

request for the development and implementation of regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals. NMFS invites the public to provide information, suggestions, and comments on the ALDCNR's application and request.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than January 27, 2025.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the applications should be addressed to Jolie Harrison, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. Physical comments should be sent to 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and electronic comments should be sent to ITP.cockrell@noaa.gov.

Instructions: NMFS is not responsible for comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period. Comments received electronically, including all attachments, must not exceed a 25-megabyte file size. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel or Adobe PDF file formats only. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities> without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Cockrell, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401. An electronic copy of the ALDCNR's application may be obtained online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) direct the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and either regulations are issued or, if the taking is

limited to harassment, a notice of a proposed authorization is provided to the public for review.

An incidental take authorization shall be granted if NMFS finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s), will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for subsistence uses (where relevant), and if the permissible methods of taking and requirements pertaining to the mitigation, monitoring and reporting of such takings are set forth.

NMFS has defined "negligible impact" in 50 CFR 216.103 as an impact resulting from the specified activity that cannot be reasonably expected to, and is not reasonably likely to, adversely affect the species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.

The MMPA states that the term "take" means to harass, hunt, capture, kill or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal.

Except with respect to certain activities not pertinent here, the MMPA defines "harassment" as: any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance, which (i) has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild (Level A harassment); or (ii) has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering (Level B harassment).

Summary of Request

On April 12, 2024, NMFS received an application from the ALDCNR requesting authorization for take of marine mammals incidental to their fisheries independent research programs related to sampling activities with gillnet and trawl gear in Mobile Bay and adjacent waters of Alabama. Following NMFS' review of the application, ALDCNR provided responses to NMFS initial questions on July 11, 2024 and responses to follow up questions on December 10, 2024. NMFS determined the application was adequate and complete on December 12, 2024. The requested regulations would be valid for five years from the date of issuance. The ALDCNR plans to conduct the research in Mobile Bay and adjacent waters including Mississippi Sound, Perdido Bay, Wolf Bay, and Little Lagoon. It is possible that marine mammals may interact with fishing gear (*e.g.* gillnets and trawl gear) proposed for use in ALDCNR's fishery independent resulting in injury, serious injury, or mortality. Therefore, the ALDCNR

requests authorization to incidentally take marine mammals.

Specified Activities

The ALDCNR conducts fishery independent surveys throughout the inshore and coastal waters of Alabama, in the northern Gulf of Mexico, to produce scientific information necessary for the management and conservation of living marine resources in that area. The fisheries independent research programs use sampling gear including gillnets, seines, and otter trawls to assess marine organisms in different habitats and trophic levels and provides data about post-larval, juvenile, and adult populations of marine organisms in Alabama inshore and coastal waters. The collective data is used by fisheries scientists to monitor growth, seasonal and geographical distribution, changes in population structures, and correlation of abundance with some abiotic factors for all Alabama marine fauna. These proposed activities by ALDCNR would be conducted over the 5-year period of the regulations and subsequent LOA.

Information Solicited

Interested persons may submit information, suggestions, and comments concerning the ALDCNR's request (see **ADDRESSES**). NMFS will consider all information, suggestions, and comments related to the request during the development of proposed regulations governing the incidental taking of marine mammals by the ALDCNR, if appropriate.

Dated: December 18, 2024.

Kimberly Damon-Randall,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE536]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of meeting open to the public.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a second Recreational Initiative

Public Engagement Workshop via webinar.

DATES: The webinar will convene Thursday, January 16, 2025, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., EST.

ADDRESSES: The workshop will take place via webinar. You may participate by accessing the log-on information by visiting our website at www.gulfcouncil.org.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 4107 W Spruce Street, Suite 200, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Muehlstein, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630; Emily.Muehlstein@gulfcouncil.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Thursday, January 16, 2025; 6 p.m.–9 a.m., EST

The meeting will begin with a brief presentation on the purpose of the Recreational Initiative, provide a brief overview of results of the second Working Group Meeting, and outline the meeting format and expected outcomes. Staff will ask a series of open-ended questions and allow for open public comment on the Recreational Initiative.

Visit the Gulf Council's website for meeting registration information: <https://gulfcouncil.org/recreational-initiative/>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Public feedback on the Recreational Initiative will also be gathered online through an online feedback tool located at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfwnQ6AgzIBmgx0k18yzcPpDm0RDUV-zyybR05mxoJVRmBdQg/viewform>.

The meeting will be via webinar only. You may register for the webinar by visiting www.gulfcouncil.org and click on the meeting on the calendar.

The timing and order in which agenda items are addressed may change as required to effectively address the issue, and the latest version along with other meeting materials will be posted on the website as they become available.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid or accommodations should be directed to Kathy Pereira, (813) 348-1630, at least 15 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: December 18, 2024.

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-XE534]

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 (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Scallop Committee 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 meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 1 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Webinar registration URL information: https://nefmc-org.zoom.us/j/9PZk_BAqawjkMxGEXiGZc44.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cate O'Keefe, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Scallop Committee will meet to Review 2025 Scallop Work Priorities, including a work plan for this calendar year. The discussion will focus on the development of a Long-Term Strategic Plan. 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: December 18, 2024.

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-XE518]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; North Pacific Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota Cost Recovery Program

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

ACTION: Notice of standard prices and fee percentage.

SUMMARY: NMFS publishes the individual fishing quota (IFQ) standard prices and fee percentage for cost recovery for the IFQ Program for the halibut and sablefish fisheries of the North Pacific (IFQ Program). The fee percentage for 2024 is 3.0 percent. This action is intended to provide holders of halibut and sablefish IFQ permits with the 2024 standard prices and fee percentage to calculate the required payment for IFQ cost recovery fees due by January 31, 2025.

DATES: The standard prices and fee percentages are valid on December 26, 2024

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charmaine Weeks, Fee Coordinator, 907-586-7231.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

NMFS Alaska Region administers the IFQ Program in the North Pacific. The IFQ Program is a limited access system authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens