

system. The permit would expire on August 31, 2022.

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: March 17, 2021.

**Amy Sloan,**

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

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XA940]

**Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit**

**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 Northeast Fisheries Science Center in support of the 2021 Study Fleet Program contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This Exempted Fishing Permit would exempt participating vessels from minimum fish sizes and possession limits for species of interest, for sampling purposes only. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notice to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on Exempted Fishing Permit applications.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before *April 7, 2021*.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit written comments by the following method:

- *Email: nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov.*

Include in the subject line “NEFSC STUDY FLEET EFP.”

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Maria Fenton, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9196.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (Center) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) in support of the 2021

Study Fleet Program. This EFP would exempt 20 commercial fishing vessels from minimum fish sizes and possession limits for species of interest.

The Center established the Study Fleet Program in 2002 to more fully characterize commercial fishing operations and provide sampling opportunities to augment NMFS’s data collection programs. As part of the program, the Center contracts commercial fishing vessels to collect biological data and fish specimens for the Center to use in research relevant to stock assessments and fish biology. The Center’s Study Fleet Program trains participating captains and crew to conduct at-sea sampling consistent with Center sampling protocols for survey and observer programs. During EFP trips, crew would sort, weigh, measure, and collect biological data from fish prior to discarding. During sampling, some discarded fish would remain on deck slightly longer than they would under normal sorting procedures. Exemptions from minimum fish sizes and possession restrictions would allow vessels to temporarily retain catch for at-sea sampling.

Table 1 lists the regulations from which participating vessels would be exempt for at-sea sampling or when retaining and landing fish for research purposes. The exemptions listed in Table 1 are necessary for contracted vessels to acquire the biological samples needed to meet Center research objectives.

TABLE 1—LIST OF VESSEL EXEMPTIONS FOR RETAINING AND LANDING FISH

2021 Study Fleet Program EF	
Number of vessels	20
Exempted regulations in 50 CFR part 648 .....	<p><i>Minimum fish sizes:</i>                      § 648.83 Northeast multispecies minimum fish sizes for haddock, yellowtail flounder, winter flounder, and American plaice.  <i>Possession restrictions:</i>                      § 648.86(a) Haddock.                      § 648.86(d) Small-mesh multispecies.                      § 648.86(g) Yellowtail flounder.                      § 648.86(o) Possession limits implemented by the Regional Administrator.</p>

When directed by the Center, participating vessels would be authorized to retain and land specific amounts of fish exceeding possession limits and/or below minimum fish sizes, for research purposes only. The captain

or crew would deliver these fish to Center staff or local Port Agents upon landing. In these limited circumstances, the Study Fleet Program would give participating vessels a formal biological sampling request prior to landing. This

would ensure that the landed fish do not exceed any collection needs of the Study Fleet Program, as detailed in Table 2.

TABLE 2—2021 STUDY FLEET PROGRAM BIOLOGICAL SAMPLE COLLECTION NEEDS

Species	Stock area *	Gear types #	Collection frequency	Individual fish per collection period	Maximum weight allowed per trip	Maximum allowance
Haddock .....	GOM, GB .....	OTF, DRS .....	Monthly (Dec–Mar).	80 per week (40 from each stock area).	300 lb (136 kg)	4,800 lb (2,177 kg)

