

Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2 Decision Document

New England Fishery Management Council
April 22-23, 2015 · Mystic, Connecticut

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Introduction

This document summarizes the alternatives under consideration in Omnibus EFH Amendment 2 (OHA2). Preferred alternatives are identified as: Council (February 2014), Advisory Panel (March 18, 2015), and Habitat Committee (March 23-24, 2015 and April 9, 2015). Page references to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement are included in each section, as well as some highlights from the public comments. Coordinates for the habitat management areas and motions that carried at recent Habitat Committee meetings are provided at the conclusion of the document. The order of this document is the anticipated order of agenda items at the Council meeting and differs somewhat from the order in which the alternatives are presented in the DEIS.

Essential Fish Habitat designation alternatives (DEIS Volume 2): OHA2 includes updated Essential fish habitat (EFH) designations for all species managed by the Council. EFH means those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity. EFH designations consist of two complementary elements, the text descriptions, and the map representations. The two components of EFH must be used in conjunction with one another when applying EFH designations to fishery management, EFH consultation, or other questions.

Habitat Area of Particular Concern designation alternatives (DEIS Volume 2): Designation of HAPCs is intended to indicate which areas within EFH should receive more of the Council's and NMFS' attention when providing comments on Federal and state actions, and in establishing higher standards to protect and/or restore such habitat. OHA2 includes various HAPC designations, which meet one or more criteria identified in the EFH Final Rule (50 CFR 600.815(8)) and/or by the Council. These criteria include:

- Importance of historic or current ecological function (EFH final rule)
- Sensitivity to anthropogenic stresses (EFH final rule)
- Extent of current or future development stresses (EFH final rule)
- Rarity of the habitat type (EFH final rule)
- Will improve the fisheries management in the EEZ (Council),
- Include EFH designations for more than one Council-managed species in order to maximize the benefit of the designations (Council),
- Include juvenile cod EFH (Council),
- Meet more than one of the EFH Final Rule criteria above (Council).

Habitat management alternatives (DEIS Volume 3): OHA2 includes various sets of areas intended to minimize the adverse impacts of fishing on habitat. These are presented by sub-region, i.e. Eastern Gulf of Maine (GOM), Central GOM, Western GOM, Georges Bank, and Great South Channel/Southern New England. Measures focus on restricting mobile bottom-tending gear use within the areas. With the exception of the Ammen Rock area in the Central Gulf of Maine, which is proposed as a closure to all types of fishing except lobster traps, measures for habitat management areas can generally be selected from Options 1-4. In the

eastern Gulf of Maine sub-region, Option 5 can be selected for Alternative 2. These options are specified as follows:

- Option 1, complete restrictions on use of mobile bottom-tending gears, or
- Option 2, restrictions on the use of mobile bottom-tending gear with an exemption for hydraulic clam dredges, or
- Option 3, a requirement that bottom trawl vessels use ground cables modified with 20 centimeter diameter elevating disks spaced at 5 fathoms, with a length per side capped at 45 fathoms. Use of dredges would be permitted, or
- Option 4, a requirement that bottom trawl vessels eliminate ground cables entirely and cap bridle lengths at 30 fathoms per side. Use of dredges would be permitted.
- Option 5, complete restriction on gears capable of catching groundfish. (Eastern GOM Alternative 2 only)

Spawning management alternatives (DEIS Volume 3): OHA2 includes various sets of areas intended to improve groundfish spawning protection. Management measures for spawning areas can be selected from Options A, B, or C.

- Option A, closure to commercial gears capable of catching groundfish. Detailed gear restrictions by area are in Volume 3.
- Option B, closure to commercial and recreational gears capable of catching groundfish. Detailed gear restrictions by area are in Volume 3.
- Option C, exemption for scallop dredges. Option C is under consideration on Georges Bank only, not in the Gulf of Maine.

Dedicated Habitat Research Area alternatives (DEIS Volume 3): OHA2 includes three different habitat research area proposals. Research areas are generally proposed as mobile bottom-tending gear closures, with the exception of the Stellwagen DHRA. The Stellwagen DHRA would have status quo measures associated with the overlapping Western Gulf of Maine Groundfish and Habitat Closures, i.e. closure to mobile bottom-tending gear and other commercial gears capable of catching groundfish, such as gillnets, and could include a smaller reference area within it also closed to recreational groundfishing.

Framework and monitoring alternatives (DEIS Volume 3): Currently, there is no schedule for evaluating or updating spatial management measures. Furthermore, Council research priorities related to spatial management are developed separately for each FMP and they are updated periodically by Plan Development Teams, FMP Committees, Advisory Panels, and the Scientific and Statistical Committee. The action alternative (Alternative 2) identifies additional frameworkable items, lists research priorities, and sets an objective to conduct a comprehensive review of spatial management measures according to a set schedule.

Essential Fish Habitat and Habitat Area of Particular Concern designations

Council action required:

1. **Review and confirm, as desired, updates to selected EFH designations recommended by the Committee (these are listed below).**
2. **Confirm approval of the entire suite of final preferred alternatives identified in the DEIS, inclusive of any updates made at the meeting.**

| Alternative | Notes |
|---|--|
| No Action | These are not the Council's preferred alternatives. DEIS Volume 2, pages 23-80. |
| Final preferred alternatives | The final preferred EFH alternatives were adopted in 2007. In general, the alternatives in this section of the document do not require individual motions to adopt them as the Council's final action at this time. The Committee has identified a small number of suggested updates to the EFH designations that the Council should weigh in on during this meeting. These are listed below the table. DEIS Volume 2, pages 80-180. |
| Non-preferred alternatives as presented in the 2007 DEIS | These are not the Council's preferred alternatives. DEIS Volume 2, pages 181-377. |

The Council should weigh in on the following items during final action. The current preferred alternatives for these species and life stages are described in Volume 2 of the DEIS. These updates are described in the April 9, 2015 Committee summary.

- **Winter flounder EFH for eggs, juveniles, and larvae/adults:** The southern boundary of the designation and EFH map should be established at 39° 22' N latitude, at Absecon Bay, NJ.
- **Atlantic sea scallop EFH for all life stages combined:** The map should be limited to areas shallower than 110 meters depth. The text description should be revised to include information on salinity, temperature, and other requirements as appropriate.
- **Atlantic cod EFH, juveniles:** The minimum 30 meter depth limit in areas mapped based on the NMFS trawl surveys should be eliminated to better reflect the text description, which does not include a minimum depth.
- **Atlantic herring EFH, eggs:** Additional egg EFH areas should be added based to the EFH map on areas where very small larvae are abundant.

Habitat Area of Particular Concern designations

Council action required:

1. **Confirm approval of the entire suite of final preferred alternatives identified in the DEIS, inclusive of updates made at the final Council meeting, if any.**

| Alternative | Notes |
|--|---|
| <p>No Action (two alternatives): Atlantic Salmon and Northern Edge Cod HAPCs</p> | <p>These are 2007 Council preferred alternatives. No further action is required on individual items. DEIS Volume 2, pages 380-386</p> |
| <p>Additional continental shelf HAPCs (four alternatives): Inshore Juvenile Cod, Great South Channel Juvenile Cod, Cashes Ledge, Jeffreys Ledge/Stellwagen Bank</p> | <p>These are 2007 Council preferred alternatives. No further action is required on individual items. The Cashes Ledge HAPC is the same area as the current Cashes Ledge EFH Closure. The Jeffreys Ledge/Stellwagen Bank HAPC is the same area as the existing Western Gulf of Maine EFH Closure. DEIS Volume 2, pages 387-396.</p> |
| <p>Canyons and seamounts (twelve alternatives): Bear and Retriever Seamounts; north to south: Heezen Canyon; Lydonia/Gilbert/Oceanographers Canyons; Hydrographer Canyon; Veatch Canyon; Alvin/Atlantis Canyon; Hudson Canyon; Toms, Middle Toms, and Hendrickson Canyons; Wilmington Canyon; Baltimore Canyon; Washington Canyon; Norfolk Canyon</p> | <p>These are 2007 Council preferred alternatives. No further action is required on individual items. The Council has approved deep-sea coral conservation areas for analysis in a separate coral amendment. These coral areas overlap the HAPCs that are within the New England region, i.e. everything north of Hudson Canyon. DEIS Volume 2, pages 397-427.</p> |

Habitat Management Alternatives – Eastern Gulf of Maine

Council action required: Select one alternative set of areas below and identify a fishing restriction option for each management area. The Council may choose to mix and match areas from different alternatives.

| <u>Alternative</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Notes |
|--|---|--|--|
| Alternative 1: No Action - No mgmt. areas | Habitat Advisory Panel | Not applicable | DEIS Volume 3, page 46. |
| Alternative 2: Large Eastern Maine, Machias | Council, with Options 1 and 5 | Can select from Options 1-5 | Public comments note the Grey Zone overlap. Approximately 121 km ² of the Machias HMA (36%) is within the Grey Zone, which is fished by Canadian fishermen. This is the only habitat management alternative for which Option 5 (closure to gear capable of catching groundfish) was analyzed. DEIS Volume 3, pages 46-48. |
| Alternative 3: Small Eastern Maine, Machias, Toothaker Ridge | Habitat Committee, <u>Small Eastern Maine Area only</u> , with Option 1 | Can select from Options 1-4 | Little support for Toothaker Ridge area in public comments. DEIS Volume 3, pages 48-50. |

Eastern Gulf of Maine DEIS Analysis: Physical environment page 207; Large mesh groundfish page 278 and 283, Human Community page 355; Protected Resources page 489.

Other alternatives recommended in the comments include:

- Alternative 3 without Toothaker Ridge and Machias (this is the Committee preferred).
- Expand Large Eastern Maine HMA further towards shore to protect Atlantic herring spawning grounds. Note that inshore boundary of all areas in this sub region except Toothaker Ridge are along the 3-mile state waters boundary.
- Designate an area in Eastern Maine to protect deep sea corals. Note that the Council has approved for analysis in the coral amendment a coral protection area west of Mt. Desert Rock that lies within the Large Eastern Maine HMA. Since this coral area was developed, additional coral-focused survey work has been conducted in the region.

Habitat Management Alternatives – Central Gulf of Maine

Council action required: Select one alternative set of areas below and identify a fishing restriction option for each management area. The Council may choose to mix and match areas from different alternatives.

| <u>Alternative</u> ¹ | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Notes |
|---|---|--|--|
| Alternative 1: No Action - Jeffreys Bank Habitat Closure, Cashes Ledge Habitat Closure, Cashes Ledge Closed Area | No | Existing measures – DEIS Vol. 3, page 52 | Many public comments supporting existing Cashes Ledge areas; some comments supporting the existing Jeffreys Bank area. DEIS Volume 3, page 50-53. |
| Alternative 2: No habitat closures | No | Not applicable | No public comments in support. DEIS Volume 3, page 53. |
| Alternative 3: Modified Jeffreys Bank, Modified Cashes Ledge, Ammen Rock, Fippennies Ledge, Platts Bank | Habitat Committee preferred, <u>without Platts Bank</u> ; Option 1 in all areas except Ammen Rock which would be closed to all gears except lobster traps | Can select from Options 1-4; Ammen Rock closed to all gears except lobster traps | Modified Jeffreys Bank area is almost identical in size to existing area, but focuses on shallower, hard bottom areas. Public comments expressed concerns about loss of current fishing opportunities if Platts Bank is closed. Modified Cashes Ledge has the western 27% of the existing habitat closure area removed. DEIS Volume 3, page 54-55. |
| Alternative 4: Modified Jeffreys Bank, Modified Cashes Ledge, Ammen Rock | Council preferred; Option 1 in all areas except Ammen Rock which would be closed to all gears except lobster traps | Can select from Options 1-4; Ammen Rock closed to all gears except lobster traps | DEIS Volume 3, page 56-57. |

Central Gulf of Maine DEIS Analysis: Physical environment-page 216; Large mesh groundfish page 278 and 289, Human Community-page 369; Protected Resources-page 491.

Other alternatives recommended in the comments include Alternative 3 without Platts Bank closure (this is the Committee preferred).

¹ No Advisory Panel preferred alternative was identified

Habitat Management Alternatives – Western Gulf of Maine

Council action required:

- **Select one alternative set of areas below (from Alternatives 1-6) and identify a fishing restriction option for each management area. The Council may choose to mix and match areas from different alternatives.**
 - **If Alternative 1 is selected as final, the Council may also select Alternative 8, if desired.**
- **In addition, select Alternative 7a or 7b, or neither alternative as a roller gear restricted area.**

| <u>Alternative²</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|---|--|---|
| Alternative 1: No Action – Western GOM Habitat closure and Western GOM closed area | Council preferred; Habitat Committee preferred with eastern part of WGOM groundfish closure removed | Existing measures (DEIS Vol. 3, page 59) | Removal of the eastern part of the WGOM groundfish closure was not analyzed in the DEIS. See PDT memo dated April 8, 2015 for some preliminary evaluation of this adjustment. Many public comments support No Action. DEIS Volume 3, pages 59-60. |
| Alternative 2: No habitat closures | No | Not applicable | No public comments supporting this alternative. DEIS Volume 3, page 60. |
| Alternative 3: Large Bigelow Bight, Large Stellwagen | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | Many public comments opposed to Bigelow Bight areas (large and small). Others supported adding the Large Bigelow Bight area to the existing areas. DEIS Volume 3, pages 61-62. |
| Alternative 4: Large Bigelow Bight, Small Stellwagen, Jeffrey’s Ledge | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | See above. DEIS Volume 3, pages 62-64. |

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² No preferred alternative was agreed upon by the Advisory Panel.

| <u>Alternative²</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|--|---|---|
| Alternative 5: Small Bigelow Bight, Small Stellwagen, Jeffreys Ledge | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | See above. DEIS Volume 3, pages 64-66. |
| Alternative 6: Large Stellwagen | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | Many public comments in support of Alternative 6. DEIS Volume 3, pages 66-67. |
| Alternative 7a: Inshore Roller Gear Restricted Area | Council | Limits roller size to 12 inches for any bottom trawl gear | Very similar to current measures but would restrict all bottom trawls to 12 inch rollers versus bottom trawls operating on a multispecies DAS or sector trip. DEIS Volume 3, pages 68-69. |
| Alternative 7b: Alternate Roller Gear Restricted Area | No | Limits roller size to 12 inches for any bottom trawl gear | When combined with the current roller gear restricted area, would also add a roller gear restriction north of the current area. DEIS Volume 3, pages 68-69. |
| Alternative 8: WGOM Shrimp Trawl Exemption Area | Council | Shrimp trawls exempt from mobile bottom-tending gear closure | Only makes sense as an add-on to No Action, because other alternatives (2-6) eliminate the exemption area entirely. DEIS Volume 3, pages 69-70. |

Western Gulf of Maine DEIS Analysis: Physical environment-page 227; Large Mesh Groundfish pages 278 and 293; Human Community-page 385; Protected Resources-page 492.

Other alternatives recommended in the public comments included an alternative with the Jeffreys Ledge and Stellwagen Small areas, without Bigelow Bight.

The Habitat Committee identified two additional alternatives during their February 24 meeting:

- An alternative similar to No Action, but where the eastern boundary of the groundfish closure area is moved west to match the boundary of the habitat closure. This was identified as their preferred alternative on March 23.
- As described in the bullet above, an alternative similar to Alternative 5, that includes the Jeffreys Ledge and Stellwagen Small areas, without Bigelow Bight.

Spawning Management Alternatives – Gulf of Maine

Council action required:

1. **Select Alternative 1 as specified below, Alternative 2 as specified below, or take no action. If no action is taken, the measures implemented via the Northeast Multispecies Framework 53 final rule (which has not yet been published) will remain in effect. The Council may choose to mix and match areas, seasons, and measures to modify one of the alternatives below.**
2. **Alternative 2 includes the Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area. If Alternative 2 is not selected, the Council may wish to adopt this area separately via Alternative 3.**

| <u>Gulf of Maine</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|--|---|---|--|
| Alternative 1 as written up in the DEIS (No action/status quo measures prior to implementation of Framework 53): Western Gulf of Maine Closure, Cashes Ledge Closure, Gulf of Maine Common Pool and Sector Rolling Closures, Gulf of Maine Cod Spawning Protection Area (known as 'Whaleback' area) | Council | Existing measures (DEIS Vol. 3, page 98) | DEIS Volume 3, pages 97-101. |
| No Action, assuming Framework 53 is implemented as specified in the proposed rule: Framework 53 Cod Protection Areas and Spawning Areas | Committee, Advisory Panel | This alternative was not analyzed in the OHA2 DEIS, which was developed prior to Framework 53. | See April 8, 2015 Habitat PDT memo for more information. |
| Alternative 2: Sector rolling closures, Massachusetts Bay Cod Spawning Protection Area, GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area. Eliminates common pool rolling closures; Western Gulf of Maine and Cashes Ledge Closure Areas would also be eliminated unless maintained for habitat protection purposes. | No | Rolling closures would apply to all vessels capable of catching groundfish, whether the vessel is in the common pool or enrolled in a sector, with possible exemptions. Massachusetts Bay area is more restrictive. | DEIS Volume 3, pages 101-106. |

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| <u>Gulf of Maine</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|--|---|---|--|
| Alternative 3: Massachusetts Bay Cod Spawning Protection Area | Council, Committee | Existing measures associated with the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area (DEIS Vol. 3, pages 106-107) | Intent was that this designation could be combined with Alternative 1/No Action. DEIS Volume 3, pages 106-107. |

Gulf of Maine Spawning DEIS Analysis: Physical environment-page 500; Large-Mesh Groundfish Stocks-page 503; Human Community-page 526; Protected Resources-page 543.

Dedicated Habitat Research Areas

Council action required:

1. **Select Alternative 1, No Action, or some combination of Alternatives 2, 3, and 4.**
 - **For Alternative 3, select Option A, B, or C.**
2. **For each DHRA selected, identify whether the sunset provision, Alternative 5, will be applied.**

| <u>Dedicated Habitat Research Areas</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|--|---|---|--|
| Alternative 1: No Action, No DHRAs | No | Not applicable | DEIS Volume 3, page 122. |
| Alternative 2: Eastern Maine DHRA | Council | Closed to mobile-bottom tending gears | DEIS Volume 3, pages 122-124. |
| Alternative 3: Stellwagen DHRA. Option A includes the southern reference area. Option B includes the northern reference area. Option C would designate the DHRA without the reference area. | Council, Committee, Advisory Panel, with Option B | Option A or B would close the reference area to recreational fishing. | DEIS Volume 3, pages 124-127. Substantial public comments both for and against this alternative. |
| Alternative 4: Georges Bank | Council, Committee, Advisory Panel | Closed to mobile-bottom tending gears | DEIS Volume 3, pages 127-129. |
| Alternative 5: Sunset provision | Council, Committee | | Three year timeframe. Some public commenters indicated that the timeframe for sunset provision is too short. Five years (or longer) is a more appropriate timeframe. DEIS Volume 3, pages 129-131. |

DHRA DEIS Analysis: Environment-pages 545-552; Large-Mesh Groundfish Stocks –pages 553-569; Human Community-pages 569-582; Protected Resources-page 583-584.

Habitat Management Alternatives – Georges Bank

Council action required: Select one alternative set of areas below and identify a fishing restriction option for each management area. The Council may choose to mix and match areas from different alternatives.

| <u>Alternative</u> ³ | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|---|--|--|
| Alternative 1: No Action – Closed Area I and II EFH and Groundfish closure | No | Existing measures DEIS Vol. 3, page 73 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 72-74. |
| Alternative 2: No habitat closures | No | Not applicable | DEIS Volume 3, page 74. |
| Alternative 3: Northern Edge HMA | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 75-76. Existing CAII habitat closure shifted north and west. Limited public comments on this alternative. |
| Alternative 4: Northern Edge HMA, Georges Shoal Gear Modified Area | No | Can select from Options 1-4 N. Edge, 3-4 G. Shoal | DEIS Volume 3, pages 76-78. Similar to Alternative 3. |
| Alternative 5: Georges Shoal MBTG HMA, Northern Georges Gear Modified Area | No | Can select from Options 1-2 G. Shoal, 3-4 N. Georges | DEIS Volume 3, pages 78-80. No discussion in the public comments. |
| Alternative 6a: EFH Expanded 1 | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 80-82. Existing CAII habitat closure with additional areas to the west. |
| Alternative 6b: EFH Expanded 2 | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 80-82. Similar to 6a with an 8 nm wide area along the EEZ removed. |

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³ The Council did not select a preferred alternative for Georges Bank.

| <u>Alternative</u> ³ | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|---|--|---|
| Alternative 7⁴: Georges Shoal 2 MBTG, EFH South MBTG HMA | Advisory Panel, Habitat Committee | Can select from Options 1-2 | Received significant attention in public comments. On April 9, the Committee also recommended for analysis two areas that could be substituted for the EFH South HMA. These areas remove the northern part of the current CAII habitat closure and include additional areas to the southeast. One of the areas excludes a buffer 4 nautical miles wide along the EEZ. This change was not analyzed in the DEIS, see information in forthcoming staff memo. Current Alternative 7 described in DEIS Volume 3, pages 82-83. |
| Alternative 8: Northern Georges MBTG HMA | No | Can select from Options 1-2 | Largest Georges Bank area, received significant attention in public comments. DEIS Volume 3, pages 84-85. |

Other Alternatives recommended through public comments include:

- Develop an Alternative to no action that encompasses the northern edge of Georges Bank from the west through the 'fingers'.
- A few commenters wrote in favor of the clam dredge exemption under any of the proposed alternatives in Georges Shoal and Great South Channel.
- Consider an area that consists of the Georges Bank Swept Area Seabed Impact/LISA Clusters and straddles the existing CAII habitat area and Alt. 8.
- Consider gear-sharing agreement for lobster vessels and scallop vessels in Closed Area II, if re-opened.
- Consider Closed Area II closure combined with Alt 8, or consider Alt. 6A.

⁴ The Advisory Panel and Committee recommends Alternative 7 on GB as preferred, and that an area of Closed Area II north of 41° 30' N would remain closed to all mobile bottom-tending gear between June 15 and October 31, subject to the scallop fishery having access to the area north of 41° 30' N between March 1 and June 15. They recognized the agreement between the trawl fishery and the offshore lobster fishery, which could be subject to revision. The Advisory Panel only also recommended an exemption for hydraulic clam dredges.

Habitat Management Alternatives – Great South Channel/Southern New England

Council action required: Select one alternative set of areas below and identify a fishing restriction option for each management area. The Council may choose to mix and match areas from different alternatives or identify different fishing restrictions for different areas, as recommended by the Committee and Advisory Panel. Note that the Committee recommended separate discussion of the Cox Ledge areas, rather than grouping them with the Great South Channel/Nantucket Shoals areas, and the Advisory Panel agreed with this approach.

| <u>Great South Channel/Southern New England</u> ⁵ | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|---|--|--|
| Alternative 1: No action – Nantucket Lightship Habitat Closure Area, Nantucket Lightship Closed Area | No | Existing measures (DEIS Vol. 3, page 87) | DEIS Volume 3, pages 86-88. |
| Alternative 2: No habitat closures | No | Not applicable | DEIS Volume 3, page 88. |
| Alternative 3: Great South Channel East HMA, Cox Ledge HMA | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 89-90. Great South Channel East includes areas further north and east than Alternatives 4 or 5. Area was subject of many public comments. |
| Alternative 4: Great South Channel HMA, Cox Ledge HMA | No | Can select from Options 1-4 | DEIS Volume 3, pages 90-92. Great South Channel is a subset of the Great South Channel East area. |

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⁵ The Council has not selected a preferred habitat management alternative for Great South Channel.

| <u>Great South Channel/Southern New England⁵</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|--|---|--|
| Alternative 5: Nantucket Shoals HMA, Cox Ledge HMA | Habitat Committee preferred with Option 3 and a restriction on hydraulic clam dredges in Cox Ledge Areas, Option 1 in the northeast corner of the Nantucket Shoals area, and Option 2 in the remainder of the Nantucket Shoals area for three years, with a sunset to Option 1 unless clam dredge exemption areas are identified. Advisory panel preferred, with a restriction on hydraulic clam dredges in Cox Ledge areas, and Option 2 for the Nantucket Shoals area. | Can select from Options 1-4 | Area received lots of discussion in the public comments. DEIS Volume 3, pages 92-94. |
| Alternative 6: Nantucket Shoals West MBTG HMA, Great South Channel Gear Modified Area, Cox Ledge HMA | No | Can select from Options 1-2 NSW, Options 3-4 GSC, Options 1-4 Cox Ledge | Not really discussed in the public comments. DEIS Volume 3, pages 94-96. |

Other Alternatives recommended through public comments include:

- Great South Channel East HMA could be extended further east. Expand into the Great South Channel to protect Atlantic herring spawning grounds.
- Support a modified version of Alternative 3 that focuses more closely on cobble and boulder habitats.
- Support designation of Cox Ledge areas 1 and 2 provided areas are managed separately from other areas given local differences in the fisheries and stocks in the area compared to other HMAs.

Spawning Management Alternatives – Georges Bank and Southern New England

Council action required:

1. Select either Alternative 1, Alternative 2, or Alternative 3.
2. If Alternative 2 or 3 is selected, select Option A or B.
3. If Alternative 2 or 3 is selected, Option C (scallop dredge exemption) can be added to A or B.

| <u>Alternatives</u> ⁶ | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|---|---|--|--|
| Alternative 1 (No Action): Retains Closed Area I, Closed Area II, the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, and the Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area, which is in place during May. | No | Existing measures (DEIS Vol. 3, page 109-110) | DEIS Volume 3, pages 108-111. |
| Alternative 2: Retain as spawning closures Closed Area I and Closed Area II during the months of February, March, and the first half of April. -The Nantucket Lightship Closed Area and the Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area would be eliminated. Exemptions for some gears, such as purse seines, pelagic longlines, and recreational, would be in place (full list available in Volume 3). | | | |
| Alternative 2 - Option A: Consider closures to commercial gears | No | Details – DEIS Vol 3, pages 112-113 | DEIS Volume 3, page 112. |
| Alternative 2 - Option B: Similar to Alt. 2 Option A except it also restricts recreational gear | Council | Details – DEIS Vol 3, page 113 | DEIS Volume 3, page 113. |
| Alternative 2 - Option C: Consider an exemption for sea scallop dredges. | No | | This could be implemented in combination with Option A or Option B. DEIS Volume 3, page 113. |

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⁶ No preferred alternative was agreed upon by the Advisory Panel

| <u>Alternatives⁶</u> | Preferred by Council, Habitat Committee, or Habitat Advisory Panel? | Range of management options/gear restrictions analyzed in the DEIS | Additional information |
|--|---|--|--|
| Alternative 3: Retain as spawning closures <u>the northern part of Closed Area I</u> and Closed Area II during the months of February, March, and the first half of April. The Nantucket Lightship Closed Area and the Georges Bank Seasonal Closure Area would be eliminated. Exemptions for some gears, such as purse seines, pelagic longlines, and recreational, would be in place (full list available in Volume 3). | | | |
| Alternative 3 - Option A: Consider closures to commercial gears | No | Details – DEIS Vol 3, page 115-116 | DEIS Volume 3, page 115. |
| Alternative 3 - Option B: Consider closures to commercial and recreational gears | Committee | Details – DEIS Vol 3, page 116 | DEIS Volume 3, page 116. |
| Alternative 3 - Option C: Consider an exemption for sea scallop dredges | Committee | | This could be implemented in combination with Option A or Option B. DEIS Volume 3, page 116. |

Georges Bank/Southern New England Spawning DEIS Analysis: Physical Environment-page 501; Large-Mesh Groundfish Stocks page 514; Human Community-page 537; Protected Resources-page 544. Also see the scallop resource and fishery analysis (page 631).

Other Alternatives recommended for spawning closures through public comments include:

- Should consider spawning protections in the Great South Channel. The truly important area to protect in the GSC is the habitats between 29-31 fathoms; could expand protection on either side of this. Hook fishery in this area collapsed about 10 years ago but the area was productive, historically.

Framework and monitoring alternatives

Council action required: select either Alternative 1 or Alternative 2.

| Alternative | Description | Rationale |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <p>1 – No Action</p> | <p>No change to list of frameworkable items in FMPs</p> <p>No change to procedures for reviewing effectiveness of spatial management measures</p> | <p>The Council can use the existing framework adjustment procedures to respond to new fish habitat science or changing circumstances.</p> <p>DEIS Volume 3, pages 131-133.</p> |
| <p>2</p> | <p>Council and Committee preferred.</p> <p>Would specify that the designation or removal of habitat management areas and changes to fishing restrictions within habitat management areas are frameworkable in all FMPS</p> <p>Would establish a review process to routinely evaluate the boundaries, scope, characteristics, and timing of habitat and spawning protection areas; completed at 10 year intervals</p> <p>Building on what the Council learned during the review of the performance of existing closed areas and the development of new EFH management, the Council would identify and periodically revise research priorities to improve habitat and spawning area monitoring</p> | <p>A regular review process would help ensure that reevaluation of spatial management performance and effects on groundfish productivity would be conducted in a holistic rather than piecemeal fashion.</p> <p>The proposed review process is not intended to replace the Council’s authority to reconsider specific management issues at any time, or to respond to new science. It is also not intended as a substitute for the sunset evaluation process for Dedicated Habitat Research Areas which is intended to promote habitat research in unfished areas for a period not less than three years.</p> <p>The ten year review interval is suggested because enough time is needed to gather sufficient information to analyze the effects of area closures and any statistically significant changes in fish populations. Recent research suggests that at least three generation times are needed to see population changes due to closed areas (Moffitt et al. 2013), which would be more than 15 years for Atlantic cod.</p> <p>DEIS Volume 3, pages 133-136.</p> |

Framework DEIS Analysis: page 584.

Habitat management area coordinates

Table 1 – Coordinates for habitat management areas in eastern Maine

| <u>Toothaker Ridge HMA (Alt 3)</u> | | | <u>Small Eastern Maine HMA, see note B (Alt 3)</u> | | |
|--|------------|-------------|---|------------|-------------|
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 1 | 43° 40.0' | 69° 15.4' | 1 | 44° 02.5' | 68° 06.1' |
| 2 | 43° 40.0' | 69° 07.9' | 2 | 43° 51.0' | 68° 33.9' |
| 3 | 43° 45.4' | 69° 07.9' | 3* | 43° 56.6' | 68° 38.1' |
| 4 | 43° 45.4' | 69° 00.5' | 4* | 44° 07.6' | 68° 10.6' |
| 5 | 43° 40.0' | 69° 00.5' | | | |
| 6 | 43° 40.0' | 68° 45.6' | <u>Machias HMA, see note A (Alts 2 and 3)</u> | | |
| 7 | 43° 34.6' | 68° 45.6' | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 8 | 43° 34.6' | 68° 53.1' | 1 | 44° 27.7' | -67° 08.9' |
| 9 | 43° 29.2' | 68° 53.1' | 2 | 44° 28.0' | -67° 27.1' |
| 10 | 43° 29.2' | 69° 00.5' | 3 | 44° 46.0' | -66° 54.8' |
| 11 | 43° 29.2' | 69° 07.9' | | | |
| 12 | 43° 34.6' | 69° 07.9' | | | |
| 13 | 43° 34.6' | 69° 15.3' | | | |
| <u>Large Eastern Maine HMA, see note B (Alt 2)</u> | | | <i>A. Western boundary state waters; eastern boundary state waters/EEZ B. Landward boundary at state waters. Only endpoints provided.</i> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | | | |
| 1 | 44° 07.1' | 68° 00.2' | | | |
| 2 | 43° 51.7' | 68° 00.0' | | | |
| 3 | 43° 42.2' | 68° 33.1' | | | |
| 4 | 43° 42.3' | -68° 46.0' | | | |
| 5* | 43° 49.0' | -68° 45.9' | | | |
| 6* | 43° 55.9' | -68° 41.0' | | | |
| 7* | 43° 56.8' | -68° 39.3' | | | |
| 8* | 44° 07.1' | -68° 10.8' | | | |

Table 2 – Coordinates for habitat management areas in the central Gulf of Maine

| <u>Jeffreys Bank Habitat Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | | <u>Modified Jeffreys Bank EFH HMA (Alts 3 and 4)</u> | | |
|---|------------|-------------|--|------------|-------------|
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| JB1 | 43° 40' | 68° 50' | 1 | 43° 31' | 68° 37' |
| JB2 | 43° 40' | 68° 40' | 2 | 43° 20' | 68° 37' |
| JB3 | 43° 20' | 68° 40' | 3 | 43° 20' | 68° 55' |
| JB4 | 43° 20' | 68° 50' | 4 | 43° 31' | 68° 55' |
| <u>Cashes Ledge Habitat Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | | <u>Modified Cashes Ledge EFH HMA (Alts 3 and 4)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| CLH1 | 43° 01' | 69° 03' | 1 | 43° 01.0' | 69° 00.0' |
| CLH2 | 43° 01' | 68° 52' | 2 | 43° 01.0' | 68° 52.0' |
| CLH3 | 42° 45' | 68° 52' | 3 | 42° 45.0' | 68° 52.0' |
| CLH4 | 42° 45' | 69° 03' | 4 | 42° 45.0' | 69° 00.0' |
| <u>Cashes Ledge Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | | | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | | | |
| CL1 | 43°07' | 69°02' | | | |
| CL2 | 42°49.5' | 68°46' | | | |
| CL3 | 42°46.5' | 68°50.5' | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| CL4 | 42°43.5' | 68°58.5' | | | |
| CL5 | 42°42.5' | 69°17.5' | | | |
| CL6 | 42°49.5' | 69°26' | | | |
| <u>Ammen Rock HMA (Alts 3 and 4)</u> | | | <u>Fippennies Ledge HMA (Alt 3)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 1 | 42° 55.5' | 68° 57.0' | 1 | 42° 50.0' | 69° 17.0' |
| 2 | 42° 52.5' | 68° 55.0' | 2 | 42° 44.0' | 69° 14.0' |
| 3 | 42° 52.5' | 68° 57.0' | 3 | 42° 44.0' | 69° 18.0' |
| 4 | 42° 55.5' | 68° 59.0' | 4 | 42° 50.0' | 69° 21.0' |
| <u>Platts Bank HMA 1 (Alt 3)</u> | | | <u>Platts Bank HMA 2 (Alt 3)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 1 | 43° 13.0' | 69° 37.5' | 1 | 43° 10.5' | 69° 32.0' |
| 2 | 43° 10.5' | 69° 37.5' | 2 | 43° 07.5' | 69° 32.0' |
| 3 | 43° 10.5' | 69° 42.5' | 3 | 43° 07.5' | 69° 37.5' |
| 4 | 43° 13.0' | 69° 42.5' | 4 | 43° 10.5' | 69° 37.5' |

Table 3 – Coordinates for habitat management areas in the western Gulf of Maine

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|---|------------|-------------|
| <u>Western Gulf of Maine Habitat Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | | <u>Western Gulf of Maine Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| WGM4 | 43° 15' | 70° 15' | WGM1 | 42°15' | 70°15' |
| WGM1 | 42° 15' | 70° 15' | WGM2 | 42°15' | 69°55' |
| WGM5 | 42° 15' | 70° 00' | WGM3 | 43°15' | 69°55' |
| WGM6 | 43° 15' | 70° 15' | WGM4 | 43°15' | 70°15' |
| <u>Small Stellwagen HMA (Alt 4 and 5)</u> | | | <u>Small Bigelow Bight HMA (Alt 5)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 1 | 42° 38.0' | 70° 07.0' | 1* | 43° 07.1' | 70° 24.4' |
| 2 | 42° 31.0' | 70° 07.0' | 2 | 42° 07.1' | 70° 21.6' |
| 3 | 42° 31.0' | 70° 02.0' | 3 | 42° 50.9' | 70° 21.1' |
| 4 | 42° 15.0' | 70° 02.0' | 4* | 42° 50.6' | 70° 44.6' |
| 5 | 42° 15.0' | 70° 15.0' | 5* | 42° 57.1' | 70° 41.7' |
| 6 | 42° 38.0' | 70° 15.0' | 6* | 43° 03.4' | 70° 35.9' |
| | | | 7* | 43° 07.6' | 70° 32.7' |
| <u>Jeffreys Ledge HMA (Alts 4 and 5)</u> | | | <u>Large Stellwagen HMA (Alts 3 and 6)</u> | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | Point | N Latitude | W Longitude |
| 1 | 43° 13.0' | 70° 00.0' | 1 | 42° 15.0' | 70° 00.0' |
| 2 | 42° 44.4' | 70° 00.0' | 2 | 42° 15.0' | 70° 15.0' |
| 3 | 42° 44.4' | 70° 15.0' | 3 | 42° 45.2' | 70° 15.0' |
| 4 | 42° 55.0' | 70° 15.0' | 4 | 42° 46.0' | 70° 13.0' |
| 5 | 42° 55.0' | 70° 08.0' | 5 | 42° 46.0' | 70° 00.0' |
| 6 | 43° 09.0' | 70° 08.0' | | | |
| 7 | 43° 09.0' | 70° 05.0' | | | |
| 8 | 43° 13.0' | 70° 05.0' | | | |
| <u>Large Bigelow Bight HMA (Alts 3 and 4)</u> | | | | | |
| Point | N Latitude | W Longitude | | | |
| 1* | 43° 39.2' | 69° 45.1' | | | |
| 2 | 43° 29.1' | 69° 45.0' | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|-----------|--|--|--|
| 3 | 43° 28.9' | 70° 07.3' | | | |
| 4 | 43° 18.1 | 70° 07.1' | | | |
| 5 | 43° 18.0' | 70° 14.4' | | | |
| 6 | 43° 07.2' | 70° 14.2' | | | |
| 7 | 43° 07.1' | 70° 21.6' | | | |
| 8 | 42° 50.9' | 70° 21.1' | | | |
| 9* | 42° 50.6' | 70° 44.6' | | | |
| 10* | 42° 57.1' | 70° 41.7' | | | |
| 11* | 43° 03.4' | 70° 35.9' | | | |
| 12* | 43° 07.2' | 70° 33.8' | | | |
| 13* | 43° 07.6' | 70° 32.7' | | | |
| 14* | 43° 09.6' | 70° 31.3' | | | |
| 15* | 43° 17.3' | 70° 29.3' | | | |

Table 4 – Coordinates for habitat management areas on Georges Bank. MBTG indicates possible closure to mobile bottom-tending gears, with or without an exemption for hydraulic clam dredges.

| Closed Area II Habitat Closure Area (Alt 1) | | | Closed Area I Habitat Closure Area North (Alt 1) | | |
|--|---------------|------------|--|-------------|------------|
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| CIH1 | 67° 20' | 42° 10' | CI1 | 69° 23' | 41° 30' |
| CIH2 | 67° 09.3' | 42° 10' | CI4 | 68° 30' | 41° 30' |
| CIH3 | 67° 0.5' | 42° 00' | CIH1 | 68° 30' | 41° 26' |
| CIH4 | 67° 10' | 42° 00' | CIH2 | 69° 01' | 41° 04' |
| CIH5 | 67°10' | 41° 50' | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| CIH6 | 67° 20' | 41° 50' | | | |
| Closed Area I Habitat Closure Area South (Alt 1) | | | Closed Area I (Groundfish Closure Area, Alt 1) | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| CIH3 | 68° 53' | 40° 55' | CI1 | 69° 23' | 41° 30' |
| CIH4 | 68° 30' | 40° 58' | CI2 | 68° 45' | 40° 45' |
| CI3 | 68° 30' | 40° 45' | CI3 | 68° 30' | 40° 45' |
| CI2 | 68° 45' | 40° 45' | CI4 | 68° 30' | 41° 30' |
| Closed Area II (Groundfish Closure Area, Alt 1) | | | | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | | | |
| CII1 | 67° 20' | 41° 00' | | | |
| CII2 | 66° 35.8' (1) | 41° 00' | | | |
| G5 | 66° 24.8' (1) | 41° 18.6' | | | |
| CII3 | 67° 20' | 42° 22' | | | |
| <i>(1) US – Canada maritime boundary</i> | | | | | |
| Northern Edge HMA (Alts 3 and 4) | | | Georges Shoal Gear Modification Area (Alt 4) | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | 67° 11.4' | 42° 12.3' | 1 | 67° 20.0' | 42° 40.0' |
| 2 | 67° 00.5' | 42° 00.0' | 2 | 67° 56.0' | 41° 40.0' |
| 3 | 67° 16.8' | 42° 00.0' | 3 | 67° 56.0' | 41° 56.0' |
| 4 | 67° 25.8' | 42° 09.6' | 4 | 67° 39.7' | 41° 56.0' |
| 5 | 67° 20.0' | 42° 11.3' | | | |
| 6 | 67° 15.2' | 42° 12.2' | | | |
| Northern Georges Gear Modification Area (Alt 5) | | | Georges Shoal 1 MBTG HMA (Alt 5) | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | 66° 34.9' | 41° 30.1' | 1 | 67° 20.0' | 41° 30.0' |
| 2 | 68° 10.0' | 41° 30.0' | 2 | 67° 56.0' | 41° 30.0' |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|---|-------------|------------|
| 3 | 68° 09.9' | 41° 55.1' | 3 | 67° 56.0' | 41° 40.0' |
| 4 | 67° 09.7' | 42° 10.3' | 4 | 67° 20.0' | 42° 40.0' |
| <u>EFH Expanded 1 (Alt 6A)</u> | | | <u>EFH Expanded 2 (Alt 6B)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 (CIIH2) | 67° 09.3' | 42° 10' | 1 | 67° 22' 16" | 42° 10' |
| 2 (CIIH3) | 67° 0.5' | 42° 00' | 2 | 67° 10' | 41° 56' 1" |
| 3 (CIIH4) | 67° 10' | 42° 00' | 3 (CIIH5) | 67° 10' | 41° 50' |
| 4 (CIIH5) | 67° 10' | 41° 50' | 4 | 67° 30' | 41° 50' |
| 5 | 67° 30' | 41° 50' | 5 | 67° 30' | 42° 10' |
| 6 | 67° 30' | 42° 10' | | | |
| <u>EFH South HMA (Alt 7)</u> | | | <u>Georges Shoal 2 MBTG HMA (Alt 7)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | 67° 07' | 41° 57' | 1 | 67° 46' | 41° 46' |
| 2 | 67° 02' | 41° 50' | 2 | 67° 40' | 41° 39' |
| 3 (CIIH6) | 67° 20' | 41° 50' | 3 | 67° 40' | 41° 30' |
| 4 | 67° 20' | 41° 57' | 4 | 68° 10' | 41° 30' |
| | | | 5 | 68° 10' | 41° 41' |
| <u>Northern Georges Bank MBTG HMA (Alt 8)</u> | | | | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | | | |
| 1 | 67° 17' 29" | 42° 19' 13" | | | |
| 2 | 66° 57' 21" | 41° 56' 14" | | | |
| 3 | 68° 02' 42" | 41° 24' 00" | | | |
| 4 | 68° 02' 42" | 41° 57' 54" | | | |

| | | |
|---|-------------|------------|
| <u>New Northern Edge 1</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | -67° 20' | -42° 6.3' |
| 2 | -67° 8.1' | -42° 8.5' |
| 3 | -67° 0.5' | -42° 0' |
| 4 | -67° 57.3' | -41° 56.2' |
| 5 | -67° 10' | -41° 50' |
| 6 | -67° 20' | -41° 50' |
| <u>New Northern Edge 1b (with buffer removed)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | -67° 1.8' | -41° 54' |
| 2 | -67° 10' | -41° 50' |
| 3 | -67° 20' | -41° 50' |
| 4 | -67° 20' | -42° 6.3' |
| 5 | -67° 13.6' | -42° 7.5' |

Table 5 – Coordinates for habitat management areas in the Great South Channel and southern New England

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|------------|--|-------------|------------|
| <u>Nantucket Lightship Habitat Closure Area (Alt 1)</u> | | | <u>Nantucket Lightship Closed Area (Alt 1)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------|------------|---|-------------|------------|
| NLH1 | 70° 00' | 41° 10' | G10 | 69°00' | 40°50' |
| NLH2 | 69° 50' | 41° 10' | CN1 | 69°00' | 40°20' |
| NLH3 | 69° 30' | 40° 50' | CN2 | 70°20' | 40°20' |
| NLH4 | 69° 30' | 40° 20' | CN3 | 70°20' | 40°50' |
| NLH5 | 70° 00' | 40° 20' | | | |
| <u>Great South Channel HMA (Alt 4)</u> | | | <u>Great South Channel East HMA (Alt 3)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | 69° 31.0' | 41° 30.3' | 1 | 69° 49.5' | 41° 44.9' |
| 2 | 69° 18.5' | 41° 0.00' | 2 | 69° 31.0' | 41° 30.3' |
| 3 | 69° 18.5' | 40° 51.7' | 3 | 69° 25.2' | 41° 30.0' |
| 4 | 69° 48.9' | 40° 51.6' | 4 | 69° 12.9' | 40° 58.0' |
| 5 | 69° 49.3' | 41° 30.2' | 5 | 69° 18.5' | 40° 58.0' |
| | | | 6 | 69° 18.5' | 40° 51.7' |
| | | | 7 | 69° 48.9' | 40° 51.6' |
| <u>Nantucket Shoals HMA (Alt 5)</u> | | | | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | | | |
| 1 | 69° 30.0' | 41° 30.2' | | | |
| 2 | 69° 30.0' | 40° 51.5' | | | |
| 3 | 69° 53.5' | 40° 51.5' | | | |
| 4 | 69° 53.5' | 41° 30.2' | | | |
| <u>Nantucket Shoals West MBTG HMA (Alt 6)</u> | | | <u>Great South Channel Gear Modified Area (Alt 6)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | W Longitude | N Latitude |
| 1 | 70° 00.0' | 40° 50.0' | 1 | 69° 23.0' | 41° 30.0' |
| 2* | 69° 60.0' | 41° 11.4' | 2 | 69° 00.0' | 41° 02.9' |
| 3* | 69° 60.0' | 41° 25.7' | 3 | 69° 00.0' | 40° 50.0' |
| 4* | 69° 60.0' | 41° 29.3' | 4 | 69° 30.0' | 40° 50.0' |
| 5* | 69° 60.0' | 41° 29.5' | 5 | 69° 30.0' | 41° 30.0' |
| 6* | 69° 57.5' | 41° 30.2' | | | |
| 7 | 69° 30.0' | 41° 30.0' | | | |
| 8 | 69° 30.0' | 40° 50.0' | | | |
| <i>*State waters boundary</i> | | | | | |
| <u>Cox Ledge HMA 1 (Alts 3-6)</u> | | | <u>Cox Ledge HMA 2 (Alts 3-6)</u> | | |
| Point | W Longitude | N Latitude | Point | Longitude | Latitude |
| 1 | 71° 03.0' | 41° 05.0' | 1 | 70° 55.0' | 41° 12.0' |
| 2 | 71° 03.0' | 41° 00.0' | 2 | 70° 55.0' | 41° 07.5' |
| 3 | 71° 14.0' | 41° 00.0' | 3 | 71° 01.0' | 40° 07.5' |
| 4 | 71° 14.0' | 41° 05.0' | 4 | 71° 01.0' | 41° 12.0' |

Option 1 area within Alternative 5/Nantucket Shoals HMA:

| | | |
|---|------------|-------------|
| 1 | 69° 30' 0" | 41° 30' 10" |
| 2 | 69° 32' 0" | 41° 21' 0" |
| 3 | 69° 43' 0" | 41° 21' 0" |
| 4 | 69° 43' 0" | 41° 30' 10" |

