

salmon for genetic analysis. Shoreline research locations will include: (1) the Tower Bridge in Sacramento, California; and (2) the city of Ryde, California (RM 24); and Georgiana Slough. Hatchery and wild salmon will then be transported and/or released for tracking by acoustic telemetry receivers in place throughout the Delta. Fish capture and transport will begin in mid-October and continue until early February of the following year; all field activities will be completed by March of each sampling season. USGS requests authorization for an estimated take of 100 wild Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon and 38 Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon, including no more than 15 percent unintentional mortality resulting from handling, transporting and holding, tissue-sampling, invasive tagging, and releasing for tracking by hydroacoustic telemetry arrays.

Dated: December 12, 2008.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XM29

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene a public meeting of the Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP).

DATES: The Shrimp AP meeting is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2009 and end by 2 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Spring Hill Suites, 7922 Mosley Road, Houston, TX 77061.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Richard Leard, Interim Executive Director; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Shrimp AP will receive a presentation of the "Biological Review of the 2008

Texas Closure and Percent Change in Yield" and consider recommendations for a cooperative closure with Texas in 2009. The Shrimp AP will also receive presentations of the "Status and Health of the Shrimp Stocks for 2007", the "Stock Assessment Report 2007", "A Biological Review of the Tortugas Pink Shrimp Fishery Through December 2007", and a Report on the Number of Moratorium Permits Issued and Preliminary Effort Estimates for 2008. The Shrimp AP may make recommendations regarding these reports.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Shrimp AP for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions of the Shrimp AP will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

Copies of the agenda can be obtained by calling (813) 348-1630.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Tina O'Hern at the Council (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: December 15, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. E8-30092 Filed 12-17-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XM28

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings and Hearings

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

ACTION: Notice of availability of reports; public meetings, and hearings.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has

begun its annual preseason management process for the 2009 ocean salmon fisheries. This document announces the availability of Council documents as well as the dates and locations of Council meetings and public hearings comprising the Council's complete schedule of events for determining the annual proposed and final modifications to ocean salmon fishery management measures. The agendas for the March and April 2009 Council meetings will be published in subsequent **Federal Register** documents prior to the actual meetings.

DATES: Written comments on the salmon management options must be received by March 31, 2009, at 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time.

ADDRESSES: Documents will be available from, and written comments should be sent to, Mr. Donald Hansen, Chairman, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384, telephone: (503) 820-2280 (voice) or (503) 820-2299 (fax). Comments can also be submitted via e-mail at

PFMC.comments@noaa.gov, address, or through the internet at the Federal eRulemaking Portal: *http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the instructions for submitting comments, and include the I.D. number in the subject line of the message. For specific meeting and hearing locations, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Chuck Tracy, telephone: (503) 820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Schedule for Document Completion and Availability

February 26, 2009: "Review of 2008 Ocean Salmon Fisheries" and "Preseason Report I-Stock Abundance Analysis for 2009 Ocean Salmon Fisheries" will be mailed to the public and posted on the Council website at *http://www.pcouncil.org*.

March 22, 2009: "Preseason Report II-Analysis of Proposed Regulatory Options for 2009 Ocean Salmon Fisheries" and public hearing schedule will be mailed to the public and posted on the Council website at *http://www.pcouncil.org*. The report will include a description of the adopted salmon management options and a summary of their biological and economic impacts.

April 24, 2009: "Preseason Report III-Analysis of Council-Adopted Ocean

Salmon Management Measures for 2009 Ocean Salmon Fisheries” will be mailed to the public and posted on the Council website at <http://www.pcouncil.org>.

May 1, 2009: Federal regulations for 2009 ocean salmon regulations will be published in the **Federal Register** and implemented.

Meetings and Hearings

January 20–23, 2009: The Salmon Technical Team (STT) will meet at the Council office in a public work session to draft “Review of 2008 Ocean Salmon Fisheries” and to consider any other estimation or methodology issues pertinent to the 2009 ocean salmon fisheries.

February 17–20, 2009: The STT will meet at the Council office in a public work session to draft “Preseason Report I-Stock Abundance Analysis for 2009 Ocean Salmon Fisheries” and to consider any other estimation or methodology issues pertinent to the 2009 ocean salmon fisheries.

March 30–31, 2009: Public hearings will be held to receive comments on the proposed ocean salmon fishery management options adopted by the Council. All public hearings begin at 7 p.m. at the following locations:

March 30, 2009: Chateau Westport, Beach Room, 710 W Hancock, Westport, WA 98595, telephone: (360) 268–9101;

March 30, 2009: Red Lion Hotel, Umpqua Room, 1313 N Bayshore Drive, Coos Bay, OR 97420, telephone: (541) 269–4099; and

March 31, 2009: Red Lion Eureka, Evergreen Room, 1929 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501, telephone: (707) 445–0844.

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

Special Accommodations

The meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Ms. Carolyn Porter at (503) 820–2280 (voice), or (503) 820–2299 (fax) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: December 15, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. E8–30091 Filed 12–17–08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XM02

Small Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Seabird and Pinniped Research Activities in Central California

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of an incidental harassment authorization.

SUMMARY: In accordance with provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to PRBO Conservation Science (PRBO) to take small numbers of marine mammals, by Level B behavioral harassment only, incidental to conducting seabird and pinniped research in central California. **DATES:** This authorization is effective from December 12, 2008, through December 11, 2009.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the IHA and the application are available by writing to P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910–3225, or by contacting one of the individuals listed here (**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**), or online at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/incidental.htm>. Documents cited in this notice may be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours, at the aforementioned address and at the Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeannine Cody or Jaclyn Daly, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 713–2289, or Monica DeAngelis, Southwest Regional Office, NMFS, (562) 980–4023.

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 small numbers of marine mammals by United States 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.

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

NMFS has defined “negligible impact” in 50 CFR 216.103 as:

...an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA established an expedited process by which citizens of the United States can apply for an authorization to incidentally take small numbers of marine mammals by harassment. Except for certain categories of activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines “harassment” as:

any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild [“Level A harassment”]; or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering [“Level B harassment”].

Section 101(a)(5)(D) establishes a 45–day time limit for NMFS’ review of an application followed by a 30–day public notice and comment period on any proposed authorizations for the incidental harassment of small numbers of marine mammals. Within 45 days of the close of the comment period, NMFS must either issue or deny the authorization.

Summary of Request

On July 28, 2008, NMFS received an application from PRBO requesting an authorization for the harassment of small numbers of California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), Pacific harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina richardsi*), northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*), and Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) incidental to