



# Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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## **ATLANTIC SEA SCALLOP FISHERY:** **LIMITED ACCESS GENERAL CATEGORY (LAGC) SCALLOP VESSELS**

Updated Allocations for the Remainder of the 2015 Fishing Year  
and Other New Measures  
*Effective Date: May 1, 2015*

The following information describes new measures implementing Framework 26 and a summary of how they may affect your fishing plans and activities for the remainder of the 2015 fishing year. Please read through each section carefully, and distribute this letter to your vessel operators. This summary is not a substitute for the actual regulations, and we encourage you to review the full text of the regulations, available at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov>.

We have posted additional information on our website at:  
<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/scallop/>.

If you have a question about any of the measures, please call our Sustainable Fisheries Division staff at (978) 281-9315. They can answer your questions or direct you to other staff members that can help you.

**With the exception of new gear requirements on page 3, all of the measures described in this letter are effective May 1, 2015**

### **Final 2015 Allocations for all LAGC vessels**

**Updated Fishing Year 2015 Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Allocations:** The table below includes the LAGC fleet IFQ allocations effective May 1, 2015, through the remainder of fishing year 2015. We will send you a separate letter that specifies your vessel's updated 2015 IFQ, which we set based on the following allocations.

#### LAGC Fleet Allocations

LAGC IFQ only	2,700,663 lb
LAGC IFQ with limited access scallop permit	271,169 lb

*For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.*

**IFQ Overage Payback (accountability measure):** Please remember that it is unlawful to exceed at any point in the year your IFQ Allocation. You can balance an overage within a fishing year through temporary IFQ leases and/or permanent allocation transfers completed before the applicable fishing year ends. We will deduct any overages that remain at the end of the fishing year from the following year's IFQ allocation on a pound-for-pound basis.

**2015 Access Area Closures:**

- Closed Area I, Closed Area II, and Nantucket Lightship Access Areas are closed for fishing year 2015.
- In addition, the Nantucket Lightship Closure has been expanded to include a portion of previously open area along the southeast corner (See the map at the end of this bulletin). This will expand the Nantucket Lightship Closure Area by 158 square miles. Area coordinates are included in Appendix A.
- A 549 square mile area in the northwest corner of the Elephant Trunk Access Area is closed to scallop fishing. This area is the Elephant Trunk Closed Area (See map, coordinates included in Appendix A).

NOTE: Vessels are prohibited from transiting the Elephant Trunk Closed area when on a declared scallop trip.

- The remainder of the Elephant Trunk will be open as an access area, as described below.

**2015 Access Area Trip Allocations:**

- All three Mid-Atlantic Access areas, with the exception of the Elephant Trunk Closure Area mentioned above, will be treated as a single access area and open to scallop fishing in fishing year 2015. (See map, coordinates for the Mid-Atlantic Access Area are included in Appendix A)
- IFQ vessels are allocated 2,065 fleet-wide trips into the Mid-Atlantic Access Area.
- Vessels will be able to fish across all three areas (Delmarva, Elephant Trunk, and Hudson Canyon) on a single access area trip.
- The Mid-Atlantic Access Area will be open for the rest of the 2015 fishing year (i.e., there are no seasonal closures).
- Once we project that all trips have been taken, we will close the area to IFQ vessels.
- **Until further notice, declare a Delmarva trip through your VMS unit to indicate you are taking a Mid-Atlantic access area trip.** VMS software will be updated later this summer with a new Mid-Atlantic Access Area declaration. We will notify you when this change occurs and provide further instructions.

**LAGC Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) Management Area Scallop Total Allowable**

**Catch (TAC):** Vessels issued an LAGC NGOM scallop permit are restricted to 200 lb shucked or 25 U.S. bu in-shell scallops per trip. The NGOM TAC for fishing year 2015 is 70,000 lb. If the NGOM fleet harvests 70,000 lb of scallops from the NGOM area, we will close the NGOM to all scallop vessels for the remainder of the fishing year.

**LAGC Incidental Scallop Target TAC:** The incidental scallop target TAC for fishing year 2015 is 50,000 lb. Vessels issued an LAGC Incidental Catch scallop permit may only land up to 40 lb shucked or 5 U.S. bu of in-shell scallops per trip.

