

**Robert S. LaRussa,**

*Assistant Secretary for Import  
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**Allen Stayman**

*Director, Office of Insular Affairs, Department  
of the Interior.*

[FR Doc. 98-6893 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-M, 4310-93-M

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration**

[I.D. 031098E]

**Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management  
Council; Meeting**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries  
Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),  
Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Mid-Atlantic Fishery  
Management Council's (Council) Spiny  
Dogfish Technical Committee will hold  
a public meeting.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on  
Thursday, April 2, 1998, from 10:00  
a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at  
the Radisson Hotel Philadelphia  
Airport, 500 Stevens Drive,  
Philadelphia, PA; telephone: 610-521-  
8954.

*Council address:* Mid-Atlantic Fishery  
Management Council, 300 S. New  
Street, Dover, DE 19904; telephone:  
302-674-2331.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
David R. Keifer, Executive Director,  
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management  
Council; telephone: 302-674-2331

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The  
purpose of this meeting is to discuss  
revised estimates of current fishing  
mortality, review results of surplus  
production modeling and biomass  
estimation, review projection model  
results, and develop definition of  
overfishing.

Although other issues not contained  
in this agenda may come before this  
Committee for discussion, in accordance  
with the Magnuson Stevens Fishery  
Conservation and Management Act,  
those issues may not be the subject of  
formal action during this meeting.  
Action will be restricted to those issues  
specifically identified in the agenda  
listed in this notice.

**Special Accommodations**

This meeting is physically accessible  
to people with disabilities. Requests for  
sign language interpretation or other  
auxiliary aids should be directed to

Joanna Davis at the Council (see  
**ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the  
meeting date.

Dated: March 11, 1998.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable  
Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-6855 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration**

[I.D. 031098F]

**New England Fishery Management  
Council; Public Meetings**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries  
Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),  
Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery  
Management Council (Council) is  
scheduling a number of public meetings  
of its oversight committees and advisory  
panels in March and April 1998 to  
consider actions affecting New England  
fisheries in the exclusive economic zone  
(EEZ). Recommendations from these  
groups will be brought to the full  
Council for formal consideration and  
action, if appropriate.

**DATES:** The meetings will be held  
between March 31, 1998, and April 27,  
1998. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**  
for specific dates and times.

**ADDRESSES:** The meetings will be held  
in Peabody and East Boston, MA;  
Warwick, RI; and New London, CT. See  
**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific  
locations.

*Council address:* New England  
Fishery Management Council, 5  
Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906-1036;  
telephone: (781) 231-0422.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul  
J. Howard, Executive Director, New  
England Fishery Management Council;  
telephone: (781) 231-0422.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Meeting Dates and Agendas**

*Tuesday, March 31, 1998, 10 a.m. and  
Wednesday, April 1, 1998, 9:00 a.m.—*  
Joint Council Herring Committee and  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries  
Commission Herring Section Meeting  
Location: Sheraton Inn, Providence  
Airport, 1850 Post Road, Warwick, RI  
02886; telephone: (401) 738-4000.

Selection of Atlantic Herring Fishery  
Management Plan (FMP) measures,  
including the identification of a

preferred alternative, for public hearing  
purposes.

*Thursday, April 2, 1998, 9:30 a.m.—*  
Joint Habitat Committee and Advisory  
Panel Meeting

Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury  
Street (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960;  
telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Review of the progress and status of  
essential fish habitat (EFH)  
identification and description, and  
discussion of alternatives for EFH  
designation.

*Friday, April 3, 1998, 9:30 a.m.—*  
Groundfish Committee Meeting

Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury  
Street, (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960;  
telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Final selection of measures to be  
recommended to the Council for public  
hearings on Amendment 9 to the  
Northeast Multispecies FMP and  
development of a recommendation to  
the Council on Framework Adjustment  
26 to the FMP, an action that would  
implement alternative cod conservation  
measures.

*Tuesday, April 7, 10 a.m.—*Whiting  
Committee Meeting

Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury  
Street (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960;  
telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Development of final  
recommendations to the Council on a  
management alternative for  
consideration at public hearings.

*Wednesday, April 14, 1998, 9:30  
a.m.—*Joint Monkfish Committee and  
Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Airport Holiday Inn, 225  
McClellan Highway, East Boston, MA  
02128; telephone: (617) 569-5250.

Approval of final management  
measures to be included in the  
Monkfish FMP, for New England and  
Mid-Atlantic Council consideration.  
This agenda will include time for public  
comments on the proposed final  
management measures.

*Monday, April 27, 10 a.m.—*Whiting  
Committee Meeting

Location: Radisson Hotel, 35  
Governor Winthrop Boulevard, New  
London, CT 06320; telephone: (860)  
443-7000.

Review of the draft Whiting  
Amendment, draft Environmental  
Impact Statement and a public hearing  
schedule.

