Scallop Committee Report

New England Fishery Management Council
Gloucester, Massachusetts & Webinar
September 25, 2025

Today's Meeting:

- **General updates –** RSA and NGOM
- **Framework 40 update –** Surveys and management measures
- **Scallop Work Priorities –** Updates, Strategic Plan, and outlook for 2026

Anticipated Action:

- *Committee Motion to recommend the Council send a letter to NOAA Fisheries urging the immediate publication of the 2026 Scallop RSA Notice of Funding Opportunity*

New England Fishery Management Council

Framework 40

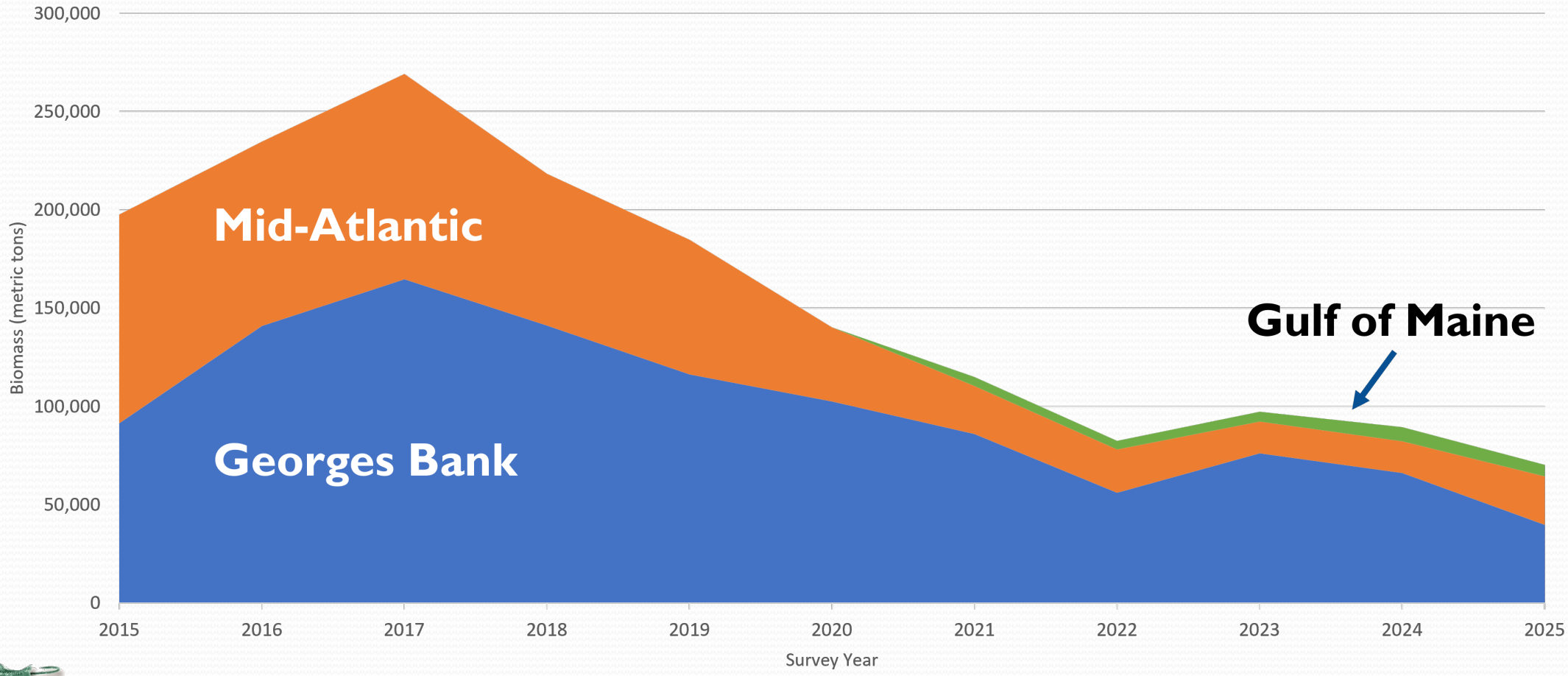
- Set fishery specifications for fishing year 2026 and default measures for 2027
- Measures included in scallop fishery specifications:
  - Overfishing Limit (OFL) and Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), which is recommended by the SSC and approved by the Council;
  - Annual Catch Limits (ACL) for both the limited access and limited access general category fisheries, Annual Catch Target (ACT) for the LA fishery; and Annual Projected Landings (APL) for LA and LAGC;
  - Allocations for limited access vessels include DAS allocations, access area allocations with associated possession limits;
  - Allocations for limited access general category vessels including an overall IFQ for both permit types, as well as a fleet wide, area-specific maximum number of access area trips available for the general category fishery;
  - NGOM TAL and NGOM Set-Aside;
  - Incidental catch target-TAC; and set-aside of scallop catch for the industry funded observer program and research set-aside program.

2025 Research Track Assessment

	Definition in Scallop FMP		SAW 50 (2010)	SARC 59 (2014)	SARC 65 (2018)	2020 Management Track	2025 Research Track
OFL	F_{MSY}	Mid-Atlantic	$F_{MSY\ MA}$ = 0.47	$F_{MSY\ MA}$ = 0.74	$F_{MSY\ MA}$ = 0.73	$F_{MSY\ MA}$ = 0.72	$F_{MSY\ MA}$ = 1.56
		Georges Bank	$F_{MSY\ GB}$ = 0.21	$F_{MSY\ GB}$ = 0.30	$F_{MSY\ GB}$ = 0.57	$F_{MSY\ GB}$ = 0.46	$F_{MSY\ GB}$ = 0.36
		Combined Regional	F_{MSY} = 0.38	F_{MSY} = 0.48	F_{MSY} = 0.64	F_{MSY} = 0.61	F_{MSY} = 0.49
ABC=ACL	25% probability of exceeding the OFL		F=0.32	F=0.38	F=0.51	F = 0.45	F = 0.36
B_{MSY}	B_{TARGET}		125,358 mt	96,480 mt	116,766 mt	102,657 mt	93,282 mt
½ B_{MSY}	$B_{THRESHOLD}$		62,679 mt	48,240 mt	58,383 mt	51,329 mt	46,641 mt
MSY			24,975 mt	23,798 mt	46,531 mt	32,079 mt	28,402 mt
Overfished?	$B < B_{THRESHOLD}$		No	No	No	No	No
Overfishing?	$F < F_{THRESHOLD}=F_{MSY}$		No	No	No	No	No

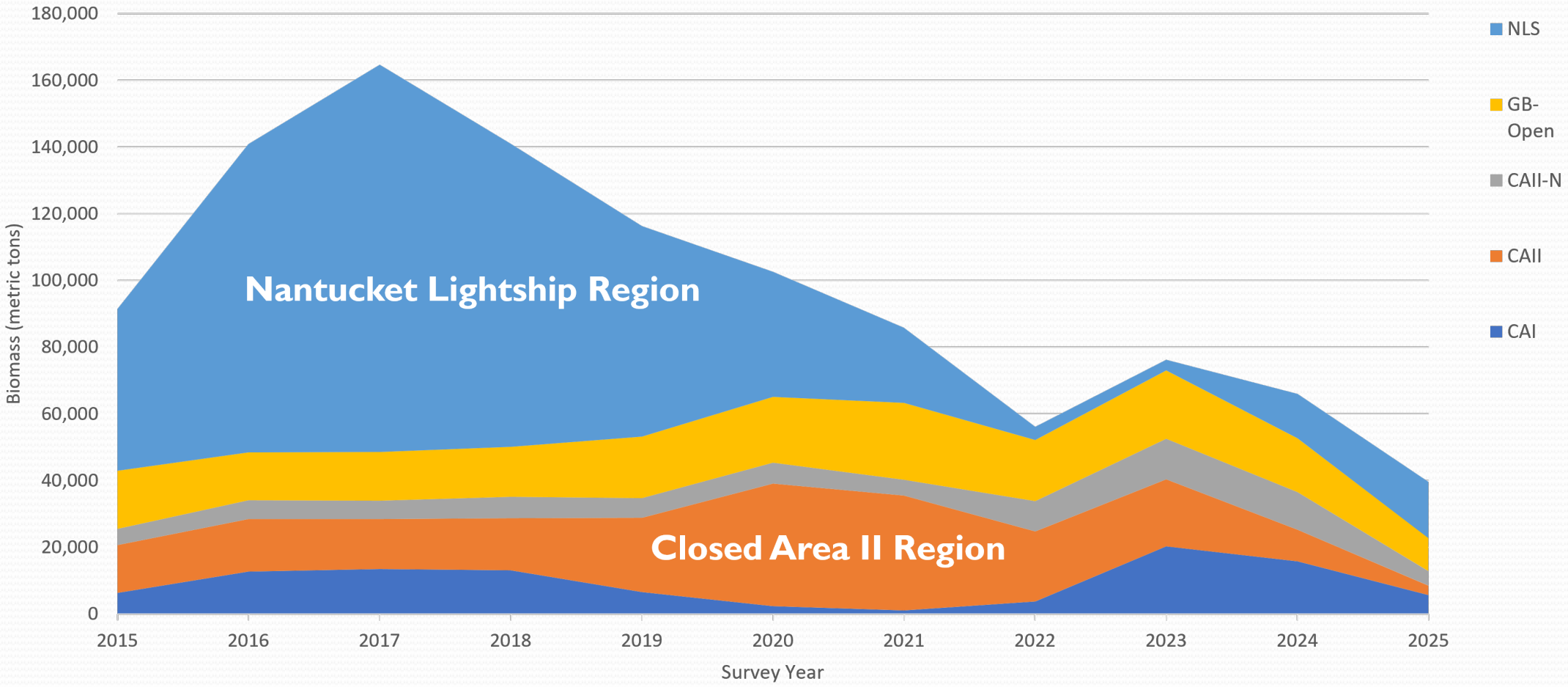
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic Biomass Estimates (2015 – 2025)



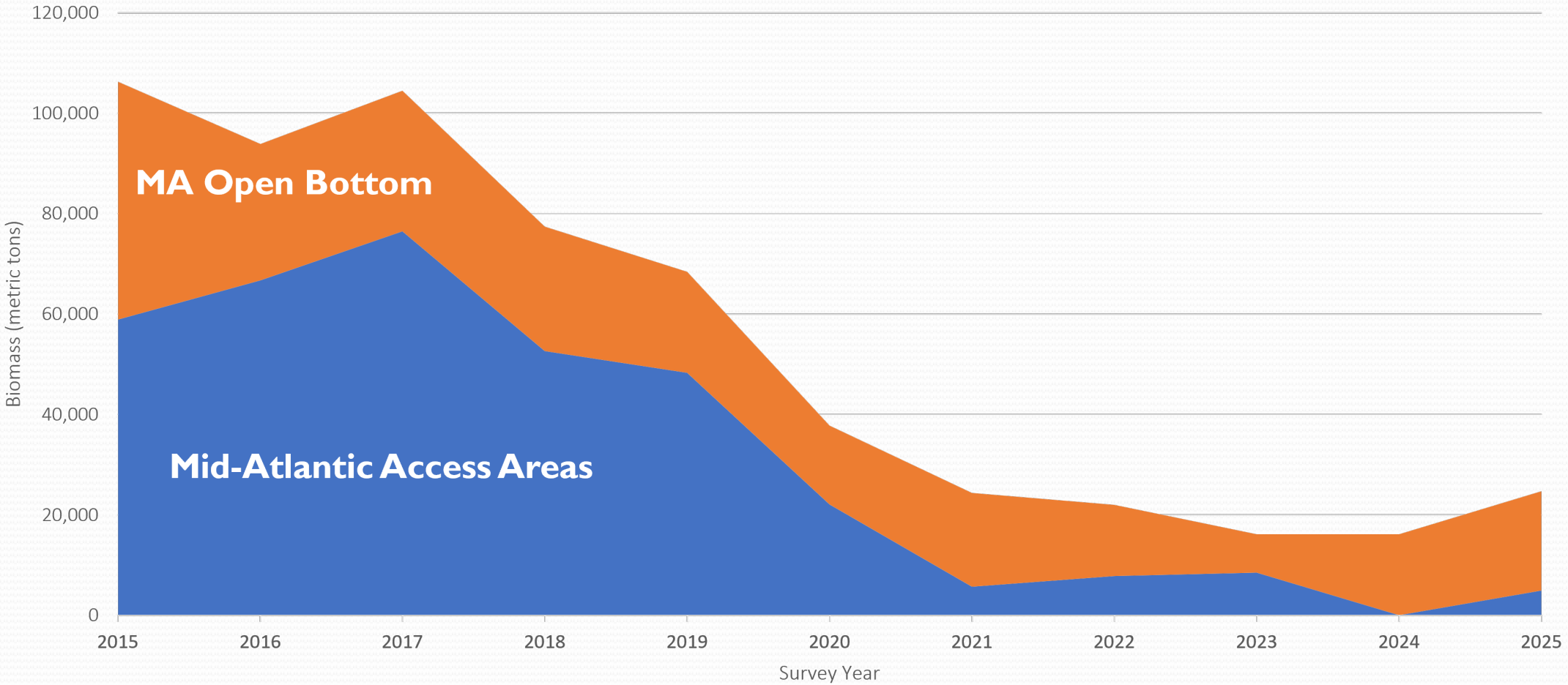
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Biomass Estimates (2015 – 2025) By Sub-Region



New England Fishery Management Council

Mid-Atlantic Biomass Estimates (2015 – 2025) By Sub-Region



New England Fishery Management Council

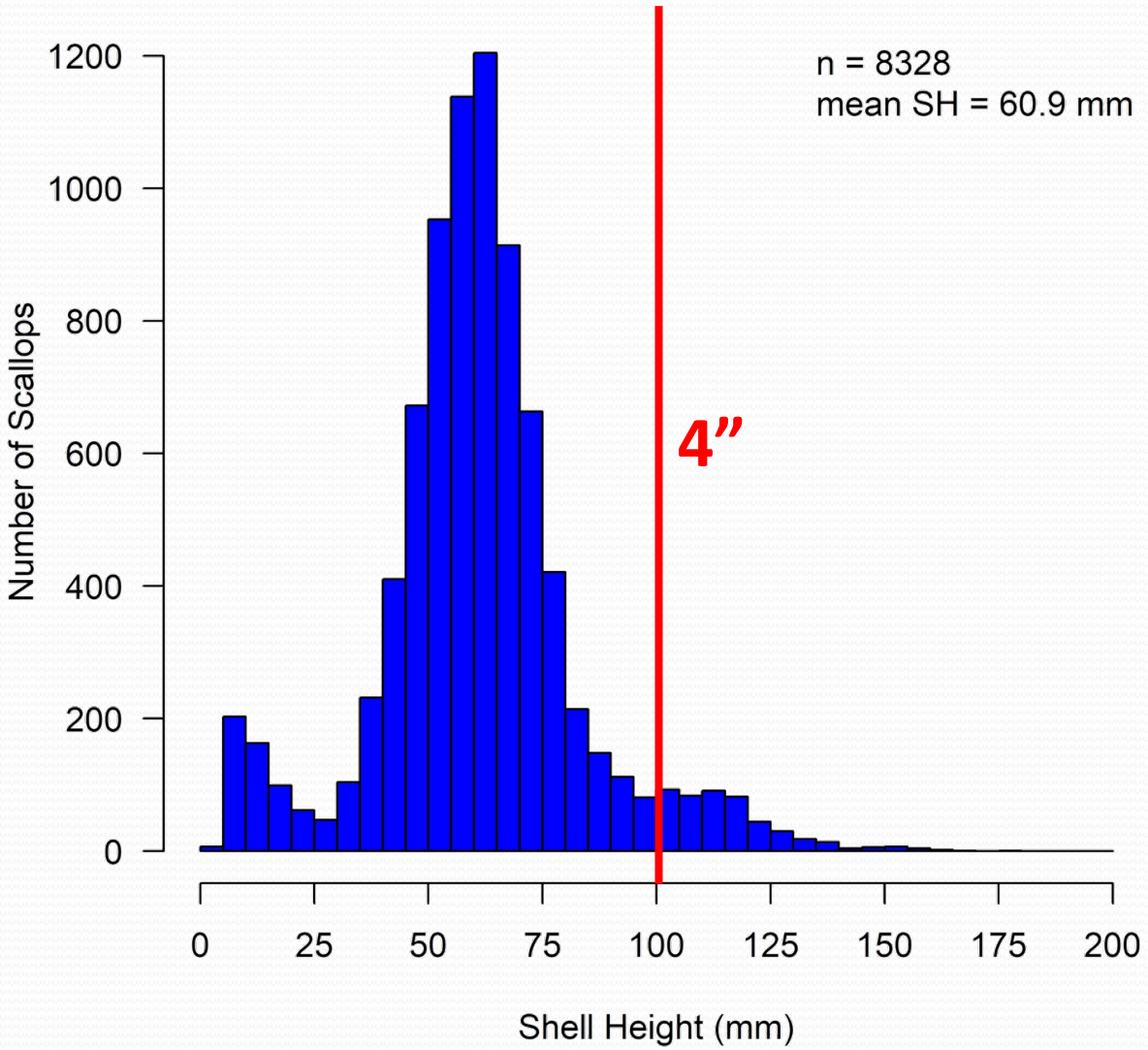
Key Points – Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic

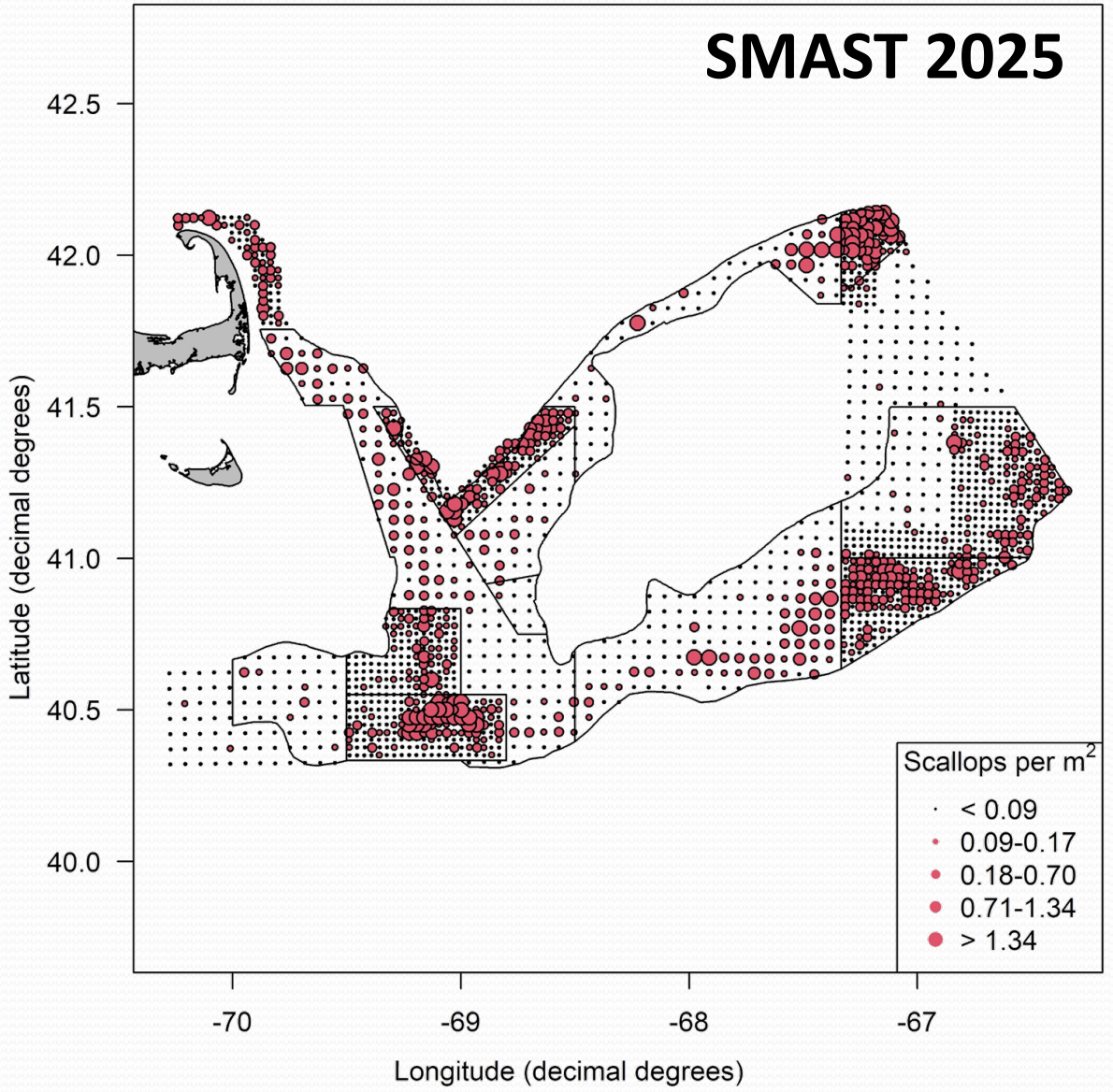
- Over 2x more scallops in Georges Bank than Mid-Atlantic
  - 6.0 billion vs. 2.3 billion
- Abundance in both Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic decreased between 2024 and 2025
  - Declines in abundance observed in almost all areas, particularly in Closed Area II – North (HAPC) and Closed Area I – North (Sliver)
  - No strong recruitment observed. Some recruitment noted in the Southern Flank, Northern Flank, Closed Area II – North (HAPC), Nantucket Lightship South and North, New York Bight, Long Island, and Block Island.
- Overall decrease in Survey Biomass between 2024 and 2025
  - Georges Bank increased in NLS-S but declined throughout Area I and Area II.
  - Mid-Atlantic biomass increased overall, driven by growth in the Elephant Trunk & Hudson Canyon South, and recruitment in New York Bight and Long Island.
- Substantial uncertainty in biomass estimates for areas of Georges Bank with high densities of recruits, e.g. NLS-South, Southern Flank, Long Island, and areas that had limited survey coverage, e.g. Hudson Canyon South.

