

Sheepshead Proclamation Authority



Feb. 28, 2013

Marine Fisheries Commission
Meeting



Issue

The Marine Fisheries Commission requested Division of Marine Fisheries develop an issue paper to start the process for implementing proclamation authority to manage sheephead.

- Previously managed as part of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Snapper Grouper Complex
- Currently, Division of Marine Fisheries has no authority to manage harvest of sheephead.

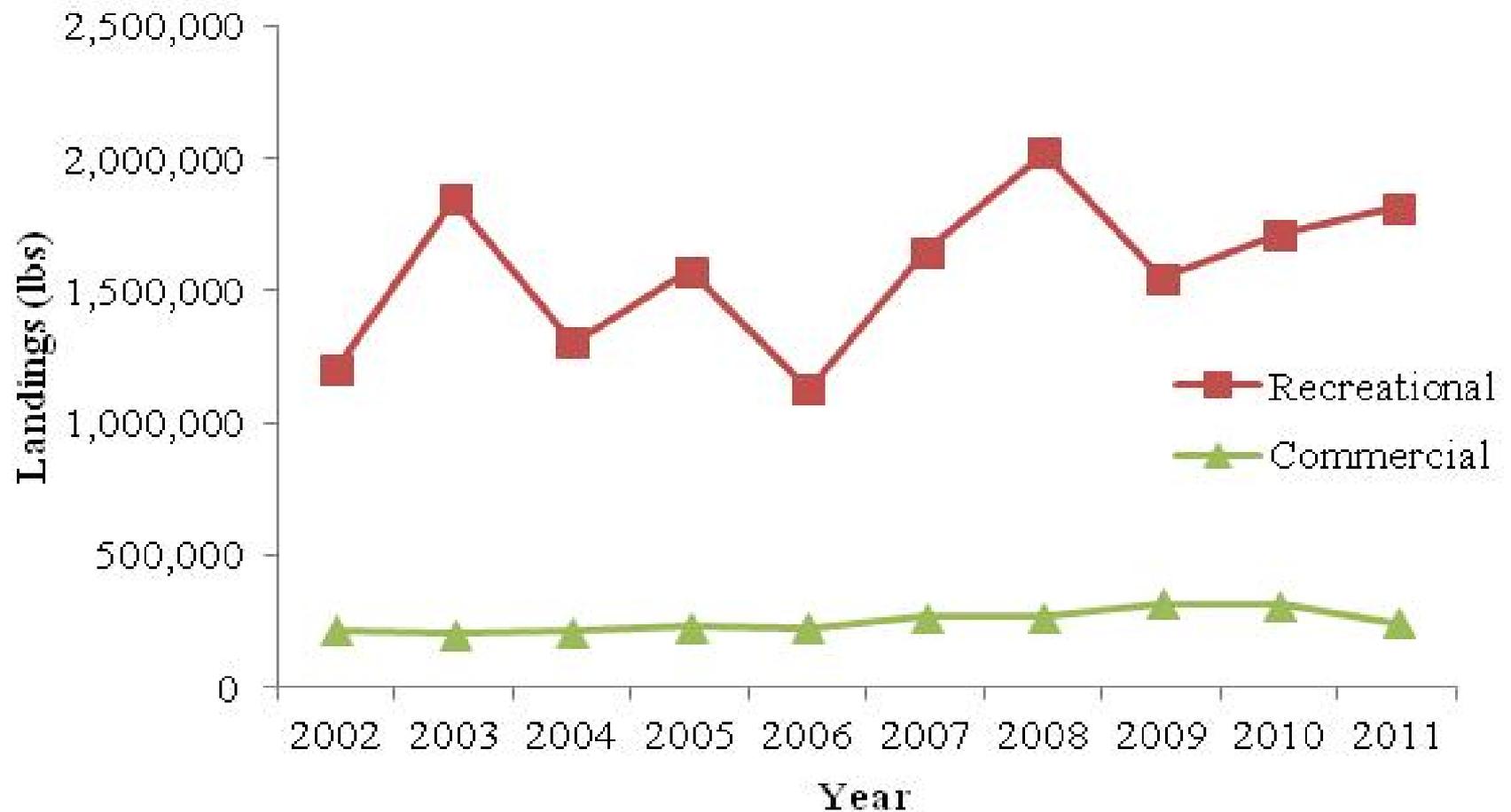


Life History

- Ranges from Nova Scotia to Rio De Janeiro
- Fast growing at ages less than 6 years
- Maximum age – 23 years
- World record - 21 ¼ pounds
- 50 percent of fish mature at age 1 (10 inches fork length)
- 100 percent of fish mature at age 3 to 5 (14 inches fork length)



