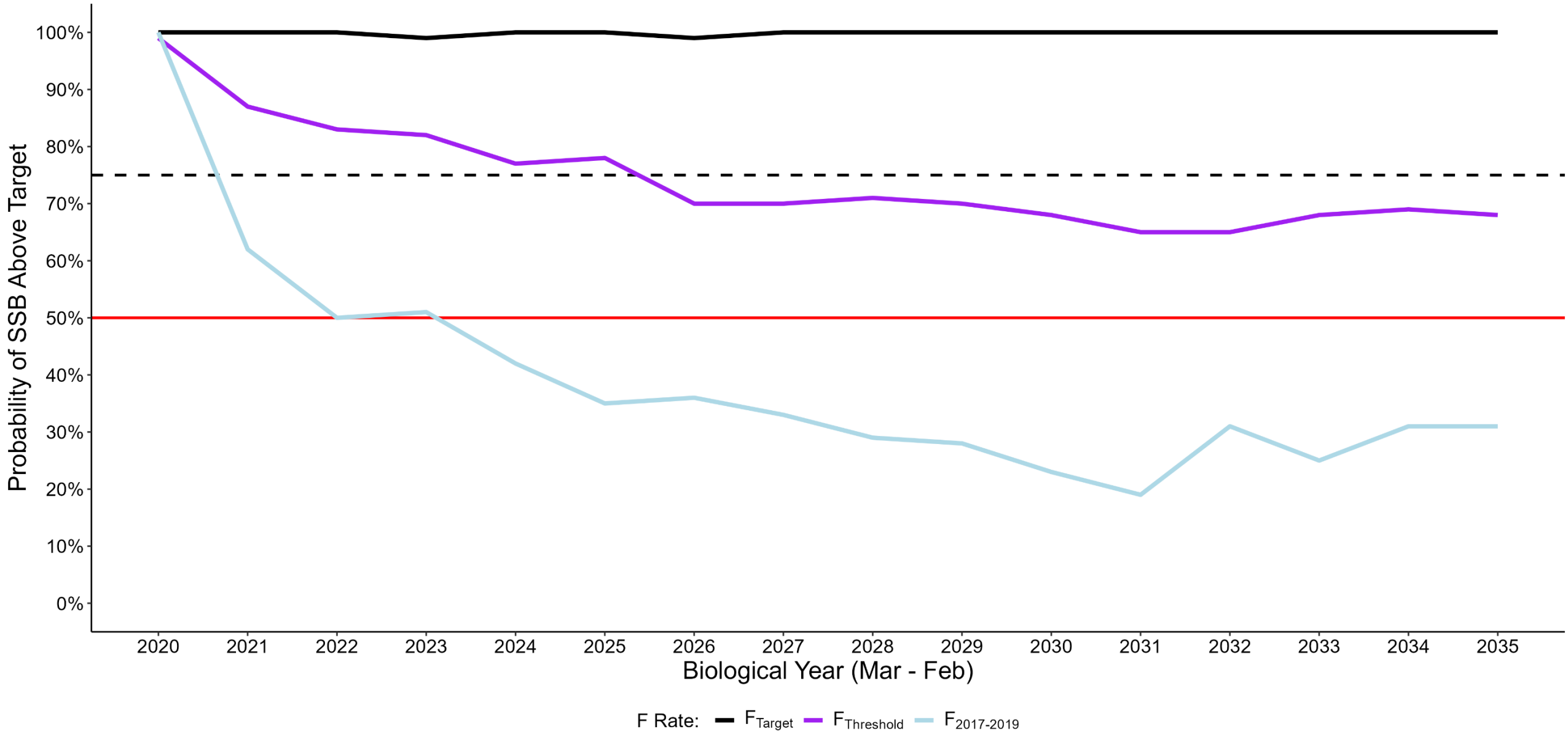


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Appendix 2: Projections

Probability of SSB Above Target, No Cold Stun



Appendix 2: Potential management measures

- Size Limits
- Season Closures
- Bag/Trip Limits
- Stop Net Management
- Combinations of management measures
- Adaptive Management



Appendix 2: Sustainable Harvest adaptive management framework

Adjustable Measures:

- Season closures
- Day of week closures
- Trip limits
- Bag limits
- Size limits
- Gear restrictions in support of above measures

