

sei, fin, blue, and sperm whales. Under section 7 of the ESA, NSF, on behalf of SIO, initiated formal consultation with the NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Act Interagency Cooperation Division, on this low-energy seismic survey. NMFS's Office of Protected Resources, Permits and Conservation Division, initiated and engaged in formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA with NMFS's Office of Protected Resources, Endangered Species Act Interagency Cooperation Division, on the issuance of an IHA under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for this activity. These two consultations were consolidated and addressed in a single Biological Opinion addressing the direct and indirect effects of these independent actions. In May 2015, NMFS issued a Biological Opinion that concluded that the action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the six listed cetaceans that may occur in the study area and included an Incidental Take Statement (ITS) incorporating the requirements of the IHA as Terms and Conditions of the ITS. Compliance with those Terms and Conditions is likewise a mandatory requirement of the IHA. The Biological Opinion also concluded that designated critical habitat of these species does not occur in the action area and would not be affected by the low-energy seismic survey.

National Environmental Policy Act

With SIO's complete IHA application, NSF and SIO provided NMFS an *Environmental Analysis of a Low-Energy Marine Geophysical Survey by the R/V Roger Revelle in the Southwest Pacific Ocean, East of New Zealand, May to June 2015*, (Environmental Analysis), prepared by LGL Limited, Environmental Research Associates, on behalf of NSF and SIO. The Environmental Analysis analyzes the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of the planned specified activities on marine mammals, including those listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. NMFS, after independently reviewing and evaluating the document for sufficiency and compliance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations and NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 § 5.09(d), conducted a separate NEPA analysis and prepared an *Environmental Assessment on the Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to a Low-Energy Marine Geophysical Survey in the Southwest Pacific Ocean, East of New Zealand, May to June 2015*. This

process included a public review period. Following completion of our EA, NMFS has determined that the issuance of the IHA is not likely to result in significant impacts on the human environment and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to SIO for conducting a low-energy seismic survey in the Southwest Pacific Ocean, East of New Zealand, incorporating the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements.

Dated: May 15, 2015.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2015-12531 Filed 5-21-15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: Western Pacific Community Development Program Process.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0612.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (revision and extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 5.

Average Hours per Response: 6 hours.

Burden Hours: 30.

Needs and Uses: This request is for revision and extension of a currently approved information collection.

The Federal regulations at 50 CFR part 665 authorize the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Island Region to provide eligible western Pacific communities with access to fisheries that they have traditionally depended upon, but may not have the capabilities to support continued and substantial participation, possibly due to economic, regulatory, or other barriers. To be eligible to participate in the western Pacific community development program, a community must meet the criteria set forth in 50 CFR part 665.20, and submit a

community development plan that describes the purposes and goals of the plan, the justification for proposed fishing activities, and the degree of involvement by the indigenous community members, including contact information.

This collection of information provides NMFS and the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) with data to determine whether a community that submits a community development plan meets the regulatory requirements for participation in the program, and whether the activities proposed under the plan are consistent with the intent of the program, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and other applicable laws. The information is also important for evaluating potential impacts of the proposed community development plan activities on fish stocks, endangered species, marine mammals, and other components of the affected environment for the purposes of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act and other applicable laws.

Affected Public: Business or other for profit organizations; individuals or households.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: May 19, 2015.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2015-12460 Filed 5-21-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD957

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); 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 of the Council and its Committees.

DATES: The meetings will be held Monday, June 8, 2015 through Thursday, June 11, 2015. For agenda details, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at: Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront, 3001 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, telephone: (757) 213-3000.

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. The Council's Web site, www.mafmc.org also has details on the meeting location, proposed agenda, webinar listen-in access, and briefing materials.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following items are on the agenda, though agenda items may be addressed out of order (changes will be noted on the Council's Web site when possible.)

Monday, June 8, 2015

9 a.m.

Council Convenes

9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Species Interactions Workshop

—A workshop to convene scientists and managers to discuss potential strategies to fully consider species interactions and climate drivers in the stock assessment process, determination of catch limits, and to build capacity within the region to conduct comprehensive management strategy evaluations (MSEs).

1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Species Interactions Workshop (continued)

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

9 a.m.–11 a.m.

Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Committee, Meeting as a Committee of the Whole

—Review SSC, Advisory Panel, Monitoring Committee, and staff recommendations
—Develop Council preferred alternatives for:

- 2016 squid and butterfish specifications (only if changes are necessary)
- 2016–2018 mackerel specifications
- Associated mackerel, squid,

butterfish management measures
11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Committee, Meeting as a Committee of the Whole (continued)

—Review squid amendment scoping comments
—Provide guidance to staff regarding amendment development

1 p.m.–2 p.m.

River Herring and Shad Committee, Meeting as a Committee of the Whole

—Review and develop recommendations for the river herring and shad cap (2016–2018)
—Review progress on river herring and shad conservation

2 p.m.

Council Convenes

2 p.m.–3:30 p.m.

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Specifications

—Review SSC, Advisory Panel, and staff recommendations for 2016 specifications
—Recommend any changes if necessary

3:30 p.m.–4 p.m.

