

alternatives to be considered. A second **Federal Register** notice was published following the scoping period on January 20, 1999 (64 FR 3066), announcing the decision to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was subsequently produced and made available for a 60-day public comment period on January 14, 2000 (65 FR 2390). The comment period was extended for 17 days to March 14, 2000 (65 FR 13947), in direct response to requests from the public. This resulted in a total comment period of 77 days. Comments received on the DEIS and responses to those comments are included in the FEIS.

The analyses in the FEIS are done in two parts; one covering the alternatives for water withdrawal activities, and the other covering alternatives for land management activities in the upper watershed. Three water withdrawal alternatives are analyzed in detail, including: (1) the no action alternative; (2) the proposed HCP alternative; and, (3) an alternative involving the construction of a new water withdrawal facility approximately 30 miles downstream of the existing Tacoma Headworks. Four additional water withdrawal options were identified during scoping, but they are not analyzed in detail as alternatives to the proposed action because they would not accomplish Tacoma's objective of meeting current and future water demands, and/or because highly speculative information would be required to adequately analyze impacts.

Three alternatives are analyzed for Tacoma Water's watershed management, including: (1) the no action alternative; (2) the proposed HCP alternative; and, (3) a no commercial timber harvest alternative. A fourth watershed management option was identified during public scoping, but it was not analyzed in detail as an alternative to the proposed action because it would not accomplish Tacoma's objective of managing its watershed lands to protect water quality. Lastly, a fifth alternative was identified during public review of the DEIS, involving the state Forests and Fish Report. However, this was not fully analyzed because the No Action and proposed conservation measures surpassed this report, due to agreements Tacoma Water has with other stakeholders.

All water withdrawal and watershed land management alternatives (except the no action alternatives) would provide incidental take coverage for the same 32 fish and wildlife species. These include the following listed species:

gray wolf, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, grizzly bear, Canada lynx, Puget Sound chinook salmon, and the bull trout. Coverage is also being requested for 24 currently unlisted species (including anadromous and resident fish) under specific provisions of the permits, should these species be listed in the future. The duration of the proposed permits and Plan is 50 years.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(a) of the Act, and NEPA regulations. The Services will evaluate the application, associated documents, and comments submitted thereon to determine whether the application meets the requirements of the Act and the NEPA. If it is determined that the requirements are met, permits will be issued for the incidental take of all covered species.

Dated: December 28, 2000.

Daniel Diggs,

Acting Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, Portland, Oregon.

Dated: January 2, 2001.

Margaret Lorenz,

Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 010201C]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of emergency meetings of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its Advisory Panel.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council and its Advisory Panel will meet in Seattle in early January to consult with NMFS on Steller sea lion protective measures for 2001 and 2001.

DATES: The meeting of the Advisory Panel will be held on January 11, 2001. The Council meeting will be held January 12-13, 2001.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Doubletree Hotel, Seattle Airport, 18740 Pacific Highway South, Seattle, WA.

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: All meetings will be held at the Hotel. The Advisory Panel will meet on Thursday, January 11, beginning at 8:00 a.m., concluding by 6:00 p.m. The Council will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, January 12, and may continue into Saturday, January 13th, if necessary. Topics for both meetings include:

1. Consult with NMFS on emergency rule proposed for January 20-July 20, 2001.

2. NMFS proposed regulations for July 21-December 31, 2001; recommend changes as appropriate.

3. Establish a schedule for development of protective measures for 2002.

4. Develop schedule and proposal for utilizing expertise of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct an independent scientific review of the November 30, 2000 biological opinion and its underlying hypothesis and reasonable and prudent alternatives.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

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 at 907-271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: January 2, 2001.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

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