

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Joan Hall at the Department of Commerce. Telephone number 202-482-2267 or FAX 202-482-0115. The U.S. Franchising Matchmaker Trade Delegation, The Hague, Netherlands, Munich, Germany, Milan, Italy and Paris, France, November 1-10, 1999.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sam Dhir at the Department of Commerce. Telephone number: 202-482-4756 or FAX number: 202-482-0178. The Healthcare Technologies Matchmaker Trade Delegation, Madrid, Spain and Milan, Italy, February 28-March 3, 2000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Yvonne Jackson at the Department of Commerce. Telephone number: 202-482-2675 or FAX number: 202-482-0178.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Molly Costa, U.S. Department of Commerce: Tel: 202-482-0691 or FAX number: 202-482-0178. The Hotel and Recreation Equipment Trade Mission, Santo Domingo and Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, February 8-11, 2000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sheila de Andujar at the U.S. Department of Commerce Telephone: 809-221-2171, x408 or FAX 809-688-4838.

Dated: September 27, 1999.

**John Klingelhut,**

*Director, Office of Private/Public Initiatives.*  
[FR Doc. 99-25487 Filed 9-30-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-FP-M

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D.092799F]

#### Highly Migratory Species Tournament Registration and Reporting

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

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**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, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before November 30, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington DC 20230 (or via Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Kimberly Dawson, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, NMFS, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, 301-713-2328.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

Tournament operators planning to hold tournaments targeting Atlantic highly migratory species (i.e., tunas, billfish, swordfish, sharks) will be required to register their tournaments with NMFS at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the tournament.

Tournament operators who have held tournaments targeting Atlantic highly migratory species will be required to submit summary reports on landings of Atlantic highly migratory species to NMFS. International treaty obligations pertaining to catch monitoring and provision of scientific information for these species require a comprehensive reporting program.

##### II. Method of Collection

The information required will be transcribed on registration and reporting forms provided by NMFS. Completed forms are mailed to NMFS.

##### III. Data

*OMB Number:* 0648-0323.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission.

*Affected public:* Individuals, business or other for-profit organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 300.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 2 minutes to complete a tournament registration form and 20 minutes to complete a tournament landings report.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 110.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$0 (no capital expenditures).

##### IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the

agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and /or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: September 24, 1999.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-25572 Filed 9-30-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 990907250-9250-01; I.D. 063099B]

RIN 0648-ZA70

#### Community-Based Restoration Program

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

**ACTION:** Request for comments on proposed guidelines for the Community-Based Restoration Program.

**SUMMARY:** NOAA Fisheries began a new Community-Based Restoration Program (Program) in 1996 to encourage local efforts to restore fish habitats. Since that time NOAA has provided funding to 66 small-scale habitat restoration projects around coastal America. The Program is a systematic national effort to encourage partnerships with Federal agencies, states, local governments, non-governmental and non-profit organizations, businesses, industry and schools to carry out locally important habitat restorations to benefit living marine resources. The Program is developing formal guidelines which will expand the financial instruments available to accomplish furtherance of this mission. This announcement provides proposed guidelines for the implementation of the Program in FY 2000 and beyond. NMFS is seeking comments on the proposed guidelines for the Program through this document. This is not a solicitation of project proposals.

**DATES:** The agency must receive comments concerning this document on or before November 1, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be provided in writing. Please send your comments by mail to: Director, NOAA Restoration Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East West Highway (F/HC3), Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282, ATTN: Guideline Comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Christopher D. Doley, (301) 713-0174, or by e-mail at [Chris.Doley@noaa.gov](mailto:Chris.Doley@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

Habitat loss and degradation are major, long-term threats to the sustainability of the Nation's fishery resources. Over 75 percent of commercial fisheries and 80-90 percent of recreational marine and anadromous fishes depend on estuarine or coastal habitats for all or part of their life-cycles. Protecting existing, undamaged habitat is a priority and should be combined with coastal habitat restoration to enlarge and enhance the functionality of degraded habitat. Restored coastal habitat will help rebuild fisheries stocks and recover threatened or endangered species. Restoring coastal habitats will help ensure that valuable resources will be available to future generations of Americans.

The proposed guidelines that follow reflect modifications to the existing Program to allow greater flexibility to support community-based habitat restoration projects. The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of the goals, objectives and structure of the Program, and to solicit comments and suggestions concerning Program design for implementation in FY 2000 and beyond. The Program will provide **Federal Register** notifications on the availability of funds and will solicit project proposals one or more times per year. Each solicitation will provide greater detail on the criteria for project selection and/or the weighting of the criteria.

