

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent by any of the following methods, mail: Kate Michie, NMFS, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; phone: 727-824-5305; fax: 727-824-5308; e-mail: 0648-XE87@noaa.gov. Scoping documents are available from the Council's Web site at www.safmc.net.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer, South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405; phone: 843-571-4366, toll free 1-866-SAFMC-10; fax: 843-769-4520; e-mail: kim.iverson@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The snapper-grouper fishery of the South Atlantic region in the exclusive economic zone is managed under the FMP. The FMP was prepared by the Council and implemented by NMFS under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act by regulations at 50 CFR part 622. Of the 98 species managed by the Council, 73 of these are included in the snapper-grouper management complex.

The mixed species nature of this fishery poses a significant management challenge. Initially, FMP regulations consisted of minimum sizes, gear restrictions, and a provision for the designation of special management zones. To address overcapitalization in the fishery, the Council established a permit program to limit effort. However, recent ecological occurrences and regulatory requirements have decreased the ability for fishermen to maintain profitability in the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery. Management options that enable a reduction in fleet size are expected to increase total fleet profitability compared to the status quo. The Council is considering use of a limited access privilege (LAP) program and other management tools for the South Atlantic commercial snapper-grouper fishery.

In December 2006, the Council passed a motion to consider application of a LAP program for the South Atlantic commercial snapper-grouper fishery in Amendment 18. The LAP Committee met January 23-24, 2007 to draft goals and objectives for a possible LAP program, discuss the membership and structure of a LAP Exploratory Workgroup, and develop an action plan that would outline how the Council should explore use of a LAP program for this fishery. In 2007, the Limited Access Program Exploratory Workgroup was tasked with developing a potential plan for using a LAP program in the

commercial snapper-grouper fishery. The group has met several times and has considered a LAP program as well as other programs that look to reduce capacity in the fishery.

This NOI is intended to inform the public of the preparation of a DEIS in support of Amendment 18 to the FMP. The DEIS will evaluate measures to reduce capacity in the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery. Following publication of this NOI, the Council will conduct public scoping meetings to determine the range of issues to be addressed in the DEIS and the associated Amendment 18.

Following consideration of public scoping comments, the Council plans to begin preparation of the draft Snapper-Grouper Amendment 18/DEIS. The Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee will review the draft Snapper-Grouper Amendment 18/DEIS in 2008. If the Council approves the document, public review will take place in late 2008. A comment period on the DEIS is planned, which will include public hearings to receive comments. A **Federal Register** notice will announce the availability of the DEIS associated with this amendment, as well as a 45-day public comment period, pursuant to regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and to NOAA's Administrative Order 216-6. The Council will consider public comments received on the DEIS in developing the final environmental impact statement (FEIS), and before voting to submit the final amendment to NMFS for Secretarial review, approval, and implementation. NMFS will announce in the **Federal Register** the availability of the final amendment and FEIS for public review during the Secretarial review period, and will consider all public comments prior to final agency action to approve, disapprove, or partially approve the final amendment.

Scoping Meetings, Times, and Locations

All meetings will begin at 2 p.m. In addition to Amendment 18, the Council intends to scope three other amendments at this series of meetings. Separate NOIs have been prepared for each amendment. The meetings will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for information packets or for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council (see **ADDRESSES**).

Monday, February 4, 2008—The Mutiny Hotel, 2951 South Bayshore

Drive, Coconut Grove, FL 33133; phone: 305-441-2100.

Tuesday, February 5, 2008—Radisson Resort at the Port, 8701, Astronaut Boulevard, Cape Canaveral, FL 32920; phone: 321-784-0000.

Wednesday, February 6, 2008—Quality Inn, 125 Venue Drive, Brunswick, GA 31525; phone: 912-265-4600.

Thursday, February 7, 2008—Sheraton New Bern, 100 Middle Street, New Bern, NC 28560; phone: 252-638-3585.

Wednesday, February 20, 2008—Hilton Garden Inn, 5265 International Boulevard, North Charleston, SC 29418; phone: 843-308-9331.

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

Dated: January 16, 2008.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. E8-1045 Filed 1-18-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF08

International Whaling Commission; Intersessional Meeting on the Future of the International Whaling Commission; Nominations

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

ACTION: Notice; request for nominations.

SUMMARY: This notice calls for nominees for one non-federal position to the U.S. Delegation to the Intersessional Meeting on the Future of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) that will be held in March, 2008, in London, England. The non-federal representative selected as a result of this nomination process is responsible for providing input and recommendations to the U.S. IWC Commissioner representing the positions of non-governmental organizations.

DATES: All written nominations for the U.S. Delegation to the IWC annual meeting must be received by February 8, 2008.

ADDRESSES: All nominations for the U.S. Delegation to the IWC annual meeting must be addressed to Bill Hogarth, U.S. Commissioner to the IWC, and sent via post to: Cheri McCarty, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of International Affairs, 1315 East-West Highway,

SSMC3 Room 12603, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Cheri McCarty, 301-713-9090, ext. 183.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Secretary of Commerce is charged with the responsibility of discharging the domestic obligations of the United States under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, 1946. The U.S. IWC Commissioner (Commissioner) has responsibility for the preparation and negotiation of U.S. positions on international issues concerning whaling and for all matters involving the IWC. The Commissioner is staffed by the Department of Commerce and assisted by the Department of State, the Department of the Interior, the Marine Mammal Commission, and by other agencies. The non-federal representative selected as a result of this nomination process is responsible for providing input and recommendations to the Commissioner regarding the positions of non-governmental organizations.

The Intersessional Meeting on the Future of the IWC will be held March 6-8, 2008, at the Renaissance London Heathrow Hotel in London, England.

Dated: January 15, 2008.

Rebecca Lent,

*Director, Office of International Affairs,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-1036 Filed 1-18-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XF12

New England 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 New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Research Steering Committee (Committee) in February, 2008 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Friday, February 1, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Home Suites Inn, 455 Totten Pond Road, Waltham, MA 02451; telephone: (781) 890-3000; fax: (781) 890-0233.

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; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council's Research Steering Committee will address a range of issues including, a briefing on funding available for research projects supported through the Northeast Region's Cooperative Research Program, the development of comments related to a National Marine Fisheries proposed rule concerning the experimental fishery permit application process; strategic planning for research to support New England Fishery Management Council fishery management plans and research priority setting for 2008. The agenda also may include the review of final cooperative research reports relative to their utility in fisheries management. The Committee may consider other topics at their discretion.

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 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

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: January 16, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E8-949 Filed 1-18-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XF13

New England 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 New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Habitat/MPA/Ecosystem Committee, in February, 2008, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Monday, February 4, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 30 Hampshire Street, Mansfield, MA 02048; telephone: (508) 339-2200; fax: (508) 339-1040.

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; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Committee will review proposed habitat areas of particular concerns (HAPCs) that include areas with depths greater than designated essential fish habitat (EFH). The Committee will also review risk assessment strategy for minimizing adverse impacts to the EFH to the extent practicable in Phase II of the omnibus habitat. The Committee will also consider other topics at their discretion.

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 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.

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