



NOAA
FISHERIES

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team

July 1, 2021 Meeting

Day 2 of 2

Facilitators: Consensus Building Institute

Bennett Brooks

David Plumb

Elizabeth Cooper

Agenda

Day 2

3:00 - 3:30	Recap of day 1, review additional data	Marisa & Burton
3:30 - 4:20	Questions and revisions to scoping list	
4:20 - 4:35	Break	
4:35 - 5:05	ALWTRT Breakout Groups	
5:05 - 5:20	Debrief Breakout Groups	CBI
5:20 - 5:45	Menti polls and scoping list review	CBI
5:45 - 6:00	Wrap up and public comments	

Groundrules for Team members



Discussion protocols:

- Contribute
- Share time
- Ask questions of one another
- Integrate

-Not seeking consensus advice at this meeting
-Focus is on brainstorming potential measures
-DST is very much a work-in-progress

To contribute to the discussion:

- Raise a virtual “hand”
- Use “Chat” sparingly and thoughtfully
- Alternates engage as public unless sitting in for primary

We encourage you to
keep your cameras on
and stay on mute
unless speaking

Groundrules for Public Attendees



Discussion protocols:

- **Input welcome during public comment portion** on both days
 - Share thoughts in chat or via comment during that time
- **Please remain on mute and refrain from using chat at other times**
- Intent is to **manage public input as if we were all in room together**
| will adapt as needed

To contribute during Public Comment period:

- Raise a virtual “hand”

OTHER TRAP/POT

GEAR CONFIGURATION

RI: 1 line per 5 pots (increase max)

RI: Minimum traps/ trawl (currently no min)

Gear config+ line strength: As opposed trawling up, how low a breaking strength could a single pot line go

Trawl up similar to what Lobster does, weak line/inserts

MA: Two pot minimum traps/trawl in fish and whelk

Consider the lobster trap proposed rule as one alternative for other pot fisheries (subject to some modifications for the specific fisheries)

MA: 1 line per 5 pots (increase max)

LINE STRENGTH

ALL: Weak inserts every ~40-60 feet OR fully formed 1700lb line throughout the whole end line.

Limit all endlines to 1/2 inch to distinguish from other countries gear

ALL: 1,700 lb inserts similar to proposed rule.

MA specific weak rope regulations for state waters (fully formed or a weak insertion every 60 ft)

Other

Develop consequences of a documented U.S. take (so greater than 0.8/year) on the specific (if known) or all U.S. commercial fisheries

TRAP LIMITS

SE- state by state trap limits for oceanside blue crab

RI- Reduce fish pot limits (total traps)

Cap effort for fisheries not already capped

Reduce trap limit in whelk fishery, from 200 to 150 or 100

GILLNETS

GEAR CONFIGURATION

RI: Increase nets per string in large mesh (fed monks and winter skate) by distance from shore (out 20 30 10/string, beyond 15/string for eg.)

ALL?: Do a nets per string minim #s by distance from shore similar to TPs

Regionally: minimum length of net strings

Groundfish gillnet has a total length restriction; check other fisheries; may affect trawling up

Cap effort for fisheries not already capped

Fully ropeless gear

Evaluate 8 lb anchor if requiring weak rope or weak inserts at 1700 lbs for small boats. Ask Locke for more input

Hybrid gear (ie one end ropeless, other end weak rope)

MidATL: Might be able to go to a smaller weak link (less than 1100lb), if using a smaller anchor (8lb). Currently small boat, 5/16th end line. Currently 17 or 22 lb anchors req?

LINE STRENGTH

ALL: 1,700 lb inserts similar to proposed rule.

ALL: Consider full weak line or weak inserts every ~40 to 60 feet throughout the range

Operational feasibility- make sure 1700lb can haul up anchor

Immediate removal of lines larger than ~1/2 to 5/8; test for anchors

Limit all US endlines to 1/2 inch to help identify US vs other countries

SOAK TIME

RI, ME: Shorter soak time

NJ: prohibition of overnight gillnet soaks State waters

IF considered: analyze soak time by category if in NE: Trip vs Day vs. target sp. Tough on trip boats

Develop consequences of a documented U.S. take (so greater than 0.8/year) on the specific (if known) or all U.S. commercial fisheries

Question- is this in hours or fishing days?

SEASONAL RESTRICTED AREA

OTHER TRAP/POT

ALL: Ropeless fishing in existing closures

SE: Include BSB closures in ALWTRP

BOTH

NE: Re-evaluate area/time of GSCRA (all gear?)



Expand GSC closure to shoulder months

NE: Large South Island RA from proposed rule 11/1 - May 30

GILLNET

SE: Re-evaluate timing and area of SERA N/S, including exemptions

MA: Extend CCB closure similar to MA State

Extend MA state waters closure to gillnets. New closure area up to NH border.

MA is likely going to extend our seasonal state waters closure to gillnets too. Until May 15 unless right whales not seen in the area. We also have the ability to extend past May 15 by emergency action.

Dynamic Management

Seasonal or real time predictions and real time management as we explore a flexible regulatory scheme. Possibly just gillnets if they are more flexible in relocating gear

Develop consequences of a documented U.S. take (so greater than 0.8/year) on the specific (if known) or all U.S. commercial fisheries

Not great for TP fisheries, but gillnets are more mobile



Outstanding

Depth model for DST: Humpbacks on top or bottom (Wiley) NARW in CCB where food is, affected by thermocline; on bottom in spring, early, then upper 203 meters in May

Absent data-model worst case

EXEMPT AREAS

Maintain exempted area in Long Island sound

New DST Analyses

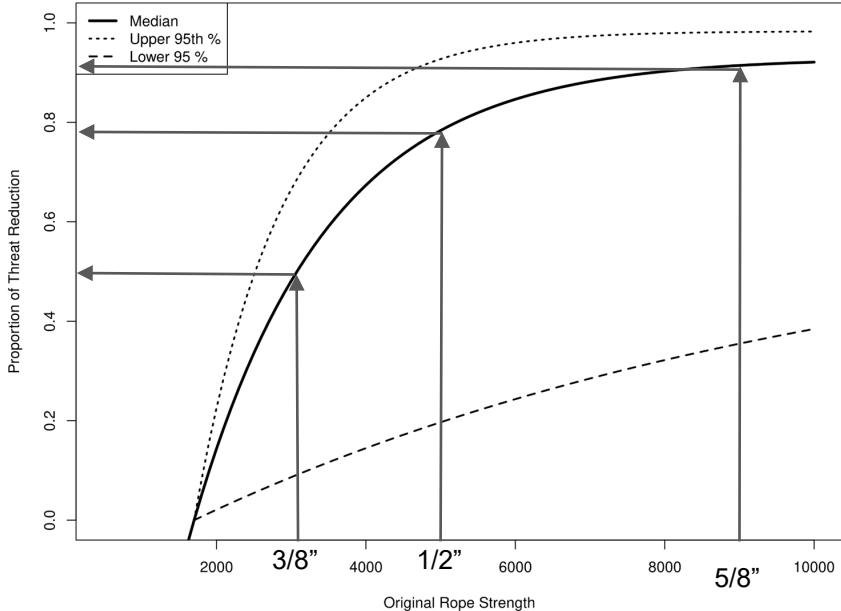
- A few follow-up analyses
 - Risk characterizations
 - Limited combinations of different measure types
- Caveats:
 - Need to improve gear characterization in model to evaluate configuration changes
 - Still limited to federal fisheries (mostly) but we will update all analyses to include state data
 - All values are still preliminary estimates



