



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

Douglas E. Grout (NH), Chair

James J. Gilmore, Jr., (NY), Vice-Chair

Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

February 23, 2016

Dear Area 3 Lobster Fisherman,

Enclosed is a survey to collect data on the distribution of lobster and Jonah crab fishing effort in and around the canyons in Georges Bank and Southern New England. Your participation is valued and important in determining the extent of lobster and Jonah crab fishing in these offshore areas.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is requesting this information from all active Area 3 lobster permit holders, as ASMFC has been asked to provide the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) with a clearer picture of the extent and magnitude of trap fishing around the canyons. NEFMC is currently drafting an Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment which could establish discrete deep-sea coral protective zones as well as broad deep-sea coral regions along the edge of the continental shelf, from Alvin canyon to the Hague line (Figure 1). It is unknown if this Amendment will impact the lobster fishery. While lobster is not a species managed under Magnuson-Stevens, the legislation does grant NEFMC the authority to protect deep-sea coral habitats. As the Amendment progresses, NEFMC will debate what types of gear restrictions are appropriate in coral zones. ASMFC plans to provide a summary of the survey results to NEFMC in April in order to inform the discussion on gear use.

Current lobster and Jonah crab trip reports include data on statistical area fished; however, this location information is too coarse to map fishing effort near specific canyons. The attached survey asks for more detailed information on fishing locations, fishing patterns, and the value of your lobster and Jonah crab harvest near the offshore canyons. ASMFC hopes that collecting these data will allow ASMFC to provide NEFMC with a comprehensive picture of the potential impacts on the lobster and Jonah crab fisheries, should lobster traps be proposed as a restricted gear within the deep sea coral zones.

The survey should take 15 minutes to complete. ASMFC will take all measures necessary to ensure that confidential data is protected and an individual fisherman's data will not be shared. Only summaries of the survey responses will be shared with NEFMC. If you do not feel comfortable providing an answer for a particular question, you may choose to leave it blank. Informational meetings on this survey and its purpose will be held on the following dates:

March 14th; 4:30 p.m.

New Bedford Fairfield Inn and Suites
185 McArthur Drive
New Bedford, MA 02740

March 15th; 5:00 p.m.

MA DMF Annisquam River Field Station
30 Emerson Ave.
Gloucester, MA 01930



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ASMFC encourages your participation in this survey, as each fisherman has a unique perspective on fishing in this dynamic offshore region. **Please return the survey using the enclosed postage-paid envelope to Bob Glenn, Chair of the ASMFC Lobster Technical Committee, by March 28, 2016.** If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Megan Ware, ASMFC Lobster FMP Coordinator, at mware@asmfc.org or (703-842-0740).

Thank you for taking time to share your knowledge with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert P. Glenn".

Bob Glenn
Senior Marine Fisheries Biologist, Mass DMF

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Ware".

Megan Ware
Lobster FMP Coordinator, ASMFC

INSTRUCTIONS

This survey is to be filled out by active Area 3 lobster permit holders. The purpose of this survey is to gather information on the distribution of lobster fishing effort in and around the canyons in Georges Bank and Southern New England. All confidential data will be protected and an individual fisherman's response will not be shared. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, you may choose to leave it blank. Please return completed surveys by mail or email to:

Bob Glenn, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
1213 Purchase St., 3rd Floor
New Bedford, MA 02740-6636
robert.glenn@state.ma.us

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Prior to this letter, were you aware that NEFMC is considering an Amendment to protect deep sea corals?
a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

B. LOCATIONS FISHED

Please refer to Figure 1 (page 7) to answer the following questions. All confidential data will be protected.

