

the date of publication of this preliminary determination. A list of authorities used and an executive summary of issues should accompany any briefs submitted to the Department. This summary should be limited to five pages total, including footnotes. In accordance with section 774 of the Act, we will hold a public hearing, if requested, to afford interested parties an opportunity to comment on arguments raised in case or rebuttal briefs. Tentatively, any hearing will be held fifty-seven days after publication of this notice at the U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230, at a time and location to be determined. Parties should confirm by telephone the date, time, and location of the hearing two days before the scheduled date.

Interested parties who wish to request a hearing, or to participate if one is requested, must submit a written request to the Assistant Secretary for Import Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 1870, within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice. Requests should contain: (1) the party's name, address, and telephone number; (2) the number of participants; and (3) a list of the issues to be discussed. At the hearing, each party may make an affirmative presentation only on issues raised in that party's case brief, and may make rebuttal presentations only on arguments included in that party's rebuttal brief. See 19 CFR 351.310(c). If this investigation proceeds normally, we will make our final determination no later than May 10, 1999.

This determination is issued and published in accordance with sections 733(d) and 777(i)(1) of the Act.

Dated: February 22, 1999.

Richard W. Moreland,
Acting Assistant Secretary for Import Administration.

[FR Doc. 99-4840 Filed 2-24-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021799C]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Groundfish Harvest Rate Review Panel will hold a work session which is open to the public.

DATES: The Groundfish Harvest Rate Review Panel will meet beginning at 8 a.m., March 25, 1999 and continue until 12 p.m. on March 26, 1999 or as necessary to complete business.

ADDRESSES: The Harvest Rate Policy Review Panel meeting will be held at the California Department of Fish and Game Office, 20 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Suite 100, Main Conference Room, Monterey, CA 93940; telephone: (604) 535-1432.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julie Walker, Fishery Management Analyst; telephone: (503) 326-6352.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to review recent information regarding appropriate harvest rates for various groundfish species. Some investigations indicate current harvest policies ($F_{35\%}$ and $F_{40\%}$) may not adequately protect stocks and may not produce the maximum sustainable yield. This panel will provide external review of the new information on appropriate harvest rates. The review panel's conclusions will be forwarded to the Groundfish Management Team and the Council.

Although other issues not contained in this agenda may come before this panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act, 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.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. John Rhoton at (503) 326-6352 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: February 18, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 99-4636 Filed 2-24-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 020599A]

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific

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

ACTION: Receipt of an exempted fishing permit application; announcement of the window period for the selection of participants.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application from the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS), NMFS. If awarded, the EFP will allow fishers aboard three commercial trawl vessels to collect depth-specific samples of fish according to NMFS' approved protocols. These fish will be delivered to designated ports in the State of Oregon where Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and NMFS scientists will collect biological data that will be used to improve survey and stock assessments for sablefish, Dover sole, and thornyhead. An EFP is needed to allow the retention and sale of sablefish and Dover sole samples in excess of trip limits. NMFS also announces a 2-week window period in which interested parties may submit application materials that NMFS will use to select the 1999 industry participants. These actions are taken under the authority of the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

DATES: The EFP will be effective from March 1, 1999, or as soon as possible thereafter, through February 29, 2000. Applications from interested parties must be received from February 25, 1999 to March 11, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit applications to Sharon Hunt, NMFS, 2030 South Marine Science Drive, Newport, OR 97365. Submit comments on this action to Katherine King, Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0070.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Hunt 541-867-0307, or Cyreis Schmitt 206-860-3322 or 541-867-0127.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

This action is authorized by the FMP and implementing regulations at 50 CFR 600.745 and 50 CFR 660.350, which specify that an EFP may be issued to a

commercial fishing vessel for the purpose of collecting resource information in excess of current management limits, according to NMFS approved protocol, and that the participating vessel may be compensated with fish for doing so.

At its November 2–6, 1998, meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) considered an EFP application for depth-specific groundfish sampling submitted by the NWFSC, NMFS. The EFP application represents a cooperative data collection effort among NMFS, ODF&W, and the groundfish industry. An opportunity for public testimony was provided during the November Council meeting. However, none was given. The Council recommended that NMFS approve the EFP application, with the understanding that approximately 30 mt of sablefish and 15 mt of Dover sole would be sampled and sold in excess of current trip limits, but within the allocations and optimum yields for those species.

