

**2018 REVIEW OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE 2017 BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY
Black Sea Bass (*Centropristis striata*)**



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I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC or Commission) management of black sea bass was initiated as one component of a multi-species fishery management plan (FMP) addressing summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. In 1990, summer flounder was singled out for immediate action under a joint ASMFC and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC or Council) plan. Further action on the scup and black sea bass plan was delayed until 1992 to expedite the summer flounder FMP and subsequent amendments. The joint Black Sea Bass FMP was completed and approved in 1996. The MAFMC approved regulations for black sea bass as Amendment 9 to the Summer Flounder FMP in May 1996.

The management unit of the Black Sea Bass FMP includes all black sea bass in U.S. waters in the western Atlantic Ocean from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina north to the Canadian border. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina have declared an interest in black sea bass; Maine and New Hampshire declared interest in 2014, and in 2017 Maine declined interest in the fishery. The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (or Board) and the MAFMC Demersal Species Committee guide development of the FMP. Technical issues are addressed through the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Technical and Monitoring Committees. The Black Sea Bass Plan Review Team conducts annual reviews and monitors compliance, and the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel provides industry input and advice.

The objectives of the FMP are to reduce fishing mortality to ensure overfishing does not occur, reduce fishing mortality on immature black sea bass to increase spawning stock biomass, improve yield from the fishery, promote compatible regulations among states and between federal and state jurisdictions, promote uniform and effective enforcement, and minimize regulations necessary to achieve the stated objectives. The initial black sea bass FMP (1996) aimed to reduce fishing mortality using a coastwide commercial quota allocated into quarterly periods beginning in 1999, and a recreational harvest limit constrained through the use of minimum size, possession limit, and seasonal closures.

Amendment 12 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP was approved by the Commission in October 1998. The Amendment revised overfishing definitions, identified and described essential fish habitat, and defined the framework adjustment process.

Addendum IV, approved on January 29, 2001, provides that upon the recommendation of the relevant monitoring committee and joint consideration with the Council, the Board will decide state regulations rather than forward a recommendation to NMFS. Addendum IV also made the states responsible for implementing the Board's decisions on regulations.

Starting in 1998, the fishery was subject to lengthy closures and had some significant quota overages in the commercial sector. Fishery closures occurring as a result of exceeded quotas resulted in increased discards of legal sized black sea bass in mixed fisheries for the remainder of the closed period. A significant financial hardship for the fishing industry resulted from a decrease in market demand caused by a fluctuating supply. To address these issues, the Board enacted a series of Emergency Rules in 2001 that established initial possession limits, triggers, and adjusted possession limits. These measures helped reduce the length of fishery closures, but the rapidly changing regulations confused fishermen and added significant administrative burden to the states. To simplify the process for all parties, the Board approved Addendum VI to provide a mechanism for initial possession limits, triggers, and adjusted possession limits to be set during the annual specification setting process without the need for further Emergency Rules.

Amendment 13, approved by ASMFC in May 2002, implemented a federal, annual coastwide commercial quota that is managed in state waters by ASMFC using a state-by-state allocation system. The Amendment was implemented in 2003 and 2004. State-specific commercial shares are listed in Table 1. Amendment 13 also removed the necessity for fishermen who have both a Northeast Region (NER, now referred to as the Greater Atlantic Region) Black Sea Bass permit and a Southeast Region (SER) Snapper Grouper (S/G) permit to relinquish their permits for a six-month period prior to fishing south of Cape Hatteras during a northern closure.

Addendum XII, approved in 2004, continued the use of an annual coastwide commercial quota managed by the ASMFC through a state-by-state allocation system.

Addendum XIII, approved in 2004, modified the FMP so that Total Allowable Landings (TALs) for the summer flounder, scup, and/or black sea bass can be specified for up to three years.

