

turtles for scientific research. The permit holder requests authorization to increase the number of sea turtles that can be sampled after they are incidentally captured during separately authorized trawl, bottom longline and pelagic longline resource assessment cruises. The permit holder proposes to take an additional 14 loggerhead and six Kemp's ridley sea turtles and also requests authorization to take nine leatherback, six green and six hawksbill sea turtles during the cruises. The applicant proposes to handle, flipper tag, measure and release all turtles associated with these cruises. None of the activities authorized under this modification are expected to result in mortality. The research will be conducted in waters of the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico during the remainder of the permit which expires June 30, 2006.

Dated: February 20, 2004.

Carrie W. Hubbard,

Acting Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 04-4515 Filed 2-27-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022504A]

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

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

ACTION: Notification of a proposal for EFPs to conduct experimental fishing; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the Assistant Regional Administrator for

Sustainable Fisheries, Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries (Assistant Regional Administrator), has determined that an application for EFPs contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. The Assistant Regional Administrator is considering the impacts of the activities to be authorized under the EFPs with respect to the Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue EFPs. Therefore, NMFS announces that the Assistant Regional Administrator proposes to issue EFPs in response to an application submitted by the Maine Department of Marine Resources (Maine DMR). These EFPs would allow six commercial longline or tub trawl vessels to conduct fishing operations that are otherwise restricted by the regulations governing the fisheries of the Northeastern United States. The EFPs would allow for exemptions from the FMP as follows: Six federally permitted vessels would be allowed to fish for, land, and possess Atlantic halibut (*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*) in excess of the allowable landing and possession limit specified at 50 CFR 648.86(c) within a portion of the Gulf of Maine Regulated Mesh Area (GOM RMA); these vessels would be allowed to possess temporarily Atlantic halibut less than the minimum size requirement of 36 inches (91.4 cm) specified at § 648.83(a)(1) for purposes of collecting scientific information; and these vessels would be granted access to GOM Rolling Closure Area IV (June 1-June 30).

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed EFPs.

DATES: Comments on this notification must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) on or before March 16, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this notice may be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is *DA367@noaa.gov*. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "Comments on Maine Halibut EFP Proposal." Written comments should be sent to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on Maine Halibut EFP Proposal." Comments may also be sent via facsimile to (978) 281-9135.

Copies of the Draft 2004 Amended Environmental Assessment (EA) Prepared for the Experimental Halibut Fishery in Groundfish Closed Areas in the Eastern Gulf of Maine are available from the Northeast Regional Office at the same address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan Chinn, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9218.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Maine DMR submitted an application on December 19, 2003, to conduct an experimental Atlantic halibut fishery using up to six commercial longline and tub trawl vessels in a portion of the GOM RMA. The proposed experiment is a continuation of experimental fisheries conducted by Maine DMR in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 the fifth in a series of at least five anticipated studies aimed at collecting biological information to be used in the long-term management of this species. As with the prior studies, this year's application proposes to collect data on the distribution, relative abundance, migration, stock definition, mortality rates, stock size, yield, and other significant biological reference points for Atlantic halibut.

The proposed 2004 experimental fishery would take place from May 1 to June 30, 2004, or 60 days concurrent from the start date, in a portion of the GOM RMA defined as follows:

Area point	N. Latitude	W. Latitude
HAL 1	Mainland Maine Coastline	69°00"
HAL 2	43°12.3"	69°00"
HAL 3	43°58.3"	67°21.5"
HAL 4 ¹	Mainland Maine Coastline and U.S./Canada Maritime Boundary	Mainland Maine Coastline and U.S./Canada Maritime Boundary

¹Between points HAL 3 and HAL 4, the area follows the U.S./Canada maritime boundary.

Participating vessels would be authorized to use only traditional longline or tub trawl gear during the experiment. These vessels would be

limited to a maximum of 700 hooks per boat, and would be restricted to using only circle hooks no smaller than 140 in size.

Each of the six vessels would be limited to a total allowable catch (TAC) of 50 halibut, with no possession or landing limit prior to reaching this

amount. Once the TAC is reached by an individual vessel, that vessel would be restricted to possessing and landing no more than four legal-sized halibut per day. The maximum number of Atlantic halibut that could be harvested as part of this study would be 500, the same number authorized to be harvested in the 2003 experimental fishery.

