

# Options and alternatives to minimize the adverse effects of fishing on Essential Fish Habitat

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NEFMC Habitat Oversight Committee Meeting  
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# Options vs. Alternatives

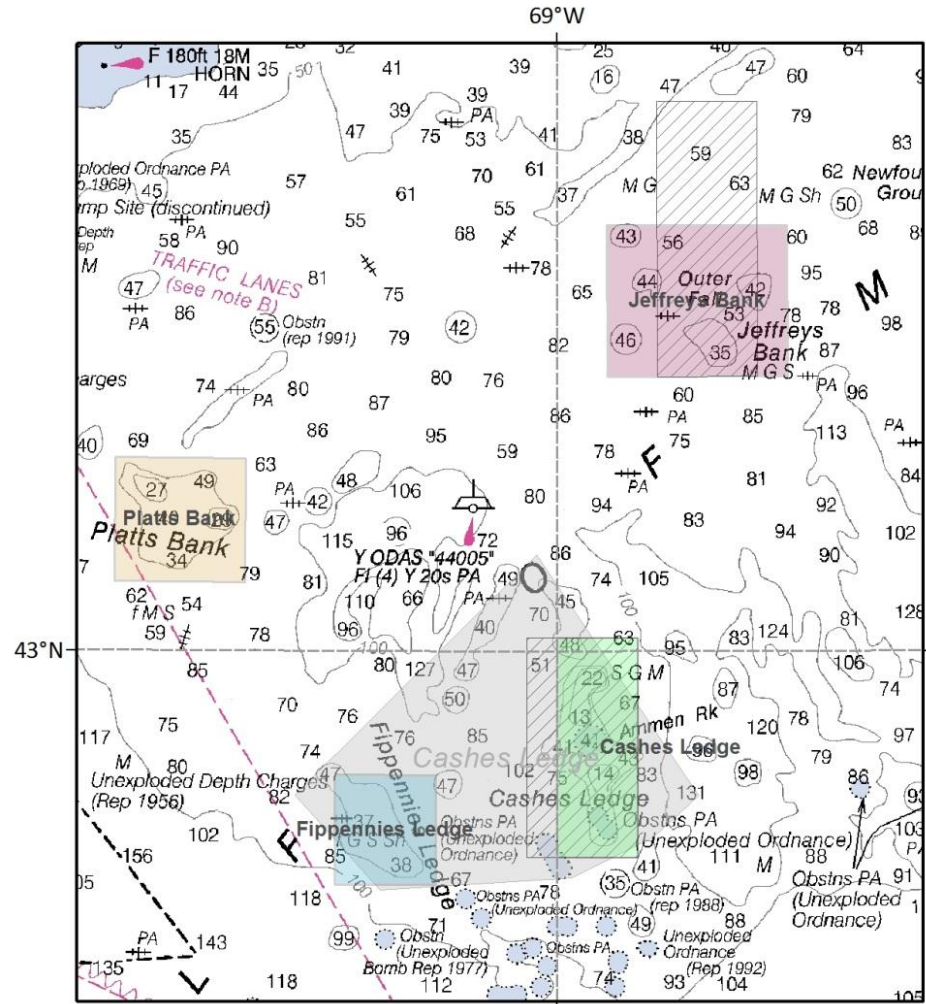
- Options are management proposals specific to a current, modified, or newly proposed habitat area
  - Each option defines the area boundaries and the restrictions on fishing in the area
- Alternatives are groups of options that will be discussed and analyzed together as a package
  - Each option may be included in more than one alternative

# Status of options and alternatives

- At this stage, options are recommended by the PDT for further analysis, and no one option is recommended over another
- These draft alternatives are intended to serve as a starting point for discussion - they are not intended to meet very specific objectives, and tradeoffs between individual options have not been discussed by the PDT

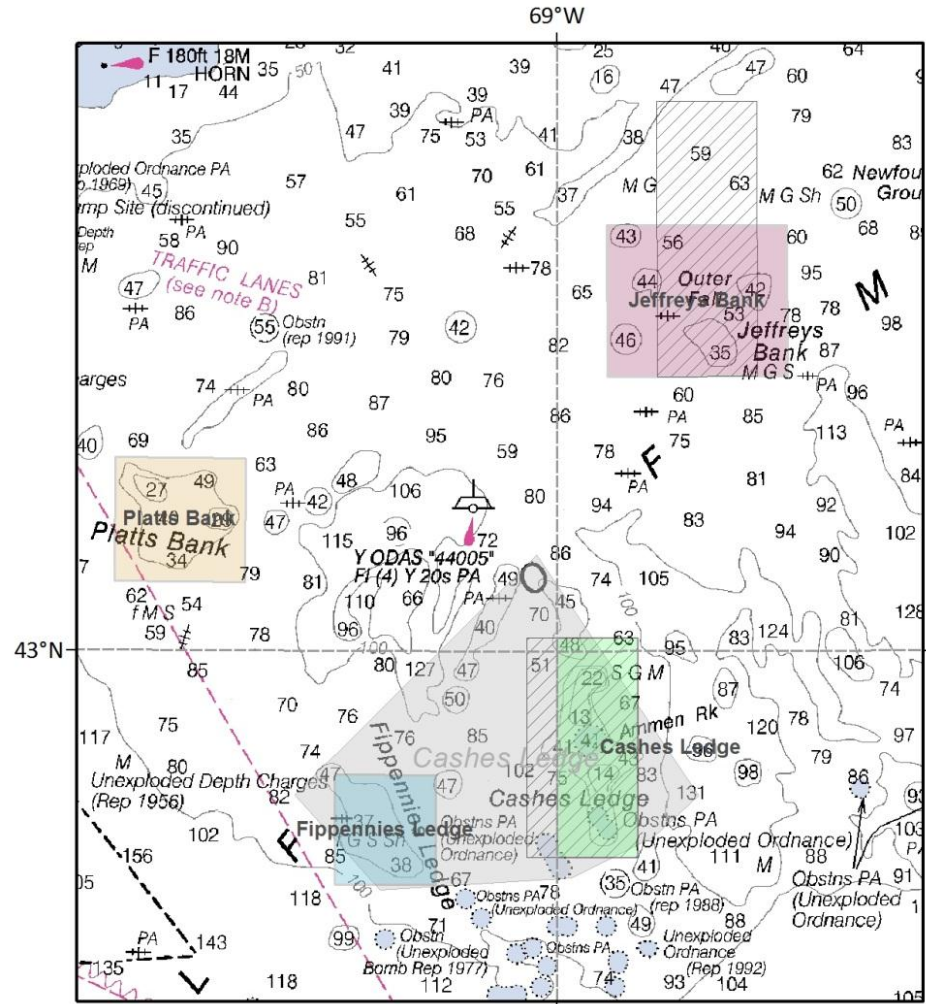
# Options for Jeffreys Bank

- Maintain current area as a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Adjust boundaries of area and make updated area a mobile bottom-tending gear closure



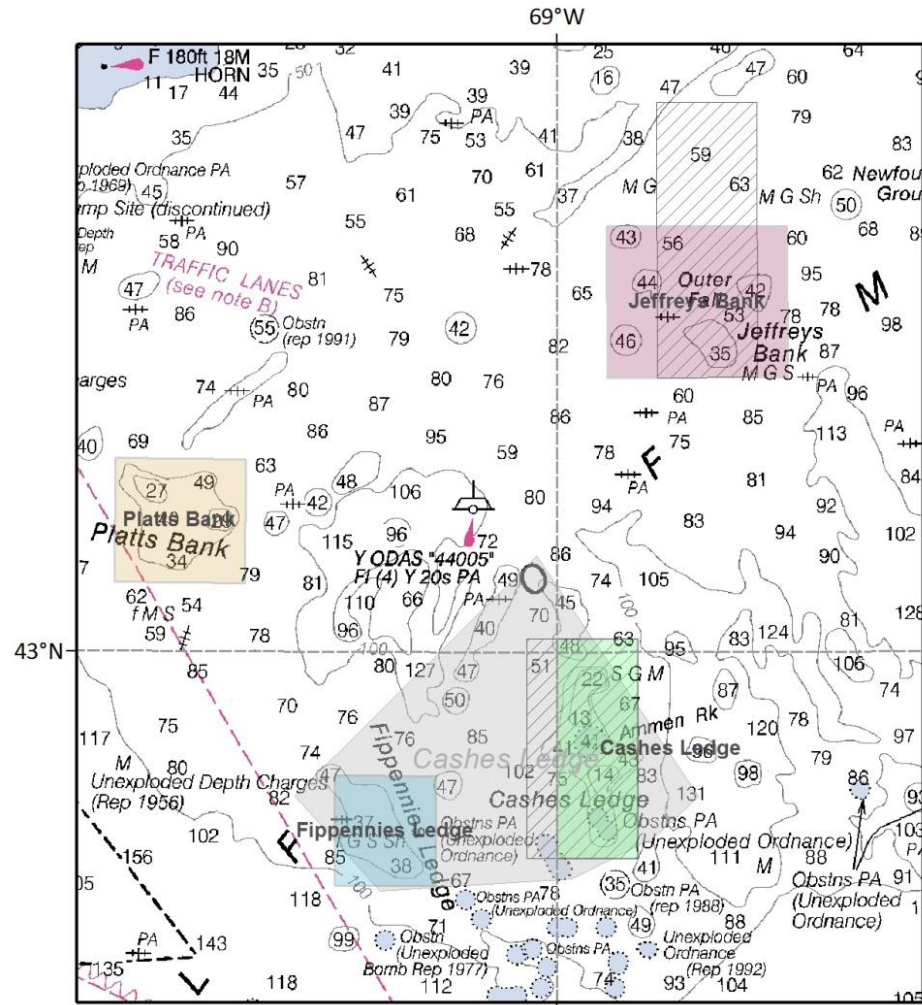
# Options for Cashes Ledge

- Maintain current area as a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Modify boundaries of area and make updated area a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Create a smaller area focused on Ammen Rock and close to all types of fishing gear, including a recommendation about lobster traps



# Options for Fippennies Ledge and Platts Bank

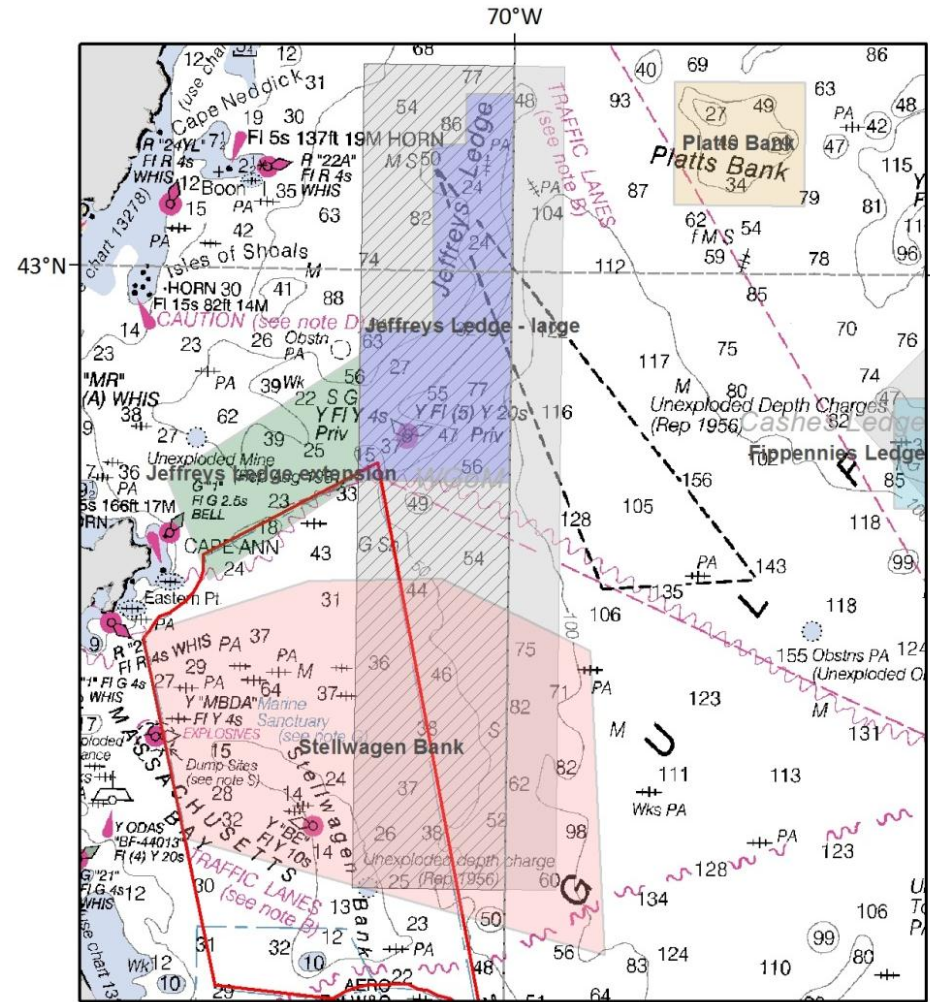
- Create a mobile bottom-tending gear closure on Fippennies Ledge
- Create a mobile bottom-tending gear closure on Platts Bank





