ATLANTIC SURFCLAM
SPISULA SOLIDISSIMA

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (MAFMC) - ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH) PROFILE

1. Management Unit

The management unit is all Atlantic surfclams (*Spisula solidissima*) and in the Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

2. Stock Status

The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring based on the most recent stock assessment (2020). For current stock status: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/status-stocks-reports

3. Current Text Designations

Source: MAFMC. 1998. Amendment 12 to the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Fishery Management Plan. Dover, DE. Available at: www.mafmc.org

Juveniles and Adults: Throughout the substrate, to a depth of three feet below the water/sediment interface, within federal waters from the eastern edge of Georges Bank and the Gulf of Maine throughout the Atlantic EEZ, in areas that encompass the top 90% of all the ranked ten-minute squares for the area where surfclams were caught in the NEFSC [Northeast Fisheries Science Center] surfclam and ocean quahog dredge surveys. Surfclams generally occur from the beach zone to a depth of about 200 feet, but beyond about 125 feet abundance is low.

4. Current Map Designations

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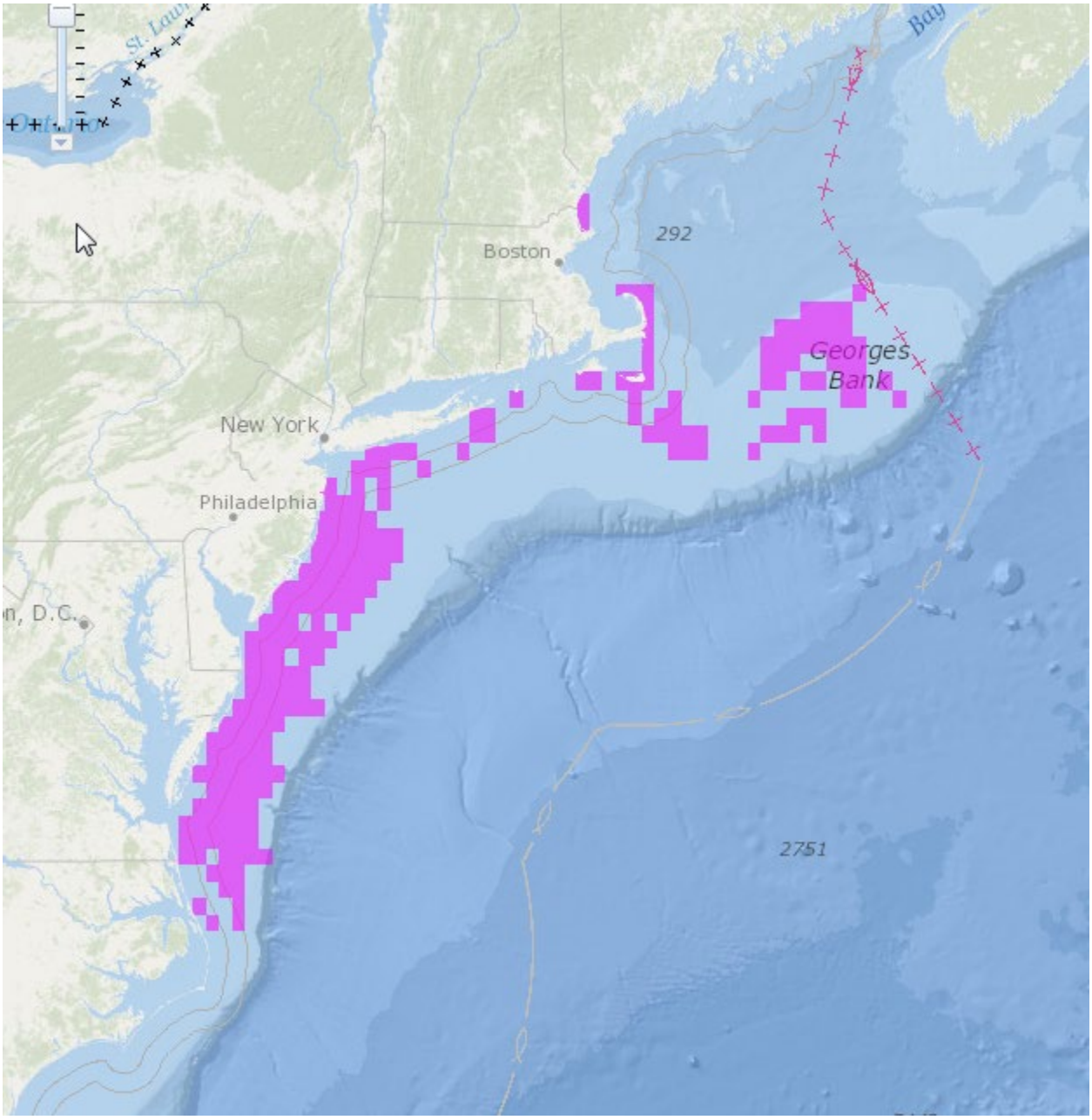
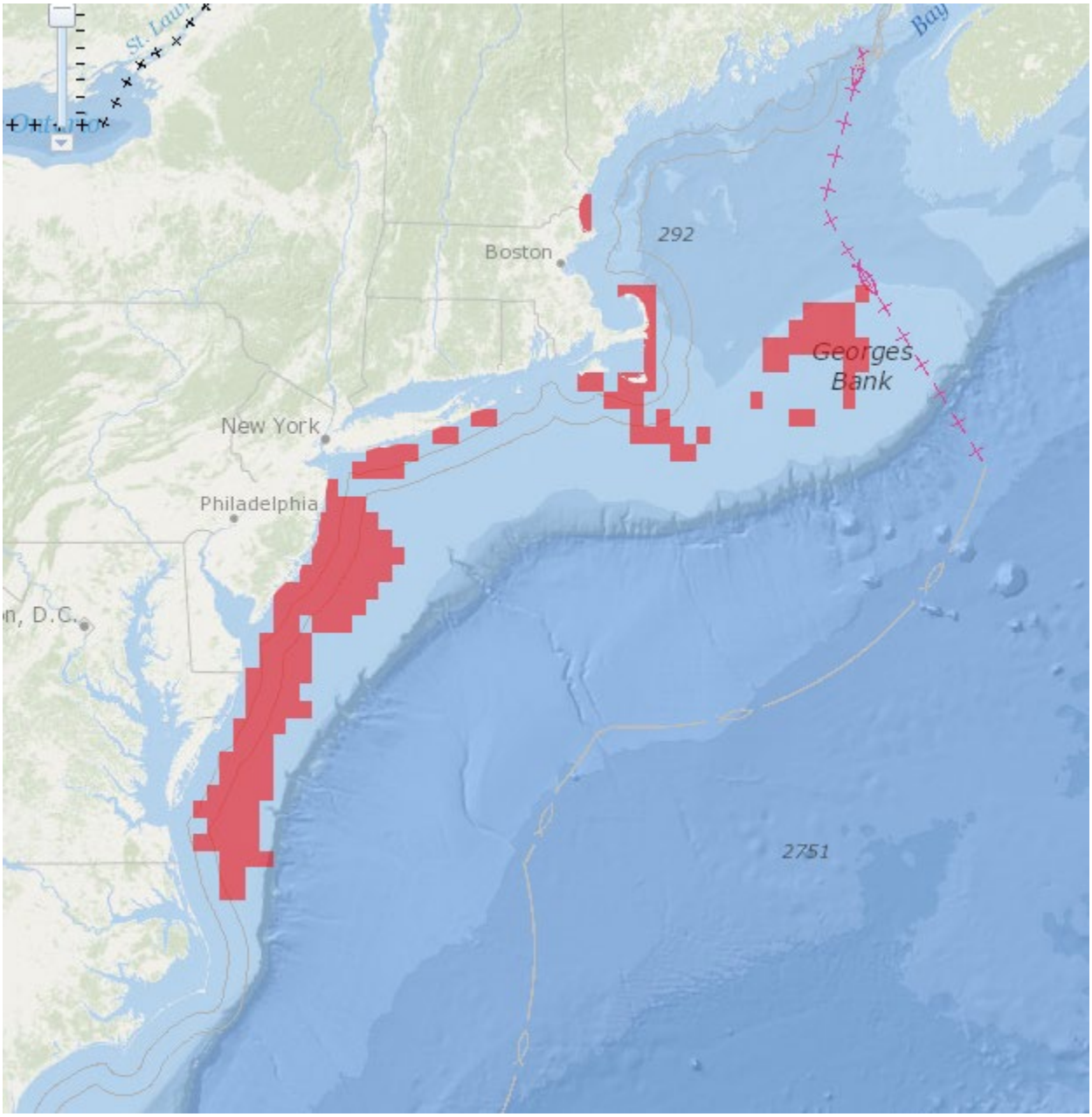
Juvenile: Areas which encompass the top 90% of the areas where juvenile surfclams were caught in the NEFSC clam dredge survey between 1965-1997.



Adults: Areas which encompass the top 90% of the areas where adult surfclams were caught in the NEFSC clam dredge survey between 1965-1997.



5. Designation and Mapping Methods

The Council has generally identified EFH using level 1 and/or level 2 data (see EFH regulations; section 7). The designations were comprised of a detailed text description and a series of maps by ten-minute square areas (TMSQ). The Mid-Atlantic EFH Technical Team, Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) scientists, and other experts developed alternatives for the Council to consider. Four alternatives were proposed and, for mapping purposes, the Council selected the alternative that used a distributional percentage (50%, 75%, 90%, or 100% of observations) of the catches by area based on which level of information was available and stock status. EFH maps were developed for each life stage and displayed the distribution and abundance data by TMSQ.

Amendment 12 to the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog FMP (1999) identified surfclam EFH by life stage. Descriptions and maps were based on information from the NEFSC clam dredge survey and EFH source documents (technical memos) developed by NEFSC staff. The Council used 90% of the TMSQ where surfclams were collected in order to be more inclusive and risk averse.

6. EFH Source Documents

Information on surfclam habitat requirements can be found in:

Cargnelli LM, Griesbach SJ, Packer DB, Weissberger E. 1999a. Essential fish habitat source document: Atlantic surfclam, *Spisula solidissima*, life history and habitat characteristics. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-NE-142. Available at: http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/habitat/efh/.

7. Other Information

EFH Legal Authorities

EFH from Magnuson Stevens Act:
http://www.fisheriesforum.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=014976d6-5bc1-f0c4-be6b-ade7c99fc932&forceDialog=0

EFH Contents of Fishery Management Plans under CFR §600.815:
https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title50-vol12/pdf/CFR-2013-title50-vol12-sec600-815.pdf

Federal agency consultation with the Secretary under CFR §600.920:
https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title50-vol12/pdf/CFR-2014-title50-vol12-sec600-920.pdf

NMFS 2006 EFH Guidance:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/op/pds/documents/03/201/03-201-15.pdf

Management and Stock Assessments

MAFMC: http://www.mafmc.org

ASMFC: http://www.asmfc.org

NEFSC Stock Assessments: http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/saw/