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New England Fishery Management Council

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John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 25, 2008
TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee
FROM: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Terms of Reference: Positive effects of fishing on dredging on resource productivity**

The SSC is asked to address issues that may be relevant to the hypothesis proposed in the report titled "*Report on mobile fishing gear: effects and citation validity in NEFMC documents affecting the Atlantic sea scallop fishery.*" Please note that this inquiry is restricted to the portion of the report that proposes a positive relationship between dredging and resource productivity. Specifically, the Council would appreciate advice on the following topics:

Is there scientific support for the author's proposed hypothesis that dredging increases productivity for resources targeted by fisheries managed under the New England Council's jurisdiction, in particular the Atlantic sea scallop fishery?

If the answer is yes, Dr. Everett's report will be forwarded to the Scallop Committee and its Plan Development Team (PDT) for further consideration, as well as other Council committees as appropriate, such as the Groundfish and Habitat Committees given possible impacts on species other than scallops.

The issue of evaluating the accuracy of the scientific citations used in Council documents that have addressed essential fish habitat (EFH), as discussed by Dr. Everett, has been forwarded to the Council's Habitat PDT. The PDT is currently conducting a review of the references cited as part of its charge to develop an Essential Fish Habitat Omnibus Amendment, a major review of all issues related to EFH. In part, the amendment focuses on the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requirement to minimize the adverse impacts of fishing on EFH to the extent practicable.

