

Atlantic Sea Scallop RSA Program and Priorities

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Scallop AP & Committee Meeting
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New England
Fishery Management Council

Presentation Outline:

- Background – Program overview, Process, Recent awards
- RSA Priorities & Recommendations for 2017/2018
- Council's Scallop RSA Policy – Operations Handbook

Goals for RSA discussion:

1. Develop Recommendations for 2017/2018 RSA Priorities
2. Potentially Develop Recommendations for Council's RSA Policy

RSA Meeting Materials

- Doc #1 – Staff Memo re: 2017/2018 RSA Priorities
- Doc #2 – Joint PDT/AP Mtg Summary & Edited FFO
- Doc #3 – PDT Mtg Summary
- Doc #4 – PDT's RSA Priority Recommendations



Background

- Scallop RSA program began in 1999
- Evolved over time but overall 1.25 million pounds set-aside each year to fund research projects (over \$10mil)
- About 10-15 projects are funded annually
- At least biennially the Council recommends the research priorities that are used in the funding announcement



Scallop RSA Process

- Process coordinated by NEFSC and NEFMC
- No federal funds – awards in pounds of scallop – allocated through competitive grants process
- Council identifies research priorities every 1-2 years – usually June meeting for summer announcement
- Applications submitted through internet based system
- Current review process: each proposal reviewed by three subject matter experts that score technical merits (importance/relevance, technical merit, qualifications, costs, outreach).
- NMFS convenes a management review panel meeting with council members and technical experts to discuss relevance of each project. Reviewers submit individual comments; no consensus recommendations are made.



Scallop RSA Process – New for 2016

- Separate technical panel convened to review survey proposals
- 5 technical experts reviewed all survey proposals (2 NMFS and 3 non-federal scientists)
- Two meetings: one about process and review of survey methods peer review and a second to discuss each proposal
- No consensus – individual comments are submitted by each reviewer
- Rationale: in the past high variance between reviewers, difficult to compare similar scores, request from Council to share peer review results with reviewers, difficult to find 90 individual reviewers each year – more efficient)
- Initial input: higher level of technical review, more consistent, NEFSC hopes to use in the future again



Scallop RSA Process (cont.)

- Successful applicants may be asked to refine/modify project to better fit priorities/management needs.
- Priority given to higher technically ranked proposals, although additional factors such as management relevance, project needs, and cost effectiveness may be considered.
- Common scallop price determined by NMFS based on best and most recent data to determine set aside allocation.
- Awards in pounds, can be harvested from any area open to fishery unless FMP prohibits it.

