

Blueline Tilefish



Tilefish SSC Meeting

March 9, 2021

Outline



- Meeting objective
- Specification process
- Stock status
- Review recent fishery performance (fishery information document)
- 2021 Fishery Performance Report Comments
- Staff Recommendation

Meeting Objective



- Recommend ABCs for up to 3 years (2022-2024)
 - Previous ABC and management measures
 - Factors influencing recent catch and landings
 - AP Fishery Performance Report
 - Other issues or concerns

2020 Specifications



- Reviewing year 3 of 3 (2019-2021 specifications)
- Commercial trip limits
 - 500 lbs → 300 lbs once 70% of the quota has been landed
 - Jan. 1 – Dec. 31
- Recreational trip limits
 - 7,5,3 (Inspected, Uninspected, Private)
 - May 1 – Oct. 31

2019-2021 Specifications

Specification	Recreational	Commercial
ABC	100,520 lbs	
ACLs	73,380 lbs	27,140 lbs
ACTs	73,380 lbs	27,140 lbs
TALs	71,912 lbs	26,869 lbs

2020 Landings

Recreational (Numbers)		Commercial (Pounds)
9,600 (VTRs)	None reported (MRIP-Private) 3,813 (Delphi est. – Private)	31,270

Stock Status



- SEDAR 50 (2017)
 - North (NOH) and South of Cape Hatteras (SOH)
 - SOH
 - Not overfished, overfishing not occurring
 - NOH
 - Unknown: Data Limited Toolkit used to estimate ABCs
- No specific data update from NEFSC
 - Data is similar to what is reported in the Fishery Information Document

Next Assessment

YEAR	<u>SA Team</u>			
	1	2	3	4
2020	Scamp RT	Snowy Grouper U	Gag Grouper OA	Tilefish OA
2021		Red Snapper OA		
2022	Scamp OA			Spanish Mackerel OA
2023	Gray Triggerfish RT	Vermilion OA	Black Sea Bass OA	Red Grouper OA
2024		White Grunt RT		Blueline Tilefish OA
2025				Snowy Grouper/ Tilefish
2026				

- Conducted with the SAFMC/SEFSC – SEDAR
- Tentative research track assessment for 2024
- Available in 2025
- Need to sync up our specifications cycle.

