

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Habitat Oversight Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Omnibus EFH Amendment 2: The notice of availability for the amendment published on October 6, and the proposed rule published November 6. The comment period ends on December 5. A decision is expected on January 4, with implementation of approved measures in the spring. The EFH designations will be in use as soon as the decision is filed in January; staff is coordinating with NMFS to prepare spatial data for NOAA's EFH mapper.
- B. Clam dredge framework adjustment: The PDT continues work on data products to support alternatives development, and is planning a conference call on this topic on December 1. The PDT will meet jointly with the AP on December 20.
- C. Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment: The PDT continues work on data products to support development of Option 7, an empirically-based broad coral protection zone. A revised alternative is available for comment and will be reviewed with the AP on December 20.
- D. Offshore Wind Coordination: The Committee had a robust discussion of issues surrounding offshore wind and fisheries at its meeting on October 4. Presentations were received from three developers, BOEM, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Collaborative. Staff attended a workshop on offshore wind and fisheries on November 8 and 9. Staff, working through the Council Chair and Habitat Committee, will continue to develop Council comments on these issues as appropriate, for example on the draft wind energy areas off New York, and on continued leasing of the Massachusetts wind energy area. Brian Hooker will update the Council on BOEM activities during the Habitat Committee report on December 5.
- E. Meetings: The Habitat Committee will meet January 9 to discuss ongoing work and recommend final alternatives in the Deep-Sea Coral Amendment.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

Approve draft comment letter on Draft Lobster Addendum XXVI.

III. INFORMATION

- 1. Presentation by Toni Kerns, ASMFC, on Draft Lobster Addendum XXVI
- 2. Presentation by Brian Hooker, BOEM, on recent and upcoming actions on wind energy
- 3. Draft Addendum XXVI to Amendment 3 to the American Lobster FMP/Addendum III to the Jonah Crab FMP (November 2017)
- 4. Draft comment letter on Addendum XXVI (comments are due January 22, 2018)
- 5. Summary of October 4, 2017 Habitat Committee meeting
- 6. Correspondence

Materials related to the suggested updates to the Option 7 broad coral zone are available on the Council's website, at <https://www.nefmc.org/library/omnibus-deep-sea-coral-amendment>.