



COASTAL RESOURCES DIVISION
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COMMISSIONER

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Finfish Advisory Panel

November 2, 2021 – 5:00PM-7:00PM
In-Person (Shipman Building, CRH Brunswick)
and Virtual Meeting (4:45PM – log on to Zoom)

- 5:00 Welcome & Introduction of New Members
- 5:10 Approve Agenda & June 2021 Meeting Summary
- 5:15 Coastal Resources Division Updates
 - CARES Act 2.0 & shrimp fishery disaster funds
 - SAFMC open seats
 - Reef deployments
- 5:30 Discussion of Potential GADNR Rule Changes
- 5:50 Red Drum Informational Updates
- 7:00 Adjourn

To join the meeting virtually through Zoom, click the web address below.

The meeting will begin at 5PM, so please log on by 4:45 to confirm connectivity.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87972113508?pwd=eHlrcWxFVzI5ZktxejhxeExXQTFuZz09>



Finfish Advisory Panel

Tuesday, November 2, 2021

Please stay tuned. The meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m.

Agenda

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Potential GADNR Rule Changes

Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.)

Title 27 Game & Fish (primarily license fees, penalties & comm)

Changes occur through legislation

Authorizes Board to promulgate rules & regs for fishing

Rules & Regulations of the State of Georgia

Title 391 Rules of Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Chapter 391-2-4 “Saltwater Fishing Regulations” authorizes

- Board of Natural Resources with 18 Sections of regulations
- e.g., eel, shad, shrimp, crab, rec & comm fishing
- Process of “Rule Making” includes public notice & Board action with GADNR Board meeting monthly

Potential GADNR Regulatory Changes



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

- Partnership of 15 Atlantic coast states
- Works for the conservation & management of shared near shore fishery resources (0-3 miles)

Bluefish Coastal assessment: stock is overfished

States have 2 options

- Adopt coastwide ASMFC measures: 3-fish rec and 5-fish for-hire creel
- Offer “Conservation Equivalency” option: allows states flexibility to develop alternate regulations still achieve coastal objectives
 - Required GA decrease in coastwide rec harvest = 8.13%
 - Achieve estimated 13.1% decrease by closing March & April harvest (2020 & 2021)



CRD has decided to continue to annually close March & April via Administrative Order by DNR Commissioner rather than codify through Board Rule.

Potential GADNR Regulatory Changes



South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

- Conservation & management of stocks 3-200 miles offshore
- Proposed rule changes are sent to NMFS for review & final approval by Secretary of Commerce

Dolphin (federal waters)

- Sept 2021 Council meeting: amendment for proposed rule being prepared for submission to NMFS
- Decrease vessel creel limit for rec and charter vessels from 60 to 54 fish
- Individual creel limit 10 per person or 54 per vessel, whichever is less



Current Georgia state water dolphin regulations: 10 per person not to exceed 60 per boat.

If approved by NMFS, recommend state regs changed through Board Rule to match federal.
Estimated impact: <0.1% of Georgia angler trips.

Potential GADNR Regulatory Changes



NOAA Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS)

- Most federal water species are managed through Councils
- HMS species found throughout Atlantic, GOM & Caribbean and thus NOAA has primary management authority (HMS Management Division)
- Strictly managed with required rec & charter vessel permit & reporting
- In addition to minimum sizes, annual US landings limit of 250 Atlantic blue marlin, white marlin & roundscale spearfish (combined).

Current GA Board Rule for sailfish, blue & white marlin:

“No open season has been established by the Board of Natural Resources.”

CRD recommends state regs changed through Board Rule

- Match federal minimum sizes
 - 63-inch, 99-inch & 66-inch LJFL (respectively)
- Season: only open when allowed by applicable federal law



Potential GADNR Regulatory Changes

Sometimes inquiries lead to recommended changes

- Current GA Tarpon regs = minimum 68” FL allows for possible record landing
- Primarily catch & release with anglers seeking photos holding fish prior to release
- Being lifted from the water can reduce ability to survive
 - Damage to jaw and gills
 - If lifted into boat, easy to drop when fish “kicks”
 - Intense innate fight when caught & leads to oxygen depletion, often severe

Recommend add to Board Rule

“Tarpon over 40-inch fork length must remain in the water at all times, with gear limited to hook and line, and no gaffing.”



Potential GADNR Regulatory Changes

Pacific White Shrimp



Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species

“A certain percentage of non-native species, introduced either intentionally or unintentionally, have harmful or damaging effects on the ecosystem that is invaded, causing extensive changes to the native vegetation (plants), wildlife, and the habitat.”

Angler & Guide Satisfaction Survey

2017 survey GA licensed residents: 1,965 anglers and 83 guides (62%)

- Anglers: SIP permit holders who saltwater fished in previous 12 months
- 171-page report includes survey questions & summary of results
- Responses from anglers and guides presented separately

2022 survey

- ~85% of 2017 survey questions will be repeated verbatim
 - New aspect is comparison between 2017 & 2022 responses
- New questions relate primarily to opinions related to flounder & sheephead
 - Red Drum specific: circle hook use, if yes, short leader circle hook use
 - Nighttime fishing
 - Flounder specific: what fishing method(s) used
- Deleted questions:
 - General CRD questions: focused on Marine Fisheries
 - Offshore & artificial reef use questions: focused on 4 marine finfish species

Angler & Guide Satisfaction Survey

Question template: red drum, spotted seatrout, flounder & sheephead

Do you typically fish for (species) in Georgia?

(remainder of species-specific questions are only asked if reply = yes)

During the past 12 months, how many days did you fish for (species) in Georgia?

From which coastal counties do you usually depart to fish for (species)?

In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your (species) fishing?

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the number of (species) you catch?

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the average size of the (species) you catch?

Of all the (species) you catch that are of legal size to keep, approximately what percentage do you release back into the water when fishing in Georgia?

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the current fishing regulations for (species)?

(Asked of those dissatisfied with regulations) In a few brief words, what would make you more satisfied with (species) regulations in Georgia?

