

hunting areas; (ii) Directly displacing subsistence users; or (iii) Placing physical barriers between the marine mammals and the subsistence hunters; and (2) That cannot be sufficiently mitigated by other measures to increase the availability of marine mammals to allow subsistence needs to be met.

Harbor seals and Steller sea lions are subsistence harvested in Alaska. During 2012, the estimated subsistence take of harbor seals in southeast Alaska was 595 seals with 49 of these taken near Sitka (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013). This is the lowest number of seals taken since 1992 (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013) and is attributed to the decline in subsistence hunting pressure over the years as well as a decrease in efficiency per hunter (Wolf *et al.*, 2013).

The peak hunting season in southeast Alaska occurs during the month of November and again over the March to April time frame (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013). This corresponds to times when seals are aggregated in shoal areas as they prey on forage species such as herring, making them easier to find and hunt.

The Project is in an area where subsistence hunting for harbor seals or sea lions could occur (Wolfe *et al.*, 2013), but the location is not preferred for hunting. There is little to no hunting documented in the vicinity and there are no harvest quotas for non-listed marine mammals. For these reasons and the fact that Project activities would occur outside of the primary subsistence hunting seasons, there would be no impact on subsistence activities or on the availability of marine mammals for subsistence use.

To satisfy requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, R&M Consultants, Inc. reached out to the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida, and Sealaska regarding cultural resources in 2016. No issues or concerns with the Project were raised during this effort.

Based on the description of the specified activity, the measures described to minimize adverse effects on the availability of marine mammals for subsistence purposes, and the mitigation and monitoring measures, NMFS has determined that there will not be an unmitigable adverse impact on subsistence uses from the FAA's activities.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA: 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, in this case with the Alaska Regional Office, whenever we propose to authorize take for endangered or threatened species.

NMFS is authorizing take of two DPSs (*i.e.*, western DPS of Steller sea lions and Mexico DPS of humpback whales), which are listed under the ESA. The Permit and Conservation Division requested initiation of Section 7 consultation with the Alaska Region for the issuance of this IHA. The NMFS Alaska Regional Office Protected Resources Division issued a Biological Opinion in October, 2017 under section 7 of the ESA, on the issuance of an IHA to the FAA under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA by the NMFS Permits and Conservation Division. The Biological Opinion concluded that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of western DPS Steller sea lions or Mexico DPS of humpback whales, and is not likely to destroy or adversely modify western DPS Steller sea lion critical habitat.

Authorization

NMFS has issued an IHA to the FAA for the potential harassment of small numbers of five marine mammal species incidental to the Biorka Island dock replacement project in Sitka, AK, provided the previously mentioned mitigation, monitoring and reporting requirements are incorporated.

Dated: October 25, 2017.

Donna S. Wieting,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-23563 Filed 10-30-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF803

Western Pacific 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 Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold its 172nd meeting by teleconference and webinar to discuss and make recommendations on fishery

management issues in the Western Pacific Region.

DATES: The Council will meet on November 15, 2017, between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. (Hawaii Standard Time (HST)); 1 and 4 p.m. (American Samoa Standard Time (ASST)); and November 16, 2017, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (Marianas Standard Time (MST)). All times listed are local island times. For specific time and agenda, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held by teleconference and webinar. The teleconference numbers are: U.S. toll-free: 1 (888) 482-3560, International Access: +1 (647) 723-3959, and Access Code: 5228220. The webinar can be accessed at: <https://wprfmc.webex.com/join/info.wpcouncilnoaa.gov>.

The following venues will also be host sites for the teleconference: Council Conference Room, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, Hawaii; Land Grant Conference Room, American Samoa Community College, Agriculture, Community and Natural Resources, Mapusaga Road, Malaieimi Village, American Samoa; Guam Hilton Resort and SPA, 202 Hilton Road, Tumon Bay, Guam; Department of Land and Natural Resources Conference Room, Santa Remedio Drive, Lower Base, Saipan, MP.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; telephone: (808) 522-8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public comment opportunity will be provided in the agenda. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meeting will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business. Written comments must be received by November 10, 2017. Background documents will be available from, and written comments should be sent to, Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; Western Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813; phone: (808) 522-8220 or fax: (808) 522-8226.

Schedule and Agenda for the 172nd Council Meeting

2 p.m.–5 p.m., Wednesday, November 15 (HST); 1 p.m.–4 p.m., Wednesday, November 15, 2016 (ASST); 10 a.m.–1 p.m., Thursday, November 16, 2016 (MST)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review and Approval of the 172nd Agenda
3. Modifying the Swordfish Trip Limit in the American Samoa Longline Fishery (Final Action)

4. Public Hearing
5. Other Business
6. Council Discussion and Recommendations

Non-Emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before the Council for discussion and formal Council action during its 172nd meeting. However, Council action on regulatory issues will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any regulatory issue arising after publication of this document that requires emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

Agenda items noted as "Final Action Items" refer to actions that result in Council transmittal of a proposed fishery management plan, proposed plan amendment, or proposed regulations to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, under Sections 304 or 305 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Special Accommodations

The host sites are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808) 522-8220 (voice) or (808) 522-8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 25, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-23600 Filed 10-30-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF802

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 (MAFMC's) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel will hold a public meeting via webinar, jointly with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries

Commission's (ASMFC's) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, November 20, 2017, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for agenda details.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will take place over webinar with a telephone-only connection option. Details on how to connect to the webinar by computer and by telephone 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; Web site: 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 Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel, together with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Advisory Panel, will meet on Monday, November 20, 2017. The purpose of this meeting is to review and provide feedback on proposed recreational management measures (*e.g.*, bag limits, size limits, and seasons) and strategies for the recreational summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries in 2018.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council's Web site (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

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: October 25, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-23591 Filed 10-30-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF796

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 Herring 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 Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Blvd., Taunton, MA 02780; telephone: (508) 823-0430.

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 review analyses prepared for Herring Amendment 8 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) specific to the range of alternatives developed to address potential localized depletion and user conflicts in the herring fishery. The committee may identify preferred alternatives for the Council to consider. The committee is not scheduled to discuss the other measures under consideration in Amendment 8, Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) control rule alternatives. The Council reviewed the ABC control rule alternatives at the September 2017 meeting and declined to select a preferred alternative, but approved that portion of Amendment 8 to proceed for submission and public comment. They will discuss recommendations for the Council to consider for Herring Research Set-Aside research priorities for fishing years 2019-21 and discuss any challenges the program has had in recent years. They will discuss other business, as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has