

# New England Fishery Management Council Timelines

November 7, 2025

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# Scallops

## 1. Framework 40 – Fishing Years 2026 specifications, 2027 default specifications

**Scope:** Update reference points, set specifications for FY 2026 and FY 2027 default specifications, consider area-based management measures.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Connor Buckley / Chandler Nelson

2025	
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council initiates action</b>
AUG	SSC discusses reference points for developing catch advice
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
OCT	SSC recommends OFL/ABC for FY2026-2027
OCT-NOV	Committee and PDT complete documents
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
DEC	Council staff completes decision draft
2026	
JAN-FEB	Council staff completes preliminary submission
FEB	NMFS completes review of preliminary submission
FEB-MAR	NMFS publishes proposed rule
MAR	Council staff completes final submission for NMFS review and approval
APR 1	NMFS publishes final rule, Implementation

## 2. LAGC IFQ Fishery Program Review

**Scope:** Determine progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the Scallop LAGC IFQ Program as specified in Amendment 11 and the MSA.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Connor Buckley / Chandler Nelson

2024	
MAY	Initial meeting of work group
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
JUL-DEC	Work group meetings, assembling data and beginning analysis
2025	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
APR-MAY	Work group completes analyses
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council reviews preliminary analyses</b>
JUL-DEC	Work group drafts and finalizes report
2026	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council receives final report</b>

### 3. Development of a Long-Term (3-5 year) Scallop Strategic Plan

**Scope:** Develop a strategic plan for management of Atlantic sea scallops including consideration of rotational management review, scallop enhancement, and overall fishery objectives.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Connor Buckley / Chandler Nelson

2024	
JUL	Initial meeting of PDT
SEP	Council receives update
DEC	Council receives update
2025	
JAN-MAR	Visioning sessions and development of SWOT analysis
APR	Council reviews input from visioning sessions and provides guidance for the development of a draft Strategic Plan
MAY	Development of draft Strategic Plan
JUN	Council receives update
JUL-AUG	Continue development of draft Strategic Plan
SEP	Council receives update
OCT-NOV	Finalize elements and focus areas of the Strategic Plan
DEC	Council approves Strategic Plan

## Groundfish

### 1. Amendment 25 – Incorporate Cod Stock Units into FMP

**Scope:** Identify four new stock units for Atlantic cod, consistent with the 2023 Atlantic Cod Research Track Assessment and incorporate the new stock units into the Fishery Management Plan.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2024	
APR	Council defines action
JUN	Council receives update
JUN-SEP	Committee/PDT develop alternatives
SEP	Council takes final action
NOV	Council staff completes preliminary submission
DEC	Council staff final submission for NMFS review and approval
2025	
MAR	NMFS publishes Notice of Availability
MAY	NOAA decision – action disapproved
JUN	Council changes 2025 priorities to initiate revised action
JUL-AUG	Council staff reformats cod-specific management measures from A25 & FW69
SEP	Council takes final action for resubmission
NOV	Council staff completes preliminary submission
DEC	Council staff final submission for NMFS review and approval
TBD	NMFS publishes proposed rule

### 2. Framework 69 – Fishing Years 2025-2027 Specifications/Measures

**Scope:** Set FY2025-2027 specifications for groundfish stocks; revise accountability measures triggers for GB yellowtail and N. windowpane in the scallop fishery; modify sector reporting requirements

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2024	
JUN	Council initiates action
JUL	SSC OFLs/ABCs for cod stocks and GB yellowtail
SEP	Peer review – Management Track Assessments for groundfish stocks
SEP	Council receives update
OCT	TMGC/SC TACs for transboundary stocks; SSC OFLs/ABCs for groundfish stocks
DEC	Council takes final action
2025	
JAN	Council staff completes preliminary submission
MAR	Council staff final submission for NMFS review and approval
TBD	NMFS publishes proposed rule – cod measures removed

### 3. Framework 72 – Fishing Years 2026-2030 Specifications and Management Measures

**Scope:** Update status determination criteria for GB yellowtail flounder; FY2026-FY2030 specifications for groundfish stocks; establish regulatory process for Regional Administrator to adjust recreational measures for cod and haddock.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede / Mark Grant

