

# FWC Atlantic Red Snapper EFP Project: Year 1



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

SAFMC Snapper Grouper AP: April 2026



# FWC Atlantic Red Snapper EFP Projects

- 3 unique EFP Projects
- **Year 1:** August 2024 – July 2025
- **Goals**
  - Collaborate with anglers to obtain catch and discard data
  - Test innovative strategies to reduce discards
  - Allow additional red snapper harvest
  - Develop reporting app and education course
  - Evaluate angler satisfaction

**Year 1  
Complete!**

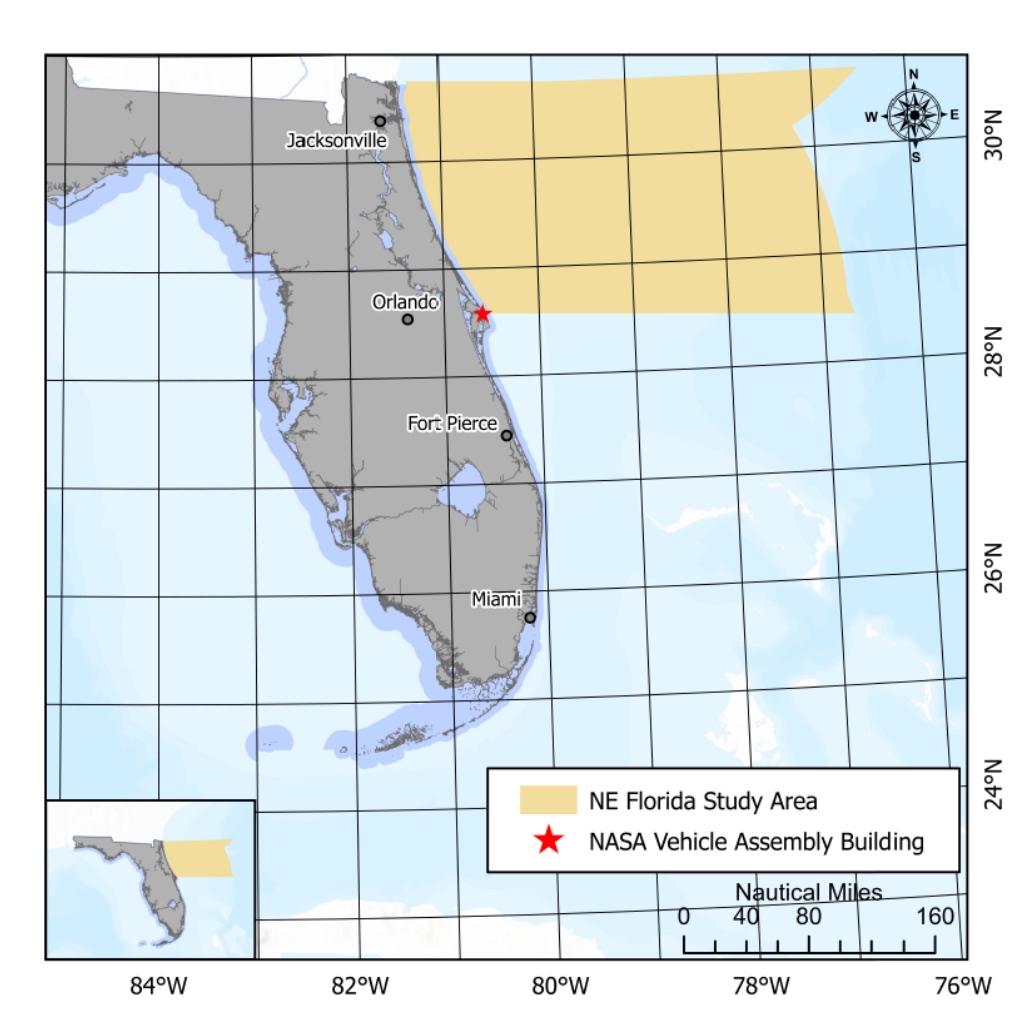


Photo courtesy of Capt. Robert Holmquist



# Study Area

## NE Florida



## SE Florida



	<b>Study Fleet</b>	<b>Hot Spot Fleet</b>	<b>SE Florida Snapper Grouper Fleet</b>
<b>Where:</b>	NE Florida		SE Florida
<b>Who:</b>	Private and for-hire vessels	Private anglers	
<b># of Participants:</b>	Total: 40 (10/quarter)	Total: 800 (200/quarter)	
<b>Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Test 15 fish aggregate bag limit</li> <li>- Full retention of red snapper (up to 60 vessel)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Test 15 fish aggregate bag limit</li> <li>- Add. red snapper harvest opportunities (bag limit of 3 pp)</li> <li>- Experimental and control group selected via lottery</li> </ul>	
<b>Angler Requirements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education course</li> <li>- Hail in/Hail out</li> <li>- Data validation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customized app for reporting</li> <li>- Angler satisfaction surveys</li> <li>- Angler incentives</li> </ul>	



# Proposal Components

## Aggregate Bag Limit

- Designed to hit bag limit quicker, stop bottom fishing; thereby reducing discards
- Considers current federal regs, species stock status

## Education Course

- 3 modules focused on project, best fishing practices, and fish ID
- Designed to educate participants and disseminate information

## Customized App

- Include hail out, trip information, species catch and discards
- Testing angler self-reported data

## Angler Satisfaction Surveys

- Pre and post surveys; semi-structure interviews
- Focused on understanding angler behavior and drivers



# EFP Application Summary: Year 1



	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
	Aug. – Oct.	Nov. – Jan.	Feb. – April	May – July
Applications Received	7,722	3,524	5,052	5,830
Participants Selected	410	410	410	410

*Over 22,100 applications in Year 1!*



# Year 1: Project Statistics

22,100+  
applicants

1,230  
participants

1,019  
fleet trips  
completed

866  
education courses  
completed

5,019  
red snapper  
otoliths collected

5,615  
red snapper  
harvested

5,395  
red snapper sampled



Photo courtesy of Sam Talluto



# Year 1: Data Collected

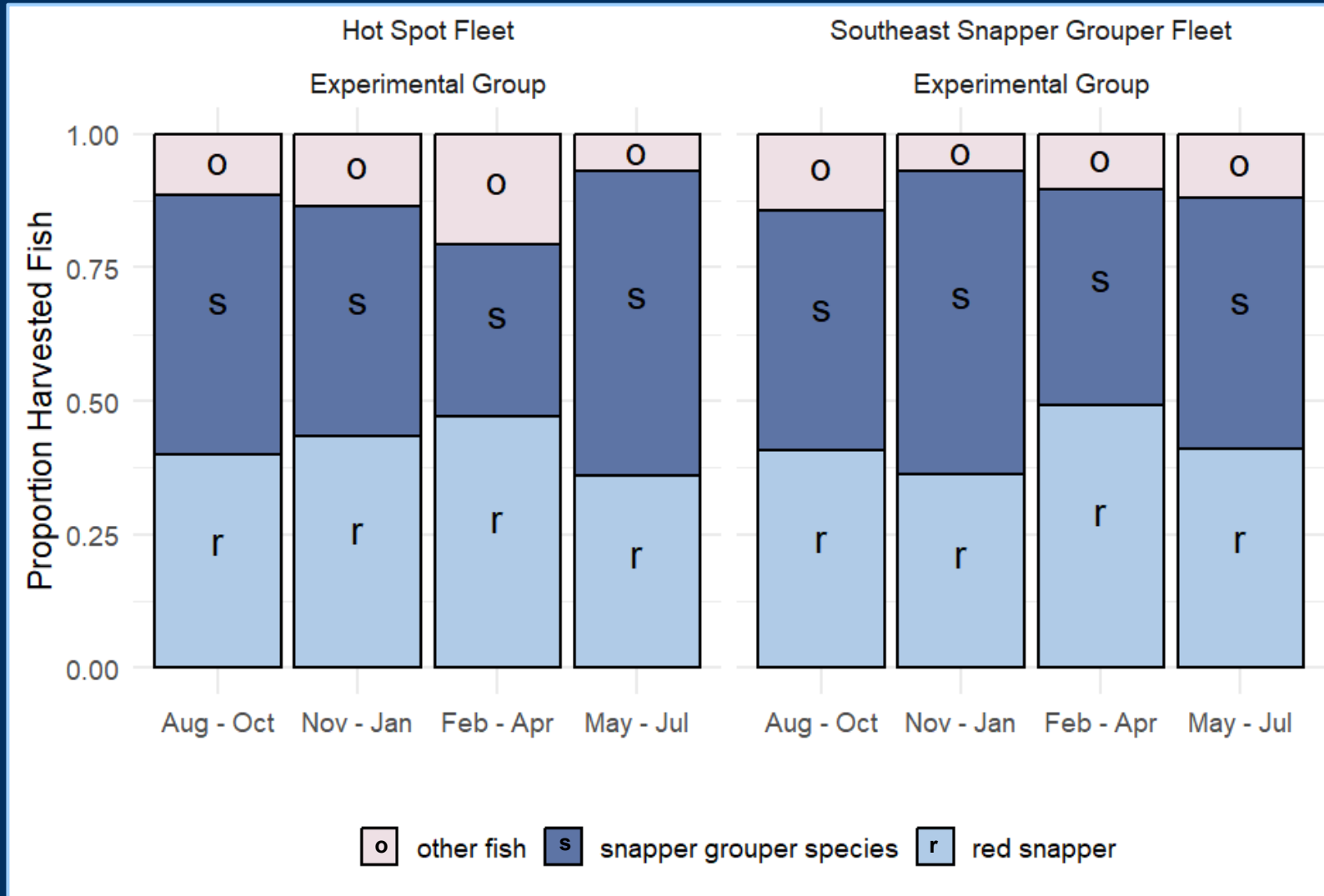
- Aggregate bag limit
- Fishing trip details
  - Time fished, depth, weather
- Seasonal variation
- Catch composition
  - Species, length, age
- Effort by quarter
- Reported harvest and discards
- Fleet comparison
- Angler satisfaction
- Multiple validation methods



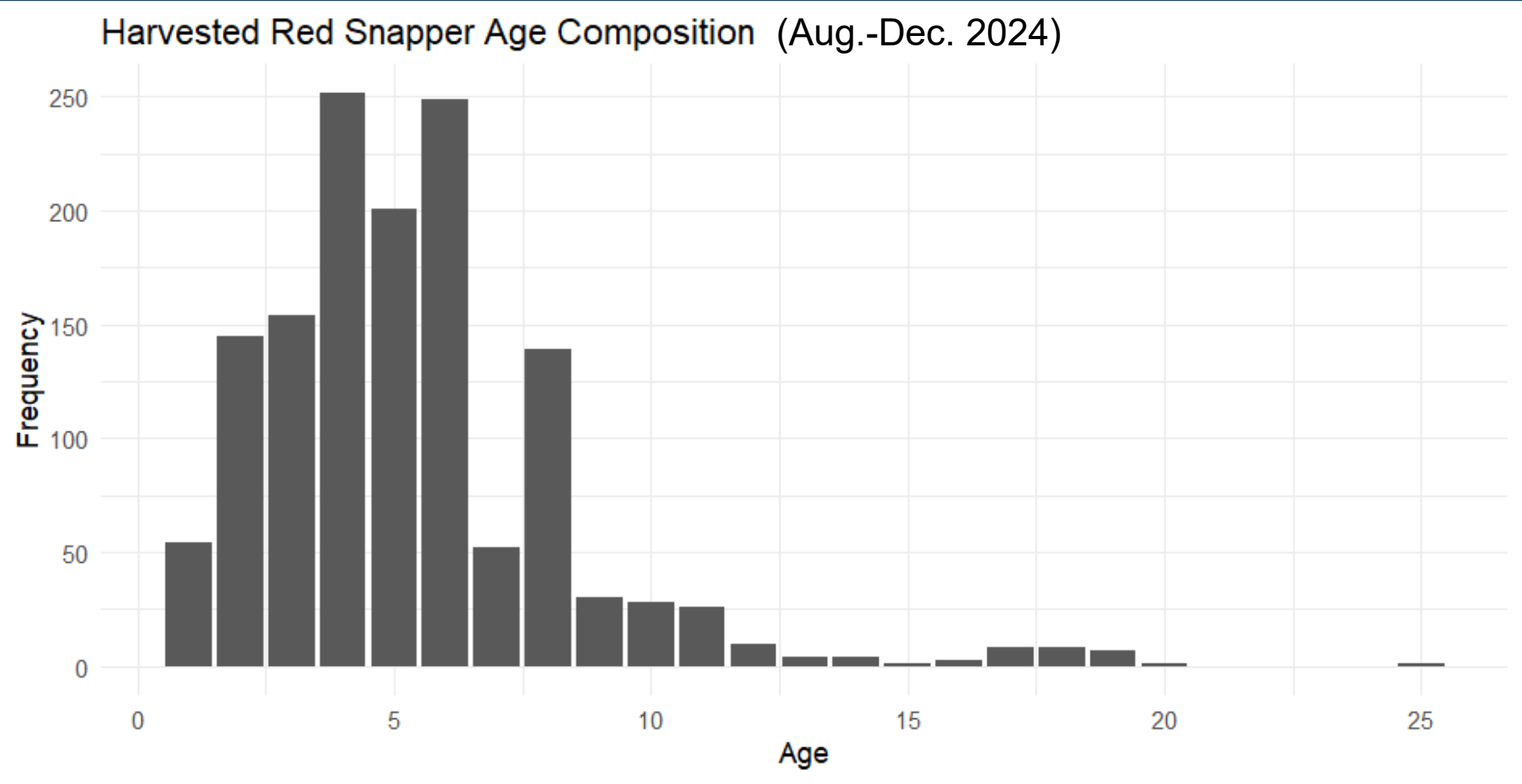
*Additional analyses ongoing!*



# Harvested Species Composition

