



New England Fishery Management Council

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Groundfish Monitoring Amendment 23: Planning Moves Forward for Outdoor, In-Person Public Hearing on August 26

Barring severe weather or changes in outdoor gathering restrictions issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the New England Fishery Management Council will hold an outdoor, in-person public hearing for Amendment 23 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 beginning at 3:00 p.m. It will take place under a large tent on the grounds of the [Sheraton Four Points in Wakefield, MA](#).

NOW'S THE TIME: This is the **last public hearing** the Council will hold on Amendment 23 before taking final action during its [September meeting](#). If extenuating circumstances prevent the Council from holding the hearing in person, the hearing will be conducted by webinar on the same day at the same time.

IMPORTANT: **Everyone** planning to attend the in-person hearing **MUST [fill out this form by August 21](#)**. You'll receive a confirmation notice. Current Massachusetts COVID-19 guidelines restrict outdoor public gatherings to 50 people. The Council will need to limit the number of people under the tent to 50. This includes staff and the Council member who will be running the hearing. An accurate headcount is critical.

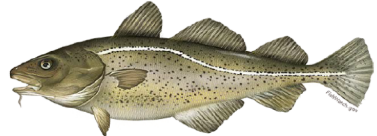
SAFETY PRECAUTIONS: The Council has taken every precaution possible to conduct this in-person hearing safely.

- All attendees will be **REQUIRED** to wear a mask and **FOLLOW** social distancing requirements.
- The hotel will set up **SANITATION STATIONS** at strategic locations and **SANITIZE** the speaker's table between each public commenter.
- All chairs under the tent will be placed six feet apart and **CANNOT** be moved.
- Attendees from outside of Massachusetts will need to **COMPLY** with the state's COVID-19 quarantine requirements, which can be found [here](#).
- Anyone experiencing [COVID-like symptoms](#) should **NOT** attend.
- Entry and exit to the hotel grounds will be **ONE WAY**: in one entrance and out another.



Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan

DRAFT Amendment 23

Including a Draft Environmental Impact Statement



Formal Submission Draft
March 4, 2020
Prepared by the
New England Fishery Management Council
In consultation with the
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
National Marine Fisheries Service



Visit the [Amendment 23 library](#) to access all documents and public hearing materials.



New England Fishery Management Council

Have Questions? Here's What You Need to Know

Q: How big is this tent?

A: The tent is 40' by 80' in size, equivalent to roughly 3,200 square feet of floor space. The sides of the tent will be rolled up for maximum ventilation.

Q: What if I want to comment in person but the 50 seats under the tent are full?

A: If you [preregister by August 21](#) and receive a confirmation from the Council saying you're signed up, you'll be able to provide in-person comments. If more people register than can be accommodated under the Massachusetts outdoor cap of 50 people, you'll be placed on a waiting list. If necessary, the Council will hold a second hearing that same day.

Q: Who can attend this in-person hearing?

A: The Council is encouraging anyone who wants to testify in person to attend this outdoor hearing. Others who are not intending to speak in person but still want to listen to the conversation may [join the webinar](#).

Q: There's a webinar option? Can I register now?

A: Yes. [REGISTER HERE](#). The Council is working with the hotel to provide an outdoor internet cable to broadcast the hearing by webinar. Please be aware that: (1) the Council is not in full control of this service; and (2) you'll be in listen-only mode on the webinar. The Council's first priority for this [August 26 hearing](#) is to provide an avenue for fishermen and others to offer in-person comments. The Council already has held [eight public hearings by webinar](#).

Q: Will this in-person hearing really take place?

A: The Council is taking extraordinary steps to hold this hearing in person. However, the Council is bound by Massachusetts COVID-19 restrictions and, since this is an outdoor meeting, adverse weather. All updates will be posted on the Council's website on the [Amendment 23 webpage](#). Please monitor this webpage for updates.

NEED HELP? Call or email [Jamie, Robin, Janice, or Joan](#).



Top: Electronic monitoring (EM) camera mounted on a fishing vessel, The Nature Conservancy photo; Bottom: Measuring pollock on an EM trip, Energy Films photo



Want to comment in person?
Fill out this [REQUIRED FORM](#).