



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Date Issued: 12/22/2017

Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass 2018 Commercial Quotas and Recreational Harvest Limits

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

We have published a final rule that implements the following measures:

1. Revised 2018 scup (porgy) commercial and recreational catch limits;
2. A commercial summer flounder (fluke) accountability measure that adjusts the 2018 annual catch target and quota because of a prior year overage;
3. Revised 2018 summer flounder state quotas to account for the adjusted quota; and
4. A continuation of the commercial summer flounder closure in Delaware in 2018.

The 2018 black sea bass catch limits are unchanged from those implemented last year but are repeated here for ease of reference.

Revised Scup Specifications

2018-2019 Scup Specifications, in millions of pounds.

	2018	2019*
Commercial Annual Catch Limit	30.53	28.42
Commercial Annual Catch Target	28.42	28.42
Commercial Quota	23.98	23.98
Recreational Annual Catch Limit	8.61	8.01
Recreational Annual Catch Target	8.01	8.01
Recreational Harvest Limit	7.37	7.37

* Preliminary, final 2019 specifications incorporating any overages will be announced in late 2018.

Scup initial commercial quota allocations for 2018 and Initial Trip Limits, in pounds.

Season	Percent Share	Quota ¹	Possession Limits (per trip) ²
Winter I	45.11	10,820,000	50,000
Summer	38.95	9,340,986	--
Winter II	15.94	3,822,816	12,000
Total	100.0	23,983,802	

¹There were no applicable overages through 10/31/17.

²The Winter I possession limit will drop to 1,000 lb upon attainment of 80 percent of that period's allocation. The Winter II possession limit may be adjusted (in association with a transfer of unused Winter I quota to the Winter II period) via notification in the *Federal Register*.

Summer Flounder Specifications

Commercial Summer Flounder Quota Adjustment

In 2016, estimated discards were higher than expected, resulting in the annual catch limit being exceeded. The commercial summer flounder accountability measure requires that the amount of the total commercial overage (i.e., discards and landings) be deducted from a subsequent year's catch target. As such, the 2018 annual catch target is reduced by **191,218 lb.** Using the projected discards for 2018, the final 2018 commercial summer flounder quota is **6,436,120 lb.** The revised 2018 quota is still 13.7 percent higher than that in place for 2017.

Commercial Summer Flounder State Quotas

To account for this adjusted 2018 quota, as well as any other overages incurred by individual states, we've outlined updated 2018 flounder state quotas in the table below.

2018 State-By-State Commercial Summer Flounder Quotas, in pounds

	FMP Percent Share	2018 Initial Quota	2018 Adjusted Quota (2016 ACL overage deducted)	2017 Preliminary Overages ¹	Adjusted 2018 Quota, Less Overages ²
Maine	0.04756	3,152	3,061	0	3,061
New Hampshire	0.00046	30	30	0	30
Massachusetts	6.82046	451,998	438,973	37,816	401,157
Rhode Island	15.68298	1,039,326	1,009,375	13,002	996,373
Connecticut	2.25708	149,579	145,268	0	145,268
New York	7.64699	506,773	492,169	0	492,169
New Jersey	16.72499	1,108,381	1,076,440	0	1,076,440
Delaware	0.01779	1,179	1,145	49,638	-48,493
Maryland	2.0391	135,133	131,239	0	131,239
Virginia	21.31676	1,412,682	1,371,972	0	1,371,972
North Carolina	27.44584	1,818,862	1,766,447	0	1,766,447
Total	100	6,627,096	6,436,120	0	6,384,158

¹2017 quota overage is determined through comparison of landings for January through October 2017 plus any landings in 2016 in excess of the 2016 quota that were not previously addressed in the 2017 quota specifications.

²Total quota is the sum of all states having allocation. A state with a negative number has an allocation of zero (0).

Delaware Commercial Summer Flounder Closure

The amount of overharvest from previous years is again greater than the amount of commercial quota allocated to Delaware for 2018. As a result, there is no quota available for 2018 in Delaware and the commercial fishery is closed. Effective January 1, 2018, landings of summer flounder in Delaware by vessels holding commercial Federal summer flounder permits are prohibited for the 2018 calendar year. If a quota transfer occurs and the commercial fishery in Delaware is opened, we will announce the changes in the *Federal Register* and notify you in another fishery bulletin.

Black Sea Bass Specifications

The current 2018 black sea bass specifications have not changed since they were approved as projected last May 2017.

2018 Black Sea Bass Specifications, in millions of pounds.

	2018
Commercial Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target	4.35
Commercial Quota	3.52
Recreational Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target	4.59
Recreational Harvest Limit	3.66

Recreational Fishing Measures

The management measures for the recreational summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries will be finalized through a separate rulemaking in the spring of 2018. We will notify you with another bulletin when they are complete.