

ACTION: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory committees will hold public meetings.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory committees will hold public meetings in Anchorage.

DATES: The meetings will be held on October 6 through October 14, 2003. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times. All meetings are open to the public except executive sessions.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, 401 E 6th 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, telephone: 907-271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council's Advisory Panel will begin at 8 a.m., Monday, October 6 and continue through Saturday, October 11, 2003. The Scientific and Statistical Committee will begin at 8 a.m. on Monday, October 6, and continue through Wednesday, October 11, 2003. The Enforcement Committee will meet Tuesday, October 7, at 6:30 p.m.

The Council will begin its plenary session at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, October 8 continuing through Wednesday October 14.

Council Plenary Session: 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
 - (a) Executive Director's Report
 - (b) NMFS Management/Enforcement Reports
 - (c) United States Coast Guard Report
 - (d) Alaska Department Fish & Game Reports
2. Gulf of Alaska Rationalization (GOA): Receive report from Joint Protocol Committee; review discussion paper on GOA crab/salmon bycatch and take action as necessary; review staff discussion paper on alternatives and options, open access fisheries, License Limitation Program transfers and catch history, allocation of community shares, observer issues, and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) alternatives.
3. Community Development Quota (CDQ) Issues: Review proposed appeals process; review discussion paper on eligible CDQ communities.
4. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)/Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC): Preliminary review of EIS; finalize HAPC process.

5. Improved Retention/Improved Utilization (IR/IU): Receive Committee report and finalize alternatives for Amendment A.

6. Steller Sea Lion (SSL): Receive SSL Mitigation Committee report and discuss next steps.

7. Halibut Subsistence: Discuss subsistence regulations (data collection, sale, gear regulations); finalize action on Ninilchik eligibility; discuss petitions from other communities.

8. Groundfish Management: Discuss Aleutian Island pollock fishery management; receive report on F40 recommendations; receive report from non-target species committee; review preliminary Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report; set initial groundfish specifications for 2004; take final action on Total Allowable Catch (TAC)-setting process; review discussion paper on repeal of Vessel Incentive Program (VIP).

9. Crab Management: Review Bering Sea Aleutian Island Crab SAFE report; take final action on Pribilof blue king crab rebuilding plan.

10. Staff Tasking: Receive report from Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Implementation and Cost Recovery Committee, and review IFQ proposals received; review tasking and provide direction to staff, and discuss direction to Committees.

11. Other Business.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, these 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 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.

Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC): The SSC agenda will include the following issues:

1. C-3 Essential Fish Habitat
2. C-5 Steller Sea Lion
3. D-1(b-f) Groundfish Management
4. D-2 Crab Management

Advisory Panel: The Advisory Panel will address the same agenda issues as the Council.

Enforcement Committee: The Enforcement Committee will meet during each meeting of the Council to discuss enforcement issues or concerns related to any subject on the Council agenda.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gail Bendixen at 907-271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 3, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

[FR Doc. 03-22915 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 090303C]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Non-Target Species Committee will hold a public meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on October 9, 2003, at 6 p.m., Ballroom C.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, 401 East 6th Avenue, Yukon Room, Anchorage, AK.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane DiCosimo, Council staff, telephone: (907) 271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Non-Target Species Committee will hold an organizational meeting to review technical recommendations on management of non-target groundfish species by the ad hoc working group and to identify appropriate alternative management approaches. The proposed terms of reference for this committee include identification of efficient methods for monitoring non-target catch, improving abundance estimates of non-target species, and development of harvest recommendations that build sustainable populations of non-target species. Another meeting of the committee will be scheduled before the end of 2003.

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

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gail Bendixen at 907-271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 3, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 03-22917 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 090303B]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) IFQ Implementation and Cost Recovery Committee will hold a public meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on October 5, 2003, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, 401 East 6th Avenue, Yukon Room, Anchorage, AK.
Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane DiCosimo, Council staff, telephone: (907) 271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting will be held to (1) Review commercial IFQ proposals from 1999 and recent proposals; (2) discuss sale of subsistence halibut.

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

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gail Bendixen at 907-271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 3, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 03-22916 Filed 9-8-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 082203C]

Endangered Species; File No. 1420, File No. 1444, and File No. 1447

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

ACTION: Receipt of applications.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the following actions regarding permits for takes of shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) for scientific research:

NMFS has received permit applications from Michael F. Mangold, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maryland Fisheries Resource Office, 177 Admiral Cochrane Drive, Annapolis, Maryland 21401 (File No. 1444); and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (Dr. Mark Collins, Principal Investigator), 217 Fort Johnson Road, Charleston, South Carolina 29412 (File No. 1447). NMFS has received a request to modify a permit application from Douglas Peterson, Ph.D, Warnell School of Forest Resources (Fisheries Division), University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602 (File No. 1420).

DATES: Written or telefaxed comments must be received on or before October 9, 2003.

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

All documents: Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)713-0376.

For File No. 1444: Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; phone (978)281-9200; fax (978)281-9371; and
For File No. 1420 and File No. 1447: Southeast Region, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702-2432; phone (727)570-5301; fax (727)570-5320.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Jefferies or Sarah Wilkin, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226).

Applications for permits

Mr. Mangold (File No. 1444) seeks authorization to sample and track shortnose sturgeon for two projects: one project would be conducted in the Potomac River and the second would be conducted in the Delaware River, the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. For the Potomac River project, up to 50 fish would be taken annually via gill, pound, fyke and trammel netting, measured, weighed, PIT tagged, tissue samples will be taken, and the fish subsequently released. A subset of 20 fish annually would also be T-bar and CART tagged and have a temperature/depth datalogger attached. Additionally, Mr. Mangold would also use D-traps to collect up to 2500 shortnose sturgeon eggs annually. This research would be conducted from 2004-2006. For the second project, Mr. Mangold proposes to capture via gill and trammel net, measure, weigh, tag with PIT and T-bar tags, take a tissue and blood sample of, biopsy gonads of and release 50 fish annually. A subset of 10 fish annually would also have sonic transmitters attached before release and subsequently tracked. This project would be conducted from 2004-2009. A total of 5 incidental mortalities between both projects is requested.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (File No. 1447) seeks authorization to sample and track shortnose sturgeon, in South Carolina coastal waters. Annually, up to 100 fish would be taken via gill nets and trawls, measured, weighed, PIT tagged, and the fish subsequently released. A subset of