



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
C.M. "Rip" Cunningham, Jr., *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 23, 2012
TO: Groundfish Oversight Committee
FROM: Terry Stockwell
SUBJECT: **March 29, 2012 Committee Meeting Materials**

1. Please review the attached materials prior to our meeting at the Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI. Please contact me if you have questions. The package includes:

- Agenda
- 2012 Groundfish Assessment Updates Executive Summary (full report available online at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/crd/crd1206/index.html>)
- Groundfish Plan Development Team memo dated March 20, 2012 – FY 2013-2014 ABCs
- Draft PDT paper: Developing Effective Monitoring for the Northeast Multispecies Fishery
- Groundfish Committee meeting summary from January 18, 2012
- Groundfish Plan Development Team report dated March 23 2012 summarizing February 27 and March 13, 2012 PDT meetings.
- Background materials on inshore roller gear area
- Enforcement Committee Gear Stowage Workshop summary, November 29, 2011
- Background materials on gear stowage requirements
- Correspondence
- Staff Presentation: 2012 Groundfish Assessment Overview

2. Council staff will provide an overview of the 2012 Groundfish Assessment Updates. A more detailed presentation will be provided by the NEFSC at the April Council meeting. Because of a full meeting agenda I intend to limit discussion on this item to the time period on the agenda.

3. Much of the sector action discussion will focus on monitoring issues. The PDT will suggest additional clarification of the programs goals and objectives adopted by the Committee in January. There is also a need to further refine what measures will be considered in the action.

4. NERO staff will provide an update on the listing of Atlantic sturgeon under the Endangered Species Act. The biological opinions are under development and are not expected to be published until April. NERO may ask for Committee input on measures that may reduce sturgeon encounters. There have also been some discussions on a process for adopting any measures included in the biological opinions, and the Committee may want to develop a recommendation for the Councils consideration.

5. We will discuss the action to adopt new OFLs/ABCs/ACLs for FY 2013- 2014. The Committee should discuss what items will be included in this action. In addition to updating the specifications for a number of stocks, the following items could be considered:

- Revised GOM cod rebuilding plan. This would seem premature, because it is not clear the work plans developed by the SSC will be completed soon enough to be considered for this action. Even if the rebuilding plan is not revised for 2013, the Committee may wish to discuss future plans for addressing GOM cod issues.
- Revised plaice rebuilding plan. Whether this is necessary awaits guidance from NERO.
- Rebuilding plan for GOM haddock. Whether this is necessary awaits guidance from NERO.
- Application of the mixed stock exception to SNE/MAB windowpane flounder. This idea surfaced during FW 47 discussions but was deferred to a future action.
- Scallop fishery sub-ACLs for SNE/MA winter flounder and SNE/MAB windowpane flounder. These ideas surfaced during FW 47 discussions but were deferred to a future action.
- Scallop fishery sub-ACLs for GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder. The Scallop Committee will plan future access programs this year and the necessary yellowtail flounder sub-ACLs will need to be specified.
- Timing of scallop fishery access to GB access areas. While this issue may not need to be in this action, the Scallop Committee priorities included the possibility of a joint action to modify the dates for the access areas.
- Letters have been received from interested parties suggesting additional items for this action. Please review the correspondence for details.

6. Staff will provide an update on PDT progress in developing recommendations for possible modifications to groundfish closed areas. While some progress has been made, the PDT has not yet developed specific recommendations.

7. There are two specific items to be addressed under “Other business.” The first is to clarify the intent of the inshore roller gear restricted area, adopted by FW 27. The second is to review the recommendations of the Enforcement Committee for changes to the gear stowage requirements.



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
C. M. "Rip" Cunningham, Jr., *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

Groundfish Oversight Committee

Agenda

March 29, 2012

Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI

- 8:30 a.m. Introductions/approval of agenda
- 8:40 a.m. Overview of groundfish assessment updates (*Tom Nies*)
- 9:40 a.m. Sector action issues (*Anne Hawkins*)
 Monitoring
 Other issues
- Noon Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Report on sturgeon ESA listing (*NERO staff*)
- 2:00 p.m. Action to adjust ABCs/ACLs for FY 2013- 2014 (*Tom Nies*)
- 3:15 p.m. PDT progress on possible modifications to closed areas (*Tom Nies*)
- 4:00 p.m. Other business
 Clarification of Council intent on inshore roller gear area (*Anne Hawkins*)
 Discussion of recommended changes to gear stowage regulations (*Anne Hawkins*)
- 5:00 p.m. Adjourn

