

abundance, demographic structure, and health of foraging sea turtles in these waters. The permit expires on June 15, 2021.

Dated: November 16, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,
Office of Protected Resources, National
Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF052

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting and scoping sessions.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold public meetings and scoping sessions to discuss fishery management regulations for the Monument Expanded Area in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

DATES: The Council will hold meetings in Hawaii from Tuesday, December 6 through Saturday, December 17, 2016. For specific dates, times and agendas, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in Hilo, Kona, Kahului, Maui, Lihue, Kauai, Honolulu, Oahu, Kaunakakai, Molokai, HI. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations of the meetings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; telephone: (808) 522-8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council will hold meetings in Hilo, HI, on Tuesday, December 6, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Kona, HI, on Wednesday, December 7, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Kahului, Maui, HI, on Thursday, December 8, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Lihue, Kauai, HI on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; in Honolulu, Oahu, HI, on Thursday, December 15, 2016, between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.; and in Kaunakakai, Molokai, HI, on Saturday, December 17, 2016, between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. All times listed are local island times.

The Hilo meeting will be held at the Hilo Intermediate School Cafeteria, 587 Waiuanue Ave, Hilo, HI 96720. The Kona meeting will be held at the West Hawaii Civic Center, Building G, 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740. The Maui meeting will be held at the Courtyard Maui Kahului Airport, 532 Keolani Pl, Kahului, HI 96732. The Kauai meeting will be held at the Chiefess Kamakahahei Middle School, 4431 Nuhou St, Lihue, HI 96766. The Oahu meeting will be held at the Ala Moana Hotel, 410 Atkinson Dr, Honolulu, HI 96814. The Molokai meeting will be held at Kaunakakai Elementary School Cafeteria, 30 Ailoa St, Kaunakakai, HI 96761.

Public scoping and comment periods will be provided in the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Schedule and Agenda for All Meetings

1. Visit Informational Booths
2. Informational Briefing on Presidential Proclamation, Council Role in Rule-making Process, Data Discovery
3. Public Comment/Scoping Session
4. Adjourn

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808) 522-8220 (voice) or (808) 522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: November 16, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-27973 Filed 11-18-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA774, 0648-XA806, and 0648-XE766

Marine Mammals and Endangered Species; File Nos. 13927, 16553, and 20532

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permits.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that permits or permit amendments have been issued to the following entities:

Permit No. 13927-03: James H.W. Hain, Ph.D., Associated Scientists at Woods Hole, Box 721, Woods Hole, MA 02543;

Permit No. 16553-01: Brent Stewart, Ph.D., J.D., Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute, 2595 Ingraham Street, San Diego, CA 92109; and

Permit No. 20532: Stephen John Trumble, Ph.D., Baylor University, 101 Bagby Ave., Waco, TX 76706.

ADDRESSES: The permits and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carrie Hubard (File Nos. 13927-03, 16553-01) and Shasta McClenahan or Jennifer Skidmore (File No. 20532) at (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Requests for a permit or permit amendment had been submitted by the above-named applicants. The requested permits have been issued under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226), as applicable.

Permit No. 13927-03: The original permit (No. 13927), issued on October 19, 2011 (76 FR 67151, October 31, 2016) authorized Dr. Hain to conduct aerial and vessel surveys to study North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*), Humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) may be incidentally harassed. Research may occur annually, December through April off the U.S. southeast coast. Two subsequent amendments (13927-01 issued January 13, 2013 and 13927-02 issued December 1, 2015) increased the number of North Atlantic right whale takes and added unmanned aircraft systems, respectively. The minor amendment (No. 13927-03) extends the duration of the permit through October 31, 2017, but does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Permit No. 16553-01: The original permit (No. 16553), issued on October

24, 2011 (76 FR 68719, November 7, 2011) authorized Dr. Stewart to continue a long term study on pinnipeds in California. California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) may be captured and sampled at several sites: San Nicolas Island, San Miguel Island, Santa Rosa Island, Santa Cruz Island, Piedras Blancas, Cape San Martin, and Gorda. The minor amendment (No. 16553-01) extends the duration of the permit through October 31, 2017, but does not change any other terms or conditions of the permit.

Permit No. 20532: The requested permit (81 FR 59190, August 29, 2016) authorizes receipt, import, and export of biological samples from museum holdings and stranded animals worldwide for scientific research to chronologically profile anthropogenic and physiological data including hormones and pesticides to record exposure and stress. Samples will be from blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*), gray (*Eschrichtius robustus*), fin (*B. physalus*), minke (*B. acutorostrata*), bowhead (*Balaena mysticetus*), humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), and sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*). Samples may also be obtained from subsistence hunted bowhead whales in Alaska. The permit is valid through November 1, 2021.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activities proposed are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, as applicable, issuance of these permits was based on a finding that such permits: (1) Were applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: November 15, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division,
Office of Protected Resources, National
Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF050

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), Atlantic Herring Committee, Atlantic Herring Advisory Panel and Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team is scheduling a public workshop on the Atlantic Herring Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule Management Strategy Evaluation 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 workshop will be held on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 9 a.m. and Thursday, December 8, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The workshop will be held at the Sheraton Harborside Hotel, 250 Market Street, Portsmouth, ME 03801; phone: (888) 627-7138; fax: (603) 431-7805.

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:

Introduction

The New England Fishery Management Council is currently developing Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. Through Amendment 8, the Council expects to establish a long-term control rule for the acceptable biological catch (ABC) of Atlantic herring that may explicitly account for herring's role in the ecosystem and address the biological and ecological requirements of the Atlantic herring resource. A control rule is a method for establishing an annual catch limit or target fishing level based on scientific information. A long-term control rule is needed to provide guidance on setting an annual ABC to account for scientific uncertainty, stock status, and the Council's risk tolerance to maintain a

sustainable Atlantic herring stock that includes consideration of herring as a forage species.

In January 2016, the Council approved conducting a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) to support the development of alternatives for an ABC control rule. MSE is a collaborative decision-making process involving more public input and technical analysis than the normal amendment development process. The MSE will help determine how a range of control rules may perform relative to potential objectives.

The Council held an initial public workshop in May 2016 to develop recommendations for a range of potential objectives of the ABC control rule, how progress towards these objectives may be measured, and the control rules to test. In June 2016, after reviewing the workshop recommendations and additional input from the Herring Plan Development Team, Advisory Panel, and Committee, the Council approved moving forward with the MSE. Technical work has been underway ever since.

Workshop Purpose

The purpose of this workshop is to provide continued opportunities for public input on the Management Strategy Evaluation of Atlantic herring ABC control rules.

Workshop Goals

The Council is holding this workshop to: Develop a common understanding of the outcomes of the MSE technical simulations, which tested the performance of a range of ABC control rules relative to potential objectives, identified at the May 2016 public workshop and approved by the Council in June. The workshop also aims to get input from stakeholders on: Identifying acceptable ranges of performance for various metrics, so that tradeoffs in achieving objectives may be identified; narrowing the range of Atlantic herring ABC control rule alternatives to consider in more detail; and what, if any, additional (minor) MSE simulation work would be helpful for establishing a long-term ABC control rule. Finally, the workshop will provide a chance for stakeholders of the Atlantic herring fishery to have greater input than typically possible at Council meetings, through constructive and open dialogue among resource users, scientists, fishery managers, and members of the public.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to