

**Special Accommodations**

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**), at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: May 5, 2009.

**William D. Chappell,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. E9-10838 Filed 5-8-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN: 0648-XP09**

**New England Fishery Management Council; Public Hearings**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public hearings.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold five public hearings to solicit Public comments on Draft Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

**DATES:** Written public comments must be received on or before 5 p.m. EST, June 8, 2009. The meetings will be held in May and June, 2009. For specific dates and times, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**ADDRESSES:** The Public document can be obtained by contacting the New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

**Meeting addresses:** The meetings will be held in Wakefield, MA, Portsmouth, NH, Portland, ME, New London, CT, and So. Kingstown, RI. For specific locations, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

Public comments: Mail to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "DEIS for Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP". Comments may also be sent via fax to (978) 281-9207 or submitted via e-mail to [multisamendment16@noaa.gov](mailto:multisamendment16@noaa.gov) with "DIES for Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP" in the subject line.

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The agendas for the following six hearings are as follows: New England Fishery Management Council staff will brief the public on the herring amendments and the contents of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) prior to opening the hearing for public comments and the schedules are as follows:

**Public Hearings: Locations, Schedules, and Agendas**

1. *Tuesday, May 26, 2009, from 5:30-9 p.m.;* Sheraton Colonial, One Audubon Road, Wakefield, MA 01880; telephone: (781) 245-9300.

2. *Wednesday, May 27, 2009, from 6-9 p.m.;* Sheraton Harborside, 250 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801; telephone: (603) 431-2300.

3. *Thursday, May 28, 2009, from 5-8 p.m.;* Holiday Inn By the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME 04101; telephone: (207) 775-2311.

4. *Monday, June 1, 2009, from 1-3:30 p.m.;* Radisson, 35 Governor Winthrop Blvd., New London, CT 06320; telephone: (860) 443-7000.

5. *Monday, June 1, 2009 from 6-9 p.m.;* Holiday Inn, 3009 Tower Hill Road, So. Kingstown, RI 02674; telephone: (401) 789-1051.

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

Dated: May 5, 2009.

**William D. Chappell,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN: 0648-XP08**

**Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Hearings**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public hearings.

**SUMMARY:** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene public hearings on Reef Fish Amendment 31.

**DATES:** The public hearings will be held on May 26, 2009 through June 8, 2009 at six locations throughout the Gulf of Mexico. For specific dates, times and subjects, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**ADDRESSES:** The public hearings will be held in the following locations: Madeira Beach, Marathon and Panama City, FL, Biloxi, MS, LaMarque, TX, Galliano, LA. For specific locations, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**Council address:** Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Carrie Simmons, Fishery Biologist; Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) has scheduled six public hearings on Amendment 31 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) that addresses bycatch of hardshell sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico bottom longline reef fish fishery. The Council operates under mandates to minimize bycatch to the extent practicable and to protect endangered and threatened species. National Standard 9 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), requires that conservation and management measures shall, to the extent practicable, (A) minimize bycatch and (B) to the extent bycatch cannot be avoided, minimize the morality of such bycatch. The bycatch reduction and monitoring requirements in the Magnuson-Stevens Act apply to a broad range of living marine species, including sea turtles.

Observer data from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) indicated a high level of bycatch in the bottom longline component of the fishery, which exceed the anticipated take in the 2005 Biological Opinion. In September 2008, NMFS released an observer report that examined sea turtle takes by the bottom longline reef fish fishery from July 2006 through 2007. In April 2009 an updated report from the SEFSC was published with information collected in 2008 based on revised effort and observer data.

The Council is considering a range of actions and alternatives outlined in Public Hearing draft of Amendment 31 to the Reef Fish FMP to mitigate