Addendum XIX, approved in 2007, continued the state-by-state black sea bass commercial management measures, without a sunset clause. This addendum also broadened the descriptions of stock status determination criteria contained within the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP to allow for greater flexibility in those definitions, while maintaining objective and measurable status determination criteria for identifying when stocks or stock complexes covered by the FMP are overfished. It establishes acceptable categories of peer-review for stock status determination criteria. When these specific peer-review metrics are met and new or updated information is available, the new or revised stock status determination criteria may be incorporated by the Commission directly into the annual management measures for each species, rather than requiring a modification to the FMP.

Addendum XX, approved in November 2009, set policies to reconcile commercial quota overages to address minor inadvertent quota overages. It streamlined the quota transfers process and established clear policies and administrative protocols to guide the allocation of transfers from states with underages to states with overages. It also allowed for commercial quota transfers to reconcile quota overages after the year's end.

Beginning in 2011, a series of addenda replaced the use of uniform coastwide measures to management the recreational fishery due to concerns about equitable access to the resource. Addendum XXI established state shares of the recreational harvest limit (RHL) for 2011. Addenda XXII, XXIII, XXV, and XXVII implemented an ad hoc regional management approach for 2012-2017, whereby the northern region states of Massachusetts through New Jersey individually crafted state measures aimed at liberalizing or reducing harvest by the same percent to achieve the RHL, while the southern region states of Delaware through North Carolina largely set regulations consistent with the measures set for federal waters.

II. Status of the Stock

The most recent benchmark stock assessment for black sea bass was peer reviewed in December 2016 (SAW-62). The assessment found black sea bass was not overfished nor experiencing overfishing in 2015, the terminal year of the assessment. The assessment used an age-structured assessment model (ASAP) that partitioned the resource into two spatial sub-units separated at approximately Hudson Canyon. This approach was accepted as the best scientific information available for determining stock status for black sea bass; however, it should be noted that the two sub-units were not considered separate stocks by the stock assessment work group, peer review panel, or the MAFMC Scientific and Statistical Committee.

With improved recruitment and declining fishing mortality rates since 2007, spawning stock biomass (SSB) has steadily increased. SSB in 2015 was estimated at 48.9 million lbs (22,176 mt), 2.3 times the SSB target of 21.3 million lbs. Fishing mortality (F) was estimated at 0.27, 25% below the F target ($F_{40\%}$) of 0.36. To account for the fact that black sea bass are protogynous hermaphrodites, changing sex from female to male, the assessment defined SSB as the combined male and female mature biomass. Recruitment at age 1 averaged 24.3 million fish from 1989 to 2015, with peaks in 2000 (1999 cohort) at 37.3 million and at 68.9 million in 2012 (2011 cohort). The large 2011 cohort, which is currently moving through the fishery, was dominant in the northern area and less so in the south. Since 2012, recruitment has been average with a 2014 cohort estimated at 24.9 million fish. The 2017 data update indicated that the 2015 cohort is above average for both the north and south spatial sub-units, but a final recruitment estimate has not yet been generated.

III. Status of the Fishery

The commercial fishery is allocated 49% of the total allowable landings (TAL) for black sea bass. The principle gears used in the fishery are fish pots (or traps), otter trawls, and handlines. After peaking at 21.8 million lbs in 1952, commercial landings markedly decreased in the '60s and have since ranged from 1.17 to 3.85 million lbs since 1981. In 1998, a commercial quota system was incorporated into management and state-by-state shares were introduced in 2003. From 2005-2016 commercial landings remained stable, with a range from 2.87 million lbs in 2005 to 1.17 million lbs in 2009 (Tables 2 and 3). In 2017, commercial landings were approximately 3.85 million lbs, under the coastwide quota of 4.12 million lbs by approximately 6.6% (Tables 2 and

3)¹. According to the 2018 data update from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), commercial dead discards in 2017 were 1.78 million lbs (NEFSC 2018). Commercial catch exceeded the 2017 commercial annual catch limit (ACL) of 5.09 million lbs by 13%.

