

achievement of population viability parameters for listed Chinook salmon and steelhead. The programs would continue to be operated to minimize any impacts on genetic integrity of the natural salmon and steelhead populations while providing the intended benefits. The benefits include preserving and assisting in the recolonization of Elwha River salmon and steelhead during, and for a period following, dam removal when natural productivity conditions will be poor.

The hatchery programs would add marine-derived nutrients to the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems above Glines Canyon Dam, which have been inaccessible to salmon and steelhead since the early 1900s. The programs would increase total and natural-origin abundance and spatial structure of the Chinook salmon population as hatchery-origin fish return to spawn naturally with wild fish and new habitat becomes available. The hatchery programs would protect the Elwha River salmon and steelhead populations when turbidity levels are high and detrimental to natural-origin fish survival due to dam removal activities. The proposed plans are interrelated and interdependent through shared population preservation and recolonization objectives and effects, broodstock collection locations and actions, fish rearing and release sites, monitoring and evaluation actions, and funding sources.

The RMP includes provisions for annual reports that will assess compliance with performance standards established through the RMP. Reporting and inclusion of new information derived from RMP research, monitoring, and evaluation activities provides assurance that performance standards will be achieved in future seasons. NMFS' evaluation is available on the NMFS Northwest Region Web site at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov>.

#### Summary of Comments Received in Response to the Proposed Evaluation and Pending Determination

NMFS published notice of its proposed evaluation and pending determination on the RMP for public review and comment on October 16, 2012 (77 FR 63294). The proposed evaluation and pending determination and an associated draft environmental assessment were available for public review and comment for 30 days.

NMFS received four sets of comments: Three from Tribal organizations and one on behalf of several environmental groups. Several comments were addressed in NMFS' final Evaluation and Recommended Determination document, but no

substantive changes to the RMP were required. A detailed summary of the comments and NMFS' responses is also available on the NMFS Northwest Region Web site. Based on its evaluation and recommended determination and taking into account the public comments, NMFS issued its final determination on the Elwha River basin salmon and steelhead hatchery RMP.

#### Authority

Under section 4 of the ESA, the Secretary of Commerce is required to adopt such regulations as he deems necessary and advisable for the conservation of species listed as threatened. The ESA salmon and steelhead 4(d) rule (65 FR 42422, July 10, 2000) specifies categories of activities that contribute to the conservation of listed salmonids and sets out the criteria for such activities. The rule further provides that the prohibitions of paragraph (a) of the rule do not apply to actions undertaken in compliance with an RMP developed jointly by the State of Washington and the Tribe and determined by NMFS to be in accordance with the salmon and steelhead 4(d) rule (65 FR 42422, July 10, 2000).

Dated: December 17, 2012.

#### 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-XC407

#### New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice; public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its *Monkfish* Advisory Panel on January 9, 2013, to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

**DATES:** This meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2013 at 9 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:**

**Meeting address:** The meeting will be held at the Radisson Airport Hotel, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 739-3000; fax: (401) 732-9309.

**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:** In Amendment 6 to the *Monkfish* Fishery Management Plan, the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils are considering a range of possible changes to the management system, including modifications to the current system, incorporation of *monkfish* into groundfish sectors and/or individually transferrable quotas (ITQs). The Advisory Panel will review the Amendment 6 draft document, focusing on the section pertaining to modifications to the current days-at-sea (DAS) trip limit management system, including alternatives for establishing a *monkfish* DAS leasing program. The recommendations of the Advisory Panel will be forwarded to the *Monkfish* Committee which will meet at a later date.

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 listed in this notice 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 final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, at 978-465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: December 17, 2012.

#### Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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