

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The NMFS Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This exempted fishing permit would allow up to six commercial fishing vessels to use raised-footrope trawl gear to target small-mesh multispecies (silver and red hake) within Small Mesh Area 1 before the start of the open season. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for a proposed exempted fishing permit.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before June 6, 2019.

**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 the Gloucester Fisheries Commission Whiting Exempted Fishery Study EFP.”
- *Mail:* Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope “Gloucester

Fisheries Commission Exempted Fishery Study EFP.”

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Laura Hansen, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9225.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Gloucester Fisheries Commission (GFC) submitted an application for an EFP on May 6, 2019. This EFP would allow up to 6 commercial fishing vessels to take up to 60 trips to fish for small-mesh multispecies within Small Mesh Area 1 (SMA1). The GFC asserts that SMA 1 is underutilized during the current season and that small-mesh multispecies stocks may be more prevalent and more effectively targeted within the area before the start of the July 15 opening of the exemption area. This study would provide data on catch rates of small-mesh multispecies and bycatch of regulated Northeast multispecies (and other species) to help evaluate the potential for opening SMA1 earlier.

The small-mesh multispecies fishery is open in SMA1 from July 15 through November 15. This EFP would allow the participating vessels to fish in SMA1 as early as June 1 through July 14, 2019. The exact start date may be after June 1, as some details of participation and monitoring resources are still being finalized. The length of each trip would be at the discretion of the vessel operators, consistent with normal commercial fishing practices. Fishing would not occur in any area closed to protect spawning groundfish.

Participating vessels would use a raised-footrope trawl with diamond mesh codends that have a mesh size of greater than 2.5 inches but less than 3 inches, consistent with 50 CFR 648.80(a)(9)(ii). Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) staff would inspect all gear prior to use to verify that it meets the required mesh size and gear specifications. Per regulation, this size mesh will allow participating vessels to retain up to 3,000 lb (3.4 mt) of whiting/offshore hake and 7,500 lb (1.4 mt) of red hake per trip. Participating vessels would also be exempt from the possession limits and minimum size requirements for biological sampling purposes only. All catch that is not retained for sale will be promptly returned to the sea.

A contracted observer or Northeast Fisheries Science Center staff would be on board all trips to collect data on catch composition, length and weight measurements, and operational data (location, weather, time, duration of tow, trawl speed, etc.).

The table below shows catch estimates for the project that are based on a similar study conducted by MA DMF, in 2016 and 2017. There is potential to catch up to 18 percent of the red hake total allowable landings (TAL) as part of this project which may be of concern to other fishermen that are not participating in the EFP.

TABLE 1—ESTIMATED CATCH FOR WHITING, RED HAKE, REGULATED GROUND FISH, AND OTHER SPECIES  
[Numbers in metric tons]

Species	Average catch/trip 2016	Average catch/trip 2017	Project average	Expected catch (60 trips)	Percent of quota
Northern Silver Hake .....	2.4	1.9	2.1	128.5	0.5
Northern Red Hake .....	0.9	0.8	0.8	50.2	* 18.0
Cod .....	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	0.2	<0.1
Haddock .....	0.5	0.1	0.3	19.0	<0.1
American plaice .....	<0.1	0.1	0.1	3.2	<0.1
Herring .....	<0.1	0.9	0.5	27.5	<0.1
Yellowtail flounder .....	<0.1	0.1	<0.1	2.4	<0.1
Groundfish Excluding Haddock .....	0.1	0.1	0.1	6.8	

\* This number is the percent of the TAL for Northern red hake.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. 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 impact that does not change the scope of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of

the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: May 17, 2019.

**Jennifer M. Wallace,**  
*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 2019-10672 Filed 5-21-19; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee**

**AGENCY:** National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee (Committee) the Consortium for Ocean Leadership Office, in Washington, DC.

**DATES AND TIMES:** The meeting will be held on Monday, June 3, 2019, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 4, 2019 from 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. Refer to the web page listed below for the most up-to-date agenda.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Consortium for Ocean Leadership Office, 1201 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005. Venue may be subject to change. Refer to the web page listed below for the most up-to-date information.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Krisa Arzayus, Designated Federal Official, U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee, U.S. IOOS Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone 240-533-9455; Fax 301-713-3281; Email [krisa.arzayus@noaa.gov](mailto:krisa.arzayus@noaa.gov) or visit the U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee website at <http://ioos.noaa.gov/community/u-s-ioos-advisory-committee/>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Committee was established by the NOAA Administrator as directed by Section 12304 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act, part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111-11). The Committee advises the NOAA Administrator and the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee (IOOC) on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 12302 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 and other appropriate matters as the Under Secretary refers to the Committee for review and advice.

The Committee will provide advice on:

- (a) Administration, operation, management, and maintenance of the System;
- (b) Expansion and periodic modernization and upgrade of technology components of the System;
- (c) Identification of end-user communities, their needs for information provided by the System, and the System's effectiveness in dissemination information to end-user communities and to the general public; and
- (d) Any other purpose identified by the Under Secretary of Commerce for

Oceans and Atmosphere or the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee.

The meeting will be open to public participation with a 15-minute public comment period on June 3, 2019, from 5:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., on June 4, 2019 from 12:00 p.m. to 12:15 p.m. (check agenda on website to confirm time.) The Committee expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of three (3) minutes. Written comments should be received by the Designated Federal Official by May 24, 2019 to provide sufficient time for Committee review. Written comments received after May 24th, 2019 will be distributed to the Committee, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-registration is required for those attending in person. Please send your name as it appears on driver's license and the organization/company affiliation you represent to Krisa Arzayus. This information must be received by May 17, 2019. Additionally, a webinar will be provided. Sign-up information for the webinar will be posted on the website.

*Matters To Be Considered:* The meeting will focus on ongoing committee priorities, and developing the next set of recommendations. The latest version of the agenda will be posted at <http://ioos.noaa.gov/community/u-s-ioos-advisory-committee/>.

*Special Accommodations:* These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Krisa Arzayus, Designated Federal Official at 240-533-9455 by May 24, 2019.

Dated: April 12, 2019.

**Carl C. Gouldman,**

Director, U.S. IOOS Program, National Ocean Service.

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**Evaluation of Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Public Meeting**

**AGENCY:** Office for Coastal Management (OCM), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management will hold a public meeting to solicit comments for the performance evaluation of the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

**DATES:** *Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Evaluation:* The public meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 23, 2019, and written comments must be received on or before Friday, August 2, 2019.

For the specific date, time, and location of the public meeting, see

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on the reserve by any of the following methods:

*Public Meeting and Oral Comments:*

A public meeting will be held in Greenland, New Hampshire for the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. For the specific location, see

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

*Written Comments:* Please direct written comments to Susie Holst Rice, Evaluator, NOAA Office for Coastal Management, 35 Colovos Road, University of New Hampshire, Gregg Hall, Room 142, Durham, New Hampshire 03824, or via email to [Susie.Holst@noaa.gov](mailto:Susie.Holst@noaa.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Susie Holst Rice, Evaluator, NOAA Office for Coastal Management, 35 Colovos Road, University of New Hampshire, Gregg Hall, Room 142, Durham, New Hampshire 03824, by phone at (603) 862-1205, or via email to [Susie.Holst@noaa.gov](mailto:Susie.Holst@noaa.gov). Copies of the previous evaluation findings, Management Plan, and Site Profile may be viewed and downloaded on the internet at <http://coast.noaa.gov/czm/evaluations>. A copy of the evaluation notification letter and most recent performance report may be obtained upon request by contacting the person identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Sections 312 and 315 of the Coastal Zone