

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

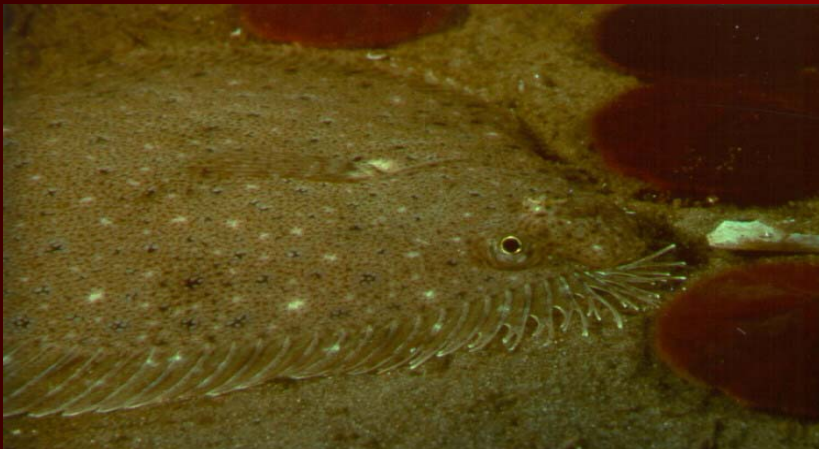
**Habitat Conservation Division
NOAA / National Marine Fisheries Service
Gloucester, Massachusetts**



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What is EFH?

The term “essential fish habitat” means those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.



Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1996)

- requires Federal action agencies to consult with NOAA Fisheries on projects that may adversely affect "Essential Fish Habitat"
- examples of action agencies
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
 - Environmental Protection Agency

EFH Consultation

- Notification by the Federal agency of the proposed action
- EFH Assessment - written assessment of the effect of the action, prepared by the Federal agency
- EFH Conservation Recommendations - recommended measures to conserve EFH, prepared by NMFS (non-binding)
- Agency Response to the Conservation Recommendations

EFH Consultation

EFH Assessment

- Describes the action
- Analyzes potential adverse effects of the action on EFH and the managed species
- The agency's conclusions regarding the effects of the action on EFH
- Level of detail appropriate to the complexity and magnitude of the potential adverse effects of the action

EFH Consultation

Potential Impacts

- Impacts to subaquatic vegetation (SAV)
- Resuspension of sediments, pollutants, nutrients
- Restrictions to migration
- Thermal impacts
- Habitat alteration
- Other

Typical EFH Conservation Recommendations

- Time-of-Year Restrictions on Dredging or In-Water Construction
- Implementation of Construction Best Management Practices
- Mitigation and/or Monitoring Requirements
- Project Design Modifications
- Project Denial