Specifications Process

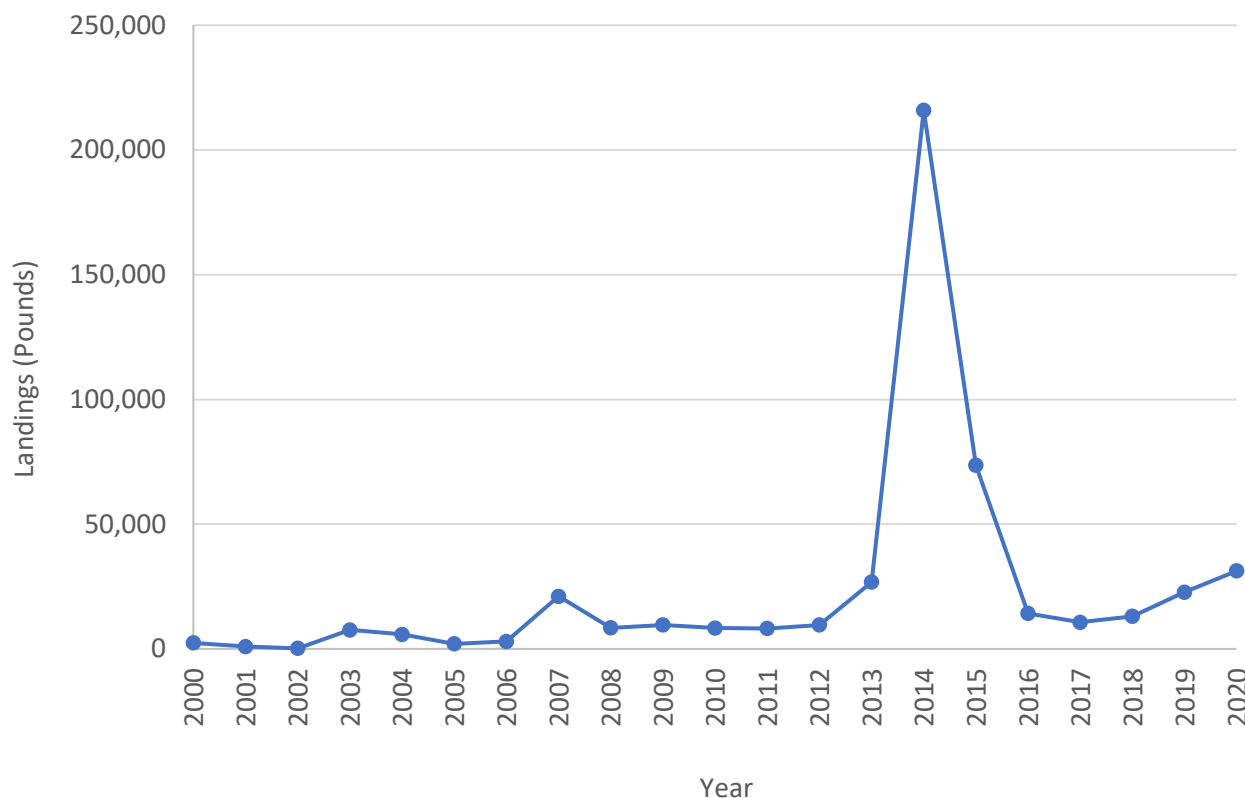


- Assessment (2017) made no ABC recommendations
 - 2 Stocks
- Subcommittee: MAFMC/SAFMC/NEFSC/SEFSC
 - Develop ABC recommendations North of Cape Hatteras
- SSC: ABC recommendations at March meeting
 - Will review 2021 FPR and fishery info doc
- MC: Recommend management measures at March meeting
- Council: Approve specifications at the April meeting

Commercial Fishery Performance



Blueline Tilefish Dealer Landings



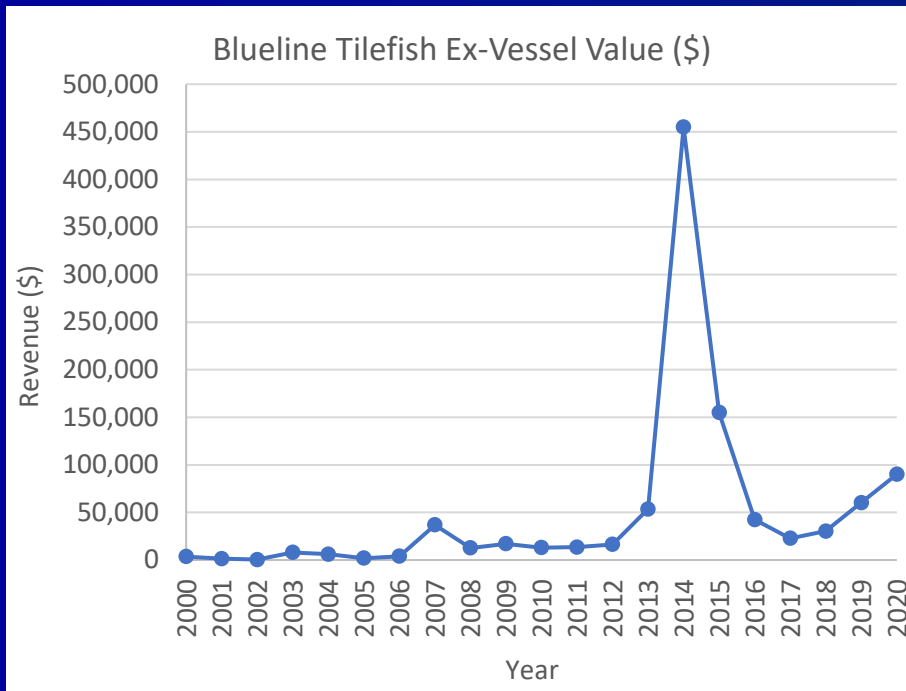
Year	Landings (lbs)
2013	26,781
2014	215,928
2015	73,644
2016	14,235
2017	10,734
2018	13,068
2019	22,759
2020	31,270

