

New England Fishery Management Council
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New England Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda
Tuesday - Thursday, September 29 - October 1, 2015
Radisson Hotel, Plymouth Harbor, 180 Water Street, Plymouth MA 02360
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Sending comments? If you would like your written comments considered at this meeting, they must be received at the NEFMC office by 12 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 24, 2015. Please address them to Council Chairman Terry Stockwell or Executive Director Tom Nies. Email submissions should be sent to comments@nefmc.org.

Tuesday, September 29, 2015

- 8:30 a.m. Introductions and Announcements** (Council Chairman Terry Stockwell)
- 8:35 New and reappointed Council Member Swearing-in** (John Bullard, GARFO Regional Administrator)
- 8:45 Election of 2015-2016 Council Officers**
- 9:30 Reports on Recent Activities** (Terry Stockwell)
Council Chairman and Executive Director, NOAA Regional Administrator (Greater Atlantic Region), NOAA General Counsel, Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council liaisons, and representatives of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, and NOAA Enforcement
- 11:45 Open Period for Public Comments** (Terry Stockwell) Opportunity for the public to provide brief comments on issues that are relevant to Council business but not listed on this agenda for formal discussion (speakers are asked to sign up beforehand and limit remarks to between 3-5 minutes)
- 12 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:00 Herring Committee Report** (Doug Grout) ***Final Action on 2016-2018 Atlantic Herring Fishery Specifications***
Select and approve final recommendations for the 2016-2018 Atlantic herring fishery specifications; these will include an overfishing level and acceptable biological catch based on Scientific and Statistical Committee advice, quotas for each of the four Atlantic herring management areas as well as monthly quota allocations, research set-asides, and annual gear/area-specific catch caps for river herring and shad
- 2:30 Observer Committee Report** (Terry Stockwell and GARFO staff) ***Industry-Funded Monitoring Amendment (IFM)***
- Review and potentially approve a Draft Environmental Assessment and omnibus amendment that would establish provisions for IFM across all federally-managed fisheries in the Greater Atlantic region and address monitoring requirements on Atlantic herring vessels
 - Consider Observer and Herring Committee recommendations regarding the inclusion of any other management measures, the selection of preferred alternatives, and approve a draft amendment for public review

Wednesday, September 30, 2015

- 8:30 a.m. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report** (Dr. Jake Kritzer, SSC Chair) ***ABCs for GB yellowtail and skates***
Receive SSC recommendations for an overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder to apply to groundfish fishing years 2016-2017; and also an ABC recommendation for the Northeast skate complex for fishing years 2016-2018
- 9:15 Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC) Report** (Terry Stockwell) ***Three U.S./CA stocks***
- Receive a summary of the 2015 Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee's (TRAC) report on assessments for Eastern Georges Bank cod, Eastern Georges Bank haddock, and the Georges Bank yellowtail flounder assessments (Elizabeth Brooks, NEFSC)
 - Consider and possibly approve the TMGC's recommendations for fishing year 2016 quotas for the above stocks and receive an overview of other TMGC issues
- 10:45 Groundfish Committee Report** (Frank Blount)
- ***Overview of the September 2015 operational assessments*** for 20 groundfish stocks (NEFSC staff)
 - ***Final Council Action Amendment 18*** to the Northeast Multispecies Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), an action that focuses on accumulation limits and fleet diversity; review public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and select final alternatives for submission to NOAA Fisheries

- **Framework Adjustment 55 Update** Review progress on setting specifications for all groundfish stocks for fishing years 2016-2018, and the three U.S./Canada stocks for 2016; include the addition of a new sector; discuss alternatives that could modify the current At-Sea Monitoring Program with potentially cost-effective approaches

12:15 p.m. Lunch Break

1:15 Groundfish Committee Report – continued

Amendment 18 discussion to reconvene at 1:15; Framework 55 to begin at approximately 2:15

Thursday, October 1, 2015

8:30 a.m. Briefing on NOAA Fisheries' Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Strategy Report (Dr. Jason Link, NOAA Fisheries)

9:30 Habitat Committee Report (Doug Grout)

- **Consider initiating a framework adjustment** to allow hydraulic clam dredging in some parts of the Great South Channel and the Georges Shoal Habitat Management Areas approved by the Council in Omnibus EFH Amendment and discuss other habitat-related management actions
- **Update on the NEFMC's Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment**, including an overview of new information

11:00 Discuss the Council's 2016 Management Priorities (Executive Director Tom Nies)

12 p.m. Lunch Break

1:00 Scallop Committee Report (Mary Beth Tooley)

- **Amendment 19 to the Sea Scallop FMP** Select preferred alternatives for an action that would expedite the implementation of the sea scallop fishery specifications
- **Framework Adjustment 27 Update** Receive information on the development of fishing year 2016 specifications and default measures for fishing year 2017

2:30 Small Mesh Multispecies Program Report (Vincent Balzano) **Monitoring report; Red hake; Scoping document**

- Receive a summary of the annual monitoring report for the three species in this small mesh group, red, silver, and offshore hake, all of which are managed via the Groundfish Plan
- Consider an interim adjustment to the fishery specifications for red hake
- Review and approve a draft scoping document for Amendment 22 which would address limited access in this fishery

4:00 Skate Committee Report (Peter Kendall) Receive an update on the stock status of the seven species in the skate complex and recent catches; consider initiating a framework adjustment to allow the Skate Committee to develop specifications for fishing year 2016 through 2017

4:30 Other Business

*Times listed next to the agenda items are estimates and are subject to change.
The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities
Council member financial disclosure forms are available for examination at the meeting.*

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305 (c) of the Magnuson- Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Documents pertaining to Council actions are available for review prior to a final vote by the Council.
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