

# **Executive Order 14276**

## ***Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness***

**New England Fishery Management Council**

**April 14, 2026**

**Portland, ME**



**New England Fishery  
Management Council**

# Executive Order 14276 – Expanded Council Request

- NOAA reopened the public comment period for December 1 – 15, 2025 to “help identify specific actions as we launch a bold, coordinated effort to revitalize the U.S. seafood sector”
- NOAA shared the additional public comments with Councils on Jan 23, 2026, and requested review and possible revisions to Council work plans by April 30, 2026
- If, following review, no changes to current plans are necessary, notify NOAA of that decision



# Executive Order 14276 – Reminder

- (i) “The Secretary of Commerce shall **request** that **each Regional Fishery Management Council**, within 180 days of the date of this order, provide the Secretary of Commerce with **updates to their recommendations submitted pursuant to Executive Order 13921**, to **reduce burdens on domestic fishing and to increase production**.
- Building upon the earlier goals, identified actions should **stabilize markets, improve access, enhance economic profitability, and prevent closures**. The Regional Fishery Management Councils will **commit to a work plan and a schedule for implementation** to ensure these actions are prioritized.”



# Council Process for EO 14276 Response – September 2025

- Request for input from Plan Development Teams (PDTs) and Advisory Panel (AP) members on potential actions that address one or more of the EO's stated goals
- Public comment submitted directly to the Council and to NOAA Fisheries
- Executive Committee reviewed all public comments and provided recommendations to the Council
- Council considered Executive Committee recommendations for priority topics and workplan; response submitted to NOAA on Sept. 30, 2025
- Four categories of recommendations:
  - Council actions in the NOAA Fisheries Rulemaking Process
  - Council actions currently under development
  - Possible new Council actions
  - Non-Council actions (recommendations to Federal Agencies)



# Council EO 14276 Response – September 30, 2025

- Council actions in the NOAA Fisheries Rulemaking Process
  - Groundfish FW69 – **complete**
  - Atlantic Herring 2025-2027 Specifications – **complete**
- Council actions currently under development
  - Omnibus Management Flexibility Action – **in review**
  - Actions to Set Specifications for Monkfish and Skates – **in review/rulemaking**
  - Spiny Dogfish FW for Accountability Measures – **in review**
  - Sea Scallop Strategic Plan – **complete**
  - Ecosystem Components Evaluation – **in process via IRA and R/V matrix**
  - Modernizing Approaches to Governance – **in process via IRA**



# Council EO 14276 Response – September 30, 2025

- Proposed Council Activities
  - Modifications to Vessel Baseline Restrictions – **2026 Council Priority, underway**
  - Atlantic Herring Slippage Measures
  - Monkfish Management Modifications – **2026 Council Priority, underway**
  - Revisions to Reactive Accountability Measures
  - Fishery Management Plan Revisions – **2026 Council Priority, underway**
  - Dogfish Gillnet Exemption Area Modifications
- Non-Council Activities - **underway**
  - Seafood Marketing and Promotion
  - Fisheries Monitoring and Scientific Programs
  - Recreational Bioeconomic Model
  - Changing Environment and Fisheries Initiative
  - Categorical Exclusions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)



# Additional Comments – Received January 2026

- 34 comments specific to New England
  - 12 referred to possible Council actions
  - 22 referred to ongoing activities or topics outside of direct Council purview
- Council action topics
  - Scallop fishery access to the Northern Edge
  - Rescinding Industry-Funded Monitoring
  - Modify the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area
- Other topics
  - Use of fishery-dependent data and cooperative research
  - Regulation reform
  - Use of technology



# Additional Comments – Received January 2026

Affiliation	Fishery / Focus	Topic	Summary
New Bedford Port Authority	Scallop/Groundfish	Northern Edge access	Scallop access N Edge GB; ensure monument science; real-time data; marketing; support aquaculture; relocate GARFO.
Fisheries Survival Fund	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Open N Edge Georges Bank for scallops (rotational access); issue NOFO for 2026 Scallop Research Set-Aside.
Commercial fisherman	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Support opening N Edge GB; opposes permit stacking/leasing (disadvantages single-vessel owners, consolidation).
Sustainable Scallop Fund	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Expedited rulemaking for permit stacking; controlled access to N Edge HAPC.
Commercial fisherman	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Support petition for rotational access program for N Edge of Georges Bank.
Commercial fisherman	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Open N Edge/W side channel; use geo-fencing; permit stacking; assign quota to active permits only; no leasing.
Commercial fisherman	Scallop	Northern Edge access	Support reopening N Edge GB; oppose permit stacking/leasing (consolidation/cost concerns); focus on high grading.
Seafreeze Ltd	Multiple	Industry-Funded Monitoring	Eliminate industry-funded monitoring; moratorium on offshore wind; return SK funding; supports cooperative research.
NE Seafood Coalition	Groundfish	Industry-Funded Monitoring	Rescind industry-funded monitoring; reform US/Can biomass apportionment; reform closures; improve stock assessments
NE Seafood Coalition	Groundfish	Industry-Funded Monitoring	Rescind industry-funded monitoring; reconsider scale in assessments; address NEFMC letter to NEFSC
American Mussel Harvesters	Surfclam	Great South Channel open	Rescind Great South Channel HMA to restore mussel/clam fisheries; establish clear/affordable aquaculture permit areas.
Nantucket Sound Seafood	Surfclam	Great South Channel open	Reopen Great South Channel HMA (economic impact, displacement, lower yield in state waters).



# Executive Committee Recommendations (Memo 3/30/26)

- Scallop fishery access to the Northern Edge – **no change to work plan**
  - Robust discussion in December 2025 under Priority Setting agenda
  - Council did not recommend initiating action at this time
- Rescinding Industry-Funded Monitoring – **no change to work plan**
  - Ongoing litigation related to Herring Industry-Funded Monitoring action
  - Amendment 23 review to be completed in 2026, consideration of revisions to monitoring program as 2027+ priority proposals
- Modify the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area – **no change to work plan**
  - 2026 Priority “Evaluation of GSC HMA surfclam exemption areas”
  - Following evaluation, consideration of revisions to habitat management as 2027+ priority proposals



# Executive Committee Recommendations (Memo 3/30/26)

- Other topics – **no change to work plan**
  - Use of fishery-dependent data and cooperative research
    - Council has continually supported use of fishery-dependent data and cooperative research in management and science products
  - Regulation reform
    - Council’s EO workplan includes evaluation of vessel baseline restrictions, revisions to fishery management plans, and Omnibus Flexibility Amendment
  - Use of technology
    - Council is exploring use of AI and automation, as well as new technology tools to enhance user accessibility and decision-making processes



# Next Steps

- TODAY:
  - Council input on Executive Committee recommendation to maintain workplan submitted on Sept 30, 2025
- FOLLOW-UP:
  - Staff submit response to NOAA by April 30, 2026
    - Any revisions to work plan identified by Council today
    - Emphasis on Council activities that are ongoing/anticipated that directly align with the objectives of EO 14276

