



Access to Surfclam (*Spisula solidissima*) Fishing Grounds Studied by SCeMFIS Scientists in Research Survey Cruise Southeast of Nantucket Island

August 11, 2017, Boston, MA. - The scientists of the Science Center for Marine Fisheries (SCeMFIS) recently completed a survey of the surfclam fishery area southeast of Nantucket Island to provide information regarding surfclam stock status and habitat to ensure continued resource access by local surfclam vessels. Surveys were successfully conducted in 4 days aboard the *F/V Mariette* sailing from New Bedford, MA.

Chris Shriver of Galilean Seafoods in Bristol, Rhode Island commented - *“We believe this survey will assist the federal managers of the surfclam industry to preserve traditional surfclam fishing areas and to assist in opening new areas for the vessels to harvest surfclams so we can supply the public with sustainable and healthy clam chowders and clam strips, while protecting the marine habitat.”*

Data will be reported to the SCeMFIS Industry Advisory Board at the Fall 2017 meeting in Cape May, New Jersey, with a final report by Spring 2018 and will be considered by the National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Fisheries Science Center (“NEFSC”) Survey Design Working Group at their September meeting. If necessary, reporting will be accelerated as required to provide input to the New England Fisheries Management Council (“NEFMC”) Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2 (OHA2) decision making process. Data collected from this cruise will contribute both to ongoing efforts to (1) preserve access to the local resource by the small boat surfclam fishermen, and (2) ensure a well informed and scientifically based decision by the NEFMC concerning delineation of Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) area closures.



SCeMFIS Scientists Survey Surfclams (*Spisula solidissima*) off Nantucket.

SCeMFiS scientific projects are unique in that they respond directly to the scientific needs of the fisheries managers in collaboration with the commercial fishing industry while upholding strict quality scientific standards and procedures. SCeMFiS partnerships include academia, government agencies, non-profits, trade organizations, and industry members. The [Virginia Institute of Marine Science](#) (VIMS), the [University of Southern Mississippi](#) (USM) are lead academic institutions and SCeMfiS is part of the National Science Foundation's Industry/University Cooperative Research Center program. Other participating partners include Atlantic Capes Fisheries, Bumble Bee Seafoods Incorporated, Garden State Seafood Association, Intershell International Corporation, LaMonica Fine Foods, Lund's Fisheries Incorporated, National Fisheries Institute Clam Committee, National Fisheries Institute Scientific Monitoring Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Omega Protein, Seafreeze Limited, Sea Watch International, Surfside Seafood Products, and The Town Dock.



SCeMFiS scientists on the fishing vessel Mariette.



Research scientists and fishing crew at the conclusion of the survey

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