Joint Meeting of Golden Crab and Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panels

Daytona Beach, FL
April 25-26, 2018

The AP approved the minutes from May 2014 for Golden Crab and April 2015 for Deep-water Shrimp meeting and agenda.

1. **Update on amendments recently submitted**

The AP was provided an update on the status of all amendments under review or being developed.

AP Action: The AP did not make any motions on the update.

2. **Joint Coral (Amendment 10), Golden Crab (Amendment 10), and Shrimp (Amendment 11)**

The AP was provided an overview of the draft options paper to get the APs suggestions for options to include. During the March 2018 Council meeting, the Council requested staff begin development of an amendment to address requests from Golden Crab Advisory Panel for additional access areas in the Northern Zone and from Deep-water Shrimp fishermen to revise the eastern edge of the Oculina Bank expanded in Coral Amendment 8, add an option to require VMS on golden crab vessels, and review transit provision for shrimp trawlers.

The AP had considerable discussion about the northern access area for the golden crab fishermen. The fishermen indicated they had essentially been shut out of fishing from north of 29º N latitude due to the creation of the Stetson Miami Terrace Coral Habitat Area of Particular Concern. Although areas north of the CHAPC were open to fishing, transiting the area to fish would take too long to make the trip profitable. The AP recommend three different options for consideration (motion below). The golden crab fishermen also did not recommend the use of VMS for the fishery. Fishermen often begin setting their traps outside of allowable areas but the trap would land in an allowable area. The AP discussed safety issues trying to stay within a defined area due to competing with the water and weather conditions. They saw VMS as an added cost for their trip.

The discussion then shifted to deepwater shrimp. The fishermen recommended using their recommendation they made previously to the Council regarding the location (Motion #1 and previous recommended language-attached item). This area includes an area they have historically fished. They also recommended looking into an additional area on the east side of the Oculina Bank by the Oculina Experimental Closed Area (motion below). They indicated that this was an older area that was designated as a buffer to protect coral habitat. The AP indicated that since they are using VMS, the buffer could be reduced to given them access to this area.

The discussion on the current transit provisions focused on the safety at sea issues with requirements to disconnect trawl doors or stow the doors below deck. The group felt a consistent regulation for traveling through closed areas would be sufficient to be able to recognize if a shrimper was actively fishing. They noted it takes time to deploy and retrieve the gear.

AP Motions:

MOTION #1: ADD ALTERNATIVE TO CONSIDER ADJUSTING THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE OCULINA BANK HAPC SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN EXPANSION IN CORAL AMENDMENT 8 FURTHER WEST TO INCLUDE HISTORICAL TRAWL AREAS AND AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONSIDER AN ALLOWABLE TRAWL AREA IN THE OCULINA BANK HAPC SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN EXPANSION IN CORAL AMENDMENT 8 FURTHER WEST TO INCLUDE HISTORICAL TRAWL AREAS.

Approved by AP

MOTION #2: RECOMMEND REMOVING THE ACTION FOR VMS IN THE GOLDEN CRAB FISHERY FROM THE DRAFT OPTION PAPER.

Approved by AP

MOTION #3: MOVE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE NORTHERN EXPANSION IN CORAL AMENDMENT 8 WESTWARD BASED ON RECOMMENDATION MADE BY ROCK SHRIMP FISHERMEN (~2015).

Approved by AP

MOTION #4: ADD ALTERNATIVE TO CONSIDER ADJUSTING THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE OCULINA BANK HAPC SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN EXPANSION IN CORAL AMENDMENT 8 FURTHER WEST TO INCLUDE HISTORICAL TRAWL AREAS AND AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONSIDER AN ALLOWABLE TRAWL AREA IN THE OCULINA BANK HAPC SOUTH OF THE NORTHERN EXPANSION IN CORAL AMENDMENT 8 FURTHER WEST TO INCLUDE HISTORICAL TRAWL AREAS.

Approved by AP

Note: Appendix A has boundaries based on language provided at past Council Meetings.

MOTION #5: TRANSIT MEANS DIRECT, PROGRESSION THROUGH THE AREA UNLESS ANCHORED. FISHING GEAR APPROPRIATELY STOWED MEANS—

TRAWL DOORS OUT OF THE WATER, NETS HANGING IN RIGGING, AND BAG STRAPS REMOVED. (ALL AREAS)

Approved by AP

MOTION #6: ADD AN ALTERNATIVE FOR GOLDEN CRAB ACCESS AREAS BETWEEN THE DEPTH LINES (~1,600 FROM 2,400 FT) FROM THE NORTHERN ZONE (LATITUDE 29 N) CONTINUED UP THROUGH THE STETSON MIAMI TERRACE TO VIRGINIA STATE LINE AND A) RE-OPEN LOW (GREEN CODE=1) AND MODERATE PROBABILITY AREAS AND REGULATE KNOWN AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATION OF CORAL, B) RE-OPEN LOW, MODERATE (YELLOW CODE=2), AND HIGH (ORANGE CODE=3-5) PROBABILITY AREAS AND REGULATE KNOWN AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATION OF CORAL, C) RE-OPEN LOW, MODERATE, HIGH, AND VERY

HIGH (RED CODE=6-10) PROBABILITY AREAS AND REGULATE KNOWN AREAS OF HIGH CONCENTRATION OF CORAL.

Approved by AP

Note: Appendix B has maps created for the APs review.

3. Update on Deep-Sea Coral Research

The AP received an update on the Deep-Sea Coral Research currently occurring in the South Atlantic region as funding as cycled back to the Southeast region. An overview was provided on the projects that are occurring in the South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean region.

AP Motions: No motions were made.

4. Regulations recommended for removal

The AP received an update on the Executive Order 13777 as part of efforts to lower regulatory burdens on the American people by implementing and enforcing regulatory reform. The Council is working with each of its advisory panels to conduct the review/evaluation and provide recommendations on rules to be removed by the end of June 2018. The AP discussed removing the requirement for permit cards. However, they did not recommend removing the cards because it allows enforcement to ticket the captain (if not the vessel owner) that committed a potential violation such as shrimping in a closed area or using illegal gear and enables vessel owners to conduct background checks on potential captains. The AP had previously discussed shrimp transit provisions which was included in the rules for evaluation.

