

Comment received via email: March 17, 2016

-----Original Message-----

From: kbporter5@roadrunner.com [<mailto:kbporter5@roadrunner.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 2:02 PM

To: Deirdre Boelke

Cc: touge.brawn@gmail.com

Subject: NGOM inconsistencies

Dear Members of the Scallop Advisory Panel and Scallop Committee:

I am writing to ask you to prioritize correction or inconsistencies in NGOM scallop management.

The NGOM scallop management area was created so small fishermen like me who fished the area in times of abundance would be able to do so when the resource came back. Last year I made significant investments in permits and vessels so my family will be able to access what I believe is a rebounding resource.

Many Maine fishermen agree with me and are looking forward to fishing for scallops in the Federal waters of the NGOM in the future. But several inconsistencies threaten our ability to do that.

The Council has recognized several inconsistencies in NGOM management would need to be addressed at some point. The fact that the NGOM TAC was exceeded in the 2015 fishing year, and that just a few vessels fishing in the far southern section of the management area may shut down the entire NGOM in the very near future suggests that time has come.

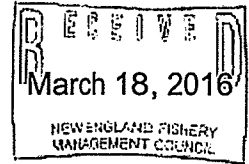
I appreciate your consideration of the issue which is of great importance to me and many other small boat fishermen in Northern New England.

Yours Truly

Kristan Porter

F/V Brandon Jay Permit #150227

#8A



To: New England Fishery Management Council Scallop Committee

March 17, 2016

Dear Chairwoman Tooley,

My name is Steve Benner and I am a commercial fisherman from Port Clyde, Maine. As the groundfish fishery has become more and more difficult for many small-boat fishermen to make a living in, especially for those who have traditionally caught flatfish, I have transitioned to relying on scallops for a greater part of my income. The state of Maine has worked to rebuild our state water scallop resource, which is an important winter fishery for me and many fishermen in Maine, but I also rely on the Northern Gulf of Maine Scallop fishery for the rest of the fishing year.

I was recently fishing in the Northern Gulf of Maine Management area off of Gloucester and found myself fishing next to several Limited Access boats. My concern is that the Northern Gulf of Maine is currently managed under a total allowable catch which the Limited Access boats are exempt from. We are just beginning to see the return of the scallop fishery to the Gulf of Maine and allowing Limited Access boats to come in and fish these grounds and be exempt from the trip limits and total allowable catch that the rest of the fleet is under puts the entire future of this resource at risk.

The NGOM scallop management area was created so fishermen who fished the area in times of abundance would be able to do so when the resource came back. Now that the resource is coming back, the inconsistencies in the management have the potential to destroy this important fishery. I hope that the committee will be willing to help address these concerns in the near future before this becomes a reoccurring issue.

I appreciate your consideration of this issue, which is of great importance to me and many other small boat fishermen in Northern New England.

Sincerely,

Steve Benner
F/V High Roller