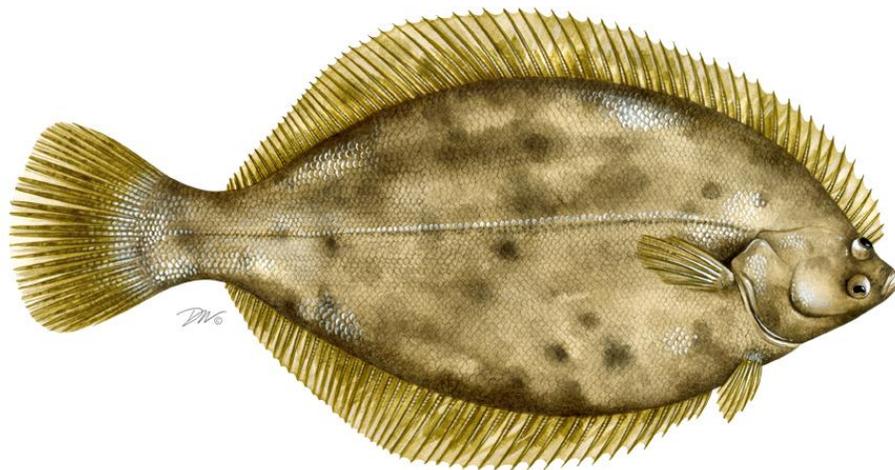


ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR WINTER FLOUNDER
(Pseudopleuronectes americanus)

2018 FISHING YEAR



Prepared by the Plan Review Team

Approved by the Winter Flounder Management Board
April 2020



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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I. Status of Fishery Management Plan

<u>Date of FMP Approval</u>	Original FMP (October 1988)
<u>Amendments</u>	Amendment 1 (November 2005)
<u>Addenda</u>	Addendum I (May 1992) Addendum II (February 1998) Addendum I to Amendment 1 (May 2009) Addendum II to Amendment 1 (October 2012) Addendum III to Amendment 1 (May 2013)
<u>Management Units</u>	Three stocks units: Gulf of Maine (GOM), Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA), and Georges Bank (GBK). Commission participates in management of GOM and SNE/MA stocks.
<u>States with Declared Interest</u>	Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey
<u>Active Boards/Committees</u>	Winter Flounder Management Board, Advisory Panel, Technical Committee, Plan Review Team

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) and the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) manage winter flounder in state and federal waters. The Commission participates in the management of two inshore winter flounder stocks: 1) the Gulf of Maine (GOM) stock, which consists of waters north of Cape Cod; and 2) the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) stock, which consists of waters south of Cape Cod to the Delaware-Maryland border. The decision to consider only inshore stocks of winter flounder was based upon the Commission's focus on fisheries in state waters, and the differences in biological characteristics from the offshore stock in Georges Bank.

Interstate Fishery Management Plan (1988)

The Commission authorized development of the first Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Winter Flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*) in October 1988. The purpose of the plan was to: 1) address management of inshore stocks of winter flounder; and 2) prominently consider habitat and environmental quality as factors affecting the condition of the resource. The original FMP and Addendum I called for reductions in fishing mortality on winter flounder. It allowed states the flexibility to achieve those reductions based on the life history characteristics of the particular stocks inhabiting each region. Implementation of the plan required cooperation between state fishery management agencies, National Marine Fisheries Service, the Council, and the Commission.

Although all states submitted plans that were approved by the Winter Flounder Management Board (Board), results from a 1995 stock assessment concluded that none of the states

achieved a fishing mortality rate corresponding to F_{30} . Subsequent analyses in early January 1997 indicated that fishing mortality on a coastwide basis was slightly higher than the F_{30} target for the SNE/MA stock complex. Fishing mortality in the GOM stock was presumed to be higher than in the SNE/MA stock, and the spawning stock biomass was estimated to be at a low level, indicating that the GOM unit might be in greater need of rebuilding than the SNE/MA unit.

In February 1998, the Board approved Addendum II to the FMP. Addendum II adjusted the implementation schedule for management measures by the participating states and called for plans to reach the target fishing mortality goal for rebuilding (F_{40}).

Amendment 1 (2005)

In May 1999, the Board acknowledged that it was necessary to update the Interstate FMP for Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder through an amendment. The original plan and addenda did not prove successful in rebuilding inshore winter flounder populations. In addition, the FMP did not reflect the goals and objectives of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA), which was established in 1993 after the original FMP was approved. The Board further noted that an upcoming stock assessment would likely provide new information on the status of winter flounder stock complexes. After the assessment was completed in late 2002, the Commission began development of Amendment 1 in February 2003.

Amendment 1 to the Interstate FMP for Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder, approved in November 2005, replaced all previous Commission management plans. It focused on joint management of winter flounder between the Commission and Council, and was designed to rebuild and maintain spawning stock biomass at or near target biomass levels. In addition, Amendment 1 prioritized restoration and maintenance of essential winter flounder habitat.

Amendment I required a minimum size limit of 12 inches for commercial and recreational fisheries for both GOM and SNE/MA stock units. Recreational creel limits were ten (10) fish in the SNE/MA stock area and eight (8) fish in the GOM. There were no required closed recreational seasons in the GOM, while a closed season of 20 days during March and April was required in SNE/MA. The 60-day open season for recreational winter flounder fishing could be split into no more than 2 blocks. States were required to implement a minimum size of 6.5 inches square or diamond mesh for the cod-end in both GOM and SNE/MA inshore waters. Additionally, a 100-pound trip limit was required if smaller mesh was being used in the SNE/MA. This “mesh trigger” was intended for the landing of a small amount of winter flounder as bycatch in small-mesh fisheries.

Addendum I to Amendment 1 (2009)

Addendum I was approved in May 2009, following the 2008 GARM III stock assessment which indicated that the SNE/MA spawning stock biomass was only 9% of the target and the GOM stock was likely to be overfished and experiencing overfishing. For the GOM commercial fishery, Addendum I established a maximum possession limit of 250 pounds per vessel. This limit was estimated to reduce 2006-2007 harvest levels by 31% for state water fishing vessels.

For the GOM recreational fishery, Addendum I required states to implement regulations to reduce fishing mortality by 11% from the average of 2006-2007 levels. This 11% reduction was estimated to reach F_{MSY} . States were allowed to achieve reductions through possession limits, seasons, or a combination of both, and also had the option to submit conservation equivalency proposals to achieve the necessary reductions through alternative management measures, subject to approval by the Board.

For SNE/MA, Addendum I's management measures were designed to reach the lowest F rate possible with minimal economic and social impacts. The Addendum also sought to reduce dead discards and prevent an influx of effort into state waters. Non-federally permitted commercial vessels were allowed to possess a maximum of 50 pounds of winter flounder. This F rate was projected to reduce harvest by 65%, and was intended solely to allow for bycatch. Recreational fishermen were permitted to possess a maximum of two (2) winter flounder from inshore waters of the SNE/MA stock area. This bag limit was established with the expectation that it would reduce harvest by 46%.

Addendum II to Amendment 1 (2012)

In response to updated stock status information and federal action to substantially increase the GOM winter flounder state waters annual catch limit (ACL) subcomponent, the Board initiated Addendum II to Amendment 1 of the Winter Flounder Interstate FMP. This Addendum changed commercial and recreational management measures for the state waters component of the GOM stock only. Specifically, it increased the maximum possession limit for non-federally permitted commercial vessels to 500 pounds. It also removed the 11% reduction in F for the recreational fishery and allowed states the option to open their recreational fishing season year-round.

Addendum III to Amendment 1 (2013)

Addendum III established an annual specification process to set commercial and recreational management measures for the GOM and SNE/MA fisheries. Each year, with advice from the Winter Flounder Technical Committee, the Board can adjust trip limits, size limits, and seasons for the commercial fishery; the Board can also adjust size limits, bag limits, and seasons for the recreational fishery. The Addendum enables the Commission to quickly respond to federal actions and changes in the winter flounder fishery.

II. Status of Stocks

The most recent peer reviewed stock assessment for all three winter flounder stocks was conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in 2017. These operational stock assessments included data through 2016.

Gulf of Maine

The 2017 operational stock assessment determined that GOM winter flounder stock biomass status is unknown and overfishing is not occurring. 2016 biomass (30+ cm) was estimated to be

2,585 metric tons (mt) and the exploitation rate was estimated to be 0.086, below the exploitation threshold of 0.23. The assessment noted that there have been significant declines in commercial and recreational removals since the 1980's; however, this has not resulted in an increase in the survey biomass indices, or an expansion of the age and size structure of the catch. Significant sources of uncertainty include gear catchability and deriving absolute estimates of biomass from trawl surveys. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

The 2017 operational stock assessment concluded that the SNE/MA winter flounder stock is overfished but overfishing is not occurring. Specifically, the 2016 spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated to be 4,360 mt, well below the biomass threshold of 12,343.5 mt. In addition, fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.21 in 2016, below the threshold of $F_{MSY}=0.34$. The assessment noted that there is an overall declining trend in SSB throughout the time series; however, recruitment has increased from a historic low in 2013. Notable sources of uncertainty include the estimate of natural mortality and the length distribution of recreational discards, which are not well represented by the current sampling program. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

III. Status of the Fishery

Stockwide

Across all stocks (GOM, SNE/MA, and GBK), the winter flounder fisheries are a fraction of their historic productivity. Specifically, commercial and recreational landings have declined since the early 1980s (Table 1, Figure 6). Landings are reported for the 2018 calendar year unless otherwise stated.

Commercial landings peaked at 18,279 mt (40.3 million lbs) in 1981, the highest since 1950, but have generally declined throughout the 1990's and 2000's. In 2018, commercial landings were 896.4 mt (2.0 million lbs), a 15.8% decrease from 2017 landings of 1,064.8 mt (2.6 million lbs). A majority of the landings were taken in Massachusetts (Table 2). It is important to note that management action has impacted yearly landings as annual catch limits increased in 2011 and 2012, and a moratorium was in place for the SNE/MA stock between May 2009 and April 2013. (Landings source: NMFS, State Compliance Reports)

The primary commercial gear used to harvest winter flounder in 2018 was the otter trawl, followed by gill nets and dredge. Landings of winter flounder primarily occurred in the months of May – October.

Recreational harvest was 101.3 mt (223,356 lbs) in 2018, a 47.9% decrease from 2017 harvest of 194.7 mt (429,158 lbs) (Table 1). These recent recreational catch values represent a significant decrease from the 17,535.1 mt (38,658,241 lbs) caught in 1981. In 2018, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Jersey comprised the majority of coastwide recreational winter flounder landings, at 80.90%, 9.1%, and 8.7%, respectively. Generally, the

percentage standard error (PSE) values around each state's recreational data are very high (>40) and indicate very imprecise estimates (Landings source: MRIP).

Gulf of Maine

Commercial landings of Gulf of Maine winter flounder have substantially declined since the early 1980s, with recent landings being roughly 7% of harvest levels in the 1980s. From 1964 through the mid-1970s, commercial landings were near 1,000 mt. Productivity peaked at nearly 2,793 mt in 1982, and steadily decreased to a record low of 139 mt in 2010. For the 2018 fishing year (May 1 – April 30), landings in the GOM winter flounder stock were 225.5 mt (does not include discards), of which 133.6 mt were landed in state waters (Source: NMFS). 2018 total discard estimates were 8.4 mt (Source: NMFS).