**Fishing Year 2015 Groundfish Annual Catch Limits (ACL) in the Scallop Fishery:**

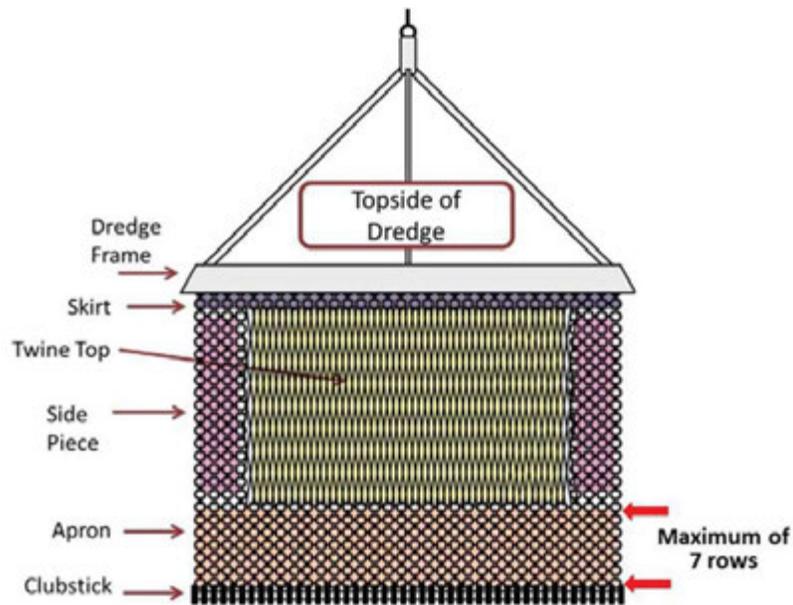
Stock	Scallop sub-ACL
Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder	<b>38.0 mt (83,776 lb)</b>
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	<b>66.0 mt (145,505 lb)</b>
SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	<b>183.0 mt (403,446 lb)</b>

For more information about yellowtail flounder and windowpane flounder catch limits in the scallop fishery, go to <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/info.html>

**New Measures**

**New Gear Restrictions to Limit Finfish Bycatch – EFFECTIVE MAY 21, 2015**

All scallop dredges must have no more than seven rows of rings in the apron between the twine top and the clubstick, **year-round and in all areas**. Previously, the required number of rows was different depending on where you were fishing. This change makes the maximum number required consistent across all areas and is intended to further reduce flatfish bycatch.



**Alignment of Gear to Protect Sea Turtles:** Both the turtle deflector dredge (TDD) and the sea turtle chain mat now have the same area and season requirements. They are both required from May through November only in the area west of 71°W. long. The map at the end of this bulletin shows the updated area where both TDDs and chain mats are required. No changes are made to which vessels must use TDDs or chain mats.

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>			
<b>Where and when are the gears required?</b>	The gears are required May through November only in the area west of 71°W. long.		
<b>Which LAGC IFQ vessels are required to use the gears?</b>	<b>Dredge Width</b>	<b>TDD</b>	<b>Turtle Chain Mat</b>
	10' 6" or greater	Yes	Yes
	Less than 10' 6"	No	Yes

**Changes to TDD Flaring Bar:** To ensure safe handling of the dredge, TDD flaring bars are now allowed to be in the shape of a “U”, as well as a bar (see below). No portion of the flaring U or bar can exceed 12 in. The location of the flaring mechanism can be on the inside or outside of the dredge frame, so long as all the other gear requirements are met, including required spacing of flaring mechanism from the “bump out.” TDD gear regulations are found at 50 CFR Part 648.51(b)(5)(ii).



The regulations now allow a flaring mechanism to be a bar (left, status quo) or in the shape of a “U” (right).

**Changes to the State Waters Exemption Program:** States within the NGOM management area (i.e., Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine) can now request an exemption from the regulation that requires that scallop vessels must stop fishing in the state waters portion of the NGOM once the Federal TAC has been reached. States have to apply for this exemption and specify to which vessels this would apply (e.g., vessels with NGOM permits, IFQ permits, incidental permits, or limited access permits). NOTE: Until a state has submitted, and NMFS has approved, an exemption request, all vessels with a Federal scallop permit must stop fishing in the NGOM management area when the NGOM TAC has been harvested.

## Reminders

**Observer Set-Aside Compensation:** LAGC IFQ vessel owners must call in weekly to NMFS's Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (see attachment for call-in instructions) to report expected scallop IFQ trips you expect to take during the week. Vessel operators must call by Thursday if they expect to make any open area (or access area) trips from Sunday through Saturday of the following week. Observer service providers should charge dock-to-dock, where a "day" is considered a 24-hr period, and portions of other days should be pro-rated at an hourly charge.