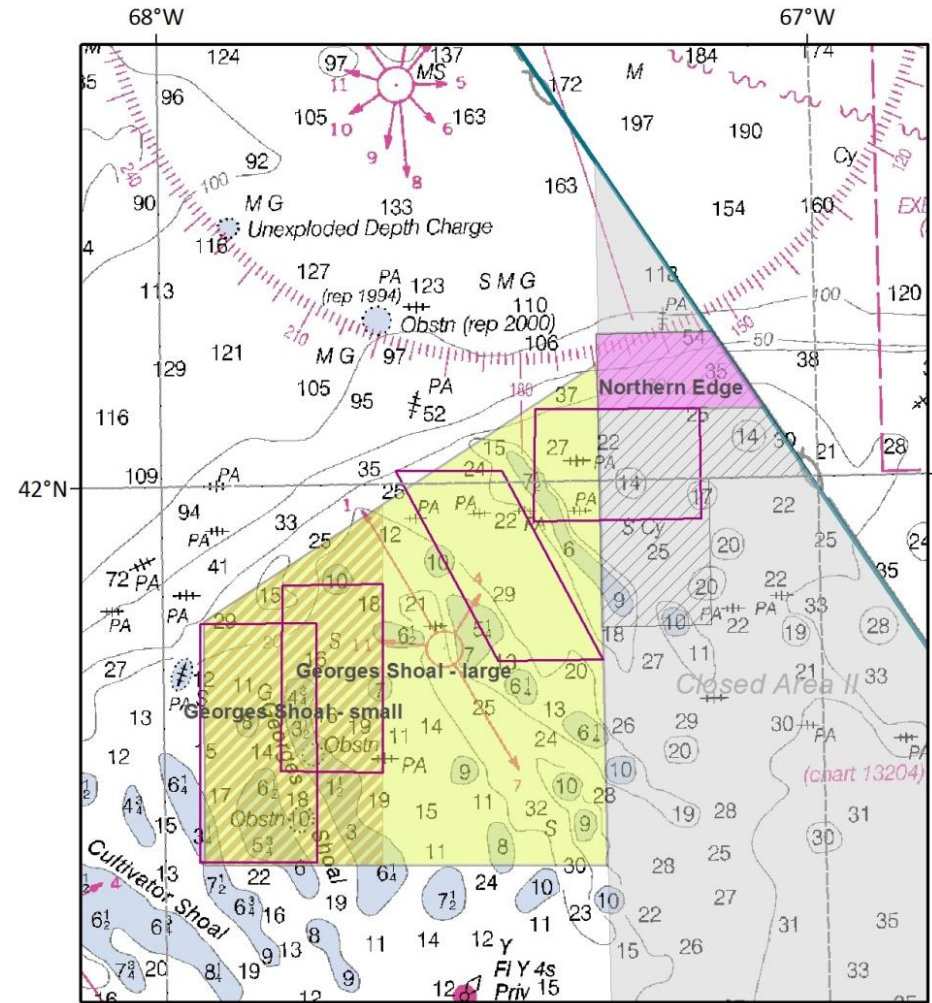
# Options for the western Gulf of Maine

- Maintain WGOM habitat closure
- Eliminate WGOM habitat closure
- Modify boundaries of WGOM habitat closure to focus on Jeffreys Ledge, maintain as a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
  - Sub-option – extend boundaries to southwest to encompass more of Jeffreys Ledge and make the extension area a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Create some type of habitat management area in and around Stellwagen Bank – review SERA proposal as a starting point



# Options for northeastern Georges Bank

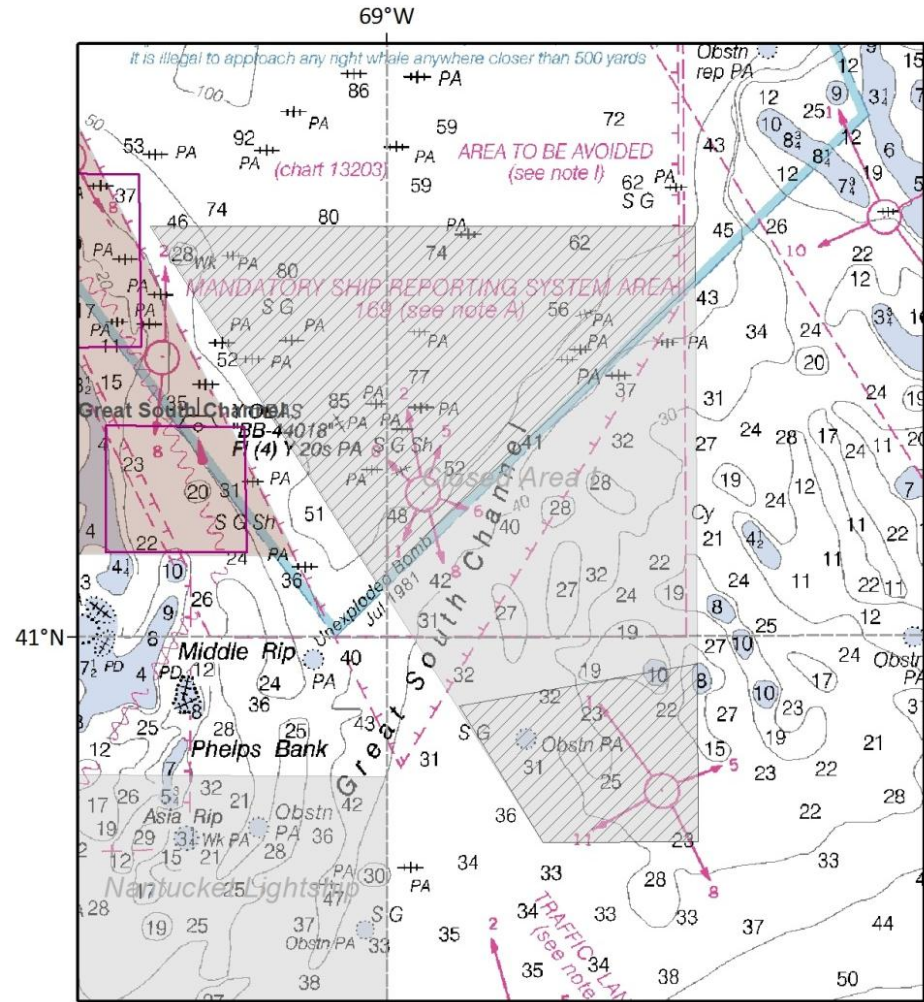
- Maintain CAII habitat closure
- Eliminate CAII habitat closure
- Modify boundaries of CAII habitat closure to create Northern Edge area and close to all types of fishing gear, including a recommendation about lobster traps
- Create large Georges Shoal area and implement maximum ground cable length requirements
- Create small Georges Shoal area and close to mobile bottom-tending gear





