



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

March 15, 2024

Via Electronic Transmittal

The Honorable Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
ATTN: Morgan Corey

RE: New England Fishery Management Council Nominations

Dear Administrator Coit,

I am pleased to share with you the names of three highly qualified individuals as nominees for Connecticut's obligatory seat on the New England Fishery Management Council ("NEFMC"), currently held by Mark S. Alexander, who will be stepping down from the NEFMC at the end of his term on August 10, 2024. There is also one at-large seat open for nominations for which I decline to submit nominations.

The state and region are best served by councilmembers who are knowledgeable and experienced in marine fisheries conservation, fishing communities, commercial fisheries interests, and recreational fisheries interests. I believe the following nominees can help the NEFMC effectively address the pressing needs for fisheries both in Connecticut and the surrounding region. I ask that you give your fullest consideration to our slate of nominees. Enclosed, you will find a complete nomination package for each candidate.

For Connecticut's obligatory seat, I nominate, in priority order:

Mr. William G. Lucey (other sector)

Mr. Robert LaFrance (other sector)

Mr. William A. Hyatt (other sector)

Please find provided below a summary of each candidate's background, along with their relevant professional qualifications.

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Governor.Lamont@ct.gov

William (“Bill”) Lucey has my highest recommendation to fill Connecticut’s obligatory seat on the NEFMC. He is a resident of Connecticut and works for the regional non-profit, “Save the Sound” as the Long Island Soundkeeper advocating for water quality and sustainable fisheries. A native of Connecticut, Bill holds a graduate certificate in Fisheries Management from the University of Oregon and a B.S. in Fisheries Biology from the University of Vermont. After college, he joined the U.S. Peace Corps as a fisheries extensionist in Central America. From there, he took a job as a federal fisheries technician in Yakutat, Alaska, where he remained for 20 years, also working during that time for the local municipality dependent on commercial fishing as its primary industry. From 1997 to 2013, Bill held trawl, gillnet and long line permits for salmon and halibut, and operated small fishing boats in the Gulf of Alaska. At the same time, he continued working as a field biologist conducting multiple research projects centered on fish, marine mammals, and salmon restoration. As a coastal program planner, he secured funding to upgrade fishing related infrastructure and to establish a regional seafood branding program and promoted beneficial fisheries policies at the state and federal level. His dual careers as a fisherman and biologist provide him a unique perspective on the fisheries management process. Given Bill’s current employment with a conservation non-profit, I would classify him as belonging to the “other” sector, although his background certainly gives him substantial perspective on both the “commercial” and “recreational” sectors with his 46 years of recreational fishing experience.

Robert LaFrance is a resident of Connecticut and is currently the Director of Policy (Connecticut) for National Audubon Society as well as an on-going proxy to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for Connecticut’s Governor’s Appointed Commissioner. He is currently a member of the Dean’s Advisory Board of the University of Connecticut’s College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, a member of the Advisory Board of the Connecticut Office of Conservation Law Foundation, a member of the Financing and Funding Adaptation and Resilience and the Resilient Infrastructure and Nature Based Solutions Working Groups of the Governor’s Council on Climate Change and an Adjunct Professor of Environmental Law at the Quinnipiac School of Law.

William (“Bill”) A. Hyatt is a resident of Connecticut and a retired former senior manager within the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) and currently serves as the Connecticut Governor’s appointee to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Bill has extensive knowledge of New England regional fisheries and the environmental, administrative, and fisheries management issues that the Council regularly addresses. Bill began his career with DEEP in 1982 as a fisheries biologist and retired in 2018 as the Bureau Chief of the Bureau of Natural Resources. Bill has served on and been chairman of numerous Boards, Councils, Commissions and Task Forces in a range of natural resource organizations.

Notice of the Council seat vacancy was distributed by email list-serve on January 5, 2024, to nearly 1,000 subscribers of DEEP Marine Fisheries News who represent a cross section of the recreational and commercial fishing industry and environmental community. Potential candidates were also identified through consultation with the past and current obligatory council members with emphasis on identifying qualified women and minority candidates. DEEP Fisheries Division staff followed up with potential candidates through individual e-mail solicitations. During the process of compiling this list of nominees, DEEP Marine Fisheries Program staff consulted with numerous members of the commercial and recreational fishing communities and made efforts to identify qualified women and minority candidates.

Equity and representation outreach efforts were also supported by Joseph Dickerson, DEEP Senior Advisor for Outdoor Equity. His outreach activities, while not a comprehensive outreach and recruitment initiative, included focused emails, phone calls and conversations with the leaders of Outdoor Afro, Latino Outdoors, Kindling Collective, and The Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice, all outdoor recreation affinity organizations that serve underrepresented individuals.

