



Department of Fisheries Oceanography
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8 June 2009

Dear Scallop Fleet:

The southern portion of Closed Area II is about to open to scallop harvesting. We are concerned that this opening could shut down before the scallop TAC is collected because of yellowtail flounder by-catch. This has happened before in the CAII scallop exemption fisheries of 1999 and 2006.

Attached is a map with the scallop densities (red dots) we saw in our video survey that we just finished for CAII, 22nd through 29th May 2009 on the F/V *Horizon*. One scallop per station is a harvestable density; more than seven scallops per station is a high density. Last summer we conducted a large yellowtail flounder tagging study; using five commercial draggers we tagged 75,000 fish in the southern portion of CAII. The tow lengths were roughly 15 minutes. We've plotted the number of yellowtail collected per tow (blue dots) and overlaid it with the scallop distribution.

Basically, we saw that the southeast region of CAII has the highest densities of scallops and the lowest yellowtail flounder densities, divided roughly by 70 m depth (35 fathom). The yellowtail flounder data is from last summer and they could have moved, but this is the best data we have. We hope it's of use; good luck. Also if you see any tagged scallops, yellowtail flounder or skate please give us a call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Stokesbury'.

Kevin Stokesbury, PhD
Chair of DFO, SMASST, UMASSD

