

Determine Need For and Impacts of Sheepshead Size, Creel, and Trip Limits



N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission

Feb. 19, 2015

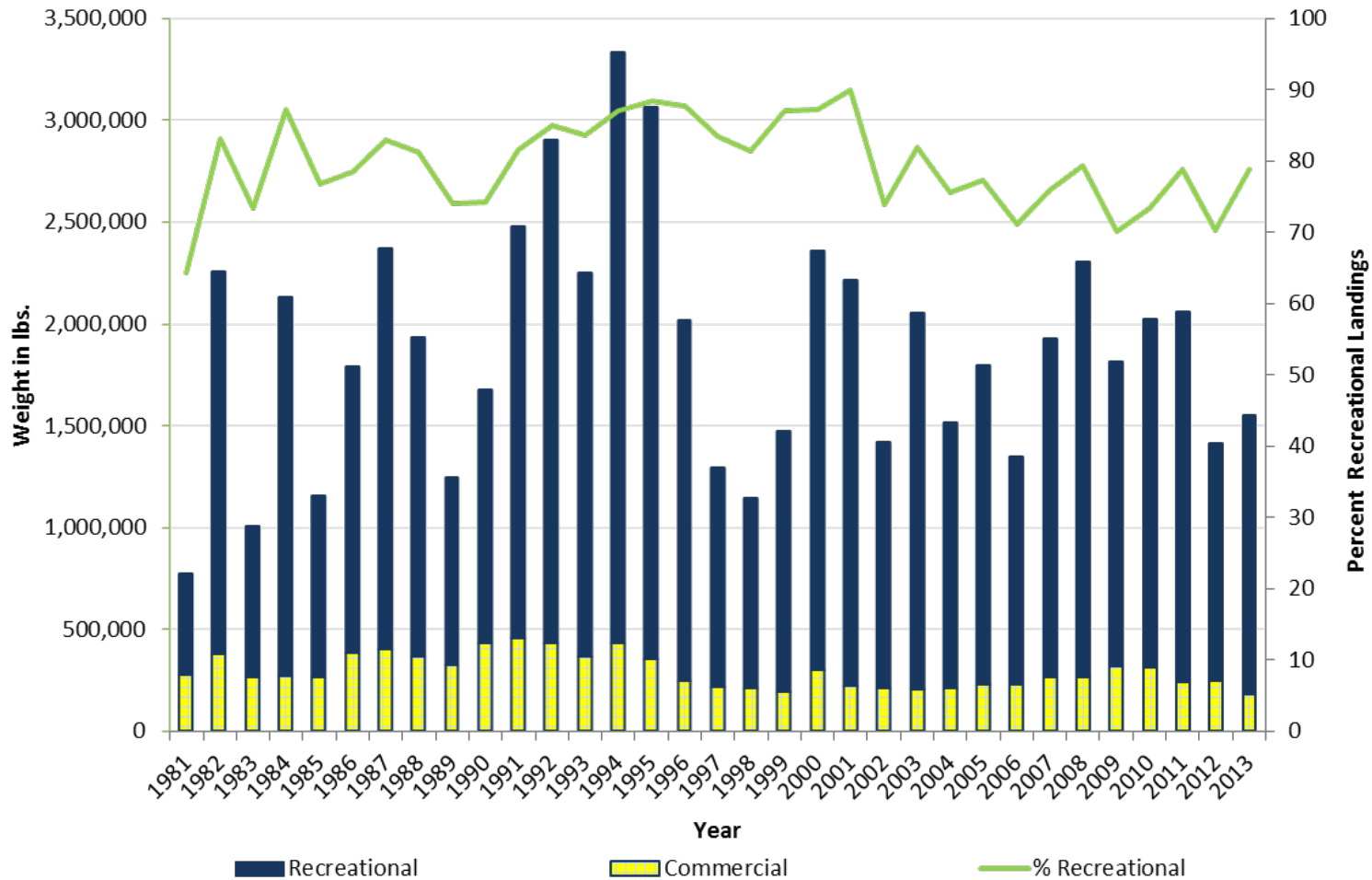


Life History

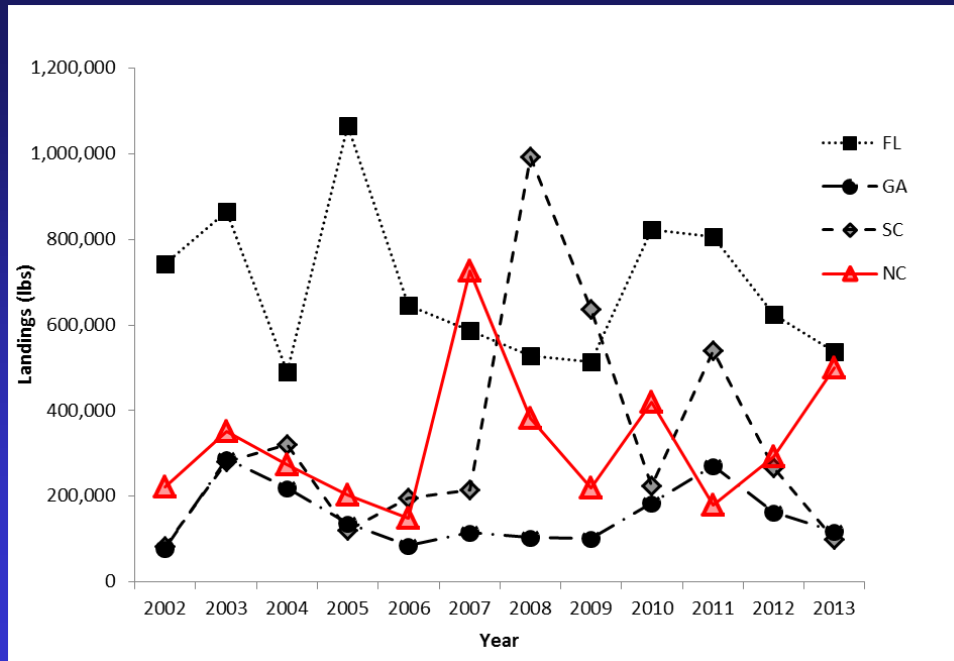
- Range: Nova Scotia to Brazil
- Habitat: pilings, reefs, jetties, wrecks and sandy bottoms
- Strong incisors and molars for crushing shellfish and crustaceans
- Fast growing
- Live up to 35 years
- Unclear if truly migratory