Division
evaluation

Management
strategy **NOT**
achieving
sustainable
harvest

Revise
management
strategy using
adaptive
management

Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Topic	Option	Description
Size limits	1.a*	Status quo – no change to commercial size limit. Consider recreational size limit changes as a part of the overall management strategy to achieve sustainable harvest but not as a single solution option.
	1.b	Recreational 16”–20” slot limit with allowance for one fish over 24” and commercial 16” minimum size limit
Season closure	2.a	Status quo – no season closure as standalone measure
	2.b	Statewide season closure Dec 16–Feb 28/29 (both sectors)
	2.c*	11:59 p.m. Friday-12:01 a.m. Tuesday statewide commercial harvest closure Oct-Dec and Jan-Feb commercial harvest closure. Consider recreational season closures as a part of the overall management strategy to achieve sustainable harvest but not as a single solution option.
	2.d	Statewide season closure Nov 1 – Feb (both sectors)

* Preliminary DMF management recommendation

Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Topic	Option	Description
Bag and trip limits	3.a*	Status quo – no change to commercial trip limit. Consider recreational bag limit changes as a part of the overall management strategy to achieve sustainable harvest but not as a single solution option.
	3.b	Reduce recreational bag limit to 2 fish and commercial trip limit to 45 fish
Stop net	4.a	Status quo – no change
	4.b	No change to quota but formalize management in FMP
Combinations	5.a-j & 6.a-h	See tables 2.8 and 2.9. *Preliminary DMF management recommendation is option 5.h
Adaptive management	7*	

* Preliminary DMF management recommendation

Appendix 3: Supplemental Management Options in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery



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Appendix 3: Supplemental Management Options in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Options that could support sustainability objectives

- Vessel Limits
- Effort Controls
- Gear Requirements
- Tournaments
- Commercial Hook and Line Harvest



Appendix 3: Supplemental Management Options in the North Carolina Spotted Seatrout Fishery

Topic	Option	Description
Boat limits and captain/crew allowance	1.a	Status quo – no boat limit, continue captain/crew allowance
	* 1.b	Eliminate captain/crew allowance on for-hire trips with no broader vessel limit.
	1.c	Implement 8 fish vessel limit with captain/crew allowance on for-hire trips counted as part of vessel limit.

* Preliminary DMF management recommendation

Appendix 4: Cold Stun Management



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Appendix 4: Cold Stun Management

Options expected to support sustainability objectives

- Season Closures
- Size Limits
- Bag/Trip Limits
- Adaptive Management



Appendix 4: Cold Stun adaptive management framework

Temporary Measures:

- Season closures
- Trip and Bag limits
- Size limits
- Gill net yardage restrictions

Division
evaluation

Especially
severe cold
stun

Implement
temporary
measures
using adaptive
management

Appendix 4: Cold Stun Management

Topic	Option	Description
Season closure	1.a	Status quo – fishery closed until June 15 th following a cold stun
	* 1.b	Extend fishery closure until June 30 th following a cold stun
	1.c	Extend fishery closure until October 15 th following a cold stun
Size limits	* 2.a	Status quo – no size limit change following a cold stun
	2.b	Temporary adjustment of size and or slot limits following a cold stun
Bag and trip limits	* 3.a	Status quo – no bag/trip limit changes
	3.b	Temporary adjustment of bag and trip limits following a cold stun
Adaptive management	* 4	

* Preliminary DMF management recommendation

Amendment 1: PRELIMINARY Division Recommendations



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Amendment 1: PRELIMINARY Division Recommendations

Appendix 2: Sustainable Harvest

- Both sectors
 - Jan–Feb statewide harvest closure (Options 2.c and 5.h)
- Recreational
 - 14”–20” slot limit with allowance for 1 fish > 26” (Option 5.h)
 - 3 fish bag limit (Option 5.h)
- Commercial
 - Oct–Dec, 11:59 p.m. Friday to 12:01 a.m. Tuesday statewide harvest closure (Option 2.c)
 - No change to Bogue Banks stop net quota but formalize management in Amendment 1 (Option 4.b)
- Adopt Adaptive Management framework (Option 7)

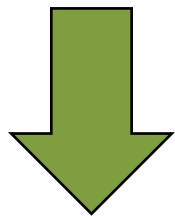
Amendment 1: PRELIMINARY Division Recommendations



Recreational Reduction (lb)	Recreational Reduction (%)	Commercial Reduction (lb)	Commercial Reduction (%)	Total Harvest Reduction (%)
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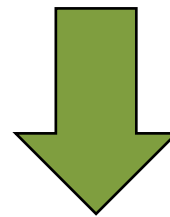
1,319,252	39.5	228,340	40.2	39.6
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86% of harvest