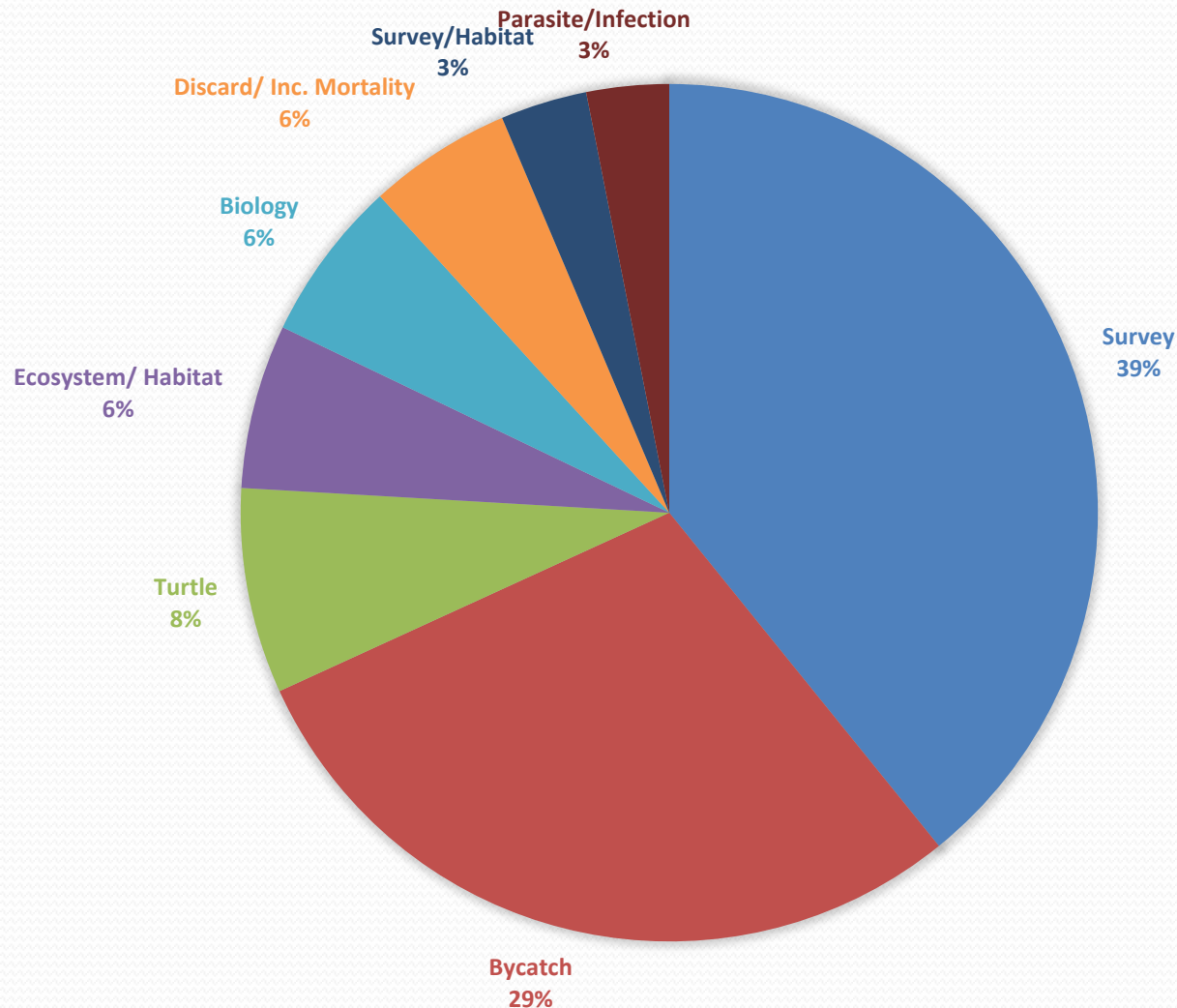


Scallop RSA Process (cont.)

- Recipients required to submit financial reports as well as technical performance or progress reports every six months (see FFO).
- Final reports due no later than 90 days after award expires, but researchers can apply for extensions for both progress and final reports (see FFO).
- Data collected under all NOAA grants/cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable.



Research Topics by Allocated Dollars (2010-2016)



Research Topic	Grand Total
Survey	39.17%
Bycatch	29.00%
Turtle	7.75%
Ecosystem/ Habitat	6.20%
Biology	6.10%
Discard/ Inc. Mortality	5.41%
Survey/Habitat	3.27%
Parasite/Infection	3.11%
Grand Total	100.00%

Scallop RSA Recipients by Allocated Dollars (2010-2016)

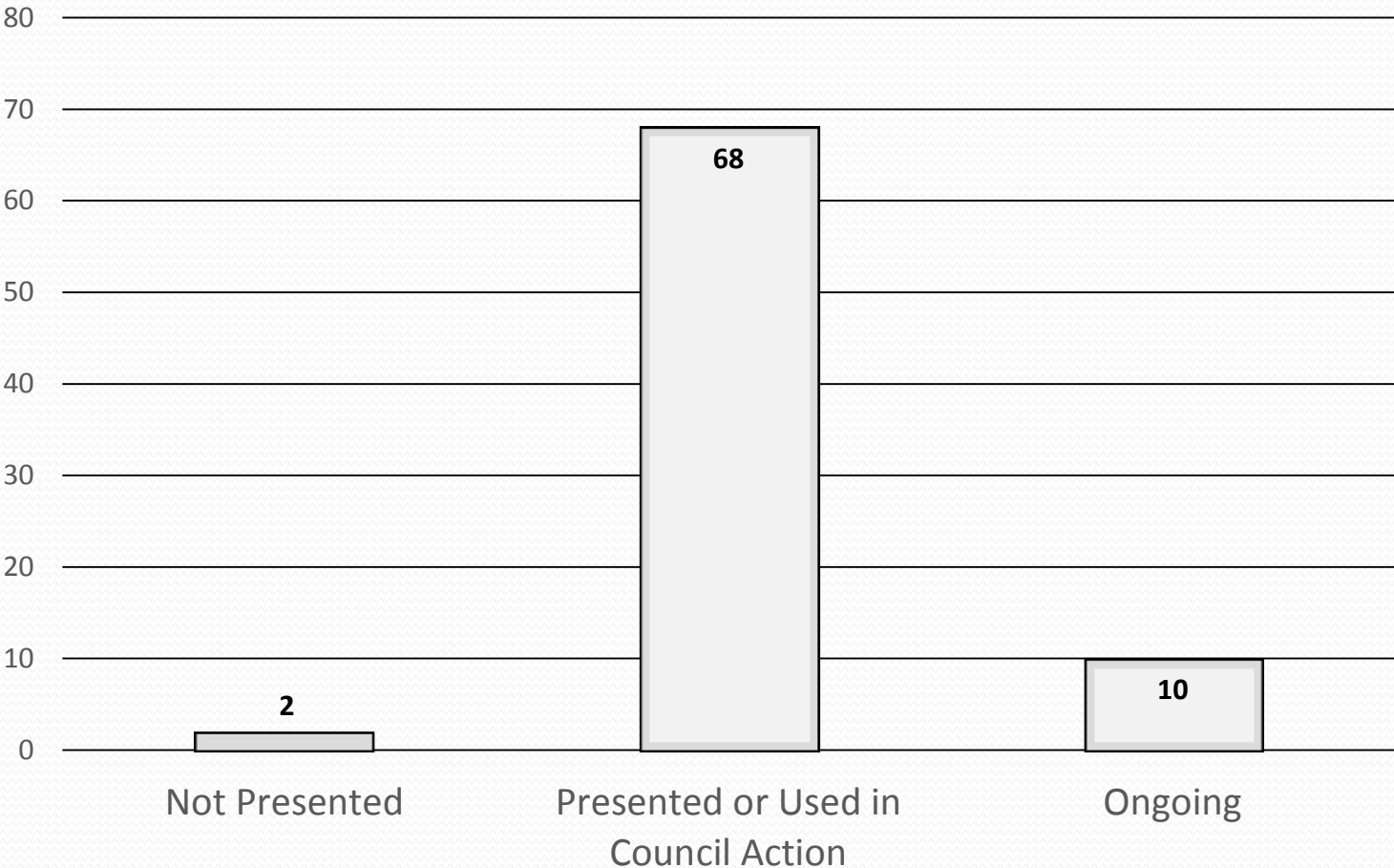
Doc #1

Lead Research Organization	Grand Total
Coonamesett Farm	35.20%
SMAST	20.99%
VIMS	18.96%
Arnie's Fisheries	10.80%
Northeastern University	3.47%
WHOI	3.27%
University of Delaware	2.03%
Maine DMR	1.86%
Phoel Associates, Inc.	0.98%
U Maine	0.87%
National Fisheries Institute	0.86%
Fisheries Specialists	0.72%
Grand Total	100.00%

Status of Funded RSA Projects

Doc #1

STATUS OF RSA PROJECTS, COUNT (2010-2015)



