



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 NORTHEAST REGION
 One Blackburn Drive
 Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

February 25, 2003

SMALL ENTITY COMPLIANCE GUIDE

Dear General Category Scallop Permit Holder:

This letter is to notify you that Framework 15 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan (Framework 15) has been approved and the regulations that implement it are effective on **March 1, 2003**. For vessels issued General Category scallop permits, Framework 15 extends the management measures established by Framework 14 on May 1, 2001. For your convenience these measures are described below. This letter is only a summary of regulatory provisions implementing Framework 15 and is not a substitute for the actual regulations.

SEA SCALLOP POSSESSION LIMIT FOR GENERAL CATEGORY VESSELS AND LIMITED ACCESS SCALLOP VESSELS NOT FISHING UNDER A SCALLOP DAS

General Category scallop vessels and limited access scallop vessels not fishing under the scallop DAS program (and, therefore, under the General Category provisions) may possess or land per trip up to 100 lb of sea scallop meats in or from the Hudson Canyon or Virginia Beach Sea Scallop Access Areas (see coordinates and chart below). These vessels may transit the Sea Scallop Access Areas with more than 100 lb of scallop meats on board, provided the scallop meats in excess of the 100 lb were not harvested from the Sea Scallop Access Areas and all fishing gear is properly stowed and unavailable for immediate use, as required in the regulations.

No in-shell scallops from the Hudson Canyon and Virginia Beach Sea Scallop Access Areas may be landed. Up to 12.5 bu of in-shell scallops may be harvested by such vessels from the Hudson Canyon and Virginia Beach Sea Scallop Access Areas and possessed at sea, but only for the purpose of shucking to provide no more than 100 lb of scallop meats. Any combination of scallop meats and in-shell scallops possessed by such vessels must be equivalent to no more than 100 lb of scallop meats.

Sea Scallop Access Areas - The Hudson Canyon and Virginia Beach Sea Scallop Access Areas are defined by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated:

