

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648–XB295]

New England 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 New England Fishery Management Council's is convening its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) via webinar 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 webinar will be held on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, beginning at 9 a.m. Webinar registration information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/954374310389982478>. Call in information: +1 (415) 655–0052, Access Code: 131–042–664.

ADDRESSES: *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 Scientific and Statistical Committee will meet to review recent stock assessment information from the U.S./Canada Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee and information provided by the Council's Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) and recommend the overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder for the 2022 and 2023 fishing years. Other business will be discussed as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on the agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council 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. The public also should be

aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. 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: August 2, 2021.

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**

[RTID 0648–XB298]

Marine Mammals; File No. 25770

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Institute of Marine Sciences, University of California at Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA 95064 (Responsible Party: Daniel Costa, Ph.D.), has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on Antarctic pinniped species.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before September 7, 2021.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the "Features" box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 25770 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 25770 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sara Young or Carrie Hubbard, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The purpose of this research is to understand the foraging ecology, physiology, habitat use, and diving behavior of Southern Ocean pinnipeds and the factors that affect and constrain their foraging and at-sea behaviors and how these ecological and physiological factors (1) vary in space and time, (2) influence and constrain the behavior of these species, (3) are impacted by environmental change, and (4) compare with other marine mammal species. To accomplish these objectives, the applicant proposes to capture and sample Ross seals (*Ommatophoca rossii*), leopard seals (*Hydrurga leptonyx*), crabeater seals (*Lobodon carcinophaga*), southern elephant seals (*Mirounga leonina*), Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*), and Antarctic fur seals (*Arctocephalus gazella*) throughout their range for five years. Researchers may capture, release, and recapture up to 40 adult animals per species per year at sites throughout their range to assess mass, sex, morphometrics, blood, total blood volume, hair, vibrissae, milk, muscle/blubber/skin biopsies, swabs, urine, metabolic measurements, stomach lavage/enema, and ultrasound blubber measurements. Researchers may also capture 50 pups of each species for marking, morphometrics, and sample collection, including blood, blubber, nail, hair, mucous membrane swabs, and vibrissae. An additional 1,000 each of crabeater seals, leopard seals, and Ross seals, southern elephant seals, Weddell seals, and Antarctic fur seals may be taken annually by unintentional disturbance during captures, opportunistic sample collection, aerial surveys, and resights. Unintentional mortality or serious injury of up to four animals per species annually, not to exceed ten animals per species over five years, is requested. Blood and tissue samples from sampled animals or salvaged from carcasses would be imported from the Southern Ocean and Antarctica to the United States and exported world-wide for analyses.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the