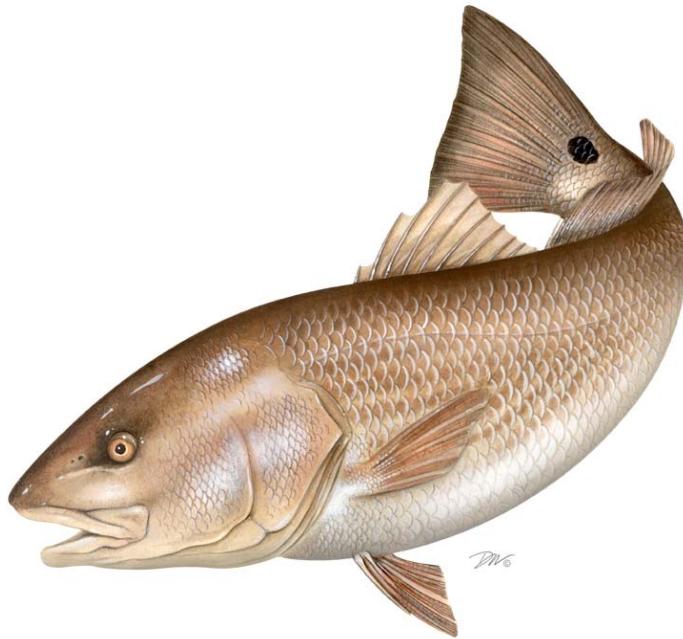


**2017 REVIEW OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR**

**RED DRUM
(*Sciaenops ocellatus*)**

2016 FISHING YEAR



The Red Drum Plan Review Team

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I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

<u>Date of FMP Approval:</u>	Original FMP – October 1984
<u>Amendments:</u>	Amendment 1 – October 1991 Amendment 2 – June 2002 Addendum 1 – August 2013
<u>Management Areas:</u>	The Atlantic coast distribution of the resource from New Jersey through Florida Northern: New Jersey through North Carolina Southern: South Carolina through the east coast of Florida
<u>Active Boards/Committees:</u>	South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board; Red Drum Technical Committee, Stock Assessment Subcommittee, Plan Development Team, Plan Review Team, South Atlantic Species Advisory Panel

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) adopted an interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Red Drum in 1984. The original management unit included the states from Maryland to Florida. In 1988, the Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board requested that all Atlantic coastal states from Maine to Florida implement the plan's recommended management regulations to prevent development of northern markets for southern fish. The states of New Jersey through Florida are now required to follow the FMP, while Maine through New York (including Pennsylvania) are encouraged to implement consistent provisions to protect the red drum spawning stock.

In 1990, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) adopted a FMP for red drum that defined overfishing and optimum yield (OY) consistent with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. Adoption of this plan prohibited the harvest of red drum in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), a moratorium that remains in effect today. Recognizing that all harvest would take place in state waters, the Council FMP recommended that states implement measures necessary to achieve the target level of at least 30% escapement.

Consequently, ASMFC initiated Amendment 1 in 1991, which included the goal to attain optimum yield from the fishery over time. Optimum yield was defined as the amount of harvest that could be taken while maintaining the level of spawning stock biomass per recruit (SSBR) at or above 30% of the level which would result if fishing mortality was zero. However, a lack of information on adult stock status resulted in the use of a 30% escapement rate of sub-adult red drum to the off-shore adult spawning stock.

Substantial reductions in fishing mortality were necessary to achieve the escapement rate; however, the lack of data on the status of adult red drum along the Atlantic coast led to the adoption of a phase-in approach with a 10% SSBR goal. In 1991, states implemented or maintained harvest controls necessary to attain the goal.

As hoped, these management measures led to increased escapement rates of juvenile red drum. Escapement estimates for the northern region of New Jersey through North Carolina (18%) and the southern region of South Carolina through Florida (17%) were estimated to be above the 10% phase-in goal, yet still below the ultimate goal of 30% (Vaughan and Carmichael 2000). North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia implemented substantive changes to their regulations from 1998-2001 that further restricted harvest.

The Council adopted new definitions of OY and overfishing for red drum in 1998. Optimum yield was redefined as the harvest associated with a 40% static spawning potential ratio (sSPR), overfishing as an sSPR less than 30%, and an overfishing threshold as 10% sSPR. In 1999, the Council recommended that management authority for red drum be transferred to the states through the Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Program (ISFMP) process. This was recommended, in part, due to the inability to accurately determine an overfished status, and therefore stock rebuilding targets and schedules, as required under the revised Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996. The transfer necessitated the development of an amendment to the interstate FMP in order to include the provisions of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act.

ASMFC adopted Amendment 2 to the Red Drum FMP in June 2002 (ASMFC 2002), which serves as the current management plan. The goal of Amendment 2 is to achieve and maintain the OY for the Atlantic coast red drum fishery as the amount of harvest that can be taken by U.S. fishermen while maintaining the sSPR at or above 40%. There are four plan objectives:

- Achieve and maintain an escapement rate sufficient to prevent recruitment failure and achieve an sSPR at or above 40%.
- Provide a flexible management system to address incompatibility and inconsistency among state and federal regulations which minimizes regulatory delay while retaining substantial ASMFC, Council, and public input into management decisions; and which can adapt to changes in resource abundance, new scientific information, and changes in fishing patterns among user groups or by area.
- Promote cooperative collection of biological, economic, and sociological data required to effectively monitor and assess the status of the red drum resource and evaluate management efforts.
- Restore the age and size structure of the Atlantic coast red drum population.

The management area extends from New Jersey through the east coast of Florida, and is separated into a northern and southern region at the North Carolina/South Carolina border. The sSPR of 40% is considered a target; an sSPR below 30% (threshold level) results in an overfishing determination for red drum. Amendment 2 required all states within the management unit to implement appropriate recreational bag and size limit combinations needed to attain the target sSPR, and to maintain current, or implement more restrictive, commercial fishery regulations. All states were in compliance by January 1, 2003. See Table 1 for state commercial and recreational regulations in 2015.

Following the approval of Amendment 2 in 2002, the process to transfer management authority to ASMFC began, including an Environmental Assessment and public comment period. The final rule became effective November 5, 2008. It repeals the federal Atlantic Coast Red Drum Fishery Management Plan and transfers management authority of Atlantic red drum in the exclusive economic zone from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Board approved Addendum I to Amendment 2 in August 2013. The Addendum revised the habitat section of Amendment 2 to include current information on red drum spawning habitat and life-stages (egg, larval, juvenile, sub-adult, and adult). It also identified and described the distribution of key habitats and habitats of concern.

II. Status of the Stocks

The 2017 Red Drum Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report indicate overfishing is not occurring for either the northern or southern stock of red drum (ASMFC 2017). The assessment was unable to determine an overfished/not overfished status because population abundance could not be reliably estimated due to limited data for the older fish (ages 4+).

