



New England Fishery Management Council

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Revised MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 14, 2020 (revised 3/18)

TO: Skate Committee

FROM: Skate Plan Development Team

SUBJECT: Skate fishery data in support of Amendment 5 (limited access)

This memo summarizes the outcomes of the tasking in support of developing Amendment 5 to the Skate Fishery Management Plan by the Skate Committee (Committee) during its October 22, 2019 meeting. This memo was developed from October 2019 to March 2020 over a few meetings of the Skate Plan Development Team (PDT). This memo includes the work on all tasks except Task 6 (provide average revenue on the draft qualification tables); that work is in the PDT memo on Amendment 5 progress, dated March 10, 2020.

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1.0 TAKE-HOME POINTS

Data query method. Data query methods have been resolved such that the PDT is confident that the data in this memo do not include any duplicative trips or doubled landings, which was occurring in the draft data provided in October 2019 (Section 4.1). “Apples to apples” comparison is difficult with data in the October memo for several reasons and should be avoided.

Landings by declarations. For the years examined in this memo (FY 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018), most skate wing landings were either from declared Northeast multispecies trips (41-49% of wing landings, Section 4.0) or from declared monkfish trips (36-45% of wing landings) followed by undeclared trips (6-15% of wing landings). Most skate bait landings were from declared Northeast multispecies trips (29-63% of bait landings) and undeclared trips (20-44% of bait landings).

Potential source data errors. In examining the data from undeclared trips closely, the PDT has discovered that there are likely errors in the source data (Section 4.1):

1. There are trips in which the landings disposition code is likely miscoded, i.e., trips in which the landings were recorded as wing but are more likely to be bait (the lower price is more akin to expected bait prices and landed and live weight are equivalent).
2. There are trips in which the wing landed weight is greater than the live weight.

The magnitude of these potential data errors is small relative to the total undeclared landings (e.g., 0.9% in FY 2017; 0.1% in FY 2018 for the undeclared data). Thus, a minor weight of undeclared landings that were likely bait may be accounted for under the wing TALs.

Undeclared wing landings over the incidental limit. In October, the Committee was concerned that the FY 2017 draft data provided was showing that there was a large weight (850,084 lb) of wing landings on undeclared trips over the incidental limit. Correcting the data query method reduced this number to 584,936 lb (Section 5.0; Table 6, yellow highlight). Removing trips by vessels with a Federal fishing permit but no Federal endorsements (potentially fishing with state fishing permits) and potential data errors reduced the number further to 205,936 lb (2.4% of total FY 2017 wing landings, Section 5.1). These landings are inconsistent with regulations and occurred from 128 trips landing 504-5,372 lb each trip by 35 unique permit numbers (three permits account for most of these trips). For FY 2018, landings similarly inconsistent with regulations were 224,459 lb (2.4% of total FY 2018 wing landings).

Wing landings exceeding possession limits. In October, the Committee was concerned about the number of trips in the FY 2017 draft data that appeared to have wing landings exceeding possession limits. Correcting the data query method (duplicate trips and doubled landings removed) has reduced the number of trips and the weight of overage (Section 6.0), though comparison is difficult due, because the data provided in October were not presented by season and excluded some trips. With the query method corrections, total wing landings (all declaration codes) that exceed the seasonal possession limits were under 300,000 lb (65 vessels, 155 trips) in FY2017 and under 200,000 lb (20 vessels, 113 trips) in FY2018. However, this includes potentially miscoded data and skate landings by vessels with a Federal fishing permit but no Federal endorsement. Accounting for all potential data issues (including miscodings) for undeclared landings with a Federal endorsement, the weight in excess of possession limits is about 7,000 and 18,000 lb in FY 2017 and 2018, respectively (Section 5.1).

Gillnet large-mesh exemption. Trips that are using the gillnet large-mesh exemption use the Northeast multispecies declaration (Section 3.2.4).

2.0 INTRODUCTION

At its May 22, 2019 meeting, the Skate Committee considered data provided by the PDT on the number of vessels, pounds landed and revenue for the wing and bait limited access permit qualification criteria drafted by the Skate Advisory Panel (AP) in April 2019. The Committee then tasked the PDT to provide similar fishery data for the qualification criteria revised by the AP in May. The PDT was also tasked to examine the landings of different user groups who routinely participate in the wing and bait fisheries (e.g., trips, declaration codes, dependence on skate).

At its October 22 meeting, the Committee reviewed progress on these tasks, draft data for FY 2017, and further input from the AP. Staff noted challenges with querying declaration data (e.g., created duplicate records, miscoded disposition codes) and that these challenges were only partially resolved. Briefly, the Committee wanted to better understand the fisheries and fishermen using skates before developing limited access criteria. The Committee noted that in the draft FY 2017 data, there were skate wing landings on undeclared trips, and some wing trips where landings were over the 4,100 lb Season 2 wing possession limit. The PDT was tasked with resolving data challenges and providing additional analyses.

Tasking. On October 22, the Committee tasked the PDT with the tasks identified in Table 1. Tasks 1 – 3 are to clarify or correct fishery data provided. Tasks 4-6 are to provide additional data.¹ Task 7 is to clarify how this exemption is administered. The PDT has worked to ensure data queries do not produce duplicate data and have delved into understanding the undeclared trips (esp. wings) and cases where wing landings exceed possession limits. After gaining confidence in data queries for FY 2017, the PDT queried other years (FY 2012, 2015, 2018), as provided below. Data include the number of unique vessels when reporting data by declaration plan code and program code and average revenue/vessel on qualification tables.

Table 1 - Skate Committee tasking, October 22, 2019.

#	Task	Location of Information
1	Identify and resolve the source of duplicate records when presenting plan and program code data (remove trips under incidental limits and state only landings).	See Section 4.0.
2	Explain the large number of undeclared trips (especially for wings).	See Section 5.0.
3	Explain why wing landings exceed possession limits.	See Section 6.0.
4	Provide declaration data by plan code and program code for years other than FY 2017.	See Section 4.0.
5	Include the number of vessels when reporting declaration by plan code and program code.	See Section 4.0.
6	Include average revenue on the qualification tables.	See PDT memo on A5 progress.
7	Identify under which declaration(s) are trips that are using the gillnet large mesh exemption.	See Section 3.2.4.

¹ Data for Task 6 is provided in the PDT memo on the history of Amendment 5 development, dated March 10, 2020. *Skate PDT memo (March 14, 2020 – revised 3/18)* 3

3.0 SKATE REGULATIONS

This section reviews some of the regulations important to understanding the data requested by the Committee, particularly under what scenarios may skate landings from trips without a Federal declaration (“undeclared”) be permissible. This section also addresses Committee Task 7 (Table 1), explaining under which declaration(s) are trips that are using the gillnet large mesh exemption.

The data in Sections 4.0-6.0 of this memo are the Federal skate landings, i.e., landings from vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# >000000) and sold to a Federal dealer. The Federal skate landings are accounted for under the Federal quota monitoring and are the “commercial landings” in the NMFS Northeast skate complex Annual Catch Limit accounting tables (Table 10). However, a portion of these landing likely occurs from fishing in state waters via the scenarios described below. Generally, the Federal skate fishery is defined as landings under a Federal skate permit (i.e., endorsement), though there are some Federal skate landings without a federal skate permit.

