



Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment: Draft EIS Approval



June 6, 2018
Philadelphia, PA

Today's Objectives

- Approve Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for formal submission to NMFS
- Update on timeline and amendment next steps

Council & Commission Documents

- Joint public hearing document (approved 4/30)
- Commission amendment document (approved 4/30)
- Council amendment document = Draft EIS (approval needed today)

DEIS

- Includes analysis of impacts for each alternative relative to:
 - Summer flounder
 - Non-target species
 - Habitat
 - Protected resources
 - Human communities

DEIS

- Will undergo additional modifications through NMFS review process
- Will eventually include additional sections demonstrating compliance with other federal laws

DEIS Updates as of 6/4/18

- Minor edits (mostly to section 7.0)
- Additional analysis of eliminated permit landings/revenues from 2013-2017
 - Slightly higher than landings/revenues over August 2009-July 2014; still low % of overall coastwide landings/revenues
- Complete draft cumulative effects analysis
- Added Appendix C: Ports and communities descriptions

Remaining Action Timeline

- Changes to hearing timing to account for NMFS review of DEIS and subsequent modifications
- Does not change timing of final action (December)

Remaining Action Timeline

June 2018	Council approves DEIS; Council staff finalizes and formally submits DEIS to NMFS (mid-June)
July 2018	3-week NMFS review period; staff addresses comments and resubmits (targeting end of July for resubmission)
August 2018	NMFS submits document to EPA; EPA publishes Notice of Availability, 45-day DEIS public comment period starts (overlapping with public hearings)
Sept 2018	Public hearings start 15 days after NOA publishes to allow public to review the DEIS prior to hearings (targeting early/mid-September for start of hearings)

Remaining Action Timeline

Oct-Nov 2019	Staff prepares documents and comment summaries for final action
Dec 2019	Final action (December 11-13 joint meeting in Annapolis)
Jan 2019	FEIS prepared, submitted and reviewed by NMFS (3-week review period)
Feb 2019	FEIS finalized
March- May 2019	NOAs and proposed rule publish. Overlapping comment periods : Amendment NOA 60-day; Proposed rule 45-day; FEIS NOA 30-day.

Remaining Action Timeline

**Jun-Jul
2019**

Amendment decision (30 days after Amendment NOA comment period closes); final rule publishes

**Aug-Sep
2019**

Final rule effective (30 days after final rule unless otherwise specified; revised allocations effective beginning January 1, 2020; permit requalification would likely need additional time after final rule)

**Dec
2019**

State allocations/quotas adjusted (if applicable) for Jan 1, 2020

Draft Motion

- Move to submit the Summer Flounder Commercial Issues Amendment DEIS to NMFS for review.