

**DRAFT New England Fishery Management Council Timelines
September 17, 2015**

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SCALLOPS

1. Scallop Framework Adjustment 27

OBJECTIVE: 2016-2017 Scallop Specifications – fishery specifications only

2015	
JUN 16-18	NEFMC – Council initiates action
JUL-SEP	Committee / PDT develop alternatives
SEP 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – receive information on the development of specifications
OCT 13-14	SSC recommends ABC for fishing year 2016 and default ABC for fishing year 2017
OCT-NOV	PDT completes documents
DEC 1-3	NEFMC – Council takes final action
2016	
DEC-JAN	Council staff finalize Environmental Assessment (EA)
JAN	EA reviewed by NMFS
FEB	Staff submits documents for NMFS review and approval
APR 18 – MAY 18	Target Implementation

2. Scallop Amendment 19

OBJECTIVE: Implement measures to implement fishery specifications closer to the start of the scallop fishing year

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Deirdre Boelke

2015	
JUN 16-18	NEFMC – Council initiates action
JUL-SEP	Committee / PDT develop alternatives
SEP 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – Council selects preferred alternatives
OCT 13-14	SSC recommends ABC for fishing year 2016 and default ABC for fishing year 2017
OCT-NOV	PDT completes documents
DEC 1-3	NEFMC – Council takes final action
2016	
DEC-JAN	Council staff finalize Environmental Assessment (EA)
JAN	EA reviewed by NMFS
FEB	Staff submits documents for NMFS review and approval
APR 18 – MAY 18	Target Implementation

GROUND FISH

1. Amendment 18 – Accumulation Limits & Fleet Diversity

OBJECTIVE: Amendment to consider accumulation limits; measures to preserve fleet diversity, measures to enable US-Canada quota trading, measures for permit banks; other measures.

The Council is waiting for guidance from NMFS about whether an EIS will be required.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Rachel Feeney

TARGET COMPLETION DATE: APR 2015

TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: MAY 1, 2015

MILESTONES	PLANNED	COMPLETED (✓) / PROJECTED
1. Staff completes draft Fleet Diversity, Allocation, and Excessive Shares whitepaper	SEP 2010	✓
2. NMFS publishes control date for A18	APR 2011	✓
3. Accumulation Limits Workshop	JUN 2011	✓
4. Committee approves scoping document	AUG 2011	✓
5. Council approves scoping document	SEP 2011	✓
6. Scoping hearings	NOV-DEC 2011	✓JAN 2012 ¹⁻
7. Council reviews scoping comments	JAN 2012	✓JUN 2012 ²⁻
8. Council considers fishery performance data and sets goals & objectives for the amendment	MAR-JUN 2013 ³⁻	✓JUN 2013
9. Independent peer review of Compass-Lexecon report on excessive shares in the groundfish fishery	APR-MAY 2015	✓JUN 2015 ⁴⁻
10. Council <u>partially</u> approves range of alternatives for DEIS		✓JUN 2015 ⁵⁻
11. Council approves remaining range of alternatives for DEIS	JAN 2015	✓NOV 2014 ⁶⁻
12. Council approves DEIS & selects preferred alternatives	APR 2015	✓APR 2015
13. NMFS accepts DEIS	JUN 2015	✓ JUN 2015
14. Public hearings - 45-day comment period	JUL – AUG	✓ JUL-AUG 2015
15. Council votes on final action	SEP 2015	SEP 2015
16. Amendment & FEIS submitted to NMFS	NOV 2015	NOV-2015
17. Revisions, final submission of amendment & FEIS, review, and deeming of proposed regulations. NMFS publishes NOA. 60-day public comment period	NOV 2015 - FEB 2015	NOV-DEC 2015
18. Implementation	TBD	MAY 2016

1. Delayed by additional time needed to complete Framework 47

2. Further delayed from April until June by Executive Committee decision on to extend the comment period by an additional 60 days

3. The Council revised Groundfish priorities for 2012 and put several actions ahead of the completion of Amendment 18.

4. The results of this review of the Compass Lexecon report will not be available until a later time.

5. The Council delayed approving the full range of alternatives to include measures that address fishing effort in the inshore Gulf of Maine.

6. The Council delayed approving the full range of alternatives because discussion about GOM cod management issues for FW53 and emergency action did not leave enough time at the Sep-Oct Council meeting.

2. Framework 55: FY 2016-2018 Specifications for Groundfish Stocks and other measures

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Jamie Cournane

2015	
JUN 16-18	NEFMC – Council initiates framework
JUL	TRAC assessments for US/CA stocks including GB yellowtail flounder
SEP 1	SSC recommends ABC for GB yellowtail flounder
SEP 9-10	TMGC recommends TACs for US/CA stocks
SEP 14-18	Assessment updates for all groundfish stocks (except for GB yellowtail flounder)
SEP 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – Council reviews progress on setting specifications for groundfish stocks, the three U.S./Canada stocks for 2016 & other measures in the framework
OCT 13-14	SSC recommends ABCs for all groundfish stocks except for US/CA stocks
DEC 1-3	NEFMC – Council takes final action/approves framework
2016	
JAN	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAY 1	Implementation

3. At-Sea Monitoring (ASM) Action

OBJECTIVE: Develop alternatives to enable the Groundfish fishery to meet future at-sea monitoring needs under the Multispecies FMP

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Jamie Cournane
 TARGET COMPLETION DATE: TBD
 TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: TBD

Herring

1. Specifications for fishing years 2016-2018

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Lori Steele

2015	
Jan-June	Herring PDT compiles fishery data – Atlantic herring catch, observer coverage, RH/S catch, etc. – to be utilized for development of alternatives/options and analyses in specifications package
April 8-9	Atlantic Herring Operational Stock Assessment Meeting
May 13	Herring PDT reviews Atlantic herring operational stock assessment results and begins preparing for SSC discussion of 2016-2018 ABC specification
May 22	SSC reviews stock assessment and develops recommendations for 2016-2018 Atlantic Herring ABC specification
June 16-18	NEFMC – receive herring operational assessment results, SSC recommendations, and select OFL and ABC specifications for 2016-2018
July 22	Herring Committee discuss ABC and management uncertainty, and develop alts/options for sub-ACLs and RH/S catch caps
August	Herring PDT develops analysis of sub-ACL options, RH/S catch cap options, and other specifications; prepares Draft 2016-2018 Specifications Package
Sept 14-15	Herring Committee/AP review draft specifications document and PDT analysis; develop recommendations re. final 2016-2018 specifications
SEPT 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – review draft specifications document and recommend final 2016-2018 herring fishery specifications
October	Preliminary submission of 2016-2018 Atlantic herring fishery specifications package
Nov-Dec	Final Submission of 2016-2018 Atlantic herring fishery specifications package
2016	
Jan-Feb	Implementation

2. Amendment 8 – EBFM based control rule for herring

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Rachel Feeney/ Deirdre Boelke

TARGET COMPLETION DATE:

TBD

WHITING (Small Mesh Multispecies)

1. Multispecies Amendment 21 – Small Mesh Multispecies Limited Access (**DRAFT TIMELINE**)

OBJECTIVE: Develop Limited access program for Small Mesh Multispecies FMP which includes whiting.
 STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Andrew Applegate

