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**Date:** Monday, May 31, 2021 at 5:14 PM

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**Subject:** Virginia BSB Landings

Hello Chris,

I thought I would send you some new real science based on my trap landings for the past 6 years. I have been fishing about the same number of traps and in the same locations for the past 15 years. These landings come from offshore of Va. Beach approximately 36 to 50 miles. These landings are from my most productive months during each year, spring include April, May, June, and July, the fall months are Oct., Nov., Dec., and Jan. of the following year. As you can see by the totals that my landings have remained relatively constant until the fall of 2020, this is when my landings increased significantly. This increase carried into the spring of this 2021. My catch total for May was just over 30,000 lbs., which is an all time record for me dating back 26 years. This is even more remarkable because many years ago I was fishing many more traps than I do now.

I realize that this is not a perfect CPUE trap study, but I would consider it a very good and reliable one.

These figures give real evidence that the BSB spawning stock biomass is exploding in my waters. There is also increased catches in the Chincoteague and Ocean City areas as well. This information must be considered in the attempt by the northern states to steal commercial BSB quota from the southern states simply to give more Recreational fishermen the right to sell BSB. I predict that at least 80% of the stolen quota will go to Rec. fishermen turned into commercial fishermen with minimal trip limits. The trip limit for BSB hook and line state license ranges from 50 lbs. to 200 lbs. a trip. The whole state of NY is 50 lbs. per trip. This is not a commercial fishery, it is a Rec. fishery with the ability to sell fish. I believe that 95% of the BSB landed in the southern states from NJ south are from full time commercial fisherman.

I understand the push to steal quota from the southern states. The northern states can sell more state licenses to more Rec. fishermen allowing them to sell fish in their state, thus increasing commerce (money) to their respective states, and at the same time decreasing commerce to the southern states.

It has nothing to do with the BSB supposedly shifting stock, it has nothing to do with the faulty science either, this is simply a money grab, and using "science" as the reasoning. This is exactly the same reasoning behind the potential % change to the federal commercial-recreational divide of the overall BSB

Quota.

I understand the politics behind these attempts to transfer quota from one sector to another, the Rec-party charter lobby is much more organized, financed, and represented than the commercial sector, we cannot compete.

If these quota grabs succeed then call it for what it really is, it is not based on science, it is based on transferring commerce.

Thank you for your time,

Mark Hodges

# TRAP POUNDAGE TOTALS

2016

SPRING - APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 31,071

FALL - OCT., NOV., DEC, JAN 2017 34,269

2017

SPRING - APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 27,687

FALL - OCT, NOV, DEC, JAN 2018 26,814

2018

SPRING - APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 19,319

FALL - OCT, NOV, DEC, JAN 2019 28,121

2019

SPRING APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 31,986

FALL OCT, NOV, DEC, JAN 2020 33,225

2020

SPRING APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 25,124

FALL OCT, NOV, DEC, JAN 2021 54,408

2021

SPRING - APRIL, MAY 31,990