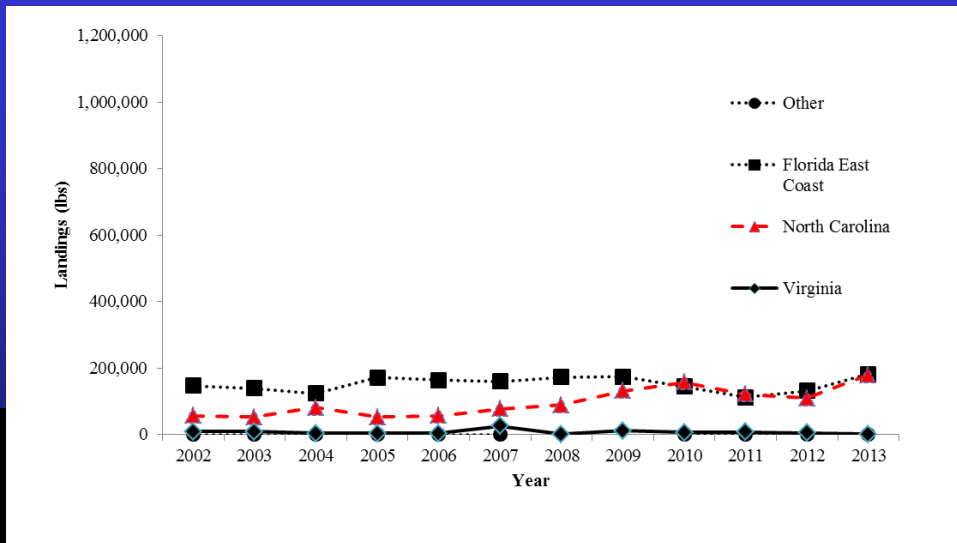
Atlantic Coast Landings



South Atlantic Recreational Landings 2002 to 2013

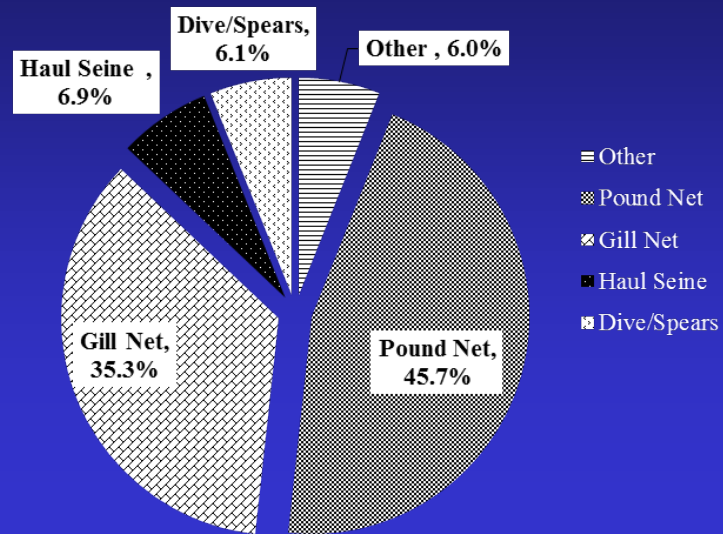


Atlantic Coast Commercial Landings 2002 to 2013



N.C. Landings

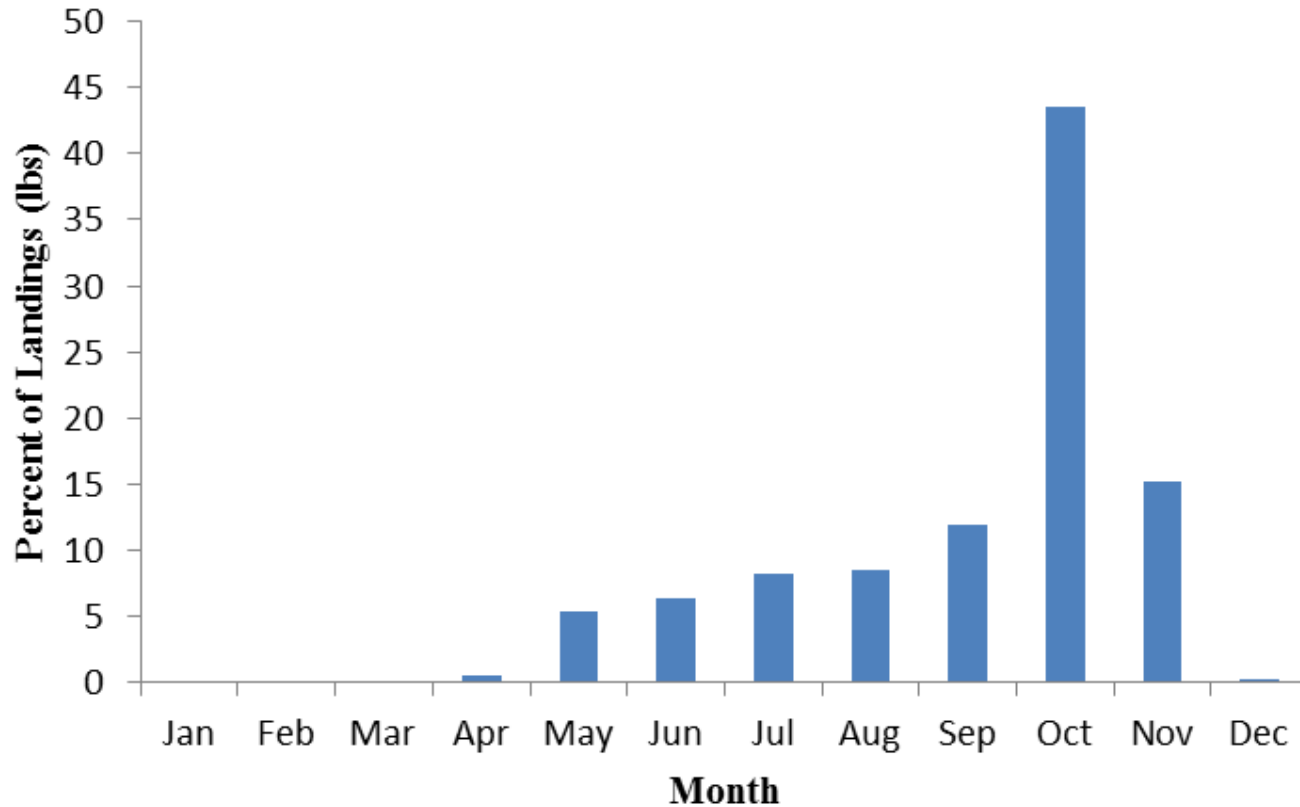
Recreational & Commercial



Gear



Percent of Commercial Landings by Month 2011-2013



Proclamation Authority

The Fisheries Director may, by proclamation, impose any or all of the following restrictions on the taking of sheepshead:

- (1) specify time;
- (2) specify area;
- (3) specify means and methods;
- (4) specify season;
- (5) specify size; and
- (6) specify quantity.

