

license holders and, for vessel captains, to the address provided to NMFS by the captains during the prior information solicitation that ended August 18, 2003. All votes assigned to an eligible voter must be cast for the same decision, i.e., either all to approve or all to disapprove the applicable referendum question. The ballot must be signed by the eligible voter. Ballots must be mailed to Phil Steele, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701. Ballots for the second referendum must be received at that address by 4:30 p.m., eastern time, February 21, 2006; ballots received after that deadline will not be considered in determining the outcome of the initial referendum. Although it will not be required, voters may want to consider submitting their ballots by registered mail.

How Will the Outcome of the Second Referendum Be Determined?

Vote counting will be conducted by NMFS. Approval or disapproval of the referendums will be determined by a majority (i.e., a number greater than half of a total) of the weighted votes cast. NMFS will prepare a fishery bulletin announcing the results of the second referendum that is conducted and will distribute the bulletin to all Gulf reef fish permittees, including dealers, and to other interested parties. The results will also be posted on NMFS' Southeast Regional Office's Web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

What Will Happen After the Second Referendum?

NMFS will present the results of the second referendum at the March 2006 Council meeting. If the second referendum fails, the Council cannot proceed with implementation an IFQ program for the commercial red snapper fishery in the Gulf of Mexico. If the second referendum is approved, the Council would be authorized, if it so decides, to submit the finalized plan amendment and regulations to the Secretary for review and approval or disapproval. The proposed IFQ program was developed through the usual Council and rulemaking processes that involved extensive opportunities for industry and public review and input at various Council meetings, public hearings, and during public comment periods on the plan amendment and regulations. The plan amendment and regulations could only be submitted to the Secretary for review and approval or disapproval if, in a second referendum, approval of the submission was passed by a majority (i.e., a number greater than

half of a total) of the votes cast by the eligible voters as described above.

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

Dated: December 30, 2005.

Margo Schulze-Haugen,

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

[FR Doc. 06-109 Filed 1-3-06; 2:49 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 123005B]

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 Scallop Committee in January, 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 Monday, January 23, 2006, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, One Thurber Street, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 734-9600; fax: (401) 734-9700.

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 Committee will meet to begin development of a draft Amendment 11 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan. The primary purpose of this amendment is to improve the effectiveness of management in the general category fishery. In addition, it will address the allocation of scallops between the limited access and general category permit holders as well as consider options to change the scallop fishing year. The committee will review and develop issues to present for public comment at scoping meetings scheduled for spring 2006. Draft management alternatives will be developed at future meetings based on scoping comments

and specific policy direction from the Council. The committee will also have a closed door session to discuss the formation of an ad-hoc industry advisory panel for general category management.

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.

Dated: December 30, 2005.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. E5-8310 Filed 1-5-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 123005C]

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 joint public meeting of its Scientific and Statistical and Social Sciences Advisory Committees in January, 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 Friday, January 27, 2006, at 9 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 225 McClellan Highway, E. Boston, MA 02128; telephone: (617) 569-5250; fax: (617) 561-0971.