

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Kenneth R. Hollingshead, NMFS, (301)
713-2055.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional taking of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is limited to harassment, notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

Permission may be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses, and the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such taking are set forth.

On April 10, 1996 (61 FR 15884), NMFS published an interim rule establishing, among other things, procedures for issuing LOAs under section 101(a)(5)(A) and IHAs under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA.

Section 101(a)(5)(D)(ii)(III) of the MMPA requires authorizations to prescribe, where applicable, the requirements for the "independent peer review of proposed monitoring plans

or other research proposals where the proposed activity may affect the availability of a species or stock for taking for subsistence uses..." This requirement was codified at 50 CFR 216.107. However, due to time constraints, it is often necessary for the peer review process to be substantially completed prior to issuance of the authorization.

Procedure

If an activity, taking place in Arctic waters, has the potential to cause an adverse impact on those marine mammals taken in subsistence harvests, applicants are required to submit to NMFS a complete draft Monitoring Plan (Plan) for assessing impacts to marine mammals, either with an IHA application but no later than 120 days prior to the date an IHA is expected to be issued. The timing of the submission minimizes potential conflicts among user groups over whether a proposed Plan is adequate for determining the effects of the proposed activity on stocks

of marine mammals needed for subsistence purposes.

Upon receipt of a small take application and draft Plan, NMFS reviews the documents and makes a preliminary determination on whether the activity has the potential to adversely affect the availability of a species or stock for subsistence uses. If NMFS makes a preliminary determination that the activity has the potential to adversely affect the availability of a species or stock for subsistence uses, NMFS will (1) establish an independent peer-review panel to critique the Plan and provide comments and recommendations on improving monitoring, (2) convene a peer review workshop to discuss and evaluate the Plan prior to requesting independent peer review, or (3) consult with the Marine Mammal Commission (MMC), the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC), and either the North Slope Borough (NSB), or another Native Alaskan Interest Group as appropriate to determine the level of review appropriate for the activity. The Plan, and NMFS' preliminary determination on the level of peer review, is also made available to the public at the time of publication in the **Federal Register** of a notice of receipt of an IHA or LOA application. If a peer review workshop is convened, independent peer review is requested on the Plan after incorporation of any workshop recommendations. Peer review usually is also conducted on the results of any monitoring program that has previously undergone peer review.

As an example of a peer-review process, applicants involved in oil and gas exploration and development activities in the U.S. Beaufort Sea coordinate activities with NMFS and NSB residents and provide a Plan several months prior to an activity's commencement. In most years, a peer-review workshop is scheduled to review the Plan. That procedure is likely to continue into the future. For this type of activity, the workshop normally includes 6 to 10 experts in the fields of population ecology, survey design, acoustics, and marine mammal behavior. Workshop participants are selected by NMFS, in consultation with the MMC, the AEWC, the NSB and the applicant, all of whom may have scientific representation. Normally, the workshop is chaired by NMFS and minutes from the workshop are prepared within 2 weeks by a rapporteur assigned to assist the Chair, and made available to the general public upon request. Often, the Plan is modified subsequent to the workshop and submitted to NMFS for acceptance

and submission to the independent peer review panel. Selected independent peer reviewers (usually 3 to 4) are experts in one or more of the previously mentioned scientific areas who are not currently employed or contracted by either the affected Alaskan native organization, or NMFS. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, marine mammal scientists who are currently employed or contracted by potential applicants may be selected for the peer review panel, but would not be requested to peer review the Plans of their employer.

Nominations Solicited

NMFS requests interested persons to submit recommendations, comments, information, and suggestions concerning potential peer-reviewers (see **ADDRESSES**). Nominators should ensure that the potential applicant is a biological scientist, familiar either with monitoring techniques for assessing marine mammal populations, and/or knowledgeable on life history parameters of Arctic marine mammals and willing to review a maximum of 1 monitoring plan and resulting research report per year without compensation. Upon receipt of an interest in participating as an independent peer reviewer, NMFS may solicit additional information, including, where necessary, curriculum vitae of the interested individual. Applicants who are currently employed or contracted by NMFS, the NSB, or the AEWC cannot be selected.

Dated: April 5, 1999.

Art Jeffers,

Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 99-8906 Filed 4-8-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 040599B]

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, its Executive Committee, and its Surf Clam and Ocean Quahog, Comprehensive Management, Information and Education, Tilefish, and Squid,

Mackerel and Butterfish Committees will hold public meetings.

DATES: The meetings will be held from April 27–29, 1999. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Sheraton Atlantic City West, 6821 Black Horse Pike, Atlantic City, NJ; telephone: 609–272–0200.

Council Address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 300 S. New Street, Dover, DE 19904; telephone: 302–674–2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Daniel T. Furlong, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; telephone: 302–674–2331, ext. 19.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Meeting Dates and Agendas

On Tuesday, April 27 the Surf Clam and Ocean Quahog Committee will meet from 9:00 a.m. until noon. The Comprehensive Management Committee will meet from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. There will be a Tilefish Committee scoping meeting from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, April 28 the Executive Committee will meet from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. The Information and Education Committee will meet from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. The Tilefish Committee will meet from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The Squid, Mackerel and Butterfish Committee will meet from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

On Thursday, April 29 the Council will meet from 8:00 a.m. until noon.

Agenda items for the meetings include discussion of preliminary results of economic models for surf clams and ocean quahogs; convening of workshop on scup to discuss ways to reduce bycatch in small mesh fisheries; discussion of Information and Education Committee plans for 1999; review of results of March 31–April 1 meetings on tilefish, and discussion of possible tilefish management measures; review of 1999 quota specifications for *Illex*; review of the status of Amendment 8 to squid, mackerel, and butterfish fishery management plan, and potential for framework actions for squid, mackerel and butterfish; review of quota setting procedures and other management measures for the year 2000 *Illex* fishing season, including seasonal restrictions and in-season quota adjustments based on outcome of pending stock assessment; discussion of Amendment 9 management measures, including real-time management of the *Illex* fishery and limited entry for the Atlantic mackerel fishery; approve staff

reorganization and address Executive Committee and industry advisory appointment policy.

Although other issues not contained in this agenda may come before the Council/Committees for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, such issues may not be the subject of formal Council/Committee action during these meetings. Council/Committee actions will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda listed in this notice.

Special Accommodations

The meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Joanna Davis at least five days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: April 5, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 99–8908 Filed 4–8–99; 8:45 am]

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COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

Notice of Meeting

In a departure from our regular third-Thursday-of-the-month meetings, the next meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. in the Commission's offices at the National Building Museum (Pension Building), Suite 312, Judiciary Square, 441 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20001. Items of discussion will include designs for projects affecting the appearance of Washington, DC, including buildings and parks.

Inquiries regarding the agenda and requests to submit written or oral statements should be addressed to Charles H. Atherton, Secretary, Commission of Fine Arts, at the above address or call 202–504–2200. Copies of the meeting's draft agenda are usually available one week before the meeting. Individuals requiring sign language interpretation for the hearing impaired should contact the Secretary at least 10 days before the meeting date.

Dated in Washington, DC, 1 April 1999.

Charles H. Atherton,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99–8891 Filed 4–8–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6330–01–M

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Adjustment of Import Limits for Certain Cotton, Wool and Man-Made Fiber Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in the Philippines

April 2, 1999.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs reducing limits.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 13, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet Heinzen, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482–4212. For information on the quota status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port, call (202) 927–5850, or refer to the U.S. Customs website at <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, call (202) 482–3715.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended.

The current limits for certain categories are being reduced for carryforward applied to the 1998 limits.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the **CORRELATION:** Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 63 FR 71096, published on December 23, 1998). Also see 63 FR 67050, published on December 4, 1998.

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

April 2, 1999.

Commissioner of Customs,
Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: This directive amends, but does not cancel, the directive issued to you on November 30, 1998, by the Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements. That directive concerns imports of certain cotton, wool and man-made fiber textiles and textile products and silk blend and other vegetable fiber apparel, produced or manufactured in the Philippines and exported during the twelve-month period which began on January 1,