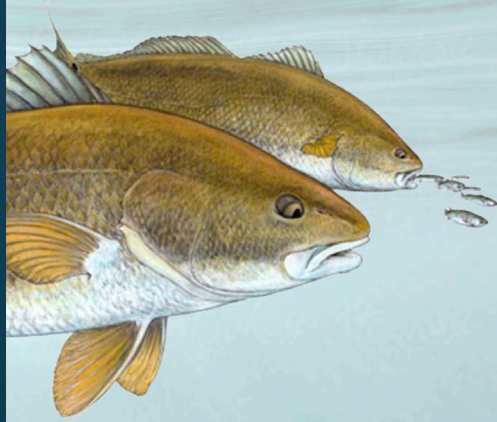


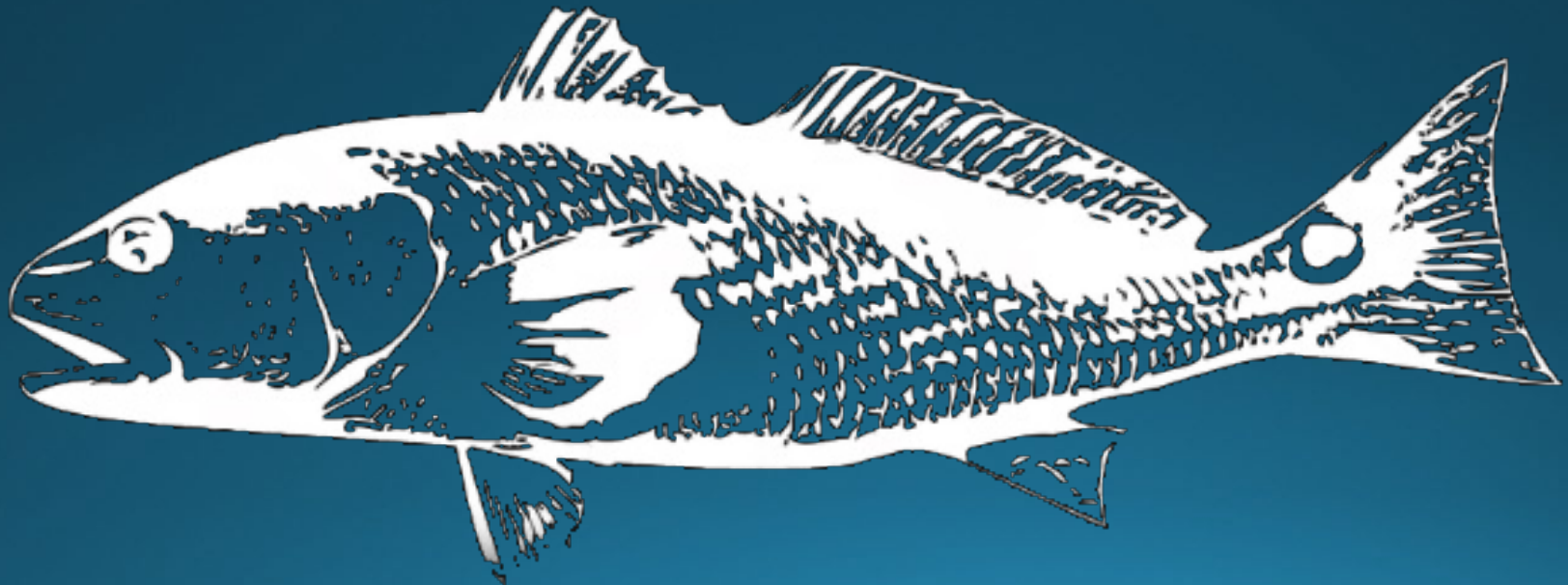
Management Profile for Gulf
of Mexico Red Drum



