



**Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council**  
**Scientific and Statistical Committee Meeting**

September 8, 2021

**Input on Potential 2027 Research Track Assessment Schedule**

**Background**

At their annual spring meeting, the Northeast Region Coordinating Council (NRCC) typically reviews a suite of research track assessment proposals and, from the list of proposals, decides what stock-specific and/or topic-based assessments will be placed on the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the research track stock assessment schedule (e.g., in spring of 2021, the 2026 assessment research track schedule was set and in spring 2022, the 2027 schedule will be determined). The current 2022-2026 research track schedule is provided in Table 1.

In general, the process to identify, review, and select the assessments that will occur in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the research track schedule is as follows. An initial “wish list” of potential species and topics are identified by NRCC at their fall meeting. This wish list typically includes prior year proposals that did not make the research track schedule and any new stocks or topics offered by the NRCC. This wish list is then refined over the winter and research track assessment proposals are then further developed, typically by staff from the NEFSC or other NRCC members. In early spring, an NRCC stock assessment planning group, comprised of NRCC partners including SSC members, reviews all of the proposals and makes recommendations for both topic-based and stock-specific priorities for the NRCC to consider. Then at the spring meeting, the NRCC decides which stocks and/or topics will be added to the research track schedule. Table 2 provides a list of stocks or topics that were considered but not selected for the 2026 research track schedule and will likely be on the initial 2027 list of potential assessments for consideration.

The September SSC meeting is an opportunity for the SSC to provide early input into the research track process. The SSC should provide any direction or feedback on potential stocks or topics that should be considered by the NRCC at their fall meeting that could potentially be added to the initial wish list for further development. The SSC will get another opportunity to provide input on the final list of proposals for the 2027 research track schedule at either the March or May meeting, prior to the NRCC spring meeting when schedule decisions are made.

**Table 1.** Current 2022-2026 research track stock assessment schedule as approved by the NRCC. Timing of the 2026 assessments is still to be determined

YEAR	“SPRING” STOCKS/TOPIC	“FALL” STOCKS/TOPIC
2022	American Plaice, Spiny Dogfish	Black Sea Bass, Bluefish
2023	Cod- GOM, GB & EGB (TRAC)	Applying State-Space Models
2024	Golden Tilefish, Scallops	Yellowtail Flounder - CC/GOM, SNE/MA, and GB (TRAC)
2025	Atlantic herring, American lobster	Ensemble modeling
2026	Winter flounder (3 stocks) or Longfin Squid and Monkfish	Winter flounder (3 stocks) or Longfin Squid and Monkfish

**Table 2.** List of stocks and topics considered by the NRCC for the 2026 research track schedule but not selected. These stocks and/or topics will likely be on a list for potential consideration for the 2027 schedule.

STOCKS	TOPICS
Scup	Consideration of ecosystem and climate information in the stock assessment process
Blueline Tilefish	Evaluation of Harvest Control Rules
Chub Mackerel	Retrospective patterns (including historical catch biases and stock assessment performance)
Jonah Crab	Spatial Analysis of Survey Data
	Evaluation of the Efficacy of Management Measures for Commercial Fisheries