If NMFS selects your IFQ vessel for an open area or access area observed trip, you will receive observer compensation credit of 150 lb per trip if the observer set-aside has not been fully harvested. You can fish those additional pounds on the observed IFQ trip above the regular possession limit or on a subsequent trip that fishing year (but you must harvest these pounds within the current possession limit if you fish them on a future trip).

NMFS monitors the compensation rates and the observer set-aside use in each area very closely throughout the year. If information suggests that a different rate is necessary to account for unexpected fishery conditions, NMFS will change the compensation rate as appropriate.

**LAGC Calendar Day Landing Restriction:** LAGC vessels may not land scallops more than once per calendar day. For example, an LAGC vessel that lands scallops on Monday may depart on a second trip on the same day it landed scallops (Monday), but cannot land scallops again until Tuesday or later.

**Scallop Pre-Landing Notification:** You must send a VMS Scallop Pre-Landing Notification form at least 6 hours before arrival on the way back to port, or immediately after fishing ends if less than 6 hours before arrival. In addition, you must submit this form on trips that are not declared as scallop trips, but on which scallops are kept incidentally. Forms must include:

- Operator's permit number
- VTR serial number recorded from that trip's VTR
- Amount of scallop meats and/or bushels to be landed
- Estimated time of arrival in port
- Port at which the scallops will be landed
- Whether any scallops were caught in the NGOM.

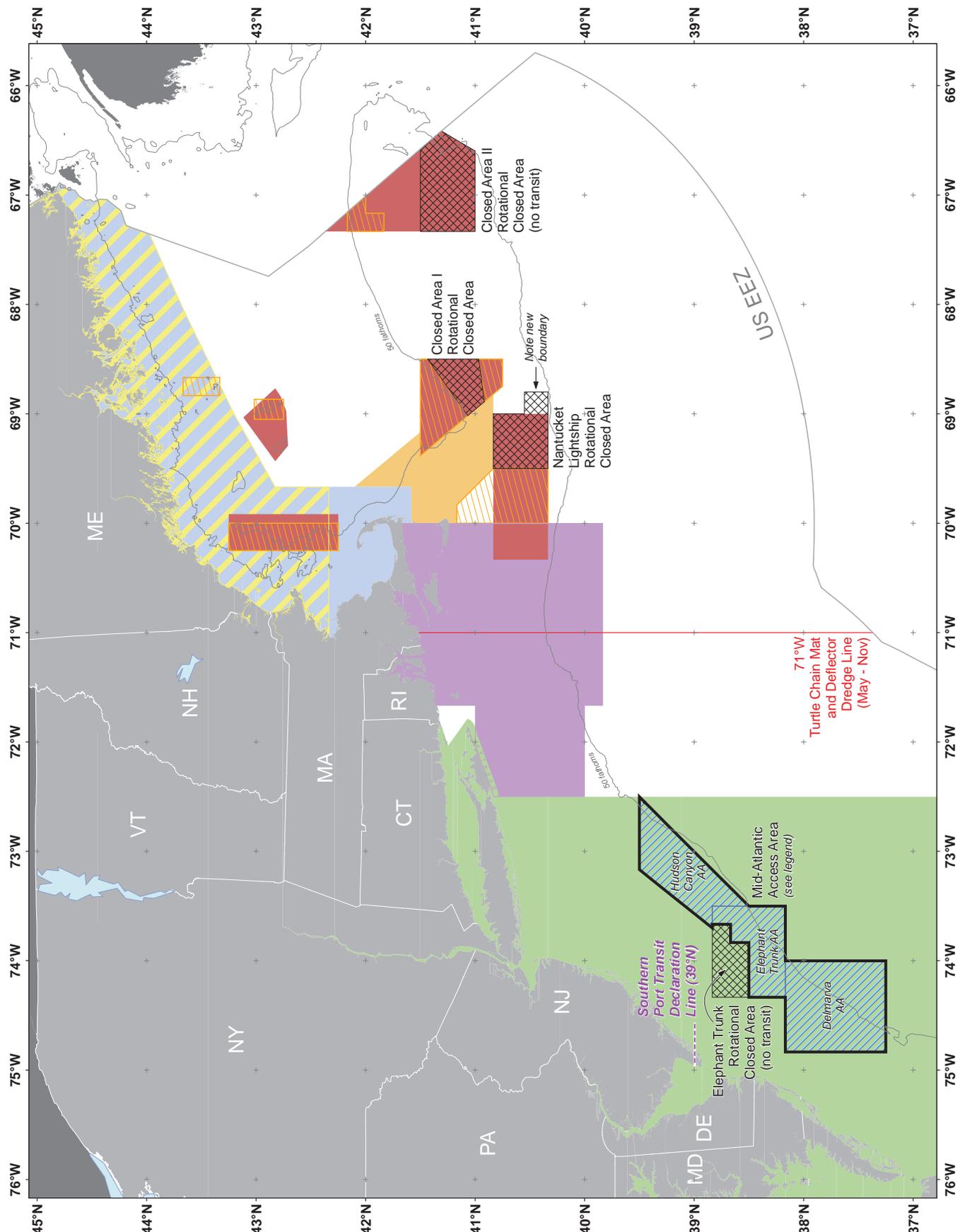
**Daily Scallop Catch Reports:** Scallop catch reports are also still required to be submitted daily for vessels that fish for, possess, or retain scallops and not also fishing under a NE multispecies DAS or sector allocation. These reports must be submitted in 24-hour intervals for each day of fishing that begins at 0000 hours and ends at 2400 hours. The reports must be submitted before 9:00 a.m. local time each day for the previous day's catch. Each report must include the VTR serial number, the date fish were caught, the total pounds of scallop meats kept, and the total pounds of all fish kept. The upcoming VMS software change will remove outdated references to reporting the total pounds of yellowtail flounder discarded, which no longer needs to be reported by the vessel operator