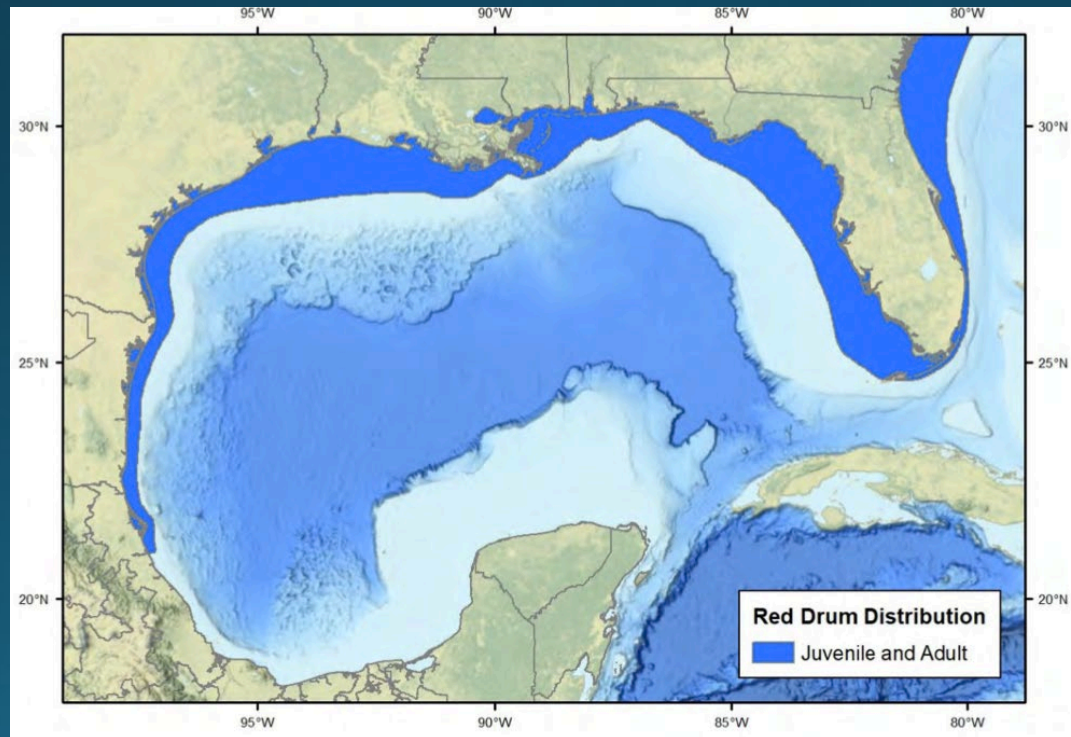
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

