Public Comments

Public comments are being solicited on the application and the EA through the end of the comment period stated in this notice. To be considered, comments must be received by 5 p.m. A.L.T. on the last day of the comment period; that does not mean postmarked or otherwise transmitted by that date. Copies of the application and EA are available for review from NMFS (see ADDRESSES). Interested persons also may comment on the application and on the EA at the March/April 2011 Council meeting during public testimony.

Information regarding the meeting is available at the Council’s Web site at http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Application kits may be obtained from 299 Foam Street, Monterey, CA, 93940 or online at http://montereybay.noaa.gov/.

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


Margo Schulze-Haugen,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XA285

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Extension for Exempted Fishing Permit

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Northeast Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that the subject exempted fishing permit (EFP) application contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. This EFP extension would exempt four commercial fishing vessels from the restriction on fishing for, catching, possessing, landing, and selling female red crabs in excess of one standard tote of female red crab, as specified at 50 CFR 648.263(a)(3). Vessels would remain subject to all other commercial fishing regulations, including red crab possession limits and days-at-sea restrictions.

The primary goal of the experimental fishery is to harvest non-egg-bearing females to expand the red crab market and increase efficiency in the harvesting process. In addition, an experimental fishery that includes non-egg-bearing females has provided an opportunity to conduct at-sea sampling, renewed tagging, and model development to better evaluate the growth and reproductive performance of the population, as well as the impact of current and proposed harvesting on yields and egg production. This aspect of the project is conducted by an onboard researcher under the direction of Dr. Wahle.

The EFP was initially issued July 23, 2009, for 1 year, expiring July 22, 2010. An extension was granted July 26, 2010, through the end of the fishing year (February 28, 2011). A subsequent extension is now being requested due to initial logistical delays and additional time to complete research and funding components of this study. No additional exemptions beyond those in the extension of this EFP and the activities of the study remain consistent with the Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Fishery Management Plan.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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


Margo Schulze-Haugen,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Availability of Seats for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council


ACTION: Notice and request for applications.

SUMMARY: The ONMS is seeking applications for the following vacant seats on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council: Diving, Education (alternate), Research (alternate), Agriculture (alternate), and Tourism (alternate). Applicants are chosen based upon their particular expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying; community and professional affiliations; philosophy regarding the protection and management of marine resources; and possibly the length of residence in the area affected by the sanctuary. Applicants who are chosen should expect to serve until February 2014. The Research alternate and Agriculture alternate should expect to serve until February 2013 because the seats were vacated prematurely.

DATES: Applications are due by April 15, 2010.

ADDRESSES: Application kits may be obtained from 299 Foam Street, Monterey, CA, 93940 or online at http://montereybay.noaa.gov/.