

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy Hapeman or Kristy Beard,
(301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 4, 2008, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (73 FR 45217) that an amendment to Permit No. 605-1904, issued February 21, 2008 (73 FR 10744), had been requested by the above-named organization. The requested amendment has been granted under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

Permit No. 605-1904 authorizes the WCNE to harass humpback (*Megaptera novaengliae*), fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*), and sei (*Balaenoptera borealis*) whales along the U.S. Atlantic coast during close approaches for vessel surveys, photo-identification, tracking, and incidental harassment annually. During approaches, researchers may suction-cup tag and/or biopsy sample whales greater than six months of age. A subset of approached humpback and fin whale calves three to six months of age may also be biopsy sampled. This amendment authorizes the WCNE to harass up to 75 North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*) annually during close vessel approaches for photo-identification, behavioral observation, and prey sampling. This work would continue long-term population monitoring to determine status and trends of this species in the North Atlantic. The amendment is valid until the permit expires on February 15, 2013.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an environmental assessment was prepared analyzing the effects of the permitted activities. After a Finding of No Significant Impact, the determination was made that it was not necessary to prepare an environmental impact statement.

Issuance of this permit, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit: (1) was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: September 18, 2009.

P. Michael Payne,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. E9-23065 Filed 9-23-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN: 0648-XR79

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council(s) (Council) Habitat Committee and Habitat Advisory Panel will hold meetings to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meetings will be held in October, 2009. For specific dates and times, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn, 31 Hampshire Street, Mansfield, MA 02048; telephone: (508) 339-2200; fax: (508) 339-1040.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The advisory panel and committee meeting schedules and agendas are as follows:

1. *Joint Habitat Committee and Advisory Panel Meeting - Tuesday, October 13, 2009 beginning at 9 a.m.*

The committee and advisory panel will review Swept Area Seabed impact (SASI) model. They will also solicit Committee and Advisory Panel input on model components and discuss terms of reference for upcoming Scientific and Statistical Committee review of SASI. The Committee and Advisory Panel may also consider other topics at their discretion.

2. *Habitat Committee Meeting - Wednesday, October 14, 2009 beginning at 9 a.m.*

The Committee will discuss alternatives to minimize the effects of

fishing on essential fish habitat (EFH) and will also review a timeline for completion of Omnibus EFH Amendment 2.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before these groups 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 Council(s) 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 Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**), at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: September 21, 2009.

William D. Chappell,

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

[FR Doc. E9-23019 Filed 9-23-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN: 0648-XR80

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene its Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (LEAP).

DATES: The meeting will convene at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 and conclude no later than 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the IP Casino Resort, 850 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Richard Leard, Deputy Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery

Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (LEAP) to review to discuss Joint Enforcement Agreements including cases made and federal training for state officers. The LEAP will also provide reports from each of the member agencies and review the Council's future action schedule. Finally, the LEAP will receive information on the status of fishery management plan amendments and other regulatory actions and elect a new chairman and vice chairman.

The LEAP consists of principal law enforcement officers in each of the Gulf States, as well as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the U.S. Coast Guard, and the NOAA General Counsel for Law Enforcement. A copy of the agenda and related materials can be obtained by calling the Council office at (813) 348-1630.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agendas may come before the LEAP 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 this meeting. Actions of the LEAP will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agendas 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.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are 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**) 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: September 21, 2009.

William D. Chappell,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-23020 Filed 9-23-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN: 0648-XR81

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public 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 (Council), its Executive Committee, its Law Enforcement Committee, its Protected Resources Committee, and its Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee will hold public meetings.

DATES: Tuesday, October 13, 2009 through Thursday, October 15, 2009. On Tuesday, October 13, the Executive Committee with the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) leadership and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) leadership will meet from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. The Executive Committee with the Council's SSC leadership will meet from 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. On Wednesday, October 14 at 8:30 a.m., new Council members will be sworn into office and the Council will then elect its officers. From 8:45 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., the Council will convene to conduct its regular Business Session, receive Organizational Reports, Liaison Reports, the Executive Director's Report, and a report on the status of the Council's Fishery Management Plans (FMP's). From 12:30 p.m. until 1:30 p.m., the Council will review eligible sites for Marine Protected Area (MPA) designation and solicit public comments on such designations. The Law Enforcement Committee will meet from 1:30 p.m. until 2 p.m. The Protected Resources Committee will meet from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m. The Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee will meet from 3 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. On Thursday, October 15, the Executive Committee will meet from 8 a.m. until 9 a.m. The Council will convene at 9 a.m. until 10 a.m. for NOAA Catch Share Policy presentation. From 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. the Council will receive and discuss Committee reports. At 11:30 a.m., the Council will address continuing and new business.

ADDRESSES: Princess Royale Hotel, 9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, MD 21842; telephone: (410) 524-7777.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 300 S. New St.,

Room 2115, 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: Agenda items by day for the Council's Committees and the Council itself are: On Tuesday, October 13—the Executive Committee with the Council's SSC leadership and the ASMFC's leadership will address roles and responsibilities of the Council's SSC and the Council's and Commission's Species Monitoring Committees (MC) for "jointly managed species (these include: summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, bluefish, and dogfish), and clarify the responsibilities of the SSC and the respective MCs in terms of their respective roles in the Council's annual specification setting process. The Executive Committee with the Council's SSC leadership will address the development of a Council risk policy concerning National Standard 1 Guidelines regarding the Allowable Biological Catch (ABC) control rule. On Wednesday, October 14—new Council members will be sworn into office, the Council will elect Officers, conduct its regular Business Session, receive Organizational Reports, Council Liaison Reports, the Executive Director's Report, and a report on the status of the Council's FMPs. Following lunch there will be review of eligible sites for MPA designation and the public will be solicited for its comments about such designations. The Law Enforcement Committee will review the Fisheries Achievement Award (FAA) nominations and recommend recipient(s) for recognition. The Protected Resources Committee will review the outcome of the recent Bottlenose Dolphin (BND) Take Reduction Team meeting, review revisions to the BND stock structure and mortality estimates, and review the current information on all stocks and evaluate the BND Plan's goals for each stock. The Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee will review and clarify management measures to be included in Amendment 15. On Thursday, October 15—the Executive Committee will review the Council's 2010 Annual Work Plan (AWP), review highlights of the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council (NRCC) Meeting, and review the nominees for and select the recipient of the 2009 Ricks E Savage Award. The Council will then convene to receive a presentation on NOAA's Catch Share Policy by Monica Medina (NOAA's Catch Share Task Force