

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Scallops

I. STATUS

A. Management Actions

The Nantucket Lightship scallop access area closed on August 4, 2008 because the 9.8% allowance of YT flounder for the scallop fishery was projected to be caught (73 FR 45358).

Request for proposals for 2009 Scallop RSA was published on July 11, 2008 (73 FR 40052). Applications were due on August 25, and all applications are under review.

B. Meetings

Since the June Council meeting the Scallop Committee has met twice (July 7 and September 10/11), the advisory panel has met once (August 20) and the PDT has met three times (June 25, August 14 and September 29). All three groups have been working on development of measures for Amendment 15 as well as discussing how the Council should respond to the turtle biological opinion completed by NMFS in April. That subject will be discussed at the November 2008 Council meeting.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

Under Framework 19, the PDT is required to meet after scallop surveys are conducted in the summer to determine if biological estimates for specific scallop access areas require a reduction in effort. If biomass estimates are lower than anticipated for Elephant Trunk and Delmarva then NMFS has the authority to reduce the number of access area trips for those areas. There is no Council action required for this issue; the Council will only be updated on the biomass estimate prepared by the PDT and this meeting will serve as notice to NMFS whether or not a reduction of effort is necessary.

The Council will also consider a motion from the Scallop Committee related to sending a letter to NEFSC. The subject is a request for analysis on how NMFS collects and monitors yellowtail flounder bycatch in the scallop access areas.

Lastly, the Council will review timelines for Amendment 15 and other scallop actions; no formal action by the Council is required for this agenda item.

III. INFORMATION

1. Working timeline for Amendment 15 and other upcoming scallop actions
2. Scallop Committee motion regarding request for YT incidental catch analysis
3. Correspondence from FSF related to YT bycatch (September 9, 2008)
4. Scallop Committee meeting summary (September 10/11, 2008)
5. Memo from PDT regarding updated biomass estimates for Elephant Trunk and Delmarva (*to be handed out*)