



New England
Fishery Management
Council

Scientific and Statistical Committee Subpanel

Peer Review of Standardized Catch-per-Unit-Effort Indices for the Commercial Monkfish Fishery

March 13, 2026

This meeting will be recorded.
Consistent with 16 USC 1852, a copy of
the recording is available upon request.



Agenda

9:00 AM	Welcome, introductions, opening remarks, and agenda review (C. McManus, SSC Subpanel Chair)
9:05	Introductory presentation: Monkfish management and project context (M. Sanderson, Cape Cod Fishermen's Alliance)
9:10	Presentation on background of monkfish management and assessments and Project 1: Incorporating Fishermen's Knowledge into Standardized Catch-Per-Unit-Effort Indices for the Commercial Monkfish Fishery (S. Cadrin, SMAST)
9:50	SSC questions
10:10	Presentation on Project 2: Examining High-Resolution Monkfish CPUE Indices Across Gillnet, Trawl, and Scallop Dredge Fisheries (A. Jones, NEFSC)
10:30	SSC questions
10:50	Public comment
11:00	Break
11:10	Project synthesis and recommendations (S. Cadrin)
11:20	SSC discussion – project evaluation guided by Terms of Reference (C. McManus)
12:45 PM	SSC Subpanel report
1:00	Adjourn

Introductions

SSC Subpanel

- Connor McManus,
Chair
- Lisa Kerr
- Jason McNamee

Researchers

- Sierra Richardson
- Dr. Steven Cadrin
- Dr. Andrew Jones
- Melissa Sanderson
- Aubrey Church

Council Staff

- Jenny Couture
- Rachel Feeney

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the methods and summary products of the two projects to develop standardized monkfish catch per unit effort (CPUE) indices. Provide suggestions for improvements to the methods and/or summary products where appropriate. Topics to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Do the projects clearly define and describe the data sources, methods, and assumptions with a level of detail sufficient to assess results and applicability to monkfish assessment and management?
2. Do the projects characterize trends in monkfish catches by gear type and monkfish management area?
 - i. Are there additional data sources, aggregations, resolutions, etc. that should be considered?
 - ii. Are key areas of uncertainty identified and addressed?
3. Are the conclusions regarding the trawl and gillnet CPUE comparisons to the NEFSC bottom trawl surveys scientifically robust?

TERMS OF REFERENCE

B. Evaluate utility of the project outcomes and what project modifications would improve their utility. Topics to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Whether project outcomes should be used individually or if they can also be used in combination given the differences in methods and assumptions.
2. Whether and how project outcomes could inform future monkfish stock assessments.
3. Whether and how project outcomes could inform management approaches, such as how monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) and monkfish trip possession limits are determined?

Motivation for Research

- I-Smooth stock assessment approach for data-poor stocks
 - Fishery Independent Surveys to determine direction and magnitude of changes in stock abundance
 - Assumptions: 1) the fishery independent survey adequately and consistently catches monkfish and 2) the recent trend in the survey reflects the stock's response to recent fishery catch
 - Challenge: monkfish catch is dependent on external factors like price, market conditions, interactions with skate wing fishery, environmental conditions, and number of vessels targeting monkfish
- Calls for development of alternative assessment methods/additional survey indices by Council, RSA Priorities, and SSC

Context for CPUE Indices

Two separate but complementary technical products using fishery dependent data that should be evaluated individually but they are not competing – the researchers collaborated.

1. FY2023 Research Set Aside Project (*NA23NMF4540355-T1-0*)
2. Jones & Legault Technical Memo - NEFSC Study Fleet

2023–2024 Monkfish Research Set-Aside Awards

Institution	Project Title	Research Budget	Allocation (DAS)
Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Suffolk County	Addressing Monkfish Management Needs by Developing a Standardized Catch per Unit Effort Time Series	\$140,209	2023: 250 2024: 150
Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, Inc.	Incorporating Fishermen's Knowledge into a Standardized Catch Per Unit Effort Index for the Commercial Monkfish Gillnet Fishery	\$150,344	2023: 250 2024: 200

Unavailable: Cornell Cooperative Extension's FY23 RSA Project (CPUE indices expanded to also include fishery independent data)

Peer Review Goals

In this review, the subpanel will:

1. review the methods presented for developing monkfish CPUE indices,
2. consider how this research can inform future monkfish stock assessments and management measures, and
3. provide any recommendations for improving the research.

This technical review follows the [Council's Research Review Policy](#), consistent with National Standard 2 Guidelines.