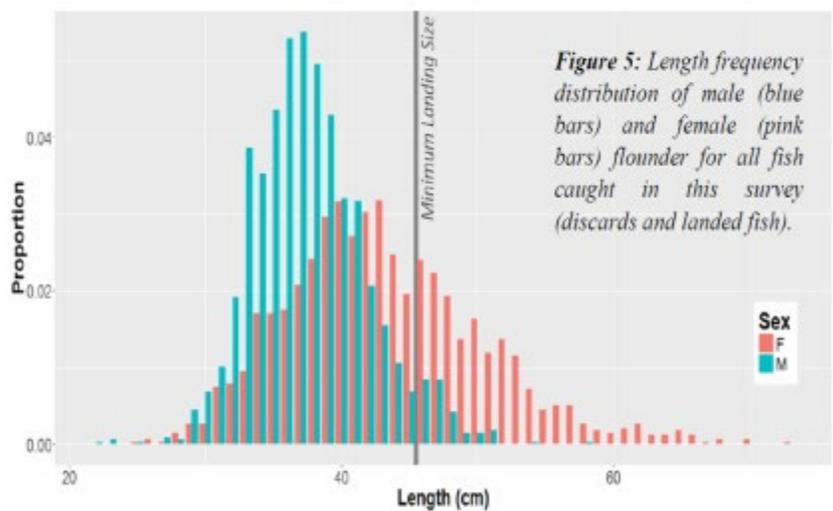
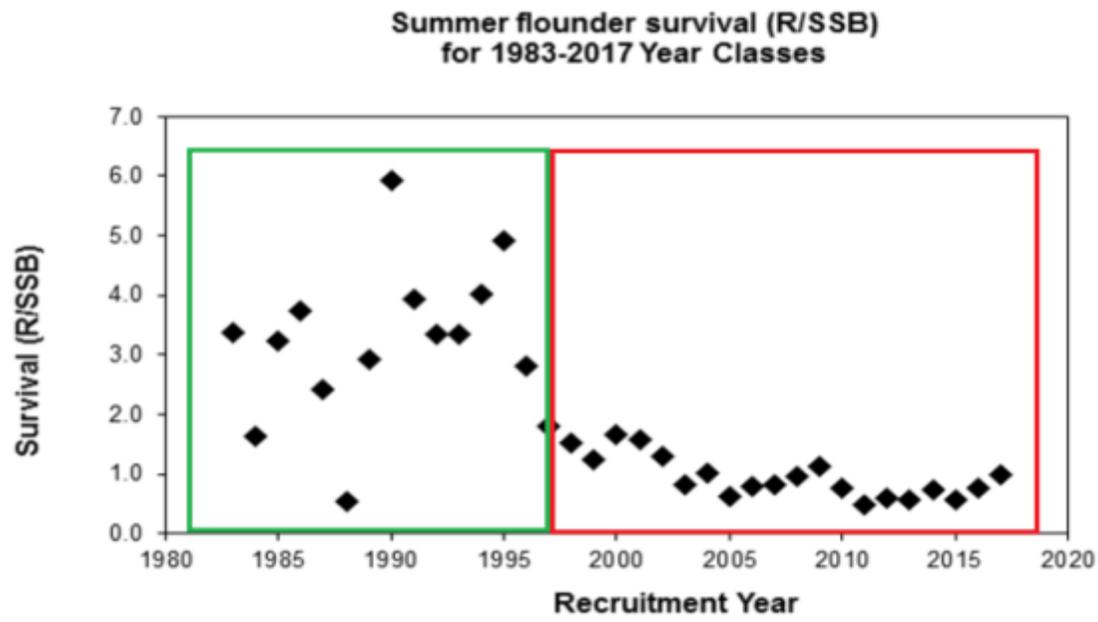


From: [Tom](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] 2022 Recreational Measures
Date: Saturday, March 12, 2022 11:13:03 AM
Attachments: [6958370055B54A6EBA9B58FDC97FCF47.png](#)
[AE3AB8F749DB4B7B9318577341335482.png](#)

From 1989 to 2004, the summer flounder fishery experienced its most prolific growth in history adding 120 million fish to the population. Those increases were fueled by harvest of the correct age classes. Over 90% of the harvest consisted of age groups 1 thru 2 meaning we were harvesting a higher percentage of sexually immature fish and proportionately more males by a 3:1 to 4:1 margin (reference below graph). The breeding stock wasn't being exploited, recruitment levels per the below chart from NEFSC we're strong and the female population as well as the spawn itself were de-facto protected as younger age groups were being harvested.



