

# Atlantic Sea Scallop

## Amendment 21 Scoping Hearings

### Written Comments



## **ASSOCIATED FISHERIES OF MAINE**

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PO Box 287, South Berwick, ME 03908

April 2, 2019

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

"Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21 Scoping Comments."

Dear Tom:

It is difficult to evaluate how the "actions the Council is considering" may benefit the fishery, because the scoping document does not provide rationale for the potential changes. Nevertheless, the Associated Fisheries of Maine (AFM) offers the following comments on actions the Council is considering in Amendment 21:

### Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM)

- AFM seeks Council rationale for a change to the boundary of the NGOM management area, and until rationale can be evaluated opposes any changes.
- The Council has already considered and rejected (June 2017) a proposal to restrict limited access general category permits movement between categories. We agreed with the Council decision then and continue to oppose any further development of such restrictions.
- The AFM supports continued survey of the NGOM and urges the Council to consider developing rotational management for the NGOM.
- The AFM seeks Council rationale for an action that would impose at-sea monitoring costs on the LAGC permit holders, as well an evaluation of cost/benefit.

### Limited Access General Category IFQ Possession Limits and Quota Transfers from LA to LAGC

The AFM is on record expressing concerns that changes to the possession limit may not be consistent with the Amendment 11 "vision" for this permit category – "a fleet made up of relatively small vessels, with possession limits to maintain the historical character of this fleet". Similarly, the AFM raises concerns about how the transfer of LAGC IFQ from the LA fleet to the LAGC IFQ vessels may impact the vision. We urge the Council to compare/contrast how temporary versus permanent transfers would impact the vision.

Sincerely,

*M. Raymond*  
Maggie Raymond  
Executive Director



**From:** George Bamford <gbamford74.gb@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Saturday, April 13, 2019 1:21 PM

**To:** comments <comments@nefmc.org>

**Subject:**

Im writing to give my input on the amendment 21 . I wont to say i agree with the 70 50/50 split i agree with the use of quota for research and i agree with stopping the transfer of other permits into a ngom i dont see where i can change my ngom into unlimited or ifq or incidental and i would hate see a step incline of boats into fishery. Thank you for listening





April 14, 2018

Tom Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill #2  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Tom:

I would like to echo the sentiments expressed by Maine fishermen at the Rockport and Gloucester scoping hearings, namely:

- The quota split currently in place is fair. Gen Cat fishermen have historically harvested just over 50% of scallops in the NGOM area, and this split should be preserved.
- The boundary of the NGOM should stay where it is. If it is to be moved, any movement should be based on science, not greed.
- We need better data on the NGOM, so a research set-aside specific to the NGOM makes sense.
- We need to consider restricting movement between permit categories. We can't adequately manage a fishery without knowing how many people may target it.
- Consistent gear restrictions make sense: this area is patchy and vulnerable. A single 10' dredge with a catch limit of 200 pounds makes sense.
- We may need to consider different types of management once the biomass increases. For instance, area-specific TACs will likely make sense in the future when the resource grows and we have better data.
- We shouldn't spread the quota out over the year. Doing so will create gear conflict issues without accomplishing anything. The "derby fishery" concerns raised don't apply in the Northern Gulf of Maine.

Importantly: the NGOM was created because the resource here and the fishermen who have traditionally targeted it are different. We cannot paint management here with the same brush we've used south of 42 20. Fishermen throughout New England lament a loss of flexibility and talk nostalgically about times when they were able to move between fisheries. The NGOM was created to preserve this type of flexibility. Most NGOM fishermen want to stay close to home and pursue scallops as one of several fisheries. As the fishery south of 42 20 thrives it is important to remember the NGOM Management Area was designed to preserve a diverse yet primarily small-boat fishery. Profits and economic efficiency are not the primary drivers in this area. I thank the Council for working to ensure the fishery in the NGOM continues to grow sustainably while achieving the purpose for which it was created.

Thank you

Togue Brawn





## NE Fishery Management Council

### Scallop Scoping Comment Amendment 21

To All

I have commented oral twice at 2 scoping hearing and this will be my written one.

Issue 1) NGOM I do not know much about the NGOM , but I believe if you considering expanding their border slightly to protect their 'nich" fishery that would help their " true small boat Fishery" .

Issue 2) The Hot Topic, LAGC Change in Trip Limit. I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF A TRIP LIMIT INCREASE .This topic here is a debatable one. For the individuals that own and fish their own quota it could go either way by preference . Those that do half and half same thing. Those who depend on 60% or better it will affect them because lease pricing will go up as stated in the scoping document. . There are also other concerns in a trip limit raise especially a double limit raise.

Safety ... If the council make too large of an increase I would say the smaller boat fleet with a typical crew of 3 total deck loading 150 bushels which will happen with quick fishing is concerning. 150 bushel of scallops in the shell weighs around 12000 lbs total on deck of a vessel. Someone gets caught off guard there will be an issue flooding capsizing etc. Now we know that with IFQ the beauty is you don't have to get the limit but trust me most guys feel they do. Also if the limit increase is too large guys will either have to put an extra guy on deck which is less of a crew share or the Captain running the vessels will have to shuck which some of these boats are not set up for a captain to shuck and maintain a watch. I have 2 part time vessels and 2 day boat vessels . It takes 5 guys in a 10 hour watch on my part time boat to put down 24 bags or 1200 lbs non stop. Do the math.

Quality... If this trip limit is increased to much you will have vessels deck loading with scallops cooking on deck while waiting to be cut. This does not serve as a "quality" day boat product for the consumer. There will be waste in a resource in which everyone has worked hard to rebuild. Also with a large trip limit increase this will no longer become a " day boat product" . It will take more than a day. Yes you can manage you own quota but most won't. They will feel they have to get that limit.

Spread of Product.... Rite now with the limit the way it is fish houses won't be over whelmed in a market that is currently flooded with trip boat product and pricing. Procut is spread throughout the year nicely . If 10 day boats come into a port at the same time with a double limit or slightly less that's an extra 4000-6000 lbs a day to sell. Product will not be spread year round.

Other Fisheries... If the council makes this limit too large guys will blow out trips vessels will not just sit once their IFQ is caught in possibly half the time. Latent permits could come into play, fed and state quotas used more quickly. More nets, traps, gear etc. on the bottom. I don't believe the council has considered this and should maybe also consult with the " Mid Atlantic Council" on this issue.

