



New England Fishery Management Council

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

Daniel Salerno, *Chair* | Cate O'Keefe, PhD, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 7, 2026
TO: Small-Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) Committee and Advisory Panel (AP)
FROM: Jackie Odell (Committee chair) and Katie Almeida (AP chair)
SUBJECT: **Purpose and Agenda for Meeting**

Meeting registration: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#).

Meeting materials (to become available): <https://www.nefmc.org/calendar/may-19-2026-whiting-joint-committee-and-advisory-panel-meeting>

The **Small-Mesh Multispecies Committee and Advisory Panel (AP)** will meet jointly at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Warwick, RI and via webinar starting at 9:00 am on May 19, 2026. The meeting will break for lunch and at other times, as needed. Webinar access will be provided.

PURPOSE: The committee will identify a package of alternatives to be considered in a 2026 management action, slated for approval in December 2026 and implemented in May 2027. This action will include updated catch specifications for 2027 to 2031 based on an assessment data update, which also will apply the Council's new risk policy scoring to account for uncertainty.

Depending on the extensiveness of the action, the Council may prepare and submit a specifications document or framework adjustment. If a framework adjustment is required, the Council will initiate it at the June Council meeting. Risk policy factor guidance is under development and will also be approved by the Council in June. The Council will also conduct a global weighting procedure that reflects management's valuation of various sources of risk.

The Council has initiated a 2026 management action to set catch specifications for 2027 up to 2031, with the potential for additional measures to be identified by the Small-Mesh Multispecies Committee. The PDT has performed some preliminary analyses of recent fishery performance, focusing on issues raised at recent AP meetings. These preliminary analyses will be presented and discussed at this meeting.

A PDF of each document is posted to www.nefmc.org. If you have any questions about the documents, please contact Andrew Applegate (aapplegate@nefmc.org); 978-465-0492 ext. 114).

1. Meeting memo and agenda (this memo)
2. AP/PDT workshop summary
3. Staff summary presentation
 - a. 2026 small-mesh multispecies action plan
 - b. Overview of exemption area analyses
 - c. Additional analyses (whiting prices and imports; red hake catches)
4. Small-Mesh Multispecies Exemption Area Issues
 - a. Draft exemption area memo
 - b. Exemption area catch ratio analysis

AGENDA

Small-Mesh Multispecies Plan Committee and Advisory Panel May 19, 2026 Warwick, RI

- 9:00 am Agenda and purpose of meeting.....(Odell)
- 9:30 Small-mesh multispecies management priorities..... (Applegate)
- 2026 action plan
 - Assessment data update planning and new risk policy application
 - Review of specifications and frameworkable measures
- 10:00 Fishery analyses (Applegate)
- Domestic whiting pricing and imports overview
 - Catch specifications and red hake catches
- 11:00 Fishery performance observations (Almeida; Advisory Panel)
- 12:00 Lunch break
- 1:15 Exemption area analyses..... (Council Staff)
- Exemption area history management overview
 - Letters of Authorization and bycatch allowances
 - Exemption area season and boundary adjustments based on large-mesh fishery catch ratios
- 3:15 Recommendations for management alternatives in the 2026 and future actions...(Committee)
- Specifications for 2027-2031
 - Red hake possession limits
 - Adjustments to exemption area management
 - Adjustments to exemption area seasons and boundaries
- 4:30 Other business.....(Odell/Almeida)
- 5:00 Adjourn