

in order to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act, NOAA published the Georgia Coastal Management Program and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (P/DEIS) for public review on September 5, 1997. NOAA published the P/FEIS including public comments on the P/DEIS and responses to those comments on December 5, 1997. NOAA has also fulfilled the responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act through consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The GCMP is the culmination of several years of development by the State of Georgia, in consultation with interest groups, the general public, Federal agencies, and NOAA. The GCMP consists of numerous state policies on diverse coastal management issues which are prescribed by statute and other legal mechanisms and made enforceable under state law. The GCMP will improve the decision making process for determining appropriate coastal land and water uses in light of resource consideration and increase public awareness of coastal resources and processes. The GCMP will increase long term protection of the state's coastal resources, while providing for sustainable economic development.

NOAA approval of the GCMP makes the state eligible for federal financial assistance for program administration and enhancement under sections 306, 306A, 308 and 309 of the CZMA (16 U.S.C. Secs. 1455, 1455a, 1456a, and 1456b). Georgia has submitted an application for \$731,250 in FY 1997 Federal CZMA funds which are available for Georgia. These funds will generally be used to assist the state in administering the various state authorities included in the GCMP, as well as be used to fund local management efforts.

NOAA approval of the GCMP also makes operational, as of the date of this Federal Register Notice, the CZMA federal consistency requirement with respect to the GCMP (16 U.S.C. 1456; 15 CFR Part 930). Therefore, as of today, direct federal activities occurring within or outside the Georgia coastal zone that are reasonably likely to affect any land or water use or natural resources of the Georgia coastal zone must be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the GCMP. In addition, activities within or outside the Georgia coastal zone requiring a federal license or permit listed in the P/FEIS, and federal financial assistance to state agencies and local governments, that are reasonably likely to affect any land or water use or natural resource of the

Georgia coastal zone must be consistent with the enforceable policies of the GCMP.

Chapter 5 of the P/FEIS identifies the enforceable policies of the Georgia program. Chapter 8 of the P/FEIS identifies federally licensed or permitted activities subject to the federal consistency requirements. Chapters 4 and 8 of the P/FEIS, as well as the CZMA regulations at 15 CFR Part 930, provide specific procedures to be used in the Federal/State coordination process.

ADDRESSES: For further information please contact Joshua Lott at (301) 713-3117, ext. 178; or via fax at (301) 713-4367; or via the Internet at josh.lott@noaa.gov.

(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog 11.419 Coastal Zone Management Program Administration)

Dated: February 6, 1998.

Nancy Foster,

Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 093097G]

Strategic Plan for Fisheries Research

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

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the availability of the Strategic Plan for Fisheries Research. Section 404(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires the Secretary of Commerce to develop, triennially, a strategic plan for fisheries research for the subsequent 5 years.

ADDRESSES: Requests for copies of the Plan should be directed to Mark Chandler, Research, Analysis, and Coordination Division, Office of Science and Technology, NMFS, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Phone (301) 713-2363. FAX: (301) 713-1875

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mark Chandler or Carolyn Brown at (301) 713-2363.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 404(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires the Secretary of Commerce to

publish in the **Federal Register** a strategic plan for fisheries research for the 5 years immediately following the plan's publication. Pursuant to Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements, the Plan addresses 4 major areas: (1) Research to support fishery conservation and management; (2) conservation engineering research; (3) research on the fisheries; and (4) information management research. Additionally, the Plan contains a limited number of priority objectives for each of these areas; indicates goals and timetables; provides a role for commercial fishermen in such research; and provides for collection and dissemination of complete and accurate information concerning fishing activities.

In 1997, NMFS published a *Strategic Plan for NOAA Fisheries*. The Plan was developed in a comprehensive manner, with substantial public involvement, including 16 public meetings. The present Strategic Plan for Fisheries Research is based upon and entirely consistent with the NMFS Strategic Plan. It is a subset of the all-encompassing NMFS Strategic Plan, focusing on science research activities. The objectives found under the *Major Fishery Research Goals and Objectives* section of the subject document can be matched with strategies in the NMFS Strategic Plan. In addition, the strategies, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan for Fisheries Research are wholly consistent with the 1993 *NOAA Strategic Plan: A Vision for 2005*.

The scope of the present document is solely fisheries research to support the Act. It does not include the regulatory or enforcement components of the NMFS mission. The document covers current fisheries research and how NMFS aims to improve its research under current and projected NMFS budgets.

Dated: January 23, 1998.

William W. Fox, Jr.

Director, Office of Science and Technology.

[FR Doc. 98-3887 Filed 2-13-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021098A]

Notice of Public Hearing on Individual Fishing Quotas

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that NMFS will hold a public hearing in Hawaii on the island of Oahu to solicit comments on Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQs) in compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996. The hearing supplements those held by the National Research Council (NRC) and/or the NMFS in the other Council regions.

DATES: The public hearing will be held on March 25, 1998 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The public hearing will be held at the Ala Moana Hotel, Ilima Conference Room, 410 Atkinson Dr., Honolulu, HI, 96815, telephone: 808-955-4811.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles Karnella, Administrator, Pacific Islands Area Office; telephone 808-973-2937.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Participants will be given five minutes each to provide a statement regarding any aspect of IFQ implementation identified in the study requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. All input will be provided to the NRC to be used in the preparation of its study of a national policy with respect to IFQs.

Dated: February 11, 1998.

William W. Fox, Jr.

*Director, Office of Science and Technology,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-3889 Filed 2-13-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

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

[I.D. 021098D]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a number of public meetings of its oversight committees and advisory panels in March, 1998 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for

formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meetings will be held between March 3 and March 31, 1998. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: Meetings will be held in Peabody and Danvers, MA and Warwick, RI. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (781) 231-0422.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Meeting Dates and Agendas**

Tuesday, March 3, 1998, 9:30 a.m.— Groundfish Advisory Panel Meeting
Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Identification of issues and options, and a review of proposals to meet the stock rebuilding objectives necessary to bring the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) into compliance with the requirements of the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA); development of comments on alternative measures to address the overfished condition of Gulf of Maine cod; discussion of other tasks as assigned by the Groundfish Oversight Committee.

Tuesday, March 10, 1998, 9:30 a.m.— Joint Habitat Committee and Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Peabody Marriott Hotel, 8A Centennial Drive, Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 977-9700.

Review of progress on the development of essential fish habitat (EFH) designations for Council-managed species.

Wednesday, March 11, 1998 9:30 a.m.— Groundfish Committee Meeting
Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Review of Groundfish Advisory Panel and Plan Development Team (PDT) reports, including comments on alternative measures to address the overfished condition of Gulf of Maine cod and the identification of management options requiring PDT analysis; initial identification of management measures to be included in an FMP amendment that meets the SFA requirements; further development of action restricting the use of "streetsweeper" gear.

Thursday, March 12, 1998, 9:30 a.m.— Aquaculture Committee Meeting
Location: Peabody Marriott Hotel, 8A Centennial Drive, Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 977-9700.

Consideration of a request to extend the timing of the closure associated with the Westport Sea Scallop Project located south of Martha's Vineyard, MA; discussion of evaluation criteria for projects proposed for the EEZ; development of a framework adjustment process to facilitate Council project approval.

Monday, March 16, 1998, 10 a.m.— Joint Whiting Committee and Advisory Panel Meeting

Location: Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

Discussion of comments received at scoping hearings on whiting, offshore hake and red hake management and the development of a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS); consideration of spawning closures and management options for the Cultivator Shoal whiting fishery.

Tuesday, March 17, 1998, 8:30 a.m.— Whiting Committee Meeting

Location: Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

Discussion of comments received at scoping hearings on whiting, offshore hake and red hake management; initial development of a preferred management alternative; identification of analyses necessary to develop a DSEIS.

Tuesday, March 24, 1998, 9:30 a.m.— Groundfish Committee Meeting

Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Development of final recommendations on management alternatives to address overfishing and bring the Multispecies FMP into compliance with the SFA; further discussions of alternative measures to address the overfished condition of Gulf of Maine cod.

Wednesday, March 25, 1998, 10 a.m.— Monkfish Committee Meeting

Location: Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, (Route 1) Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

Final review of the Monkfish FMP documents prior to Council approval at its next meeting.

Monday, March 30, 1998, 10 a.m. and Tuesday, March 31, 8:30 a.m.— Scallop Committee Meeting

Location: Radisson Hotel, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886; telephone: (401) 739-3000.

Approval of management measures to address the requirements of the SFA concerning overfishing for purposes of public hearings; further development of an open/closed area management program, including access to the Georges Bank areas closed for groundfish conservation; further