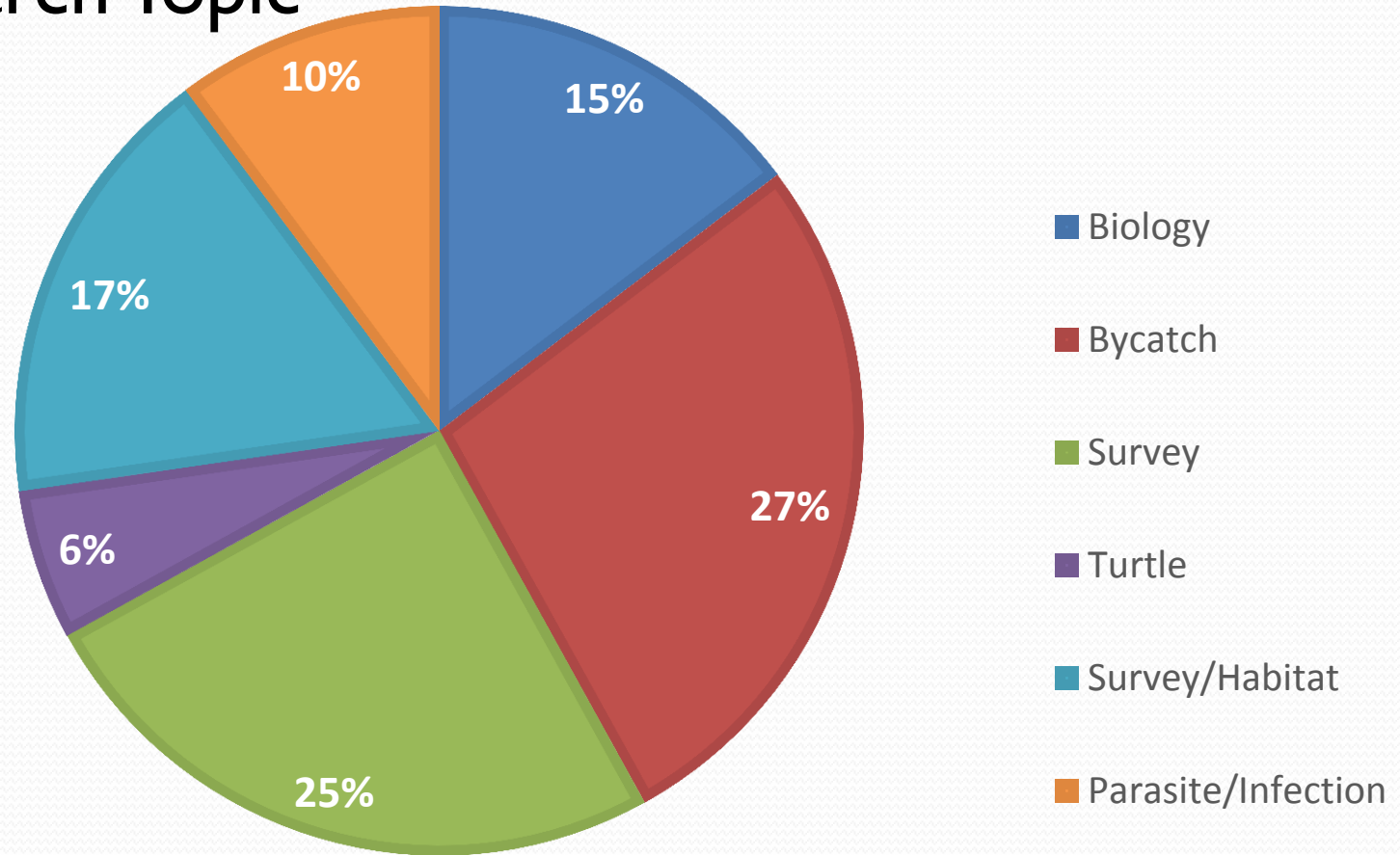
2016 Awards

- *Details Doc #1, Section 2.*
- Fifteen projects funded in total: 4 survey, 4 bycatch, 1 turtle, 2 parasite/infection, 3 biology, and 1 survey/habitat
- Six projects received 2 year funding, and will continue into 2017
 - 2 Survey (MA, NL)
 - 2 Parasite/Infection
 - 1 Biology (Age structure and growth)
 - 1 Survey/Habitat (HMA on GB)



2016 Awards – Announced April 7, 2016

By Research Topic



\$15,589,853 awarded

2016/2017 RSA Surveys

2016 Only

Project Title	Lead	Years Funded	Survey Type	2016 RSA Priority
Optical Survey of the Scallop Resource in the Elephant Trunk Scallop Access Area (Optical)	Arnies	2016	Optical (HabCam)	Ia
An Assessment of Sea Scallop Abundance and Distribution in Georges Bank Closed Area II and Surrounds (Dredge)	VIMS	2016	Dredge	Ia

