

or “Dolphin Wahoo Reg Amend 1” in the Subject Line of the email according to the comment being submitted. Public hearing comments for both Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 25 and Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on November 16, 2015. Copies of the public hearing documents for each amendment will be posted on the Council’s Web site at [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) when they become available.

During the webinars, Council staff will present an overview of the amendment and will be available for informal discussions and to answer questions via webinar. Members of the public will have an opportunity to go on record to record their comments for consideration by the Council. Area Council representatives will be present at the local comment stations.

#### Special Accommodations

These hearings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see ADDRESSES) 3 days prior to the meeting.

**Note:** The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 20, 2015.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

[FR Doc. 2015–27006 Filed 10–22–15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510–22–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Pacific Fishery Management Council; Online Webinar

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

**ACTION:** Notice of online webinar.

**SUMMARY:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council’s (Pacific Council’s) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will hold an online webinar to review a revised west coast limited entry trawl individual fishing quota (IFQ) projection model developed by the Pacific Council’s Groundfish Management Team (GMT). The online SSC webinar is open to the public.

**DATES:** The SSC webinar will commence at noon PST, Monday, November 9, 2015 and continue until 2 p.m. or as

necessary to complete business for the day.

**ADDRESSES:** To attend the SSC webinar, please join online at <http://www.gotomeeting.com/online/webinar/join-webinar> and enter the webinar ID: 148–230–579, as well as your name and email address. Once you have joined the webinar, call the toll number 1 (914) 614–3221 and enter 117–723–807 when prompted for the audio access code. Then enter your audio phone pin (shown after joining the webinar). Participants are encouraged to use their telephone, as this is the best practice to avoid technical issues and excessive feedback (see [http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/PFMC\\_Audio\\_Diagram\\_GoToMeeting.pdf](http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/PFMC_Audio_Diagram_GoToMeeting.pdf) for best practices). System requirements for PC-based attendees: Windows 7, Vista, or XP; for Mac-based attendees: Mac OS X 10.5 or newer; and for mobile attendees: iPhone, iPad, Android phone, or Android tablet (see the *GoToMeeting Webinar Apps*). If you experience technical difficulties and would like assistance, please contact Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820–2280, extension 425. A public listening station will also be provided at the Pacific Council office.

**Council address:** Pacific Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220–1384.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. John DeVore, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820–2413.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The specific objectives of the SSC webinar are to review revisions to the GMT’s west coast limited entry trawl IFQ projection model to ensure the changes recommended by the SSC’s Groundfish and Economics Subcommittees in June were implemented and the model behaves as expected. During the webinar, the SSC will consider endorsing the GMT’s IFQ model to inform management decisions. No management actions will be decided in this webinar. Public comments during the webinar will be received from attendees at the discretion of the SSC chair.

Although non-emergency issues not identified in the webinar agenda may come before the webinar participants for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this webinar. Formal action at the webinar 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public

has been notified of the webinar participants’ intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

The public listening station at the Pacific Council office is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt at (503) 820–2280 at least 5 days prior to the webinar date.

Dated: October 20, 2015.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

[FR Doc. 2015–27007 Filed 10–22–15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510–22–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648–XE270**

#### Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

**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 contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This Exempted Fishing Permit would allow commercial fishing vessels to fish outside of the limited access sea scallop regulations in support of study investigating coastal spawning of winter flounder in Southern New England.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before November 9, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- **Email:** [nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line “DA15–063 CFF SNE Essential Fish Habitat Study EFP.”

- **Mail:** John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic

Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "DA15-063 CFF SNE Essential Fish Habitat Study EFP."

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Shannah Jaburek, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-282-8456.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NOAA has awarded the Coonamesset Farm Foundation (CFF) a grant through the 2015 Saltonstall-Kennedy grant program, in support of a project titled "Investigating Offshore Essential Fish Habitat of Southern New England Winter Flounder." To conduct this research, CFF submitted a complete application for an EFP on August 4, 2015. The applicant proposes to investigate questions associated with spawning winter flounder in Southern New England (SNE) by conducting multiple research activities, which include:

1. A paired scallop dredge survey to identify and monitor the distribution of winter flounder;
2. Test dredge gear twine top configurations and apron lengths to reduce finfish bycatch;
3. Attempt to observe winter flounder spawning behavior using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV);
4. Conduct a benthic habitat video survey; and
5. Sample for a winter flounder eggs using a plankton net.