Recreational landings also peaked in 1982, at 3,024 mt. Landings have generally declined, and in 2018 were 28.9 mt. Recreational releases make up a small portion of catch. (NMFS)

Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

Commercial landings of SNE/MA winter flounder generally declined throughout the time series from 1964 to 2010, with periodic peaks and dips. After reaching a historical peak of 11,977 mt in 1966 and then declining through the 1970s, total U.S. commercial landings again peaked at 11,176 mt in 1981. After 1981, SNE/MA commercial landings declined to 2,159 mt in 1994 and then increased to 4,672 mt in 2001. Commercial landings have generally decreased since the 2001 peak, and were just 134 mt in 2012 (in part due to the zero possession limit in federal waters). Landings in the 2018 fishing year (as opposed to calendar year) were 269.7 mt (does not include discards), of which 14.7 mt were landed in state waters (Source: NMFS). 2018 total discard estimates were 128.3 mt (Source: NMFS).

Recreational landings of SNE/MA winter flounder peaked in 1984 with 5,510 mt and substantially declined to 4.3 mt in 2018. The principal mode of fishing is private/rental boats, with most recreational landings occurring during May and June. (Source: NMFS).

IV. Status of Research and Monitoring

Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Winter Flounder requires the following research and monitoring activities by certain states:

- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York are required to conduct annual surveys of juvenile recruitment to develop an annual juvenile abundance index.
- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey are required to conduct annual trawl surveys to develop an index of spawning stock biomass.

In 2018 (and early 2019), states with interest in the winter flounder FMP conducted the fisheries-independent surveys summarized below.

Maine

Maine DMR conducts spring and fall bottom trawl surveys in cooperation with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Division. The Maine-New Hampshire (MENH) Inshore Trawl Survey collects length, weight, maturity stage, and age samples for winter flounder. In 2018, 2,322 winter flounder were caught with 481 being taken for maturity samples during the spring survey. In the fall survey 4126 winter flounder were caught with none being sampled for maturity. Mean weight per tow increased slightly from 2017 levels for both the spring and fall tows.

New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFG) conducts an annual seine survey of juvenile fish in its estuaries from June through November. Winter flounder encountered in the survey during 2018 ranged in size from 2.3 to 15.8 cm total length with a mean of 6.4 cm total length. The survey produces an index of relative abundance for each species encountered using a geometric mean catch per seine haul. The index value (0.36) for winter flounder decreased from 2017 and is below the average (1.23) since 1997: the index has been highly variable. In addition, NHFG has worked with Maine Department of Marine Resources (MEDMR) since the fall of 2000 to conduct an inshore trawl survey off of Maine and New Hampshire.

Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) has conducted a biannual trawl survey covering MA territorial waters since 1978. 98 and 90 tows were completed during the 2018 spring and fall surveys, respectively. During the 2018 spring survey, winter flounder were present in all tows completed in the Gulf of Maine (GOM), the abundance index was near the time series median, and the biomass index was below the time series median. The biomass and abundance of Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) winter flounder remained well below their time series medians during the 2018 spring trawl survey.

During the 2018 fall survey, winter flounder were present in >90% of tows completed in the GOM, the biomass index was slightly above average, and the abundance index was among the highest values in the time series. The 2018 fall survey indicated that the biomass and abundance indices of SNE/MA winter flounder were near their time series medians.

From June 21 – July 3, 2018, DMF conducted the 43rd Nantucket Sound Estuarine Winter Flounder Young-of-the-Year (YOY) Seine Survey. The survey covers six Nantucket Sound estuaries on the south side of Cape Cod: Great Pond, Waquoit Bay, Cotuit Bay, Lewis Bay, Bass River and Stage Harbor. 49 Stations were sampled in 2018. The 2018 pooled (all estuaries combined) winter flounder YOY index (0.11 YOY / m²) is the lowest observation since 2010.

Rhode Island

Excluding the ichthyoplankton survey, which was discontinued in July of 2008, Rhode Island's Division of Fish & Wildlife conducted five studies to monitor juvenile and adult winter flounder

in its state waters. The seasonal demersal trawl survey samples 42 fixed and random stations in the spring and fall. The spring seasonal trawl survey had a 2018 CPUE of 3.09 winter flounder per tow, the second lowest abundance index in the time series. The fall seasonal trawl survey had a 2018 CPUE of 2.04 winter flounder, remaining below the time series median. The monthly demersal trawl survey samples 13 fixed stations each month. CPUE from this survey in 2018 was 1.84 winter flounder per tow, a value well below the time series median. The Narragansett Bay juvenile finfish seine survey samples 18 stations once a month from June through October. The 2018 CPUE was 1.55 winter flounder per seine haul, the lowest value recorded in the time series (1988-2018). The coastal pond seine survey samples 24 stations in 8 coastal ponds from May through October. The 2018 survey had a CPUE of 4.12 winter flounder per seine haul, the lowest value recorded in the time series (1994-2018). The coastal pond winter flounder spawning stock survey samples 6 stations with fyke nets from January to May in Point Judith and Charlestown ponds. The 2018 survey indices remain at or near the lowest values recorded in the time series. The overall trend in winter flounder abundance for all surveys indicates a declining abundance of this species in Rhode Island waters.

Connecticut

Winter flounder have been monitored through the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey (LISTS) since 1984. Spring (April, May and June) and Fall surveys (September and October) are conducted each year. The 2018 LISTS spring (April-May) index (geometric mean fish/tow) for all ages of winter flounder was 3.59, the second lowest value in the 35 year time series (lowest value = 0.99 in 2017). Similarly, the 2018 spring index for age-4+ winter flounder was 1.28, the third lowest value in the time series. CT DEEP also conducts a fall estuarine seine survey that provides an index of abundance for young-of-year winter flounder. The geometric mean fish/tow in 2018 was 0.42, the second lowest index value in the 31-year time series.