In 1997 when MAFMC passed Amendment 10 mandating the increase in commercial mesh sizes to protect juvenile fish and target commercial harvest on older age classes, the gender balance in this fishery started what has evolved into a complete change. Just read the Section titled "Sex Ratio" on page 60 of the 66th Stock Assessment to see how substantially female proportions have declined to the male population over the years. Amendment 10 coupled with the use of elevated size minimums in the recreational fishery caused a seismic change in the gender composition of this stock and killed recruitment levels ever since. Reference the below chart prepared for the last 40 years which proves two things. First, recruitment strength relative to the breeding stock fell off the cliff flat-lining in 1997 never recovering through today and second, for all the "steepness prognosticators" in this fishery, this chart alone proves that theory wrong since the relationship of new recruits to a declining biomass would have increased if there were any merit to that theory. It hasn't, it's actually worsened as the regulations have caused serious declines in the mature female population of the fishery as well as substantial declines in the size of the spawning stock.



Until the regulations start addressing issues which are threatening the fishery as opposed to issues addressing everything else, the stock will remain at risk. Options 3 and 4 will never be chosen because of reductions in season lengths. Season lengths are being mandated because NEFSC and SSC models don't properly reflect the impacts of harvesting younger age classes as they relate to gender composition, the benefits of harvesting younger age classes before natural mortality consumes those age groups at 25% annually and most important the impact on protecting females, the spawning stock and bolstering recruitment. While Option 5 is the best option of the five presented, a slot between 17 and 17.99" will continue removing all sexually mature fish primarily females from the population and have little impact on the issues hurting the stock. It is however the best option of the five options given, will reduce discard mortality in the recreational fishery, give anglers at least a chance of catching a keeper and is without doubt a step in the right direction. It's a start of addressing the issues confronting this stock.

We had successful regulation in place in the 90's that worked to perfection. The sooner we acknowledge that fact and work our way back to those regulations thoughtfully without causing undue economic hardship in the process, the sooner we'll nurse this fishery back to health and sustainability and insure the future of the fishery and the associated benefits to all its constituents and businesses dependent on its survival.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [keith wakefield](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] ASFMC Comments Summer Flounder Seabass
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:23:11 PM

Gents,

As a concerned NJ Fisherman I would encourage you to approve the NJ State Examples in their entirety, including the slot option for Summer Flounder.

If we keep taking out the female breeders these fish stocks will never recover. This applies to the commercial side as well. What we are currently doing isn't working for summer flounder.

Thank you
Keith Wakefield
(a life long NJ fisherman)
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [tdellaventura](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] Fluke regulations
Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 5:38:26 PM

Please adopt a slot limit for fluke this fishing season. Thanks Tom Dellaventura.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Alan](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] New Jersey Summer Flounder
Date: Sunday, March 13, 2022 2:07:09 PM

I would like to encourage you to approve the NJ State Examples in their entirety, including the slot option for Summer Flounder.

Alan Kenter

From: [Richard melton](#)
To: [Comments](#)
Subject: [External] NJ State Examples for Summer Flounder
Date: Saturday, March 12, 2022 12:01:45 PM

As a recreational angler and an employee of a charter boat operation , I sincerely believe we need these changes Especially Example #5 slot limit proposal. In this financial climate the fishing industry needs this change in order to offer there clients a chance of to balance cost to catch. Nobody want to spend a substantial amounts of money for no return.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows