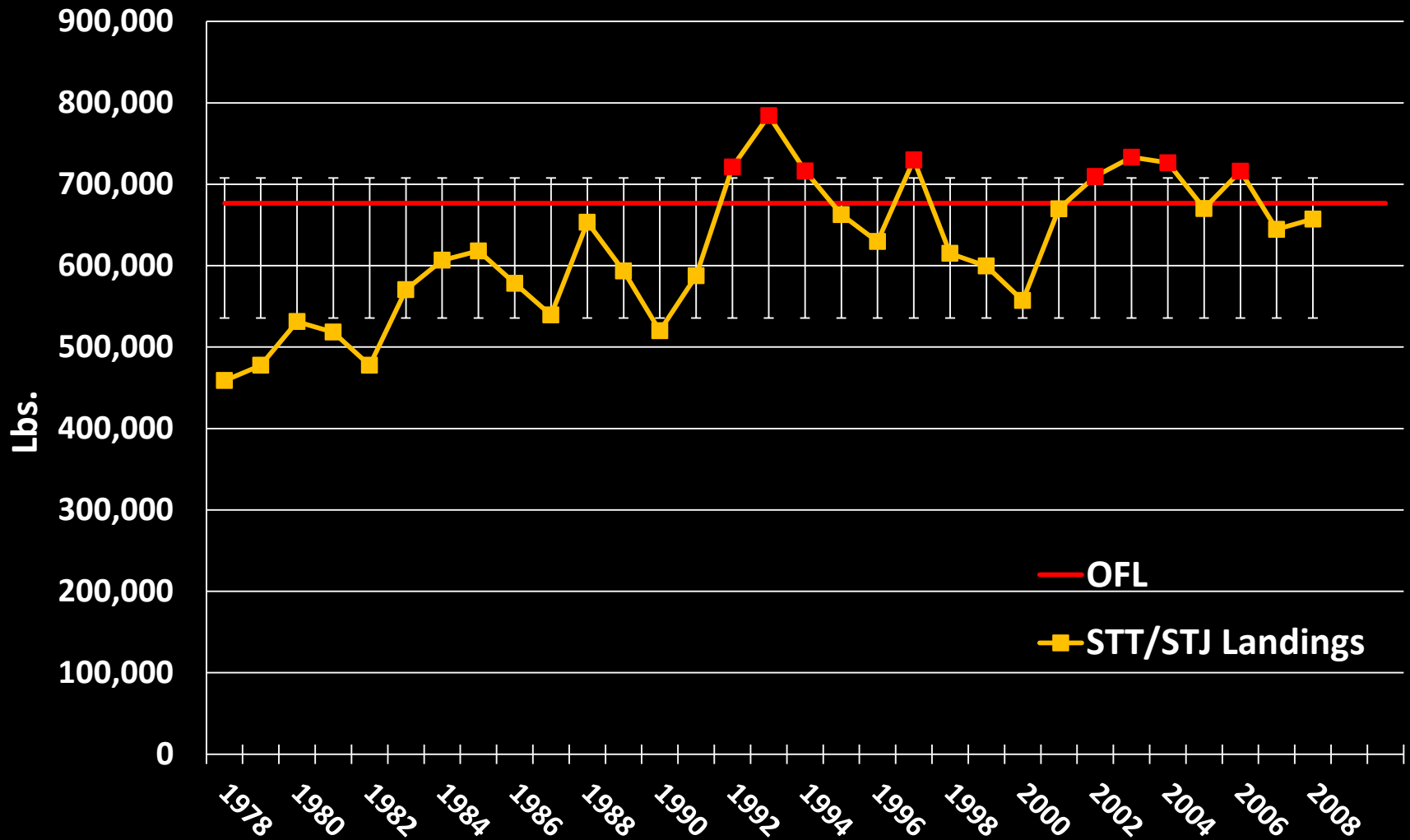


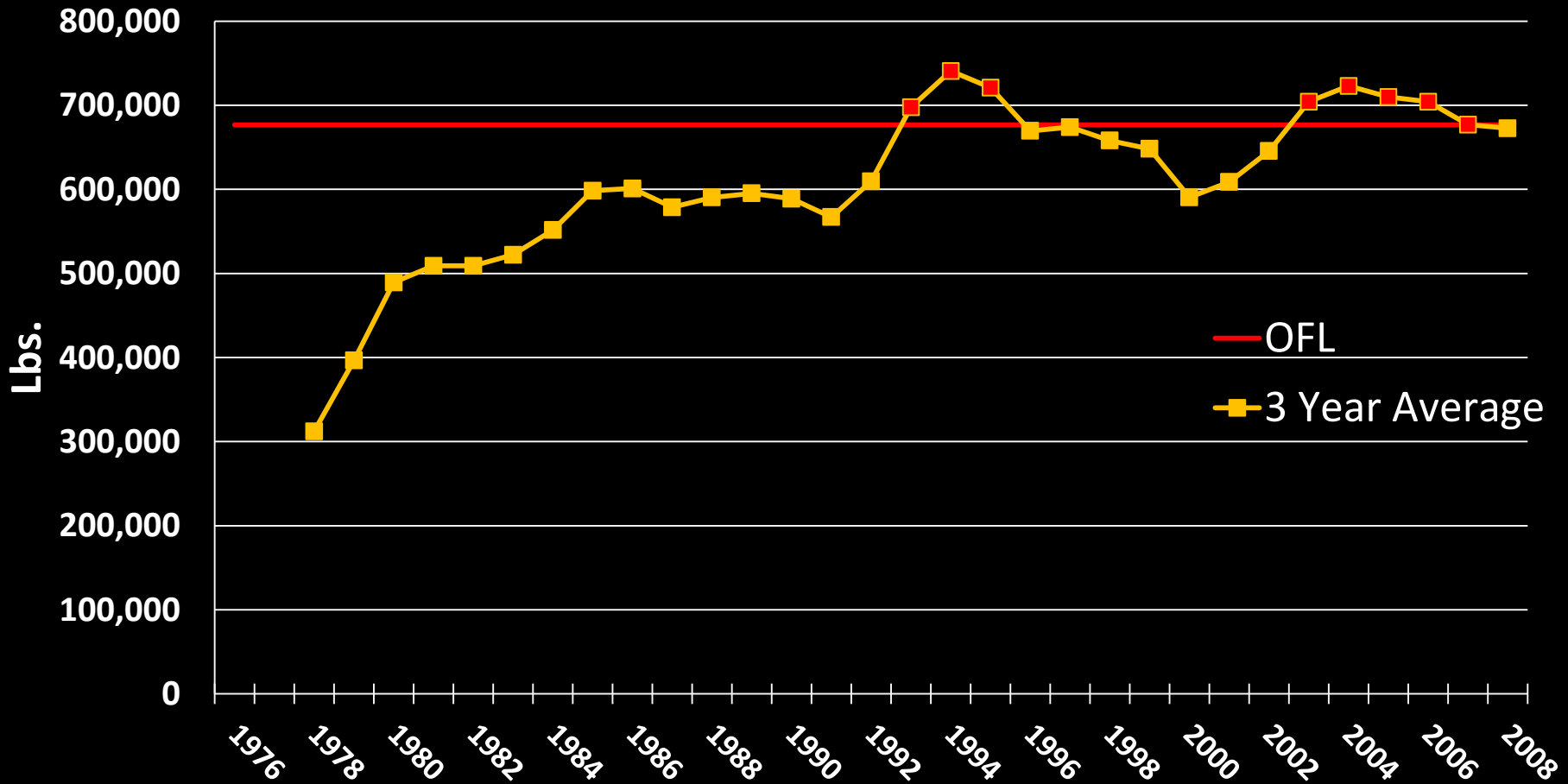
Implications of ACLs

- St. Thomas/St. John landings have been stable since around 1980.
- Variations due to exogenous rather than fishing effort factors (Caribbean fish kill, urchin die off, hurricanes, etc).
- Effort in equilibrium with resource.
- ACLs create artificial (and unnecessary) requirement for reduction and administratively create “overfishing”.
- Inconsistent with MSA National Standards.

