

2016 NEFMC Inshore Scallop Fishing Workshop

Overview and Planning Process

August 2015

Concept and Timing

The Council, at its November 2014 meeting, passed a motion to develop a workshop to explore concerns about inshore scallop fishing and impacts on the LAGC IFQ fishery. This workshop, slated for February/March 2016, will build on and contribute to ideas explored in the May 2015 draft White Paper on Inshore Scallop Fishing Issue.

Draft Goals and Discussion Topics

With input from the Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel, Council staff developed draft terms of reference, outlined in the May 2015 white paper. The following draft problem statement, goals and discussion topics will serve as a starting point in guiding workshop development.

Draft Problem Statement

Inshore fishing areas are typically depleted faster than offshore areas because there is a built in incentive for most vessels to fish closer to shore. Segments of the LAGC fishery have expressed concern that LA fishing pressure periodically increases inshore causing negative impacts on the LAGC fishery. If LAGC vessels are unable to catch their quota in traditional areas nearshore it may drive LAGC vessels to fish farther offshore, with increased potential impacts on bycatch, gear conflict and safety at sea. Some LAGC participants are interested in having an in-depth dialogue about these concerns, and potentially identifying measures the Council could develop further that promote more stable scallop resource conditions inshore.

Draft Goals for Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to provide an opportunity for participants in the fishery to discuss concerns raised about the negative consequences of inshore scallop fishing pressure that can be relatively high in certain areas and years. The workshop should provide for an open dialogue between all users of the resource to discuss this issue with each other, as well as scientific experts and fishery managers. The workshop should identify potential next steps for the Council to consider related to this issue, which should address the concerns of all components of the scallop fishery.

Draft Discussion Topics for Workshop

- Recognize the LAGC fishery has changed and management measures may also need to change to reflect the current ITQ program in place. Discuss and potentially identify measures to enable LAGC vessels to harvest their quota inshore without causing undue negative impacts on LA vessels. Measures should:
1) minimize the need for LAGC effort in offshore access areas; 2) promote safety

at sea; 3) reduce bycatch of LAGC vessels; and 4) reduce gear conflicts with other fisheries.

- Discuss if there are any biological benefits to the resource and fishery overall from reducing fishing mortality levels in nearshore areas. If so, discuss and potentially identify measures to better control fishing mortality in inshore areas and prevent pulse fishing behavior.
- Discuss and potentially identify measures that consider differences in fishing capacity of LA and LAGC vessels as well as different fishing behavior incentives. Are there ways to increase incentives for LA vessels to fish offshore?

Workshop Development and Planning

The Fisheries Leadership & Sustainability Forum (Fisheries Forum) has been enlisted to lead the development of the workshop and facilitate meeting discussions. The planning process will rely on guidance provided by the workshop Steering Committee, and will incorporate input from management and advisory bodies, as well as fishery participants.

- Workshop Steering Committee
A Steering Committee (5 members from council, council staff, and AP) has been established to serve as the core planning group and will provide direction and oversight during the workshop planning process. Specifically, the Steering Committee will:
 - Share insights and perspectives and identify opportunities for industry input during the scoping process;
 - Develop and refine workshop goals, objectives, and outcomes to ensure that the workshop supports the Council's consideration of the inshore scallop fishery's concerns;
 - Provide guidance on draft agendas, discussion topics, trigger questions, and input on workshop logistics as needed; and
 - Serve in a leadership capacity during the workshop on behalf of the Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel.
- Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel
The Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel will receive updates during their fall and winter meetings, and have the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Individuals involved in the scallop fishery
The workshop development process will engage individuals who represent a variety of interests and perspectives on the issue. The perspectives, ideas and feedback shared will inform the articulation of workshop goals and the development of the agenda.

Development of the Inshore Scallop Fishery Workshop will involve three planning phases with significant iteration and coordination between the Fisheries Forum and Steering Committee (see next page).

Phase I: Early workshop development

Summer/early fall 2015

- Convene steering committee and hold kickoff calls
- Revisit and refine workshop goals, objectives and discussion topics
- Develop a plan for scoping and soliciting industry input

Phase II: Agenda development, scoping and logistics

Early fall 2015 – winter 2016

- Conduct scoping calls with managers, advisors and fishery participants
- Synthesize feedback, revisit and prioritize workshop goals and discussion topics
- Explore examples from other council regions and identify any relevant case studies or lessons learned
- Frame, refine and finalize agenda, discussion framework and trigger questions
- Workshop logistics and correspondence
- Identify briefing materials to support discussions

Phase III: Workshop execution

February/March 2016

- Develop facilitation strategy
- Distribute meeting materials, final logistics
- Execute workshop