

- Scope of compliance “envelopes” prescribed by first-stage manufacturers and ability of intermediate- and final-stage manufacturers to stay within those envelopes.

Commenters neither objected to these issues nor suggested that additional issues be addressed. Accordingly, they will be the issues considered by the Committee.

V. Procedures and Schedule

Staff support for the Committee will be provided by NHTSA and the facilitator, and meetings will take place in Washington, DC, unless agreed otherwise by the Committee.

Consistent with FACA requirements, the facilitator will prepare summaries of each Committee meeting. These summaries and all documents submitted to the Committee will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

As stated in the notice of intent, the Committee’s objective is to prepare a report containing an outline of its recommendations for a notice of proposed rulemaking with suggestions for specific preamble and regulatory language based on the Committee’s recommendations, as well as information relevant to a regulatory evaluation and an evaluation of the impacts of the proposal on small businesses.

NHTSA intends to accept the Committee recommendations, keeping in mind its statutory authority and other legal requirements. In the event that the agency rejects any of the recommendations, the preamble to a NPRM addressing the issues that were the subject of the negotiations will explain the reasons for the rejection.

VI. Authority

5 U.S.C. sections 561 *et seq.*, delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: April 14, 2000.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Acting Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 00–9829 Filed 4–18–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

RIN 1018–AF92; RIN 1018–AF95

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Extension of Comment Periods on Proposed Critical Habitat for the Spectacled Eider and Steller’s Eider

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule; notice of extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) provides notice that the comment periods on the proposed rules designating critical habitat for spectacled eider (*Somateria fischeri*) and Steller’s eider (*Polysticta stelleri*) are extended. The spectacled eider and Steller’s eider are found in marine waters and coastal wetlands in Alaska. All interested parties are invited to submit comments on these proposals.

DATES: The comment period for the proposed rule concerning spectacled eiders, which originally closed on May 8, 2000, now closes on June 30, 2000. The comment period for the proposed rule concerning Steller’s eiders, which originally closed on May 12, 2000, now closes on June 30, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written data or comments on the spectacled eider should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Ecological Services Field Office, Anchorage, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 605 W. 4th Ave. Rm G–62, Anchorage, AK 99501; Fax: 907/271–2786. Written data or comments on the Steller’s eider should be submitted to the Field Supervisor, Northern Alaska Ecological Services, 101 12th Ave., Rm 110, Fairbanks, AK 99701. All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

The deadline for requesting public hearings for the spectacled eider critical habitat proposal was March 24, 2000. The deadline for requesting public hearings for the Steller’s eider critical habitat proposal is April 27, 2000. In order to be considered valid, requests must have been, or must be, submitted in writing and received at the offices indicated above before the public hearing request deadline date.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For the proposed rule concerning spectacled eiders, contact Ann G. Rappoport, Field Supervisor, Ecological Services Field

Office, Anchorage, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 605 W. 4th Ave. Rm G–62, Anchorage, AK 99501; phone: 907/271–2787 or toll-free 800/272–4174; Fax: 907/271–2786. For the proposed rule concerning Steller’s eiders, contact Ted Swem, Endangered Species Branch, at Northern Alaska Ecological Services, 101 12th Ave., Rm 110, Fairbanks, AK, 99701; phone: 907/456–0203; fax: 907/456–0208.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The spectacled eider is a large seaduck found in marine waters and coastal areas from the Nushagak Peninsula of southwestern Alaska north to Barrow and east nearly to the Canadian Border. The species may be threatened by habitat degradation, lead poisoning, increased predation rates, and hunting and other human disturbance. The Steller’s eider is a seaduck found in coastal and marine waters from the eastern Aleutian Islands around the western and northern coasts of Alaska to the Canada border. The Alaska-breeding population of this species is thought to have decreased significantly, but the causes of the suspected decline are unknown. On February 8, 2000, the Service published a proposed rule (65 FR 6114) to designate critical habitat for the spectacled eider, and on March 13, 2000, the Service published a proposed rule (65 FR 13262) to designate critical habitat for the Steller’s eider.

