

of three or more limited access NE multispecies vessel permits, with distinct ownership, who voluntarily enter into a contract to manage their fishing operations and to share liability. A sector is granted an annual allocation of most stocks of fish managed by the NE Multispecies FMP. In return for increased operational flexibility, such as exemptions from certain effort controls and the ability to pool and trade quota, sectors have additional reporting and monitoring requirements. The sector reporting and monitoring requirements, as established by Amendment 16 and revised by subsequent framework adjustments to the NE Multispecies FMP, are contained within this information collection.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Weekly and on occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: December 18, 2018.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018-27814 Filed 12-21-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG679

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of a meeting of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) System Management Plan Workgroup via webinar.

SUMMARY: The Council will hold a meeting of its System Management Plan (SMP) Workgroup via webinar.

DATES: The SMP Workgroup will meet via webinar from 1:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. on January 14, 2019.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar. The meeting is accessible to the public via webinar. Registration is

required. Information regarding registration and other meeting information will be posted to the Council's website at: <http://safmc.net/safmc-meetings/> as it becomes available.

Council address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N Charleston, SC 29405.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer, SAFMC; phone: (843) 571-4366 or toll free (866) SAFMC-10; fax: (843) 769-4520; email: kim.iverson@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SMP Workgroup is an advisory group for the Council that reviews actions items, evaluates protected areas, and reviews management of protected areas recommended by the Council. The SMP Workgroup was formed in March 2018. The Workgroup will hold a series of meetings to discuss components of the System Management Plans created by the Council. The Workgroup is responsible for development of a report to the Council with recommendations.

During this meeting the SMP Workgroup will review writing assignments for each section of the report including: background information on managed areas; biological and habitat monitoring; socio-economic factors; enforcement and compliance; and outreach.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) 5 days prior to the public meeting.

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

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

Dated: December 19, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-27838 Filed 12-21-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG540

Marine Mammals; File No. 22187

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Heather E. Liwanag, Ph.D., 1 Grand Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0401, has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*) in California.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before January 25, 2019.

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. 22187 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. 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: Sara Young or Shasta McClenahan, (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), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant requests a five year permit to study northern elephant seals at the Piedras Blancas Rookery in San Simeon, CA, and new pupping beaches at Vandenberg Air Force Base. Research would be conducted year-round on all age classes and both sexes, with increased frequency and effort during the breeding season (December-April). This study would establish a catalog of known individual seals at the Piedras Blancas colony via marking, tagging, and weighing of young-of-the-year pups. Types of takes include behavioral

observations, measurements, bioacoustic recordings, acoustic playbacks, marking, flipper tagging, capture, and non-invasive physiological sampling. A total of 64, 927 elephant seals will be taken annually: 3,550 handle/release takes, 500 capture/handle/release takes, 1,575 harassment takes, 59,000 incidental disturbance takes, and two unintentional mortality takes, not to exceed five mortalities over the life of the permit. Samples from up to 300 naturally deceased elephant seals may be salvaged and imported, exported, or received annually. Non-target species that may be incidentally disturbed include California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), and northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*).

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

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: December 19, 2018.

Julia Marie Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-27870 Filed 12-21-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG678

Pacific 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 Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) will hold a meeting, which is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, January 15 and Wednesday, January 16, 2019. The meeting will start at 1 p.m. on January 15 and 8:30 a.m. on January 16 and will continue until 4:30 p.m. on both days.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at Hyatt Place Portland Airport/Cascade Station, Meeting Place 2, 9750 NE Cascades Parkway, Portland, OR 97220; phone: (503) 288-2808.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Kit Dahl, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820-2422.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is for the EWG to discuss assignments from the Pacific Council due at the March Council meeting. These include topic selection for a climate change scenario planning exercise and recommendations on changes to the Fishery Ecosystem Plan as part of the 5-year review. The EWG will also meet with the Groundfish Management Team and Highly Migratory Species Management Team to discuss climate change scenario planning topics.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document 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 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 Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt, (503) 820-2411, at least 10 business days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: December 19, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-27837 Filed 12-21-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF888

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Trawl Rationalization Program; 2019 Cost Recovery

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

ACTION: Notice; 2019 cost recovery fee percentages and mothership (MS) pricing.

SUMMARY: This action provides participants in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program with the 2019 fee percentages and MS pricing needed to calculate the required payments for the cost recovery fees due in 2019.

For calendar year 2019, NMFS announces the following fee percentages by sector specific program:

- 2.9 percent for the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program,
- 0 percent for the MS Co-op Program,
- 0 percent for the Catcher/Processor (CP) Co-op Program.

For 2019, the MS pricing to be used as a proxy by the CP Co-op Program is: \$0.07./lb for Pacific whiting.

DATES: Applicable January 1, 2019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Biegel, Cost Recovery Program Coordinator, (503) 231-6291, fax (503) 872-2737, email Christopher.Biegel@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires NMFS to collect fees to recover the costs directly related to the management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement directly related to and in support of a limited access privilege program (LAPP) (16 U.S.C. 1854(d)(2)), also called "cost recovery." The Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program is a LAPP, implemented in 2011, and consists of three sector-specific programs: The Shorebased IFQ Program, the MS Co-op Program, and the CP Co-op Program. In accordance with the MSA, and based on a recommended structure and methodology developed in coordination with the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), NMFS began collecting mandatory fees of up to three percent of the ex-vessel value of