

## FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

### 47 CFR Parts 1 and 73

[MM Docket No. 96-16, DA 96-1033]

#### Revision of Broadcast EEO Policies

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; extension of comment and reply comment period.

**SUMMARY:** In *Streamlining Broadcast EEO Rules and Policies*, DA 96-1033, released June 26, 1996, (*Streamlining*), the Commission grants a motion for extension of time concerning the Commission's *Order and Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, MM Docket No. 96-16, (*NPRM*). A group of organizations request the extension of time due to, among other things, staff shortages. The Commission finds that the public interest favors grant of the motion for extension of time for filing comments, as well as a corresponding extension of time for filing reply comments.

**DATES:** Initial comments due July 11, 1996; reply comments due August 12, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Hope G. Cooper, Mass Media Bureau, Enforcement Division. (202) 418-1450.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Adopted:* June 26, 1996.

*Released:* June 26, 1996.

*Comment Date:* July 11, 1996.

*Reply Comment Date:* August 12, 1996.

1. On February 8, 1996, the Commission adopted an *Order and Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, 11 FCC Rcd 5154 (1996), 61 FR 9964 (March 12, 1996) (*NPRM*), which vacated the Commission's *EEO Forfeiture Policy Statement* and requested comment on proposals for amending the Commission's EEO Rule and policies. Comment and Reply Comment dates were established for April 30, 1996, and May 30, 1996, respectively.

2. On April 12, 1996, twenty organizations, including the Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (hereinafter "Petitioners"), filed a Motion for Extension of Time to file comments in response to the above-captioned proceeding.<sup>1</sup> On April 26, 1996, the Commission granted the Petitioners' request for extension of

time.<sup>2</sup> The date for filing comments was extended to July 1, 1996, and the date for filing reply comments was extended to July 31, 1996.

3. On June 20, 1996, Petitioners filed a Motion for Further Extension of Time. Therein, Petitioners request that we extend further the date for submission of comments in response to the *NPRM* by ten days, until July 11, 1996. Petitioners do not seek an extension of the reply comment deadline. In support of their request, petitioners state that they are conducting "very extensive research on broadcast stations' EEO practices, in order to provide the Commission and the other parties with a useful database for evaluation of the Commission's proposals."<sup>3</sup> They assert that due to, among other things, staff shortages, "it is physically impossible to complete this task by July 1."<sup>4</sup>

4. It is Commission policy that extensions of time not be routinely granted. See Section 1.46(a) of the Commission's Rules, 47 CFR Section 1.46(a). We believe, however, that the public interest favors grant of the request for extension of time for filing comments in this proceeding. In addition, we believe that the public interest favors a corresponding extension of time for filing reply comments. Accordingly, we will extend the date for filing comments to July 11, 1996, and extend the date for filing reply comments to August 12, 1996.

5. Accordingly, it is ordered that the Motion for Extension of Time filed by Petitioners is granted and that the Commission, on its own motion, also extends the time for filing reply comments.

6. It is therefore ordered that the dates for filing comments and reply comments in this proceeding ARE EXTENDED to July 11, 1996, and August 12, 1996, respectively.

7. This action is taken pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. Sections 4(i) and 303(r), and Sections 0.204(b), 0.283 and 1.46 of the Commission's Rules, 47 CFR Sections 0.204(b), 0.283 and 1.46.

Federal Communications Commission.

Roy J. Stewart,

Chief, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 96-18077 Filed 7-16-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

<sup>2</sup> FCC 96-198 (released: April 26, 1996), 61 FR 25183 (May 20, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Minority Media and Telecommunications Council *et al.*, Motion For Further Extension of Time, MM Docket No. 96-16, filed June 20, 1996, at 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 2.

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 648

[I.D. 070596D]

#### New England Fishery Management Council; Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a 2-day meeting to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone.

**DATES:** The meeting will begin on Wednesday, July 17, 1996, at 10 a.m. and on Thursday, July 18, 1996, at 8:30 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, Route One, Peabody, MA; telephone (508) 535-4600. Requests for special accommodations should be addressed to the New England Fishery Management Council, 5 Broadway, Saugus, MA 01906-1097; telephone: (617) 231-0422.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Douglas G. Marshall, Executive Director, (617) 231-0422.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

July 17, 1996

After introductions, the July 17 session will begin with a report on and discussion of the Canadian Program for Responsible Fishing Operations. The Marine Mammal Committee report will follow and include a recommendation to take final action on Framework Adjustment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (Multispecies FMP) that would extend the timing of the Mid-coast Closure Area. An additional measure under consideration for the same framework adjustment would prohibit the use of pelagic and any other gillnets in the harbor porpoise time/area closures under certain conditions.

