OPERATION ROE
Fact sheet

Published research indicates that water temperatures below 44 degrees can be lethal to spotted seatrout. Even when trout are not killed immediately, they can suffer stress leading to chronic mortality.

Spotted seatrout exhibit sexual dimorphism – females are larger than males at the same age. In Georgia, the majority of fish larger than 18 inches are female.

Spotted seatrout are indeterminate batch spawners – an individual fish will spawn multiple times during the spawning season (April to September). Research has shown that spawning may occur two to four times each month with larger and older fish spawning more frequently than younger fish.

The number of eggs released per spawning event is positively related to the size of the female – the larger the fish, the more eggs released.

Age	Total Length (inches)	Eggs Per Spawn	Annual Egg Production
1	11	175,000	3.2 million
2	15	407,000	9.5 million
3	18	530,000	17.6 million

Typically, Age 1 and 2 fish comprise the majority of Georgia's spotted seatrout population and produce most of the eggs during the annual spawning season. However, it's theorized that smaller, younger trout suffer disproportionately high mortality during cold winters. Thus, in the spawning season after a very cold winter, older and larger trout may contribute a greater portion of annual egg production than in years following mild winters.

The voluntary release of trout larger than 18 inches in length during the period from April through September 2018 should result in increased egg production during the 2018 spawning season and, with favorable conditions for survival, a stronger year class of juvenile trout going into the winter of 2018/2019.