



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

August 9, 2023

Dr. Christopher M. Moore
Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 200
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Dr. Moore:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) further publicize and provide for additional formal public comment on our draft procedural directive regarding the use of our Magnuson-Stevens Act §304(f) authority. We are in the process of planning, publicizing, and conducting a public webinar on the draft directive in the coming weeks. We will keep you informed as that webinar and wide distribution of the draft are scheduled and available.

Recall that we initially revised the schedule regarding the draft directive to ensure coordination with the East Coast Scenario Planning Project. We have discussed the draft publically on several occasions, including twice at the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) meeting, and the draft is available on the CCC website. The upcoming webinar will allow us to further engage the public and stakeholders and receive actionable feedback on the draft document.

The purpose of this project is to develop procedural guidance explaining how NMFS will use its existing Magnuson-Stevens Act §304(f) authority in situations where fisheries may extend across the jurisdictions of more than one Council. Our intent is to set forth a clear and consistent approach for using this authority moving forward.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Regional Fisheries Management Councils, stakeholders, and the public on this important procedural directive regarding governance. If you have additional questions, please contact Kelly Denit, Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries at Kelly.denit@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator
for Fisheries

