

Meeting address: The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested in participating should contact Dr. Julie A. Neer at SEDAR (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) to request an invitation providing webinar access information. Please request webinar invitations at least 24 hours in advance of each webinar.

SEDAR address: 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; telephone: (843) 571-4366; email: Julie.neer@safmc.net

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a multi-step process including: (1) Data Workshop; (2) Assessment Process utilizing webinars; and (3) Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a data report that compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The product of the Assessment Process is a stock assessment report that describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The assessment is independently peer reviewed at the Review Workshop. The product of the Review Workshop is a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, HMS Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and NGO's; International experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion in the Assessment Process webinars are as follows:

1. Using datasets and initial assessment analysis recommended from the Data Webinar, panelists will employ assessment models to evaluate stock status, estimate population benchmarks and management criteria, and project future conditions.

2. Participants will recommend the most appropriate methods and configurations for determining stock status and estimating population parameters.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. 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-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to each workshop.

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

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

Dated: June 7, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-12072 Filed 6-9-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF438

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 NMFS Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, 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 in collaboration with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries to research the use of raised-footrope trawl gear to target whiting (Northern silver hake) within an area of the Gulf of Maine whiting exempted fishery for two weeks before the start of the current open season.

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 a proposed exempted fishing permit.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 27, 2017.

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

- **Email:** NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on 2017 MADMF Whiting Exempted Fishery Study EFP."

- **Mail:** John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "2017 MADMF Whiting Exempted Fishery Study EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Reid Lichwell, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 282-9112.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) submitted an application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) to assess the use of small-mesh raised-footrope trawl gear in a Gulf of Maine (GOM) exempted fishing area two weeks before the area opens for whiting fishing. Research would occur within a subarea of Small Mesh Area 1 (SMA1). This EFP would allow up to eight participating commercial fishing vessels exemptions from the minimum mesh size gear requirements found at 50 CFR 648.80(a)(3); and from the possession limits and minimum size requirements specified in 50 CFR part 648, subparts B and D through O.

MADMF asserts that the GOM whiting exempted fishery is underutilized and analysis of observer data have indicated that whiting stocks may be more prevalent and more effectively targeted within the exemption areas before the current July 15 opening for SMA1. This study would provide data on catch rates of whiting and bycatch of regulated Northeast (NE) multispecies to evaluate if an earlier opening of the GOM whiting exempted fishery in SMA1 is warranted. This is the second year of study to test raised-footrope trawl gear targeting whiting before the start of the SMA1 whiting exempted fishery.

This EFP would allow eight vessels to fish within the western portion of SMA1 during July 1–14. Participating vessels would each be limited to six fishing days. The length of each trip would be at the discretion of the vessel operators, consistent with normal commercial fishing practices. Each vessel would conduct 3 to 4 tows per day, with each tow lasting approximately 90 minutes.

These vessels would operate under the normal restrictions for operating in the whiting exemption areas during their open seasons. For instance, participating vessels would use a raised-footrope trawl with diamond mesh nets that have either a codend mesh size of greater than 2.5 inches but less than 3 inches, or a codend mesh size of 3 inches or greater, consistent with § 648.80(a)(9)(ii). Per trip possession limits that would be allowed for silver, northern red, and offshore hake are consistent with those outlined in § 648.86(d). Additional species permitted for retention and sale would include butterfish, spiny dogfish, Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel, scup, and squid. Regulated Northeast multispecies (cod, haddock, etc.) cannot be retained by the participating vessels either under this EFP or during the normal small-mesh exempted fisheries. Participating vessels would be exempt from the possession limits and minimum size requirements for sampling purposes only, in order to facilitate collecting weight and length measurements of catch. All catch not retained for sale would be returned to the sea as soon as possible after biological sampling is conducted.

MADMF has analyzed catch data collected during last year's sampling trips, which utilized the same gear, time period (July 1–14), geographic area, and methods that are proposed for this year's study. Last year's sampling was conducted by five vessels within SMA1, totaling 29 trip (82 tows). Data collected from these trips shows approximately 10 percent bycatch of regulated groundfish species in SMA1. The majority of this catch was haddock. It is anticipated that the catch for the proposed 2017 study would have similar bycatch and catch composition as last year's study.

All trips will be accompanied by either MADMF trained staff or contracted observers to collect data on catch composition, length and weight measurements, and operational data (location, weather, time, duration of tow, trawl speed, etc.). All gear will be inspected and measured prior to its use to verify that it meets the mesh sizes requirements consistent with existing

applicable small-mesh exempted gear requirements.

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 impact that does not change the scope 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: June 7, 2017.

Margo B. Schulze-Haugen,

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

[FR Doc. 2017–12103 Filed 6–9–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: West Coast Region Pacific Tuna Fisheries Logbook and Fish Aggregating Device Form.

OMB Control Number: 0648–0148.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 21.

Average Hours per Response: 5 minutes to complete bridge log; 10 minutes to complete FAD data collection requirements.

Burden Hours: 746.

Needs and Uses: This request is for an extension of a current information collection.

United States' (U.S.) participation in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) results in certain record keeping requirements for U.S. vessel owners and operators who fish in the IATTC's area of management responsibility. Vessel owners and operators must maintain a log of all operations conducted from the fishing vessel, entering the date, noon position, and the tonnage of fish aboard by

species. The purse seine bridge logbook provided by the IATTC is used by all United States purse seine vessel owners and operators. In addition, vessel owners and operators of large purse seine vessels (*i.e.*, with at least 363 metric tons of fish hold volume) that fish with FADs in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) are required to collect data specific on fish aggregating devices (FADs) to meet international obligations under IATTC Resolution C–16–01. Owners and operators of a FAD would be required to record data for each interaction with a FAD through a FAD form provided by the IATTC or through a FAD form provided by NMFS that combines the bridge logbook with the FAD Form. Data collected from FADs will allow IATTC scientific staff to distinguish a particular FAD when analyzing data and can track the activities on a FAD through time.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Daily when on fishing trip.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395–5806.

Dated: June 7, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–12065 Filed 6–9–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Emergency Beacon Registrations

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

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.