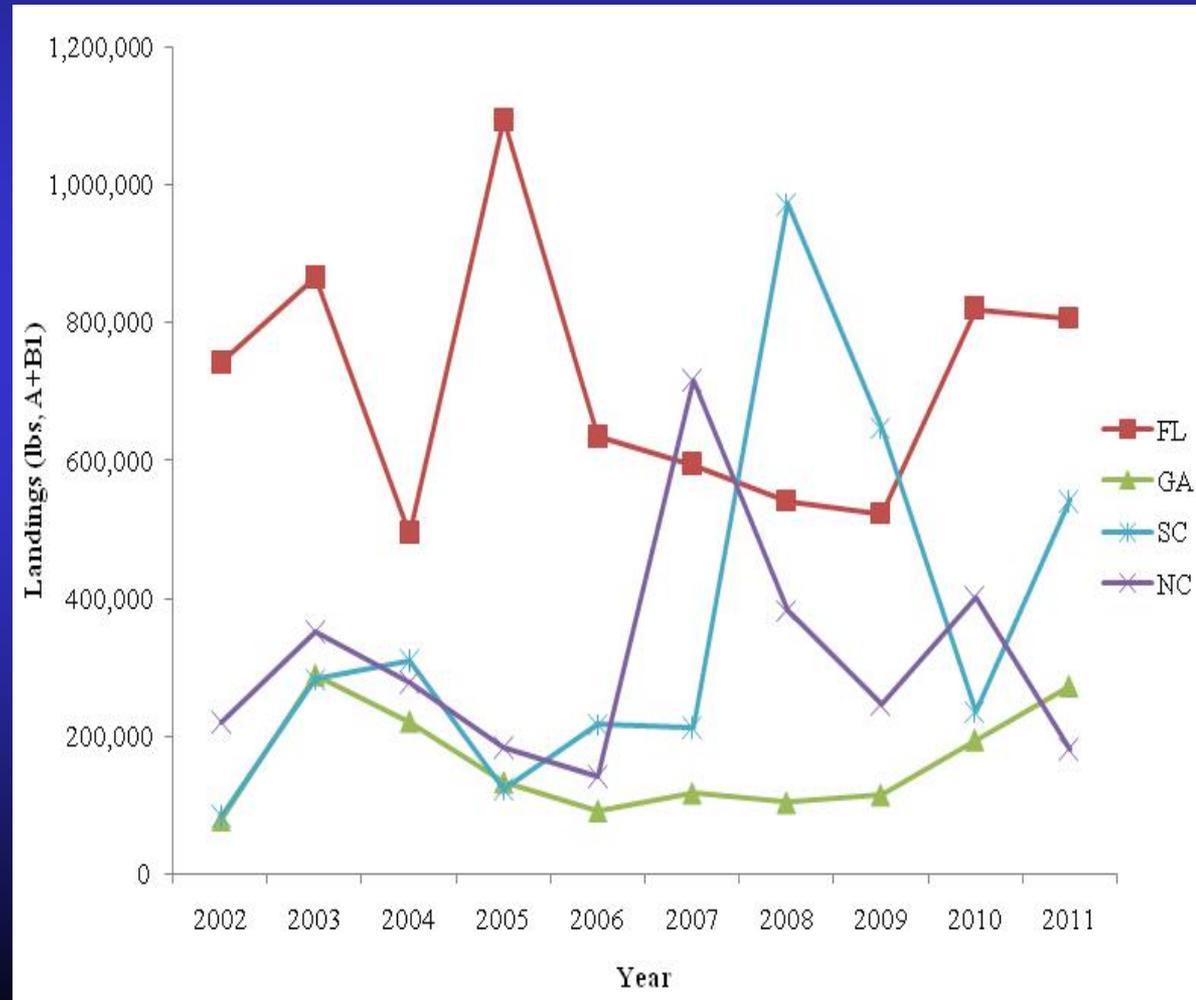
United States Atlantic Coast Sheepshead Fisheries



