

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

[I.D. 033103G]

New England 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 New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Habitat and Monkfish Oversight Committees in April, 2003 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meetings will be held on April 22, 2003 and April 24, 2003. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in Portsmouth, NH and Warwick, RI. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Meeting Dates and Agendas**

Tuesday, April 22, 2003 at 9 a.m.—Habitat Oversight Committee Meeting.

Location: Courtyard Marriott, 1000 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801; telephone: (603) 436-2121.

The committee will review recommendations from the Habitat Technical Team related to Essential Fish Habitat requirements for Amendment 2 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and Amendment 1 to the Herring FMP. They will also review the recommendations from the Joint Advisory Panel and Habitat Technical Team meeting, scheduled for April 10, 2003. The purpose of this Joint Advisors meeting is to develop one habitat closed area alternative to be incorporated into both Amendment 10 to the Scallop FMP and Amendment 13 to the Multispecies FMP. The Committee will review this recommendation and preliminary analysis of this alternative.

Thursday, April 24, 2003 at 9 a.m.—Monkfish Oversight Committee Meeting.

Location: Sheraton Providence Airport Hotel, 1850 Post Road, Warwick, RI; telephone: (401) 738-4000.

The Committee will discuss issues and options to be included in the Amendment 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS). The Committee will also consider the recommendations of the Habitat Committee, and the enforcement analysis prepared by the Enforcement Committee. Amendment 2 alternatives being considered include, but are not limited to; permit qualification criteria for vessels fishing south of 38°N; management program for a deepwater directed fishery in the SFMA; separation of monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) from multispecies and sea scallop DAS programs; counting of monkfish DAS as 24-hour days; measures to minimize impacts of the fishery on endangered sea turtles; measures to minimize bycatch in directed and non-directed fisheries; an exemption program for vessels fishing for monkfish outside of the EEZ (in the NAFO Regulated Area); alternative measures to minimize impacts of the fishery on essential fish habitat; measures to improve data collection and research on monkfish, including mechanisms for funding cooperative research programs; and, timing of the annual review and adjustment process. The Committee may develop and recommend other management alternatives not included in the list above.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before these groups for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens 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 Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: April 1, 2003.

Theophilus R. Brainerd,

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

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

[I.D. 033103F]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Ad Hoc Groundfish Fishery Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement Oversight Committee (EIS Oversight Committee) will hold a working meeting, which is open to the public, on the draft Groundfish Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

DATES: The EIS Oversight Committee working meeting will occur Tuesday, April 22, 2003, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, April 23, 2003, 8 a.m. to close of business on that day.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the West Conference Room at the Pacific Fishery Management Council office, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200, Portland, OR 97220-1384, telephone: (503) 820-2280.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200, Portland, OR 97220-1384.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Kit Dahl, NEPA Specialist, (503) 820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the EIS Oversight Committee meeting is to review the status of the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), which will analyze five comprehensive alternatives to the current groundfish management program. These alternatives were developed by the EIS Oversight Committee in 2002 and adopted by the Council in October 2002. The EIS Oversight Committee will review the alternatives, descriptions of the affected environment, bycatch management requirements, proposed analytical methodologies, and other relevant information and documents. The EIS Oversight Committee will advise the drafters and analysts regarding resource indicators, important issues for analysis, schedules for review of draft sections as they are prepared, and other matters relating to preparation of the draft document. The EIS Oversight Committee will report to the Council at its June 2003 meeting.