

At the January 2011 Council meeting, the Habitat Oversight Committee raised the issue of modifying or eliminating the NE multispecies closed areas via the Omnibus EFH Amendment. At its April 2011 meeting, the Council reviewed available information related to this issue, including how this change in scope would affect the Omnibus EFH Amendment's timeline given other priorities established for 2011, and then voted to expand the scope of the Amendment to consider modifying the NE multispecies closed areas in conjunction with the establishment of any new habitat closed areas.

Following public comment on all alternatives, including any alternatives related to the NE multispecies closed areas as well alternatives to designate EFH and HAPCs, minimize impacts to EFH, and protect deep-sea corals, the Council will select final alternatives and then prepare and submit a final EIS document. It is anticipated that all selected alternatives from both phases of the Omnibus EFH Amendment will be implemented via a single rulemaking. Considering this expansion of scope, the expected implementation date for the Omnibus EFH Amendment will be delayed beyond the previously anticipated date of summer 2012.

Stakeholders are encouraged to submit comments on this change in scope as well as on other issues related to the development of EFH impacts minimization alternatives. Comments are specifically sought on the utility of existing or alternative closures to address the needs of groundfish stocks, as well as on the impacts of changes to the existing closures on groundfish fishing and other activities (such as Special Access Programs, exempted/certified bycatch fisheries, recreational fishing opportunities, endangered or threatened species protection, *etc.*).

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

Dated: June 13, 2011.

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-XA457

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico and Southern Atlantic States

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

ACTION: Notice of receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) from the Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc. (Foundation). If granted, the EFP would authorize the applicant, with certain conditions, to collect and retain limited numbers of specimens that would otherwise be prohibited from possession and retention. This study, to be conducted in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) and South Atlantic, is intended to characterize catch and bycatch within the shrimp fisheries of the Gulf and South Atlantic.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., eastern time, on July 15, 2011.

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

- *E-mail:* Steve.Branstetter@noaa.gov.

Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "FND EFP".

- *Mail:* Steve Branstetter, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

The application and related documents are available for review upon written request to any of the above addresses.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Steve Branstetter, 727-824-5305; *e-mail:* Steve.Branstetter@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EFP is requested under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and regulations at 50 CFR 600.745(b) concerning exempted fishing.

The applicant proposes research as part of the Cooperative Research Program, which is intended to involve commercial fishermen in the collection of fundamental fisheries information. The described research is part of three

ongoing Cooperative Agreements (No. NA08NMF4330406, No. NA09NMF4540135, and No. NA10NMF4540108), plus two pending Cooperative Research Program projects. Resource collection efforts support the development and evaluation of fisheries management and regulatory options.

The proposed collection for scientific research involves activities otherwise prohibited by regulations at 50 CFR part 622, as they pertain to fish and invertebrates managed by the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (Councils) specific to the shrimp fisheries of the Gulf and South Atlantic. The applicant requires authorization through the EFP to collect these Council-managed species that may be taken in association with the commercial shrimp fisheries of the southeast United States. This proposed collection would include reef fish, red drum, coastal migratory pelagics, stone crab, and lobsters in the Gulf, and snapper-grouper, coastal migratory pelagics, dolphin and wahoo, and lobsters in the South Atlantic.

The EFP exempts personnel from the Foundation from bag limits, size limits, quotas, seasonal restrictions, and gear authorizations, when possessing Council-managed species as part of scientific research activities from August 1, 2011, through December 31, 2013. Specimens would be collected from Federal waters of the Gulf and South Atlantic, and sampling would occur during normal fishing operations of the trawl gear component of the penaeid shrimp commercial sector. Sampling would occur year-round, collecting as many as 500 fish during the course of the study. These species would be retained only in the event of the need for subsequent shore-side identification or as documentation of quality assurance in the data collection process. Data collection for this study would support improved information about the catch, bycatch, discards, and the ability to reduce bycatch for species taken by the shrimp fisheries of the Gulf and South Atlantic. These data would provide insight on a stock's resilience to fishing, and would help improve estimates of long-term biological productivity of the stocks. Currently, these data are unavailable, and it is anticipated that project results will yield valuable data within these fisheries.