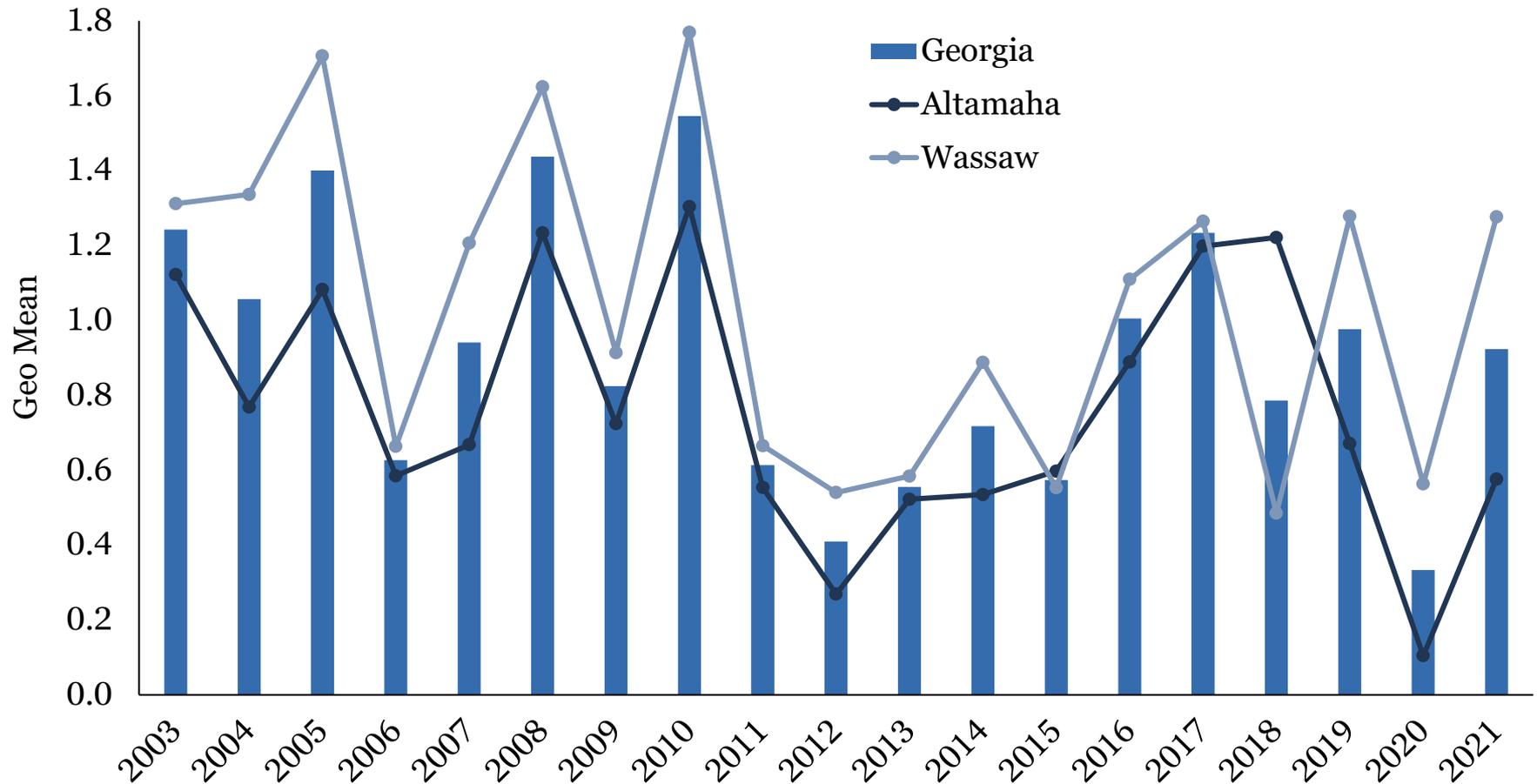


Red Drum Updates 2021

Mission Statement:

To balance coastal development and protection of the coast's natural assets, socio-cultural heritage and recreational resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