New York

The NYSDEC has been conducting a small mesh trawl survey targeting juvenile finfish since 1987. The weekly survey runs from May through October in Peconic Bay using a small mesh sixteen foot semi-balloon shrimp trawl. A total of 127 randomly chosen stations were sampled during June and July. In 2018, the YoY CPUE of winter flounder from June through July was 0.483, an increase from the lowest-ever recorded YoY CPUE of 0.055 in 2017. It is the highest YoY winter flounder per tow since 2011's catch of 3.816 YoY per tow.

The Department also conducts a seine survey in western Long Island bays, which has been ongoing since 1986, using a 200 foot ¼ inch mesh seine. Sampling is conducted at multiple stations twice a month within each bay from May through October. On average, 40 tows occur in Jamaica Bay each year during this period, and 24 tows each in Manhasset Bay and Little Neck Bay. YoY winter flounder catch per seine, aggregated for all 5 bays, was 2.653 for 2018, the third-lowest CPUE since 1986 (2.602 in 2017 and 1.778 in 2011).

New Jersey

The Bureau of Marine Fisheries has conducted an Ocean Trawl program in nearshore ocean waters since 1988. Winter flounder are most abundant in New Jersey during April, and data

from this cruise have been used to develop an index of abundance for winter flounder in New Jersey waters. Due to unforeseen and severe technical difficulties, the April cruise for 2019 was canceled. Bureau of Marine Fisheries has since corrected the issue and will continue to sample the month of April as the Ocean Trawl program directs. In the absence of 2019's April cruise, January's index data trends and scale are similar and can be used to analyze the winter flounder's characterization of relative abundance in New Jersey.

For each tow, information is collected on total number, total weight, and individual lengths. Stratified geometric mean catch per tow (numbers) in 2019 decreased by 21.1% to 0.56 from 0.96 in 2018. The biomass indices for 2019 resulted in a geometric mean of 0.20 kg/tow, an increase of 26.2% from the 2018 index of 0.16. However, for the sixth year in a row, these indices remained significantly below the time series means of 2.87 fish and 1.18 kilograms per tow.

V. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements and De Minimis

De Minimis

Amendment I allows a state to be granted *de minimis* status if their fishery constitutes less than 1% of the coastwide commercial or recreational landings for the preceding three years for which data are available. A state that qualifies for *de minimis* status based on their commercial landings will qualify for exemptions in the commercial fishery only, and a state that qualifies for *de minimis* based on their recreational landings will qualify for exemptions in their recreational fishery only. States that apply for and are granted *de minimis* status are exempted from biological monitoring/sub-sampling activities for the sector for which *de minimis* has been granted.

Request for De minimis Status

There were no requests for de minimis status in the winter flounder fishery.

State Compliance

All of the states with a declared interest in the management of winter flounder have implemented commercial and recreational regulations that are consistent with ASMFC's Winter Flounder FMP (Tables 3 and 4).

VI. Research and Monitoring Recommendations

The 2017 Operational Stock Assessments noted several data needs that would improve future population estimates.

Gulf of Maine

- Additional studies on federal and state survey gear efficiency and catchability

- Quantifying the degree of herding between the doors and escapement under the footrope and/or above the headrope
- Studies quantifying winter flounder abundance and distribution among habitat types

Southern New England - Mid-Atlantic

- Additional studies on maximum age
- Additional studies on recreational discard lengths
- Investigation of localized structure/genetics of the stock

VII. References

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Commercial Fisheries Statistics Tool.

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Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2019. Northeast Multispecies Fishery Final Year-End Results for Fishing Year 2018.

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https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/reports/Sector_Monitoring/FY18_Multispecies_Catch_Estimates_191028_for_HTML.htm

Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2017. Operational Assessment of 19 Northeast Groundfish Stocks, Updated through 2016, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Woods Hole, Massachusetts. US Department of Commerce, NOAA Fisheries, Northeast Fish Science Center Ref. Doc. 17-17; 259 p.

Available online at <https://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/groundfish/operational-assessments-2017/>

