

consumption that are not sold or bartered and would not impact the regulations for party/charter vessels. Private recreational tilefish vessels would be required to submit vessel trip reports (VTRs) for any trip targeting tilefish, through any NMFS-approved electronic reporting system. This meeting will provide a review of approved electronic VTR applications, initial steps that would be necessary for private recreational vessel operators to begin reporting electronically, and a demonstration of the most popular electronic reporting application (with limited time for questions) to convey information on the process involved for private recreational vessel operators to report VTRs electronically.

**Special Accommodations**

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: April 3, 2020.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

[FR Doc. 2020-07412 Filed 4-7-20; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XX049]

**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 Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application submitted by The Nature Conservancy contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This exempted fishing permit would allow participants to use electronic monitoring systems in lieu of at-sea monitors in support of a study to develop electronic monitoring for catch monitoring in the Northeast multispecies 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 April 23, 2020.

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

- *Email:* [nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov).

Include in the subject line “PARTIAL EM EFP RENEWAL.”

- *Mail:* Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope “PARTIAL EM EFP RENEWAL.”

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Claire Fitz-Gerald, Fishery Policy Analyst; 978-281-9255; [claire.fitzgerald@noaa.gov](mailto:claire.fitzgerald@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Northeast multispecies (groundfish) sectors must implement and fund an at-sea monitoring (ASM) program, and the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) regulations allow sectors to use electronic monitoring (EM) to satisfy this monitoring requirement, provided that NMFS deems the technology sufficient for catch monitoring. NMFS recently notified the Council of its intent to allow sectors to submit EM plans instead of, or in addition to, ASM plans as part of the fishing year 2021 and 2022 sector operations plans approval process. For the 2020 fishing year, lessons learned through this exempted fishing permit (EFP) would allow NMFS to continue developing standards and requirements for the groundfish EM program. Project partners include The Nature Conservancy, the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance, the Maine Coast Fishermen’s Association, and fishermen.

The Nature Conservancy first obtained an EFP authorizing participant vessels to use EM in lieu of human observers to meet their ASM requirements in fishing year 2016. Project partners applied to renew this EFP in fishing years 2017, 2018, and 2019. The EFP was reissued for all 3 years.

**TABLE 1—PARTICIPATION IN PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE PARTIAL AUDIT-MODEL EM EFP**

| Fishing year | Number of participant vessels | ASM coverage level (percent) |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2016 .....   | 14                            | 14                           |
| 2017 .....   | 5                             | 16                           |
| 2018 .....   | 5                             | 15                           |
| 2019 .....   | 5                             | 31                           |

On February 27, 2020, The Nature Conservancy, along with project partners, submitted a request to renew this EFP for the 2020 fishing year, as part of an ongoing effort to develop EM in the groundfish fishery. The proposed participant list includes five vessels, all of which participated in this EFP in fishing year 2019. Together, they are expected to take an a total of 235 trips in fishing year 2020. Vessels would be assigned observer coverage at the fishing year 2020 ASM coverage level of 40 percent, which is a combination of Northeast Fishery Observer Program (NEFOP) and ASM coverage. At 40-percent observer coverage, this would equate to roughly 94 EFP trips.

On groundfish trips selected for observer coverage, vessels participating in this EFP would use EM in lieu of human ASMs, and in addition to NEFOP observers. Vessels would adhere to a vessel-specific Vessel Monitoring Plan (VMP) detailing at-sea catch handling protocols. An EM service provider would review 100 percent of the video footage. The provider would also produce an EM summary report identifying, counting, and generating weight estimates for all groundfish discards, which it would submit to the NMFS Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regional Office. These data would be used for catch accounting purposes on trips selected for ASM coverage. EM data would not be used for catch accounting in place of observer data on NEFOP trips. Following the EM service provider’s review, the Northeast Fisheries Science Center would conduct a secondary review of the EM summary reports for a subset of EFP trips.

Under this EFP, participating vessels would be exempt from minimum fish size requirements (§ 648.83(a)) for Northeast multispecies, for sampling purposes only; and ocean pout, windowpane flounder, and Atlantic wolffish possession prohibitions (§ 648.86(l)), for sampling purposes only. Vessels would also be exempt from their sector’s third-party monitoring program requirements (§ 648.87(b)(1)(v)(B)); all other standard sector reporting and monitoring

requirements would still apply. All catch of allocated groundfish stocks would be deducted from the appropriate sector's allocation. Legal-sized regulated groundfish would be retained and landed as required by the Northeast Multispecies FMP. Undersized groundfish would be handled according to the VMP guidelines in view of cameras and returned to the sea as quickly as possible. All other species would be handled per normal commercial fishing operations. No legal-size regulated groundfish would be discarded, unless otherwise permitted through regulatory exemptions granted to the participating vessel's sector.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: April 3, 2020.

**Hélène M.N. Scalliet,**

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

[FR Doc. 2020-07391 Filed 4-7-20; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA110]

#### Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Notice of SEDAR 71 South Atlantic Gag Grouper Data Scoping Webinar.

**SUMMARY:** The SEDAR 71 assessment of the South Atlantic stock of Gag Grouper will consist of a data scoping webinar and a series assessment webinars.

**DATES:** The SEDAR 71 Gag Grouper Data Scoping Webinar has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2020 from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

**ADDRESSES:**

*Meeting address:* The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Registration is

available online at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7558944934802809100>.

*SEDAR address:* South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N Charleston, SC 29405; [www.sedarweb.org](http://www.sedarweb.org).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Kathleen Howington, SEDAR Coordinator, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405; phone: (843) 571-4371; email: [Kathleen.Howington@safmc.net](mailto:Kathleen.Howington@safmc.net).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions, have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a three-step process including: (1) Data Workshop; (2) Assessment Process utilizing webinars; and (3) Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a data report which compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The product of the Assessment Process is a stock assessment report which describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The assessment is independently peer reviewed at the Review Workshop. The product of the Review Workshop is a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include: Data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); international experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion at the SEDAR 71 Gag Grouper Data Scoping Webinar are as follows:

- Discuss available data sources

- Identify and discuss potential new data sources

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 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 intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to the meeting.

**Note:** The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

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

Dated: April 3, 2020.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XV174]

#### Determination of Overfishing or an Overfished Condition

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This action serves as a notice that NMFS, on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), has found that Southern Atlantic greater amberjack, Southern Atlantic red grouper, Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack, and Gulf of Mexico gray triggerfish are now subject to overfishing; Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank white hake and Georges Bank winter flounder are now overfished; Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank windowpane flounder, Atlantic witch flounder, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder, Pribilof Islands blue king crab, and Atlantic white marlin are still overfished; and both Georges Bank Atlantic cod and Gulf of Maine Atlantic cod are still