AP Motions: No motions were made. One suggestion was made after the meeting.

46 USC 8103
(b)

(1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, on a documented vessel—

(A) each unlicensed seaman must be—

(i) a citizen of the United States;

(ii) an alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence; or

(iii) a foreign national who is enrolled in the United States Merchant Marine Academy; and

(B) not more than 25 percent of the total number of unlicensed seamen on the vessel may be aliens lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence.

Reason for consideration for modification or removal: Unlicensed seamen may be legally allowed in the U.S. because they have proper work documentation, but not allowed to serve on a fishing vessel because they are not permanent residents. Some fishing vessel owners would like to see this percentage increased from 25%, or preferably allow anyone legally permitted to work in the U.S. to serve as an unlicensed seaman.

5. Royal Red Shrimp Discussion

The AP discussed the royal red shrimp fishery, economics, and potential drivers. Royal red shrimp are not federally managed in the South Atlantic region, but they are managed in the Gulf of Mexico. Since they were last considered for management the landings of royal red shrimp have been extremely variable. Landings of royal red shrimp increased from 2009 to 2013 when the landings were over 900,000 pounds. From 2013 to 2016, the landings have dropped. The landings in 2016 were less than 10% of the landings in 2013. The AP noted that the royal red shrimp fishery has been impacted by imports from Argentina. This has resulted in lower demand for royal red shrimp. If a fishermen fishes for royal red shrimp, the fish house is often limited in the amount of shrimp they will purchase. There are very few vessels and captains that are capable of fishing for royal red shrimp. The AP did not notice a change in shrimp abundance, location, or seasonality. See the royal red shrimp fishery description report attached at the end of this report for additional information.

AP Motions: No motions were made.

6. Election of Officers

The Deepwater Shrimp AP voted for Mike Merrifield as chair and Laurilee Thompson as vice chair. The Golden Crab AP voted for Robert Palma as chair and Brad Whipple as vice chair.

7. Other Business

In the Gulf of Mexico, there is some golden crab fishing where a permit is not required to fish. A fishermen is harvesting golden crab females. Since there could be some connectivity between South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council should consider limiting harvest of females to protect spawning stock.

Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel Royal Red Shrimp Fishery Description

Catch

The fishery typically operates in the winter. The fishermen can go out any time, but the fishery is mainly based on opportunity. The fishermen will target inshore shrimp first and then if there is a market for royal red shrimp they may go offshore. Fishermen will target royal red shrimp when rock shrimp catch is lower and a market is available. One AP indicated they tried to catch royal reds during the summer, but they usually were not there.

Royal red shrimp fishery is a more expensive fishery to operate than the rock shrimp fishery, and very few boats/captains are capable of operating in it. It is a dangerous fishery. The boats will go where they can money the easiest way.

Royal red shrimp from Argentina are competing for local royal red shrimp since 2015 and the imports are increasing. Grocers have imported royal red shrimp for lower price than fish houses can pay boats. The Argentine fishery has three fisheries: beam trawl, trawl, and freshwater. Their fisheries are much cheaper to operate. Beam trawls started increasing in 2005 and bottom trawl since 2013 have increased. Artisanal has increased production at same time. These imports have decreased the market for royal red shrimp. The imports may not be available throughout the year because there are some closures for spawning hake. Royal red shrimp are a clear example of how imports impact fishery.

Recent Trends

There has been no change in the abundance of royal red shrimp. The fishery continues to operate in same areas off St Augustine to St Palm. Catch on a trip is limited based on what the market can handle. CPUE from a trip is not indicative of abundance. Effort is also controlled by current, tide, and weather.

There was some concern about water quality and habitat issues. Better habitat led to improved ecosystem in the Chesapeake Bay. The AP members noted some brown water offshore, which could be impacting habitat for royal red shrimp and rock shrimp.

Social and economic influences

There is pressure to lower price due to the imports. If the price is increased by $0.25, then market could be lost. The current prices are back down to early prices.

There are two markets for royal red shrimp. Small red shrimp are peeled and large are shell and tails or whole. Peelers have been full due to other small shrimp. When a fisherman makes a trip for royal red shrimp, they need to have market for large and small to sell both. Royal red shrimp may be substituted for rock shrimp. Since there has been good abundance of rock shrimp, demand for small peeled royal red has decreased. The royal red shrimp of the east coast of Florida have a darker red color and better flavor than the shrimp from the Gulf of Mexico and Argentina.

The fishery off east coast of Florida typically lands in Canaveral and Mayport (Jacksonville included). Some of the fishery occurs off the Florida Keys and in the Gulf of Mexico. The Keys fishery operates around Pourtales Terrace. There is only a few places on east coast of Florida that can handle large vessels (Fernandina, Mayport, and Port Canaveral). Other options would be Fort Myers but the area is limited in docking. The next port up is Tampa. The trip to Tampa from Canaveral is a 4-day trip.

Older fishermen are not being replaced. Only one out of fort Myers.

Environmental/ecological

The AP have not observed changes in the distribution of royal red shrimp.

Black gill has not been observed.

Other

What is else important to know about royal red shrimp?

East coast royal red is a premier shrimp. Royal red shrimp have short shelf life than other shrimp. Shelf life is a critical issue. In a month can loose 10% of weight in freezer. Argentine shrimp are dipped in tripolyphosphate. The longer it takes to freeze to more water and salt they absorb. Due to the weight loss and freezer coast, royal red shrimp have a high overhead to process and maintain. Some fishermen handle the shrimp more carefully. Royal red shrimp can be caught up to 7 months out the year but the fishery is usually 3 to 4 months for production.

Bill Sessions and Jeremy Zirlott Gulf fishermen. They are operating in other fisheries. There is little effort in Gulf of Mexico.

