

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council) will convene a meeting of its Economics and Groundfish Subcommittees of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, May 24, 2017 and Thursday, May 25, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time or until business is completed on each day.

ADDRESSES: Watertown Hotel, Wallingford Room, 4242 Roosevelt Way NE., Seattle, WA 98105, telephone: 1-855-580-8614.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John DeVore, Staff Officer; telephone: (503) 820-2413.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The primary purpose of the meeting is to review draft analyses informing the Pacific Council's five-year review of the U.S. West Coast Trawl Catch Share Program. The SSC Economics and Groundfish subcommittees will conduct a review of the draft review document. The Pacific Council and its advisors will receive the report and recommendations of the SSC Economics and Groundfish subcommittees on the five-year review of the U.S. West Coast Trawl Catch Share Program at its June 7-14, 2017 meeting in Spokane, WA.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subjects 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 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 Mr. Kris Kleinschmidt (503) 820-2280 at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: May 3, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-09227 Filed 5-5-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

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

RIN 0648-XF387

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting via webinar.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will hold a half day meeting of its Standing and Reef Fish Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSC).

DATES: The meeting will convene on Wednesday, May 10, 2017, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., EDT.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven Atran, Senior Fishery Biologist, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; steven.atran@gulfcouncil.org; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Wednesday, May 10, 2017; 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

1. Introductions and Adoption of Agenda
 2. Vermilion Snapper OFL and ABC Projections Under a 26% SPR MSY Proxy
 3. Review of Draft Underharvest Carry-over Options
 4. Status Determination Criteria Options Paper
 5. Other Business
- Meeting Adjourns—

You may register for the SSC Meeting: Standing and Reef Fish on or before May 10, 2017 at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6351571192497709313>.

The Agenda is subject to change. The latest version along with other meeting materials will be posted on the Council's file server. To access the file server, the URL is <https://public.gulfcouncil.org:5001/webman/index.cgi>, or go to the Council's Web site and click on the FTP link in the lower left of the Council Web site (<http://www.gulfcouncil.org>). The username and password are both "gulfguest". Click on the "Library Folder", then scroll down to "SSC meeting-2017-05".

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Scientific and Statistical Committee for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions of the Scientific and Statistical Committee will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

Dated: May 3, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-09215 Filed 5-5-17; 8:45 am]

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

RIN 0648-XF384

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This Exempted Fishing Permit would allow four commercial fishing vessels, directed by Coonamesett Farm Foundation, to be exempt from Atlantic sea scallop regulations for the purpose of bycatch reduction research.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 23, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on CFF Extended Link Apron EFP."
- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, NE Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on CFF Extended Link Apron EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alyson Pitts, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9352, alyson.pitts@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on March 30, 2017, to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize four vessels to test the efficacy of an extended link scallop dredge apron at reducing the capture of yellowtail and windowpane flounder and small scallops over the duration of four directed research cruises. The EFP would support research associated with a project titled "Development of an Extended Link Apron: A Broad Range Tool for Bycatch Reduction," that has been funded under the 2017 Atlantic Sea Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program.

CFF is requesting exemptions that would exempt four commercial fishing vessels from the following regulations:

- Atlantic sea scallop days-at-sea (DAS) allocations at 50 CFR 648.53(b)
- Crew size restrictions at § 648.51(c)
- Atlantic sea scallop observer program requirements at § 648.11(g)
- Access area program requirements at § 648.59(a)(1)–(3), (b)(2), (b)(4)
- Rotational closed area exemptions for Closed Area I Access Area at § 648.60(c), Closed Area II Access Area at § 648.60(d), Closed Area II Extension Scallop Rotational Area at § 648.60(e) and Nantucket Lightship Scallop Rotational Area at § 648.60(f)
- Possession limits and minimum size requirements specified in 50 CFR part 648, subsections B and D through O, to allow temporary possession for biological sampling. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Four vessels would conduct scallop dredging in July 1, 2017–January 31, 2018, on a total of four 7-day trips, for a total of 28 DAS. Each trip would complete approximately 15 tows per DAS for an overall total of 420 tows for the project. In addition to open areas, tows could occur in Closed Area I and II Scallop Access Areas, Closed Area II Extension Scallop Rotational Area, and Nantucket Lightship Scallop Rotational Area. Trips would be centralized around

areas with high yellowtail and winter flounder bycatch and in areas with a mixed abundance of harvestable size and pre-recruit scallops.

The four trips would fish two 15-foot (4.57-m) Turtle Deflector Dredges, towed for a maximum duration of 30 minutes with a tow speed of 4.8–5.1 knots. One dredge would be rigged with a standard linked bag while the other would be rigged with a uni-directional extended link apron. Standard linking is defined as a single link between ring spaces, and the extended link is defined as two links linked together between rings. Both dredges would use 4-inch (10.16-cm) rings and a 10-inch (25.40-cm) twine top.

For all tows, the sea scallop catch would be counted into baskets and weighed. One basket from each dredge would be randomly selected and the scallops would be measured in 5-mm increments to determine size selectivity. Finfish catch would be sorted by species and then counted, weighed, and measured in 1-mm increments. Depending on the volume of scallops and finfish captured, the catch would be subsampled as necessary. No catch would be retained for longer than needed to conduct sampling and no finfish or scallop catch would be landed for sale. Table 1, below contains an estimate of the finfish catch anticipated for the project.

TABLE 1—CFF EXTENDED LINK APRON PROJECT CATCH ESTIMATES

| Species | Scientific name | Number | Weight (lbs) | Weight (kg) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| NE Skate Complex (excluding barndoor skate) | <i>Rajidae</i> Species | 56,250 | 100,000 | 45,359 |
| Barndoor Skate | <i>Dipturus laevis</i> | 375 | 500 | 226 |
| Summer Flounder | <i>Paralichthys dentatus</i> | 75 | 150 | 68 |
| Winter Flounder | <i>Pseudopleuronectes americanus</i> | 225 | 500 | 226 |
| Yellowtail Flounder | <i>Limanda ferruginea</i> | 1,500 | 1,500 | 680 |
| Windowpane Flounder | <i>Scophthalmus aquosus</i> | 1,500 | 1,500 | 680 |
| Monkfish | <i>Lophius americanus</i> | 1,750 | 3,500 | 1,587 |

CFF needs these exemptions to allow them to conduct experimental dredge towing without being charged DAS, and to deploy gear in closed access areas where concentrations of primary bycatch species are sufficiently high to provide statistically robust results. Participating vessels need crew size waivers to accommodate science personnel, and possession waivers will enable researchers to conduct finfish sampling activities. The project would be exempt from the sea scallop observer program requirements because activities conducted on the trip are not consistent with normal fishing operations.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the

year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: May 3, 2017.

Karen H. Abrams,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-09280 Filed 5-5-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF359

Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of SEDAR 50 Assessment Workshop for Atlantic blueline tilefish.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR 50 assessment of the Atlantic stock of blueline tilefish