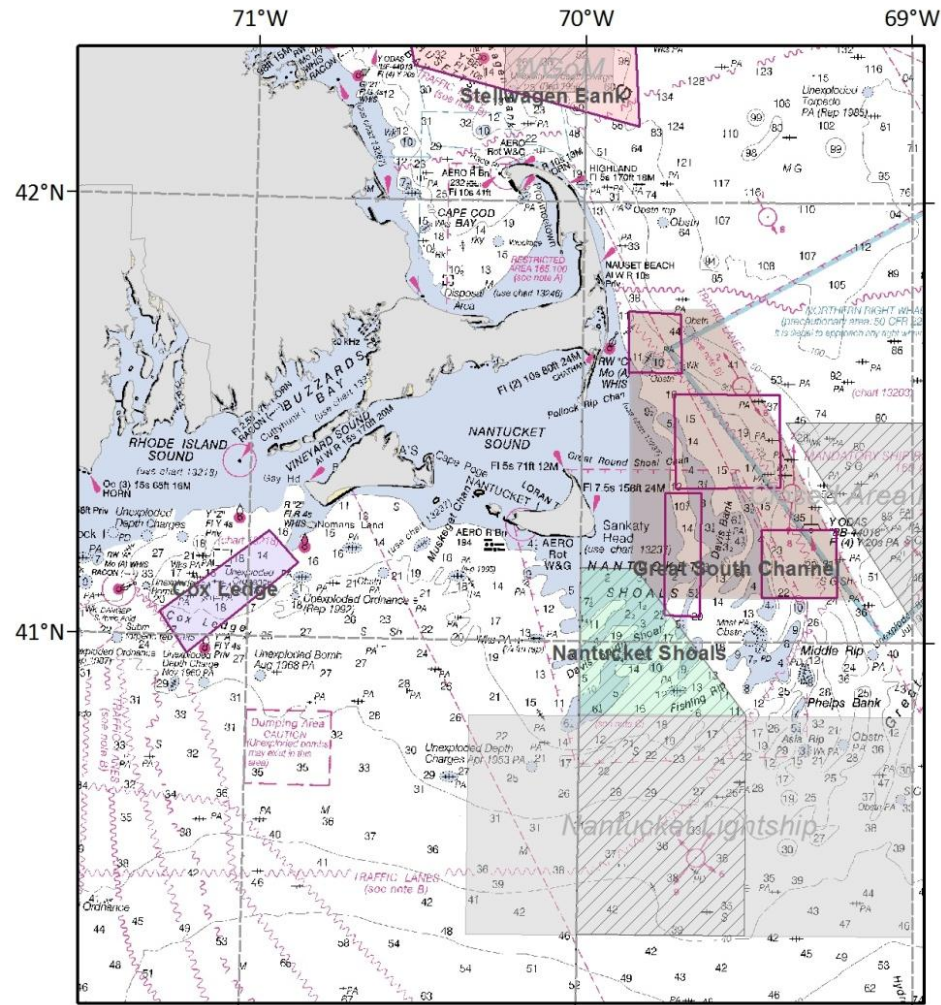
# Options for Closed Area I

- Maintain CAI habitat area as a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Eliminate CAI habitat area