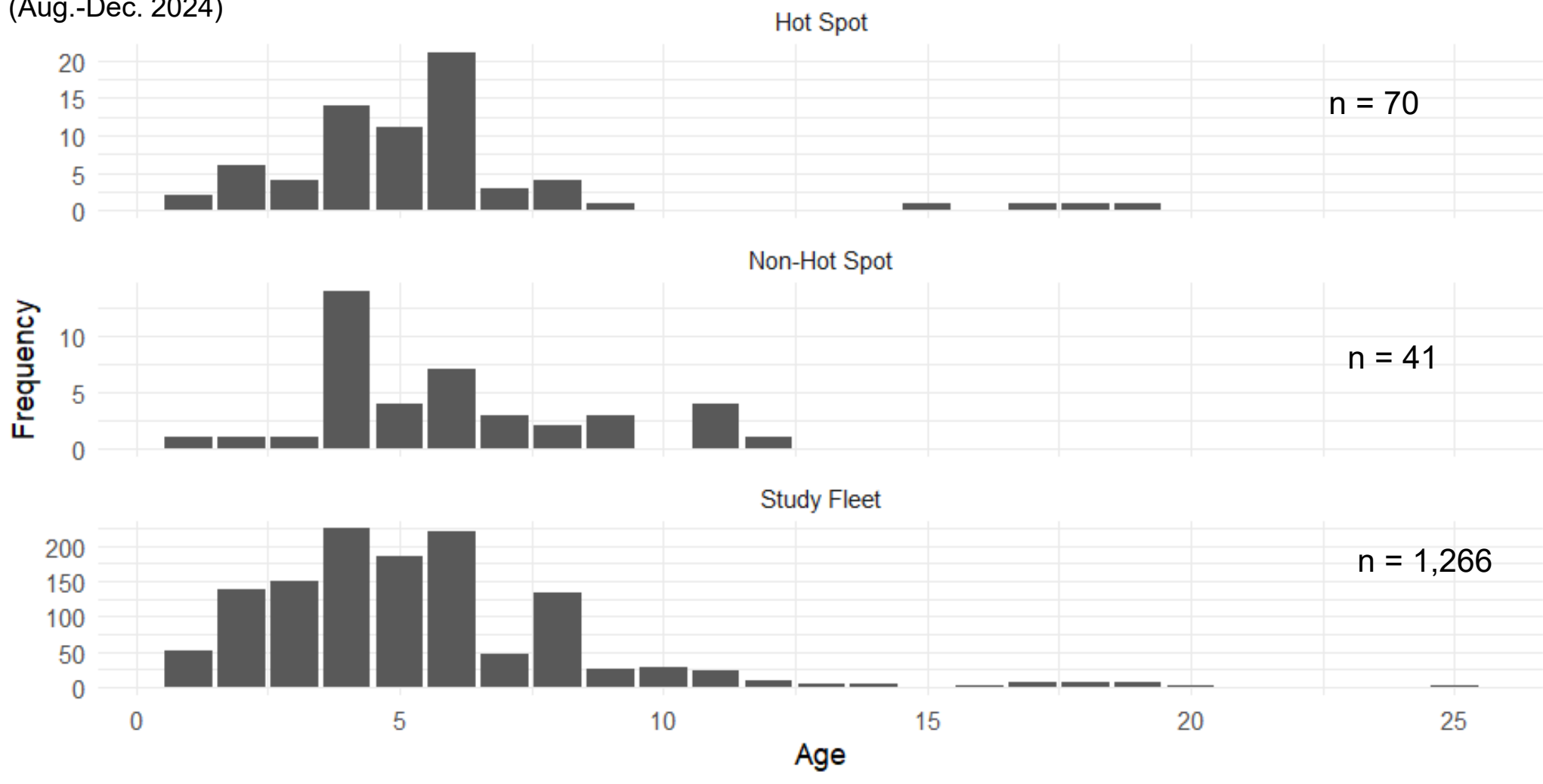


# Harvested RS Age Composition Across Fleets

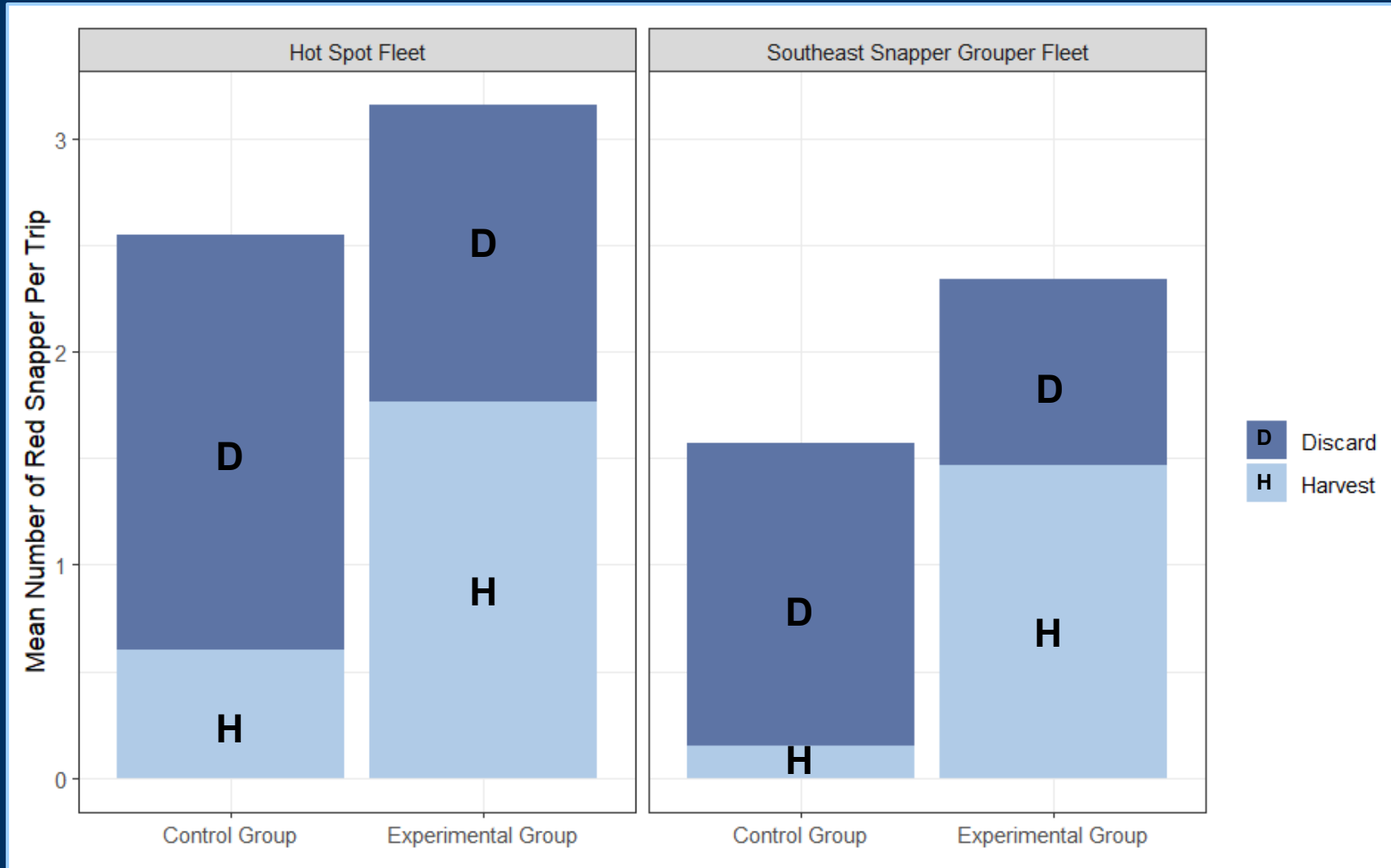


