Derek and Dan,

I looked over the MS (NOTE: was v0\_3) and had only a few minor comments

1. First sentence of abstract could it just be changed to “Estimating the average time required (i.e., age) for fish in a population to reach a specific mean length (e.g., legal harvest length) is useful for understanding population dynamics and simulating the potential effects of length-based harvest regulations.”

RESPONSE: Yes, that is much better. Done.

1. Is it necessary/correct to always write mean age and mean length in the same sentence? For example, could the following sentence be changed from “The mean age at which a population reaches a specific mean length” to just “The age at which a population reaches a specific mean length”?  I’m a little uncertain here as with typical regression models the independent variable is considered fixed and we talk about the conditional expectation of Y given X (mean length given age), but does that translate to mean length given mean age?  Again I’m not sure about this but I don’t think I’ve encountered a description where it is referred to as mean age.

RESPONSE: I have made the suggested changes. Originally, it felt awkward to not use “mean age” as we ultimately put a confidence interval on it. However, I see that “t\_0”, which is analogous to “t\_r” is simply called the “age where the mean length is zero” and not the “mean age when the mean length is zero.”

1. My only issue/question with the methodology is whether you should point out that you can accomplish the same thing by sticking with the regular VBGF formula and simply subtracting the specified length (call it S) from your observed length at age data.  When you do that t0 becomes tS.  This has the added minor complication of making your L infinity estimate equal to Linf-S but the K and tS parameter will be the same as what you get from your modified as function will the confidence intervals for all parameters (apart from the confidence intervals for Linf being S too small).  Deleting a constant value doesn’t affect the shape of a regression curve so parameter estimates and confidence intervals should always be equal.

RESPONSE: We added a final paragraph to the Conclusion that discusses this, but also recommends using our method as it is more flexible and less ad hoc.

1. Line 37 – “facilitated” rather than expanded?

RESPONSE: Done.

1. Line 42 – since this is a hypothetical example should it be “grows slower” rather than “grew slowly”

RESPONSE: Done.

1. Line 114 – delete non-parametric

RESPONSE: Did not delete “non-parametric.” I was asked, in a previous recent publication with this journal, to include this information for the same “bootstrapping method” with a different growth model. The specific R function used (nlsBoot() from nlstools package) notes that it uses “non-parametric bootstrapping.”

Let me know if there is anything else you need.

Travis