



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF653]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is conducting five scoping meetings to solicit comments on ideas for fishery improvements in the monkfish and skate fisheries. The scoping is designed to identify the challenges the monkfish and skate fishing sectors are grappling with and to identify possible management measures for the Council to address those challenges in the future. In June of 2026, the Council will consider comments received during scoping and in December of 2026, the Council will consider these comments when developing 2027 Council work priorities. Given monkfish is jointly managed with the Mid-Atlantic Council, during its August 2026 meeting, the Mid-Atlantic Council will receive the same scoping summary and an update on any outcomes of the June 2026 New England Council meeting.

DATES: These meetings and webinar will be held between Monday, April 27, 2026 and Monday, May 11, 2026. See supplementary information for more details on specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES:

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cate O’Keefe, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Monday, April 27, 2026 from 4 – 6:30 p.m. The Westin Portland Harborview Hotel, 157 High Street, Portland, ME 04101

2. Wednesday, April 29, 2026 from 4 – 6:30 p.m. Fairfield Inn & Suites, 185 MacArthur Drive, New Bedford, MA 02740

3. Thursday, April 30, 2026 from 4 – 6:30 p.m. Cornell Cooperative Extension Suffolk County, 423 Griffing Avenue, Riverhead, NY 11901

4. Thursday, May 5, 2026 from 4 – 6:30 p.m. Stafford Township, 260 East Bay Avenue, Manahawkin, NJ 08050

5. Monday, May 11, 2026 from 4 – 6:30 p.m. via webinar. Please register for the webinar here:

<https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/CjSy3wZ4SfSBSOgc87uRiQ>

Public comments: The public comment deadline is on Monday, May 18, 2026. Mail to Cate O’Keefe, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill #2, Newburyport, MA 01950. Mark the outside of the envelope “Monkfish and Skate Fishery Improvements Scoping Comments.” Comments may also be sent via e-mail to comments@nefmc.org - with “Monkfish and Skate Fishery Improvements Scoping Comments” in the subject line.

Agenda:

Council staff will brief the public on prior monkfish and skate priority ideas, recent monkfish catch per unit effort (CPUE) project review information, and the Monkfish and Skate 2025 Joint Management Summary Report before receiving comments. Staff seek feedback on gear-type dynamics, skate fishery components, and the differences between the northern and southern monkfish components to help the Council articulate and prioritize management objectives for both fisheries in the future. These meetings will begin promptly at the time indicated above. If all attendees who wish to do

so have provided their comments prior to the end time indicated, the meeting may conclude early. To the extent possible, the Council may extend scoping meetings beyond the end time indicated above to accommodate all attendees who wish to speak.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on the 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. The public also should be aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

Special Accommodations:

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Cate O'Keefe, Executive Director, at 978-465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: April 9, 2026.

Rey Israel Marquez,

Acting Deputy Director,

Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.