



# *Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan Amendment 2*

Draft Amendment 2 Overview

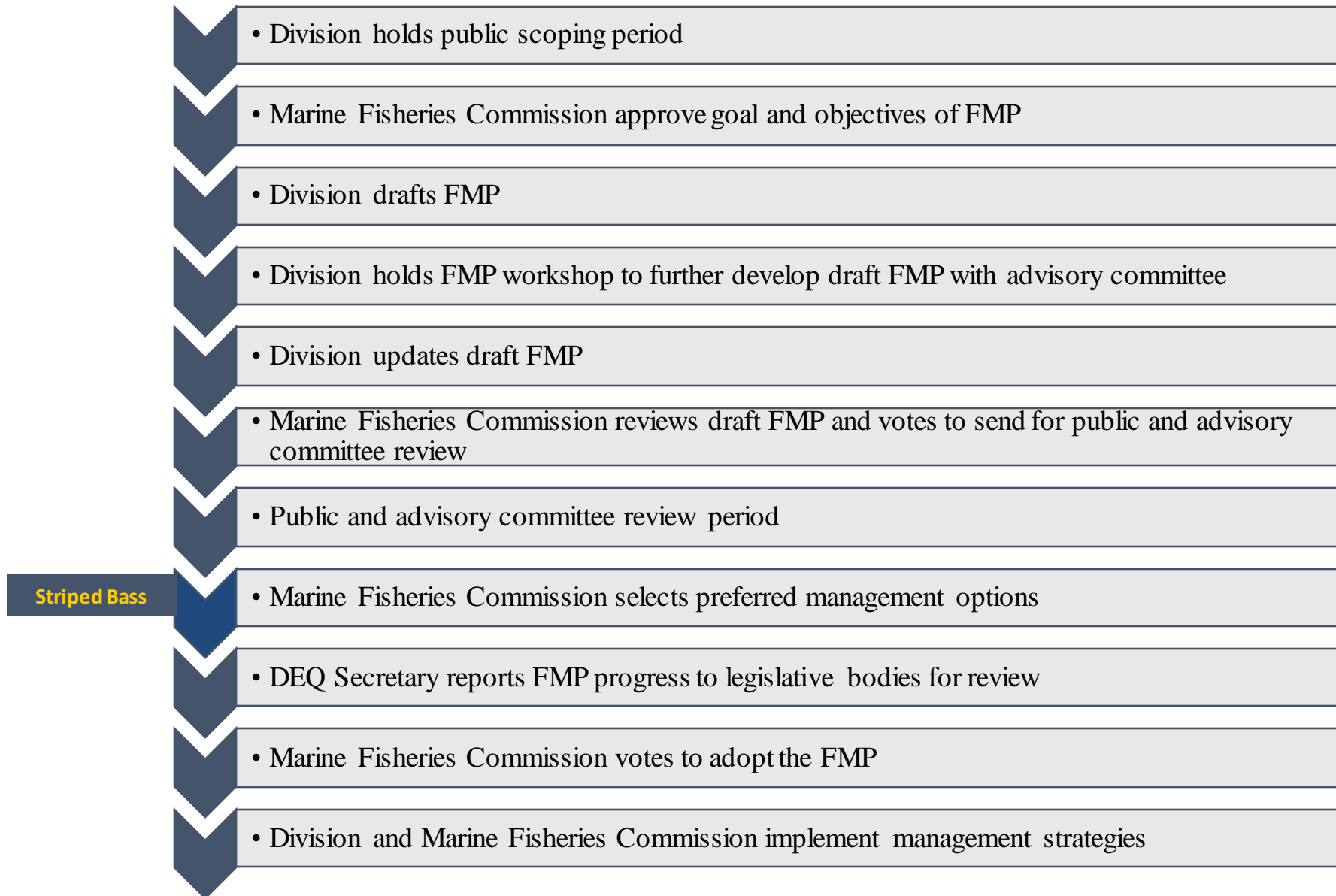
*DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY*

Marine Fisheries

Amendment 2 | Charlton Godwin, Todd Mathes, Nathaniel Hancock, and Joe Facendola | May 26, 2022



# *FMP Process May 2022*



# Issue and Information Papers Overview

## Sustainable Harvest



### Albemarle-Roanoke

End overfishing and rebuild the spawning stock to achieve long-term sustainable harvest.

#### Example Options

Reduce TAL, no possession provision, size limit changes, gear modifications including possibly phasing out gill nets



### Tar-Pamlico and Neuse Rivers

Promote natural recruitment by expanding the age structure of the stock to achieve a self-sustaining population.

#### Example Options

Continue the no-possession provision and gear modifications



### Cape Fear River

Consider implications of allowing harvest given high hatchery contribution to the stock, low overall abundance, limited natural recruitment, and impediments of locks and dams on spawning migration.

#### Example Options

Continue no-possession or allow limited harvest by area

## Across Systems



### Stocking Information Paper

Describes the history of striped bass stocking strategies in North Carolina and gives an overview of future stocking strategies by system. Strategies are developed through the North Carolina Interjurisdictional Fisheries Cooperative (COOP) annual work plans.



### Hook & Line as Commercial Gear

Evaluate the purpose and benefit of hook-and-line as an allowable gear in the commercial striped bass fishery and examine concerns and logistics of implementing the use of hook and line gear.

# *Public Comment Period*

Credit: Buzz Bryson

- March 4 – April 1
- Public listening session
- MFC AC meetings
  - Northern Regional
  - Southern Regional
  - Finfish Standing



# *Public Comment Summary*

## Public Comment Received

- 35 written comments

## Online Questionnaire

- 264 Responses

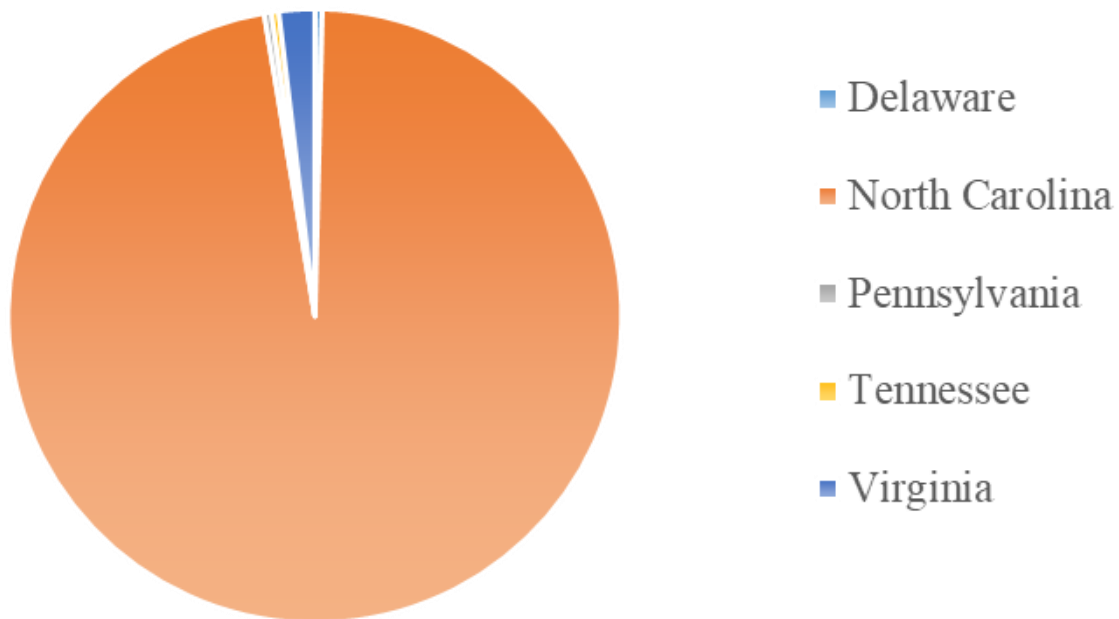
## In Person Comment at an AC Meeting

- 15 people

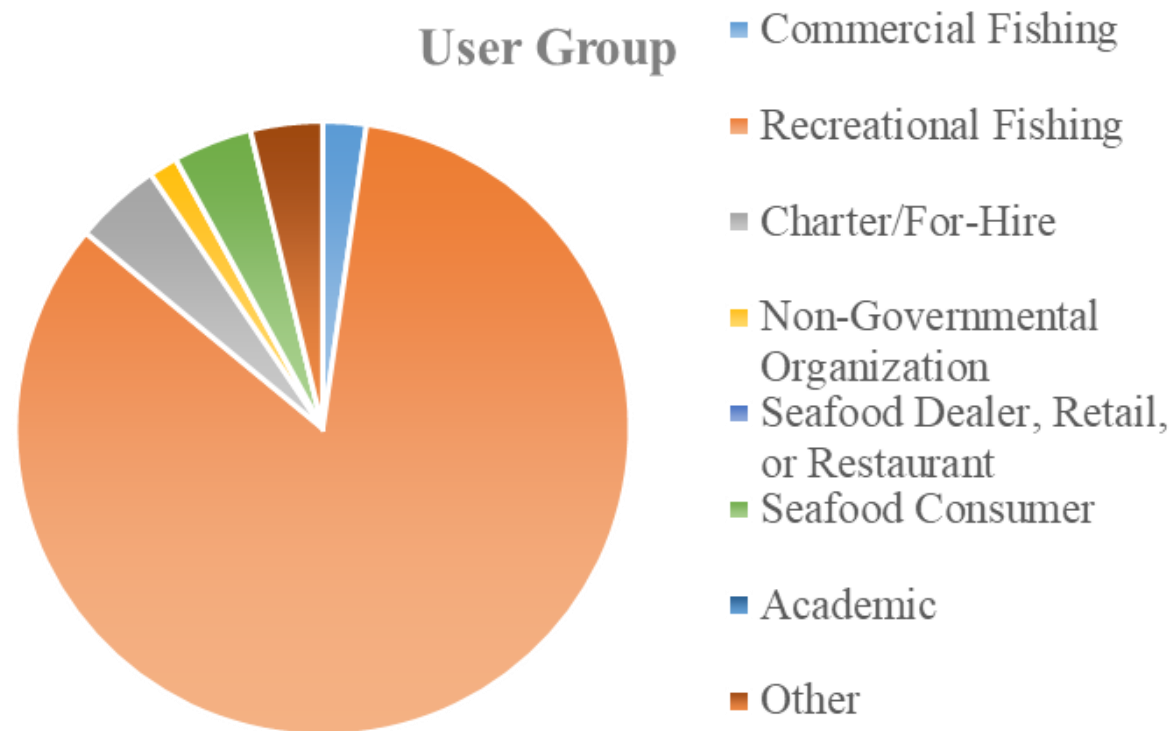


# Online Questionnaire Summary

## State of Residency



## User Group

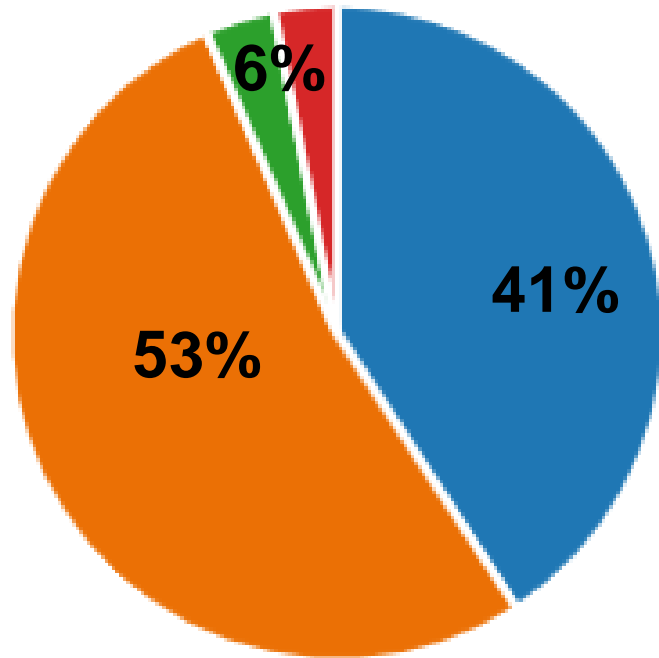


2 respondents commercially fish for striped bass  
0 respondents use gill net to harvest striped bass

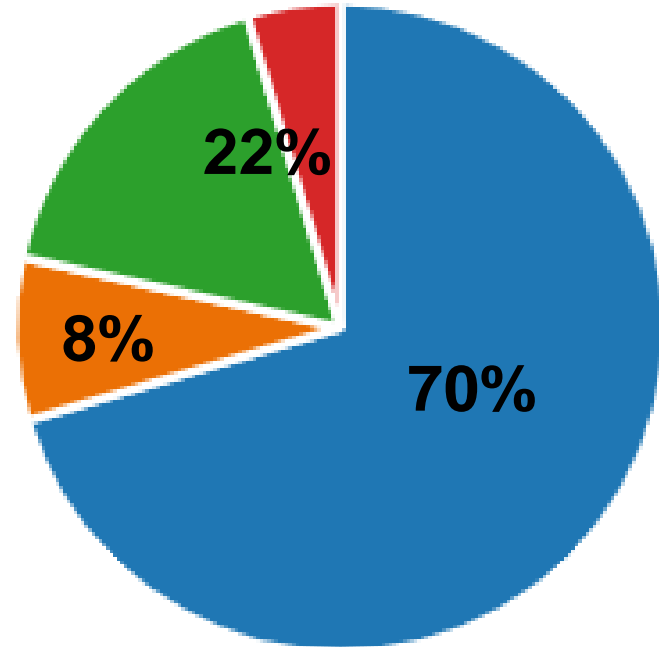
# Online Questionnaire Summary

## Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest for the A-R Stock

- **Option 1:** majority support moratorium



- **Option 2:** majority support bycatch fishery



- If moratorium selected 56% of respondents would catch-and-release

## *Online Questionnaire Summary*

### **Appendix 2: Achieving Sustainable Harvest for the A-R Stock**

- **Option 3:** 68% support 3.D.
  
- **Option 4:** 83% support size limit changes to increase older fish in the stock  
11% opposed  
71% supported 4.C and 4.E
  
- **Option 5:** 49% support 5.B., 19% support 5.D., 17% support 5.E., and 11% 5.C.

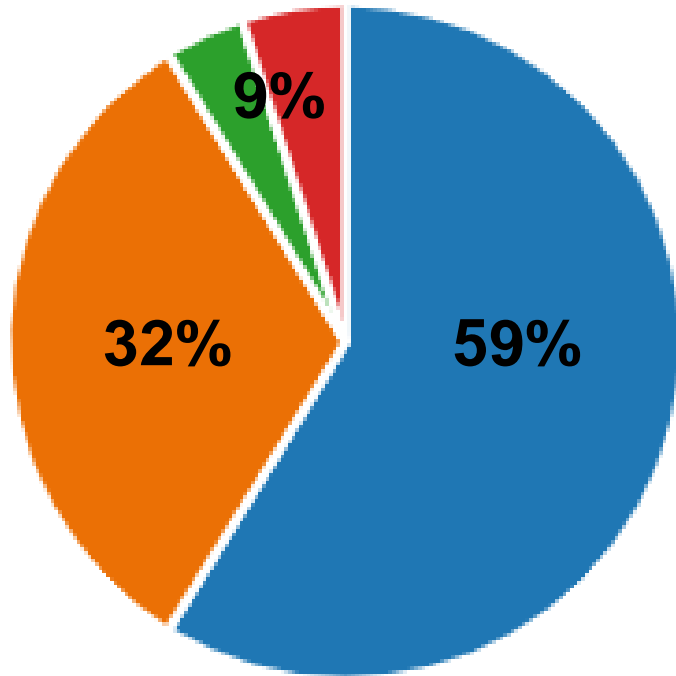




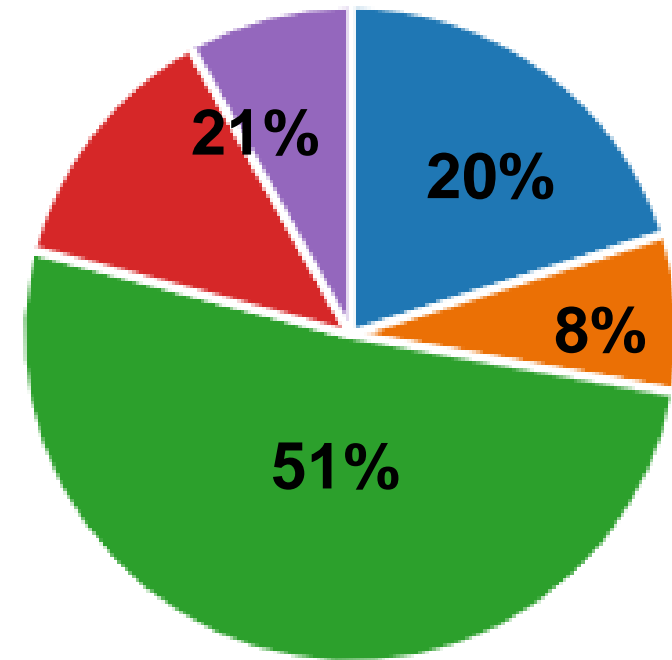
## *Online Questionnaire Summary*

### **Appendix 3: Achieving Sustainable Harvest for the Tar-Pam and Neuse stocks**

- **Option 1:** majority support moratorium



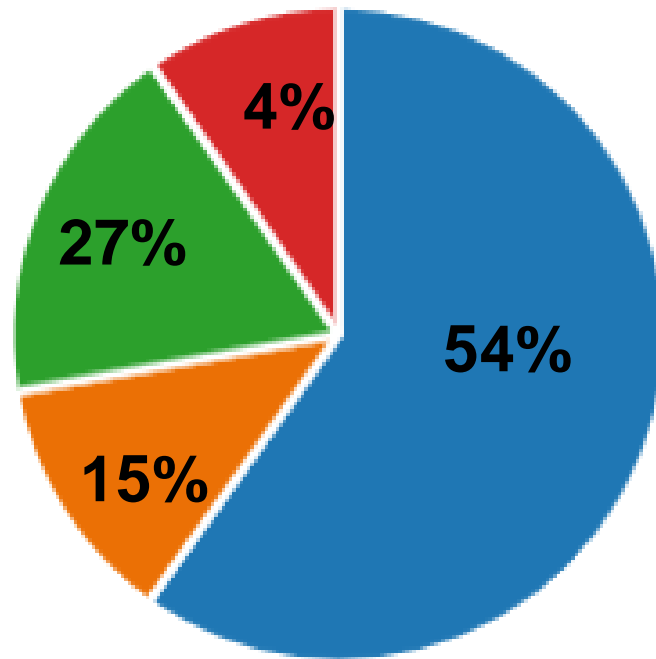
- Maximum time of support



## *Online Questionnaire Summary*

### **Appendix 3: Achieving Sustainable Harvest for the Tar-Pam and Neuse stocks**

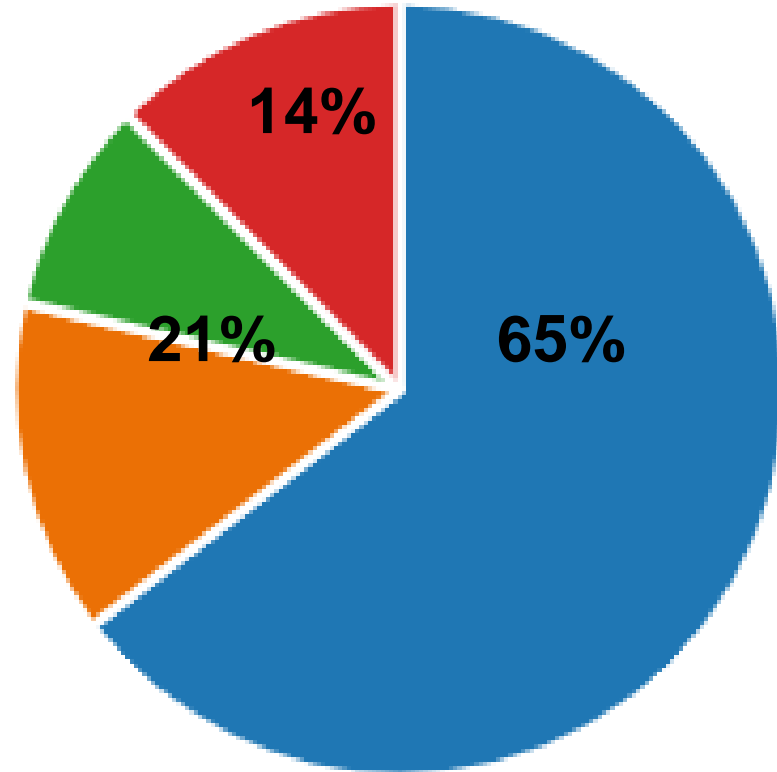
- If no sign of natural reproduction, support harvest on stocked fish
- Maintain gear closure above ferry lines



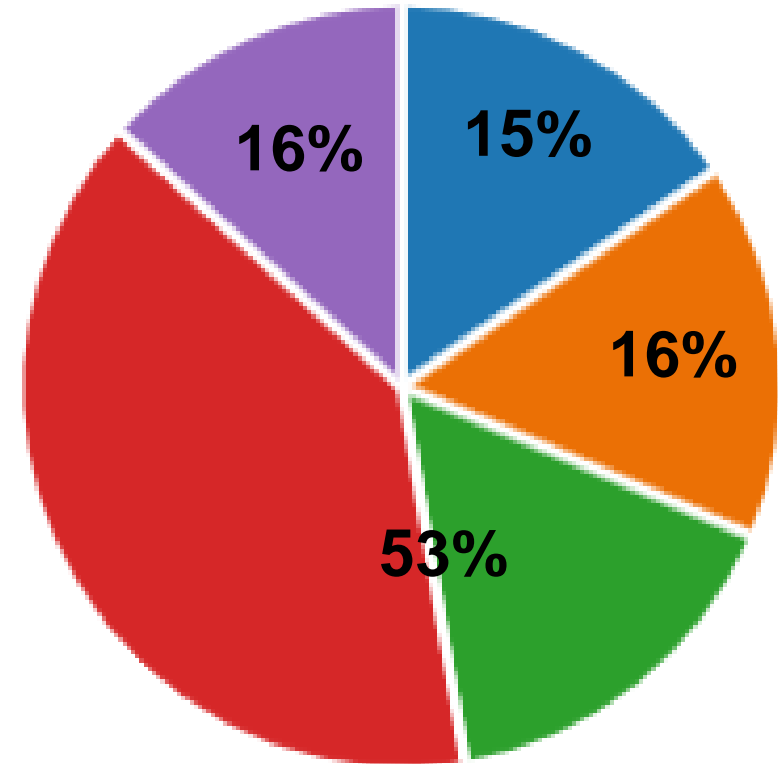
## Online Questionnaire Summary

### Appendix 4: Achieving Sustainable Harvest for the Cape Fear stock

- **Option 1:** majority support moratorium



- If harvest public is uncertain of what harvest to allow



# *Online Questionnaire Summary*

## **Appendix 5: Hook and Line**

- If hook and line was allowed for commercial fishing 23 respondents would enter fishery
- There was support by respondents to allow H&L as gear if gill net was not allowed



# *Recommendations*



## *Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock*

### **1. Manage for sustainable harvest through harvest restrictions**

- A. Continue to use stock assessments and stock assessment projections to determine the TAL that achieves a sustainable harvest for the A-R stock
- B. Implement a harvest moratorium

- DMF, WRC, Southern AC, and Finfish AC
  - Option 1.A
- Northern AC
  - No recommendation passed

### **2. Management of striped bass harvest in the commercial fishery as a bycatch fishery**

- A. Status Quo: continue bycatch fishery
- B. Stop managing the ASMA striped bass fishery as a bycatch fishery

- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Option 2.A

## *Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock*

### **3. Accountability measures to address TAL overages**

- A. If total landings exceeds the total TAL by 10% the fishery(ies) contributing to the overage will reduce their TAL by percent contribution to the overage the next year.
  - B. If total landings exceeds the total TAL by 5% the fishery(ies) contributing to the overage will reduce their TAL by their percent contribution to the overage the next year.
  - C. If the landings in any fishery exceeds their allocated TAL by 5% in a calendar year, any landings in excess of the TAL will be deducted from that fisheries TAL the next year.
  - D. If the landings in any fishery exceeds their allocated TAL, landings in excess of the TAL will be deducted from that fisheries TAL the next year.
- DMF and ACs
    - Option 3.D
  - WRC
    - If the landings in any one of the three fisheries (RRMA recreational, ASMA recreational, and ASMA commercial) exceed their allocated TAL by 5% in a calendar year, any landings in excess of their allocated TAL and 5% buffer will be deducted from that fishery's allocated TAL the next calendar year. If the payback for a fishery exceeds the next year's allocated TAL, the fishery will be closed the subsequent year with no additional payback required

# Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3.D. hypothetical scenario

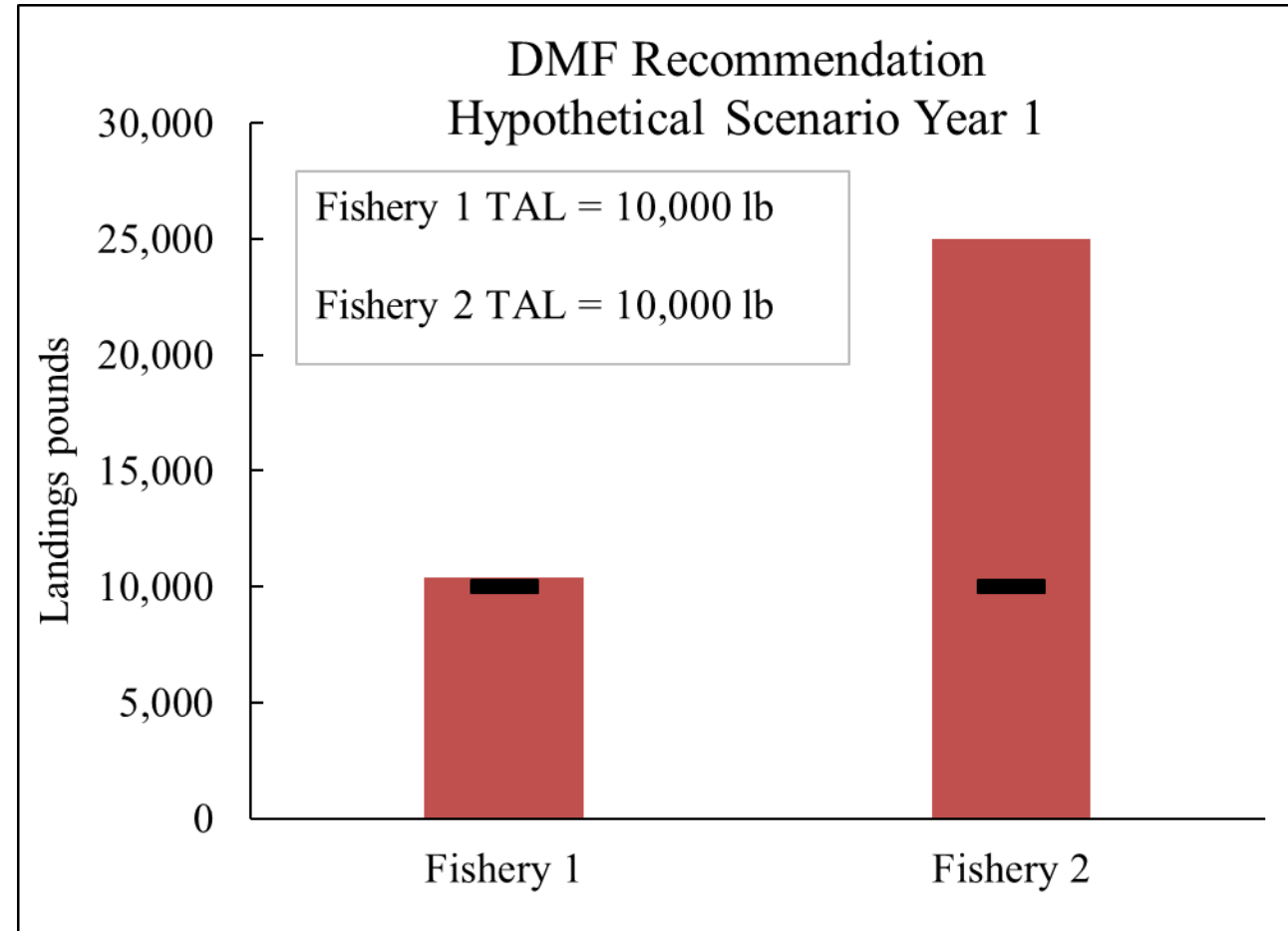
**Year 1:** Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

**Year 2:**

- Fishery 1 TAL = 9,600 lb to account for overage
- Fishery 2 TAL = 0 lb to account for 15,000 lb overage in Year 1

**Year 3:**

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb back to original TAL
- Fishery 2 = 5,000 lb to account for the remainder of the overage from Year 1





# Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3.D. hypothetical scenario

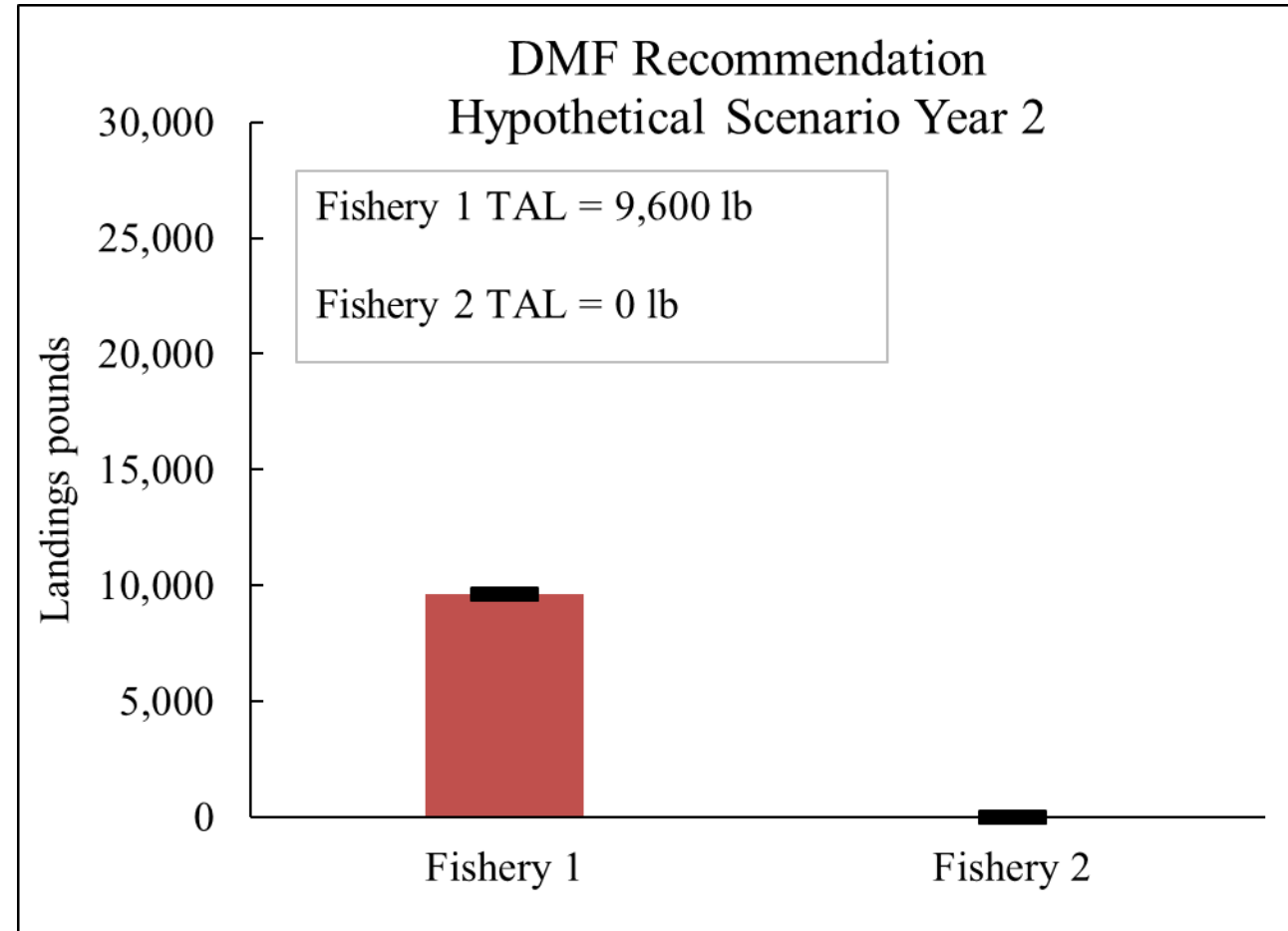
Year 1: Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

## Year 2:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 9,600 lb to account for overage
- Fishery 2 TAL = 0 lb to account for 15,000 lb overage in Year 1

## Year 3:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb back to original TAL
- Fishery 2 = 5,000 lb to account for the remainder of the overage from Year 1



# Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3.D. hypothetical scenario

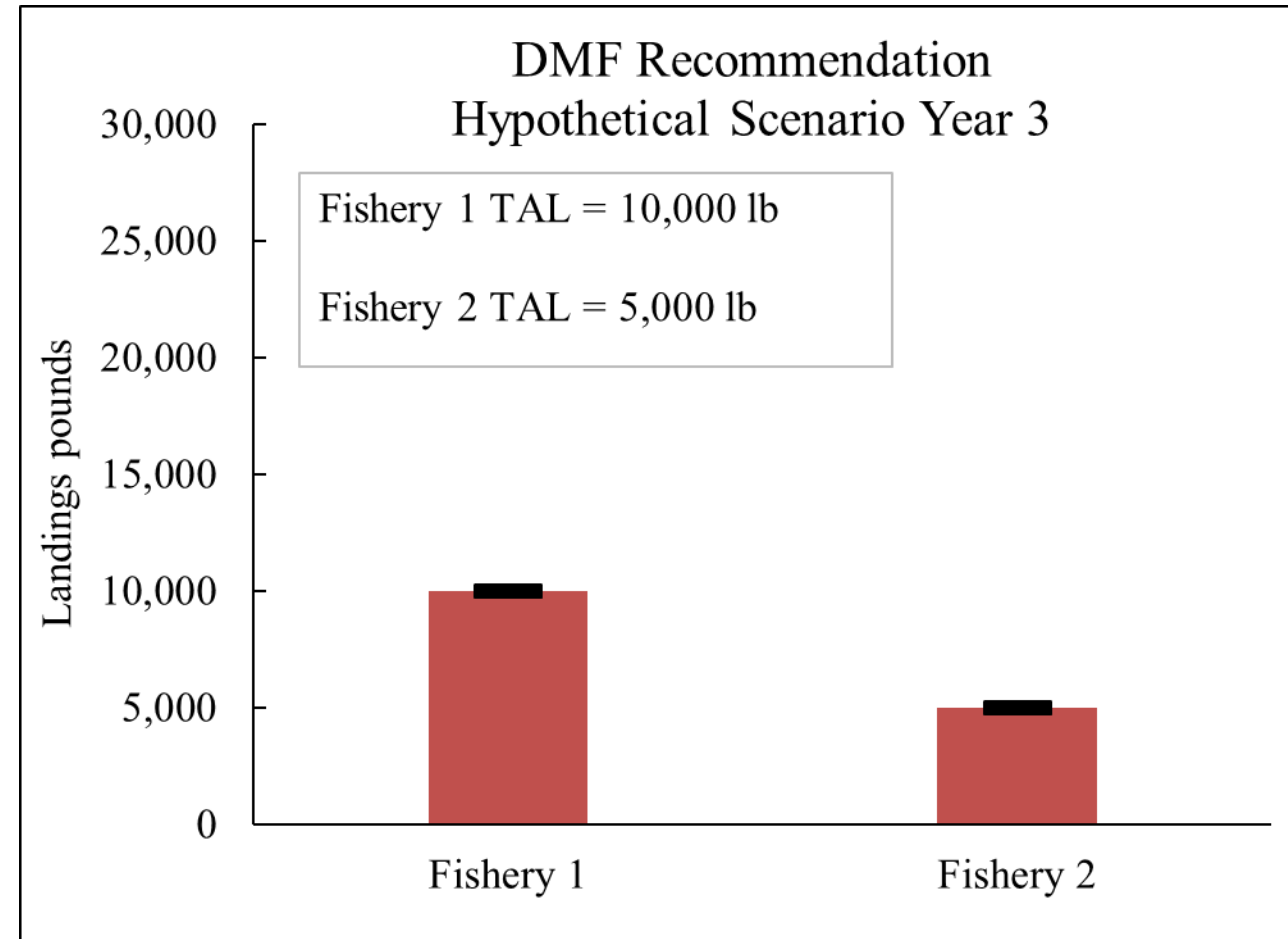
**Year 1:** Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

## Year 2:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 9,600 lb to account for overage
- Fishery 2 TAL = 0 lb to account for 15,000 lb overage in Year 1

## Year 3:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb back to original TAL
- Fishery 2 = 5,000 lb to account for the remainder of the overage from Year 1



## Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3: WRC recommendation example

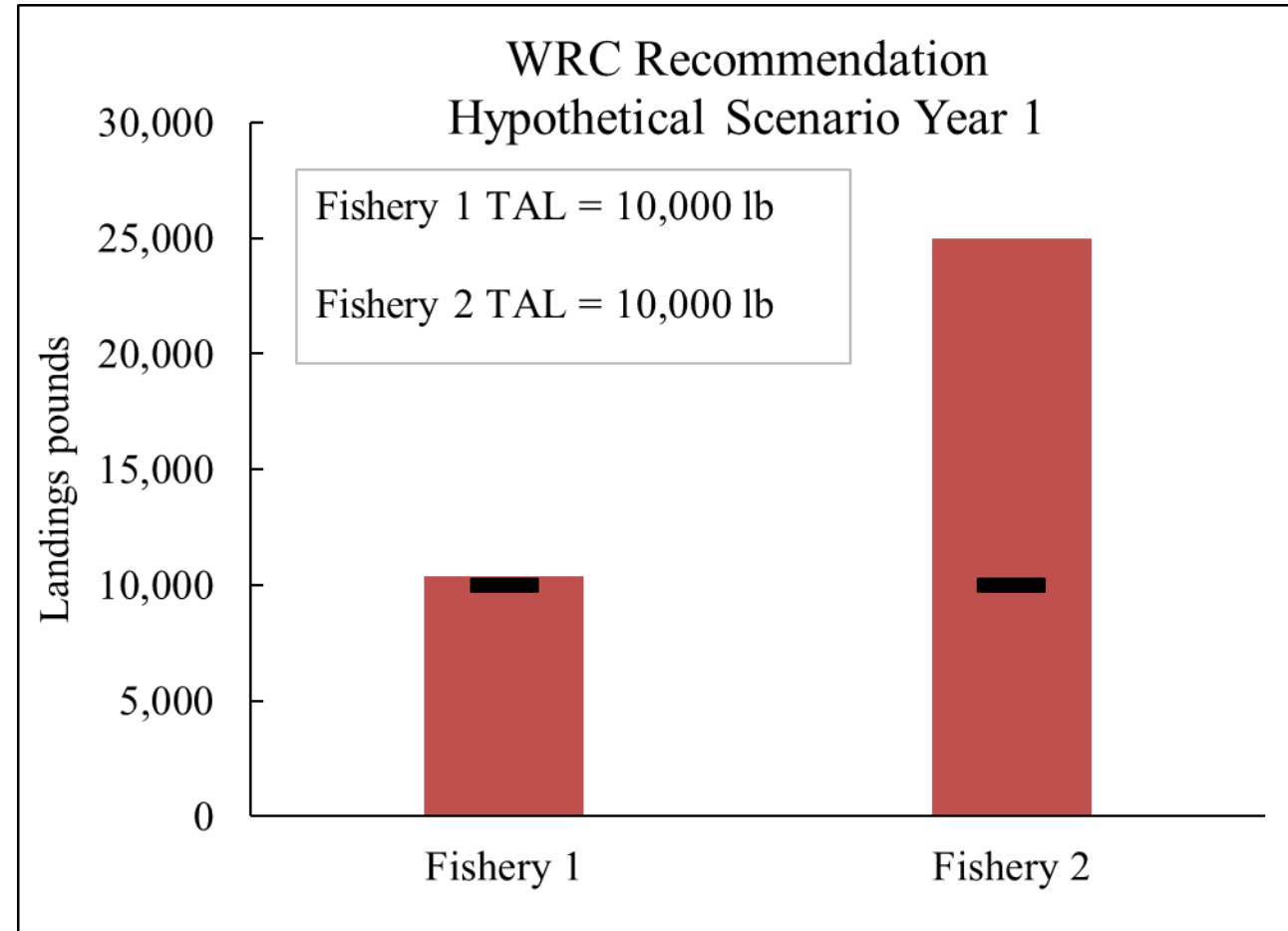
**Year 1:** Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