Hudson Canyon Sea Scallop Access Area

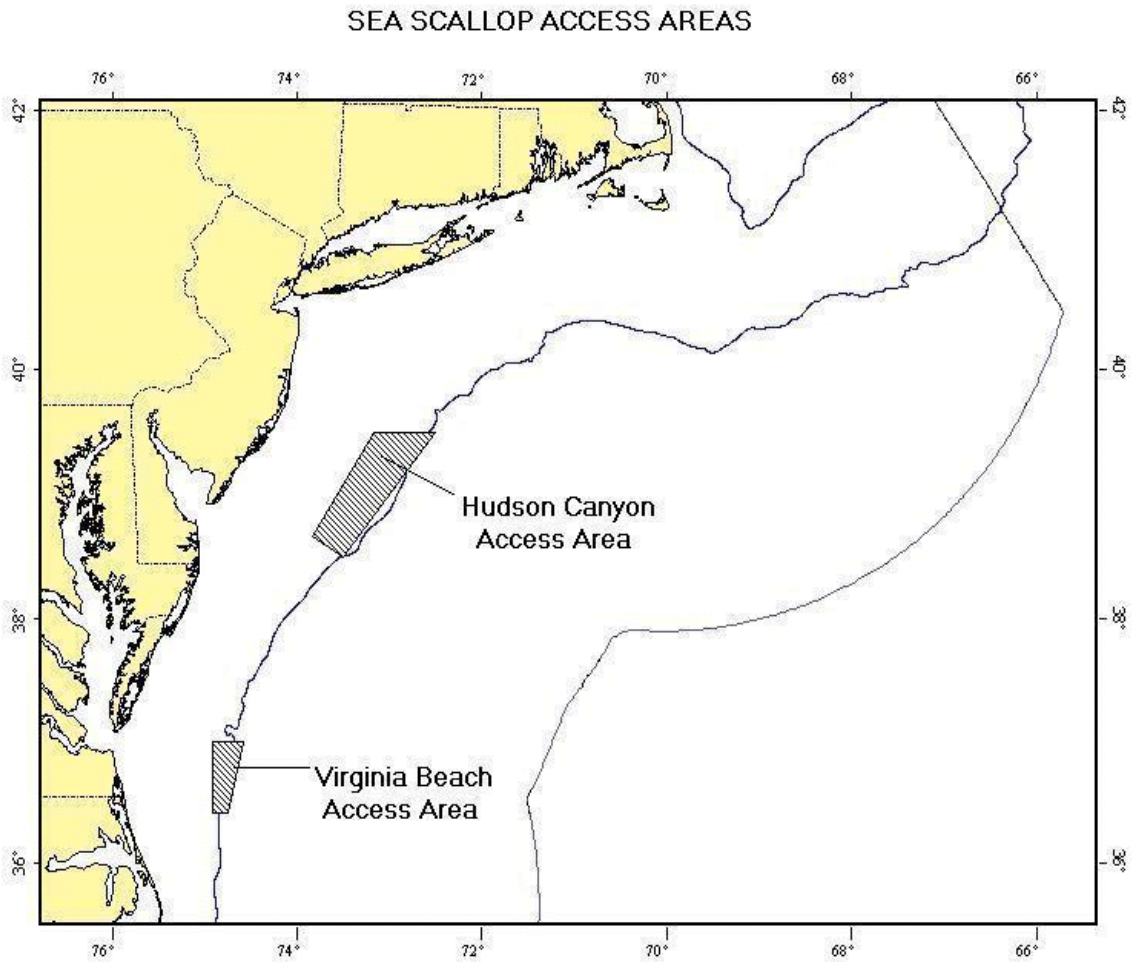
Point	Latitude	Longitude
H1.....	39°30' N.	73°10' W.
H2.....	39°30' N.	72°30' W.
H3.....	38°30' N.	73°30' W.
H4.....	38°40' N.	73°50' W.



Virginia Beach Sea Scallop Access Area

Point Latitude Longitude

V1.....	37°00' N.	74°55' W.
V2.....	37°00' N.	74°35' W.
V3.....	36°25' N.	74°45' W.
V4.....	36°25' N.	74°55' W.



TRANSITING FOR GENERAL CATEGORY VESSELS


Fishing for scallops is currently prohibited in the Southern New England Exemption Area (SNE Exemption Area) if a vessel is not fishing under either a scallop or Northeast multispecies DAS. Vessels legally fishing for scallops outside of the scallop or multispecies DAS program in an area other than the SNE Exemption Area (for example, the Mid-Atlantic Regulated Mesh Area), are allowed to transit the SNE Exemption Area, provided that their gear is properly stowed and unavailable for immediate use as required in the regulations.

The boundary of the SNE Exemption Area is the same line that formerly defined the SNE Regulated Mesh Area under the Northeast Multispecies plan: from the Rhode Island shoreline at 41°18.2' N. lat. and 71°51.5' W. long. (Watch Hill, RI) southwesterly through Fishers Island, NY, to Race Point, Fishers Island, NY; and from Race Point, Fishers Island, NY, southeasterly to the intersection of the 3-nautical mile line east of Montauk Point, southwesterly along the 3-mile nautical line to the intersection of 72°30' W. long.; and south along that line to the intersection of the outer boundary of the EEZ.

AT-SEA DISPOSAL OF SCALLOP DISCARD

The EPA has informed NMFS that disposal of sea scallop discard (shucked scallop viscera and shells) inside the VMS demarcation line may be subject to permitting requirements under the Clean Water Act or Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuary Act (Ocean Dumping Act). If you intend on shucking scallops inside the VMS demarcation line, you are advised to contact the Regional EPA Office of Ecosystem Protection, Water Quality Unit, #617-918-1676 or 1-888-372-7341.

Sincerely,



for Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

This Small Entity Compliance Guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996.