South Atlantic Sheepshead Harvest

Recreational

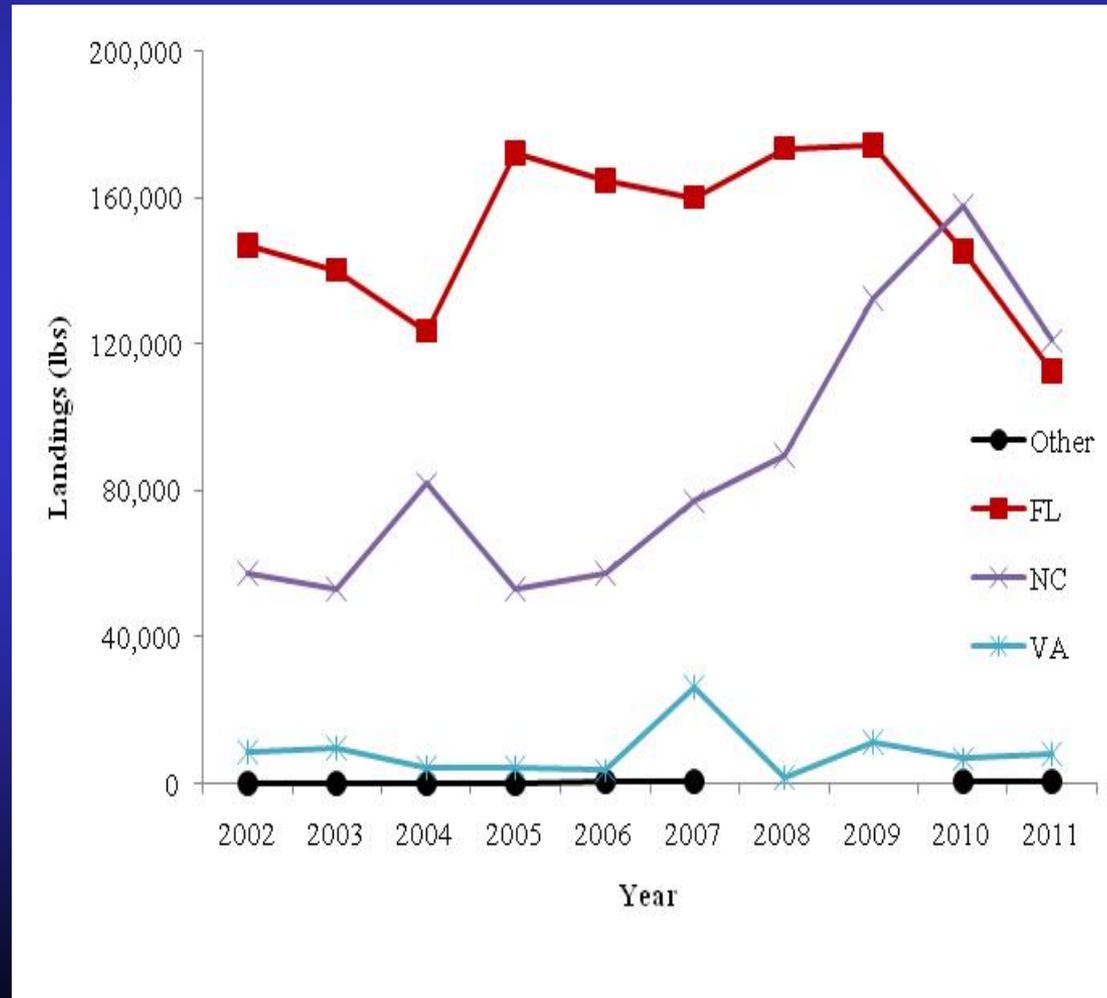
- Most harvest occurs in Florida
- North Carolina ranked third in total landings



