

equipment authorization apply to the Commission, and instead propose that they apply to designated Telecommunications Certification Bodies. The Commission is proposing that instead of submitting part 68 application information to the Commission, the TCBs would be required to submit the data to a nationwide database instead, which shall be administered by a private entity. The Commission is also proposing to offer responsible parties the option to use either a Self-Declaration of Conformity or a verification process for equipment authorization. Such parties would have to submit data concerning their equipment to a nationwide database.

26. Further, the Commission is proposing to privatize development and maintenance of technical criteria for terminal equipment, other than those technical criteria required for compliance with the HAC/VC and consumer protection rules, which the Commission proposes to retain. Small entities with an interest in the development, interpretation, and waiver of such technical criteria would be required to seek the ruling of the standard development organization responsible for the standard at issue in the first instance. The Commission, however, proposes to retain full de novo review procedures for any industry decision.

27. The Commission also proposes to require that certain information regarding the equipment authorized under part 68 would be placed into a publicly available database. This information would be available for review of technical parameters of specific equipment, including parameters required for compliance with hearing aid compatibility, volume control, and other HAC/VC requirements. This requirement would not be a new information requirement since application data is currently required and kept in a Commission database.

28. Finally, the Commission proposes to unify the numbering system and the logo that must be imprinted on customer premises equipment. Currently, part 15 and part 68 have different labeling and different registration numbering systems.

29. *Steps Taken to Minimize Significant Economic Impact on Small Entities, and Significant Alternatives Considered.* The RFA requires an agency to describe any significant alternatives that it has considered in reaching its proposed approach, which may include the following four alternatives: (1) the establishment of

differing compliance or reporting requirements or timetables that take into account the resources available to small entities; (2) the clarification, consolidation, or simplification of compliance or reporting requirements under the rule for small entities; (3) the use of performance, rather than design, standards; and (4) an exemption from coverage of the rule, or any part thereof, for small entities.

30. The proposals in this Notice are designed to reduce the length of time for new technology to reach the market. This may benefit small entities especially because the proposals would cut any manufacturer's cost to bring an equipment design to market. Alternatives for making these reductions are included in the form of options for different methods of (1) industry development and maintenance of technical standards and (2) equipment registration. The Commission requests comment on these options.

31. The Commission requests comment on whether small entities would be adversely affected by the proposals herein, particularly whether the proposed enforcement procedures or any of the proposed options for establishing technical criteria would have a significant economic impact. The Commission believes that the proposals would have either no impact, or would reduce, any economic burdens on small entities.

32. *Federal Rules that May Duplicate, Overlap, or Conflict With the Proposed Rules.* None.

### C. Comment Filing Procedures

33. Interested parties may file comments on or before June 23, 2000 and reply comments on or before July 7, 2000. Parties must file an original and four copies of each filing. All filings must be sent to the Commission's Secretary, Magalie Roman Salas, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 Twelfth Street, SW, Room TW-B204F, Washington, DC 20554. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) or by filing paper copies. *See Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 68 FR 24,121 (1998). Comments filed through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>. Generally, only one copy of an electronic submission must be filed. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket number, CC Docket No. 99-216.

34. Written comments must be submitted by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the proposed information collections on or before July 31, 2000. In addition to filing comments with the Secretary, a copy of any comments on the information collections contained herein should be submitted to Judy Boley, Federal Communications Commission, Room 1-C804, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554, or via the Internet to [jboley@fcc.gov](mailto:jboley@fcc.gov) and to Edward C. Springer, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10236 NEOB, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503 or via the Internet to [edward.springer@omb.eop.gov](mailto:edward.springer@omb.eop.gov).

35. Parties should also file one copy of any documents filed in this docket with the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Comments and reply comments will be available for public inspection during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

### List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 68

Administrative practice and procedure, Communications common carriers, Communications equipment, Labeling, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Telephone.

Federal Communications Commission.

**Magalie Roman Salas,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 00-13588 Filed 5-30-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

---

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 648

[I.D. 052300A]

#### New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notification of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a 2-day public meeting on June 14 and 15, 2000, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 14, 2000, beginning at

9:30 a.m. and Thursday, June 15, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Sheraton Harborside Hotel, 250 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801; telephone (603) 431-2300. Requests for special accommodations should be addressed to the New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950; telephone (978) 465-0492.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (978) 465-0492.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Wednesday, June 14, 2000**

After introductions, the meeting will begin with a report from the Chairman of the Council's Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) Committee (committee). The committee will seek Council guidance on issues to be considered for the development of comments during the Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization process and may ask for approval of preliminary draft comments. This agenda item will be followed by two presentations to be discussed by NMFS staff: An overview of the Vessel Monitoring System Program in the Northeast; and Applications of Vessel Monitoring Systems for Improved Fisheries Science and Management. Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and related topics will be discussed during the

second half of the day. The Scallop Committee will present proposed Amendment 10 management alternatives. Alternatives selected for further development will be analyzed in terms of their scallop, habitat, bycatch, gear conflict, enforcement, and social and economic impacts in a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Under consideration are proposals for: Rotational area management (which would also require a re-estimation of the overfishing definition reference points, consistent with the expected change in size selection and other factors); a requirement for scallop nets to be modified to achieve the same selectivity and/or equivalent fishing mortality as dredges; a change in the fishing year and the annual review process; and possibly adjusting the present crew size limits. The Scallop Committee also will provide an update on the development of the annual adjustment to management measures for the FMP (Framework Adjustment 14) scheduled to take effect in March 2001.

**Thursday, June 15, 2000**

The second day of the meeting will begin with reports on recent activities from the Council Chairman, Executive Director, the Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council liaisons, and representatives of the Coast Guard, NMFS Enforcement, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

**Announcement of Experimental Fishery Application**

The Regional Administrator will discuss, during the reports portion of the agenda, the receipt of an experimental fishing proposal submitted by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) for which the issuance of Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) is required. The Regional Administrator has made a preliminary determination that the application is complete and warrants further consideration. The public may comment during the discussion at the Council meeting, or may submit comments in writing. Written comments must be received by June 15, 2000, and should be submitted to: Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Written comments may be submitted by facsimile (fax) to (978) 281-9135, but may not be submitted via e-mail or the Internet. The proposal is summarized here.

The MADMF proposes to continue the work they conducted beginning in 1997 to show that small-mesh whiting fishing with a raised footrope trawl configuration can effectively target whiting in areas east of Cape Cod. The experimental area, formerly referred to as Area 3 during the 1999 experiment, is proposed to be modified this year by shifting the western boundary farther west to the port of Chatham, MA (see coordinates below).

Point Number	Latitude	Longitude
4 .....	42°14.05'	70°08.80'
7 .....	42°09.20'	69°47.80'
8 .....	41°54.85'	69°35.20'
9 .....	41°41.50'	69°32.85'
10 .....	41°39.00'	69°44.30'
11 .....	41°45.60'	69°51.80'
12 .....	41°52.30'	69°52.55'
13 .....	41°55.50'	69°53.45'
4 .....	42°14.05'	70°08.80'

This change in area would likely expand the participating fleet and improve our understanding of bycatch levels in the area through increased data collection and gear experimentation. The industry cooperative experiment is proposed to take place from September 1 to December 30, 2000. The experiment is likely to involve approximately 20 vessels; 5 vessels in the early part of the season (September through November) and an additional 15 beginning in late

November through to December 2000. Enrollment would be established by the MADMF similar to last year, when historical participation and previous experience with the raised footrope trawl gear operation played a role in the selection process conducted by the MADMF. It is expected that 100 percent of the participants would be vessels from Chatham, MA, during the early part of the season beginning in September through to October. In

November and December, it is expected that approximately 50 percent of the participants would be from the ports of Gloucester and Provincetown, MA, with the remaining vessels continuing to be from Chatham. The purpose of the experimental fishery is to document bycatch levels in this area. If they are below the 5-percent regulated multispecies bycatch standard, the fishery could be found to be an exempted fishery.