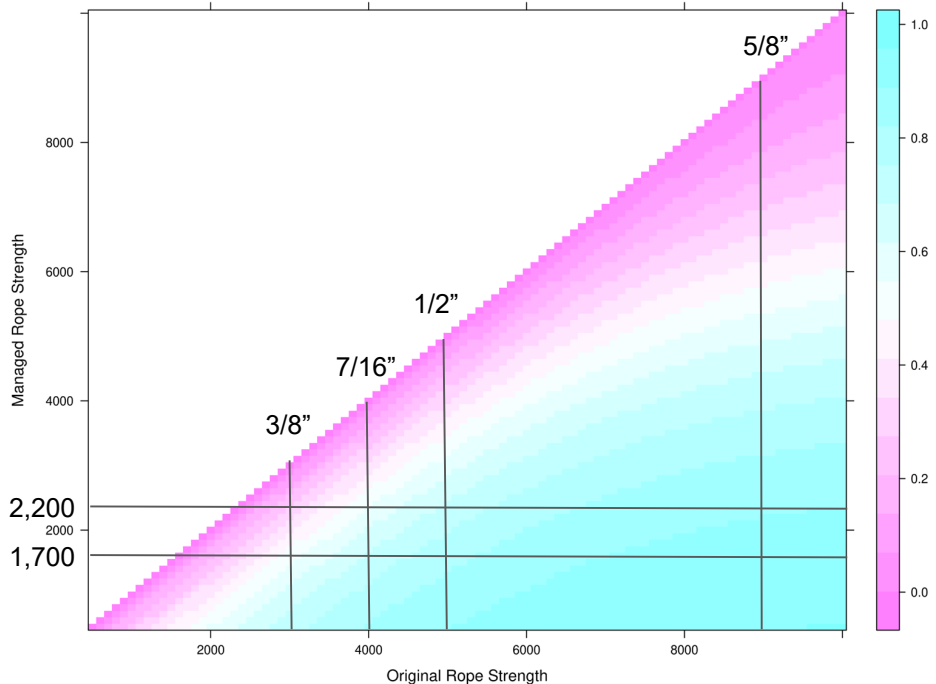
Photo credit: Christin Khan, NEFSC

Rope Threat Estimates

Example Threat Reductions Associated With Changing To 1,700lb Weak Rope

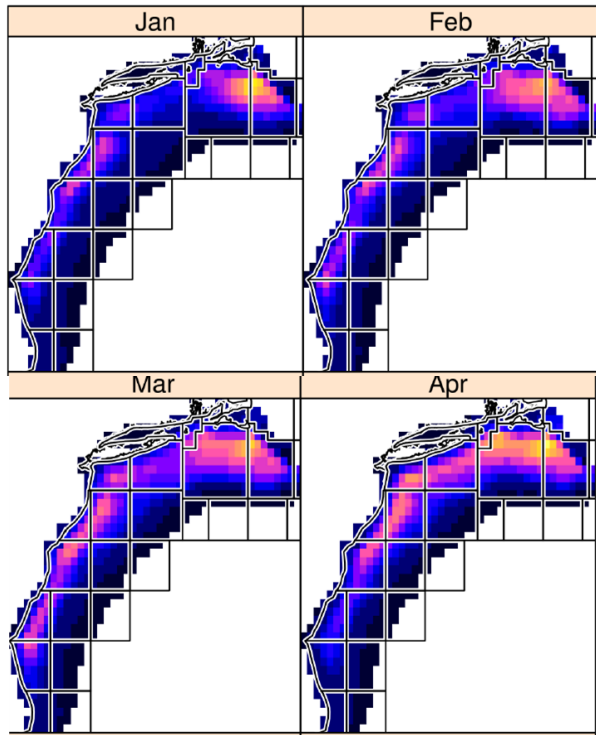


Modeled Threat Reduction Given Original and Managed Rope Strengths

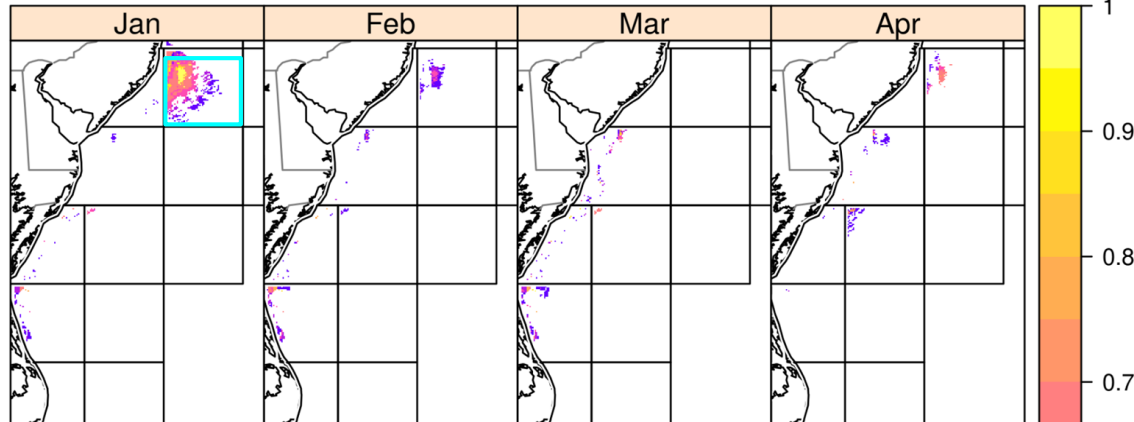


