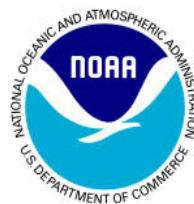


# Regulatory Amendment 16

to the Fishery Management Plan for the  
Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region



## Changes to the Seasonal Closure for the Black Sea Bass Pot Sector



**Including an Environmental Impact Statement**

**Draft**

**October 2014**

A publication of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council pursuant to  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Award Number FNA10NMF4410012

## Abbreviations and Acronyms Used in the FMP

<b>ABC</b>	acceptable biological catch	<b>FMP</b>	fishery management plan
<b>ACL</b>	annual catch limits	<b>FMU</b>	fishery management unit
<b>AM</b>	accountability measures	<b>M</b>	natural mortality rate
<b>ACT</b>	annual catch target	<b>MARMAP</b>	Marine Resources Monitoring Assessment and Prediction Program
<b>B</b>	a measure of stock biomass in either weight or other appropriate unit	<b>MFMT</b>	maximum fishing mortality threshold
<b>B<sub>MSY</sub></b>	the stock biomass expected to exist under equilibrium conditions when fishing at $F_{MSY}$	<b>MMPA</b>	Marine Mammal Protection Act
<b>B<sub>OY</sub></b>	the stock biomass expected to exist under equilibrium conditions when fishing at $F_{OY}$	<b>MRFSS</b>	Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey
<b>B<sub>CURR</sub></b>	The current stock biomass	<b>MRIP</b>	Marine Recreational Information Program
<b>CPUE</b>	catch per unit effort	<b>MSFCMA</b>	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
<b>DEIS</b>	draft environmental impact statement	<b>MSST</b>	minimum stock size threshold
<b>EA</b>	environmental assessment	<b>MSY</b>	maximum sustainable yield
<b>EEZ</b>	exclusive economic zone	<b>NEPA</b>	National Environmental Policy Act
<b>EFH</b>	essential fish habitat	<b>NMFS</b>	National Marine Fisheries Service
<b>F</b>	a measure of the instantaneous rate of fishing mortality	<b>NOAA</b>	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>F<sub>30%SPR</sub></b>	fishing mortality that will produce a static SPR = 30%	<b>OFL</b>	overfishing limit
<b>F<sub>CURR</sub></b>	the current instantaneous rate of fishing mortality	<b>OY</b>	optimum yield
<b>F<sub>MSY</sub></b>	the rate of fishing mortality expected to achieve MSY under equilibrium conditions and a corresponding biomass of $B_{MSY}$	<b>RIR</b>	regulatory impact review
<b>F<sub>OY</sub></b>	the rate of fishing mortality expected to achieve OY under equilibrium conditions and a corresponding biomass of $B_{OY}$	<b>SAFMC</b>	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
<b>FEIS</b>	final environmental impact statement	<b>SEDAR</b>	Southeast Data Assessment and Review
		<b>SEFSC</b>	Southeast Fisheries Science Center
		<b>SERO</b>	Southeast Regional Office
		<b>SIA</b>	social impact assessment
		<b>SPR</b>	spawning potential ratio
		<b>SSC</b>	Scientific and Statistical Committee

## **Regulatory Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region with an Environmental Impact Statement**

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<b>Proposed action:</b>	Reconsider the annual November 1 through April 30 prohibition on the use of black sea bass pot gear
<b>Lead agency:</b>	FMP Amendment – South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Environmental Impact Statement – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Southeast Regional Office
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# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

### 1.1 What Actions Are Being Proposed?

Fishery managers are reconsidering the annual prohibition on the use of commercial black sea bass pot gear from November 1 through April 30.

### 1.2 Who is Proposing the Actions?

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is proposing the action. The Council develops the regulatory amendment and submits it to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) who publishes a rule to implement the regulatory amendment on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce. NMFS is an agency in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

### *South Atlantic Fishery Management Council*

- Responsible for conservation and management of fish stocks
- Consists of 13 voting members: 8 appointed by the Secretary of Commerce, 1 representative from each of the 4 South Atlantic states, the Southeast Regional Director of NMFS; and 4 non-voting members
- Responsible for developing fishery management plans and amendments under the Magnuson-Stevens Act and recommends actions to NMFS for implementation
- Management area is from 3 to 200 miles off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and east Florida through Key West with the exception of Mackerel which is from New York to Florida, and Dolphin-Wahoo, which is from Maine to Florida



### 1.3 Why is the Council Considering Action?/Purpose & Need

In 2013, a stock assessment concluded that the black sea bass stock in the South Atlantic is not undergoing overfishing, is not overfished, and is rebuilt. In response to the stock assessment, the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), at their April 2013 meeting, recommended an increase to the acceptable biological catch (ABC) for black sea bass. The increase in the ABC allowed the commercial and recreational annual catch limits (ACL) to increase. The Council and NMFS, through Regulatory Amendment 19 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Snapper Grouper FMP) (SAFMC 2013), modified the ABC, ACLs, recreational annual catch target (ACT), and optimum yield (OY) for the black sea bass stock.

The increase to the commercial ACL could have extended fishing activity with black sea bass pot gear past November 1, the onset of right whale calving season in the South Atlantic and migration of large Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed whales. Because black sea bass pot gear could potentially be used past November 1, the Council and NMFS implemented a prohibition on the use of black sea bass pot gear from November 1 through April 30 each year, beginning in 2013 to protect large whales from risk of entanglement.

Without the prohibition on the use of black sea bass pots during the large whale migration and right whale calving season, a re-initiation of formal consultation for the snapper grouper fishery probably would have been triggered under the ESA. The consultation would have required development of a biological opinion to perform the additional analyses to evaluate the effects of black sea bass pot gear on ESA listed species. Those analyses would not have been

completed in time to allow the ACL increases to be implemented for the 2013-2014 fishing season, which began on June 1. The black sea bass pot prohibition was a precautionary step taken by the Council and NMFS to allow the black sea bass ACL to increase in the 2013-2014 fishing year, while preventing entanglements with ESA-listed whales until a comprehensive biological impact analysis could be completed.

