

following specific items with them to the workshop:

- Individual vessel owners must bring a copy of the appropriate swordfish and/or shark permit(s), a copy of the vessel registration or documentation, and proof of identification;
- Representatives of a business-owned or co-owned vessel must bring proof that the individual is an agent of the business (such as articles of incorporation), a copy of the applicable swordfish and/or shark permit(s), and proof of identification; and
- Vessel operators must bring proof of identification.

Workshop Objectives

The Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops are designed to teach the owner and operator of a vessel that fisheries with longline or gillnet gear the required techniques for the safe handling and release of entangled and/or hooked protected species, such as sea turtles, marine mammals, smalltooth sawfish, Atlantic sturgeon, and prohibited sharks. In an effort to improve reporting, the proper identification of protected species and prohibited sharks will also be taught at these workshops. Additionally, individuals attending these workshops will gain a better understanding of the requirements for participating in these fisheries. The overall goal of these workshops is to provide participants with the skills needed to reduce the mortality of protected species and prohibited sharks, which may prevent additional regulations on these fisheries in the future.

Online Recertification Workshops

NMFS implemented an online option for shark dealers and owners and operators of vessels that fish with longline and gillnet gear to renew their certificates in December 2021. To be eligible for online recertification workshops, dealers and vessel owners and operators need to have previously attended an in-person workshop. Information about the courses is available online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-shark-identification-workshops> and <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/safe-handling-release-and-identification-workshops>. To access the course please visit: <https://hmsworkshop.fisheries.noaa.gov/start>.

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

Dated: August 23, 2023.

Jennifer M. Wallace,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD277]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program; Public Workshop

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

ACTION: Notification of public workshop.

SUMMARY: NMFS will present a public workshop on the implementation of the Pacific cod Trawl Cooperative Program (PCTC Program or Program) for potentially eligible participants and other interested parties. The PCTC Program allocates Pacific cod harvest quota to qualifying groundfish License Limitation Program (LLP) license holders and qualifying processors and requires participants to form cooperatives to harvest the quota. At the workshop, NMFS will provide an overview of the PCTC Program, discuss the key PCTC Program elements, describe the process for participating in the Program, and answer questions. NMFS is conducting this public workshop to provide assistance to fishery participants in understanding and reviewing this Program.

DATES: The same workshop will be presented in Seattle and then via webinar. The first workshop will be held in-person on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time in Seattle, Washington and will not have a webinar option. The second workshop will be held via webinar on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Alaska Standard Time.

ADDRESSES: The first workshop on September 20 will be held in Seattle, Washington at The Mountaineers Seattle Program Center, 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115. The second workshop will be held via webinar and the link to the meeting is: <https://meet.google.com/oky-ajgw-nhm>. A phone connect is also available by calling +1 502-518-3401 and entering the following pin number: 163 659 782#.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stephanie Warpinski,
stephanie.warpinski@noaa.gov, (907)-586-7234.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS published a final rule that implements Amendment 122 to the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) on (88 FR 53704, August 8, 2023). The PCTC Program assigns Pacific cod harvest quota to qualifying groundfish LLP license holders and qualifying processors. The Program is a limited access privilege program for the harvest of Pacific cod in the BSAI trawl catcher vessel (CV) sector. Under the Program, participants holding quota share (QS) form harvesting cooperatives in association with a processor to harvest the annual harvest privilege of Pacific cod.

The PCTC Program implements a complex suite of measures to improve fishery conditions for all participants. This Program establishes criteria for harvesters and processors in the BSAI trawl CV sector Pacific cod fishery to qualify for and receive QS, criteria for allocating QS in the initial year of implementation, and criteria for the transfer of QS. QS holders are required to join a cooperative (harvesters) or associate with a cooperative (processors). The aggregate QS of cooperative members and associated processors yields an exclusive harvest privilege for PCTC Program cooperatives, which NMFS will issue as cooperative quota (CQ) each year. CQ represents a portion of the A and B season BSAI trawl CV sector Pacific cod Directed Fishing Allowance (DFA). Of the total annual CQ, 77.5 percent is derived from QS issued to LLP licenses, and 22.5 percent is derived from QS issued to processors. The DFA for the C season remains available for harvest as a limited access fishery open to all CVs with the required trawl gear and area endorsements on the LLP license assigned to the vessel.

As required under Magnuson-Stevens Act section 303A(c)(5)(D), the PCTC Program includes ownership and use caps to prevent a permit holder from acquiring an excessive share of the fishery. No person is permitted to hold more than 5 percent of harvester-issued QS or 20 percent of processor-issued QS. In addition, no vessel is allowed to harvest more than 5 percent of the annual CQ, and no company is allowed to process more than 20 percent of the annual CQ. The PCTC Program also includes legacy exemptions for persons over these ownership and use caps at the time of PCTC Program

implementation, allowing participants to maintain levels of historical participation rather than forcing divestiture.

The PCTC Program reduces the halibut and crab Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) limits for participating trawl CVs during the A and B seasons. NMFS will apportion halibut and crab PSC limits to PCTC Program cooperatives during the annual harvest specifications process based on the percentage of total BSAI Pacific cod CQ allocated to each cooperative.

To support the sustained participation of AI communities in the Pacific cod trawl CV fishery, cooperatives are required to collectively set-aside 12 percent of the A season CQ for delivery to an Aleutian Islands shoreplant (AI CQ set-aside) during years in which an AI community representative notifies NMFS of their intent to process Pacific cod.

At this time, NMFS mailed out official records to eligible participants who have until October 10, 2023 to submit the Application for PCTC Program QS to NMFS. Any participants who do not join or associate with a cooperative by November 1 will not receive benefits from their QS for the 2024 fishing season. On November 1, 2023, all cooperatives must submit Applications for PCTC Program Cooperative Quota to NMFS. For the calendar year 2023, to provide for implementation of the Program during its first year, NMFS will allow each cooperative to submit the inter-cooperative agreement on or before December 31, 2023, after the November 1 deadline for the Application for PCTC Program CQ.

NMFS is conducting two public workshops to provide assistance to fishery participants in reviewing the requirements of the Program. At the workshops, NMFS will provide an overview of the Program, and discuss the key Program elements, including the process to apply for QS; cooperative and limited access participation provisions; cooperative quota transfer provisions; the appeals process; monitoring and enforcement; and electronic reporting. Additionally, NMFS will answer questions from workshop participants. For further information on the Program, please visit the NMFS Alaska Region website here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-122-fishery-management-plan-groundfish-bering-sea-and-aleutian-islands-management>.

Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Stephanie

Warpinski, stephanie.warpinski@noaa.gov, at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 23, 2023.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XD285]

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, starting at 10 a.m. and continuing through 1 p.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for agenda details.

ADDRESSES: This will be an in-person meeting with a virtual option. SSC members, other invited meeting participants, and members of the public will have the option to participate in person or virtually via Webex webinar. Webinar connection instructions and briefing materials will be available at: www.mafmc.org/ssc.

Meeting address: Royal Sonesta Harbor Court Baltimore, 550 Light Street, Baltimore, MD.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331; website: www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; telephone: (302) 526-5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: During this meeting, the SSC will discuss recent research that evaluates the science implications and fishery interactions associated with offshore wind development. The SSC will receive an update on the Council's development of the Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework, including anticipated model

development and management strategy evaluation analysis to support the action. The SSC will review and provide feedback on the updated Scup discard report and Gear Restricted Area (GRA) analysis. The SSC will get an overview of the Northeast commercial port sampling program and an update on Atlantic Mackerel management track stock assessment and projection scenarios. The SSC will also receive updates from the SSC ecosystem work group and the SSC overfishing limit (OFL) coefficient of variation (CV) subgroup. The SSC may take up any other business as necessary.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council's website (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

Special Accommodations

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

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

Dated: August 22, 2023.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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-XD292]

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold its 149th Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and its 196th Council meeting to take actions on fishery management issues in the Western Pacific Region. The Council will also hold meetings of the following standing committees: Pelagic and International Standing Committee (SC); Program Planning SC; Fishing Rights of Indigenous Peoples SC; and Executive and Budget SC.

DATES: The meetings will be held between September 12 and September 20, 2023. For specific times and