

2014/2015 Monkfish RSA Awards (2)

NA14NMF4540226

University of New England (UNES) “Evaluating the Condition and Discard Mortality of Winter Skate, *Leucoraja ocellata*, Following Capture and Handling in the Sink Gillnet Fishery”

Principal Investigators: Dr. James Sulikowski and Ted Platz

\$349,983 Research Project/\$1,471,086 Compensation/\$1,821,069 Total Value
359 DAS (2014) 248 DAS (2015) Awarded: 7/9/14

This project proposes to quantify the (immediate) at-vessel and short-term delayed (discard) mortality rates from sink gill net capture for this species of skate. The analyses will consider not only the impacts of fishing conditions (e.g. season, depth, seawater and air temperature), but also the impacts of handling protocols and the biological characteristics (e.g., size, sex) of captured skate. Consideration of these factors will allow the researchers to refine the mortality estimates to the conditions in the fishery and to identify potential avenues to improve the chances of successful live release.

NA14NMF4540227

University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth/School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) “2014 Monkfish RSA - Archival Tagging and Age Validation in the Mid-Atlantic”

Principal Investigators: Dr. Steven Cadrin & Crista Bank (SMAST), Dr. Jonathan Grabowski (Northeastern University), & Dr. Graham Sherwood (Gulf of Maine Research Institute-GMRI)

\$235,800 Research Project/\$1,143,630 Compensation/\$1,379,430 Total Value
141 DAS (2014) 252 DAS (2015) Awarded: 7/9/14

This is a two part project and a continuation of work which originated in 2007 from GMRI. Part one proposes to chemically mark and release monkfish into the wild as part of the high reward Data Storage Tag study. The methods developed in the lab from their previously funded age validation work will be used to validate the age of recaptured tagged monkfish in order to examine the growth rates and age structure of monkfish populations from each region where tagging will be conducted. Part two will release 75 DST monkfish focusing on the Chincoteague, Virginia area. Archival tags will be used to assess if monkfish in the southern part of the Mid-Atlantic stay in that region migrating inshore/offshore, or do they migrate north in deep water mixing in the canyons with fish from the Northern region. SMAST will couple these tagging efforts with continued age validation work to improve upon existing efforts to age monkfish, and use the growth estimates derived from previous tagging work to revise the Statistical Catch Length (SCALE) model currently used in the stock assessment.