



New England Fishery Management Council

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PRESS CONTACT: Alex Dunn
978-465-0492 ext. 112; adunn@nefmc.org

The Council votes to pause work on multiple existing groundfish priorities and resubmit Amendment 25 to the Northeast Multispecies Plan

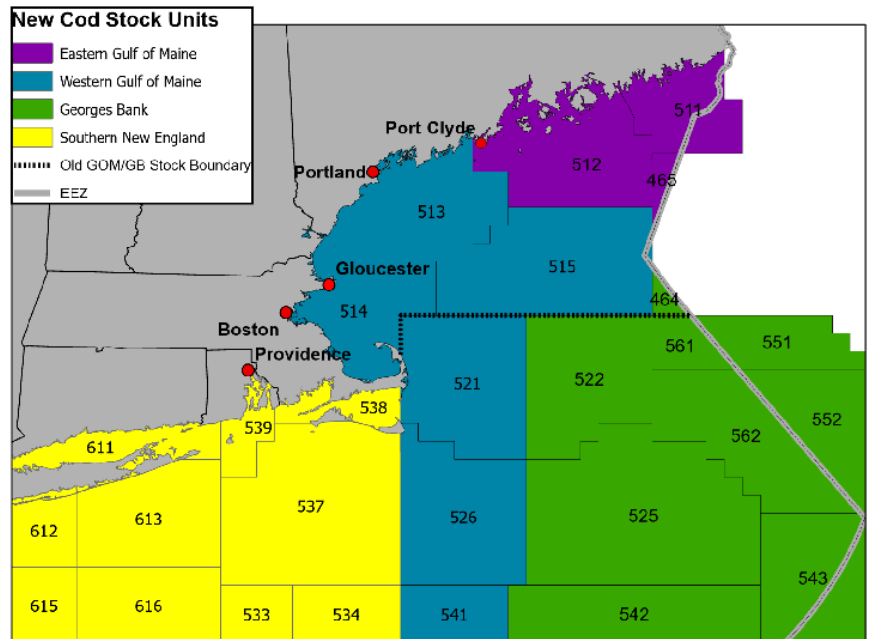
After extensive deliberation at the [June meeting](#), the New England Council voted to resubmit Amendment 25 (A25), which would replace the current Atlantic cod stocks in the Gulf of Maine and on Georges Bank with the newly identified cod stocks in Eastern Gulf of Maine, Western Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and Southern New England. The resubmission will include the Council's previously recommended cod measures from Framework 69 (FW69).

The Council's decision was based on NOAA's disapproval of A25 in May due to procedural issues. NOAA's [disapproval letter](#) detailed that A25 lacked critical management elements including reference points, accountability measures, and catch limits, but noted that the revised stock structure, with four cod stock units, is the best scientific information available. The "missing management elements" noted in the disapproval letter were included in the parallel action, [Framework 69](#) (FW69), which is currently under NOAA review.

FW69 was intended to work in tandem with A25, but upon publication it will only replace the current Emergency Action specifications for the non-cod, groundfish stocks. The emergency measures for cod are anticipated to be extended for the entirety of Fishing Year (FY) 2025.

The Council will pause work on several 2025 groundfish priorities to complete the resubmission of A25 later this fall, including:

- Redfish sector exemption program review
- Evaluation of the monitoring system, per Amendment 23
- Revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks



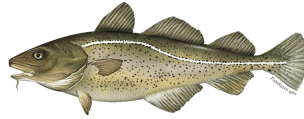
Many Council members voiced frustration over NOAA's disapproval of A25 and the recommended guidance for the Council to resubmit the action, citing unforeseen "procedural issues". However, the Council supported continued engagement to ensure the 2026 groundfish season opens on May 1, 2026, and voted with no opposition to "finish the job". The revised A25 is scheduled for final action at the [September Council meeting](#).

Framework 72

The Council also initiated groundfish Framework Adjustment 72 with anticipated final action scheduled for December 2025. This action will set specifications for groundfish stocks for FY2026-2028, US/Canada Total Allowable Catch for FY2026, and other measures:

- FY2026-FY2027 specifications for Georges Bank cod and haddock; FY2026-FY2028 specifications for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine yellowtail flounder, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder, Georges Bank winter flounder, Gulf of Maine winter flounder, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder, white hake, Acadian redfish, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish
- Establish Regional Administrator authority to adjust recreational measures for haddock and cod on a permanent basis

ATLANTIC COD STOCK RESTRUCTURING TIMELINE



2012 Gulf of Maine Research Institute

The Council and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center began collaborative work to develop a science plan for evaluating Atlantic cod stock structure.

GMRI releases a **report** on the *Workshop on Stock Structure of Atlantic Cod In the Gulf of Maine Region* which incorporated Industry input and support.

2013 NEFMC & NEFSC

2018 Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Working Group

The **ACSSWG** identifies five distinct cod stocks in New England waters, underscoring the need for stock-specific management and improved assessments to support rebuilding efforts.

2020 Peer Review

With facilitation from the University of New Hampshire, the NEFMC and NEFSC host **eight public workshops** focused on both the science and management of the restructuring work.

This ACSSWG work passes an independent **peer review** by a sub-panel of the NEFMC's SSC.

2021 Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Workshops

2021-2023 NRCC Research Track Assessment

The Northeast Region Coordinating Council (NRCC) starts a multi-year **stock assessment** of the science and modeling of four distinct cod stocks.

2022 Stakeholder Meetings

Two stakeholder input meetings are held in **February** and **March** to solicit public feedback.

2023 Peer Review

A panel of **independent experts** **peer reviews** and approves the Cod Research Track Assessment.

The Council begins a multi-year **transition plan** to shift from two to four cod management units, aligning with the best available science.

2024 Atlantic Cod Management Transition Plan

Amendment 25 is initiated at the **April Council Meeting**, and three facilitated **workshops** are held across New England.

April/May Amendment 25

At its **June Meeting**, the Council initiates Framework 69, proposing specifications and management measures for four cod stocks.

June Framework 69

Council takes final action at the **September Council Meeting** and submits A25 to NOAA's Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

September Final Action