1. In 2014-2015, did you land lobster and/or Jonah crab with traps from Area 3?
a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐
2. In 2014-2015, did you fish traps within NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig. 1)?
a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐
3. If yes, please circle the statistical areas in which you fished traps in 2014-2015.
a. 537 c. 526 e. 525
b. 534 d. 541 f. 562
4. If yes, please circle any canyons in which you fished traps in 2014-2015. Detailed figures of the specific canyons are available on pages 8-12.
a. Alvin l. Oceanographer
b. Atlantis m. Filebottom
c. Nantucket n. Chebacco
d. Veatch o. Gilbert
e. Shallop p. Lydonia
f. Hydrographer q. Powell
g. Dogbody r. Munson
h. Clipper s. Nygren

- i. Sharpshooter t. Unnamed
- j. Welker u. Heezen
- k. Heel Tapper

5. If yes, did you fish traps in areas between specific canyons in 2014-2015?
a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐
6. Do you set traps more often in the heads of the canyons or along the shelf between the canyons?
a. Heads of canyons
b. Between canyons
c. Neither

Please describe your fishing practices:

C. DEPTH FISHED

1. In 2014-2015, did you harvest lobster and/or Jonah crab with traps from depths **greater** than:
a. 200 meters (109 fathoms)?
Yes ☐ No ☐
b. 300 meters (164 fathoms)?
Yes ☐ No ☐
c. 400 meters (219 fathoms)?
Yes ☐ No ☐
d. 500 meters (273 fathoms)?
Yes ☐ No ☐

2. In 2014-2015, what was your maximum depth fished with traps?

3. Approximately how was your total fishing effort (traps fished) allocated across depth in 2014-2015? Please indicate the percentage of total traps fished at each depth range.

- a. <100 m _____ %
 b. 100-200 m _____ %
 c. 200-300 m _____ %
 d. 300-400 m _____ %
 e. >400 m _____ %

4. In 2014-2015, during which months did you set your traps in the deepest waters?

- a. Jan. – March ☐
 b. April – June ☐
 c. July – Sept. ☐
 d. Oct. – Dec. ☐
 e. No seasonal change ☐

5. In a **single trip**, did you tend to set your traps at a consistent depth along the shelf or at varied depths across a canyon? Please describe your fishing patterns.

D. PATTERNS FISHED

1. In 2014-2015, did you ever set traps in more than one canyon **per trip**?
 a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

2. In 2014-2015, did you ever set traps in more than one statistical area **per trip**?
 a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

3. In 2014-2015, did you ever set a trap more than once during a **single trip**?
 a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

4. In 2014-2015, how many total traps did you typically haul **per trip**?

5. In 2014-2015, during which months did you set the highest number of traps?

- a. Jan. – March ☐
 b. April - June ☐
 c. July – Sept. ☐
 d. Oct. – Dec. ☐
 e. No seasonal difference ☐

6. Do you expect your fishing effort in the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig 1) to change substantially over the next five years?

- a. Expect it will increase ☐
 b. Expect it will decrease ☐
 c. Do not expect significant change ☐
 d. Unsure ☐

E. FISHERY VALUE

All confidential data will be protected. An individual fisherman's data will not be shared. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, you may leave it blank.

1. In 2014 and 2015, what **percentage** of your combined lobster and Jonah crab revenue came from the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig 1)?

2014:

2015:

2. What was your **average revenue per trip** from lobster and Jonah crab combined in 2014 and 2015, specifically from within the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig.1)?

2014:

2015:

3. What was the approximate **total number of trips** you made in 2014 and 2015 within the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig. 1)? Include partial trips within the Area.

2014:

2015:

4. What was your **total annual revenue** in 2014 and 2015 from **lobster** caught within the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig 1)?

2014:

2015:

5. Which three canyons in the NEFMC Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig 1) contributed **most** to your combined revenue of **lobster** in 2015?

1.

2.

3.

6. What was your **total annual revenue** in 2014 and in 2015 from **Jonah crab** caught within the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig. 1)?

2014:

2015:

7. Which three canyons in the NEFMC's Area of Interest (outlined in orange in Fig 1) contributed **most** to your combined revenue of **Jonah crab** in 2015?

1.

2.

3.

8. Approximately how much of your revenue from lobster and Jonah crab in 2014-2015 came from the following depth ranges? Please indicate the percentage of your total revenue at each depth.

a. <100m _____%

b. 100-200m _____%

c. 200-300m _____%

d. 300-400m _____%

e. >400m _____%

9. Was 2014-2015 typical in terms of revenue from lobster and Jonah crab in and around the canyons?

a. Yes, my revenue was typical ☐

b. No, my revenue was lower ☐

c. No, my revenue was higher ☐

d. I don't have a typical revenue ☐

10. How has your revenue from lobster and Jonah crabs in and around the canyons changed over the last 5 years?

a. It has steadily increased ☐

b. It has steadily decreased ☐

c. There has been no change ☐

d. It has changed w/out pattern ☐

F. FISHERMAN INFORMATION

Your answers in this section will help analysts compare data from vessel trip reports with the results of this survey. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question, you may leave it blank.

1. What is the name of your vessel?

2. What is your lobster permit number?

3. What is your home port?

4. From 2014-2015, in what ports did you land lobster and/or Jonah crab?

5. Do you report by VTRs?
a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

Please share any comments you may have about this topic or the survey in the box below. We thank you for participating in this survey and sharing information on this topic as we try to capture more detailed data on lobster fishing effort in and around the canyons.

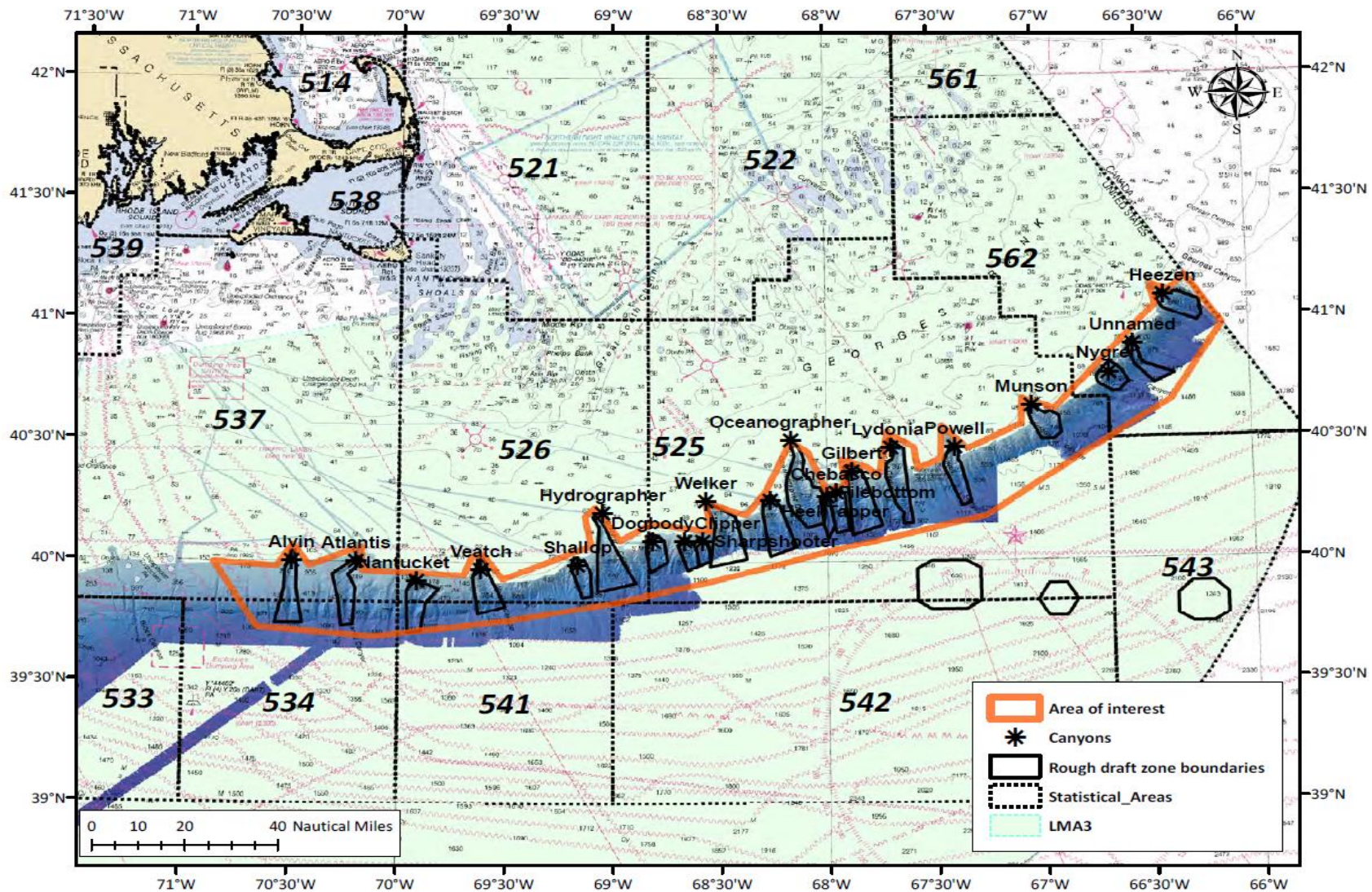


Figure 1: Location of NEFMC Deep-Sea Coral Area of Interest (orange boundary), discrete canyon zones (solid black lines), and statistical areas (dotted black lines).

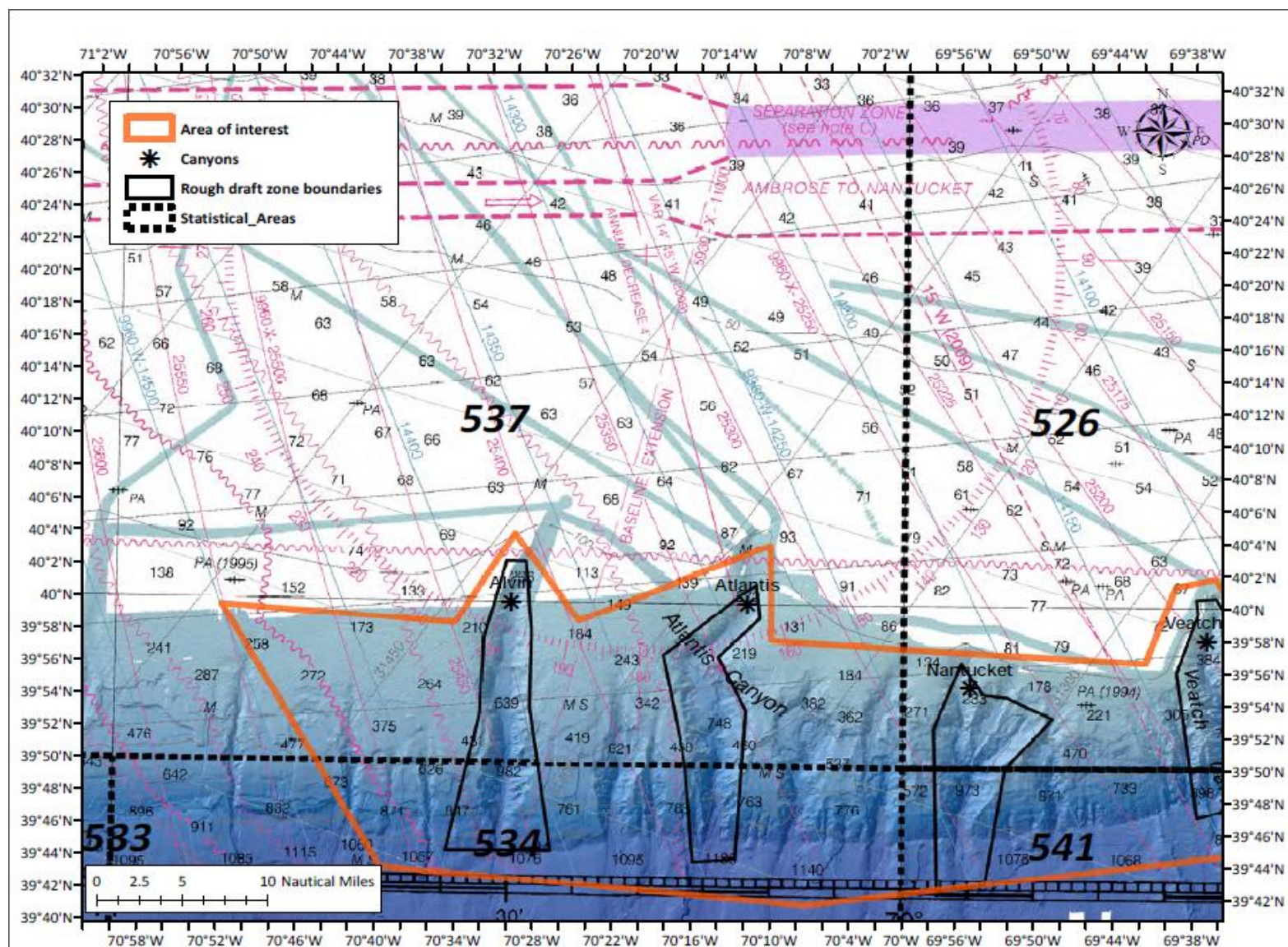


Figure 2: Western most portion of the NEFMC's Area of Interest from Alvin to Veatch.