The three nominees I have put forward herein represent the most qualified candidates that were identified by the DEEP Marine Fisheries Program outreach effort.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of our nominees.

Sincerely,



Ned Lamont
Governor

cc: Katie Dykes, Commissioner, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Mason Trumble, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Annie Decker, Chief of Legal, Planning and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Peter Aarrestad, Director, Inland Fisheries Division, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Christopher Shepard, Executive Secretary, Environmental Conservation, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection



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MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

March 13, 2024

Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Room 14636
Silver Springs, MD 20910
ATTN: Kelly Denit

Dear Ms. Coit:

I am submitting three (3) individuals as nominees to the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) for the obligatory seat currently held by Mr. Michael Pierdinock of Plymouth, Massachusetts. This seat will become vacant in August 2024. Included are the completed application kits for the nominees.

My selections were made from a list of candidates who responded to the efforts of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to solicit interest in the NEFMC positions. Outreach included announcements through the Division's email distribution service, notices posted on the DMF website, and direct contact with potentially qualified candidates. Outreach included efforts to consider qualified women and minority candidates. Those whom I am nominating are eligible by reason of occupational or other experience, scientific expertise, or training, thereby making them knowledgeable and experienced in ways related to the fishery resources of New England.

For the obligatory seat currently held by Mr. Michael Pierdinock of Plymouth, Massachusetts, I nominate in order of preference:

- **Michael Pierdinock (Incumbent)**
- **Peter Seminara**
- **Heather Amtower**

Candidate descriptions are listed below:

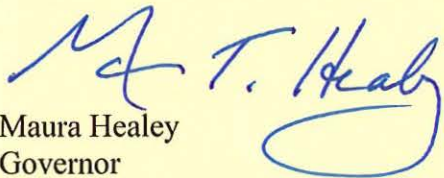
- Michael Pierdinock (incumbent, recreational sector).** Mr. Pierdinock of Plymouth, MA is a lifelong angler and recreational fisheries advocate. He is the owner/operator of the charter boat *Perseverance* that has targeted various inshore, offshore, and groundfish species since 2003. In addition to his successful charter boat business, Mr. Pierdinock actively participates on various committees, councils, and advisory panels that impact recreational anglers and the for-hire industry. Currently, he serves on the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (Vice Chair), Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association (President); U.S. ICCAT Advisory Committee; NMFS Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel; and Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA), Executive Committee and Advisory Council; . On the New England Fishery Management Council, he serves as Chair of the On-demand Gear Conflict Working Group and as Vice Chair of the Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Committee, and member of the Groundfish and Whiting Committees. Mr. Pierdinock was a U.S. delegate at the annual ICCAT meetings in Morocco (2017), Croatia (2018), and virtually in 2020 due to Covid-19. He is also a regular contributor to industry magazines and radio shows, discussing the latest fishery management issues that impact recreational fishermen. Mr. Pierdinock seeks to continue to bring his experiences as a charter boat captain and industry advisor at the state and federal level to the Council to assist in making sound management decisions that consider the economic and social impacts to all stakeholders.
- Peter Seminara (other sector).** Mr. Seminara of Rockport, MA is the shellfish constable for the City of Gloucester where he manages the shellfish fishery. Peter holds a Bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Eckerd College, and has been involved in local recreational and commercial fisheries since 1994. Overall, he has twenty-one years of experience in commercial fisheries and over 30 years of experience recreational and charter fisheries. He is a member of the Massachusetts Lobster Association and the Massachusetts Shellfish Officer's Association. He also served on the Massachusetts Shellfish Initiative Taskforce as a proxy for former Mayor Sefatia Romeo-Theken. He seeks to maintain sustainable fisheries to protect the marine ecosystem as well as continuing to provide employment for thousands of commercial and charter fishermen in New England through fisheries management, utilizing science, education, outreach, and experience.
- Heather Amtower (recreational sector).** Ms. Amtower of Weymouth, MA is an avid angler who understands and appreciates the significance of protecting and conserving the fisheries and environments that Massachusetts residents rely on both recreationally and commercially. Heather holds a Bachelor's degree in business administration from Southern New Hampshire University, and currently works for Sense as a logistics manager. Heather's background primarily lies in recreational fishing, but she recognizes the delicate balance between current commercial interests and the need to safeguard future commercial opportunities. By actively engaging with stakeholders from various sectors, she is confident that we can find common ground and develop sustainable solutions that benefit all.

Through DMF, I have consulted with representatives of the commercial and recreational fishing interests of the Commonwealth regarding the nominees, including members of the Massachusetts

Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission—a nine-member citizen advisory board, representing recreational and commercial fishing interests (including seafood dealers). Additionally, many unsolicited letters of support for some of the candidates were received and are included.

Each of my nominees meets the requirements listed in Section 302(b)(2)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. All have convinced me of their commitment to improve fisheries management in New England and to assist the Council in rebuilding, maintaining, and managing the marine resources so important to the economic vitality of the Massachusetts fishing industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. T. Healey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Maura Healey
Governor

cc: Secretary Rebecca Tepper, EEA
Commissioner Thomas O'Shea, DFG
Director Daniel J. McKiernan, DMF



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

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Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway, 14th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910

March 21, 2024

Dear Administrator Coit,

It is my pleasure to submit the following names for consideration for appointment to the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) on behalf of the State of Maine. These nominations are for two seats on the NEFMC: an obligatory seat currently held by Geoffery Smith and an at-large seat currently held by Kristen (Togue) Brawn. This letter is revised from my previous letter sent on March 15 based on feedback from NMFS staff.

Through its work, the Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR) is in regular contact with numerous organizations and individuals across the coast with knowledge and interest in marine fisheries. In addition, ME DMR supports several industry-based advisory councils which provide input and recommendations to the Department on the management of marine species. Through these interactions, ME DMR has identified three candidates for the two NEFMC seats.

The individuals listed below are qualified by residency and in accordance with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Conservation and Management Act.

For the obligatory seat current held by Geoffery Smith, who has completed his first term on the New England Fishery Management Council:

1. **Geoffery Smith (“Other”)**
2. **Kristen (Togue) Brawn (“Commercial”)**
3. **Dana Hammond (“Commercial”)**

For the at-large seat currently held by Kristen (Togue) Brawn, who has completed her first term on the New England Fishery Management Council:

1. **Kristen (Togue) Brawn (“Commercial”)**
2. **Dana Hammond (“Commercial”)**
3. **Kristan Porter (“Commercial”)**



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Geoffery Smith

Geoffery Smith is applying for his second term on the NEFMC. Serving as the Marine Program Director for The Nature Conservancy in Maine for 18 years, Geoffery has immense experience with Maine's fisheries and coastal habitats. During his first term on the NEFMC, this experience was clearly displayed at the Groundfish Committee where Geoffery was a thoughtful and consistent participant in discussions regarding electronic monitoring and cod stock structure. Geoffery's ability to consider broader ecosystem perspectives has also been critical to his involvement on the Habitat and Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management committees. During his first term, Geoffery was also appointed to the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, participating in intergovernmental fisheries management as a member of the US delegation. Outside of the Council, Geoffery serves on the Board of Directors for the Maine Coast Community Groundfish Sector and is an avid recreational fisherman.

Kristen (Togue) Brawn:

Kristen (Togue) Brawn is applying for her second term on the NEFMC. As the owner of Maine Dayboat Scallop Inc., Togue is intimately familiar with the scallop fishery, its science, and its management. This knowledge was easily transferred to the NEFMC during her first term where Togue was an active participant on the Scallop and Habitat Committees. Togue has also shown a commitment to increasing her knowledge of other species by serving on the Groundfish Committee and, at present, the Skate Committee. Togue's commitment to sustainable fisheries and coastal communities was clearly shown during her first term on the NEFMC and is repeatedly displayed through her work outside of the NEFMC. Togue is Chair of the ME DMR Advisory Council, which has advice and consent authority for the Department's regulatory changes. She also serves on the Maine Fishermen's Forum Board of Directors and plays a key role in organizing this education and trade show for Maine's fishing community each year.

Dana Hammond

Dana Hammond has over three decades of experience as a commercial fisherman and is the owner/operator of the F/V Nichole Leigh. He participates in the scallop, whiting, squid, herring, and menhaden fisheries and is an active groundfisherman in the Sustainable Harvest Sector. Dana brings a unique perspective on electronic monitoring in the groundfish fishery as his boat is one of the few vessels which participated in the maximized retention program. Dana is also actively involved in supporting and contributing to fisheries science. Most notably, he served five seasons as a deckhand on the Maine-New Hampshire Inshore Trawl Survey, ensuring Dana has in-depth knowledge on how surveys are conducted in the Gulf of Maine. Dana has participated in the Marine Resource Education Program (MREP) and currently sits on ME DMR's Advisory Council, which provides routine advice to the Department and votes on regulatory changes.

