

surveys in the Gulf of Alaska for a 1-year period, provided the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are undertaken.

Dated: September 22, 2004.

Laurie K. Allen,

*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. 090904E]

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will separately convene its Mackerel and Reef Fish Advisory Panels (AP).

DATES: The Mackerel AP meeting will be convened by conference call at 3 p.m. EST on Tuesday, October 26, 2004. The Reef Fish AP meeting will be convened by conference call at 3 p.m. EST on Wednesday, October 27, 2004.

ADDRESSES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for locations of listening stations.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 North U.S. Highway 301, Suite 1000, Tampa, FL 33619.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard L. Leard, Deputy Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 228-2815.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Persons wishing to listen to the calls may do so at the following locations:

1. NMFS Panama City Laboratory, 3500 Delwood Beach Road, Panama City, FL, Contact: Gary Fitzhugh at 850-234-6541, extension 214.
2. NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 9721 North Executive Center Drive, St. Petersburg, FL, Contact: Peter Hood at 727-570-5728.
3. NMFS Pascagoula Laboratory, 3209 Frederic Street, Pascagoula, MS, Contact: Cheryl Hinkel at 228-762-4591.
4. NMFS Galveston Laboratory (on 15th only), 4700 Avenue U, Galveston, TX, Contact: Rhonda O'Toole at 409-766-3500.

The Council will separately convene its Mackerel and Reef Fish AP to review public hearing drafts of Amendment 15 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and Amendment 24 to the Reef Fish FMP. Each of these amendments contain alternatives to allow the existing commercial permit moratoria to expire, extend the moratoria for 5 or 10 years, or replace the moratoria with permanent limited access systems that would, in essence, maintain the cap on the number of permits indefinitely, or until replaced or eliminated by additional actions by the Council.

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

Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Dawn Aring at the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) by September 24, 2004.

Dated: September 23, 2004.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 092304B]

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: Notification of a proposal for exempted fishing permits to conduct experimental fishing; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries,

Northeast Region, NMFS (Assistant Regional Administrator) has made a preliminary determination that the subject Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. The Assistant Regional Administrator has also made a preliminary determination that the activities authorized under the EFP would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue the EFP. Therefore, NMFS announces that the Assistant Regional Administrator proposes to recommend that an EFP be issued that would allow one vessel to conduct fishing operations that are otherwise restricted by the regulations governing the fisheries of the Northeastern United States. The EFP may allow for exemptions from the NE multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) effort control program for up to 11 DAS for testing a bycatch reducing gear modification. 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 on this document must be received on or before October 14, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this notice may be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is DA591@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "Comments on UNH Soft Grid Gear Modification EFP Proposal." Written comments should be sent to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on UNH Soft Grid Gear Modification EFP Proposal." Comments may also be sent via facsimile (fax) to (978) 281-9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brian Hooker, Fishery Policy Analyst, phone 978-281-9220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Dr. Pingguo He of the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension (UNH) submitted an application for an EFP on May 27, 2004. This is a continuation of a project that started in 2002. Due to gear modifications, tank flume tests, and poor weather conditions the sea trials were not completed in the 2003-2004 fishing