

western states and evaluate and develop scientifically and statistically rigorous field protocols for assessing large (unwadeable) rivers. The study would benefit listed salmonids by providing baseline information about water quality in the study areas and helping managers enforce the Clean Water Act in those river systems where listed fish are present. The OSU proposes to capture fish (using raft-mounted electrofishing equipment), sample them for biological information, and release them. The researchers will seek to avoid adult salmonids, but some may be handled as an unintentional result of the sampling. Moreover, OSU does not intend to kill any fish being captured but some juvenile fish may die as an unintentional result of the research activities.

Permit 1560

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is asking for a 3-year research permit to take adult and juvenile MCR steelhead, LCR Chinook salmon, LCR coho salmon, and CR chum salmon in the White Salmon River, Washington a tributary to the lower Columbia River. The objectives of the research are to: (1) Determine fish assemblage composition and fish use in the lower White Salmon River; (2) assess salmonid growth and survival as indices of productivity; (3) contribute to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service efforts to characterize life history, genetics, and health of Chinook stocks that currently use the lower White Salmon River; and (4) coordinate with ongoing sampling efforts associated with dam removal projects in the Elwha River system (Olympic Peninsula, Washington). The study would benefit listed salmonids by providing information on the effects dam removal may have on important fish species such as Chinook, coho, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, bull trout, and sea-run cutthroat trout. The U.S. Geodetic Survey (USGS) proposes to conduct snorkel surveys instead of capturing fish whenever possible, but they will also capture fish using backpack electrofishing equipment and traps and anesthetize, measure, weigh and inspect them for external diseases. Researchers would clip the fins of some captured fish in order to collect genetic tissues and gauge trapping efficiency. The researchers will seek to avoid adult salmonids, but some may be handled as an unintentional result of the sampling. Moreover, the USGS does not intend to kill any fish being captured but some juvenile fish may die as an unintentional result of the research activities.

Permit 1336 – Modification 1

Permit 1336 currently authorizes the Port Blakely Farms (PBF) to take juvenile UWR Chinook salmon, LCR Chinook salmon, UWR steelhead and LCR steelhead in headwater streams in western Oregon and Washington. They are asking to modify their permit so they may be allowed to take LCR coho salmon; they also wish to extend the permit's expiration date to December 31, 2010. The purpose of the research is to evaluate factors limiting fish distribution and water quality in streams owned by PBF. The research would benefit listed salmonids by producing data to be used in conserving and restoring critical habitat. The PBF proposes to capture (using backpack electrofishing and dipnetting), handle, and release juvenile fish. The PBF does not intend to kill any fish being captured but some may die as an unintentional result of the research activities.

This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA. NMFS will evaluate the application, associated documents, and comments submitted to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the ESA and Federal regulations. The final permit decisions will not be made until after the end of the 30-day comment period. NMFS will publish notice of its final action in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 14, 2006.

Angela Somma,

Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021506C]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Habitat/Marine Protected Area (MPA)/Ecosystem Advisory Panel in March, 2006 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: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2006 at 10 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Radisson Hotel Plymouth Harbor, 180 Water Street, Plymouth, MA 02360; telephone: (508) 747-4900; fax: (508) 746-5386.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Advisory Panel will review the draft Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) designation management alternatives for inclusion in the EFH Omnibus Amendment 2. In addition the panel will be briefed on the EFH Omnibus Amendment 2 Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) proposals; review and continued work on the Advisory Panel gear description document; discussion of a potential gear description workshop and any other topics that may be covered at the panel's discretion.

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 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.

Special Accommodations

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

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

Dated: February 15, 2006.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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