

species or stock through effects on annual rates of recruitment or survival.”

Regulations governing the taking of individuals of 16 species of marine mammals, representing 16 stocks, by Level B harassment, and 4 of those same species by Level A harassment, incidental to 86 FWS LRS WSEP training activities are valid from August 21, 2017, through August 20, 2022 and are codified at 50 CFR part 218, subpart F. The regulations include mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements. Pursuant to those regulations, NMFS issued a five-year LOA for the incidental take of marine mammals during training activities on BSURE area of the PMRF on April 21, 2017. For detailed information on this action, please refer to the August 22, 2017 **Federal Register** notice (82 FR 39684) and 50 CFR part 218, subpart F.

Summary of Request

On December 21, 2016, NMFS received an adequate and complete application from the 86 FWS for regulations governing the taking of 16 species of marine mammals representing 16 stocks incidental to LRS WSEP activities in the BSURE of the PMRF off Kauai, Hawaii. On January 6, 2017, we published a notice of receipt of the 86 FWS's application in the **Federal Register** (82 FR 1702) requesting public comment on the application and subsequently published a notice of proposed rulemaking in the **Federal Register** on May 5, 2017 (82 FR 21156) requesting public comment on the proposed rule. Since publishing the proposed rule, the 86 FWS clarified training would only occur four days per year, not five as presented in the application and proposed rule. Moreover, the 86 FWS decreased the number of munitions it would deploy annually, by 40 to 92 percent depending on year. This decreases the number of anticipated and authorized takes for this activity compared to what was presented in the proposed rule. In addition, NMFS worked with the 86 FWS to develop a comprehensive marine mammal mitigation and monitoring plan designed to decrease potential impacts to marine mammals. To support issuance of the LOA, NMFS adopted the 86 FWS' *Final Environmental Assessment/Overseas Environmental Assessment (EA/OEA) for the Long Range Strike Weapon Systems Evaluation Program at Kauai, Hawaii*, and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on August 11, 2017.

The final rule (82 FR 39684, August 22, 2017) and 86 FWS EA/OEA include a complete description of the 86 FWS's

specified training activities incidental to which NMFS is authorizing take of marine mammals. Air-to-surface exercises involving surface and slightly subsurface live munition detonations are the stressors most likely to result in impacts on marine mammals that could rise to the level of harassment.

Authorization

We have issued a LOA to the 86 FWS authorizing the take of marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to LRS WSEP training activities on the BSURE area of the PMRF as described above. The level and type of take authorized by the LOA is the same as the level and type of take analyzed in the final rule (82 FR 39684, August 22, 2017). Take by mortality or serious injury is not anticipated or authorized. Take of marine mammals will be minimized through implementation of mitigation and monitoring measures, including: Aerial surveys using sensor pods and range camera monitoring before, during, and after training; delaying exercises if a marine mammal is observed within an exclusion zone to avoid exposing marine mammals to levels of explosives likely to result in injury or death; delaying exercises if marine mammals are observed within a designated harassment zone if take is exceeded or not authorized, and shifting target coordinates as far from an observed marine mammal as possible. The 86 FWS is required to also comply with monitoring and reporting measures under 50 CFR 218.55 which includes collecting data from the PMRF hydrophones to better understand impacts, if any, of LRS WSEP training activities on marine mammals. Additionally, the rule and LOA include an adaptive management component that allows for timely modification of mitigation or monitoring measures based on new information, when appropriate. For full details on the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements, please refer to the final rule (82 FR 39684; August 22 2017).

Issuance of the LOA is based on findings, described in the preamble to the final rule, that the total taking of marine mammals incidental to the 86 FWS's training activities on the PMRF will have a negligible impact on the affected marine mammal species or stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for subsistence purposes.

The LOA will remain valid through August 20, 2022, provided the 86 FWS remains in conformance with the conditions of the regulations and the LOA, including the mitigation,

monitoring, and reporting requirements described in 50 CFR part 218, subpart F and the LOA.

Dated: August 24, 2017.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF644

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will hold a 3-day meeting of its Standing, Reef Fish, and Socioeconomics Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSC).

