

damaged but not harvested on each dive, by species; (vii) method of harvest; (viii) observations that may be made about the habitat (current, bottom type, bottom topography, bottom slope, etc.).

(3) Sale information - (i) amount of coral sold, by species; (ii) sale price; (iii) date of sale; (iv) name(s) and address(es) of buyer(s).

(4) Any other information specified in the permit. Any video tapes made during harvest operations shall be made available to the NMFS PIAO upon request. The video recording should continuously display date and time. Although these measures were identified as the preferred actions, the other alternatives are still being analyzed and considered.

Plan Team Recommendations

8:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 13, 1999

D. Pelagic FMP issues

1. 2nd quarter 1999 Hawaii and American Samoa longline fishery report
2. Status of bigeye and yellowfin tuna tagging around the Hawaiian Islands
3. Shark incidental catch in the

Hawaii longline fishery

- a. Update on catch trends and NMFS shark studies
- b. Cultural study of sharks and shark fishing in Western Pacific (WP) Region
- c. Management of shark fishing in the WP Region

d. State of Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources and Council action on sharks in Hawaii.

4. Seabird interactions in the Hawaii longline fishery

- a. Update on trends and numbers
- b. Mitigation project final draft
- c. Final action on measures to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in the Hawaii longline fishery.

Based on a discussion of these issues at the 100th Council meeting, the Council identified the following preferred actions: Require vessels with Hawaii Longline Limited Entry Permits operating with longline gear above 25° N. lat. to adhere to two or more of the following measures to mitigate seabird-longline interactions: maintain adequate quantities of blue dye on board and use only completely thawed, blue-dyed bait; use strategic offal discards while setting and hauling the line; tow a NMFS-approved deterrent (such as a tori line or a buoy) while setting and hauling the line; deploy line with a shooter so that the line is set faster than the vessel's speed; ensure that weights greater than 45 grams are attached to branch lines within 1 meter of each hook; begin setting 1 hour after sunset and complete setting 1 hour before sunrise, using minimal vessel lighting. In addition,

vessels must make every reasonable effort to ensure that birds brought onboard alive are released alive and that hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the birds, and all vessel captains must complete an annual protected species educational workshop conducted by NMFS. Although these measures were identified as the preferred actions, the other alternatives are still being analyzed and considered.

5. Turtles longline fishery interactions
 - a. Update on trends and numbers
 - b. Update on mitigation studies
 - c. Outcome of recent litigation
6. Marine debris
7. International meetings
8. Recreational fisheries data task force

8:30 am Thursday, October 14, 1999

E. Crustaceans FMP issues (NWHI lobster fishery)

1. Status of the fishery
2. Public Education Project
3. Status of state regulations for NWHI import license

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issue arising after publication of this document that requires emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

F. Other Business

List of authorized fishing gear/fisheries

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, 808-522-8220 (voice) or 808-522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to meeting date.

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

Dated: September 27, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 99-25463 Filed 9-27-99; 4:56 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[I.D. 092499A]

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) off the West Coast

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

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an EIS; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NOAA announces its intention to prepare an EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act for the proposed FMP for HMS fisheries off the West Coast. The NMFS and Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will jointly hold public scoping hearings in California, Oregon, and Washington on management issues and alternatives to be analyzed under the FMP and associated EIS.

DATES: Written comments on the intent to prepare the EIS will be accepted on or before November 1, 1999. Public scoping meetings are scheduled for October 12 and 13 and October 18 and 19, 1999 (see SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION).

ADDRESSES: Written comments on suggested alternatives and potential impacts should be sent to Larry D. Six, Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201; and to Svein Fougner, Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for specific dates and times.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Larry Six, at 503-326-6352.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Dates and Times

The following locations and times have been set for scoping meetings:

1. California - San Pedro Hilton Hotel, Madeo Ristorante and Banquet Center, 2800 Via Cabrillo Marina, San Pedro, October 12, 1999, beginning at 7:00 P.M.;
2. California - Hilton Monterey, Vista del Mar Banquet Room, 1000 Agujito Road, Monterey, October 13, beginning at 7:00 P.M.;

3. Washington - Driftwood Room, Islander Motel, 421 Westhaven Drive, Westport, October 18, 1999, beginning at 1:00 P.M.; and

4. Oregon - Hatfield Marine Science Center, Room 9, Newport, October 19, 1999, beginning at 7:00 P.M.

A summary of a background information document on HMS fisheries off the West Coast and on initial issues to be considered will be presented, as well as potential conservation and management actions that might be included in the FMP. Comments will be solicited from the public on these and any other issues and management alternatives the public cares to offer.

Management measures that may be adopted in the FMP for HMS Fisheries off the West Coast include permit and reporting requirements for commercial and recreational harvest of HMS resources, time and/or area closures to minimize gear conflicts or bycatch, adoption or confirmation of state regulations for HMS fisheries, and allocations of some species to non-commercial use. The FMP is likely to include a framework management process to add future new measures, including the potential for collaborative management efforts with other Regional Fishery Management Councils with interests in HMS resources. It would also include essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern, including fishing and non-fishing threats, as well as other components of FMPs required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

The proposed FMP, and its associated EIS, would be the Council's fourth FMP for the exclusive economic zone off the West Coast. Development of the FMP is timely, considering the new mandates under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, efforts by the United Nations to promote conservation and management of HMS resources through domestic and international programs, and the increased scope of activity of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission in HMS fisheries in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Public Information Meetings

The planning process for the FMP will involve many meetings of the Council Plan Team, and these meetings are open to the public. The Council also will frequently discuss progress on the FMP at regular Council meetings. All Plan Team and Council meetings will be advertised in the **Federal Register** and local newspapers.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Larry Six, (see ADDRESSES), 503-326-6352 (voice) or 503-326-6831 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: September 27, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 99-25462 Filed 9-27-99; 4:56 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[I.D. 092499]

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Hearings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting/public scoping hearing/public hearings.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Council (Council) will hold its 101st meeting in Honolulu, HI. The Council expects to initiate action on shark management and expects to adopt a draft Coral Reef Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan (FMP) at this meeting. The Council may take final action on regulatory amendments for precious corals and incidental catch of seabirds in the Hawaii longline fishery. A public hearing will be held on the management alternatives being considered in the draft Coral Reef Ecosystem FMP of the U.S. Western Pacific Region and being analyzed in associated documents, including a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). A public scoping hearing on the intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be held on the Bottomfish and Seamount Groundfish FMP.

DATES: The full Council meeting will be held on October 19-21, 1999. The Council's Standing Committees will meet on October 18, 1999. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times for these meetings.

ADDRESSES: The Council meeting will be held at the Lanai Ballroom, Sheraton Waikiki Hotel, 2255 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, Phone: (808) 922-4422.

Council address: Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; telephone 808-522-8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Dates and Times

Enforcement/Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., International Fisheries/Pelagics Fisheries from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Bottomfish Fisheries from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Ecosystem & Habitat from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Native and Indigenous Rights from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Precious Corals Fisheries from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Crustaceans Fisheries from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Executive/Budget & Program from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The full Council will meet on October 19, 20 and 21, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., each day. Public hearings will be conducted as follows: Draft Coral Reef Ecosystem FMP/DEIS—October 19, 1999; regulatory amendment governing incidental catch of seabirds in Hawaii longline fishery—October 20, 1999; scoping on bottomfish FMP EIS—October 21, 1999; and regulatory amendment for precious corals—October 21, 1999.

Agenda

The agenda during the full Council meeting will include the items below. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The Council will meet as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

1. Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of 100th Meeting Minutes
4. Island Reports
 - A. American Samoa
 - B. Guam
 - C. Hawaii
 - D. Northern Mariana Islands
5. Reports from Fishery Agencies and Organizations
 - A. Department of Commerce
 - (1) NMFS
 - (a) Southwest Region, Pacific Island Area Office
 - (b) Southwest Fisheries Science Center LaJolla and Honolulu Laboratory
 - (2) NOAA General Counsel, Southwest Region
 - B. Department of the Interior
 - (1) Fish and Wildlife Service
6. Enforcement
 - A. Cooperative enforcement presentation to American Samoa B. U.S. Coast Guard enforcement activities
 - C. NMFS enforcement activities and status of violations