



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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ATLANTIC SEA SCALLOP FISHERY: **SCALLOP PERMIT HOLDERS**

New Start Date for the Scallop Fishing Year and New Specifications Process
Effective Date: December 5, 2016

On October 17, 2016, NMFS approved Scallop Amendment 19. This action implements two measures that will allow timelier implementation of annual scallop fishing allocations.

Amendment 19:

- 1) Moves the start of the scallop fishing year from March 1 to April 1, and
- 2) Establishes a specifications process outside of the current framework adjustment process.

Changing the Start of the Fishing Year to April 1

Pushing the fishing year back one month (from March 1 to April 1) increases the likelihood that NMFS would be able to implement simple specifications actions at the start of the scallop fishing year on a more consistent basis and not need to implement default measures at all.

****The 2017 fishing year will still start on March 1.****

In order to provide the industry time to account for the change in the start of the fishing year, fishing year 2017 will still start on March 1, 2017. The 2017 fishing year will be 13 months (March 1, 2017-March 31, 2018). We will then start the 2018 fishing year on April 1, 2018.

New Specification Process

Amendment 19 creates a new specifications process for the scallop fishery. This will help ensure that the annual specifications go into place on or about the start of the scallop fishing year, by:

- 1) Limiting the types of measures that can go into a specifications action, and
- 2) Removing the requirement for the New England Fishery Management Council to discuss measures over the course of two Council meetings, as is required for a framework.

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.