3.1 VESSELS WITHOUT FEDERAL FISHING PERMITS

Fishing vessels without a Federal fishing permit can participate in a state skate fishery if they have a state skate fishing permit or license, which allows for skate fishing in the waters and under the rules (e.g., landing limits) of that state. Of these landings, those sold to a state dealer are considered by NMFS to be the state landings in the NMFS Northeast skate complex Annual Catch Limit accounting tables (Table 10, “state-permitted only vessel landings”) included in the skate annual monitoring reports. These landings (no Federal fishing permit and sold to a state dealer) are NOT included in the data in Sections 4.0-6.0 of this memo (and were not included in the data presented at the October 2019 AP and Committee meetings).

Landings by vessels without a Federal fishing permit that are sold to a Federal dealer do not contribute to the Federal quota monitoring (Table 10, they accounted for as “state-permitted only vessel landings”). These landings also are NOT included in the data in Sections 4.0-6.0 of this memo, which focuses on landings from vessels with Federal fishing permits (# >000000).

3.2 VESSELS WITH FEDERAL FISHING PERMITS

Fishing vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# >000000) can participate in the Federal skate fishery and land wing or bait if the vessel also has a Federal skate permit (endorsement), and to land the higher bait possession limit, also needing a Letter of Authorization for bait.

If a vessel has a Federal fishing permit and a Federal skate permit (endorsement), it can fish in state waters (if it also has a state skate permit) or Federal waters, but regardless, the vessel must abide by whichever measures (state or Federal) are more restrictive. In many cases, Federal measures are more restrictive but not always. All landings with a Federal skate permit (endorsement) must be sold to a Federal dealer and are considered to be Federal landings and contribute to the Federal quota monitoring (“commercial landings” in Table 10).

If a vessel has a Federal fishing permit but does not have a Federal skate permit (endorsement), it must fish for skate in state waters under state regulations. If the landings are sold to a Federal dealer, they are considered to be Federal landings and contribute to the Federal quota monitoring (“commercial landings” in Table 10).

3.2.1 Federal Skate Wing Fishery

If a vessel has a Federal skate permit (endorsement), it can participate in the Federal skate fishery and land catch as wings or bait. If fishing for skate wings with the intent to land over the 500 lb incidental limit, the vessel must also have a Federal limited access permit for either the Northeast (NE) multispecies, monkfish or scallop fishery, and must declare into and use a day-at-sea (DAS) of one of those fisheries.

To retain skates in Federal waters without using a NE multispecies, monkfish, or scallop DAS, a vessel can declare out of fishery (DOF). There are two scenarios for declaring DOF. One is for fishing in a skate exemption area in Southern New England or the Mid-Atlantic (i.e., the Southern New England (SNE) Monkfish Trawl Exemption Area, SNE Monkfish, Skate, and Dogfish Gillnet Exemption Area, and Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area). If so, possession and landings of skate or skate parts must be 10%, by weight, of all other species on board, or 500 lb of skate wings (1,135 lb whole weight), whichever is less. The second reason is for transiting the EEZ with skates on board the vessel or landing skates in U.S. ports that were caught while fishing in the NAFO Regulatory Area. If so, a vessel is exempt from skate permit and possession limit restrictions. These vessels may possess, retain, and land barndoor skate but no prohibited skate species (e.g., thorny skate). A Letter of Authorization (LOA) is required for participation in the NAFO Exemption Program.

If planning to land under the 500 lb incidental limit, a vessel with a NE multispecies, monkfish or scallop limited access permit may DOF to avoid using a DAS. If the vessel has another limited access permit (e.g., herring, squid-mackerel-butterfish), it must declare into one of those fisheries. If the vessel does not have a limited access permit, then it does not need to make a declaration (“undeclared”).

Thus, if a vessel has any Federal limited access fishing permit, it must make a Federal declaration or DOF, even if fishing in state waters. There are NO scenarios in which vessels with a Federal skate permit (endorsement) can take an undeclared trip in the wing fishery and land skates over the 500 lb incidental limit. However, if a vessel dropped its Federal skate permit (endorsement), is fishing in state waters only, and does not have any VMS-required permits but sells to a Federal dealer, then the landings do not require a declaration and may account for some of the Federal undeclared landings (Table 7 and Table 8). If a vessel wants to activate a Federal skate permit (endorsement), it can do so for the entire year or for part of a year. Open access permits may be added/dropped as often as desired throughout the fishing year (no limit on activation periods), but there is natural processing time for the permit office in between. This same principle goes for the Bait LOAs, with the added requirement of the minimum seven-day enrollment period each time a vessel "adds" the LOA.

More information on skate wing fishery regulations is at:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/northeast-skate-complex#commercial>.

Recap - possible “undeclared” scenarios. Per regulations, there should be NO undeclared skate wing landings over the incidental possession limit (500 lb) by vessels with a Federal fishing permit that requires VMS. Landings in the skate wing fishery from trips without a Federal declaration (“undeclared”) are permitted by vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# >000000) under these scenarios:

- With a Federal skate permit (endorsement), if planning to land (wing or bait) under the 500 lb incidental limit; the vessel must not have a limited access permit.
- Without a Federal skate permit (endorsement), if fishing in state waters only, and does not have any VMS-required permits but sells to a Federal dealer.

3.2.2 Federal Skate Bait Fishery

If a vessel has a Federal skate endorsement, it can participate in the Federal skate fishery, and land catch as wings or bait. To participate in the formal skate bait fishery and land the maximum possession of skate bait, a vessel needs a skate bait Letter of Authorization (LOA), which allows much higher possession limits than the wing fishery, with additional restrictions to clarify the catch as bait. If the vessel wishes to

maintain the maximum bait possession limit under the LOA, but does not want to fish in an exemption area, it must possess a limited access permit for and declare into either a Northeast multispecies, monkfish or scallop fishery DAS trip.

If the vessel is fishing in a skate exemption area in Southern New England or the Mid-Atlantic and the vessel has a limited access NE multispecies, monkfish or scallop permit, it may declare out of fishery (DOF) to retain skate without using a DAS. If a vessel does not have a NE multispecies, monkfish or scallop permit and is fishing for bait under a LOA, it can only fish in the exemption area and would not make a declaration (undeclared).

As in the wing fishery, if a vessel has a Federal limited access fishing permit that requires VMS, it must make a Federal declaration or declare DOF to fish for bait in the exempted areas. The ONLY scenarios in which a vessel may take an undeclared trip in the Federal bait fishery and land skates over the 1,135 lb incidental limit is if the vessel does not have a limited access permit with DAS, has a LOA, and fishes in the exempted areas or is fishing in state waters but sells to a Federal dealer (which would be considered Federal undeclared bait in Table 7 and Table 8).

There are vessels that fish for bait in the wing fishery. The wing fishery allows landings in both wing weight and whole weight (bait), with a conversion rate of 2.27 wing to whole. The converted total possession of skates for a trip must be within the seasonal trip limit (5,902 lb whole weight in Season 1; 9,307 lb whole weight in Season 2). Under a LOA, a vessel is not allowed to land wings (all skate catch must be landed whole) but a much higher possession limit is allowed for just whole skates (bait).

