



New England Fishery Management Council

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John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 31, 2020
TO: Skate Advisory Panel and Committee
FROM: Dr. Matt McKenzie, Skate Committee Chairman
SUBJECT: Charge for September 10, 2020 meetings

There will be separate webinar meetings of the Skate Advisory Panel and Committee on **Thursday, September 10. The Advisory Panel starts at 8:30 AM. The Committee starts at 1:00 PM.**

PURPOSE. The primary purpose of these meetings is to discuss the 2020 Northeast Skate Annual Monitoring Report (for FY 2019), Amendment 5 to the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and future Council priorities regarding skates.

MEETING MATERIALS. Apart from the agendas (Document #1a), the documents for these meetings are identical. To make the most of our meeting time, please familiarize yourself with the documents beforehand and come ready to make any recommendations. As documents become available, they will be posted on the Council webpages for these meetings:

Advisory Panel: <https://www.nefmc.org/calendar/sep-10-2020-skate-advisory-panel-webinar-meeting>

Committee: <https://www.nefmc.org/calendar/sep-10-2020-skate-committee-webinar-meeting>

WEBINAR REGISTRATION. Each meeting has its own registration link. You must register for each webinar in advance to participate in the meetings (if you plan to attend both meetings). The registration link for each is posted on the above respective webpages.

QUESTIONS/TECHNICAL SUPPORT: In advance, if you have any questions about the documents or this meeting, please contact Rachel Feeney (rfeeney@nefmc.org; (978) 465-0492 x110). A [Public Participation Guide](#) is available, and staff can set up a practice webinar for you ahead of the meeting if that would be helpful. For technical support during the meetings, email helpdesk@nefmc.org or call (978) 465-0492 x111.

Annual Monitoring Report

RECENT ACTIVITY. The Skate Plan Development Team recently completed the 2020 Skate Annual Monitoring Report for FY 2019 (Document #2). This was discussed at PDT meetings on July 13 and August 18 (Documents #5b and 5d).

Technical support during webinar: helpdesk@nefmc.org or (978) 465-0492 x111

NEXT STEPS. We will review the report, discuss fishery performance in FY 2019 and into FY 2020, and develop any recommendations on the need to adjust measures in the Northeast Skate Complex FMP to better achieve the FMP objectives (listed in Section 3.5 of the Amendment 5 Discussion Document, Document #3).

Amendment 5

RECENT ACTIVITY. In June 2020, the Council considered the Skate Committee motions from our March 26 meeting (Document #5a) on creating a problem statement and adding a third objective for Amendment 5, along with PDT feedback on the motions and additional fishery data than was provided in March. On the Committee motion to approve the Amendment 5 problem statement, there was enough concern by the Council that more work on the problem statement was needed and the motion failed unanimously. A motion to cease work on Amendment 5 also failed, but the Council agreed by consensus to remand the problem statement, goals, and objectives back to the Skate Committee.

Then on August 6, the Committee met and was facilitated through a brainstorming session of current problems in the skate fishery, supporting information and rationale, outcomes that would indicate problem resolution, and approaches to achieve outcomes. As a result, the Committee approved two motions for problem statements and one motion for goals. The Committee also developed a motion for the types of measures that could achieve the goals, but discussion of this motion was postponed until the September 10 meeting. The PDT provided brief feedback on the Committee's August 6 motions (Document #5d).

Neither the Council nor the Committee has tasked the PDT with additional substantive work on this action since the June Council meeting. However, the PDT has made small additions and updates to the Discussion Document (Document #3, listed in Section 1.0). New since the August 6 Committee meeting is a summary of the analysis of potential landings under FY 2020 possession limits from the March 11, 2020 PDT memo.

NEXT STEPS. The Skate Advisory Panel should consider the development of this action since our March 2020 meeting and make any recommendations to the Committee, focusing particularly on the Committee's motions at its August 6 meeting (Document #5c). The Committee will finalize its recommendations to the Council, including reconsideration of its postponed motion.

Skate Priorities

RECENT ACTIVITY. In May 2020, Executive Order (EO) 13921 on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth was issued (Document #4a). The Council was tasked to provide a "prioritized list of recommended actions to reduce burdens on domestic fishing and to increase production within sustainable fisheries" by November 2, 2020 (Document #4b). Normally, the Council develops an initial list of management priorities for the following year in September and finalizes it in December. This EO is pushing the Council to finalize its list earlier than usual, likely at the end of October. At its August 18 meeting, the Skate PDT finalized recommendations for future Council management priorities (Document #5d).

NEXT STEPS. The Advisory Panel and Committee should develop any skate priority recommendations at the September 10 meetings, as well as any ranking of priorities given the shortened timeframe. This can include any input on how the annual monitoring report could be improved in the future.