

## Guideline for Scallop Assessments

Currently there are no stock assessments for scallop stocks. However, in the future, assessments are anticipated as per new assessment methodology (video surveying and modeling efforts) thus the following applicable notification and timing notations are made should an external review be requested in the future.

### ***Notification:***

The appropriate time period for notification of intent to solicit an external stock assessment review would be prior to July. Notification should be made to ADF&G, NMFS and the Council. The guidelines should be posted on the Council, NMFS and State websites for public access.

### ***Timing:***

In order to alleviate possible complications with staff workloads, the appropriate time period for an external review (inclusive of any interactions with the stock assessment authors as well as any follow up workshop) would be from July to December. This would allow time for an external review and subsequent workshop with follow up discussion at the February plan team meeting. Ideally, the reviewer will work with Assessment Authors in a collegial setting where reviewers would make suggestions to the framework or information used in the assessment. If this procedure is adopted, the Assessment Author would work with the reviewer(s) to find a mutually acceptable time for a pre-assessment workshop.

## **Comments from the Scallop Plan Team**

### **(Excerpted from SPT minutes, February 2007)**

The team reviewed a draft document on guidelines for external reviews of stock assessments. The team was requested to modify this document as necessary to meet the particular needs of scallop management (timing, information available) prior to SSC review at the March meeting. The team noted that the fishing season ends February 15<sup>th</sup> and begins again on July 1<sup>st</sup>, thus the time period between the seasons is utilized to summarize the previous year's data and schedule all surveys. News releases are typically published in early June for the GHR. This time period should be avoided should an external review be sought.

Currently there are no stock assessments for scallop stocks. However, in the future, assessments are anticipated as per new assessment methodology (video surveying and modeling efforts) thus the team discussed the applicable timing and notification needs should assessments be available in the future.

The team noted that there is necessarily a time lag following scallop surveys to incorporate data into models. It is difficult at present to predict how the timing of assessment modeling would unfold. Assessment timing would be February to May if the assessment relied upon the previous survey data. It does not appear to be possible to incorporate survey data from the Feb. 15–July 1 time period into modeling and have it be done prior to the season start in that year.

The team agreed that the appropriate time period for an external review would be July to December. This would allow time for an external review and subsequent workshop with follow up discussion at the February plan team meeting. The team notes that it is important to clarify the expectations regarding the results of the review and subsequent recommendations. This varies by fishery as management differs for groundfish, scallops, and crabs. For scallops, the SSC can make recommendations to the State on their findings. There is no absolute authority of the SSC to force the State to make changes to the assessment but they can serve in their role as a scientific advisor. The team noted that these guidelines are clearly more applicable for groundfish than for scallops, and a different set of guidelines for crabs and scallops would likely be more similar. The team agreed with the notations in the guidelines regarding vetting a disagreement between the stock assessment author and review results through the SPT and SSC but notes that these remain advisory bodies.

Gregg Rosenkranz offered to communicate further with stock assessment authors on the east coast for scallops regarding their review process. He noted that he was invited to participate in one of their assessment review process meetings but was unable to attend due to departmental constraints. Gregg further suggested that Jie Zheng would also be a good reviewer for the assessments on the east coast. Jie noted that Canadians send out reports for external review and receive comments back. Gregg suggested that assessment review be sent out, with comments then received but that the reviewer is not necessarily included in the assessment workshop.

Notification changes: The team suggested that notification be made to ADF&G and the Council. The guidelines should be posted on the Council and State websites for public access.

The team discussed the need for a transparent process for using survey and observer data to manage scallop stocks and establish GHRs. Formalizing an external review process for assessments (eg models) would be useful provided it does not inadvertently constrain the open process and lines of communication between industry and the department in management of the fishery as currently pursued