85.2% of total reduction

14% of harvest



14.8% of total reduction



Amendment 1: PRELIMINARY Division Recommendations

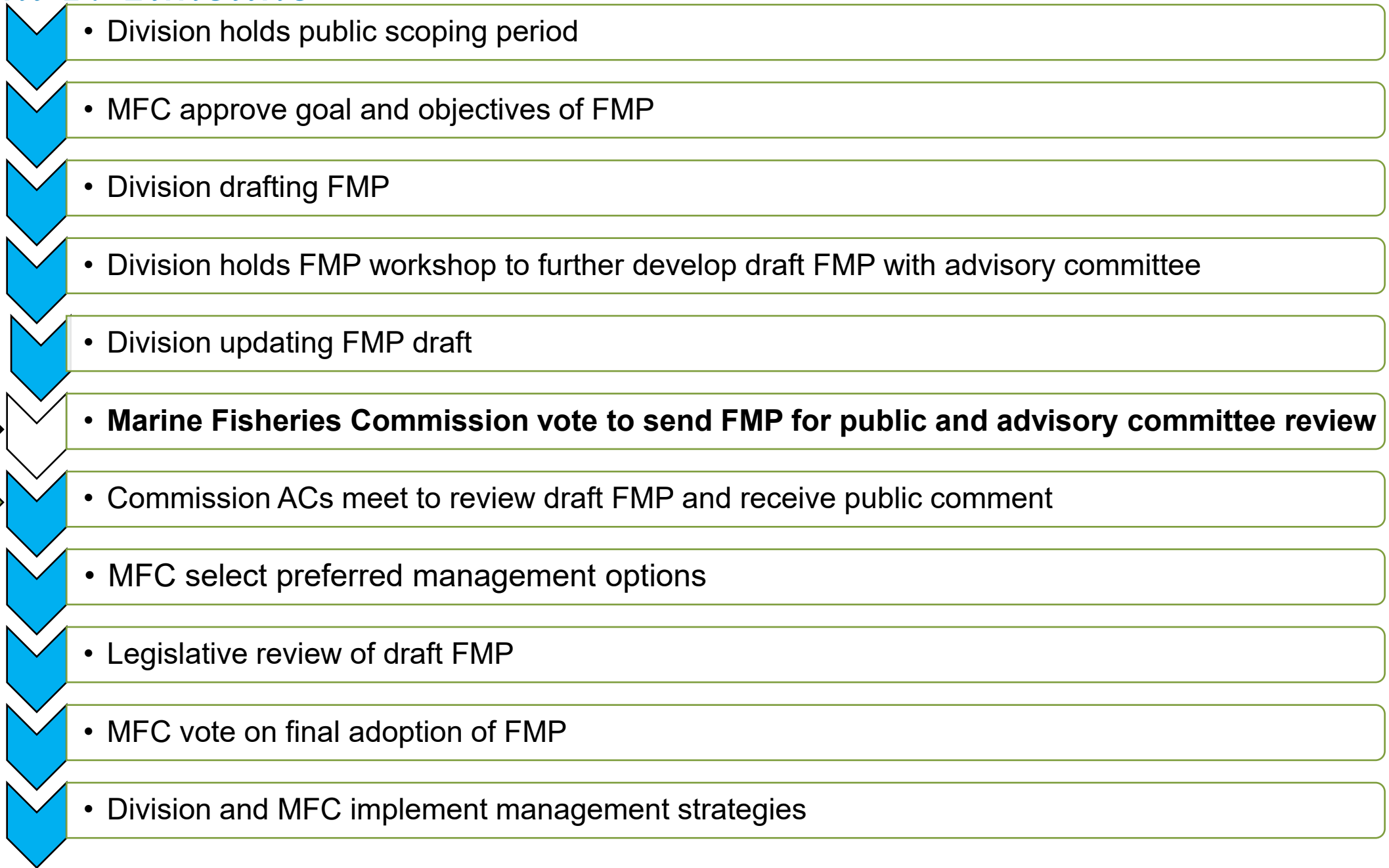
Appendix 3: Supplemental Management

- Eliminate the captain/crew allowance (Option 1.b)

Appendix 4: Cold Stun Management

- Extend fishery closure through June 30 following cold stun (Option 1.b)
- Adopt Adaptive Management framework (Option 4)

Amendment 1: Timeline



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Next step



Questions

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Vote on sending draft Amendment 1 to the Spotted Seatrout Fishery Management Plan for public and advisory committee review

