

services. SAB activities and advice provide necessary input to ensure that National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) science programs are of the highest quality and provide optimal support to resource management.

**Time And Date:** The meeting will be held Tuesday December 5, 2006, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday December 6, 2006, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. Please refer to the Web page <http://www.sab.noaa.gov/Meetings/meetings.html> for the most up-to-date meeting agenda.

**Place:** The meeting will be held both days at the Courtyard by Marriott, 8506 Fenton Street, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

**Status:** The meeting will be open to public participation with a 30-minute public comment period on December 5 (check Web site to confirm time). The SAB expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of five (5) minutes. Written comments (at least 35 copies) should be received in the SAB Executive Director's Office by November 27, 2006 to provide sufficient time for SAB review. Written comments received by the SAB Executive Director after November 27 will be distributed to the SAB, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Matters To Be Considered:** The meeting will include the following topics: (1) The Revision of NOAA Information Quality Guidelines to Conform with the OMB Peer Review Bulletin; (2) NOAA High Performance Computing Needs; (3) NOAA Space-Based Sensors; (4) Sound in the Marine Environment and Associated Science Challenges and Opportunities for NOAA; (5) the NOAA Hurricane Intensity Research Working Group (HIRWG) and National Science Foundation (NSF) National Science Board Hurricane Reports; (6) Research Goals to Improve Operational Support of Wildland Fire Management; (7) the NOAA Five-Year Research Plan and (8) Reviews of the NOAA Cooperative Institutes and the SAB's Role in them.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Cynthia Decker, Executive Director, Science Advisory Board, NOAA, Rm. 11230, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. (Phone: 301-713-9121, Fax: 301-713-3515, E-mail:

[Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov)); or visit the NOAA SAB Web site at <http://www.sab.noaa.gov>.

Dated: November 2, 2006.

**Mark E. Brown,**

*Chief Financial Officer and Chief Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102606B]

#### Sea Turtle Conservation; Activities Related to Fishing

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

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is seeking public review and comment on information characterizing Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico state trawl fisheries to support the Strategy for Sea Turtle Conservation in Relation to Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fisheries (Strategy). NMFS is requesting public review of these reports to ensure state trawl fishery characterizations contain the most accurate and up-to-date scientific, commercial, and anecdotal information available and to inform potential future management actions to address incidental capture of sea turtles in trawl gears (bycatch).

**DATES:** Written comments on the state trawl characterizations announced by this notice, or other information that NMFS should consider, are requested on or before January 8, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be sent to: Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Comments may also be sent via fax to (301) 427-2522. Comments on this notice may be submitted by e-mail (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: 102606B. Comments sent via e-mail, including all attachments, must not exceed a 10-megabyte file size. References used in this document may be obtained by writing to this address or by telephoning the contact listed here

(See **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tanya Dobrzynski (ph. 301-713-2322, fax (301) 427-2522, e-mail [Tanya.Dobrzynski@noaa.gov](mailto:Tanya.Dobrzynski@noaa.gov)).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

All species of sea turtles that occur in U.S. waters are listed as either endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). NMFS is required to take steps to conserve and recover endangered and threatened sea turtles. Incidental capture in fishing gear is a leading threat to sea turtle populations. Certain types of gear are more prone to incidentally capturing sea turtles than others, depending on the design of the gear, the manner in which the gear is fished, and the time and area within which it is fished. NMFS initiated the Strategy in 2003 to institute a new approach to addressing sea turtle bycatch on a per-gear basis, rather than fishery by fishery, given that sea turtle bycatch is more strongly correlated with gear type than target species. The primary objectives of the Strategy are to: (1) conserve and recover sea turtles; (2) evaluate sea turtle bycatch across gear types; (3) develop and implement measures to reduce bycatch; and (4) authorize fishery takes consistent with ESA mandates. A comprehensive approach evaluating fishing impacts by gear type across fishing sector as well as across state, Federal, and regional boundaries will increase management effectiveness and ensure broader compliance with the ESA.

To execute the goals of the Strategy, NMFS has prioritized fishing gear in relation to sea turtle bycatch. Trawl gears operating without turtle excluder devices in areas and times where sea turtles are present are a high priority gear type under the Strategy. NMFS' efforts to address sea turtle bycatch in trawl gears include characterizing state and Federal fisheries; monitoring and estimating sea turtle takes; undertaking gear research; and working with stakeholders to develop solutions.

To prepare the state fishery characterizations mentioned above, NMFS contracted the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to prepare Atlantic state reports and individual state agencies in the Gulf of Mexico to prepare Gulf state reports. State fishery characterizations contain information, where available, on all fisheries and fishing gears used in each state's waters. NMFS is seeking public review only of trawl gear reports at this time since trawls have been identified as a high

priority gear type under the Strategy. Other gear sections of these reports will likely be made available at a future date.

State trawl gear reports include, where available, information on trawl deployment (e.g., how the gear is deployed, where in the water column it fishes, when it is fished seasonally); target species; number of licensed vessels/fishermen; landings or effort by geographical area; recent history, current status, and projected status of the fishery; state laws and regulations relevant to sea turtle bycatch reduction either directly or indirectly; bycatch monitoring programs (e.g., observer coverage); and sea turtle bycatch. Reports generally include information from 1999–2004.

NMFS is interested in corrections, clarifications, additions, or updates to the information provided in these reports, especially regarding the operation or presence of the trawl fisheries, and/or the interaction of sea turtles with this gear type. Public review and comment is sought to ensure that management decisions are based upon the best information available.

State trawl reports will be available for review for a period of 60 days. Individual trawl gear characterizations can be downloaded at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/turtles/trawl.htm> or copies may be requested from Tanya Dobrzynski (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

Dated: November 2, 2006.

**James H. Lecky,**

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

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**BILLING CODE 3510–22–S**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 103106C]

#### Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

**ACTION:** Receipt of applications for scientific research permits and permit modifications.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that NMFS has received ten scientific research permit application requests relating to Pacific salmon. The proposed research is intended to increase knowledge of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to

help guide management and conservation efforts.

**DATES:** Comments or requests for a public hearing on the applications must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific standard time on December 8, 2006.

**ADDRESSES:** The applications are available online at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/ESA-Salmon-Regulations-Permits/Section-10-Permits/Scientific-Research-Authorizations/Appls-for-Cmnt.cfm>. Written comments on the applications should be sent to the Protected Resources Division, NMFS, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100, Portland, OR 97232–1274. Comments may also be sent via fax to 503–230–5441 or by e-mail to [resapps.nwr@NOAA.gov](mailto:resapps.nwr@NOAA.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Garth Griffin, Portland, OR (ph.: 503–231–2005, Fax: 503–230–5441, e-mail: [Garth.Griffin@noaa.gov](mailto:Garth.Griffin@noaa.gov)). Permit application instructions are available from the address above.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Species Covered in This Notice**

The following listed species are covered in this notice:

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*): threatened lower Columbia River (LCR), endangered upper Columbia River (UCR), threatened Snake River (SR) spring/summer-run, threatened SR fall-run, threatened Puget Sound (PS).

Chum salmon (*O. keta*): threatened Columbia River (CR), threatened Hood Canal (HC).

Steelhead (*O. mykiss*): threatened LCR, threatened middle Columbia River (MCR), threatened Snake River (SR), threatened UCR, proposed threatened PS.

Coho salmon (*O. kisutch*): threatened LCR.

Sockeye salmon (*O. nerka*): threatened Ozette Lake (OL).

#### **Authority**

Scientific research permits are issued in accordance with section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 et. seq) and regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50 CFR parts 222–226). NMFS issues permits based on findings that such permits: (1) are applied for in good faith; (2) if granted and exercised, would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species that are the subject of the permit; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policy of section 2 of the ESA. The authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits.

Anyone requesting a hearing on an application listed in this notice should set out the specific reasons why a hearing on that application would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). Such hearings are held at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS.

#### **Applications Received**

##### *Permit 1175—Modification 1*

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest (GPNF) is requesting a 5-year research permit to take juvenile PS Chinook salmon, LCR Chinook salmon, LCR coho salmon, and LCR steelhead. It would also take juvenile PS steelhead. The purpose of this research is to determine fish species presence and distribution, record fish habitat conditions, and inventory spawning areas on the GPNF. The information would be used in broad-scale analyses (e.g. watershed analysis) and project-level planning (e.g., timber sales and habitat restoration projects). The research would benefit listed salmonids by providing the GPNF with information to improve forest management. Permit 1175 has been in place for almost 5 years and is due to expire on December 31, 2006. The GPNF would observe/harass adult and juvenile salmonids during spawner and redd counts, snorkel surveys, and habitat surveys. The GPNF would also capture (using backpack electrofishing equipment or seines), handle, and release juvenile salmonids. The GPNF does not intend to kill any fish being captured, but a small number of fish may die as an unintentional result of the research activities.

##### *Permit 1313—Modification 1*

Pentec Environmental (Pentec) is requesting a 4-year research permit to take Puget Sound Chinook salmon associated with research to be conducted in Port Gardner and the Snohomish River estuary, Washington. It would also take juvenile PS steelhead. The purpose of the research is to monitor juvenile salmonid use of habitat restoration sites. The habitat restoration work was conducted by the Port of Everett in 2002 and monitoring has continued (under this permit) since then. Permit 1313 is due to expire on December 31, 2006. The habitat restoration projects were designed to improve salmonid rearing and migration habitat, and the research would benefit the fish by helping managers learn the effectiveness of those measures. Juvenile salmonids would be captured (using a floating beach seine), counted, measured, checked for adipose fin clips, and released. Pentec does not intend to