

exemptions from pertinent GRA regulations would be required. There will be an opportunity for public discussion of this proposal at the December 12-14, 2000, meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council in Atlantic City, NJ. An agenda and other details of that meeting will be published in the **Federal Register** in advance of the meeting.

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

Dated: November 15, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[I.D. 110800C]

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries; Technical Gear Workshop

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

ACTION: Notification of public meeting.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces a public workshop to discuss potential gear modifications for the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery aimed at reducing the incidental take and mortality of threatened and endangered sea turtles. The workshop is intended to synthesize available information and discuss research objectives. A report of the workshop will be made available to interested parties.

DATES: The workshop will take place December 12, 2000, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and December 13, 2000, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Notice of attending the meeting should be provided by December 5, 2000.

ADDRESSES: The location for the workshop is: National Marine Fisheries Service, Building 4 - Science Center, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Margo Schulze-Haugen or Tyson Kade at (301) 713-2347. Also, if you are planning to attend the workshop, please contact the above named individuals by December 5, 2000. Attendees will be provided briefing materials prior to the meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A Biological Opinion (BO) issued on June

30, 2000, by NMFS' Office of Protected Resources found that the continued operation of the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of loggerhead and leatherback sea turtles. Since the BO was issued, NMFS has concluded that further analyses of observer data and additional population modeling of loggerhead sea turtles are needed to determine more precisely the impact of the pelagic longline fishery on turtles. NMFS reinitiated consultation to consider these factors, and anticipates issuance of a new BO in March 2001. This workshop will allow fishermen, gear experts, sea turtle experts, and fishery managers to discuss possible measures, including gear and fishing method modifications, to reduce the incidental take and mortality of sea turtles in the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery in the future. Information developed at the workshop will be incorporated into a workshop report that will be considered in the ongoing fishery consultation. The report will also be made available to the public.

Special Accommodations

The public workshop is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Margo Schulze-Haugen or Tyson Kade (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: November 14, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 001030303-0303-01; I.D. 091900E]

RIN 0648-AO41

Fisheries off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Amendment 13

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues this proposed rule to implement portions of Amendment 13 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Amendment 13 is intended to make the FMP consistent with the bycatch provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). Amendment 13 would also increase flexibility in the groundfish annual specifications and management measures process to allow the Council to more easily craft measures that protect overfished and depleted species, and would amend the limited entry permit provisions to remove unused and outdated limited entry permit endorsements. This proposed rule would introduce an increased utilization program for the at-sea whiting fisheries, revise the regulatory provisions for the routine management measures process, and remove regulatory references to limited entry permit endorsements other than the "A" endorsement.

DATES: Comments must be submitted in writing by January 5, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Donna Darm, Acting Administrator, Northwest Region, (Regional Administrator) NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Seattle, WA 98115; or Rebecca Lent, Administrator, Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213. Copies of Amendment 13 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish FMP and the environmental assessment/regulatory impact review (EA/RIR) are available from Donald McIsaac, Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201. Send comments regarding the reporting burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection-of-information requirements in this proposed rule to the NMFS address and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Washington, DC 00503 (Attn: NOAA Desk Officer). Send comments regarding any ambiguity or unnecessary complexity arising from the language used in this rule to Donna Darm or Rebecca Lent.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Robinson at: phone, 206-526-6140; fax, 206-526-6736; and email, bill.robinson@noaa.gov. Svein Fougnier at: phone, 562-980-4000; fax, 562-980-4047; and email, svein.fougnier@noaa.gov.