\$\$\$\$\$ and Liability..... If it takes longer than a day most small boat insurance programs are based around a day boat policy and limitations. Some insurance programs are already asking for VMS data and AIS watching. Their rates could increase significantly and if accident occurs could be denied a claim as such. If they put an extra person on that is also an added increase expense. If leases do go up it will know matter what affect a bottom line as stated in the scoping document This could be perceived as a way to just increase lease pricing in a market that has been tough on both ends .The individual leasing out the quota because of a low product price and the person leasing in with low product pricing.

Inclosing things have been fine with this fishery and the limit so far why upset the applecart.

Issue 3) LA with LAGC to LAGC.... This could work as long as a Limited Access Combo vessel could not lease in quota. One way transfers only. I would hope that the vessels leasing out LA Combo boat quota would hopefully lease it within their community or through there town fish house first then just throwing out in the open lease market.

Thank You

Jimmy Elliott

F/V Maizey James , Saint James, Nautilus II , Vengeance . C Venture.

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April 15, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill #2  
Newburyport, MA 01950



Re: **Fisheries Survival Fund's Comments on  
Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21 Scoping Documents**

Dear Director Nies:

On behalf of the Fisheries Survival Fund ("FSF"), we submit the following comments regarding the New England Fishery Management Council ("Council")'s proposed Amendment 21 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan ("Scallop FMP"). As you know, FSF represents the significant majority of full-time Limited Access permit holders in the Atlantic scallop fishery. Our members are home-ported along the Atlantic Coast from Massachusetts through North Carolina.

The subject matter areas being considered in Amendment 21 are important to FSF because they seek to revisit the Council's fundamental regulatory approaches for the scallop fishery. We appreciate your attention to our concerns and suggestions regarding this Council action, as well as the Council's continued efforts to ensure the scallop fishery's sound conservation and management.

***Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area:***

Scallop abundance in the Northern Gulf of Maine ("NGOM") Management Area continues to vary over time, but the trend appears to be toward a more consistent presence of harvestable biomass. The NGOM Management Area was designed to allow for the opportunistic, seasonal, inshore harvest of scallops by local vessels as an adjunct to their main fishery (most

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April 15, 2019

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often, lobstering). This management approach, moreover, recognized the episodic nature of scallop abundance in the Gulf of Maine.

But the NGOM Management Area was neither designed nor intended to set aside scallop fishing grounds in federal waters in the Gulf of Maine for any one fleet. Indeed, these opportunistic Gulf of Maine vessels did not qualify for a Limited Access permit in 1994 and, by and large, they did not qualify for General Category IFQ as part of Amendment 11. The NGOM Management Area was designed to ensure they could remain part of the scallop fishery nonetheless, when harvestable sets of scallops did occur in the Gulf of Maine. No basis exists to create a dedicated scallop fishing area in federal waters for these vessels.

That being said, FSF is interested in exploring additional options for managing the scallop fishery in a manner which brings more predictability for these episodic Gulf of Maine vessels and greater consistency to the management of the scallop resource as a whole. As acknowledged by the Council's actions in FW 29 related to the NGOM, we are currently faced with the problem of "derby fishing" for this biomass. In establishing the NGOM through Amendment 11, the Council acknowledged that future management of the area may need to be altered if circumstances changed in either the scallop population or the fishery.

Accordingly, and consistent with Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act ("MSA") National Standard Three, the Council should return to managing the unitary scallop stock "as a unit throughout its range." FSF therefore recommends that the Council consider the option of creating a DAS allocation specifically for NGOM-permitted vessels. FSF further recommends that the Council consider an associated daily possession limit equal to 200 pounds of meat per vessel per DAS for these vessels. In establishing these parameters, we would request that no geographic or time restrictions be placed on the management within the NGOM for other permitted vessels operating in the scallop industry.

***LAGC IFQ Possession Limits:***

Amendment 11's goal for LAGC vessels was to allow access to the scallop resource on a part-time basis to smaller "day boat" vessels that did not qualify for (or did not want to accept the burdens of) Limited Access in 1994, but that thereafter demonstrated a consistent level of participation in the fishery. In particular, Amendment 11 specifically sought to maintain the General Category's historic character as "a fleet made up of relatively small vessels," even as it created and allocated Individual Fishing Quota ("IFQ") to qualifying vessels.

In the meantime, certain LAGC participants have begun consolidating quota shares and arguing for increased flexibility in how they are able to fish. While FSF generally supports flexibility in scallop management, FSF does not support any change via Amendment 21 or

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April 15, 2019

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otherwise to the General Category's fundamental, historic character as an inshore, day boat fleet. Efforts to increase the LAGC daily possession limit represent the next incremental step toward creating an offshore LAGC fleet, something inapposite of Amendment 11's goals and fundamental approach towards the historic function and purposes of these General Category vessels. It is not altogether surprising, then, that increasing the daily possession limit is even controversial within the LAGC fleet itself.

Accordingly, FSF does not support inclusion of any increases to the LAGC IFQ daily possession limit within Amendment 21 or in any future framework adjustments.

*LA Quota Transfers to LAGC IFQ Vessels:*

The gradual "greying" of scallop fishery participants (and of the fishing industry as a whole) represents a troubling trend, particularly with the sustainability and long-term value of this fishery. Due to these concerns, FSF supports new opportunities for younger fishermen to participate in the fishery. However, because of the high value of an individual day at sea, opportunities for training the next generation of scallopers is often limited to day trips typically associated with LAGC IFQ fishing. If moving these permits around the industry helps to develop younger fishermen and aid in the transition of the fishery to the next generation, then FSF would support this added level of flexibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and for your consideration of these crucial issues. Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time if you require additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Frulla  
Andrew E. Minkiewicz  
Bret A. Sparks\*  
*Counsel for Fisheries Survival Fund*

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\*Mr. Sparks is admitted to practice law only in the state of Louisiana. He is practicing under the supervision of principals of the firm who are members of the D.C. bar.



Sea scallop amendment 21 scoping comments.  
Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill #2

Dear Thomas & Council

This letter is in reference to amendment 21 alternatives focusing on the Northern Gulf of Maine management area. I am in agreement that changes must be made. As I sat on the general category advisory board I thought over the things we are addressing now. Before the establishment of the northern gulf of Maine I was able to fish out of my home port of Gloucester year-round. I am a proponent Sustainable fishing. This is what I had thought we were working for. Now it has become a gold rush fishery. I am in agreement with alternatives that would spread the availability of the total allowable catch in this area across the fall fishing year. It would make the fishery safer and more profitable. With every scallop vessel receiving their quota at the start April 1 of the new fishing year the prices are plummeting. The other alternatives should be analyzed very carefully also, possibly a combination of alternatives may be the best scenario. I feel the way the fishery exists presently has hurt The general category vessels. I'm hoping some day I will be able to fish from my home port year round again. In 10 give or take days the northern golf of Maine will be closing again and I will have to prepare my vessel to go away and Fish somewhere else till next December. The day boat fishery can be when managed in a sustainable way. Through NOAA and the councils stewardship I think these things are possible.

