

established to fill a need for advice and assessment on MEP's plans, strategies and performance. MEP is a unique program consisting of centers across the United States and Puerto Rico, with partnerships at the State, Federal, and local levels. The Board provides input and advice on MEP's programs, plans, and policies. At this meeting, the Board will address MEP's sustainability initiatives and efforts to deploy services into the U.S. manufacturing economy. The Board's agenda may include other Board business.

DATES: The meeting will convene April 19, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. and will adjourn at 4 p.m. on April 19, 2009.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at Orlando World Center Marriott Resort & Convention Center, 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, Florida 32821. Any interested person wishing to attend this meeting should submit his or her name, e-mail address and phone number to Susan Hayduk (susan.hayduk@nist.gov, (301) 975-5614) no later than c.o.b. April 9, 2009. Those who are unable to attend in person are invited to submit written statements to the MEP Advisory Board. Please send your statements to Karen Lellock at karen.lellock@nist.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Lellock, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899-4800, telephone number (301) 975-4269.

Dated: March 19, 2009.

Richard Kayser,
Chief Scientist.

[FR Doc. E9-6906 Filed 3-26-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-X036

Endangered Species; File No. 1547-02

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit modification.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (Kathryn Hattala, Principal Investigator), 21 South Putt Corners Road; New Paltz, NY 12561, has been issued a modification to scientific research Permit No. 1547-02.

ADDRESSES: The modification and related documents are available for

review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

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

Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978)281-9300; fax (978)281-9333;

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On December 9, 2008, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (72 FR 74708) that a modification of Permit No. 1547-01, issued March 22, 2007 (72 FR 17135), had been requested by the above-named individual. The requested modification has been granted under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 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).

In addition to all research activities authorized under Permit No. 1547-01, this modification authorizes anesthesia and gastric lavage on up to 200 shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) in the Haverstraw and Newburgh Bays of the Hudson River. The researcher also is permitted one unintentional mortality of a shortnose sturgeon during the remaining permitted period. The goal of the additional research will be to document the diet of shortnose sturgeon occupying the same habitat as Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) in the lower Hudson River. This modification will be valid through the expiration date of the original permit, October 31, 2011.

Issuance of this modification, as required by the ESA, was based on a finding that such permit (1) was applied for in good faith, (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered or threatened species, and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: March 24, 2009.

Tammy C. Adams,

Acting Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E9-6899 Filed 3-26-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XN99

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Application for an Exempted Fishing Permit

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of exempted fishing permit applications; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications, and is considering issuance of EFPs for vessels participating in the EFP fisheries. The EFPs are necessary to allow activities that are otherwise prohibited by Federal regulations. The EFPs will be effective no earlier than April 27, 2009, and would expire no later than December 31, 2009, but could be terminated earlier under terms and conditions of the EFPs and other applicable laws.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., local time on April 27, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by 0648-XN99 by any one of the following methods:

- Fax: 206-526-6736, Attn: Gretchen Arentzen.
- Mail: D. Robert Lohn, Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-0070, Attn: Gretchen Arentzen.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To view copies of the 2009 EFP applications, visit the Pacific Council website at www.pcouncil.org and browse the September 2008 Briefing Book; or contact Gretchen Arentzen (Northwest Region, NMFS), phone: 206-526-6147, fax: 206-526-6736.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action is authorized by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act provisions at 50 CFR 600.745, which states that EFPs may be used to authorize fishing activities that would otherwise be prohibited. At the September 2008 Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting in Boise, Idaho, the Council considered applications for four EFPs from: (1) The Nature Conservancy and their collaborators; (2) the California Recreational Fishing Alliance and Golden Gate Fisherman's Association; (3) the Oregon Recreational Fishing

Alliance; and (4) Steven Fosmark. An opportunity for public testimony was provided during the Council meeting. For more details on these EFP applications and to view copies of the applications, see the Pacific Council's website at www.pcouncil.org and browse the September 2008 Briefing Book. The Council recommended that NMFS consider issuing the following EFPs.

