

of final engineering design. The final permit approval and contractor award were issued in late Winter 2015 and final engineering design was not completed until Fall 2015. Therefore, construction activities have not commenced to date. No in-water work has occurred, including all aspects of the specified activity considered in our issuance of the IHA. The IHA, as issued, is a one-year IHA with no consideration of seasonality in timing any component of the specified activity.

Findings

Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)—As required by the MMPA in order to issue an IHA, we determined that (1) the required mitigation measures are sufficient to reduce the effects of the specified activities to the level of least practicable impact; (2) the authorized takes will have a negligible impact on the affected marine mammal species; (3) the authorized takes represent small numbers relative to the affected stock abundances; and (4) TNEC's activities will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on taking for subsistence purposes as no relevant subsistence uses of marine mammals are implicated by this action. Shifting the effective dates of the IHA to accommodate TNEC's delayed schedule for this project has no effect on our analysis of project impacts and does not affect our findings. There are no changes to any construction methodologies.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)—In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), as implemented by the regulations published by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and NOAA Administrative Order 216–6, NMFS prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing the potential impacts of the issuance of an IHA for the BITS construction. The final EA was prepared in July 2014 and NMFS made a Finding of No Significant Impact for this action on August 19, 2014. These documents are available on our Web site at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental/energy_other.htm.

The potential environmental impacts of the revision to the BITS IHA are within the scope of the environmental impacts analyzed in the EA. NMFS has determined that there are no substantial changes to the action and that there are no new direct, indirect, or cumulative effects to the human environment resulting from the revision to the IHA. Therefore, NMFS has determined that new or supplemental EAs or Environmental Impact Statements are

unnecessary, and reaffirms the existing FONSI for this action.

Endangered Species Act (ESA)—There are three marine mammal species that are listed as endangered under the ESA: Fin whale, humpback whale, and North Atlantic right whale. Under section 7 of the ESA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the federal permitting agency for the actual BITS construction) consulted with NMFS on the proposed BITS project. NMFS also consulted internally on the issuance of an IHA under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for this activity. NMFS Northeast Region (now known as the Greater Atlantic Regional Office (GARFO)) issued a Biological Opinion on January 30, 2014, concluding that the Block Island Wind Farm project (which includes the BITS) and NMFS' issuance of an IHA may adversely affect but are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of fin whale, humpback whale, or North Atlantic right whale. The Biological Opinion further concluded that critical habitat would not be affected by the proposed action since it did not occur in the action area. NMFS determined the revision to the IHA to change the authorization period of effectiveness to October 30, 2015, through October 29, 2016 falls within the scope of what was analyzed in the Biological Opinion and does not change the basis for NMFS' original determinations. In a memo dated October 21, 2015, NMFS made the determination that a re-initiation of a section 7 formal consultation was not necessary.

In summary, no new information is available that would substantively affect our analyses under the MMPA, NEPA, or ESA. All mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures described in our notice of issuance of the IHA remain in effect. The species for which take was authorized and the numbers of incidences of take authorized are unchanged.

As a result of the foregoing, we have revised the IHA issued to TNEC for construction of the BITS. The IHA is now effective from October 30, 2015, through October 29, 2016. With these revised dates, TNEC can perform the installation of the cofferdam and submarine cable intended to meet the Block Island Wind Farm operational deadline of December 2016.

Dated: October 29, 2015.

Perry F. Gayaldo,
Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 2015–27974 Filed 11–2–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE288

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 (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Scallop Committee Meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2015 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Thursday, November 19, 2015 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Radisson Airport Hotel, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 739–3000; fax: (401) 732–9309.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465–0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Committee will review Amendment 19 alternatives, analyses, and public comments received to date and make final recommendations. Amendment 19 was developed to consider measures to better align fishery allocations with the start of the scallop fishing year. They will also review Framework 27 alternatives and analyses and make final recommendations. Framework 27 was developed to consider fishery allocations for fishing year 2016 and default measures for fishing year 2017. The Committee will review progress to date and potentially provide input on a future Council sponsored workshop related to concerns raised about inshore scallop fishing patterns. Finally, the Committee will review and potentially provide input on draft guidance prepared by NMFS related to the Magnuson Act requirement to evaluate limited access privilege programs within five years after adoption. Other business may be discussed if time permits.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 29, 2015.

Jeffrey N. Lonergan,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-27951 Filed 11-2-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648-XE278

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 (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Groundfish Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2015, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Radisson Hotel Providence Airport, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886; phone: (401) 739-3000; fax: (401) 732-9309.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Agenda**

The committee will receive an overview from the Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) on draft alternatives in Framework Adjustment 55 (FW 55) specifications, changes to the groundfish monitoring program, and other management measures and draft impacts analysis. They will also review

a presentation on the results from Northeast Fisheries Science Center's bioeconomic model for recreational fisheries in the Gulf of Maine. The committee also plans to consider recommendations from the Groundfish Advisory Panel, regarding FW 55 and 2016 Council priorities. They will also consider recommendations from the Recreational Advisory Panel (RAP), regarding FW 55, FY 2016 Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock recreational measures, and 2016 Council priorities. The committee also plans to develop recommendations to the Council regarding preferred alternatives in FW 55, FY 2016 recreational measures, and 2016 Council priorities. Also on the agenda is to discuss GARFO's Recreational Implementation Plan, review RAP recommendations to the Committee, and develop recommendations to the Council. They will also discuss other business as necessary.

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 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 Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 29, 2015.

Jeffrey N. Lonergan,

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

[FR Doc. 2015-27949 Filed 11-2-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648-XE287

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 (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Scallop Advisory Panel on Wednesday, November 18, 2015, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2015, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Radisson Airport Hotel, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 739-3000; fax: (401) 732-9309.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Agenda**

The Advisory Panel will review Amendment 19 alternatives, analyses, and public comments received to date and make final recommendations. Amendment 19 was developed to consider measures to better align fishery allocations with the start of the scallop fishing year. The Advisory Panel will also review Framework 27 alternatives and analyses and make final recommendations. Framework 27 was developed to consider fishery allocations for fishing year 2016 and default measures for fishing year 2017. They will also review progress to date and potentially provide input on a future Council sponsored workshop related to concerns raised about inshore scallop fishing patterns. Finally, the Advisory Panel will review and potentially provide input on draft guidance prepared by NMFS related to the Magnuson Act requirement to evaluate limited access privilege programs within five years after adoption. Other business may be discussed, if time permits.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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