

listed. Email attachments will be accepted in plain text, Microsoft Word, or Adobe PDF formats only. Each individual or institution is requested to submit only one response. The SARSAT Program may post responses to this RFI, without change, on a Federal website. NOAA, therefore, requests that no business proprietary information, copyrighted information, or personally identifiable information be submitted in response to this RFI.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: SARSAT Program Analyst, Mr. Allan Knox, NOAA, allan.knox@noaa.gov, 301-817-4144.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The RLS is being provided via the Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System and is designed to provide the beacon user in distress an acknowledgment message informing them that the alert has been detected and located by the Cospas-Sarsat System.

The SARSAT Program has commenced an effort to understand the benefits and associated risks of RLS Type 1 equipped beacons and is soliciting the public through this RFI to obtain input from a wider range of stakeholders, including academia, private industry, beacon users and other relevant organizations and institutions. The public input provided in response to this RFI will help inform the SARSAT Program as it evaluates the authorization of RLS Type 1 equipped beacons within the United States.

In depth information on RLS Type 1 equipped beacons can be found at: <https://www.gsc-europa.eu/sites/default/files/sites/all/files/Galileo-SAR-SDD.pdf>.

Additional information on RLS-enabled beacons may be viewed at: <https://cospas-sarsat.int/en/beacon-ownership/rls-enabled-beacon-purchase>.

Questions To Inform U.S. SARSAT Program Regarding Authorization of Type 1 RLS Cospas-Sarsat Distress Beacons

Please consider the following questions of interest to the SARSAT Program when responding:

1. Under nominal conditions, the RLS has an inherent period of time between beacon activation and the acknowledgement being received and displayed to the person in distress. This period of time should be within 30 minutes. Is this acceptable? If not, what is an acceptable time?

2. What is the best method to ensure the user understands that there is a

period of time before the acknowledgement message is received? Please consider that the user's first interaction with an RLS capable beacon could be an emergency situation where only the beacon is available (no user manual).

3. RLS only indicates that the distress signal has been received, not that rescue forces have been deployed. Therefore, the acknowledgement message is not an indication of when rescue forces may arrive on scene. How should the beacon user be provided this information so that they understand what the RLS signal means? Please consider that the user's first interaction with an RLS capable beacon could be an emergency situation where only the beacon is available (no user manual).

4. There are several RLS related message indications that can be displayed to the beacon user; RLS signal sent from beacon, awaiting RLS signal return, RLS response received, RLS signal not received, etc. Which signals should be displayed to the user and how should they be displayed? Please consider the user's first interaction with an RLS capable beacon could be an emergency situation where only the beacon is available (no user manual).

5. Are there any other features you believe would be advantageous to add to 406 MHz emergency beacons?

6. Are there any other comments you would like the U.S. SARSAT Program to consider?

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 883(d) and (e).

Dated: March 11, 2021.

Mark W. Turner,
SARSAT Program Manager.

[FR Doc. 2021-05450 Filed 3-16-21; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA906]

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management 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 renewal application from the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This permit would facilitate research on the abundance and distribution of juvenile American lobster and Jonah crab along the northwest Atlantic coast. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act require publication of this notice to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 1, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by the following method:

- **Email:** NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on CFRF Lobster Study Fleet EFP." If you are unable to submit your comments via the comments email address, please contact Laura Hansen at (978) 281-9225 or email at Laura.Hansen@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Hansen, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9225, Laura.Hansen@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) submitted a complete application to renew an existing Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on December 9, 2020, to conduct fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize 19 vessels to continue a study using ventless lobster traps to survey the abundance and distribution of juvenile American lobster and Jonah crab in regions and times of year not covered by traditional surveys. This EFP proposes to use 69 ventless lobster traps throughout Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMA) 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Maps of these areas are available at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/lobster-management-areas>. The study would inform management by addressing questions of changing reproduction and recruitment dynamics of lobster, and developing a foundation of knowledge for the data poor Jonah crab fishery.

