

considered during this period. Speakers who wish to expand upon their oral statements, those who had wished to speak but could not be accommodated on the agenda, and those who were unable to attend in person are invited to submit written statements to VCAT, NIST, 100 Bureau Drive, MS 1060, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899, via fax at 301-216-0529 or electronically by email to stephanie.shaw@nist.gov.

All visitors to the NIST site are required to pre-register to be admitted. Please submit your name, time of arrival, email address and phone number to Stephanie Shaw by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday, January 29, 2018. Non-U.S. citizens must submit additional information; please contact Ms. Shaw. Ms. Shaw's email address is stephanie.shaw@nist.gov and her phone number is 301-975-2667. For participants attending in person, please note that federal agencies, including NIST, can only accept a state-issued driver's license or identification card for access to federal facilities if such license or identification card is issued by a state that is compliant with the REAL ID Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109-13), or by a state that has an extension for REAL ID compliance. NIST currently accepts other forms of federal-issued identification in lieu of a state-issued driver's license. For detailed information please contact Ms. Shaw at 301-975-2667 or visit: http://nist.gov/public_affairs/visitor/.

Kevin Kimball,

Chief of Staff.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF946

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council, NEFMC) will hold a two-day meeting to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 30, and Wednesday, January 31, 2018, beginning at 10 a.m. on January 30 and 9 a.m. on January 31.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Harborside, 250 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801; telephone: (603) 431-2300; online at www.sheratonportsmouth.com.

Council Address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950; telephone: (978) 465-0492; www.nefmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492, ext. 113.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Tuesday, January 30, 2018

After introductions and brief announcements, the meeting will begin with reports from the Council Chairman and Executive Director, NMFS's Regional Administrator for the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), liaisons from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, representatives from NOAA General Counsel and the Office of Law Enforcement, and staff from the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and U.S. Coast Guard. Next, the Council will receive an industry-funded monitoring briefing from GARFO that includes: (1) An update with preliminary results on the agency's electronic monitoring project aboard midwater trawl vessels participating in the Atlantic herring and mackerel fisheries; and (2) information on industry-funded monitoring service providers. The Skate Committee will report next. The Council is expected to initiate Framework Adjustment 6 to the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to consider adjustments to the skate wing possession limit.

After a lunch break, members of the public will have the opportunity to speak during an open comment period on issues that relate to Council business but are not included on the published agenda for this meeting. The Council asks the public to limit remarks to 3-5 minutes. The Habitat Committee will report after the public comment period. The Council is scheduled to take final action on coral protection measures for the continental slope and canyons south of Georges Bank in its Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment. The Council took final action on coral protection measures for the Gulf of Maine in June of 2017. In other habitat-related business, the Council will: (1) Review NMFS's decision on Omnibus Habitat

Amendment 2 and discuss how it relates to the Council's 2018 habitat priorities; and (2) review comments on offshore wind projects. The Council then will hear from its Research Steering Committee and first review and possibly approve the committee's recommendations for potential improvements to the Council's research priority-setting process. The Council also will receive an update on issues related to the Northeast Cooperative Research Program and be briefed on management reviews of completed research projects. Following these actions, the Council will adjourn for the day.

Wednesday, January 31, 2018

The second day of the meeting will begin with a closed session in order for the Council to consult on Scientific and Statistical Committee appointments for 2018-20. The first item of business in the open session will be an update on the ongoing external review of Council operations, known as the Council Program Review. Next, the Council will receive a report on the latest meeting of the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel and discuss several issues related to the workings of the panel, including NEFSC engagement and previous/future studies and projects. This discussion will be followed by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-funded report on implementing electronic monitoring in New England's groundfish fishery. The Council then will receive a presentation on the NEFSC's "2007-2015 Final Report on the Performance of the Northeast Multispecies Fishery," followed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee's report, which is centered on providing overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch recommendations for Atlantic halibut to the Council.