**Electronic Access**

Information on the existing Program, including projects that have been funded to date, can be found on the world wide web at: <http://www.nmfs.gov/habitat/restoration>.

**Goals and Objectives**

The Program's objective is to bring together citizen groups, public and non-profit organizations, industry, corporations and businesses, youth conservation corps, students,

landowners, and local government, state, and Federal agencies to implement habitat restoration projects to benefit NOAA trust resources. Partnerships are sought at the national and local level to contribute funding, land, technical assistance, workforce support or other in-kind services to allow citizens to take responsibility for the improvement of locally important living marine resources.

The Program recognizes the significant role that communities play in habitat restoration and protection and acknowledges that habitat restoration is often best supported and implemented at a community level. Projects are successful because they have significant community support and depend upon citizens' "hands-on" involvement. The role of NMFS in the Program is to strengthen the development and implementation of sound restoration projects. NMFS anticipates maintaining the current focus of the Program by continuing to form strong partnerships to fund grass-roots, bottom-up activities that restore habitat and develop stewardship and a conservation ethic for the Nation's living marine resources.

**Eligibility Requirements**

Any state, local or tribal government, regional governmental body, public or private agency or organization may sponsor a project for funding consideration. The sponsoring group or organization may be a recipient of the funds or may recommend that a Federal agency receive the funds for implementation. However, in the latter situation, NMFS would enter into a Memorandum of Agreement between NMFS, the sponsor and the Federal agency. Although Federal and state agencies and municipalities are eligible to be the recipient of funding, they are encouraged to work in partnership with community groups. Successful applicants will be those whose projects demonstrate that significant, direct benefits are expected to NOAA trust resources within supportive, involved communities. Proponents who seek funding under the Program are not eligible to seek funding for the same project under other Restoration Center programs. The Program operates under statutory authority that precludes individuals from applying.

**Eligible Restoration Activities**

NMFS is interested in funding projects that will result in on-the-ground restoration of habitat to benefit living marine resources, including anadromous fish species. Habitat restoration is defined here as activities that directly result in the

reestablishment or re-creation of stable, productive marine, estuarine or coastal river biological systems. Restoration may include, but is not limited to: improvement of coastal wetland tidal exchange or reestablishment of historic hydrology, dam or berm removal, fish passageway improvements, natural or artificial reef/substrate/habitat creation, establishment of riparian buffer zones and improvement of freshwater habitat features that support anadromous fishes, planting of native coastal wetland and submerged aquatic vegetation and improvements of feeding, spawning and growth areas essential to fisheries.

In general, proposed projects should clearly demonstrate anticipated benefits to habitats such as salt marshes, seagrass beds, coral reefs, mangrove forests and riparian habitat near rivers, streams and creeks used by anadromous fish. To protect the Federal investment, projects on private lands must demonstrate a minimum 10-year conservation easement. Projects on permanently protected lands may be given priority consideration.

Projects must involve significant community support through an educational and volunteer component tied to the restoration activities. Implementation of on-the-ground habitat restoration projects must involve community outreach and post-restoration monitoring to assess project success, and may involve limited pre-implementation activities such as engineering and design and short-term baseline studies. Proposals emphasizing only research, outreach, monitoring or coordination are discouraged, as are funding requests primarily for administration, salaries, and overhead.

Although NMFS recognizes that water quality issues may impact habitat restoration efforts, this initiative is intended to fund physical habitat restoration projects rather than direct water quality improvement measures, such as wastewater treatment plant upgrades or combined sewer outfall corrections. Similarly, the following restoration projects will not be eligible for funding: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or Federal law; (2) activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under Federal or state law, and (3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation. Funds from this program may be available to enhance restoration activities beyond the scope legally required by these activities.

### Examples of Previously Funded Projects

The following examples are community-based restoration projects that have been funded with assistance from the Restoration Center. These examples are only illustrative and are not intended to limit the scope of future proposals in any way.

#### *Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Restoration*

Funding was provided to evaluate the feasibility of using volunteer divers to restore seagrass. A protocol was developed to train volunteers in water quality monitoring and seagrass transplantation techniques.

#### *Fish Ladder Construction*

An impediment to fish passage was corrected through the design and construction of a step-pool fish ladder, which now allows native steelhead trout to reach their historic spawning grounds.

#### *Invasive Plant Removal*

Funding was provided to a coalition of volunteer groups called "Pepperbusters" who worked to remove exotic Brazilian pepper plants and replant native shoreline vegetation.

