

Scallop Committee Report

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Council Meeting
April 20, 2016



New England
Fishery Management Council

Outline of Presentation

1. Summary of Inshore Scallop Workshop
2. Update on five-year performance review of the LAGC IFQ program
3. Scallop fishing in the Northern Gulf of Maine management area

No Committee motions to consider



1. Summary of Inshore Scallop Workshop



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Background

- Document #3
- Council hosted a workshop on Feb 22/23, 2016 to discuss concerns raised about the consequences of inshore scallop fishing pressure.
- The Fisheries Leadership & Sustainability Forum was hired to facilitate discussions.
- Steering Cmte worked with the Fisheries Forum to recommend meeting logistics and agenda.



Workshop Objectives

1. **Share concerns and perspectives** related to inshore fishing pressure and resulting impacts on the resource and the different segments of the fishery;
2. **Understand, define and frame the issue(s)**; including scope, scale, consequences, and influencing factors;
3. **Generate and discuss ideas that may alleviate the concerns and issue(s)** identified;
4. **Understand each fleet's operational realities**, incentives and expectations, and consider how each fleet's vision for the fishery aligns; and
5. **Foster collaboration and communication** among user groups, scientists, fishery managers, and the general public.



Attendance

- Registration required – About 120 individuals
- PDT, AP, and Council specifically invited and travel compensated
- Several outreach efforts
- Handful that did not register, and over 30 “no-shows”
- About 90 participants
- From pre-registrants
 - LA (30%); LAGC (25%); Both (10%); Council/PDT (25%); and Other (10%)
 - About 55% from Mass, another 15-20% from other New England states, and remaining 25-30% from Mid-Atlantic



Agenda

- 1.5 days in length
- 4 presentations: management background, fishery trends, two presentations on experiences in other regions
- 3 break-out group topics:
 1. General fishery goals and expectations
 2. Identifying the issues and concerns
 3. Discussing ideas or opportunities to address concerns





Overarching Themes (I)

- Everyone wants a successful fishery.
- Lots of commonalities in goals and expectations; however, there was not general agreement on the problem that is trying to be addressed.
- Both segments want fishery to be “fair and equitable”.
- Speakers expressed a desire/need to work together.
- When available biomass is reduced, both segments feel the pinch
- Improving management of open areas would benefit both segments.
- There is a sense of frustration:
 - LAGC fishermen feel that their concerns aren’t being acknowledged and that they are at a disadvantage;
 - LA fishermen feel like there is not a clear problem and don’t want to see something being taken away from one fleet and given to the other.

Overarching Themes (2)

- What does “inshore” mean? Lacks clarity.
- The characteristics, needs and constraints of the LAGC segment vary geographically and have changed over time.
- LAGC fishery allocation is not spatially based.
- Background concern - potential for highgrading.
- Fishery management measures should not only be implemented for social engineering objectives.
- Reconcile problems with appropriate tools.
 - If concerns stem from business planning challenges, a management response may not be appropriate.
 - A widespread solution may not be appropriate for a geographically isolated/defined problem.



Final Take-Homes

No consensus on recommendations for next steps

4 Potential Pathways:

1. Directly address concerns – consider measures
2. Acknowledge concerns – but do not respond with specific measures
3. Indirectly address concerns – across the board improvements (recruitment, LPUE, etc)
4. Bigger picture – other ways to support the goals and expectations raised – more general about success of the fishery overall

Group agreed there is value to these workshops – these conversations are important to have.

Strong commitment to work together to keep this fishery a success.

More detailed notes in Attachment I

Committee and AP input

- **AP: No motions or consensus statements**
 - The group agreed the workshop was valuable and there is a strong commitment to work together
 - Different opinions about what the most important issues are
- **Committee: No motions or consensus statements**
 - Interest in overall cost of the workshop in case Council decides to have more workshops in the future, Council may want to review open area management and LPUE in more depth in future specifications



2. Update on Five-Year Performance Review of the LAGC IFQ Program



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Draft Work Plan

- Document #4
- Scope, requirements, draft guidance
- Five issues the review with address – page 2
- Technical working group includes staff from NEFMC, NEFSC, and GARFO – Table I
- Several in-person meetings and calls planned between March – October
- Will review with PDT, AP and Cmte
- SSC meeting to review work plan in June
- Some initial data challenges



Committee and AP input

- **AP: No motions or consensus statements**

Some suggested the report include some information about vessels that did not qualify to summarize the initial costs of the program on the region. Another recommended info on the number of vessels that have converted from IFQ to NGOM and vice versa.

- **Committee: No motions or consensus statements**

Did not recommend including specific item to evaluate impacts on non-qualifiers, only if there is time after other analyses complete. Suggested there may be ideas from the workshop discussions.



3. Scallop Fishing in the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area



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Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM)

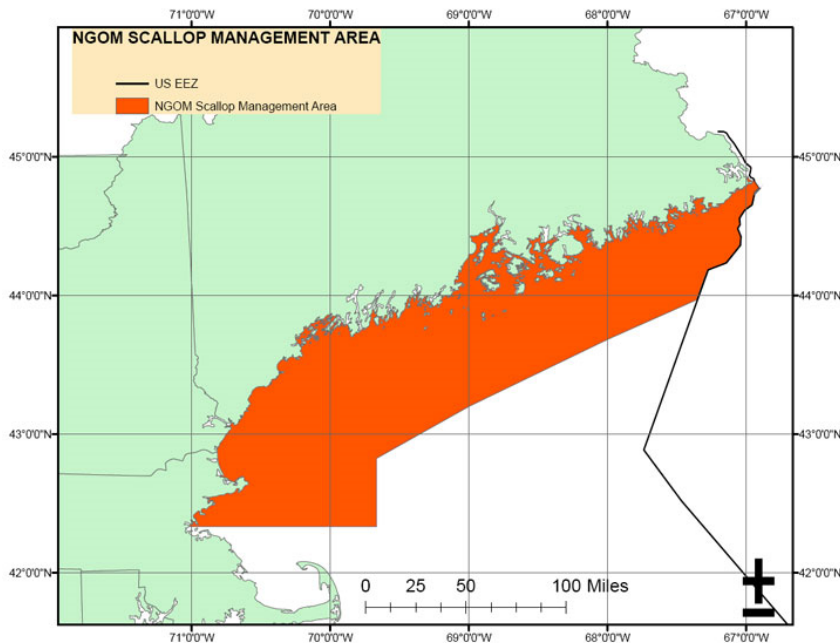
- Staff memo – Document #5
- 2 letters of correspondence received on this topic for March AP & CTE meetings; additional correspondence since – over 15 letters and emails (Document #8).
- 2 issues:
 - 1) increase in LAGC IFQ fishing in southern portion of NGOM management area; and
 - 2) increase in LA fishing activity in the same area.



NGOM Regulations – Section 1.0

- All implemented NGOM management program – unique characteristics, abundance fluctuates, at times could support substantial fishery, but not during qualification years.
- Program needed to be compatible with state water fishery (predominantly seasonal in ME and MA).
- Measures were not perfect – placeholder for if and when resource returned to GOM.
- No landings criteria – had to have a GC permit on control date 11/01/04.
- 200 lb. possession limit – to reduce incentive to fish in that area.
- Vessels restricted to one 10.5 ft dredge.
- VMS required
- Hard-TAC of 70,000

NGOM Management Area - Fig. I



- NGOM resource not in overall assessment or federal ABC/ACL.
- LAGC IFQ catch is applied against the TAC as well as individual IFQ.
- LAGC Incidental catch is not applied against the TAC, 40 pound possession limit.
- LA catch is not applied against the TAC, vessels under DAS management
- Once the TAC is reached, all federal vessels are prohibited to fish in NGOM area, *unless under state water exemption program.*

Possession of in-shell scallops –

Section 1.2

- Unlawful for LA vessels to possess more than 50bu of in-shell scallops inside VMS demarcation line at any time during a trip south of 42 20 N, unless fishing under state water exemption program (Figure 2).
- FWI 4 – measures adopted to eliminate incentive to deckload and shuck scallops off the clock and circumvent DAS program, also reduce adverse impacts of discarded scallop shells and viscera in inshore waters.
- Limited to south of 42 20 N to accommodate a small market of in-shell scallops landed in GOM.
- Section 1.3 – MA state waters – transit only



LAGC IFQ Fishing in NGOM

	LAGC IFQ		LAGC NGOM		Total
2009	0	0%	5,793	100%	5,793
2010	4,762	55%	3,877	45%	8,639
2011	6,092	88%	816	12%	6,908
2012	894	12%	6,546	88%	7,440
2013	8,907	16%	46,501	84%	55,408
2014	11,911	22%	43,003	78%	54,914
2015	25,549	36%	45,982	64%	71,531

- Both categories have fished in this management area
- LAGC IFQ activity has almost exclusively been in southern area (north of Cape Ann and along southern boundary)
- Platt's Bank effort in 2013 and 2014 by NGOM vessels
- TAC exceeded in FY2015 – will likely be addressed in FY2016 under FW27 final rule

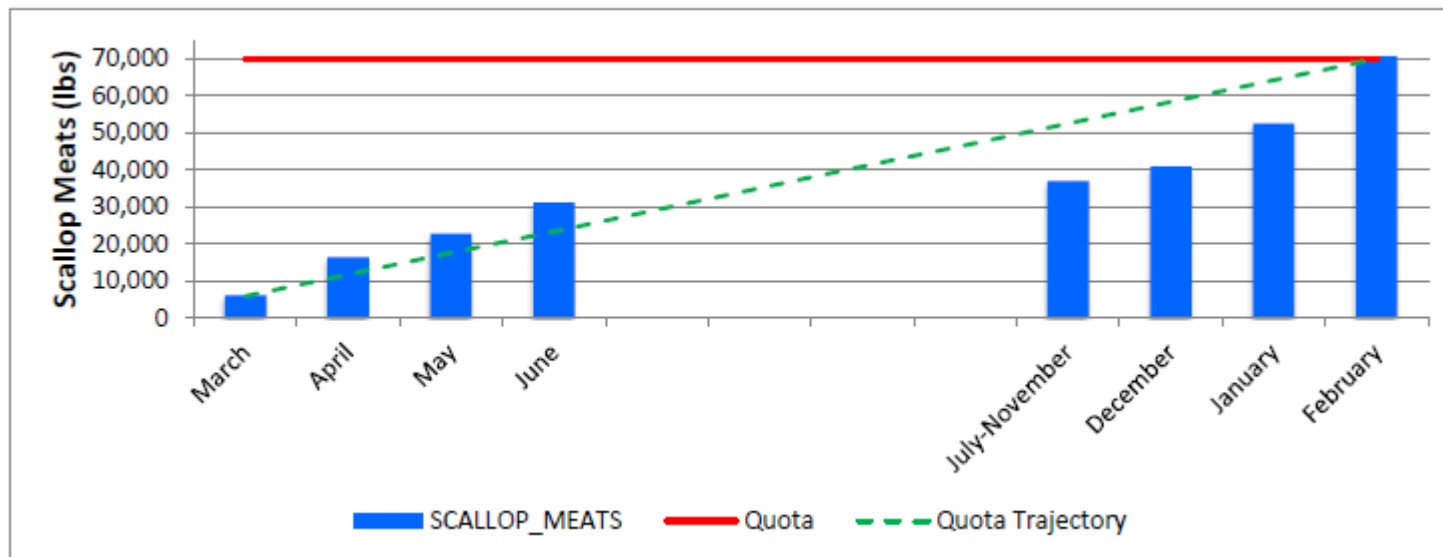
LAGC IFQ Fishing in NGOM

FISHING YEAR	AVERAGE LANDING LGC_IFQ	AVERAGE LANDING LGC_NGOM	#PERMITS LGC_IFQ	#PERMITS LGC_NGOM
2011	76	51	6	4
2012	128	115	3	6
2013	87	122	7	11
2014	86	108	8	16
2015	103	104	8	20



LAGC IFQ Fishing in NGOM: FY2016

- March 2016 – 15,000 lbs. by LAGC vessels
- About half for LAGC IFQ and half by LAGC NGOM
- Through April 13, over 26,000 lbs., 38% of TAC
- FY2015



LA Fishing in NGOM

- Essentially no LA effort in NGOM until very recently.
- According to VMS data, eight LA vessels fished at least a portion of twelve individual trips within the NGOM area between March 1, 2016 and April 6, 2016.
- About 60,000 lbs. from first five trips and over 110,000 pounds to date – still very preliminary.
- Method for estimated landings: all trips with any VMS poll in NGOM area flagged, catch with VTR reported stat area of 514 or less included from dealer database.
- Size distribution of first five trips – mostly 20/30 count (Fig 3).
- Some vessels are spending over 50% of total trip length inside VMS
- LPUE very diverse: mean of 7,500; median of 6,000

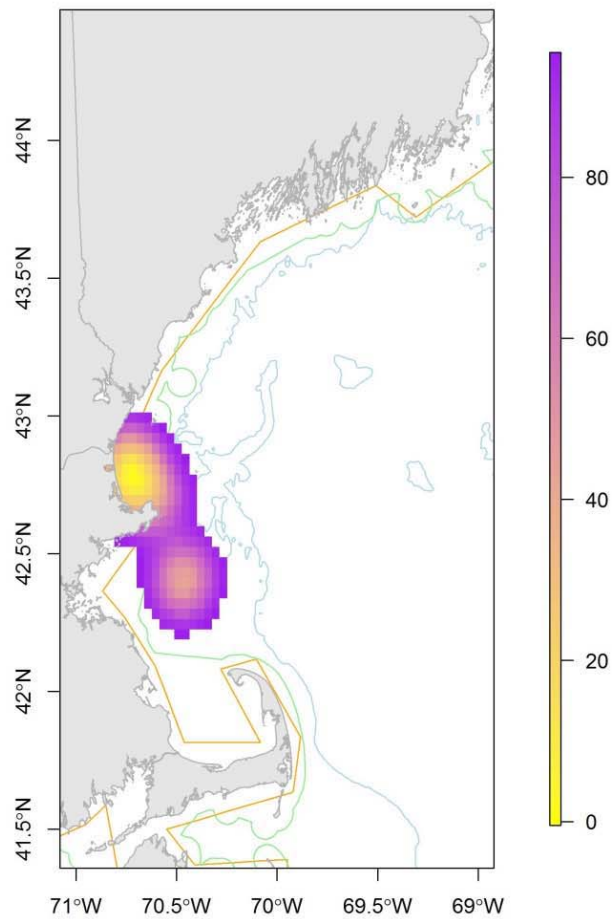
Fishing Locations in the NGOM

- Maps show LAGC effort in NGOM
- Heatmaps show how tightly concentrated or dispersed LAGC IFQ & NGOM trips were for that year
- Scale indicates the volume of trips, i.e., 80 indicates 80% of trips occurred within this range
- Similar maps for LA effort have not been created yet
- Effort by LA vessels in March 2016 is concentrated in the same general areas as the LAGC effort in FY2016 to date

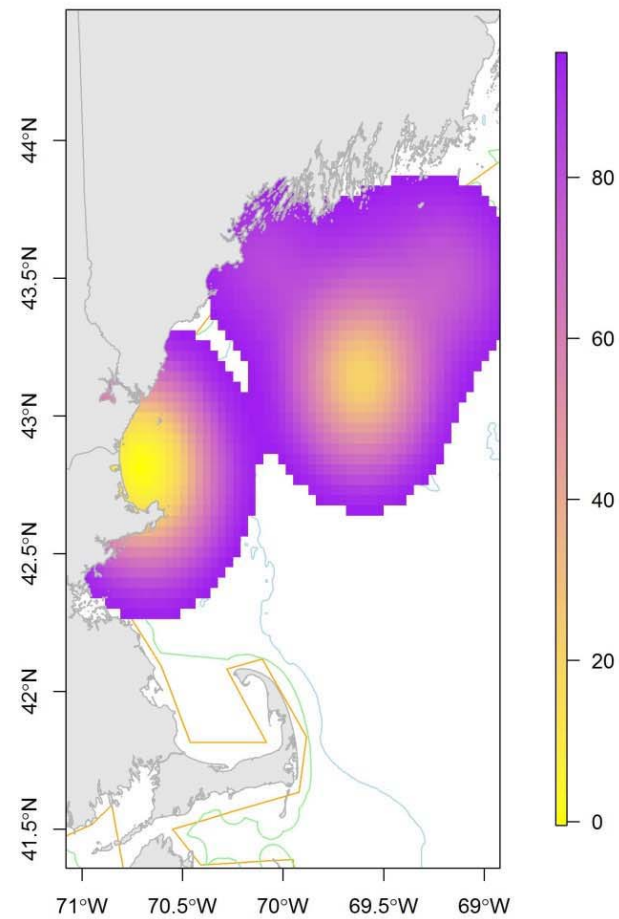


LACG Fishing Locations: FY2013

LAGC IFQ

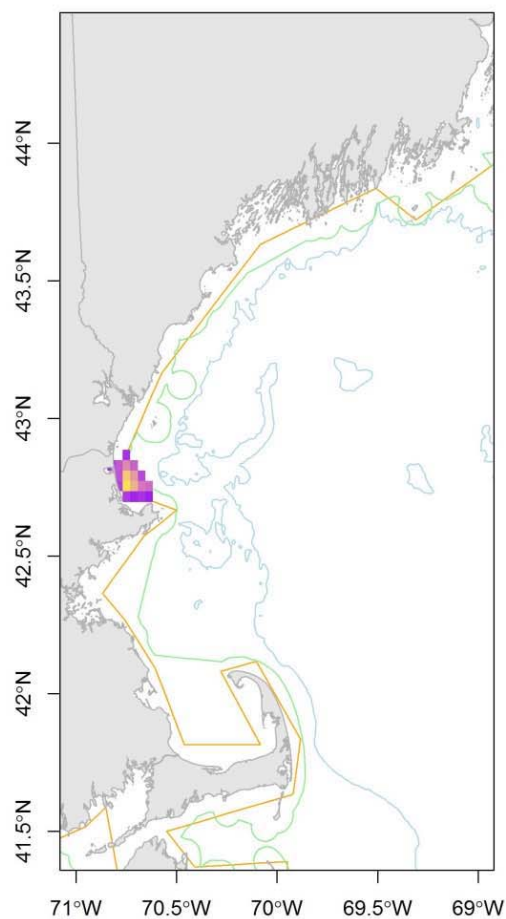


LAGC NGOM

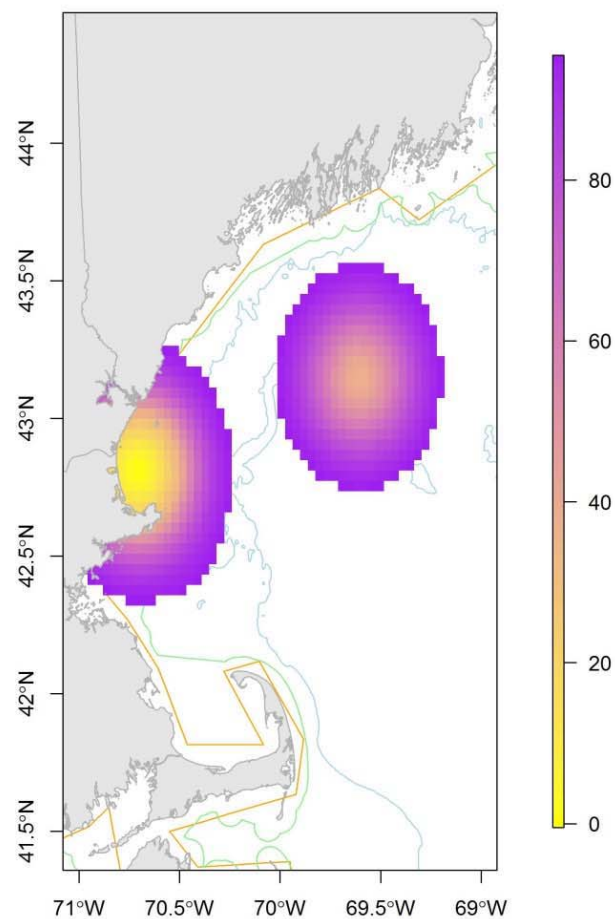


LACG Fishing Locations: FY2014

LAGC IFQ

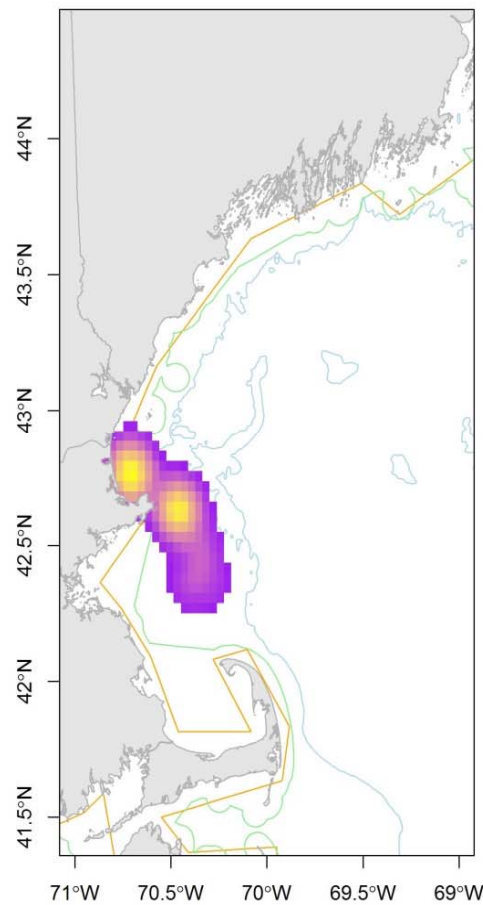


LAGC NGOM

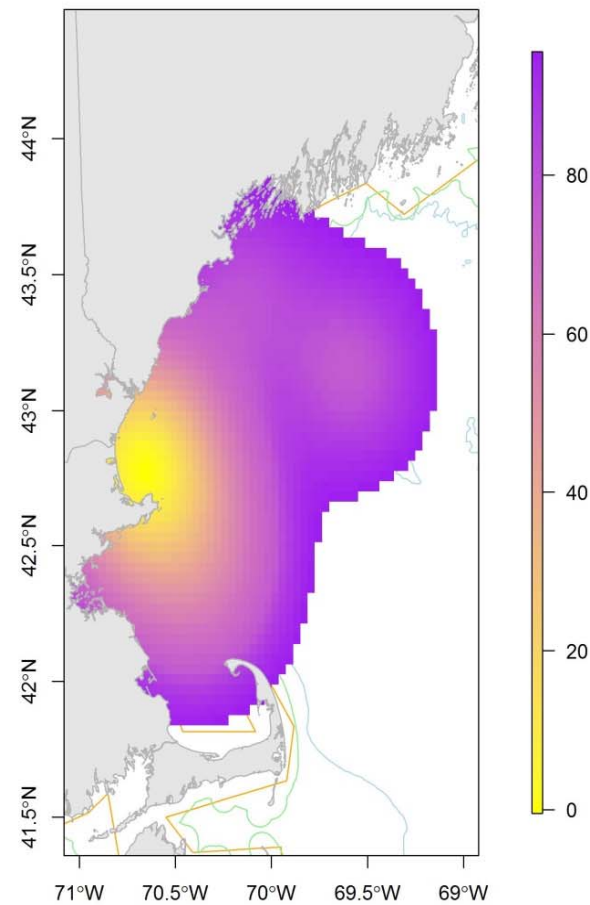


LACG Fishing Locations: FY2015

LAGC IFQ



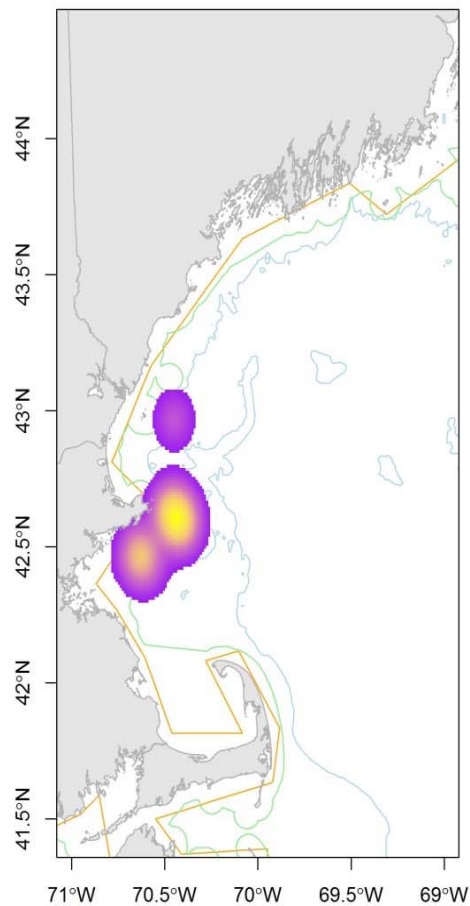
LAGC NGOM



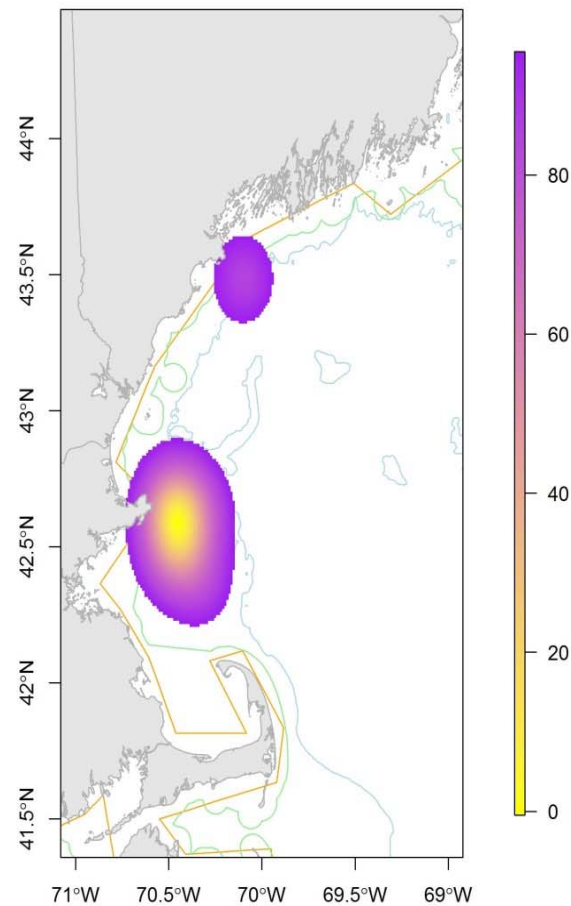
LACG Fishing Locations: FY2016

March 2016

LAGC IFQ



LAGC NGOM



Committee and AP input

- Ample public testimony at both AP and Cmte meetings
- Ideas for potential measures discussed include:
 - Implementing an Emergency Action to close the NGOM
 - Implementing a consistent possession limit of 200 pounds for LA vessels
 - Change the start date for the TAC so it is consistent with traditional winter scallop seasons
 - Prohibit deckloading north of 42 20 N
 - Assess the GOM resource and potentially increase the TAC
 - Sub-divide the TAC into smaller areas



Committee and AP input (cont.)

- **AP:**

- Motion to prohibit LA vessels from having more than 50 bushels in-shell scallop product inside VMS demarcation line (Vote: 10:0:0)
- Two Tabled motions: requesting Emergency Action to close area to LA vessels and address NGOM inconsistencies in next available action

- **Committee:**

- No motions or consensus statements
- Request for more information on scallop fishing and regulations in the NGOM area for April Council meeting

