

240-533-0064, and *Virginia.Dentler@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting is open to the public via webinar. Public comment is encouraged on the topics of the HSRP meeting and there is a public comment period scheduled in the agenda. Each individual or group making written comments will be limited to one comment per public comment period, the comment will be transcribed, and comments will become part of the meeting record. Comments or letters can be submitted in writing via email prior to the meeting or by email or in the chat function of the webinar during the meeting. The HSRP will provide webinar capability. Pre-registration is required to access the webinar as noted above.

The Hydrographic Services Review Panel (HSRP) is a Federal Advisory Committee established to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, the NOAA Administrator, on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 303 of the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, as amended, and such other appropriate matters that the Under Secretary refers to the Panel for review and advice. Past recommendations and issue papers are located online at: <https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/hsrp/recommendations.html>.

Past HSRP public meeting documents are located online at: <https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/hsrp/meetings.html>.

Matters To Be Considered

The panel is convening on issues relevant to NOAA's navigation services, including stakeholder use of navigation services data, products and services, Seabed 2030 and ocean mapping plans, hydrographic surveys, nautical charting including the Five-Year Plan for Sunsetting Traditional NOAA Paper Charts, the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS) and datums updates for 2022, legislative priorities and other topics. Navigation services include the data, products, and services provided by the NOAA programs and activities that undertake geodetic observations, gravity modeling, shoreline mapping, bathymetric mapping, hydrographic surveying, nautical charting, tide and water level observations, current observations, flooding, inundation and sea level rise, marine modeling, and related topics. This suite of NOAA products and services support safe and efficient navigation, resilient coasts and communities, and the nationwide

positioning information infrastructure to support America's commerce. The Panel will hear about the mission and use of NOAA's navigation services, the value these services bring, and what improvements could be made. Other administrative matters may be considered. The agenda, speakers and time are subject to change, please refer to the website for the most updated information.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Please direct requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids to *hydroservices.panel@noaa.gov*, *Lynne.Mersfelder@noaa.gov* and *Virginia.Dentler@noaa.gov* at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

Shepard M. Smith,

Director, Office of Coast Survey, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB); Meeting

AGENCY: Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (OER) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda for a meeting of the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB). OEAB 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 Wednesday, April 8, 2020, from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT and Thursday, April 9, 2020, from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT.

ADDRESSES: This will be a virtual meeting. Information about how to participate will be posted to the OEAB website at <http://oeab.noaa.gov>.

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 new OEAB Blue Economy Subcommittee; (2) OER updates, including the OER program review; (3) the future of the OEAB; (4) the National Strategy for Mapping, Exploring, and Characterizing the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone; 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 Thursday, April 9, 2020 from 3:00 to 3:15 p.m. EDT (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 April 3, 2020, to provide sufficient time for OEAB review. Written comments received after April 3, 2020, 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 April 3, 2020.

Dated: April 2, 2020.

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

[RTID 0648-XX047]

Magnuson-Stevens 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 Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application submitted by the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This exempted fishing permit would require participants to use electronic monitoring systems on 100 percent of sector trips for catch accounting in the Northeast multispecies fishery; additionally, vessels would be authorized to access portions of Northeast multispecies closed areas. 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 proposed exempted fishing permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 23, 2020.

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

- *Email:* nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "AUDIT-MODEL EM 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 "AUDIT-MODEL EM EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Claire Fitz-Gerald, Fishery Policy Analyst, 978-281-9255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Northeast multispecies (groundfish) sectors must implement and fund an at-sea monitoring (ASM) program, and the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan regulations allow sectors to use electronic monitoring (EM) to satisfy this monitoring requirement, provided that NMFS deems the technology sufficient for catch monitoring. NMFS recently notified the Council of its intent to allow sectors to submit EM plans instead of, or in addition to, ASM plans as part of the fishing year 2021 and 2022 sector operations plans approval process. For the 2020 fishing year, lessons learned through this exempted fishing permit (EFP) will allow NMFS to continue developing standards and requirements for the groundfish EM program. Project partners include the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, the Maine Coast Fishermen's Association, and fishermen.

If approved, this EFP would build on previous EFPs issued to the project partners in support of the audit-model EM program for groundfish sectors. The first EFP was issued in fishing year 2017; participating vessels were required to use EM on 100 percent of sector trips and groundfish discards were calculated based on the video footage. Vessels were exempted from their sector's ASM requirements. Thirteen vessels using a variety of gear types (e.g. hook, benthic longline, sink gillnet, bottom trawl) participated in the project and completed a total of 81 trips. The EFP was renewed in fishing year 2018. We developed and implemented a protocol for verifying, or auditing, vessels' self-reported discards from the electronic vessel trip report (eVTR) against video footage. Vessels were also granted exemptions to fish in closed areas during certain times of the year. A total of 258 trips suitable for quota monitoring were completed during fishing year 2018. In fishing year 2019, we renewed the EFP again and reduced the targeted level of audit to 50 percent of trips based on a statistical analysis of EFP trips from fishing years 2017 and 2018. EVTRs were used to calculate discards for trips that were not selected for audit.

The project partners have submitted a renewal request for fishing year 2020. The proposed participant list includes 15 vessels, all of which participated in this EFP in fishing year 2019. Together, these vessels are expected to take a total

of 590 trips. The project partners expect that additional vessels may join the project during fishing year 2020.

Vessels participating in this EFP would be exempt from the regulations requiring them to adhere to their sector's ASM program, and instead would be required to use EM on 100 percent of groundfish trips. Camera systems would be used in lieu of human at-sea monitors, and in addition to Northeast Fishery Observer Program (NEFOP) observers. Vessels would adhere to a vessel-specific monitoring plan detailing at-sea catch handling protocols. Vessels would submit haul-level eVTRs with count and weight estimates for all groundfish discards. In fishing year 2020, individual vessels may test different catch handling and reporting methodologies (e.g., volumetric sampling, sub-trip level eVTR), with our approval. Vessels would not be exempt from any other standard reporting and monitoring requirements.

The discard estimates provided in the eVTR would be used for catch accounting, and all catch of allocated groundfish would be deducted from the appropriate sector's allocation. The EM service provider would review the video footage and produce an EM summary report identifying, counting, and generating weight estimates for all groundfish discards. The provider would submit this report to NMFS. We would compare the eVTR and EM summary report to ensure the submissions match within an established tolerance. If the trips do not match, the eVTR would not be used for catch accounting for that trip. For trips that carry a NEFOP observer, the NEFOP data would be used for catch accounting.

In fishing year 2019, we targeted an audit level of 50 percent of trips. In fishing year 2020, we intend to develop performance-based audit standards and may adjust the targeted audit level for vessels up or down in an effort to test a performance-based audit. Developing and implementing a performance-based audit selection process would incentivize accurate reporting on eVTRs and good catch handling practices. Following the EM service provider's review of selected trips, the Northeast Fisheries Science Center would conduct a secondary review of the EM summary reports for a subset of trips, consistent with previous years.

Because participating vessels would be fully monitored and accountable, project partners requested exemptions to access closed areas, to incentivize participation and create additional fishing opportunities for healthy stocks.