#### ***Purpose for Action***

The purpose of Regulatory Amendment 16 is to reconsider the annual November 1 through April 30 prohibition on the use of black sea bass pot gear.

#### ***Need for Action***

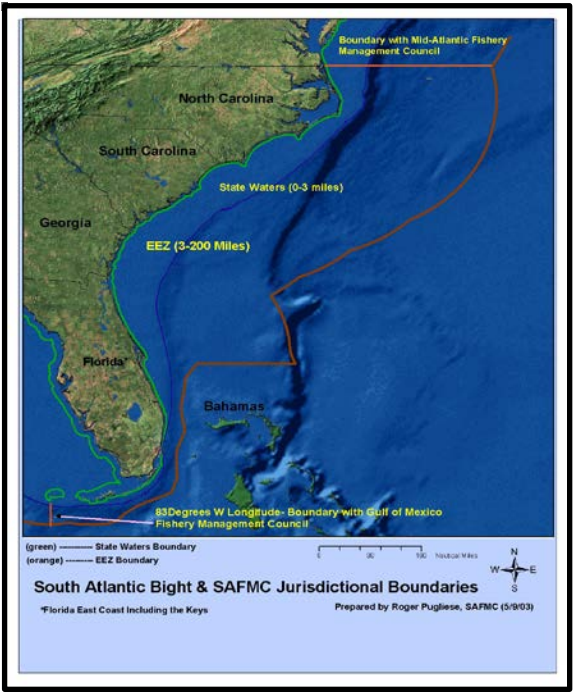
The need for the amendment is to increase socio-economic benefits to black sea bass pot endorsement holders while maintaining protection for ESA-listed whales in the South Atlantic region.

Through Regulatory Amendment 16, the Council and NMFS are reconsidering the annual November 1 through April 30 prohibition on the use of black sea bass pot gear. Fishery managers are considering adjustments to both the geographical and temporal boundaries of the closure in order to improve socio-economic benefits to black sea bass pot endorsement holders while maintaining protection for ESA-listed whales in the South Atlantic region. During the scoping process for Regulatory Amendment 16, fishermen reported that fishing for black sea bass during winter months is important to them and claim that the fish migrate southward and are generally found closer to shore making them easier to harvest. Fishermen have also reported this time period is important

due to the coloration of the fish. Fish tend to be a lot darker during winter months, which commands a higher price on the market.

### 1.4 Where is the Management Area?

Management of the federal snapper grouper fishery located off the southeastern United States (South Atlantic) in the 3-200 nautical miles U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone is conducted under the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 1983). The northern limit of the management of black sea bass by the Council is 35°15.9' N. lat., the latitude of Cape Hatteras Light, North Carolina (**Figure 1.4.1**). Black sea bass is one of 59 fish managed by the Council under the Snapper Grouper FMP.



**Figure 1.4.1.** Jurisdictional boundaries of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. (UPDATE MAP TO SHOW BSB JURISDICTION)

### 1.5 What is the Stock Status of Black Sea Bass in the South Atlantic Region?

The black sea bass stock is not undergoing overfishing, is not overfished, and is rebuilt (**Table 1.5.1**) (SEDAR 25 Update 2013). **Section 3.2.2** includes a detailed description of the stock assessment and results. The stock assessment update was conducted in early 2013, with data through 2012, through the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) process. Most of the data sources in this assessment were updated with the two additional years of observations available since the benchmark assessment SEDAR 25 (2011). The Council’s SSC met to review the stock assessment in April 2013 and determined it was adequate and suitable to inform management decisions. The actions and alternatives in Regulatory Amendment 19 (SAFMC 2013) to increase the ACL were based on the results of this recent stock assessment update for black sea bass and the SSC’s recommendation

**Table 1.5.1.** Stock status of black sea bass based on the SEDAR 25 Update 2013 assessment.

Status	SEDAR 25 Update 2013 (2012 most recent data)
<b>Overfishing</b> ( $F_{CURR}/MFMT$ value)	No (0.659)
<b>Overfished</b> ( $SSB_{CURR}/MSST$ value)	No (1.66)
<b>Rebuilt</b> ( $SSB_{CURR}/SSB_{MSY}$ value)	Yes (1.03)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <math>F_{CURR} &gt; MFMT</math>, then undergoing overfishing. The higher the number, the greater degree of overfishing.</li> <li>• If <math>SSB_{CURR} &lt; MSST</math>, then overfished. The lower the number, the greater degree of overfished.</li> <li>• If <math>SSB_{CURR} &gt; SSB_{MSY}</math>, then the stock is rebuilt.</li> </ul>	

## 1.6 What Regulations Have the Council and NMFS Implemented Concerning Black Sea Bass in the South Atlantic Region?

Amendment 13C to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2006) phased-in quota/total allowable catch reductions over 3 years to end overfishing, changed the fishing year from the calendar year to June 1 through May 31, required use of at least 2 inch (") mesh for the entire back panel of pots, required that pots be removed from the water when the commercial quota is met, increased the recreational minimum size limit from 10" total length (TL) to 11" TL in year 1 and 12" TL in year 2 onwards, and reduced the recreational bag limit from 20 to 15 per person per day.

Amendment 15A to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2008a) updated black sea bass management reference points and modified the rebuilding strategy. Amendment 15A to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2008a) established formulas for defining the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for black sea bass. MSY equals the yield produced by  $F_{MSY}$  when the stock is at equilibrium. MSY and  $F_{MSY}$  are defined by the most recent SEDAR assessment.

Amendment 17B to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2010b) established ACLs and AMs for black sea bass and other snapper grouper species that were undergoing overfishing at the time.

Regulatory Amendment 9 to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2011a) reduced the recreational bag limit from 15 to 5 per person per day.

The Comprehensive ACL Amendment (SAFMC 2011c) includes ACLs and AMs for federally managed species not undergoing overfishing in four FMPs (Snapper Grouper, Dolphin Wahoo, Golden Crab, and *Sargassum*).

The Comprehensive ACL Amendment also established an ABC control rule.