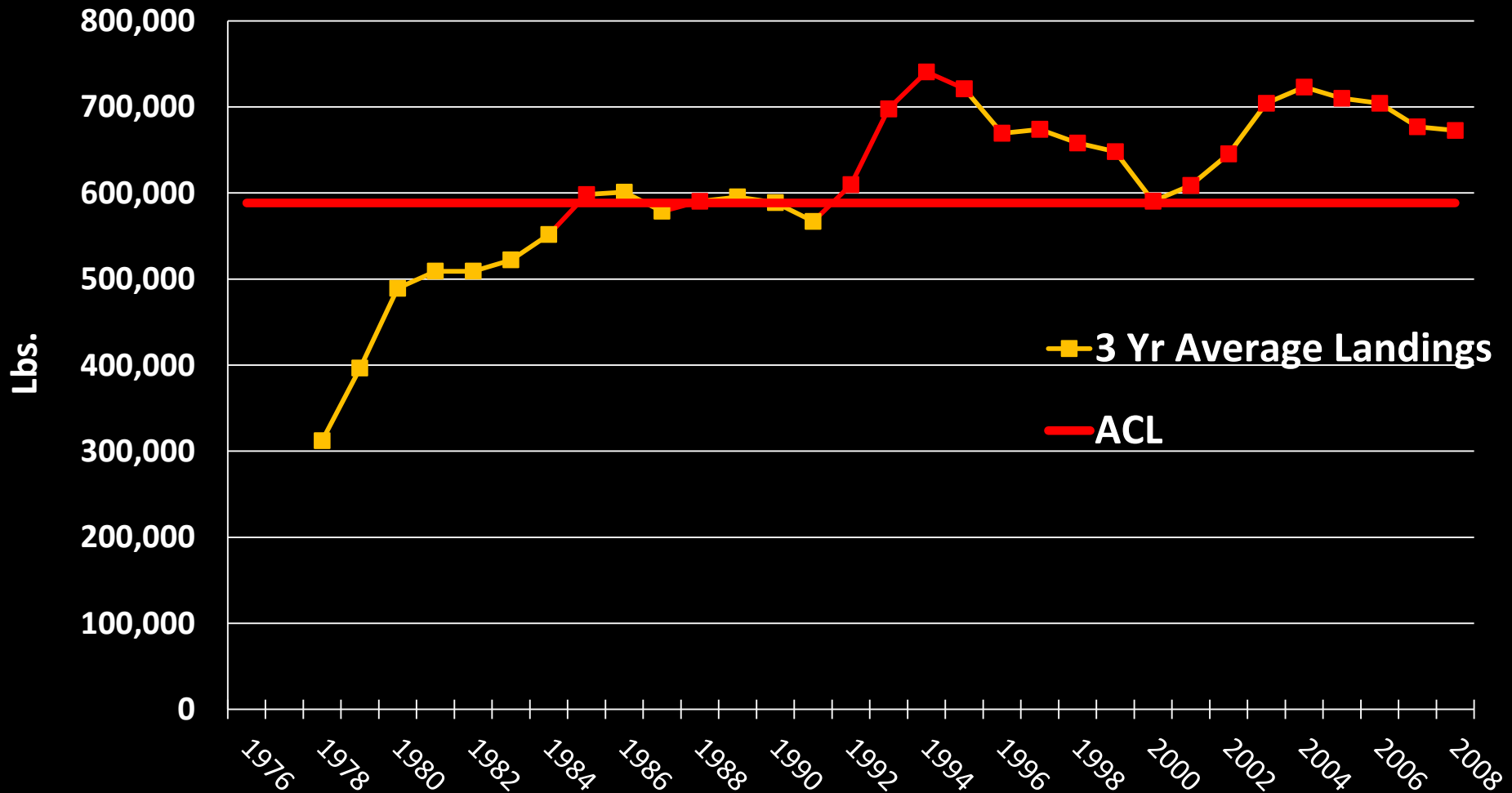
St. Thomas/St. John Combined Average Finfish Landings



St. Thomas/St. John Combined Finfish Landings (3 yr average) with 2000-2008 OFL



St. Thomas/St. John Combined Finfish Landings (3 yr average) with 2000-2008 ACL



National Standard Inconsistency

- **National Standard 1** requires that Conservation and management measures shall **prevent overfishing** while **achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield** from each fishery.

CFMC ACLs are creating artificial limitations for St. Thomas fishermen which are not required as the fishery has been stable throughout the past four decades while documented overfishing in Puerto Rico is being ignored.

- **National Standard 2** requires that Conservation and management measures shall be based upon the **best scientific information available**.

Port sampling data is the best data regarding the species and families and has been ignored. Niemeth research ignored, impacts of 2005 actions ignored.

Overfishing in Puerto Rico is Well Documented: But No Reductions Proposed.

- **Reef fisheries in Puerto Rico's coastal waters have plummeted during the last two decades. It is important to take action in order to revive and attempt to sustain a healthy fishery for the future.**

2002 US Coral Reef Task Force.

- **Fish landings reported (in Puerto Rico) between 1979 and 1990 fell 69 percent.**

World Resources Institute 2002

- **“a majority of snapper-grouper species in Puerto Rico are currently fished at unsustainable levels.”**

Ault, J. S., S. G. Smith, J. Luo, M. E. Monaco, and R. S. Appeldoorn. 2008. Length-based assessment of sustainability benchmarks for coral reef fishes in Puerto Rico. *Env. Conserv.* , 35:221-231.

Required Gain/**Reduction** in Pounds

Species Group	% REDUCTION	PR Reduction/ Increase	STX Reduction	STT/STJ Reduction
CONCH	*	46,439	-99,026	
LOBSTER	10%	81,931	-148	-11,578
JACKS	10%	18,058	-2,099	-5,879
ANGELFISHES	10%	8,939	-148	-2,632
BOXFISH	10%	21,230	-4,297	-3,098
GOATFISHES	10%	2,586	-843	-36
TOTAL GROUPEL	15%	103,888	-5,371	-9,150
GRUNT	10%	77,395	-2,526	-4,180
WRASSE	10%	6,225	7	-65
PARROTFISH	25%	8,533	-121,229	-28
PORGIES	10%	-64	-367	-2,424
TOTAL SNAPPER	15%	124,591	-27,635	-23,607
SQUIRRELFISH	10%	3,610	-13	-34,758
SURGEONFISH	15%	7,172	-10,976	-7,846
TILEFISH	10%	14,435		
TRIGGERFISH AND FILEFISH	10%	58,475	-1,789	-9,067
Total Reduction/Increase		583,442	-276,461	-65,995
Average Price		\$ 4.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00
Total Gain/Loss		\$ 2,333,769	\$ (1,382,304)	\$ (395,973)

ACL reduction is 15% in PR. VI has established 50,000 lb quota in 2007.

- **National Standard 4** requires that “Conservation and management measures **shall not discriminate between residents of different States.**”

Analysis of the impacts of the ACLs shows that the impacts fall entirely upon Virgin Islands fishermen despite the fact that overfishing in Puerto Rico has been well documented in numerous scientific studies showing overfishing in Puerto Rico.

- **National Standard 6** requires that Conservation and management measures shall **take into account and allow for variations among, and contingencies in, fisheries, fishery resources, and catches.**

Variability within the St. Thomas/St. John fishery is low and almost entirely due to exogenous factors. These cannot be regulated as an element of the fishery but should be considered in establishing a management regime for the District. This has been ignored in setting the ACLs for St. Thomas.

- **National Standard 8** Conservation and management measures shall, consistent with the conservation requirements of this Act (including the prevention of overfishing and rebuilding of overfished stocks), **take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities by utilizing economic and social data** that meet the requirements of in order to (A) provide for the sustained participation of such communities, and (B) to the extent practicable, minimize adverse economic impacts on such communities.

At its 136th meeting the Caribbean Fishery Management Council voted unanimously to designate the Virgin Islands and certain Puerto Rican fishing villages as “Fishing Communities” under the terms of the MSRA.

Thus, passage of recent ACLs in 2010 and 2011 should have been accompanied by in-depth analysis of the impacts of those actions upon the Virgin Islands fishing communities.

- **What can be done within the constraints of the MSA?**
 - Not much, but the Council can at least acknowledge the problem.
 - The SSC has not proved to be helpful nor has it seriously examined actual data. This should change.
 - Consider seriously the problems with the national standard inconsistencies.