Appendix A. Boundary Points Provided by Fishermen at Past Council Meetings.

The Deepwater Shrimp AP requested we use points that were provided to the Council during the later stages of Coral Amendment 8. There were two different sets of points that were provided in December 2013 and March 2014 (**Table 1** and **Figure 1**).

Table 1. Latitude and longitude for the current boundaries established through Coral Amendment 8 and the points recommended by fishermen in December 2013 (Vogglesong) and March 2014 (HabCom2014) to the SAFMC.

Area	Latitude	Longitude
Current	29.49025	-80.2544
Current	29.15903	-80.2048
Current	29.07922	-80.17
Current	28.93385	-80.1482
Current	28.879	-80.1481
Current	28.79127	-80.1187
Current	28.77047	-80.1211
Current	8.687867	-80.0997
Current	28.58493	-80.0873
Current	28.56415	-80.0902
Current	28.51427	-80.0733
Current	28.5	-80.0659
Vogelsong	29.29213	-80.1728
Vogelsong	29.18887	-80.1482
Vogelsong	28.88742	-80.0907
Vogelsong	28.81005	-80.0759
Vogelsong	28.7659	-80.0681
Vogelsong	28.5	-80.017
HabMar2014	29.29213	-80.1728
HabMar2014	29.183	-80.1442
HabMar2014	29.05973	-80.1246
HabMar2014	28.90697	-80.0898
HabMar2014	28.81013	-80.0728
HabMar2014	28.5	-80.017

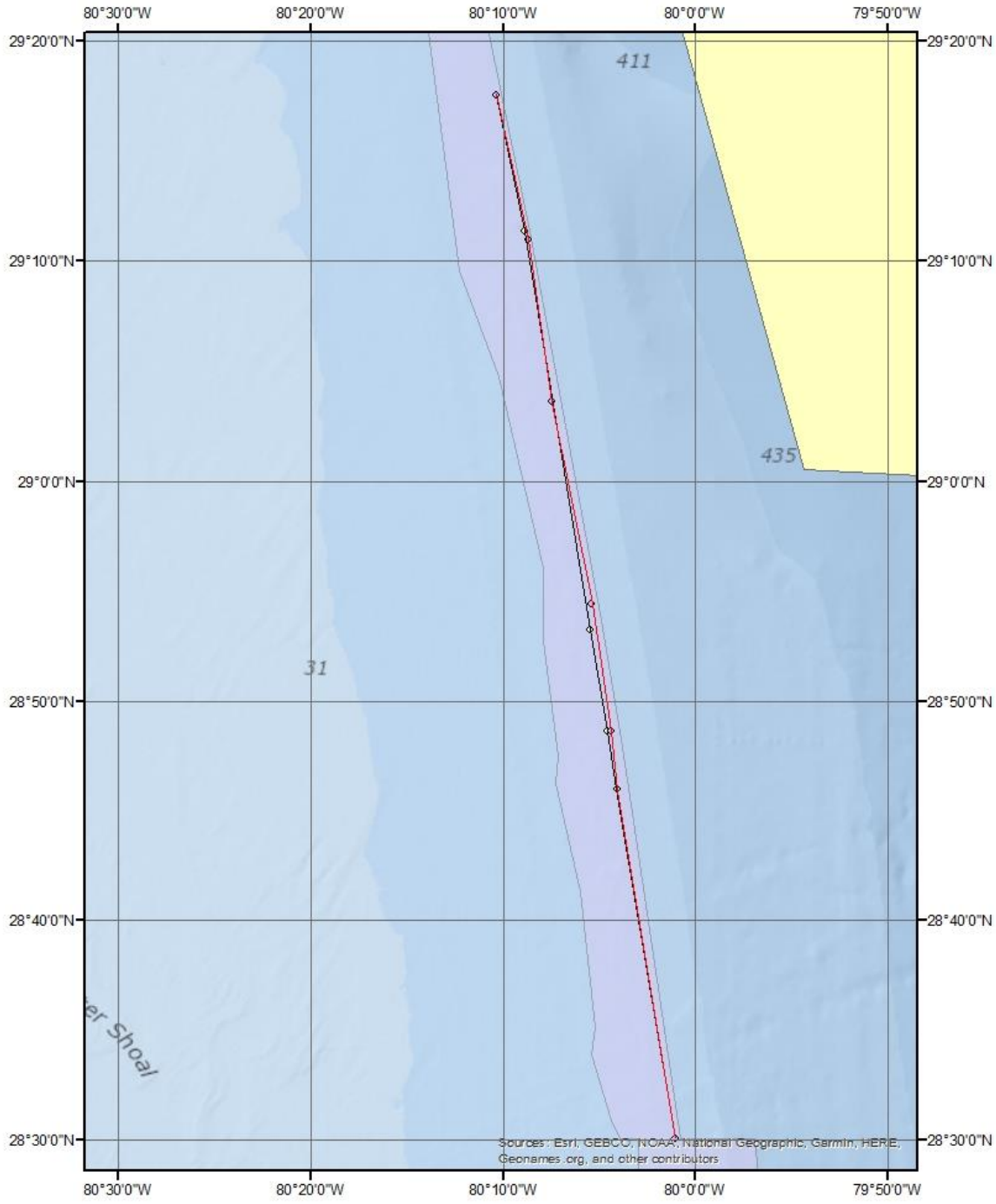


Figure 1. Map of the Oculina Bank as established in Coral Amendment 8 (purple) and boundary lines provided by fishermen in December 2013 (black) and March 2014 (red).

