DECISION DOCUMENT

for

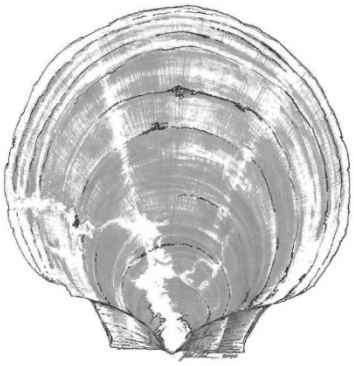
the development of

FY 2027 and 2028 Specifications

to the

Atlantic Sea Scallop FMP

Scallop AP/Committee Copy (10/27/26)



October 27, 2026

Scallop AP/Committee Meeting

Fishing Year (FY) 2027 and 2028 (default) Specifications

An action to set fishery specification for FY 2027 and FY 2028 (default) was initiated at the June 2026 Council meeting and currently includes the following measures: scallop fishery specifications for FY 2027 and default measures for FY 2028, specifically ABC/ACLs, days-at-sea (DAS), access area allocations for limited access (LA) and Limited Access General Category (LAGC), total allowable landings (TAL) for Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) management area, target-TAC for LAGC incidental catch and set-asides for the observer and research programs.

Anticipated outcomes: Develop recommendations for measures to include in specifications action, including:

1. Access areas, trip limits, and total access area allocations for full-time LA, part-time LA vessels, and the distribution of LAGC individual fishing quota (IFQ) access area trips for FY 2027.
2. Rotational closures for FY 2027.
3. Full-Time LA DAS or an associated target open area fishing mortality (F) rate.
4. Default measures for FY 2027, and specifically whether an access area trip should be allocated as part of default measures.
5. Target F rate for the NGOM for FY 2027, and default measures for FY 2028.
6. Access areas where Scallop research set-aside (RSA) compensation fishing can occur, if any.

1. Specification Alternatives & 2. Potential Closures

Table 1 – FY 2027 Specification Committee Tasking Runs.

#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Name	Status Quo	No Action	NLS_40	NLS_36	NLS_32	NLS_28	NLS_24	NLS_20
Open Area F/DAS	36 DAS	27 DAS	40 DAS	36 DAS	32 DAS	28 DAS	24 DAS	20 DAS
FT LA Trip Limit	n/a	n/a	9,000 lbs	12,000 lbs	15,000 lbs	9,000 lbs	12,000 lbs	15,000 lbs
Trips trading	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
CA2-Access	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
CA2-Ext								
NLS-Ext	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
NLS-South			9,000 lbs (1 trip)	12,000 lbs (1 trip)	15,000 lbs (1 trip)	9,000 lbs (1 trip)	12,000 lbs (1 trip)	15,000 lbs (1 trip)
NLS-North								
NLS-West	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
CA2-N (HAPC)	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
CA1	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
CA1-Sliver	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
ET	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
HCS	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
DMV	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
NYB, BI, LI, MAB Nearshore	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
NF, GSC, SF, Stellwagen-S	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom	Open Bottom
NGOM (Stellwagen, Jeffreys, NGOM Other)	F=0.21	218,933 lbs	F=0.15	F=0.17	F=0.19	F=0.21	F=0.23	F=0.25

Figure 1 - No Action and Status Quo.

