



New England Fishery Management Council

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Eric Reid, *Acting Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEETING SUMMARY

Scallop Committee Meeting

September 22, 2021

Webinar Meeting

The Scallop Committee met via webinar on September 22, 2021 to: 1) review 2021 survey findings and projections and provide input on 2022 and 2023 (default) specifications; 2) discuss LAGC IFQ access area trip accounting options and determine if measures should be included in FW34; 3) provide input on the list of potential 2022 work priorities; and 4) discuss other business.

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Melanie Griffin (Scallop Committee Chair), Jonathon Peros (Plan Coordinator), Sam Asci (Council staff), Michelle Duval, Matt Gates, Emily Gilbert, Cheri Patterson, John Pappalardo, Melissa Smith, Mike Sissenwine, Eric Reid, Alan Tracy, and Peter Hughes.

Jim Gutowski (AP Chair) was in attendance on the webinar along with approximately 34 members of the public.

The meeting began at 9:02 AM. Scallop Committee Chair Melanie Griffin welcomed the Committee and members of the audience to the webinar. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all Council related meetings have been transitioned to webinars including the Scallop Committee and Council meetings. Mr. James Gutowski (AP Chair) provided a brief overview of the September 21, 2021 Advisory Panel and PDT meeting.

Key Outcomes:

- The Committee recommended a range of rotational management options, open area DAS options, and possible closures to be developed for Framework 34.
- The Committee recommended that no further action is needed on the development of LAGC IFQ access area trip accounting options.
- The Committee recommended two additions to the list of possible scallop priorities for 2022.

Meeting materials can be accessed at [this link](#). Audio recordings of the full meeting can be provided upon request.

Review of 2021 Survey Results, Fishery Data, Observer Data, Initial 2022 Projections

Council staff provided an overview of findings from the 2021 scallop surveys, PDT discussion to date on the outlook for the 2022 fishing year, and recent fishery and observer data. There were no questions on

the presentation. Dr. Dvora Hart (NEFSC) presented the initial length frequency (L-F) projections for 2022 by SAMS area (see [Doc.1c2](#)). The Committee discussed the lower than average recruitment observed in the scallop resource over the last several years – historically, recruitment has been variable across the resource and assumptions used in the projection model account for variability in recruitment from year to year. Dr. Hart noted that there may be a climate effect impacting recruitment success at the southern range of the resource (i.e., Virginia Beach, Delmarva), however, climate effects are less of a concern on Georges Bank presently. There was also some discussion around the potential for scallops shifting to deeper water – this could be occurring at some degree; however, in the Mid-Atlantic, scallops are constrained to shallower water due to the presence of predators (sea stars) in deeper water. A question was raised as to whether it is worth adjusting the recruitment assumption being used for areas in the southern range of the resource to account for lower than expected recruitment observed over the past several years – Dr. Hart noted that adjusting the assumption will not have an effect on short term projections (i.e., one year out), but that these adjustments could be considered for longer term projections at some point in the future.

Discussion/Motions on 2022 Specifications Options

There was very limited discussion on the range of specifications options (Motion 1) and fishing mortality rates used to set the NGOM TAL (Motion 2) tasked by the Committee. There was one clarifying question ensuring that the recommended New York Bight closure option be consistent with the area recommended by the Advisory Panel the day before (see Motion 1).

Motion 1: Hughes/Patterson Move to task the PDT to develop the following specification options for consideration at the October 2021 Committee Meeting:

- For open bottom DAS, use F=0.3 for all model runs, and F=0.36 and 24 DAS for one of the runs to understand DAS/landings associated various open bottom configurations. (7 runs total)
- The PDT should develop closure options in the NYB region [rectangular closure] and NLS-West region and apply those to Runs 3 & 4.

	Run 1	Run 2	Run 3	Run 4	Run 5
	Status Quo	AP Motion 1; AP Motion 4	AP Motion 2 Run 1; AP Motion 3,5,6	AP Motion 2 Run 2, Motion 4, Motion 5/6	AP Motion 2 Run 3, Motion 3
Open Area F/DAS	F=0.3	F=0.3	F=0.3	F=0.3	F=0.3
FT LA Trip Limit	18,000 lbs	18,000 lbs	18,000 lbs	15,000 lbs	15,000 lbs
Trips trading	9,000 lbs	9,000 lbs	9,000 lbs	15,000 lbs	15,000 lbs
CL2-SE	CLOSED	18000 lbs	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
CLS-SW	27,000 lbs (1.5 trips)		27,000 lbs (1.5 trips)	30,000 lbs (2 trips)	15,000 lbs
CL2-Ext	18,000 lbs				15,000 lbs
NLS-South	18,000 lbs	18,000 lbs	18,000 lbs	15,000 lbs	15,000 lbs
NLS-North	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
NLS-West	Open Bottom	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
NLS-Triangle	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED

CL2-N (HAPC)	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
CA1	513k lbs LAGC AA	Open Bottom	LAGC IFQ AA from CAII	Open Bottom	LAGC IFQ AA from CAII
NYB	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	NEW CLOSURE	NEW CLOSURE	Open Bottom
NF	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
GSC	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
SF	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
BI	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
LI	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
MAB- Nearshore	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
MAAA	18,000	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
DMV	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
Area West of NLS-W (Non- SAMS)	n/a	n/a	NEW CLOSURE	NEW CLOSURE	n/a

Rationale: This motion is intended to combine all of the options recommended by the Scallop AP in Motions 1-6 from their September 21, 2021 meeting. These preliminary SAMS runs will help inform decisions about open bottom and rotational management, and possible closures. The closure in the NYB and NLS regions would improve yield per recruit and may enhance recruitment in other parts of the resource (source/sink).

	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse
Scallop Committee				
Melanie Griffin, MA (Chair)				
Emily Gilbert, GARFO	YES			
John Pappalardo, MA	YES			
Melissa Smith, ME	YES			
Mark Godfroy, NH	YES			
Cheri Patterson, NH	YES			
Matt Gates, CT	YES			
Michelle Duval, MAFMC	YES			
Peter Hughes, MAFMC	YES			
Alan Tracy, ME	YES			
Eric Reid, RI	YES			
Dr. Michael Sissenwine, MA	YES			
TOTAL VOTE	11	0	0	0

Motion 2: Smith/Hughes

Task the PDT to analyze a TAL for the NGOM of at F=0.15, F=0.18 and F=0.20 using only the Stellwagen Bank area of interest.

Rationale: To be cautious as the scallop biomass in the Stellwagen portion of the NGOM is made up of relatively young scallops. Most fishing will happen on Stellwagen Bank in 2022 if it is opened.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse
Scallop Committee				
Melanie Griffin, MA (Chair)				
Emily Gilbert, GARFO	YES			
John Pappalardo, MA	YES			
Melissa Smith, ME	YES			
Mark Godfroy, NH	YES			
Cheri Patterson, NH	YES			
Matt Gates, CT	YES			
Michelle Duval, MAFMC	YES			
Peter Hughes, MAFMC	YES			
Alan Tracy, ME	YES			
Eric Reid, RI	YES			
Dr. Michael Sissenwine, MA	YES			
TOTAL VOTE	11	0	0	0

LAGC IFQ Access Area Trip Counting

Council staff provided a brief presentation on LAGC IFQ access area trip counting, which is a 2021 scallop work priority. There was limited discussion on this topic following the presentation, with only one clarifying point that LAGC IFQ vessels are only charged the quota they land on access area trips, even if landings are less than the possession limit. Overall, the Committee was in agreement with the AP and PDT's recommendation to continue tracking LAGC IFQ access area fishing in terms of trips, and not transition to a pounds-based system (see Motion 3 below).

Motion 3: Hughes/Gates

Recommend that the Committee maintain the status quo for LAGC IFQ AA trip counting and not transition to using pounds to monitor the areas.

Rationale: The current system is working well. The LAGC IFQ does not lose pounds, they can fish the allocation in different areas or the open bottom.

	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse
Scallop Committee				
Melanie Griffin, MA (Chair)				
Emily Gilbert, GARFO	YES			
John Pappalardo, MA	YES			
Melissa Smith, ME	YES			
Mark Godfroy, NH	YES			
Cheri Patterson, NH	YES			
Matt Gates, CT	YES			
Michelle Duval, MAFMC	YES			
Peter Hughes, MAFMC	YES			
Alan Tracy, ME	YES			
Eric Reid, RI	YES			
Dr. Michael Sissenwine, MA	YES			
TOTAL VOTE	11	0	0	0

2022 Scallop Priorities Discussion

Council staff reviewed the current list of 2021 work priorities and initial list of potential 2022 work priorities, noting that input from the Committee was needed to populate a full list of potential priorities to be considered by the Council over the next few months. Based on recommendations from the Advisory Panel the day before, the Committee added “predator management” to the existing priority “#28 Develop management and policy approaches for scallop seeding and grow out” by consensus (see consensus statement #4 below). Also following a recommendation from the AP, the Committee added a priority that would consider adjusting the line where vessels can clock out of DAS when fishing an open area trip (see consensus statement #5 below) – with fishing happening farther and farther east, Mid-Atlantic vessels remain on the DAS clock during the extended transit home after open area trips end compared to landing in New Bedford.

There was some discussion around the potential priority “#30 develop long-term plan for managing scallop fishery”. Several members of the Committee recalled earlier discussion around the changing resource conditions observed in recent years and suggested that this priority should be an opportunity for the Council to have a holistic discussion around the long-term outlook for management of the fishery in light of these changes. They felt that it will be crucial for the Council to be proactive in scallop management in the face of climate change in order to sustain one of the most valuable fisheries in the country.

There was a comment that several of the potential priorities on the list have significant overlap – a member of the Committee noted that this can sometimes make ranking priorities difficult, especially when the magnitude of priorities are so different across the list.

A Council member participating in the call suggested that a worthwhile priority would be developing a list of guidelines/best practices for managing around high density recruitment events. Further discussion noted that this is a topic of discussion covered by several on-going work items, such as the Scallop Survey Working Group, evaluation of rotational management, and the review of the SAMS projection model scheduled for 2023.

4. By consensus: Move to add the following topic as a possible work item for 2022:

Add: “Predator management” to “#28. Develop management and policy approaches for scallop seeding and grow out.”

Rationale: This could include the development of other fisheries (moon snails) or just controlling larval predators.

Passed without objection, by consensus.

5. By consensus: Move to add the following topic as a possible work item for 2022:

Add: “Revisit the DAS clock counting system to address changes in resource distribution.”

Rationale: Scallop resource is to the east on Georges Bank. DAS clock system currently creates a disincentive for vessels to bring trips back to NJ to land their open area trips. Trying to make DAS usage more uniform for vessels fishing out of New Bedford and points in the Mid-Atlantic.

Passed without objection, by consensus.

Other Business

No other business was discussed. The meeting adjourned at 12:08 PM.