

Director will present an overview of the Center's draft Strategic Plan. A question and answer period is scheduled to accompany the presentation. NEFMC staff will provide findings and recommendations concerning the use of socio-cultural information in the NEFMC process. Three additional reports will follow: the Spiny Dogfish Committee will ask for final approval of measures to be included in Amendment 3 to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP); the Monkfish Committee will update the Council on its progress to develop management alternatives for inclusion in Amendment 6 to the Monkfish FMP; and the Council's Enforcement Committee will review any recommendations relative to NOAA's enforcement priorities for 2013, fishing gear stowage requirements, and new forms proposed by NOAA as part of a new information collection system. The day will end with a listening session that the audience and larger public may participate in via webinar. For this Council meeting, the focus will be on the new Northeast Regional Administrator, his views and opinions, and his recent visits to many coastal communities in the Northeast.

Wednesday, September 26, 2012

The Council will receive a report from the NEFSC summarizing the findings of the 54th Stock Assessment Workshop/ Stock Assessment Review Committee meetings. The species addressed were Atlantic herring, and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will report on its acceptable biological catch recommendations for groundfish stocks for fishing years 2013–15, Atlantic herring for 2013–15 and sea scallops for 2013–14. The Herring Committee will address the recent court decision about Amendment 4 to the Atlantic Herring FMP and ask the Council to consider actions to address the court order. Discussion also will cover initial development of Atlantic herring fishery specifications for the upcoming fishing years 2013–15, including possible action to maintain the 2012 specifications through 2013 and develop a separate package for 2014–16. The Scallop Committee will report later in the day about management measures proposed for Atlantic Sea Scallop FMP Framework Adjustment 24/Groundfish FMP Framework Adjustment 49. Framework 24 is an action to set fishery specifications for fishing years 2013 and 2014, but includes other measures: a possible modification of the Georges Bank access area seasonal closures;

measures to address yellowtail flounder bycatch in the limited access general category (LAGC) fishery; the potential allowance of quota transfer during the year for LAGC individual fishery quota vessels; and measures to expand the observer set-aside program to include LAGC scallop vessels in open areas. At the end of the day, the Council will hear about the 2012 assessments for the transboundary stocks of Eastern Georges Bank cod and haddock, and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder. The day will conclude with consideration and approval of fishing year 2013 quotas for these same stocks.

Thursday, September 27, 2012

The Council may approve a small mesh multispecies control date for the red hake, silver hake and offshore hake fisheries. This issue will be followed by a lengthy Groundfish Committee report on a range of issues including: the development of Framework 48 to the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) FMP, an action that may include fishing year 2013–15 overfishing levels and acceptable biological catches for a number of stocks managed through this FMP; the creation of a Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic windowpane flounder sub-annual catch limit (sub-ACL) for the sea scallop fishery; adjustments to the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder sub-ACLs for the scallop fishery; sector monitoring issues; adjustments to recreational fishing measures if necessary; and consideration of other adjustments to the groundfish management measures. As part of this action, the Council also will consider recommendations for allowing increased access to the groundfish closed areas to mitigate expected low acceptable biological catches for groundfish stocks in fishing year 2013.

During the afternoon session on Thursday the Habitat Committee will request that the Council consider splitting the deep-sea coral alternatives off from the Omnibus EFH Amendment 2, and possibly initiating development of a coral-focused omnibus amendment. The Council also may endorse a Memorandum of Understanding related to deep-sea corals, and will review the draft adverse effects minimization alternatives under development in Omnibus EFH Amendment 2. The day will conclude with an initial discussion of the Council's 2013 management priorities.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subjects of formal

action during this meeting. Council 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 Act, provided that 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.

Dated: September 4, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-22025 Filed 9-6-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC182

Pacific 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: Members of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee Subcommittee on Coastal Pelagic Species (SSC Subcommittee) will hold a meeting that is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, October 2, 2012 through Wednesday, October 3, 2012. Business will begin each day at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m. or until business for the day is completed.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Large Conference Room of the Southwest Fisheries Science Center's Torrey Pines Court Facility, 3333 North Torrey Pines Court, La Jolla, CA 92037.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kerry Griffin, Staff Officer; telephone: (503) 820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The primary purpose of the meeting is to review the updated Pacific sardine stock assessment for 2012. The results of the assessment update will be used to establish management measures and

harvest specifications for the 2013 Pacific sardine fishery. The SSC Subcommittee will develop a report for consideration by the full SSC, at the November 2012 Pacific Council 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 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

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820-2280 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 4, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-22029 Filed 9-6-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC050

Marine Mammals; File No. 17236

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a permit has been issued to Robert A. Garrott, Ecology Department, Montana State University, 310 Lewis Hall, Bozeman, MT 59717 to conduct research on Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) for scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review 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; and

Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach,

CA 90802-4213; phone (562) 980-4001; fax (562) 980-4018.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On May 31, 2012, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 32081) that a request for a permit to conduct research on Weddell seals had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*).

The permit holder is authorized to continue long-term studies of the Weddell seal population in the Erebus Bay, McMurdo Sound, Ross Sea and White Island areas of Antarctica. Up to 425 adults and 700 pups will be captured annually. Animals will be weighed, tissue sampled, flipper tagged, and released. A subset of 200 pups annually will have a small temperature logging tag attached. The permit holder is authorized to opportunistically collect, import, and export Weddell seal parts and carcasses. Annually, up to 2,000 Weddell, 50 crabeater (*Lobodon carcinophagus*), and 50 leopard (*Hydrurga leptonyx*) seals may be incidentally disturbed as a result of research activities. Up to 4 (2 adults and 2 pups) Weddell seal research-related mortalities are authorized annually. The permit is valid for five years from the date of issuance.

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

Dated: August 31, 2012.

Tammy C. Adams,

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

[FR Doc. 2012-22112 Filed 9-6-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB155

Endangered Species; File No. 17095

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

ACTION: Issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Entergy Nuclear Operations Inc., 450 Broadway, Suite 3, Buchanan, NY 10511 [Responsible Party: John Ventosa], has been issued a permit to take shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) and Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit 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) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376; and
- Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978) 281-9328; fax (978) 281-9394.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Malcolm Mohead or Colette Cairns, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On April 11, 2012, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 21750) that a request for a scientific research permit to take shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon had been submitted by the above-named applicant. 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).

The Permit Holder is issued a five-year permit to study shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon in the Hudson River Estuary from New York Harbor (RKM 0) to Troy Dam (RKM 245). The research will monitor abundance and distribution of the sturgeon species through the Hudson River Biological Monitoring Program (HRBMP), focusing on fish identification, mark and recapture, and enumeration of sturgeon in defined Hudson River regions and at various depth strata. Researchers are authorized to non-lethally capture, handle, measure, weigh, scan for tags, insert passive integrated transponder and dart tags, photograph, tissue sample, and release up to 82 shortnose sturgeon and 82 Atlantic sturgeon annually. Additionally, researchers are permitted to lethally collect up to 40 shortnose sturgeon and up to 40 Atlantic sturgeon early life stages annually. The permit would be valid for five years from the date of issuance.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good