

(b) A Party, investigating authority or interested person that does not file a Complaint but that intends to appear in support of any reviewable portion of the final determination may participate in the panel review by filing a Notice of Appearance in accordance with Rule 40 within 45 days after the filing of the first Request for Panel Review (the deadline for filing a Notice of Appearance is January 19, 2018); and

(c) The panel review shall be limited to the allegations of error of fact or law, including challenges to the jurisdiction of the investigating authority, that are set out in the Complaints filed in the panel review and to the procedural and substantive defenses raised in the panel review.

Dated: December 12, 2017.

Paul E. Morris,

U.S. Secretary, NAFTA Secretariat.

[FR Doc. 2017-27116 Filed 12-15-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF855

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Gulf of Mexico Coral Habitat Management Areas

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

ACTION: Notice of intent (NOI) to prepare a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS); request for comments.

SUMMARY: The NMFS Southeast Region, in collaboration with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council), intends to prepare a DEIS to describe and analyze management alternatives to be included in Amendment 9 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Coral and Coral Reef Resources of the Gulf of Mexico: Coral Habitat Areas Considered for Management in the Gulf of Mexico (Amendment 9). Amendment 9 will consider alternatives that would modify fishing regulations within the existing habitat areas of particular concern (HAPC) boundary of Pulley Ridge; establish new areas for HAPC status in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) that may include associated fishing regulations; and prohibit dredge fishing in all HAPCs that are managed with fishing regulations. These decisions would help conserve Gulf coral resources and essential fish habitat to

maintain suitable marine fishery habitat to support sustainable fisheries. The purpose of this NOI is to inform the public of upcoming opportunities to provide additional comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the DEIS, as specified in this notice.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the DEIS must be received by NMFS by January 17, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on Amendment 9 identified by “NOAA-NMFS-2017-0146” by either of the following methods:

- **Electronic submissions:** Submit all electronic comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Go to www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2017-0146, click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit all written comments to Lauren Waters, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lauren Waters, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, telephone: 727-824-5305, or email: lauren.waters@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Over 100 species of coral are included in the FMP for the Coral and Coral Reef Resources of the Gulf. In 2013, the Council held a workshop to discuss how corals may be affected by Gulf fisheries. One of the workshop recommendations was for the Council to consider additional habitat protections for new and existing coral areas in the Gulf. While designating particular sites within existing coral essential fish habitat (EFH) as HAPCs does not provide any additional specific protections to designated areas, it can be used to focus attention on those areas for future Council actions and when NMFS conducts required EFH consultations on Federal actions that may adversely affect the habitat.

In December 2014, the Council convened their Coral Working Group to discuss which areas in the Gulf may warrant specific protection for corals. The group identified 47 areas, including existing HAPCs, that may be in need of new or revised protection and recommended that new areas also be designated as HAPCs. In May 2015, the Council’s Special Coral Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Coral Advisory Panel (AP) reviewed these areas along with members of the shrimp fishing community and recommended that the boundaries of some of the areas be refined based on available fishing information. In August 2016, the Council’s Coral SSC, Coral AP, Shrimp AP, as well as Council invitees including royal red shrimp fishermen and bottom longline fishermen, provided input to the Council and recommended that 14 areas be designated as HAPCs with accompanying fishing regulations and 8 areas be designated without accompanying fishing regulations. Based on this input, the Council began developing Amendment 9.

NMFS, in collaboration with the Council, will develop a DEIS to describe and analyze alternatives to address the management needs described above including the “no action” alternative. The Amendment 9 DEIS will describe and analyze the modification of fishing regulations within the existing Pulley Ridge HAPC boundary, the establishment of 22 new HAPCs, and the exclusion of dredge fishing in all HAPCs that are managed with fishing regulations.

In accordance with NOAA’s Administrative Order 216-6A, accompanying National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Procedures (companion manual), and the Scoping Process, NMFS, in collaboration with the Council, has identified preliminary environmental issues as a means to initiate discussion for scoping purposes only. The public is invited to provide written comments on the preliminary issues, which are identified as actions and alternatives in the Amendment 9 draft public hearing paper and action guide. These preliminary issues may not represent the full range of issues that eventually will be evaluated in the DEIS. A copy of the Amendment 9 draft public hearing paper and action guide are available at http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/coral/Coral9/Coral9index.html. Additionally, public comments will be solicited at public hearings held by the Council, which are planned for spring 2018 and will be announced in the **Federal Register**.

After the DEIS associated with Amendment 9 is completed, it will be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After filing, the EPA will publish a notice of availability (NOA) of the DEIS for public comment in the **Federal Register**. The DEIS NOA will have a 45-day comment period. This procedure is pursuant to regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) and to NOAA's Administrative Order 216–6A regarding NOAA's compliance with NEPA and the CEQ regulations.

The Council and NMFS will consider public comments received on the DEIS in developing the final environmental impact statement (FEIS), and before the Council votes to submit Amendment 9 to NMFS for Secretarial review and implementation under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. NMFS will announce in the **Federal Register** the availability of the final amendment and FEIS for public review during the Secretarial review period, and will consider all public comments prior to final agency action to approve, disapprove, or partially approve the final amendment. During Secretarial review, NMFS will also file the FEIS with the EPA and the EPA will publish an NOA for the FEIS in the **Federal Register**.

NMFS will announce, through a notice published in the **Federal Register**, all public comment periods on the final amendment, the proposed implementing regulations, and the availability of the associated FEIS. NMFS will consider all public comments received during the Secretarial review period, whether they are on the final amendment, the proposed regulations, or the FEIS, prior to final agency action.

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

Dated: December 12, 2017.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. 2017–27142 Filed 12–15–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Science Advisory Board (SAB); Notice of a Meeting

AGENCY: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a meeting of the NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB). The members will discuss issues outlined in the section on Matters to be considered.

Time and Date: The meeting will be held Tuesday, February 20, 2018 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). These times and the agenda topic described below are subject to change. For the latest agenda please refer to the SAB website: <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

ADDRESSES: Public access is available at: NOAA, SSMC 3 Room 11836, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD. Members of the public may participate virtually by registering at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2013943949799846914>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) was established by a Decision Memorandum dated September 25, 1997, and is the only Federal Advisory Committee with responsibility to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere on strategies for research, education, and application of science to operations and information services. SAB activities and advice provide necessary input to ensure that National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) science programs are of the highest quality and provide optimal support to resource management.

Status: The meeting will be open to public participation with a 10-minute public comment period at 3:45–3:55 p.m. EST. The SAB expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of two (2) minutes. Written comments for the meeting should be received in the SAB Executive Director's Office by February 13, 2018 to provide sufficient time for SAB review. Written comments received after by the SAB Executive Director after these dates will be distributed to the SAB, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date.

Special Accommodations: This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for special accommodations may be directed to the Executive Director no later than 12 p.m. on February 13th.

Matters To Be Considered: The meeting will include discussions on the SAB biennial work plan. Meeting

materials, including work products will be made available on the SAB website: <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Cynthia Decker, Executive Director, SSMC3, Room 11230, 1315 East-West Hwy., Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone Number: 301–734–1156; *Email:* Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov; or visit the SAB website at <http://sab.noaa.gov/SABMeetings.aspx>.

Dated: December 7, 2017.

David Holst,

Chief Financial Officer/CAO, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 2017–27185 Filed 12–15–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Defense Acquisition Regulations System

[Docket Number DARS–2017–0021; OMB Control Number 0704–0214]

Information Collection Requirement; Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Part 217, Special Contracting Methods

AGENCY: Defense Acquisition Regulations System, Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice and request for comments regarding a proposed extension of an approved information collection requirement.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, DoD announces the proposed extension of a public information collection requirement and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. *DoD invites comments on:* Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of DoD, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved this information collection requirement for use through February 28, 2018. DoD proposes that OMB extend its approval for three additional years.

DATES: DoD will consider all comments received by February 16, 2018.