

mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

NMFS has defined “negligible impact” in 50 CFR 216.103 as “an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.”

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines “harassment” as: “any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).”

Summary of Request

On June 28, 2016, NMFS received an adequate and complete application from the AFSC requesting authorization for take of marine mammals incidental to fisheries research conducted by the AFSC. The requested regulations would be valid for five years from the date of issuance. The AFSC plans to conduct fisheries research surveys in multiple geographic regions, including the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Arctic Ocean. It is possible that marine mammals may interact with fishing gear (*e.g.*, trawls nets, longlines) used in AFSC's fisheries research projects, resulting in injury, serious injury, or mortality. In addition, the AFSC operates active acoustic devices that have the potential to disturb marine mammals. Because the specified activities have the potential to take marine mammals present within these action areas, the AFSC requests authorization to take multiple species of marine mammal that may occur in these areas.

Specified Activities

The Federal Government has a responsibility to conserve and protect living marine resources in U.S. federal waters and has also entered into a number of international agreements and treaties related to the management of living marine resources in international waters outside the United States. NOAA has the primary responsibility for managing marine fin and shellfish species and their habitats, with that responsibility delegated within NOAA to NMFS.

In order to direct and coordinate the collection of scientific information needed to make informed management

decisions, Congress created six Regional Fisheries Science Centers, each a distinct organizational entity and the scientific focal point within NMFS for region-based, Federal fisheries-related research. This research is aimed at monitoring fish stock recruitment, abundance, survival and biological rates, geographic distribution of species and stocks, ecosystem process changes, and marine ecological research. The AFSC is the research arm of NMFS in U.S. waters off of Alaska.

Research is aimed at monitoring fish stock recruitment, survival and biological rates, abundance and geographic distribution of species and stocks, and providing other scientific information needed to improve our understanding of complex marine ecological processes. The AFSC proposes to administer and conduct these survey programs over the five-year period.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the AFSC's request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the AFSC, if appropriate.

Dated: October 13, 2016.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE960

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (MAFMC's) *Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass* Monitoring Committee will hold a public meeting.

DATES: The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, November 9, 2016, and end at 3 p.m. on Thursday, November 10, 2016, to view the agenda see

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Admiral Fell Inn, 888 S. Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231; telephone: (410) 522-7377.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331 or on their Web site, at www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526-5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's *Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass* Monitoring Committee will meet November 9 and 10 to develop recommendations for recreational management measures for the *summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass* fisheries for the 2017 fishing year. The Committee may also discuss initial analyses related to a possible *scup* commercial seasons framework action. A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council's Web site (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

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.

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

Dated: October 12, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-25090 Filed 10-17-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE911

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: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application from the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This Exempted Fishing Permit would allow seven commercial fishing vessels and one party/charter vessel to collect black sea bass catch data while on routine fishing trips and retain a limited amount of black sea bass for laboratory analysis. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notice to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before November 2, 2016.

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

- *Email to:* nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line “BSB Research Fleet EFP.”
- *Mail to:* 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 BSB Research Fleet EFP.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Reid Lichwell, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-281-9112.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) submitted a complete application for an EFP on September 9, 2016, to develop a research fleet that would collect fishery-dependent information on black sea bass for eight months, November 2016 through July 2017. The EFP would authorize seven commercial fishing vessels and one party/charter vessel to collect data on black sea bass catch, and retain a limited amount of black sea bass for a laboratory study conducted by RI DEM. This EFP would exempt the participating vessels from the following Federal regulations:

1. Recreational possession limits specified at 50 CFR 648.145;
2. Commercial and party/charter minimum size limits for black sea bass specified at 50 CFR 648.147(a) and (b) respectively;

The research fleet would be comprised of vessels fishing with

different gear types including trawls, lobster pots, gillnets, and hook and line. All gear deployments would be typical of the routine fishing practices associated with the fishery being targeted. All vessels fishing under this research would have either a black sea bass moratorium or charter/party federal permit allowing them to legally land black sea bass. There will be no increase in fishing effort associated with this project.

Each vessel would be randomly selected to conduct sampling events during three trips per month within Southern New England and the Mid-Atlantic Bight. During each sampling event, up to 50 black sea bass would be temporarily held to record their length and sex. Some may be retained for shoreside analysis. Each vessel would be allowed to retain 100 black sea bass per month, not to exceed a cumulative total of 6,400 individual fish or 10,880 lb (4,935 kg) of black sea bass catch over the course of the project.

All legal sized black sea bass retained for sampling by commercial vessels would be reported through a dealer as “research” landings and attributed to the state of Rhode Island’s allocated commercial black sea bass quota. Undersize black sea bass retained for sampling would be weighed and recorded as bycatch on all appropriate fishing logs. The participating vessels would be able to sell their additional catch as they typically would under the permits they possess. Catch not retained for sale or sampling will be returned to the sea as soon as practicable. The participating vessels would be issued the appropriate state exemptions to all applicable state regulations. If the Federal commercial coastwide quota for black sea bass is reached and leads to a Federal black sea bass closure, then no retention of black sea bass would occur under this EFP until the fishery reopens.

Vessels fishing under this research permit would be exempt from the commercial and party/charter minimum size limits for black sea bass, to allow for the retention of both adult and undersized juvenile black sea bass. The party/charter vessel would be exempt from the possession limits found at § 648.145 to retain black sea bass for sampling above the designated possession limit; there are no federal commercial possession limits for black sea bass.

If approved, CCRF and RI DEM may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the study period. 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: October 13, 2016.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-25137 Filed 10-17-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Defense Acquisition Regulations System

[OMB Control Number 0704-0225; Docket Number DARS-2016-0041]

Information Collection Requirement; Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS); Administrative Matters

AGENCY: Defense Acquisition Regulations System, Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice and request for comments regarding a proposed revision of an approved information collection requirement.

SUMMARY: In compliance with section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), DoD announces the proposed revision of a public information collection requirement and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. DoD invites comments on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of DoD, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved this information collection for use through March 31, 2017. DoD proposes that OMB extend its approval for use for three additional years beyond the current expiration date.

DATES: DoD will consider all comments received by December 19, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by OMB Control Number