2021 Gill Net Survey



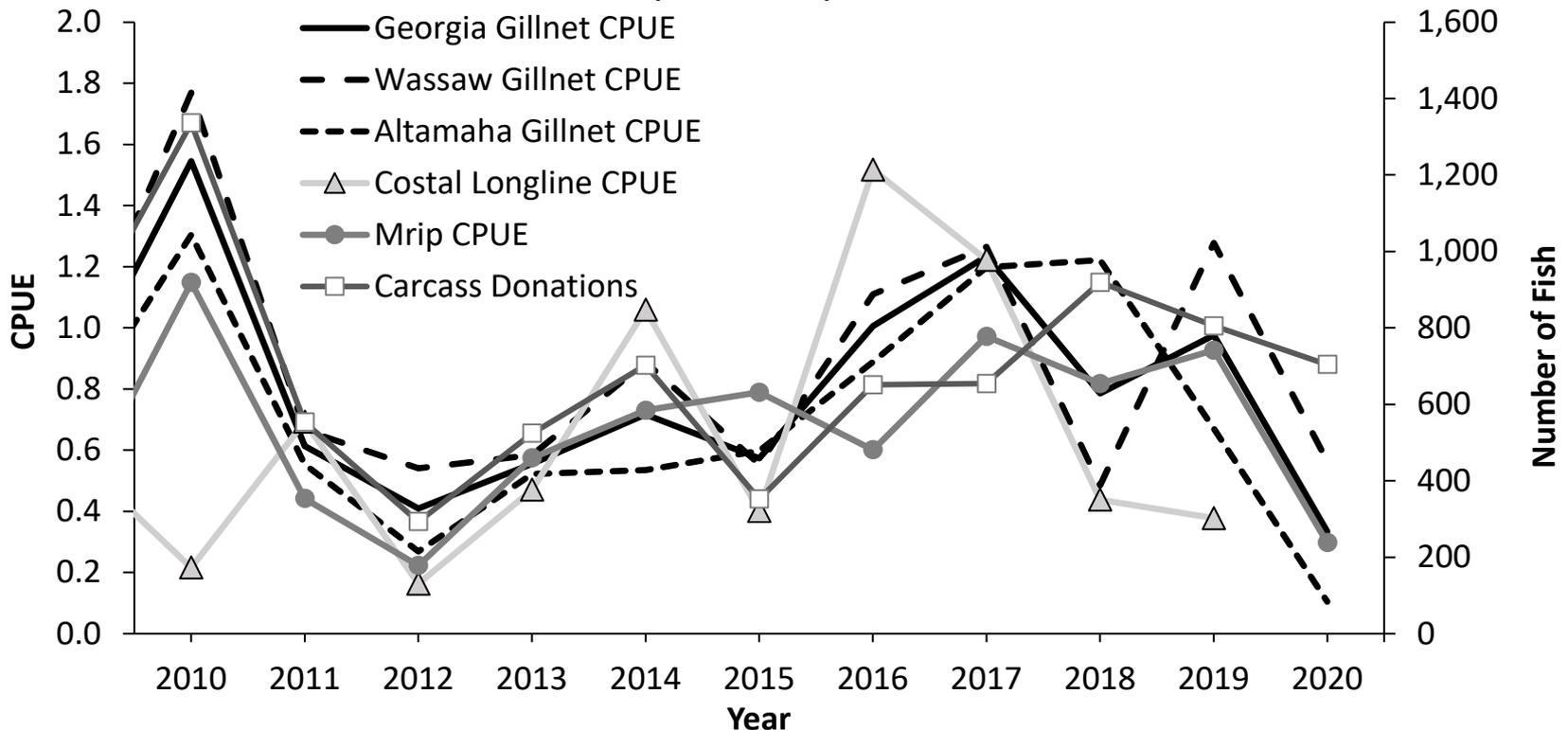
2021 numbers were up from 2020's lows
Wassaw highest CPUE since 2010

Gill Net Survey Takeaways

- Fitting linear trend line to gillnet data has issues
 - Sampling changed in 2009 based on recommendations from ASMFC regional stock assessment
 - Numbers before 2010 are not directly comparable to those after

