

Department of Commerce Announces 2021 Appointments to the Regional Fishery Management Councils

June 28, 2021

The Secretary of Commerce announces the appointment of 31 new and returning members of the eight regional fishery management councils.

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The U.S. Department of Commerce today announced the appointment of 31 members to the [regional fishery management councils](#) that partner with NOAA Fisheries to manage marine fishery resources.

Established by the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#), councils are responsible for developing region-specific fishery management plans that safeguard and enhance the nation's fisheries resources. Council members represent diverse groups, including commercial and recreational fishing industries, environmental organizations, and academia. They are vital to fulfilling the act's requirements to end overfishing, rebuild fish stocks, and manage them sustainably.

NOAA Fisheries works closely with the councils through the process of developing fishery management plans. We also review, approve, and implement the plans.

Each year, the Secretary of Commerce appoints approximately one-third of the total 72 appointed members to the eight regional councils. The Secretary selects members from nominations submitted by the governors of fishing states, territories, and tribal governments.

Council members are appointed to both state-specific and regional seats—also known as obligatory and at-large seats, respectively. Council members serve a three-year term and may be reappointed to serve three consecutive terms.

An asterisk preceding a member's name indicates a reappointment.

Mid-Atlantic Council

The Mid-Atlantic Council includes members from the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. 2021 appointees will fill two obligatory seats for New Jersey and Virginia, and two at-large seats.

Obligatory seats:

*Adam Nowalsky (New Jersey)
Skip Feller (Virginia)

At-large seats:

*Sara Winslow (North Carolina)
Thomas Schlichter (New York)

2.4 OFFICERS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

2.4.1 General

- (a) A Chair and a Vice Chair shall be elected annually at the first Council meeting following the seating of new Council members (on or after August 11 of each year) by the voting members of the Council present and voting; each such officer shall serve for a period of one year and until a successor is elected.
- (b) Officers may succeed themselves.
- (c) The Council may elect other officers as it deems necessary.

2.4.2 Nominations

The Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee, who shall make its nominations (at least two for each office) at the beginning of the election process. Following the Committee's nomination, any voting member may nominate additional candidates from the floor. When nominations are closed the election shall be held.

2.4.3 Elections

- (a) The election of Chair will be held first, followed by the election for Vice Chair. If only one candidate accepts the nomination for an office, the Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall cast all votes for that candidate. If there are two or more candidates, the election shall be by a secret ballot with the votes tabulated by two or more Tellers appointed by the Council Chair.
- (b) The Tellers shall use the following rules to determine the winning candidate:
 - (1) To win, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast.
 - (2) If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, the Tellers shall declare no election. If there are more than two candidates, the candidate receiving the lowest number of vote shall be dropped from consideration and a vote will be taken for the remaining candidates. This process will continue until a candidate receives a majority of the vote cast.
 - (3) Those preferring not to vote for any candidate shall check "ABSTAIN" on the ballot.
 - (4) The number of ballots cast for an individual shall not be announced. Any Council member who questions the result may review the ballots. The ballots will not identify which Council member cast a particular ballot.

2.4.4 Special Elections

In the event that the Chair cannot fulfill the Chair's obligations for the balance of the Chair's term, a special election will be held at the next scheduled Council meeting to fill the position of Chair. In the event that the Vice Chair cannot fulfill the Vice Chair's obligations for the balance of the Vice Chair's term, a special election will be held at the next scheduled Council meeting to fill the position of Vice Chair. The procedures for nominations and elections set forth above will be followed for special elections.

2.4.5 Authority of the Chair

- (a) The Council Chair shall be the chief executive officer of the Council. Subject only to the authority of the Council, the Chair shall have general charge and supervision over, and responsibility for the business and affairs of the Council. Unless otherwise directed by the Council, the Chair may enter into and execute in the name of the Council, contracts or other instruments in the regular course of business or contract or other instruments not in the regular course of business which are authorized, either generally or specifically, by the Council. The Council Chair shall have the general powers and

duties of management usually vested in the office of the Chair of the Board of a corporation.

(b) The Council Chair shall have the authority to appoint and dissolve committees of Council members, name their officers and membership, and describe their functions, duties, and responsibilities consistent with the Charter of the Council, the Act, and other applicable law.

(c) The Council Chair shall also have the full authority to call meetings as necessary for the conduct of the Council's business.

(d) The Council Chair shall have the authority to authorize reimbursement of travel expenses and/or compensation of any eligible members of the Council, its committees or subpanels except that proper notification, at the direction of the Chair, in the Federal Register of a regular meeting of the Council or one of its committees or subpanels shall constitute authorization for travel expenses and/or compensation to be paid to eligible members.

(e) The Council Chair shall have the authority to authorize, approve, or disapprove all meetings of Council subpanels or committees.

(f) In the event of the absence or inability of the Council Chair to serve or fulfill the Chair's obligations, the Council Vice-Chair shall assume authority and duties of the Chair.

2.2 Oath of Office

As trustees of the nation's fishery resources, all voting members must take an oath specified by the Secretary as follows:

I, [name of the person taking oath], as a duly appointed member of a Regional Fishery Management Council established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, hereby promise to conserve and manage the living marine resources of the United States of America by carrying out the business of the Council for the greatest overall benefit of the Nation. I recognize my responsibility to serve as a knowledgeable and experienced trustee of the Nation's marine fisheries resources, being careful to balance competing private or regional interests, and always aware and protective of the public interest in those resources. I commit myself to uphold the provisions, standards, and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other applicable law, and shall conduct myself at all times according to the rules of conduct prescribed by the Secretary of Commerce. This oath is given freely and without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

From: Michael Pentony - NOAA Federal <michael.pentony@noaa.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 3:29 PM

To: Adam Nowalsky <captadamnj@gmail.com>; Winslow, Sara <fishsqueezeers@yahoo.com>; Skip Feller <skip.feller@gmail.com>; Schlichter, Thomas <outdoortom@optonline.net>

Cc: Luisi, Michael <michael.luisi@maryland.gov>; Moore, Christopher <cmoore@mafmc.org>; Almeida, John <john.almeida@noaa.gov>; Bland, Sarah <Sarah.Bland@noaa.gov>

Subject: Council Member Swearing In "Ceremony"

Good afternoon,

In two weeks at the Council meeting, we will be swearing you in as either a newly appointed or re-appointed Council member. Ordinarily, we would all be together, and I would have you all stand up and recite the oath along with me, and then I would present you with your official certificates signed by the Secretary of Commerce. However, for a variety of reasons I will be participating in the meeting virtually (as some of you may be doing too), so we have to do things a little differently.

Rather than have you read the oath along with me, which would be a problem for the webinar with us all speaking at the same time, instead I will read the oath as a series of four questions, and at the end of each question, I will call on you individually to affirm that you agree ("I do").

So that you're prepared, here is the oath as I will read it in question form:

"Do you, as a duly appointed member of a Regional Fishery Management Council established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, hereby promise to conserve and manage the living marine resources of the United States of America by carrying out the business of the Council for the greatest overall benefit of the Nation?"

"Do you recognize your responsibility to serve as a knowledgeable and experienced trustee of the Nation's marine fisheries resources, being careful to balance competing private or regional interests, and always aware and protective of the public interest in those resources?"

"Do you commit yourself to uphold the provisions, standards, and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other applicable law, and shall you conduct yourself at all times according to the rules of conduct prescribed by the Secretary of Commerce?"

"Is this oath given freely and without mental reservation or purpose of evasion?"

At the end of each question, I will then call on you in the following order: Adam, Sara, Skip, and Tom. When I call on you, simply say "I do" (I'm pretty sure no one will end up inadvertently married) to affirm that you agree with that provision of the oath, and then I'll call on the next person. When you've each agreed, I'll move on to the next question. Because I don't know which of you may also be participating remotely or will be present in the meeting room, let's assume we're all virtual. To avoid the pauses from muting and unmuting each time someone

speaks, the Council staff has confirmed that the five of us can remain unmuted throughout the swearing in (just make sure you're unmuted when we start) and you can just respond when called on. I'll do a roll call before I get started just to make sure you are all on and we can hear you. For those of you physically in the Council meeting room, I will ask you to stand and you may have to speak loudly for me to hear you.

Also, we don't have the nice certificates for you yet, but we're working on it and will get them to you as soon as we can.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Mike

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Michael Pentony

Regional Administrator

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