

Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon are now overfished. Upper Columbia River summer-run Chinook salmon is now subject to overfishing. Thorny skate and the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico stock of sandbar shark are still overfished. The Gulf of Maine/Cape Hatteras Atlantic mackerel stock is now both overfished and subject to overfishing. NMFS, on behalf of the Secretary, notifies the appropriate fishery management council (Council) whenever it determines that overfishing is occurring, a stock is in an overfished condition or a stock is approaching an overfished condition.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Regina Spallone, (301) 427-8568.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to section 304(e)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1854(e)(2), NMFS, on behalf of the Secretary, must notify Councils, and publish in the **Federal Register**, whenever it determines that a stock or stock complex is subject to overfishing, overfished, or approaching an overfished condition.

NMFS has determined that Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon, Queets coho salmon, Juan de Fuca coho salmon, Snohomish coho salmon, and Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon are now overfished. Pacific salmon stocks are overfished when the 3-year geometric mean of annual spawning escapement falls below the stock's minimum stock size threshold (MSST). MSST for Pacific salmon is generally defined as  $0.5 * S_{MSY}$  or  $0.75 * S_{MSY}$ , although there are some exceptions including Juan de Fuca and Snohomish coho, where MSST is  $0.636 * S_{MSY}$  and  $0.62 * S_{MSY}$ , respectively.  $S_{MSY}$  is the number of spawners corresponding to maximum sustainable yield (MSY). The determinations for the two Chinook stocks are based on 2018 assessments—using data from 2017—produced by the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Salmon Technical Team (STT) using methodologies that have been reviewed by the Pacific Council's Science and Statistical Committee (SSC). The determinations for the three coho stocks are based on 2018 assessments—using data from 2016—produced by the Pacific Council's STT, using methodologies that have been reviewed by the Pacific Council's SSC.

NMFS has further determined that Upper Columbia River summer-run Chinook salmon is now subject to overfishing. This stock is subject to overfishing when the  $F_{year}$  exceeds the maximum fishing mortality threshold

(MFMT), where the MFMT is generally defined as less than or equal to  $F_{MSY}$ . This determination is based on a 2018 assessment—using data from 2015—produced by the Pacific Salmon Commission's Chinook Technical Committee. Consistent with the requirements in the Salmon FMP, the Pacific Council has directed the STT to develop rebuilding plans for each overfished stock for the Council's consideration. Of the six salmon stocks, only the two Chinook stocks are not internationally managed stocks. For all other stocks, the Council has limited ability to control ocean fisheries in waters outside its jurisdiction.

Thorny skate and the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico stock of sandbar shark are still overfished. Thorny skate is overfished if the three-year moving average of the autumn survey mean weight per tow (B) is less than  $B_{THRESHOLD}$ , which is one-half of the 75th percentile of the mean weight per tow observed in the autumn trawl survey from the selected reference time series. A stock assessment was completed in 2017—using data through 2016—which supported the determination that thorny skate remains overfished. NMFS is working with the New England Fishery Management Council (New England Council) to implement conservation and management measures to rebuild thorny skate. The sandbar shark stock is overfished when current biomass (B) proxy is less than the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) ( $B < B_{MSST}$ ). The B proxy for sandbar shark is spawning stock fecundity. The sandbar shark determination is based on a stock assessment completed in 2018—using data through 2015—following the Southeast Data Assessment and Review process. NMFS manages sandbar shark under the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and its amendments.

The Gulf of Maine/Cape Hatteras Atlantic mackerel stock is now both overfished and subject to overfishing. Atlantic mackerel is subject to overfishing if the fishing mortality rate (F) exceeds  $F_{40\%}$ . The stock is overfished if spawning stock biomass (SSB) is less than  $\frac{1}{2} SSB_{MSY}$ , the SSB associated with fishing at  $F_{MSY}$ . This determination is based on a benchmark assessment, finalized in 2018 and using data through 2016. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council has been notified of its requirement to adopt measures to end overfishing and approve a rebuilding plan for Atlantic mackerel.

Dated: August 1, 2018.

**Margo Schulze-Haugen**,  
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable  
Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.  
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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG368

#### 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 Whiting Advisory Panel and Committee on Wednesday, August 29, 2018 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:** The meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 29, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:** *Meeting address:* The meeting will be held at the Hotel Providence, 139 Mathewson Street, Providence, RI 02903; telephone: (401) 861-8000.

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

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Agenda

The Whiting Advisory Panel and Committee will evaluate Amendment 22 (limited access alternatives) public hearing comments and impact analyses to recommend final action to the Council at its September meeting. The will also receive the Annual Monitoring Report for Fishing Year 2017 from the Whiting Plan Development Team. The Advisory Panel and Committee will review recommendations to streamline small-mesh multispecies fishery regulations and make final recommendations to the Council. Other business will be discussed as necessary.

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

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: July 31, 2018.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XG389**

#### North Pacific 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 North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Trawl Electronic Monitoring Committee will hold a public meeting on August 23, 2018 through August 24, 2018.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Thursday, August 23, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on Friday, August 24, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (or as necessary).

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held in the Husky Room, Purple and Gold at the Silver Cloud Hotel, 5036 25th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105. Teleconference number: (907) 271-2896.

**Council address:** North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252; telephone: (907) 271-2809.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Elizabeth Figus, Council staff; telephone: (907) 271-2801.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Thursday, August 23, 2018 through Friday, August 24, 2018*

This two-day meeting is expected to focus on: (a) A presentation on uses of EM for recording interactions with seabirds; (b) an update about the Alaska Region Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan; (c) updates for ongoing research, funding, and regulatory comparisons relevant to trawl EM; (d) a review of the EM Workgroup cooperative approach; (e) drafting of a cooperative workplan for trawl EM; and, (f) a discussion of scheduling and other issues. The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <http://www.npfmc.org/observer-program/>.

#### Public Comment

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted either electronically to Elizabeth Figus, Council staff: [Elizabeth.figus@noaa.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.figus@noaa.gov) or through the mail: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252. In-person oral public testimony will be accepted at the discretion of the chair.

#### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Shannon Gleason at (907) 271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: July 31, 2018.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XG384**

#### Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Acting Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. The Exempted Fishing Permit would allow commercial fishing vessels to fish outside of scallop regulations in support of research conducted by the Coonamessett Farm Foundation. These exemptions would support research conducted on trips to test gear modifications for bycatch reduction in the scallop dredge fishery.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before August 21, 2018.

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

- *Email:* [nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line "CFF Compensation Fishing Gear Research EFP."

- *Mail:* Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on CFF Compensation Fishing Gear Research EFP."

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Shannah Jaburek, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-282-8456.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on July 6, 2018, that would allow gear research to be conducted by vessels on compensation fishing trips associated with projects funded by the 2018 Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) program. The exemptions would allow commercial fishing vessels to exceed the crew size regulations at 50 CFR 648.51(c) to place a researcher on the vessel and temporarily exempt the participating vessels from possession limits and minimum size requirements specified in 50 CFR part 648, subpart B and subparts D through O, for biological sampling purposes. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited, including landing fish in excess of a possession limit or below the minimum size.

Experimental fishing activity would test a one-way extended link gear