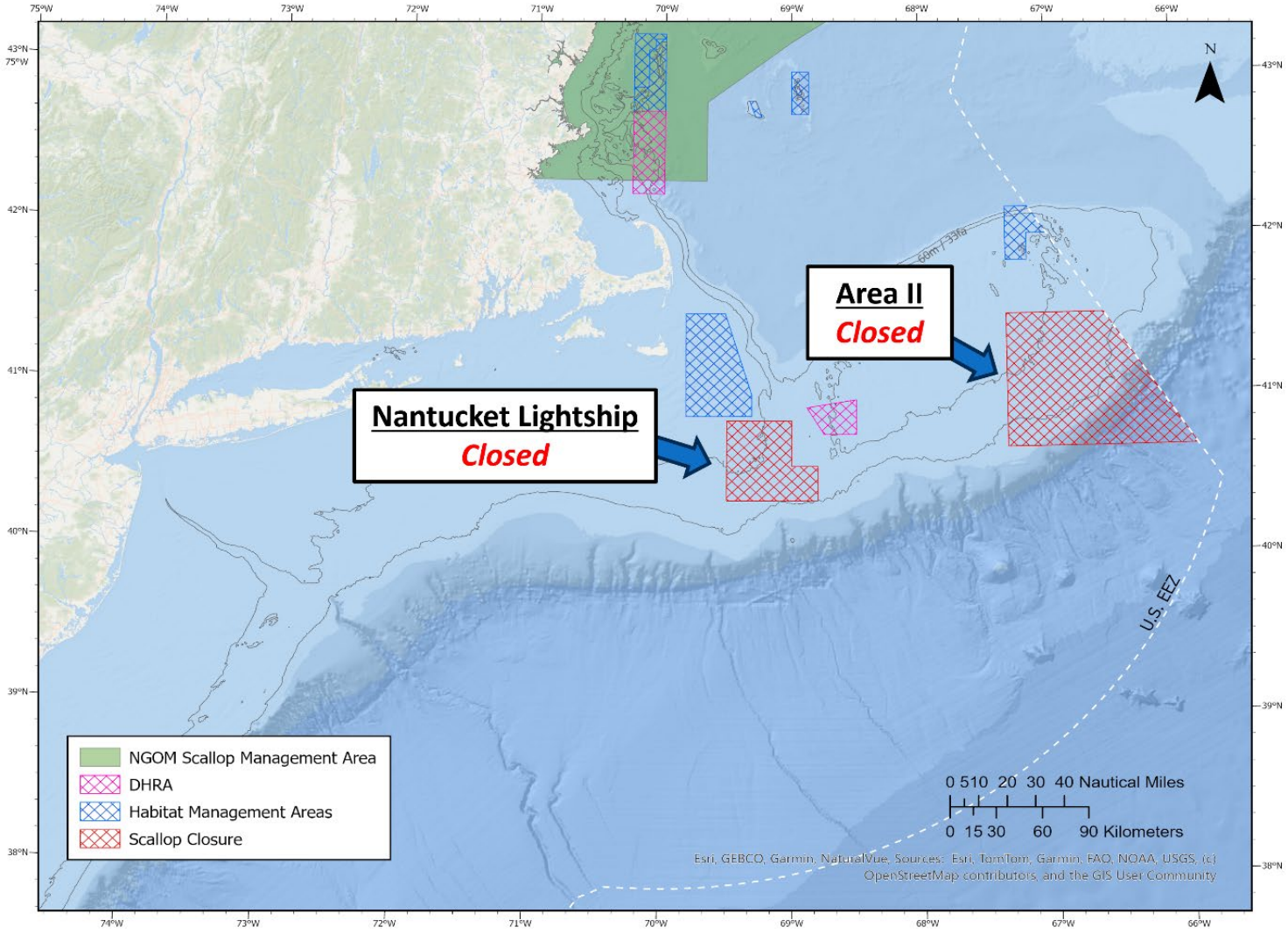


Figure 2 – Potential 2027 rotational management with a Nantucket Lightship Access Area.

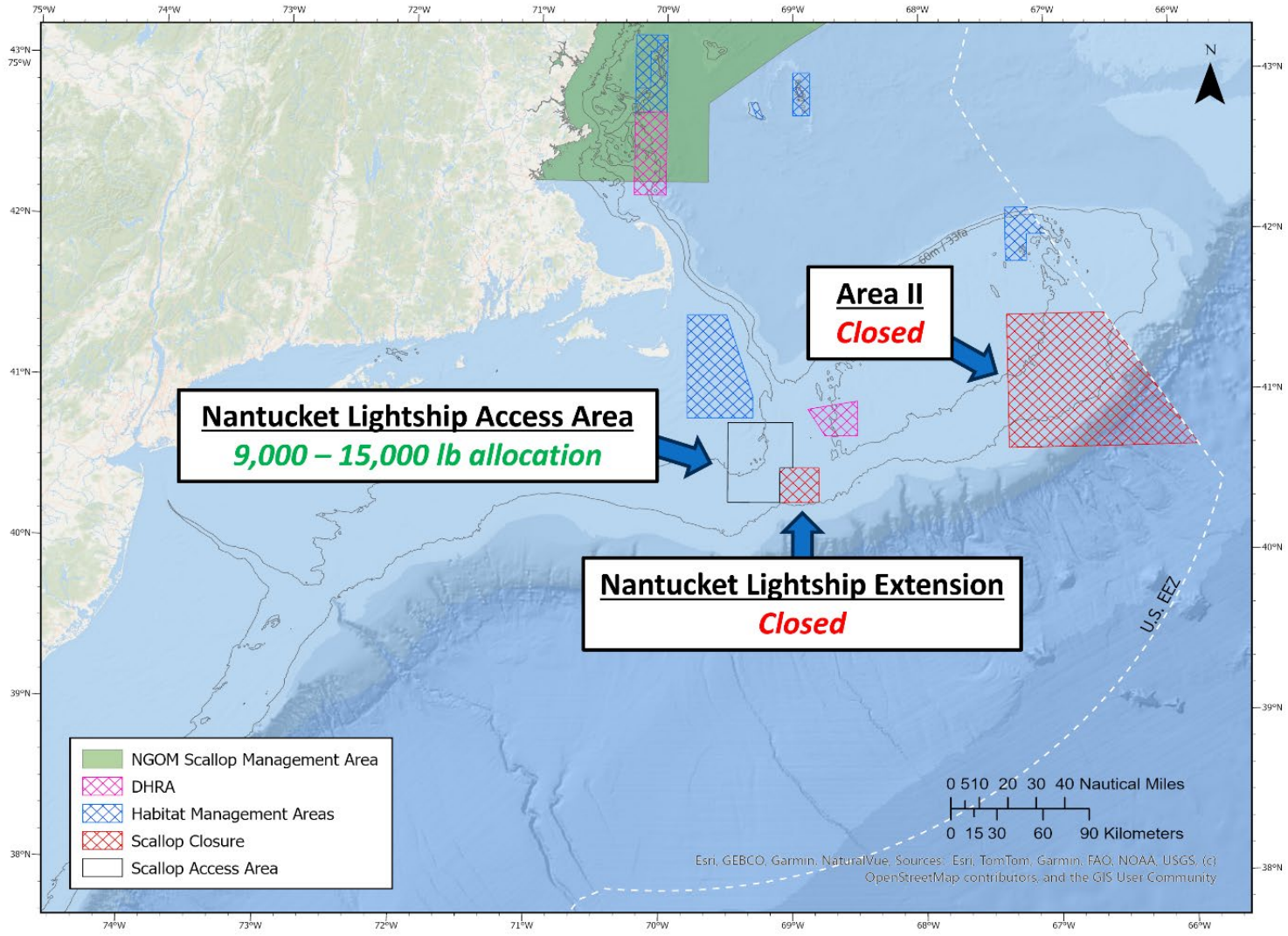


Table 2 – SAMS Model Outputs. *Note: Set-Asides are NOT removed in this table.*

Scenario Description	Total F	Open Area F	Open Area LPUE	Open Area Landings (lb)	Access Area (AA) Landings (lb)	Total Landings (lb)
No Action: 27 DAS, Area II and NLS (South + North) closed	0.13	0.27	1,495	15,542,250	0	15,542,250
Status Quo: 36 DAS, Area II and NLS (South + North) closed	0.17	0.33	1,386	18,725,992	0	18,725,992
20 DAS, **1x 15k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.16	0.21	1,603	12,496,121	4,858,770	17,354,897
24 DAS, **1x 12k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.17	0.24	1,542	14,221,963	3,928,615	17,410,357
28 DAS, **1x 9k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.17	0.27	1,485	15,814,245	2,949,377	18,763,622
32 DAS, **1x 15k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.21	0.30	1,432	17,262,297	4,858,770	22,121,073
36 DAS, **1x 12k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.21	0.33	1,382	18,624,398	3,928,615	22,553,014
40 DAS, **1x 9k trip** in NLS (South + North), Area II and NLS-Ext closed	0.21	0.35	1,334	19,887,746	2,949,377	22,837,124

Table 3 – Matrix of Limited Access DAS and AA landings by DAS and trip limit option combination.

Full-Time Trip Limit	Limited Access Landings (million lb)					
	20 DAS	***24 DAS***	***28 DAS***	***32 DAS***	***36 DAS***	***40 DAS***
0 lb	12.50	14.22	15.81	17.26	18.62	19.89
9,000 lb	15.45	17.17	18.76	20.21	21.57	22.84
12,000 lb	16.43	18.15	19.74	21.19	22.55	23.82
15,000 lb	17.36	19.08	20.67	22.12	23.48	24.75

Table 4 – Annual Projected Landings from Committee Tasking.

Model Run	APL (lb)	APL with set-asides removed (lb)
No Action	15,542,250	13,952,298
Status Quo	18,725,992	17,136,040
NLS-20	17,354,897	15,764,945
NLS-24	17,410,357	15,820,405
NLS-28	18,763,622	17,173,670
NLS-32	22,121,073	20,531,121
NLS-36	22,553,014	20,963,062
NLS-40	22,836,048	21,246,096

Note: APL represents total projected landings. This value is reduced to support the observer, RSA, NGOM set-asides, and incidental landings.

Figure 3 – Projected size frequency of scallops in the Nantucket Lightship South.

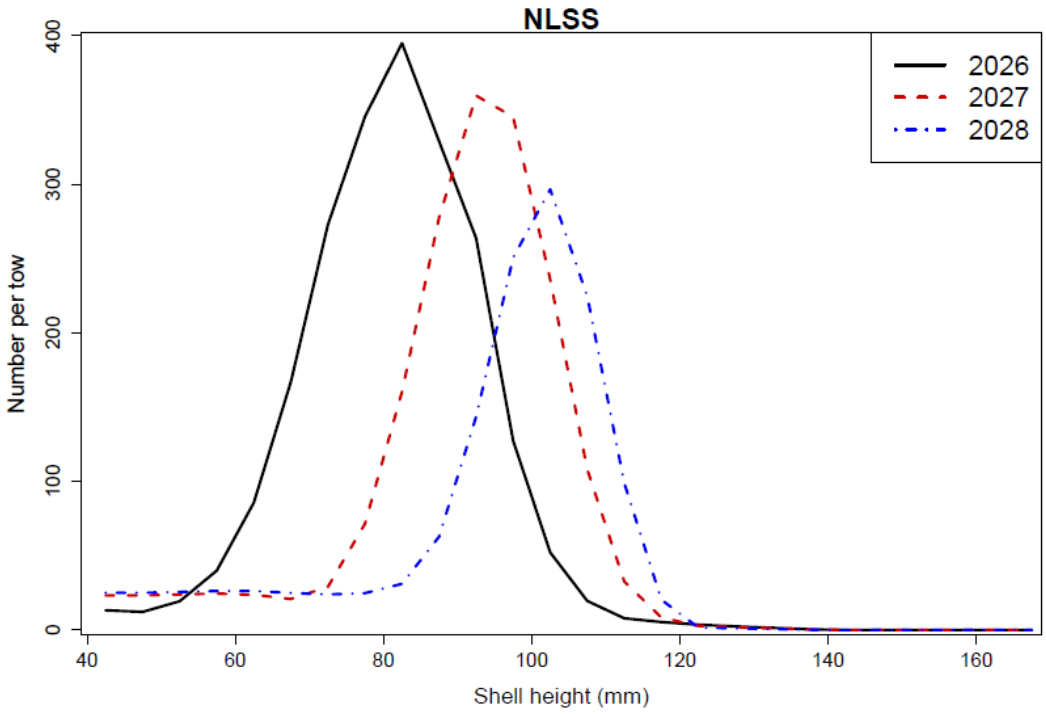
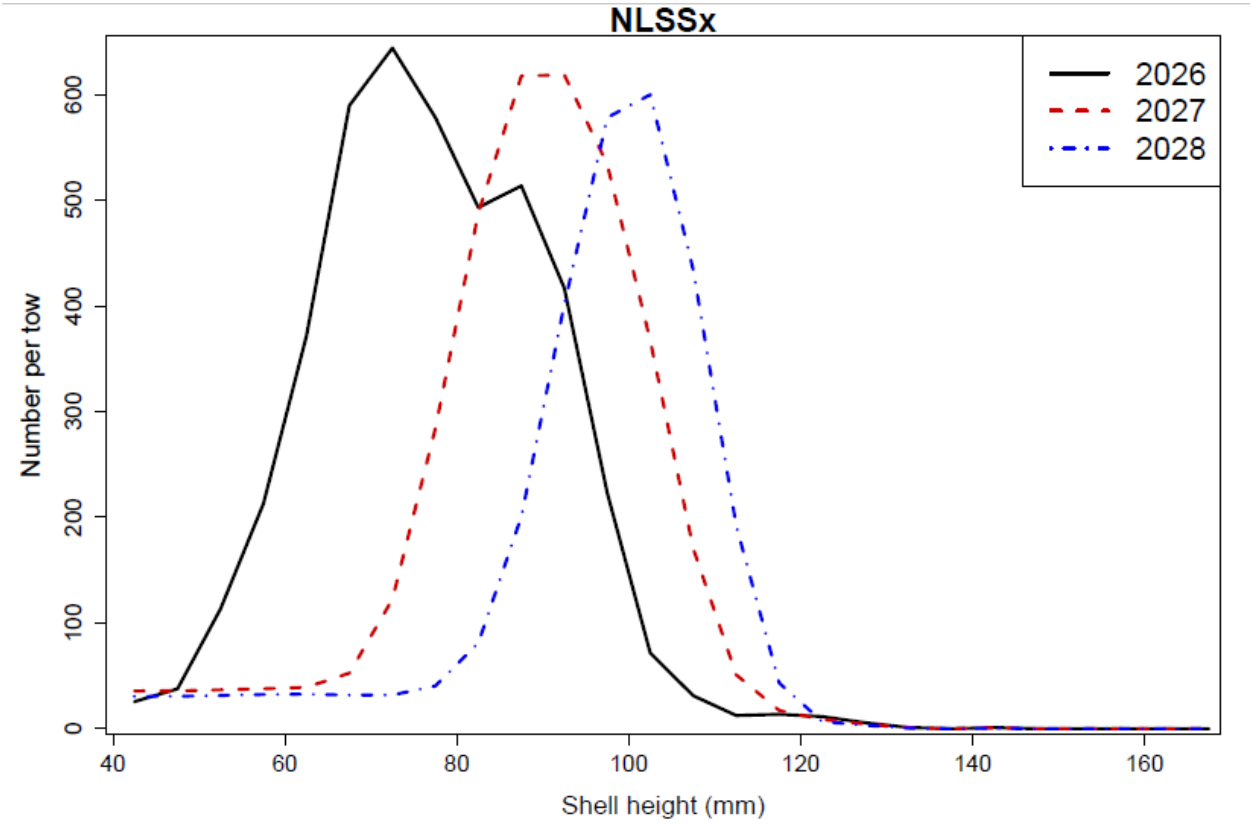


Figure 4 – Projected size frequency of scallops in the Nantucket Lightship Extension.



Access areas, trip limits, and total access area allocations for full-time and part-time Limited Access vessels; rotational closures for FY 2027

The Scallop PDT has developed and reviewed harvest projections for the range of access area allocations tasked by the Scallop Committee at the September 10th meeting (Table 1). This range of options results in two spatial management options, shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Part-time vessels receive 40% of FT LA allocations for both DAS and access area trips. The Committee can recommend where part-time vessels can fish their access area trips, possession limits, and how many trips PT vessels are allocated.

Scallop PDT Input: The PDT did not reach consensus and generally viewed the decision to allocate the Nantucket Lightship (South & North areas) as a policy tradeoff between maximizing future yield through an additional year of closure and allowing limited access area fishing in FY 2027. The PDT discussion reflected two primary perspectives on access area allocations for the Nantucket Lightship (North & South). Many preferred keeping the area closed for another year, emphasizing that much of the biomass remains relatively small and slow-growing, that discard and handling mortality on these thin-shelled scallops could be substantial if the area is opened prematurely, and that allowing additional growth may maximize future yield and allow for continuous access area harvest until the recent recruitment event in Area II becomes exploitable (i.e., the next potential access area). It was also noted that projected fishing mortality under all

analyzed scenarios is relatively low and that open-area fishing opportunities appear sufficient without relying on the Nantucket Lightship region. Others supported a limited opening of the area with a small trip limit, a delayed opening or seasonal closure to maximize yield, and the closure of the Nantucket Lightship Extension. It was noted that the area contains a substantial amount of exploitable biomass, that the proposed allocations would harvest only a small portion of that biomass, and that delaying harvest carries its own risks given uncertainty about future natural mortality and resource conditions. Proponents of this view suggested that a small opening, particularly if paired with continued closure of the Nantucket Lightship Extension and seasonal restrictions, could provide harvest opportunities while being appropriately conservative.

Scallop AP and Committee: Consider whether to allocate an access area trip to the Nantucket Lightship (South and/or North) in FY 2027. For specifications alternatives that include access area trip allocations, identify PT LA trip limits and access area allocations in FY 2027.

LAGC IFQ Access Area trip allocations

In Framework 34, LAGC IFQ access area trips were allocated proportional to the LA allocations in each access area, and distributed the LAGC IFQ Closed Area II trip allocation exclusively to Closed Area I. In Framework 36, the LAGC IFQ was able to access the NLS-North as an access area, and the total number of trips were allocated between Area II and the NLS-North. In Framework 38 and Framework 39, there were not a specific number of trips allocated to Area I, Area II, or the New York Bight, but rather, vessels would be able to fish in any of these areas and trips would be counted against the total trip allocation.

Scallop PDT Input: As only one area is being considered for access area fishing in FY 2027, the PDT did not make any specific recommendation regarding the distribution of LAGC IFQ access area trip allocations.

Scallop AP and Committee: If there are specifications alternatives being considered that include access area trip allocations, identify how LAGC IFQ access area trips should be distributed in FY 2027.

Figure 5 – GARFO Quota Monitoring, updated October 15, 2026.

Limited Access sub-ACL

	OPEN	CA I	CA II	MONTHLY TOTAL	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	% OF SUB-ACL (25,059,945 lb)	% OF APL (16,140,042 lb)	Observer Set Aside
April	3,683,643	133,149	0	3,816,792	3,816,792	**15.23%**	**23.65%**	**26,000**
May	3,929,768	375,577	128,283	4,433,628	8,250,420	**32.92%**	**51.12%**	**23,140**
June	3,186,615	79,970	254,329	3,520,914	11,771,334	**46.97%**	**72.93%**	**23,920**
July	2,462,307	0	146,604	2,608,911	14,380,245	**57.38%**	**89.1%**	**16,900**
August	2,319,800	0	0	2,319,800	16,700,045	**66.64%**	**103.47%**	**28,080**
September	1,809,056	0	0	1,809,056	18,509,101	**73.86%**	**114.68%**	**13,780**
October	439,334	0	0	439,334	18,948,435	**75.61%**	**117.4%**	**0**
TOTAL	**17,830,523**	**588,696**	**529,216**	**18,948,435**				**131,820**

Limited Access General Category sub-ACL

	OPEN	NGOM	MONTHLY TOTAL (ACL)	CUMULATIVE TOTAL (ACL)	% OF SUB-ACL (1,324,978 lb)	CUMULATIVE TOTAL (APL)	% APL (853,923 lb)	Observer Set Aside
April	39,836	166,097	39,836	**39,836**	**3.01%**	205,933	**24.12%**	6,325
May	102,797	0	102,797	**142,633**	**10.76%**	308,730	**36.15%**	2,000
June	117,452	0	117,452	**260,085**	**19.63%**	426,182	**49.91%**	3,700
July	86,855	0	86,855	**346,940**	**26.18%**	513,037	**60.08%**	4,800
August	75,298	0	75,298	**422,238**	**31.87%**	588,335	**68.9%**	2,700
September	32,121	0	32,121	**454,359**	**34.29%**	620,456	**72.66%**	1,800
October	11,688	0	11,688	**466,047**	**35.17%**	632,144	**74.03%**	200
TOTAL	**466,047**	**166,097**	**466,047**					**21,525**

* ACL/APL does not include 66,223 Carryover pounds

Table 5 – Projected 2026 biomass, exploitable biomass, and catch by area. Catch assumes F=0.36 for the Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank, and F=0.29 for the GOM.

Region	**Biomass (lbs)**	**Exploitable Biomass (lbs)**	**ABC (GB/MA F=0.36; GOM F=0.29) (lbs)**
HCS	13,871,486	9,631,996	2,586,022
VIR	22,046	0	0
ET	15,580,068	9,435,785	2,306,035
DMV	467,380	132,277	41,888
NYB	8,626,688	5,108,111	1,724,015
LI + BI	11,428,764	7,458,238	2,400,834
MAB-Inshore	238,099	2,205	11,023
MAB TOTAL	**50,234,531**	**31,768,612**	**9,072,022**
CA1-N	3,959,502	1,779,130	588,634
CA1-Mid	1,221,361	659,182	176,370
CA2-N	8,450,319	6,472,772	1,514,576
CA2-S	27,641,558	2,295,012	826,733
CA2-Ext	6,168,534	2,204,623	575,407
NLS-W	434,311	253,532	70,548
NLS-N	2,081,164	1,336,001	359,353
NLS-S	31,067,542	12,868,382	4,713,483
NLS-Ext	29,850,590	11,084,843	4,248,308
GSC	11,655,840	6,560,957	1,843,065
NF	3,538,419	1,113,334	427,697
SF	17,994,130	8,880,220	2,649,956
GB TOTAL	**144,065,474**	**55,507,988**	**17,991,925**
Stell-S	1,058,219	762,799	180,779
Stell-NGOM	1,750,470	1,020,740	291,010
Jeffreys	595,248	500,449	110,231
NGOM-Other	1,084,674	923,737	202,825
GOM-Closed	7,004,086	6,115,623	1,148,608
GOM TOTAL	**10,937,133**	**9,323,349**	**1,931,249**

3. Full-Time Limited Access (LA) days-at-sea (DAS) or an associated target open area fishing mortality (F) rate.

The Scallop PDT analyzed the range of DAS allocations tasked by the Scallop Committee. Table 6 shows the full-time Limited Access DAS allocation, open area landings, DAS used, and open area LPUE from FY 2021 through October 7, 2026.

Table 6 – Open area fishing mortality by SAMS area and DAS allocation.

SAMS Area	20 DAS	24 DAS	28 DAS	32 DAS	36 DAS	40 DAS	No Action (27 DAS)
HCS	0.48	0.57	0.65	0.72	0.8	0.88	0.63
Virginia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elephant Trunk	0.32	0.37	0.43	0.48	0.53	0.58	0.42
Delmarva	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
NYB	0.31	0.36	0.42	0.47	0.52	0.56	0.41
Long Island	0.17	0.2	0.23	0.26	0.28	0.31	0.22
MAB Inshore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA1 – Sliver	0.19	0.22	0.25	0.28	0.32	0.35	0.25
CA1 – Access	0.08	0.1	0.11	0.12	0.14	0.15	0.11
NLS – West	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.02
GSC	0.15	0.18	0.21	0.23	0.26	0.28	0.2
Northern Flank	0.1	0.12	0.14	0.15	0.17	0.18	0.13
Southern Flank	0.29	0.33	0.38	0.43	0.47	0.52	0.37
Stellwagen South	0.22	0.25	0.29	0.32	0.36	0.39	0.28

Table 7 – Average open area LPUE (lb per day) by month and fishing year (source: GARFO Quota Monitoring). *Values reported as of October 15, 2026.

FY	FT LA DAS	Open Area Landings	DAS used	Open Area LPUE
2021	24	17,599,512	8,228	2,139
2022	24	15,540,752	7,431	2,091
2023	24	13,815,448	7,476	1,848
2024	20	5,606,305	6,092	920
2025	24	11,970,337	8,244	1,452
2026	36	17,830,523*	8,881*	2,008*

Scallop PDT Input: The PDT recommends consideration of a range of DAS from 28-40, due to the reasonable open area fishing mortality rates that are at or below what the Council has considered in previous years. PDT members agreed that 20 and 24 DAS options were unnecessarily restrictive given projected exploitable biomass and LPUE, and that the allocation of DAS should be considered alongside any Nantucket Lightship allocation to maintain stability in scallop landings.

Scallop AP and Committee: Refine the range of FY 2027 DAS allocations considered for further analysis.

4. Default Measures for FY 2028

The Scallop FMP has adopted standard default measures for setting out-year default allocation for the LA and LAGC IFQ.

1. *Default specifications*: Set DAS and LAGC IFQ quotas at 75% or previous year's allocations.
2. Allocate 5.5% of default access area allocations to the LAGC IFQ component for access area fishing.

The Council did not recommend allocating any access area trips as part of default allocations in FW40.

Scallop PDT Input: Given the current uncertainty and limited opportunities for access area fishing in 2027, the PDT does not recommend allocating access area trips as part of FY 2028 default measures.

Scallop AP and Committee: You may wish to identify Access Areas to be included as part of 2028 default measures.

5. FY 2027 and FY 2028 (default) NGOM TAL and Set-Aside values

The process established for setting the NGOM TAL in Amendment 21 is as follows:

1. Calculate the ABC for the NGOM based on exploitable biomass from areas surveyed inside of the management unit that are not permanently closed (e.g., inside Western GOM).

2. Calculate NGOM Total Allowable Landings based on F rate prescribed by the Council. The Committee recommended variations fishing at F=0.15 to F=0.25 using all open exploitable biomass in the NGOM. These values are shown in row C.

3. To calculate the NGOM Set-Asides (row F) and determine if there will be a LA or LAGC IFQ share added to the APL, the TAL (row C) is reduced by 1% of the NGOM ABC to support observer coverage (row D), and 25,000 lbs that are added to the overall RSA (row E). Overall, the NGOM Set-Aside was calculated as: F = C – D – E for each option.

4. For FY 2027, all NGOM Set-Aside (row F) options under consideration are less than 800,000 lb. If this weren't the case, 5% of the NGOM Set-Aside above 800,000 lb would be available as NGOM set-aside and the remaining 95% would be available to the LA and LAGC IFQ component as part of the overall APL.

5. The Council will consider setting NGOM default measures for FY 2028. Two options are presented below: 75% of the FY 2026 NGOM set-aside (row G), and 50% (row H) of the NGOM set-aside. The AP and Committee should be ready to recommend a FY 2027 default approach at your next meeting, or to task the PDT to develop more options.

Table 8. NGOM Total Allowable Landings for range of fishing mortality rates.

	NGOM 2027 Exploitable Biomass	**2027 (lbs)**						
	Stellwagen-NGOM	1,020,740						
	Jeffreys	500,449						
	NGOM-Other	923,737						
B	*ABC (F=0.29 all NGOM areas)*	1,750,470						
	Fishing Mortality Rate	50% of FY26 (No Action)	0.15	0.17	0.19	0.21 (Status Quo)	0.23	0.25
	Area(s) Fished	All open NGOM						
C	*Total Allowable Landings (lb)*	262,640	321,875	359,353	396,832	434,311	469,585	504,859
D	*1% NGOM ABC for Observers*	17,505	17,505	17,505	17,505	17,505	17,505	17,505
E	*RSA Contribution*	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
F	*NGOM Set-Aside*	220,135	279,380	316,848	354,327	391,806	427,080	462,354
G	*Deduction for 2025 overage*	-7,149	-7,149	-7,149	-7,149	-7,149	-7,149	-7,149
H	*FY 2027 NGOM Set-Aside*	212,986	272,221	309,699	347,178	384,657	419,931	455,205
	FY 2028 (Default) NGOM Set-Aside	N/A						

Scallop PDT Input: The PDT recommends a fishing mortality rate no higher than status quo (F=0.21) due to greater uncertainty in survey biomass estimates and declines in the exploitable scallop biomass on Stellwagen Bank. The PDT notes that the majority of biomass in the Stellwagen region appeared to be located off the bank, in an area that was not covered by optical survey effort. There was agreement that while fishing effort in FY 2027 would likely be more dispersed than in previous years, it would likely still be highest on Stellwagen Bank within the NGOM. The PDT also recommended a default NGOM Set-Aside of 50% of the previous year's set-aside to avoid a scenario where the default is greater than updated specifications.

Scallop AP and Committee: You may wish to recommend a FY 2028 default approach, or to task the PDT to develop more options.

6. Where Scallop RSA compensation fishing can occur in FY 2027 and FY 2028

Scallop PDT Input: The PDT did not recommend allowing RSA compensation fishing to occur in a potential Nantucket Lightship access area in FY 2027.

Scallop AP and Committee:

1. **How much RSA to set-aside for FY 2027 and FY 2028 (default)?**
    a. The starting position is that 1.25 million pounds are set-aside, deducted from the Annual Projected Landings (APL), with an additional 25,000 pounds deducted from the NGOM Total Allowable Landings, for a total of 1.275 million pounds.
2. **Where can RSA compensation fishing occur in FY 2027 and FY 2028 (default)?**
    a. The starting position is that RSA compensation fishing can only happen in open areas, and in some years the Council has allowed RSA compensation fishing in access areas.

