

#607

ADDITIONAL
CORRESPONDENCE
Related to Mussel Fishery



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September 18, 2018

Dr., Nies,
Executive Director
NEFMC
50 Water St.
Newburyport, Ma. 01950

Dear Dr., Nies,

I am writing to request that the Council entertain, at the meeting on September 24-27, 2018, the proposal submitted by Domenic Santoro for a mussel fishery exemption in the NW quadrant of the HMA (see attached). This proposal was developed, at your direction in a letter dated 6-25-18, by Michelle Bachman and Domenic and submitted for consideration at the Habitat committee meeting in Wakefield, Ma 8-28-18. It somehow got twisted into an EFP application and got side railed. This appeal is following the suggestion of Michelle in a mail dated September 4, 2018 on which you and Dr. Kellogg were copied. In that mail it is suggested that we ...” lobby the council to consider an exemption as part of the framework...”

At the PDT meeting today, Dr. Powell made several points that I believe support the position that a mussel fishery could take place within the HMA and not adversely impact habitat:

1. Mussels do not correlate with cobble. They use small sand grains to attach to.
2. The dominant factor impacting habitat in the HMA is sand movement. Dredging impacts are minimal in comparison.
3. Mussels recruit mussels.

There are probably a lot more mussels in the HMA that the survey work did not identify, or an active fishery would remove. The fishery would not remove them because of poor market quality, the beds were not found, or the beds were not dense enough to fish. These mussels would remain in the HMA and recruit more mussels.

I appreciated your willingness to entertain this request.

Sincerely,


Bill Silkes

165 Tidal Drive, North Kingstown, RI 02852 tel: (401)294-8999 ~ fax: (401)294-0449

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CHATHAM LIGHT SEAFOOD

September 19, 2018

Dr. Quinn
Chairman NEFMC



I am writing today requesting the NEFMC consider a mussel fishery exemption in the GSC HMA at the September council meeting. I believe any potential mussel fishery exemption should be in the form of an LOA from NMFS and should include both VMS and trip reporting components. Any vessel given an LOA to harvest mussels in the HMA should be equipped with a mussel declumper so that any undersized mussels and sediments are returned overboard.

Based on a directive dated June 25th from executive director Tom Nies, I have worked closely with Michelle Bachman to develop areas for possible mussel fishery exemption based on; historically fished areas, information from other fishermen, and first hand knowledge. The map attached shows a potential mussel exemption in the northwest corner of the HMA. Thanks to captain Mark Rynasiewicz we were able to establish This is an area historically fished for mussels. I know there is some mussels there today based on information from fixed gear fishermen and The Powell survey.

