

Supplemental Scoping Meeting for Amendment 5 to the Northeast Skate Complex FMP

Webinars

January 21, 2021 3:30-5:30 PM

February 8, 2021 4:00-6:00 PM



Technical Support: helpdesk@nefmc.org or (978) 465-0492 x111

Welcome to the scoping meeting

- Introductions
 - Skate Committee Chair: Matthew McKenzie
 - NEFMC Staff: Rachel Feeney, Jenny Couture, Lou Goodreau
- Staff presentation
 - Webinar logistics and how to comment
 - Purpose of the scoping meeting
 - Overview of Amendment 5
 - Key questions that the Council seeks input on
 - Ground rules for commenting
- Public comment period

Webinar logistics and how to comment

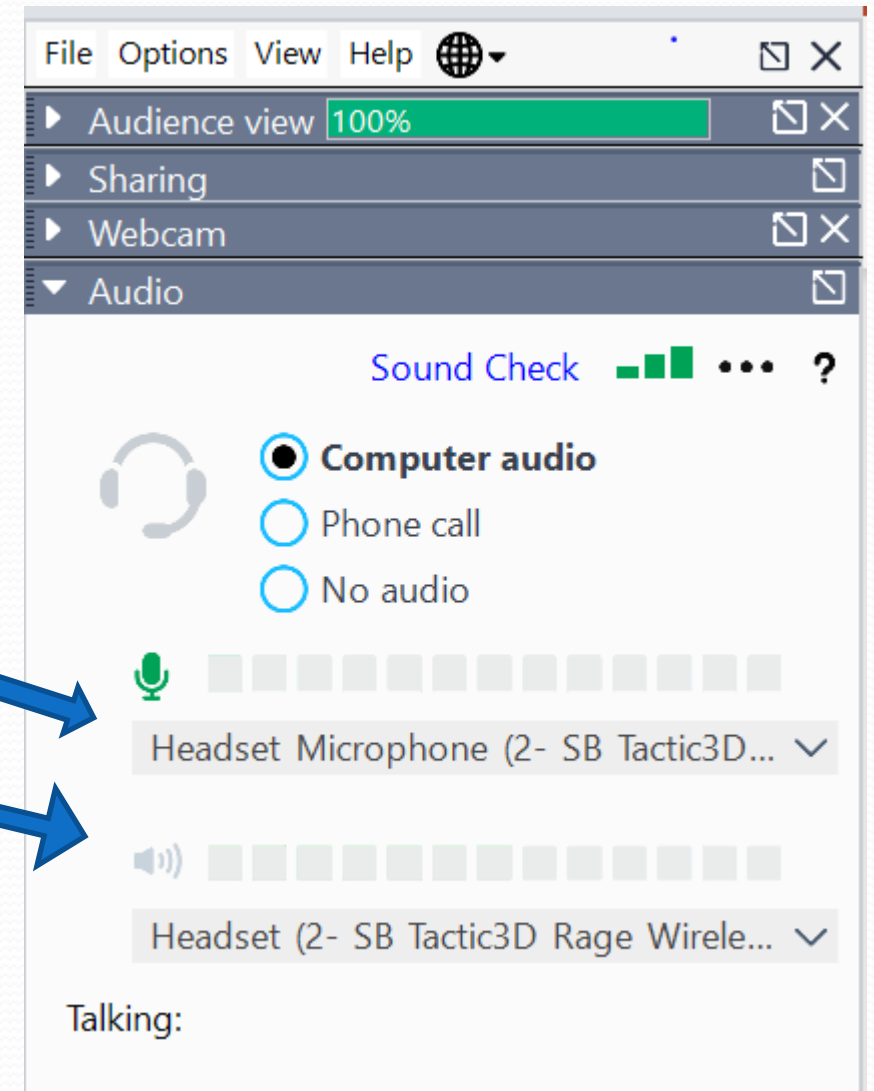
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Webinar Instructions

Using Computer Audio:

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- In “Audio” settings box, select the microphone and speaker options that correspond with your computer.