NMFS finds this application warrants further consideration. Based on a preliminary review, NMFS intends to issue an EFP. The limited sampling program and associated methodology listed in the EFP is not expected to impact the fishery stocks; the estimated

500 fish to be retained through the duration of the EFP represents a small fraction of average annual landings.

Conditions the agency will impose on this permit, if it is indeed granted, include but are not limited to, a prohibition of conducting research within marine protected areas, marine sanctuaries, or special management zones, without additional authorization. Additionally, NMFS will prohibit the possession of Nassau or goliath grouper, and require any sea turtles taken incidentally during the course of fishing or scientific research activities to be handled with due care to prevent injury to live specimens, observed for activity, and returned to the water. All Foundation-associated personnel who conduct onboard sampling activities have undergone formal sea turtle handling training through NMFS, and are considered NMFS-designated agents while conducting work under the identified Cooperative Agreements.

A final decision on issuance of the EFP will depend on a NMFS review of public comments received on the application, consultations with the affected states, the Councils, and the U.S. Coast Guard, and a determination that the EFP is consistent with all applicable laws.

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

Dated: June 13, 2011.

Margo Schulze-Haugen,

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

[FR Doc. 2011-15162 Filed 6-16-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Science Advisory Board; Meeting

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 Science Advisory Board (SAB) was established by a Decision Memorandum dated September 25, 1997, and is the only Federal Advisory Committee with responsibility to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere on strategies for research, education, and application of science to operations and information services. SAB activities and advice provide necessary input to ensure that National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) science

programs are of the highest quality and provide optimal support to resource management.

Time and Date: The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 20, 2011, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Thursday, July 21, 2011, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. Please refer to the Web page <http://www.sab.noaa.gov/Meetings/meetings.html> for the most up-to-date meeting agenda.

Place: On July 20, 2011 the meeting will be held at the Michigan League at the University of Michigan, 911 N. University Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan. On July 21, 2011 the meeting will be held at NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, 4840 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Please check the SAB Web site <http://www.sab.noaa.gov> for confirmation of the venue and for directions.

Status: The meeting will be open to public participation with a 15 minute public comment period on July 20 at 5:15 p.m. (check Web site to confirm time). The SAB expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of five (5) minutes. Individuals or groups planning to make a verbal presentation should contact the SAB Executive Director by July 15, 2011 to schedule their presentation. Written comments should be received in the SAB Executive Director's Office by July 15, 2011 to provide sufficient time for SAB review. Written comments received by the SAB Executive Director after July 15, 2011 will be distributed to the SAB, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Seating at the meeting will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Matters To Be Considered: The meeting will include the following topics: (1) Report from the Joint SAB Environmental Information Services and Climate Working Groups' Climate Partnership Task Force (2) Review of the SAB Working Groups' Comments on the Working Group Concept of Operations; (3) NOAA Response to the SAB Proposal for Re-alignment of Working Groups (4) Proposal for a Satellite Working Group of the SAB; (4) Results of the External Review of the NESDIS Center for Satellite Applications and Research (STAR) and the NOAA Response; (5) NOAA Response to the Office of Science and Technology Policy Memorandum on Scientific Integrity; (6) NOAA

Science Challenge Workshops; (7) SAB Role in Optimizing NOAA's Research and Development Enterprise; (8) Presentations on NOAA programs and research in the Great Lakes; and (9) Updates from SAB Working Groups.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Cynthia Decker, Executive Director, Science Advisory Board, NOAA, Rm. 11230, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. *Phone:* 301-734-1156, *Fax:* 301-713-1459, *E-mail:* Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov; or visit the NOAA SAB Website at <http://www.sab.noaa.gov>.

Dated: June 14, 2011.

Mark E. Brown,

Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2011-15106 Filed 6-16-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA369

Marine Mammals; File No. 14326

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a major amendment to Permit No. 14326 has been issued to NMFS National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Seattle, WA.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendment and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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) 713-0376; and Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907) 586-7221; fax (907) 586-7249.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tammy Adams or Amy Sloan, (301) 713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On April 18, 2011, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (76 FR 21703) that a request for an amendment to Permit No. 14326 to conduct research on Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) in the North Pacific Ocean, including rookeries and haulouts in CA, OR, WA, and AK, had