Amendment 18A to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 2012a) changed the definition of OY from the average yield associated with fishing at 75% of  $F_{MSY}$  when the stock is at equilibrium to a formula setting  $ACL = ABC = OY$ . Magnuson-Stevens Act national standard 1 establishes the relationship between conservation and management measures, preventing overfishing, and achieving OY from each stock complex, or fishery. Under this formula, the ACL/OY would be based on the ABC for black sea bass from the most recent SEDAR assessment, which takes into consideration scientific uncertainty to ensure catches are maintained below the MSY/overfishing limit (OFL). Amendment 18A (SAFMC 2012a) also modified the rebuilding strategy, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs; limited participation in the black sea bass pot sector (32 endorsements/vessels); limited pots to 35 per vessel; required that pots be brought back to shore after each trip; modified AMs; established a 1,000 pounds gutted weight (lbs gw) commercial trip limit; increased the recreational minimum size limit from 12" to 13" TL; and increased the commercial minimum size limit from 10" to 11" TL.

Regulatory Amendment 19 (SAFMC 2013) made adjustments to the ACLs (including sector ACLs), recreational ACT, and optimum yield for black sea bass based on the ABC recommendation of the SSC and established an annual prohibition on the use of black sea bass pots from November 1 through April 30 to minimize the probability of interactions between pot gear and ESA-listed whales during large whale migrations and right whale calving season off the southeastern coast. A Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) stock assessment update for black sea bass was completed in 2013, and suggested the ACL for this species could be increased based upon the new ABC levels recommended by the SSC. The

stock assessment update indicated black sea bass is no longer undergoing overfishing, is not overfished, and the stock is rebuilt. Based on the outcome of the stock assessment update for black sea bass, the SSC applied the approved ABC control rule to black sea bass, revised P\* to be 40%, and recommended new ABC values for 2013-2015.

For a detailed history of management of the snapper grouper fishery, please refer to **Appendix B**.

### **1.6.1. Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan**

In addition to the Council regulations, the commercial black sea bass trap/pot fishery must adhere to regulations implemented under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP). The ALWTRP seeks to reduce serious injury to and/or mortality of large whales due to incidental entanglement in U.S. commercial fishing gear. Since its implementation in 1997, NMFS has modified the ALWTRP on several occasions to address the risk of entanglement in gear employed by gillnet and trap/pot fisheries. Although the plan focuses on right, humpback, and fin whales, its implementation also benefits minke whales. The ALWTRP consists of restrictions on where and how gear can be set; research into whale

populations, whale behavior, and fishing gear; outreach to inform fishermen of the entanglement problem and to seek their help in understanding and solving the problem; and a program to disentangle whales that do get caught in gear.

ALWTRP trap/pot gear measures that apply to the southern commercial black sea bass trap/pot fishery are listed in **Table 1.6.1** and the times and areas where the restrictions apply in the South Atlantic are illustrated in **Figure 1.6.1**. These measures would remain in place regardless of any actions implemented through Regulatory Amendment 16.

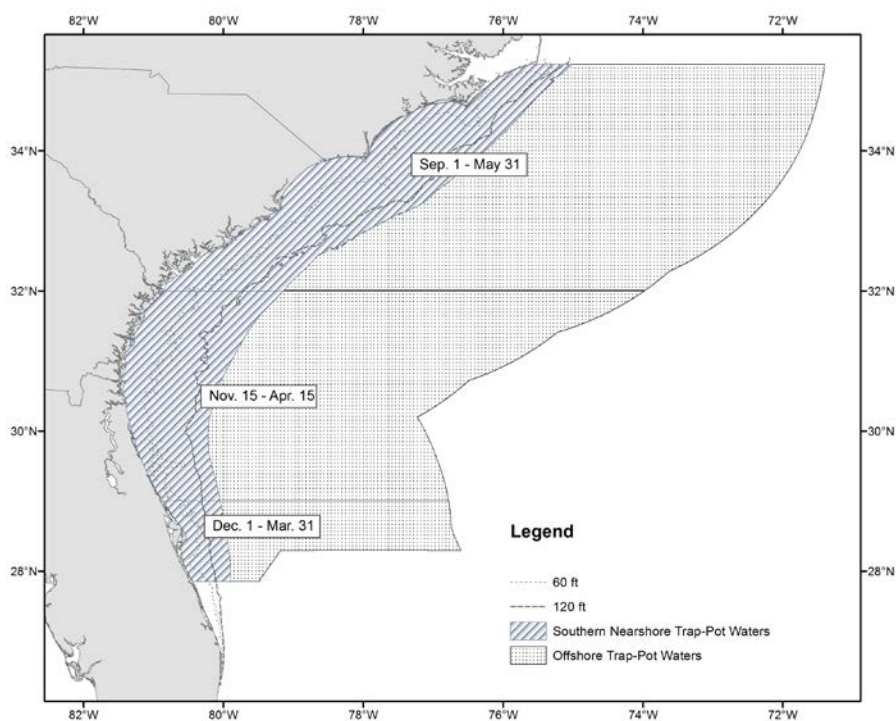


**Table 1.6.1.** ALWTRP measures that are applicable to the commercial black sea bass trap/pot fishery.

Area	Requirements
<b>Offshore Trap/Pot Waters</b>	<b>Year-round:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No buoy line floating at the surface.</li> <li>No wet storage of gear (gear must be hauled <math>\leq 30</math> days).</li> <li>Gear marking (color = black; 4in in length)</li> <li>Weak links* <math>\leq 1,500</math> lbs on floats and/or weights</li> <li>All ground lines must be made of sinking line.</li> </ul>
<b>Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters</b>	<b>Year-round:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No buoy line floating at the surface.</li> <li>No wet storage of gear (gear must be hauled <math>\leq 30</math> days).</li> <li>Gear marking (color = orange; 4in in length)</li> <li>Weak links* <math>\leq 600</math> lbs on floats and/or weights</li> <li>All ground lines must be made of sinking line.</li> </ul>

\* Weak links must be chosen from the list of NMFS approved gear.

Source: 50 CFR part 229.32, available online at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/whaletrp/>.



**Figure 1.6.1.** Times and areas where ALWTRP measures are in effect for the southern commercial black sea bass trap/pot fishery (only the SAFMC's BSB management area depicted).