Appendix B. Maps Provided to Golden Crab AP for Review After Meeting

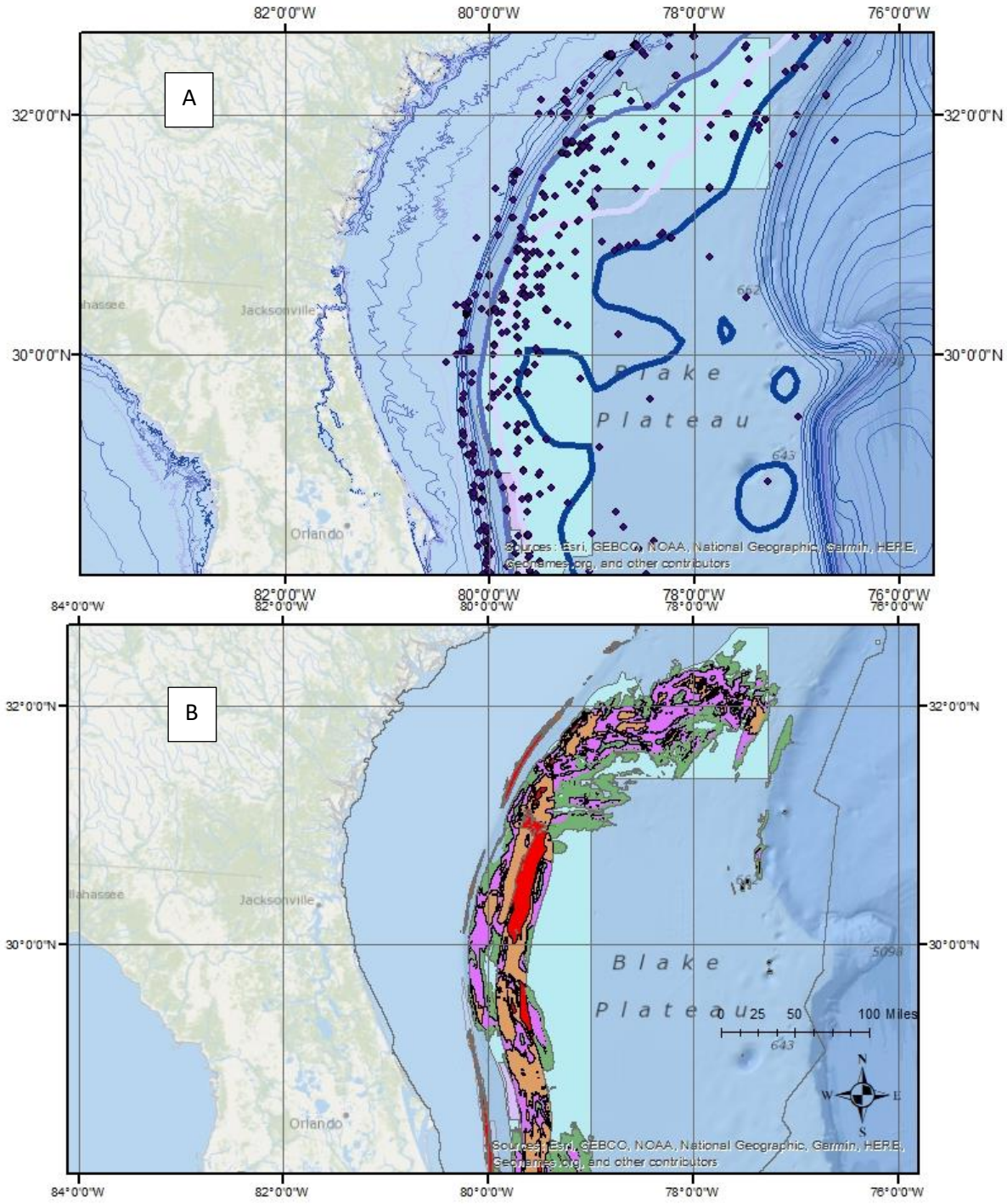
The maps included in this appendix were develop based on the language in Motion #6 of the AP meeting. They were sent to the AP after the April 25-26, 2018 meeting.

Motion: Add an alternative for Golden Crab access areas between the depth lines (~1,600 from 2,400 ft) from the northern zone (latitude 29 N) continued up through the Stetson Miami Terrace to Virginia state line and a) re-open low (green code=1) and moderate probability areas and regulate known areas of high concentration of coral, b) re-open low, moderate (yellow code=2), and high (orange code=3-5) probability areas and regulate known areas of high concentration of coral, c) re-open low, moderate, high, and very high (red code=6-10) probability areas and regulate known areas of high concentration of coral.

