

three salmon and steelhead species: The California Coastal (CC) Chinook salmon ESU, and the Northern California (NC) and Central California Coast (CCC) steelhead DPSs. Between 1997 and 2000, NMFS listed the CCC steelhead DPS (62 FR 43937; August 18, 1997), the CC Chinook salmon ESU (64 FR 50394; September 16, 1999), and the NC steelhead DPS (65 FR 36074; June 7, 2000), as threatened under the ESA due to the precipitous and ongoing declines in their populations.

Our goal is to restore the threatened CC Chinook salmon, and NC and CCC steelhead to the point where they are self-sustaining populations within their ecosystems and no longer need the protections of the ESA.

A series of public workshops will be held to help inform interested parties on the Public Draft Recovery Plan. Written comments will be accepted at the workshops. These include:

- UKIAH—October 14, 2015, UC Cooperative Extension Mendocino, 890 N. Bush Street, Ukiah, CA 95482, from 6–8 p.m.
- ARCATA—October 15, 2015, Humboldt Area Foundation, 363 Indianola Road, Bayside, CA 95524, from 6–8 p.m.
- SANTA CRUZ—October 20, 2015, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, 110 Shaffer Road, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, from 3–5 p.m.
- OAKLAND—November 3, 2015, Elihu M Harris State Building, 1515 Clay St., Oakland, CA 94612, from 1–3 p.m.
- SANTA ROSA—November 5, 2015, Sonoma County Water Agency, 404 Aviation Blvd., Santa Rosa, CA 95403 from 1–3 p.m.

#### The Public Draft Recovery Plan

The ESA requires recovery plans incorporate, to the maximum extent practicable: (1) Objective, measurable criteria which, when met, would result in a determination that the species is no longer threatened or endangered; (2) site-specific management actions necessary to achieve the plan's goal for the conservation and survival of the species; and (3) estimates of the time required and costs to implement recovery actions.

The Public Draft Recovery Plan provides background on the natural history, population trends and the potential threats to the viability of CC Chinook salmon, and NC and CCC steelhead. The Public Draft Recovery Plan lays out a recovery strategy to address conditions and threats based on the best available science and incorporates objective, measurable criteria for recovery. The Public Draft

Recovery Plan is not regulatory, but presents guidance for use by agencies and interested parties to assist in the recovery of CC Chinook salmon, and NC and CCC steelhead. The Public Draft Recovery Plan identifies actions needed to achieve recovery by improving population and habitat conditions and addressing threats to the species; links management actions to a research and monitoring program intended to fill data gaps and assess effectiveness of actions; incorporates an adaptive management framework by which management actions and other elements may evolve as we gain information through research and monitoring; and describes agency guidance on time lines for reviews of the status of species and recovery plans. To address threats related to the species, the Public Draft Recovery Plan references many of the significant efforts already underway to restore salmon and steelhead access to high quality habitat and to improve habitat previously degraded.

Recovery of CC Chinook salmon, and NC and CCC steelhead will require a long-term effort in cooperation and coordination with Federal, state, tribal and local government agencies, and the community. Consistent with the Recovery Plan, we will implement relevant actions for which we have authority, work cooperatively on implementation of other actions, and encourage other Federal and state agencies to implement recovery actions for which they have responsibility and authority.

In compliance with the requirements of the ESA section 4(f), NMFS is providing public notice and an opportunity to review and comment on the Public Draft Recovery Plan for CC Chinook salmon, and NC and CCC steelhead prior to its final approval.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: September 30, 2015.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510–22–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE201

#### Notice of Availability of a *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill; Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan (PDARP) and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS)

**AGENCY:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of a Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the *Deepwater Horizon* Federal and State natural resource trustee agencies (Trustees) have prepared a Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft PDARP/PEIS). As required by OPA, in this Draft PDARP/PEIS, the *Deepwater Horizon* Trustees present the assessment of impacts of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill on natural resources in the Gulf of Mexico and on the services those resources provide, and determine the restoration needed to compensate the public for these impacts. The Draft PDARP/PEIS describes the Trustees' programmatic alternatives considered to restore natural resources, ecological services, and recreational use services injured or lost as a result of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. The Trustees evaluate these alternatives under criteria set forth in the OPA natural resource damage assessment regulations, and also evaluate the environmental consequences of the restoration alternatives in accordance with NEPA. The purpose of this notice is to inform the public of the availability of the Draft PDARP/PEIS and to seek public comments on the document.

