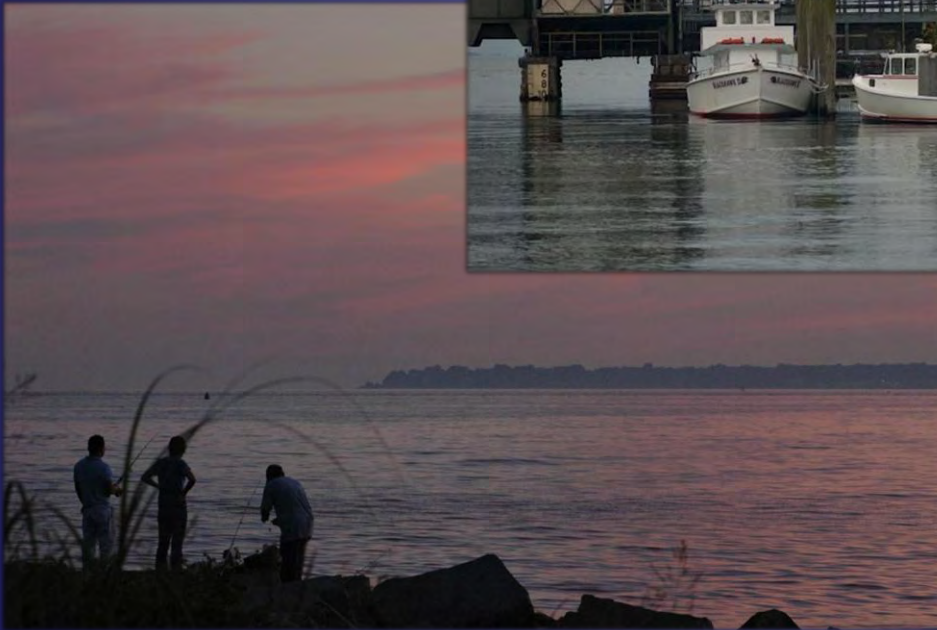




CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

MARINE FISHERIES DIVISION



**Informational Meeting on American Lobster
December 21, 2010**



Center for Independent Experts Overall Conclusions:

- SNE lobster stock is “in a poor state”
- Sea temperature and disease incidence provide strongest evidence that current conditions are different than those prevailing in the early 1980’s (when landings were similar to today).
- CIE agrees w/ TC: recruitment decline is environmentally driven (one reviewer thought overfishing a more likely cause)
- Significant action is needed immediately to maximize chances of rebuilding the stock (Moratorium, 75%, 50%)



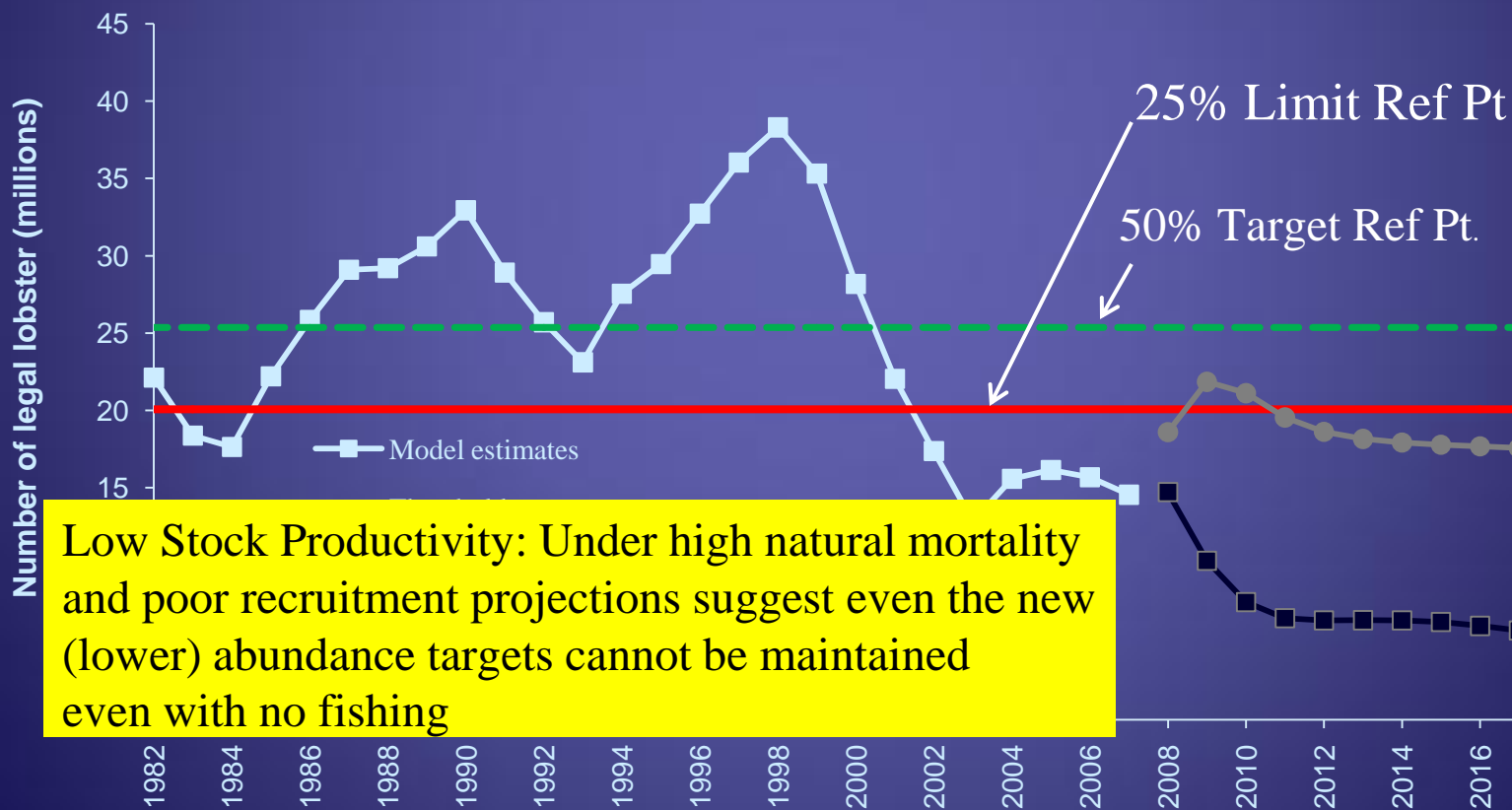
Next ASMFC Steps

- **Plan Development Team to draft Addendum for next Board meeting with specific options for achieving 50% and 75% reduction in exploitation (landings).**
- **PDT Meeting Expected early January 2011**
- **Next Board Meeting March 2011 (or earlier)**



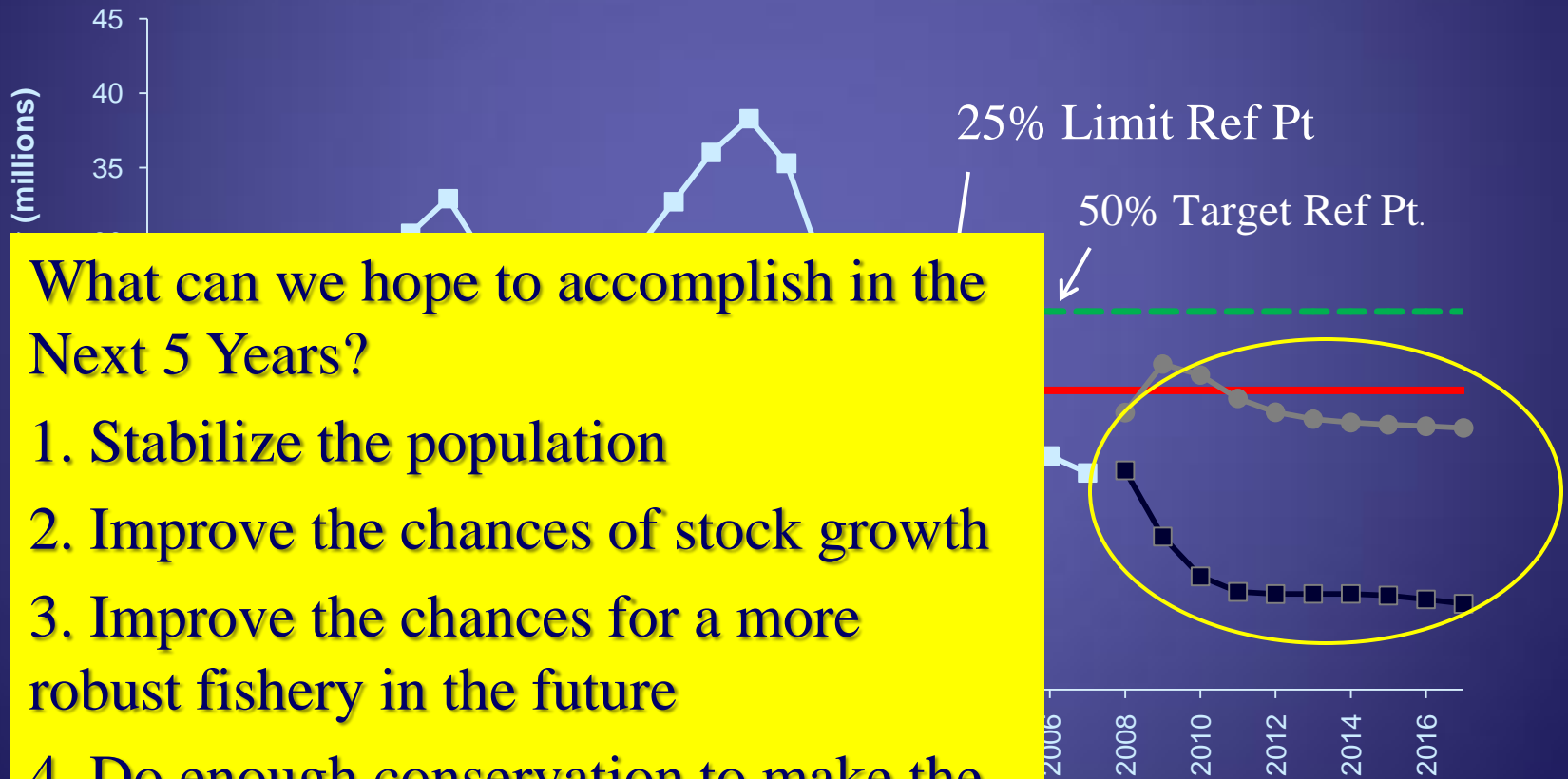
Stock Projections

Brown line w/ circles= Moratorium,
Black Line w/squares=No Action (No limit on harvest)





Potential Goals for the Stock



What can we hope to accomplish in the Next 5 Years?

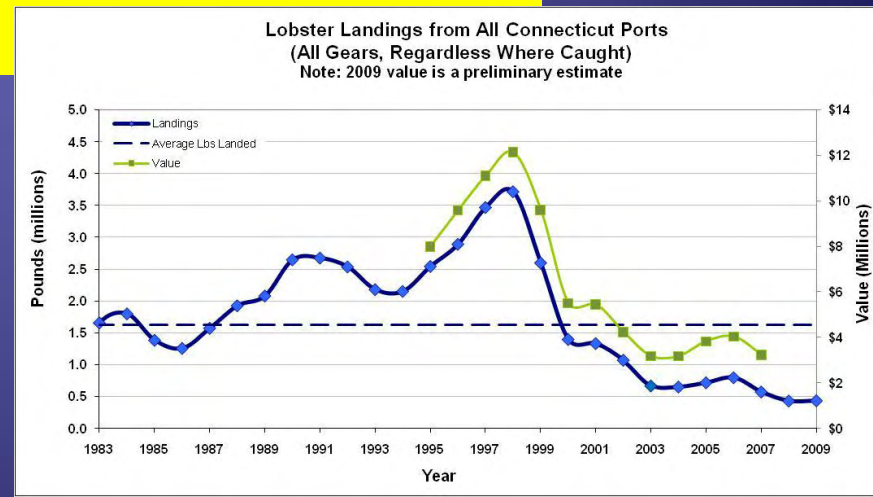
1. Stabilize the population
2. Improve the chances of stock growth
3. Improve the chances for a more robust fishery in the future
4. Do enough conservation to make the sacrifice worthwhile



Potential Goals for the Fishery

Social and economic:

- 1. Maintain a limited open fishery that preserves fishery infrastructure (dockage, vessels), the heritage of fishing and the basis from which the industry can rebound should resource condition improve.*
- 2. Allow fishermen more flexibility to make business decisions*
- 3. Maintain public ownership of resource*
- 4. Allow market forces to play a larger role in shaping the fishery*
- 5. Achieve balance with strategies to prevent excessive consolidation*





Tonight

- **Chance to consider:**
 - **The best level of management to pursue: State, Lobster Mgmt Area (LIS) or SNE stock wide (MA-NC)**
 - **The best management approach for CT lobstermen**
- **Share New Information (Hand Outs)**
 - **TC Nov. Memo on management options**
 - **Recent press on SNE Lobster issue**
 - **LIS/CT statistics**

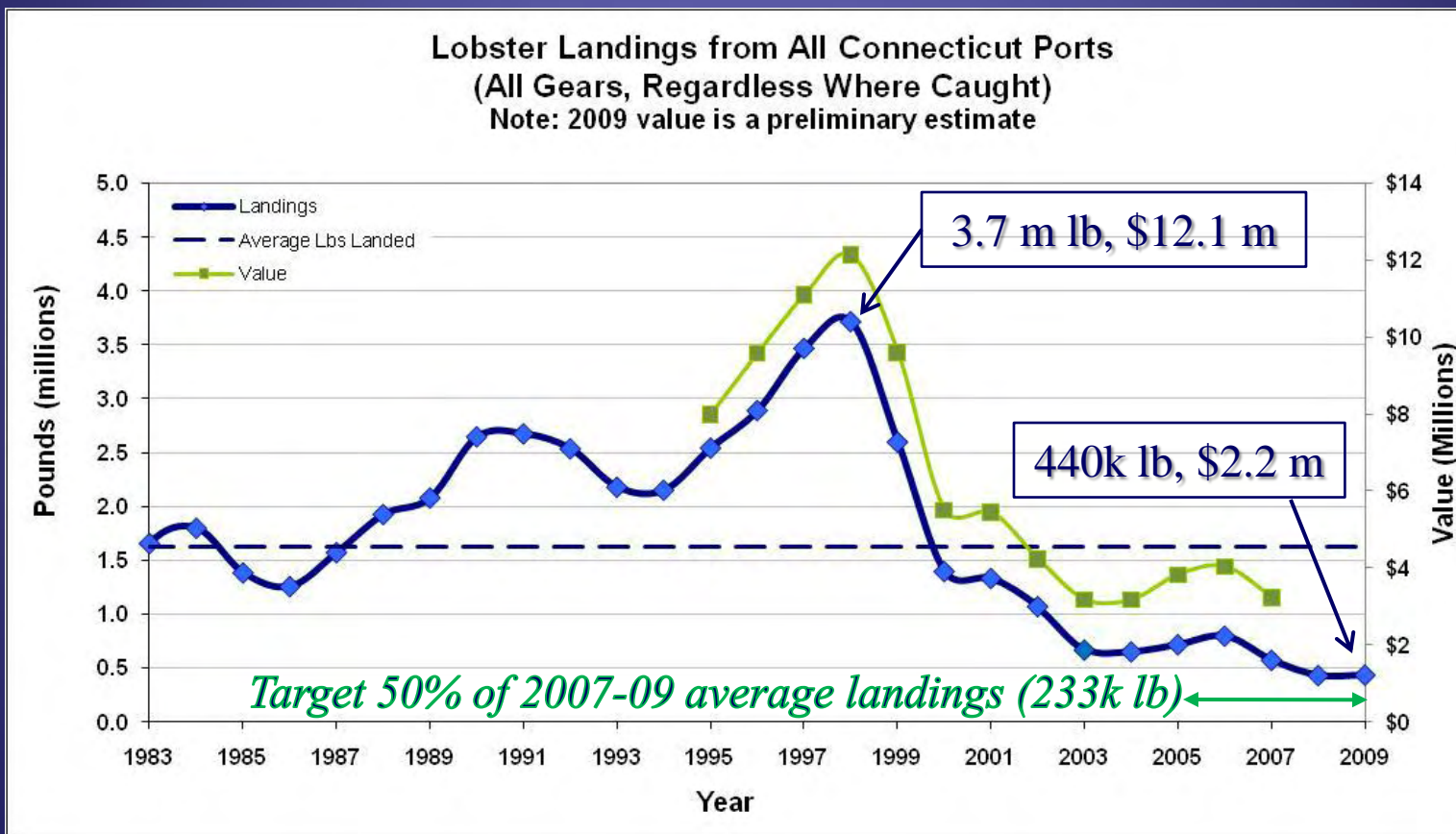


Tonight

- **Management Approaches for 50% reduction in exploitation (landings). (Assuming same approach needed to reach 75%).**
- **EXPECT a Compliance Requirement to actually achieve the target reduction in landings. (a catch QUOTA of some sort)**
- **Consider “Recoupment” (ability to make up for lost landings especially due to area/season closures)**
- **Consider Goals for this fishery**



CT Lobster Landings & Value 1983-2009 & target landings under 50% reduction





Management Options

BY STATE or LMA or SNE?

Current Approaches

- 1. Limit Participation**
- 2. Trap Limits**
- 3. Gauge increase / max gauge**
- 4. V-notch / Male only**



Management Options

BY STATE or LMA or SNE?

New Approaches

5. Closed Seasons

6. Closed Areas

7. Quota

a. Annual/Seasonal

b. Individual



Management Options

1. Limit Participation (further)

- **PROS**

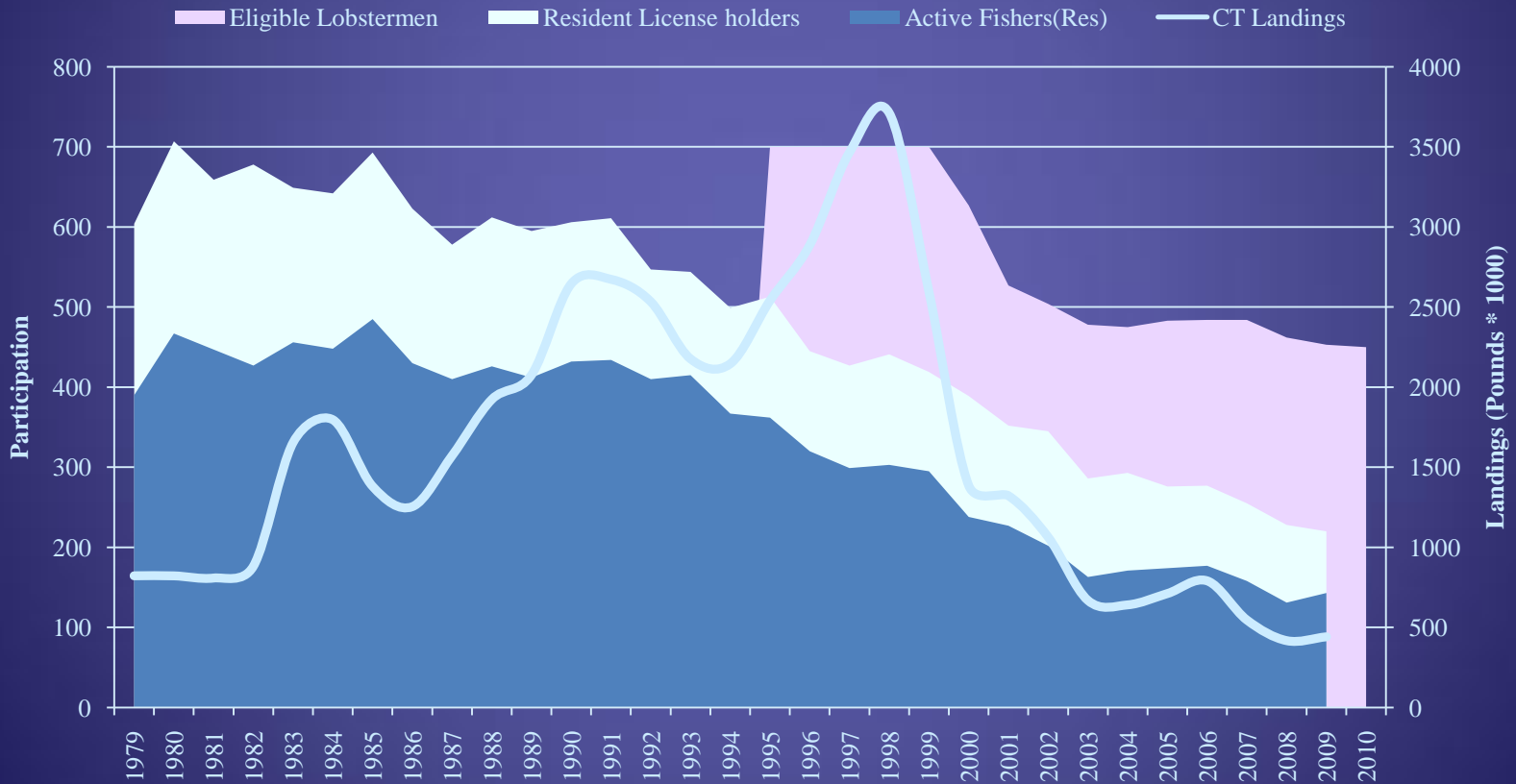
- ➔ Remaining fishermen near status quo mgmt
- ➔ Latent effort removed from fishery
- ➔ Participants remaining could be extremely few (7)

- **CONS**

- ➔ 94% of current participants eliminated from fishery (or all FT)
- ➔ No new entry
- ➔ Industry loses social significance with such low numbers
- ➔ Early fishery closures likely
- ➔ “Race to fish”



Number of fishermen 1979-2010

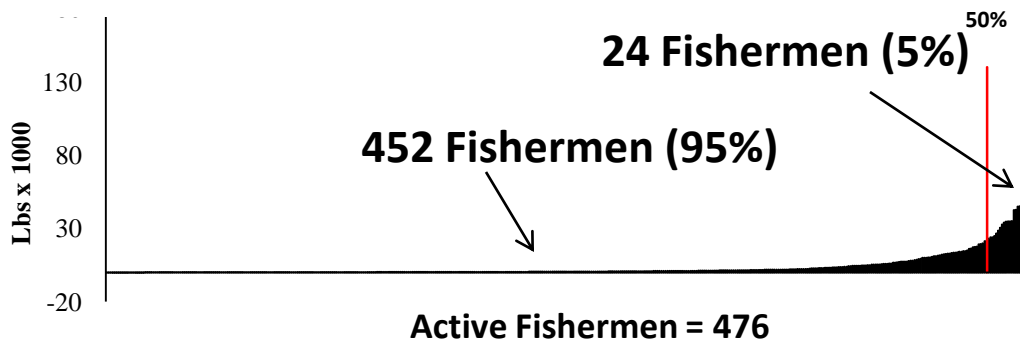


Landings are not related to number of fishermen. See next slide.

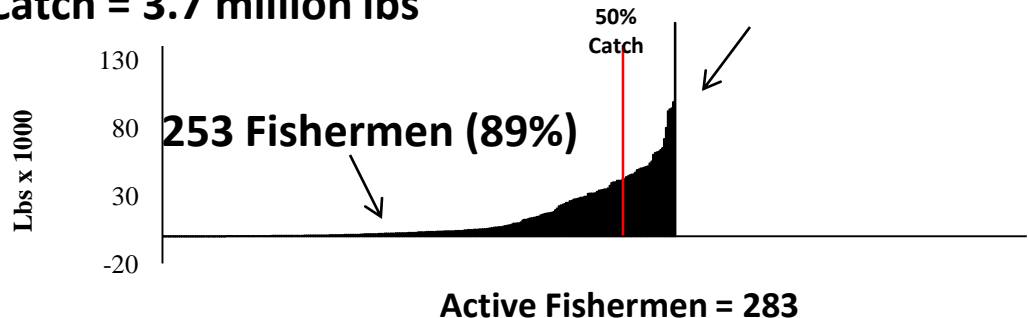


Very few fishermen account for most of the catch

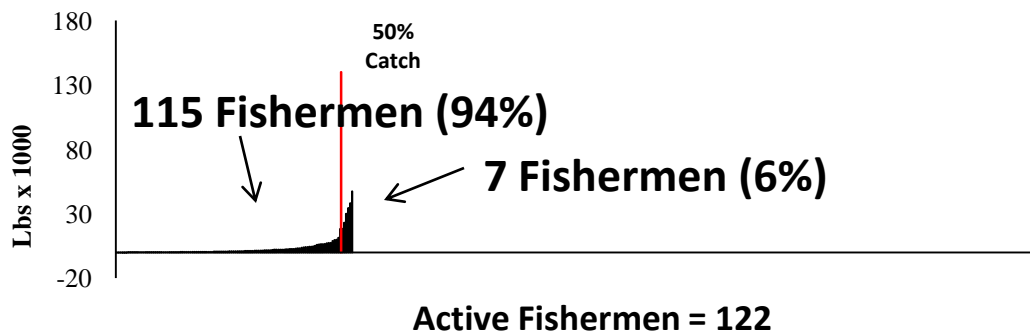
Catch = 1.9 million lbs 1988



Catch = 3.7 million lbs 1998



Catch = 0.4 million lbs 2008





Management Options

2. Trap Limits (further)

• PROS

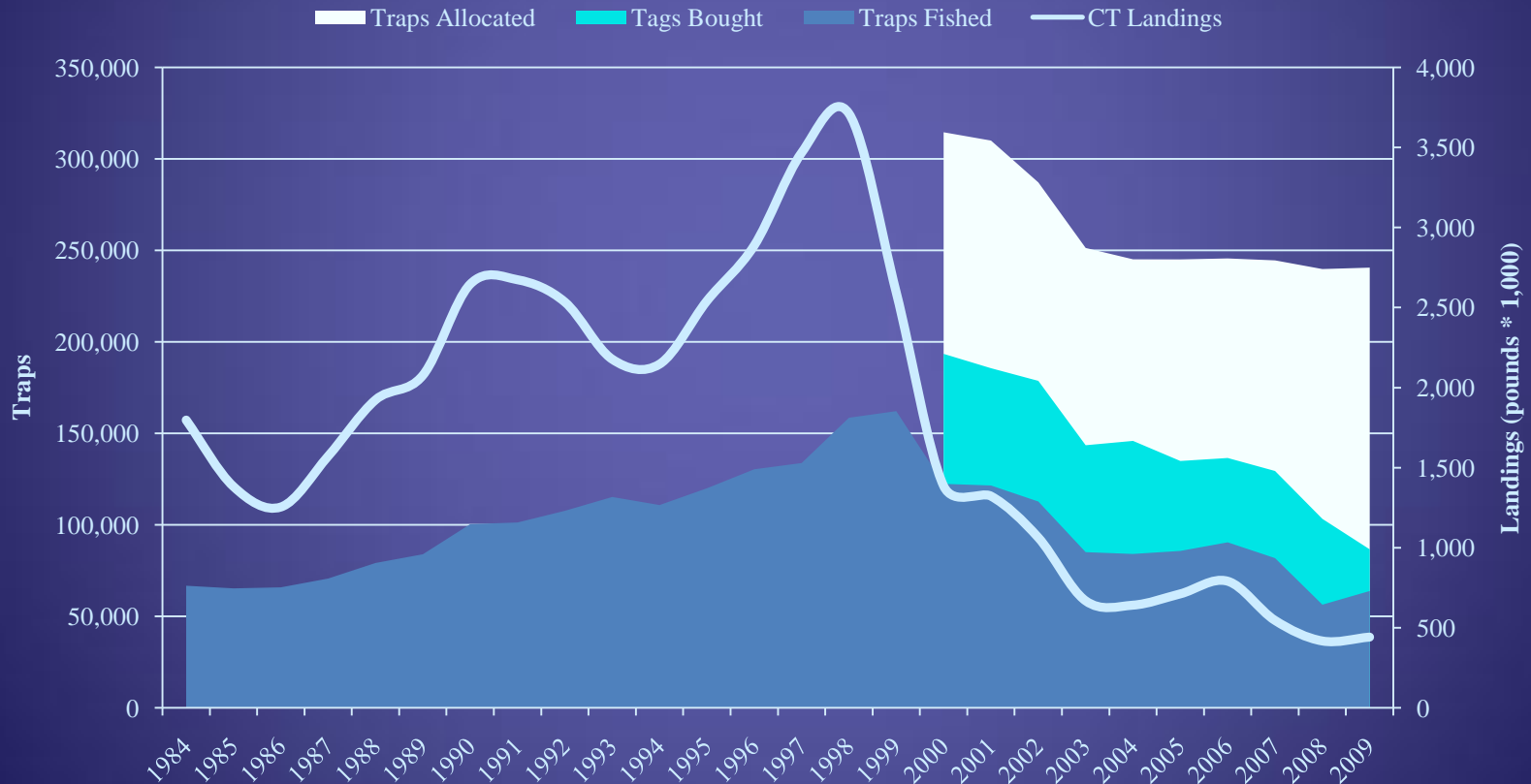
- Latent effort removed from fishery
- Current participants can (theoretically) remain in fishery
- Fishery more efficient
- Minimizes bycatch mortality

• CONS

- Very large reduction (90%) in actively fished traps likely required
- Many fishermen will be allocated too few traps to be viable
- Early fishery closures likely
- “Race to fish”



Trap History & Allocation 1984-2009



Traps fished lags behind abundance. Trap Limits an ineffective control on fishing
 To achieve 50% reduction in exploitation might mean 5,000-8,000 total trap limit



Management Options

3. Gauge Increase / Max Gauge

- **PROS**

- **Current fishing practices (generally) maintained**
- **Easy to enforce**
- **Traditional**

- **CONS**

- **Inefficient for industry**
- **Uneven conservation burden by area**
- **Likely to require annual increases to maintain exploitation rate target**
- **Bycatch mortality**



Management Options

4. Male Only / V-notch

• PROS

- ➔ Female biomass fully protected
- ➔ Current fishing practices (generally) maintained
- ➔ Easy to enforce

• CONS

- ➔ Unknown impact on mating/reproductive dynamics
- ➔ Inefficient for industry
- ➔ Uneven conservation burden by area
- ➔ Bycatch mortality



Management Options

5. Closed Seasons

- **PROS**

- Easy to enforce
- Could reduce bycatch mortality

- **CONS**

- Closed season needs to be long
- Summer closure hurts some more than others (vice versa)
- “Race to fish”
- Early closures likely
- “Deadliest Catch”



Management Options

6. Closed Areas

- **PROS**

- ➔ Could apply conservation where needed most

- **CONS**

- ➔ Closed areas need to be very large
- ➔ Impacts some fishermen, not others
- ➔ Gear conflicts from displaced fishermen



Management Options

7a. Annual/Seasonal Quotas

- **PROS**

- All fishermen can continue to fish
- Minimize bycatch mortality

- **CONS**

- “Race to fish”
- Inefficient
- Difficult for fishermen to plan their business
- Price impacts?
- Expect very short open seasons/frequent closures



Management Options

7b. Individual Quotas

- **PROS**

- ☞ Allow fishermen full flexibility in fishing practices
- ☞ Time fishing to maximize profit
- ☞ Minimize bycatch mortality
- ☞ Allow broad participation at various levels

- **CONS**

- ☞ Change from current system
- ☞ Time required to develop/implement



Next Steps

- **FISHERMEN:** Consider options and send me your comments
- **COMMISSIONERS/DEP:** Work to include approaches CT fishermen can support are in the Addendum
- **ALL:** Work on details of promising options



Contact Information

Send Comments to:

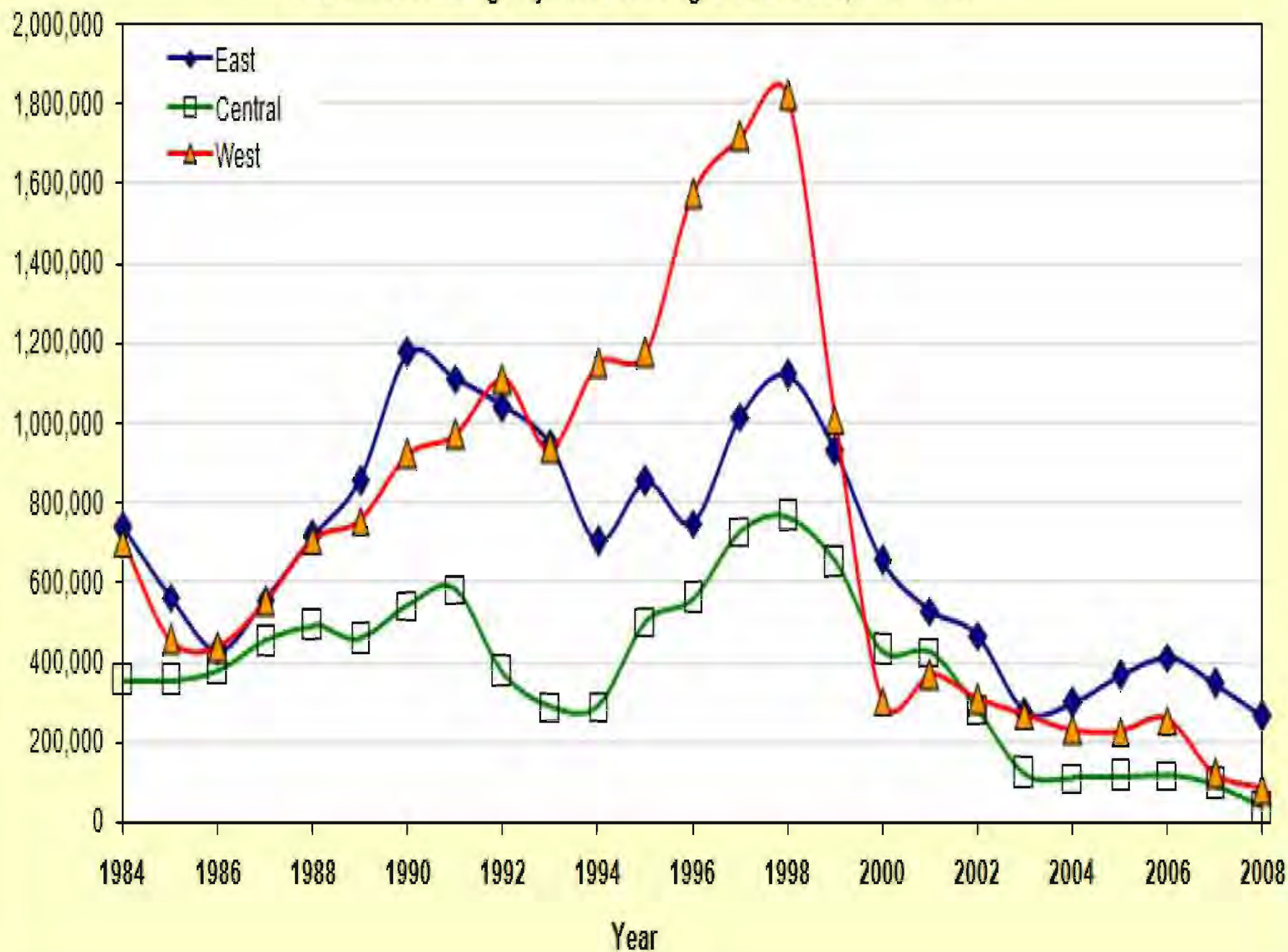
David Simpson, Marine Fisheries Division

PO Box 719 Old Lyme, CT 06371

Email: david.simpson@ct.gov

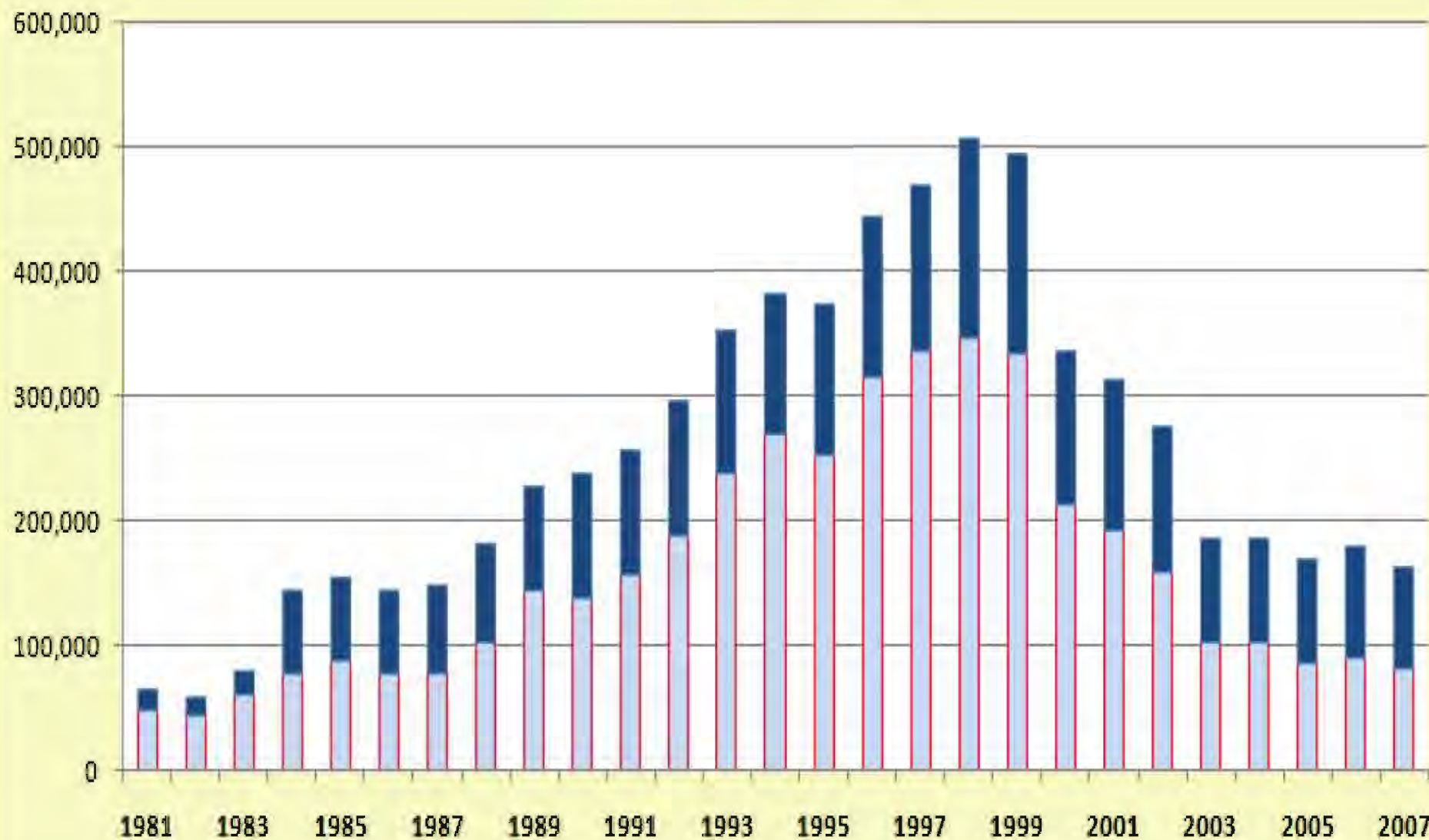
Phone: 860-447-4306

Connecticut Landings By Basin of Long Island Sound, 1984 - 2008

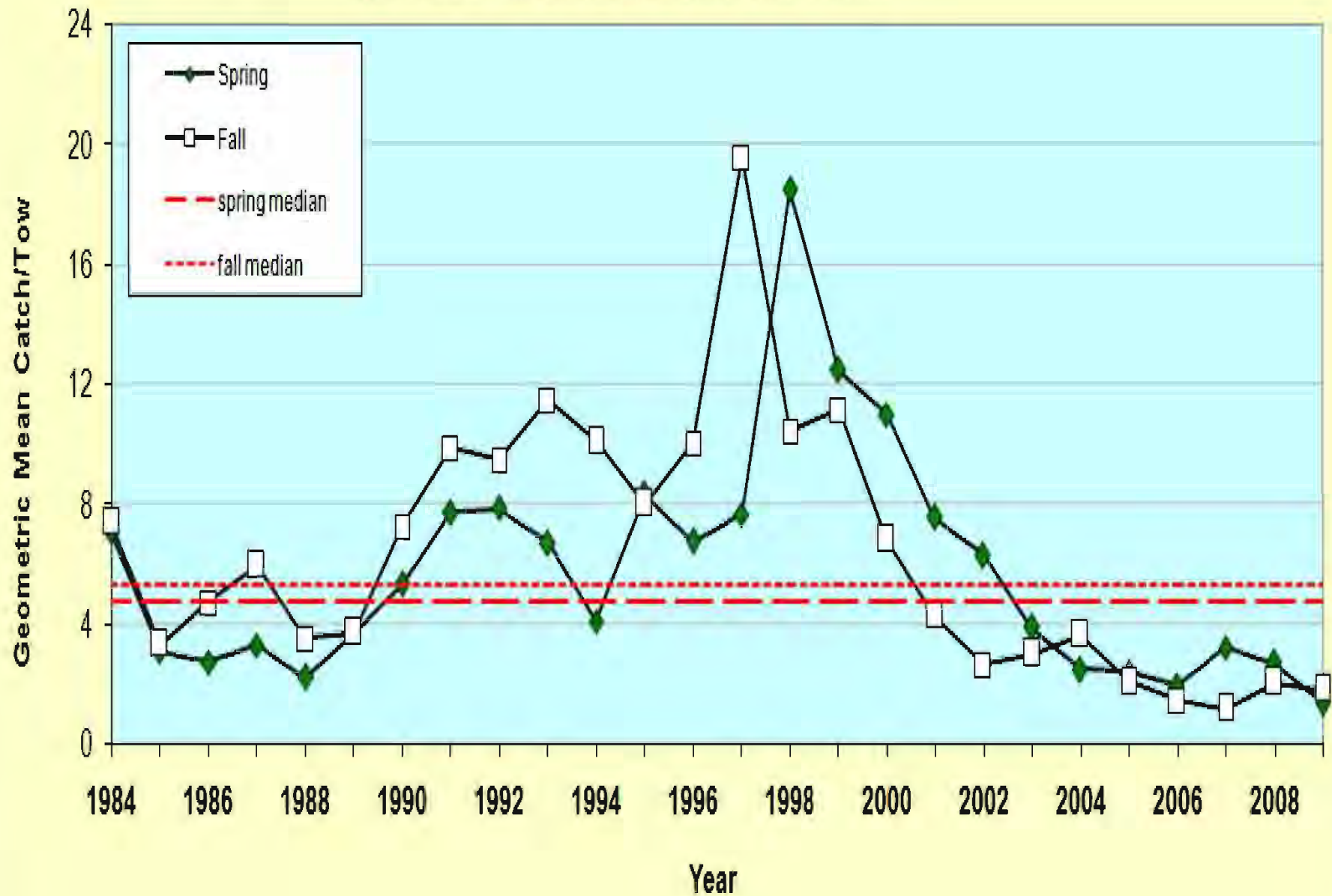


New York and Connecticut Actively Fished Lobster Traps

■ New York ■ Connecticut



CT DEP Long Island Sound Trawl Survey Indices of Lobster Abundance 1984-2009



Larval Lobster Production