#### *Salt Marsh Restoration*

Tidal flushing was restored to 20 acres of salt marsh by replacing an undersized culvert to increase the mean high water level in the restricted portion of the marsh.

#### *Oyster Reef Restoration*

Funding was provided to increase oyster reef habitat by reconstructing historic reefs and seeding them with hatchery-produced seed oysters grown in floating cages by students.

#### *Kelp Forest Restoration*

Funding was provided to train community dive groups in kelp reforestation activities, including the preparation, planting and maintenance of kelp sites, documentation of growth patterns and changes in marine life attracted to the newly-planted kelp areas.

#### *Wetland Plant Nursery*

Funding was provided to start an innovative wetland nursery program in local high schools, where science and ecology classes build wetland nurseries on-campus to grow salt marsh grasses for local restoration efforts.

#### *Riparian Habitat Restoration*

Funding was provided to train youth corps in the use of biorestation and stabilization techniques to restore

eroding riverbanks and improve habitat for salmon smolt and other fish species.

#### *Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration*

Highly functional salmonid and wildlife habitat was restored with the cooperation of private landowners by opening silted enclosures along a slough to provide refuge for juvenile salmonids during the winter flood flows.

### Funding Ranges

NMFS anticipates that typical project awards will range from \$25,000 to \$50,000, but NMFS will accept proposals ranging from \$5,000 to \$200,000. Final awards will be dependent on funding levels appropriated by Congress. Each solicitation issued for pre-applications for the Program will contain suggested ranges for funding requests and any specific criteria, including the weighting of selection criteria that will be used for proposal evaluation. The number of awards to be made in FY 2000 and beyond will depend on the amount of funds appropriated to the Program.

### Funding Sources and Dispersal Mechanisms

The Restoration Center envisions funding projects through joint project agreements, cooperative agreements and grants, and intra- and interagency transfers, as appropriate.

The Secretary of Commerce has authority to enter into joint project agreements with non-profit, research or public organizations on matters of mutual interest, the cost of which is equitably apportioned. The principal purpose of a joint project agreement is to engage in a collaborative and equitably apportioned effort with a qualified organization on matters of mutual interest.

Interagency agreements are written documents containing specific provisions of governing authorities, responsibilities, and funding, entered into between NMFS and a reimbursing Federal agency or between another Federal agency and NMFS when NMFS is the funding organization. Such agreements will also require inclusion of a local sponsor of the restoration project.

A cooperative agreement is a legal instrument reflecting a relationship between NMFS and a recipient whenever (1) the principal purpose of the relationship is to provide financial assistance to the recipient and (2) substantial involvement is anticipated between NMFS and the recipient during performance of the contemplated activity. A grant is similar to a cooperative agreement, except that in

the case of grants, substantial involvement between NMFS and the recipient is not anticipated during the performance of the contemplated activity. Financial assistance is the transfer of money, property, services or anything of value to a recipient in order to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation which is authorized by Federal statute.

The instrument chosen will be based on such factors as degree of direct NOAA involvement with the project beyond the provision of financial assistance, the proportion of funds invested in the project by NOAA and the other organizations, and the efficiency of the different mechanisms to achieve the Program's goals and objectives. NMFS will determine which method is the most appropriate for funding individual projects based on the specific circumstances of each project.

NMFS reserves the right to fund individual projects directly, or through partnership arrangements. The Program will continue to create partnership arrangements at a national level with non-profit and other organizations that have similar goals for improving fisheries habitat. Partnerships are a key element that allow the Restoration Center to significantly leverage the funding available for on-the-ground restoration. Partnerships also encourage the sharing and distribution of technical expertise, often improve relations between diverse organizations with common goals, and allow NOAA to reach larger and more diverse communities that have vested interests in fishery habitat restoration.

The Restoration Center will also function in a clearinghouse capacity to help develop and link high quality proposals for habitat restoration with other potential funding sources whose evaluation criteria contain similar specifications for habitat enhancement. This will provide greater exposure for project ideas that increase the chances for project proponents to secure funding.

Each year the Restoration Center Director will make a determination of the proportion of the funds available to the Program that will be obligated to national or regional partnerships and the proportion for direct project solicitation. The proportion will be established annually and will depend upon the amount of funds available from partnership organizations for habitat restoration activities that meet the goals and objectives of the Program, including the goal of funding a broad array of projects over a wide geographic distribution.

