

considered to be recovered; and/or (3) the original data available when the species was listed, or the interpretation of such data, were in error (see 50 CFR 424.11(d)). A 5-year review ends with a determination of whether the species should be delisted or the listing status changed. A 5-year review does not change the listing status of the species. Changes to the listing status of a species can only be made following publication of a proposed rule with an opportunity for public comment and our consideration of the comments before making a final determination to reclassify or delist the species.

The ESA implementing regulations at 50 CFR 424.21 require that we publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing those species currently under active review. This notice announces our active review of the Gulf of Maine DPS of Atlantic sturgeon currently listed as threatened, and the active review of the New York Bight, Chesapeake Bay, Carolina, and South Atlantic DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon that are currently listed as endangered.

Background information for the Gulf of Maine, New York Bight, and Chesapeake Bay DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon is available on the NMFS GARFO website: <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/atlsturgeon/index.html>. Background information for the Carolina and South Atlantic DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon is available on the NMFS SERO website at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/protected/resources/sturgeon/index.html>.

#### Public Solicitation of New Information

To ensure that the 5-year review is complete and based on the best available scientific and commercial information, we are soliciting information that has become available since the 2012 listing determination from the public, concerned governmental agencies, tribes, the scientific community, industry, environmental entities, and any other interested parties concerning the status of each of the five DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon. For example, we are aware that the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has just completed an Atlantic Sturgeon Benchmark Stock Assessment. This is an example of new information we will consider during our review. Categories of requested information include: (1) Species biology including, but not limited to, population trends, distribution, abundance, demographics, and genetics; (2) habitat conditions including, but not limited to, amount, distribution, and suitability; (3) status and trends of identified limiting

factors or threats; (4) conservation measures that have been implemented that benefit the species; and (5) other new information, data, or corrections including, but not limited to, taxonomic or nomenclatural changes, identification of erroneous information contained in the list of endangered and threatened species, and improved analytical methods for evaluating extinction risk.

Since there are no recovery plans for any of the DPSs, we will analyze the available information for the 5-year review relative to the ESA definitions of endangered and threatened and in the context of the five listing factors. The five factors are: (1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or, (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

During the 5-year review, we are also required to consider whether the 1996 DPS policy (61 FR 4722; February 7, 1996) is appropriately applied to the species. The DPS Policy specifies that we consider the available information with respect to three elements. These elements are: (1) The discreteness of the population segment in relation to the remainder of the of the species to which it belongs; (2) the significance of the population segment to the species to which it belong; and (3) the population segment's conservation status in relation to the ESA's standards for listing (*i.e.*, is the population segment endangered or threatened?). Because the five DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon have already been classified as DPSs following the 1996 DPS policy, a re-evaluation of the DPSs will not be necessary, unless there is new information specific to these DPSs relevant to the application of the policy.

If you wish to provide information for this 5-year review, you may submit your information and materials electronically at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or via mail (see **ADDRESSES** section). We request that all information be accompanied by supporting documentation such as maps, bibliographic references, or reprints of pertinent publications. We also would appreciate the submitter's name, address, and any association, institution, or business that the person represents; however, anonymous submissions will also be accepted.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: March 12, 2018.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XG092**

#### North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory committees will meet April 2 through April 10, 2018, in Anchorage, AK.

**DATES:** The meetings will be held Monday, April 2 through Tuesday, April 10, 2018. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel, 500 W 3rd Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501.

*Council address:* North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252; telephone (907) 271-2809.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Diana Evans, Council staff; telephone: (907) 271-2809.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Agenda**

The Council will begin its plenary session at 8 a.m. in the Aleutian Room on Wednesday, April 4, continuing through Tuesday, April 10, 2018. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will begin at 8 a.m. in the King Salmon/Iliamna Room on Monday, April 2, and continue through Wednesday, April 4, 2018. The Council's Advisory Panel (AP) will begin at 8 a.m. in the Dillingham/Katmai Room on Tuesday, April 3 and continue through Friday April 6, 2018. The Enforcement Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 in the Birch/Willow Room from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

*Monday, April 2, 2018 Through Tuesday, April 10, 2018*

*Council Plenary Session:* The agenda for the Council's plenary session will

include the following issues. The Council may take appropriate action on any of the issues identified.

- (1) Executive Director's Report (including CCC update, Northern Edge 2017 report (T), and outreach and community engagement discussion)
- (2) NMFS Management Report (including Pacific cod fishery management update, and report on pollock trip limit overages(T))
- (3) ADF&G Report
- (4) NOAA GC Report
- (5) NIOSH Report
- (6) USCG Report
- (7) USFWS Report
- (8) Protected Species Report (including seabird conservation working group update)
- (9) Salmon FMP Amendment for Cook Inlet
- (10) Scallop SAFE and Plan Team Report—Set OFL/ABC Catch Specifications
- (11) Charter Halibut Annual Permit Registration
- (12) Mixing of guided and unguided halibut
- (13) Salmon bycatch: Pollock ICA/IPA Reports; Update on Salmon Genetics and BSAI salmon Adult Equivalency (AEQ)
- (14) GOA CV Chinook PSC limit adjustments
- (15) Co-op Reports (AFA, AM 80, GOA Rockfish, BSAI Crab)
- (16) Halibut retention in BSAI sablefish pots
- (17) Halibut Abundance-based PSC limits
- (18) Regulatory Reform Review
- (19) Committees and Tasking

The Advisory Panel will address most of the same agenda issues as the Council except B reports.

The SSC agenda will include the following issues:

- (1) Salmon bycatch: Update on Salmon Genetics and BSAI salmon Adult Equivalency (AEQ)
- (2) Scallop SAFE and Plan Team Report—Set OFL/ABC Catch Specifications
- (3) GOA CV Chinook PSC limit adjustments
- (4) Halibut retention in BSAI sablefish pots
- (5) Seabird Conservation Update
- (6) Halibut Abundance-based PSC limits

The Enforcement Committee agenda will include review of the Mixing of Guided and Unguided Halibut analysis.

In addition to providing ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, the SSC functions as the Council's primary peer review panel for scientific information, as described by

the Magnuson-Stevens Act section 302(g)(1)(e), and the National Standard 2 guidelines (78 FR 43066). The peer review process is also deemed to satisfy the requirements of the Information Quality Act, including the OMB Peer Review Bulletin guidelines.

The Agendas are subject to change, and the latest versions will be posted at <http://www.npfmc.org/>.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before these groups for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions 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.

#### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Shannon Gleason at (907) 271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 13, 2018.

**Jeffrey N. Lonergan,**

*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-XG027**

#### Marine Mammals; File No. 21348

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

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC), 2725 Montlake Boulevard East, Seattle, WA 98112-2097, (Responsible Party: M. Bradley Hanson, Ph.D.) has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on marine mammals.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before April 16, 2018.

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review by

selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the "Features" box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 21348 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available 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.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Shasta McClenahan or Amy Hapeman, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 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.*), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant proposes to take marine mammals in the North Pacific Ocean in the U.S. waters of Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii, and international waters, to assess the biology and ecology of marine mammals in the study area, in particular endangered Southern Resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca*). Up to 47 species of marine mammals may be taken during research including the following ESA-listed cetaceans: Blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*), fin (*B. physalus*), humpback (*Megaptera novaeangliae*; Western North Pacific, Central America, and Mexico distinct population segments), North Pacific right (*Eubalaena japonica*), Main Hawaiian Islands insular DPS of false killer (*Pseudorca crassidens*), sei (*B.*