Northern Region (NJ-NC)

Recruitment (age 1 abundance) has varied annually with a large peak occurring in 2012 (Figure 1). The trend in the three-year average sSPR indicates low sSPR early in the time series with increases during 1991 – 1997 and fluctuations thereafter (Figure 2). The average sSPR has been above the overfishing threshold ($F_{30\%}$) since 1994, and at or above the target ($F_{40\%}$) since 1996, except during one year (2002). Fishing pressure and mortality appear to be stabilized near the target fishing mortality. The average sSPR is also likely above the target benchmark.

Southern Region (SC-FL)

Recruitment (age 1 abundance) has fluctuated without apparent trend since 1991 (Figure 1). A high level of uncertainty exists around the three-year average sSPR estimates for the southern region. While the 3-year average sSPR estimate in 2013 was above both the target ($F_{40\%}$) and the overfishing threshold ($F_{30\%}$), indicating that overfishing is not occurring, the high level of uncertainty around this estimate indicates that this conclusion should be considered with extreme caution (Figure 2).

III. Status of the Fishery

Total red drum landings from New Jersey through the east coast of Florida in 2016 are estimated at 2.18 million pounds (Tables 2 and 3, Figure 3). This is roughly 624,000 pounds more than was landed in 2015. 2016 total landings also are above the previous ten-year (2007-2016) average of 1.96 million pounds. The commercial and recreational fisheries harvested 4% and 96% of the total, respectively. The southern region includes South Carolina through Florida's east coast, while the northern region includes New Jersey through North Carolina. In 2016, 80% of the total landings came from the southern region where the fishery is exclusively recreational, and 20% from the northern region (Figure 4).

Coastwide commercial landings were low this year, but show no long-term temporal trends. In the last 50 years, landings have ranged from approximately 54,000 pounds (in 1997) to 440,000 pounds (in 1980, Figure 3). In 2016, red drum were commercially landed only in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina (Table 2). Coastwide commercial harvest decreased from 80,946 pounds in 2015 to 78,784 pounds in 2016, with 98% harvested by North Carolina. Historically, North Carolina and Florida shared the majority of commercial harvest, but commercial harvest has been prohibited in Florida under state regulation since January 1988. South Carolina also banned commercial harvest and sale of native caught red drum beginning in 1987, and in 2013 Georgia designated Red Drum Gamefish status, eliminating commercial harvest and sale.

In North Carolina, a daily commercial trip limit and an annual cap of 250,000 pounds with payback of any overage constrain the commercial harvest. Unique to this state, the red drum fishing year extends from September 1 to August 31. In 2008, the Board approved use of the fishing year to monitor the cap. During the 2009/2010 and the 2013/2014 fishing years, North Carolina had overages of 25,858 pounds and 12,753 pounds, respectively. The commercial harvest for each following fishing year remained well below the adjusted cap allowance, providing sufficient payback.

Recreational harvest of red drum peaked in 1984 at 1.05 million fish (or 2.6 million pounds; Tables 3 and 4). Since 1988, the number has fluctuated without trend between 250,000 and 760,000 fish (800,000 to 2.7 million pounds; Figures 3 and 5). Recreational harvest increased from 426,302 fish (1.5 million pounds) in 2015 to 566,291 fish (2.1 million pounds) in 2016. The 2016 harvest is greater than the 10-year average (2007-2016) for recreational harvest in numbers (527,193) and pounds (1.8 million). Florida anglers landed the largest share of the coastwide recreational harvest in numbers (65%), followed by Georgia (13%), South Carolina (11%), and North Carolina (10%).

Anglers release far more red drum than they keep; the percent of the catch released has been over 80% during the last decade (Figure 5). Recreational releases show an increasing trend over the time series that has plateaued from around the early 2000s to the present. The proportion of releases in 2016 was 82% (versus 84% in 2015), and the overall number of fish released was 3.2 million in 2016 (Figure 5, Table 5). It is estimated that 8% of released fish die as a result of being caught, resulting in an estimated 206,840 dead discarded fish in 2016 (Table 5). Recreational removals from the fishery are thus estimated to be 773,131 fish in 2016 (Figure 6).

IV. Status of Assessment Advice

Current stock status information comes from the 2017 stock assessment (ASMFC 2017) completed by the ASMFC Red Drum Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS) and Technical Committee (TC), peer reviewed by an independent panel of experts through ASMFC's desk review process, and approved by the South Atlantic State-Federal Fisheries Management Board for use in management decisions. Previous interstate management decisions were based on the last coastwide assessment, SEDAR 18 (SAFMC 2009), and prior to 2009, decisions were based on regional assessments conducted by Vaughan and Helser (1990), Vaughan (1992, 1993,

1996), Vaughan and Carmichael (2000). Several states have also conducted state-specific assessments (e.g., Murphy and Munyandorero 2009; Takade and Paramore 2007). South Carolina is currently performing a state-specific stock assessment of red drum.

The 2017 stock assessment uses a statistical catch at age (SCA) model with age-specific data for red drum ages 1 through 7+. This model is similar to that used in the 2009 assessment, with data updated through 2013. Data from 1989-2013 were included from the following sources: commercial and recreational harvest and discard data, fishery-dependent and -independent biological sampling data, tagging data, and fishery-independent survey abundance data.

The Peer Review Panel considered the use of an SCA model appropriate given the types of data available for red drum. For the northern region, the Review Panel agreed that the model was informative of age 1 – 3 abundance and exploitation rates, but not for older age groups. The model was also found to be informative of annual trends in sSPR and the 2011 – 2013 average sSPR. For the southern region, the Review Panel agreed that estimates of age 7+ fish seemed to be more consistent with the population biology, leading to a large fraction of biomass being unavailable to exploitation. For both regions, most of the sSPR is contained within the larger, fully mature, age 7+ fish, thus even a small increase in fishing mortality on older red drum (due to harvest or other factors) could quickly lead to a decrease in sSPR and overfishing.

V. Status of Research and Monitoring

No monitoring or research programs are annually required of the states except for the submission of a compliance report. The following fishery-dependent (other than catch and effort data) and fishery-independent monitoring programs were reported in the 2017 reports.

Fishery Dependent Monitoring

- Delaware DFW -- Commercial monitoring through mandatory logbook reports.
- Maryland DNR – Commercial pound nets sampled bi-weekly in the Chesapeake Bay from late spring through summer (2016 n=0). Only three of the 24 years of sampling exceeded 20 fish, and no red drum were encountered in ten of the survey years. Licensed charter boat captain logbooks are monitored for red drum captures (2016: 55 caught, 19 harvested).
- PRFC -- Red drum are harvested incidentally in the commercial pound net and haul seine fisheries. The mandatory commercial harvest daily reporting system, which collects harvest and discards/releases, reported zero red drum released in 2016.
- Virginia MRC –Volunteer anglers have participated since 1995 in the Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program (2016: 1,801 fish tagged, 96 reported recaptures). Carcasses collected through the Marine Sportfish Collection Project since 2007 (2016 n=2).
- North Carolina DMF – Commercial cap monitored through trip ticket program; commercially-landed red drum sampled through biological monitoring program since 1982 (2016: 365 fish measured, primarily gill net).
- South Carolina DNR –State finfish survey conducted in January and February (2016 n=155 caught and 47 harvested, mean catch rate: 1.69 red drum/targeted angler hour). Charter

Vessel Trip Reporting (2016 caught: 46,604; release rate: 94.1%). SC Marine Game Fish Tagging Program studies movement patterns, growth rates, and release-mortality rates (in 2016 fish tagged: 2,766; recaptured: 238). Tournament and freezer fish programs (2016 n=17).

- Georgia CRD – Age, length, and sex data collected through the Marine Sportfish Carcass Recovery Project (2016 n=352 red drum).
- Florida FWC –8,087 trip interviews in 2016 collected data on total-catch rates and sizes (through MRIP).
- NMFS – Length measurements and recreational catch, harvest, release, and effort data are collected via the Marine Recreational Information Program.

Fishery Independent Monitoring

- New Jersey DFW – Five annual nearshore trawl surveys conducted since 1988, in January/February, April, June, August, and October. Length and weight data, and catch per unit effort (CPUE) in number of fish per tow and biomass per tow recorded for all species. Only two red drum were caught in entire time series (single tow, 2013).
- North Carolina DMF - Seine survey since 1991 produces age-0 abundance index (2016 n=712; CPUE of 5.93, increase from 2015 CPUE of 4.88). Gill net survey in Pamlico Sound since 2001 characterizes size and age distribution, produces abundance index, improves bycatch estimates, and studies habitat usage (2016 CPUE of 3.29, above long-term average). Longline survey since 2007 produces adult index of abundance and tags fish (2016 n=246; CPUE below long-term average at 3.41 fish per set).
- South Carolina DNR – Estuarine trammel net survey for subadults (2016 CPUE below 10-year average). Electrofishing survey in low salinity estuarine areas for juveniles/subadults (2016 CPUE below 10-year average). Inshore bottom longline survey for biological data and adult abundance index (808 tagged, 128 sampled for age in 2016). Genetic sub-sampling and tagging conducted during these three surveys.
- Georgia CRD – Estuarine trammel net survey for subadult biological data and abundance index (2016, both areas n=89). Estuarine gill net survey for young-of-year (YOY) biological data and abundance index (2016 both areas n = 508). Bottom longline survey for adult biological data and abundance index (2016 n = 181).
- Florida FWC-FWRI – Two seine surveys in northern Indian River Lagoon (IRL) and lower St. Johns River (SJR) for YOY (< 40 mm SL) abundance indices (2016 CPUE less than 2015). Haul seine survey in these areas and southern IRL for subadult index (2016 CPUE slightly higher than 2015). Age and length data collected during surveys.

VI. Status of Management Measures and Issues

Fishery Management Plan

Amendment 2 was fully implemented by January 1, 2003, providing the management requirements for 2010. Requirements include: recreational regulations designed to achieve at least 40% sSPR, a maximum size limit of 27 inches or less, and current or more stringent commercial regulations. States are also required to have in place law enforcement capabilities adequate to successfully implement their red drum regulations. In August 2013, the Board

approved Addendum 1 to Amendment 2 of the Red Drum FMP. The Addendum revises the habitat section of Amendment 2 to include the most current information on red drum spawning habitat for each life stage (egg, larval, juvenile, sub-adult, and adult). It also identifies the distribution of key habitats and habitats of concern, including potential threats and bottlenecks.

De Minimis Requests

New Jersey and Delaware requested *de minimis* status through the annual reporting process. While Amendment 2 does not include a specific method to determine whether a state qualifies for *de minimis*, the PRT chose to evaluate an individual state's contribution to the fishery by comparing the two-year average of total landings of the state to that of the management unit. New Jersey and Delaware each harvested zero percent of the two-year average total landings. *De minimis* status does not exempt either state from any requirement; it may exempt them from future management measures implemented through addenda to Amendment 2, as determined by the Board.

VII. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements for 2016

The PRT finds that all states have implemented the requirements of Amendment 2.

VIII. Recommendations of the Plan Review Team

Management and Regulatory Recommendations

- < Consider approval of the *de minimis* requests by New Jersey and Delaware
- < Support a continued moratorium of red drum fishing in the exclusive economic zone.

Prioritized Research and Monitoring Recommendations (H) =High, (M) =Medium, (L) =Low

Stock Assessment and Population Dynamics

- < Implement surveys (e.g. logbooks, electronic methods, etc.) in each state throughout the management unit to determine the length composition (and age data, if possible) of recreational discards (B2) of red drum. This information has been highlighted as the single largest data gap in previous assessments. (H)
- < Further study is needed to determine discard mortality estimates for the Atlantic coast, both for recreational and commercial gears. Additionally, discard estimates should examine the impact of slot-size limit management and explore regulatory discard impacts due to high-grading. Investigate covariates affecting discard mortality (e.g., depth, size, seasonality), and explore methods of determining *in situ* mortality (as opposed to tank studies) and mitigating mortality (e.g. gear types, handling methods, use of descending devices on adults). (H)
- < Improve catch/effort estimates and biological sampling from recreational and commercial fisheries for red drum, including increased intercepts of night fisheries for red drum. (H)
- < Expand biological sampling based on a statistical analysis to adequately characterize the age/size composition of removals by all statistical strata (gears, states, etc.). (H)
- < Each state should develop an on-going red drum tagging program that can be used to estimate both fishing and natural mortality and movements. This should include concurrent evaluations of tag retention, tagging mortality, and angler tag reporting rates. The

importance of each state's tagging data to the assessment should be evaluated, including analysis of historical tagging data to determine if existing and historic recreational data sources (e.g., tagging) can be used to evaluate better B2 selectivities. (H)

- < Establish programs to provide on-going estimates of commercial and recreational discard mortality using appropriate statistical methods. Discard estimates should examine the impact of slot-size limit management and explore regulatory discard impacts due to high-grading. (M)
- < Evaluate the broader survey needs to identify gaps in current activities and provide for potential expansion and/or standardization between/among current surveys. (M)

Biological

- < Explore methods to effectively sample the adult population in estuarine, nearshore, and open ocean waters, such as in the ongoing red drum long line survey, and to determine the size, age and sex composition of the adults. (H)
- < Continue genetic analyses (i.e., SC DNR analyses) to evaluate stock structure and mixing and temporal changes in genetic composition of the red drum population and other applications. (H)
- < Refine maturity schedules on a geographic basis. Thoroughly examine the influence of size and age on reproductive function. Investigate the possibility of senescence in female red drum. Archive histological specimens across sizes to look for shifts in maturity schedules and make regional comparisons. Standardize histology reading methods of slides across states conducting such studies. (For reference, see SEDAR 44-DW02). (H)
- < Determine habitat preferences, environmental conditions, growth rates, and food habits of larval and juvenile red drum throughout the species range along the Atlantic coast. Assess the effects of environmental factors on stock density/yearclass strength. Determine whether natural environmental perturbations affect recruitment and modify relationships with spawning stock size. (H)
- < Continue tagging studies to determine stock identity, inshore/offshore migration patterns of all life stages (i.e. basic life history research). Specific effort should be given to developing a large-scale program for tagging adult red drum. (M)
- < Fully evaluate the effects and effectiveness of using cultured red drum to facilitate higher catch rates along the Atlantic coast. (M)
- < Conduct a tagging study using emerging technologies (i.e., acoustic tagging, satellite tagging, genetic tags) to evaluate stock mixing and identify movement of sub-adult fish transitioning to maturity. (M-L)
- < Otolith microchemistry analysis should be considered for exploring links between sub-adult estuarine habitats and adult stock structure. (L)

Social (Unless otherwise indicated, the collection of sociological and/or economic data, also sometimes collectively described as "socioeconomic data," would be based on ACCSP standards.)

- < Encourage the NMFS to fund socioeconomic add-on questions to the recreational fisheries survey that are specifically oriented to red drum recreational fishing. (H)

- < States with significant fisheries (over 5,000 pounds) should periodically (e.g. every five years) collect socioeconomic data on red drum fisheries through add-ons to the recreational fisheries survey or by other means. (H)
- < Using a human dimension analysis perspective, explore Atlantic red drum historical catch-release trends and explanatory factors such as the possible impacts of changes recreational fishing technology and/or angler behavior on red drum catchability and selectivity over time. (H)
- < Conduct applied research to evaluate the various projected (forecasted) social impacts on red drum fishery stakeholders of possible regulatory options (e.g. changing minimum sizes, etc.). (M)

Economic

- < Perform new analyses, using available secondary data and other information in established models, to estimate the economic impacts (e.g. sales, jobs, income, etc.) of recreational red drum fisheries related activities at the state and regional level including "for-hire sector" (e.g. hiring a fishing guides). (H)
- < Where appropriate, encourage individual member states to conduct studies to project and evaluate the estimated comparable net economic values associated with current and possible future regulatory regimes that could impact red drum recreational anglers including those preferring catch and release fishing. (M)
- < Using benefit-cost analysis protocols, project the estimated the public sector oriented net economic values over a time (e.g. ten years or more) for various cultured red drum stocking scenarios. (M)
- < Encourage the NMFS to periodically conduct special surveys and related data analysis to determine the economic and operational characteristics of the "for-hire sector" targeting red drum especially fishing guide oriented businesses in the South Atlantic states. (M)

Habitat

- < Identify spawning areas of red drum in each state from North Carolina to Florida so these areas may be protected from degradation and/or destruction. Explore relationships between spawning activity (e.g. spawning sounds) and environmental parameters (e.g. temperature). (H)
- < Identify changes in freshwater inflow on red drum nursery habitats. Quantify the relationship between freshwater inflows and red drum nursery/sub-adult habitats. (H)
- < Determine the impacts of dredging and beach re-nourishment on red drum spawning and early life history stages. (M)
- < Investigate the concept of estuarine reserves to increase the escapement rate of red drum along the Atlantic coast. (M)
- < Identify impacts of water quality, environmental, and ecosystem changes on red drum stock dynamics for potential incorporation into stock assessment models. (M)
- < Quantify relationships between red drum production and habitat and implications for future management planning. (L)

- < Determine methods for restoring red drum habitat and/or improving existing environmental conditions that adversely affect red drum production. (L)

IX. References

- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). 2002. Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Red Drum. ASMFC, Washington, DC, Fishery Management Report No. 38, 141 p.
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X. Figures

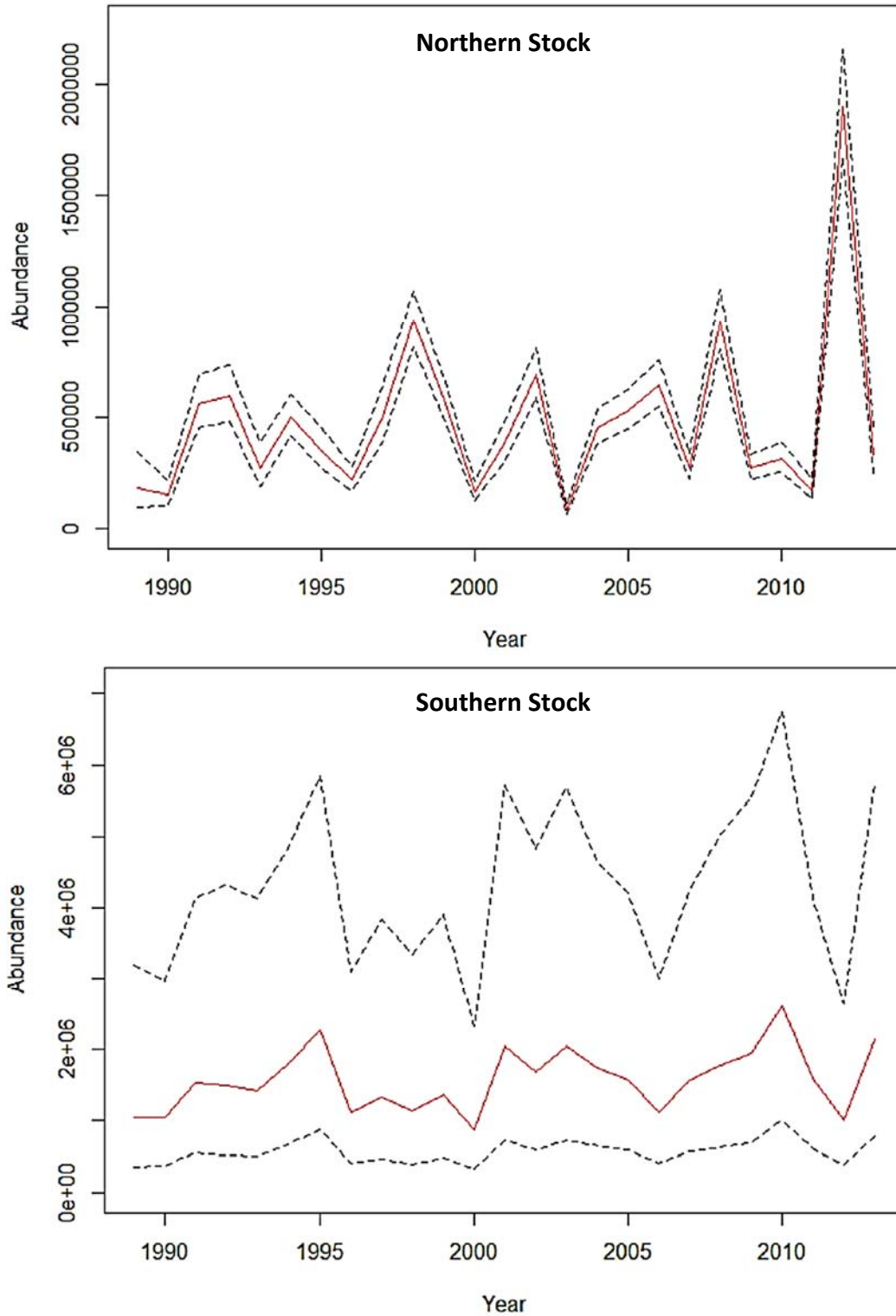


Figure 1. Predicted recruitment (age-1 abundance, red lines) with 95% confidence intervals (dashed black lines) for the northern (top) and southern (bottom) regions (Source: ASMFC 2017).