Bait LOAs can be issued at any time throughout the fishing year through the general LOA application to the permit office, but there is a required minimum seven-day participation period, and generally vessel owners must request their active LOA participation period (when during the fishing year they want to fish under the active LOA). In the application, they need to provide vessel information and Federal permit number (for confirmation of Federal skate endorsement). A LOA must be reapplied for each year (they do not automatically roll over). A vessel can withdraw from the LOA program (or remove the LOA) at any time once the minimum seven-day period has been met and must reapply if they wish to have an active LOA again that year. Issuance and withdrawals are not effective until certificates are received from the permit office.

More information on skate bait fishery regulations is at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/resources-fishing/skate-bait-fishery>.

Recap - possible “undeclared” scenarios. Skate bait landings from trips without a Federal declaration (“undeclared”) are permitted by vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# >000000) under these scenarios:

- If a vessel does not have a NE multispecies, monkfish or scallop permit and is fishing for bait under a LOA, it can only fish in the exemption area.
- Without a Federal skate endorsement, if fishing in state waters only, and does not have any VMS-required permits but sells to a Federal dealer.

3.2.3 Skate Fishery Reporting

Vessels. Vessels with a Federal skate endorsement must report monthly by submitting a Vessel Trip Report (VTR) within 15 days after each month.² The skate fishery does not require use of the Vessel Monitoring System, but vessels with a Federal NE groundfish, scallop or monkfish permit must use VMS, whether or not they are fishing on a DAS or declaring out of fishery to fish in an exempted area. There could be vessels fishing in Federal waters for skate that do not have a VMS unit onboard for reporting trips (IVR call-in reporting, incidental "non-DAS" fishing, etc.). However, if the vessel had any permits requiring a VMS, they would need to have a VMS unit onboard and report during their fishing trips, even

² Under the ongoing eVTR Framework Adjustment, the NEFMC and MAFMC have recommended that all vessels with Federal fishing permits report electronically within 48 hours.

for a skate trip. There is no specific VMS declaration or VMS report that an operator could send to notify NMFS that they were fishing specifically for skate or under a Federal skate endorsement that could be checked. It is not part of the validation process to check the permit when the declarations come in; but GARFO does run a report that checks to see if there are any vessels in NE with current fishing year permits requiring a VMS, that do not have a VMS reporting to NMFS.

Dealers. Federal dealers must report. As the dealer data come in, the data are entered into CFDEERS at the NEFSC and a copy is provided to GARFO. Over time, as the data are corrected and audited, these data become the official landings data, housed in the Commercial Fisheries Database (CFDBS) located at the NEFSC. When there is no dealer report, VTR data are used, which should only be the case for the bait landings if the bait is transferred at sea or home consumption. If fishing with a Federal fishing permit, vessels must sell to a Federal dealer.

Skate dealers report the weight that was landed (i.e., sold to the dealer), so they do not convert between live pounds and landed pounds. The onus is on the vessel to calculate weight conversions of what they are landing and provide it to the dealers (usually converting up to whole if they are landing skate parts; wings, racks, etc.).

If the dealer has any GARFO dealer permit, the dealer will report through the Federal view of SAFIS regardless of what species they are reporting. A Federal dealer is not restricted on who they may buy from, but vessels are restricted on where they can fish, and who they may sell to, based on their suite of permits. A Federally permitted vessel must sell its catch of permitted species to a Federally permitted dealer. However, a state vessel can sell its catch to anyone. SAFIS presently identifies vessels by their state registrations or Coast Guard document numbers and displays their Federal permit numbers, but SAFIS does not capture in all cases where a species was captured or whether a select vessel has the appropriate permit for the species in question.

3.2.4 Extra-Large Mesh Gillnet Exemption

The Skate Committee tasked the Skate PDT with clarifying which declarations(s) are trips using the gillnet large mesh exemption (Task 7, Table 1). Trips using the Extra-large Mesh Gillnet Exemption are within the Northeast multispecies sector declaration rows (“NMS-SEC”) in the tables of this memo.

The Extra-large Mesh Gillnet Exemption is a specific sector exemption that is separate and distinct from the Monkfish SNE Gillnet Exemption Area. The exemption removes at-sea monitoring (ASM) requirements when fishing with gillnets with >10” mesh in the SNE/MA and Inshore GB Broad Stock Areas. Any trip using this exemption would be declared as a NE Multispecies Trip, and not use a monkfish DAS. These trips by NE Multispecies sector vessels are not identified by VMS declaration, but rather by their "Multispecies Trip Start Hail." There is no LOA required to use this exemption. Trips using this exemption would be binned as a multispecies trip, except if they were to "split" the trip, where a Monkfish DAS could be used on the second half of the trip, but the catches would essentially be considered as if on a separate trip with non-large mesh gear. See the [Framework 55 Final Rule](#) (p. 26,420 middle column) for more information.

4.0 SKATE LANDINGS BY DECLARATION AND PROGRAM CODE

This section addresses Committee Tasks 1, 4 and 5 (Table 1), providing corrected data for FY 2017, declaration and program code data for other years, and the number of vessels when reporting data by declaration and program codes. For FY2017, the data replace the draft data provided in October 2019.

4.1 NOTES ABOUT THESE DATA

Data source. The data for this memo were provided by the Analysis and Program Support Division (APSD) office at GARFO. The Commercial Fisheries Database at the NEFSC includes disposition data (wing/bait) but does not have declaration and program code data. These codes are in the APSD database. Thus, these two databases had to be merged to produce the data for this memo.

Fishing Years examined. The Skate Committee tasked the PDT to provide data for years in addition to FY 2017, but it did not specify the years. The PDT selected four fishing years: 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2018 for the following reasons. Looking at 2012 provides a view of how the fishery performed a few years after the implementation of Amendment 3 (in 2010). In the last few framework adjustments, data were provided for FY 2015, so it is provided here for comparison. Data for FY 2017 were provided to update and correct the draft data in the October 2019 memos. Finally, FY 2018 data provide a look at the most recent, complete fishing year, as well as a year in which possession limit reductions were not triggered. The PDT can provide data for other years as requested.

Data query methods. The draft FY 2017 data provided in October 2019 purposely excluded 480 trips (4% of all trips), as the data query method used at the time was producing duplicate records for these trips. Also, it was later discovered that the queries were doubling the landings on some trips. Data query methods have been resolved such that the PDT is confident that the data in this memo do not include any duplicative trips or doubled landings.

Potential data errors. The PDT has discovered that there are likely errors in the source data. In examining the data from undeclared trips, the PDT found:

1. Undeclared trips in which the landings disposition code is likely miscoded, i.e., trips that indicate that the landings were wing are more likely to be bait (the lower price is more akin to expected bait prices and landed and live weight are equivalent).
2. Undeclared trips in which the wing landed weight is greater than the live weight.

The magnitude of these potential data errors is small relative to the total landings (e.g., 0.9% in FY 2017; 0.1% in FY 2018). Thus, a minor weight of undeclared landings that were likely bait may be accounted for under the wing TALs. The PDT did not examine landings on declared trips for potential data errors but has forwarded the potential errors in the undeclared data to the APSD office at GARFO.

Additionally, there are landings with no disposition code in the data (Table 7 and Table 8, “Missing column”). It cannot be determined if these landings were wing, bait or other. FY 2018 had 1.1M lb of landings without a disposition code, more than twice that amount in FY 2017 (0.4M). The landings without a disposition code is progressively lower in FY2015 and FY2012, most likely due to the data corrections that usually occur over time.