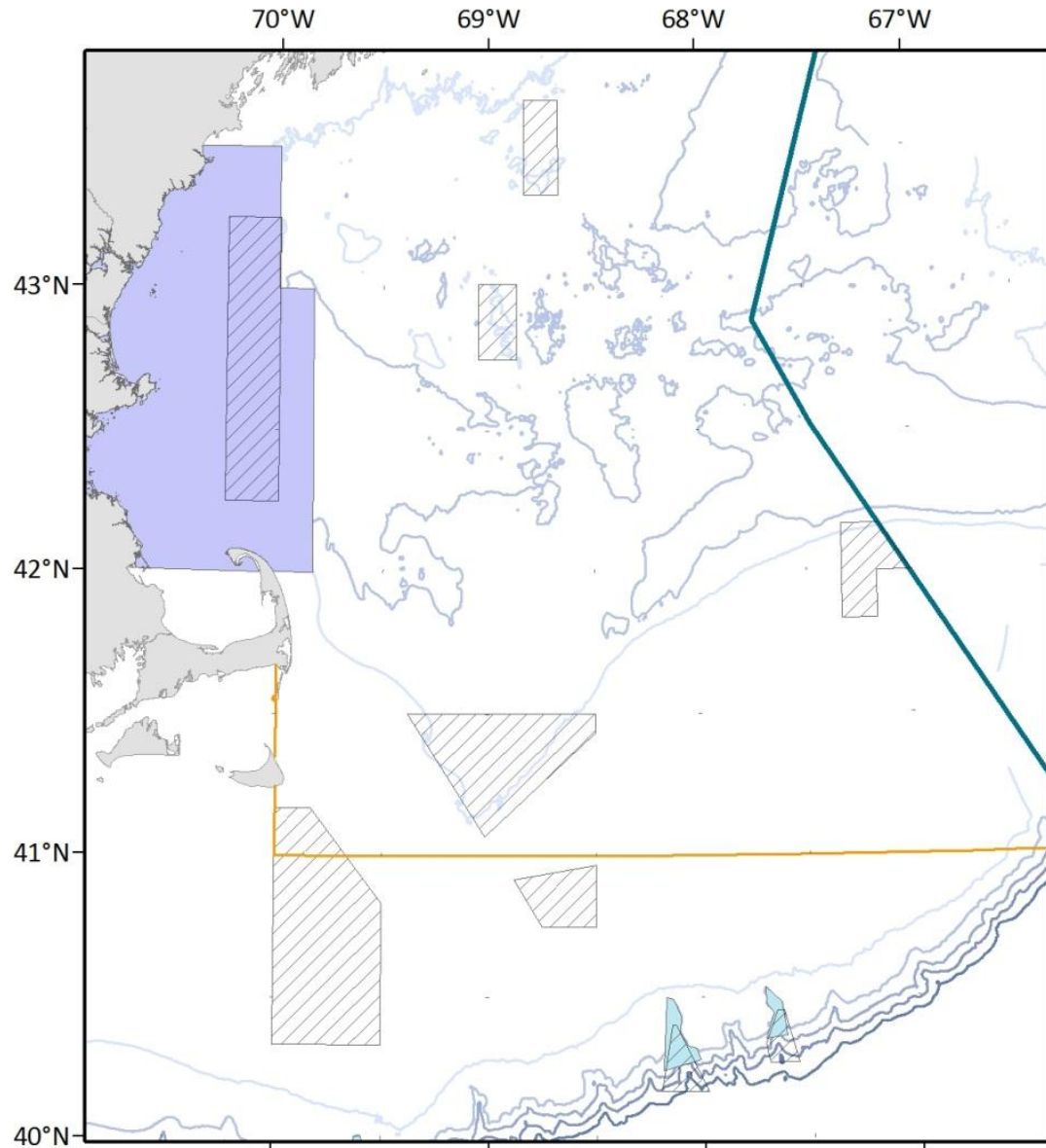


# Options for the Great South Channel, Nantucket Shoals, and Southern New England

- Maintain NLCA habitat area as a mobile bottom-tending gear closure
- Eliminate NLCA habitat closure
- Modify the NLCA habitat closed area to create the Nantucket Shoals habitat area, and close to mobile bottom tending gear
- Establish a habitat management area in the Great South Channel
  - Sub-option A: Close to mobile bottom tending gear
  - Sub-option B: Establish trawl gear ground cable modification requirements
- Establish a habitat management area on Cox Ledge and close to mobile bottom-tending gear



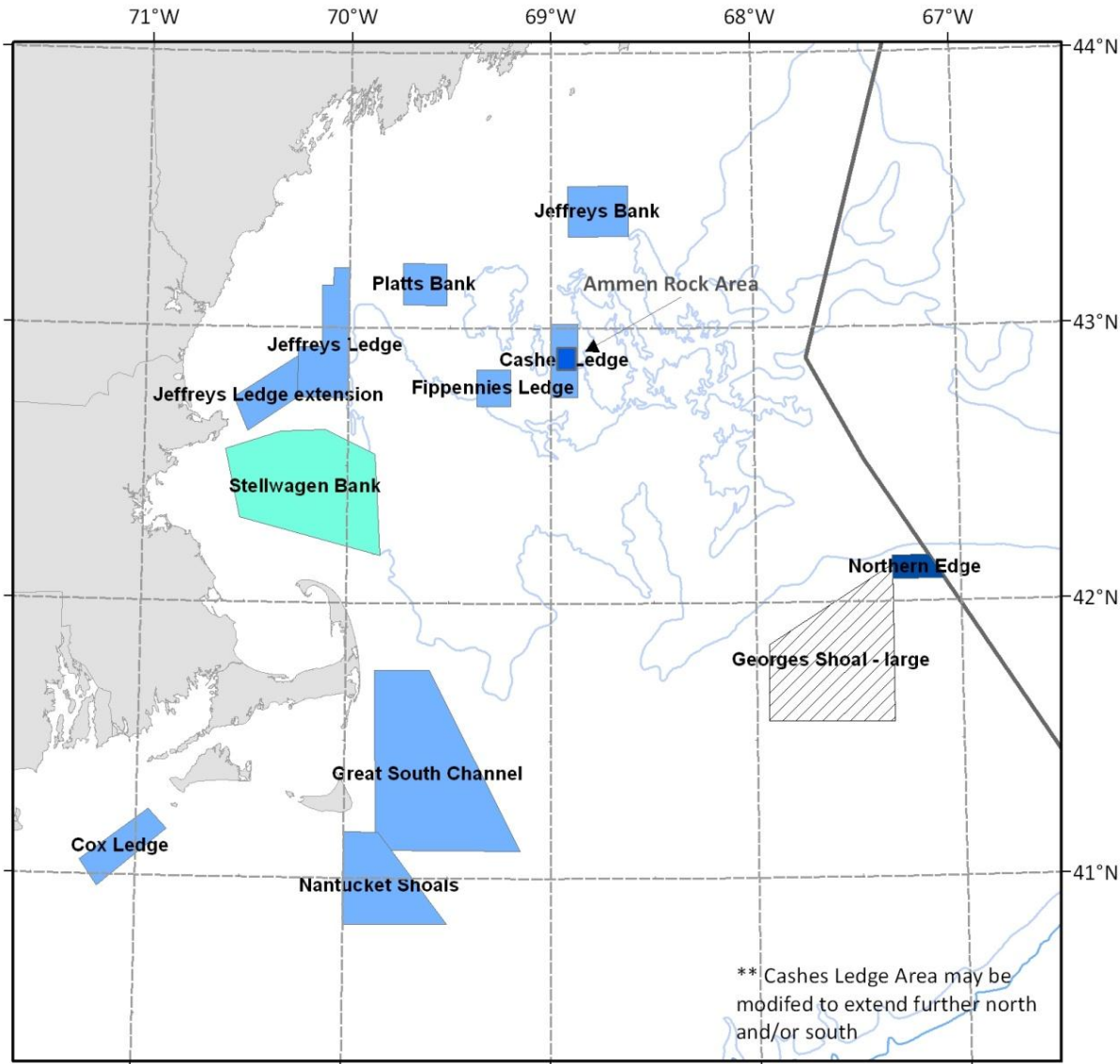
## No Action Alternative



- Six habitat closed areas implemented via Amendment 13 to the Multispecies FMP: Closed Area I, Closed Area II, Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, Western Gulf of Maine, Cashes Ledge, and Jeffreys Bank
- Tilefish GRAs in and around Lydonia, Oceanographer, Veatch, and Norfolk Canyons (mobile bottom tending gear restrictions)
- Lydonia Canyon and Oceanographer Canyon closures
- A maximum ground gear size of 12 inches in the inshore GOM
- A maximum ground gear size of 6 inches applies in the southern monkfish management area