History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-182; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52;

Eff. April 1, 2014.



Other State Regulations

State	Size Limit	Recreational Limit	Commercial Limit
New Jersey	None	15 fish Aggregate *	None
Delaware	None	None	None
Maryland	None	20 fish Aggregate*	None
Virginia	None	4/person	500 lb.
North Carolina	None	None	None
South Carolina	13inch FL	10/person; 30/boat	10/person; 30/boat
Georgia	10inch FL	15/person	15/person
Florida	11inch FL	15/person	None / 50 lb.**

* SAFMC 20 fish aggregate bag limit for snapper grouper complex

** FL has no commercial trip limits but does limit bycatch from shrimp trawls only to 50 lbs.

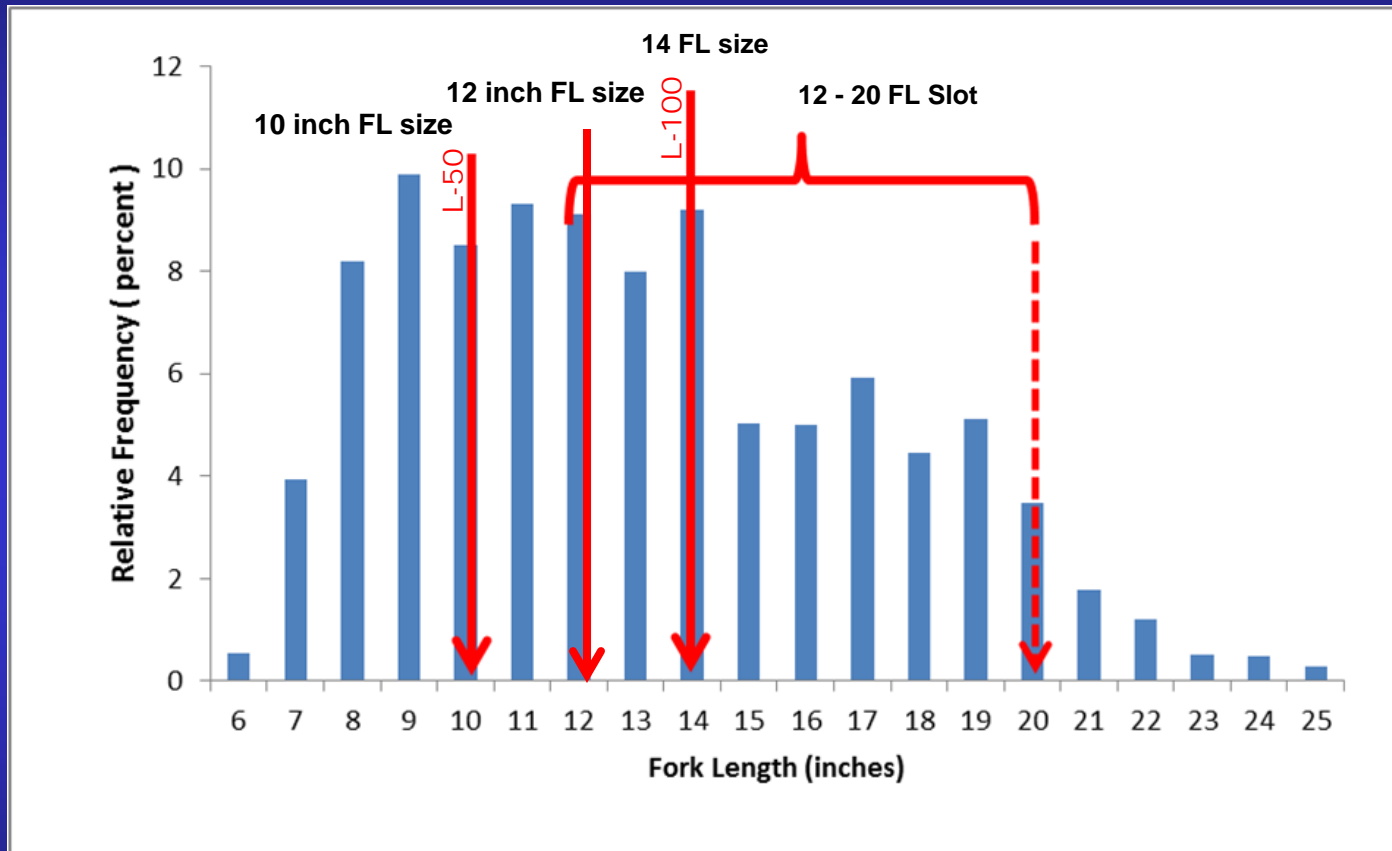


Management

- No Stock Assessment
 - Stock status: *Unknown*
- Recreational Options
- Commercial Options



Length Frequency Distribution Recreational Landings 2002 to 2013



Recreational Percent Reductions from Size Limits

Minimum Size Limit (FL)	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average Reduction
10" min	4.1	25.1	8.8	6.8	16.6	9.6	29.1	35.7	5.9	4.3	33.4	40.2	18.3
12" min	21.2	42.5	17.2	8.3	30.0	15.6	45.0	67.2	31.1	17.9	38.5	70.5	33.7
14" min	49.0	52.0	25.8	16.1	46.2	37.5	75.6	79.1	47.1	59.8	54.7	76.4	51.6
