



New England Fishery Management Council

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Daniel Salerno, *Acting Chair* | Cate O'Keefe, PhD, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 15, 2025
TO: Scallop Advisory Panel and Scallop Committee
FROM: Melanie Griffin, Scallop Committee Chair
SUBJECT: **Purpose for Scallop AP and Committee meetings on September 12 & 15, 2025**

The Council will hold the upcoming Scallop Advisory Panel (AP) on September 12, followed by a meeting of the Scallop Committee on September 15. These meetings will be held via webinar. Documents for this meeting will be posted to a Sharefile site and then to the [Council's website](#) as they become available. You will receive a link to access files ahead of the meeting.

Purpose: The main objectives of the meetings are to:

- 1) Framework 40 - Review results of 2025 scallop surveys, and preliminary projections. The primary focus of this meeting will be to develop input on the range of potential specification alternatives for FY 2026 and FY 2027. The action will set ABC/ACLs, days-at-sea, access area allocations, total allowable landings for the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) management area, targets for General Category incidental catch, General Category access area trips and trip accounting, and set-asides for the observer and research programs for fishing year 2026 and default specifications for fishing year 2027.
- 2) Social and Wellbeing Outcomes in Catch Share Programs – Receive a presentation by Dr. Kanae Tokunaga (Gulf of Maine Research Institute) on a Case Study of the LAGC IFQ Scallop Program.
- 3) Discuss Scallop Work Priorities – Review Long-Term Strategic Plan Roadmap and discuss prioritization, LAGC IFQ Review, initial discussion of Council priorities for scallop-related work in 2026.
- 4) Discuss other business, as necessary.

Webinar: In order to participate in the meetings, you will need to register for the webinar. Please register before the meeting begins. You can use the following links to register:

Scallop AP:

<https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/lvOsydGdQ0yKRuLpQ03Svg>

Scallop Committee:

<https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/9WoRDKwoT0u4TrE3G1PsZA>

1. **Participating in the meeting:** To participate, you **MUST** register for the meeting. If you do not register, staff will not be able unmute you.

The public and Committee members will be able to participate in the webinar. Council staff will be working closely with the Chair to accommodate remote participation during the meeting. Staff

will review how individuals can participate during the meeting. As with in-person meetings, questions about presentations will be entertained before taking comments. The Committee will have the first opportunity to weigh-in, followed by the public. Individuals interested in speaking should raise their hand on the webinar.

2. **Motions via Webinar:**

- a. **Making Motions:** The preferred approach is for AP and Committee members to e-mail motions to Connor Buckley (cbuckley@nefmc.org) and Chandler Nelson (cnelson@nefmc.org) on Council staff, and cc the AP or Committee Chair.
- b. **Seconding Motions:** AP and Committee: You can raise your hand in the webinar to second the motion. Council staff or the Chair will confirm this by voice over the webinar so it is clear who the maker and seconder of each motion are.
- c. **Discussion on each Motion:** The AP and the Committee will have an opportunity to discuss each motion, followed by an opportunity for the public to comment. Please raise your hand on the webinar if you would like to speak to a motion. The Chair will call on individuals who would like to address the motion. After the AP or Committee has a chance to discuss this motion, the Chair will call on members of the public.
- d. **Voting:** When the Chair is ready to call the vote, Council staff will do a roll call vote. Staff will provide the vote count, which will be confirmed by the Chair. At the discretion of the Chair, motions can also be approved by a show of hands or unanimous consent in lieu of a roll call vote.

MEETING MATERIALS

If you have any questions about the documents, please contact Connor Buckley (cbuckley@nefmc.org; 978-465-0492 ext. 115).

1. Meeting Information
 - a. Meeting Agenda
 - b. Meeting Memo from Committee Chair, Ms. Melanie Griffin
2. Presentations
 - a. Staff Presentation
 - b. Social and Wellbeing Outcomes in Catch Share Programs: A Case Study of the LAGC IFQ Scallop Program (Dr. Kanae Tokunaga, GMRI)
 - c. Alternative Gear Marking Framework (Caroline Potter, GARFO)
3. Framework 40
 - a. 2025 Scallop Survey biomass estimates (preliminary – circulated when available)
 - b. Projections of 2026 scallop exploitable biomass (preliminary – circulated when available)
4. Scallop Research Track Assessment
 - a. Assessment Summary Report
 - b. Peer Review Summary Report
5. Strategic Plan
 - a. Strategic Plan Roadmap – Draft
 - b. Scallop FMP & Subsequent Actions – Goals & Objectives
6. Recent Meeting Summaries
7. Correspondence
8. Background Materials

- a. [Link to materials from August 27-28, 2025 Scallop PDT meeting, including survey group short reports and presentations](#)
- b. [Fishery Performance Report - Scallop landings, grades, and LPUE](#)
- c. SSC Recommendation
 - i. Scallop PDT memo to SSC re Reference Points, August 8, 2025
 - ii. SSC Report
- d. Scallop Research Set-Aside
 - i. 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity (*if available*)
 - ii. Link to program page on Grants.gov (*if available*)
 - iii. [NEFMC press release re: 2025/2026 RSA Priorities and regional surveys](#)
- e. Northern Gulf of Maine
 - i. NEFMC letter to NOAA OLE NED re NGOM, August 1, 2025
 - ii. NOAA OLE NED letter to NEFMC re NGOM, August 18, 2025
- f. [NOAA Fisheries Gear Conflict Notice for Lobster Area 4](#)
- g. Alternative Gear Marking Framework
 - i. [Link to materials from June 2025 On-Demand Fishing Gear Conflict Working Group Report](#)

Framework 40: Survey Results and Projections

Recent Activity: Four survey groups (VIMS, SMAST, CFF, and ME DMR) completed survey work during the 2025 field season. The Scallop PDT has met on August 27 & 28 and September 5 to discuss survey results and consider the fishery outlook for FY2026 and 2027 (default).

Key Survey Findings: Surveys continued to detect the strong 3-year-old year-class in the Nantucket Lightship South region that was first detected in 2023. The mean survey abundance estimate from this region was nearly 4 billion animals. While this year class is not as large as the exception 2012- or 2013-year classes, their growth is faster than those very slow growing year classes, although still slower than other areas of the scallop resource. While no large recruitment events were detected this year, small areas of strong recruitment were detected in both the Southern Flank, Long Island, and New York Bight areas, and there was continued growth of the 3-year-old year classes in both the Hudson Canyon South and Elephant Trunk regions. Rotational fishing opportunities are likely very limited but could be considered in the Hudson Canyon South and Elephant Trunk regions of the Mid-Atlantic. The outlook for Area II suggests that the area may not support further rotational fishing beyond the current opening and RSA compensation fishing in the area. Overall, surveys suggest a slight increase in biomass in the Mid-Atlantic and a large decline in biomass on Georges Bank, with no large year classes entering the fishery. Fishing opportunities in the Stellwagen Bank region of the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Unit are expected to continue into FY2026. Although biomass declined overall relative to 2024, modest signs of incoming recruitment were noted.

Potential Topics for the AP & Committee Discussions: In addition to discussing survey results and projections, the groups may wish to discuss the following topics:

1. 2025 fishery performance, model projections for 2026, two-year outlook for the fishery.
2. Growth of large year class in NLS-S and the continued closure to protect small scallops.
3. Outlook for Area I and Area II in 2026.
4. Treatment of the HCS and ET areas in 2026.
5. Spatial extent of recruitment in the Long Island and New York Bight areas and consideration of a closure to protect small scallops.
6. LPUE and outlook for open bottom, projection performance.

7. Opportunities for LAGC IFQ access area fishing in 2026.
8. Outlook for NGOM fishery in 2026.

Anticipated Outcomes:

1. Tasking motions for the PDT to evaluate options for 1) access area fishing and 2) open area DAS for FY2026 and FY2027 (default). Motions should indicate the number of access area trips to an area, and what the FT LA trip limit would be.
2. Input from the AP and Committee on issues related to specifications, such as where LA PT vessels can fish their trips.
3. Tasking motion for F rates to set the total allowable landings for the NGOM management area. The Council's preferred range for the F rate in this area was identified as $F=0.15$ to $F=0.25$ in Amendment 21. The group should consider the age of the main cohort on Stellwagen.

Scallop Work Priorities

Recent Activity: Progress has been continued toward completing 2025 work priorities. In June, the Council reviewed the draft Scallop Strategic Plan Roadmap and preliminary analyses supporting the LAGC IFQ Program Review. At their August meeting, the Scallop PDT continued development of the Strategic Plan Roadmap. The LAGC IFQ Program Review, originally scheduled for completion by the September Council Meeting, has been pushed back to present a final report at the January Council Meeting.

Anticipated Outcomes: The Advisory Panel and Committee will review the Strategic Plan Roadmap and provide input on prioritization, sequencing, and timing, as well as additional considerations such as potential challenges and research needs. The Committee may wish to advise Council staff on next steps for the Strategic Plan (consensus statement or tasking motion). The Advisory Panel and Committee will begin an initial discussion of Council priorities for scallop-related work in 2026.

Social and Wellbeing Outcomes in Catch Share Programs

Anticipated Outcomes: The Advisory Panel and Committee will receive a presentation by Dr. Kanae Tokunaga (Gulf of Maine Research Institute) on a project titled, "Social and Wellbeing Outcomes in Catch Share Programs: A Case Study of the LAGC IFQ Scallop Program", investigating how different tools and structural changes in U.S. catch share programs may work to achieve equity goals while minimizing adverse impacts to participants, communities, and other stakeholders. The AP and Committee will discuss and provide feedback.

Alternative Gear-Marking Framework

Recent Activity: The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), and the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), is developing an action which would consider allowing alternative surface marking provisions for fixed gear fisheries in the Greater Atlantic Region. If approved, this action would allow for the use of fixed gear without a persistent buoy line. The Councils are anticipated to take final action at their September/October 2025 meetings.

Anticipated Outcomes: The Advisory Panel will receive a presentation by Caroline Potter (GARFO) on an overview of the Alternative Gear-Marking Framework. The AP will discuss and provide feedback.

Other Business

Anticipated Outcomes: Additional items and issues may be taken up under other business.

Please review all documents before the meeting. If you have any questions about these enclosures, please contact Connor Buckley (cbuckley@nefmc.org; 978-465-0492 ext. 115).