APPENDIX. TERMS OF REFERENCE.

Terms of Reference for the 44th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop

(Last Revised Sept. 6, 2006)

Meeting Dates: November 28 – December 4, 2006

A. Ocean quahogs

1. Characterize the commercial catch including landings and discards.

2. Estimate fishing mortality, spawning stock biomass, and total stock biomass for the current year and characterize the uncertainty of those estimates. If possible, also include estimates for earlier years.

3. Either update or redefine biological reference points (BRPs; proxies for B_{MSY} and F_{MSY}), as appropriate. Comment on the scientific adequacy of existing and redefined BRPs.

4. Evaluate current stock status with respect to the existing BRPs, as well as with respect to updated or redefined BRPs (from TOR 3).

5. Recommend what modeling approaches and data should be used for conducting single and multi-year stock projections, and for computing TACs or TALs.

6. If possible,

    a. provide numerical examples of short term projections (2-3 years) of biomass and fishing mortality rate, and characterize their uncertainty, under various TAC/F strategies and

    b. compare projected stock status to existing rebuilding or recovery schedules, as appropriate.

7. Review, evaluate and report on the status of the SARC/Working Group Research Recommendations offered in recent SARC reviewed assessments.

B. Skate species complex

1. Characterize the commercial and recreational catch including landings and discards.

2. Estimate fishing mortality, spawning stock biomass, and total stock biomass for the current year and characterize the uncertainty of those estimates. If possible, also include estimates for earlier years.

3. Either update or redefine biological reference points (BRPs; proxies for B_{MSY} and F_{MSY}), as appropriate. Comment on the scientific adequacy of existing and redefined BRPs.

4. Evaluate current stock status with respect to the existing BRPs, as well as with respect to updated or redefined BRPs (from TOR 3).

5. Review, evaluate and report on the status of the SARC/Working Group Research Recommendations offered in recent SARC-reviewed assessments.

6. Examine the NEFSC Food Habits Database to estimate diet composition and annual consumptive demand for seven species of skates for as many years as feasible.

C. Atlantic surfclam

1. Characterize the commercial and recreational catch including landings and discards.

2. Estimate fishing mortality, spawning stock biomass, and total stock biomass for the current year and characterize the uncertainty of those estimates. If possible, also include estimates for earlier years.

3. Either update or redefine biological reference points (BRPs; proxies for B_{MSY} and F_{MSY}), as appropriate. Comment on the scientific adequacy of existing and redefined BRPs.

4. Evaluate current stock status with respect to the existing BRPs, as well as with respect to updated or redefined BRPs (from TOR 3).

5. Recommend what modeling approaches and data should be used for conducting single and multi-year stock projections, and for computing TACs or TALs.

6. If possible,

   a. provide numerical examples of short term projections (2-3 years) of biomass and fishing mortality rate, and characterize their uncertainty, under various TAC/F strategies and

   b. compare projected stock status to existing rebuilding or recovery schedules, as appropriate.

b. Review, evaluate and report on the status of the SARC/Working Group Research Recommendations offered in recent SARC reviewed assessments.