Funding for this study is through the Campbell Foundation and the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program (Grant # NA17NMF4270208). For this project, CFRF is requesting exemptions from the following Federal lobster regulations:

1. Gear specification requirements in 50 CFR 697.21(c) to allow for closed escape vents and smaller trap mesh and entrance heads;

2. Trap limit requirements, as listed in § 697.19, for LCMA 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, to be exceeded by 3 additional traps per fishing vessel for a total of 69 additional traps;

3. Trap tag requirements, as specified in § 697.19(j), to allow for the use of untagged traps (though each experimental trap will have the participating fisherman's identification attached); and

4. Possession restrictions in § 697.20(a), (d), (g), and (h)(1) and (2), to allow for onboard biological sampling of undersized, v-notched, and egg-bearing lobsters and undersized and egg-bearing Jonah crabs.

If the EFP is approved, this study would take place during the regular fishing activity of 19 federally-permitted commercial fishing vessels; 4 "inshore" vessels in LCMA 2 and 15 "offshore" vessels in LCMA 1, 3, and 4. Four additional offshore vessels will be added to the project at a later date. Each vessel would have up to three modified traps attached to a standard Atlantic Large Whale-compliant, trap trawl. When the additional vessels are active on the EFP, no more than 69 total modified traps would be in the water at any time. The modifications to a conventional lobster trap would include a closed escape vent, single parlor, and smaller mesh size and entrance head to capture juvenile lobsters and Jonah crabs. Additional traps would be added to the participating vessels' commercial trawls so there would be no additional vertical lines as a result of this project. Sampling would occur year round with traps hauled weekly in LCMA 2 and every 10 days in the other areas. All lobsters and Jonah crabs caught in the experimental traps would be counted, sexed, and measured. Biological information, including shell hardness and presence of eggs, would also be recorded. All species captured in study traps would be returned promptly to the sea after sampling. All data collected would be made available to state and Federal management agencies to improve and enhance the available data for these two crustacean species.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the study period. 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: March 11, 2021.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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

[FR Doc. 2021-05449 Filed 3-16-21; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA876]

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 contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. The Exempted Fishing Permit would allow four commercial surfclam and ocean quahog vessels to conduct at-sea paralytic shellfish poisoning testing in the Closed Area II scallop access area in statistical area 552. 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 1, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by the following method:

- *Email: nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov.*

Include in the subject line "Sea Watch Surfclam EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Laura Hansen, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9225, Laura.Hansen@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sea Watch is requesting exemption from the Georges Bank Closed Area specified at 50 CFR 648.76(a)(4). The proposed project would explore expansion of the area that is currently open to vessels that are certified for at-sea testing for paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP).

This Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) would allow four commercial surfclam and ocean quahog vessels, using hydraulic clam dredge gear, to conduct at-sea PSP testing in the Closed Area II scallop access area in statistical area 552. The participating vessels are already certified for at-sea testing and are currently operating the area that opened in George's Bank in 2012. Vessels would take 2 trips per week for a yearlong period, for a total of up to 416 trips. Each trip would be between two to four days. Vessels would land up to 4,800 bushels (169,148 L) of surfclams or ocean quahogs per trip. All landings would be handled under the current PSP protocol in place as mandated by the Food and Drug Administration and Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference. A positive PSP result from any one sample would deem the area unacceptable for harvest. The vessel Captain would immediately report all positive screening test results, by telephone or email, to the Authority within the intended State of landing, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Shellfish Specialist, and the processor. The FDA would notify NMFS and permitted vessels would stop fishing in the affected area(s).

Participating vessels would adhere to all seasonal groundfish closures in Closed Area II and would not retain any scallops while on EFP trips. Additionally, vessels must also adhere to all other requirements at 50 CFR 648.76(a)(4)(i).

If approved, Sea Watch may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the study. 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: March 11, 2021.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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

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