

New England Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda
Tuesday – Thursday, January 26-28, 2021
[By Webinar](#)

Sending comments? Written comments must be received at the NEFMC office no later than 8:00 a.m., Thursday, January 21, 2021 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 [January 2021 meeting webpage](#).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The Council's "Guidelines for Providing Public Comments" can be found [here](#). Anyone interested in speaking during the open period for public comment on January 26, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. should email Janice Plante at jplante@nefmc.org to get on the list.

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Groundfish Committee Meeting** (Terry Alexander)
The Council's Groundfish Committee will meet to: (1) receive the Groundfish Advisory Panel report; (2) discuss and vote on the last component of Framework Adjustment 61 – a proposed universal sector exemption to allow fishing for redfish; (3) receive the Recreational Advisory Panel report; (4) discuss and develop recommendations on fishing year 2021 recreational measures for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock; (5) receive a summary of public feedback on developing a strawman proposal for a potential limited entry program for party/charter vessels in the recreational groundfish fishery, discuss the proposal and next steps; (6) receive an update on work to revise acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules for groundfish stocks; (7) receive an update on Cod Stock Structure Working Groups; and (8) discuss other business as needed
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:30 Groundfish Committee Meeting Continued** (Terry Alexander)
- 4:00 NEFMC January 2021 Meeting Convenes, Introductions and Announcements** (Chairman Dr. John Quinn)
The Council meeting will begin immediately following the conclusion of the Groundfish Committee meeting
- 4:10 Groundfish Committee Report** (Terry Alexander)
Framework Adjustment 61: final action on universal sector exemption to allow fishing for redfish, vote to submit framework to NMFS; Council action on other issues resulting from Groundfish Committee recommendations for items listed above

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. 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, and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel
- 10:30 Scallop Committee Report** (Vincent Balzano)
Framework Adjustment 33: overview of 2020 Gulf of Maine surveys, final action on 2021 fishery specifications, 2022 default specifications, measures to mitigate impacts on Georges Bank yellowtail flounder and northern windowpane flounder, plus other measures; Scallop Priorities: possible discussion on adding listening or scoping sessions for a limited access leasing program to 2021 priorities with consideration of deleting a previously approved priority in exchange
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:30 Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management** (John Pappalardo)

Brief progress report on steps needed to conduct informational workshops using public outreach materials, focusing on potential application to a Georges Bank example Fishery Ecosystem Plan (eFEP)

- 2:00 NEFSC Northeast Fishery Monitoring and Research Division** (Amanda McCarty, NEFSC division chief)
Report on Northeast Fishery Monitoring and Research Division: (1) current division organization; (2) status of ongoing responsibilities; (3) at-sea monitoring and observer program activities, funding status, and impacts due to COVID-19; and (4) cooperative research update
- 3:45 NEFSC Cost Survey for Commercial Fishing Businesses** (Dr. Tammy Murphy, NEFSC)
Presentation on Northeast Fisheries Science Center's cost survey for commercial fishing businesses, including: (1) overview of survey methods and data collected to date; (2) discussion on challenges and opportunities; and (3) efforts to solicit industry feedback while planning for next cost survey
- 4:30 Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP)** (Terry Alexander)
Report on January 14, 2021 meeting of the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel

Thursday, January 28, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Index-Based Methods and Control Rules 2020 Research Track Assessment:** (Dr. Chris Legault, NEFSC)
Report on peer reviewed results of Index-Based Methods and Control Rules 2020 Research Track Assessment
- 9:45 Small-Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) Committee Report** (Rick Bellavance)
2021-2023 Specifications: final action; Priorities: potentially discuss adding a 2021 whiting priority to (1) analyze factors for why the northern whiting fishery is not achieving optimum yield (OY), and (2) recommend measures to allow greater resource utilization, plus consider deleting a previously approved priority in exchange
- 10:45 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)
- 11:00 Habitat Report** (Eric Reid)
Update on offshore energy development and ongoing/future habitat-related work and priorities
- 11:30 North Atlantic Right Whales** (Colleen Coogan, GARFO)
Presentation on: (1) Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and proposed rule, and (2) Draft Batched Biological Opinion covering 10 fisheries; Council discussion and comments
- 12:45 p.m. Other Business**
Approve draft letter to NMFS supporting investigation of using vessel monitoring system (VMS) notifications rather than Federal Register notices to announce area closures for Atlantic herring fishery; and other business as needed
- 1:00 Closed Session** (Chairman Dr. John Quinn)
Council discussion in closed session on 2021-2023 appointments to the Scientific and Statistical Committee

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.