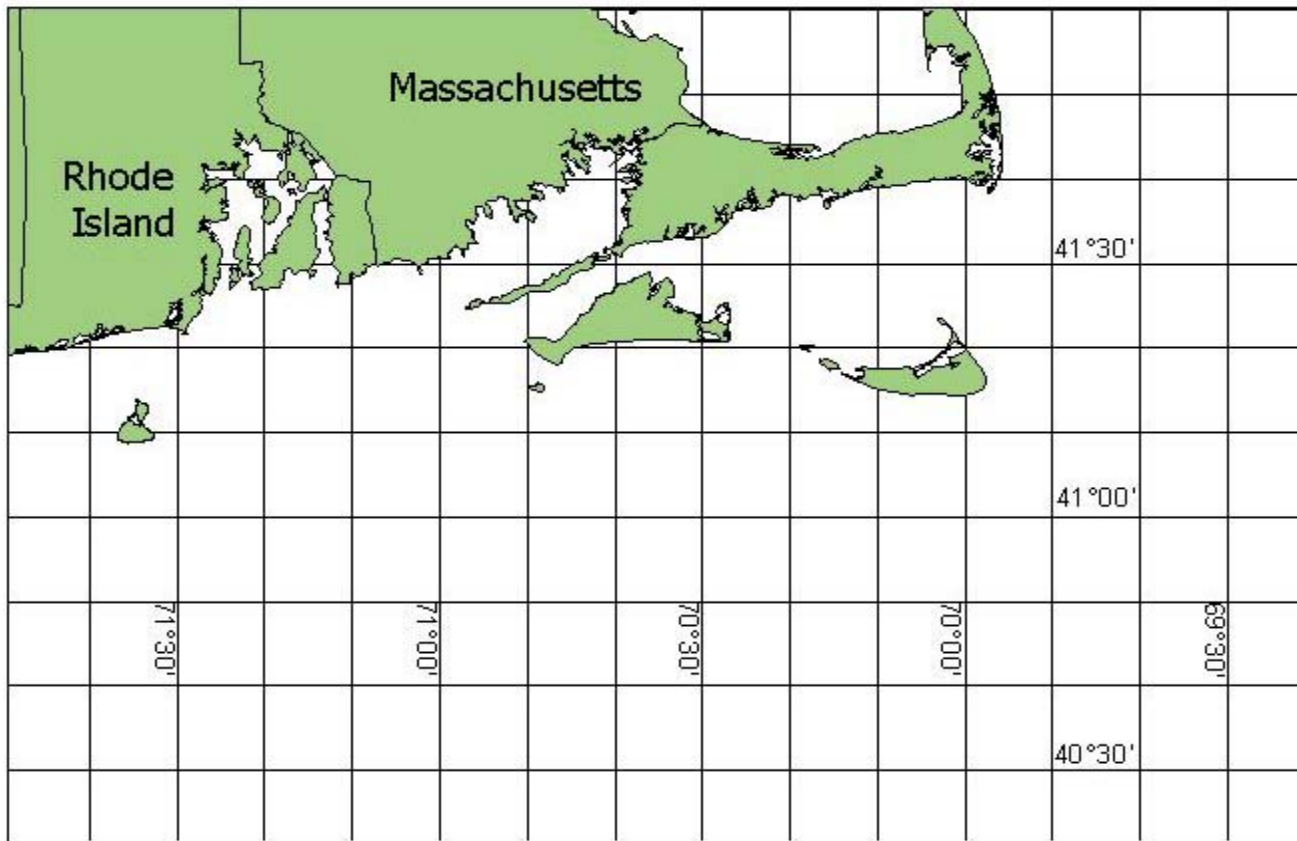
EFH Consultation

Federal Agency Response

- Detailed written response to NMFS on the conservation recommendations
- Response must be at least 10 days prior to final approval of the action
- Must include a description of the measures proposed for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating the impacts of the action
- Scientific justification provided for any disagreements over anticipated adverse effects

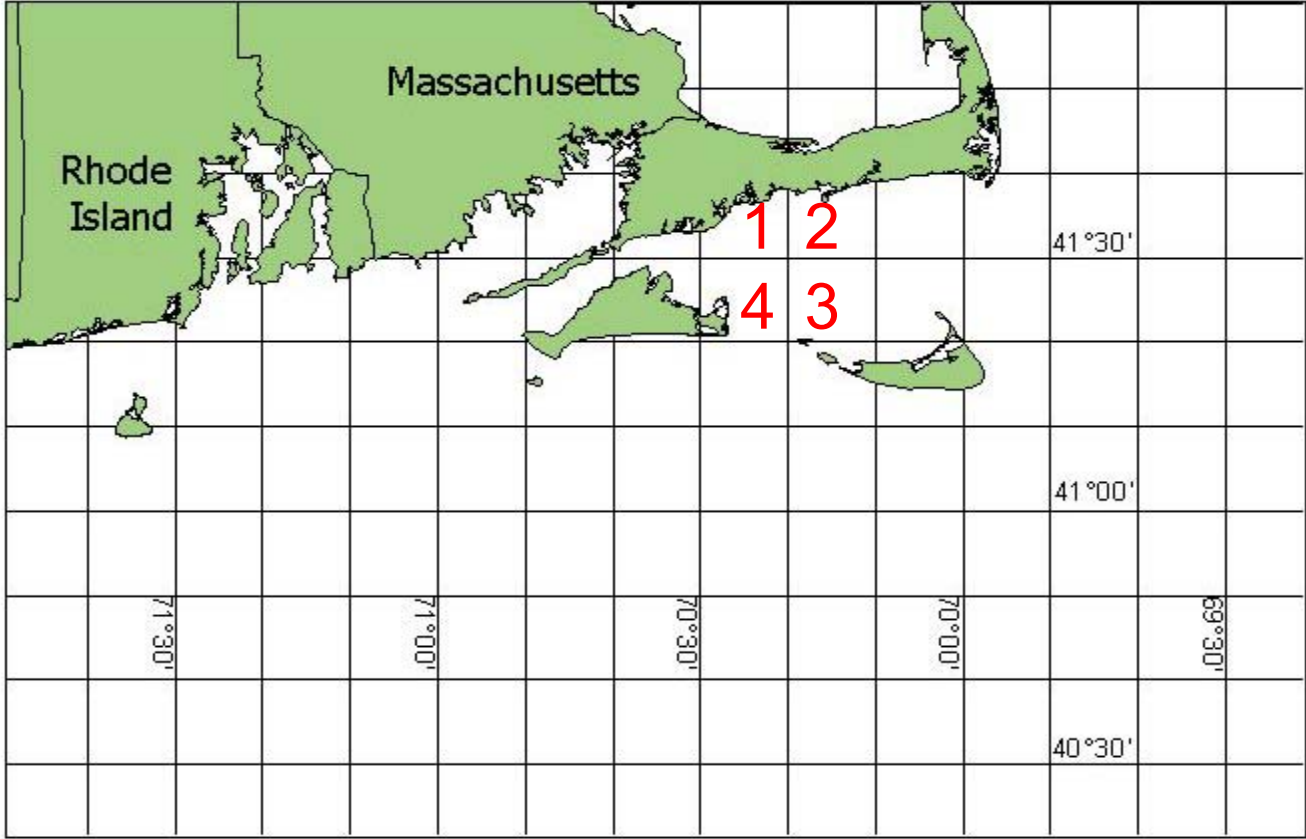
Sample EFH Consultation

Select the Area

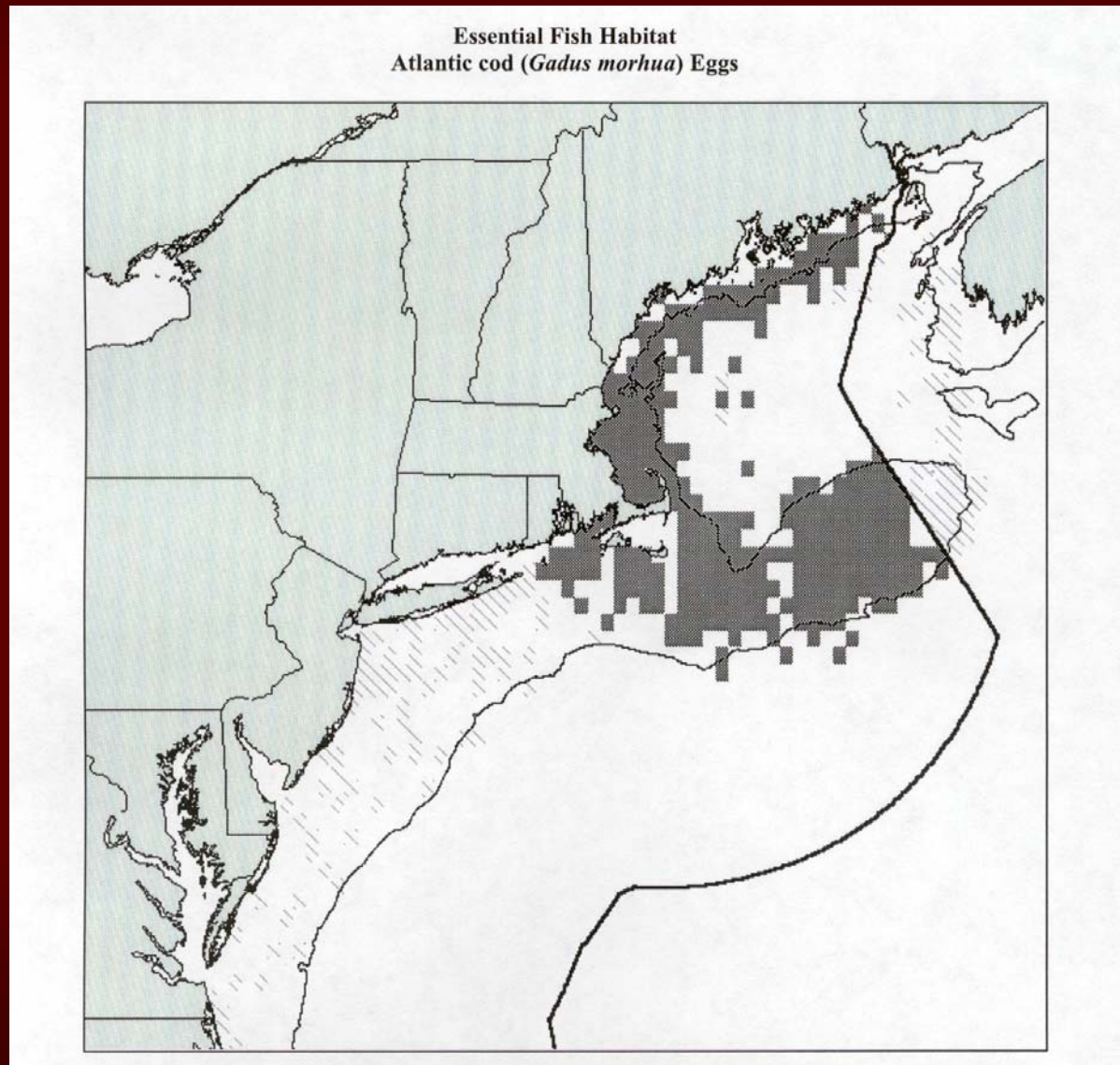


Sample EFH Consultation

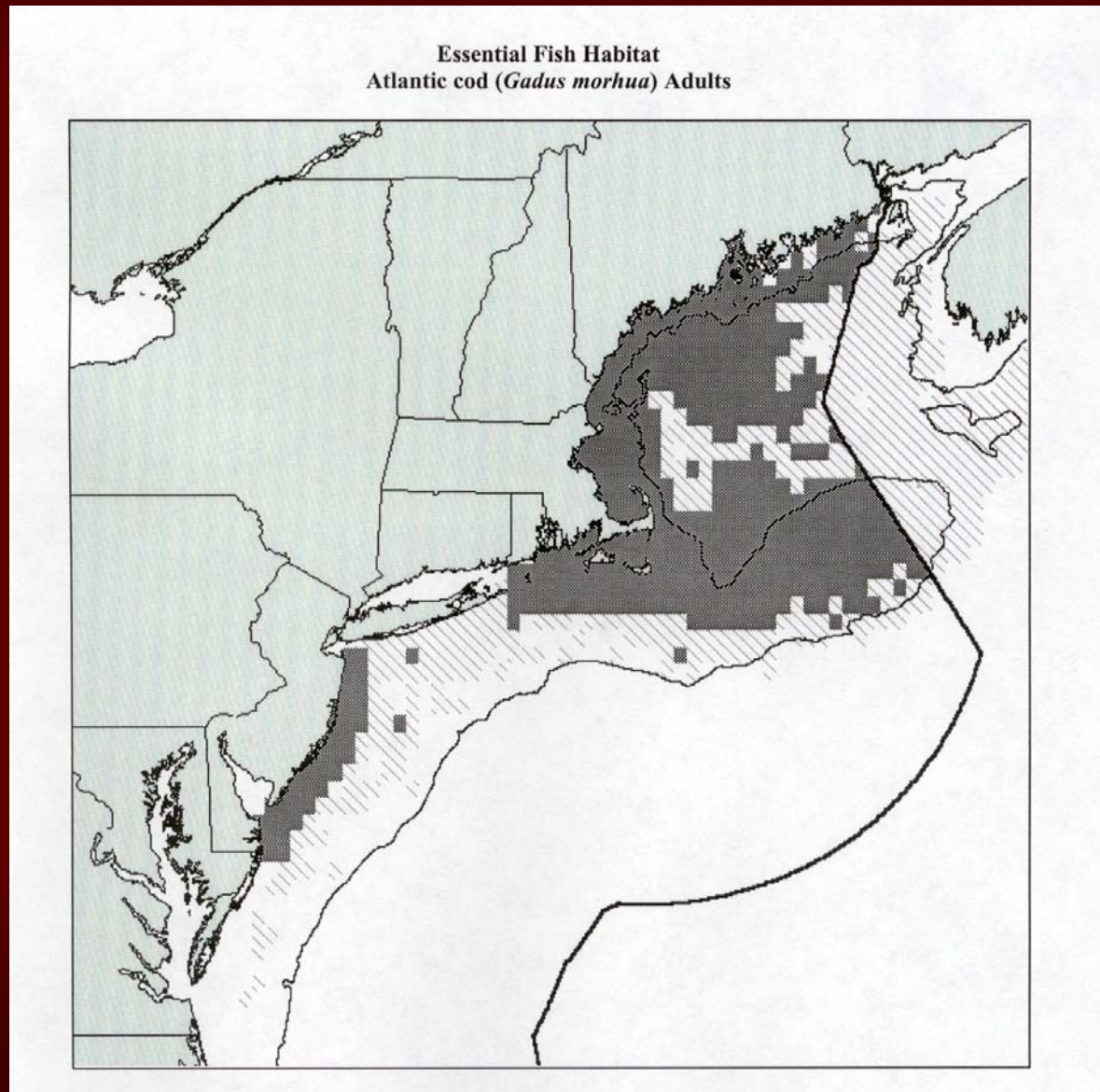
Select the Area



Sample EFH Consultation



Sample EFH Consultation



Sample EFH Consultation

EFH in Nantucket Sound

	Area	Eggs	Larvae	Juvenile	Adults
Species					
Atlantic cod	All				X
winterr flounder	All	X	X	X	X
long-finned squid	All			X	X
Atlantic butterfish	All	X	X	X	X
Atlantic mackerel	All	X	X	X	X
summer flounder	All	X	X	X	X
scup	All			X	X
black sea bass	All		X	X	X
surf clam	All			X	X
king mackerel	All	X	X	X	X
spanish mackerel	All	X	X	X	X
cobia	All	X	X	X	X
windowpane flounder	1-3				X
yellowtail flounder	3,4			X	
short-finned squid	3			X	X
blue shark	3,4				X
bluefin tuna	3,4			X	X
shortfin mako	4			X	

Available EFH Consultation Tools

Habitat Conservation Division Web Site

www.nero.nmfs.gov/ro/doc/hcd.htm

- Guide to EFH Designations**
- Guide to EFH Species**
- Guide to EFH Consultations**
 - Types of Consultations**
 - Consultation Requirements**
 - How to do an EFH Assessment**
 - Important Web Links**

