



New England Fishery Management Council

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C.M. "Rip" Cunningham, Jr., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 4, 2013
TO: Groundfish Oversight Committee
FROM: Terry Stockwell, Groundfish Oversight Committee Chairman
SUBJECT: Committee meeting on Wednesday June 12, 2013

There will be a Groundfish Oversight Committee meeting at the Providence Biltmore in Providence, RI on Wednesday June 12, 2013 at 8:30 AM.

Purpose. The main purpose of the meeting is to continue development of Amendment 18 (A18) to the Northeast Multispecies FMP.

Meeting Materials. Paper copies of the documents listed below will be provided at the meeting. A PDF of each document is posted to www.nefmc.org. Staff will provide copies of any additional meeting materials that are not included in this package. If you have any questions about the documents, please contact Rachel Feeney (rfeeney@nefmc.org; 978-465-0492 ext. 110).

1. Meeting memo (this document)
2. Agenda
3. SSB draft report: "Indicators of Fleet Diversity in the New England Groundfish Fishery"
4. SSB draft report: "Trends in Groundfish Fishery Concentration, 2007-2013"
5. PDT memo re. groundfish permit banks, June 3, 2013
6. Goal and objectives of the Northeast Multispecies FMP
7. Groundfish Committee meeting summary, January 24-15, 2013
8. Groundfish Committee/Advisory Panel meeting summary, March 6, 2013
9. Groundfish Committee meeting summary, April 16-17, 2013
10. Correspondence

Recent activity. On March 6, 2013, the Committee, held a joint meeting with the GAP. While no motions were made, there was general interest in moving forward with amendment development. A list of potential data analyses was generated, related to fishery performance, legal considerations, and hypothetical measures, that may inform the development of A18. Some desire was expressed to potentially revise the goals and objectives based on this additional analysis.

The Groundfish Committee met on April 16 and heard from the PDT on the feasibility of the data analysis requested. The Committee also discussed a letter dated April 8 from the Regional Administrator to the NEFMC encouraging that the objectives of A18 be narrowed to focus on accumulation limits, moving fleet diversity measures to a later action (see Correspondence). The Committee made no motions related to A18, and seemed generally interested in holding off on further action until some of the requested data analysis is available. No motions were made relative to A18 at the April 24-26 Council meeting either.

A18 Purpose and Need. A formal purpose and need statement has not yet been drafted for A18, apart from the statement contained in the Notice of Intent (NOI) for the action, outlining why additional measures are being considered (December 21, 2011, *Federal Register* 76, p. 79153):

“Currently, there are no specific controls on the excessive accumulation or control of fishing privileges in the multispecies fishery. There is concern that the low catch limits, in conjunction with expanded sector management, will lead to excessive consolidation and lack of diversity in the groundfish fleet. Likewise, there is concern regarding consolidation and diversity in the groundfish fleet as stocks rebuild and acceptable biological catches (ABCs) increase.”

A18 Goals. As approved by the Council, June 2010.

1. Maintain inshore and offshore fleets;
2. To the extent possible, maintain a diverse groundfish fishery, including different gear types, vessel sizes, geographic locations, and levels of participation;
3. Maintain a balance in the geographic distribution of permits to protect fishing communities and the infrastructure they provide; and
4. Prohibit any person or government entity from acquiring or controlling excessive access to the resource, in order to prevent extraction of disproportionate economic rents from other permit holders.

A18 Objectives. As approved by the Council, September 2011.

1. To consider the establishment of accumulation caps for the groundfish fishery; and
2. To consider issues associated with fleet diversity in the multispecies fishery.

Preceding Advisory Panel Meeting. Please note the Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) will be meeting on Monday June 10. While there has not been a formal request made by the Groundfish Committee for specific GAP input on A18 development, on March 6, Committee members suggested that the GAP meet separately to develop recommendations on the goals and objectives of A18, whether and how to revise them. On June 12, your agenda includes a report from the GAP Chairman of their June 10 meeting.

Questions to consider. The Committee may want to consider developing recommendations on the following questions, based on data available and knowledge of the fishery:

1. *Purpose and Need.* A refined Purpose and Need statement will be needed, which the goals and objectives would address. What are the most important points that such a statement should articulate? Could the aforementioned statement in the NOI serve this purpose? If not, what are key elements to include?
2. *Goals.* As written, do the A18 goals address the purpose and need that the GAP envisions? Are the outcomes of the goals clear and achievable? Why or why not? If not, how could the A18 goals be refined?
3. *Objectives.* As written, do the A18 objectives address the goals that the GAP envisions? Are the outcomes of the objectives clear and achievable? Why or why not? If not, how could the objectives be refined?

To make the most of your meeting time on June 12, if you feel the goals and objectives should be revised, you are encouraged to prepare ideas in advance and either bring language to the meeting or contact Rachel Feeney (by May 7) who will compile ideas and/or motions. Some ideas for revisions have already been raised (see meeting summaries of March 6 and April 16-17).

Note: If there is time after the Committee develops recommendations/motions on the above questions, the Committee may discuss potential measures that could be developed to achieve the goals and objectives articulated. However, settling on the purpose and need, goals, and objectives of the amendment should occur first.