

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Habitat

I. STATUS

Meetings and ongoing work:

At the Council's request, staff convened a series of informational meetings with individuals and small groups of interested parties, mostly fishermen, to discuss the alternatives approved by the Council in June (Document 1). A primary objective was to gather information that would inform the adjustment of area boundaries or management measures in order to improve the alternatives. These conversations were captured in a report (Document 2), which was reviewed by the technical teams (Closed Area Technical Team and Habitat PDT), and forwarded to the Habitat and Groundfish Committees at the end of August.

The Committees met jointly on September 5 to review the alternatives generally and discuss any adjustments necessary. A draft meeting summary is provided (Document 3). The Committee's recommendations to the Council are highlighted in the draft EIS (Document 1).

Also on September 5, the Committee tasked staff with developing an additional habitat management area on the Northern Edge of Georges Bank. A memorandum from staff explains the alternative and rationale, and provides some preliminary analysis (Document 4).

The CATT and PDT will meet on September 18 and 19, respectively, to continue work on the DEIS.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

Based on recommendations from the Committee, approve adjustments to the range of alternatives being analyzed in the Omnibus EFH Amendment 2 DEIS.

III. INFORMATION

1. Excerpts from Omnibus EFH Amendment 2 DEIS including background information and spatial management alternatives; updated to reflect Committee recommendations made on 9/5/13
2. Report from August 2013 informational meetings, including technical feedback; updated 9/11/13
3. Draft meeting summary from Habitat/Groundfish Committee meeting, 9/5/13
4. Staff memorandum - Northern Edge habitat management alternative – recommendation, rationale, and preliminary analysis
5. Correspondence