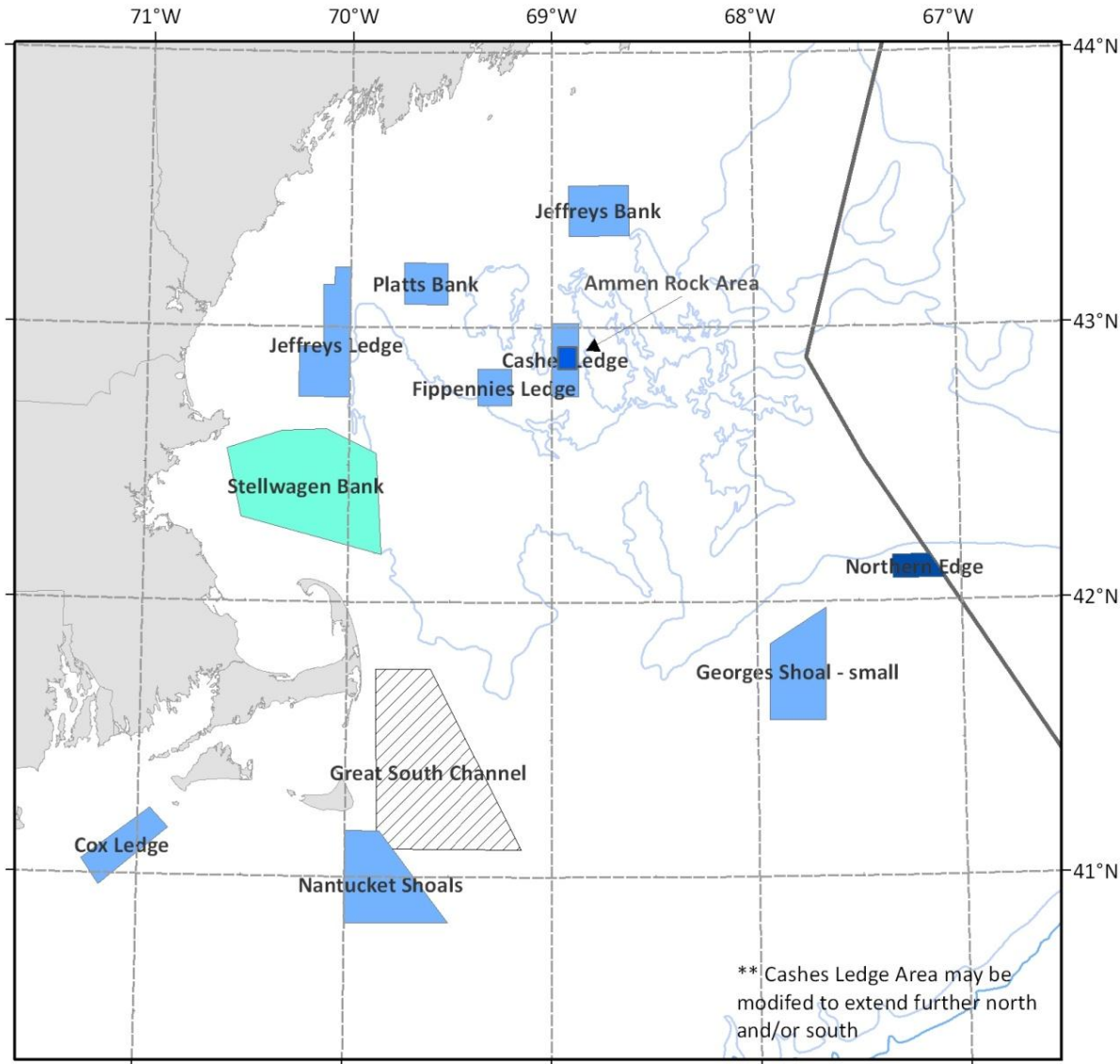


# Alternative 1



- Closures to all gears would be implemented in the Ammen Rock and Northern Edge areas
- Closures to mobile bottom-tending gears would be implemented in the Georges Shoal small, Nantucket Shoals, Great South Channel, Cox Ledge, Jeffreys Ledge, including the Jeffreys Ledge Extension, Jeffreys Bank (modified), Cashes Ledge (modified), Fippennies Ledge, and Platts Bank areas
- This alternative would also include some kind of habitat management area in and around Stellwagen Bank/Tillies Bank/Wildcat Knoll
- Gear modification requirements for trawls would be implemented in the Georges Shoal large area

