2014-2015 Statewide Process

- Scoping meetings January 7-9
- TPWD Commission meeting January 22-23
- If decided, proposals published in TX Register
- Statewide Public Hearings
- TPWD Commission meeting March 26-27
- If enacted, changes effective September 1, 2014
Southern Flounder
Current Flounder Regulations

• As of Sept 1, 2009:
  – Recreational possession limit reduced to 5, except in November when it is 2
  – Commercial possession limit reduced to 30, except in November when it is 2
  – No gigging allowed in November
Flounder Management Options

- Depending on the arrival of the first cold fronts, the flounder run may occur earlier or later than the month of November
  - Extend the November regulations for additional conservation of spawning flounder
  - Include a sunset provision
  - No action – maintain status quo
Flounder Management Options

• Extend the November regulations to:
  – Last week of October
  – Last two weeks of October
  – First week of December
  – First two weeks of December
  – Combinations of 1-4 above
  – Entire month of December
Percent of Commercial Flounder Harvest by Month

- Before Gigging Ban
- After Gigging Ban

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec
Percent of Recreational Flounder Harvest by Month

Daytime landings only
Benefits from 2009 Regulations

- Commercial landings reduced 30% in first year
- Recreational landings reduced 32% in first year
- November market glut eliminated
- Reduces opportunity for sport gig fishery to illegally sell their catch
- Flounder population increased 180% in 3 years
Coastwide Gill Nets
Southern Flounder

1983 freeze
1989 freeze
1999 freeze
2010 & 2011 freezes

12” minimum size
14” minimum size
November gigging ban
## Predicted Effects of Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closure</th>
<th>Effect on Landings</th>
<th>Effect on Spawning Biomass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last week of October</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>+2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last 2 weeks of October</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>+6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First week of December</td>
<td>-3.5%</td>
<td>+7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last week of October and first week of December</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First 2 weeks of December</td>
<td>-7%</td>
<td>+14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last 2 weeks of October and first 2 weeks of December</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>+20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>-14%</td>
<td>+29.0%</td>
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</table>
Spotted Seatratout
Current Regulations

• 10 fish daily bag
• 15” minimum size
• One over 25” per person per day, counts as part of daily bag
• Special regulation for the LLM (2007)
  – Reduced bag limit to 5 fish
  – Possession limit equals bag limit
SST Management Options

• Extend the 5-fish bag and possession limit along the entire Texas coast
• Extend the 5-fish bag and possession limit along the coast from the upper Laguna Madre to East Matagorda Bay (excludes Galveston Bay and Sabine Lake)
• Include a sunset provision to #1 and #2 above
• No action – maintain status quo
Effect of the 5-Fish Bag Limit in the Lower Laguna Madre

- Landings have been reduced
- More, larger trout in the population
- Reports of high grading, or culling of fish
- Non-compliance
Lower Laguna Madre Spotted Seatrout Bag Distribution

Private boats, 2004-2012; Regulation implemented Sept 1, 2007
Lower Laguna Madre Spotted Seatrout Bag Distribution

12% reduction in landings

Number per angler

5 fish bag limit  10 fish bag limit

Party boats, 2004-2012; Regulation implemented Sept 1, 2007
Spring Gill Nets by Region
Spotted Seatrout

Number per hour

- Upper Coast
- Middle Coast
- Lower Coast
- Lower Laguna

Year:
- 1982
- 1984
- 1986
- 1988
- 1990
- 1992
- 1994
- 1996
- 1998
- 2000
- 2002
- 2004
- 2006
- 2008
- 2010
- 2012
Spotted Seatrout
Mean Lengths from Gill Nets

Length (in)

14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Upper Coast  Middle Coast  Lower Coast  Lower Laguna

# Predicted Effects of Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Spawning Biomass</th>
<th>Change of fish ≥ 25”</th>
<th>Population of fish ≥ 25”</th>
<th>Landings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastwide</td>
<td>+4.8%</td>
<td>+16.6%</td>
<td>+42.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>-13.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ULM to Matagorda</td>
<td>+4.5%</td>
<td>+16.4%</td>
<td>+41.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>-13.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status quo</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where to Provide Comment

- TPWD Website
  - http://www.tpwd.texas.gov
- SWFishComments
  - SWFishComments@tpwd.texas.gov
- Art Morris
  - art.morris@tpwd.texas.gov
- Jeremy Leitz
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