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Northeast Fisheries Science Center

NTAP Bigelow Contingencies Working Group

November 16, 2023

Background

Full panel meeting Jul 20: discussed Bigelow Contingency Plan options, evaluation criteria, created working group

WG kickoff meeting Sept 5: developed TOR

Describe vessel platforms that can support completing the NEFSC spring and fall BTS when the Bigelow is unavailable. Assess the viability of the platform(s) and platform deployment needs from logistical and scientific perspectives and identify where additional information is needed to fully develop a given option. Consider options that at a minimum meet stock assessment needs. This effort should produce a relatively high level overview of options and identify information gaps.

4 options discussed:

1. Pisces
2. NEFSC vessel
3. IBS calibrated to Bigelow
4. IBS not calibrated to Bigelow (parallel, separate survey)

Today we're focused on Option #4

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Council motions

NEFMC and MAFMC passed motions:

The Council request the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to develop a white paper to be submitted to the New England Fishery Management Council by January 12, 2024, outlining an industry-based survey that is complementary to the spring and autumn Bottom Trawl Survey.

NEFSC efforts focused on fleshing out Bigelow Contingency Plan Option #4

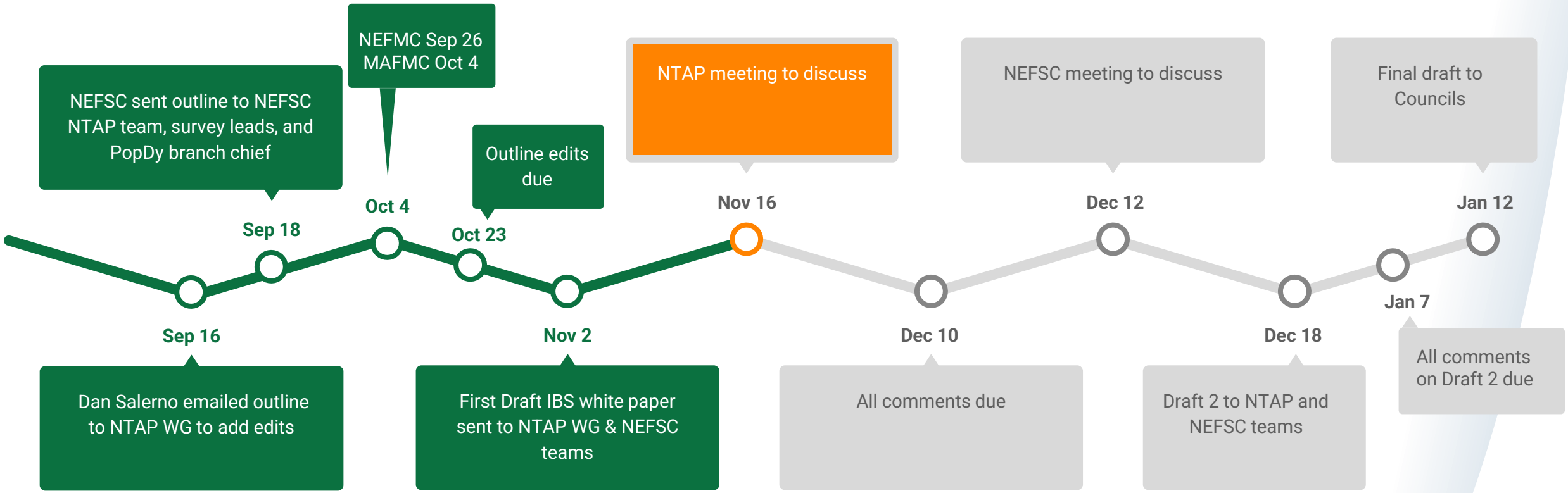
Still working on Pisces and NEFSC vessel options

Meeting goals

- Discuss the Industry-Based Survey white paper
  - for a parallel, separate survey to the Bigelow survey
- Identify the approach to sampling, focusing on logistics

- *Other items*
  - *Update on progress for other contingency options*

IBS white paper development



Accessing the draft IBS white paper

- Email Nov. 2 to the working group
  - Microsoft Word version
  - Google doc link
- Direct edit: please use suggesting mode (Google doc), track changes (Word) AND/OR
- Send an email with a list of changes kathryn.ford@noaa.gov
- You can call me to discuss changes (774) 279-3695

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Basic description of the proposed IBS

- A multispecies trawl survey using industry boat(s)
- Does not introduce survey redesign elements or calibration (keep it simple to start)
  - Same geographic range, seasons, strata, and station allocation as NEFSC survey
  - Starting point is same gear as NEFSC survey
  - Reduced biological sampling of catch
  - Not calibrated to Bigelow, parallel separate survey from NEFSC survey
- Third-party operated as starting point BUT other options described
- "SNE/MidA NEAMAP-style" program

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A quick word on program management

Program Name	Program Manager	Vessel Operator
SNE/MidA NEAMAP	ASMFC - Academic (VIMS)	Fishing industry
MA NEAMAP	State gov't	Federal vessel
ME/NH NEAMAP	State gov't	Fishing industry
NY & NJ trawl surveys	State gov't	Commercial research vessel
AFSC/NWFSC	Fed gov't	Fishing industry

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Questions

About how we got here?

About the basic “keep it simple” approach?

Do you have a program management preference?

Major questions/needs

- Logistics
  - 24 hr sampling vs. 12 hr sampling - what is the best approach?
  - Vessel space, crew size, science crew size - how many people will fit? Then … how do we adjust the science to meet that cap?
  - What is needed in terms of geographic divisions? (Can one boat cover whole extent, do we divide into regions?)
  - What is max depth possible? (200 fm/1200 feet is NEFSC survey extent)
  - Will dockage be needed?
- Gear
  - Proposal is to use same gear - are there details that should be discussed here (auto trawl or no, doors/sweep)

24 hr vs 12 hr sampling & crew sizes

Goals: Logistically feasible, maximum scientific value

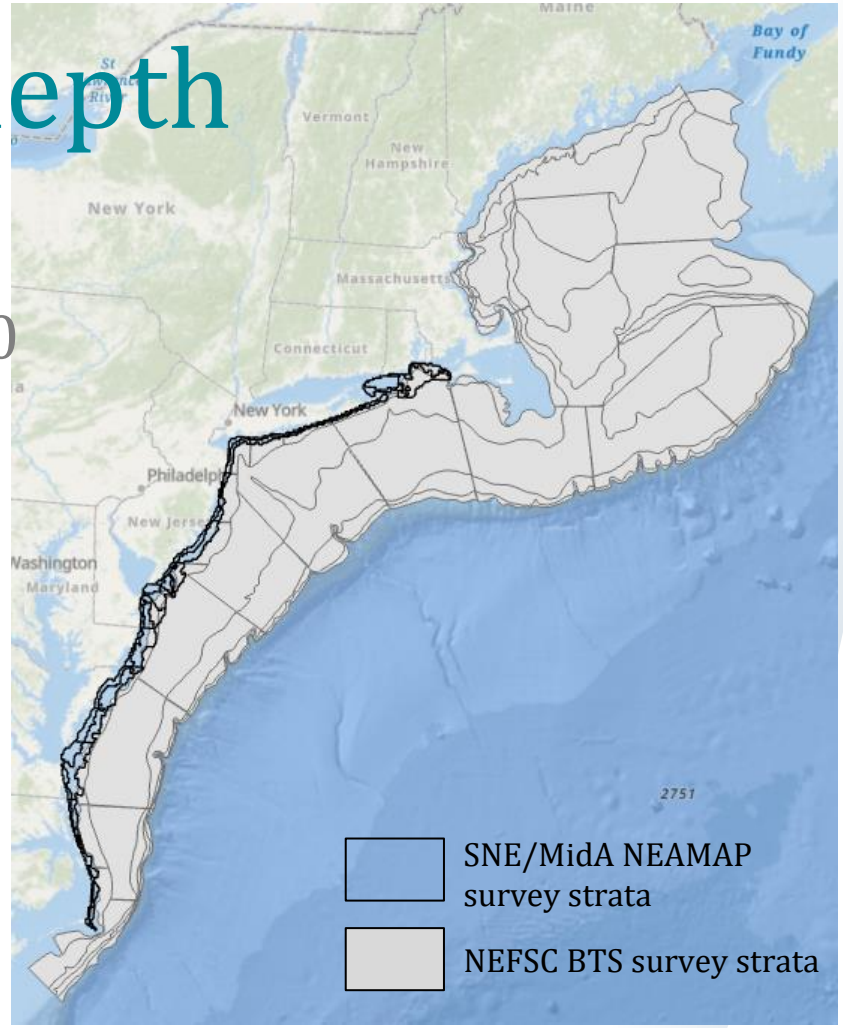
Geographic divisions, max depth

NEAMAP = 150 stations, 30 days/season (over a 60 day survey period), max depth 120 ft

NEFSC BTS = 370 stations, 60 days/season (over a 90 day survey period), max depth 1200 ft

~ 2x scale of NEAMAP

Maps on next 2 slides



Fall 2016, 373 tows

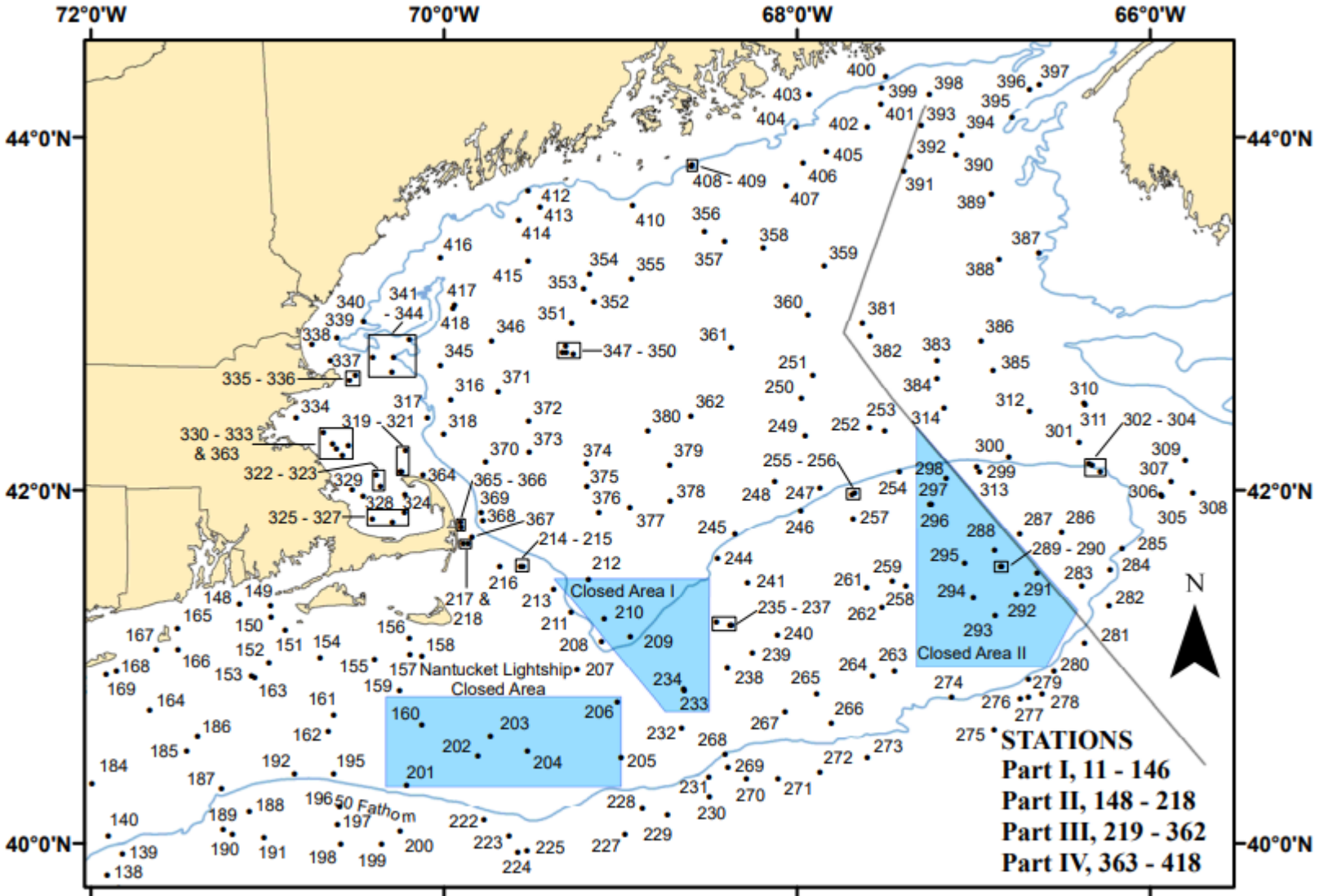


Figure 2. Trawl hauls made from NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow* (16 - 04), during NOAA Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center's autumn bottom trawl survey, 8 September - 10 November 2016

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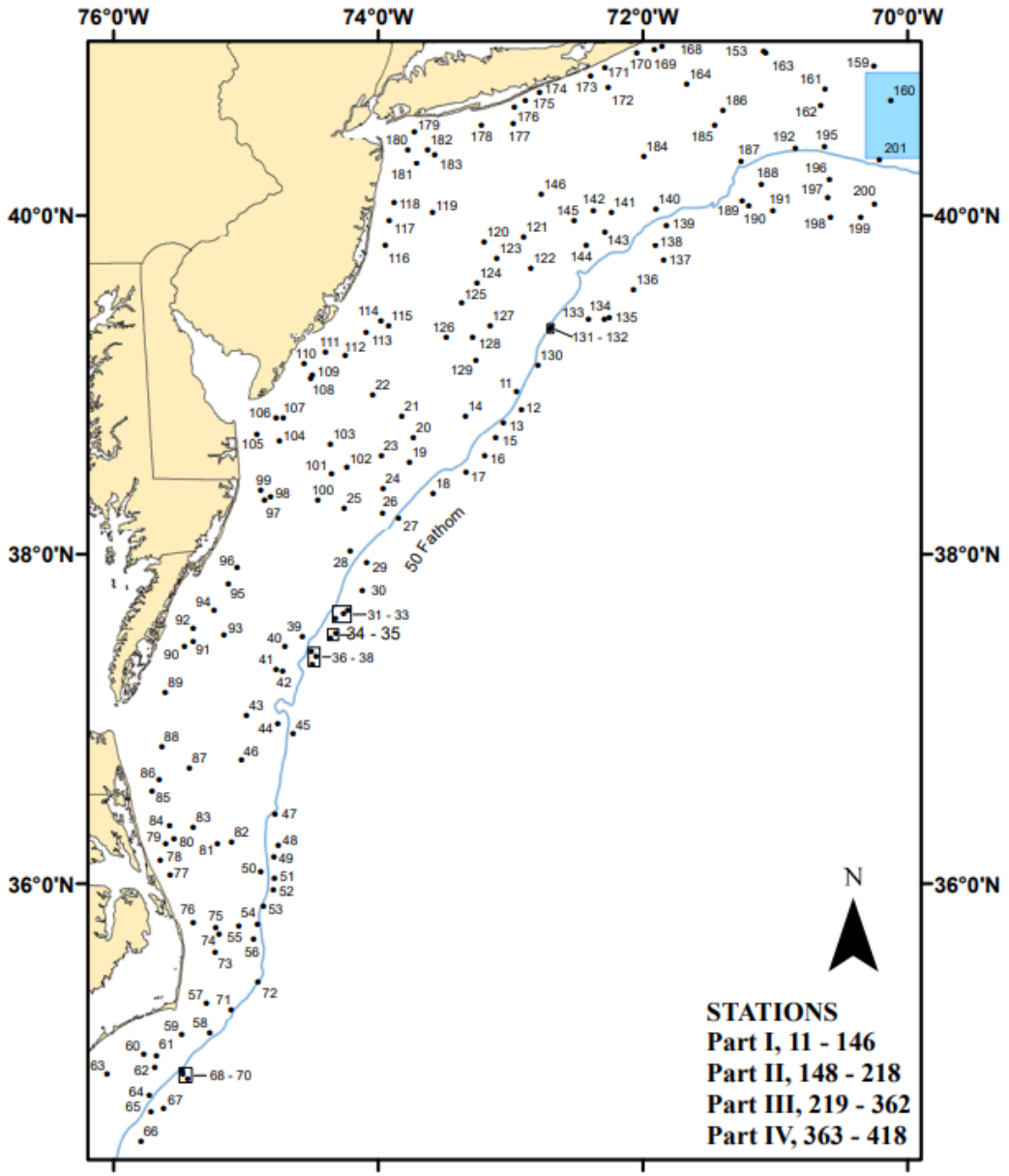


Figure 1. Trawl hauls made from NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow* (16-04), during NOAA Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center's autumn bottom trawl survey, 8 September - 10 November 2016

Other costs

What does the budget need to address?

Dockage

Vessel modifications

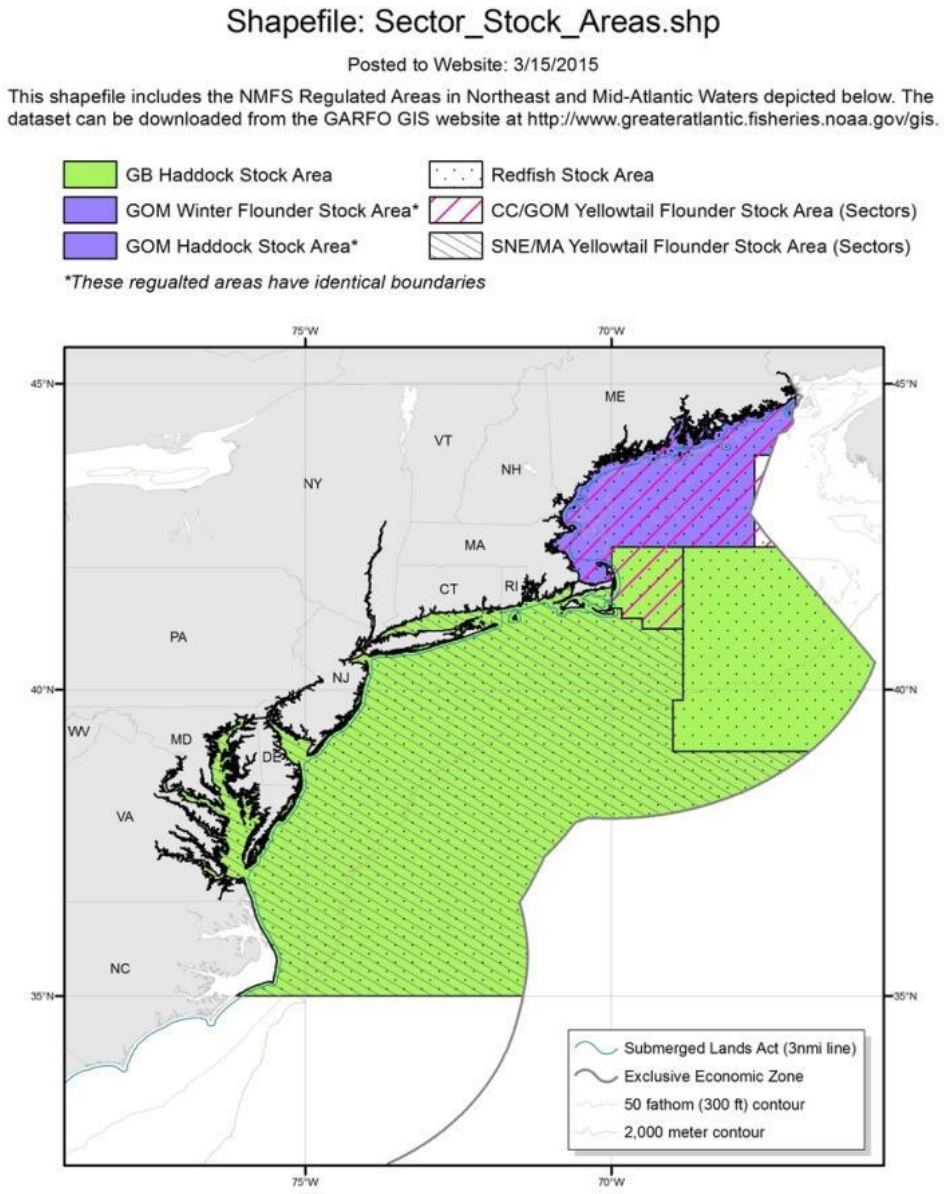
Electronics upgrades

Gear storage

Gear

Gear needs to be standardized at least within a stock area

- For some stocks, the gear needs to work in GOM, Georges, SNE, and Mid-Atlantic



Gear

- Starting point is NEFSC BTS gear
  - 4-seam, 3-bridle box-net with rockhopper gear
  - Poly-Ice oval doors
  - Auto trawl
  - Same wire and vessel beam, draft, power each survey
  - What has to be reconsidered in an industry-based survey?

To do

Draft a list here of what needs to be done and who is doing it …

Bigelow contingencies

Discussion points:

Use of Pisces

NEFSC vessel discussion

OMAO-NMFS comms

Who do we want to hear from?

Next steps

Dec 10 - All comments due

Dec 11 week - NEFSC meeting to discuss

Dec 18 - Draft 2 to NTAP - (should this go to the full panel??) and NEFSC teams

Jan 7 - All comments on Draft 2 due

Jan 12 - Final draft to Councils