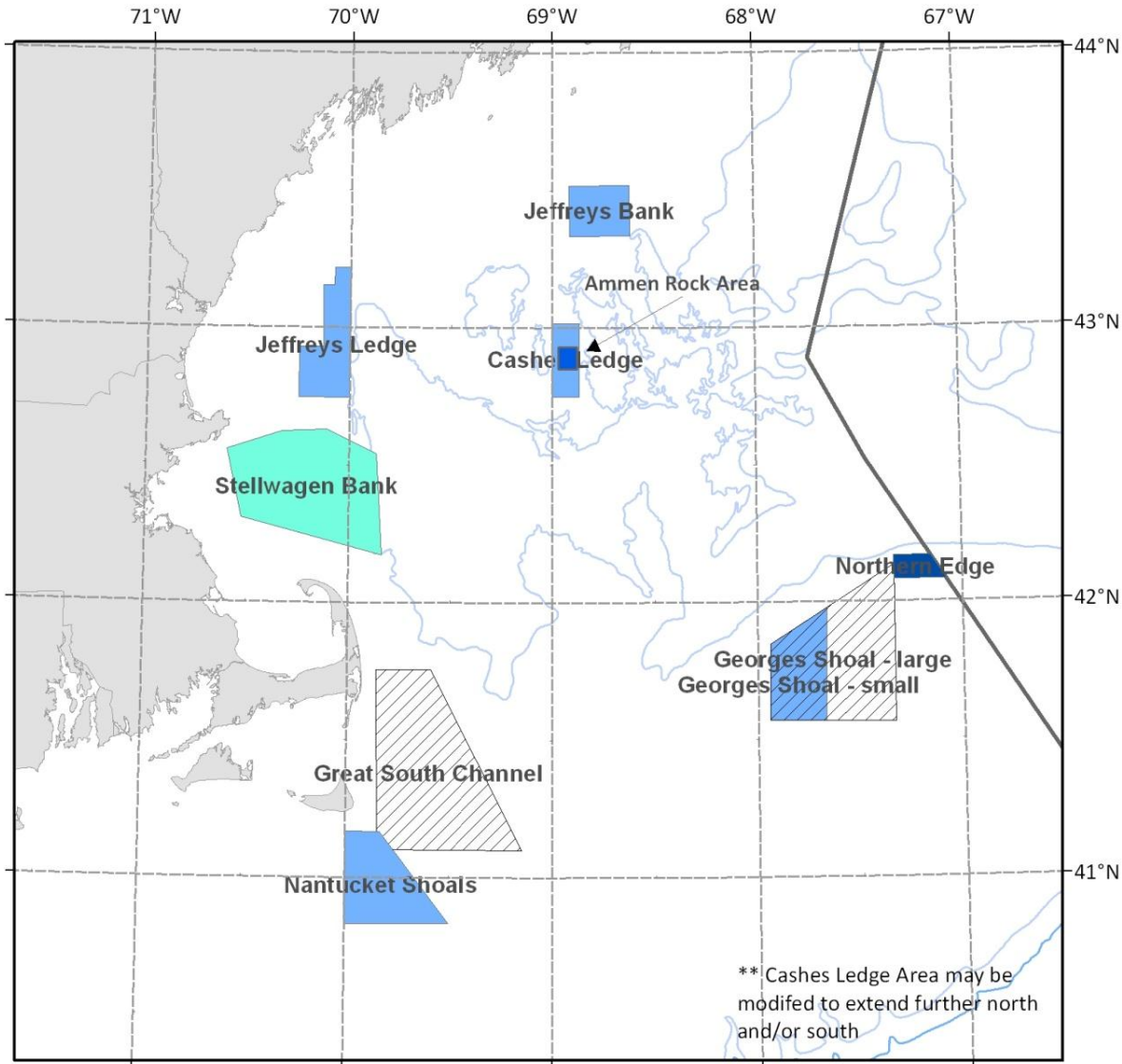
# Alternative 2



- Closures to all gears would be implemented in the Ammen Rock and Northern Edge areas
- Closures to mobile bottom-tending gears would be implemented in the Georges Shoal small, Nantucket Shoals, Cox Ledge, Jeffreys Ledge, Jeffreys Bank (modified), Casher Ledge (modified), Fippennies Ledge, and Platts Bank areas
- This alternative would also include some kind of habitat management area in and around Stellwagen Bank/Tillies Bank/Wildcat Knoll
- Gear modification requirements for trawls would be implemented in the Great South Channel area