2015	
May-Aug	Draft scoping document
Jun-Jul	Whiting PDT compiles fishery data – Catch history data; update affected environment/SAFE Report data
June-July	Staff conducts public hearings and compiles or summarize comments
June-July	GARFO & NEFSC staff prepare small-mesh multispecies fishery monitoring report and red hake operational assessments
August	Whiting PDT finalizes annual monitoring report with management advice
SEPT 29-OCT 1	NEFMC - approve scoping document for Amendment 22 - receive annual monitoring report and decide whether additional whiting management action is needed – additional action may delay Amendment 22
TBD	Scoping hearings
2016	
JAN 26-28	Council reviews scoping comments
TBD	PDT develops draft limited access alternatives and analyzes their potential effects
TBD	Whiting Committee/AP develop range of limited access alternatives
TBD	NEFMC – Approve range of limited access alternatives for further analysis
TBD	Whiting PDT analyzes range of alts in Am 22 and develops Draft EIS
TBD	Whiting AP/Committee review Draft Am22/DEIS, recommend preferred alternative
TBD	NEFMC - Review draft amendment and select preferred alternatives
TBD	Submit DEIS; NEPA comment period begins
TBD	GARFO and NEFSC prepare small-mesh multispecies fishery monitoring report
TBD	Staff conducts public hearings for Draft Amendment 22
TBD	Whiting PDT finalizes annual monitoring report with management advice
TBD	NEFMC – Review public comments, committee recommendations and select final measures to submit for review and approval
TBD	Whiting PDT develops Final EIS
TBD	Amendment 22 preliminary submission
TBD	Amendment 22 Final submission early 2017
TBD	Implementation

1. A control date for this action was published on November 28, 2012.

HABITAT

1. Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 2, Phases I & II

OBJECTIVE: Designate EFH, and HAPCs as necessary, for all managed species; minimize the adverse effects of fishing on EFH to the extent practicable in a consistent manner across all FMPs; evaluate and possibly modify system of groundfish closures.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Michelle Bachman

MILESTONES	PLANNED / REVISED COMPLETION DATE	COMPLETED (✓) / PROJECTED
1. Phase 1 scoping hearings	MAR 2004	✓
2. Council approves EFH designations (Phase 1)	JUN 2007	✓
3. Peer Review of Habitat Models	FEB 2011	✓
4. Committee develops alternatives to minimize, to the extent practicable, adverse effects of fishing on EFH (including coral alts)	MAY-JUN 2011	Through AUG 2011
5. PDT analyzes adverse effects minimization alternatives (including coral alts)	MAY-JUN 2011	✓MAY-SEP 2011
6. Habitat Committee finalizes adverse effects minimization options (=habitat options), forwards to joint process with groundfish	Winter 2011-2012	✓FEB 2012
7. Council approves deep-sea coral alternatives for analysis	APR 2012	✓
8. Council moves deep-sea coral alternatives into a separate action	SEP 2012	✓
9. Habitat Committee develops Designated Habitat Research Area (DHRA) options	n/a	✓
10. Groundfish CATT/PDT/AP/Committee develop options for groundfish areas	DEC-MAR 2013	✓DEC-MAR 2013 ² .
11. Council reviews groundfish options ³.	APR 23-25 2013	NA
12. Habitat and Groundfish Committees package habitat and groundfish options into alternatives ⁴ .	MAR-APR 2013	✓MAY-JUN 2013
13. Council approves packaged habitat /groundfish alternatives, including DHRAs, for analysis in DEIS	APR 2013	✓JUN 2013
14. Council approves Omnibus 2 draft EIS; selects preferred alternatives	JUN 2013	✓FEB 2014 ⁵ .
15. Preliminary submission of DEIS	<i>added milestone</i>	✓MAY 2014
16. NMFS completes review of preliminary submission	<i>early JUL 2014</i>	✓JUL-SEP 2014
17. Final submission of Omnibus 2 DEIS (combining EFH and HAPC designations, habitat/groundfish alternatives, and DHRAs)	<i>JUN 2014 ⁶.</i>	✓SEP-OCT 2015
18. NMFS publishes NOA, starts 45-day comment period	<i>JUL 2014 ⁶.</i>	✓OCT 2014
19. Public hearings	<i>AUG 2014 ⁶.</i>	✓ NOV 2014-JAN 2015
20. Council reviews public comments, selects final alternatives	NOV 2014	✓ APR - JUN 2015 ⁶ .
21. Staff submission of amendment and FEIS to NMFS	<i>JAN 2014</i>	OCT 2015
22. NMFS provide comments on submission		NOV-18-15
23. Staff revisions submitted to NMFS		DEC-3-15
24. Proposed rule published		JAN-25-16
25. Final rule published		APR-29-16
26. Implementation	<i>AUG 2015 ⁶.</i>	MAY-30-16

1. Planned completion dates for pending items are based on the November 2012 timeline.

2. CATT convened in August 2012. Projected completion of this step was pushed back due to delay in Groundfish Framework 48 and complexity of technical issues and analyses.
3. Step added to January 2013 timeline for clarification.
4. Delayed from NOV 2013 because of Federal government shutdown and Council decision in DEC 2013 to request more complete analysis of alternatives
5. Revised as a result of alternatives added at Feb 25-26, 2015 Council meeting

2. Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment

OBJECTIVE: Designate deep-sea coral protection zones in the Gulf of Maine, continental slope and canyons, and New England seamounts, and develop fishing restrictions to protect corals within those zones.

PROJECT MANAGER: Michelle Bachman
TARGET COMPLETION DATE: To be determined (TBD)
TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: To be determined (TBD)

Comments: work on the coral amendment will be reinitiated once the Council completes Omnibus EFH Amendment 2. The Mid-Atlantic Council is pursuing a similar action and efforts and analyses will be coordinated between the two Councils. The timeline may be compressed if an Environmental Assessment can be completed, rather than an EIS.

MILESTONES	PLANNED ¹ .	COMPLETED (✓) / PROJECTED
1. Council directed PDT to evaluate information related to deep-sea corals and develop alternatives for deep-sea coral protection	-	✓ FEB 2008
2. Committee and PDT develop deep-sea coral alternatives	-	✓ SEP 2010-APR 2012
3. Advisory Panel reviews deep-sea coral alternatives	-	✓ JAN 2012
4. Council approves deep-sea coral alternatives for analysis	APR 2012	✓
5. Council splits coral alternatives from Omnibus EFH Amendment 2; initiate separate coral action	SEP 2012	✓ SEP 2012
6. Council develops and approves MOU with MAFMC and SAFMC coordinating coral management activities	SEP 2012	✓ JUN 2013
7. Council approves Omnibus Coral draft EIS (or EA) and public hearing document; selects preferred alternatives	NOV 2012	Spring 2016 ²
8. Staff submits Omnibus Coral draft EIS/EA	DEC 2012	Spring/summer 2016
9. NMFS publishes NOA, starts 45-day comment period (perhaps reduced in scope if EA)	JAN 2012	TBD
10. Public hearings (perhaps reduced in scope if EA)	JAN 2012	TBD
11. Council approves Coral Amendment EIS (or EA)	APR 2013	TBD
12. Final submission of amendment and FEIS to NMFS	JUN 2013	TBD
13. Implementation	DEC 2013	TBD

1. Planned dates were based on the coral amendment being completed before Omnibus EFH Amendment 2; however the Council decided to finish the coral amendment after the Omnibus EFH A2 submission.
2. Tentative. Timing will depend on other priorities and time required to revise management alternatives.

MONKFISH

1. Framework Adjustment 9 (Groundfish Framework 54)

OBJECTIVE: The framework modifies the DAS system for monkfish and groundfish

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Fiona Hogan

2014	
NOV	NEFMC – Council initiates framework
2015	
JAN	Committee develops management alternatives
APR	NEFMC – Council approves range of alternatives
MAR-JUN	PDT analyzes alternatives
JUN	MAFMC approves framework
JUN	NEFMC – Council approves framework
OCT	Final submission of framework to NMFS ¹ .
2016	
MAY 1	Implementation

1. Completion of economic analysis delayed from Aug 2015

2. Monkfish Amendment 6

OBJECTIVE: The framework would address measures currently included in A6 that could be implemented via a framework action, e.g. modifications to the DAS system. A6 would consider catch shares including sectors and IFQs in the Monkfish FMP, and would address latent effort. A6 would be completed after the framework.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Fiona Hogan
TARGET COMPLETION DATE: To be determined (TBD)
TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: To be determined (TBD)

MILESTONES	PLANNED	COMPLETED (✓) / PROJECTED
1. Committee restarts the development of management alternatives for A6	SEP 2015	TBD
2. NEFMC approves Amendment 6 alternatives for analysis in Draft EIS (including voter eligibility)*	SEP 2016	TBD
3. <i>MAFMC approves Amendment 6 alternatives for analysis in Draft EIS (including voter eligibility)*</i>	OCT 2016	TBD
4. NEFMC approves Draft Amendment 6/Draft EIS, public hearing document & selects preferred alternatives	JAN 2017	TBD
5. <i>MAFMC approves Draft Amendment 6/Draft EIS, public hearing document & selects preferred alternatives</i>	FEB 2017	TBD
6. Public Hearings	APR 2017	TBD
7. NEFMC reviews public and advisor comments and O/S recommendations; approves final Amendment 6 measures	JUN 2017	TBD
8. <i>MAFMC reviews public and advisor comments and O/S recommendations; approves final Amendment 6 measures</i>	JUL 2017	TBD
9. NMFS prepares and conducts referendum (including proposed and final rule), tally results; concurrent with FEIS preparation	JUN 2018	TBD
10. Staff submits FEIS for preliminary review	AUG2018	TBD
11. Final submission of amendment & FEIS to NMFS	OCT 2018	TBD
12. NMFS review/approval/publish proposed rule	NOV 2018	TBD
13. Implementation	MAY 2019	TBD

1. Timing refers to original amendment timeline
2. If Council includes ITQ program requiring a referendum

SKATES

1. Framework 3 and /or Specifications for FY 2016-2017

PROJECT MANAGER: Fiona Hogan

Year 2015	
JUL-SEP	PDT develops monitoring report
SEP 1	SSC recommends ABC for skate complex
SEP 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – Council considers whether to initiate a framework adjustment if measures need to be added to the specifications
OCT - NOV	Committee & PDT develop & analyze alternatives
DEC 1-3	NEFMC – Council approves framework/specifications
Year 2016	
JAN	Final submission of framework/specifications document to NMFS
MAY 1	Implementation

Industry-funded Monitoring Amendment

OBJECTIVE: Develop an industry-funded monitoring program to meeting monitoring objectives for all FMPs

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Lori Steele/ Monitoring Amendment FMAT

TARGET COMPLETION DATE: JULY 2015

TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: JAN 2015

MILESTONES	PROJECTED	COMPLETED (✓) / PROJECTED
1. FMAT begins work on action	FEB 2013	✓
2. NMFS provides NEFMC guidance on type of action required and possible funding mechanisms	SEP 2013	✓ NOV 2013
3. Councils approve draft range coverage target range of alternatives of alternatives to be analyzed	JAN / FEB 2015	✓ JAN / FEB 2015
4. PDT/FMAT/Councils develop alternatives, draft EA	FEB-OCT 2015 ¹	✓ FEB –APR 2015
5. Councils approve additional alternatives for inclusion in an Environmental Assessment		✓ APR 2015 ²
6. Councils approve draft EA for public review	NOV-DEC 2015	SEP 2015
7. Councils take final action	JAN-FEB 2015	DEC 2015
8. Final rule published	JUN 2015	APR 2016
9. Final rule effective	JUL 2015	MAY 2016

1. New timeline proposed by NMFS in response to comments at NEFMC and MAFMC meeting that the public and Councils would like more opportunity to provide input and consider the implications of the action.
2. Council added portside sampling alternative which required further analysis

Background

Timelines are provided for actions that have not been submitted for final review and approval. They are updated only after review by the Executive Committee or at the direction of the Council Chair between Executive Committee meetings.

Notes on major changes to timelines since September 2014

1. Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2 - Public hearings were delayed from September- October 2014 to November 2014 - January 2015 and final action delayed from January 2015 to April 2015 due to longer time than expected for the review of DEIS and to respond to NMFS comments including addressing additional concerns about possible changes to the protection of spawning cod. In April 2015 the Council was not able to complete final action on the amendment, thereby delaying it until June 2015.
2. Multispecies Amendment 18 - Final action delayed from NOV 2014 to to include measures that address fishing effort in the inshore Gulf of Maine. There had been two timelines for this action: one that included the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a shorter one that included the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA). The shorter timeline was dropped when the Council decided to prepare an EIS instead of an EA.