

ground rules will be asked to leave the meeting.

After the open session, the Advisory Committee will meet in closed session to discuss sensitive information relating to upcoming international negotiations regarding Atlantic highly migratory species conservation and management.

Special Accommodations

The meeting location is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Grace Ferrara at (301) 427-8371 or grace.ferrara@noaa.gov at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 17, 2018.

John Henderschedt,

Director, Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-20714 Filed 9-21-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG482

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) and the Alaska Board of Fisheries will meet October 17, 2018.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 17, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Egan Center, 555 W 5th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501.

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: David Witherell, Council staff; telephone: (907) 271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Wednesday, October 17, 2018

The committee will discuss several issues of joint concern including: (a) Status report on Council action on the Salmon Fishery Management Plan re Cook Inlet; (b) status report on

Southeast Chinook salmon and management; (c) status of Pacific cod stocks; (d) overview of Total Allowable Catch allocation and Federal management of Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BS/AI) cod; (e) update on Council initiative on BSAI cod fishery participation; (f) update on Council action on AI cod community and shoreside processor protections; (g) overview of State management of Pacific cod fisheries; (h) review of State managed Pacific cod proposals; and (i) other business.

The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <http://www.npfmc.org> prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

Public Comment

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted either electronically to David Witherell, Council staff: david.witherell@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 committee.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is 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: September 19, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-20716 Filed 9-21-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG450

User Manual for Optional User Spreadsheet Tool for 2018 Revisions to Technical Guidance for Assessing the Effects of Anthropogenic Sound on Marine Mammal Hearing: Underwater Thresholds for Onset of Permanent and Temporary Threshold Shifts

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) seeks public

comment on our *User Manual for Optional User Spreadsheet Tool (Version 2.0)* (User Manual) for NMFS' 2018 Revisions to Technical Guidance for Assessing the Effects of Anthropogenic Sound on Marine Mammal Hearing: Underwater Acoustic Thresholds for Onset of Permanent and Temporary Threshold Shifts (2018 Revised Technical Guidance). This User Manual provides detailed instructions and examples on how to use NMFS' optional User Spreadsheet tool, which incorporates the 2018 Revised Technical Guidance's acoustic threshold levels to determine whether and how sound-producing activities are expected to result in hearing impacts to marine mammals.

DATES: Comments must be received by November 8, 2018.

ADDRESSES: The User Manual for optional User Spreadsheet tool (Version 2.0) is available in electronic form via the internet at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-acoustic-technical-guidance>. You may submit comments by including NOAA-NMFS-2018-0100, by either of the following methods:

Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: Go to www.regulations.gov/ #!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2018-0100, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

Mail: Send comments to: Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226, Attn: Acoustic Guidance User Manual.

Instructions: NMFS may not consider comments if they are sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the comment period ends. All comments received are a part of the public record and NMFS will generally post for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender is publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy R. Scholik-Schlomer, Office of Protected Resources, 301-427-8449, Amy.Scholik@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Presidential Executive Order (E.O.)

13795, "Implementing an America-First Offshore Energy Strategy" (82 FR 20815; April 28, 2017), states in section 2 that it shall be the policy of the United States to encourage energy exploration and production, including on the Outer Continental Shelf, in order to maintain the Nation's position as a global energy leader and foster energy security and resilience for the benefit of the American people, while ensuring that any such activity is safe and environmentally responsible. Among the requirements of E.O. 13795 is section 10, which called for a review of NMFS' Technical Guidance, originally published in 2016.

To assist the Secretary of Commerce in the review of the 2016 Technical Guidance for consistency with the policy in section 2 of E.O. 13795, NMFS solicited public comment via a 45-day public comment period (82 FR 24950; May 31, 2017) and hosted an Interagency Consultation meeting (September 25, 2017) with representatives from ten federal agencies. In response to the feedback received during the public comment period and the Interagency Consultation meeting and per approval of the Secretary of Commerce, NMFS issued the 2018 Revised Technical Guidance (83 FR 28824; June 21, 2018).

To help applicants implement the 2018 Revised Technical Guidance, NMFS also updated the accompanying optional User Spreadsheet tool for the technical guidance and drafted a new User Manual that provides more detailed instructions and examples on how to use the optional User Spreadsheet tool to assess auditory injury thresholds.

NMFS is soliciting public comment on our User Manual and associated optional User Spreadsheet tool via a 45-day public comment period. In particular, NMFS invites comment on how we can further refine the User Manual to aid in the application and implementation of the 2018 Revised Technical Guidance. Input from stakeholders provided during this public comment period will inform updated versions of the User Manual and/or associated optional User Spreadsheet tool, which may be issued as early as the end of 2018. Please note NMFS is only soliciting comments at this time on the User Manual and associated optional User Spreadsheet tool, and not on the 2018 Revised Technical Guidance (For more detail on the Technical Guidance's public comment periods, see: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-acoustic-technical-guidance>).

The 2018 Revised Technical Guidance, the updated optional User Spreadsheet tool, and the new companion User Manual are available in electronic form via the internet at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-acoustic-technical-guidance>.

Dated: September 19, 2018.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2018-20712 Filed 9-21-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG474

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. This Exempted Fishing Permit would exempt one commercial fishing vessel, which is authorized to fish in the yellowtail flounder fishery in international waters regulated by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, from Northeast multispecies fishery minimum fish size regulations. The purpose of the Exempted Fishing Permit is to support a study to determine equivalent length and weight ratios from legal-sized, whole, fish to dressed, headed and gutted fish caught in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization yellowtail flounder fishery, and to the extent possible, the effect of the exemption on the marketplace. The only other U.S. vessel authorized to fish in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization yellowtail fishery may request, and be approved, to fish under this same EFP.

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 October 9, 2018.

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

- *Email:* nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "DA18-059 NAFO 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 "DA18-059 NAFO EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Shannah Jaburek, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-282-8456.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Tremont Fisheries, LLC, submitted an exempted fishing permit (EFP) application that would authorize the company's fishing vessel to land dressed fish (headed and gutted) that do not meet the minimum fish size requirements specified for Northeast multispecies fish as defined in federal regulations. These regulations prohibit the possession of any fish, including parts of fish, that do not meet certain minimum fish sizes (50 CFR 648.83(a)(2)). Consequently, U.S. vessels participating in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) fishery that transit the U. S. Exclusive Economic Zone are subject to a minimum size larger than what NAFO requires and which essentially precludes any dressing of the caught fish through heading and gutting. In addition, because the NAFO fishery for groundfish is a frozen fish fishery, they are relegated to freezing whole fish in order to meet U.S. minimum size requirements, which have less value and a weaker market when compared with frozen dressed fish from foreign markets not subject to U.S. minimum size requirements. These other frozen dressed fish markets are currently occupied by foreign fish processing firms, which are able to harvest a smaller minimum size than the U.S. domestic fishery. Moreover, requiring U.S. vessels in NAFO waters to adhere to the U.S. minimum size even for dressed fish can result in U.S. vessels discarding more fish which is inconsistent with NAFO's objectives to reduce unnecessary discards. The EFP applicant is proposing to use the NAFO minimum sizes (Table 1) for landed fish, to determine appropriate weight conversion factors between whole and dressed fish that have been headed and gutted, and to see, to the extent possible, how this may affect the market for these fish. For any fish that do not have