



BILLING CODE: 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE477

SAW-SARC 63 Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: NMFS and the Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW) will convene the 63rd SAW Stock Assessment Review Committee for the purpose of reviewing the stock assessment of Ocean Quahog. The Northeast Regional SAW is a formal scientific peer-review process for evaluating and presenting stock assessment results to managers for fish stocks in the offshore U.S. waters of the northwest Atlantic. Assessments are prepared by SAW working groups and reviewed by an independent panel of stock assessment experts called the Stock Assessment Review Committee, or SARC. The public is invited to attend the presentations and discussions between the review panel and the scientists who have participated in the stock assessment process.

DATES: The public portion of the Stock Assessment Review Committee Meeting will be held from February 21, 2017 – February 23, 2017. The meeting will commence on February 21, 2017 at 10 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. Please see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for the daily meeting agenda.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the S.H. Clark Conference Room in the Aquarium Building of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science

Center (NEFSC), 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sheena Steiner, 508-495-2177; e-mail: *sheena.steiner@noaa.gov*; or, James Weinberg, 508-495-2352; e-mail: *james.weinberg@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: For further information, please visit the NEFSC website at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov>. For additional information about the SARC meeting and the stock assessment review of Ocean Quahog, please visit the NMFS/NEFSC SAW webpage at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/saw/>.

DAILY MEETING AGENDA – SAW/SARC 63 Benchmark Stock Assessment for Ocean Quahog. (Subject to Change; All times are approximate and may be changed at the discretion of the SARC Chair)

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

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| 10 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Welcome Introductions | James Weinberg, SAW Chair |
| 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Ocean Quahog (OQ) Assessment Presentation | Dan Hennen |
| 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Lunch | |
| 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | OQ Presentation (cont.) | Dan Hennen |
| 3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | Break | |
| 3:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. | OQ SARC Discussion | Ed Houde, SARC Chair |
| 5:45 p.m. – 6 p.m. | Public Comment Period | |

Wednesday, February 22, 2017

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| 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | Revisit with OQ presenters | Ed Houde |
| 10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Break | |
| 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | OQ presentation (cont.) | Ed Houde |
| 11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Public Comment | |
| 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. | Lunch | |

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| 1:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Review/Edit Assessment Summary Report | Ed Houde |
| 4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. | Break | |
| 4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | SARC Report Writing | |

Thursday, February 23, 2017

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| 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. | SARC Report Writing | |
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The meeting is open to the public; however, during the ‘SARC Report Writing’ sessions on February 22nd and 23rd, the public should not engage in discussion with the SARC.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Special requests should be directed to Sheena Steiner at the NEFSC, 508-495-2177, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: December 20, 2016.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
 Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,
 National Marine Fisheries Service.

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