

pursuant to section 312 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (CZMA) and regulations at 15 CFR part 923, subpart L. The National Estuarine Research Reserve evaluation will be conducted pursuant to sections 312 and 315 of the CZMA and regulations at 15 CFR part 921, subpart E and part 923, subpart L. The CZMA requires continuing review of the performance of states with respect to coastal program implementation. Evaluation of Coastal Management Programs and National Estuarine Research Reserves requires findings concerning the extent to which a state has met the national objectives, adhered to its Coastal Management Program document or Reserve final management plan approved by the Secretary of Commerce, and adhered to the terms of financial assistance awards funded under the CZMA.

Each evaluation will include a site visit, consideration of public comments, and consultations with interested Federal, state, and local agencies and members of the public. A public meeting will be held as part of the site visit. Notice is hereby given of the dates of the site visits for the listed evaluations, and the dates, local times, and locations of the public meeting during the site visits.

DATES: The Old Woman Creek (Ohio) National Estuarine Research Reserve evaluation site visit will be held August 14–17, 2006. One public meeting will be held during the week. The public meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 15, 2006, at 7 p.m. at the Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve Visitor Center, Exhibit Hall, 2514 Cleveland Road, East, Huron, Ohio.

The Connecticut Coastal Management Program evaluation site visit will be held September 11–15, 2006. One public meeting will be held during the week. The public meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2006, at 7 p.m. at the Department of Environmental Protection, Marine Headquarters, Conference Room (Building 3), 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

The New Hampshire Coastal Management Program evaluation site visit will be held September 20–22, 2006. One public meeting will be held during the week. The public meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2006, at 5 p.m. at the New Hampshire Coastal Program Office, Department of Environmental Services, 50 International Drive, Suite 200, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

ADDRESSES: Copies of states' most recent performance reports, as well as OCRM's evaluation notification and supplemental information request letters to the states, are available upon request from OCRM. Written comments from interested parties regarding these Programs are encouraged and will be accepted until 15 days after the public meeting held for a Program. Please direct written comments to Ralph Cantral, Chief, National Policy and Evaluation Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, NOS/NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, 10th Floor, N/ORM7, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. When the evaluations are completed, OCRM will place a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the availability of the Final Evaluation Findings.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given of the availability of the final evaluation findings for the Pennsylvania and California Coastal Management Programs (CMPs) and the Sapelo Island (Georgia), Chesapeake Bay-Maryland, and Rookery Bay (Florida) National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs). Sections 312 and 315 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), as amended, require a continuing review of the performance of coastal states with respect to approval of CMPs and the operation and management of NERRs.

The states of Pennsylvania and California were found to be implementing and enforcing their federally approved coastal management programs, addressing the national coastal management objectives identified in CZMA section 303(2)(A)–(K), and adhering to the programmatic terms of their financial assistance awards. The Sapelo Island (Georgia), Chesapeake Bay-Maryland, and Rookery Bay (Florida) NERRs were found to be adhering to programmatic requirements of the NERR System.

Copies of these final evaluation findings may be obtained upon written request from: Ralph Cantral, Chief, National Policy and Evaluation Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, NOS/NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, 10th Floor, N/ORM7, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, or Ralph.Cantral@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ralph Cantral, Chief, National Policy and Evaluation Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, NOS/NOAA, 1305 East-West Highway, 10th Floor, N/ORM7, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, (301) 563–7118.

Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog 11.419

Coastal Zone Management Program Administration

Dated: June 23, 2006.

Elizabeth Scheffler,

Chief Financial Officer, Management and Budget Office, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Availability of Seats for the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

AGENCY: National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMS), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice and request for applications.

SUMMARY: The Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS or Sanctuary) is seeking applicants for the following vacant seats on its Sanctuary Advisory Council (Council): Conservation (Alternate) and At-Large (Member). Applicants are chosen based upon their particular expertise and experience in relation to the seat for which they are applying; community and professional affiliations; philosophy regarding the protection and management of marine resources; and possibly the length of residence in the area affected by the Sanctuary. Applicants who are chosen as members should expect to serve two-year terms, pursuant to the Council's Charter.

DATES: Applications are due by August 15, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Application kits may be obtained from

Ruthetta.Halbower@noaa.gov, 175 Edward Foster Road, Scituate, MA 02066. Telephone 781–545–8026 X201. Completed applications should be sent to the same address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nathalie Ward, SAC Coordinator 175 Edward Foster Road, Scituate, MA 02066 nathalie.ward@noaa.gov Tel: 781–545–8026.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council was established in March 2001 to assure continued public participation in the management of the Sanctuary. Serving in a volunteer capacity, the Advisory Council's 21 voting members represent

a variety of local user groups, as well as the general public, plus seven local, state and federal government jurisdictions. Since its establishment, the Advisory Council has played a vital role in advising the Sanctuary and NOAA on critical issues and is currently focused on the sanctuary's development of a new 5-year management plan.

The Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 842 square miles of ocean, stretching between Cape Ann and Cape Cod. Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary supports a rich diversity of marine life including marine mammals, more than 30 species of seabirds, over 100 species of fishes, and hundreds of marine invertebrates and plants.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1431, et seq.

(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog Number 11.429 Marine Sanctuary Program)

Dated: June 20, 2006.

Daniel J. Basta,

Director, National Marine Sanctuary Program, National Ocean Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 062306A]

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; proposal for an exempted fishing permit to conduct experimental fishing; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) has made a preliminary determination that the subject exempted fishing permit (EFP) application from the East Coast Pelagic Association (ECPA) that would allow herring vessels to possess haddock while testing modified mid-water herring trawls designed to reduce haddock bycatch contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. The Regional Administrator has also made a preliminary determination that the activities authorized under the EFP would be consistent with the goals and

objectives of the Atlantic Herring and Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue the EFP.

DATES: Comments on this document must be received on or before July 14, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this notice may be submitted by e-mail. The mailbox address for providing e-mail comments is DA6-161@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "Comments on ECPA EFP Proposal for Modifications to Herring Midwater Trawls to Increase Escapement of Non-Target Species." Written comments should be sent to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope, "Comments on ECPA EFP Proposal for Modifications to Herring Midwater Trawls to Increase Escapement of Non-Target Species." Comments may also be sent via facsimile (fax) to (978) 281-9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ryan Silva, Fishery Management Specialist, phone: 978-281-9326, fax: 978-281-9135.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of an experiment titled, "Research Project to Examine Modifications to Herring Midwater Trawls to Increase Escapement of non-target species (i.e., haddock)," exempted vessels would test trawl modifications designed to reduce haddock bycatch in the herring fishery and research the vertical distribution and behavior of herring and haddock during the seasonal and spatial overlap that occurs between these species on Georges Bank. The experiment is being coordinated by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) on behalf of several research partners. The EFP application was submitted by one of the project partners, the ECPA. If approved, the EFP would authorize participating vessels to possess haddock during research activities. Haddock would not be marketed for human consumption. All catch of herring would be reported and accounted for through vessel trip reports (VTR) and interactive voice reporting (IVR). Incidental catch of haddock would be estimated using the NMFS Observer Program sampling protocols established for the herring fishery, and reported to NMFS following each research trip. Both herring and haddock catch would be deducted from the total allowable catch (TAC) specifications for herring Management

Area 3 and the 0.2 percent haddock TAC as proposed in Framework 43 to the NE Multispecies FMP, respectively. The herring catch for this project is estimated at 3,500 - 5,000 mt. The 2006 haddock catch cap allocated to the herring fishery under Framework 43 is 73.2 mt (161,377 lb). If the overall haddock catch cap is harvested, the project would be stopped.

The applicant intends to compare bycatch rates of 2 modified trawl designs and a standard midwater herring trawl. At any given time during the requested 26 research days, up to 4 vessels would conduct normal fishing activity in herring Management Area 3. Nets would be deployed by a combination of vessels, including up to two sets of midwater pair trawl vessels and two single midwater trawl vessels. The number of tows made per day would be dependent on weather, proper gear deployment and availability of herring, but can be estimated at 3-5 per day. Average duration of each tow is 3-4 hours at an estimated speed of 3.5 - 4 knots. In addition, participating vessels would research the vertical distribution and reaction behavior of herring and haddock during the seasonal and spatial overlap that occurs between these species on Georges Bank. Research is proposed for the period July 15 - October 30, 2006.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed EFPs. The applicant may place requests for minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and minimal so as not to change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request.

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

Dated: June 23, 2006.

James P. Burgess,

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

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