

4. Comments are due no later than March 11, 2015. Reply comments are due no later than April 8, 2015.

5. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 505, the Commission appoints Katalin K. Clendenin to serve as an officer of the Commission (Public Representative) to represent the interests of the general public in this docket.

6. The Secretary shall arrange for publication of this order in the **Federal Register**.

By the Commission.  
**Shoshana M. Grove**,  
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2014-30111 Filed 12-23-14; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 622

RIN 0648-BE46

#### Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 16

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico (FMP) for review, approval, and implementation by NMFS. Amendment 16 includes actions to revise the annual catch limit (ACL) for royal red shrimp, remove the royal red shrimp quota, and revise the accountability measures (AM) for royal red shrimp to remove an inconsistency in the regulations.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before February 23, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on Amendment 16, identified by "NOAA-NMFS-2014-0030" by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov#!/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0030](http://www.regulations.gov#!/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0030), click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to Susan Gerhart, Southeast Regional

Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

**Instructions:** Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Electronic copies of Amendment 16, which includes an environmental impact statement, a Regulatory Flexibility Act analysis, and a regulatory impact review, may be obtained from the Southeast Regional Office Web site at [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/shrimp/2014/am16/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/shrimp/2014/am16/index.html).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Susan Gerhart, telephone: 727-824-5305, or email: [Susan.Gerhart@noaa.gov](mailto:Susan.Gerhart@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires each regional fishery management council to submit any FMP or amendment to NMFS for review and approval, partial approval, or disapproval. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving a plan or amendment, publish an announcement in the **Federal Register** notifying the public that the plan or amendment is available for review and comment.

The FMP being revised by Amendment 16 was prepared by the Council and implemented through regulations at 50 CFR part 622 under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

#### Background

The FMP was established in 1981, and the maximum sustainable yield for royal red shrimp was estimated at 392,000 lb (177.9 mt), tail weight, annually and specified as a fixed annual quota (46 FR 27489, May 20, 1981). This quota has remained in effect since that time. On January 30, 2012, NMFS implemented regulations developed through the Generic ACL Amendment to multiple fishery management plans, including the Shrimp FMP (December

29, 2011, 76 FR 82044). That amendment included actions to establish the commercial ACL and AM for royal red shrimp. However, the "no action" alternatives and discussions in the Generic ACL Amendment incorrectly stated that there were currently no catch limits or AMs for royal red shrimp, even though a quota and in-season quota closure were in the regulations. As a consequence, through the Generic ACL Amendment, both a royal red shrimp ACL and AM were added to the regulations, but the existing quota and in-season quota closure provision were not removed. On March 11, 2014, NMFS published a notice of intent to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement for Amendment 16 and requested public comment (79 FR 13623).

Federal regulations currently include a royal red shrimp ACL of 334,000 lb (151,000 kg), tail weight and a quota of 392,000 lb (177.8 mt), tail weight. Amendment 16 would remove the royal red shrimp quota and update the ACL to 337,000 lb (152,861 kg), tail weight, which is equal to the acceptable biological catch as recommended by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee at its March 2014 meeting.

Federal regulations currently include a royal red shrimp in-season closure if the quota is met or projected to be met, based on in-season monitoring (which functions as an AM), and include an AM that implements in-season monitoring and an ACL closure in the year following any ACL overage. The presence of two AMs in the regulations presents an inconsistency in the management of royal red shrimp. Amendment 16 would remove the in-season quota closure associated with the royal red shrimp quota and retain the AM associated with the ACL.

A proposed rule that would implement measures outlined in Amendment 16 has been drafted. In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS is evaluating the proposed rule to determine whether it is consistent with the FMP, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other applicable law. If that determination is affirmative, NMFS will publish the proposed rule in the **Federal Register** for public review and comment.

#### Consideration of Public Comments

The Council submitted Amendment 16 for Secretarial review, approval, and implementation on November 19, 2014. Comments received by February 23, 2015, whether specifically directed to the amendment or the proposed rule, will be considered by NMFS in its

decision to approve, disapprove, or partially approve the amendment. Comments received after that date will not be considered by NMFS in this decision. All comments received by NMFS on the amendment or the proposed rule during their respective comment periods will be addressed in the final rule.

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

Dated: December 19, 2014.

**Emily H. Menashes,**

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

[FR Doc. 2014-30160 Filed 12-23-14; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 660

RIN 0648-XD339

#### Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Amendment 14 to the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of an amendment to a fishery management plan; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 14 to the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for review by the Secretary of Commerce. The purpose of Amendment 14 is to specify an estimate of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for the northern subpopulation of northern anchovy in the CPS FMP.

**DATES:** Comments on Amendment 14 must be received by February 23, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2014-0156, by any of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0156](http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0156), click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- Mail: Submit written comments to William W. Stelle, Jr., Regional Administrator, West Coast Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE.,

Seattle, WA 98115-0070; Attn: Joshua Lindsay.

**Instructions:** Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Copies of the draft CPS FMP as Amended through Amendment 14, with notations showing how Amendment 14 would change the FMP, if approved, are available from Donald O. McIssac, Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384 or the NMFS West Coast Region (William W. Stelle, Jr. or Joshua Lindsay).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joshua B. Lindsay, Sustainable Fisheries Division, NMFS, at 562-980-4034; or Kerry Griffin, Pacific Fishery Management Council, at 503-820-2280.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The CPS fishery in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off the West Coast is managed under the CPS FMP, which was developed by the Council pursuant to the MSA, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* Species managed under the CPS FMP include Pacific sardine, Pacific mackerel, jack mackerel, northern anchovy, market squid and krill. The CPS FMP was approved by the Secretary of Commerce and was implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 660, subpart I.

The MSA requires each regional fishery management council to submit any amendment to an FMP to NMFS for review and approval, disapproval, or partial approval. The MSA also requires that NMFS, upon receiving an amendment to an FMP, publish notification in the **Federal Register** that the amendment is available for public review and comment. NMFS will consider the public comments received

during the comment period described above in determining whether to approve, disapprove, or partially approve Amendment 14.

At the November 2013 Council meeting, the Council adopted an  $F_{MSY}$  of 0.3 as the best estimate of MSY for the northern subpopulation of northern anchovy and agreed to amend the CPS FMP accordingly to include this reference point. This action was based on data compiled by the CPS Management Team and a recommendation by the Council's Science and Statistical Committee (SSC). An  $F_{MSY}$  equal to 0.3, the default exploitation rate for Pacific mackerel, a stock for which more information is known regarding stock variability and productivity, was deemed an appropriate specification of MSY by the SSC. Based on available information regarding northern anchovy, they are likely to be at least as productive as Pacific mackerel, and likely have higher natural mortality, which would typically be associated with a higher  $F_{MSY}$ . Speaking further to their recommendation of the  $F_{MSY}$ , the SSC stated that due to both high uncertainty in the available biomass estimates and large fluctuations in stock biomass that are known to occur in species such as anchovy, a fixed biomass-based approach to specifying MSY would likely not be appropriate. Additionally, because the northern subpopulation of northern anchovy is lightly fished, with inconsistent effort over time, the existing time series of catch was likely an unreliable indicator of stock status and therefore determining a catch-based MSY would not be meaningful.

Public comments on Amendment 14 must be received by February 23, 2015 to be considered by NMFS in the decision whether to approve, disapprove, or partially approve Amendment 14. All comments received during the comment period for the amendment will be considered in the approval/disapproval decision.

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

Dated: December 19, 2014.

**Samuel D. Rauch III,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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