Federal fishing permit. The data in Sections 4.0-6.0, include vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# > 000000) at the time of landing, including those with and without a Federal endorsement.

These data do not include landings by vessels without a Federal fishing permit (# = 000000) at the time of landing. The data provided to the Skate Committee in October 2019 also excluded these landings.

Other. Plan and program code acronym descriptions are in Section 8.2. Data including less than three vessels and/or dealers are considered confidential and are merged with other data or not shown. Only disposition codes 1 (wing) and 8 (bait) are included in the data tables; other disposition codes and missing codes generally account for a minor percentage of total landings and would be likely considered part of the non-bait (i.e., wing) fishery.

4.2 FY 2012

Table 2 – FY 2012 skate landings by declaration (plan) code and program code.

	Live		Landed		Trips		Vessels	
WING landings by declaration (plan) code								
SES & Confidential	51,346	0%	26,837	0%	283	2%	27	3%
DOF	804,573	4%	382,167	4%	2,037	15%	122	14%
Undeclared	3,213,897	15%	1,626,777	16%	3,243	24%	263	31%
NMS	8,910,114	41%	3,964,467	39%	4,347	33%	240	28%
MNK	8,635,786	40%	4,073,969	40%	3,398	26%	199	23%
TOTAL	21,615,716	100%	10,074,218	100%	13,308	100%	516^a	100%
WING landings by program code								
SES-SCG	49,251	0%	25,914	0%	270	2%	24	2%
SES-other & Conf.	11,601	0%	5,111	0%	18	2%	7	3%
DOF- TST	885	0%	390	0%	5	0%	4	0%
DOF-CML	402,120	2%	192,037	2%	949	7%	86	7%
DOF-DOF	400,960	2%	189,472	2%	1,079	8%	97	8%
Undeclared	3,213,897	15%	1,626,777	16%	3,243	24%	263	22%
NMS-SEC	1,836,474	8%	824,566	8%	1,690	13%	169	14%
NMS-MUL	4,995,297	23%	2,209,153	22%	1,855	14%	86	7%
NMS-COM	87,364	0%	53,327	1%	95	1%	26	2%
NMS-USC	429,865	2%	189,648	2%	122	1%	28	2%
NMS-MNK	1,561,113	7%	687,773	7%	585	4%	72	6%
MNK-NAM	27,856	0%	12,271	0%	22	0%	8	1%
MNK-NAS	62,025	0%	27,334	0%	40	0%	22	2%
MNK-SAC	74,381	0%	33,159	0%	40	0%	10	1%
MNK-NMA	115,346	1%	50,895	1%	91	1%	35	3%
MNK-RSA	735,882	3%	328,625	3%	273	2%	26	2%
MNK-SAS	896,018	4%	394,730	4%	357	3%	60	5%
MNK-SAM	1,657,051	8%	853,616	8%	847	6%	77	6%
MNK-SMA	5,058,329	23%	2,369,419	24%	1,727	13%	121	10%
BAIT landings by declaration (plan) code								
MNK & Conf.	78,922	1%	71,189	1%	151	11%	6	12%
DOF	2,698,768	26%	2,698,730	26%	272	20%	8	16%
NMS	3,067,955	29%	3,067,955	29%	238	17%	6	12%
Undeclared	4,641,105	44%	4,640,914	44%	709	52%	29	59%
TOTAL	10,486,750	100%	10,478,787	100%	1,370	100%	37^a	100%
BAIT landings by program code								
MNK-SAM	4,100	0%	4,100	0%	17	1%	3	5%
MNK-SMA	31,150	0%	30,833	0%	87	6%	5	8%
Confidential	46,402	0%	38,986	0%	48	4%	15	10%
DOF-DOF	2,451,175	23%	2,451,175	23%	250	18%	8	13%
DOF-CML	247,593	2%	247,555	2%	22	2%	3	5%
NMS-SEC	1,990,475	19%	1,990,475	19%	172	13%	5	8%
NMS-MUL	1,074,750	10%	1,074,750	10%	65		3	5%
Undeclared	4,641,105	44%	4,640,914	44%	709	52%	29	48%

^a The number of unique vessels, not the column total.

4.3 FY 2015

Table 3 - FY 2015 skate landings by declaration (plan) code and program code.

	Live		Landed		Trips		Vessels	
WING landings by declaration (plan) code								
SES & Conf.	97,580	0%	45,059	0%	307	3%	29	4%
SMB	176,046	1%	77,777	1%	405	4%	52	7%
DOF	884,590	4%	466,919	5%	1,689	15%	133	18%
Undeclared	2,031,101	10%	991,541	10%	2,427	22%	220	29%
NMS	8,208,721	40%	3,654,571	39%	3,251	30%	177	23%
MNK	9,141,924	45%	4,219,014	45%	2,844	26%	143	19%
TOTAL	20,539,962	100%	9,454,881	100%	10,923	100%	421^a	100%
WING landings by program code								
Confidential	7,354	0%	3,240	0%	15	0%	8	1%
SES-SCA	979	0%	436	0%	3	0%	3	0%
SES-SCG	94,486	0%	43,691	0%	301	3%	26	3%
SMB-SHM	10,076	0%	4,531	0%	33	0%	9	1%
SMB-SQL	90,642	0%	39,983	0%	191	2%	32	4%
SMB-SQM	74,719	0%	32,995	0%	177	2%	26	3%
DOF-CML	847,179	4%	447,731	5%	1,641	15%	122	16%
DOF-DOF	8,942	0%	3,940	0%	7	0%	3	0%
DOF-SCI	1,011	0%	445	0%	11	0%	5	1%
DOF-TSP	5,596	0%	2,465	0%	9	0%	3	0%
DOF-TST	20,791	0%	11,866	0%	19	0%	13	2%
Undeclared	2,031,101	10%	991,541	10%	2,427	22%	220	29%
NMS-COM	268,673	1%	126,798	1%	367	3%	40	5%
NMS-SEC	7,938,577	39%	3,527,125	37%	2,879	26%	143	19%
MNK-NAS	118,197	1%	59,819	1%	123	1%	26	3%
MNK-SAC	138,851	1%	61,839	1%	38	0%	6	1%
MNK-SAS	2,474,854	12%	1,114,489	12%	558	5%	46	6%
MNK-SAM	6,407,934	31%	2,981,947	32%	2,124	19%	90	12%
BAIT landings by declaration (plan) code								
MNK	62,825	1%	62,825	1%	98	7%	5	13%
DOF	1,253,675	12%	1,253,675	12%	258	19%	13	33%
Undeclared	2,668,214	25%	2,668,214	25%	538	39%	28	70%
NMS	6,669,059	63%	6,667,572	63%	493	36%	11	28%
TOTAL	10,653,773	100%	10,652,286	100%	1,387	100%	40^a	100%
BAIT landings by program code								
Confidential	33,275	3%	33,275	5%	47	3%	3	8%
MNK-SAM	35,850	0%	35,850	0%	56	4%	4	10%
DOF-CML	1,247,375	12%	1,247,375	12%	253	18%	12	30%
Undeclared	2,668,214	25%	2,668,214	25%	538	39%	28	70%
NMS-COM	3,307,301	31%	3,307,301	31%	147	11%	4	10%
NMS-SEC	3,361,758	32%	3,360,271	32%	346	25%	7	18%
^a The number of unique vessels, not the column total.								

