Framework 40

Council Staff

Scallop PDT/AP & Committee
September 12 & 15, 2025
Webinar

New England
Fishery Management Council

Kirk Larson Sr.

May 8, 1954 – August 30, 2025

Thank you for your nearly 30 years contributing to Scallop management and the Council process!

Today's Meeting:

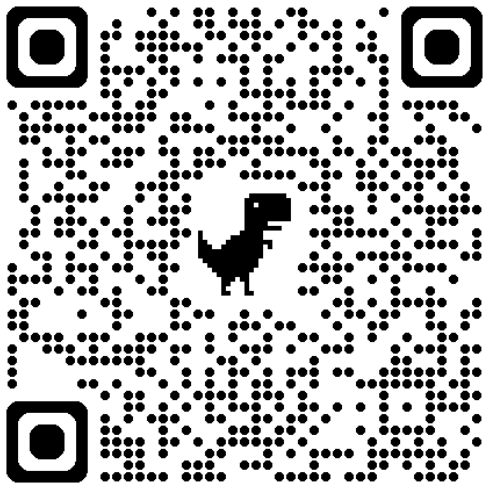
- **Updates**
- **Framework 40 –** Surveys and projections, management measures
- **Scallop Work Priorities –** Updates, Strategic Plan, and initial 2026 priority discussion

Action anticipated by the AP and Committee*:*

- FW40: PDT Tasking for spatial management, LA DAS, NGOM TAL, other FW topics
- Input on Strategic Plan prioritization, implementation, and evaluation

Advisory Panel Solicitations

- Council is soliciting commercial and recreational fishermen, as well as other stakeholders, to serve on all its advisory panels.
  - Deadline to apply is **October 3, 2025**
  - 3 year terms, from January 2026 through December 2028.
  - Existing AP members who wish to continue must reapply for consideration



https://www.nefmc.org/news/nefmc-seeks-applicants-for-2026-2028-fishery-advisory-panels

Scallop RSA - Notice of Funding Opportunity

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

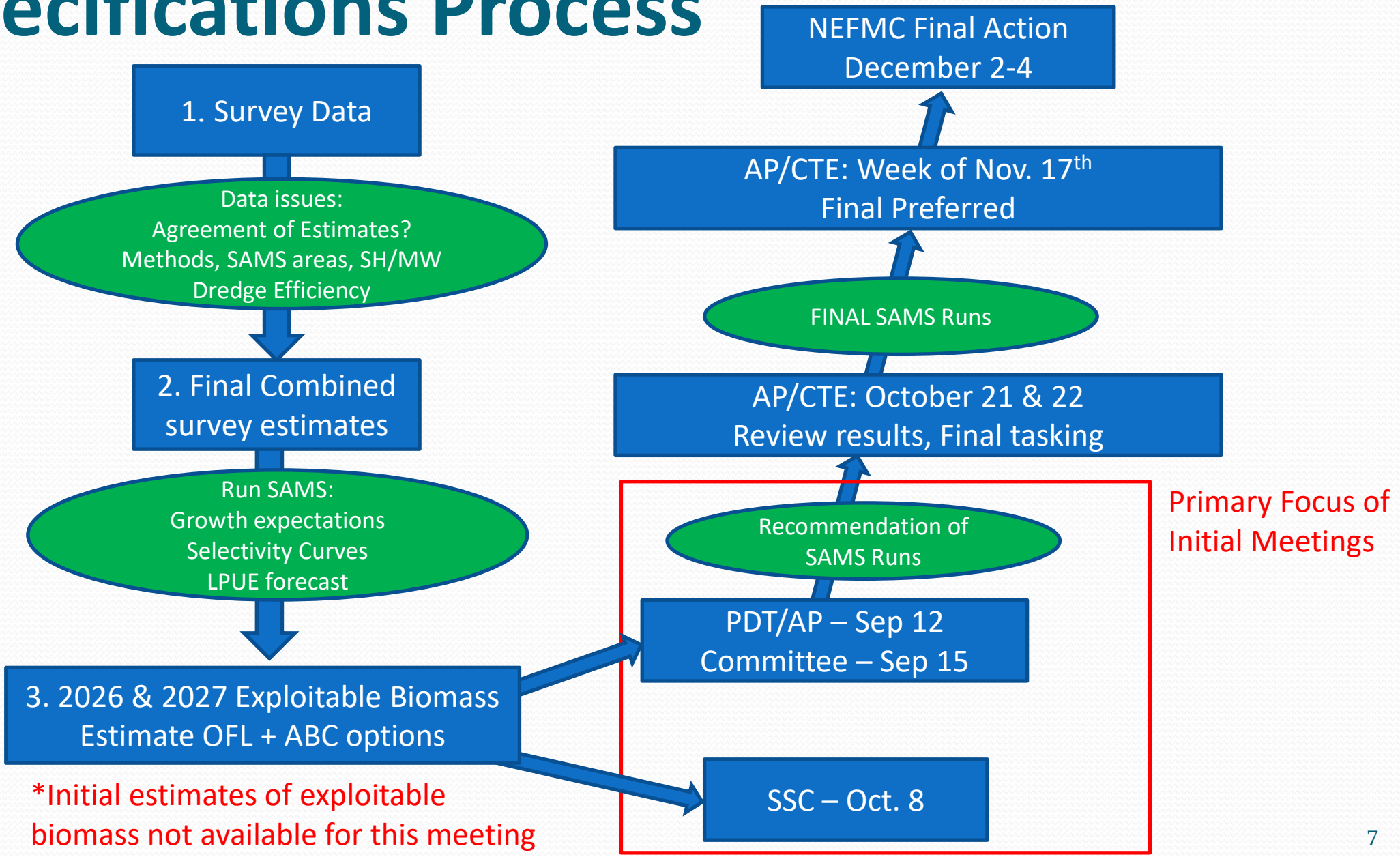
Scallop RSA Survey Awards

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

2025 NGOM Compliance Concerns

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

Specifications Process



Plan for today

Discuss:

1. 2025 survey results and fishery performance
   - Model projections not available for today
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 Hudson Canyon South and Elephant Trunk areas in 2026
5. Spatial extent of recruitment in the NYB/Long Island area 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).
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 NGOM management area (F=0.15 to F=0.25).

2025 Research Track Assessment

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

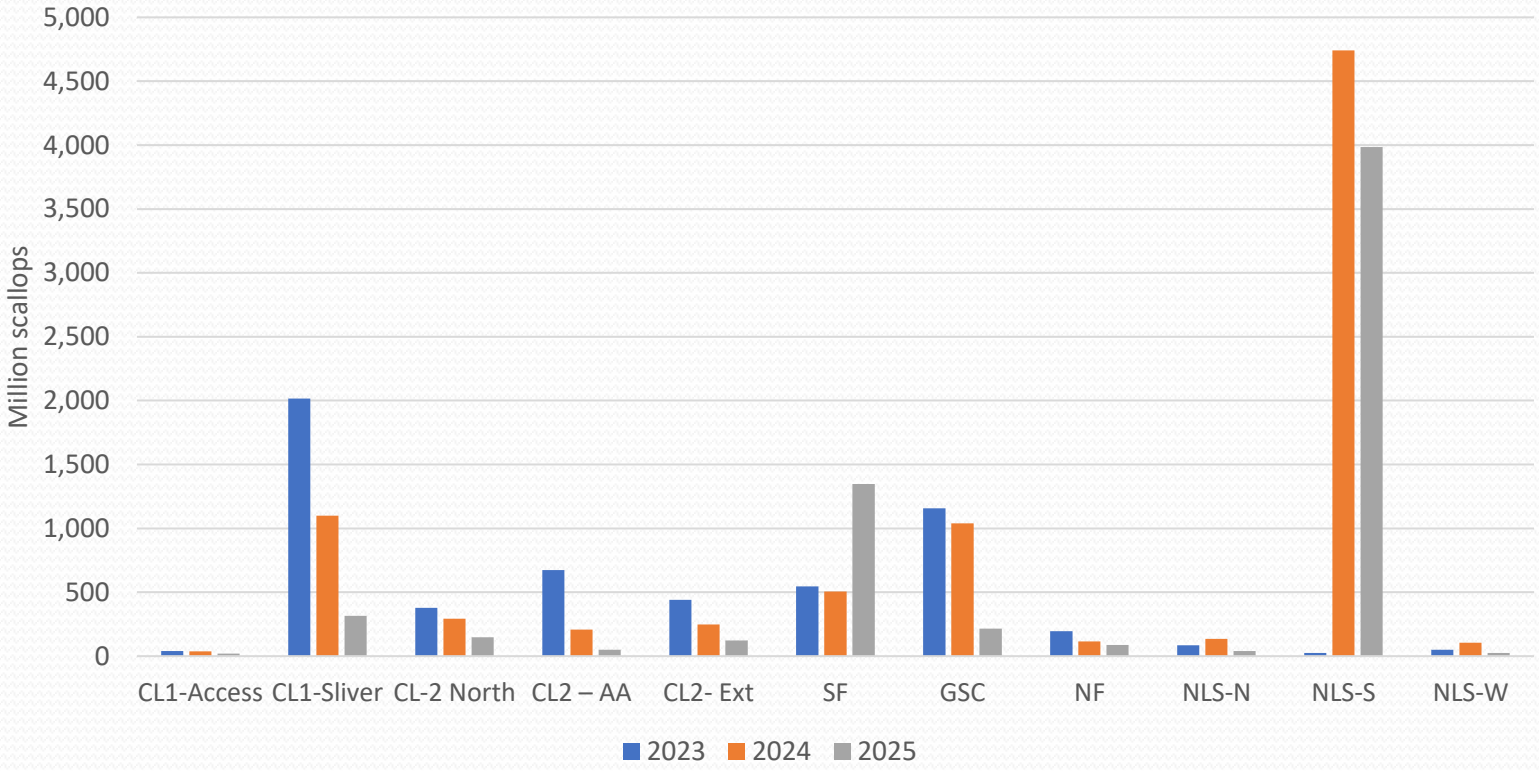
Combined Survey Biomass Estimates

Preliminary version 2 Sept 10

		Dredge				DropCam				Habcam				Mean					
Regior	Subarea	Num	Bmsmt	SE	MeanWt	Num	Bmsmt	SE	MeanWt	Num	Bmsmt	SE	MeanWt	Num	Bmsmt	Bmslb	SE	MeanWt	CV
GB	CL1-North	260	4802	1821	18.5	412	6213	932	15.1					336	5508	12,141,959	1023	16.4	0.19
GB	CL1-Middle+South	10	232	93	23.2	31	790	170	25.6					20	511	1,126,562	97	25.0	0.19
GB	CL-2N	107	3927	1061	36.7	199	5268	710	26.4					153	4598	10,135,752	638	30.0	0.14
GB	CL-2S	37	776	49	21.0	92	1948	218	21.2	24	740	71	30.8	51	1155	2,545,604	78	22.6	0.07
GB	CL2Ext	124	1357	216	10.9	166	1953	140	11.8	78	1505	110	19.3	123	1605	3,538,419	93	13.1	0.06
GB	SF	260	3146	304	12.1	964	5629	2360	5.8	461	5164	154	11.2	562	4646	10,243,412	795	8.3	0.17
GB	NLS-North	28	182	22	6.5	53	1107	223	21.0					40	645	1,420,879	112	15.9	0.17
GB	NLS-South	2045	9308	1085	4.6	7864	28271	6131	3.6	2046	10379	597	5.1	3985	15986	35,243,097	2085	4.0	0.13
GB	NLS-West	13	313	49	25.0	35	727	324	21.0	26	631	121	24.3	24	557	1,227,975	116	22.9	0.21
GB	NF	40	776	243	19.4	139	2148	618	15.5					89	1462	3,223,158	332	16.4	0.23
GB	GSC	276	5372	606	19.5	211	2889	316	13.7					244	4131	9,106,194	342	17.0	0.08
GB	**TOTAL**	**2940**	**25389**	**1698**	**8.6**	**9753**	**50730**	**6663**	**5.2**					**5291**	**35295**	**77,811,053**	**2380**	**6.7**	0.07
MAB	BI	28	478	118	17.3					12	196	7	16.3	20	337	743,422	59	17.0	0.17
MAB	LI	1000	10434	1157	10.4					452	5916	69	13.1	726	8175	18,022,799	580	11.3	0.07
MAB	NYB	467	4093	342	8.8					223	2125	18	9.5	345	3109	6,854,657	171	9.0	0.06
MAB	MAB_Nearshore	5	67	9	13.3									5	67	146,648	9	13.3	0.13
MAB	HCS	777	7769	739	10.0									777	7769	17,127,731	739	10.0	0.10
MAB	ET	362	3674	276	10.1					562	6079	66	10.8	462	4876	10,750,691	142	10.6	0.03
MAB	DMV	9	40	4	4.5									9	40	88,365	4	4.5	0.11
MAB	VIR	11	45	9	3.3									11	45	99,645	9	4.1	0.21
MAB	**TOTAL**	**2659**	**26601**	**1446**	**10.0**									**2355**	**24419**	**53,833,957**	**967**	**10.4**	0.04
GOM	Stellwagen South-SMAST	25	394	105	15.9	23	297	22	12.9					24	345	761,256	54	14.4	0.16
GOM	Stellwagen South-Outside SM	1	32	14	29.5									1	32	71,430	14	29.5	0.42
GOM	Stellwagen South - Total	26	426	119	16.4									25	378	832,686	55	15.1	0.15
NGOM	WGOM Closure					84	3410	237	40.7					84	3410	7,517,763	237	40.7	0.07
NGOM	Fippennies					25	708	65	27.9					25	708	1,560,873	65	27.9	0.09
NGOM	Cashes					1	25	7	25.0					1	25	55,116	7	25	0.28
NGOM	Stellwagen-SMAST	19.2	548.2	179	28.6	17	389	52	23.3					18	469	1,033,086	186	26.1	0.40
NGOM	Stellwagen-Outside SMAST	2.9	98.5	56	34.0									3	99	217,155	56	34.0	0.57
NGOM	Jeffreys-SMAST	13.4	349	88	26.1	8	188	16	23.5					11	269	592,051	89	25.1	0.33
NGOM	Jeffreys-Outside SMAST	0.9	38	37	41.9									1	38	83,114	37	41.9	0.98
NGOM	Platts	2	43	31	21.7	3	60	10	18.8					3	52	113,869	33	19.9	0.63
NGOM	Ipswich	6.7	162	50	24.1	5	130	11	27.7					6	146	321,324	51	25.6	0.35
NGOM	Machias Seal Island	12.3	214	77	17.4									12	214	470,907	77	17.4	0.36
NGOM	*TOTAL*	*57*	*1452*	*232*	*25.3*	*143*	*4910*	*252*	*34.4*					*41*	*5214*	11,494,351	*238*	*127.9*	0.05
NGOM	**Open**	**57**	**1452**	**232**	**27.5**	**59**	**1500**	**86**	**25.4**					**40.75**	**1071**	**2,360,600**	**247**	**26.3**	0.23

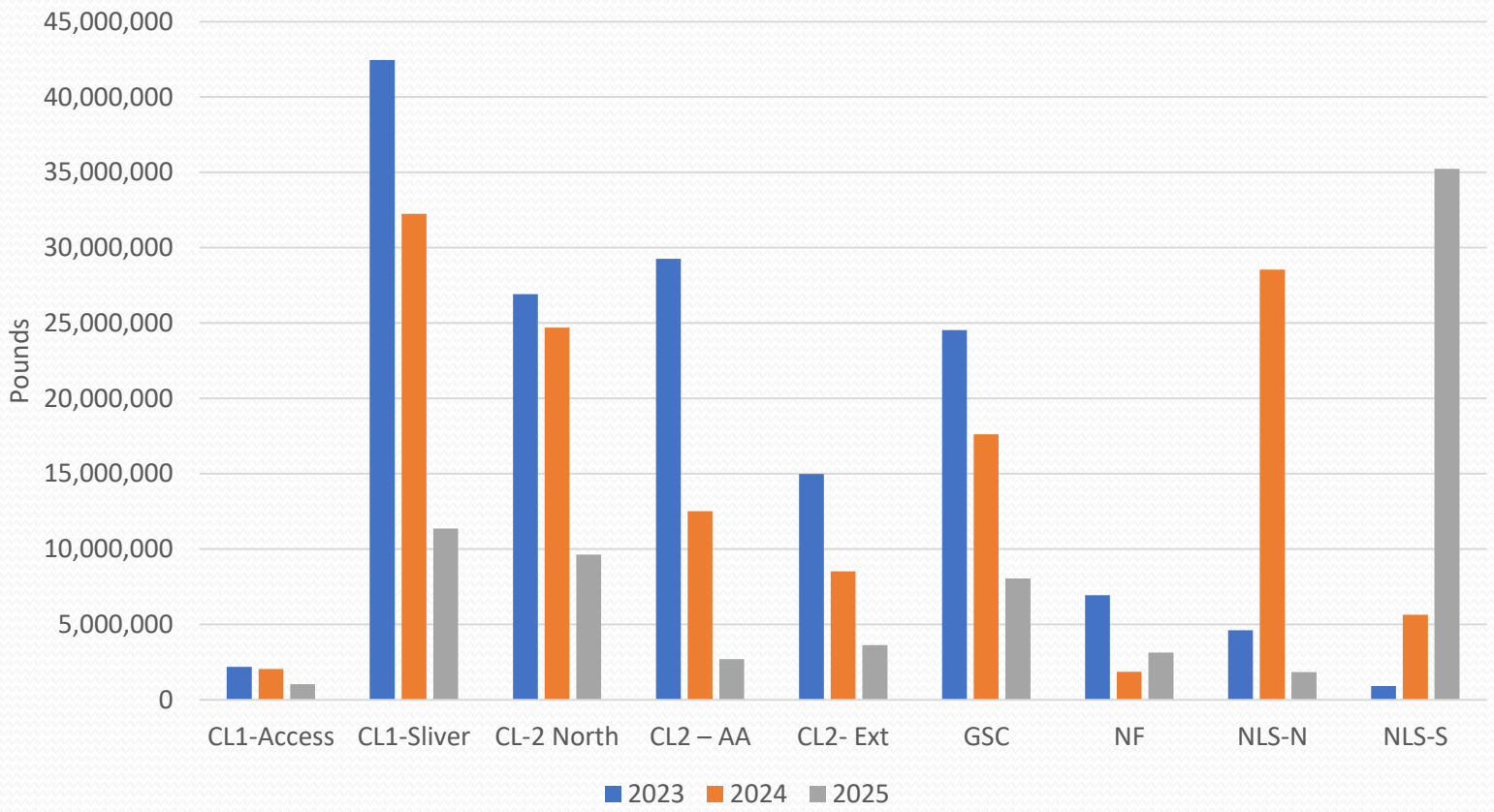
Georges Bank Abundance Comparison 2023-2025 Survey Mean

Scallop Survey Abundance (millions)			
GB	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
CL1-Access	40	38	19
CL1-Sliver	2,016	1,099	316
CL-2 North	379	292	149
CL2 – AA	673	208	51
CL2- Ext	442	247	123
SF	545	507	1,347
GSC	1,157	1,039	217
NF	195	114	88
NLS-N	85	136	40
NLS-S	24	4,742	3,985
NLS-W	49	106	24
Total	**5,606**	**8,528**	**6,043**



