

counterproposal to allot Channel 298C3 to Roswell, GA, is dismissed. With this action, this proceeding is terminated.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 9, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Leslie K. Shapiro, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a synopsis of the Commission's Report and Order, MM Docket No. 98-18, adopted September 16, 1998, and released September 25, 1998. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the FCC Reference Center (Room 239), 1919 M Street, NW., Washington, DC. The complete text of this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Services, Inc., (202) 857-3800, 1231 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio broadcasting.

Part 73 of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

PART 73—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 73 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 303, 334, 336.

§ 73.202 [Amended]

2. Section 73.202(b), the Table of FM Allotments under Georgia, is amended by removing Channel 300C1 at Macon and by adding Hampton, Channel 300C1.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 98-26408 Filed 10-1-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Parts 216, 227, and 600

[I.D. 091498A]

Atlantic Pelagic Fishery; Marine Mammals; Endangered and Threatened Fish and Wildlife; Public Workshops

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

ACTION: Notice of public workshops.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the first of the workshops for longline vessel operators, scheduled from October 1998 through February 1999, to meet requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). The purpose of the workshops is to educate longliners on avoidance, handling, and release techniques for marine mammals and sea turtles and to provide information and receive feedback on different management options in the pelagic longline fishery.

DATES: The first workshop is scheduled for October 9, 1998. Other workshop dates will be announced in the *Federal Register* once they are scheduled.

ADDRESSES: The first workshop will be held at the Days Inn, 500 Hathaway Road, New Bedford, MA 02740; (508)997-1231. Other workshops during 1998 will be held in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina and South Carolina. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for workshop addresses.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rebecca Lent, 301-713-2347, Cathy Eisele, 301-713-2322, or Therese Conant, 301-713-1401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

NMFS will conduct workshops with owners/operators in the pelagic longline fishery throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The purpose of the workshop is threefold: To supplement information gathered in a survey of fishery participants to evaluate alternatives for a comprehensive management system for pelagic longline fishery; to implement the recommendations of the NMFS Biological Opinion to hold workshops for vessel operators in order to reduce mortality of incidentally caught sea turtles; and to meet the requirements of the Atlantic Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Team to hold workshops to educate pelagic longline vessel operators on marine mammal release and avoidance techniques.

Background

1. Section 304 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires NMFS to evaluate the feasibility of implementing changes to the management system for the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery. These requirements include (1) forming a pelagic longline advisory panel (Longline AP) to assist in the collection and evaluation of information relevant to future management of the fishery; (2) preparing a report evaluating the

feasibility of implementing a comprehensive management system for the pelagic longline fishery, including consideration of limited access and individual fishing quota systems; and (3) conducting a survey and holding workshops with affected fishery participants to gather input on future management of the fishery.

NMFS formed the Longline AP in April 1997 and, with the assistance of the Longline AP, prepared a report to Congress outlining the feasibility of implementing several types of comprehensive management systems ("Study of the Feasibility of Implementing a Comprehensive Management System for the Pelagic Longline Fishery for Atlantic HMS," December 30, 1997). NMFS hereby gives notice of the first of a series of workshops that will be held with pelagic longline fishery participants to gather input on the feasibility of implementing a comprehensive management system for the fishery. The portion of the workshop dealing with endangered species and marine mammals will be conducted by NMFS personnel. The portion of the workshop evaluating alternatives for a comprehensive management system will be conducted by non-NMFS staff from the University of Hawaii and the University of Maryland.

The Longline AP identified the following seven areas of concern that should be considered in evaluating a future management system for the pelagic longline fishery: Overfished stocks; effects of international fisheries; effort control; bycatch reduction; the need to evaluate discrete gear harvests on a range of species; the need to improve communication among managers, the public, and the fishery; and reliance on historical data that may be inadequate. Management systems considered in the report to Congress are as follows: Open access; limited access to the shark and swordfish and bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack tunas fisheries; and individual quota programs. One purpose of the workshops is to solicit input from fishery participants regarding the areas of concern and management systems outlined in the report to Congress.