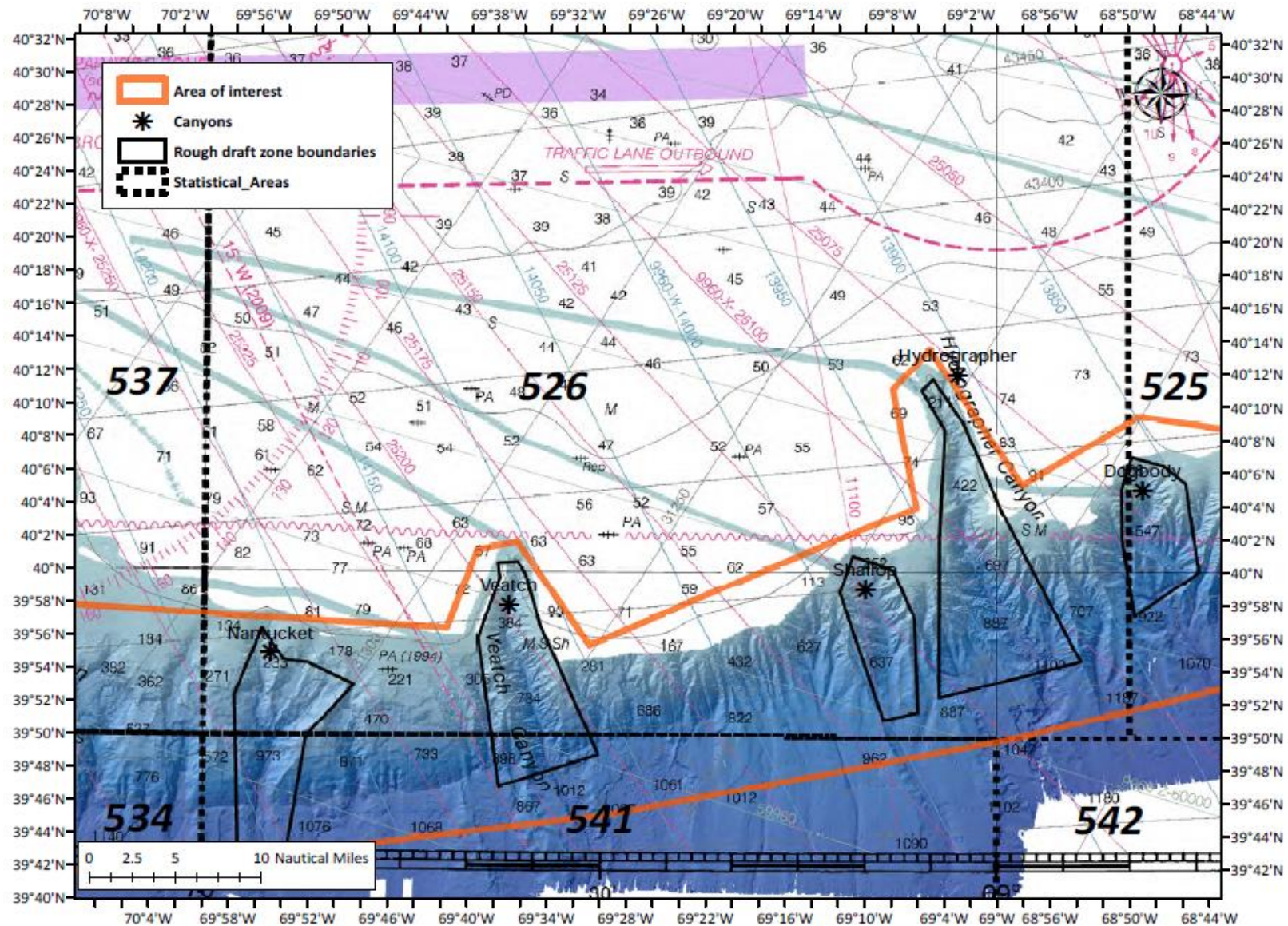


Figure 3: Portion of the NEFMC's Area of Interest from Nantucket to Dogbody.