Respectfully  
Raymond Hilshey  
F/V Victoria  
Gloucester,ma





Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to you regarding public comments on the current issue being examined for LAGC IFQ vessels and their potential daily trip limit increase. I currently operate several LAGC IFQ vessels in the Mid-Atlantic region. Primarily I "lease in" the majority of my IFQ that I harvest. Personally I support the IFQ increase for reasons, which I will outline below.

- Since we have gone to an IFQ fishery years ago, our fishery has changed. As not only a boat owner but as businessman I have several other endorsements on my Federal fisheries permits for all of my vessels some of which include lobster permits, gillnet permits etc... Increasing our daily trip limit will allow boat owners such as myself to catch our scallop IFQ in a more timely manor and allow us to move into the other fisheries which we have permits for. Under our current system of 600 pounds per trip, it is very hard to achieve this goal due to the fact that we need to complete a large number of trips in order to catch our quota for the year.
- As fisherman we have an obligation to sustain the well being of the various fisheries that we participate in. A larger daily trip limit will not only reduce the amount of trips we fish per year, but it will also lead to lower fuel consumption rates, less "bottom time" for our scallop dredges to cultivate the ocean floor and also less chance for our scallop dredges to interact with marine life such as turtles which we work so diligently to avoid. It can also be said that and increased trip limit would give fisherman at the LAGC level more incentive to travel further on the "open bottom" and allow inshore areas which have been pressured by IFQ vessels to repopulate with scallops and in a sense have some pressure taken off of them.
- As boat owners we have an obligation to keep our crew safe. I take great comfort in knowing that if we went to a larger daily limit, my crew would spend less days per year scalloping then

they do with our current system thus lessening the chances for injury or serious marine accident.

- Increasing our daily limit above the 600-pound system, which we currently use, would also allow fishermen to target their scallops more affectively. Knowing that we would have to fish fewer days per year to catch our maximum allowable quota would enable me to be more selective in the times of year I fish. In doing so I would be able to target scallops in the times of year when I felt as though the weather was the most fair and also when the scallop prices could provide the best return to my crews and I. This could also benefit those who chose to lease out their IFQ rather than fish it.

In conclusion, I would like to say that as both an IFQ owner and multiple vessel owner, I strongly support the proposed increase to our daily landing limit beyond 600 pounds. I would like to add that I feel as though this should be measured however. I feel as though no less then 800 pounds but no more then 1,000 pounds should be our target weight for a daily limit should we move forward with this increase. I feel as though any proposed limits beyond this could lead to negative economic factors and management challenges. I would ask that my comments remain anonymous and be submitted towards the public comments record of our scoping meetings on this issue.

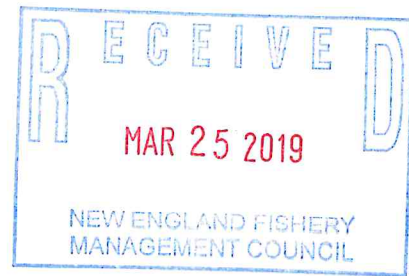
Thank you for your consideration.

IP #2

Scoping Document for Amendment 21

Public Comment

VIA FAX 978-465-3116



March 25, 2019

Current Status: Scallop-LAGC-IFQ Permitholder and Active Fisherman

I am opposed to increasing the trip limits for the LAGC-IFQ category permit.

I feel this way for the below reasons:

I have been able to successfully prosecute the fishery at the current 600 lb trip limit.

An increase in the trip limit would force my crew to work longer hours and I am concerned about safety.

If it becomes necessary to add an additional crewman, my insurance cost will be increased.

I agree that the per trip fuel cost will be decreased but feel the cost of leasing will increase.

I have been a commercial fisherman for 30 years and have been involved in the scallop fishery both as a crewman and LAGC-IFQ vessel owner-operator.

RE:

NGOM – I have no real feelings on this either way, as I have not studied the issue.

LA-LAGC leasing down to LAGC-IFQ Boats - I am okay with this in principle, but I would like to understand how any Permanent Quota transferred down will be handled. Temporary IFQ leasing is ok with me.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment anonymously! I feel more comfortable making my point this way.

Respectfully submitted



IP #3



To whom it may concern:

I think it's pretty easy to tell who is currently running the LAGC fishery. They are in control lease price as well as ALLOWING those who are compliant enough to lease quota. This needs to be stopped. My guess was the plan originated at a Duke University and carried all the way through to today where its made some people in powerful positions a lot of money. It's time to create some fairness and that starts by not getting bullied into further changing this fishery. Upping the trip limit will have so many negative impacts that it is just not worth it. Why risk putting so many out of business. If this goes through it will be more apparent than ever who controls the fishery and that wouldn't be the people, but a minority of owners that have gotten so full of themselves they have taken to bold threats.



IP#4



Dear Council & Scoping Committee,

It has been brought to my attention that you are considering all letters including anonymous letters while making your decision on the trip limit increase as well as the LA transfer issue. I think it is important to make you aware that some information you are considering is inaccurate and you should understand that the circumstances around gathering people votes to use for the purpose of overall opinion have been tainted. I am speaking particularly about the vote that came out of the data collected from the CCCFA. There was a very threatening undertone from staff as well as other captains for EVERYONE to vote in favor of both issues. Many captains have been put in a position of voting against their own interest or risk not only not having access to quota in years to come but also potentially not getting accepted back into the program for what they claimed was "making the organization look divided".

The ability to keep this anonymous is extremely important. I think moving forward the threats could become more harmful not only to livelihoods but people's personal safety.