### Match and Use of Funds

The focus of the Program is to provide seed money to leverage funds and other contributions from a broad public and private sector to implement locally important habitat restoration to benefit living marine resources. To this end, proposals are required to demonstrate a minimum non-Federal match (equitable share, in the case of a joint project) of 50-percent of the total funds needed to complete the proposed project. The Restoration Center may waive the requirement for 50-percent matching funds if the project meets the following three requirements: (1) The project is judged to be an outstanding match with NMFS and Restoration Center objectives; (2) there is a critical need to carry out the project in a timely fashion in order to benefit NOAA trust resources; and (3) the project sponsor has attempted to obtain matching funds but was unable to come up with the full 50-percent minimum requirement. NOAA strongly encourages applicants to leverage as much investment as possible. The degree to which cost-sharing exceeds the minimum level may be taken into account in the final selection of projects to be funded. The match can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include in-kind goods and services. Federal funds may not be considered as matching funds. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from additional project partners in order to meet the 50-percent required match (equitable share, in the case of a joint project) for the project. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be obligated to account for the amount of cost-share reflected in the proposal and provide letters of commitment identifying and precisely specifying match (or equitable share) to confirm stated contributions.

For each proposal accepted for funding one award will be made. Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs which the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations", A-21, "Cost Principles for Education Institutions" and A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments." Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable." However, in order to encourage on-the-ground restoration, if funding for salaries is requested, at least 75 percent of the total salary request must be used to support staff

accomplishing the restoration work. Entertainment costs are an example of unallowable costs. Generally, the Program will make awards only to those projects where requested funding will be used to complete proposed restoration activities, with the exception of post-construction monitoring, within a period of 18 months from the time awards are distributed.

### Project Selection Process

NOAA will publish, in the **Federal Register**, notifications soliciting project proposals one or more times annually. Pre-proposals submitted in response to these solicitation notices will be screened for eligibility and conformance with the final program guidelines and must achieve a minimum score based on the weighting of selection criteria set forth within each solicitation. Pre-proposals will be limited to 4 single-spaced, single-sided pages of 12 point type, including an abstract of the work to be performed. An appendix, limited to 2 pages, may be added to include maps, photographs, letters of support or other supplementary information. Suggested pre-proposal contents may be detailed in each solicitation, but are also summarized as follows: (1) Project abstract that includes the applicant's name, address and phone number, the Congressional district where the project will occur, the amount of assistance requested, the various entities or organizations that will be partners in the project, and any indication of support from other organizations, and (2) a proposal narrative that explains the relationship of the proposed restoration activity to the criteria for project selection described in each **Federal Register** notification, including the project's objectives, methodology and anticipated results, degree of community involvement, and a plan for evaluating project success. A detailed budget, while helpful in evaluating the cost effectiveness of the project, is not required in a pre-proposal, but the total amount of assistance requested is required.

Pre-proposals will be used to determine if applicants meet the minimum Program requirements. Guidance will be provided as to the most suitable funding mechanism that project proponents may pursue for further consideration. Some of these proposals will be required to submit additional information, which may require providing additional information on budget details. Restoration projects determined to be eligible by NOAA for funding under this program will undergo a technical review, ranking and selection process.

As appropriate during this process, the NOAA Restoration Center will consult with other NMFS and NOAA offices, the NOAA Grants Management Division, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Regional Fishery Management Councils, other Federal and state agencies such as state coastal management agencies and state fish and wildlife agencies, private and public sector subject experts or other interested parties who have knowledge of a specific project or its subject matter. The NOAA Restoration Center will solicit individual technical evaluations of each project. Recommendations on the merits of funding each project and the level of funding NMFS should award will be presented to the Director of the NOAA Restoration Center for final approval. Reviewers will assign scores to proposals ranging from 0 (unacceptable) to 100 (excellent) based on the following four evaluation criteria:

(1) *Benefit to NOAA Trust Resources*  
NMFS is interested in funding projects where benefits to living marine resources can be realized. Therefore, NMFS will evaluate proposals based on the potential of the restoration project to restore, protect, conserve, and create habitats and ecosystems vital to self-sustaining populations of living marine resources under NOAA Fisheries stewardship. Locations where restoration projects may have high potential to benefit NOAA trust resources include areas identified as essential fish habitat (EFH) and areas within EFH identified as Habitat Areas of Particular Concern; areas identified as critical habitat for listed marine and anadromous species; areas identified as important habitat for marine mammals; areas located within National Marine Sanctuaries or National Estuarine Research Reserves; watersheds or other areas under conservation management, such as special management areas under state coastal management programs; and other important commercial or recreational marine fish habitat, including degraded areas that formerly were important habitat for living marine resources.

