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**NOAA Fisheries Service Director Eric Schwaab Plans Review of Federal Fishery Management in the Northeast**

NOAA Fisheries Service's Assistant Administrator Eric Schwaab today announced plans by the agency to conduct a regional assessment and management review of the fishery management process in New England.

The focus will be on the relationships among the New England Fishery Management Council, the Northeast Regional Office, and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and factors affecting the effectiveness of those three entities in carrying out their responsibilities under fisheries law. It is expected that lessons learned will be more broadly applied to other regions.

"Every organization no matter how large or how well run can benefit from constructive guidance as to how it could improve its processes, said Schwaab. "This is something Fortune 500 companies do all the time, not because they believe they are performing poorly but because they want to ensure they do not miss opportunities to perform better."

A critical component of this review will be to conduct a series of interviews and focus groups to gather information on the current processes, what is working and what could be improved. Input will be sought from members and staff of the New England Fishery Management Council, NOAA Fisheries Service science and management staff, fishing industry leaders, the environmental community and state agencies.

The end result, anticipated in six to twelve months, will be a series of recommendations for improvements in coordination, communication and processes that would enable all three entities to work more efficiently and effectively to better meet our mission ending overfishing and rebuilding sustainable fisheries.

"I designated Preston Pate, who is currently under contract with NOAA to develop a new survey program for the recreational fishery, to oversee this process," said Schwaab. "Preston is a respected voice in fisheries management and is well suited to carry out this task."

Mr. Pate is a current member of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and former chair of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. NOAA also plans to secure the services of an external organization experienced in

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

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