

## Potential 2017 Scallop Work Priorities

**There are 11 priorities listed on the current list. Specifications are a legal requirement that we will work on in 2017.**

**Is there any input from the group today?**

**There will be an opportunity to revisit this list again in November.**

**Potential 2017 Sea Scallop Priorities – Current Council List**

		Priority
a		Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2018 and 2019 (2020 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.). Clarification needed on whether this is for one or two year specifications.
b		Framework action to modify scallop access areas to be consistent with OA2 revised areas
c		NGOM scallop management measure changes: such as changing opening date, consistent gear restrictions, possession limits, effort controls.
d	Staff	NMFS and PDT have new annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, YT, windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).
e		Measures to address high-grading of scallops and reduce discard mortality
f		Gear modifications to protect small scallops (extended link)
g		Specify allocation review triggers
h		Complete LAGC review (final report April 2017)
i		RSA program review and modifications
j		Modify flatfish AMs
k	Staff	Support Scallop RSA program, including technical and management reviews
l	Staff	Integrate findings from Sea Scallop Survey Methods Peer Review (process TBD, but may include additional review of how surveys are combined for management advice)

**Groundfish Priority with Scallop Plan Overlap:**

Modification to small dredge exemption area. (This will require scallop PDT time)

Staff working list of Priorities from 2016 Discussions and PDT Comments and Recommendations to date.

	Potential Priorities	Description	PDT Comments from July 21 and Aug. 30/31
1	Set Specifications		<u>High Priority.</u>
2	NGOM Management	Council rec. in April: “.... Management actions to consider could be: changing the opening date, and considering consistent gear restrictions, possession limits, and effort controls throughout the NGOM for all permit types.”	When considering recent NGOM survey results, the PDT noted that overall fishing mortality in the area is not limited by the TAC for LAGC vessels. In general the PDT felt that <b><u>NGOM management is an important issue to consider.</u></b>
3	Gear modifications to protect small scallops	By Council Action in June 2016. This was a 2016 priority that the Council elected not to pursue in FW28 at June meeting. Potential approaches include extended link, 5 row apron, etc.	Think about how modifying gear can complement the spatial management of the fishery (i.e. closing areas to protect small scallops). Larger than 4” rings in some AA to help reduce discarding marketable scallops (discarding 110 mm scallops on GB). <b><u>The PDT recommends looking at the objectives of gear modifications to protect small scallops and the development of flatfish AMs together.</u></b>
4	Measures to address high grading.	Concept Raised by Rick Robbins (June 2016). Focus would be to reduce discard mortality and improve the overall economic performance and production in the scallop fishery. There are incentives in place that may be affecting fishing behavior to increase discard mortality of scallops including low fuel prices, no time constraints in access areas, and high price premiums for larger scallops. One specific idea to facilitate this topic is to convene a specific working group to discuss this issue, potentially including Scallop AP and PDT members.	High grading is an important issue to address, but can be difficult to tease out in existing fishery data. The observer program is starting to collect this information – but this is a difficult question to get at while on the boat. Two places to get at this 1) sorting, 2) while shucking. If pursued, the PDT could look at this in the context of ongoing work on discard mortality. A working group could help to get at lessons learned from other regions. However, it is not clear how much high grading is happening – there is not a smoking gun in the data the PDT has seen and this would need additional analysis. <b><u>There were priorities added to RSA to look at high grading, the PDT recommends seeing where this heads before adding it to the 2017 work plan.</u></b>
5	Scallop RSA-Program	Discussion at June Committee about developing goals for the program. Priority could explore the basis for scaling the program? Are grants the right way to administer the program, etc. Should a review of the program come before/in conjunction with Council action?	Consider the realized percentage of the projected landings that the set-aside represents (varies year to year). If a review is conducted, the NEFSC should be consulted.
6	Modify GB access areas	After the OHA2 Final rule – looking at Northern Edge, Nantucket Lightship. Ongoing scallop priority – time sensitive with progress of OHA2 final rule.	This has been on the work/priority list for several years. The HMA-NL has lots of small scallops. (in addition to GB closures) <b><u>HIGH PRIORITY for NEXT AVAILABLE FW.</u></b>

7	Develop new flatfish Ams	By Council Action in June 2016. Develop new flatfish AMs for scallop fishery for yellowtail flounder (SNE/MA & GB) and windowpane flounder (SWP & NWP). Council interest pursuing AMs requiring gear modifications vs. current time area closures.	Look at gear modifications in concert with time/area closures. <b><u>If the Council develops a sub-ACL for northern windowpane this year, corresponding AMs will need to be developed through the scallop FMP. The PDT recommends looking at the objectives of gear modifications to protect small scallops and the development of flatfish AMs together.</u></b>
8	Remove LAGC scallop dredge exemption areas (would be GF priority)	Remove scallop exemption areas that are part of Multispecies FMP (to reflect changes proposed in OHA2) to allow LAGC vessels to fish in newly opened areas that are outside current exemption areas (if approved)	The PDT recommends completely removing the LAGC dredge exemption areas. These areas were instituted when the GC fishery was open access. The fishery have evolved considerably over time. <b><u>The PDT recommends pursuing this priority after the OHA2 final rule.</u></b>

**From the Process Last Year: Other issues the Scallop PDT and Committee will be working on in 2016**

- Support Scallop RSA Program** – Annually  
*December/January - Members of Scallop PDT, AP, and Committee review RSA proposals and may participate in management review meeting.*  
*April/May – Joint PDT/AP meeting to review recent project results and begin priority setting process for next cycle.*  
*June meetings – PDT, AP, & CTE recommendations to Council, Council identifies research priorities (June Council Meeting).*
- Finish Five-Year LAGC IFQ Review**  
*Completion date not certain, likely winter 2016/spring 2017 for presentation to full Council*
- In-season catch monitoring**  
*Staff: NMFS and PDT have new annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop and YT catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).*
- Effort to integrate findings from Scallop Survey Methods Peer Review** – *Specifics are uncertain but a working group may be formed to identify ways to leverage findings into the overall process*

## 2016 Council Priorities (as approved in December 2015 – Comm, ExComm, Council)

Sea Scallops								
	<u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2017 and 2018 (2019 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, potential modification of scallop access area boundaries, etc.). Clarification needed on whether this is for one or two year specifications.</u>	✓	✓	✓				
	Framework action to modify scallop access areas to be consistent with OA2 revised areas (including CAI carry-over trips in the north); develop gear modifications to further protect small scallops (same as reactive windowpane flounder AM)	✓	✓	✓				
	Host a workshop to address concerns raised about scallop fishing pressure in inshore areas.	✓	✓	✓				
	Staff: Support technical and management reviews for Research Set Aside program	✓	✓	✓				
	<i>Integrate findings from Sea Scallop Survey Methods Peer Review (process TBD)</i>	✓						
	Staff: NMFS and PDT have new annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop and YT catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).	✓	✓	✓				
	<u>Five year review of LAGC IFQ program (will require staff and Committee time)</u>	✓	✓	✓				
	Review the overall performance of the ACL structure since it was adopted under Amendment 15 in 2010 (could be considered in a future action in 2016 or later).	✓	✓	✓				
	<i>Consider modifications of current reactive YTF AMs to be more consistent with windowpane flounder AMs.</i>	✓						