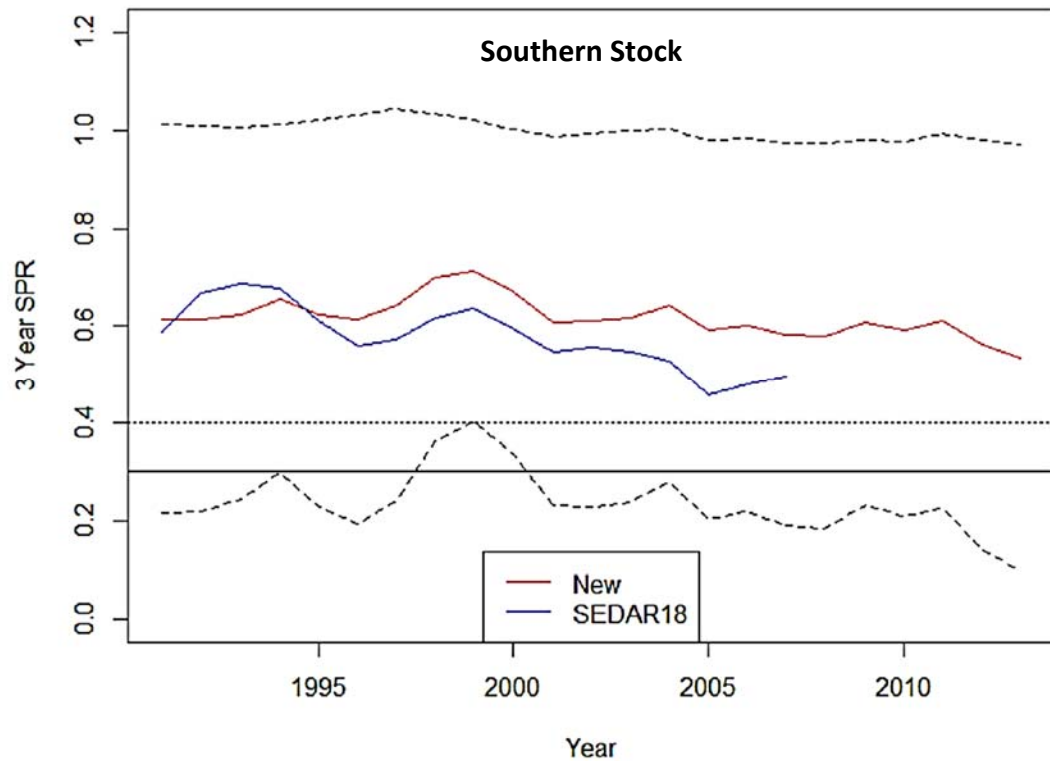
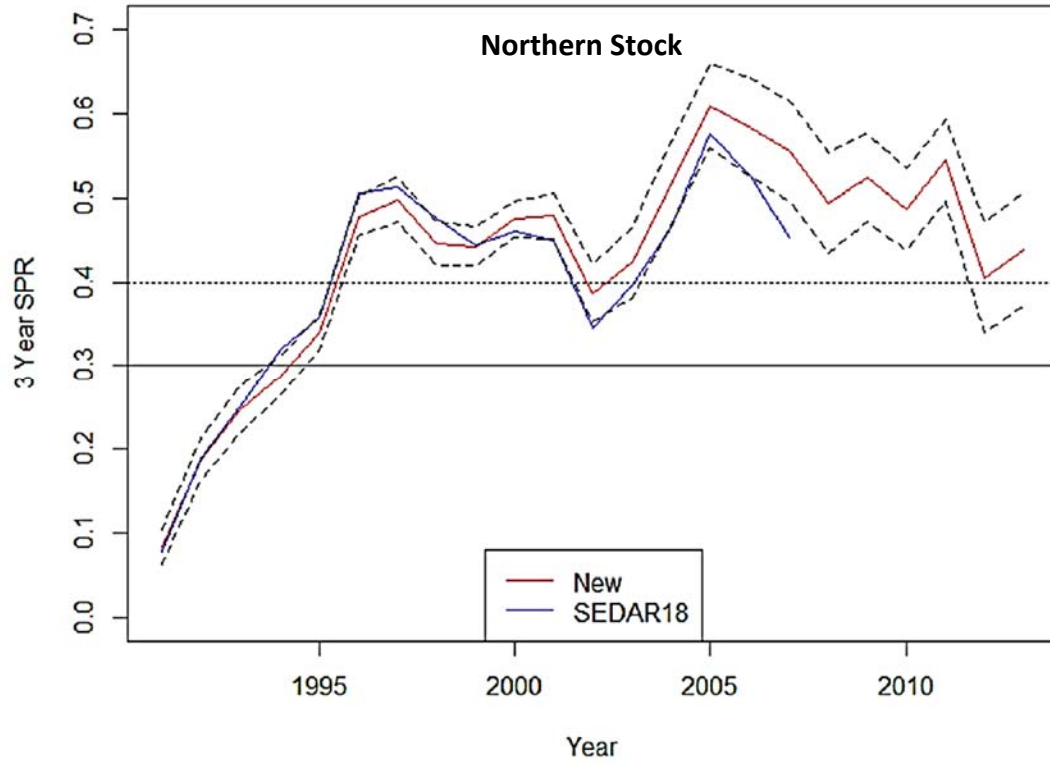


Figure 2. Three year average sSPR (red lines) for the northern (top) and southern (bottom) stocks with 95% confidence intervals (dashed black lines). Point estimates from the previous benchmark assessment (SEDAR18) are included for comparison. The target sSPR (dotted black line) is 40% and the threshold sSPR (solid black line) is 30% (Source: ASMFC, 2017).

