



# New England Fishery Management Council

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## Atlantic Sea Scallop RSA Competition Underway; 2019-2020 Proposals Due by October 1, 2018

The federal competition for 2019-2020 Atlantic Sea Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Awards is now open. The deadline for submitting full proposals is 5 p.m., Monday, October 1, 2018.

The New England Fishery Management Council sets research priorities for this industry-funded program, while NOAA Fisheries, through the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, manages the RSA competition and administers the program.

During its June meeting in Portland, ME, the Council approved two categories of priorities for this latest RSA cycle. These include: (1) “high” priorities, which are ranked; and (2) “general research areas,” which

are not ranked in any order of preference.

Each year during the specification-setting process, the Council “sets aside” 1.25 million pounds scallops to carry out the program. Awards are made in pounds, not dollars, and no federal funding is provided. Instead, proceeds generated from the sale of set-aside scallops are used to fund research activities and compensate participating vessels.

The New England Council established the Scallop RSA Program to address research questions that support management of the scallop resource. The work is conducted collaboratively between fishermen and scientists. Research results directly contribute to stock assessments and help the Council better manage the fishery overall.

Council Chairman Dr. John Quinn called the RSA program “one of the flagships of the scallop fishery.”

2019-2020 Scallop RSA Priorities At-A-Glance Summary	
<b>HIGH PRIORITIES – RANKED</b>	
1a:	Intensive surveys of access areas
1b:	Intensive surveys of areas of interest
1c:	Broadscale surveys of Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic resource areas
2:	Variability in survey dredge efficiency
<b>GENERAL RESEARCH AREAS – NOT RANKED</b>	
	Impact of offshore wind development
	Sea turtle research
	Bycatch: small scallops/non-target species
	Scallop meat quality research
	Management Strategy Evaluation research
	Scallop biology research

➤ **INTERESTED?** View the Federal Grant Opportunity at [APPLY HERE](#).

➤ **QUESTIONS?** Contact Cheryl Corbett at (508) 495-2307; [cheryl.corbett@noaa.gov](mailto:cheryl.corbett@noaa.gov).



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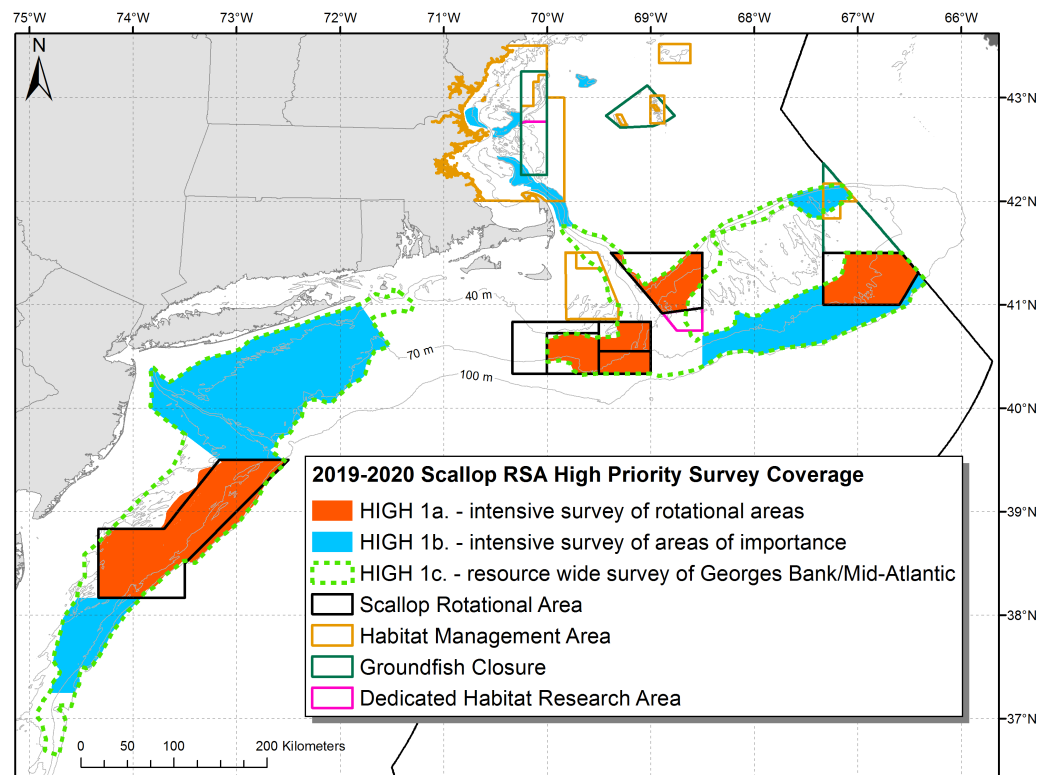
## Resource Surveys – HIGH Priority