12"-20" slot	33.2	52.4	48.0	41.3	37.2	30.5	46.5	69.5	36.7	22.4	41.7	73.4	44.4



Reduction in Numbers



Percent Reductions from Recreational Size Limits with Bag Limits

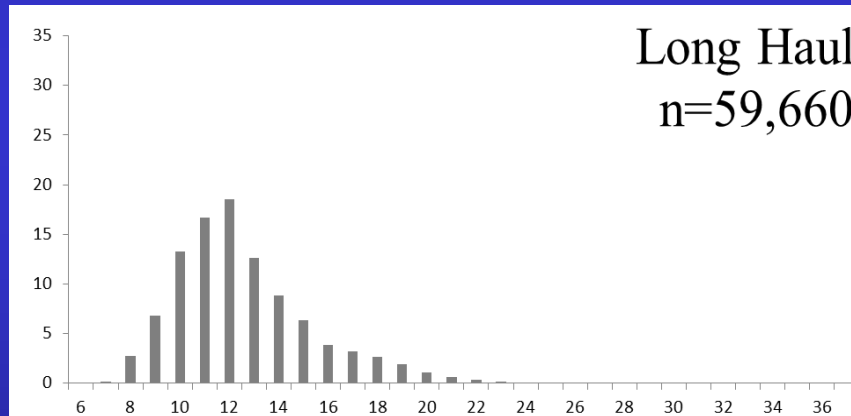
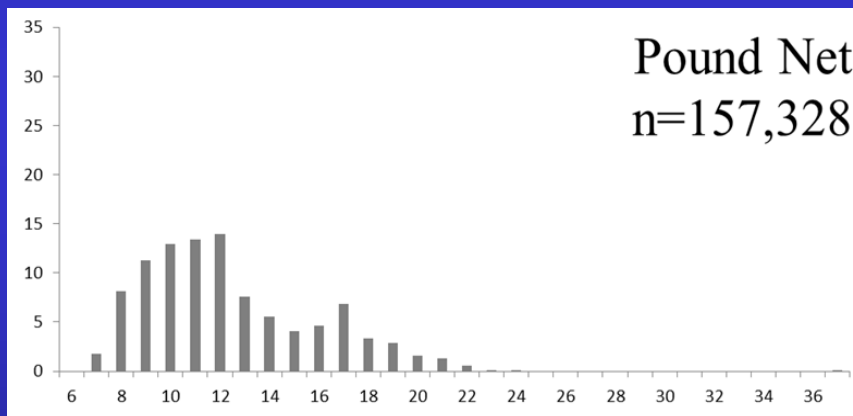
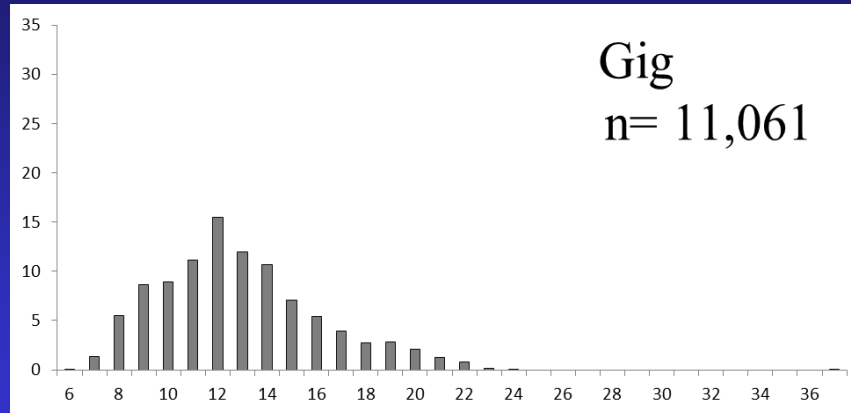
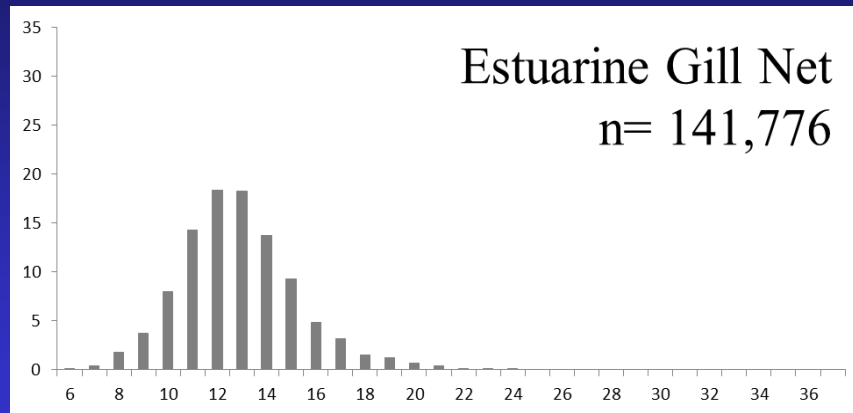
	10 inch	12 inch	14 inch	12 to 20 inch Slot Limit
Bag #	Average Reductions	Average Reductions	Average Reductions	Average Reductions
1	74.3	80.3	86.1	82.8
2	59.8	69.2	78.2	73.0
3	50.5	62.0	73.2	66.8
4	44.2	57.2	69.8	62.6
5	39.7	53.8	67.4	59.6
6	36.1	51.0	65.4	57.2
7	33.3	48.8	63.9	55.3
8	31.1	47.2	62.7	53.8
9	29.5	45.9	61.8	52.7
10	28.2	44.9	61.1	51.8