TABLE 2—2021 STUDY FLEET PROGRAM BIOLOGICAL SAMPLE COLLECTION NEEDS—Continued

Species	Stock area *	Gear types #	Collection frequency	Individual fish per collection period	Maximum weight allowed per trip	Maximum allowance
Winter Flounder .....	GOM, GB, SNE	OTF, DRS .....	Monthly (Jan–Apr).	120 per week (40 from each stock area).	240 lb (109 kg)	3,840 lb (1,742 kg)
Yellowtail Flounder ....	GOM, GB, SNE	OTF, DRS .....	Monthly (Jan–Apr).	120 per week (40 from each stock area).	135 lb (61 kg) ...	2,160 lb (980 kg)
American Plaice .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Monthly (May–Apr).	100 per month .....	300 lb (136 kg)	5,760 lb (2,613 kg)
Atlantic Mackerel .....	SNE .....	OTM, OTF Jig	Monthly (Jan–Jun).	300 per trip .....	300 lb (136 kg)	1,800 lb (816 kg)
Shortfin Squid .....	Any Area .....	OTM, OTF .....	Monthly (Dec–Mar).	30 per month .....	15 lb (7 kg) .....	60 lb (27 kg)
Summer Flounder .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	65 lb (29 kg) ....	650 lb (295 kg)
Black Sea Bass .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	22 lb (10 kg) ....	220 lb (100 kg)
Scup .....	Any Area .....	OTM, OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	13 lb (6 kg) .....	130 lb (59 kg)
Haddock .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	20 lb (9 kg) .....	200 lb (91 kg)
Bluefish .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	61 lb (28 kg) ....	610 lb (277 kg)
Witch Flounder .....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	10 lb (5 kg) .....	100 lb (45 kg)
Yellowtail Flounder ....	Any Area .....	OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	10 lb (5 kg) .....	100 lb (45 kg)
Atlantic Herring .....	Any Area .....	OTM, OTF, Jig	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	5 lb (2 kg) .....	50 lb (23 kg)
Atlantic Mackerel .....	Any Area .....	OTM, OTF, Jig	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	5 lb (2 kg) .....	50 lb (23 kg)
Butterfish .....	Any Area .....	OTM, OTF .....	Opportunistic .....	Maximum 5 per trip ....	5 lb (2 kg) .....	50 lb (23 kg)

\* Stock area abbreviations: Gulf of Maine (GOM); Georges Bank (GB); Southern New England (SNE).  
 # Gear abbreviations: Otter trawl (OTF); sea scallop dredge (DRS); otter trawl midwater (OTM).

All catch would be attributed to the appropriate commercial fishing quota. For a vessel fishing on a groundfish sector trip, all catch of groundfish stocks allocated to sectors would be deducted from the vessel’s sector’s annual catch entitlement (ACE). Once the ACE for a stock has been reached in a sector, vessels would no longer be allowed to fish in that stock area unless the sector acquired additional ACE for the stock in question. For common pool vessels, all groundfish catch would be counted toward the appropriate trimester total allowable catch (TAC). Common pool vessels would be exempt from the possession and trip limits listed in Table 1, but would still be subject to trimester TAC closures.

If approved, the Center 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: March 17, 2021.

**Jennifer M. Wallace,**  
*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Telecommunications and Information Administration**

**Commerce Spectrum Management Advisory Committee Meeting**

**AGENCY:** National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces a public meeting of the Commerce Spectrum Management Advisory Committee (Committee). The Committee provides advice to the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on spectrum management policy matters.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held April 8, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

**ADDRESSES:** This meeting will be conducted in an electronic format and open to the public via audio teleconference (866–880–0098 participant code 48261650). Public comments may be emailed to [arichardson@ntia.gov](mailto:arichardson@ntia.gov) or mailed to Commerce Spectrum Management Advisory Committee, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 4600, Washington, DC 20230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Antonio Richardson, Designated Federal Officer, at (202) 482–4156 or

[arichardson@ntia.gov](mailto:arichardson@ntia.gov); and/or visit NTIA’s website at <https://www.ntia.gov/category/csmac>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background:** The Committee provides advice to the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information on needed reforms to domestic spectrum policies and management in order to: License radio frequencies in a way that maximizes public benefits; keep wireless networks as open to innovation as possible; and make wireless services available to all Americans. See Charter at [https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/csmac\\_charter\\_10.1.19.pdf](https://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/publications/csmac_charter_10.1.19.pdf).

This Committee is subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App. 2, and is consistent with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Act, 47 U.S.C. 904(b). The Committee functions solely as an advisory body in compliance with the FACA. For more information about the Committee visit: <http://www.ntia.gov/category/csmac>.

**Matters To Be Considered:** The Committee provides advice to the Assistant Secretary to assist in developing and maintaining spectrum management policies that enable the United States to maintain or strengthen its global leadership role in the introduction of communications technology, services, and innovation; thus expanding the economy, adding jobs, and increasing international trade, while at the same time providing for the