

Teresa Marie IV. Phase 3 would include ten 8-day trips occurring from August through December 2017. Trips would be

split between Georges Bank and the Gulf of Maine targeting haddock and redfish, respectively. Targeted redfish fishing,

with the 4.5-inch (11.43-cm) codend, would only occur within the sector redfish exemption area (Table 1).

TABLE 1—PROPOSED EFP TRIPS

Phase	Number of trips	DAS per trip	Season	Location (statistical areas)	Target species
1	1	5	August/September	512, 513, 515 (3 days)	Redfish.
2	1	5	August/September	521, 522 (2 days)	Haddock.
3	10	8	August/September	512, 513, 515 (3 days)	Redfish.
				521, 522 (2 days)	Haddock.
			August–October	521, 522 (5 days)	Haddock.
				512, 513, 515 (3 days)	Redfish.
			October–December	512, 513, 515 (5 days)	Redfish.
				521, 522 (3 days)	Haddock.

The applicant has stated that estimating anticipated catch for this project using the off-bottom trawl is a challenging exercise given a lack of historical evidence using a trawl of this design. Subsequently, catch from the *Teresa Marie IV* using a haddock separator trawl in fishing year 2016 was used to estimate anticipated catch using the off-bottom trawl. The average catch of haddock per trip was 5,500 pounds (2,495-kg) in the Gulf of Maine, 6,400 pounds (2,903-kg) in the Eastern U.S./Canada management area of Georges Bank, and 22,300 pounds (10,115-kg) in Georges Bank West. The average catch of redfish in the Gulf of Maine was 2,000 pounds (907-kg) per trip. The average catch of cod per trip was 180 pounds (82-kg) in the Gulf of Maine, 70 pounds (32-kg) in the Eastern U.S./Canada management area of Georges Bank, and 530 pounds (240-kg) in Georges Bank West. The off-bottom trawl is expected to catch at least as much haddock as a bottom trawl, with substantial reductions in cod catch, and the complete elimination of flatfish catch. If these ratios are not realized the applicant has indicated that the off-bottom trawl would be deemed unsuccessful and the project may be abandoned.

All trips would carry a GMRI sampler, an assigned at-sea observer, or an independently contracted data collection technician. In Phases 1 and 2, a GMRI sampler would be onboard to document the operational performance of the off-bottom trawl, and sample catch. In Phase 3, a GMRI sampler would be onboard the F/V *Teresa Marie IV* during at least two fishing trips. An assigned at-sea observer or independent contracted data collection technician would collect data during remaining trips with the off-bottom trawl. The volume of the catch is anticipated to be large, so subsampling protocols have been developed. The dimensions of the

boats' checker pens would be measured. Catches emptied into these pens would be estimated by recording the depth of the catch in each pen. Efforts would be made to spread the catch evenly in these pens, and up to 10 measurements of catch depth would be recorded in each pen in random locations. This would provide an estimate of total catch volume. Legal-sized haddock are placed on a conveyor belt and then filleted. A subsample of the total catch would be taken from the checker pens to estimate total catch, including cod and other non-target species by weight. All fish in the subsample would be weighed, and length measurements would be taken for cod and other non-target catch. All bycatch would be returned to the sea as soon as practicable following data collection. Exemption from minimum sizes would support catch sampling activities, and ensure the vessel is not in conflict with possession regulations while collecting catch data. All trips would otherwise be conducted in a manner consistent with normal commercial fishing conditions and catch consistent with the Northeast Multispecies FMP would be retained for sale. Trips not accompanied by GMRI researchers would be required to carry an At-Sea Monitor (ASM), Northeast Fishery Observer Program (NEFOP) observer, or privately contracted data collection technician. On trips assigned to carry an ASM or observer by NEFOP, normal sampling protocols would be carried out. The vessel is responsible for notifying its monitoring provider of upcoming research trips and ensuring a research technician is present on all EFP trips not selected for observer coverage through Pre-trip Notification System (PTNS).

GMRI needs this exemption to allow them to conduct testing of a net configuration that is prohibited by the current regulations. 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: July 19, 2017.

Emily H. Menashes,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 2017-15487 Filed 7-21-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XF564

Gulf of Mexico 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 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a four-day meeting to consider actions affecting the Gulf of Mexico fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, August 7 through Thursday, August 10, 2017.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place at the Marriott Plaza, located at 555 South Alamo Street, San Antonio, TX 78205; telephone: (210) 229-1000.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N.

Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Douglas Gregory, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Monday, August 7, 2017; 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

The Administrative/Budget Committee will review and approve the Final 2017 Budget Funding Report, and review of SOPPS guidance on Advisory Panel Appointments; and, the Education and Outreach Committee will review and discuss the technical committee report from their August 2017 meeting. After the lunch break, the Gulf SEDAR Committee will hold a discussion on the 2017 Extended Recreational Red Snapper Season; and review the SEDAR Assessment Schedule. The Sustainable Fisheries Committee will receive a presentation on the protocol for authorizing Sea Turtle Release Gear and review a discussion paper. This Committee will also receive updates on Lionfish Research, Actions and Efforts by Federal and State Agencies.

Tuesday, August 8, 2017; 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

The Reef Fish Management Committee will review and discuss taking final action on Framework Action—Greater Amberjack Annual Catch Limit (ACL) and Management Measures; discuss draft Amendment 42—Federal Reef Fish Headboard Survey Vessels and Final Action on Referendum Eligibility Requirements, and draft Amendment 41—Federal Charter-For-Hire Reef Fish Management Discussion and Final Action on Referendum Eligibility Requirements. The committee will receive a Review of the For-Hire Permit Moratorium and Transfers; discuss draft Framework Action to modify the Annual Catch Target (ACT) for Red Snapper Federal For-Hire and Private Angler Components; and receive a presentation on the Grouper-Tilefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program 5-year review. The committee will end the day reviewing a revised options paper for Amendment 36B—Modifications to Commercial IFQ Programs and NMFS' response regarding referendum requirements for auctions and discuss the next steps for the Ad Hoc Red Snapper IFQ Advisory Panel.

Wednesday, August 9, 2017; 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

The Reef Fish Management Committee will reconvene and review options papers for Status Determination Criteria and Optimum Yield (OY) for Reef Fish Stocks, and draft documents on State Management of Recreational Red Snapper for Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

The Full Council will convene mid-morning (approximately 10:45 a.m.) with a call to order, announcements, introductions; adoption of agenda; and approval of minutes. The Council will review Exempted Fishing Permit (EFPs) Applications, and a summary of public comments; and, receive a presentation from Texas Law Enforcement. After lunch, the Council will receive public testimony from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. on the following agenda items: Final Action on Framework Action—Greater Amberjack ACL and Management Measures; Final Action on Referendum Eligibility Requirements for Reef Fish Amendment 42—Reef Fish Management for Headboat Survey Vessels; and Final Action on Referendum Eligibility Requirements for Reef Fish Amendment 41—Allocation-Based Management for Federally Permitted Charter Vessels; and, open testimony on any other fishery issues or concerns.

Thursday, August 10, 2017; 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

The Council will receive reports from the following Management Committees: Reef Fish, Gulf SEDAR, Administrative/Budget, Sustainable Fisheries, and Outreach and Education. Upon returning from lunch, the Council will review and vote on Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Applications, if any; and receive updates from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of State. Under Other Business, the Council will receive an update and next steps for the Generic For-Hire Electronic Reporting Amendment.

Meeting Adjourns

You may listen in to the August 2017 Council Meeting via webinar by registering at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2332013968662616323>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

The timing and order in which agenda items are addressed may change as required to effectively address the issue. The latest version will be posted on the

Council's file server, which can be accessed by going to the Council's Web site at <http://www.gulfcouncil.org> and clicking on FTP Server under Quick Links. For meeting materials, select the "Briefing Books/Briefing Book 2017–08" folder on Gulf Council file server. The username and password are both "gulfguest". The meetings will be webcast over the internet. A link to the webcast will be available on the Council's Web site, <http://www.gulfcouncil.org>.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subjects 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 that the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

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

Dated: July 19, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

[Transmittal No. 17–08]

36(b)(1) Arms Sales Notification

AGENCY: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Defense is publishing the unclassified text of a section 36(b)(1) arms sales notification.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathy Valadez, (703) 697–9217 or Pamela Young, (703) 697–9107; DSCA/DSA–RAN.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This 36(b)(1) arms sales notification is published to fulfill the requirements of section 155 of Public Law 104–164 dated July 21, 1996. The following is a copy of a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Transmittal