In the afternoon, the Multispecies Groundfish Committee will review and possibly recommend changes to the gillnet effort reduction measures currently in the FMP. Additionally, they will discuss membership on the Council's Multispecies Monitoring Committee, progress on the development of a fishery management plan for whiting, and possible alternatives to the Gulf of Maine

<sup>1</sup> See National Council of Churches *et al.*, Petition For Reconsideration and Clarification, MM Docket No. 96-16, filed April 11, 1996, at 1.

groundfish area closures. The Council also will consider final action on Framework Adjustments 17 and 18, as explained below. There will also be an update on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC's) Winter Flounder Plan.

July 18, 1996

The July 18 session will begin with reports from the Council Chairman; Executive Director; Director, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Director); and representatives from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center; ASMFC; U.S. Coast Guard; and the Mid Atlantic Council. The Herring Committee Chairman will brief the Council on the outcome of the most recent United States/Canada meeting. The Enforcement Committee will discuss its review of the management alternatives proposed for inclusion in the proposed monkfish fishery management plan (Monkfish FMP). There will be a discussion of the experimental fishery for mahogany quahogs in the Gulf of Maine. The Regional Director is considering an experimental fishery for vessels involved in a Fishing Industry Grant (FIG) entitled "Local Production and Market Development for High Quality Cape Cod Shark Frozen Fillets." The objective of the project is to enhance dogfish processing and marketing. Operations under the FIG grant have become restricted by the implementation of Amendment 7 to the Multispecies FMP and therefore possibly threaten the success of the grant. Experimental fishing permits would be necessary for vessels to continue to operate as they had done under Amendment 5 to the FMP. The Regional Director is considering issuing experimental fishing permits for federally permitted vessels that may be involved in a continuation of a gear development project conducted by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) in the Cape Cod Bay/Massachusetts Bay area. The purpose of the experimental fishery is to continue to test and refine a MADMF constructed trawl and the associated fishing technique as a selective type of gear that can be used in the whiting

fishery, as well as the dogfish and red hake fisheries. The MADMF expects its experimental net to retain primarily whiting, red hake, and dogfish while minimizing the catch of bottom dwelling groundfish. The information compiled by MADMF from last year's experiment has been reviewed by NMFS and supports continuation of the project.

The afternoon session will include reports from the Gear Conflict and Monkfish Committees. There will be a briefing on the most recent industry meeting concerning a proposed framework adjustment to address the Southern New England gear conflict situation, as well as a status report on the development of monkfish management alternatives. The Monkfish Committee will present a Monkfish FMP draft public hearing document for Council comment. The Council will address any other outstanding business at the conclusion of the agenda items described above.

#### Background for Framework Adjustments

##### *Abbreviated Rulemaking—Northeast Multispecies*

At the recommendation of its Marine Mammal Committee, the Council will consider final action on Framework Adjustment 16 to the Multispecies FMP under the framework for abbreviated rulemaking procedure contained in 50 CFR 648.90. The Council proposes to further reduce the bycatch of harbor porpoise in the Gulf of Maine sink gillnet fishery by extending the timing of the Mid-coast Closure Area. Currently, the use of sink gillnets is prohibited from November 1 through December 31. This adjustment would add September 15 through October 31 to the existing period. No change in area is proposed although the Council may recommend an experimental fishery to continue the assessment of the use of acoustic deterrents to mitigate the porpoise bycatch.

Final action also may be taken on a provision to prohibit the use of pelagic and other gillnets during the harbor porpoise time/area closures. The measure, which also would be included

in Framework Adjustment 16, would allow such gillnets if they were constructed of mesh less than the regulated size of 6 inches (15 cm), were not anchored to the bottom but attached to the boat, had surface floats, and were set in the top third of the water column. The Council is considering two options for the length of the net, 300 feet (91 m) and 900 feet (274 m).

At the recommendation of its Groundfish Committee, the Council will consider final action on Framework Adjustments 17 and 18 to the Multispecies FMP. Framework Adjustment 17 would restore DAS to vessels that took time out of the groundfish fishery between May 31 and July 1 and were then subject to a DAS allocation under Amendment 7, which again subtracted days for those same months. This adjustment would rectify the inequity. Framework Adjustment 18 would allow herring/mackerel fishing with pelagic mid-water trawls in areas of Georges Bank now closed to all gear capable of catching groundfish.

The Council will consider public comments at a minimum of two Council meetings prior to making any final recommendations to the Regional Director under the provisions for abbreviated rulemaking cited above. If the Regional Director concurs with the measures proposed by the Council, he will publish them as a final rule in the Federal Register.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Douglas G. Marshall, New England Fishery Management Council (see ADDRESSES), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: July 11, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,  
Acting Director, Office of Fisheries  
Conservation and Management, National  
Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-18081 Filed 7-11-96; 4:51 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F