Mid-Atlantic Hot Spots

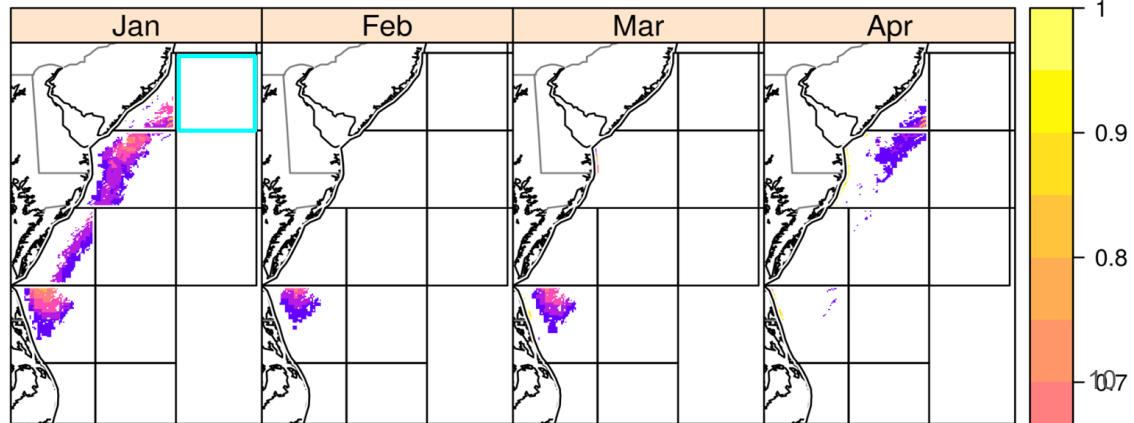
Whale Habitat Score



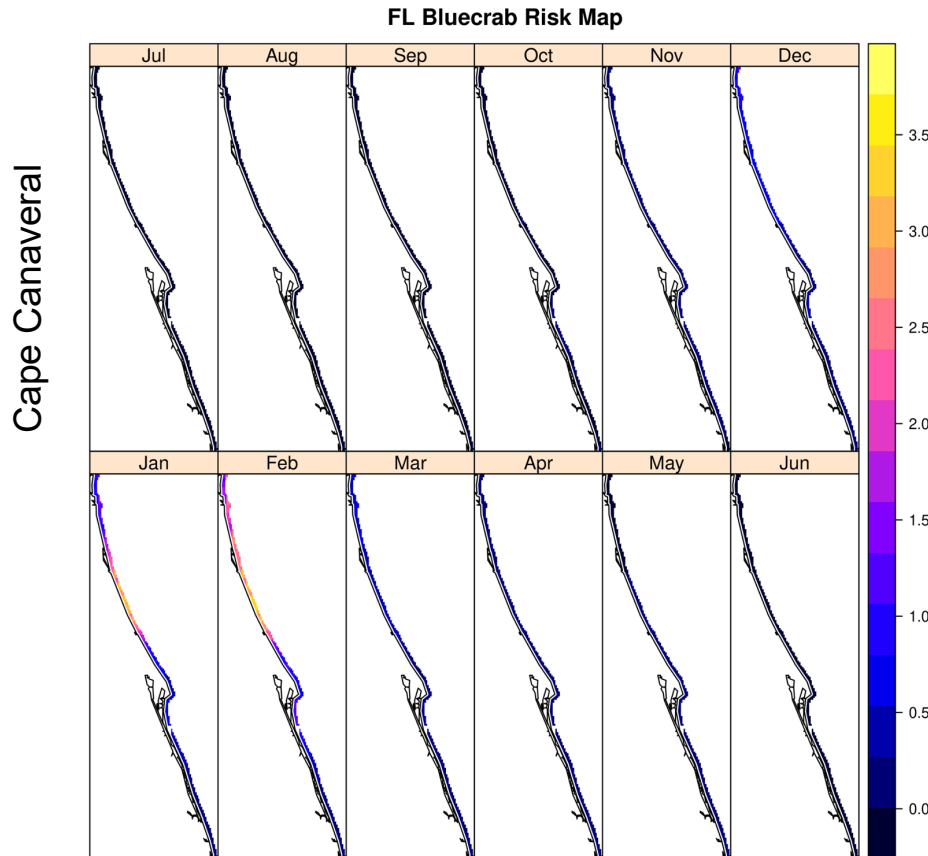
Top 60% of risk within ALL OTP



Top 60% of risk within ALL gillnet



Florida Blue Crab Baseline Seasonality

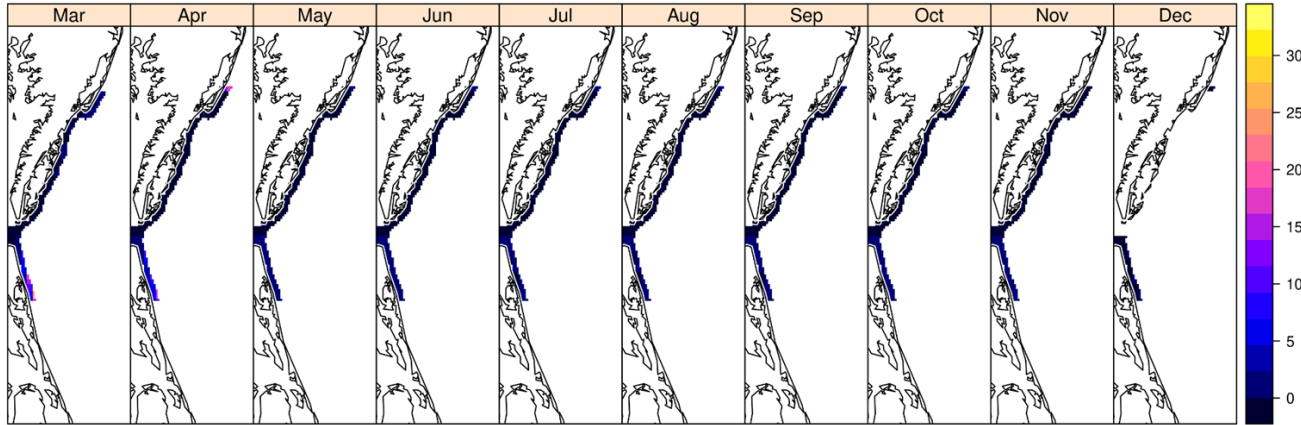


Month	Fishing Effort	Whales Presence	FL Blue Crab Co-oc
1	5.2%	39.2%	32.8%
2	7.0%	39.1%	43.6%
3	6.2%	9.3%	9.2%
4	6.5%	0.9%	1.0%
5	9.1%	0.2%	0.3%
6	12.8%	0.0%	0.0%
7	8.2%	0.0%	0.0%
8	8.4%	0.0%	0.0%
9	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%
10	10.5%	0.1%	0.1%
11	8.0%	1.1%	1.4%
12	7.2%	10.2%	11.8%