### (2) *Technical Merit and Adequacy of Implementation Plan*

Proposals will be evaluated on the technical feasibility of the project from both biological and engineering perspectives, and the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners. Communities and/or organizations developing their first locally driven restoration project may not be able to document past experience, and, therefore, will be evaluated on the basis of the availability of technical expertise to guide the

project to a successful completion. Proposals will also be evaluated on their ability to: (a) Deliver the restoration objective stated in the proposal; (b) provide educational benefits; (c) incorporate post-restoration monitoring and assessment of project success in terms of meeting the proposed objectives; (d) demonstrate that the restoration activity will be sustainable and long-lasting; (e) demonstrate that implementation of the project will meet all state environmental laws and Federal consistency requirements by obtaining or proceeding to obtain applicable permits and consultations; and (f) provide mid-term and final project reports, including photo-documentation of the project site and restoration activities.

### (3) *Community Commitment and Partnership Development*

Proposals will be evaluated on how well they describe the depth and breadth of the community's support. Projects must incorporate significant community involvement, which may include: (a) Hands-on training and restoration activities undertaken by volunteer students and other citizens; (b) input from local entities such as businesses, conservation organizations and others, either through in-kind goods and services (earth moving, technical expertise, easements) or cash contributions; (c) visibility within the community and demonstrated potential for public outreach and/or outreach products, including, but not limited to, an educational sign/poster at the project site, compilation of protocols into training manuals, guides, brochures, or videos; (d) cooperation with private landowners that set an example within the community for natural resource conservation; (e) support by state and local governments; (f) representation of those within the community who have an interest in or are affected by the project and seek the benefits of the restoration; (g) ability to achieve long-term stewardship for restored resources and generate a community conservation ethic; and/or (h) description of methods to assure that all residents or citizens affected by the project are provided an opportunity to participate.

### (4) *Cost-effectiveness and Budget Justification*

Projects will be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate that a significant benefit will be generated for the most reasonable cost; on their importance to NOAA trust resources; the extent of habitat and degree to which it will be restored; and on their demonstration of partnership and collaboration. Projects will also be ranked in terms of their need for funding and the ability of

NMFS to act as a catalyst to implement projects. NMFS will require cost-sharing to leverage funding and to encourage partnerships among government, industry, and academia to address the needs of communities to restore important fisheries habitat. Applicants submitting full proposals must include a detailed cost estimate showing a breakdown of total project costs. Cost-sharing must be indicated as Federal and non-Federal shares, divided into cash and in-kind contributions, and must be accompanied by commitment letters. The exact amount of funds awarded to a project and the funding instrument will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA/NMFS representatives. The application requirements will differ depending upon the funding instrument selected. Projects receiving funds under this program will have to meet applicable NOAA/Department of Commerce/Federal policies, requirements and laws.

NMFS is particularly interested in comments on the following:

Are there additional criteria for proposal evaluation that should be included? Are there criteria that should be excluded?

Should the evaluation criteria listed above receive equal or different weighting during evaluation, and why?

### **Statutory Authority**

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1956, 16 U.S.C. 661-667; Joint Project Authority, 15 U.S.C. 1525, and the Economy Act, 31 U.S.C. 1535.

Dated: September 27, 1999.

**Andrew A. Rosenberg,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 092499E]

### **Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Caribbean Fishery Management Council's Queen Conch Committee will hold a public meeting to discuss the issues included in the agenda.

**DATES:** The Committee will meet on October 20, 1999. The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will adjourn at 4:00 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 8000 Tartak St., Isla Verde, Puerto Rico.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, Puerto Rico; telephone: (787) 766-5926.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The agenda is as follows:

Call to Order  
Adoption of Agenda  
Queen Conch  
Banning Use or SCUBA Gear in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)  
Banning Queen Conch Fishing in the EEZ

Establishing a Four Months Closed Season

Alternative Management Measures to the Size Limit Requirement -Draft Option Paper

Discussion of Puerto Rico's Present and New Fishing Regulations

Other Business

The meeting is open to the public, and will be conducted in the English language. However, simultaneous interpretation services (English-Spanish) will be available. Fishers and other interested persons are invited to attend.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

### **Special Accommodations**

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Miguel A. Rolon at the Council (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 27, 1999.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

[FR Doc. 99-25636 Filed 9-30-99; 8:45 am]

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