

in this paragraph to the new listing cited in parenthesis as follows: M T R Ravensburg, Inc. (Machine Tool Research, Inc.) and Buffalo Forge Company (Buffalo Machine Tools of Niagara, Inc.).

Dated: August 14, 1998.

**Morton Schnabel,**

*Director, Office of Export Trading Company Affairs.*

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BILLING CODE 3510-DR-P

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 080598A]

**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 (APs) will each hold a meeting to discuss management issues under consideration for inclusion in the draft HMS fishery management plan (FMP) and draft Billfish FMP amendment, respectively.

**DATES:** The HMS AP meeting will be held Thursday, August 27, 1998, and Friday, August 28, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. A public comment period is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 1998, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Public comment is solicited on issues in the draft HMS FMP, including the use of vessel monitoring systems (VMS) in HMS fisheries. The Billfish AP meeting will be held Wednesday, September 2, 1998, and Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. A public comment period for the Billfish AP meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Billfish AP public comment period will be held in conjunction with and at the site of the regional meeting of the U.S. Advisory Committee to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

**ADDRESSES:** The HMS AP will meet at the Radisson Airport Hotel Providence, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, Rhode Island 02886; telephone: (401) 739-3000. The Billfish AP will meet at the Hotel on the Cay, Protestant Cay, P.O. Box 4020, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00822; telephone: (340) 773-2035. The

Billfish AP public comment period will be held at the Buccaneer Hotel, Estate Shoys, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00824; telephone: (340) 773-2100. Written comments should be submitted to, and informational materials related to the AP meetings are available from, Liz Lauck, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Pat Wilbert or Liz Lauck, telephone: (301) 713-2347, fax: (301) 713-1917.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The HMS and Billfish APs were established under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1901 *et seq.* The APs will assist the Secretary of Commerce in collecting and evaluating information relevant to the development of an FMP for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks, and 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 Atlantic HMS, and the Chair, or his or her representative, of the U.S. Advisory Committee to ICCAT.

The agendas for the AP meetings will include discussion of draft documents for the HMS FMP and the Billfish FMP amendment, respectively, and the draft HMS Essential Fish Habitat document.

Topics will include:

1. Rebuilding alternatives;
2. Bycatch reduction alternatives;
3. Permitting and reporting alternatives;
4. VMS (HMS AP meeting only);
5. Essential fish habitat identification; and
6. Other items related to meeting requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The public comment period for the HMS Advisory Panel is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 1998, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the meeting location. NMFS seeks comments on issues in the draft HMS FMP including U.S. implementation of the ICCAT vessel monitoring system (VMS) program. The ICCAT VMS recommendation applies to vessels greater than 79 feet that fish for HMS on the high seas. Comments are requested specifically on applicability of the ICCAT recommendation to the U.S. fleet, costs of implementation, and participation in high seas fishing for HMS.

The public comment period for the Billfish Advisory Panel is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and will be held in conjunction with, and at the site of, the

ICCAT regional meeting. Note that the location of the Billfish AP public comment period/ICAAT regional meeting is different from the location of the Billfish AP meeting. Comments are solicited on management issues under consideration for inclusion in the draft Billfish FMP amendment. See **ADDRESSES** to request informational materials related to the AP discussion or to submit public comments on management issues for the draft FMP documents.

**Special Accommodations**

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or for other auxiliary aids should be directed to Pat Wilbert, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, phone (301) 713-2347; fax: (301) 713-1917, at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 13, 1998.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 081198A]

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Experimental Fishing Permit**

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

**ACTION:** Issuance of an experimental fishing permit.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces the issuance of an experimental fishing permit 98-01 (EFP) to the Groundfish Forum. The EFP authorizes the Groundfish Forum to conduct an experiment in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) that would test the effectiveness of a halibut excluder device for flatfish trawls in reducing halibut bycatch rates without significantly lowering catch rates of flatfish. Results of the experiment will be used to develop methods for trawl vessels targeting flatfish to reduce halibut bycatch rates and mortality. This EFP will provide information not otherwise available through research or commercial fishing operations. The intended effect of this