



*North Carolina Spotted Seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*)  
Fishery Characterization*

*Department of Environmental Quality  
Marine Fisheries*

N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting | L. Pensinger | Feb 22-24, 2023



## *Outline*

- Overview of Spotted Seatrout Fishery
- Commercial Fishery
- Recreational Fishery
- Reductions
- Next Steps



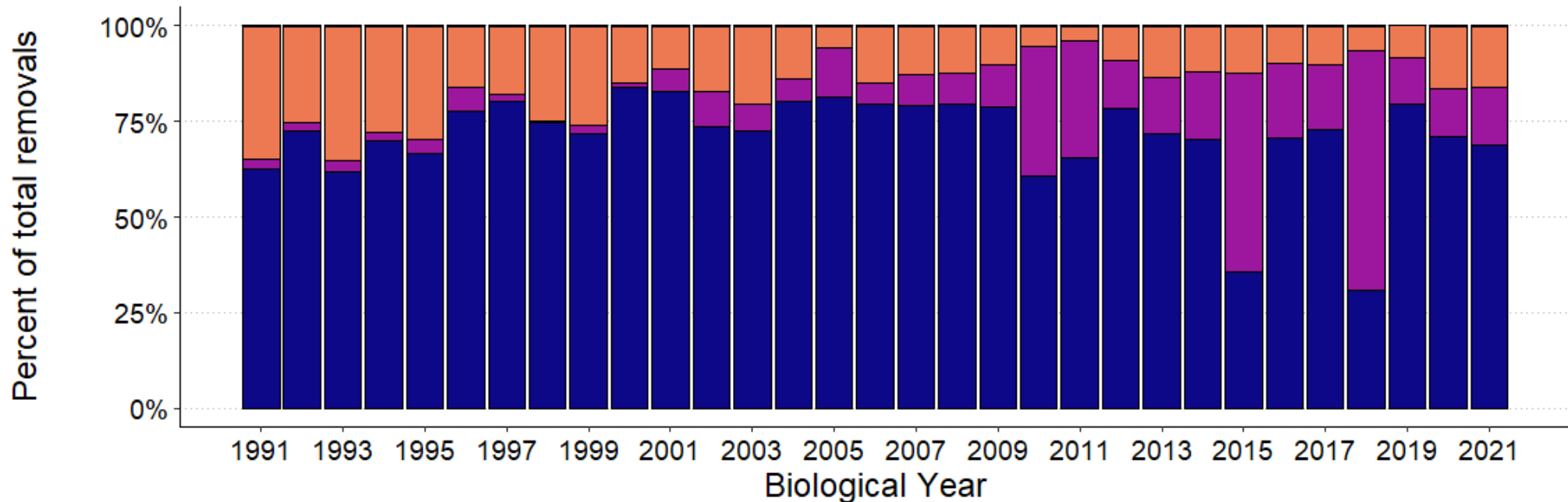
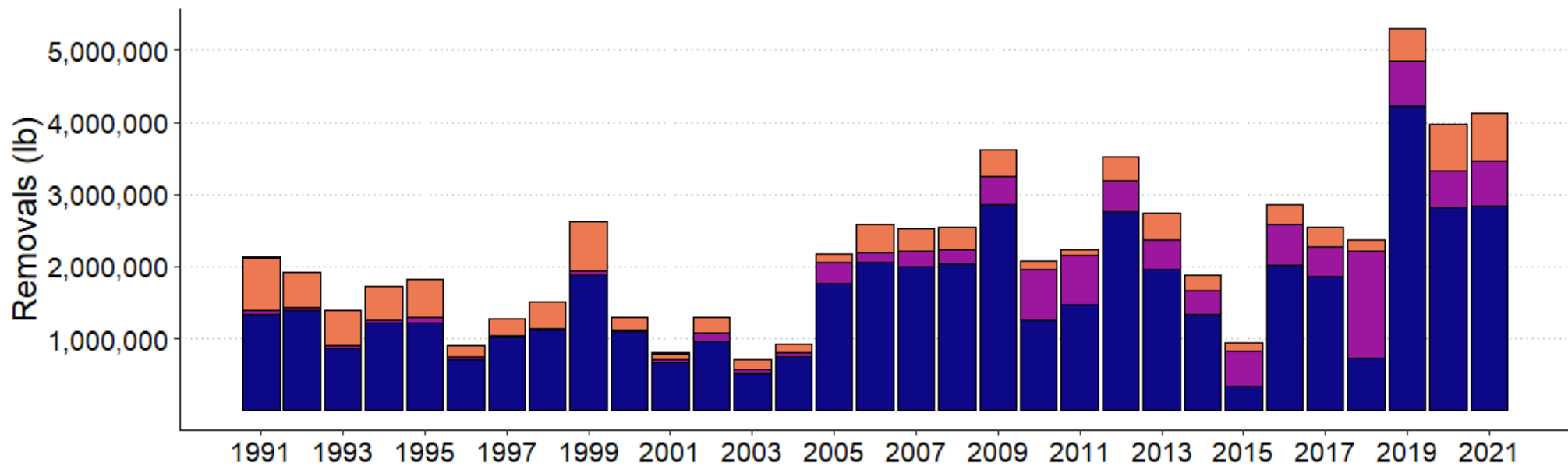
## *Fishery Overview*



# Annual landings and discards by sector

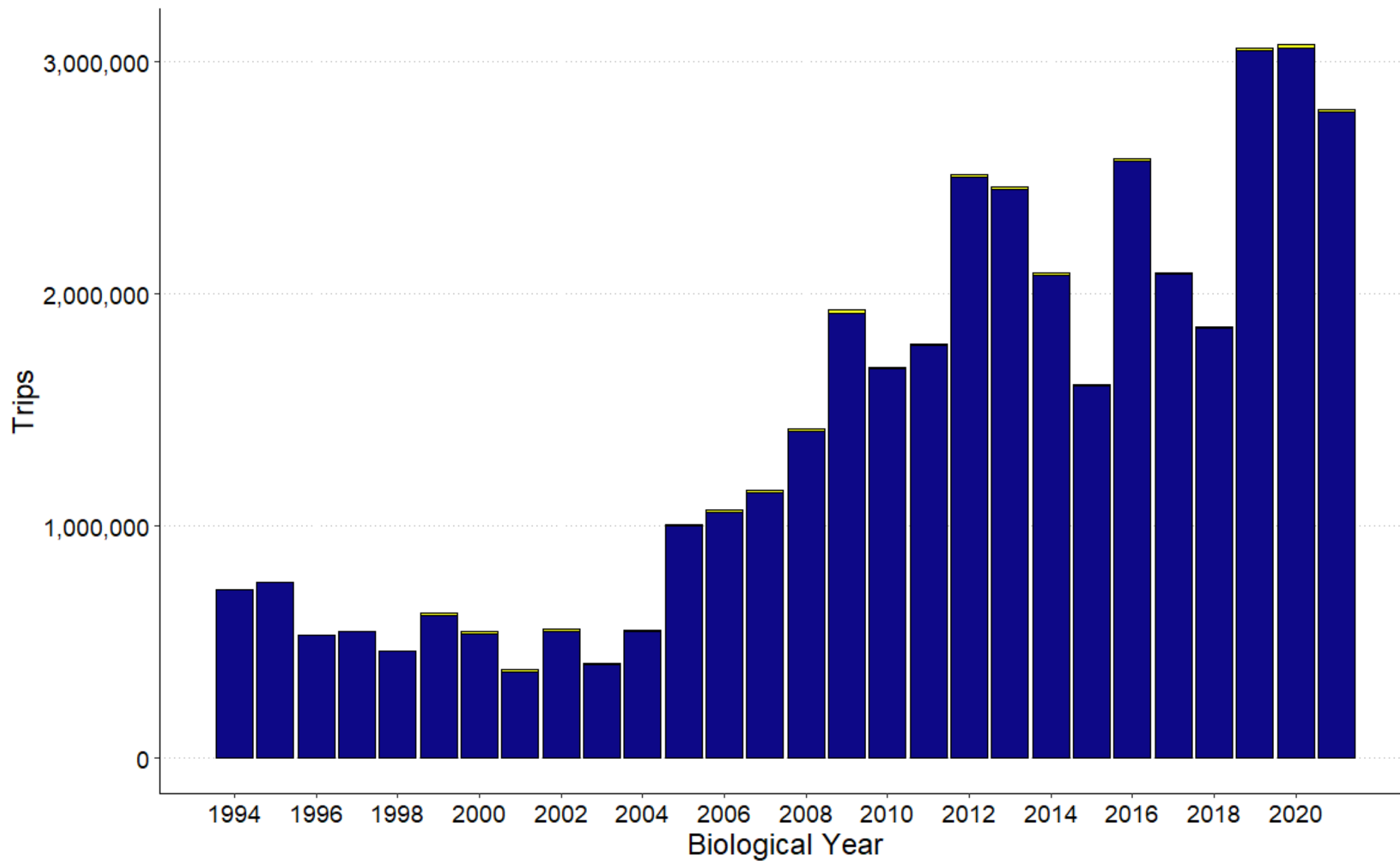
Fleet RecLandings RecDeadDiscards ComLandings ComDeadDiscards

Percentage Since 2009	
Rec. Landings	69.29%
Rec. Discards	20.16%
Comm. Landings	10.52%
Comm. Discards	0.04%



