

2019 New England Recreational Fishing Workshops
NOAA Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

Workshop Expectations and Outcomes

Purpose and Goal: *What do we hope to get out of these workshops?*

A collaborative process for developing potential management approaches for the recreational groundfish fishery that balance the need to prevent overfishing with enabling profitability in the for-hire fleet and providing worthwhile fishing opportunities for anglers.

Objectives: *How will the goal be achieved?*

1. Long-term: Think creatively about how the recreational groundfish fishery could be managed to improve alignment with angler and for-hire captain needs, including how to meaningfully utilize the new Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data.
2. Short-term: Develop short-term steps for achieving potential long-term management approaches that achieve, but not exceed, recreational catch limits, including Gulf of Maine cod and haddock.
3. Assess and evaluate available research around: methods for avoidance and reduction of bycatch mortality; calculation methods for dead discards; as well as release methods. We will also identify any gaps for future research.
4. Develop methods to regularly engage with captains and anglers throughout the season to get feedback on catch and trends, and develop ideas on how to enhance coordination between NOAA Fisheries, state partners, scientists, and the recreational fishing community.

Outcomes: *What will we walk out with?*

- A list of ideas and recommendations on how to adapt long-term approaches to better manage groundfish stocks with a recreational catch component.
- A list of potential management approaches and ideas for pilot studies to address the short-term objective of preventing Gulf of Maine cod and haddock overages.
- A shared understanding of the new MRIP data collection and assessment processes, and best practices for using this data to inform decisions.
- A shared awareness around current research and how to best use results, and a list of needs for future research.
- A list of communication methods to more regularly inform all stakeholders of any new proposals, pilot studies, reporting methods, or potential rulemaking.

Guiding principles to consider throughout the workshops:

- Stabilize business planning with more predictable regulatory changes, potentially utilizing multi-year measures.
- Adapt best practices in data management and collection that allow for more appropriate usage of MRIP data, e.g., using an average of 3-5 years of data for analyses and not just looking back on 1 year of data.

- Optimize opportunities across other fisheries and management plans (state and federal) through improved alignment of regulations. For example, reducing overlap in closures across recreational fisheries and increasing coordination between various recreational management plans.
- Develop solutions that work across modes (e.g. private angler and for-hire fleet) or that address the nuances within various user groups (recognizing a one-size-fits-all approach isn't ideal in most cases).

Workshop Scope

There are many overlapping topics of interest to recreational fishing stakeholders. At this meeting, we will focus on groundfish species that GARFO and NEFMC manage. Species managed by states and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, including striped bass, or topics like limited entry, which has a separate NEFMC-led process for stakeholder input, will be outside the scope of these workshops. However, as these fisheries and policies are intertwined, we realize there are likely to be discussions around how businesses and individuals interact with other state and federal fisheries.

Next Steps: *What happens after the workshops?*

The organizers will summarize the findings of these workshops and share them with the New England Fishery Management Council, including its Groundfish Committee and Recreational Advisory Panel. The Agency and Council will consider relevant recommendations within the appropriate processes for developing recreational management measures, with input from all groundfish stakeholders and the public. Ideas and recommendations external to this federal regulatory process will be shared with the appropriate state agencies and other organizations.