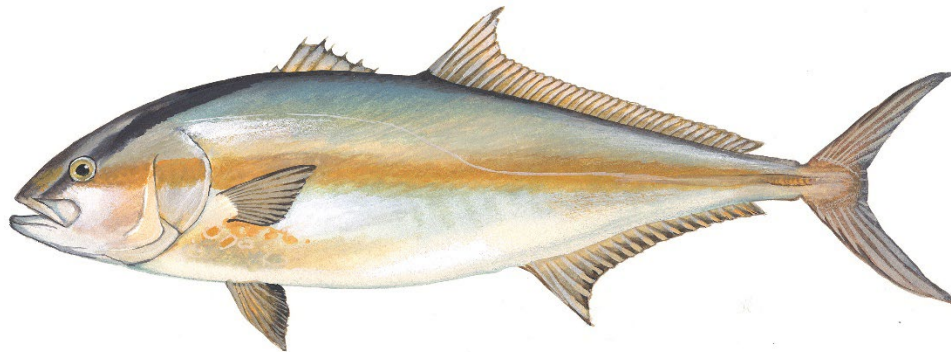




Amendment 49

Catch Level Adjustments and Allocations for Greater Amberjack

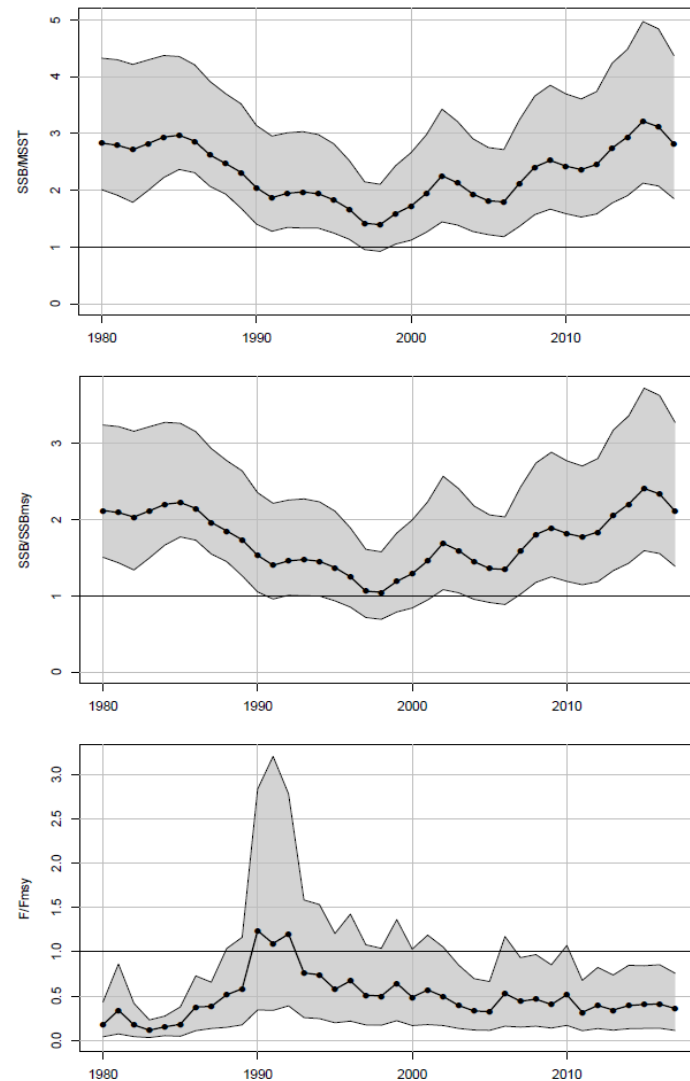


April 2022

Michael Schmidtke, SAFMC Staff

Background

- S Atlantic Greater Amberjack assessed earlier in 2020 (SEDAR 59) (Fig. 1)
 - Not overfished
 - Not experiencing overfishing
- FES recreational estimates



SSC Recommendations

- SSC reviewed SEDAR 59 in April 2020
 - Recommended OFLs and ABCs through 2024 (Table A1.1)
 - Current ABC = 1,968,000 lbs ww
 - Future recreational catches would be monitored in FES (currently MRFSS)

| Year | OFL (lbs ww) | ABC (lbs ww) |
|------|--------------|--------------|
| 2022 | 4,615,000 | 4,380,000 |
| 2023 | 3,283,000 | 3,233,000 |
| 2024 | 2,839,000 | 2,818,000 |
| 2025 | 2,719,000 | 2,699,000 |
| 2026 | 2,691,000 | 2,669,000 |



Management Issues/Questions

- Current ABC, total and sector ACLs, sector allocation percentages, and recreational ACT based on MRFSS recreational data
- MRIP will use FES moving forward
- **Does the Council want to update management numeric values to reflect the new assessment and recreational estimation methodology?**
 - Current values are as/more conservative
- **Does the Council want to make other changes to management of S Atlantic Greater Amberjack?**



Amendment Timing

| Dates | Process Steps |
|-------------------|---|
| December 2020 | Review options paper and provide guidance to staff |
| March 2021 | Review draft actions and alternatives and approve for scoping |
| Apr 14 & 15, 2021 | Conduct scoping hearings |
| September 2021 | Review scoping comments, review preliminary analyses, and provide guidance to staff |
| December 2021 | Review modifications to the amendment, select preferred alternatives, and provide additional guidance |
| March 2022 | Review modifications to the amendment, select preferred alternatives, and approve for public hearings |
| June 2022 | Conduct public hearing, review updated analyses, and select preferred alternatives |
| September 2022 | Review final draft amendment and consider approval for formal review |
| Early-Mid 2023 | Regulations effective |



Goals for Today

1. Review current actions/alternatives and previous comments.
 2. Revise previous input or provide additional input as needed.
- With the current timeline, this is the last opportunity for AP input before final action
 - Selecting preferred alternatives and developing rationale



Action 1 – ABC, Total ACL, and OY

Preferred Alternative 2.

| Fishing Year | ABC (lbs ww) | Annual OY (lbs ww) | Total ACL (lbs ww) |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022/2023 | 4,380,000 | 4,380,000 | 4,380,000 |
| 2023/2024 | 3,233,000 | 3,233,000 | 3,233,000 |
| 2024/2025 | 2,818,000 | 2,818,000 | 2,818,000 |
| 2025/2026 | 2,699,000 | 2,699,000 | 2,699,000 |
| 2026/2027+ | 2,669,000 | 2,669,000 | 2,669,000 |

- Current total ACL = Current ABC = 1,968,000 lbs ww
- Other alternatives: (**Alt 1**) No Action; (**Alt 3**) ACL = 90%ABC; (**Alt 4**) ACL = 80%ABC

Previous AP Input:

- Recommended consistent ~2.8 million pound ACL
 - Alternative based on this recommendation was added but later removed, prior to the current draft amendment
- Consider potential impacts of large, short-term ACL changes



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

| Current Sector Allocations | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Recreational | Commercial |
| % of Total ACL | 59.34% | 40.66% |
| ACL | 1,167,837 lbs ww | 769,388 lbs gw |
| *Based on MRFSS recreational data | | |

Sector Allocations and 2022/2023 ACLs (Table 1)

| Alternative | Rec % of Total ACL | Rec ACL (lbs ww) | Com % of Total ACL | Com ACL* (lbs gw) | Com Seas 1 Quota (lbs gw) | Com Seas 2 Quota** (lbs gw) |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 (No action) | 59.34% | 2,599,092 | 40.66% | 1,712,412 | 1,027,447 | 684,965 |
| 2 | 70.16% | 3,073,008 | 29.84% | 1,256,723 | 754,034 | 502,689 |
| 3 (Preferred) | 60.00% | 2,847,000 | 35.00% | 1,474,038 | 884,423 | 589,615 |
| 4 | 55.00% | 2,409,000 | 45.00% | 1,895,192 | 1,137,115 | 758,077 |
| 5 | 50.00% | 2,190,000 | 50.00% | 2,105,769 | 1,263,462 | 842,308 |



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

| Sector ACLs for Pref Alts for Actions 1 (Alt 2) & 2 (Alt 3) (Table 2) | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Year | Rec ACL (lbs ww) | Com ACL (lbs gw) | Com Seas 1 Quota (lbs gw) | Com Seas 2 Quota** (lbs gw) |
| 2022/2023 | 2,847,000 | 1,474,038 | 884,423 | 589,615 |
| 2023/2024 | 2,101,450 | 1,088,029 | 652,817 | 435,212 |
| 2024/2025 | 1,831,700 | 948,365 | 569,019 | 379,346 |
| 2025/2026 | 1,754,350 | 908,317 | 544,990 | 363,327 |
| 2026/2027+ | 1,734,850 | 898,221 | 538,933 | 359,288 |

Landings Summary

- [Fishery Overview](#)
- Rec Closures: 2016/17 (Nov); 2017/18 (Oct)
- Com Closures: 2015/16 (Oct); 2016/17 (Oct); 2017/18 (Jan)
 - Split season implemented in 2020/21
- Summary of Landings Projections Analyses for Alts 1-3 in Doc



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

| Sector ACLs for Pref Alts for Actions 1 (Alt 2) & 2 (Alt 3) (Table 2) | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Year | Rec ACL (lbs ww) | Com ACL (lbs gw) | Com Seas 1 Quota (lbs gw) | Com Seas 2 Quota** (lbs gw) |
| 2022/2023 | 2,847,000 | 1,474,038 | 884,423 | 589,615 |
| 2023/2024 | 2,101,450 | 1,088,029 | 652,817 | 435,212 |
| 2024/2025 | 1,831,700 | 948,365 | 569,019 | 379,346 |
| 2025/2026 | 1,754,350 | 908,317 | 544,990 | 363,327 |
| 2026/2027+ | 1,734,850 | 898,221 | 538,933 | 359,288 |

Previous AP Input

- Recommended **Alternative 1 (No Action)** be preferred
- Consider potential added pressure to GAJ with restrictions to other fisheries
- Consider potential impacts of large, short-term ACL changes; large commercial increase could impact (currently high) price per pound



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

Sector Allocations and 2022/2023 ACLs (Table 1)

| Alternative | Rec % of Total ACL | Rec ACL (lbs ww) | Com % of Total ACL | Com ACL* (lbs gw) | Com Seas 1 Quota (lbs gw) | Com Seas 2 Quota** (lbs gw) |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 (No action) | 59.34% | 2,599,092 | 40.66% | 1,712,412 | 1,027,447 | 684,965 |
| 2 | 70.16% | 3,073,008 | 29.84% | 1,256,723 | 754,034 | 502,689 |
| 3 (Preferred) | 60.00% | 2,847,000 | 35.00% | 1,474,038 | 884,423 | 589,615 |
| 4 | 55.00% | 2,409,000 | 45.00% | 1,895,192 | 1,137,115 | 758,077 |
| 5 | 50.00% | 2,190,000 | 50.00% | 2,105,769 | 1,263,462 | 842,308 |

AP Discussion

- Should Alternatives 4 and 5 be included for further consideration?
- Does the AP support the current preferred alternative (Preferred Alternative 3; 35% commercial and 65% recreational)?



Action 3 – Rec Minimum Size Limit

Preferred Alt 1 (No Action). 28 inches fork length

Alt 2. 30 inches

Alt 3. 32 inches

Alt 4. 36 inches

| Age | Fork Length (in) | Female Maturity |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 19.6 | 53% |
| 2 | 25.0 | 89% |
| 3 | 29.1 | 99% |
| 4 | 32.1 | 100% |
| 5 | 34.4 | 100% |

Previous AP Input

- Recommendation for equal com and rec size limits of 28 inches, 30 inches, or 32 inches
- Some members wanted to keep the rec limit at 28 inches



Action 4 – Com Minimum Size Limit

Alt 1 (No Action). 36 inches fork length

Alt 2. 32 inches

Alt 3. 30 inches

Alt 4. 28 inches

| Age | Fork Length (in) | Female Maturity |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 19.6 | 53% |
| 2 | 25.0 | 89% |
| 3 | 29.1 | 99% |
| 4 | 32.1 | 100% |
| 5 | 34.4 | 100% |

Previous AP Input

- Recommendation to decrease com minimum size to 34 inches, 32 inches (**Alt 2**), or 30 inches (**Alt 3**)
- Com preference for smaller fish; increased trip and catch efficiency (less gaffing, discard mortality, & depredation)

AP Discussion

- Recommend a preferred alternative? Benefits and risks of this alternative?



Action 5 – Seasonal Com Trip Limits

Alternative 1 (No Action).