# Annual number of trips by sector

Sector ■ Recreational ■ Commercial

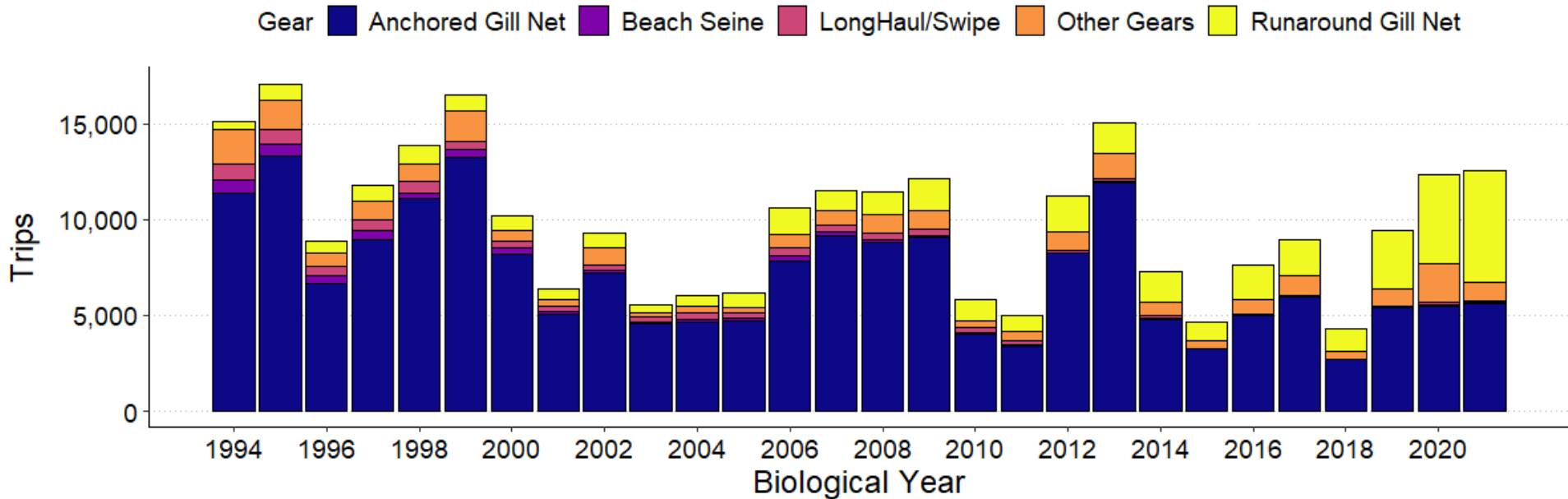
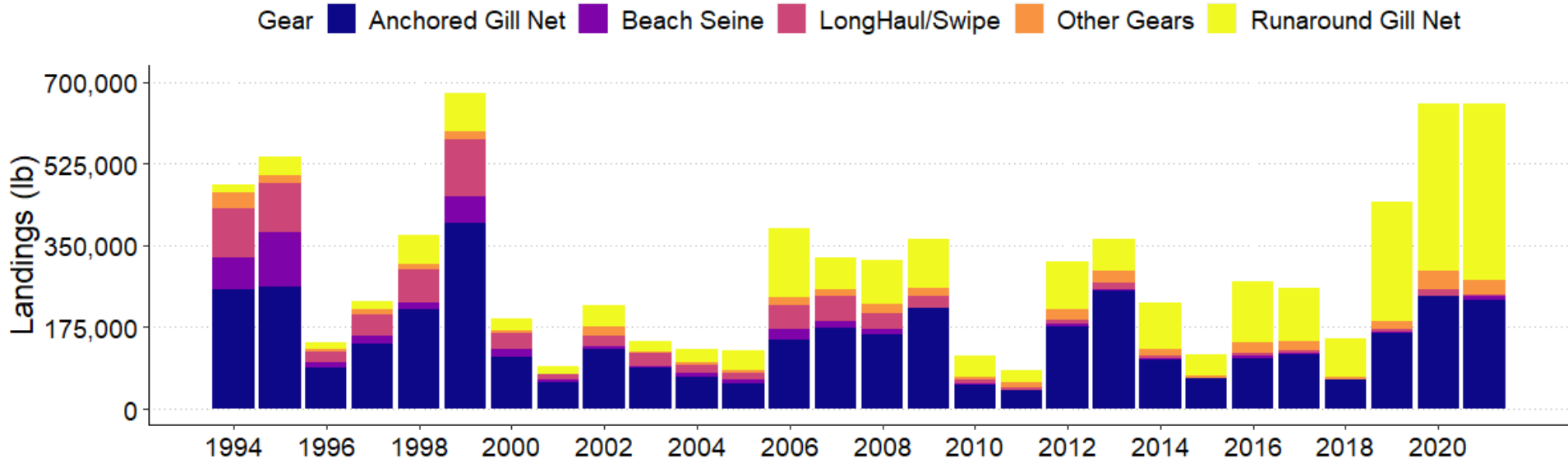


## *Commercial Fishery*



# Commercial Fishery: Annual Landings

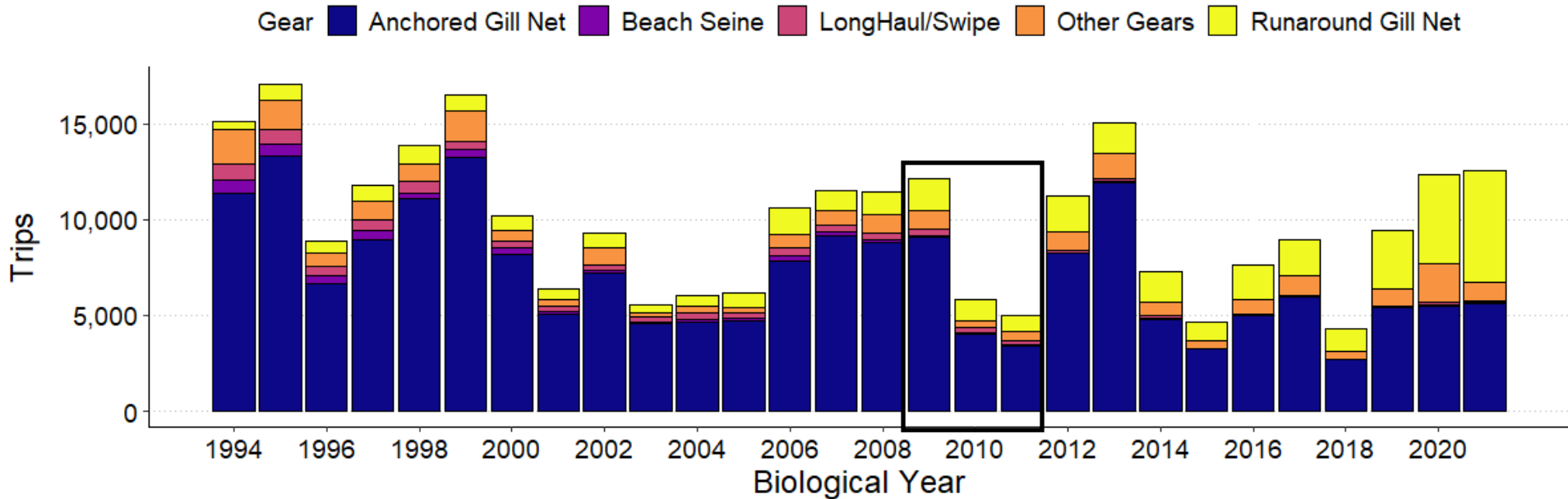
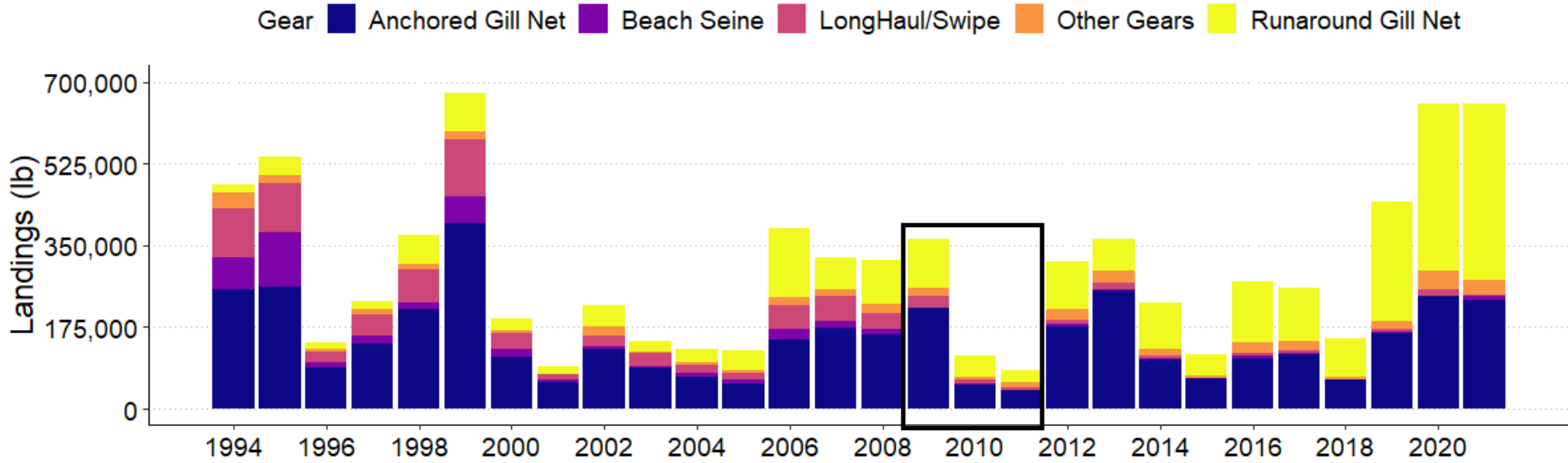
Annual commercial landings and trips by gear type





