



New England Fishery Management Council

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 25, 2009

Patricia M. Fiorelli
978.465.0492

New England Fishery Approves Scallop Amendment 15 for Public Hearings

Newburyport, MA After working out the details of management rules in Plymouth, MA this week, members of the New England Fishery Management Council approved further development of Amendment 15 to the Scallop Fishery Management Plan.

The amendment is intended to address the new requirements of the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act --- that fishery management plans must use annual catch limits to prevent overfishing and include measures to ensure accountability. Additionally, the action will address excess harvesting capacity in the largest segment of the scallop fleet while providing vessels with more flexibility to efficiently harvest the resource.

Other changes under consideration could adjust the overfishing definition to be more compatible with the area rotation system used to manage the fishery, modifications to the general category fleet management program and a change to the start date of the fishing year. Amendment 15 also contains alternatives that would make the scallop and groundfish essential fish habitat closed areas consistent with each other.

The Council indicated its preferences for very few of the alternatives, but did opt to support a Scallop Committee recommendation that identified both the stacking and leasing of permits as its preferred measures to address the excess capacity and efficiency issues.

While no revisions have yet been made to reflect the changes made yesterday to the Amendment 15 alternatives, the document discussed at the meeting is available at <http://www.nefmc.org/scallops/index.html>. It is listed as Document 2 under the September 22-24 meeting materials. The Council plans to hold public hearings following completion of Amendment 15 and its draft Environmental Impact Statement. The timetable is early 2010.

#

New England Fishery Management Council | 50 Water Street, Mill 2 | Newburyport, MA 01950
Tel 978.465.0492 | Fax 978.465.3116