

organizations to discuss subjects that relate to the field of weights and measures technology and administration.

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 272 B, the National Institute of Standards and Technology acts as a sponsor of the National Conference on Weights and Measures in order to promote uniformity among the States in the complex of laws, regulations, methods, and testing equipment that comprises regulatory control by the States of commercial weighing and measuring.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held January 31–February 4, 1999, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

**LOCATION OF MEETING:** Sheraton Old Town Hotel, 800 Rio Grande Boulevard, N.W., Albuquerque, New Mexico 878104.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Gilbert Ugiansky, Chief, NIST, Office of Weights and Measures, 100 Bureau Drive Stop 2350 Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899–2350. Telephone: (301) 975–4004, or E-mail: owm@nist.gov.

Dated: January 8, 1999.

**Robert E. Hebner,**

*Acting Deputy Director.*

[FR Doc. 99–899 Filed 1–14–99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 011199C]

#### Endangered and Threatened Species; Request for Information on Candidate Species List Under the Endangered Species Act

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

**ACTION:** Request for information for revision of candidate species list.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS solicits information on marine and anadromous species that may qualify as candidates for possible addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Species, including information on the status of species currently classified as candidate species. This notice is not a proposal for listing; candidate species do not receive substantive or procedural protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). The goal of the candidate species program is to identify marine and anadromous species as candidates for possible addition to the List of Endangered and Threatened Species and encourage voluntary efforts to help prevent listings.

**DATES:** Comments will be accepted until April 15, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and documentation for these and any recommended additions or deletions to the candidate species list should be sent to Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marta Nammack or Terri Jordan at (301)713–1401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The ESA requires determinations of whether species of wildlife and plants are endangered or threatened, based on the best available scientific and commercial data. “Species” includes any species or subspecies of fish, wildlife, or plant, and any distinct population segment of any vertebrate species that interbreeds when mature (vertebrate population). NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service share responsibilities under the ESA. With some exceptions, NMFS is responsible for species that reside all or the major portion of their lifetime in marine or estuarine waters. The regulations implementing Section 4 of the ESA (49 FR 38900, October 1, 1984) define “candidate” as “any species being considered by the Secretary for listing as an endangered or a threatened species, but not yet the subject of a proposed rule.”

The four main purposes of the candidate species list are to (1) Increase public awareness about these species; (2) identify those species that may be in need of protective measures under the ESA, and if possible, recover them before listing under the ESA becomes necessary; (3) stimulate voluntary conservation efforts by Federal agencies and other appropriate parties with regard to these species; and (4) identify uncertainties associated with the status of the species. As resources permit, NMFS conducts a review of the status of each candidate species to determine if it warrants listing as endangered or threatened under the ESA. Sometimes, even though NMFS may determine after conducting a status review that a species does not warrant listing under the ESA, NMFS may retain the species on the candidate species list due to remaining concerns or uncertainties. NMFS believes it is important to highlight species for which listing may be warranted so that Federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, and the private sector are aware of which species could benefit from proactive conservation efforts. Agencies and other appropriate parties can take candidate species into account in project planning,

which may lower the likelihood of an ESA listing.

NMFS has developed specific criteria for determining which species/vertebrate populations should be included on the NMFS candidate species list. These criteria are based on the requirement for reliable information on the biological status of a species or vertebrate population.

Biological status is determined by both demography and genetic composition of the species/vertebrate population. If there is evidence of demographic or genetic concerns that would indicate that listing may be warranted, the species/vertebrate population should be added to the candidate species list. Demographic concerns would occur when there is a significant decline in abundance or range from historical levels that would indicate that listing may be warranted. This could result from activities such as over-harvest, habitat degradation, disease outbreaks, predation, natural climatic conditions, and hatchery operations that negatively impact natural stocks. Genetic concerns that would indicate that listing may be warranted include outbreeding and inbreeding depression resulting from poor hatchery practices or substantially reduced numbers of natural individuals.

If you wish to propose that a species/vertebrate population be designated as a candidate species, please submit available information, including: (1) Taxonomic validity of the species, subspecies or vertebrate population; (2) life history; (3) historic and current population size and distribution; (4) assessment of confirmed and likely threats and declines; (5) existing laws, regulations, agreements and other protective mechanisms; and (6) documentation of information used to justify their proposal.

