

# Liaison Report from the September 26<sup>th</sup> thru 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 NEFMC Meeting in Gloucester, MA – Hybrid

## **New and Returning Council Members:**

Regional Administrator Pentony swore in 2 new council members, Peter Whelan from NH and Eric Hansen from MA. Mr. Pentony also swore in returning member, Rick Bellavance from RI.

The Council then moved on to their election of officers, Chairman Reid and Vice Chair Bellavance were both successful in their campaigns and thus reelected to their positions.

## **Monkfish Committee Report:**

### Framework 13:

- Will establish specifications for the 2023-2025 fishing years. The specifications include total allowable landings (TALs) for both the Northern and Southern Monkfish Fishery Management Areas.
- During the NEFMC meeting and prior to the peer reviewed finalized report we received a Management Track Assessment update. The Council was informed that the recent trawl survey index for monkfish is notably lower than it was during the 2019 assessment. This means total allowable landings likely will need to be reduced for the next three fishing years and that the reductions may occur in both the Northern and Southern fisheries.

Recognizing that landing limits likely will be reduced in 2023-2025, the Council voted to move three of the framework's proposals to "considered but rejected" because they potentially could increase effort and landings.

## **Scallop Committee Report:**

- The Council received an update on FW 36, including a presentation on surveys and projections and management measures that will be finalized at their December Council meeting.
- In regards to leasing, after 3 failed motions the NEFMC decided not to develop an amendment in regards to voluntary leasing of DAS and Access Area trips in the full time Limited Access Scallop Fishery.

## **Transboundary Management Guidance Committee Report:**

## TMGC - US/CA TACs

- The Council approved the TMGC's recommendations of US/CA TACs for 2023 for Eastern Georges Bank cod of 520 mt and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder of 200 mt.

## **Groundfish Committee Report:**

The Council took up 3 motions in regards to FW 65 / Specifications and Management Measures:

- That the Council remove revised rebuilding strategy for Southern New England/Mid Atlantic winter flounder from consideration in Framework Adjustment 65.
- That the Council remove additional measures to promote stock rebuilding of Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder from consideration in Framework Adjustment 65.
- That the Council send a letter to Mid-Atlantic states communicating concern with recent levels of recreational catch of Georges Bank cod and request consideration of complementary rule making regarding slot limit, possession limit and seasonal restrictions.

## **Habitat Committee Report:**

The Council took up 4 motions during the Habitat Committee Report.

- Aquaculture

That the Council initiate an Atlantic salmon aquaculture framework, focused on possession of farmed salmon, raised according to NASCO standards. Other issues to explore include enforcement and reporting. The Council would continue to consult and coordinate on individual aquaculture projects in addition to developing this framework.

- Dedicated Habitat Research Areas (DHRA)

That the Council recommend that the Regional Administrator retain the Stellwagen DHRA designation for another three years with a review process using the authority granted by the Council in Omnibus EFH Amendment 2.

That the Council remand back to the Habitat Committee for further review whether to remove the Georges Bank DHRA.

- Great South Channel Habitat Management

Council voted to forward the Habitat Committee's recommendations and PDT analysis regarding Exempted Fishing Permit-based projects that might be considered within the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area to the Regional Administrator. Specifically, that such

projects should be thoughtfully designed, and that any compensation fishing should be implemented strategically.

**Herring Committee Report:**

- Council Received and finalized the 2023-2025 Specification package and voted to submit it to NMFS.
- In regards to Framework 7, (Cod Spawning protections), a motion put forth to discontinue work on the FW failed so this issue will be referred back to the committee for additional work.