to decline, although more effort has been allocated to fish in access areas, which served to offset that reduction. In fishing year 2026, a full-time vessel was allocated 36 open area DAS and no access area trips.

Some members of the industry have commented that the current low allocations, paired with increasing costs, are reducing profits and suggesting the reconsideration of certain management approaches may be timely. Some crews routinely work on multiple vessels in one fishing year. Further, reports suggest that some ports are congested with vessels tied to the dock for the majority of the year causing safety and space issues.

The Secretary is considering addressing excess capacity in the limited access scallop fishing by allowing up to two limited access scallop permits to be combined on a single vessel. The vessel would be permitted to fish the allocations for both permits, which would reduce business expenses associated with maintaining multiple vessels with low DAS allocations.

To mitigate risks of fleet consolidation, job loss, and effort spillover into other fisheries, any potential Secretarial amendment under consideration would evaluate specific protective management measures, including but not limited to:

- Limiting stacked permits to those within the same Limited Access category (*i.e.,* full-time, part-time, occasional);
- Requiring stacking to be a one-time, permanent, and irreversible action (*i.e.,* prohibiting de-stacking);
- Whether to restrict permit stacking to strictly respect existing vessel length, tonnage, and horsepower baseline restrictions (*i.e.,* disallowing a permit carrying a smaller baseline specification to stack onto a vessel with larger baselines and to ensure stacking is not used to bypass vessel replacement limits);
- Narrowing allowable permit stacking exclusively to vessels under common ownership or common control in order to avoid fleet concentration and accommodate the needs of active owner-operators; and
- Maintaining the ownership cap of no more than 5 percent of the total number of limited access permits.

NMFS is seeking public input on all aspects of a potential action to allow permit stacking. Additional details are available in the public hearing document, available at *https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/commercial-fishing/scoping-potential-secretarial-action-implement-permit.*

Special Accommodations

These hearings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Emily Keiley, (978) 281–9116 at least 5 days prior to any meeting date.

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

Dated: October 30, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–22425 Filed 11–2–26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XG146]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public hybrid meeting of its Scallop Joint Committee and Advisory Panel to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 9 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Webinar registration URL information: *https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/jYhFeiQ1QfmoYpDvwU9Eqg.*

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held at Hilton Garden Inn Boston Logan, 100 Boardman Street, Boston, MA 02740; Phone (617) 567–6789.

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:

Agenda

The Scallop Committee and Advisory Panel will meet to discuss 2027 Specifications: Review specifications alternatives and select final preferred alternatives. This action will set specifications for fishing year 2027 and fishing year 2028 (default) including the overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch/annual catch limit, days-at-sea, access area allocations for Limited Access vessels, quota and access area trip allocation to the Limited Access General Category (LAGC) Individual Fishing Quota component, Total Allowable Landings for the Northern Gulf of Maine management area, a target-Total Allowable Catch for LAGC incidental catch and set-asides for the observer and research programs. Other business will be discussed, if necessary.

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

This meeting is 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: October 30, 2026.

Anna Michelle Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2026–22416 Filed 11–2–26; 8:45 am]

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