

**New England Fishery Management Council Timelines**

**November 2, 2017**

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## **Background**

Preliminary or draft timelines may be provided for actions for which Action Plans have not been formally approved; however, they will be revised as needed when Actions Plans are available. The Council, together with GARFO and the NEFSC, will develop action plans for all regulatory actions as soon as practicable.

Timelines are provided for actions until they have been approved or disproved by NMFS. They are updated only after review by the Executive Committee or at the direction of the Council Chair between Executive Committee meetings or as part of the process for updating action plans.

## SCALLOPS

### 1. Framework 29 Specifications for FY 2018 and 2019 Default, Etc.

**Scope:** 2018-2019 Scallop Specifications; NGOM management measures; AMs for N. windowpane, GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, modify scallop access and open area boundaries consistent with Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Jonathon Peros

<b>2017</b>	
<b>APR 18</b>	<b>NEFMC – Council initiates action</b>
MAY	PDT work on 2017 priorities
JUN	Committee / PDT develop alternatives
<b>JUN 20-22</b>	<b>NEFMC – receives information on development of management measures</b>
JUL-SEP	Committee / PDT develop alternatives
<b>SEP 26-28</b>	<b>NEFMC – receives information on the development of specifications</b>
OCT	SSC recommends ABC for FY17 and FY18
OCT-NOV	Committee and PDT complete documents
<b>DEC 5-7</b>	<b>NEFMC – Council takes final action</b>
DEC-JAN	Council staff submits decision draft completes pre-submission
<b>2018</b>	
JAN	NMFS publishes proposed rule
JAN	EA reviewed by NMFS
FEB	Staff completes final submission for NMFS review and approval
MAR	NMFS publishes final rule
APR 1	Target Implementation

## GROUND FISH

### 1. Framework 57 FY 2018-2020 Groundfish Specifications, etc.

**Scope:** Incorporate status changes / set specifications for all groundfish stocks for FY 2018 - 2020 and for FY 2018 for US/Canada stocks (EGB cod and haddock, and G yellowtail flounder; evaluate the common pool trimester TACs; modify Atlantic halibut management; modify S. windowpane flounder AMs for large-mesh non-groundfish fisheries (e.g., scup and summer flounder; revise the recreational management measures process.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Jamie Cournane

2017	
<b>JUN 20-22</b>	<b>NEFMC – Council initiates framework</b>
JUL	TRAC assessments for US/CA stocks including GB yellowtail flounder
AUG 8	SSC recommends ABC for GB yellowtail flounder
SEP	TMGC recommends TACs for US/CA stocks
SEP 11-15	Operational Assessments for all groundfish stocks (except for GB yellowtail flounder)
<b>SEP 26-28</b>	<b>NEFMC – Receives an update on the development of the action, approve range of alternatives, including discussing US/CA stocks</b>
OCT 23-24	SSC recommends ABCs for groundfish stocks (except for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder)
<b>DEC 5-7</b>	<b>NEFMC – Council takes final action/approves framework</b>
DEC	SSC recommends ABC for GB Atlantic halibut
2018	
<b>JAN 30 – FEB 1</b>	<b>NEFMC – Provide recommendations to GARFO for FY 2018 recreational measures for GOM cod and haddock</b>
TBD	Preliminary submission
TBD	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAY 1	Implementation

## 2. Amendment 23 Groundfish Monitoring

**Scope:** Consider changes to the groundfish monitoring and reporting system to ensure it is providing accurate catch information necessary to manage the fishery efficiently

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Jamie Cournane

<b>2017</b>	
MAR - APR	Council holds scoping hearings
APR- MAY	Groundfish Committee/PDT review scoping comments
MAY	AP develops recommendations
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council receives scoping comments; discusses purpose/need and range of alternatives</b>
TBD	Groundfish Committee/PDT develop alternatives and analyses
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council receives progress report</b>
TBD	Groundfish Committee/PDT continue develop alternatives and analyses
<b>2018</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council receives progress report</b>
TBD	Groundfish Committee/PDT continue develop alternatives and analyses
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Council approves range of alternatives</b>
TBD	Preparation of EA or EIS
TBD	Public hearings and comment period
<b>TBD</b>	<b>NEFMC – Council takes final action/approves amendment</b>
<b>2019</b>	
MAY 1	Target Implementation

## 3. Other Groundfish priority timelines to be developed

<b>2017</b>
Process for review of groundfish catch in other fisheries; to include state water and other sub- component analysis review, identifying those stocks and segments of the fishery where sub-component catch exceeds 5 percent and determine if additional sub-ACLs are needed.
Investigate reclassification of both windowpane flounder stocks as Ecosystem Component Species, and other approaches that will improve flexibility.
<b>MULTIYEAR</b>
Staff: Cod Stock Structure Workshop

# Herring

## 1. Amendment 8 – MSE for ABC control rule / localized depletion

**Scope:** Account for the role of Atlantic herring within the ecosystem including its role as forage (via revising the ABC control rule), to stabilize the fishery at a level designed to achieve OY, and to address localized depletion in inshore waters.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS: Deirdre Boelke/Rachel Feeney

<b>2015</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review action plan and approve scoping document</b>
FEB-APR	NOI for developing an EIS is published – Scoping period
<b>JUN</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review EBFM Report and A8 scoping comments; revise goals and objectives; recommends peer review of Management Strategy Evaluation</b>
AUG-SEP	Supplemental scoping period regarding expanded scope of A8 (localized depletion)
DEC	Herring PDT reviews scoping comments, discusses technical analyses to support A8
<b>2016</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review scoping comments, approve MSE approach to developing ABC control rule alternatives</b>
FEB-APR	Herring PDT, AP, Committee work to develop background information and alternatives regarding localized depletion. Planning for MSE workshop.
MAY	Public workshop on MSE.
<b>JUN</b>	<b>NEFMC – approve range of ABC control rule objectives, performance metrics and control rules to be evaluated. Continued development of localized depletion alternatives.</b>
JUL - DEC	MSE and localized depletion-related work continues
<b>2017</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>NEFMC – Discuss range of alternatives for MSE CR alternatives only</b>
MAR	Independent peer review of MSE analysis
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC – Approve range of alternatives for Draft EIS</b>
MAY- SEP	Impacts analysis
<b>SEP</b>	<b>NEFMC – Select preferred alternatives for ABC control rule</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review/approve Draft EIS for public hearings, select preferred alternatives for localized depletion measures</b>
<b>2018</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review public comments</b>
<b>JUN</b>	<b>NEFMC - Select final preferred alternatives</b>
TBD	Preliminary submission of amendment document including EIS
TBD	Final submission of amendment document including EIS
TBD	Implementation of action

## WHITING (Small Mesh Multispecies)

### 1. Amendment 22 – Limited Access

**Scope:** Develop Limited access program for the Small Mesh Multispecies FMP, which includes whiting, red hake and offshore hake.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Andrew Applegate

