

programs identified with sufficient clarity by the public in response to this notice.

Request for Comments

Given the large number of countries that export softwood lumber and softwood lumber products to the United States, we are soliciting public comment only on subsidies provided by countries whose exports accounted for at least one percent of total U.S. imports of softwood lumber by quantity, as classified under Harmonized Tariff Schedule code 4407.1001 (which accounts for the vast majority of imports), during the period January 1 through June 30, 2011. Official U.S. import data published by the United States International Trade Commission Tariff and Trade DataWeb indicate that exports of softwood lumber from Canada and Chile each account for at least one percent of U.S. imports of softwood lumber products during that time period. We intend to rely on similar previous six-month periods to identify the countries subject to future reports on softwood lumber subsidies. For example, we will rely on U.S. imports of softwood lumber and softwood lumber products during the period July 1 through December 31, 2011, to select the countries subject to the next report.

Under U.S. trade law, a subsidy exists where a government authority: (i) Provides a financial contribution; (ii) provides any form of income or price support within the meaning of Article XVI of the GATT 1994; or (iii) makes a payment to a funding mechanism to provide a financial contribution to a person, or entrusts or directs a private entity to make a financial contribution, if providing the contribution would normally be vested in the government and the practice does not differ in substance from practices normally followed by governments, and a benefit is thereby conferred. See section 771(5)(B) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended.

Parties should include in their comments: (1) The country which provided the subsidy; (2) the name of the subsidy program; (3) a brief description (at least 3–4 sentences) of the subsidy program; and (4) the government body or authority that provided the subsidy.

Submission of Comment

Persons wishing to comment should file a signed original and six copies of each set of comments by the date specified above. The Department will not accept comments accompanied by a request that a part or all of the material be treated confidentially due to business

proprietary concerns or for any other reason. The Department will return such comments and materials to the persons submitting the comments and will not include them in its report on softwood lumber subsidies. The Department also requests submission of comments in electronic form to accompany the required paper copies. Comments filed in electronic form should be submitted on CD-ROM with the paper copies or by e-mail to the Webmaster below.

Comments received in electronic form will be made available to the public in Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Import Administration Web site at the following address: <http://ia.ita.doc.gov>. Any questions concerning file formatting, document conversion, access on the Internet, or other electronic filing issues should be addressed to Andrew Lee Beller, Import Administration Webmaster, at (202) 482-0866, e-mail address: webmaster-support@ita.doc.gov.

For documents filed in the antidumping and countervailing duty proceedings, the Department only accepts electronic filings through the new IA ACCESS system. However, all comments and submissions in response to this Request for Comment should be mailed to James Terpstra, Import Administration; Subject: Softwood Lumber Subsidies Bi-Annual Report: Request for Comment; Room 1870, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC, 20230, by no later than 5 p.m., on the above-referenced deadline date.

Dated: October 24, 2011.

Christian Marsh,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Operations.

[FR Doc. 2011-28142 Filed 10-28-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XX775

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Shark Management Measures; 2012 Research Fishery

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

ACTION: Notice of intent; request for applications.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces its request for applications for the 2012 shark research fishery from commercial shark

fishermen with a directed or incidental limited access permit. The shark research fishery allows for the collection of fishery-dependent data for future stock assessments while also allowing NMFS and commercial fishermen to conduct cooperative research to meet the shark research objectives of the Agency. The only commercial vessels authorized to land sandbar sharks are those participating in the shark research fishery. Shark research fishery permittees may also land non-sandbar large coastal sharks (LCS), small coastal sharks (SCS), and pelagic sharks. Commercial vessels not participating in the shark research fishery may only land non-sandbar LCS, SCS, and pelagic sharks. Commercial shark fishermen who are interested in participating in the shark research fishery need to submit a completed Shark Research Fishery Permit Application in order to be considered.

DATES: Shark Research Fishery Applications must be received no later than 5 p.m., local time, on November 30, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Please submit completed applications to the HMS Management Division at:

- **Mail:** Attn: Delisse Ortiz, HMS Management Division (F/SF1), NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

- **Fax:** (301) 427-8503

For copies of the Shark Research Fishery Permit Application, please write to the HMS Management Division at the address listed above, call (301) 427-8503 (phone), or fax a request to (301) 713-1917. Copies of the Shark Research Fishery Application are also available at the HMS Web site at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/index.htm>. Additionally, please be advised your application may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Delisse Ortiz, at (301) 427-8503 (phone) or (301) 713-1917 (fax).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Atlantic shark fisheries are managed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 635.

The final rule for Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP (73 FR 35778, June 24, 2008, corrected at 73 FR 40658, July 15, 2008) established, among other things, a shark research fishery to maintain time series data for stock assessments and to meet NMFS'

research objectives. The shark research fishery also allows selected commercial fishermen the opportunity to earn more revenue from selling additional sharks, including sandbar sharks, than allowed outside of the commercial shark fishery. Only the commercial shark fishermen selected to participate in the shark research fishery are authorized to land/harvest sandbar sharks subject to the sandbar quota available each year. The base quota is 87.9 mt dw per year through December 31, 2012, although this number may be reduced in the event of overharvests, if any. The selected shark research fishery permittees will also have access to the non-sandbar LCS, SCS, and pelagic shark quotas. Commercial fishermen not participating in the shark research fishery may land non-sandbar LCS, SCS, and pelagic sharks subject to retention limits and quotas per §§ 635.24 and 635.27, respectively.

The 2012 trip limits and number of trips per month will depend on the number of selected vessels, available quota, and objectives of the research fishery. The trip limits and the number of trips taken have changed each year the research fishery has been active. Participants may also be limited on the amount of gear they can deploy on a given set (*e.g.*, number of hooks, length of longline). In 2011, vessels selected to participate in the shark research fishery were allowed a trip limit of 33 sandbar sharks and 33 non-sandbar large coastal sharks. The vessels participating in the shark research fishery fished an average of 2.6 trips per month.

In order to participate in the shark research fishery, commercial shark fishermen need to submit a completed Shark Research Fishery Application showing the vessel and owner(s) meet the specific criteria outlined below.

Research Objectives

Each year, NMFS determines the research objectives for the upcoming shark research fishery. The research objectives are developed by a shark board, which is comprised of representatives within NMFS, including representatives from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) Panama City Laboratory, Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) Narragansett Laboratory, the Southeast Regional Office, Protected Species Division (SERO\PSD), and the HMS Management Division. The research objectives for 2012 are based on the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 11, 2005/2006 LCS stock assessment and SEDAR 21, 2010/2011 U.S. South Atlantic blacknose, U.S. Gulf of Mexico blacknose, sandbar, and

dusky sharks stock assessment. The 2012 research objectives are:

- Collect reproductive, length, sex, and age data from sandbar sharks throughout the calendar year;
- Collect reproductive, length, sex, and age data from all species of sharks for additional species-specific assessments;
- Monitor the size distribution of sandbar sharks and other species captured in the fishery;
- Continue on-going tagging programs for identification of migration corridors and stock structure;
- Maintain time-series of abundance from previously derived indices for the shark BLL observer program;
- Acquire fin-clip samples of all species for genetic analysis;
- Attach satellite archival tags to endangered smalltooth sawfish to provide information on critical habitat and preferred depth, consistent with ESA requirements for such tagging under the SEFSC observer program take permit obtained through the 2008 Section 7 Consultation and Biological Opinion (BiOp) for the Continued Authorization of Shark Fisheries (Commercial Shark Bottom Longline, Commercial Shark Gillnet and Recreational Shark Handgear Fisheries) as Managed under the Consolidated Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks (Consolidated HMS FMP), including Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP (F/SER/2007/05044);
- Attach satellite archival tags to prohibited dusky sharks and other sharks, as needed, to provide information on daily and seasonal movement patterns, and preferred depth;
- Evaluate hooking mortality and post-release survivorship of dusky, hammerhead, and other sharks using hook timers and temperature-depth recorders;
- Evaluate the effects of controlled gear experiments in order to determine the effects of potential hook changes to prohibited species interactions and fishery yields; and
- Examine the size distribution of sandbar sharks and other species captured in the Mid-Atlantic shark time/area closure off the coast of North Carolina from January 1 through July 31.

Selection Criteria

Shark Research Fishery Permit Applications will only be accepted from commercial shark fishermen who hold a current directed or incidental limited access permit. While incidental permit holders are welcome to submit an application, to ensure that an

appropriate number of sharks are landed/harvested to meet the research objectives for this year, NMFS will be giving priority to directed permit holders. As such, qualified incidental permit holders will only be selected if there are not enough qualified directed permit holders to meet research objectives.

The Shark Research Fishery Permit Application includes, but is not limited to, a request for the following information: Type of commercial shark permit possessed; past participation in the commercial shark fishery (not including sharks caught for display); past involvement and compliance with HMS observer programs per § 635.7; past compliance with HMS regulations at 50 CFR part 635; availability to participate in the shark research fishery; ability to fish in the regions and season requested; ability to attend necessary meetings regarding the objectives and research protocols of the shark research fishery; and ability to carry out the research objectives of the Agency. An applicant who has been charged criminally or civilly (*e.g.*, issued a Notice of Violation and Assessment (NOVA) or Notice of Permit Sanction) for any HMS-related violation will not be considered for participation in the shark research fishery. In addition, applicants who were selected to carry an observer in the previous 2 years for any HMS fishery, but failed to communicate with NMFS observer programs in order to arrange the placement of an observer before commencing any fishing trip that would have resulted in the incidental catch or harvest of any Atlantic HMS, per § 635.7, will not be considered for participation in the 2012 shark research fishery. Applicants who were selected to carry an observer in the previous 2 years for any HMS fishery and failed to comply with all the observer regulations per § 635.7, including failure to provide adequate sleeping accommodations per § 635.7(e)(1), a sufficiently sized survival craft per § 600.746(f)(6), or failure to pass a USCG safety examination per § 600.746(c)(2) will also not be considered. Exceptions will be made for vessels that were selected for HMS observer coverage but did not fish in the quarter when selected. Applicants who do not possess a valid United States Coast Guard (USCG) safety inspection decal when the application is submitted will not be considered. Applicants who have been non-compliant with any of the HMS observer program regulations in the previous 2 years, as described above, may be eligible for future participation in shark