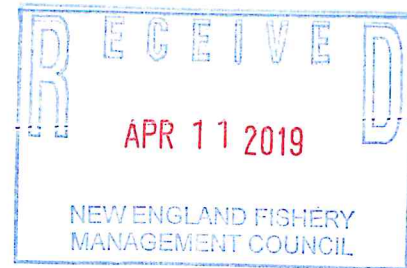
Sincerely,

Captain of a day boat scalloper





IP#5



April 9, 2019

Dear Council and scoping committee,

I am writing to share my opinion on the issues before you. LAGC trip limit increase and LAGC transfers. I believe the integrity of this entire process has been compromised. I am a deckhand on a Chatham based day boat scalloper with a young family to provide for. That is why I am writing this letter anonymously. I have already been threatened by my boat owner that if I speak on this issue I will be fired. I was originally told by the boat owner that an increase would be better for various reasons including more time with my family which is something that I consider valuable. After really considering the situation and evaluating what I'd be gaining in comparison to what I'd be losing the whole situation just took on another completely different point of view. Speaking with other local deckhands and business owners it is very clear to me the only people that will gain from this are boat owners. The reality is if we are catching more per trip the captain will bring more crew, reducing my share. There will be less people leasing reasonably priced pieces of quota which will ultimately put a lot of my fellow deckhands on boats that own less quota completely out of business. I have as well as other deckhands, and concerned members of our fishing community read through some of the research on this matter and it has certainly proven that these points will have negative impacts as I am stating. We have 2 fisheries right now, if people feel they need to catch more quota while out on a trip then they should get into that fishery which allows a greater catch per trip. The small dayboat fishery should remain as is to not change and morph into the second category because that exists already.

In regards to the transfer of LA quota I think this will only help the LA fleet and increase the LAGC competition. There are a lot of crew and even boat owners who are afraid to weigh in on this issue because of the actual threats which I think is wrong. This fishery has already changed and there have been enormous negative impacts with the quota system. Having to pay to go fishing, worse -to pay a someone that owns the quota who wears a suit and tie to work and has no idea of the hard work involved with actual fishing. It's difficult to swallow. Now, management is considering letting people that are selfishly motivated further their agenda of greed hiding behind "environmentally friendly" ideals. At the rate this is falling apart eventually we will all be eating factory chemical saturated scallops caught by a crew of men working at a low wage. Small things like changing trip limits will have big impacts on local fishing communities. Please consider all I have brought to your attention in this letter and know that it comes in support of hundreds of crew that risk their lives daily to feed their families and support their local communities. We see the impact of greed everyday in our communities, especially our school systems please do not consider adding the scallop fishery to this rampant problem. Thank you for taking the time to read this. I cannot say it enough, please consider all those that will be affected by these changes.

Sincerely,

Concerned deckhand, husband, father, long time fisherman



## Revised scoping

I am writing to express my displeasure that the council is even considering a trip limit increase for the IFQ General Category Scallop fishery. The intended benefit of such an increase is to "ensure the GC fishery remains profitable". It is my opinion that if the trip limit is increased, it will only make it more profitable for those who own most or all of their quota. However, those who rely on leased quota will be negatively impacted by this action. Since most GC fisherman rely on leased quota (at least to some extent), this action will have a negative economic impact on most of the fishery. Furthermore, there are many other problems that will be created by any increase in the trip limit.

One of the main catalyst for this action is the rising cost of fuel. The council already adjusted the trip limit from 400lbs to 600lbs in 2011 for the same reasons being cited now - the rising fuel price. This 200lb increase was suppose to ensure that the fishery remained profitable, despite rising fuel prices. In 2011 the fuel price was higher than it is presently. It peaked at around \$3.80/gal. The fuel price today is less than \$3.00. This fuel price increase was already dealt with in 2011. "The 200lb trip limit increase was not expected to change the nature of the dayboat fishery and would keep the LAGC IFQ component consistent with the vision statement laid out by the council in 2011." We should be wondering what has changed that warrants a decision that was previously determined to likely change the nature of this dayboat fishery.

Another expense that will be affected is the crew share. We shouldn't act like an increase in the trip limit won't have any effect on crew size. As a captain of a GC boat for 20 years, I can say with confidence that, even a 200lb increase in the trip limit, would cause an overall increase in crew size. The addition of another crew member completely negates any gain in economic performance that a higher trip limit might create, especially for the crew.

Although fuel is part of the overall expense of a General Category scallop trip, it is a small expense compared to the cost of leasing in quota. If a fisherman leases in 20% of their quota last year at \$3.25/lb then their quota expense is \$650 on a 600lb trip. The fuel for that same trip is around \$325 to \$450. Those 40% of boats that leased in half or more of their quota had a lease expense of at least \$975 a trip. Since the PDT has already pointed out that most the fleet leases in more than 20% and closer to 50% of their quota, this reasoning makes absolutely zero sense. If we are really trying to bring down expenses, we should concentrate on bringing down the lease expense instead of increasing it.

Another reason cited for the increase is the distance needed to travel to productive scallop grounds. Although this is a legitimate concern, it shouldn't be dealt with in this manner. The council needs to protect the near shore waters from overfishing.

#### Revised scoping

Although the council seems reticent to address the problem in the near shore waters (in any meaningful manner), this is where we need to concentrate efforts to keep the GC in line with the vision statement of Amendment 11. By simply increasing the trip limit, we are creating many other, more crucial problems.

The only people who will benefit from this trip limit increase are those who own most or all of their quota. Those few quota owners are the only ones who will stand to benefit from the increase in price of leased quota that is associated with a trip limit increase. Most of those owners already don't even fish their own quota. They are simply quota brokers. If we increase the trip limit we will be increasing the profit of these "arm chair captains" at the expense of the actual fishermen.

One area of concern that the council needs to be aware of has to do with the stranglehold that these "brokers" already hold over the fishermen who rely on leased quota. There are many of these fishermen who are afraid to voice their opinion about this issue. They have been told that if they speak against this higher trip limit, they will not be able to find any quota. This threat is real and the council needs to be aware of this type of extortion.

Another area of concern is the possible increase in the derby affect that a higher trip limit will likely cause. If the near shore waters aren't productive and the GC is reliant on the access areas, the smaller boats are at a disadvantage. If the trip limit is increased, this disadvantage is exaggerated. Bigger boats will be landing more scallops on the days the small boats can't fish, thus using up most of the quota allocated for that area. A higher trip limit will make the fishery more appealing to the bigger boats. The GC scallop fleet has been, historically, made up of small boats. This part of history has always been important to the New England fishing communities and should be protected.

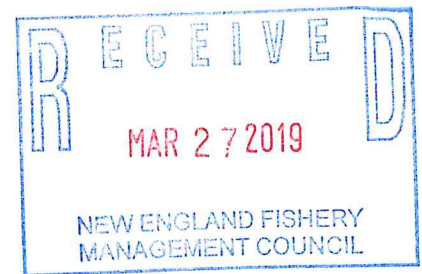
If we increase the trip limit again, we will do so at the expense of those fishermen who need the most help. These fishermen, both captains and crew members, are the ones needing protection. If the council wants this fishery in the hands of scallop brokers and not in the hands of actual fishermen, then raising the trip limit (again) is the thing to do. However, if we want to protect the historical character of this successful, small boat scallop fleet, we need to protect the actual fishermen and preserve the historical character of this fishery by keeping the trip limit the same or decreasing it.