2015	
MAY-AUG	Draft scoping document
AUG-SEP	Whiting PDT finalizes annual monitoring report with management advice
<b>SEP 29-OCT 1</b>	<b>NEFMC - approve scoping document for Amendment 22; receive annual monitoring report; decide whether additional whiting management action is needed</b>
DEC -JAN	Staff conducts scoping hearings and summarizes comments
2016	
<b>JAN 26-28</b>	<b>NEFMC - review scoping comments and approve scope of amendment</b>
FEB-NOV	Whiting Committee/AP develop range of alternatives
MAR-SEP	PDT prepares preliminary analysis of alternatives and potential effects, committee and advisory panel identify range of qualification criteria alternatives
<b>NOV</b>	<b>NEFMC - Committee report on limited access qualification criteria alternatives</b>
2017	
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC – Approve range of alternatives for DEIS analysis</b>
MAR-MAY	Whiting PDT analyzes range of alternatives and develops Draft EIS
MAY-AUG	Whiting AP/Committee review Draft amendment /DEIS, recommend preferred alternatives
<b>SEP</b>	<b>NEFMC - Review draft amendment and select preferred alternatives</b>
<b>OCT-NOV</b>	<b>Staff works with PDT to finalize analyses and complete draft document</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>NEFMC – Approve range of alternatives for DEIS analysis</b>
2018	
JAN	Submit DEIS; NEPA comment period begins
JAN-FEB	Staff prepares public hearing documents and schedules public hearings.
MAR	Public hearings
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC – Review public comments, committee recommendations and select final measures to submit for review and approval</b>
MAY	Whiting PDT develops Final EIS
JUN	Amendment 22 preliminary submission
AUG	Amendment 22 final submission
SEP-DEC	NMFS reviews amendment; publishes final rule
2018	
JAN-MAR	Qualification and appeals process
TBD	Implementation

## 2. 2018-2020 Specifications

**Scope:** Small mesh multispecies (silver hake, offshore hake, red hake specifications for FY 2018-2020.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Andrew Applegate

2017	
APR-MAY	Staff prepares action plan, review by PDT
JUL-AUG	GARFO and NEFSC prepare small-mesh multispecies fishery monitoring report, including assessment update for red and silver hake stocks
AUG	Whiting PDT finalizes annual monitoring report with management advice
<b>SEP 26-28</b>	<b>NEFMC – Receive annual monitoring report &amp; approval of ABC specification, possession limit, and exemption area alternatives</b>
SEP-OCT	Staff and PDT prepare specifications document
OCT 12	SSC develops ABC recommendations
<b>DEC 5-7</b>	<b>NEFMC - Approve specifications document with preferred alternatives</b>
DEC-JAN	Preliminary submission of documents for NMFS review
2018	
JAN-FEB	NMFS comments / final submission
FEB-MAY	NMFS final review and approval
MAY 1, 2018	Implementation



## HABITAT

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

**Scope:** 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	<b>APR 2012</b>	✓
8. Council moves deep-sea coral alternatives into a separate action	<b>SEP 2012</b>	✓
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 <sup>2</sup> .
<b>11. Council reviews groundfish options <sup>3</sup>.</b>	<b>APR 23-25 2013</b>	NA
12. Habitat and Groundfish Committees package habitat and groundfish options into alternatives <sup>4</sup>	MAR-APR 2013	✓MAY-JUN 2013
<b>13. Council approves packaged habitat /groundfish alternatives, including DHRAs, for analysis in DEIS</b>	<b>APR 2013</b>	✓JUN 2013
<b>14. Council approves Omnibus 2 draft EIS; selects preferred alternatives</b>	<b>JUN 2013</b>	✓FEB 2014 <sup>5</sup> .
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 <sup>6</sup>.</i>	✓SEP-OCT 2015
18. NMFS publishes NOA, starts 45-day comment period	<i>JUL 2014 <sup>6</sup>.</i>	✓OCT 2014
19. Public hearings	<i>AUG 2014 <sup>6</sup>.</i>	✓ NOV 2014-JAN 2015
<b>20. Council reviews public comments, selects final alternatives</b>	<i>NOV 2014</i>	✓ APR - JUN 2015 <sup>6</sup> .
21. Preliminary submission of amendment and FEIS to NMFS	<i>JAN 2014</i>	✓ JAN 2016 <sup>7</sup> .
22. NMFS provide comments on submission		✓ APR 2016
23. Staff revisions submitted to NMFS	<b>MAY 2016 <sup>8</sup>.</b>	✓AUG 2016
24. Notice of availability published		<b>OCT 2017</b>
25. Proposed rule published <sup>9</sup> .	<b>FEB 2017</b>	<b>NOV 2017</b>

MILESTONES	PLANNED / <i>REVISED</i> COMPLETION DATE	COMPLETED (✓) / <b>PROJECTED</b>
26. Final rule published	JUL 2017	JAN 2018 ???
27. Implementation	AUG 2017	APR-MAY 2018 ???