VIII. Figures and Tables

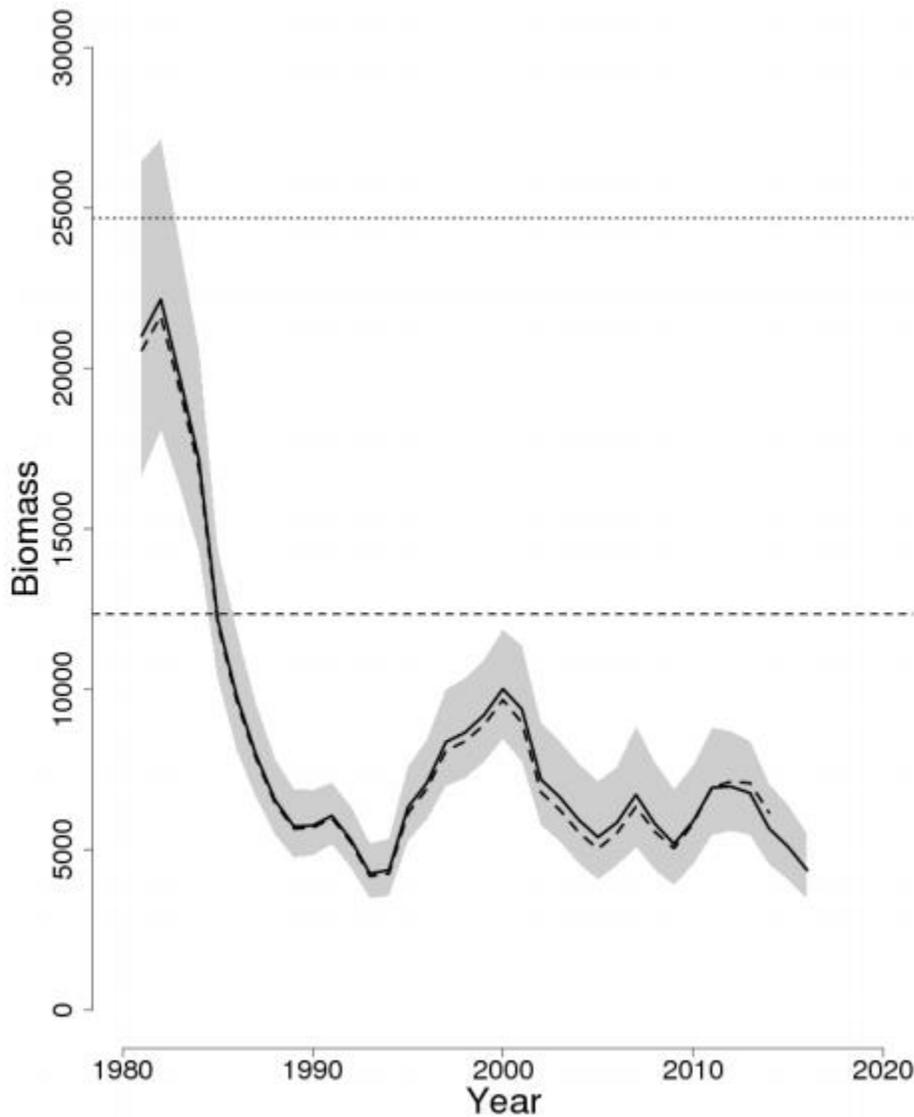


Figure 1. Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic winter flounder spawning stock biomass between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The horizontal dotted line is the SSB-target and the horizontal dashed line is the SSB-threshold based on the 2017 assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

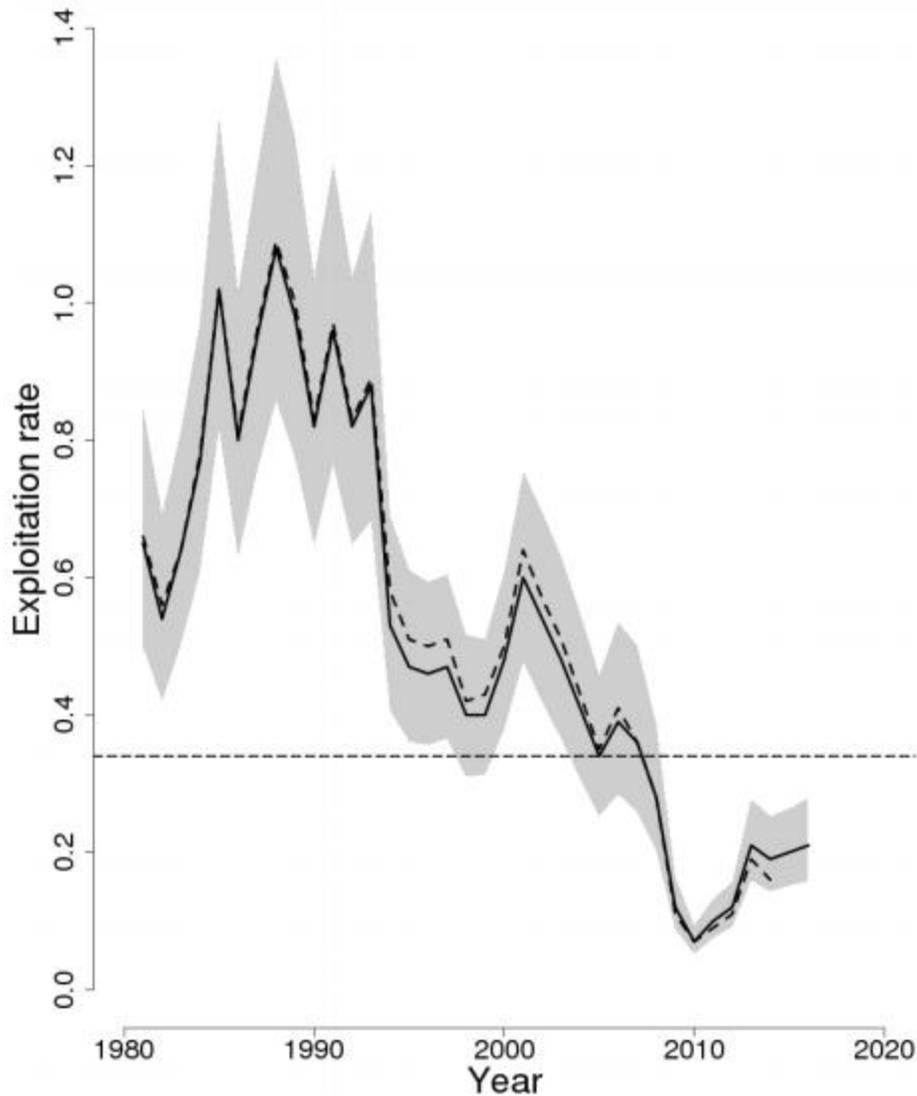


Figure 2. Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder fishing mortality between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The horizontal dashed line is the F-threshold based on the 2017 assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

