

evaluate the effectiveness of a halibut excluder in the Gulf of Alaska trawl cod fishery, which noted higher than desirable escapement rates of the target species. Therefore, an excluder design that avoids high target species losses with more significant reduction in halibut bycatch would be an improvement and could foster wider adoption of these devices among the fleet. This EFP proposes a collaborative study with the Alaska Seafood Cooperative and Amendment 80 fishermen of halibut excluders in the Bering Sea flatfish trawl fishery to conduct field testing to explore improved designs.

Exempted Fishing Permit

On June 2, 2020, Mr. John Gauvin of the Alaska Seafood Cooperative submitted an application for an EFP to develop and test a halibut excluder in the Amendment 80 flatfish fishery. The objectives of this proposed EFP are as follows:

- Collect escapement rate data on a halibut excluder design.
- Employ appropriate data collection methods to statistically estimate excluder performance.
- Conduct excluder testing in two different target flatfish fisheries (yellowfin sole and flathead/mid-shelf flatfish) to get a broader range of results versus testing in just one fishery.
- Collect caudal fin clips from a sample of halibut encountered during field testing for a pilot study of sex ratios of bycaught halibut.
- Draft EFP reports to effectively communicate key results for excluder testing and pilot study of sex ratios.
- Conduct outreach meetings of key results on halibut excluder performance tailored to the information needs of flatfish fishermen and gear manufacturers interested in the improvement of halibut excluders.

Field testing would be conducted on the 261-foot (79.5 meter) factory trawler, The North Star, using twin trawl nets in the yellowfin sole and flathead sole fisheries. This would involve one trip with 60 to 70 total tows, occurring sometime between August 2021 and December 2022. To address potential differences in catch rates, the excluder device would be switched from one side to the other at the half way point for each part of the EFP testing (*i.e.*, halfway through the tows in the yellowfin target; same for the tows in the flathead target). This would allow a separate analysis of excluder performance in each net, which would help to identify differences in catch rates for halibut and target species between sides.

To understand the effects of the excluder, halibut catch and groundfish total catch data would be collected from each side of the twin trawl separately. Catch would be brought on board from the two nets separately and in conjunction with usual observer deck sorting, after which the contents of each net would be placed into separate tanks. Crew members would collect all halibut that make it to the factory (*i.e.*, are not sorted on deck) for purposes of measuring each of these fish and recording the length data before discarding them using the same conveyor belt pathway that is normally used.

The project manager for the field testing trip would collect up to 100 caudal fins from a random sample of halibut from both the deck and the factory, storing them for later testing to determine sex ratios. This should not disturb the normal workflow of observer desk sorting and data collection. Testing would be done in conjunction with researchers from the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC). This will help to provide data on the sex ratio of halibut taken as bycatch, which is a data gap identified by the IPHC.

Exemptions

Two exemptions are necessary to conduct this experiment. First, an exemption would be necessary from the requirement to minimize catch of prohibited species at § 679.21(a)(2)(i) in the event higher than average catch of halibut is encountered during field testing.

Second would be an exemption from § 679.21(a)(2)(ii) regarding careful handling and immediate release of prohibited species catch. This will allow the collection of caudal fin clips from a sample of the halibut encountered. This will also allow crew members to collect and measure the halibut that make it to the factory, recording length data before releasing the fish via the standard conveyor belt pathway.

Permit Conditions, Review, and Effects

The applicant would be required to submit to NMFS a report of the EFP results six months after completion of field testing. The report would include the halibut excluder device designs tested in the experiment; how the tests were conducted, including operational variables tested (such as towing speeds, water conditions, target catch rates); performance of the device in terms of halibut bycatch reduction, target catch escapement, handling, and maintenance; and the total catch of each groundfish species and Pacific halibut

in metric tons during EFP fishing. The activities that would be conducted under this EFP are not expected to have a significant impact on the human environment, as detailed in the categorical exclusion prepared for this action (see **ADDRESSES**).

In accordance with §§ 679.6 and 600.745, NMFS has determined that the application warrants further consideration and has forwarded the application to the Council to initiate consultation. The Council is scheduled to consider the EFP application during its February 2021 meeting, which will be held virtually. The EFP application will also be provided to the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee for review at the February Council meeting. The applicant has been invited to speak in support of the application.

Public Comments

Interested persons may comment on the application during the February 2021 Council meeting during public testimony or the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal (see **ADDRESSES**) until February 12, 2021 when the comment period ends. Information regarding the meeting is available at the Council's website at <http://www.npfmc.org>. Copies of the application and categorical exclusion are available for review from NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**). Comments may also be submitted directly to NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**) by the end of the comment period (see **DATES**).

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

Dated: January 12, 2021.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA801]

Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of SEDAR 73 Assessment Webinar III for South Atlantic Red Snapper.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR 73 assessment of the South Atlantic stock of red snapper will consist of a data scoping webinar,

a workshop, and a series of assessment webinars. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 73 Assessment Webinar III will be held via webinar February 17, 2021, from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. EST. The established times may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the assessment process. Such adjustments may result in the meeting being extended from or completed prior to the time established by this notice. Additional SEDAR 73 workshops and webinar dates and times will publish in a subsequent issue in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: The SEDAR 73 Assessment Webinar III will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Registration is available online at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6502218609208356366>.

SEDAR address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N. Charleston, SC 29405; www.sedarweb.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathleen Howington, SEDAR Coordinator, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405; phone: (843) 571-4373; email: Kathleen.howington@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions, have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a three-step process including: (1) Data Workshop; (2) Assessment Process utilizing webinars; and (3) Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a data report which compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The product of the Assessment Process is a stock assessment report which describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The assessment is independently peer reviewed at the Review Workshop. The product of the Review Workshop is a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are

appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include: data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); international experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion at the Assessment Webinar III:

- Finalize any data decisions remaining
- Finalize modelling issues and decisions

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 this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice 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 accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the SAFMC office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to the meeting.

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

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

Dated: January 12, 2021.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Tornado Watch/Warning Post-Event Evaluation

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

ACTION: Notice of Information Collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before March 16, 2021.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at Adrienne.thomas@noaa.gov. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Dr. Kim Klockow-McClain, Research Scientist, OU CIMMS/NOAA NSSL, 120 David L. Boren Blvd., Norman, OK 73071, 405-325-0805, kim.klockow@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Each year over 1000 tornadoes affect communities across the United States, yet very little is known about how individuals receive, interpret, and respond to information from NOAA relating to this hazard. In fact, only a small sample of tornadoes ever receive study, and most often those are only the largest tornadoes. No generalizable information on tornado warning response after real-world events exists. The National Weather Service and National Severe Storms Laboratory have designed this data collection instrument to allow for more routine collection of this information. Respondents will include members of the US public who have recently (within the previous 30 days) been in or near a tornado, and they will be asked questions about the ways they received, understood, and responded to NWS watch/warning information.

The information would be collected by NWS forecasters using their Damage Assessment Tool (DAT), and also by members of the public who voluntarily access a web tool developed by the National Severe Storms Laboratory. The questions will also be included in a