

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 assessment webinar I are as follows:

1. Using datasets and initial assessment analysis recommended from the Data Workshop, panelists will employ assessment models to evaluate stock status, estimate population benchmarks and management criteria, and project future conditions.
2. Participants will recommend the most appropriate methods and configurations for determining stock status and estimating population parameters.

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 2 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: August 7, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-16933 Filed 8-10-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF518

Marine Conservation Plan for Pacific Insular Areas Other Than American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands; Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund

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

ACTION: Notice of agency decision.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces approval of a Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) for Pacific Insular Areas other than American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

DATES: This agency decision is valid from August 4, 2017, through August 3, 2020.

ADDRESSES: You may obtain a copy of the MCP, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2017-0077, from the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal, <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2017-0077>, or from the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813, tel 808-522-8220, www.wpcouncil.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Melanie Brown, Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office, 808-725-5171.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 204(e) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) authorizes the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), and at the request and in consultation with the Council, to negotiate and enter into a Pacific Insular Area fishery agreement (PIAFA). A PIAFA would allow foreign fishing within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) adjacent to a Pacific Insular Area other than American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands, that is, in the EEZ around the Pacific Remote Island Areas (PRIA). The PRIA are Baker Island, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Island, Wake Island, and Palmyra Atoll. Before entering into a PIAFA for the PRIA, the Council must develop and submit to the Secretary a 3-year MCP that details the uses for funds collected by the Secretary under the PIAFA. NMFS is the designee of the Secretary for MCP review and approval.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires any payments received under a PIAFA, and any funds or contributions received in support of conservation and management objectives for the PRIA MCP, to be deposited into the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund (Fund) for use by the Council. Additionally, amounts received by the Secretary attributable to fines and penalties imposed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act for violations by foreign vessels occurring in the EEZ off the PRIA are deposited into the Fund for use by the Council. Section 204(e)(7)(C) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act also authorizes the Council to use the Fund to meet conservation and management objectives in the State of Hawaii, if funds remain after implementing the PRIA MCP.

An MCP must be consistent with the Council's fishery ecosystem plans (FEPs), identify conservation and management objectives (including criteria for determining when such objectives have been met), and prioritize planned marine conservation projects. Although no foreign fishing in the PRIA is being considered at this time, the Council reviewed and approved the draft MCP for PRIA in June 2017 and sent the MCP to NMFS for review on July 7, 2017.

The PRIA MCP contains five conservation and management objectives, consistent with the PRIA and Pelagic FEPs:

1. Support quality research and monitoring to obtain the most complete scientific information available to assess

and manage fisheries within an ecosystem approach.

2. Conduct education and outreach to foster good stewardship principles and broad and direct public participation in the Council's decision-making process.

3. Promote regional cooperation to manage domestic and international fisheries.

4. Encourage development of technologies and methods to achieve the most effective level of monitoring, control, and surveillance, and to ensure safety at sea.

5. Support Western Pacific community demonstration projects and Western Pacific Community Development Program to promote participation and access to fisheries for eligible communities.

In addition, the PRIA MCP contains seven conservation and management objectives, consistent with the Hawaii FEP:

1. Support quality research and monitoring to obtain the most complete scientific information available to assess and manage fisheries within an ecosystem approach.

2. Promote an ecosystem approach to fisheries management including reducing bycatch in fisheries, minimizing impacts on marine habitats and protected species, and addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation.

3. Conduct education and outreach to foster good stewardship principles and broad and direct public participation in the Council's decision-making process.

4. Recognize the importance of island cultures and traditional fishing practices in managing fishery resources and foster opportunities for participation.

5. Promote responsible domestic fisheries development to provided long-term economic growth and stability by reducing foreign imports and increasing local seafood production.

6. Promote regional cooperation and capacity-building to manage domestic and international fisheries.

7. Encourage development of technologies and methods to achieve the most effective level of monitoring, control, and surveillance, and to ensure safety at sea.

Please refer to the MCP for planned projects and activities designed to meet each conservation and management objective, for the evaluative criteria, and for the priority rankings.

This notice announces that NMFS has reviewed the MCP for the PRIA, and has determined that it satisfies the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Accordingly, NMFS has approved the MCP for the 3-year period from August 4, 2017, through August 3, 2020.

This MCP supersedes the MCP previously approved for the period August 4, 2014, through August 3, 2017 (79 FR 44753, August 1, 2014).

Dated: August 8, 2017.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-16988 Filed 8-10-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Patent Examiner Employment Application

ACTION: Proposed extension of an existing information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, invites comments on a proposed extension of an existing information collection: 0651-0042 (Patent Examiner Employment Application).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before October 10, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include "0651-0042 comment" in the subject line of the message.
- *Federal Rulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- *Mail:* Marcie Lovett, Records and Information Governance Division Director, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Request for additional information should be directed to LaRita Jones, Chief of the Workforce Employment Division, Office of Human Resources, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-145; by telephone at 571-272-6196; or by email to larita.jones@uspto.gov with "0651-0042 comment" in the subject line. Additional information about this collection is also available at <http://www.reginfo.gov> under "Information Collection Review."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

In the current employment environment, information technology professionals and engineering graduates

are in great demand. The USPTO is in direct competition with private industry for the same caliber of candidates with the requisite knowledge and skills to perform patent examination work. The use of automated online systems during recruitment allows the USPTO to remain competitive, meet hiring goals, and fulfill the agency's Congressional commitment to reduce the pendency rate for the examination of patent applications.

The USPTO uses the Monster Hiring Management (MHM) system to rapidly review applications for employment of entry-level patent examiners. Using MHM saves time by eliminating paper applications; reducing by several weeks the time Office of Human Resources staff need to spend processing and reviewing applications. Given the time sensitive hiring needs of the Patent Examining Corps, the MHM system provides increased speed and accuracy during the employment process.

The MHM online application collects supplemental information to an candidate's USAjobs application. This information assists the Human Resource Specialists and hiring managers in determining whether an applicant possesses the basic qualification requirements for the patent examiner position. From the information collected, the MHM system creates an electronic real-time candidate inventory on applicants' expertise and technical knowledge, which allows the USPTO to instantaneously review applications from multiple potential applicants.

The use of the MHM online application fully complies with 5 U.S.C. 2301, which requires adequate public notice to assure open competition by guaranteeing that necessary employment information will be accessible and available to the public on inquiry. It is also fully compliant with Section 508 (29 U.S.C. 794(d)), which requires agencies to provide disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others.

II. Method of Collection

With the use of MHM, the applicant's information is collected electronically from the application. The USAJobs.gov Web site provides the online job announcement that links the applicant to the application and the MHM system. The application is completed online and then transmitted to the USPTO via the Internet.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0651-0042.

IC Instruments and Forms: There are no forms associated with this collection.