NMFS unpublished dealer data, ME-VA

Commercial Fishery Performance

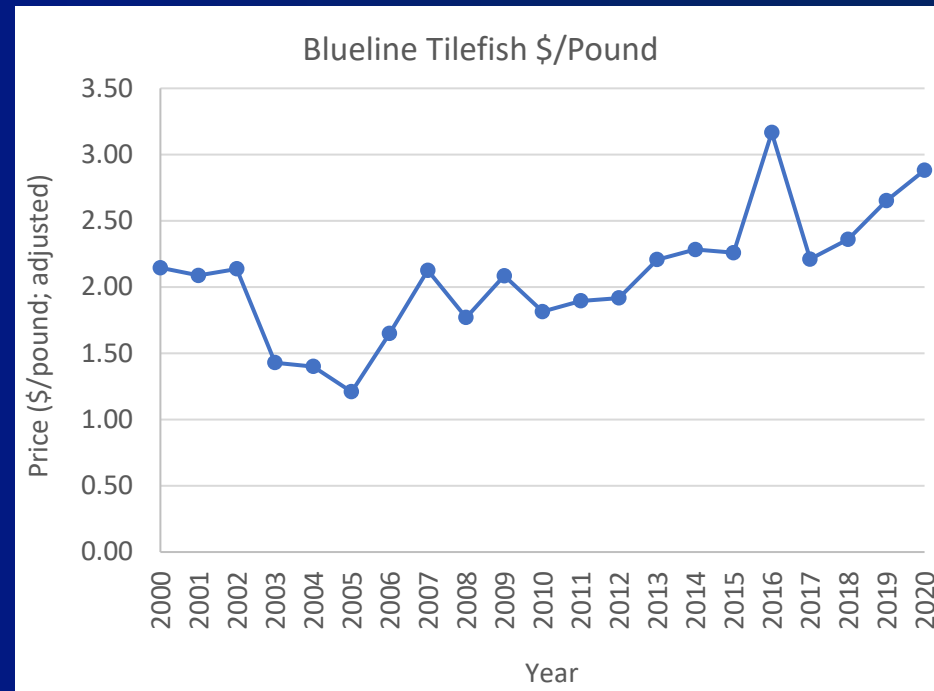


Figure 3. Ex-Vessel Revenues for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 2000-2020.



2020: \$90,092

Figure 4. Price for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 2000-2020. Note: Price data have been adjusted by the GDP deflator indexed for 2019 (2020 – unadjusted).



2020: \$2.88

Commercial Fishery Performance



2020 Landings by Gear (ME-VA)

Source: NMFS unpublished VTR

Gear	Pounds	Percent
Longline	13,545	48%
Handline	10,130	36%
Trawl	3,632	13%
Pots/Traps	880	3%
Total	28,187	100%

Pound Range	Trips (N)
500+	13
400 - 499	10
300 - 399	11
200 - 299	33
100 - 199	27
1 - 199	49
Total	143