**DATES:** The Trustees will consider public comments received on or before December 4, 2015.

**Public Meetings:** The Trustees will host a series of public meetings to facilitate public review and comment on the Draft PDARP/PEIS. Both written and verbal public comments will be taken at each public meeting. The Trustees will hold an open house for each meeting followed by a formal meeting. Each public meeting will include a

presentation of the Draft PDARP/PEIS. Public meetings will be held between October 19th and November 18th. The full public meeting schedule is listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

**ADDRESSES: Obtaining Documents:** You may download the Draft PDARP/PEIS at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov>. Alternatively, you may

request a CD of the Draft PDARP/PEIS (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). You may also view the document at any of the public facilities listed at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov>. The Draft PDARP/PEIS also will be available for download at <http://www.justice.gov/enrd/deepwater-horizon>.

**Submitting Comments:** You may submit comments on the Draft PDARP/PEIS by one of following methods:

- Via the Web: <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov> and
- U.S. Mail: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 49567, Atlanta, GA 30345. Please note that mailed comments must be received on or before the comment deadline of December 4, 2015 to be considered.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Courtney Groeneveld at [gulfspillrestoration@noaa.gov](mailto:gulfspillrestoration@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Introduction**

On April 20, 2010, the *Deepwater Horizon* mobile drilling unit exploded, caught fire, and eventually sank in the Gulf of Mexico, resulting in a massive release of oil and other substances from BP's Macondo well. Tragically, 11 workers were killed and 17 injured by the explosion and fire. Initial efforts to cap the well following the explosion were unsuccessful, and for 87 days after the explosion, the well continuously and uncontrollably discharged oil and natural gas into the northern Gulf of Mexico. Approximately 3.19 million barrels (134 million gallons) of oil were released into the ocean, by far the largest offshore oil spill in the history of the United States.

Oil spread from the deep ocean to the surface and nearshore environment, from Texas to Florida. The oil came into contact with and injured natural resources as diverse as deep-sea coral, fish and shellfish, productive wetland habitats, sandy beaches, birds, endangered sea turtles, and protected marine life. The oil spill prevented people from fishing, going to the beach, and enjoying their typical recreational activities along the Gulf. Extensive response actions, including, use of dispersants, cleanup activities, and actions to try to prevent the oil from reaching sensitive resources, were

undertaken to try to reduce harm to people and the environment. However, many of these response actions had collateral impacts on the environment. The oil and other substances released from the well in combination with the extensive response actions together make up the *Deepwater Horizon* incident.

The Trustees are conducting the natural resource damage assessment for the *Deepwater Horizon* incident under the Oil Pollution Act 1990 (OPA; 33 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.*). Pursuant to OPA, Federal and State agencies act as trustees on behalf of the public to assess natural resource injuries and losses and to determine the actions required to compensate the public for those injuries and losses. OPA further instructs the designated trustees to develop and implement a plan for the restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or acquisition of the equivalent of the injured natural resources under their trusteeship, including the loss of use of those resources and the loss of services they provide from the time of injury until the time of restoration to baseline (the resource quality and conditions that would exist if the spill had not occurred) is complete.

The Trustees<sup>1</sup> are as follows:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), on behalf of the U.S. Department of Commerce;
- U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), as represented by the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management;
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA);
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA);
- State of Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Oil Spill Coordinator's Office, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and Department of Natural Resources;
- State of Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality;
- State of Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Geological Survey of Alabama;
- State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; and
- For the State of Texas: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas General Land Office, and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

<sup>1</sup> Although a trustee under OPA by virtue of the proximity of its facilities to the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) is not a member of the Trustee Council and did not participate in development of this Draft PDARP/PEIS.

**Background**

On February 17, 2011, the Trustees initiated a 90-day formal scoping and public comment period for this Draft PDARP/PEIS (76 FR 9327) through a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Begin Restoration Scoping and Prepare a Gulf Spill Restoration Planning PEIS. The Trustees conducted the scoping in accordance with OPA (15 CFR 990.14(d)), NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7), and State authorities. That NOI requested public input to identify and evaluate a range of restoration types that could be used to fully compensate the public for the environmental and recreational use damages caused by the spill, as well as develop procedures to select and implement restoration projects that will compensate the public for the natural resource damages caused by the spill. As part of the scoping process, the Trustees hosted public meetings across all the Gulf States during Spring 2011.

