**DRAFT**

# Summary of the Recent Scallop PDT Conference Calls

## October 21, 2016

## October 26, 2016

## October 28, 2016

**PDT Call on October 21, 2016:**

**OFL and ABC Recommendations:** The PDT was updated on the SSC's recommendations for 2017 (13 month) and 2018 (default) OFLs and ABCs, shown in the table below.

| Year | ABC_Land | ABC_Disc | ABC_Tot | OFL_Land | OFL_Disc | OFL_Tot |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2017 | 46737 | 15004 | 61741 | 56533 | 18952 | 75485 |
| 2018 | 43142 | 13850 | 56992 | 52184 | 17494 | 69678 |

**FW28 Specifications:** With regard to running the SAMS model, Dr. Hart explained that adjustments to the new LPUE model were made since it was last presented to the PDT. The new linear LPUE model did not account for the number of scallops that can be shucked in a day (the old model did account for this), and was adjusted to cap the number of animals that can be shucked at 50,000 per day, which reduces the maximum LPUE to 4,500 lbs.

Additional information was provided on NLS ext, which would revert to open bottom in the proposed specification alternatives tasked by the Committee. Animals in the NLS ext will be five years old next year and are expected to be around 20 counts. Dr. Hart explained that the model is predicting an LPUE of 2,900 lbs per DAS in this area. Because the LPUE in this area is higher than in other SAMS areas, the model predicts that the F rate for this area will be F=0.65. Adding this area as open bottom increases the averaged LPUE for all open areas. Keeping this area closed or keeping it as part of the NLS AA would reduce the number of DAS associated with various F rate runs by around three (3) DAS. Some members of the PDT feel that these animals have additional growth potential, however, their maximum growth is expected to be less than their counterparts in the NLS north, which is one of the most productive areas in the fishery (VIMS SH/MW data from 2016 dredge survey – see PDT memo to SSC).

The PDT discussed an idea proposed by Dr. Hart to make this NLS ext its own AA and reduce the overall number of DAS. The concept would be to add a 5$^{th}$ AA trip that could be taken in either the ETC area or the NLS ext for the fleet (assuming that some vessels would go to the ETC and some to NLS). The PDT noted that this sort of approach may require a lottery, something the AP and CTE have moved away from in recent years. The PDT requested that an updated table of exploitable biomass be provided for the NLS ext area, and expressed reservations about adding a 5$^{th}$ rotational trip (which the CTE did not recommend/task) and additional effort in the MAAA for FY2017 (in addition to the 2 trips on the table).

With regard to the opening of access areas, one PDT member cited correspondence from the October 13 joint meeting that suggested meat weights in the NLS improved starting in June of 2016.

**Thirteen Month Fishing Year:** The 2017 fishing year will be 13 months, beginning on March 1, 2017 and ending on March 31, 2018. The PDT discussed possible ways to prorate the 2017 fishing year to account for the extra month (March of 2018). The group discussed increasing the DAS and corresponding IFQ quota by 8% to account for the additional time in the FY. The group also discussed basing the proration on recent LA DAS usage and IFQ landings during the month of March. The PDT reviewed recent March DAS and IFQ usage and recommends

prorating the DAS/corresponding IFQ quota increase in 2017 by recent March fishing activity (multiply the 12 month DAS specifications by 4.7%).

**PDT Call on October 26, 2016:**

**Results of SAMS model runs:** The PDT reviewed the results of SAMS model runs based on recent scallop Committee tasking. The SAMS model was run assuming status quo allocations for the LAGC IFQ component (5.5% of ACL (SQ for short)), and the spatial management approach (LAGC IFQ allocated 5.5% of projected landings (PL for short)). The status quo allocation approach results in higher overall fishery allocations, as well as a higher quota for the IFQ component. A total of eight model runs were completed for this meeting: 1) No Action (FW27 default specifications for FY2017); 2) Status Quo (FY2017 Specifications, assuming status quo allocations); 3) SQ Basic Run at 30 DAS; 4) SQ Basic Run w/ ETC Flex Option at 30 DAS; 5) PL Basic Run at 30 DAS; 6) PL Basic Run at F=0.4 for DAS; 7) PL Basic Run at F=0.48 for DAS; and 8) PL Basic Run with ETC Flex Option at 30 DAS. The SAMS model was not run assuming 34.55 DAS because this would have resulted in an F > 0.48, and violates the hybrid overfishing definition. Also, the SAMS model was not run at different F rates for the Basic Run with ETC Flex Option for this meeting because there are no differences in the open bottom configuration or the AA pounds allocated in the Basic Run and the Basic Run with the ETC Flex Option. The results of the various F rate runs can be expected to be nearly identical for underlying AA configurations.