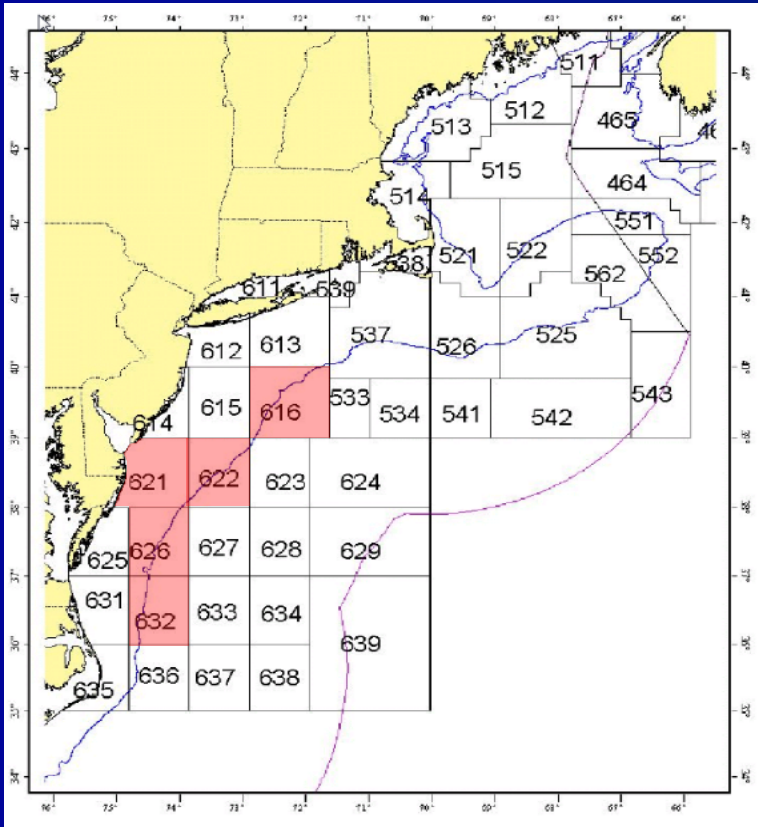
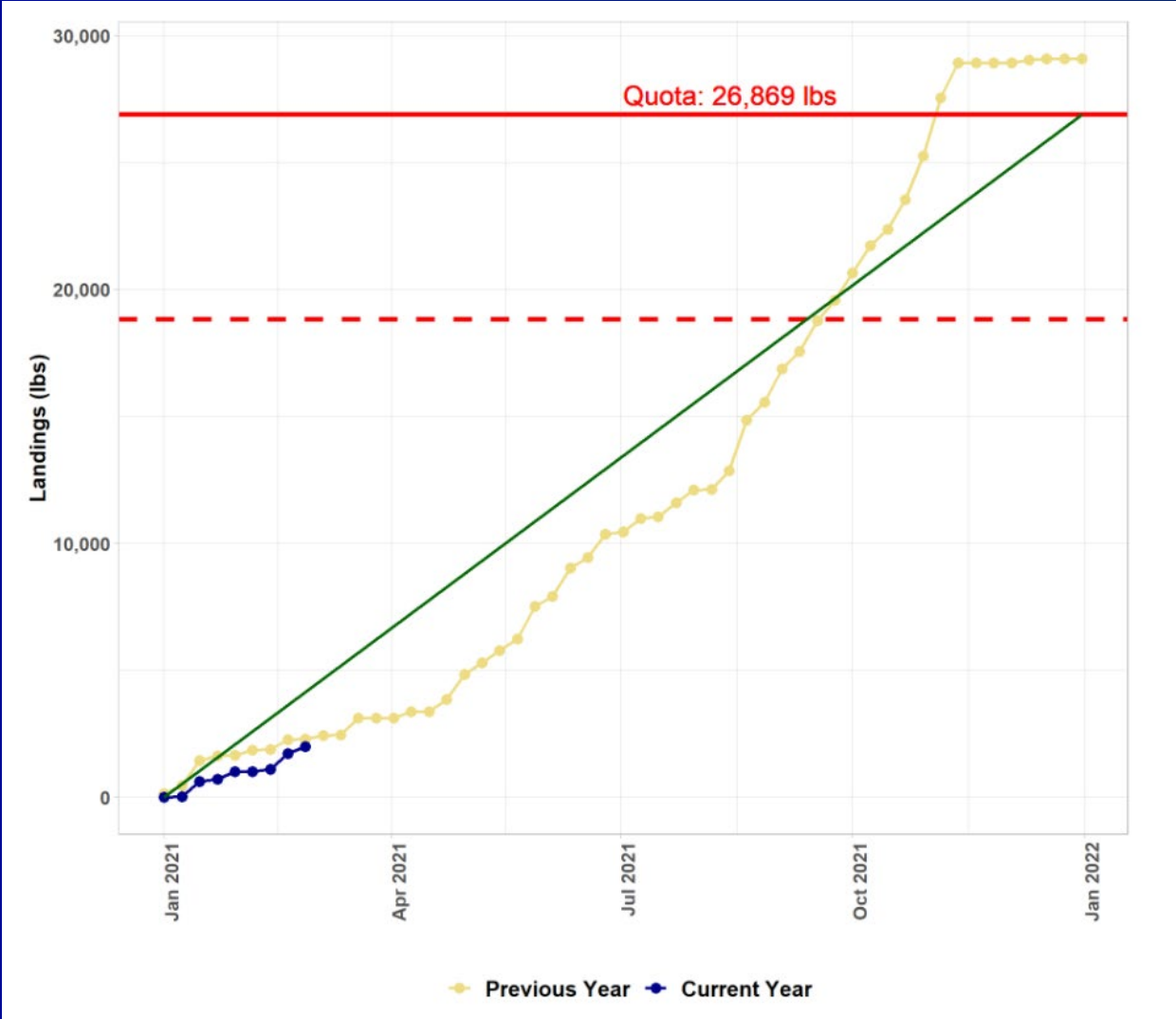


Figure 2. Top 5 NMFS statistical areas accounting for total 2020 blueline tilefish landings identified with commercial VTRs. Source: NMFS unpublished VTR data.