The purpose of this exempted fishing is to collect data on the seasonal distribution and biological characteristics of sablefish, Dover sole, and shortspine and longspine thornyhead. These crucial stock parameters are poorly understood at the present time. Collecting these data will enable NMFS to determine the most appropriate season in which to conduct surveys, better analyze fishery logbook data, and improve assumptions regarding fish stock structure and life history that are critical to stock assessments. An EFP is needed (1) to allow the participating vessels to land sablefish and Dover sole in excess of the normal cumulative trip limits and in excess of the “per-trip” limit for trawl-caught sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) (total length) so that the fish may be sampled, and (2) to sell the samples of sablefish and Dover sole to avoid waste and to allow compensation for participating in the project. The objectives of this project are consistent with the research goals of NMFS and the Council.

The Administrator of the Northwest Region, NMFS, has determined that the application contains all of the required information and constitutes valid exempted fishing appropriate for issuance of EFPs.

II. Project Design

For the first year of the project, only three vessels that deliver to ports in the State of Oregon will be used. Oregon ports were selected because of the availability of trained ODF&W port samplers for collecting the necessary biological data. If, at any point during

the year, a vessel cannot complete its obligation, a replacement vessel will be asked to collect samples. Vessels will be selected at random from a list of qualified applicants. Completed applications, as described in this notice, received during the two-week window period will be used to compile the list of qualified applicants. After completion and evaluation of the first year’s work, a request to conduct a revised and expanded program in the year 2000 is expected.

The quantity and composition of groundfish catches landed by the participating vessels are not expected to differ greatly relative to their normal operations. During commercial operations, fishers aboard the selected vessels will use predefined methods to gather samples of the four species of fish—nine samples of each of the four species from three specified depth zones in each 3-month sampling period. Therefore, in each of the 3-month sampling period, each vessel would bring in 108 samples. The approximate sample sizes are as follows: 200 lb (91 kg) of sablefish, 100 lb (45 kg) of Dover sole, 100 lb (45 kg) of shortspine thornyhead, and 50 lb (23 kg) of longspine thornyhead. Sample selection is not expected to hinder fishing operations. Samples will need to be labeled and kept separate from the commercial catch. The samples will be delivered to a port in Oregon where NMFS or ODF&W scientists will collect additional scientific information. Sampling instructions will be provided in writing, and participating vessels will be required to carry a NMFS scientist during an initial training period and at any other time that NMFS believes it necessary.

Sampled fish may be sold after all needed biological information is collected. Sablefish and Dover sole samples will not count toward the vessel’s cumulative trip limit total or toward the trip limit for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm). However, shortspine and longspine thornyhead samples will count toward the vessel’s cumulative trip limits. Because the vessels are under normal trip limit restrictions for shortspine and longspine thornyhead, cumulative trip limits for these species may not be exceeded. Sample fish are expected to be marketable after the collection of biological data, but, regardless of whether or not the vessel is able to sell the sample fish, the samples will count toward the vessel’s cumulative trip limits or EFP limits.

If the recommended sampling levels are achieved, over the 12-month sampling period, each of the three

vessels is expected to provide samples of 21,600 lb (9.8 mt) of sablefish, 10,800 lb (4.9 mt) of Dover sole, 10,800 lb (4.9 mt) of shortspine thornyhead, and 5,400 lb (2.4 mt) of longspine thornyhead. As stated above, only the sablefish and Dover sole samples will be above normal trip limit amounts. The total catch by all participating vessels will be about 30 mt of sablefish, 15 mt each of Dover sole and shortspine thornyhead, and 7 mt of longspine thornyhead.

III. Minimum Qualifying Requirements

The following criteria must be met for a vessel to be considered qualified for the random selection of participants.

(1) The vessel must have an “A” limited entry permit with a trawl endorsement.

(2) The vessel must be capable of, and equipped for, commercial trawling for sablefish, Dover sole, shortspine thornyhead, and longspine thornyhead throughout the year and in depths greater than 400 fm.

(3) The vessel must be capable of and equipped for measuring haul depth and fishing location.

(4) The vessel owner must agree to:

a. Provide vessel accommodations (comparable to those provided for the crew) for a NMFS scientist during an initial training period and at any other time NMFS believes it is necessary;

b. Follow the sampling protocol provided by NMFS scientists, which states that samples of the four species be taken from each of the three depth zones (100–200 fm, 201–400 fm, deeper than 400 fm) while commercial fishing during each of the four sampling periods (March 1, 1999–May 31, 1999, June 1, 1999–August 31, 1999, September 1, 1999–November 30, 1999, and December 1, 1999–February 29, 2000), and that communication with NMFS and ODF&W personnel be maintained throughout the duration of the project;

c. Offload sample fish in at least one of the following Oregon ports: (1) Astoria (including Garibaldi, Warrenton and Pacific City); (2) Newport (including Depoe Bay and Florence), and (3) Coos Bay/Charleston (including Bandon, Port Orford, Gold Beach and Brookings).

d. Provide a vessel operator for all fishing conducted under this permit who, since January 1, 1997, has had experience as a trawl vessel operator fishing for Dover sole, sablefish, and thornyheads off Washington, Oregon, or California during at least one trip in each quarter of the year and who has experience fishing for sablefish, Dover

sole, and shortspine and longspine thornyhead deeper than 400 fm.

