Dated: April 22, 2015.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2015–09713 Filed 4–24–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–12–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XZ51

Marine Mammals; File No. 15543

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit amendment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a major amendment to Permit No. 15543–03 has been issued to Randall S. Wells, Ph.D. (Principal Investigator), Sarasota Dolphin Research Program, c/o Mote Marine Laboratory, 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota, FL 34236.

ADDRESSES: The permit amendment and related documents are available for review 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Courtney Smith or Brendan Hurley, (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On January 9, 2015, notice was published in the **Federal Register** (80 FR 1398) that a request for an amendment Permit No. 15543–03 to conduct research on bottlenose (*Tursiops truncatus*) and Atlantic spotted (*Stenella frontalis*) dolphins for scientific research had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit amendment has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The amended permit expands the study area to include the bay, sound, estuary and associated coastal waters of Mobile Bay, AL, and Terrebonne Bay, LA, and added annual takes in each location by remote biopsy sampling of bottlenose dolphins. Annual biopsy takes were also added to the currently authorized allotment of Florida biopsy activities to include a focused study in Pensacola Bay, FL. The amendment also authorizes the capture, satellite-tagging, and release of Atlantic spotted dolphins for health assessments by hoop-netting bow-riding individuals during surveys on the West Florida Shelf. Up to two takes by unintentional mortality are authorized annually. Finally, the amended permit authorizes a minor procedural modification to allow the administration of doubly-labeled water (deuterium oxide and oxygen-18) to bottlenose dolphins that are temporarily captured during currently permitted health assessments.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Dated: April 10, 2015.

Julia Harrison,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–09723 Filed 4–24–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XD913

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 Scallop Advisory Panel 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, May 14, 2015, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The meeting will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott, 55 Jefferson Park Road, Warwick, RI, 02888; telephone: (401) 467–6900; fax: (401) 467–2666.

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: The Advisory Panel (AP) will meet to discuss several issues. First, the AP will review progress and make recommendations related to Amendment 19 alternatives. Amendment 19 is considering measures to address timing issues that inhibit implementation of fishery specifications at the start of the scallop fishing year (March 1). The Advisory Panel will also discuss an issue that has been raised at previous meetings related to scallop fishing space in near shore areas and issues of differential catch rates for general category and limited access vessels. The Council may have a workshop later in the year to discuss these issues further. The AP will also review a draft action plan for Framework 27 that will consider fishery specifications for 2016 and default measures for 2017. Finally, the Advisory Panel will discuss final research priority recommendations for the 2016 Scallop Research Set-Aside announcement. All recommendations will be forwarded to the Scallop Committee meeting that is scheduled several weeks later.

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: April 22, 2015.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–09669 Filed 4–24–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XD883

Magnuson-Stevens 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 two Exempted Fishing Permit applications contain all of the required information and warrant further consideration. These Exempted Fishing Permits would allow commercial fishing vessels to fish outside of the limited access scallop regulations in support of research conducted by the Coonamessett Farm Foundation. The Exempted Fishing Permits would exempt participating vessels from the crew size restriction; and possession limits and minimum size requirements for sampling purposes only. These exemptions are in support of research conducted on trips to test gear modifications for bycatch reduction in the scallop dredge fishery.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 12, 2015.

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

- *Email: nmfs.gar.efp@noaa.gov.* Include in the subject line ''CFF Research Sampling EFP.''
- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope ''Comments on CFF Research Sampling EFP.''
- *Fax:* (978) 281–9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shannah Jaburek, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978–282–8456.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Five proposals submitted by the Coonamesset Farm Foundation (CFF) have been favorably reviewed and are pending final approval by NOAA's Grants Management Division under the 2015 Atlantic Sea Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program, including one in support of a project titled, ''Determining the Impacts of Dredge Bag Modifications on Flatfish Bycatch in the LAGC Scallop Fishery.'' All grants would include RSA Compensation fishing trips to harvest the set-aside award in order to procure the necessary funds for completing the research.

CFF submitted two complete applications for EFPs on March 24, 2015, and March 25, 2015, to enable data collection activities during research and compensation fishing trips associated with the five Scallop RSA projects, which include allowing seven commercial fishing vessels to exceed the crew size regulations at 50 CFR 648.51(c) in order to place a researcher on the vessel, and temporarily exempt the participating vessels from possession limits and minimum size requirements specified in 50 CFR part 648, subsections B and D through O, for sampling purposes only. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited, including landing fish in excess of a possession limit or below the minimum size.

Experimental fishing activity conducted on both the research project and the compensation fishing trips would test gear modifications that adhere to current scallop gear regulations in an attempt to reduce finfish bycatch in the dredge fishery. Gear modifications that would be tested include the use of alternative materials for shoes, the use of lights or cameras mounted to the dredge frame, and replacing the skirt with two rows of 12-inch (30.48-cm) square mesh. It would also include modifying the twine top by placing rows of 12-inch (30.48-cm) square mesh forward of, but not overlapping the remainder rows of 10-inch (25.40-cm) diamond mesh. All trips would take place in scallop fishing areas open to the entire Atlantic sea scallop fishery.

Exemption from crew size limits is needed because a research technician would accompany vessels on some of the compensation fishing trips to collect catch data associated with different dredge modifications. The crew size exemption would be for approximately 30 DAS per EFP. The additional crew would only be in support of data collection activities, and would not process catch to be landed for sale. Exemption from possession limit and minimum sizes would support catch sampling activities, and ensure the vessel is not in conflict with possession regulations while collecting catch data. All catch above a possession limit or below a minimum size would be discarded as soon as practicable following data collection.

For all EFP trips, scallop catch would be evaluated by the number of baskets caught and a total catch weight would be obtained by the researcher. Total weight of bycatch species and individual measurements to the nearest centimeter would also be obtained by the researcher. If the volume of the catch is large, subsampling protocols would be necessary. All bycatch would be returned to the sea as soon as practicable following data collection. All research trips would otherwise be conducted in a manner consistent with normal commercial fishing conditions and catch would be retained for sale.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. 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. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: April 22, 2015.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. 2015–09649 Filed 4–24–15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XD914

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

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting.

DATES: The SSC meeting will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, May 13–14, 2015. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. on May 13 and conclude by 2 p.m. on May 14.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at Lord Baltimore Hotel, 20 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201; telephone: (410) 539–8400.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674–2331.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 526–5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Agenda items to be discussed at the SSC meeting include: Develop multi-year ABC specification for Atlantic mackerel;