Commercial Fishery Performance



Recreational Fishery Performance



MRIP

Year	State	MRIP (#)	Mode
2015	DE	4,663	Private/Rental
2016	MD	46,106	Private/Rental
	NJ	9,924	Private/Rental
	VA	1,222	Charter
	VA	60,803	Private/Rental
2017	VA	12,122	Private/Rental
2018	DE	19	Charter
	MD	11	Party
	VA	2,373	Charter
	VA	2,989	Private/Rental
2019	MD	4,839	Private/Rental
	VA	7	Party
	VA	2,294	Charter

Party/Charter

Year	Trips	Catch (#)	Reported Discards (#)
2012	103	10,051	338
2013	120	11,838	128
2014	138	15,849	254
2015	170	14,391	292
2016	158	15,493	246
2017	129	10,164	115
2018	221	12,432	99
2019	167	10,711	176
2020	143	9,600	174

Blueline tilefish VTR landings and discards from ME-VA, 2012-2020 (Numbers of fish).

Recreational Fishery Performance



Year	Party (Numbers)	Charter (Numbers)	Private Rental (MRIP 2015-2019, VTR 2020 Numbers)	Private Rental (Delphi - Numbers)
2015	12,381	2,298	4,663	2,417
2016	13,746	2,057	116,833	2,163
2017	8,735	1,632	12,122	1,716
2018	4,796	7,885	2,989	8,291
2019	3,247	7,679	4,839	8,075
2020	6,166	3,626	84	3,813

Table 9. Recreational blueline tilefish catch (ME-VA) using VTRs (party/charter: 2015-2020, private rental: 2020) and MRIP (private/rental: 2015-2019), as well as estimates of private/rental catch using the Delphi method (Delphi – 105.16% of charter).

Private Recreational Permitting/Reporting

- Approved in Amendment 6 to the Tilefish FMP in 2017, but with delayed implementation
- Report through VTRs, eTrips/mobile, *eFin Logbook*
- Requirements went live in August 2020
 - Season goes through October 31st
- For 2020:
 - ~340 permits
 - 8 recreational trips → 84 fish

Discussion Points



- What factors have influenced recent blue line tilefish catch?
 - Markets/economy?
 - Fishery regulations?
 - Environment?
 - Other factors?
- Are the current fishery regulations appropriate?
How could they be improved?
- Feedback on some of the patterns we saw in 2020
- What else is important for the Council to know?

Fishery Performance Report



- No major changes have been observed for bluelines in terms of catch rates/composition
 - Once blueline limits are met recreational trips search for other targets
- When targeting other species, trip limits restrict commercial fishermen from targeting areas where bluelines are present
- Many advisors stated they prefer status quo specifications and management since the fishery is still new
- Recreational effort decreased this year as it does not make economic sense to target blueline tilefish when tuna are not present or are very plentiful

Fishery Performance Report



- New York (Hunts Point) was receiving approximately \$2.88 per pound, and occasionally as high as \$4.00 per pound for larger fish
 - Advisors remain confident that there is continued demand for blue line tilefish
- Advocated to maintain the 3, 5, 7 bag limits in place since there is currently limited reporting for private anglers and we are still learning how the fishery responds to management in the Mid-Atlantic
- Some disagreement on whether an increased bag limit will have negative effects on the overall stock
- Advisors want to avoid creating a directed fishery especially with the uncertainty of the overall stock

Potential Research Priorities

- Comprehensive 5-year Research Plan (2020-2024)
 - Improve the biological length samples of commercial and recreationally landed fish to better characterize the size distribution of removals.
 - Incorporate mandatory logbook reporting for all recreational anglers and collect fishery-dependent information.
 - Research the reliability of aging methods. Collect additional age information from the commercial and recreational sectors.

Potential Research Priorities

- Comprehensive 5-year Research Plan (2020-2024)
 - Investigate new stock assessment approaches.
 - Conduct habitat studies of deep-water sites in the mid-Atlantic (Norfolk Canyon, Baltimore Canyon, and Hudson Canyon).
- Other
 - Collect representative discard and kept length frequency data in the for-hire fishery.
 - Improve mean weight estimates in the recreational fishery.
 - Collect catch per unit effort data to help track the stock.



Staff Recommendation

- Council staff recommends a status quo ABC of 100,520 pounds (45.60 mt) for the 2022-2024 specifications package.
 - Considering last year's recommendation
 - Recent fishery performance
 - Lack of an updated assessment
 - The need to streamline the Mid-Atlantic specifications cycle with a SEDAR assessment scheduled for 2024/2025
 - The high degree of uncertainty within the recreational sector

Questions?



Image: David Hoke