# Commercial Fishery: Annual Landings

Annual commercial landings and trips by gear type

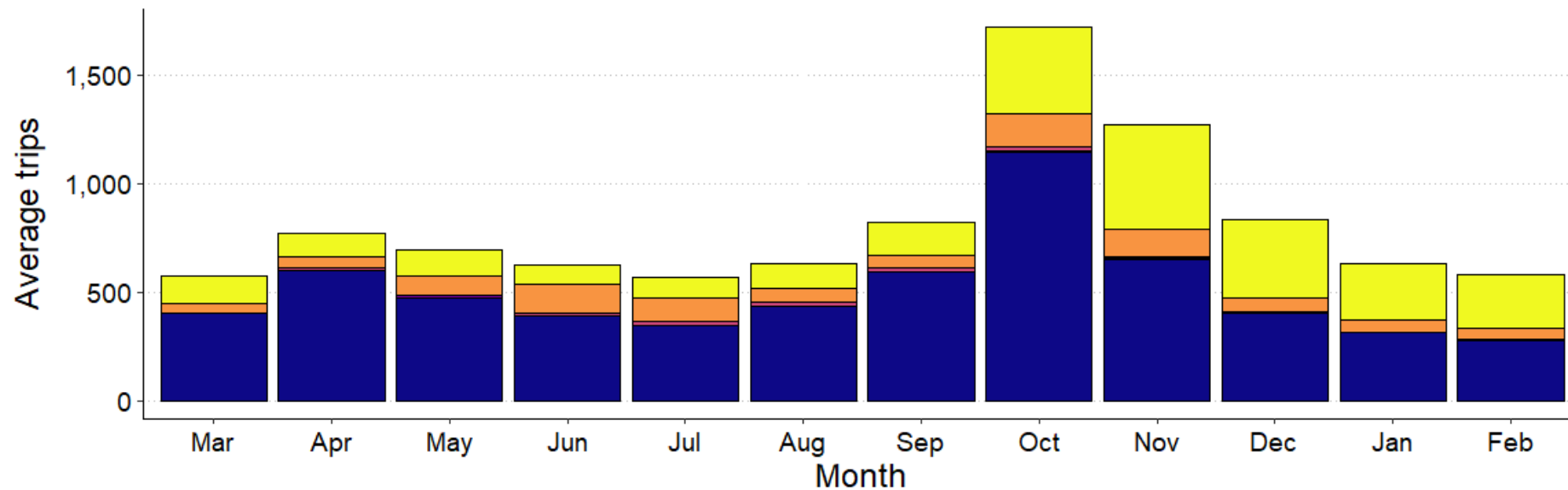
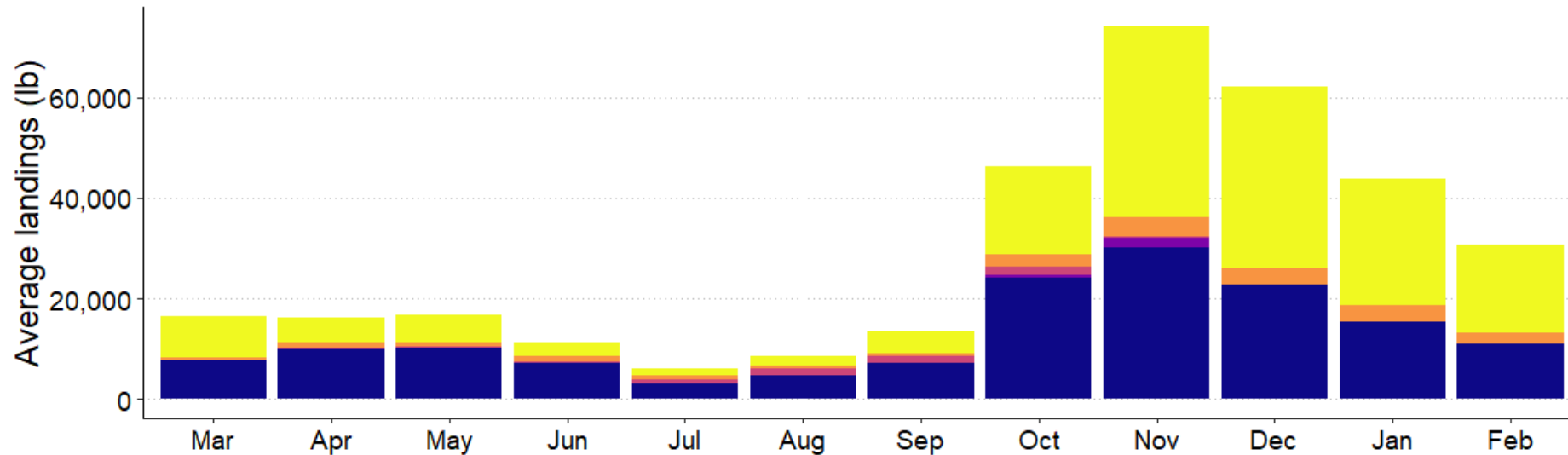




# Commercial Fishery: Seasonal Landings

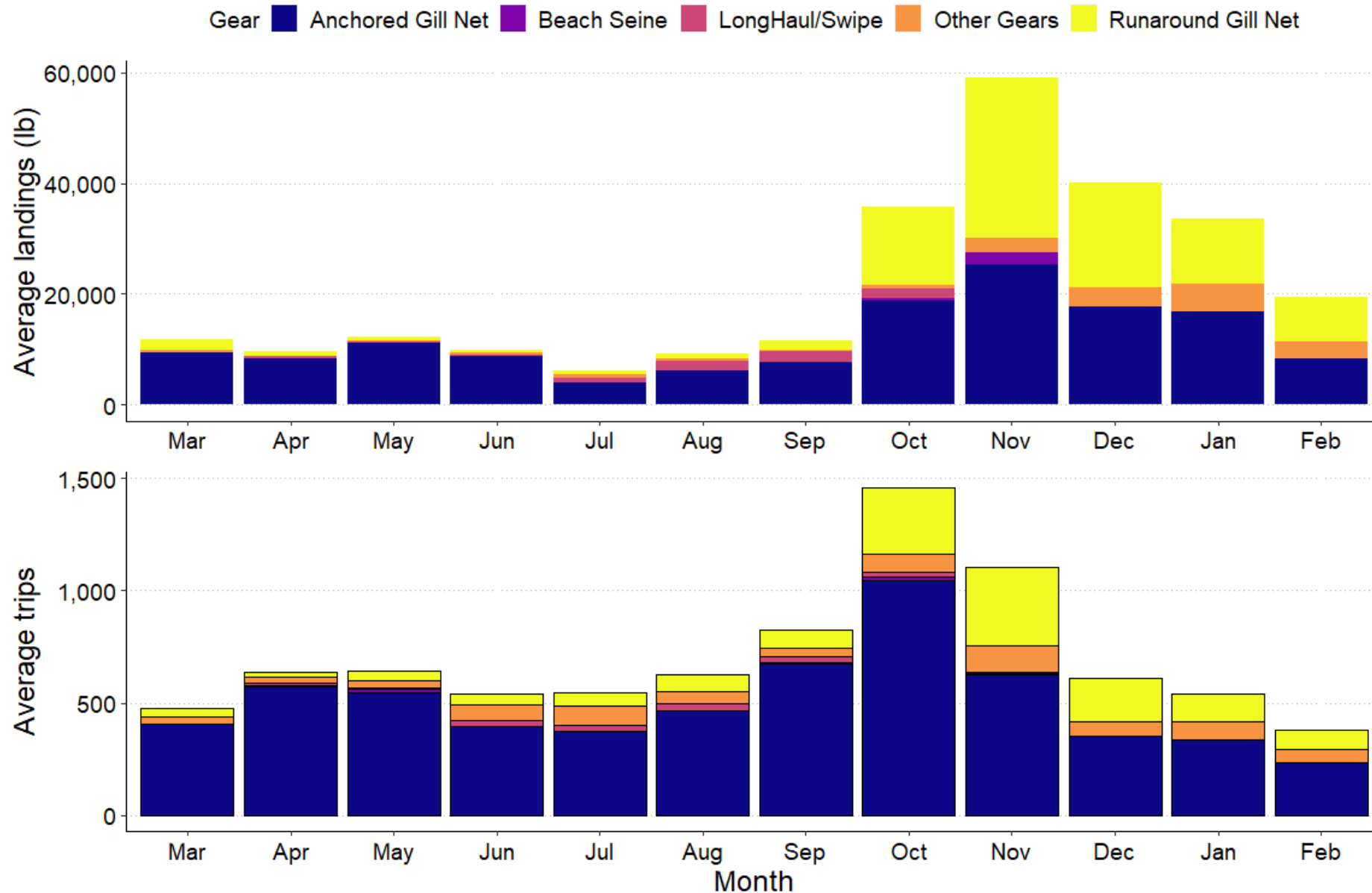
Average monthly landings and trips by gear type (2012-2021)

Gear ■ Anchored Gill Net ■ Beach Seine ■ LongHaul/Swipe ■ Other Gears ■ Runaround Gill Net



# Commercial Fishery: Seasonal Landings

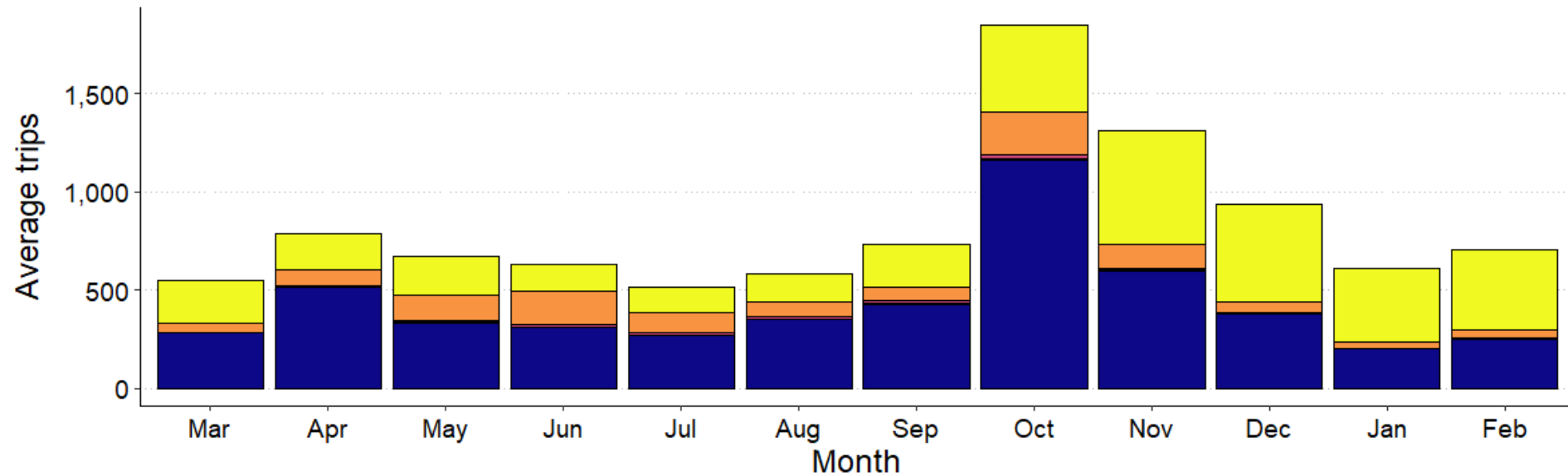
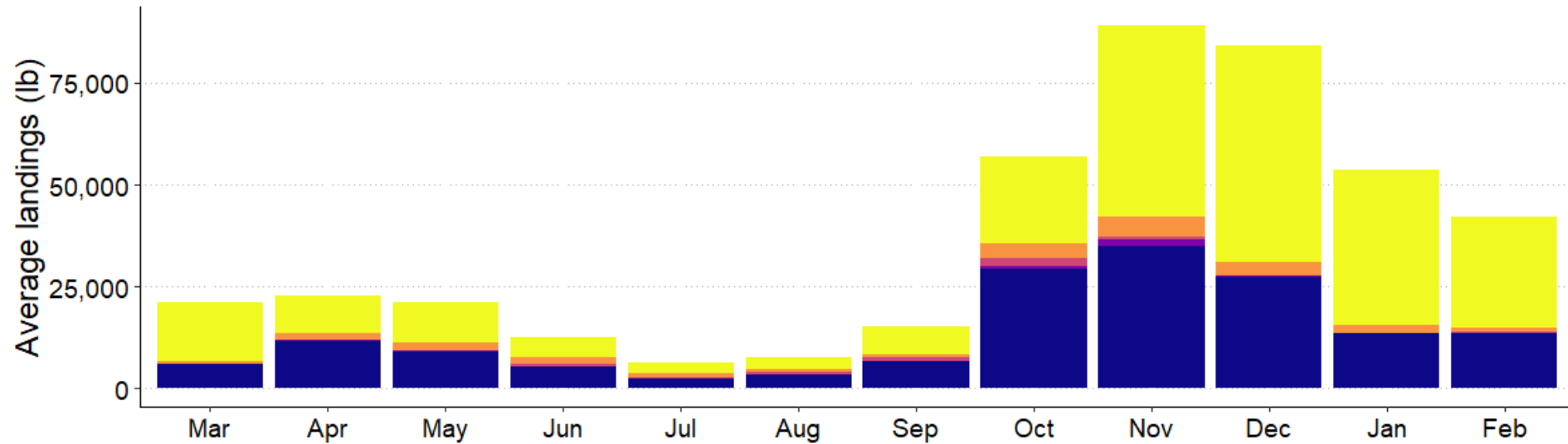
Average monthly landings and trips by gear type (2012-2016)



# Commercial Fishery: Seasonal Landings

Average monthly landings and trips by gear type (2017-2021)

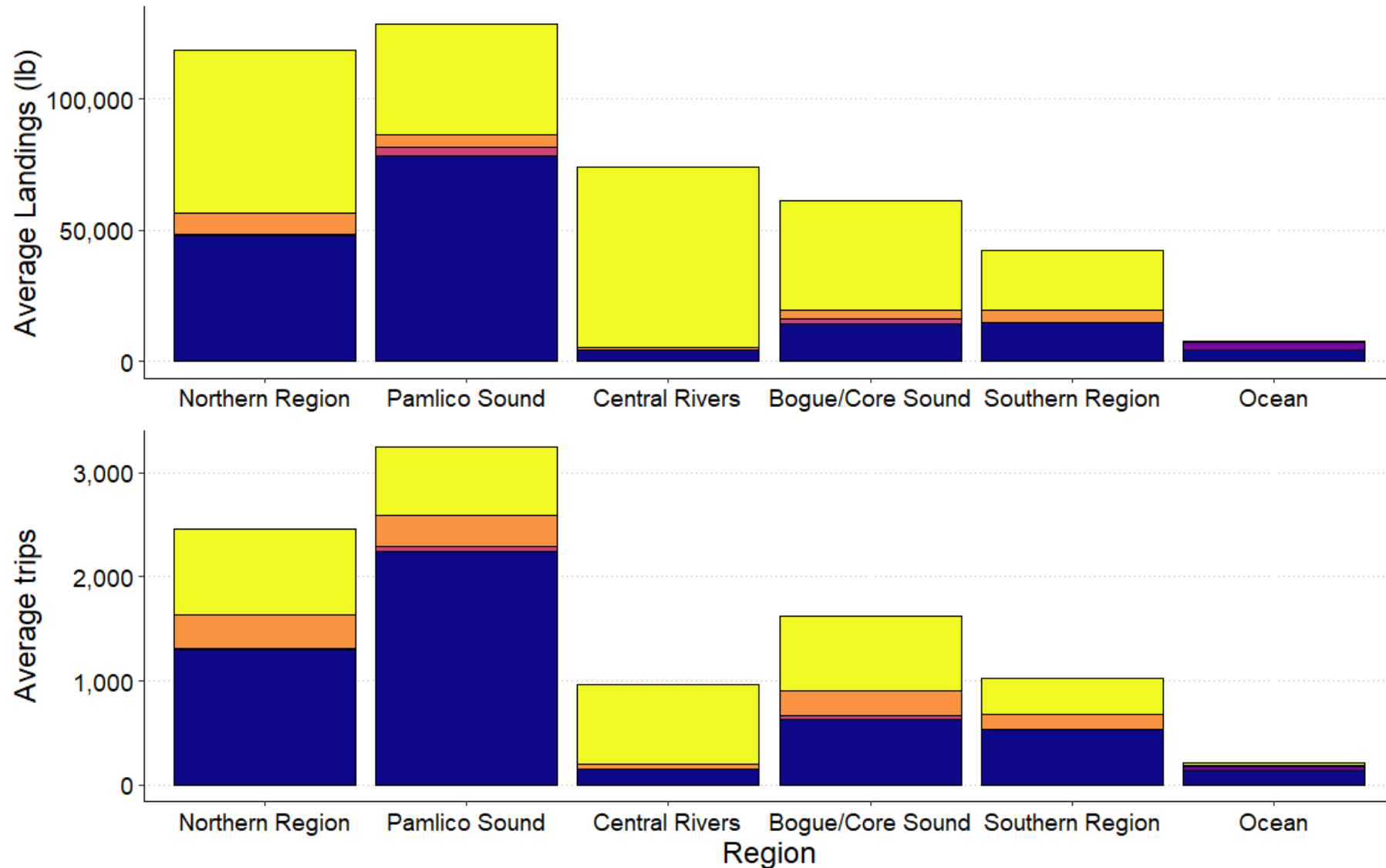
Gear ■ Anchored Gill Net ■ Beach Seine ■ LongHaul/Swipe ■ Other Gears ■ Runaround Gill Net



# Commercial Fishery: Regional Landings

Regional average commercial landings and trips by gear (2017-2021)

Gear ■ Anchored Gill Net ■ Beach Seine ■ LongHaul/Swipe ■ Other Gears ■ Runaround Gill Net

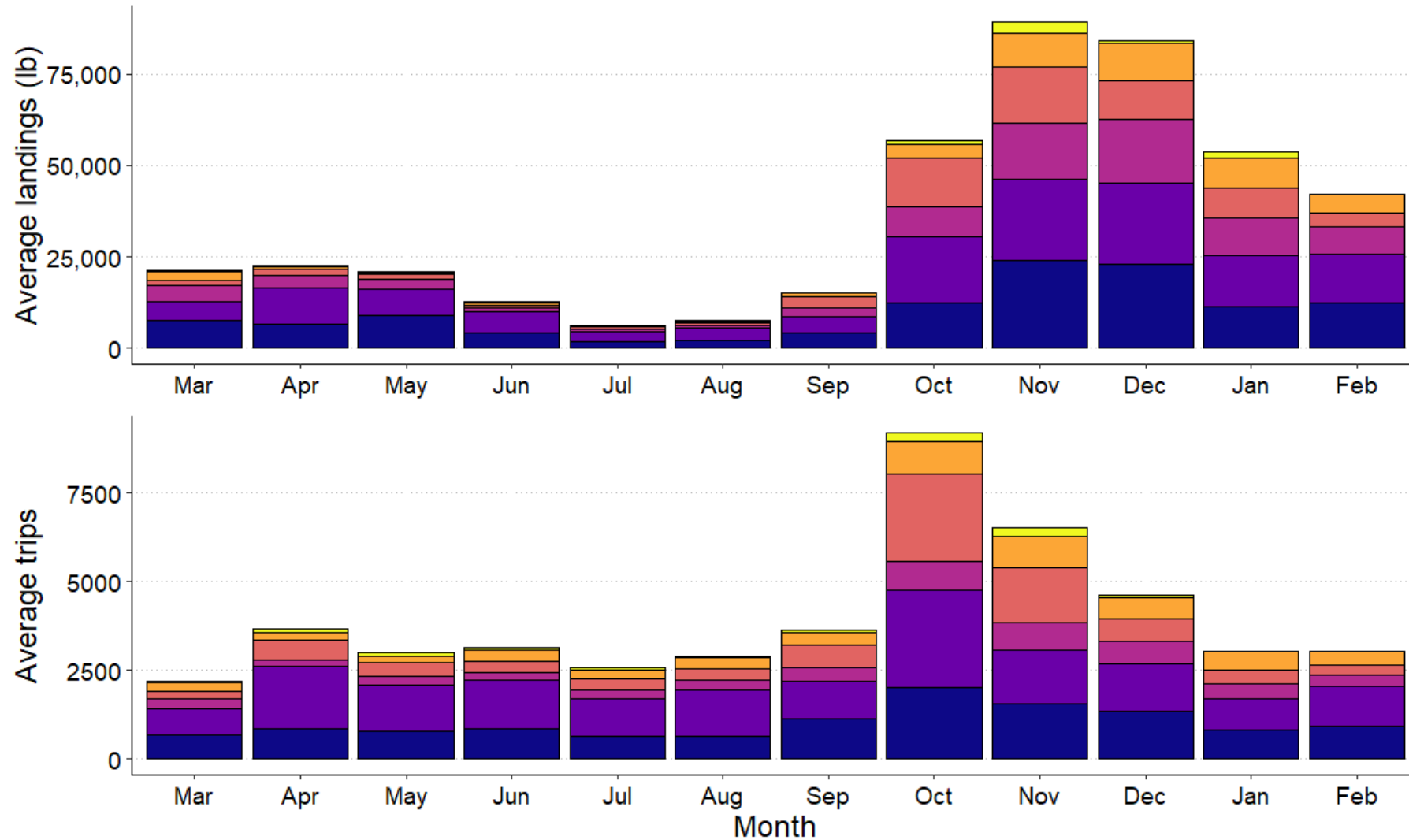




# Commercial Fishery: Regional Landings

Average monthly commercial landings by region (2017-2021)

Region  
■ Northern Region  
■ Pamlico Sound  
■ Central Rivers  
■ Bogue/Core Sound  
■ Southern Region  
■ Ocean

