



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery

Northern Gulf of Maine Measures for Fishing Year 2018 Small Entity Compliance Guide

Effective Date: April 1, 2018

IMPORTANT: Regulations implementing the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) portions of Framework Adjustment 29 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan become effective on April 1, 2018. These NGOM measures are being implemented separately from other Framework 29 measures to ensure that they were in place before April 1, 2018. We will be publishing a final rule for the remaining measures in Framework 29 in the coming weeks.

If you would like to learn more about these and other measures, or details about recent actions, please visit our website at:

<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/scallop>

****NEW PROHIBITION****

All limited access vessels are now prohibited from fishing in the NGOM while participating in the days-at-sea (DAS) program.

These regulations implement new requirements for the 2018 and 2019 NGOM scallop fishing years. These regulations do not change how the limited access general category (LAGC) component currently operates in the NGOM, but they do make changes to how the limited access fleet operates. The limited access fleet is now prohibited from fishing in the NGOM while participating in the DAS program. The limited access share of the NGOM total allowable catch (TAC) is only available through research set-aside (RSA) compensation fishing. Each fleet must operate independently under its own portion of the TAC. This action divides the annual NGOM TAC between the limited access fleet while on RSA trips and LAGC fleets for the 2018 and 2019 (default) fishing years as follows:

Table 1. NGOM TAC (lb) for Fishing Years 2018 and 2019 (default)

Fleet	2018	2019
LAGC	135,000	102,500
Limited access (RSA Only)	65,000	32,500
Total	200,000	135,000

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, Greater Atlantic Region.

Frequently Asked Questions

How did the Council determine the split between the two fleets?	Due to relatively inconsistent catches between the two fleets historically, the Council considered several options for dividing the TAC. This action uses 2017 survey information to set a TAC of 200,000 lb for fishing year 2018. The first 70,000 lb of this TAC goes to the LAGC fleet. The remaining portions of the TAC are split equally between the two fleets.
If either fleet reaches its portion of the TAC is the NGOM shutdown to everyone?	No. The NGOM management area remains open for each component until their TAC is projected to be harvested, even if the other component has reached its TAC. For example, if the LAGC component harvests its TAC before the limited access fleet harvests all of its allocation under the RSA Program, the area would remain open for limited access fishing.
How will the limited access portion of the TAC be allocated?	NMFS will allocate the limited access portion of the NGOM TAC (65,000 lb) to be harvested as RSA compensation quota. This allocation is a sub-portion of the total 1.25 million lb RSA quota. When allocating the NGOM RSA quota to specific projects, NMFS gives priority to projects that are relevant to the NGOM.
How do I fish RSA compensation in the NGOM?	Any limited access or LAGC vessel that NMFS awards NGOM RSA compensation pounds to must declare into the area and fish exclusively within the NGOM management area. More details on the requirements for projects that receive NGOM RSA compensation allocation will be addressed in the Letters of Authorization issued to the projects.
Is this a permanent change to how the NGOM will be managed?	No. This is intended as a short-term solution to address management issues in the NGOM. The Council intends to develop a more complete allocation and harvest strategy in a future amendment.