

Scallop PDT Conference Call – November 10, 2014***PDT Recommendations in Italics*****1. FW26 Issues to clarify**

- Clarify possession limit for part-time vessels

PDT recommends possession limits for PT vessels as described in Table 16 on page 44. Equivalent to 40% of FT allocation.

- Monitoring details for “megatron”

1. *PDT does not recommend any specific/new monitoring requirements for the flexible allocation alternative, otherwise known as the “megatron” alternative. NMFS will not be able to track catch by current access area if this is selected (i.e., all dealer-reported landings would be recorded as caught in the “megatron”). Even if additions were considered to report catch by area per day through VMS for example, funding constraints currently prevent any changes to VMS that are not directly supporting enforcement.*
2. *The PDT does not support flexible allocation unless the closure in ETA is adopted. The added flexibility is positive, but it comes with a cost and should not be adopted unless the inshore area of ETA is closed.*

- Issue of automatic polling frequency for DOF alternatives

Based on input from Regional Office, the PDT does not recommend that increased polling be added to either DOF alternative; it is not currently feasible.

2. Review bio and eco impact analyses and recommend preferred alternatives

- Identify preferred alternatives for 2015 specifications and method of allocation of access areas

PDT Consensus input on FW26 specifications

1. *PDT only supports flexible allocation (megatron) if ETA closure adopted. If the area is left open, megatron should not be adopted. There are risks associated with megatron approach. Primarily, it will be uncertain where 2015 catches are removed from when the Council needs to set allocations for 2016. This may cause a need to allocate trips in 2016 in the same way since fishery removals will be more uncertain compared to lottery allocation where vessels need to fish in a certain area.*
2. *The PDT recommends Alternative 3 – all 3 closure areas (CA2, NL and ETA inshore) as preferred.*
3. *The PDT does not believe the trip limit should exceed 17,000 pounds per access area trip. The model output is the best information available for setting possession limits, but there are several issues that are not incorporated in the model. Specifically, unintended consequences of allocating trips later in the year. For example, if trips are not allocated until June there is higher discard mortality of small scallops in warmer months. Also, there are more unknowns with the flexible allocation approach that may or may not have unintended consequences of fishing mortality. Overall the PDT would not oppose a lower possession limit, and lower total catch from the access areas (i.e. 15,000 pounds per trip and total allocation of 45,000 pounds) to recognize some of the uncertainties; however, the PDT did not recommend one.*

4. *If ETA is not closed than the possession limit should be lower to protect small scallops in the access areas (i.e. 16,000 pounds as in reduced F option).*

3. Review VMS analysis and make final recommendation for DAS adjustment

- Identify final DAS adjustment for both DOF alternatives

PDT developed a method to identify a potential DAS adjustment for both DOF alternatives. A worse case scenario as well as a realistic scenario were developed to inform what the adjustment could be. The PDT did not identify a final recommendation because it is very dependent on changes in fishing behavior; therefore, the AP may be better suited to identify the final adjustment value for each alternative.

The PDT noted that since the adjustments may be a fraction of a DAS (i.e. 0.2 DAS), future allocations should be to the tenth decimal place, and not rounded to the nearest DAS. For example, if the final allocation is 30.4 DAS it should not be rounded to 30 DAS it should be allocated as 30.4 DAS.

The PDT recommends that the adjustment be applied to part time vessels the same way total DAS are calculated; the adjustment would be 40% of FT adjustment. For example, if the final adjustment for FT vessels is 1.0 DAS, DAS for a vessel with a part-time permit would be charged 0.4 DAS (40% of 1.0 DAS).

- How long should the adjustment be applied?

The PDT recommends the adjustment be applied for at least two years.

It will take at least two years for the adjustment to get into the fishery results that would be used to set future fishing allocations (total catch / total DAS charged). Therefore, the adjustment should be applied in both 2015 and 2016. After that time the model should be able to account for this adjustment automatically; a separate variable could be added to account for this change in DAS used based on several years of actual data.

4. Other

Default for 2016 – *The PDT is not supportive of adding access area allocations as default measures for 2016.*

Default measures should only include open area DAS (75% of projection – about 26/27 DAS). In this particular year there is too much uncertainty in terms of whether ETA inshore is closed, if access areas will be allocated with flexible boundaries, etc. Allowing access area effort in March is a lower yield month than May, when the next framework would be in place. More uncertainty than usual about fishing mortality in access areas so automatically allocating effort there is not a smart idea. The surveys in 2015 will not show us about any removals from fishery in 2015 because effort will not be allowed in there until FW26 is implemented (mid-May 2015). Therefore, we will have to assume about fishery removals, and there are many uncertainties being proposed with megatron, inshore closures, etc.