The previous list was published on July 14, 1997, (62 FR 37560). NMFS intends to consider the results of ongoing status reviews and all data received in response to this notice to make appropriate amendments to the list. Some of the species NMFS is considering adding to the candidate species list are the largemouth sawfish (*Pristis pristis*), smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*), barndoor skate (*Raja laevis*), elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*), staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*), and four gastropods that are possibly extinct: “*Collisella*” *edmitchelli*, *Lottia alveus alveus*, *Cerithidea fuscata*, and *Phyllaplysia smaragda*.

It is important to note that the candidate species list is limited by the information available. Therefore, it does

not encompass all declining marine and anadromous species that may warrant listing in the future. Moreover, inclusion of a species on the candidate species list does not create a higher listing priority for that species. As appropriate, NMFS may initiate a status review for any species or vertebrate population of concern, regardless of whether it is a candidate species, and the public may petition to list any species or vertebrate population.

Dated: January 12, 1999.

**Ann D. Terbush,**

*Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 99-1011 Filed 1-14-99; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 011199B]

**North Pacific 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 North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory committees will meet in Anchorage, AK, the week of February 1, 1999.

**DATES:** 1. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, February 1, continuing through at least Tuesday, February 2, 1999.

2. The Advisory Panel (AP) will begin meeting at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, February 1, and continue through Thursday, February 4, 1999.

3. The Council will meet jointly with the Alaska Board of Fisheries beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 2, and begin their regular plenary session at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 3, continuing through a portion of Monday, February 8, 1999.

Other workgroup or committee meetings may be held during the week. Notices of these meetings will be posted at the hotel. All meetings are open to the public with the exception of Council executive sessions, which may be held during the noon hour during the meeting week, if necessary, to discuss personnel, international issues, or litigation.

**ADDRESSES:** The meetings will be held at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel, 500 W. Third Avenue, Anchorage, AK.

**Council address:** North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Council staff, phone: 907-271-2809.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The agenda for the Council's joint meeting with the Alaska Board of Fisheries will include reports and discussion of the following subjects: halibut, groundfish and crab management issues, limited entry for the scallop fisheries off Alaska, progress on a shark management plan, Steller sea lion protection measures, and the American Fisheries Act.

The agenda for the Council's plenary session will include the following issues. The Council may take appropriate action on any of the issues identified.

1. Reports from NMFS on the current status of the groundfish fisheries off Alaska, from the International Pacific Halibut Commission on 1999 halibut quotas and from Groundfish Forum on the results of an experimental fishery to test gear to minimize bycatch.

2. NOAA Legal Counsel will provide a briefing on the new recusal regulations for Council members.

3. Receive a report on the implementation of emergency rules to protect Steller sea lions, review necessary actions for 1999 and review alternatives and options for implementation of additional or alternative measures in 2000.

4. Discuss progress on implementation of fishery management measures in 1999 required by the American Fisheries Act as well as discuss development of further amendments for 2000 and beyond. The Council will also review the disapproval of emergency rules by NMFS and consider a Council response.

5. Review of a discussion paper of proposed management measures for the Alaska halibut charterboat fleet, and review of proposals received by the Alaska Board of Fisheries for halibut local area management plans.

6. Receive status reports on the multi-species community development quota (CDQ) program, the individual fishing quota (IFQ) fee program, and the IFQ weighmaster program.

7. Review alternative management measures to reduce bycatch of seabirds in the groundfish fisheries.

8. Receive reports and discuss further development of issues related to ecosystems management and the

gathering of social and economic data for fishery management actions.

9. Identify research priorities to forward to NMFS.

10. Groundfish amendments scheduled for action are as follows:

a. Final action on revisions to the prohibited species catch allocations for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) chinook salmon.

b. Discussion of total catch measurement in the groundfish fisheries.

c. Final action on an amendment to address retention of demersal shelf rockfish in the Gulf of Alaska IFQ fisheries.

d. Final action on an amendment to the improved retention/utilization (IR/IU) program; review progress on report to Congress on IR/IU.

e. Receive status report on a pilot halibut avoidance program from the Vessel Bycatch Allowance/Halibut Mortality Avoidance Program Committee.

f. Discuss the differences between the Federal and state definitions of "pelagic trawl" and determine whether revisions are necessary.

11. Final action on license limitation program for the scallop fisheries off Alaska.

12. Progress report on a rebuilding plan for *bairdi* crab in the BSAI.

13. Review the overfishing definition for the Salmon Fishery Management Plan and determine appropriate action.

Although other issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during the meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda 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 Helen Allen, 907-271-2809, at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: January 12, 1999.

**Richard W. Surdi,**

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

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