Single pots, 1,500 lb line

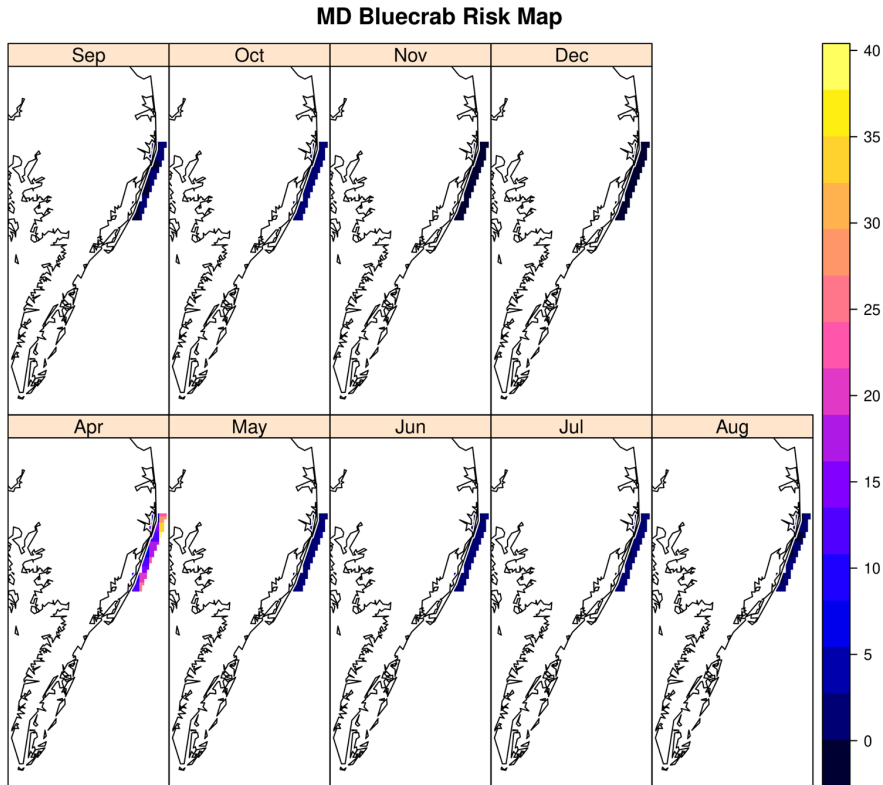
VA Blue Crab Baseline Seasonality

VA Bluecrab Risk Map



Month	Fishing Effort	Whales Presence	VA Blue Crab Co-oc
1	0.0%	24.9%	0.0%
2	0.0%	30.9%	0.0%
3	3.8%	20.8%	40.2%
4	13.4%	4.5%	40.2%
5	17.4%	0.7%	8.8%
6	14.4%	0.2%	1.8%
7	15.8%	0.1%	0.8%
8	12.8%	0.1%	0.5%
9	10.2%	0.1%	1.1%
10	9.0%	0.3%	2.4%
11	3.4%	2.2%	3.9%
12	0.0%	15.1%	0.2%

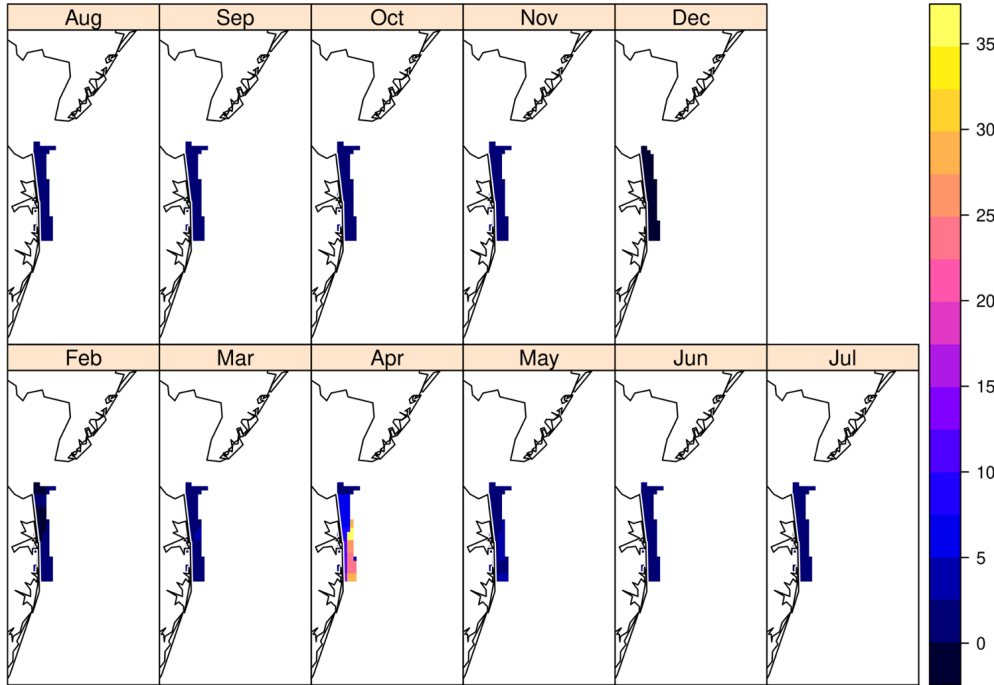
MD Blue Crab Baseline



Month	Fishing Effort	Whales Presence	MD Blue Crab Co-oc
1	0.0%	25.1%	0.0%
2	0.0%	27.9%	0.0%
3	0.0%	21.6%	0.0%
4	14.4%	6.5%	90.3%
5	16.8%	0.4%	6.8%
6	19.3%	0.1%	1.1%
7	19.4%	0.0%	0.5%
8	15.7%	0.0%	0.3%
9	9.6%	0.0%	0.3%
10	5.0%	0.1%	0.5%
11	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%
12	0.0%	16.5%	0.1%