The Council approved an exemption request for an area comprising the experimental Areas 2B and 4 under Framework 35 to the Northeast Fishery Management Plan (Framework 35). The MADMF did not request that Area 3 be included in the exemption due to the low sample size and inconclusive data results from previous year's experiments. Therefore, this year's experiment proposes to increase the sampling size (fleet size expansion) and improve the confidence level of data on bycatch of regulated multispecies, overall effort, species composition and gear performance.

The MADMF has stated that the gear specifications would be identical to those approved under Framework 35, including the minimum mesh size requirement of 2.5 inches (6.35 cm), the headrope, ground gear, footrope and drop chains settings and configurations, option to use the sweepless trawl, and a prohibition on use of net strengtheners. Also, net possession restrictions would be amended to allow fishermen to leave their large-mesh groundfish net aboard the vessel (in addition to the small mesh raised footrope trawl) when enrolled in the fishery.

The area defined by the MADMF for the experiment overlaps a portion of the Gulf of Maine Rolling Closure Area V (Rolling Closure Area) from October 1—November 30, 2000. NMFS is also requesting comments on MADMF's request that participants in the experimental fishery be allowed to fish in the Rolling Closure Area. The MADMF hopes that this overlap would help define a continuous exemption area including the area proposed in Framework 35 and the area proposed in this experiment.

The MADMF personnel would sea sample approximately 10–20 percent of the total trips during the course of the experimental fishery season; September through December of 2000. In addition, participants would be required to record catch information on a tow-by-tow basis on MADMF-supplied logs and submit all logs weekly to MADMF. If bycatch problems should develop, MADMF would take the appropriate remedial actions to amend the problem, as they have in past years.

EFPs would be issued to participating federally permitted whiting vessels to exempt them from DAS, mesh size and other gear restrictions required as part of the Northeast Multispecies FMP during the specified season.

Following reports and consideration of the experimental fishery proposal, the Groundfish Committee will report on the development of Amendment 13 to

the Northeast Multispecies FMP. The Habitat Committee will report during the afternoon session. Included will be a presentation on the 2000 Habitat Annual Review Report, discussion and possible approval of recommendations concerning the establishment of one or more dedicated habitat research areas, and review and possible approval of a letter to the Minerals Management Service about proposed sand mining off the New Jersey coast.

Prior to addressing any other outstanding business, the Capacity and Herring Committees will update the Council on their most recent activities.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal 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.

The New England Council will consider public comments at a minimum of two Council meetings before making recommendations to the Regional Administrator on any framework adjustment to a fishery management plan. If she concurs with the adjustment proposed by the Council, the Regional Administrator has the discretion to publish the action either as proposed or final regulations in the **Federal Register**. Documents pertaining to framework adjustments are available for public review 7 days prior to a final vote by the Council.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 24, 2000.

**Richard W. Surdi,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 00-13569 Filed 5-30-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-F**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 000524153-0153-01; I.D. 042100C]

RIN 0648-AO11

#### Fisheries off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Highly Migratory Species Fishery; Control Date

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

**ACTION:** Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking; Notice of a control date for Pacific Coast Highly Migratory Species Fisheries; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) is developing a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) off the Pacific Coast that would place HMS species such as tuna, billfish, and sharks under Federal management. This document announces a control date of March 9, 2000, after which vessels participating in the commercial (troll, long line, drift gillnet, harpoon, purse seine), and charter boat fisheries for HMS may not be qualified if the Council determines that a program to limit entry to the fisheries is appropriate. The intended effect of this announcement is to discourage speculative entry into the Pacific Coast HMS fisheries while the Council determines whether, it will limit participation in the fisheries in the future. If the Council decides to limit future participation, it will decide on criteria at that time.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted by June 30, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments on this advance notice of proposed rulemaking may be mailed to Jim Lone, Chairman, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Svein Fougner, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Southwest Region, NMFS, 562-980-4040.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Council was established under section 302(a)(1)(F) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Council has concluded that an HMS FMP is needed and has named a plan development team. The Council sponsored scoping sessions to obtain