

action also considers modifying the seasonal bycatch closure of Area II to improve yield and reduce impacts to northern windowpane flounder and modifying the possession prohibition for NGOM-permitted scallop vessels on a declared NGOM trip to possess scallops outside of the NGOM management area. Other business will be discussed, if 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 Cate O'Keefe, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 30, 2024.

**Rey Israel Marquez,**

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

[FR Doc. 2024-25587 Filed 11-1-24; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE443]

#### 2025 Annual Determination To Implement the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement

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

**ACTION:** Notification of annual determination of fisheries.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is providing notification that the agency will not identify additional fisheries to observe on the 2025 Annual Determination (AD), pursuant to its authority under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Through

the AD, NMFS identifies U.S. fisheries operating in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Pacific Ocean that will be required to take observers upon NMFS' request. The purpose of observing identified fisheries is to learn more about sea turtle bycatch in a given fishery, evaluate measures to prevent or reduce sea turtle bycatch, and implement the prohibition against sea turtle takes. Fisheries identified on the 2020 and 2023 ADs (see table 1) remain on the AD for a 5-year period and are required to carry observers upon NMFS' request until September 29, 2025, and December 31, 2027, respectively.

**DATES:** Published on November 4, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Wendy Piniak, Office of Protected Resources, 301-427-8402; Ellen Keane, Greater Atlantic Region, 978-282-8476; Dennis Klemm, Southeast Region, 727-824-5312; Dan Lawson, West Coast Region, 206-526-4740; Irene Kelly, Pacific Islands Region, 808-725-5141. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the hearing impaired may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Purpose of the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement

Under the ESA, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*, NMFS has the responsibility to implement programs to conserve marine life listed as endangered or threatened. All sea turtles found in U.S. waters are listed as either endangered or threatened under the ESA. Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*; North Pacific distinct population segment [DPS]), leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), green (*Chelonia mydas*; Central West Pacific and Central South Pacific DPSs), and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles are listed as endangered. Loggerhead (Northwest Atlantic Ocean DPS), green (North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Central North Pacific, and East Pacific DPSs), and olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) sea turtles are listed as threatened, except for breeding colony populations of olive ridleys on the Pacific coast of Mexico, which are listed as endangered. Due to the inability to distinguish between populations of olive ridley turtles away from the nesting beach,

NMFS considers these turtles endangered wherever they occur in U.S. Pacific waters. While some sea turtle populations have shown signs of recovery, many populations continue to decline.

Bycatch in fishing gear is the primary anthropogenic source of sea turtle injury and mortality in U.S. waters. Section 9 of the ESA prohibits the take (defined to include harassing, harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting or attempting to engage in any such conduct), including incidental take, of endangered sea turtles. Pursuant to section 4(d) of the ESA, NMFS has issued regulations extending the prohibition of take, with exceptions, to threatened sea turtles (50 CFR 223.205 and 223.206). Section 11 of the ESA provides for civil and criminal penalties for anyone who violates the ESA or a regulation issued to implement the ESA. NMFS may grant exceptions to the take prohibitions with an incidental take statement or an incidental take permit issued pursuant to ESA section 7 or 10, respectively. To do so, NMFS must determine that the activity that will result in incidental take is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the affected listed species. For some Federal fisheries and most state fisheries, NMFS has not granted an exception for incidental takes of sea turtles primarily because we lack information about fishery-sea turtle interactions.

For most fisheries, the most effective way for NMFS to learn more about bycatch in order to implement the take prohibitions and prevent or minimize take is to place observers aboard fishing vessels. In 2007, NMFS issued a regulation (50 CFR 222.402) establishing procedures to annually identify, pursuant to specified criteria and after notice and opportunity for comment, those fisheries in which the agency intends to place observers (72 FR 43176, August 3, 2007). These regulations specify that NMFS may place observers on U.S. fishing vessels, commercial or recreational, operating in U.S. territorial waters, the U.S. exclusive economic zone, or on the high seas, or on vessels that are otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Failure to comply with the requirements under this regulation may result in civil or criminal penalties under the ESA.

NMFS will pay the direct costs for vessels to carry the required observers. These include observer salary and insurance costs. NMFS may also evaluate other potential direct costs, should they arise. Once selected, a fishery will be required to carry

observers, if requested, for a period of 5 years without further action by NMFS. This will enable NMFS to develop appropriate observer coverage and sampling protocols to investigate whether, how, when, where, and under what conditions sea turtle bycatch is occurring and to evaluate whether existing measures are minimizing or preventing bycatch.

**2025 Annual Determination**

Pursuant to 50 CFR 222.402(a), NOAA’s Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, in consultation with Regional Administrators and Fisheries Science Center Directors, annually identifies fisheries for inclusion on the AD based on the extent to which:

- (1) The fishery operates in the same waters and at the same time as sea turtles are present;
- (2) The fishery operates at the same time or prior to elevated sea turtle strandings; or
- (3) The fishery uses a gear or technique that is known or likely to result in incidental take of sea turtles based on documented or reported takes in the same or similar fisheries; and
- (4) NMFS intends to monitor the fishery and anticipates that it will have the funds to do so.

NMFS is providing notification that the agency is not identifying additional fisheries to observe on the 2025 AD, pursuant to its authority under the ESA. NMFS is not identifying additional fisheries at this time given lack of dedicated resources to implement new observer programs or expand existing observer programs to focus on sea turtles. The four fisheries identified on the 2020 AD (see table 1) will remain on the AD for a 5-year period and are required to carry observers upon NMFS’ request until September 29, 2025. The two fisheries identified on the 2023 AD (see table 1) will remain on the AD for a 5-year period and are required to carry observers upon NMFS’ request until December 31, 2027.

**TABLE 1—STATE AND FEDERAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INCLUDED ON THE 2020 AND 2023 ANNUAL DETERMINATIONS**

Fishery	Years eligible to carry observers
<i>Trawl Fisheries:</i>	
Southeastern U.S. Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawl .....	2020–2025
Gulf of Mexico mixed species fish trawl .....	2020–2025
<i>Gillnet Fisheries:</i>	

**TABLE 1—STATE AND FEDERAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INCLUDED ON THE 2020 AND 2023 ANNUAL DETERMINATIONS—Continued**

Fishery	Years eligible to carry observers
Chesapeake Bay inshore gillnet .....	2020–2025
Long Island inshore gillnet .....	2020–2025
Mid-Atlantic gillnet .....	2023–2027
<i>Pound Net/Weir/Seine Fisheries:</i>	
Gulf of Mexico menhaden purse seine .....	2023–2027

Dated: October 29, 2024.  
**Kimberly Damon-Randall,**  
*Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
 [FR Doc. 2024–25541 Filed 11–1–24; 8:45 am]  
**BILLING CODE 3510–22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for NOAA Social, Behavioral, and Economic Science Studies for Weather, Water, and Climate**

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public’s reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on August 30, 2024 during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.  
*Title:* NOAA Social, Behavioral, and Economic Science Studies for Weather, Water, and Climate.  
*OMB Control Number:* 0648–XXXX.  
*Form Number(s):* None.  
*Type of Request:* New information collection.  
*Number of Respondents:* Approximately 6,000 per year.

*Average Hours Per Response:* 0.5 hours per person.  
*Total Annual Burden Hours:* Annualized 3,000 hours overall.  
*Needs and Uses:* This is a request for a new collection of information. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) products and services “support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America’s gross domestic product.” The National Weather Service (NWS) is a critical component of this service and operates under the mission to “provide weather, water and climate data, forecasts, warnings, and impact-based decision support services for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy.” Leveraging and integrating Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBES) methodologies and knowledge is crucial to meeting our mission.

If we are to effectively support public and partner decision making, build actionable tools and information, and evaluate our performance, then it’s imperative that the NOAA/NWS collect key SBES data and fully engage with our audiences. Additionally, the NOAA/NWS has articulated a priority to enhance services for historically underinvested and underserved communities and improve service equity across the board. These communities typically experience higher rates of poverty, homelessness, disabilities, and language barriers, which increase their vulnerability to hazard impacts.

The generic clearance is an important planning and engagement tool for NOAA/NWS. The procedures expected to be used include but are not limited to social network analysis, open, semi-structured and structured interviews, focus groups, surveys, and participant observation.

*Affected Public:* Members of the public, emergency managers, broadcast meteorologists, state/local/tribal decision makers, and non-profit organizations.

*Frequency:* On Occasion.  
*Respondent’s Obligation:* Voluntary.  
 This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting “Currently under 30-day