

Potential 2021 Scallop Work Priorities

Version 1.1

SCALLOP AP & CTE: We will be considering potential 2021 work priorities at your meetings. Please be ready to discuss and rank your recommendations.

Scallop AP & Committee Meetings

September 23 & 25, 2020

Webinar

Version 1.2 - Draft

1.0 UPCOMING SCALLOP MEETINGS

Please note that additional meetings will be added as the year progresses.

- September 14, 2020 – Scallop Management Track Assessment
- September 23 & 25, 2020 – AP and Committee (Webinar)
- September 29 – October 1, 2020 – NEFMC meeting (Webinar)
 - Scallop Report on Thursday, October 1 at 9:00am.
- October 15, 2020 – Scallop PDT webinar to review survey results
- October 20, 2020 – Scallop PDT webinar
- October 22, 2022 – Scallop PDT webinar
- October 27, 2020 – Half-day Council meeting to set 2021 priorities
- October 28, 2020 – Scallop PDT webinar
- October/November (TBD) - Scallop AP and Committee
- November (TBD – likely Nov. 23) - SSC meeting to recommend OFL & ABC
- December 1-3, 2020 – NEFMC meeting
- December (TBD) – Scallop AP and Committee
- January (TBD) – Scallop AP and Committee
- January 26 – 28, 2020 – NEFMC meeting (Final Action FW33)

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2.0 2020 SCALLOP PRIORITIES

Link to 2020 priorities for all FMPs:

https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/2020_Final_Priorities_200117_200117_102819.pdf

Table 1 – Council’s 2020 Scallop Work Priorities

Regulatory Requirements & Ongoing work	Council Ranking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specifications for 2021/2022• Support Scallop RSA Program• In-season catch accounting	1. Complete Amendment 21

2.1 Outlook for Completing 2020 Priorities

- **Amendment 21.** The Council is scheduled to take final action on Amendment 21 at its September/October meeting. This would mark the end of the Council’s formal development on the action. Council staff would then begin preparing the document for preliminary submission to NMFS, likely in the first half of 2021.
- **Framework 33 (2021/2022 specifications).** The Council is delaying final action on 2021/2022 specifications until January of 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Scallop surveys funded through the RSA program will be on the water into September, and the specification setting process will begin in mid-October.
- **Scallop RSA.** Staff plan to continue support of the Scallop RSA program, and in-season catch accounting issues are handled primarily by NMFS.
- **General note.** There are 15 potential work items listed in Section 3.0. The Council will be devoting time toward completing legal and regulatory requirements and finishing work on Framework 33 (2021/2022 specifications) and Amendment 21 from January – June of 2021. There will be limited time to make headway on new work items, and difficult at-best to move directly into new work items at the start of the calendar year. There may be some time over the summer (July, August) to work on new priorities before transitioning to work on the 2022/2023 specifications.

The following graphic shows how the Council would likely handle each possible priority for 2021. Items in green will be worked on in 2021. Items in green will be worked on during calendar year 2021. Items in grey are possible “new” work items for 2021. The AP and Committee should consider recommending which “new” priorities that they want to work on in 2021.

Possible 2021 Priorities and Vehicles

Each column represents a way to address the priority

Limited time in 2021 to work on “new” priorities (summer of 2021)

Ongoing Work from 2020, Reg Req.		“new” Potential Priorities for 2021		
Specs	Framework	Other		Amendment
	2021/2022 Specs	RSA Support	Tracking flatfish catch	Amendment 21: NGOM Management Measures, LAGC IFQ Trip Limits, One-way IFQ transfers
	2022/2023 Specs	Scallop Survey Advisory Panel		
	Approaches for seeding and grow out	Performance Report for LA	Evaluate Rotational Management	Limited Access DAS and Access Area Leasing Program
	Enforcement (Bag tags)	Online AA trip exchange (Council letter, NMFS rulemaking)		
	Adjust industry funded observer program	Modify LAGC Closure Noticing (Council letter, NMFS rulemaking)		
	Northern Edge (Habitat)			

The following table is intended to describe progress on each priority, relative to the next five Council meetings (September 2020 – June 2021).

DRAFT and subject to change	Expected progress on priorities <u>relative</u> to upcoming Council meetings				
Council Meeting:	Sep-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Apr-21	Jun-21
Regulatory Requirements and Ongoing Work Items					
Amendment 21	Final Action		Preliminary Submission		Final submission
2021/2022 Specifications	2020 Survey updates and planning for other issues	Update Council on FW33 progress	Final Action	Preliminary Submission	Final submission
Support Scallop RSA Program	FFO Published	Proposals Due, Reviews begin		Announce 2021/2022 awards; RSA Share day (May)	Council votes on 2022/2023 Priorities
In-season catch accounting		Support FW33 bycatch projections	Evaluate YT transfer to GF		

3.0 FOR DISCUSSION: INITIAL LIST OF PRIORITIES

	Status	Multi Year	Legal/Regulatory Requirement?	EO Response	Source
1. <u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2022 (2023 default).</u>			Y	Y	Requirement
2. Support action for access to Northern Edge HMA (see Habitat), including development of access area program.		Y		Y	2018 priority
3. Review and implement recommendations from 2015 scallop survey review panel	Ongoing				Scallop survey review panel 2020 priority
4. Modify RSA program as recommended by RSA Program Review	Ongoing				2020 - NEFSC lead on surveys
5. Performance report for the LA component					Scallop Committee
6. Evaluate rotational management program					Scallop PDT, Committee
7. Develop limited access vessel DAS and access area trip leasing				Y	July 2020 letter from Scallopers Campaign
8. Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (IFO coverage vs. required SBRM coverage, etc.)					NEFSC letter 2017
9. In season catch accounting	Ongoing		Y		
10. Support annual scallop RSA process, priority setting, reviews.	Ongoing				
11. Online access area trip exchanges (Administrative)				Y	CTE → EO
12. Modify LAGC closure noticing (Administrative)				Y	CTE → EO
13. Complete A21/ FW33	Ongoing		Y		
14. Develop mgmt and policy approaches for seeding and grow out					2021 RSA priorities; staff, public comment
15. Develop measures to improve enforceability of landings limits (bag tags)					Public comment, June 2020

4.0 DESCRIPTIONS OF POTENTIAL 2021 WORK ITEMS

4.1 Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2022 (FY2023 default)

- Specifications could be included in a FW or specifications package. This would include allocations for 2022 and 2023.

4.2 Support action for access to Northern Edge HMA (see Habitat), including development of access area program for modified area

- This is a work item that would be led by the Council's Habitat Committee.
 - Through multiple awards from the Scallop RSA, Dr. Scott Gallagher completed a three-year BACI study of scallop dredging in and around the Northern Edge HMA. Some of the preliminary results of this work have been presented to the Habitat PDT and at the Scallop RSA Share Day ([Presentation, Short Report](#))

4.3 Review and implement recommendations from 2015 scallop survey review panel (Ongoing)

- The NEFSC sent the Council a letter on September 16, 2019 that summarizes steps that have been taken to address recommendations of the 2015 report. focusing on the development of an optimal and integrated statistical survey design.
- The Council's Executive Committee is currently assembling a Scallop Survey Advisory Panel (SSAP), which was a recommendation of the RSA program review (see suggested composition below). This group would likely work on developing an integrated statistical survey design, which is noted in the Sept. 16, 2019 letter. The NEFSC is the lead group of this effort. The panel has not been assembled, and TORs for the SSAP are being drafted by the NEFSC.

4.4 Modify RSA program as recommended by RSA Program Review

- Two separate tracks of work: scallop survey advisory panel and RSA program review implementation team.
- On January 28, 2020, the Council agreed by consensus to adopt the Executive Committee's recommended composition for two working groups that will consider the recommendations of the RSA Program Review.
 - Scallop Survey Advisory Panel: This Panel would design a strategic approach for sea scallop surveys and then explore mechanisms for implementation. The NEFSC should take the lead on this effort. It may be that membership may be different for the survey design and implementation phases of this discussion. Suggested membership:
 - Council – 2 members and one staff
 - NEFSC – 2 (possibly more during survey design phase)
 - GARFO – 1

- Survey providers/public – 4-5 representatives should be solicited from recent survey providers
- RSA Program Review Implementation Team: This group is to focus on the ten concerns identified in Recommendation #2 of the final report. There has not been work on this item since early 2020. The Council would take the lead on this effort. The first step of this group would be to prioritize the order that topics will be discussed. Output is a discussion paper that will be used to influence/ Council priorities. Suggested membership:
 - Council members – 2, plus one staff
 - NEFSC – 1
 - GARFO – 1
 - AP/Public (with RSA experience) – 2-4

4.5 Evaluate performance of the LA component

- This concept was suggested at the Scallop AP and Committee in 2017 after the completion of the last [LAGC IFQ performance report](#). There was interest an evaluation of the LA component using some of the same metrics that were used to describe performance of the LAGC IFQ component.

4.6 Evaluation of Rotational Management

- Evaluate the performance of the Council’s rotational program since it was adopted in Amendment 10.
- PDT Suggestion: Start small with an initial ‘white paper’ describing the concepts of rotational management from Amendment 10, and how this management strategy has been used (and evolved over time). Use data we already have in Framework actions and year end reports, etc.

4.7 Develop limited access vessel DAS and access area trip leasing

- Letter received on July 24, 2020: “the Scallopers Campaign requests the Council to include the development of a leasing program for the Limited Access (LA) sea scallop fishery in its 2021 priorities. A leasing program would improve operational and economic flexibility and enhance the fleet’s ability to withstand future variability and contingencies in the fishery.”
- This ask is different than what was proposed several years ago by the East Coast Scallop Harvesters Association. Initially this concept was proposed as a pilot project, that is no longer being suggested. <https://www.scalloperscampaign.org/>
- Concept of leasing was considered by the Council during the priority setting process last year. The Council ranked that potential priority low relative other work items. The Scallop AP has expressed support for this concept several times. The MAFMC voted in August 2020 to send the NEFMC a letter in support of LA leasing as a work priority.

4.8 Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (IFO coverage vs. required SBRM coverage, etc.)

- The Council has noted that the number of sea-days assigned to the scallop fishery have been higher than what is required to meet the SBRM standard. The IFO program is used to offset the cost of carrying observers for the vessel. The cost of administering scallop observers is born by the NMFS.
- Modifying coverage requirements for the scallop fishery could be done through a framework adjustment.

4.9 In Season Catch Accounting

- NMFS and the Scallop PDT have annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, yellowtail, and windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).
- Work is ongoing.

4.10 Scallop RSA program support

- Support annual scallop RSA process: priority setting, and management and technical reviews.
- Organize and facilitate RSA Share Day for 2021.

4.11 Online access area trip exchanges (Administrative)

- This would allow LA vessels to complete access area trip exchanges using a web-based platform.
- Trip exchanges in LA fishery are currently handled through signed paper forms, can take up to 15 days to process.
- Streamlining this process would improve flexibility in LA fishery, economic benefit in terms of planning business in real-time.
- Administrative issue/change that would be handled by NMFS. The Council would likely send a letter to NMFS requesting this.
- Recommended by the PDT and AP in response to E.O. on Promoting Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

4.12 Modify LAGC closure noticing (Administrative)

- When LAGC IFQ AA trips are projected to be landed, process for noticing area closure is burdensome and can take time. Can also lead to premature IFQ AA closures.
- Streamline area closure noticing through VMS notifications.
- Current process: GARFO estimates when area will close (~week before) → closure notice goes to NMFS HQ for approval (~days before notice) → notice of closure published in Federal Register (~days before closure).
- Administrative issue/change that would be handled by NMFS. The Council would likely send a letter to NMFS requesting this.
- Recommended by the PDT and AP in response to E.O. on Promoting Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

4.13 Complete A21/ FW33 (2020 work items)

- As noted above, Council staff will be completing Amendment 21 and Framework 33 during the first part of 2021.
- Council staff expect that completion of these 2020 work items will require a substantial amount of time in 2021 (January – June). It will be difficult – at best – to move directly into new work items at the start of the calendar year.

4.14 Develop management and policy approaches for scallop seeding and grow out

- In June 2020, the Council approved a new RSA research priority: “Scallop Recruitment Supplementation: Research to develop the tools, such as spat collection, grow out of juvenile scallops, predator control, and offshore seeding, to supplement natural recruitment of scallops.”

4.15 Develop measures to improve enforceability of landings limits (bag tags)

- Public comment at the June 2020 Council meeting suggesting that the Council should consider using more/new tools to track landings in the scallop fishery.