South Atlantic Sheepshead Harvest

Commercial

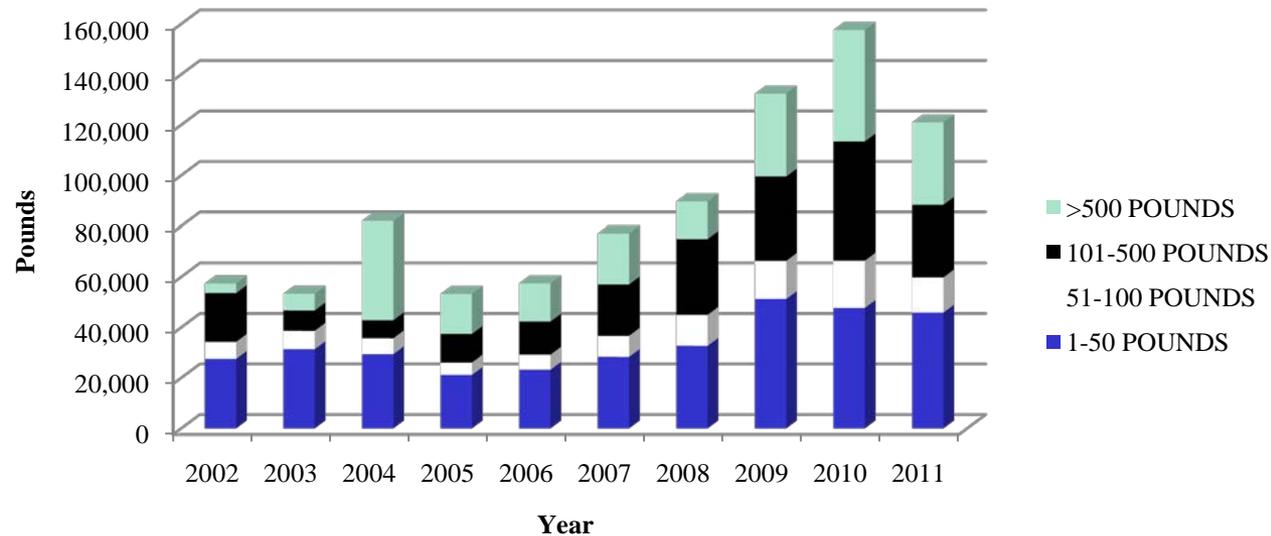
- Florida highest landings until 2010
- North Carolina increasing trend



Bag and Trip Sizes

Percent of North Carolina recreational trips not reaching various catch levels

Number of fish	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Combined
5	98%	78%	84%	81%	87%	97%	86%
10	100%	91%	93%	93%	98%	99%	95%
15	100%	98%	99%	100%	100%	100%	99%
20	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Recreational
15 sheephead rarely kept

Commercial
Recently, more landings from trips harvesting greater than 500 pounds

Sheepshead Regulations

State	Recreational		Commercial	
	Size Limit	Bag Limit	Size Limit	Trip Limit
MD		20 aggregate*		
VA		4 per person		500 lb
NC		**		
SC	14" TL	10 per day/ 30 per boat		
GA	10" FL^	15 per day		
FL	12" TL	15 per day	12" TL	50 lb^^

*Aggregate refers to species included in the 20 aggregate limit established by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

**20 fish aggregate limit removed by Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment

^10 inches fork length converts to 10.7 inches total length

^^Only limited in the shrimp trawl fishery

Potential Management Options

- Status quo
- Establish proclamation authority for size, bag, and trip limit
- Establish proclamation authority for gear, season, area, size, bag, and trip limit
- Establish a rule to manage sheepshead with size, bag, and trip limits
- Recommend Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission stock assessment



Division of Marine Fisheries Recommendation

- Establish proclamation authority for gear, season, area, size, bag, and trip limit to manage sheepshead.
- Present issue to Finfish and regional advisory committees to solicit public input on management measures.



Questions ?