Red Drum Management Profile

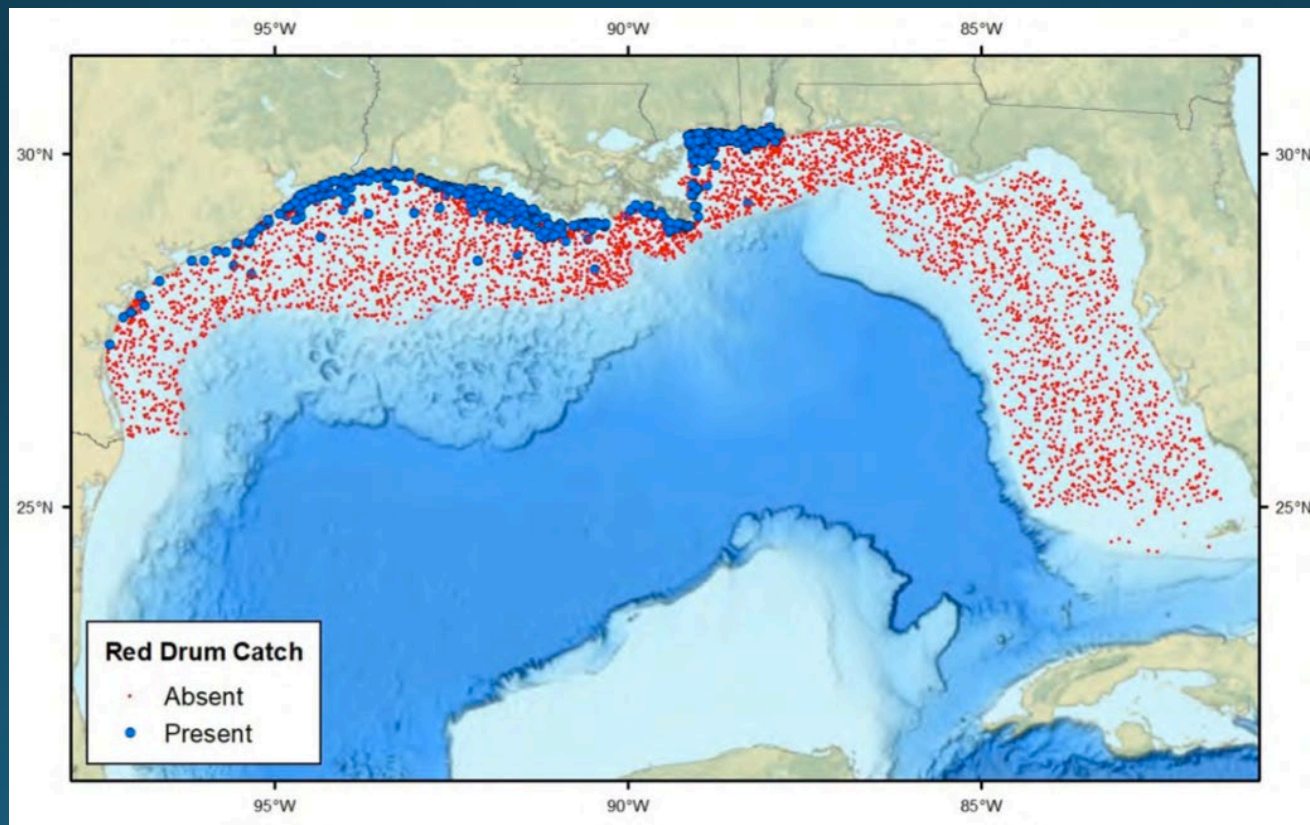
Sciaenops ocellatus



Red Drum in U.S. waters are found throughout the coastal and nearshore environments of the Western Atlantic and the throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Gulf of Mexico is managed separate from the Atlantic with peninsular Florida being the boundary. One stock in the Gulf based on genetics.



Habitat by the different life stages is driven by a wide array of environmental variables. Numerous increasing stressors that may impact future stocks and their distribution.





Management

The states manage to a 30% escapement rate value to add to the adult stocks. Federal waters were closed in 1987.

Based on escapement rates, states have exceeded the goals set by NOAA as in the 1987 rebuilding plan. Despite the success and closure of the EEZ, the stock assessment request more data on nearshore adult population.

Population Status

The most recent assessment for Red Drum in the Gulf of Mexico was conducted in 2016 (SEDAR 49) as a data-limited species. This attempt was not successful in part to the fact that there is no data available on the 'offshore' population. Stock status is not defined as a result.

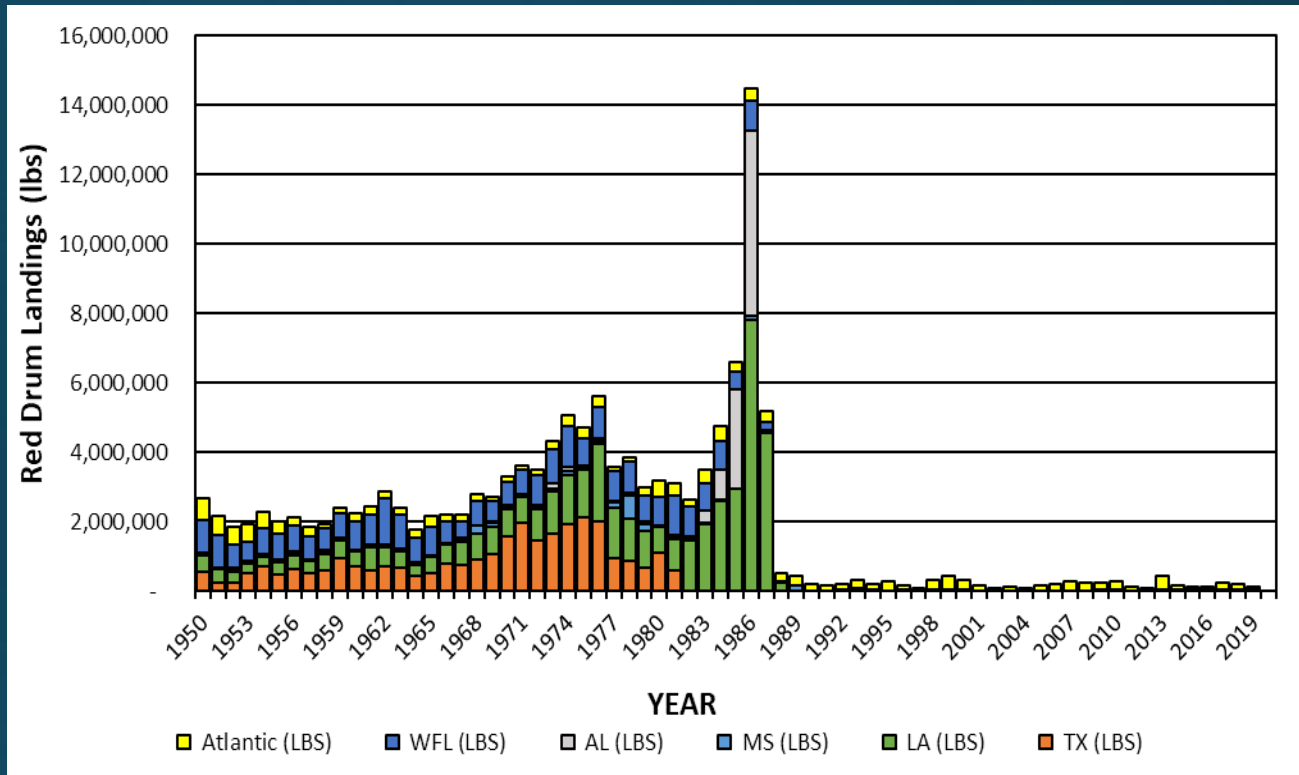


There has been virtually no exploitation of the 'offshore' population since. Can we manage better and differently today?

Commercial

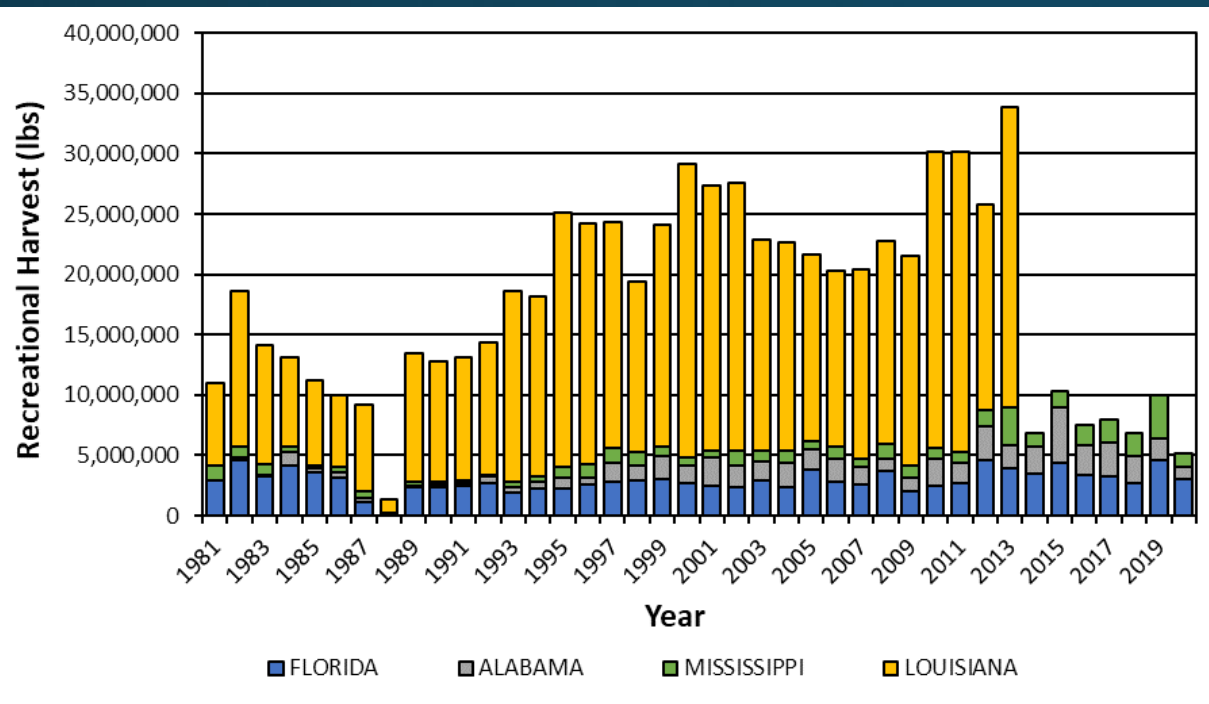
Red Drum in the Gulf of Mexico were relatively steady but beginning to increase in

the mid-1970s. A rapid increase in the mid-1980s caused significant concern about the population health. The popularity of 'blackened red fish' was blamed for the increase.