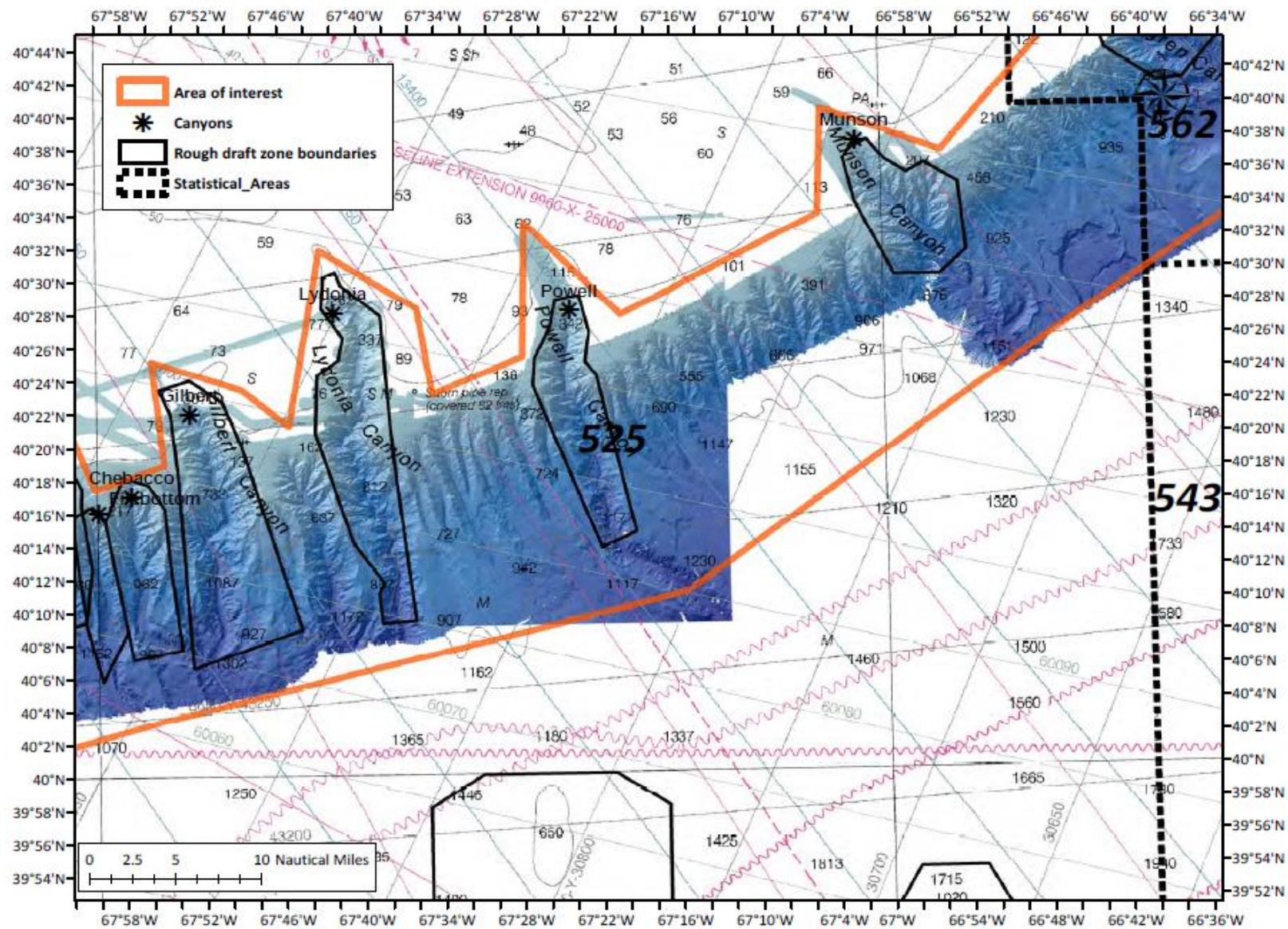


Figure 5: Portion of the NEFMC's Area of Interest from Chebacco to Munson.

