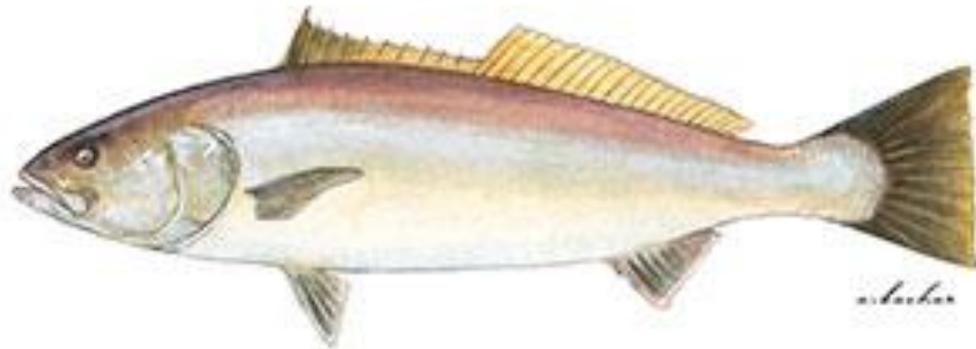




White Seabass Fishery Management



12 March 2026

Presented to:

**Marine Resources Committee
California Fish and Game Commission**

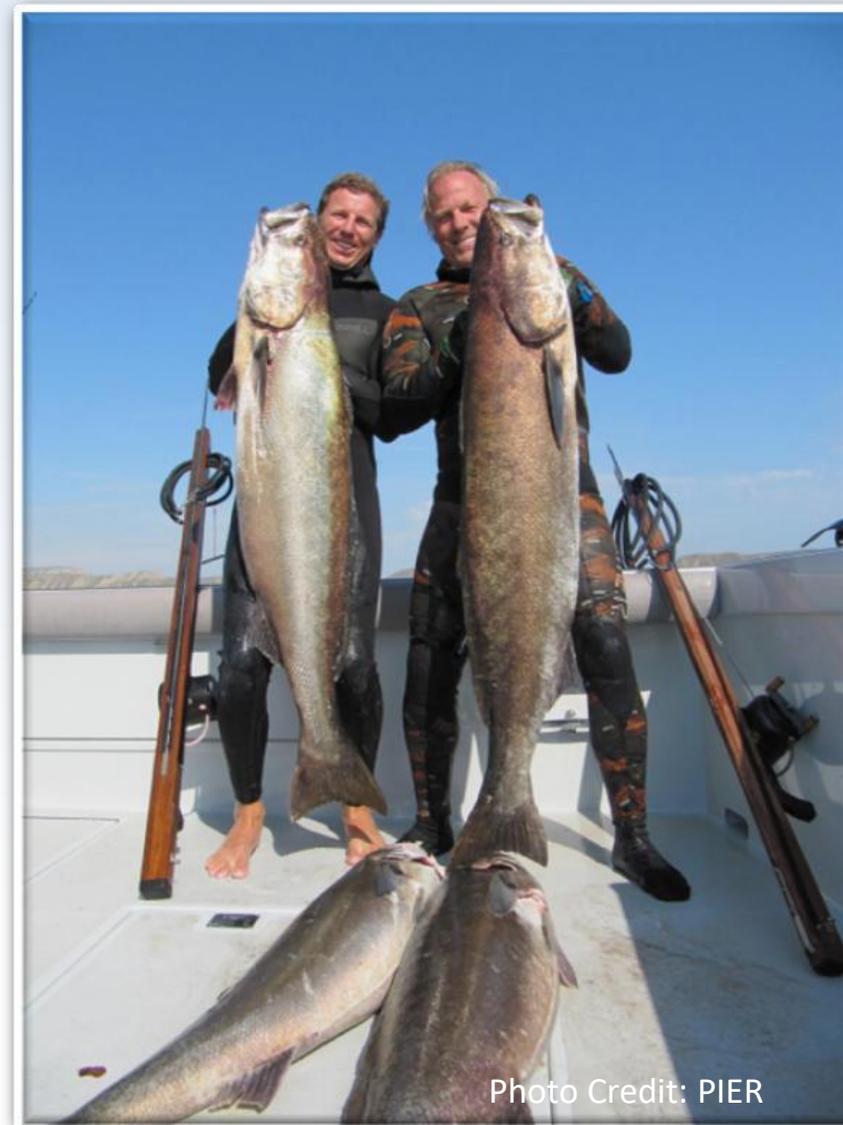
Presented by:

**Miranda Haggerty
Environmental Scientist
Marine Region**



Outline

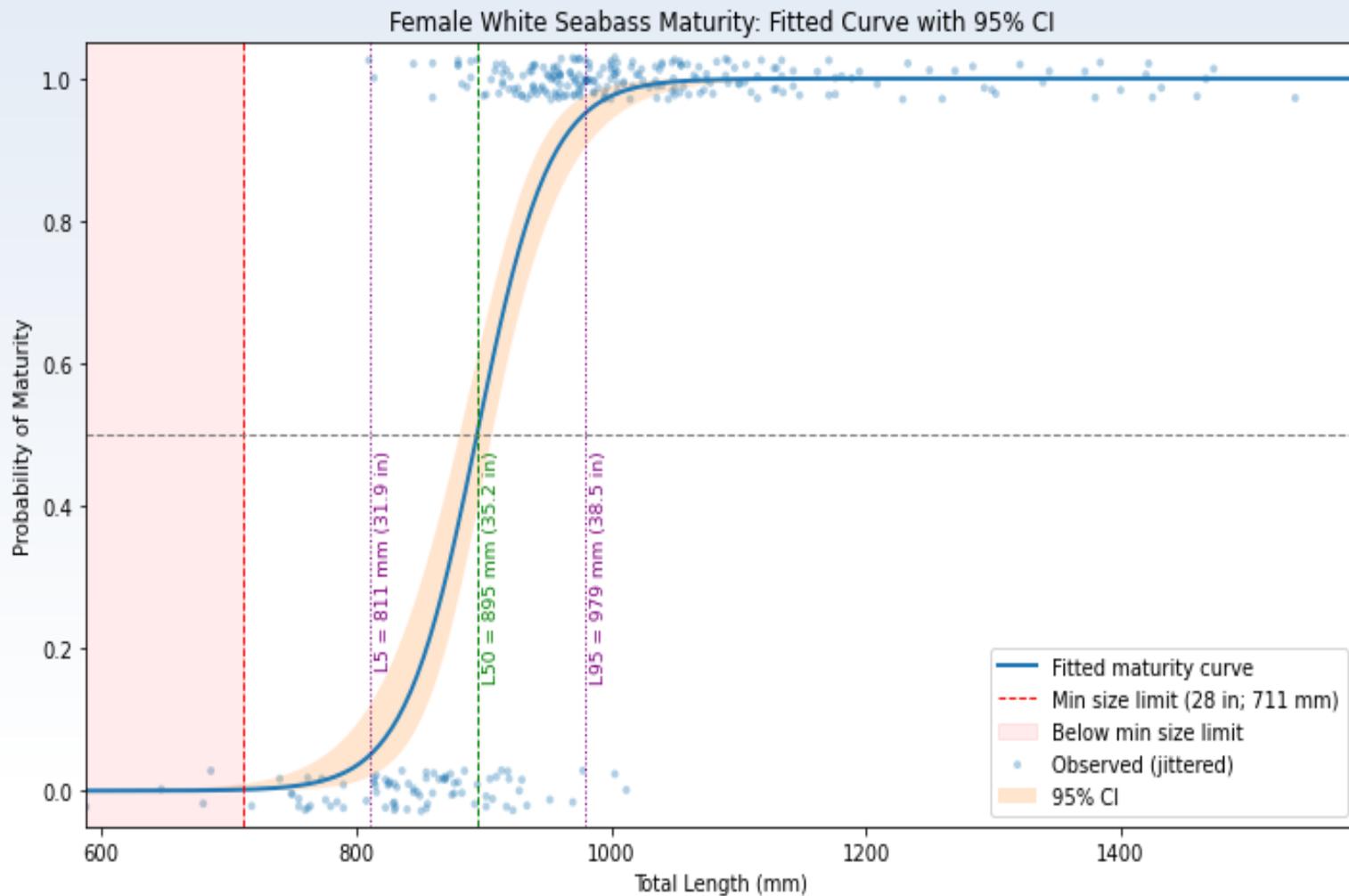
- Results from maturity assessment
- White seabass Fishery Management Plan (WSFMP) stakeholder meeting
 - FMP triggers
 - Stakeholder concerns
- WSB landings
 - Length composition
- Updating stock assessment
- Next steps





Updated Size at Maturity Results

- Submitted for publication in CDFW Journal
- WSFMP Point of Concern
 - New biological information is discovered
 - Capturing immature females





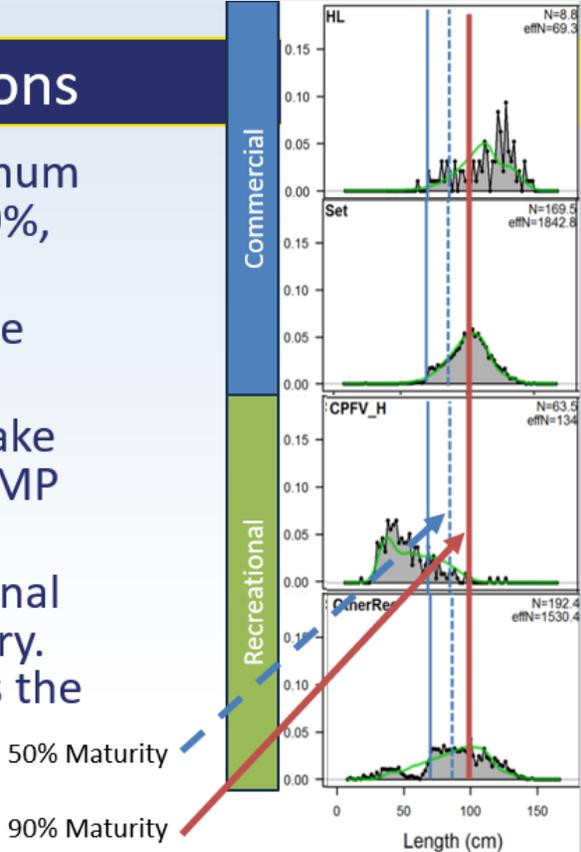
Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder Engagement Webinar, November 2025
 - 2023-24 Annual FMP Review
 - Maturity Study
 - Management Options



Discussion Questions

1. What are your perceptions of the minimum size limits under consideration (50%, 90%, 95% maturity)?
2. What concerns or questions do you have about the recommended process?
3. What aspects should the Department take into consideration when planning the FMP review?
4. Length change will impact the recreational fishery more than the commercial fishery. What recommendations do you have as the Department considers increasing the minimum size limit?





Stakeholder Feedback

- Stakeholder Questions and Comments
 - Updating FMP Points of Concerns
 - Accounting for effort in WSB landings
 - Is catching immature fish impacting overall population
 - Is there data to show natural spawning success?
 - How size of WSB caught varies between fishing sectors
 - Difficulty of catching WSB accounted for in regulations



Photo Credit: PIER

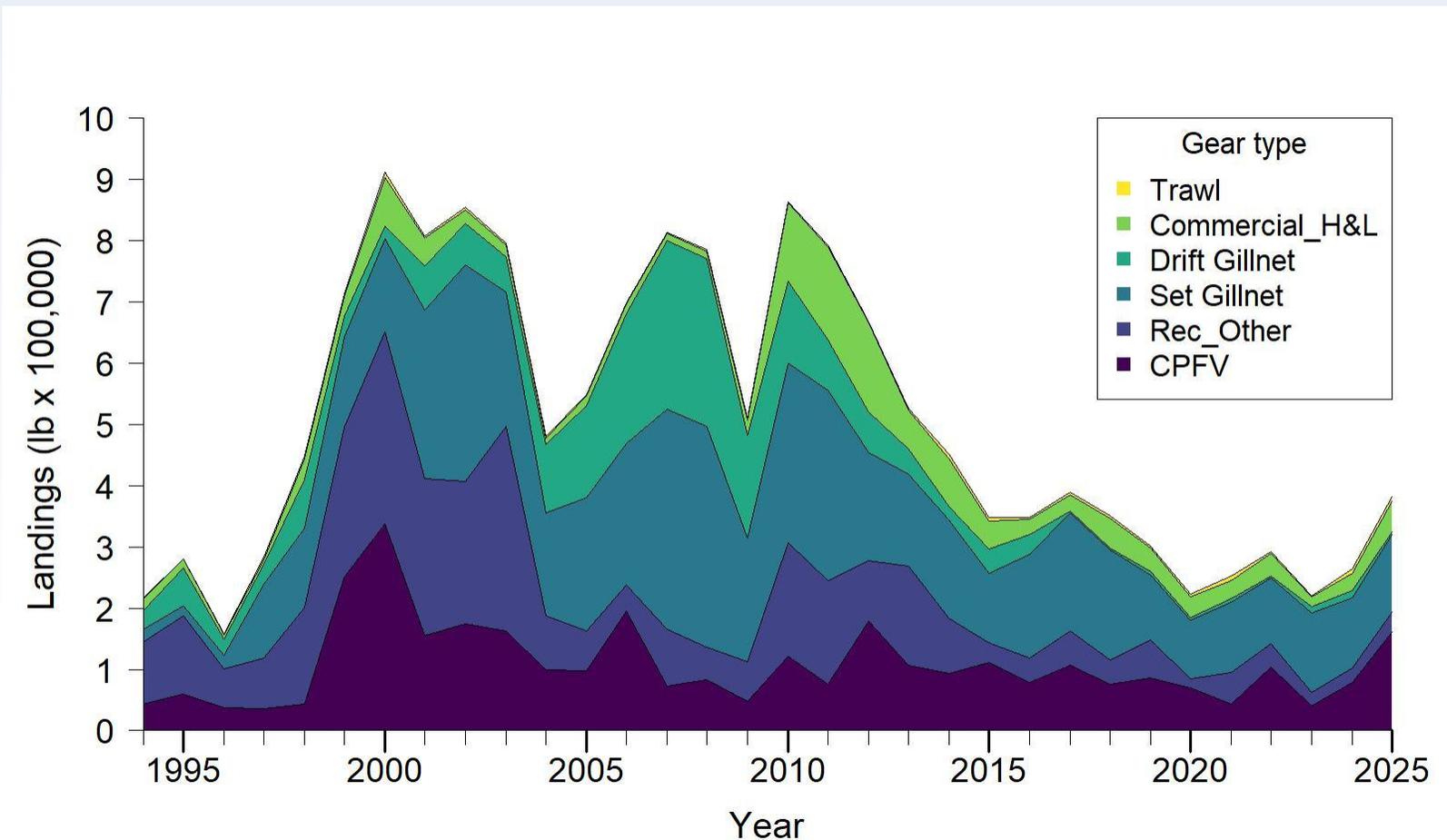


Photo Credit: PIER



White Seabass Landings

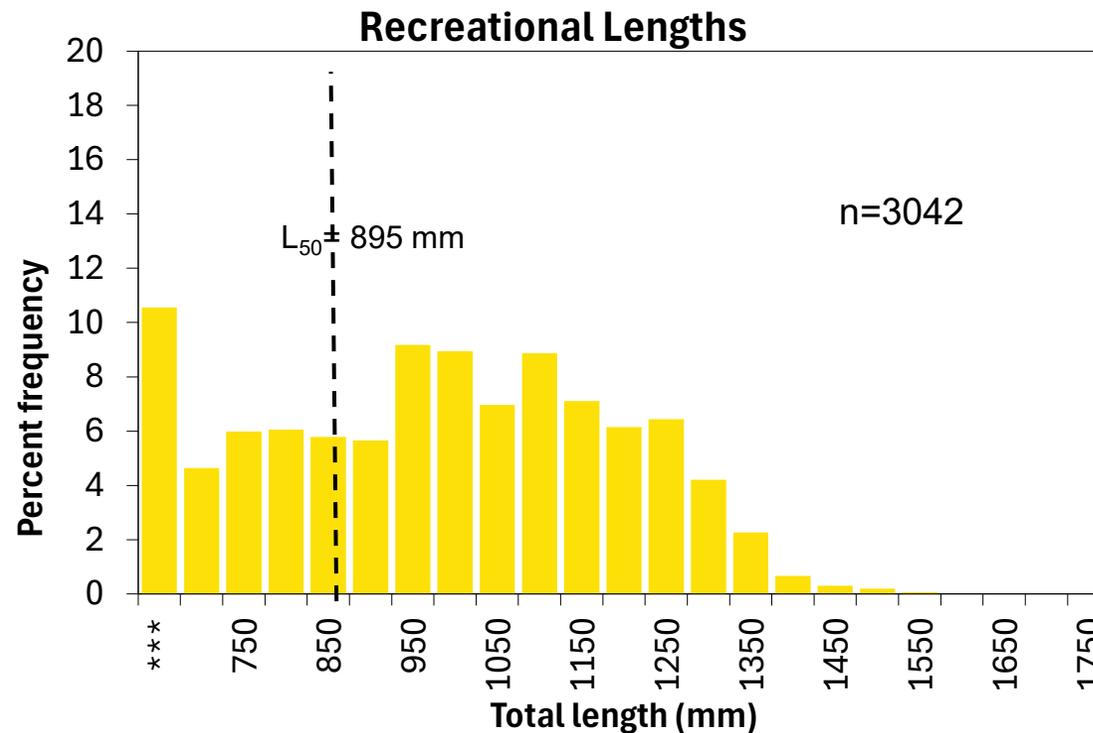
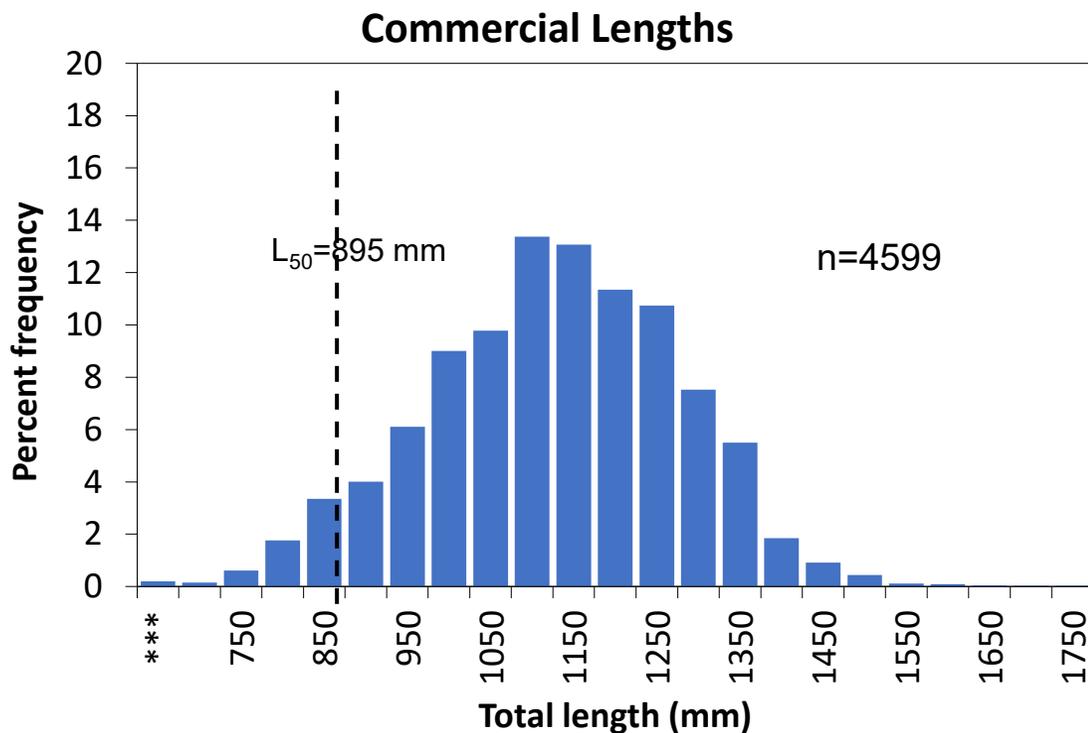
- WSB Landings 1994-2025
 - Optimum Yield – 1.2 million pounds





White Seabass Landings Length Composition

- Department dockside sampling 2008-2025
 - 6% of commercially sampled fish <895 mm
 - 32% of recreationally sampled fish <895 mm



***Fish under current 28-inch (711 mm) minimum size limit



Catch and Release Mortality

- Post release mortality assessed (MacNamara et al. 2025)
- Hooking location and WSB size main variables impacting survival

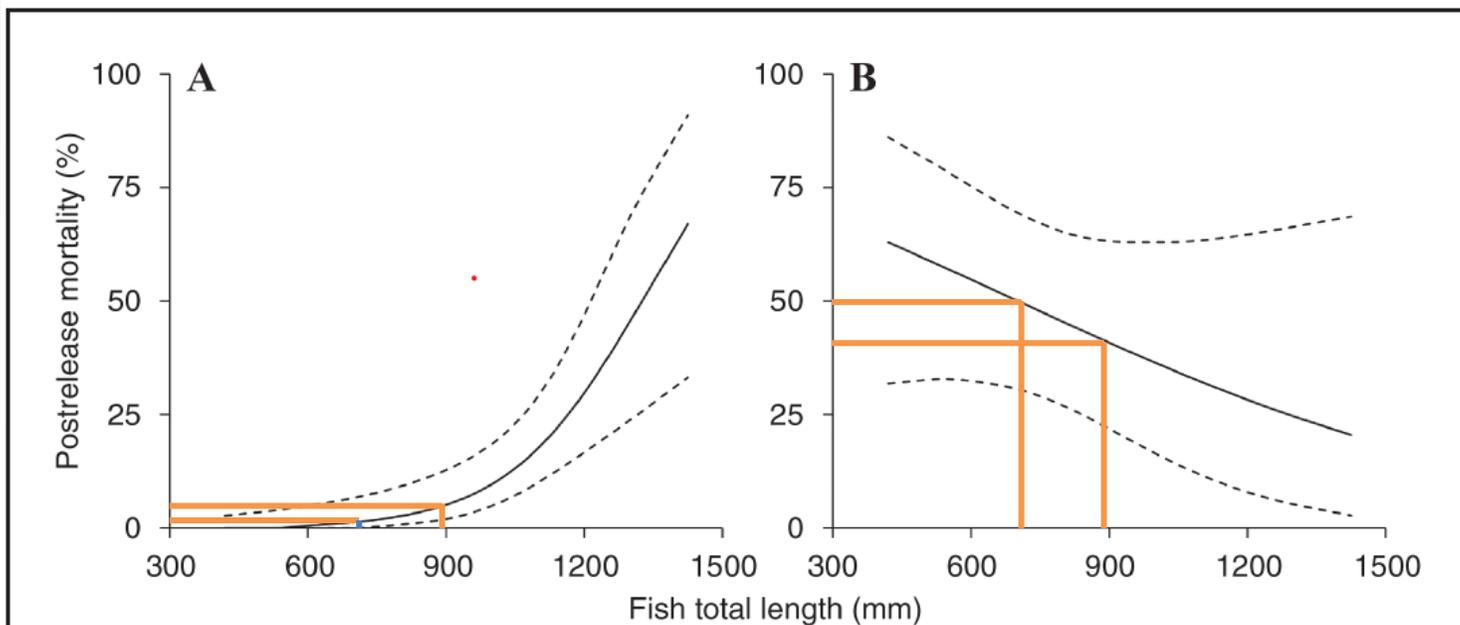


Figure 3

Model response curves showing the relationship between short-term postrelease mortality (within 24 h) and fish total length (**A**) when lip hooked or (**B**) when internally hooked for white seabass (*Atractoscion nobilis*) captured by hook and line during 2021–2024 in the Southern California Bight. Dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals.

MacNamara, R., Shane, M., Bach Muñoz, V., & Drawbridge, M. 2025. Assessing postrelease mortality in hook-and-line fishing of a large coastal sciaenid, the white seabass (*Atractoscion nobilis*). *Fishery Bulletin*, 123(2).



Next Steps

- Ongoing stakeholder engagement
- Recommendations
 - Propose a change in the minimum size limit to protect sexually immature fish
 - Update the 2016 stock assessment
 - Initiate a review of the 2002 WSFMP



Thank You

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[https://marinespecies.wildlife.ca.gov/
white-seabass/true/](https://marinespecies.wildlife.ca.gov/white-seabass/true/)