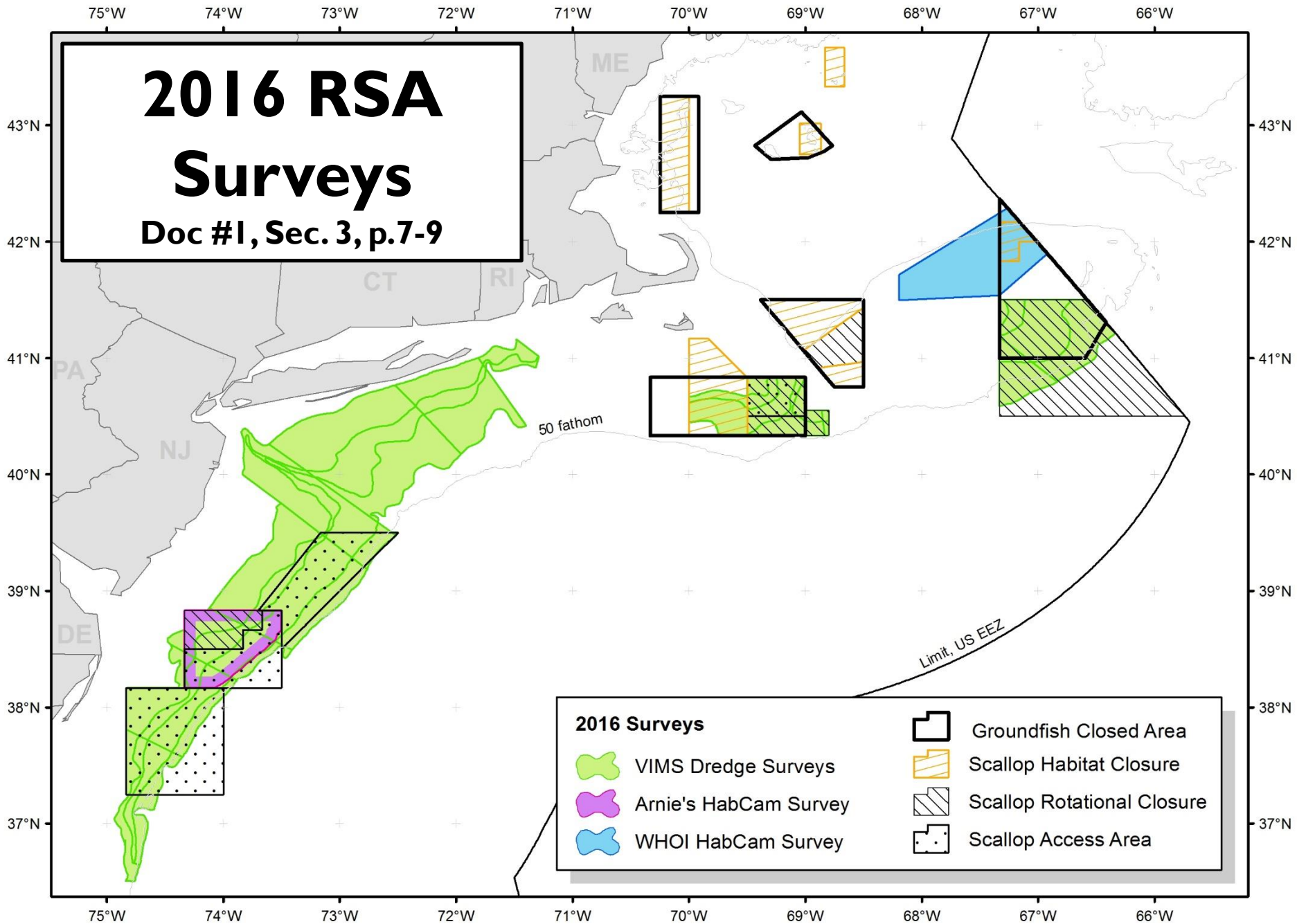
2016 & 2017

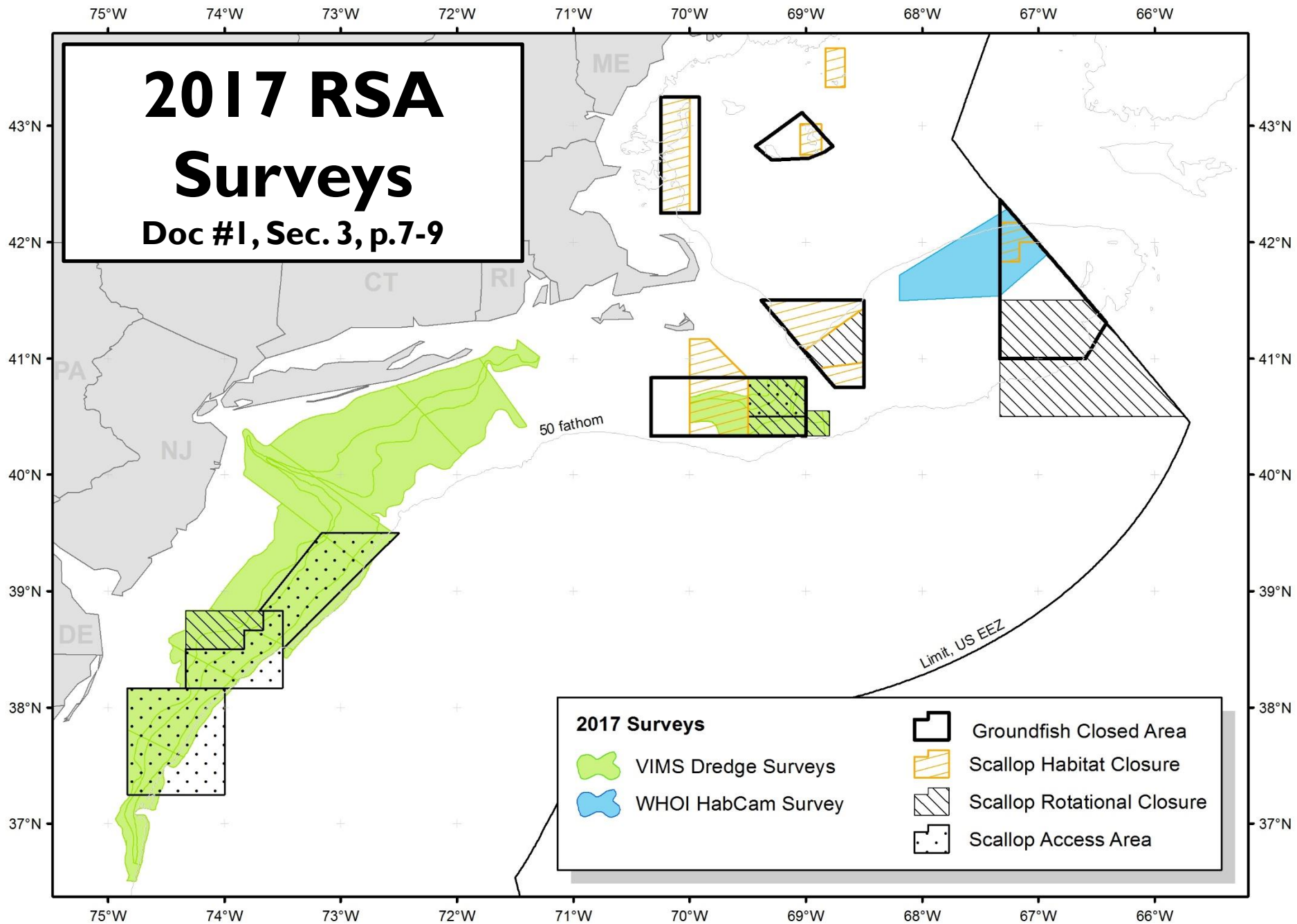
Project Title	Lead	Years Funded	Survey Type	2016 RSA Priority
A Cooperative High Precision Dredge Survey to Assess the Mid-Atlantic Sea Scallop Resource Area (2-years)	VIMS	2016/2017	Dredge	Ic
An Assessment of Sea Scallop Abundance and Distribution in the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area and Surrounds (2 years)	VIMS	2016/2017	Dredge	Ia
Impact of Disturbance on Habitat Recovery in Habitat Management Areas on Georges Bank (2 years)	WHOI	2016/2017	Optical	Ib