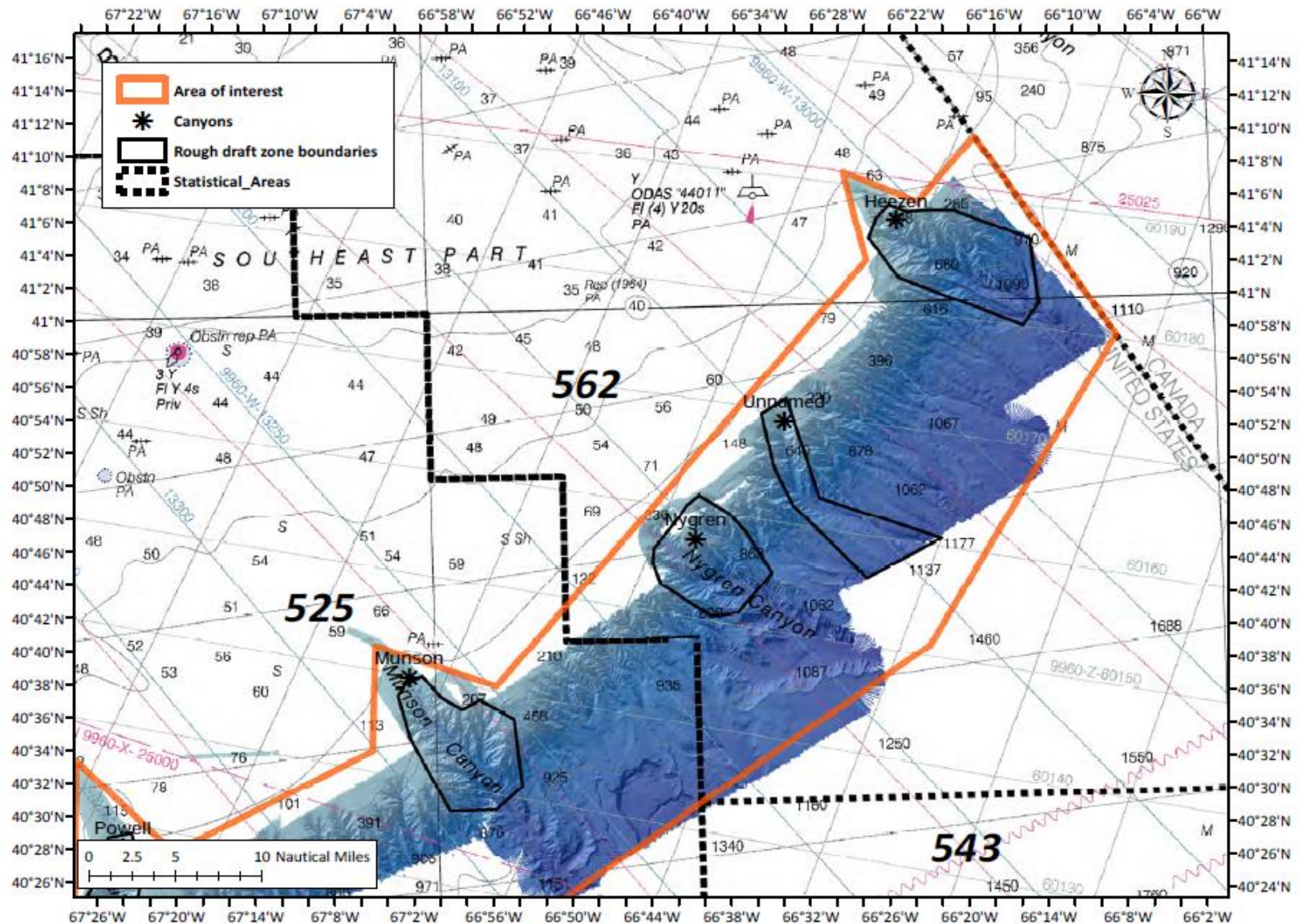


Figure 6: Eastern most portion of the NEFMC's Area of Interest from Munson to Heezen.