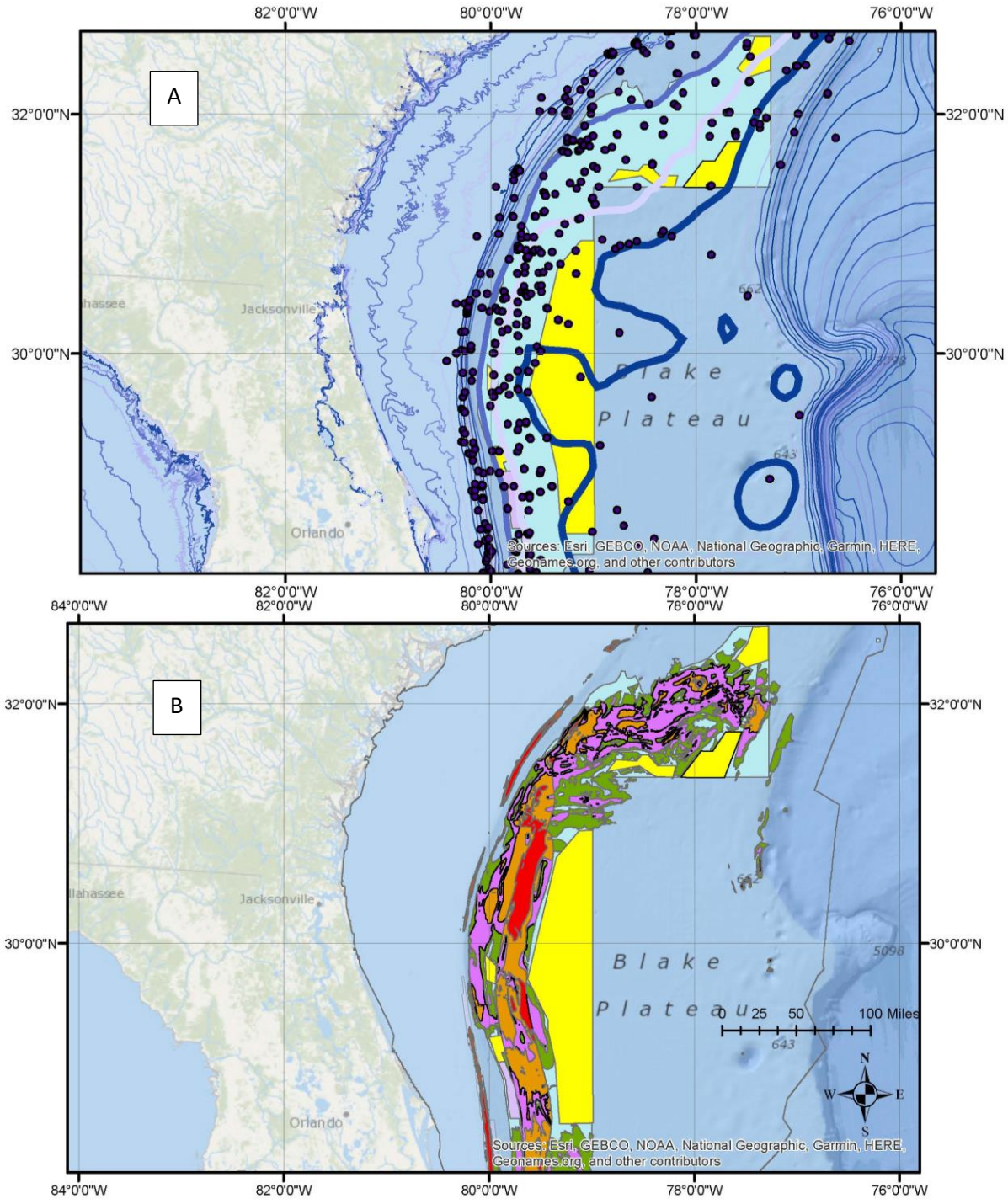
Note: The colors changed from the colors that were presented at the meeting but nothing else changed. Code=1 remained green, code=2 is now purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 remained red.

To give a full range of alternatives, a map was added for the very low probability (0) (**Figure 2**) and an AP member requested an option that would follow the same contours from the northern zone access area (**Figure 7**). For each of your suggested alternatives, there are two maps. The top map has the current CHAPC in light blue. The inner thick line is 1,300 feet (blue), middle thick line is 1,950 feet (gray), outer thick line is 2,600 feet (dark blue). These depth contours were the contours currently available for the maps. The yellow boxes are areas that could be considered for opening based on the APs suggestions. Added onto the maps are verified locations of coral (black dots). A lack of a black dot does not mean there is no coral. It likely means the area has not been sampled to verify if coral is in the area.

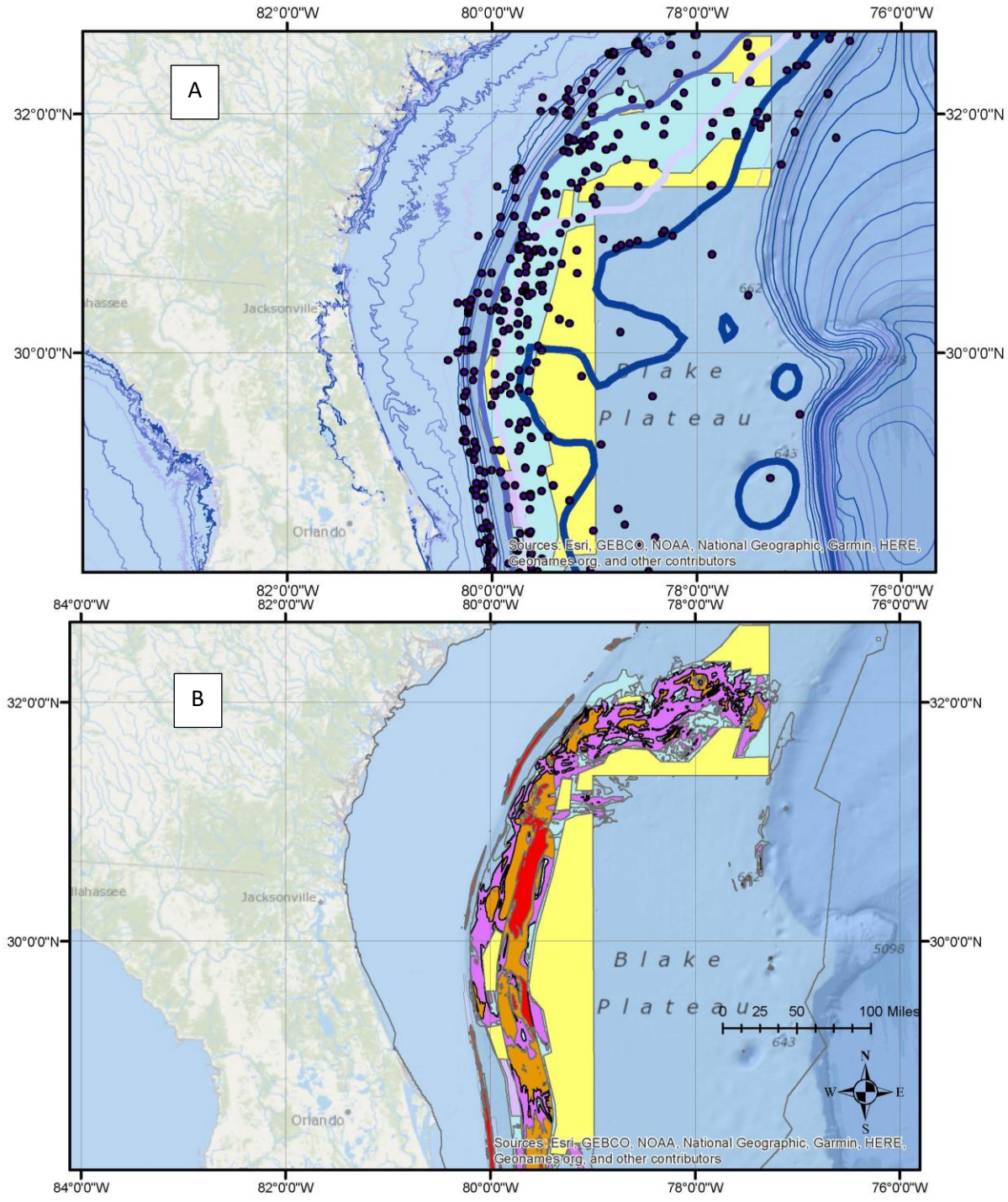
The bottom map has the probability map for Scleractinia and Oculina coral along with the suggested areas for opening based on the APs suggestions.



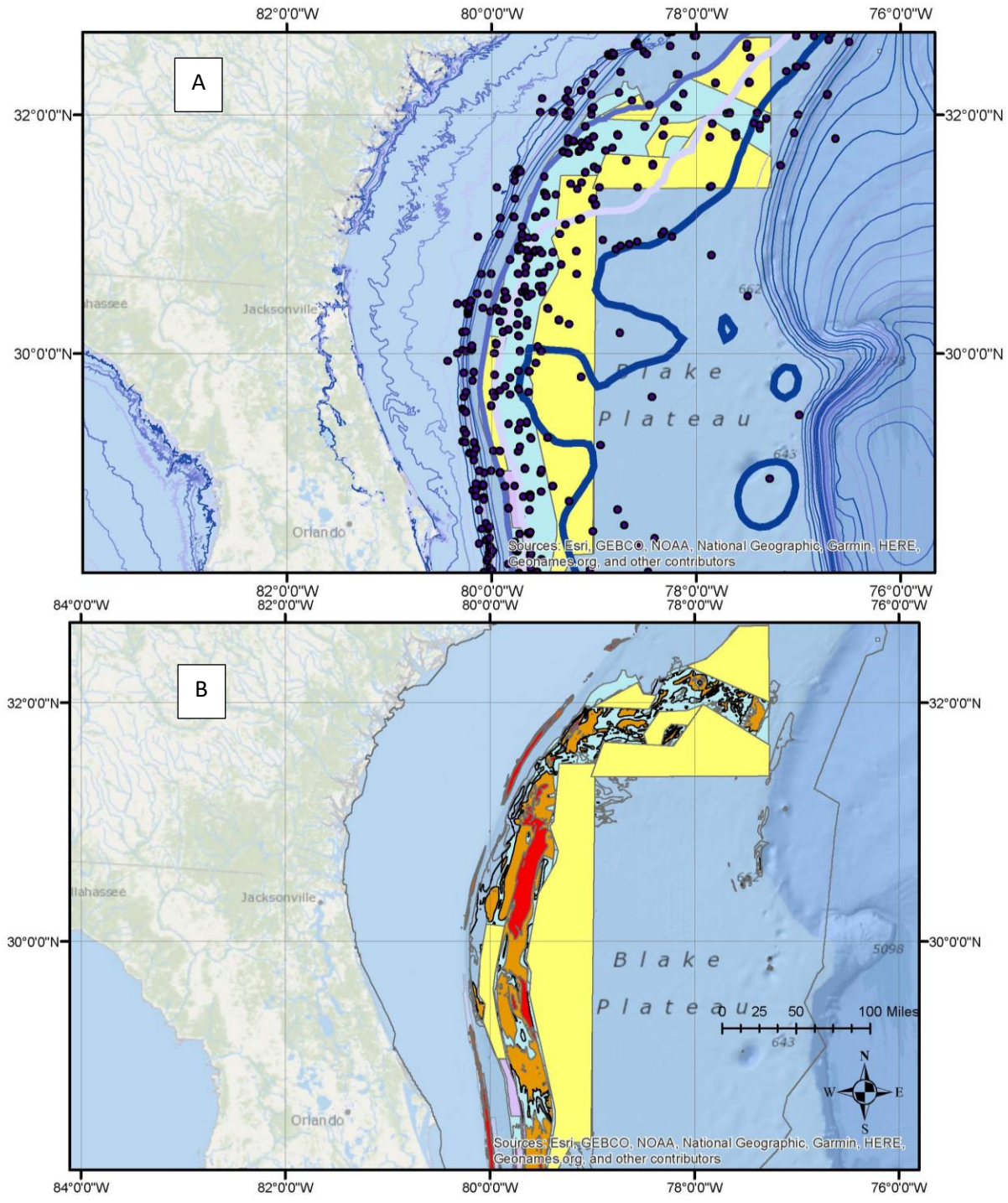
Map 1. A). Status quo maps. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. . B). Status quo map with probability of coral added. Darker colors represent probability of coral being in the area. Code=1 is green, code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red. Higher numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.



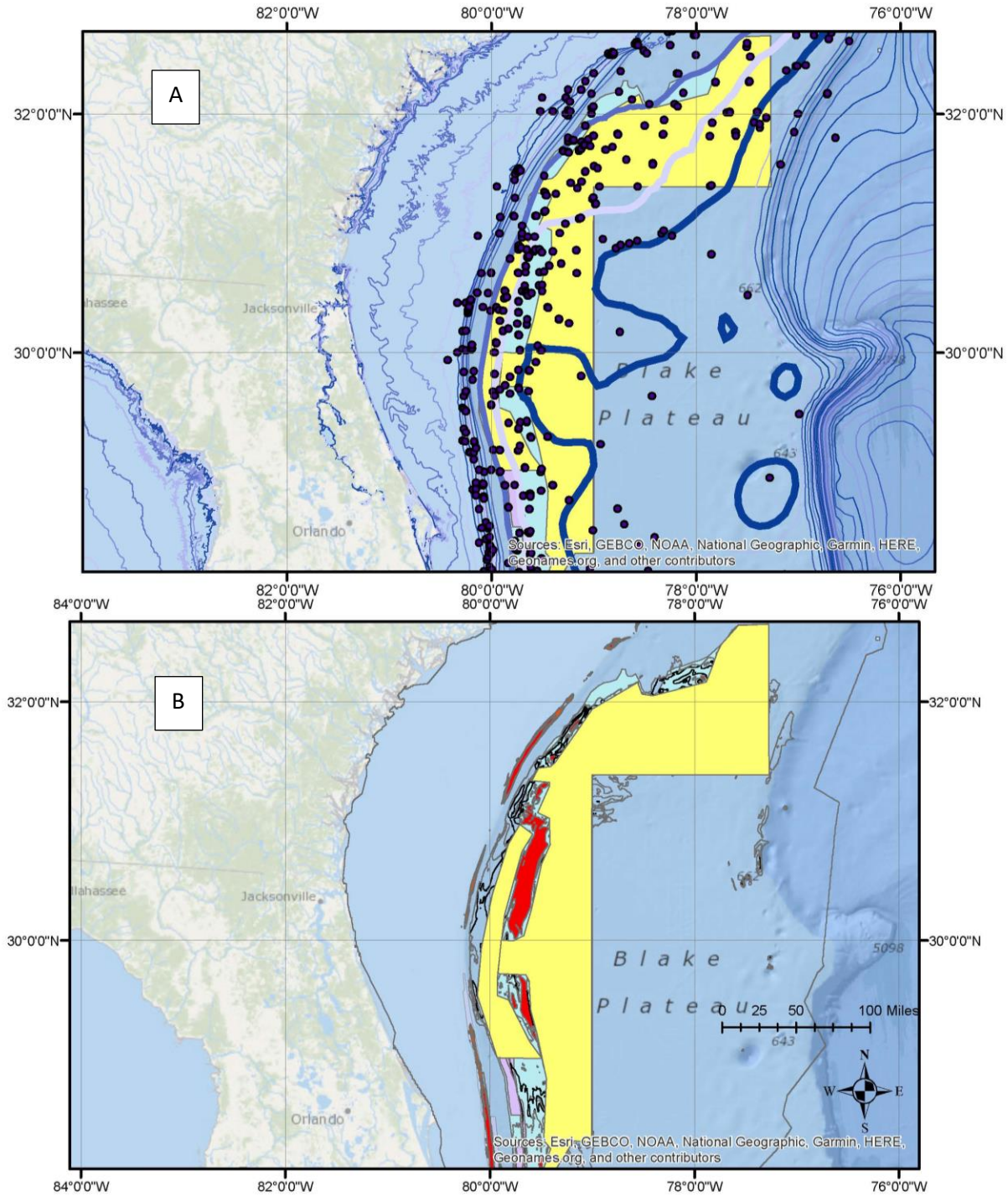
Map 2. A). Potential access area with very low coral probability created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with very low probability of coral. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=1 is green, code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in very low probability coral areas being opened (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.



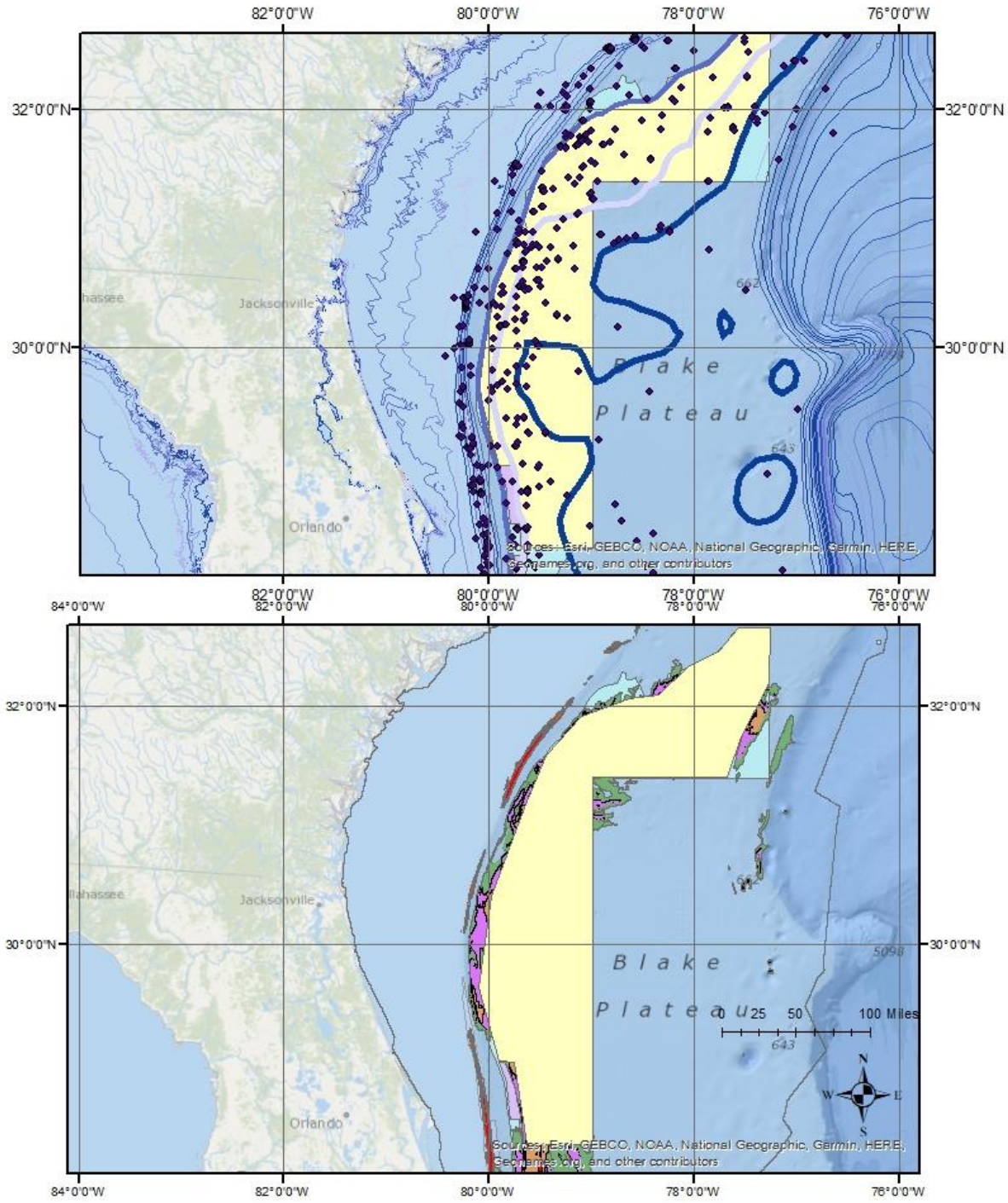
Map 3. A). Potential access area with very low and low coral probability created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with very low and low probability of coral. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in very low and low probability coral areas being opened (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area. .



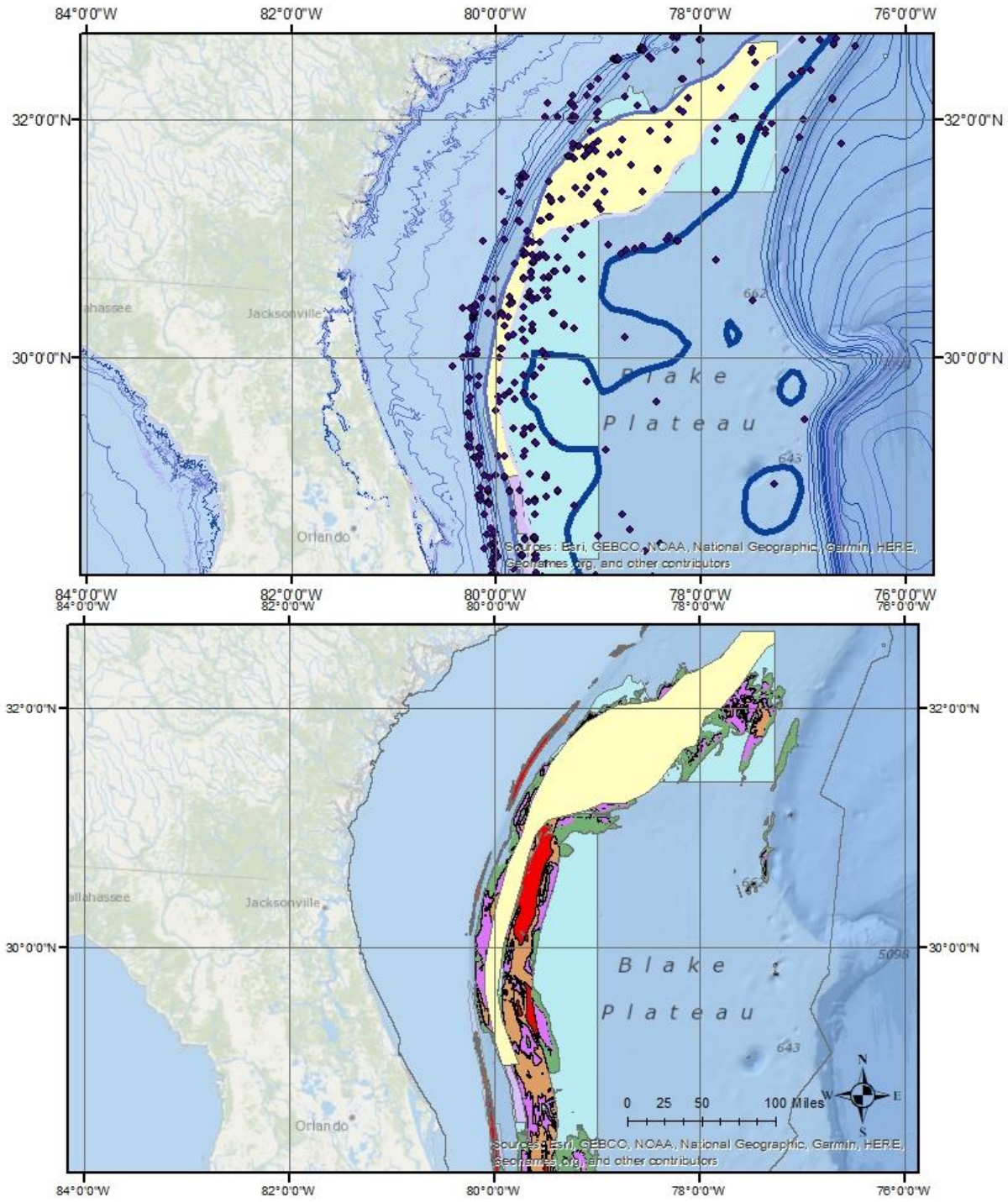
Map 4. A). Potential access area with very low through mid-probability of coral created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with very low through mid-probability of coral. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in very low through mid-probability coral areas being opened (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.



Map 5. A). Potential access area with very low through high coral probability created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with very low through high probability of coral. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=1 is green, code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in very low through high probability coral areas being opened (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.



Map 6. A). Potential access area with very low through very high coral probability following depth contours of (1,300 ft through 2,600 ft) created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with very low through high probability of coral. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=1 is green, code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in very low through high probability coral areas being opened (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.



Map 7. A). Potential access area based on following the depth contours (1,300 ft through 1,950 ft) created as access areas. Light blue box is Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC. Black dots are verified coral locations. Thicker blue (1,300 ft), gray (1,950 ft), and dark blue (2,600 ft) lines are depth contours. Yellow boxes are potential access areas based on creating access in areas with similar depths to the northern zone access area. B). Map with coral probabilities added (code=1 is green, code=2 is purple, code=3-5 is orange, and code=6-10 is red) and potential access areas based on access in areas with depths between (1,300 and 1,950 ft) (yellow). Higher probability numbers indicate higher probability of coral in the area.