2. Section 118 of the MMPA requires NMFS to convene Take Reduction Teams (TRT) to develop plans for reducing the mortality and serious injury of marine mammals incidental to commercial fisheries. NMFS established the Atlantic Offshore Cetacean TRT in 1996, and the TRT developed a draft plan to reduce bycatch of the strategic marine mammal stocks taken in the U.S. Atlantic pelagic longline and driftnet

fisheries. The TRT recommended that workshops be conducted to educate vessel owner/operators and crew members about strategies for reducing incidental harvest of marine mammals, guidelines for releasing entangled animals, and the MMPA and its implementing regulations. Another purpose of these workshops is to provide a forum for information exchange regarding successful strategies for reducing incidental takes of marine mammals. Although participation is not mandatory under the MMPA, it is likely that attendance at these workshops will be a requirement of NMFS' proposed Atlantic Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Plan.

3. Section 7 of the ESA requires all Federal agencies to ensure that any action, funded, authorized, or carried out, is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species. If such action adversely affects a listed marine species under NMFS jurisdiction, a consultation must be conducted, and NMFS must provide a written biological opinion on the effects. A consultation was conducted on the Atlantic Pelagic Fishery, and NMFS concluded in the biological opinion (May 29, 1997; amended July 10, 1998) that the longline component of the Atlantic Pelagic Fishery was likely to adversely affect, but not jeopardize, the continued existence of listed sea turtles. The opinion requires NMFS to develop a schedule of workshops throughout the geographical range of the fishery to educate vessel operators on appropriate sea turtle resuscitation, and handling and release techniques. All vessel operators must attend a workshop before commencing fishing operation in September 2000. Thus, for purposes of the ESA, participation in at least one workshop is mandatory.

Workshops

This announcement is for the workshop scheduled for New Bedford, MA, on October 9, 1998, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The workshop will be held at the Days Inn, 500 Hathaway Road, New Bedford, MA 02740; (508)997-1231.

Because specific locations and times are unknown for the later workshops, they will be published separately in the *Federal Register*. However, locations by area have been set for 1998 for the following workshops: Montauk, NY; Barnegat Light, NJ; Wanchese, NC; and Charleston, SC. Additional workshop meeting locations and dates for 1999 will be announced separately in the *Federal Register*.

Special Accommodations

These hearings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Rebecca Lent (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

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

Dated: September 28, 1998.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 98-26356 Filed 9-29-98; 1:21 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 971208297-8054-02; I.D. 092298B]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Modification of a closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is opening directed fishing for Pacific cod by vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod in this area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 5, 1998, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew N. Smoker, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Regulations governing fishing by U.S. vessels in accordance with the FMP appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The 1998 TAC of Pacific cod allocated to vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area was established as 16,682 metric tons (mt) by the Final 1998 Harvest Specifications

of Groundfish for the GOA (63 FR 12027, March 12, 1998). See § 679.20(c)(3). On April 16, 1998 (63 FR 18848), it was increased by an apportionment of reserves to 20,853 mt.

The fishery for Pacific cod by vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA was closed to directed fishing under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on March 3, 1998 (63 FR 11160, March 6, 1998), in order to reserve amounts anticipated to be needed for incidental catch in other fisheries.

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 20,753 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 100 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. NMFS has determined that as of September 5, 1998, 1,238 mt remain in the directed fishing allowance. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for Pacific cod by vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., October 5, 1998.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds for good cause that providing prior notice and public comment or delaying the effective date of this action is impracticable and contrary to the public interest.

All other closures remain in full force and effect. This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. It must be implemented immediately in order to allow full utilization of the Pacific cod TAC. Further delay would only disrupt the FMP's objective of providing a portion of the Pacific cod TAC for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA. Without this action, the Pacific cod allocation for vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the inshore component in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA would be underharvested. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action cannot be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

Classification

This action is required by § 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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