## Chapter 2. Proposed Action and Alternatives

### Action 1. Modify the annual November 1 through April 30 prohibition on the use of black sea bass pot gear

#### 2.1 Alternatives

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Retention, possession, and fishing for black sea bass is prohibited using black sea bass pot gear, annually, from November 1 through April 30.

The following provisions currently exist that may reduce entanglements of whales listed under the Endangered Species Act. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council does not intend to change these provisions through this amendment.

Amendment 18A to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan of the South Atlantic Region (SAFMC 2012a):

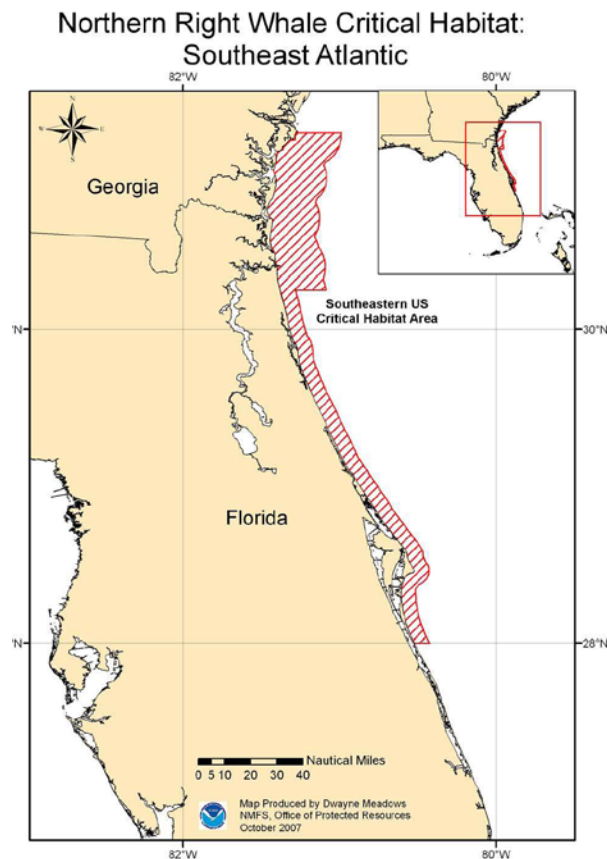
- Established an endorsement program that capped the number of vessels utilizing pot gear at 32;
- Limited the number of pots per vessel to 35;
- Required that pots be brought back to shore after each trip;
- Established a commercial trip limit of 1,000 lbs gw;

See **Table 1.6.1** for measures mandated through the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan.

**Alternative 2.** Remove the annual November 1 through April 30 prohibition on the retention, possession, and fishing for black sea bass using black sea bass pot gear.

**Alternative 3.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to the area currently designated as North Atlantic right whale critical habitat (**Figure 2.1.1**). North Atlantic right whale critical habitat encompasses waters between 31° 15'N, (approximately the mouth of the Altamaha River, Georgia) and 30° 15'N (approximately Jacksonville, Florida) from the shoreline out to 15 nautical miles offshore; and the waters between 30° 15'N and 28° 00'N, (approximately Sebastian Inlet, Florida) from the shoreline out to 5 nautical miles. The closure applies to the area annually from November 15 through April 15.

Note: This area represents North Atlantic right whale critical habitat in the South Atlantic region designated on June 3, 1994. The map below provides location of the critical habitat boundary. The critical habitat designation did not provide waypoints for the boundary. The boundary would not automatically change if the boundary for the right whale critical habitat were to change.



**Figure 2.1.1.** Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 3.

**Alternative 4.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to waters inshore of points 1-15 listed below (**Table 2.1.1**); approximately Ponce Inlet, Florida, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina (**Figure 2.1.2**). The closure applies to the area annually from November 1 through April 30.

Note: This area likely represents North Atlantic right whale calving habitat. The area identified from Cape Fear, North Carolina, southward to 29°N (approximately Ponce Inlet, Florida) is based on model outputs (i.e., Garrison 2007, Keller et al. 2012, Good 2008). The area from Cape Fear, North Carolina, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, is an extrapolation of those model outputs and based on sea surface temperatures and bathymetry.

**Table 2.1.1.** Eastern boundary coordinates for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 4.

Point	N Latitude	W Longitude
1	35°15.19' N	Shoreline
2	35°15.19'	75°12'
3	34°51'	75°45'
4	34°21'	76°18'
5	34°21' N	76°45'
6	34°12'	77°21'
7	33°37'	77°47'
8	33°28'	78°33'
9	32°59'	78°50'
10	32°17'	79°53'
11	31°31'	80°33'
12	30°43'	80°49'
13	30°30'	81°01'
14	29°45'	81°01'
15	29°00'	Shoreline

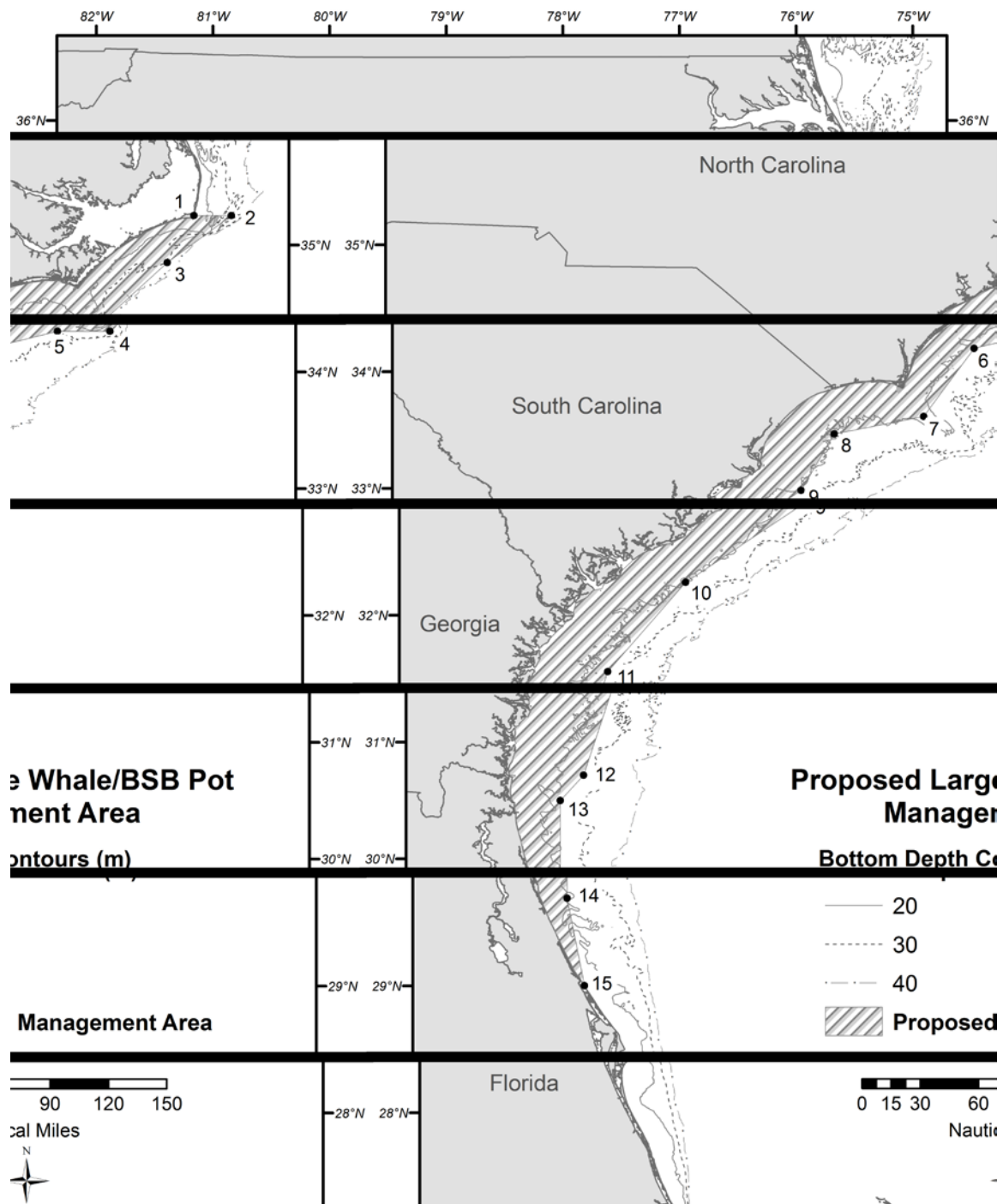


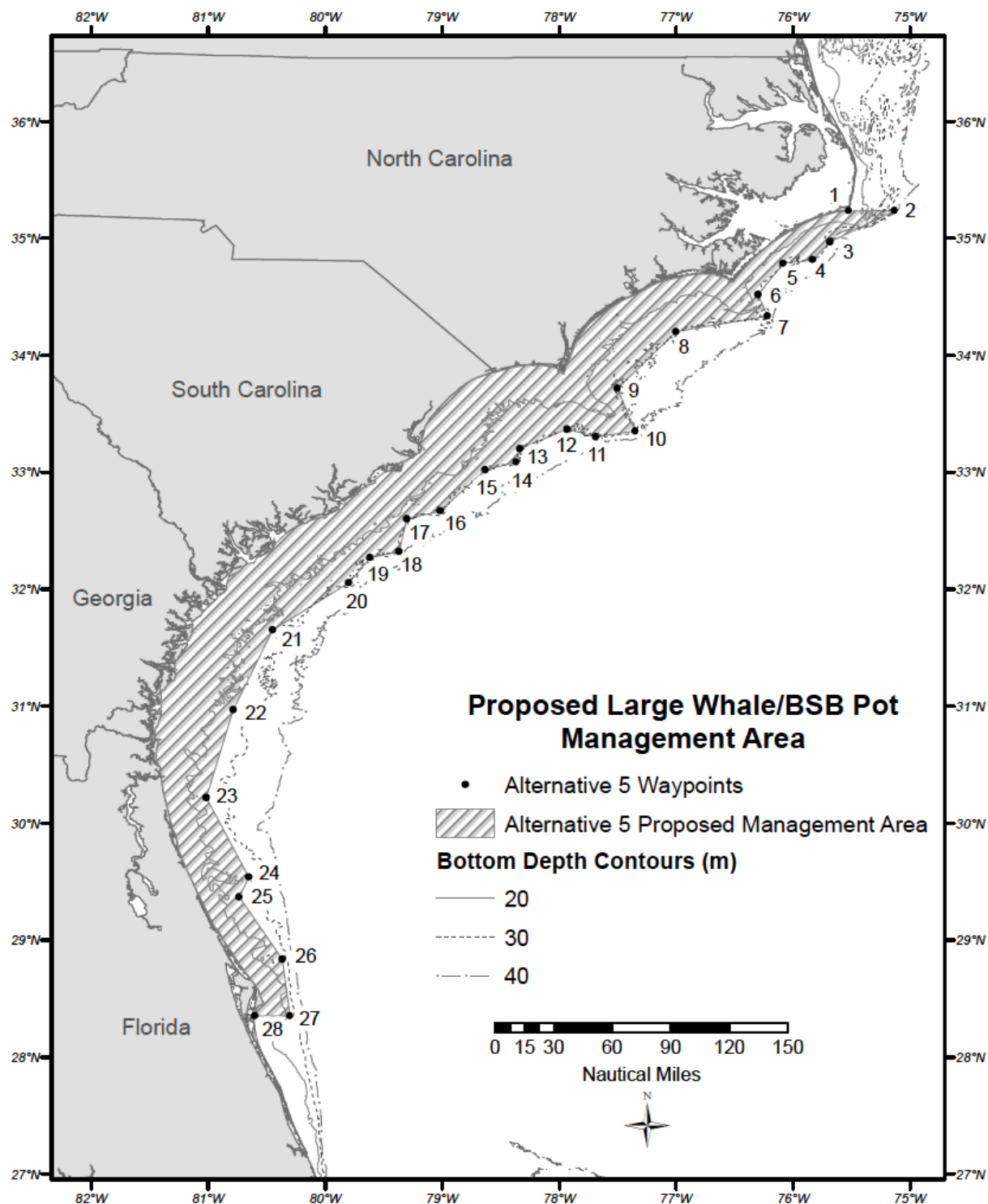
Figure 2.1.2. Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 4.

**Alternative 5.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to waters inshore of points 1-28 listed below (**Table 2.1.2**), approximately Cape Canaveral, Florida, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina (**Figure 2.1.3**). The closure applies to the area annually from November 1 through April 30.

Note: This area generally represents waters 25 m or shallower from 28° 21.5'' N (approximately Cape Canaveral, Florida) to Savannah, Georgia; from the Georgia/South Carolina border to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, the closure applies to waters under Council management that are 30 m or shallower. This bathymetric area is based on right whale sightings (all demographic segments) and sightings per unit of effort (proxy of density) by depth and captures 97% and 96% of right whale sightings off the North Carolina/South Carolina area, and Florida/Georgia area, respectively. The map below provides an approximate location of the proposed boundary.

**Table 2.1.2.** Eastern boundary coordinates for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 5.

Point	N Latitude	W Longitude
1	35° 14'	Shoreline
2	35° 14'	75° 08'
3	34° 58'	75° 41'
4	34° 49'	75° 50'
5	34° 47'	76° 05'
6	34° 31'	76° 18'
7	34° 20'	76° 13'
8	34° 12'	77° 00'
9	33° 43'	77° 30'
10	33° 21'	77° 21'
11	33° 18'	77° 41'
12	33° 22'	77° 56'
13	33° 12'	78° 20'
14	33° 05'	78° 22'
15	33° 01'	78° 38'
16	32° 40'	79° 01'
17	32° 36'	79° 18'
18	32° 19'	79° 22'
19	32° 16'	79° 37'
20	32° 03'	79° 48'
21	31° 39'	80° 27'
22	30° 58'	80° 47'
23	30° 13'	81° 01'
24	29° 32'	80° 39'
25	29° 22'	80° 44'
26	28° 50'	80° 22'
27	28° 21'	80° 18'
28	28° 21'	Shoreline



**Figure 2.1.3.** Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 5.

**Alternative 6.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to waters inshore of points 1-28 listed below (**Table 2.1.3**); approximately Cape Canaveral, Florida, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina (**Figure 2.1.4**). The closure applies to the area annually from November 1 through April 30.

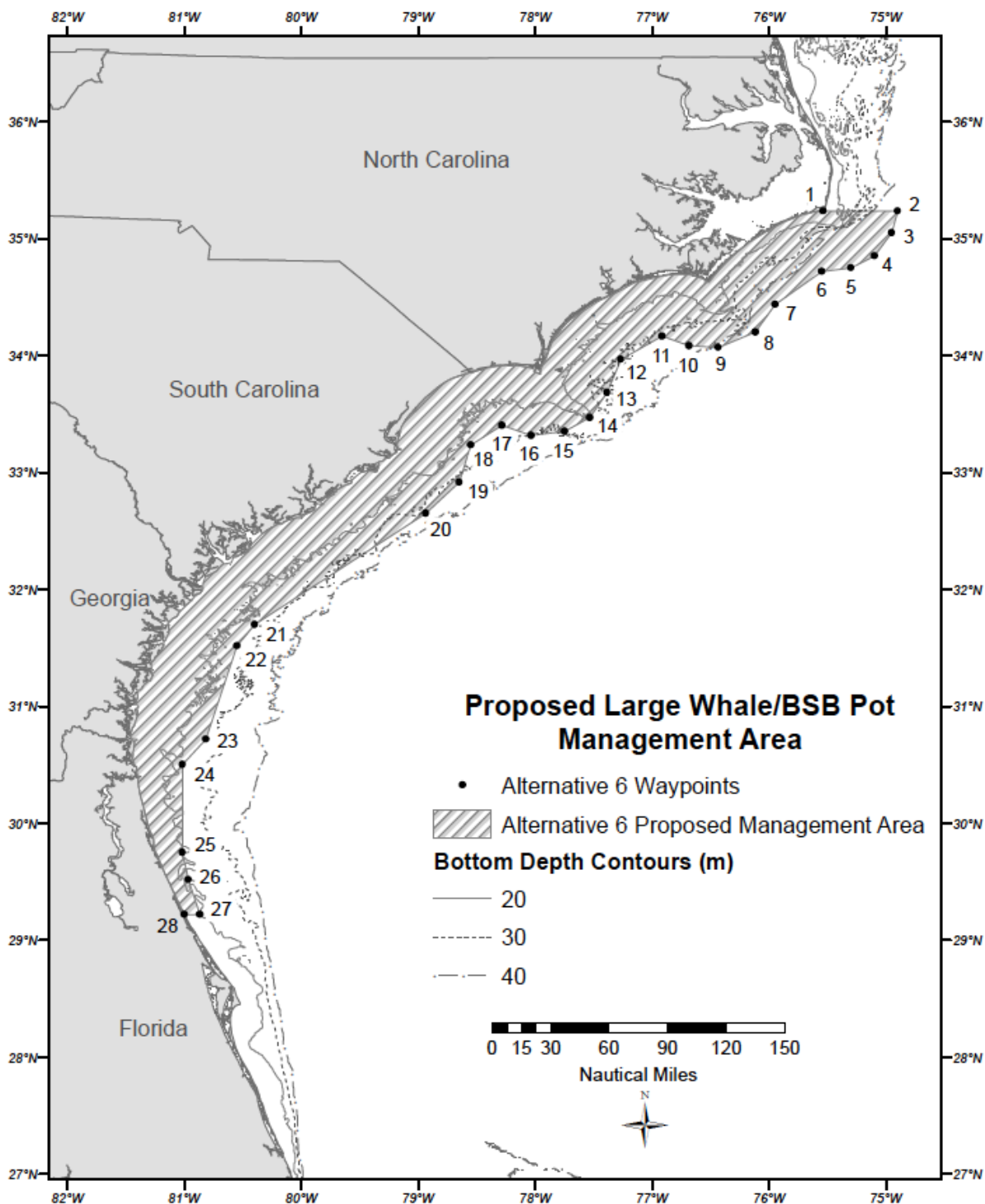
Note: This area is based on joint comments received from non-government organizations (dated January 3, 2014) in response to NMFS' December 4, 2013, *Federal Register* Notice of Intent to Prepare this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) (78 FR 72868). The non-government organizations proposed the area as a reasonable alternative for consideration. The area, also included in a Center for Biological Diversity et al. petition in 2009 for right whale critical habitat, is off the coasts of Georgia and Florida and based on calving right whale habitat modeling work of Garrison (2007) and Keller et al. (2012). This area represents the 75th percentile of sightings (91% of historical sightings included in their study) off Florida and Georgia (Garrison 2007 and Keller et al. 2012). Off the coasts of North Carolina and South Carolina, the closure extends from the coastline to 30 nautical miles offshore. The map below provides approximate location of proposed boundary.

**Table 2.1.3.** Eastern Boundary Coordinates for the Proposed Black Sea Bass Pot Closure in Alternative 6.

Point	N Latitude	W Longitude
1	29° 13'	Shoreline
2	29° 13'	80° 52'
3	29° 31'	80° 58'
4	29° 45'	81° 01'
5	30° 30'	81° 01'
6	30° 43'	80° 49'
7	31° 31'	80° 33'
8	31° 42'	80° 24'
9	32° 39'	78° 56'
10	32° 55'	78° 39'
11	33° 14'	78° 33'
12	33° 24'	78° 17'
13	33° 19'	78° 02'
14	33° 21'	77° 45'
15	33° 28'	77° 32'
16	33° 41'	77° 23'
17	33° 58'	77° 16'
18	34° 10'	76° 55'
19	34° 05'	76° 41'
20	34° 04'	76° 26'
21	34° 12'	76° 07'
22	34° 26'	75° 57'
23	34° 43'	75° 33'
24	34° 45'	75° 18'
25	34° 51'	75° 06'



26	35° 03'	74° 57'
27	35° 14'	74° 54'
28	35° 14'	Shoreline



**Figure 2.1.4.** Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 6.

**Alternative 7.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to waters inshore of points 1-20 listed below (**Table 2.1.4**), approximately Sebastian, Florida, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. The closure applies to the area annually from November 1 through April 30.

Note: This area is also based on joint comments received from a number of environmental groups (dated January 3, 2014) in response to NMFS' December 4, 2013, *Federal Register* Notice of Intent to Prepare this DEIS (78 FR 72868). The environmental groups proposed the area as a reasonable alternative for consideration. This area represents an existing management area, the Southeast Seasonal Gillnet Restricted Area, under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan; and an additional area off North Carolina. The area off North Carolina includes waters shallower than 30 meters and is northward of the designated ALWTRP Southeast Restricted Area.

**Table 2.1.4.** Eastern boundary coordinates for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 7.

Point	N Latitude	W Longitude
1	35° 14'	Shoreline
2	35° 14'	75° 08'
3	34° 58'	75° 41'
4	34° 49'	75° 50'
5	34° 47'	76° 05'
6	34° 31'	76° 18'
7	34° 20'	76° 13'
8	34° 12'	77° 00'
9	33° 43'	77° 30'
10	33° 21'	77° 21'
11	33° 18'	77° 41'
12	33° 24'	77° 57'
13	33° 19'	78° 06'
14	32° 58'	78° 39'
15	32° 39'	78° 59'
16	32° 37'	79° 14'
17	32° 22'	79° 22'
18	32° 00'	80° 00'
19	27° 51'	80° 00'
20	27° 51'	Shoreline

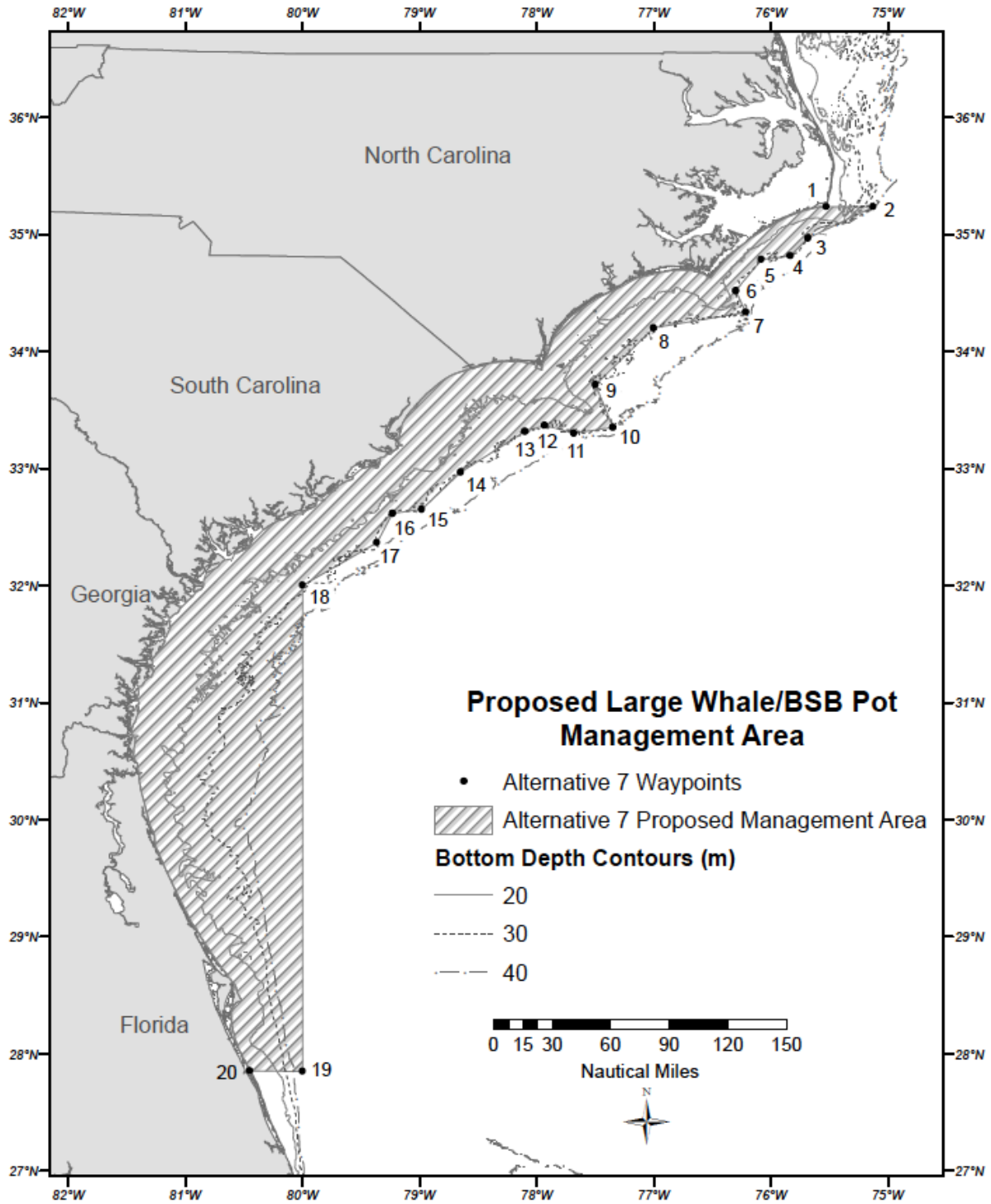


Figure 2.1.5. Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 7.

**Alternative 8.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to the area currently designated as North Atlantic right whale critical habitat, in addition to waters inshore of points **X-X** listed below (**Table 2.1.5**), approximately North of the Altamaha River, Georgia, to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina (**Figure 2.1.6**).

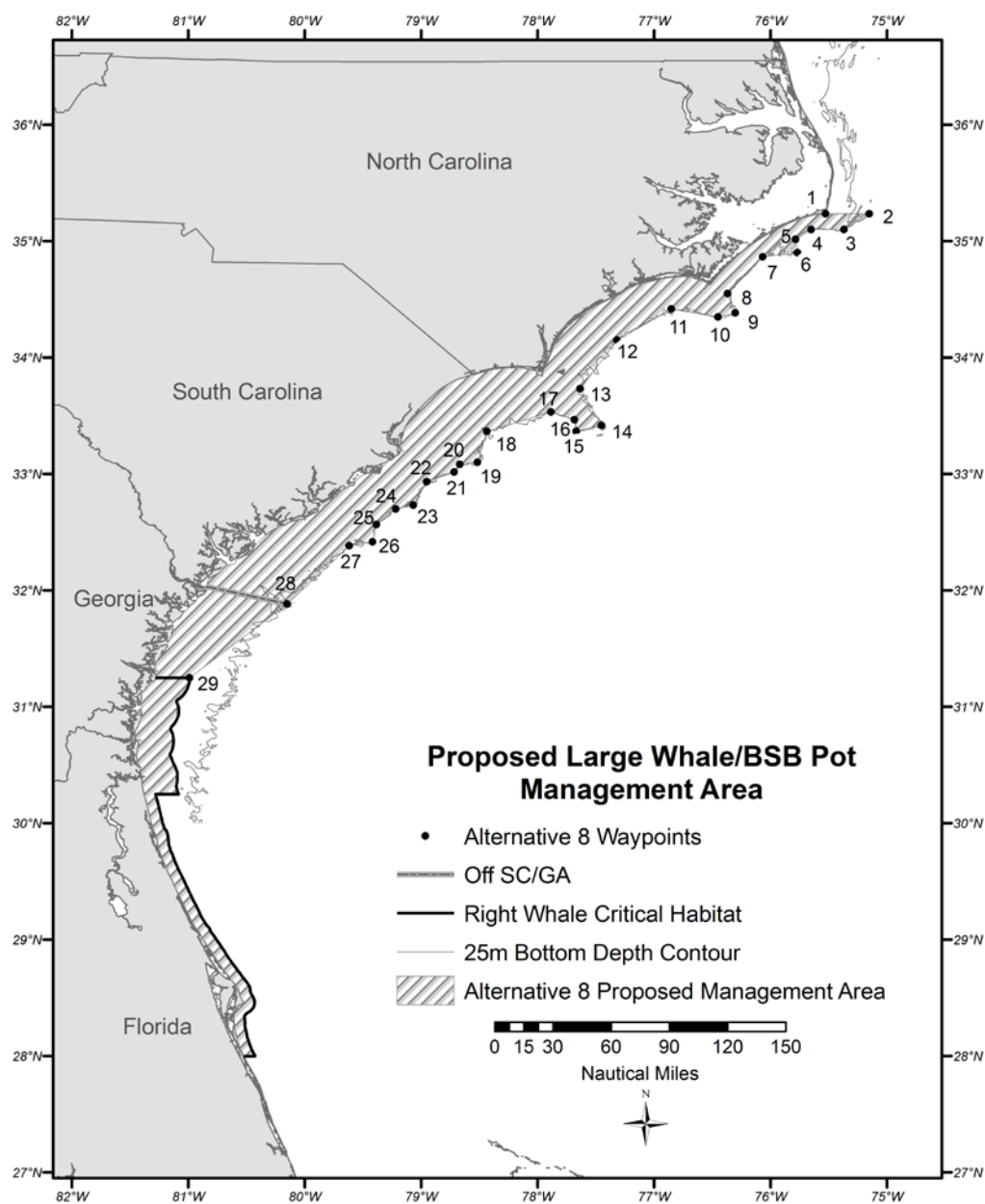
**Table 2.1.5.** Eastern boundary coordinates for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 8.

Point	N Latitude	W Longitude
1		

**Sub-alternative 8a.** The black sea bass pot closure applies to the area annually from November 1 through December 15 and March 15 through April 30.

**Sub-alternative 8b.** For the area off North Carolina and South Carolina, the black sea bass pot closure applies annually from November 1 through December 15 and March 15 through April 30. For the area off Georgia and Florida, the black sea bass pot closure applies annually from November 15 through April 15.

Note: There currently is a sub-alternative that would implement the prohibition off of NC and SC for the entire EEZ. Members of the IPT recommend that the Council reconsider whether this is a reasonable alternative. The placement of this alternative in the rejected alternative appendix would simplify the alternatives/analysis.



**Figure 2.1.6.** Area for the proposed black sea bass pot closure in Alternative 8.