

**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]

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**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).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Gulf, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions have implemented the SEDAR process. SEDAR is a participatory process for developing, evaluating and reviewing information used for fisheries management advice. This multi-step process for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region may include (1) a Data stage, and (2) an Assessment stage, and (3) a Review stage. Each stage produces a report summarizing decisions made during that stage. A final stock assessment report is produced at the end of a SEDAR process documenting data sets used, model configurations and the opinions from the independent peer review. Participants for SEDAR projects are appointed by the Gulf, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants may include data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations; International experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and Federal agencies.

The items of discussion during the SEDAR 94 Assessment webinar III are as follows: Participants will review the assessment modelling work to date.

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 this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to each workshop.

**Note:** The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

*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. 2026-03409 Filed 2-19-26; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF536]

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

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, from 12:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for agenda details.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place over webinar using the Webex platform with a telephone-only connection option. Details on how to connect to the webinar by computer and by telephone will be available at: <https://www.mafmc.org/ssc>.

*Council address:* Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331; website: <https://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:** During this meeting, the SSC will review and provide feedback on the results of a recently completed study on black sea bass genetics along the Atlantic coast. The SSC will receive an overview of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center Cooperative Research Program activities. The SSC will review the Council task to consider potential adjustments to the *Illex* squid quota based on the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) squid quota and provide initial feedback on the potential biological linkages between the two quotas. In addition, the SSC will discuss the activities and provide any feedback and direction on the tasks for the Overfishing Limit (OFL)

Coefficient of Variation (CV) sub-group. The SSC may take up any other business as necessary.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be made available on the Council's website (<https://www.mafmc.org>) prior to the meeting.

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to Shelley Spedden, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

*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. 2026-03407 Filed 2-19-26; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Office of the Secretary

[Docket ID: DOD-2026-OS-0331]

#### Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSDP&R), Department of Defense (DoD).

**ACTION:** 60-Day information collection notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the *Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995*, the OUSDP&R announces a proposed public information collection and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. Comments are invited on: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

**DATES:** Consideration will be given to all comments received by April 21, 2026.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments, identified by docket number and title, by any of the following methods:

*Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.