Survey-related research is at the top of the “high priorities” list with three subcomponents, all of which carry equal weight:

- 1a: An intensive industry-based survey of each relevant scallop rotational area – Closed Area I, Closed Area II, Nantucket Lightship, Elephant Trunk, and Hudson Canyon – that will provide estimates of total and exploitable biomass to be used for setting catch limits under the fishery’s rotational area management program;
- 1b: An intensive industry-based survey of areas of importance, such as open areas with high scallop recruitment or areas of overall importance to the fishery, which possibly could cover:
  - The Habitat Area of Particular Concern in Closed Area II and surrounding bottom,
  - The area south of Closed Area II that formerly was part of the Closed Area II extension,
  - Delmarva,
  - Areas off Long Island, and
  - Areas in the Gulf of Maine that recently have been or are likely to be fished;
- 1c: A broadscale industry-based survey of Georges Bank and/or Mid-Atlantic scallop resource areas, which does not need to be carried out by a single grant recipient.

## Dredge Efficiency

The other “high” 2019-2020 Scallop RSA priority involves dredge efficiency. The Council recommends additional research that investigates variability in dredge efficiency across habitats, times, areas, scallop densities, and gear designs to improve dredge survey estimates either through new research or analyses of existing data sets.



– New England Fishery Management Council graphic



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## General Research

All other 2019-2020 RSA priorities fall under a single category called “general research areas” without ranking. Each proposal will be judged on its overall merit and contribution to the Council’s scallop management program. This category includes:

- Research to assess the impact of offshore energy development on the Atlantic sea scallop resource, including larval settlement and dispersal;
- Research on turtle behavior and potential impact on the scallop fishery in the Mid-Atlantic and on Georges Bank;
- Research to identify and evaluate methods to reduce bycatch of small scallops and non-target species and assess impacts to the fishery;
- Scallop meat quality research aimed at describing the occurrence of disease and parasites, as well as many other aspects affecting product quality, including density dependence, seasonality, and others;
- Projects involving Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) to gauge biological, social, and economic impacts and associated long-term consequences of rotational area management; and
- Scallop biology research focusing on recruitment-related issues, environmental stressors on reproduction and growth, scallop spat/seed, natural mortality and predation on scallops, and juvenile mortality events. Scallop biology research may include projects in the Gulf of Maine.

➤ *Read the NOAA Fisheries web story about the 2019-2020 Atlantic Sea Scallop RSA solicitation at [Apply by October 1, 2018](#).*

➤ *View the full Federal Funding Opportunity announcement at [Related Documents](#).*



*Seed scallops from a 2017 RSA trip in the Mid-Atlantic Bight.*

*– Virginia Institute of Marine Science photo*

- Go [HERE](#) to visit the New England Fishery Management Council’s scallop webpage.
- View the list of 2018-2019 funded projects at [New England Council](#) and [NOAA Fisheries](#).
- For more information about RSA programs, visit [Research Set-Aside Program - Frequently Asked Questions](#).