

## **NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

### **Habitat Committee**

#### **I. STATUS**

- A. Meetings: The Committee and Advisory Panel met jointly on August 20, 2020 to discuss offshore wind (focus on habitat aspects), development of habitat policies (including aquaculture issues), and 2021 Council priorities related to habitat (Document 2). An additional Committee/AP meeting is being planned for November.
- B. PDT activities: The PDT is currently finalizing background documents on submarine cables and aquaculture to support the development of Council policy statements on these topics. Committee and AP members are working with staff and the PDT to draft aquaculture and cable policies.
- C. Offshore Energy Coordination: Over the summer, the Council commented on the Vineyard Wind SEIS and the USCG's Northern New York Bight Port Access Route Study. Both comment letters are posted on the joint wind website, <https://www.mafmc.org/northeast-offshore-wind>; staff continue to coordinate with MAFMC to update this page. The first meeting of the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance, ROSA, will be held on September 28, 2020. Multiple Council members serve on the ROSA Advisory Council which should help ensure effective coordination between the two groups.
- D. Northeast Regional Fish Habitat Assessment and Habitat Climate Vulnerability Assessment: NRHA team members have been working primarily on data inventories and model development and will likely hold working technical meetings later in the fall. For more information visit <http://www.mafmc.org/nrha>.
- E. Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment: NMFS has approved the amendment and the final rule is still in review.
- F. EFP for the Great South Channel HMA: Coonamessett Farm Foundation researchers and partners have been conducting dredge-mounted camera data collection in the Rose and Crown area this summer.

#### **II. COUNCIL ACTION**

No Council action is required at this time.

#### **III. INFORMATION**

- 1. Staff presentation
- 2. Habitat Committee/Advisory Panel Summary – August 20, 2020
- 3. Correspondence