2016 RSA Surveys

Doc #1, Sec. 3, p.7-9





RSA Research Priorities from 2016

- **Highest priority (in order of importance)**
 - Survey related research – equal priority to: intensive for access areas, intensive for candidate access areas, broad resource wide
 - Bycatch
 - Scallop and area management research
- **Medium** – not in priority order (predation, turtle)
- **Other** – not in priority order (habitat characterizations, environmental stressors, discard mortality, incidental mortality, other surveys, electronic data collection)

PDT/AP Joint Meeting – May 4, 2016

- Group discussed potential recommendations for 2017/2018 priorities

Some areas of discussion (see Doc #2):

- Surveys
- Scallop meat quality
- Non-harvest mortality
- Turtles
- New Priority on LPUE

PDT Recommendations

Doc. #3 & Doc. #4

2016 Priorities and 2017 PDT Recommendations

Priority	2016/2017 Scallop RSA Priorities	Priority	2017/2018 PDT RECOMMENDATIONS
HIGHEST	Survey related research (1a,1b,1c) have equal priority	HIGHEST	Survey related research (1a,1b,1c) have equal priority
	1a Intensive IBS survey of each relevant AA 1b Intensive IBS of candidate AA 1c broad, resource wide IBS of scallop w/in GB and/or MA 2 bycatch research (seasonal, gear mods, spatial/temporal, discard mortality) 3 Area management research (disease/parasites, scallop quality, spat collection/seeding)		1a Intensive IBS survey of each relevant AA 1b Intensive IBS of candidate AA 1c broad, resource wide IBS of scallop w/in GB and/or MA
		HIGH	(of equal importance - could renumber as 2a and 2b)
			2 bycatch research (small scallops and non-target species) 3 Scallop meat quality research (disease/parasites, density dependence, area rotation)
MEDIUM	Not listed in order of importance		
	4 Scallop predation, and ways to mitigate (e.g. starfish, crab, dogfish) 5 Loggerhead turtle behavior in Mid-Atlantic	MEDIUM	Listed in order of importance
			4 Non-harvest mortality of scallops (e.g. incidental, discard, natural mortality) 5 Loggerhead turtle behavior in Mid-Atlantic
OTHER	Not listed in order of importance		
	6 Habitat Characterization Research 7 Environmental Stressors 8 Discard mortality of scallops 9 Incidental mortality of scallops 10 Other resource surveys to expand and/or enhance survey coverage 11 Electronic data collection, scallop "study fleet"	OTHER	Not listed in order of importance
			6 Habitat Characterization Research 7 Environmental Stressors (incl. seeding/spat) Research on relationship btw fishing power and LPUE 8 projections Other resource surveys to expand and/or enhance survey 9 coverage

Additional Clarifications

- Add text to FFO reminding applicants that final budgets are required
 - Including detailed accounting of expenditures
- Add text to FFO recommending that applicants only list vessels/companies they intend to work with
- Re: Disclosure of vessels that receive RSA compensation
 - List of eligible vessels is public
 - Specific rationale?

Council's Scallop RSA Policy

Doc #1, Sec. 4, p.10-11

- Page XXX of Council's Operations Handbook
 - Describes RSA program and process
- RSA process continues to evolve
 - Use of survey review panel in 2016
- Looking to broaden description of technical review process

Each proposal is subject to a thorough review process. The process has evolved over time to include input from both technical reviewers and fishery managers. ~~Each proposal is reviewed by three~~ Proposals are evaluated by subject matter experts that score the technical merits of the proposals. A panel of experts may be convened to evaluate proposals. Details about the evaluation process will be described annually by NMFS.

Doc #1, p.11



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