2025	
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council initiates action</b>
JUL-NOV	Committee/PDT develop draft alternatives
SEP-OCT	TMGC/SC TACs for transboundary stocks; Peer review – Management Track Assessments for groundfish stocks
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
OCT	SSC OFLs/ABCs for groundfish stocks
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
2026	
JAN	Council staff completes preliminary submission
MAR	Council staff final submission for NMFS review and approval
TBD	NMFS publishes proposed rule
MAY	Target implementation

### 4. Develop Atlantic Cod Management Transition Plan

**Scope:** Consider options for transitioning cod management based on four new stock units.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2023	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council provides feedback on work plan</b>
APR-NOV	RAP, GAP, Committee discuss topics at each meeting
<b>JUN/SEP/DEC</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
2024	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council decides initial transition plan</b>
MAY	Focused public workshops
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council approves transition plan Phase 1</b>
2025	
JAN-MAR	Council staff final submission for NMFS review and approval for Phase 1 actions
MAY 1	Target implementation for Phase 1 actions*
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council pauses work, revisit during 2026 priority setting</b>

\*see Amendment 25 decision – NOAA disapproval and Emergency Action published on May 1, 2025

\*see Framework 69 status – NOAA proposed rule with cod measures removed TBD

## 5. Framework 68 – Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rules

**Scope:** Modify/revise groundfish Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) control rules.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2023	
JUN	Council initiates action
AUG	Facilitated Session and Groundfish Committee input to goals/objectives
SEP/DEC	Council discusses goals and objectives, timeline and overlap with Risk Policy
2024	
SEP	Council action on Risk Policy
2025	
JAN-DEC	Simulation testing of Risk Policy with ABC Control Rules; IRA contracted project
JUN	Council pauses work, revisit during 2026 priority setting

## 6. Develop Amendment 23 Review Metrics and Indicators

**Scope:** Develop metrics and indicators to be used in the review of A23 monitoring measures.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2022	
MAY-OCT	Initial list of potential metrics and indicators
JUN	Council receives update
2023	
JAN/APR	Council receives update
MAR-DEC	Develop list of metrics and indicators; SSC review; preliminary analyses
2024	
JAN	Council receives update
2025	
JAN-JUN	Continue development of metrics and initiate review
JUN	Council pauses work, revisit during 2026 priority setting

## 7. Redfish Sector Exemption Program Review

**Scope:** Develop and conduct review of redfish sector exemption program.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Robin Frede

2025	
MAR-JUN	PDT, Committee develop review
JUN	Council pauses work, revisit during 2026 priority setting

# Herring

## 1. Herring Specifications for 2025-2027

**Scope:** Set specifications for 2025 through 2027, management uncertainty, annual catch limit (ACL), management area sub-ACLs, river herring and shad catch caps.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Jamie Cournane / Emily Bodell

2024	
JUN	Council initiates action
JUL	SSC recommends OFLs and ABCs
SEP	Council takes final action*; Tasks review of 2024 catch and updated projections
OCT	Council staff preliminary submission to NMFS for review
2025	
JAN	Council receives projections, requests the SSC reconsider OFLs and ABCs
MAR	Peer Review – Research Track Stock Assessment
APR	SSC recommends OFLs and ABCs
APR	Council takes final action
MAY	Council staff final submission to NMFS for review and approval
JUN	NMFS proposed rule published June 25; public comment period closed July 10
TBD	NMFS final rule
TBD	Target implementation date

\* The Council recommended an in-season adjustment to reduce 2025 specifications; approved Dec 2024.

## 2. Amendment 10

**Scope:** To address spatial and temporal allocation of herring to minimize user conflicts, contribute to optimum yield, and support rebuilding; and to enhance river herring and shad avoidance.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Jamie Cournane / Emily Bodell

2023	
APR	Council receives update
JUN	Council develops problem statement
SEP	Council initiates action; development of a public scoping document
DEC	Council revises problem statement to include river herring and shad
2024	
JAN	Council approves the public scoping document
MAR-APR	Public scoping comment period including six public scoping meetings
APR/JUN	Council receives update and summary of public scoping
2025	
JAN	Council receives update
APR	Council pauses work, revisit during 2026 priority setting

## Monkfish

### 1. Monkfish Framework 17 – Specifications for FY 2026-2028

**Scope:** Specifications for fishing years 2026 through 2028 based on a data update from NEFSC.

*Note: Monkfish and Skate Council staff are coordinating PDT, AP, and Committee activities.*

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: **Jenny Couture (NEFMC - lead) / Jason Didden (MAFMC)**

2025	
FEB-MAR	PDT prepares background information, joint with Skate PDT
MAR	AP and Committee meet, joint with Skate
<b>APR</b>	<b>NEFMC/MAFMC receive update, initiate Framework 17</b>
AUG	PDT prepares ABCs based on NEFSC data update
AUG	SSC recommends ABCs and OFLs
<b>SEP</b>	<b>NEFMC takes final action</b>
<b>OCT</b>	<b>MAFMC takes final action</b>
NOV	Council staff preliminary submission to NMFS for review
2026	
JAN-FEB	Council staff final submission to NMFS for review and approval
APR	NMFS publishes rule
MAY	Target implementation date

## Skates

### 2. Skate Specifications for FY 2026-2028

**Scope:** Specifications for fishing years 2026 through 2028 based on a data update from NEFSC.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS: **Rachel Feeney / Emily Bodell**

2025	
FEB-MAR	PDT prepares background information, joint with Monkfish PDT
MAR	AP and Committee meet, joint with Monkfish
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
AUG	PDT prepares ABCs based on NEFSC data update
AUG	SSC recommends ABCs
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
NOV	Council staff preliminary submission to NMFS for review
2026	
JAN-FEB	Council staff final submission to NMFS for review and approval
APR	NMFS publishes rule
MAY	Target implementation date



## Spiny Dogfish

### 1. Accountability Measures and Specifications for 2026 and 2027 Framework Adjustment

**Scope:** Considers modified/relaxed payback AMs; specifications for 2026-2027 based on updated projections.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Jason Didden (MAFMC- lead) / Jamie Cournane (NEFMC)

2025	
FEB	MAFMC receives update
MAY	Monitoring Committee recommendations
JUN	MAFMC/NEFMC set range of alternatives
AUG	Monitoring Committee recommendations
AUG	AP meets and Council staff facilitates creation of AP Fishery Performance Report
SEP	MAFMC SSC recommends ABCs for 2026-2027
SEP	Monitoring Committee recommendations
SEP	Committee meets
OCT	MAFMC final action
DEC	NEFMC final action
DEC-JAN	Council staff prepares document for submission to GARFO
2026	
JAN	Preliminary submission
JAN-FEB	ASMFC receives summary from Council staff
FEB-MAR	Final submission
TBD	NMFS publishes rule
MAY	Target Implementation Date

## Habitat

### 1. Atlantic Salmon Aquaculture Framework

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Michelle Bachman / Jenny Couture

<b>2022</b>	
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council initiates Atlantic salmon framework action</b>
<b>2023</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council final action</b>
MAY	Council staff preliminary submission
<b>2024</b>	
JAN	NMFS completes review of preliminary submission
JAN	Council staff final submission for review and approval
<b>2025</b>	
TBD	NMFS publishes proposed rule
TBD	NMFS publishes final rule

### 2. Essential Fish Habitat Designation Framework

**Scope:** Consider updates to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) designations for 10 species across four FMPs: Atlantic herring, monkfish, Atlantic cod (Northeast Multispecies), and skates complex (barndoor, clearnose, little, rosette, smooth, thorny, and winter skate). Adjustments to habitat management area designations or associated restrictions on fishing are not being considered as part of this action.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Michelle Bachman / Julian Garrison

<b>2025</b>	
FEB-MAY	PDT finalizes species distribution models; drafts revised EFH designations (maps and text); and develops draft alternatives
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council initiates 2025 EFH Designation Framework</b>
MAY-SEP	Review EFH designation alternatives with PDTs, APs and Hab AP, CTE
AUG-SEP	Habitat Committee recommends preferred alternatives
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council takes final action</b>
<b>OCT</b>	<b>MAFMC receives update</b>
NOV	Preliminary submission
TBD	Final submission
TBD	Implementation of 2025 EFH Designation Framework

## On-Demand Fishing Gear Conflict Working Group

### 1. Addressing on-demand gear conflict with Council-managed fisheries

**Scope:** On-Demand Fishing Gear Conflict Working Group formed to address Terms of Reference (TORs) to identify strategies for reducing gear interactions between on-demand gear and other fisheries and consider interactions resulting from measures adopted for sink gillnet and other trap/pot fisheries.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Emily Bodell/ David McCarron/ Robin Frede

2023	
JAN	Initial Council discussion of working group
APR	Council approves work plan
SEP	Council approves terms of reference
2024	
JAN	Council receives update
JUN	Council receives update
SEP	ODWG drafts gear marking strawman and report on reducing gear conflict
SEP	Council receives report with proposed actions/management measures
2025	
JAN	Council receives update
FEB-APR	ODWG meets and continues working to address TORs
JUN	Council receives update
JUL-SEP	ODWG meets and continues working to address TORs
SEP	Council receives final report on strategies to reduce gear interactions

### 2. Joint Alternative Gear Marking Framework

**Scope:** In conjunction with MAFMC and GARFO, develop alternative surface marking requirements for all fixed-gear fisheries to allow the use of fixed gear without a persistent buoy line.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER: Emily Bodell/ David McCarron/ Robin Frede (NEFMC)  
Hayden Dubinczki (MAFMC)  
Alli Murphy, Caroline Potter (GARFO - lead)

2024	
DEC	Council prioritizes joint gear marking action with MAFMC and GARFO
2025	
JAN	Council receives update
JAN-APR	FMAT/PDT meets
APR	Council initiates framework; MAFMC Framework meeting 1
APR-JUN	FMAT/PDT meets
JUN	Council receives update
SEPT	NEFMC: postpone final action until completion of NOAA Request for Information
OCT	MAFMC: postpone final action until completion of NOAA Request for Information
TBD	NMFS develops and publishes Request for Information
TBD	NEFMC final action
TBD	MAFMC final action

## Management Flexibility

### 1. Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment

**Scope:** Increase management flexibility across FMPs: changes to specifications frequency, specifications setting process, in-season adjustment authority, and preparation of Council reports/reviews.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGERS:

Jamie Cournane / Cate O’Keefe (NEFMC – lead)

<b>2025</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council adds omnibus action to 2025 priorities</b>
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council initiates action</b>
SEP	Executive Committee reviews draft
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council final action</b>
<b>OCT</b>	<b>MAFMC final action on monkfish aspects</b>
NOV	Preliminary submission
DEC	Final submission
<b>2026</b>	
TBD	Implementation

## Risk Policy

### 1. Revisions to Council’s Risk Policy

**Scope:** Alpha phase: use of the Risk Policy statement and scoring of factors using pre-defined guidance Beta Phase: refinement of factors, scoring and weighting process, data flows, connection to harvest control rules.

STAFF PROJECT MANAGER:

Jonathon Peros

<b>2023</b>	
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council approves work group Terms of Reference (TORs)</b>
<b>2024</b>	
<b>SEP</b>	<b>Council Approves Revised Risk Policy Statement and Concept</b>
<b>2025</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council receives update; transition to new Risk Policy</b>
<b>APR</b>	<b>Dedicated session for Council weighting of factors</b>
MAY-DEC	Alpha Phase: Use of Risk Policy statement and matrices; Beta Phase: Simulation testing of Risk Policy for integration with Groundfish ABC Control Rules
<b>DEC</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
<b>2026</b>	
<b>JAN</b>	<b>Council receives update</b>
FEB-APR	RPWG Meetings and presentation of revised Risk Policy to SSC
<b>APR</b>	<b>Council receives update on Risk Policy Concept</b>
MAY	RPWG Meeting
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Council approves Risk Policy; Council weighting of factors (global)</b>
JUL-DEC	Quantitative application of Risk Policy in specification actions (PDTs, SSC).