The PDT noted that the F=0.4 is the most conservation positive approach under consideration in FW28, and recommends this approach. The PDT noted that the F rate associated with DAS has been set equal to an F=0.48 in recent years, and that the open bottom has been pushed hard. With four access area trips under consideration, this year is a good time to reduce F for DAS while still achieving relatively stable landings.

The PDT discussed information on the NLS extension area, which was closed in 2015 after high densities of small scallops were observed in the area. The PDT briefly followed up on its earlier discussion about this area, and requested that updated exploitable biomass estimates from the area be provided.

**PDT Call on October 28, 2016:**

**Default specifications for 2018:** The PDT recommends that default measures in 2018 be set at the following levels:

- DAS set at 75% of FY2017 allocation
- LAGC IFQ quota set at 75% of the FY2017 quota
- One (1) access area trip at 18,000lbs in the MAAA

**Part Time Limited Access allocations for 2018:** The PT LA access area allocation for FY2017 would be 28,800 lbs under the current range of specification alternatives (40% of FT allocation). The PDT reviewed how PT allocations have been handled in recent frameworks, and noted that the majority of PT vessels are homeported in the Mid-Atlantic. The PDT recommends that the PT LA access area allocations be set as follows for FY2017:

- Two (2) AA trips at 14,400lbs per trip
- PT vessels may take up to one (1) AA trip in the NLS, CA II, or the ETC (if opened). PT vessels may take up to two (2) trips in the MAAA.

**Preliminary Economic Analysis:** Dr. Demet Haksever presented preliminary economic analysis to the group based on the current set of model runs. Dr. Haksever explained that given the differences in allocations between the status quo (SQ) option (No Action - setting IFQ allocations at 5.5% of the ACL), and the measures that set allocations based on projected landings for both the LA and LAGC IFQ, the SQ landings in the short term (ST) would result in 50 million dollars more in revenue than the spatial management options. Total economic benefits in the short term are very similar between several of the specification options. Over the long term, landings revenue is very similar for all runs (both SQ and spatial management runs).

The economic model estimates are based on size categories that are generated through the SAMS model. The PDT noted that the economic benefits of keeping the Elephant Trunk Rotational Closure (ETC) closed may be under estimated in the economic model because the SAMS model may be underestimating the growth potential of the animals in this area, and the model does not have a U12 market category. The PDT also noted that portions of the ETC are generally shallower, and observed growth of shell height and meat weight in this area are generally higher in this area than other areas. The PDT flagged the ETC as an area to look into more next year (SAMS model and economic model).

**Sea Surface Temperatures:** Dr. David Rudders presented plots of SST in the Mid-Atlantic based on satellite/remote sensing data and R code provided by Dr. Kevin Friedland at the NEFSC. The monthly plots seem to confirm the temperatures that the group generally expected – that is, warmer in the summer into the fall, and cooler into the winter. The PDT suggested that if the Council considers a summer seasonal closure, that it could potentially be in mid-July to allow for harvest and landings for the 4$^{th}$ of July. Dr. Rudders indicated that his lab would continue to review the SST, and indicated that October data output seemed warmer than expected. Dr. Rudders also noted that VIMS is conducting research on discard mortality, and results will ready next year.

**Closed Area I Carryover Pounds:** The PDT is in support of allocating carryover trips to CA I if the boundary is modified to include substantial exploitable biomass currently in the CA I habitat management area North (CAI HMA N). The PDT noted that meat quality in this area declines in the late summer into the fall, and that there could be safety issues if these pounds are allocated late in the fishing year and would not carry forward.

**Prohibition on the Possession of Shell Stock Inshore of the DAS demarcation line north of 42° 20' N:** The PDT highlighted some of the negative impacts of shucking scallops/discarding viscera in nearshore waters. Processing scallops while off the DAS clock undermines the DAS system, and inflates LPUE estimates which are used to estimate LPUE in future FY.