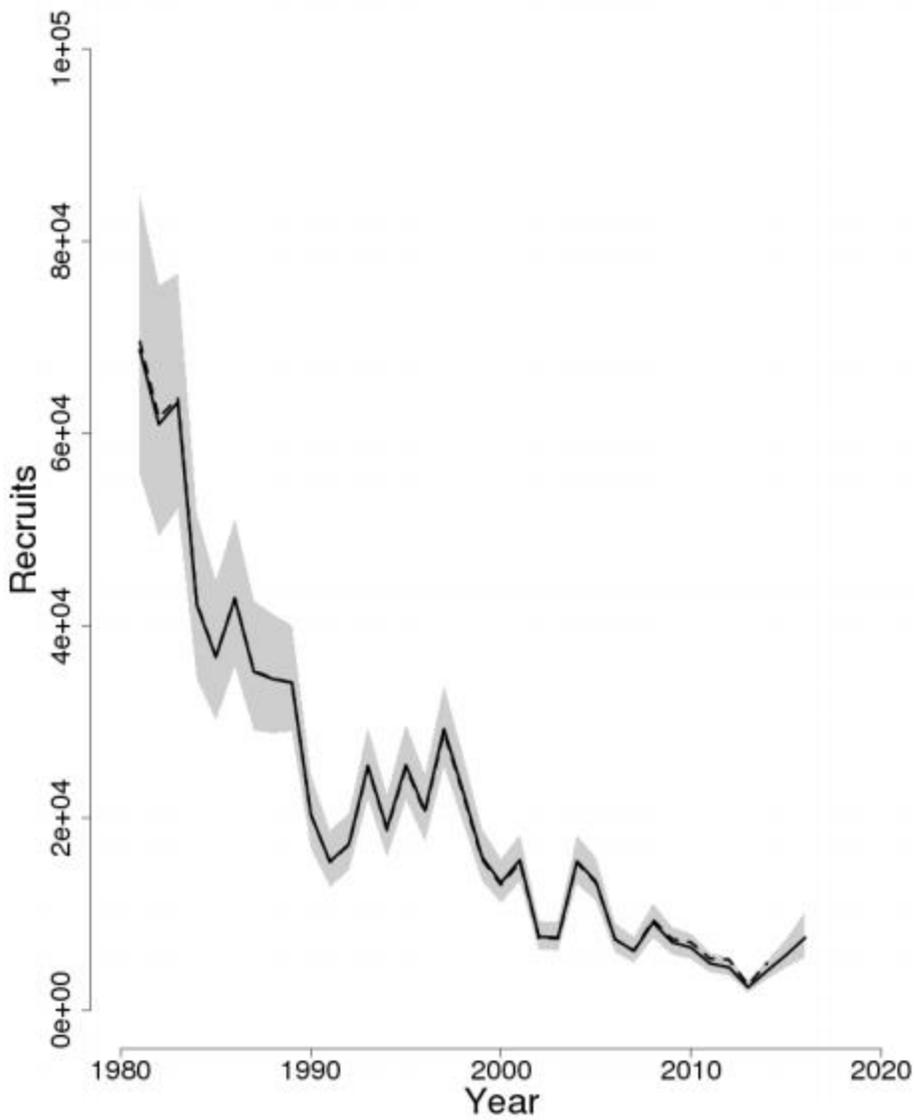


Figure 3. Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic winter flounder trends in recruits between 1981 and 2016. The solid line represents results of the current assessment and the dotted line represents results from the previous assessment. The 90% confidence intervals are shown in grey. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

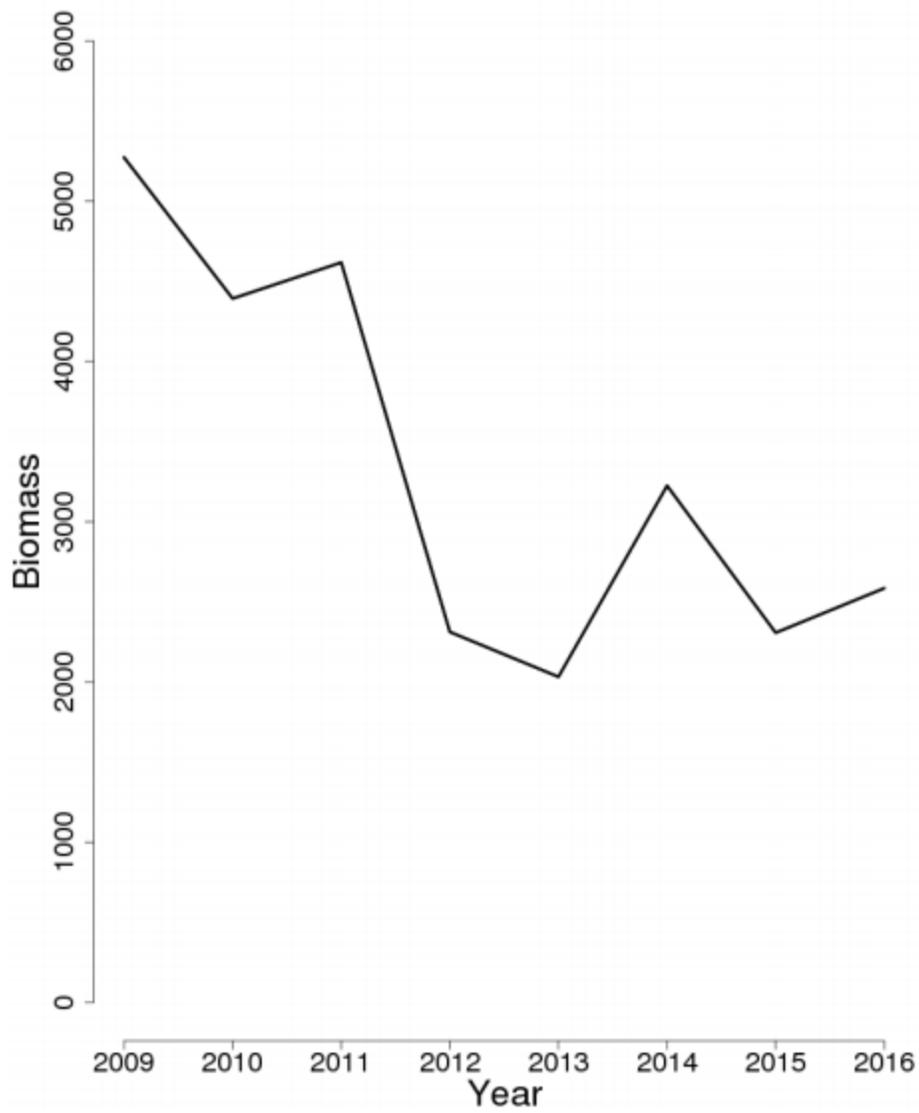


Figure 4. Estimates of exploitable biomass (30+ cm) for Gulf of Maine winter flounder between 2009 and 2016 as estimated from the fall MENH, MDMF, and NEFSC trawl surveys. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

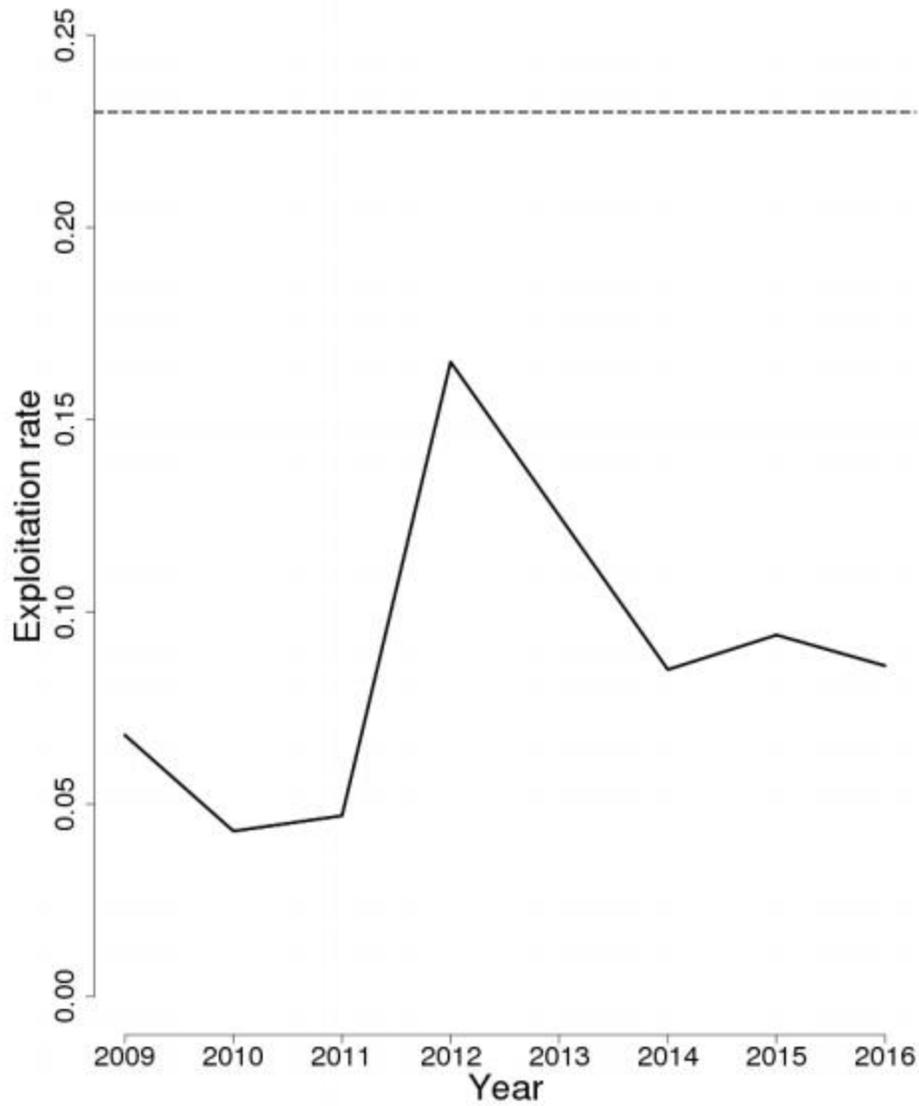


Figure 5. Gulf of Maine winter flounder exploitation rate between 2009 and 2016. The dashed line represents the corresponding F-Threshold from the 2017 assessment. (Source: Groundfish Operational Assessments 2017)

Commercial and Recreational Winter Flounder Landings

Sources: State Compliance Reports, ACCSP, MRIP 2019

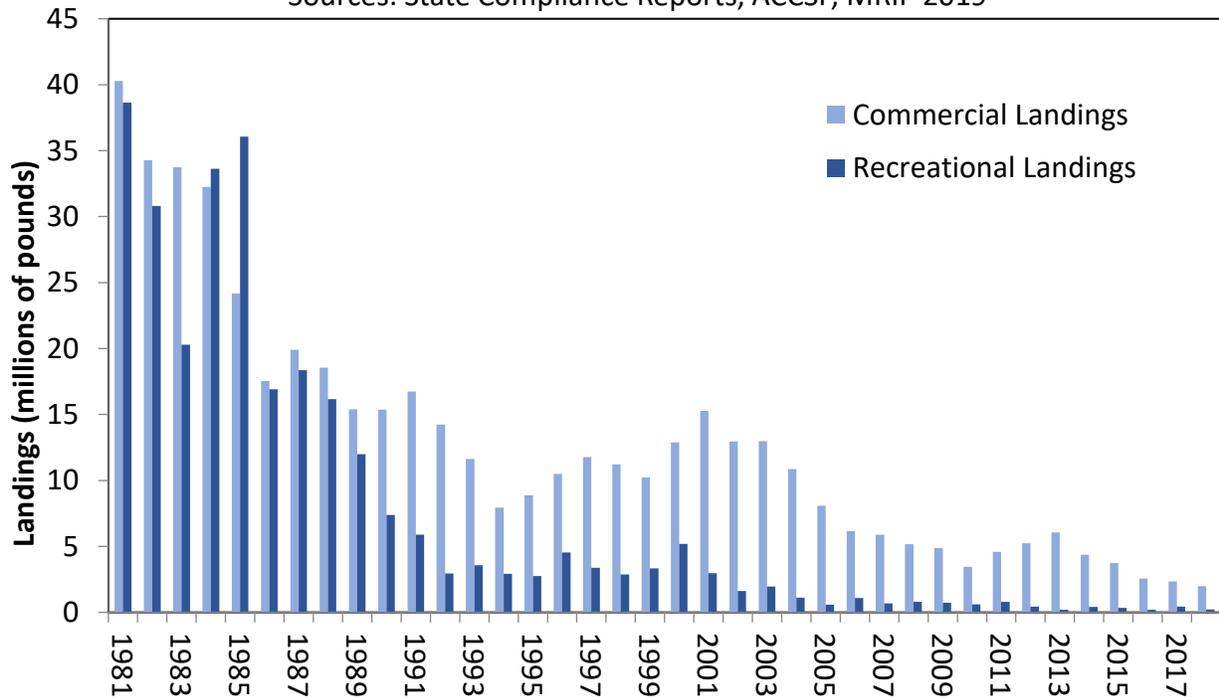


Figure 6. Commercial and recreational winter flounder landings.

Table 1. Coastwide commercial and recreational landings of winter flounder.

Source: ACCSP, MRIP.

Year	Commercial Landings (lbs)	Recreational Landings (lbs)	Total Harvest (lbs)
1981	40,281,800	38,658,241	78,940,041
1982	34,287,800	30,800,885	65,088,685
1983	33,762,300	20,292,783	54,055,083
1984	32,259,500	33,619,053	65,878,553
1985	24,169,500	36,066,629	60,236,129
1986	17,551,600	16,910,804	34,462,404
1987	19,900,600	18,363,389	38,263,989
1988	18,558,400	16,165,790	34,724,190
1989	15,403,400	11,985,476	27,388,876
1990	15,375,295	7,388,964	22,764,259
1991	16,755,114	5,879,856	22,634,970
1992	14,232,802	2,952,665	17,185,467
1993	11,618,074	3,566,233	15,184,307
1994	7,934,950	2,920,574	10,855,524
1995	8,869,168	2,752,810	11,621,978
1996	10,489,726	4,533,523	15,023,249
1997	11,774,996	3,389,886	15,164,882
1998	11,213,153	2,864,283	14,077,436
1999	10,219,341	3,323,926	13,543,267
2000	12,876,176	5,190,357	18,066,533
2001	15,274,384	2,961,871	18,236,255
2002	12,955,503	1,611,635	14,567,138
2003	12,986,593	1,967,619	14,954,212
2004	10,854,383	1,118,235	11,972,618
2005	8,074,650	575,650	8,650,300
2006	6,149,946	1,087,320	7,237,266
2007	5,882,975	677,000	6,559,975
2008	5,158,100	787,910	5,946,010
2009	4,877,566	715,732	5,593,298
2010	3,452,445	600,396	4,052,841
2011	4,593,883	805,448	5,399,331
2012	5,238,701	427,191	5,665,892
2013	6,054,017	191,784	6,245,801
2014	4,375,270	415,101	4,790,371
2015	3,752,672	336,896	4,089,568
2016	2,561,793	203,185	2,764,978
2017	2,347,429	429,158	2,776,587
2018	1,976,173	223,356	2,199,529

Table 2. 2018 Winter flounder commercial landings and recreational harvest (A + B1) by weight (lbs) by state. "C" denotes confidential landings. (Source: State compliance reports, ACCSP, and MRIP)

State	Commercial		Recreational		
	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	PSE	Percent
Maine	C	C	0		0%
New Hampshire	10,580	1.03%	20,275	40.3	9.10%
Massachusetts	740,332	71.95%	180,763	44.6	80.90%
Rhode Island	191,543	18.61%	453	68.6	0.20%
Connecticut	69,071	6.71%	2,279	77.5	0.10%
New York	C	C	48	97.5	<0.1%
New Jersey	C	C	19,537	52.8	8.70%
Total	1,028,983		223,355		

Table 3. Commercial winter flounder regulations.

State	Stock Unit	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Seasonal Closure (dates inclusive)	Recruitment Assessment	SSB Assessment	Min. Mesh Size	<i>De minimis Request</i>
Maine	GOM	12"	500 lbs	May 1 – June 30	N/A	N/A	6.5"	No
New Hampshire	GOM	12"	500 lbs	April 1 – June 30	N/A	N/A	6.5"	No
Massachusetts	GOM	12"	500 lbs	Open all year	N/A	Bottom Trawl Survey (May, Sept)	6.5"	No
	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	Open all year	YOY Seine Survey (June)	Bottom Trawl Survey (May, Sept)	6.5"	No
Rhode Island	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	Open all year	Narragansett Bay Juvenile Finfish Survey	Bottom Trawl Surveys	6.5"	No
Connecticut	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs or 38 fish	March 1 – April 14	YOY Fall Estuarine Seine Survey	Long Island Sound Trawl Survey	6.5"	No
New York	SNE/MA	12"	50 lbs	June 14 – Nov 30 (for all gear besides fyke nets, pound and trap nets)	Small Mesh Trawl Survey, Seine Survey	N/A	6.5"	No
New Jersey	SNE/MA	12"	38 fish	June 1 – Nov 30 (all gear except for fyke nets) Feb 20 – Oct 31 (Fyke net)	N/A	Ocean Trawl Survey	6.5"	No

Table 4. Recreational winter flounder regulations.

State	Stock Unit	Creel Limit	Size Limit	Seasonal Closure (dates inclusive)
Maine	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
New Hampshire	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
Massachusetts	GOM	8	12"	Open all year
	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1- February 28
Rhode Island	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – February 28
Connecticut	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – March 31
New York	SNE/MA	2	12"	May 31 – March 31
New Jersey	SNE/MA	2	12"	January 1 – February 28