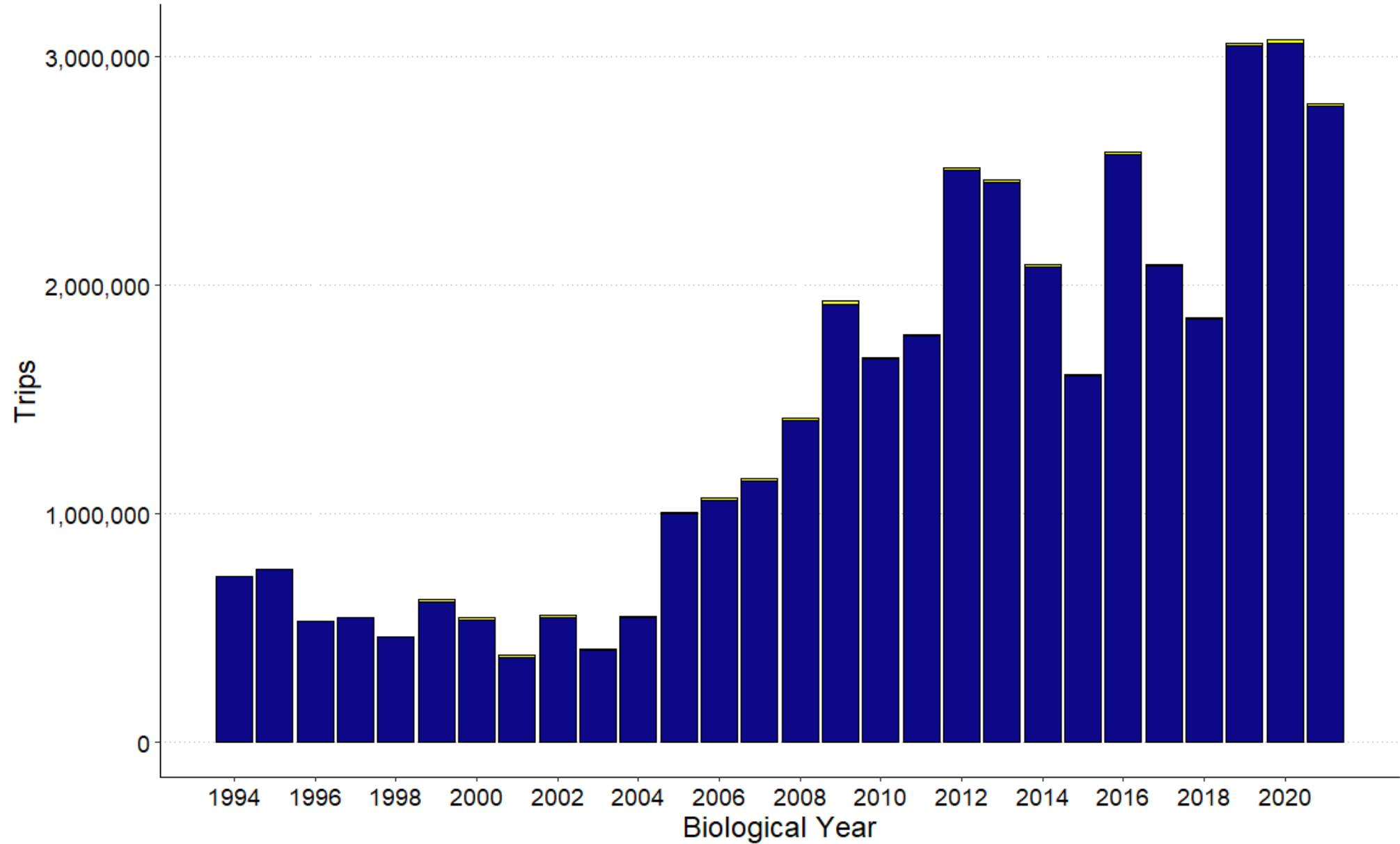


*Recreational Fishery*



# Annual number of trips by sector

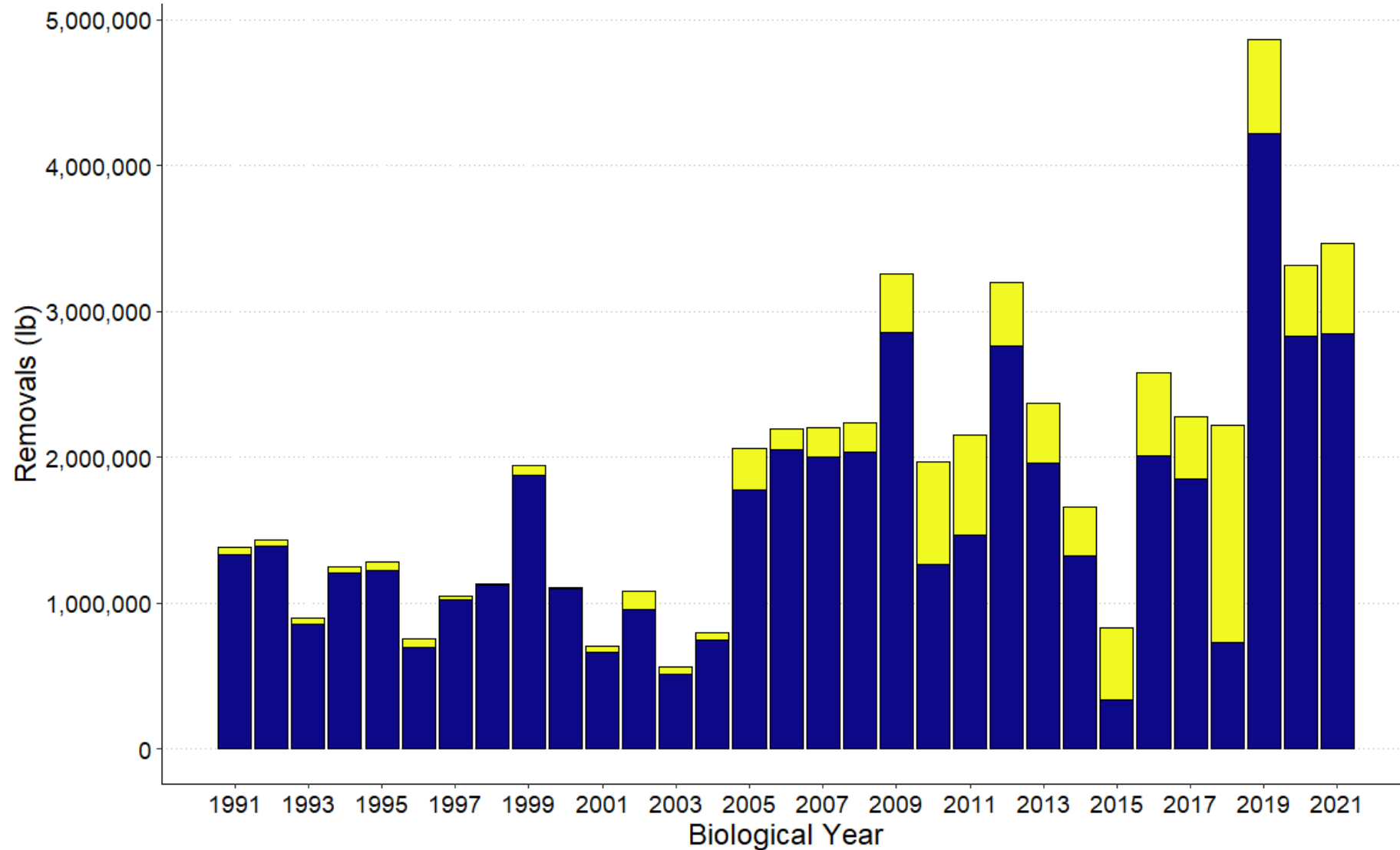
Sector ■ Recreational ■ Commercial



# *Recreational Landings and Dead Discards: Annual*

Annual recreational removals

Fleet RecLandings RecDeadDiscards

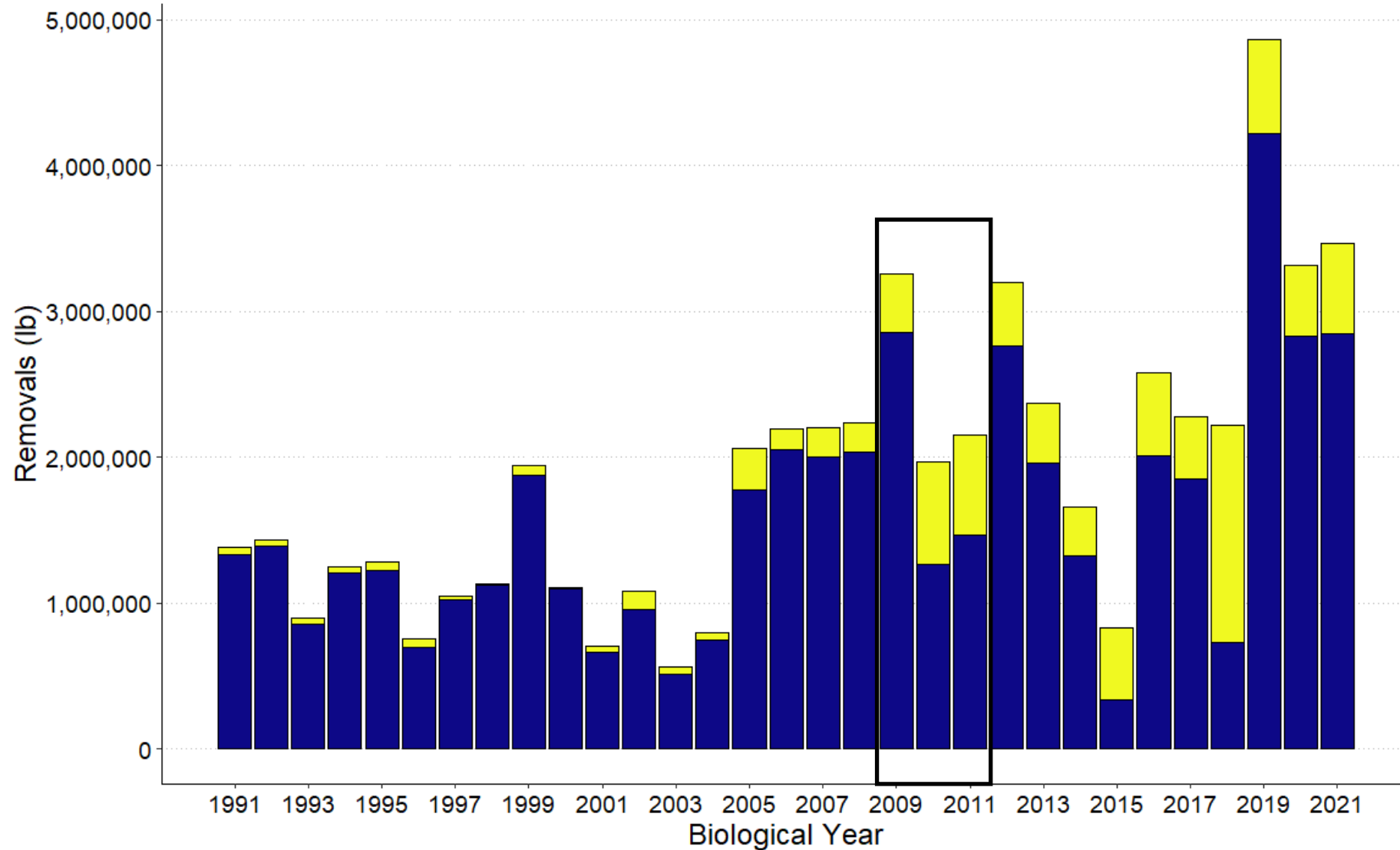




# *Recreational Landings and Dead Discards: Annual*

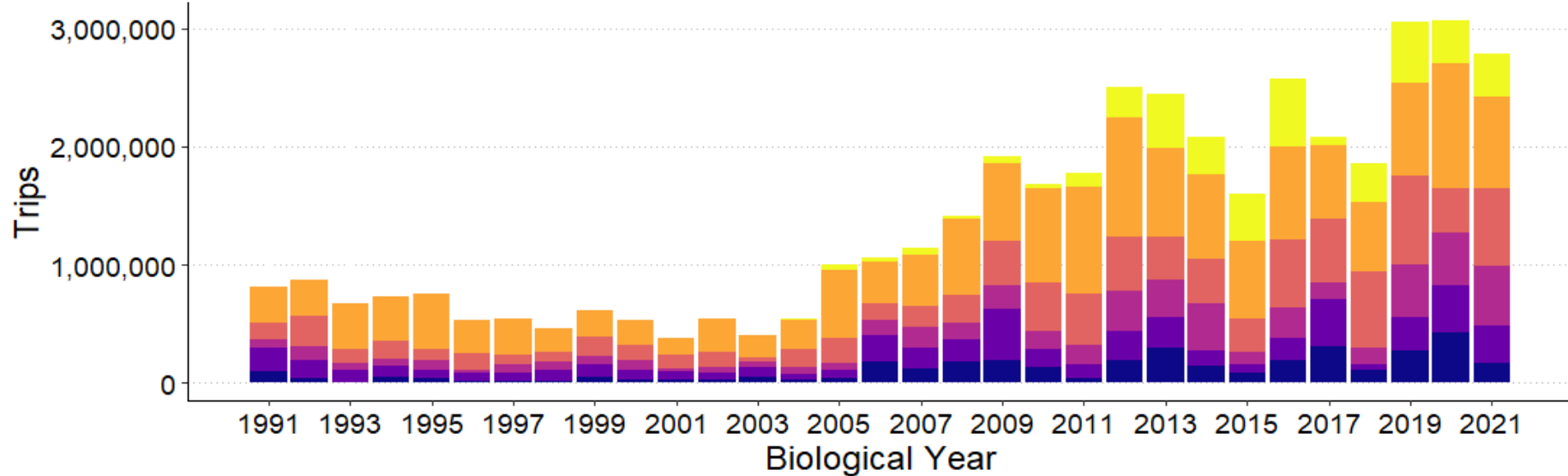
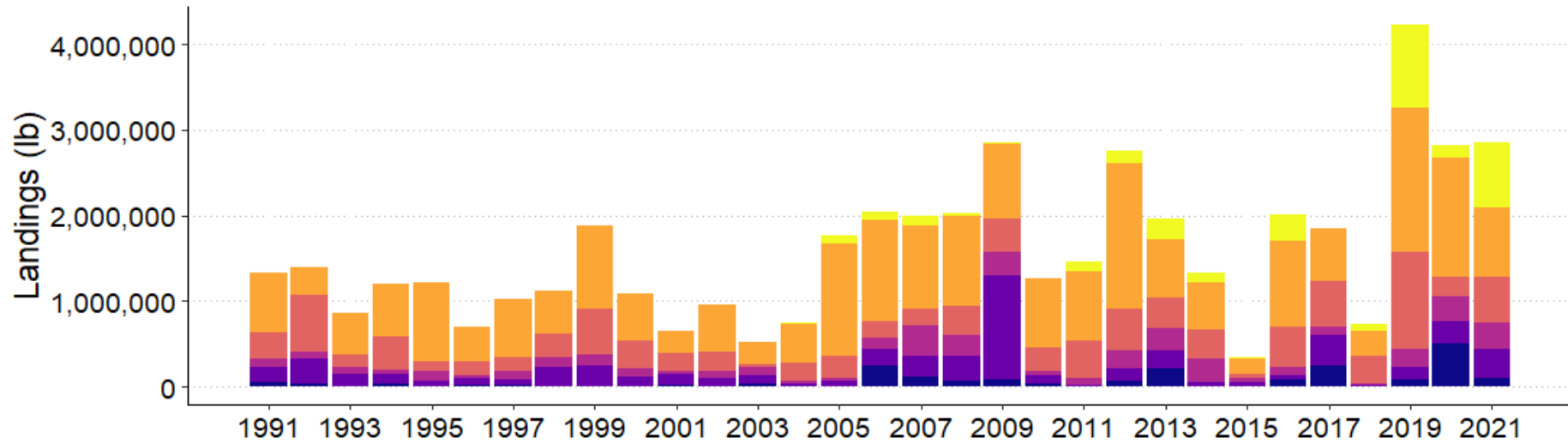
Annual recreational removals