For FY 2025, the Council recommended allowing RSA compensation fishing in the open bottom and in Area I and Area II, with up to 50% of the RSA compensation harvest coming from access areas. Up to 25,000 lbs can come from the NGOM management unit. For FY 2026, there were no available access areas, and RSA compensation fishing was limited to the open bottom.

Figure 6 - LPUE by Month (LA), updated October 2, 2026

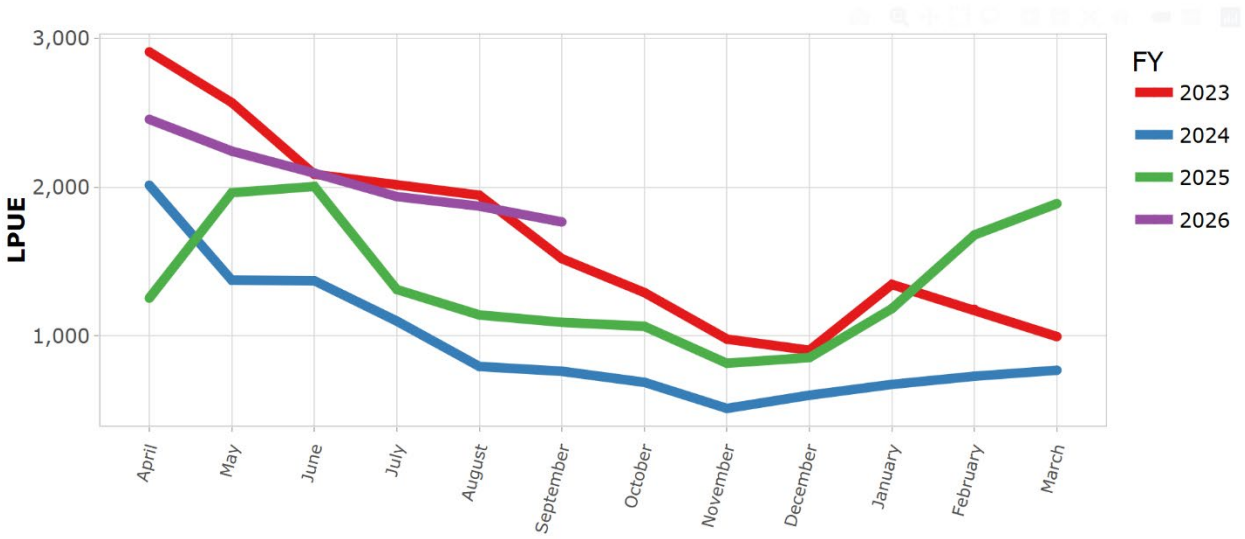


Figure 7 – Scallop landings by month (LA), updated October 2, 2026

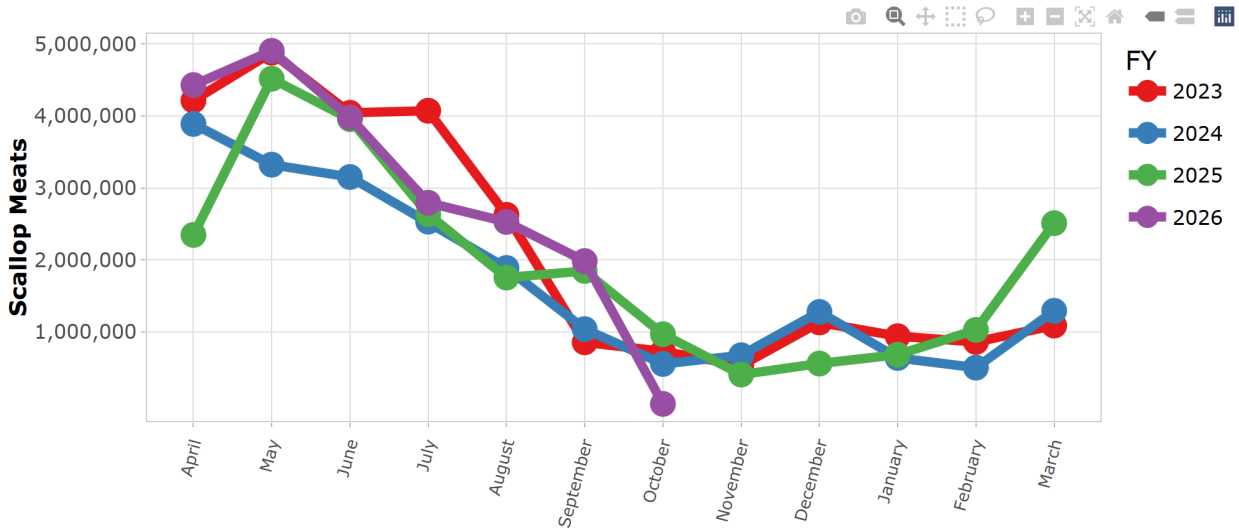


Figure 8 – Open area days fished (LA), updated October 2, 2026