Following a lunch break, the Council will begin its Groundfish Committee report, which will cover recreational fishery measures and the Council's Groundfish Monitoring Amendment 23. On the recreational end, the Council will: (1) Provide recommendations to GARFO on fishing year 2018 recreational measures for Gulf of Maine cod and haddock; (2) possibly consult with GARFO on fishing year 2018 recreational measures for Georges Bank cod; and (3) consider recommending a new control date for the party/charter fishery. Regarding Amendment 23 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan, which is focused on monitoring in the groundfish fishery, the Council will: (1) Receive a progress report on the amendment's development; and (2) discuss the

possibility of holding a groundfish workshop or establishing a working group dedicated to monitoring issues. Finally, the Council will close out the meeting with “other business.”

Although non-emergency issues not contained on this agenda may come before the Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council’s intent to take final action to address the emergency. The public also should be aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

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 (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: January 10, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF945

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice; applications for one new scientific research permit and five scientific research permit renewals.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received six scientific research permit application requests relating to Pacific salmon and steelhead. The proposed research is intended to increase knowledge of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to help guide management and conservation efforts. The applications may be viewed online at: https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov/preview/preview_open_for_comment.cfm.

DATES: Comments or requests for a public hearing on the applications must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific standard time on February 15, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the applications should be sent to the Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232-1274. Comments may also be sent via fax to 503-231-5441 or by email to nmfs.nwr.apps@noaa.gov (include the permit number in the subject line of the fax or email).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rob Clapp, Portland, OR (ph.: 503-231-2314), Fax: 503-230-5441, email: Robert.Clapp@noaa.gov. Permit application instructions are available from the address above, or online at <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Species Covered in This Notice

The following listed species are covered in this notice:

Chinook salmon (Oncorhynchus tshawytscha): Endangered upper Columbia River (UCR); threatened Snake River (SR) spring/summer (spr/sum), threatened SR fall-run.

Steelhead (O. mykiss): Threatened UCR; threatened SR; threatened middle Columbia River (MCR).

Sockeye salmon (O. nerka):

Endangered SR.

Authority

Scientific research permits are issued in accordance with section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222–226). NMFS issues permits based on findings that such permits: (1) Are applied for in good faith; (2) if granted and exercised, would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species that are the subject of the permit; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policy of section 2 of the ESA. The authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits.

Anyone requesting a hearing on an application listed in this notice should set out the specific reasons why a hearing on that application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). Such hearings are held at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS.

Applications Received

Permit 1124-6R

The IDFG is seeking to renew for five years a permit under which they have been conducting six research projects in

the Snake River basin for nearly 20 years. The permit would continue to cover the following actions: One general fish population inventory; one project designed to monitor fish health throughout the state; two projects looking at natural and hatchery Chinook salmon production (in which sockeye may rarely be captured); one project monitoring natural steelhead; and one project centering on monitoring sockeye salmon recovery in Idaho. Much of the work being conducted under these projects is covered by other ESA authorizations; the work contemplated here is only the work that portion of the research that may affect sockeye salmon. The purposes of the research are therefore to monitor listed salmonid health, help guide sockeye salmon recovery operations, and to rescue sockeye salmon in need imperiled by circumstances such as being trapped by low flows. The benefits to the salmon would come in the form of information to help guide resource managers in restoring the listed fish and, as stated, in directly rescuing them from peril. The fish would be captured by various methods—screw traps, electrofishing, hook-and-line-angling, mid-water trawl—and most captured fish would immediately be released. The researchers do not intend to kill any of the captured fish, but a few may die as an inadvertent result of the research.

Permit 1134-7R

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) is seeking to renew for five years a permit under which they have been conducting research for nearly 20 years. The permit would continue covering five study projects that, among them, would annually take adult and juvenile threatened SR spring/summer Chinook salmon and adult and juvenile threatened SR steelhead in the Snake River basin. There have been some changes in the research over the last ten years; nonetheless, the projects proposed are largely continuations of ongoing research. They are: Project 1—Adult Spring/summer and Fall Chinook Salmon and Summer Steelhead Ground and Aerial Spawning Ground Surveys; Project 2—Cryopreservation of Spring/summer Chinook Salmon and Summer Steelhead Gametes; Project 3—Adult Chinook Salmon Abundance Monitoring Using Video Weirs, Acoustic Imaging, and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tag Detectors in the South Fork Salmon River; Project 4—Snorkel, Seine, fyke net, Minnow Trap, and Electrofishing Surveys and Collection of Juvenile Chinook Salmon and Steelhead; and Project 5—Juvenile Anadromous