



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
C.M. "Rip" Cunningham, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 15, 2013
TO: Council
FROM: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Summary of February 14, 2013

The Executive Committee met on February 14, 2013 at the Sheraton Colonial Hotel in Wakefield, MA. Messrs. Cunningham, Stockwell, Blount, Dempsey and Preble participated in the meeting. Messrs. Howard, Kellogg and Nies and Ms. Roy attended from the Council staff. Dr. Bill Karp of the NEFSC participated as well. The committee discussed the following agenda items:

1. Update on Risk Policy Workshop: Mr. Kellogg updated the committee on how the workshop is progressing. The Steering Cte had almost completed the list of invited participants and anticipated including some PDT members and allowing outside non-invited participants to observe the meeting. Mr. Dempsey asked what the next step was after output from the workshop. Mr. Kellogg answered that a written summary of the workshop would be completed and Mr. Dempsey suggested a process for following up on workshop recommendations was needed. The committee decided that follow-up from the workshop could be further addressed at the next Executive Committee and/or Council meeting.

2. Discuss timelines and management actions: Mr. Kellogg reviewed the draft timelines. Mr. Kellogg stated that both the groundfish and monkfish timelines will be updated prior to the April Council meeting. A timeline will be created for a framework to adjust the monkfish specifications. Also, timelines will be added for developing specifications for skates and red crab. Mr. Cunningham suggested having a definitive report on where we are with the Habitat Omnibus Amendment. The possibility of adding a 1-day committee and/or Council meeting was discussed.

3. Discussion on SMAST/MFI: Dr. Karp stated that the NEFSC is responding to the Rothschild initiative and stated that 3 workshops may be planned to address: 1) ecosystem considerations in assessments; 2) surveys and data related issues and 3) reference points. Dr. Karp has advised SMAST/MFI that the correct process for developing assessments is through the NRCC and involves the Councils and the ASMFC. He is currently waiting to hear from MFI before moving forward.

4. Discussion on monitoring levels and funding: Dr. Karp stated that as reported at the Council meeting, NMFS will begin to ask the industry to share the cost of at-sea monitors and that NMFS is exploring mechanisms for cost-sharing. Mr. Cunningham asked about the impact of

sequestration on monitoring coverage. Dr. Karp stated that there is still a lot of unanswered questions and expectation is that it will take a considerable amount of time to get answers. Mr. Stockwell asked who is going to pay the 3rd party clearing cost and Dr. Karp stated that NMFS will provide as much appropriated funding for groundfish monitoring as possible. Mr. Stockwell suggested that the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program could manage NOAA funding to third-party providers. Mr. Stockwell also suggested providing the industry with a best and worst case scenario.

Mr. Nies asked when are we going to know how much coverage will be required. He also stated that whichever program NMFS requires, that it be well documented.

5. Approve SSC Chair and Vice Chair: Mr. Kellogg stated that the SSC has recommended Jake Kritzer as the Chair and Pat Sullivan as the Vice Chair. The committee agreed with the SSC's recommendation.

6. Discuss river herring stock: Mr. Stockwell suggested bringing the issue of adding river herring to the Atlantic herring FMP as a stock in the fishery. Mr. Howard stated that ASMFC manages river herring and that the MAFMC has had an option to add river herring to their Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish plan. Mr. Stockwell stated that it's a huge public issue driving the MAFMC right now. Mr. Howard had previously brought this issue up to the NRCC and suggested ASMFC should continue managing river herring and New England and MAFMC should consider it as bycatch under National Standard 9. Mr. Stockwell feels it's prudent not to ignore it. Mr. Howard stated that management of river herring must be assigned and that the NEFMC has been asked (via a lawsuit) to consider managing it. Mr. Cunningham, Stockwell and Howard will get more information after February ASMFC and CCC meetings.

7. Discuss fast tracking Habitat Omnibus for scallop economics: Mr. Stockwell suggested that a possible way of accelerating the Habitat Omnibus would be to deal with possible changes to Closed Area 2 in a separate action. He also suggested the CATT continue to work on the groundfish closed areas. The committee decided that there would be too many problems, including NEPA process issues, in recommending this course of action to the Council.

8. Update on Groundfish A.18: Mr. Stockwell stated that the next groundfish committee meeting (joint with the AP) will be held on March 6 and he will provide an overview of the issues and the changes in landscape over past year. A white paper will be distributed for review and discuss how to continue forward focusing on A.18. Goals and objectives previously agreed upon will be discussed at the committee level as well. The Chair of the AP will not be available at this meeting and the VC recently resigned. Mr. Stockwell has requested Maggie Raymond sit in as proxy for the Chair. The next meeting of the groundfish committee will be held in April.

9. Follow-up on the Georges Bank East-West cod landings issue: Mr. Nies stated that there have been reports that cod caught in Eastern Georges Bank are being reported as Western Georges Bank cod. Committee members agreed to surface this issue informally with the Regional Office to determine if there is evidence of this practice. They also noted that if this practice is occurring, it may indicate a larger problem with quota monitoring that the Council may need to address.

10. Approve mid-term Advisory panel applications and approve Scallop AP Chair and Vice Chair: The committee reviewed the nominees for the Herring, Recreational and Scallop Advisory panels and approved all committee selections without objection. In addition, the committee approved Peter Hughes as Chair of Scallops and Jim Gutowski as the Vice Chair. The Scallop Committee has also suggested the Exec Cte develop a draft resolution for the Council to consider at a future meeting. Mr. Cunningham directed staff to draft up a resolution for Mr. Wells.

11. Approve 2014 Council meeting schedule: Ms. Roy reviewed the proposed Council meeting schedule dates for 2014 which were approved by the committee. There was concern with the September meeting dates conflicting with the NAFO meeting dates. Staff will discuss a meeting date change with the MAFMC and NMFS/NEFSC to see how moving the September meeting date will affect their travel. All other meeting dates and locations were approved by the committee.

12. Review of Council priorities in light of staff resources: Mr. Howard discussed issues with staff which might affect management priorities. A review of budget showed the Council is in good shape financially for all of 2013 and 2014. Mr. Dempsey suggested a strategy of targeting new hires with intent to keep them for only 2 years. Mr. Nies stated that the learning curve is too great and there is a good deal of time spent on getting staff productive.

13. Discussion on Monkfish Committee/Advisory panel: Mr. Dempsey addressed concerns with emails sent out based on latest Monkfish AP meeting summary. Certain emails coming from member of the AP seemed to be attacks on the AP Chair and this person was asked to resign from the panel. Mr. Dempsey stated that the committee and AP are being ineffective with their time. Mr. Howard offered several suggestions on how to address improvements. Mr. Nies suggested asking the PDT to craft four (4) alternatives for presentation to the Council. Mr. Cunningham suggested the committee make another effort to strip out the ITQs.

14. Closed Session to discuss personnel issues: This discussion was closed to discuss staff resources and funding.