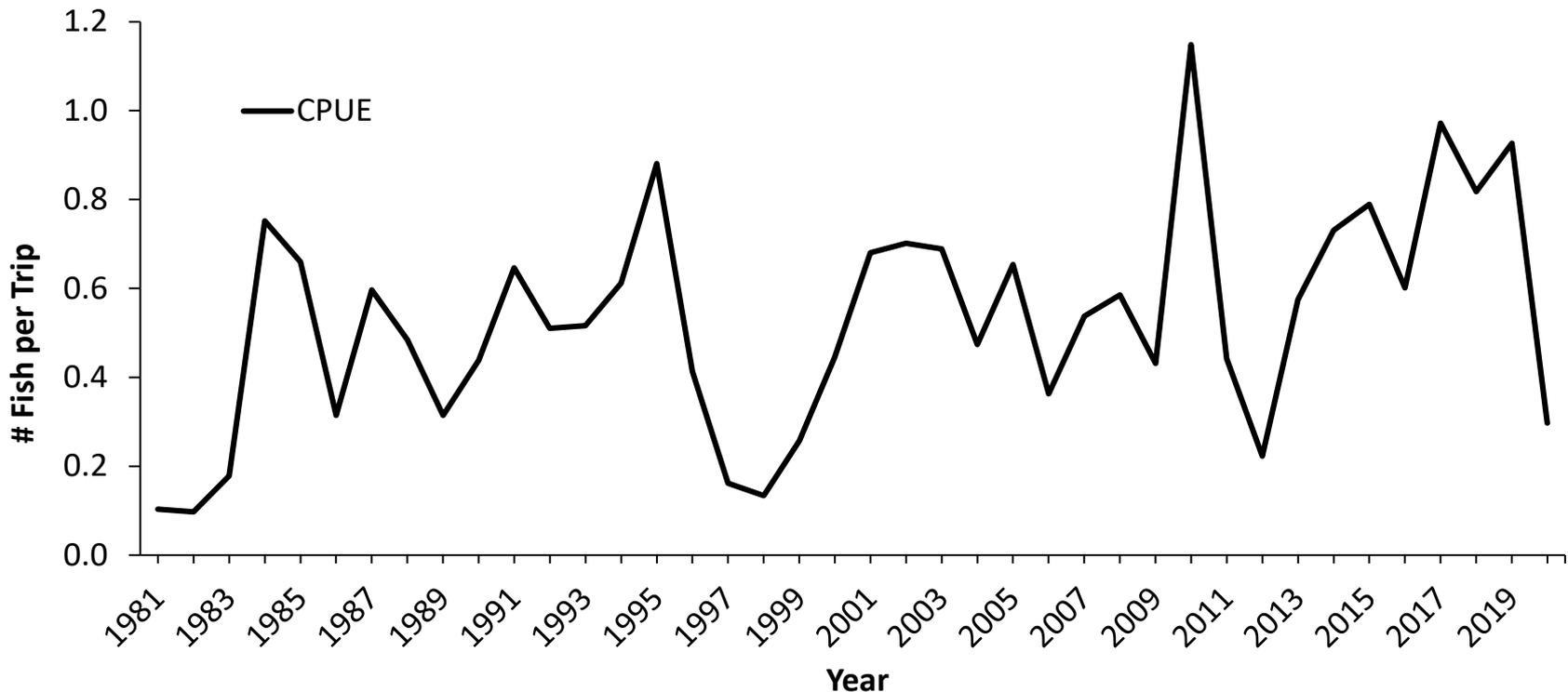
Gill Net Survey Takeaways

- Fitting linear trend line to gillnet data has issues
 - Sampling changed in 2009 based on recommendations from ASMFC regional stock assessment
 - Numbers before 2010 are not directly comparable to those after
- Gillnet data is not our only survey for Red Drum