DATES: The meeting will convene on Tuesday, September 12, 2017, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday, September 13, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursday, September 14, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. EDT.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Gulf Council's Conference Room.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven Atran, Senior Fishery Biologist, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; steven.atran@gulfcouncil.org, telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Day 1—Tuesday, September 12, 2017; 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

- I. Introductions and Adoption of Agenda
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. March 27–29, 2017 SSC meeting
 - b. May 10, 2017 SSC webinar
- III. Selection of SSC representative at October 2–5, 2017 Council meeting in Biloxi, MS

Standing and Socioeconomic SSC Session

- IV. Grouper and Tilefish 5-year IFQ Review
 - a. Safety at sea
 - b. Stakeholders survey

Standing, Socioeconomic and Reef Fish SSC Session

- V. Alternative Approaches to Recreational Red Snapper Management
- Review of relevant legislative approaches
 - Other alternative approaches to recreational red snapper management

Standing and Reef Fish SSC Session

- VI. Further Development of a Stock Assessment Prioritization Spreadsheet

Day 2—Wednesday, September 13, 2017: 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

- VII. Review of Draft Status Determination Criteria Options Paper
- VIII. A Comparison of Recent Stock Assessment Results Using SS3 vs. DLMTToolkit
- Greater amberjack
 - Gray triggerfish
- IX. SEDAR Activities
- Status of SEDAR 48—black grouper benchmark assessment
 - FWC Gulf hogfish update assessment—Terms of Reference
 - SEDAR 61 Gulf red grouper standard assessment
 - Terms of reference
 - Project schedule
 - Assessment workshop appointments
- X. Review of Draft Generic Amendment—Carry-over Provision and Framework Modifications
- Simulation of the Effect of Carrying Over Unused ACL

Day 3—Thursday, September 14, 2017: 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

- XI. Evaluating Robustness of Harvest Control Rules to Future Red Tide Events
- XII. Spawning Aggregations in the Gulf of Mexico
- RESTORE Act Science Program project on spawning aggregations in the Gulf of Mexico
 - Prediction and Verification of Snapper-Grouper Spawning Aggregation Sites on the Offshore Banks of the Northwestern Gulf of Mexico
- XIII. Review of Framework Action to Modify the ACT for Red Snapper Federal For-Hire and Private Angler Components
- XIV. Review of Closed Season Decision Tool and Analysis for Greater Amberjack
- XV. Tentative 2018 SSC Meeting Dates
- XVI. Other Business—Meeting Adjourns

You may register for the SSC Meeting: Standing, Reef Fish, and Socioeconomic

on September 12–14, 2017 at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4690969987648505603>.

The Agenda is subject to change, and the latest version along with other meeting materials will be posted on the Council's file server. To access the file server, the URL is <https://public.gulfcouncil.org:5001/webman/index.cgi>, or go to the Council's Web site and click on the FTP link in the lower left of the Council Web site (<http://www.gulfcouncil.org>). The username and password are both "gulfguest". Click on the "Library Folder", then scroll down to "SSC meeting—2017–09".

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Scientific and Statistical Committee for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions of the Scientific and Statistical Committee will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda 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 action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Pereira at the Gulf Council Office (see **ADDRESSES**), at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: August 24, 2017.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XF631

Fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of SEDAR 51 assessment webinar III for Gulf of Mexico gray snapper.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR 51 assessment process of Gulf of Mexico gray snapper will consist of a Data Workshop, a series of assessment webinars, and a Review Workshop. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 51 assessment webinar III will be held September 19, 2017 from 1 p.m.–3 p.m. Eastern Time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested in participating should contact Julie A. Neer at SEDAR (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) to request an invitation providing webinar access information. Please request webinar invitations at least 24 hours in advance of each webinar.

SEDAR address: 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julie A. Neer, SEDAR Coordinator; (843) 571–4366; email: Julie.neer@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a multi-step process including: (1) Data Workshop, (2) a series of assessment webinars, and (3) A Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a report that compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The assessment webinars produce a report that describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The product of the Review Workshop is an Assessment Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, HMS Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers;