

DATES: Written comments from interested parties on the Permit application must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 pm Pacific daylight time on July 28, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the application should be sent to Kristine Petersen, Salmon Recovery Division, F/NWR1, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 510, Portland, OR 97232 or faxed to (503) 872-2737. Comments on this draft EA may be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is Nason.nwr@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line the following document identifier: "Nason Creek application". Federal e-rulemaking portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. The documents are also available on the Internet at www.nwr.noaa.gov/1sustfsh/10permits/. Requests for copies of the permit application should be directed to the Salmon Recovery Division, F/NWR1, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 510, Portland, OR 97232. Comments received will also be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours by calling (503) 230-5409.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kristine Petersen, Portland, OR (ph: (503)230-5409, fax: (503)872-2737, e-mail: kristine.petersen@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is relevant to the following species and evolutionarily significant units (ESUs):

Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*): endangered, naturally produced and artificially propagated Upper Columbia River (UCR).

Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*): endangered, naturally produced and artificially propagated, UCR spring-run.

Background

Section 9 of the ESA and Federal regulations prohibit the "taking" of a species listed as endangered or threatened. The term "take" is defined under the ESA to mean harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. NMFS may issue permits, under limited circumstances, to take listed species for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the species under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. NMFS regulations governing permits for threatened and endangered species are promulgated at 50 CFR 222.307.

Application Received

On May 20, 2004, the BPA submitted an application to NMFS for an ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) permit for the take of

ESA-listed anadromous fish species associated with monitoring of salmon and steelhead in Nason Creek, a tributary of the Wenatchee River in Washington. The monitoring will enable collection of data to estimate natural and hatchery-origin production and productivity and other life history parameters, as well as to help evaluate the effects of supplementation programs in the Wenatchee River Basin.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA. NMFS will evaluate the application, associated documents, and comments submitted thereon to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA. If it is determined that the requirements are met, a permit will be issued to the BPA for the monitoring actions in Nason Creek. NMFS will publish a record of its final action in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: June 22, 2004.

Phil Williams,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 062104B]

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 will convene public meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held on July 12-15, 2004.

ADDRESSES: These meetings will be held at the Omni Houston Hotel, 4 Riverway, Houston, TX; telephone: 713-871-8181.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 North U.S. Highway 301, 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

July 14, 2004

9 a.m.—Convene.

9:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.—Receive public testimony on the Reef Fish Amendment 23 (Vermilion Snapper Rebuilding Plan) and Applications for Exempted Fishing Permits (if any).

1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.—Receive a presentation on the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Amendment 2.

2:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.—Receive the Shrimp Management Committee report.

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.—Receive the Joint Reef Fish/Mackerel Management Committee report.

3:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.—Receive the Mackerel Management Committee Report.

4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.—(Closed Session) - Receive the report of the Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy Committee.

July 15, 2004

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.—Receive the Reef Fish Management Committee Report.

10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.—Receive the report of the Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy Committee.

11 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.—Receive the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) Liaison report.

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.—Receive Enforcement Reports.

11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.—Receive the NMFS Regional Administrator's Report.

11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.—Receive Director's Reports.

12:15 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.—Other Business

Committees

July 12, 2004

1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.—Convene the Shrimp Management Committee to review the public hearing draft of Shrimp Amendment 13 that includes alternatives for setting maximum sustainable yield (MSY), optimum yield (OY), overfishing, overfished definitions for shrimp, and also includes alternatives for evaluating shrimp trawl bycatch. The committee will also receive presentations by NOAA Enforcement on a case study of illegal shrimp trawling in the Gulf and by NMFS on the status of Gulf shrimp stocks.

3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.—Convene the Joint Reef fish/Mackerel Management Committee to review both the public hearing draft of Reef Fish Amendment 24 and Mackerel Amendment 15 that proposes creating a limited access system for both of these fisheries. The joint committee will also review public comments on a Scoping Document for an Amendment for the Extension of the

Charter Vessel/Headboat Permit Moratorium. Finally, the joint committee will discuss problems with implementation of the current moratorium and possible actions.

July 13, 2004

8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.—Convene the Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy Committee in a session closed to the public to revise the Council's Statement of Practices and Procedures (SOPPs) and the Administrative Handbook of Policies and Procedures which regulates personnel.

1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.—Convene the Mackerel Management Committee to review the Options Paper for Mackerel Amendment 16 and review actions of the Joint South Atlantic/Gulf Council Mackerel Management Committee meeting that was held in June. The committee will receive a presentation on the National Mercury Working Group Report.

2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.—Convene the Reef Fish Management Committee to review public comments and recommend final action on the Final Reef Fish Amendment 23 (vermillion snapper rebuilding plan) that contains alternatives for arresting overfishing of that stock by commercial and recreational fishermen. The committee will also review and revise the Draft Scoping Document for the Red Snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) System that will be presented at hearings in August. The committee will also receive a report on the status of grouper for 2004 and may take action accordingly.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agendas may come before the Council and Committees for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions of the Council and Committees will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agendas 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 action to address the emergency. The established times for addressing items on the agenda may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the untimely completion of discussion relevant to other agenda items. In order to further allow for such adjustments and completion of all items on the agenda, the meeting may be extended from, or completed prior to the date established in this notice.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Trish Kennedy at the Council (see **ADDRESSES**) by July 2, 2004.

Dated: June 22, 2004.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 062204B]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a 3-day Council meeting on July 13–15, 2004, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 13, 2004 beginning at 9 a.m. and on Wednesday and Thursday, July 14 and 15, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME 04101; telephone: (207)775-2311.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Following introductions, the Council will further discuss improvements to the Council process and alternative approaches to management problems. The Herring Committee, its Plan Development Team and Advisory Panel is then scheduled to report on recommendations for herring fishery specifications for the 2005 fishing year. The Council is scheduled to approve the specifications at this meeting. The day will conclude with possible

reconsideration of the approach adopted to establish limited access qualification criteria now under consideration for inclusion Amendment 1 to the Herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The element to be discussed relates only to the proposed criteria that requires vessels to document historical landings from one or more specific management areas.

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

During the Wednesday morning session Council will review issues identified for inclusion in Framework Adjustment 40B to the Northeast Multispecies FMP. It also will receive a report from its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Chairman with SSC advice how to use stock assessment advice in light of changing assessments and retrospective patterns in fishing mortality and biomass estimates. The afternoon period will include an open public comment period during which the audience may address issues that are relevant to Council business but not listed on the meeting agenda. A report by the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent will follow and include an update on the sanctuary's management plan review process which is currently underway. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center will provide a update new developments related to its bottom trawl surveys.

Thursday, July 15, 2004

The Habitat/Marine Protected Area Committee will summarize and review comments received during the formal scoping period for Essential Fish Habitat Omnibus Amendment 2. Following this discussion the Council will consider approving goals and objectives for the amendment based on the committee's recommendations. Reports on recent activities will be provided by the Council Chairman and Executive Director, the NMFS Regional Administrator, Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council liaisons, NOAA General Counsel and representatives of the U.S. Coast Guard, NMFS Enforcement and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. The last item on the agenda will be a presentation of the advisory report from the 39th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW). The briefing will include information on the status of sea scallops and black bass and a discussion of the new SAW stock assessment model. Any other outstanding business will be addressed at the end of the day.