# Harvested RS Age Composition by Fleet

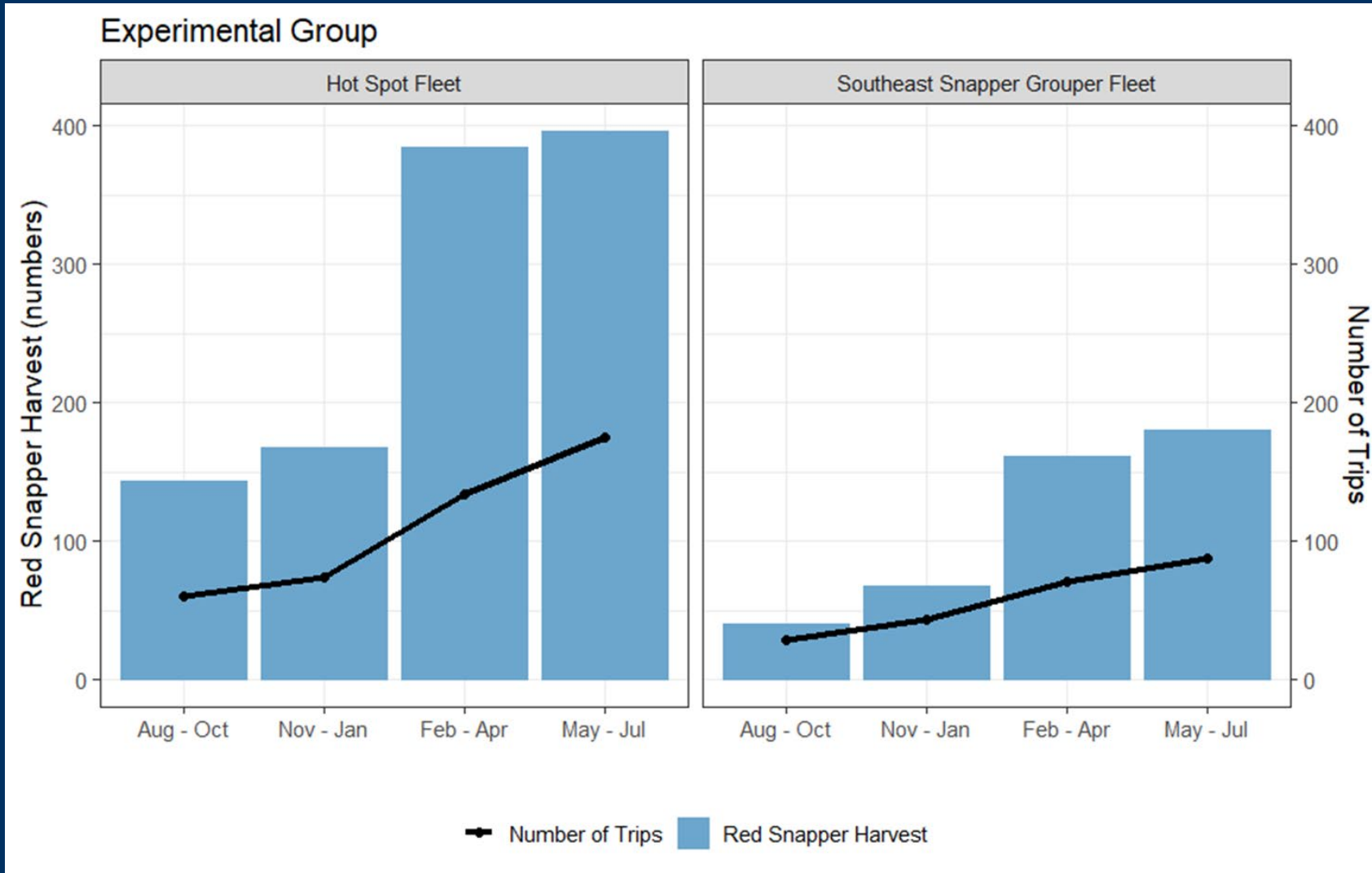
(Aug.-Dec. 2024)



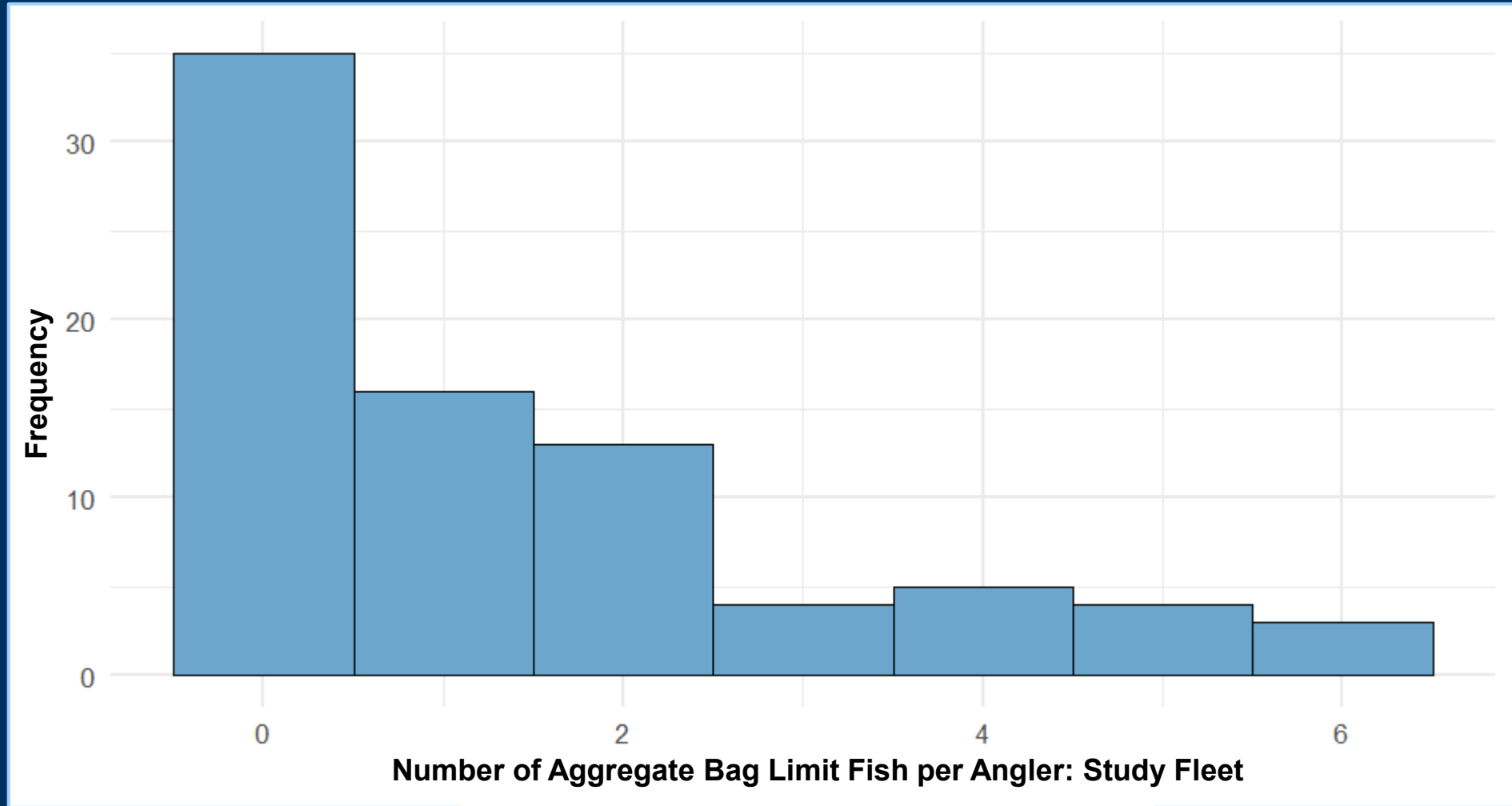
# Red Snapper Discards



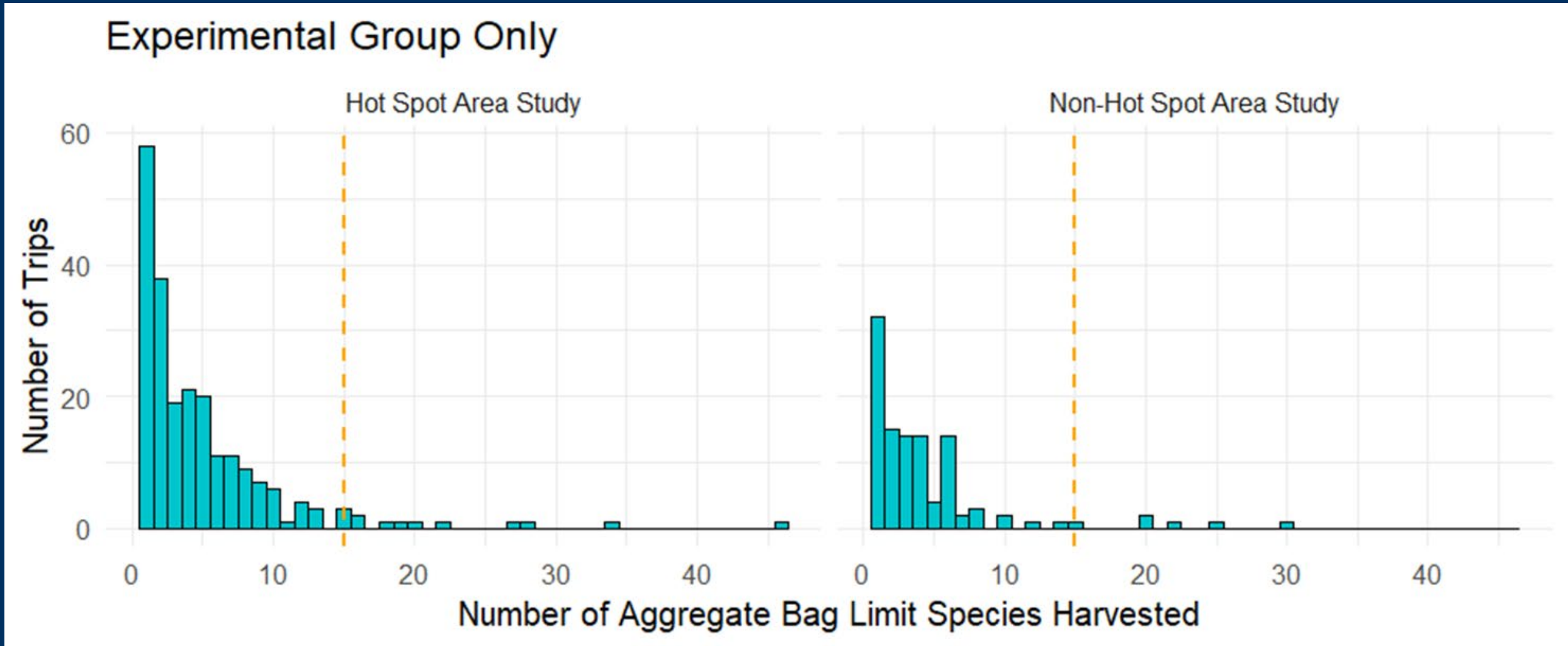
# Red Snapper Harvest by Quarter



# Snapper Grouper Aggregate Harvest: Study Fleet

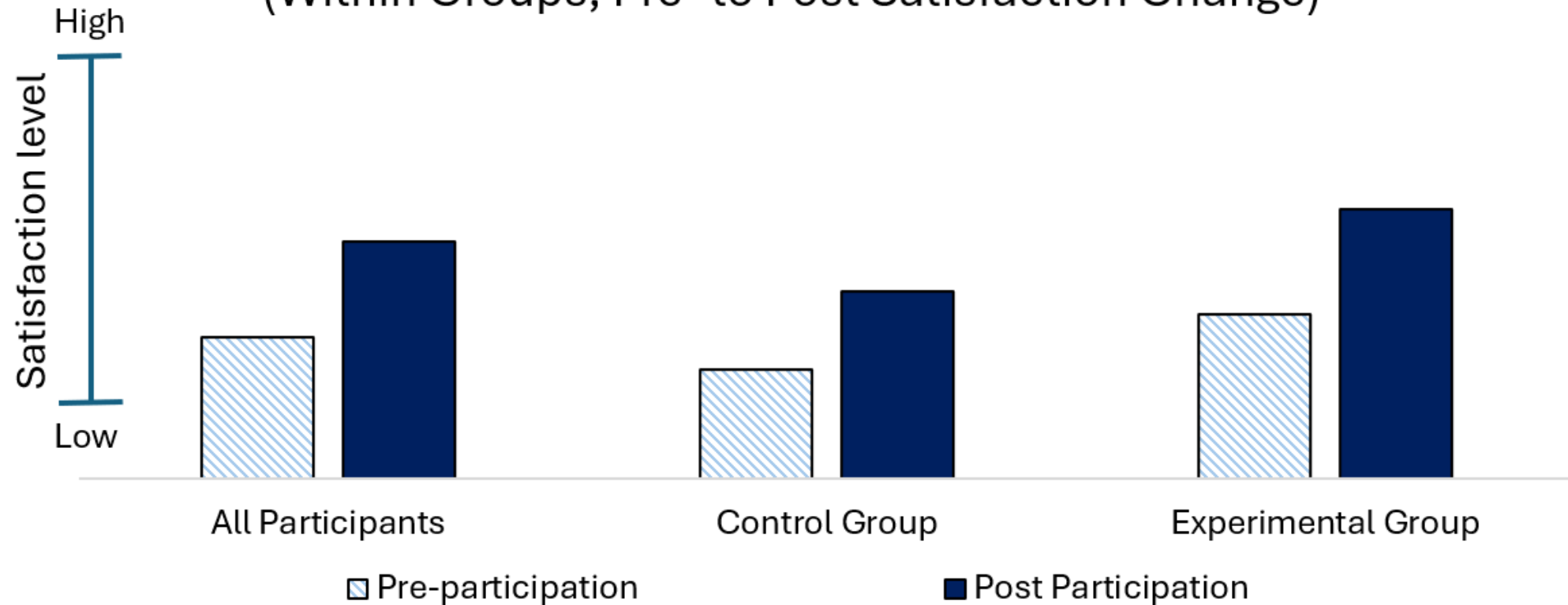


# Snapper Grouper Aggregate Harvest: Lottery Fleets



# Angler Satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction with Reef Fishing in South Atlantic  
(Within Groups, Pre- to Post Satisfaction Change)



# Year 1: Takeaways

- Strong cross- agency coordination and cooperation
- 15-fish snapper grouper aggregate is too large
- Anglers content with being able to hit their red snapper limit and stop bottom fishing
- Discards are reduced; turning discards into harvest
- Effort varies by season
- Anglers support reporting data to FWC
- Participation increased angler satisfaction
