

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Woods Hole, MA (Responsible Party: Michael Simpkins), has applied in due form for a permit to take marine mammals during scientific research in coastal waters and adjacent waters off the northeast U.S.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before June 4, 2012.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the *Features* box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 15777 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376;

Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978) 281-9328; fax (978) 281-9394; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727) 824-5312; fax (727) 824-5309.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tammy Adams or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The applicant requests a five-year permit to take harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina concolor*), gray seals (*Halichoerus grypus*), harp seals (*Pagophilus groenlandicus*), and hooded

seals (*Cystophora cristata*) during conduct of research to estimate distribution and abundance, determine stock structure and habitat requirements, study foraging ecology, assess health and determine the effects of natural and anthropogenic factors on these seal species. Types of take include harassment during shipboard, skiff, and aircraft transect and photo-identification surveys, and scat collection; and capture with tissue sampling and instrument or tag attachment. The applicant proposes to capture up to 175 harbor seals and 225 gray seals annually for measurement of body condition, collection of tissue samples (e.g., blood, blubber biopsy, skin, hair, swab samples, vibrissae), and attachment of telemetry devices. Up to 200 harp seals, 50 hooded seals, and an additional 18,000 harbor seals and 20,000 gray seals could be harassed annually incidental to surveys, scat collections and capture operations. The applicant requests unintentional mortality of up to 3 animals of each species annually. Permission is also sought to import and export pinniped specimen material (including soft and hard tissue, blood, extracted DNA, and whole dead animals or parts thereof) to/from any country. The study area includes waters within or proximal to the U.S. EEZ from North Carolina northward to Maine, and Canadian waters in the Gulf of Maine.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Dated: May 1, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

Acting Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-10847 Filed 5-3-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB114

Notice of Availability of Draft Documents for Public Comment Related to a Fishery Conservation Plan and Research Permits for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening the comment period for a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Fishery Conservation Plan (Plan) related to scientific research and fisheries management measures in waters of the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin, Washington.

DATES: Written comments on the draft EA and proposed Plan and associated applications must be received on or before May 11, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Address all written comments to: Dan Tonnes, National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Building Number 1, Seattle, WA 98115-6349, facsimile (206) 526-6426. Comments may be submitted by email to the following address: WDFWEA.nwr@noaa.gov. In the subject line of the email, include the Document identifier: WDFWEA. Comments and materials received will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the office listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Tonnes, National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Building Number 1, Seattle, WA 98115-6349, facsimile (206) 526-6426, phone (206) 526-4643, email: Dan.Tonnes@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

NMFS published a document in the **Federal Register** on March 30, 2012, concerning the availability of a draft documents for public comment related to a Fishery Conservation Plan and Research Permits for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The comment period for this action expired on April 23, 2012. The comment period is being reopened to provide additional opportunity for public comment.

Reopening of Comment Period

The comment period is reopened through May 11, 2012.

Document Availability

The documents are available electronically on the World Wide Web at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov>.

Dated: May 1, 2012.

Dwayne Meadows,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-10841 Filed 5-3-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration**

RIN 0648-XC015

**New England Fishery Management
Council; Public Meeting**

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Groundfish Advisory Panel will meet to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 23, 2012 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME 04101; telephone: (207) 775-2311; fax: (207) 772-4017.

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:

Agenda

The Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) will meet to discuss pending groundfish management actions. The GAP will discuss possible adjustments to management measures for sectors. The focus of this discussion will be on possible changes to the sector monitoring program, but may also consider other sector management issues. The GAP will discuss dockside, at-sea, and electronic monitoring options. The GAP will also discuss possible changes to the treatment of Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures. Other business may also be discussed. GAP recommendations will be provided to the Groundfish Oversight Committee at a future meeting.

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 identified 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 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 (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: May 1, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-10760 Filed 5-3-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration**

**Mid-Atlantic 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 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The SSC will meet Wednesday and Thursday, May 23-24, 2012 beginning at 10 a.m. on May 23 and conclude by 4 p.m. on May 24.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Pier V Hotel, 711 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21202; telephone: (410) 539-2000.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 526-5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The primary purpose of the SSC meeting includes: Review multi-year specifications for *Loligo* and *Illex* squid; reaffirm 2012 ABC recommendation for

butterfish; review performance of butterfish mortality cap program; make 2013-15 ABC recommendations for butterfish and Atlantic mackerel; review and adopt criteria for establishing multi-year ABC recommendations; review RSA funded projects for 2012; and receive report of the Ecosystems Subcommittee (review Ecosystem Guidance Document outline).

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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to M. Jan Saunders at the Mid-Atlantic Council Office, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 1, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-10763 Filed 5-3-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration**

**Pacific Fishery Management Council;
Public Meetings**

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council) will convene a Methodology Review Panel May 29-31, 2012. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The Methodology Review Panel will meet Tuesday, May 29 through Thursday, May 31, 2012. Business will begin the first day at 8:30 a.m., and will begin at 8 a.m. each subsequent day. Business will conclude each day at 5 p.m. or until business for the day is completed.