Although other issues not contained  
in this agenda may come before these  
groups for discussion, in accordance  
with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery  
Conservation and Management Act,  
those issues may not be the subject of  
formal action during this meeting.  
Action will be restricted to those issues  
specifically listed in this notice.

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: March 11, 1998.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 98-6856 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

#### Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. 98-0303053-8053-01]

#### Notice of Conference on Database Protection and Access Issues

**AGENCY:** Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) is announcing that it will hold a one-day conference on issues related to protection of and access to compilations of data.

**DATES:** The conference will be held on Tuesday, April 28, 1998, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Registration materials must be returned no later than April 20, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** The conference will be held on Tuesday, April 28, 1998, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Falk Auditorium of the Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Conference sessions will be held in the Falk Auditorium, other conference facilities of the Brookings Institution, and conference facilities at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Requests for registration materials should be made to Justin Hughes by electronic mail to [database.conference@uspto.gov](mailto:database.conference@uspto.gov), by facsimile transmission marked to his attention at (703) 305-8885, or by mail marked to his attention and addressed to the Office of Legislative and International Affairs, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. Because of limited seating in the conference facilities, the PTO will accept the first 175 participants on a first-come, first-served basis according to the date and time of each registration request.

There will be a reasonable charge to help defray costs of the lunch and refreshments served at the conference. However, payment is not obligatory to participate in the conference.

Arrangements for conference panelists and moderators will be made separately from conference participant registration.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Justin Hughes, by telephone at (703) 305-9300, by facsimile transmission marked to his attention at (703) 305-8885, by electronic mail to [database.conference@uspto.gov](mailto:database.conference@uspto.gov), or by mail marked to his attention at the Office of Legislative and International Affairs, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Issues concerning legal protection for compilations of data gained increased attention following the Supreme Court's 1991 decision *Feist Publications, Inc. v. Rural Telephone Service Co.*, 499 U.S. 340 (1991), which determined that there is no copyright protection for compilations of data that lack creativity in their selection, arrangement, and presentation. The *Feist* decision, as well as subsequent cases in the lower courts, established that copyright does not protect all compilations of data or of information and that even where copyright exists in such compilations, it provides "thin" protection that does not inhibit unauthorized copying of all or substantial amounts of databases.

Protection of compilations of data has also become an issue abroad. In March 1996, the European Commission adopted a Directive on Databases which creates a sui generis intellectual property system for compilations of data. The Directive requires member states of the European Union (EU) to implement national legislation to provide database owners with a right to control extraction and reutilization of data from a proprietary compilation for a fifteen-year term; the Directive provides that member states may create exceptions to liability for education and research uses of databases.

In response to the *Feist* decision, subsequent cases, and the European initiative, H.R. 3531 was introduced in 1996 by then Congressman Carlos Moorhead. House bill 3531 would have provided a sui generis legal regime for database protection. The bill would have protected database owners for a twenty-five-year term from unauthorized extraction, use, or reuse of any substantial part of a database.

In the 105th Congress, Congressman Howard Coble, Chair of the House Subcommittee on Courts and Intellectual Property, introduced H.R.

2652, the "Collections of Information Antipiracy Act". House bill 2652 would provide a database owner with protection against misappropriation of substantial portions of its database if such misappropriation would harm the owner's actual potential market for the database or products incorporating the database. House bill 2652 provides exceptions from liability for use of data for not-for-profit, educational, scientific, research, or news reporting purposes, although the contours of these exceptions may not correspond precisely to fair use exceptions under copyright law. House bill 2652 has been supported by a wide variety of entities in the information industry and has been endorsed by the Copyright Office as a constructive step to restore protection for "sweat of the brow" compilations that was eliminated in the *Feist* decision.

At the same time, a number of organizations, particularly in the scientific and academic communities, have expressed concerns that H.R. 2652 may impede access to data necessary to scholarly and scientific research. Scientists have stressed that many research efforts rely on uses of entire databases, uses that might be deemed substantial extraction under the bill's provisions and that privately controlled databases might be priced so as to make many research projects impossible.

Opponents of providing additional database protection have argued that the database market is already characterized by single source, niche marketers; that there is no apparent market failure, i.e. undersupply of databases, because of the absence of comprehensive protection; and that existing copyright and contractual law coupled with current technology provide adequate protection to database owners.

Internationally, in 1996, the European Union submitted a draft international database protection treaty, similar in scope to the EU Directive, to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). In anticipation of a WIPO Diplomatic Conference in December 1996, and because of substantial concerns about provisions in the EU proposal, the United States submitted its own proposal to WIPO. The 1996 Diplomatic Conference ultimately focused on copyright and neighboring rights proposals; it did not resolve any issues related to possible protection of databases. WIPO has established a timetable to resume discussions concerning database protection in 1998.

The April 28, 1998 database conference is intended to bring together representatives from academia, private industry, and Government for an in-