



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Council Discontinues Skate Wing and Monkfish IFQ Scoping; Approves Schedule for Listening Sessions

Portland, ME: The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) responded to industry feedback opposing further exploration of a potential individual fishing quota (IFQ) program for the monkfish and/or skate wing fisheries. The Council also voted to refocus the five existing scoping meetings into five listening sessions, giving New England and Mid-Atlantic fishermen an opportunity to share ideas for improvements to the management of the monkfish and skate fisheries, informing future Council work priorities.

IFQ SCOPING DISCONTINUED

At the April 2026 meeting, the Council voted to discontinue IFQ scoping work during the Monkfish and Skate [report](#). This decision aligns with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (MAFMC) [April](#) decision for the jointly managed monkfish fishery. The NEFMC added IFQ scoping as a [2026 Monkfish and Skate Priority](#) at the [December 2025](#) meeting.

LISTENING SESSIONS SCHEDULED ACROSS THE REGION

The Council voted to hold five Listening Sessions across New England and the Mid-Atlantic to give monkfish and skate fishermen an opportunity to help guide future Council priorities. These sessions will:

Discuss how to utilize existing information: Participants will review previous monkfish and skate priority ideas, recent monkfish catch per unit effort project review [information](#), and the Monkfish and Skate 2025 Joint Management Summary [report](#) on governance

Target specific dynamics: The Council is seeking feedback on gear-type dynamics, skate fishery components, and the differences between northern and southern monkfish components

Inform 2027+ Council Priorities: This is an opportunity for fishery participants to help the Council articulate and prioritize monkfish and skate management objectives in 2027 and beyond.

Input from the five listening sessions along with written comments will be compiled and presented to the Council at the [June](#) 2026 meeting and shared with the Monkfish and Skate Advisory Panels and Committees to inform the 2027 Council work priorities discussion at the [December](#) 2026 meeting. The MAFMC will also receive a summary of the monkfish input during its [August](#) 2026 meeting, as monkfish is a jointly managed fishery.

ATTEND A LISTENING SESSION

MEETING	DATE and TIME	LOCATION
Portland, ME	Monday, April 27, 2026 4:00 – 6:30 PM	Westin Portland Harborview Hotel 157 High Street, Portland, ME 04101 Telephone: (207) 775-5411
New Bedford, MA	Wednesday, April 29, 2026 4:00 – 6:30 PM	Fairfield Inn & Suites 185 MacArthur Drive. New Bedford, MA 02740 Telephone: (774) 634-2000
Riverhead, NY	Thursday, April 30, 2026 4:00 – 6:30 PM	Cornell Cooperative Extension Suffolk County 1st floor conference room 423 Griffing Avenue, Riverhead, NY 11901 Telephone: (631) 727-7850
Manahawkin, NJ	Tuesday, May 5, 2026 4:00 – 6:30 PM	Stafford Township, Council Room 260 East Bay Avenue, Manahawkin, NJ 08050 Telephone: (609) 597-1000
Webinar	Monday, May 11, 2026 4:00 – 6:30 PM	ZOOM LINK After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

SUBMIT A COMMENT

Written comments: The Council will also accept written comments from **April 20, 2026 - May 18, 2026**.

Mail Comments to:

Cate O’Keefe, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill #2
Newburyport, MA 01950;

Or email: comments@nefmc.org

Please note on your correspondence: “Monkfish and Skate Fishery Improvements Comments.”