**Overview of the Draft PDARP/PEIS**

The Draft PDARP/PEIS is being released in accordance with the OPA, the Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) regulations found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 15 CFR part 990, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*).

In the Draft PDARP/PEIS, the *Deepwater Horizon* Trustees present to the public their findings on the extensive injuries to multiple habitats, biological species, ecological functions, and geographic regions across the northern Gulf of Mexico that occurred as a result of the *Deepwater Horizon* incident, as well as their programmatic plan for restoring those resources and the services they provide. The Draft PDARP/PEIS proposes four programmatic alternatives evaluated in accordance with OPA and NEPA. The *Deepwater Horizon* Trustees decided to fulfill NEPA requirements by conducting a PEIS that evaluates broad (as opposed to project-specific) restoration alternatives. As the Draft PDARP/PEIS shows, the injuries caused by the *Deepwater Horizon* incident cannot be fully described at the level of a single species, a single habitat type, or a single region. Rather, the injuries affected such a wide array of linked resources over such an enormous area that the effects of the *Deepwater Horizon* incident constitute an ecosystem-level injury. Consequently, the Trustees' preferred alternative for a restoration plan employs a comprehensive, integrated ecosystem approach to best address these ecosystem-level injuries. The Trustees'

evaluation determines this alternative is best, among several other alternatives, at compensating the public for the losses to natural resources and services caused by the *Deepwater Horizon* incident.

The four alternatives under the Draft PDARP/PEIS are as follows:

- Alternative A (Preferred Alternative): Comprehensive Integrated Ecosystem Restoration Plan based on the programmatic Trustee goals;
- Alternative B: Resource-Specific Restoration Plan based on the programmatic Trustee goals;
- Alternative C: Continued Injury Assessment and Defer Comprehensive Restoration Plan; and
- Alternative D: No Action/Natural Recovery.

The Trustees have jointly examined and assessed the extent of injury and the restoration alternatives. In the Draft PDARP/PEIS, the Trustees present to the public their findings on the extensive injuries to multiple habitats, biological species, ecological functions, and geographic regions across the northern Gulf of Mexico that occurred as a result of the *Deepwater Horizon* incident, as well as the programmatic plan for restoring those resources. In particular, they considered restoration types and approaches to restore, replace, rehabilitate, or acquire the equivalent of the injured natural resources and

services. The Trustees believe that the preferred alternative in this Draft PDARP/PEIS is most appropriate for addressing the injuries to natural resources.

The Trustees' proposed decision is to select a comprehensive restoration plan to guide and direct subsequent restoration planning and implementation during the coming decades. The Draft PDARP/PEIS is programmatic; it describes the framework by which subsequent project specific restoration plans will be identified and developed, and sets forth the types of projects the Trustees will consider in each of several described restoration areas. The subsequent restoration plans would identify, evaluate, and select specific restoration projects for implementation that are consistent with the restoration framework laid out by the PDARP/PEIS. The Trustees are considering this programmatic restoration planning decision in light of the proposed settlement among BP, the United States and the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Texas to resolve BP's liability for natural resource damages associated with the *Deepwater Horizon* incident. Under this proposed settlement, BP would pay a total of \$8.1 billion for restoration to address natural resource injuries (this includes \$1

billion already committed for early restoration), plus up to an additional \$700 million to respond to natural resource damages unknown at the time of the settlement and/or to provide for adaptive management. As noted below, the proposed Consent Decree for the proposed settlement is the subject of a separate public notice and comment process.

**Next Steps**

The public is encouraged to review and comment on the Draft PDARP/PEIS. As described above, public meetings are scheduled to facilitate the public review and comment process. After the close of the public comment period, the Trustees will consider and address the comments received before issuing a Final PDARP/PEIS. A summary of comments received and the Trustees' responses will be included in the final document. After issuing the Final PDARP/PEIS, the Trustees will prepare a Record of Decision that formally selects an alternative.

The public is also encouraged to review and comment on the proposed Consent Decree through a separate process managed by the Department of Justice. A link for the proposed Consent Decree and directions for comment to the Department of Justice is available at [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov).

**PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE**

Date	Time (local times)	Location
Mon., Oct. 19, 2015	5 p.m. Open House 6 p.m. Public Meeting	Courtyard by Marriott—Houma, Versailles Parlour, 142 Liberty Boulevard, Houma, LA 70360.
Tues., Oct. 20, 2015	5 p.m. Open House 6 p.m. Public Meeting	University of Southern Mississippi, Long Beach FEC Auditorium, 730 East Beach Boulevard, Long Beach, MS 39560.
Thurs., Oct. 22, 2015	5 p.m. Open House 6 p.m. Public Meeting	Hilton Garden Inn, New Orleans Convention Center, Garden Ballroom, 10001 South Peters Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.
Mon., Oct. 26, 2015	6 p.m. Open House 7 p.m. Public Meeting	The Battle House, Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa, Moonlight Ballroom A, 26 North Royal Street, Mobile, AL 36602.
Tues., Oct. 27, 2015	6 p.m. Open House 7 p.m. Public Meeting	Pensacola Bay Center, 201 E Gregory Street, Pensacola, FL 32502.
Thurs., Oct. 29, 2015	6 p.m. Open House 7 p.m. Public Meeting	Hilton St. Petersburg, Bayfront, Salon AB, 333 1st Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.
Tues., Nov. 10, 2015	6 p.m. Open House 7 p.m. Public Meeting	Hilton Galveston Island Resort, Crystal Ballroom, 5400 Seawall Boulevard, Galveston, TX 77551.
Wed., Nov. 18, 2015	6 p.m. Open House 7 p.m. Public Meeting	DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Washington DC, Terrace Ballroom, 1515 Rhode Island, Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005.

**Invitation to Comment**

The Trustees seek public review and comment on the Draft PDARP/PEIS. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your

personal identifying information, may be publicly available at any time.

**Administrative Record**

The documents included in the Administrative Record can be viewed electronically at the following location: <http://www.doi.gov/deepwaterhorizon/>

*adminrecord*. The Trustees opened a publicly available Administrative Record for the NRDA for the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill, including restoration planning activities, concurrently with publication of the 2011 NOI (pursuant to 15 CFR 990.45).

**Authority:** The authority of this action is the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.*) and the implementing NRDA regulations found at 15 CFR part 990.

Dated: September 28, 2015.

**Samuel D. Rauch III,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2015-24913 Filed 10-2-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XE226**

#### 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) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel will hold a public meeting.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Thursday, October 22, 2015, from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held via webinar with a telephone-only connection option. Details on webinar registration and telephone-only connection details will be available at: <http://www.mafmc.org>.

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

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526-5255.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Council's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel (AP) will meet jointly with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC's) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass AP. The purpose of this meeting is to solicit advisor input on specific commercial management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. These include, but are not limited to, the commercial minimum fish size, trawl mesh size requirements, seasonal possession limits triggering the minimum mesh size requirements (*i.e.*, incidental possession

limits), other possession limits, other gear requirements, and exemption programs for all three species. The Council and the ASMFC will consider the input from the AP in December when reviewing recommendations on commercial measures from the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Monitoring and Technical Committees.

#### 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 the meeting date.

Dated: September 30, 2015.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

[FR Doc. 2015-25239 Filed 10-2-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XC667**

#### Application for a Permit Modification: Endangered Species; File No. 17304

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

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

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Kristen Hart, Ph.D., U.S. Geological Survey, 3205 College Ave., Davie, FL 33314, has requested a modification to scientific research Permit No. 17304-01.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before November 4, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** The modification request and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the Features box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 17304 Mod 2 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at

the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Amy Hapeman or Carrie Hubbard, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject modification to Permit No. 17304, issued on September 20, 2013 (78 FR 59657) 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. 17304-01 authorizes researchers to capture 100 green, 100 loggerhead, 90 Kemp's ridley, and 20 hawksbill sea turtles annually by hand or using nets in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Alternative to direct capture, researchers may obtain sea turtles for study that are legally captured during relocation trawling for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Sea turtles may have the following types of procedures performed before release: Morphometrics, marking, photograph/video, tagging, biological sampling, and/or attachment of transmitters and subsequent tracking. The permit is valid through September 30, 2018. Dr. Hart is seeking to modify the permit to (1) authorize trawling as a capture method, and (2) increase the annual number of loggerhead and Kemp's ridley sea turtles taken by 200 and 210 turtles, respectively. This work would be used to (1) provide density and abundance data to managers for these species in Louisiana waters and associated federal waters, and (2) establish the feasibility of sea turtle monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico by trawl.

Dated: September 29, 2015.

**Julia Harrison,**

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

[FR Doc. 2015-25209 Filed 10-2-15; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**