

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

[I.D.] 050898A

Highly Migratory Species and Billfish Advisory Panels; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) and Billfish Advisory Panels (AP) will hold consecutive meetings, with a half-day joint meeting, to discuss issues in, and future management options for the fisheries for, Atlantic HMS.

DATES: The Billfish AP meeting will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on May 26, and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on May 27. The HMS AP meeting will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on May 28, 1998. A joint session of the Billfish and HMS APs is scheduled for May 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. A public comment period will be held Wednesday, May 27, 1998, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the meeting location.

ADDRESSES: The APs will meet at the Islandia Marriott Long Island Hotel, 3635 Express Drive North, Happaug, NY 11788. Written comments should be submitted to, and informational materials related to the AP meeting are available from, Jill Stevenson or Liz Lauck, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jill Stevenson or Liz Lauck, telephone: (301) 713-2347, fax: (301) 713-1917.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The HMS and Billfish APs have been established under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* The APs will assist the Secretary of Commerce in collecting and evaluating information relevant to the development of a fishery management plan (FMP) for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks and to an amendment to the Billfish FMP. All AP meetings are open to the public and will be attended by members of the AP, including appointed members, representatives of the five Fishery Management Councils that work with HMS, and the Chair, or his representative, of the U.S. Advisory Committee to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. A public comment

period is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, 1998, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the meeting location. Comments are solicited on draft overfishing definition criteria and on rebuilding plans that will be discussed at the AP meetings. To request informational materials related to the AP discussion or to submit public comments, please see **ADDRESSES**.

Agenda items for the AP meetings include discussion of:

1. Objectives for the draft HMS FMP and draft Billfish FMP amendment;
2. Development of overfishing criteria and definitions for Atlantic HMS;
3. Rebuilding scenarios for overfished stocks of Atlantic HMS;
4. Description of the fisheries and fishing activities; and
5. Essential fish habitat requirements as they relate to HMS fisheries.
6. Safety of human life at sea.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Liz Lauck, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, phone (301) 713-2347, at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 12, 1998.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 98-13130 Filed 5-15-98; 8:45 am]

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

[I.D. 050898B]

Marine Mammals

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

ACTION: Issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the National Marine Mammal Laboratory, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, BIN C15700, Building 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0070, has been issued a permit to take large and small cetaceans and incidentally harass some pinniped species during aerial surveys for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301/713-2289);

Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, BIN C15700, Building 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0070; and

Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ruth Johnson or Sara Shapiro, 301/713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 15, 1998, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 2366) that a request for a scientific research permit to take multiple cetacean and pinniped species had been submitted by the above-named individual. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the Regulations Governing the Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered fish and wildlife (50 CFR parts 217-227), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of the endangered species which is the subject of this permit, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: May 8, 1998.

Ann D. Terbush,

Chief, Permits and Documentation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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

[I.D. 050198B]

Marine Mammals; Permits

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