Season 1 (Mar-Aug): 1,200 lbs gw or ww

Season 2 (Sept-Feb): 1,000 lbs gw or ww

- Com ACL allocated 60% to Season 1 & 40% to Season 2
- Unharvested ACL from Season 1 carries over to Season 2
- Split season first implemented in 2020/21 (only 1 year of final com landings data available; analyses do not include years with split season)



Action 5 – Seasonal Com Trip Limits

Alternative 1 (No Action).

Season 1 (Mar-Aug): 1,200 lbs gw or ww

Alternative 2. Change Season 1 trip limit to:

Sub-Alt 2a. 1,500 lbs

Sub-Alt 2b. 2,000 lbs

Sub-Alt 2c. 2,500 lbs

- Projected closure dates under the com ACL from **Action 2-Pref Alt 3** would be earlier than those shown in Appendix 3



Action 5 – Seasonal Com Trip Limits

Alternative 1 (No Action).

Season 2 (Sept-Feb): 1,000 lbs gw or ww

Alternative 3. Change Season 2 trip limit to:

Sub-Alt 3a. 1,200 lbs

Sub-Alt 3b. 1,500 lbs

Sub-Alt 3c. 2,000 lbs

Sub-Alt 3d. 2,500 lbs

- Projected closure dates under the com ACL from **Action 2-Pref Alt 3** would be earlier than those shown in Appendix 3



Action 5 – Seasonal Com Trip Limits

Alt 1 (No Action).

Season 1 (Mar-Aug): 1,200 lbs gw or ww

Season 2 (Sept-Feb): 1,000 lbs gw or ww

Alt 2. Change Season 1 trip limit to:

Sub-Alt 2a. 1,500 lbs

Sub-Alt 2b. 2,000 lbs

Sub-Alt 2c. 2,500 lbs

Alt 3. Change Season 2 trip limit to:

Sub-Alt 3a. 1,200 lbs

Sub-Alt 3b. 1,500 lbs

Sub-Alt 3c. 2,000 lbs

Sub-Alt 3d. 2,500 lbs

Previous AP Input

- Recommended that the Season 2 trip limit be increased to 1,200 lbs, same as Season 1 (**Alt 3-Sub-Alt 3a**)

AP Discussion

- Noting other changes considered, what should the seasonal com trip limits be?
- Benefits and risks of these trip limits?



Action 6 – April Spawning Closure

Alternative 1 (No Action).

- No commercial sale/purchase in April
- Possession limit (both sectors) in April is 1 fish/person/day or 1 fish/person/trip, whichever is more restrictive (same as year-round recreational bag limit)

Alternative 2. No possession for either sector in April.

Alternative 3. Remove the April Spawning Closure. Allow purchase, sale, and possession for both sectors as in other times of the year.



Action 6 – April Spawning Closure

Alternative 1 (No Action). Current closure

Alternative 2. Both sectors fully closed

Alternative 3. Both sectors fully open

- Projected closure dates under the rec ACL from **Action 2-Pref Alt 3** would be later than those shown in Appendix 3
- Alt 2 would delay estimated rec closures (5-year max only)
- Projected closure dates under the com ACL from **Action 2-Pref Alt 3** would be earlier than those shown in Appendix 3
- Alt 3 would expedite estimated com closures



Action 6 – April Spawning Closure

Alternative 1 (No Action). Current closure

Alternative 2. Both sectors fully closed

Alternative 3. Both sectors fully open

Previous AP Input

- Recommend including the recreational sector in the April closure, allowing sale of commercially-landed fish during April, or full closure of both sectors (**Alt 2**) (not unanimous)
 - Would increase equity between sectors
 - Potential biological benefit from reduced harvest during spawning

AP Discussion

- Noting other changes considered, should the April spawning closure remain the same, include a full closure of both sectors, or be removed to allow full access to both sectors in April?
- Benefits and risks of recommendation?



Action 7 – Recreational ACTs

Preferred Alt 2. Remove Recreational Annual Catch Targets from the FMP

Alt 1. Retain recreational ACTs

- ACTs are intended to be indicated when recreational landings are approaching the ACL, considering uncertainty of recreational data (PSE)
- Not codified and not currently used in the Snapper Grouper FMP
- Currently, as part of the FMP, must be evaluated and changed as the rec ACL changes

Previous AP Input

- Remove recreational ACTs (**Preferred Alt 2**)



A school of blue fish swimming in dark water near a coral reef. The fish are arranged in a loose formation, swimming towards the right. The background is dark, and the coral is visible on the right side.

Additional Questions/Discussion