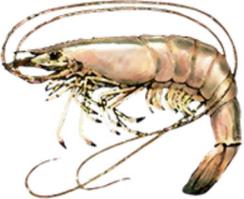


2017 NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES STOCK OVERVIEW - STATE MANAGED SPECIES

(July 2017, based on 2016 Data)

 = Viable	 = Recovering	 = Concern	 = Depleted	 = Unknown
Species	Status	Comments		
<p>Bay Scallop</p> 		<p>Bay scallops are considered an annual crop, so high natural mortality from environmental change and predation impacts annual abundance. As a result, a stock assessment is not an effective tool for management. Sampling showed low numbers in all areas and harvest was not allowed in 2016 because abundance levels did not meet the thresholds to open the season.</p>		
<p>Blue Crab</p> 		<p>Results of the stock assessment update in 2016 met the moderate management trigger for adult abundance. Additional management measures were implemented in June 2016 to improve stock condition. The stock assessment update in 2017 indicates the condition of the stock has not improved and continues to need protection.</p>		
<p>Eastern Oyster</p> 		<p>A stock assessment could not be conducted due to limited data; therefore, population size and the rate of removals from the population are unknown. Commercial landings from public bottom have been variable, and landings from private bottom in the past few years have increased significantly due to more interest in aquaculture.</p>		
<p>+Estuarine Striped Bass: Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River Management Area</p> 		<p>The 2016 Albemarle/Roanoke striped bass stock assessment update indicates overfishing (excessive fishing mortality) is not occurring and the stock is not overfished (stock size is adequate). Although the stock is not overfished, the abundance of mature females in the population has declined steadily since the peak in 2003. While very large, the estimate of abundance in the final year of the assessment (2014) is the most uncertain and should be viewed with caution. The estimate will likely decrease as additional years of data are added to the model. A new benchmark stock assessment is underway in conjunction with the ongoing fishery management plan review. Results are expected in the late fall of 2017.</p>		

<p><u>Estuarine Striped Bass:</u> Central/Southern Management Area</p> 		<p>The Central Southern Management Area stocks include the Tar/Pamlico, Neuse, and Cape Fear rivers. The major issue is determining the environmental and biological factors preventing a self-sustaining population. No stock assessment is currently available for management. A benchmark stock assessment is underway in conjunction with the ongoing fishery management plan review. Results are expected in the late fall of 2017.</p>
<p><u>Hard Clam</u></p> 		<p>A stock assessment could not be conducted due to limited data; therefore, population size and the rate of removals from the population are unknown. Harvest fluctuates, often in response to changes in demand, improved harvesting methods, and increases in polluted shellfish area closures.</p>
<p><u>Kingfishes</u></p> 		<p>A stock assessment is not available due to lack of migration data, so an annual trend analysis with management triggers is used to monitor the stock. Though three management triggers were activated in 2016, no action is required because triggers must be activated for two consecutive years to warrant further evaluation and possible management change.</p>
<p><u>+Red Drum</u></p> 		<p>The regional benchmark stock assessment (North Carolina and all states north), conducted by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission in 2017, indicates that overfishing (excessive fishing mortality) is not occurring and that management targets continue to be met. The size of the population (overfished status), however, continues to be unknown due to limited data available for the adult population.</p>
<p><u>+River Herring</u></p> 		<p>River herring are currently listed as depleted in the Albemarle Sound by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. This designation is based on the results of the 2012 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Atlantic coastwide stock assessment. The North Carolina portion of the coastwide assessment is for the Albemarle Sound blueback herring stock only. River herring in other parts of the state are currently listed as unknown by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission due to the lack of data for these systems. Many factors contribute to the stock's failure to recover, including bycatch in offshore fisheries, degraded water quality, and reductions in spawning habitat due to dams and other</p>

		blockages. An update to the coastwide stock assessment with data through 2015 is underway with results expected in the fall of 2017.
<p><u>Sheepshead</u></p> 	?	No stock assessment is available for sheepshead due to lack of data; therefore, the stock status is currently unknown. Landings trends and other biological data prompted the Marine Fisheries Commission to implement new harvest restrictions in June 2015. The division continues to monitor landings and collect data on the stock. In 2016, both recreational and commercial landings were below the 10 year average.
<p><u>Shrimp</u></p> 	✓	The stock is considered an annual crop that consists of three species of shrimp (brown, pink, white). The population size is determined mainly by the number of shrimp entering the population each year, which is driven by environmental conditions. Therefore, a stock assessment is not an effective tool for management. The division is continuing to collaborate with the industry on bycatch reduction in the shrimp trawl fishery.
<p><u>Southern Flounder</u></p> 	◇	The Division of Marine Fisheries 2014 stock assessment of southern flounder in North Carolina waters was not approved for management due to mixing of the stock on a regional scale (the U.S. South Atlantic). There are concerns about the coastwide trends in juvenile and adult abundance and the high percentage of immature fish in the harvest. A regional stock assessment is underway including partners from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina and is scheduled to be completed in late 2017.
<p>+<u>Spotted Seatrout</u></p> 	✓	The 2014 stock assessment showed a viable status and removals from fishing were considered sustainable. Recreational and commercial landings for 2016 were at average levels compared to the past 10 years and there is no indication that the stock is at risk.
<p><u>Striped Mullet</u></p> 	◇	The 2011 stock assessment indicated overfishing (excessive fishing mortality) was not occurring but could not determine the overfished (stock size) status. The stock is classified as concern due to commercial landings from 2016 falling below the landings thresholds established in Amendment 1 and due to historically low striped mullet abundance in division sampling surveys.
<p>+ The species is also managed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Management measures are implemented by the North Carolina Fishery Management Plan for Interjurisdictional Fisheries, which defers to the Atlantic States Marine</p>		

Fisheries Commission plans.