

corrected to read “instruction 17 (§ 27.14(x)(4))”.

2. On page 48708, in the third column, in paragraph 60, the second sentence is corrected to read as follows: “Specifically, if a licensee fails to meet the first performance benchmark (*i.e.*, providing reliable signal coverage and offering service to at least 45% of the population in the license area no later than two years after the relevant Transition Deadline), it will accelerate its second performance benchmark by one year.”

3. Beginning on page 48708, in the third column, in paragraph 60, the third sentence is corrected to read as follows: “If a licensee fails to meet the second performance benchmark (*i.e.*, providing reliable signal coverage and offering service to at least 80% of the population in the license area no later than six years after the relevant Transition Deadline) in any license area, its authorization for that particular license area will terminate automatically without Commission action.”

4. Beginning on page 48738, in the third column, paragraph 241 is corrected to read as follows: “*It is further ordered* that the rules and requirements as adopted herein *are adopted*, effective sixty (60) days after publication in the **Federal Register**, and that the *Order of Proposed Modification* is effective as of the date of publication in the **Federal Register**; provided, however, that §§ 25.138(a)–(b); 25.147(a)–(c); 27.14(x)(4); 27.1412(b)–(c); 27.1412(e); 27.1412(g); 27.1413(a)(3); 27.1413(c)(1); 27.1413(c)(9); 27.1413(e)–(f); 27.1414(e); 27.1415; 27.1416; 27.1417; 27.1419; 27.1421; 27.1422(c); 27.1424 of the Commission’s rules, which contain new or modified information collection requirements that require review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act, will not become effective until the effective date for those information collections is announced in a document published in the **Federal Register** after the Commission receives OMB approval. The Commission directs the Bureau to issue such document and to cause §§ 25.138(a) and (b); 25.147(a) through (c); 27.14(x)(4); 27.1412(b) and (c); 27.1412(e); 27.1412(g); 27.1413(a)(3); 27.1413(c)(1); 27.1413(c)(9); 27.1413(e)–(f); 27.1414(e); 27.1415; 27.1416; 27.1417; 27.1419; 27.1421; 27.1422(c); 27.1424 to be revised accordingly.”

■ 5. On page 48742, in the third column, in § 27.14, paragraphs (x)(3) and (x)(4) are corrected to read as follows:

§ 27.14 [Corrected]

(x) * * *

(3) If a licensee fails to establish that it meets the Second Buildout Requirement for a particular license area, its authorization for each license area in which it fails to meet the Second Buildout Requirement shall terminate automatically without Commission action, and the licensee will be ineligible to regain it if the Commission makes the license available at a later date.

(4) [Reserved]

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene Dortch,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2026–17508 Filed 8–26–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 260821–0006]

RIN 0648–B016

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Monkfish; Framework Adjustment 17

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: Through this action, NMFS is implementing specifications and management measures in Framework Adjustment 17 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This action sets monkfish specifications for fishing year 2026, projects specifications for fishing years 2027 and 2028, streamlines the Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Overage Accountability Measure (AM) trigger, and adds default specifications for the monkfish fishery. This action is necessary to respond to updated scientific information and achieve the goals and objectives of the FMP. These measures are intended to help prevent overfishing and ensure that management measures are based on the best scientific information available.

DATES: Effective September 28, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Copies of Framework Adjustment 17, including the draft Supplemental Information Report (SIR) prepared by the New England Fishery Management Council in support of this action, are available from Dr. Cate O’Keefe, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport,

MA 01950. The supporting documents are also accessible via the internet at: <https://www.nefmc.org/management-plans/monkfish> or <https://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Spencer Talmage, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281–9232.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The monkfish fishery is jointly managed under the Monkfish FMP by the New England and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (Councils). The fishery extends from Maine to North Carolina from the coast out to the end of the continental shelf. The Councils manage the fishery as two management areas, with the Northern Fishery Management Area (NFMA) covering the Gulf of Maine and northern part of Georges Bank, and the Southern Fishery Management Area (SFMA) extending from the southern flank of Georges Bank through Southern New England and into the Mid-Atlantic Bight to North Carolina.

The monkfish fishery is primarily managed by landing limits and a yearly allocation of monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) calculated to enable vessels participating in the fishery to catch, but not exceed, the target total allowable landings (TAL) and the annual catch target (ACT), which is the TAL plus an estimate of expected discards, for each management area.

