For further information contact: John Naughton, NMFS, Southwest Region, Pacific Islands Area Office, (808) 973-2940.

Supplementary information: The Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 amended the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) to establish new requirements for EFH descriptions in FMPs and require consultation between NMFS and Federal agencies on activities that may adversely impact EFH for species managed under FMPs. The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires all Councils to amend their FMPs by October 1998 to describe and identify EFH for each managed fishery. In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS published an interim final rule in the Federal Register on December 19, 1997 (62 FR 66531), providing guidelines to assist the Councils in description and identification of EFH in FMPs (including adverse impacts on EFH) and consideration of actions to ensure conservation and enhancement of EFH. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires NMFS to provide each Council with recommendations and information regarding EFH for each fishery under that Council’s authority.

NMFS has developed proposed EFH recommendations for EFH for each of the Western Pacific Council’s FMPs through a process that has involved input from the Council, its advisory bodies, and the fishing industry at the Council’s public meetings in November 1997, and April 1998.

The proposed EFH recommendations for each FMP include a description of EFH for the managed species; a description of adverse effects to EFH, including fishing and non-fishing threats; and a description of measures to ensure the conservation and enhancement of EFH. Copies of the proposed EFH recommendations are available (see Addresses). Public comments are requested by June 22, 1998.

Special accommodations

This meeting will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to John Naughton (see for further information contact) at least 5 working days prior to the hearing date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.