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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 2, 2011

Commerce announces 2011 regional fishery council appointments

The Commerce Department today announced the appointment of 21 new and returning members to the eight regional fishery management councils – important partners with NOAA's Fisheries Service in determining how ocean fisheries are managed.

The councils, established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, prepare fishery management plans for marine fish stocks in their regions. The councils fulfill the act's charge to end and prevent overfishing and rebuild fish stocks to ensure sustainable fisheries. NOAA's Fisheries Service works closely with the councils during plan development and also reviews, approves and implements the management plans developed by the councils.

"Since Magnuson-Stevens was put in place 35 years ago, the councils have been key partners with NOAA Fisheries Service in the regional, science-based and transparent fishery management process which exists in the U.S. Today I'm pleased to announce our newest members to the councils," said Eric Schwaab, assistant administrator for NOAA's Fisheries Service. "The individuals selected for the councils are uniquely qualified for these important positions. They are the experts—fishermen and scientists, leaders in their regions—who will help us achieve sustainable fisheries and maintain vibrant fishing communities."

Council members represent diverse constituents including commercial and recreational fisheries, environmental interests and academia. Each year, the Secretary of Commerce selects approximately one-third of the total of 72 appointed members to the eight regional councils. Twenty-one are being named or reappointed for the next term, which begins on August 11.

NOAA's Fisheries Service annually solicits nominations from the governors of fishing states and oversees the annual appointment process. The Secretary must select council members from the list of nominees provided by the governors to fill obligatory and at-large seats that have become available due to an expiring term, a resignation or other reasons. Obligatory seats are state-specific, while at-large seats can be filled by a person from any of the states in the region. Council members serve three-year terms, and may be reappointed to serve up to three consecutive terms. The 2011 appointments are listed below, by Council. An asterisk (*) indicates a reappointment.

New England Council

The New England Council includes members from the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. The appointees for 2011 fill four at-large seats.

At-large seats:

Thomas D. Dempsey (Massachusetts)
Peter T. Kendall (New Hampshire)
*Mary Beth Nickell-Tooley (Maine)
Laura Ramsden (Massachusetts)

Mid-Atlantic Council

The Mid-Atlantic Council includes members from the states of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The appointees for 2011 fill obligatory seats for Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania and one at-large seat.

Obligatory seats:

G. Warren Elliott (Pennsylvania)

*Howard J. King III (Maryland.)

*Jule D. Wheatly (North Carolina)

At-large seat:

Laurie A. Nolan (New York)

South Atlantic Council

The South Atlantic Council includes members from the states of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. The appointees for 2011 fill two at-large seats.

At-large seats:

*David M. Cupka (South Carolina)

John W. Jolley (Florida)

Caribbean Council

The Caribbean Council includes members from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The appointee for 2011 fills an obligatory seat for Puerto Rico.

Obligatory seat:

Nelson R. Crespo (Puerto Rico)

Gulf Council

The Gulf Council includes members from the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The appointees for 2011 fill three at-large seats.

At-large seats:

Pamela J. Dana (Florida)

Patrick F. Riley (Texas)

*Robert L. Shipp (Alabama)

Pacific Council

The Pacific Council includes members from the states of California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. The appointees for 2011 fill an obligatory seat for Washington and one at-large seat.

Obligatory seat:

Richard H. Lincoln (Washington)

At-large seat:

Jeffrey N. Feldner (Oregon)

North Pacific Council

The North Pacific Council includes members from the states of Alaska and Washington. The appointees for 2011 fill obligatory seats for Alaska and Washington.

Obligatory seats:

*John J. Henderschedt (Washington)

*Eric A. Olson (Alaska)

Western Pacific Council

The Western Pacific Council includes members from the state of Hawaii, the American-flagged Pacific islands of American Samoa and Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The appointees for 2011 fill an obligatory seat for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and two at-large seats.

Obligatory seat:

Richard B. Seman (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands)

At-large seats:

*David G. Itano (Hawaii)

Frederick M. Rice (Hawaii)

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On the Web:

NOAA's Fisheries Service: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

2010 Report to Congress on Apportionment of Membership on the Regional Fishery Management Councils: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/reg_svcs/councils.htm