Recreational Fishery

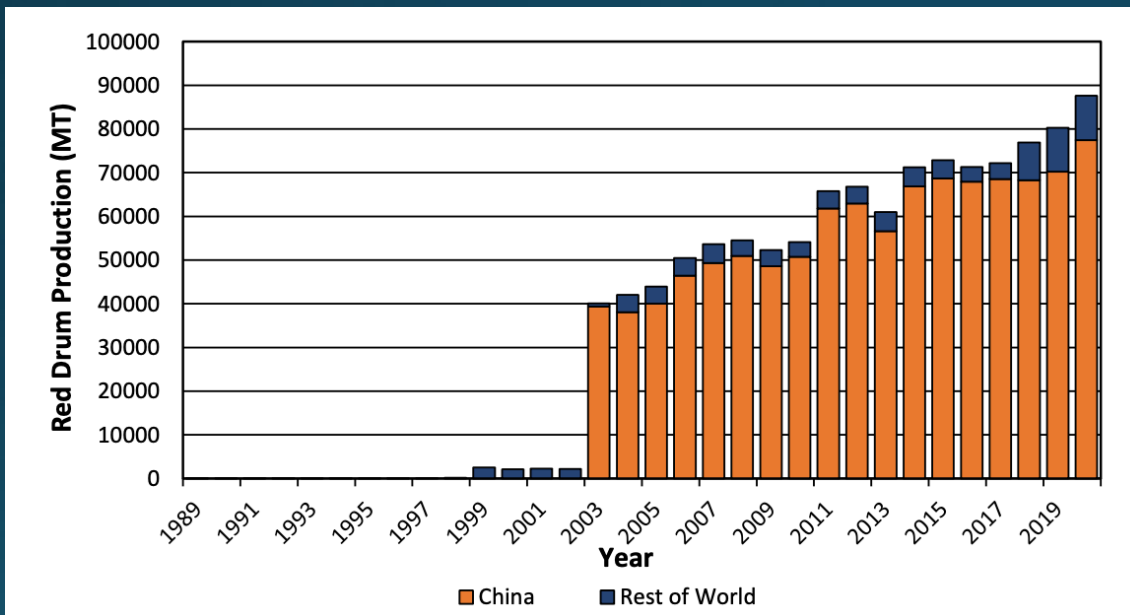
The majority of recreational landings occur in Louisiana state waters followed by Florida. Texas records numbers of fish and are not included.



Louisiana landings included in the MRIP estimates end in 2013. LA Creel data is not comparable at this time.

Economics and Social Dimensions

This iconic fish is an important linkage to coastal communities and has value worldwide.



US production of Red Drum is increasing, but far behind China.

Red Drum Data Needs

Stock Status

- Update abundance estimates of the adult population along with size and age structure.
- Explore the possibility of conducting aerial surveys of surface schools in state and federal waters to get adult population estimates.
- Prioritize placing Gulf of Mexico Red Drum back on the SEDAR stock assessment schedule.

Red Drum Data Needs

Fishery-Independent Data

- Establish routine fisheries-independent surveys for offshore waters to collect length-at-age, gonad, and gut samples from adult Red Drum.
- Expand the SEAMAP Bottom Longline Survey to include Florida waters between 3-10m to collect age, gonad, and gut samples from nearshore waters.

Distribution and Migration

- Acoustic/PSAT/Passive Tagging - Better understanding of spatial structure, mixing and migration, movement of adult fish, sub-adult fish transitioning to maturity, ontogenetic movement, and regional philopatry.

Red Drum Data Needs

Reproduction

- In order to conduct a stock assessment, spawning frequency, batch fecundity, potential skip spawning and reproductive potential needs to be updated across potential regions (stocks) and Gulf-wide.

Habitat

- Quantify habitat change and the scale at which stressors may affect the Red Drum stocks and potential reductions in productivity (local versus regional).

So what are the next steps?



Steve,
Tell the
contestants
what they have
won!