

Pacific Ocean (Convention), including implementing the decisions of the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPFC or Commission). The regulations include requirements for the owners or operators of U.S. vessels to: (1) Apply for and obtain a WCPFC Area Endorsement if the vessel is used for fishing for highly migratory species on the high seas in the Convention Area (50 CFR 300.212), (2) complete and submit a Foreign Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Form if the vessel is used for fishing for highly migratory species in the Convention Area in areas under the jurisdiction of any nation other than the United States (50 CFR 300.213), and (3) request and obtain an IMO number if the vessel is used for fishing for highly migratory species on the high seas or in areas under the jurisdiction of any nation other than the United States (50 CFR 300.217(c)). An IMO number is the unique number issued for a vessel under the ship identification number scheme established by the International Maritime Organization or, for vessels that are not strictly subject to that scheme, the unique number issued by the administrator of that scheme using the scheme's numbering format, sometimes known as a Lloyd's Register number or LR number.

The application for WCPFC Area Endorsements calls for specified information about the vessel and its operator that is not already collected via the application for high seas fishing permits issued under 50 CFR 300.333. The Foreign EEZ Form calls for specified information about the vessel, its owners and operators and any fishing authorizations issued by other nations. The information required to obtain an IMO number is not submitted to NMFS directly, but to a third party and serves to ensure that IMO numbers are issued for certain categories of vessels.

This information collected under the three requirements is used by NOAA, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Commission to monitor the size and composition of the HMS fleets in the Convention Area for compliance-related and scientific purposes and to ensure that IMO numbers are issued for certain categories of vessels.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents must submit some of the information by mail or in person via paper forms, and have a choice of submitting some of the information electronically, by mail, or in person.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0595.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a currently approved collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 55.

Estimated Time per Response: WCPFC Area Endorsement Application, 60 minutes; Foreign EEZ Form, 90 minutes; IMO number application, 30 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 58.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$2,465 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: April 30, 2018.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018–09374 Filed 5–2–18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XG200

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 Scallop Committee 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 Thursday, May 24, 2018 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hotel Providence, 139 Mathewson Street, Providence, RI 02903; Phone: (401) 861–8000.

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 Scallop Committee will provide research recommendations for the 2018/19 Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) federal funding announcement. They also plan to review progress on 2018 work priorities, focusing on (1) standard default measures; (2) monitoring and catch accounting. Progress on other work items may be discussed, as well as the initiation of appropriate vehicles (Specifications package, Framework, Amendment) to complete work items. The committee will also receive an update on Scallop Committee tasking re: Achieved at-sea monitoring coverage levels. Other business may be discussed as necessary.

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 these meetings. 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. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

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

Dated: April 30, 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-XG203

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management 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 Acting Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit Application from the Atlantic Offshore Lobsterman's Association and Maine Department of Marine Resources contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative 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 May 18, 2018.

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

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on AOLA Lobster EFP."

- *Mail:* Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on AOLA Lobster EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Hansen, NOAA Affiliate, (978) 281-9225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association (AOLA) and Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP)

on April 10, 2018, to conduct fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize one commercial fishing vessel to conduct a lobster tagging study using experimental traps to track movements and migrations of American lobster in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stock. This EFP proposes to use 300 experimental traps in Lobster Conservation Management Area (LCMA) 3 in statistical area 515. Maps depicting this area is available on request.

AOLA and ME DMR are requesting exemptions from the following Federal lobster regulations:

1. Gear specification requirements to allow for the use of traps with escape vents compliant with LCMA 1, but not LCMA 3 (50 CFR 697.21(c)(4));
2. Trap limit requirements to allow for trap limits to be exceeded (§ 697.19(a) for LCMA 1);
3. Trap tag requirements to allow for alternatively-tagged traps (§ 697.19(i)); and
4. LCMA designation requirements to allow fishing with experimental traps in LCMA 3 without an LCMA 3 designation on a Federal permit (§ 697.4(a)(7)(i)).

The purpose of this lobster study is to track migration in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stock area, estimate growth rates via imaging technology and direct measurements, and characterize catch-per-unit-effort and spatial distribution of egg-bearing females. This study will expand on data collected in 2015 from a New Hampshire Fish and Game and ALOA's fishery dependent lobster survey, which gathered some information on the spatial and temporal distribution of mature lobsters in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank area.

Trawls will be compliant with the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan and consistent with LCMA 1 trap standards. Sampling will occur from June to July. Trawls will be hauled no more than 8 times over the 40-day study period. Researchers have selected four primary research sites and one alternate site. Trawls will be initially deployed by the vessel's crew alone, but all hauling activities will be supervised by ME DMR staff. All lobsters caught will be measured, tagged, and returned to the water. All other species will be immediately returned to the sea. No catch from the study will be landed for sale.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. We may grant 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. The EFP would prohibit any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activities.

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

Dated: April 30, 2018.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-09385 Filed 5-2-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG198

North 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.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will host a meeting of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), consisting of the Regional Fishery Management Council chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors on May 22 through May 24, 2018.

DATES: The CCC will begin at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, May 22, 2018, recess at 4:30 p.m.; and reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 23, 2018, recess at 4:30 p.m.; and reconvene at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, May 24, 2018 and adjourn at 5 p.m. or when business is complete. The Council Communications Group (CCG) will meet Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 8:30 a.m., recess at 5 p.m.; and reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 23, 2018, adjourn at 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at Harrigan Centennial Hall, 330 Harbor Drive, Sitka, AK; Westmark Hotel, 330 Seward Street, Sitka, AK.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Witherell, at (907) 271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: