

DATES: The meeting dates are:

1. Honolulu, HI, November 14, 2000, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
2. Miami, FL, November 16, 2000, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
3. Silver Spring, MD; November 20, 2000, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The workshop locations are:

1. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, Hawaii Imin International Conference Center, Jefferson Hall, Pacific Room, East West Center Road, Honolulu, HI 96822.
2. Miami: Rosenstiel School Auditorium, 4600 Rickenbacker Causeway, Miami, FL 33149.
3. Silver Spring: NOAA Auditorium, 1301 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD. 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Edwin Rhodes at (301) 713-2334 or Colin Nash at (360) 871 8309. For specific workshop information contact: Honolulu, HI, Wende Goo (808) 983 5303; Miami, FL, Daniel Benetti (305) 361 4889 or Kim Newlin (305) 361 4464; Silver Spring, MD, Edwin Rhodes, (301) 713 2334.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

NMFS has Federal responsibility for the living marine resources of the United States. Under authorities of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, NMFS has responsibility for federally managed species and for the conservation and enhancement of essential fish habitat in the zone seaward of coastal state boundaries to the 200 nautical mile limit of the EEZ. NMFS has additional responsibilities for threatened and endangered species and for marine mammals under authorities of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. NMFS anticipates increasing aquaculture activity in the EEZ. In order to provide guidance to potential users of the U.S. EEZ for aquaculture, NMFS, with broad stakeholder input, will produce a Code of Conduct for Responsible Aquaculture in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone. It is the purpose of such a Code of Conduct to provide general guidance to the aquaculture industry for siting and operating aquaculture facilities in this zone, and to provide NMFS with a framework that can be used to ensure a more consistent review of aquaculture projects that require agency actions. NMFS may also use the Code of Conduct as a starting point for the development of regulatory standards in the future.

The United States was an active participant in the 1993-1995

consultations that led to the adoption by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (FAO Code). While the FAO Code is a voluntary and non-binding instrument, the United States has consistently supported its usefulness as an internationally agreed upon statement of principles that should govern the policies of FAO members in all sectors of the fishing industry, including aquaculture, which is addressed in Article 9 of the FAO Code. Although the Code of Conduct being developed for the U.S. EEZ does not have to follow the FAO model, the FAO Code is an important reference instrument. A copy of the aquaculture section (Article 9) of the FAO Code can be obtained from the contact persons listed here, and can be found on the internet at <http://www.fao.org/fi/agreem/codecond/ficonde.asp>

NMFS will develop the Code of Conduct in steps. The first step is to get stakeholder input through workshops to assist in Code of Conduct development. NMFS, in consultation with other Federal agencies with authorities in Federal waters, will consider this stakeholder input in producing a draft Code of Conduct, which will be made available for public comment through a Federal Register notice early in 2001. Public comments will be addressed in formulating a final Code of Conduct, which will be published in the Federal Register before January, 2002.

Regional Workshops

NMFS held three workshops in September, 2000, and will hold three more regional workshops to receive additional stakeholder input for development of the Code of Conduct. NMFS seeks input on the scope, content, specificity and use of a Code of Conduct that can be used to help guide aquaculture development in the EEZ. Areas for discussion include, but are not limited to, species choices, siting, transboundary considerations, design and construction of facilities, disease prevention and control, feeds and feeding protocols, effluents and pollution, interactions with wild species and protected resources, general operations, stock enhancement, use conflict resolution, and on-shore impacts. The workshops are open to all interested persons.

Special Accommodations

The workshops will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids

should be directed to Edwin Rhodes at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: October 24, 2000.

Clarence G. Pautzke,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 102400D]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene public meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held on November 13-16, 2000.

ADDRESSES: These meetings will be held at the Isle of Capri Casino Hotel, 151 Beach Boulevard, Biloxi, MS; telephone: 228-435-5400.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 U.S. Highway 301 North, Suite 1000, Tampa, FL 33619.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Wayne E. Swingle, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 228-2815.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Council**

November 15

8:30 a.m.—Convene.

*9 a.m. - 12 noon—*Receive public testimony on a proposed amendment to the Stone Crab Fishery Management Plan (FMP), a proposed amendment to the Shrimp FMP, and a proposed Dolphin/Wahoo FMP. Persons who will testify must turn in a registration card before the start of the testimony period on Wednesday.

*1:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.—*Continue public testimony if needed.

*4 p.m. - 5 p.m.—*Receive a report of the Shrimp Management Committee.

*5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.—*Receive a presentation on the Invasion of Australian Spotted Jellyfish.

*4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.—*Receive a report of the Stone Crab Management Committee.

November 16

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.—Receive a briefing on new travel procedures for Council members.

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.—Receive a report of the Reef Fish Management Committee.

11:30 a.m. - 12 noon—Receive a report of the Mackerel Management Committee.

1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.—Receive a report of the Joint Reef Fish and Mackerel Management Committees.

2:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.—Receive a report of the Habitat Protection Committee.

3 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.—Receive a report of the Administrative Policy Committee.

3:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.—Receive a report of the Stone Crab Management Committee.

3:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.—Receive the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Liaison report.

3:45 p.m. - 4 p.m.—Receive the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas Advisory Committee Report.

4 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.—Receive enforcement reports.

4:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.—Receive the NMFS Regional Administrator's Report.

4:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.—Receive Director's Reports.

4:45 p.m. - 5 p.m.—Other Business.

November 13

1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.—Convene the Shrimp Management Committee to discuss the proposed Shrimp Amendment 11 and develop recommendations for final action by the full Council on Wednesday afternoon. Shrimp Amendment 11 contains alternatives for requiring shrimp vessel permits, shrimp vessel registration, operator permits, and prohibiting trap gear in the royal red shrimp fishery of the exclusive economic zone.

3:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.—Convene the Stone Crab Management Committee to discuss the proposed Stone Crab Amendment 7 and will develop recommendations for final action by the full Council on Thursday afternoon. Stone Crab Amendment 7 proposes to create a Federal trap certificate program for the commercial stone crab fishery in Federal waters off Florida. This program will be similar to the trap certificate program adopted by the state of Florida.

4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.—Convene the Mackerel Management Committee to discuss the proposed Dolphin/Wahoo FMP and develop recommendations for final action by the full Council on Wednesday afternoon. They will also hear scientific presentations on cobia. The Dolphin/Wahoo FMP has been

prepared by the South Atlantic, Gulf, and Caribbean fishery management councils. The first 10 actions, with options, of the Dolphin/Wahoo FMP contain measures that are applicable to the dolphin and wahoo stocks in the jurisdictions of all 3 councils. These include measures to: define the management units; address dealer, vessel, and operator permits; consider data reporting requirements; identify estimates of maximum sustainable yield, optimum yield, and overfishing/overfished criteria; and, framework options to enable seasonal adjustments to the management structure. Other actions, with options, are separately applicable to each Council's area of jurisdiction, and include actions that may be implemented through the framework procedures, e.g. minimum size limits, bag limits, trip limits, and allocations, among others.

November 14

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.—Convene the Reef Fish Management Committee to receive the Reef Fish Stock Assessment Panel's and the Socioeconomic Panel's recommendations on grouper complex rebuilding scenarios, and to receive a report from NMFS on red snapper restoration scenarios. This discussion will include management strategies, estimates of trawl bycatch, alternative assessment scenarios, and the management implications.

1:30 p.m. - 2 p.m.—Convene the Joint Reef Fish and Mackerel Management Committees to consider further Council action on a Draft Amendment for Charter Vessel Permit Moratorium for public hearings. The draft amendment proposes to put a moratorium on the issuance of additional permits for charter vessels to fish for reef fish or coastal migratory pelagics in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The amendment will make the charter vessel permits transferable.

2 p.m. - 4 p.m.—Convene the Habitat Protection Committee to hear a review of the Turkey Creek Development Project, a review of floating production storage and offloading systems, an update on an Essential Fish Habitat lawsuit, receive recommendations from the Texas Habitat Protection Advisory Panel meeting, and discuss draft council wetland and submerged aquatic vegetation policies.

4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.—Convene the Administrative Policy Committee to discuss amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Act) and amendments to the Council's Administrative Handbook. They will develop recommendations for

comments to be heard by full Council on Thursday afternoon.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the agenda may come before the Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council 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 Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency. A copy of the Committee schedule and agenda can be obtained by calling (813) 228-2815.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Anne Alford at the Council (see **ADDRESSES**) by November 6, 2000.

Dated: October 25, 2000.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 102400F]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Research Steering Committee and Social Science Advisory Committee (SSAC) in November, 2000 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meetings will be held on Monday, November 13, 2000. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.