

Any new method to estimate population size within the DMA will be evaluated by the IGBST. If accepted, the new method will be used in conjunction with the model-averaged Chao2 until it is calibrated to the model-averaged Chao2. Determining the correlation or correction between the model-averaged Chao2 and any new estimation method is critical to maintain the population at the 2002–2014 average. The new average population estimate and the lower and upper 95% confidence intervals that correspond to the model-averaged Chao2 population estimates would be inserted in Table 2 to reset the population size numbers with the same sliding scale to maintain the population goal of the average 2002–2014 population size. The new lower 95% confidence interval would replace the model-averaged Chao2 lower 95% as the level below which no discretionary mortality would be allowed. If, for example, a new method provides estimates that are double that of the model-averaged Chao2, the current population objectives would allow states, if they so choose, to reduce the population by half before discretionary mortality is reduced (*see* Table 2). Such a reduction would be inconsistent with the stated goal maintaining the population at 2002–2014 levels.