



New England Fishery Management Council

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E.F. "Terry" Stockwell III, *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 18, 2016
TO: Council
FROM: Mr. Thomas Nies, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Scallop Fishery Accountability Measures for GB YT Flounder**

On September 12, 2016 the Groundfish Committee requested that additional information about the Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder accountability measures currently in place for the scallop fishery. Staff have compiled the following information for reference.

Scallop Fishery's GB YT AM:

Who:

- The accountability measure only applies to the Limited Access component of the fishery.

What:

- The scallop fishery is subject to a time/area closure on Georges Bank if the accountability measure is triggered (Figure 1).

Where:

- The closure covers statistical reporting area (SRA) 562, and a small portion of SRA 525. This area includes the Closed Area II Access Area (Figure 1), as well as a portion of the Closed Area II Extension rotational closure, and open bottom to the west to the current groundfish closed area (within SRA 562).

When (see Table 1 and Table 2):

- The duration of the AM closure depends on the amount (percentage) of the sub-ACL overage. Two penalty schedules of percentages/closures were developed to account for years when the Closed Area II Access Area is closed and the AM is set to take effect.
- Overages in year 1 (Y1) can trigger accountability measures in either the following year (Y2) or two fishing years after the overage (Y3), depending on when the overage is known. The GB YT AM cannot be implemented in-season.
 - Because final year end catch data is often not available until after the start of the scallop fishing year (currently March 1, will change to April 1 in FY2018), AMs triggered by overages in Y1 are not implemented until Y3.
 - NMFS evaluates scallop fishery catch of GB YT in-season (January 15). If estimated catch at this point in the year indicates that the scallop fishery has exceeded its sub-ACL by more than 50%, an AM could be put in place for Y2.

Why (AM triggers):

- There are two (2) ways to trigger the GB YT scallop AMs. Either:
 - The scallop fishery exceeds its sub-ACL *and* the US ACL is exceeded.
 - The scallop fishery exceeds its sub-ACL by more than 50% (150% of sub-ACL).

Outlook for FY2017:

Georges Bank Yellowtail Allocations:

- US TMGC negotiated a GB YT TAC of 300 mt.
- The US fishery receives 69% of the negotiated quota (300 mt).
- Scallop fishery sub-ACL is 16% of the US ABC.
- The scallop sub-ACL for FY2017 would be ~32 mt.
- The Scallop PDT will be projecting GB YT catch, estimates expected in October.

Scallop Fishery Access on Georges Bank:

- The scallop PDT is still developing estimates of exploitable biomass for FY2017.
- There is potential for CA II AA to be open for FY2017 (1 trip per FT LA permit). This is the green box in Figure 1.
- There is potential for the CA II extension, a rotational closure in place for FY2016, to remain closed in FY2017 (Hatched area in Figure 1).
- The Scallop Committee discussed prohibiting RSA compensation fishing in CA II in order to reduce interactions with GB YT. The RSA set-aside is 1.25 million lbs.
- Continuation of the seasonal closure of CA II AA from Aug. 15 – Nov. 15 to reduce yellowtail bycatch.

Figure 1 - Georges Bank yellowtail accountability measure area, potential spatial management on Georges Bank in FY2017 (Scallop FW28), and other management boundaries.

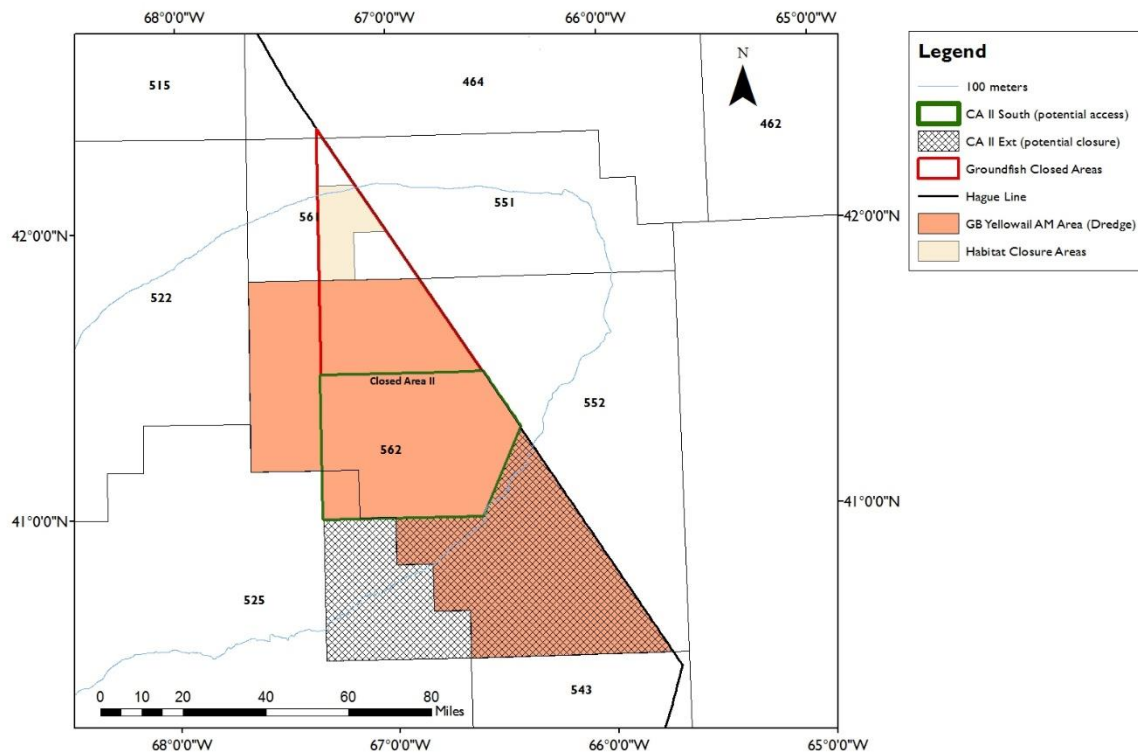


Table 1 - AM penalty schedule for years when CA II AA is not open.

Years when CA II is NOT open		
~32mt sub-ACL	Percent overage of YTF sub-ACL	Length of closure
33mt	1.9 or less	September through November.
33mt	2.0-2.9	August through January.
33mt	3.0-3.9	March and August through February.
34mt	4.0-4.9	March and July through February.
34mt	5.0-5.9	March through May and July through February.

Table 2 - AM penalty schedule for years when CA II AA is open.

Years when CA II is open		
~32mt sub-ACL	Percent overage of YTF sub-ACL	Length of closure
33mt or less	3 or less	Oct-Nov
34mt - 36mt	3.1-14	Sep-Nov
37mt	14.1-16	Sep-Jan
37mt - 44mt	16.1-39	Aug-Jan
45mt - 50mt	39.1-56	Jul-Jan
>50mt	Greater than 56	Mar-Feb (All year)

Table 3 - Breakdown of the GB YT allocations to the scallop fishery (mt) for FY2017, and 150% of the sub-ACL.

	YT ABC	US Share	Scallop 'ABC'	Scallop 'sub-ACL'	150% of sub-ACL
	FY2017	69%	16%	95% of ABC	
US TAC (300 mt)	300	207.0	~33	~32	~47

Table 4 - Limited Access scallop fishery allocations by FY, recent schedule of CAII access, recent scallop fishery catch of GB YT by FY.

FY	Action	LA DAS (FT)	AA trips	CA II AA	Notes re: CA II AA and other management	% US TAC Caught	Scallop sub-ACL (mt)	Scallop catch (mt)	% Scallop ACL Caught	Initial Projected GB YT Catch
2011	FW22	32	4 (2 MA)	0.5 trips (157 vessels; 18K lbs/trip)	10% access area bycatch cap; GB stock-wide monitoring of YT sub-ACL; Bycatch Avoidance Program CAI and CAII	76%	200.8	83.9	41.8%	175.3mt
2012	FW22	34	4	1 trip (313 vessels; 18K lbs/trip)	GB stock-wide monitoring of YT sub-ACL; Bycatch Avoidance Program CAI and CAII	68%	156.9	164	104.5%	341.8mt
2013	FW24	33	2	182 trips (13K lbs/trip)	Seasonal closure of CAII Aug 15 – Nov 15; GB stock-wide monitoring of YT sub-ACL; Bycatch Avoidance Program CAII	43%	41.5	37.5	90.4%	85.3mt
2014*	FW25	31	2	197 trips (12K lbs/trip)	16% GB YT sub-ACL; YT landings prohibited; Seasonal closure of CAII Aug 15 – Nov 15; GB stock-wide monitoring of YT sub-ACL; Bycatch Avoidance Program CAII	37%	50.9	59	115.9%	62.4mt - 103.7 mt
2015*	FW26	30.86	51K lbs to MAAA	Closed	In-season transfer to groundfish fishery (7.9 mt).	***	38	29.7	78.1%	27.9mt – 49.6mt
2016*	FW27	34.55	3 (51K lbs to MAAA)	Closed	‘CAII Extension’ closure of open areas to protect small scallops	***	42	~10mt** (as of Aug 2)	24.1%	~30mt
<p>* Indicates that retention of GB YT was prohibited for scallop fishery **FY2016 GB YT scallop catch estimate as of Aug. 2, 2016 ***Indicates that final catch data is not yet available</p>										