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), NMFS approves, disapproves, or partially approves measures that the Council recommends, based on consistency with the Act and other applicable law. NMFS reviews proposed regulations for consistency with the fishery management plan, plan amendments, the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law, and publishes the proposed regulations, solicits public comment, and promulgates the final regulations. NMFS published a proposed rule for Framework 17 on April 23, 2026 (91 FR 21779), with a 30-day comment period that ended on May 26, 2026. Based on information provided in the SIR and considered during the preparation of this action, and after consideration of comments, NMFS has approved all the measures in Framework 17 recommended by the Councils, as described below. The measures implemented in this final rule:

- Set specifications for the NFMA and SFMA for fishing year 2026 and projects specifications for fishing years 2027 and 2028;

- Streamlines the implementation of AMs in the event of an ACL overage; and
- Adds default specifications for the monkfish fishery, previously approved in Framework 13.

Approved Measures

1. Specifications

This action sets the NFMA and SFMA quotas for fishing year 2026 and projects quotas for fishing year 2027 and 2028, based on the Councils' recommendations.

On August 19, 2025, the New England Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommended acceptable biological catch (ABC) levels in the NFMA and SFMA for fishing years 2026–2028 based on the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's 2025 Data Update for Northern and Southern Monkfish and information provided by the New England Council's Plan Development Team.

The Councils' recommended specifications include status quo ABCs and ACLs in both management areas

relative to 2023–2025 values. Expected discards, calculated using the median of the most recent 10 years of data, slightly increased in the NFMA and marginally decreased in the SFMA. After accounting for discards, the Councils recommended a 3-percent decrease in the TAL for the NFMA and a less than 1-percent increase in the TAL for the SFMA. Table 1 includes the approved catch limits for 2026–2028 and the change relative to the 2023–2025 specifications.

TABLE 1—APPROVED FRAMEWORK 17 SPECIFICATIONS

Catch limits	Northern area		Southern area	
	2026–2028 Specs in metric tons (mt)	% Change from 2023–2025 *	2026–2028 Specs (mt)	% Change from 2023–2025 *
ABC	6,224	0	5,861	0
ACL	6,224	0	5,861	0
Management Uncertainty (3%)	187		176	
ACT (TAL + discards)	6,038	0	5,685	0
Expected Discards	863	18.4	2,198.5	–0.3
TAL	5,309	–3	3,487	0.2

* Percent change from the previously approved 2023–2025 specifications.

At the end of each fishing year, NMFS evaluates catch information and determines if the quota has been exceeded. The regulations at 50 CFR 648.96(d) require revision of the monkfish ACT if it is determined that the ACL was exceeded in any given year. If an overage occurs, NMFS will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** of any revisions to these specifications. NMFS has determined, based on final 2024 year-end accounting, that no adjustment is necessary for fishing year 2026. NMFS will provide notice of the 2027 and 2028 quotas prior to the start of each respective fishing year.

2. Annual Catch Limit Overage Accountability Measures

Under regulations defining the ACL Overage AMs at § 648.96(d)(2), if it is determined that the ACL for a stock was exceeded in a given year, then the Councils are required to take action to deduct the amount of the ACL overage from the ACT for that stock in the second fishing year following the overage. Only if the Councils fail to take action to implement this revision is the Regional Administrator required to take action to implement the AM in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable law.

Framework 17 removes the requirement that the Councils trigger the ACL Overage AMs, making only the Regional Administrator responsible for implementing the AMs. This change

simplifies and streamlines the procedure for implementing AMs and minimizes disruption to Council workplans. Shifting responsibility for implementing AMs to the Regional Administrator eliminates these disruptions; NMFS already provides notice of annual monkfish quotas in the **Federal Register** and would be able to implement any ACT revisions as part of that process. The regulations included in this final rule clarify this process.

This rule implements no other changes to the ACL Overage AMs.

3. Default Overfishing Limits (OFL), ABCs, and ACLs

This rule implements regulations that define default OFLs, ABCs, and ACLs that would go into place if no specifications for a fishing year are in place at the start of that fishing year.

Default rollover specifications were originally included in the Councils' submission of Framework 13 to the Monkfish FMP. After reviewing Framework 13 for consistency with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and applicable law, NMFS approved Framework 13 and published a final rule in the **Federal Register** on August 11, 2023 (88 FR 54495) (2023 Final Rule). However, during the development of Framework 17 and in discussions related to potential changes that might be considered under the New England Council's Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment, NMFS

discovered that changes to the monkfish regulations to clarify rollover and default specifications in § 648.96 were inadvertently omitted from the 2023 Final Rule. As such, these regulations were never put in place. This action adds regulations to define default specifications and corrects this omission.

Comments and Responses

NMFS received two comments during the public comment period for the proposed rule. Of these comments, one was not relevant to the proposed measures and will not be addressed here. The other comment received opposed publication of the final rule for Framework 17 on procedural grounds.

Comment 1: One member of the public stated that, in 15 separate instances, the proposed rule for Framework 17 failed to comply or document compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act (including the 10 National Standards), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), and several Executive Orders. The commenter stated that NMFS should not approve the action or issue the final rule for Framework 17 until these “procedural and substantive defects” are addressed.

Response: NMFS disagrees that Framework 17 or the proposed rule is out of compliance with the MSA, applicable law, or applicable Executive Orders. NMFS has approved Framework 17 on the basis that it is in compliance with the Monkfish FMP, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and all applicable law.

The Supplemental Information Report submitted by the Councils in support of Framework 17 includes an in-depth discussion of the action's compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and applicable laws that the commenter states are not adequately addressed. Specifically, the Framework 17 document includes a summary of how the Framework is consistent with all 10 National Standards, 15 required provisions for FMPs found in section 303(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the ESA, the MMPA, CZMA, and applicable Executive Orders. The proposed rule for Framework 17 provided instruction in the **ADDRESSES** section on how to obtain copies of the Framework 17 document, including the draft Supplemental Information Report, prepared by the Councils. This included instructions on how readers could access the documents via the internet. NMFS again directs the commenter and the public to the Framework 17 document by following the instructions in the **ADDRESSES** section of this final rule.

In addition, the proposed rule clearly documents that the Chief Counsel for Regulation of the Department of Commerce certified to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration (SBA) that this action would not have a significant economic effect on a substantial number of small entities. The proposed rule includes a detailed description of the entities regulated by this action, whether they are large or small, and the long-term impacts of the action on small entities.

Finally, some of the remaining deficiencies that the commenter claims regarding Framework 17 and/or its proposed rule are not relevant (*e.g.*, Executive Orders 12898 and 14008, which have been rescinded).

Changes From the Proposed Rule

NMFS made one change to the proposed rule. This final rule made a minor adjustment to the regulatory text regarding the implementation of an AM due to an ACL overage to clarify the Regional Administrator's role in the process.

Classification

Pursuant to section 304(b)(3) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the NMFS

Assistant Administrator has determined that this final rule is consistent with the Monkfish FMP, other provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other applicable law.

This final rule has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

This final rule is exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 14192 because it is a routine fishing action.

This final rule contains no information collection requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

NMFS has determined that this action would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian Tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian Tribes; therefore, consultation with Tribal officials under Executive Order 13175 is not required, and the requirements of section (5)(b) and (c) of Executive Order 13175 also do not apply. A Tribal summary impact statement under section (5)(b)(2)(B) and (c)(2) of Executive Order 13175 is not required and has not been prepared.

The Chief Counsel for Regulation of the Department of Commerce certified to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration during the proposed rule stage that this action would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The factual basis for the certification was published in the proposed rule and is not repeated here. Although NMFS received a comment simply stating that the certification was not defensible, this comment did not provide additional data or information that contradicts the factual basis for this certification. This comment and NMFS's response is included in the Comments and Responses section of this final rule. As a result, a regulatory flexibility analysis was not required, and none was prepared.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 648

Fisheries, Fishing.

Dated: August 24, 2026.

Samuel D. Rauch III,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.*

For the reasons set out in the preamble, NMFS amends 50 CFR part 648 as follows:

PART 648—FISHERIES OF THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 648 continues to read as follows:

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

■ 2. Amend § 648.96 by adding paragraph (c)(1)(iv) and revising paragraph (d)(2) to read as follows:

§ 648.96 FMP review, specification, and framework adjustment process.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(1) * * *

(iv) *Default OFLs, ABCs, and ACLs.* If final specifications (OFLs, ABCs, and ACLs) for a fishing year are not published in the **Federal Register** in a manner consistent with this section for the start of that fishing year, specifications for that fishing year shall be equal to the prior fishing year's specifications for each stock, until superseded by a final rule implementing new specifications.

(A) Specification of ACTs for each management area and accounting for incidental catch in non-directed fisheries and discards in all fisheries under default ACLs shall be consistent with what was adopted for the previous year's specifications.

(B) [Reserved]

(d) * * *

(2) *ACL overages and adjustments.* If it is determined, based upon, but not limited to, available landings and discard information, that the ACL for a monkfish stock is exceeded in a given year, then the ACT for that stock in the second fishing year following the fishing year in which the ACL overage occurred shall be revised such that the ACL overage is deducted from the ACT on a pound for pound basis. If necessary, based on the scale of the deduction, management measures (DAS and trip limits) may be revised after consultation with the Councils. The Regional Administrator shall make these adjustments in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable law.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2026-17500 Filed 8-26-26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P