Scallop Research Set-Aside Program to Support 14 New Projects; Several 2024 Announcements Include Multi-Year Awards

The Atlantic Sea Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program will support 14 new projects that were selected from the 2024 RSA solicitation. Several awards will support multi-year research, including a four-year regional survey effort. The set-aside harvest is expected to generate $22 million in revenue. Of that total, $5 million will fund the targeted research and $17 million will compensate industry partners who harvest the set-aside scallops. To determine the award amounts, the price of sea scallops was projected to average $14 per pound of meats.

**Council Priorities and Research Partners**

Seven different institutions will lead the projects, partnering with fishermen, fishing businesses, and non-profit fishery research organizations. The new RSA projects address 2024-2025 research priorities identified by the New England Fishery Management Council in June 2023. At that meeting, the Council asked NOAA Fisheries to modify the Scallop RSA Program to allow for longer-term RSA awards for regional survey work, which the agency accommodated in this latest round of funding with a four-year award. Other Council priorities...
are listed here on page 1. RSA-funded scallop surveys have been a long-standing priority. They have become increasingly important in: (1) providing information that directly helps scientists determine the status and distribution of the resource; and (2) guiding the Council in making management decisions for this valuable resource.

The new awards were announced on May 2, 2024 by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) of NOAA Fisheries. The Council and NOAA Fisheries work together to support the Scallop Research Set-Aside Program. While the Council sets the research priorities, NOAA Fisheries manages the RSA competition and administers the program.

**RESEARCH SET-ASIDE PROGRAM RECAP:**
The Council established the Scallop RSA Program in 1999 through Framework Adjustment 11 to the scallop management plan. No federal money is involved. Instead, the Council “sets aside” scallop poundage to carry out RSA projects. The total RSA amount for this important industry-funded program is 1.275 million pounds as described in Amendment 21 to the federal scallop plan.

**EYES OPEN ON THE WATER:** The ocean is a busy place these days with numerous competing uses and user groups. The 2024 scallop survey teams will be on the water this spring and summer in the mix.

Last year, some survey teams encountered buoys, beacons, and gear in the path of the scallop survey footprints. In an effort to avoid unwanted interactions, the Council and survey teams are attempting to raise awareness of scallop survey activities. If you

**QUESTIONS?** Questions about these latest scallop RSA awards should be directed to Ryan Silva, GARFO’s Cooperative Research Liaison. He can be reached at ryan.silva@noaa.gov; (978) 281-9326. Also, visit the NOAA Fisheries RSA webpage and the awards webpage.
2024 Scallop Research Set-Aside Project Announcements
~ Several Multi-Year Awards in the Mix ~

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution *</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Set-Aside Award in Pound of Scallops Meats and Total Budget</th>
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| Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) | Operationalizing ScallApp: A Tool to Engage the Fishing Industry in Tracking Scallop Health and Reproduction (2-year cooperative agreement) | • 2024 Award: 14,145 pounds  
• 2025 Award: 14,106 pounds  
• Total Budget: $395,503 |
| CFRF | Incorporating Limited Access Scallop Vessels into the Scallop Research Fleet (2-year grant) | • 2024 Award: 19,106 pounds  
• 2025 Award: 17,574 pounds  
• Total Budget: $513,520 |
| Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF) | Understanding the Impacts of the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery on Loggerhead Sea Turtles | • 2024 Award: 77,062 pounds  
• Total Budget: $1,078,864 |
| CFF | Seasonal Survey of the Scallop Fishery on the Eastern Portion of Georges Bank | • 2024 Award: 103,669 pounds  
• Total Budget: $1,451,362 |

* Project collaborators are listed on the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office’s 2024 Scallop RSA webpage.

The Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) will begin discussing future research priority ideas at these meetings.

On-demand fishing gear information can be found on the NOAA, Maine, and Massachusetts websites. At right is a map showing bottom-mounted passive acoustic beacons. Learn more here.

**RSA SHARE DAYS – INFO SHARING:** Join the New England Council’s scallop research share day webinars to hear presentations on scallop RSA projects and other scallop research. The webinars will be held on May 7, 2024 and May 9, 2024. The Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) will begin discussing future research priority ideas at these meetings.

2024 scallop RSA surveys will be on the water during the spring and summer of 2024 and may intercept with the path of bottom-mounted passive acoustic beacons, which are shown in the map above.
# 2024 Scallop Research Set-Aside Project Announcements

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| CFF | An optical assessment of sea scallop abundance and distribution in select areas of the Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank (4-year cooperative agreement) | • 2024 Award: 157,102 pounds  
• 2025 Award: 113,521 pounds  
• 2026 Award: 109,437 pounds  
• 2027 Award: 114,257 pounds  
• Total Budget: $6,920,421 |
| CFF | Tension in the Air: Using a tensiometer to assess dredge fullness and loss during haul back comparing the 5-row- and extended-link apron dredge configurations | • 2024 Award: 60,543 pounds  
• Total Budget: $847,607 |
| Maine Department of Marine Resources | Sea Scallop Assessment in the Northern Gulf of Maine (2-year grant) | • 2024 Award: 21,283 pounds  
• 2025 Award: 17,436 pounds  
• Total Budget: $524,060 |
| University of Connecticut | Combining ocean models and historical shell archives to quantify and project spatiotemporal changes in Atlantic Sea Scallop functional traits (2-year grant) | • 2024 Award: 53,096  
• 2025 Award: 47,696  
• Total Budget: $1,411,088 |
| UMass Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) | Assessing Cumulative Impact of Offshore Wind Energy Development on Sea Scallop Larval Transport and Settlement in Southern New England Waters (2-year project funded through 2024 award) | • 2024 Award: 137,671 pounds  
• Total Budget: $1,927,400 |
| SMAST | Intensive drop camera surveys of sea scallops in two key areas of Georges Bank | • 2024 Award: 39,211 pounds  
• Total Budget: $548,953 |
| SMAST | A seasonal video-trawl survey to assess the population size of yellowtail flounder (Pleuronectes ferruginea) and windowpane (Scophthalmus aquosus) on Eastern Georges Bank | • 2024 Award: 179,979 pounds  
• Total Budget: $2,421,706 |
| Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) | An Assessment of Sea Scallop Abundance and Distribution for the Nantucket Lightship, Closed Area II, and Southern Flank | • 2024 Award: 74,622 pounds  
• Total Budget: $1,044,708 |
| VIMS | Retrospective and prospective: climate driven changes in growth and distribution in the sea scallop, *Placopecten magellanicus* (2-year project funded through 2024 award) | • 2024 Award: 62,620 pounds  
• Total Budget: $876,675 |
| Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute | Disentangling recruitment and growth dynamics of the Atlantic sea scallop, *Placopecten magellanicus* (2-year grant) | • 2024 Award: 66,272 pounds  
• 2025 Award: 61,944 pounds  
• Total Budget: $1,795,024 |

* Project collaborators are listed on the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office’s [2024 Scallop RSA webpage](#).