Fleet RecLandings RecDeadDiscards



# Recreational Landings: Annual

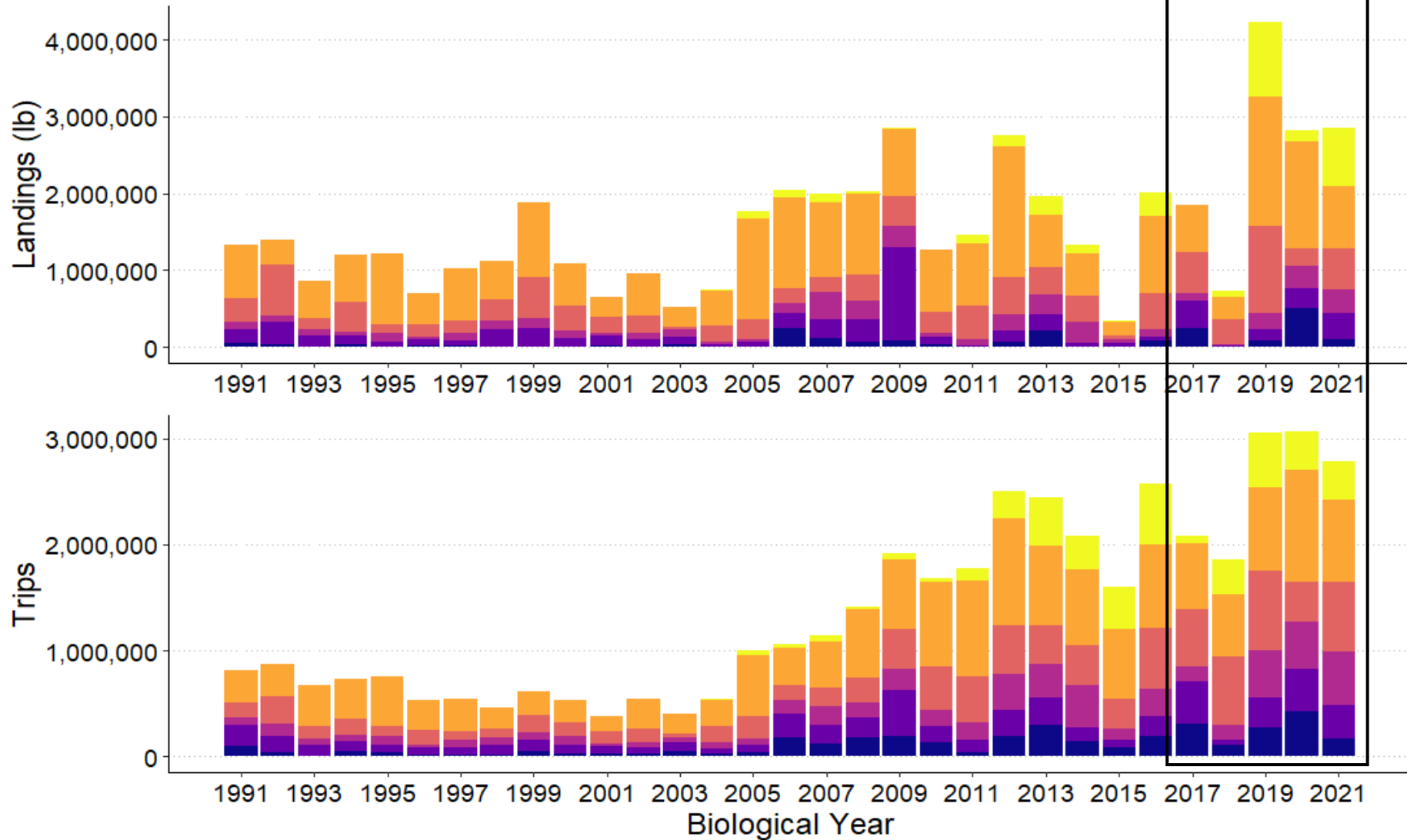
Recreational landings by wave



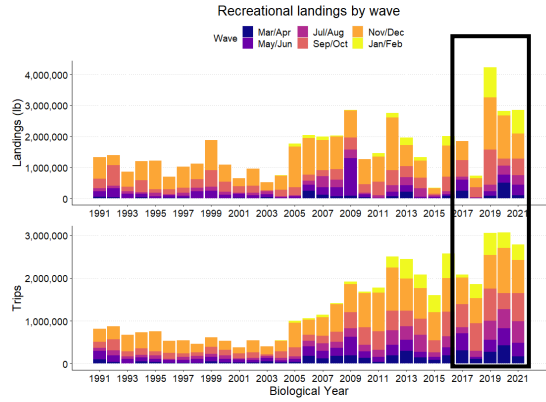
# Recreational Landings: Annual

Recreational landings by wave

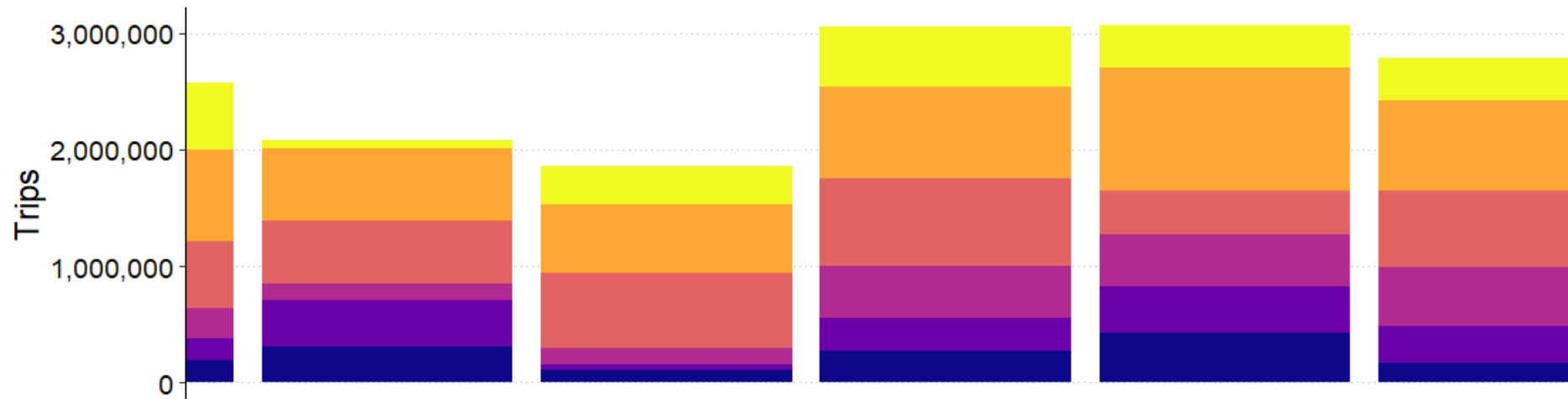
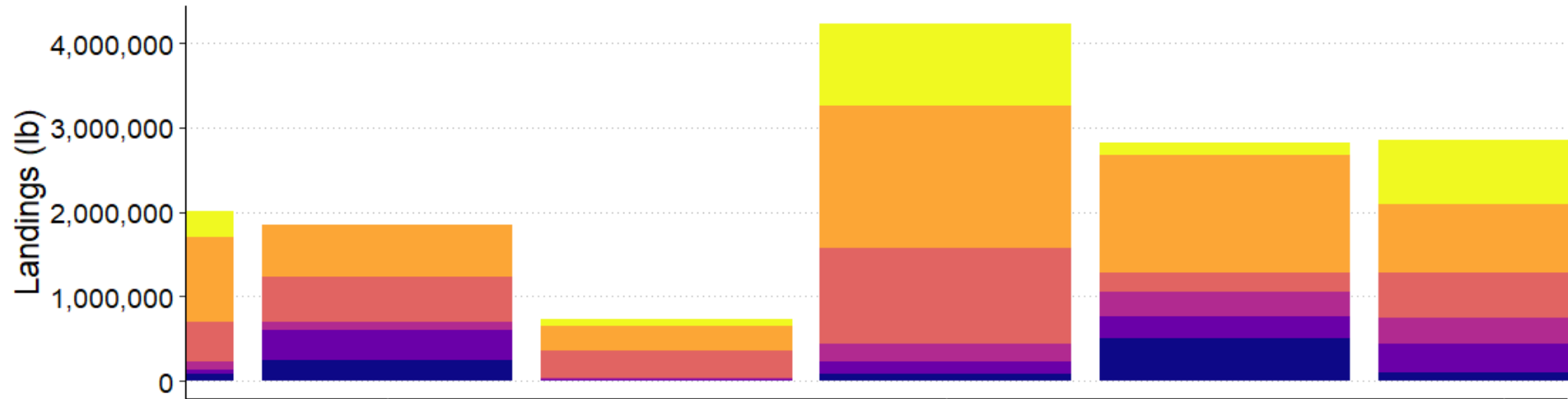
Wave  
Mar/Apr (dark blue), May/June (purple), Jul/Aug (magenta), Sep/Oct (red), Nov/Dec (orange), Jan/Feb (yellow)



