

past compliance with HMS regulations at 50 CFR part 635; availability to participate in the shark research fishery; ability to fish in the regions and season requested; ability to attend necessary meetings regarding the objectives and research protocols of the shark research fishery; and ability to carry out the research objectives of the Agency. An applicant who has been charged criminally or civilly (e.g., issued a Notice of Violation and Assessment (NOVA) or Notice of Permit Sanction) for any HMS-related violation will not be considered for participation in the shark research fishery. In addition, applicants who were selected to carry an observer in the previous 2 years for any HMS fishery, but failed to contact NMFS to arrange the placement of an observer as required per § 635.7, will not be considered for participation in the 2013 shark research fishery.

Applicants who were selected to carry an observer in the previous 2 years for any HMS fishery and failed to comply with all the observer regulations per § 635.7 will also not be considered. Exceptions will be made for vessels that were selected for HMS observer coverage but did not fish in the quarter when selected and thus did not require an observer. Applicants who do not possess a valid USCG safety inspection decal when the application is submitted will not be considered. Applicants who have been non-compliant with any of the HMS observer program regulations in the previous 2 years, as described above, may be eligible for future participation in shark research fishery activities by demonstrating 2 subsequent years of compliance with observer regulations at § 635.7.

Selection Process

The HMS Management Division will review all submitted applications and develop a list of qualified applicants from those applications that are deemed complete. A qualified applicant is an applicant that has submitted a complete application by the deadline (see **DATES**) and has met the selection criteria listed above. Qualified applicants are eligible to be selected to participate in the shark research fishery for 2013. The HMS Management Division will provide the list of qualified applicants without identifying information to the SEFSC. The SEFSC will then evaluate the list of qualified applicants and, based on the temporal and spatial needs of the research objectives, the availability of observers, the availability of qualified applicants, and the available quota for a given year, will randomly select approximately 10 qualified applicants to conduct the prescribed research. Where

there are multiple qualified applicants that meet the criteria, permittees will be randomly selected through a lottery system. If a public meeting is deemed necessary, NMFS will announce details of a public selection meeting in a subsequent **Federal Register** notice.

Once the selection process is complete, we will notify the selected applicants and issue the shark research fishery permits. The shark research fishery permits will be valid only in calendar year 2013. If needed, we will communicate with the shark research fishery permit holders to arrange a captain's meeting to discuss the research objectives and protocols. The shark research fishery permit holders must contact the NMFS observer coordinator to arrange the placement of a NMFS-approved observer for each shark research trip.

A shark research fishery permit will only be valid for the vessel and owner(s) and terms and conditions listed on the permit, and, thus, cannot be transferred to another vessel or owner(s). Issuance of a shark research permit does not guarantee that the permit holder will be assigned a NMFS-approved observer on any particular trip. Rather, issuance indicates that a vessel may be issued a NMFS-approved observer for a particular trip, and on such trips, may be allowed to harvest Atlantic sharks, including sandbar sharks, in excess of the retention limits described in § 635.24(a). These retention limits will be based on available quota, number of vessels participating in the 2013 shark research fishery, the research objectives set forth by the shark board, the extent of other restrictions placed on the vessel, and may vary by vessel and/or location. When not operating under the auspices of the shark research fishery, the vessel would still be able to land non-sandbar LCS, SCS, and pelagic sharks subject to existing retention limits on trips without a NMFS-approved observer. The shark research permit may be revoked or modified at any time and does not confer the right to engage in activities beyond those listed on the shark research fishery permit.

NMFS annually invites commercial shark permit holders (directed and incidental) to submit an application to participate in the shark research fishery. Permit applications can be found on the HMS Management Division's Web site at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/index.htm> or by calling (301) 427-8503. Final decisions on the issuance of a shark research fishery permit will depend on the submission of all required information by the deadline (see **DATES**), and NMFS' review of

applicant information as outlined above. The 2013 shark research fishery will start after the opening of the shark fishery and under available quotas as published in a separate **Federal Register** final rule.

Dated: November 7, 2012.

Lindsay Fullenkamp,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC349

North 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 North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory committees will hold public meetings in Anchorage, AK.

DATES: The meetings will be held December 3, 2012 through December 11, 2012. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel, 500 W 3rd Avenue, Anchorage, AK.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Witherell, Council staff; telephone: (907) 271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council will begin its plenary session at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, December 5 continuing through Tuesday, December 11. The Scientific Statistical Committee (SSC) will begin at 8 a.m. on Monday, December 3 and continue through Wednesday, December 5, the Council's Advisory Panel (AP) will begin at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, December 4 and continue through Saturday, December 8. The Enforcement Committee will meet Tuesday, December 4, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Halibut Charter Committee will meet Tuesday, December 4, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. All meetings are open to the public, except executive sessions.

