

for completion of the final results until Monday, March 6, 2000. See Memorandum from Joseph A. Spetrini to Robert S. LaRussa, September 30, 1999, on file in Room B-099 of the main Commerce building.

This extension is in accordance with section 751(a)(3)(A) of the Tariff Act, as amended.

Dated: October 22, 1999.

Richard Weible,

*Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Enforcement Group III.*

[FR Doc. 99-28657 Filed 11-1-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

North American Free-Trade Agreement, Article 1904; NAFTA Panel Reviews; Request for Panel Review

AGENCY: NAFTA Secretariat, United States Section, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of completion of panel review of the final remand determination made by the U.S. International Trade Administration, in the matter of certain corrosion-resistant carbon steel flat products from Canada, Secretariat File No. USA-97-1904-03.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Order of the Binational Panel dated September 13, 1999, affirming the final remand determination described above was completed on October 25, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caratina L. Alston, United States Secretary, NAFTA Secretariat, Suite 2061, 14th and Constitution Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20230, (202) 482-5438.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 13, 1999, the Binational Panel issued an order which affirmed the final remand determination of the United States International Trade Administration ("ITA") concerning Certain Corrosion-Resistant Carbon Steel Flat Products from Canada. The Secretariat was instructed to issue a Notice of Completion of Panel Review on the 31st day following the issuance of the Notice of Final Panel Action, if no request for an Extraordinary Challenge was filed. No such request was filed. Therefore, on the basis of the Panel Order and Rule 80 of the *Article 1904 Panel Rules*, the Panel Review was completed and the panelists discharged from their duties effective October 25, 1999.

Dated: October 25, 1999.

Caratina L. Alston,

United States Secretary, NAFTA Secretariat.

[FR Doc. 99-28551 Filed 11-1-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 071698B]

RIN 0648-AJ67

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fisheries; Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement; Notice of Intent

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

ACTION: Notice of intent (NOI) to prepare a Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) document.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces its intent to prepare an SEIS to assess the impact on the natural and human environment of management strategies designed to reduce bycatch from pelagic longlines. The SEIS will examine time/area management alternatives available to NMFS to reduce the incidence of bycatch of undersized swordfish, Atlantic billfish, and other overfished HMS, as well as protected species (including sea turtles) by pelagic longlines fished along the Atlantic coastal waters of the United States. The purpose of this notice is to inform the interested public of the intent to prepare the SEIS document, and to announce the availability of a draft Technical Memorandum that provides background information on the materials and analytical methods used by NMFS in developing potential time/area closure fishery management alternatives to reduce bycatch from the U.S. Atlantic pelagic longline fishery.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (HMS FMP), Amendment 1 of the Atlantic Billfish FMP, the final rule, supporting documents, and the HMS Time/Area draft Technical Memorandum can be obtained from Rebecca Lent, Chief, Highly Migratory Species Division, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Buck Sutter, NMFS, (727) 570-5447, or Jill Stevenson, NMFS, (301) 713-2347.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In a September 1997 Report to Congress, NMFS identified north Atlantic swordfish, Atlantic blue marlin and Atlantic white marlin as overfished; west Atlantic sailfish were included in the 1998 report. The HMS FMP and Amendment 1 of the Atlantic billfish FMP amendment, including final environmental impact statements (revised final SEIS for the Atlantic billfish amendment), were published in April, 1999, to comply with provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) for fisheries identified as overfished. The final rule implementing actions included in these FMPs was published on May 28, 1999 (64 FR 29090). Among the fishery conservation and management measures contained within the HMS FMP and Atlantic billfish FMP amendment are actions specifically addressing bycatch concerns associated with HMS fisheries, as required under national standard 9. NMFS is also subject to other national and international requirements to minimize bycatch and bycatch mortality, most notably under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species, and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act, which provides authority to implement International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) recommendations.

Complicating bycatch management of swordfish and Atlantic billfish is the highly migratory nature of these species, resulting in movement outside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) where they are available for capture by other countries. The United States accounts for 29 percent of the north Atlantic swordfish quota (1997-1999) while Atlantic billfish mortality levels from all U.S. sources (commercial dead discards and recreational landings) during the 1990s averaged only 5.2 percent for Atlantic blue marlin, 5.8 percent for white marlin, and 6.6 percent of west Atlantic sailfish, relative to the total mortality as reported to ICCAT. It is important to note, however, that despite the highly migratory nature of these species, changes in fishing patterns or management measures that impact fishing mortality levels in a portion of their range may result in localized increases or decreases in abundance.

Time/area closures have been utilized as a fishery management tool to reduce bycatch for several U.S. marine fisheries, including North Pacific fisheries (herring, crab and groundfish fisheries), the northeast groundfish gillnet fishery (through the Northeast

Multispecies FMP), and the bluefin tuna fishery off the coast of New Jersey during the month of June. In the case of billfish and undersized swordfish, time/area closures for the pelagic longline fishery appear to show promise as interaction with billfish and undersized swordfish bycatch tend to occur in discernable patterns.

The draft HMS FMP and Atlantic billfish FMP amendment included a preferred alternative for time/area closure in the Florida Straits (26° to 28° N. lat., 78° to 81° W. long.) to pelagic longline fishing activity during the months of July, August, and September as part of a management strategy to reduce bycatch of undersized swordfish and Atlantic billfish. NMFS received many written and verbal comments on this proposed closure. The majority of comments received questioned the effectiveness of the Florida Straits closure based on the small size of the selected area relative to the range of the target species within the U.S. EEZ and Atlantic Ocean. In the final HMS FMP, NMFS agreed that this closure would likely be ineffective, and that NMFS would consider, under the framework provisions of the HMS FMP, a larger area or areas. Because of the potential magnitude of the economic and social impacts that would likely result from a more extensive time/area closure, NMFS delayed implementation until completion of further analyses and consultation with the Highly Migratory Species and Atlantic Billfish Advisory Panels (AP's).

On June 10 and 11, 1999, NMFS met with the HMS and Billfish APs to discuss the issue of expanded time/area closures. NMFS has prepared a draft Technical Memorandum that provides a preliminary discussion of the information, methods, and procedures used to identify and analyze alternative time/area closures for U.S. pelagic longlines operating in the Atlantic Ocean. A copy of the HMS Time/Area Technical Memorandum is currently available (see ADDRESSES).

Management Measures Under Consideration

NMFS will consider various spatial and temporal closures of waters along the continental U.S. Atlantic coast, including the Gulf of Mexico, to U.S. pelagic longlines. Analyses will likely be limited to areas generally within the U.S. EEZ where most of the incidental catch of species not sought occurs. It is anticipated that the spatial boundaries for time/area closures will follow specific latitudes or longitudes, as appropriate, to facilitate practical application of potential closures to both

commercial vessels and enforcement entities. NMFS will also consider the impacts under various assumptions regarding displaced fishing effort, in order to fully evaluate environmental, social, economic and biological impacts of the alternatives.

NMFS has determined that preparation of an SEIS is appropriate because of the potentially significant impact of regulations on the human environment. Based on discussions with the APs, NMFS is preparing a SEIS to fully assess potential impacts on the natural and human environment of various time/area closure alternatives to reduce bycatch of undersized swordfish, Atlantic billfish, other overfished or approaching overfished HMS, and protected species, from U.S. Atlantic pelagic longlines.

Timing of the Analysis and Tentative Decisionmaking Schedule

The public will be provided ample opportunity for written and verbal comments following the publication of the proposed rule. NMFS anticipates that a proposed rule outlining a time/area fishery closure for pelagic longlines will be completed by mid-December, 1999, with a final rule completed by May 1, 2000.

Dated: October 27, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 99-28642 Filed 11-1-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102599B]

South Atlantic 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 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Marine Reserves Advisory Panel will meet in Charleston, SC.

DATES: The Marine Reserves Advisory Panel meeting will be held on November 17, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on November 18, 1999, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Town and Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; telephone: 843-571-1000.

Council address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, telephone: (843) 571-4366; fax: (843) 769-4520; email: kim.iverson@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The advisory panel will review and provide comments and guidance on the following documents: the initial draft of "Why Consider Marine Reserves"; "The Use of Marine Reserves in the South Atlantic Council's Area of Authority"; and the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the South Atlantic Council and the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

Although non-emergency issues may come before this Panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see ADDRESSES) by November 3, 1999.

Dated: October 27, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 102699F]

Marine Mammals; File No. 782-1532-00

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

ACTION: Receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Alaska Fisheries Science