4.4 FY 2017

Table 4 - FY 2017 skate landings by declaration (plan) code and program code.

	Live lb		Landed lb		Trips (#)		Vessels (#)	
WING landings by declaration (plan) code								
SES & Conf.	45,916	0%	32,388	0%	119	1%	19	2%
SMB	422,523	2%	188,182	2%	846	8%	81	11%
DOF	923,102	5%	440,729	5%	1,743	17%	138	20%
Undeclared	1,293,616	7%	746,234	9%	2,193	21%	200	28%
MNK	6,844,455	36%	3,158,915	36%	2,365	23%	114	16%
NMS	9,233,923	49%	4,101,178	47%	3,185	30%	154	22%
TOTAL	18,763,535	100%	8,667,626	100%	10,451	100%	406	100%
WING landings by program code								
Confidential	24,451	0%	19,969	0%	26	0%	11	2%
SES-SCG	28,378	0%	17,227	0%	107	1%	14	2%
SMB-LHM	13,674	0%	6,023	0%	20	0%	6	1%
SMB-SQM	23,147	0%	10,198	0%	55	1%	18	2%
SMB-SLM	177,294	1%	78,833	1%	331	3%	48	6%
SMB-SQL	204,845	1%	91,558	1%	434	4%	57	7%
DOF-SCI	3,532	0%	1,554	0%	29	0%	7	1%
DOF-CML	912,220	5%	435,937	5%	1,706	16%	129	16%
Undeclared	1,293,616	7%	746,234	9%	2,193	21%	200	25%
MNK-NAM	7,711	0%	3,397	0%	19	0%	6	1%
MNK-SAC	50,097	0%	22,641	0%	20	0%	6	1%
MNK-NAS	237,189	1%	104,501	1%	159	2%	22	3%
MNK-SAS	1,247,291	7%	615,822	7%	374	4%	25	3%
MNK-SAM	5,302,167	28%	2,412,554	28%	1,793	17%	75	10%
NMS-COM	136,609	1%	61,130	1%	189	2%	26	3%
NMS-SEC	9,097,314	48%	4,040,048	47%	2,996	29%	131	17%
BAIT landings by declaration (plan) code								
MNK & Conf.	569,100	5%	569,100	5%	137	7%	11	10%
DOF	2,817,315	24%	2,817,315	24%	406	22%	26	27%
Undeclared	3,192,916	27%	3,188,453	27%	693	37%	39	41%
NMS	5,341,937	45%	5,310,441	45%	642	34%	19	20%
TOTAL	11,921,268	100%	11,885,309	100%	1,878	100%	66^a	100%
BAIT landings by program code								
Confidential	188,225	1%	188,225	1	54	3%	9	9%
MNK-SAM	393,375	3	393,375	3	85	5%	6	6%
DOF-CML	2,804,815	24	2,804,815	24	404	22%	26	26%
Undeclared	3,192,916	27	3,188,453	27	693	37%	39	39%
NMS-COM	1,658,387	14	1,626,891	14	128	7%	5	5%
NMS-SEC	3,683,550	31	3,683,550	31	514	27%	15	15%

^a The number of unique vessels, not the column total.

4.5 FY 2018

Table 5 – FY 2018 skate landings by declaration (plan) and program code.

	Live lb		Landed lb		Trips (#)		Vessels (#)	
WING landings by declaration (plan) code								
SES	6,832	0%	3,009	0%	54	1%	14	2%
SMB	371,279	2%	168,815	2%	722	7%	75	12%
DOF	892,153	4%	415,506	4%	1,791	17%	115	19%
Undeclared	1,167,012	6%	550,717	6%	1,952	19%	176	28%
MNK	8,027,842	39%	3,781,546	40%	2,582	25%	100	16%
NMS	10,128,637	49%	4,496,04	48%	3,208	31%	139	22%
TOTAL	20,593,755	100%	9,415,633	100%	10,309	100%	370^a	100%
WING landings by program code								
Confidential	3,749	0%	1,652	0%	9	0%	6	1%
SES-SCG	6,619	0%	2,915	0%	52	1%	12	2%
SMB-LHM	2,876	0%	1,267	0%	6	0%	3	0%
SMB-SCM	4,962	0%	2,185	0%	14	0%	5	1%
SMB-SLM	172,105	1%	77,837	1%	316	3%	42	6%
SMB-SQL	187,800	1%	85,968	1%	379	4%	47	7%
DOF-SCI	1,497	0%	659	0%	18	0%	4	1%
DOF-TST	4,041	0%	1,780	0%	5	0%	5	1%
DOF-CML	886,615	4%	413,067	4%	1,768	17%	111	16%
Undeclared	1,167,012	6%	550,717	6%	1,952	19%	176	26%
MNK-NAC	9,434	0%	6,722	0%	9	0%	3	0%
MNK-NAM	83,629	0%	36,841	0%	23	0%	7	1%
MNK-NAS	105,918	1%	46,660	0%	88	1%	14	2%
MNK-SAC	166,433	1%	83,605	1%	68	1%	8	1%
MNK-SAS	1,990,304	10%	971,215	10%	416	4%	23	3%
MNK-SAM	5,672,124	28%	2,636,503	28%	1,978	19%	72	11%
NMS-COM	195,830	1%	93,787	1%	202	2%	28	4%
NMS-SEC	9,932,807	48%	4,402,253	47%	3,006	29%	111	16%
BAIT landings by declaration (plan) code								
SMB	36,270	0%	36,270	0%	14	1%	7	7%
MNK	411,532	4%	411,532	4%	126	6%	9	8%
Undeclared	2,014,406	20%	2,012,566	20%	719	36%	35	33%
DOF	2,747,799	28%	2,747,799	28%	365	18%	22	21%
NMS	4,672,338	47%	4,672,133	47%	789	39%	34	32%
TOTAL	9,882,345	100%	9,880,300	100%	2,013	100%	74^a	100%
BAIT landings by program code								
Confidential	73,400	0%	73,400	0%	13	0%	6	0%
SMB-SQL	22,470	0%	22,470	0%	6	0%	4	4%
MNK-SAC	158,657	2%	158,657	2%	31	2%	3	3%
MNK-SAM	193,275	2%	193,275	2%	90	4%	5	5%
Undeclared	2,014,406	20%	2,012,566	20%	719	36%	35	32%
DOF-CML	2,747,799	28%	2,747,799	28%	365	18%	22	20%
NMS-COM	1,172,726	12%	1,172,534	12%	114	6%	11	10%
NMS-SEC	3,499,612	35%	3,499,600	35%	675	34%	23	21%

^a The number of unique vessels, not the column total.

5.0 UNDECLARED LANDINGS

This section addresses Committee Task 2 (Table 1), to explain the large number of undeclared trips (especially for wings). The data in the PDT memos considered at the October 2019 Committee meeting were known to be draft and contained errors due to data query methods. As a result of carefully examining the query methods, and through close examination of the data to explore potential explanations, the PDT now feels confident that the data provided here do not contain errors due to data query methods.

