

Framework 8: Scup Gear Restricted Areas

**New Bern, NC
February 12, 2014**

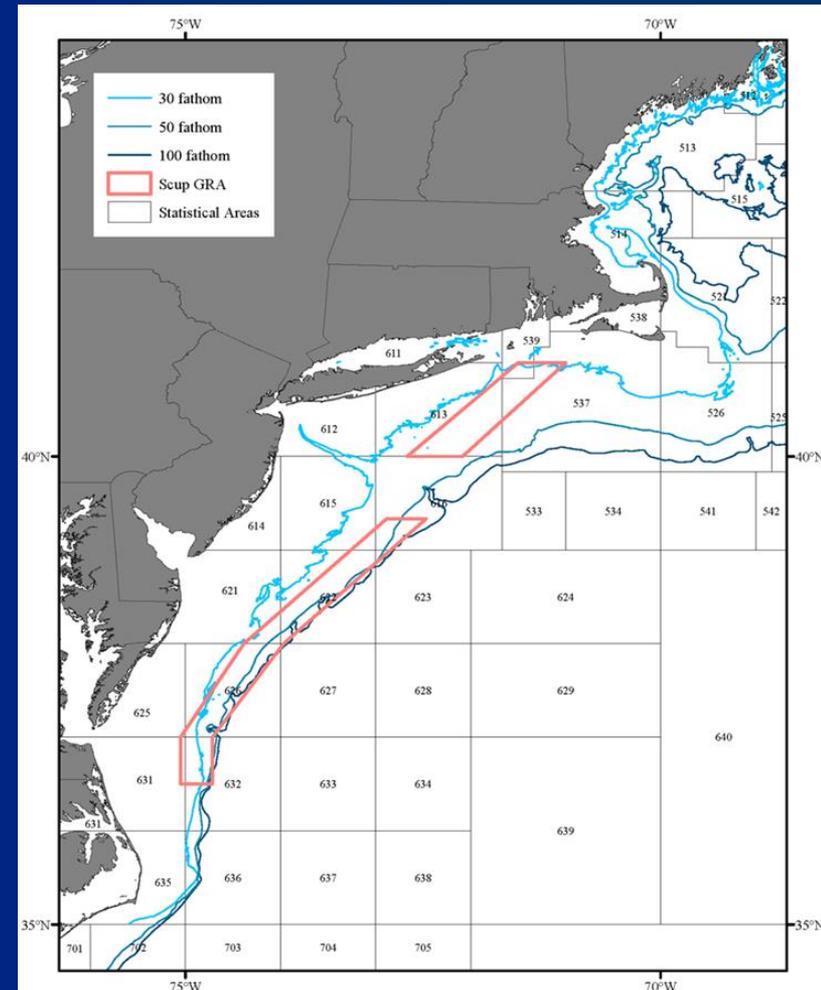
Overview

- History of the GRAs
- Impacts of the GRAs
 - Analyses provided by NEFSC
- Framework 8 and Draft Alternatives for the GRAs
- Council Input and Next Steps



Current GRAs

- Prohibit fishing for non exempt species (*Loligo*, black sea bass, silver hake) with...
- Small mesh (<5 inches) in....
- Jan. 1-March 1 in SGRA and Nov. 1-Dec. 31 in NGRA



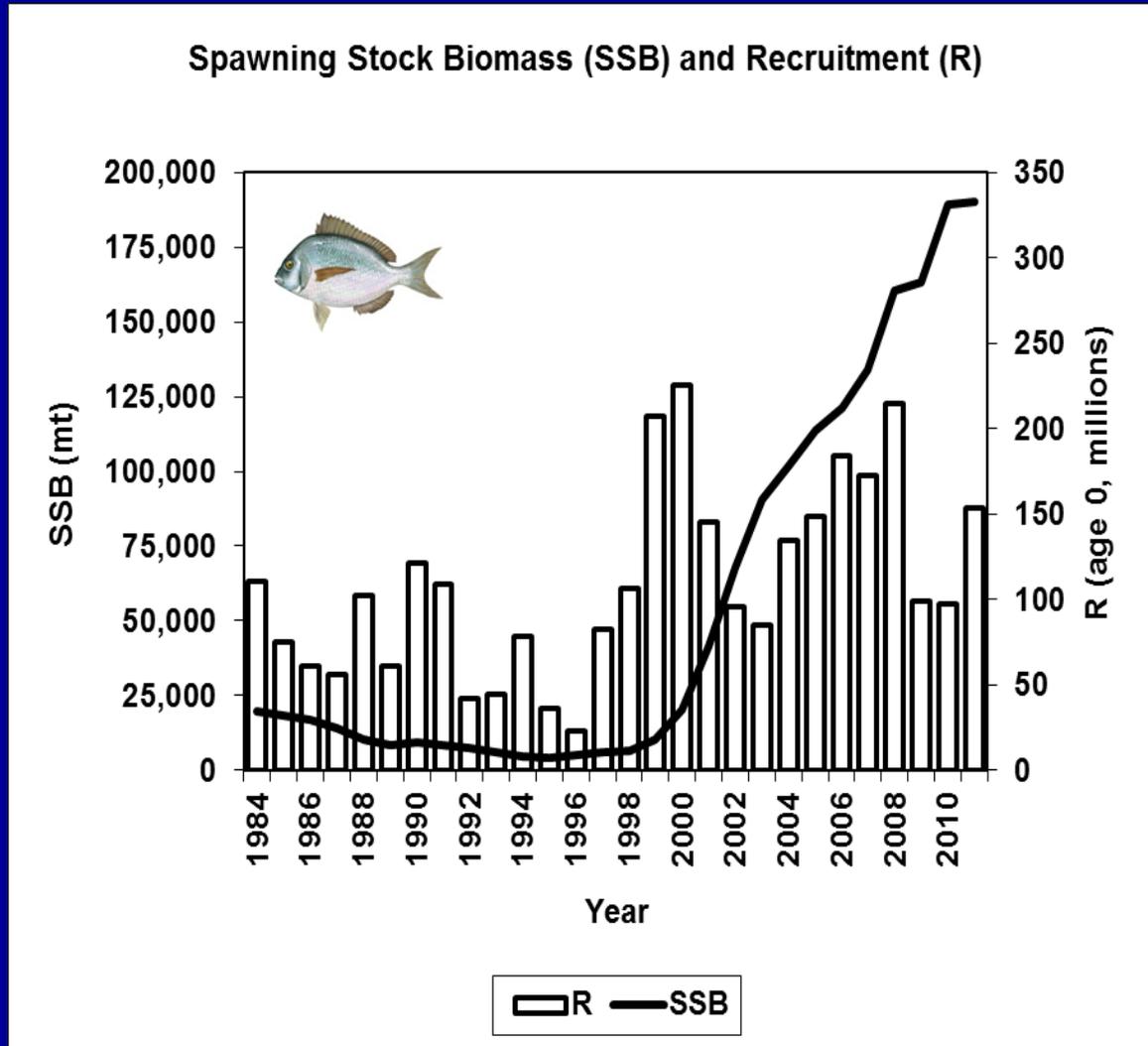
History of the GRAs

- **First implemented in 2000** - reduce scup mortality from discards, esp. juvenile scup (31st SARC)
- **Modified in 2001** - SGRA size reduced and seaward (east) boundary moved inshore to approximate 100 fathom line (industry request)
- **GRA Exemption Program (2003)** - fish for non-exempt species with modified small mesh nets and observers on board. NMFS discontinued in 2005; no vessels participated
- **Modified again in 2005** - shifted 3 longitudinal minutes to the west (industry request); provides for more *Loligo* squid access while maintaining protect aspects of SGRA

Scup Rebuilding History

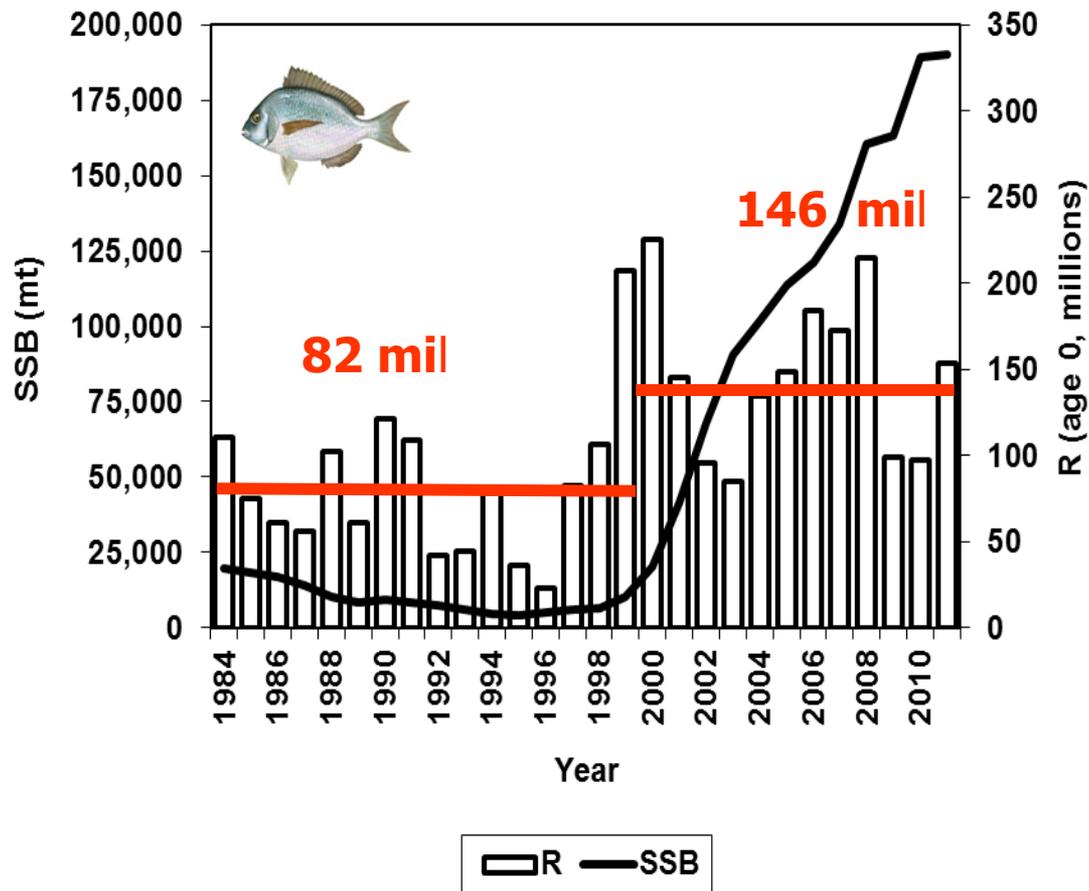
- **Scup Rebuilding** - 10-year rebuild clock started in 2000; declared rebuilt by NMFS in May 2009 (DPSWG, Dec. 2008)
- **F-reduction, Landings Limits** - quotas and harvest limits reduced fishing mortality (F) on adult scup
- **Scup GRAs (2000 onward)** - reduce discard mortality on scup, particular juvenile scup

Stock Biomass and Recruitment



Average Age 0 Recruitment

Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) and Recruitment (R)



Impacts of the GRAs

- Terceiro and Miller (NMFS- NEFSC) provided analyses of survey and observer data
- Concluded that NEFSC Observer data show since 1989 most observed commercial fishery scup discards occurred in small mesh tows in Statistical Areas that include the GRAs.

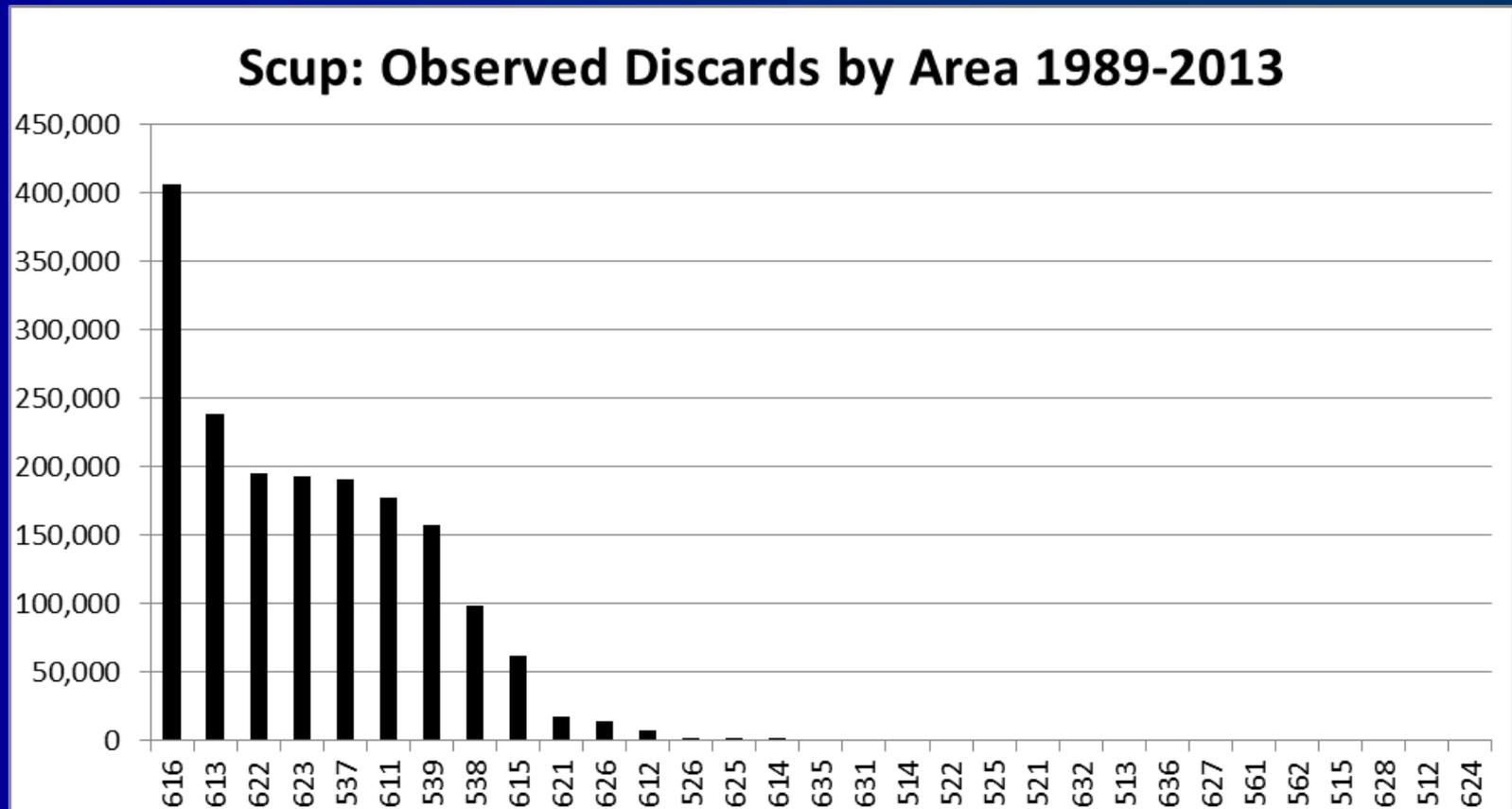
Impacts of the GRAs

- Concluded that NEFSC Observer and Trawl Survey data, and the SSB and F that result once integrated within the stock assessment, indicate that the GRAs likely reduce the discard mortality of small scup, and,
- GRAs responsible for the improved post-recruitment survival of these small scup.

Impacts of the GRAs

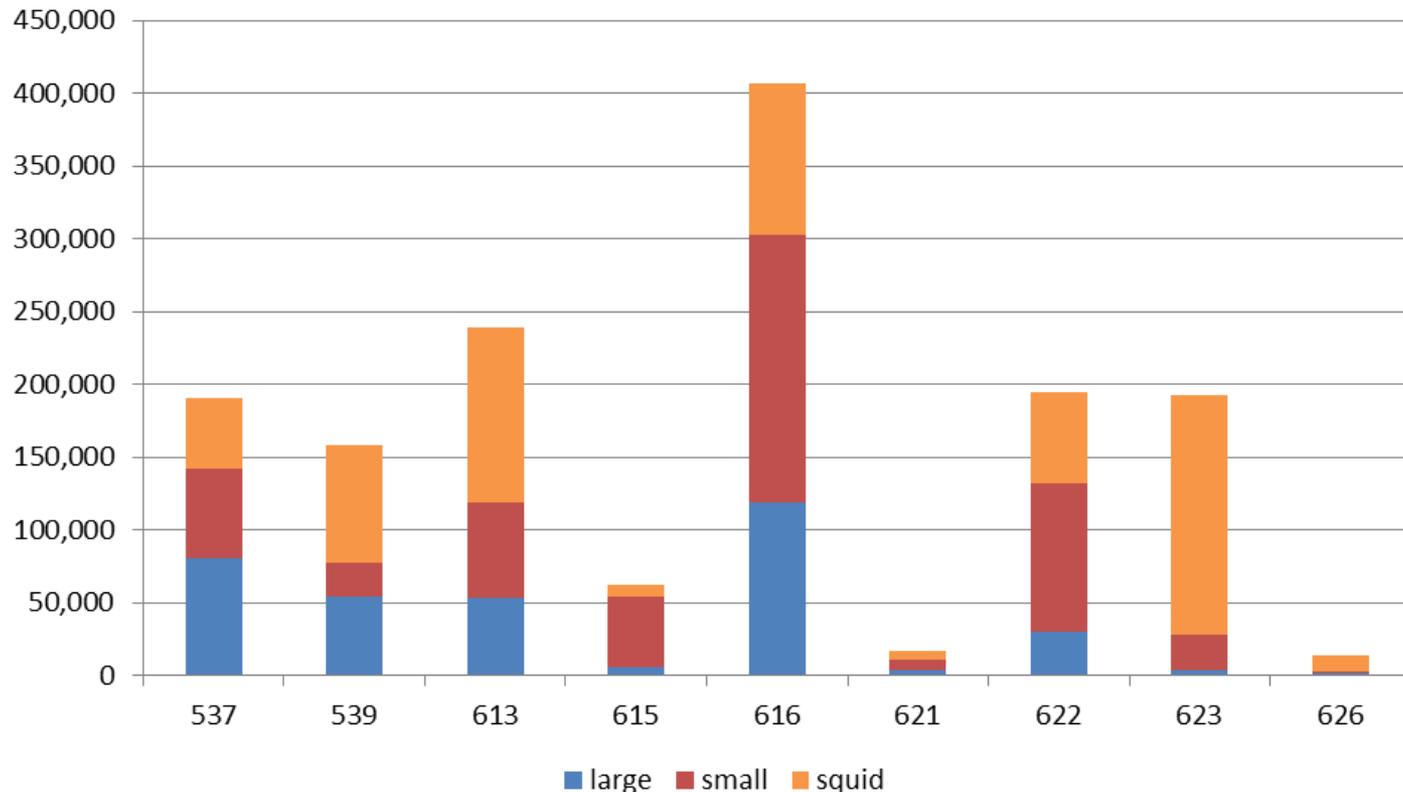
- Discards (in absolute estimate terms) have been reduced in the GRA areas and months since 2001.
- Relatively high discards have occurred recently (2009-2010) outside the GRA areas and months.

Impacts of the GRAs

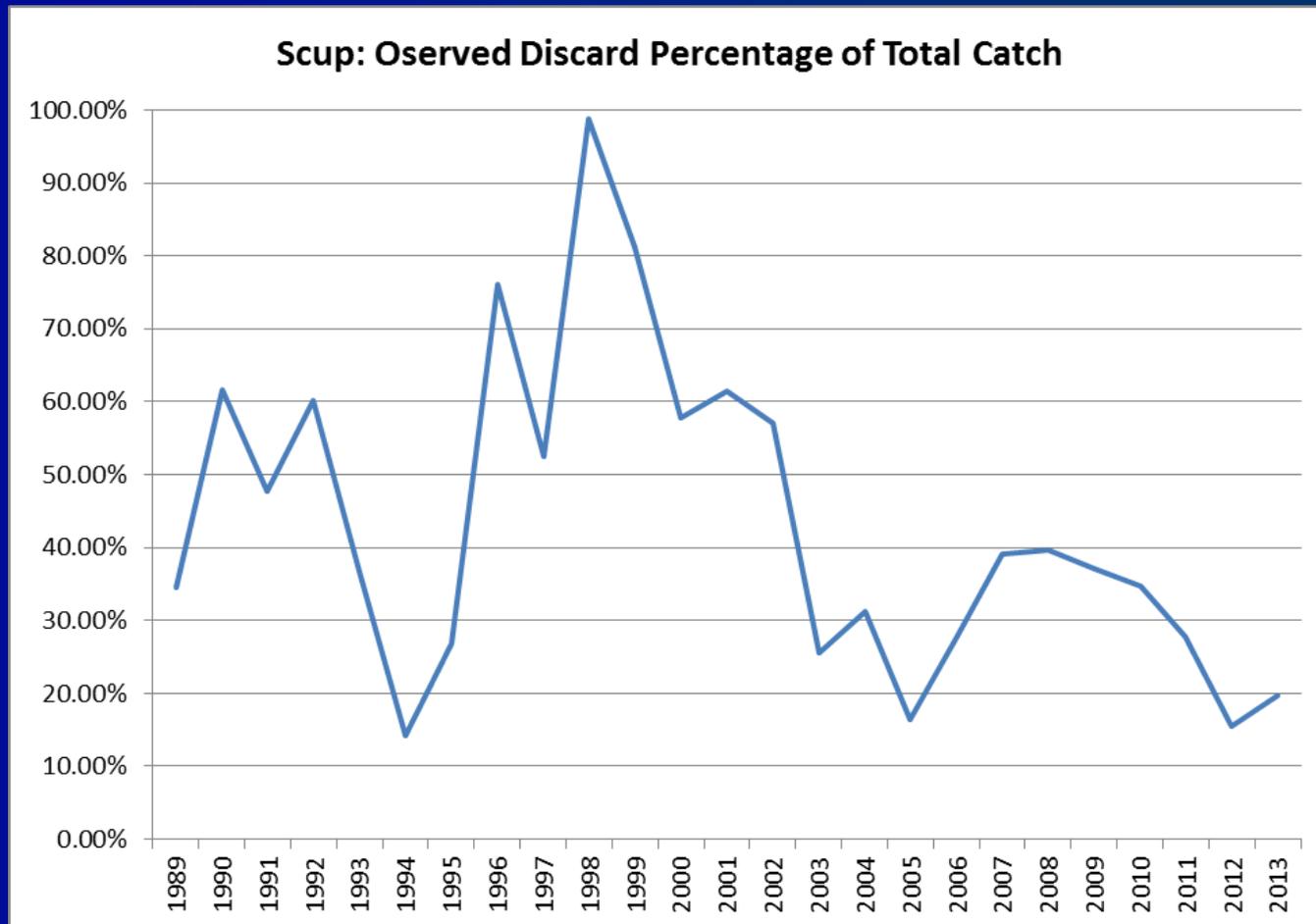


Impacts of the GRAs

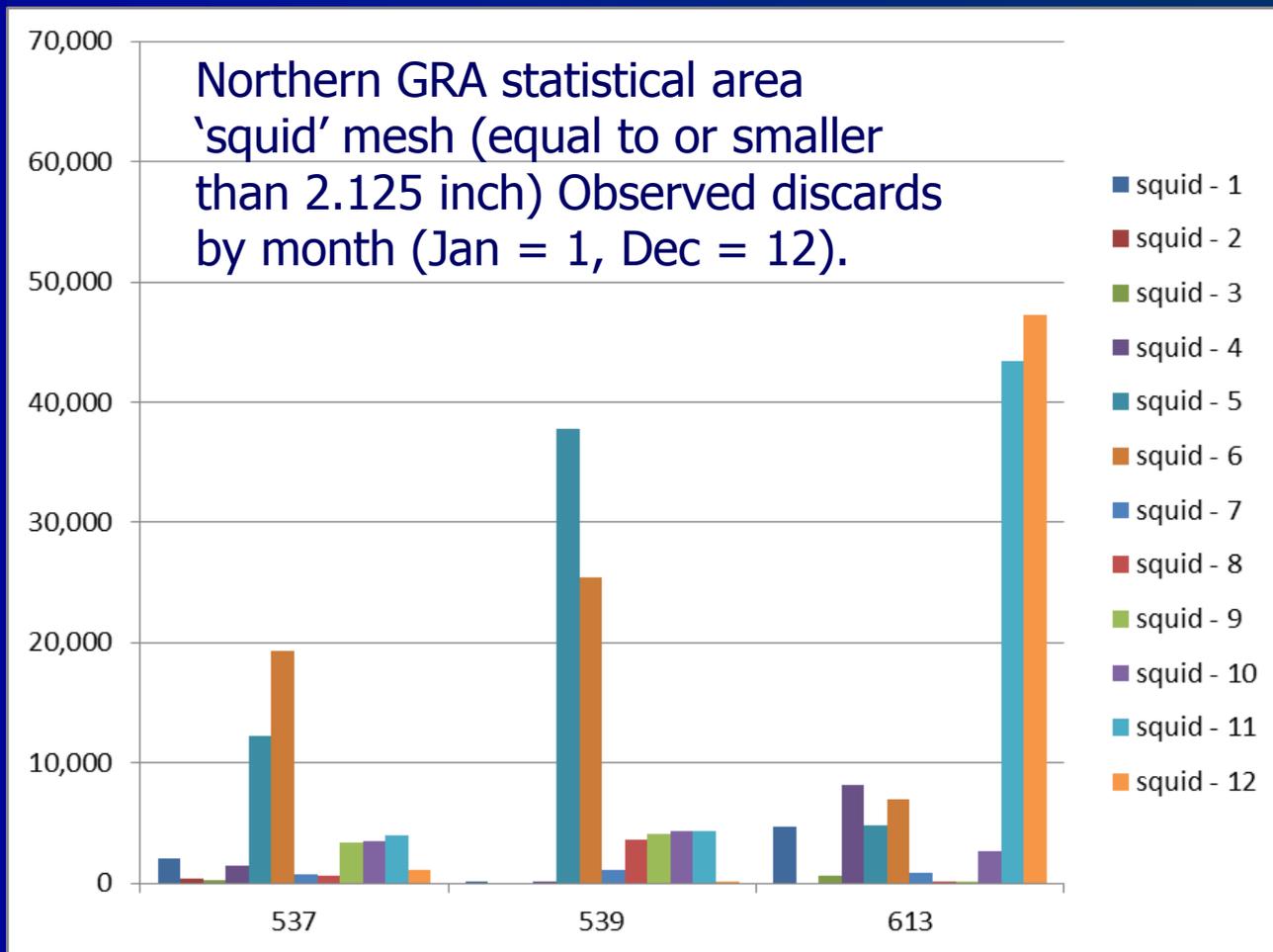
Scup: Observed Discards by Area and Mesh
 Large => 4.5/5.0; Small >2.125, < 4.5/5.0; Squid <= 2.125



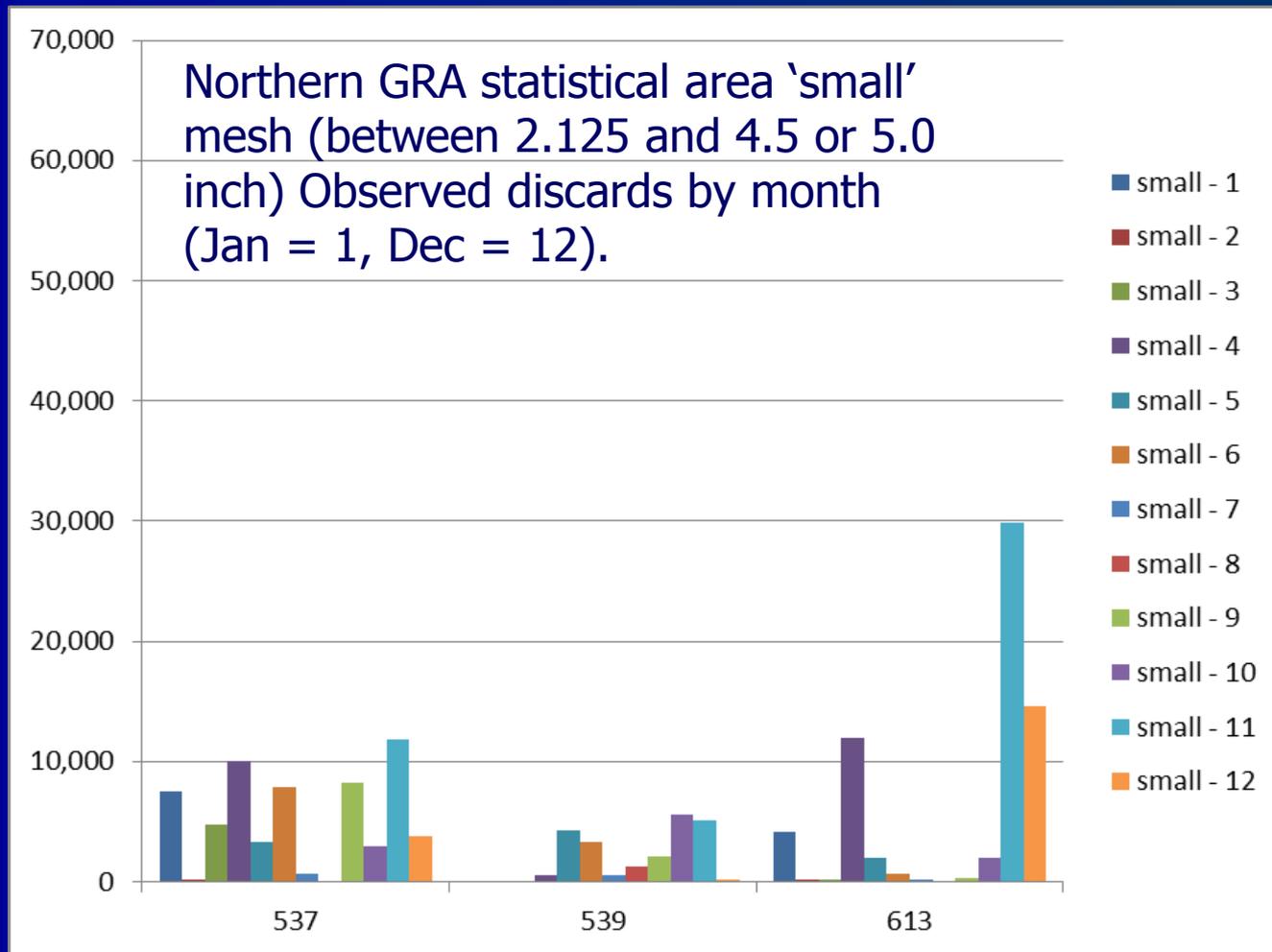
Impacts of the GRAs



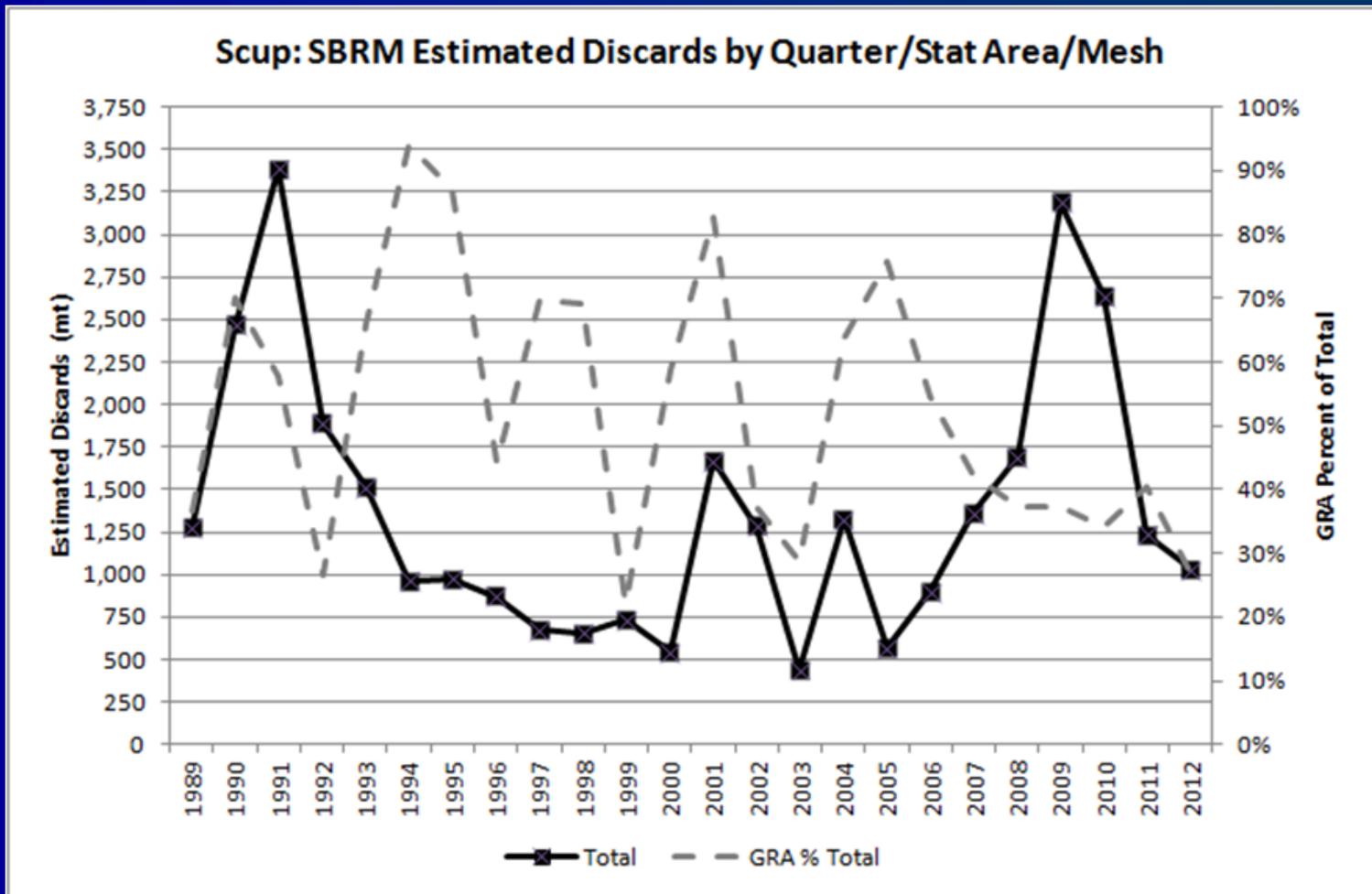
Impacts of the GRAs



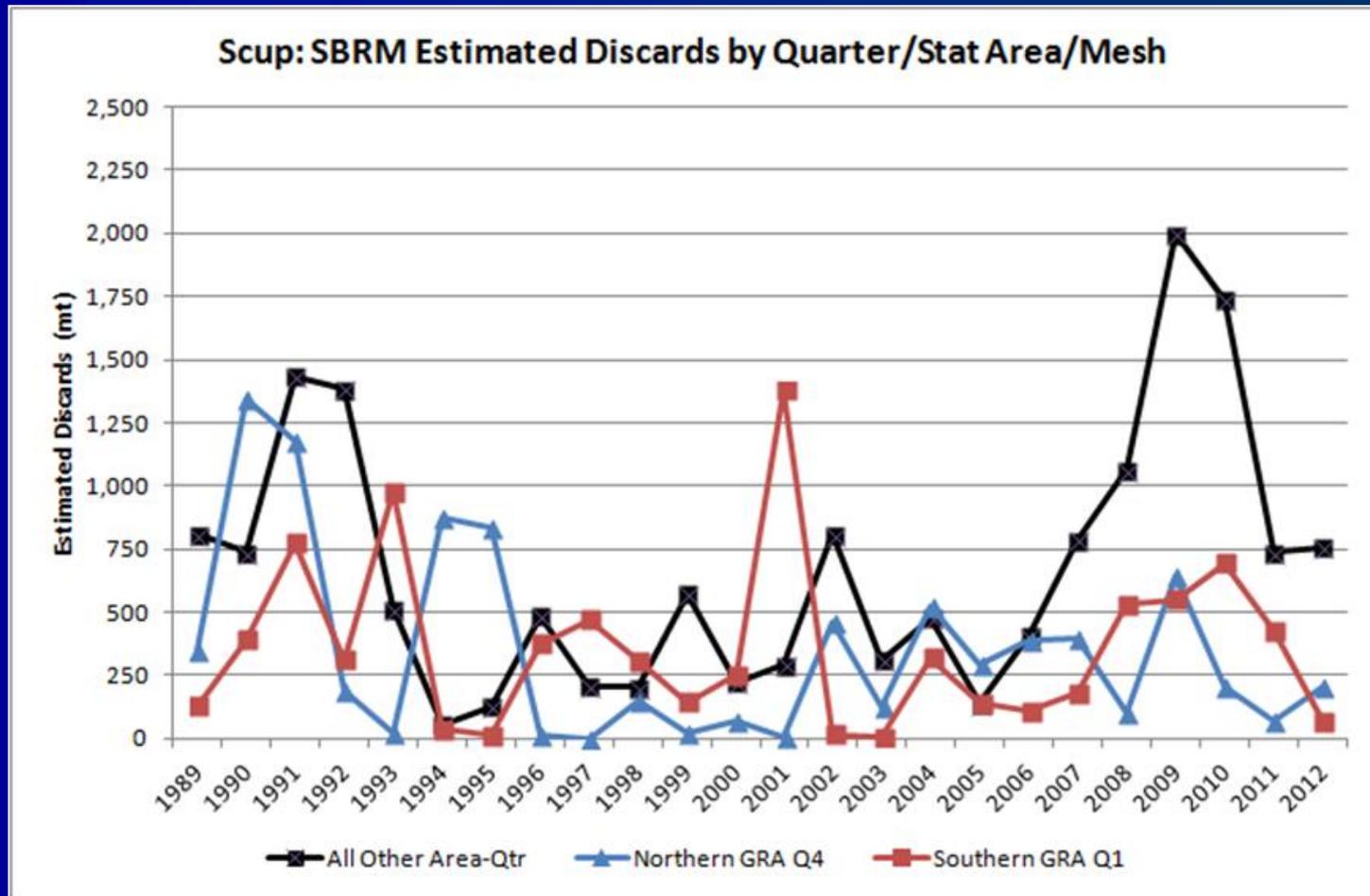
Impacts of the GRAs



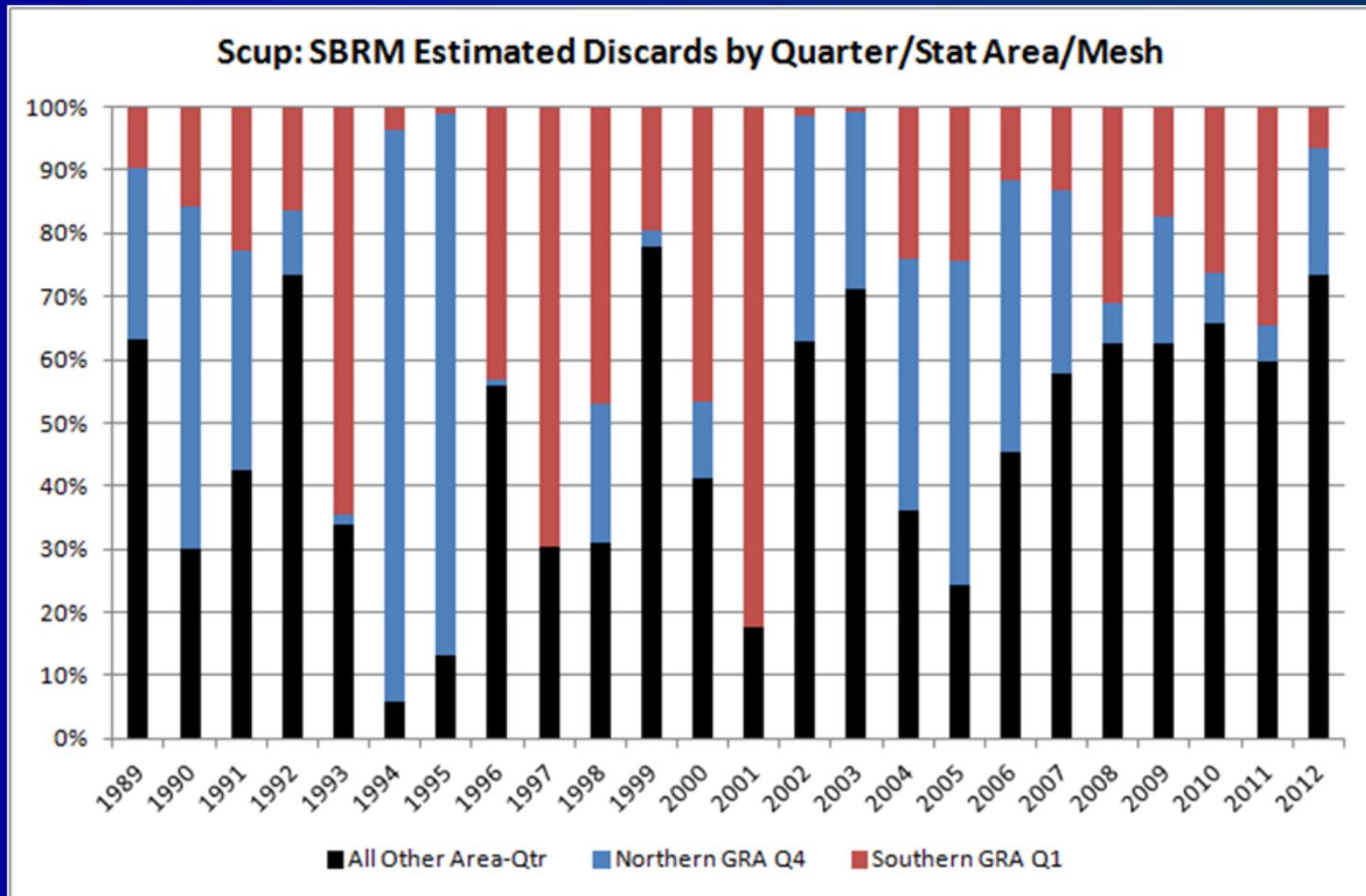
Impacts of the GRAs



Impacts of the GRAs



Impacts of the GRAs



Impacts of the GRAs

- Discards (in absolute estimate terms) have been reduced in the GRA areas and months since 2001.
- Relatively high discards have occurred recently (2009-2010) outside the GRA areas and months.
- Since 2001, 53% of the discards have occurred outside the GRAs.

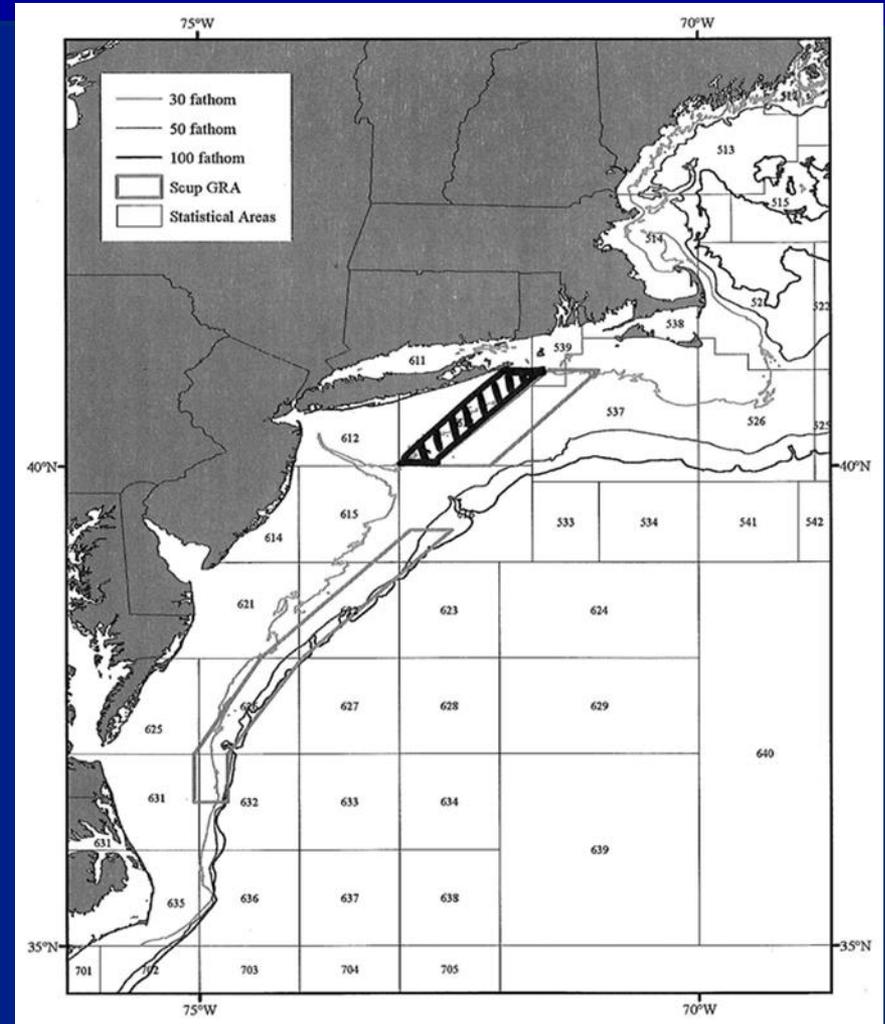
Draft Alternatives Included in Framework 8

- ❑ **1: No Action/Status Quo**
- ❑ **2: Modify the NGRA**
- ❑ **3: Modify the SGRA**
- ❑ **4: Eliminate the NGRA**
- ❑ **5: Eliminate the SGRA**



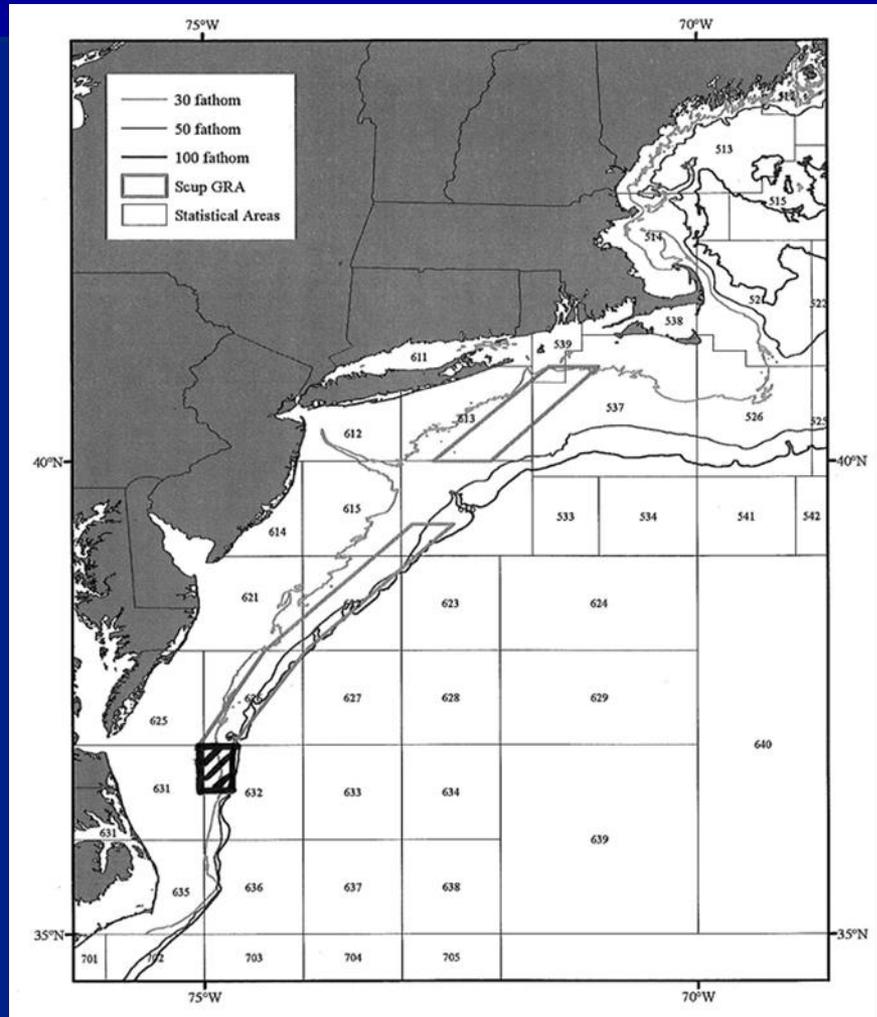
Draft Alternative 2

- **Modify the NGRA**
- **Option 2a:**
Include additional areas in stat area 613
- **Option 2b:**
Something else?



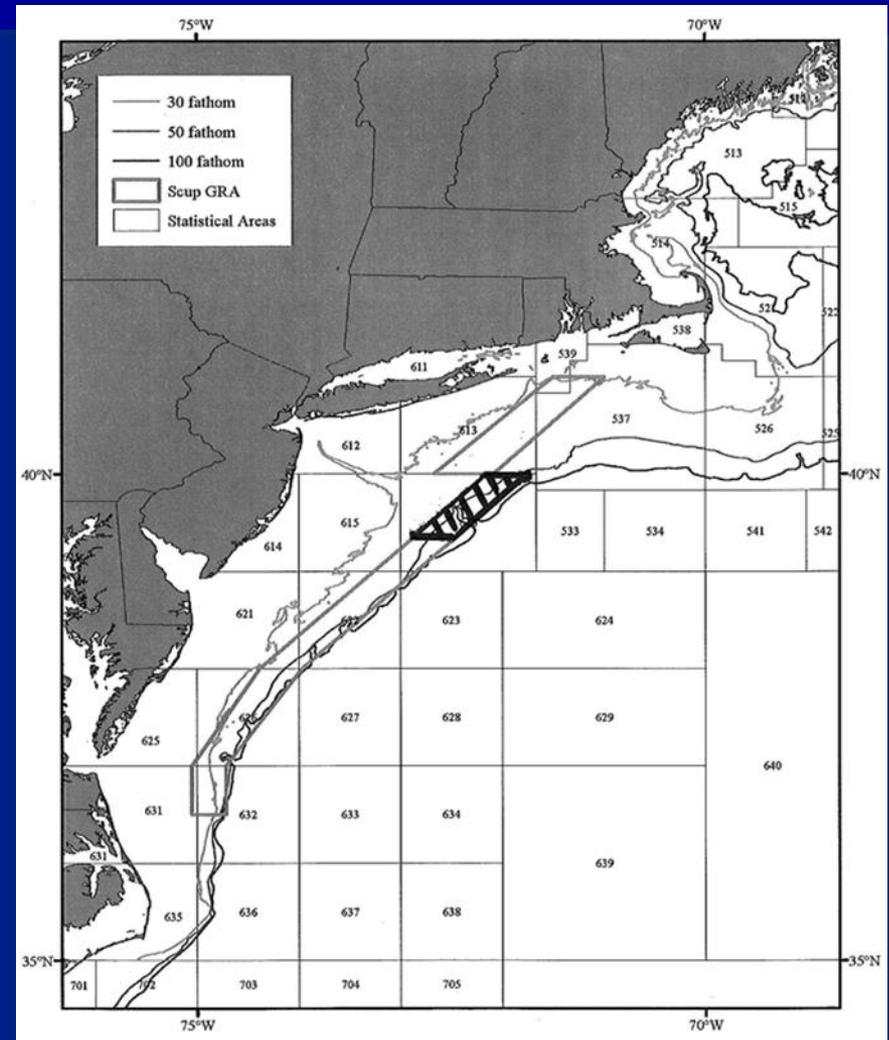
Draft Alternative 3

- Modify the SGRA
- Option 3a:
Remove stat area
632



Draft Alternative 3

- Modify the SGRA
- Option 3b:
Include additional
areas in stat area
616



Draft Alternative 3c, 4, 5

- **Modify the SGRA Option 3c:** Something else?
- **Alternative 4:** Eliminate NGRA
- **Alternative 5:** Eliminate SGRA



Next Steps

- Today is Framework Meeting One
- Council must specifically identify which alternatives they want to include (specifically!!)
- Alts. could include:
 - changes to the seaward or landward boundaries,
 - Northern or Southern boundaries, or
 - changes to the time period the GRA is in effect.

Comments

- Comment received via email about a year ago from Hank Lackner
- Suggested the eastern boundary of the Southern GRA should follow bathymetric contour as opposed to being a straight line
- Boundaries should be modified to provide access to prime squid fishing areas

Next Steps

- Alternatives?
- Build the Environmental Assessment?
- Framework Meeting Two in April?



Questions?