CFF is requesting exemptions that would allow commercial fishing vessels be exempt from the Atlantic sea scallop days-at-sea (DAS) allocations at 50 CFR 648.53(b); crew size restrictions at § 648.51(c); Atlantic sea scallop observer program requirements at § 648.11(g); and possession limits and minimum size requirements specified in 50 CFR part 648, subsections B and D through O, for sampling purposes only. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Five vessels would conduct the dredge survey and gear testing on six 5-day trips, for 30 total DAS. Each trip would complete approximately 60 dredge tows per trip for an overall total of 360 tows for the project. The project would also conduct a single video survey trip utilizing a benthic sled. Trips would take place in the open areas of SNE in December 2015–May 2016.

All dredge tows would use two 15-foot (4.57-m) Turtle Deflector Dredges (TDD) and be conducted in tandem for a duration of 30 minutes at a tow speed of approximately 4.8 knots. One dredge would be rigged with a 7-row apron and 60-mesh wide twine top while the other

dredge would be rigged with a 5-row apron and 45-mesh wide twine top. To examine factors that may influence flatfish bycatch rates such as habitat characteristics and fish behavior in response to the TDD, each dredge would have an underwater camera attached to the bale bar. When researchers identify large numbers of spawning winter flounder during the dredge survey, they would deploy the ROV to film spawning behavior interactions.

For all tows, researchers would count and weigh sea scallop catch. Researchers would measure scallops from one randomly selected basket from each dredge in 5-mm increments to determine size selectivity. Researchers would sort finfish catch by species then count, weigh, and measure finfish catch in 1-mm increments. Researchers would also weigh, sex, and assess the reproductive stage of all winter flounder greater than 32 cm. The vessels would not retain catch for longer than needed to conduct sampling and vessels would not land any catch for sale. CFF researchers would accompany all trips, and be in charge of sampling activities.

**PROJECT CATCH ESTIMATES**

Species	lb	kg
Scallops .....	21,000	9,525
Yellowtail .....	500	227
Winter Flounder .....	1,500	680
Windowpane Flounder ..	2,600	1,179
Monkfish .....	8,000	3,629
Barndoor Skate .....	500	227
NE Skate Complex .....	50,000	22,680
Other Fish .....	1,500	680

The project would also use a commercial vessel for a single dedicated video trip utilizing a benthic underwater survey sled. At each of the survey stations the benthic sled would be deployed and towed for 5–10 minutes at a speed of 1.5–2 knots. Researchers would attach a live feed video camera transmitting video back to the vessel, and two underwater cameras taking high definition still shots to the benthic sled. There would also be two low level lights attached to the benthic sled in order to illuminate the area for the cameras. The video footage and photos from the benthic sled survey would be compared to still shots take during the dredge surveys. Researchers would also attach a plankton net to the benthic sled. The plankton net would be 101.60 cm long with a 27.94 x 45.72-cm opening, and a mesh size of 0.05 cm. The plankton net would allow researchers to see if there are winter flounder eggs present at each of the survey stations.

CFF has requested these exemptions to allow them to conduct experimental dredge towing without being charged DAS. Participating vessels need crew size waivers to accommodate science personnel and possession waivers will enable them to conduct finfish sampling activities. NMFS would waive observer notification requirements because the research activity is not representative of a commercial scallop fishing trip.

If approved, the applicant 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 impacts that do not change the scope or impact 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: October 20, 2015.

**Emily H. Menashes,**

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

[FR Doc. 2015-27003 Filed 10-22-15; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XE230**

**Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act Provisions; Horseshoe Crabs; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit, 2015; Reopening of Comment Period**

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

**ACTION:** Notification of a proposal to conduct exempted fishing; reopening of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** This action reopens the comment period for an application for an exempted fishing permit for horseshoe crab that published on October 7, 2015. The original comment period closed 13 days later on October 19, 2015, which is two days shorter than the 15-day minimum comment time period required in our regulations. We are therefore reopening the comment period through October 27, 2015, to make-up for this shortfall and to provide additional opportunity for public comment.