# Recreational Landings: 2017-2021



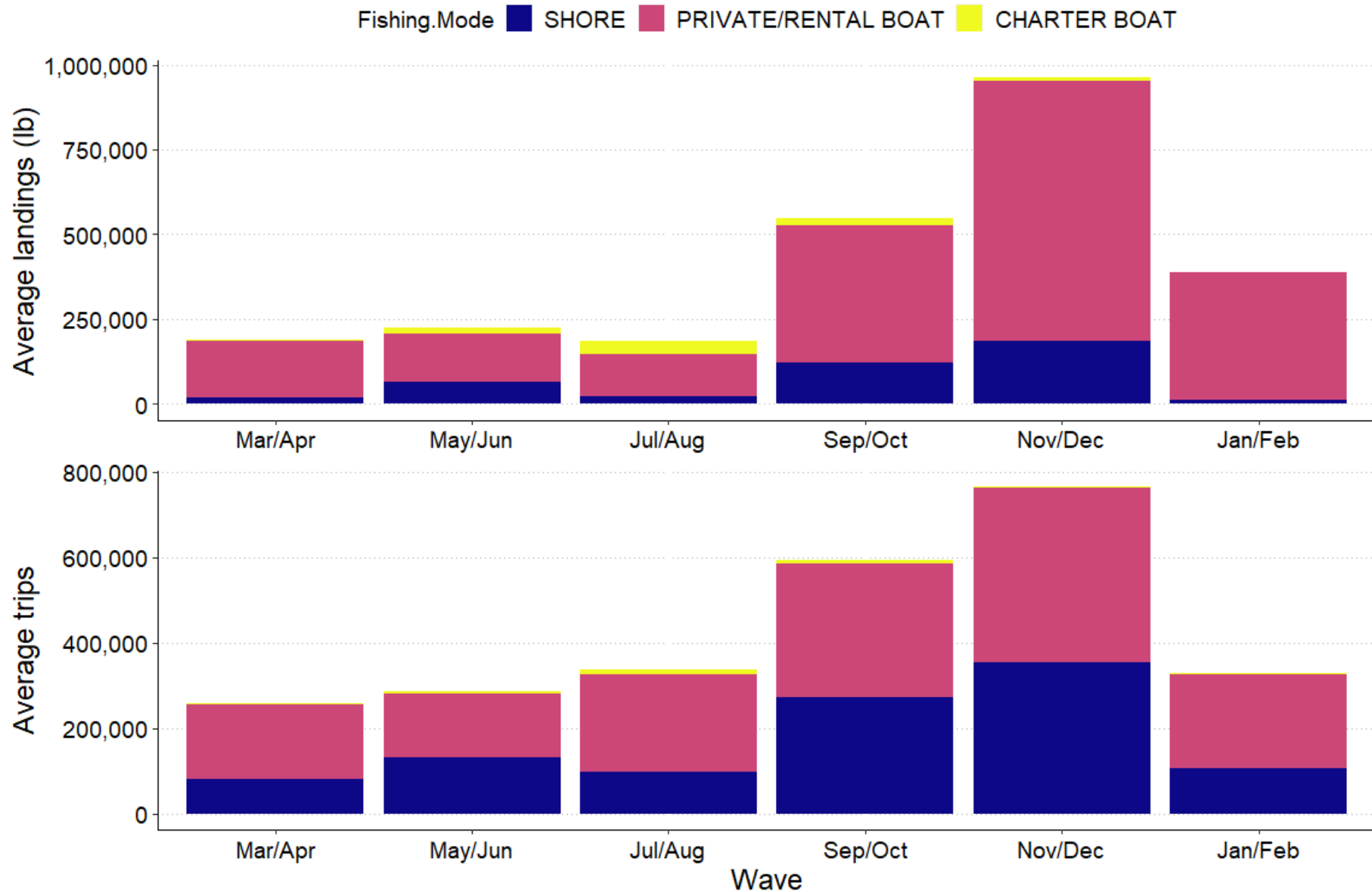
Recreational landings by wave





# Recreational Landings: MRIP Wave

Average recreational landings and trips by wave and mode (2017-2021)



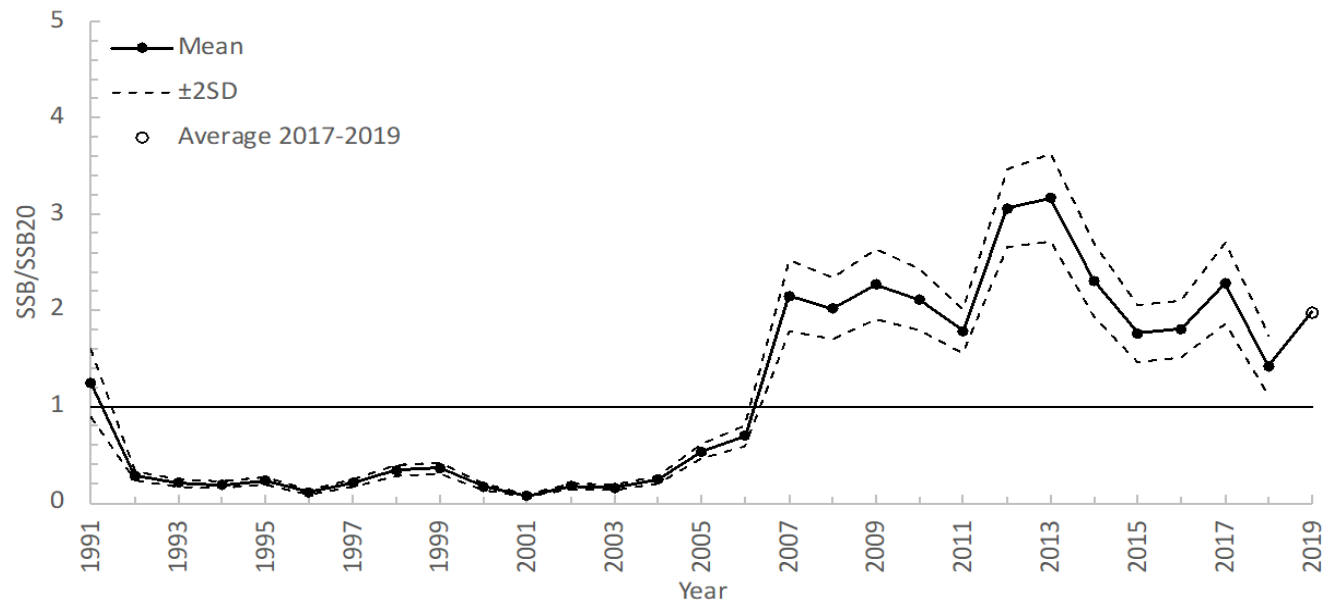
## *Necessary Reductions*



# Necessary Reductions: Stock Assessment



- Not Overfished
  - Spawning stock biomass is high
- Overfishing is occurring
  - Removing too many fish



## *Necessary reductions*

- Need 14.6% - 39.6% reduction in total removals
  - 14.6 % = threshold
  - 39.6% = target
- Why reductions?
  - Statutory requirement to end overfishing
  - Curb fishery growth while spawning stock is still healthy
- Successful current management
  - 14" minimum size limit
  - 4/75 fish bag/trip limit
  - Cold stun adaptive management
- Biology

## *Next Steps*

- Public Scoping March 13 - 24
  - March 14 – Raleigh (McKimmon Center, hybrid)
  - March 16 – Barco (NC Coop. Extension Currituck County Center)
  - March 21 – New Bern (New Bern-Craven County Public Library)
  - March 23 – Wilmington (Cape Fear Community College)
- May MFC Meeting
  - Review Scoping
  - Approve goal and objectives

# *Questions?*

Lucas Pensinger

Email: [lucas.pensinger@ncdenr.gov](mailto:lucas.pensinger@ncdenr.gov)

Office: 252-808-8159