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
6. Delayed because Council modified previously identified alternatives
7. Additional time required to analyze final preferred alternatives
8. Additional time required because extensive revisions were required to address comments
9. Timing of steps 25, 26, and 27 is estimated, and could be later than indicated.

## 2. Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment

**Scope:** 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.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Michelle Bachman

<b>2008-2013</b>	
FEB 2008	Council directed PDT to evaluate information related to deep-sea corals and develop alternatives for deep-sea coral protection
2010-2012	Committee and PDT develop alternatives
<b>APR 2012</b>	<b>Council approves range of alternatives for analysis</b>
AUG 2012	Notice of intent to split habitat amendment
<b>SEP 2012</b>	<b>Council splits coral alternatives from Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2</b>
<b>JUN 2013</b>	<b>Council approves MOU to coordinate with MAFMC and SAFMC on coral protection</b>
<b>2015</b>	
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council approves remaining aspects of OHA2</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council identifies coral amendment as 2016 priority</b>
DEC 4 & 15	Habitat PDT meetings
<b>2016</b>	
MAR	Habitat Committee meeting
AUG-FEB 2017	PDT analysis, development of draft EA
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
<b>NOV</b>	<b>Council reviews preliminary impacts analysis; refines range of alternatives</b>
<b>2017</b>	
MAR	Develop EA, Advisory Panel review, additional Committee work, workshop
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council finalizes range of alternatives including final zone boundaries, prior to hearings, selects preferred alternatives</b>
MAY-JUN	Public hearings
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Final action postponed to consider new alternative</b>
JUL 2017 - JAN 2018	PDT/COMMITTEE work to further analyze/consider new alternative for continental slope/canyons
<b>SEP, DEC</b>	<b>Updates on work to further analyze/consider new alternative for continental slope/canyons</b>
<b>2018</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
APR	Submission of Deep-Sea Coral Amendment and final EA
NOV	Implementation (assuming 7 months for review and rulemaking)

### 3. Habitat - Clam dredge exemption framework - preliminary timeline

**Scope:** Identify possible exemption areas for hydraulic clam dredges within two management areas proposed in Omnibus EFH Amendment 2

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Michelle Bachman

<b>2015</b>	
<b>SEPT 29-OCT 1</b>	<b>NEFMC – Initiates framework</b>
NOV 23	Habitat PDT meeting
<b>DEC 1-3</b>	<b>NEFMC – Identifies as 2016 priority</b>
<b>2016</b>	
MAR, AUG	Habitat Committee meetings – PDT update
NOV-DEC	PDT work
<b>2017</b>	
<b>JAN, SEP</b>	<b>Council updates</b>
OCT	Notice of availability for OHA2
JUL-DEC	PDT work on data to support framework
DEC	PDT/AP meeting to develop alternatives
<b>2018</b>	
JAN	Decision date for OHA2
JAN-APR	Committee develops alternatives
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council selects range of alternatives for analysis</b>
MAY-JUN	Draft framework document/EA, Committee identifies preferred alternatives
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council takes final action on framework</b>
AUG	Submission of Clam Exemption Framework
<b>2019</b>	
JAN	Implementation

\* Timing will depend on the publication and decision dates for Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2, since this is a trailing framework to that amendment.

# SKATES

## 1. Skate Framework Adjustment 4

**Scope:** Revise possession limits to reduce the likelihood of overages occurring in FY2017

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Fiona Hogan

<b>2017</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council initiates framework</b>
APR-JUN	PDT develops & analyzes alternatives
JUN	Committee initiates framework
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council approves framework</b>
<b>NOV</b>	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
<b>FEB</b>	Implementation

## 2. Framework 5 - Specifications FYs 2018 - 2019; landing of barndoor

**Scope:** Set specifications for FYs 2018 and 2019; allow landings of barndoor skate; allow exemption from certain skate regs for vessels fishing in NAFO areas

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Fiona Hogan

<b>2017</b>	
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council initiates framework/specifications</b>
JUL-AUG	PDT develops annual monitoring report
AUG	SSC recommends ABC for skate complex
AUG-SEP	Committee & PDT develop & analyze alternatives
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council approves framework/specifications</b>
<b>2018</b>	
<b>JAN-FEB</b>	Final submission of framework/specifications document to NMFS
MAY 1	Implementation

### 3. Amendment 5 – Limited Access for Skate FMP

**Scope:** Develop Limited access program for the Skate FMP

**STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:** Fiona Hogan

<b>2016</b>	
<b>NOV</b>	<b>Council approves scoping document</b>
<b>2017</b>	
JAN-FEB	Scoping hearings
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council reviews scoping comments</b>
MAY-NOV	Committee/PDT develop alternatives and preliminary analyses
<b>2018</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council receives progress report</b>
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Council approves range of alternatives for analysis in draft EIS</b>
TBD	PDT completes DEIS
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Council approves draft EIS for public review</b>
TBD	Public hearings
<b>TBD</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
TBD	Implementation

## Industry-funded Monitoring Amendment

**Scope:** Develop an industry-funded monitoring program to meeting monitoring objectives for all FMPs.

PROJECT MANAGERS: Fiona Hogan– NEFMC Staff  
 Carly Bari/Carrie Nordeen - GARFO FMAT

<b>2013</b>	
FEB	FMAT begins work on action
NOV	NMFS provides NEFMC guidance on type of action required and possible funding mechanisms
<b>2015</b>	
<b>JAN / FEB</b>	<b>Councils approve draft coverage target range of alternatives of alternatives to be analyzed</b>
FEB–OCT <sup>1.</sup>	PDT/FMAT/Councils develop alternatives, draft EA
<b>APR 2 <sup>2.</sup></b>	<b>Councils approve additional alternatives for inclusion in an Environmental Assessment</b>
<b>2016</b>	
<del>JAN</del> <sup>3.</sup> JUN	<b>Councils approve draft EA for public review</b>
OCT-NOV	Public hearing(s)
<b>DEC</b>	<b>MAFMC postponed final action</b>
<b>2017</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>NEFMC considers final action and selects several alternatives</b>
<b>APR</b>	<b>MAFMC considers final action</b>
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC final vote to submit preferred alternative</b>
TBD	Final rule published
TBD	Final rule effective

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 required additional analysis.
3. Delayed because Council added monitoring set-aside option to the IFM Amendment at its Sept-Oct 2015 meeting. The MAFMC tasked the PDT/FMAT with continuing to refine cost assumptions and economic analysis of mackerel coverage target alternatives.

## Ecosystems Based Management

**Scope:** Phase II – Develop worked example of integrated Example Fishery Ecosystem Plan for Georges Bank.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Andrew Applegate

<b>2017</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>NEFMC - Georges Bank Example Fishery Ecosystem Plan (eFEP) - Committee progress report</b>
FEB – MAY	Committee and PDT continue work on examples of GB Ecosystem Production Unit (EPU) operating models and draft ecosystem forage fish mgt. policy
<b>SEP</b>	<b>NEFMC - Georges Bank Example Fishery Ecosystem Plan – report on quantitative worked examples of GB EPU operating models and harvest control rules</b>
TBD	PDT develops MSE work plan
<b>DEC</b>	<b>NEFMC – progress report on Georges Bank Fishery Ecosystem Plan - initial overview of Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)</b>
<b>2018</b>	
<b>JAN-FEB 1</b>	<b>NEFMC - receive completed Georges Bank eFEP and MSE planning overview</b>
<b>TBD</b>	<b>NEFMC – receive MSE results &amp; identify potential FEP measures</b>
TBD	Draft and analyze FEP or EBFM policy documents