research fishery activities by demonstrating 2 subsequent years of compliance with observer regulations at § 635.7.

Selection Process

The HMS Management Division will review all submitted applications that are deemed complete and develop a list of qualified applicants. A qualified applicant is an applicant that has submitted a complete application and has met the selection criteria. Qualified applicants are eligible to be selected to participate in the shark research fishery for 2012. The HMS Management Division will provide the list of qualified applicants without identification information to the SEFSC. The SEFSC will then evaluate the list of qualified applicants and, based on the temporal and spatial needs of the research objectives, the availability of qualified applicants, and the available quota for a given year, will randomly select approximately 10 qualified applicants to conduct the prescribed research. Where there are multiple qualified applicants that meet the criteria, permittees will be randomly selected through a lottery system. If a public meeting is deemed necessary, NMFS will announce details of a public selection meeting in a subsequent **Federal Register** notice.

Once the selection process is complete, NMFS will notify the selected applicants and issue the shark research fishery permits. If needed, NMFS will communicate with the shark research fishery permit holders to arrange a captain's meeting to discuss the research objectives and protocols. The shark research fishery permit holders must contact the NMFS observer coordinator to arrange the placement of a NMFS-approved observer for each shark research trip.

A shark research fishery permit will only be valid for the vessel and owner(s) and terms and conditions listed on the permit, and, thus, cannot be transferred to another vessel or owner(s). Issuance of a shark research permit does not guarantee that the permit holder will be assigned a NMFS-approved observer on any particular trip. Rather, issuance indicates that a vessel may be issued a NMFS-approved observer for a particular trip, and on such trips, may be allowed to harvest Atlantic sharks, including sandbar sharks, in excess of the retention limits described in § 635.24(a). These retention limits will be based on available quota, number of vessels participating in the 2012 shark research fishery, the research objectives set forth by the shark board, and may vary by vessel and/or location. When

not operating under the auspices of the shark research fishery, the vessel would still be able to land non-sandbar, SCS, and pelagic sharks subject to existing retention limits on trips without a NMFS-approved observer. The shark research permit may be revoked or modified at any time and does not confer the right to engage in activities beyond those listed on the shark research fishery permit.

Commercial shark permit holders (directed and incidental) are invited to submit an application to participate in the shark research fishery on an annual basis. Permit applications can be found on the HMS Management Division's Web site at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/index.htm> or by calling (301) 427-8503. Final decisions on the issuance of a shark research fishery permit will depend on the submission of all required information, and NMFS' review of applicant information as outlined above. The 2012 shark research fishery will start after the opening of the shark fishery and under available quotas as published in a separate **Federal Register** final rule.

Dated: October 25, 2011.

Galen Tromble,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 2011-28042 Filed 10-28-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA774

Marine Mammals; File No. 13927

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a permit has been issued to Dr. James H.W. Hain, Associated Scientists at Woods Hole, Box 721, Woods Hole, MA 02543 to conduct research on North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*) and humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*).

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727) 824-5312; fax (727) 824-5309.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carrie Hubbard or Amy Hapeman, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

On December 10, 2008, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (73 FR 75084) that a request for a permit to conduct research on 23 cetacean species had been submitted by the above-named applicant. An additional two species of pinnipeds and four species of sea turtles were listed as animals that could be incidentally harassed as a result of the research. A permit that authorizes some of the activities requested by the applicant has been issued 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. 13927 authorizes aerial and vessel surveys to study North Atlantic right and humpback whales. Bottlenose (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) may be incidentally harassed during research activities. Research may occur annually, December through April off the U.S. southeast coast. The permit is valid through October 31, 2016. Several aspects of the application request have been denied, including: (1) Research off the coast of the northeast United States; (2) takes of pinnipeds, sea turtles, and cetacean species other than those listed above; (3) the use of non-motorized vessels, such as kayaks; (4) research associated with Project II (studies of sightability and survey methodology as relates to Early Warning Systems and mitigation of human impacts, including development and evaluation of new and/or improved research methods); and (5) research associated with Project III.b (feeding behavior of baleen whales).

An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared analyzing the effects of the permitted activities on the human environment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Based on the analyses in the EA, NMFS determined that issuance of the permit would not significantly impact the quality of the human environment and that preparation of an environmental