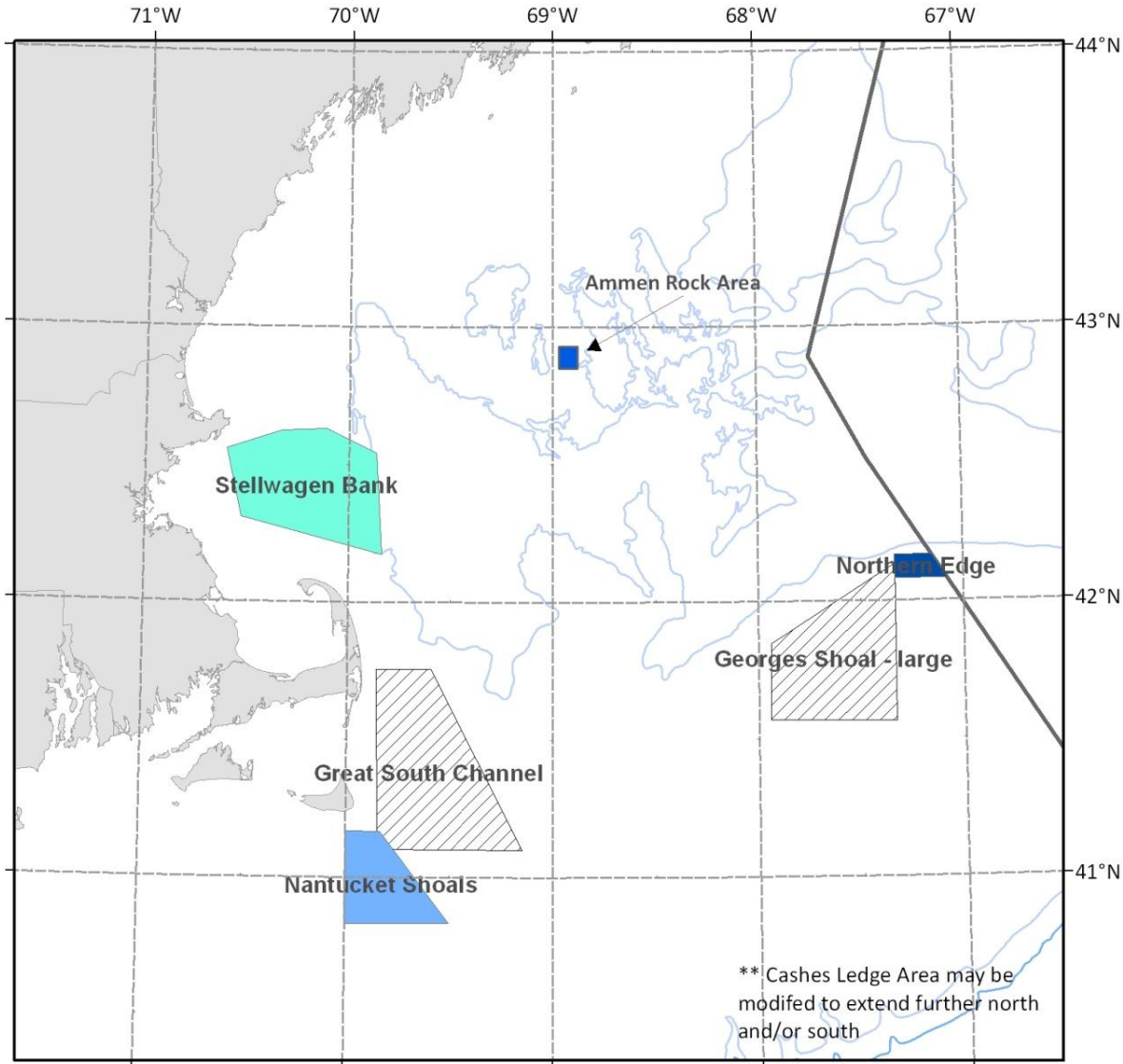


# Alternative 3



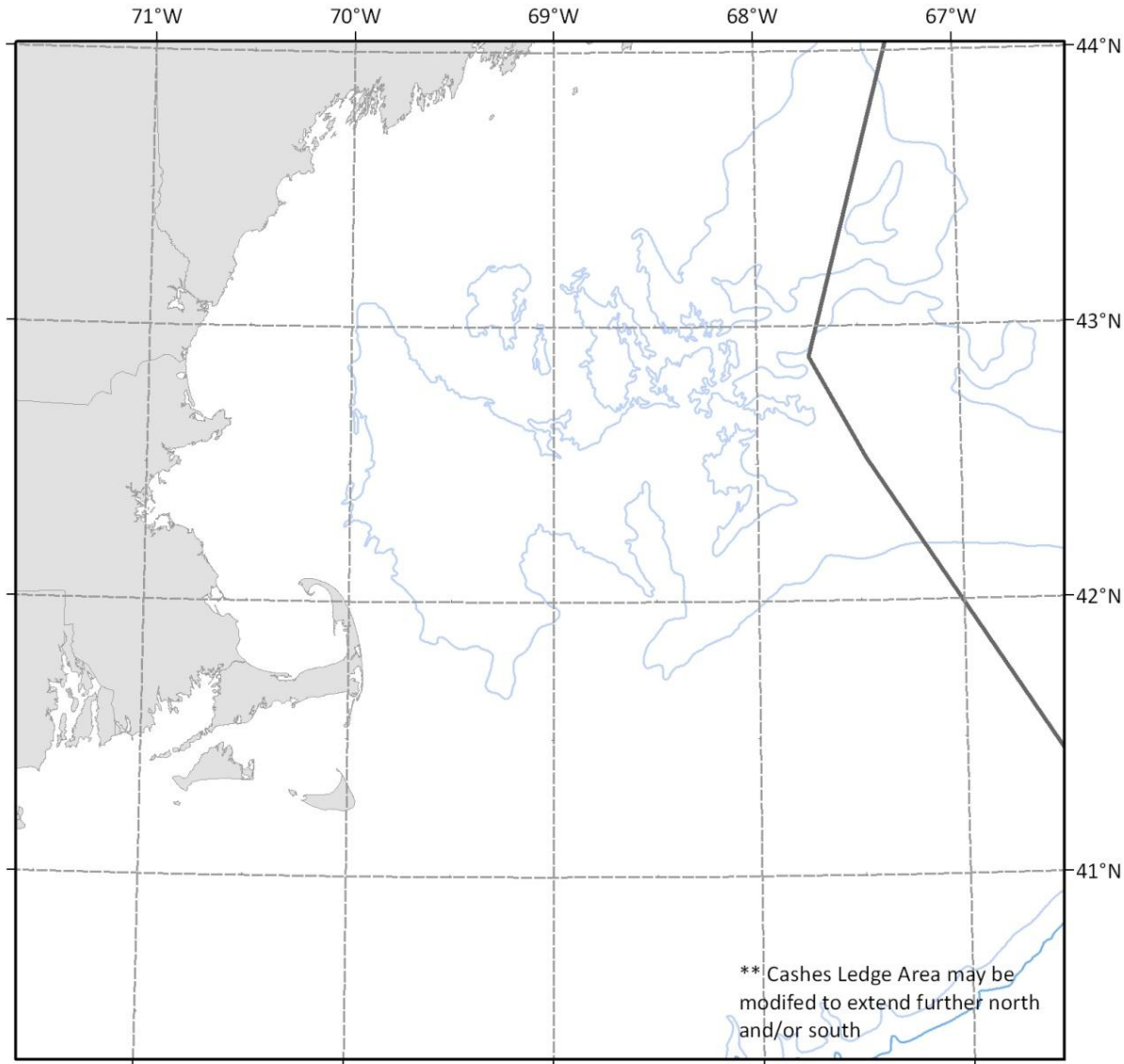
- Closures to all gears would be implemented in the Ammen Rock and Northern Edge areas
- Closures to mobile bottom-tending gears would be implemented in the Georges Shoal small, Nantucket Shoals, Jeffrey's Ledge, Jeffrey's Bank (modified), and Casher's Ledge (modified) areas
- This alternative would also include some kind of habitat management area in and around Stellwagen Bank/Tillies Bank/Wildcat Knoll
- Gear modification requirements for trawls would be implemented in the Georges Shoal large area and the Great South Channel area

# Alternative 4



- Closures to all gears would be implemented in the Ammen Rock and Northern Edge areas
- Closures to mobile bottom-tending gears would be implemented in the Nantucket Shoals area
- This alternative would also include some kind of habitat management area in and around Stellwagen Bank/Tillies Bank/Wildcat Knoll
- Gear modification requirements for trawls would be implemented in the Georges Shoal large and the Great South Channel areas

# Alternative 5



- No habitat closures or gear modification areas

# Next steps

- Refine/better specify options, as needed
- Add additional options to meet research or monitoring objectives (the PDT will be doing additional work on this)
- Adjust the mix of options in each alternative
- Forward options to Council for their consideration
- Groundfish Committee will develop options and alternatives for year round rebuilding closures
- Habitat and groundfish alternatives will be consolidated and forwarded to the Council