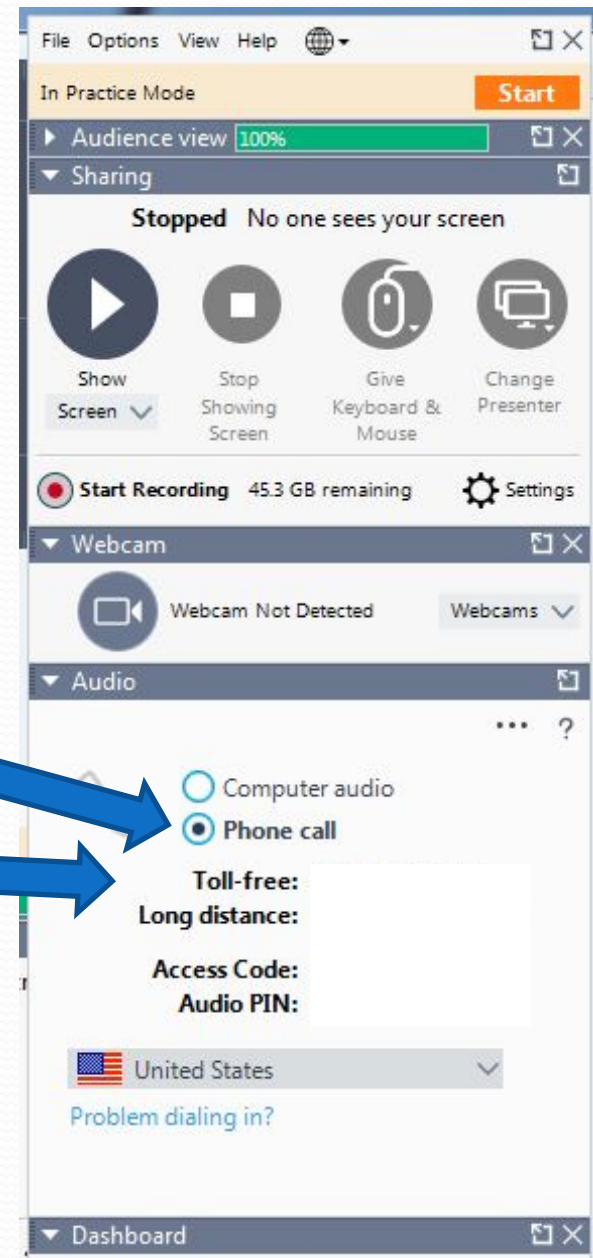


Webinar Instructions

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Only have ONE audio connection to the webinar to avoid echoes!!

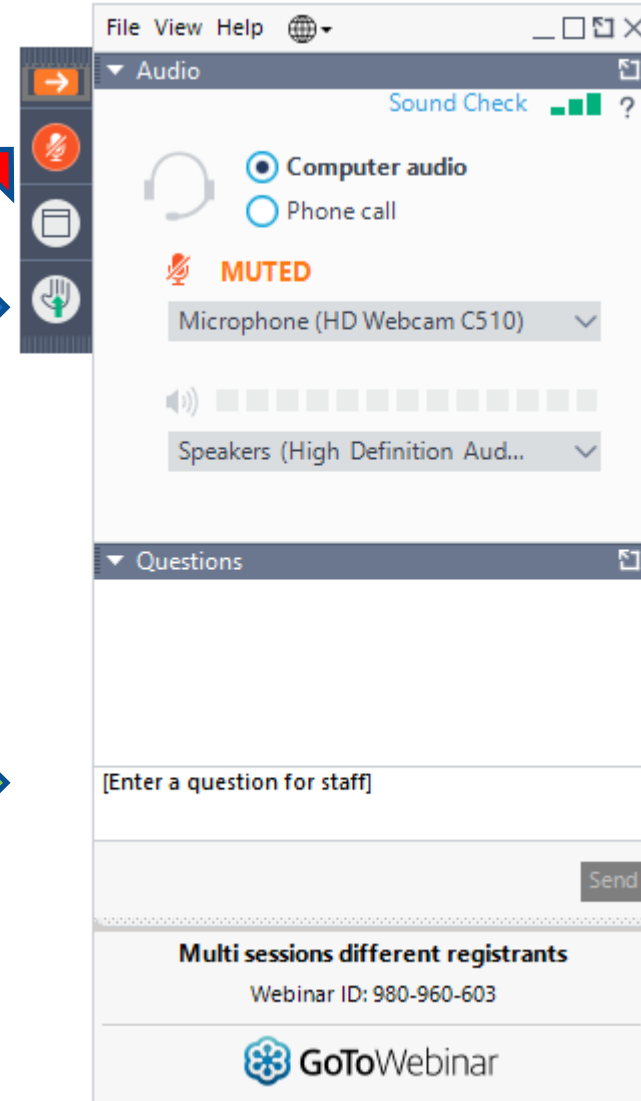
Webinar Instructions

Talking:

- If you would like to talk, click “**Raise hand**” button. (green = your hand is down and need to click to raise)
- After being called on, make sure you are unmuted (red = muted, green = unmuted).

Tech Support:

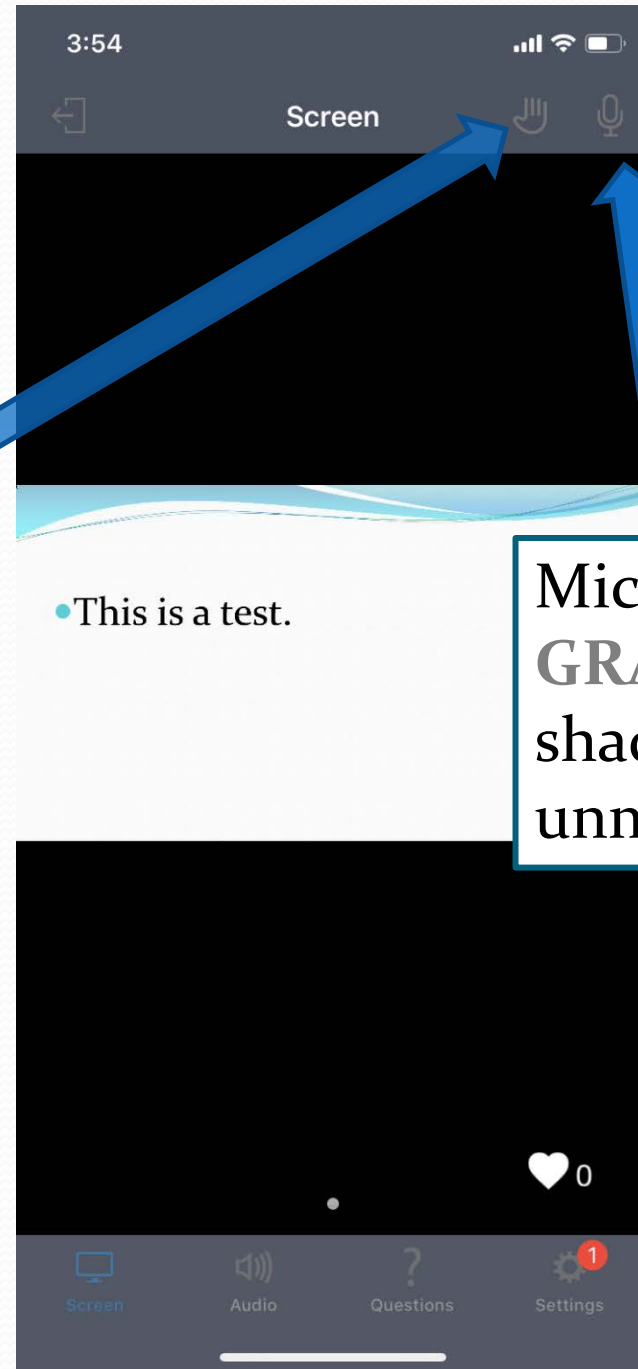
- Type your need here.
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GTW on iPhone/iPad

- The “raise hand” and mute/unmute functions work the same if you are using the GoToWebinar app on an iPhone or iPad.

“Raise hand” will be **GRAY** when hand is down, shaded **BLUE** when hand is raised



Microphone will be **GRAY** when muted, shaded **BLUE** when unmuted



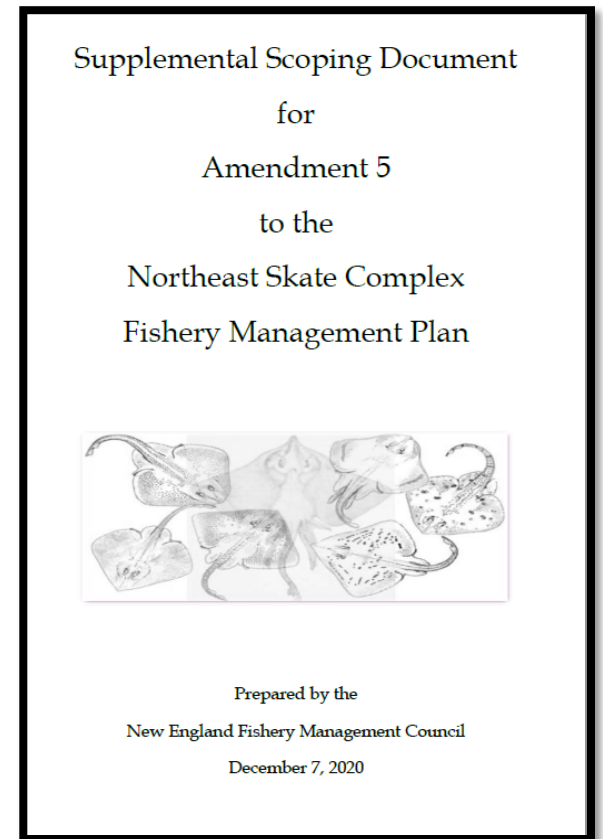
Skate Amendment 5 Supplemental Scoping Staff Presentation

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Purpose of this public meeting

- The New England Fishery Management Council is conducting public scoping meetings to solicit comments on Amendment 5 to the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan.
- The Council seeks your ideas, concerns, and other comments to identify management issues and develop alternatives for the skate wing and/or bait fishery.
- All related materials can be found on the Council webpage:

<https://www.nefmc.org/library/amendment-5-3>



Why is the Council scoping again?

- The Council first scoped for Amendment 5 in early 2017 to address concerns that:
 - Increasingly strict regulations in other fisheries might cause fishermen to shift effort into the open access skate fishery.
 - This could cause the skate fishery to use its quota quickly, trigger reduced skate possession limits, or have negative economic impacts on current participants.
- Since then, the Council has:
 - Considered implementing limited access for the skate fishery through Amendment 5.
 - Developed several Framework Adjustment actions that have changed possession limits, the uncertainty buffer and other measures.
- In September 2020, the Council expanded the scope of Amendment 5 to consider other ways to prevent triggering incidental skate possession limits, improve the precision and accuracy of fishery data, and better define skate fishery participants.



A5 Problem Statement (emphases added)

There are two modes of the skate fishery, directed and non-directed fisheries. An **incidental limit** has been triggered five times since first implemented July 2010, and when it gets triggered, there are negative impacts on the directed skate fishery and on the other fisheries that incidentally harvest skate.

There is a need to improve the reliability and accountability of **catch reporting** in the skate fishery (and other fisheries that catch skate) to ensure there is precise and accurate representation of catch (landings and discards). **Accurate catch data** are necessary to ensure that catch limits are set at levels that prevent overfishing and to determine when catch limits are exceeded.

Current and potential access to the skate resource make it difficult to achieve long term sustainable management in the skate fishery. It is more difficult to prevent overfishing and predict outcomes of management when **participants in a fishery cannot be defined**.



A5 Goals (desired outcomes)

1. Avoid tripping the skate incidental possession limit.
2. Improve skate data, leading to improved assessments (e.g., no longer be considered data-poor) and more precise and accurate understanding of the landings and discards in different segments of the fishery.
3. Minimize discards.
4. Better characterize the directed and non-directed fisheries.
5. Better understand the true potential for vessels to enter the fishery.
6. Minimize the impact on any other fisheries that have interactions with skates.
7. Preserve, to the extent possible, ongoing participation in the fishery consistent with how past utilization has occurred.



Types of measures to consider for achieving goals

1. An intermediate trigger to slow the wing and/or bait fishery.
2. Limited access for the wing and/or bait fishery, with or without tiers for different qualification criteria for permit categories.
3. Creating different TALs for the wing fishery segments (e.g., directed and non-directed TALs).
4. Monitoring requirements for the wing and/or bait fishery beyond NEFOP/SBRM requirements.
5. Restrict switching between state and federal fishing for the wing and/or bait fishery.
6. Gear modifications that could reduce bycatch for the wing and/or bait fishery (e.g., 12” mesh gillnet size).
7. Make the Federal skate permit a year-round permit for the wing and/or bait fishery.
8. Additional reporting requirements for the wing and/or bait fishery (e.g., VMS declarations, daily catch reports).



The Council seeks your comment on...

- ...whether, how, and why:
 - the problem statement articulates current issues in the wing **and/or** bait fishery that should be addressed and/or if other issues should be considered.
 - the goals would address the problem statement and/or if other goals should be considered for the wing **and/or bait** fishery.
 - the types of measures would achieve the goals identified and/or if others should be considered and if measures should apply to the wing **and/or** bait fishery.

The Council could revise the problem statement, goals and objectives based on scoping comments.



Questions to consider about limited access

- Should limited access be used to manage capacity in the wing **and/or** bait fishery?
- If so, should:
 - Qualifying criteria be based on the bait **and/or** wing (non-bait) control dates or some other dates? What other factors in a vessel's history should be considered?
 - There be more than one type of (or tiered) limited access permit, with allowed landings varying by permit type? How?
 - A mechanism exist to allow a limited number of new entrants in the wing **and/or** bait fishery? If so, what factors should be considered?
 - There be an accumulation limit for skate fishery permits and/or provision for temporary or permanent transfers of permits?
 - Vessels not qualifying for limited access be allowed to land skate (wing **and/or** bait), potentially under a low skate possession limit?



Questions to consider about other measures

- Would triggering incidental possession limits and exceeding TALs be prevented by:
 - Intermediate possession limits? How structured?
 - Different landing limits (TALs) for wing fishery segments? How defined?
- How might monitoring and reporting change to improve the precision and accuracy of the landings and discards in the skate fishery? How should such changes impact or interact with the requirements of other FMPs?
- How might restricting switching between state and federal fishing or making the Federal skate permit a year-round permit help improve fishery data, catch accounting, and/or better understand the true potential for vessels to enter the fishery?
- Which gear modifications should be considered to reduce discards?



Consistency with FMP goal and objectives

Skate FMP Goal: Consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other applicable laws, to develop a Fishery Management Plan to research and manage the Northeast Skate Complex at long-term sustainable levels.

The Scoping Document lists the seven FMP objectives.

- What should the Council consider in ensuring that Amendment 5 is consistent with the FMP goal and objectives?
- Should the Skate FMP goal and/or objectives be revised or updated? How?



Supplemental scoping comment process

Where? How? When?

1. Give a comment at a scoping meeting
2. Write a letter or email. Send to:
 - Fax: (978) 465-3116
 - Email: comments@nefmc.org
 - Mail at the address below.

**Comment deadline:
5:00 p.m. EST
Friday, February 12, 2021**

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill #2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Please note on your correspondence: "Northeast Skate Complex Amendment 5 Scoping Comments."



Ground Rules for commenting

- To indicate you wish to comment, please use the “Raise Hand” feature and you will be called on by the Committee Chair. Then unmute yourself.
- When commenting, please state:
 - Your name
 - Brief description of your organization/occupation/fishery and region you represent (Ex. Skate bait fisherman from New Bedford)
- We will allow for one round of comments – one per person. If time permits, and only after everyone who wants to comment has a chance, the Chair may allow a second round of comments.
- We ask that no New England Council member comment today.

All oral and written comments, and a summary of comments, will be provided to the Council. THANK YOU!