5.1 UNDECLARED WING LANDINGS

In October, the Committee was concerned that the FY 2017 draft data provided was showing that there was 850,084 lb of wing landings on undeclared wing trips over the incidental limit by vessels with a Federal fishing permit (# >000000). Data query improvements have corrected this number, reducing it to 584,936 lb (Table 6, **yellow highlight**). In FY 2017, of the 746,234 lb of wing landings that were from undeclared trips, just 161,298 lb from about 2,200 trips were skate landings under the 500 lb incidental limit.

Table 6 - Undeclared skate landings (pounds) by vessels with a Federal fishing permit.

FY	Wing TAL	Undeclared Wing Landings			Bait TAL	Undeclared Bait Landings		
		Total	Under Incidental Limit (≤500 lb)	Over Incidental Limit (>500 lb)		Total	Under Incidental Limit (≤1,135 lb)	Over Incidental Limit (> 1,135 lb)
2012	31.6 M	1,626,777	214,768	1,412,009	15.9 M	4,640,914	156,054	4,484,860
2015	24.0 M	991,541	215,900	775,641	12.1 M	2,668,214	153,123	2,515,091
2017	18.5 M	746,234	161,298	584,936	9.3 M	3,188,453	131,550	3,056,903
2018	19.3 M	550,717	141,773	408,944	9.7 M	2,012,566	244,289	1,768,277

Note: These are data with Federal fishing permit (# >000000).

For each of the fishing years included in this memo, most undeclared skate landings were over the incidental possession limit (Table 6). However, the poundage steadily declined from 1.4M in FY 2012 to 0.4M in FY 2018. The PDT assumes this may, in part, be attributed to increased understanding by fishermen of the regulations about declarations.

Per regulations, there should be NO undeclared skate wing landings over the incidental possession limit (500 lb) by vessels with a Federal endorsement that requires VMS. The PDT queried the Federal fishing permit data further to investigate the undeclared skate wing landings over the incidental limit. For each fishing year, there were skate landings on trips with and without activated Federal endorsements (“Endorsement” and “No Endorsement” in Table 7 and Table 8, respectively). Consistent with the decline between FY 2012 and FY 2018 in the total undeclared wing landings over the incidental limit, the subsets with Federal endorsements and those without have also declined.

Table 7 - Skate landings total and over incidental limit by disposition code, FY 2012 and FY 2015.

	Fishing Permit	Bait	Wing	Missing ^a	Total	Bait	Wing	Total
FY 2012		Total				Total Over Incidental Limit		
	No Endorsement	189,443	826,479	0	1,015,922	121,690	786,766	908,456
	Endorsement	10,289,345	9,247,739	37,522	19,574,605	10,113,681	8,165,991	18,279,672
	Total	10,478,788	10,074,218	37,522	20,590,527	10,235,371	8,952,758	19,188,128
		Undeclared				Undeclared		
	No Endorsement	188,468	804,857	0	993,325	121,690	768,689	890,379
	Endorsement	4,452,446	821,920	8,333	5,282,699	4,363,170	643,320	5,006,490
	Total	4,640,914	1,626,777	8,333	6,276,024	4,484,860	1,412,009	5,896,869
FY 2015		Total				Total Over Incidental Limit		
	No Endorsement	267,600	483,037	0	750,637	195,550	428,609	624,159
	Endorsement	10,384,686	8,971,844	117,059	19,486,463	10,231,335	7,861,854	18,093,189
	Total	10,652,286	9,454,881	117,059	20,237,100	10,426,885	8,290,463	18,717,348
		Undeclared				Undeclared		
	No Endorsement	267,600	443,719	0	711,319	195,550	390,939	586,489
	Endorsement	2,400,614	547,822	7,780	2,957,141	2,319,541	384,702	2,704,243
	Total	2,668,214	991,541	7,780	3,668,460	2,515,091	775,641	3,290,732
<p><i>Note:</i> These are data with Federal fishing permit (# >000000). Other declaration categories besides undeclared (e.g., MNK, NMS) are not shown.</p> <p>^a Disposition code missing in database, so it is unknown if landings are wing, bait, or other. There were no missing disposition codes in landings over incidental limit.</p> <p>“No Endorsement” = Landings from trips with no Federal endorsement (skate or other) at the time of landing.</p> <p>“Endorsement” = Landings from trips with a Federal endorsement at the time of landing.</p>								

Table 8 - Skate landings total and over incidental limit by disposition code, FY 2017 and FY 2018.

	Fishing Permit	Bait	Wing	Missing ^a	Total		Bait	Wing	Total
FY 2017		Total					Total Over Incidental Limit		
	No Endorsement	3,247,504	358,194	0	3,605,698		3,148,946	311,752	3,460,698
	Endorsement	8,637,805	8,309,432	426,406	17,376,443		8,512,555	7,182,857	15,695,412
	Total	11,885,309	8,667,626	426,406	20,982,141		11,661,501	7,494,609	19,156,110
		Undeclared					Undeclared		
	No Endorsement	2,348,704	348,294	0	2,696,998		2,250,146	304,002	2,554,148
	Endorsement	839,749	397,940	38,595	1,276,284		806,757	280,934	1,087,692
	Total	3,188,453	746,234	38,595	3,973,282		3,056,903	584,936	3,641,840
FY 2018		Total					Total Over Incidental Limit		
	No Endorsement	1,012,574	225,190	326,854	1,564,618		856,660	194,429	1,051,089
	Endorsement	8,867,726	9,190,455	769,395	18,837,976		8,635,215	8,090,069	16,725,283
	Total	9,880,300	9,415,645	1,096,249	20,402,594		9,491,875	8,284,498	17,776,372
		Undeclared					Undeclared		
	No Endorsement	1,012,574	205,810	326,854	1,545,238		856,660	175,967	1,032,627
	Endorsement	999,992	344,919	96,744	1,449,105		911,617	232,977	1,144,594
	Total	2,012,566	550,729	423,598	2,994,343		1,768,277	408,944	2,177,221
<p><i>Note:</i> These are data with Federal fishing permit (# >000000). Other declaration categories (e.g., MNK, NMS) are not shown.</p> <p>^a Disposition code missing in database, so it is unknown if landings are wing, bait or other. There were no missing disposition codes in landings over incidental limit.</p> <p>“No Endorsement” = Landings from trips with no Federal endorsement (skate or other) at the time of landing.</p> <p>“Endorsement” = Landings from trips with a Federal endorsement at the time of landing.</p>									

Skate wing landings from undeclared trips over the incidental limit by vessels with no Federal endorsement may be from:

- Vessels with a state fishing permit fishing in state waters³ that:
 - Sold to Federal dealers. This could include vessels with de-activated Federal fishing permits.
 - Did not sell to a Federal dealer but reported via the VTR.
- Activity inconsistent with regulations.
 - Vessels with a de-activated Federal fishing permit fishing in Federal waters and neglecting to activate the permit.

Skate wing landings from undeclared trips over the incidental limit by vessels with a Federal endorsement may be from:

- Data errors.
 - Bait landings miscoded as wing (i.e., disposition code is 1 when it should have been 8). Examination of fishing trips with undeclared, Federal skate “wing” landings over the incidental limit shows that some trips have landed pounds equal to live pounds and prices typical of bait (~\$0.13-0.15/lb) rather than wing (\$0.20-0.55/lb).
- Activity inconsistent with regulations.
 - Vessels neglecting to make a Federal declaration and:
 - Selling to a Federal dealer but.
 - Not selling to a Federal dealer but reporting via the VTR.

