

216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity: (1) That is likely to reduce the availability of the species to a level insufficient for a harvest to meet subsistence needs by: (i) Causing the marine mammals to abandon or avoid hunting areas; (ii) Directly displacing subsistence users; or (iii) Placing physical barriers between the marine mammals and the subsistence hunters; and (2) That cannot be sufficiently mitigated by other measures to increase the availability of marine mammals to allow subsistence needs to be met.

Hunters from two native villages—Chenega Bay and Tatitlek—and native hunters living in Cordova annually harvest marine mammals within Prince William Sound as part of a subsistence lifestyle (Fall and Zimpelman 2016). Chenega Bay hunters annually harvest a few harbor seals and sea otters and have hunted Steller sea lions in the past (Wolfe et al. 2009). Most hunting occurs locally. Hunters from Tatitlek harvest harbor seals and sea lions over most of central Prince William Sound, although their hunting range does not extend to Passage Canal (Fall and Zimpelman 2016). Native hunters living in Cordova mostly harvest harbor seals but occasionally take sea otters and sea lions (Fall and Zimpelman 2016). All villages are greater than 100 km (62 mi) by boat travel from Passage Canal. The short-term, relatively low-impact, Level B harassment takes resulting from construction activities associated with the Whittier Ferry Terminal modifications project will have no impact on the ability of hunters from these villages to harvest marine mammals. Therefore, NMFS has preliminarily determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks would not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

#### Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally, in this case with the Alaska Region, Protected Resource Division Office, whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

NMFS is proposing to authorize take of western stock Steller sea lions under

the MMPA. For purposes of the Endangered Species Act, the NMFS Permits and Conservation Division has preliminarily determined that this action is not likely to adversely affect western DPS Steller sea lions because we do not expect Steller sea lions to use habitats near Whittier during the season when construction will occur. Effects on western DPS Steller sea lions are thus extremely unlikely to occur, and considered discountable under the ESA. The Permits and Conservation Division will request concurrence in this determination from the NMFS Alaska Region, per section 7 of the ESA.

#### Proposed Authorization

As a result of these preliminary determinations, NMFS proposes to issue an IHA to ADOT&PF for conducting pile installation and removal activities at the Whittier Ferry Terminal in Whittier, Alaska between February and March 2020, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated. A draft of the proposed IHA can be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/incidental-take-authorizations-under-marine-mammal-protection-act>.

#### Request for Public Comments

We request comment on our analyses, the proposed authorization, and any other aspect of this Notice of Proposed IHA for the proposed pile driving project. We also request at this time comment on the potential renewal of this proposed IHA as described in the paragraph below. Please include with your comments any supporting data or literature citations to help inform decisions on the request for this IHA or a subsequent Renewal.

On a case-by-case basis, NMFS may issue a one-year IHA renewal with an additional 15 days for public comments when (1) another year of identical or nearly identical activities as described in the Specified Activities section of this notice is planned or (2) the activities as described in the Specified Activities section of this notice would not be completed by the time the IHA expires and a Renewal would allow for completion of the activities beyond that described in the Dates and Duration section of this notice, provided all of the following conditions are met:

- A request for renewal is received no later than 60 days prior to expiration of the current IHA.
- The request for renewal must include the following:

(1) An explanation that the activities to be conducted under the requested Renewal are identical to the activities

analyzed under the initial IHA, are a subset of the activities, or include changes so minor (*e.g.*, reduction in pile size) that the changes do not affect the previous analyses, mitigation and monitoring requirements, or take estimates (with the exception of reducing the type or amount of take because only a subset of the initially analyzed activities remain to be completed under the Renewal).

(2) A preliminary monitoring report showing the results of the required monitoring to date and an explanation showing that the monitoring results do not indicate impacts of a scale or nature not previously analyzed or authorized.

- Upon review of the request for Renewal, the status of the affected species or stocks, and any other pertinent information, NMFS determines that there are no more than minor changes in the activities, the mitigation and monitoring measures will remain the same and appropriate, and the findings in the initial IHA remain valid.

Dated: October 16, 2019.

**Donna S. Wieting,**

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XV110

#### Fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of SEDAR 67 data webinars for Gulf of Mexico vermilion snapper.

**SUMMARY:** The SEDAR 67 assessment process of Gulf of Mexico vermilion snapper will consist of a series of data and assessment webinars. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

**DATES:** The SEDAR 67 data webinars will be held November 12, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Eastern Time; November 13, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Eastern Time; and November 14, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Eastern Time.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested

in participating should contact 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:** Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; (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) a series of assessment webinars, and (3) A Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a report that compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The assessment webinars produce a 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 product of the Review Workshop is an Assessment 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 during the data webinars are as follows:

Panelists will review the data sets being considered for the assessment and discuss initial modeling efforts.

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

These meetings are 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: October 17, 2019.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 2019-22986 Filed 10-21-19; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XV109**

#### New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice; public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for EBFM Steering Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

**DATES:** This meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 9 a.m.

#### ADDRESSES:

*Council address:* The meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn and Suites, 2 Foxborough Blvd., Foxborough, MA 02035; telephone: (508) 623-2555.

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

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director,

New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Agenda

Based on the recently completed example Fishery Ecosystem Plan (eFEP) for Georges Bank, the Steering Committee will identify the core approach of Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management and develop recommendations on drafting a less technical and publicly digestible document using a science communicator. The will also develop and draft recommendations on how the Council should structure and conduct public information workshops with stakeholders. Other business may be discussed as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject 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 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. This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 17, 2019.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XV111**

#### Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting

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