**Shell Stock Restrictions:**

- Vessels fishing in the Georges Bank paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) closure area may not retain in-shell scallops.
- Vessels fishing in or transiting the area south of 42°20'N. lat. at any time during a trip may possess no more than 75 bu of in-shell scallops shoreward of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) demarcation line.
- A vessel declared into the Sea Scallop Area Access Program may not possess more than 75 bu of in-shell scallops outside of the access area.

# Atlantic Sea Scallop Managed Waters Fishing Year 2015

- Groundfish Closed Area
- Essential Fish Habitat Closed Area
- Scallop Access Area (AA)  
*Mid-Atlantic AA (black outline) Includes Hudson Canyon, Elephant Trunk, & Delmarva AAs*
- Scallop Rotational Closed Area
- Northern Gulf of Maine Scallop Management Area (*Overlaps GOM SDEA*)
- Gulf of Maine Scallop Dredge Exemption Area
- Great South Channel Scallop Dredge Exemption Area
- Southern New England Scallop Dredge Exemption Area
- Mid-Atlantic Exemption Area



## Appendix A: Scallop Area Coordinates

### Closed Areas

#### Closed Area 1

Point	Latitude	Longitude	Note
CAIA1	41°26' N.	68°30' W.	
CAIA2	40°58' N.	68°30' W.	
CAIA3	40°54.95' N.	68°53.37' W.	( <sup>1</sup> )
CAIA4	41°04' N.	69°01' W.	( <sup>1</sup> )
CAIA1	41°26' N.	68°30' W.	

<sup>1</sup>From Point CAIA3 to Point CAIA4 along the western boundary of Closed Area I, defined in § 648.81(a)(1).

#### Closed Area 2

Point	Latitude	Longitude	Note
CAIIA1	41°00' N.	67°20' W.	
CAIIA2	41°00' N.	66°35.8' W.	
CAIIA3	41°18.45' N.	( <sup>1</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )
CAIIA4	41°30' N.	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )
CAIIA5	41°30' N.	67°20' W.	
CAIIA1	41°00' N.	67°20' W.	

<sup>1</sup>The intersection of 41°18.45' N. lat. and the U.S.-Canada Maritime Boundary, approximately 41°18.45' N. lat. and 66°24.89' W. long.

<sup>2</sup>From Point CAIIA3 connected to Point CAIIA4 along the U.S.-Canada Maritime Boundary.

<sup>3</sup>The intersection of 41°30' N. lat. and the U.S.-Canada Maritime Boundary, approximately 41°30' N. lat., 66°34.73' W. long.

#### Nantucket Lightship Closed Area\*

Point	Latitude	Longitude
NLAA1	40°50' N.	69°30' W.
NLAA2	40°50' N.	69°00' W.
NLAA3	40°33' N.	69°00' W.
NLAA4	40°33' N.	68°48' W.
NLAA5	40°20' N.	68°48' W.
NLAA6	40°20' N.	69°30' W.
NLAA1	40°50' N.	69°30' W.