Bob Keese

NEFMC,

My name is Chris LaRocca, I work for the Larson family as captain of the LUCKY THIRTEEN, a gen cat day boat.

I would like to submit my comments concerning the scallop amendment 21. First I do not think the limited access boats should be excluded from the NGOM. i think the transfer of quota from LA boats with GC to GC boats is ok but not vice versa. The trip limits should only be increased by a small amount and see how it settles out economically. The idea of tiered trip limits might work, say five trips at six hundred, three trips at nine hundred, or two trips at twelve hundred per week. As far as access area quotas, they should be the same as open areas so as not to give any geographic area an advantage in catching the available quota. The observer system does not favor the day boaters anyway. We get bumped for a trip boat every time, and told there are no observers available. Our compensation weight could be tiered as well, two hundred pounds for the first day and one hundred for the second.





Jim Lovgren

FV Shadowfax

### Comments on General Category scallop management plan.

There should be no increase in the trip limit even considered before there is an economic evaluation of the effects of the GC limited access amendment. That amendment is one of the 5 most important amendments ever passed in the North east region and has had more wide ranging economic impacts than any other plan. There were certainly winners, some became millionaires overnight, but many more were simply pushed out of business, or into other fisheries, or forced to buy quota from the lucky new generation of armchair plantation owners. There are now two types of fishermen in the NE, those with scallop quota, and those without. Doesn't matter how long you fished, as long as you fished for scallops in those 5 qualifying years you're now on easy street.

The GC was created as a small day fishery for those who didn't qualify for DAS in the original scallop plan. The AP carefully selected those 5 qualifying years so as to keep a few hundred fishermen who would have qualified for full time DAS if they went back an extra year, out of the fishery. Instead they got 400 pounds a day, and the major mistake was the fact that the council did not make GCa limited access permit from the start. That resulted in the number of permits more than tripling over the years as new fishermen entered the fishery as the price increased and the stock rebounded. The growing catch rate of the GC fishermen alarmed the DAS holders and they forced NMFS into addressing the problem, which plainly stated was too many people are making too much money. Oh my god we can't let that happen. Lets put thousands of them out of work because we [DAS holders] want total control of the fishery.

No sooner was the GC limited access plan passed then the same people were demanding that stacking be allowed and the trip limit be increased to 800 pounds, and the vessel upgrade restrictions lifted, or just simply allow the GC quota to be caught all at once if the newly minted millionaire wanted to do so. They got much of what they wanted. Vessel upgrade restriction were removed for the only time in any fishery, meaning that quota caught by a weather restricted 35 foot boat could be put onto a fish anytime, anywhere 90 footer. Another step in the consolidation of the industry into just a few major players. The trip limit was increased to 600 pounds to make it more financially profitable since the price of fuel was so high, despite legitimate arguments from the fishermen who got screwed out of the scallop fishery that an increase in quota would simply cause them even more economic harm than taking away their scallop permit in the first place. The increase in the trip limit now allowed the chosen few to catch their quota in much less time than at 400 pounds, and they then engaged in the few fisheries left to the fishermen who got screwed out of the GC fishery. These fisheries ,primarily fluke, Black Sea Bass and squid, are all on tightly regulated quota's with short seasons. New entrants in these fisheries can close the seasons down early and result in real economic harm to those who depend on them.

There is unquestionably a major economic shift in the fisheries due to the GC limited access plan that has not been documented and should be before any increase in quota is allowed. I personally find it laughable that this increase is even coming up as an amendment. Have the Scallop quota holders no end to their greed? How much do they need, that they are willing to put the few remaining industry survivors out of business? An increase of the trip limit to 1000 or 1200 pounds simply means that these



scallopers will now catch their quota in a third of the time that they were previously allowed and will turn their sights onto the other fisheries I mentioned. If a boat had enough quota for 50 days fishing at 600 pounds, he will only have to fish 25 days if the trip limit is increased to 1200 pounds. They will not tie up the boat during those extra 25 days. They will turn to fluke, squid and sea bass. They can only buy so many solid gold toilet seats for their boats. They have been making more money than they ever believed possible in the industry, yet it is not enough. They have bought up every state fluke and black sea bass permit they can find, many of them latent permits, and have forced early closures on the fishermen dependent on those fisheries for survival. NMFS and the NEFMC needs to abide by the law, that all fishery management plans should be fair and equitable to all, and they need to do a real economic analysis of what impact the GC plan has had on other fisheries. The DAS Scallop industry has set up a planned step by step process to slowly strangle every other competing fisherman on the coast out of business so that they can buy them out cheap, leaving just a handful of very rich arm chair quota holders, while the fishermen themselves become share croppers, having to buy quota from some wall street investor duped into the "deal of a lifetime" by an integrity compromised green Mafia member hiding as a conservationist.

NMFS and the NEFMC has totally ignored the economic effects of the GC plan on other fisheries. It has been enormous and will only get worse if the trip limit is increased. It seems that the people pushing this plan claim that increasing the limit will make their trip economically more feasible. That is what they claimed as a reason for the first trip limit increase when fuel was over 4 dollars a gallon. Well fuel is 2.50 now so that argument doesn't hold water. If economic efficiency is the main reason for the trip limit increase then there is a simple solution, increase the trip limit but require an hour for hour layover before another trip can be made. If a vessel fishes for 30 hours then he cannot leave the dock for 30 hours after packing. That way there is not another huge detrimental impact on other fisheries that NMFS and the NEFMC has ignored. Lets call a spade a spade here. A certain group has been manipulating the council for 20 years now and getting special treatment because they claim to be conservation minded. That simply means that they sold out to some NGO's who want to end all fishing unless they can profit from it. They have promised their wall Street investors X amount of money in return for their investment in their permit bank/ or whatever else they want to call their scam. The NGO money has allowed their purchase of huge amounts of scallop quota which they than sell for major profit to the very people who had their fishing ability stolen from them by the GC limited access plan.

They, with their political connections are driving this plan so that they can keep their wall street investors happy with an economic return that is worth investing in. There is no conservation involved here. The scallop fishery is the type of fishery that these phony enviro's have railed against since the first PEW dollar found its way into their back pocket, but now they are so heavily invested in it, that they have taken to audience intimidation and threatening to never lease quota to anyone who dares to not support the trip limit increase. They have become the Green Mafia, and it is time to put them out of business or in jail where mobsters belong.