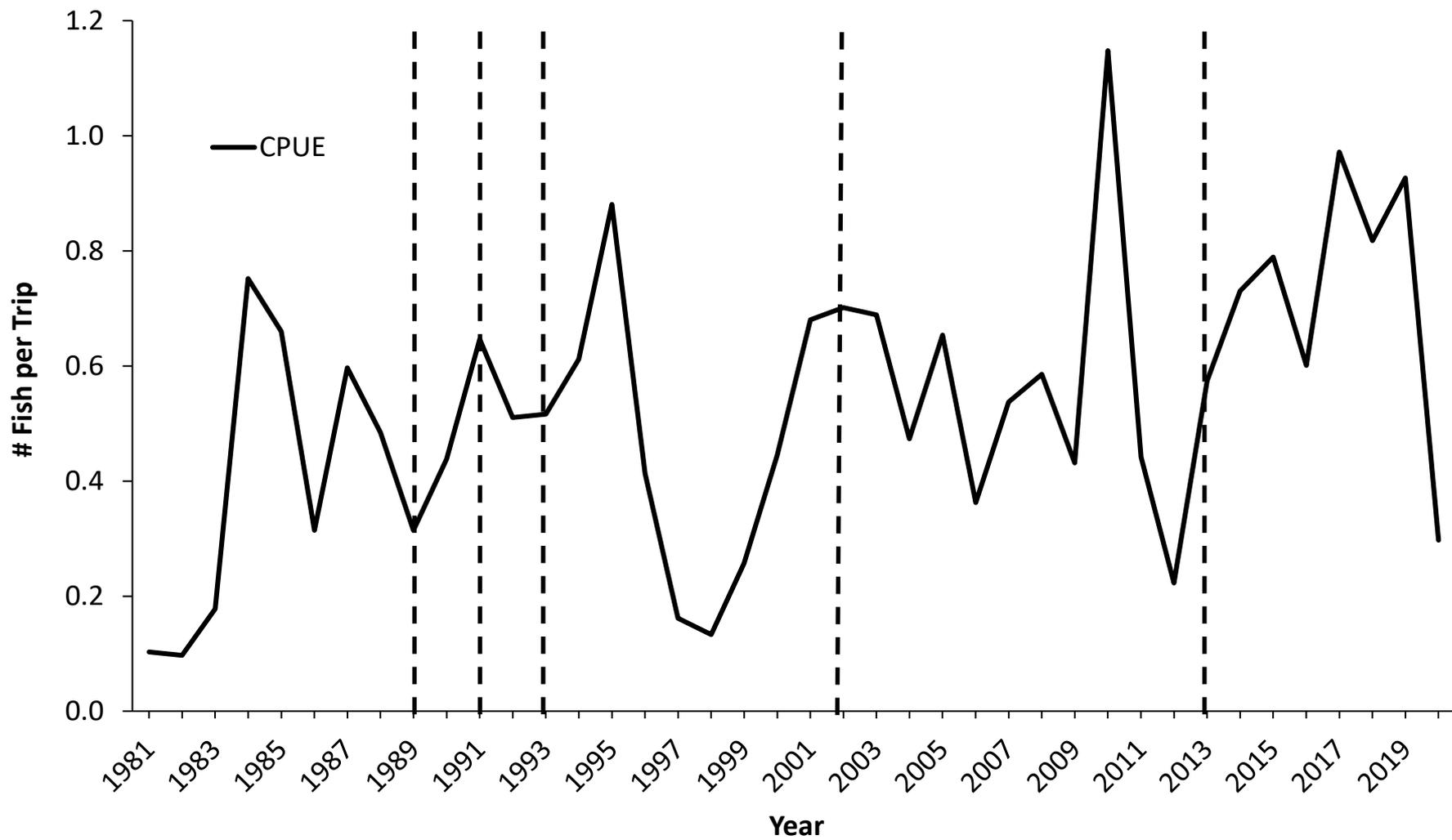


Gill Net Survey Takeaways

- Fitting linear trend line to gillnet data has issues
 - Sampling changed in 2009 based on recommendations from ASMFC regional stock assessment
 - Numbers before 2010 are not directly comparable to those after
- Gillnet data is a relatively short survey based on time



MRIP CPUE



Results – Cooperative Tag Deployments 2020-21

	Cooperative Taggers			Staff Taggers			Grand Total
	Single	Double	Total	Single	Double	Total	
Savannah River	13	3	16			0	16
Wassaw	47	1	48	367	37	404	452
Ossabaw	126		126			0	126
St. Catherines	109		109			0	109
McQueen Inlet	30	11	41			0	41
Cabretta Inlet	1		1			0	1
Sapelo	361	62	423	29	5	34	457
Doboy	94	5	99	63	7	70	169
Altamaha	28		28	7		7	35
Hampton River	27		27	59	6	65	92
Village Creek	44		44	5	1	6	50
St. Simons	349	22	371	117	22	139	510
St. Andrew	86	1	87	201	17	218	305
Cumberland	111		111	31	3	34	145
Offshore	4		4			0	4
Total	1,430	104	1,535	879	98	977	2,512

* Additionally, 73 high reward tags have been deployed by staff taggers

Regional Stock Assessment

- Analysis is nearly finalized
- Report writing is underway
- First draft ready by early December
- Next is peer review