Community Based Fishing Association EFP

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) submitted a proposal for a 2009 EFP, along with their collaborators: City of Morro Bay Harbor Department; Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen's Association; Port San Luis Harbor District; California Department of Fish and Game; Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization, Inc.; and Environmental Defense. The primary purpose of the EFP is to test whether establishing a cooperatively managed, community based fishing association can provide economic and environmental performance benefits.

Recreational Chilipepper EFP

The California Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) and the Golden Gate Fishermen's Association submitted an application for a 2009 EFP. The primary purpose of the EFP is to do an area-based recreational fishing study to test if hook and line fishing gear can be used to access underutilized chilipepper rockfish seaward of the non-trawl RCA, while keeping bycatch of overfished species low.

Recreational Yellowtail EFP

The Oregon RFA submitted an application for a 2009 EFP. The primary purpose of the EFP is to test if recreational fishing gear, fitted with a long leader to keep gear up off the ocean floor, can be used to access underutilized yellowtail rockfish, while keeping bycatch of overfished species low.

Commercial Chilipepper EFP

Steven Fosmark submitted an application for a 2009 EFP. The primary purpose of the EFP is to test if a specific longline gear configuration can be used in the commercial fishery to target underutilized chilipepper rockfish, while keeping bycatch of overfished species low.

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

Dated: March 23, 2009.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

[FR Doc. E9-6895 Filed 3-26-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Customer Panel Quality Survey

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on this extension of a continuing information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before May 26, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *E-mail:* Susan.Fawcett@uspto.gov.

Include "0651-0057 Customer Panel Quality Survey comment" in the subject line of the message.

- *Fax:* 571-273-0112, marked to the attention of Susan K. Fawcett.

- *Mail:* Susan K. Fawcett, Records Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Administrative Management Group, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

- *Federal e-Rulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to the attention of Martin Rater, Management Analyst, Office of Patent Quality Assurance, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450; by telephone at 571-272-5966; or by e-mail at martin.rater@uspto.gov with "Paperwork" in the subject line.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

For over the past 10 years, the USPTO has used surveys to obtain customer feedback regarding the products, services, and related service standards of the USPTO. The USPTO used the data to measure how well the agency is meeting established customer service standards, to identify any disjoints between customer expectations and

USPTO performance, and to develop improvement strategies. Typically, these surveys ask customers to express their satisfaction with the USPTO's products and services based upon their interactions with the agency as a whole over a 12-month period.

In order to obtain further data concerning customer ratings of the USPTO's services, service standards, and performance, the USPTO developed the Customer Panel Quality Survey. This survey narrows the focus of customer satisfaction to examination quality and uses a longitudinal, rotating panel design to assess changes in customer perceptions and to identify key areas for examiner training and opportunities for improvement. The USPTO plans to survey patent agents, attorneys, and other individuals from large domestic corporations (including those with 500+ employees), small and medium-size businesses, universities and other non-profit research organizations, and independent inventors; however, the USPTO does not plan to survey foreign entities.

The USPTO will draw a random sample of these customers from their database. Due to the rotating panel design, some sample members will be surveyed twice in order to measure change over a period of time. Each year of the survey will include four waves of data collection.

The Customer Panel Quality Survey is a mail survey, although respondents can also complete the survey electronically on the Web. The content of both versions will be identical. A survey packet containing the questionnaire, a separate cover letter prepared by the Commissioner of Patents, a postage-paid, pre-addressed return envelope, and instructions for completing the survey electronically will be mailed to all sample members. A pre-notification letter, reminder/thank you postcards, and telephone calls will be used to encourage response from sample members.

This is a voluntary survey and all responses will remain confidential. The collected data will not be linked to the respondent and contact information that is used for sampling purposes will be maintained in a separate file from the quantitative data. Respondents are not required to provide any identifying information such as their name, address, or Social Security Number. In order to access and complete the online survey, respondents will need to use the username, password, and survey ID number provided by the USPTO.