The recreational fishery is allocated 51% of the TAL for black sea bass. After peaking in 1985 at 12.35 million lbs, recreational harvest averaged 3.75 million lbs annually from 1988 to 1997². Recreational harvest limits were put in place in 1998 and harvest ranged from 1.1 to 3.88 million lbs from 1998 to 2014 (Table 4). From 2012-2016, the recreational harvest limit was exceeded annually – by 142%, 9%, 59%, 67%, and 84% respectively. In 2017, the recreational harvest was 4.16 million lbs³ (3% below the RHL of 4.29 million lbs). Recreational live discards as a proportion of total catch have generally increased over the time series, averaging 37% in the 1980s, and 85% over the last 10 years. According to the NEFSC, total recreational discards in the management unit were 12.86 million fish in 2017. Assuming 15% hook and release mortality, estimated recreational discard losses were projected to be 1.93 million fish, equal to 45% of the total recreational removals (harvest plus dead discards) in 2017.

IV. Status of Research and Monitoring

Commercial landings information is collected by the Vessel Trip Reporting system and dealer reports. States are also required to collect and report landings data. Sea sampling data from the NEFSC observer sampling program are used to estimate discards for the trawl and gill net fisheries, and VTR data is used to estimate discards from pots and hand lines if observer data are insufficient. The NEFSC weigh-out program provides commercial age and length information. Recreational landings and discards were estimated through the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) until it was replaced by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), which has provided recreational landings and discards from 2008 to present. Recreational discards in weight are estimated by the NEFSC. Fishery-dependent surveys are conducted in New York and North Carolina.

Fishery-independent surveys are conducted in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. The Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program has targeted black sea bass since 1997. Recruitment and stock abundance data are also provided by the NEFSC spring, autumn, and winter trawl surveys.

¹ Prior to the start of the 2019 fishing year, NOAA will review final 2017 catch estimates and determine if any overages occurred. NOAA will publish a notice with final 2019 specifications prior to the start of the fishing year that would account for any overages, if applicable. In February 2018, the Council approved a modification to the commercial summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass accountability measures (AMs). This change, which has not yet been implemented, would eliminate the requirement for pound for pound paybacks of ACL overages when the stock is above the target biomass, as black sea bass is currently. If NMFS approves and implements this change, then ACL overages in 2017 may not require a modification to the 2019 ACLs.

² All recreational data included in this report are derived from MRIP data released prior to the July 2, 2018 estimate recalibration based on the new Fishing Effort Survey (FES). New MRIP estimates will be incorporated into an operational assessment in 2019 for management use.

³ In 2016 and 2017, the Technical Committee identified outliers in MRIP estimates through statistical analyses. The Technical Committee has developed methodologies for analyzing and smoothing MRIP estimates to reduce the impact of MRIP outliers when evaluating harvest and developing recreational measures.

V. Status of Assessment Advice

The next benchmark stock assessment is tentatively scheduled for 2020. An operational stock assessment or assessment update may be completed in 2019.

VI. Status of Management Measures and Developing Issues

Draft Addendum XXX was initiated by the Board and Council in May 2017, and approved for public comment at the joint ASMFC and MAFMC meeting in December 2017. Addendum XXX was approved for management use in March 2018. The 2018 state recreational measures were then revised in May 2018 following an appeal to the ISFMP Policy Board of the Addendum by the States of MA, RI, CT and NY (Table 7).

In October 2017, the Board and Council recommended opening a Wave 1 recreational fishery for black sea bass from February 1-28, 2018. Up to 100,000 lbs of black sea bass were allocated to the fishery, to be accounted for by the participating states according to their historic recreational harvest in February.

In December 2017, the Council and Board initiated a joint framework action and addendum to consider adding the following management options to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan:

1. Conservation equivalency for the recreational black sea bass fishery
2. Conservation equivalency rollover for the recreational summer flounder fishery
3. Transit provisions for Block Island Sound for recreational and/or commercial fisheries for all three species
4. Use of slot limits for recreational fisheries for all three species

VII. Black Sea Bass Compliance Criteria

2017 Commercial Fishery Requirements

Minimum size of possession: 11"

Minimum mesh: Nets must possess a minimum of 75 meshes of 4.5" diamond mesh in the codend, or the entire net must have a minimum mesh size of 4.5" throughout; for codends with fewer than 75 meshes, the entire net must have 4.5" diamond mesh or larger throughout

Threshold to trigger minimum mesh requirements: 500 lbs for January-March and 100 lbs for April-December

Maximum roller rig trawl roller diameter: 18"

Pot and trap escape vents: 2 ½" for circular, 2" for square, and 1-3/8 x 5-3/4" for rectangular. Must be 2 vents in the parlor portion of the trap

Pot and trap degradable fastener provisions: a) untreated hemp, jute, or cotton string 3/16" (4.8 mm) or smaller; b) magnesium alloy timed float releases or fasteners; c) ungalvanized, uncoated iron wire of 0.094" (2.4mm) or smaller. The opening covered by a panel affixed with degradable fasteners would be required to be at least 3" x 6".

Commercial quota: 4.12 million lbs

Pot and trap definition: A black sea bass pot or trap is defined as any pot or trap used by a fisherman to catch and retain black sea bass.

2017 Recreational Fishery Requirements

See Table 6.

Recreational harvest limit: 4.29 million lbs

Other Measures

Reporting: States are required to submit an annual compliance report to the Chair of the Black Sea Bass Plan Review Team by June 1st. The report must detail the state's management program for the current year and establish proof of compliance with all mandatory management measures. It should include landings information from the previous year, and the results of any monitoring or research programs.

Black Sea Bass FMP Compliance Schedule*

<u>Commercial</u>	
11" Size Limit	1/1/02
4.5" diamond minimum mesh throughout codend and threshold provisions	1/1/02
Pot and trap escape vents and degradable fasteners	1/1/97
Maximum 18" roller diameter restriction	1/1/97
States must report to NMFS all landings from state waters	1/1/98
<u>Recreational</u>	
Size Limit	1/1/97
Harvest Limit	1/1/98
Ability to implement possession limits and seasonal closures	1/1/98
<u>General</u>	
Annual compliance report	Annually, 6/1

This summary of compliance criteria is intended to serve as a quick reference guide. It in no way alters or supersedes compliance criteria as contained in the Black Sea Bass FMP and any Amendments thereto. Management measures may change annually.

VII. PRT Review

States and jurisdictions required to comply with the provisions of the Black Sea Bass FMP are: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, and North Carolina. All states implemented regulations in compliance with the requirements approved by the Board.

All states appear in compliance with the FMP provisions for fishing year 2017; however, the PRT made the following recommendations:

- *State compliance reports should explicitly list all required regulations and whether they are in compliance with the FMP. Not all 2017 reports included information on the degradable fastener requirement.*
- *Pots/traps should be separated from other types of gear in the commercial harvest by gear tables included in compliance reports.*
- *Compliance reports should be restricted to only the relevant information.*
- *Virginia should note in their compliance report that trawling is prohibited in state waters to make it clear their regulations are in compliance with the FMP.*

VIII. References

NEFSC (Northeast Fisheries Science Center). 2017. 62nd Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (62nd SAW) Assessment Report. US Dept Commer, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 17-03; 822 p. Available from: National Marine Fisheries Service, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026, or online at <http://nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/>.

NEFSC (Northeast Fisheries Science Center). 2018. Black Sea Bass 2017 Catch and Survey Information for Stock North of Cape Hatteras, NC - Report to the Mid-Atlantic Science and Statistical Committee. Available at: <http://www.mafmc.org/ssc-meetings/2018/july-17-18>

Table 1. State by state allocation of annual commercial quota.

State	% Allocation
Maine	0.50%
New Hampshire	0.50%
Massachusetts	13%
Rhode Island	11%
Connecticut	1%
New York	7%
New Jersey	20%
Delaware	5%
Maryland	11%
Virginia	20%
North Carolina	11%

Table 2. Black Sea Bass Commercial Landings by State (2007-2017) in pounds.

