

on December 7, 2010. NMFS considered the request and new information available since its prior authorization, including the Bonneville Task Force's recommendations. NMFS again authorized lethal take, under similar conditions to the 2008 authorization (albeit with modifications), issuing a new LOA on May 13, 2011. HSUS again filed suit this time in federal court for the District of Columbia, alleging, among other things, that NMFS had not followed procedural requirements under MMPA section 120 prior to issuing the new authorization (including public notice and comment on the States' application). In coordination with the States, NMFS revoked the May 13 authorization on July 22, 2011, and HSUS voluntarily withdrew their lawsuit.

On August 18, 2011, the States submitted a new request for lethal removal of California sea lions at Bonneville Dam under essentially the same conditions as the prior authorizations. NMFS published notice of the States' application in the **Federal Register** on September 12, 2011, and requested comment on the application and other relevant information concerning the pinniped-salmonid conflict at Bonneville Dam (76 FR 56167; September 12, 2011). NMFS reconvened the Bonneville Task Force in October 2011 to evaluate the States' application and public comments and to recommend whether NMFS should approve or deny the proposed intentional lethal taking program. The Bonneville Task Force's final report and recommendation was provided to NMFS on November 14, 2011. On March 15, 2012, NMFS issued the current LOA to the States. In renewed litigation by HSUS, this LOA was upheld in district court on February 15, 2013, and later affirmed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. *Humane Society of the US v. Bryson*, 924 F.Supp.2d 1228 (D. Or., 2013); *HSUS v. Pritzker*, No. 13-35195 (9th Cir., 9/27/13).

The NMFS West Coast Regional Administrator has considered the States' application and determined that it provides sufficient evidence to warrant reconvening the Bonneville Task Force. The application, based on NMFS' 2012 LOA and its implementation, describes the continuing problem of interactions between pinnipeds and listed salmonids at and below Bonneville Dam, and describes the expected benefits from the removal of pinnipeds. The application also documents past nonlethal efforts to prevent problem pinniped-salmonid interactions.

The MMPA requires NMFS to consider the recommendations of the

Task Force when determining whether to issue a section 120 LOA. In order to obtain the Bonneville Task Force's views regarding this extension of the existing LOA, NMFS will consult with Bonneville Task Force members after the 30-day public comment period closes.

Request for Comments and Other Information

NMFS solicits public comments on the States' application and any additional information that should be considered by the Bonneville Task Force in making its recommendation, or by NMFS in making its determination whether to approve or deny the application.

Dated: March 22, 2016.

Nicole R. LeBoeuf,

Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-06928 Filed 3-25-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Ecosystem Based Fishery Management (EBFM) Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Thursday, April 14, 2016 at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hotel 1620, 180 Water Street, Plymouth, MA 02360; telephone: (508) 747-4900; fax: (508) 747-8937.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The committee will receive and discuss a progress report from the Plan Development Team on a prototype or example Fishery Ecosystem Plan (eFEP). A final report is scheduled to be presented at the June 2016 Council meeting. They will also discuss establishing an EBFM Advisory Panel and developing a Fishery Ecosystem Plan scoping process. Other business will be discussed if time permits.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: March 23, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2016-06894 Filed 3-25-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE525

Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish

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

ACTION: Notice; availability of hatchery plan and request for comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has submitted a Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) pursuant to the protective regulations promulgated for Pacific salmon and steelhead under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The HGMP specifies the operation of a hatchery program rearing steelhead in the Mad River subbasin within the State of California. This document serves to notify the public of the availability of the HGMP and associated draft environmental assessment (EA) for comment prior to a decision by NMFS whether to approve the proposed hatchery program.

DATES: Comments must be received at the appropriate address or fax number (see **ADDRESSES**) no later than 5 p.m. Pacific time on April 27, 2016.