

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 101399F]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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 scheduling public meetings of its Scientific and Statistical Committee, Social Sciences Advisory Committee, Habitat Committee and Advisory Panel, Groundfish Committee and Advisory Panel, Sea Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel, Gear Conflict Committee and Enforcement Committee in November, 1999 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meetings will be held between Thursday, November 4, 1999 and Monday, November 15, 1999. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in, Saugus, Peabody and Danvers, MA. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; (781) 231-0422.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Meeting Dates and Agendas**

Monday, November 4, 1999, 10 a.m. and Friday, November 5, 8:30 a.m.— Scientific and Statistical Committee Meeting

Location: New England Fishery Management Council Office, 5 Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906; telephone: (781) 231-0422.

The committee will evaluate the scientific information and analyses used in the Northeast Multispecies Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report. The SAFE report will include the Multispecies Monitoring Committee Report which addresses the status of the multispecies finfish stocks, evaluates the effectiveness of management measures and estimates the potential impacts of possible management options that could be used to adjust the Northeast Multispecies

Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the 2000-01 fishing year.

Friday, November 5, 1999, 10 a.m.— Social Sciences Advisory Committee Meeting

The committee will finalize recommendations concerning improvements to the economic, social and community impact analyses in Council documents and review the SAFE Reports for the Scallop and the Northeast Multispecies fisheries. Any recommendations made at the last committee meeting will be revisited at this meeting for purposes of ensuring adequate public comment.

Tuesday, November 9, 1999, 9:30 a.m.— Joint Habitat Committee and Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Sheraton Ferncroft Hotel, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

The committee will review proposals for scallop fishing access to three groundfish closed areas (Closed Areas I and II on Georges Bank, and the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area). The committee will develop recommendations on this issue and also will discuss the NMFS "internal" Essential Fish Habitat consultation process.

Wednesday, November 10, 1999, 9:30 a.m.— Joint Groundfish Committee and Groundfish Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Sheraton Ferncroft Hotel, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

The committee and panel will review the Northeast Multispecies SAFE Report, including the annual Multispecies Monitoring Committee Report and proposals from industry for management measures to be considered for the 2000-01 fishing year. The committee may recommend a preferred alternative to the Council for the Northeast Multispecies Plan annual framework adjustment. The committee and panel also will discuss proposals to allow scallop dredge vessel access to Closed Areas I and II and the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, and may develop recommendations to the Council for measures to be included in the Northeast Multispecies FMP annual framework adjustment.

Friday, November 12, 1999, 9:30 a.m.— Joint Scallop Committee and Scallop Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Sheraton Ferncroft Hotel, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

The committee will review the impacts of the proposed annual framework adjustment alternatives for the Scallop FMP and will recommend a preferred management option to the Council at its November 16-18, 1999 meeting. Final action on the framework

adjustment is scheduled to occur at that time.

As an addition to the committee agenda, members will discuss and recommend changes to the Sea Scallop Total Allowable Catch research set-aside mechanism that is currently in the Sea Scallop FMP.

Monday, November 15, 1999, 9:30 a.m.— Gear Conflict Committee Meeting

Location: New England Fishery Management Council Office, 5 Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906; telephone: (781) 231-0422.

The committee will develop recommendations concerning gear conflict issues to be considered by the Council when considering scallop vessel access to Closed Areas I and II on Georges Bank, and the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area. The committee also may discuss other gear conflict issues that are brought to its attention.

Monday, November 15, 1999, 1 p.m.— Enforcement Committee Meeting

Location: New England Fishery Management Council Office, 5 Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906; telephone: (781) 231-0422.

The committee will develop recommendations concerning enforcement issues related to scallop vessel access to Closed Areas I and II on Georges Bank, and the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area for the fishing year March-February, 2000-01. The committee may discuss other enforcement issues that are brought to its attention.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during these meetings. 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.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: October 15, 1999.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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