

Dated: October 10, 2008.

Samuel D. Rauch III,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator For
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-24795 Filed 10-16-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan

AGENCY: Coral Reef Conservation Program, NOAA, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) publishes this notice to announce the availability of the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan for public comment. The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan identifies objectives, priorities and approaches that will guide NOAA's research, management, and international activities from Fiscal Year 2009 through 2013 as they relate to deep coral and sponge ecosystems.

DATES: Comments on this draft must be received no later than 5 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, January 15, 2009.

ADDRESSES: The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan will be available at the following location: <http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/Library/Publications/deepcstratplan.pdf>.

The public is encouraged to submit comments on the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan electronically to:

deepseacoral.strategicplan.gov. For commenters who do not have access to a computer, comments on the document may be submitted in writing to: NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, c/o Karen Palmigiano, NOAA's Deep-Sea Coral Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 15828, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Palmigiano by mail at NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, c/o Karen Palmigiano, NOAA's Deep-Sea Coral Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 15828, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 or phone at 301-713-

3459 or e-mail at karen.palmigiano@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announces that the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan is available for public review and comment. All interested parties are encouraged to provide comments. The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Management and Strategic Plan is being issued for comment only and is not intended for interim use. Suggested changes will be considered for incorporation into the final version, where appropriate.

The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan identifies objectives, priorities, and approaches that will guide NOAA's research, management, and international activities from Fiscal Year 2009 through Fiscal Year 2013 as they relate to deep coral and sponge ecosystems. It is intended to integrate research and conservation needs and to be a flexible, evolving document that allows NOAA and its partners to address our growing understanding of management challenges and allow new issues and priorities to be addressed as appropriate. NOAA is soliciting review and comment from the public and all interested parties on the Draft Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan.

The Draft NOAA Deep-Sea Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan is presented in three sections: (I) Exploration and Research; (II) Conservation and Management; and (III) International Cooperation.

Section I identifies the role of research in management, including NOAA's priorities and objectives for research and exploration of deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems and anticipated deliverables for each objective. Section II provides objectives and approaches that NOAA will undertake to enhance protection of deep-sea coral and sponge communities working with the Councils, other Federal agencies and interested partners. NOAA's strategy for managing deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems is centered on the authority provided to NOAA through the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act as amended January 12, 2007, and the National Marine Sanctuary Act. Section III describes NOAA's participation in international activities to protect and/or conserve deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems.

NOAA welcomes all comments on the content of the Draft NOAA Deep-Sea

Coral and Sponge Research and Management Strategic Plan. We also request commenters to acknowledge areas where more language may be needed and to provide specific language for those areas.

Using the format guidance described below will facilitate the processing of reviewer comments and assure that all comments are appropriately considered; however, all comments received will be considered. Please format your comments into the following three sections: (1) Background information about yourself (optional); (2) overview or general comments; and (3) specific comments. Section one may include the following background information about yourself on the first page of your comments: Your name(s), organization(s), area(s) of expertise, and contact information such as mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address(s). Section two should consist of overview comments, and each should be numbered. Section three should consist of comments that are specific to particular pages, paragraphs, or lines in the document, and each comment should identify the page and line numbers to which it applies. Please number and print identifying information at the top of all pages.

Public comments may be submitted from October 17, 2008, through January 15, 2009.

Dated: October 2, 2008.

David Kennedy,

Director, Ocean and Coastal Resource Management.

[FR Doc. E8-24469 Filed 10-16-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL14

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice of decision and availability for permit 13537.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that a scientific research permit has been issued to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, pursuant of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), and that the decision documents are available upon request.

DATES: Permit 13537 was issued on September 23, 2008, subject to certain conditions set forth therein. The permit expires on December 31, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the decision documents or any of the other associated documents should be directed to the Salmon Recovery Division, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, 1201 N.E. Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232. The documents are also available on the Internet at www.nwr.noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rich Turner, Portland, OR, at phone number: (503) 736-4737, e-mail: rich.turner@noaa.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is relevant to the following species and evolutionarily significant units (ESUs):

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*): threatened Lower Columbia River

Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*): threatened Lower Columbia River

Chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*): threatened Columbia River.

Dated: October 14, 2008.

Angela Somma,

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

[FR Doc. E8-24799 Filed 10-16-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XL13

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice, issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), 1 Winemasters Way, Lodi, CA 95240, has been issued a permit to take Central Valley, California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s): 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) 427-2521; and

NMFS, Protected Resources Division, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 8-300, Sacramento, CA 95814-4706; phone (916) 930-3600; fax (916) 930-3629.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shirley Witalis, phone (916) 930-3606.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 27, 2008, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (73 FR 36494), that a request for a scientific research permit to take Central Valley steelhead had been submitted by the above-named organization. The requested permit has been issued 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 parts 222-226). Researchers will annually capture, tag, and release adult and juvenile Central Valley steelhead in the Lower Mokelumne River through various sampling methods described in the permit application (e.g., trapping, seining, electrofishing, etc.). The purpose of the study is to conduct monitoring and research of anadromous and resident fishes to measure the success of the Lower Mokelumne River Restoration Program and to determine if the modifications of the Lower Mokelumne River Project are appropriate for conserving fish and wildlife resources in the Lower Mokelumne River. This permit also authorizes EBMUD lethal take of wild and hatchery adult and juvenile Central Valley steelhead in the Lower Mokelumne River for purposes of otolith extraction and analysis, to measure the expression of resident life history among natural and hatchery (*O. mykiss*) and assist the development of the Mokelumne River Hatchery steelhead Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan. The permit is issued for 5 years.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of any endangered or threatened species, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: October 14, 2008.

Angela Somma,

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

[FR Doc. E8-24800 Filed 10-16-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Federal Consistency Appeal by the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of appeal.

SUMMARY: This announcement provides notice that the Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control and Wetlands Management District (the District) has filed an administrative appeal with the U.S. Department of Commerce (the Department), asking that the Department override an objection by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (Massachusetts). Massachusetts objects to the District's proposed Open Marsh Water Management (OMWM) program.

ADDRESSES: Materials from the appeal record will be available at the NOAA Office of General Counsel for Ocean Services, 1305 East-West Highway, SSMC4, Room 6111, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, and on the following Web site: <http://www.ogc.doc.gov/czma.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jamon Bollock, Attorney-Advisor, NOAA Office of General Counsel for Ocean Services, at (301) 713-7393 or gcos.inquiries@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Notice of Appeal

On September 17, 2008, the District filed a notice of appeal with the Department, pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), 16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*, and implementing regulations found at 15 CFR Part 930, Subpart H. The District appealed an objection by Massachusetts to the District's proposed OMWM program, which is a mosquito abatement practice that involves increasing access of predacious fish to mosquito breeding habitat by converting vegetated salt marsh areas into larger, deeper pools of standing water connected through a network of ditches.

Under the CZMA, the Department may override Massachusetts's objection on grounds that the project is consistent with the objectives or purposes of the CZMA or otherwise necessary in the interest of national security. To make the determination that the proposed activity is "consistent with the objectives or purposes of the CZMA,"