Key Points – Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic

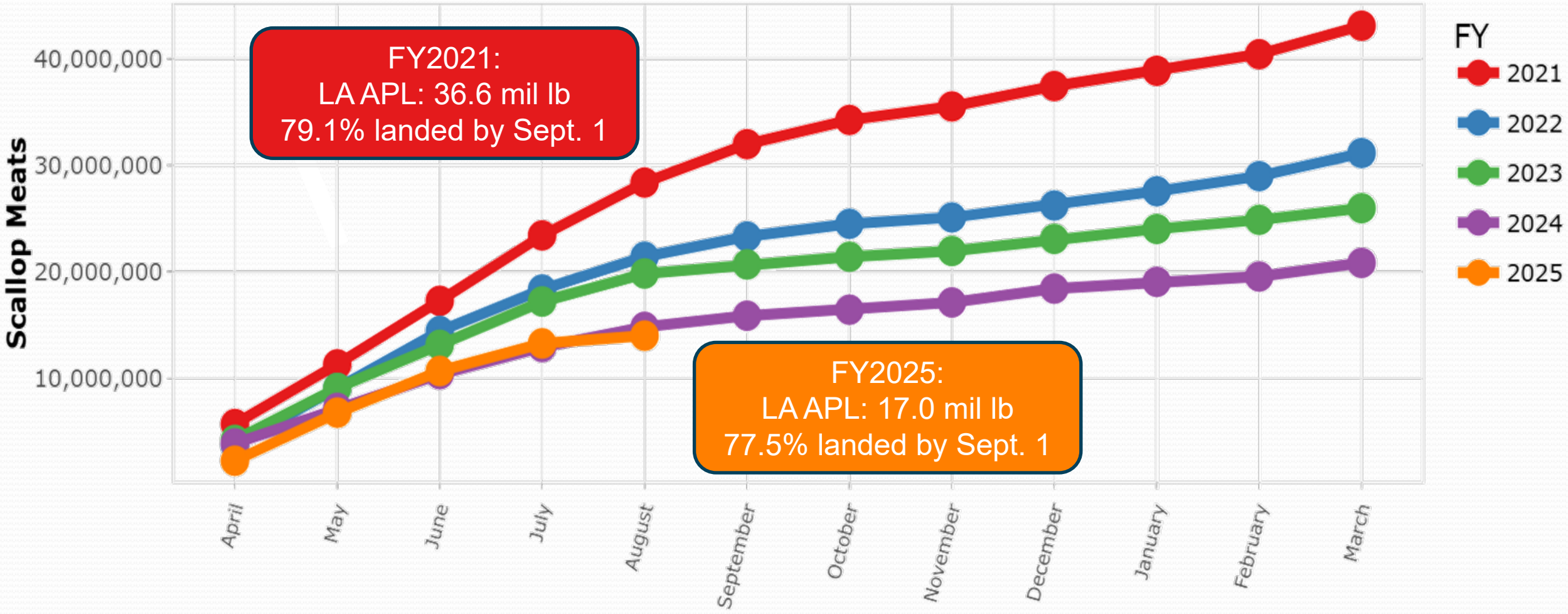
- Surveys and size-frequency data suggest there will likely be few opportunities for rotational access in FY2026 on Georges Bank. Recruitment was observed in the NLS, SF, CAII-Ext, CAII-North (HAPC), and NF.
  - The large 2022 recruitment event in the NLS-South continues to grow. Growth is quicker than the slow-growing 'Peter Pan' cohort, but slower than observed elsewhere on Georges Bank.

- In the Mid-Atlantic, surveys observed higher survival in the southern areas, continued growth in the ET and HCS, and recruitment in the NYB region.
  - Opportunities for access to Elephant Trunk and Hudson Canyon South for limited rotational fishing or open bottom fishing could reasonably be considered.


Georges Bank all
n = 8328
mean SH = 60.9 mm
4”
Number of Scallops
0
200
400
600
800
1000
1200
0
25
50
75
100
125
150
175
200
Shell Height (mm)


SMAST 2025
Latitude (decimal degrees)
42.5
42.0
41.5
41.0
40.5
40.0
-70
-69
-68
-67
Longitude (decimal degrees)
Scallops per m2
< 0.09
0.09-0.17
0.18-0.70
0.71-1.34
> 1.34

Cumulative Monthly Landings – 2025 in orange



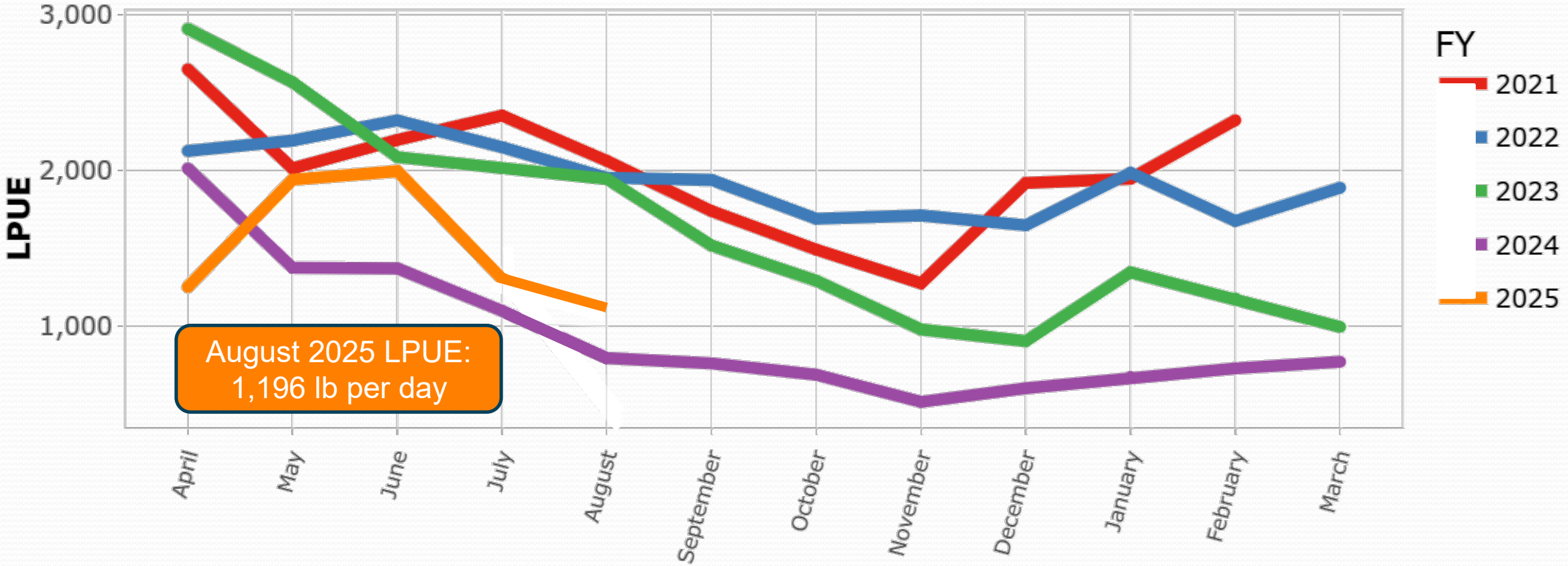
LPUE

FW39 Estimate:
1,126 pounds per day

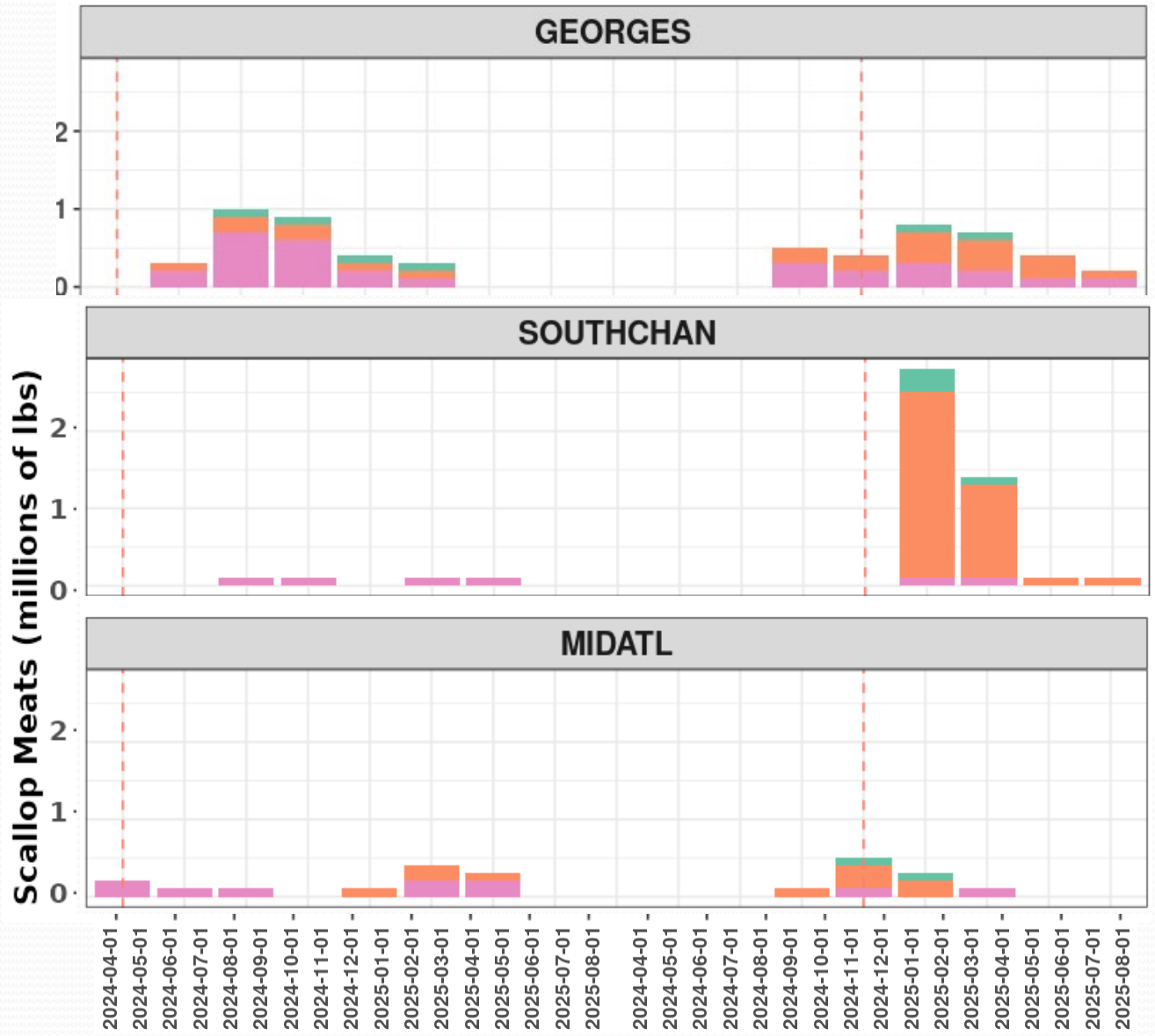
As of August 20, 2025

FY2025 Open Area Fishing:

- 7,776,422 lb
- 4,754 DAS used
- LPUE: 1,636 lb/day



Open Area Landings and Days at Sea Effort

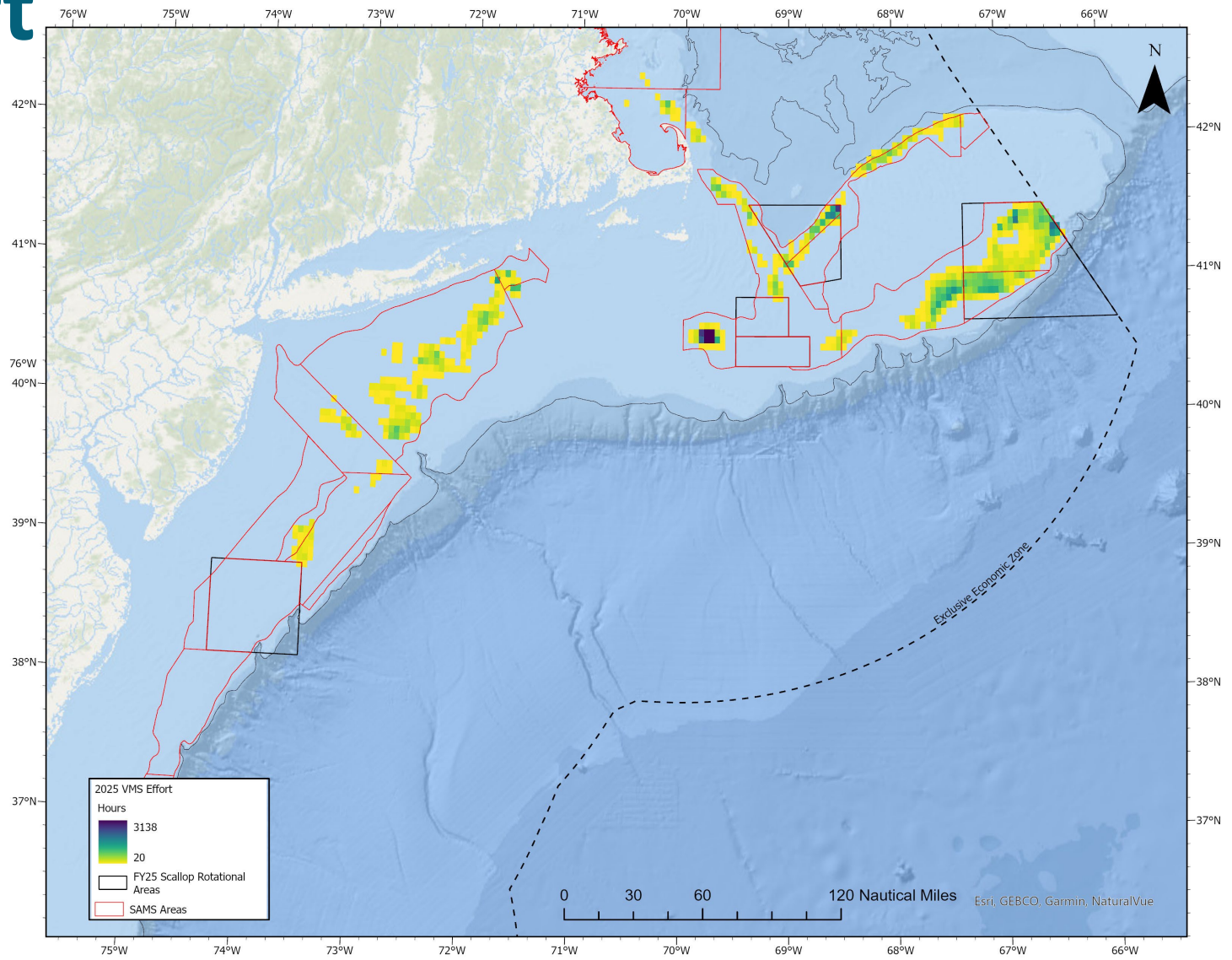


- Allocation assumes fishing is distributed across Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank → Realized F may be greater than Projected F.
- Mid-Atlantic: Declining biomass, below-average meat weights in 2023, nematodes, shell disease, clappers.
- High densities of scallops on management boundaries.

Issue: Limit DAS fishing on Georges Bank while providing alternative open bottom opportunities

FY2025 Fishing Effort

- Majority of LA DAS activity on Georges Bank, particularly in the Nantucket Lightship – West.
- Some recruitment, but likely less exploitable biomass in Georges Bank open bottom than in FY2026 than in FY2025 – lower LPUE.

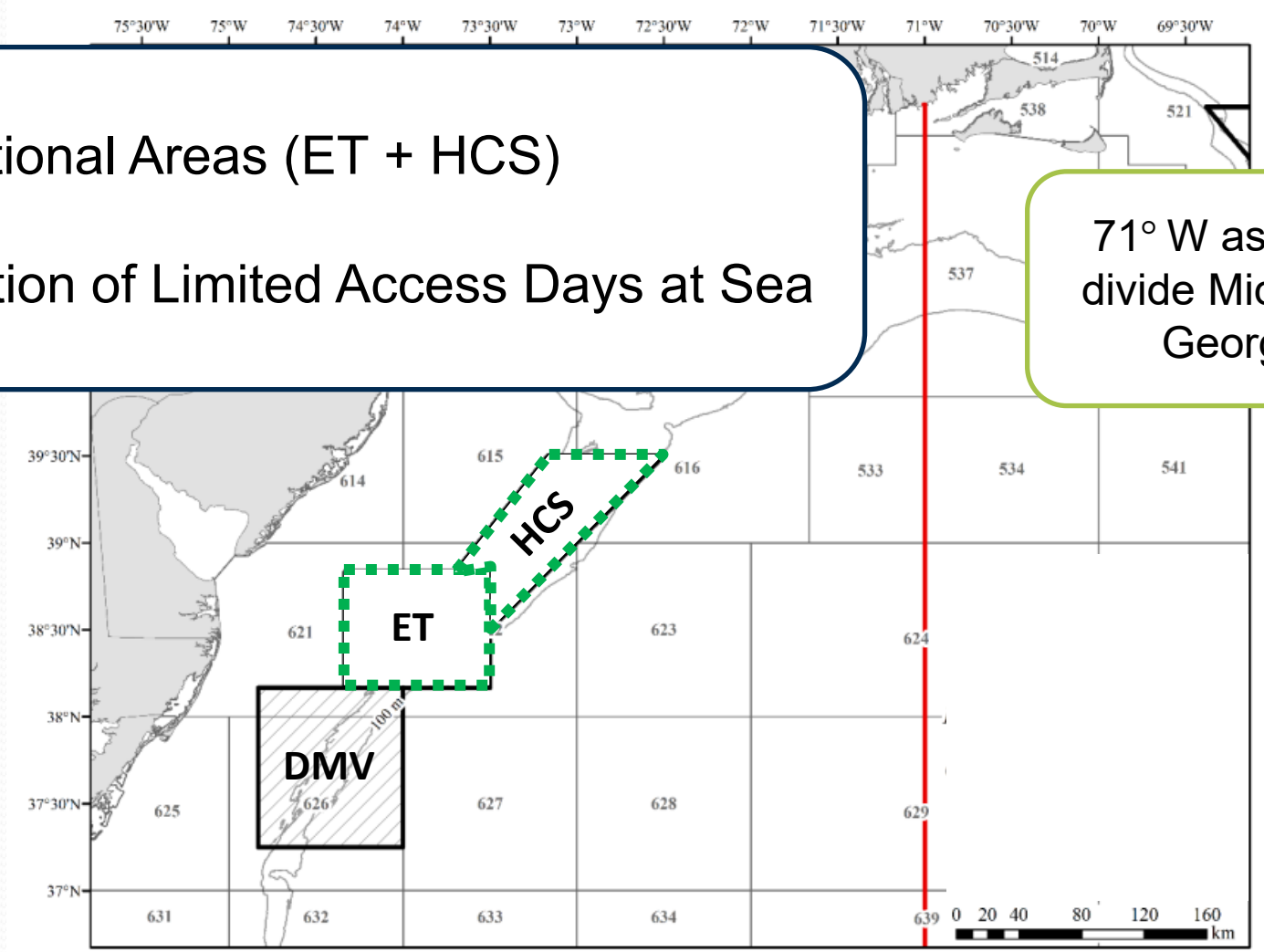


Effort by region (LA only)

Region	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025 (April-July)
GB – Open	90,769 hours (85%)	30,462 hours (64%)	73,079 hours (70%)	112,464 hours (78%)	38,246 hours (62%)
MA – Open	16,037 hours (15%)	17,182 hours (36%)	7,069 hours (30%)	31,240 hours (22%)	23,347 hours (38%)
Total - Open	**106,806 hours**	**47,644 hours**	**80,148 hours**	**143,704 hours**	**62,492 hours**
GB – AA	60,386 hours (45%)	37,375 hours	37,544 hours	59,963 hours (55%)	44,944 hours
MA - AA	74,356 hours (55%)	0 hours	0 hours	49,813 hours (%45)	0 hours
Total - AA	**134,742 hours**	**37,375 hours**	**37,544 hours**	**109,776 hours**	**44,944 hours**
Georges Bank	151,155 hours (63%)	67,837 hours (80%)	110,633 hours (77%)	172,427 hours (68%)	83,190 hours (78%)
Mid-Atlantic	90,393 hours (37%)	17,182 hours (20%)	7,069 hours (23%)	81,053 hours (32%)	23,347 hours (22%)
Grand Total	**241,548 hours**	**85,019 hours**	**117,702 hours**	**253,480 hours**	**106,537 hours**

Concepts for Mid-Atlantic Harvest

1. Rotational Areas (ET + HCS)
2. Regional Allocation of Limited Access Days at Sea



71° W as boundary to divide Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank

Possible Tools to Address Effort on GB

- **Issue:** Limit DAS fishing on Georges Bank while providing alternative open bottom opportunities

- **Rotational Management**
  - Existing Tool, known analysis and implementation.
  - New application (low biomass).
  - Leaves inshore Mid, Long Island, and Block Island as open bottom.
  - Fewer DAS in favor of limited rotational allocation.
  - No Council action required, Committee tasking.

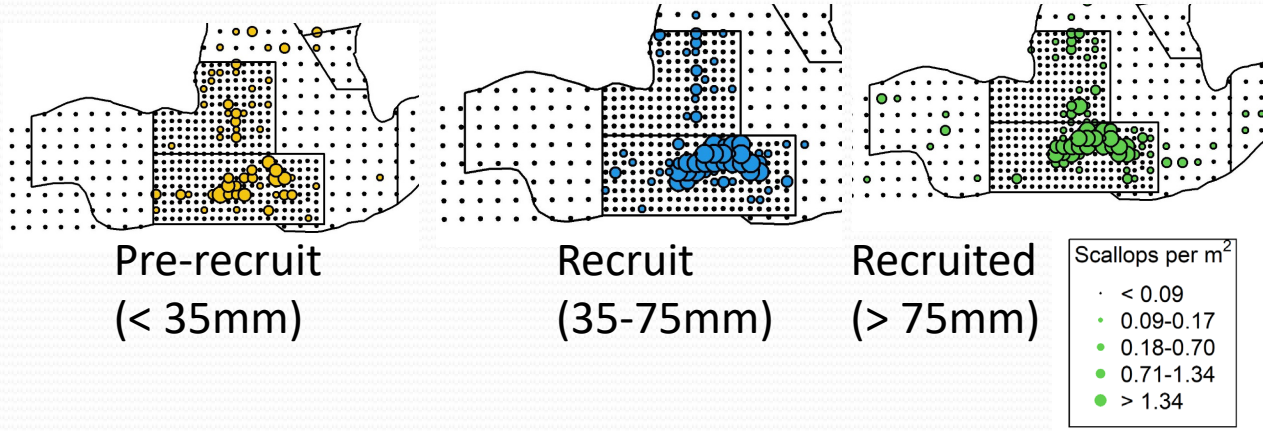
- **Regional Allocations of LA DAS**
  - New approach. Current system allocates total DAS, fished anywhere in the open bottom.
  - Implementation considerations, i.e. how to treat carryover DAS.
  - PDT tasking for SAMS runs with DAS split by 71°W @ regional F_{ABC}
  - Vote needed to explore in Framework 40 (final action at next Council meeting)

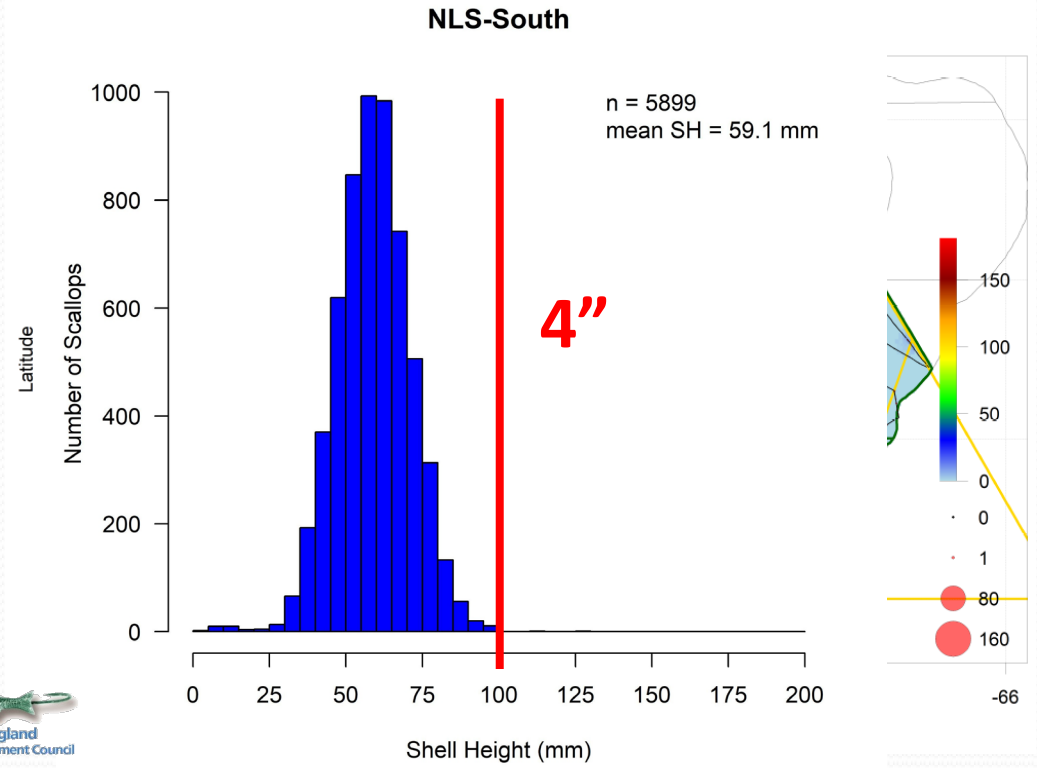
Nantucket Lightship

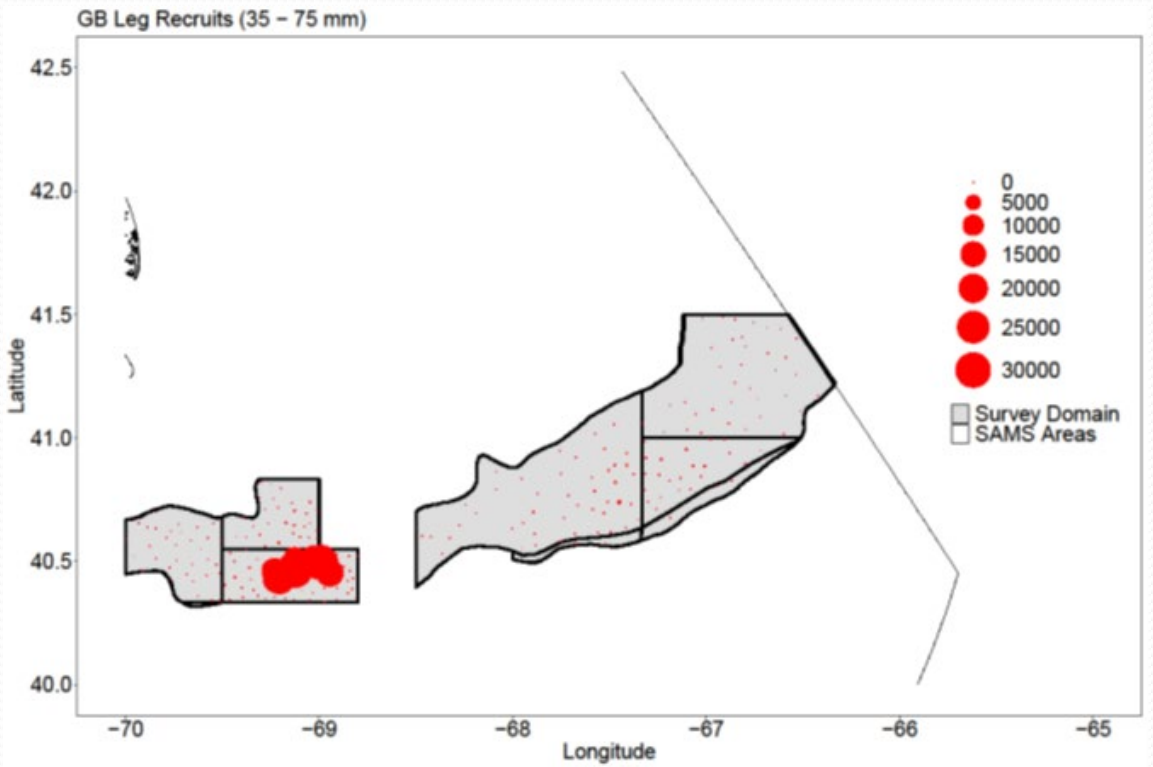
Drop Camera (top), Dredge (bottom right), HabCam (bottom left)

NLS-S Recruitment

- Smaller recruitment event than 2013 year class. Shallower and growing slightly faster than slow-growing 'Peter Pan' scallops
- 47% of total scallops, 27% of total scallop biomass
- Committee tasking to analyze continued closure







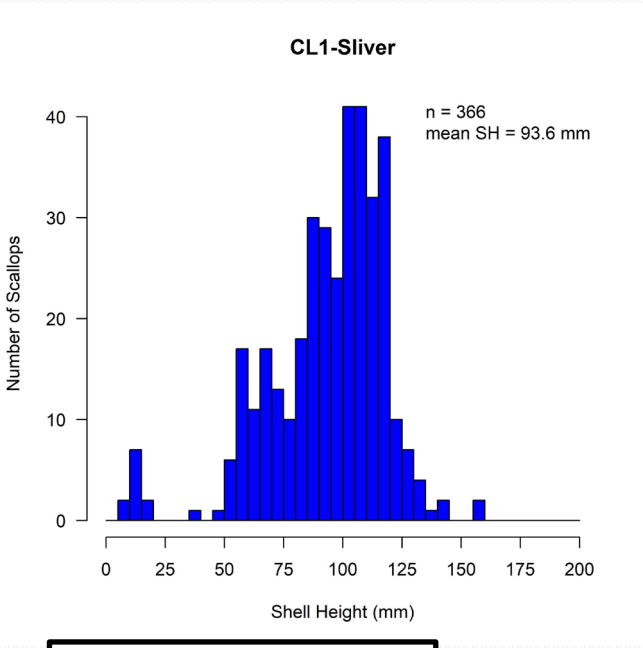
New England Fishery Management Council

Area I

Sub-Area	2024 Biomass	Year Classes in the Area	Recruitment?
Closed Area I Sliver	12.1 mil lbs.	3-year olds & 5-year olds intermixed	Minor
Closed Area I Middle	1.1 mil lbs.		No

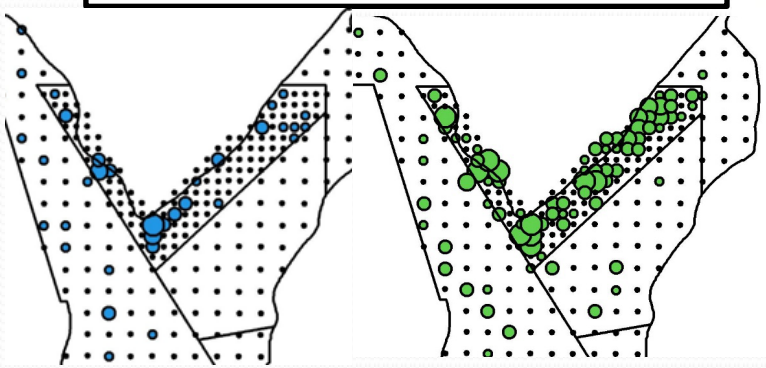
Committee tasking to explore reverting to open bottom or rotational fishing at 12k lb trip limit.

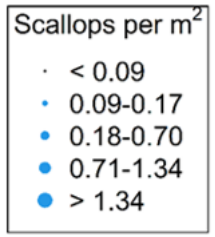
Currently: 1x 12,000 lb trip in FY2025

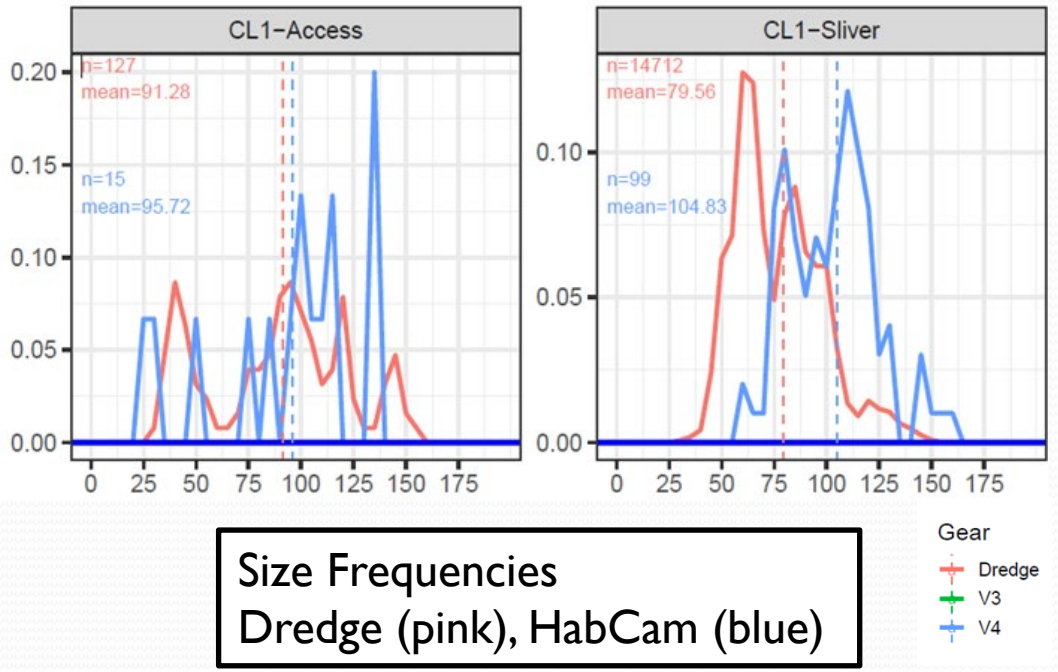


Size Frequencies (Drop Camera)

Survey densities (drop camera)
35mm – 75mm (blue),
> 75 mm (green)







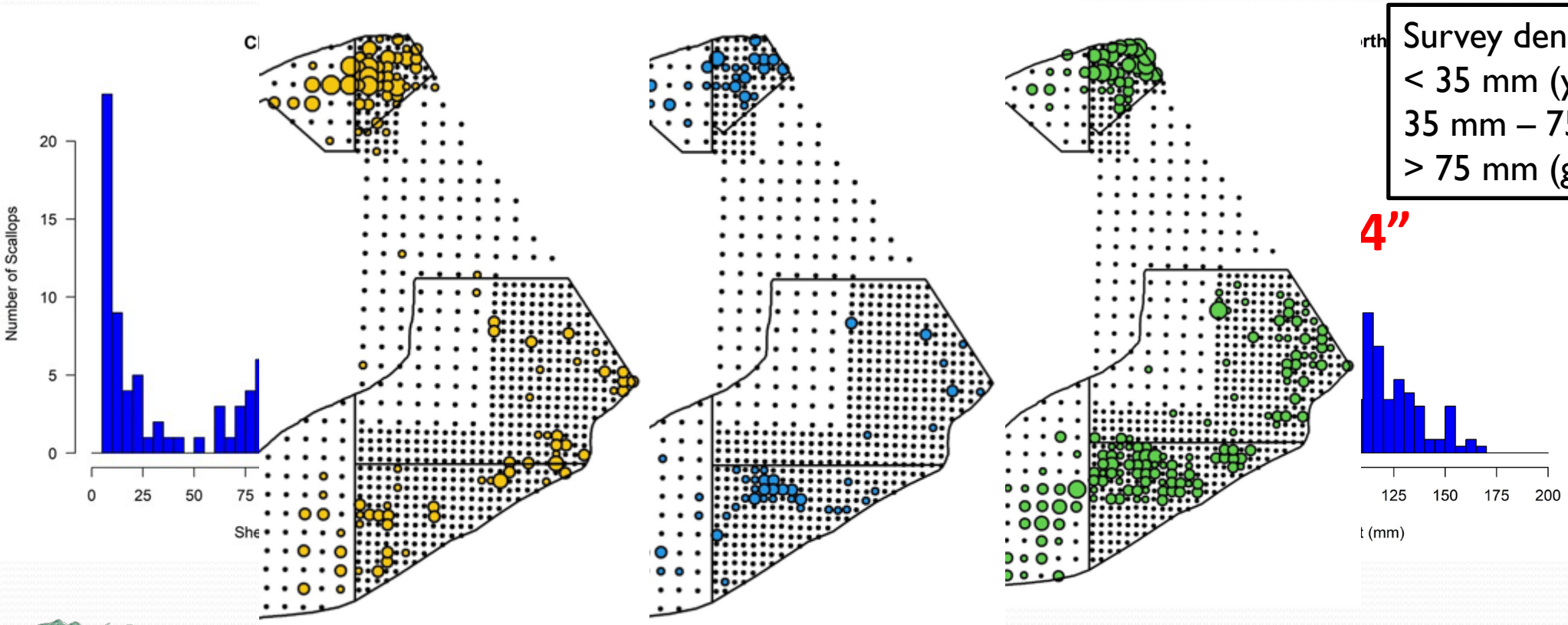
Size Frequencies
Dredge (pink), HabCam (blue)

Area II

Sub-Area	2024 Biomass	Year Classes in the Area	Recruitment?
Area II Access	2.5 mil lbs.	Multiple	Minor
Area II Extension	3.5 mil lbs.	Multiple	Minor

Committee tasking to analyze closure of Area II in FY2026

Currently: 1x 12,000 lb trip in FY2025



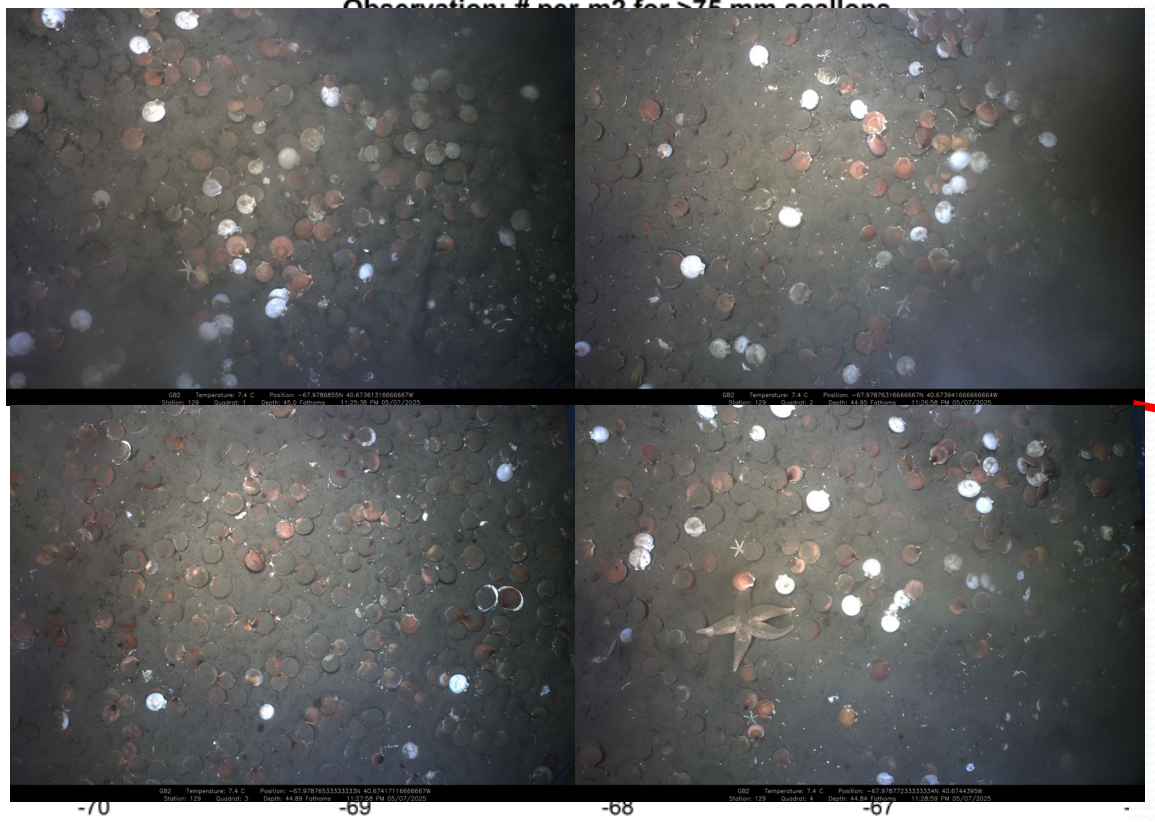
Survey densities (drop camera)
< 35 mm (yellow)
35 mm – 75 mm (blue),
> 75 mm (green)

4”

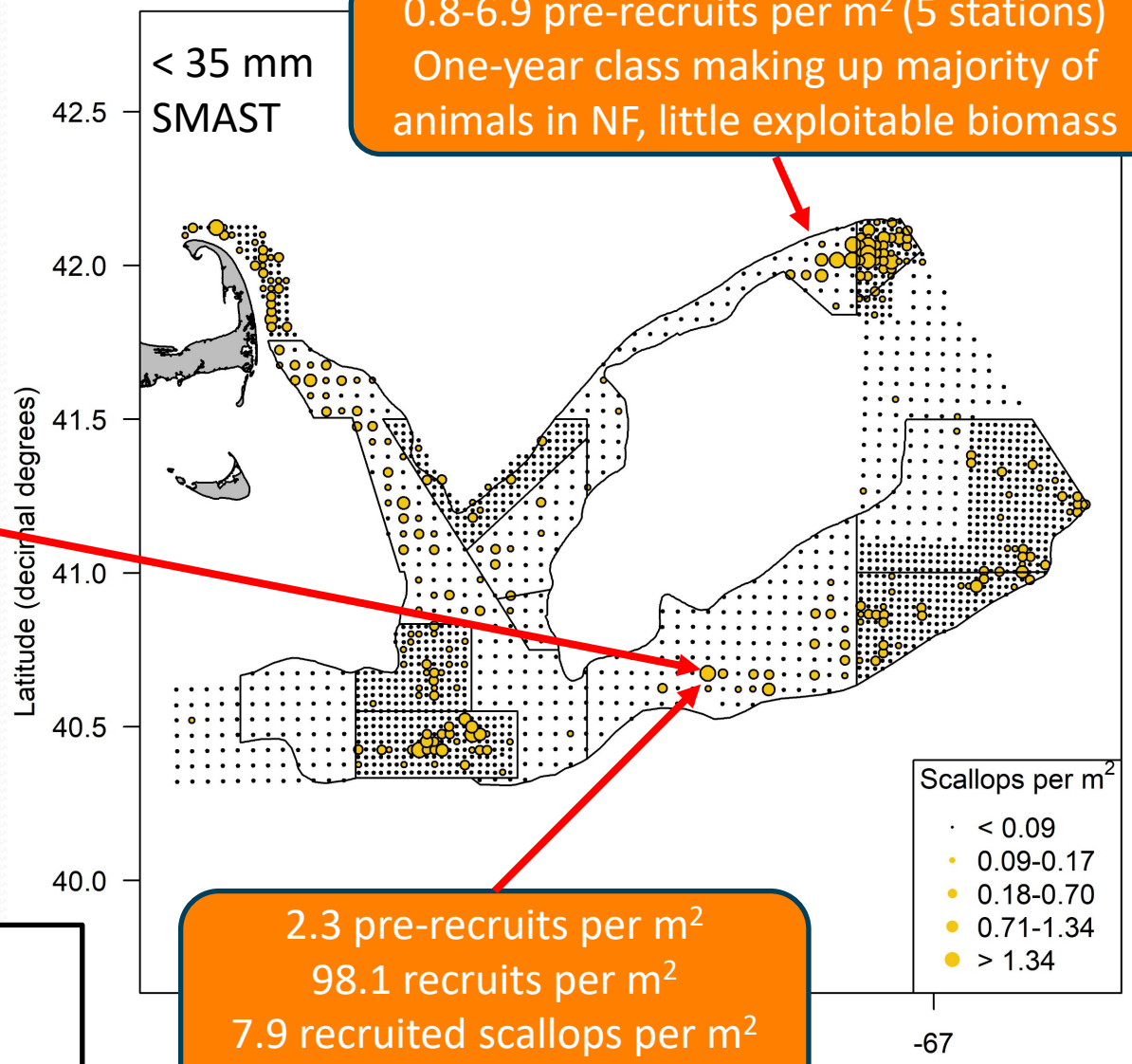
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Open

>75mm
HabCam



< 35 mm
SMAST



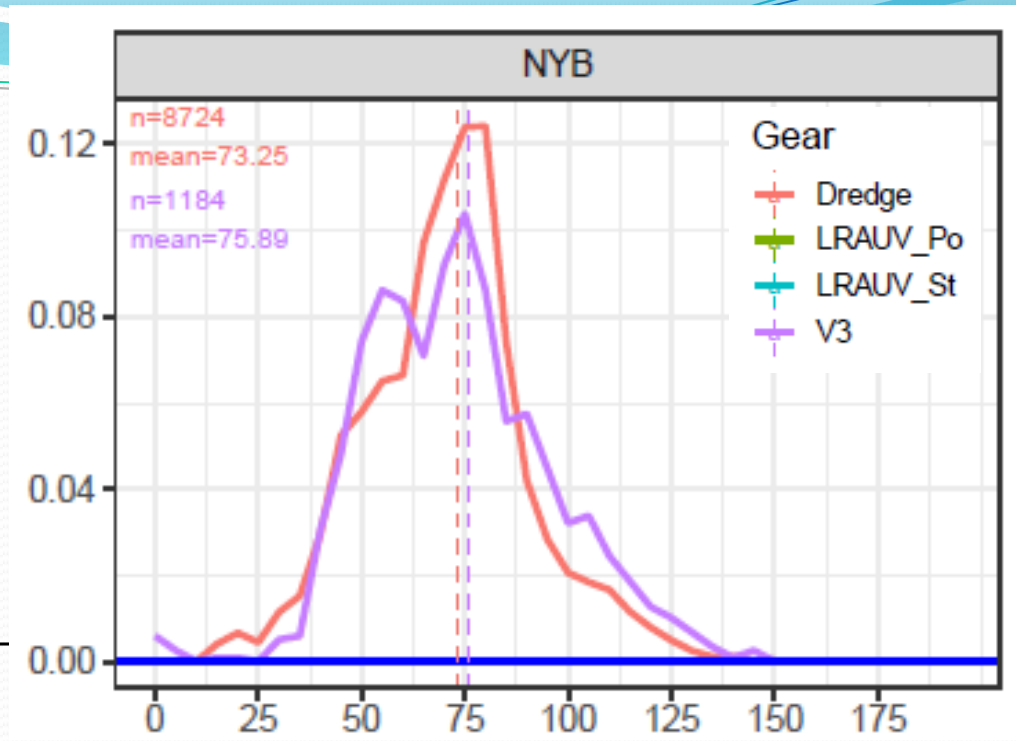
0.8-6.9 pre-recruits per m^2 (5 stations)
One-year class making up majority of animals in NF, little exploitable biomass

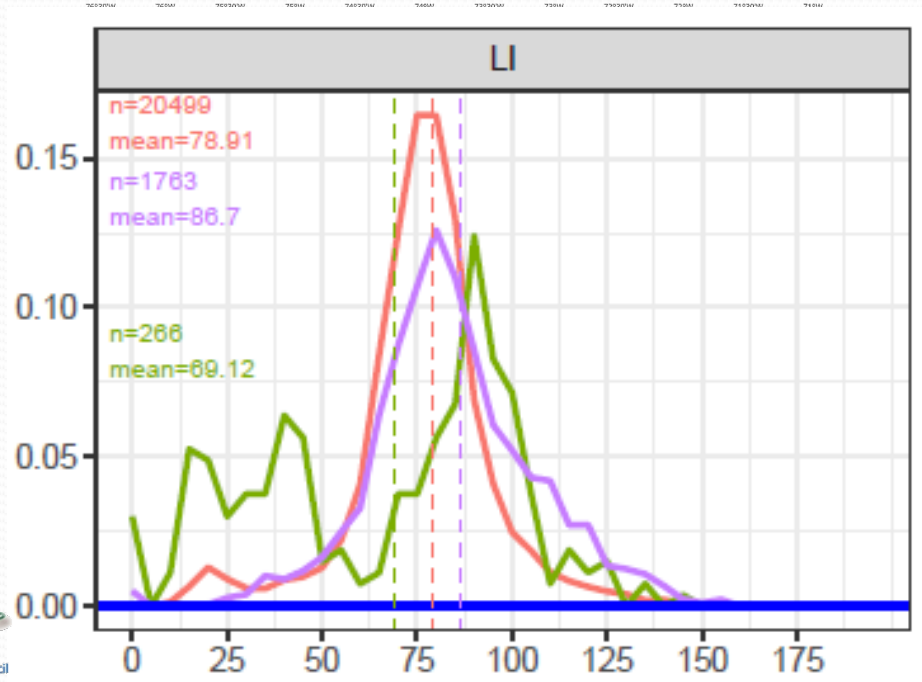
2.3 pre-recruits per m^2
98.1 recruits per m^2
7.9 recruited scallops per m^2
Multiple cohorts, smaller area

Committee tasking to analyze 18, 24, 30, 36 DAS, with and without MA/GB split.
Currently: 24 DAS

NYB & Long Island

- Large cohort of slow-growing 3-year-olds in southern Long Island, within old New York Bight closure
- Committee tasking to analyze closure to protect small scallops
- Would reduce Mid-Atlantic open bottom biomass in the Mid-Atlantic by ~30%, and Hudson Canyon South area by ~45%



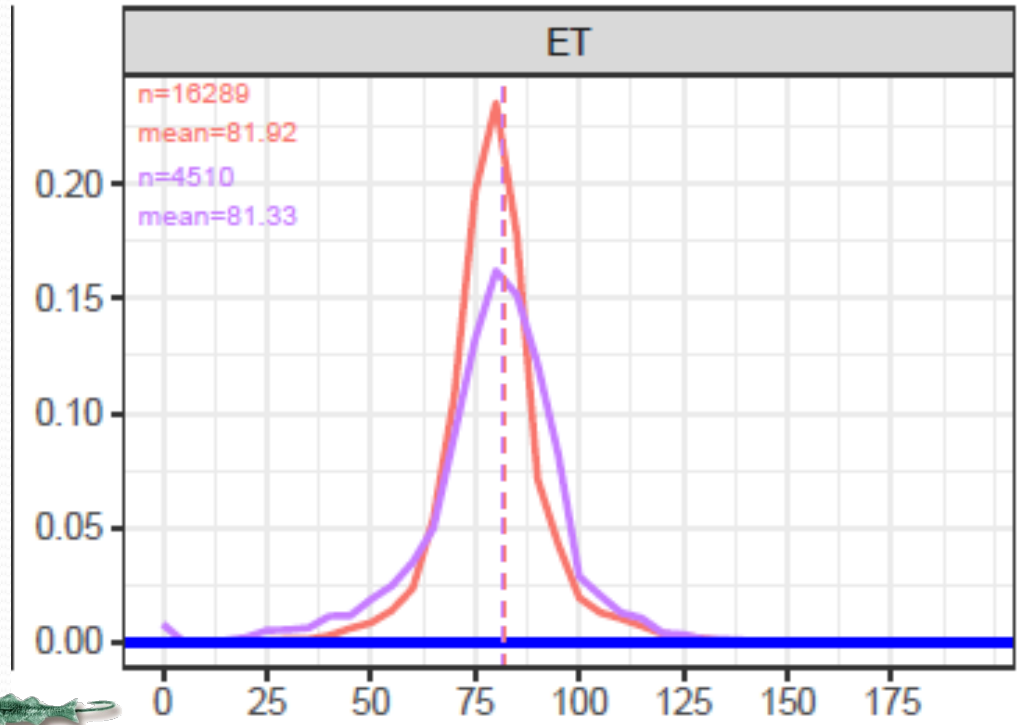


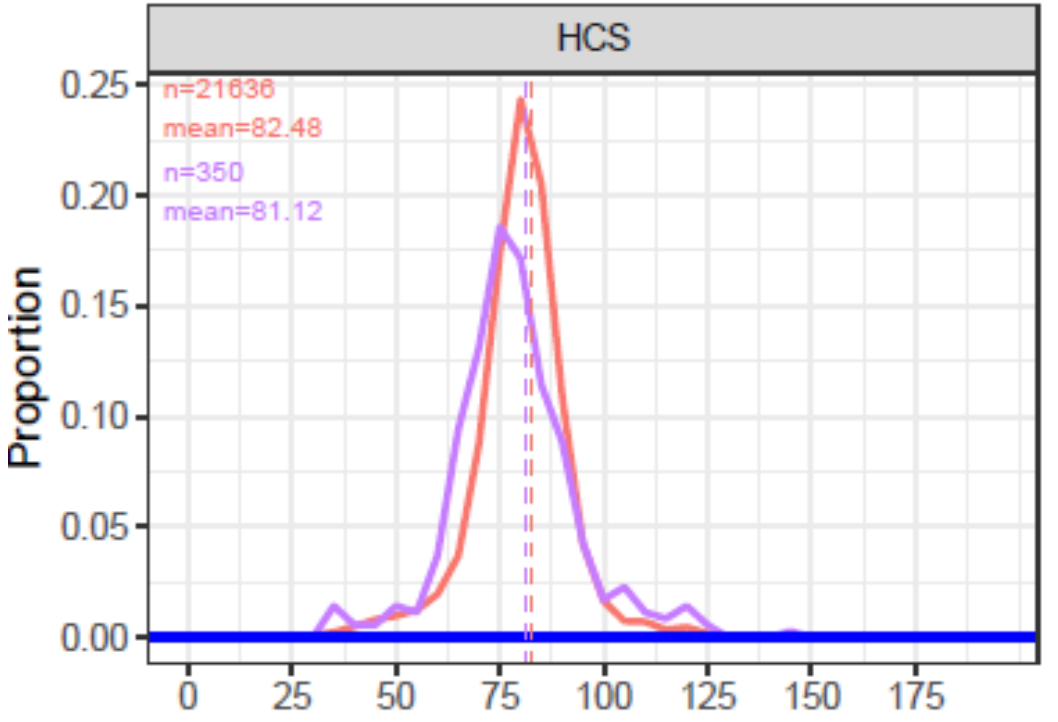
NYB Region Survey Biomass in Pounds			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
LI	9,831,172	15,681,462	18,190,341
NYB	1,677,936	4,800,560	6,920,310
NYB Closure	14,745,601		
MAB Nearshore	800,387	225,974	146,648
HCS	3,046,675	9,742,216	17,377,629
Total	**30,101,771**	**30,450,212**	**42,634,929**

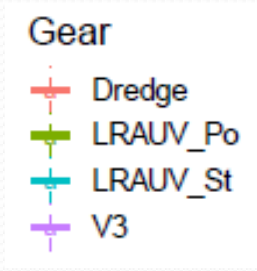
New England Fishery Management Council

Elephant Trunk & Hudson Canyon South

- Growth in ET and HCS, 1.24 billion scallops, ET closed for 2025
  - 2024 biomass in ET = 10.8 million lb, HCS = 17.4 million lb
- Committee tasking to explore reverting to open bottom in FY2026
  - If animals do not grow as large, fishing earlier may provide greater yield
  - PDT considered open bottom or limited rotational fishing



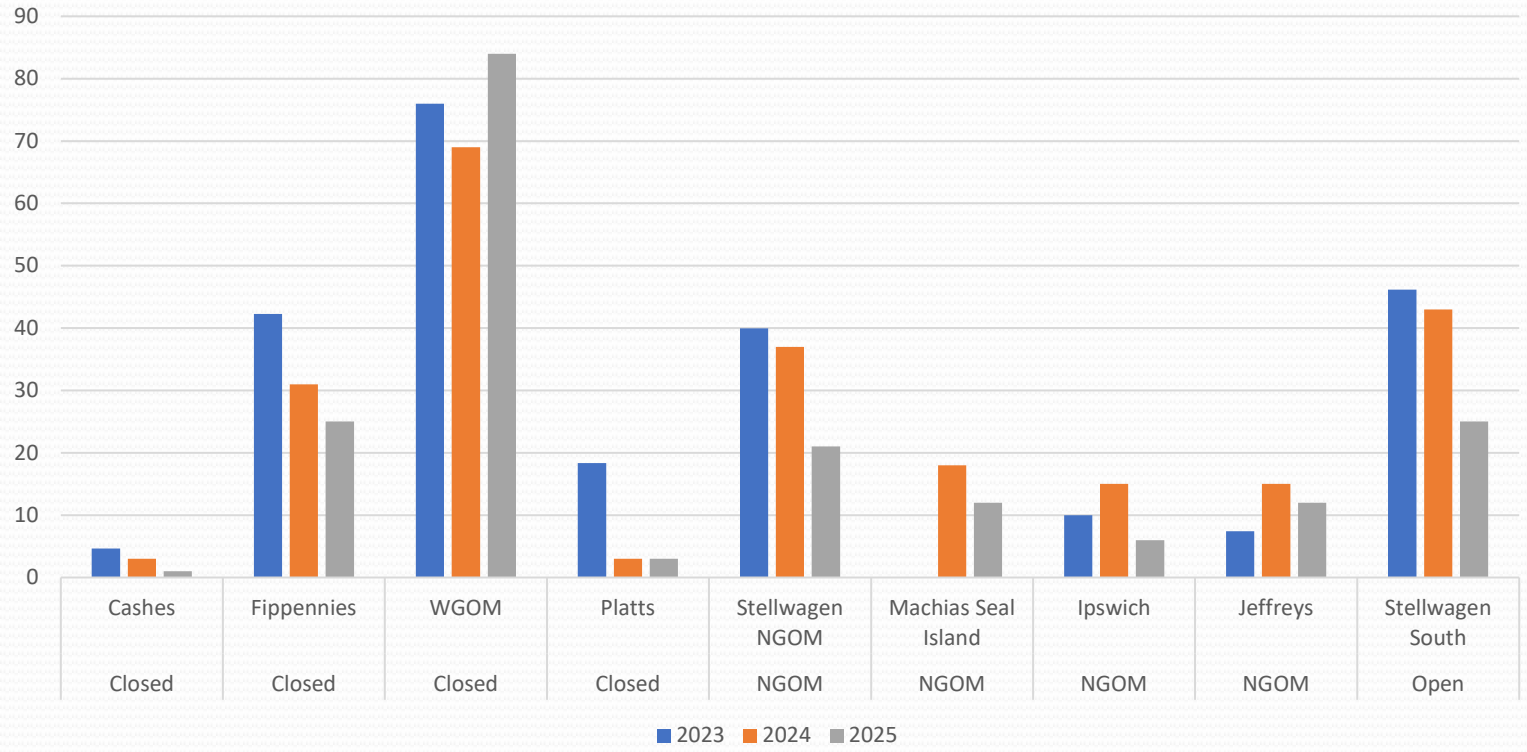




New England Fishery Management Council

Gulf of Maine Abundance Comparison 2023-2025 Survey Mean

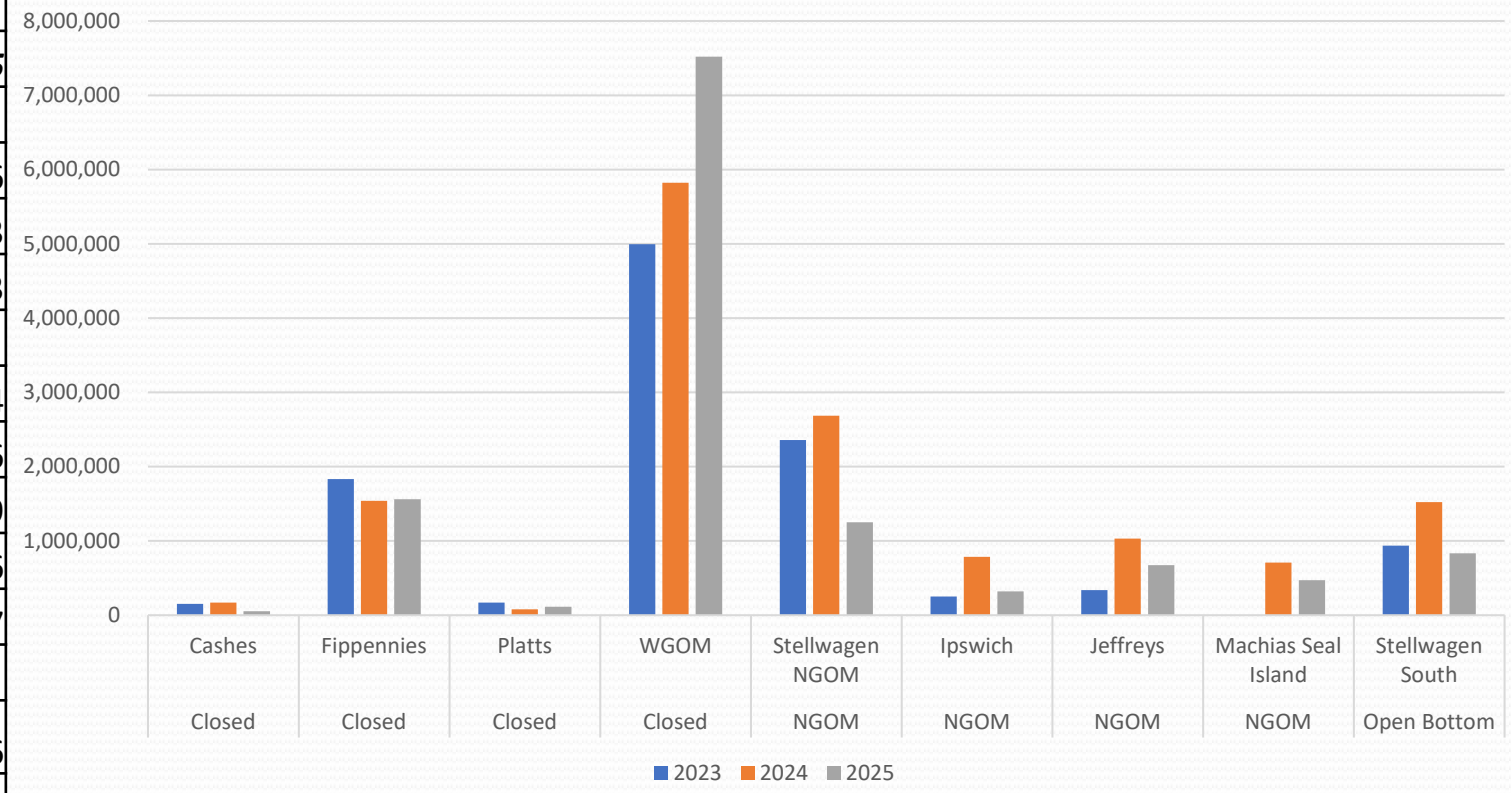
Number of Millions of Scallops			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
Cashes	5	3	1
Fippennies	42	31	25
Ipswich	10	15	6
Jeffreys	7	15	12
WGOM	76	69	84
Platts	18	3	3
Stellwagen NGOM	40	37	21
Stellwagen South	46	43	25
Machias Seal Island		18	12
Total	**245**	**191**	**189**



New England Fishery Management Council

Gulf of Maine Biomass Comparison (Pounds) 2023-2025 Survey Mean

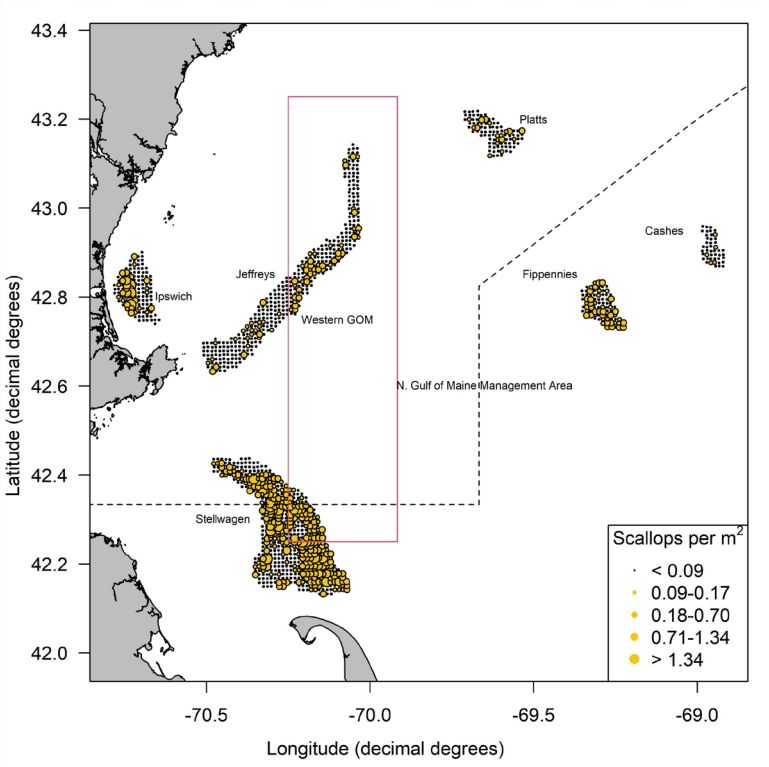
Scallop Survey Biomass in Pounds			
Area/Management	**2023**	**2024**	***2025***
Closed			
Cashes	153,488	169,756	55,116
Fippennies	1,832,177	1,541,031	1,560,873
WGOM	4995,695	5,820,167	7,517,763
NGOM			
Ipswich	253,427	785,847	321,324
Jeffreys	335,909	1,029,558	675,166
Platts	171,463	79,366	113,869
Stellwagen NGOM	2,360,027	2,687,432	1,252,226
Machias Seal Island		731,935	470,907
Open Bottom			
Stellwagen South	935,863	1,520,526	832,686
Grand Total	11,038,046	14,343,669	11,965,259



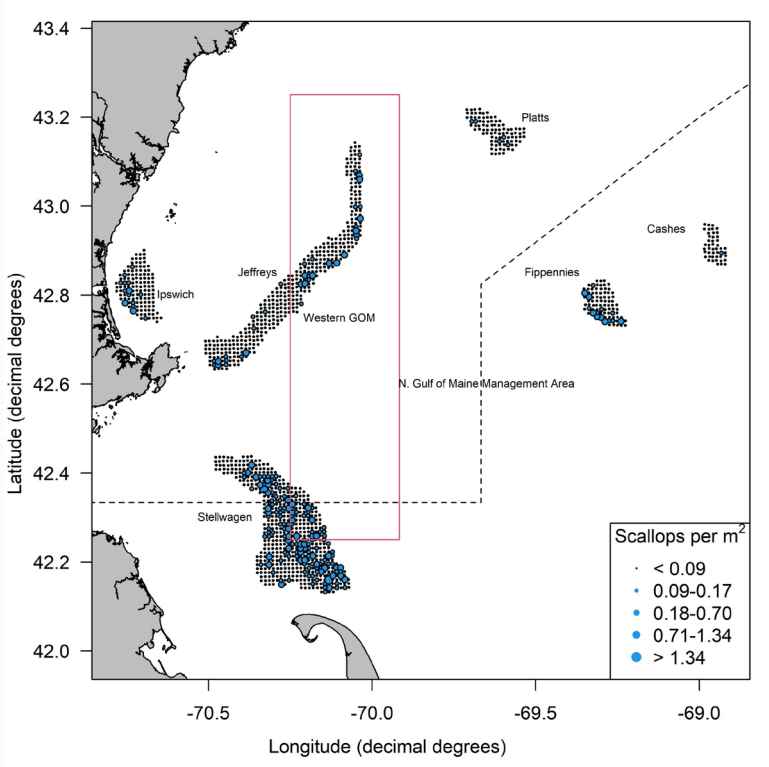
New England Fishery Management Council

Gulf of Maine

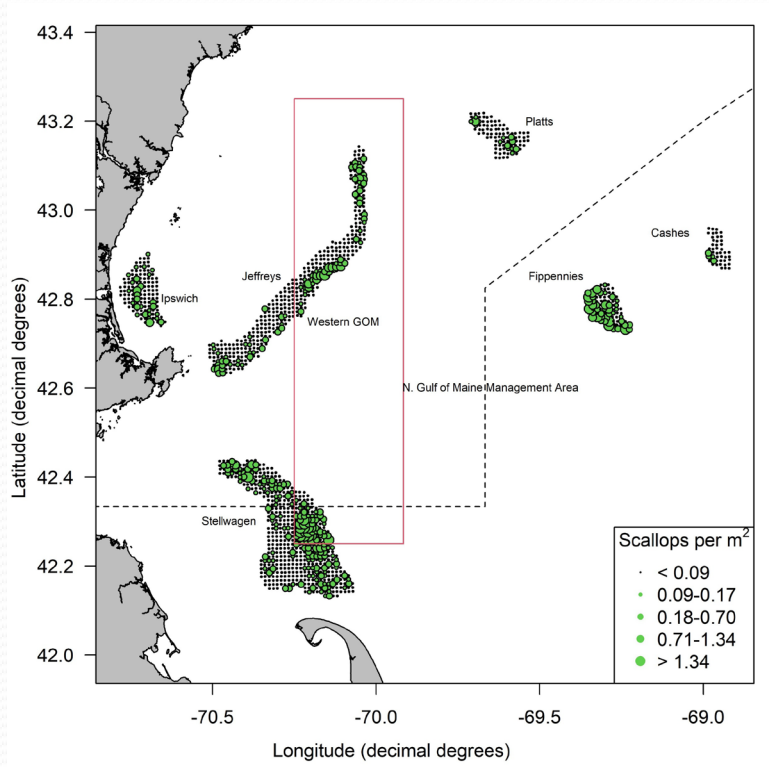
- No major recent recruitment events, and moderate decline in biomass within NGOM area outside of the WGOM closure.



Pre-recruits (< 35mm)



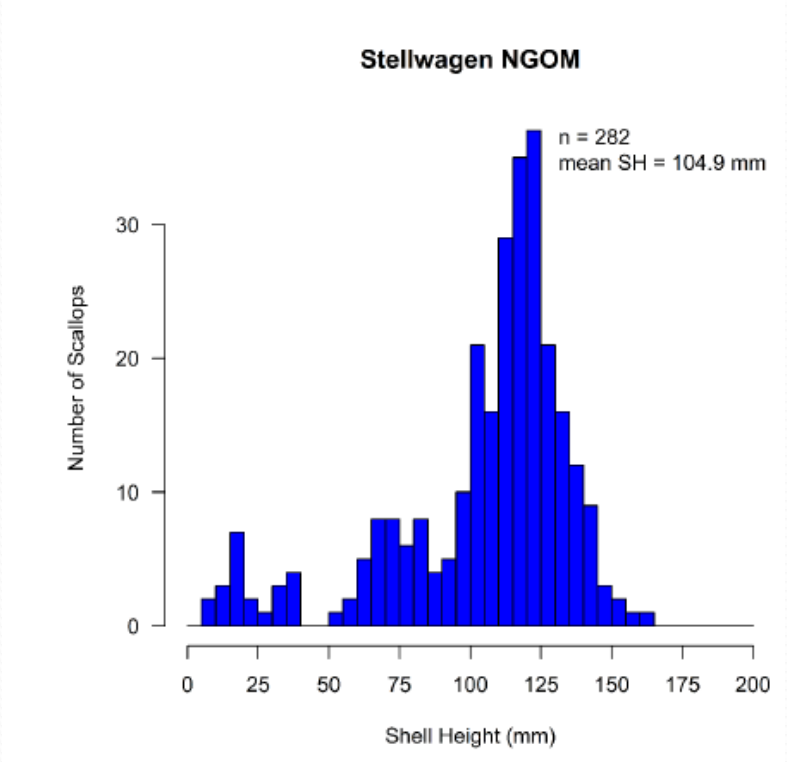
Recruits (35-75 mm)



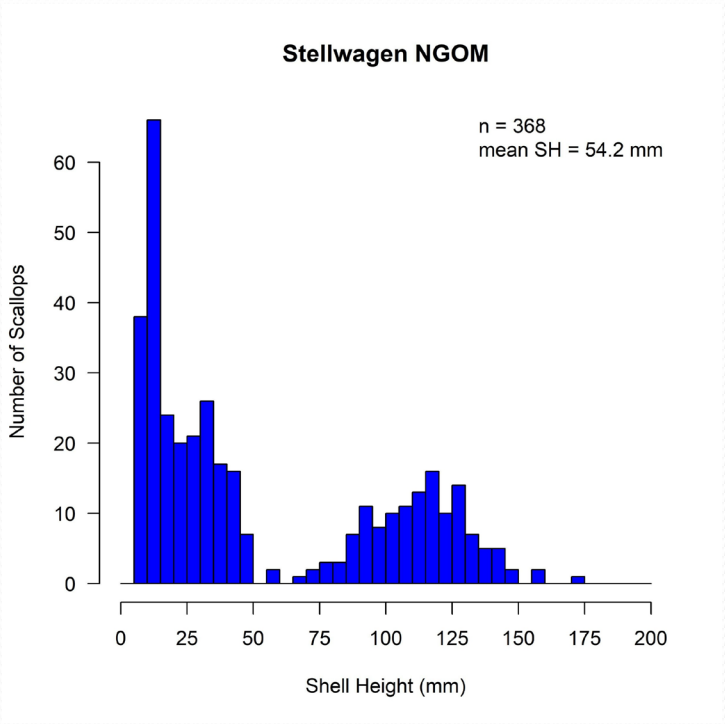
Recruited (> 75mm)

Gulf of Maine

- Majority of biomass in NGOM on Stellwagen Bank south of 42 20'.
- Some recruitment observed, but decline in large scallops outside of the WGOM Closure
- Committee tasking to look at F=0.2-0.25 for Stellwagen-only, and F=0.18 for all-NGOM except for Stellwagen → Interest in splitting NGOM into 2 sub-areas.



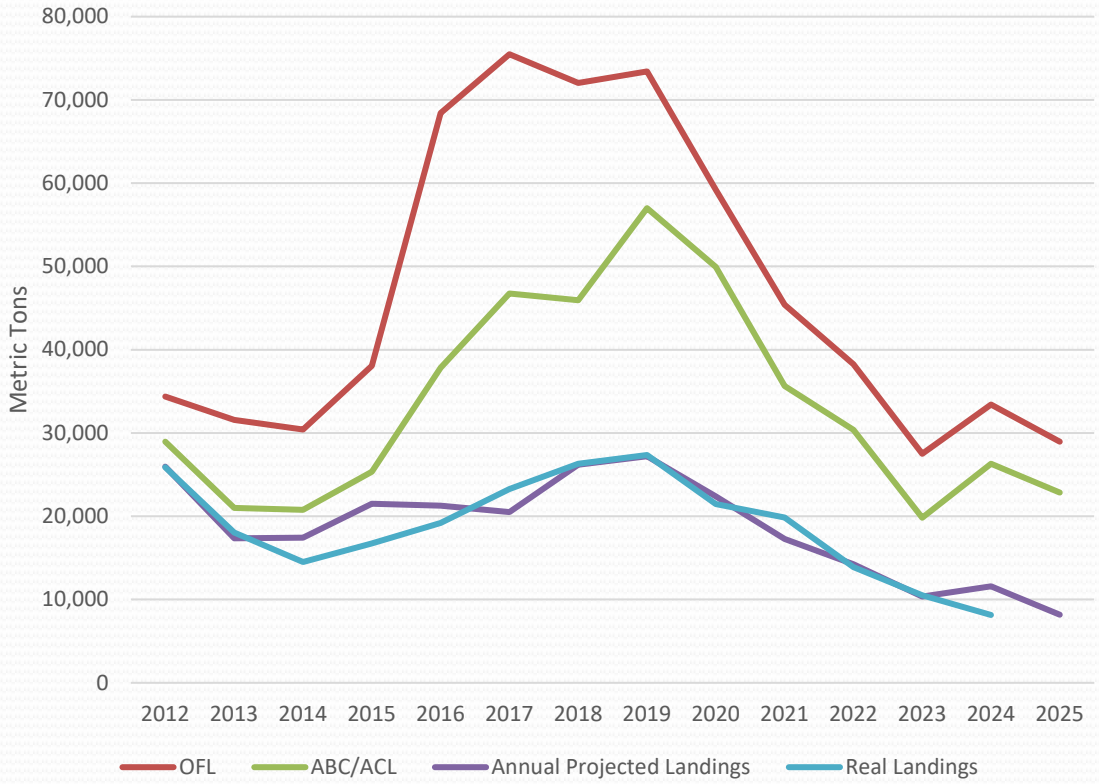
2024 SMAST



2025 SMAST

New England Fishery Management Council

August 19 SSC Considerations and Questions



- Are the reference points appropriate for use in management specifications?
- How should the Council be considering the elevated uncertainty associated with the combined reference point?
- SSC recommended the PDT provide several OFL and ABC options for consideration at the October 8th meeting, including approaches that would deviate from the ABC Control Rule.

New England Fishery Management Council

SSC Recommendations for PDT for Oct 8

1. OFL and ABC using Scallop ABC Control Rule
   - F_{OFL}=0.49 and F_{ABC}=0.36
2. OFL and ABC using Georges Bank reference points
   - F_{OFL}=0.36 and F_{ABC}=0.29
3. OFL and ABC using modified p*
   - F_{OFL}=0.49 and F_{ABC}= $F_{20\% \text{ probability of overfishing}}$

- Based on GARFO input, Option 2 and 3 are viable within a Framework but would require modifying ABC control to allow SSC to deviate from ABC control rule, per National Standard 1.
  - Would require Committee to add measure to Framework 40
- PDT will need to assess the degree to which Option 2 and 3 constrain catch.
  - If negligible effect, may not be worthwhile.

Questions?

New England
Fishery Management Council

Work Priorities

Scallop outlook by quarter in 2025

Key: Scallop led project | NMFS led project, with Staff and/or PDT involvement | Possible follow-up and/or implementation

Calendar Year	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Framework 39	Preliminary and Final Submission			
FY 26/27 Specifications		2025 Field Season	Framework 40: 2026/2027 (default) Specifications	
Annual Scallop RSA Work	Award Decisions	Announce Awards; Share Day; Awards made	NOFO; NOFO Closes	Proposal Reviews; Award Decisions
2025 Research Track Assessment	Working Group Participation	Incorporate new stock reference points		
LAGC IFQ Program Review	WG meetings, conduct analyses	Report assembly and writing	Review draft, final report approved at NEFMC	
Strategic Plan	SWOT analysis; Visioning sessions	Review input, iterate with AP/CTE/Council, draft Strategic Plan		Approval at NEFMC

New England Fishery Management Council

LAGC IFQ Review

- While Final Report was expected to be delivered to the Council at the September meeting, the LAGC IFQ Review working group has asked for additional time to finalize and review the report.

- The Council will receive the Final Report at the January 2026 Council meeting.

Scallop Strategic Plan

- Since June, the PDT has made minor revisions and added additional data to support the Strategic Plan Roadmap. The Strategic Plan will be presented to the Council in December for final approval.

- At their September 12 & 15 meetings, the Scallop AP and Committee provided input on prioritization of each strategy, how the Strategic Plan would be aligned with annual priority-setting, and considered evaluation criteria and frequency.

Strategic Plan Objectives

1. Improve management capacity, flexibility, and responsiveness in a changing environment
2. Improve the reliability of annual projections of scallop biomass and abundance
3. Expand opportunities in the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) fishery while maintaining conservative management approaches
4. Improve rotational management performance and access area fishing opportunities
5. Improve fishing practices to minimize incidental scallop mortality, bycatch, and impacts on habitat and protected resources
6. Maintain the economic viability of the scallop fleet
7. Maintain a dynamic Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) program to fund scallop research and resource surveys
8. Develop the regulatory, management, and funding infrastructure to support a scallop enhancement program
9. Improve scallop industry engagement at meetings of the Council's Scallop Plan Development Team, Advisory Panel, and Committee

Implementation

- Living document that adapts to fishery and management needs
  - Strategies could be added or removed through Committee motion
  - Aiming for a list that is achievable in 3-5 year period

- Evaluation criteria to measure progress towards each objective and ensure work priorities are moving closer to the long-term vision of the fishery that the industry and other stakeholders outlined in March.
  - Evaluate progress annually or biennially.
  - Aiming for measurable and quantitative, but high-level and not burdensome to evaluate.

Next steps

- Final prioritization of Strategic Plan strategies
- Consider evaluation criteria for each Objective
- Appendix describing previous management actions and Council discussion relevant to each Objective
- Final approval of Strategic Plan in **December 2025**

2025 NGOM Compliance Concerns

- At June meeting, Council requested Scallop PDT work with NOAA OLE to develop data request to better understand perceived issues with NGOM fishery compliance in 2025 relative to previous years.
- Scallop PDT developed a data request with NOAA OLE input and sent in a letter to NOAA OLE Northeast Division leadership on August 1
- Council staff met with NOAA OLE GC and staff on August 12 to better understand NOAA OLE obstacles to fulfilling the data request, including staffing and database limitations.
- NOAA OLE understood Council concerns and agreed to work towards data structure that would be more useful for understanding finer-scale scallop fishery compliance data.

Scallop RSA - Notice of Funding Opportunity

- The 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is still pending publication, despite being submitted by GARFO in June. There have been no status updates or other information from NOAA Headquarters.
- Without publication of 2026 NOFO, there will be no Scallop RSA grant competition or awards beyond what is needed to fund multi-year awards.
- SMAST drop camera, CFF HabCam, and VIMS dredge survey work is awarded through 2027/2028.
- Maine DMR dredge survey would need 2026 award.

Scallop RSA Survey Awards

	2025	2026	2027	2028
Georges Bank				
CFF	X	X	X	
SMAST	X	X	X	X
VIMS	X	X	X	X
Mid-Atlantic				
CFF	X	X	X	
VIMS	X	X	X	X
Gulf of Maine				
SMAST	X	X	X	X
DMR	**X**			

New England Fishery Management Council

Questions?

New England
Fishery Management Council

Backpocket

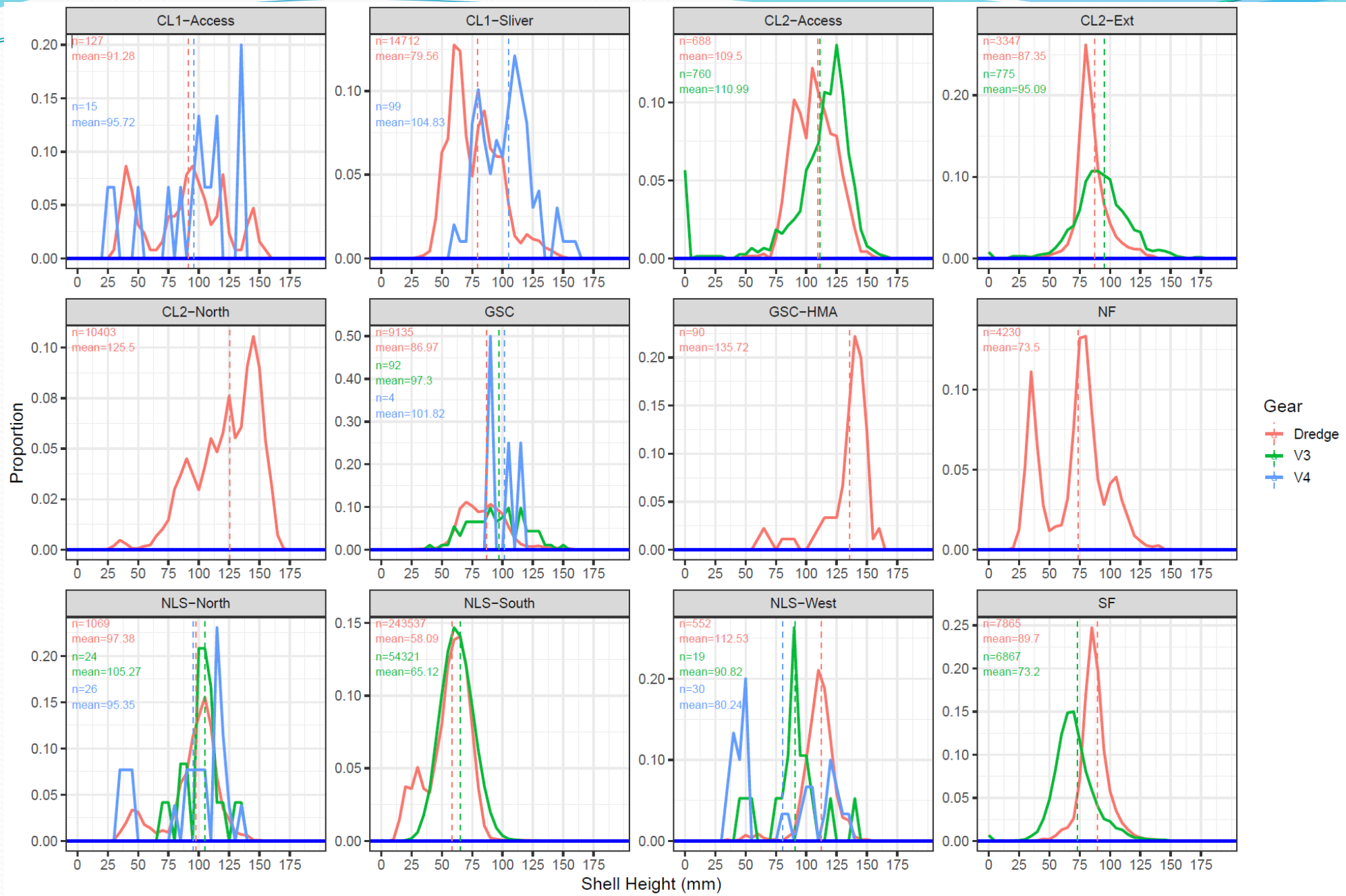
NYB Closure – Dredge Estimate Comparison

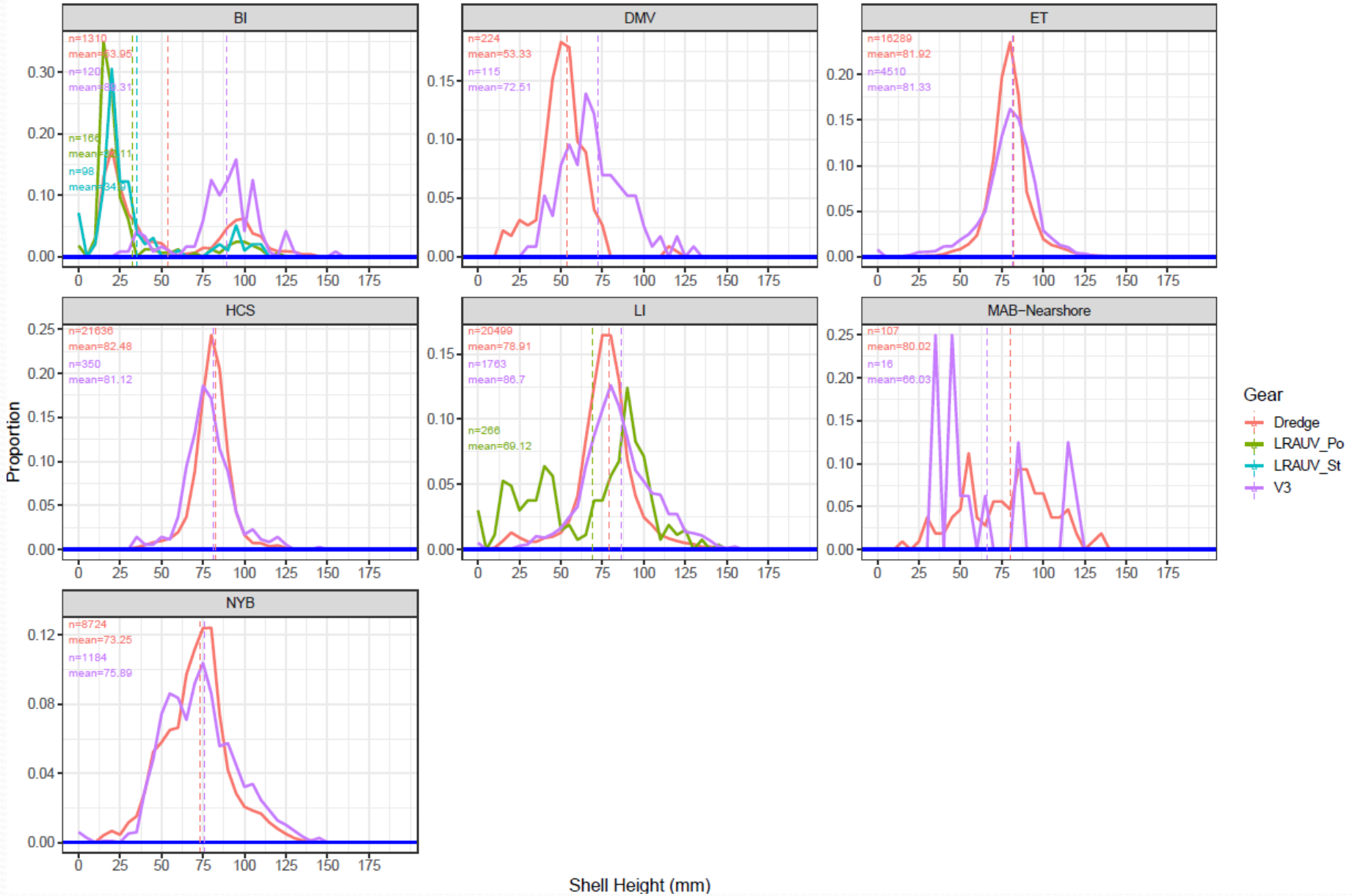
2025 VIMS Dredge Estimate using 2023 NYB Closure SAMS boundary

SAMS Area	Total Number	Total Biomass (mt)	SE Biomass (mt)	Avg MW (g)
BI	28	561	138	20.5
LI	355	5333	393	15.2
NYB	38	504	49	13.6
NYB_Closure	**1,363**	**14568**	**930**	**10.8**
MAB_Nearshore	5	75	7	14.9
HCS	413	5016	377	12.2
ET	362	4308	324	11.7
DMV	9	47	5	4.7
VIR	11	53	11	4.8
TOTAL	2584	30464	1135	11.8

2025 VIMS Dredge Estimate

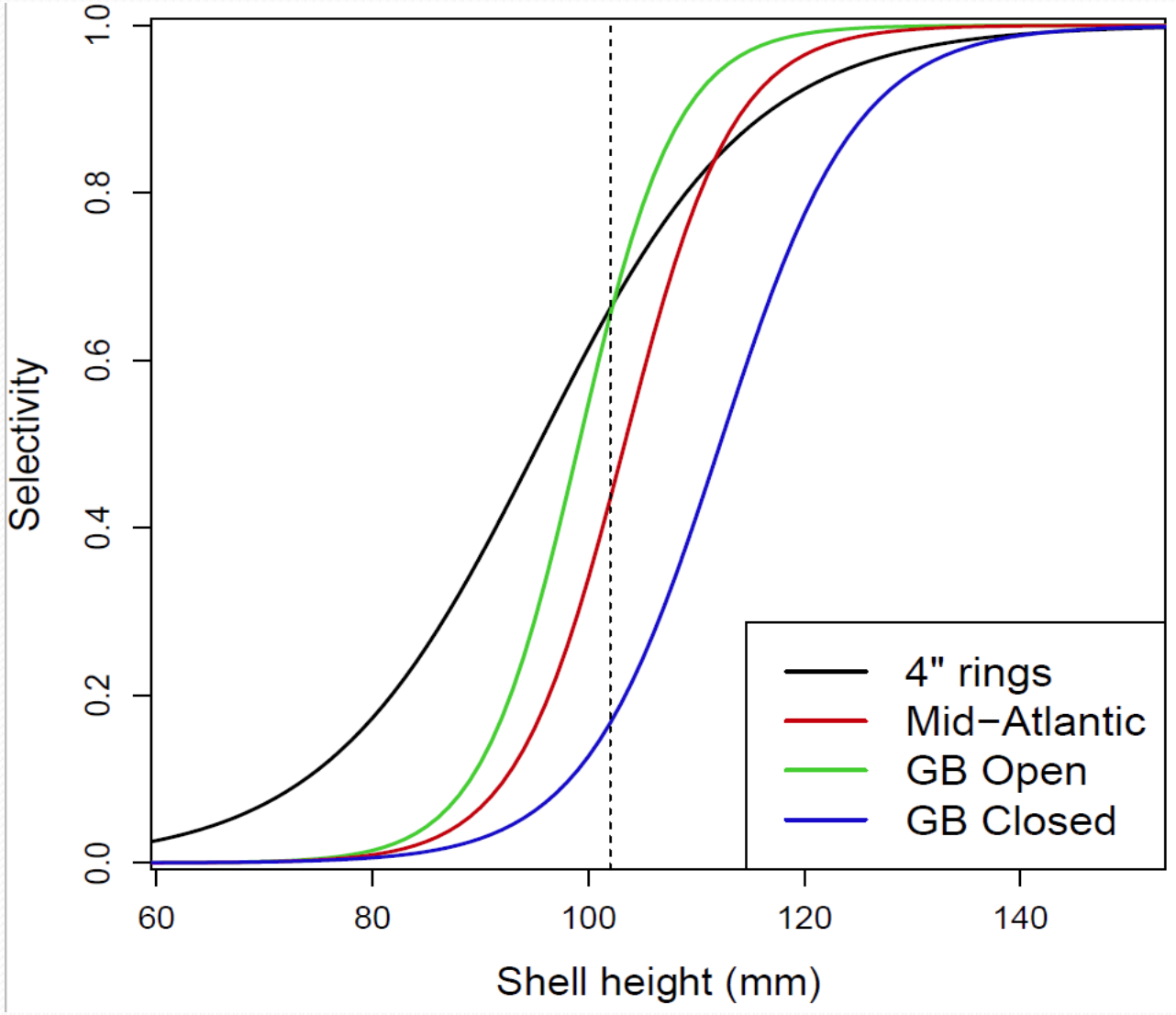
SAMS Area	Total Number	Total Biomass (mt)	SE Biomass (mt)	Avg MW (g)
BI	28	561	138	20.2
LI	1000	12235	1357	12.2
NYB	467	4800	401	10.3
MAB_Nearshore	5	78	10	15.5
HCS	777	9110	866	11.7
ET	362	4308	324	11.9
DMV	9	47	5	5.2
VIR	11	53	11	4.8
TOTAL	2659	31190	1696	11.7


CL1−Access
n=127
mean=91.28
n=15
mean=95.72
CL1−Sliver
n=14712
mean=79.56
n=99
mean=104.83
CL2−Access
n=688
mean=109.5
n=760
mean=110.99
CL2−Ext
n=3347
mean=87.35
n=775
mean=95.09
CL2−North
n=10403
mean=125.5
GSC
n=9135
mean=86.97
n=92
mean=97.3
n=4
mean=101.82
GSC−HMA
n=90
mean=135.72
NF
n=4230
mean=73.5
NLS−North
n=1069
mean=97.38
n=24
mean=105.27
n=26
mean=95.35
NLS−South
n=243537
mean=58.09
n=54321
mean=65.12
NLS−West
n=552
mean=112.53
n=19
mean=90.82
n=30
mean=80.24
SF
n=7865
mean=89.7
n=6867
mean=73.2
Proportion
Shell Height (mm)
Gear
Dredge
V3
V4


BI
n=1310
mean=53.95
n=120
mean=89.31
n=166
mean=88.11
n=98
mean=84.91
DMV
n=224
mean=53.33
n=115
mean=72.51
ET
n=16289
mean=81.92
n=4510
mean=81.33
HCS
n=21636
mean=82.48
n=350
mean=81.12
LI
n=20499
mean=78.91
n=1763
mean=86.7
n=266
mean=69.12
MAB−Nearshore
n=107
mean=80.02
n=16
mean=66.03
NYB
n=8724
mean=73.25
n=1184
mean=75.89
Proportion
Shell Height (mm)
Gear
Dredge
LRAUV_Po
LRAUV_St
V3

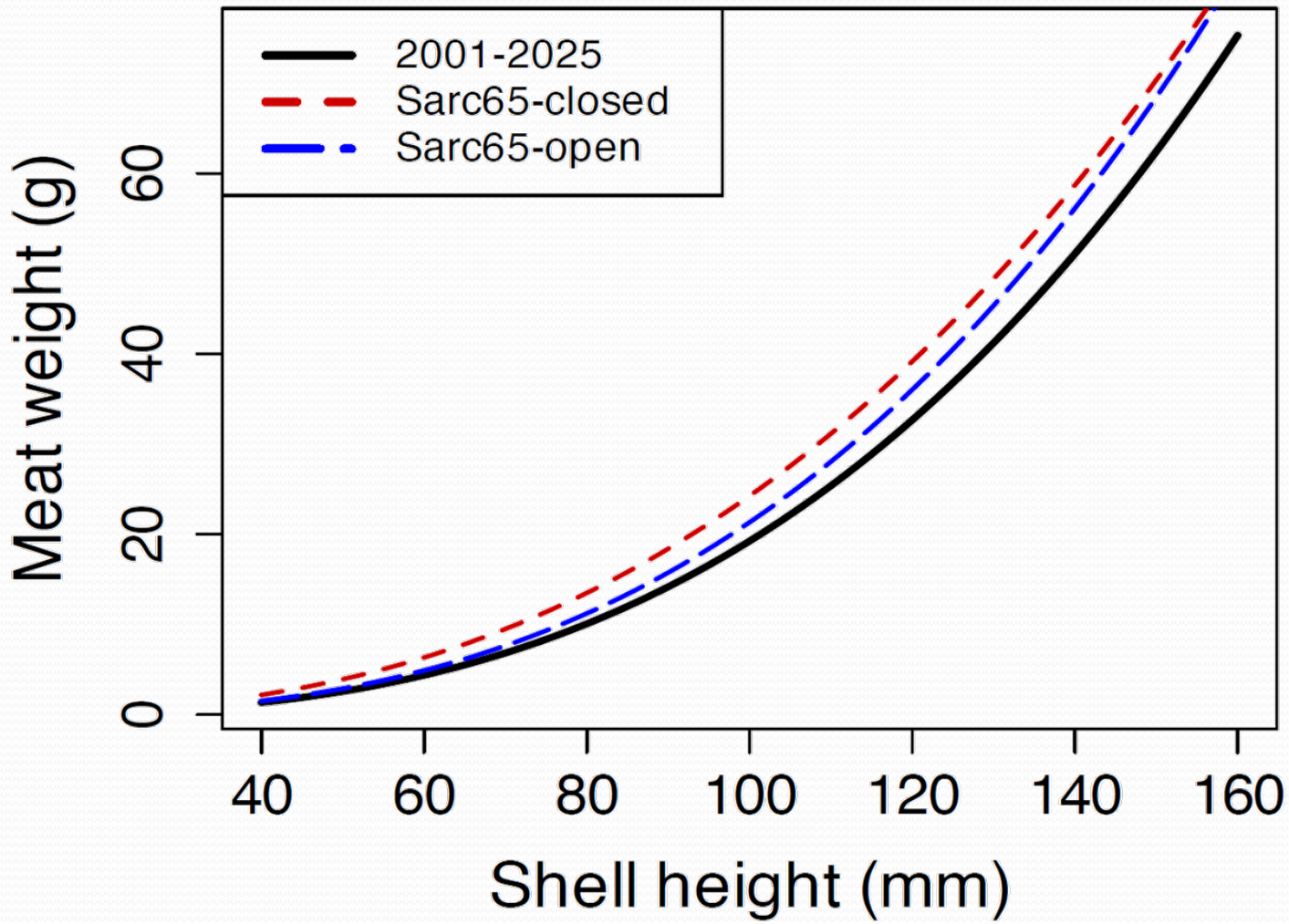
Selectivity Curves

- SAMS model projections of exploitable biomass are based on selectivity curves estimated from the CASA model, which account for gear selectivity (i.e. 4” ring) and fishery selectivity (i.e. targeting larger scallops).



Comparison with SARC-65

Predictions are still less than those from SARC-65



Nantucket Lightship

SMAST Drop Camera Data

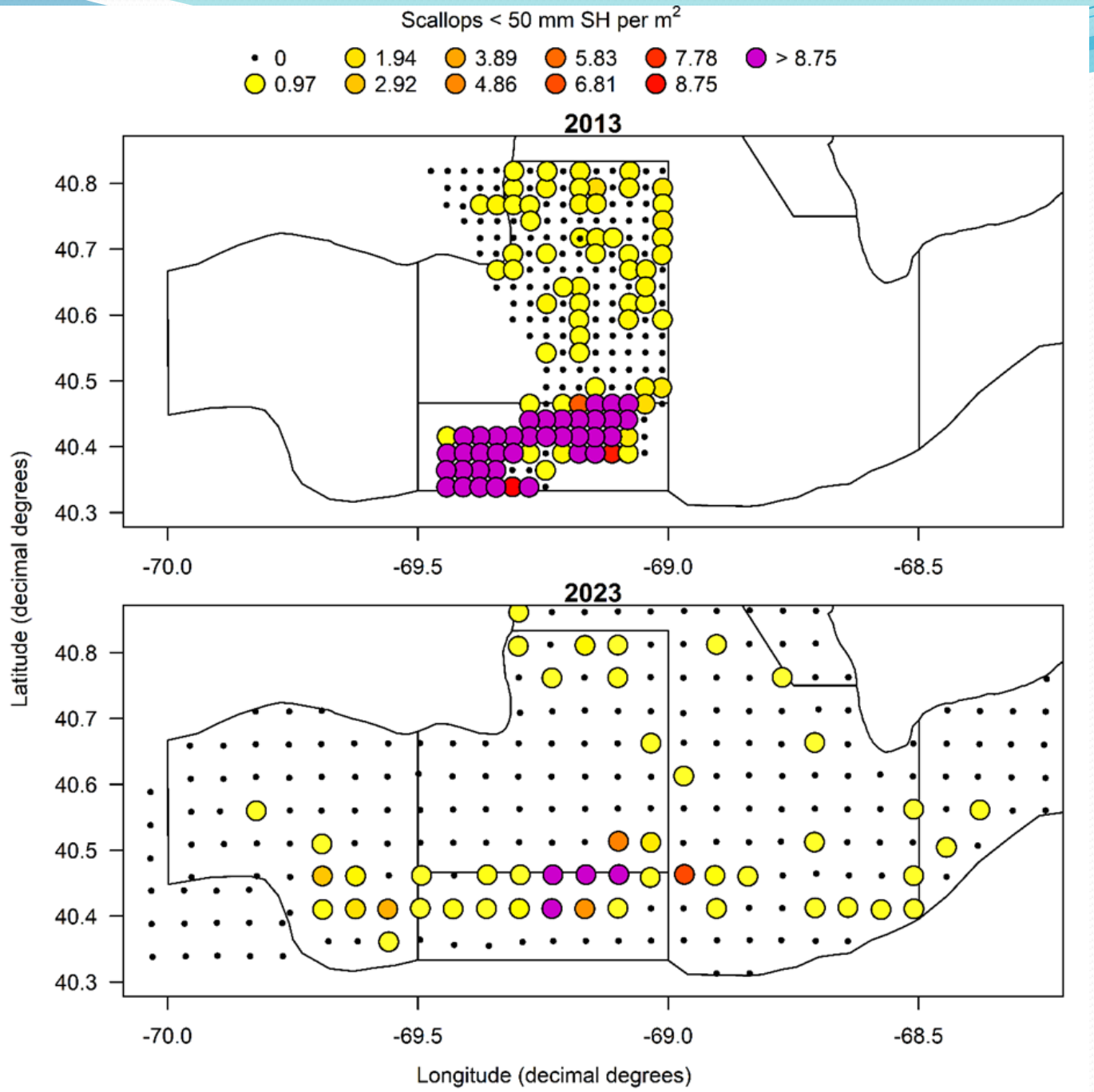
NLS Recruitment Event

Densities of scallops less than 50 mm shell height (number per m^2) in the Nantucket Lightship and neighboring areas from 2013 and 2023. Densities are the mean at each SMAST drop camera station.

Black points represent a mean station density of zero scallops per m^2.

Most non-zero densities are colored as indicated in the legend, where the value specified on the legend color gradient indicates the density at that position on the color scale from light yellow to red.

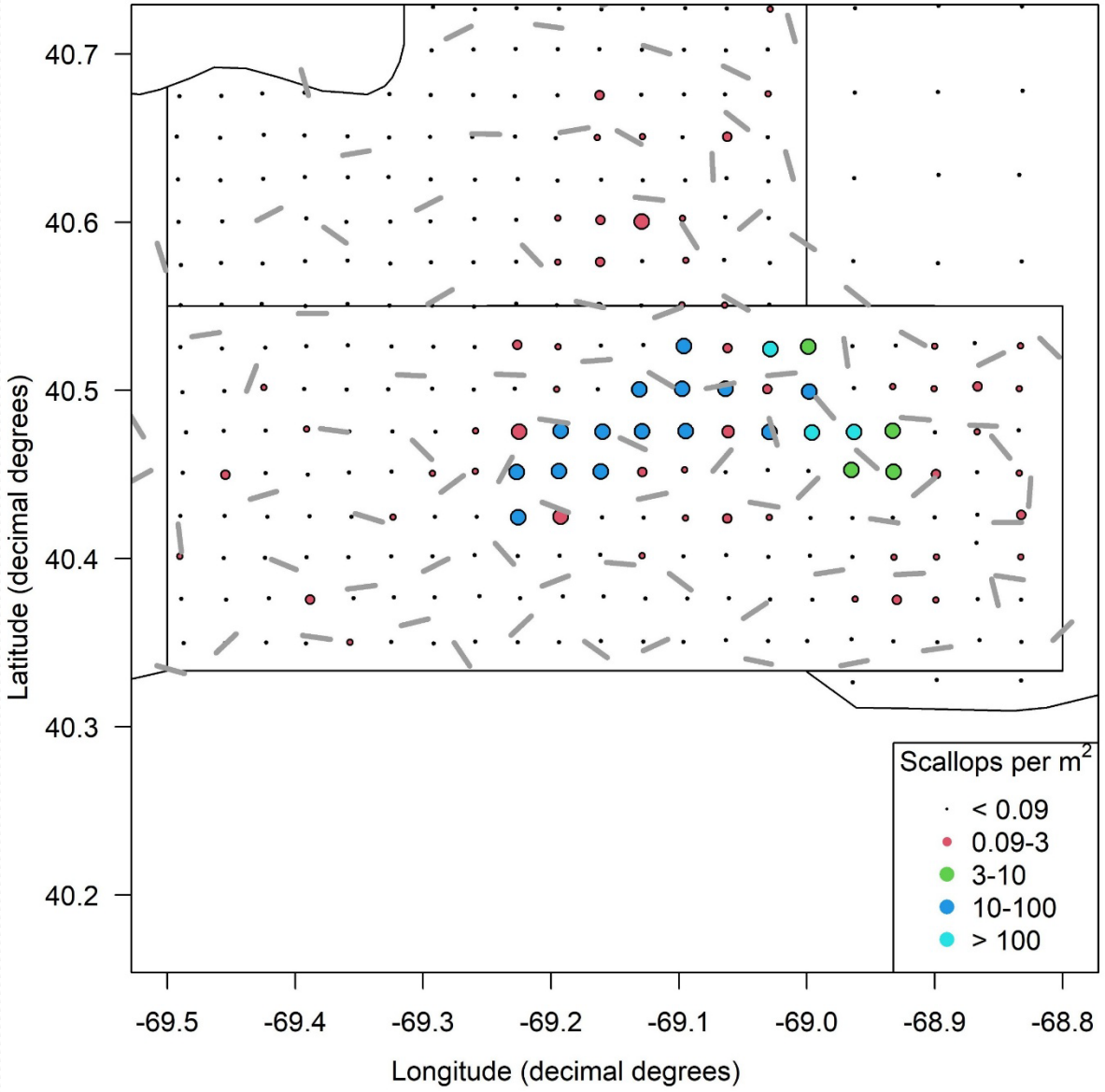
Purple is used to represent extreme densities.



NLS-South

- SMAST density bubbles relative to VIMS tows.
- No VIMS tows directly on the very high-density stations, but good coverage throughout.
- VIMS encountered larger scallops in the NLS-South was on northern boundary (previous NLS-North)

VIMS 2025	VIMS 2016-2023,2025	2025 RTA	SARC 65
9,307.55	7,804.59	10,296.69	8,966.20



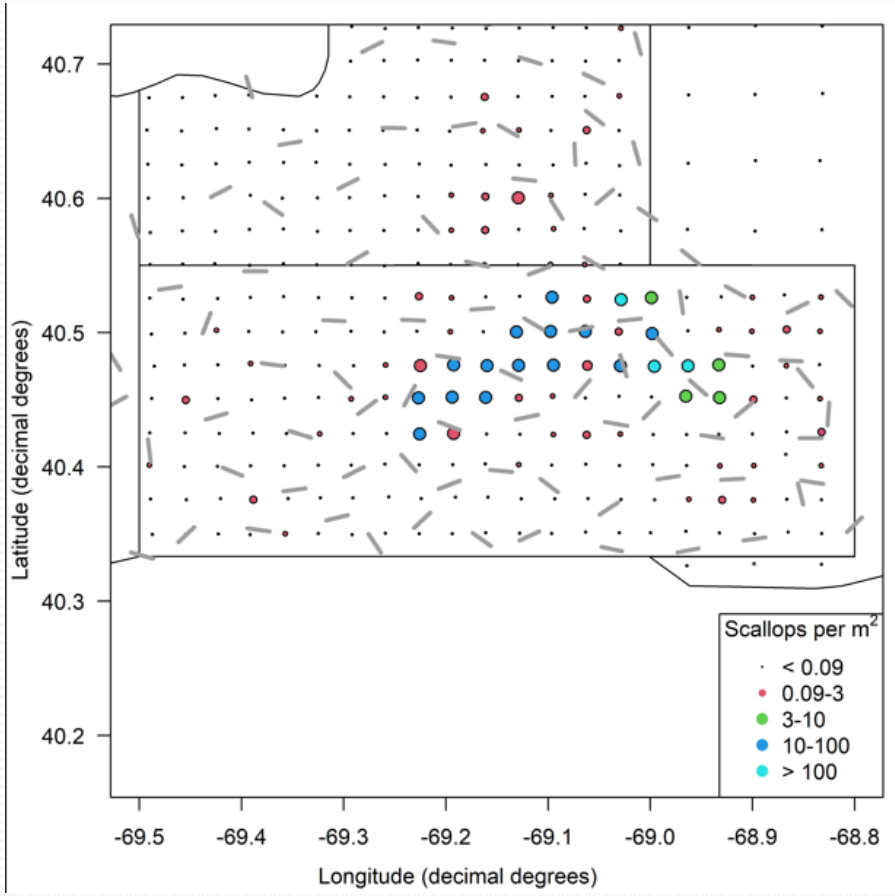
Nantucket Lightship South

VIMS 2016-2023, 2025 SHMW

	Biomass (mt)	SE	Abundance
VIMS Dredge	9,292	1,087	2,045,000,000
HabCam	8,760	514	2,046,000,000
SMAST	38,001	8,242	7,864,000,000

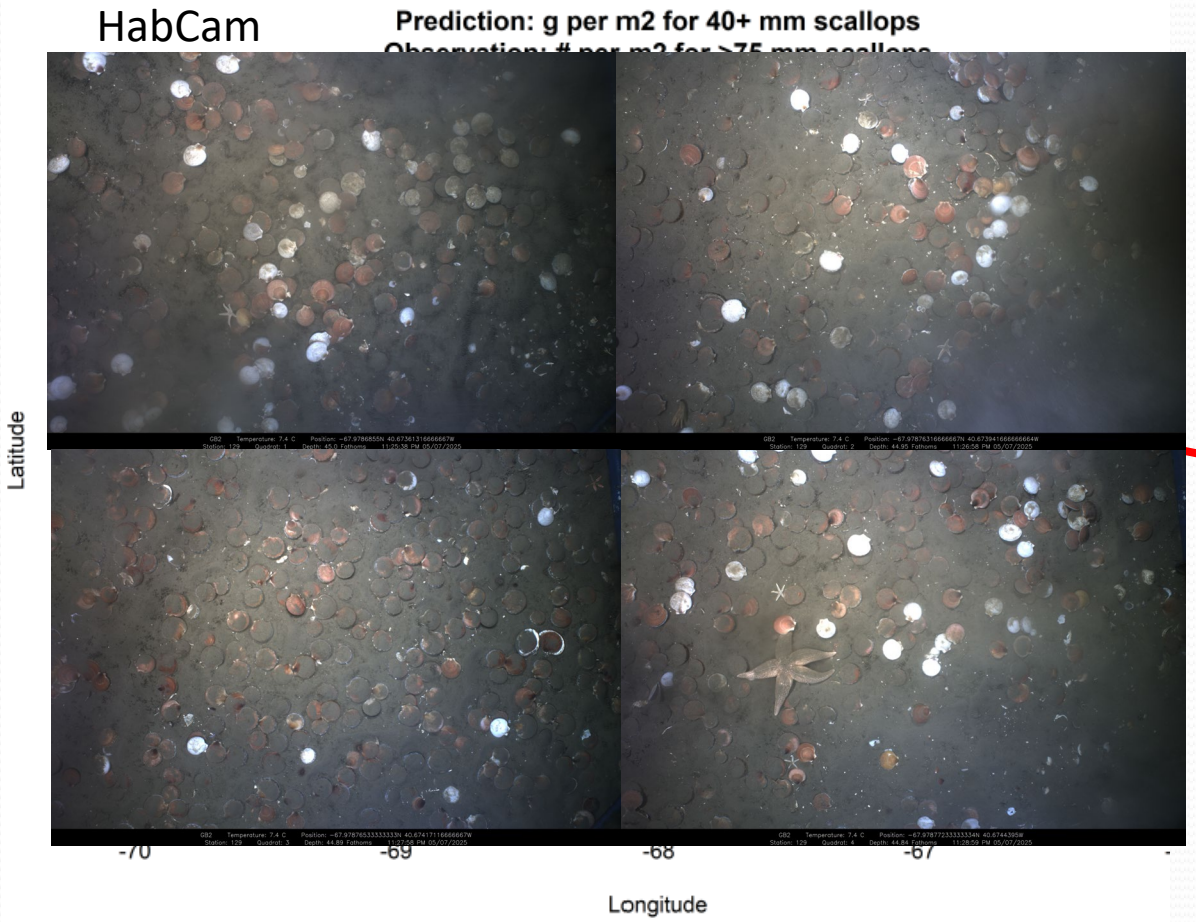
VIMS 2025 SHMW

	Biomass (mt)	SE	Abundance
VIMS Dredge	9,308	1,085	2,044,824,987
HabCam	10,379	596	2,046,000,000

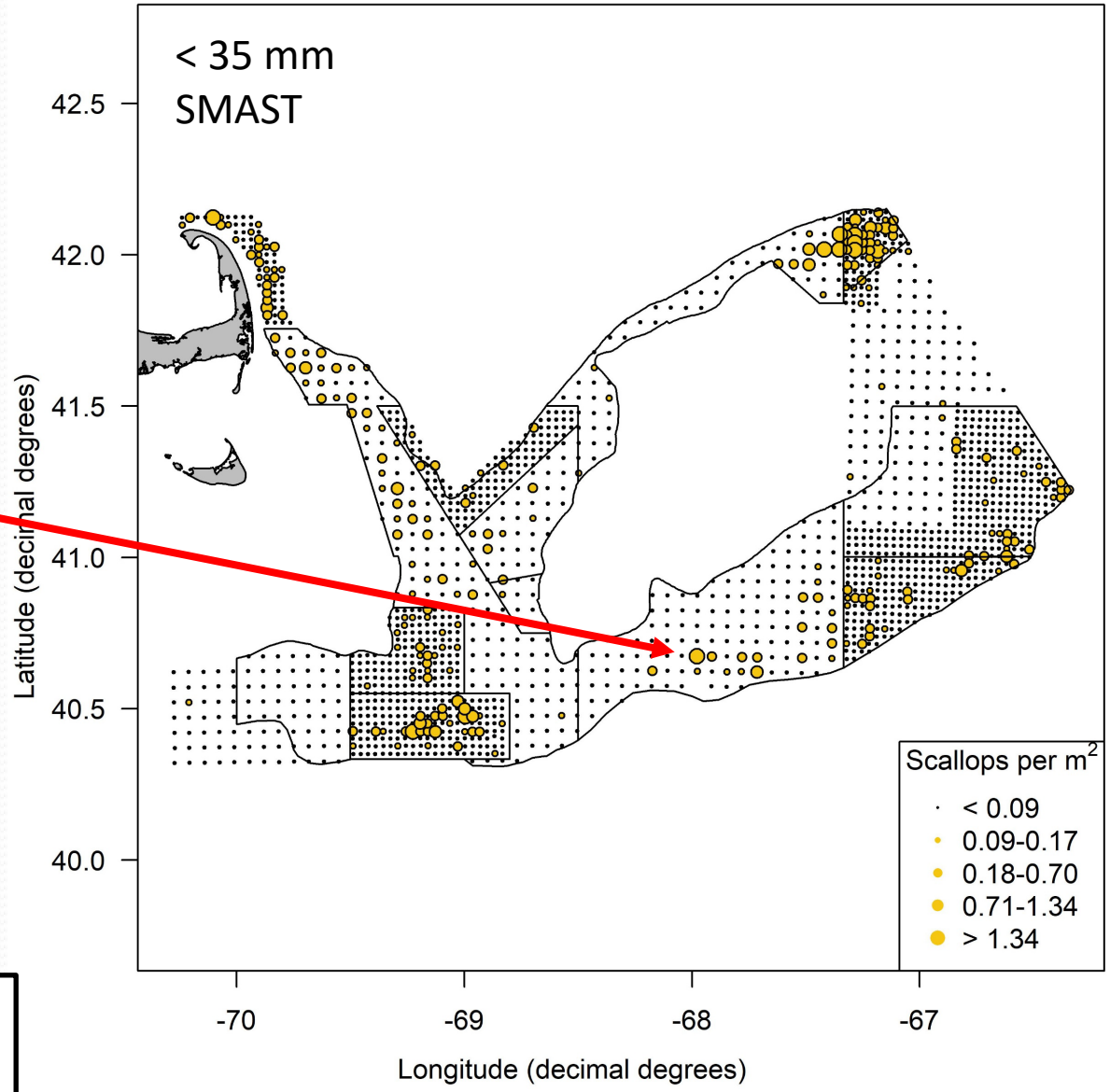


GB Open and Area II Region

>75mm
HabCam

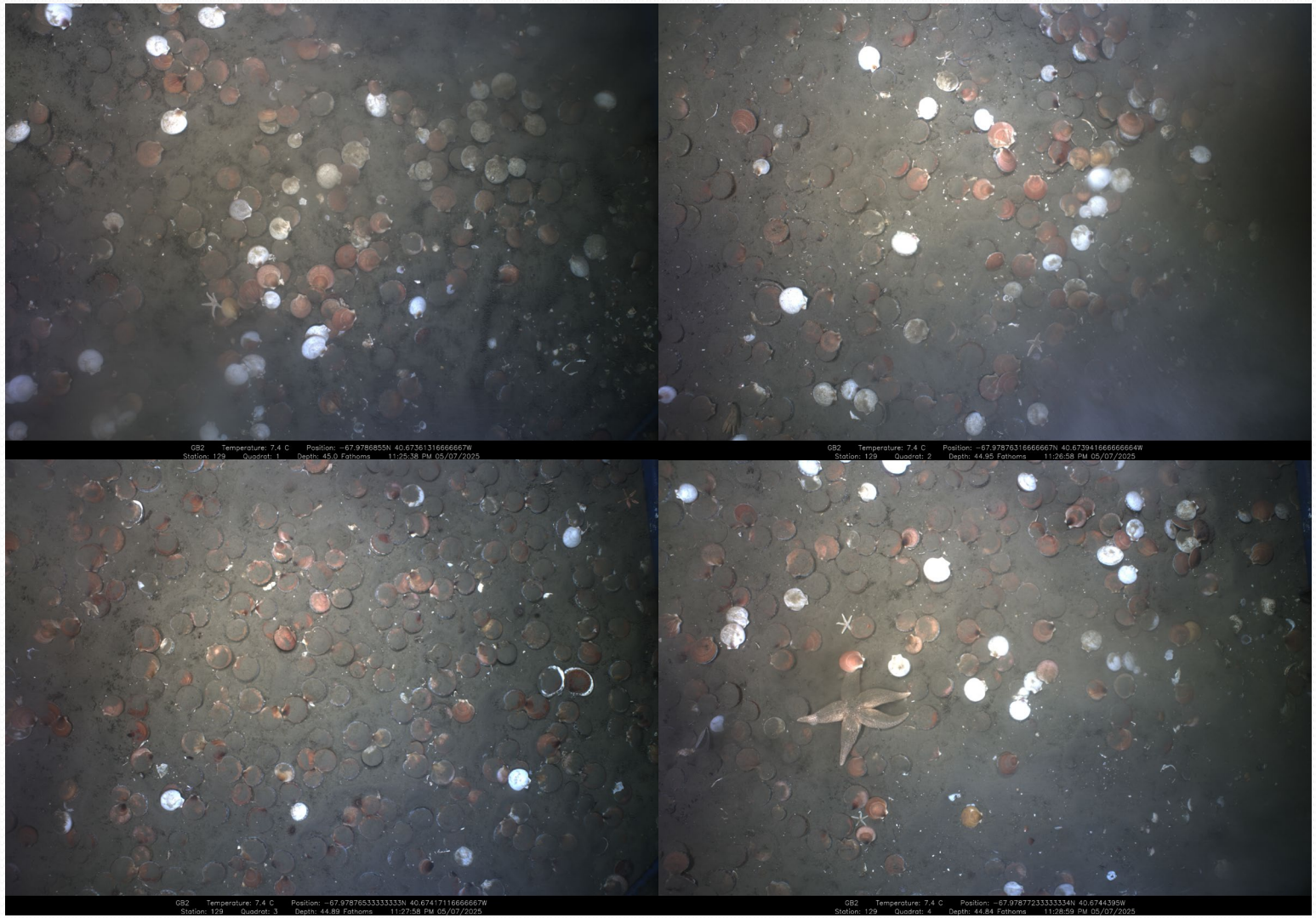


< 35 mm
SMAST

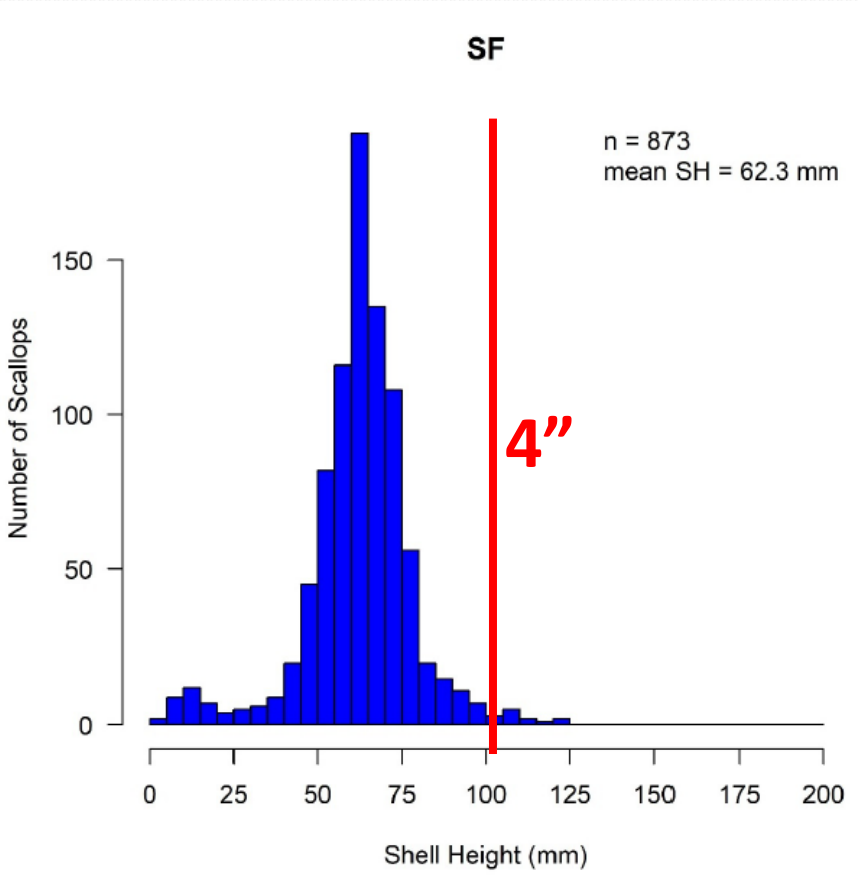


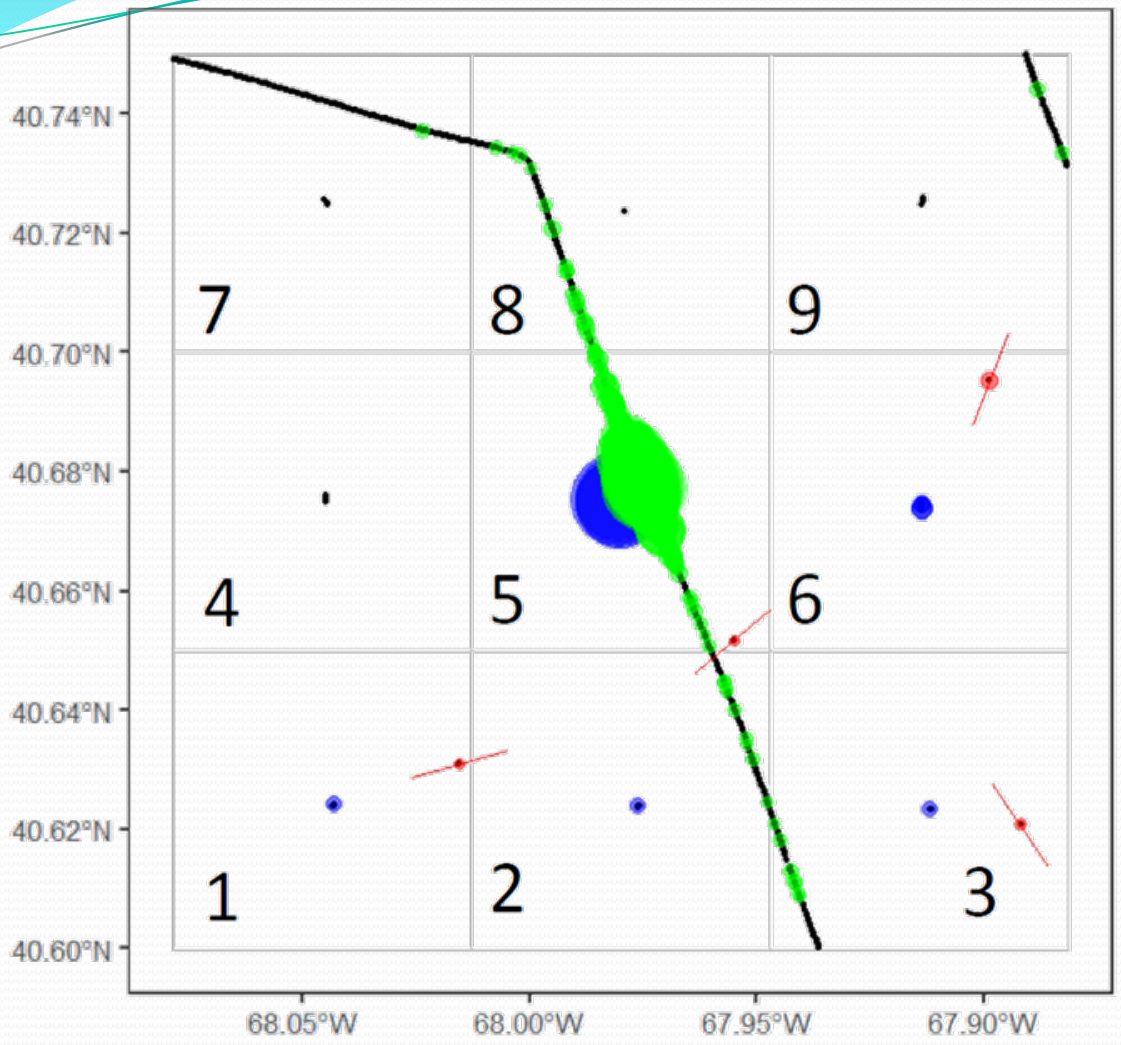
High density recruitment 'hot spot' in SF and NF.
PDT not recommending closures due to small size, but considering early messaging to avoid small scallops in the area

Southern Flank



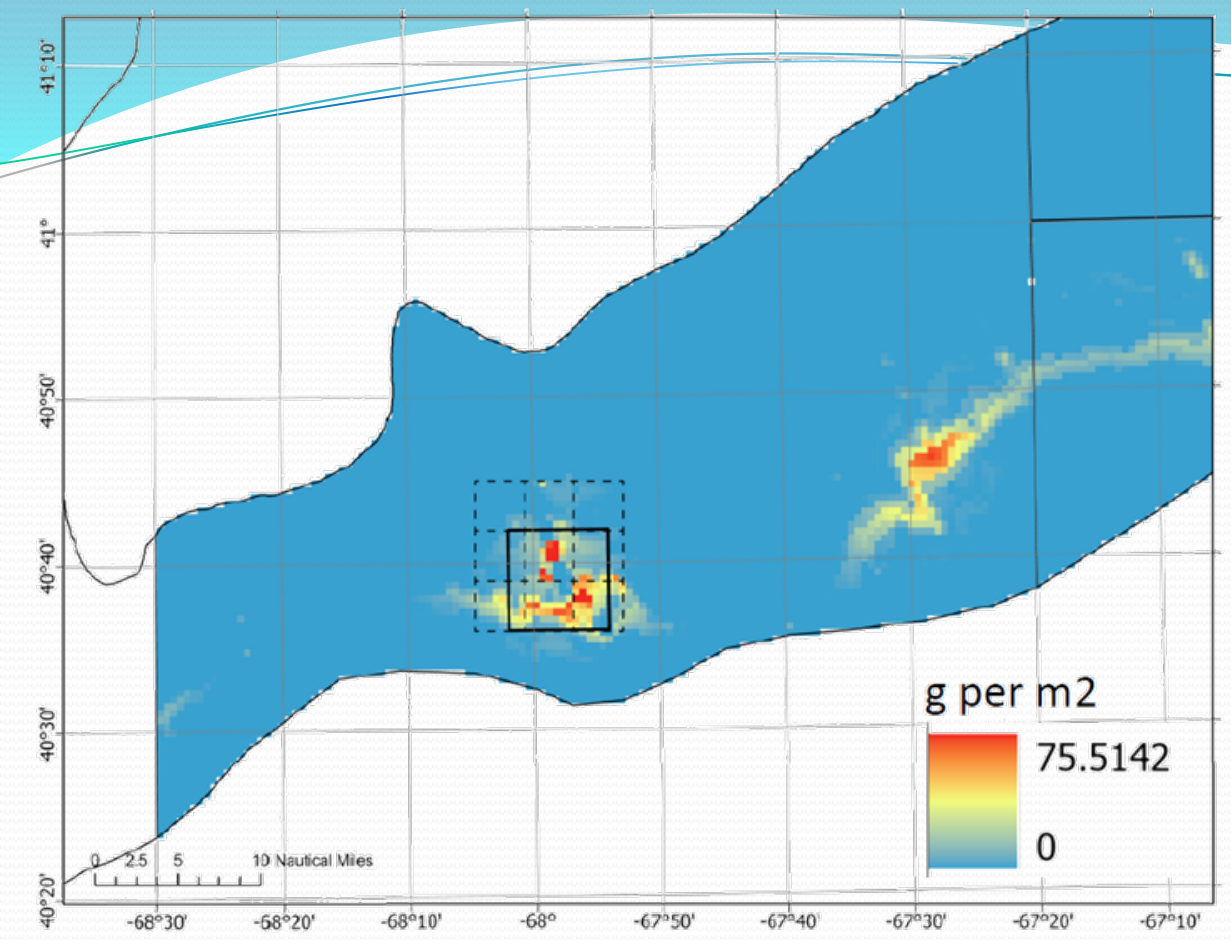
- Small, hotspot of high-density recruitment observed in the Southern Flank.





Grid	SMAST Mean # Per M2	Habcam Mean # Per M2	Habcam Image #	VIMS # Per M2	Mean from 3 surveys	Mean from optical surveys (by image)
1	0.10			0.01	0.06	
2	0.10	0.03	65		0.06	0.03
3	0.10	0.04	53	0.06	0.07	0.04
4	0				0	
5	97.30	12.31	126	0.04	36.55	14.93
6	1.27			1.01	1.14	
7	0	0.002	121		0.001	0.002
8	0	0.08	102		0.04	0.08
9	0	0.01	48		0.01	0.01

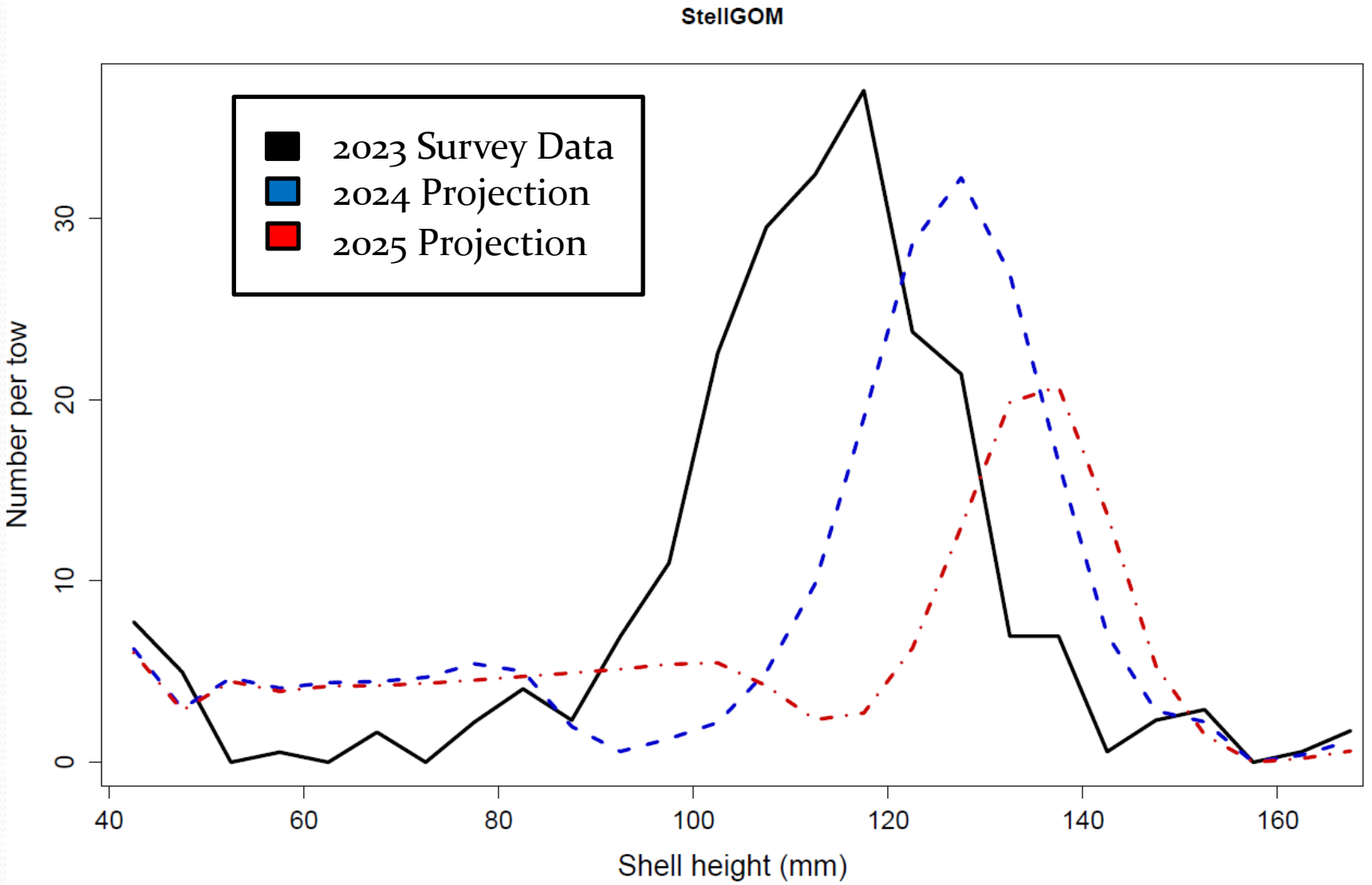
Grid 5	From 3 surveys	From optical surveys only
Per M2	36.55	14.93
NumMill in Grid 5	1128	461



- An approximately 9 * 9 nm box was drawn around the high-density drop camera station and habcam estimates.
- 2101 mt and 197 mill were estimated within the box.
- ~40% of the total estimated SF biomass and abundance were in the box.
- Density in the box was 0.71 per m2.

	NumMill	BmsMT	BmsMTSE	MeanWt	#PerM2	AreaKM2
High Density Box	197 (43%)	2101 (42%)	82	10.66	0.71	278 (7%)
Rest of SF	264 (57%)	2938 (58%)	114	11.13	0.06	4102 (93%)
Total SF	461	5033	196	10.92	0.11	4227

NGOM Projections – Stellwagen AOI



Staff suggestion – Identify high priority strategies earlier in the year to streamline annual priority recommendations

OBJECTIVE 1: Improve management capacity, flexibility, and responsiveness in a changing environment

1. Increase the capacity for and use of real-time data collection and monitoring in management, including industry-collected data, VTRs, auction data, LPUE, and other data sources. **CTE**
2. Develop a Management Strategy Evaluation model based on an understanding of scallop population dynamics, biological and oceanographic conditions, and fishery behaviors to inform Best Management Practices, including addressing ocean use conflict, changing resource distribution, and allocation scenarios.
3. Separate management of the Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank resources, with individual OFL/ABCs and DAS separately allocated. **AP + CTE**
4. Streamline the annual specifications setting process to increase capacity for addressing other fishery management challenges.
5. Develop tools within the Scallop FMP to allow for in-season management **AP + CTE**
6. Revise the Limited Access DAS carryover provision to reduce uncertainty in open-bottom harvest. **CTE**
7. Disperse fishing effort in high-density areas to reduce incidental mortality and vessel crowding.

OBJECTIVE 2: Improve the reliability of annual projections of scallop biomass and abundance

1. Evaluate Scallop Area Management Simulator (SAMS) model performance and associated uncertainty. **CTE**
2. Continue development of next generation, GeoSAMS projection model to allow for more flexible and precise projections.
3. Establish a small-scale survey of access areas each year to provide additional data on the resource prior to the start of the fishing year on April 1.
4. Increase survey effort at the end of an area's rotational cycle to reduce projection uncertainty. **CTE**

OBJECTIVE 3: Expand opportunities in the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) fishery while maintaining conservative management approaches

1. Extend the length of the NGOM season.
2. Encourage greater dispersion of scallop fishing effort within the NGOM management area to areas other than Stellwagen Bank. **AP + CTE**
3. Maintain opportunities for NGOM-permitted vessels while allowing orderly access to the NGOM scallop resource by the LAGC and LA components

OBJECTIVE 4: Improve rotational management performance and access area fishing opportunities

1. Improve stability of harvest from access areas.
2. Reconsider development of an access area on the Northern Edge **AP**

OBJECTIVE 5: Improve fishing practices to minimize incidental scallop mortality, bycatch, and impacts on habitat and protected resources

1. Improve scallop industry compliance around best fishing practices through outreach and education efforts. **CTE**
2. Increase size selectivity using gear modifications to reduce catch of juvenile scallops. **CTE**
3. Increase use of other gear modifications.
4. Regulate best fishing practices, such as restrictions on high-grading, deck-loading, and excessive tow-times, and monitoring using deck cameras as part of an electronic monitoring (EM) program.
5. Reduce bycatch and habitat impacts from scallop dredging.

OBJECTIVE 6: Maintain the economic viability of the scallop fleet

1. Develop lower-cost tools, potentially including an EM program, to meet the industry's observer requirement and collect biological and discard data.	**AP**
2. Allow for consolidation of the Limited Access fleet.	**AP + CTE**

OBJECTIVE 7: Maintain a dynamic Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) program to fund scallop research and resource surveys

1. Expand the RSA set-aside for Gulf of Maine-focused research projects and surveys.
2. Expand industry participation in RSA research and compensation fishing. **CTE**
3. Ensure equity between scallop industry partners with access to RSA compensation pounds and those without, while maintaining sufficient support for RSA-funded surveys and research.

OBJECTIVE 8: Develop the regulatory, management, and funding infrastructure to support a scallop enhancement program

1. Form a working group to identify appropriate areas for spat collection and settlement, develop best practices, and identify regulatory hurdles.
2. Create a separate set-aside as a long-term source of funding for scallop enhancement projects.

OBJECTIVE 9: Improve scallop industry engagement at meetings of the Council's Scallop Plan Development Team, Advisory Panel, and Committee

1. Increase outreach to members of the scallop industry that are not represented on or are unaware of the Scallop Advisory Panel. **CTE**