



# New England Fishery Management Council

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## Scallops: Council Receives Final Report on Evaluation of Area Management and Update on Timeline for Scoping on Leasing

The New England Fishery Management Council received short updates on numerous scallop-related issues during its [February 1-3, 2022](#) webinar meeting and covered two items in greater depth. These focused on:

- Recommendations contained in the [final report](#) on the Council's evaluation of the rotational area management program for the Atlantic sea scallop fishery; and
- A proposed timeline and initial strategy for conducting scoping meetings about limited access leasing.

**Rotational Management:** As part of its 2021 work priorities, the Council agreed to [conduct an evaluation](#) of the scallop fishery's rotational area management program, which was established under [Amendment 10](#) to the federal scallop plan. The evaluation focused on the 2015-2021 fishing years.

During its December 2021 meeting, the Council received a [detailed presentation](#) on the findings of the draft report. The presentation that the Council viewed during the February 2022 meeting underscored the final report's [recommendations](#).

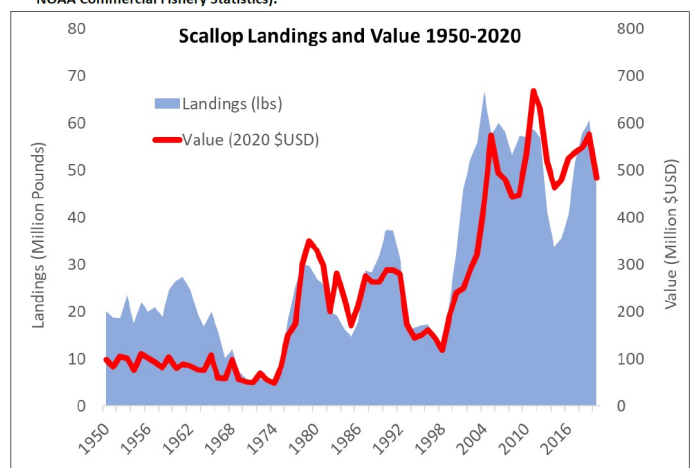
The [report](#) states, "The findings suggest that the rotational management program has achieved the primary and secondary objectives outlined in Amendment 10," adding, "there is continued room for improvement." (See excerpts in box at right.)

The Council's Scallop Advisory Panel and Scallop Committee will meet in March to review the report's recommendations in detail and consider next steps. Keep tabs on the Council's [calendar](#) for upcoming meeting dates.

**Limited Access Leasing:** As part of its 2022 work priorities, the Council agreed to conduct scoping for a limited access days-at-sea and access area leasing

*"The rotational management program has been effective to reduce and minimize bycatch mortality and habitat impacts. The rotational scheme inherently directs fishing effort to areas with high catch rates and larger scallops, which reduces bottom contact time and overall area swept. ... Based on the scope of information considered, the evaluation indicates that the scallop rotational management program has been extremely successful in meeting intended objectives and adapting to changing expectations." – Excerpts from the final report*

Figure 2. Scallop landings (millions of pounds) and value (\$2020 USD) from 1950-2020 (data from NOAA Commercial Fishery Statistics).



The above figure is from the [final report](#) titled "Evaluation of the Atlantic Sea Scallop Rotational Management Program," which was prepared by Fishery Applications Consulting and the Council's Scallop Plan Development Team.



# New England Fishery Management Council

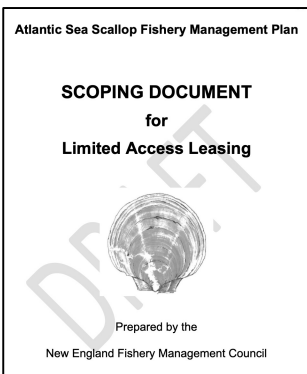
program within the scallop fishery. The purpose of scoping is to assess: (1) the need for a leasing program; and (2) what elements a leasing program should consider.

Based on the feedback gathered during scoping, the Council will decide during its September 2022 meeting whether to initiate an amendment to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan that *may* allow the leasing of access area allocations and days-at-sea in the limited access component of the scallop fishery.

**IMPORTANT: The Council needs to hear from all impacted stakeholders to be fully informed before deciding in September whether to proceed with the next step. Learn more and weigh in!**

If the Council were to initiate an amendment to develop a limited access leasing program, the changes could include but are not limited to:

- Allowing the **temporary** leasing of days-at-sea or access area allocations from one permit to another;
- Allowing the **permanent** leasing of days-at-sea or access area allocations from one permit to another;
- Limits on the amount of leased or transferred allocation that may be fished on a single vessel; and/or
- Vessel power adjustments.



*An early draft of the scoping document is available [HERE](#) for those who want to learn more about the scoping process and better understand the type of feedback the Council is looking for.*

➤ **Keep scrolling for more scallop news.**



## Send Us Your Comments!



The Council will hold a series of public scoping meetings in May and June. The schedule will be released as soon as the meetings are set.

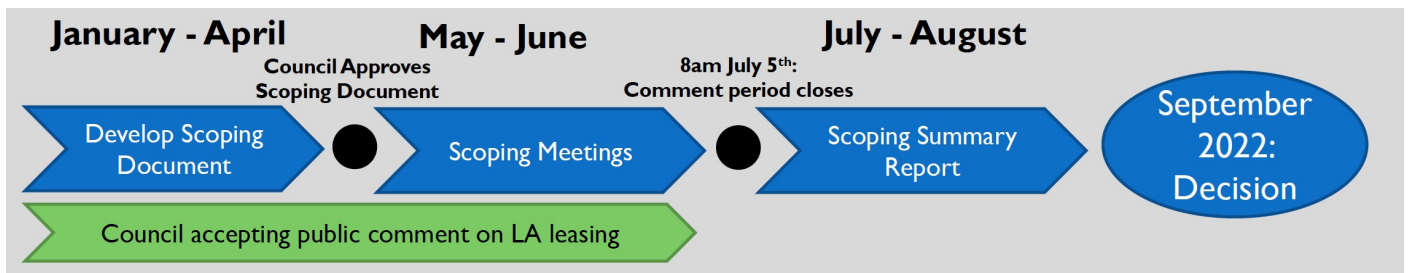
Meanwhile, the Council is collecting written comments that will be part of the scoping record. Label your letters as **“Atlantic Sea Scallop Limited Access Leasing Scoping Comments”** and send by:

- Email: [comments@nefmc.org](mailto:comments@nefmc.org)
- Fax: (978) 465-3116
- Mail:

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**The Council Wants to Hear From You!**





# New England Fishery Management Council

**Additional Scallop Items:** The Council also received brief updates on the following actions and events.

- **Maine Fishermen’s Forum Scallop Seminar** – Staff from both the Council and the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) will be participating in an online educational seminar on [Thursday, February 17, 2022 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.](#) about scallop management in the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) area. This session is being hosted by the Maine Fishermen’s Forum.
- **New NGOM Observer Requirement** – The Council and audience were reminded that all vessels active in the directed scallop fishery in the federal waters of the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area will be [required as of April 1, 2022](#) to participate in the industry-funded scallop observer program operated by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. This requirement was added under Amendment 21.
- **Fishery Management Plan Updates** – The Council was informed that the [final rule](#) for [Amendment 21](#) to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan (FMP) was published on January 12, 2022. [Framework Adjustment 34](#) to the FMP also is on track to be implemented in time for the start April 1 start of the 2022 scallop fishing year. And,
- **Scallop Work Priorities** – The Council received a high-level overview of the projected timelines associated with its [2022 scallop priorities](#) and major projects for the year ahead. This included a preview of what to expect for this year’s Scallop Research Share Days in May, as well as a multi-year outlook for scallop actions and research that are on the horizon.
  - More information about these additional items can be found in the [staff presentation](#).



– VIMS photo



– S Mast photo

All scallop-related materials used during the Council’s February meeting are posted [HERE](#).

Questions? Contact Jonathon Peros, the Council’s scallop plan coordinator, at [jperos@nefmc.org](mailto:jperos@nefmc.org), (978) 465-0492 ext. 117.