Source: State Compliance Reports (June 2018) & ACCSP. 2016-2017.Commercial Landings Summaries (Dealer Reports)-Non-Confidential; generated by J. Kuesel; using ACCSP Data Warehouse, Arlington, VA.

State	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017**
ME											
NH											0
MA	442,136	316,722	148,470	260,181	287,666	248,463	329,223	277,276	347,820	353,602	541,932
RI	356,542	226,925	128,053	241,892	185,709	187,806	237,951	245,268	238,647	294,097	441,899
CT	10,123	15,554	17,854	21,422	20,485	17,677	22,735	27,036	24,591	28,854	43,917
NY	265,940	201,222	123,287	200,463	177,997	153,347	180,947	188,436	151,311	202,336	313,902
NJ	480,112	424,667	204,213	305,294	293,609	310,427	494,075	486,073	468,248	525,615	898,665
DE	63,431	60,700	50,259	76,913	82,436	82,351	104,937	102,279	111,508	95,328	116,066
MD	170,909	159,453	125,643	203,088	182,711	140,861	219,321	235,689	234,707	271,780	364,731
VA	189,875	211,500	164,524	263,563	274,446	391,384	493,153	410,162	422,333	511,608	737,219
NC*	472,931	208,726	176,748	107,996	98,505	61,187	88,242	212,488	241,538	225,405	388,858
Coastwide	2,451,999	2,101,250	1,577,037	1,973,695	1,777,248	1,593,503	2,170,584	2,183,208	2,240,703	2,508,625	3,847,189

* Landings from NC are statewide for 2007 and from north of Cape Hatteras from 2008 forward

**2017 landings are preliminary

Table 3. 2016 Commercial Landings and 2017 Black Sea Bass State by State Quotas (pounds)

State	% Allocation	Final 2016 Landings	2017 ASMFC Initial Quota
Maine	0.005	0	20,602
New Hampshire	0.005	0	20,602
Massachusetts	0.13	353,602	535,652
Rhode Island	0.11	294,097	453,244
Connecticut	0.01	28,854	41,204
New York	0.07	202,336	288,428
New Jersey	0.2	525,615	824,080
Delaware	0.05	95,328	206,020
Maryland	0.11	271,780	453,244
Virginia	0.2	511,608	824,080
North Carolina	0.11	225,405	453,244
Coastwide Total	100%	2,508,625	4,120,400
2016 Coastwide Quota		2,702,867	
Overage		None (Under by 194,242)	

* Landings from North Carolina are from North of Cape Hatteras

Table 4. Black Sea Bass Recreational Harvest Estimates by State (2007-2017) in pounds.

Source: "Personal Communication with National Marine Fisheries Service June 2018"

State	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ME					0	0					
NH				0		4,587	19,227	0	0	0	0
MA	169,852	380,125	621,596	1,052,441	318,383	1,052,049	660,797	1,087,847	718,101	891,440	743,617
RI	65,091	84,536	50,657	246,229	85,903	226,132	144,722	370,531	444,337	564,370	426,405
CT	37,016	90,120	1,025	24,138	13,758	261,164	262,392	586,113	495,675	914,014	825,446
NY	558,204	521,073	878,047	975,624	399,031	545,222	734,729	847,181	1,531,493	2,211,292	770,849
NJ	1,076,467	830,820	768,732	780,115	181,699	993,613	515,176	631,457	428,319	398,481	1,137,317
DE	137,202	27,390	45,496	29,430	46,232	49,966	44,365	30,962	26,893	31,939	75,895
MD	49,046	33,550	40,554	41,507	51,730	42,174	39,170	87,086	78,052	103,995	102,656
VA	60,093	51,421	145,181	24,702	26,747	2,599	33,660	24,433	63,694	70,187	59,988
NC*	21,863	11,489	7,043	16,265	47,310	7,153	9,992	1,180	3,887	1,249	19,448
Coastwide	2,174,834	2,030,524	2,558,331	3,190,451	1,170,793	3,184,659	2,464,230	3,666,790	3,790,451	5,186,967	4,161,621

**Harvest is from north of Hatteras from 2007 to 2017.*

Table 5. Average Weight of Black Sea Bass Recreational Landings by State (2007-2017) in pounds.