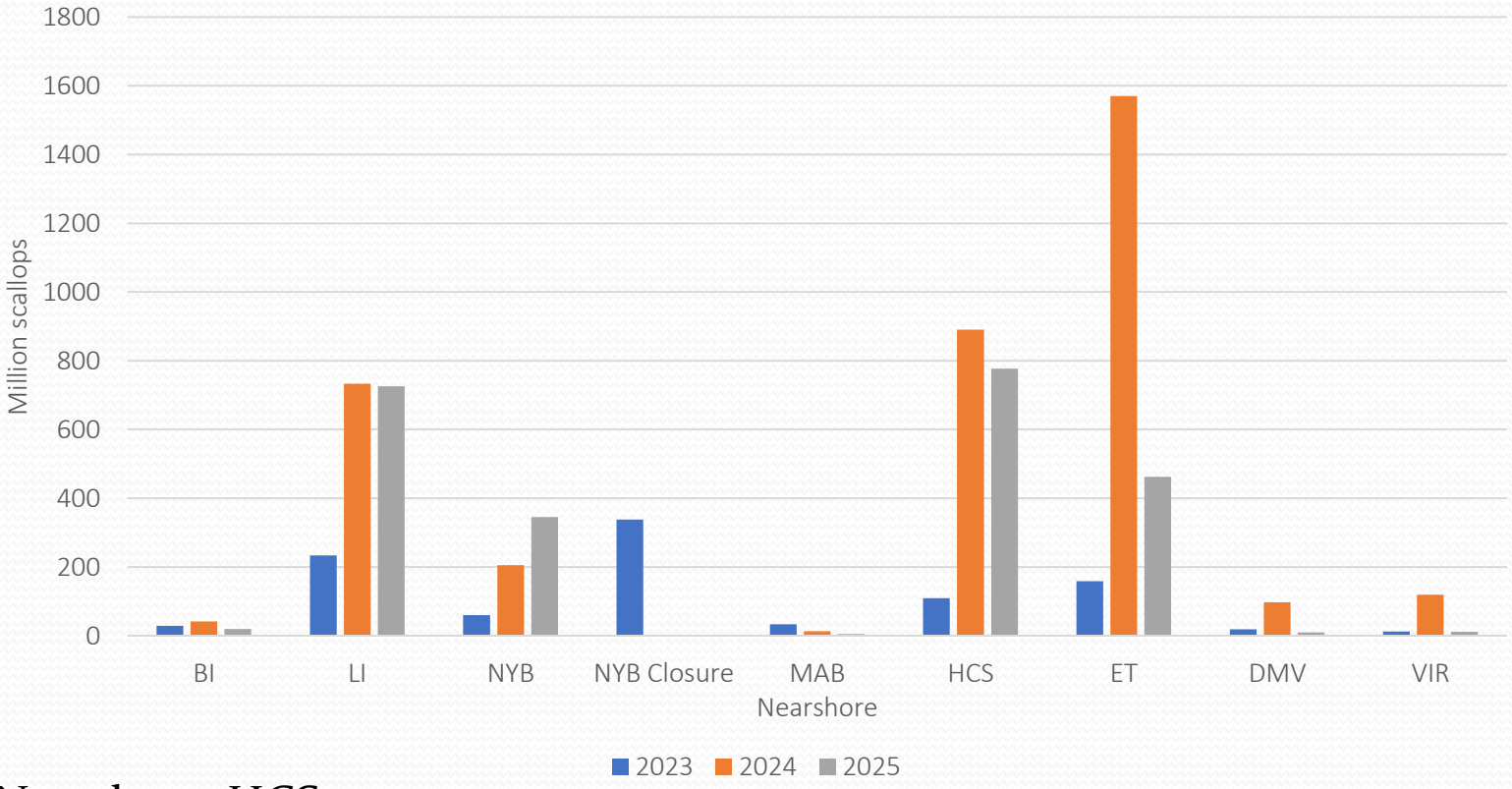
Georges Bank Biomass Comparison (Pounds) 2023-2025 Survey Mean

Scallop Survey Biomass in Pounds			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
CL1-Access	2,195,147	2,039,274	1,031,763
CL1-Sliver	42,462,061	32,248,447	11,376,955
CL-2 North	26,924,444	24,703,502	9,629,792
CL2 – AA	29,270,247	12,522,242	2,702,617
CL2- Ext	14,989,287	8,521,371	3,632,513
GSC	24,529,700	17,619,691	8,044,668
NF	6,943,735	1,854,820	3,136,076
NLS-N	4,626,964	28,552,034	1,830,939
NLS-S	924,695	5,650,000	35,242,767
NLS-W	1,352,050	3,553,847	1,267,658
SF	13,779,276	14,290,714	10,747,124
Total	**167,997,544**	**151,555,941**	**77,265,916**



Mid-Atlantic Abundance Comparison 2023-2025 Survey Mean

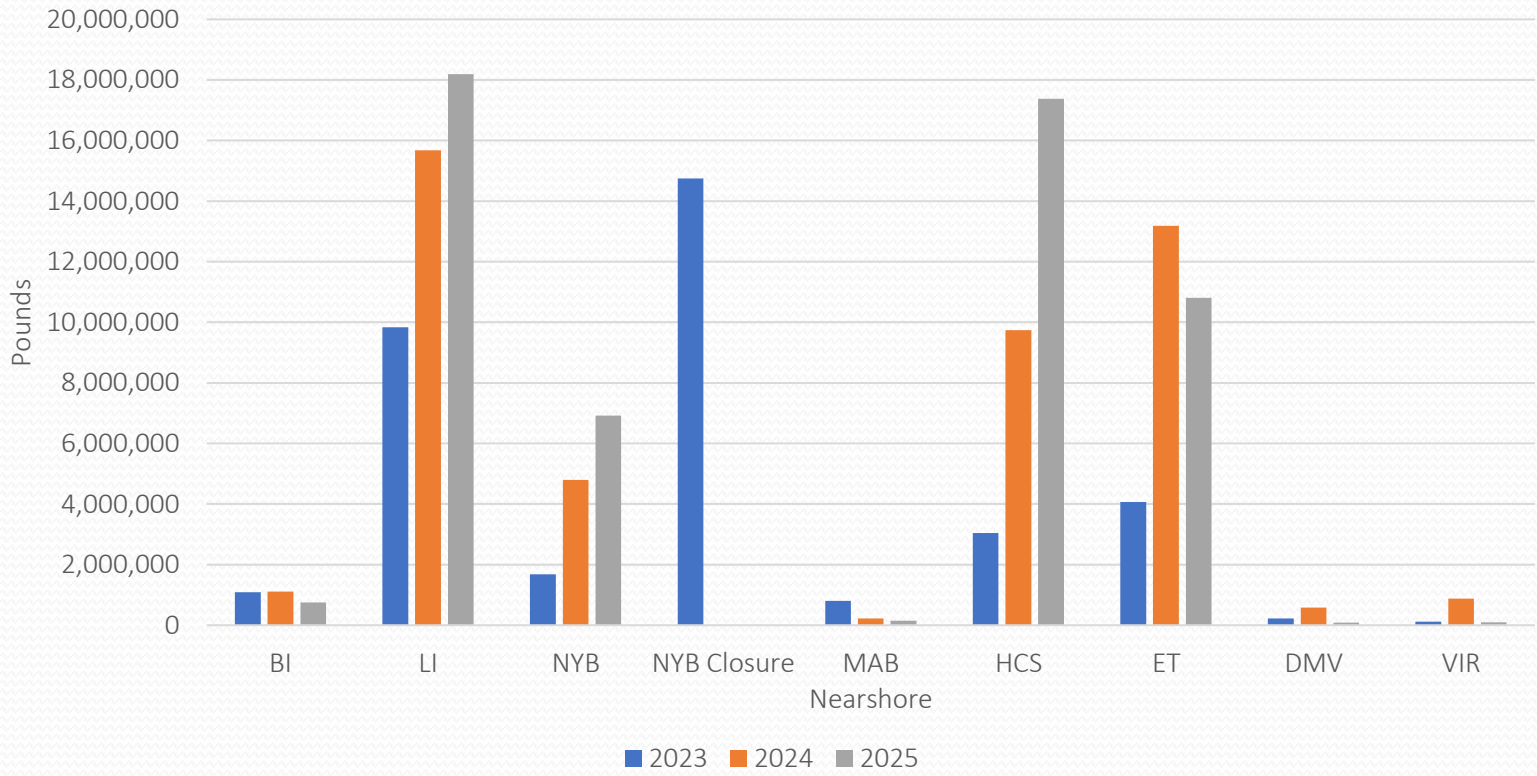
Scallop survey abundance (millions)			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
BI	29	41	20
LI	234	733	726
NYB	60	205	345
NYB Closure	338	**	**
MAB Nearshore	33	13	5
HCS	109	890	777
ET	159	1570	462
DMV	19	97	9
VIR	12	119	11
Total	990	3668	2355



**NYB Closure reverted to LI, NYB, MAB Nearshore, HCS

Mid-Atlantic Biomass Comparison (Pounds) 2023-2025 Survey Mean

Scallop Survey Biomass in Pounds			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
BI	1,092,499	1,108,924	750,939
LI	9,831,172	15,681,462	18,190,341
NYB	1,677,936	4,800,560	6,920,310
NYB Closure	14,745,601	**	**
MAB Nearshore	800,387	225,974	146,648
HCS	3,046,675	9,742,216	17,377,629
ET	4,064,217	13,184,730	10,809,496
DMV	226,194	578,713	90,390
VIR	111,995	875,234	101,413
Total	**35,596,676**	**46,197,812**	**54,387,166**



**NYB Closure reverted to LI, NYB, MAB Nearshore, HCS

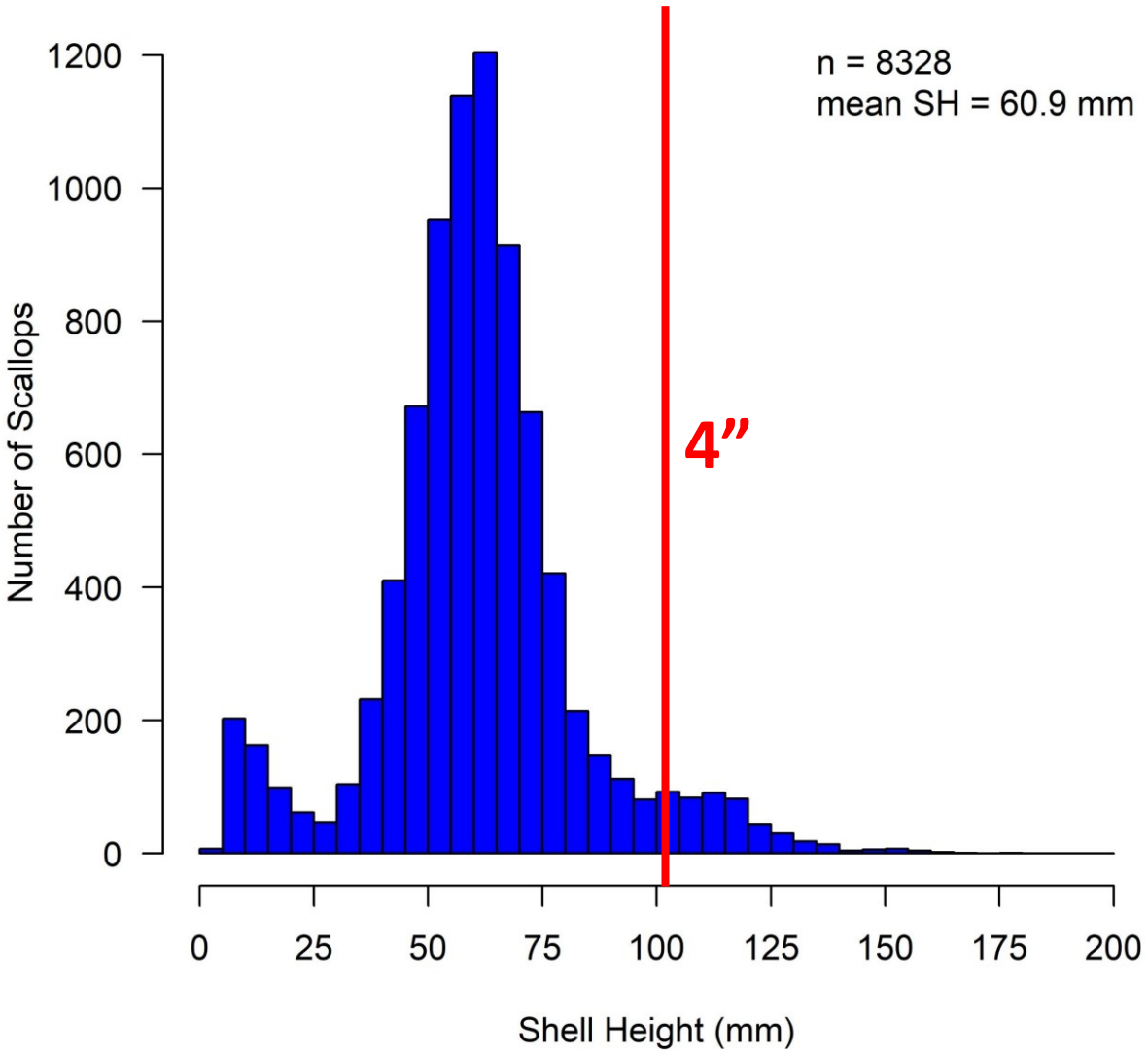
Key Points – Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic

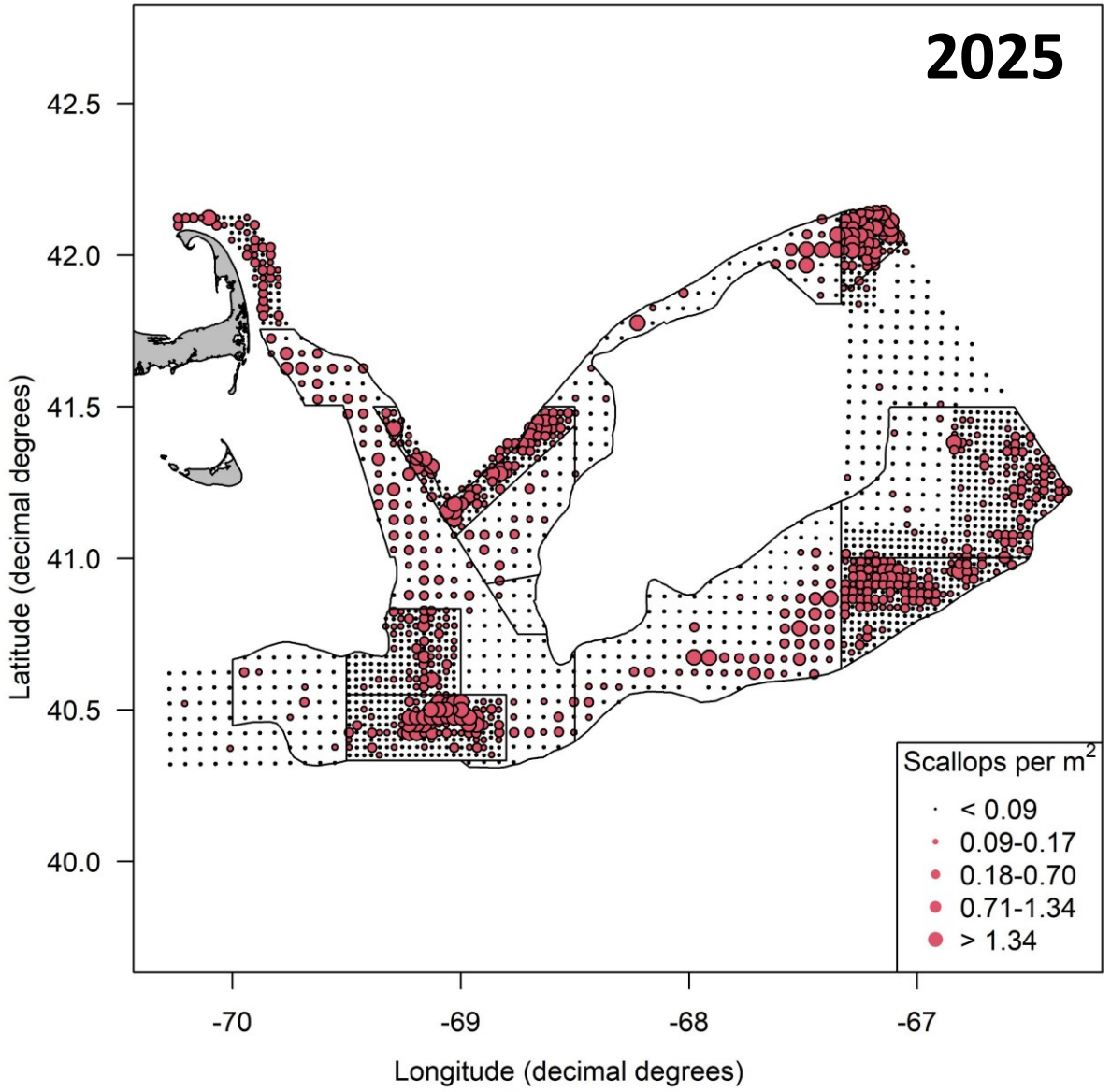
- Over 2x more scallops in Georges Bank than Mid-Atlantic
  - 6.0 billion vs. 2.3 billion
- Abundance in both Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic decreased between 2024 and 2025
  - Declines in abundance observed in almost all areas, particularly in Closed Area II – North (HAPC) and Closed Area I – North (Sliver)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

Key Points – Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic

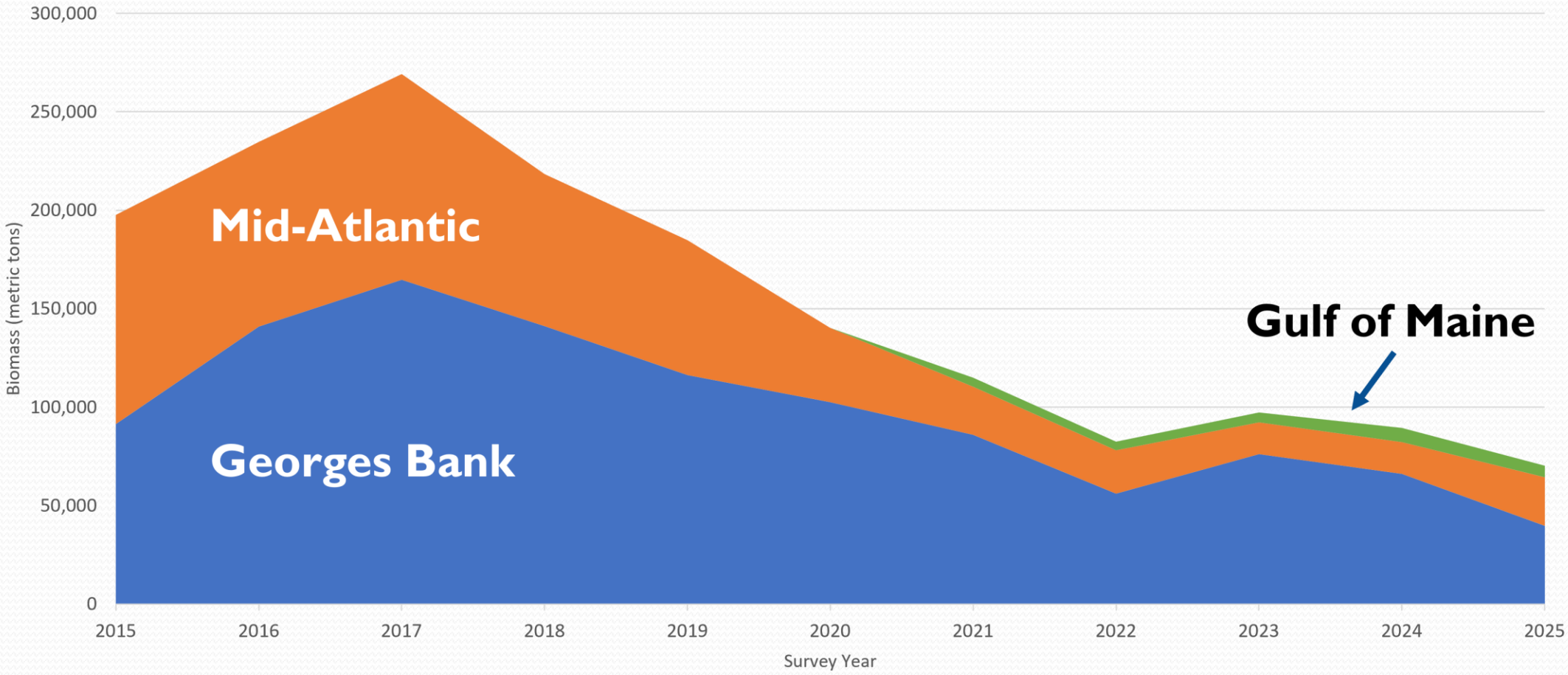
- Surveys and L-F plots suggest there will likely be few opportunities for rotational access in FY2026 on Georges Bank. Recruitment was observed in the NLS, SF, CAII-Ext, CAII-North (HAPC), and NF.
  - The large 2022 recruitment event in the NLS-South continues to grow. Growth is quicker than the slow-growing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

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

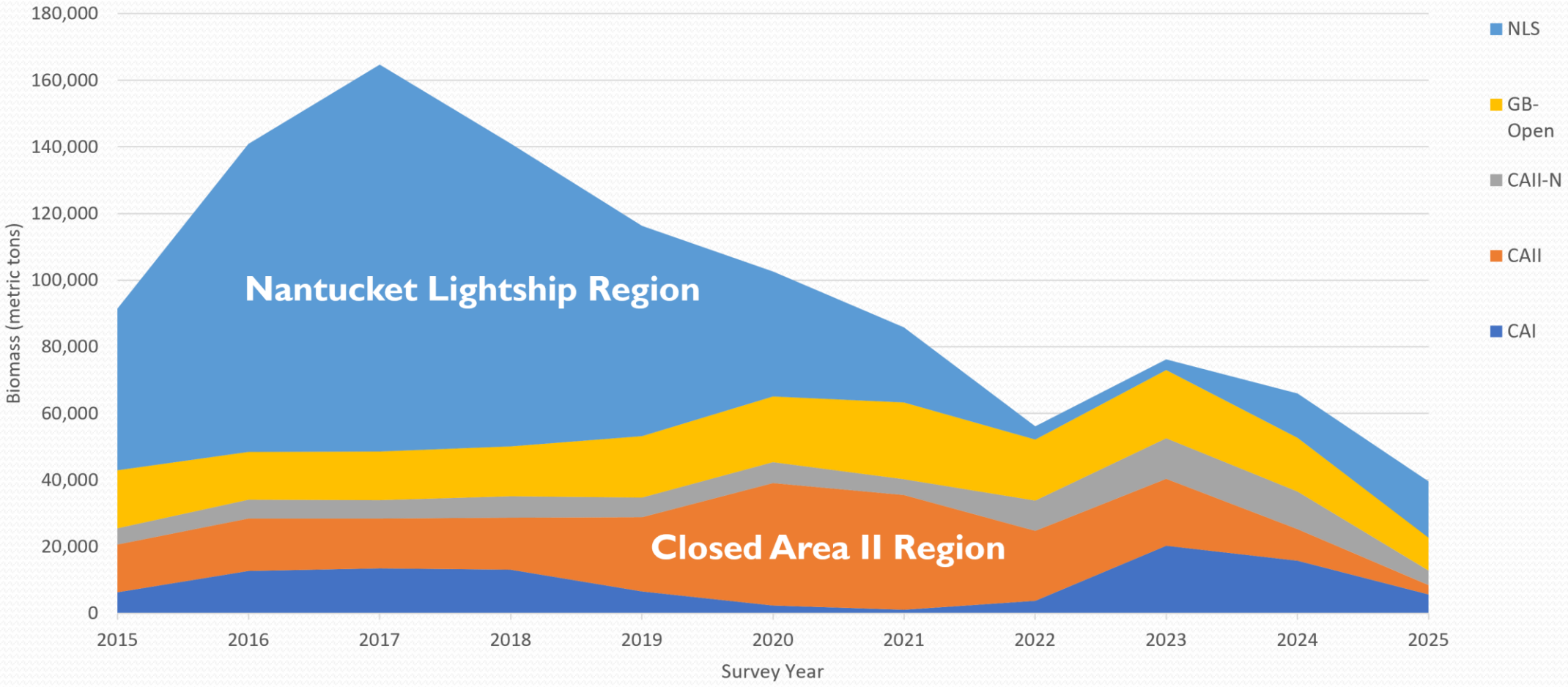

Georges Bank all
2024
n = 8328
mean SH = 60.9 mm
4”
Number of Scallops
Shell Height (mm)
0
200
400
600
800
1000
1200
0
25
50
75
100
125
150
175
200


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

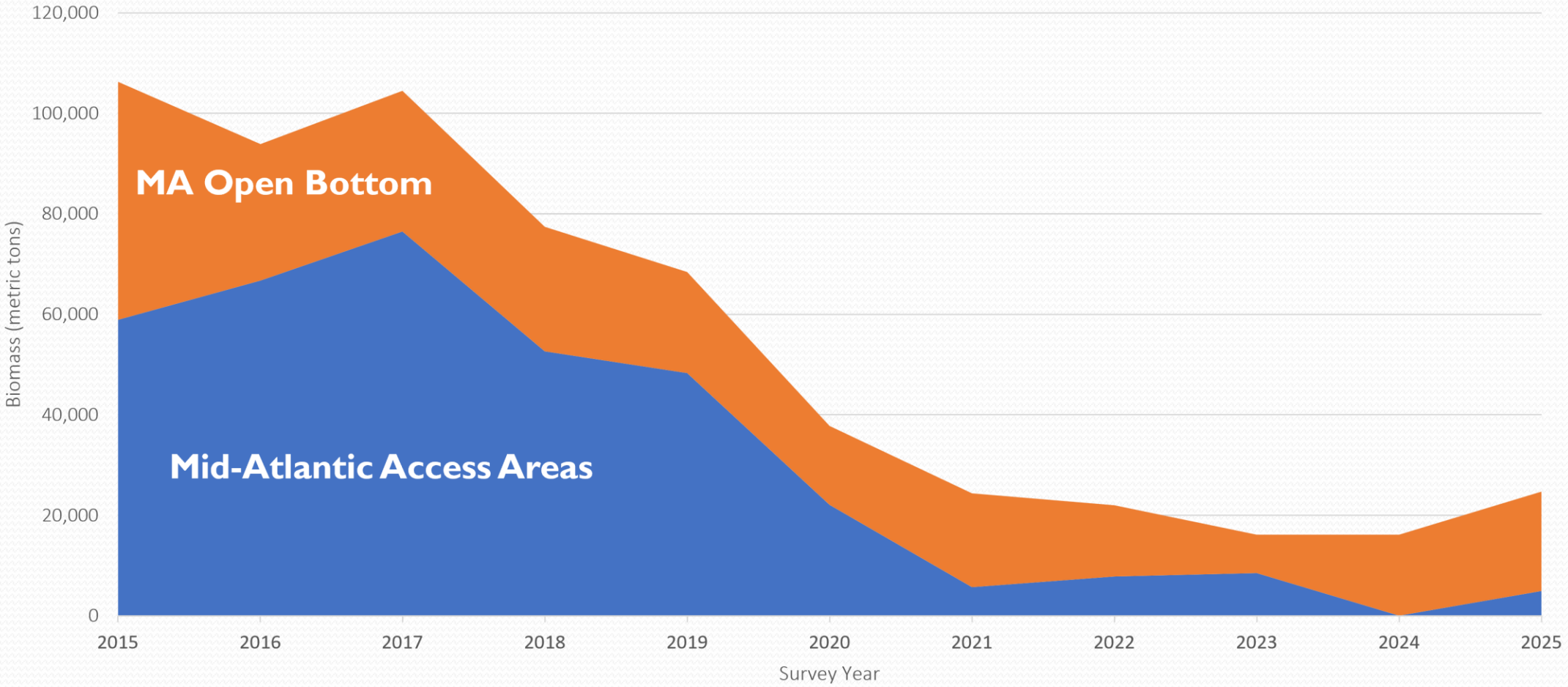
Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic Biomass Estimates (2015 – 2025)



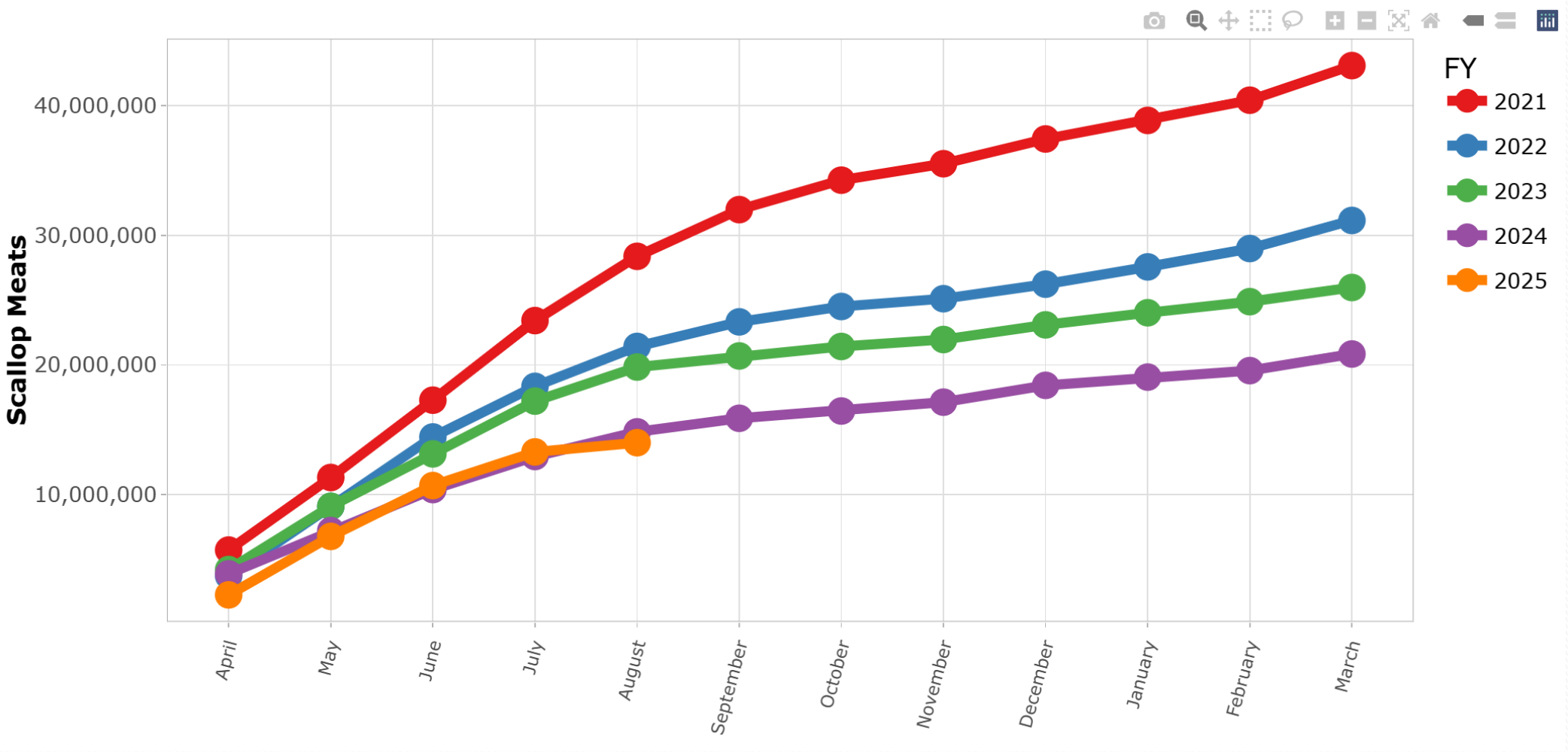
Georges Bank Biomass Estimates (2015 – 2025) By Sub-Region



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



Cumulative Monthly Landings – 2025 in orange



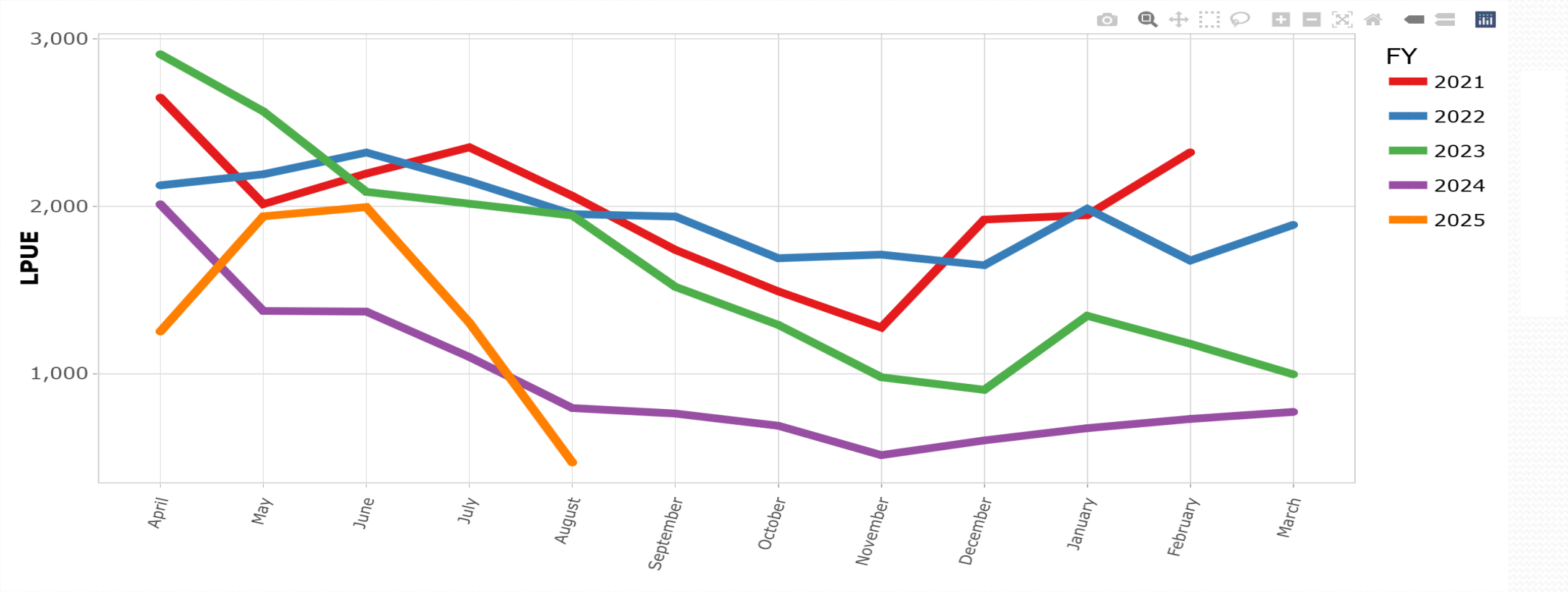
LPUE

FW39 Estimate:
1,126 pounds per day

As of August 20, 2025

FY2025 Open Area Fishing:

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



Atlantic Sea Scallop ACL monitoring

Reports Run on: 2025-08-28

For data reported through 2025-08-27

Quota Period: *2025*

Quota period dates: *April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026*

Limited Access General Category sub-ACL

	OPEN	CA I	CA II	NGOM	MONTHLY TOTAL (ACL)	CUMULATIVE TOTAL (ACL)	% OF SUB-ACL (1,854,088 lb)	CUMULATIVE TOTAL (APL)	% APL (901,691 lb)	Observer Set Aside
April	34,325	199	0	232,571	34,524	**34,524**	**1.86%**	267,095	**29.62%**	3,900
May	118,007	26,945	0	0	144,952	**179,476**	**9.68%**	412,047	**45.7%**	1,400
June	43,648	133,173	0	0	176,821	**356,297**	**19.22%**	588,868	**65.31%**	2,800
July	41,845	124,317	0	0	166,162	**522,459**	**28.18%**	755,030	**83.73%**	2,900
August	23,207	55,107	0	0	78,314	**600,773**	**32.4%**	833,344	**92.42%**	500
TOTAL	**261,032**	**339,741**	**0**	**232,571**	**600,773**					**11,500**

VIMS additional information

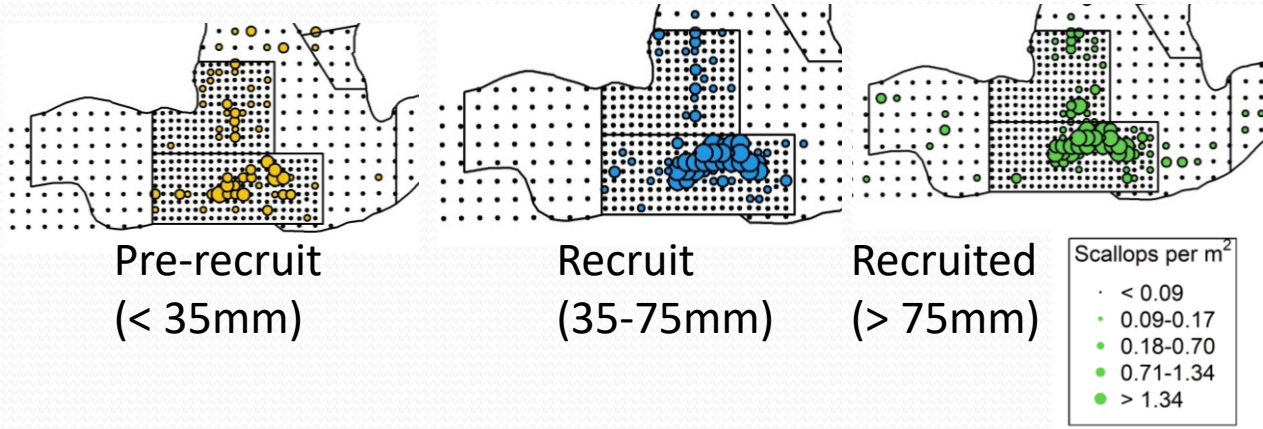
- **Nematodes:** Little change relative to overall trend
- **Shell Blister Disease**: Similar trend and spatial distribution since 2023, but overall decline in shell blister across all SAMS areas in 2025. Shell blister percentage was highest in ET and HCS. Less frequently observed in scallops under 100mm, except for around BI, and the NLS South. No difference in spatial distribution of small and large scallops with blister – consistent with past few years. Overtime – higher percentage of scallops with shell blister across the MAB and moving from more offshore to inshore.
- **Clappers:** On Georges Bank, elevated number of clappers observed in Area II (EXT & Access) relative to the time series. In Mid-Atlantic, elevated number of clappers observed in the NYB & LI – but the number & spatial extent declined relative to 2024
- **Water temperature:** Declining average temp since 2023 across Mid-Atlantic, except for BI in 2025. First year since 2020 with observed survival of small scallops to the next year in VIR & DMV. Declining trend in bottom temperature in NLS region, while temperatures are stable in southeast Georges Bank.

