

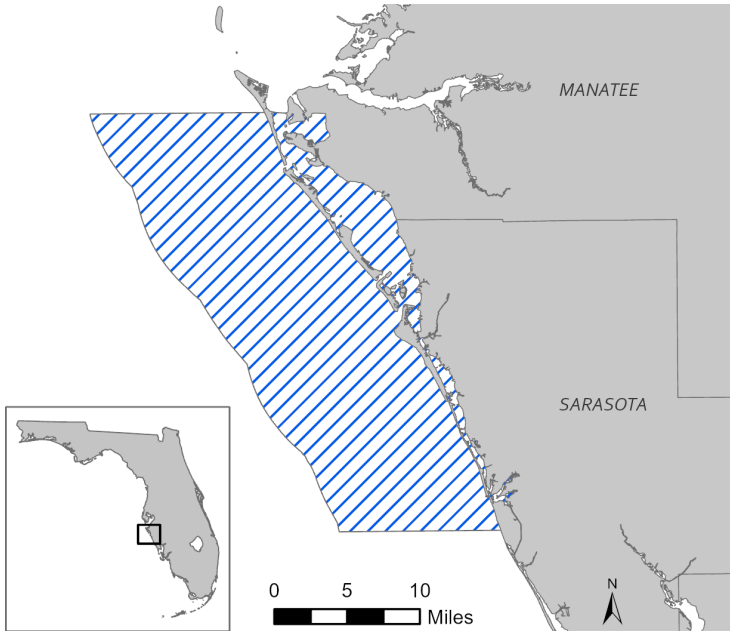


2024 Annual Review of Redfish Management Metrics



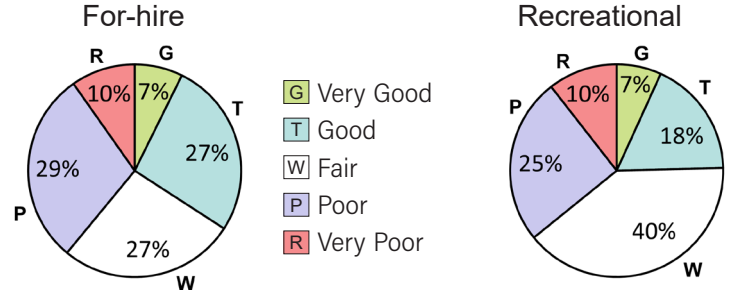
SARASOTA BAY REDFISH MANAGEMENT REGION

REGION BOUNDARIES

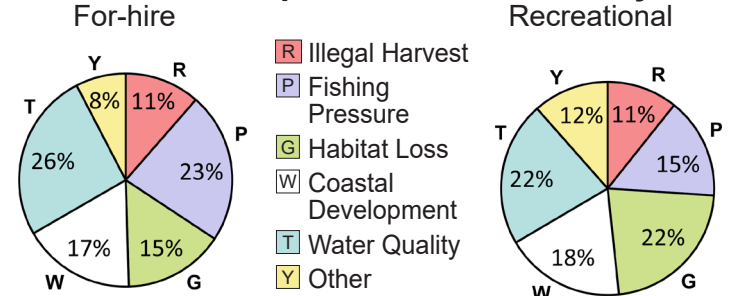


STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Satisfaction with recent fishing experience



Perceived top threats to the fishery



Source: FWC 2024 Redfish Angler Survey. Responses were based on the angler's experience during the previous 12 months of fishing.

ESCAPEMENT

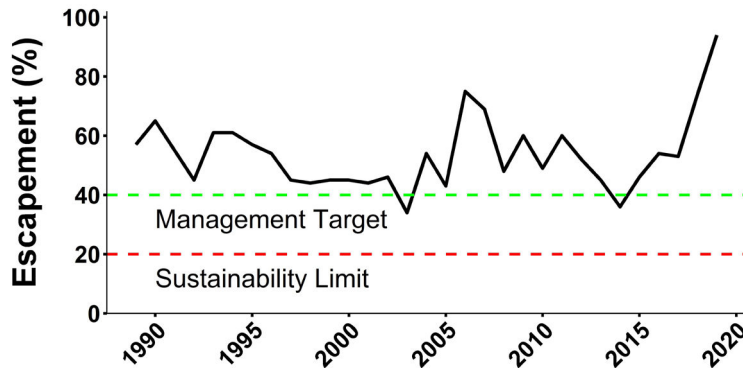


Figure 1. Estimated redfish escapement rates for the Tampa Bay, Sarasota Bay, Charlotte Harbor and Southwest management regions.

Source: FWC 2020 Redfish Stock Assessment.

FISHING EFFORT AND LANDINGS

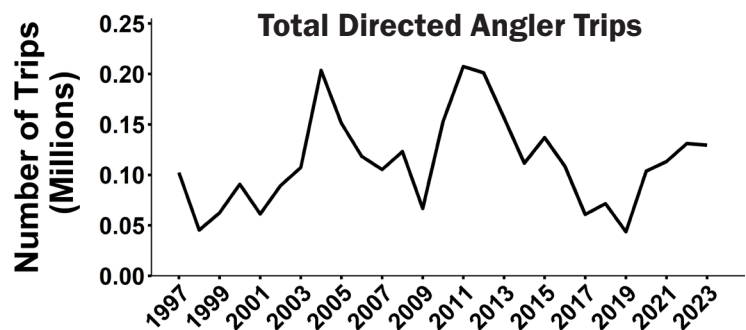


Figure 2. Estimates of angler trips targeting redfish each year through 2023.

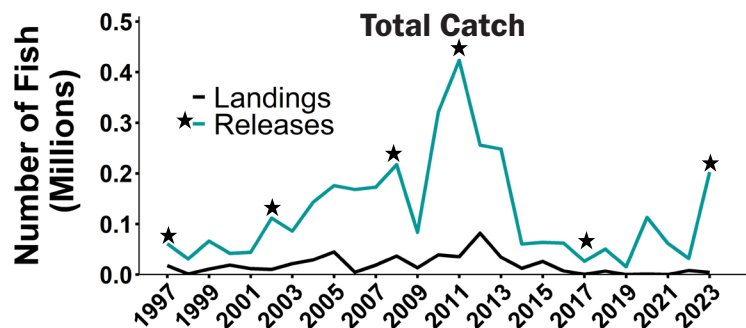


Figure 3. Estimates of annual redfish catch (landings and releases) through 2023.

Source: NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP).

HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

Likelihood of fish kills	Frequency	Average duration (months)	2023 Duration (months)
Possible	17 out of 20 years (85%)	5.2	5
Probable	16 out of 20 years (80%)	4.1	3

Table 1. Frequency and duration of red tide where fish kills were possible or probable within the region over the previous 20 years.

Source: Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Harmful Algal Bloom Group.

HABITAT TRENDS

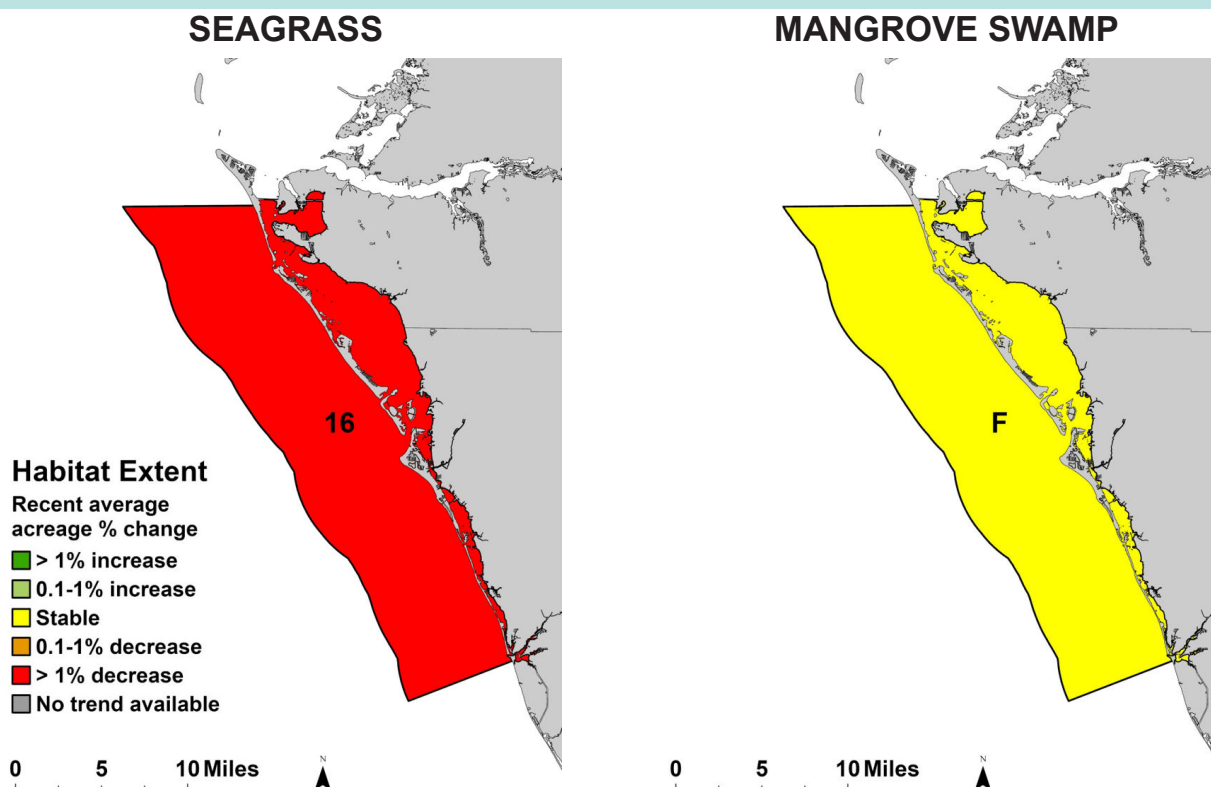


Figure 4. Average yearly percent changes in the extent (i.e., acreage) of seagrass and mangrove swamp for comparable years. Date ranges for the comparisons are provided in Table 2.

Location	Monitoring Zone	Annual recent change (reference years)	Long-term overall changes (reference years)
Seagrass — 16	Sarasota Bay	-2.7% (2020–2022)	14.4% (1988 vs. 2022)
Mangrove Swamp — F	Sarasota Bay	-0.04% (2017–2020)	5.6% (1990 vs. 2020)

Table 2. Observed habitat changes in extent (i.e., acreage) for comparable surveys of seagrass and mangrove swamp. Locations correspond to the maps in Figure 4.

Source: Southwest Florida Water Management District, FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.

ABUNDANCE TRENDS

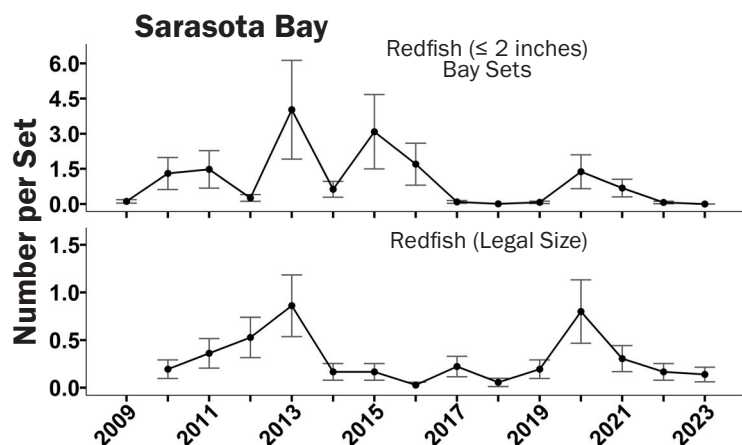


Figure 5. Abundance trend estimates for redfish from Sarasota Bay, FL. Top figure is young-of-year (YOY; <1 year old) sampled in the bay and the bottom figure represents legal-size (i.e., slot size) redfish.

Source: FWC FWRI Fishery Independent Monitoring Program.

SUMMARY

- Mangrove swamp acreage has been stable in recent years and is greater than what was observed in 1990.
- Landings and releases have increased slightly from record low numbers in 2019, likely due to an increase in the number of trips during this same time period.
- Escapement rate is higher than the management target; however, these estimates are only through 2019. More recent estimates will be available after the next stock assessment is completed.
- Satisfaction with recent fishing experience varied among for-hire guides, mostly between "good," "fair," or "poor." Most private recreational anglers reported it as either "fair" or "poor."
- Duration of the 2023 red tide bloom was similar to the 20-year average.
- Estimates of legal-sized redfish peaked in 2013 and 2020, but otherwise remained relatively stable throughout the time series.
- Due to the higher salinities in Sarasota Bay, the YOY abundance trend for this region is likely not the best indicator for the recruitment of fish into the local population. Redfish recruitment is higher in lower-salinity environments.
- Seagrass acreage has declined in recent years, but current acreage is greater than in the 1980s. The decline in seagrass is not uniform throughout the region.