



New England Fishery Management Council

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E.F. "Terry" Stockwell, Chairman | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 6, 2016
TO: Groundfish Committee
FROM: Frank Blount, Groundfish Committee Chairman
SUBJECT: Groundfish Committee meeting on June 9, 2016

There will be a Groundfish Committee meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn, Boston, MA on Thursday, June 9, starting at 9:00 AM.

Purpose. The purpose of the Committee meeting is to 1) review PDT work to date on developing a sub-ACL for the scallop fishery for northern windowpane flounder and allocating the northern windowpane flounder stock to sectors in the groundfish fishery; and make recommendations to the Council regarding the development of alternatives; 2) review PDT work to date on an action that considers revising the Georges Bank haddock sub-ACL and associated accountability measures; and make recommendations to the Council regarding the development of alternatives; 3) receive an update from the PDT on Committee tasking regarding estimated discards and associated CVs and a draft white paper examining the groundfish monitoring program; and make recommendations to the Council; and 4) discuss other business, as necessary. Under Other Business, the Committee will develop recommendations on NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Priorities.

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 Jamie Cournane (jcournane@nefmc.org; 978-465-0492 ext. 103).

1. Meeting memo (this document)
2. Agenda
3. Northern windowpane flounder management alternatives
 - a. Groundfish PDT memo to Committee – scallop fishery sub-ACL for northern windowpane flounder, June 6, 2016
 - b. Groundfish PDT memo to Committee – allocating northern windowpane flounder to sectors, June 6, 2016

- c. Presentation: PDT report, Council staff (*to be provided*)
- 4. Atlantic herring and Georges Bank haddock action
 - a. Draft Action Plan, May 27, 2016
 - b. Draft Discussion Document, May 27, 2016
 - c. Groundfish PDT memo to Committee – Atlantic herring and Georges Bank haddock action, June 6, 2016
 - d. Summary of Herring Advisory Panel and Committee recommendations, June 1-2, 2016
 - e. Presentation: Council staff overview (*to be provided*)
- 5. Groundfish monitoring program
 - a. Groundfish PDT memo to Committee – CV standard and groundfish catch monitoring, June 6, 2016
 - b. Presentation: PDT report, Council Staff (*to be provided*)
 - c. Presentation: Summary of compliance with groundfish catch reporting, GARFO staff (*to be provided*)
- 6. Enforcement Priorities for Northeast Division, 2012-2017, NOAA OLE
- 7. Groundfish Committee meeting summary, April 7, 2016
- 8. Groundfish Advisory Panel meeting summary, November 12, 2015
- 9. Recreational Advisory Panel meeting summary, November 17, 2015
- 10. Correspondence

To make the most of our meeting time on June 9th, you are encouraged to prepare motions in advance and either bring them to the meeting or send them to Jamie Cournane (jcournane@nefmc.org).

Northern Windowpane Flounder Management Alternatives

Recent Activity: The PDT summarized analysis completed to date on developing a sub-ACL for the scallop fishery for northern windowpane flounder (Doc. 3a) and allocating the northern windowpane flounder stock to sectors in the groundfish fishery (Doc. 3b).

Next Steps: On June 9th, Council staff will provide an overview of the PDT's work (Doc. 3c). After reviewing the analysis, the Committee may wish to develop recommendations to the Council.

The Council is scheduled to receive an update from the Committee at its June 2016 meeting. In addition, Framework Adjustment 56 will be initiated at the meeting.

Atlantic herring - Georges Bank haddock action

Recent activity: In April 2016, the Council initiated a framework to consider amending: the herring fishery catch cap of Georges Bank haddock, associated accountability measures, and their implementation, with a goal to incentivize the midwater trawl fleet to minimize the incidental catch of haddock in the herring fishery while providing the opportunity to fully harvest the sub-ACL of herring for herring management Areas 3 and 1B. The Herring and Groundfish

PDTs have collaborated to develop a Draft Action Plan (Doc. 4a) and a Draft Discussion Document (Doc. 4b). The Groundfish PDT also summarized its preliminary analysis and discussion (Doc. 4c). The Herring Advisory Panel and Committee met earlier this month (June 1 and 2) and provided recommendations of the range of alternatives (Doc 4d.)

Next steps: On June 9, Council staff will provide an overview of the Draft Discussion Document and information and recommendations from the PDTs, AP, and Herring Committee (Doc. 4e). The Committee may wish to develop recommendations to the Council on the range of alternatives for this framework.

At its June 2016 meeting, the Council will consider any motions from the Herring and Groundfish Committees and may approve the range of alternatives. If so, the PDTs would develop the impacts analysis over the summer and potentially bring a draft Environmental Assessment to the Committees prior to the September Council meetings, when the Council may take final action. However, the alternatives may be folded into the framework action developing groundfish specifications for FY2017 (Framework Adjustment 56), which has final action scheduled later (November 2016 or even January 2017). Under either scenario, implementation of measures related to the GB haddock catch cap and AMs is expected in May 2017.

Groundfish Monitoring Program

Recent activity. The PDT completed some of the analysis that the Committee requested (Doc. 5a). Additional analyses are in progress at this time.

Next Steps. On June 9th, Council staff will provide an overview of the PDT's work (Doc. 5b). In addition, GARFO staff will provide a presentation summarizing compliance with groundfish catch reporting (Doc. 5c). The Committee will discuss the analysis and potentially develop recommendations to the Council on possible alternatives for a monitoring action.

The Council is scheduled to receive an update from the Committee at its June 2016 meeting.

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Priorities

Recent Activity: The NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) has National Priorities for 2012-2017 for law enforcement, which contain Regional Priorities for the period. The Northeast Office of OLE seeks feedback on its priorities (Doc. 6) for immediate consideration and as preliminary to the priority setting process next year.

Next Steps: On June 9 under "Other Business", the Committee will develop any feedback relative to the groundfish fishery. Several of the Council's species committees will also provide species-specific feedback. At its next meeting, the Council's Enforcement Committee may consider input from the committees and develop feedback to the OLE.