

Pat McCrory, Governor



Donald R. van der Vaart, Secretary

Release: Immediate

Date: July 1, 2016

Contact: Patricia Smith

Phone: 252-726-7021

One species reclassified in 2016 Stock Status Report

MOREHEAD CITY – The stock status of most coastal fish did not change in the 2016 Stock Status Report, released today by the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries. Only one species was reclassified from the 2015 report.

Summer flounder moved from “viable” to “concern.” The change was based on a 2015 National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Fisheries Science Center benchmark stock assessment for U.S. waters north of Cape Hatteras. The assessment indicated the stock was not overfished but overfishing was occurring.

As a result of the stock assessment, federal fisheries authorities lowered the allowable biological catch by 29 percent, which lowered the state-by-state commercial quotas proportionately. North Carolina receives the highest commercial quota share at 27.4 percent.

The division annually classifies the status of important marine finfish, shellfish, shrimp and crabs as viable, recovering, concern, depleted or unknown. Definitions of these categories can be found at <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/stock-status-categories-and-definitions>.

The annual classifications are based on biological and statistical data from the prior year and serve as a barometer of the overall health of the state’s fishery resources. They are used to prioritize development of state fishery management plans.

New this year, the online table that summarizes the report includes information about which fisheries management authorities manage the stock in parenthesis under each species name.

The complete 2016 Stock Status Report can be found on the division’s website at: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/stock-status-reports>.

For more information, contact division Fisheries Biologist Lee Paramore at 252-473-5734, ext. 222 or Lee.Paramore@ncdenr.gov

nr-49-2016