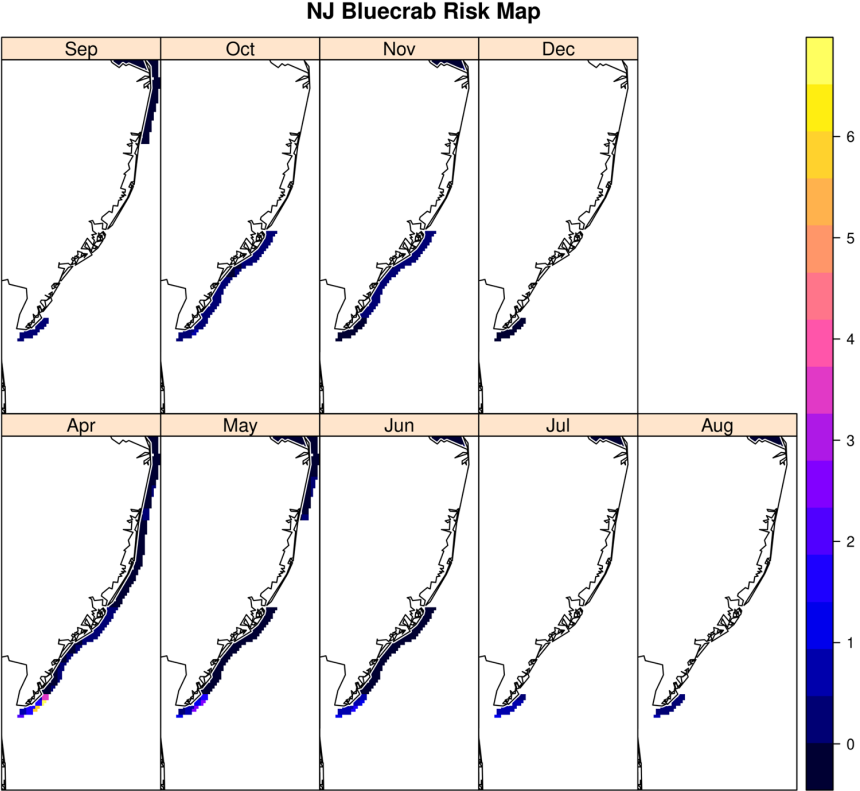
DE Blue Crab Baseline Seasonality

DE Bluecrab Risk Map



Month	Fishing Effort	Whales Presence	DE Blue Crab Co-oc
1	0.0%	26.0%	0.0%
2	0.0%	30.2%	0.3%
3	0.4%	18.6%	7.7%
4	9.4%	5.6%	72.3%
5	13.5%	0.6%	10.7%
6	16.8%	0.1%	2.8%
7	20.0%	0.1%	1.2%
8	18.9%	0.0%	0.9%
9	13.8%	0.1%	1.2%
10	6.7%	0.2%	1.7%
11	0.5%	2.0%	1.1%
12	0.0%	16.3%	0.0%

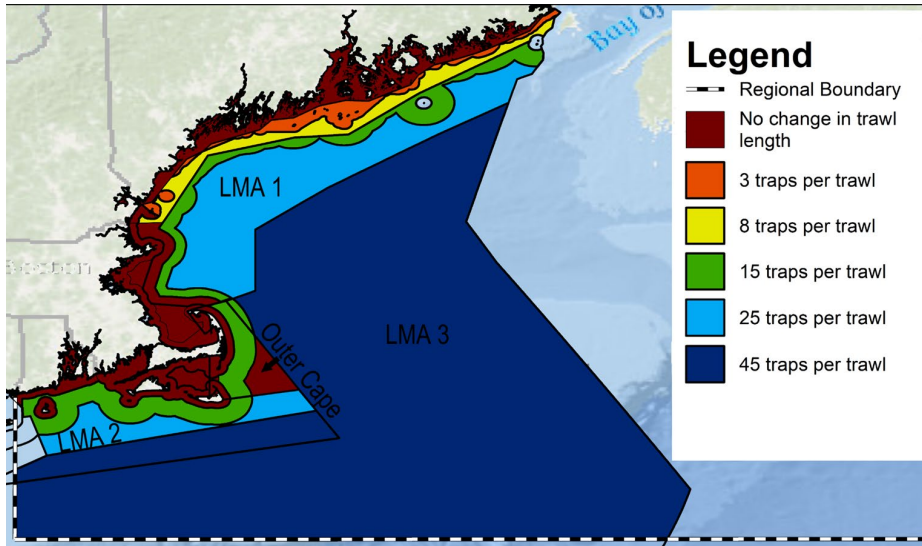
NJ Blue Crab Baseline Seasonality



Month	Fishing Effort	Whales Presence	NJ Blue Crab Co-oc
1	0.0%	23.8%	0.0%
2	0.0%	26.8%	0.0%
3	0.0%	22.9%	0.0%
4	13.3%	7.9%	37.9%
5	15.6%	1.0%	17.9%
6	18.3%	0.2%	12.1%
7	18.4%	0.1%	9.3%
8	14.8%	0.1%	4.5%
9	9.4%	0.1%	2.8%
10	7.0%	0.2%	5.4%
11	3.1%	2.3%	10.1%
12	0.0%	14.7%	0.0%

