



New England Fishery Management Council

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Habitat Plan Development Team

January 15, 2013 (Conference call)

January 17, 2013 (Joint with CATT and invited participants, Milford, MA)

The PDT met twice in January 2013 to discuss issues related to alternatives development for the Omnibus EFH Amendment.

Dedicated Habitat Research Areas (January 15)

The PDT discussed several implementation issues related to DHRAs (sunset provisions, specifying subareas at this stage vs. later, etc.).

The PDT discussed the idea of the SERA II DHRA as an alternative to the Jeffreys Ledge and Stellwagen HMAs, and will develop some information for the Committee on the costs/benefits of selecting SERA II as the western GOM habitat management area option.

The PDT also discussed a potential Eastern Maine DHRA with a stakeholder group that originated the proposal. Aaron Dohity of Penobscot East Resource Center was on the call to summarize their ideas for the area and to answer questions about their ongoing sentinel fishery. The PDT will investigate other sources of geological data for this area to help better define a DHRA boundary that encompasses habitat types of interest, using the SASI LISA cluster as a starting point.

Great South Channel Areas (both days)

The PDT discussed potential updates to the boundaries for the Great South Channel habitat management areas; specifically, creating a single area with equal habitat protection value as compared to four individual areas. Dr. Ford presented three options. At the 1/17 meeting, the PDT reviewed another option developed by the Fisheries Survival Fund. These options will be presented to the Committee next month.

Data related to Northern Edge of Georges Bank (January 17 only)

Scientists with habitat, groundfish, and/or scallop data from the northern edge of Georges Bank were invited to present and discuss their work at a jointly convened Habitat PDT/Closed Area Technical Team meeting. The presenters included VIMS, SMAST, HabCam, and WHOI. The data presented was of interest to both the PDT and CATT and consideration is being given as to how to incorporate the information in ongoing development and evaluation of alternatives.