(5) The vessel must be in compliance with all required USCG regulations at 46 CFR part 28 pertaining to navigational systems, communications equipment, emergency source of electrical power, radar and depth sounding devices, electronic position fixing devices, electronic position indicating radio beacon (EPIRBs), and safety provisions.

IV. Announcement of Window Period and Application Process

This document also announces a 2-week window period from February 25, 1999 to March 11, 1999 in which applications must be received. The applicant must be the registered owner of the vessel named in the application. Applications will be screened to determine those that meet the minimum requirements. Applicants may be contacted by NMFS to clarify information in the application and to discuss the project and the terms and conditions of the EFP; the applicant may decline further consideration. The qualified applications will be separated into three port groups according to the area that the applicant indicated most of the four species will be landed. Within each port group, the final participant will be randomly selected. If no qualified applications are received for a port group, the qualified applications from the other ports will be pooled, and the participant will be selected at random. Participants will be selected and notified shortly after the close of the window period. If needed, replacement vessels may be randomly selected later in the year from the same group of qualified applicants.

Applications must be received no later than March 11, 1999 (see **ADDRESSES**), and include the following information:

General

(1) Vessel name, U.S. Coast Guard documentation number, radio call sign, Pacific Coast Groundfish limited entry permit number and gear endorsements.

(2) Owner of the vessel listed in the application (hereafter referred to as "vessel") and operator(s) who would be fishing under this EFP;

(3) Address, phone number, cell phone number, and fax number, if applicable, of vessel owner and operator;

(4) Hull type, vessel length overall;

(5) Number of engines, model(s), horsepower;

(6) Because vessels may be selected depending on the port of landing indicated in the application, name the one area where you anticipate landing

the majority of your sablefish, Dover sole, and thornyhead between March 1, 1999, and February 29, 2000. The areas are (1) Astoria (including Garibaldi, Warrenton, and Pacific City), (2) Newport (including Depoe Bay and Florence), and (3) Coos Bay/Charleston (including Bandon, Port Orford, Gold Beach and Brookings).

(7) Do you intend to fish commercially for sablefish, Dover sole, shortspine thornyhead, and longspine thornyhead, as deep as 500 fm, during each of the stated sampling periods? The sampling periods are March 1, 1999–May 31, 1999, June 1, 1999–August 31, 1999, September 1, 1999–November 30, 1999, and December 1, 1999–February 29, 2000.

(8) Will you commit to following NMFS sampling protocols and to maintaining communications with NMFS and ODF&W personnel throughout the duration of this project?

V. Owner and Operator Experience

(1) Does each operator(s) who will be fishing under this EFP have experience as a trawl vessel operator(s) fishing for Dover sole, sablefish, and thornyhead off Washington, Oregon, or California during at least one trip in each quarter since January 1, 1997? Briefly describe each operator's relevant experience.

(2) Will vessel accommodations (comparable to those provided for the crew) for a NMFS scientist be provided? Briefly describe the accommodations that will be provided.

VI. Fishing Gear

(1) Describe the trawl gear that will be used, including type, manufacturer, headrope length, footrope length, footrope type.

(2) Describe the trawl doors that will be used, including type, size, and weight.

(3) Estimate the maximum and average towing speed with the gear described above.

(4) Estimate the maximum towing depth with the gear described above.

VII. Electronics and Survival Equipment

(1) List the types, manufacturers, and models of radios aboard the vessel that are used for communications. Also describe the emergency power source for the communications systems, including the number of continuous hours of operation the system is expected to supply.

(2) List the number and class of EPIRBs.

(3) Describe the electronic positioning, radar, and depth sounding devices aboard the vessel, including

type, manufacturer, model, and system's accuracy at measuring tow depth and fishing location. If your current system(s) is insufficient for this project, state whether or not you are willing to purchase the necessary electronics for use under the EFP.

(4) State whether or not your vessel meets all applicable U.S. Coast Guard requirements or statutes pertaining to the safe operation of a vessel (46 CFR Chapter I; copy available, see **ADDRESSES**).

(5) Do you agree to provide and maintain the above equipment in good working order while fishing under the EFP?

Certification

State that the information in the application is accurate to the best of your knowledge. Sign and date the application, which must be received by March 11, 1999. Only the registered owner of a vessel may submit an application.

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

Dated: February 19, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 99-4711 Filed 2-24-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DAPE-ZXI-RM), DoD.

ACTION: Notice.

In compliance with Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Department of the Army announces a proposed public information collection and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.