Federal fish pots: Northeast trap/pot proposed rule

- Minimum trawl length
- Restricted Areas
- Weak Inserts
- With MA new measures



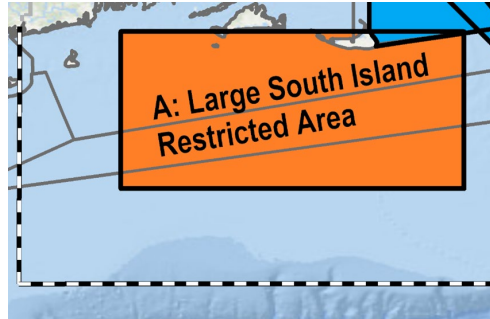
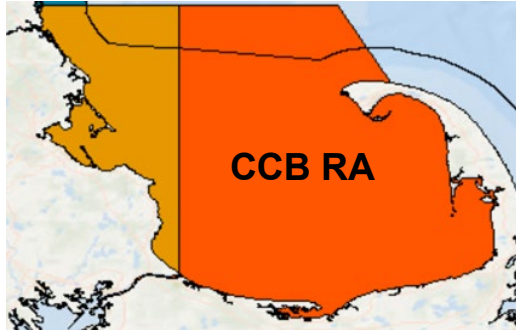
Final Relative Risk Scores – Mean Threat

Variable	Month	Default	Scenario	Reduction
1 RelativeRisk_Threat	1	3.52	1.89	46.3 %
2 RelativeRisk_Threat	2	3.86	1.92	50.2 %
3 RelativeRisk_Threat	3	1.33	0.40	70.1 %
4 RelativeRisk_Threat	4	10.35	7.66	25.9 %
5 RelativeRisk_Threat	5	6.36	3.60	43.5 %
6 RelativeRisk_Threat	6	0.73	0.52	28.3 %
7 RelativeRisk_Threat	7	0.55	0.34	37 %
8 RelativeRisk_Threat	8	0.56	0.35	36.4 %
9 RelativeRisk_Threat	9	0.49	0.32	34.5 %
10 RelativeRisk_Threat	10	0.29	0.18	37.8 %
11 RelativeRisk_Threat	11	1.31	0.78	40.3 %
12 RelativeRisk_Threat	12	3.71	1.96	47.2 %
13 RelativeRisk_Threat	Total	33.05	19.93	39.7 %

*Relative to NE Federal Fish Pots only

Coastwide Federal Gillnet Risk Reduction

- Current Cape Cod Bay Restricted Area with eastern expansion: Jan-May 31
- Large South Island Restricted Area: Jan 1 - May 31
- Full length 1,700 lb rope



- Restricting buoy lines in the mid-Atlantic from January through April gets up to a 17% co-occurrence reduction
 - Consider rolling restricted area in mid-Atlantic?

	Risk reduction with net panels*	Co-occurrence Reduction
January	69%	19%
February	67%	12%
March	64%	7%
April	67%	12%
May	73%	27%
June	62%	0%
July	61%	0%
August	61%	0%
September	61%	0%
October	61%	0%
November	61%	0%
December	62%	0%
Total	67%	13%

*Net risk characterization is not complete

Questions?



Team Discussion

What other potential measures might the Agency bring to scoping? For gillnets? For other trap-pot gear?

Break



Breakout Groups

Which gear groups / regions would benefit from having additional measures to take to scoping? What might those measures be?

- Initial polling question
- Facilitated cross-caucus breakout groups for further discussion

Polling question for Team members only

Team members and alternates invited to breakout groups

Debrief key discussion points in plenary

Taking a Temperature Check on the Ideas Under Discussion

Elicit Team feedback on possible measures under discussion using quick Menti polls

- Only Team members to participate in polls
- Polls intended to get a quick read on Team alignment
 - Help Agency characterize support in scoping sessions
 - Not intended to limit ideas being brought to scoping
- Brief opportunity to discuss results

Next Steps

1. Schedule and prepare for scoping
2. Scoping August - September (tentative, starting with ASMFC meeting first week of August)
3. Share the scoping slide deck recording before posting for comments (tentative)
4. Early November meeting

