

Small Numbers

As noted above, only small numbers of incidental take may be authorized under sections 101(a)(5)(A) and (D) of the MMPA for specified activities other than military readiness activities. The MMPA does not define small numbers and so, in practice, where estimated numbers are available, NMFS compares the number of individuals taken to the most appropriate estimation of abundance of the relevant species or stock in our determination of whether an authorization is limited to small numbers of marine mammals. When the predicted number of individuals to be taken is less than one third of the species or stock abundance, the take is considered to be of small numbers. Additionally, other qualitative factors may be considered in the analysis, such as the temporal or spatial scale of the activities.

We authorize incidental take of seven marine mammal stocks. The total amount of taking authorized is less than one third of the best available population abundance estimate for all stocks (Table 7), which we find are small numbers of marine mammals relative to the estimated overall population abundances for those stocks.

Based on the analysis contained herein of the planned activity (including the mitigation and monitoring measures) and the anticipated take of marine mammals, NMFS finds that small numbers of marine mammals will be taken relative to the population size of all affected species or stocks.

Unmitigable Adverse Impact Analysis and Determination

There are no relevant subsistence uses of the affected marine mammal stocks or species implicated by this action. Therefore, NMFS has determined that the total taking of affected species or stocks would not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

National Environmental Policy Act

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6A, NMFS must evaluate our proposed action (*i.e.*, the promulgation of regulations and subsequent issuance of incidental take authorization) and alternatives with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 of the Companion Manual for NAO 216-6A,

which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which we have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has determined that the proposed action qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each Federal agency insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat. To ensure ESA compliance for the issuance of IHAs, NMFS consults internally whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species. No incidental take of ESA-listed species is authorized or expected to result from this activity. Therefore, NMFS has determined that formal consultation under section 7 of the ESA was not required for this action.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to Dominion for conducting pile driving activity offshore of Virginia, for a period of one year, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements are incorporated.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XX055]

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application

from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act require publication of this notice to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 5, 2020.

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

- **Email:** NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on NEFSC Ropeless Fishing EFP."

- **Mail:** Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on NEFSC Ropeless Fishing EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Hansen, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on March 9, 2020, to conduct fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. NEFSC is requesting an exemption from Federal lobster regulations that would authorize five federally permitted commercial lobster vessels to participate in a ropeless lobster gear study in Lobster Conservation Management Area 3. NEFSC is requesting an exemption from gear marking requirements at 50 CFR 697.21(b)(2) to allow for the use of a single buoy marker on a trawl of more than three traps.

The purpose of this study is to test a prototype ropeless fishing system as a potential technique to prevent entanglements of protected species, primarily North Atlantic right whales.

The EFP would authorize five participating vessels to modify some of their existing trawls, consisting of 35-45 traps. Experimental trawls would either have a rope spool, a buoy and stowed rope system, or a lift bag system fitted with an acoustic release, deployed on one end of the trawl, with a buoy line attached to the other. Soak time would be between 4-8 days, but may be modified depending on what each fisherman decides is appropriate for fishing. Sampling would occur from May to October, 2020. Initial deployments would be overseen by an

engineering team. NEFSC estimated there would be approximately 96 deployments of experimental trawls.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. We may grant EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. The EFP would prohibit any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activities.

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

Dated: May 18, 2020.

Hélène M.N. Scalliet,

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

[FR Doc. 2020-11017 Filed 5-20-20; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA196]

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) Committee will hold a meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday June 8, 2020 at 9 a.m. and conclude by 4:30 p.m. For agenda details, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar with a telephone-only audio connection: <http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/msbc2020illex/>. Telephone instructions are provided upon connecting, or the public can call direct: (800) 832-0736, Rm: *7833942#.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331 or on their website at www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526-5255, or visit www.mafmc.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to develop committee recommendations regarding an amendment to the MSB fishery management plan that could modify the plan's goals and objectives as well as the permitting system and associated management measures for *Illex* squid.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to any meeting date.

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

Dated: May 18, 2020.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2020-11009 Filed 5-20-20; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA190]

Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council's (Council) District Advisory Panels (DAPs) will hold public virtual meetings to address the items contained in the tentative agenda included in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The DAPs public virtual meetings will be held as follows: St. Thomas/St. John DAP, June 8, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; St. Croix DAP, June 9, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Puerto Rico DAP, June 10, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. All meetings will be at Eastern Day Time.

ADDRESSES: You may join the DAPs public virtual meetings (via GoToMeeting) from a computer, tablet or smartphone by entering the following address:

Monday, June 8, 2020—St. Thomas/St. John, DAP 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/114042653>.

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (872) 240-3311
Access Code: 114-042-653

You may download the GoToMeeting app to be ready when the meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/114042653>.

Tuesday, June 9, 2020—St. Croix, DAP 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/245609085>.

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (571) 317-3122
Access Code: 245-609-085

You may download the GoToMeeting app to be ready when the meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/245609085>.

Wednesday, June 10, 2020—Puerto Rico DAP 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/453789421>.

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (646) 749-3122
Access Code: 453-789-421

You may download the GoToMeeting app to be ready when the meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/453789421>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Miguel Rolón, Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 401, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-1903; telephone: (787) 398-3717.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following items included in the tentative agenda will be discussed:

10 a.m.–11 a.m.

—Call to Order

—Roll Call

—Adoption of Agenda

—How the Fishing Industry is Coping with the Pandemic Impacts—
Presentation by Cedric Taquin

11 a.m.–11:10 a.m.

—Break

11:10 a.m.–12 p.m.

—Island-Based FMPs Update

—Other Business

All three meetings will be discussing the same agenda items.

The order of business may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the completion of agenda items. The