FY 2017. In FY 2017, there were 584,936 lb of skate wing landings over the incidental possession limit by vessels with a Federal fishing permit but with no Federal declaration (Table 8, yellow highlight). Of these landings, 304,002 lb were by vessels with no active Federal endorsements at the time of landing (“No Endorsement” in the tables). The only way these landings data could be consistent with regulations if the vessels dropped their Federal endorsement to fish in state waters (The PDT did not examine these data further). The remainder, 280,934 lb, were by vessels with a Federal endorsement at the time of landing (“Endorsement” in the tables).

The undeclared skate wing landings with a Federal endorsement on trips with landings over the 500 lb incidental limit (280,934 lb) may be:

- Data errors.
 - 64,215 lb are potentially miscoded bait. Evidence suggests that the disposition code should be 8 (bait) rather than 1 (wing); the landed and live weights are equivalent, and the price is more akin to normal bait prices (~\$0.13/lb). However, these trips did not have a LOA.
 - 10,783 lb are potentially other data errors, because the live weight is less than the landed weight.
- Activity inconsistent with regulations. The remainder is **205,936 lb, unexplained by potential data errors.** This is 2.4% of total FY 2017 wing landings (Table 4). These landings are:
 - From 128 trips landing 504–5,372 lb each trip.
 - By 35 unique permit numbers.

The PDT examined the undeclared wing trips over the incidental limit by season, northern vs. southern statistical areas, gear type, and percent over the 500 lb incidental limit. However, once all the duplicative and doubled data were discovered and removed, the PDT found that there would be too many data

³ These landings from state waters are counted as Federal landings according to GARFO’s catch accounting method. *Skate PDT memo (March 14, 2020 – revised 3/18)* 16

confidentiality issues with providing more detailed looks at the 205,936 lb of landings. Generally, these landings can be characterized as:

- Mostly caught by three permit numbers.
- Mostly using gillnets (<15% trips used otter trawl).
- Mostly in southern statistical areas (i.e., 600-699; with ~72% of trips occurring in Areas 539, 612, 613, and 614, Map 1).
- Mostly caught on trips with wing landings that are more than 10% over the 500 lb incidental limit (~93%).

The 205,936 lb of landings (i.e., the potential bait miscoding data and trips where live < landed were removed) was examined to determine the extent to which landings exceeded possession limits. About 23,000 lb was landed on 21 trips that exceeded the seasonal possession limit (7,000 lb in excess):

- In Season 1, under 13,000 lb was landed on trips that exceed the 2,600 lb possession limit (5,000 lb was in excess).
- In Season 2, under 10,500 lb was landed on trips that exceed the 4,100 lb possession limit (2,000 lb was in excess).
- Two trips accounted for 40-50% of the landings that exceeded possession limits.

FY 2018. In FY 2018, there were 408,944 lb of skate wing landings over the incidental limit by vessels with a Federal fishing permit but with no Federal declaration (Table 8, yellow highlight). Of these landings, 175,967 lb were by vessels with no active Federal endorsement at the time of landing (“No Endorsement” in the tables). The remainder, 232,977 lb, were by vessels with a Federal endorsement at the time of landing (“Endorsement” in the tables).

The undeclared skate wing landings with a Federal endorsement on trips with landings over the 500 lb incidental limit (232,977 lb) may be:

- Data errors.
 - 3,208 lb are potentially miscoded bait. Evidence suggests that the disposition code should be 8 (bait) rather than 1 (wing); the landed and live weights are equivalent, and the price is more akin to normal bait prices (~\$0.12/lb). However, these trips did not have a LOA.
 - 7,310 lb are potentially other data entry errors or skate wing landings that were winged after landed. The landed and live weights are equivalent, the trips did not have a LOA, and the price is within the normal range of wing prices (i.e., \$0.25-0.85/lb).
- Activity inconsistent with regulations. The remainder is **224,459 lb, unexplained by potential data errors.** This is 2.4% of total FY 2018 wing landings (Table 4). These landings are:
 - From 123 trips landing 503-5,500 lb each trip.
 - By 27 unique permit numbers

As with FY 2017, there would be too many data confidentiality issues with providing more detailed looks at the 224,459 lb of landings. Generally, these landings can be characterized as:

- Mostly caught by two permit numbers.
- Mostly using gillnets (<10% trips used otter trawl).
- Mostly in southern statistical areas (i.e., 600-699; with ~68% of trips occurring in Areas 612 and 614, Map 1).
- Mostly caught on trips with wing landings that are more than 10% over the 500 lb incidental limit (~93%).

The 224,459 lb of landings were examined to determine the extent to which landings exceeded possession limits. Where landings exceeded possession limits, none of the landings appear to have any potential bait miscoding data. About 81,500 lb was landed on 21 trips that exceeded the seasonal possession limit (18,000 lb in excess):

- In Season 1, under 53,000 lb was landed on trips that exceed the 2,600 lb possession limit (14,000 lb was in excess).
- In Season 2, under 28,500 lb was landed on trips that exceed the 4,100 lb possession limit (4,000 lb was in excess).

5.2 UNDECLARED BAIT LANDINGS

In FY2017, most of the undeclared bait trips over the 1,135 lb incidental limit had valid LOAs, however, 22 trips (out of 161 total trips) did not have LOAs (made mostly by one permit number). In FY2018, the number of undeclared bait trips over the incidental limit without LOAs decreased to four trips (out of 170 total trips).

6.0 WING LANDINGS EXCEEDING POSSESSION LIMITS

This section addresses Committee Task 2 (Table 1), to explain why wing landings exceed possession limits in some cases. The data in Table 9 include landings with and without Federal endorsements and include any trips with potential data entry or miscoding errors. The amount reported as landed over the possession limit do not include the amount landed within the possession limit (e.g., if a vessel landed 2,700 lb in Season 1, then the amount over the 2,600 lb possession limit was 100 lb).

Table 9 - Landings (lb) exceeding the seasonal possessional limits (PL) by plan code, FY 2017-2018.

Season	Plan Code	Landed lb > PL	Trips (#)	Vessels (#)
FY 2017				
<i>Season 1</i>	Confidential	2,120	c	c
	MNK	55,931	40	40
	NMS	1,165	3	3
	Undeclared	169,696	37	37
	Total	228,912	82	18
<i>Season 2 Before Closure</i>	Confidential	4,805	c	c
	MNK	28,588	12	12
	Undeclared	7,435	6	6
	Total	40,828	21	11
<i>Season 2 During Closure</i>	Confidential	285	c	c
	DOF	2,664	11	11
	MNK	13,002	15	15
	NMS	7,660	15	15
	Undeclared	618	7	7
	Total	24,229	51	35
<i>Season 2 After Closure</i>	Confidential	3,384	c	c
	Total	3,384	c	c
FY 2017 Total lb > Seasonal PL		297,353	155	65
FY 2018				
<i>Season 1</i>	Confidential	3,720	c	c
	MNK	60,611	33	33
	Undeclared	56,784	43	43
	Total	121,115	78	15
<i>Season 2</i>	MNK	71,532	28	28
	Undeclared	3,849	7	7
	Total	75,381	35	5
FY18 Total lb > Seasonal PL		196,496	113	20
<i>Note: The total vessels is the unique number of vessels, not necessarily the column sum.</i>				

FY 2017. For these data in FY 2017, there were ~300,000 lb of wing landings exceeding possession limits (Table 9). These landings were by 65 unique vessels on 155 trips and mostly (60%) on undeclared trips. The most any one trip exceeded the possession limit was by ~13,000 lb in FY 2017.