The EA prepared for the 2002 halibut experimental fishery and the 2003 Supplement to the 2002 EA, prepared for the 2003 halibut experimental fishery, concluded that the activities conducted under the 2002 and 2003 EFPs were consistent with the goals and objectives of the FMP and would have no negative environmental impacts including impacts to Essential Fish Habitat, marine mammals, and protected species. A Draft 2004 Amended Environmental Assessment (EA) Prepared for the Experimental Halibut Fishery in Groundfish Closed Areas in the Eastern Gulf of Maine has been prepared that analyzes the impacts of the proposed 2004 experimental fishery on the human environment. The draft Amended EA determines that the proposed experimental fishery to collect biological and ecological information on Atlantic halibut will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

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

Peter H. Fricke,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 04-4517 Filed 2-27-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Wireless Sensor Technology Forum

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Technology Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), and Technology Administration (TA) will host a half-day forum on sensor technologies, entitled "From RFID to Smart Dust: The Expanding Market for Wireless Sensor Technologies." The first panel will address the future market for sensor technologies by examining a variety of wireless sensor

technologies, along with the current and potential future uses by industry and government. Panelists will include researchers, market analysts, and industry and government users. The second panel will address public policy issues facing sensor technologies such as spectrum use, privacy and security, and intellectual property. Panelists will include representatives from companies and government, as well as public policy analysts.

DATES: The Wireless Sensor Technology Forum will be held from 9 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The forum on wireless sensor technologies will be held at the U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Auditorium, Washington, DC. (Entrance to the Department of Commerce is on 14th Street between Constitution and Pennsylvania avenues.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wendy Lader, Office of Policy Analysis and Development, NTIA, at (202) 482-1880, or electronic mail: wlader@ntia.doc.gov. Please direct media inquiries to the Office of Public Affairs, NTIA, at (202) 482-7002.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sensor applications stand to transform the way business is conducted by yielding greater efficiencies and by reducing costs for the retail, manufacturing, security, shipping and transportation industries by billions of dollars. These industries currently use limited radio frequency identification (RFID) technology in security systems, tollbooths, gasoline pumps, electronic ear tags for livestock, antitheft devices, toys and other products.¹ Market analysts project that sensor technologies will be the next billion-dollar market for the information technology industry, with current RFID projects and services generating \$1 billion annually, but potentially growing to \$7 billion by 2008.²

According to the RFID Journal, RFID is a generic term used to describe technologies that use radio waves to automatically identify objects and consumer goods and products. RFID uses several methods to identify such items. One such method employs an RFID reader, which can process serial numbers stored on a microchip attached to an antenna (collectively known as the RFID tag). The RFID chip transmits

¹ See Scientific American, "RFID: A Key to Automating Everything," pp. 56-65 (January 2004).

² See "RFID: Investing in the Next Multi-Billion Dollar I.T. Opportunity," Precursor Advisors (January 12, 2003).

information about the product to the RFID reader via radio waves.³

The Department of Commerce's forum on wireless sensor technologies is being held at a critical time when companies are actively debating the design and implementation of sensor applications worldwide.⁴ By holding this event, the Department of Commerce will increase awareness of sensor technology applications, their potential future economic impact, and public policy issues they may raise.

Public Participation: The panel discussions will be open to the public and press on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is limited. Due to security requirements and to facilitate entry to the Department of Commerce building, attendees must present photo identification and/or a U.S. Government building pass, if applicable, and should arrive at least one-half hour ahead of the panel sessions. The public meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Any member of the public wishing to attend and requiring special services, such as sign language interpretation or other ancillary aids, should contact Wendy Lader at (202) 482-1880 or at wlader@ntia.doc.gov at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

Dated: February 24, 2004.

Kathy D. Smith,

Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-4420 Filed 2-27-04; 8:45 am]

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COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Agency Information Collection

Activities: Notice of Intent To Renew Collection 3038-0055, Privacy of Consumer Financial Information

AGENCY: Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*,

³ See RFID Journal, Frequently Asked Questions available at <http://www.rfidjournal.com/article/articleview/207>.

⁴ In 2003, the Department of Defense and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. each announced requirements for suppliers to include passive-tracking RFID tags on product shipments by 2005. Wal-Mart projects the implementation of RFID tags to generate \$8.4 billion in annual cost savings. See "Case Study: Wal-Mart's Race for RFID," *CIO Insight* (January 8, 2004).