

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****RIN 0648-XE348****Endangered Species; File No. 17225**

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543 [Responsible Party: Jon Hare, Ph.D.], has been issued a permit to take Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles for purposes of scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit 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: Malcolm Mohead or Amy Hapeman, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 15, 2016, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (81 FR 2196) that a request for a scientific research permit to take Atlantic sturgeon, loggerhead Kemp's ridley, green, hawksbill and leatherback sea turtles had been submitted by the above-named organization. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of 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).

Permit No. 17255 authorizes the NEFSC to conduct research on Atlantic sturgeon and sea turtles in Northwest Atlantic waters from Massachusetts to Florida, testing and evaluating gear modifications used within commercial fisheries in efforts to minimize or prevent future interactions with sea turtles and Atlantic sturgeon. Researchers may capture, measure, weigh, tag, genetic tissue sample, and photograph animals prior to release. The

permit is valid for five years from the date of issuance.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered or threatened species, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: January 5, 2017.

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

[FR Doc. 2017-00360 Filed 1-10-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****RIN 0648-XF143****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 Habitat Advisory Panel 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 Monday, January 30, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton, 1 Audubon Road, Wakefield, MA 01880; phone: (781) 245-9300.

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 the alternatives and analyses in the Council's Deep-Sea Coral Amendment and provide feedback. They will specifically review (1) Management alternatives: Are the alternatives clearly specified, *i.e.* is clarification required? Are any boundary modifications recommended? What are the potential

implementation/operational issues? Does the advisory panel have any preferred alternatives? (2) Impacts analysis completed to date: Are there questions about the approaches used or the results? Are there additional factors or issues that should be considered? (3) Further amendment development: Does the advisory panel have suggestions about how to conduct outreach with the fishing industry? With other groups? Are there specific actions that would make a public workshop to refine the coral zone boundaries more effective? Other business may be discussed as needed.

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: January 6, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-00419 Filed 1-10-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****RIN 0648-XF145****Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting**

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Law Enforcement Committee of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 7, beginning at 2

p.m. and conclude by 3:30 p.m. For agenda details, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar with a telephone-only connection option.

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: The purpose of the meeting is to review and comment on the NOAA Fisheries 2017 Enforcement Priorities.

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

The meeting is 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: January 6, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-00427 Filed 1-10-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF027

Draft Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines

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

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: NMFS, in an effort to increase preparedness for wildlife response under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, has drafted guidelines for marine mammal

response in northern Alaska entitled "Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines." NMFS invites the public to comment on and/or provide additional information for NMFS to consider in finalizing the guidelines.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before March 13, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2016-0143, by any one 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-2016-0143 click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments;

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to Sadie Wright, attention Ellen Sebastian, National Marine Fisheries Service, Protected Resources Division, Alaska Region, 709 West 9th Street, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.

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), 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).

Electronic copies of the Draft Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines and associated Appendices may be obtained from www.regulations.gov or from the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at alaskafisheries.noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sadie Wright, (907) 586-7630 or Sadie.Wright@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Marine mammal oil spill response and preparedness in Arctic Alaska presents many challenges including large populations of marine mammals, remote conditions, and lack of infrastructure, equipment, and trained personnel. Additionally, marine mammals are important subsistence and cultural resources for Alaska Native coastal communities, and response efforts must be cooperative with and sensitive to local communities. NMFS developed

the Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines (Guidelines) for the Bering Strait, Northwest Alaska, and the North Slope of Alaska through stakeholder engagement to develop regionally specific and culturally sensitive response strategies.

NMFS sought input on communication and response protocols for carcass collection, de-oiling, tissue sampling, necropsies, and subsistence food issues through meetings with local leaders in Nome, Kotzebue, Wainwright, and Barrow, and teleconferences and email correspondence with outlying communities. These stakeholder meetings resulted in three key recommendations for the Guidelines: (1) Include a communication structure that is locally based and efficient, (2) prioritize public health and food safety, and (3) address the lack of infrastructure, equipment, and trained personnel for response efforts.

These recommendations are addressed by the Guidelines in the following ways:

(1) The local stranding agreement holder or community-appointed organization(s) is the local lead, and communication protocols outline cooperative approaches between stakeholders;

(2) All response protocols are congruent with food safety testing, and the Alaska state public health representative is part of the communication loop; and

(3) Caches of equipment should be developed and stored in hub communities with smaller caches in outlying villages, to include modular and adaptive infrastructure for response activities.

Finally, the Guidelines recommend that trainings be developed for village residents that can be deployed remotely.

The draft Guidelines focus on Arctic marine mammal species under NMFS jurisdiction (principally whales and ice-associated seals), and different approaches may be appropriate for walrus and polar bears, which are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Any response to marine mammals per these Guidelines should occur in coordination with NMFS through the Incident Command Structure, if put in place for an oil spill or other major incident.

Comments are invited on any aspect of the draft Guidelines. We are particularly interested in maintaining an efficient communication strategy for marine mammal disaster response in the Arctic, and seek suggestions to ensure the Guidelines provide that framework. In addition, NMFS appreciates specific suggestions on how to improve the