Council Plenary Session: The agenda for the Council's plenary session will include the following issues. The

Council may take appropriate action on any of the issues identified.

Reports:

1. Executive Director's Report

NMFS Management Report (including report on observer deployment and implementation, report on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation, update on response to halibut subsistence proposal)

Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) Report (including report on Chinook salmon conference and update on halibut subsistence)

NOAA Enforcement Report

United States Coast Guard (USCG) Report (including Aleutian Island Risk Assessment)

United State Fish & Wildlife (USFWL) Report

International Pacific Halibut

Commission (IPHC) Report (T)(including a report on the IPHC closed area)(T)

Protected Species Report

2. Groundfish Specifications: Review Gulf of Alaska (GOA) pollock Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP); Adopt final catch specifications for GOA groundfish; Adopt final catch specifications for Bering Sea Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish.

3. Salmon Prohibited Species Catch (PSC): Initial review on BSAI Chum Salmon Bycatch; Initial review on GOA Chinook Bycatch All Trawl Fisheries.

4. Halibut Issues: Recommendations for 2013 Charter Halibut; Discussion paper on Community Quota Entity (CQE) small block restrictions; discussion paper on retention of 4A halibut in sablefish pots.

5. Steller Sea Lion (SSL) Mitigation: Identify Alternatives for SSL Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Analysis.

6. Miscellaneous Groundfish: Progress report on Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS)/Supplemental Information Report (SIR); Discussion paper on Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) use and requirements.

7. Staff Tasking: Review Committees and tasking; Review halibut/sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) issues for tasking/timing; provide direction on Round Island transit analysis scope, purpose and need.

8. Other Business.

The SSC agenda will include the following issues:

1. Groundfish Specifications
2. Update on Salmon Genetics
3. Review BSAI Salmon Bycatch
4. Review GOA Chinook Bycatch all trawl fisheries

The Advisory Panel will address most of the same agenda issues as the Council except B reports. The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/>.

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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's 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 Gail Bendixen at (907) 271-2809 at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: November 7, 2012.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Hydrographic Services Review Panel Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: The Hydrographic Services Review Panel (HSRP) is a Federal Advisory Committee established to advise the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 303 of the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, its amendments, and such other appropriate matters that the Under Secretary refers to the Panel for review and advice.

Date and Time: The public meeting will be held on November 27-29, 2012. November 27th from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; November 28th from 8:30 a.m. to

5:30 p.m.; and November 29th from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Location: Astor Crowne Plaza, 739 Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, 70130, tel: (504) 962-0500. Refer to the HSRP Web site listed below for the most current meeting agenda. Times and agenda topics are subject to change.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathy Watson, HSRP Program Coordinator, National Ocean Service (NOS), Office of Coast Survey, NOAA (N/CS), 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; Telephone: 301-713-2770 ext. 158; Fax: 301-713-4019; Email:

Hydroservices.panel@noaa.gov or visit the NOAA HSRP Web site at <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/ocs/hsrp/hsrp.htm>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The HSRP meeting will be open to the public and public comment periods (on-site) will be scheduled in the meeting agenda. Comment periods are scheduled in the afternoon, will be limited to a total time of five (5) minutes per person, and are recorded as part of the meeting minutes. A final meeting agenda will be posted on the HSRP Web site at: <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/ocs/hsrp/hsrp.htm> before November 27, 2012. Written comments should be submitted to Hydroservices.panel@noaa.gov by November 19, 2012. Written comments received after November 19, 2012, will be distributed, but may not reach Panel members for review until the meeting date. Approximately 30 seats will be available for the public, on a first-come, first-served basis.

Special Accommodations: HSRP public meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Watson, HSRP Program Coordinator, National Ocean Service (NOS), Office of Coast Survey, NOAA (N/CS), 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; Telephone: 301-713-2770 ext. 158, or Email: Kathy.Watson@noaa.gov by November 8, 2012.

Matters to be Considered: Regional and local stakeholders will present to the HSRP on issues relevant to NOAA's navigation services and products. Broad topic areas to be heard about include: (1) Current and future needs of regional ports and navigation users; (2) use of coastal observation systems for coastal protection and restoration programs and surge and inundation models to protect coastal populations; and (3) use of geospatial services and spatial reference systems to support sea level rise and land subsidence observations.