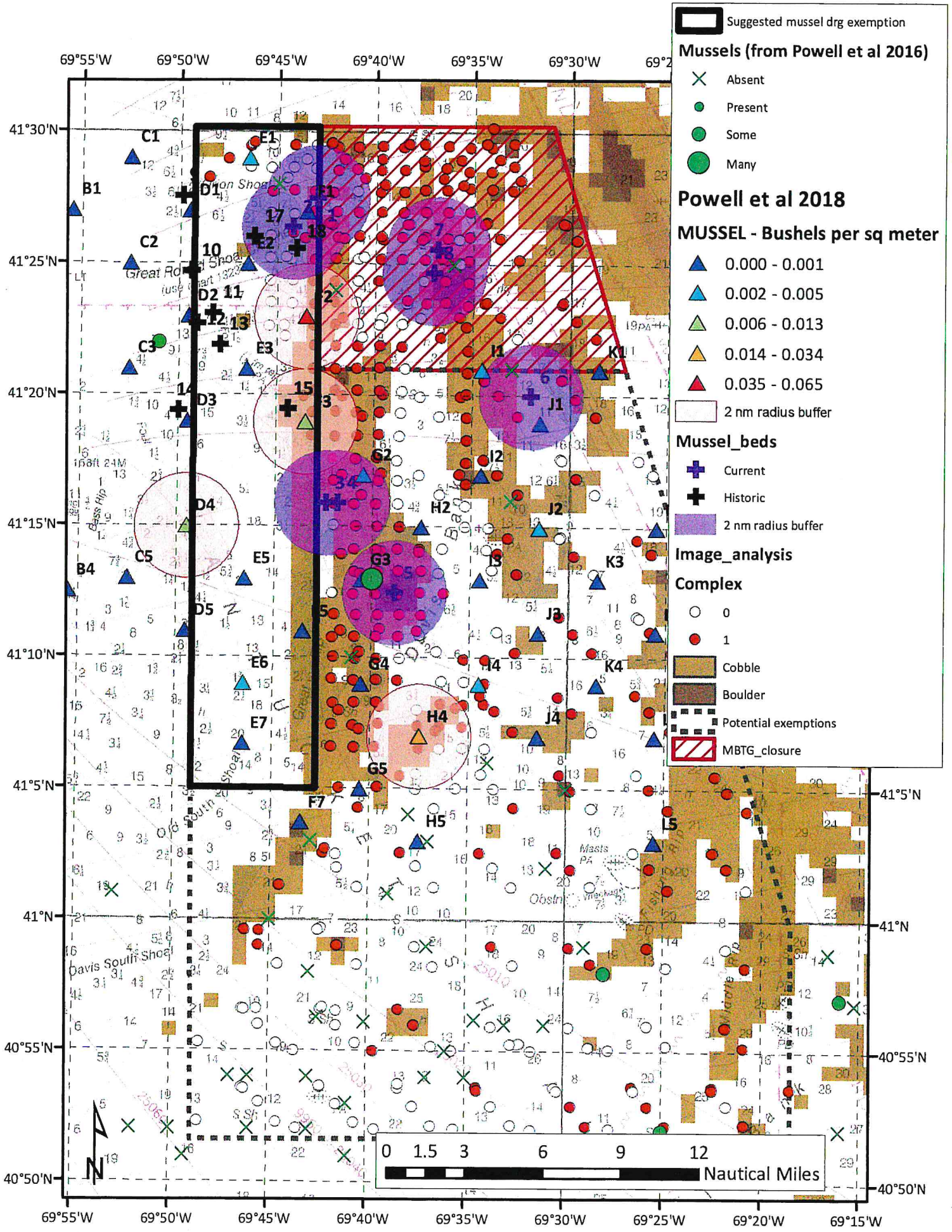
The proposal could be modified by closing the southern half during groundfish spawning months. This proposed exemption area is considerably smaller than the habitat committee recommendation of the northwest quadrant during the May committee meeting.

At the Sept 18th pmt meeting Dr. Powell stated "mussel beds in the area do not correlate or correspond with the presence of cobble". Dr. Powell went on to state that mussels are attached to mussels and that mussels use fine sediment as anchoring substrate. The area is highly dynamic and the Mussel beds are known to move within the area over time. It is essential that council members review Dr. Powell's report thoroughly

Towing for mussels in bottom that is rocky or full of cobbles is not feasible, this is not the scallop fishery where picking through a rock pile for lucrative scallops may be acceptable. Mussel tows must be clean to be fishable. I have submitted video of my mussel boat in operation. Notice please the extremely short tow time and the clean piles of mussels the tows yield.

The mussel fishery is an opportunity for industry and fisheries managers to work together from the beginning to use ecosystem-based management approach to manage a fishery that; provides an affordable food source, provides opportunity to support coastal communities and finds the balance for the ecosystem and the fishery.

Domenic Santoro
Chatham Light Seafood
202 Commerce park
South Chatham Ma 02659
508 738 0189



Sherie Goutier

Subject: FW: EFP



-----Original Message-----

From: Domenic Santoro <dsantoro3@icloud.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 18, 2018 7:25 AM

To: Ryan Silva <ryan.silva@noaa.gov>; Michael Pentony <michael.pentony@noaa.gov>; Michael Ruccio <michael.ruccio@noaa.gov>

Cc: Michelle Bachman <mbachman@nefmc.org>; adam@americanmussel.com; Bill Silkes <bill@americanmussel.com>; gsilkes@americanmussel.com

Subject: EFP

Ryan

Please withdraw my earlier request for an EFP to locate mussel beds within the GSC HMA. My request for an EFP has been turned into something entirely different than my intention. Based on feedback from the NEFMC Director Tom Nies the EFP was an attempt to provide better information to the council to make more sound decisions. Instead I feel it has turned into a bureaucratic tool. I am reserving the right to submit an EFP at a later date.

Domenic Santoro
508-738-0189

