

groundfish fisheries and (2) review and further develop analyses relating to Amendment 23: annual catch limits and accountability measures. The GMT may also address other assignments relating to groundfish management. No management actions will be decided by the GMT. The GMT's role will be development of the environmental analyses and recommendations for consideration by the Council at its March meeting in Sacramento, CA and at its April meeting in Portland, OR.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may come before the GMT for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal GMT action during this meeting. GMT 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the GMT'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 Ms. Carolyn Porter at (503) 820-2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: December 22, 2009.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-30612 Filed 12-24-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XT44

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Scoping Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene Scoping Meetings on proposed Amendment 32, dealing primarily with gag and red grouper.

DATES: The scoping meetings will be held on January 11, 2010 through January 19, 2010 at eight locations throughout the Gulf of Mexico. For

specific dates, times and subjects, see

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

ADDRESSES: The scoping meetings will be held in the following locations: St. Petersburg, Key West, Ft. Myers and Panama City, FL, Biloxi, MS, Galveston, TX, New Orleans, LA and Orange Beach, AL. For specific dates, times and subjects see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven Atran, Population Dynamic Statistician; Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has scheduled eight scoping meetings on proposed Amendment 32, dealing primarily with gag and red grouper.

A SEDAR Assessment Workshop was convened during March 30 - April 2, 2009 at the National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center in Miami, FL to update the benchmark assessments of Gulf of Mexico gag and red grouper conducted in 2006 as SEDAR 10 and SEDAR 12 respectively. Two reports detailing the results of the workshop, one for each stock, were published on August 3, 2009. The red grouper update assessment found that the stock was neither overfished nor undergoing overfishing. However, the 2008 spawning stock biomass had declined to just above its minimum stock size threshold, and the current fishing mortality rate was above the rate associated with fishing at optimum yield. As a result, the Scientific and Statistical Committee recommended an Acceptable Biological Catch to a level that is below the current annual catch limit. Consequently, a reduction in the annual catch limit and annual catch target is needed to bring management into compliance with the new Acceptable Biological Catch. The gag update assessment found that the gag stock was overfished and undergoing overfishing, with the 2008 spawning stock size at 47 percent of the minimum stock size threshold, and a current fishing mortality rate 2.47 times greater than the maximum fishing mortality threshold. A rebuilding plan is necessary to end overfishing of gag and to rebuild the stock.

Potential actions for scoping include establishing a rebuilding plan for gag, revising annual catch limits and optionally annual catch targets for gag and red grouper, revising accountability

measures for gag and red grouper, making adjustments to the multi-use shares in the individual fishing quota system for the commercial grouper fishery, addressing commercial bycatch issues including consideration of fish traps as an allowable gear to reduce bycatch in the red grouper fishery, addressing recreational bycatch issues including a keep the first gag caught strategy, recreational data collection and monitoring programs such as a fish tag program or a fish stamp program, and time and area closures to direct fisheries away from gag concentrations and toward red grouper. Potential actions for scoping will also include a number of public-proposed initiatives to improve management and data collection of grouper fisheries including recreational sector separation of the for-hire and private recreational sectors, vessel monitoring systems for for-hire recreational vessels, a telephone or web based reporting system for recreational fisheries, electronic logbooks, and grouper endorsements. The public is welcome to suggest other actions for management or data collection and monitoring of gag and red grouper fisheries that are not listed in the scoping document.

The eight scoping meetings will begin at 6 p.m. and conclude at the end of public testimony or no later than 9 p.m. at the following locations:

****Monday, January 11, 2010,** Monroe County Harvey Government Center, 1200 Truman Avenue, Key West, FL 33040;

Monday, January 11, 2010, Holiday Inn, 5002 Seawall Blvd., Galveston, TX 77550, telephone: (409) 740-3581;

***Tuesday, January 12, 2010,** Hilton, 950 Lake Carillon Drive, St. Petersburg, FL 33716, telephone: (727) 540-0050;

Tuesday, January 12, 2010, Best Western, 7921 Lamar Poole Road, Biloxi, MS 39532, telephone: (228) 875-7111;

Wednesday, January 13, 2010, Fairfield Inn and Suites, 3111 Loop Road, Orange Beach, AL 36561, telephone: (251) 513-4444;

****Wednesday, January 13, 2010,** Ramada, 4760 S. Cleveland Avenue, Ft. Myers, FL 33907, telephone: (239) 275-1111;

***Thursday, January 14, 2010,** The Boardwalk, 9600 S. Thomas Drive, Panama City, FL 32408, telephone: (850) 234-2154;

Tuesday, January 19, 2010, Crowne Plaza, 2829 Williams Blvd., Kenner, LA 70062, telephone: (504) 467-5611.