Reduction in numbers



Commercial Length Frequencies by Gear

Relative frequency (%)



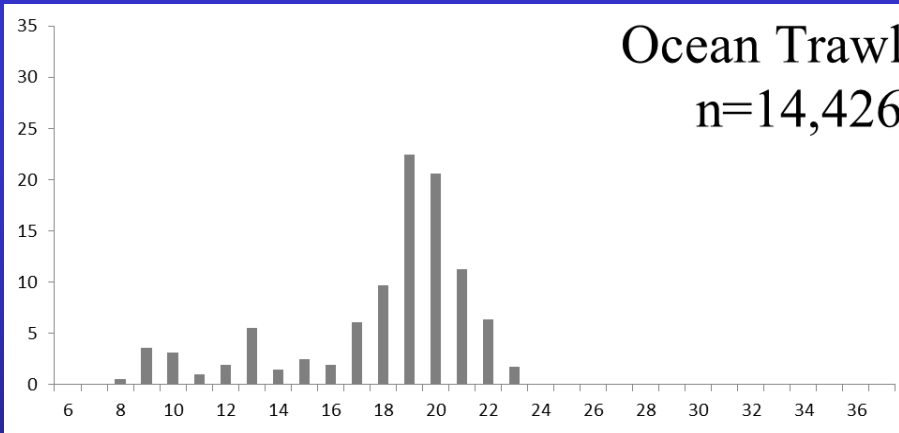
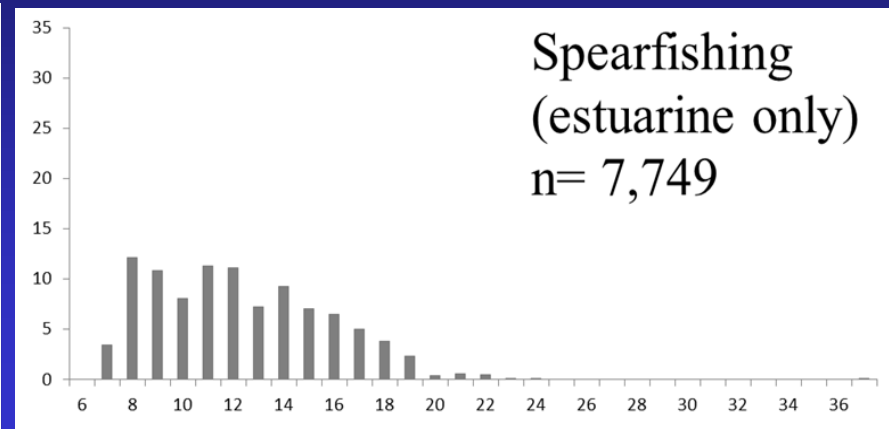
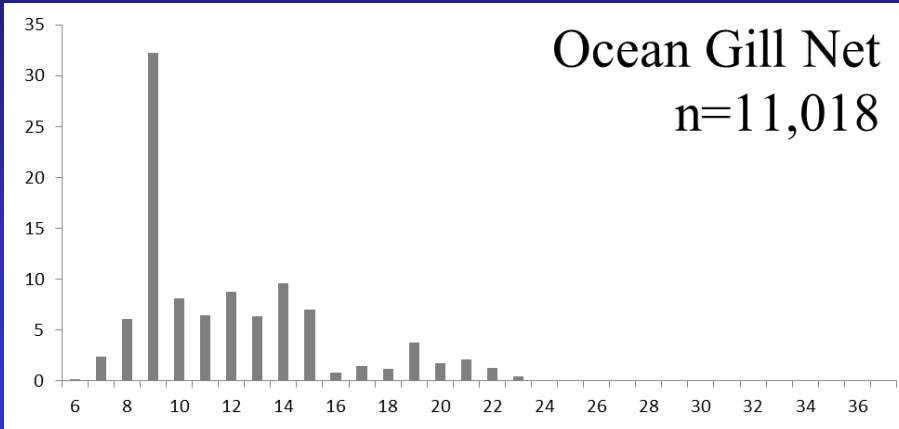
Fork Length (inches)

Fork Length (inches)



Commercial Length Frequencies by Gear

Relative frequency (%)



Fork Length (inches)



Fork Length (inches)



Percent Reductions in Pounds from Commercial Size Limits By Gear 2002 - 2013

Fishery	Reductions for all years (2002-2013)			
	10" Size limit	12" Size limit	14" Size limit	12 to 20" Slot
Estuarine Gill Net	6.0	28.3	64.9	28.9
Pound Net	21.2	47.5	69.0	49.5
Gig	20.1	39.8	73.6	41.7
Long Haul	9.7	39.7	70.9	40.9
Ocean Gill Net	40.9	55.5	70.5	59.4
Ocean Trawl	4.2	8.3	15.8	27.8
Spear/Diving	26.5	45.8	64.2	47.5



Commercial Harvest Percent Reductions from Trip Limits by Gear 2002 - 2013

Fishery	Commercial Trip Limit (Pounds)					Percent of Commercial Harvest
	100	200	300	400	500	
Estuarine Gill Net	7.8	4.0	2.6	1.9	1.5	35.2
Pound Net	55.3	40.7	31.8	25.5	20.9	39.0
Gig	8.2	2.3	1.0	0.7	0.3	2.8
Long Haul	47.0	29.4	19.8	13.9	10.1	14.8
Ocean Gill Net	8.1	4.3	2.7	1.8	1.3	2.7
Ocean Trawl	89.1	82.5	77.4	73.4	69.8	3.6
Spear/Diving	35.1	10.3	3.0	0.3	0.0	1.9
All Fisheries	36.6	26.5	21.0	17.3	14.7	100.0



Considerations

- Unknown stock status
- Are management actions needed?
- Is a fishery management plan needed?



Potential Management Options

- Status quo
- Minimum size limits
- Slot limits
- Bag limits
- Trip limits
- Combination of size limits and bag limits
- Combination of size limits and trip limits
- Time, area, and seasons



Recommendation

The division recommends that the commission refer this issue to its relevant standing and regional advisory committees for public input during the spring 2015 scheduled meetings.



Next Steps

Vote to send draft issue paper to relevant standing and regional advisory committees for public input during the spring 2015 scheduled meetings.