- Positive feedback with high interest



*Additional analyses ongoing!*



# Lessons Learned

- Keep requirements minimal to ensure participation
- Not all fishing days are created equal
- Anglers are open and responsive to change in fishing behavior and management strategies
- Anglers are willing and eager to assist in providing better data
- Building trust and relationships is key to conserving resource



Photo courtesy of Hudson Davis

*Results informed FWC state management EFP proposal*



# FWC Atlantic Red Snapper EFP Project: Year 2

- Continuation of Year 1
- Changes include:
  - Adding headboat component
  - Modifying red snapper retention limits
  - Adjusting snapper grouper aggregate
  - Removing control group
  - Streamlining data reporting

*Quarter 3 is underway!*



Photo courtesy of Jesse Bowling



# Thank you to all participants, sponsors, and supporters of the project!



# Questions?



# 2026 RED SNAPPER EFP APPLICATIONS



- All South Atlantic states have submitted applications for exempted fishing permits (EFP) for data collection and alternative management of their red snapper recreational fisheries
- EFP: Permit issued by NOAA Fisheries (or regional authorities) that authorizes fishing activities which would otherwise be prohibited under federal regulations.
  - Allow for experimental fishing, gear testing, or scientific data collection—such as landing undersized fish—that support fishery management and research
- Comment period closed on March 10, 2026
- Next step: NOAA Fisheries will determine whether the applications are approved
- To view the applications and follow the process: visit the [NOAA Fisheries Web Page](#)