Kristan Porter

Kristan Porter is a commercial fisherman out of Cutler, Maine, who participates in the scallop, halibut, lobster, and menhaden fisheries. He has extensive experience engaging in the management of commercial fisheries, both at the NEFMC and through other management bodies. At the NEFMC, Kristan currently serves on the Scallop Advisory Panel, providing his perspective as a participant in the Northern Gulf of Maine fishery. Outside of the NEFMC,



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Kristan serves as president of the Maine Lobstermen's Association where he has navigated the lobster industry through many challenging conversations regarding the lobster resource as well as protected resources. Kristan resides and fishes out of Downeast Maine, a region which is often under-represented at the NEFMC table.

I appreciate your consideration of these individuals for these critical appointments. I am confident of their experience and qualifications to represent our state on behalf of Maine's fisheries and coastal communities. In considering these nominees, Maine has continued to seek a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and skills. The nominees described above represent diversity in both gender and sector. The State of Maine is proud that its current Council representation is 50% female.

I have asked DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher to follow up with you to reiterate my priorities, but please feel free to contact him directly with any questions or concerns that your agency may have.

Sincerely,



Janet T. Mills
Governor of Maine

Cc: Patrick Keliher, Commissioner, Maine Department of Marine Resources



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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

March 7, 2024

Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
1305 East-West Hwy
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Assistant Administrator Coit:

I write in response to your request for nominations for one obligatory and one at-large seat on the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), which will become vacant in August 2024.

On January 29 and February 5, 2024, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) issued a solicitation notice seeking candidates from Rhode Island for the two seats on the NEFMC. The notice was broadly distributed throughout Rhode Island's marine fishing community (commercial and recreational) via the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries listserv. In response, three individuals submitted applications: Theodore "Ted" Platz, Spencer Bode, and Gary Mataronas.

I am herewith forwarding those three applications to you for your review and consideration. All three individuals are well-qualified, strong candidates and would serve Rhode Island's interests well. The three candidates were interviewed by the DEM Division of Marine Fisheries and are provided in the order of preference identified above. As the top candidate, Mr. Platz has shown his willingness to identify and understand NEFMC actions in order to make well-informed decisions. It was a difficult choice, as all of the nominees display an excellent understanding of fisheries science and management. However at this time, Mr. Platz is the candidate that would best serve this role for the State of Rhode Island.

Theodore Platz is a dedicated and highly motivated commercial fisherman with over 30 years of experience in commercial fishing. Mr. Platz has expert knowledge of Rhode Island fisheries and fishing operations and is based out of Newport, RI, fishing both inshore and offshore. Ted has engaged in many fisheries important to the State of Rhode Island including American lobster, monkfish, skates and bluefish. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Emory and Henry College in Economics and has participated in multiple fishery science and management seminars. His

Assistant Administrator Coit
March 5, 2024
Page 2

background and education in economics play an important role in his decision making. Ted has also been an active participant in cooperative fisheries research programs and a member of both the monkfish and skate industry advisory panels for the NEFMC.

Spencer Bode is a commercial fisherman that has participated in both inshore and offshore fisheries, recreational/for-hire sector charter industry, and seafood processing. Mr. Bode has been a strong advocate for increased collaboration among all fisheries stakeholders, petitioning for the protection and sustainability of working waterfronts. Spencer has seafood processing and marketing experience and has served as the commercial fishing representative on the Department's Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) which tackles difficult licensing issues for both DEM and the Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Council. Mr. Bode holds a B.S. in Business Administration from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and has been involved with numerous grant writing and fisheries policy efforts which focused on ecosystem-based fisheries science and management. He is also a part of the State's Commercial Fisheries Apprenticeship Program.

Greg Mataronas has been a very active and effective member of the NEFMC process as a member on numerous advisory panels and is also a member of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team. He has a strong conservation ethic, which he views as being fundamentally important to the interests of fishermen, and has participated in many fisheries relevant to the New England Council process. He has had a long and diverse Rhode Island-based career, including 34 years as a commercial fisherman and the owner and operator of multiple commercial fishing vessels and businesses. He is the current president of the Rhode Island Lobstermen's Association and has emerged as a strong and influential voice on the panels which he serves, currently chairing the Monkfish Advisory Panel. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Biology from Southampton College of Long Island University.

Although DEM reached out to Rhode Island's entire marine fisheries community, broadly soliciting candidates for the vacancy, we received no requests for consideration by any women or minority candidates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Daniel J. McKee
Governor