

members will discuss and provide advice on Federal ocean exploration programs, with a particular emphasis on the topics identified in the section on *Matters to Be Considered*.

DATES: The announced meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST and Wednesday, December 4, 2019 from 9:00 to 5:00 p.m. EST.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at: Consortium for Ocean Leadership, 1201 New York Avenue NW, Suite 420, Washington, DC 20005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David McKinnie, Designated Federal Officer, Ocean Exploration Advisory Board, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115, (206) 526-6950.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NOAA established the OEAB under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and legislation that gives the agency statutory authority to operate an ocean exploration program and to coordinate a national program of ocean exploration. The OEAB advises NOAA leadership on strategic planning, exploration priorities, competitive ocean exploration grant programs and other matters as the NOAA Administrator requests.

OEAB members represent government agencies, the private sector, academic institutions, and not-for-profit institutions involved in all facets of ocean exploration—from advanced technology to citizen exploration.

In addition to advising NOAA leadership, NOAA expects the OEAB to help to define and develop a national program of ocean exploration—a network of stakeholders and partnerships advancing national priorities for ocean exploration.

Matters to be Considered: The OEAB will discuss the following topics: (1) The Ocean Science and Technology Summit; (2) the NOAA fleet plan; (3) OER updates, including the OER program review, the OER annual review, and the Ocean Exploration Fiscal Year 2019 Funding Opportunity projects; (4) an update on the U.S. critical minerals strategy; and (5) other matters as described in the agenda. The agenda and other meeting materials are available on the OEAB website at <http://oeab.noaa.gov>.

Status: The meeting will be open to the public with a 15-minute public comment period on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 from 11:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. EST (please check the final agenda on the OEAB website to confirm the time). The public may listen to the

meeting and provide comments during the public comment period via teleconference. Dial-in information may be found on the meeting agenda on the OEAB website.

The OEAB expects that public statements 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 three minutes. The Designated Federal Officer must receive written comments by November 26, 2019, to provide sufficient time for OEAB review. Written comments received after November 26, 2019, will be distributed to the OEAB but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Special Accommodations: These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Designated Federal Officer by November 26, 2019.

Dated: October 2, 2019.

David Holst,

Chief Financial Officer/Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XV031

Draft Outline for a Work Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: On behalf of the National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Aquaculture, NOAA announces the availability of the Draft Outline for a Work Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force for public review and comment.

DATES: NOAA will consider public comments received on or before November 8, 2019.

ADDRESSES:

Obtaining Documents: You may download the Draft Outline for a Work

Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force at: <https://www.ars.usda.gov/SCA/taskforce.html>.

Submitting Comments: Interested persons may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submissions:* Submit electronic public comments to Aqua.RegPlan@noaa.gov.
- *Mail:* Susan Bunsick, Attn: Aquaculture Work Plan Comments, Office of Aquaculture, F/AQ, 1315 East-West Highway, 12th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be made available for public viewing upon request. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—Susan Bunsick, susan.bunsick@noaa.gov, 301-427-8325.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The U.S. national policy on aquaculture states that (from the National Aquaculture Act of 1980): “Congress declares that aquaculture has the potential for reducing the United States trade deficit in fisheries products, for augmenting existing commercial and recreational fisheries, and for producing other renewable resources, thereby assisting the United States in meeting its future food needs and contributing to the solution of world resource problems. It is, therefore, in the national interest, and it is the national policy, to encourage the development of aquaculture in the United States.”

The Subcommittee on Aquaculture (SCA), previously known as the Interagency Working Group on Aquaculture (IWGA) and the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture (JSA), is a statutory subcommittee that operates under the Committee on Environment of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) under the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President. It is co-chaired by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Members include the Department of Agriculture,

Department of Commerce, Army Corps of Engineers, Department of the Interior, Food and Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of Management and Budget. The SCA serves as the Federal interagency coordinating group to increase the overall effectiveness and productivity of Federal aquaculture research, regulation, technology transfer, and assistance programs. This interagency coordinating group has been functioning since before the National Aquaculture Act was signed into law in 1980.

This draft outline lays out the components of a Work Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force. The proposed goal of this plan is to address the Federal strategic goal of improving regulatory efficiency and predictability for domestic freshwater and marine aquaculture under existing laws and regulations. The plan proposes to describe key interagency and federal-state issues raised by aquaculture regulations relating to permitting and aquatic animal health as well as the key science and technology needs to facilitate streamlined regulations and timely management decisions under current regulations.

Next Steps

The public is encouraged to review and comment on the Draft Outline for a Work Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force. After the public comment period ends, NOAA and the SCA will consider and address the comments received before issuing a draft work plan.

Invitation to Comment

NOAA, on behalf of the National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Aquaculture, seeks public review and comment on the Draft Outline for a Work Plan for a Federal Aquaculture Regulatory Task Force (see **ADDRESSES** above). Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, will become part of the public record.

Authority: This outline and plan is being issued under the following authorities: National Aquaculture Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-362, 94 Stat. 1198, 16 U.S.C. 2801, *et seq.*) and the National Aquaculture Improvement Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-198, 99 Stat. 1641).

Dated: October 3, 2019.

David O'Brien,

*Acting Director, Office of Aquaculture,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Reporting Requirements for Sea Otter Interactions With the Pacific Sardine Fishery; Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 9, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Adrienne Thomas, PRA Officer, NOAA, 151 Patton Avenue, Room 159, Asheville, NC 28801 (or at PRACOMMENTS@DOC.GOV). All comments received are part of the public record. Comments will generally be posted without change. All Personally Identifiable Information (for example, name and address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Joshua Lindsay, (562) 980-4034 or Joshua.Lindsay@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This is a regular submission, an extension of a currently approved collection.

On May 30, 2007, NMFS published a final rule (72 FR 29891) implementing a requirement under the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan

(FMP) to report any interactions that may occur between a CPS vessel and/or fishing gear and sea otters. In accordance with the regulations implementing the Endangered Species Act (ESA), NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) initiated an ESA section 7 consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding the effects of implementing the final rule (72 FR 29891), which codified Amendment 11 to the CPS FMP. USFWS determined that formal consultation was necessary on the possible effects to the threatened southern sea otter. USFWS completed a biological opinion (BO) for this action and although it was concluded that fishing activities were not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the southern sea otter, that there remained the potential to incidentally take southern sea otters. USFWS determined that certain measures should be put in place to ensure the continued protection of the species, including certain reporting requirements.

Specifically, these reporting requirements are:

1. If a southern sea otter is entangled in a net, regardless of whether the animal is injured or killed, such an occurrence must be reported within 24 hours to the Regional Administrator, NMFS West Coast Region.

2. While fishing for CPS, vessel operators must record all observations of otter interactions (defined as otters within encircled nets or coming into contact with nets or vessels, including but not limited to entanglement) with their purse seine net(s) or vessel(s). With the exception of an entanglement, which will be initially reported as described in #1 above, all other observations must be reported within 20 days to the Regional Administrator.

When contacting NMFS after an interaction, fishermen are required to provide information regarding the location, specifically latitude and longitude, of the interaction and a description of the interaction itself. Descriptive information of the interaction should include: Whether or not the otters were seen inside or outside the net; if inside the net, had the net been completely encircled; did contact occur with net or vessel; the number of otters present; duration of interaction; otter's behavior during interaction; and, measures taken to avoid interaction.

II. Method of Collection

The information will be collected on forms submitted by mail, phone, facsimile or email.