Source: "Personal Communication with National Marine Fisheries Service June 2018"

State	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ME											
NH						1.436	1.565				
MA	1.1366	1.5444	1.4430618	1.4989	1.635	2.024	2.266	2.3799	2.0963	2.2727	2.5253
RI	1.4785	1.6163	1.4082342	1.5348	1.711	2.205	1.937	1.7277	1.9019	2.2158	2.2828
CT	1.5702	1.5083	2.2043011	1.5392	1.642	2.356	2.39	1.4762	1.4992	2.0982	2.2146
NY	1.3625	2.0079	1.5499971	1.7959	1.454	1.696	2.081	1.8058	1.747	2.1415	2.1886
NJ	1.4856	1.4334	1.3177367	1.1348	1.224	1.352	1.492	1.3481	1.3803	1.3539	1.3816
DE	1.473	1.2108	1.2182622	1.3996	1.076	1.245	1.214	1.2966	1.1744	1.3215	1.3067
MD	1.2684	1.2694	1.225863	1.1524	1.09	1.275	1.32	1.2719	1.3543	1.3007	1.4793
VA	1.6622	1.3516	1.2645878	0.8312	1.41	0.638	1.581	1.2995	1.6432	2.4275	1.6674
NC	2.567	1.2284	2.1297248	1.4991	1.527	1.952	1.249	1.6954	1.9771	1.4456	1.4889
Coastwide	1.4235	1.5695	1.4169026	1.4459	1.434	1.699	1.922	1.7313	1.7113	2.0394	1.8866

**Landings are from north of Hatteras from 2007 to 2017.*

Table 6. 2017 recreational management measures for black sea bass by state

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Maine	13	10 fish	May 19-September 21; October 18-December 31
New Hampshire	13	10 fish	January 1-December 31
Massachusetts	15	5 fish	May 20-August 29
Rhode Island	15	3 fish	May 25-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-September 21; October 22-December 31
Connecticut (Private & Shore)	15	5 fish	May 1-December 31
CT Authorized Party/Charter Monitoring Program Vessels		8 fish	May 1-December 31
New York	15	3 fish	June 27-August 31
		8 fish	September 1-December 31
		10	November 1-December 31
New Jersey	12.5	10 fish	May 26-June 18
		2 fish	July 1-August 31
		15 fish	October 22-December 31
Delaware	12.5	15 fish	May 15-September 21; October 22-December 31
Maryland	12.5	15 fish	May 15-September 21; October 22-December 31
Virginia	12.5	15 fish	May 15-September 21; October 22-December 31
North Carolina, North of Cape Hatteras (N of 35° 15'N)	12.5	15 fish	May 15-September 21; October 22-December 31
Minimum Federal Measures	12.5	15 fish	May 15-September 21; October 22-December 31

Table 7. 2018 recreational management measures for black sea bass by state

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Maine	13	10 fish	May 19-September 21; October 18- December 31
New Hampshire	13	10 fish	January 1-December 31
Massachusetts	15	5 fish	May 19-September 12
Rhode Island	15	3 fish	June 24- August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
Connecticut (Private & Shore)	15	5 fish	May 19-December 31
CT (Authorized party/charter monitoring program vessels)	15	5 fish	May 19-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
New York	15	3 fish	June 23-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
New Jersey	12.5	10 fish	May 15-June 22
		2 fish	July 1-August 31
		10 fish	October 8-October 31
	13	15 fish	November 1-December 31
Delaware	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31
Maryland	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31
Virginia	12.5	15 fish	February 1-28
	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31
North Carolina, North of Cape Hatteras (N of 35° 15'N)	12.5	15 fish	February 1-28
	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31
Minimum Federal Measures	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31