The comment period for the proposed rule designating critical habitat for spectacled eiders originally closed on May 8, 2000. The comment period for the proposed rule designating critical habitat for Steller’s eiders originally closed on May 12, 2000. Following publication of the proposed rules several parties expressed concern that the original comment periods did not allow sufficient time for review and comment by individuals and communities that may be affected by the proposed designation of critical habitat. The parties specifically indicated that the original comment periods may be inadequate for communities in remote areas and communities that are populated predominantly by Alaska Natives, for many of whom English is a second language. Additionally, we anticipate that the comment periods for the economic analyses associated with these proposed critical habitat designations will be open during June 2000. We wish to solicit comments on the proposed rules and their respective economic analyses simultaneously. In order to accommodate these

considerations, the Service is extending the comment period for both proposed rules until June 30, 2000. Written comments may be submitted to the appropriate Service office as specified in the **ADDRESSES** section.

Author

The primary author of this notice is Susan Detwiler, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Endangered Species, 1011 E. Tudor Rd., Anchorage, AK 99503.

Authority

The authority of this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: April 12, 2000.

David B. Allen,

Regional Director, Region 7, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 00-9812 Filed 4-18-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[I.D. 041000E]

RIN 0648-AN39

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery off the Southern Atlantic States; Amendment 12

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

ACTION: Notice of availability of Amendment 12 to the FMP for the snapper-grouper fishery off the southern Atlantic states; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 12 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (FMP) for review, approval, and implementation by NMFS. Amendment 12 would replace the current emergency rule that addresses overfishing of red porgy and is in accordance with section 305(c)(3)(B) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Amendment 12 would implement permanent measures to rebuild the red porgy resource, limit the harvest and possession of red porgy in or from the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off the southern Atlantic states to specified incidental catch amounts, add to the

factors that may be established or modified via the FMP's framework procedure for regulatory adjustments, and modify the snapper-grouper limited access system to allow trip-limited permit transfers among the same vessel owner, regardless of vessel size. Written comments are requested from the public.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m., eastern standard time, on June 19, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Peter Eldridge, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702. Comments also may be sent via fax to 727-570-5583. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or Internet.

Requests for copies of Amendment 12, which includes a final supplemental environmental impact statement, initial regulatory flexibility analysis, regulatory impact review, and a social impact assessment/fishery impact statement may be obtained from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Southpark Building, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699; telephone: 843-571-4366; fax: 843-769-4520; e-mail: safmc@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Peter Eldridge, 727-570-5305; fax 727-570-5583; e-mail: peter.eldridge@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act, requires each Regional Fishery Management Council to submit any FMP or amendment to NMFS for review, and approval, disapproval, or partial approval. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving an FMP or amendment, immediately publish a document in the **Federal Register** stating that the amendment is available for public review and comment.

Under Amendment 12, the Council proposes management measures to limit the harvest and possession of red porgy to incidental catches. Specifically, a recreational fisherman would be restricted to one red porgy per day or per trip, whichever is more restrictive. A commercial fisherman would be limited to 50 lb (22.7 kg) per trip during the months of May through December and to one red porgy per day or per trip, whichever is more restrictive, during January through April. The current prohibition on sale of red porgy during March and April would be extended to the months of January through April.

The Council also proposes to clarify that actions taken under the framework procedure regarding essential fish habitat (EFH) and EFH Habitat Areas of Particular Concern may include restrictions on gear and fishing activities.

In addition, the Council proposes to allow a vessel owner who has been issued a trip-limited permit to transfer the permit to another vessel owned by the same entity, regardless of vessel size. This action would ease an administrative burden on vessel owners.

Under Amendment 12, the Council proposes to establish the following measures for red porgy through the FMP's framework procedure: maximum sustainable yield (MSY); optimum yield (OY); maximum fishing mortality threshold, the fishing mortality rate which, if exceeded, constitutes overfishing; minimum stock size threshold, the stock size below which red porgy are overfished; and a stock rebuilding schedule, the period during which the overfished red porgy resource should be rebuilt to a level that will support MSY.

Amendment 12's action which establishes an OY for red porgy does not quantify a specific annual yield or range of yields associated with the spawning biomass that would produce OY. NMFS is specifically inviting comment on a quantitative yield estimate of OY, realizing that this yield must be less than or equal to MSY.

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS is evaluating the proposed rule to implement Amendment 12 to determine if it is consistent with the FMP, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other applicable law. If that determination is affirmative, NMFS will publish the proposed rule in the **Federal Register** for public review and comment.

NMFS will consider comments received by June 19, 2000, in its decision to approve, disapprove, or partially disapprove the amendment. NMFS will not consider comments received after that date in its decision; NMFS will address all the comments received on Amendment 12 or on its proposed rule in the preamble of the final rule.

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

Dated: April 12, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 00-9697 Filed 4-18-00; 8:45 am]

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