# LUND'S FISHERIES



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April 15, 2019

Thomas A Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill 2  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Re: Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21 Scoping Hearing  
(Northern Gulf of Maine and Limited Access General Category Amendment)

Email: [comments@nefmc.org](mailto:comments@nefmc.org)



Dear Mr. Nies:

On behalf of the 150 employees of our family-owned seafood business and the independent fishermen supplying seafood to our processing facility in Cape May, New Jersey, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Scallop Amendment 21 scoping process.

Our company holds full time, part time and general category limited access scallop permits. Our vessels fish in a variety of fisheries under management by the Council. While scallop fishing represents a significant portion of our vessel and shoreside business, our scallop vessels also operate in large mesh and small mesh trawl fisheries throughout the region.

## Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) Management Area

We support the Council's plan to develop measures to ensure that the growing scallop fishery, in federal waters in the NGOM management area, is prevented from overharvesting the available resource while allowing orderly access to the scallops in the area by both the Limited Access and General Category fleets. Managing the area with different outcomes, relative to different levels of biomass available there from year-to-year, is a reasonable goal. We support the Council analyzing the potential of a separate research set-aside, to directly support research and monitoring in the NGOM management area. Any targeted set-aside should also be related to changes in available biomass in the management area.

## Limited Access General Category Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Possession Limit

We do not support increasing the LAGC IFQ possession limit. As the scoping document reminds us, A15 increased the possession limit by 50%, to 600 pounds, due to reasonable concerns about economic feasibility but with the clear intent to maintain the nature of the "dayboat" fishery. The limited access small boat fleet in the GOM was provided access to the federal fishery, by A11, when a 400 pound possession limit was set, twice the General Category possession limit of 200 pounds. A15 also increased the maximum quota a vessel could hold, from 2 to 2.5% and allowed for quota transferability for the LAGC IFQ-only fleet. We are not convinced that increasing the possession limit is necessary to maintain the economic feasibility of the small boat scallop sector, now that these changes have been made.

# LUND'S FISHERIES



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We believe, instead, that further increasing the possession limit will not only change the nature of the small boat. "day boat" fishery but has the very real potential to shift effort into other fisheries through the use of latent fishery permits on vessels that may give up scallop fishing as quota is consolidated on a fleet of fewer vessels harvesting the same quota available today. We ask the Council to remove this issue from the amendment and maintain the 600 pound possession limit for this fleet.

## One-Way Limited Access Quota Transfers to LACG IFQ Vessels

We support considering both permanent and temporary transfers between LA vessels holding LAGC IFQ permits and LAGC IFQ vessels, as outlined in the scoping document. This change seems consistent with the economic flexibility provided to the LACG fleet by A15 and should work to support the maintenance of a small boat LAGC fleet, as envisioned by and established by A11.

Thank you for your attention to and your consideration of our comments and concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide you with additional information.

With best regards,

*Wayne Reichle*

Wayne Reichle, President





Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director,  
New England Fishery Management Council,  
50 Water Street, Mill 2,  
Newburyport, MA 01950;

4/15/2018

Dear Executive Director Nies,

Please accept these public comments on behalf of The Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFA) and our board of directors. MCFA is an industry-based nonprofit organization that identifies and fosters ways to restore the fisheries of the Gulf of Maine and sustain Maine's iconic fishing communities for future generations. Since its creation in 2006, MCFA has focused on empowering Maine's fishermen to create progressive and stewardship focused solutions to complex ecosystem, community, and management problems. Through our work, we empower harvesters to engage in the political and scientific processes which form the foundation of marine resource management. MCFA is working with community-based fishermen throughout Maine who participate in the federal scallop fishery and we are excited to provide guidance and **public comments on the scoping of Amendment 21 to the scallop fishery management plan.** Amendment 21 is an opportunity to create long-term regulations to build a sustainable fishery for a diverse fleet of boats in New England. We appreciate the Council's attention to this issue, and we hope that the significant effort that went into Framework 29, that originally addresses many of these issues last year, will help guide the current discussion. As such, MCFA would like to offer the following comments on the potential focus and work of the Amendment.

- **An allocation split between the Limited Access and General Category.**

MCFA supports the status quo for an allocation split. As established through Framework 29, a distribution to the General Category and Northern Gulf of Maine permits that secures an allocation of 70,000lbs and then allows for a 50/50 split of any allocation available for catch above that amount creates incentive for all parties to sustainably manage the resource. We believe that status quo is fair and equitable and is the simplest to ensure this Amendment is completed in a timely manner. Framework 29 had significant focus from the AP, Committee, Council, and public on this issue in particular, and we feel it is not a great use of time or resources to reopen this issue.

- **Consistent Gear Restrictions:**

MCFA support a consistent gear restriction within the sensitive inshore habitat of the Northern Gulf of Maine area. The Gulf of Maine scallop fishery is sensitive to overfishing and this unique area deserves increased protection from habitat loss and exploitation. The Gulf of Maine is rebuilding, and we have limited science on scallops in federal waters. We believe that a consistent gear restriction throughout the area will limit the impact on bottom habitat and the resource especially until we have better and more consistent data on the resources within the Gulf of Maine.

- **Should the Council limit the ability to turn incidental permits and Gen Cat permits into NGOM permits?**

MCFA supports the Scallop Committee and Council developing a range of alternatives that would explore ways to limit large increases in effort in the Northern Gulf of Maine. This should include incidental permits that can be declared NGOM permits on an annual basis and IFG General Category permits, which are allowed to sell off their quota and then be turned into a NGOM permit. We are not opposed to new entrants into this fishery if it can be sustainably done, but currently we have no means of limiting or understanding what new effort could look like. The biomass in this area is low right now and a large influx of new permits could undermine

the sustainability and economics of the fishery. More work needs to be done to understand what the risks actually are to the fishery and the resource but we support the council putting some effort into this portion of the Amendment.

- **Spread the availability of catch throughout the year (trimester TACs)**

MCFA is not opposed to trimester TACs, but currently we worry that the biomass is too small to support a redistribution of the quota throughout the year. If the council would like to explore trimester TACs, we would ask that analyses be conducted that establish a biomass at which point trimester allocations could be triggered. Additionally, it would be valuable to understand what level of catch would be necessary to make a trimester TAC economically feasible to implement.

In meetings, fishermen also raised concerns about gear conflict that could take place if the scallop fishery was pushed to a different time of year. Most of the NGOM catch has taken place within a small area over the past four years and that area off of Stellwagen Bank becomes very active with groundfish, herring, recreational, and pleasure boats as the weather gets warmer. A shift in the fishery may be putting scallop boats onto some of the most crowded fishing grounds which could create safety concerns and gear conflict.

- **Change the start date to the fishery.**

MCFA opposes shifting the start date of the fishery.

- **Develop set-asides to support research and monitoring.**

MCFA strongly supports creating a set-aside for research and monitoring as it is essential to have good science and accountability to ensure a sustainable and profitable fishery in the Gulf of Maine. We need more surveys within the data-poor area of the Gulf of Maine and an accountable fishery to ensure the resource is managed effectively. MCFA has undertaken a project, with financial support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to explore using cameras on the small boats in the Gulf of Maine in lieu of human observers. We are excited to see the results of this project after the season is completed.

- **Change of the NGOM boundary**

MCFA does not support moving the NGOM line. There needs to be a good reason to revisit a line that was drawn over 10 years ago and if we are going to move the line whenever there is a change in biomass distribution, we will be consistently drawing new lines in the ocean.

- **Allocate portions of the catch across sub-regions of the NGOM.**

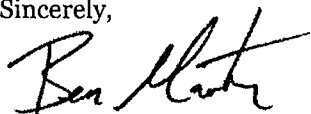
We believe that there is significant value in creating opportunities in different areas of the Gulf of Maine by spreading portions of the catch across different areas. Unfortunately, we don't currently have good enough data to make these decisions. If the council could create an option to do this in the future through a framework this could be very valuable, but we are not ready for that change presently.

- **Change how landings by IFQ vessels in the NGOM are accounted for.**

We do not feel as though it is the appropriate time to change how catch is accounted for by the different vessels within the fleet.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scoping for Amendment 21 to the scallop fishery management plan. We look forward to working with you over the course of this process.

Sincerely,



Ben Martens  
Executive Director



P.O. Box 96 • Menemsha, MA • 02552

April 15, 2019

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director  
New England Fisheries Management Council  
50 Water Street, Mill #2  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Subject: Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21 Scoping Comments

Dear Mr. Nies,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21. The Martha's Vineyard Fishermen's Preservation Trust, a Massachusetts 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation established to i) Preserve the historic fishing fleets, communities, and economies of Martha's Vineyard; ii) Protect the marine populations and fishing grounds off of the coast of Martha's Vineyard and New England and; iii) Educate the community about its local fisheries.

We would like to submit the following comments to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 21:

**Limited Access General Category Possession Limits and LA quota transfers:**

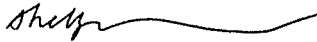
We believe an increase to the daily trip limits for the Limited Access General Category IFQ Fleet (LAGC) would greatly benefit the small-boat fishermen in our community. This increase would do the following:

- Create safer fishing businesses by allowing less fishing trips and the flexibility to fish in more favorable weather conditions without decreasing annual harvest
- Create more stable fishing businesses by reducing fishing costs (lower fishing trips equals less fuel costs, crew cost, and boat maintenance)
- Decrease environmental impacts due to lower fishing trips (decreasing carbon emissions and allowing for more efficient harvests on stock)
- Improve monitoring without additional enforcement costs because fewer trips will be needed for the same total catch

- We believe an increase in daily trip limits will not create disparity between fishermen who lease quota and those that own quota because both parties are subject to costs whether it be lease fees or the bank payments for quota owned.
- We support allowing quota leases or transfers to take place from Limited Access vessels with General Category permits to General Category vessels. We do not support such leases or transfers taking place in the opposite direction (General Category to Limited Access)

Our small-boat fishermen need the ability to continue to operate efficient businesses and we believe an increase in daily trip limits will significantly help their capacity to do so. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelley", followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that extends to the right.

Shelley Edmundson, Executive Director  
Martha's Vineyard Fishermen's Preservation Trust

## Sherie Goutier

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**From:** Julie Miller <jamiller54@roadrunner.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 27, 2019 10:09 AM  
**To:** comments  
**Subject:** Comments on Scallop Amendment 21

Dear Executive Director Nies and the New England Fisheries Management Council:

My name is Ira "Tad" Miller of the F/V Julie Ann and F/V Mallary Sky from Tenants Harbor, Maine. I am writing to you to comment on Amendment 21 to the Scallop Management Plan. I would like to thank the Council for working towards a plan that will help to build and protect a healthy scallop fishery in the Gulf of Maine now and into the future. The following are some of the issues that I feel should be addressed in order to improve upon this critical fishery. I believe the Council should review and limit the potentially devastating effect from allowing permits to shift categories from incidental and General category permits to NGOM permits and could undermine efforts in what seems to be a rebounding fishery after many years very low production. I would also support consistent gear restrictions given the fact that this is a unique area. If we all abide by the same rules it would limit the impact to the resource as well as the bottom while allowing everyone equal access. I believe that we should support better science through surveys and any other means possible as the best way to ensure that we are doing the best that we can to manage the resource in the northern Gulf of Maine. At this point in time we really don't have a good handle on the resource throughout this area. Through doing the proper research over time it could change how we best manage the fishery throughout the range of this area. There may be opportunities to allocate the catch across different regions of the Northern Gulf of Maine which could be a benefit to both the resource as well as different geographic regions. Now is not the time to think about this type of plan though as we don't have the science to support this, but my thought would be in the future if you had away to approach this through a framework it may be of some value. I am also not adverse to a workable monitoring plan that fits the scale of the NGOM fleet, possibly electronic monitoring as long as it is not overburdensome. I would like to suggest one more change in the name of safety. I feel that it is unwise to have the Limited Access Fleet engage in this fishery at the same time as the General Category boats as much as is practical. I believe that the General Category boats should be allowed to be allowed to fish their share of the quota first, then allow the Limited Access Boats in creating a much safer environment. There have already been close calls that have taken place which thankfully to this point have been avoided. But just imagine the possibility of something awful happening with the size and power differences that exist between these two fleets. If one of those high horsepower heavy 100' plus vessels hook up with a 40' vessel that they outweigh by a ratio of 5:1 or more especially on a day where the weather conditions are not good and visibility is poor the result will more than likely be catastrophic, they'd be lucky to even realize something was wrong before it was way to late and that they had one of these vessels in tow and more than likely underwater by that point!

I would favor "holding a turn" or status quo situation on the following rules currently associated the NGOM fishery. I believe that the current split between the Limited Access and the General Category vessels is a workable solution with a 70,000# General Category quota then a 50/50 split on remaining quota. I cannot support any thought of changing the current Northern Gulf of Maine line as it currently exists. If the Council wants to explore this issue there should be a scientific, biological, or habitat reasoning to determine that there is a need to look at any possible changes. I am against the creation of any system that would split the TAC at this point. The result of splitting the TAC would have some very negative effects, one of which would be that a lot of the areas that have fishable quantities of scallops are also highly exploited for other fisheries and recreational uses during other potential times of openings especially the summer. This would create potential gear conflicts and unneeded friction between user groups leading to potentially dangerous situations. Another factor that should be considered a deterrent to changing the current system would be the obvious interaction with more fin-fish as the water warms and the fish move up to shoal water to spawn resulting in more bycatch. During the time the fishery takes place now there is very little by-catch which is a very desirable result. I would like to thank the Council for considering my comments as this important Amendment moves forward.

Sincerely,  
Ira "Tad" Miller  
F/V Julie Ann  
F/V Mallery Sky



My name is Michael Porter and I am a NGOM owner-Operator. I am writing to give comment on Amendment 21 of the Scallop Plan. I think that this amendment should mirror the management measures developed in Framework 29. The allocation of quota between the Limited Access and NGOM was debated and voted on by the Council in FW 29 and worked very well in the 2018 season. It assures that the quota is not over harvested. I also support keeping the boundaries of the NGOM status quo. These boundaries have been fine since they were debated and established in Amendment 11 in 2008. I would suggest a few additional measures to be added to Amendment 21 to help better manage the growing resource in the NGOM and help the boats in that area maximize the total allowable catch (TAC) in the area. First, a research set aside should be taken from the TAC to help fund the surveys. Initially this won't fully fund the survey but the hope is that a well managed fishery will allow it to grow and be self sufficient. Good surveys are the most important part of good management. Second I suggest a mechanism to be added to the amendment that allows the Plan Development Team to divide the TAC into sub areas. This would assure that the right amount of scallops are harvested for each area. This would allow the harvesters to access scallops that are not currently included in the TAC because it is assumed that there won't be activity there. I also have concerns about the amount of potential effort that can enter the NGOM fishery. Currently both Occasional and Gen Cat permits can be transferred to NGOM permits. There are 178 inactive or CPH Gen Cat permits and several hundred Occasional permits. I hope this issue will be addressed.

Michael Porter Permit Number 150973



## Sherie Goutier

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**From:** Notification Team <endspec@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2019 10:04 AM  
**To:** comments  
**Subject:** Atlantic sea scallop amendment 21 scoping comments

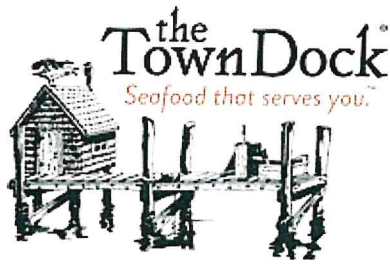
On issue #2 limit should be changed to 3000 or at a bare minimum should be doubled.  
A weekly quota is a good idea  
Trip limits should be the same for open and closed areas  
La. Boats should NOT be allowed to transfer quota.

Capt. Mike Skarimbas  
F/V New Species  
Montauk ny.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10







April 3, 2019

Dear Director Nies,

I am writing to comment on the Northern Gulf of Maine, Limited Access General Category Amendment. As owners of two LAGC scallop permits we are not in support of raising the current LAGC possession limit at this time.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our comment.

Sincerely,

Katie Almeida  
Fishery Policy Analyst



**Sherie Goutier**

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**From:** Dube, Jeannine <jeannine\_dube@fws.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 8, 2019 1:19 PM  
**To:** comments; Stephanie Nash  
**Cc:** David Simmons  
**Subject:** ER 19/0079 - NOI for Amendment 21 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan, Fisheries of the Northeastern United States

David Simmons of the New England Field Office has requested that I submit a no comment on the subject ER.

Jeannine Dube

--  
Secretary  
New England Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
70 Commercial St., Suite 300  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-223-2541

"Our lives are better left to chance. I could have missed the pain, but I'd have had to miss the dance." Tony Arata, from Garth Brooks' "The Dance"





Received via email 4/15/19

Hello my name is James West. I am a NGOM owner/operator. My permit number is 151983. This email is to comment on Amendment 21 of the Scallop Plan. I believe this amendment should mirror the management measures developed in framework 29. The allocation of quota between the Limited Access and NGOM was debated and voted on by the council in framework 29 and worked very well in the 2018 season. It assures that the quota is not over harvested. I also support keeping the boundaries of the NGOM status quo. These boundaries have been fine since they were debated and established in Amendment 11 in 2008. I would suggest a few additional measures to be added to Amendment 21 to help better manage the growing resource in the NGOM and help the boats in that area maximize the total allowable catch (TAC) in the area. First a research set aside should be taken from the TAC to help fund the surveys. Initially this won't fully fund the survey but the hope is that a well managed fishery will allow it to grow and be self sufficient. Good surveys are the most important part of good management. Second, I suggest a mechanism be added to the amendment that allows for the Plan Development Team to divide the TAC into sub areas. This assures that the right amount of scallops are harvested for each area. This would allow harvesters to access scallops that are not currently included in the TAC because it is assumed that there won't be activity there. I also have concerns about the amount of potential effort that can enter the NGOM fishery. Currently, both Occasional and General Cat permits can be transferred to NGOM permits. There are 178 inactive or CPH Gen Cat permits. I hope this issue will be addressed. Thank you! James





**From:** jim wotton <cranberryislandlobster@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 13, 2019 10:25 AM  
**To:** comments <comments@nefmc.org>  
**Subject:** Amendment 21 Scoping comments

Thomas Niels,

My name is Jim Wotton, Owner operator of FV Overkill out of Friendship Maine. I've held a NGOM permit since it was created. I'd like to thank you and the council for the work you have undertaken over the last few years to protect and preserve the NGOM scallop Fishery. However the work is not complete. We need to plan for the future.

The easiest way to make management decisions is when you have accurate and timely scientific data. That is something we have been missing. Good Science could have guided you to the proper answers to many of the question in the scoping document. I support a set-aside for research and monitoring, to preserve and protect our fishery.

I believe that the protections in place now should remain in place.

The allocation split, while not perfect, is working.

The lines have have been in place since amendment 11 they should remain as is.

I also believe we should have consistent rules across the fleets in regards to gear configurations within the Gulf of Maine and that shifting permit categories should not be allowed.

I am a believer in having as many "tools in the toolbox" as possible, some tools we may need in the future are the ability to manage the area through sub areas or trimester quota. We aren't there yet but hopefully will be when we get better research.

