

New England Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda – Revised*

Tuesday – Thursday, December 1-3, 2020

[By Webinar](#)

Sending comments? Written comments must be received at the NEFMC office no later than 8:00 a.m., Friday, November 27, 2020 to be considered at this meeting. Please address comments to Council Chairman Dr. John Quinn or Executive Director Tom Nies at: NEFMC, 50 Water St., Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950. Email submissions should be sent to comments@nefmc.org.

IMPORTANT: Due to ongoing federal and state travel restrictions and public safety guidelines related to [COVID-19](#), this meeting will be conducted by webinar. Please continue to monitor the Council's [December 2020 meeting webpage](#).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The Council's "Guidelines for Providing Public Comments" can be found [here](#).

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

- 9:00 a.m. Introductions and Announcements** (Chairman Dr. John Quinn)
- 9:10 Reports on Recent Activities**
Council Chairman, Council Executive Director, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) Regional Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) General Counsel, Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA Enforcement, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Advisory Committee
- 10:30 Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management** (John Pappalardo)
Extension of October 27, 2020 Council meeting discussion to set 2021 priorities; reaffirm or alter path for EBFM outreach and EBFM management strategy evaluation (MSE)
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:30 Open Period for Public Comment**
Opportunity for the public to provide brief comments on issues relevant to Council business but not listed on this agenda (please limit remarks to 3-5 minutes)
- 1:45 Atlantic Herring Report** (Rick Bellavance)
Framework Adjustment 7: update on action to protect spawning herring on Georges Bank; update on other herring-related actions
- 2:10 Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology** (Staff)
Presentation on findings of three-year review; Council discussion
- 2:40 Northeast Ocean Data Portal** (Nick Napoli, NROC; Dr. Fiona Hogan, RODA)
Final report on collaborative effort between the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance to update commercial fisheries data on portals
- 3:00 Habitat Committee Report** (Eric Reid; Chris Schillaci, GARFO)
Council review and approval of completed Habitat Policies for Aquaculture and Submarine Cables; update on offshore energy and habitat-related work; NOAA Fisheries update on regional aquaculture activities and Federal Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, Council discussion

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

- 9:00 a.m. Fall 2020 Management Track Assessments** (Dr. Russell Brown, Northeast Fisheries Science Center)
Report on peer reviewed Fall 2020 Management Track Assessments for Atlantic sea scallops and 13 Northeast multispecies stocks, including large-mesh groundfish and small-mesh whiting/hake stocks
- 10:15 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report – Part 1** (SSC Chair Dr. Jason McNamee)

Receive overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations for Atlantic sea scallop fishing year 2021 and defaults for 2022; receive OFL and ABC recommendations for northern and southern red hake, northern and southern silver hake, and offshore hake for fishing years 2021-2023

- 11:00 Scallop Committee Report** (Vincent Balzano)
Framework Adjustment 33: overview of 2020 surveys; progress report on 2021 fishery specifications, 2022 default specifications, and other measures
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:00 Small-Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) Committee Report** (Rick Bellavance)
Annual Monitoring Report: presentation of report with catch accounting for 2019 fishing year; 2021-2023 Specifications: initiate action
- 2:00 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report – Part 2** (SSC Chair Dr. Jason McNamee)
Receive OFL and ABC recommendations for nine groundfish stocks for fishing years 2021-2023; receive SSC recommendations for white hake rebuilding
- 3:00 Groundfish Committee Report** (Terry Alexander)
Framework Adjustment 61: Council final action on (1) 2021 total allowable catches for U.S./Canada stocks of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod, Eastern GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder, (2) 2021-2023 specifications for roughly half of the groundfish stocks, and (3) white hake rebuilding; Council discussion on universal sector exemption to allow fishing for redfish, pollock, and haddock, final action on this measure delayed until January Council meeting

Thursday, December 3, 2020

- 9:00 a.m. NOAA Guidance to Councils on Financial Disclosures and Voting Recusals** (Mitch MacDonald, NOAA GC)
NOAA General Counsel briefing on final rule addressing disclosure of financial interests and voting recusal regulations for Regional Fishery Management Council members
- 10:00 Spiny Dogfish** (Rick Bellavance; Jason Didden, Mid-Atlantic Council staff)
Review 2021-2022 specifications proposed by Mid-Atlantic Council; New England Council discussion; consider final action
- 11:00 Skate Committee Report** (Dr. Matt McKenzie)
Northeast Skate Complex Amendment 5: approve scoping document with expanded range of possible measures
- 11:30 NEFSC Report on Recent Activities** (Dr. Jon Hare) *
Northeast Fisheries Science Center report on recent activities; Council questions and discussion on role of Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP)
- 11:50 North Atlantic Right Whales** (NEFSC; GARFO; Terry Alexander)
Presentation/Reports on: (1) preliminary 2019 population estimate, (2) Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and proposed rule; (3) Draft Batched Biological Opinion covering 10 fisheries; Council discussion and comments; and (4) 2020 Ropeless Consortium Annual Meeting
- 1:15 p.m. Other Business**

Times listed next to the agenda items are estimates and are subject to change.

This meeting is being held entirely by webinar. Council member financial disclosure forms are available for examination on the Council website.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained on 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.

Please check the Council's website, www.nefmc.org, or call (978) 465-0492 for copies.

This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 USC 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.