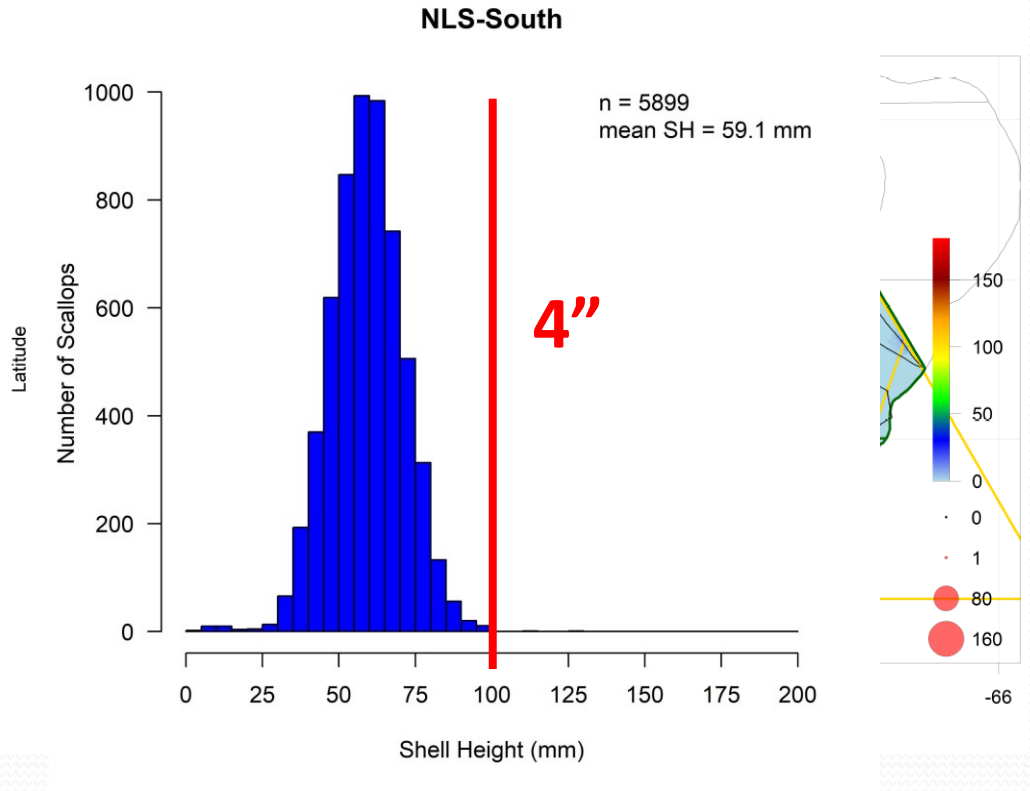
Nantucket Lightship

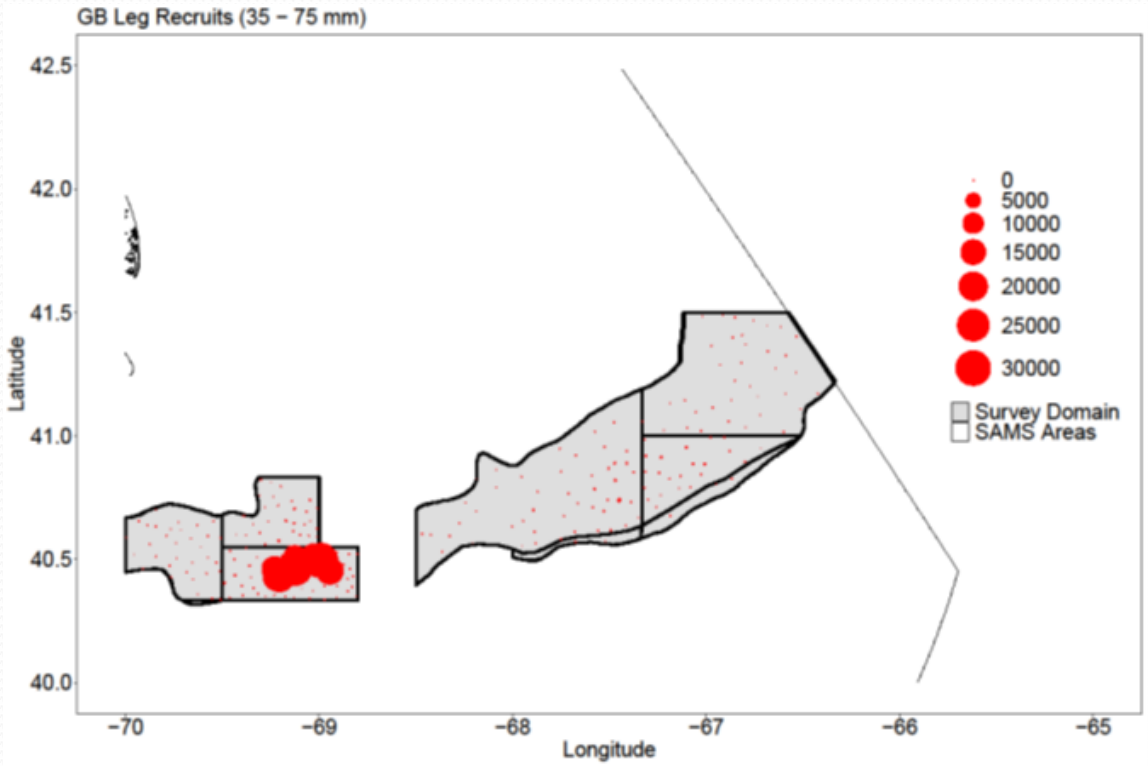
Drop Camera (top), Dredge (bottom right), HabCam (bottom left)

NLS-S Recruitment

- Smaller recruitment event than 2013 year class. Shallower and growing slightly faster than slow-growing ‘Peter Pan’ scallops
- 47% of total scallops, 27% of total scallop biomass
- PDT recommends continued closure

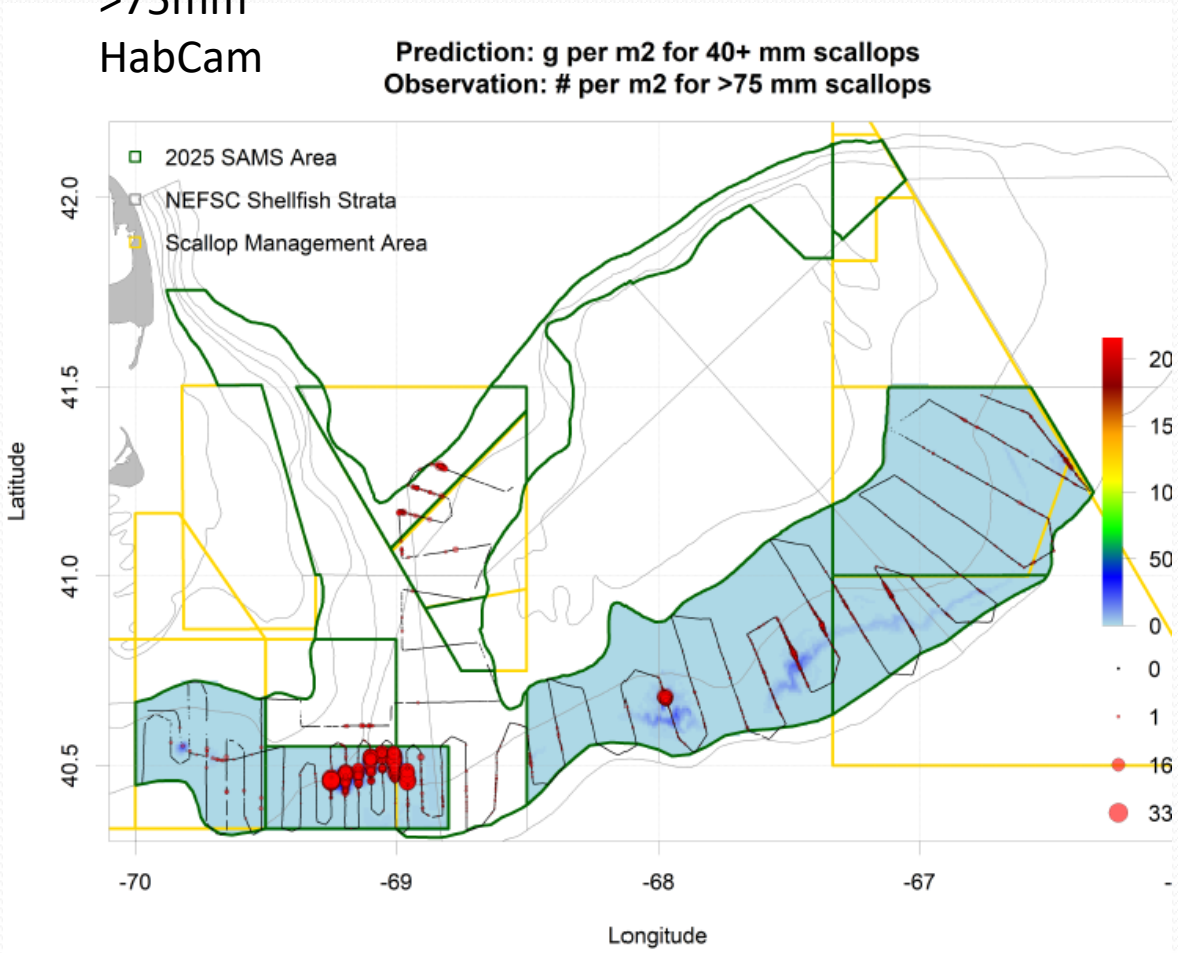




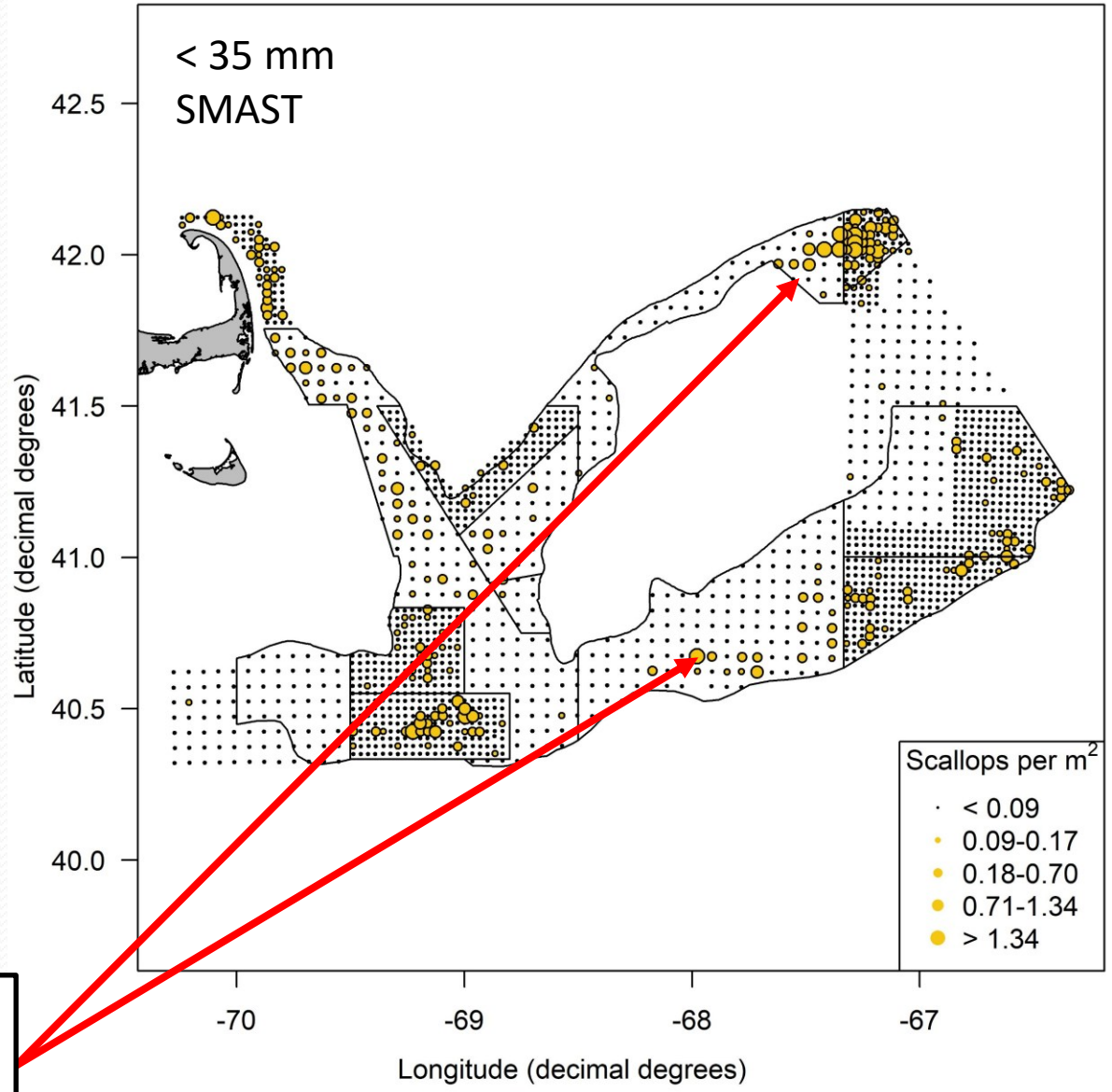


GB Open and Area II Region

>75mm
HabCam



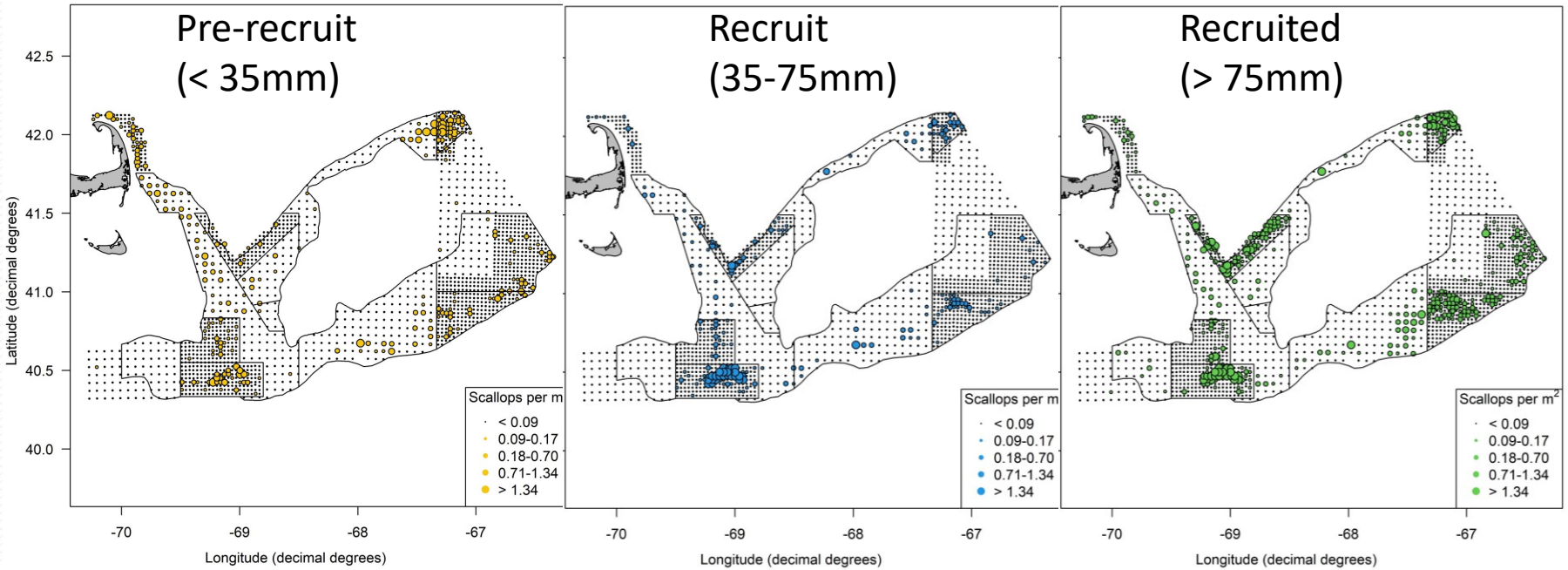
< 35 mm
SMAST



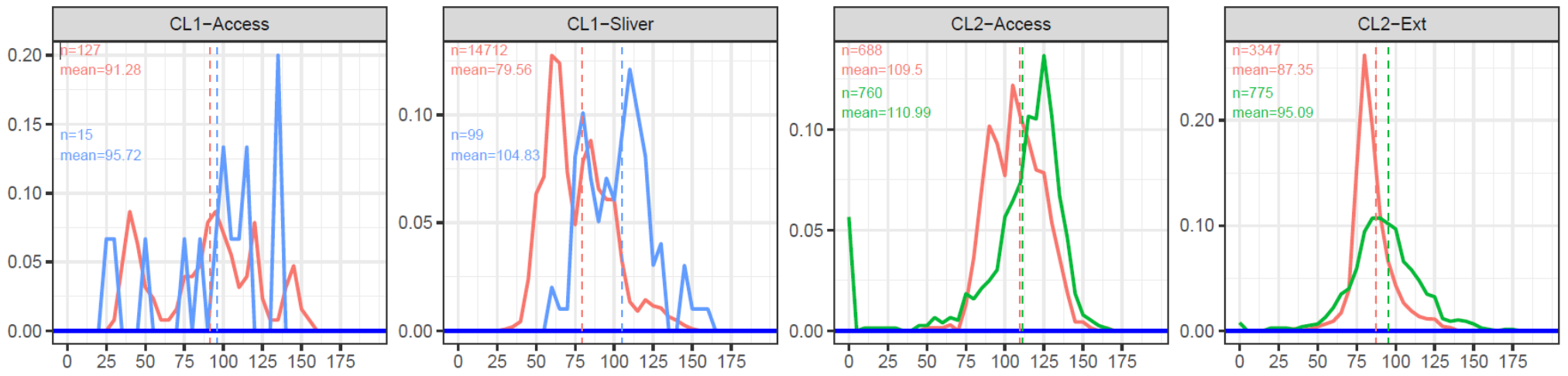
High density recruitment 'hot spot' in SF and NF.
PDT not recommending closures due to small size, but considering early messaging to avoid small scallops in the area

Area I and Area II regions

- PDT Input for FY 2026
  - Consider reverting Area I to open bottom
  - Consider a closure of Area II



Size frequencies for dredge, CFF HabCam, and NEFSC HabCam



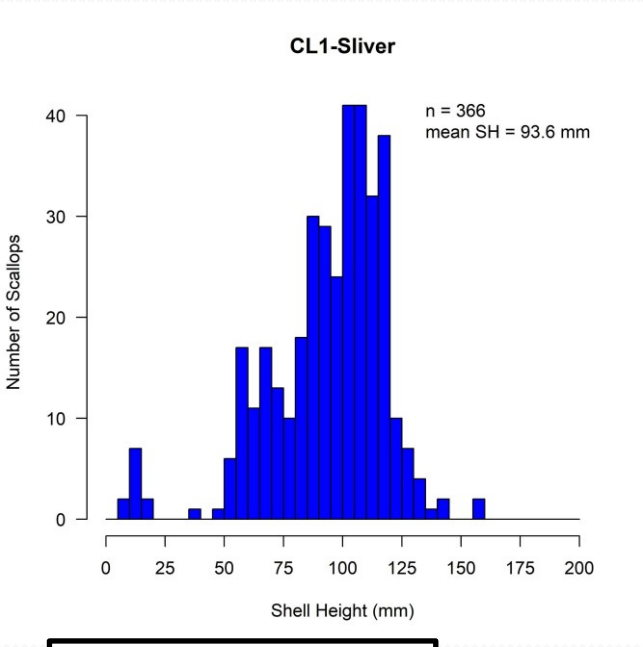
Area I

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

The PDT recommends consideration of reverting Area I to open bottom or area for LAGC IFQ fishing.

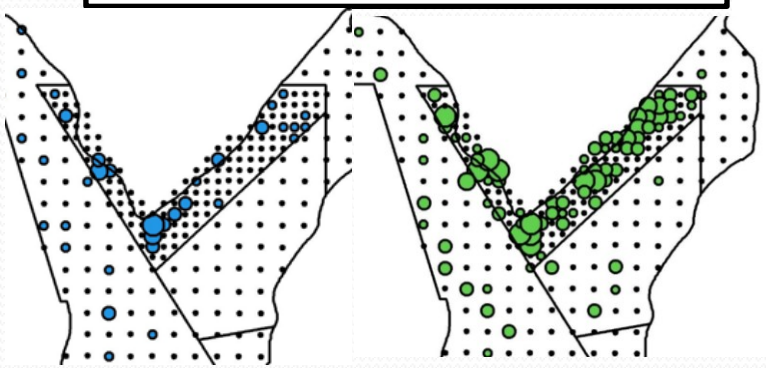
The AP and Committee should consider how this area would be treated in FY2026.

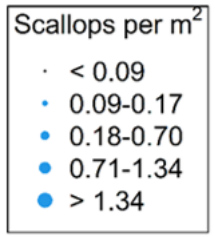
Currently: 1x 12,000 lb trip in FY2025

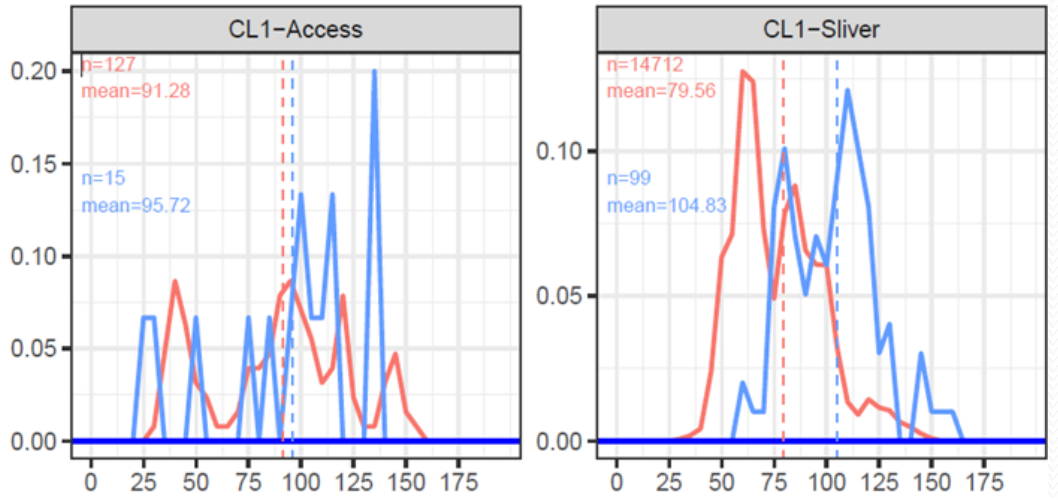


Size Frequencies (Drop Camera)

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







Size Frequencies
Dredge (pink), HabCam (blue)

Area II

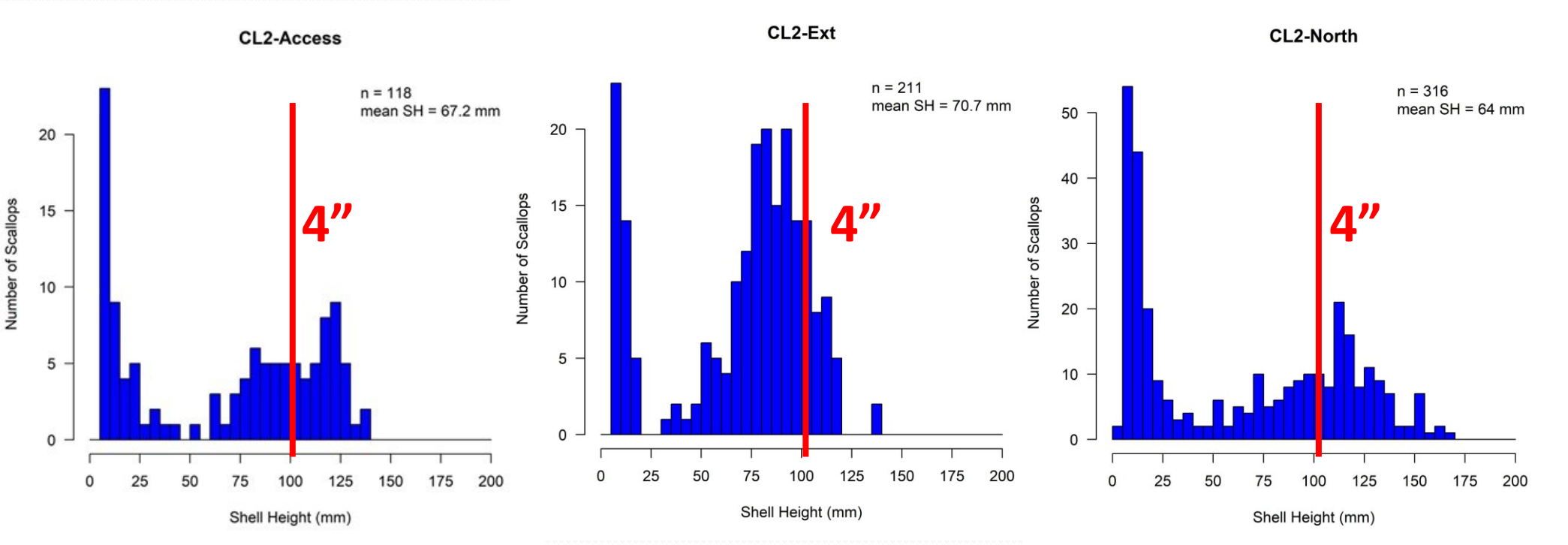
Sub-Area	2024 Biomass	Year Classes in the Area	Recruitment?
Area II Access	2.5 mil lbs.	Multiple	Minor
Area II Extension	3.5 mil lbs.	Multiple	Minor

The PDT recommends consideration of a closure of Area II

The AP and Committee should consider how this area would be treated in FY2026.

Currently: 1x 12,000 lb trip in FY2025

Size Frequencies (Drop Camera)



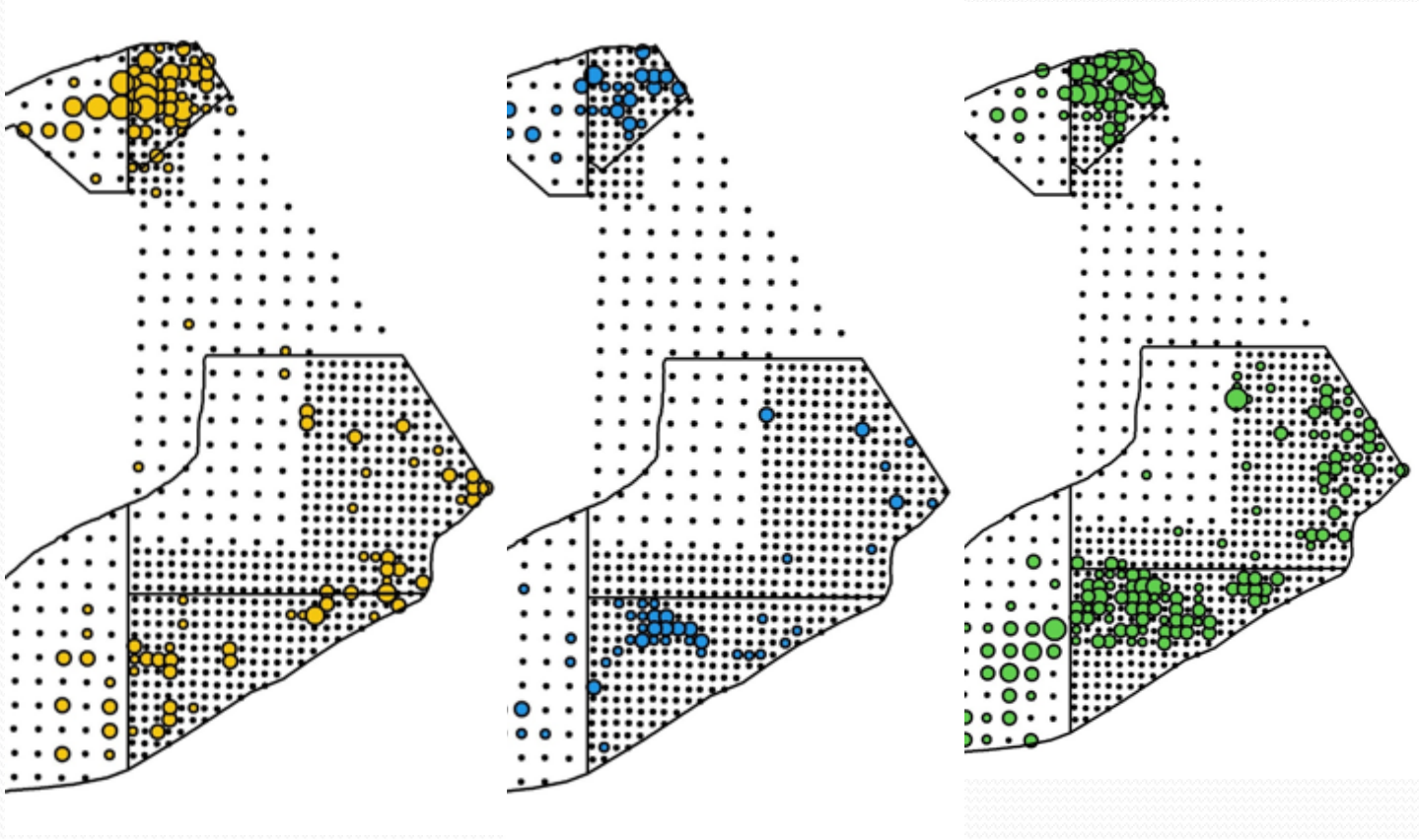
Area II

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

The PDT recommends consideration of a closure of Area II

The AP and Committee should consider how this area would be treated in FY2026.

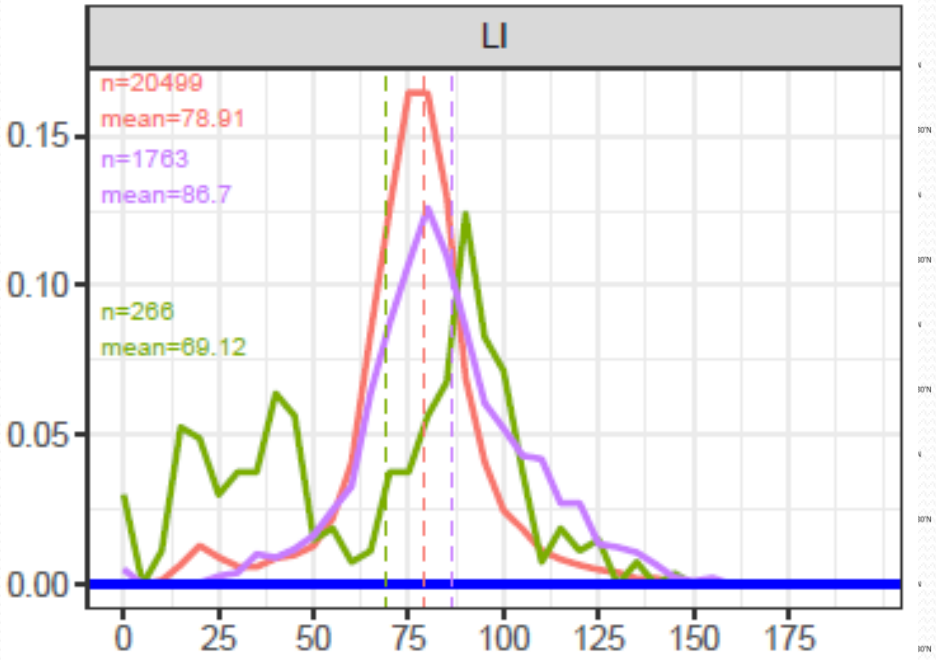
Currently: 1x 12,000 lb trip in FY2025

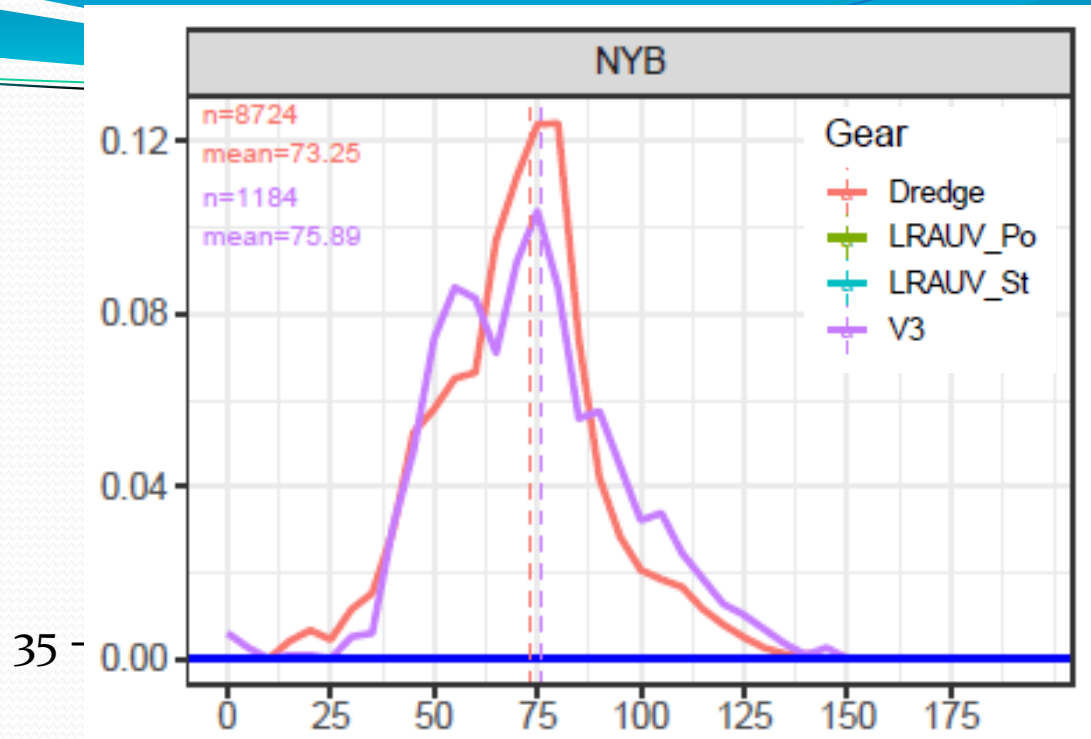


Survey densities (drop camera)
< 35 mm (yellow)
35 mm – 75 mm (blue),
> 75 mm (green)

NYB & Long Island

- Modest recruitment event in southern Long Island, within old New York Bight closure
- Could consider closure of 2023 NYB-Closure area.
  - PDT looked at options to include bump-out to north and east
- Would reduce Mid-Atlantic open bottom biomass in the Mid-Atlantic by ~30%, and Hudson Canyon South area by ~45%

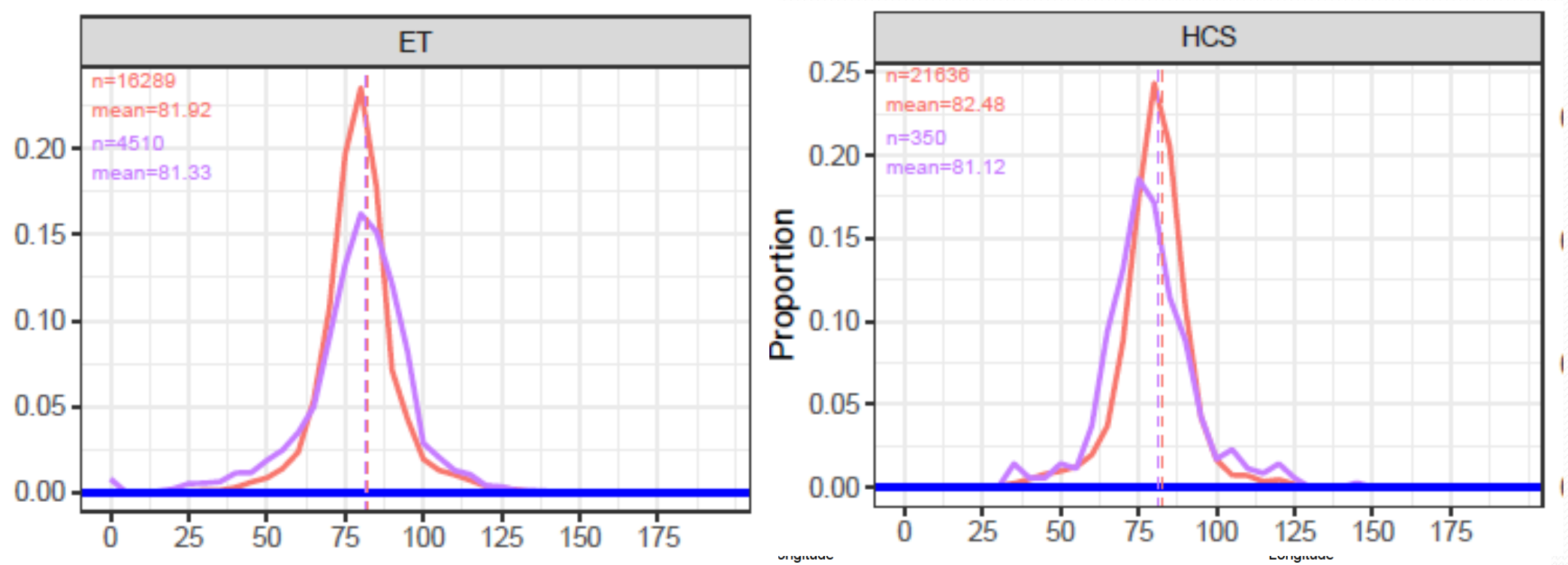




NYB Region Survey Biomass in Pounds			
Area	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
LI	9,831,172	15,681,462	18,190,341
NYB	1,677,936	4,800,560	6,920,310
NYB Closure	14,745,601		
MAB Nearshore	800,387	225,974	146,648
HCS	3,046,675	9,742,216	17,377,629
Total	**30,101,771**	**30,450,212**	**42,634,929**

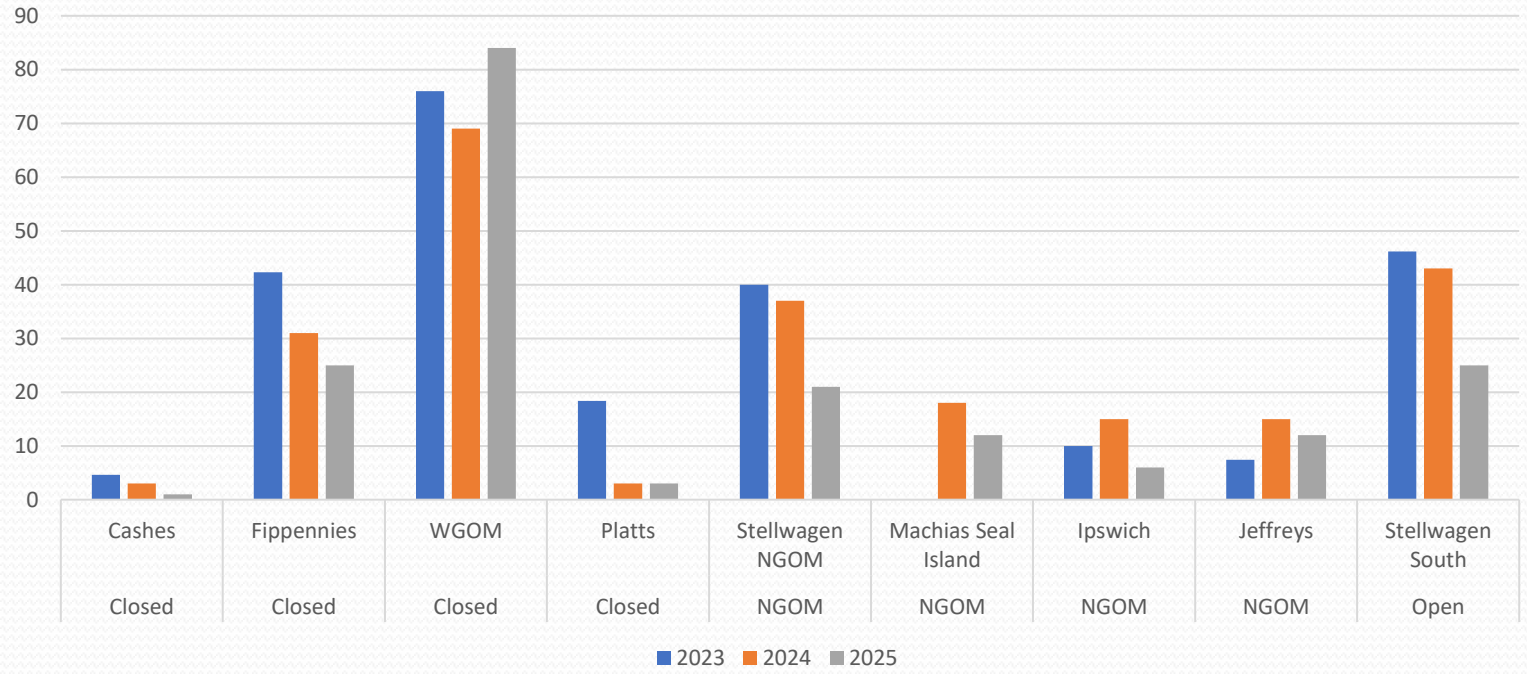
Elephant Trunk & Hudson Canyon South

- Growth in ET and HCS, 1.24 billion scallops, ET closed for 2025
  - 2024 biomass in ET = 10.8 million lb, HCS = 17.4 million lb
- PDT recommends considering access in 2026
  - If animals do not grow as large, fishing earlier may provide greater yield
  - Could consider open bottom or rotational area (Mid-Atlantic Access Area)



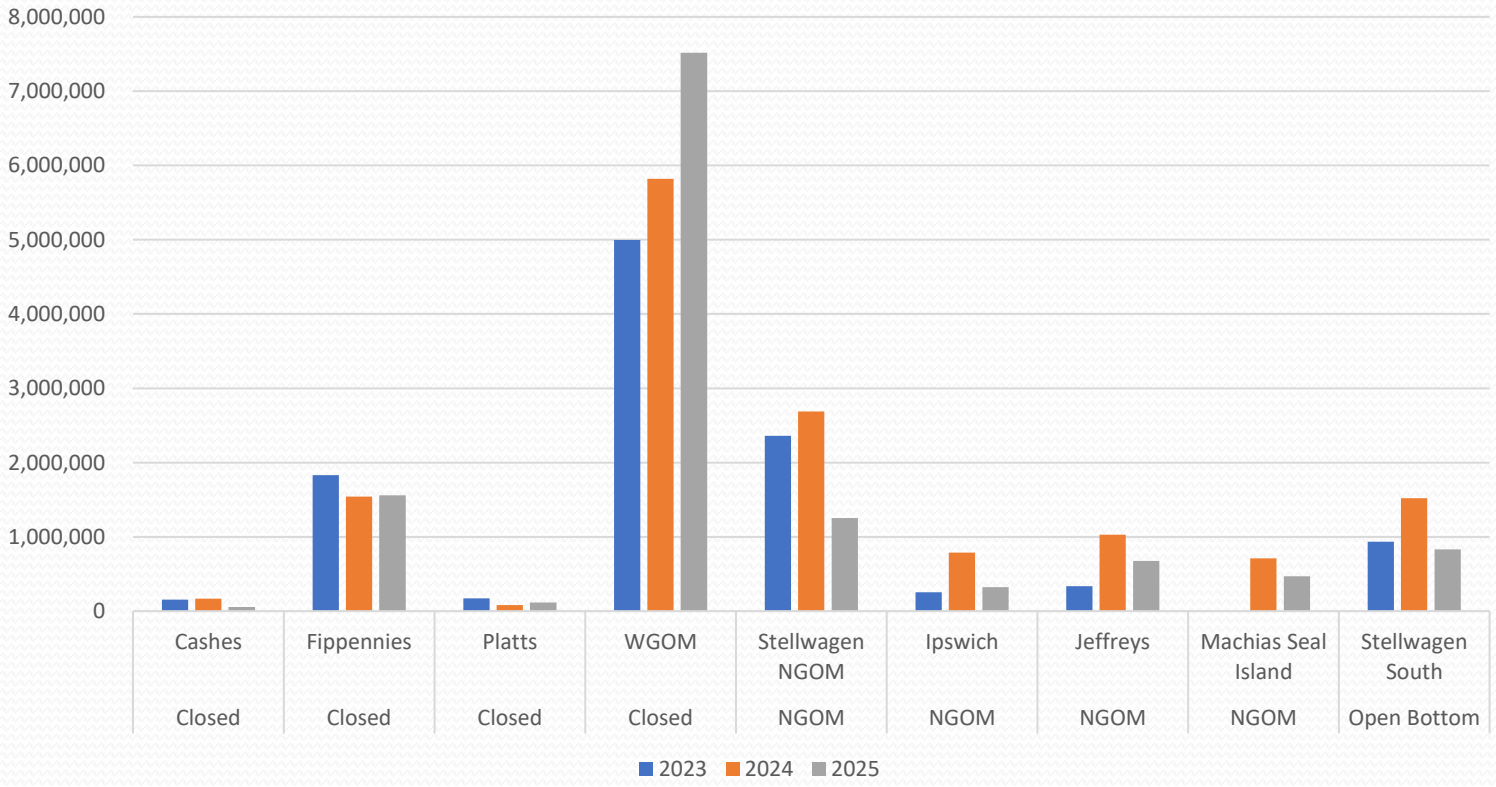
Gulf of Maine Abundance Comparison 2023-2024 Survey Mean

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



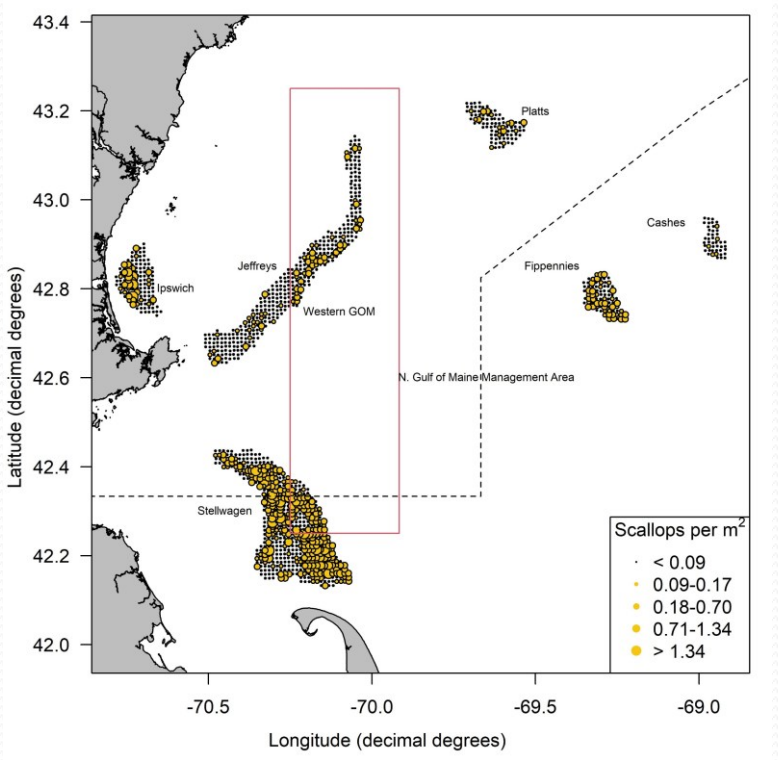
Gulf of Maine Biomass Comparison (Pounds) 2023-2025 Survey Mean

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

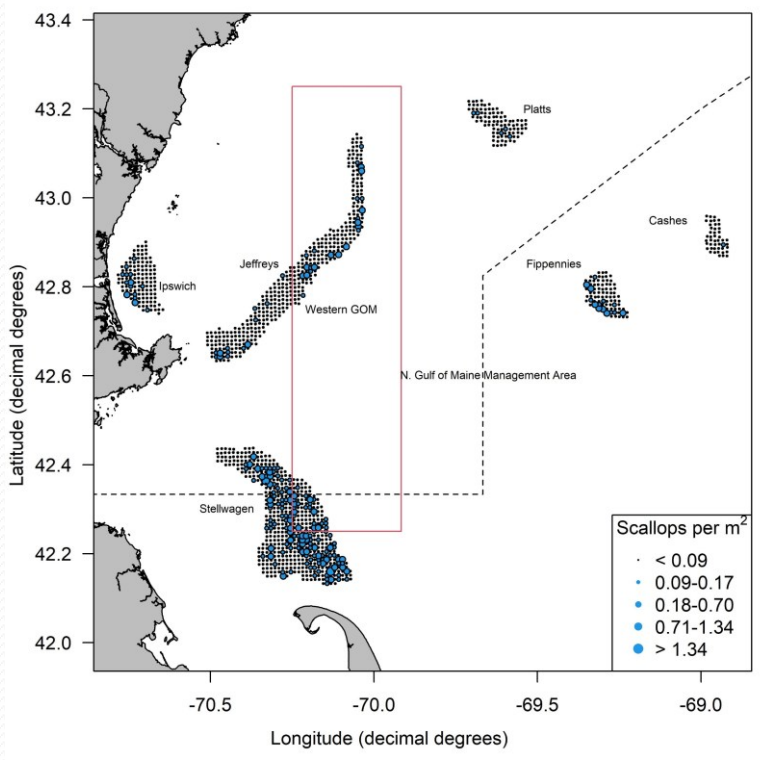


Gulf of Maine

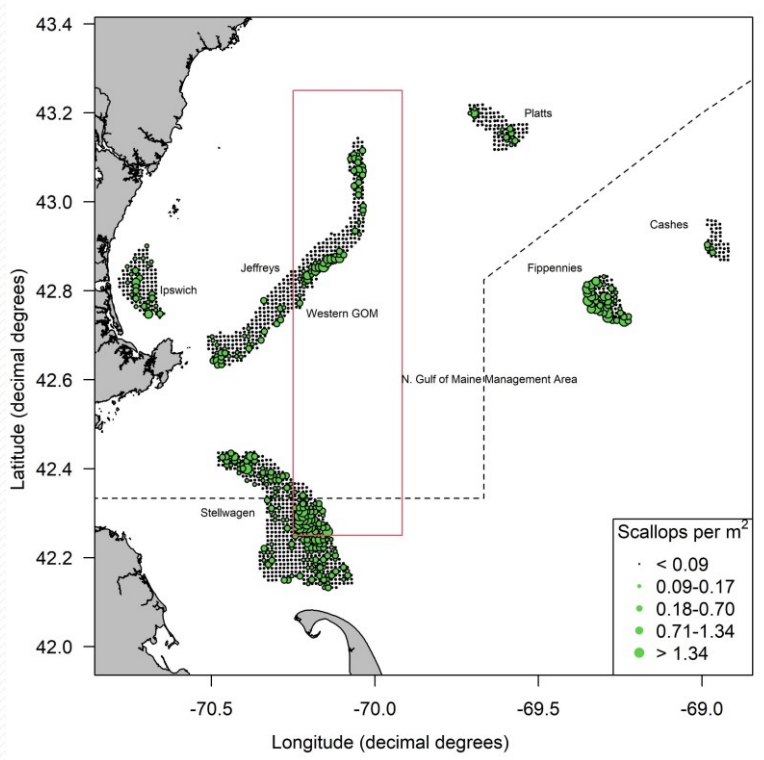
- No major recent recruitment events, and moderate decline in biomass within NGOM area outside of the WGOM closure.



Pre-recruits (< 35mm)



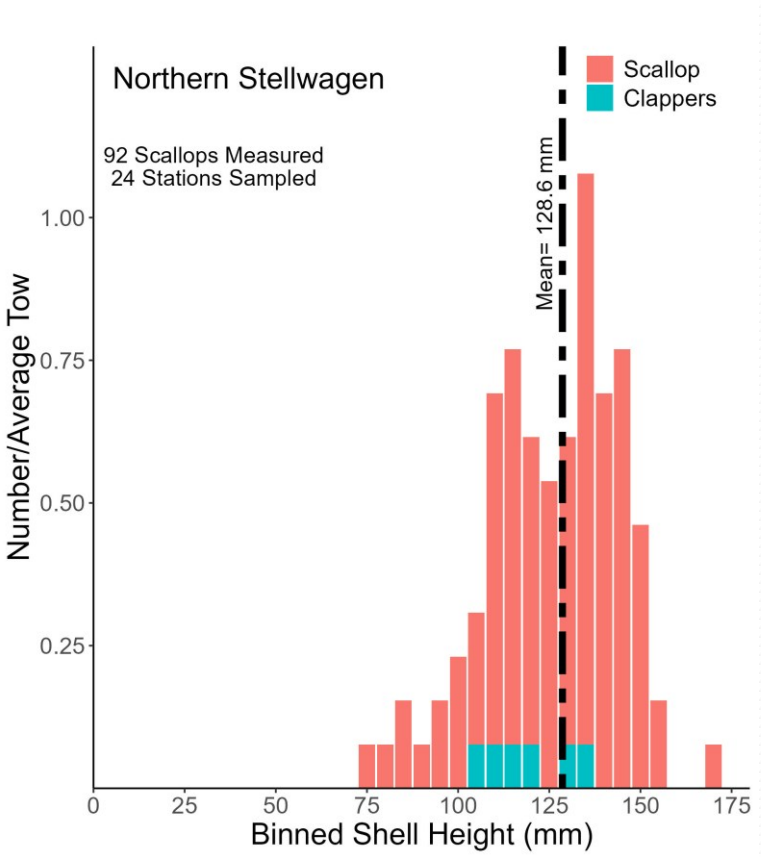
Recruits (35-75 mm)



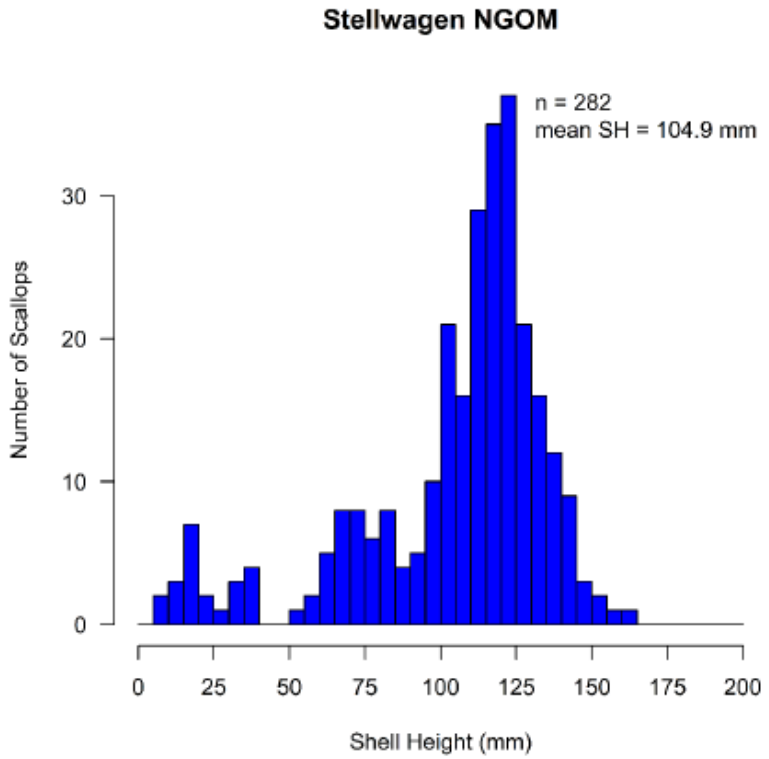
Recruited (> 75mm)

Stellwagen Bank

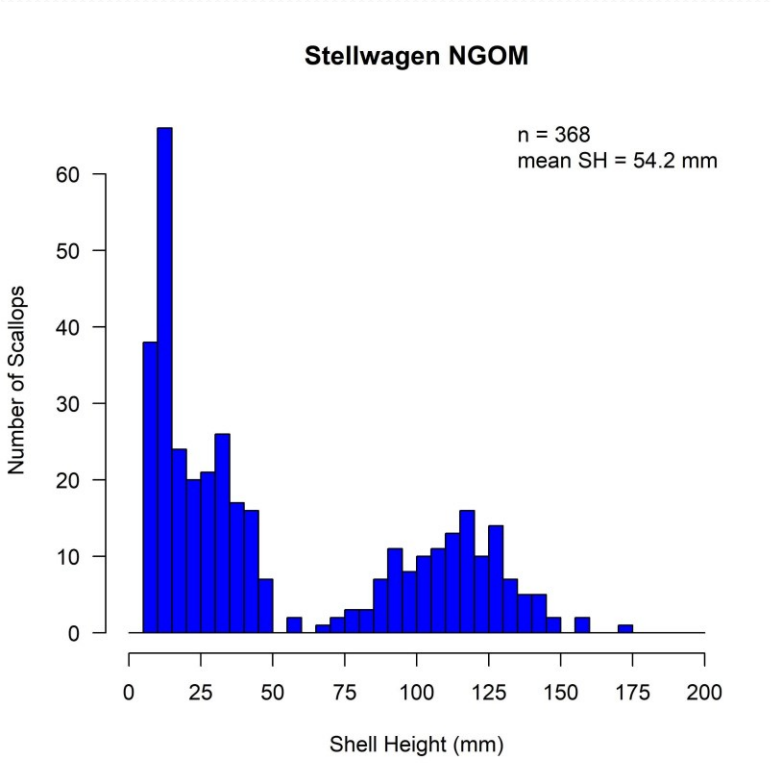
- Majority of biomass in NGOM on Stellwagen Bank north of 42 20’.
- Staff recommend considering likely F rate on Stellwagen when setting 2026 & 2027 TALs.
- Modest recruitment observed, but decline in large scallops



2025 ME DMR



2024 SMAST



2025 SMAST

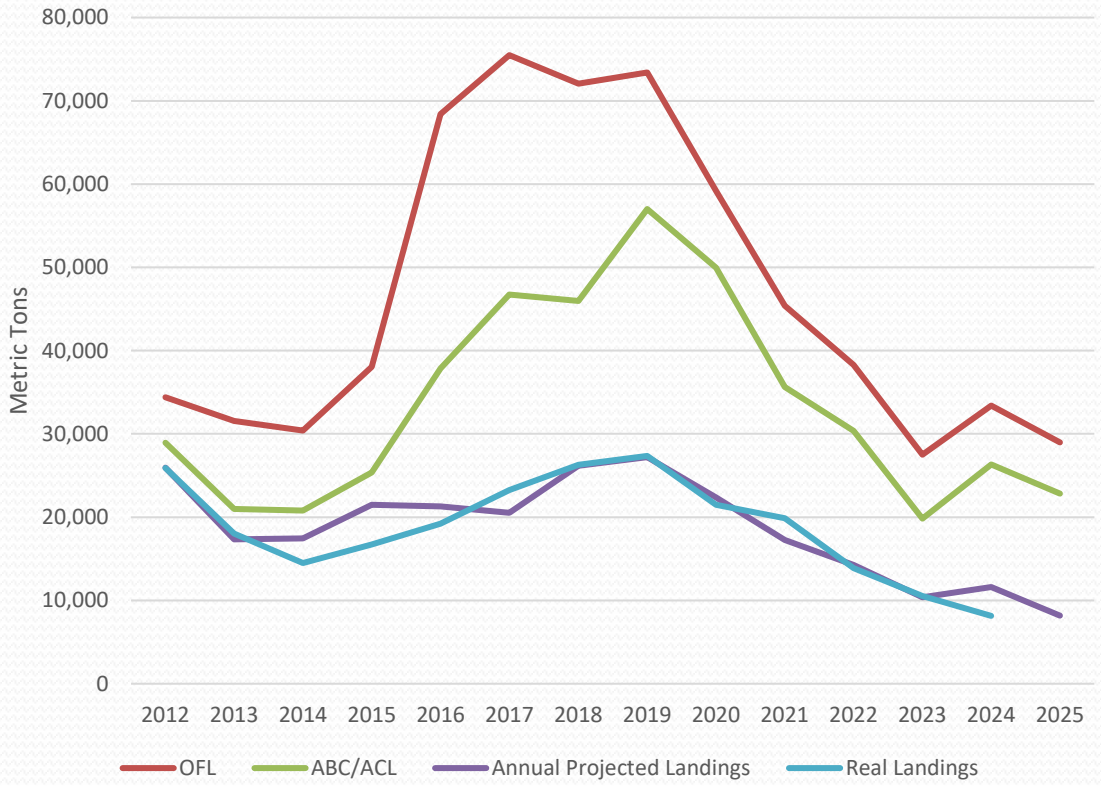
August 19 SSC – Scallop Reference Points

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. Consider the results of the 2025 research track assessment for Atlantic sea scallops and information provided by the Council's Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) on developing specifications considering biological reference points.

B. Provide recommendations related to fishing mortality reference points and targets for developing specifications for fishing year (FY) 2026 and default FY 2027. The SSC will review catch specification methods when recommending overfishing limits (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) at the October 2025 SSC meeting.

SSC Considerations and Questions



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

SSC Recommendations for PDT for Oct 8

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

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

Discussion

1. 2025 survey results and fishery performance.
2. Spatial management
    1. Area I
    2. Area II
    3. NYB/Long Island
    4. HCS/ET
3. LPUE and outlook for open bottom, projection performance.
4. Opportunities for LAGC IFQ access area fishing in 2026.
5. Outlook for NGOM fishery in 2026.

Work Priorities

Scallop outlook by quarter in 2025

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

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

LAGC IFQ Review

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

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

Scallop Strategic Plan

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

- **For today:** the AP and Committee should provide input on:
  - Prioritization of Strategic Plan strategies
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation criteria

Strategic Plan Objectives

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

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

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

Example

1. Increase the capacity for and use of real-time data collection and monitoring in management, including industry-collected data, VTRs, auction data, LPUE, and other data sources.
2. Develop a Management Strategy Evaluation model based on an understanding of scallop population dynamics, biological and oceanographic conditions, and fishery behaviors to inform Best Management Practices, including addressing ocean use conflict, changing resource distribution, and allocation scenarios.

Example

3. Separate management of the Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank resources, with individual OFL/ABCs and DAS separately allocated.
4. Streamline the annual specifications setting process to increase capacity for addressing other fishery management challenges.

Example

5. Develop tools within the Scallop FMP to allow for in-season management
6. Revise the Limited Access DAS carryover provision to reduce uncertainty in open-bottom harvest.
7. Disperse fishing effort in high-density areas to reduce incidental mortality and vessel crowding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OBJECTIVE 6: Maintain the economic viability of the scallop fleet

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Implementation and Evaluating progress

- Living document vs. fixed list of strategies
  - Strategies could be added or removed through Committee motion
  - Aiming for a list that is achievable in 3-5 year period

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

Next steps

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

2026 Priorities Process

1. **Today -** Identify the universe of possible work priorities for 2026
2. **October –** With ED list of possible priorities, make recommendations on which projects to work on in 2026.
3. **For today:**
    1. Review the current list of 2025 and draft recommendations for E.O. 14276
    2. Consider prior input from PDT, correspondence, and the draft Strategic Plan.
    3. Identify work items for further consideration at October AP and Committee meetings.

2025 Work Priorities

2025 New England Fishery Management Council Priority List (April 2025)				
Ref #	**Plan/Topic**	**Category**	**Priority/Task**	**Estimated Timing**
SC5	Scallop	Required	LAGC IFQ program review (2016-2023)	Multiyear, expected completion 2025
SC6	Scallop	Required	Develop long-term (3-5 years) strategic plan for managing the scallop fishery, considering range of management tools, enhancement opportunities, permit portfolios, rotational management performance	Multiyear, expected completion 2025
SC7	Scallop	Ongoing	Scallop RSA Management (Share Day, Proposal Review)	Ongoing
SC1	Scallop	Required	Complete and submit FW39	Complete early 2025
SC2	Scallop	Required	Set ABC/ACL for scallop stock with specifications for FY2026 (FY2027 default)	2025
SC3	Scallop	Required	FW to set management measures for FY2026	2025
SC4	Scallop	Required	Scallop Research Track Assessment WG and Peer Review (Apr 2025)	Complete Apr 2025

E.O. 14276 – Draft Recommendations and Work Plan

List of Draft Recommendations

1. **Council Actions in the NOAA Fisheries Rulemaking Process**
   - 1.1. Northeast Multispecies Framework Adjustment 69
   - 1.2. Atlantic Herring 2025-2027 Specifications

2. **Council Actions Currently Under Development**
   - 2.1. Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment
   - 2.2. Actions to Set Specifications for Monkfish and Skates
   - 2.3. Spiny Dogfish Framework Adjustment for Accountability Measures and Specifications
   - 2.4. Sea Scallop Strategic Plan
   - 2.5. Ecosystem Components Evaluation
   - 2.6. Modernizing Approaches to Governance

3. **Possible New Council Actions**
   - 3.1. Modifications to Vessel Baseline Restrictions
   - 3.2. Atlantic Herring Slippage Measures
   - 3.3. Monkfish Management Modifications
   - 3.4. Revisions to Reactive Accountability Measures
   - 3.5. Fishery Management Plan Revisions

4. **Non-Council Actions (Recommendations to Federal Agencies)**
   - 4.1. Seafood Marketing and Promotion
   - 4.2. Fisheries Monitoring and Scientific Programs
   - 4.3. Recreational Bioeconomic Model
   - 4.4. Changing Environment and Fisheries Initiative
   - 4.5. Categorical Exclusions under the National Environmental Policy Act

- Input from PDTs, Advisors, members of the public.
- Council is committing to developing work plan for final recommendations due to NOAA on September 30.
- **Today –** Initial discussion around possible 2026 Scallop work priorities

September Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at Beauport Hotel, Gloucester, MA

- Framework Adjustment 40: preliminary overview of 2025 surveys, update on framework action for 2026 fishing year specifications and 2027 default; Scallop Strategic Plan: progress update; LAGC IFQ Program Review: progress update.

Upcoming Meeting/Milestones:

We'll need several meetings to review and agree on survey data and SAMS parameters, prepare memo to SSC:

- **September 12 – Joint Scallop PDT/ AP meeting (Webinar)**
- **September 15 – Scallop Committee meeting (Webinar)**
- September 24, 2025 – Scallop Report, Council meeting (Gloucester, MA)
- September 30 – Scallop PDT calls to finalize report to SSC
- October 8 – Science and Statistical Committee meeting (Boston, MA)
- October 9 – Scallop PDT call to review SAMS runs
- October 21, 2025 – Scallop AP meeting (New Bedford, MA)
- October 22, 2025 – Scallop CTE meeting (New Bedford, MA)

Backpocket

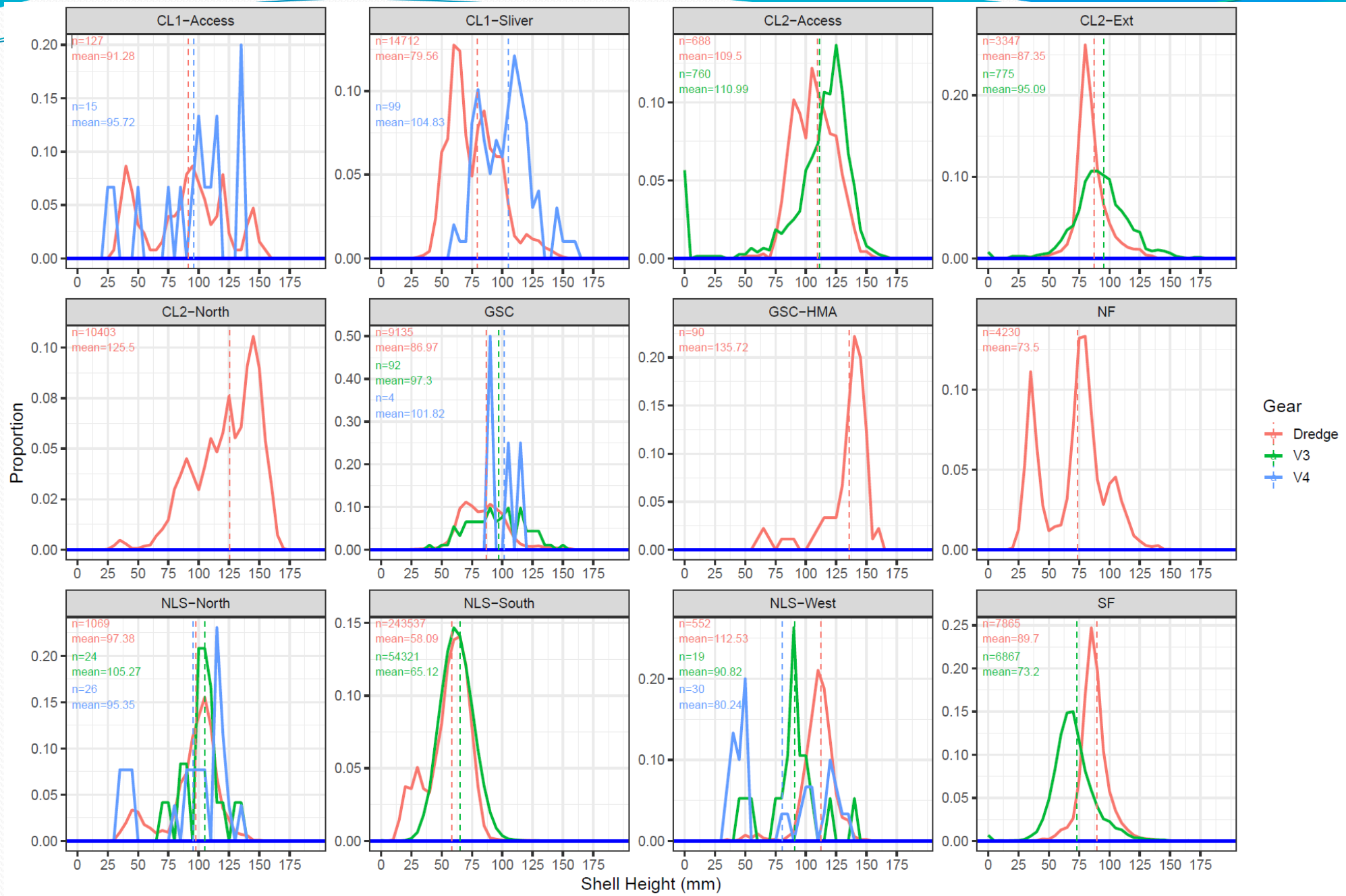
NYB Closure – Dredge Estimate Comparison

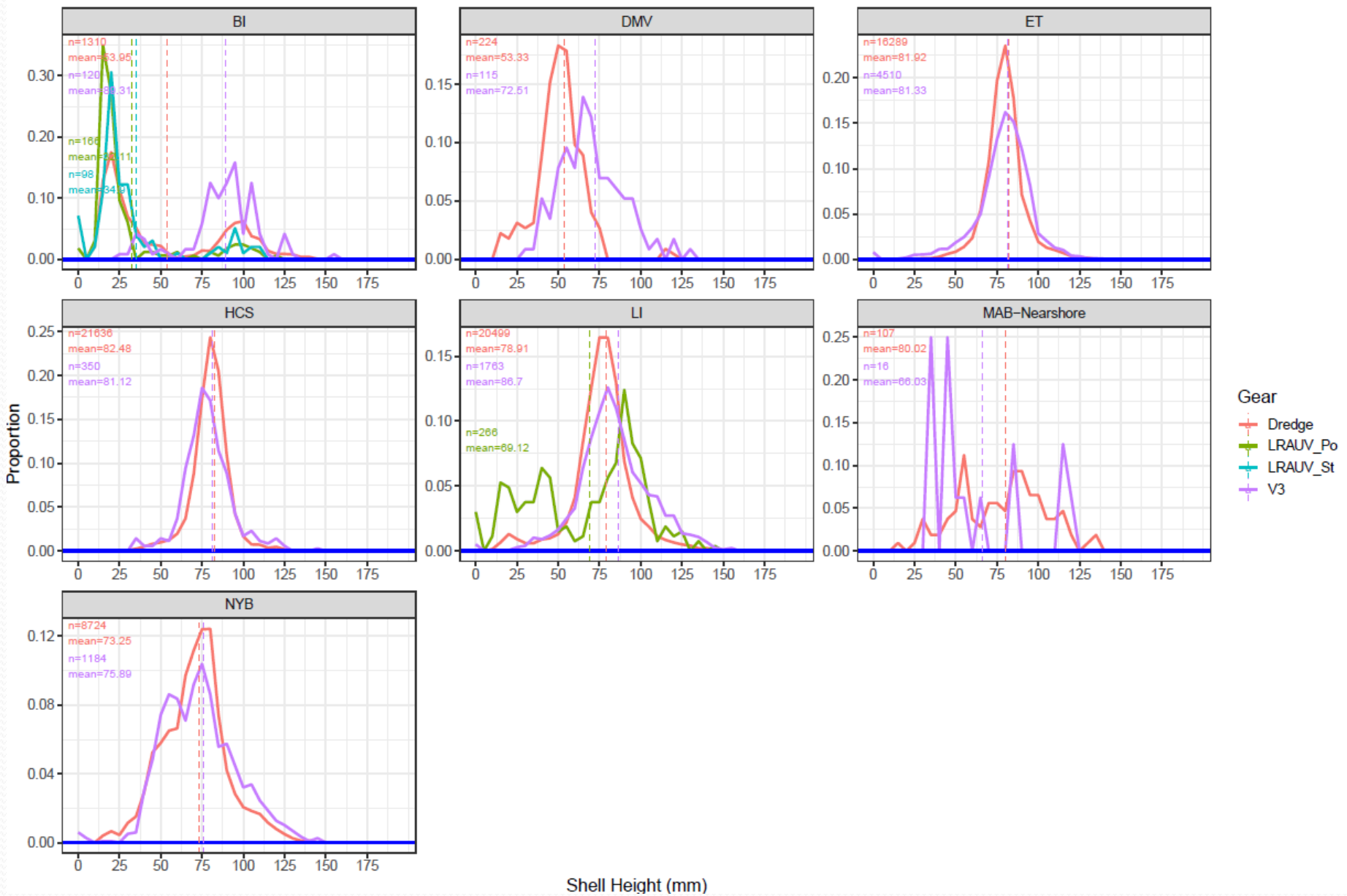
2025 VIMS Dredge Estimate using 2023 NYB Closure SAMS boundary

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

2025 VIMS Dredge Estimate

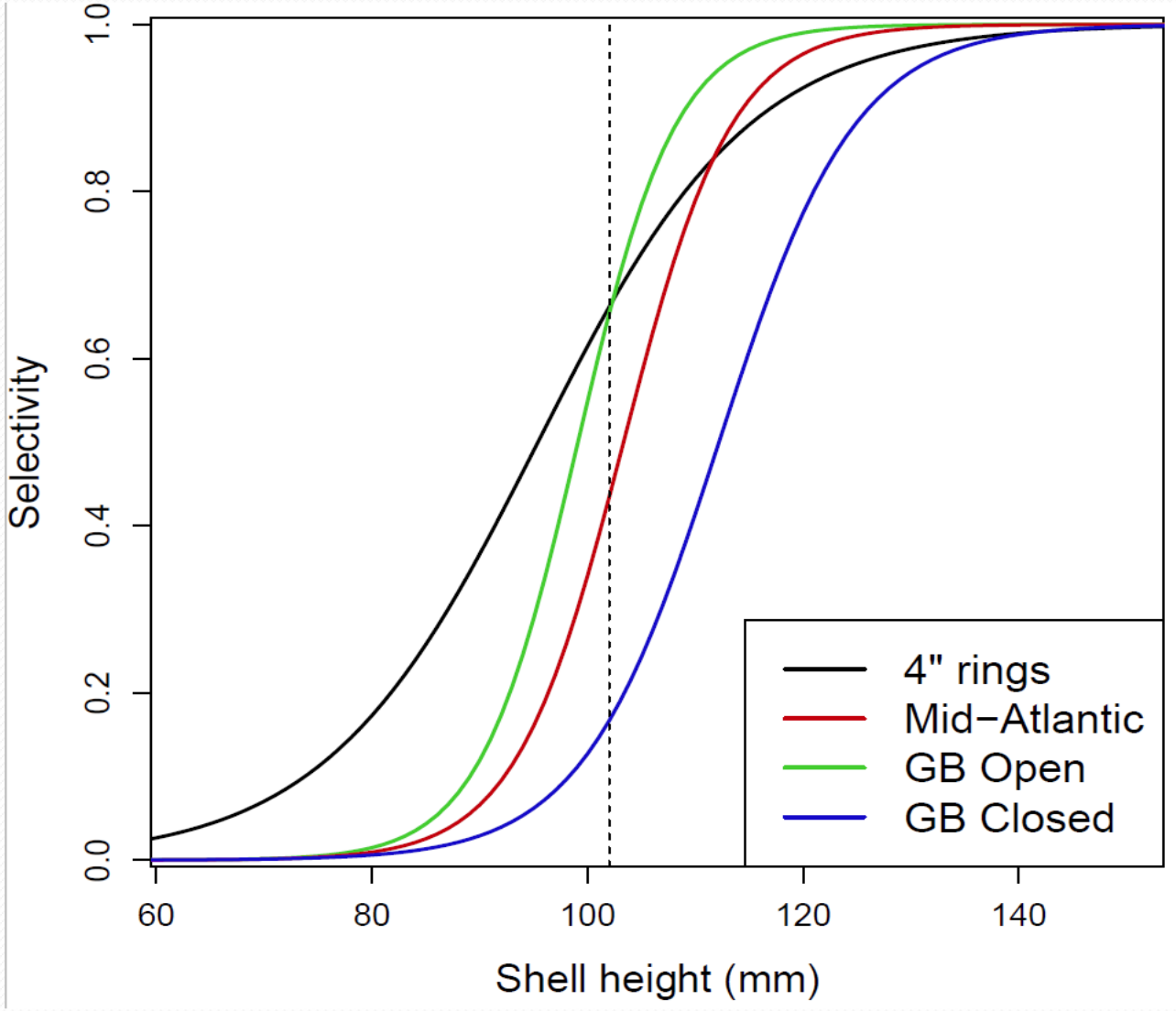
SAMS Area	Total Number	Total Biomass (mt)	SE Biomass (mt)	Avg MW (g)
BI	28	561	138	20.2
LI	1000	12235	1357	12.2
NYB	467	4800	401	10.3
MAB_Nearshore	5	78	10	15.5
HCS	777	9110	866	11.7
ET	362	4308	324	11.9
DMV	9	47	5	5.2
VIR	11	53	11	4.8
TOTAL	2659	31190	1696	11.7


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


BI
n=1310
mean=83.95
n=120
mean=89.31
n=166
mean=88.11
n=98
mean=84.91
DMV
n=224
mean=53.33
n=115
mean=72.51
ET
n=16289
mean=81.92
n=4510
mean=81.33
HCS
n=21636
mean=82.48
n=350
mean=81.12
LI
n=20499
mean=78.91
n=1763
mean=86.7
n=266
mean=69.12
MAB−Nearshore
n=107
mean=80.02
n=16
mean=66.03
NYB
n=8724
mean=73.25
n=1184
mean=75.89
Proportion
Shell Height (mm)
Gear
Dredge
LRAUV_Po
LRAUV_St
V3

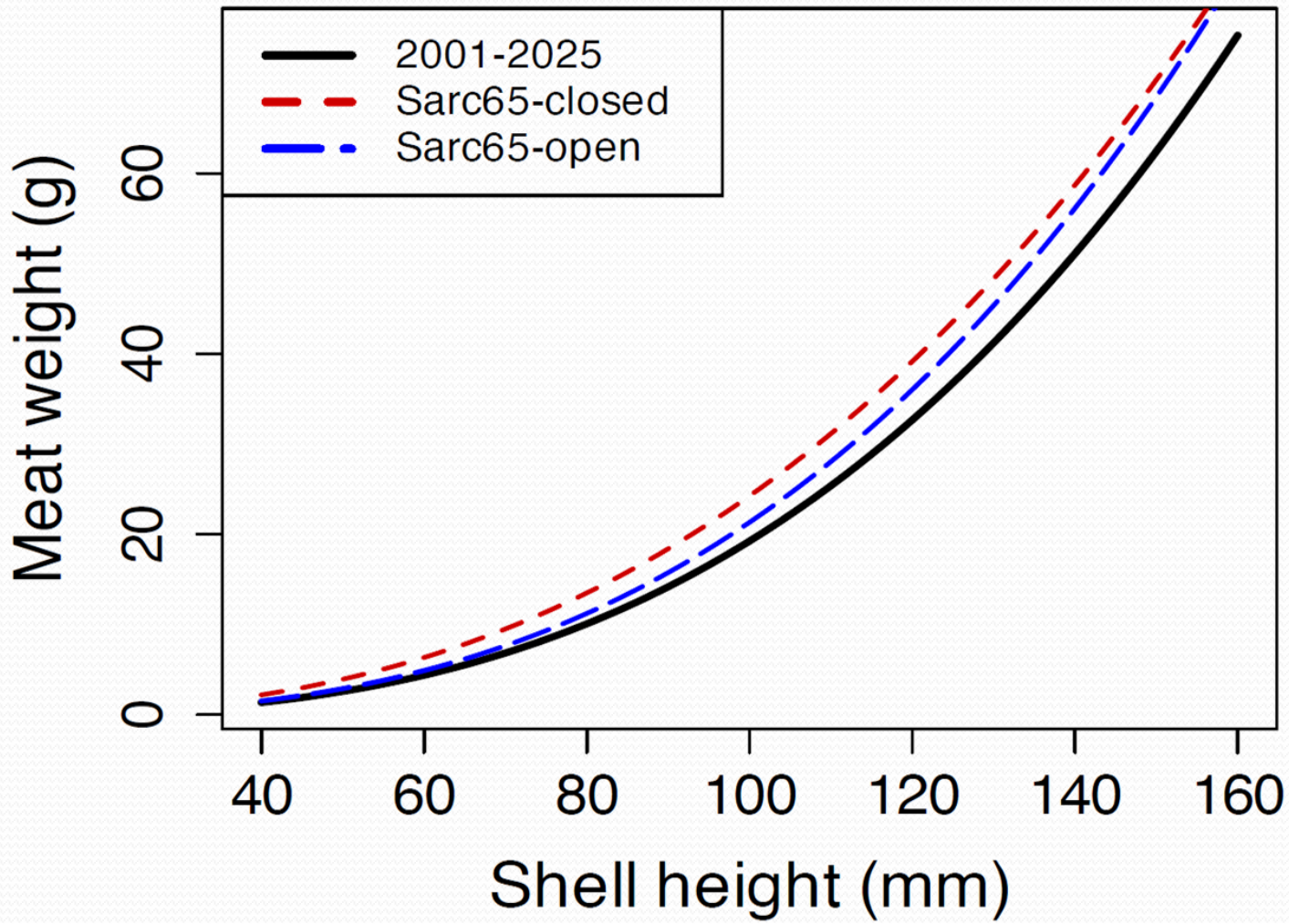
Selectivity Curves

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



Comparison with SARC-65

Predictions are still less than those from SARC-65



Nantucket Lightship

SMAST Drop Camera Data

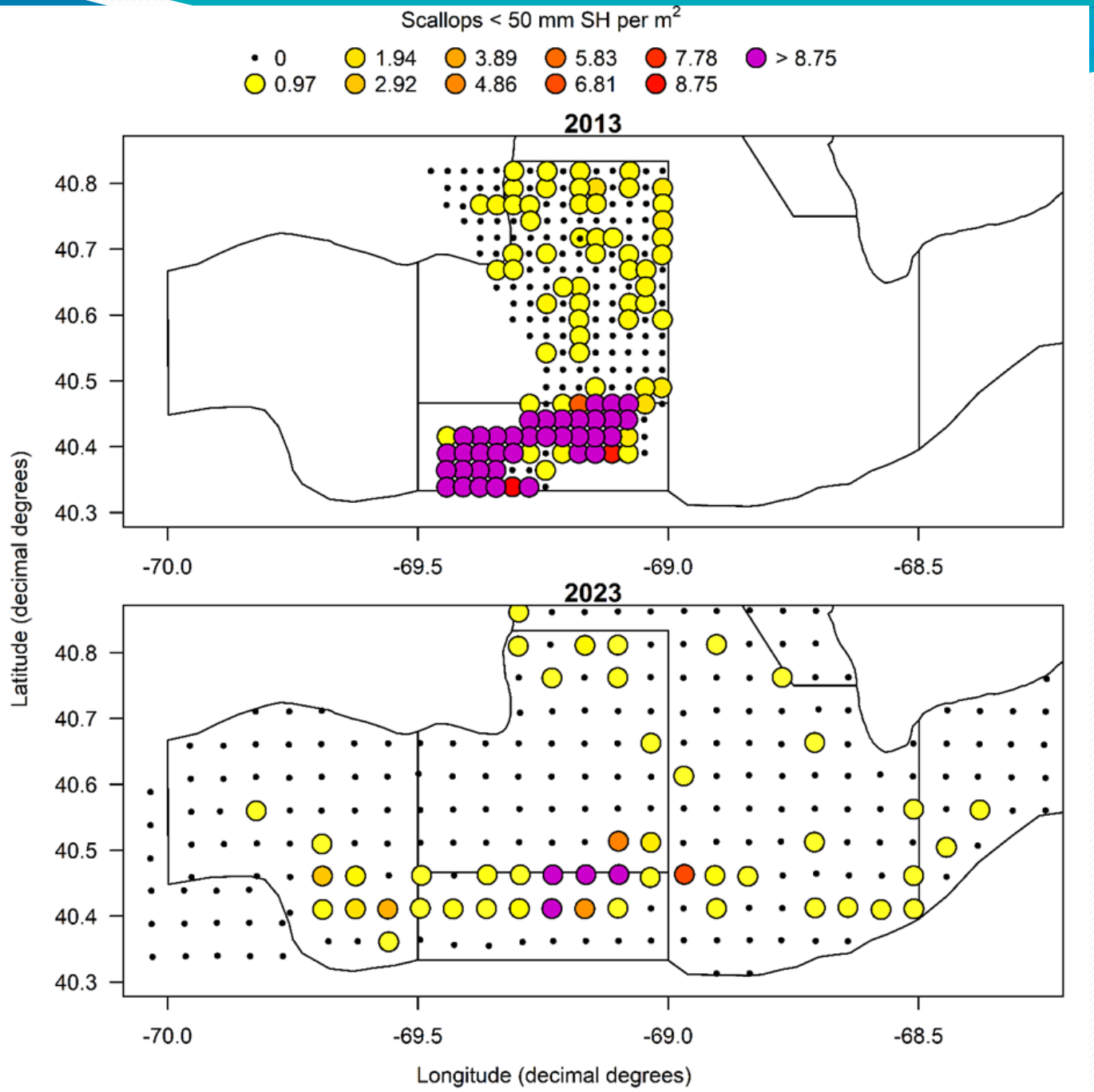
NLS Recruitment Event

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

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

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

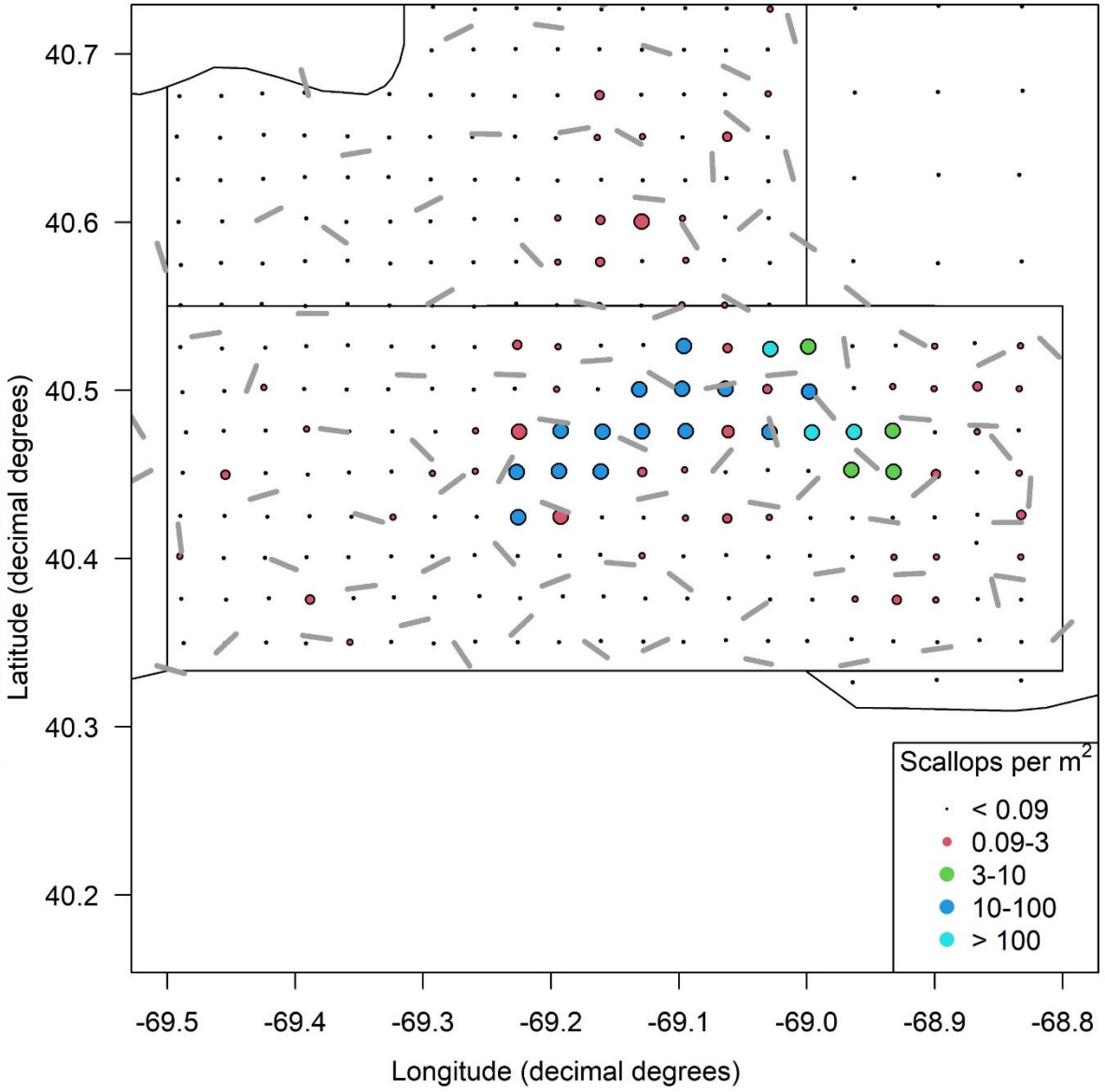
Purple is used to represent extreme densities.



NLS-South

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

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



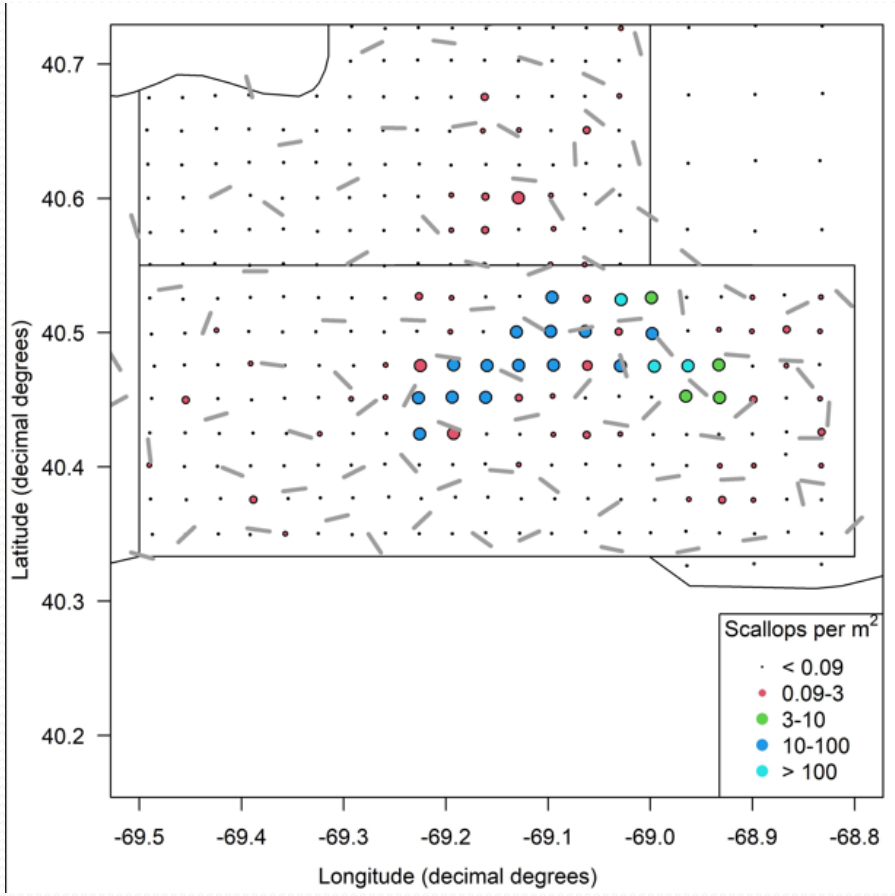
Nantucket Lightship South

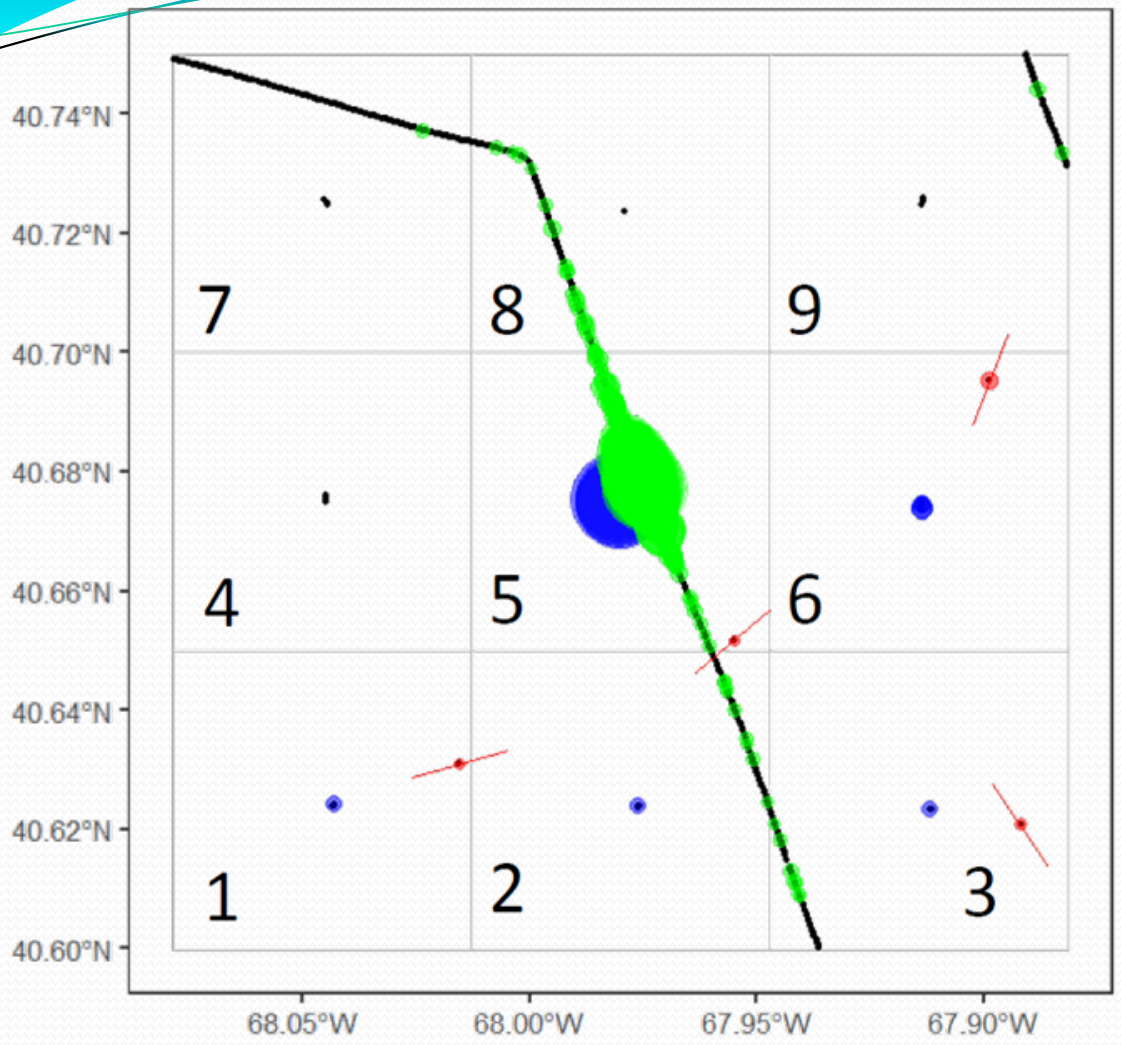
VIMS 2016-2023, 2025 SHMW

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

VIMS 2025 SHMW

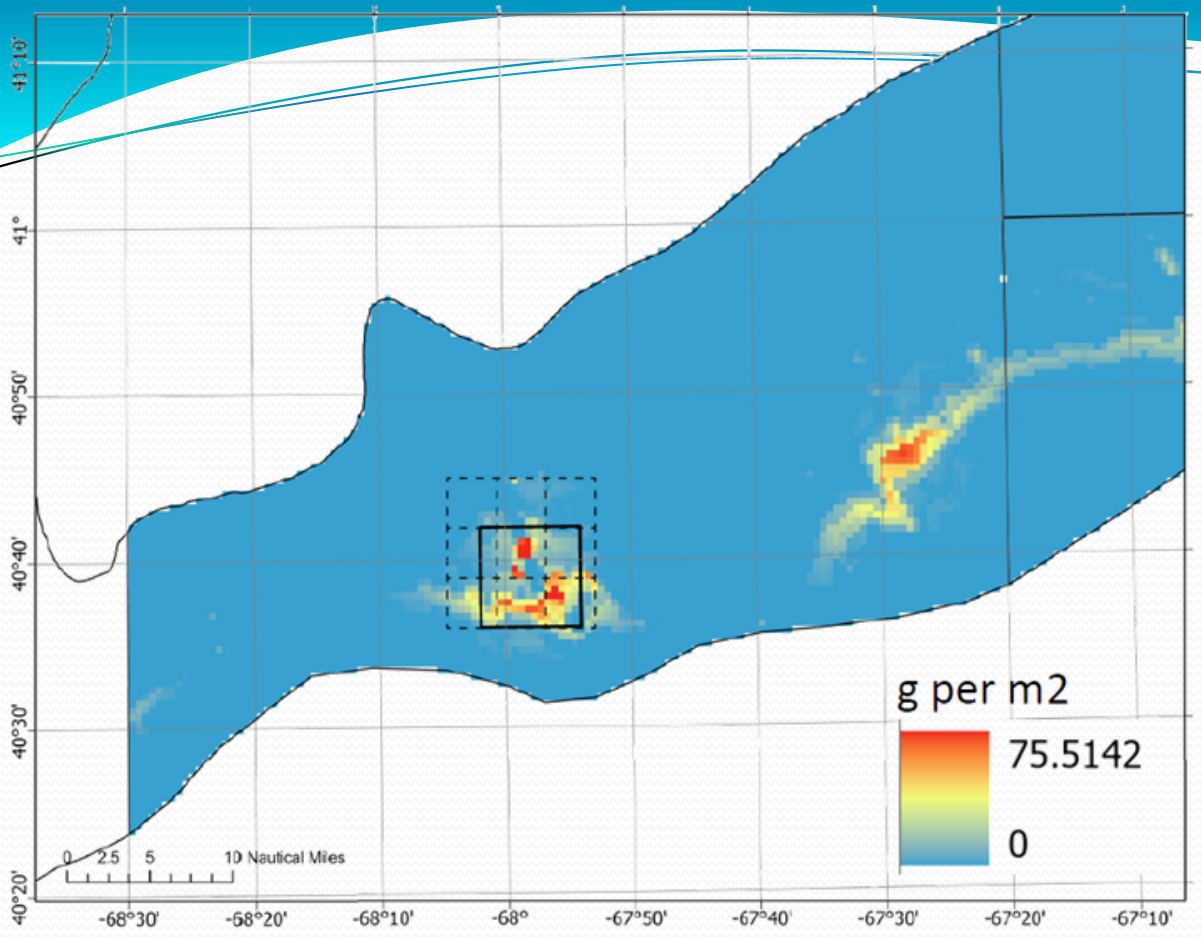
	Biomass (mt)	SE	Abundance
VIMS Dredge	9,308	1,085	2,044,824,987
HabCam	10,379	596	2,046,000,000





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

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



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

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

NGOM Projections – Stellwagen AOI