



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116

John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEETING SUMMARY

Herring Committee

Holiday Inn - Taunton, MA

November 21, 2017

The Herring Committee met on November 21, 2017 in Taunton, MA primarily to review draft analyses of measures developed to address potential localized depletion and user conflicts in the herring fishery being considered in Amendment 8 and potentially select preferred alternatives before the document is scheduled for public hearings. The secondary purpose of the meeting is to discuss recommendations for the Council to consider for Herring RSA research priorities and discuss any challenges the program has had in recent years.

MEETING ATTENDANCE: Mr. Peter Kendall (Chairman), Mr. Vincent Belzano, Mr. Rick Bellavance, Mr. Peter Christopher (NMFS/GARFO), Mr. Doug Grout, Dr. Cate O'Keefe, Mr. John Pappalardo, Ms. Melissa Smith, Dr. Matt Mckenzie, Mr. Scott Oslzewski, and Mr. Terry Stockwell. The Committee was supported by Council staff members Deirdre Boelke and Dr. Rachel Feeney; Ms. Carrie Nordeen (NMFS/GARFO); and Mr. Mitch MacDonald (NOAA General Counsel). In addition, about 20 members of the public attended.

KEY OUTCOMES:

- The group reviewed the alternatives in Amendment 8 and identified preferred alternatives for the Council to consider before approving the document for public hearings in 2018.
- The group recommended the Council request NMFS implement an in-season action to reduce catch limits in 2018 to prevent overfishing, based on results from the recent assessment.
- The group identified Herring RSA research priorities for 2019-2021 to be recommended to the full Council.
- The group discussed recommendations for 2018 herring work priorities.

Amendment 8 Motions

1. Stockwell/Pappalardo

Recommend Alternative 4b as the preferred alternative for the ABC control rule in Amendment 8 (Section 2.1.1), and recommend Alternative 2 for Section 2.1.2 as preferred, which would set ABC for three years with annual application of the control rule.

1a. Motion to amend: Grout/Smith

Recommend Alternative 4b as the preferred alternative for the ABC control rule in Amendment 8 (Section 2.1.1), but modify the maximum fishing mortality (maxF) parameter to be 0.8 from 0.7, and recommend Alternative 2 for Section 2.1.2 as preferred, which would set ABC for three years with annual application of the control rule.

Vote: 9:0:1, carries

Main motion as amended: 9:0:1, carries

2. Stockwell/Grout

Recommend Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative for Section 2.2 of Amendment 8 to address potential localized depletion and user conflicts, but modified to extend the 12-mile buffer to include Area 1A so it is a coastwide prohibition of mid-water trawl gear inside of 12-nautical miles, including seasonal sub-option A so it is year-round, and including spatial sub-option A to include Areas 2, 3, and 1B.

Vote: 6:3:1, carries

2019-2021 Specifications Motions

3. Grout/O'Keefe

Recommend the Council request NOAA fisheries develop an in-season action that would set 2019 catch limits with the following guidance:

- Using the most recent assessment and projections;
- Using the ABC control rule approved the by Council;
- Proportionally reduce the fixed gear set-aside;
- Set the border transfer to 0mt; and
- Maintain the sub-ACLs for herring management areas based on the same proportions as the last specifications package (Area 1A=28.9%, Area 1B=4.3%, Area 2=27.8%, Area 3=39%).

4. Stockwell/Pappalardo

Motion to postpone until the Herring report at the September Council meeting, after decisions on Amendment 8.

Vote: 5:4:1, carries

2019 Work Priorities

Committee supports PDT recommendation #3 – Recommend NRCC or other appropriate group discuss the specifics and timing of a review of the Herring MSE (5-10 years?). When can that be integrated into the overall schedule of work items? Analysts will want to know in advance to plan model updates.

Committee supports PDT/NEFSC research into identifying the possible causes of recent declines in herring recruitment, what information is available about the most likely drivers of below average recruitment in recent years.