

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Agenda**

A Scientific and Statistical Committee Subpanel will review recent research on the development of standardized monkfish catch per unit effort (CPUE) indices. The research was conducted by the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth School for Marine Science & Technology and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center Cooperative Research Branch. In this review, the subpanel will: (1) review the methods presented for developing monkfish CPUE indices, (2) consider how this research can inform future monkfish stock assessments and management measures, and (3) provide any recommendations for improving the research. This technical review follows the Council's Research Review Policy, consistent with National Standard 2 Guidelines. Other business will be discussed as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained on the agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council 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 been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency. The public also should be aware that the meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

**Special Accommodations**

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

*Authority:* 6 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: February 18, 2026.

**Becky J. Curtis,**

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

[FR Doc. 2026-03404 Filed 2-19-26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XF515]

**North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of web conference.

**SUMMARY:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) Ecosystem Committee will meet March 6, 2026.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Friday, March 6, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Alaska Time.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held via web conference. Join online through the link at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3123>.

*Council address:* North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1007 W 3rd Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501-2252; telephone: (907) 271-2809.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Katie Latanich, Council staff; phone; (907) 271-2809 and email: [klatanich@npfmc.org](mailto:klatanich@npfmc.org). For technical support, please contact administrative Council staff, email: [support@npfmc.org](mailto:support@npfmc.org).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Agenda**

*Friday March 6, 2026*

The Ecosystem Committee agenda will include: (a) Introductions and Terms of Reference; (b) Discuss Council's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)/ climate resilience activities, including discussion and prioritization of potential new activities; (c) Review Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) 5-Year review plan and discuss anticipated information products and potential committee role in review; and receive an overview of the Alaska Climate and Sponge Initiative; (d) Review the Groundfish Management Policy triennial review approach adopted by the Council in December 2025 and prepare for review of future draft products. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3123> prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

**Connection Information**

You can attend the meeting online using a computer, tablet, or smartphone, or by phone only. Connection information will be posted online at:

<https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3123>.

**Public Comment**

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted electronically to <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3123>.

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

Dated: February 18, 2026.

**Becky J. Curtis,**

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

[FR Doc. 2026-03410 Filed 2-19-26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XF474]

**Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to a Marine Geophysical Survey of the East Pacific Rise in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; issuance of incidental harassment authorization.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued an incidental harassment authorization (IHA) to the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (L-DEO) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to a marine geophysical survey of the East Pacific Rise in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean (ETP).

**DATES:** This authorization is effective for 1 year from the date of notification by the IHA-holder, not to exceed 1 year from the date of issuance (February 11, 2026).

**ADDRESSES:** Electronic copies of the application and supporting documents, as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-research-and-other-activities#active-authorizations>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jenna Harlacher, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**MMPA Background and Determinations**

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. Among the exceptions is section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) which directs the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking by harassment of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and the public has an opportunity to comment on the proposed IHA.

Specifically, NMFS will issue an IHA if it finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for taking for subsistence uses (where relevant). Further, NMFS must prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other “means of effecting the least [practicable] adverse impact” on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to here as “mitigation”). NMFS must also prescribe requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such takings. The definitions of key terms, such as “take,” “harassment,” and “negligible impact,” can be found in the MMPA and the NMFS’ implementing regulations (see 16 U.S.C. 1362; 50 CFR 216.103).

On December 18, 2025, a notice of NMFS’ proposal to issue an IHA to L-DEO for take of marine mammals incidental to a marine geophysical survey of the East Pacific Rise in the ETP was published in the **Federal Register** (90 FR 59330, December 18, 2025). In that notice, NMFS indicated the estimated numbers, type, and methods of incidental take proposed for each species or stock, as well as the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures that would be required should the IHA be issued. The **Federal Register** notice also included analysis to support NMFS’ preliminary conclusions and determinations that the IHA, if issued, would satisfy the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for issuance of the IHA. The **Federal**

**Register** notice included web links to a draft IHA for review, as well as other supporting documents.

No comments were received during the public comment period. There are no changes to the specified activity, the species taken, the proposed numbers, type, or methods of take, or the mitigation, monitoring, or reporting measures in the proposed IHA notice. No new information that would change any of the preliminary analyses, conclusions, or determinations in the proposed IHA notice has become available since that notice was published, and therefore, the preliminary analyses, conclusions, and determinations included in the proposed IHA are considered final.

**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 review our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) 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 issuance of the IHA qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

**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 ensures 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.

The NMFS Office of Protected Resources (OPR) ESA Interagency Cooperation Division has issued a Biological Opinion under section 7 of the ESA, on the issuance of an IHA to L-DEO under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA by the NMFS OPR Permits and Conservation Division. The Biological Opinion concluded that the action is not

likely to jeopardize the continued existence of ESA-listed humpback whales (Central America Distinct Population Segment), fin whales, sei whales, sperm whales and blue whales.

**Authorization**

Accordingly, consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA, NMFS has issued an IHA to L-DEO for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to a marine geophysical survey of the East Pacific Rise in the ETP.

Dated: February 17, 2026.

**Shannon Bettridge,**

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

[FR Doc. 2026-03372 Filed 2-19-26; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648-XF534]

**Fisheries of the Gulf of America and South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review; Public Meeting**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Southeast Data Assessment and Review 94 Assessment Webinar III for Florida Hogfish.

**SUMMARY:** The Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 94 assessment process of Florida hogfish will consist of a Data Workshop, and a series of assessment webinars, and a Review Workshop. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**DATES:** The SEDAR 94 Assessment webinar III will be held March 12, 2026, from 10 a.m.–1 p.m. Eastern Time.

**ADDRESSES:**

*Meeting address:* The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested in participating should contact Julie A. Neer at SEDAR (See **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) to request an invitation providing webinar access information. Please request webinar invitations at least 24 hours in advance of each webinar.

*SEDAR address:* 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; (843) 571-4366. Email: [Julie.neer@safmnc.net](mailto:Julie.neer@safmnc.net).