

information; 15 minutes for observer candidates college transcripts and disclosure statements, observer candidate; 15 minutes for observer candidates college transcripts and disclosure statements, observer provider; 5 minutes for notification of observer physical examination, observer provider; 2 hours for observer physical examination; 7 minutes for projected observer assignment; 7 minutes for briefing registration; 12 minutes for certificate of insurance; 15 minutes for copies of contracts; 7 minutes for weekly deployment/logistics reports; 7 minutes for debriefing registration; 2 hours for reports of problems; 40 hours for observer provider permit expiration or denial of permit appeals; and 20 hours for appeals for denial of observer certification, certification suspension, or decertification.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,959.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$83,126.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 26, 2008.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. E8-14933 Filed 7-1-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Aleutian Islands Pollock Fishery Requirements

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before September 2, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at dHynek@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Patsy A. Bearden, (907) 586-7008 or patsy.bearden@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004 (Public Law (Pub. L.) 108-199) was signed into law on January 23, 2004. Section 803 of this law allocates the Aleutian Islands (AI) directed pollock fishery to the Aleut Corporation for economic development of Adak, Alaska. The statute permits the Aleut Corporation to authorize one or more agents for activities necessary for conducting the AI directed pollock fishery. Management provisions for the AI directed pollock fishery include: Restrictions on the harvest specifications for the AI directed pollock fishery; provisions for fishery monitoring; reporting requirements; and an AI Chinook salmon prohibited species catch limit that, when reached, would close the existing Chinook salmon savings areas in the AI.

II. Method of Collection

Participants are identified and approved through a letter from the Aleut Corporation which is approved by National Marine Fisheries Service

(NMFS). This letter includes a list of approved participants. A copy of the letter must be on each participating vessel.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0513.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1.

Estimated Time per Response: 16 hours for Annual AI Pollock Fishery Participant Letter; 5 minutes for copy of NMFS Approval to Participants; 4 hours for appeal process.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 40.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$48.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 26, 2008.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. E8-14935 Filed 7-1-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-AW65

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS); Atlantic Shark Management Measures

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; notice of public scoping meetings; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS previously published, on May 7, 2008, a notice of intent (NOI) to initiate an amendment to the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), including an Environmental Impact Statement. NMFS now announces the availability of an issues and options presentation describing potential measures for inclusion in Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and provides details for four scoping meetings to discuss and collect comments on these issues. Comments received by NMFS on the NOI and issues and options presentation as well as in the scoping meetings will be used in the development of Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP.

DATES: Scoping meetings for Amendment 3 will be held from July through October 2008. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for meeting dates, times, and locations. The deadline for comments on the NOI has been extended from August 5, 2008, as published in the NOI on May 7, 2008 (73 FR 25665), to 5 p.m. on October 31, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Scoping meetings will be held in Freeport, Texas; Fort Pierce, Florida; St. Petersburg, Florida; and Gloucester, Massachusetts. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for dates, times, and locations.

As published on May 7, 2008 (73 FR 25665), written comments on this action should be sent to Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: SCS_Scoping@noaa.gov. Include the following identifier in the subject line: "Scoping Comments on Amendment 3 to Consolidated HMS FMP".
- Written: 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please mark

the outside of the envelope "Scoping Comments on Amendment 3 to Consolidated HMS FMP."

- Fax: (301) 713-1917.

The issues and options presentation is available on the HMS website: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>. For a copy of the related stock assessments, please contact Michael Clark or Jessica Beck at (301) 713-2347.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Clark or Jessica Beck at (301) 713-2347, or Jackie Wilson at (240) 338-3936.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Atlantic shark fisheries are managed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP is implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 635.

On May 7, 2008 (73 FR 25665), NMFS published a NOI that summarized the 2007 Small Coastal Shark (SCS) stock assessment conducted for Atlantic sharpnose, blacknose, bonnethead, and finetooth sharks. The NOI also described NMFS' determination as to the status of these stocks based on the results of the 2007 stock assessment, including the determination that blacknose sharks are overfished with overfishing occurring. As a result of this determination, NMFS is taking steps to amend current shark management measures via a third FMP amendment to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP. NMFS anticipates completing this amendment and any related documents by January 1, 2010. The comment period for the NOI has been extended and now ends at 5 p.m. on October 31, 2008. Additionally, NMFS now announces the availability of an issues and options presentation describing potential measures for inclusion in Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (see **ADDRESSES**).

Request for Comments

Four scoping meetings will be held (see Table 1 for meeting dates, times, and locations) to provide the opportunity for public comment on potential SCS shark management measures. These comments will be used to assist in the development of the upcoming amendment to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP. Specifically, NMFS requests comments on commercial SCS management options including, but not limited to, quota levels, establishing regions and regional and seasonal quotas, trip limits, minimum sizes, quota monitoring, authorized gears, permit structure, and prohibited species. In addition, NMFS is seeking comments on recreational SCS management options including, but not limited to, retention limits, minimum sizes, authorized gears, and landing requirements. Comments are also requested on SCS management measures to reduce fishing mortality of blacknose sharks in shrimp trawl fisheries as bycatch in these fisheries contributes to a significant proportion of fishing mortality for this species.