**Year 2:**

- Fishery 1 = No payback necessary b/c landings did not exceed TAL + 5% Buffer (10,500 lb)
- Fishery 2 = 0 lb to account for 14,000 lb overage in Year 1

**Year 3:**

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb
- Fishery 2 TAL = 10,000 lb. No additional payback. Back to original TAL.



# Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3: WRC recommendation example

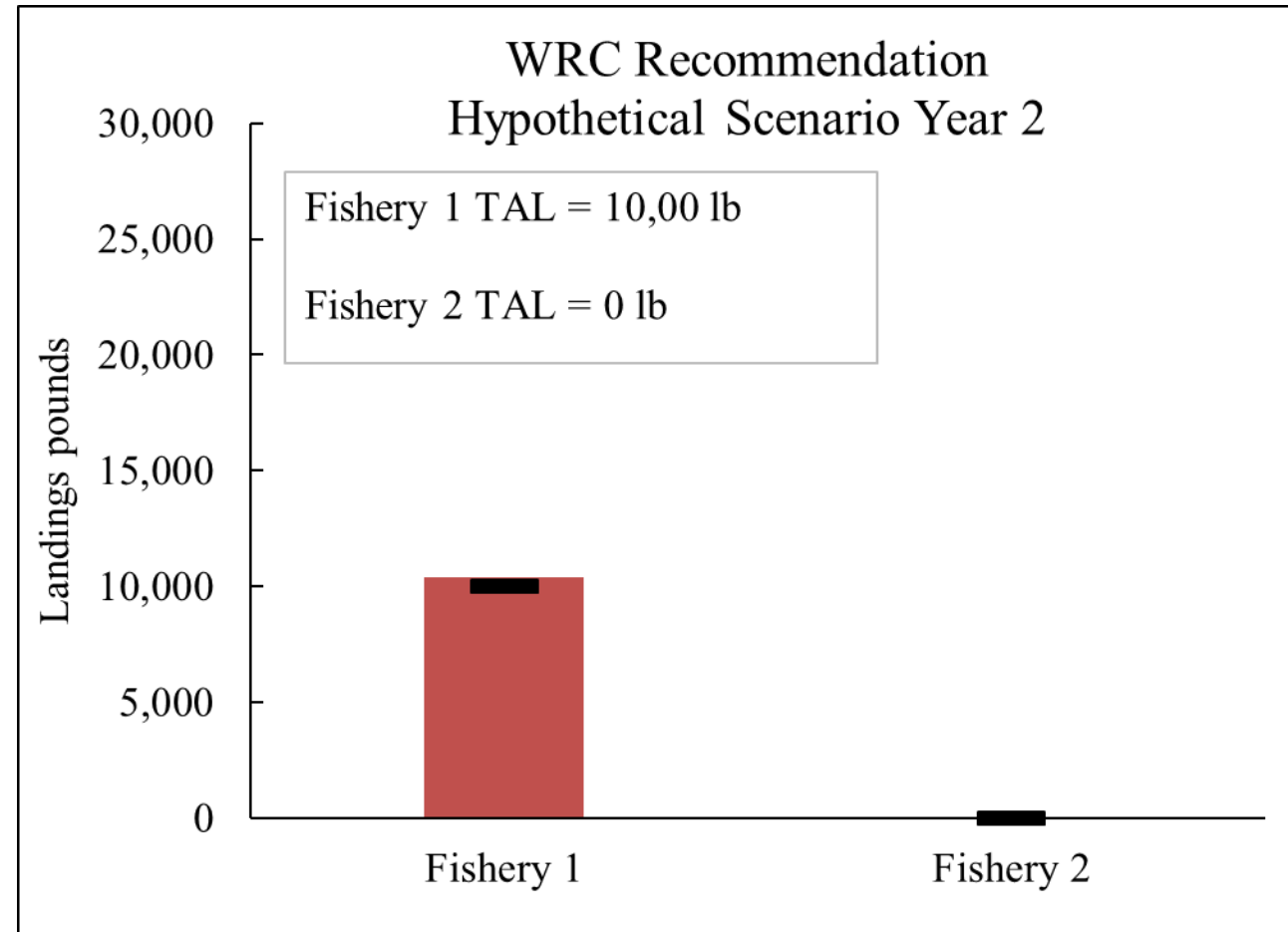
Year 1: Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

## Year 2:

- Fishery 1 = No payback necessary b/c landings did not exceed TAL + 5% Buffer (10,500 lb)
- Fishery 2 TAL = 0 lb to account for 14,000 lb overage in Year 1

## Year 3:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb.
- Fishery 2 TAL = 10,000 lb. No additional payback. Back to original TAL.



# Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock Option 3: WRC recommendation example

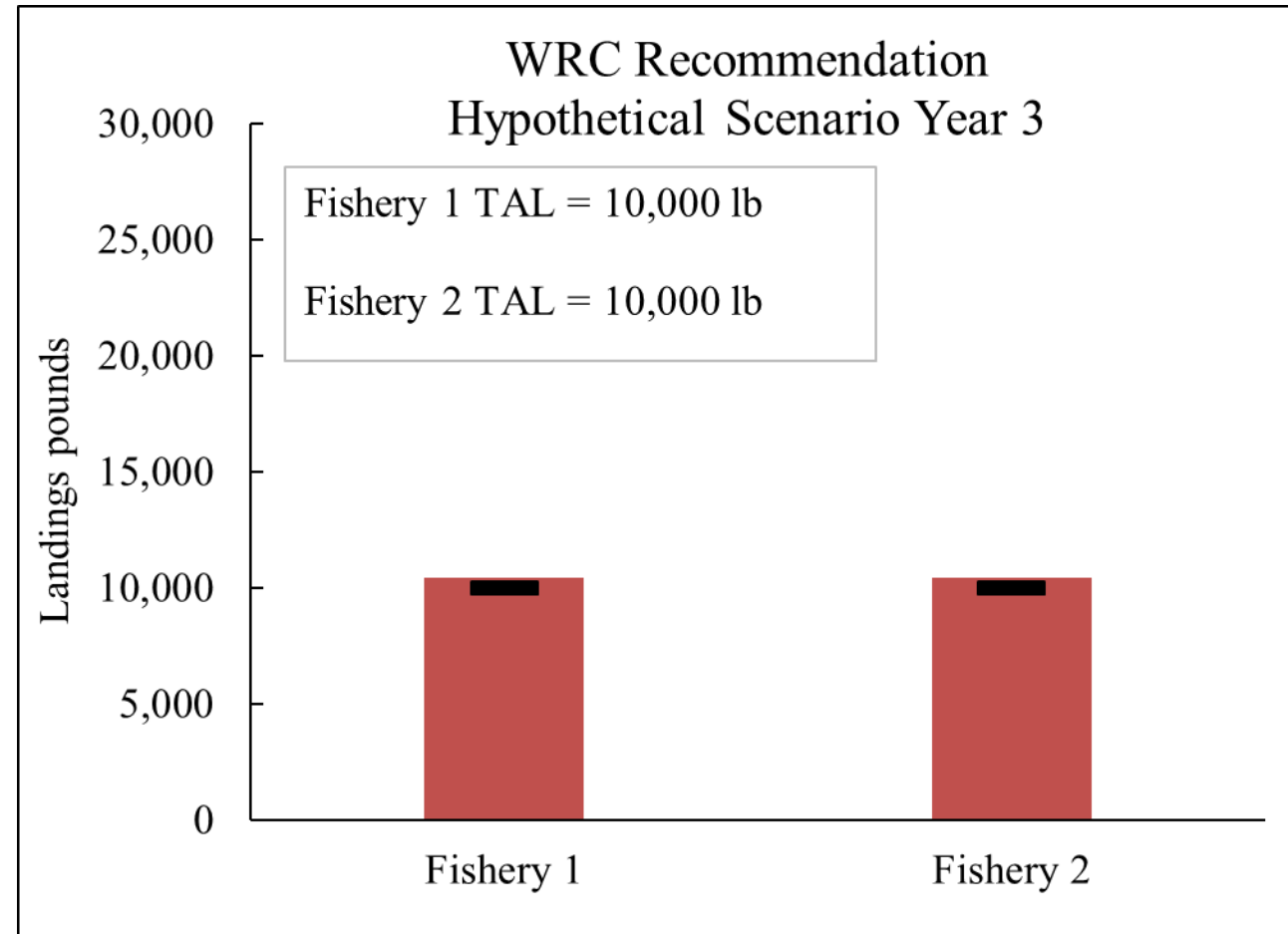
**Year 1:** Landings in both fisheries exceeded their individual TAL of 10,000 lb

## Year 2:

- Fishery 1 = No payback necessary b/c landings did not exceed TAL + 5% Buffer (10,500 lb)
- Fishery 2 TAL = 0 lb to account for 14,000 lb overage in Year 1

## Year 3:

- Fishery 1 TAL = 10,000 lb
- Fishery 2 TAL = 10,000 lb. No additional payback. Back to original TAL.



## *Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock*

### **4. Size limits to expand the age structure of the stock**

- A. Status Quo: In the ASMA 18-inch minimum size and in RRMA 18–22 inch harvest slot, with a no harvest slot of fish 22–27 inches, and only 1 fish greater than 27-inches
- B. Increase minimum size limit in ASMA and RRMA
- C. In ASMA implement an 18–25-inch harvest slot for commercial and recreational
- D. In RRMA maintain 18–22-inch harvest slot, with a no harvest slot of fish 22–40 inches, and only 1 fish greater than 40-inches as a trophy fish
- E. In RRMA, maintain slot limit 18–22-inch and no fish greater than 22 inches

- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Option 4.C
  - Option 4.E



## *Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock*

- 5. Gear modifications and area closures to reduce discard mortality**
  - A. Status Quo: Continue commercial harvest of striped bass with gill nets and recreational harvest and catch-and-release fishing in the ASMA and RRMA including on the spawning grounds
  - B. Do not allow harvest of striped bass with gill nets in the ASMA
  - C. Do not allow harvest or catch-and-release fishing for striped bass in the RRMA on the spawning grounds or other areas of high concentration
  - D. Expand the single barbless hook requirement to the entire RRMA during striped bass season
  - E. Implement a requirement to use non-offset barbless circle hooks when fishing with live or natural bait in the inland waters of the Roanoke River (upstream of Hwy 258 bridge) from May 1 through June 30
- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Option 5.A
  - Option 5.E



## *Appendix 2. Albemarle-Roanoke Stock*

### 6. Adaptive Management

- Use peer reviewed stock assessments and updates to recalculate the BRPs and/or TAL. Stock assessments will be updated at least once between benchmarks. A harvest moratorium could be necessary if stock assessment results calculate a TAL that is too low to effectively manage, and/or the stock continues to experience spawning failures.
- If  $F$  exceeds the  $F_{\text{Target}}$  reduce the TAL to the  $F_{\text{Target}}$
- Ability to change daily possession limits to keep landings below the TAL
- Ability to open and close harvest seasons and areas to keep landings below the TAL
- Ability to require gear modifications and area closures to reduce striped bass dead discards
- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Support all adaptive management



## *Appendix 3. Tar-Pamlico and Neuse Rivers Stocks*

### **1. Striped bass harvest**

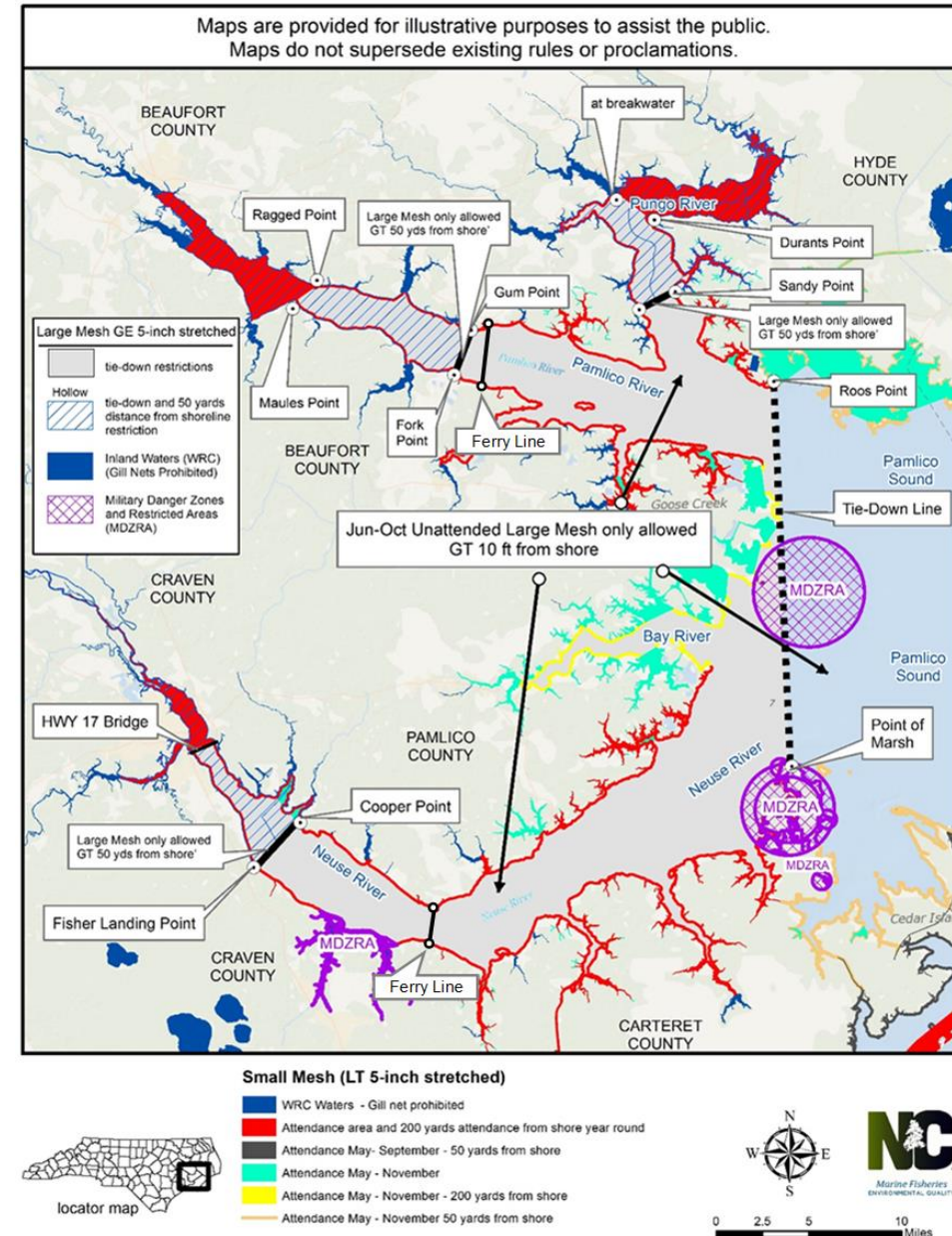
- A. Continue no-possession measure
  - B. Discontinue the no-possession measure in Supplement A to Amendment 1 after reviewing data in 2025 if it can be shown populations are self-sustaining and a level of sustainable harvest can be determined (open harvest)
- DMF, WRC, Southern AC, and Finfish AC
    - Option 1.A
  - Northern AC
    - Recommend to end no-possession measure

# Appendix 3. Tar-Pamlico and Neuse Rivers Stocks

## 2. Gear Restrictions/Limits

A. Maintain gill net closure above ferry lines and maintain the 3-foot tie-downs below the ferry lines

- Northern AC and Southern AC
  - End closure and return to DMF prior regulations
- DMF and Finfish AC
  - No recommendation
- WRC
  - Option 2.A



## *Appendix 3. Tar-Pamlico and Neuse Rivers Stocks*

### **3. Adaptive Management**

- In 2025, review data through 2024 to determine if populations are self-sustaining and if sustainable harvest can be determined
- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Option 3



# *Appendix 4. Cape Fear River Stock*

## **1. Striped Bass Harvest**

- A. Status Quo: maintain Cape Fear River harvest moratorium
  - B. Allow seasonal harvest in all Cape Fear River fishing waters (proposed season and limits: open season March 1–April 30; 18-inch TL minimum length limit; 2 fish daily creel limit)
  - C. Allow seasonal harvest in joint and inland fishing waters in the mainstem Cape Fear River above the 140 Bridge (proposed season and limits: open season March 1–April 30; 18-inch TL minimum length limit; 2 fish daily creel limit)
  - D. Allow harvest in inland fishing waters only above the Joint/Inland Waters boundary on the mainstem of the Cape Fear River (proposed season and limits: no closed season; 20-inch TL minimum length limit; 4 fish per day)
- DMF and ACs
    - Option 1.A
  - WRC
    - Option 1.B



# *Appendix 4. Cape Fear River Stock*

## **2. Adaptive Management**

- Continue YOY surveys and genetic PBT analysis to inform adaptive management
  - Management measures which may be adjusted include means and methods, harvest area, season, size, and creel limit.
  - Must be evaluated by staff with the MFC Finfish AC consultation.
- 
- DMF, WRC, and ACs
    - Option 2



## *Appendix 5. Use of Hook and Line as a Commercial Gear*



1. Hook and Line as a commercial gear
  - A. Do not allow hook and line as a commercial gear for estuarine striped bass
  - B. Allow hook and line as a commercial gear for estuarine striped bass
2. Adaptive management
  - Triggered by landings or enforcement concerns
  - Management options available include means/methods, area, season, size, and limits
- DMF, WRC, and ACs
  - Option 1.A
  - Option 2



# Questions?

Todd Mathes  
Washington Regional Office  
252-946-6481  
[Todd.Mathes@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Todd.Mathes@ncdenr.gov)

Joe Facendola  
Wilmington Regional Office  
910-796-7291  
[Joe.Facendola@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Joe.Facendola@ncdenr.gov)

Charlton Godwin  
Elizabeth City Field Office  
252-381-6008  
[Charlton.Godwin@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Charlton.Godwin@ncdenr.gov)

Nathaniel Hancock  
Elizabeth City Field Office  
252-381-6005  
[Nathaniel.Hancock@ncdenr.gov](mailto:Nathaniel.Hancock@ncdenr.gov)



# *Recommendations Overview*

- **Appendix 2**
  - Options 1.A, 2.A, 3.D, 4.C, 4.E, 5.A, 5.E, and 6
- **Appendix 3**
  - Options 1.A and 3
- **Appendix 4**
  - Options 1.A and 2
- **Appendix 5**
  - Options 1.A and 2
  
- WRC differences
  - Appendix 2 option 3: suggest their own wording
  - Appendix 3 support option 2.A
  - Appendix 4 support 2.B

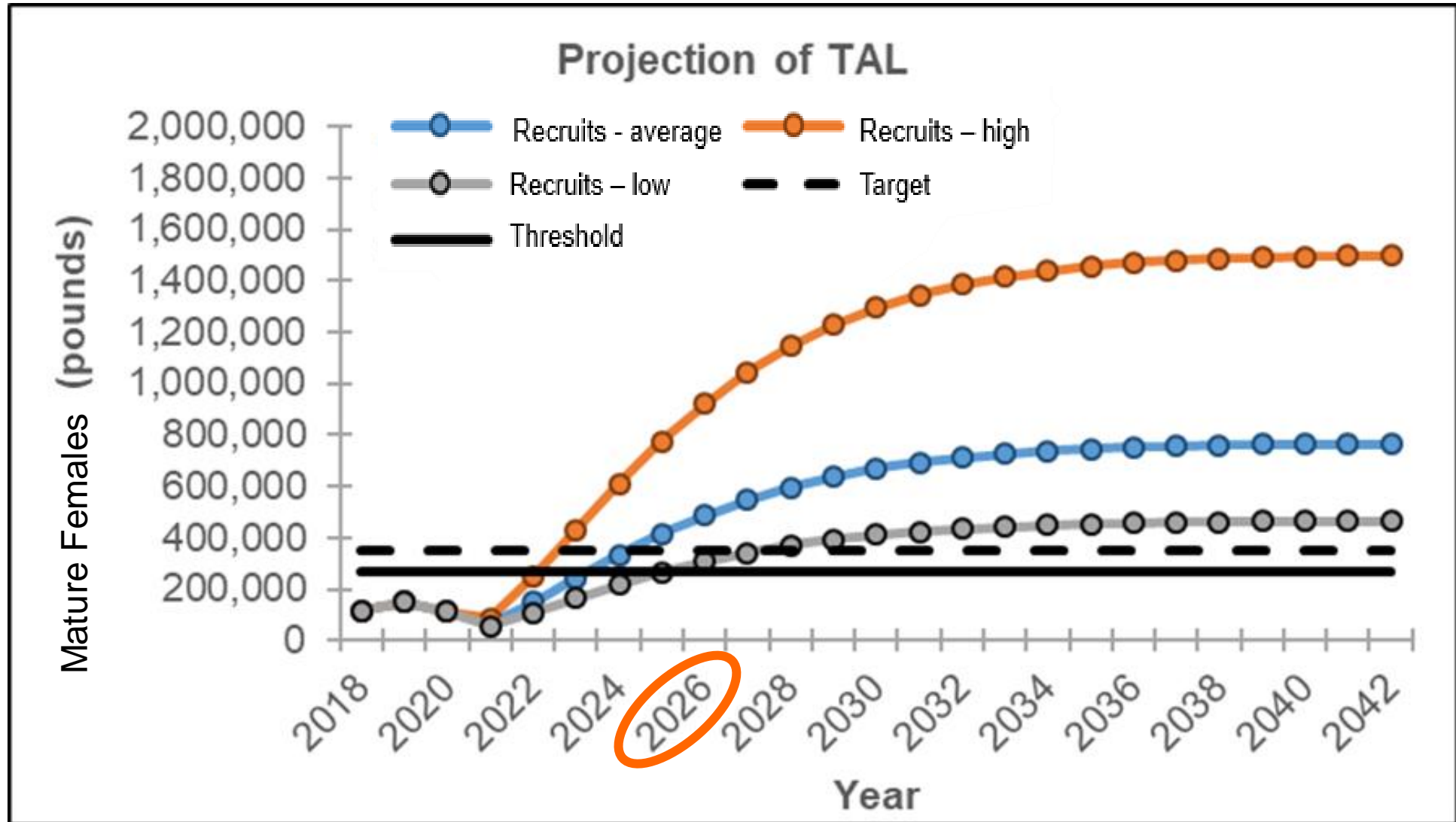




Following are potential pocket slides and then language of the options in case they want to go through them one by one. Or even if they make a motion to adopt all of the DMF's recommended options then we could go to just the one or two options if someone wants to change that particular one.



# Appendix 2 Option 1: Sustainable Harvest



# Appendix 2 Option 1: Sustainable Harvest

