

Columbia Basin. These modules, as well as the HCPs and Settlement Agreements, are incorporated into the Plan by reference. The modules are available on the NMFS Web site: www.nwr.noaa.gov/Salmon-Recovery-Planning/ESA-Recovery-Plans/Other-Documents.cfm.

The hydropower cost estimates will be updated over time, as the section 7 consultation on the remanded 2004 FCRPS BiOp is completed. The estuary recovery costs could be further refined following public comment on the module and on the ESA recovery plan for the three listed lower Columbia River ESUs and one listed lower Columbia River steelhead DPS in 2007 or early 2008. There are virtually no estimated costs for recovery actions associated with harvest to report at this time. This is because no actions are currently proposed that go beyond those already being implemented through U.S. v. Oregon and other harvest management forums. In the event that additional harvest actions are implemented through these forums, those costs will be added during the implementation phase of this recovery plan. All cost estimates will be refined and updated over time.

The Plan estimates it may cost a total of \$10 million (\$1 million per year) to cover state, tribal, and local agency and organization staffing costs during the first 10 years of plan implementation, and it is conceivable that this level of effort will need to continue for the Plan's duration. Also, continued actions in the management of habitat, hatcheries, and harvest, including both capital and non-capital costs, will likely warrant additional expenditures beyond the first 10 years. Although it is not practicable to accurately estimate the total cost of recovery, it appears that most of the costs will occur in the first 10 years. Annual costs are expected to be lower for the remaining years, so that the total for the entire period (years 11–30) may possibly range from \$150 million to \$200 million.

Periodic Reviews

In accordance with its responsibilities under ESA section 4(c)(2), NMFS will conduct status reviews of the listed Upper Columbia River Spring-Run Chinook Salmon ESU and Upper Columbia River Steelhead DPS at least once every 5 years to evaluate their status and determine whether the ESU or DPS should be removed from the list or changed in status. Such evaluations will take into account the following:

- The biological recovery criteria (ICTRT 2007) and listing factor (threats) criteria described in the Plan.

- The management programs in place to address the threats.

- Principles presented in the Viable Salmonid Populations paper (McElhany *et al.*, 2000).

- Best available information on population and ESU/DPS status and new advances in risk evaluation methodologies.

- Other considerations, including: the number and status of extant spawning groups; linkages and connectivity among populations; the diversity of life history and phenotypes expressed; and considerations regarding catastrophic risk.

- Principles laid out in NMFS' Hatchery Listing Policy (70 FR 37204, June 28, 2005).

Conclusion

NMFS has reviewed the Plan, the public comments, and the conclusions of the ICTRT from its reviews of the Plan. Based on that review, NMFS concludes that the Plan meets the requirements in section 4(f) of the ESA for developing a recovery plan.

Literature Cited

Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team. 2005. Updated population delineation in the Interior Columbia Basin. National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Fisheries Science Center. Memorandum. May 11, 2005.

Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team. 2007. Viability criteria for application to Interior Columbia Basin salmonid ESUs. National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Fisheries Science Center. March 2007.

McElhany, P., M. H. Ruckelshaus, M. J. Ford, T. C. Wainwright, and E. P. Bjorkstedt. 2000. Viable salmon populations and the recovery of evolutionarily significant units. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA Tech. Memo., NMFS NWFSC 42, 156 p.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: October 2, 2007.

Angela Somma,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC75

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Amendment 3 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Spiny Lobster Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and Amendment 4 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands

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

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS); scoping meetings; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council) in conjunction with NMFS intends to prepare a DEIS to describe and analyze management alternatives to be included in a joint amendment to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Spiny Lobster Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and the FMP for the Reef Fish Fishery of Puerto Rico and the USVI. These alternatives will consider measures to implement escape vents in the trap fishery sector of both fisheries. The purpose of this notice of intent is to solicit public comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the DEIS.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the DEIS must be received by the Council or NMFS (see **ADDRESSES** below) by November 8, 2007. A series of scoping meetings will be held in October 2007. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below for the specific dates, times, and locations of the scoping meetings.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the proposed rule by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: 0648-XC75.Proposed@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line the following document identifier: 0648-XC75.

- Mail: Jason Rueter, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

- Fax: 727-824-5308.

- Mail: Graciela Garcia-Moliner, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, PR 00918-25772203;

- Fax: 787-766-6239.

- E-mail: Graciela.Garcia-Moliner@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Graciela Garcia-Moliner; phone: 787-766-5927; fax: 787-766-6239; e-mail: Graciela.Garcia-Moliner@noaa.gov; or Jason Rueter; phone: 727-824-5350; fax: 727-824-5308; or e-mail: Jason.Rueter@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Many species of fish in the reef fish fishery in Puerto Rico and the USVI are believed to be overexploited, largely due to trap fishing and bycatch associated with this fishery. Landings from the trap fishery have continuously decreased since 1990 in Puerto Rico; species composition has changed; and size frequency of some fish has decreased over the last 10 years. These effects have been attributed to excessive trap fishing effort, lack of compliance with trap construction requirements (i.e., fishers often do not use the required biodegradable fasteners on trap doors), use of other gears by commercial fishers (e.g., gill nets), and the lack of escape panels in traps which would allow smaller fishes to escape, resulting in high mortality of juveniles and a loss of long-term potential yield.

According to the NMFS Report on the Status of the U.S. Fisheries for 2006, five stocks are undergoing overfishing, four are overfished, and two are approaching an overfishing condition. The five stocks undergoing overfishing are Grouper Unit 1 (Nassau grouper), Grouper Unit 4 (red, yellowedge, misty, tiger, and yellowfin grouper), Snapper Unit 1 (silk, blackfin, black, and vermilion snapper), parrotfishes, and queen conch. The four stocks that are overfished are Grouper Unit 1 (Nassau grouper), Grouper Unit 2 (goliath grouper), Grouper Unit 4 (red, yellowedge, misty, tiger, and yellowfin grouper), and queen conch. The two stocks approaching an overfished condition are Snapper Unit 1 (silk, blackfin, black, and vermilion snapper) and parrotfishes. All of the finfish species and spiny lobster are susceptible to trap capture at some life history stage, particularly the juvenile stage.

Under current fishing practices, bycatch and the associated mortality of bycatch is not expected to be reduced sufficiently in the reef fish or spiny lobster trap fisheries. Without a reduction in bycatch, those stocks experiencing overfishing may become overfished, and those stocks overfished may not meet the goals of the rebuilding plan set forth in the Sustainable Fisheries Act Amendment of 2005. Therefore, the use of escape panels as a management tool is proposed in this amendment to help achieve the necessary reductions in fishing

mortality among the species harvested by traps.

The Council in conjunction with NMFS will develop a DEIS to describe and analyze management alternatives to implement escape panels in the trap sector of both fisheries. The DEIS will provide updates to the best available scientific information regarding the reef fish complex and the spiny lobster stock, and based on the information, the Council, in conjunction with NMFS, will determine what actions and alternatives are necessary to protect reef fishes and spiny lobster. Those alternatives may include, but are not limited to: a "no action" alternative regarding the fisheries, which would not require escape vents; alternatives to require one escape panel of various sizes and shapes in traps; and an alternative requiring two escape panels of various sizes and shapes.

In accordance with NOAA's Administrative Order NAO 216-6, Section 5.02(c), the Council, in conjunction with NMFS, has identified this preliminary range of alternatives as a means to initiate discussion for scoping purposes only. This may not represent the full range of alternatives that eventually will be evaluated by the Council and NMFS.

Once the Council and NMFS completes the DEIS associated with the amendment to the Caribbean reef fish and spiny lobster FMPs, NMFS will submit the DEIS for filing with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA will publish a notice of availability of the DEIS for public comment in the **Federal Register**. The DEIS will have a 45-day comment period. This procedure is pursuant to regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 40 CFR parts 1500-1508) and to NOAA's Administrative Order 216-6 regarding NOAA's compliance with NEPA and the CEQ regulations.

The Council and NMFS will consider public comments received on the DEIS in developing the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and before adopting final management measures for the amendment. The Council will submit both the final joint amendment and the supporting FEIS to NMFS for review under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, i.e., Secretarial review.

NMFS will announce, through a notice published in the **Federal Register**, the availability of the final joint amendment for public review during the Secretarial review period. During Secretarial review, NMFS will

also file the FEIS with the EPA for a final 30-day public comment period. This comment period will be concurrent with the Secretarial review period and will end prior to final agency action to approve, disapprove, or partially approve the final joint amendment.

NMFS will announce, through a notice published in the **Federal Register**, all public comment periods on the final joint amendment, its proposed implementing regulations, and its associated FEIS. NMFS will consider all public comments received during the Secretarial review period, whether they are on the final amendment, the proposed regulations, or the FEIS, prior to final agency action.

Scoping Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations

All scoping meetings are scheduled to be held from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The meetings will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Request for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council (see **ADDRESSES**).

October 16—Windward Passage Hotel, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, USVI.

October 17—Buccaneer Hotel, Christiansted, St Croix, USVI.

October 23—Pierre Hotel, De Diego Avenue, San Juan, PR.

October 24—Ponce Golf and Casino Resort, 1150 Caribe Avenue, Ponce, PR.

October 25—Mayaguez Holiday Inn, 2701 Highway 12, Mayaguez, PR.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 2, 2007.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Meeting: Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) Product Development Committee (CPDC) for Synthesis and Assessment Product 3.3**

AGENCY: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: The Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) Product Development Committee for Synthesis and Assessment Product 3.3 (CPDC-S&A