Note the data in Section 5.1 on the undeclared wing landings exceeding the possession limits, which include only data from landings with Federal endorsements and excludes trips with any potential data entry and miscoding errors. For those data, there were ~6,700 lb of wing landings exceeding possession limits in FY 2017. Thus, exceeding the possession limits appears to be mostly an issue for trips by vessels without Federal endorsements.

FY 2018. For these data in FY 2018, there were ~200,000 lb of wing landings exceeding possession limits (Table 9), substantially lower than FY 2017. These landings were by 20 unique vessels on 113 trips and mostly (67%) on declared monkfish trips, with a lesser percentage (31%) on undeclared trips. The most any one trip exceeded the possession limit was by 7,600 lb in FY 2018.

Note the data in Section 5.1 on the undeclared wing landings exceeding the possession limits, which includes only data from landings with Federal endorsements and excludes trips with any potential data entry and miscoding errors. For those data, there were ~17,500 lb of wing landings exceeding possession limits in FY 2018. As with FY 2017, exceeding the possession limits appears to be mostly an issue for trips by vessels without Federal endorsements.

7.0 OTHER COMMENTS

Over the past few years (perhaps beginning in 2016), there has been a great deal of confusion among fishermen about several skate fishery regulations including: declarations, exempted fishing areas, the bait fishery LOA requirements, mixed (wing and whole) landings, etc. This came to a head in 2018 following the unusual 2016 fishing year (spring 2017 with the limit changes) and subsequent framework adjustment actions (4, 5, and eventually 6) in 2018. GARFO developed an outreach flier to remind fishermen of the regulations that were frequently confusing. It was mailed out and distributed to port agents and at Council meetings, etc., but it did not take the form of an official bulletin. Since declaring to get the higher possession limit is a basic aspect of the fishery, it is mentioned (if indirectly) in almost every bulletin about possession limits for the fishery.

For the wing fishery, FY 2016 was the "perfect storm" year that caused all the subsequent frameworks, issues and worry in the skate fishery. Further, from the bait side, because when both the wing and bait fisheries hit their triggers, the bait fishery (at that time) fell to whatever the wing limit was, and the wing incidental is less than 2,000 lb whole weight. So, bait fishermen were going from 25,000 lb to <2,000 lb, which was a big hit.

8.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

8.1 NORTHEAST SKATE COMPLEX ANNUAL CATCH LIMIT ACCOUNTING

Table 10 - Northeast skate complex catch accounting data used in Annual Monitoring Reports.

FY 2012	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (50,435 mt)
Commercial landings	33,803,428	15,333	30.4%
State-permitted only vessel landings	1,616,819	733	1.5%
Estimated dead discards	23,599,375	10,704	21.2%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	1,043,685	473	0.9%
Total Northeast skate catch	60,063,307	27,244	54.0%
<i>Source: Commercial fisheries dealer database and MRIP reports; accessed March 2014.</i>			

FY 2013	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (50,435 mt)
Commercial landings	32,338,552	14,669	29.1%
State-permitted only vessel landings	418,780	190	0.4%
Estimated dead discards	28,800,034	13,063	25.9%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	517,102	235	0.5%
Total Northeast skate catch	62,074,468	28,157	55.8%
<i>Source: Commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases, accessed October 2014; and MRIP reports, accessed August 2014.</i>			

FY 2014	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (35,479 mt)
Commercial landings	35,827,600	16,251	45.8%
State-permitted only vessel landings	726,133	329	0.9%
Estimated dead discards	25,246,998	11,452	32.3%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	1,735,210	787	2.2%
Total Northeast skate catch	63,535,941	28,819	81.2%
<i>Source: Commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases and MRIP reports, accessed August 2015.</i>			

FY 2015	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (35,479 mt)
Commercial landings	34,313,819	15,564	43.9%
State-permitted only vessel landings	2,073,641	941	2.7%
Estimated dead discards	24,668,321	11,189	31.5%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	918,014	416	1.2%
Total Northeast skate catch	61,973,794	28,111	79.2%
<i>Source: Commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases and MRIP reports, accessed September 2016.</i>			

FY 2016	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (31,081 mt)
Commercial landings	30,711,991	13,931	44.8%
State-permitted only vessel landings	1,200,363	544	1.8%
Estimated dead discards	21,530,780	9,766	31.4%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	677,185	307	1.0%
Total Northeast skate catch	54,120,319	24,549	79.0%
<i>Source:</i> Commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases and MRIP reports, accessed August 2017.			

FY 2017	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (31,081 mt)
Commercial landings	31,854,574	14,449	46.5%
State-permitted only vessel landings	1,752,206	795	2.6%
Estimated dead discards	18,790,080	8,523	27.4%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	3,367,634	1,528	4.9%
Total Northeast skate catch	55,764,494	25,294	81.4%
<i>Source:</i> commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases and MRIP reports, accessed August 2018.			

FY 2018	Pounds	Metric tons	% of ACL (31,081 mt)
Commercial landings	32,155,182	14,585	46.9%
State-permitted only vessel landings	1,268,820	576	1.9%
Estimated dead discards	17,369,954	7,879	25.3%
Recreational catch (MRIP landings and dead discards)	2,398,508	1,088	3.5%
Total Northeast skate catch	53,192,464	24,128	77.6%
<i>Source:</i> Commercial fisheries dealer and NEFOP databases and MRIP reports, accessed August 2019.			

8.2 DEFINITIONS OF PLAN AND PROGRAM CODES

Plan Code	
NMS	Northeast multispecies
MNK	Monkfish
SES	Scallop
HER	Herring
SCO	Surfclam & ocean quahog
SMB	Squid, mackerel, butterfish
DOF	Declare out of fishery
Program Code	
SEC	Multispecies sector vessel trip
COM	Multispecies common pool vessel trip
NAS	Monkfish Northern Management Area sector vessel trip
NAC	Monkfish Northern Management Area common pool vessel trip
SAS	Monkfish Southern Management Area Sector vessel trip
SAC	Monkfish Southern Management Area common pool vessel trip
NAM	Monkfish Northern Management Area monkfish-only vessel trip
SAM	Monkfish Southern Management Area monkfish-only vessel trip
SAA	Special access area
SCA	Limited access
SCG	Limited access general category (LAGC)
HER	Herring trip
CAR	Herring carrier trip
HMS	Herring trip with mackerel and/or squid retention
SFC	Surfclam
OQU	Ocean quahog
SWE	State waters exemption
TST	Transit
CML	Fishing - commercial
REC	Fishing - recreational/charter
SCI	Scientific research
NAF	NW Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) participation
MAC	Mackerel trip
MAS	Mackerel trip with longfin squid retention
MAH	Mackerel trip with herring retention
MHS	Mackerel trip with herring and longfin squid retention
SQL	Longfin squid trip
SQM	Longfin squid trip with mackerel retention
SQH	Longfin squid trip with herring retention
SHM	Longfin squid trip with herring and mackerel retention

8.3 STATISTICAL AREAS

Map 1 - Northeast U.S. statistical areas.

