

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: October 21, 2005.

Emily Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E5-5959 Filed 10-26-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102105C]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; committee meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Habitat/Marine Protected Area (MPA) Oversight Committee will meet to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, November 14, 2005, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 31 Hampshire Street, Mansfield, MA 02048; telephone: (508)339-2200.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978)465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The items of discussion in the committee's agenda are as follows:

1. The Committee will continue work on elements of the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Omnibus Amendment 2 including, but not limited to, consideration of Advisory Panel gear descriptions; review and refinement of EFH designations; consideration of Habitat Areas of Particular Concern and review and consideration of comments received on modified notice of intent.

2. The Committee may review the Ecosystem Workshop results.

3. The Committee will be briefed on the proposed non-fishing projects that may adversely affect EFH.

4. The Committee may consider other topics at their discretion.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice 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 final action to address the emergency.

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Dated: October 21, 2005.

Emily Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E5-5960 Filed 10-26-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 101905A]

Endangered Species; File No. 1518

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application for modification of a scientific research permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Carlos Diez, Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales de Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 9066600, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00906-6600, has requested a modification to scientific research Permit No. 1518.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before November 28, 2005.

ADDRESSES: The modification request and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following office(s):

Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room

13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)713-2289; fax (301)427-2521; and

Southeast Region, NMFS, 263 13th Ave South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; phone (727)824-5312; fax (727)824-5309;

Written comments or requests for a public hearing on this request should be submitted to the Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Those individuals requesting a hearing should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this particular modification request would be appropriate.

Comments may also be submitted by facsimile at (301)427-2521, provided the facsimile is confirmed by hard copy submitted by mail and postmarked no later than the closing date of the comment period.

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing email comments is *NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov*. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: File No. 1518.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patrick Opay or Kate Swails, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject modification to Permit No. 1518, issued on August 15, 2005 (70 FR 47813), is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226).

Permit No. 1518 currently authorizes the permit holder to study green and hawksbill sea turtles. The purpose of the research is to identify marine habitat, determine distribution and abundance, determine sex ratios, evaluate the extent of ingestion of marine debris, determine growth rates and sexual maturity, and quantify threats. Mr. Diez will annually capture up to 320 hawksbill and 250 green sea turtles by hand or entanglement net. All turtles will be measured, weighed, tagged, and blood sampled. A subset of animals will be lavaged and have transmitters attached to them. One leatherback sea turtle could be incidentally captured during the course of the studies but would be released alive. The permit is issued for 5 years. The permit holder requests a modification to the permit that would allow skin biopsy of 190 green and hawksbill sea turtles. A subset of 10 green turtles would undergo

fibropapillomatosis tumor removal surgery and subsequent rehabilitation.

In the case that a turtle has evidence of severe internal tumors, the turtle would be euthanized. The applicant does not expect that more than 2 turtles would require euthanasia. The goal of the additional research would be to create baseline parameters of health assessments, determine groups' heterogeneity and dispersal, and provide insight into the pathogenesis of the disease in the wild through the use of long-term capture and release surveys.

Dated: October 20, 2005.

Stephen L. Leathery,

Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 05-21487 Filed 10-26-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 082605B]

Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS); Specification of Requirements for Mobile Transmitting Unit Type Approval

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

ACTION: Revision of type approval requirements for mobile transmitting units.

SUMMARY: This document provides notice of type approval requirements for Mobile Transmitting Units (MTU) to be authorized for use on any vessel participating in the NOAA Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) program. Vessels participating in VMS programs must acquire an OLE - approved MTU to comply with VMS standards set forth in NMFS rules requiring the use of VMS.

ADDRESSES: To obtain copies of the list of NOAA-approved VMS MTU and VMS communications service providers, or to obtain information regarding the status of VMS systems being evaluated by NOAA, write to NOAA Fisheries, Office for Law Enforcement (OLE), 8484 Georgia Avenue, Suite 415, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For current listing information contact Mark Oswell, Outreach Specialist, or for questions regarding VMS installation and status of evaluations contact Jonathan Pinkerton, National VMS

Program Manager by phone: 301-427-2300 or by fax: 301-427-2055.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice supersedes all previous notices on MTU type approval requirements. Previously installed MTU approved under prior notices will continue to be approved for the remainder of their service life. New installations of a previously approved MTU occurring 120 days or more after the publication date of this notice must comply with all of the requirements herein. All new requests for type approval must comply with all of the requirements herein.

Background

The Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office for Law Enforcement (OLE) maintains MTU specification requirements as an OLE National Directive. This notice sets prerequisite standards for the purpose of type approval that must be met by an MTU and any associated software before it is authorized for use in the NOAA VMS program. Vessels participating in VMS programs must acquire an OLE-approved MTU to comply with the specific VMS standards set forth in NMFS rules requiring the use of VMS. The MTU is a transceiver or communications device, including antennae, installed on fishing vessels participating in the VMS requirement. The MTU allows OLE to determine the geographic position of the vessel during specified intervals or events. In addition, it enables mobile communications services between OLE and the vessel when using an OLE-accepted Mobile Communication Service Provider (MCSP). (Note: Standards for the MCSP are written in the complementary directive titled Mobile Communication Service Provider Specification of Requirements.)

Goal

OLE seeks to deploy an "open system," whereby the fishing industry participants may select from a variety of suppliers that qualify and have been approved to participate in VMS programs. Fishermen must comply with their Federal fishery regulations regarding VMS and therefore may be cited for a violation and held accountable for monitoring anomalies not attributable to faults in the MCSP or MTU. Therefore, type approval is essential to establish and maintain uniformly high system integrity. By this directive, OLE seeks to approve reliable, robust, and secure MTU products and thereby create and maintain a VMS meeting the requirement of high

integrity. Specific VMS programs are created to support particular NMFS rules requiring the use of VMS, which typically are designed to manage or protect fish and other marine species within designated areas.

Process

Based on a request for type approval from an MTU supplier and certification of certain minimal standards, OLE will conduct a thorough evaluation and then issue a statement accepting or denying the type approval of the particular MTU. An MTU must meet the minimal national VMS standards, as required by this directive, and the requirements of the specific fisheries for which approval is sought. MTU supplier requestors are encouraged to review the national VMS standards and NMFS rules requiring the use of VMS prior to submitting a request for approval. Upon successful demonstration of compliance with the requirements set forth in this directive, OLE will issue an MTU type approval within a particular communications Class applicable to one or more VMS operations targeting particular NMFS rules requiring the use of VMS. OLE will maintain a current list of type approved MTU(s). OLE will forward lists of type approved MTU(s) to the respective regional Fisheries Management Council(s), post the information on the OLE website and provide it by fax upon request.

OLE approval will not necessarily result in NMFS procurement of the MTU. Instead, OLE will request the MTU supplier to provide a fact sheet to provide information to the fishing industry. This fact sheet will allow fishermen to make purchase decisions that are compatible with the VMS standards and their individual needs. Purchasing strategies are determined on a per rule implementation basis.

Initiation

OLE will initiate the MTU type approval process upon written request from the supplier, subject to the demonstration of compliance with this directive and the availability of test units. The requestor for type approval, may include the manufacturer, or an OEM/labeler, distributor, and/or reseller acting as a representative of the manufacturer. The evaluation may include consideration if that MTU has already passed a comparable type approval process to qualify for use in a foreign fisheries management effort. If applicable, the supplier should provide the MTU's identifying characteristics, the details of foreign VMS requirement specifications, the MTU's level of compliance with them, and appropriate