

#5

CORRESPONDENCE

-----Original Message-----

From: maxwell lucarelli <maxslucarelli@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, March 16, 2026 12:25 PM

To: comments <comments@nefmc.org>

Subject: Skate/monk comment

Growing up in a fishing family as well as a fishing community. You always hear guys talk about the old days. How they would “sink the boat with cod fish” or “the net would be so full it would float to the surface.” These story’s echoed through my childhood and there’s still grumbles of them today. Unfortunately this day and age all they are is stories. With the ground fish stocks and quota down the fleet turned to skates.

I grew up on a skate boat. Since I started in 2009 there hasn’t been a year to look back on that I would consider terrible or not good. There always seems to be plenty of skates in the ocean. In 2014 I finally had enough experience under my belt that I bought my own boat. Pulling double duty long lining for dogfish after we had gotten home from our trip skate fishing. I learned a lot about what it meant to have something that was your own. The next step. The pride. The successes. The failures. One day at a time. After so many years of that I decided it was time for an upgrade. My own gillnet boat and a NE multi species permit. I could officially join the skate fishery.

Growing up in a lobster family on the outter cape and the sticker shock of what it costs to get your hands on one of those federal permits made the skate fishery appealing. The skate fishery was a good chance for me to get my foot in the door. I still believe this to be true. I worry that this is being pushed by older fisherman who want to push a quota based system. In return to make their permits worth more money so they can cash out when they retire. But who’s buying? Let’s face it there’s also not a lot of the next generation banging down the door to go skate fishing. With a low budget to enter the skate fishery it makes it more appealing to younger people trying to get a foot in the door. It’s a good building block to other fisheries. With the annual quota not being met and healthy fish stocks I believe going to a quota based system doesn’t make a whole lot of sense.

I believe going to an IFQ based fishery for skates is driven by greed. People wanting to drive the price up on something they own and paid virtually nothing for. Giving them the ability they can cash out when they retire. Or lease their quota. Look at the average age of anyone who owns a skate boat. It’s up there. Whos going to benefit? The people with all the history? Who’s going to profit? Maybe people who sell their permits? Or people who just sit on their permit forever and lease a quota? So that permit never changes hands. Or big commercial draggers? There’s not a lot of young people getting into this fishery. I hope someday there will be a fishery left my son can afford to get his foot in the door. With more regulation and more rules to go make a living I believe it’ll kill the day boat dream.

Maxwell Lucarelli

F/V Seahound

5082929607

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Elsey <relseyy@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 8:23 PM

To: comments <comments@nefmc.org>

Subject: Monk / skate wing Ifq program scoping comments

Robert Elsey owner / operator of F/V knucklehead out of Point Pleasant , NJ.

- I don't see any problems with the management of the monk or skate wing fisheries besides closures. Migration patterns are different every year for fish / mammals but our closure are set in stone and never change.
- I don't see how an IFQ will help anything besides remove people out of the fishery just like when IFQs have been introduced in the past.
- I don't think either skate or monk should have an IFQ but if I had to choose one I would say monk
- The only benefit of the Ifq program would hopefully be making the permits more valuable. How the quota for monk and skate is divided among the remaining active permits is the biggest hurdle. Does everyone have the same quota and equal share? How we choose to go about this can put a lot of people like myself being a full time gill-netter and 100% dependent on monk / skates out of business. Much much more to discuss on this.
- The goal should be to allow people enough quota to make a living and stay in business. That can't be less than what were already allowed with our Days at sea and current trip limits at minimum. In my 15 years being an owner we've only compromised and sacrificed but never had anything put into law in our favor.
- If I had to choose it would be fish history and active permits. But also hard because some years fishing is better than others. Not only because of fish themselves but what if they had a break down and didn't get the season in? Crew quit mid season and couldn't fish? what happens when you pick those years based off history / landings? Then they are shut out and lose their permits? That's not right which makes me believe equal quota for all remaining active permits. A lot to think about with this.
- Equal quota only way to stop excessive shares of quota
- yes leasing or transferring of quota should be allowed
- possibly by area and gear type depending on rules
- not sure need more information

-----Original Message-----

From: Rob Elsey <relsey@yaho.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2026 4:11 PM

To: comments <comments@nefmc.org>

Subject: Re: Monk / skate wing Ifq program scoping comments

Forgot to add that after all is said and done I think this is a terrible idea and vote to shut it down. This will destroy the handful of left in the business. With business loans , people who work for me and a family to support this is my only source of income like many others. There are many ways we can improve the monk and skate fisheries with our destroying it.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Mar 17, 2026, at 8:22 PM, Rob Elsey <relsey@yaho.com> wrote:

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> Robert Elsey owner / operator of F/V knucklehead out of Point Pleasant , NJ.

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