*** NOTE** a scoping meeting format change for these meetings. Two rooms will be used - one room where participants can get answers to

questions about the proposed amendment, and the other room for participants to provide input.

**** NOTE** a scoping meeting format change for these meetings. An informal roundtable discussion regarding the proposed amendment will be held during the first hour of the meeting, from 6 p.m. - 7 p.m. Public input will be taken beginning at 7 p.m. and will end no later than 9 p.m.

Copies of the scoping document can be obtained by calling the Council office at (813) 348-1630.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Tina O'Hern at the Council (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: December 22, 2009.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-30611 Filed 12-24-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XT43

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: A joint meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and its Black Sea Bass (BSB) Monitoring Committee will be held as a public meeting via Webinar. Immediately following completion of the joint SSC / BSB Monitoring Committee meeting, the SSC will be convened separately to conduct its deliberations independent of the Monitoring Committee.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Friday, January 8, 2010, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via Webinar. Details about online participation in the Webinar can be obtained by visiting the Council's website (www.mafmc.org). Members of the public may also access the Webinar at the Council office located at Room

2115 of the Frear Federal Building, 300 S. New Street, Dover, DE 19904.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 300 S. New Street, Room 2115, Dover, DE 19904; telephone: (302) 674-2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Daniel T. Furlong, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 300 S. New Street, Room 2115, Dover, DE 19904; telephone: (302) 674-2331, extension 19.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Topics to be discussed during the meeting include a reconsideration of the SSC's Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) recommendation for black sea bass for the 2010 fishing year and a framework for ABC control rule specification for inclusion in the Council's Annual Catch Limit / Accountability Measures (ACL/AM) Omnibus Amendment which is currently under development.

Special Accommodations

The listening station at the Council's office is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to M. Jan Bryan at the Mid-Atlantic Council Office, (302) 674-2331 extension 18, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: December 22, 2009.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-30610 Filed 12-24-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XT26

Council Coordination Committee Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: NMFS will host a meeting of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), consisting of the Regional Fishery Management Council chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors in January 2010. The intent of this meeting is to discuss issues of relevance to the Councils, including FY 2010 budget allocations and budgetary planning, the Ocean Policy Task Force, Marine Spatial Planning, the draft Catch Shares Task Force Report, and implementation of the

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

DATES: The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, January 13, 2010, recess at 5:30 p.m. or when business is complete; and reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2010, and adjourn by 4:30 p.m. or when business is complete.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hotel Monaco, 700 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20004, telephone 202-628-7177, fax 202-628-7277.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

William D. Chappell: telephone 301-713-2337 or e-mail at William.Chappell@noaa.gov; or Tara Scott: telephone 301-713-2337 or e-mail at Tara.Scott@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (MSRA) of 2006 established the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) by amending Section 302 (16 U.S.C. 1852) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The committee consists of the chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors of each of the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens Act or other Council members or staff. NMFS will host this meeting and provide reports to the CCC for its information and discussion. The main topics of discussion will be the FY2010 budget allocation and budgetary planning, the Ocean Policy Task Force, Marine Spatial Planning, the draft Catch Shares Task Force Report, implementation of the provisions of the MSRA, and related guidance and technical regulatory changes. All sessions are open to the public.

Proposed Agenda

January 13, 2010

- 9 a.m. Morning Session Begins.
- 9-10:15 Welcome comments and open session with Councils.
- 10:15-10:30 Break.
- 10:30-11 Open Session with Councils (Continued).
- 11-11:30 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Update.
- 11:30-1 Lunch.
- 1 Afternoon Session Begins.
- 1-2:30 Catch Shares Task Force Report.
- 2:30-3:30 Budget issues (General update and FY 2010 allocation).
 - Council base funding.
 - Limited Access Privilege Programs funding.
 - Stipends.
- 3:30-3:45 Break.