Motions that carried during recent Habitat Committee meetings (March 23-24, 2015 and April 9, 2015)

Essential Fish Habitat

- Kaelin/Robins: The Committee recommends to the Council a revision of the southern boundary of the winter flounder EFH designation (eggs, juveniles, and larvae/adults) established at 39° 22' N latitude, such that Absecon Bay would represent the southern limit of winter flounder EFH. *The motion carried 8/0/1 on a show of hands.*
- Grout/Robins: The Committee recommends to limit the sea scallop EFH designation to 110 meters on the maps, and have the PDT add back in the more detailed text description information inclusive of salinity, temperature and other requirements as appropriate. *The motion carried 8/0/1 on a show of hands.*
- McKenzie/Chiarella: The Committee recommends that the Council adjust the map for juvenile cod EFH to be consistent with the text description (i.e. eliminate the minimum depth cropping). *The motion carried 8/0/1 on a show of hands.*
- McKenzie/Kaelin: The Committee requests that the Council add revised Atlantic Herring Egg EFH areas as recommended by the PDT. *The motion carried 8/0/1 on a show of hands.*

Gulf of Maine

- Tooley/Kaelin: In the Eastern Gulf of Maine, the Committee recommends that the Council select the Small Eastern Maine HMA with Option 1 as their final preferred alternative. *The reconsidered motion carried on a roll call vote, 8/2/0. For: Grout, Alexander, Chiarella, Elliott, Etrie, Gibson, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: Balzano, McKenzie; Abstentions: None.*
- Grout/Tooley: In the Central Gulf of Maine, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 3, Option 1, without Platts Bank (Modified Cashes Ledge, Modified Jeffreys Bank, Fippennies Ledge, Ammen Rock) as their final preferred alternative. *The motion as substituted and amended carried on a roll call vote, 8/2/0. For: Grout, Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Gibson, Kaelin, Tooley, Elliot. Against: Chiarella, McKenzie. Abstentions: None.*
- Alexander/Kaelin: In the Western Gulf of Maine, the Committee recommends that the Council select the Western Gulf of Maine habitat closure, the Western Gulf of Maine groundfish closure with the eastern boundary shifted to match the habitat closure, Alternative 7a (roller gear), and Alternative 8 (shrimp exemption) as their final preferred alternatives. All gear restrictions in the WGOM Closure Area would remain as-is. *The main motion as amended carried on a roll call vote, 7/1/2. For: Alexander, Balzano, Elliott, Etrie, Gibson, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: McKenzie; Abstentions: Grout, Chiarella.*

- Alexander/Tooley. In the Gulf of Maine, the Committee recommends that the Council select the Framework 53 spawning and cod protection measures as their final preferred alternative for spawning protection. *The motion carried on a roll call vote, 7/2/1. For: Grout, Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Gibson, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: Chiarella, McKenzie; Abstentions: Elliott.*
- Grout/Alexander. In the Gulf of Maine, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 3, the Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area, as their final preferred alternative. *The motion carried on a show of hands, 8/2/0.*

Dedicated Habitat Research Areas

- Chiarella/McKenzie: The Committee recommends that the Council select as their final preferred alternatives for Dedicated Habitat Research Areas Alternative 3b (Stellwagen DHRA with northern reference area) and Alternative 5 (sunset provision) as preferred. *The motion carried 3/2/5 on a show of hands.*
- Grout/McKenzie. For Dedicated Habitat Research Areas on Georges Bank, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternatives 4 and 5 as their preferred alternatives. *The motion carried on a roll call vote, 7/0/1. For: Grout, Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Kaelin, Tooley, McKenzie; Against: none; Abstentions: Chiarella.*
- Tooley/Alexander. The Council recommends to NMFS that habitat research projects funded with government or RSA funds and conducted from commercial vessels will be allowed access into habitat management areas contingent on EFP approval. *The motion carried on a show of hands, 6/0/2.*

Georges Bank and Great South Channel/Southern New England

- Robins/Kaelin: Move to add an option to OHA2 for analysis and consideration by the Council, to include the habitat closure area contained in “New_Northern_Edge_1” combined with the “Georges Shoal 2 MBTG” component of Alternative 7. *The motion carried 4/2/3 on a show of hands.*
- Alexander/Balzano: Move to add an option to OHA2 for analysis and consideration by the Council, to include the habitat closure area contained in “New_Northern_Edge_1”, less a four nautical mile alley along the Hague Line, combined with the “Georges Shoal 2 MBTG” component of Alternative 7. *The motion carried 4/2/3 on a show of hands.*
- Alexander/Kaelin: On Georges Bank, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 7, Option 1 as their final preferred alternative. *The main motion carried on a roll call vote, 5/3/1. For: Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: Grout, Chiarella, McKenzie; Abstentions: Elliot.*

- Grout/Kaelin. The Habitat Committee recommends that the Council support development of an agreement between the scallop fishery and the offshore lobster fishery that includes an area of Closed Area II north of 41° 30' N would remain closed to all MBTG between June 15 and October 31 subject to the scallop fishery having access to the area north of 41° 30' N between March 1 and June 15. This motion also recognizes and supports the existing agreement between the trawl fishery and the offshore lobster fishery for this area, which could be subject to revision per the agreement. *The motion carried on a show of hands, 6/0/3.*
- Alexander/Tooley. In the Great South Channel, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 5, Option 1 as their final preferred alternative. *The main motion carried on a roll call vote, 5/2/2. For: Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: Grout, McKenzie; Abstentions: Chiarella, Elliot.*
- Grout/Kaelin: Recommend to the Council Alternative 5, with Option 1 (MBTG closure) in the northeast corner identified by the PDT, and Option 2 (hydraulic dredge exemption) for the remainder for the area, with a sunset provision from Option 2 to Option 1 three years after the implementation of the amendment if an exemption area is not identified. *The motion carried 3/2/4 on a show of hands.*
- Alexander/Kaelin. The Habitat Committee recommends that the Council create an HMA in the Cox Ledge Areas (1 and 2), with a prohibition on trawl ground cables with bridles capped at 30 fathoms per side, and a prohibition on hydraulic clam dredges. *The motion carried on a show of hands, 6/3/0.*
- Alexander/Etrie. On Georges Bank, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 3 (Closed Area I North and Closed Area II, Feb 1-April 15) with Options B and C as their final preferred alternative for spawning. *The motion carried on a roll call vote, 6/1/1. For: Grout, Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: McKenzie; Abstentions: Chiarella.*

Framework and monitoring

- Grout/Alexander. For Framework and Monitoring approaches, the Committee recommends that the Council select Alternative 2 as their preferred alternative. *The motion carried on a roll call vote, 6/1/1. For: Grout, Alexander, Balzano, Etrie, Kaelin, Tooley; Against: McKenzie; Abstentions: Chiarella.*