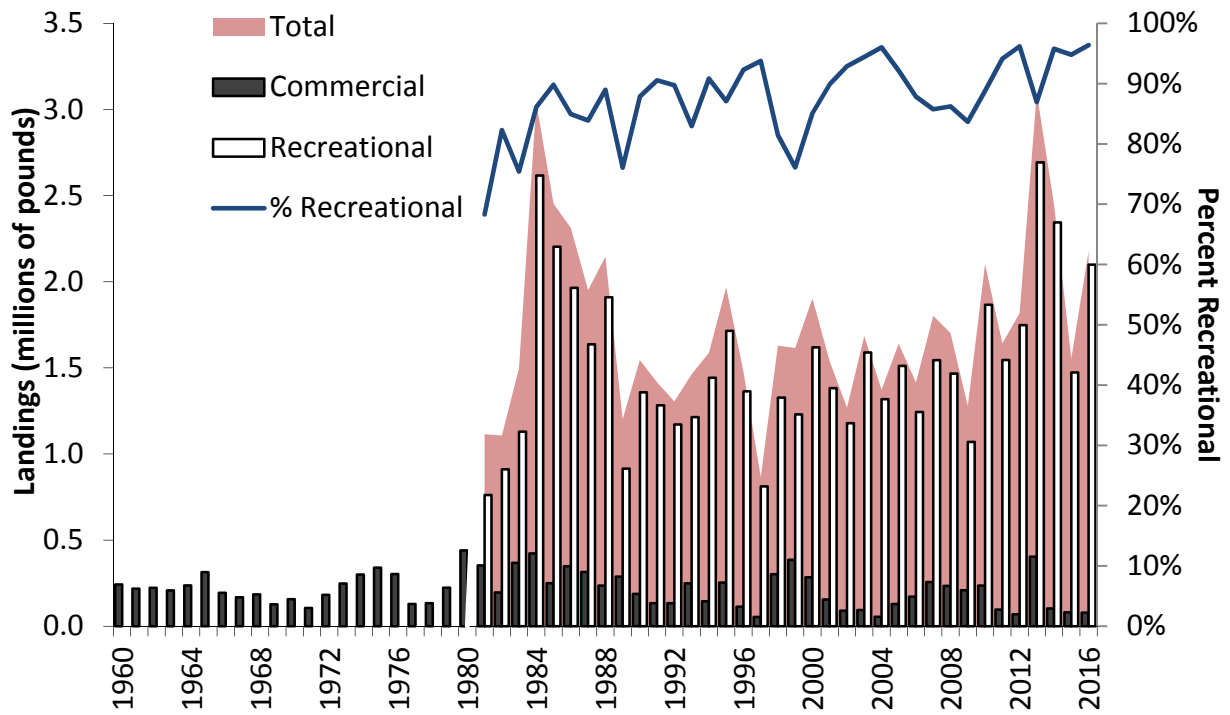


Figure 3. Commercial and recreational landings (pounds) of red drum. Recreational data not available prior to 1981. See Tables 2 and 3 for values and data sources.

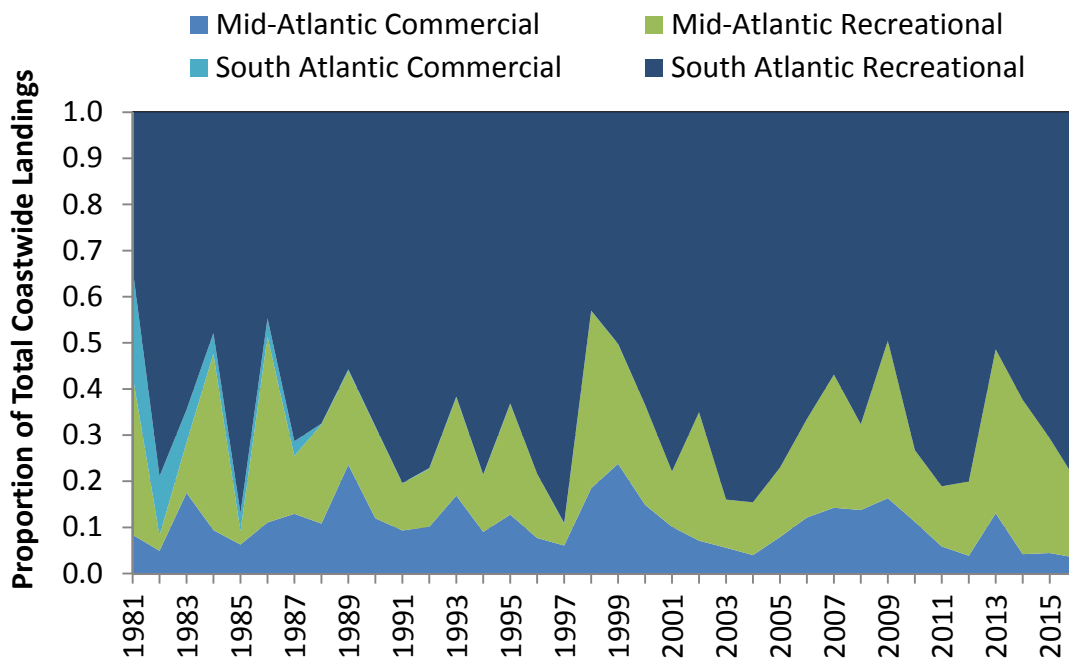


Figure 4. Proportion of regional, sector-specific landings to total coastwide landings (pounds). See Tables 2 and 3 for data sources.

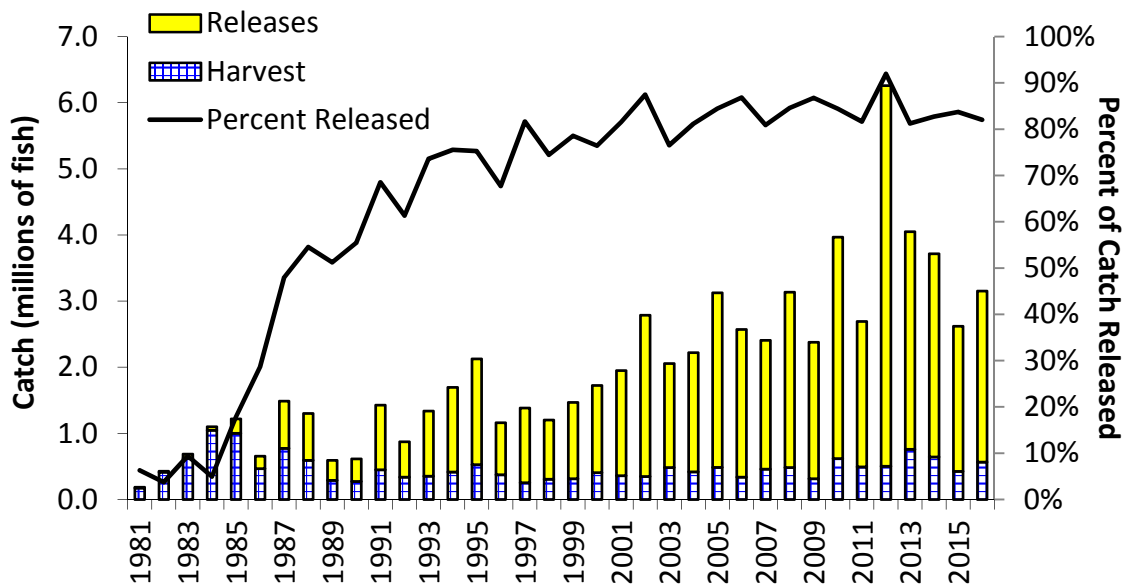


Figure 5. Recreational catch (harvest and alive releases) of red drum (numbers) and the proportion of catch that is released. See Tables 4 and 5 for values and data sources.

