

Council Meeting Agenda | January 31-February 2, 2012
Sheraton Harborside Hotel, 250 Market Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Telephone (603) 431-2300 | Fax (603) 433-5649

Tuesday, January 31, 2012

9:00 a.m. Introductions and Announcements (Council Chairman Rip Cunningham)

9:05 Reports on Recent Activities

Council Chairman, Executive Director, NMFS Acting Regional Administrator, NOAA General Counsel, Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council liaisons, and representatives of the U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA Enforcement/VMS, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission; John Weber from the Northeast Regional Ocean Council also will provide an update during this portion of the meeting

10:50 Experimental Fishery Permit (EFP) Applications (Chris Kellogg, NEFMC staff)

Review and approve any comments on pending experimental fishery permits received since the last meeting

11:00 Essential Fish Habitat Omnibus Amendment 2 Update (David Preble)

Overview of progress to date; this action focuses on alternatives to minimize the adverse effects of fishing on essential fish habitat and protect deep sea corals

11:30 Research Steering Committee Report (David Goethel)

Review of the committee's recent evaluations of cooperative research final reports and its ongoing discussions with NMFS concerning accounting for scientific research catch and the sale of that catch

Noon Open Period for Public Comment (Rip Cunningham)

Opportunity for any interested parties or the general public to briefly comment on items relevant to Council business but not otherwise listed on this agenda

12:30 p.m. Lunch Break

1:45 Response to the Touchstone Report on the New England Fisheries Management Process (George Lapointe, Council staff)

Presentation on a Fishery Management Plan Performance Evaluation white paper; a Q and A session for Council members and the public will follow

2:45 Bureau of Energy Management (BOEM) Update and Discussion (BOEM staff)

Review of recent offshore wind energy projects and proposals in New England

3:45 Scallop Committee Report (Mary Beth Nickell-Tooley)

Initiate Framework Adjustment 24 to the Scallop Fishery Management Plan (FMP); the action will likely include fishery specifications for fishing years 2013 and 2014 as well as several additional measures identified by the Council in priority order: 1) possible modification of the Georges Bank access area opening dates; 2) measures to address sub-annual catch limits for yellowtail flounder for limited access general category trawl fishery; and 3) leasing limited access general category IFQ mid-year

Wednesday, February 1, 2012

8:00 a.m. Summary of the Findings of the Stock Assessment Workshop/Stock Assessment Review 53 Committee Meetings

(Dr. James Weinberg and Dr. Paul Rago) Overview of SAW/SARC 53, possibly to include the SARC conclusions concerning the status of black sea bass and Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod

9:30 Scientific and Statistical Committee Report (Dr. Chris Legault)

Report on SSC's December planning meeting to discuss the use of social science information in the development of a risk policy for ABC recommendations, its discussions to address cod discard mortality in the hook fishery, research recommendations, the committee's 2012 activities and SSC outreach; summary of the committee's January 25, 2012 meeting and any decisions or comments about the status of GOM cod

11:00 Marine Recreational Information Program Briefing (Gordon Colvin)

New estimates of recreational catch from 2004 through 2011, including estimates of GOM cod and haddock catches

Noon Lunch Break

1:00 p.m. Groundfish Committee Report (Terry Stockwell)

Discussions during this agenda item will encompass a range of issues:

- A summary of the Northeast Multispecies FMP Amendment 18 scoping hearings;
- The status of GOM cod, including the development of a course of action to address the recent stock assessment and a possible request to NMFS for emergency action to address overfishing;
- Progress on the sector framework adjustment and work on the groundfish closed areas;
- Overview of the Rednet Project to redevelop a sustainable redfish trawl fishery (Mike Pol, MA DMF / Kohl Kanwit, ME DMR);
- Possible review of sector exemption requests and the development of Council recommendations on those requests

1:15 **Groundfish Committee Report – *continued until meeting adjournment***

Thursday, February 2, 2012

8:30 a.m. **Whiting Committee Report** (David Goethel)

Review and approve comments on the Small Mesh Multispecies Secretarial Amendment, an action that addresses the small mesh fishery for stocks of red hake, silver hake, and offshore hake and is scheduled to become effective on May 1, 2012; approve Multispecies FMP Draft Amendment 19 for public hearing purposes

11:00 **Monkfish Committee Report** (Mark Alexander)

Discuss progress to develop a range of alternatives for consideration in Amendment 6 to the Monkfish FMP; the Council also will consider adopting a committee recommendation to establish a control date for use in developing management measures including, but not limited to, catch shares accumulation limits.

Noon **Lunch Break**

1:15 p.m. **Briefing by NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division** (NMFS Headquarters staff)

The agency is seeking comments on its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and FMP Amendment that would consider catch shares for the Atlantic shark fisheries

2:15 **Enforcement Committee Report** (Frank Blount)

Request for Council approval recommendations concerning gear stowage and NOAA Enforcement's draft priorities document discussed briefly at the November Council meeting

3:00 **Other Business**

Times listed next to the agenda items are estimates and are subject to change. The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities.

Council member financial disclosure forms are available for examination at the meeting.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subjects 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 call (978) 465-0492 for copies or check the Council website - www.nefmc.org. If you are submitting comments for Council consideration at this meeting, they must be received at the Council office by 12 p.m. EST on Thursday, January 26, 2012. Notice Issue, Jan. 10, 2012.