\*includes the additional closure area

#### Elephant Trunk Closed Area

Point	Latitude	Longitude
ETCA 1	38°50' N.	74°20' W.
ETCA 2	38°50' N.	73°40' W.
ETCA 3	38°40' N.	73°40' W.
ETCA 4	38°40' N.	73°50' W.
ETCA 5	38°30' N.	73°50' W.
ETCA 6	38°30' N.	74°20' W.
ETCA 1	38°50' N.	74°20' W.

## Scallop Access Areas

The Mid-Atlantic Access Area is the combination of these three areas:

### **Delmarva Scallop Access Area**

<b>Point</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
DMV1	38°10' N.	74°50' W.
DMV2	38°10' N.	74°00' W.
DMV3	37°15' N.	74°00' W.
DMV4	37°15' N.	74°50' W.
DMV1	38°10' N.	74°50' W.

### **Hudson Canyon Scallop Access Area**

<b>Point</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
H1	39°30' N.	73°10' W.
H2	39°30' N.	72°30' W.
H3	38°30' N.	73°30' W.
H4	38°50' N.	73°30' W.
H5	38°50' N.	73°42' W.
H1	39°30' N.	73°10' W.

### **Elephant Trunk Scallop Access Area**

<b>Point</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
ETAA1	38°30' N.	74°20' W.
ETAA2	38°30' N.	73°50' W.
ETAA3	38°40' N.	73°50' W.
ETAA4	38°40' N.	73°40' W.
ETAA5	38°50' N.	73°40' W.
ETAA6	38°50' N.	73°30' W.
ETAA7	38°10' N.	73°30' W.
ETAA8	38°10' N.	74°20' W.
ETAA1	38°30' N.	74°20' W.

# Industry-Funded Scallop Observer Program Call-In Guide

**Limited Access (LA) Vessels:** Call for **BOTH** Open Area and Access Area trips. MUST provide 72 hours' notice before the intended sail date. Notice should be no more than 10 days prior to sail date.

**LA General Category Vessels:** Call for **BOTH** Open and Access Area trips. Notify weekly by Thursday if you intend to make any trips from Sunday through Saturday of the following week.

## **STEP I – CALL (508) 495-2100**

1. Press 1 to report a trip and follow the telephone message prompts.

2. Gear type: 

1	Scallop Dredge	2	Scallop Trawl
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3. Permit type: 

1	Limited Access	2	General Category
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4. Fishing Area: 

4	Mid-Atlantic Open Area
5	Georges Bank Open Area
9	Mid-Atlantic Access Area

5. Phone Number: enter your 10 digit phone number (DO NOT use '1' before the area code)

6. Permit number: enter your 6 digit permit number

7. Name: please speak clearly, first and last name, then press # key

8. Port sailing from: please speak clearly the port name, including city and state, then press # key

9. Date of sailing: please speak clearly the month, day, and year, then press # key; for General Category, use the date for Sunday starting that week.

You will receive a **trip confirmation number** for each call (trip calls for limited access trips, and weekly calls for general category trips). An email transmission from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be sent to your email address(s) within 24 hours and will either issue a 'waiver' or notify you that an observer must be hired for the trip. If you are issued a waiver, you may begin your trip(s). If you receive an observer notice, please follow the instructions in Step II. **If you do not receive VMS notification within 24 hours, contact the NMFS Vessel Call-in Coordinator at (508) 495-2188 or (508) 560-3550 (cell).**

## **STEP II - OBSERVER PROVIDER 48-HOURS PRIOR TO TRIP**

**If selected for observer coverage you MUST provide 48 hours notice to observer providers. The 48 hour notice is required for each provider when contacting them to hire an observer for your trip.** The observer provider may take up to 18 hours to notify you on observer availability. General Category vessels that are selected for coverage are required to carry an observer and may be selected for up to 2 trips during the week per NMFS discretion.

**You are required to call all observer providers before requesting a waiver from NMFS.**

Current Industry Funded Scallop Observer providers are:

**A.I.S. Inc. (774) 200-1688**

**East West Technical Services Inc. (860) 910-4957**

**Fathom Research LLC. (508) 990 - 0997**

**Please call the NMFS Vessel Call-in Coordinator at (508) 495-2188 or (508) 560-3550 (cell) if:**

1. There are no observers available from any of the providers and you would like to request a waiver.
2. You are cancelling your trip or your trip has been delayed more than 48 hours beyond the intended sail date.
3. Any other extenuating circumstances.

*This summary is not a substitute for the actual regulations. The full text of the regulations is available at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov> or call the Northeast Regional Office at (978) 281-9315.*

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