



New England
Fishery Management
Council



MID-ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

February 25, 2019

Mr. Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator
NMFS/GARFO
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Mike,

The Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils request involvement in the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation for the North Atlantic Right Whale.

National Marine Fisheries Service Policy Directive 01-117 describes the integration of ESA Section 7 with Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions. Ongoing discussions by the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT) will consider measures that could affect fixed gear fisheries managed by the two Councils. While we are members of the TRT, we request that we also be involved in the Section 7 process as authorized by the policy directive. Specific tasks that we are interested in include:

- Identifying feasible alternatives
- Providing Council views on “best scientific information available”
- Reviewing the draft Biological Opinion, including a review of draft Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives (RPAs) or Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPMs)

Should you grant this request, please work with our Executive Directors to define the level of coordination and identify points of contact. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael Luisi
Chairman, MAFMC

Dr. John Quinn
Chairman, NEFMC