

groundfish TACs are set with a sufficient difference between ABC and TAC to accommodate EFP fishing catch of groundfish species other than pollock.

The EFP is expected to take approximately 12 mt of halibut per season for a total of 12 mt of halibut in 2015 and 24 mt of halibut in 2016. The EFP would require an exemption from halibut PSC limits under § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(C). The halibut taken under the EFP in combination with the groundfish fisheries is not expected to exceed the halibut PSC harvest specifications in 2015 or 2016.

Using a catcher/processor for the EFP study would require exemption from the Catcher Vessel Operational Area (CVOA) restriction (§ 679.22(a)(5)) because of the location of the Chinook salmon concentration in the CVOA. Catcher/processors are prohibited from operating in the CVOA during the B season. The EFP fishing may be done by either a catcher vessel or a catcher/processor. It may be necessary for the EFP applicant to use a catcher/processor to conduct tows in this area to ensure encountering sufficient pollock and salmon concentrations to meet the experimental design.

The EFP would exempt vessels that are EFP fishing from closures of the Chum Salmon Savings Area. This is necessary because the experimental design for this EFP is based on testing in areas with high incidental catch rates of salmon that may occur in the Chum Salmon Savings Area.

The EFP would include an exemption from selected observer requirements at §§ 679.50, 679.51, and 679.55. Participating vessels would use “sea samplers” who are NMFS-trained observers. They would not be deployed as NMFS observers, however, at the time of the EFP fishing. The “sea samplers” would conduct the EFP data collection and perform other observer duties that normally would be required for vessels directed fishing for pollock. EFP fishing trips also would be exempted from observer requirements for trip selection and fee collection.

The activities under the EFP are not expected to have a significant impact on the human environment as analyzed in the EA for this action (see **ADDRESSES**). The EFP would be subject to modifications pending any new relevant information regarding the 2015 and 2016 fishery, including the groundfish harvest specifications.

In accordance with 50 CFR 679.6 and 600 CFR 745(b)(3)(ii), NMFS has determined that the proposal warrants further consideration and has forwarded the application to the Council to initiate

consultation. The Council will consider the EFP application during its meeting June 2 through June 10, 2014, which will be held at the Nome Mini Convention Center, 409 River St., Nome, AK. The applicant has been invited to appear in support of the application.

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 on or before 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 June 2014 Council meeting during public testimony.

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

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

Dated: May 20, 2014.

James P. Burgess,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2014–12021 Filed 5–22–14; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XD266

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NOAA Fisheries has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This request was submitted by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute and would allow commercial fishing vessels to evaluate if whiting can be caught in commercially viable quantities with minimal bycatch in the Gulf of Maine Grate Raised Footrope Trawl Exemption Area using a small-mesh trawl that has a standard cookie sweep, prior to the start of the current season that begins

July 1. The exempted fishing permit would exempt the vessels from the Northeast multispecies minimum mesh size and seasonal restrictions at 50 CFR 648.80(a)(3) and 648.80 (a)(16).

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed exempted fishing permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 9, 2014.

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

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line “Comments on GMRI Whiting EFP.”

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope “Comments on GMRI Whiting EFP.”

- *Fax:* (978) 281–9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jason Berthiaume, Fishery Management Specialist, 978–281–9177, Jason.Berthiaume@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) has submitted an application for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would exempt three federally permitted commercial fishing vessels from the minimum mesh size requirements for the purpose of testing a small-mesh trawl fitted with an excluder grate for harvesting silver hake. The applicant states that there has been poor performance of the raised footrope trawl in this area due to the rocky habitat, and that removing the raised footrope could allow for increased catch rates while maintaining low bycatch rates. In addition, the applicant has requested authorization to test the trawl prior to the July 1–November 30 season in the Gulf of Maine Grate Raised Footrope Trawl Exemption Area.

The applicant would evaluate the performance of a small-mesh trawl that has a regulation compliant excluder grate and is fitted with a cookie sweep. The trawl would not have a raised footrope as required by the Gulf of Maine Grate Raised Footrope Trawl regulations. Participating vessels would complete up to 25 days of experimental fishing with five 1-hour tows per day with a target whiting catch of 5,000 lb (2,268 kg) per day. A research technician would accompany all trips under the EFP, and sort and weigh all

catch by species. Catch rates would be calculated for target and bycatch species and compared with historical and current catch rates. If it is determined that whiting catch rates are commercially viable, with minimal bycatch rates, GMRI would work on developing and obtaining funding to conduct more robust research in the future.

Whiting catch would be landed and sold and all catch of stocks allocated to Northeast multispecies sectors will be deducted from the sector's annual catch entitlement for each stock. Discards would be identified, weighed, measured, and returned to the sea as quickly as possible. The participating vessels would be required to comply with all other applicable requirements and restrictions specified at 50 CFR part 648, unless specifically exempted in this EFP.

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.*

Dated: May 20, 2014.

James P. Burgess,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-12022 Filed 5-22-14; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD302

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Groundfish Management Team (GMT) will hold a webinar to discuss items on the June Pacific Council meeting agenda (see <http://tinyurl.com/mg4p59h>). The meeting is open to the public, but is not intended as a public hearing.

DATES: The webinar will be held Tuesday, June 10, 2014 from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m., or when business for the day has been completed.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar. Join the meeting by visiting this link: <http://www.joinwebinar.com>. Enter the Webinar ID: 936-920-471. Please enter your name and email address (required). Once you have joined the webinar, choose either your computer's audio or select "Use Telephone." If you do not select "Use Telephone" you will be connected to audio using your computer's microphone and speakers (VoIP). It is recommended that you use a computer headset as GoToMeeting allows you to listen to the meeting using your computer headset and speakers. If you do not have a headset and speakers, you may use your telephone for the audio portion of the meeting by dialing this TOLL number 1-646-307-1722 (not a toll-free number); phone audio access code 694-418-350; audio phone pin shown after joining the webinar.

Pacific Council Address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384. A public listening station will also be provided at the Pacific Council office.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Kelly Ames, Staff Officer, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820-2426.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The GMT will hold a webinar to discuss items on the June Council meeting agenda (see <http://tinyurl.com/mg4p59h>) with specific focus on electronic monitoring regulatory development and exempted fishing permits. Public comments will be taken at the discretion of the GMT chair as time allows. The GMT is scheduled to report their recommendations to the Pacific Council at their June 2014 meeting in Garden Grove, CA.

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.

Technical Information

PC-based attendees must use Windows 7, Vista, or XP. Mac-based

attendees must use Mac OS X 10.5 or newer. Mobile attendees must use an iPhone, iPad, Android phone, or Android tablet. You may also send an email to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt or contact him at (503) 820-2425 for technical assistance.

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) 820-2425 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 20, 2014.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2014-11959 Filed 5-22-14; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD305

Mid-Atlantic 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 Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold public meetings.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, June 10, 2014 through Thursday, June 12, 2014. See

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Radisson Hotel Freehold, 50 Gibson Place, Freehold, NJ 07728; telephone: (732) 780-3400.

Council Address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State St., 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; telephone: (302) 526-5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Tuesday, June 10, 2014

10 a.m. until 12 p.m.—The Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee will meet.

1 p.m. until 4 p.m.—The Ecosystems and Ocean Planning Committee will meet.