National Standard 1, 3, 7 Guidelines

—Review draft comment letter on proposed revisions

4 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Commercial Fishery Mapping in support of Regional Ocean planning: Northeast Regional Ocean Council—George Lapointe

4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

Listening Session—Proposed Rule To Revise Listing Status of Humpback Whales—David Gouveia

Wednesday, June 10, 2015

9 a.m.

Council Convenes

9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Deep Sea Corals Amendment

—Summary of April Deep Sea Corals Workshop
—Select preferred alternatives for submission to NMFS

1 p.m.–3 p.m.

Deep Sea Coral Amendment (continued)

3 p.m.–4 p.m.

Unmanaged Forage Fish Action

—Update on progress
—Review and approve scoping document

4 p.m.–5 p.m.

Framework 9 to Monkfish

—Approve Framework 9 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan

Thursday, June 11, 2015

9 a.m.

Council Convenes

9 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Cooperative Research

—Review and discuss Cooperative Research Committee Report

9:30 a.m.–10 a.m.

Guidelines for SAW Working Group Formation and Participation—Jim Weinberg

10 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Trawl Survey Advisory Panel Formation—Bill Karp

10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Business Session

Organization Reports

—NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Office
—NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center
—NOAA Office of General Counsel
—NOAA Office of Law Enforcement
—U.S. Coast Guard
—Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
—Liaison Reports

- New England Council
- South Atlantic Council

—Executive Director's Report, *Chris Moore*
—Science Report, *Rich Seagraves*
—Committee Reports

- SSC Report

—Continuing and New Business

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions 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 Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities.

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 19, 2015.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-12494 Filed 5-21-15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD896

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Regional Administrator, NMFS West Coast Region, has determined that four applications for exempted fishing permits (EFPs) warrant further consideration, and requests public comment on the applications. The applications request 2-year exemptions from various prohibitions under the Fishery Management Plan for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS FMP) to test the effects and efficacy of using deep-set buoy gear and longline gear to fish for swordfish and other highly migratory species (HMS) off the West Coast.

DATES: Comments must be submitted in writing by June 22, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2015-0063, 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-2015-0063, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. EFP applications will be available under Relevant Documents through the same link.

- *Mail:* Attn: Chris Fanning, NMFS West Coast Region, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802.

Include the identifier "NOAA-NMFS-2015-0063" in the comments.

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 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).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Chris Fanning, NMFS, West Coast Region, 562-980-4198.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 2, 2014, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) solicited EFP proposals to test alternative gears and/or new approaches or methods for the California large-mesh drift gillnet fishery to target swordfish and other HMS. Applications for EFPs were submitted on February 9, 2015, to the Council for consideration during the March 2015 meeting (Agenda H.3, <http://www.pcouncil.org/resources/archives/briefing-books/march-2015-briefing-book/#hmsMar2015>). On March 20, 2015, the Council made recommendations to NMFS to consider issuing EFPs for three proposals to use deep-set buoy gear (DSBG—multiple hooks deployed relatively deep in the water column, using one or more weighted mainlines which are suspended with one or more buoys floating on the ocean surface) and a single proposal to use deep-set and shallow-set longline gear in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off of the West Coast of the United States. If approved, the EFPs would exempt a limited number of federally permitted commercial fishing vessels from requirements of the HMS FMP pertaining to non-authorized gear types and areas currently closed to longline fishing. The EFPs would authorize up to 11 DSBG vessels and one longline vessel to fish year-round in areas within the Federal U.S. EEZ off of the West Coast. Aside from the exemptions described above (e.g., allowing non-authorized gear types to fish and allowing longline gear within the EEZ to target swordfish), vessels fishing under an EFP would be subject to all other regulations implementing the HMS FMP, including measures to protect sea turtles, marine mammals, and seabirds. The EFP

applications request issuance for 2 fishing seasons or 2 calendar years.

The Council suggested NMFS impose the following additional conditions on these EFPs (originally outlined here: <http://www.pcouncil.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/03/0315decisions.pdf>):

- (1) 100 percent observer coverage;
 - (2) prohibit fishing in waters north of the Washington/Oregon border, and in the first year prohibit fishing in waters north of the Oregon/California border;
 - (3) close fishing for the remainder of the year if the number of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species taken in the fishery is the lower of either double the amount of incidental take estimated in an ESA biological opinion prepared for that activity, or 10 animals;
 - (4) for those EFPs testing buoy gear, permit fishing only in Federal waters;
 - (5) for the EFP testing longline gear, prohibit fishing within 50 miles of the mainland shore and islands; and
 - (6) for the EFP testing longline gear, develop and impose an annual incidental catch limit for striped marlin.
- NMFS is seeking public comment on the EFP applications and the Council's recommended conditions.

In accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-6, appropriate National Environmental Policy Act documents will be completed prior to the issuance of the EFPs. Additionally, NMFS will consider all applicable laws, including Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), to determine if the proposed action is likely to jeopardize the continued existence and recovery of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.

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

Dated: May 18, 2015.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-12411 Filed 5-21-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XD950

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.