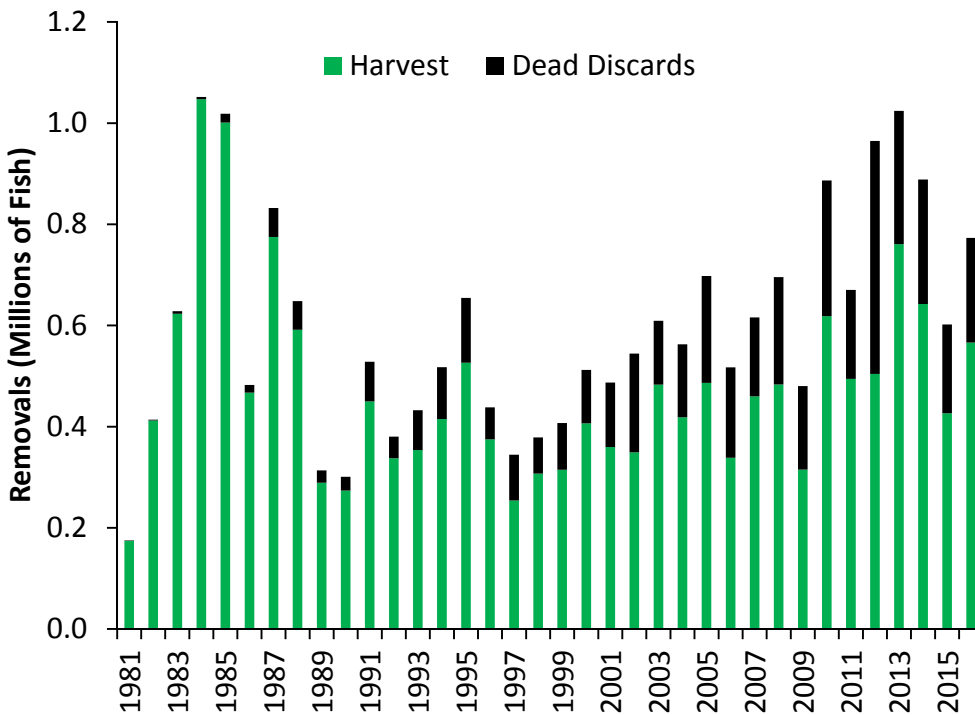


Figure 6. Recreational removals (harvest and dead discards) of red drum (numbers). Dead discards are estimated by applying an 8% discard mortality rate to alive releases. See Tables 4 & 5 for values and data sources.

XI. Tables

Table 1. Red drum regulations for 2016. The states of New Jersey through Florida are required to meet the requirements in the FMP; states north of New Jersey are encouraged to follow the regulations. All size limits are total length.

State	Recreational	Commercial
NJ	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 27", 1 fish
DE	20" - 27", 5 fish	20" - 27", 5 fish
MD	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 25", 5 fish
PRFC	18" - 25", 5 fish	18" - 25", 5 fish
VA	18" - 26", 3 fish	18" - 25", 5 fish
NC	18" - 27", 1 fish	18" - 27"; 250,000 lb harvest cap with overage payback (150,000 lbs Sept 1- April 30; 100,000 lbs May 1-Aug 31); harvest of red drum allowed with 7 fish daily trip limit; red drum must be less than 50% of catch (lbs); small mesh (<5" stretched mesh) gill nets attendance requirement May 1 - November 30. Fishing year: September 1 – August 31.
SC	15" - 23", 3 fish. Gigging allowed March-November	Gamefish Only
GA	14" - 23", 5 fish	Gamefish Only
FL	18" - 27", Northern Region- 2 fish; Southern Region- 1 fish	Sale of native fish prohibited

Table 2. Commercial landings (pounds) of red drum by state, 1981-2016. (Source: personal communication with ACCSP, Arlington, VA, for years prior to 2016 and State Compliance Reports for 2016, except as noted below.)

Year	NJ	DE	MD	PRFC	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL	Total
1981					200	93,420	808	261	258,374	353,063
1982					1,700	52,561	2,228	251	139,170	195,910
1983			100		41,700	219,871	*	1,126	105,164	367,961
1984					2,600	283,020	3,950	1,961	130,885	422,416
1985					1,100	152,676	3,512	3,541	88,929	249,758
1986			1,000		5,400	249,076	12,429	2,939	77,070	347,914
1987					2,600	249,657	14,689	4,565	42,993	314,504
1988			8,100	2	4,000	220,271	20	3,281	284	235,958
1989			1,000	86	8,200	274,356	165	3,963		287,770
1990			29	86	1,481	183,216		2,763		187,575
1991			7,533	3,808	24,771	96,045	1,475	*		133,632
1992			1,087	196	2,352	128,497		1,759		133,891
1993			55		8,637	238,099		2,533		249,324
1994			859		*	142,169	32	2,141		145,201
1995			6		2,992	248,122		2,578		253,698
1996			215		*	113,338		*		113,553
1997			22	4	*	52,502	*	1,426		53,954
1998	*		336		6,456	294,366	*	672		301,830
1999	*		504	186	10,856	372,942	*	1,115		385,603
2000	*		843	10	11,512	270,953	*	707		284,025
2001	*		727	191	4,905	149,616		*		155,439
2002	*		1,161	285	7,361	81,370		*		90,177
2003	*		631	47	2,716	90,525		*		93,919
2004	*		12		638	54,086		*		54,736
2005	*	33	37	51	527	128,770		*		129,418
2006	*	*	8	2	2,607	169,206		*		171,823
2007			6678	58	6,372	243,658		*		256,766
2008			*	69	4,585	229,809		*		234,463
2009	*		*	157	8,315	200,296		*		208,768
2010			*	22	3,634	231,828		*		235,484
2011				3	4,369	91,980		*		96,352
2012	*		347	81	2,609	66,519				69,556
2013	*	0	3,121	268	28,766	371,949				404,104
2014	*	0	298	3	11,999	90,647				102,947
2015	0	0	*	0	664	80,282				80,946
2016	0	0	*	0	1,807	76,977	0	0	0	78,784

* Notes: PRFC landings from agency reporting program; * indicates confidential landings.

Table 3. Recreational landings (pounds) of red drum by state, 1981-2016. (Source: personal communication with MRIP for years prior to 2016, state compliance reports for 2016)

Year	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL	Total
1981			4,370	347,939	31,519	50,230	9,442	317,963	761,463
1982					37,511	340,686	52,150	480,676	911,023
1983			3,018	51,299	109,540	222,691	67,298	675,924	1,129,770
1984				1,285	1,160,539	183,282	294,583	976,971	2,616,660
1985					70,677	1,532,316	185,887	414,176	2,203,056
1986			754,161	145,517	31,594	498,586	173,837	360,725	1,964,420
1987				44,332	200,729	913,639	250,795	227,222	1,636,717
1988				9,030	451,974	1,050,049	385,860	12,507	1,909,420
1989			2,348	27,236	214,849	396,771	127,245	146,064	914,513
1990			2,679		302,994	631,819	161,712	258,569	1,357,773
1991			5,635	30,582	108,268	284,290	337,207	516,999	1,282,981
1992				55,324	109,134	411,484	198,751	396,555	1,171,248
1993				45,505	266,459	282,614	328,245	290,930	1,213,753
1994				3,684	192,060	314,632	353,616	578,412	1,442,404
1995				66,270	405,620	417,595	300,337	525,231	1,715,053
1996				1,512	204,556	396,394	164,756	596,483	1,363,701
1997				1,810	39,077	296,155	129,836	345,390	812,268
1998				34,861	591,428	129,619	84,348	487,091	1,327,347
1999				92,794	326,303	103,777	166,630	540,310	1,229,814
2000				95,596	316,029	93,043	228,965	885,447	1,619,080
2001				51,890	132,578	188,198	155,854	853,714	1,382,234
2002		860	15,154	155,212	182,225	103,831	170,572	551,128	1,178,982
2003				57,213	118,808	449,399	234,865	729,446	1,589,731
2004				32,415	124,264	312,569	296,777	566,508	1,332,533
2005				7,624	239,694	298,600	177,169	788,993	1,512,080
2006		2,064		21,039	251,735	160,760	143,699	636,742	1,216,039
2007				209,248	305,664	152,190	197,510	674,463	1,539,075
2008				72,510	236,744	254,305	244,594	652,613	1,460,766
2009				148,573	286,702	165,874	125,499	343,359	1,070,007
2010				40,323	281,587	451,144	319,427	776,346	1,868,827
2011					212,245	441,833	229,214	662,811	1,546,103
2012	0	396	26,788	27,422	238,310	368,445	107,368	978,727	1,747,456
2013	0	7,153	6,367	411,236	676,050	236,887	129,279	1,226,481	2,693,453
2014	0	0	0	221,280	598,166	242,371	154,332	1,129,663	2,345,812
2015	0	0	0	29,339	154,496	269,787	97,690	922,065	1,473,377
2016	0	0	0	9,682	230,473	144,859	153,368	1,560,972	2,099,354

Table 4. Recreational landings (numbers) of red drum by state, 1981-2016. (Source: personal communication with MRIP for years prior to 2016, state compliance reports for 2016)

Year	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL	Total
1981			601	49,630	15,054	27,319	6,323	75,244	174,171
1982					16,445	160,760	30,757	204,401	412,363
1983			2,413	32,940	81,528	104,806	56,854	344,513	623,054
1984				1,457	108,787	129,547	258,188	549,381	1,047,360
1985				0	22,077	530,110	183,837	265,185	1,001,209
1986			12,804	28,139	17,501	193,188	102,279	113,440	467,351
1987				2,186	61,100	522,420	138,062	51,225	774,993
1988				4,311	142,626	287,916	147,042	9,542	591,437
1989			1,014	12,007	62,359	127,492	51,557	34,748	289,177
1990			1,279	0	33,149	118,666	76,304	44,280	273,678
1991			2,745	17,119	38,658	125,833	162,802	102,727	449,884
1992				13,275	23,593	112,534	83,861	104,265	337,528
1993				14,005	49,493	119,189	105,710	65,140	353,537
1994				1,378	28,953	129,515	134,214	120,938	414,998
1995				3,665	88,593	202,430	134,915	96,927	526,530
1996				572	36,746	130,649	60,251	146,823	375,041
1997				1,920	8,749	129,022	39,041	75,235	253,967
1998				13,070	114,638	46,509	24,929	107,982	307,128
1999				12,425	64,739	44,069	67,283	126,180	314,696
2000				22,603	61,618	37,217	94,144	191,070	406,652
2001				6,967	23,142	61,420	90,376	177,633	359,538
2002		275	5,521	49,795	42,541	41,190	90,993	119,010	349,325
2003				13,607	25,481	162,484	122,259	159,331	483,162
2004				5,005	30,017	107,803	138,893	136,728	418,446
2005				2,766	51,807	130,655	105,655	195,550	486,433
2006		468	6,362	12,665	55,714	48,703	68,813	145,860	338,585
2007				46,405	66,789	72,261	113,237	161,427	460,119
2008				20,847	50,809	119,471	133,107	159,246	483,480
2009				38,670	57,543	70,326	68,857	79,635	315,031
2010				11,076	64,024	172,708	194,826	175,828	618,462
2011	995				45,143	161,503	106,962	180,001	494,604
2012		296	17,869	28,149	52,948	121,068	45,766	238,191	504,287
2013		1,686	2,134	124,156	164,217	97,387	73,826	297,527	760,933
2014	0	0	0	53,545	116,921	103,892	91,764	275,536	641,658
2015	0	0	2	7,792	36,704	106,620	48,172	227,014	426,304
2016	0	0	0	3,510	56,166	62,816	74,702	369,097	566,291

Table 5. Recreational alive releases and dead discards (numbers) of red drum by state, 1981-2016. Dead discards are estimated based on an 8% release mortality rate. (Source: Source: personal communication with MRIP for years prior to 2016, state compliance reports for 2016)

Year	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL	Total	Dead Discards
1981					2,230	417		9,042	11,689	935
1982						2,496	3,377	10,172	16,045	1,284
1983					1,866	6,751	1,417	54,723	64,757	5,181
1984					2,931	0	4,232	47,196	54,359	4,349
1985				1,115		16,688	6,315	193,399	217,517	17,401
1986				7,595		24,018	56,045	100,095	187,753	15,020
1987					18,499	82,595	234,676	377,959	713,729	57,098
1988				3,958	24,874	269,176	177,319	233,988	709,315	56,745
1989			2,918	7,038	7,566	42,824	71,162	172,303	303,811	24,305
1990			0	934	12,452	102,611	156,263	68,667	340,927	27,274
1991			4,432	14,461	121,178	99,968	92,803	645,773	978,615	78,289
1992	301			15,383	60,230	46,269	128,066	284,893	535,142	42,811
1993				50,434	182,301	146,324	140,386	465,656	985,101	78,808
1994				10,684	107,662	324,706	146,039	691,261	1,280,352	102,428
1995				33,560	164,520	362,844	356,618	683,706	1,601,248	128,100
1996				2,424	35,752	176,517	71,983	500,374	787,050	62,964
1997		2,571		109,754	259,570	175,772	22,736	560,559	1,130,962	90,477
1998			2,768	93,660	199,701	84,274	33,882	481,009	895,294	71,624
1999			2,148	232,893	247,146	87,776	18,586	565,981	1,154,530	92,362
2000			1,458	196,541	203,967	94,050	129,190	693,152	1,318,358	105,469
2001				30,365	238,552	221,045	249,892	850,044	1,589,898	127,192
2002		1,388	18,412	801,239	640,857	142,931	168,902	663,879	2,437,608	195,009
2003		731	2,935	43,379	75,561	430,052	272,897	748,765	1,574,320	125,946
2004				33,777	181,252	438,173	141,972	1,006,814	1,801,988	144,159
2005				28,351	378,541	493,595	334,521	1,405,967	2,640,975	211,278
2006		875	12,357	185,859	510,264	539,936	136,306	847,269	2,232,866	178,629
2007				110,566	416,352	436,797	225,985	758,684	1,948,384	155,871
2008		75	217	236,787	658,887	552,217	313,743	889,550	2,651,476	212,118
2009			14,754	178,396	429,776	751,123	167,704	521,659	2,063,412	165,073
2010			2,182	28,580	635,876	786,452	483,650	1,414,115	3,350,855	268,068
2011				61,330	207,697	664,291	213,781	1,051,143	2,198,242	175,859
2012	0	5,873	280,000	2,503,237	1,533,006	543,618	90,237	799,428	5,755,399	460,432
2013	0	407	2,207	220,305	654,030	673,377	198,722	1,541,541	3,290,589	263,247
2014	0	41	273	114,305	383,421	635,152	285,770	1,648,723	3,067,685	245,415
2015	0	0	774	25,835	334,510	571,433	168,338	1,094,215	2,195,105	175,608
2016	0	0	15,414	49,819	825,046	337,852	160,031	1,197,342	2,585,504	206,840