NMFS also requests comments on management issues concerning other shark species, including common thresher, hammerheads, ragged-tooth, and smooth dogfish sharks as well as the addition of deepwater sharks to a management unit, improving compliance with HMS regulations, enhanced Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), dealer reporting requirements, and quota monitoring. NMFS also seeks comments on display quotas and collection of sharks through exempted fishing permits, display permits, and scientific research permits.

Comments received on this action will assist NMFS in determining the options for rulemaking to conserve and manage shark resources and fisheries, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP.

TABLE 1. DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS OF THE FOUR SCOPING MEETINGS.

Date	Time	Meeting Locations	Address
July 30, 2008	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Freeport Branch Library	410 Brazosport Boulevard, Freeport, TX 77541
Aug 27, 2008	6 – 8 p.m.	NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office	263 13th Avenue South, Saint Petersburg, FL 33701
Aug 28, 2008	5:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Fort Pierce Library	101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce, FL 34950
Oct 9, 2008	3 – 5 p.m.	NOAA Fisheries Service, Northeast Regional Office	1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

In addition to the four scoping meetings, NMFS will also present the issues and options presentation to the

five Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries

Commissions during the public comment period. Please see the Councils' and Commissions' summer

and fall meeting notices for dates, times, and locations. Finally, NMFS also expects to present the issues and options presentation at the fall 2008 HMS Advisory Panel (AP) meeting. The actual date and location of the AP meeting will be announced in a future **Federal Register** notice.

Scoping Meetings Code of Conduct

The public is reminded that NMFS expects participants at the scoping meetings to conduct themselves appropriately. At the beginning of each meeting, a representative of NMFS will explain the ground rules (e.g., alcohol is prohibited from the meeting room; attendees will be called to give their comments in the order in which they registered to speak; each attendee will have an equal amount of time to speak; attendees may not interrupt one another, etc.). The NMFS representative will structure the meeting so that all attending members of the public will be able to comment, if they so choose. Attendees are expected to respect the ground rules, and those that do not will be asked to leave the meeting.

Special Accommodations

The meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Jessica Beck (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Dated: June 25, 2008.

Emily H. Menashes

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E8-15053 Filed 7-1-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-X130

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), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Northeast Region, NMFS (Assistant Regional Administrator), has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP)

application submitted by the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MADMF) contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. The Assistant Regional Administrator has made a preliminary determination that the activities authorized under this EFP would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Northeast (NE) Multispecies and Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue an EFP. Therefore, NMFS announces that the Assistant Regional Administrator proposes to recommend that an EFP be issued that would allow one commercial fishing vessel to conduct fishing operations that are otherwise restricted by the regulations governing the fisheries of the Northeastern United States. This EFP, which would enable researchers to study the effects of a spiny dogfish excluder grate within a raised footrope whiting trawl, would grant exemptions from the NE multispecies regulations as follows: Gear restrictions while fishing in the Gulf of Maine (GOM) Regulated Mesh Area (RMA), Northeast (NE) multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) effort control measures, and NE multispecies minimum fish sizes for sampling purposes only.

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 EFPs.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before July 17, 2008.

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

- Email: DA8-141@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on MADMF whiting fishery EFP."
- Mail: Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, NE Regional Office, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on MA MADMF whiting fishery EFP, DA8-141."
- Fax: (978) 281-9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Bryant, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9244.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An application for an EFP was submitted on May 29, 2008, by David Chosid, the conservation engineering project leader at MADMF, for a project funded by the Northeast Consortium. The primary goal of this study is to investigate the effects of an experimental excluder grate in order to reduce catch rates of spiny

dogfish and maximize the catch rates of whiting, using a raised footrope whiting trawl. The results of this research could be submitted to the New England Fishery Management Council to provide information that could be used to enhance the management of the whiting and spiny dogfish fisheries.

The project is proposed to be conducted from July 2008 through September 2008. One fishing industry collaborator would conduct a total of 70 1-hour tows using the excluder grate in a raised footrope whiting trawl over the course of 14 trips, conducting 5 tows per trip. The vessel would use a 2.5-inch (6.4-cm) diamond codend mesh and, with the exception of the spiny dogfish grate, the gear would be configured as a standard raised footrope trawl. All experimental tows would occur between 42°12' W. long. and 42°30' W. long. in statistical area 514. Fishing would occur along the western edge of Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, but not within it. No testing would occur in closed areas or during rolling closures. An underwater camera would be attached to the net to observe the behavior of spiny dogfish and whiting. Catches in the codend would be quantified. MADMF would have at least one staff member on board the vessel at all times during the experimental tows.

Due to the small mesh size used in the whiting fishery, this activity would require an exemption from gear restrictions while fishing in the GOM RMA found at § 648.80(a)(3)(i). The researchers are requesting permission to fish outside of the small mesh exemption areas and time restrictions in order to increase interactions with the project's target species, spiny dogfish. Based on industry recommendations, whiting and spiny dogfish are expected to be in relatively high abundance in the proposed research location. The requested exemption would help ensure that adequate densities of fish are present to conduct valid testing and provide sound statistical evidence of gear performance within that area. An exemption from the use of NE multispecies DAS at § 648.82(a) is necessary because, due to the small mesh size of the raised footrope trawl, landing NE multispecies under the DAS possession limits would otherwise be prohibited and thus inconsistent with the purpose of charging DAS. In lieu of fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, the project must adhere to a multispecies bycatch cap of 5 percent of the total weight of fish caught overall during the course of the research. This percentage is the standard percentage used as a criterion to qualify an