

Conservation and Management Act and the FMP also require that NMFS implement actions to prevent overfishing and to rebuild overfished stocks. These specifications include fish caught in state ocean waters (0–3 nautical miles (nm) offshore) as well as fish caught in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (3–200 nm offshore). Management measures intended to control the rate at which different groundfish species or species groups are taken in the fisheries include trip limits, bag limits, size limits, time/area closures, and gear restrictions.

For 2003, the Council is considering management measures that could include time/area closures of large portions of the continental shelf off the U.S. West Coast. These measures would be necessary to prevent fishing vessels from directly targeting or incidentally catching the overfished species that are primarily found on the continental shelf. In particular, large time/area closures would focus on protecting bocaccio, canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, and yelloweye rockfish. While other overfished species could also be expected to benefit from these closures, the rebuilding needs of these particular overfished species would likely shape the design of the closed areas. A more detailed description of the management alternatives that will be considered by the Council at its September 9–13, 2002, meeting in Portland, OR is available on the Council's web site at <http://www.pcouncil.org>.

A principal objective of the scoping and public input process is to identify significant issues that will be analyzed in depth in the EIS. The EIS will address these significant issues through a range of reasonable management alternatives and an analysis of their impacts on the human environment. Alternatives will be analyzed for impacts on essential fish habitat, target and non-target species of fish, discarded fish, marine mammals, and other protected species present in the Pacific Coast ecosystem. In addition, the environmental consequences section of the EIS will contain an analysis of impacts from fishery management measures on the following groups of individuals: (1) Those who participate in harvesting the fishery resources and other living marine resources; (2) those who process and market the fish and fish products; (3) those who are involved in allied support industries; (4) those who consume fish products; (5) those who rely on living marine resources in the management area, either for subsistence needs or for recreational benefits; (6) those who benefit from non-consumptive uses of

living marine resources; (7) those involved in managing and monitoring fisheries; and (8) fishing communities.

Scoping documents that identify the management issues, initial alternatives, and an outline of the proposed analysis will be made available at the August 28–29, 2002, meeting.

Dates and Times of the Scoping Meeting and Associated Informational Meetings

A scoping meeting for this EIS will be held in concurrence with a meeting of the Council's Allocation Committee on August 28–29, 2002, at the Shilo Inn, 11707 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220. The Council will be particularly seeking comments on the EIS at 4 p.m., i.e., on August 28, 2002. The purpose of the Allocation Committee's meeting is to discuss the Council's proposed 2003 groundfish specifications and management measures prior to and in preparation for the Council's September 9–13, 2002 meeting in Portland, OR. Issues to be analyzed in this EIS were also discussed at the Council's June 18–21, 2002 meeting in Foster City, CA, at the meetings of the Allocation Committee and the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) that preceded that June Council meeting, and a July 29 through August 2, 2002, meeting of the Council's GMT. The scoping hearing held as part of the Council's August 28–29, 2002, Allocation Committee meeting, and the earlier meetings listed above are intended to meet NEPA scoping guidelines at 40 CFR 1501.7(b).

Special Accommodations

These meetings are accessible to people with physical disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Carolyn Porter 503–820–2280 (voice) or 503–820–2299 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

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

Dated: August 9, 2002.

Virginia M. Fay,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[I.D.080902A]

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/public hearings.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet on August 29, 2002, at 2 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The Council meeting will be held via telephone conference call at the Council offices, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu Hawaii 96813; telephone: 808–522–8220; FAX: (808)522–8226.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; telephone: 808–522–8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Public Hearing

A public hearing will be conducted for final action on American Samoa longline fishery limited entry program, on Wednesday, August 29, 2002, at 3 p.m.

Public comment periods will be provided throughout the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The Council will meet as late as necessary to complete scheduled business. The agenda during the Council meeting will include the items listed below:

1. Pelagic Fisheries

(i) American Samoa longline limited entry program

(ii) public hearing

The Council will hold a public hearing on the preferred alternative for the American Samoa longline fishery limited entry program, and may take final action on these management measures. At its 113th meeting, the Council adopted a limited entry program for the American Samoa longline fishery. This action was prompted by the doubling of the number of fishing vessels participating in the American Samoa longline fishery during 2001, and a fourfold rise in the level of fishing effort in terms of hooks set. Unlike Hawaii, American Samoa is surrounded by the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of other nations and options for fishing elsewhere are

limited. Consequently, gear conflict and competition for resources are likely to increase as the level of fishing within the American Samoa EEZ increases. At the 113th Council meeting, the Council reviewed the options for a limited entry program and developed and adopted a preferred alternative that would limit entry into the American Samoa EEZ longline fishery. The proposed program would create four vessel size classes and limit initial entry to historical participants in the longline fishery. Permits would be transferable subject to certain criteria. Provisions would be made to allow participants to upgrade from small to larger longline vessels. The Council also discussed measures to require observers and vessel monitoring systems on some vessels. However, the Council recognized that the final format of the limited entry program required additional revisions to the draft Pelagic Fisheries Management Plan (PFMP) amendment and the draft regulations therein and put these on the agenda for the 114th Council meeting. The Council will review the revised PFMP amendment and regulations, consider final management measures, and vote on whether to send the amendment document to NMFS for review and approval.

2. Fishery rights of indigenous peoples: Community demonstration projects program

A. selection of projects for funding

B. solicitation of new project proposals Following the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) in 1996, The Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of the Interior were authorized to make direct grants to eligible western Pacific communities, as recommended by the Council, for the purpose of establishing fishery demonstration projects to foster and promote traditional indigenous fishing practices. Criteria for fishery demonstration projects were published in April 2002, and proposals for fishery demonstration projects were subsequently solicited. The Native and Indigenous Advisory Panel will review these proposals in the week preceding the Council meeting and recommend to the Council which projects should be funded. The Council may concur with these recommendations or prefer to make recommendations of its own on those projects for funding. The Council may also decide to initiate another request for project proposals.

Other Business

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before the Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and to any issue arising after publication of this document that requires emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided that the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, 808-522-8220 (voice) or 808-522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: August 9, 2002.

Richard W. Surdi,

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